

Smarticulation™ Language Edition I

The Game That Helps You Express Yourself Intelligently!

Hello, gentle player!

My name is Arthur Q. Pebbleton – call me Artie, please – and I’ll be your guide on the great thoroughfare we call the English Language. I’m an authority in the twin disciplines of Learning and Fun, and it is with these credentials that I welcome you to Smarticulation™.

/Smar.tɪ.kju.ˈle.ʃən/

What is *Smarticulation*? It’s a *portmanteau word*, or blend of the words *smart* and *articulation*. You won’t find it in any dictionaries, but I believe that if a word has meaning, then, darn it, it’s a word. I think *smarticulation* embodies the spirit of this game, which combines learning with the joy of playing with language. In this game, the first in a series, you’ll find instruction, trivia, recommendations, and occasional opinions, to be heeded or ignored.

Game Overview

Smarticulation Language Edition I is an English language skill-building game that helps you *Express Yourself Intelligently*. The game consists of 40 Challenge cards. Each card has one Primary Challenge and three Bonus Challenges, which you and other players answer correctly to earn points. (There are 160 Challenges in all.) Each Primary Challenge answer is worth two points and each Bonus Challenge answer is worth one point. ***The first player to reach 10 points wins!***

The cards are divided into four different sections:

- *Out on a Limerick*
- *On the Road*
- *The Eschewbox*
- *Rooted Out*

Quick and dirty rules:

1. *Out on a Limerick* – Fill in the blank at the end of the limerick with the correct Greek or Latin prefix.
2. *On the Road* – Identify the author of each diary entry, and the work of fiction he or she comes from.
3. *The Eschewbox* – Find the common grammatical errors and put them in a box far away! The number of corrections you must make is in parentheses at the end of each Primary Challenge. *Eschew* (from the Old German *sciuhēn*, to scare off) means to *shun* or *avoid*.
4. *Rooted Out* – Replace the [***bracketed words***] in the Primary Challenges with one of the multiple-choice answers.

Please see *How Each Section Works* below for specific directions on how to answer the Primary Challenges in each Section.

What this game helps you do:

I designed Smarticulation to help you tighten up your writing, catch the mistakes you might make in everyday speech, and improve your vocabulary. You'll also learn all sorts of trivia, which will propel you confidently through interviews, first dates, and cocktail parties. Some of it is challenging. But I have faith in you. You're playing this game because you want to be challenged.

Smarticulation isn't about knowing; it's about learning! But I also designed it to be fun, and I hope you'll agree as you play. The sad truth is that people will judge you for the way you talk, how you write, and even your scores on standardized tests. I don't think this should be the way someone judges your intelligence, but I don't make the rules; if I did, nobody would make *any* snap judgments about intelligence. But if you express yourself in a smart and articulate way, people will recognize you for the capable person you are and you'll earn their respect. That's what this game can do. With that in mind, let's get started!

Yours in learning,

- Artie

What's in the Box?

- 40 Challenge Cards, each featuring one Primary Challenge and three Bonus Challenges on the card front, and answers to the Primary Challenge and Bonus Challenges on the card back
- This Instructions Booklet

How to Play

For Two or More Players or Teams

1. Shuffle the deck and put the cards down with the Challenge side face up.
2. Pick one person to be the Reader for each round. (Whoever has the closest birthday is the first Reader.) Everyone else is a Player. A round is complete when both the Primary and Bonus Challenges are answered correctly, or when all the Players are stumped.
3. The Reader takes a card from the top of the deck and reads the Primary Challenge out loud. The Reader looks at the answer on the back of the card and keeps it covered so the Players can't see the answer.
4. Each Player, starting clockwise from the Reader, has one minute to look at the front of the card and answer the Primary Challenge. The Player who says the correct answer out loud earns two points. The card is passed back to the Reader, who reads the short Primary Challenge answer (**in bold letters**) out loud. The Reader then reads the entire answer out loud so everybody learns even more. If no Player gets it right, the Reader reads the answer out loud, places the card at the bottom of the deck and the round is over.
5. The Player who answered the Primary Challenge correctly gets to pick a Bonus Challenge.

6. The Reader reads that Bonus Challenge out loud. The Player has one minute to look at the card and answer the Bonus Challenge out loud before it passes on, clockwise around the table. The Player who answers the Bonus Challenge correctly (the short answer in **bold letters**) gets a point. If that Player doesn't answer correctly, going clockwise, each Player gets a one-minute turn to earn a point and end the round. If no Player comes up with the correct answer to the Bonus Challenge, the Reader reads the Bonus Challenge answer out loud to all, puts the card at the bottom of the deck, and the round is over.
7. The Player who is clockwise to the Reader becomes the new Reader and a new round begins.
8. The first Player or Team to earn ten points wins the game!

