Sample plan: vague categories

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| STAGE | ACTIVITY | PURPOSE | MATERIALS |
| 1 | Focus on: *and things/or something/and everything*  Procedure:  1) Students try the gap-fill exercise in pairs. Your instruction: ‘Use each of these phrases twice’:  *and things/or something/and everything*  2) Go through answers. See WORKSHEET (teacher).  3) Students read dialogue aloud with answers.  4) Ask students: ‘For these three phrases, what is the difference in meaning?’  5) Listen to what students say and then go through answers. See WORKSHEET (teacher). | To guide students towards the difference in meaning and use of *and things/or something/and everything.* | WORKSHEET: [A] |
| 2 | Focus on: *sort of /kind of*  Procedure:  1) Write on board:  *What sort of car have you got?*  *A: What does your sister do?*  *B: She’s a sort of doctor.*  *I’m feeling sort of tired.*  2) Ask students for the meaning of *sort of* generally and in each example.  3) Go through answers. See WORKSHEET (teacher). | To check understanding and use of *sort of /kind of* | [Board work] |
| 3 | Practice of terms covered so far.  Procedure:  1) Ask students what sort of things they like doing at the weekend. Do they relax, see friends, get jobs done etc.  2) Now familiarise students with the dialogue in any way you like. E.g. a) read aloud in pairs or b) underline key language or c) once students are very familiar with the dialogue, see if they can remember it, only using the ‘cue phrases’. See [B2].  2) Freer practice: students should mingle in the classroom, asking each other the question: ‘What are you doing this weekend? Anything special?’  You can listen to the students (who may use some of the language you have introduced), and either feed in language on the spot or make notes for feedback after the activity. | To practise the new language in a freer way. | WORKSHEET: [B1] and [B2] |
| 4 | Focus on: *-ish* and *-y*  Procedure:  1) Ask these questions to class, and guide towards *-ish* and *–y* answers.  1. How would you describe someone who enjoys sports? (sporty)  2. How would you describe an adult who acts like a child? (childish)  3. What’s another word for ‘rich’? (wealthy)  4. What’s another word for ‘stupid’ in the sentence, ‘That was a stupid thing to do.’ (foolish)  5. How might you describe someone who is very fond of reading and studying? (bookish)  Explain that these are ‘standard’ adjectives that you would find in a dictionary, but that the suffixes *–ish, -y* are also used informally to mean ‘in that category’.  2) Elicit rules for usage on board, putting –ish, -y,  *ish/y*, and *ish/y* in four quarters of the board. See WORKSHEET (teacher). | Guided discovery towards concept of *-ish* and *–y.* | [Board work] |
| 5 | *-ish* and *–y (cont.)*  Procedure:  1) Ask students if they like eating out, what their favourite restaurant is, if they’ve had any bad experiences at restaurants etc.  2) Now ask students to fill the gaps in the dialogue.  Go through answers. Read aloud in ‘threes’ where possible.  3) For freer practice *-ish* and *–y (*and *sort of/kind of),* write the words/phrases below and ask students todescribe them using *–ish* and *-y* and *sort of/kind of.*  *an unusual drink or dish, a family member, a perfume or wine, a town centre, a painting, a room, a film or novel, a dress* | Controlled, then freer practice of *-ish* and *–y.* | WORKSHEET: [C]  [Board work] |

WORKSHEET (student): vague categories

**[A]**

A: What’s happening over there? Has someone won the lottery \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

B: No, they’re watching a football match on that guy’s iPad. Someone must have scored.

C: What did you get up to on your holiday? Anything exciting?

D: I’m afraid not. Just swam, walked, shopped \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

E: Vanya’s gone? I don’t understand. She didn’t even say goodbye.

F: I know. She got a new job in Paris, sold her car, packed up her flat \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!

G: Is Katie really going into business, then?

H: Of course. She’s bought a shop, hired staff \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

G: Amazing! But it’s fairly risky, isn’t it, from a financial point of view?

