

Activity Type

Vocabulary Game:
forming words from
letters (group work)

Focus

Vocabulary

Aim

To come up with the
longest word possible
using nine letters.

Preparation

Countdown music that
lasts one or two minutes

Level

Any

Time

25 minutes

Introduction

This engaging ESL word game has been adapted from a famous TV game show.

Procedure

Divide the class into four teams.

Assign each team with a number.

The first team chooses nine letters by saying either 'vowel' or 'consonant'.

Each time the team says vowel or consonant, write a corresponding random letter on the board. Alternatively, you could have a set of letter cards that you stick on the board.

Next, set a time limit of one or two minutes (depending on the students' level) for the teams to come up with the longest word possible using the nine letters.

Each letter can only be used once.

While the teams are writing, play some music that lasts as long as the time limit.

There is a countdown TV theme song that you can find online. You can also combine the theme song and Public Enemies - Final Countdown of the Collision.

When the time limit has been reached, ask each team how many letters are in their word.

The team with the longest word gives their answer.

If the word has the correct letters and spelling, that team scores the same amount of points as there are letters in the word, e.g. a six-letter word scores six points.

If the team has made a mistake, go to the next team with the most letters in their word.

The second team then chooses vowels and consonants and so on, until every team has had a chance to choose letters.

The team with the most points at the end of the game wins.

After each round, you can also show the students an anagram. The first team to correctly guess the word scores extra points. The anagrams can be from vocabulary students have studied in previous lessons.