

13. Typhoon

Explain to students that this game is named after the strong wind that blows everything away. It can be played with a class as small as 3, but it also works with large classes. It's great for reviewing speaking topics.

1. On the board draw a grid of boxes—a 6 x 6 grid works well and can take about 45 minutes to complete, but you may vary this once you've played a few times. You'll just want to choose the size depending on how much time you have. Mark one axis with numbers, the other with letters. (Or use vocabulary words like adjectives on one and nouns on the other.)

2. On a piece of paper or in a notebook (out of sight) draw the same grid. On your grid, fill in scores in all of the boxes. Most of them should be numbers, and others will be letters. It doesn't matter which numbers you choose, but it's fun to have some small ones (1, 2, 3, etc.) and some very big ones (500, 1000, etc.). About one in four boxes should have the letter "T" for "Typhoon."

3. Put the students into teams—at least 3 teams—and mark a place on the board to record each team's score.

4. Ask questions or give speaking tasks to each team in turn. If they answer correctly, they then "choose a box" using the grid labels. The teacher checks the secret grid, and writes the score into the grid on the board. This score also goes into the team's score box.

5. If the chosen box contains a number, the scores simply add up. But if the box contains a "T," the team then chooses which other team's score they want to "blow away" back to zero.

Notes on Typhoon:

If you run out of time but the game isn't finished, declare a "no questions, just choose" period to fill the rest of the grid and find out who wins. Students love this game, so you can spice it up by adding different symbols in some of the boxes.

I use:

Swap: They must swap their score with another team's score, even if they're winning.

S: Steal. They can steal a score instead of just blowing it away.

D: Double. They double their own score.

After a couple of times playing this game, students can easily run it themselves. This provides even more opportunities to speak. One student (or a pair) could handle the grid, another could handle the score board, others can make or choose questions or tasks and someone can be Game Presenter.

