

# English Now!

## Learning Circles

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5 Sample Virtual  
Lesson Plans



# English Now! Virtual Lesson Plan #1

## Learning Circle and Zoom Orientation

	<h3>Greeting and warm-up (20 minutes)</h3>
<p><b>Virtual Tool</b></p>	<p><b>Mute/unmute</b> by clicking microphone button in bottom left corner of menu bar.</p> <p><b>Rename</b> by clicking <b>Participants</b> button in menu bar. Find name in the list. Click on <b>Rename</b>. Type the name you want to be called.</p>
<p><b>Suggested Content</b></p>	<p>Greet learners as they join. Ask them to remain on mute until introductions.</p> <p>Ask learners to rename themselves (if needed) to the name they prefer to be called.</p> <p><b>Facilitator models introduction:</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b>  <i>My name is _____. I am from _____.          I have facilitated learning circles a few times, and I enjoy it. My favorite thing about it is _____.</i></p> <p>Call on learners, ask them to unmute and introduce themselves. If needed, provide a structure for introductions.</p> <p><b>Example:</b>  <i>My name is _____.          I am from _____ and today I am feeling _____.</i></p> <p>Keep a running list of learners' feeling words/descriptions and discuss any new vocabulary.</p> <p>Acknowledge learners who have joined by calling in. Pause or check in frequently to make sure these learners are following the conversation.</p> <p>Encourage learners to ask questions of and respond to each other.</p>
<p><b>Images to use</b></p>	

## Orientation to Zoom (30 minutes)

### Virtual Tool

#### Nonverbal responses

Click the **Participants** button in menu bar. Click on any image to display next to your name, or click **More** to see more options. Click the image again to make it disappear.

#### Reactions

Click the reactions button in menu bar. Click on any reaction. Reaction will disappear automatically after a few seconds.

#### Poll

Poll box will appear on screen. Click the button next to your choice. Click submit.

### Suggested Content

Practice listening and using nonverbal response (raising hands or reactions). Example:

- *Raise your hand if you had tea today. Raise your hand if you had coffee.*
- *Give a thumbs up if you have been in a virtual class before.*

Discuss virtual classroom etiquette:

- *Should the meeting be recorded and shared? Get learners' permission.*
- *Should we raise hands when we want to speak or unmute ourselves and speak?*
- *How do learners "enter" our class meeting if they arrive a little late?*

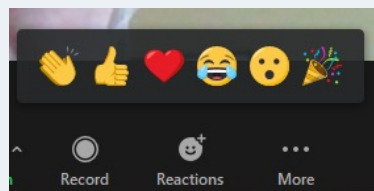
Conduct a class poll (create [Zoom poll](#) ahead of meeting or conduct a poll by raising of hands)


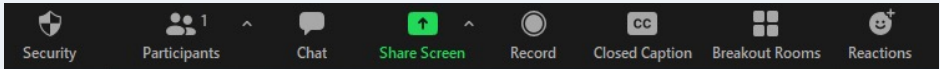
- *How should we communicate outside of class: WhatsApp, Remind, email, text?*

Discuss results and decide as a group.

Review any other virtual learning tools/rules relevant to your group.

### Images to use



	<h2>Orientation to Learning Circles</h2> <p>(30 minutes)</p>
<p><b>Virtual Tool</b></p>	<p><b>Whiteboard</b> Facilitator/host clicks on <b>Share Screen</b> in menu bar. Select <b>whiteboard</b>. Click on <b>Share Screen</b> so participants can see and annotate board.</p> <p><b>Chat</b> Click chat button in menu bar. Type message when box opens. Press enter to send.</p>
<p><b>Suggested Content</b></p>	<p>Discuss: What is a Learning Circle?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What do you already know about learning circles?</i></li> <li>• <i>How is this learning circle different from other English classes you have taken? (possible answers might include virtual instead of face-to-face, attendance is not required, no textbook, led by facilitator rather than teacher)</i></li> <li>• <i>What does facilitator mean?</i></li> <li>• <i>What does virtual mean?</i></li> </ul> <p>Use the whiteboard to create a Venn diagram of Learning Circles/ Other Classes or make a simple chart with learners' responses</p> <p>Co-create a class agreement using the whiteboard or noting ideas in chat.</p> <p>In this learning circle, we will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol> <p>Invite learner volunteers to read agreement back to the group.</p>
<p><b>Images to use</b></p>	


