



Using the *Game* in Classrooms to Promote Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar
and Story-Telling



Recommended Grade Levels: 2nd grade and up

Subjects Enhanced by Play: Language Arts

Applicable Concepts, Skills and Strategies: Vocabulary development, grammar identification, thinking quickly, creative writing, cooperative teamwork, self-confidence

Objectives:

Students will identify words along with their definitions and parts of speech, alphabetize, use words in oral and written forms and explore homographs and rhymes.

Components:

- Classroom lessons
- Bibliography
- Worksheets

Materials needed:

- Word Shout game(s)
- Scratch paper

Warm up:

Familiarize students with the game play by rolling the dice and asking students to quickly identify any words the dice may form. Ask them to take the dice as they announce words they see with those dice. For example, if they see an L, A and Y, they can say the word "lay" and take those three dice. Whoever says words first gets to take those dice. If you decide to keep score, each die is worth one point. Roll all dice again once they have all been used or no more words can be formed with the remaining dice. You decide whether to use one set or multiple sets of the dice, depending on how many students you have playing. Encourage students as they find words quickly.

Ask students why they think some letters on the dice are blue and some are red. The answer is that the red letters are vowels and the blue letters are consonants. Review the difference between these two as needed.

Activities:

1. Spelling Practice

Have students work individually or in groups. Each student/group should have a set of Word Shout dice. Stand in front of the class and call out spelling words. You may use the list below or customize to match the spelling words you are working on in class. Students may use scratch paper to write out the word, trying to correctly spell it, then they must roll the dice to try and get the letters on the dice to spell it, setting aside letters needed with each roll. You may make it a race to see who can spell it first, or just an activity to practice spelling. Once everyone has spelled the word with their dice, write the word on the board for everyone to see the correct spelling and compare to their own spelling. You may choose to check and keep track of who spelled the word correctly, or keep it merely as a practice activity and allow your spelled word on the board to act as the students' correction.

sat	dime	turn
grab	sky	from
band	buy	your
trick	nose	dirt
stop	joke	grow
robot	float	very
made	far	only
day	party	two
tree	over	pen

2. Define it

Gather a group of students, and using one or more sets of dice, roll them on the table. Ask the first student to find a word using the letters of the dice that are showing. The word must have at least three letters (no one- or two-letter words). Once they have correctly spelled a word, ask them what the word means. You may want to open the question of the word's definition up to the whole group to engage all students. Continue until each student has had at least one opportunity to spell a word with the dice.

Homework or class assignment: Ask students to match words with their definitions on the worksheet at the end of these lesson ideas. You may also make up your own worksheet to correlate with any words you are studying in class.

3. Homographs for Laughs

Following the exercise above, ask students if the words spelled have more than one meaning. For example, bat is a piece of sports equipment used in baseball, and it is also a type of winged animal. Talk about homographs and how homographs differ from synonyms in that homographs are one word with two different meanings and synonyms are two words with one meaning.

4. A Rhyme in Time

In a group, have students take turns rolling the letter dice and finding a word. Once a word has been found, ask the group to announce a word that rhymes with it. Discuss rhymes and how, even though the words may sound alike, they probably do not have similar meanings.

Homework or class assignment: Using the worksheet at the end of these lesson ideas, ask students to write words that rhyme with each word on the sheet.

5. Alpha Order

Gather a group of students and using one or more sets of dice, roll them on the table. Ask two students to each find one word using the letters showing. Once both have correctly spelled a word, ask the students whose word goes first, alphabetically. Set that word aside and have a third student roll the rest of the dice and try to spell a new word. Then ask which goes first alphabetically—the new word or the one set aside. Continue the game until all students have had a turn to spell and alphabetize words.

Homework or class assignment: Using the worksheet at the end of these lesson ideas, ask students to write the words in alphabetical order.

6. What is it?

Gather a group of students and using one or more sets of dice, roll them on the table. Ask the first student to find a word using the letters of the dice that are showing. Once they have correctly spelled a word, ask them what part of speech that word belongs to—is it a noun, action verb, adjective, adverb, etc.? Discuss the different parts of speech and how they are important in a sentence. You may want to open the question of the word's part of speech to the whole group to engage all students. Continue until each student has had at least one opportunity to spell a word with the dice.

Once a student has identified a word as a noun, verb, etc., you may want to ask them to tell you another word of that same category. For example, if they spelled "run" and identified it as a verb, you may ask them to tell you another verb, and they may answer, "walk."

