

Collocations in colour by Stephanie Hirschman

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Age: | Teenagers/Adults |
| Level: | Intermediate |
| Time: | 2 hours (can be divided into two one-hour lessons) |
| Objectives: | To practise using a monolingual English dictionary to find five types of key information; to recognize what collocations are and why they are important; to form collocations with four common verbs |
| Key skills: | Speaking, listening |
| Materials: | One copy of the worksheet per student; one monolingual English dictionary per pair of students; one copy of the colouring task per pair or small group of students; coloured pens or pencils (four different colours for each pair or small group); one copy of the colouring task solution (printed in colour) |

Procedure

Warmer: 'Jump the line'

1. Ask learners to stand in a line one behind the other, facing you.
2. Tell students they should ...
 - step to the left if they prefer guessing the meaning of new words from the context in a reading text;
 - step to the right if they prefer checking the meaning of new words in a dictionary.
3. Hold a quick feedback session to initiate discussion about dictionary use and why learners have certain preferences.
4. Next, tell students to ...
 - step to the left if they prefer electronic dictionaries;
 - step to the right if they prefer paper dictionaries.
5. Hold another quick feedback session where students give reasons for their choice.

6. Lastly, ask students to ...
 - step to the left if they prefer monolingual English dictionaries;
 - step to the right if they prefer bilingual dictionaries.
7. Hold a final quick feedback session. Then, tell learners they will practise using monolingual English dictionaries in the next part of the lesson.

Dictionary task

8. Put students in pairs. Hand out copies of the worksheet, one per student, and monolingual dictionaries, one per pair.
9. Go over the task instructions and demonstrate the activity with the first sentence on the worksheet. Prompt students to look up the word *everything* and confirm whether or not the word has three syllables. (It has. The second e is not pronounced.) Then, point out that they also need to identify what type of information from the list the answer represents. (pronunciation)

Tell the pairs that they should work collaboratively. They will need to read the full dictionary entry for the underlined word in each question very carefully in order to ascertain if the sentence is true or false, as the information they need may be found in example sentences at the end of the entry. You may want to tell them that four sentences are true and four are false.

10. Check answers with the whole class. The final two sentences (7 and 8) relate to collocations so learners may not be easily able to identify the type of information they represent (learners may suggest meaning or grammar). This gives you the opportunity to introduce the idea of collocation, a fifth type of information that dictionary entries may include, often in the form of example sentences at the end of the entry.

Collocations in colour by Stephanie Hirschman

Key:

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Everything has three syllables. | TRUE – pronunciation: /ˈevriˈθɪŋ/ |
| 2. Argument is the noun form of the verb <i>to argue</i> . | FALSE – spelling: <i>argument</i> |
| 3. Progress can be both a noun and a verb but you say the two forms differently. | TRUE – pronunciation: noun: 'progress verb: pro'gress |
| 4. You make an excuse to say why you have or haven't done something that you shouldn't or should have done. | TRUE – meaning: e.g. <i>My dog ate my homework.</i> |
| 5. <i>Be + take + place</i> means 'happen at a specific time or in a specific location', eg: <i>The festival is take place on the first Saturday of March.</i> | FALSE – grammar: The correct form is without <i>be</i> , i.e. <i>The festival will take place on ...</i> |
| 6. Taking advantage of someone is similar to cheating them. | TRUE – meaning: e.g. <i>He took advantage of me when he asked to borrow money for an operation for his sick grandmother.</i> |
| 7. Scientists carry on an experiment . | FALSE – collocation: <i>carry out</i> an experiment |
| 8. Tea is both a hot drink and a meal and it is correct to say: <i>Most families in the UK take tea at 4 o'clock.</i> | FALSE – collocation: Most families <i>have</i> tea at 4 o'clock. |

11. Define *collocations* and explain their significance by presenting the following information on the board:
- A collocation is two or more words that we often use together.
 - There are several grammar patterns, for example:
 - adjective + noun: e.g. *best friend, old friend, close friend*;

- adverb + adjective: e.g. *absolutely furious, incredibly difficult*;
- verb + noun: e.g. *do your homework, have tea/lunch/dinner.*

- Knowing collocations:
 - makes you sound more natural and more like a native speaker;
 - helps with your comprehension.
- Collocations may not translate word for word into your L1; translate the idea or concept rather than each word.
- To find the meaning of verb + noun collocations, check the noun phrase when using the dictionary, rather than the verb as it may have only a general meaning.
- Collocations don't really follow rules so you have to listen carefully to notice them and then experiment to get them right. Ask your teacher or a native speaker, 'Can we say ...?'

