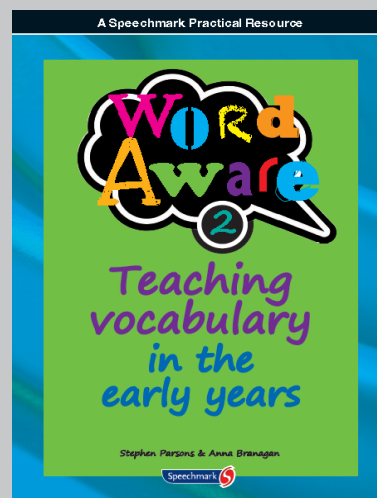
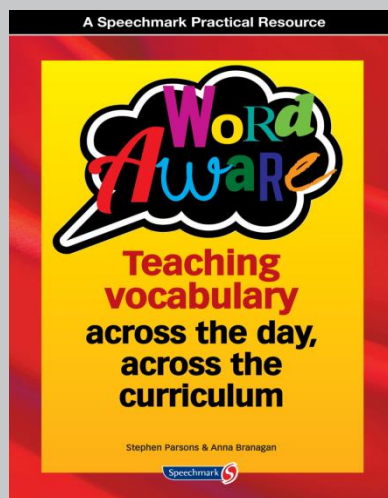


# Word Aware word games



## **Word Aware**

'Word Aware' is a whole school approach for developing children's vocabulary. Just because schools are not operating normally doesn't mean you can't still develop children's vocabulary. And with so much happening we all need a little bit of fun, so why not kill two birds with one stone and play word games?

Over the next twenty or so pages are lots of simple-to-play word games. Tweak them as you wish to adapt to your children's needs or play your own words games. Whatever you do, show your enjoyment of words and children will too.

You can find out more about Word Aware at [www.thinkingtalking.co.uk](http://www.thinkingtalking.co.uk) and we are always happy to hear from users of our resources, so drop us a line at [thinkingtalking@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:thinkingtalking@yahoo.co.uk)

Anna Brangan and Stephen Parsons  
March 2020

## Word rounds

Choose one of the categories below. Go around the circle, with each player adding a category item.

**Variation:** After you have chosen your category set a timer for one minute. Taking turns around the group see how many words can be generated in one minute. Record the class total and then try to beat it next time.

Animals	Clothes	Furniture	Food	Transport
Sports	Countries	Shops	Parts of the body	Computer games
Films	T.V. programmes	Famous people	Anything to do with Christmas	Books
Something you cut	Something you can smell	Something you wear when it is hot	Something you can see on a beach	Songs
Somewhere you go on holiday	Something you would see at the zoo	Things you use or wear when playing sport	Things you could do with a piece of paper	Something red/ green/ blue
Something starting with 'p' (or any other letter)	Something with legs	Something you would find in a handbag	Things in a classroom	Things you could buy in a supermarket that isn't food
Shoes	Things that are cold	Insects	Things that grow	Musical instruments
Boy's/ girl's name	Cartoon characters	Famous sports men/ women	Verbs (doing words)	Adjectives (describing words)
Things that are thin	Things that are round/ square	Breakable objects	Things that can fly	Things with wheels
Toys	Things you plug in	Emotions	Pets	Jobs
Things that make you laugh	Things that are fast	Breakfast foods	Things that are exciting/ exhilarating	Things that open
Things that are boring	Liquids /things you can pour	Things that rhyme with tea/ cat/ light.	Drinks	Things that are light (not heavy)

## **Word spinner**

Make an online spinner using the website [www.wheeldecide.com](http://www.wheeldecide.com). Search YouTube for 'Wheel decide' tutorials. It's very straightforward.

Create your own, by adding a number of categories (from the list on the previous page) onto the word spinner. Create an account if you wish to save it, or save the URL.

How to play: When the spinner stops, the children may either call out or write down items that belong to that category.

Make it harder by having two spinners, one for letters and the other for categories. You can do this with 'Wheel decide' but you have to open two separate windows and position them side by side. Spin both at the same time. When they stop the children need to think of items in the category that begin with the letter shown. This makes a fun team game where the team has to think of 5 words.

## **I spy variations**

**Variation 1:** Thinking hat. Word meaning clues are given rather than letters and the object does not need to be within sight. Say, "I put on my thinking hat and think of something that is (give a clue)." If incorrect say, "It's not that. I put on my thinking hat and think of something that is (original clue and a second clue)." Continue until the word has been guessed.

