

# 5 Fun Filled Activities with Noncount Nouns

## A, SOME, MUCH OR MANY? IF YOUR STUDENTS ARE ASKING THEMSELVES THESE QUESTIONS, YOU ARE LIKELY STUDYING NONCOUNT NOUNS.

The objects in English require a counting word to express plurality. For example, pieces of furniture, cups of coffee or cartons of milk. Once you explain the concept of noncount nouns to your class, here are some fun activities for reviewing how to properly express noncount nouns in English.

## TRY THESE 5 FUN FILLED ACTIVITIES WITH NONCOUNT NOUNS

### 1 GOING ON A PICNIC

When you are teaching noncount nouns, you will find that many of them fall into the category of food. Rice, milk, coffee, jelly and peanut butter are just a few of the noncount nouns one might find at a picnic. Playing this game will challenge your students' memories while also reviewing count and noncount nouns. Arrange your class in a circle. Then start the game by saying, "I'm going on a picnic, and I'm bringing a \_\_\_\_\_" filling in the blank with a food item, either count or noncount. The student to your left continues, "I'm going on a picnic and I'm bringing a..." He then chooses his food item and repeats your food item. The third person in the circle chooses a food item and repeats the other two. Play continues around the circle until it has reached you once again, and you face the big challenge of remembering what everyone is bringing on the picnic! As play moves around the circle, be sure to correct your students if they make an error with count and noncount nouns. For example, if someone says I am bringing a juice, you should remind him or her to say a bottle of juice.

### 2 MUCH OR MANY AUCTION

Give each student two stiff cards. On one have her write much, and on the other have her write many. All students should hold their cards flat on their

desks. You present a noun to them, and they need to decide whether they should use much (noncount nouns) or many (count nouns). On the count of three, each person holds up his chosen card. Anyone who gets the answer wrong is eliminated. Play until only one student remains – the winner.

### 3 THREE STRIKES

Play a baseball style game with count and noncount nouns with your students. Draw a baseball diamond on the board or lay one out in your classroom (your students will not be running) and review the basic rules of the game. Then give each "batter" a fill in the blank challenge that includes a noncount noun. For example, you might write on the board "Five \_\_\_\_\_ celery". The batter must then choose which blank to fill in to correctly complete the phrase. In this case, "five stalks of celery." If the batter gets the answer right, his team gets a hit and he advances to first base. If the batter gets the answer wrong, he is out. Teams give each member a turn until they receive three strikes. Anyone who makes it around the bases scores a point for his team. Play for three innings, and the team with the most points at the end wins bragging rights.

### 4 A ROLL OF THE DICE

There is no risk in this game for practicing pluralization of noncount nouns. Write several noncount nouns on small slips of paper and put them in a hat or basket. Then give a student two standard, six sided dice. First she rolls the dice to get her number. Then she draws a noun. She must then make a sentence using the number to pluralize the noun she drew. For example, if your student rolls a seven and pulls the noun furniture, she could say, "I bought seven pieces of furniture this weekend."

### 5 THIS IS A WHAT

Play this classic youth group game with your ESL students to practice the difference between a and some

in English. Students arrange themselves in a circle. Give one student an object (a pencil, for example). That student should then present that item to the student next to him. Their conversation should follow the following pattern.

This is a pencil.

A what?

A pencil.

A what?

A pencil.

Oh, a pencil.

The first student then passes the object to the second student, and that person follows the same pattern as he introduces the item to the next person in the circle. Play continues around the circle until the object is back to the first person. While this object is moving around the circle, give two other students additional objects and have them present them to their neighbors in the circle. You will have three objects travelling around the circle at the same time, and students will need to pay attention to what they are giving and receiving. If you are careful to choose at least one count noun and one noncount noun, your students will have to determine whether to use a or some in their dialogue. For example,

This is some coffee.

Some what?

Some coffee.

Some what?

Some coffee.

Oh, some coffee.

Listen to students as they present their objects and correct any errors you hear.

## THOUGH SOME STUDENTS WILL FIND NONCOUNT NOUNS EASY TO REMEMBER, FOR MOST ESL STUDENTS NONCOUNT NOUNS ARE TROUBLE.

These fun filled activities give your students a chance to practice this unusual structure while having a good time in your classroom.

