

Community Based Tourism: Homestay English Activity Pack





Homestay English Activity Pack

Overview

The Homestay English Activity Pack was designed to provide a mutual language learning tool for children, guides, and homestay families. The pack is totally self-contained, so visitors and volunteers participating in community-based tourism in a rural setting can use it with nothing more than the instructions provided. The pack is simple and straightforward enough that people without any prior teaching experience can use it effectively.

The pack contains flashcards, activities, and games centered on relevant language, with topics like simple introductions and vocabulary-building activities with household objects. The activities are designed to be fun and engaging, ensuring total interaction between all parties. Some instructions have been translated into Thai to promote mutual language exchange, thus giving both the villagers and tourists a feeling of accomplishment.

The Homestay English Activity Pack is targeted to teaching beginner-level English. The emphasis is on speaking using a communicative and interactive methodology. By using only practical vocabulary and simple grammar, the activities aim to give users the motivation and confidence to learn more language.

How to Use This Pack

Each activity is described in step-by-step detail and includes suggestions for further teaching. Flashcards are attached as an appendix and can be glued to cardboard or laminated for repetitive use. A feedback form is attached to help individual organizations further develop the pack.

The homestay pack is intentionally small in size so as not to overwhelm short-term visitors or volunteers and homestay families. The *Ideas for Expansion* section offers ways to add to the pack, which could be beneficial for longer term volunteers wishing to provide extra English language content.

Tips

The Thai culture of 'losing face' can create difficulties when trying to teach English. A Thai person would rather keep quiet than attempt to say a word when they are less than 100% confident that they will say it correctly. Thus, it is essential to encourage the villagers to participate. This can be done by using hand gestures (i.e., miming "come to me"), eye movements, and nodding. Combining teaching English with learning Thai can also help to encourage participation as it breaks the ice and causes amusement when mistakes are inevitably made, and reinforcing the fact that language acquisition is not an easy task.

The flashcards provided are examples of what we identified as relevant vocabulary to the homestay environment. These can easily be tailored for your own needs. Images help learners retain the language better, and this philosophy can further be applied by employing specific household objects as well as physical actions—visuals and physical response will help reinforce the new language. In fact, try and use actions to convey meaning and practical objects to illustrate new vocabulary as much as possible. This can also make the language exchange more fun and put the villagers at ease so they participate more.

When working with children it is important to try and engage them as much as possible. They normally have limited time to practice English and are mostly taught by a Thai teacher. It is a great opportunity for them to listen to a native speaker and practice the language they know. The attention span of children can be limited so make sure activities are short and varied!

When carrying out an activity it is important to demonstrate it clearly first. Due to limited vocabulary you can't just say in English what you want your hosts to do. You may have to demonstrate more than once to make the activity clear. Patience is essential along with clear and simple language.

Activity 1: Introductions

This activity is a good ice-breaker. It helps with the pronunciation of different Thai and English sounds. It's also a great way to help remember the names of your homestay family members, which you should use to make them feel at ease.

1. Say 'hello' to your host, encourage them - by using hand gestures (as if miming come to me), eye movements and nodding - to say hello back
2. Say 'My name is

Repeat your name so they understand the meaning, point to yourself when saying 'my'

Encourage your host to repeat after you and introduce themselves

3. Say 'What is your name?'

Encourage your hosts to repeat 'what', 'What is', then 'what is your' and then put it together: 'What is your name?'

4. Answer your host and then introduce your fellow travelers

'My name is, this is

Say again: 'this is'

Encourage host to repeat: 'This is'

5. Say: 'This is (another farang)'

Encourage host to introduce other members of their household: 'This is

6. **A Round of Introductions**

Get everyone to stand in a circle and introduce each other around the circle, or, if you feel it's appropriate - and once everyone has learnt the new names - introduce each other by throwing something (ball, toy) randomly across the circle.

Eg. Throw ball to Sally and say: "this is Sally", Sally throws ball to Ben and says: "this is Ben", etc.

Suggestions for Further Teaching

- As tourists and volunteers will come from different countries you can use the same method as above to get the villagers to ask 'Where are you from?' and reply 'I am from'. Get the villagers to repeat the statements and help with any pronunciation difficulties.
- Many people live in a different place than where they are from. You could add the question 'Where do you live?' and the answer 'I live in'. This can be true for both visitors and villagers, especially those re-housed after the tsunami.
- To generate interest in different countries it is fun to use a globe or atlas. The villagers can highlight the countries where other tourists have come from. You could compare an atlas written in English and an atlas in Thai for further language exchange.
- Using the same method as the round of introductions you can practice 'his and her'. For example, throw the object to a male and say 'his name is', then throw to a female and say 'her name is'. You can then practice the question form 'what is his/her name?'
- If you have a few interested participants you can get them all on their feet. They can mingle with each other and introduce themselves asking the questions above, giving a lot of valuable speaking practice which you can listen to and correct mistakes at the end.

Activity 2: Household Objects

This activity gets the homestay family familiar with household vocabulary.

