SOAS LANGUAGE CENTRE
LEARNER SUPPORT

Learning Vocabulary through games

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Here are some simple and entertaining ideas to help you learn vocabulary with a partner. A lot of learning takes place when studying with other learners of the language, so find a friend from your class and try some of the following activities.

► ***Snake game**, all levels*
Consult **The 100 Word Exercise Book**, by *GW Publishing*. The Snake Game is on page 58 on the **Mandarin, Japanese, Panjabi, Gujarati, Urdu** versions of the book.
You can create your own version for any language, using the book as a model. Practise the vocabulary you need for your next class, or a set of words that you find difficult to memorise. You will need a die for this game.

► ***Hangman**, all levels*
Play this classic game. Agree on a specific vocabulary category before you start, e.g. food, work, entertainment etc. and test each others knowledge. Books like **First Thousand Words in Arabic** by *Usborne*, or **Chinese Vocabulary** by *McGraw-Hill*, can give you ideas for choosing a topic and selecting vocabulary.
Use **dictionaries** to check the spelling of words if you think that your partner is cheating.

► ***Mime**, beginner*
Agree on a list of words that you would both like to practise. One of you chooses a word randomly from the list, and uses body language and gestures to describe it. The other person has to guess what the word is in the target language, and then make a sentence with the word in. You can set your own rules to make this game competitive: for instance, you get 3 points if you guess the word right in the first attempt, 2 points in the second attempt, and so on.

► ***Flash cards**, all levels*
It is best if you make your own flash cards.
Take turns to test each other: show your partner the word in the target language and ask them what it means, or show them the word in English/the image and ask them to give you the word in the target language.
Then change roles.
Visit our External Links page on our Learner Support Pages **www.soas.ac.uk/languagecentre** and look for links with online flash cards in your target language.

► ***Creative writing**, intermediate-advanced*
Try writing a paragraph or short story together with your partner, using key words from a set of vocabulary that you have both agreed on. Use your imagination and write a humourous or dramatic story, a dialogue, or even a poem or song. Use dictionaries, phrase books and grammar books. Visit websites in the target language for inspiration.

► ***Scrabble**, all levels*
Scrabble (English language version) may be appropriate for learners of some African or Asian languages that use the Roman script. You will need to make your own rules about letters with diacritics (accents) that do not occur in English.

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