

Activity Type

Spelling activity, group work

Focus

Vocabulary

Aim

To change one word into another by changing one letter at a time.

Preparation

None

Level

Pre-intermediate (A2-B1)

Time

20 minutes

Introduction

This intriguing word game was invented by Lewis Carroll who wrote "Alice in Wonderland".

Procedure

Tell the students that they are going to play a game where they change one word into another by changing one letter at a time.

Explain that letters cannot be moved, merely substituted. Every time a letter is changed, it must result in an English word.

Give the following 'wet to dry' example to help the students understand: wet - met - mat - may - day - dry.

Next, divide the students into teams of three or four. Start the students off with one of the easier examples. Write the first and last word on the board.

Working in their teams, students try to change one word into the other. Allow the teams to use dictionaries to help them with possible words.

When the teams have finished, ask them for their answers.

Teams score points according to the number of steps taken to turn one word into the other, e.g. wet - met - mat - may - day - dry = six points.

Play several rounds. The team with the 'lowest' score at the end of the game wins.

Examples:

cat - cot - dot - **dog**

shoe - shot - soot - **boot**

cow - cot - pot - pit - **pig**

few - new - net - not - **lot**

give - live - like - lake - **take**

boy - toy - ton - ten - men - **man**

love - live - give - gave - gate - **hate**

road - read - lead - lend - land - **lane**

hard - card - cord - ford - food - foot - soot - **soft**

hand - band - bend - bead - beat - boat - boot - **foot**

cold - sold - sole - mole - male - mare - ware - **warm**

meat - beat - bent - went - want - cant - cane - cone - **bone**

wind - wine - line - lane - land- sand - said - paid - pain - **rain**

wolf - golf - gold - bold - bolt- boat - boar - bear - beer - **deer**

pear - bear - beat - bent - bend - bind - wind - wine - line - **lime**

wood - wool - pool - poor - pour - four - foul - soul - soil - sail - **nail**

rich - rice - ripe - pipe - pine - dine - done - bone - bore - born

- morn - moon - moor - **poor**