

# Games in the Secondary Classroom: Why and How

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# WHY PLAY GAMES?

- Fun and engaging for students
- Opportunities for repetition without being boring
- Provide quick feedback to students
- Can be used to develop useful skills
- Can help teachers use every minute of class time



“on average, using academic games in  
the classroom is  
associated with a 20 percentile point  
gain in student achievement”  
(Marzano 2010)

# HOW MANY REPETITIONS ARE NEEDED TO LEARN A NEW WORD?

- 5-16 exposures in context (Nation, 1990)
- Approximately 100 (Meara, 1997)
- Words repeated more than 8 times more likely to be remembered (Horst, Cobb, and Meara, 1998)
- Depends on a variety of factors:
  - Prominence of the word in context (Brown, 1993)
  - Contextual clues, learner interest, quality and size of existing vocabulary (Laufer & Hadar, 1997)

**petition Repe  
Repetition Re  
on Repetition  
ition Repetiti  
petition Repe  
Repetition Re  
on Repetition**

# GAMES FOR REPETITION (WITHOUT BOREDOM!)

- Matching games
  - concentration
  - Quizlet.com
  - [www.textivate.com](http://www.textivate.com)
  - [www.classtools.net](http://www.classtools.net)
  - Bingo
- Speaking Games
  - Battleship
- Board Games



A screenshot of a matching game interface from textivate.com. The interface shows a 3x3 grid of cards. Each card has a number in the top left corner and a word or phrase in the center. The words are in Chinese, English, or a mix of both. The cards are numbered 1 through 12. The bottom of the interface shows a status bar with '0/6', 'Print', '6 pairs', 'Restart', and 'Back'.

1 希望	2 音乐会	3 Laugh (xiào)
4 Can/Be Able To (néng)	5 Recently (zuìjìn)	6 最近
7 学期	8 笑	9 semester (xué qī )
10 Hope (xīwàng)	11 concert (yīn yuè huì )	12 能

[Back](#) MATCHTIME  
**6.8**rìjì  
diarynàr  
there

知道

发音

fāyīn  
pronunciation

宿舍

sùshě  
dormitory

日记

zhīdào  
to know

祝

Express Good Wishes (zhù)

信

Letter (xìn)

那儿

Can/Be Able To (néng)

能

1 希望	2 音乐会	3 Laugh (xiào)
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PacMan [NEW!!]

Manic Miner

Wordshoot

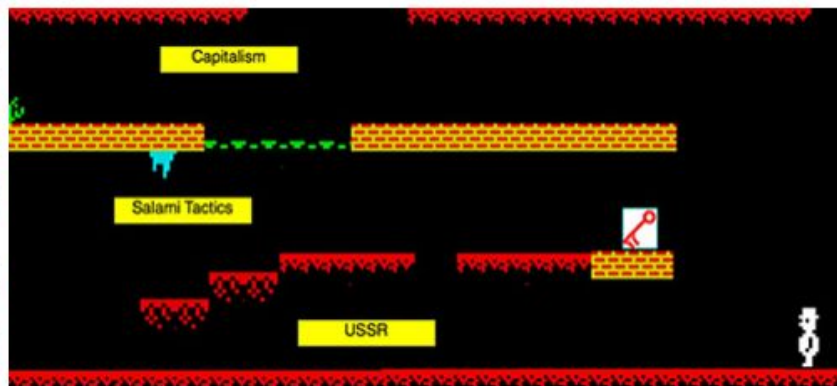
Pong!

Asteroids

Cannonball

Matching Pairs

Flashcards



Manic Miner: A platform game on 20 levels, complete with  
leaderboard/markbook

[Create a new Quiz](#) | [Edit this Quiz](#) | [Share this Quiz](#) | [Download Web Shortcut](#)

**START DOWNLOAD**

3 Easy Steps:

1. Click "Download"
2. Download on our website
3. Enjoy














## Vocabulary Battleship: Hobbies

Directions:

1. Mark five boxes on your sheet. The boxes you mark indicate each person likes to do. DO NOT SHOW YOUR PARTNER!
2. Ask your partner questions to "sink their battleship". You win when you have found all five marks on their sheet. You may only ask yes-or-no questions.

