



# Speak, Play, Win – engaging students through board games

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# Why use games in the classroom?

Games bring communication, creativity, and collaboration into language learning. They lower anxiety, motivate students, and make speaking activities more meaningful and memorable.

## Benefits of board games in EFL teaching:

- Encourage **authentic communication** and spontaneous speaking.
- Build **confidence and fluency** through play.
- Support **critical thinking and imagination**.
- Promote **teamwork, negotiation, and listening skills**.
- Easy to **adapt** for any level or topic.

# The teacher's role:

In game-based lessons, teachers act as **facilitators** — explaining rules, modeling language, and guiding communication rather than leading it. The focus shifts from correctness to creativity and fluency.

# Workshop goal:

In this session, you'll explore three adaptable, low-prep games that promote speaking fluency, vocabulary growth, and classroom interaction — and you'll get to try them yourself!

# The Giri Game

**Focus:** Storytelling, creativity, narrative skills, linking ideas.

## Game Components

- **Cards:** The game includes cards from various categories, such as Characters, Objects, Atmosphere, Places, and Themes.
- **Card Distribution:** Each player draws a set number of cards from each category. The exact number can vary based on the number of players and the desired game length.

# Basic Rules

- **Setup:** Shuffle the cards and deal a set number to each Storyteller (1 Themes, 1 Atmosphere, 1 Place, 2 Characters, 2 Objects)
- **Gameplay:**
  - The Storyteller has 3 minutes to prepare their story
  - The Storyteller starts narrating their story, incorporating the elements from their cards into a meaningful story
  - Teasers (1 card each teaser) can interrupt the Storyteller once to introduce elements from their own cards, seamlessly integrating them into the ongoing narrative
- **Objective:** Collaboratively create a coherent and imaginative story, using the cards as prompts.

# Educational Benefits

- **Language Skills:** Enhances vocabulary and grammar through storytelling.
- **Creativity:** Stimulates imagination and creative thinking.
- **Emotional Intelligence:** Encourages empathy and understanding of different perspectives.
- **Social Skills:** Promotes teamwork and communication among players.

# Impossible Decisions

## Game Components:

- **Deck:** A collection of cards, each presenting a unique "Would You Rather" question.
- **Categories:** The questions cover a wide range of topics, from the absurd to the hilarious, ensuring diverse and engaging conversations.

# Basic Rules

- **Setup:** Shuffle the deck of cards and place it face down in the centre of the playing area.
- **Gameplay:**
  - Players take turns drawing a card from the top of the deck.
  - The player reads the question aloud to the group.
  - All players, including the one who drew the card, must then choose one of the two options presented.
  - After everyone has made their choice, players share their decisions and the reasons behind them.
- **Winning:** There is no competitive aspect to the game. The goal is to enjoy the discussions and learn more about each other's preferences and personalities.

# Classroom Integration Tips

- **Icebreaker Activity:** Use the game at the beginning of a lesson to help students get to know each other in a fun and relaxed setting.
- **Vocabulary Building:** Encourage students to explain their choices using new vocabulary or grammatical structures they've recently learned.
- **Debate Practice:** Select questions that prompt students to justify their opinions, fostering critical thinking and speaking skills.

# The Three- Round word game

**Focus:** Vocabulary recall, paraphrasing, teamwork, fluency.

## How it works:

- Each player writes 5-10 words, writing each one on a separate piece of paper
- Teams compete to guess as many words as possible in three rounds:
  - **Describe the word** (no gestures, no spelling).
  - **One-word clue only.**
  - **Act it out** (charades).
- Same word set is used in all rounds — students rely on memory and associations.

# Learning outcomes:

- Vocabulary reinforcement.
- Paraphrasing and quick thinking.
- Collaboration and communication strategies.

# Variations:

- Use vocabulary from a recent lesson or textbook unit.
- Add a “taboo” challenge (for advanced groups).

# Pro tip: “Set expectations, then step back”

- **Explain rules clearly but concisely** – do a very quick demo if possible.
- **Model the language** – show one example of a story, answer, or description before starting.
- **Step back and circulate** – once the game starts, don’t over-direct. Move around, listen in, gently prompt, and note language use.
- **Keep time visible** – a timer helps students stay focused and keeps the pace lively.
- **Celebrate creativity and participation, not just “winning”** – a quick comment like *“I love how you connected all the images!”* or *“Great reasoning!”* keeps motivation high.
- The key is: **clear instructions + space to play + light guidance = maximum learning and fun.**

# And let's finish with a joke...

*How can you tell difference between a chemist and a plumber?*

*Ask them to read **unionised** ☺*

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Thank you for your  
attention and may the  
dice always roll in your  
favour!

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