1. **Vanishing Circle** - Everyone can join in this one!

Choose about 5 of the flashcards provided

2. Put the objects or flashcards on the floor in a circle with everyone sitting around.
3. Point to each one in order around the circle, say the name of it, and your host can repeat.
Do this a couple of times.

4. Keep pointing at each object/flashcard, but this time, take something away.
Point to the empty space. Everyone has to remember what was there and say the word.

5. Do it faster. Take things away one by one.

Soon, everything has disappeared and you're only pointing to empty spaces.

Hey presto, you've just taught some English words they'll probably remember for ever.

Now, they can use these words in the next task....

6. Offer them one of the flashcards

Say: 'Would you like'

Continue with more objects/flashcards.

Encourage host to repeat 'Would you like?'

Offer more objects/flashcards, encourage host to offer them back.

7. Next, ask for them back – 'Can I have a mosquito coil?' until you get them all back.
Then give them all the objects/flashcards and they can offer them to you.

8. **Circle of Offering**

Motion for everyone to stand in a circle and pass or throw the objects/flashcards to each other (in order or randomly) saying 'would you like' or 'can I have'

Suggestions for Further Teaching

- Instead of flashcards use objects in the house. For example, you could take a group of items from the kitchen to teach the vocabulary of things used at meal times.
- To follow on from household objects, lead the homestay family through the house and introduce the names of specific rooms. E.g., bathroom, kitchen, toilet, bedroom. Practice the vocabulary 'this is the _____'.

Activity 3: Food

1. **Vanishing Circle** - Everyone can join in this one!
Pick some (max 5) of the flashcards (or foodstuffs), especially those you can't eat.
2. Put the objects or flashcards on the floor in a circle, with everyone sitting around.
3. Point to each one in order around the circle, say the name of it, and encourage your host to repeat. Do this a couple of times.
4. Keep pointing at each object/flashcard, but this time, take one away.
Point to the empty space. Everyone has to remember what was there and say the word.
5. Do it faster. Take things away one by one until everything has vanished.
6. 'Can you eat?'
First show them the meaning of can and can't.....
7. 1. Take a top off a water bottle – point to yourself and say: 'I can'.
Then try to do it but fail – say 'I cannot'.*

Repeat this with some other examples so they understand the meaning.
8. Eat something. Point to yourself and say 'I can eat'
Try to eat something inedible (e.g. soap)– point to yourself and say: 'I cannot eat'.
9. Point to something edible. Say to your host, slowly: 'Can you eat?'
Encourage host to reply (you might have to say 'yes' 'no' so they know how to reply).
10. Now introduce the question.....
Point to something inedible and ask: 'Can you eat?'

Encourage host to reply. Do this a few more times.

Encourage your hosts to point to objects and ask you: 'Can you eat?'

Answer your host.
11. Point to a foodstuff/flashcard
Say: 'Can you eat spicy?' Encourage host to reply.

Repeat using the foodstuff/flashcards drilled at the start.

Suggestions for Further Teaching

- To continue the can and cannot questioning, to find out about your host you could ask about things that are easily mimed – 'can you.....play football, play takraw, cook, drive a longtail, fish'.....etc.

* Thai speakers find it easier to hear and pronounce 'cannot' rather than 'can't'.

Activity 4: Numbers

1. Show random number flashcards to elicit different numbers.
2. Say the numbers 1-10 in order around a circle, prompting the family if necessary.
3. Continue with more numbers if they find 1-10 easy.
4. Use two sets of the number flashcards for a concentration matching game.

Place all the cards face down and each person turns over two, if they have the same two cards they keep them, the person with the most cards at the end wins. Each time a card is turned over the number should be said out loud.

5. To check understanding, hold up random number flashcards after the game and see if your hosts can identify them quickly.

Suggestions for Further Teaching

- If the family are comfortable with the numbers you can further the activity by asking 'how old are you?'. Start by saying 'I am ____ years old, how old are you?'
- To help with written English you can make flashcards with written numbers. You can carry out the concentration game where the written number has to be matched to a numeral.

Activity 5: Days of the Week and Months

1. Show random days of the week large flashcards to the family and repeat to help their pronunciation.
2. Start with a day of the week (eg. Monday) and throw an object to someone. Try to get them to say the next day of the week and throw the object to someone else. Continue this a few times to give the family a chance to remember the new vocabulary.
3. Hand out the smaller days of the week flashcards to individuals for them to order correctly. If any children are actively participating give a time limit for them to complete the activity to make it more fun.
4. Carry out the steps 1-3 above with month flashcards.

Suggestions for Further Teaching

- Draw seven blocks to illustrate the seven days of the week. Recap the days of the week first. Point to the day it is today. See if the family recognize 'today', if not say it for them and get them to practice it. Continue to a full sentence, 'today is _____. You can also add the question form 'What day is it today?'.
- Using the seven blocks point to the next day to elicit 'tomorrow'. Practice the phrase 'tomorrow is _____' and the question form 'What day is tomorrow?'. Similarly, using the seven blocks again point to the previous day to elicit 'yesterday'. Practice the phrase 'yesterday was _____' and the question form 'What day was yesterday?' Emphasise the past tense of is, 'was'.

