

Using the Homophone Decks in Cooperative Learning Activities

Before playing competitive games with any or all of the **INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL HOMOPHONE CARD DECKS 1-5**, you can use the two-sided word-and-picture cards in cooperative learning activities. Here are some suggested steps to follow:

- Mix up and spread out a set or deck of matching homophone cards face up (with the words showing) on a table. Learners match the words that are pronounced exactly the same. They pronounce these pairs of homophones aloud.
- Working with nine to eighteen pairs of homophone cards at a time, learners review their pronunciation. Then, looking only at the pictures and definitions of the words on the backs of the cards, they try to recall the homophones. (The “answers” are on the other side of the cards, of course.)
- Working together in pairs, learners make sentences with their pairs of homophone cards: one student creates (says or writes) a sentence with one homophone, and the other makes a sentence with the matching word. Then—with the same set or deck of nine to eighteen homophone pairs—they go through the cards again. This time, each student tries to recall the sentence that his or her partner made.
- Again using sets or decks of nine to eighteen homophone pairs each, learners in pairs or groups pronounce the words and tell what they mean. (There are simple definitions and pictures on the backs, of course, but students may want to look up the words in their dictionaries to learn their other meanings and to see more examples of the words used in context.)
- With the words in their decks, students can make homophone charts like the example on page 6 of this booklet. They list the homophones in the first column, choose definitions for the second column, and write corresponding examples in the third.
- Students make up their own “homophone quizzes” for one another. They list sentences that make use of the listed words, substituting a blank for each homophone. Then they trade papers and try to fill in the blanks appropriately.
- Pairs or small groups can repeat any or all of the above steps with a set or deck of different homophone pairs—up to 27 pairs of words at a time for the most advanced students.

Homophone Card Games and Activities

Before playing homophone card games, you may want to adjust the size of each card deck to the size of each group, participants' level of language proficiency, and the time available. Decks of 36 cards (18 matching pairs) can be divided into smaller sets, such as two sets of 18 (nine pairs of cards) each. And even though they have different backgrounds, the cards of separate decks may be combined to create larger sets for more challenging vocabulary-learning activities and games.

Of course, the "difficulty" of a deck of homophone cards depends on the words as well as the size of the deck. You can "tailor arrange" certain decks for certain learners, making them easier or more difficult learning aids by choosing the cards to include.

Here are some vocabulary games that can be played with homophone card decks of various sizes:

THE GAME OF CONCENTRATION

Each pair or group of players spreads out a different set or deck of homophone cards, face down, on a surface. Using the pictures and definitions on the back as "clues," the first player turns two of the cards face up. He or she pronounces the two words aloud. If they are a "match" (homophones of each other), that player keeps the cards and gets another turn. If the two words do not "match" (if they are pronounced differently), the player turns them face down again. Play passes to the next person.

The game ends when all of the homophone card pairs have been collected from the desk or table. The player with the largest number of card pairs is the winner.

Before playing the same game with a different deck of homophone cards, players can review the words in their present deck. (See the suggestions on the previous page.)



The two turned-up cards in this game of Homophone Concentration are a match!

THE GAME OF "SNAPPING UP HOMOPHONES"

Each group of players (at best, four to eight) receives a different set or deck of homophone cards, containing from 18 to 36 word pairs each. One person shuffles the cards and deals them out approximately evenly among the players. All players place their cards face down in a stack in front of them.

Simultaneously at a signal ("Go"), all players turn over the top cards of their stacks. If there are no matches, they continue to turn cards face up. The first player to see a homophone match calls out the words. If one of the matching cards is on that player's own pile, he wins the other player's turned-up cards. If neither card is on his or her pile, that player wins *both* piles of turned-up cards. He puts the newly-won cards—together with his own turned-up cards—face down on the table.

Play continues as before: simultaneously, players turn over the top cards of their piles and place them face up on the table. If a player calls out a word in error, his turned-over cards are "forfeited"—placed face up in the center of the table. Any player can win the stack of cards in the center by matching the top card with a card that a player has just turned over. If two players call out a homophone pair at the same time, both return their turned-up cards to the bottom of their face-down stacks. Even players with no more cards can continue to play by calling out the word(s) for matching homophones when they appear. Then they'll win card stacks to continue to play with.

There are two ways to end the game. The first is to play until time is called. Then the player with the most cards in his face-down pile is the winner. Or, from time to time, all players look through their stacks and remove all the matching pairs. The player that runs out of cards first is the winner.

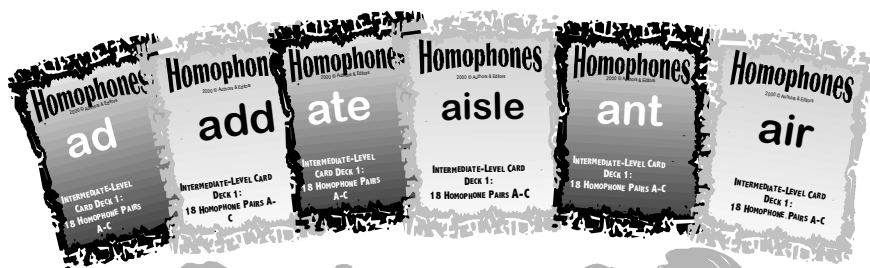
To play a more challenging version of the "Game of Snap," players can begin with a stack of cards turned *face up*—i.e., with the definitions and pictures hidden. Covering their stacks with one hand, they turn over the cards as described above. When players see two *definitions* that match, they call out the relevant homophone(s). If correct, they win the cards as described above.

SENTENCE OR MEANING PAIRS

In a more "sedate" game that requires talking, all the cards of a set or deck are dealt out approximately equally. Looking at the words on the card faces, players hold their cards in their hands, fan-shaped. They match the homophones in their hands and remove those cards from their hands, placing the cards on the playing surface.

The player to the dealer's left begins by putting any card, face up, on the table, and using the word in a sentence that illustrates its meaning. The next player places the matching homophone card on the surface if she has it and makes a sentence—or passes. As soon as a player makes a match, she gets another turn—to place the first card of a homophone pair on the table and use it in a sentence. The first player to run out of cards is the winner.

For a more challenging variation, players hold their hands with the definitions of the words toward them. The player to place the first card of any pair on the table puts it face *down*—with the definition and picture showing. The next player must place the matching definition card on the table or pass, and so on—until one player is rid of all her cards.



Perhaps there are other kinds of card games that can be played with decks of Homophone Cards. Try using your creativity to adapt the rules of games that involve only *pairs* of cards (instead of sets of four or suits of thirteen).