



Pirates and Sailors: Classroom Phonics Game

A fastpaced matching game. The sailors match graphemes to objects whilst the pirates try to scupper their plans.

Educational aim:

- to rehearse matching graphemes to initial phonemes of words

Location: Hall or playground

Players: 10-30 children

Playing time: flexible (see note at end of instructions about short rounds)

Resources:

- Hoops (10-15) to make islands
- A4 pictures of objects that begin with target graphemes (one per hoop)
- A5 target grapheme cards (at least three per child)

How to set up:

- Scatter the hoops over the ground
- Place a picture in each hoop
- Keep one grapheme card for each child
- Scatter the remaining grapheme cards between the hoops

How to play:

1. Tell the children that the hoops are islands and that some of them will be sailors and some will be pirates (about one in five should be pirate).
2. Split the children into sailors and pirates and give each sailor a grapheme card.
3. Explain that when you say 'Go!' they must find an island which has a picture which begins with their letter sound. (For example, you might choose a child with the letter 'p' to demonstrate finding an island containing a picture of a pie or a peg or a pig.)



4. Next, they must run and find another letter on the ground and find the correct island for that letter.
5. Tell them that they can only carry one letter at a time.
6. Choose your pirates (about one per five players) and tell them that they must loot the islands by taking out letters from the hoops, one at a time, and scattering them round the room.
7. Tell the sailors that it's their job to beat the pirates and get all the letters in the islands.
8. Each round ends when the teacher shouts out a humorous sea-related phrase (e.g. "Ah ha my hearties!" or "Shiver me timbers!").
9. When they hear this phrase, all the children sit down where they are and the teacher counts the graphemes that are still outside the hoops (see note below about short rounds).

Notes:

Because the pirates are not engaging in the learning, it's important to change roles quite frequently.

This game works well with a time limit so you count the number of graphemes left outside the hoops at the end of each round. Can the children beat their own record?

Aims of game:

It might be useful to remind children of the aims of the game, which are

- to match the initial sounds of objects to graphemes located on different islands
- to fill the islands before the pirates can loot them
- to have as few graphemes as possible floating in the sea (outside the hoops) at the end of the game.

For more classroom phonics games and extra resources go to our Teachers' Area at www.teachyourmonster.org