Activity 6: Children's Games

In village you may have the opportunity to teach a group of children either in an informal environment or a local classroom. Games are fun and children like to play them, especially Thai children. Language learning may not be a priority for a child but through using language and games together they can be stimulated and use the target language effectively.

There are many resources from books and the internet containing English language games for children. We have identified a selection below which we have found to work well. It is important to introduce any new vocabulary first, practice the pronunciation and then start the activity.

1. Teacher Says

- a. Introduce new vocabulary, for example body parts (nose, ear, leg, arm, etc.) or action verbs (stand up, sit down, jump etc.)
- b. Call out a command, *Teacher says: touch your nose*
- c. The children must do what you say
- d. Call out another command, *touch your leg*, this time leaving out *Teacher says*. If children do the action they are out.
- e. Last child left can then become the caller and you can take part in the game while monitoring.

2. Touch It

- a. Introduce color vocabulary
- b. Split children into teams
- c. Order one member of each team to touch something a particular color. *Touch something green.*
- d. The fastest child gets a point for their team
- e. Variation: you can use this to practice different objects, shapes etc.

3. Hangman

- a. Pick a word the children know and draw a dash for each letter on the board
- b. Divide the children into two teams and have each team call out a letter in turn
- c. If the letter chosen is in the word write it above the dash
- d. If the letter is not in the word write it somewhere else on the board and draw a line of the gallows
- e. Continue this until either team completes the word or a team is executed (ie. When you have completed the drawing of the gallows, including the hanging stick man)
- f. Give the winning team a point

4. Find It

- a. First practice the alphabet
- b. Hold up a letter flashcard or write a letter where the children can see it
- c. The children have to find something in the room beginning with that letter
- d. Variation: create vocabulary flashcards, for example animals. The cards can be spread around the room and the children find a card beginning with the letter

Suggestions for Further Teaching

- A search for English games for children on the internet will provide a great deal of material. This will help you find something suitable for the ages and ranges of children available.
- As well as games, children like to recite songs when they are together. Use classic children's songs like 'Old MacDonald had a farm', 'head, shoulders, knees and toes' and 'I can sing a rainbow' to practice vocabulary. Lyrics can be found on the internet if required.

Ideas for Expansion

Here are some ideas to help expand the homestay pack in its current form. This will be necessary as villagers are exposed more frequently to English and will provide valuable additional material to longer term volunteers.

- Contractions are commonly used in spoken English. To keep the homestay pack as a simple tool contractions have not been used. If villagers are becoming more confident and fluent with English production they should be taught the most common contractions and rules.
- A clock flashcard is present in appendix 1 to help visually identify times. This can be used to help teach the time in English, which is very different than the Thai method.
- Long term volunteer's keen to advance their Thai skills may find learning the Thai alphabet a useful tool. By interacting with the homestay families and teaching the Roman alphabet while learning the Thai alphabet both parties will progress with their language skills.
- Getting to know your homestay family is all part of the overall homestay experience. By introducing further sections to the homestay pack introducing family lexis and hobbies, it will be easier to get to know your hosts and find out what you have in common. Pictures of your family are useful and mimes can be used to show hobbies.
- There are common errors in pronunciation with Thai speakers. For example confusing the 'l' and 'r' sound and difficulty with the 'v' sound. This is similar with English speakers pronouncing Thai, the 'ng' sound an example. A wealth of materials can be found on the internet identifying these common errors. Practicing pronunciation would help to build confidence in the spoken language.
- The existing flashcards can be used to illustrate different language points. You can identify countable and uncountable nouns, for example 'some water' and 'two fans'. You can show the difference between 'this' and 'that' and 'these' and 'those'.
- If cardinal numbers are found to be easy you could introduce ordinal numbers. Using a calendar and asking 'when is your birthday?' can help to show this. It is important to illustrate the difference in use of the numbers, cardinal for amounts and ordinal for the order or rank.

