

## Eat the Teacher (or the pupil)

**Eat the Teacher** is a gameboard which is designed to be used by two players. One plays the teacher (left) and the other is the learner (right). These games are particularly useful for developing an awareness of syllables or phonemes (individual sounds).

For these games, you will need to use one counter, which will represent your dragon. Place it on the central space (in front of the dragon in the cave) at the beginning of the game. The pupil goes first, and moves towards the teacher (and then vice versa). The dragon counter is moved towards the opposite person. The game ends when one player has been eaten (the counter has reached the other player), or you may wish to finish at the end of a pack, or after a particular period of time. In this case, the winner is the one who is furthest away from being eaten.

You'll also need sets of picture materials. See below for suggestions for each of the main games. You can access these materials through The Learning Staircase, or you may have existing picture materials which would be suitable.

### Syllable Awareness

It is important for learners to be able to break words into auditory syllables. Here we are not dealing with the (rather complex) set of rules for breaking written words into chunks. We are talking about hearing the 'beats' in a word.

Many learners have difficulty with this aspect. The most common error for 'remember' is 'rember'. This error shows that the learner is not 'hearing' the middle syllable. Whatever our level of literacy knowledge, we cannot effectively tackle unknown longer words if we can't identify how many 'beats' or syllables there are in that word.

To teach this aspect in the first place, show the learner a picture and explain the concept of syllables. Get the learner to hold his hand under his chin, so that the chin touches the hand when the word is spoken. The number of times the chin touches the hand is the number of syllables in that word. Try it for yourself with a word like 'elephant' and you'll see how easy it is. Remind your learner to check syllables in this way when playing the syllables game.

You will need a set of picture cards. There is a Syllable Set, complete with more extensive information at [www.stepsweb.com/support](http://www.stepsweb.com/support). This gives you a set of picture cards, which you can print out for yourself, plus detailed background information and instructions.

### **Syllable Game Instructions**

You will need a counter to represent the dragon and a set of syllable picture cards. This is a 2-player game.

1. Place the counter on the space in front of the dragon.
2. Place the cards face down in front of the players.
3. Decide who is going first. That player turns over the top card and decides how many syllables it has. The player then moves the counter that number of spaces towards their opponent. Example: Player 1 turns over the 'elephant' card. 'Elephant' has three syllables so the player moves the counter three spaces towards his/her opponent.
4. Player 2 then has a turn and does the same.

The counter will move backwards and forwards towards each of the players. When it gets to one of the players, the other one has won. In other words, when the dragon gets to the teacher, it means the teacher has been 'eaten'.

Depending on the cards, it may take a while for the counter to get to one of the players. One alternative is to allocate a time-frame (i.e. 5 minutes) to the game. Whoever the counter is closest to at the end of the time-frame has been 'eaten'.

### **Phoneme Games**

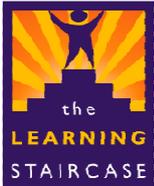
You will need a set of picture cards with shorter words, i.e. single syllable words. The Rhyme Set is suitable for this.

1. Place the counter as above and the picture set face downwards.
2. The game instructions are the same as for the syllables game. However, in this case, you will be using the number of sounds in a word. Example: Picture card – thumb. Sounds are: th – u – mb (3 sounds)

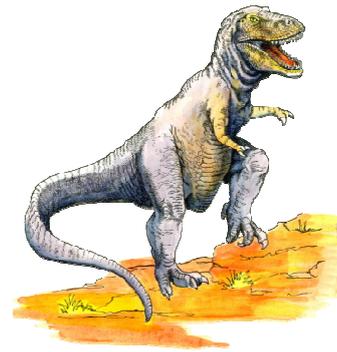


## Other Game Options

You can adapt the board for other games. One idea would be to use vocabulary cards or quiz cards and simply write a number on each card (1 – 5). When the learner defines a word or answers the question correctly, they get to move the dragon counter the corresponding number of spaces.



**Have fun!**



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