



Games and Activities

Successful skills review requires that the lessons be accessible and interesting. Sometimes, all that it takes to fill a gap in students' learning is for them to see the material presented in a different way. Part of your goal while reviewing must be to cater to many different learning styles and to add a fresh approach. These games and activities can be used to review a number of topics and offer a change of pace in your course.

General Activity

The Money Game: Use this ongoing game to help students understand how important it is for them to be committed to school and the Cambridge program. Standardized test scores account for 45 percent of college application criteria (Test Score = 45%; Grades = 45%; Other Factors = 10%). The more time that students dedicate to test preparation, the better they will perform on standardized tests. Moreover, an individual with a Bachelor's degree stands to earn a median income of \$55,000 per year, as opposed to \$34,000 per year—the median income of someone with only a high school diploma.

In order to play this game, each student gets a certain sum of play money at the beginning of the course. As the course progresses, students earn money for their successes (e.g., completing homework assignments, attending class, improvement, etc.) and lose money for a lack of effort (e.g., not completing homework, not attending class, etc.). At the end of the course, emphasize to students that the amount of play money they have is meant to indicate how successful they will be in college (and in life).

Math Games and Activities

24-Game: Reproduce the table below on a worksheet or on the board in your classroom. Students must manipulate the four numbers with mathematical operations to come up with a total of 24 in as many combinations as possible. They can use addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division. However, they must use all four numbers and use each number only once.

Examples:

$$5 \cdot 5 = 25; 25 - 4 = 21; 21 + 3 = 24$$

$$5 \cdot 3 = 15; 15 + 4 = 19; 19 + 5 = 24$$

5	4
3	5

Math Baseball: Use the Math Skills Review to compile a list of items that represents a variety of math topics. These items should range on a scale of difficulty from easy to hard. Then, split the class into two teams. Just as in baseball, there are nine innings, with three outs per team, per inning. When the teams are “up to bat,” one person at a time goes up to the board to answer an item. Each team picks the level of item that they would like to answer:

1 = Single (very easy)

2 = Double (easy)

3 = Triple (hard)

4 = Home Run (very hard)

Before the game begins, set a rule whereby the batting team can only go through the batting rotation twice before it switches to the other team’s turn at bat. If you do not make this type of rule, one team can stay at bat forever because they might continue to pick the easy items.

The batting order must stay the same and once the team decides on a level of item, the person up to bat is the only one who can answer. The batter gets one chance to answer the item correctly, and if he or she answers incorrectly, it counts as an out against the team. The team with the highest score at the end of the game wins. You may decide to award a candy prize to the winning team.

Examples:

Single item: What is 0.015 expressed as a percent?

Home run item: If the circumference of a circle is 35 feet, what is the diameter of the circle, rounded to the nearest thousandth of a foot?

Math BINGO™: Using the Math Skills Review as a source, create flash cards with math items, or write items on the board. Students must work through the items and then cover up the spaces on their BINGO™ cards that contain the correct answers to the items. In order to get BINGO™, a person must have five spaces covered up in a row. The first student to get BINGO™ wins.

Example:

$3 \cdot 4 = 12$ (cover 12 on the card)

$8 \cdot 8 = 64$ (cover 64 on the card)

$20 \div 5 = 4$ (cover 4 on the card)

$57 - 9 = 48$ (cover 48 on the card)

B	I	N	G	O
64	14	72	9	25
18	4	50	36	30
56	77	FREE	21	20
81	144	15	48	49
27	16	24	6	12



Shopping the Sunday Circular: Have students bring in grocery store circulars from the Sunday newspaper and use them to determine the price per unit on familiar items.

Examples:

A can of corn is 16 oz. and costs 80¢. $80¢ \div 16 = 5¢$ per oz.

A case of soda is \$7.99; there are 24 cans in a case and 12 oz. per can.
 $\$7.99 \div 24 \approx \0.33 per can, and $\$0.33 \div 12 \approx \0.03 per oz.

Each student should create a chart with the following information:

- item
- store
- price
- volume of item
- cost per unit

Compare similar items from different stores to determine the biggest bargain.

Shopping Spree: Use department store circulars from the Sunday newspaper, or create a list of items and sales. Have students calculate the sale price of items, plus sales tax (e.g., 8% or the sales tax applied to merchandise where you live).

Examples:

Levi™ jeans are regularly \$45.00; this week, they are 25% off.

Sale price: $\$45.00 - (45 \cdot 0.25) = \$45.00 - \$11.25 = \33.75 .

Sales tax: $\$33.75 \cdot 0.08 = \2.70 .

Total Charge: $\$33.75 + \$2.70 = \$36.45$.

Nike™ shoes are regularly \$68.00; this week, they are 30% off.