	<h2>Wrap-up (10 minutes)</h2>
<b>Virtual Tool</b>	<p><b>Leave Meeting</b> Click on the Leave Meeting button in menu bar to exit.</p>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Speak, write in chat, or use nonverbal response for wrap-up questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What did you learn today?</i> (Call on one learner, then have learners call on each other in a round robin, using mute/unmute when responding.)</li> <li>• <i>What would you like to work on in a future class?</i> (Learners answer in chat)</li> <li>• <i>Did you learn a new word today?</i> (nonverbal reaction like thumbs up)</li> </ul> <p>Thank learners for attending and make sure learners leave meeting.</p>
	<h2>Follow-up</h2>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Send a copy of learner agreement and reminders about future meetings in a follow-up message via email, WhatsApp, Remind, or whatever method learners selected.</p>



# English Now! Virtual Lesson Plan #2

## App Onboarding and Goal-Setting

This lesson can also be used with an app or online program.


	<h3>Greeting and Warm-Up (20 minutes)</h3>
<b>Virtual Tool</b>	<p><u>Mute/unmute</u> <u>Rename</u></p>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Greet learners as they join. Ask them to remain on mute until their turn to speak. Remind learners to rename themselves the name they prefer to be called.</p> <p>Facilitate check in and encourage conversation. Provide a prompt if needed. Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Did you have any opportunities to write, read, speak, or listen to English this week? Talk about your experience.</i></li> </ul> <p>Encourage learners to ask questions of and respond to each other.</p> <p>Discuss any new vocabulary that comes up and add it to a master class list. Review any vocabulary from the previous week.</p>
	<h3>Orientation to Apps (20 minutes)</h3>
<b>Virtual Tool</b>	<p><u>Nonverbal responses</u> <u>Reactions</u></p>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Discuss apps through non-verbal responses like thumbs up or raised hand, or through conversation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's take a poll. Raise your hand if you have an iPhone. Raise your hand if you have an Android phone.</li> <li>• What does the word "app" stand for?</li> <li>• What apps do you use most often? Do you have a favorite app?</li> <li>• Which apps do you use for learning, and which apps do you use for entertainment?</li> </ul> <p>If there is a learner who has already used the app, invite that learner to share his/her experience with the group. (Could they share their iphone on Zoom-make them a Co-host)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you like about the app?</li> <li>• What have you learned using the app?</li> <li>• Is there anything you would change about the app?</li> <li>• What kind of data plan do you have? (this could be discussed with buddies later, possibly in native languages to get the best result)</li> </ul> <p>Suggest using headphones for optimal experience. Also discuss use of data and/or WiFi.</p>

	<b>Wrap-up</b> (10 minutes)
<b>Virtual Tool</b>	<a href="#"><u>Leave Meeting</u></a>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Help learners setting a goal or intention for app use.  <i>Set a goal for use this week!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will use xyz for at least 15 minutes once this week.</li> <li>• I will use xyz a few times this week</li> <li>• I will use xyz every day this week.</li> </ul>
	<b>Follow-up</b>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Send the screenshot of learners' meaningful objects and ask them to send a reflection or comment to the group during the week.</p>

# English Now! Virtual Lesson Plan #3

## Virtual Field Trip

Note: This lesson is about a virtual visit to a park, but you could modify this lesson to explore another place in your community, such as a library or museum.

	<h3>Greeting and warm-up</h3> <p>(20 minutes)</p>
<b>Virtual Tool</b>	<u>Mute/unmute</u>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Greet learners as they join. Review when to mute/unmute.</p> <p>Warm-up discussion: (Learners may have many different opinions about this. There is no right or wrong response.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you agree with this statement: <i>Going to a park and being outside is safe to do during the pandemic.</i></li> <li>• Follow-up question: <i>What can you do to make going to a park a safer experience?</i></li> </ul> <p>Discuss and note any new vocabulary, or ask one of the learners to keep a list of new vocabulary.</p>





## Small group activity: Breakout Discussions (30 minutes)

### Virtual Tool

**Breakout rooms:** [Enable breakout rooms](#)  
[Manage participants](#) once they have entered breakout rooms

### Suggested Content

#### **Orient learners to Breakout Rooms:**

Tell learners that you will be using “breakout rooms” for a small group activity. Ask learners if they have used this feature before.

- *What is a breakout room in a face-to-face setting?*
- *What is a virtual breakout room?*

Tell learners that they will receive a message asking them to join the rooms when it is time.

#### **Small group activity:**

Use breakout rooms to divide learners into groups of 2-3 to discuss the questions below. Ask learners to decide on roles within the group, such as notetaker, timekeeper, facilitator.

