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# **The Effect of Educational Cards in Teaching EFL for Iraqi Slow Learners at College of Physical Education and Sciences Sport for Women**

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## **Abstract**

English teacher has challenged of meeting slow learners needs because a slow learner is one who cannot learn at an average rate from the instructional resources, texts, workbooks, and learning materials that are designed for the majority of students in the classroom. These students need special instructional pacing, corrective instruction, frequent feedback, and modified materials. Thus, the current research aims at investigates experimentally the effect of education cards in teaching English foreign language for slow learners at College of Physical Education and Science Sport for Women. It is hypothesized that there is no statistical significant differences between the experimental group who taught English by educational cards and control group who taught according the traditional textbook in students' achievement. Two groups of slow students are chosen to fulfill the aim of the research, and both groups are adopted the pre and post tests. After three months of experiment,



the results have analyzed statistically. It has been found out that there is significant difference between the two groups in the students' achievement of English. Finally, College of Education and Sciences Sports is recommended to use educational cards in teaching English and it should pay more attention to slow learners.

### تأثير البطاقات التعليمية في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية لبطيئ التعلم لطالبات التربية البدنية وعلوم الرياضة للبنات

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#### المستخلص

من التحديات التي تواجه المدرس هو الالتقاء باحتياجات الطلبة بطئ التعلم. لان بطئ التعلم هو الطالب الذي لا يستطيع ان يكون ضمن الاغلبية الطلبة في الصف لانه يحتاج لاضافات ومواد اكثر للتعلم لذلك ان هذا البحث يحاول البحث بطريقة تجريبية تأثير البطاقات التعليمية في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية للطالبات بطئ التعلم في كلية التربية البدنية وعلوم الرياضة للبنات. افترض البحث عدم وجود فروق احصائية لدى عيني البحث التي تدرس احدها بالبطاقات التعليمية والاخرى بالطريقة التقليدية للتدريس. طبق الاختبار القبلي لغرض اختيار مجموعتي البحث وبعد فترة ثلاثة اشهر من التجربة اختبروا. تم تحليل النتائج وظهرت فروق احصائية بين المجموعتين وهذا يعني ان استخدام البطاقات التعليمية اكثر تأثيرا من الطريقة التقليدية في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية للطالبات بطئ التعلم واوصى البحث بالتدريس بهذه الاسلوب في الكلية.

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## Section 1 - Introduction

### 1.1 The problem of the research

According to Borah (2013), students with below average cognitive abilities, whom it cannot term as disabled, are called slow learners. In a Critical Thinking class the teacher aims at ensuring that learning takes place. Learning is understood as coming about through experience. While fast learners will move faster than moderate learners, a slow learner may easily be ignored in a class by the teacher. Borah (2013) states that slow learners are normal students but the problem is that they are simply not interested in studying under traditionally accepted system of education. What teachers ought to know is that slow learners can learn all that is required in their course as long as they put an extra effort to help them. Teachers must therefore be innovative in course management to facilitate learning of slow learners as well as moderate and fast learners (Borah,2013:139-143).

A student may fail to excel in some classes or in some subjects but that does not imply that they are slow learners. What ought to be acknowledged is that slow learners exist in University classrooms. Several students in a class fall under this category, but most teachers ignored them which worsens the situation (Claypool,2008: 432).

To avoid falling into errors where students who have other learning problems are classified as slow learners, scholars have compiled specific traits of slow learners. There are five

characteristics of slow learners. Firstly, slow learners are recurrently immature in their relation with others in school and do poorly in school. Secondly, they cannot do multifaceted or complex problems and work very slowly. Thirdly, slow learners lose track of time and cannot convey what they have learned from one task to another. Fourthly, they do not easily master skills that are academic in nature such as the times tables or spelling rules. Finally, slow learners exhibit an inability to have long-term goals. It ought to be noted here that each learner is unique and hence the characteristics offered by Borah above do not necessarily appear in all slow learners in equal way (Gadamer,2004:122).

In educational studies, the term slow learner and many other labels used to identify students who are seen as learning differently or having learning difficulties comes from a widespread institutional phenomenon Graham and Slee (2008:85) identify as follows: “under the sustained and combined influence of the medical and psychological disciplines, teachers and education administrators have become used to thinking in terms of the norm and categorizing educational endeavor according to abstract notions of intelligence”.