# 7 Best Games for Vocabulary Class

## TRY THESE 7 BEST GAMES FOR YOUR NEXT VOCABULARY CLASS

### 1 CHARADES

Write vocabulary words on individual index cards. Break your class into two teams, and have one individual from each team act out the same word. The team to correctly guess the word first scores a point.

### 2 Pictionary

Write vocabulary words on individual index cards or use your set from charades. Break your class into two teams, and one individual from each team draws a picture on the board. Drawers cannot use letters numbers or symbols in their drawings. The first team to guess the word correctly scores a point.

### 3 MEMORY

Create your own memory game using vocabulary words. Write each word on individual index cards. For each existing card, make a matching card with the definition, a synonym or an antonym. Students shuffle the cards and arrange them all face down on a table. Students take turns flipping over two cards. If the cards make a set, the student keeps the cards and takes an additional turn. The person with the most cards at the end of the game wins.

### 4 MODIFIED CATCH PHRASE

Write each vocabulary word on an individual index card. Students sit in a circle with a timer set for a random amount of time (3-8 minutes works well). Shuffle the cards and give the deck to the first person in the circle. That person draws a card and tries to get his classmates to guess the word by giving verbal clues. He cannot say the word or any part of the word. When someone guesses the word, he passes the stack to the next person

who takes a turn with another word. The person holding the stack of cards when the timer goes off loses.

### 5 SCATTERGORIES

Choose ten categories with your students or before class starts (e.g. types of pets, city names, sports, items in a kitchen, etc.). Use an alphabet die to determine the letter for each round of play. Set a timer for three minutes, and students must think of one word for each category that begins with that round's letter. Students score one point per word, and the person with the most points at the end of three rounds is the winner.

### 6 THE DICTIONARY GAME

Choose an unusual word from the dictionary and spell it for your students. Each person creates a fictional definition for the word and writes it on an index card. You write the actual definition on another index card. Collect and shuffle the cards, and then read all the definitions. Students must try to guess which definition is the real one.

### 7 A-Z PICTURES

Using a picture with many elements (I-Spy books work great), students attempt to find an object in the picture that begins with each of the letters A through Z. After about five minutes, students compare answers. The person with the most correct answers wins the round.



# 6 Absolutely Essential ESL Games for Vocabulary Review

Well, it is that time again. You have finished your unit on (insert topic here) complete with vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing activities, but you are not entirely done. The test is coming in just a few days, and your students need some review. When vocabulary is on that agenda, try one of these fun games to review the words your students have recently learned!

## TRY THESE FUN ESL VOCABULARY REVIEW GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

### 1 CHARADES

Charades is a fun and lively game for your ESL class to play when reviewing vocabulary. Your students will be energized and enthusiastic when their acting skills are put to the test for their classmates. It is easy to have a charade vocabulary review ready for your class at almost any time and on a moment's notice with minimal advance preparation. The easiest way to be ready at any time is to keep a collection of vocabulary cards for the words your class has studied. When you are ready to play, divide your class into two teams. Individuals will take turns acting out one of the words from the cards that you have prepared. They will choose this card randomly on their turns and will have 2 minutes to get their team to guess the word without using books or notes. The actor cannot use any sounds but must communicate only through actions. The rest of the team should shout out any answers that come to mind. If the team is able to guess the word within the designated time, they score a point. If after two minutes the team has not guessed the word correctly, the other team gets one chance to guess the word. If they are correct, they score a point and then continue with their turn. Continue playing until you run out of time or you run out of words. The team with the higher score at the end of the game wins.

### 2 Pictionary

Pictionary is a similar and just as entertaining game to play for vocabulary review. The rules are similar to those of charades except that instead of acting out the word, the clue giver is permitted only to draw on the white board in front

of the class. He cannot use any symbols, numbers or letters in his drawing. Again, give each person two minutes to try to get his team to guess the word. If he is unsuccessful, give the other team a chance to guess. Score the game the same way that you would score charades and announce the winning team at the end of the game.

