

# TRADES & CHARADES: SPEECH THERAPY CARD GAME

## Background Information

The following poster is an insight into the creation of 'Trades & Charades', a card game for late primary - early secondary school aged pupils (9 - 14) with speech, language, and communication needs. It is designed to be used by speech and language therapists working in therapeutic contexts with this client group.

The game of 'Trades and Charades' (T&C hereafter) uses picture cards and 'speech coins' to facilitate game mechanisms. Players are allocated 10 cards, each containing a common English noun or verb and a corresponding black-and-white drawing. Players must use gesture and non-speech sounds to prompt other player/s to guess said word.

Cards range in difficulty from Easy - e.g. easily gestured words such as 'phone' or 'cow' - to Extreme, characterised by low-imageability words such as 'recycle' and 'Newcastle'. The level of difficulty is denoted by colour: 'Easy' is dark blue, 'Medium' is green, 'Hard' is magenta and 'Extreme' is gold.

Players are also given two 'Speech Coins' for every ten cards, which they can cash in at any time to say or write three words - so, for example, if one was struggling to gesture 'Newcastle', one could cash in a Speech Coin to say 'Geordie, Tyne, Shearer'.



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PIC 1: Sample of cards.



PIC 2: Coins used in game.

## Reflections, Future Steps, and How to Contact Us

Based on the feedback from the general public and the youth focus group, we have made the following patches to the game:

- The amount of cards, particularly in the easier levels of the game, has been greatly increased; the overall number of cards has grown from 68 to 110.
- Clearer instructions will be provided for the use of the coins, as this has been highlighted in feedback as an area prone to misunderstandings.
- We have made changes based on regional and cultural variations in the use of words, and how drawings may be interpreted. This is something we will continue to take into account for Trades & Charades 2.0.
- We are also looking at the possibility of themed 'expansion packs' in Trades & Charades 2.0.

@TradesCharades on Twitter has instructions on how to download the game for free. Please enjoy!

## Aims & Methods

### LITERATURE REVIEW

To better understand the qualities of a successful card game, particularly in a therapeutic context, we performed a literature review of the available material. From this, we were able to identify four qualities of a successful card game: high enjoyability, clear design, breakdown of existing power balance between players, and replayability.

### WHAT DID THE GENERAL PUBLIC THINK?

Our aim following the literature review was to assess how successfully the prototype of 'Trades & Charades' met the qualities we had set out. We decided that we would need to gather the opinions of the non-specialist general population via a survey. In total 16 members of the public completed the survey, with all having played at least one round of the game.

We asked participants to rank the game against our qualities on a numerical scale from 1 - 10, with 10 being the highest value e.g. most like the quality. The mean ratings for each quality were: Enjoyability: 8.56; Replayability: 8.00; Clear design: 8.81. These results are extremely promising, with no participants ranking any value as lower than 5 on the scale.

### WHAT DID THE 10 YEAR OLDS THINK?

We were able to organise a focus group of 10-year-olds with speech, language, and communication needs. The young people played the game and provided the following qualitative feedback for this report:

- The young people enjoyed the fact that there were multiple ways to act out a single word; for example, 'espresso' could be the act of drinking, or acting out the subsequent energy boost from caffeine.
- We observed that the young people grasped the rules of the game quickly, perhaps indicating that the game was intuitive to play.
- The main area to improve, suggested by all of the young people, was to increase the number of cards in the game. This became apparent as, when playing with a larger group than 2 - 3 players, the same cards were repeatedly being drawn.