

Workshop Games:

These are the games we tried during the workshop.

KEY: ES =Elementary School / JHS = Junior High School

1. King or Queen of the Hill (Gender neutral name = Monarch of the Hill):

Goal:

To practice speaking using new grammar points, wrapping up a unit, or reviewing grammar learned throughout the term.

Time:

About 20 or 30 minutes including set up

Materials:

- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Bell or something to ring to signal the game is over
- ✓ For some grammar points you'll need mini vocab cards

Grades:

This game is best for ES 3rd to 6th grade and all grades at JHS. I've never tried this game at JHS, but believe it could work well if you have the time to play it.

Grammar Points:

You can use this game for almost any grammar point or unit. We have used it to practice English conversation like: "What ~ do you like?" / "Where do you want to go?" and so on. We have also used it for presentation topics like: "This is my hero" / "Welcome to our town" / "Welcome to Japan" / "Self-Introductions and so on. The students practice their presentations many times while having fun.

For this workshop, we will use "Have you ever ~?" from New Horizon Unit 3 (JHS 3G).

How to Play:

1. First, you will need to move all the desks to clear a space in the middle of the classroom.
2. Next, create the bases by sticking strips of tape on the floor about 80cms apart. The strips must be long enough for the students to see the separation between each base. It's kind of like splitting the board into sections when playing jeopardy or board races, only this time it's on the floor and the students will move between the bases.
3. Place a chair at the front of the class and have a student or teacher sit in the chair. They are the Monarch of the hill.
4. Have all the students stand at the back of the classroom and make pairs.
5. Explain that their goal is to overthrow the "Monarch of the Hill".
6. To do this, they must have an English conversation (for this lesson we did "Have you ever ~?") and beat each other at janken. If they win, they can move to the next base. If they lose, they must stay

at whatever base they are in.

7. The first person to reach the monarch on the chair must have the same conversation and play janken. If they win, ring the bell and crown them the new monarch. If they lose, they must go to the back of the line so another student can try.
8. Once a new monarch has been found, stop the game and have everyone face the winner. Then, the whole class will ask, "Have you ever ~?" (Or whatever grammar topic you've chosen; in this case pick one question, like "Have you ever eaten snake?"), and the winner must answer the question.
9. Finally, have the class ask the new monarch if they can play again. The students usually love playing the game, so it's not too difficult to get the newly appointed monarch to say yes.

Tips:

- You know your classes the best. Use that knowledge to determine the best way to play this game and change up the rules to suit your needs.
- If you have an English room at your Elementary school, try set up the game before the students arrive to save time, but if not, you can get the students to help you. They love sticking the tape on the ground.
- You can join in the game but be sure to watch and listen. Some of the naughtier students will cheat, but it's easy to catch.
- Sometimes a student will be at a base alone. Don't worry if they aren't speaking while waiting for an opponent; they will get the chance to speak once someone makes it to the base. You can also jump in if you like.
- It can get quite loud, so just be prepared for that.
- If the class is very big, you can have two monarchs by splitting the class. This can make it a little easier to monitor the students.
- If you want to use this game for grammar points like "What's this?" / "What do you want?" / "What would you like?" and so on, you can give each student a vocabulary card. The conversation would go like this:

S1: What's this? (Points at their card)

S2: It's a notebook. What's this? (Points at their card)

S1: It's a pencil

Then, you can get them to swap the cards and do janken to move through the bases as usual. That way they practice the phrases and vocabulary often.

2. Class Survey:

Goal:

To practice speaking, listening, and writing.

Materials:

- ✓ For a class of 40, create 8 groups of five. You will need five A3 or B4 sheets with all your students' names and the teachers' names.

- ✓ The students will need their pencils and erasers

Time:

About 20 - 30 minutes including set up

Grades:

This game is best for ES 3rd to 6th grade and all grades at JHS. I've never tried this game at JHS but believe it could work well if you have the time to play it. Use it to wrap up a unit. Also, if you teach eikaiwa, it's a fun "get-to-know-you" game.

Grammar Points:

Use this game for grammar points that have a lot of variety, for example: "What ~ do you like?" / "How many ~ do you have?" / "Can you ~?" / "Do you have ~?" / "What is your favorite ~?" / "Which do you like better, ~ or ~?" / "Do you like ~?" and so on. You can also use this as a review game and have a range of different questions they must ask and answer. This would work especially well for JHS.

