Engaging and Easy Low-Tech Games for the Grammar Classroom

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9:55-10:15
What is the format of grammar instruction at your institution?

- Grammar is taught as its own, stand-alone course
- Grammar is taught with speaking
- Grammar is taught with writing
- Grammar is taught throughout the curriculum
- There is no explicit teaching of grammar in my program
Overview

- Why include games in the classroom?
- What is “Apples to Apples”?
- Grammar Game #1: Silly paragraphs
- Grammar Game #2: Guess the noun
Using Games in the Classroom

- Grammar instruction can be boring! Games can add some “spice” to a monotonous class.
- Our goal is to communicate the material as effectively as possible so that students retain and use what they have learned.
  - Classroom games can improve student engagement and motivation (Andrade, 2009; Thekes, 2011; Hanson-Smith, 2016)
- Don’t have much technology available in your classroom? No problem!
Apples to Apples

- Originally intended as a party game
- The “tame” version of Cards Against Humanity
Game #1: Silly paragraphs

Goal: Students will utilize adjectives and articles to modify count and non-count nouns in writing.

Materials: noun cards & adjective cards

Directions: With your partner or group, write a short story using all of your nouns and adjective cards. Try to use the adjectives to describe the nouns. As you are writing, pay careful attention to articles and count/non-count nouns.

Make your story as funny or interesting as possible! The class will vote on their favorite paragraph.
Game #2: Guess the noun

**Goal:** Students will utilize relative clauses to describe nouns.

**Materials:** A large stack of noun cards for each pair/group

**Directions:** With your partner or group, choose who will describe first and who will guess first. Once you are ready, the instructor will set the timer for 1 minute. When the instructor says “go,” turn over your first card and try to get your partner to guess the word by describing it with a relative clause. For example, “This is the place where you park your car.”

Try to get your partner to guess as many answers as possible! If you cannot describe it or your partner can’t guess, you can skip that card.
Take-home message

- Games are a great way to increase student attention and interest
- Grammar is a subject that lends itself well to games
- Games do not have to be high-tech or time-intensive

Share your games with me!

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References