Under this medical-psychological rubric of normalization and exceptionality, the slow learner label has a variety of meanings. Previously, slow learner was an available general term to refer to any students who are seen as struggling with curriculum as well a more specific term used to describe students who are thought to be the

largest subgroup of persons who fell in to the category we now call mild to moderately intellectually disabled (Reynolds & Fletcher-Janzen, 2006:321).

## **1.2 The Aims of the Research**

The research aims at investigate experimentally the effect of educational cards in teaching EFL for Iraqi slow learners at College of Physical Education and Science Sports for Women.

## **1.3 The Hypothesis of the Research**

There is no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group, which is taught English by using (educational cards) and the control group which is taught by using the traditional method.

## **1.4 Limits of the Research**

The research is limited to:

1. College of Physical Education and Sciences Sports for Women at the academic year 2016-2017.
- 2-Slow learners at first year stage students are concerned of the research.
- 3- Educational cards are focused of the research.

## **1.5 Definitions for Basic Terms**

### **1.5.1 Educational Cards**

Richards & Schmidt (2002:204) define educational cards as “a card with words, sentences, or pictures on it, used as an aid or cue in a language lesson”.

### **1.5.2 Slow Learners**

The slow learners often are used to frame students whose Intelligence Quotients the low average level I.Q. score of between 75 and 90(King, 2006: 2-3).

But it is difficult for teachers and instructors to measure the I.Q of their students therefore the best definitions for slow learners is a term used to identify students who are seen as learning differently or having learning difficulties comes from a widespread institutional phenomenon (Williamson & Paul, 2012: 93).

Muppudathi (2014: 98-99) defines a slow learner as a student with the ability to acquire all necessary academic skills, at a depth and rate below that of the average student.

### **1.5.3 College of Physical Education and Sciences Sport for Women**

It is interested in sports and games. The students in this college learn the basic principles, techniques, rules and training in many games that lead them to be players, trainers and teachers in specific game or physical activities as well.

### **1.6 The Procedures of the Research**

To achieve the aim of the research the following procedures are adopted:

- 1- Reviewing the literature in using educational cards in foreign English teaching.
- 2- Preparing educational cards for teaching students.

- 3- Selecting the two groups.
- 4- Exposing the two groups to the pre test.
- 5- Teaching the experimental group by using the educational cards and the control one by using the textbook (New English Course for First Year Stage by Baan Jafar SAdiq, 2010).
- 6- Exposing the two groups to the post test.
- 7- Collecting the data from the results of the research.
- 8- Analyzing the results statistically.
- 9- Making the conclusions and recommendations.

## **Section 2 –Theoretical Background and Related Studies**

### **2.1 Strategies of Teaching Slow Learners**

Williamson &Paul (2012: 86-95) explains the strategies of teaching slow learners as the following:

#### **2.1.1 Compensatory Teaching**

Compensatory teaching is an instructional approach that alters the presentation of content to circumvent a student's fundamental weakness or deficiency. Compensatory teaching recognizes content, transmits through alternate modalities (pictures versus words), and supplements it with additional learning resources and activities (learning centers and simulations, group discussions and co-operative learning). This may involve modifying an instructional technique by including a visual representation of content, by using more flexible instructional presentations (films, pictures,

illustrations), or by shifting to alternate instructional formats (self-paced texts, simulations, experience-oriented workbooks).

### **2.1.2 Remedial Teaching**

This is an alternate approach for the regular classroom teacher in instructing the slow learner. Remedial teaching is the use of activities, techniques and practices to eliminate weaknesses or deficiencies that the slow learner is known to have. The instructional environment does not change, as in the compensatory approach. Conventional instructional techniques such as drill and practice might be employed.

### **2.1.3 Develop Lessons that Incorporate Students' Interests, Needs, and Experiences**

This helps address the short attention spans of slow learners. Also, slow students should be made to feel that some of the instruction has been designed with their specific interests or experiences in mind. Oral or written autobiographies at the beginning of the year, or simple inventories in which students indicate their jobs, hobbies, and unusual trips or experiences can provide the structure for the lesson plans, special projects, or extra-credit assignments in the year.

### **2.1.4 Frequently the Instructional Technique**

Switching from lecture to discussion and then to seat work provides the variety that slow learners need to stay engaged in the learning process. In addition to keeping their attention, variety in instructional technique offers them the opportunity to see the same content

presented indifferent ways. This increases opportunities to accommodate the different learning styles that may exist among slow learners and provides them some of the remediation that may be necessary.