**Variation 2:** Big brain. In this game players give a clue containing the first phoneme of the word as well as a word meaning clue. Unlike 'I spy' players do not need to be able to see the item, but they need to think with their 'big brains'. For example, "I think with my big brain, something that is part of a tree and begins with a 'b'."

## **Henry VIII**

Select a historical figure or fictional character that have featured in the class' learning. Work in groups to think of words that best describe this person or character. As a class refine them to the best five. Here are some examples:

Henry VIII: fat, greedy, self-centred, powerful and wealthy.

Red Riding Hood: kind, happy, helpful, innocent and young.

An extension would be to draw a picture of the person or character and write the words to describe him/her.

Harry Potter, Percy Jackson, Charlie (from the Chocolate factory), Matilda, Hagrid, Gandalf, Tracey Beaker, Horrid Henry, Robin Hood, Spiderman, Yoda, Darth Vader, Mr Bean, James Bond.

Henry VIII, Queen Victoria, Florence Nightingale, Anne Frank.

Donald Trump, Queen Elizabeth II, Boris Johnson, Greta Thunberg, Lewis Hamilton, Lewis Capaldi, Harry Styles, Greg James.

## Character slinky

Cut a piece of card into quarters. Then fold the card in concertina style (like a fan). Open out the card so that there are now spaces to write. Add the words to describe the character. Attach head, arms and legs to the folded card.



Thanks to Miss Hurren & P5B

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/553309504214726571/>

## 20 questions

Traditional game in which one person thinks of an object. Others try to guess what it is by asking questions. The original player can only answer 'yes, no or maybe.' A clue may be given if the guessers are on the wrong track. Can the item be guessed in 20 questions? Keep a tally of the number of questions on the board.

## What can it do?

Pick one of the words below. Can you think of 5 things that it can do or that can be done with it? For example, **tree**: climb, chop, grow, fall down and absorb carbon dioxide.

apple	baby	ball	bread	chalk
giraffe	leaf	lion	lollipop stick	paper
paperclip	pencil	penguin	rubber band	stick
tree	your foot	your hand	cat	flour
flower	hair	water	air	spoon

## Alison is an acrobat in Asia

Select a letter of the alphabet. Then ask each player to generate a name, profession and place that all begin with the same letter. For example, for the letter 'a': "Alison is an acrobat in Asia", or for 'e': "Eddie is an engineer in Edinburgh."

(Thanks to Julie Sanders, Pershore High School for this idea.)

## In the manner of the word ...

Ask the class to generate four to six adverbs (eg slowly, painfully, joyously, speedily, messily, quietly and sadly) and write them on the board. Ensure that they all know the meaning of each word. One student then goes out of the room. Pick one of the words, such as **sadly**. The student who has left the room then comes back in and asks someone to act an everyday task in the 'manner of ...', for example, for **sadly**. "Isaac, make a cup of tea **in the manner of the word**." Isaac then acts making a cup of tea as **sadly** as he can. If the first child is unable to guess what the target word is then a different child is asked to do another task **in the manner of the word** – and as many others as needed until

the answer is guessed. Once the first child guesses correctly, a second child goes out of the room and a different word is chosen. The child or children who are acting are allowed to talk. Several children can be selected at one time. (From Nash, 2013)

**Adverb examples:** slowly, painfully, joyously, speedily, messily, quietly, sadly energetically, crossly, loudly, dramatically, sternly, happily, sedately, reluctantly, solemnly, vainly, gracefully, blindly, covertly, hastily, boldly, wildly, daintily, sleepily, thoughtfully, jokingly, proudly, suspiciously, rapidly, wearily, angrily. dejectedly, chivalrously, shakily, sheepishly, rudely, elegantly, intensely, mysteriously,

Task examples (for either one child or several children) to carry out the action or pretend to:

- write 'The cat sat on the mat' on the board
- walk across the classroom
- dance
- make a cup of tea,
- have a drink in the pub/coffee shop
- get dressed
- brush your hair/teeth
- pick some flowers and give them to someone
- have a wash
- talk to each other on the phone
- ask your mum if you can go out and see a friend
- climb on a climbing frame
- blow out birthday candles and cut the cake
- buy an icecream
- have a conversation on the bus
- swim

<https://7esl.com/list-of-adverbs/>

<https://www.thegamegal.com/2010/10/20/in-the-manner-of-the-adverb/>

### ***The parson's cat***

The group picks a letter of the alphabet such as the letter 't'. Each player takes a turn describing the parson's cat using an adjective starting with that letter, for example, "The parson's cat is a **t**iny cat." The next person has to think of a different adjective starting with the same letter, for example, "The parson's cat is a **t**errifying cat." The game continues until no more adjectives starting with that letter can be identified. That can be the end of the game or another letter can be chosen.

