

**Title:** Word Association

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**Levels:** Beginner to Advanced

**Aims:** Improve vocabulary and speaking

**Class Time:** 5-30 minutes (it depends if this is a scheduled activity or a filler when other activities are completed early).

**Preparation Time:** 5-10 minutes

**Resources:** 3X5 cards, sharpie/felt tip pen

### **Introduction & Theoretical Rationale:**

This activity engages the Ss by having them to recall words that are associated with the word the teacher produces.

Awareness-raising: According to Scott Thornbury activities aimed at helping learners uncover these gaps we will call “awareness activities”, rather than simply “presentation activities”, some the former term allows the possibility of learners discovering – and even filling – their knowledge gaps themselves. Awareness involves at least three processes: attention, noticing, and understanding.

**Procedure:** (the vocabulary cards are developed in previous classes)

1. Have students choose words (nouns, verbs, adjectives) from lesson (or provide words at beginning of class). This is best achieved by developing the cards in a previous class and distributing them to students at the beginning of the exercise to save time.
2. Ss break into groups of four.
3. Distribution of cards (randomly, increases difficulty of associations).
4. Write a word on the board:
  - a. Clearly state and enunciate the word.
  - b. Ss chorally repeat the word.
5. Each Ss chooses a card with the word they feel is best associated with the word the T has written on the board and places it face down in the middle of group. (T can allow 30 seconds to one minute for the Ss to choose).
6. One member from each group will turn over the cards. Each Ss states their word and why they chose it/how is it associated with the word written on the board to their group.
7. Ss choose the best word in the group which is most closely associated with the word written on the board. The Ss who chose that card would then present to the class.
8. As a game, the teacher can choose the best word and score points.

### **Caveats & Options:**

1. Ss can vote for the winning cards within their group and within the class.
2. T can award points for the closest and most correct word.
3. Ss can compete in small groups or as a class.

### **References:**

Thornbury, S. (2005). How to teach speaking. Pearson Longman.

### Word Association

This is a word association game for all levels of language learners. The complexity of the words can be increased or decreased depending on level of students. This game can be played as the semester/term progresses. The quantity of word cards needed for this game would increase with time.

Time: depends on teacher, from 5-30 minutes.

You would require 3X5 cards with words written on them. (I recommend creating the cards during a previous exercise where the students write the words on them, saving time, and they will have familiarity with the words).

Break the class into groups of four.

Either have students to take out their 3X5 cards or pass them out as appropriate, with words to each student within the groups (samples provided below). If the students are creating their own vocabulary cards during each lesson, you can increase difficulty by having them to choose 5-10 cards out of their collection. This will cause them to have to think more in the association.

Write a word on the board and state it aloud having the students to repeat the word chorally.

Students will have one minute to associate one of their words with the word provided by the teacher. Each student will take one card with their word and place it face down in the middle of their group.

After one minute, the teacher will have the students turn their cards over, the students will have to state the words they chose and state why they associated that word with the teachers' word. The teacher will choose the best word for each group. You can award points to increase competitiveness.

After the groups have done this game 5 times (or whatever is specified by the teacher) then the groups will then play against the other groups in the class.

Teacher words: House Dog Car School Movie

Student words: Bone, Chair, Wheel, Pencil, Popcorn, Soda, Road, Signs, Paper, Bed, Bathtub, TV, Trunk, Hood, Bowl

This is by no means an exhaustive list. And the goal is not necessarily to create words that will match correctly with the words that students will accumulate during the lessons; it is to get them listening, speaking, thinking critically, and working as teams to improve their language ability.