For this workshop we will use "What ~ do you like?" from *Let's Try 2 Unit 4 (ES G4)*

How to Play:

1. First, split the class into groups of four or five depending on the number of students you have.
2. Next give each group a survey sheet with all the students' and teachers' names, and a different topic. For example, in this workshop we are using the grammar point "What ~ do you like?", so each group will have a different question on their sheet like this:
 - What **food** do you like?
 - What **color** do you like?
 - What **animal** do you like?
 - What **character** do you like?
 - What **TV show** do you like?
 - What **sports** do you like?
 - What **season** do you like?
 - What **day** do you like?
3. Give the students a minute to look at their question.
4. Be sure to walk around to make sure they understand what they must ask before starting the game.
5. Once everyone knows what to do, the game begins. Students must leave the survey at their base and walk around asking whatever target question is on their sheet. Once, they get an answer, they must race back to their group and write it down next to the relevant person's name. For lower grades at ES, they can write in Japanese, but for higher grades you can try get them to write in English, especially at JHS.
6. You can set a time limit or tell your students the game is over when the first group gets an answer from everyone in the class. My students usually ask everyone, and even ask for more time if they didn't get a chance to complete their survey.
7. Then, give each group time to calculate what the three most popular things were. For example, if they were asking about colors, they will list the three most popular colors in the class.
8. They must stand up and present their findings. For lower grades, they can simple say; "One - Red. Two - Green. Three - Blue." For higher grades, they can say full sentences.

Tips:

- Get involved. The students love asking you questions and writing it on their survey.
- Get your JTE or ALT to help you make the survey. So, if you don't have all your students' names, ask your JTE for them. If you need more topic ideas, ask your ALT for advice.
- For "yes" or "no" grammar points, like "Can you ~?" the students will simply say how many people can or can't do whatever they asked.
- We usually display the surveys on our English board or in the classroom for a few weeks, so the students in the other grades can see. They really enjoy that.

3. Pyramid Game:

Goal:

To practice speaking, listening, and writing. This game is best as a warm-up game at JHS or a review game at ES.

Materials:

- ✓ For a class of 40, create 8 groups of five.
- ✓ The students will need strips of paper and pens. They can always just use their notebooks.

Time:

About 10 minutes if you are simply reviewing or 20 - 30 minutes for a main activity

Grades:

This game is best for JHS because it's used to practice complex grammar points; however, at ES you could use it to practice vocabulary or phrasal verbs. It would be best with the 5th and 6th grade classes, though.

Grammar Points:

You can use this game to practice almost any grammar point in JHS, but it's best for verb conjugation practice, preposition and pronoun review, or sentence structure review, such as how to use articles (a; the; an) in English.

For this demonstration we will practice for the Eiken. Have many different pictures of people doing different things to ask the question, "What is ~ doing?" This is important not only for the Eiken, but also for school exams. I will also show you how easy it is to use the action cards for a variety of grammar points.

How to Play:

1. Split the class into groups of 3 or 4. Make sure each group has strips of paper and pens to write.
2. Draw pyramids on the board. The number will depend on how many groups you have in your class.
3. Once you've drawn the pyramids, break them up into blocks (like a food pyramid) with as many blocks as there are rounds. So, 10 blocks = 10 rounds.
4. Then, one student from each team comes to you. Give them a pronoun and a verb for them to

conjugate.

5. The students then run back to their group to relay the information. As a group, they must construct a sentence using the words you gave them, ensuring they use it correctly.
6. One person writes down their sentence on a piece of paper (you can also have a student from each team run to the board and write their sentence there).
7. Then the runner brings the sentence to you. They must read it aloud to you. Be sure to check the paper for spelling after they've read it out. If it's correct, the round ends and that team gets a block (just color it in). Then you can start the next round.
8. This time the runner and writer will switch, so all the students in the group have a chance to run and write.
9. The game ends when the first team has completed an entire pyramid.

Tips:

- Writing might be difficult at ES, but you can use this game to help practice phonics and spelling. Every time a student runs to you, you can give them a letter. They run back to the group, say the letter and write it down (or find it in their alphabet karuta cards) Do this until they have a word. Once they know what the word is, one person runs to you and says the word. If it's correct, they can have a block in the pyramid and the next round begins. Remember to review the word with the whole class, so everyone can practice the vocabulary and reading.
- You can also use this game to practice answering questions, like "What ~ do you like?" Writing might be difficult, but the students could have to find a card that correctly corresponds with the word. So, if you're doing characters and they bring you the blue card, you know they haven't understood the question.

4. Tic-Tac-Toe:

Goal:

To practice speaking and listening

Materials:

- ✓ A set of flashcards for whatever grammar point you're teaching

Time:

About 15 - 20 minutes including set up

Grades:

This game is great for ES Grades 3-6. It can also be used at JHS level when introducing new grammar points or to review an entire unit.

Grammar Points:

This game is super versatile for almost any grammar point or vocab practice. You could fill the tic-tac-

toe board with different flags and use it to practice, "Where do you want to go?" Other ideas include: "What would you like?" / "This is my town!" / "My Summer Vacation!" / "What sports do you want to watch (at the Olympics)?" / "He or She does/doesn't ~."

