

Activity Type

Vocabulary Game:
guessing vocabulary from
clues (group work)

Focus

Vocabulary revision

Aim

To guess words from
clues given by the
teacher.

Preparation

A copy of the clues

Level

Intermediate (B1-B2)

Time

25 minutes

Introduction

This ESL vocabulary game comes from an English TV game show. The game can be used as a general knowledge quiz or to revise vocabulary.

Procedure

Draw a five-by-five hexagon on the board.

Write a different letter of the alphabet in each hexagon.

Divide the class into two teams.

Allocate each team with a colour, e.g. red and blue.

The two teams then decide which direction they want to play - top to bottom or left to right.

The aim of the game is to connect the hexagons from one side of the grid to the other.

Tell the students that this is a fairly strategic game, and they need to choose their moves carefully in order to win the game, blocking the other team when necessary.

Start with the center hexagon.

Give a clue for the letter in the hexagon, e.g. if the letter was B, the clue might be: A person who bakes bread.

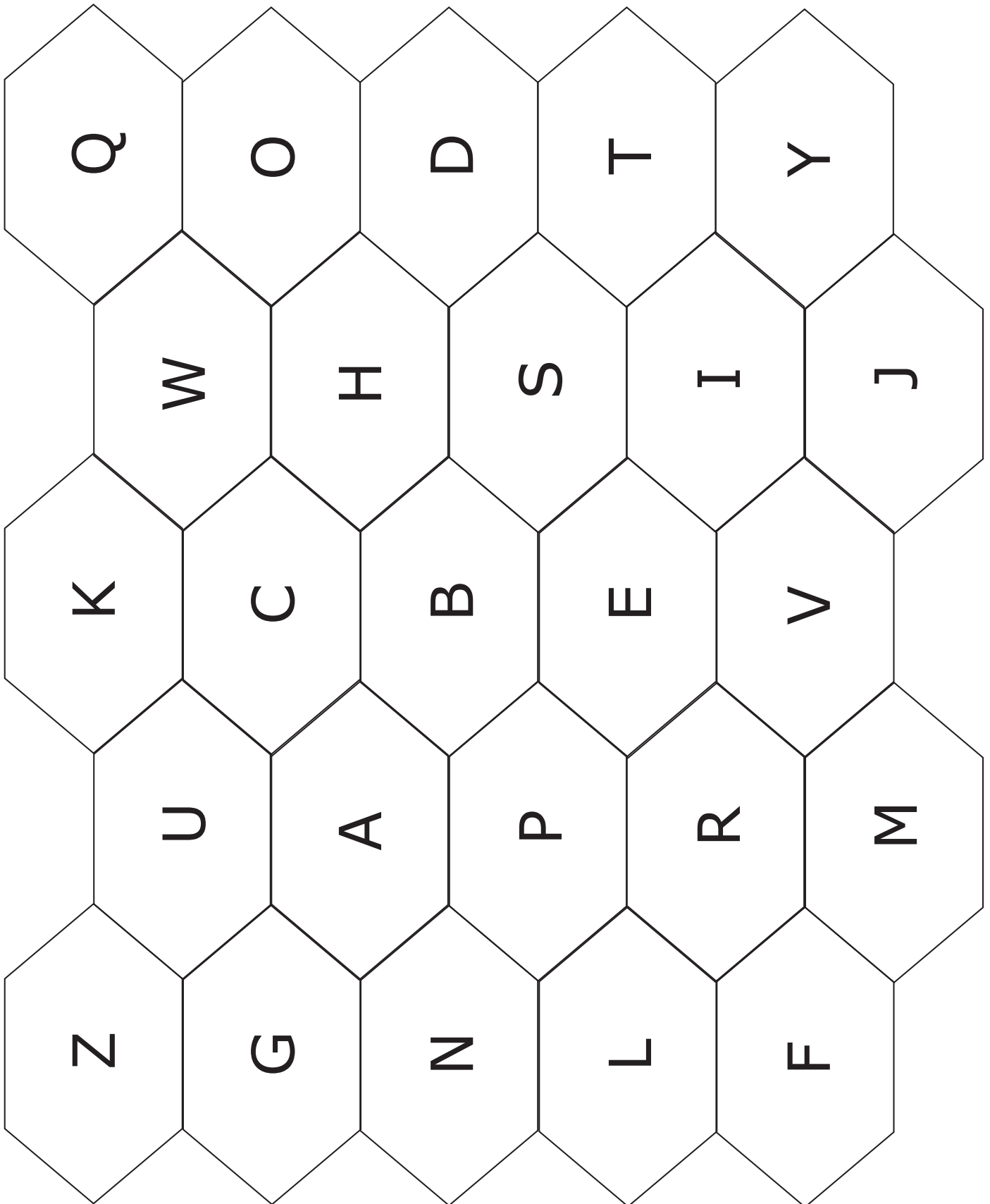
The two teams then race to answer, e.g. baker.

