

## Teachers notes: The reporter game

- Aim:** A game in which students create stories for an imaginary newspaper.
- Level:** intermediate +
- Age:** teenagers and adults
- Class size:** 2 + (preferably an even number of students)
- Time:** 45 - 90 minutes depending on the number of stories you give your students to write.

### Resources:

1. The reporter game board (enlarged to A3 size)
2. Storyboard
3. Scoop cards
4. Celebrity cards
5. Bonus cards
6. Photo cards (all provided)
7. a die and counters

### Warm-up

Bring in a copy of a newspaper like *The Mirror* and a newspaper like *The Guardian*. Hold them up to the class or circulate. Ask students what we call the two types of paper. Elicit *tabloid* and *broadsheet*. Ask students to explain the differences in look and style. (In general, tabloids have bigger, punchy headlines and more photos and their stories are lighter). Ask students which they prefer, and to give examples of current stories in the news.

### Extension

Use one of the news stories from [www.onestopenenglish.com](http://www.onestopenenglish.com) before playing the game.

Elicit vocabulary for the game including a headline, a scoop, celebrities, types of stories e.g. natural disasters, love stories, political scandals, financial news, stock market variations etc. Ask students what type of stories appear in the two main types of newspapers.

### Explain the rules for the reporter game

- Explain that this is a creative writing game. The objective is to write 1, 2 or 3 stories. Decide in advance, depending how much time you have available.
- Points will be awarded for originality, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, celebrities featured, photos, headlines and bonuses.
- The 'interest' of the story (if their newspaper is a tabloid or broadsheet) is also important.

## The rules

### Round one

1. Divide the class into pairs or teams, if you have a large class.
2. Give each team a copy of the storyboard sheet and ask them to create a newspaper name and type - tabloid or broadsheet, and to write this information at the top.
3. Each team starts on the GO square and moves around the board anti-clockwise collecting cards upon which the story will be based. There are five types of square:

1	Celebrity card	Different celebrities are shown for use in the story. A celebrity like Madonna is worth more points for a tabloid than a broadsheet. Conversely Chirac is of more interest to a broadsheet.
2	Scoop card	These are the main story categories, e.g. stock market crash, love, disaster etc. Again different types of story are worth more or less points, depending on the type of newspaper - tabloid or broadsheet.
3	Bonus	Extra points are available for your next story.
4	Paparazzi	You can 'steal' one of your opponent's cards.
5	Photo card	Extra points available for your next story.

4. Teams continue around the board collecting cards. When all teams have passed GO, there is a short negotiation stage, where teams can swap cards.
5. Next, each team decides the subject of their story (the scoop card), which is placed or written in the space on the storyboard). If the team newspaper is a broadsheet, they get better points for a financial or political type of story. Conversely scandals or love affairs score more highly in the tabloids.
6. Each story should be about 100 to 150 words. Teams can place up to two celebrity cards, a photo card, and a bonus card on their storyboard. The celebrity (ies) must be included in the story to get their points value.
7. When everything is in place, the team can either start writing the story first, or devise a headline. The total time allowed is 15 minutes (this can be extended, depending on level). Emphasize that the Editor (the teacher), is looking for creativity and good use of English, including vocabulary and suitability. Explain how points will be awarded:

1.	Story type (scoop card)	up to 5 points
2.	Celebrity (celebrity card(s))	Up to 10 points
3.	Bonus	Up to 5 points
4.	Photo	Up to 5 points
5.	Headline	Up to 5 points
6.	Story writing	Up to 20 points

8. Circulate during the writing phase, helping with vocabulary, grammar etc. After 15 minutes, stop the teams. Ask one member of the team to present their story. Get comments at the end, corrections, discuss etc.

### Second round

Teams all go back to the GO square and return cards to the bottom of their respective piles. Teams go around the board a second time collecting cards for the next story. During this time the Editor (you), will have time to correct the stories and allocate points. Announce the point totals for the first story just before the second writing phase. Continue for as many rounds of stories as you wish. The winning team is the one with the most points after the end of all the story writing phases.

For homework you could ask the students to write their own version of a current news story.