

Optional Games

We believe that children learn best by *doing*. Many children also excel when allowed to compete. The teacher is the best judge as to whether or not these games are suitable for her classroom, but it is our experience that children shine when presented with these learning opportunities. We know of schools that have students on waiting lists because “TLP Jeopardy!” is a part of their curriculum. The following is a list of games that have worked successfully in classrooms, co-ops, and individual homeschools.

Note: Flashcard games usually require sets of spelling flashcards *and* vocabulary flashcards. Students are directed to make spelling flashcards during the Spelling A activity; however, they are *not* directed to make vocabulary flashcards. Some teachers substitute the Vocabulary C activity (the Glossary) with making vocabulary flashcards. Simply have students write the synonyms on flashcards. They should *not* include the vocabulary word, only the synonym. It works best if the vocabulary flashcards are a different color from the spelling flashcards.

I. **Flashcard Relay I** (at least two teams, no more than eight to a team)

Requirements: Each team needs a set of spelling flashcards, vocabulary flashcards, basket or container and two tables; room to move.

Goal: Correctly match the most cards.

Set up: Place the tables or desks at both ends of the playing area, one set for each team. Put a set of spelling flashcards on each desk at one end. On the desks at the opposite end, put a set of vocabulary flashcards, paperclips, and basket (one for each team).

How to Play: Divide into teams. Team members line up by their desk with the spelling flashcards. When directed to “Go!” one person from each team takes a spelling flashcard, races to his or her team’s desk with the vocabulary flashcards, and paperclips the corresponding cards together: Each spelling flashcard should have only one vocabulary flashcard that will match it. The paper-clipped flashcards are then placed in the team’s basket or container. The next person from a team may go when the first person returns back to the original desk and touches it.

Winning: The first team to match all the cards stops the game. Matches from the basket are then checked for accuracy and the team with the most correct matches wins.

II. **Flashcard Relay II** (at least two teams, no more than eight to a team)

Requirements: One set of spelling flashcards; two sets of vocabulary flashcards; two tables; room to move; paperclips and a basket or container for each team.

Goal: Correctly match the most cards.

Set up: Place two tables opposite from each other with as much space between as room will allow. Put one set of spelling flashcards on one table and both sets of vocabulary flashcards on the opposite table. Place paperclips and basket with the vocabulary flashcards.

How to Play: Divide into teams. Teams line up an equal distance from the spelling flashcard table. When directed to “Go!” a member from each team races to the

spelling flashcard table, takes one spelling word with him, races to the vocabulary table, matches the spelling word with the synonym, and drops the match in his team's basket. As soon as he makes it back to his team, the next person may go. This game varies from Flashcard Relay I, in that the teams work from the same set of spelling words. Two sets of synonyms are necessary in case of matching errors.

Winning: The game is over when all the cards have been matched. The team with the most correct matches wins.

III. Flashcard Bingo (individual)

Requirements: Set of 25 spelling flashcards per student, list of 60 synonyms, 25 markers for each student, (markers may be buttons, pennies, paperclips, etc.), prize.

Goal: Be the first to mark five words in a row. As in Bingo, the words may be down, across or diagonal.

Set up: Students place their 25 spelling flashcards on their desks in rows and columns of five.

How to Play: A student or teacher says a synonym from the list. Players mark the spelling word that matches the synonym. The first player to mark five words in a row (across, down, or diagonally) shouts "Bingo!" A final "Black Out" round may be played IF the student's spelling flashcards are not all the same. For example you may wish to play this game with cards from units 1 – 4, which would involve 60 words. The students would choose 25 of those 60 words to make up their "card," but all 60 words would be on the list of synonyms. A "Blackout" is when all the words are marked on a "card."

Winner: The first student to get a "Bingo" or a "Blackout" wins.

IV. Flashcard Tic-Tac-Toe (any number of sets of two players)

Requirements: A set of spelling flashcards or vocabulary flashcards for each two players, two sets of nine markers (nine markers of one type and nine markers of another, for example nine buttons and nine paperclips, or nine M & M's and nine peanuts).

Goal: Be the first to get three words in a row (across, down, or diagonally).

Set up: Students place nine cards on a desk, in three rows of three. The game may be played with either the spelling flashcards or the vocabulary flashcards.

How to Play: Divide students into pairs. Play as in regular Tic-Tac-Toe, except a player must "earn" his "square." If the spelling flashcards are being used, the player puts his marker on the "square" and gives the synonym for the flashcard he has chosen. If he is correct, he keeps his marker on the square. If he is incorrect, he removes his marker. His opponent then gets an opportunity to say the correct synonym. If he is correct, he puts his marker on the square, then continues with his regular turn. If he is incorrect, the turn reverts back to the original player. A player may not choose the same square in consecutive turns. If the vocabulary flashcards are being used, the players say the spelling word that matches the synonym. When the game is over, choose nine more words and play again.