Practice: 'Slap the board'

12. Give learners a chance to practise some collocations with a 'slap the board' game. Divide the whiteboard into four large squares, like this:

| | |
|------|------|
| do | make |
| have | take |

Divide learners into two teams and put each team into a line, standing near the board. Call out a noun that collocates with one of the verbs (from the table on the next page). The first person in each team's line must try to be the first to hit the part of the board that corresponds to the verb that collocates with each phrase.

This game is both a review and a learning opportunity. Some of these collocations will be familiar from the lesson so far or previous learning but you may need to stop and explain others. They will all be encountered again in the next activity. The learners take turns to compete in slapping the board. Keep score so you can announce an overall winner.

Collocations in colour by Stephanie Hirschman

| | Call out ... | Collocates with ... | | Call out ... | Collocates with ... |
|----|------------------|---------------------|----|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | an experiment | do | 9 | an excuse | make |
| 2. | tea/lunch/dinner | have | 10 | the ironing | do |
| 3. | a party | have | 11 | a go at doing something | have |
| 4. | place | take | 12 | the dishes | do |
| 5. | progress | make | 13 | advantage of someone | take |
| 6. | someone a favour | do | 14 | friends with someone | make |
| 7. | an effort | make | 15 | an argument | have |
| 8. | a photo | take | 16 | your time | take |

13. To finish the lesson after one hour, stop here. Repeat the 'Slap the Board' game as a lead-in to your next lesson on another day, then continue as below.

Colouring

14. Hand out one copy of the colouring task per pair or small group. Introduce the colouring task. Point out that each shape contains a phrase that collocates with one of the verbs that you will write on the board. Explain that learners need to find and colour collocations for the verbs as follows:

| | |
|-------------|--------|
| do | blue |
| make | yellow |
| have | purple |
| take | green |

(These are suggested colours; any four colours will do as long as they are different.)

Learners enjoy doing this activity in pairs or small groups so that they can teach each other new lexis. Monitor and assist where needed. Learners should be encouraged to use monolingual English dictionaries to check their ideas and find the meanings of new collocations.

15. When most learners are finished, ask them to tell you what is revealed by the coloured shapes (a picture of Tower Bridge in London). Display the coloured solution for learners to check their work, provide further explanation and promote discussion of any alternative ideas.

Activate

16. Activate the collocations by asking learners to write a minimum of four questions to ask their classmates. They should use at least one of each of the four verbs from the lesson (*do, make, have, take*), and focus on using collocations that:

- are new to them;
- OR are different in their language;
- OR they often make mistakes with.

For example: *What time do you usually **have lunch**?*

Note: These questions could be written instead as homework and used as the basis of a warmer/review activity in the next lesson.

17. Learners then ask and answer the questions in pairs or as a mingling activity. Insist that learners produce the full collocation in a sentence when they answer a question.

For example: *I usually **have lunch** at 1pm.*

18. Do some quick feedback on the most common, interesting and unusual answers to their questions. Insist that students use the full collocations during the feedback.

Collocations in colour by Stephanie Hirschman

USING THE DICTIONARY

Read the eight sentences below and find out if they are true or false by checking the bold words in the dictionary.

Also, decide what type of information the question is asking about:

- meaning
- grammar
- spelling
- pronunciation
- something else

1. **Everything** has three syllables.
2. **Argument** is the noun form of the verb *to argue*.
3. **Progress** can be both a noun and a verb but you say the two forms differently.
4. You make an **excuse** to say why you have or haven't done something that you shouldn't or should have done.
5. *Be + take + place* means 'happen at a specific time or in a specific location', e.g. *The festival is take **place** on the first Saturday of March.*
6. Taking **advantage** of someone is similar to cheating them.
7. Scientists carry on an **experiment**.
8. Tea is both a hot drink and a meal and it is correct to say: *Most families in the UK take **tea** at 4 o'clock.*