Example: Nǐ xǐhuān \_\_\_\_\_ ma?












							
			X				
					X		X
	X						
					X		

## Vocabulary Battleship: Hobbies

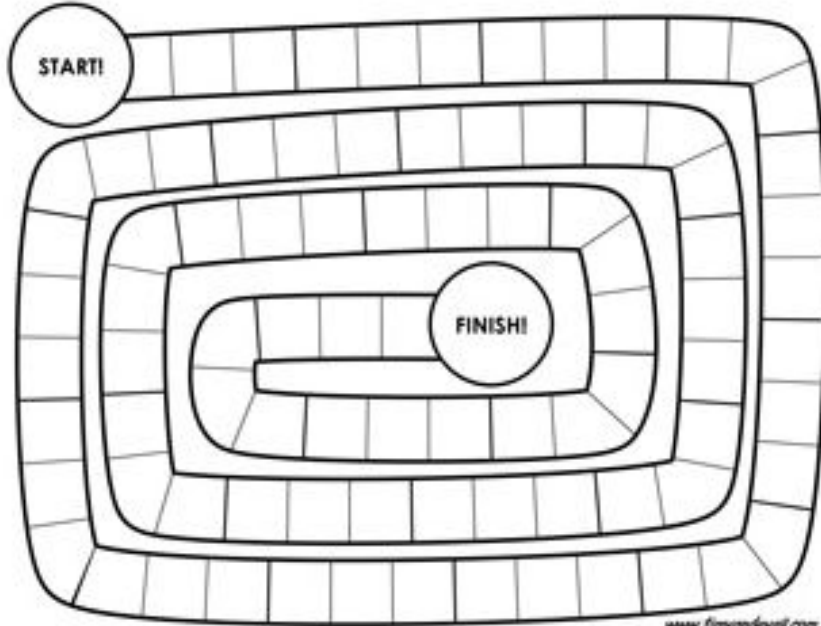
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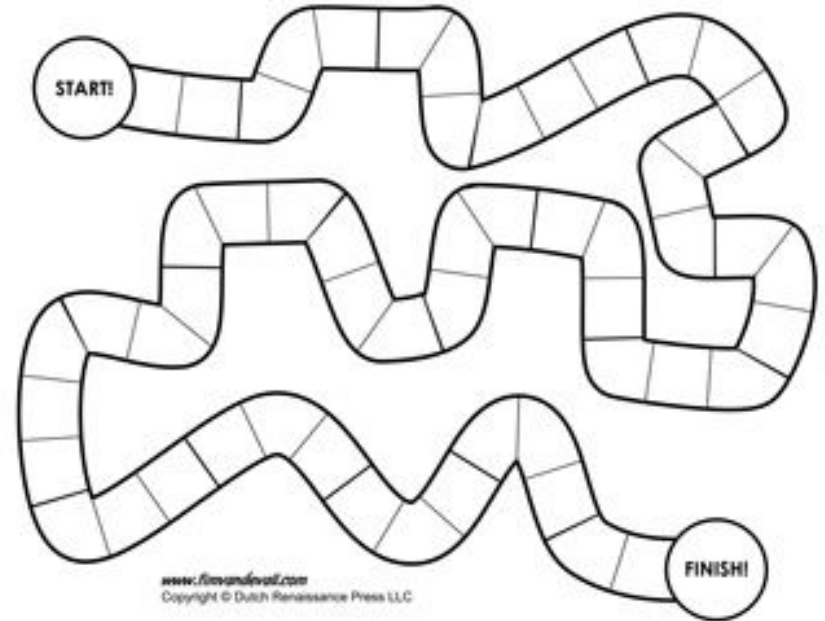
Example: Nǐ xǐhuān \_\_\_\_\_ ma?