- *What do you already know about parks in our area?*
- *What is the difference between a city park, a county park, a state or national park?*
- *Do you have a favorite park?*
- *What do you like to do when you visit a park? What features make a park a nice place to visit?*
- *What questions do you have about parks?*

Invite learners back from breakout rooms. Ask each group to share their ideas with the whole group.



## Group activity: Virtual Tour (30 minutes)

### Virtual Tool

**Share Screen:** Pull up the website you want to share ahead of time and then [share screen](#).

### Suggested Content

*Introduce the idea of a “virtual field trip.” By sharing your screen, view the website of a local park. You might also want to look at maps and images or use Google Earth to explore the park.*

*Possible questions for learners:*

- *What do you already know about this park? Have you been here before?*
- *Where is the park located? Where can you find this information on the website?*
- *What looks interesting about this park?*
- *What recreation activities can you do at this park? Does it have a playground, walking trail, picnic shelters?*
- *What are the park’s hours? (Discuss any vocabulary, like dawn to dusk)*
- *What information do you think we will find under “Contact Us”?*
- *Are there any special COVID precautions? (Are the bathrooms closed? Are there a limited number of visitors? Are masks required on trails?)*
- *Is this a park you would like to visit (or visit again)?*
- *What else would you like to know about this park?*
- *How can visiting a park (even virtually) help people during the pandemic?*

## Wrap-up (20 minutes)

### Virtual Tool

**Leave Meeting**

### Suggested Content

*Speak, write in chat, or use nonverbal response for wrap-up questions:*

- *What did you learn today about parks that you didn’t already know?*
- *Do you feel comfortable using the internet to learn more about local parks?*
- *Do you plan to visit a park in the future?*

## Follow-up


### Suggested Content

Send a link to the park website viewed in class, a brief summary of the discussion, and reminders about future meetings in a follow-up message.

# English Now! Virtual Lesson Plan #4

## New Skills during the Pandemic:

### Necessity is the Mother of Invention

	<b>Greeting and warm-up</b> (20 minutes)
<b>Virtual Tool</b>	<p>Speaker view vs. Gallery view</p> <p>On phones, the first screen is Speaker view and if you slide right, you get the gallery view.</p>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Greet learners as they join. Ask them to remain on mute until greetings.</p> <p>Facilitator models introduction. Example: Hi _____, how are you today? Learner 1 responds: Fine, thank you. Then asks the greeting of another learner, and so on...</p> <p>Some people have found that since the pandemic began, they have to be home more to stay safe or because they are not working. They have begun making things they used to buy like bread or clothing. How has your life changed because of the pandemic? What have been some of the negative consequences of the pandemic and some of the unexpected positive ones?</p> <p>(If available, use the whiteboard to record learners' responses: 2 columns: - +; if you can't use the whiteboard, take notes and repeat learners' responses frequently.)</p> <p>Acknowledge learners who have joined by calling in. Pause or check in frequently to make sure these learners are following the conversation.</p> <p>Encourage learners to ask questions of each other: A: What have you been doing that's new to you during the pandemic? B: "I've been <u>cooking a lot</u>. How about you?"</p>



## On-line learning: Things I learned to make during the pandemic! (30 minutes)

### Virtual Tool

Google Slides

### Suggested Content

**Discuss the idiom:** Necessity is the mother of invention

Share your screen. Read The Change Agent article: [Pandemic Haircut article](#)

Give learners a chance to read silently as you move through the slides, then ask questions to check for comprehension. Who/What happened? Read again, aloud.

[Note: The Change Agent is a subscription based magazine of learner-written stories with accompanying lesson plans and ideas to extend the lesson. Go to <https://changeagent.nelrc.org>.

If you are in a New England state, you have a free subscription. Please go to <https://changeagent.nelrc.org/nelrc-member-states>. If not, subscription is affordable-only \$30/year/teacher or \$20/year/teacher for 10 or more teachers. All back issues are available for this price]

**Discuss:** "Pandemic Haircut": What did she learn to do for the first time because of the pandemic? Have you had any similar experiences? If yes, what? What is different about your life now than at the start of the pandemic?

Go back to the idiom. What does the idiom mean to you now?

Use a Google Doc/Slides to record participants' responses about what they learned/started to do. Use in the next section.

