

Ten Second Objects

This is one of my favourite games. I use it in just about every workshop I run. It doesn't require any materials, just imagination! The class is divided into groups (usually four to six students per group is about right).

*This game is called **Ten Second Objects**. In this game your group is going to make the shape of an object, using everybody in the group, joining together in some way. I'm going to call out the name of an object and then you've got ten seconds to make the object out of yourselves.*

As everyone looks at each other, the light dawns on them - they're going to have to work fast. They smile or laugh - nervously. But I don't give them time to think about it.

The first object is a... car. Off you go, ten, nine, eight, seven, six...

By now the groups are working quickly, a few words are spoken as people move into place.

Remember, everyone has to join in, even if you are a windscreen wiper! Find a place in your group. Five, four, three, two, one... and freeze! Well done, everybody. Brilliant. Each group has made the shape of a car and they are all different. Let's have a look at them.

You can ask the students to sit down and watch as you give each group a chance to show what they've made. I assure them that there is no right or wrong answer in this game. It's all about working together. Now that the groups have realised how easy it is, I move straight on to the next object. Here are some examples of ones that never fail:

A washing machine, helicopter, plate of food for breakfast (don't forget to ask what each person is afterwards), clock, firework (or volcano), giraffe (or any other animal), pirate ship, jigsaw puzzle, any musical instrument.

Quite often children will have moving parts in their object - and sounds. I will still ask them to freeze at the end of the ten seconds so that order is restored. Then when they show their object I ask them to bring it to life for a few seconds (or if it is a machine, I mime pressing the 'on' button).

Objects can be big (**the Statue of Liberty**) or small (**a pencil-sharpener**). When groups have made a few you can ask them to make up one of their own for the others to guess. Give them a whole thirty seconds for this! And towards the end start counting down the last ten seconds.

The whole beauty of *Ten Second Objects* is that it only takes... 10 seconds. This means that people don't have time to argue, they just have to get on. The time-limit gives them a challenge and when they see the other groups working on their ideas it usually acts as a kind of peer-pressure (in a positive way) to speed them up.

You may want to start your session by demonstrating how the game works with one group of volunteers while everybody else watches. Usually this is very funny and makes other people want to have a go.

You can use this game over and over and it works for all ages. It can be linked to a story, for example: **a cow, a magic bean, a beanstalk, a harp, a hen, a golden egg, a giant, a castle, a cloud, an axe**. Are you following me?

It could be linked to a subject like history: **a Viking longboat, a Victorian invention, the Golden Hind, Tutankhamun's tomb, a WW2 gas mask, Boudicca in her chariot, Norman castle.**

Buildings and places - **the Taj Mahal, London Eye, rainforest, restaurant, leaning tower of Pisa, coral reef.**

Or science: **a snowflake, molecule, electrical circuit, human bar graph, wind farm, light bulb, steam engine, chemical reaction, bridge, object related to air resistance...**

A celebration or festival: **a ghost, witch, broomstick, spider, vampire, skeleton, pumpkin, cauldron, haunted house, bat.**

Here's a list of random objects in alphabetical order:

America	Fridge
Bathroom object	Garden sprinkler
Bermuda Triangle	Germ
Bike	Hair brush
Birthday cake	Hair dryer
Blender with different ingredients	Hamster in a cage
Bouncy castle	Helicopter
Bridge	Hot air balloon
Butterfly	Hot dog
Cactus	Household object
Car	Jack in the box
Car wash	Jigsaw puzzle
Clock (with sound and action)	Juicer
Coffee machine	Jukebox
Comb	Kaleidoscope
Cuckoo clock	Kitchen
Chinese fire-breathing dragon	Lawn mower
Cup and saucer	London Eye
Digestive system	London Tower Bridge
Dishwasher	Merry-go-round (carousel)
Drone	Microwave oven
Drum kit	Minibeasts under a log
$E=mc^2$	Mixer
Egg beater	Mosque
Egg on toast	Motor bike
Eiffel Tower	Motorway
Environmental pollution	Musical instrument
Escalator	Paddle steamer
Famous work of art - can give out postcards	Pencil case
Fire	Pencil sharpener
Fireworks display	Photocopier
Fire engine	Picasso painting
Fridge with food	Pinball machine
Giraffe	Pinball wizard
Flower	Pirate ship

Pizza
Plate of food for breakfast
Playground equipment (slide, merry-go-round, swings)
Printer
Rainbow
Rainforest
Record player
Remote control
Rooms of a house
Safari Park
Scissors
Sculptures in a museum
See-saw
Sewing Machine
Shoe
Skull
Snowflake
Snow globe
Snowman
Space Station
Stapler
Statue of Liberty
Sydney Opera House
Tattoo
Teacher's desk drawer
Toaster
Transport (worldwide, historical)
Treasure chest
Typewriter
Tyrannosaurus Rex
Umbrella
Veggie burger
Vending Machine
Viking longboat
Volcano
Washing line
Washing machine
WW1 tank
X-ray machine