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Speaking and Listening – Days and Dates

Guess the Date – Activity

Work in pairs or small groups. One person is the quizmaster. They pick a month, e.g. the current or following month, then a day in that month. The others have to guess it, while the quizmaster gives clues, ranging from easy to impossible! Show a calendar of the month and cross out dates that have been discounted (link below). You could also research and use special events in that particular month as clues. When the date has been guessed, points are scored and the winner – or the next player – picks a date and the game continues.

Easy clues:

- The day of the week begins with the letter *x*
- It is / is not at the weekend
- It is towards the beginning / the end of the week
- The day has *x* letters
- The date has st / nd / rd / th suffix
- The date starts with a 0 / a 1 / a 2 / a 3
- The date has one / two digits
- The day has a silent letter

Medium clues:

- It is / is not a [day]
- It is not [date]
- The date is higher / lower than [number]
- It is / is not on or near a particular holiday / special day
- It is earlier / later in the month than the holiday / special day
- The date is odd / even
- The date has *x* straight lines / rounded elements
- The 1st / 2nd letter (etc.) is from the 1st / 2nd half of the alphabet
- The figure and day share the same first / second / last, etc. letter
- There are *x* vowels / consonants in the spelling of the day / date
- The day has 2 / 3 syllables

Difficult / impossible clues:

- The day / number has *x* stressed vowel sound
- This is the day I went on holiday last year
- It is my mum's birthday / the day before / two weeks before, etc.
- It is my favourite day of the week

Notable dates in the chosen month, e.g. public holidays or 'International Day of x':

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Find special events: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Current_events

Download a free calendar template here: <https://www.wiki-calendar.com/>

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Variations

There are various ways of playing this game. At heart it is simply a 'guess the number out of 30 or 31' game. Here are some more variations. Note: yes/no questions work better than wh-questions, because players can ask much easier questions – even just 'What is the date?' It's also a great way to practice and reinforce making question forms. Before you start, you could go through the kinds of question that SS can ask from the previous page:

1. Player A asks five (or more or fewer) yes/no questions. The aim is to narrow down the number of possible options, e.g. if you ask 'Is it an odd or an even number?' the answer will rule out half of the dates. If they can't guess the date after their questions, the other player(s) gets x points. Then swap roles.

Example of five questions to narrow down the date to one (based on the month of August 2022):

1. *Is it an odd or an even number? (if odd, 15 days are discounted; if even, 16 days; let's say the date is odd)*
 2. *Is it a week day? (let's say no, so 4 potential dates remain: 7th, 13th, 21st, and 27th)*
 3. *Does the date have 7 letters (i.e. Is it Sunday)? Yes, so 2 dates remain: 7th and 21st)*
 4. *Does the date have double figures? If yes, it is 21/08/22; if no, the date is 07/08/22*
 5. *No fifth question required, but another good question is: Is the first or second number straight (i.e. 1, 4, 7) or round (all the other numbers)?*
2. Player A gives five (or more or fewer) clues (see previous page or cards). The other players listen, make notes, then guess at the end. Points for the winner(s). Change roles.
 3. Both players have 10 (or more or fewer) virtual coins. Player 1 asks questions or 'buys' clues to guess the date. For every question or clue they lose 2 (or more or fewer) coins. If they run out, the round ends and Player 2 tells them the date. At the start of the next round both players receive another amount of coins to use. The winner is the player with the most coins after x rounds.
 4. In a big group – every player or team writes down the date they think it is. The correct date is called and the player or team which is closest wins that round. Continue for x rounds.
 5. Use the question cards provided, or write your own. Each player in the pair or group has written their date and the others have to guess it. Each player in turn takes a card and asks the question to each person in the pair or group. Guess when you like, but lose a point if you are incorrect. It would be a good idea to take notes, if there are several people in the group! The winner is the player whose date is guessed last – or not at all. You can also use the cards as clue cards in Activity 2 (above), by changing the questions into a statement, e.g.

Does the day begin with the letter M? *becomes* The day begins with the letter M.

6. Feel free to devise your own variations! Be creative.

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Card Game – List of 40 Questions

Note: x means a variable

DAY:

1. Does the day begin with the letter x ?
2. Is the day at the weekend?
3. Is it a weekday?
4. Does the day have x letters?
5. Does the day contain a silent letter?
6. Does the x letter of the day come from the first half of the alphabet?
7. Does the x letter of the day come from the second half of the alphabet?
8. Are there x vowel letters in the spelling of the day?
9. Are there x consonant letters in the spelling of the day?
10. Are there x vowel letters in the spelling of the month?
11. Are there x consonant letters in the spelling of the month?
12. Does the day have two syllables?
13. Does the day have three syllables?

DATE (NUMBERS):

14. Is the date near the beginning of the month?
15. Is the date near the middle of the month?
16. Is the date near the end of the month?
17. Does the date have the suffix -st?
18. Does the date have the suffix -nd?
19. Does the date have the suffix -rd?
20. Does the date have the suffix -th?
21. Does the date begin with 0?
22. Does the date begin with 1?
23. Does the date begin with 2?
24. Does the date begin with 3?
25. Does the date have 1 or 2 figures?
26. Is the date higher than x ?
27. Is the date lower than x ?
28. Is the date x ?
29. Is the date odd?
30. Is the date even?
31. Is the x digit of the date straight?
32. Is the x digit of the date rounded?
33. Does the first digit begin with the same letter as the first letter of the month?
34. Does the second digit begin with the same letter as the first letter of the month?
35. Are there x vowel letters in the spelling of the date?
36. Are there x consonant letters in the spelling of the date?
37. Is the date before a special event?
38. Is the date after a special event?
39. Does the sum of the two figures equal x ?
40. Any maths equation with the two figures in the date: e.g. plus, minus, multiply, divide, etc.
e.g. If you add together both digits of the date, is the result more than 5?