### ***What would make you feel ...?***

Name an emotion. Class members then make suggestions about situations in which they may experience the nominated emotion. For example, "Can you think of a time when you might feel **courageous/ argumentative/ uneasy/ resentful?**"

### ***Emotions spin game***

A slight variation on the previous game. Make an online spinner using the website [www.wheeldecide.com](http://www.wheeldecide.com). Write a range of emotions onto the spinner. When the spinner stops on an emotion word the children are asked to describe a time they felt that way. A variation might be to ask for examples of situations when characters from a shared text experienced that emotion. A list of emotions is provided here. This list is from [csefel.vanderbilt.edu](http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu)

Affectionate, agreeable, annoyed, awful, bored, brave, calm, capable, caring, cheerful, clumsy, comfortable, confused, cooperative, creative, cruel, curious, depressed, disappointed, disgusted, ecstatic, embarrassed, enjoying, excited, fantastic, fearful, fed-up, free, friendly, frustrated, gentle, generous, gloomy, guilty, ignored, impatient, important, interested, jealous, joyful, lonely, lost, loving, overwhelmed, peaceful, pleasant, proud, relaxed, relieved, safe, satisfied, sensitive, serious, shy, stressed, strong, stubborn, tense, thoughtful, thrilled, troubled, unafraid, uncomfortable, weary, worried.



### **Word associations**

One player starts by saying a word. The next player says a word that is related to the first word. It can be related in any way. If another player can't see how the words are related, they can challenge and the connection needs to be explained. Keep going until a word is repeated or a connection cannot be explained. Here is an example: Egypt – Mummy – Dad – beard – Santa Claus – Christmas – trees – leaves – departs.

### **Describe it!**

Put up an interesting picture on the whiteboard. [www.pobble365.com](http://www.pobble365.com) gives a large selection. Each child brainstorms words to describe the picture. Help the children if needed. For instance, in describing a person, headings such as appearance, movement, speech and personality may be provided. Then change to another picture and brainstorm another selection of words. When this is done, each child takes it in turn to say one of their words. If someone else has that word they call 'snap' and tick it off their list. Then the children have to guess which picture the word was used for. Talk about differences in opinion. The adult records the words chosen. As a group identify which is the most powerful for each picture.

### **Adjectives in a row**

Brainstorm a number of adjectives that could be used to describe an attribute such as temperature, height, emotions, weight, light, types of rain, wealth, speed or size. You will need at least three, but you could do up to seven or eight. Cut up and place them along a line in order. Here are some to get you going:

<b>tiny</b>	<b>small</b>	<b>minute</b>	<b>microscopic</b>	<b>little</b>	<b>petite</b>	<b>mini</b>
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<b>big</b>	<b>huge</b>	<b>gigantic</b>	<b>enormous</b>	<b>giant</b>	<b>colossal</b>	<b>vast</b>
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<b>rain</b>	<b>showers</b>	<b>thunderstorms</b>	<b>downpour</b>	<b>monsoon</b>	<b>drizzling</b>
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<b>rich</b>	<b>wealthy</b>	<b>affluent</b>	<b>prosperous</b>	<b>loaded</b>	<b>well-off</b>
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<b>fast</b>	<b>quick</b>	<b>rapid</b>	<b>hasty</b>	<b>speedy</b>	<b>brisk</b>	<b>nimble</b>
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<b>slow</b>	<b>sluggish</b>	<b>unhurried</b>	<b>relaxed</b>	<b>leisurely</b>	<b>dawdling</b>	<b>gentle</b>
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[www.thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com) [www.wordhippo.com](http://www.wordhippo.com)

## **Descriptive word books**

Groups of children together make a book of descriptive words. On the cover write and draw a noun. The group brainstorms adjectives that describe that noun. Each child is allocated an adjective to illustrate. This is then collated into a book. For instance, if the noun selected is 'snake' the adjectives included on the inside pages might be **slithery, scaly, dangerous, sinister, flexible** and **poisonous**.



