The Top 10 Ways To Enhance The Learning Experience

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1. Use Background Music
Background music can break the ice. Create an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable to talk. They should feel they are not being listened to – though of course you may be listening. The music should be instrumental so that students can concentrate on their task without wanting to sing-a-long. Chakra music also works well.

2. Introduce Lesson Themes With Music
Students guess the song titles and write them on laminated card. The song titles provide clues to the theme of the lesson. This works particularly well with lessons on Verb + Gerund/ Infinitive.

3. Create Grammar/ Use of English Tasks From Lyrics
In this activity students do the activity and then listen to check their answers. Many songs have a range of grammar points, collocations, dependent prepositions, interesting words etc. that can be exploited to make into an enjoyable learning activity. Rolling In The Deep by Adele is a good example.

a. Supporting Material For Discussion or Grammar Topics
Discussing finance- The Complete Banker by The Divine Comedy

I wish I knew how it would feel to be free by Nina Simone is excellent for discussing issues related to American history and slavery. It also provides practice of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} conditional and introduces some excellent vocabulary, e.g. to long for something

Other grammar often featured in songs is modal verbs, e.g.

\textit{It must have been love}
\textit{If you liked it then you should have put a ring on it}
Rolling In The Deep - Adele

Task:
In the lyrics there are 11 questions.

1) Questions 1,2,4,8 and 9: choose the correct word/ collocation
2) Questions 3,5,6 and 7: key word transformation
3) Questions 10 and 11 : complete the sentence so it is grammatically correct
4) Listen and Check

There's a fire starting in my heart. Reaching a fever pitch and it's bring me out the dark.
Finally I can see you 1) brightly/ crystal/ diamond/ shiny clear.
Go 2) forward/ up/ ahead/ down and sell me out and I'll lay your shit bare

See how I'll leave, with every piece of you
Don't 3) __________________ the things that I will do

There's a fire starting in my heart. Reaching a fever pitch and it's bring me out the dark

The scars of your love 4) speak/ remember/ show/ remind me of us
They keep me thinking that we almost had it all
The scars of your love, they leave me 5) ______________
I can't help feeling

We could have had it all. Rolling in the deep
You had my heart inside your hand and you played it to the beat

Baby, I have no story to be 6) __________
But I've heard one of you and I'm gonna make your head burn
Think of me in the 7) ______________ of your despair
Making a home down there as mine sure won't be shared

Throw your soul through every open door
Count your blessings
to find what you look for
Turn my 8) sad/ unhappy/ sorrow/ grieve into treasured gold
You pay me back in 9) nice/ kind/ good/ well and reap just what you sow

Now you’re gonna wish you 10) (never – meet - me)________________________
We 11) (could - have) it all ____________________________________________
(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)
We could have had it all

Now you’re gonna wish you 10) (never – meet - me)
You had my heart and soul in your hand
(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)
But you played it, you played it, you played it to the beat
4. Dictogloss
In this activity, the teacher reads several lines of text and the students take notes and reconstruct the text from what they hear. This works particularly well with *used to* and *would* for past states and activities, so why not use the first lines of a song that include these grammar points, e.g. *Viva La Vida* by *Coldplay*. The text may sound familiar to some students if they know the record, but that should only heighten their engagement in the activity.

*I used to rule the world*
*Seas would rise when I gave the word*
*Now in the morning, I sleep alone*
*Sweep the streets I used to own*

To confirm the correct text, the teacher can play the relevant part of the song.

5. Pronunciation/ Phonemic Script Practice
Remove key words from the lyrics & write them in phonemic script. Students decipher the words and insert them back in to the lyrics. They then listen to check. This can be done at individual word level, multiple words, and even to raise awareness of features of connected speech such as linking, intrusion, elision and assimilation.
**Ex’s & Oh’s – Elle King**

Questions 1 and 6: guess the missing word
Questions 2, 3, 5, 7-13: select the correct option
Question 4: write the missing words from the phonemic script

First, do the exercise & then listen to check

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Well, I had me a boy, turned him 1) __________ a man
I showed him all the things that he 2) not/ didn’t/ no understand
Whoa, and then I let him 3) to go / go / going
Now, there’s one in California
4) /huːz bɪn ˈkɜːʃiŋ maɪ neɪm/

