

VOCABULARY PRACTICE WITH TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a classic language teaching methodology that emphasizes language learning by having students respond physically to language cues. TPR is effective for reinforcing and practicing active language and vocabulary. Common games used in language classrooms such as Simon Says and Charades are often versions or modifications of TPR. In this week's Teacher's Corner, learners get a chance to practice vocabulary by acting out words in this fun game.

LEVEL

Beginning and above

LANGUAGE FOCUS

Speaking
Listening
Vocabulary

GOALS

During this activity, students will be able to:

- Teach classmates vocabulary with the Total Physical Response (TPR) method
- Recognize vocabulary words and define them through acting out the word's action

MATERIALS

- Pieces of paper with the lesson's vocabulary words listed (see Appendix A)

PREPARATION

- Copy and cut out the cards in Appendix A. Make enough copies for each group of 3 students to have their own set. (The vocabulary used here is for sports. If using a different set of vocabulary, model the handout on Appendix A.)

- Divide students into groups of 3 and post the names of each group on the board to facilitate quickly moving into the activity.

PROCEDURE

1. Begin class by telling students: “Today we are going to review some of our new vocabulary words related to sports. We will work in groups of 3 to play a game that helps us to practice the vocabulary.”
2. Warm up by asking students to name some of the vocabulary they have recently learned related to playing sports.
 - a. Give students time to think and share some of the vocabulary words. If students seem stuck, offer a couple of examples.
 - b. Do not spend time defining as this is a review game and students will have plenty of time to define.
3. Bring the students’ attention to the groups listed on the board and have students assemble with their groups in different parts of room.
 - a. Students will stand for this activity so have them move furniture if necessary.
 - b. Point out a location in the room for each group to gather.
4. Ask for the students’ attention and explain the rules of the game.
 - a. Each group will receive a stack of vocabulary cards.
 - b. One student will take the first card from the pack and say the vocabulary word.
 - c. The two other students will “race” to respond with the correct action first.
 - Model this with a word for all students such as “run.”
 - Tell students to quickly show the action of the word “run.”
 - d. Explain that the first student to correctly act out the vocabulary word will earn a point.
 - e. The winner of the point will pick the next card and say the word for the two other group members to act out.
 - f. When all of the words have been used, the group member with the most points wins the game.

5. Call on a few students to repeat the rules of the game so that everyone is clear on how to proceed.

The rules can also be written on the board for added support.

6. Tell students it is time to begin the game. Give each group their own set of vocabulary cards. Tell students to wait until the teacher says “Go” to start the game.

a. Remind them that each group must keep score in order to declare a winner.

VARIATIONS

Students could make the vocabulary word cards. First put the students into their groups and ask each person to write 5 vocabulary words on note cards. Each card has a single word. Students then shuffle the cards and play the game as outlined above.

EXTENSIONS

The activity could be extended to finish with the whole class. Each group’s winner participates in a challenge with the other groups’ winners. The winners stand in front of the class, and the other students sit down. Have an extra set of vocabulary cards and give one card to every seated student. Each seated student takes a turn reading out the card they have (loudly enough for everyone to hear). The winners race each other to act out the words. The teacher watches which student acts out each word correctly and keeps score.

APPENDIX A

jump	kick	catch
throw	slide	swing
toss	shoot	dribble
pedal	ski	skate
block	lift	wrestle