



Academic English antonyms reversi

Instructions for teachers

Preparation

*Photocopy and cut out one set of 20 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 antonyms (e.g. “Biased/ Subjective” and “Objective”) are on opposite sides of the card and so can only be seen one at 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 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 opposite on the other side of the card is, e.g. guessing that “Ancient” is on the other side of “Contemporary”. 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 antonym is now displayed. They can then try to do the same with the next card, that is 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**, but the next person will mainly be converting the other way round, e.g. converting “Ancient” to “Contemporary”, 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 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.



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 20 cards with a vertical line across the middle of each one, then fold along these lines to make cards with antonyms on opposite sides.

Biased/ Subjective	Objective (adj.)
Contemporary	Ancient
Constant	Variable/ Intermittent
Expand	Contract/ Shrink/ Diminish
Agree with	Contradict
Compete	Cooperate
Civil	Military/ Religious
Create	Destroy
Artificial	Natural
A help	A hindrance
Similarities	Differences
Ambiguous	Clear/ Obvious
Approximate (adj.)	Exact/ Precise
Arbitrary/ Random	Systematic/ Logical



Assume/ Presume	Conclude
Complex/ Complicated	Straightforward
Identical/ Homogeneous	Distinct/ Diverse
Durable	Fragile
External	Internal
Finite/ Limited	Infinite