Special challenge: Use the vocabulary flashcards and require the players to say the spelling word that corresponds to the synonym, then spell the word before “earning” the square. May choose to play tournament style, with the winners of the first game playing against the winners of the second game and so on until there are only two players left. Students not continuing to play are either spectators, or drill the words they missed.

Winning: The player that gets three in a row is the winner.

V. Hangman (two to six teams, no more than four per team)

Requirements: Chalk board and chalk, or white board and marker, second timer.

Goal: Be the first team to guess the word and spell it correctly

Set-up: Draw the beginnings of the gallows; underneath the gallows, draw a blank line for each letter in the word being spelled.

How to Play: Divide students into teams. Choose a team to go first, second, third, etc.

Play as in regular hangman, with these alterations: Players on the same team may help each other choose a letter to suggest, but each player takes his own turn; teams are allowed only five seconds to say the letter or guess the word; whether or not the letter is correct, the play moves on to the next team; a team cannot “win” unless they can correctly spell the word and give its synonym; a turn consists of either suggesting a letter or guessing the word, but not both; if a team guesses the correct word but cannot spell it or does not know its synonym, the play moves on to the next team who may choose from suggesting a letter or spelling the word and defining it. If no team guesses the word, spells it correctly, and knows its synonym before the Hangman is completely drawn, then the game is over without a winner and play is resumed with a new word and a new gallows. As in regular Hangman, be sure to write down the unsuccessful letter choices, and to draw one part of the stickman with each incorrect letter.

Winning: The team that correctly guesses the word, spells it correctly, and gives its synonym is the winner. Continue playing with more words.

VI. Flashcard Fish (two to four players per table)

Requirements: Spelling and matching vocabulary flashcards for each table. Number of cards depends on number of players; recommend at least 46 (23 spelling and 23 vocabulary for a group of 4 players)

Goal: Match spelling flashcards with the vocabulary flashcards containing the correct synonym

Set up: Mix the spelling and vocabulary flashcards together.

How to Play: Play as in regular Fish. Dealer shuffles the flashcards together and deals out seven cards, one by one, to each player. The rest of the cards are placed face down in the middle of the table. Players are trying to make pairs by matching a spelling flashcard with a vocabulary flashcard. Before play begins, each player checks his hand for matches and places them on the table in front of him. The player on the dealer’s right goes first. He asks a specific opponent for a card that will match one of the cards in his hand. The opponent must give the card to the player if he has it; if he does not have it, the opponent tells the

player to “go fish.” The player draws the top card off the pile. If it is the card he asked for, he continues his turn. If it is not the card he asked for, it becomes the next player’s turn. If a player has no cards left in his hand, he draws three more from the face-down deck. The game is over when there are no more cards in the deck.

Winning: The player with the most matches wins.

VII. Flashcard Concentration (two to four players per table)

Requirements: Spelling and vocabulary flashcards for each table.

Set up: Place fifteen spelling flashcards and fifteen corresponding vocabulary flashcards face down on a table.

How to Play: Play as in regular Concentration with the alteration that a pair is a spelling word with its matching synonym. Player one turns over two cards, one spelling card and one synonym. If they are a match, he keeps the cards and continues his turn. If the cards do not match, he turns them back over in the same place and the next player takes his turn. Play continues until all the cards are matched or time is called.

Winning: The player with the most matched cards wins.

VIII. TLP Jeopardy! (at least two teams, no more than six per team)

Requirements: Chalkboard or whiteboard, game grid, score keeper

Set up: Copy grid onto chalkboard or whiteboard, write team names for scorekeeping on another board

How to Play: Divide players into teams. Only one person per team may answer at a time; each player on a team must take his or her turn. Determine who will go first. A player from the first team chooses a category and point level. For example, he might say “Begins with W for 100.” The teacher reads the answer and the player from the first team responds in the form of a question. If his response is correct, his team is awarded the points allotted to that question. If his response is incorrect, those points are subtracted from his team’s score. Whether his response is right or wrong, the play continues with the next team. A player on the next team may choose to respond to the previous incorrect answer, or choose a new category. Play continues until all the categories are used or the time limit is reached. Since this game can take varying amounts of time, setting a 20 or 30 minute limit is a good option. The teacher can develop questions for Jeopardy, Double Jeopardy and Final Jeopardy. In Double Jeopardy, the points are doubled over Jeopardy. In Final Jeopardy, as in the television game, teams are given a category, then they write down how much of their score they are willing to wager. Their final response is also written down and the points either added or subtracted.

Winning: The team with the highest score at the end of the game is the winner.

TLP Jeopardy! is a great game for an end of project celebration with parent spectators. Writing assignments, art projects, and other work related to the novel study can be showcased at the same time. If your students will be playing this game in front of spectators, you might play a practice game or two before the celebration.