MAKE SENSE!
SENTENCE BUILDER

Get more out of your Solitaire Syntax. Three more games.



Scramble



Cuckoo



The Grid Game

Here is your card “cheat sheet” to show what elements can go beside what other elements. However, just saying the sentence out loud will give English learners an idea whether the sequence, or syntax, makes sense.

Note: Adult, native English speakers are the most rule-bound and the most fearful of making mistakes! Younger English learners feel free to experiment, play faster and enjoy themselves more.

All the logical element cards will fit together grammatically, despite the content sounding unlikely, crazy or funny. Some sequences will fail the “appropriateness” or “standard convention” test, but all sequences depicted here should be grammatically correct.

WHY	*WHO*	*WHAT*	*DETAIL*	*WHERE*	*WHEN*	*WHY*	*RESULT*	
WHO	*WHAT*	*DETAIL*	*HOW*	*WHEN*	*WHERE*	*WHY*	*RESULT*	
WHO	*DETAIL*	*WHAT*	*HOW*	*WHERE*	*WHEN*	*WHY*	*RESULT*	
DETAIL	*WHO*	*HOW*	*WHAT*	*WHEN*	*WHERE*	*WHY*	*RESULT*	
WHEN	*WHERE*	*WHO*	*DETAIL*	*WHAT*	*HOW*	*WHY*	*RESULT*	
WHERE	*WHEN*	*DETAIL*	*WHO*	*HOW*	*WHAT*	*WHY*	*RESULT*	
WHY	*WHO*	*DETAIL*	*WHAT*	*HOW*	*WHEN*	*WHERE*	*RESULT*	
HOW	*WHERE*	*WHEN*	*WHO*	*DETAIL*	*WHAT*	*WHY*	*RESULT*	
PLUS	*DETAIL*	*WHO*	*HOW*	*WHAT*	*WHEN*	*WHERE*	*WHY*	*RESULT*
PLUS	*WHO*	*DETAIL*	*HOW*	*WHAT*	*WHEN*	*WHY*	*RESULT*	*WHERE*

Scramble

Cooperative, for 2 or 3 players. Adjust difficulty levels by using fewer logical elements and shorter, longer or no time limits.

Rules

1. Count out these logical elements to assemble a deck of 50 cards for beginners.:

10 WHO	10 WHAT	10 WHEN	10 WHERE	10 RESULTS

2. Shuffle the deck very, very well.
3. Deal out 7 cards to each player.
4. Players take turns placing 1 card at a time to form the first sentence; any fragment MUST MAKE SENSE! (See the Card Cheat Sheet).
5. Only one logical element may appear in a sentence.
6. One card placed is worth 1 point; any player may challenge the card placed as ungrammatical and insist on recall; the player at fault misses that turn.
7. Players replace every card played from their hand with a draw of one card from the deck; you always have 7 in your hand.
8. When all cards are played, the game is finished and the player with the most points wins.

Speaking Option: Scramble can conclude with oral delivery of sentences formed, with the tutor correcting the pausing, stress, intonation or pronunciation.

Team Option: To make this more cooperative, players at a table-for-three can help each other and play against other tables in a given time frame. The table that finishes first with the most *correct sentences* is the winner.

Cuckoo

Cuckoo livens things up with a little chance added to skill, adding vertical sentence composition, competitive scoring and a chance to move around when learners have been sitting too long. Each player is attempting to make the biggest crossword puzzle spread of sentences. Cuckoo is best with three players.

Rules

1. Count out these logical elements to assemble a deck of 63 cards:

8 WHO	8 WHERE	6 HOW	3 PLUS
8 WHAT	8 WHY	6 DETAILS	
8 WHEN	8 RESULTS		

1. Shuffle the deck very well.
2. You will need as many dice as are players. Die with a 4-dot limit are best, or use a regular die where *any number above 4 counts as just 4*.



3. Players stand up around a table, as you will be moving around (good to stretch the legs mid-class).
4. The space in front of them at their starting point is where they will build their own spread.
5. Deal out 7 cards to each player.
6. Each player rolls the die to determine how many cards may be played on their own spread.



7. All cards must be connected either horizontally or vertically, and all fragments must MAKE SENSE! (See the Card Cheat Sheet).
8. Award yourself 2 points or pick up 2 coins for every card played on your own spread.
9. Cards that cannot be played are carried to the neighbour's spread. Roll the die again and play that number of cards on your neighbour's spread.
10. Award yourself 1 point or pick up 1 coin for every card played on any neighbour's spread.
11. Continue to the next spread, roll the die and play.
12. When your cards are all played, you get dealt a new hand of 7 cards and move to the next position to roll and play.
13. Continue moving around the table playing as many cards as you can, grammatically, on each spread in turn.
14. Returning to your own spread, you always award 2 points for cards played on your own spread.
15. The game is over when no one has any cards.
16. The person with the most points or coins wins.

The Grid Game

The Grid Game is for advanced students and serious competitors. The Grid deck requires 88 cards to be played as a solid block, like a brick wall, with all cards being readable as part of a sentence in BOTH directions. The goal is to have no empty slots. The trick to this is making sure no card placed in one stream (horizontal or vertical) blocks a sentence from forming in the other direction. However, attention flags. So, to increase attention, the rules penalize any player making a bad play and encourage all players to spot them.

This is game is played very quietly in our experience. It takes about 50 minutes. This game is best played with three people.



Best Practices

It slows down the game, but each move can be read aloud be in the direction intended, then checked in the opposite direction as well.

Scores should be calculated and recorded after every move.

