

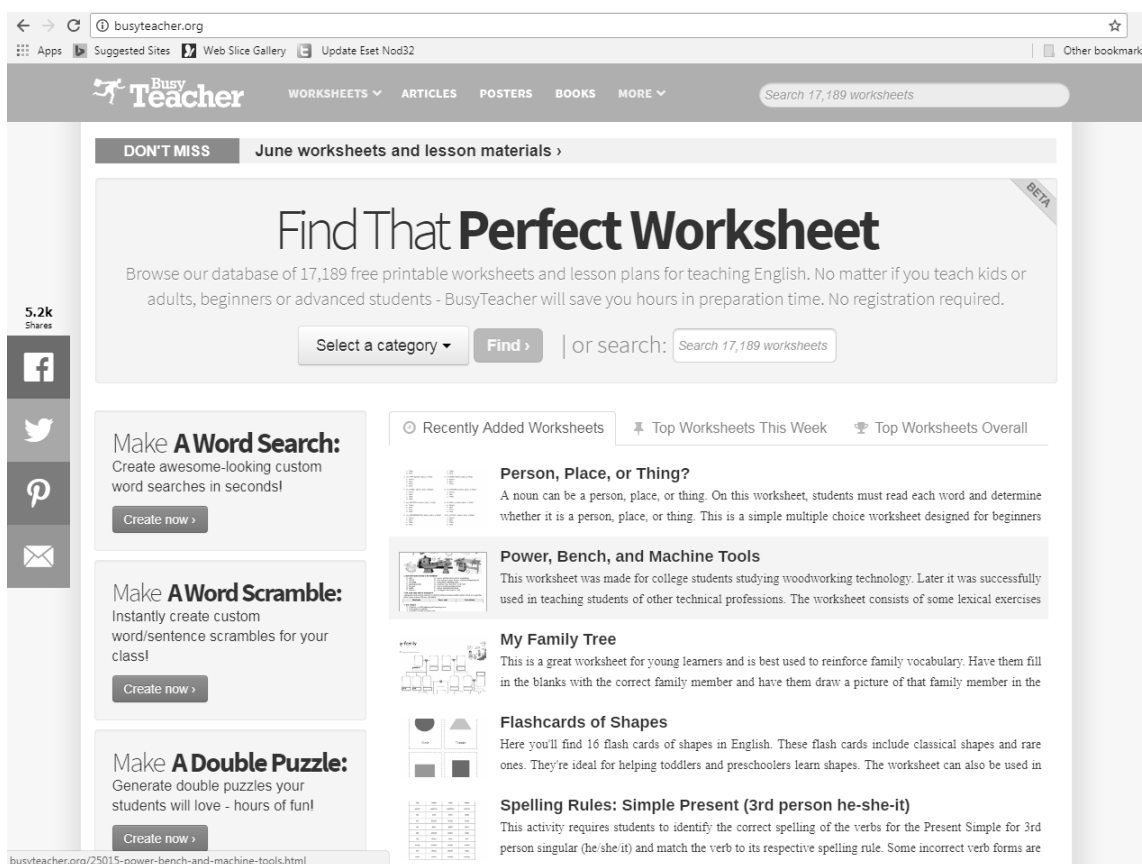
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## **BusyTeacher.org: A Website of Resources for English Teachers**

<b>Title</b>	BusyTeacher.org
<b>Publisher</b>	SureSwift Worldwide 113 Cherry Street #40306 Seattle, WA 98104
<b>Contact Information</b>	Email: info@busyteacher.org; Physical address: SureSwift Worldwide 113 Cherry Street #40306 Seattle, WA 98104 USA
<b>Type of Product</b>	Website with downloadable resources for teachers of English
<b>Hardware Requirements</b>	An Internet-capable computer or device, including Android and iOS tablets and smartphones
<b>Software requirements</b>	An Internet browser such as Chrome, Safari, Firefox, or the like
<b>Platform</b>	Web-based
<b>Registration</b>	No Registration Required
<b>Price</b>	Free

