



Shawna's Favorite Games:

- *Standing Survey*- Students move across the room to represent their opinion on various issues. Eg. “Stand on the left if you love to read poetry, on the right if you hate it, and in the middle if you feel so-so about it”
- *Jeopardy*- Teams choose a category and point value for questions (higher point value corresponds to greater difficulty).
- *'Password'*- One student describes a word or concept to a partner (This can be done with numerous pairs, if half of the students can see the word on the board, and the other half cannot).
- *Around the World*- The first two students stand next to each other in a ‘challenge’. The first one to answer a question correctly gets to ‘travel’ to the next desk to challenge a new partner. The goal is to travel ‘around the world’ and back to your desk, by winning a challenge against every other student in the class.
- *Find your Match* (AKA ‘Dating game’)- Students draw words or definitions from a ‘hat’ and must locate their ‘match’ in the room.
- *Outburst* (AKA Categories)- Students work in teams to come up with a list of examples in a particular category. (Eg: bones in the human skull, 18th century British poets, bodies of water, etc.). Points are determined based on which answers are unique to each group’s list.
- *Pict-ades*- My own combination of “Pictionary” and “Charades,” this game allows the student to decide whether to act or draw to illustrate a word or concept. Other rules are the same.
- *Who am I?*- Student have a name or concept taped to their backs, and must ask questions of classmates, in order to identify themselves.
- *Board races*- These activities require students from each team to ‘run’ to the board to solve a problem, answer a question, etc. The winner must be both quick AND correct!
- *Reading Relay*- Each team has 3 students—two readers and one runner. The runner must go between reader 1—who has a list of questions, and reader two—who has an article with answers. This encourages students to practice listening, reading quickly, and retaining information.
- *Trashketball*- My favorite and most versatile game, this is a variation on the typical ‘quiz game,’ allowing teams to earn extra points by tossing a ball (or paper wad) into the wastebasket. They must answer three questions correctly, however, before they get to

‘shoot’.

- *Popcorn*- Students put chairs in a circle, with one fewer chair than there are students. One student stands in the middle and makes a true statement about himself. (e.g. I live in Taipei) Students sitting in the circle must change their seats if that statement is also true for them. The student left without a chair stands in the middle, and the game continues.
- *TIC-TAC-TOE*- Two teams answer questions (about grammar, vocabulary, etc). If they get the question right, they can choose where to put their ‘X’ or ‘O.’ Three in a row is a winner!
- *Interrogation*- Students write both true and false statements about themselves (1 or 2 of each, depending on level and available time. E.g. I have been to New York City two times. OR I have three pets.). They then form small groups, in which each student reads her statements aloud, and then invites ‘interrogation’ (questions to verify the truth of statements) e.g. Why did you go to New York City? How long were you there? OR What are the names of your pets? After 5 minutes of questions, the group votes on which statement(s) are lies. Then the game continues with the next student sharing statements.
- *I look, You Don’t (drawing or acting dictation)*- This game begins with a drawing or other picture. (Either one that students create, or one given to them). Each student tries to describe what he sees to his partner, who then re-creates it, either on paper, or through acting (if the picture is a photograph). At the end, the partners compare to see how effective their communication has been.
- *Telephone*- Students form a two or more lines (with at least 5 students in each). The teacher whispers a secret message (phrase or sentence) to the first person in each line, and they race to communicate that message to the end of the line. The line that is fastest and most accurate wins a point. Then the game continues, perhaps after a re-shuffling of the lines.
- *Knots*- 7-10 students stand in a circle and put their hands in the center. They then grab the hands of someone NOT next to them. This is how the ‘knot’ is formed. The groups then race to see who can ‘unravel’ their knot most quickly—using English to communicate directions.

A few tips on using games effectively:

- ✚ Encourage team members to share the role of speaker or writer, so that all of them must participate in some way.
- ✚ I often have **students design a game or write quiz questions**. (It’s amazing what they come up with, and this can save TAs time)
- ✚ As an alternative to prizes or candy, consider offering **coupons** for extra credit or extended time on a quiz or assignment, small **privileges** (such as leaving class 5 min early), or even offering a **class reward** (party, field trip, etc.) for increased participation or high test scores.