### **2.1.5 Incorporate Individualized Learning Materials**

Slow learners respond favorably to frequent reinforcement of small segments of learning. Therefore, programmed texts and interactive computer instruction often are effective intermediation of basic skills of slow learners. In addition, an emphasis on frequent diagnostic assessment of the student progress, paired with immediate corrective instruction, often is particularly effective.

### **2.1.6 Incorporate Audio and Visual Materials**

The common characteristic among slow learners is that they often learn better by seeing and hearing than by reading. This should be no surprise, because performance in basic skill areas, including reading usually is below grade level among slow learners. Incorporating videotapes, films, and audio into lessons helps accommodate the instruction to the strategies learning modalities among slow learners. Emphasizing concrete and visual forms of content also helps compensate for the general difficulty slow learners have in grasping abstract ideas and concepts.

### **2.1.7 Develop the Worksheets and Exercises**

Textbooks and workbooks, when written for the average student often exceed the functioning level of the slow learner and sometimes



become more of a hindrance than an aid. When textbook materials are too difficult, or are too different from topics that capture your students' interests, develop your own. Sometimes only some changes in worksheets and exercises are needed to adapt the vocabulary or difficulty level to the ability of your slow learners. Also, using textbooks and exercises intended for a lower grade could ease the burden of creating materials

that are unavailable at your grade level.

### **2.1.8 Motivating slow learners**

Motivating slow learners are a task that teachers cannot ignore. To help a slow learner fetch a good grade is a challenge that marks the qualities of a good teacher. Students' motivation are optimized when teachers provide them with challenging tasks in a mastery-oriented environment that includes good emotional and cognitive support, meaningful and interesting material to learn and master, and sufficient support for autonomy and initiative (Wentzel, 2008:34). While university students can be in-charge of their learning process, the teacher has a big role to play. The responsibilities of the teacher on slow learners as include building confidence among slow learners, finding out the main reason behind the learner's weak performance, interact with slow learner often, pay equal attention to slow learner in class, arrangement of special learning resources, maintenance of cumulative records, maintaining a friendly relationship, repetition, arranging for peer tutoring among others. All

the foresaid interventions call for constant revision of the entire course management process (Muppudathi,2014:3).

### **2.1.9 Suggestions for Teachers**

Redd (1999:76) suggests many things for the teachers to follow, they are:

#### **\* Time**

Slow learners need more time to understand and figure out how to use basic concepts. They may require more thorough revision and review for the basic concepts to make sense to them. They also require more time to perform math computations while practicing or testing. Pressuring a child to perform at a time standard beyond his abilities will only reduce his confidence, and thus making learning more difficult.

#### **\* Concept Building**

Slow learners have difficulty with new concepts, so wherever possible new concepts should be related to previously learned ones. The connection with the previous concept helps to build confidence in the subject and provides a framework upon which to build mastery of new skills.

#### **\* Real World Examples**

Many slow learners use their fingers when performing calculations at an age at which the faster learners have left this behind, so teaching a new skill such as addition or multiplication is made easier when the instructor gives real-world examples or allows for physical

representations of the math problem. Because slow learners have difficulty with imaginary concepts, the physical example provides guidance and structure.

**\* Review**

Because slow learners need more time to absorb new concepts, frequent reviewing can be helpful. More frequent exposure to the new concept, in shorter blocks of time such as five- or 10-minute review sessions, can speed up the learning process slightly for the slow learner.

**\* Reward**

Slow learners tend to have low confidence levels. They know they are learning more slowly than others and may have been teased at school for it. Low confidence impedes anyone's ability to learn, so it's important to reward the student's performance. Giving the slow learner a special treat for improving performance in school or finishing an assignment on time will create positive associations with the subject or the skill that outweigh the negatives.

**2.1.10 Educational Cards**

Education cards develop and improve retention of information and improve the connection of synapses. The card obverse side would usually contain a singular image of an object, organism, letter, word, or number depending on its use. Such minimalism in design allows a person to focus on the card's image. Sometimes, additional information that is written concisely is printed on the reverse sides of

the cards. If the flashcards are particularly designed for guessing games, the information written on the reverse sides are answers or literal references of the images on the front (Bellani ,2011: 1).

### **2.1.11 Advantages of Educational Cards**

Learning with educational cards can be a fun and interactive educational experience for both children and adults. They are simple media of instruction used commonly for the basic education of children. But the employment of these educational tools can also extend to adult education (Bellani ,2011: 1).