Cause I found me a better lover in the UK
Hey, hey, until I 5) did/made/ ran my getaway
One, two, three, they gonna run back to me
Cause I’m the best baby that they never gotta keep
One, two, three, they gonna run back to me
They always wanna come, but they never wanna leave

Ex’s and the oh, oh, oh’s they 6) h _ _ _ _ me 🐦
Like ghosts they want me 7) make / to make / making / ’em all
They won’t let 8) to go / go / going
Ex’s and oh’s

I had a summer lover down in New Orleans
Kept him warm in the winter, left him 9) freeze/ freezing/ frozen in the spring
My, my, how the seasons go 10) by / out / in
I get high, and I love to get low
So the hearts keep 11) break / breaking / to break, and the heads just roll
You know that’s how the story goes

**Chorus**
One, two, three, they gonna run back to me
12) *climbing/ climb/ to climb* over mountains

And 13) *sail/ sailing/ to sail* over seas.

One, two, three, they gonna run back to me
They always wanna come, but they never wanna leave

**Review**

a) ‘let’ is followed by *to+infinitive, bare infinitive, verb+ing*

My example
___________________________________________

b) To escape after a crime or from a boring social event is to _________ a getaway.

My example
___________________________________________

c) Time goes _______. As time passes

My example
___________________________________________

d) d) ‘Keep’ is followed by *to+infinitive, bare infinitive, verb+ing*. This action happens frequently and might also annoy the speaker.

My example
___________________________________________

Up The Junction – Squeeze

Up the junction is an English phrase that means you are in a bad/hopeless situation. This song tells the story of a boy who meets a girl on Clapham Common, which is in southwest London. The couple are in love, have a baby but in the end the girl leaves him, mostly due to his drinking.

The song is composed in rhyming & semi rhyming couplets, e.g. in 1 and 2, the weak ending of happen is a semi rhyme of Clapham. The same with common & forgotten.

Task.
Transcribe the phonemic script of the words in the box & put in their correct place in the song.

| /ˈletə/ | /ˈsʌndeɪ/ | /ˈleɪtə/ |
| /ˈhændi/ | /ˈteli/ | /meɪ bi/ |
| /ˈsmeli/ | /tuk ʌp/ | /bɪte/ |
| /ˈsəm.ˈfləʊəz/ | /ɪn.ˈsərd hə/ | /ˈwɔːkə/ |
| /ˈfɔː ˈfɪfti/ | /enˈgeɪdʒmənt/ | /ˈsəʊldʒə/ |
| /ˈkɪtfɪn/ | /fe.ˈgɪvnəs/ | /ˈpæʃən/ |
Listen and complete the spaces. The missing words are sung in connected speech.

I sing myself to sleep
A song from the a) ______________________
Secrets I can't keep
b) __________________ the day
Swing from high to deep
Extremes of c) __________________ sour
Hope that d) __________________
I e) __________________ pray

Drawn by the undertow
My life is f) __________________ control
I believe this wave will bear my weight
So g) __________ flow

Oh h) __________ X3
i) ______ ______ ______ me

In sympathy

Now I'm relieved to hear
That you've been to some j) ______ places
It's hard to k) __________
When you feel l) __________
Now I've swung back m) __________
It's worse than it was before
If I hadn't seen such riches
I could live with being poor

Oh h) __________ X3
i) ______ ______ ______ me

Those who feel the j) __________ __________ sadness
i) ______ ______ ______ me
Those who find they're touched by madness
i) ______ ______ ______ me
Those who find themselves ridiculous
i) ______ ______ ______ me
in Love, in k) ________ hate, in tears
This text has been written in phonemic script and it also shows connected speech.

1. The words ‘you’re’ are pronounced in 3 different ways: These are
   ____________, ____________ and ____________

2. Why do you think this is?
People Are Strange

/ˈpiːpələstreɪndʒ/  People are strange
wenjə'e'streɪndʒə  when you’re a stranger
fæ sizluk'agli wenjə'rə'ləun  faces look ugly when you’re alone
'wiminsi:m'twikd  women seem wicked
wenjə'rən'
wəntɪd  when you’re unwanted
stri:tse'ven'iven wenjə'daun  streets are uneven when your down
wenjə'streɪndʒ  when you’re strange
'fæ sizkəməutəvðəreɪn  faces come out of the rain
wenjə'streɪndʒ  when you’re strange
nəuwnəri'membəzjənəim  no-one remembers your name
wenjə'streɪndʒ  when you’re strange
wenjə'streɪndʒ  when you’re strange
wenjə: streɪndʒ/  when you’re strange
# Beatles – When I'm Sixty-Four Lyrics

