



How to Manage Games in the Classroom

When playing games in the classroom, try to keep the following points and tips in mind:

- ✓ Simple games often work best with big classes, especially if you have limited time to explain and play the game.
- ✓ Make sure you know how to play the game before the lesson, and that you are confident of the rules and how you are going to explain them. You don't want to lose the children's interest before the game has started!
- ✓ Remember that **demonstration** can be the most effective means of teaching the game.
- ✓ **Written instructions** on the board (for those who need a little extra time or respond better to written language) is useful. **A written reminder** of the procedural language (*It's your turn*, etc.) is also a useful technique and stops the temptation to fall back into L1.
- ✓ Before you start the game, **check** the game's rules with simple Yes/No questions or two-choice questions: *'Do you touch the picture or point to it?' 'Point!' / 'Can you stand up before I say 'Go'?' 'No!'*
- ✓ Remember – you don't always need to be looking for new games. **Familiar favourites** form the basis of your games resource, and an occasional new one can bring some variety.
- ✓ Make sure you **have rules** in place which can help you govern noise, cooperation and use of English. If these are built in as part of the game and all of the children are aware of them, things will run smoother and the game will be more fun!
- ✓ Your application of rules needs to be **consistent**, or some children's sense of competition will lead to a loss of motivation for the game.
- ✓ Remember that **not all games need to be competitive**. Sometimes it is fun to just play a game and enjoy the fact that people are doing well!
- ✓ Try to have some kind of **reward** system for your games. This could be with **points** for correct answers, good effort or good use of English. Or small extra **privileges** such as being chosen to hand out books or clean the board, to have an extra turn at the computer or to choose the next game.
- ✓ Having a continuous reward system (such as adding marbles to a large jar for good effort, or adding smiley faces to a chart for good use of English) can also be the reward for the whole class for doing well in a game. This encourages the children to be cooperative, rather than competitive.