Sale price: $\$68.00 - (68 \cdot 0.30) = \$68.00 - \$20.40 = \47.60 .

Sales tax: $\$47.60 \cdot 0.08 = \3.81

Total Charge: $\$47.60 + \$3.81 = \$51.41$.

Assign a set budget and have students determine how many items they can purchase without going over the budget (e.g., \$150).

Vocabulary, Grammar, and Reading Games and Activities

Word Rally (Boggle™): Have students roll lettered Boggle™ dice and come up with as many words as possible (using each letter no more than once per word) in one minute. Unlike the game Boggle™, letters don't have to touch to form words.

Example:

If the dice fell into the Boggle™ slots on the right as indicated, you could come up with the following 50 words:

WAVE; FLUKE; HEN; HUGE; HAWK; LOVE; TALK;
SAT; HAT; PAT; PET; SET; NET; GET; NAP; TAP; SAP;
PUT; HUT; NUT; TON; TAN; THAW; FLOSS; FLOW;
STEP; FLOP; SWAP; SLAP; FLOP; GLUE; GUN; GLOW;
SLOW; POKE; POLE; FLAT; FLOG; SPEAK; WASP;
SHELF; SOAK; SOUP; PASS; FLAG; SHAVE; PEAK

A	G	O	S
W	S	V	P
F	L	U	K
T	N	H	E

PDQ Word Game: Create flash cards, each containing one letter of the alphabet. Make three to five cards for each letter. Each student receives three flash cards and must come up with a word that contains those letters. Students race against the clock to come up with as many words as possible.

Examples:

S, M, P = (e.g., simple, sample, sophomore, metaphysics, etc.)

P, T, R = (e.g., picture, portrait, patronize, trampoline, etc.)

Vocabulary BINGO™: This game is a fun and effective way to help students learn the meanings of difficult words. Prepare a worksheet with a numbered list of 25 challenging vocabulary words and a lettered list of corresponding definitions (in a different order). Give the students a set amount of time to match the words with their definitions. Go over the answers with your students.

Example:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. ___ referee | A. To supply with money or capital; to obtain money or credit |
| 2. ___ definition | B. Approaching without interest or concern; not caring; apathetic |
| 3. ___ resident | C. To convey or remove from one place, person, or position to another |
| 4. ___ presidency | D. Meeting for consultation or discussion; a league; a convention |
| 5. ___ unfinished | E. To bring to a pure state; to purify; to become more elegant |
| 6. ___ conference | |
| 7. ___ refine | |



- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 8. ___ finance | G. The formal statement of meaning |
| 9. ___ possess | H. An arbitrator; a judge |
| 10. ___ subside | F. A person who lives for a long time or permanently in one place. |
| 11. ___ indifferent | I. Not complete; lacking surface treatment, such as polish or paint |
| 12. ___ transfer | J. To have, as belonging to oneself, a quality; to have as property |
| | K. The office, function, or term of the highest administrative offices |
| | L. To sink to a low or lower level; to become quiet or less active |

Next, prepare a BINGO™ sheet (five squares across, five down) and ask the students to write the vocabulary words randomly in the squares (one word per square). Then, read the definitions aloud in random order, having the students place Xs on the squares that contain the words matching your definitions. The first student to place an X on five squares in a row gets BINGO™ and wins. You may continue after the first winner to let students play for second and third places.

Vocabulary Fractions: Use flash cards to create vocabulary fractions and reduced fractions based on the number of vowels and consonants per word.

Example:

Word	$\frac{\# \text{ of Vowels}}{\text{Total \# of Letters}}$	$\frac{\# \text{ of Consonants}}{\text{Total \# of Letters}}$
Gather	$\frac{2}{6} = \frac{1}{3}$	$\frac{4}{6} = \frac{2}{3}$
Focus	$\frac{2}{5}$	$\frac{3}{5}$
Manage	$\frac{3}{6} = \frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{6} = \frac{1}{2}$

Written Telephone: Most students know the game “Telephone,” in which one person whispers something to another person, and then the whispered phrase is passed around a circle of people until it returns to the person with whom it originated. Oftentimes, the phrase has changed because people did not speak clearly or were not listening carefully. “Written Telephone” is similar, although it demands a higher level of thinking and attentiveness.

Find a short story or create a story of your own. The story should not be longer than one paragraph. The story should include several details. Divide the students into groups of four or five. The first student in each group reads the original text once through only (allow no more than 30 seconds for students to read through). Then, he or she turns the original piece of paper over, and from memory, reproduces the story as accurately as possible on a clean sheet of paper. When finished, the student writes his or her name in the upper corner. This student then passes his or her version of the story to the next person, and the process is repeated.

