

Ten Green Bottles

The melody for this song can be found on this site. A video showing the learning outcomes possible can also be found on this site.

Learning Ten Green Bottles

The lyrics are: Ten green bottles hanging on the wall
Ten green bottles hanging on the wall
And if one green bottle should accidentally fall
There'd be nine green bottles hanging on the wall
Nine green bottles hanging on the wall
And if one green bottle should accidentally fall
There'd be Eight . . .
Repeat for seven, six, five, four, three ...
And if one green bottle should accidentally fall
There'd be two green bottles hanging on the wall
Two green bottles hanging on the wall
And if one green bottle should accidentally fall
There'd be one green bottle hanging on the wall
One green bottles hanging on the wall
And if one green bottle should accidentally fall
There'd be no green bottles hanging on the wall

Delivery by teacher

You can use this as short warm up task; part of a lesson to introduce the idea of counting down (some students say backwards) and “add” some numbers each day for a week. You might count in multiples e.g. 10, 8, 6, 4, 2, 0 or 20, 15, 10, 5, 0. You can do it simply with zero “models” or use objects such as the bottle masks in the video. The numbers on the bottles are to encourage the “audience to help the singers”. Also the singers can see who the number is next to them but NOT who they themselves are, which encourages communication.

I allow plenty of time for students to correct each other, such as “6” instead of “5”. I also monitor pronunciation, timing (e.g. stress timing) and many other things for future teaching. The teacher knows his or her students best, but the things to look for are spontaneous speaking attempts and participation. The students in the sample video were taught in standard timetabled lessons and for the time available for practice made much more progress than hoped for. Very high expectations were achieved in a non-stressful way. Teacher was both the maths and English teacher. That helped with subject – verb – plurals (one bottle is/two bottles are)

The students were performing without music (they did know the song) being age 4 to 5 years were amenable to tasks which were creative and repetitive i.e. chanting. Counting down and in sequence are mentioned in the curricula of several countries including the UK.

Non-native English speaking teachers wishing to use this material can get further help from johnhkg.com by using the Contact form.