

Fun with words & sentences

Groups activities for in the class



Games for Grammar

Children are practicing their reading and writing skills by these games. They like to play games and while playing they learn and have fun. When you have fun you learn better!

You can play the games with the whole group, in small groups or in pairs.

Make sure that all children can see what's happening.

Make rules e.g. about raising hands.

Make sure you prepare well and collect the things you need to play the game.

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1. How many words

Write one big word on the blackboard. Let the children make as many words as they can with the letters of this word in a few minutes.

Variation:

- Let the children write their own names on a paper and make as many words as they can with their letters.
- Give each group of 4 children a big word and see which group can make the most words with the letters of their word.

2. Cheap words

Give every letter of the alphabet an amount of money.

E.g.

a = 100 shilling

b = 400 shilling

c = 200 shilling

d = 300 shilling

Etc.

Now the children have to make words with the letters.

- Make 5 cheap words with 5 letters each.
- Make 4 expensive words with 6 letters each.
- Make 6 cheap words with 3 letters each.
- You get 10.000 shilling, how many words can you make?
- Etc.

3. Vowel words

Write three vowels or double vowels on the blackboard. Let the children make words with those vowels by adding consonants. They are not allowed to use other vowels.

Variation:

- Say a vowel, let the children start writing words with that vowel, after a certain time you say another vowel and the children start writing words with that vowel. The words have to be spelled correctly.
- Let the children make a sentence with only words that have the same vowel.
E.g. A cat had a hat and a mat.

4. Difficult words

Write a difficult word on the blackboard. It has to be a word the children don't know the meaning. In small groups they have to think about the meaning of the word. They give answers and you see who is close to the real meaning. You can tell them the real meaning from a dictionary.

5. What is the word?

Have a word in mind. Ask questions to the children. With each correct answer they get a letter from the word. Who is the first to know the word that is in your mind?

E.g.

- What is outside and has colour green? (grass, they get letter g)
- What is the third day of the week? (Tuesday, they get letter t)
- When a light is not off it is ... (on, so they get letter o)
- What is the letter in the middle of the word tap? (a, they get letter a)

They have the letters g, t, o, a.

The word in your mind was 'goat'.

When they understand this game well, you can also let them make their own questions and let others find the word.

6. Write long words

Write as many long words as you can in two minutes. They have to be spelled correctly.

- 6 letters 1 point
- 7 letters 2 points
- 8 letters 3 points
- ...

The one with the most points is the winner.

7. Make sentences

Give each child or a group of children a letter. They have to make a sentence with at least three words in it that start with the letter you gave them.

E.g. letter R

Ruben was riding his bicycle to go and see the rhinos.

8. Alphabet words

Let the children write the alphabet on their papers. They can work individual or in pairs. You give them a theme e.g. animals, jobs, people, vegetables, clothes, towns, etc. They have to write a word with each letter.

A – alligator

B – bee

C – chimpanzee

D – dog

Etc.

Q, x and y are very difficult. You can allow them to skip these letters.

You can give a certain time for this activity or all day to work on e.g. they work on it when they finished work. At the end of the day see what they find. Can you together make one alphabet complete?

9. Story with nouns

Let every child write a noun on a paper, then collect the papers. The children start writing their own stories. After a while you pick one of the nouns the children have written and tell it to the class. The children have to use that noun in the next sentence that they make. They continue their story and after a while you give them another noun.

You can start this game easier. You collect the nouns and then the children have to make a sentence by every noun that you name. It doesn't have to be a story.

e.g. you say "dog"

A child writes: I like to walk outside with the dog.

Another one writes: The dog was eating food.

10. Funny sentences

Give every child a small paper. Let them write a word and close that word. When everyone is ready they give it to the next one, who writes the next word. After several words open the papers and read the funny sentences.

e.g.

- First word: article: a, the
- Second word: noun: cat, book, chair, apple, mother, etc
- Third word: verb in third person: works, reads, sits, drives, etc,
- Fourth word(s): place: on the playground, in Mukono, under the table, etc.