The first team to answer correctly wins the hexagon, and it is coloured accordingly.

The winning team then chooses the next hexagon.

Give a clue for the letter in that hexagon, and both teams race to answer as before.

The first team to connect their hexagons from top to bottom or left to right wins the game.



A

Absent: Not present

Always: This A will last forever

Axe: This A is used for cutting wood

Air: This A is a mixture of oxygen, nitrogen and other gases

Act: This A is what you might do in a Shakespeare play or in a movie

Atlas: A book that contains pictures of maps of the world

Auction: A place where secondhand goods are sold to buyers who offer the highest prices

Accelerate: This happens to you when you press your foot on the gas pedal

Active: This A is always lively, never passive

Adjust: This A means to change the position of something

Advance: This A means to move forward or attack

B

Before: Not after

Baker: A person who bakes bread

Bee: This small insect likes to make honey and can sting you

Border: The line between two countries

Blame: To accuse somebody of causing a problem

Buck: One dollar or a male deer

Buddha: He who found enlightenment

Bent: Not straight

Beaver: An animal that likes to construct dams

Bond: Either a guarantee or something to glue things together

Bankrupt: When a firm runs out of money it can sometimes go this!

C

Close: Not so far away

Capital: Lima, Washington, Paris, Bangkok...

Company: An enterprise

Clarify: To make something more visible

Circle: A shape whose area is 3.1415 times its radius squared

Century: One hundred years

Caffeine: The stuff in coffee that keeps you awake

Caesarian: When a woman gives birth via operation

Camp: To sleep outside in a tent

Climate: This C determines how much sun, wind and rain your country will get

Creative: A person who has a lot of new ideas might be described like this

D

Decade: Ten years

Develop: This D usually appears with research

Dyke: A mound made of earth designed to prevent flooding

Duck: A bird that floats on water

Duplicate: To copy

Dozen: 12 or incase of a baker, 13

Dough: Soft material used to make bread

Disadvantage: Opposite of benefit

Dear: A word that often appears first in a letter

Drip: This small drop of water might appear if you don't shut the tap off fully

Dungeon: An underground room used to keep prisoners in the old days

E

Eager: A word that means very keen or enthusiastic

Eagle: A bird of prey

Entire: Encompassing the whole range

Enlarge: To make bigger

Engaged: Two people can be this

Enormous: Very large

Eskimo: A person who lives in an igloo

Escape: This E is when a person or several people break out of prison

Error: This is a mistake

Expert: A person who knows more than most about a subject

Empty: Vacant

F

Factory: A place where goods are manufactured

Fiancé: The person who you intend to marry

Fertile: Land is said to be this if it yields abundant crops

Fluoride: Stuff they put in toothpaste to protect your teeth

Fountain: A place where water shoots out of the ground into the air

Frequent: Often

Freeze: This happens to water when it drops below zero degrees Celsius

Furious: A person who is very angry could be said to be this

Fuse: You might have to change this when the lights go out

Future: Comes after the present

Florist: A person who stocks and sells flowers

G

Grin: A smile

Germ: A small living organism that causes disease

Grease: A lubricant that may appear in your hair or be put in an engine

Germany: This G fought and lost two world wars

Grandfather: Your father's father

Gypsy: A person who travels around the country in a caravan

Gym: An indoor place where exercise is done

Guest: A person who comes to your home at your invitation

Genocide: Mass killing of human beings

Genuine: The real thing, not imitation

Guess: To make an assumption about something without any evidence

H

Hard: Not soft

Help: Aid

Highlight: The most exciting parts of a sports match

Hammock: A bed made of string that is hung between two trees

Holiday: Christmas, Easter, New Year.... we all like these

Hijack: When terrorists storm a building or aircraft and take people hostage

Hinge: A small metal piece that allows a door to be swung open or closed

History: Details of what happened in the past

Heroin: A very addictive drug

Hungry: State of being after not eating for several hours

Hour: Three thousand six hundred seconds

I

Improve: To get better

Inaudible: Something that cannot be heard

Idol: Somebody who people worship

Identity: ID

Illiterate: A person who is unable to read or write

Individual: Just one person

Innocent: A verdict handed down by a jury when they think the suspect is not guilty

