

eslactive

Hot Seat

Tags: [advanced](#), [beginner](#), [grammar](#), [intermediate](#), [kids](#), [vocabulary](#), [warmer](#)

Rather than one specific activity, the Hot Seat ESL game (or Backs To The Board) is a very versatile set-up used for many different guessing games.

 1+  10-20 mins

 Internet **or** Prepared Words; Projector **or** Board and Chalk/Markers

Setup

You will need some suitable vocabulary words for the students to guess. If you have an Internet connection and a projector, you can simply use our [interactive online games](#). If not, you will need to prepare a list of words to write/project on the board.

Divide your class into two, three, or four teams.

Game

If you have a projector (and an Internet connection or prepared slideshow of vocabulary), you can play the **Timed** version, where teams take turns guessing against the clock. This has the advantage that students can't listen to/watch the other team(s), and there is never an issue of which team said the word first.

However there is also the option of playing **Head-to-Head**, which is great when you don't have a projector or countdown timer, or when you'd just prefer that all the students played at once. Here all the teams describe/act and guess at the same time, so it's usually better with only two teams!

1. One student/one student from each team sits facing away from the board.
2. Write/project a vocabulary word on the board. The rest of the team have to make the student guess the word with appropriate clues for the game (e.g. describing/ acting).

3. If you're playing the Timed version, teams are awarded one point for each correct guess in thirty seconds. If you're playing the Head-to-Head version, the student who guesses correctly first wins a point for their team.
4. Repeat with other words and different students in the hot seat(s) for future rounds. The team with the most points at the end wins.

Just some of the different guessing games you can play using this setup are: [Heads Up](#), [Reverse Charades](#), [Who Am I](#), [Where Am I](#), [Things They Might Say](#), [Consequences](#) and [What Just Happened](#). Click on one of the links for more details.

Target Language

Because of the variety of different games you can play, you can use the Hot Seat setup with any class, beginner, intermediate or advanced. And more often than not, students love it! It's a great option for a warmer, to review recently learned vocabulary, and some types of grammar.