**Task**

* a) First write the words from the phonemic script. The utterances are how you would hear them.
* b) Then put the words in to the text on the next page.
* c) Then listen and check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Phonemic Script</strong></th>
<th><strong>Words</strong></th>
<th><strong>Comments &amp; observations</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ˈgræntʃildrən/</td>
<td>Elision (Omission) of /d/ in grandchildren</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kudæsk ʃə mə:/</td>
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<td>/biːɜulə/</td>
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<td>/miːəlain/</td>
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<td>/aɪəlvwaɪt/</td>
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<td>/biː hændi/</td>
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<td>/fɪlɪnə/</td>
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<td>/joːsɪnˈsiəli/</td>
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<td>/gedəuldə/</td>
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<td>/ˈbotələvwaɪn/</td>
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<td>/ˈkɔːtəθriː/</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>/fərəraɪd/</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When I ________________ losing my hair,
Many years from now.
Will you still be sending me a Valentine
Birthday greetings ________________

If I'd been out till ________________
Would you lock the door,
Will you still need me, will you still feed me,
When I'm sixty-four

You'll ____________________ too,
And if you say the word,
I could stay with you.

I could ____________________, mending a fuse
When your lights have gone.
You can knit a sweater by the fireside
Sunday morning go ____________________,
Doing the garden, digging the weeds,
Who ________________________________?

Will you still need me, will you still feed me,
When I'm sixty-four

Every summer we can rent a cottage,
In the ________________, if it's not too dear
We shall scrimp and save
____________________ on your knee
Vera, Chuck and Dave

Send me a postcard, drop ____________________
Stating point of view
Indicate precisely what you mean to say
______________________________, wasting away
Give me your answer, ____________________ form
Mine for evermore
Will you still need me, will you still feed me.
When I’m sixty-four

6. Narrate The Video

This is great as a warmer activity to encourage fluency, and also to practise the present and past continuous. This is a ‘backs to the board’ activity where half of the students sit with their back to the screen & the other half sit opposite them facing the screen and have to describe what they see in the video. The teacher then stops the video in the middle and students who have been listening must recount what they have heard. The students then swap places and roles for the second part of the video.

Higher levels may not need to be pre-taught vocabulary, but this activity can be easily differentiated for lower levels by pre-teaching key words, or by using a bingo style sheet where they tick off the verbs that they hear.

Finally, students can see the whole video to check and also to ask about vocabulary.

For the video for So What by Pink, the following vocabulary could be pre-taught, or used to tick off the verbs heard.

*Which words did you hear? Tick (✔) the words that your partner used.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>✔️</th>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>✔️</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sing</td>
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<td>Tree</td>
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<td>Sit</td>
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<td>Drive</td>
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<td>Jump</td>
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<td>Drink</td>
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<td>bus</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7. **Order The Lyrics**
Give students strips of paper with lyrics from a song. Students read the lyrics & put the paper away/in their pocket. They then aim to order themselves according to the lyrics. The students listen to check & to make any changes as they listen. This requires good student interaction & listening skills. Songs with a story work best for this activity.

8. **Augmented Reality**
A fantastic way of bringing a page to life. Students create work on paper and add a trigger image that activates a video, which has been created by the students. So a two dimensional poster includes a video. The application *Aurasma* is a popular tool for this.

**Organising Thoughts**
Planning and essay or talk can often be a cause of frustration for learners. Here are some ideas for helping them focus on the key points.

9. **Message maps/ The 15 second pitch**
Students pitch an idea within 15 seconds using 3 key supporting points. This focuses on identifying the important aspects, using powerful adjectives, and clear and persuasive pronunciation. Here is an example for Lush soap.

10. **Paperslides**
Students create a plan or storyboard on 6 pieces of paper. A key piece of information is written on each piece of paper. The papers are stacked and the students film themselves reading the information.

   This is good for all levels. Higher levels can summarise films, events in history or even course book listenings and videos.

   https://paperslide.wikispaces.com/Guidelines