Intentional: On purpose

Itch: A ticklish sensation on the skin that makes you want to scratch

Iron: Fe

Inaccurate: Not quite correct

J

Joke: A story or tale designed to make someone laugh

Jigsaw: A game made of pieces that fit together to form a picture

Javelin: A long, thin spear thrown as far as possible during an Olympic event

Juvenile: This J is a young teenager who is not quite an adult

Jupiter: The largest planet in our solar system

Jail: A place to hold criminals

Jungle: Tarzan's home

Join: To connect two pieces together

Jewel: A precious stone that could be found in a crown or a ring

Junior: Not senior

Jet: A very fast airplane used in modern warfare

K

Knock: To hit your hand on the door before you enter a room

Kiss: This K happens when two people touch lips

Kerosene: A flammable liquid used in heaters and burners

Knit: To make an item of clothing from wool

Kangaroo: An animal that jumps quite high and is usually seen in Australia

Kingfisher: A small brightly coloured bird that feeds on fish in rivers and lakes

Kilometre: Metric distance used to measure distances between cities

Kinetics: The science that studies movement

Kilowatt: A unit of energy

Kilt: A traditional item of clothing worn by Scotsmen

Koran: The holy book for Muslims

L

Love: This L could appear at first sight

Lock: A metal piece used to secure a door

Luxury: Great comfort which is provided by wealth

Lunch: A meal that you eat in the middle of the day

Luck: A fortunate happening

Lyrics: The words of a song

Loyalty: A bond between two or more people that prevents them from betraying each other

Lottery: A game of chance that depends on you having the correct number

Lecture: A formal speech presented to an audience at a university

Legitimate: Legal or correct

Leap: To jump through the air over a great distance

M

Market: A place where goods are bought and sold
Manual: A book that describes how to operate something
Mistake: An act that was not intended
Mismanage: To control or lead a business or group badly
Multiple: Not just one but many
Myth: A tale that has no truth to it
Mystery: Something that defies all explanation
Mortgage: A special loan taken out in order to buy a house
Modern: Up to date and trendy
Moment: A small amount of time
Mist: A thin fog that usually appears around a mountain top

N

Nervous: A person might feel this before an interview or exam
Novelty: Something that is new and has never been seen before
Nicotine: This N is the addictive substance that is found in cigarettes
Nightmare: A frightening dream
Newspaper: This N is black and white, and read all over
Navigate: To choose the best route so that a vehicle will arrive at the correct destination
Nurse: A person who looks after you when you are in hospital
Niece: Your sister's daughter
Nightclub: A place for drinking and dancing after dark
Neither: Not both
Narrate: To tell a story

O

Orange: A fruit and a colour
Object: A thing that can be seen or touched but is not alive
Occasionally: This O happens from time to time
Once: One time and no more
Onion: A vegetable that can make you cry
Orchestra: A group of musicians who play classical music
Oven: A place where food is put in order to be cooked
Overcrowded: When there are too many people in one place
OPEC: An organization that regulates oil prices and production
Ozone: A protective layer high above the earth that is slowly disappearing
Owl: A bird that flies at night and hunts small animals

P

Paint: This P is spread on surfaces to change their colour
Palm: The inside of your hand
Package: An item that is wrapped in paper and sent through the post
Page: One of many thin sheets in a book
Panic: What passengers might do when told the plane is going to crash
Paradox: A mystery
Parallel: Two lines are said to be this when the distance between them stays constant
Pound: Could be a measure of weight or a currency
Praise: Words that you say to a person when they do a good job
Pregnant: A woman's state when she has a child inside her
Punishment: Something that is given to a person who has been convicted of a crime

