

Word Walls

Ideas for Interactive Activities

Add an Ending	The students take out their notebooks and add endings (s, ed, ing) to each of the words where appropriate.
Alphabetical Order	Depending on the number of word wall words, students can alphabetize all of them or they can alphabetize the first 20 or last 20 words.
Around the World	All the students sit in a circle (or in their desks) One student stands behind another student who is sitting. The teacher flashes them a word. Whichever child says or defines the word first will move on to the next student. The student who makes it back to his or her own desk or starting point is the winner.
Ball Toss	Put students in small groups. The leader of the group shares one thing learned about a particular word on the word wall, then toss the ball to someone in the group. That student shares something different, and so on.
Bang!	All the sight words learned are put in a box. The students sit in a circle and each take a word from the box. If they can read or define the word, they get to keep it. If they cannot, the word is returned to the box. If they pull a card with the word "Bang!" from the box, all the cards they have collected so far must be returned to the box. The child with the greatest number of cards when the game ends is the winner.
Baseball	Materials: Words at 4 different levels (from simple to more difficult). Make them on different colored cards and have the type of hit that each color represents posted somewhere that everyone can see it clearly. Designate different places in the room as 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, and homeplate. Divide the students into 2 teams. Designate one team as the home team, and the other as the visitors. Mix up the cards. The children take turns going to the homeplate. Draw out a card and let the child attempt to read or define the word. If the student can read the card correctly, he or she may move according to the type of hit. (A single: move 1 base, a double: move 2 bases, a triple: move 3 bases, and a homerun: go all the way to home plate.) Make sure that you have included some strike out cards and walk cards among the word cards. If the student is unable to read or define the word,

	it is considered an out. After 3 outs, the next team gets to "Bat". Keep the score so that everyone can see.
Basketball	Set up in the classroom as a mini basketball court. Use masking tape to create on the floor a foul line that shots will be taken from. Prepare in advance a vocabulary activity employing words that are included on the students' word wall. Prepare at least one question for each student in the class. Arrange the class into 2 to 4 teams. Ask one of the questions you prepared of the first student on the first team. If a student identifies the correct word-wall word, that student earns a point. He or she also gets a chance to double his or her score (earn two points for the team) by trying to shoot a basket. A successful shot earns that second point; there is no penalty for a missed shot. If the student does not identify the correct word-wall word, pass the question to the first player on the next team. At the end of the game, the team with the most points is declared the winning team.
Cartoon Captions	Give students a collection of comics from the Sunday paper and have them choose a strip. Tell them to cut the strip apart and glue three of the individual panels in sequence on a piece of paper. Then have the students write new captions under each of the panels or in the speech bubbles, using words from the word wall to create a story. Have students share their cartoon captions with the class.
Categories	Name a category, such as parts of speech, opposites, location, etc., and ask students to call out words from the word wall that are in the given category. Ask students to choose category topics according to the words that are on the word wall and allow them to move the words until they are in their correct categories.
Change a Letter	Students try to make new words by changing just one letter. This can also be played in teams.
Charades	Students act words from the word wall and guess which word is being acted out. Put students in teams and record scores to determine the winner.
Erasing Relay	Write two columns of words on the board that are approximately equal in difficulty. Include as many words on the board as there are children in the relay. Children are divided into 2 teams, and will stand in two lines at right angles to the chalkboard. At the signal, the first child in each line points at the first word in his respective column of words and reads or defines that word. If he or she reads or defines the word correctly, he or she is allowed to erase that word. The game is won by the side that erases all the words first.
Flashlight Word	Start off the game by turning off the lights and pointing the flashlight at a particular word on the Word Wall. The teacher calls on a student to read or define the word. When the child has read or defines the word, it is their turn to shine the flashlight on a word and call on another

