



Vocabulary Games

Students are often hesitant about learning new vocabulary, especially in the content areas.

Vocabulary can be reviewed quickly before a lesson using quick and entertaining games.

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Summary: Students will play games to reinforce key vocabulary.

Objective: To help students master key vocabulary.

Target Age: These games can be adapted for any age group.

Time: Approximately 5-10 minutes.

Materials needed: Materials will vary with activity.

Strategies:

Game: True or False

Put a line of tape or stretch out a jump rope in the middle of the room. Explain to the students that the left side is the false side and the right side is the true side. Read a vocabulary word and its 'definition'. If they believe the word matches the definition they are to stand on the true side. If they believe it does not match they are to stand on the false side.

Game: Hot Potato

Make sure a list of vocabulary words and their definitions are posted where the students can see them. Ask the students to scatter around the room. Set an egg timer and read a definition. Throw the egg timer to a student. They must correctly call out the matching vocabulary word and then throw the timer to another student. The student who catches it must read another definition and then throw the timer to another student who will give the matching vocabulary word. If the timer goes off while a student is holding it they must sit out for the rest of the round.

Game: Find your match

Write down each vocabulary word on a 3 X 5 card. Do the same thing for each definition. Shuffle the cards and hand one card to each student. The student with the definition is to silently act out their word until their partner finds them. The student with the vocabulary word is to find their match without talking. Once they have found their match they are to stand in the front of the room. When everyone is done each team will read their word and its definition. Give a small prize like a sticker or a piece of candy if they are correct.

Game: Swat

Divide students into teams of two and put them into two straight lines. Write each vocabulary word on the board. Make sure to spread them out over the entire board. Give the first person in each line a flyswatter and read a definition. The first student to correctly swat the matching vocabulary word earns a point for their team. If students talk or 'accidentally' swat each other they lose a point.

Game: Rushing River

Write each of the vocabulary definitions on a piece of construction paper (stepping stone). Explain to your students that they must cross a raging river full of crocodiles by jumping from stepping stone to stepping stone. They are to read the definition on the stone and call out the matching vocabulary word before they may hop to the next stepping stone. Once they have made it across the river rearrange the stepping stones before the next player attempts to cross.