Single Player

1. Shuffle the deck and put the cards down with the Challenge side face up. Take a card from the top of the deck and read the Primary Challenge.
2. If you get it right, take the next card and test yourself on another Primary Challenge.
3. If you're stumped, set the card aside and move to the next card. If you get it right, move on through the Bonus Challenges in order. (Look at just the answer to each Bonus Challenge as you play, 'cause you're on the honor system here!)
4. When you get stumped on a Bonus Challenge set the card aside and try the next card, starting with the Primary Challenge.
5. A round is over when you decide to stop. Play as often as you like – the many Bonus Challenges let you play, over and over again.

Once you understand how the game works, the possibilities for play are endless. If you come up with a new idea for the game, please e-mail it to us; if we like it, we'll post it on our website, credit your ingenuity, and send you a free game to boot!

How Each Section Works

1. Out on a Limerick

Fill in the **Out on a Limerick** blank with the proper prefix and spell it correctly to win two points and move on to the Bonus Challenges.

There once was a limerick game
 With a silly tree pun in its name
 In which meanings, that we fix
 To classical prefix,
 Once Greek to us, now become tame.

To increase your grammatical rank,
 End the limerick and fill in the blank.
 It isn't that hard;
 Get it right, win the card,
 And you can take that to the bank.

Remember:

1. A *prefix* is a unit of language that you place at the *beginning* of a word. For example, “super-” is a prefix. Put “super-” in front of “human” to form “superhuman” – which is what you’ll be after you play Smarticulation. (Hint: Prefixes usually do not stand as words on their own, although “super” can.)
2. A *suffix* is just like a prefix, but it goes at the *end* of a word. A suffix changes the meaning of a word (like changing the verb *to calculate* to the noun *calculation*). Like prefixes, suffixes are units of language that cannot stand on their own in a sentence. I couldn’t say “Please pass me the –tion, if you would,” or “I lost my –ment!”
3. A *limerick* is a five-line poem with an A-A-B-B-A rhyme scheme and a tendency towards prurience* or horrible puns. Here at Smarticulation, we shall avoid the former, as this is a family game.

* *Prurience* (from the Latin *pruriens*, *it itches*) is a tactless interest in the sexual side of everything.

2. On the Road

Identify the **On the Road** diarist (a fancy way of saying “diary writer”) and the work of fiction to win two Primary Challenge points and move on to the Bonus Challenges.

“There is no Frigate like a Book/to take us Lands away.”

– Emily Dickinson

Travel has always been an excuse for a great story. The Road is paved with tales, whether it’s the sea, air, or – hey! – an actual road. Each **On the Road** diary entry has been written by a central character in a great work of literature where travel plays a key theme. These diaries are purely fictional. Names have been abbreviated because the writer is familiar with them. These works have captivated readers for generations.

3. The Eschewbox

Read the Primary Challenges on the front of **The Eschewbox** cards out loud, then identify the word or words that need to be removed or corrected. The number of corrections that must be made on each card is in parentheses at the end of the Primary Challenge. Get it right and you move on to the Bonus Challenges.

If the English language is a garden of words, then there are certain phrases that need weeding every time they’re detected.

I’m not talking about plants that get a bad rap, like dandelions. I’m talking about the terrors of the garden: Chokeweed! Kudzu! Poisoned groundwater!

If you use the words in this game in your writing and speech, you will poison your prose. You must avoid these words at all costs – that is why this section is called *The Eschewbox*-- because that is where they must go: far, far away, and under your bed to be forgotten. Like dust bunnies.

People judge us by the way we use words and certain words throw up big red flags that scream “incompetence!” I don’t want people thinking you’re incompetent before they’ve even met you. I’m sure you don’t either.

4. Rooted Out

Read the sentences on the **Rooted Out** cards aloud; replace the *[bracketed words]* in the Primary Challenges with one of the multiple-choice answers. If you get the Primary Challenge right, move on to the Bonus Challenges.

English has its roots in German. Once upon a time, our ancestors spoke a language that is the forerunner of modern German, Dutch, and Swedish, among others.

But England was conquered again and again by speakers of other languages, like the Anglo-Saxons. Each conquest brought English into greater contact with the early Catholic Church and classical languages like Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. As a result, when English speakers coin a new word, they don’t do it by combining Anglo-Saxon words, but by combining Greek and Latin ones.

The word *television* is a perfect example of this. Tele- comes from the Greek *tele*, meaning far, and -vision comes from the Latin *videre*, meaning “to see.” In modern German, a television is a *Fernsehen*, which means pretty much the same thing. Why don’t we call our TVs *Farseers*?

Well, that’s really a question about why English uses more Latin and Greek roots than German roots -- and a discussion for another day. For now, let’s play the game! (You see, if you understand a few Latin or Greek roots, you can unlock the meaning of all sorts of words you never thought you knew.)

I wish you good luck, good leisure, and good learning. Enjoy Smarticulation!

NB*: We, at LeftSide-RightSide use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as a pronunciation system, as well as our own house style. Explanations for why our style is the way it is can be found at our website, LeftSide-RightSide.com. Please send your questions and comments to Artie@LeftSide-RightSide.com. We’ll try to answer in a timely fashion.

*NB is short for *nota bene* which means *note well* in Latin.

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