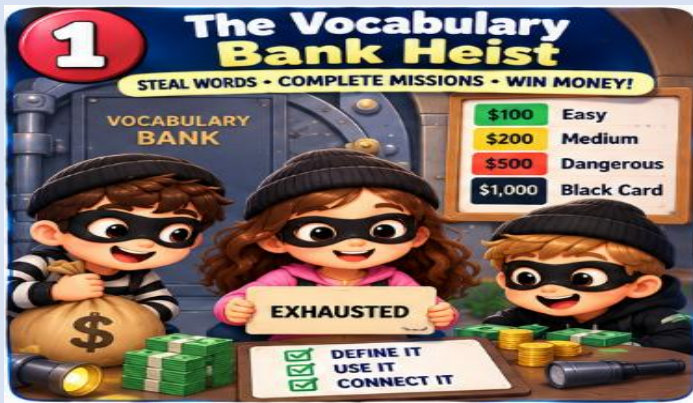


1. 🏦 THE VOCABULARY BANK HEIST



Focus: Meaning, definition, sentence production

Materials: Vocabulary cards + fake money

Divide the class into teams. Each team is a group of **bank robbers** trying to steal vocabulary money.

Put vocabulary cards inside envelopes worth different amounts:

\$100 – Easy

\$200 – Medium

\$500 – Dangerous

A player chooses an envelope.

For example:

EXHAUSTED

To steal the money, the team must complete three missions:

Mission 1 — Define it

Extremely tired.

Mission 2 — Use it

I was exhausted after the football match.

Mission 3 — Connect it

tired → exhausted → sleepy

Complete all three → steal the full \$500.

Fail Mission 3 → another team can shout:

STEAL!

They can answer and take the money.

Professional upgrade: Add \$1,000 **BLACK CARDS** containing difficult collocations or phrasal verbs.

2. 🚨 THE FORBIDDEN WORD ALARM



Focus: Definitions and paraphrasing

Materials: Word cards + bell

A student receives:

TARGET:

DELICIOUS

FORBIDDEN:

- food
- good
- tasty
- eat

They must make their team guess **delicious** without saying any forbidden words.

They might say:

“You can use this adjective when something has an amazing flavor.”

If they accidentally use a forbidden word, another team hits the bell:

ALARM! 🚨

The card is immediately transferred to them.

Challenge Levels

- Level 1 → 2 forbidden words
- Level 2 → 4 forbidden words
- Level 3 → 6 forbidden words

The harder the level, the more points they earn.

3. 🧨 VOCABULARY CHAIN REACTION



Focus: Word association and lexical connections

Materials: Ball + timer

Students stand in a circle.

Start with:

AIRPORT

Student 1:

plane

Student 2:

pilot

Student 3:

fly

Student 4:

sky

Student 5:

cloud

Every word must have a logical connection with the previous one.

But students are passing a **Vocabulary Bomb** while speaking.

When the timer suddenly rings, the student holding it receives a **Challenge Card**:

- ★ Give a synonym.
- ★ Give an antonym.
- ★ Spell the last word.
- ★ Use it in a sentence.
- ★ Give a collocation.
- ★ Change the word class.

For:

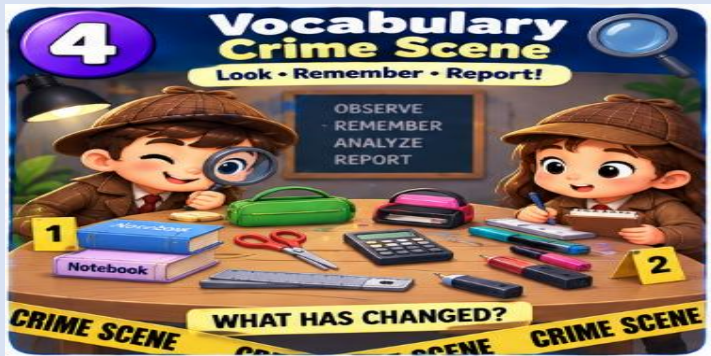
danger

a student might produce:

dangerous

This develops the kind of word association and lexical-network building used in vocabulary-retrieval activities.