Homework or class assignment: Ask students to write a sentence for each word you write on the sheet located at the end of these lesson ideas (you may want to use current spelling words your class is studying). Each sentence should include a noun, a verb, an adjective and an adverb. When sentences are complete, students will mark them according to the following legend:

- Underline nouns
- Circle verbs
- Put parentheses around adjectives
- Draw a square around adverbs

7. Use it in a Sentence

Have students take turns rolling the dice and picking out a word from the letters showing. Once they have a correctly spelled word, ask them to make up a sentence using that word. It can be a silly sentence or a serious one, as long as they correctly form the sentence with a subject and verb. For example, if the word they formed was "dog," they may make up a sentence such as, "My dog is brown" or "The dog laughed at my joke."

8. Expand on the Story

Using the exercise above, have students try to create a story and continue on other students' sentences. For example, Ryan rolls the dice, spells the word "dog" and makes up the sentence "My dog was hungry." Then Jessica rolls all of the dice, spells the word "mom" and makes up the sentence, "I asked mom to hand me his food bowl." Dan then rolls all of the dice and spells the word "play" and makes up the sentence, "Then we went out to play." And so on.

A list of relevant reading:

2nd Grade Writing Practice by Terry Cooper, published by Scholastic, 2003.

Eight Ate: A Feast of Homonym Riddles by Marvin Terban, published by Sandpiper, 2007.

Scholastic Dictionary of Synonyms, Antonyms, and Homonyms published by Scholastic Reference, 2001.

Magic Story Starters by Linda Polan, published by Good Year Books 1997.

Make Me Giggle: Writing Your Own Silly Story by Nancy Loewen, published by Picture Window Books, 2009.

Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein, published by Harper & Row, 1974 (Harper Collins, 2000, 2004).

Amelia Bedelia (and all the sequels) by Peggy Parish, published by Scholastic, 1969.

Skill Builders Second Grade Reading Comprehension published by Rainbow Bridge, 2004.

Name _____

Vocabulary

Match the words on the left with the definitions on the right by writing the correct number next to the definitions.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1. busy | ___ a person who is related to others blood or marriage |
| 2. silly | ___ fresh or recent |
| 3. present | ___ a long, narrow knitted garment worn around the neck |
| 4. above | ___ to extend from one area to another |
| 5. crawl | ___ foolish |
| 6. minute | ___ a thick mixture of flour /meal and liquid used for baking |
| 7. dough | ___ something given as a gift |
| 8. relative | ___ move slowly close to the ground; creep |
| 9. new | ___ celestial body that revolves around a star |
| 10. scarf | ___ extremely shiny or bright |
| 11. planet | ___ involved in doing something |
| 12. brilliant | ___ a unit of time equal to 60 seconds |
| 13. interrupt | ___ at a higher place |
| 14. advantage | ___ to cause to stop |
| 15. stretch | ___ benefit or profit; gain |

Answer Key
Vocabulary

Match the words on the left with the definitions on the right by writing the correct number next to the definitions.

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. busy | 8. a person who is related to others blood or marriage |
| 2. silly | 9. fresh or recent |
| 3. present | 10. a long, narrow knitted garment worn around the neck |
| 4. above | 15. to extend from one area to another |
| 5. crawl | 2. foolish |
| 6. minute | 7. a thick mixture of flour /meal and liquid used for baking |
| 7. dough | 3. something given as a gift |
| 8. relative | 5. move slowly close to the ground; creep |
| 9. new | 11. celestial body that revolves around a star |
| 10. scarf | 12. extremely shiny or bright |
| 11. planet | 1. involved in doing something |
| 12. brilliant | 6. a unit of time equal to 60 seconds |
| 13. interrupt | 13. at a higher place |
| 14. advantage | 4. to cause to stop |
| 15. stretch | 14. benefit or profit; gain |

Assignment to accompany activity #4

Name _____

Rhymes

Write one word that rhymes with each word.

cat _____

dog _____

meat _____

nail _____

nose _____

my _____

can _____

near _____

toe _____

chip _____

fox _____

chair _____

top _____

Answer Key

Alphabetizing

Write the words in alphabetical order.

weather

couple

mittens

argue

tour

produce

diamond

wrinkle

slowly

grown

family

larger

argue

couple

diamond

family

grown

larger

mittens

produce

slowly

tour

weather

wrinkle

Name _____

Parts of Speech

Write one sentence for each word, making sure that your sentence includes a noun, a verb, an adjective and an adverb.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Now, underline the nouns, circle the verbs, put parentheses around adjectives and draw a square or rectangle around adverbs.