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Characterizations

In this teaching activity, students practice making present unreal (second) conditional sentences using the verb to be. Working in small teams, students imagine their classmates as other things, like colours or flowers. They listen to the characterizations imagined by other teams and try to identify the classmates described.

Before class, make one copy of the Ideas sheet, Answer sheet and Characterization sheet for each team.

Procedure

Divide students into teams of 4 or 5 students.

Hand out one copy of the Ideas sheet and the Characterization sheet to each team.

In their teams, students match class members with a category on the Ideas sheet, and then think of an example of a thing in that category that fits that person and a reason why.

Example:

The team might characterize Jane as a building and specifically as a library, because she likes reading.

On the Characterization sheet, students write characterizations in unreal conditional sentences, putting an X instead of the student's name like this:

If X were a building, she would be a library, because she likes to read.

When all the teams have completed their Ideas and Characterization sheets, each team partners up with another team. Now, hand out the Answer sheet.

One team goes first and reads their characterizations to the other team. Each student in the team takes it in turns to read one sentence. Students should be careful not to read students' names. Instead, they should say "X."

The other team listens to each characterization in turn and fills out their Answer sheet. They complete the specific examples and reasons mentioned next to the correct category. They then try to identify the person being characterized and write their name next to the category.

Then, they read their answer to the other team to see if they are correct. The other team confirms the right answer.

When all the characterizations have been given, they swap roles.

The team with the highest number of correct matches wins.

Ideas Sheet



Student's name	Category	Specifically	Reason
_____	building	_____	_____
_____	article of clothing	_____	_____
_____	car	_____	_____
_____	animal	_____	_____
_____	movie star	_____	_____
_____	flower	_____	_____
_____	music	_____	_____
_____	drink	_____	_____
_____	vegetable	_____	_____
_____	part of speech	_____	_____
_____	city	_____	_____
_____	day of the week	_____	_____
_____	month	_____	_____
_____	sport	_____	_____
_____	food	_____	_____
_____	footwear	_____	_____
_____	plant	_____	_____
_____	colour	_____	_____
_____	time of day	_____	_____
_____	season	_____	_____

Answer Sheet



Student's name	Category	Specifically	Reason
_____	building	_____	_____
_____	article of clothing	_____	_____
_____	car	_____	_____
_____	animal	_____	_____
_____	movie star	_____	_____
_____	flower	_____	_____
_____	music	_____	_____
_____	drink	_____	_____
_____	vegetable	_____	_____
_____	part of speech	_____	_____
_____	city	_____	_____
_____	day of the week	_____	_____
_____	month	_____	_____
_____	sport	_____	_____
_____	food	_____	_____
_____	footwear	_____	_____
_____	plant	_____	_____
_____	colour	_____	_____
_____	time of day	_____	_____
_____	season	_____	_____