

HOW CAN I BE SURE THEY ARE GETTING IT RIGHT?

By the time a game starts the teaching should be over; the game is the consolidation phase. Introduce the vocabulary and structures pupils will need. Keep new material to the minimum. Provide whatever support is needed for them to get it right. Eg:

- Tell pupils why they are playing this game - what they should be able to do better, more easily, as a result of playing it.
- Revise previously learned material and remind the class of its use in this context.
- Practise common structures.
- Demonstrate the game.
- Do a practice run with the whole class.
- Provide a whole class checklist on the board, or group checklists, so that learners have something to consult when in doubt (a game is not a test).
- Appoint a 'verifier' in each group whose job it is to check that the group has all the information it needs, to consult the checklist when someone gets stuck, to call the teacher if necessary. This duty should rotate.
- Go round and listen unobtrusively, making notes for any re-teaching which may be required. If necessary, join in to help a particular group. If absolutely necessary, stop the game, explain why you are stopping it, revise a necessary point, and re-start the game.

For suitable activities, appoint a scribe to write down all the examples generated, or the answers produced. The scribe is assisted by the other members of the group and disagreements about what should be written down should be discussed by all, and then with the teacher if necessary. The teacher can then keep an eye on what is being written and can intervene to correct and explain as necessary. (If the sheets are to be handed in, this method produces six or seven scripts for marking, instead of 20 or 30.)