

VALUING - An ESL Activity

by Donna Ilyin

In this activity students discuss a statement or a question. They give their own personal beliefs and feelings or tell a personal experience. They use natural English—with vocabulary and structures appropriate to their proficiency level.

The teacher selects a statement or a group of related statements or questions, analyzes the structures best used and reviews structures and vocabulary in context. The teacher arranges the review and structure presentation by difficulty and natural order. (Short information type answers and one word questions natural to conversation and discussion are used). The teacher evaluates the class readiness for using the structures and vocabulary. She uses lead questions with the group as a whole.

(If the class has never worked in buzz groups, the teacher selects 4 to 6 students and demonstrates how each person responds and asks other students in the group the questions. The teacher uses the main sentence or questions at this point.)

(If the class has worked in buzz groups, the teacher uses the main sentences or questions as a practice session in each buzz group.)

The teacher divides the class into buzz groups of 4 to 6 people. The students use only English and when possible the teacher tries to get a heterogeneous grouping of languages spoken by the students.

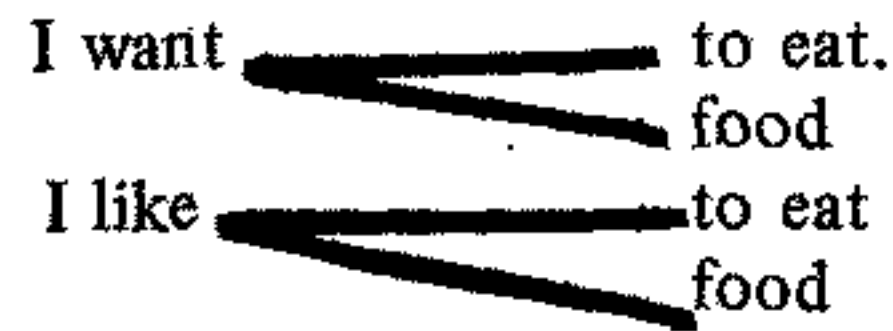
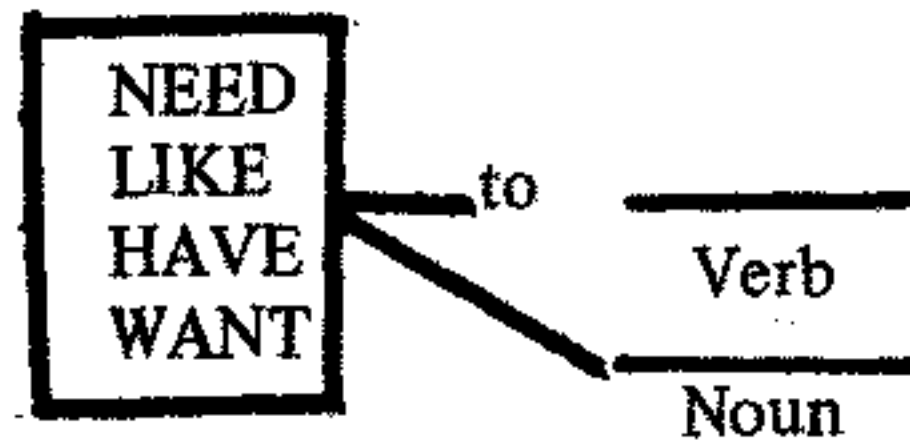
The teacher tells the students to give their own views and feelings and at the end of the discussion period asks one person from each group to report.

EXAMPLE

At the 150 level (about 12-14 weeks or 100-150 hours after a beginning adult ESL class has started).

Readiness Structures

Questions, affirmative and negative statements with present forms of BE, DO with common verbs, CAN with common verbs, and BE Going TO future with common verbs.

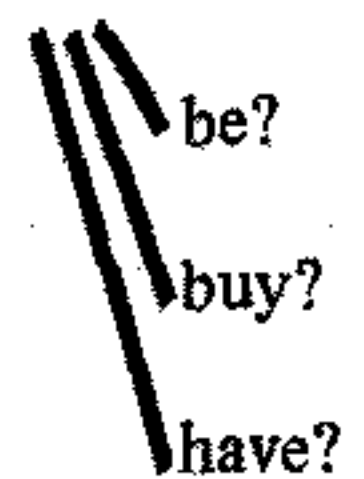


much, many, a lot of with count and non-count nouns too much, too many (excessive).