### 3 CLAYMATION

How creative are your students? How daring are they? If you think they would have fun with this activity, modify the same general idea that you used in charades and Pictionary with clay or play dough. Again, the rules are generally the same but in this version your students will not be acting or drawing. They will be molding clay to communicate the target word to their teams. Follow the same general rules, but this time you may want to give each person three to five minutes before turning it over to the opposite team for their guess. Scoring is done the same.

### 4 ALL OF THE ABOVE

If you want to energize your students even further, add a little element of chance to the festivities. Using a six-sided die, have your students roll to see whether they will give a charade, draw a picture or form their clues out of clay. For rolls of one or four, the student will give a charade. For rolls of two or five the student will draw his clues. For rolls of three or six, your students will use clay to give their clues. In all cases, no letters, symbols or numbers are allowed when giving clues. The element of surprise will make the review even more exciting and entertaining for everyone!

### 5 BINGO

Bingo can be another good game for vocabulary review though perhaps not as lively. Give your students a blank bingo boards and ask them to put the review words into the squares randomly. You should have some strategy for choosing the words to call and then which your students will mark on the cards. You may want to choose words randomly from a list. You may, instead, write the words on cards and choose them randomly from the deck or simply put small slips of pa-

per into a hat to draw randomly. Whatever method you think will work best for you, once you have chosen the word do not read it. Instead, give the definition of the word to your class. Each person must then determine if he has the word that corresponds to the definition on his bingo board. When anyone gets five squares in a row, he should shout, "Bingo!" Warn your students not to clear their boards until you have checked the winner's words to make sure they did not have an incorrect answer. Give the winner of each round a prize or allow him to call the words for the next round though you may need to supply the definitions.

### 6 MEMORY

A memory style card game can be another effective way for reviewing vocabulary, but you or your class will need to do some advanced preparation before you play. You will need a set of cards for the vocabulary you want to review. For each word, one card should have the target vocabulary word and another card should have the definition of the word. The players should then shuffle the deck and lay all the cards in a grid pattern face down on a large playing surface. Each person turns over two cards each turn trying to find a match. If the cards do not match, he turns them over again and the next person takes a turn. If they do match, he keeps the cards and gets an additional turn. The player with the highest number of cards at the end of the game wins.

You can modify this game to practice matching words with their synonyms or their antonyms, too. For each, instead of using the definition card to match the vocabulary card, use a card with either a synonym or an antonym printed on it. Play continues the same as above. Just be sure you keep the sets of cards separated so you are ready to play at any time.

## VOCABULARY IS A PART OF EVERY ESL CLASS, BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN IT HAS TO BE BORING.

These games are both fun and educational and are never boring. The next time you have vocabulary to review, change things up with a game and help your students see that fun can be effective learning, too!



# Speak Up: 6 Fabulous Games to Get your Students Speaking

Many ESL teachers find that their students are timid speakers or reluctant to participate in class discussions. It's only natural. After all, they are trying to talk in a language they are still working on learning. Still, silence can be deadly in the ESL classroom for your students and you. When you want to get your students to speak up, try one of these fun and simple games to get them talking in class.

## TRY THESE 6 INVOLVING ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS TO SPEAK UP

### 1 THIS IS HOW WE ROLL

You can use this simple game as a get to know you at the start of school or later as a get to know you better activity. All you need is one standard die and six questions – either ice breakers or ones that elicit opinions, experience or other personal thoughts. Be creative and choose the ones you'd like to hear your students answer. Give students a list of the questions, and make sure they are numbered on the paper. Then, have students take turns rolling the die. Whatever number they roll, that is the question they must answer. You could do this activity as a class, in smaller groups or as a public speaking activity. For the latter, have students prepare answers to each question as homework and then have them share in front of the class after they roll.

