



Sponges! For zoom classes!

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Link to slides:
tinyurl.com/montgomersponge



Getting started

1. Please rename yourself to your full name
2. Please type your name in the chat (for attendance)
3. Please mute yourself when not speaking

If you have questions, feel free to interrupt me, or to type in the chat :)

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What is a sponge?

- useful-but-not-essential educational activities
- can be used to "soak up" extra time
- can be skipped without compromising student learning

What makes a good sponge?

- fun
- short (2-10 minutes)
- should not require too much explanation or setup
 - simple and/or familiar

Bonus: sponges related to current or previous class content are great!
(but realistically, not always possible)

Plan for today

- No-prep sponges
- Low-prep sponges
- Sponges for breakout rooms
- Best practices
- Questions

No-prep Sponges

(using no materials or digital literacy skills)

- Q&A relay (GREAT for practicing target grammar, vocabulary)
 - What are you wearing?
 - What time do you ___?
 - Do you like to ____?
- Simon Says, Charades
 - Works best if teacher is “it” first
 - Students who can’t/won’t turn on their camera can still participate as guessers/as Simon
- Show and tell (teacher should demo, then invite volunteers)
- 2 truths and a lie
- 20 questions

Game: 20 questions

I will think of a noun

(person, place, or thing)

Ask me “yes or no” questions ONLY

Try to guess the thing!



Low-prep sponges (screenshare one of these websites)

Easy:

- [Hangman](#) (I prefer to call it “spelling game” and to draw a flower or a snowman)
- [tongue twisters](#) (or any whole-class choral reading)
 - Can also practice in pairs in breakout rooms

Low-prep sponges

Medium:

- Reading practice - Unite for Literacy
 - Eg Simple present with “he/she/it likes”, free time, chores
 - I usually read once, then call on students (or ask for volunteers) to read pages by themselves
- vocab/grammar drills
 - <https://www.gamestolearnenglish.com/>
 - Quizlet
 - Students with sufficient digital literacy can also practice with these outside of class!

Low-prep sponges

Harder:

- Short listening practices, with questions
 - [Listenwise](#)
 - [esolcourses.com](#)
- [Kahoot](#) - requires students to have a second device, to know how to navigate to website by typing in the address, etc

Sponges for breakout rooms

Easy:

- Scattergories - groups make a list of words in a category, then compare their list with other groups' back in the main room
- Going to the moon - collaborate on a list of supplies to bring on a trip to the moon (or to a desert island, up a mountain, etc)

Medium:

- Find 3 things in common (see next slide)
- Giving directions - explain, in as much detail as possible, how to walk/take the bus from your home to your workplace

Harder:

- Partner dictation (teacher sends a list of vocabulary words (by email, WhatsApp, etc) to ONE partner, who dictates to the other student(s) in the breakout room)
- Explain, using as much detail as possible, how to walk/drive/take the bus from here to your home, to your favorite restaurant, or another location of your choosing.

Game: find 3 things in common

Find 3 things that are the same for you and your group members

Must be interesting things!

“We all live in Maryland, we are all teachers” = boring

When you have 3 interesting things, you can leave your breakout room and come back!

Best practices

- When you write a lesson plan, try to include a related sponge
 - (you might choose 1-2 per week/unit)
- Keep a list of no-prep sponges that you like handy, for emergencies
- Most sponges take about twice as long the first time you do them with students, plan accordingly
- Sponges should be fun!

Questions?



Thanks for listening!



Questions? Email me! meaghan.harding@montgomerycollege.edu

Link to slides: <https://tinyurl.com/montgomerysponge>

sponge: 2 truths and a lie

Truth = real, true

Lie = not real, false

My sentences

I have 3 cats

My hometown is Toronto

I am a vegetarian

Track 3: Sharing Sessions

Presentation	Meeting ID
Learning Differences in Remote Instruction	935 7145 2094
Successes and Challenges of Incorporating the Digital Literacy Framework (Lower Levels: Literacy to Beg. 2 and ABE/ASE 1 & 2)	930 3208 5049
Successes and Challenges of Incorporating the Digital Literacy Framework (Upper Levels: Int. 1 and above)	955 5325 6700
How to Support Students with Low Digital Literacy in a Remote Learning Environment	952 7261 6246
Promoting Digital Literacy and Workplace Readiness in the Remote Classroom	936 0765 8405