

ONE MAP : SIX GAMES

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The map below appeared over a year ago in a British publication called the **Modern English Teacher**. It was the basis of a very interesting but slightly complicated pair game called **San Federico**. The instructions to the game, though explicitly spelt out, called for considerable interpretative (and linguistic) skill on the part of the players – probably more than most ESL students in Malaysia possess. Yet, the map was attractive and obviously had great potential – especially as the basis for other, simpler Communication Games.

Most readers of **The English Teacher** will be familiar with the term Communication Games, but to recapitulate, these are simply language games played in pairs or groups that 'force' the participants to communicate, usually in order to find out information or to solve a problem or complete a task. Unlike pure language games which enable students to practise fairly well-defined language items or patterns, communication games put students in situations where they have to use as much of the language as they know, much of which they have learnt passively but never used actively.

Below then, are descriptions of some simple Communication Games based on the map. Before attempting to play them it will be necessary to check students' familiarity with keys, grids and points.

Game 1

Preparation: Trace the outline of the map, the grid lines and the numbers on two stencils. On one stencil, draw in **some** of the features of the map (e.g. some of the whirlpools, one lake, one lot of cannibals, two lots of sharks, etc.) and on the other stencil draw in different features from the first stencil. Cyclostyle sufficient copies so that half the class has one version and the other half the other version.

Procedure: Pair work. Each member of the pair has a different map which he does not show to his neighbour. The two players have to discuss the contents of each other's maps and draw in the missing features, at the same time not showing each other the maps.

The key at the bottom will help. When both players feel they have filled in all the features, and thus have identical maps, they can show each other their maps and compare them. They should discuss any differences.

Game 2

Preparation: Prepare sufficient copies of the above map for all members of the class (trace onto a stencil and duplicate). Cut half the maps up following the grid lines so that each map consists of thirty squares. Each set will need to be kept in an old/used envelope marked Player B.

Procedure: Pair work. Player A has the complete map which he does not show to his partner. Player B has the cut up map which he can lay out on the desk. Both players discuss the composition of the map. The aim is for Player B to complete a jigsaw map identical to Player A's map.

Game 3

Preparation: Prepare a sufficient number of complete maps (see Game 2) for all the class. In addition, prepare outline maps (see Game 1) for half the class. Cut out the features and names on half the complete maps and store each set in an envelope.

Procedure: Player A has the complete map; Player B has the outline map plus the envelope of cut-out features and names. Player A does **not** show B his map, but through discussion B has to place the features and names on his blank outline map. Later the players can compare how closely the two maps match.

Game 4

Preparation: Prepare outline maps for all the class. Also, the same number of complete maps with the features and names cut out (see Game 3).

Procedure: Pair work. Both players have an outline map plus an envelope of features and names. Erect a barrier between the players, e.g. a schoolbag. First, Player A arranges his features and names on his map in whichever position he likes. Then, through discussion and without looking at A's map, B has to build up an identical map. Players then compare their maps before B takes a turn at starting the game.

Game 5

Preparation: Make enough complete maps for a quarter of the class. Mount these on cardboard and cut up into 4-6 jigsaw pieces. Store the pieces for each map in a separate envelope.

