

8 Easy Games for English Olympics



Figure 1 Photo of Flags

Table 1

Guess the Flag	
Description:	This game is a perfect way to learn about other countries in the world. Many students will already be familiar with countries and their flags, especially with the Olympic Games. But they may not know the English names for the countries. This game allows students to apply their background knowledge to English and have fun!
Level:	Beginner – Intermediate
Materials:	Cards with flags of countries (optional: write the names of the countries on the back of the cards)
Directions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group students according to their country (teams of 4 students). 2. For each question, one student from each group will stand up. 3. The teacher will show a picture of a flag. The first standing student to raise their hand gets the chance to say the name of the flag’s country. If they are incorrect, a different student can answer. 4. If no standing students know the answer, the teacher can allow them to ask their group for help. 5. The team of the student who answers the question gets one point. 6. A different student must respond to each question. The same student cannot answer more than once until the entire group has participated. 7. The 3 teams with the most correct answers win a medal for their team (gold, silver, or bronze, respectively).

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Figure 2 Photo of Out of Order Sign

Table 2

Out of Order!	
Description:	This game tests students' ability to take words and place them in the correct order to create a sentence.
Level:	Beginner
Materials:	1 worksheet per group Out of Order Answer Key
Directions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group students according to their country (teams of 4 students). 2. Write an example on the board and ask students to arrange the words to create a correct sentence (See example below). *Note: Some sentences may be formed in multiple correct ways* 3. Give each group a sheet of paper and have them put the words in the correct order to create a sentence. 4. The 3 teams that put all of the sentences in the correct order win a medal for their team (gold, silver, or bronze, respectively).
Example:	Game This Fun I Is Think Correct Order: I think this game is fun

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Figure 3 Photo of Letters

Table 3

First Letter, Last Letter	
Description:	First Letter, Last Letter is a popular game in the U.S. and may be recognized by one of its many other names. The game requires students to use their vocabulary and spelling knowledge to create the most number of words in a given time period.
Level:	All
Materials:	A chalk board (or blackboard) A piece of chalk (or marker) for each team **An easy alternative is to give each group a piece of paper**
Directions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group students according to their country (teams of 4 students). 2. The teacher will write the first word on the board 3. One student from each group will walk to the board and writes a new word that begins with the last letter of the previous word (see example below) and return to their group. 4. If the student needs help, they can ask their group members for help. 5. A different student will walk to the board and write a new word with the last letter of the last word. 6. A different student must write each word. The same student cannot write more than one word until the entire group has participated. 7. The game continues until the end of the time limit (to be determined by the teacher). The 3 teams with the most words at the end of the time limit win a medal for their team (gold, silver, or bronze, respectively).
Example:	<p>Starting Word: Olympics</p> <p>Word Starting with S: <u>S</u>uper</p> <p>Word Starting with R: <u>R</u>ea<u>l</u></p>

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Figure 4 Photo of boy holding letter blocks

Table 4

Spelling Bee			
Description:	This game helps test students' ability to spell words correctly in English. The participants are asked to spell a word they hear. As the game progresses, the words become increasingly more difficult to spell.		
Level:	All		
Materials:	A set of vocabulary words that your students have learned.		
Directions:	<p>1. Have students stand. Don't have enough time for every student to participate? Ask students to choose 1 representative from their country (team) to participate in each round. If a representative misses a word, their team is out of the game.</p> <p>2. Each student will be asked to spell a word. If they spell the word correctly, they can continue to the next round. If they spell the word incorrectly, they are out of the game and must sit down.</p> <p>3. In each round, choose progressively harder words to spell.</p> <p>4. The last 3 students standing win a medal for their team (gold, silver, and bronze, respectively).</p>		
Example:	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> Teacher: Spell the word "Victory" Student: V-I-C-T-O-R-Y Teacher: Correct! Student continues to the next round. </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> Teacher: Spell the word "Victory" Student: V-I-K-T-O-R-E Teacher: I'm sorry, that is incorrect. Student must sit down. </td> </tr> </table>	Teacher: Spell the word "Victory" Student: V-I-C-T-O-R-Y Teacher: Correct! Student continues to the next round.	Teacher: Spell the word "Victory" Student: V-I-K-T-O-R-E Teacher: I'm sorry, that is incorrect. Student must sit down.
Teacher: Spell the word "Victory" Student: V-I-C-T-O-R-Y Teacher: Correct! Student continues to the next round.	Teacher: Spell the word "Victory" Student: V-I-K-T-O-R-E Teacher: I'm sorry, that is incorrect. Student must sit down.		
	Think this is too easy of a game for your students? Try having them spell "aesthetically" or "antidisestablishmentarianism"		

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Figure 5 Photo of man and boy touching their heads

