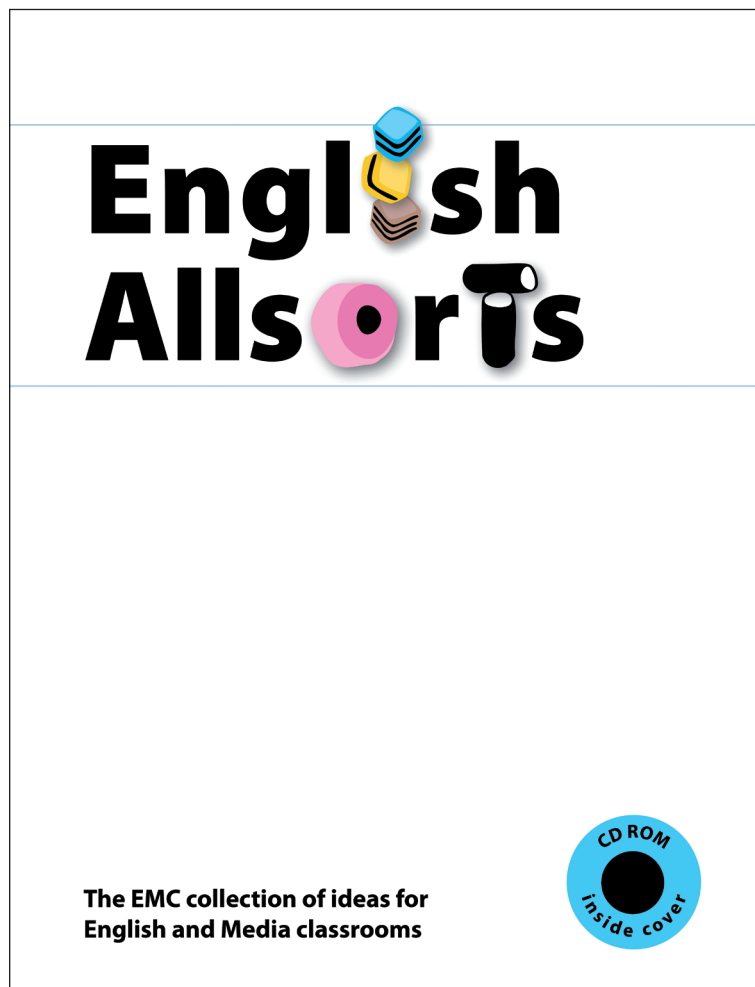


English Allsorts



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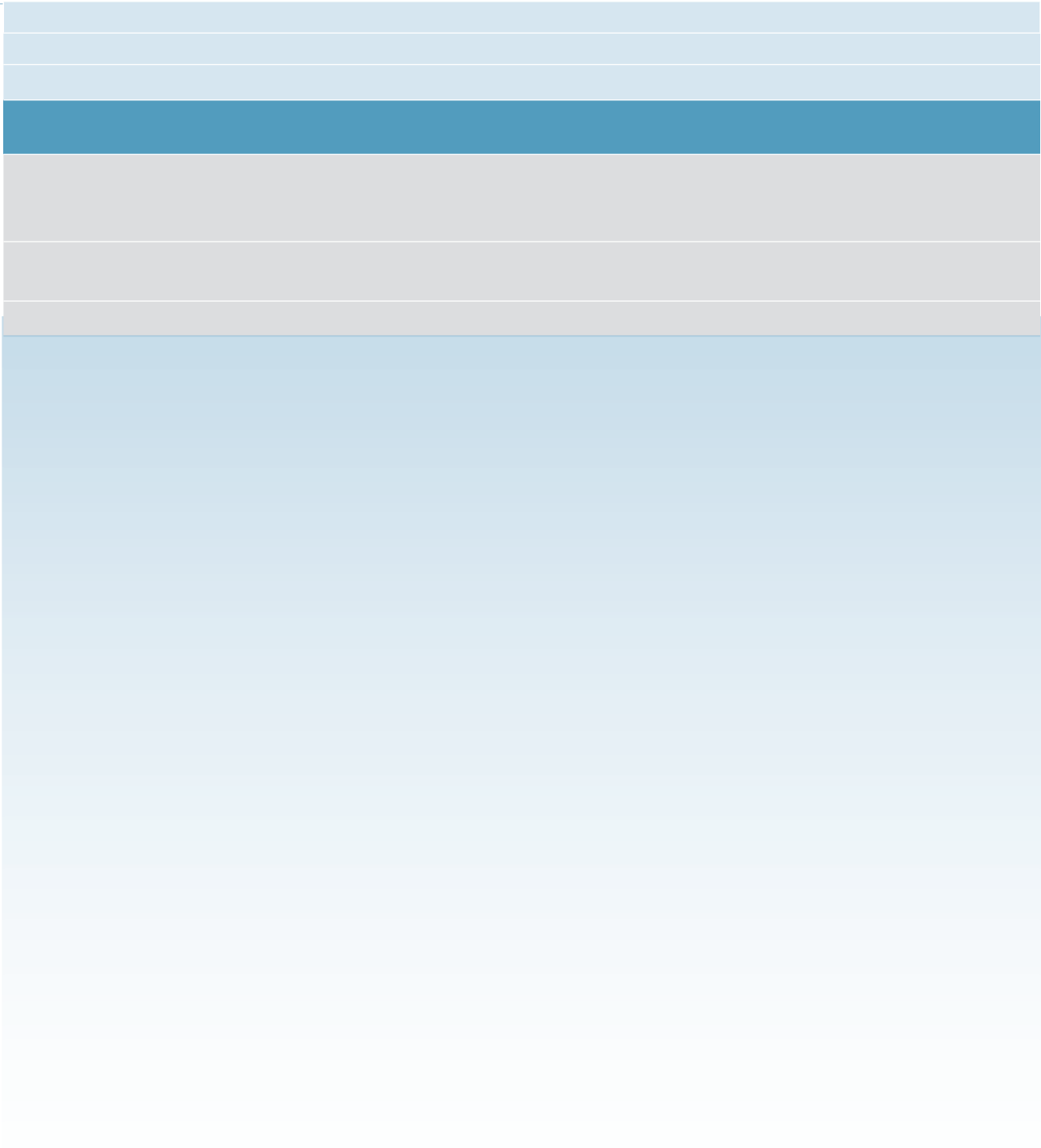