### 2 HUMAN EXPERIENCE BINGO

Your students are probably already familiar with the rules of Bingo. Simply get five numbers in a line on a chart. You can use this as a basis for another get to know you game. Work with your class to compile a list experiences that a person might have had. For example, gone scuba diving, made a birthday cake and eaten sushi would all be good experiences. Work together on the list until you have about 30-40 different experiences. (You can also compile the list on your own if you prefer.) Then, give students a blank bingo board (a 5x5 chart) and have them write one experience in each of the boxes. On your word, students mingle and talk to each other to find someone with each experience they have chosen. If a student finds someone who, for example, has gone scuba diving, that student signs the square where

your student wrote it on his Bingo board. The first person to get five in a row yells, "Bingo!" Another variation is to arrange students speed dating style: two rows of chairs facing each other. Each pair then gets two minutes to talk with each other. When time is up, the students in one row shift one chair to the right. The game is over once someone has gotten five spaces in a row on their bingo board.

### 3 CHARACTER TRAIT ROULETTE

This game works best for students who already know each other fairly well. Work as a group to come up with a list of several character traits a person might have. (Try to stick to positive traits.) You might include adventurous, sympathetic and generous. Then write these traits on small slips of paper and put them in a bag. Each person takes a turn drawing one character trait from the bag in front of the class. The student must then announce who in class (and you are fair game, too) possesses that character trait. Of course, a name isn't enough. The person must tell a story or give an example of why he made his particular choice.

### 4 STORY STARTER HOT POTATO

Put the list of story starters in your writing drawer to double duty with this silly and fast paced game. Students play in small groups of around five members. Students should arrange their seats in a circle. Give your class a story starter at the beginning of the round. Starting with the person whose birthday is closest to today and them moving around the circle, each person gives his group one sentence of the story. After one person is done, the person sitting to his left adds a line where the first person left off. Students continue around the circle, adding one sentence at a time, until the music stops or until you give another signal. Whoever is in the middle of his sentence or is struggling to think of a sentence when the music stops is out. He must leave the circle. Then students play a second round either continuing the story or with a new story starter. When you stop the music, whoever's turn it is is eliminated. Play continues until the final round when the person not speaking

when the music stops is the winner.

### 5 FIND YOUR PARTNER

Prepare a small slip of paper for each student in your class. Each paper should have one word on it that goes with a word on another slip of paper. For example, matching pairs might be fork and spoon, day and night, bat and ball, or table and chairs. Fold the papers and put them into a hat. Each person then draws one slip of paper. On your word, students must circulate and talk to one another trying to find their partner. Once two people think they are a match, they come to you to see if they are right. If they are, they sit down. Play until everyone has found their partner. Then have those partners work together to create a new pair of words that go together. Repeat the game with these student given examples.

### 6 HIDE AND SPEAK

To prepare for this energetic and fast paced game, write several questions each on one index card or post-it note. These questions can be get to know you questions, comprehension questions or questions using current vocabulary words. Before your students arrive, hide these cards throughout your classroom. At the start of class, break your students into two teams. Explain that you have hidden cards throughout the room. On your word, students will search the room for the cards you have hidden. They can only pick up one card at a time. When a student finds a card, he must bring it to you and answer the question on the card. If he answers it correctly, he earns the card for his team. If he does not answer it correctly, he must get someone else from his team to help him find the answer. Once students have correctly answered the question on their card, they can search for another card. At the end of the game (after a certain amount of time or when all the cards have been found) the team with the most cards in their possession wins.

Speaking doesn't have to be forced or boring when it comes to ESL class. These games are just a few of the fun ways to get your students speaking up and having a good time while they practice their English.



# 7 Best Games for Your Next Conversation Class

## TRY THESE 7 BEST GAMES FOR YOUR NEXT CONVERSATION CLASS

### 1 ICE BREAKER JENGA

Using a tumbling block game such as Jenga, create your own ice-breaker game. Write one simple icebreaker question on each block. When a student pulls the block from the stack on his turn, he must answer the question before placing the block at the top of the stack.

### 2 GET TO KNOW YOU BINGO

With your class brainstorm several characteristics a person might have (for example, fly in an airplane, have a younger sister, etc.). Students fill in their own empty bingo boards with these characteristics. Students then mingle asking their classmates if they have one of those characteristics. (Students may ask only one question before they must switch partners.) If the student's answer is 'yes', that student initials his classmate's board. The first student with five initials in a row shouts, 'BINGO!' and wins the game.

