

Word Chain Game

For: 2 to 6 players. Aged: 8 to adult. Younger players require a little adult support.

Preparation

- Print pages 4-8. Cut up the blue 'Play' cards, green 'Starter' cards and the red 'Help' cards. Don't cut up the 'Word Chain' board.
- Place the blue 'Play' cards face down on the 'Word Chain' board.
- Place the green 'Starter' questions in a pile, face down on 'Word Chain' board.
- Give one red 'Help' card to each player.
- Find pen and paper (optional)

Instructions

The aim of the game is to think of connections between words. These can be creative, but they must be logical.

This is a co-operative game. There is no winner. The game ends when all the blue 'Play' cards have been turned over. For an extended game reshuffle the 'Play' cards and go through them again.

An optional extra is to write down words that get an appreciative 'ooh, that is a good word' as you play. Once play has finished as a group you can then reflect on these words.

Starting the game

- The youngest player turns over a green 'Starter' card and answers the question. E.g.: what is the last thing you ate? e.g.: answer: 'banana'.
- The player to the left then turns over a blue 'Play' card and makes a link to the word 'banana.' The 'Play' card will tell the player what sort of link they will need to make. See next page.

Blue Play cards

Card	How connected?	Example
Free connection	In any way, as long as it is logical	If the previous word was 'milk' then the next word might be 'shake' because of 'milkshake', but 'cow, butter and dairy' are all options too. If the previous word was 'made' then one option is 'manufacture' because it is a synonym. Another option is 'China' as a short phrase is 'made in China' and a third option is 'mess' because we might have 'made a mess.'
Synonym	A word with a similar meaning	Synonyms of 'dog' are 'canine and puppy' A synonym of 'green' could be 'lush' or 'emerald'.
Antonym	A word with an opposite meaning. This may be tricky for some nouns.	Antonym of 'tall' is 'short.' Antonym of 'frightened' is 'brave.'
Fancier synonym	As in synonym, but a fancier, or more advanced word. One your teacher would be proud of!	A fancier synonym of 'chase' could be 'quest.' A fancier synonym of 'fizzy' could be 'effervescent.'
Sounds like	A similar sounding word. It might rhyme or it could be just a bit alike.	If the previous word was 'zip' then the next word could be 'tip' or 'flip' as they rhyme or 'zit' because it sounds a bit similar. Get imaginative with longer words. E.g.: 'spectacular' could relate to 'spectacles' as there are similarities in how the two words sound.
Make the word longer	Add letters to the start or the end.	'Car' could become 'scar' or 'carpet.' 'Place' could become 'displace' or 'placement.'
Free connection and the reverse direction (omit if only 2 players)	The player who turns over this card has a free connection (see above) but play then reverses.	See 'free connection' above.
Miss a turn	The player who turns over this card misses a turn this round. Play moves to the next player who turns over a card. The focus word does not change.	Player 1 says 'circle.' Player 2 turns over 'miss a turn', so play moves to player 3 who turns over a card and makes their connection to 'circle.'

IMPORTANT

- Each player's word must relate to the word immediately before. **TIP: Listen carefully and do not plan ahead.**
- Words previously used in the game cannot be used again.

You can make interesting connections!

When you get the option get creative and make connections which change the part of speech (from noun to verb for instance), make a link via different meaning or homophones (words which sound alike but are spelled differently and have different meanings).

Type of connection	Example
Part of speech	The word after 'button' is 'zip.' The link here is that both are things (nouns) that are on clothing. The next player could change 'zip' to a verb as in 'zip it up' and say 'close.'
Different meaning	If the word was 'sheet', connections could be made to sheets on a bed (e.g.: cotton) or sheets of paper (e.g.: scrunch). If the word was 'raise', connections could be made to raising the height of an item (e.g.: high jump bar) or raising children (e.g.: kids).
Homophones (words which sound alike but are spelled differently and have different meanings)	If one player said the word 'made' the option would be to keep it in its original meaning of 'make' or change it to its homophone 'maid.' This will take the game in very different directions.

Challenges

Words must connect to the word immediately before. If the connection is not clear, then players may be asked to explain. If a mistake has been made, then players should be given a chance to rectify it.

Flexibility

Some connections will be a source of great debate. A general rule is that players should be able to explain their links and they must conform to the type of connection. The aim is to have fun and enjoy words, so the degree of flexibility is up to each group of players. e.g.: 'sycophant' may not sound similar to 'psychologist' for every player, but if it is similar enough for most, then that is acceptable.

Help cards

Each player is given at least one red 'Help' card and it may be played on any turn, but only after having a try. The player asking for help chooses one other player to discuss the connection. If between them they cannot come up with an answer the game is a dead end (see below). The 'Help' card must be discarded after use, placing it on the 'Word Chain' board. At the start of play, some players may be given an extra Help cards, if needed.

Dead ends

There will be times when a player cannot think of a connection, even after seeking help. When this happens a 'dead end' is declared and the player who could not make the connection turns over the top starter question card, answers the question and play continues.

Play example

Starter card	Play card	Help card	Player says	Comments
what is your favourite animal?			horse	
	Sounds like		house	Acceptable as 'horse' and 'house' sound similar. 'Force' also acceptable
	Synonym		home	Acceptable. Other options are 'dwelling, flat, apartment or residence.'
	Make the word longer		homing	Acceptable. Other options include 'homes and Homer.'
	Free connection		pigeon	Acceptable. 'Pigeon' is linked to 'homing' via 'homing pigeon.' Another option could be 'instinct'
	Free connection		pests	Acceptable. 'Pigeons' may both be viewed as pests.
	Fancier synonym		annoyance	Acceptable. Definition of 'pest' has moved from vermin (rats and pigeons) to things that cause bother.
	Antonym	'Help' card used	Player asks an adult for help and discards his 'Help' card on the board.	Adult could not think of an antonym for 'annoyance,' so a starter question was turned over again. Potential antonyms for 'annoyance' are 'calm' and 'supporting' but as the player and their helper could not think of these a starter question was needed.
What is your dream job?			Teacher	Play continues...

Play cards

synonym	synonym
synonym	synonym
antonym	antonym
free connection	free connection
free connection	free connection

Play cards

free connection and then reverse direction	free connection and then reverse direction
make the word longer	make the word longer
fancier synonym	fancier synonym
sounds like	sounds like
miss a turn	miss a turn

Starter questions

What was the last thing you ate?

What is your favourite animal?

What is your favourite colour?

What is your favourite hobby or interest?

Where would you like to go on holiday?

What is your dream job?

What is your favourite word?

What is the last word that you just said?

What word would you use to describe the person sitting opposite you?

Think of a word that starts with the same letter as your name.

Help cards

HELP!	HELP!

Word Chain

Play cards

Starter questions

Discarded Help cards