For this workshop we will use "I want to go to Italy" from *We Can 1 Unit 6 (ES G5)*

How to Play:

1. Draw a giant tic-tac-toe grid on the board. The spaces must be big enough to fit the flashcards.
2. Split the class in two and let them decide on team names. Write the team names on either side of your tic-tac-toe grid then place the flashcards in the middle of each block. There is no specific order.
3. Then, each team has one minute to discuss which card they want to pick. (In our case, which country they want to go to). Make sure to visit each group and check they know the name of the flag (or how to say whatever vocabulary or sentence you are practicing for that class) they have chosen.
4. Once they have decided, Team A can ask Team B, "Where do you want to go?" Team B will answer. Put a magnet on the flag they've chosen. Then switch allowing Team B to ask Team A.
5. Then, one student from Team A and Team B comes to the front of the class. They do janken. The winning team gets a cross in the block they chose.
6. The team that gets a full row, column, or diagonal line first is the winner.
7. The game usually goes quickly, so you can play many rounds. Be sure to keep track of how many times each team has won so you can have a final winner at the end of the activity.

Tips:

1. We have never had a problem with bullying during this game, but if you know your class has a problem with this, try making smaller groups, so that no one is playing in front of the entire class. To do it in this way, make groups of four (Two member per team). Give them a laminated tic-tac-toe board and the vocabulary or sentence cards you want them to practice. They can then arrange them in any way they like. Once they've set up their boards, they play the game in the same way, except, when they win, they can remove the card from the board and write an "X" with their team color to indicate it's their block.
2. If you want to use this game for topics like "I like My Town" / "Welcome to Japan" / "My Summer Vacation" / "This is My Hero", and so on, practice each target sentence separately. For example, one of the target sentences for "I like My Town" is, "We have ~ / "We don't have ~" The board would look like this:



		
Ishidan	Midorikawa Dam	Heart Bridge
		
Misato Footpath	wonderful restaurants	beautiful mountains

And the conversation would go like this:

Green Team: "We have Forest Adventure."

Blue Team: "We have an onsen."

Then, they would do janken and the winner will get the block like this:

		
Forest Adventure	Onsen	Convenience Store
		
Ishidan	Midorikawa Dam	Heart Bridge
		
Misato Footpath	wonderful restaurants	beautiful mountains

Once they've learned all the key phrases for the speech, you could play it again mixing all the cards together, so they must think carefully about what they will say.

- For JHS, this would be a great game to practice: "Have you ever ~?" / "He or She does/doesn't ~." / "This is a ~ that makes me ~." / "What do you want to be?" / "When you are ~, what do you do?", and so on.

Variations on Common Games:

Janken Games:

1. Newspaper Janken:

Give each student a piece of broadsheet newspaper. The students make pairs and lay their pieces of newspaper on the ground. They practice the target dialogue with each other and then do janken. The loser must fold their paper over once and find a new partner. The students love this game because as the newspaper becomes smaller it gets more and more difficult to stand on it with both feet, which they must do.

2. Mario Chip Game:

We have a set of cards with all the Mario characters on them, but you can use any name or game characters that your students might like. Give each student three cards. They must walk around practicing the target dialogue and doing janken. Of course, the winner takes a card from the loser. If a student runs out of cards, they can come to and get two new cards. Play for as long as you like.

3. Progression Game:

In this game, have the flashcards on the board spaced out with arrows between them, like this:



All the students start at one end. For example, if they are practicing "I like [animal name]," all the students would start at horse. They would then have a dialogue taking turns saying, "I like horse." Of course, if they are older grades they will ask and answer a question, like:

Student A: "What animal do you like?"

Student B: "I like horse. What animal do you like?"

Student A: "I like horse."

Then, they do janken. The winner moves onto the next flashcard and the loser stays at the same place. Once they reach the goal flashcard, they must come have a conversation with the teacher.

4. Statue Game:

In this game, the students make pairs, practice the target dialogue, do janken. The loser must freeze, and the winner must find a new partner. They must choose someone who has been turned into a statue. We make them pretend they have a magic wand to unfreeze their friends. The younger children love it. This is a great game when practicing vocabulary that have strong gestures. The students must freeze in the shape of that word. Like a fireman or flight attendant.

Karuta and Keyword Games:

1. No! No! No! Game:

Play this game in the same way you play a typical keyword game, but this time the students must look at the cards on the board when repeating after you. Basically, you point at the card, say the vocab word, and they repeat after you. If you point at a card but say the wrong vocab word, they must shout, "No! No! No!" and grab the eraser. This game is best played after playing the actual keyword game. We just found that many students stare at their erasers when playing the keyword game, which is not good. The "No! No! No! Game" forces them to look at the board and really concentrate on what you are saying.