Then you get sentences like:

- The cat works on the playground.
- A book drives in Mukono.
- The mother sits under the table.

Etc.

11. Guess the person

Take a person in mind, e.g. headmaster, a child of your class, auntie Sarah, president Museveni, Winnie the pooh, etc. It has to be someone every child in the class can know.

The children start asking questions by raising their hands to get turns and you only answer with 'yes' or 'no'.

e.g.

Is it a girl?

Is he/she older than 20 years?

Does he/she live on the compound?

Does he/she wear glasses?

Etc.

When the children have guessed the right person, you start again.

If the children know the game well, you can choose one of them to be the leader and take a person in their mind.

12. Build a story

Sit in a circle with the children. Let the first one start with telling a first sentence of a story. The next person makes the next sentence and so on. You will have a funny story when everyone has had a turn.

13. Word chain

Start with one compound word. Eg. workbook. The next compound word has to start with the second word in the one before. E.g. workbook – bookstore - etc. When you cannot make a new compound word anymore start afresh one. How many words can you make in a chain.

- You can also let the children do this in groups.
- To help them start you can write together as a class a lot of compound words that you know on the blackboard.

14. Secret alphabet

Let the children make their own secret alphabet. For each letter they think of something. E.g. they make a code 'every letter in my secret alphabet means the next one of the correct alphabet.' So 'a' means 'b', 'b' means 'c', etc. The word bell would then be written as adkk.

Variation:

- Every letter of the alphabet is a number. A is 1, b is 2, c is 3 etc. The word bell would then be written as 2 5 12 12.
- Every letter of the alphabet has a shape.
- Every letter of the alphabet is a picture of an animal.
- Etc.
-

The children can make a sentence with their secret alphabet and let other children read it and make the correct sentence.

15. Newspaper stories

- Cut headings from articles in a newspaper. Let the children write a story about the heading.
- Cut the words from different headings and let the children make with these words their own heading. They write a story about the new heading.

16. My name

Write your name on a paper with the letters under each other. For each letter you think of a word that says something about you.

E.g.

T – tolerant

I – innocent

M – moody

Share what you wrote.

17. Jumbled sentences

Make sentences on the blackboard in columns with who, what, where and why.

who	what	where	why
A cat	is resting	in the sun	because it is tired.
The father	is playing	outside	because he likes.
The teacher	is teaching	in class	to teach the children.

Then the children choose a part from each box to make a new sentence. E.g. 'A cat is teaching outside to teach the children.'

When they have a sentence, this is the heading for the story they are going to write.

Each child can make its own sentence. Or you can make several sentences together and let the children choose one of the sentences to make a story.

18. Last letter

Give the children a consonant and let them write words with that consonant as the last letter.

E.g. letter n

They can write: rain, run, chicken, kitchen, hen, etc.

After a while you can give them another letter and they continue to write more words with that letter as the last.

19. Letterbox

Put all the letters of the alphabet in a box. Pick one letter out and let the children write a word with that letter.

Variation:

- Give them a subject to make a word. E.g clothes, animals, transport, things you find in a house, things you find in school, etc. If it is not possible to make a word with that letter and subject, you can pick another one.
- Pick several letters from the box. Who can make the longest word with these letters in it.

20. Find out which child

Let the children sit in a circle. Blindfold one child. That child stands in the middle and turns around. He/she points to one child. The child in the middle starts asking questions to find out which child he/she is pointing to. Other children answer the question so the child in the middle does not hear the voice of the child. When the child in the middle has guessed the name of the child another one can be blindfolded.

21. Guess the word

Talk about a word, without saying the word. By describing the word the children have to guess what you are talking about.

E.g. It is yellow, it is nice to eat, it grows on a tree – banana.

When they understand the game well, you can give children a turn to describe a word.

22. Guess the word 2

Have a word in your mind. Tell the children how many letters are in the word. Then the children say words when given a turn. Write the word on the blackboard. Circle the letters that are on the correct place. Underline the letters that are in the word but on another place.

E.g. You have the word 'frog' in your mind.