**slithery, scaly,  
dangerous,  
sinister, flexible  
poisonous.**

Things to describe:

Animals: puppies, dinosaurs, dragons, spiders, penguins, kingfisher

Book characters: Harry Potter, Matilda, Percy Jackson, Horrid Henry etc.

Story settings: haunted houses, misty wood, grand houses, dilapidated houses, space,

## **Shape poems**

Think of an object or animal, draw the outline of the item, brainstorm words related to the item and then arrange words around the shape of the object or animal. For instance, for 'dog,' 'barking' could be emanating from its mouth and 'wag' near its tail. For 'gift' a box could be opening with words such as 'delight, glee or disappointed' sprouting out, or written on the ribbons.

Possibilities: dog, cat, crocodile, penguin, lion, elephant, gift, house, star, tree, fox, umbrella, hand, rainbow, kite, spider's web, ice-cream, bell, train, flower.

Search on-line for more inspiration.

(From Scott *et al*, 2008)

## ***Hink pink***

A 'hink pink' is a rhyming pair of words that together form the answer to a riddle. Each pair of words must have the same number of syllables.

To make up a hink pink first think of two rhyming words, an adjective and a noun, for example, fat and cat.

Then think of synonyms of the words:

Fat: large, obese, overweight

Cat: feline, pet

Then make up a question, the answer to which is the two rhyming words.

Q: What do you call an overweight feline?

A: A fat cat

Use the resources on the next few pages:

Variation 1: Give out both clue and hink pink and encourage children to match.

Variation 2: Give out either the clue or the hink pink and see if they can work out the other half.

Variation 3: Children make up their own.

<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a rodent's home?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> mouse house</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a superior bird home?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> best nest</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call an empty seat?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> bare chair</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a miserable father?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> sad dad</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call an unmanageable young person?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> wild child</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call an incorrect tune?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> wrong song</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a happy gift?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> pleasant present</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a mad flower?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> crazy daisy</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a distant vehicle?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> far car</p>

<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a large branch?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> big twig</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a wealthy wizard woman?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> rich witch</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call an insect that isn't wet?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> dry fly</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a bird that doesn't go fast?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> slow crow</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a tune that goes on and on?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> long song</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a tight carpet?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> snug rug</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a cloudy 24 hours?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> grey day</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a 50% giggle?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> half laugh</p>
<p><b>Hink pink</b> What do you call a rabbit who tells jokes?</p>	<p><b>Answer</b> funny bunny</p>

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## **Cinquain poems**

Cinquain poems define words, so help to reinforce vocabulary. The 'rules' for the poem are:

Line 1: A noun (could be a general topic/category)

Line 2: Two adjectives about the noun

Line 3: Three verbs about the noun ending in -ing

Line 4: A phrase

Line 5: A synonym for the original noun (or a specific thing)

For example:

Traffic

Noisy, busy

Beeping, rushing, stopping

Not going anywhere

Cars

Examples: dragon, dog, ice-cream, flowers, Saturn, spider, river, apple cake, winter, spring, granny, grandad, mum, dad, oak.

(From Scott *et al*, 2008)

## **So many ways to talk, walk or look**

Choose a common verb such as 'said', 'walk' or 'look'. Brainstorm or collect a range of more interesting words to replace the original word. Write these on the whiteboard.

- For 'talk' ask a child to pick a word and say 'I want a glass of water' in that manner. The other children have to guess.

Words that you could use: mumble, shout, rasp, mutter, yell, laugh, splutter, squawk, brag, giggle, sighed, remind, whimper, order, snarl, croak, suggest, complain, whisper.

- For 'walk' ask a child to pick a word and then walk across the classroom in one of these ways.

Words that you could use: stride, stumble, tiptoe, trundle, stomp, stroll, glide, strut, creep, amble, swagger, limp, waddle, dawdle



- For 'look' act out as a group e.g. lets all rubberneck. Discuss words that are very similar.

Words that you could use: glance, stare, peep, flash, look daggers at, glare, gawp, scan, notice, rubberneck, glimpse, goggle.

