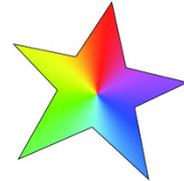




## Stargame rules



The Stargame is a very effective and enjoyable game which develops sight vocabulary, decoding skills and vocabulary. It takes about 5 minutes to play and can be used to directly reinforce the spelling/reading vocabulary or word families which have just been taught. You can print word sets from the relevant list on Steps. Just go to the print menu for the list you wish to practice.

You can use word family packs or sight vocabulary packs (or a combination of both). The cards in the sight-vocabulary or vocabulary pack are colour-coded with a shape in the top left corner. The spelling or word family packs are in spelling patterns. The spelling pattern is marked in the left-hand corner of the card and the packs are colour-coded. You will also need 9 x-change cards, marked with an X on a yellow background, and one starcard.

The word card sets and exchange cards/starcards sets can be printed from the Steps software programme. Ideally, print them in colour on 250 gsm card, then laminate them and cut them out. The sets on the software programme can also be printed in black and white, but obviously they won't look as pretty! You will not need to print out an exchange card/starcards set for every set of wordcards. It is a good idea to print out two or three sets when you start playing the Stargame and keep them somewhere safe to use with other wordcard sets in the future.

Use a pack made up of 4 different sight vocabulary sets and/or word families/spelling patterns and the x-change cards and starcard. Shuffle well and deal 7 cards to each player. Players may look at their cards.

Place the remainder of the cards face down on the table and turn over the first card. If it is the starcard or an x-change card, replace it in the middle of the pack and turn over another one so that the visible card is a wordcard.

Players take turns to follow suit with the same colour wordcard. They need to say the word as they place it on the table. If a player cannot follow suit, he may play an x-change card and say "change to another colour/another spelling pattern". The next player must then play a card of that colour/pattern. If the player cannot play, and does not have an x-change card, then he has to pick up from the pack.

The first player to get rid of all his cards is the winner.

If a player plays the starcard, everyone else in the game has to pick up 2 cards. The player has the option of changing the colour/pattern as well if he wants to.

### Variation:

If the players are required to put the word in a sentence, the game becomes a valuable language-development activity. You will find that it generates a huge amount of discussion about word usage.

### Notes:

Stargame sets are currently available on Steps for First Steps, Steps to Literacy and the first 30 High Frequency Word lists. Further lists will be added in software upgrades over the remainder of 2011.



Printed Stargame sets are available for most word families/spelling patterns from The Learning Staircase. They are also provided in the First Steps Resource Kit and Step 1 Resource Kit.

It is useful to build up a storage system for your cards. Little plastic drawer sets, such as Bunnings/Mitre 10 sell for screws or fishing bait, are very useful for this!

Label the drawers you are using and make sure that you sort out the sets after playing so you can always lay your hand on the sets you want to practice.

Once players are familiar with particular sets, take out one set and replace it with a new one, rather than presenting them with four new sets at once. In this way, sets are rotated and new wordlists can be practised as they are taught, while the three 'older' lists are still being reinforced.

**Example:** A learner may be on Unit 5 of First Steps A. He might be playing with the sight vocabulary lists from Units 2-5 (4 sets), or he might be playing with a combination of sight vocabulary lists, plus the relevant word family lists. An example for this learner might be:

*Unit 4 Sight vocabulary list*

*-un words*

*Unit 5 Sight vocabulary list*

*-in words (plus the X-change card/starcard set, of course)*