Most teachers, lecturers and parents find that learning with educational cards are quick, direct, and hassle-free. Their diverse and colorful designs attract children and adults alike. The images printed on the cards and the manners in which they are used stimulate the mind to quickly look for references to identify the images. This is why they are ideal to use as educational games in learning. It also used in testing individuals, repetition is employed in using educational cards. Such method gradually embeds in the viewers the images of the cards allows students to remember a specific image more (Ibid).

## **2.2 Related Studies**

### **2.2.1 Rajashekar &Bellad (2016)**

Title: Effectiveness of educational cards games as a supplementary educational tool in academic performance.

Aim: the study answers these questions;



1-to know the students’ perception of educational cards

2-to study the effectiveness of educational cards in academic performance of nerve muscle physiology topic.

Procedures: the students’ knowledge have assessed before and after the educational cards in short essay questions.

Results: the results has showed improvement in performance after the educational cards

### Section 3: The producers of the Research

It has adopted an experimental design to achieve the aim of the research , and to answer the question whether this technique is effective with slow learners or not.

#### 3.1 The Experimental Design

It has been adopted the design of Pre and post tests with two groups (Mackey & Gass, 2005:148-149) as shown in table below:

**Table (1) Experimental Design**

Experimental Group	Pre-test	Independent Variable Educational Cards	Post-test
Control Group	Pre-test	-----	Post test

#### 3.2 Sample and Population

The population of the research is first year stage at College of Physical Education and Science Sports for Women which are six



sections. It has been chosen two of them randomly. These two sections are exposed to pre test to choose the slow learners in these two sections. See (Table 2)

**Table (2) Number of Subject**

Group	Section	No. of subject	No. of Slow Learners
Experimental Group	C	23	8
Control Group	E	25	9

\*The total of the sample is 15 after excluded 2 students from the control group for matching purpose.

### 3.3 Equivalence of the Sample

The sample of the research has equalized two groups of the research by matching them in the following variables:

**1- Age of the subject :** The two groups are matched in the age , the average of both groups is between (19-21). Thus , two students from control group are excluded from the sample because their age is more than this average. The X mean of the experimental group is 20.190 and the control one is 20.36. the T test formula is used for the two independent samples. The value of  $t'$  is 0.425 which indicates no significant difference between the age of the two groups at the level of significant 0.005 and degree of freedom 13.

**Table (3) The Age of the Subject**

Group \ Variables	No. of subjects	X Mean	S.D	T value	
				Calculated value	Distribution
Experimental (C)	8	20.19	1.364	0.425	7.644
Control (E)	7	20.36	1.410		

## 2- Subjects' Level of Achievement in English in pre test

The sample of the research is matched according the score of the pre-test ( all the two sections are applied the pre test which are scored out of 25 marks, the lower marks from 10 and below are chosen as the sample of the research).

### 3.4 Instructional Materials

The materials are applied at the second course of the academic year 2016-2017 from 5/2/ 2017-25/4/ 2017 each lecture is lasted one and half hour weekly.

The instructional material has selected from (A Course in English for Students in the College of Physical Education, 1987) for the control group. Thus, the control group has memorized list of games in English and their meaning. See appendix ( 1)

While the experimental group has taught according educational cards which are prepared from the researcher. See appendix ( 2).

The researcher has adopted educational cards for sports and games for teaching the experimental group. The two sections of the



experiment have divided into groups each included 3-4 students. The slow learners are with each other in the same groups.

There are many activities are followed in teaching the slow learners by using the educational cards. They are:

- 1-the students are received the cards about games.
- 2- the students should give the instructor the same cards and act like the game so the other groups are predict the game
- 3- the group which are know the game should write the game in the board correctly, the group which are responsible about acting the game should correct the spelling.
- 4- after one month the students are received other cards which are not complete, the students should complete the missing weather it is letters or equipment.
- 5- each group has received their cards, they should classify these games according a categories e.g ( summer sports, winter sports, ball sports.....). Each group should take the cards which are matched their classification from the other groups.

Thus, the students in the first month ( 4 lectures) have known the games in English, while in the two later months the students have enough knowledge in equipment of these sports. The cards are colorful and interesting. The activities are presented a competitive to the class to finish the games or the cards as fast as possible correctly so they get marks.

### **3.5 Constructions the Post Test**

The pre post has applied at 5/2/ 2017. The experiment has lasted three months. The post test is applied at 25/4/2017 on the sample of the research. After three months of the experimental. The post test as well the pre test are consist of three questions each one is measured the vocabulary and spelling in English for physical education purpose. In the first question the students should write the missing letters in each word to complete the game in English. While the second question is pictures the students should recognize the game and write its name correctly in English. Finally, the student should re-arrange the game. The test is scored out of 25 marks. The slow learners have chosen from the two sections according the lowest mark in the pre test (down from 10 mark ).

