

## Lesson Plan on Slang: Speaking Legit English

By Eugene S. Lee

“I’m down to chill. Hit me up when you guys hang out.” How many of your students could understand that phrase? Utilizing slang is an essential skill needed to function in today’s society. Not only does slang occur in everyday social interactions, it is also used in classrooms by peers and professors. In spite of this, many ESL students are not taught slang in preparation for university life. As a result, these students struggle to understand lectures and participate in discussions that include colloquial language. By teaching slang in the classroom, we can prepare our students for real world interactions.

**Materials:** Whiteboard, markers, laptop, projector, paper bag, scissors, watch, [PowerPoint slides](#) (.pptx), worksheet 1 (below) and worksheet 2 (below)

**Audience:** University or IEP students, intermediate to advanced learners

**Objective:** Students will be able to understand and use slang words by utilizing a mnemonic device and playing a group game.

**Outcome:** Students will memorize slang words and create dialogues.

**Duration:** 65 minutes (approximately)

### Lesson Preparation

Choose which slang words to teach and write them on the board. The PowerPoint includes the following words:

1. Shady
2. Ballin’
3. Hit up
4. Hang out
5. Ditch
6. Down
7. Bomb
8. Tight
9. Lamé
10. Bounce

If you want to teach different words, you can find a great list of common U.S. slang words at UW-Plattville’s [slang page](#).

Print out Worksheet 1 (Slang Worksheet), one for every two students.

Print out Worksheet 2 (Scenario Sheet), cut the slips of paper for the final activity, and place them in the paper bag.

## Warm-up (10 minutes)

### Attention Grabber

Start the class by playing the video: “[Dr. House on American and British Slang](#)” (4:15). Explain that it is a video of an American talk show host and her British guest. Both are presenting slang words from their respective countries while the other tries to guess their meanings. The video is subtitled in English, so students can read along.

- Pause the video at each slang word and encourage students to guess the meaning.
  - Because there is no context given with the words, it will be extremely difficult to guess. Therefore, keep this activity light-hearted and have students throw out whatever silly guesses they come up with.
- Once the video is finished, introduce the topic of slang and open the PowerPoint slides.

## Presentation (15 minutes)

Present the slides from the downloadable PowerPoint. With each slang word, emphasize the visual mnemonic device that links the literal meaning with the new figurative meaning.

- For example, in order to teach the word *shady*, the PowerPoint slide contains a picture of a suspicious-looking man under the shade of a tree.
- This visual and literal connection will help students remember the definitions of the slang words.
- Look under the comments section in each PowerPoint slide to see how to connect the image with the slang word. It is important to give sample sentences, so that students can see how to use the slang words in context.
- Through the sample sentences, show any collocational or grammatical information that students need to know in order to use the slang properly.
- For example, continuing with the example of *shady*, include the fact that it is an adjective used to describe untrustworthy people or interactions.
- Then give a few sample sentences: “The *shady* jeweler was secretly stealing diamonds every day. The deal between the jeweler and the gangsters seemed really *shady*.”

## Practice (15 minutes)

### Speaking Practice

- After going through all of the slang words on the PowerPoint, review by showing the same pictures again.
- Have students try to remember the slang word and meaning through the visual information.
- Make sure they are practicing saying the words out loud with the correct pronunciation.

### Pair Work

- Students are given the Slang Worksheet and work in pairs.
- The worksheet contains eight formal sentences with specific sections underlined. Students rewrite the sentences, changing the underlined portions to synonymous slang words from the lesson.

- Once they are finished, students volunteer their answers. Correct any incorrect usage or pronunciation of the target words.

## Production (20 minutes)

### Impromptu Dialogue Game

- Separate students into groups of relatively equal skill levels and bring out the paper bag filled with paper slips from the Scenario Worksheet.
- Pick a slip of paper from the bag and read the scenario out loud. Give the entire class 15 seconds to create a short dialogue between two or more students using slang to fit the scenario. (Consider extending this time for lower-level students.) For example, a scenario might be going to the movies.
  - Student A: *Wow, that movie was really lame!*
  - Student B: *Yea, I'm glad we bounced early.*
- Students can look at the slang worksheet from the pair work as a reference during the 15 seconds.
- Each group, one at a time, performs its dialogue in front of the class.
- Give a point to every group that uses the slang correctly. Give a bonus point to the most creative group of that round.
- Then, pick out another scenario from the bag and start the process again.
- Different students must perform each round in order to give everyone in the group a chance to speak.
- Groups cannot use the same slang word twice in a row. Encourage groups to try out different slang words.

## Closing (5 minutes)

### Warm-down

Once the game is finished, add up the total scores for each group and declare a winner. Close the lesson by explaining that these words have special registers, meaning they are appropriate for certain contexts but not for others.

### Homework

As a homework assignment, have students interview native speakers about when and where they would use the slang words learned in the lesson. Students must take notes on the results of their interview and report back next class.

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## Slang Worksheet

**Directions:** With your partner, match the underlined portion to a slang word and rewrite the sentence in the spaces below, conjugating where necessary.

<b>shady</b>	<b>ballin'</b>	<b>hit up</b>	<b>ditch</b>	<b>down</b>
<b>bomb</b>	<b>tight</b>	<b>lame</b>	<b>bounce</b>	<b>hang out</b>

1. This party is really boring. Who wants to leave?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Did you see how much money he had? He is so rich!  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The new James Bond movie looks so cool! I can't wait to see it!  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. I'm free on Tuesday to meet. Call me when you end class.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Who is willing to go bungee jumping with me?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. I'm not going to class today. I feel like sleeping in.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. That guy in the alley looks really suspicious. Let's cross the street.  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. I can't believe you forgot the tickets! This is an unfortunate situation.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Scenario Worksheet

At the movies	Break up with boy/girlfriend	Find money on the street	Fail a class	Study all night for a test
Fight with a stranger	Eat dinner with a friend	Drive to work	Go to a rock concert	Cook a meal
Go on a first date	At a party	Shopping	Rob a bank	Pick a restaurant
Noisy neighbors	Annoying roommate	Zombie attack	Fly in a plane	Being mugged
Swim with sharks	Getting sick	Play sports with friends	Stuck on deserted island	Have super powers
Computer erases essay	Find hair in your food	Get chased by crazy dog	Run a marathon	Friend eats your food
Win a million dollars	Get into car accident	Lose a pet	At a wedding	Friend gossips about you