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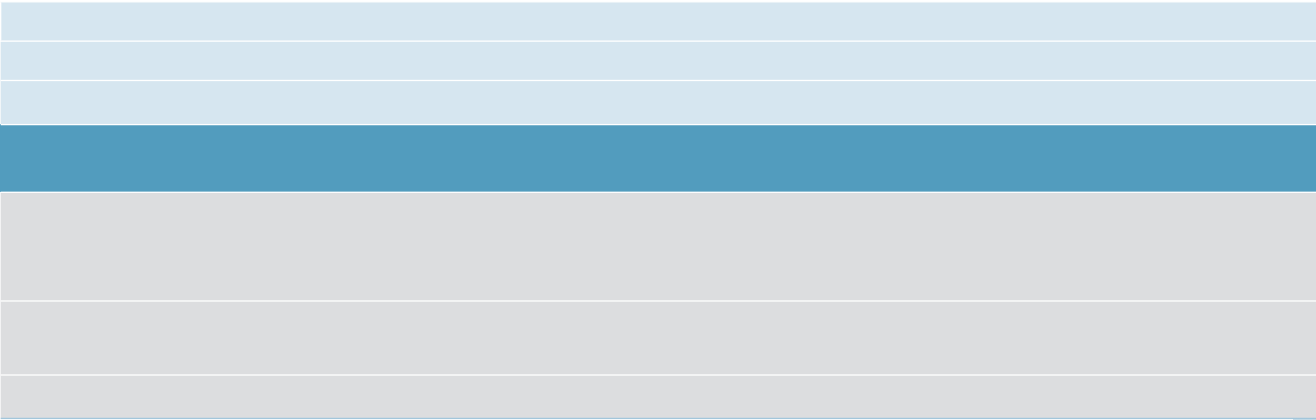
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Introduction

What is Allsorts?