### **3.6 Validity**

Validity means “the truth of the test in relation to what it is supposed to evaluated” (Bynom,2001:3).

The test is measured the sports and all the items are focused to measure the knowledge of sport and games in English.

### **3.7 Reliability**

It is important characteristic for the evaluation of language tests which is defined as the degree of consistency between two measures of the same test (Ibid:5). Therefore the test is repeated after ten days and Pearson formula has been used to find out the correlation coefficient the result is (+9.28) which is considered a high stable correlation.

## Section 4: Analysis of Results and Conclusions

The results of the test has been analyzed , in order to determine whether there is any significant difference between the two mean scores of the two groups in the pre and post tests.

### 4.1 Comparison of the Experimental and Control Groups in the Post Test

The mean of the experimental group is (20.22), while the mean of the control group is (13.247). Then the T-test formula is used to compare the two groups. The value of t-test is (7.466) which is compared with the tabulated value (1.644). this indicates that there is a significant difference at the level (0.05) and degree of freedom (13) between the experimental group and the control group. Thus, it refers that the experimental group is better than the control group. Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected. See table (4)

**Table (4)**

### **X mean, Standard Deviation and T value of Two Groups in the Post test**

Group	No.of Subjects	X mean	S.D	D.F	T Value	
E	8	20.22	3.89	13	Calculated value	distribution
C	7	13.247	4.48		12.67	7.644

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## 4.2 Discussion of the Results

The statistical analysis indicates that the achievements of the students in experimental group are significantly higher than the students in control group in the post test. This can be interpreted to educational cards is more effective for learning slow learners than the traditional method of teaching English at College of Physical Education and Science Sport for Women.

The results are agreed with the Rajashekar & Bellad (2016) which is showed improvement of students' performance in Physiology. But the current research is showed the improvement of slow learners in other branch of academic (Physical Education)

## 4.3 Conclusions

In the light of the results and findings of the research, it has concluded that the educational cards in teaching EFL for slow learners is effective than using the existing methods at College of Physical Education for Women. Also, using educational cards encourages slow learners to remember sports and terms related to sports, the students have interest as well fun in the subject.

## 4.4 Recommendations

The current research has recommended to use educational cards are to be applied instead the students memories list of games and sports in English. English teachers and instructors should use modern techniques to encourage their class and slow learners.

## 4.5 Suggestions

It has suggested that researchers are made other researches for other techniques and methods which are used to teach slow learners in different level of colleges.

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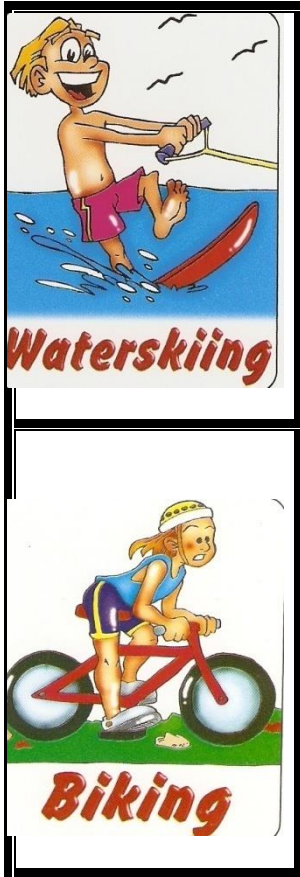


