

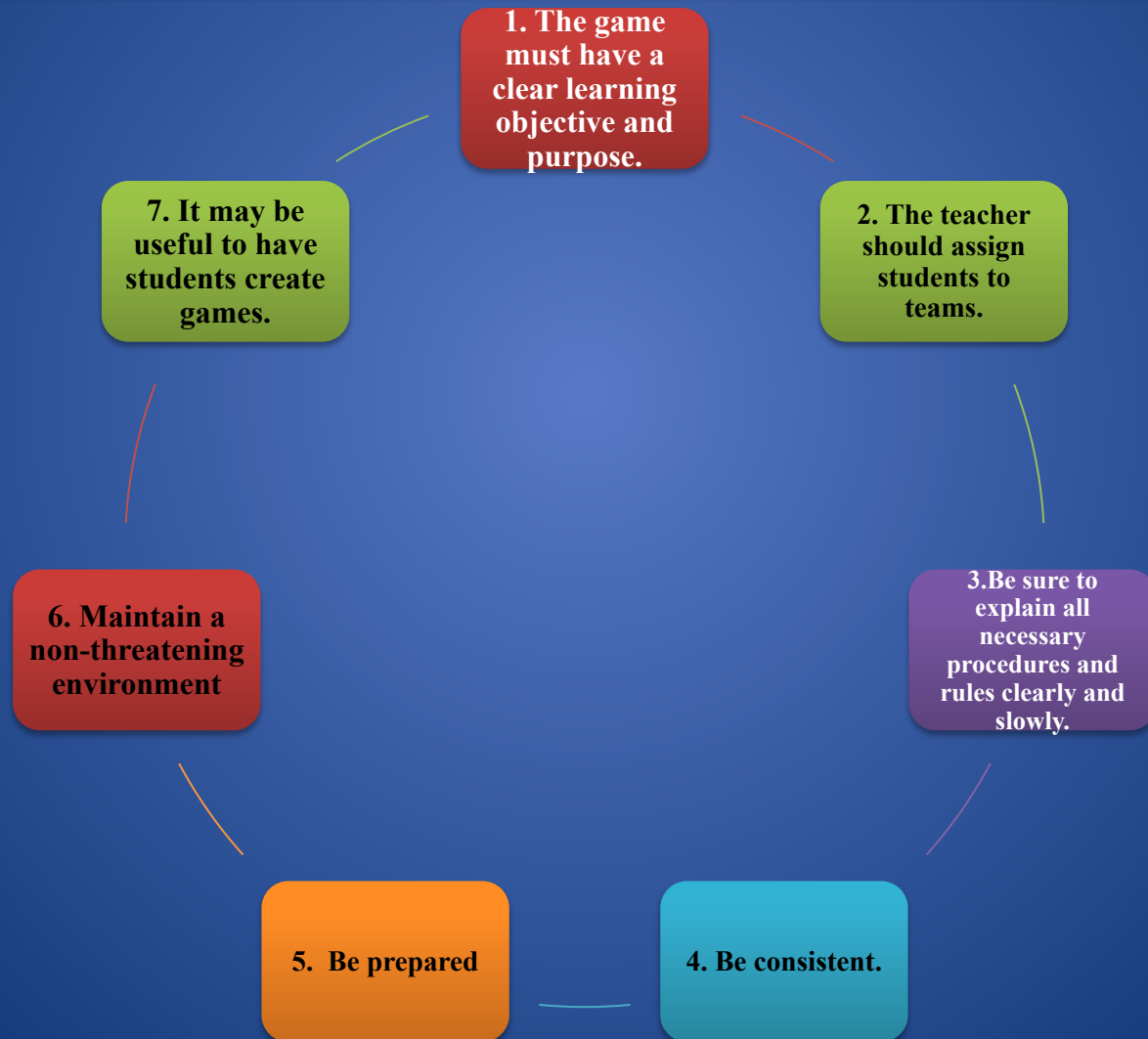
Using games in a foreign language classroom



What is a game?

Games are fun activities that promote interaction, thinking, learning and problem solving strategies. Often games have an aspect that permits the players to produce information in a short time period. Some games require the players to engage in a physical activity or complete a mental challenge.

What are some guidelines for using games effectively in the classroom?



Types of games

1. Bluff



2. Encantado



3. Truth, truth, lie

Bluff

Level	Beginner to Advanced
Skills Reinforced	Pronunciation development, vocabulary identification
Materials	None
Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Divide the group into two teams- The teacher will ask one team to define a vocabulary word- Any student who knows the definition will stand up- A student on the opposing team will select one of the students standing to translate- If the student's definition is correct, then one point for each person standing is awarded- If the student's definition is incorrect, then one point per person standing is deducted

Encantado

Level	Beginner to Advanced
Skills reinforced	making introductions, team building
Materials	Note cards or pieces of paper, 2 per person
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each person in the group should write their first name (or name they go by) on one card, and their last name on the other.• The teacher should collect all the cards and redistribute them so that no one gets either of their own cards.• The students should then go around and introduce themselves to each other until they get both of their cards back.

Truth, truth, lie

Level	Beginner to Advanced
Skills reinforced	Sentence writing, community development, listening comprehension
Materials	paper and pencil
Procedures	<p>Distribute a paper and pencil to each student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each student should write their name on the paper.• Next, he/she should write three sentences about him/herself. Two of them should be true, and one should be a lie.• Collect the sentences.• Read the sentences to the class and have them guess which one is a lie.

Why should games be used in classrooms?

Games allow for creativity, independence and higher order thinking. Usually, questions posed by the classroom teacher are fact based and have only one answer, not allowing for creativity, personal expression, or testing hypotheses. The answer is either right or wrong, but games can allow for multiple answers. They improve participation, self-esteem, and vocabulary usage and allow the learners to see that there are many ways to solve the same problem. Additionally, it is more like real life. For instance, most conversations start with open ended questions: “How are you?”, “What did you do yesterday?”, “How can I help you?”, and “What would you like for dinner?” As foreign language learners, it is important that they are provided with scenarios that are as realistic as possible. Games, if produced well, can do the same thing. Easy ways to do that involve the students finishing a sentence, listing words that begin with a certain letter, answering open ended questions on a board game or telling a story

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