English Allsorts is a compendium of strategies developed by advisory teachers at the English and Media Centre over the last 30 years. We have deliberately focused on strategies which are less generally known. Activities like hot-seating, balloon debates and freeze-frames have become staples of the English classroom, so we haven't included these. Of course, some of the strategies we have selected will be familiar to you, perhaps from EMC publications or courses; others we hope will be new to you.

Organisation

The book is organised into 14 main sections based loosely on the main areas of the English and Media curriculum, from essay and non-fiction writing to strategies for encouraging private reading and developing media literacy, plus a glossary of key media terms.

Inevitably many of the strategies could have been placed in several of the sections: 'Continuum Opinions', for example, is a strategy which not only develops Speaking and Listening but also develops students' ability to formulate and articulate arguments. 'And why not try...' cross references further strategies you may find useful.

The Alternative Index

Sometimes you may be looking for a strategy under a different kind of heading, for instance one that requires few resources or one that has links to the Citizenship curriculum or which develops argument skills. The Alternative Index on page 7 will help you locate appropriate strategies under a range of different possible headings.

The Strategies

Each strategy is presented in the same way with a table listing key information about the approach, an outline of the activity, variations and classroom tips. The key information in the

table includes: a brief overview of the strategy, what it is particularly good for, the age range it is most suitable for, timing and resources needed.

The outline of the activity is deliberately spare: these are strategies to be applied to the text or topic you are preparing to teach, rather than fully worked up resources to be taken into the classroom. 'Classroom tips' alerts you to particular issues you may need to be aware of before using it in the classroom, along with practical suggestions for ensuring the activity goes smoothly. 'Variations' includes both advice on differentiation and adapting the strategy for other age groups and suggests ways in which you could ring the changes. Many of the Media strategies offer variations specifically for use with students preparing to sit Media Studies examinations.

Speaking and Listening

And why not try...

You may also find the following activities useful:

Reading Any Text:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| 20. Just a Minute Soundbites | 39 |
| 25. Newsnight Review – a simulation | 44 |

Poetry:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----|
| 35. Role-Play Prediction | 54 |
| 42. Pair-Split-Pair | 63 |

Drama:

- | | |
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| 49. Cast Meeting | 75 |
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Essay and Non-Fiction Writing:

- | | |
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| 61. Tourists and Tour Guide | 91 |
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Print Media Texts:

- | | |
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Media Simulations:

- | | |
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| 93. You the Jury | 137 |
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1. Debate Around the Room

AGE	11-18
TIME	20-40 minutes
GROUPING	Individual and whole class
IN BRIEF	A debating game for issues, texts or anything else where different viewpoints can be aired and argued about.
GOOD FOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing confidence in speaking and listening. • Developing argument skills. • Debating a range of different interpretations on a text and finding evidence.
RESOURCES	Three large cards saying 'Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Undecided'; a controversial statement about the text or topic being studied.

Activity

- Put the three notices 'Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Undecided' up in different corners of the classroom.
- Write a controversial statement up on the whiteboard, flipchart or interactive whiteboard.
- In silence, each student thinks about their view on the statement, perhaps jotting down a few reasons for their decision.
- Without conferring, they should now go and stand in the corner of the room that corresponds to their view.
- Students take it in turns to argue each other out of their corner. Students should be told that if they hear something very persuasive they should move their position. Students who don't contribute much during verbal debate can also express their views by moving position.

Variations

- You might want to concentrate on just one statement, thoroughly working through different arguments in the debate.
- At advanced level you could use 'Debate Around the Room' as a revision activity on

a text and work through five or six different contentious statements of the kind that might appear as questions in the exam.

- Another variation is to ask students to come up with statements for debate themselves. This is a particularly good approach where students are revising a text before an examination.
- See 'Continuum Opinions' on page 18 for another variation on this activity.

