

FOUR IN A ROW!

Players

two teams with two to six players in each team

Materials

one game sheet and one *Topics ticklist* per game;
a pen/pencil; coloured pens

Before starting

Photocopy one game sheet per game and cut along the dotted line to produce one word grid and one *Topics ticklist*.

How to play

The aim of the game is to win a line – vertical, horizontal or diagonal – of four connected circles, before the other team does. Toss a coin to decide which team goes first. At the start of each turn, teams must choose a word or phrase on the word grid and a topic from the *Topics ticklist*. They then make a sentence related to this topic which includes the word or phrase from the word grid, e.g. *Cities* → *internship* = *Cities are full of companies offering internships*. If the opposing team agrees that the sentence is acceptable and exemplifies the meaning of the word or phrase, the team that made the sentence wins the circle and colours it in with the team's colour. The topic on the *Topics ticklist* is ticked off and cannot be used again by either team until all the topics have been used once (twice or up to five times for a longer game). If the sentence is incorrect, then both the topic and circle remain available. It is then the turn of the opposing team.

The game continues until one team gets four circles in a row on the word grid or all the words have been coloured in. If this happens, the team with the most circles wins.

When is a sentence 'acceptable'?

The teacher and the students themselves can decide how strict to be with the language produced – whether 100% grammatical accuracy is required, or whether clearly communicated meaning is enough. For example, the sentence *A good trainee need to be open-minded to learn well* contains a grammatical mistake (**need**) but still expresses the meaning of *trainee* clearly, so it could be acceptable for students at a lower level. For stronger students, the teacher could demand 100% accuracy from the class in their sentences.

An example of a sentence which is not acceptable as a valid answer would be *I wouldn't like to be a trainee*, because it does not exemplify the meaning of the word *trainee*. (In this case the sentence *I wouldn't like to be a trainee because they don't earn much* would better exemplify the meaning of *trainee*.)

Before students start the game, the teacher could put the following examples on the board to demonstrate how to use the language and topics to make sentences.

Cities → internship = *Cities are full of companies offering internships*.

Crime → bland = *The food in prison might be bland*.

Money and wealth → drop out = *If you drop out of school, it could be hard to earn money*.

Travel → go halves on = *When I travelled with my friend, we went halves on petrol*.

Personalities → trainee = *A good trainee needs to be open-minded to learn well*.

TIP

Teams can 'block' their opponent by winning the circles that the other team needs to make a row of four.

Versions of the game

- **Spoken or written:** The teacher can specify if the sentences are to be spoken or written, depending on what students need most practice of. If players write sentences on the whiteboard or on a piece of paper, the game will take longer.
- **It must be true:** The teacher can specify that the sentences must, wherever possible, be true for at least one member of the team.
- **Bottom to top:** Students must begin on the bottom row and can only win circles in higher rows that are above circles which have already been won.
- **You give me the topic:** Team B chooses the topic for Team A and vice versa, either before or after the circle is chosen.

Notes

This game revises a range of grammar and vocabulary from Student's Book 8, Units 9–12; the *Topics ticklist* covers topics in the Student's Book up to and including Unit 12.

Follow-up activity

If students played the speaking version of the game, ask them to remember as many of the sentences as they can and write them down.

break up	carbon neutral	go halves on	pay damages	charged with	trainee
organic	gluten-free	internship	low in (fat)	sustainable	produce (n)
critical thinking	hand in	homemade	bland	on the house	offence
networking	social skills	ready meal	freshly baked	leadership	in season
aspirations	imprisonment	shoplifting	catch up	community service	bound for
found guilty	scholarship	high in (sugar)	free-range	itinerary	fatty
self-catering	theft	sentence (v)	staycation	petty crime	drop out