

The Rules of Lotto & Bingo

What are some ways to use phonic/spelling *Bingo Sound/Spelling Picture Board Games*?

In the game of "Lotto," used for educational purposes since its beginning centuries ago, players cover boxes on their individual boards with cards that match the images in those spaces in some way. "Bingo" developed from "Lotto" as a game that could be played with large groups. A definition of "Bingo" is "a game of chance played by covering items on a printed board with markers as they are called out." "Lotto" is likely to be a useful activity for pre-literate or semi-literate—the lowest levels of—language-learners. Here are some ways to play "Lotto" with the *Basic phonic/spelling Sound/Spelling Picture Board Games 1-8*:

- ◆ **LOTTO PREPARATION.** Before cutting them apart, make copies of the "Caller Cards" for each *Board Game 1-8*—so that several individuals or groups can make use of the 9 cards at the same time.
- ◆ **CLASSIC LOTTO 1.** From the same game, up to ten people can receive a different *Phonics Bingo Board A-J*. Each gets a deck of 9 cards corresponding to the items on the boards. As fast as possible, he or she places the cards face up on top of the identical items on his or her board. The person that finishes first is the winner. As follow-up, each participant can name the 9 items from his or her card deck. The others can find those items on their own boards and point to them or can locate and show the same images from *their* card decks.

Then each participant trades his or her board and cards for another set—for a new game. Everyone repeats the above steps with different words and images.

SYMBOLS FOR SOUNDS	b	p	d	t	g
WORDS IN GAME 1	cube	mop	sag	boat	bag
SYMBOLS FOR SOUNDS	k	v	f	th	
WORDS IN GAME 2	bike	wave	wife	math	

◆ **CLASSIC LOTTO 2.** In a small-group version of "Lotto," each participant gets a different *Phonics Bingo Board* for the same game, but there is only one deck of 9 matching cards. These are spread out face up on a playing surface. At the same time, players take cards one by one and place them face up on the matching boxes of their boards. The first person to cover a "line" (three boxes in a horizontal row, a vertical column, or diagonally across the board) wins the game—if he or she can tell those words correctly. For more practice, others can read aloud the items that *they* have covered on their boards. Then the winner can collect and show the picture/word cards to the group. Everyone can tell the item names. Beginning readers can copy down the words and pronounce them. Finally, the group trades their boards and cards for another set—for a new game. Participants repeat the above steps with different words and images.

◆ **CLASSIC LOTTO 3.** In a more sedate version of the activity described above, the 9 "Caller Cards" for a game are placed face-down in a stack on the playing surface. Each person in turn draws the top card, shows the picture, tells the word to the group, and then places it face up on the corresponding box of his or her *Phonics Bingo Board*. Again, the winner is the player that first covers a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line of three boxes with the matching cards—and can correctly tell the item names. For more practice, others can read aloud the items that they have *not* covered on their boards. Then the person with the fewest cards can collect and show the picture/word cards to the group one by one. Everyone can read the items aloud, copy down the words, and/or begin or continue their own vocab lists. Finally, the group trades their boards and cards for another set—for a new game. Participants repeat the above steps with different words and images—or they use the materials for a game with different rules and steps.

Traditional or classic "Lotto" games may bore faster learners, who are likely to want some challenge in their reading and vocabulary learning activities. For these participants, you might vary the rules and procedures. There are suggestions for "Lotto and Bingo Variations" on pages 18 to 24.

Even traditional "Bingo" requires fewer materials than classic "Lotto," and it can be played in larger groups. Here are some tried-and-true ways to use *Basic-Level Phonics Bingo Sound/Spelling Picture Board Games* for whole-class and group games:

- ◆ **BINGO PREPARATION.** The "caller"—at first the teacher or tutor and later individual learners—prepares and shuffles a deck of "Caller Cards" for one of the *Phonics Bingo Games 1-8*. Meanwhile, the ten corresponding *Bingo Boards* are distributed to participants. In small groups, each person gets his or her own board. In larger groups, two or three players can share each card and work together. Markers—such as chips, checkers, beans, small pieces of paper, or the like—are placed in piles or containers accessible to everyone.
- ◆ **THE RULES OF TRADITIONAL BINGO.** Looking at the first card, the caller pronounces the word several times. Players look for that item on their boards and place a marker on it. The caller can then show the card so players can check that they have put their marker on the appropriate box. For beginning readers, the caller or a helper can print each word on a board as it is pronounced. Or someone can spell the word aloud, use it in a sentence, and/or define it.