Appendix 2: Feedback Form

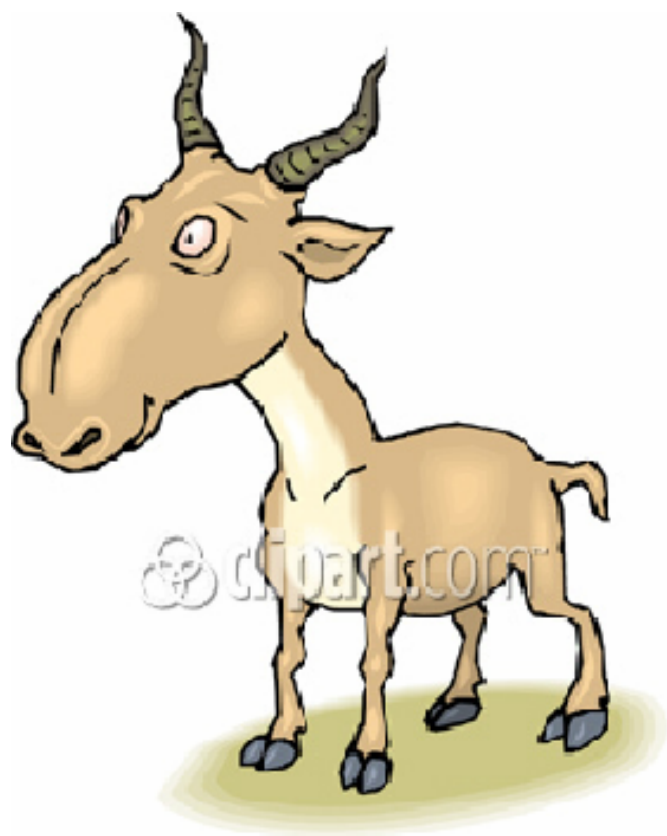
The questions below are examples to help with the individual development of the homestay pack. Each organization will have different goals and feedback can help to achieve these. The feedback questions should be modified for individual use.

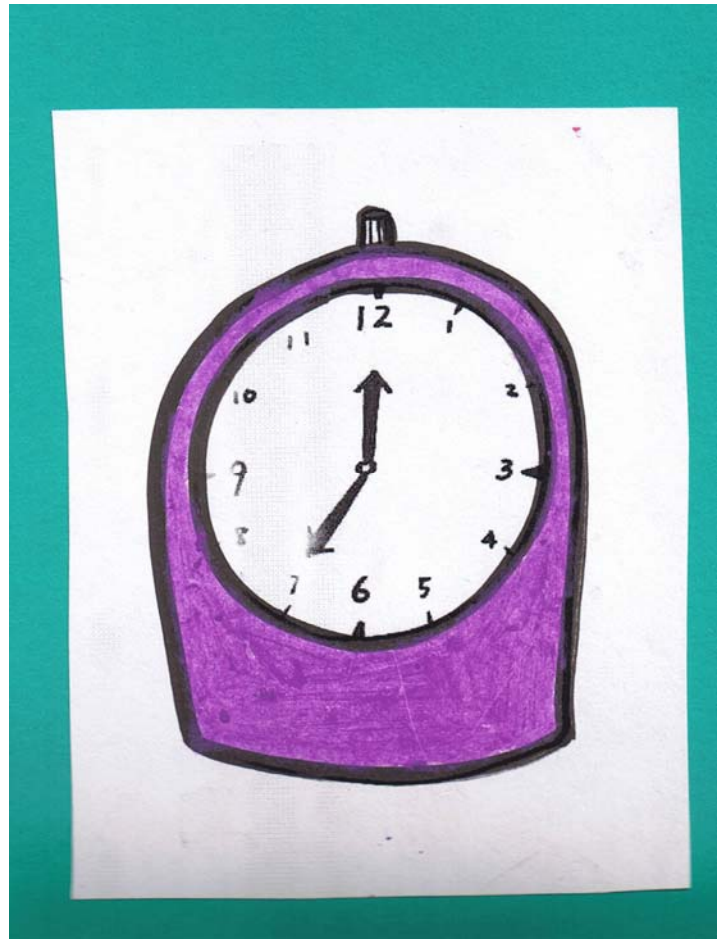
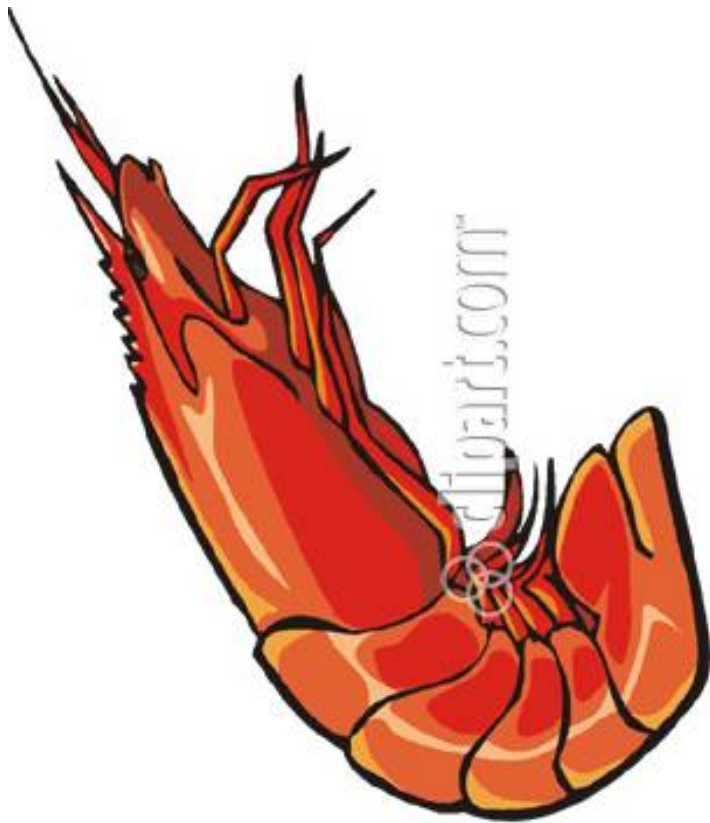
Was the homestay pack easy to use, if not why not?

