

A TESL GAME for Constructing Sentences

by Alice C. Pack

OBJECTIVE: To give students practice in creating acceptable sentences using the articles, singular forms, plurals, and prepositions necessary in particular situations.

MATERIALS: Stacks of different colored file cards. One color indicates location, another color indicates time, another lists nouns or verbs (nouns are given in either singular or plural forms). White cards have determiners listed i.e., definite, indefinite, possessive, or demonstrative.

PROCEDURE: Game may be used for individual or team play. If teams are used there should not be over five members on each team and class members should be randomly divided into teams. Cards are shuffled and stacks of each are placed in front of each student or team. At the command *GO*, each student or one member of each team draws one card from each of the stacks and, using the lexicon which the cards indicate, writes his sentence on the board. Students are free to choose a verb if a noun is given on the card or a noun if the card gives a verb and may also add any other words, (nouns, verbs, connectors, etc.) that they desire. Students have the choice to use the noun drawn as either the subject or the object of the sentence. (If team play is used, all members of the team may

suggest or correct their team's entry before it is placed on the board). At the command *STOP*, all work must cease and then, in turn, each sentence is given aloud by the student who wrote it. If another student or the other team thinks another's entry is incorrect, a correction may be submitted. Corrections should then be made and scores tallied.

Students must have everything correct in order to score the 5 points given for a completed sentence. Corrections add 2 points to the individual or team score of the person or team suggesting the correction.

Time limits should be determined by the instructor on the basis of class proficiency (students should have some opportunity to succeed).

The prepositions may be added to the location on the cards (at home, in the garden, on the lawn, etc.) for very elementary students only, and should be eliminated as soon as possible so students will learn to use prepositions meaningfully.

Additional cards giving adjectives and adverbs might be added to increase the difficulty of the game as students become proficient in constructing simple sentences.

Also other cards giving the choices of affirmative and negative questions or statements may be added.

SUGGESTED LEXICON

<i>First color</i>	<i>Second color</i>	<i>Third color</i>	<i>White</i>
Time	Location	Verb	Noun
Yesterday	home	go	boy
This morning	library	read	girl
from time to time	beach	play	baby
frequently	lawn	come	basket
this afternoon	garden	walk	house
last week	classroom	eat	boys
next Friday	car	sleep	dog
tomorrow	city	study	cats
always	boat	like	fish
Every Tuesday	room	swim	banana
right now	table	dance	friends
			definite (the)
			indefinite (a, an)
			possessive (my, your, our, etc.)
			demonstrative (this, that, these, those)