Classroom tips

- To help the activity along, for example with younger students or with a class that is doing it for the first time, or perhaps where the groups are very unbalanced, you could go and stand in a corner and contribute some arguments. It can also be enjoyable and instructive for students to see the teacher themselves being persuaded to move by a particularly good argument from someone else.

2. Continuum Opinions

AGE	11-18
TIME	15-20 minutes
GROUPING	Whole class
IN BRIEF	Students respond to statements, for example about an issue, or a character, by placing themselves along a continuum line.
GOOD FOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighting alternative viewpoints. • Developing oral argument skills, especially argument-counter argument. • Engaging students in thinking about themes and issues before reading and debating questions after reading.
RESOURCES	Controversial or provocative statements about a topic or text.

Activity

- Students are asked to envisage an imaginary line between two points in the room, for example, opposite walls labelled 'agree' and 'disagree'. Younger students particularly find it helpful if you create an actual line with a row of chairs or a ribbon.
- In response to a series of statements, students stand somewhere on the line to indicate how far they agree or disagree with the statement.
- Ask people to justify their position or try to persuade others to move. Students can move at any time to show that they have changed their mind.

Variations

- For group work: draw the continuum on a sheet of paper and give students a card with the statement on to move along the line.
- This activity works well on the interactive whiteboard. Students can come up to the board and move the original statement along the continuum, explaining their decision.
- The two ends of the continuum do not have to be agree/disagree. For example students could debate where to put a poem on the continuum between any of the following:

poetry/prose; dialect/Standard English; formal/informal; traditional/modern; personal/public; personal/political; subjective/objective; fact/opinion; emotional/unemotional.

- To discuss appropriate tone for a piece of writing, focus on the title or an exam question with a specific purpose and audience. Place the title on a continuum between 'formal' and 'informal'. Next, look at some sample paragraphs (for example from a previous class's answers to the question). This time students arrange the paragraphs on the same continuum according to their level of formality. Ask them to justify their placing of the paragraphs by referring to vocabulary, punctuation, grammar etc. With some classes you may first need to establish the characteristics of formal and informal writing.
- See 'Debate Around the Room' on page 17 for another variation.

Classroom tips

- This activity works best when the statements are provocative or controversial. Encourage students to move about when they are changing their mind, otherwise it can become a bit static.

3. Inner Circle, Outer Circle

AGE	11-18
TIME	20-60 minutes
GROUPING	Whole class
IN BRIEF	A small group does a speaking and listening activity in the middle, surrounded by an outer circle of observers.
GOOD FOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting on the processes of speaking and listening, group work or drama. • Encouraging different levels and kinds of participation. • Allowing sharing of expertise across ability and friendship groups.
RESOURCES	A group of chairs, or space in the middle with an outer circle of chairs for observers.

Activity

- Set up the room in advance and choose a group to do the activity. It could be a group discussion, a role-play or a performance.
- Give the observers in the outer circle a particular focus to make notes for report back in class feedback. The focus could be a particular person, a specific aspect of the text or topic under discussion, or a particular feature of successful group work such as turn-taking.
- At the end of the activity, ask the outer circle for their comments.
- Leave time for each member of the inner circle to respond or comment.
- Try it again with a different group in the inner circle, or give a fresh task to a different group.

Variations

- You could allow the outer circle to interrupt what's happening in the inner circle to comment as the activity is happening. You might want to control the number of interruptions, warning students in advance that you are only going to take a few, so as to avoid losing the momentum of the activity itself.

- You could allow members of the outer circle to take the place of members of the inner circle. This works well in performances or readings, if someone wants to move the interpretation in a different direction.
- You could choose to give each inner circle a sustained chance to complete the task, or you could give everyone a go at being in the middle by making it a quickfire task.

Classroom tips

- If you're reflecting on processes and contributions, set up the ground rules in advance. The feedback from the outer circle should be helpful, not critical, with observers looking for the positive rather than the negative.
- Make sure that students realise that the outer circle roles are just as important as the inner circle roles.
- Build up students' skills with this – don't expect that they'll be expert the very first time they try it.