I: We’ve got about an hour before we need to leave for the airport.

J: OK. Shall we go for a walk \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? I: Sure. I’ll get my coat.

K: Did you buy anything at the market?

L: Yeah. I got some fish, potatoes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. K: Great. Get cooking, then!

**[B1]**

A: What are you doing this weekend? Anything special?

B: I’m kind of hoping to get out of town on Saturday, into the countryside.

A: To get some fresh air?

B: Sort of. And some exercise. I might take the bike. And you?

A: It’s kind of difficult to say. Depends on the weather. I’ve joined a sort of tennis

group. We use WhatsApp to see who’s free on Saturday morning.

B: And on Sunday?

A: Oh, I’ve got to do some tidying, shopping and stuff like that.

B: Do you want to get together in the evening? We could see a film or something?

A: As long as it’s not sad. I’m tired of sad films.  
B: There’s that new musical, isn’t there? It’s got singing, dancing and everything!

I can’t remember the name, though.

**[B2]**

A: **What are you doing …** ?

B: **I’m kind of hoping** **to …** (Saturday, countryside)

A: **To get some** **… ?**

B: **Sort of. And some exercise. I might …** (bike)

A: **It’s kind of difficult to say. Depends on the weather. I’ve joined …** (tennis group, WhatsApp)

B: **And** **… ?**

A: **Oh, I’ve got to do some tidying, shopping** **…**

B: **Do you want to get together in the evening? We could** **…**?

A: **As long as …**

B: **There’s that new musical, isn’t there? It’s got** **…**

**[C]**

**Fill the gaps with these words:** *watery, thirtyish, plasticky, vinegary, browny, woody, shortish*

A: So what do you think of the place?

B: It’s OK. A bit \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ perhaps. I mean, look at these tables.

C: But they’re wood, aren’t they?

B: I don’t think so. It’s a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ kind of feel, but not real wood.

A: The chef’s famous, anyway.

C: Is he? Or she?

A: He’s on TV all the time. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I reckon, or younger. Swedish or Danish.

B: A \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ guy, with black hair?

A: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-black, yes.

C: Anyway, what about the beer? What do you think?

B: It’s OK. A bit weak and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

C: And the salad?

A: Sharp. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I suppose it’s the dressing.

WORKSHEET (teacher): vague categories

*(Answers)*

**[A]**

A: What’s happening over there? Has someone won the lottery \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? *(or something)*

B: No, they’re watching a football match on that guy’s iPad. Someone must have scored.

C: What did you get up to on your holiday? Anything exciting?

D: I’m afraid not. Just swam, walked, shopped \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *(and things)*

E: Vanya’s gone? I don’t understand. She didn’t even say goodbye.

F: I know. She got a new job in Paris, sold her car, packed up her flat \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_! *(and everything)*

G: Is Katie really going into business, then?

H: Of course. She’s bought a shop, hired staff \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *(and everything)*

G: Amazing! But it’s fairly risky, isn’t it, from a financial point of view?

I: We’ve got about an hour before we need to leave for the airport.

J: OK. Shall we go for a walk \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? *(or something)* I: Sure. I’ll get my coat.

K: Did you buy anything at the market?

L: Yeah. I got some fish, potatoes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *(and things)* K: Great. Get cooking, then!

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| *Answers:*  ***or something* =** or an alternative but similar thing  ***and things***= and other things which are similar (i.e. in the same category)  The full version, which is also quite common, is *and things like that*, and the word *thing* could be replaced by *stuff*, which is a little more colloquial.  ***and everything***= and the other things that complete the idea, or make a complete idea stronger  Grammatically, you could say in the third dialogue: *She got a new job in Paris, sold her car, packed up her flat and things*!But the context of the dialogue almost demands the use of *and everything* instead. Here’s another example where *and everything* is required, unless you want to sound rather cynical: *They’re a couple now. They’re in love and everything!*  Note 1) ‘or anything’ may be used in negative statements:  *I lent him my bike, but he didn’t say thanks or anything.*  Note 2) All three phrases are flexible in being able to represent noun or verb phrases:  *Just* ***swam, walked, shopped*** *and things. I got some* ***fish, veg, potatoes*** *and things.* |