4. 🕵️ VOCABULARY CRIME SCENE



Focus: Vocabulary recall through context

Materials: 10–15 vocabulary objects/pictures

Create a “crime scene” on a table.

For example, if you're teaching **school vocabulary**, display:

ruler

scissors

notebook

stapler

pencil case

marker

calculator

dictionary

Students have **15 seconds** to investigate.

Then cover everything.

Secretly:

- remove two objects
- add one object
- change the position of two
- replace one picture

Teams become detectives.

They must report:

The calculator has disappeared.

Someone has replaced the notebook with a dictionary.

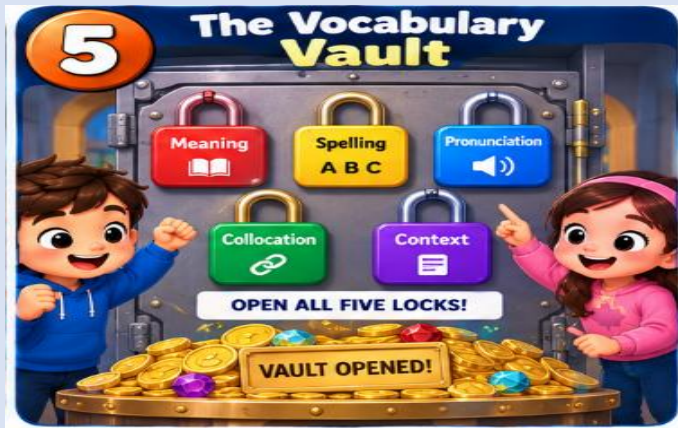
But here's the vocabulary challenge:

They receive points only if they can also give information about the object.

“A calculator is a device we use to do mathematical calculations.”

Bonus point: Use the word in a completely different sentence.

5. THE VOCABULARY VAULT



Focus: Deep vocabulary knowledge

Concept: Escape-room game

Draw a giant vault on the board with **5 locks**.

-  Meaning
-  Spelling
-  Pronunciation
-  Collocation
-  Context

Teams must open all five locks.

Suppose the target word is:

DECISION

Lock 1

Explain the meaning.

Lock 2

Spell it correctly.

Lock 3

Pronounce it correctly.

Lock 4

Choose:

do a decision

make a decision

take a decision

→ **make a decision**

Lock 5

Complete:

“After thinking about it for several days, I finally _____.”

made a decision

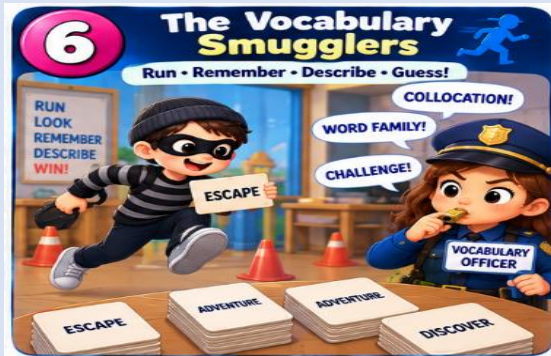
If all five locks open:

 **VAULT OPENED!**

The team receives the treasure.

This is especially useful because vocabulary knowledge includes more than meaning; collocations and how words behave with other words are also important.

6. 🏃 THE VOCABULARY SMUGGLERS



Focus: Definition, recall, speaking

Best for: High-energy classes

Put vocabulary cards on one side of the classroom.

Teams stand on the opposite side.

One student becomes the **Smuggler**.

They run across the room, secretly look at ONE vocabulary card for **three seconds**, but **cannot take it with them**.

They run back and describe it:

“It's a verb. It means to leave a place very quickly because something dangerous is happening.”

Team:

ESCAPE!

Correct → they successfully smuggle the word.

Then they must use it:

The prisoners escaped from the building.

But...

One student from another team is the:

👮 **Vocabulary Officer**

The officer can challenge:

COLLOCATION!

Now the team must give a common combination with the word.

Or:

WORD FAMILY!

They might need:

escape → escapee / escapism

Every successful challenge earns another point.

7. WORD FAMILY LABORATORY



Focus: Word formation

Best for: Intermediate+ learners

Tell students:

“You are scientists. Your job is to mutate words!”