Rules

1. Assemble a deck of 88 cards. Count out these logical elements:

12 WHO	12 WHAT	12 WHEN	12 WHERE
10 WHY	10 RESULTS	8 HOW	8 DETAILS
4 PLUS			

2. Shuffle the deck very well (you might have to divide it in two).
3. Deal out 7 cards to each player.
4. Players take turns placing one card at a time to form sentences either vertically or horizontally, but they must be connected.
5. Each played card must be immediately replaced from the deck; a player must always have seven cards.
6. Any fragment MUST make sense as far as it goes! (See the Card Cheat Sheet)

7. Here is what makes the Grid Game harder: both directions (horizontal and vertical) must be checked by other players before the next move, **to make sure it is still possible to form a 'legal' sentence in BOTH directions**. 'Legal' means a WHO must be followed somewhere by a WHAT.

8. Any move that prevents a legal sentence being formed in the other direction can be called out by another player, and the card must be removed. The player of that card loses that turn.

9. To make things easier however, more than one logical element may sometimes appear in a sentence, if grammatical. For example, two WHENs (On Friday night / after you arrived at my place), two WHEREs (On the fifth floor / in the museum), or two DETAILs (My evil twin / / Jackie Chan / who is married to my sister) are all acceptable. In all other cases, two cards of the same type may not appear next to each other, with the exception of RESULTs when they are in different sentences.

10. SCORING: Scores per move are calculated by how many cards your played card touches. Good players can earn up to four points in a single play! If your played card touches 1 other card, you get 1 point, touches two other cards, 2 points, etc. The winner is the person with the highest number of points.

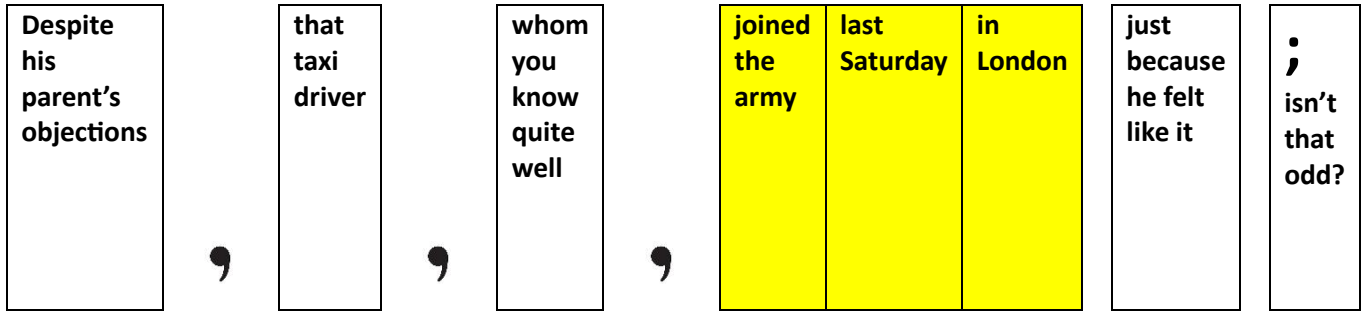
ADVICE FOR ALL GAMES

a. If working with young students or Beginner English, start with the "legal sentence" structure (WHO did WHAT) and add elements as students are comfortable.
b. While playing, learners will rehearse possible sentences mentally before placing their card. Encourage the use of reflective learning to edit for appropriateness; read the sentence out loud.
c. Students should NOT be encouraged to adopt teacher or tutor preferences, but rather to try different beginnings, endings. Re-arranging will yield the greatest variety of possible structures.
d. Check whether a player has put more than three modifying cards (HOW, WHY, WHEN, WHERE) between a WHO and a WHAT. This is likely an awkward structure, even in written form, and needs to be re-arranged.
e. Enforce rewarding players for pointing out others' violations of grammar or exacting a missed turn policy for players who make a 'bad move'.

FOCUS ON SPEAKING AND/OR PUNCTUATION

For speaking or punctuation skills, separate cards (by an inch) where one would pause in the normal delivery of a complex or cumulative sentence. Push the other cards tight together to show smooth delivery. Ask students to read the sentence according to the separations.

Have a discussion of where commas would occur. Pauses are indicated by separation.



A Guide to the Logical Building Blocks

1. A legal sentence is a **WHO** and a **WHAT**. They are equivalent to Subject and Verb Phrase.
   Jackie Chan / asked for my phone number.

2. DETAIL	**Modifies the WHO**. Two kinds: a. Can go before or after the WHO *(**your evil twin,** Brad Pitt)* b. Can go only after the WHO *(Brad Pitt, **who lives down the street**)*
3. HOW	**Modifies the WHAT**. Three kinds: a. Can go at the head of the sentence *(**With regret,** the Olympic athlete)* *b.* Almost all "ly" should go before the WHAT (***foolishly** / stole my cell phone).* There are exceptions. *c.* Can go after the WHAT *(entered the talent contest **unwillingly**)*
4. WHEN	**Modifies the WHAT.** It can be a time *(**last Saturday**)* or an occasion *(**when you were sick**)* a. Can go at the *head of the sentence* b. Can go *after the verb*
5. WHERE	**Modifies multiple elements, depending on the preposition selected.** a. Modifies the **WHAT** *(made a speech / **in Paris**)* b. Modifies the **WHO** *after the WHO (The General / **from Paris**)* c. Modifies the **RESULT sometimes** *(so we fled the country / **to Paris**).*
6. WHY	**Modifies the WHAT (motive)** a. Can go *after the WHAT (made a speech / **to impress us all**)* b. Can go at the *head of the sentence (**To make things worse, …**)*
7. RESULT	**Describes the outcome or asks a question.** *a.* Almost always the last card *(**but no one really cared / and why should that matter?**)* b. The exception is a WHERE that could follow it to conclude the sentence. (***and no one ever mentioned it again** / **at the club***)
8. PLUS	**Provides a clause to head the entire sentence**. *(**It is not true that** / King Charles / stole my cell phone)*