

## Stepping up the “Game” in Physical Education

### Word Search Showdown — 3–8

**Objective:** Word Search Showdown will stretch the student’s minds by providing multiple opportunities to recall and practice spelling words. The combination of spelling fundamentals, exercise, memorization, and teamwork forces players to strategize and think while constantly exercising to spell words and earn as many points as possible.

**Equipment:** (Needs are based on a class of 56 students)

✦ Scrabble tile sets (Scrabble tile sets are recommended for their durability. **Note:** *before purchasing sets, I recommend asking colleagues and friends to donate any Scrabble games that they may have lying around the house. Also, consider what is in a typical Scrabble set to determine how many tile sets you will need for your classes. I recommend one set per 15-20 students. A game of Scrabble contains 100 letter tiles in the following distribution:*

- 2 blank tiles (scoring 0 points)
- E x 12, A x 9, I x 9, O x 8, R x 6, N x 6, T x 6, L x 4, S x 4, and U x 4 (scoring 1 point)
- D x 4, and G x 3 (scoring 2 points)
- B x 2, C x 2, M x 2, and P x 2 (scoring 3 points)
- F x 2, H x 2, V x 2, W x 2, and Y x 2 (scoring 4 points)
- K x 1 (scoring 5 points)
- J x 1, and X x 1 (scoring 8 points)
- Q x 1, and Z x 1 (scoring 10 points)

✦ Optional: consider making alphabet sets on index cards, printing and laminating sets of letters or utilizing pre-printed alphabet cards or teaching tools.

✦ Paper (one per student; standard 8.5 x 11 paper cut into 4 sections)

✦ Pens and/or pencils (10-15; these will be placed somewhere outside of the playing area for safety reasons)

✦ List of exercises (written on board or posted on gym walls)

✦ Optional: traffic cones (8-12)

**Procedure:** Scatter all of the Scrabble tiles or alphabet sets (face up) on the floor in the center area of the gym. Optional: encircle the scrabble tiles with the traffic cones to provide a small buffer between the tiles and the students. Next, place all pens at a table or area outside of the designated playing area or gym boundaries. The object of the game is for each player to score as many points as possible by exercising and earning letters to create words.

**To Begin:** hand each student a piece of paper and instruct them to sit in personal space, away from the scrabble tiles, to await further instructions. Explain that a point is earned for every letter in every word that a player creates. Each word must also be checked by the teacher before it can be recorded onto each player’s piece of paper. Each player must first earn the right to take a trip to the center of the gym **each time** they want to get a letter. A trip to the center to get or return an unwanted letter is earned by performing any exercise/skill written on the board or posted on the gym walls. **Note:** *the exercises and skills can be replaced or modified at the teacher’s discretion (see Athletic Task Sheet A-D for some exercise examples).* All players, after earning a trip, may go to the center and choose one letter to go towards their word (See Figure 49).

The key to a player’s success is to determine how to create words. Each player has the choice to create words as an individual, with a partner, in groups, and/or a combination of the three choices. For example, a player could work by himself, change his mind and go work with a friend, change his mind

## PE2 the Max II

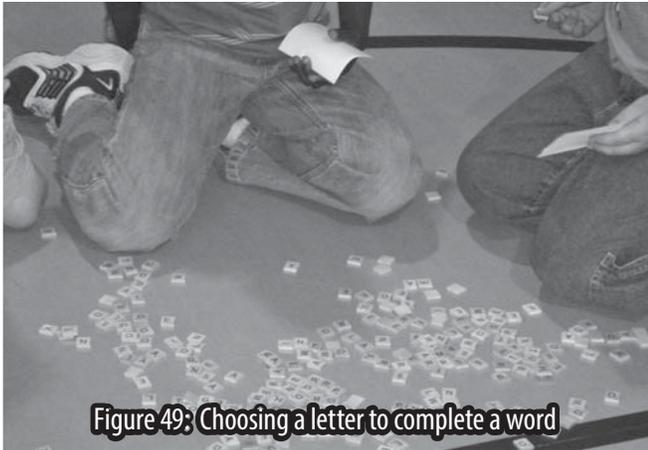


Figure 49: Choosing a letter to complete a word

again and go join a group of friends, etc. at any time during a game. **Note:** all words chosen to be spelled must contain 4 or more letters (See Figures 50 and 51).



