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Reading Games That Beat the Traps

25 interactive games for Grades 3, 4, and 5

How wrong answers are built, why they are wrong, and the most-tested reading skills

SAMPLE

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Contents

Every game includes teacher instructions, an example round, printable cards, boards, and recording sheets, and a complete answer key. Passages are original and written for grades 3-5 readers.

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Example Round

Here is one full round, so students see exactly what to say and do.

SAY: "Race Card 1. Passage C. The question is: What does 'his heart raced like a drum' mean? Teams, find the trap choice and circle it. Go."

DO: Team Blue's spotter rings the bell and circles choice B: "His heart was shaped like a drum."

STUDENT (spotter, reading the passage): "That is the trap. It is 'wrong meaning.' The phrase 'raced like a drum' is a simile. It means his heart beat fast. The answer gives the words the wrong meaning, like his heart was really a drum."

DO: The teacher checks the answer key. Choice B is the trap and the label is correct. Team Blue earns 1 point.

Why this works: The race makes finding and naming the trap fast and fun, and it repeats the five labels so students say the WAY out loud.

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Middle

BOTH texts say it.

Stay in the middle!

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Teacher Instructions

Setup (5 minutes)

1. Print and cut the 20 craft cards and the 4 trap cards.
2. Lay the 5 booth mats in a row on the table, face up and in order A, B, C, D, E. Put the trash mat at the end of the row.
3. Give each team a packet of 5 craft cards face down. Keep the passage sheet face down until a team asks for it.
4. Give each team a recording sheet. One student writes, one student holds the cards, the rest talk.

The one rule: the right booth earns 1 point. A reason that says what the author wanted the reader to notice, hear, feel, picture, or find fast earns 1 more point.

Play (15 minutes)

1. **Draw.** A team takes the top card and reads it out loud to the team.
2. **Name the move.** The team says the craft move out loud. Example: "That is onomatopoeia."
3. **Choose a booth.** The team picks a booth mat and places the card on it.
4. **Give the purpose.** A different student says why. Example: "The author wants us to hear the bees right there on the step."
5. **Fix a mistake out loud.** If the team wants to move the card, one teammate must first say a better reason than the reason that was already given. That is the whole rule for changing your mind.
6. **Check.** When the packet is gone, the team checks itself with the answer key and writes the correct booth next to any card it missed.

Trap cards

Four cards in the deck have the wrong craft move name printed on them. Any team that spots a wrong label says "wrong label" out loud, drops the card in the trash mat, and names the real craft move. A team that simply sorts a trap card to a booth does not earn the purpose point for that card.

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Scoring

- 1 point for the correct booth.
- 1 extra point for a reason that gives the author's purpose and not just the name of the device. A reason such as "it is a simile" earns 0 extra points.
- 1 extra point for each trap card a team sends to the trash mat with the correct real craft move.

How to win

Highest total wins. If two teams tie, the tie goes to the team that can name the craft move for the most cards. If that ties too, the team that can say the author's purpose for the most cards wins. No extra round is needed.

Teacher moves that keep it fast

- Say "why here" every time a team names a device. The name is free. The purpose is the point.
- When a team is wrong, do not give the answer. Ask: "Is that true somewhere else in the passage?" That one question fixes most wrong answers.
- Keep a public tally of purpose points, not only booth points, so the reason stays the target.

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Printable: Key Cards, page 1 of 6 (KA1 to KA3, KB1 to KB3)

Blue keys are real lines from the passage. Red keys are statements to test against the passage. One key in every group of three clicks.

KEY KA1

QUOTE

Lines 4 to 7: "The pool keeps its water because seawater keeps seeping in / through the sand and through cracks in the rock. Each new tide / brings different water, so a tide pool is never the same pool / twice in one week."

KEY KA2

QUOTE

Lines 1 to 3: "A tide pool is a small pool of seawater left behind when the / ocean tide goes out. A pool can be as big as a bathtub or as small / as a dinner plate. You find them in rocky places along the coast."

KEY KA3

CHECK THIS

"Each tide brings the same water back, so a tide pool stays exactly the same all week."

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KEY KB1

QUOTE

Line 16: "The biggest danger is not heat. It is losing too much water."

KEY KB2

QUOTE

Lines 8 to 11: "Life in a tide pool has to survive a lot. The sun heats the / water, the water cools it fast, and the pool loses water to the / air. An animal that is comfortable in the wide ocean can be in / danger in a pool only a few feet across."

KEY KB3

QUOTE

Lines 12 to 14: "A mussel clamps its two shells shut to hold water inside, and a / sea star presses flat against the rock so the waves cannot lift / it."

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