## Appendix (1) Lesson of Control Group Sports and Games

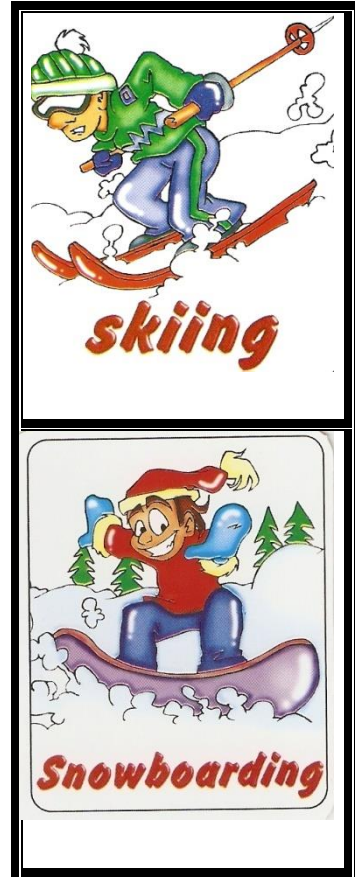
الصيد بالصنارة	Angling
الالعاب المائية	Aquatics
الرماية بالسهم	Archery
سباق السيارات	Automobile racing
كرة الريشة	Badminton
كرة القاعدة	Baseball
كرة السلة	Basketball
سباق الدراجات	Bicycle racing
البليارد	Billiards
سباق الزوارق	Boat race
الكرات الخشبية	Bowling
الملاكمة	Boxing
مصارعة الثيران	Bullfighting
عراك الديكة	Cock fighting
الكركت	Cricket
الفروسية ، ركوب الخيل	Equitation , horseback riding
الصيد بالصقور	Falconry
القفز الفني	Fancy diving

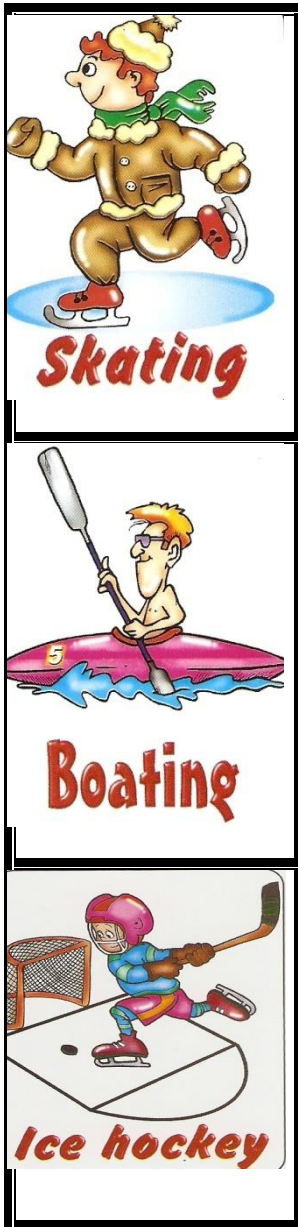
**Appendix (2) The Educational Cards for Teaching the Experimental Group**

1\* Match the picture with its category:

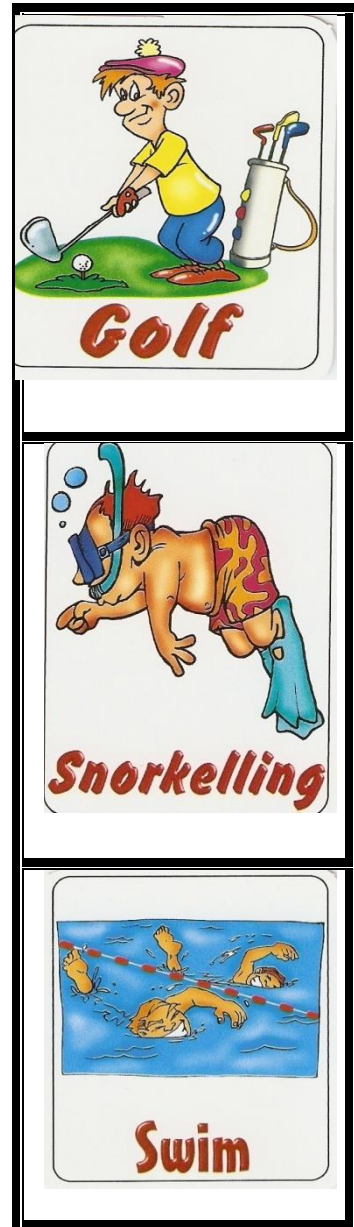


**Winter  
Games**





Summer  
Games



**Appendix (3)**

**The Pre and Post Tests**

**Q1-Complete the missing letter(s) of these games:  
(Choose Five)**

- 1-b□□ting 2- b□□ch volleyball 3- □a□dball 4- □□rate  
5- s□□ling 6- f□□□ing – 7- b□□ling, 8- sk□□ing

**(10 M)**

**Q2- Write the name of the game under its picture: (Choose five )  
(10 M)**



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**Q3-Re- order the letters of the following games:(Choose Five) (5M)**

- olgf=-----, ewighlitifntg = -----, sbaealbl = -----  
-----, wgmimsin=-----, lbovlvleyal=-----,  
tymsgnaics=-----, abdinomtn=-----