

Academic English synonyms reversi

Teacher's instructions

Preparation

Photocopy and cut out one set of 22 cards per group of two to five people (bigger groups are better in classes who might struggle with the activity). **Do not cut down the middle vertical line**, as this is where the cards should be folded so that the two words or expressions that are synonyms (e.g. "Commence" and "Start") are on opposite sides of the card and so can't be seen at the same time.

In class

Give out the sets of cards and ask them to fold them (if you have not already done so) and place the whole pack in a vertical column on the table so it looks like a ladder, with each card being one rung. It doesn't matter which side is up on each card at the start of the game. The first person should look at the card at the bottom of the "ladder" and try to guess what the synonym on the other side of the card is, e.g. guessing that "artificial" is on the other side of "man-made". When there is more than one option they only have to guess one of them, but they must guess one of the words on the card, even if other answers are possible.

If they are correct, the card is turned over so that the synonym is now displayed. They can then try to do the same with the next card, i.e. the one above it on table. Whenever they make a mistake, that card stays the same way up as before and play passes to the next person. That person must do the same, **starting at the bottom of the ladder each and every time** (throughout the game), but the next person will mainly be converting the other way round, e.g. converting "artificial" to "man-made", as the last person will have turned over the cards they got right.

Whoever can go right from the bottom to the top of the ladder without making any mistakes in one go is the winner of the game.

If students get stuck, let them work together rather than compete, but still going back to the bottom every time they make a mistake and so needing to get through the whole lot with no errors to finish.

At the end of the activity give them one photocopied version (not cut up) to keep for reference.



Academic English synonyms reversi Photocopiable cards

Photocopy one complete set of the cards below per group of two to five students. Cut along all but the middle vertical line to make 22 cards with a vertical line across the middle of each pair of words with the same meaning, then fold along these lines to make cards with synonyms on opposite sides.

Outcome	Result
Acquire/ Obtain	Get
Commence	Start
Retain	Keep
Reside/ Exist	Live (v)
Pursue	Chase (after)
Modify something	Change something
Artificial	Man-made
Exploit	Use/ Misuse
Accumulate	Gather together
The majority of people	Most people
The vast majority of people	Almost everyone
Be absolutely identical	Be exactly the same



A variation	A change/ A difference
The elderly	Old people
Refer to/ Make reference to	Mention
In the correct manner	In the right way
Attain	Reach/ Achieve
Brief	Short
Cease	Stop
Cite	Quote
Confirm	Check