A child says the word 'fork'. Write fork on the blackboard: $\text{f} \underline{\text{o}} \text{r} \text{k}$

The next child can name a word. Like four: $\text{f} \underline{\text{o}} \underline{\text{u}} \text{r}$

You continue until they know the word that was in your mind.

23. Spelling race

Divide the group in smaller groups and put them in a line. Together as a group they have to spell a word. E.g. computer. The first child says c, next one o, next one m.

Which groups spelled the most words correctly.

24. Make adjectives

Write a noun on the blackboard. Which adjectives can you put before this noun?

e.g. tree: big, small, high, green etc.

25. Say words with a magic-e

Make cards with the names of all the children from your class. Put the names in a box. Pick a card from the box and let that child say a word with magic-e. Then he/she picks another card from the box with a name and that child says a word with magic-e. And so on.

Variation:

- Pick a card from the box. Say something nice about that child. Then he/she picks another card and says something nice about that person.
- Pick a card from the box. That child tells you whom he/she likes to play with at break time. Then he/she picks another card.
- Pick a card from the box. Ask a question to the class, the child on the card gives you the answer. Then ask another question and pick another card.
- Use the cards with the names and make cards with sounds. Pick a card with a name and a card with a sound regular or alternative or a spelling problem, like silent b. The child on the card has to say a word with that sound.

26. Free the words from the snake

Write a word snake on the blackboard. Let the children find the words in the snake. Make the words free from the snake.
e.g. watertreesnailschoolwordwork etc.

27. Match the pairs

Make cards with words that match. Give each child a card and let them search the child with the card that matches.

e.g.

- small and capital letter
- singular – plural
- opposites (big / small; more / less; etc.)
- word – meaning of the word
- start and finish of a sentence
- the words that can make a compound word.

You can also make bigger groups. E.g. 4 words from a category or the same spelling problem.

28. Jumbled professions

Write several jumbled professions on the blackboard. Let the children find out which profession is hidden in the jumbled word.

What is the profession of e.g. lubpmre (plumber)

29. Circle reading

Write a word in a circle on the blackboard. The children have to find the beginning and read the word.

e.g.

t
c i
a v
y i
t (activity)

30. I go for a journey.....

The first child starts with: 'I go for a journey and take with me..... He fills in a word e.g. a bag. The next child says: 'I go for a journey and take with me a bag and He also fills in a word e.g. book. The third child says: 'I go for a journey and take with me a bag, a book and Everyone fills in something and has to repeat all things that are mentioned in the right order.

31. Throw with more dices

Throw with 2 or more letter dices. The children have to make a word with all of the letters in it.

Variation:

- Throw with two dices. One of the letters must be at the beginning of the word, the other one at the end.

32. Past – present – future

Name verbs in the past, present or future tense. When it is the present time the children keep their hands on their lap, when it is the past they put their hands behind their back and when it is the future they stretch their hands before them.

33. Scrabble

Make a field of 100 squares on the black board. Write one word in the middle. Who can write a word that crosses this word with one letter? You can only make correct words, horizontal or vertical. After making some words it is possible to cross two words, e.g. in the example table crosses ant and football

You can make it more difficult when they can only make nouns or verbs.

b	u	s				g			t
e		h	o	u	s	e			h
f	*	e	*			t	r	e	e
o		l		g					
r		f	l	o	w	e	r		
e				a			a	n	t
	n	o		t	e	n	t		a
	o	f	f						b
		f	o	o	t	b	a	l	l
			x						e

* Making the word feel is not aloud, because it makes also the word 'ol' and that word doesn't exist.

34. Who, what, where,.....

Make a dice with: who, what, where, when, start, end.

Read or tell a story. Then throw with the dice. When who is up, let the children tell about who the story was. By what, what happened. By start, how did the story start. Etc.

35. Interview

Invite somebody. Make questions for an interview.

You ask common questions or more specific e.g. about someone's profession.

They can also write an article about the interview.

You can also pretend together that a specific person is going to come to your class and make questions that you want to ask that person. E.g. the president, your sponsor, the queen of England, etc. One of the children can role play the person.