2. Karuta Guessing Game:

In this game, the students play in groups of 3 or 4. Give them a pack of karuta cards with whatever vocabulary you are learning. They must shuffle the cards, and then each take turns drawing a card. Everyone goes around trying to guess what card the person has. When someone guesses the card, the person with the card can keep it or you can have them simply set it aside. This is a good game because they must remember what cards have already been drawn.

3. Two-card Karuta:

As the name suggests, instead of having all their cards in a group while playing karuta, then students only have two vocab words at a time. They must point at the cards and repeat after you two or three times, depending on how difficult the vocabulary is. Then you say, "Hands on your head," and then shout out one of the two words. The winner keeps the card. Do this until all the vocab has been practiced. Remember to keep the more difficult vocabulary in for longer, so the students can practice saying it many times.

Other Games:

1. Hajiki Game:

The students make pairs. Give one student from each pair a marble or some sort of small object that can easily hide in their hands. The students then practice whatever conversation they are learning, like "When is your birthday?" After the conversation, the person with the marble puts both their hands out. Their partner must try to guess which hand the marble is in. If the partner guesses correctly, they take the marble and move to a new person, while the person who lost remains seated. You can play this game for as long as you like.

2. Alphabet Shopping:

This game uses the same principles as the shopping for fruits and vegetables or colors and shapes game. It's best for grammar units like "Do you have ~?" / "What do you want?" / "What would you like?" and so on. In this game, students are split into groups of 4 or 5. Each group has a box with different letters, but not all the letters of the alphabet. Each group will also have

an A3 piece of paper with different country names or fruits names or any simple vocabulary they will know. Remember to include a picture next to each word. Then, one person from each group goes to different group to find the letter they are looking for. The students have 10 minutes to collect as many letters as they can so they can build as many of the words on the sheet. You can have a separate, blank sheet where they can lay out the letters once they've collected them or leave space on the sheet with the vocabulary words. The students love this game. At the end, have the students show and tell the words they made to the rest of the class.

3. Gesture Game:

This is a great game for vocabulary that has strong gestures like job titles, animals, foods, and so on. Pick two vocabulary words. Put the students in pairs. The students must choose their favorite one but not tell their partner. Then, the students repeat after you two or three times. You must do the gesture with them when they are repeating after you. Then, shout, "3; 2; 1!" The students must do whatever gesture they've chosen. If it matches their partner, they simply high five. If it doesn't match, they shout, "Oh no!"

4. Touch, Touch Game:

Once again, only choose two cards from the set of vocabulary you're reviewing. Put students in pairs. In this game, each student chooses the word they like and tells their partner. So, if you're practicing job titles and you've chosen "doctor" and "nurse". One student will be "doctor" and one will be "nurse". Then, they repeat after you three times. Then you shout, "Hands ready!" The students must lift their hands up with their palms facing their partner. Then, you shout out whichever word you want. If you say, "doctor", then the person who chose "doctor" must try catch their partners hands. "If you say "nurse", then the person who chose "nurse" must try catch their partners hands. Remember to keep more difficult vocabulary in for longer.

5. Spin the Bottle:

This is a great game that the students love. Just beware; it can get very loud. So, practice the vocabulary with your students. Then, split the class into groups of 6 or 8. Give each group a copy of the flashcards. They then lay them in a circle with the bottle in the middle. They then must choose which word they want to sit behind. They do janken to see who gets to spin the bottle first. The person then spins the bottle and all the students shout out the vocab card they are sitting at. So, if they are sitting at the word "January", they must shout "January" until the bottle stops spinning. If the bottle lands on their card, it's their turn to spin the bottle. The students must move to a new card every round, so they practice all the vocabulary. This is a great game for numbers, months, days of the week, weather, and other vocab.

6. Business Card Game:

This is a super simple conversation game. Take colored paper and cut it up into business card sized pieces. Then, split the class into groups. They students simply take a card with them, practice the target dialogue, swap cards, and head back to their group to get a new business card. The group who gives out all their business cards first is the winner.

Game Ideas from the internet:

1. <https://www.eslcafe.com/idea/index.cgi?display:915800895-17239.txt>
2. <https://www.eslcafe.com/idea/index.cgi?display:981076994-13533.txt>
3. <https://www.eslcafe.com/idea/index.cgi?display:928151223-1766.txt>
4. <https://busyteacher.org/16508-speaking-6-fabulous-games-teach-students.html>
5. <https://eslspeaking.org/apples-to-apples-vocabulary-game/>
6. <https://www.eslactivity.org/password-esl-speaking-activity/>
7. <https://www.eslactivity.org/top-10-esl-activities-teenagers/>
8. <https://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator-english/esl-grammar-games/>
9. <https://eslspeaking.org/esl-interactive-games-and-activities/>