## **Jokes**

This is quite a high-level skill and children need to have a wide vocabulary, but of course it is also great fun. To generate jokes the steps are as follows:

1. Think of a subject, animal or person, for example, a dog.
2. Think of items associated with that subject, for example, bone, bark, tail, walk.
3. Select one of those words, such as bark.
4. Take off the first letter of that word, ie ark.
5. Think of other words that start with this, for example, archangel, archaeologists. We will call this the new word.
6. Make up a reason for the original word and the new word to link, for example, dogs and archaeologists are related to bones.
7. Add on the old beginning to the new chosen word, ie barchaeologist.

Question: What do you call a dog that digs up old bones?

Answer: A barchaeologist.

(From Beck *et al*, 2002)

### ***Make your own riddles***

Constructing riddles requires flexible thinking, but it can be done once a structure has been provided. The steps are as follows:

1. Think of a common object such as a school bag
2. Describe what it looks like and what it does (carry it to school, zip it, has a handle, straps, made of fabric)
3. Convert to the following format:  
I can ... but do not ...  
I ... but am not ...  
I ... but am not ...

4. What am I?

Example:

I go to school but never learn.

I am made of fabric but cannot be worn.

I have a handle but am not a door.

What am I?

I am a bag.

## Analogies

Fill in the missing word

Puppy is to dog as kitten is to _____
Graceful is to clumsy as hot is to _____
Gram to kilogram as centimeter is to _____
Trees are to Christmas as eggs are to _____
Apples are to fruit as leeks are to _____
Swans are to birds as cod are to _____
Light is to feather as heavy is to _____
Sweet is to sugar as sour is to _____
Tree is to leaf as flower is to _____
Toothbrush is to teeth as comb is to _____
White is to black as up is to _____
Short is to long as light is to _____
Bees to hive as people are to _____
Chef is to food as artist is to _____
Like is to love as dislike is to _____
Moon is to night as sun is to _____
Good is to bad as black is to _____
Feather is to bird as fur is to _____
Grey is to black as pink is to _____
Hot is to oven as cold is to _____

Sing is to sang as sleep is to _____
Petrol is to car as electricity is to _____
Smile is to frown as pretty is to _____
Cow is to mammal as snake is to _____
Pencil is to write as scissors are to _____
Sound is to ear as smell is to _____
Bedroom is to sleeping as kitchen is to _____
Football is to field as tennis is to _____
Near is to far as open is to _____
Baby is to crawl as frog is to _____
Aunt is to woman as uncle is to _____
Car is to road as boat is to _____
Hungry is to eat as tired is to _____
Artist is to drawing as movie star is to _____
Bow is to arrow as bat is to _____
The moon is to the Earth as the Earth is to _____
Apple is to eat as bed is to _____
Pillow is to soft as a rock is to _____
Car is to wheel as plane is to _____
Fire is to as firefighter as illness is to _____

<https://www.teachervision.com/solving-analogies>

<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/analogy-ex.html>

<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/analogy-examples-for-kids.html>

## Words Words Words

Look at an interesting picture (such as [pobble365.com](http://pobble365.com)) or read a short extract from a book. Write down words in each of these categories below.

Words to describe the setting



Words to describe what the character looks like



Words to describe feelings



Words for how the character is talking



Words to talk about how the characters walks or moves



Any other good words?

## **Audiobooks**

Audio books and podcasts can be used to boost exposure to the spoken word. It also enables children to access stories with more complex vocabulary than they are able to read.

Here are some options.

**EPIC:** Schools can access for free, but parents have to pay.

<https://www.getepic.com/>

**Borrowbox:** Families can access audiobooks from libraries for free. Often you never need to even go to a library, it can all be done on-line. Download the 'Borrowbox' app to download eBooks and audiobooks. You still need your library card number and your local library needs to be signed up to the scheme.

**SEN charities:** There are charities that offer a good range of audiobooks for children with some additional need. You do not need to provide evidence of this need, just state what the difficulty is. These services charge a fee.

[www.calibre.org.uk](http://www.calibre.org.uk)

[www.listening-books.org.uk](http://www.listening-books.org.uk)

**LibriVox** provides free downloads of out of copyright books such as Heidi, Black Beauty and The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. These are read by volunteers.

[www.librivox.org.uk](http://www.librivox.org.uk)