



## How to Play Educational Flashcard Games in A Fun Classroom

### Pictionary

Have a student come up to the front and show them a flashcard. That student draws the picture on the board. The first student to guess the word gets a point. The can also be played in teams.

### Run and Get It

Divide the class into two teams and have them stand facing each other. Assign each team member a number. Place the flashcards in the middle of the two teams. Call a number and a flashcard example: "Student three-rabbit". The students assigned that number must run into the center and touch the flashcard and shout "rabbit". The member who touched and called first can take the flashcard to their side.

### Opposites Grid

Draw a matrix or grid on the board (at least 5x4 squares) and number your axis A to E on the top scale and 1 to 4 beside the squares created; you end up with squares like A1, B2, C3 etc. Stick 10 opposites flashcards mixed up front to back onto the board (also location and occupations matching pairs possible). Students have to find and remember the correct matching squares. Team who gets the most opposites or combinations pairs wins (like memory game).

### Memory Master

Have the students sit in a circle. Designate one student to be the Memory Master. Arrange the flashcards face up in the center. Each student chooses a flashcard and says the word. They cannot touch the flashcards. After everyone has chosen, the Memory Master must hand the correct flashcards to each student, repeating the words.

### Jumping the Line

Put a piece of tape or some kind of line dividing the room. Designate one side as "true" and the other side as "false". Line up the students on the line, hold up a flashcard and say a word. If the students think you said the word that matches the flashcard, they should jump to the "true" side, otherwise they should jump to the "false" side. Students who make a mistake sit out until there is a winner (go fast).

### True or False Chairs

Put 2 chairs in front of the whiteboard. Write above one chair- TRUE- the other one -FALSE-. Show a flashcard (quickly) and shout out a vocabulary word. If that flashcard matches the vocabulary word, the students must try to sit on the TRUE chair. First to get to the correct chair gets point.-Hint: have the rest of the team read the vocabulary word again and say if it was true or false (VERY active game).

### Flashcard Act Out

Similar to charades or miming, choose one or more students to come to the front. Show a flash card and have the students act it out. Reward the first student to guess the correct answer. This can be used with many subjects like sports, actions, verbs, animals, etc.

### First Letter

For lower levels give students various picture flashcards. Go through the ABC's and instruct students to hold up the flash cards that begin with that letter.



### **Car Race**

Arrange the flash cards in a long line with starting and finishing points. Give each student a counter. The first student throws the dice and moves. The student must say the word on the flashcard they land on. If the student makes a mistake, they go back to start. Add colored paper between cards to represent "take another turn" and assign a crash number like #4 on the dice which means the student must return to the beginning.

### **Beat the Clock**

Play this game with any flashcards that have an order to them like alphabet, numbers, days of the week, months, etc. Time the students as they race to put them in order. Have them try again to see if they can beat their fastest time.

### **Dance of the Ostriches**

Fun one on one game where you attach a flash card to the backs of two students. The object of the game is to look at the other student's flash card and yell out the word before they see yours.

### **Flash Card Walk**

Arrange the flash cards in a big circle. Play some music while the students walk around the circle. When the music stops call out a flashcard and the student standing next to the flash card wins.

### **Go Fish**

Have students choose two flashcards each. Have the students hold the flashcards face up but not to show anyone. Choose a student and ask "Do you have a cat?" If they do they have to give you the flashcard. Have each student ask other students questions. A student with no cards is out.

### **Race to Touch**

Young students love this game but it is important to instruct proper handling of the flash cards, or they will get ruined. Lay the flashcards on the floor at one end of the room, and have the students line up in teams at the other end of the room. Call out a flashcard and have the first person in each team race to grab the card. Those students then go to the back and the next students race to grab the next flashcard the teacher calls.

### **Cops and Robbers**

Divide the students into two teams. Draw 2 lines on the floor and leave a big free space between the two lines, where you can place the flashcards on the ground. 2 Students have to stand behind the lines, one from each time. You call out a vocabulary word and both students have to jump in the flashcard space to find the right flashcard. Student who grabs the flashcard first get a point.

