

Social and Emotional Learning

Lesson Title: Working Memory: Three-Letter Words

Grade Level: Middle School

Project and Purpose

Working in pairs, students listen to a list and rearrange letters into words to practice using their working memory.

Essential Question

Why should we build our working memory skills?

Materials

- Slides of letter groupings
- Means to project the slide

Teacher

1. Discuss working memory with the group: working memory is the ability to hold things in your mind and rearrange those things to create understanding. Remind them that short term memory is retrieval, being able to remember things as they were. Working memory is retrieving the image or information and then manipulating it in your head.
2. Create pairs. Have one person sit/stand with back to the screen — this will be Person A. Have the partner — Person B — face the screen. Make sure pairs are scattered around the room to help with sound control.
3. Explain that they will now practice using their working memory and their spelling skills. You will ask them to rearrange groups of three letters into words.
4. Post Slide #1 so the person facing the screen (Person B) can see it and have them say the set of letters on the slide to Person A. Person A's task is to say and spell at least one word that can be created from the set; if there is more than one word that can be created, do so. Person B should go through all the letter sets on the slide for Person A to say/spell.
5. Have partners switch roles for the Slide #2 (Person A will read the letter set, Person B will say and spell at least one word).
6. Have students use the same process to try the four-letter groupings.
7. Have students create their own three, four, and five letter/word groups for working memory practice and repeat the exercise with a different partner.

Conclusion

Discuss the activity using the following questions:

- What was easy about this game? What was challenging? Why?
- What strategies did you use to help you create words?
- Sometimes in school, at work, or in other areas, you are required to demonstrate an ability to recall facts and information. How will this exercise help you do that?

Slide 1

Person B says... A-T-R

Person B says... W-N-O

Person B says... T-P-A

Person B says... A-E-R

Person B says... I-P-G

Slide 2

Person A says...F-R-A

Person A says...U-T-B

Person A says...A-D-B

Person A says...T-C-O

Person A says...E-G-L

Slide 3

Person B says...H-A-T-W

Person B says...S-K-O-C

Person B says...T-E-S-R

Person B says...O-R-C-N

Person B says...L-E-B-U

Slide 4

Person A says...R-F-O-G

Person A says...L-A-F-C

Person A says...H-C-I-P

Person A says...L-S-T-I

Person A says...M-L-D-E