							
					X		
	X					X	
		X					
		X					

# BOARD GAMES



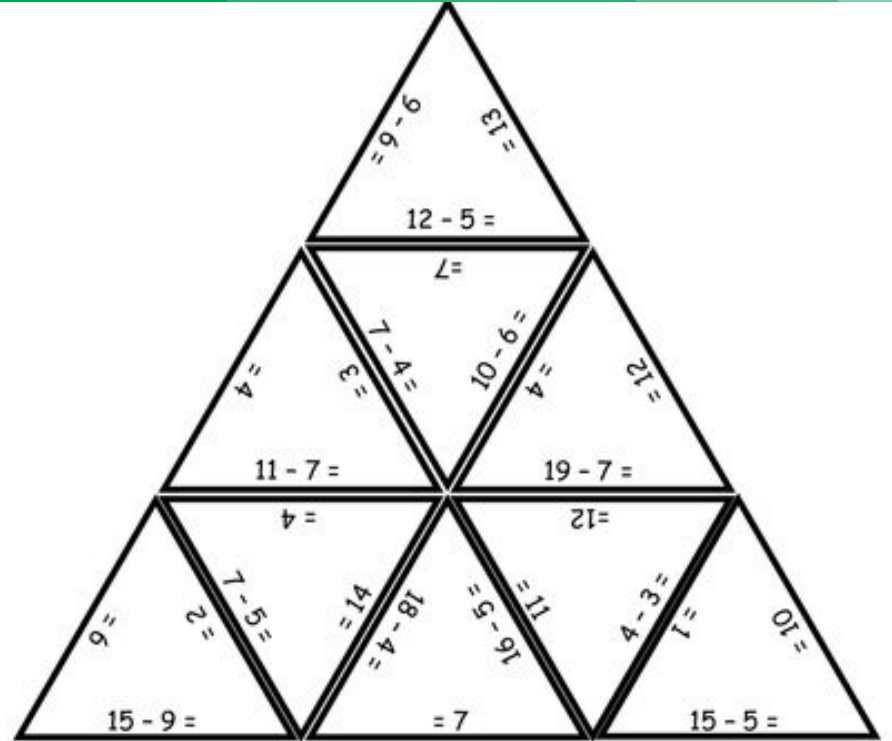
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# GAMES FOR IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK

- Students can identify areas of weakness
- Provide information to teachers about student performance
- Quizlet
- Classtools.net
- Textivate.com
- Puzzle games (provide students with a key if necessary)



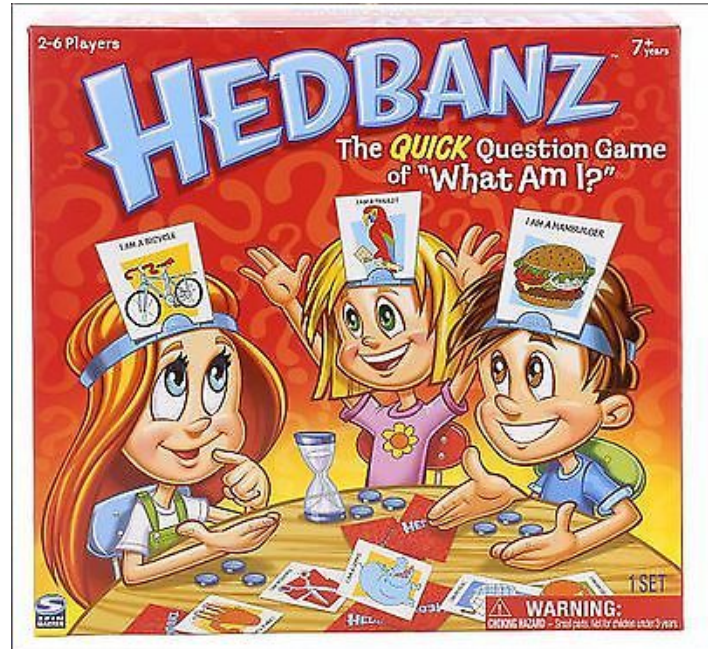
# USING GAMES TO TEACH SKILLS

- Circumlocution
- Teamwork



# TEACHING CIRCUMLOCUTION

- Why teach circumlocution?
  - Allows learners to compensate for gaps in knowledge
- Password/Headbandz
  - Use English, Chinese, or images to describe
- Go Fish!
  - Use vocabulary only, or have students describe a picture