### 3 MYSTERY PARTY GUEST

Assign each of about five students a secret identity. One at a time, these students enter a party where another student is playing host. The host must determine the identity of each guest by having party type conversations with each person.

### 4 20 QUESTIONS

One student chooses an object. The rest of the class takes turns asking yes/no questions to determine what the object is. After 20 questions, if the class has not guessed the object the student who chose the object wins.

### 5 CREATE A GAME

Get students talking to each other by making up their own board game. Start a collection of assorted board game pieces, then challenge groups of 3-4 students to make up their own game using them. They must also explain the game to the rest of the class.

### 6 APPLES TO APPLES

In this game, students play cards that they think relate to one another. The judge in each round of play lays down a card, and the other players must choose the card they think are related to the first one. The judge chooses the card that is most appropriate and then must explain his reasoning behind the choice.

### 7 CHOOSE YOUR VICTIM

Choose a specific grammar point to practice and arrange your students in a circle. The first person asks a question using the grammatical structure and then tosses a ball to another student, who answers the question. If he answers correctly, he asks a question to another student and tosses the ball. If he answers incorrectly, he must return the ball and sit down. The last student standing wins.



# 5 Easy Listening Games for ESL Beginners

**ESL BEGINNERS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SAY A WHOLE LOT, AFTER ALL THEIR VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR ARE RATHER LIMITED. BUT IN ORDER TO START SPEAKING, THEY HAVE TO START LISTENING.**

And not just listening to the correct pronunciation, intonation and stress. I mean really listening. Listening for meaning. Listening for context. Listening for real comprehension.

You may think there isn't a whole lot beginners can comprehend, but you'll be surprised. Try playing these simple listening games. They may be easy, but for students who are just starting out in their English learning journey, they can be highly effective ways to train in the basic skills they will use on a daily basis in the near future!

## **HOW TO HELP ESL BEGINNERS IMPROVE THEIR LISTENING SKILLS: 5 EASY GAMES**

### **1 LISTEN FOR IT!**

One of the most essential listening skills your students should develop involves listening for key information, which often includes numbers, facts, hours, dates or other essential info. To help them train for this skill, first give them some context: You will listen to a man asking for information at the train station. Then, before they listen, give them something they will have to find out: What time does the train to Boston leave? Now here comes the "game" aspect of it. You can:

- Divide the class into teams and have a team member raise their hand/ring a bell as soon as they hear the answer. Then, you do the same with another short audio track. You ask a question and play the audio, the team that answers first gets a point. And the team with the most points at the end wins.
- Have each student participate individually, but make sure everyone participates, not the same students over and over again.

### **2 UNMUSICAL CHAIRS**

This easy listening game works great with young learners. Arrange chairs as if to play musical chairs. Students will walk around them, but in this case they won't be listening to a song. They will listen to a conversation. As always, give them the context and ask them a question: What is Tom's favorite food? Students walk around the chairs as you play the audio and the student/s who hear the answer to the question sit/s down. Pause the audio. Those who are seated answer the question, and if it's correct they will remain seated. If several students sit down at the same time, that's fine, but ask them to whisper the answer in your ear to make sure they all heard the answer from the audio.

Ask another question (whose answer will come up next in the audio). The students who were left standing now walk around the chairs till they hear the answer. Go on asking questions and giving students the opportunity to secure a seat. The last student left standing, like the usual game of musical chairs is left out of the next round. A chair is removed from the circle and so it continues until you have one chair and two students competing to answer the final question.

It's convenient to have the script of the audio so it's easier for you to ask the questions. Also, bear in mind you will play longer with a longer audio, but you can also play with several short ones. The game will go much faster if several students sit down (have the answer) at the same time, but only those who got it right should remain seated.

### **3 WHICH ONE IS IT?**

Something that is particularly difficult for ESL students is listening to the subtle differences between words that have a different, but similar spelling. These are words like leave/live, fill/feel, tree/three, fit/feet, etc. So here's a great game you can play. Have a set of cards printed out with these troublesome words. Divide the

class into two teams. Students take turns. You place the two cards on the desk in front of them: live and leave. Say one of the words out loud: live. If the student chooses the right card, the team gets 2 points. Now, if the student is unsure, he/she may choose to request "an example", i.e. the word used in a sentence: I live a few blocks from here. If the student chooses the right card in this case, the team gets 1 point.

