



Short Activity
Ages 9–12
5–30 minutes

Word Games

Description

A collection of word games that can be used in a program or adapted for passive programming in your libraries

Space Considerations

Any type of space with seating for all players

Competencies

- Creative and imaginative thinking
- Logic and sequencing
- Working collaboratively
- Strategic thinking

Materials

- Pen or pencil
- Paper
- Timer or stopwatch (optional)

Implementation

Select a word game from the list and modify as desired to fit your preferences and the number of participants in your program

Word Grid

1. Each player begins by drawing a four by four grid (16 squares total) on a piece of paper and hiding it from the other player(s)
2. The players take turns calling out any letter—letters may be called more than once
3. As each letter is called out, players must write the letter somewhere on the grid—you cannot erase it!

4. The goal is to make as many four-letter words as possible
5. When all of the grids are full (i.e. 16 letters have been called), players show their grids and count how many four-letter words they were able to create vertically, horizontally and diagonally
6. The player with the most words wins that round
7. Play as many rounds as desired

Triplet Challenge

1. For each round, one player chooses any three letters, which each player writes down at the top of their sheet
2. Within a two-minute time limit, the players write as many words as possible that include all three letters
3. Players can use each letter as many times as they like
4. Players are awarded one point for each word
5. Play as many rounds as desired

Words Within Words

1. For each round, choose any starting word with six letters or more
2. Within a two-minute time limit, each player writes as many words as they can using letters from the starter word
3. You can only use each letter in the starter word one time
4. Proposed scoring:
 - 1 point for words with 3 or fewer letters
 - 2 points for words with 4 letters
 - 3 points for words with 5 or more letters

Starting Letters

1. For each round, provide participants with three letters
2. Participants use these three letters to start as many different words as possible within a 1-minute time limit
3. Players are awarded one point for each word at the end of each round
4. Play as many rounds as desired and then combine the scores from each round for a grand total
 - Suggested starter letters: AND, BAT, CAR, DOT, ENT, FIL, GRO, HIL, INC, JUG, KNI, LAM, MOD, NON, OFF, PUM, QUI, RUN, SIT, TRI, ULT, VIR, WEL, YEA

Acrostics

1. For each round, one participant should come up with a five-letter word
2. All participants write that word vertically down the left side of their page
3. Down the right side of the page, participants write the same word but with the letters in reverse order. For example: if the word is "teach", each player writes T-E-A-C-H down the left side and H-C-A-E-T down the right side, ensuring the letters across the page are roughly in line, as pictured below
4. The players now race to fill in the space between the two columns with words that begin with a letter on the left and end with the letter opposite it on the right
5. The initial keyword cannot be used again
6. The winner of each round could be:
 - the fastest to complete the table, or
 - the person who used the most letters overall (add up the total number of letters in all of their words)

T		O		O		T		H
E		C		S		T		A
A				R		E		N
C				R		I		M
H				A		T		C

Categories

1. This game works best when played in groups of 3 to 6 participants
2. Each player begins by drawing a grid on a piece of paper, with five boxes across and down, for a total of 25 boxes (the size of the grid can be modified as desired)
3. Players select five categories that are broad enough for players to know plenty of examples of each (for example: colours, fish, animals, birds, boys' names, girls' names, cities, flowers, fruit, vegetables, countries, and song titles)
4. Once the categories are selected, each is assigned a row in the grid and is written to the left side of that row

5. Together, the players choose letters to put at the top of the grid's five columns (all players use the same letters)
6. Players try to complete the grid (Each box must be filled in with a word that fits into the category of its row and starts with the letter at the top of its column)
7. Players have a set time period to complete the grid—5 minutes is recommended for a 5x5 grid
8. When the time is up, the players take turns reading off their answers
 - Any word that fits the category and the initial letter earns one point
 - If no other participant came up with the same word, it gets another point (two points total)
 - Blank boxes and words that don't fit the category or the initial letter do not get a point
9. The high scorer at the end of the desired number of rounds wins

	S	T	A	R	D
Animals	Skunk	Tiger	Armadillo	Rhinoceros	Dog
Cities	Saskatoon	Toronto	Amsterdam	Rochester	Detroit
Flowers	Sunflower	Tulip			Daffodil
Colours		Teal	Azure	Red	
Fruit	Star fruit	Tomato			

Book Suggestions

Andrew the Seeker by Lee Nordling

Camp Average by Craig Battle

Home Run, Touchdown, Basket, Goal! Sports Poems for Little Athletes by Leo Landry

Meet Tom Longboat by Elizabeth MacLeod