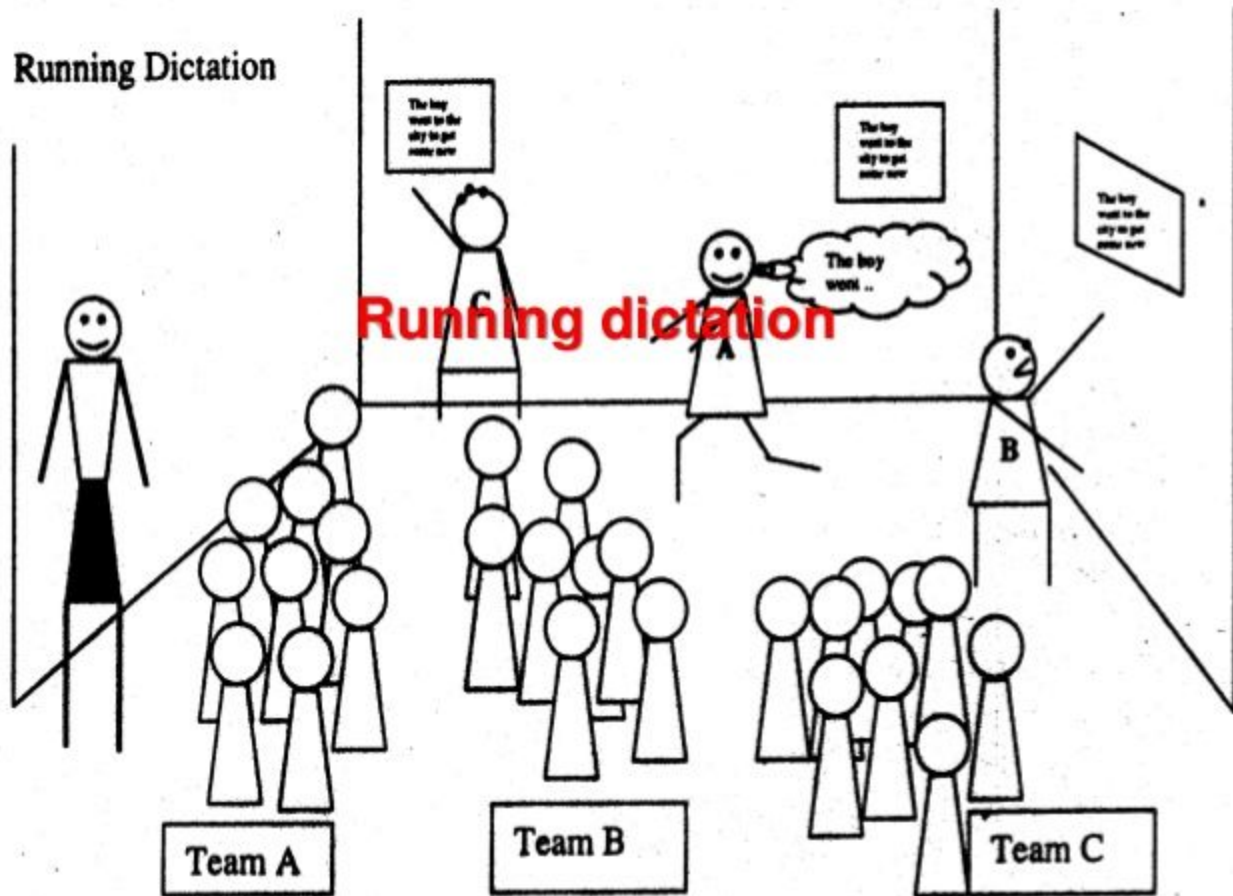


# TEACHING TEAMWORK

- Running Dictation
- Team Games
  - Jeopardy
  - Car Race
  - Randomly choose a student in the group to answer
  - Students are motivated to make sure all group members can answer