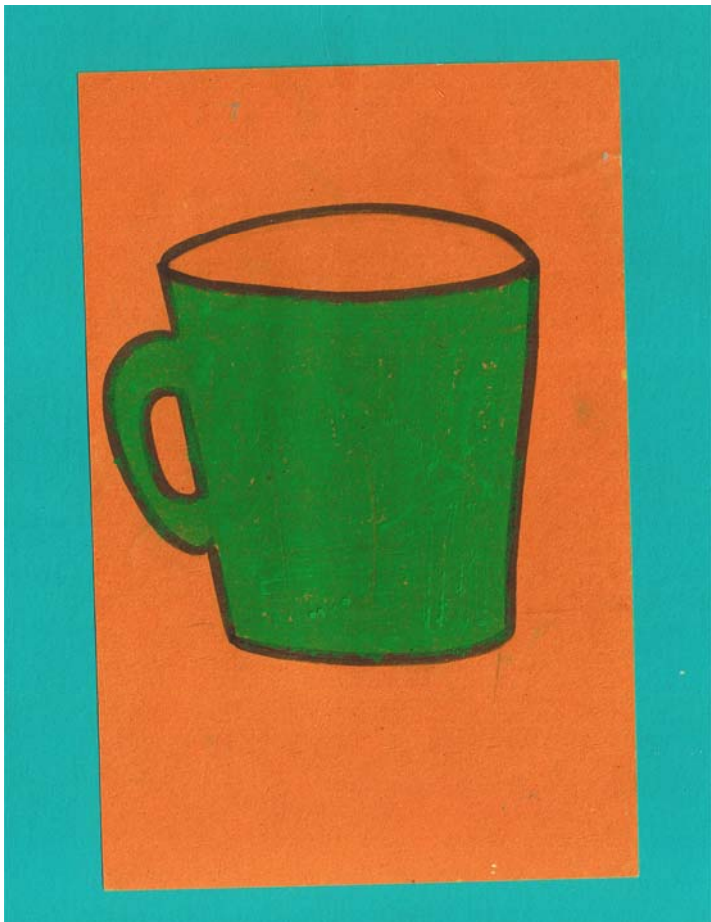
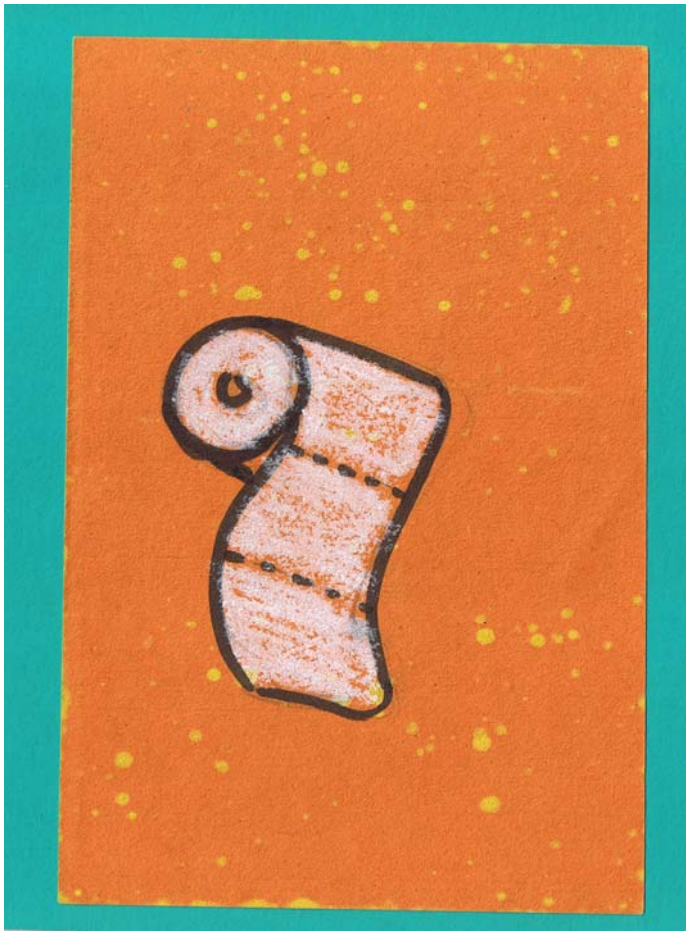
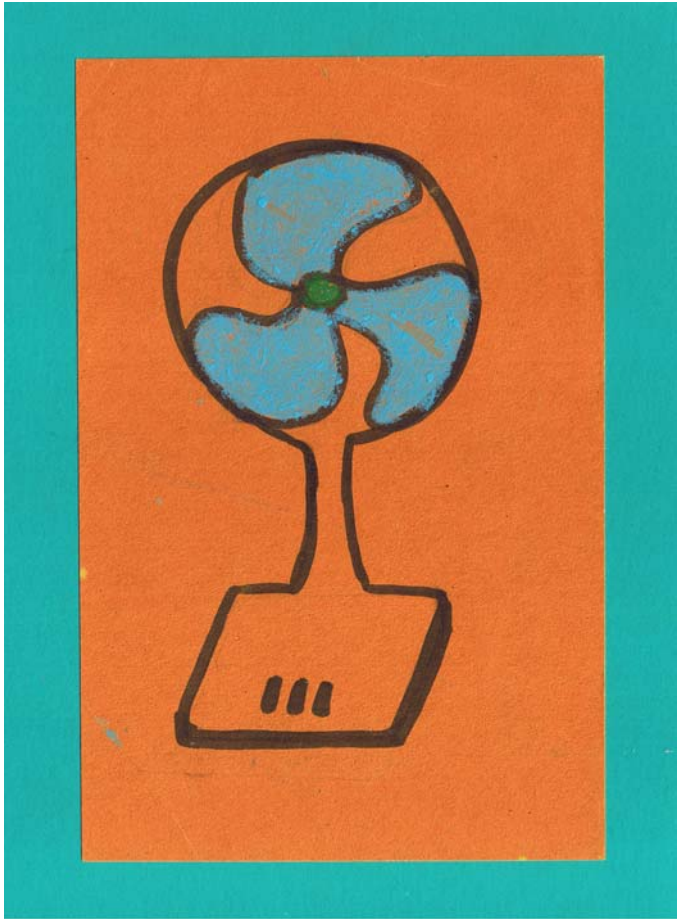