### **4 WORD OF MOUTH**

Here's another game you can play with the same easily confused words from above. Divide students into two teams. Whisper a word to a student, who must then whisper it to the student next to him/her, and so it goes until the last student in line has to say the word out loud. If he/she pronounces it correctly, the team gets a point. A variation of this would be not to whisper to the first student but show him/her the word written down on a piece of paper.

### **5 STEP BY STEP**

Another important listening skill students must develop is learning to understand step by step instructions. Try this fun listening game, which also helps them practice asking for and giving directions. You'll need a "city map": you can use a real map, or better yet create one with your students' desks, so they have actual "streets" to walk on. Start at any give point, say the "bank", and have a students ask for directions to another location. Tell them how to get there. The student must trace his/her finger along the route you indicated, or walk all the way there. Students who manage to reach their destination/don't get lost win points!

**FROM THESE EXAMPLES YOU CAN SEE THAT'S IT NOT DIFFICULT TO MAKE LISTENING PRACTICE INTO A GAME, ONE THAT IS NOT ONLY FUN, BUT ALSO GIVES YOUR ESL STUDENTS THE LISTENING SKILLS THEY NEED TO SUCCEED.**



# 10 Fun English Spelling Games for Your Students

## ARE YOUR STUDENTS READY FOR A FUN FILLED GAME STYLE SPELLING REVIEW?

Here are some ways to get their pulse quickening and the letters in the right order.

## TRY THESE 10 FUN ENGLISH SPELLING GAMES WITH YOUR STUDENTS

### 1 UNMIX IT UP

Have students unscramble letters to make an English word. Using a current vocabulary list, have each student write the letters for one word on index cards – one letter per card. Then under the flap of an envelope, have each student write out the correct spelling of their word. Students then tuck the flap into the envelope, shuffle their letter cards and put them into the envelope in front of the flap. Now you have a learning center game ready for your students. Just put the envelopes out in a box or basket. Students using the center should pull out the index cards and arrange them to make a correctly spelled English word. They can check their answer by lifting the flap of the envelope when they are finished. As the year progresses, add words to the collection while leaving those that are already there and it becomes a way to review vocabulary as well.

### 2 UNMIX IT UP RELAY

Using the envelopes your students made for the 'unmix it up' learning center, have a spelling relay race. Divide your class into teams of five, and put a stack of ten envelopes on a desk across the room for each team. One at a time, students run to the desk, take the cards out of an envelope and unscramble the letters to make a word. When they think they have a correct word they call "check". You should see to be sure they have a correctly spelled English word. If so, he should put the letters back in the envelope and put it on the floor be-

fore running back to their team. The next person then runs to the table and choose his own envelope to unscramble. Whichever team finishes unmixing all their words first wins the game.

### 3 BLIND RELAY

If your whiteboard is also a magnetic one, this game will get your students excited about spelling. Divide your class into two teams. Each team should have a set of magnetic letters (the simple kind you find at the dollar store) on their half of the board. On your go, announce one word for each team to spell. One person from each team runs to the whiteboard and uses the magnetic letters to spell out the word. Just be sure you have enough duplicate letters to spell the words you call out. (For example, "taller" would require two letter ls.) The team that gets the word first scores a point. Then two other players take a turn. Play until everyone has had at least one turn. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins. If you want to make the relay even more challenging, blindfold each person and position them at the board before calling out the word. They will have to feel the letters on the board to spell their word correctly.

### 4 TELEPHONE SPELLING

This game is just as much a test of pronunciation and listening skills as it is of spelling skills. Divide your class into two teams, and have each team sit or stand in one long line. You whisper a word to the person at the back of the line, and she must carefully whisper it to the person in front of her. That person whispers to the person in front of him and so on until the first person in line hears the word. When he does, he should go to the whiteboard and write the word that he heard using the correct spelling. If he gets the word right, his team scores a point. If not, he does not score for the team. He then goes to the back of the line and the teams play again with a new word and a new player.