Figure 50: Quintuplet

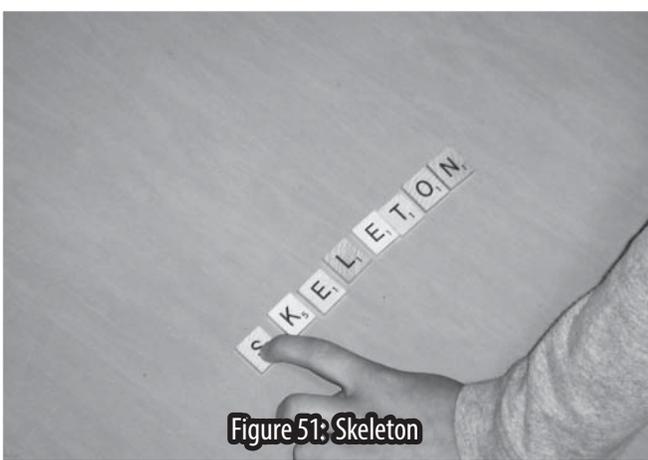


Figure 51: Skeleton

Players choosing to work alone can pace themselves and create any word they want. The only possible setback is that no one else will be contributing to the word, thus taking longer to complete a word. A potential benefit could be that there is nobody to argue with about what words to choose and which letters to find. Players choosing to work with a partner or in larger groups have different challenges. These groups must communicate much more by deciding on a word that equals the amount of people in their group since **everyone must contribute a letter to the selected word**. They must also communicate who will go and get what letters, which if not discussed can lead to chaos. The potential for arguing and frustration is much greater if this strategy is chosen. On the other hand, the potential benefit would be getting letters to a word much quicker than the individual method. For example, a group of six players could spell “apples” six times faster than an individual who would have to perform six exercises to earn the same letters. Each player/group must adhere to the following procedures to get credit for each word:

1. Select a word and earn one letter from the center for each exercise completed.
2. Find a personal space within the gym boundaries and spell the word on the ground.
3. Get the teacher’s attention by raising your hands. All players, upon the teacher’s approval of the word and its spelling, must return all letters to center before going to the designated area where the pens are located to record the word on their personal piece of paper. **Note:** students should also write their names on their paper during their first trip. The teacher may offer guidance for any misspelled words or suggest that the student(s) pick a new word to spell (See Figure 52).
4. Continue the game by choosing a new word

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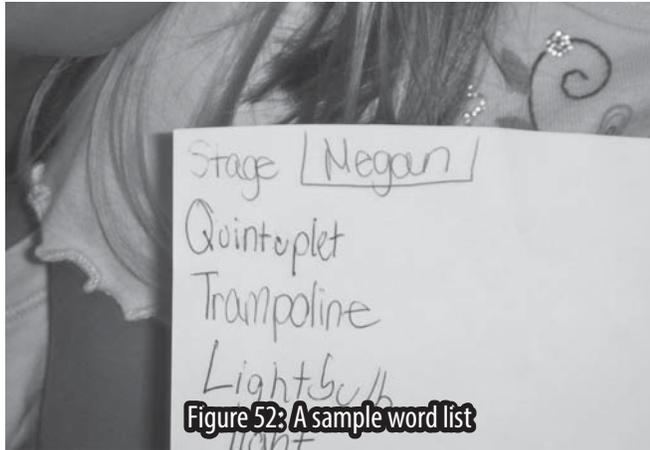


Figure 52: A sample word list

to spell. **Note:** remind students that they can change groups or work alone at anytime during the game.

**Optional:** before going to the next round, stop and let students share some possible strategies they utilized to be successful, placing special emphasis on those teams that were thinking “outside of the box.”

A signal will be given at the end of class for each player to find their own personal space. Players will then count one point for every letter in each word recorded on their piece of paper. The player(s) with the highest score will be labeled the **Word Search Showdown Champion**. The teacher will recognize all other players by announcing the following categories that each player may fall under:

1. 81-100 points is a Genius
2. 61-80 points is a Scholar
3. 41-60 points is Gifted
4. 21-40 points is Exceptional
5. 1-20 points is Skilled

### Rules and Safety:

1. Players must earn the right to make a trip to the center of the gym **each time** they want to get a letter.
2. A trip to the center, to get or return an unwanted letter, is earned by performing any exercise/skill on the exercise list.
3. All words chosen to be spelled must contain 4 or more letters. A word may not be repeated on an individual’s paper. No proper nouns may be used such as Matt, Sara, etc.
4. Players may go to the designated area to record their word upon the teacher’s approval of the word and its spelling. The teacher may offer guidance for any misspelled words or suggest that the student(s) pick a new word to spell.
5. All letters must be returned to the center before going to record the word.
6. Each letter in a word equals one point.

### Variations:

1. Allow players to get more than one letter at a time.
2. Use the actual Scrabble scoring system. Players will add up the points labeled on each Scrabble letter tile.
3. Create predetermined word lists to reinforce the learning and spelling of Grade-level words.