How can we engage our students at the start of the lesson and end our lessons effectively

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How can we engage our students at the start of the lesson and end our lessons effectively

done by Iroda Sobirova
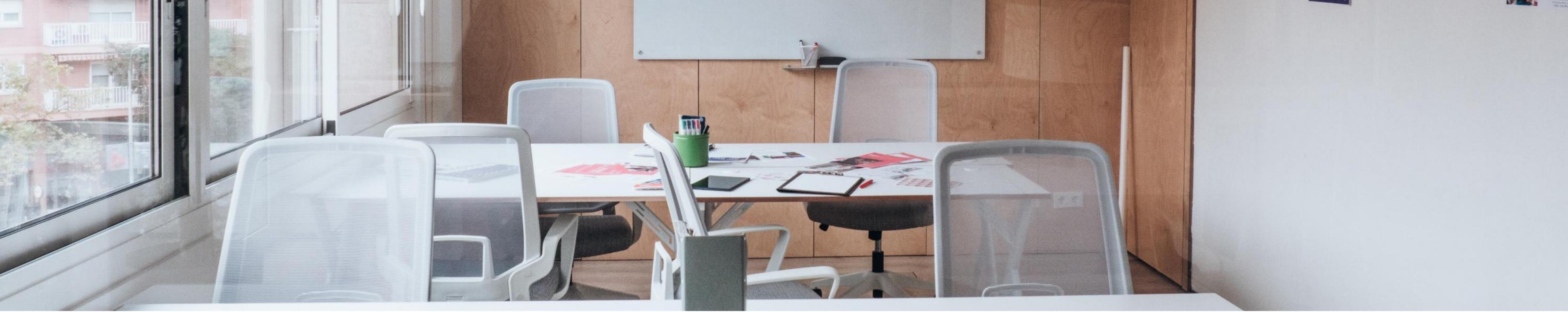
WHY THE BEGINNING OF A LESSON MATTERS

THE LESSON STARTER:

CAPTURES AT

ATTENTION

ACTIVATES PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

SETS CLASSROOM ENERGY

PREPARES STUDENTS EMOTIONALLY

BUILDS CURIOSITY

A STRONG START LOWERS THE AFFECTIVE FILTER AND INCREASES READINESS TO LEARN.