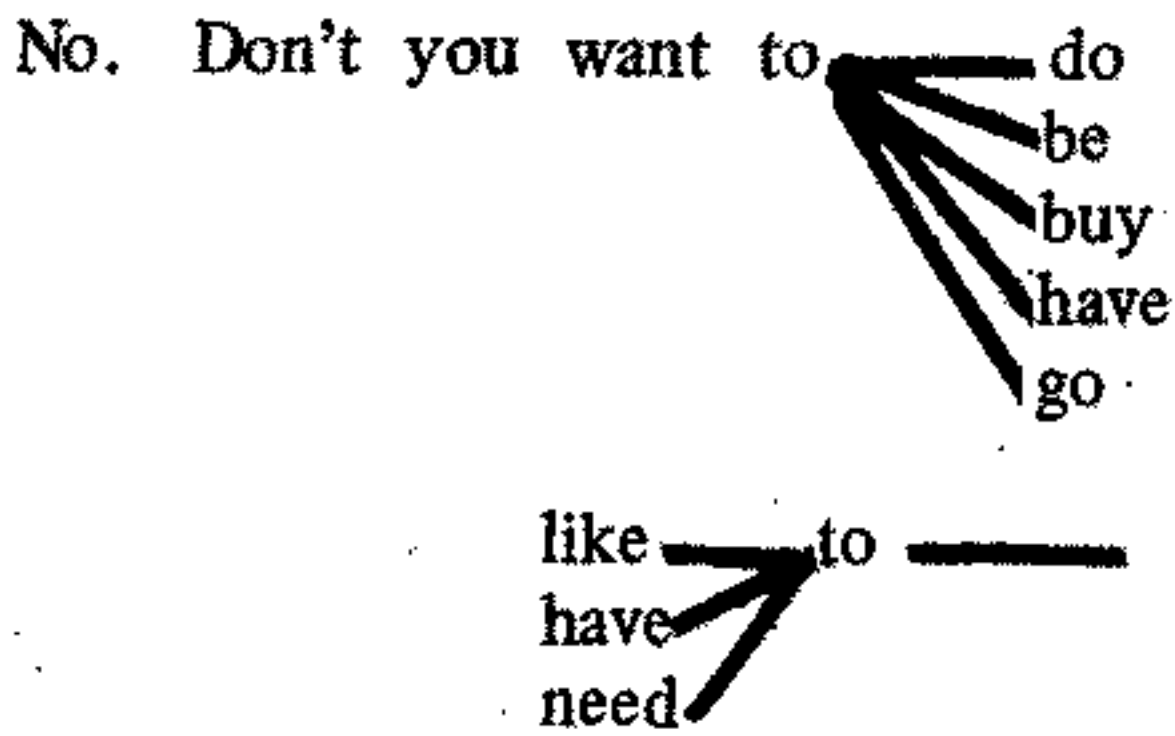
Lead Questions:

1. Do you have any plans for the future? (When students answer *yes* use additional questions below. When students answer *no* ask additional questions below.)

Yes. What do you want to do?



(If appropriate to a more complete student response)



2. Can you _____ ?

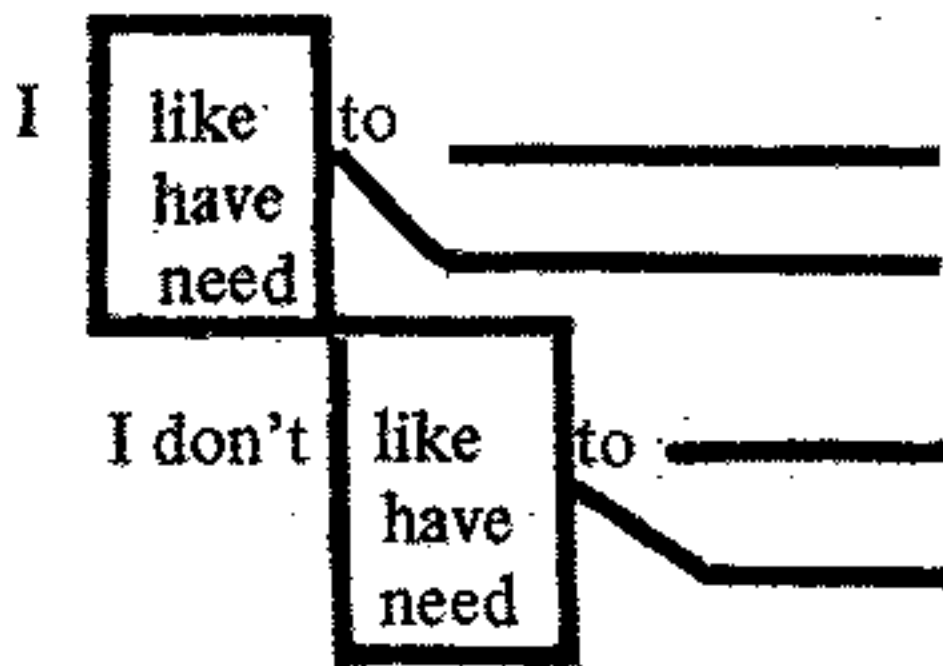
Main Questions:

1. Do you have any problems about your future?

Yes? 2) What is your problem?

I want to _____

I don't want to _____



3. Is that (responses to number 2) a problem?

4. Why?

5. Can you or Can't you?

Examples of related questions 2,3,4 and 5 with a Yes answer to 1.

Student A: Do you have any problems about your future?

B: Yes.

A. What is your problem?

B. I want to read.

A. Is that a problem?

B. Yes.

A. Can't you read in Spanish?

B. Sure, but I can't read in English.

A. That's a problem.

Student A: Do you have any problems about your future?

B. Sure.

A. What is your problem?

B. I need to study.

A. Is that a problem?

B. Yes.

A. Why?

B. I don't have much time?

A. Why?

B. I work at night. I'm tired. I want to sleep.

A. Me too.

No 6. Don't you want to _____
have
need

7. Isn't that (response to 6) a problem?

8. Why?

9. Can you or can't you _____ ?

Variations on Main questions

What is every young boy's problem.

young girl's

young man's

young woman's

husband's

wife's

ESL students

ESL teachers

working student's

poor student's

old man's

old woman's

sick person's etc.

Is that a problem?

Why?

Can he/she? or Can't he/she?

Author's Note

Please write your comments and suggestions--if you try it on your class let me know what happens.