



VOCABULARY RECALL GAME

Learners review previously-learned vocabulary playing a card game

Level:	Elementary - Advanced
Target Audience:	Secondary, Adults
Language / Skills Focus:	Reviewing vocabulary, defining words
Activity Time:	20-30 minutes
Materials:	Lots of small blank cards

IN CLASS

- 1 Give each learner between five and ten small cards. Ask them to go through their study notes (or course book) to find new words and expressions that they have learned recently. They should write one word or expression only on each card.
- 2 When they have done this, collect all the cards in a bag.
- 3 Put learners into groups of three or four, and redistribute the cards, dividing them equally between all the groups. Place them face down in a pile.
- 4 Explain the rules of the game:
 - Learners take turns to pick up one card from the top of the pile. They should give the clearest definition of the word that they can to their group. They must not say the word.
 - The other group members have to guess the word. If they do so within 10 seconds, the speaker keeps the card, and play passes to the next person.
 - If nobody can guess the word, the card goes back to the bottom of the pack, and play passes to the next person.
 - If the speaker does not know the word, the card goes back to the bottom of the pack, and play passes to the next person.
 - The winner is the person with the most cards (i.e. who has given the best definitions) when the game ends.
- 5 Check that your learners understand these instructions, and begin the activity,
- 6 At the end of the activity, ask your learners to sort out the words they had problems with. Make a note of these, and devise suitable follow-up activities to revise these at a later date.

EXTENSION

After the game, the cards can be collected again and put in a bag pinned to the classroom wall. Whenever learners have a few minutes to spare they can take out several cards and test themselves or a partner.

COMMENT

This is a very popular activity with learners at all levels. I have found it particularly useful for exam revision, and I have sometimes given learners different topic areas to work on when looking for new vocabulary.

VARIATIONS

To save time in class, ask learners to prepare their cards before the lesson for homework.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I learned this idea many years ago from an article in a teachers' journal. I cannot remember where or when.

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