

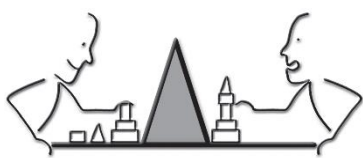
Barrier Games for Maths

Barrier games can be used to reinforce language and learning. They can help develop shared attention, listening skills, following instruction, co-operation, motivation and turn-taking. In Maths, barrier games could be used to reinforce vocabulary and concepts such as:

- Money
- Shape and size
- Odds and evens
- Maths symbols
- Directional and positional language

How to play:

Barrier games are played in a similar way to the game of *Battleships*. Each student has an identical game board/base board, for instance an A4 sheet with 4 – 8 squares on with each square a distinct colour.



A barrier (this could be a book, piece of card or small screen) is then placed between the two mats, so the students cannot see each other's game board.

For instance, if the game board has pre-printed shapes, the students need coloured counters or cubes, one student will say '*Place the yellow counter/cube on circle*'; both students do this. When all the shapes have been covered, the barrier is removed and the students compare game boards, which should have the same coloured cubes on each shape.



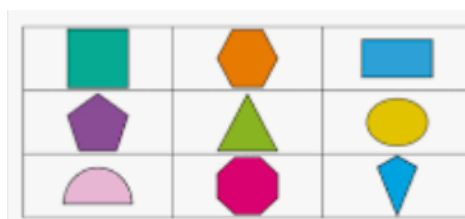
Using barrier games

The possibilities for barrier games to develop maths skills and vocabulary are endless. Some ways to use them include:

To develop skills in naming shapes:

Each child has a game board divided into 6 boxes. One child places a 3-D shape onto a box on the game board while describing to a partner what he/she is doing, e.g., '*Put a yellow hexagon in the centre box*'. The students take turns doing this until all boxes are covered, then they take the barrier away and compare game boards. Alternatively, one student can give all the instructions, until the board is covered, then they can swap roles.

This can be extended by having one student draw, rather than place, a shape in each box on the game board while describing to a partner what they are doing. For example, '*Draw an equilateral triangle in the centre box.... draw a parallelogram in the box below the equilateral triangle*', and so on. Measurements can be included in instructions to make this more challenging. For example, '*Draw a square with a perimeter of 12cm in the centre box*'.



To develop skills in naming coins/adding coin amounts:

To develop recognition and naming of coins, use a pre-printed base board or (stick coins onto a base board). One student places a coin onto a game board while describing to a partner what they are doing, e.g., *'Place the 5p coin onto the top right box'*. This can be extended to develop skills in adding coin amounts by students placing more than one coin in each space on the game board. For example, *'Place two coins that equal twenty pence on the centre box'*.

To develop skills in reading and writing numerals:

One student places a numeral card onto a game board while describing to a partner what they are doing, e.g., *'I am placing the number 6 card onto the bottom left box'*. The other student copies this action. This activity can be extended to reading and writing three/four/five-digit numbers: One student writes a number in each space on the game board while describing to a partner what they are doing. For example, *'Write the number 179 in the centre square. Write 258 in the square to the left of 179'*, and so on.

To develop skills in reading analogue and digital times:

The teacher prepares a board with a blank digital or analogue clock in each box. One student fills in a time on each clock on the game board while describing to a partner what they are doing. For example, *'Show half past two in the clock in the centre box'*; *'Show ten o'clock on the clock below half past two'*, and so on.

To develop skills in naming fractional parts:

The teacher prepares a board with a shape (divided into equal parts) in each box. One student shades in a fraction of each shape while describing to a partner what they are doing. For example, *'Shade in one-third of the circle in the top left box'*.

To develop skills in drawing and naming angle measures:

One student uses a protractor to draw an angle in each space on the board while describing to a partner what they are doing. For example, *'Draw and label an acute angle that measures 47° in the centre box.... draw and label a straight angle to the right of the acute angle'*, and so on.

Useful References and Links

McLachlan, H. & Elks, L. (2012). *Language Builders*. Elklan. (see p. 78 of this edition)
[ELKLAN Language builders book](#)

SEND OAP Toolkit resources

[Writing: Resources](#)

Further general information about barrier games

www.talkingmatters.com.au

[Resources for Barrier Games / Talking Matters, Adelaide, South Australia](#)