### ***Introduction***

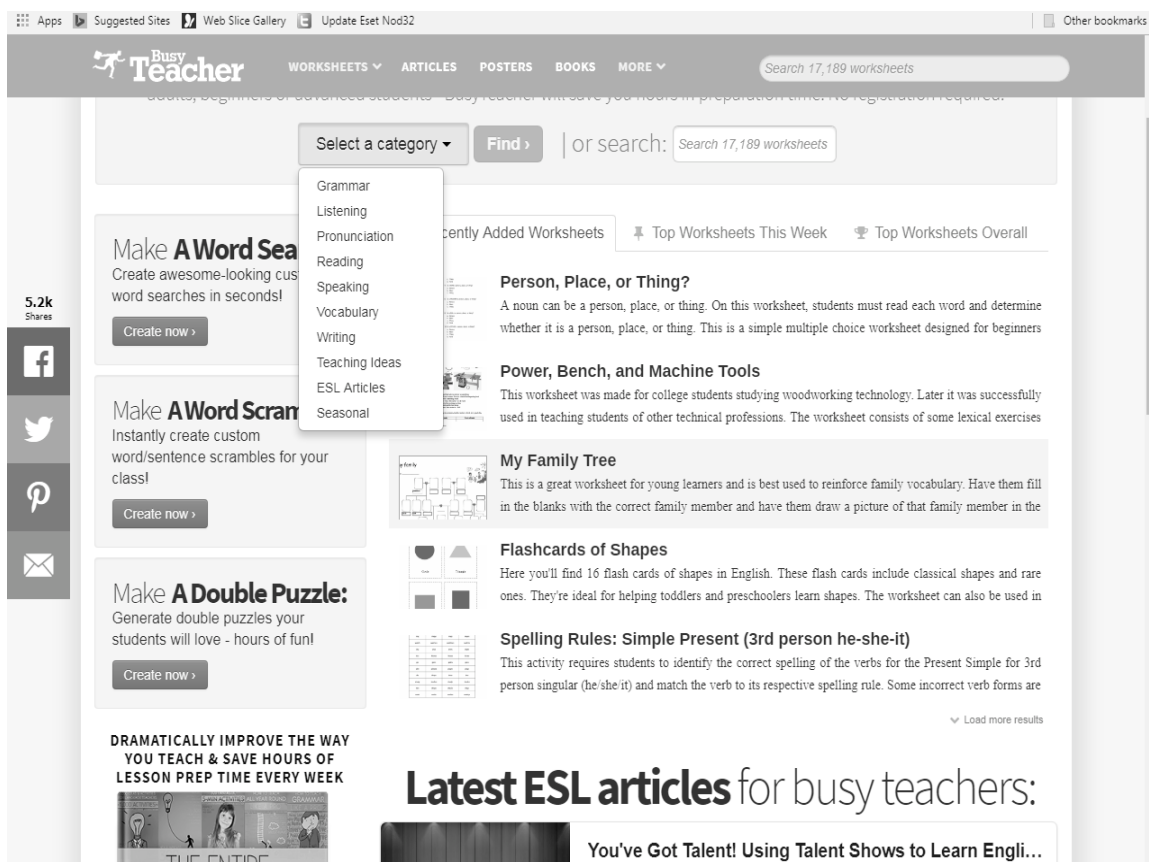
BusyTeacher.org is a website offering downloadable and printable worksheets, handouts, and resources designed for teachers of English. In addition to being able to download materials, users can upload their worksheets to the website and share them with thousands of other English teachers by clicking the “submit a worksheet” link at the bottom of every page.