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| *Answers, ‘sort of’, meaning:*  In the phrase *sort of*, ‘sort’ essentially means category, but it can range from something quite specific to something very general.  *What sort of car have you got?*  Here ‘sort’ almost certainly means ‘make’, ‘brand’ or ‘type’, and the answer would be something like: a Renault Clio or a Toyota Yaris.  *A: What does your sister do?*  *B: She’s a sort of doctor.*  ‘Sort’ could mean ‘type’ here as in: ‘She’s a doctor but I don’t know her medical specialism’ or it could be an example of vague language use: ‘I *do* know her specialism, but I don’t want to sound too detailed or technical.’  *I’m feeling sort of tired.*  The vague use of ‘sort of’ here either means ‘I can’t quite define how I’m feeling but it’s similar to tiredness’ or ‘I’m not quite sure how I’m feeling but I’ll use ‘sort of’ as a filler to give myself time to think.’ |

**[B]**

A: What are you doing this weekend?

B: I’m kind of hoping to get out of town on Saturday, into the countryside.

A: To get some fresh air?

B: Sort of. And some exercise. I might take the bike. And you?

A: It’s kind of difficult to say. Depends on the weather. I’ve joined a sort of tennis

group. We use WhatsApp to see who’s free on Saturday morning.

B: And on Sunday?

A: Oh, I’ve got to do some tidying, shopping and stuff like that.

B: Do you want to get together in the evening? We could see a film or something?

A: As long as it’s not sad. I’m tired of sad films.  
B: There’s that new musical, isn’t there? It’s got singing, dancing and everything!

I can’t remember the name, though.

Explanation on the board for meaning of ***-****ish* and –*y*:

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| **-ish:** often used for **numbers and times and dimensions**:  *I think she’s fiftyish* (= around fifty years old).  *Shall we meet at elevenish?*  *A tallish building. A deepish/widish river. A steepish hill.*  (Sometimes used on its own: ‘Are you thirsty?’ ‘Ish.’) | **-ish** and **–y** (1)**:**  Used for colours:  *reddish* (or *reddy*), *reddish-brown, bluish* (or *bluey*), *bluey-pink* etc.  (*Darkish* = dark colour, or a bit melancholy: ‘a darkish novel’) |
| **-y:** sometimes used for **materials**:  *plasticky* (= like plastic), *watery, woody*, *oily, tinny* (= unpleasant sound), *softish*  Or tastes/smells: *sugary, salty, fruity, flowery* (e.g. a perfume), *garlicky* | **-ish** and **–y** (2):  Used in adjectives that people sometimes make up, choosing the suffix that sounds better:  *A slowish film* (= not much action). *A Spanishy sort of dance* (= Flamenco-style, perhaps. *Spanishish* would sound strange.) *A blackberryish taste*. (*Blackberry-y* would sound strange.) |

**[C]**

Fill the gaps with the most appropriate word:

*watery, thirtyish, plasticky, vinegary, browny, woody, shortish*

*(Answers)*

A: So what do you think of the place?

B: It’s OK. A bit \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ perhaps. I mean, look at these tables. *(plasticky)*

C: But they’re wood, aren’t they?

B: I don’t think so. It’s a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ kind of feel, but not real wood. *(woody)*

A: The chef’s famous, anyway.

C: Is he? Or she?

A: He’s on TV all the time. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I reckon, or younger. Swedish or Danish. *(Thirtyish)*

B: A \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ guy, with black hair? *(shortish)*

A: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-black, yes. *(Browny)*

C: Anyway, what about the beer? What do you think?

B: It’s OK. A bit weak and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *(watery)*

C: And the salad?

A: Sharp. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I suppose it’s the dressing. *(Vinegary)*