

Running Dictation

Pair race · ages 8 to adult · beginner and up · about 15 minutes

① How to play

- Put the text on the wall.** Choose a text of four to eight lines, a little easier than your class level. Stick it on the wall, away from the desks, and clear the bags out of the way.
- Make pairs.** In each pair one student is the runner and one is the writer. Teach three phrases first: "Say it again, please", "How do you spell...?" and "full stop".
- Read, run, say it.** Say go. The runner reads a few words, runs back and says them. The writer writes them down. The text stays on the wall, and nobody shouts.
- Swap and check.** Swap jobs halfway. When a pair finishes, they check their copy against the text and fix every mistake. The first perfect copy wins a point for the team.

② Teach these phrases first

Say it again, please.

How do you spell ...?

Is that a full stop?

Slow down, please.

Runners say the punctuation too: "full stop", "comma", "question mark".

③ Rules and tips

Use one freeze signal to keep the noise in check: raise your hand, count down from three, and everyone freezes. Two or three texts is plenty, then start the lesson.

The text stays on the wall: runners can't take it or photograph it. Writers stay in their seats. Big class? Put several copies around the room.

④ Easier and harder

Easier: Add picture clues next to each line, use a shorter text, or let runners walk.

Harder: Put the text outside the door, use a longer text, or cut it into strips around the room so pairs put the story in order.

⑤ Which text?

Page 2: Mr Moon's Cat	Starter · ages 6 to 9 · pre-A1 to A1. The text from the video.
Page 3: The Flying Pancake	Core · ages 9 to 13 · A1 to A2. Worksheet Core uses this text.
Page 4: Parrot Saves the Toast	Harder · teens and adults · B1 and up. A made-up news story.
Page 5: Lulu's night	Strip story for the Harder version. Cut up, stick the strips around the room; pairs write them in order.

⑥ Why it works

The runner has to remember and say the words clearly, and the writer has to ask when they miss something, because the pair needs a perfect copy to win. Every question and every spelling is real communication with a partner, not a drill.

STICK ME ON THE WALL

Mr Moon's Cat

Mr Moon has a pet cat.

Her name is Lulu.

She sleeps all day
and sings all night!

STICK ME ON THE WALL

The Flying Pancake

On Saturday, Barry made pancakes.

He threw one high in the air.

It flew out of the window!

A dog in the garden caught it.

Now the dog waits by the window
every Saturday morning.

STICK ME ON THE WALL

Parrot Saves the Toast

A parrot called Captain saved a family's kitchen last Tuesday.

His owner, Mrs Patel, was in the garden when smoke filled the kitchen.

Captain shouted "Fire! Fire!" until a neighbour heard him and called for help.

Firefighters arrived six minutes later. Nobody was hurt,

but the toast was ruined. "He usually just says hello," said Mrs Patel.

Lulu's Night

Cut up, mix the strips and stick them around the room. Pairs write the story in the right order.

First, Lulu ate her dinner.

Next, she slept all day.

Then she woke up at night.

After that, she climbed onto the roof.

She sang for Mr Moon all night.

Finally, the neighbours shouted, "Quiet, Lulu!"