ACTIVATE

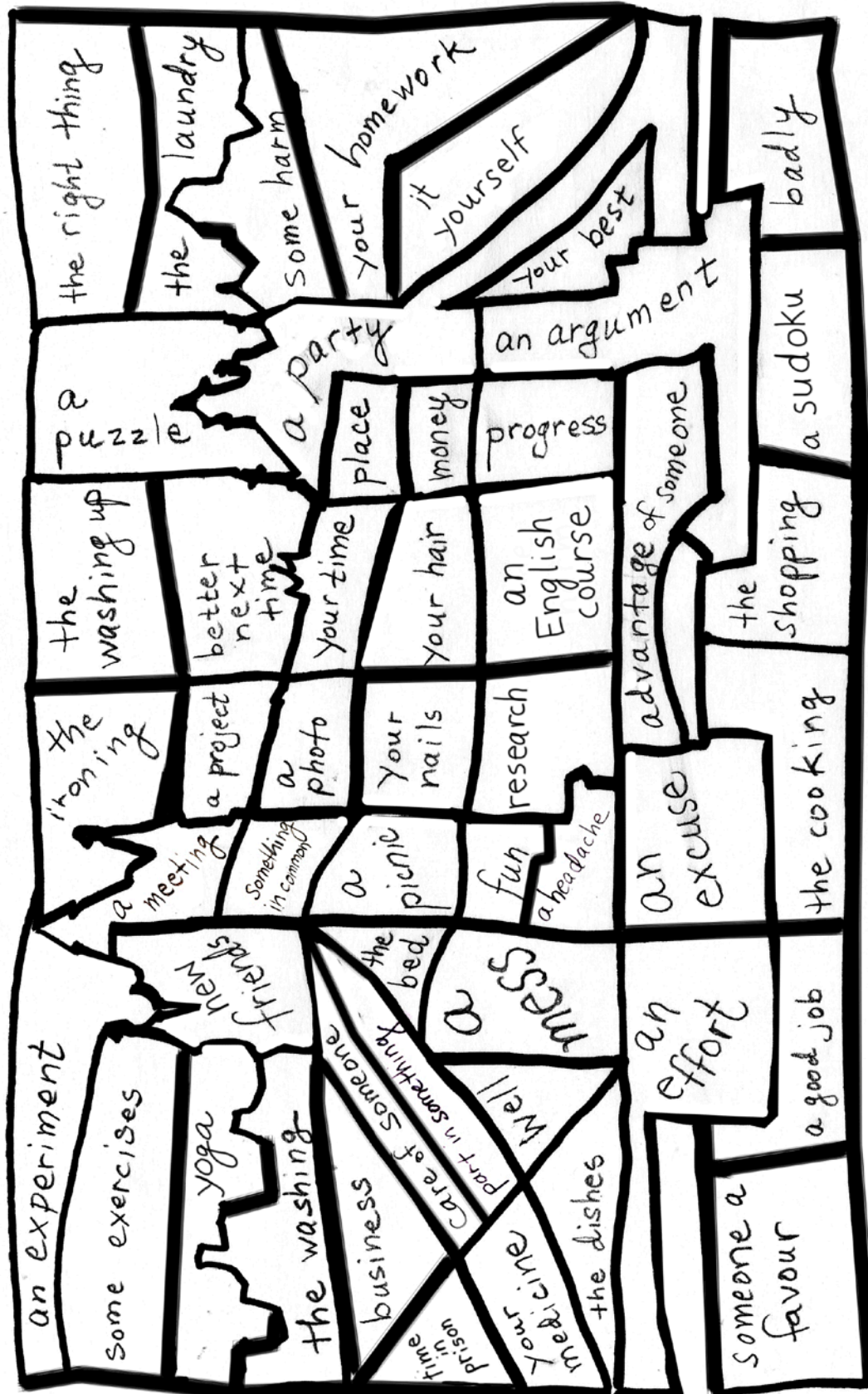
Write four or more questions to ask your classmates, using collocations with each of the verbs from today's lesson – *do, make, have, take*.

Choose collocations that:

- are new for you today;
- OR are different in your language;
- OR you often make mistakes with.

Ask and answer the questions in pairs.

Collocations in colour
by Stephanie Hirschman



Lesson Share COLOURING TASK

Collocations in colour
by Stephanie Hirschman

