Lay It on the Line: *An activity to practice* **LIE** vs. **LAY**

**Instructions for the teacher:**

**Step 1** – Draw a person in bed. (Stick figure is fine!)

Ask students: *What is the person doing?* LYING or LAYING?
Confirm that the person is *lying* and review the forms of LIE and LAY.

**Step 2** – Copy the following chart on the board. Challenge students to help you fill in information. Use these prompts:

- If LIE means to be in a flat or resting position, what does LAY mean?
- Which verb takes an object?
- When does a person lie on a bed?
- What do people lay on their beds?
- If I LIE today, what did I do yesterday?
- If I lay my pillow on the bed every day, what did I do yesterday?
- What’s the past participle of LIE/ LAY?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intransitive = no object</th>
<th>Transitive = object</th>
<th>Example:</th>
<th>Base Verb</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIE</td>
<td>“be in a flat or resting position”</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>I lie</strong> on my bed when I’m tired.</td>
<td>LIE</td>
<td>LAY</td>
<td>LAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAY</td>
<td>“put in a flat position”</td>
<td><strong>I lay</strong> my pillow on the bed.</td>
<td>LAY</td>
<td>LAID</td>
<td>LAID</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Leave the chart on the board for reference.

**Step 3** – Below the chart write: _________________ *is/ are lying on the desk.* Tell students that they must identify objects on the desk by listening to a partner describe each one. When an object can be identified, students must use LIE in the present tense.

Have students pair up. One student must sit with his/ her back to the front of the classroom. The other will view the items and describe them one by one. Place 2-3 items on the desk to be identified, for example, a pencil, a bookmark, and a set of keys.

*Model* -
Student A: (set of keys) There’s something lying on the desk. We use these to open doors.
Student B: Uh, I think keys are lying on the desk.
Student A: Yes.
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**Step 4** – Have students switch roles. Repeat Step 2 with a new set of objects. Suggestions: scissors, dictionary, umbrella, mug, earphones, cell phone, gloves, folders, calculator, coins.

**Step 5** – Below the chart write a second statement: *You laid __________ on the desk.* Tell students that they must listen and guess which object you placed on the desk. When an object is identified, students must use LAY in the present tense.

_Model_
Teacher: (set of keys) Nadia, what did I lay on the desk?
Nadia: You laid some coins on the desk.
Teacher: No, I lay something that we use to open doors.
Nadia: I think you laid keys on the desk.
Teacher: Yes.

You can either show a large set of objects or show two objects at a time. Remove all objects from view. Students will either close their eyes or you can set up a screen (use a folder or box). Loudly place one of the objects on the desk behind your screen. Based on the noise made, students must guess what you just laid down. Suggested objects if shown in pairs: keys vs. coins, mug vs. book, pencil vs. calculator, pens vs. paper clips.

**Step 6** – OPTIONAL. Discuss the following expressions. Write the expression on the board and then read the model aloud. Ask students to guess the meaning. If you wish to simplify, scramble the meanings on the board and have students match the meaning to the expression as you read each model aloud.

1. Paul decided to **lay it on the line** and tell Megan everything. She actually was very understanding and didn’t get as mad as he had thought she would be when she learned the truth. = *tell the truth and risk upsetting someone*
2. George **laid down the law** with his son and forbid him to stay out past midnight. = *state as an official rule*
3. Trudy had no sympathy for her brother. She had warned him that lying to his teachers would get him into trouble. She said, “**You’ve made your bed. Now lie in it.**” (Note there are variations.) = *deal with the consequences of your actions*
4. “Well, I know it’s not good news, so just tell me quickly. Come on. **Lay it on me.**” = *tell information that the listener will not like*
5. Why did you tell everyone you had experience when you obviously don’t? You were **lying like a rug!** = *clearly not telling the truth*

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