After each student has taken his or her turn, have the last student in each group read his or her version aloud. Then, discuss the following points:

- What kind of things did you remember most easily?
- What was most difficult to remember?
- Did you feel pressured by the time limit? If so, how did that affect your reading?
- How similar or dissimilar is the last student’s version of the story to the original story?

Many students will probably convey the correct main idea and logical flow/structure of the original story. This skill is very important when it comes to test preparation. When students read passages, they should try to retain the main idea/main points, get a good sense of the logical structure of the passage, and remember a few particularly significant details. They should not spend a lot of energy trying to memorize all of the details during the first reading. If they have a good grasp of the passage as a whole, then they will be able to find details in the passage with relative ease.

Examples:

Lower-level: Tomorrow I will teach my little sister how to tie her shoes. First she will need to learn how to pull the laces tight (that way her shoes won’t fall off of her). Then I will have her make one bunny ear. After that she will take the other lace and wrap it around the bunny ear and then pull it through the burrow. I remember when I was in Kindergarten my older brother taught me how to tie my own shoes and now it is time for me to teach my little sister.

Upper-level: When most people are looking for a pet bird, they go to the pet store. Grandpa Nick found Buddy in his own backyard. Early one winter morning, he noticed a bright green and yellow bird at the feeder. He could not believe that a parakeet could live outside in the cold temperature. Grandpa Nick held up a finger as a perch and slowly



walked toward the bird. When he reached the feeder, Buddy hopped on! Grandpa Nick returned to the house without moving his finger or turning around. Buddy was Grandpa Nick's companion for the next seven years.

Peer Editing (Part One): Provide students with a short essay or story (no more than one page in length) in which there are many errors. The essay should be written at a level comparable to the writing ability level of your students. Ask students to identify and correct as many errors as possible.

Example:

Thomas Jefferson was third president of the united states of America. Jefferson was borned april 13 1743. he growed up on a tobacco plantation in Shadweell Virginia. As a child Jefferson he worked on his parents plantation. Jefferson attended the college of William and mary Jefferson entered college at the age of seventeen years old. While Jefferson attended college he studied law with judge georg Wythe and Jefferson got admitted to the bar at twenty four. Jefferson married Martha Waylas Skelton. They marriedy january 1 1772 the had six kids five girls and one boy. Out of Jeffersons six kids only two lived to adulthood. as a member of the continental congress he was choosed in 1776 to write the declaration of independence, a important charter of American and universal liberties. Jefferson elected govornor of virginia durring the American revolution in 1801 Jeffereson elected the president, Some of his important achievements was the purchase of the Louisiana Territory in 1803 and when he supported the Lewis and Clark's expedition.

Peer Editing (Part Two): Ask students to revise the text by improving the word choice, sentence structure, organization, etc.

Peer Editing (Part Three): Create a writing prompt (see sample prompts below) and have your students write short essays. Then, have students edit each other's essays.

Examples:

The best decision I ever made...

My favorite childhood memory...

The best day of the year...

Online Learning Tools

[Vocabulary.com](#): This website offers vocabulary lists by subject area, lesson plans that are ready to implement in the classroom, resources such as the “VocabGrabber” that can generate a vocabulary list from any portion of a text, and an interactive blog about words.

[FunBrain.com](#): This vibrant website holds high appeal for students with its interactive games, web books, and movies. You will also find this site useful with its printable flash cards and curriculum guide that matches appropriate FunBrain games to your content area.

[Read.gov/exquisite-corpse/](#): Based on an old parlor game, this modern episodic adventure story provides alternative source material for your reading lessons. After reading the episodes of the adventure on the Library of Congress website referenced here, assign a similar writing project for your class to complete.

[EdHelper.com](#): You will love the free worksheets, graphic organizers, and lesson plan activity ideas available in every content area for all grades. This site even includes ready-to-solve logic, word, and math puzzles, with an option to create your own puzzles.

[Teachnet.com](#): This is a website for teachers by teachers. The lesson plans are arranged by content area and the “power tools” include resources and activities for classroom use. This website includes a Teacher-2-Teacher email forum that connects teachers all over the world and offers an outlet for teachers to share ideas/experiences.

[LessonPlanet.com](#): This search engine offers a plethora of lesson plans and worksheets for educators. Subjects can be narrowed down to specific parts of history, specific writing and math skills, etc. The site also offers a search of state standards that will allow you to easily align your lesson plans to your state standards.

[LessonFactory.com](#): In addition to teacher-approved, core subject lesson plans, this site offers lesson plans in the Arts, Computers, and Foreign Languages, as well as ideas for accommodating students with special needs. This website also offers a way for teachers to post assignments, maintain a calendar, and provide helpful links. Parents can email their child’s teacher, review assignments, and stay connected.