

DEVELOPING ENGLISH COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH ART

FOUR SEASONS

Author: Norberto Ojeda Zamora

Escuela Oficial de Idiomas Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Spain.

Objectives:

- To identify the four different seasons and state facts about each season.
- To associate pictures with the four different seasons.
- To brainstorm the different characteristics and related vocabulary of each season.
- To express what different pieces of music may evoke
- To relate music and images, especially paintings about the four seasons.
- To express their opinion through music and visuals.
- To express / contrast what people do in different parts of Europe in the different seasons.
- To write about past events.

Level: B1- B2 + (It can be adapted to lower levels)

Suggested material:

- Extracts from Vivaldi's Four Seasons. Take a 30 second- extract from Vivaldi's Four Seasons. One extract for each season.
- Copies of different suggested paintings related to the four seasons. See material provided.
- Set of photocopies.
- Copies from the images can be downloaded from

<http://www.museothyssen.org/en/thyssen/home>

Procedure:

- 1) Tell your students you are going to play 4 different pieces of music. Do not tell them at this moment what pieces they are going to listen to.
 - 2) Hand out a copy of the "Listening to music" activity and encourage students to write down as much information as they can in the spaces provided. Tell them to write what those pieces of music make them think of or feel.
 - 3) Once the four pieces have been played, elicit the composer and the pieces: Vivaldi's Four Seasons.
 - 4) Give them time to contrast with other partners, preferably in small groups of 3-4, their ideas and feelings about the pieces heard.
 - 5) Feedback whole group, noticing the similarities and differences between groups and individual students.
 - 6) Do not reveal what season corresponds to each piece of music.
 - 7) Now give to each group a set of copies from the suggested paintings and encourage them to match the paintings with the pieces of music and the notes they have written. Tell them to give clear reasons for their matching. Feedback whole group.
- Tell them that all those paintings can be seen at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid
- 8) Reveal now Vivaldi's pieces and contrast their answers.
 - 9) Hand out a copy of "Vocabulary builder" and encourage them to match each card with the corresponding painting, then tell them to make a brief description of the paintings using the vocabulary provided.
 - 10) Whole class: Feedback. Project the paintings on a screen and encourage students to describe them using the new words without using the cards.
 - 11) Extended activity: Game Four Seasons poster.
 - 12) Four Seasons Crossword.

Further activities:

- Ask learners what their favourite season is and why.
- Make a poster per group with activities you can do in every season.
- Use paintings to talk about "Celebrations and Feasts".
- Students write a paragraph of what they did during their last summer.
- Encourage learners to draw a picture of one of the activities they usually do in one of the seasons. The other students guess and interpret.

Intercultural awareness:

Make students aware of the things people do in every season. Contrast countries.
E.g. Do people do the same in winter time in Spain and in Sweden?

- Weather in Europe.

Bibliography:





Vivaldi's Four Seasons

Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum (Madrid) <http://www.museothyssen.org/en/thyssen/home>

All images © Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

The Four Seasons: Suggested paintings

Source: Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid. Spain.

	<p>Vincent van Gogh, Watermill at Gennepe, 1884.</p> <p>https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/gogh-vincent-van/watermill-gennepe</p> <p>Winter</p>
	<p>Pierre-Antoine Quillard, The Four Seasons: Summer, 1725 - 1729</p> <p>https://www.museothyssen.org/coleccion/artistas/quillard-pierre-antoine/cuatro-estaciones-verano</p> <p>Summer</p>
	<p>Zoran Music, Paysage Vide, 1960</p> <p>https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/music-zoran/paysage-vide</p> <p>All seasons?</p> <p>Note: The artist refers to this painting as a rocky deserted landscape in Switzerland, which always remains the same through the year</p>
	<p>Ambrosius Bosschaert, Chinese Vase with Flowers, Shells and Insects, 1628.</p> <p>https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/ast-balthasar-van-der/chinese-vase-flowers-shells-and-insects</p> <p>Spring</p>



Wassily Kandinsky, Picture with Three Spots, No. 196, 1914

<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/kandinsky-wassily/picture-three-spots-no-196>

Spring (Possibly)



Alfred Sisley, Evening in Moret, End of October, 1888

<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/sisley-alfred/evening-moret-end-october>

Autumn



Henri Martin, The Sower, ca. 1914-1920

<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/martin-henri/sower>

Summer



Charles Ephraim Burchfield, July Drought Sun, 1949-1960

<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/burchfield-charles-ephraim/july-drought-sun>

Summer



Jacob Grimm, A Winter Landscape with a Village, Skaters on a Frozen River, and Hunters in the Foreground, s.f

<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/grimmer-jacob/winter-landscape-village-and-skaters-frozen-river-hunters>

Winter



Jan Josephsz van Goyen, Winter Landscape with Figures on the Ice. 1643

<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/goyen-jan-josephsz-van/winter-landscape-figures-ice>

Winter



Pierre-Antoine Quillard, The Four Seasons: Autumn, 1725-1729

<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/quillard-pierre-antoine/four-seasons-autumn>

Autumn

Credits: All images © Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

Listening to music

You are going to listen to four different pieces of music. Write down in the spaces provided what every piece of music evokes

Piece	What do you see in your mind?	What does it make you feel?	What do you imagine doing ?
1			
2			
3			
4			

Now contrast your notes with your partners. Do they have the same? What images do they see? What feelings do they have? What's different?

