

Photo Captions

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This activity provides ESL learners of all levels an opportunity to use their English skills in a new and entertaining way. It also provides a record of class activities.

A camera is loaded with film is kept on hand for photographing learners and instructors engaging in regular classroom activities, special events and field trips. After the film is developed, learners work in instructor or tutor-guided pairs or small groups to write captions that will accompany each photograph. Writers must include learners' names in each caption, as well as an explanation of the activity in the photograph. This requires learners to ask questions like: "What is his/her name?" "How do you spell it?" and "What are they doing?" If the learners are involved in a word-processing class at the time, they type the captions. The photographs with captions are then posted on a classroom bulletin board and at the end of the year are transferred into a photo album.

There are several benefits to be gained from the *Photo Caption* activity. Most importantly, learners are given another opportunity to use their English skills. In addition, learners love to have their pictures taken and then have others write about them. A bonus benefit is the enjoyment derived from looking at past year's photos!

Approximately five or six rolls of 35mm film are used each year and the only other expense is the cost of developing film.