

**TITLE:** The Dictionary Game

**GRADE LEVEL/SUBJECT:** 4-12

The game is ideal for middle and high school students. It can be used in any subject area (Social Studies and Science are the best)

**OVERVIEW:** The Dictionary Game (also called Balderdash) is an activity used to introduce new vocabulary words from content areas. In order for the game to work, all students playing the game must be unfamiliar with the definition of the word being used.

**PURPOSE:** Learning new vocabulary words can be a tedious and boring process, but it's also a necessary activity. This game is one way to take the "boring" out of the process. When learning is fun, students remember what they have learned.

**OBJECTIVE(s):** Students will learn new vocabulary words that are to be used in an upcoming unit. Students will also practice writing in a style different from any others they have tried (dictionary style).

**RESOURCES/MATERIALS:**

The words and their definitions

Dictionary

KleenSlate Dry Erase Paddles /with marker and eraser

**ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES:**

(how to play the game)

1. The teacher chooses a word that no student can define.
2. Each student (or group of students if teacher chooses to play in teams) will write a made-up definition for the word in question on their KleenSlate paddle and the teacher will write the real definition on his or her Paddle Board.
3. All definitions are held up and read by teacher. Then instruct each student to vote for the definition that they believe is correct when the teacher reads them through the second time.
4. Points are scored in two ways:
  - a. someone votes for your definition as the correct one (one point per vote).
  - b. you vote for the correct definition.
5. The winner is the student with the most points.

**TYING IT ALL TOGETHER:** The game is the most fun when the players get creative and humorous with their made-up definitions. The teacher should model writing definitions so that students can see how to do it.

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