Age: All

Level: All

Time: 30 minutes +

Lesson focus: understanding the Top Trumps cards, categories and game-play

Language focus: useful expressions for playing the game; comparatives and superlatives

Materials: Cut-out packs of Top Trumps Emotis cards (optionally, get the students to do this at the start of the lesson). The ideal number of players is two to four per pack so you will need to prepare enough packs for your class to play with.

a **trump** or **trump card**: noun [countable] /trʌmp/ a card belonging to the suit (=one of the four types of cards) that players decide will be worth the most in a card game

to **trump**: verb [transitive] /trʌmp/ to win or to succeed, for example in sports or business, because you have an advantage that your opponent does not have

www.macmillandictionary.com

The aim of the game

Top Trumps Emotis is a card game in which each card contains a short list of information about a specific Emoti symbol. Players compare this information and try to win cards from their opponents.

The cards

This Top Trumps set is made up of 30 original cards. Each card contains information about a different Emoti symbol. The information on each card provides you with:

- the name of the Emoti
- a picture of the Emoti symbol
- a short text
- five categories and a number or amount (score) for each category

The short text is different on each card and contains a description of the physical features of the Emoti symbol, as well as information about the idea it expresses and when you might use it in a message. All 30 Emotis are commonly used when writing instant messages and online comments. They can express feelings (like extreme happiness, anger, etc) or communicate ideas (like agreement, sarcasm, etc).

The five categories

The five categories are the same on each card. The numbers or amounts given for each category are different on each card and apply only to the Emoti on that card. The categories are important for playing the game.

Friendliness: This category expresses how friendly a person could be feeling when they use this particular Emoti in a message. The scores range from a very unfriendly 4 (for the Rage Emoti) to a love-filled 50 (for both the Heart and Two Hearts Emotis). In this category, the highest number wins, e.g. Smirk (score = 35) will trump (i.e. beat) Sob (score = 14).

Fury: This category expresses how angry a person could be feeling when they use this particular Emoti in a message. The scores range from a totally calm 0 (for the Peace Emoti) to a furious 5 (for the Rage Emoti). If a player decides to play this category, it means they want the angrier Emotis to win. Hence, the highest number wins e.g. Unamused (score = 4) will trump Thumbs Up (score = 1).

Tweet Rank: This category shows which Emotis are the most popular on Twitter. The number is part of a ranking which ranges from a relatively unpopular #88 (for the Poop Emoti) to the most popular #1 (for the Heart Emoti). As this category is a ranking, the lowest number wins, e.g. Relaxed (ranking = #5) will trump Raised Hands (ranking = #18).

Colour: This category gives a score for how colourful the Emoti symbol is. The scores range from an uncolourful 1 (for the Notes Emoti) to a very colourful 9 (for the Information Desk Person Emoti). In this category, the highest number wins, e.g. Heart Eyes (score = 6) will trump OK Hand (score = 1).

Top Trumps Rating: This category gives a score to each Emoti, based on how funny or useful it is. The

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scores range from 18 (for the Unamused Emoti) to 100 (for the Heart Emoti). In this category, the highest number wins, e.g. Pray (score = 70) will trump Pensive (score = 47).

Strategy tips

- Remember that it depends on the category whether it is the highest or the lowest number which wins. The highest number wins for Friendliness, Fury, Colour and Top Trumps Rating. The lowest number wins for Tweet Rank.
- Do not reveal the details of the category ranges to your students. As they play the game, they will gain more knowledge of the cards and will be able to play more strategically as they get to know the categories.

How to play (and win) the game

The minimum number of players is two and the maximum is six. The ideal number is three or four players.

Easy version

- Shuffle the cards and deal them all out, face down, to the players.
- Each player holds their cards face up in the palm of their hand. The players may only look at their top card.
- The game proceeds clockwise. The player to the left of the dealer starts by reading out a category from their top card, e.g. 'Colour score: 5'.
- The other players then read out the same category from the card that is at the top of the pile in their hand.
- Depending on the category (see above), the player with the highest or the lowest number wins all the cards in that round and places them at the bottom of their pile.
- The player who won that round starts the next round.
- If two cards have the same value, the round is drawn and there is no winner. Place all the cards in the middle. The winner of the following round wins these cards too.
- The game ends when one player has won all the cards.

Advanced version

Play the game as above, but instead of just reading the category and score, put them into (grammatically correct) sentences, e.g.

People use the Relaxed Emoti when they feel comfortable and happy – it has a Friendliness score of 40.

The Expressionless Emoti can be used to express that you're a bit angry – it has a Fury score of 3.

The Pray Emoti is the twenty-fifth most popular Emoti on Twitter.

The OK Hand only uses two different colours so it only has a Colour score of 1.

The Poop Emoti has a really high Top Trumps rating of 90 – I suppose that's because it really makes people laugh!

Language practice

Playing the game provides a great opportunity to revise comparatives as they appear and are required. With lower-level students especially, remind them of the most common structures and their negative forms before you start the game:

> **(not) higher than** = the comparative form of the adjective + than
>
> **(not) as much as** = as + adverb + as
>
> **(not) much more than** = adverb + the comparative form of the adjective + than

Periodically (or if you hear the structure being used incorrectly), pause the game and ask the students to compare the information on the top card in the pile they are each holding, e.g. *The Pensive Emoti is more popular on Twitter than the Peace Emoti,* or *The Sunglasses Emoti isn't as friendly as the Thumbs Up Emoti.*

After making comparisons, the students could make superlative sentences from the information they have just discussed, e.g. *The Two Hearts Emoti is the friendliest Emoti in our group,* or *The Eyes Emoti is the least colourful picture.*

Note: For the basic game, the texts provide interesting information only. For later lesson plans, they will become more important.

> **Useful expressions**
>
> *Whose go / turn is it?*
>
> *It's your go / turn.*
>
> *Shuffle the cards.*
>
> *Deal the cards.*
>
> *I haven't got any cards left.*
>
> *I've won!*