**Figure 1. BusyTeacher.org homepage**

### ***First impressions***

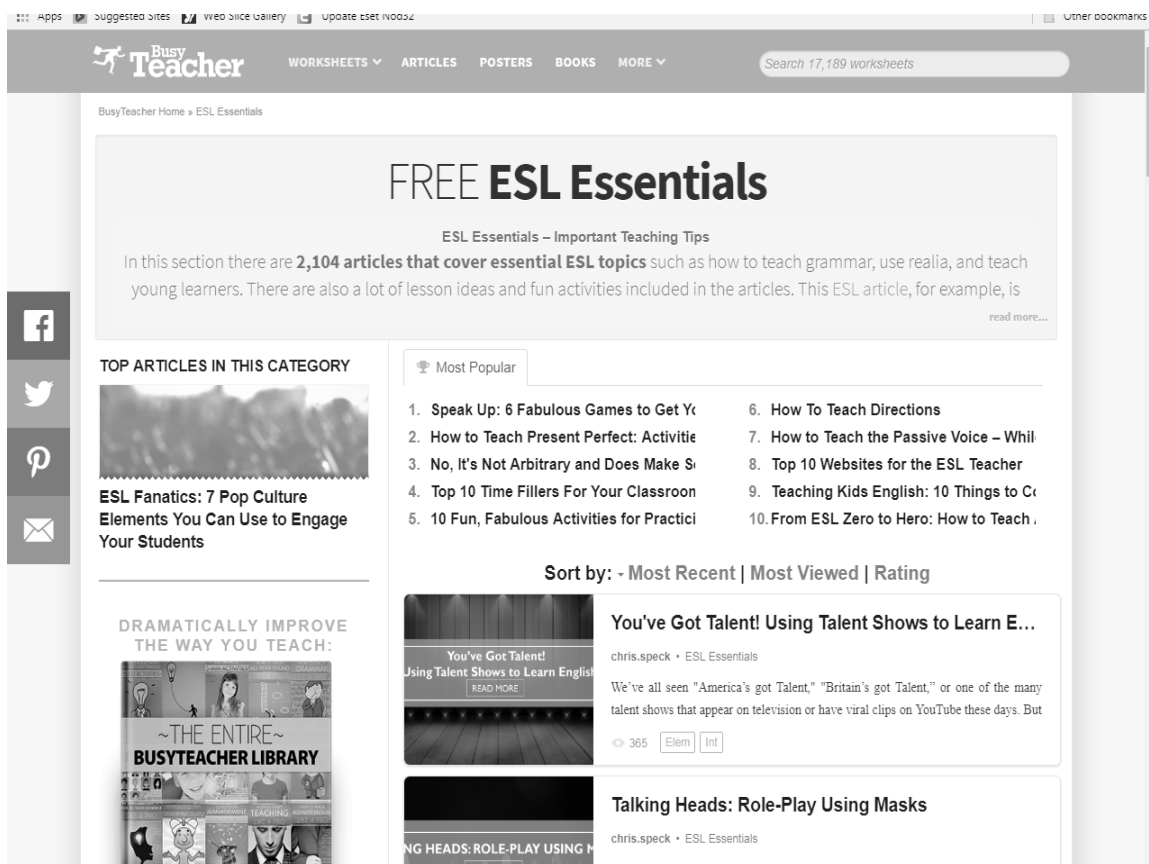
As can be seen in Figure 1, the website's layout appears complicated, and this undermines the user-friendliness of the website. There is a large amount of text on the page, which makes it appear somewhat dense and difficult to work with. Nonetheless, many of the main functions are visible on the homepage. On the left side of the home page are several puzzle making tools: *Make A Word Search*, *Make A Word Scramble*, and *Make A Double Puzzle*. In the middle section of the page, recently added and popular worksheets are listed, above which are several other tools for finding resources, such as a drop down menu (see Figure 2 below) that allows users to look for materials by category (grammar, listening, pronunciation, and so on) as well as a top menu bar that allows users to search for worksheets, articles, posters, books, and more. Let us explore these resources in more detail.