Activity.

1) Group work. Vocabulary builder cards

Be prepared to look at some cards. Each of these cards corresponds to one of the pictures shown. Match the appropriate one with the corresponding painting and make some sentences using the suggested vocabulary.
Contrast your sentences with your partners.

2) Group work. Game: What can you do in Spring?

Your teacher is going to ask you to get into four different groups. Each group needs to have the name of one of the seasons: SPRING, SUMMER, AUTUMN and WINTER.

Things you need:

- 1) One big poster on the wall for each group
- 2) 4 different coloured felt-pens. Each group needs a different colour to write with.

Instructions:

Each poster is given the name of a season.

Every group of students stands before each poster.

Each group has one minute to write on the posters the things you usually do in that particular season. Once the minute is over, the teacher says: "CHANGE" and this means that you have to move one season onwards. You continue writing on the list for that new season BUT using your colour felt-pen.

So, if your season was first SPRING, you move to SUMMER and so on until you have finished with all the seasons and finally you come to your original season again.

Once you have finished with all the seasons, all posters need to have different written lists of words in 4 different colours.

The winning group is the one with more words on all SEASON POSTERS.

3) Four Season Crossword

Check your new vocabulary. Enjoy doing a crossword.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

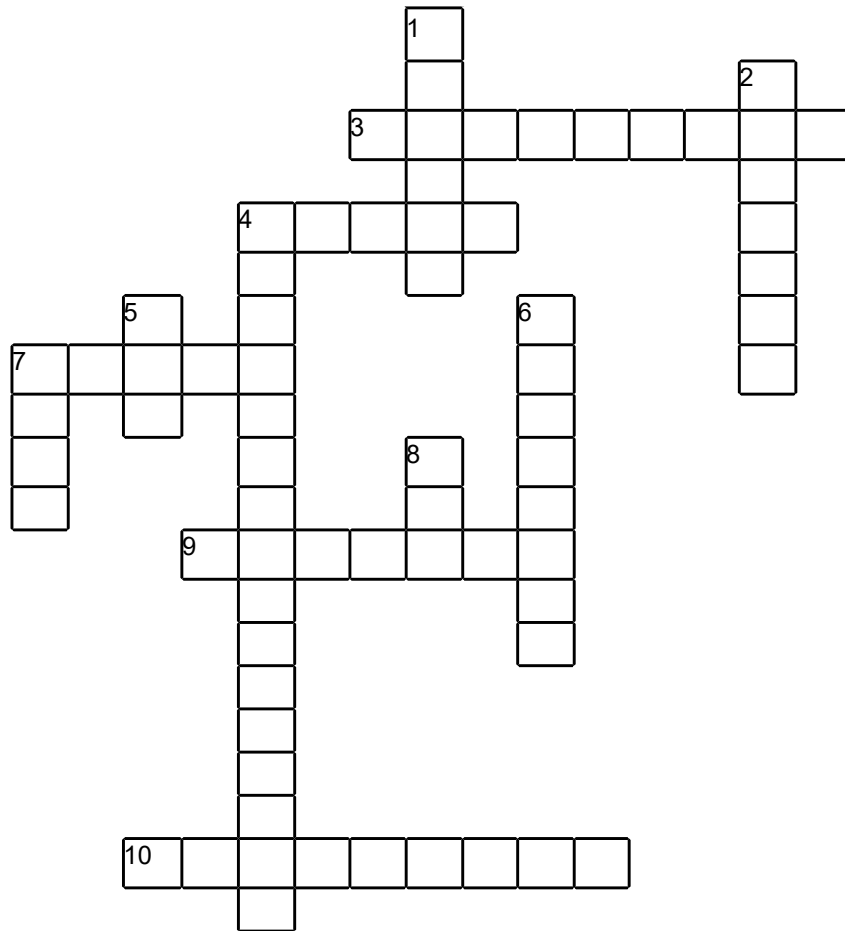
Each of these cards corresponds with one of the pictures shown. Match the appropriate one with the corresponding painting and make some sentences using the suggested vocabulary.