Give each team a base word:

SUCCESS

They have 60 seconds to create its “family”:

success

succeed

successful

successfully

unsuccessful

Then they must label each:

success — noun

succeed — verb

successful — adjective

successfully — adverb

But suddenly announce:

 **MUTATION!**

Give them a sentence:

“She completed the project _____.”

They must grab:

SUCCESSFULLY

Advanced mutation:

Give:

CARE

Students might create:

care

careful

carefully

careless

carelessly

Longest **correct** family wins.

8. 🎯 VOCABULARY SNIPER



Focus: Fast retrieval and precise meaning

Materials: Vocabulary cards around the classroom + soft ball

Stick 15–20 vocabulary cards around the room.

Divide students into teams.

Read a clue:

“Something extremely large.”

Students search the walls.

When someone finds:

ENORMOUS

they shout:

TARGET!

Then they throw a soft ball toward the card or point to/touch it, depending on your classroom setup.

But finding it earns only **one point**.

For the full **three points**, they must say:

Meaning: extremely large

Synonym: huge

Sentence: We saw an enormous building.

Trap Cards 🦋

Include similar words:

big

enormous

wide

heavy

tall

Students therefore have to understand the **precise meaning**, not just recognize a vaguely related word.

9. 🏆 THE LAST WORD STANDING



Focus: Rapid vocabulary retrieval

Materials: Category cards

Two teams stand in two lines facing each other.

Reveal a category:

TRAVEL

Student A:

passport

Student B:

luggage

Student A:

destination

Student B:

flight

Student A:

accommodation

Continue rapidly.

Rules

✗ No repetition

✗ No more than 3 seconds

✗ No unrelated words

✗ No translation

If a student fails, they sit down.

Immediately reveal another category:

PERSONALITY

generous → shy → reliable → confident → selfish → patient...

Continue until only one student remains:

🏆 **THE LAST WORD STANDING**

Advanced Round

Don't give categories. Give **lexical restrictions**:

“Only negative personality adjectives!”

or:

“Only verbs connected with travelling!”

or:

“Only words that collocate with MAKE!”

This makes the game significantly harder than a normal category race.

10. 🏆 VOCABULARY BATTLE ROYALE



Focus: Complete vocabulary mastery

Best for: End-of-lesson review

Turn the classroom into **six battle zones**.

Every team starts with:



● **ZONE 1 — DEFINE IT**

Teacher:

Generous

Team:

“Someone who is willing to give or share with other people.”

Correct → survive.

● **ZONE 2 — MIME IT**

Student secretly receives:

EXHAUSTED

They must act it out without speaking.

Team guesses:

Exhausted!

● **ZONE 3 — CONNECT IT**

Target:

DECISION

Students have 15 seconds to produce connections:

make a decision

difficult decision

important decision

final decision

Each valid connection = 1 point.

 ZONE 4 — DON'T SAY IT

Target:

FRIGHTENED

Forbidden:

scared

afraid

fear

scary

Students must define it without using those words.

 ZONE 5 — SENTENCE TRAP

Give two sentences:

The movie was absolutely _____.

The students were _____ by the movie.

Words:

frightening / frightened

Students must choose correctly **and explain the difference**.

 ZONE 6 — VOCABULARY DUEL

Two students stand opposite each other.

Teacher gives:

HOT

First student:

BOILING!

Teacher:

SMALL

Other student:

TINY!

Teacher:

VERY TIRED

EXHAUSTED!

Teacher:

VERY ANGRY

FURIOUS!

Only **3 seconds** per answer.

 FINAL BOSS — THE ONE-WORD MASTER

Give the final two teams **one vocabulary word each**.

For example:

ACHIEVE

They have **45 seconds** to provide as many of these as possible:

- 1. Meaning**
- 2. Part of speech**
- 3. Pronunciation**
- 4. Synonym**
- 5. Antonym, if appropriate**
- 6. Collocation**
- 7. Word family**
- 8. Example sentence**
- 9. Question using the word**
- 10. Short real-life context**

For example:

achieve

verb

succeed in doing something

achieve a goal

achievement

achievable

“She worked hard to achieve her goal.”

“What would you like to achieve this year?”

The team with the deepest knowledge of its word becomes the: