

The Games Children Play

These games came from the Article *The Games Children Play* in the Reading Teacher journal. This article presents 13 sound and word games that students can play at home with friends and family.

Why Games? “Word play is motivating, calls on students to reflect metacognitively on words, word parts and context, and requires students to be active learners.” (Blachowicz & Fisher, 2004, p. 220)

1. **Talking Turtles** – Use words from a recent reading, then stretch them out slowly like a turtle and have the students guess the word you are saying.
2. **Presto Chango** – Using word families, start with a word like hat. Tell the students to take off the /h/ and replace it with /s/. Then say, “Presto Chango – What do we have?”
3. **Word Ladders** – One word leads to another.
Example – bead (change a letter, something you plant in the ground)
 sead (subtract a letter, this is opposite of good)
 bad (add a letter, this means you have no hair)
4. **Which One Doesn’t Belong?** – 3 words – 2 share a common feature. Which one doesn’t belong?
hat, man, mat
5. **Clapping Words** – clap, march, stomp, snap, and the rhythm in a text.
6. **Word Sketches** - Select words from a recently read text and put them in a bowl or cup. Students choose a word and then draw the word for others to guess – like Pictionary.
7. **Word Theater** – Select words from a recently read text and put them in a bowl or cup. Students choose a word and then act it out for others to guess – like Charades.
8. **20 Questions** – Choose a word from a recently read text and have the students guess the word by asking yes or no questions.
9. **Concentration** – Using 10 words from a text, make matching pairs of word cards turn upside down in a rectangle and take turns trying to find a match.
10. **Go Fish** – Make sets of word cards (9-12) per player. Deal 7 to each player and the rest in the pile. Ask other players things like, “Do you have a word from the at family, etc”. Players try to get a match.
11. **Word-Part Rummy** – Make cards with word parts on them (about 10 per player). Deal 5 cards to each player and put the rest in a stack. Players find cards that together make a word. Continue playing until one player has matched all of their words.
12. **Word War** – All cards are dealt to players. Each player turns over a card in the middle and reads it. The person with the longest word gets to take them. Continue to play like the card game war.

10. **Dang** – Put high frequency words on cards. Pick one up, read it, keep it, pick a flash card and put them back in the pile.