

R	E	L	O	B	D	I	L	C	X	W
S	W	O	R	D	O	L	O	G	Y	R
I	H	P	G	D	A	L	P	O	B	F

Interactive Word Wall Activities

Adapted from EducationWorld.com

OOPS!

A fun game that provides word recognition, vocabulary, and spelling practice

OOPS! is a fast-moving, fun activity that can be used with groups of students or an entire class. The activity gives all students a chance to feel success because it is, ultimately, a game of chance. Even the best reader in your class might lose the game; conversely, one of your struggling readers could win the game.

Materials Needed

- a file box of word cards, one card for every word on the word wall
- cards with the word OOPS! written on them in big red letters (approximately one OOPS! card for every 15 to 20 word cards)

Before the Game

This game requires that teachers add every word-wall word to a file box of word cards. That is simple to do: Each time a word is added to the word wall, write that word on a 3- by 5-inch index card and insert it into a file box. Then, on separate cards, write the word OOPS! in big red letters. Insert the OOPS! cards randomly throughout the file box -- in a ratio of about one OOPS! card for every 15 to 20 word cards. When you have your box of word cards set, students are ready to learn to play OOPS!

The Game

One at a time, have individual students come forward and pull a word card. Alternatively, you could have the students pass the file box around and draw a card when it's their turn.

As a student pulls a card, she or he turns to the other students, shows the card, and says the word. If the student says the word correctly, he or she gets to keep the card. If the word is read incorrectly, the card is put back into the box.

You might challenge the students by asking them to give a definition of the word or compose a meaningful sentence before allowing them to keep the cards.

Continue the game in that way. Eventually, students might gather a handful of cards. A student who pulls one of the OOPS! cards, however, must give up all the word cards she or he has gathered to that point. A player who pulls an OOPS! card is back to square one!

When time is up -- an ideal game might be 10 to 15 minutes -- the student holding the most word cards is the winner.

Extension Activity

Make the box of word cards available at the Wordology center so the students can play the game on their own.

Erasing Relay

A fast-moving game that provides practice in recognizing grade-appropriate vocabulary

Materials Needed

- list of words from the word wall

Before the Game

Arrange the students into two teams. Write two columns of words that are approximately equal in difficulty on the board. Each column should list one word for each member of the team. All words should be drawn from the classroom word wall.

The Game

Position each team a few feet from the chalkboard or white board where you have written the word lists. At a signal, the first child on each team goes up to the board, points at the first word in the team's column of words, and reads aloud that word. If the student reads the word correctly, she or he is allowed to erase that word. The student then moves to the back of his or her team's line. The first team to erase all the words on their list is the winning team.

You might challenge the students by asking them to give a definition or compose a meaningful sentence before allowing them to erase the word.

Mind Reader

Students use clues to figure out a "mystery word" that appears on the classroom word wall

Materials Needed

- scrap paper; a mini whiteboard, or a mini chalkboard
- writing implement (pencil, marker, or chalk)
- list of word wall or vocabulary words with clues to help students guess them

The Game

Provide each student with a small piece of paper; this is a great activity for recycling some of that scrap paper you have been collecting. Alternatively, you can use mini-whiteboards or chalkboards.

Have students number their papers or whiteboard from one to five. Then select a "mystery word" from the word wall (or vocabulary list) and give five successive clues to help students identify the word. Each successive clue should help students further narrow down the words on the word wall to the special mystery word. As you give each clue, students should select one word from the word wall that matches all the clues given to that point in the game. The last clue should be the most obvious one.

EXAMPLE 1

Mystery Word: puppy

Clue 1: The mystery word is one of our word wall words.

Clue 2: The mystery word has two syllables.

Clue 3: The mystery word has five letters.

Clue 4: The mystery word has three letters that are all the same.

Clue 5: The mystery word will complete this statement: My father bought a new ____ at the pet store.

EXAMPLE 2

Mystery Word: pollution

Clue 1: The mystery word is one of our word wall words.

Clue 2: The mystery word has more than six letters.

Clue 3: The mystery word has three syllables.

Clue 4: The mystery word ends with the suffix -tion.

Clue 5: The mystery word rhymes with the word solution.

After you have given the five clues, have students show their papers or slates. Which student(s) guessed the mystery word with the fewest possible clues?

Assessment

Each student who guesses the correct word at the earliest possible clue earns a point. Tally points at the end of the game to determine which students are the winners.

Hot Seat

A student in the "hot seat" asks questions to discern the secret word

Materials Needed

- Word wall or vocabulary list

The Game

This can be a whole-class activity or as a small group activity once the students are familiar with the rules.

In this activity, one student is selected to come to the front of the class and take the "hot seat." The student sits in a chair facing his or her classmates and with his or her back to the board. The student should have a clear view of the class word wall.

The teacher or a classmate selects a word from the word wall (or from students' vocabulary list) and writes that word on the board. The student in the hot seat is unable to see the word, but it is his or her job to guess the word by asking questions that help to narrow down the possibilities. For example, the student in the hot seat might ask:

- Is it a noun?
- Does it have fewer than 10 letters?
- Does it have more than two syllables?
- Is the vowel a found in the word?
- Would this word be found in the first half of the dictionary?
- Is it an animal?

- Does the word mean the same thing as _____?
- Does the word rhyme with _____?

Keep a tally of the number of questions/clues it takes for the student to guess the word.

Assessment

The students who guess the correct word with the fewest number of clues are the winners. They can then be the kings and queens of the hot seat.

Vocabulary Basketball

Reinforce vocabulary with this game combining reading and basketball skills

Materials Needed

- mini basketball net with sponge "basketball"
- questions matched to words on the classroom word wall

Before the Game

Purchase and set up a mini basketball hoop that comes with a small sponge basketball. Use masking tape to create lines on the floor where the one point, two point, and three point shots will be taken from.

Prepare at least one vocabulary question for each student in the class. The following sample question formats will work nicely:

- Provide a definition and ask students to identify the word-wall word that matches the definition.
- Provide the phonetic pronunciation (for example, pro-NUN-see-AY-shun) and ask students to say or point to the word.
- Provide a sentence that has one word missing; that word can be found on the word wall.
- Provide a synonym (a word that means the same thing) or an antonym (a word that means the opposite), and have students identify the word.
- Provide a rhyming word and ask students to identify the word-wall word.
- Provide two dictionary "guide words" and ask students to identify a word wall word that might be found on the same page as those words. (For example, the word wonderful would be found on a dictionary page with the guide words "wall - word.")

The Game

Arrange the class into 2 to 4 teams. Ask one of the questions you prepared (see Before the Game above) to the first student on the first team.

If the student answers correctly, that student earns a point and a chance to shoot for additional points. If the student does not want to shoot, they may choose one of their team mates to do it for them. There is no penalty for a missed shot.

If the student does not answer correctly, pass the question to the first player on the next team.

At the end of the game, the team with the most points wins.