The Psychology Behind Strong Lesson Openings
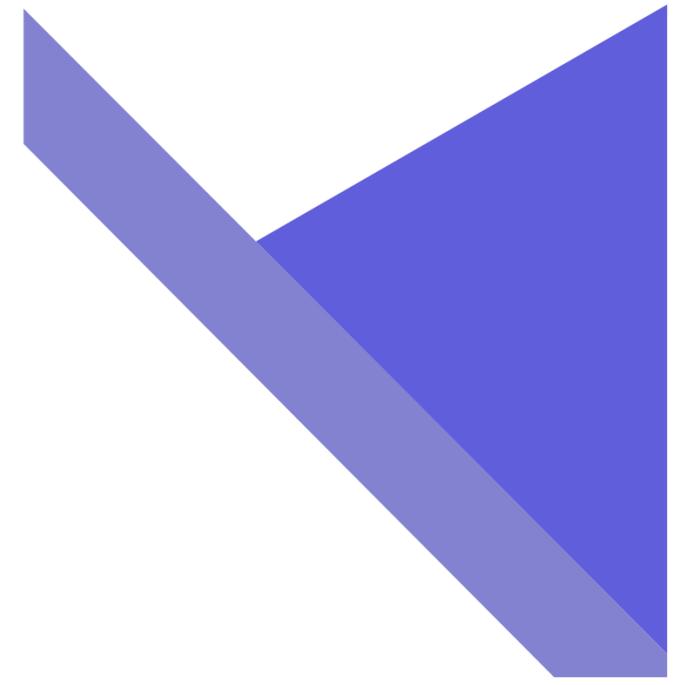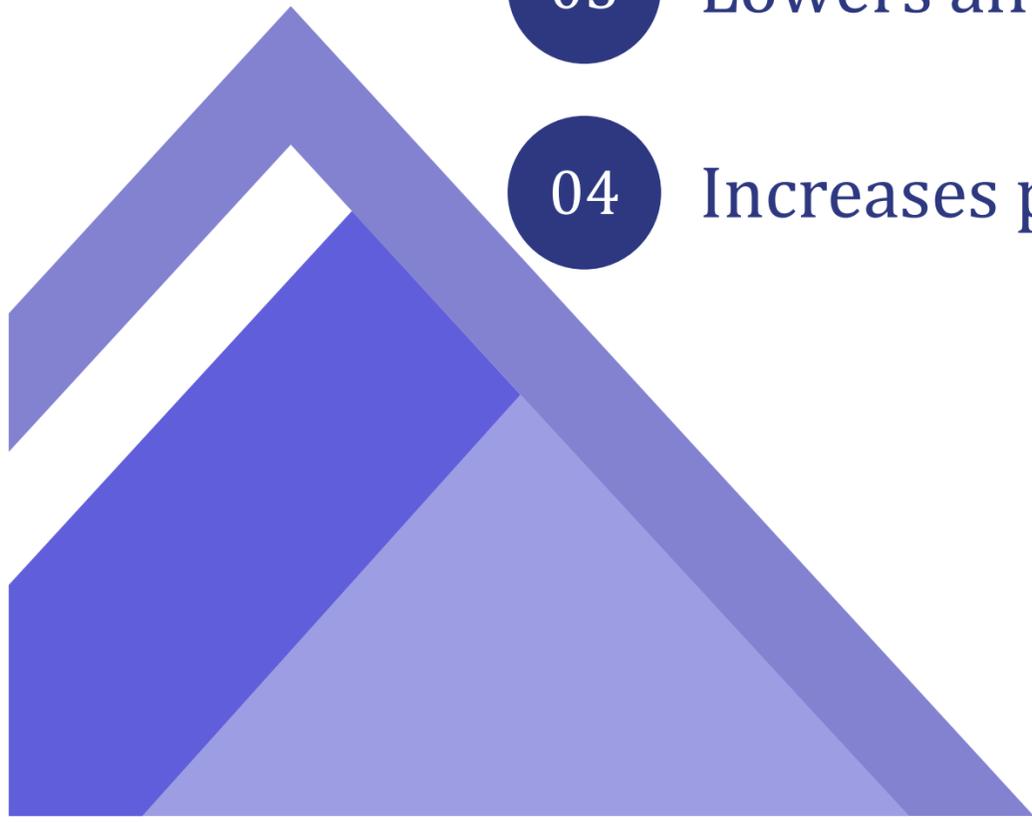
01 Activates prior knowledge

02 Builds curiosity

03 Lowers affective filter

04 Increases participation

05 Sets behavioral expectations

Research shows that attention is highest at the beginning of a session.

STARTER ACTIVITY – "SLEEP & WAKE UP" GAME

How It Works

The teacher says "Sleep!"

Students put their heads down and pretend to sleep.

The teacher secretly turns over one picture on the board.

The teacher says "Wake up!"

Students must identify which picture has been turned over.

Why "Sleep" Is an Effective Starter

Activates visual memory

Trains concentration

Revises vocabulary

Builds suspense

Engages the whole class

Methodological Value of the Starter

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From a cognitive perspective, the activity:	**Encourages quick recall**
Strengthens working memory	**It moves students from passive mode to active mode.**
Develops observation skills	**A well-designed starter is not entertainment — it is cognitive preparation.**

Why Lesson Closures Matter

"Now that we have explored how to start a lesson effectively, let us move to the equally important question — how should we end it?"