36. Telephone

Sit or stand in a circle. The first one whispers a sentence in the ear of the second one. This one whispers the same sentence in the ear of the third one, etc. The last one says the sentence out loud. Is it still the same as at the beginning?

You can practice first with one long word.

37. Throw and tell

Throw a ball. The one who catches it tells:

- something about the child at his right side
- something she/he did in the weekend
- something she/he likes to do
- finish the sentence like:
 - I like to
 - I get angry when
 - At the end of the day: finish the sentence 'Today I learned

Variation:

The ball goes round

Keep the ball rotating, while the children stand in a circle. One child is not looking and after a while he/she says 'stop'. The child who has the ball at that moment has the turn.

38. Backwards

Say or spell a word backwards. What did a say? E.g. rewolf = flower.

39. Alphabet without vowels

The children stand in the circle. The first one starts with a letter. The next one says the next letter in order of the alphabet. When the letter is a vowel you may not say it. Instead of the vowel you say: boom. (boom, b, c, d, boom, f, g, etc.).

Variation:

- You can make it more difficult when they have to say boom instead of the letters of a specific word. E.g. mango tree: boom, b, c, d, boom, f, boom, h, l, j, k, l, boom, boom, boom, p, q, boom, s, boom, u, v, w, x, y, z.

40. Parrot sentences

The first child says a part of a sentence;
the next one repeats it and makes it longer. E.g.

1. I go for shopping
2. I go for shopping, because I need new shoes
3. I go for shopping, because I need new shoes, because the old ones are broken
4. I go for shopping, because I need new shoes, because the old ones are broken, because they are very old
5. I go for shopping, because I need new shoes, because the old ones are broken, because they are very old, because I got them for a long time ago.

After 5 turns start a new sentence. Then try 6 turns, etc.

41. Odd one out

Name 4 words. One doesn't belong in the list because it doesn't have the same spellings rule, e.g. knife – flower – cave – cube: flower doesn't belong because it is not a word with a magic e.

Variation:

- rat – pin – train – cup: train, because it has more than 3 letters.
- jump – sing – drink – door: door, because it is no verb.

42. Who is it?

Each child writes three things about himself on a piece of paper. E.g. I like football; I live in a family unit; My hair is short. Put all the papers in a bag, sack or box. A child picks a paper and reads it. Who wrote this paper? Then pick the next one.

Variation:

Each child writes her/his name on the paper and three things about herself, but one is not true. Pick a paper and read it. Who knows which one is not true.

43. What do you want to be?

Put pictures of animals on a table. Each child picks the picture of the animal he wants to be. Make groups and let them tell in this group why they would like to be this animal.

Variation:

Use another theme like: important persons, professions, people on the compound, etc.

44. Dramatize

One child dramatizes a verb. The other children guess which verb it is.

45. Dramatize a story

Tell or read a story. Let the children dramatize it.

Variation:

- Tell a story without the end. Let the children make the end and dramatize it.
- Let the children write their own play.

46. Observe

Put 3 children in front of the class. 1 child is going out. Change 1 thing at the 3 children e.g. something of the clothes or the pose. Call the child who's sent out back and ask what has changed.

47. Make a quiz

Divide the group in small groups. Each group makes 4 questions about a theme. They have to know the answer!

Each group answers the questions of the other groups. Which group knows the most answers?

48. Who am I?

Pin or paste a name at the back of a child. Now the child has to ask question to other children to find out who he is. E.g. Am I a boy? Am I in New Horizon? Am I younger than 20 years? Etc.

Variation:

What am I? Pin or paste a noun at the back of a child. Now the child has to ask questions to find out what he is.

49. Follow the leader

One child gets a blindfold. Another child leads him through the class from one point to another point. He is leading him by using sentences like: go the left, go two steps to the right,

50. Living memory

1 child is going out of the class.

Divide the group in pairs. The pairs decide what sound or move they will make.

The child who's out is coming back. He calls a name and this one makes the sound or move. Then he gives another one the turn. He tries to find the pairs.

