

Around the Word - in 10 minutes!

This is a simple game but it can help parents and children get to grips with the words we use to describe language. It can be done as a frantic fast paced game or a slow gentle quiz depending on how you set it up and the needs of the group. It is useful as a practice activity during a longer literacy course or as an extra activity in a literacy workshop.

You will need

- A large space, indoors or out.
- A selection of laminated word cards placed around the venue. These should include names of countries, animals and people from all over the world as well as different temperatures, colours and weather.
- To use a colour scheme such as red for nouns, green for adjectives, blue for verbs, yellow for adverbs and orange for link words.
- Shoe boxes for the fast version; quiz sheets and pencils for the slow version.

Method – fast game

1. Play in teams – each team has three players
2. Set a time limit for the game (5 – 10 minutes)
3. One team member runs off to collect five words on different coloured card and brings them back.
4. The team then put them in order to make a correct sentence
5. They write the sentence on a quiz sheet and put it in the box
6. They repeat this till the time runs out.
7. A prize is given for the team with the most correct sentences.

Method – slow game

1. This version is more suited to a workshop or drop in event.
2. The words are mounted on walls around the venue and families try to create as many different, correct sentences, as possible.
3. It is crucial with this version that there is an explanation of each of these terms where everyone can see them. Keep it simple e.g. 'Nouns are names' 'Adjectives describe nouns' 'Verbs are doing words' 'Adverbs describe how the action is done'. You could colour code the explanations to match the word types.
3. The families complete the quiz sheets as in the fast game and again the team with the most correct sentences wins a prize.

Tips

- You could give a prize for the funniest, but still grammatically correct, sentence e.g. "The wobbly mango danced splendidly in Lapland."

Follow on

You could use some of the sentence examples as discussion points for grammar in a longer literacy course. Even parents with GCSE English may not remember the meanings of the different terms.

Use the colour cards to demonstrate word order in sentence structure either before or after the activity.

Reuse the cards for encouraging descriptive writing.

Complementary links to other national programmes

Adult Core Curriculum references

Ws/E2.2, Ws/E3.3

This sheet is particularly aimed at year 3 pupils and their families. However it is useful for older children and adults for revision