### 5 SECRET SPELLER

This game requires a small whiteboard or flipchart that you can face away from the students in your class. Set the flipchart up so it is opposite the front wall of the classroom. Put your students in pairs and have them choose one person to be the speller and one to be the writer. On the flipchart, write five to ten words that are difficult to spell or pronounce. When you say go, the speller from each team runs to the front of the classroom and looks at the list of words on the flipchart. He tries to remember as many of the words and their spelling as he can and runs back to his partner. He must then help his partner write the words on her paper, but the speller is not allowed to look at the paper. He can run back to the flipchart as many times as necessary to check spelling or remember words. When the pair thinks they have all of the words right, they call check. You should then look and tell them if the words are all correct or if there is a mistake. Throughout the game, the speller and the writer can say anything they want, but the speller can never look at the writer's paper. The first team to get all the words written correctly on the writer's paper wins.

### 6 SCRABBLE SLAM

Scrabble Slam is a fun spelling game that also builds vocabulary. Each card has one letter on the front and another on the back. (You can also create your own Spelling Slam cards by writing one letter each on index cards. Have more copies of common letters like vowels, t, s, r, n and l in your set, also omitting q and z.) Play starts with any four letter word laid out on the table and each player holding ten cards. The remaining cards go in a pile on the table. On go, players add one letter at a time to the word to create a different four letter word. For example, pole may become poke which becomes pike which becomes bike. Every time a letter is laid down, it must correctly spell an Eng-



lish word. Up to four players play at one time trying to get rid of all their cards as quickly as possible. If someone plays a word that is not spelled correctly, players stop and that person must take a three card penalty from the draw pile. If no one can play a new word and everyone still has cards, each person draws one letter from the draw pile. The first person to use all her cards wins.

## 7 HANGMAN

This classic grade school game gives your students a fun way to practice spelling. For the traditional rules, look here: <http://www.wikihow.com/Play-Hangman>. Start by playing with your entire class, you putting a word or phrase on the board. Players guess letters trying to decipher the words. If a student calls a letter that is in the phrase, you fill in all the places where it belongs. If they call a letter that is not in the phrase they receive a penalty. After a practice round with you leading, have students break into groups of three and play on their own.

## 8 3-D SPELLING

Why have a spelling test with pencil and paper when you can use play dough, beans, toys or other fun items to write out the words. You call out a word to your class, and they race through the items in their desk to spell the word out on their table. They might spell the word by arranging crayons, paper clips or other items in their desk. If they do not have enough items in the desk to spell the word, they can use items from around the room though collecting items will take more time. The first person to spell out each word correctly gets a point. The person with the highest score at the end of the spelling test wins.

## 9 SPELLING BATTLESHIP

In traditional Battleship, you sink your opponent's boats. In this spelling version, you sink their spelling words. Each person needs two 10 by 10 grids. Have students start by labeling the rows letters A-J and the columns 1-10. Then each person writes the same set of 5-7 spelling words on one grid, in random order and location, either vertical or horizontal. On the other grid, he tracks his opponent's words. Players take turns calling out a coordinate, for ex-

ample D-5. His opponent checks his grid and announces whether D-5 was a hit or miss. The first player should mark that square on his blank grid – red for a hit and blue or black for a miss. Play continues until one person finds every letter of all the words on his opponent's grid. (For more detail on how to play as well as a printable grid, see Salvo - the complete rules: [http://boardgames.about.com/od/salvo/a/salvo\\_rules.htm](http://boardgames.about.com/od/salvo/a/salvo_rules.htm).)

## 10 SPARKLE

This game tests spelling as well as listening skills. Have your students arrange themselves in a circle. Announce a word from the current vocabulary unit. The person to your left says the first letter of the word. The second person says the second letter. The third person the third and so on until the word is completed. The next person says 'sparkle'. Then you call out a new word. If at any time a person says the wrong letter, he is out and returns to his seat. If a student does not say sparkle when the word is completely spelled or if he says it too soon, he is out. Play continues until only one person remains in the circle.