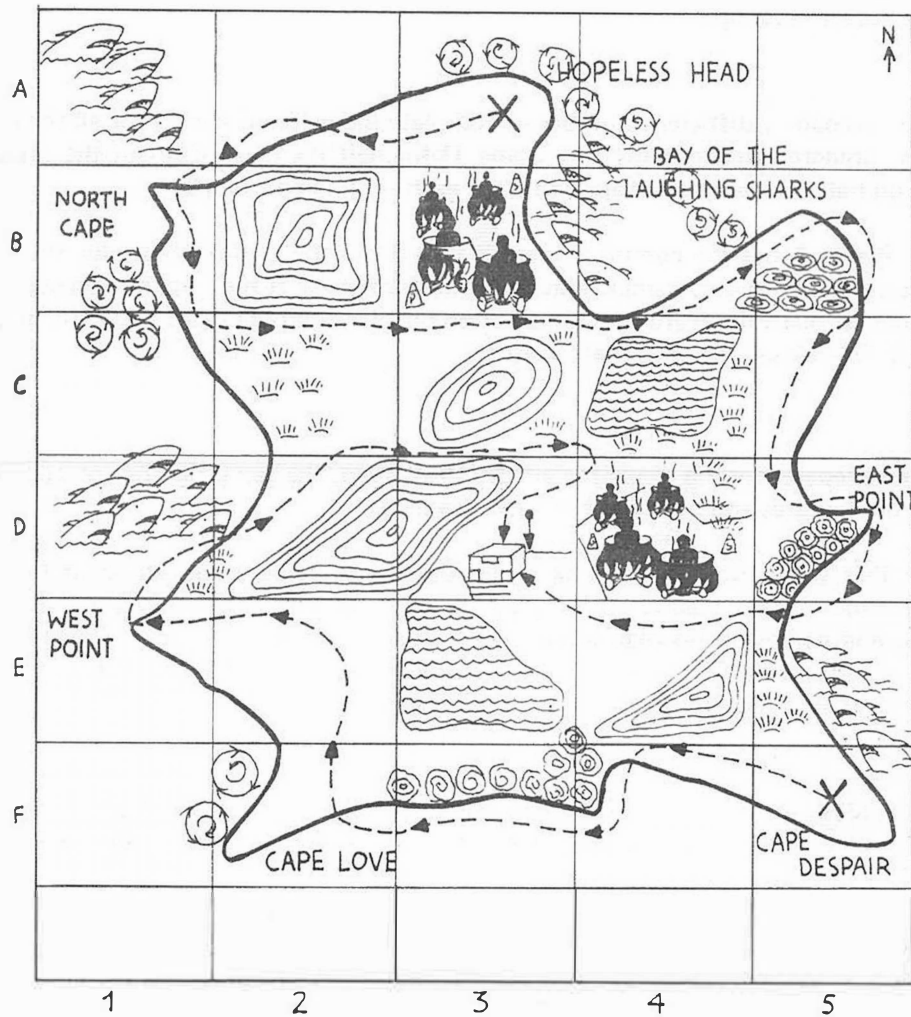
Procedure: Group work, 4-6 players. Each player takes a jigsaw piece from the envelope but does **not** show it to the other players. Through discussion, the players have to build up a mental picture of the correct position for each piece before they finally lay it down to see if the pieces really do fit together.

Game 6

Preparation: Prepare one complete map for each group of 3-4 players. Mount each map on cardboard. Mark on each map a dashed line to indicate a route. Have the route crossing hills, going over swamps, etc. (unlike in the original map where the route skirts obstacles). On 15–20 small pieces of cardboard paste small pictures (cut from magazines, newspapers, old school texts, etc.) of various objects, e.g. torchlight, rope, knife, matches, goggles, lantern, ladder. Buy or make sufficient counters and dice for each group.

Procedure: Group work. Each group member has to take turns to throw the die and move along the route – one dash per number. If a player lands on an obstacle he has to pick up an object card from the central pile and justify to the group members how he would use the object to overcome the obstacle. If his reason is accepted by the group he keeps the card; if not, he returns it to the bottom of the pile. The 'winner' is the person who reaches the end of the route first.

Although the above contains suggestions for preparing each game for whole class use, it is not necessary to prepare so many sets. Two or three of each type is adequate so that pairs or groups can move from game to game. Remember too, that the given map is merely a sample. Other pictorial matter can serve equally well as a basis for such Communication Games.



- KEY:**
- Whirlpools
 - Malarial Swamps
 - Hills inhabited by head shrinkers
 - Bottomless Lake
 - Cannibals
 - Man-eating sharks
 - Quicksands