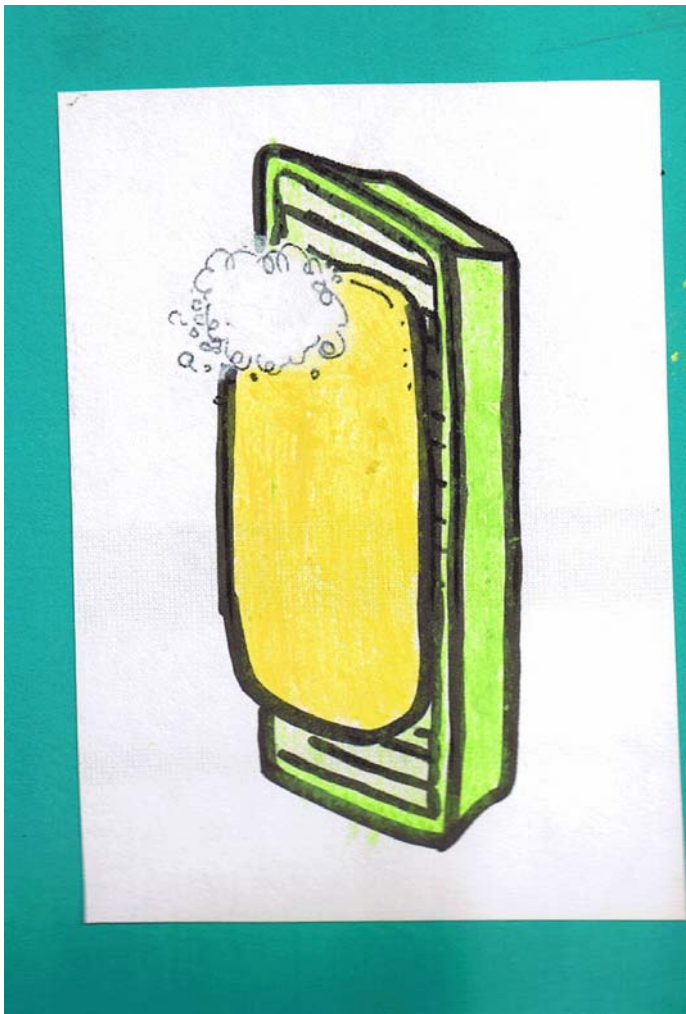
Did you and your hosts like doing the activities?