### **Fly Swats**

Much like the traditional whiteboard game, fly swats, several flashcards are stuck against the whiteboard. Divide students into 2 or 3 teams, giving one player from each team a "fly swatter" (very fun with real fly swatter, but rolled paper will work). Then Teacher then calls out a word and the first student to "swat" the card wins a point for their team. Then they get to call out the word. –Advanced classes can listen for the word used in a sentence and make up sentences with the new word, or opposites.



### **Silent Game (ideal for groups from 8-16 students)**

Divide students into 2 teams. Line up the chairs facing the whiteboard, so if you have 12 students you make 2 rows of 6 chairs. Students must sit behind each other and it is prohibited to turn their head backwards or to speak at all. Give a fly swatter to the students who sit in front of the board. Teacher sits between the 2 rows in the back. Teacher whispers a word into the ears of two students, these students have to lean forward and whisper that word to the next, until it reaches the front student (like broken telephone). The front student must hit the right flashcard. Fastest team gets a point (playable also without speaking, best used for teaching feelings, movements so they only pass the emotions further, without saying anything).

### **Which one is missing?**

Show and teach students several new vocabulary words using the pictures. Then remove one or two from the set, and see if students remember the word, the spelling or how to use it in a sentence.

### **Missing Letter**

Stick flashcards to the whiteboard and spell the words below the picture. Class must go around and spell all the words. Then the teacher will randomly erase letters, placing an underscore/s \_ in the missing letter or letters area. Students then get to look at the picture and spell the words while the teacher hides the spelling.

### **Read and Stick**

Divide students into 2 teams. Let the stronger team start the game. Stick a set of flashcards on the board and write the vocabulary below the flashcards (class spells together). Take the flashcards off the board and place them on the floor in front of the whiteboard. Each student can grab only one flashcard and they have to stick it above the correct writing back onto the whiteboard. Check the time with a stopwatch. The fastest team wins.

### **Round and Round**

Small groups of students sit in a circle (I like boy girl boy girl). Students pass flashcards around a circle face down. When the music stops or the teacher says OK, students turn their card over. The students get to then say their word in sentence.

### **Word Order**

For more advanced learners. Students listen to a story or sentence written using several different flashcard vocabulary (they may or may not fully understand). After the story or sentence they are asked to come and place the flashcards in the order they were used in the story.-Note this can be used to teach adjective ordering.

### **Sentence Making**

When using flashcards, remember to always try to make an interactive story line where the characters are doing or showing or seeing the words. Then, try to always expand the vocabulary learning by adding to the story line. ,i.e., He goes to school at 8:00 by bus....so the students will see flashcards He/goes to school/8:00/bus, the word 'at' and 'by' will be written in front of the flashcards, so students will understand where and when we place grammar to make a sentence.



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### **Back up Games**

There are many ESL games that use set vocabulary at the premise. (Round Robin, Hangman, Pirate Ships, 25 letters.....) Use the flashcards to back up these games. For instance, if they don't get the word write in hangman,

they can see the picture that goes with it. Or they run out of words in Pirate Ships, they have many flashcards that will instantly improve their vocabulary.

### **TIPS:**

- Flashcards are visual, tactile learning enhancement tools. They should be used by teachers and parents AND students. Make sure the students are using the flashcards as well.
- Flashcards are vocabulary building tools. Vocabulary building is about expansion. Always have expansion techniques and be ready to build sentences and interactive stories along with your flashcards.
- Use flashcards in ways that students are grabbing or pulling. Some games need to have set rules with deductions for not following the rules. Try pointing to the card, instead of picking up the card.
- Always show cards and speak out clearly, not to the side or to the card.
- When drilling, try to pull cards from many different patterns not always front to back (switch up the order).
- Flashcards are tactile, let the student touch them and hold them.