



## Games for Vocabulary

Use these games as a fun way to practise general vocabulary skills, such as word finding strategies e.g. 'what do you do with it', 'where would you see it', 'describe it', and words they have learnt.

### Collage

Use topic pictures or words to play this odd one out type game

Write a central theme in the middle of the page – E.g. food

Provide a choice of pictures from that and other topics

Encourage children to stick the words which relate to the central theme onto the paper and explain why they do or don't go there.

Make it harder by changing the topic from general themes to more specific, e.g. 'things you find in school' vs 'equipment you use for science'

### Thinking round the word

- Pick a vocabulary word
- Use any fun turn taking game e.g. pop up pirate.
- Each child has a 'go' as a reward for each try (e.g. dice games).
- Using topic vocabulary pictures or words, practice:
  - ❖ Saying as many things:
    - you can **do** with / to it - e.g. 'knife' – **cutting, spreading, mending** (for NOUNS / NAMING TOPIC WORDS)
    - which can be involved with the word - e.g. 'cut' – hair, meat, prices.  
(for VERBS / ACTION TOPIC WORDS)
    - share the quality – e.g. 'hot' – **fire, sunshine, radiator, curry,**  
(For ADJECTIVES / DESCRIBING TOPIC WORDS)
    - words within the same category e.g. 'Knife' – **fork, spoon, chopsticks,**  
(for ALL TYPES of WORDS)
  - ❖ Saying the category – e.g. – 'giraffe' – wild animal
  - ❖ Putting them in a sentence that makes sense



- ❖ Finding rhyming words
- ❖ Finding words which start with the same sound

### Word associations

- Pick a topic picture or word and think of 5 associations e.g. farm- pig, cow, farmer, tractor, barn.
- Pick a word and say it. The next person says an associated word e.g. car- "plane". The person after that finds an association with the second word e.g. plane- "holiday". Write them down and make a sentence or a very short story.

### What am I

Gather a list of words/pictures related to your selected topic words. Describe a word/picture without saying what it is e.g. target is dog "it's black, has 4 legs, it lives in a house, it goes 'woof'"

- Make it easier – give the number of syllables or first sound clues
- Make it harder by not having pictures to help with the choice.

### Quick fire

- Encourage the children to think of as many words they can which share an attribute / something in common:
  - Are hot
  - You find in the kitchen
  - Smell nice
  - Tools

### Block Busters

Chose a topic picture / vocabulary word and place it on the table

{Name the picture}

Draw the next picture or word. {Name the picture}

Place it next to another picture if you can find an association (e.g. they are both animals)

Make it easier - Use category cue cards to help find a link

**Make it harder – List five other words with that link.**



## Barrier games

Have a barrier between two people. Provide some topic words / pictures.

One person draws a picture with the topic vocabulary words involved.

That child describes it to their partner – who has to draw the same picture from instructions given.

Compare at the end – do they look the same?

Talk about what went right / wrong and what should have been said

## Forgetful Teacher

Explain that you are a forgetful teacher and you need help to try to remember the right word sometimes.

- Say a sentence which has an obvious lead in to one of the vocabulary words. E.g. 'A post office is where you buy .....

'A train and a plane are both types of.....'

- Let the child be the teacher. Give the child TOPIC pictures and let them start to give a sentence – can you find the missing TOPIC word.

Use the same ideas to practise vocabulary from literacy / stories. Re-tell a story from carpet time but miss out the important key words.

## Guess / Describe

Place topic words or pictures in a bag or box. Taking it in turns, pick out one out and describe it to a partner. Do not use the word or part of the word itself.

- Make it easier: Use category cue cards to help e.g. what do you do with it, where would you see it, describe it
- Make it harder: State a key word which must not be used in the description (e.g. target = 'sheep' avoid 'woolly'
  - Restrict the way you can describe i.e. gesture / drawing only.
  - Give a time limit, E.g. as many items as possible in 1 minute.

## The opposite world

Think of an alien world where they always use the opposite word

Using familiar topic vocabulary encourage children to work out what the alien would call it...



E.g. boil – cool / freeze

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## REINFORCEMENT

Children need to **hear**, **think about** and **say** vocabulary words **frequently** in order to remember what they mean and use them when they need them.

General tips to help this would include:

### **Practise vocabulary in different settings with different people**

- **At home** – use a school-home topic wordbook to inform parents of the words to be learnt and practised.
- **At school – in small groups** – vocabulary can be pre-prepared and practised in advance of the lesson. Teachers can check in lessons how well these have been retained.
- **At school – in the classroom** with the teacher and class support. Many vocabulary concepts need to be learnt in context (e.g. 'evaporation'). Often, they require physical props prepared in advance. These need to be planned with support staff in advance
- **In different tasks:**

Identifying pictures from the spoken word "which one's a ....?"

Producing the words from pictures or description 'It's a .....

In reading books, telling and writing stories

Listening to and giving instructions

Asking and answering questions.

Everyday situations – in and out of school