**Figure 2. Major categories in BusyTeacher.org**

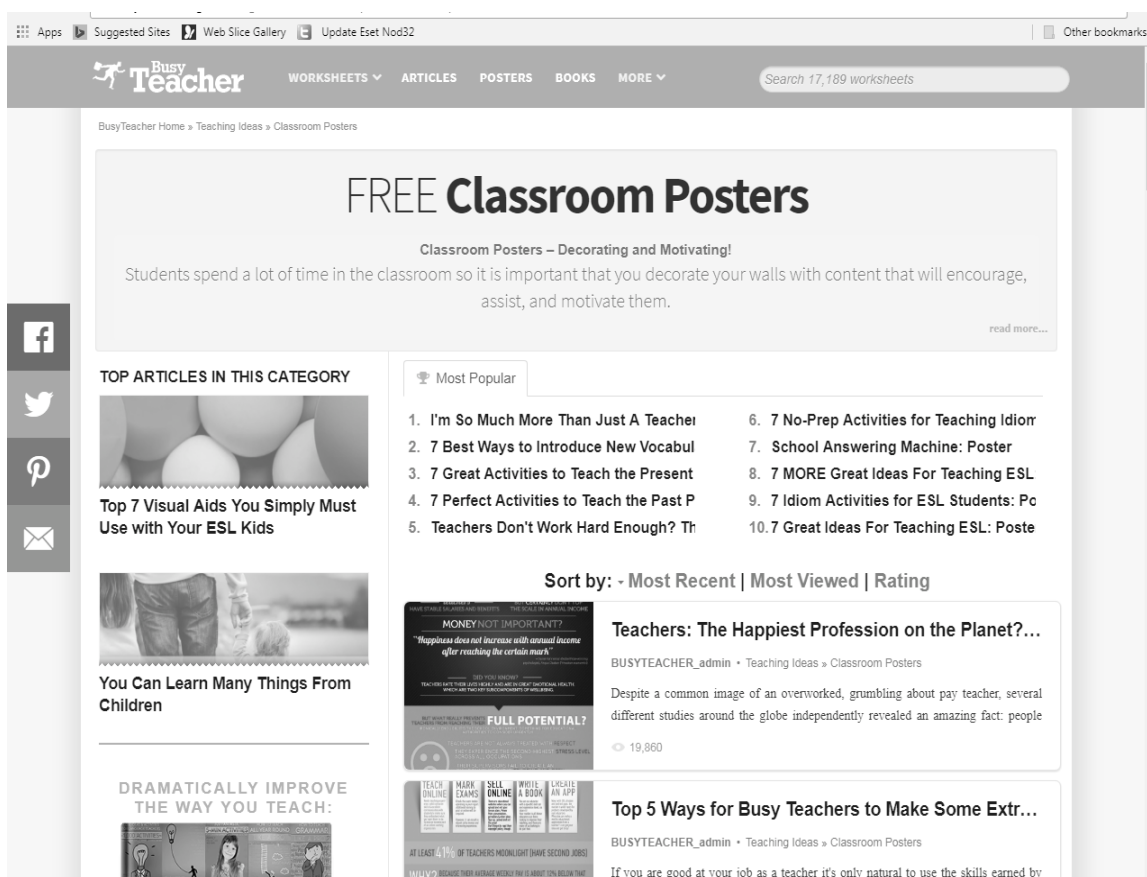
### ***Types of resources available at BusyTeacher.org***

According to the website designers, users have access to a database of over 17,000 free printable worksheets and lesson plans for teaching English (this number increases constantly with the users' contributions). *Grammar, Listening, Pronunciation, Vocabulary, Writing, Speaking, Reading, Teaching Ideas, ESL Articles, and Seasonal* are the included categories that can be selected by users when searching the database of worksheets and lesson plans. For each category, there are several subcategories that can be more specifically selected by the users. For instance, if the speaking category is selected, one has two main subcategories (role-plays and miming activities) at one's disposal. Users can also select the appropriate proficiency level of the materials; the options are *All levels, Beginner, Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper Intermediate/Advanced, and Exam*. After the level option is specified, the user will be provided with a number of different worksheets and lesson plans matching the specified proficiency level and category. Users can gain free access to the entire BusyTeacher Library, including 80 e books, through clicking on the of the library link on the left side of the home page (see Figure 3 below).



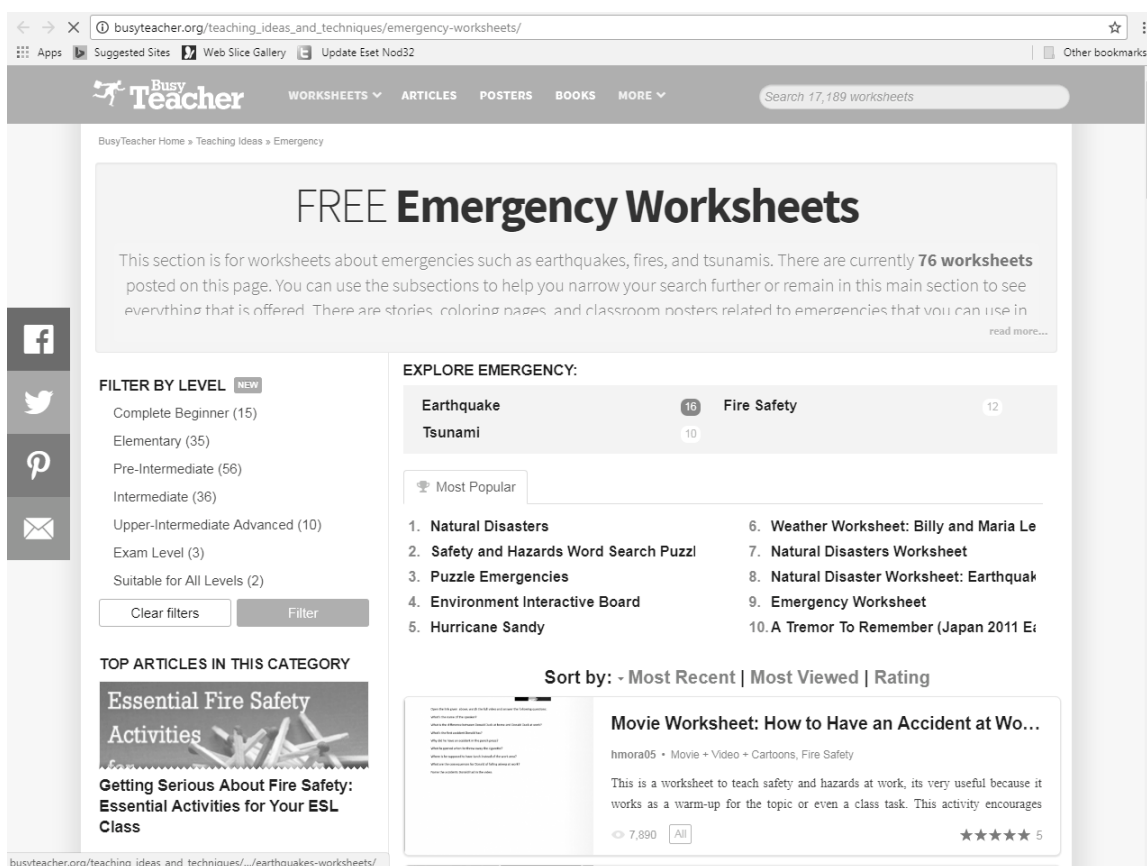
**Figure 3. Articles covering “ESL Essentials”**

One section of the website is devoted to “ESL Essentials,” which includes articles covering important topics such as grammar teaching, teaching young learners, using realia and important teaching tips. This section provides users with ideas and tips about the fundamentals of English teaching. Users can also share their teaching experiences, activities, and stories with others by submitting their articles to the website.



**Figure 4. Classroom posters available to download**

Another section of the website has been allocated to “Free Classroom Posters” (Figure 4). Since students spend a lot of time in the classroom environment, it is of paramount importance to make the classroom environment more appealing, motivating and encouraging. One way to do this could be by decorating the walls with posters and content materials that help learners learn more effectively (Freeman, 2010). Accordingly, resources in this section may help teachers enhance learners’ motivation for learning.



**Figure 5. Emergency worksheets available at BusyTeacher.org**

The “Emergency Worksheets” section (Figure 5) of the website contains worksheets about emergencies such as earthquakes, fires, and tsunamis. Users can narrow their search by choosing one of the subsections within this main section to find emergency-related stories, classroom posters, and colorful pages for their classes. The National Weather Service provides most of the emergency worksheets. For example, there is a thirteen-page story about thunderstorms including thunderstorm vocabulary and safety guidelines most appropriate for pre-intermediate learners.

The screenshot shows the BusyTeacher.org website with the URL `busyteacher.org/teaching_ideas_and_techniques/recycling_and_revising-worksheets/`. The page is titled "FREE Recycling and Revising Worksheets" and includes a sub-header "Recycling and revising – Take Two!". A description states: "This is the Recycling and Revising section of Busy Teacher. Here you can find 199 worksheets related to this topic for use in the ESL classroom. For your beginner classes, use this fun revision worksheet, which includes four different activities to review the" followed by a "read more..." link.

On the left, there is a sidebar with social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Email) and a "FILTER BY LEVEL" section with a "NEW" tag. The levels listed are: Complete Beginner (20), Elementary (83), Pre-Intermediate (82), Intermediate (74), Upper-Intermediate Advanced (55), Exam Level (17), and Suitable for All Levels (6). Below this is a "TOP ARTICLES IN THIS CATEGORY" section featuring an image of a whiteboard and the title "What You Can Do With a Whiteboard: 10 Creative ESL Games".

The main content area displays a "Most Popular" list of 10 worksheets:

1. Icebreakers
2. Introductions Board Game
3. Natural Disasters
4. Present Continuous Miming Game
5. Jeopardy! Final Game for an Elementa
6. Grammar Auction
7. Tenses Revision Worksheet
8. JC'S Reported Speech Cheat Sheet
9. Relative Pronoun Speaking Practice
10. Diagnostic Test

Below the list, there is a "Sort by:" dropdown menu with options: Most Recent | Most Viewed | Rating. Two featured worksheets are shown:

- Touchstone 2 Jeopardy (Units 1,2,3)** by Karina • Teenagers, Mingling Activities, Recycling and Revising, Coursebook Resources. Description: "A power point presentation to review units 1,2 and 3 of the book Touchstone 2, a Jeopardy game to play. Divide the class in 2 teams and start asking the questions." View count: 5,427. Rating: 5 stars.
- Review ( Backpack 1; Unit 1-3)** by samieh.teach • Cardinal Numbers, Appearance/Body Parts, Family/Friends, Back to S... Description: "This power-point presentation is appropriate for elementary students. This is helpful for reviewing numbers, school objects, family and body parts related vocabulary".

**Figure 6. Recycling and revising worksheets available at BusyTeacher.org**

The “Recycling and Revising” section (Figure 6) of the website consists of worksheets which focus on reviewing previously learned material. Building and capitalizing upon already learned information is key to committing the information to learners’ long-term memory, so materials in this section can play an important role in reviewing and recycling information. It will likely help learners retain information longer, remember it better, and will increase their self-confidence before moving on to the next topic (Nunan, 2004; Willis & Willis, 2007). For instance, there is a fun worksheet reviewing the alphabet, numbers, and colors and this could be used to practice these basics with beginners.

The screenshot shows the BusyTeacher.org website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links to Apps, Suggested Sites, Web Slice Gallery, and Update Eset Nod32. The main header includes the BusyTeacher logo, a search bar with 'Search 17,189 worksheets', and a menu with WORKSHEETS, ARTICLES, POSTERS, BOOKS, and MORE. Below the header, the page title is 'FREE Classroom Management and Discipline Worksheets'. A sub-header reads 'Classroom management and discipline – Keep Students Focused'. The main text states: 'Being able to manage your classroom and discipline students is part of being an effective teacher. Here at Busy Teacher we have compiled 102 worksheets to help teachers with this. Encouragement goes a long way towards maintaining order in the'. A 'read more...' link is visible. On the left, there's a sidebar with social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Email) and a 'FILTER BY LEVEL' section with options: Complete Beginner (38), Elementary (54), Pre-Intermediate (28), Intermediate (12), Upper-Intermediate Advanced (5), Exam Level (3), and Suitable for All Levels (33). Below this is a 'TOP ARTICLES IN THIS CATEGORY' section with a featured article '5 Things You Should Say to Your Class Every Day'. The main content area shows a 'Most Popular' list of 10 worksheets: 1. Classroom Management: Stoplight Belt, 2. 7 MORE Great Ideas For Teaching ESL, 3. 7 Great Ideas For Teaching ESL: Poste, 4. Classroom Rules, 5. Don't Raise Your Voice: Poster, 6. Classroom Verbs Matching Activity, 7. Level Test, 8. Finger Plays for Children, 9. Lesson Evaluation Template, 10. Commands. Below the list is a 'Sort by' section with options: Most Recent, Most Viewed, Rating. There are two featured worksheet thumbnails: 'Brag Tags for the EFL classroom' by karengalindo, described as 'Classroom Management and Discipline, Flashcard Sets', and 'Classroom Verbs Worksheet'.

**Figure 7. Classroom management and discipline worksheets available at BusyTeacher.org**

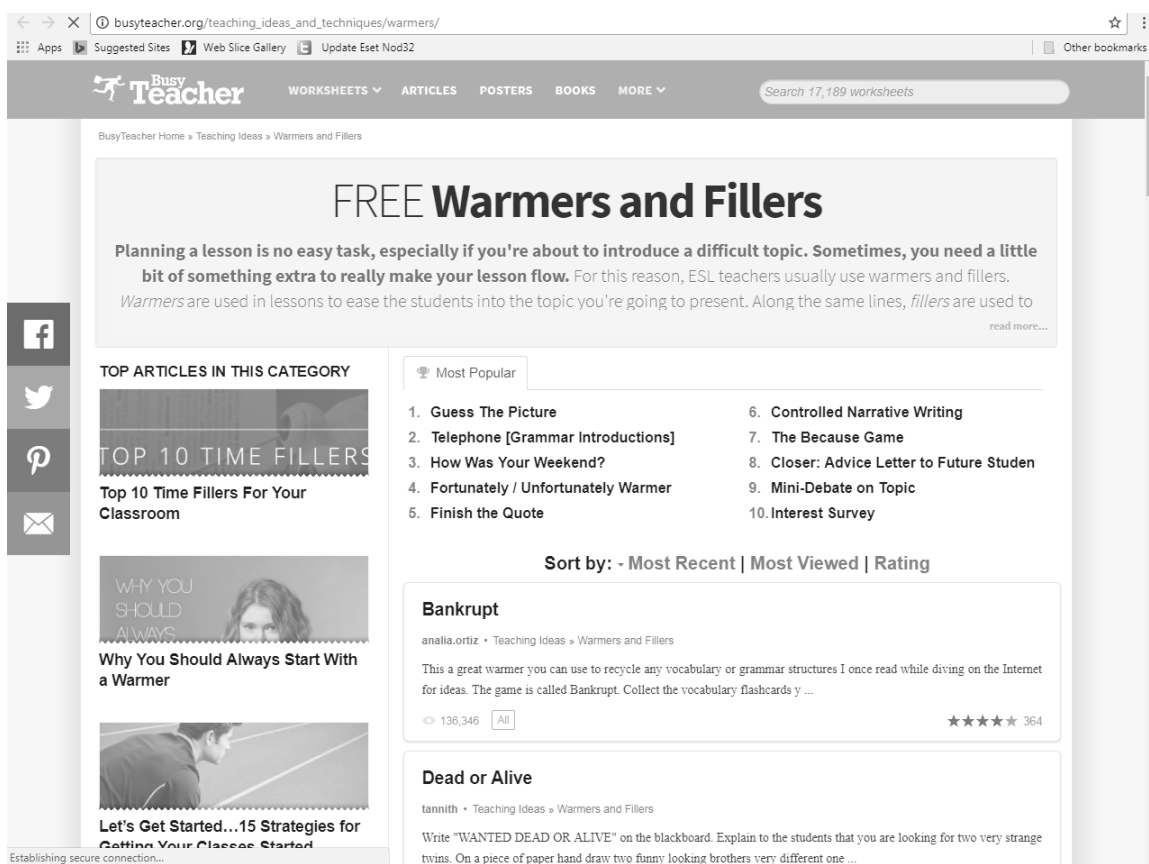
The website has also compiled “Classroom Management Worksheets” (Figure 7) to enable its users manage their classrooms more effectively and establish order and discipline in their classes more efficiently. According to Bailey (2006) and Senior (2006), to maintain order in English classrooms, teachers must know how to handle shy and/or recalcitrant students and how to properly encourage them. This section helps teachers to achieve this and many other discipline-related nuances.





