

Spelling Game

Your students will enjoy playing this at breaktime too!

Level	Pre-intermediate onwards
Activity type	Pairwork/competitive activity
Equipment/ Materials	None

- Divide the class into teams. Each team takes it in turns to add a letter to a word. Each letter must contribute to a word in English, but the team which *completes* a word loses and the opposing team is awarded a point.
- For example:

Team A says 'A.' Team B says 'N.'
Team B loses and Team A wins one point.

Team B says 'C.' Team A says 'A.'
Team B says 'R.' Team B loses and Team A wins one point.
- If a team feels that the opposing team has used a letter which does not build a word in English, they may challenge. If the opposing team is unable to produce a word, the team challenging gains one point. If a challenge is incorrect, the other team gains one point.
- For example:

Team A says 'M'. Team B says 'Z'.
Team A challenges and wins a point.

Team B says 'A'. Team A says 'A'.
Team B challenges. Team A says 'Aardvark' and gains one point.
- The best way to explain this game to your class is to demonstrate it.

Alphabet Race

Simple but effective and can be used for revision or as a warmer for a new vocabulary area

Level	Elementary onwards
Activity type	Competitive activity/game
Equipment/ Materials	None

- Put the students into pairs or small groups. Ask one student in each group to write the alphabet vertically down the side of a piece of paper (or you may wish to photocopy some sheets in advance).
- Write a topic on the board and give the students a time limit. They have to write one word related to that topic beginning with each letter of the alphabet on their sheet of paper. Check the spelling or tell the students to check it in dictionaries. The group with the most words wins.
- One way of extending the activity is to circulate the sheets round different groups. The students note down any new vocabulary and may challenge any inappropriate words or spelling mistakes. Expect heated debate.

The Rhinoceros Game

A livelier version of the previous activity – good with small classes, and very popular with children

Level	All levels
Activity type	Competitive activity/game
Equipment/ Materials	Different coloured board pens

- Put your students into two teams. Ask them to come up with a long word, for example *rhinoceros*. Write this word down the left side of the board and again down the centre, once for each team. Make sure that you have left enough space between them for each team to write a word across.
- Tell the students that each team has to write one word across for each letter of the long word. Limit the words to a particular group: at lower levels, for example, verbs, nouns etc; at higher levels, words connected with crime, cars etc.

For example:

Robber
House-breaker
Innocent
N ...
- Give each team a different coloured board pen and ask them to go to the back of the classroom. One member of each team then runs to the front of the class to write a word. He or she runs back to hand the pen to another member of the team. The first team to complete all the words across wins.

Busybodies

*Students insist on sidetracking you?
Take advantage*

Level	Elementary onwards
Activity type	Pairwork
Equipment/ Materials	None

- Allocate each of the students a question word, for example 'Why?' 'Where?' 'Did?' Explain that you are going to tell them about your morning, starting from when you woke up. Their task is to stop you arriving at the school by asking you too many questions. Give them a time limit. Make it longer if the class is more advanced.
- Once you have demonstrated the activity, you can get the students to play it in pairs. But this time the students are not limited to one question word.

Thanks to Richard Side for this idea.

Just a Minute

A variation on the well-known BBC radio show

Level	Intermediate onwards
Activity type	Competitive activity/game
Equipment/ Materials	A watch (a stopwatch is ideal); cards

- Write on cards some topics that your class will feel confident talking about, for example 'My house' 'My last holiday'. You may wish to use the cards for Summaries Circle (*Circles*).
- Ask a more confident student to take a card at random and read the topic aloud to the group. Explain that the aim of the game is for this student to talk on this subject for one minute without hesitating or making a serious grammatical error.
- Tell the other students to challenge if they feel that rules have been broken. You will need to adjudicate here. If the challenge is accepted, the challenger has to speak on the same subject for the remaining time. The student speaking at the end of the minute wins a point.
- Continue the game with another student and a new topic card.

Anything in the World

Twenty Questions or Animal, Vegetable or Mineral – classic practice of forming questions

Level	Elementary onwards
Activity type	Competitive activity/game
Equipment/ Materials	None

- Think of an object, animate or inanimate, anything in the world. Tell the students that they have to find out what you are thinking of by asking 'yes/no' questions. If you like, you can limit the number of questions, or have a time limit.
- The student who asks the final question, for example 'Is it an ant?' then thinks of the next 'thing'. The game continues.