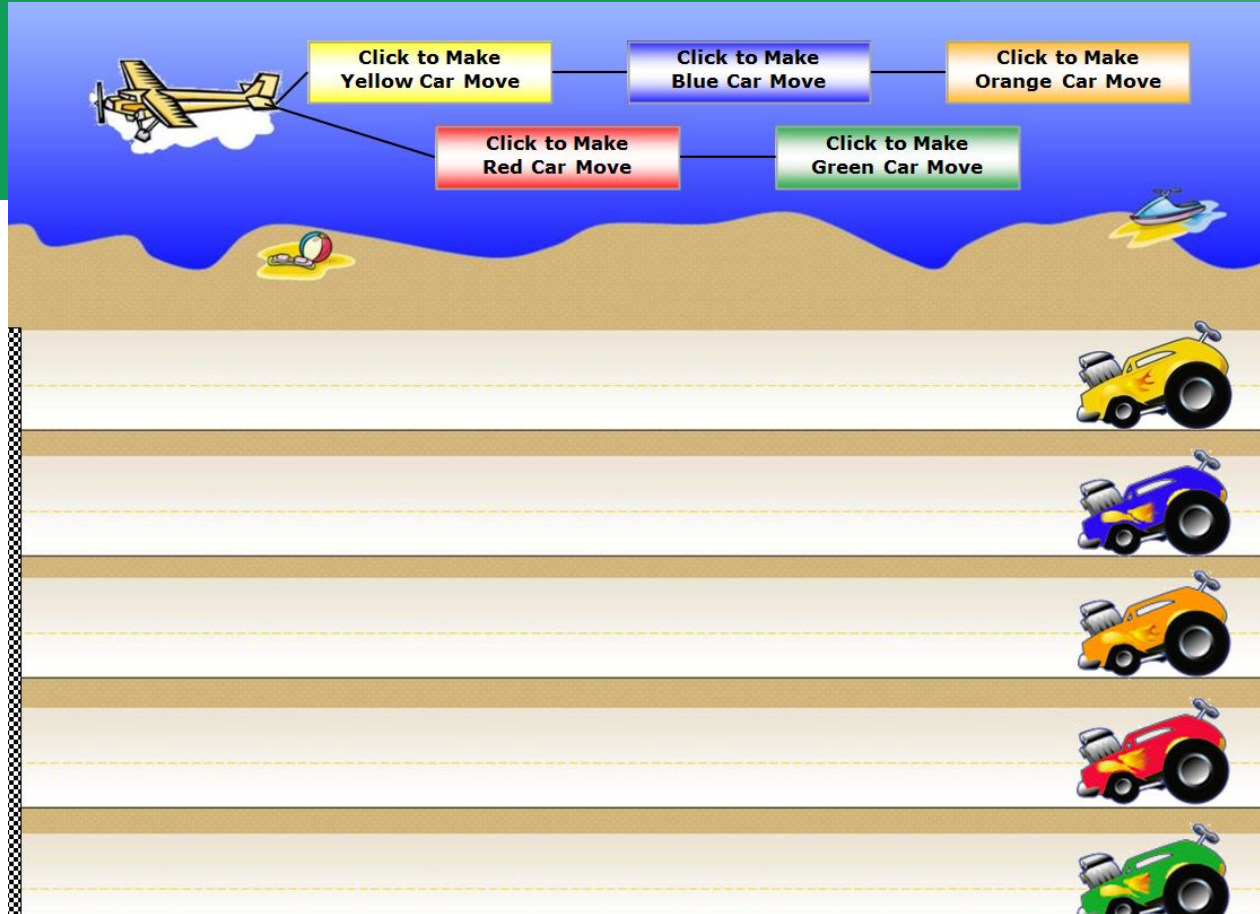


## Running Dictation





<http://people.uncw.edu/ertzbergerj/pre-all.html>





# HOW CAN GAMES BE USED EFFECTIVELY IN SECONDARY CLASSROOMS?

- Minimize negative consequences
- Balance skill and luck
- Involve all students
- Be creative with rewards



**KEEP  
CALM,  
IT'S ONLY A  
GAME!**



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