

Sample Boardless Games that Can Be Used in Psycholinguistics Classes for Analysis and Applications of Models

List of Games Organized Alphabetically

Game	Area
Camping trip	Categorization/Word form
Category name game (e.g., Animal game)	Categorization/Word form
Contact	Word meaning/word form
Dictionary/Fictionary	Word meaning
Say the Same Thing	Word meaning/concepts Possibly also discourse cooperation
Sequential story telling	Narrative/Sentences

Description of Boardless Games

Camping Trip

Have your group form a circle. Choose a pattern the words used in the game must follow. Some suggested patterns are:

- Things that start or end with a certain letter of the alphabet such as the letter D (diamond, dog, drink, etc.)
- Words with two vowels or consonants together (wheel, pizza, book, etc.)
- Words with a certain letter or sound at the beginning or end of the word such as the letter K (rake, book, coke, etc.)
- Items consisting of two words (hot dogs, baking dish, waffle iron etc.)
- Items that begin with the last letter of the last item mentioned

Choose a person to begin the game. They say, “I’m going on a camping trip and I’m going to bring _____.” The player picks anything they would like to bring on the trip that follows the chosen pattern. For example, if the pattern is “things which begin with the letter S,” they might say “sandwiches.”

The starting person needs to choose a pattern and stick with it. Only they should know the pattern before you start. This will make the items they suggest on bringing that much harder to think of.

Example:

Starting person: I’m going on a camping trip and I’m bringing *socks*.

Player 2: I’m bringing *pants*.

Starter: No, you can’t bring *pants*.

Player 3: I’m bringing *s’mores*.

Starter: Yes, you can bring *s’mores*

Player 4: I’m bringing *cookies*.

Starter: No, you can’t bring *cookies*.

Player 1: I’m bringing *sardines*.

Starter: Yes, you can bring *sardines*.

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Play continues around the circle until all players have figured out the pattern. If a player thinks they know the pattern, they can begin their turn by whispering to the leader what they think the pattern is. The leader will say yes or no. Sometimes players think they know the pattern, but they simply guess something that happens to fit.

Category Name Game

Choose a category, e.g., animal. One person names an animal. Then each person in order has to name another animal that starts with the last letter (or sound) of the previous animal named. Continue until no more animals can be named. Scoring varies – one point for each animal named plus one point for person who says the last animal that can be named is common.

Example:

Person 1: Lion

Person 2: Newt

Person 3: Tiger

Person 1: Rabbit

Person 2: Tarantula

Person 3: Ape

Person 1: Emu

Person 2:

Contact

Contact requires at least three people, one person to think of a word and at least two people to guess it. The defender thinks of a word and gives the guessers the first letter. The guessers' objective at this stage is to get the defender to give them the second letter of the word. They do this by giving a clue, which they hope will stump the defender, but not the other people.

For example:

Defender: (Thinks of the word *apple*). “My word starts with “a”.

Guesser: (Thinks of words that start with *a*, comes up with *apathy*. The guesser says “This is a symptom of depression.”)

Defender & other Guessers: (Think of words related to depression that starts with “a”.)

If the defender can think of a word:

Defender: “No, it’s not *apathy*.”

Guessers must then try again with another clue.

If the defender cannot think of a word related to depression that starts with ‘a’, they can say they give up. When the defender gives up, if one of the other guessers can think of a word related to depression starting with ‘a’, then they shout “Contact.” The original guesser and the second guesser count down from three and say they word they are thinking of.

There are two possible outcomes after someone shouts contact:

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1. The guessers both say the same word:

Guesser 2: "Contact"

Guessers 1 & 2: "3, 2, 1: apathy."

If they guessers both say the same word, the defender has to give them the second letter of the word, "p".

2. The guessers say different words

Guesser 2: "Contact"

Guessers 1 & 2: "3, 2, 1.... Guesser 1: "apathy" Guesser 2: "affect".

If they say different words, nothing happens, and they have to give a different clue to the stump defender and force them into giving a second letter.

Once you have two or more letters, the guessers can only use words that start with those letters. For instance, once the defender gives the letters "ap," the guessers can only use words like "application," or "aptitude". After three or four letters it usually becomes obvious what the word is, and players can start guessing the word.

A few suggested house rules:

- The word defender's word must be a dictionary word, and it shouldn't be a word the group is unlikely to know. While "Octothorpe" is a fine word, it's one that few people know and isn't fun for people to guess. A good Contact word is something like "tractor" because it's a word that everyone knows, but people don't think about too quickly.
- The word guessers can use any word they want, including phrases and proper nouns. They are welcome to give obscure clues that the defender probably wouldn't know, but if they do that too much it kind of spoils the game. It's best if they're clues that the defender is expected to know, but doesn't for some reason. No obscure Nepali pop stars if you're playing with people who know nothing about Nepali popstars.

Dictionary/Fictionary

Each round consists of one player selecting and announcing a word from the dictionary, and other players composing a fake definition for it. The definitions are collected by the selector and read aloud, and players vote on which definition they believe to be correct (or the best definition) Points are awarded for correct guesses, and for having a fake definition guessed as a real word. This is also marketed as the game *Balderdash*.

Sequential Story Telling

One person starts by saying a sentence. The next person adds a sentence. Game play continues until either the story ends or the story reaches such a level of absurdity that most players object.

Say the Same Thing

Say the Same Thing is a simple two-person game. You and your friend each start by saying a random word at the same time after you count down (snapping fingers 3 times

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(or 5) is best as it doesn't interfere with your verbal retrieval). After you say your words, pause to try to of a word that's "in between" those two words. Count down again and say the next word. This continues until you both say the same thing.

For example: If you start with "horse" and your friend says "silky". Then you both try to think of a word that connects the two words just said. You say "jockey" since jockeys wear racing silks (the colorful jackets/helmets jockeys wear to identify them). Your friend says "mane" since horses can have silky manes. Next you both say "Rosie Napravnik" who is an American jockey with long hair. (And you both know this because you are avid horse racing fans!)

You could play this game asynchronously via text. This game was made into an app at one point in time. While the app is no longer available, you can still see a YouTube video demonstrating it: <https://youtu.be/2sP1DqyagXE>