

LET'S GET STARTED...

In this section, directions are given for playing the first board game, *About Me*. This game demonstrates some of the features that are common to all of the board games in *Activate: Games for Learning American English*, and it provides a starting point for teachers to examine how board games work and how they can be used in a language classroom. In addition to step-by-step instructions, examples of language that students might produce while they are playing the game are provided.

Game 1: About Me

About Me lets students practice using English to express their opinions and preferences about a number of different topics.

Instructions

1. Have students (the players) sit in groups of 3–4.
2. Determine who goes first and whether the turns will progress clockwise or counter-clockwise.
3. Each player rolls the dice in turn.
4. On their turns, the players move their game pieces along the path according to the number of spaces indicated by the dice.
5. Players then finish the sentence written on the space (called a “prompt” or a “cue”) where they land, using personal experience, imagination, and/or critical thinking skills.
6. Note that some spaces, like 6, 13, and 17 in *About Me*, penalize players by requiring them to go back to an earlier space. These are meant to increase the “chance” aspect of the game and usually foster mildly negative feelings for a moment, but it is all in fun! The victim will probably groan; the other players will probably laugh.
7. The game continues until one or all players reach the ‘Finish’ space.

“Player Talk” in About Me

Cue	“Player Talk”
Something I really enjoy doing is...	Something I really enjoy doing is going for a walk. (Simple response)
I think school is...	I think school is really difficult. (Simple response)
I think English class is...	I think English class is too short because I hardly get a chance to speak in class. (More complex response)
One way I’m different from everyone else is...	One way I’m different from everyone else is that my aunt immigrated to the U.S.A. and has invited me to visit her during school vacation. (Quite complex response)

Game Squares

START: LET’S GO!

1. Something I really enjoy doing is...
2. I think school is...
3. I think English class is...
4. One way I’m different from everyone else is...
5. Sometimes I try...
6. OH NO! GO BACK TO START!
7. I know how to...
8. One of my friends knows how to...
9. I wonder what it would be like to...
10. One animal I wouldn’t want to be is...
11. One animal I would like to be is...
12. I want to learn how to...
13. OH NO! GO BACK 2 SPACES!
14. Sometimes I help...
15. Someday, I would like to visit...
16. Someday, I would like to be...
17. OH NO! GO BACK 5 SPACES!
18. I’ve never been afraid of...
19. I’m afraid of...
20. Someday, I will...

FINISH



Variations for *About Me*

Variations of a board game allow the teacher to create more than one game using the same board. The cues are the same, but the students' responses to them are different.

Variation	Directions	"Player Talk"
A Lie about Me	Have students finish the sentences following the cues, but this time, tell them not to tell the truth.	<i>Something I really enjoy doing is going to the dentist and having my teeth drilled.</i>
Make it Opposite	Have students finish the sentences following the cues, but make it state the opposite or the negative.	<i>Something I really don't enjoy doing is going to sleep without brushing my teeth. I don't think school is as bad as some kids say.</i>
What Your Friend Said	The teacher can have the students play the game again. This time the player can say what another player previously said when landing on that space. If no one had landed there, the player should create a new answer.	<i>Maya said that English class was the best part of her day. Dragana said she wondered what it would be like to dance on the moon.</i>