Q

Quack: The sound a duck makes

Quarrel: An argument between two people

Quest: A search for something

Quarry: A big hole in the ground where rocks and minerals are dug out

Quick: Not slow

Question: This is one

Quintet: A group of five

Quote: A direct repetition of what somebody said

Query: A question especially to a database

Quake: Is measured by the Richter scale

Quagmire: A large area of soft, wet ground

R

Recycle: To reuse something by sending it back to the manufacturing line

Red: One colour of the Japanese flag

Rectangle: A four-sided shape that is not quite a square

Region: An area of a country

Remain: To stay behind while others leave

Remember: To keep in your memory people or happenings from the past

Resignation: An official statement that a person is going to quit their job

Rib: One of 12 pairs in your body

Rice: Small white grains that are the staple diet of many families in Asia

Rifle: A gun that can shoot over long distances due to its length

Roam: To wander about with no clear purpose

S

Silver: A metal commonly found in rings

Sin: This S is a crime

Silence: This S is golden

Simple: Not complicated

Skeleton: This is the frame that holds your body up

Slam: To shut loudly with great force

Spanner: An instrument used to undo bolts

Spinster: An old unmarried woman

Spokesman: A person who makes announcements for a group or organization

Stars: These Ss look very small but are actually very large

Safe: A place where money can be stored to prevent it from being stolen

T

Tactic: A special strategy used by a team to win a game

Tarmac: A black substance that is laid down as the final surface of a road

Terminal: The final stop for trains, coaches and airplanes

Theatre: A place where entertainment such as plays and movies are shown

Tide: This T comes in and goes out due to the influence of the moon

Torpedo: A missile that is fired from a submarine

Twin: One of two babies born on the same day to the same mother

Typical: Usual

Turkey: A large bird usually eaten at Christmas time

Treble: This knob is usually found next to the bass knob on your stereo

Telephone: A machine for speaking to somebody who is a long way away

U

Useful: Something that is not redundant
Uranium: A radioactive element used in nuclear weapons
Urgent: This U is very important and must be carried out at once
Unique: There is only one of these
Uncle: Your father's brother
Udder: The place where milk is taken from a cow
UFO: An object that flies and has not been identified
Ultimate: The last or the best
Union Jack: The national flag of Britain
Undeveloped: Without industry or modern farming
Underground: This is usually where the subway can be found

V

Vacation: A time when you stop working and travel
Vein: A tube that carries red liquid around your body
Vehicle: A machine that will take you to work in the morning
Vendor: Somebody who sells things
Velocity: Distance travel divided by time
Vendetta: An act that gets revenge for a previous act
Vinegar: A brown liquid that turns to acid after prolonged exposure to air
Visa: Something that you need if you want to travel to another country
Vineyard: A place where grapes are grown
Vat: A large barrel or container for holding liquids
Valley: The land lying between two hills or mountains

W

Wall: There are usually four of them which support the ceiling
War: When two countries fight each other
Warm: The state that water passes through on its way to becoming hot
Wedding: A special occasion to celebrate the joining together of a man and a woman
Wheel: Your car has four of these
Whale: A mammal that lives underwater
Window: An area that allows you to see the outside world
Widow: A woman whose husband has died
Witness: A person who gives evidence at a trial
Wrist: This connects your hand to your arm
Wrong: Not right

X

X-ray: This X is used to determine if you have broken any bones
Xmas: This X celebrates the birth of Jesus
Xerox: This X is the name of a company and also the name of a process meaning to copy
Xenophobia: Unreasonable fear and dislike of foreigners or strangers
Xanadu: A place of great beauty, luxury and contentment
Xavier: Spanish Jesuit missionary
X-axis: The line that usually runs along the bottom of a graph
Xenon: Heavy, colourless, inert gas
X-rated: A movie that has sexually explicit scenes

Y

Yacht: A boat powered by wind

Yard: Three feet

Yawn: When you open your mouth to relieve your tiredness

Yield: To allow someone to pull in front of you when driving

Yoghurt: A dairy product that comes in many flavours

Yolk: The yellow part of an egg

Year: Normally eight thousand seven hundred and sixty hours

Yeast: A form of very small plant life that is used to make beer

Yen: Japanese currency

Yuletide: The Christmas holiday

Yuppie: A young person in a professional job with a high income

Z

Zoo: A place where animals are kept

Zaire: Country in Africa

Zebra: A horse with black and white stripes

Zippo: A well-known make of lighter

Zealot: A person who shows excessive enthusiasm for something

Zero: Nothing, naught

Zeus: The God of the heavens and supreme deity of the ancient Greeks

Zap: To attack, destroy and defeat something with sudden force and speed

ZIP code: A system used in the US to facilitate delivery of mail

Zodiac: There are twelve signs in this

Zombie: The body of a dead person brought back to life