Games in the Secondary Classroom: Why and How

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WHY PLAY GAMES?

- Fun and engaging for students
- Opportunities for repetition without being boring
- Provide quick feedback to students
- Can be used to develop useful skills
- Can help teachers use every minute of class time
“on average, using academic games in the classroom is associated with a 20 percentile point gain in student achievement” (Marzano 2010)
HOW MANY REPETITIONS ARE NEEDED TO LEARN A NEW WORD?

- 5-16 exposures in context (Nation, 1990)
- Approximately 100 (Meara, 1997)
- Words repeated more than 8 times more likely to be remembered (Horst, Cobb, and Meara, 1998)
- Depends on a variety of factors:
  - Prominence of the word in context (Brown, 1993)
  - Contextual clues, learner interest, quality and size of existing vocabulary (Laufer & Hadar, 1997)
GAMES FOR REPETITION (WITHOUT BOREDOM!)

- Matching games
  - concentration
  - Quizlet.com
  - www.textivate.com
  - www.classtools.net
  - Bingo
- Speaking Games
  - Battleship
- Board Games
náí
diary

zhīdào
to know

xiē
Letter (xin)

nàr
there

shùshè
dormitory

fāyīn
pronunciation

jì
diary

kāixīn
send a letter

Express Good Wishes (zhù)

nàer
Can/Be Able To (nèng)

nǐ
you
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>希望</td>
<td>音乐会</td>
<td>Laugh (xiào)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can/Be Able To (néng)</td>
<td>Recently (zuìjìn)</td>
<td>最近</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>学期</td>
<td>笑</td>
<td>semester (xué qī )</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hope (xīwàng)</td>
<td>concert (yīn yuè huì)</td>
<td>能</td>
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L&D2 (14 questions)

PacMan [NEW!!]
Manic Miner
Wordshoot
Pong!
Asteroids
Cannonball
Matching Pairs
Flashcards

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### Vocabulary Battleship: Hobbies

**Directions:**

1. Mark five boxes on your sheet. The boxes you mark indicate each person likes to do. **DO NOT SHOW YOUR PARTNER!**
2. Ask your partner questions to “sink their battleship”. You win when you have found all five marks on their sheet.
   
   *You may only ask yes-or-no questions.*

   Example: *Ni xihuan _________ ma?*

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**Example:** *Ni xihuan _________ ma?*
BOARD GAMES
GAMES FOR IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK

- Students can identify areas of weakness
- Provide information to teachers about student performance

- Quizlet
- ClassTools.net
- Textivate.com
- Puzzle games (provide students with a key if necessary)
USING GAMES TO TEACH SKILLS

- Circumlocution
- Teamwork
TEACHING CIRCUMLOCUATION

- Why teach circumlocution?
  - Allows learners to compensate for gaps in knowledge
- Password/Headbandz
  - Use English, Chinese, or images to describe
- Go Fish!
  - Use vocabulary only, or have students describe a picture
TEACHING TEAMWORK

- Running Dictation
- Team Games
  - Jeopardy
  - Car Race
  - Randomly choose a student in the group to answer
  - Students are motivated to make sure all group members can answer
Running Dictation

The boy went to the city to get some new...

The boy went to the city to get some new...

The boy went...

The boy went to the city to get some new...

The boy went to the city to get some new...

Running dictation
HOW CAN GAMES BE USED EFFECTIVELY IN SECONDARY CLASSROOMS?

- Minimize negative consequences
- Balance skill and luck
- Involve all students
- Be creative with rewards
Pick the box where you think the treasure is hidden.


