

Games That Enhance Verbal-Language Skills for Language Learning

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Teaching English to the young learners is not easy because English is not their mother tongue and it is a new thing for them. The teacher should have a good and an interesting technique to introduce English for them, so that the young learners will be interested and motivated to learn English. There are a lot of ways to introduce English to the young learners. One of them is by using games. As we all know that children like play, so by using games as the teaching method the students can be more interested to learn English. Games are not only for fun but also for motivating students to master English fast and easily.

According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On measures to further improve the learning of foreign languages “on December 10, 2012 since 2013/2014 academic years learning of foreign languages, mainly English, step by step in all territory of the republic began with the first classes of comprehensive schools in the form of game lessons and lessons of informal conversation. Why should we Use Games in our lessons especially for first grades? There some reasons for it: Games are fun and children like to play them; through games children experiment, discover, and interact with their environment; games add variation to a lesson and increase motivation by providing a plausible incentive to use the target language; for many children between four and twelve years old, especially the youngest, language learning will not be the key motivational factor, games can provide this stimulus; the game context makes the foreign language immediately useful to the children; it brings the target language to life; the game makes the reasons for speaking plausible even to reluctant children; through playing games, students can learn English the way children learn their mother tongue without being aware they are studying; thus without stress, they can learn a lot, even shy students can participate positively. Learning by doing is a good way to make them easy in understanding about English, because with doing fun activities by themselves, they

will find it easy to remember and easy to learn about the material which is taught by the teacher. As lessons learned through our bodies stick with us. We don't read a manual to learn how to ride a bike or play a game of Ping-Pong. We learn through our bodies, and once our bodies learn something, we never forget it. This same kind of body intelligence can be used to help children learn their mental skills. There are two major reasons why fun plays a very important role. First, research shows that anything learned with tension often gets flushed out along with the unpleasant memories. Second, the fun factor lifts our spirits and gives us that sense of wellbeing that opens our minds and hearts.

Verbal-Language Skills involve the knowledge of language, including reading, writing, and speaking. They involve knowing the meaning of words and understanding idioms and plays on words. Children who are strong in these skills are good at playing word games, making up stories, debating, creative writing, and telling jokes. They have good reading comprehension and tend to think in words. To give children the start they need in verbal-language skills, there are pre-reading games, which involve the recognition of letters by sight, by touch, and with the whole body. There are beginner's reading games that start with an autobiographical book, as well as an advanced reader's dictionary game. Because developing language skills requires an ability to listen well, there are also games in which hearing is very much a part of the playing. Here we are going to give some examples: Alphabet Fishing. We need small magnet, string, pencil and magnetized letters or sturdy paper and paper clips for the game. How to play the game?

Take a magnet and tie (or tape) a piece of string around it. Tie the other end of the string to a pencil. That is your fishing pole. Lay the letters down on the floor so that the small internal magnet is facing up. Spread them out so they aren't touching each other. If you don't have magnetized letters, cut some fish shapes out of index cards or other durable paper. Write a letter on each fish and spread them out on the floor or in a box. Attach a paper clip to each fish. Have your child stand over the letters dangling his fishing pole and see which letters he catches. It helps to show excitement over each letter he catches.

Lay them out faceup so he can proudly display his catches. It isn't necessary to say "And what letter is this?" It's more important to get enthusiastic about each letter. "Let's see what you caught! You got an . . . N!" You could pause slightly before you say the letter to give your child a chance to show off the letters he does know. If you have several players, you can make poles for all of them and have them fish at the same time. The older players can put their letters together to form words. You can use the game in following ways: Sort and Count: Some alphabet sets have more than one of each letter. This gives you the perfect opportunity to introduce the concepts of sameness and of counting. "Let's see, you caught an A. Now, didn't you catch a letter that was the same as this one? Where is that one? Oh, you're right—here it is. Look, now you have three A's. Let's count them together—one, two, three." What Letter Is Missing?: Place a few of the letters in front of the player and ask him to look away or cover his eyes as you remove one letter from the group. When the player uncovers his eyes and looks at the letters, ask if he knows which one is missing. This game will help make letters and numbers increasingly familiar and friendly to your learner. You can expand on the game by making connections for him between the game letters and daily life. "Remember that letter S you caught yesterday when you were fishing?"

Another game is called "Dictionary Game". It is a group activity. People of all ages can learn new words. Materials we need are: dictionary, pencils, paper. Directions to play: Each player takes a turn looking through the dictionary to find a word that he has never heard of before and suspects that no one else has, either. Once each player has a word and has written the correct definition on a piece of paper, the games begin. One person says his new word and all the other players write down a definition. Since usually no one has a clue as to the real definition, the trick is to write down something that sounds likely and will fool the others. Then the person who knows the real meaning gathers up the slips of papers, including the real definition, and reads them all out loud. The other players individually vote on which one they think is the true definition. If you

want to keep score, the player who fools someone with a phony definition gets a point for each person tricked. Any players who guess the correct definition get three points.

We also gave a point to the person who wrote the goofiest pretend definition if it made us laugh. Play the same game without writing or giving points. Just take turns finding words in the dictionary and everyone tries to figure out the meaning.

What is being learned from the game? All who play this game enlarge their vocabularies. They also get to expand their creativity by making up definitions. But, maybe more important, the game gives the players an enjoyable way to be together using something as simple as a dictionary.

Games in the classroom involve all the students and oblige them to socialize with all the other children developing their communication as well. This occurs especially when they have to speak to each other and think of tactics to defeat their opponents in group games. Those children who are timid or not used to the companionship of other kids can benefit from these games as they are exposed to other children in a fun situation. Kids who are learning English through games are inspired to win the game. For them to win the game, they need to learn the language and excel in it to do well. With their fulfillment in studying a great deal of the language, it imparts in these kids a feeling of self-regard and accomplishment.

Games encourage, entertain, teach, and promote fluency. If not for any of these reasons, they should be used just because they help students see beauty in a foreign language and not just problems that at times seem overwhelming. 'Therefore, the role of games in teaching and learning a language cannot be denied. However, in order to achieve the most from games, it is essential that suitable games are chosen. Whenever a game is to be conducted, the number of students, proficiency level, cultural context, timing, learning topic, and the classroom settings are factors that should be taken into account. We should say that games are used not only for mere fun, but more importantly, for the useful practice and review of language lessons, thus leading toward the goal of improving learners' intelligence and communicative competence.

