VOCABULARY GAMES

Enhance vocabulary instruction by engaging students in games that build vocabulary with repetition, practice and fun. Dr. Robert Marzano recommends games as the sixth step in his 6 step methodology for academic vocabulary, or Phase Three (Review and Refinement Phase) in his books: *Teaching Basic and Advanced Vocabulary*.

GAME	INSTRUCTIONS
Simon Says	One player is Simon, the person who gives commands. The other players must stand up and follow "Simon's" commands. Each command begins with "Simon says." For example: Simon says touch your arm. Other players must follow the command, and if they fail to do so , they must sit down. If the command given does not begin with "Simon says," then students must not obey the command. Those who follow such a command must sit down. The last person left standing is the winner.
I Spy	One player observes an item in clear view and calls out "I spy something that begins with the letter…." The rest of the players must call out the names of objects they see beginning with the letter until they guess the item.
Scavenger Hunt	Players are given a set of clues to try to locate various items. The winner is the person (or team) who first finds all the items.
Twenty Questions	One player thinks of a word. Other players need to guess what the word is by asking no more than 20 yes/no questions.
Bingo	Make Bingo cards with five rows and five columns. In each square write a letter, sound, or vocabulary word that students have been studying. Hand out the Bingo cards. Call out letters, sounds, or vocabulary words one at a time. Have students cross off each letter, word, or sound if they have it on their card. The winner is the first player to cross off five squares in a row, either horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.
Charades	One player is given a word, and must act it out so that the others can guess the word. The player may also give clues. For example, he or she may show with his or her fingers how many syllables are in the word.
Picture Dictionary	Make cards with vocabulary words. One player takes a card, and must draw picture to help the other players on the team guess the word. Points are given for each word the team guesses correctly. Set a time limit for each turn. At the end of the time, the opposing team may try to guess the correct word to win points.
Word Building	Using the Letter Titles found in the Heinle Phonics and Intervention Kit, assemble a large pile of letters. Divide the letters between two teams. Each team makes as many words as they can with the letters

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	they have. Give each team one point for each three-letter word, two points for every four-letter word, etc. The team with the most points wins the game.
Hangman	This is a good game to review vocabulary at the end of a chapter. Think of a word. Draw a "hanging stand" with one blank for each letter of the word you are thinking of. Students call out letters, one at a time. If the letter is in the word, write it in the correct blank. If not, draw one part of the hangman, starting with the head. The game is over when students either guess the word, or when enough incorrect letter guesses have been made to complete the hangman.
Go Fish	Create a set of cards that has pairs of matching words. Shuffle the cards, and hand out five cards to each student. The object is to ask for and complete pairs of cards. For example, a student who has only one card with the word "book" might ask the other student, Do you have "book"? The other student says "Go fish", or give the card. To "Go fish" a student draws a new card from the center pile of cards. When students get a pair, they put the pair down on the table.
Talk a Mile a Minute	In this game, terms of students are given a list of seven terms form a cluster. For example, these words come from cluster 32: Bird – chicken, crow, eagle, goose, owl, parrot, robin. To play a round, each team designates a "talker", who is provided with a list of seven words. The talker first tells his or her team mates the name of the cluster (in this case, birds) and then tries to get the team to say each of the words by quickly describing them. For example, for the term chicken, a particular talker might say "This is the bird that the store next school sells fried." The talker is allowed to say anything about the terms while "talking a mile a minute," but may not spell words or use any rhyming words. The talker keeps talking until the team members identify all send terms in the cluster. If members of the tam are having difficulty with a particular term, the talker skips it and comes back to it later. The first team to identify all seven terms wins the game.
What is the Question?	Just like the popular game show *Jeopardy!*, this game requires a simple matrix, like this one:

Points	Public Officials	Writers and Reporters	Performers and Entertainers	People Who Clean Up
100				
200				
300				
400				
500				

The columns in the matrix are cluster names (or super cluster names). A teacher can use a white board, an overhead transparency,

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	or presentation software such as Micosoft PowerPoint to create the game matrix. Intitially, all cells are covered either by slips of papter or using software animation. In each cell is a term from the cluster (or super cluster) indicated by the title of the column. For example, for the column entitled Performers and Entertainers (cluster 167) the term clown might be listed for 100 points; dancer for 200 points; actress for 300 points; comic for 400 points; and ventriloquist for 500 points. Terms that are more difficult to describe or explain are associated with more points. The game is played in the same fashion as the popular game show. A member from each of two teams comes to the front of the room. The member from the team that won the last round selects the cluster and the points for next round. For example, if Performers and Entertainers is selected for 300 points, the term actress is revealed. The two representatives then race to press a ringer if they believe they know the meaning of the tem. The student who has pressed the ringer first then has the opportunity to describe the term. The teacher decides whether the student's explanation is acceptable. If it is, the winning student gets to select the next category and the level of points. If not, the other student has an opportunity to describe the word. When the gram is completed, students make changes and additions to the entries in their vocabulary notebooks.
Classroom Feud	The game is modeled after the popular television quiz show *Family Feud.* The game can be played with teams that are put together "on the spot" by randomly organizing students into two teams or by teams that have been set up for an extended period of time such as a n entire unit. To prepare the game, the teacher selects terms that have already been introduced and entered into student vocabulary notebooks. Enough terms should be selected for each member of each team. The teacher judges whether students' descriptions of terms are acceptable. One student from each team serves as the responder for the group. Students on each team take turns being responder in some systematic fashion. The teacher presents a term to the responder for a team. The responder then turns to his or her team members and shares with them the description of the term that he or she thinks is corrector or tells the team that he or she doesn't know the meaning of the tem. Team members either agree with the responder and provide support for his or her description or offer suggestions as to the correct description. The responder has 15 seconds to decide which description to offer. When the descriptions I offered, the teacher determines whether it is acceptable. If acceptable, the team receives a point. If the description is unacceptable, the other team is given an opportunity to provide a description. The last responder for that team again acts as responder for the group. He or she has 15

	seconds to come up with an alternative description of the term, again, taking suggestions from his team. If the description is correct, the other team gets the point and is presented with the next term. If a correct description is not offered by the challenging team, no point is awarded. When every student on both teams has acted as the responder, the team with the most points winds. When the game is complete, students review the entries in their vocabulary notebooks to make changes and additions.
Which Word Doesn't Fit?	This game is particularly easy to construct. The teacher simple selects three words from a specific cluster. For example, the teacher might select the following three words from cluster 318: sled, sleigh, and snowplow. The teacher would also identify a fourth term from another cluster like automobile. The four terms would then be presented to student as a set: sled sleigh automobile snowplow Students must identify which term doesn't fit and explain why it doesn't fit.
Word Walls	Very useful for beginners because they provide a visual word bank of vocabulary learned to date. They are often posted alphabetically, but could also be classified according to academic subject areas.
Wordo	A game like BINGO in which students have cards with rows and columns. Within each square is a new word. As the teacher calls out the description of the word, students cover it with a circular marker if they have it on their card. Students try to complete an entire row or column (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally) and then shout "Wordo!"
Zip-Cloze	Put an excerpt of the selected reading on an overhead transparency and hide the new vocabulary terms with masking tape or sticky notes. Students use all the strategies they know to guess the missing words and write down the word they think it is. When a student guesses the correct word, the tape is quickly "zipped off" and students compare the word they wrote to the correct word. This steers students toward using context and syntax as additional clues for meaning.