The lesson ending:
Reinforces learning
Checks understanding
Builds retention
Provides feedback
Creates a sense of achievement
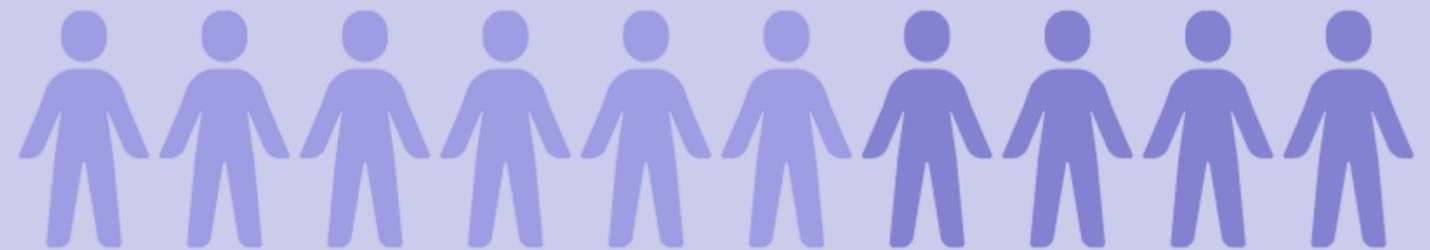
Closer Activity – "Tense Chairs" Game

Two chairs are placed at the front:

One for Present Simple

One for Past Simple

Two students come to the board.

The teacher says a verb form.

If it is past simple → students sit on the Past chair.

If it is present → they sit on the Present chair.

The activity continues with different verbs.

Why This Works as a Closer

01 Revises irregular verbs

02 Checks tense recognition

03 Encourages automaticity

04 Functions as formative assessment

05 Ends the lesson with energy

It allows the teacher to instantly identify misunderstandings.

Cognitive and Pedagogical Analysis

This closer is powerful because it includes:

- ✔ Retrieval practice
- ✔ Dual coding (hearing + movement)
- ✔ Kinesthetic learning
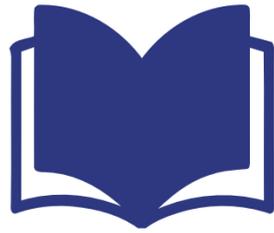- ✔ Rapid grammatical recognition

Students are not reviewing passively — they are retrieving knowledge under time pressure.

That strengthens long-term retention.

Making the Closer Even Stronger

To deepen learning, we can add reflection:
After the game, ask:

Which verbs were the most difficult?

Why are some verbs irregular?

What pattern did you notice?

Now the closer becomes:

- ✔ **Energetic**
- ✔ **Reflective**
- ✔ **Diagnostic**

◇ **Starter**

A lesson starter:

Activates prior knowledge

Builds energy

Creates curiosity

Prepares students for
learning

It sets the tone of the lesson
and mentally prepares
students for new input.

◇ **Closer**

A lesson closer:

Consolidates knowledge

Checks understanding

Strengthens retention

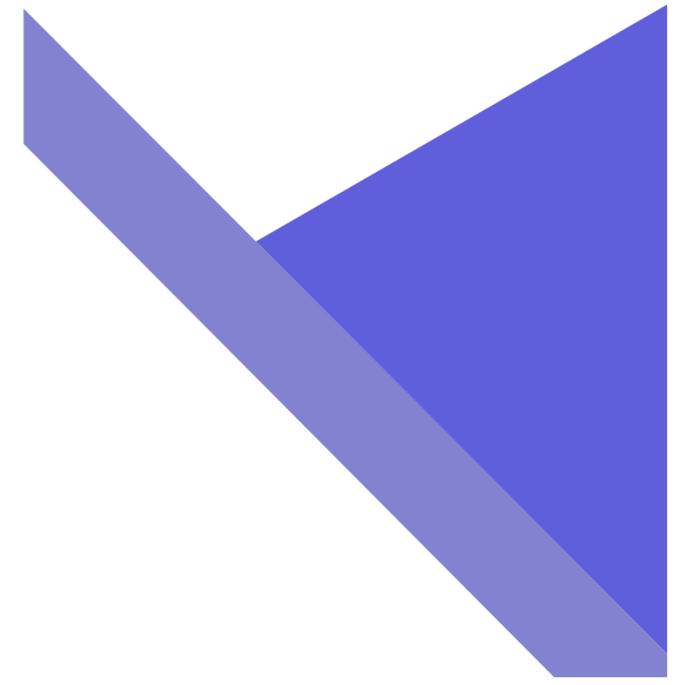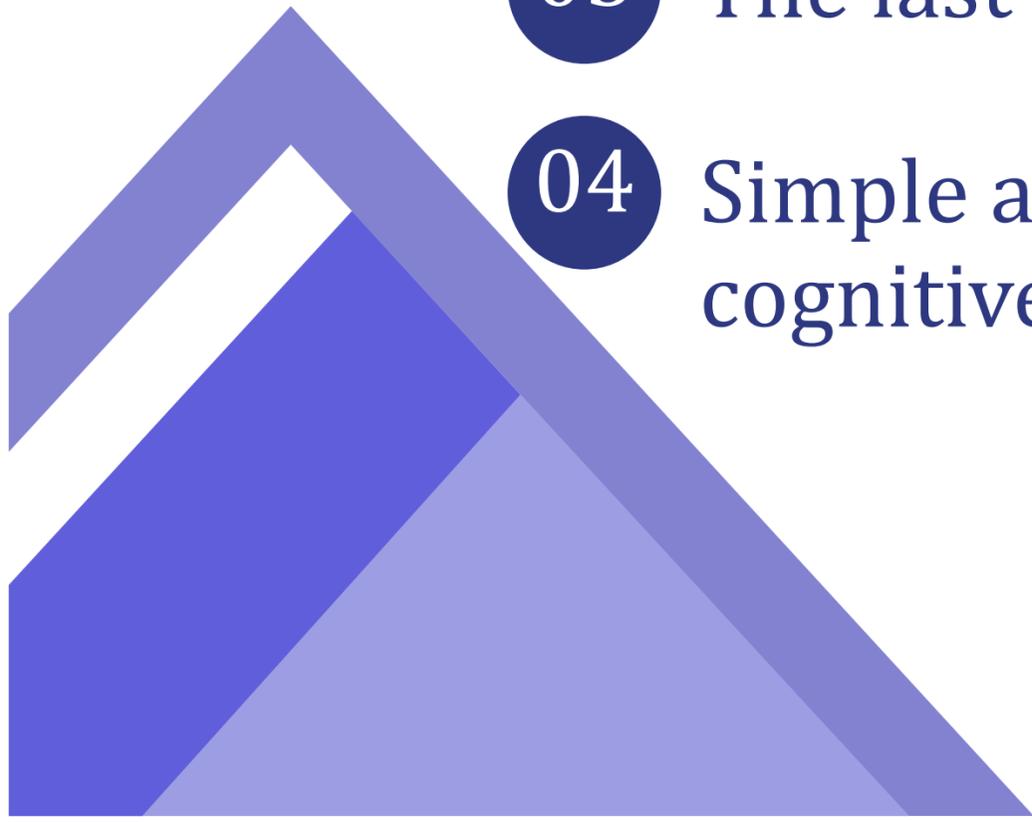Confirms learning

It helps students

process what they have

learned and gives the

lesson a meaningful

sense of completion.

Key Takeaways

01 Engagement must be intentional.

02 The first 5 minutes set the tone.

03 The last 5 minutes shape memory.

04 Simple activities can have deep cognitive impact.

05 Movement increases retention.

We do not simply teach lessons.

We design learning experiences.

When we start with purpose and end with intention, we transform ordinary lessons into meaningful journeys.

Thank You