

## Gap Fill Gamble

### By Jo Budden

This is a game to make any gap-fill task or cloze texts (reading tasks with gaps) more exciting. You need an envelope full of small bits of paper. Chop up a few pages of scrap paper for this. Students compete against one another in pairs. Give each pair a bunch of small bits of paper to keep on their table. Explain that they are going to compete against their partner to win as many bits of paper as possible. Each one is worth one point. You are going to read some sentences with gaps in. When there's a gap you'll say 'beep'. They must write the beeped out word on a bit of paper without their partner seeing. Set a 5 second time limit and then say, "Okay, turn over". Both of the students turn over their papers at the same time. If both are correct, leave them on the table to accumulate. If both are wrong, leave them on the table to accumulate. When one student is right and the other wrong, the student who is right wins all the accumulated cards that have gathered, and the piles start again on the next question. This is great for practicing prepositions, such as the time prepositions in/on/at which students often make mistakes with.

#### For example:

- My birthday is \_\_\_\_ "beep" November 22nd.
- I have English class \_\_\_\_ "beep" Wednesdays and Fridays.
- School starts \_\_\_\_ "beep" 8.30 am.
- I'm going to Cornwall \_\_\_\_ "beep" the holidays.

When you have done ten or so sentences, stop the game and get students to count how many bits of paper they won. Rather than having just one or two winners in the class after a game, the great thing about this one is that half the class win as each pair has a winner.

## Mastermind

### By Jo Budden

This is great for those logical-mathematical thinkers. Think of a word (start with a four letter word until you get the hang of it, then you can do it with longer words) and mark four lines, like you would in a game of hang-man.

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- Ask the students to guess four letter words and write them up on the board under the four lines.
- The key for telling students how close they are to the target word is:
- One tick = right letter in the right place
- Two ticks = right letter but in the wrong place.
- As students make each guess, you must give them the results in key form.
- To give an example, you are thinking of the word HOME and a student guesses the word HELP.
- They would get two ticks for the H as it is the right letter in the right place and one tick for the E is in the word but in the wrong place. They keep on guessing until they find the pattern and guess the whole word. You can set a limit of 20 guesses.

## **Concentration**

### **By Jo Budden**

This is a good game for high-energy groups when you need to get them all sitting down and on task. They really have to concentrate to stay in the game. If you don't have space to get everyone sitting in a circle or you can't move the tables you can do it standing up.

#### **Procedure**

- Sit in a circle with your students and do the hand actions of lap (both hands to lap), clap, left click, right click. When they get the hang of it, add these words in time to the rhythm "**Concentration, concentration, concentration now beginning, are you ready? If so, let's go!**"
- On the first finger click, you say your name, and on the second click you say the name of someone in the circle. You have passed the turn to the person you nominated on your second finger click. Then they say their own name on the first click and the name of another student on the second, and so it goes on.
- When they have got the idea, use different lexical sets. For example, everyone says their favorite sport first then use these to play the game instead of saying names.
- You can also use flashcards or real objects such as fruit and vegetables or classroom objects. Place a flashcard or an object by each student's feet and they use these as they do the finger clicks and pass the turn.
- For a competitive group, eliminate those students who make mistakes.

## **Two word games**

### **By Clare Lavery**

#### **Introduction**

The following games can be played throughout the school year but are also very useful as a round up at the end of term. You can play them a few times. First play with the whole class and then try in groups (good for mixed ability groups).

#### **1. Guess the word** (can be used for abstract nouns)

Choose five words relating to recent conversational themes. Write sets of clues to help students guess the words. Play with whole class or teams. Use one word per lesson over five lessons or use all words in one session as a longer game.

#### **Example clues:**

- I am a noun but I am very important.
- I begin with the letter 'f'.
- People in prison have lost it and want it back.
- People demand it when it is taken away by dictators.
- It is related to speech.  
**(Puzzle word = Freedom)**

#### **2. Get rid of it**

This game can be adapted for matching definitions to words or matching opposites.

You need two sets of cards. White cards for the words and another color (yellow?) for the questions. Put all questions in a bag or hat at the start of the game.

- Give each student at least three word cards, placed in front of them on their desks.
- Choose one card from the hat and read the question. Students study their word cards. Whoever has the corresponding word can get rid of it. The winner gets rid of all his cards first.

#### **Example questions on cards:**

- What type of animal has kittens?
- What's the opposite of the verb 'to borrow'?
- What do you call a person who cuts hair?
- Where can you buy medicine?