Table 5

Simon Says							
Description:	This game teaches students to recognize imperatives by performing actions but only when they hear the correct key phrase “Simon says.”						
Level:	Beginning – Intermediate						
Materials:	None						
Directions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have students stand up with enough room to move 2. The teacher will explain the rules of the game (see below). 3. The last student remaining will win a point for his or her country (team). 						
Rules:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher will give commands, for example “Jump” or “Touch your nose.” 2. If the teacher says “Simon says” and a command, the students must perform the command. 3. If the teacher says the command without “Simon says” the students should not perform any actions. If the student performs an action, they are out and must sit down. **To keep students who are out of the game engaged, you can have them continue to play the game but at the front of the room with the teacher** 4. The last 3 students standing win a medal for their team (gold, silver, or bronze, respectively). 						
Example:	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Teacher: Simon says “jump!”</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Teacher: Jump!</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Students jump</td> <td>Students do not jump</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>If a student jumps, they are out of the game</td> </tr> </table>	Teacher: Simon says “jump!”	Teacher: Jump!	Students jump	Students do not jump		If a student jumps, they are out of the game
Teacher: Simon says “jump!”	Teacher: Jump!						
Students jump	Students do not jump						
	If a student jumps, they are out of the game						

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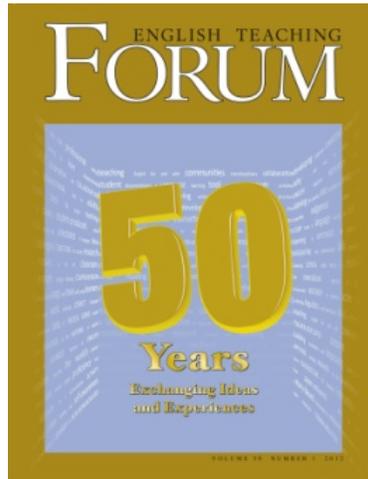


Figure 6 Illustration of English Teaching Forum Cover

Table 6

Word Association Game by Shalva Shaptozhvili from English Teaching Forum 40/2	
Description:	This vocabulary building game has students try to think of as many words as they can that relate to the key word. This game can easily be adapted to all levels of English language learners and it is a great way to review vocabulary.
Level:	All
Materials:	A chalkboard (or blackboard) A piece of chalk (or a marker) A selection of categories for the game A blank piece of paper for each group
Directions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group students according to their country (teams of 4 students). 2. Write an example category on the board (see example below) and ask students to think of as many different words they can think of that relate to the category. If there is a questionable word, ask the students to explain why they chose the word. If the student makes a convincing argument, you can keep the word. 3. For each category, each group will write as many words as they can that relate to the categories. If there are any questionable words, the students can explain why they chose the word. If they make a convincing argument, they can keep the word. 4. The team with the most acceptable, unique words at the end of the time wins the category. The 3 teams that win the most categories win a medal for their team (gold, silver, or bronze, respectively).
Example:	<p>Example Category: Animals</p> <p>1. Cat 2. Rat 3. Lion 4. Elephant 5. Rhino 6. Giraffe 7. Panda 8. Raccoon</p>

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Figure 7 Photo of a cat hiding under a blanket

Table 7

Hidden Words – Animals in Hiding from “The Lighter Side of TEFL”	
Description:	This word game is requires students to find names of animals hidden in sentences. The words can be included in inside one word or across several words. Some of the words can be difficult to find but your students will enjoy searching!
Level:	Beginner - Intermediate
Materials:	“Hidden Words – Animals in Hiding” Worksheet 1 per group “Hidden Words – Animals in Hiding” Answer Key
Directions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Download the worksheet and print one for each group. 2. Group students according to their country (teams of 4 students). 3. Write the example sentence on the board and ask students if they can find the word “Rat” anywhere in the sentence. Circle the word once students have identified it. 4. Pass out the worksheets and give the students 5 minutes to find as many animal names as they can (There is only one animal name per sentence). 5. You may want to provide a list of animal names found in the sentences. You can download the “Hidden Words – Animals in Hiding” Answer Key. Be sure to mix the order of the answers if you make a list of names. 6. The 3 teams that have correctly found the most animal names at the end of the time period win a medal for their team (gold, silver, or bronze, respectively).

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Figure 8 Photo of water jugs and bottles

Table 8

Story Puzzle – Bottle of Water from “The Lighter Side of TEFL”	
Description:	This story game promotes critical thinking while testing students’ English skills. Students are asked to read a short story and answer the question by using logic and math skills.
Level:	High Intermediate - Advanced
Materials:	“Story Puzzle – Bottle of Water” Worksheet 1 per group “Story Puzzle – Bottle of Water” Answer Key
Directions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Download the worksheet and print one for each group. 2. Group students according to their country (teams of 4 students). 3. Read the story together as a class. Ask the students to identify the problem they are asked to solve. Problem: How do the two travelers divide the 8 liters of water using the 8-liter bottle of water and the two containers (5-liters and 3-liters). 4. Pass out the worksheets and give the students and ask the students to work in their groups to find the answer. 5. The 3 teams that correctly answer the question first win a medal for their team (gold, silver, or bronze, respectively).

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Make Your Own Games! Activate Board Games



Figure 9 Photo of Do It Yourself written on chalkboard