

# ⊗ Introduction ⊗

**Got It!** is a fun and creative game suitable for ESOL students at any level (elementary to adult) and of any degree of proficiency. It can be played as a filler in those spare minutes at class end, or more comprehensively as an entire lesson. There is no prep for the teacher and answers are provided. The game is played consistently the same way, so once you've 'got it' (and it's easy), you can just whip out the cards.

**Got It!** is primarily intended as a vocabulary builder, and uses as its base standard vocabulary as well as questions inspiring more creative and thoughtful answers. Words and ideas are brainstormed in groups in a game setting, and because the students themselves are generating ideas, and communicating, the potential for vocabulary acquisition is high. This can be capitalized on by supplementing the game with activities that provide for expanded vocabulary and writing practice.

Though the game generates thought and excitement, the noise factor is low as students are reminded to keep their voices down lest another group steal their ideas. Time permitting, play just one subtopic or the entire page.

## The Layout

The first section of the book consists of 40 pages, each with a topic and four subtopics, two Easy and two Hard. If you browse through the topics and answers, you will note that some topics are more standard and others more creative. Here's an example of a page:

Each of the subtopics is called a "card." The second half of the book contains an Answer Key for each of the subtopic cards. The key is not intended to give THE answers for each subtopic; it is simply a collection of possible answers that can be used in a variety of ways to follow up on the game. Of course, students often supply answers that are original and "out of the box."

Topic 30 ⊗ Home Sweet Home		Answers page 71	
EASY	Cleaning supplies and equipment	Things in the bathroom	
	Considerations when buying a house	Reasons to live in a town (not a city)	
HARD			

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## How It's Played

After choosing a topic, make photocopies of the page – one copy for each group. At this point you can use the page in two ways. You can give the group the whole page and tell them which subtopic card they will do. Alternatively, cut out one of the subtopics and give it to each group.

Place the students in groups of four (more or less). The groups can be of the same ability or mixed ability. Then tell them:

- ⊗ “We will do subtopic card *Tools*. All of you will have the same card. In your group you will help each other to come up with words and phrases (hammer, saw) that are relevant to the subtopic on your card.
- ⊗ Write as many as you can in the time given. One person will be the Writer and write your answers on the card (or a separate piece of paper). Don't worry about spelling.
- ⊗ Don't talk too loudly or the other groups will hear your answers!” (Hand out cards.) “Ready? Go!”
- ⊗ “Bzzz – time's up!” (The length of time allotted to generate answers will vary depending on the complexity and number of possible answers.)
- ⊗ “Okay, Group One, Mariana, please be the Reader. Read your answers, and all the other groups look at your list to see if you've got the same answer.”
- ⊗ Mariana reads “screwdriver” and Group Two and Group Four have it, too. They say, “Got It!” and all groups who have it, including Mariana's, cross it off their lists.
- ⊗ When Group One is done reading their list, their score will reflect how many items they had that no other group had.
- ⊗ Keep track of scores on the board. Do the same procedure for each of the remaining groups, asking, “What words did you have that they didn't?”
- ⊗ The group with the most points wins, candy for them. You can then supplement their answers with the suggested ones found in the Answer Section.  
**NOTE:** As the referee, you may have to disqualify answers that are irrelevant to the subtopic.

## On Multi-level Groups

While multi-level classes present challenges, *Got It!*, like any team-based exercise, facilitates the process of language learning. A higher-level student has the role of Writer, an intermediate is Reader, and a beginner scans the list. When students hear a word, they cross it out and call, “Got it!” Because there are both Easy and Hard topics, you can use cards appropriate to your students’ proficiency. The use of a picture dictionary facilitates comprehension for all and helps to equalize the playing field. See page 83 for suggestions for doing so.

## Expanding Your Topics Collection

After using this *Got It!* activity for many years, I have a large collection of topics. On page 41, I have added a list of 24 extra topics that I know work well. However, I encourage you to choose your own; you know your students, and the best topics are those that reflect their interests and needs. On page 82 there is a blank topic sheet (Topic O). Copy it, create your own topic and subtopics, and you’ve really got it!

## Expanding the Game to Other Activities

In the back of the book, beginning on page 83, are suggestions for alternative and additional activities that will maximize the use of the games.

## A Parting Word or Two

Language learning is enhanced when infused with a bit of fun. I’ve played ***Got It!*** with ESOL students for years with continued success; they ‘get into’ it, have fun with it, communicate, and develop a curiosity about the meanings of words. Have fun! – PG