	student to read or define. The children really enjoy this because they get a chance to "be the teacher."
Guess My Word Wall Word	Teacher gives clues about each word. This activity can be done in a couple of ways. The teacher gets the students to number off from 1 to 10 in their notebooks and gives clues about the word. The student then writes down what they believe the word is. The other method is to do the activity orally and let a student point to the word on the word wall.
Hot Seat	In this activity, one student is selected to come to the front of the class and take the "hot seat." The hot seat is located a few feet in front of a chalkboard, whiteboard, or chart. The student sits in a chair facing his or her classmates and with his or her back to the board or chart. The student also should have a clear view of the class word wall. The teacher or a classmate selects a word from the word wall (or from students' spelling or vocabulary lists) and writes that word on the board or chart. The student in the hot seat is unable to see the word, but it is his/her job to guess the word by asking questions that help to narrow down the possibilities. As the student narrows down the word, the questions might get more specific. Keep a tally of the number of questions/clues it takes for the student to guess the word. Which student(s) guess the word in the fewest number of clues?
Missing Word	Remove a word from the wall and maybe rearrange the remaining words. Have students figure out which word is missing. May need to give clues to help them figure out what is missing.
Mind Reader	In this activity, students are given clues to identify a mystery word that appears on the classroom word wall. The teacher selects a mystery word and then gives the students five clues for identifying the word. Each successive clue should help students narrow down their choice. As you give each clue, students should select one word from the word wall that matches the clue. For example, the mystery word is pollution. Clue 1: The mystery word is one of our word wall words. Clue 2: The mystery word has more than six letters. Clue 3: The mystery word has three syllables. Clue 4: The mystery word ends with the suffix -tion. Clue 5: The mystery word rhymes with the word solution. After you have given the five clues, have students show their responses. Which student(s) guessed the mystery word with the fewest possible clues? Each student who guesses the correct word at the earliest possible clue earns a point. Tally points at the end of the game to determine which students are the winners.
On the Back	Students work with partners and draw the word with their finger on their partner's back. When the student guesses the word, they trade places.

Peer Test	Students take turns testing each other on the spelling or meaning of each of the words.
Pictionary	Each team chooses one person to begin drawing; this position rotates with each word. The drawer chooses a word from the word wall and tries to draw pictures which suggest the word. The pictures cannot contain any numbers or letters. The teammates try to guess the word the drawing is intended to represent without the drawer talking to teammates. Use a timer to limit their time on guessing. The team that guesses the word first gets to advance and take the next turn. If none of the teams guess the word, the turn passes to whichever team should have been next.
Poem Definition	Use a word from the word wall to create a poem: Line 1: Name it. Line 2: Describe it, rename it. Line 3: Tell where it would be found. Line 4: Tell more about it. Line 5: Use emotion words to tell how you feel about this. Line 6: Explain why you used the emotion words in Line 5
Rhymes	Give students a word and ask them to identify a rhyming word from the word wall. Have students create a list of rhyming words for words on the word wall. Have them write a poem or rap using these rhyming words.
Scavenger Hunt	Use old magazines or newspapers. Students try to locate as many of the word wall words as they can, they can cut them out and paste them into their notebooks.
Sentence Frames	Use sentence frames and have students use words from the Word Wall to fill in by writing and/or discussion.
Sign Language	Have sign language pictures are available. Students use sign language to spell the word the teacher says.
Sounds Like ...	The teacher says a word that sounds like the word wall word, for instance in the case of 'are' the teacher would say "sounds like far" and the students write down or says what they think the word wall is.
Stand Up Sit Down	Teacher reads a passage with words from word wall in it. When students hear a word in the passage that is on the word wall, then students stand up. When they hear another word from the word wall, students sit down and so on.
Tick-Tac-Toe	Divide the class into two teams of X's and O's. Write words in the tic-tac-toe spaces. Team members take turns coming up and selecting a space. If the child reads or defines the word correctly, he or she may put up an X or O for his or her team. If the answer is incorrect, the other team gets to send a player to the board to try to read or define the same word. An easy alternative to save time and keep the game moving is to have several tic-tac-toe boards made up with words ahead of time on overhead transparencies. Another alternative is to give each child a blank copy of the tic tac toe board, and put the list of words on the board. The children can place the words wherever they want to on their board. As the teacher calls the words out, she will have to tell the children if the word

	is an X word or an O word. The first child to get tic-tac-toe is the winner.
Who Wants to Read Like a Millionaire?	Divide the class into two teams. Using index cards prepared with the sight words, give each student a chance to read or define a word (going back and forth from team to team). The student may use a lifeline and call a friend in the classroom to help them read the word.
Word Pyramid	Students write the word wall word first, the second line write two antonyms, and the third line write three synonyms. On line four, students add four describing words. On line five they use the word in a sentence.
Word Sorts	Write 10-15 words on large index cards and place in a pocket chart. Have students write these words on separate smaller cards or papers at their desks. Have students sort the words into different piles depending on some features certain words share. Students may sort all words that begin with a certain sound, have a certain vowel sound, contain a certain blend or digraph, etc.
Word Wall Snap	The class forms 2 lines. The teacher is in front of the 2 lines. The teacher points to a word wall (or uses the word wall cards), the first student to say the definition of the word remains in front of the line. The other student goes to the back of the line and the 2 students in front continue on.
Word Wall Stories	Students use as many of the word wall words as they can to write a story.
WORDO	In this activity, the students write down a stated number of word wall words in boxes. The teacher then randomly states the names of some of the word wall words. As she says the words, the students underline the word or put a chip over the word. The first one to have their words read out by the teacher first is the winner. Just like BINGO.