My favorite things

Language level:	Intermediate (B1) +
Learner type:	Young learners; Teens; Adults
Time:	30 minutes
Activity:	Vocabulary game
Topic:	Rhythm in English songs
Language:	Pronunciation; Stress patterns
Materials:	Images; Song

Preparation, materials and equipment

1. For this activity, you will need the song *My Favorite Things* from the 1959 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *The Sound of Music*.

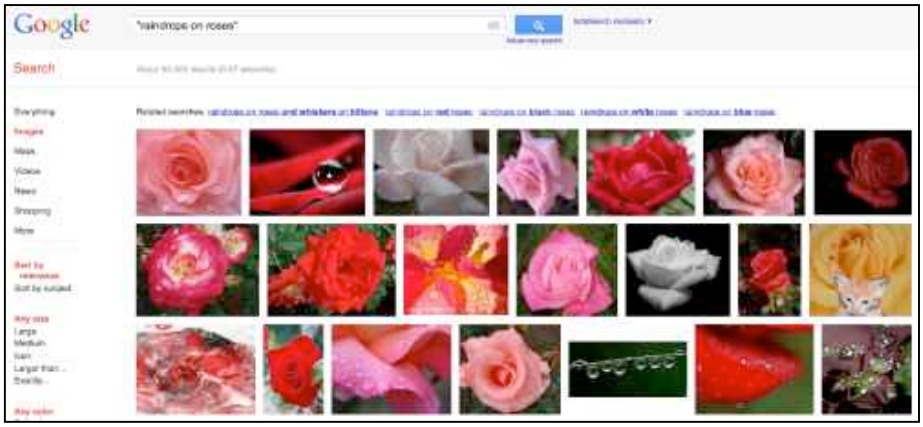
   Use any of the following sites or applications to find a version of the song:

   - YouTube http://youtu.be/33o32C0ogVM
   - Groove Shark http://tny.gs/qOCPSp
   - The iTunes store via iTunes media player

2. Decide how you are going to play the song in class (computer or mobile phone and loudspeakers, for example)

3. You will also need 5 images. Use an image search engine to find pictures to represent the following:

   - Raindrops on roses (see below)
   - Whiskers on kittens
   - Bright copper kettles
   - Warm woolen mittens
   - Brown paper packages tied up with strings



Decide how you are going to display the images in class. Possibilities include:

- Mobile device (For one-to-one situations)
- Laptop, desktop, tablet computer (For small groups)
- Computer, projector + screen (For larger classes)

Lesson plan

Note: To see a classroom video of this activity, click on the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTlt0KvmU_c

1. Write the following stress pattern on the board:

   O o o O o

   Drill a few phrases that demonstrate the sound of the stress pattern.

   Examples:

   - **Quar**ter past **sev**en
   - **Ma**ry and **Jo**seph
   - **Where** are you **go**ing?
   - **What** are you **do**ing?
   - **Every**one **thinks** so
   - **Is**n't she **lov**ely?
   - **Mon**day and **Tue**sday

2. Tell students that you are going to show them 4 images. For each image, they should write down what they see (they can do this in pairs if they like). Importantly, the phrases that they write should consist of 5 syllables and conform to the above stress pattern (OooOo).

   Note: This activity works well if students have access to bilingual dictionaries. This will allow them to find unfamiliar words that are key to the activity (whiskers, kettle, mittens, etc.)

3. Show the images one by one. Give students enough time to think of a phrase. Once everyone has an answer, invite students to share and compare what they wrote.

4. Tell students that there is one more image. In describing it, they will have to produce a phrase that follows the following stress pattern:

O o o O o o O o o O

(i.e. '*Brown paper packages tied up with strings*')

5. Show image and let students write their phrases as before. Compare answers.

6. Tell students that you are going to give them the answers. Play the first verse of *My Favorite Things* two or three times.

> *Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens*
> *Bright copper kettles and warm woollen mittens*
> *Brown paper packages tied up with strings*
> *These are a few of my favorite things*

7. Ask students to write down the words that they hear and ask everyone to sing the verse.

Follow up

Ask students to write their own personal 'Favorite Things' verses. This can be as free or as restricted as you want to make it. For example, you could ask students to keep the exact same stress pattern as before (see box below). Alternatively, let students be free with what they write.

> **O o o O o and**
> **O o o O o**
> **O o o O o and**
> **O o o O o**
> **O o o O o o O o o O**
> **These are a few of my favorite things**

This might be a good opportunity to practise or clarify the use of –ing forms as nouns (gerunds) as teacher Gina André demonstrates on her blog: http://www.englishlounge11.blogspot.com/