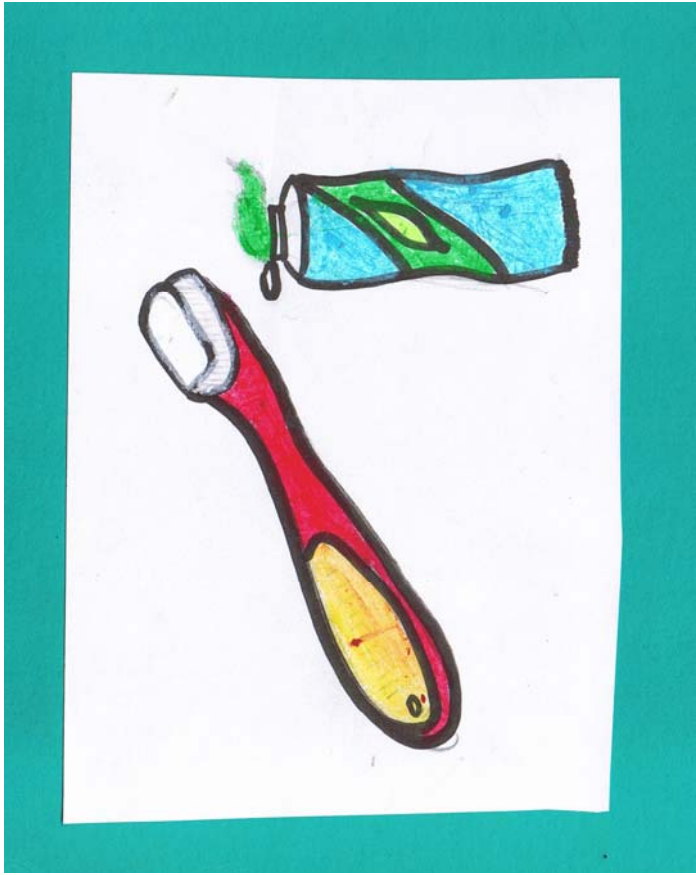
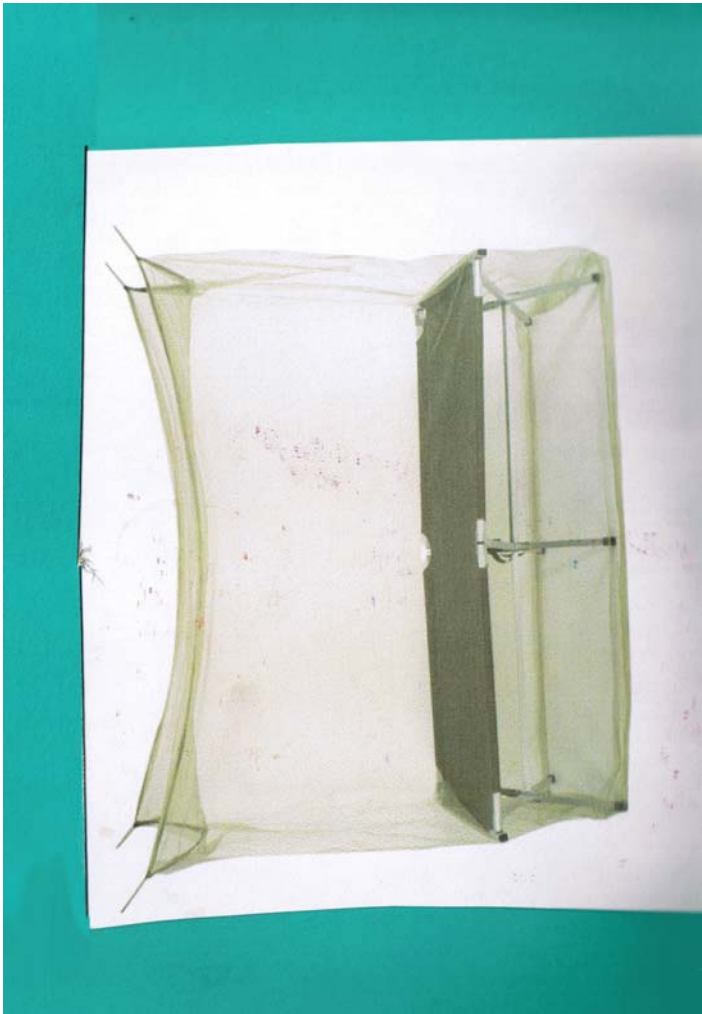
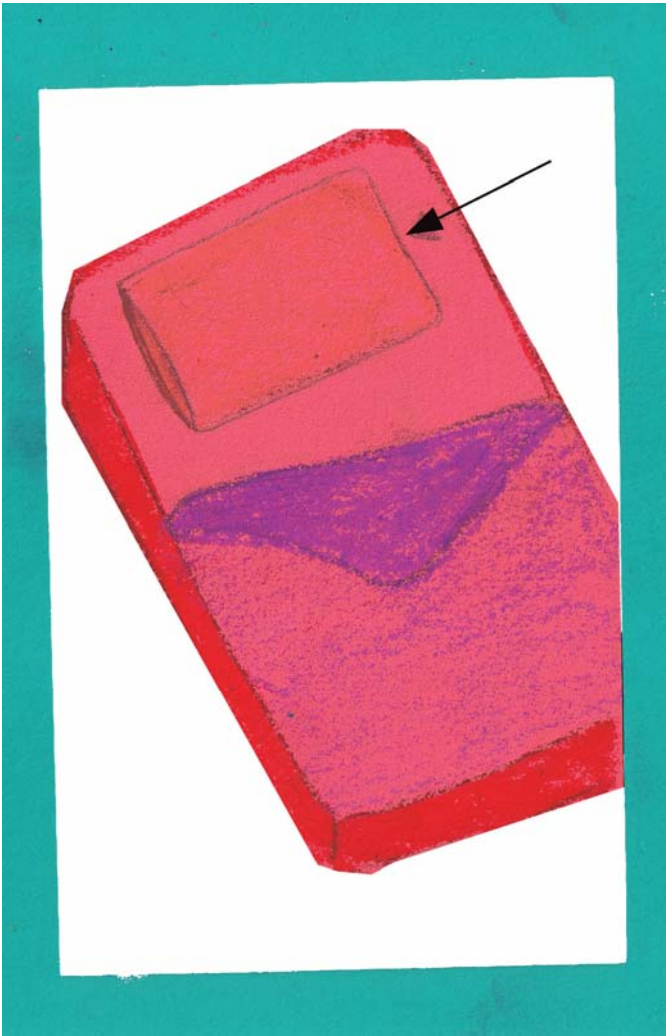
Was the content of the pack relevant to the level of English of your hosts?

