

TYPES OF GRAMMAR GAMES



18.6 TYPES OF GRAMMAR GAMES

Rinvolucris divides games into four types:

- a) **Competitive Games:** This includes traditional games like "noughts and crosses", "snakes and ladders", "double or quits", etc., which have been adapted to highlight a specific grammar point. Here students are asked to think consciously about grammar. These games pose a cognitive challenge.
- b) **Collaborative games:** In accordance with the humanistic approach, these games require warm cooperation among students rather than competition. The teacher generally remains in the background and plays the role of a facilitator.
- c) **Awareness Activities:** Here the students engage in activities which require them to think and feel about human relationships e.g. their childhood, friends, etc. Indirectly they practise grammar points. The students' focus is on what they are saying, not on the form they are using. On the other hand, the teacher's job is to control the structures.

52

- d) **Grammar through Drama:** During these activities, students are active, they practise grammar through movement; when students are shouting or disinterested these games are ideal. Or when you have a set of lively youngsters with a lot of energy to expend, this is the best way of channelising it.

Teaching Grammar : New Type
Activities and Games

Given below is a sample for each type:

- (a) **Competitive Games:**

Game: Find Who

Level: Secondary

Grammar: Simple past - Active/Passive

Give each student the following sheet, which they have to complete by locating the appropriate person from among themselves. Find a person, who, when aged between 3 and 10:

- a) rode a bike
- b) bit his father
- c) broke his leg
- d) had chickenpox
- e) fought with other children
- f) slept in the afternoons
- g) was spanked for stealing sweets
- h) was often made to stand in the corner
- i) was forced to drink milk.

Now the students must go around and find various people to whom these things happened. They should then write the name of the person on their sheet. Make sure that for each item they enter a different name. The winner is the person who gets the most names soonest.

(adopted from Rinvolucris)

- b) **Collaborative Games:**

Game: Sentence Collage

Level: Any

Grammar: Word Order

Take a long sentence, for example, Look dad, if you let me have my dress made the way I want, I'll have it done by your tailor.

Put each word on a separate slip of paper. Divide the class into groups of seven. Give each group a complete set of words. Ask them to form a sentence into which all the sentences fit grammatically and intelligibly. They may come out with a different sentence, which is fine.

(adopted from Rinvolucris)

c) **Awareness Activities**

Game: True Names and False Professions

Level: Primary

Grammar: Sentences with linking verb; vocabulary (professions)

Organise the students into groups of fifteen. First give your real name and a false profession, beginning with the first letter of your name, e.g. I am Peter the painter.

Now ask the student next to you to repeat your name and profession and then add his own.

(e.g.) He is Peter the Painter. I am Tina the Tailor, etc. The last person will have quite a few names and professions to remember!

(Frank & Rinvolucri)

d) **Grammar through Drama**

Game: One idea at a time

Level: Primary/Secondary

Grammar: Adjectives

Ask a learner to volunteer. S/he should think of an adjective and mime it. Others should try to guess what s/he is miming. An example is provided.

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------------|
| Learner 1 | : | Are you tired? |
| Mimer | : | (Shakes head) |
| Learner 2 | : | Are you lazy? |
| Mimer | : | (Shakes head) |
| Learner 3 | : | Are you bored? |
| Mimer | : | (nods head) |

(Wright et al.)

Check Your Progress 5

Think of any popular game you have enjoyed playing. Can you adapt it to teach any specific area of grammar?

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18.7 LET US SUM UP

1. Grammar should be enjoyable and help learners to improve their skills in reading and writing.
2. Grammar games provide practice in grammar in an interesting way.
3. Grammar Practice activities provide practice in grammar in an enjoyable manner.
4. The advantages of grammar games: motivating, providing opportunities for meaningful use of language; practice in the four language skills; useful at all levels of learning; diagnostic; offer genuine information gap.

5. In order to make grammar games effective, we need to follow certain guidelines: gradual introduction; appropriacy to learner's level; no compulsion; variety; incidental correction.
6. There are four major types of grammar games: competitive games; collaborative games; awareness activities; grammar through drama.

Teaching Grammar : New Type
Activities and Games

18.8 SUGGESTED READING

Frank, C. and Rinovoluceri, Mario (1983). *Grammar in Action*. Oxford : Pergamon Press.

Makey, Sandra L. (1985). *Teaching Grammar*. Oxford: Pergamon Institute of English.

Rinovoluceri, Mario (1984). *Grammar Games*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ur. Penny (1988). *Grammar Practice Activities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wright, Andrew, Betteridge, David and Buckby, Michael (1984). *Games for Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Channel 1-10 (1990). Madras : Orient Longman Ltd.

18.9 ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- | | |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1) Traditional Exercises | Grammar Games |
| Serious | Both serious and enjoyable |
| Mechanical practice | Meaningful practice |
| Learners conscious of learning grammar | Learners not conscious of learning grammar |
| Contrived | Related to real life |
| Individual work | Collaborative work |
| No information gap | Genuine information gap |
- 2) Advantages of grammar games: (Refer 18.2)
 - 3) Open-ended: no one correct answer possible.

Check Your Progress 2

The answers would be similar to the answers to Check Your Progress 1.1.

Check Your Progress 3

Open-ended

Check Your Progress 4

(b) learner-centred ; (c) don't force learners if they are not ready; (d) need for variety; (e) incidental correction.