1 WATER-MILL MILLER FARMHOUSE FREEZING DAY	2 BATHING MYTHOLOGICAL THEME CHARMING LANDSCAPE STRETCHES OF WATER BANK	3 DESERTED LANDSCAPE DRY REMAINS	4 VASE WITHERED FLOWERS FLOWER BUD	5 INTENSE COLOURS FLUCTUATING FORMS
6 BRIDGE ABSENCE OF LEAVES WATER MILL EVENING	7 COUNTRY FAMILY WINE GESTURES	8 SOWER PLOUGHMAN HAY	9 PARCHED LANDSCAPE EVAPORATING WATERCOLOUR BLAZE	10 FROZEN RIVER MEANDER ICE-SKATE

Now, look at the pictures and make different sentences BUT this time do not look at the cards. How many words could you use?

THE FOUR SEASONS CROSSWORD

Complete the crossword using the words from the cards as a reference



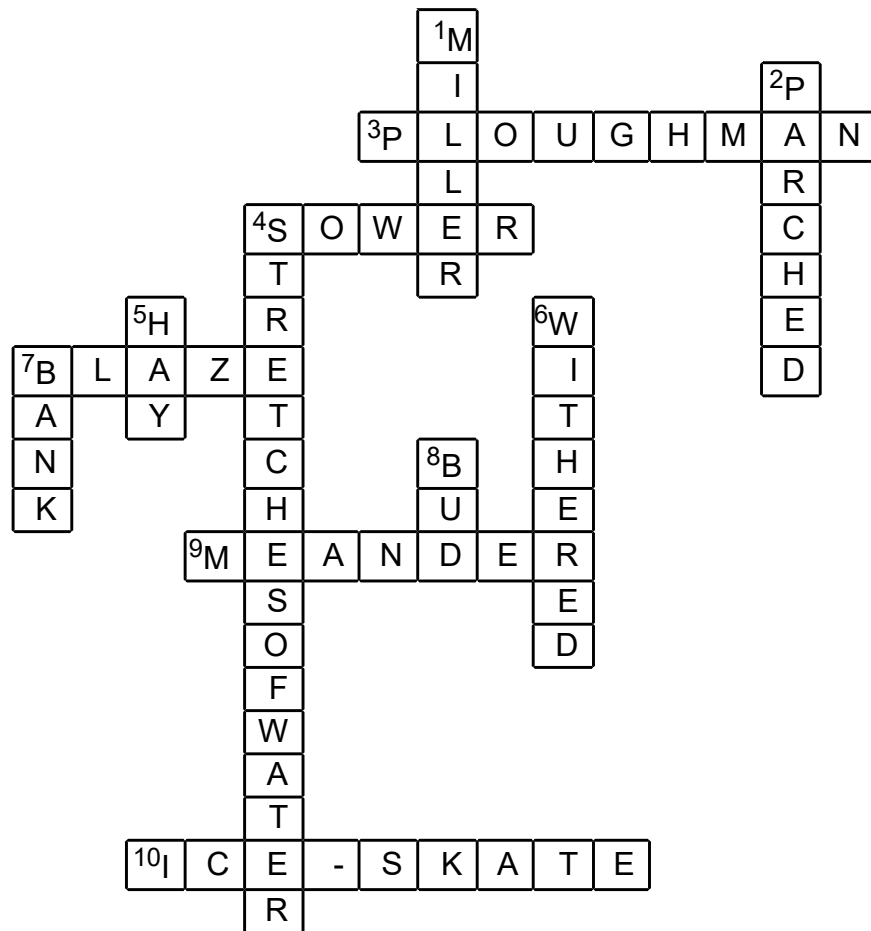
Across

- 3. FARMER, MAN WHO PLOUGHS USING ANIMALS.
- 4. A PERSON OR MACHINE THAT PUTS SEEDS IN THE GROUND
- 7. A BRIGHT FLAME OR FIRE OR TO SHINE LIKE FLAME
- 9. A PLACE WHERE A ROAD OR RIVER CURVES RATHER THAN BEING IN A STRAIGHT LINE.
- 10. A SHOE FITTED WITH A METAL BLADE FOR SKATING ON ICE.

Down

- 1. PERSON WHO OWNS OR OPERATES A MILL IN WHICH GRAIN IS CRUSHED TO MAKE FLOUR.
- 2. VERY DRY, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THE WEATHER IS HOT
- 4. AN EXTENSION OF WATER
- 5. GRASS THAT HAS BEEN CUT AND DRIED AND IS USED AS FOOD FOR ANIMALS
- 6. REFERRING TO PLANTS: DRIED UP AND DEAD
- 7. THE SIDE OF A RIVER, CANAL, ETC. AND THE LAND NEAR IT
- 8. A FLOWER OR LEAF THAT IS NOT FULLY OPEN

THE FOUR SEASONS CROSSWORD SOLUTION



Across

3. PLOUGHMAN
4. SOWER
7. BLAZE
9. MEANDER
10. ICE-SKATE

Down

1. MILLER
2. PARCHED
4. STRETCHES OF WATER
5. HAY
6. WITHERED
7. BANK
8. BUD