

Word Quest!

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Activity Summary

In this activity, learners of all levels play in teams to describe and guess vocabulary words. In addition to utilizing circumlocution to describe the words, players create other specifications to challenge their peers, such as using gestures or speaking only in rhyme. The procedure includes instructions for small groups (teams) and pairs.

Learning Outcome(s):

Learners will be able to...

- Choose target vocabulary words that are relevant to learner interests and learning targets
- Identify 1-3 words related to the target vocabulary word
- Describe target vocabulary using circumlocution, gestures, and other challenge parameters

Mode(s): Interpersonal, Presentational

Material(s): notecards or slips of paper, digital or analog timer

Team Procedure

1. **Prepare the vocabulary cards.** Have learners work individually to write words relating to the current theme or unit on the slips of paper or note cards. In addition to the vocabulary word, learners will write 1-3 related words below it (e.g., if the word is *sun*, the related words could be *warm*, *shine*, and *sky*). Each learner should create two or more cards. Once cards are complete, collect them. Together they will create the class vocabulary card deck. This part of the game operates similarly to commercially available game *Taboo*.

2. **Prepare the challenge parameters.** Ask learners to think of parameters or restrictions that will add an additional challenge to guessing the vocabulary words, and have them write these down on new slips of paper or note cards. For example, a challenge card might say, "Speak in rhymes while describing the word" or "Describe the word using only gestures." These are challenges that can be added to each round of gameplay. Once cards are complete, collect them and keep them separate from the vocabulary deck.

3. **Form teams.** Divide the group into teams of two or more members each, depending on class size. In the game, two teams play against each other, one guessing the word on the vocabulary card, and the other deploying challenge cards against the opposing team.

4. **Gameplay setup.** Set a two-minute timer for each round of gameplay. Each team selects one member to be the Adventurer and one member to be the Quest Master for the first two rounds. The Adventurer will draw the vocabulary card for their own team to guess from the class vocabulary card deck (e.g. select their adventure), and the Quest Master will draw the challenge card to play against the opposing team.

Word Quest! (cont.)

5. **Gameplay.** During each round, the Adventurer will describe the main word on their vocabulary card without saying that word or any other related words listed on the card. Their teammates should try to guess the mystery word. At any time during a round, the opposing team may play a challenge card by having the Quest Master announce the challenge.

6. **End of round.** If the Adventurer's team guesses the word correctly within the time limit, they score a point and the round is over. If they do not guess correctly or violate any of the rules, the opposing team is given a chance to guess the same word. If neither team guesses the word, the round is over.

7. **Scoring and set up for next round.** Tally up each team's points at the end of the round. When a team gains a point, they will choose another teammate to be the Adventurer and draw their next Vocabulary Card. Additionally, any time a team gains a point, they also gain another challenge card from the deck. Play as many additional rounds as desired.

8. **End of game.** The team with the most points at the end of gameplay wins.

Pairs Procedure

- To play in pairs, one member of the pair will be the Adventurer, and the other will play the Quest Master.
- For each round, the Adventurer chooses a Vocabulary Card and the Quest Master chooses a challenge card.
- As in the team version, the Adventurer must describe the word from the vocabulary card without saying the word itself or the related words written on the card. They must also adhere to the challenge from the Quest Master's challenge card.
- The Quest Master will guess the word.
- If the Quest Master correctly guesses the word within the time limit, the pair scores a point. If they do not, or if they violate any rules, no points are given.
- For the next round, the pair will switch roles.

Notes

- An educator's decision to play with challenge cards may be based on the proficiency level of learners. For example, Novice learners will likely struggle to rhyme their clues. However, providing a challenge like requiring acting or gestures for Novice learners is likely to enhance their abilities to communicate in spontaneous situations.