

Improving lesson effectiveness through the use of educational games in learning verb phrases in primary education

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Primary school students predominantly engage in thinking through imagination. The rules and phenomena of their native language require abstract thinking, which is often challenging for children at this age. As a result, they are naturally inclined toward play and physical activity. According to the current curriculum, game-based activities are frequently integrated into lessons. This is because acquiring knowledge through games is generally perceived by students as more engaging than memorizing dry rules or repetitive exercises. Games help reinforce the subject matter more effectively and ensure better retention.

There is a wide variety of methods for conducting educational games, and it is essential that school teachers master these techniques and familiarize students with them. Educational games help eliminate difficulties in teaching language materials and are developed in consideration of students' developmental characteristics. These games foster independence among children and encourage them to think quickly, formulate independent responses, demonstrate intelligence, and take initiative. They also promote active participation and improve focus. Furthermore, educational games nurture a spirit of healthy competition among students.

During these activities, students develop essential qualities such as teamwork, mutual respect, and responsibility—both toward themselves and others. In the course of gameplay, positive communication habits are also fostered. These games require students to be proactive, insightful, and capable of applying theoretical knowledge in practical contexts.

Organizing educational games necessitates consideration of several methodological factors. When incorporating games into lessons, teachers must adopt a creative approach aligned with the topic and its content. It is also crucial to consider the characteristics of students when organizing grammatical games—such as their academic level, grade, and familiarity with the subject matter. Designing the content of activities according to these factors positively influences the effectiveness of the grammatical games, allowing students to quickly and firmly grasp new grammatical concepts.

Regardless of the grammar topic, educational games should never be chosen randomly. Teachers must prepare for these games as thoroughly as they would for a standard lesson.

It is also important that children are adequately prepared for any educational game. Without proper preparation, students may not understand the intended goals of the activity, leading to disengagement and confusion. Repeated disorganized participation can result in boredom and negatively affect students' cognitive development. To prevent this, each task within the game must be clearly explained, supported by similar examples and illustrative models.

The core essence of educational games lies in assigning children mental tasks in the form of play by adults. The primary aim is to stimulate and enhance children's curiosity and motivation to learn. Educational games are not only effective for reinforcing knowledge but also serve as a valuable form of instruction in their own right.

Examples of Educational Games for Teaching Verbs in Primary Grades

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"Word Chain" Game

This game can be implemented across all primary grades. It encourages students to pay attention to each word and its structure. To conduct the game, any word can be chosen. The next word must begin with the final sound of the previous one. Students quickly come up with suitable words and see the results of their creativity in real-time, which brings them a sense of enjoyment. The game becomes even more engaging when played in pairs or between groups.

In teaching the verb word class, the game might proceed as follows: Yugurdi (ran), izladi (searched), ishondi (trusted), ilhomlandi (was inspired). This game can also be adapted to specific topics. It is particularly suitable for students with well-developed thinking skills and a rich vocabulary. Even in classes with only four or five active students, the game can still be played effectively. Initially, a small group of students may participate, but over time, participation can be expanded. As more students engage, they naturally enrich their vocabulary. Connecting the game to specific parts of speech can enhance its effectiveness and help reinforce related knowledge.

Variant 2 of the Word Chain Game

Two students come to the board simultaneously. One creates a word chain using words ending in the sound "b," while the other does the same with words ending in the sound "i." The student who stops writing first within one minute loses. The student who finds the most words wins. According to the rules, no word may be repeated.

Student 1: borib (having gone), botib (sinking), baqirib (shouting), berib (giving), boshlab (starting)

Student 2: keldi (came), intildi (aspired), izladi (searched), ilgariladi (advanced), ishonmadi (did not believe)

This game fosters agility and quick thinking among students.

"Turn the Suffix into a Word" Game

This game is best conducted after students have gained some understanding of word structure. Its objective is to develop skills in critical thinking and comparison. The rules are as follows: Students are reminded of productive and inflectional suffixes in Uzbek. They are then asked to form new words using suffixes such as -lash and -sira, which are commonly used to derive verbs.

The class is divided into two groups. One student from each group comes to the board in turn to write a suffix, followed by a dash and the derived word.

Group 1

-lash → gaplash (to talk), ishlash (to work), suhbatlash (to converse), yuzlash (to confront), yodlash (to memorize)

Group 2

-sira → uyqusira (to be sleepy), yotsira (to feel shy), suvsira (to be thirsty)

If the activity proves too difficult for students, they may be given words containing the targeted suffixes. They will then analyze the structure of each word, identify the suffix, and explain the meaning of the derived term.

"What is He/She Doing?" (Pantomime Game)

This active game is particularly suitable for teaching verbs in grade 3. One student performs silent actions in front of the class. The rest of the class must interpret and describe the action. For

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example, they may depict the movements of a rabbit, a bear, or a bird. Such games enhance students' speech, quick thinking, and prevent boredom. They also foster creativity and ingenuity. This method aligns closely with integrated learning, contributing to a comprehensive educational development.

Clearly, each educational game is designed with a specific pedagogical objective in mind. These objectives aim to impart knowledge and information. Every game requires students to complete certain tasks, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of the lesson.

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