**Take a break:** Invite learners to get something they learned to make over the pandemic to share after the break.



## Group Project: Google Slides (30 minutes)

### Virtual Tool

Google Slides

### Suggested Content

**Show & Tell:** Call on students who want to share something with the group.

Screen share the Google Slide deck. Create a slide for each participant. Demonstrate how to add an image and text. Create a slide for yourself with an image and brief text describing of something you learned to do during the pandemic. If a participant does not feel they will be able to work on a slide during the week, create their slide with the group, using it for further demonstration.

Have learners go to breakout rooms for 6 minutes with one other person to discuss their content. What will their slide look like? Check in when everyone is back in the room. Share the slides with them and demonstrate how they will find it in their email and open it.

Optional: Discuss current guidance about the pandemic. How can we keep informed and keep ourselves and our families safe but also return to more normalcy?

**Resource:** CDC website for great graphics and information re: proper use and care of a face covering:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Ask questions or have students describe a section.


Send link to students to look at over the week. Plan an activity to follow up.

#### **More optional activities:**

Invite learners to make their own video about how to put on and wear a mask, or about making something they specialize in. They could use the video option on their phone camera. Some may choose to upload it into YouTube.

-or-

If you are using Quizlet, you could have your students find or develop & share Quizlet sets with relevant vocabulary.


	<h2>Wrap-up (10 minutes)</h2>
<p><b>Suggested Content</b></p>	<p>Speak, write in chat, or use nonverbal response for wrap-up questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What have you learned about yourself today?</i></li> <li>• <i>What personal or community lessons have you learned so far from the pandemic?</i></li> </ul>
	<h2>Follow-up</h2>
<p><b>Suggested Content</b></p>	<p>Send the Pandemic Haircut pdf and mp3 to learners for review during the week. Share the Google Slides presentation and check in with them to see how they are getting along.</p>



# English Now! Virtual Lesson Plan #5

## Virtual Scavenger Hunt and Show-and-Tell

See the section on Realia in the “[Strategies for Classroom in Remote Face-to-Face Classes](#)” in the Tech Tips Blog on the World Ed website.

	<b>Greeting and warm-up</b> (20 minutes)
<b>Virtual Tool</b>	<u>Mute/unmute</u> <u>Rename</u>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Greet learners as they join. Review when to mute/unmute. Welcome any learners joining by phone.</p> <p>Warm-up discussion: Respond to this statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like learning from home because ____</i></li> <li>• <i>Learning from home is challenging because ____</i></li> </ul> <p>Discuss and note any new vocabulary, or ask one of the learners to keep a list of new vocabulary.</p>
	<b>Activity: Virtual Scavenger Hunt</b> (20 minutes)
<b>Virtual Tool</b>	<u>Screen Sharing</u>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p>Virtual scavenger hunt/Memory game.</p> <p>Have a list of common household items. Ask learners to search their house or apartment to collect them and return to the screen to share with the group. Give learners a set amount of time (1 or 2 minutes) to find the items. You might want to screen share a countdown timer (you can find a <a href="#">video of a timer</a> on YouTube)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on your learners' level, you can give them one object at a time or a list of three objects. For example: <i>Find a spoon, a book, and a coin.</i></li> <li>• You can vary the activity by focusing on a specific letter or sound, for example: <i>Find three items that begin with the letter P</i> or <i>Find an item that rhymes with hat.</i></li> <li>• Or you can make it more challenging by giving them an open-ended category rather than a specific item. For example: <i>Find something you would use in an emergency rather than find a flashlight.</i></li> </ul> <p>Discuss objects the learners bring to the screen.</p>



## Activity: Show & Tell (20 minutes)

### Virtual Tool

[Screenshot](#)  
[Gallery view/Speaker view](#)

### Suggested Content

Show-and-tell:

- What does show-and-tell mean?
- In the US, show-and-tell is a popular classroom activity. Did you ever have show-and-tell in school or when you were a child?
- What is good about show-and-tell, even for adults? (public speaking practice, getting to know each other better, building confidence, cultural connections, etc.)

Ask learners to choose a meaningful object from their home to share with the group. Give learners a few minutes to find the object and write down some notes before they share. Facilitator should select and share an object too.

Post the following questions in the chat or on the whiteboard:

- What is your object?
- Where is it from?
- Why is it special to you?
- When did you get it or find it?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about this object?

## Wrap-up (20 minutes)

### Virtual Tool

[Leave Meeting](#)

### Suggested Content

Discuss wrap-up questions:

- What new household word did you learn today?
- Did you learn something new about your classmates today?
- Do you have something in common with your classmates? What?

## Follow-up

### Suggested Content

Send Google Slides reading and mp3 (Pandemic Haircut) and reminders about future meetings in a follow-up message