The caller continues presenting items in this way. Players continue to cover the corresponding items with markers. When someone has covered all three boxes in a row, a column, or diagonally from corner to corner, that person calls out "Bingo!" S/he then tells the three marked items in his or her "Bingo" line. The caller checks to see if they were indeed "called." If they were—and if the person with "Bingo" can say the words correctly, that player wins the game—and perhaps a prize. S/he becomes the caller for the next round, which can begin when everyone has emptied his or her board and exchanged it for another.

SMALL-GROUP BINGO. As soon as learners understand the rules of "Bingo" and get the point of the activity, they can form groups to continue playing—either the same game or different games (with different boards and the corresponding "Caller Cards"). They should repeat each game several times—until each player gets a chance to be the "Caller." Participants that win more than once should give someone else a chance to call the next game.

What might happen while learners are playing *Phonics Bingo* on their own? Teachers, tutors, and/or other native or near-native speakers that can be of help can circulate around the classroom. They can serve as models for pronunciation of the words and help learners to say them correctly or comprehensibly. Teachers and other helpers should also remind players of the *real*—the educational—goals of the game, which are for participants:

- [a] to learn to say the words clearly enough for their listeners to understand and to distinguish them from similar-sounding words,
- [b] to understand the words when others pronounce them and to ask for repetition or clarification if they don't understand, and
- [c] to begin to connect sounds with the letters that produce them—as a first step in learning phonics, spelling, and word-level reading

Most participants will also be interested in learning the meanings of the vocabulary items and how to use them in their own speech. More assertive players may choose to adapt the game rules to their own cooperative or competitive learning purposes:

- ◆ **"CARD-LESS BINGO."** One game variation that seems to come up naturally is for groups to dispense with "Caller Cards" and to participate equally in choosing words to pronounce and cover. Each person in turn pronounces the name of an item several times. If listeners do not understand well enough to know which word to cover, that player must tell the meaning of the word or use it in a phrase or sentence. Finally, if there is still confusion or doubt, the same person shows the card or spells the relevant word aloud.

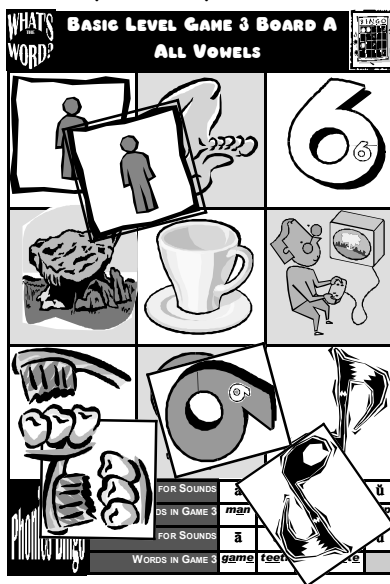
ANOTHER VARIATION ON THE RULES. Here is a more challenging variation of *Phonics Bingo* that might interest faster learners or serve as review. Instead of pronouncing the names of *items* from their boards, a "Caller" or players in turn can give "meaning clues"—a simple definition or a sentence with an "oral blank" replacing an item. For instance, instead of the word *bag*, someone might say "a paper or plastic container," or "Check your _____ at the ticket counter." *Listeners* pronounce the words aloud as they place markers on the corresponding boxes.

Lotto & Bingo Variations

In what other ways might the *Phonics Bingo* game materials be used?

Here are some ideas for ways to get additional educational "mileage" out of the *Phonics Bingo Game Boards* and caller cards. They are most useful as variations to prevent boredom, for review, and/or for follow-up after learners have mastered the pronunciation of sounds, spelling, and relevant phonics patterns.

◆ **MATCHING CALLER CARDS.** Create "Caller Cards" with words that *match* the items of a phonicspelling *Bingo Game* in the relevant sounds but are not identical. For example, matching cards for the 9 items of *Basic Level Game 3; All Vowels* might display the words cat and pal for the /ă/ sound, bed and ten for the /è/ sound, fish and hill for /i/, mom and lot for /ò/. The items sun and rug would match the /ü/ sound in cup and cake; gate would match game; etc. The cards should display pictures—with or without their printed word spellings.



For "Lotto" games, participants place matching cards on the corresponding boxes of their *Phonics Bingo Boards*, perhaps as suggested in the rules for "Classic Lotto 1-2-3" on pages 18 and 19. They should be careful to match items according to the relevant *sounds*, not the spelling of those sounds. Pre-readers might be more successful at activities of this kind than beginning language learners, who tend to rely more on spellings—how they *think* letters should be pronounced or read aloud—than on sounds. "Bingo" games can be played as described on pages 20 and 21, except that "Callers" pronounce words with sounds that *match* the items on players' *Phonics Bingo Boards* instead of the words themselves. Listeners cover the matching items with markers.