Was the layout/content ok? Is there anything you would add in or take out?











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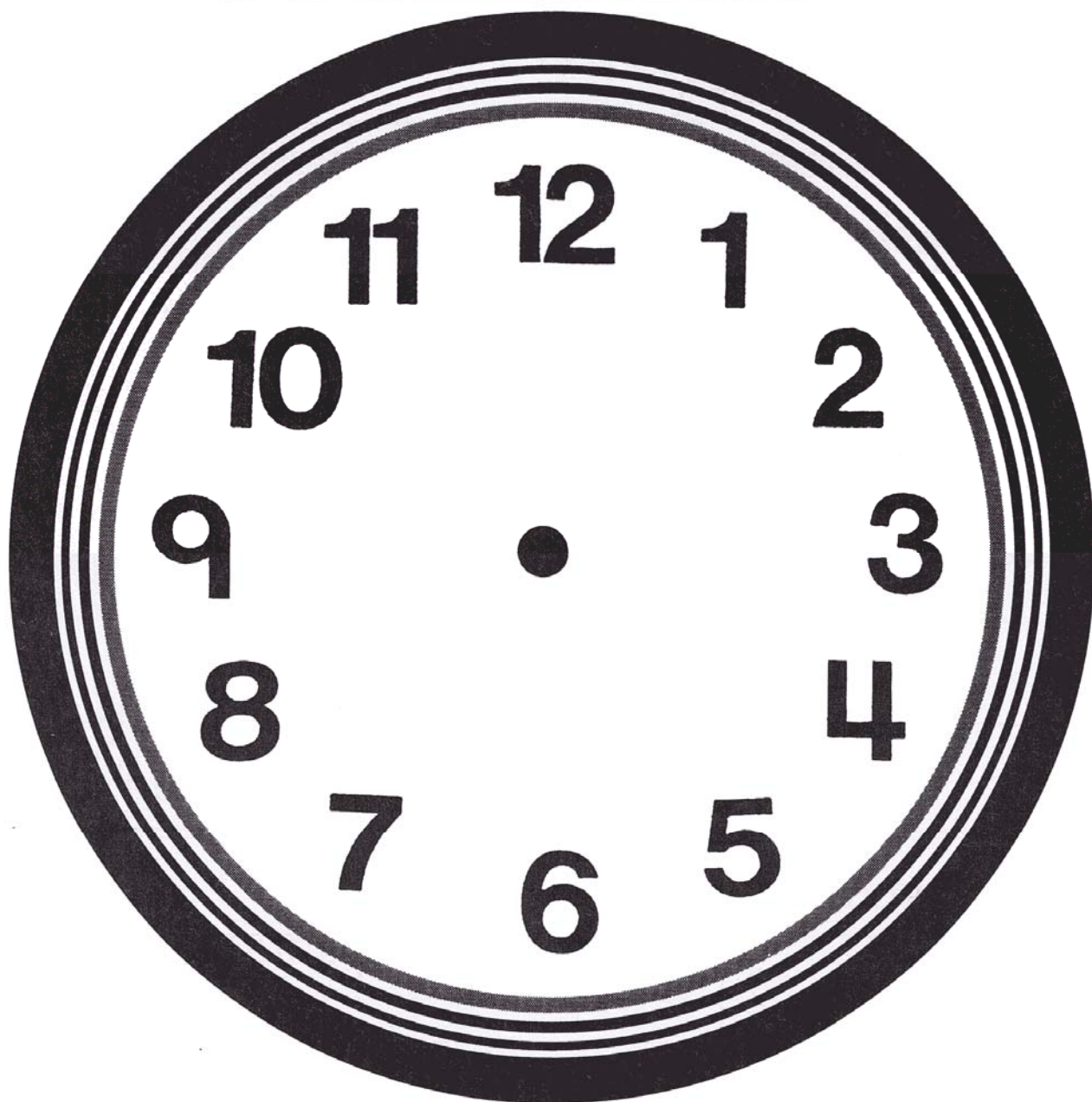
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