

Activity Type

Speaking or writing activity, group work

Language Focus

Vocabulary revision

Word order

Sentence structure

Aim

To think of words or sentences beginning with certain letters

Preparation

A pack of playing cards

Level

Elementary and above

Time

20 minutes

Introduction

This ESL vocabulary game is useful for revising words. The game can also be used to practice word order and sentence structure with more advanced students.

Procedure

Tell the students that they are going to play a vocabulary game using a pack of playing cards.

Write the following on the board:

Ace – A, N	6 – F, S	Jack – K, X
2 – B, O	7 – G, T	Queen – L, Y
3 – C, P	8 – H, U	King – M, Z
4 – D, Q	9 – I, V	
5 – E, R	10 – J, W	

Explain that each card represents two letters of the alphabet.

Divide the students into teams of three or four.

Choose a category, e.g. verbs.

Shuffle the cards and turn the top card over. Show the card to the first team and set a time limit, e.g. five seconds.

The team then races to say a category word beginning with one of the letters the card represents.

For example, if the card is an ace, the students race to say a category word beginning with A or N.

If the team is able to come up with a suitable word before the time limit has been reached, they score a point.

The game is then repeated with the second team and so on.

The team with the highest score at the end of the game wins.

For higher-level students, set a time limit and turn over ten cards.

Have the teams write down a sentence using words beginning with the given letters in the order they are drawn from the pack.

Afterwards, the teams read their sentences aloud and score points according to how many words are in their sentence.