**Figure 8. Coloring pages for kids available at BusyTeacher.org**

The “Coloring Pages” section (Figure 8) of the website presents various images for children to color. According to the website designers, the coloring pages can be used in combination with other exercises to keep youngsters focused, motivated, interested, and engaged in the learning process. Since teaching English as a second or foreign language to young learners can be a daunting task, it is vitally important to make the most of pictures, illustrations, and colors to keep things interesting and on track (Dornyei, 2009; Pinter, 2006).



**Figure 9. The “Warmers and Fillers” section**

The “Warmers and Fillers” section (Figure 9) of the website presents worksheets to assist teachers run their lessons more smoothly. Warmers provide teachers with templates for getting started on a topic and help learners prepare for the learning to come, while fillers can be used to transition from one topic to another or form one portion of a lesson to the next. The resources available at *BusyTeacher.org* save teachers a lot of time planning such activities.

busyteacher.org/seasonal-worksheets/

WORKSHEETS ▼ ARTICLES POSTERS BOOKS MORE ▼ Search 17,189 worksheets

## FREE Seasonal Worksheets

Worksheets By Month

Here at BusyTeacher we have created this section for seasonal activities which are further organized by month. Activities related to holidays and certain times of the year are posted in this part of the website. Currently there are **818 such worksheets**

read more...

**FILTER BY LEVEL** NEW

- Complete Beginner (197)
- Elementary (636)
- Pre-Intermediate (313)
- Intermediate (142)
- Upper-Intermediate Advanced (60)
- Exam Level (10)
- Suitable for All Levels (46)

Clear filters Filter

**TOP ARTICLES IN THIS CATEGORY**

10 January Themed Language Building Activities

**EXPLORE SEASONAL:**

January	66	April	65
February	89	May	37
March	81	June	30
July	31	October	119
August	23	November	63
September	38	December	173

Most Popular

- Classroom Management: Stoplight Behavior Management System
- Let's Talk About Seasons And Weather
- Months Of The Year

Sort by: - Most Recent | Most Viewed | Rating

**Word Search - Albert Einstein**

PrimaryLeap • Word Order, Young Learners, May

We have created a fun word search for your students to enjoy. There are eighteen

**Figure 10. The Seasonal Worksheets**

The website has also created a section for seasonal activities such as holidays, cultural activities, and activities pertinent to certain periods of the year. Users have access to over 800 seasonal worksheets. For example, the winter worksheet is well suited to beginners as it introduces words like *skate*, *ice*, and *snow*. Such exercises and seasonal activities provide students with enjoyable tasks that align with a given time of year. This lends an element of authenticity and personalization that should reduce learner anxiety and intrinsically motivate them as these topics and tasks are related to their personal lives (Dornyei, 2009; Ellis, 2003).

### Evaluation

The diverse worksheets and lesson plans compiled and supplied by the website, along with the articles, posters, and e-books can provide much needed assistance to time-crunched teachers. In addition, exposure to materials created by other teachers may help increase “teacher language awareness” (Andrews, 2007). These are the major and obvious strengths of the website.

However, the website suffers from a few drawbacks as well. In addition to the previously mentioned “busy-ness” of the website’s presentation, one important issue stems from the fact that the materials on the website are provided by users’ submissions. The administrators of the website have stated that they take no

responsibility over the content of the worksheets provided by users. Thus, it is not impossible for plagiarized materials to make their way into the website's content. Though privately owned and non-profit, the website should consider trying to exert more control over the content and holding plagiarizers accountable. Plagiarized submissions and worksheets are only removed from *BusyTeacher.org* if users themselves notice a copyright violation and report it; it seems likely that many plagiarized materials go unnoticed.

It is also true that the quality of the materials varies since the website relies on user submissions. The designers have included as many as worksheets as possible, but quantity sometimes outweighs quality. The website would be improved if its administrators more actively curated its contents by selecting and including only the most appropriate, effective, and carefully designed materials to include on the site.

Another minor but irritating flaw is the recurrent reference the website's designers make to "ESL" which ignores the fact that much of the material is applicable in other contexts, including EFL settings.

Overall, there is much useful material available at *BusyTeacher.org*, and the website does an admirable job of categorizing it and making it easy to locate relevant worksheets and resources. However, it will be up to users to evaluate what they find there to separate the wheat from the chaff.

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