

ESL TABOO

DESCRIBE IT WITHOUT SAYING IT

INTERMEDIATE • B1 AND UP

PREVIEW

ESL TABOO GAME

Describe It Without Saying It

One tablet per table. Tap the screen for the next card.

Intermediate, B1 and up • 75 cards • 3 categories

Classroom
REVIEW GAMES

WHAT IS INSIDE

- A tablet deck in **Google Slides**. It also opens in **PowerPoint**.
- **75 cards in 3 categories:** Daily Life, People and Work, Travel and Tech, 25 each
- **4 banned words** on every card, plus an **easy mode** line
- A **sentence starters** slide for the describer
- 16 printable pages: **rules**, **ESL teacher notes**, a **table card**, a **score sheet**, **9 card sheets** and card backs, in color and ink-saver B&W, US Letter and A4

Choose a category

Tap a category to start there, then keep tapping for the next card.

DAILY LIFE

25

cards

Tap to start

PEOPLE AND WORK

25

cards

Tap to start

TRAVEL AND TECH

25

cards

Tap to start

Or just tap forward from here to play all three in order.

HOW IT PLAYS

1. Tables of 6 split into 3 pairs and share one tablet or one pile of cards.
2. The describer explains the word without the 4 banned words. Their partner guesses.
3. A checker from another pair watches the same card. 60 seconds, one point per word.

This preview shows: one whole turn (category menu, a card, the sentence starters), a card slide and the end slide, all 75 words with a sample card from each category, and the rules, teacher notes, table card, score sheet and a card sheet.

HOW A TURN WORKS

60 seconds. One point per word. Then pass the tablet.

Choose a category

Tap a category to start there, then keep tapping for the next card.

DAILY LIFE

25

cards

Tap to start

PEOPLE AND WORK

25

cards

Tap to start

TRAVEL AND TECH

25

cards

Tap to start

Or just tap forward from here to play all three in order.

STEP 1

Pick a category

Tap Daily Life, People and Work, or Travel and Tech, or play all three in order.

STEP 2

Describe it

The describer explains the word without the 4 banned words. Their partner guesses. A checker from another pair watches.

COLLEAGUE

DO NOT SAY

work

office

..... easy mode: tap 2 only

together

team

Categories

People and Work 11 of 25

Tap for the next card

STEP 3

Stuck? Start here

Eight sentence starters help the describer begin a clue.
Easy mode: only the 2 words above the dotted line count.

Stuck? Start your clue like this

It's a kind of ...

It's a kind of food / job / place.

It's a person who ...

It's a person who works with animals.

It's a place where ...

It's a place where you can swim.

You use it to ...

You use it to open a door.

You do this when ...

You do this when you are tired.

You feel like this when ...

You feel like this when you lose.

It's the opposite of ...

It's the opposite of quiet.

It's similar to ..., but ...

It's similar to a car, but bigger.

Guesser: "Is it a ...?" · "Can you say that another way?" · "Can you give me an example?"

Easy mode: of the 4 banned words, only the 2 above the dotted line count.
The word itself and any part of it are always banned.

CARD SLIDES + END SLIDE

One card per slide. Tap anywhere for the next card.

DAILY LIFE

HEADACHE

DO NOT SAY

pain

hurt

..... easy mode: top 2 only

medicine

sick

Categories

Daily Life 7 of 25

Tap for the next card

The word, 4 banned words and the easy mode line. The Categories button goes back to the menu.

That's the whole deck!

Add up your table's score sheet and hand it in.

★ Rate this game ›

A quick review helps other teachers find this game and earns you TpT credits. Thank you!





The end slide: add up the table's score sheet.

3 CATEGORIES, 75 CARDS

Every word, with one sample card from each category:

HEADACHE

DO NOT SAY

pain

hurt

.....
medicine

sick

DAILY LIFE

25 cards

vacuum, leftovers, neighbor, rent, groceries, dessert, headache, checkup, bandage, vitamin, flashlight, doorbell, nap, shampoo, pajamas, diet, ladder, haircut, appointment, cough, ingredient, roommate, hanger, allergy, dishwasher

COLLEAGUE

DO NOT SAY

work

office

.....
together

team

PEOPLE AND WORK

25 cards

firefighter, lawyer, chef, surgeon, librarian, receptionist, babysitter, coach, interview, promotion, colleague, deadline, uniform, retirement, homesick, confused, disappointed, stressed, guilty, generous, honest, stubborn, polite, selfish, clumsy

VACATION

DO NOT SAY

holiday

travel

.....
summer

relax

TRAVEL AND TECH

25 cards

traffic, jet lag, reservation, delay, camping, highway, seat belt, sightseeing, destination, cruise, flat tire, subway, vacation, website, video game, selfie, hacker, emoji, notification, ringtone, subscription, podcast, influencer, laptop, robot

Easy mode. Only the 2 banned words above the dotted line count. Move up to full mode when pairs score 3 or more a turn.

Sentence starters. It's a kind of ... It's a person who ... You use it to ... It's the opposite of ...

PRINTABLE CARDS + NOTES

No tablets? Print the cards. Every page in color and B&W.

Daily Life cards 1 to 10 of 25

Cut on the dashed lines. Print on card stock, or print the matching card-back page on the reverse so the words do not show through.

Daily Life

DAILY LIFE

VACUUM

clean
floor
dust
carpet

DAILY LIFE

LEFTOVERS

food
yesterday
eat
finish

DAILY LIFE

NEIGHBOR

next
house
live
street

DAILY LIFE

RENT

pay
apartment
money
month

DAILY LIFE

GROCERIES

food
supermarket
buy
store

DAILY LIFE

DESSERT

sweet
cake
dinner
ice cream

DAILY LIFE

HEADACHE

pain
hurt
medicine
sick

DAILY LIFE

CHECKUP

doctor
health
visit
yearly

DAILY LIFE

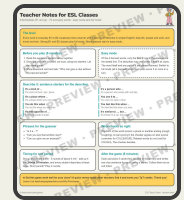
BANDAGE

cut
blood
cover
wound

DAILY LIFE

VITAMIN

healthy
pill
body
fruit



ESL teacher notes

Easy mode,
starters, timing,
what counts.

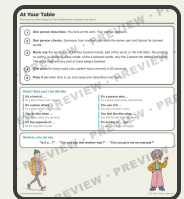


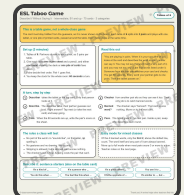
Table card

The rules and
starters for each
table.



Score sheet

3 pairs, 6 rounds.



Rules

Set up in 3
minutes.

16 printable pages

9 card sheets +
card backs, US
Letter and A4

IN THE FULL GAME

One tablet per table, and every student talks.

75 cards in 3 categories, 4 banned words each

80 slides in Google Slides and PowerPoint

16 printable pages: cards, rules, teacher notes, score sheet

8 sentence starters for the describer

MADE FOR A REAL CLASS PERIOD

- Google Slides and PowerPoint on a tablet or laptop, or the printed cards.
- Pairs swap the describer job every round, so everyone describes and everyone guesses.
- A checker from another pair keeps it fair. No prep.

Thank you! A quick review helps other teachers find this.

