

# eslactive

## Fishbowl

Tags: [advanced](#), [intermediate](#), [warmer](#)

The Fishbowl ESL game is a guessing game in which students use descriptions, then actions, and finally single words as clues.

 6+  20-30 mins  Bowl (or similar); Timer

### Setup

Students play this game in two teams of three to six. If you have more than twelve students, divide the class into multiple groups to play.

Each student writes two or three items to be guessed, on separate small pieces of paper. These items could be vocabulary words, famous people/places, tv shows or movies, quotes – almost anything as long as the other students will definitely recognise it!

The students fold their papers up and put them all in the bowl. The students sit in a circle, each team forming one half of the circle.

### Game

1. The game consists of three rounds. In each round, the teams take turns playing.
2. The team playing has two minutes to guess as many of the items as possible, with the team members taking turns to take an item from the bowl and give clues to their teammates. Each correct guess is worth one point. Once an item has been used, it is put to the side for the rest of the round, not back in the bowl.
3. In the first round, the students simply describe the items (as in [Articulate](#)). If, when both of the teams have had their go, there are any items remaining in the bowl, open them and read them out. This is because they may be used in subsequent rounds.

4. Fold all the items and put them back in the bowl, ready for the second round. In this round, students have to act, making no sounds (as in [Charades](#)). The process followed in the first round is repeated.
5. In the final round, students can only say one word as a clue (as in [Password](#)). This sounds difficult but they should have a good idea of the items in the bowl by now!
6. Total the scores for all rounds. The team with the most points wins.

**Note:** Depending on the age/level/experience of your players, you may want to allow zero or one passes per round. If you allow too many you'll quickly run out of items!

### Target Language

The Fishbowl ESL game is a great extended warmer or time-filler for a more relaxed class. It works best with higher intermediate or advanced students.

If you're looking for another long game suitable for those end-of-term or post-exam classes, [Kings Cup](#) is also a great option.