

## The Dictionary Game

*This game is similar to a commercially-available game called Balderdash, but it is easy to play using only the materials below. The purpose of the game for talented learners is to develop playfulness with language, a sense of vocabulary and word meanings, and the possibility of adding to a storehouse of new words. Creative thinking and precision in writing are additional goals.*

Materials:     a large or unabridged dictionary  
                  scrap paper  
                  pencils

### How to Play:

- One person finds a word in the dictionary that no one in the group knows. This person pronounces the word and identifies the part of speech.
- Each person creates a possible, believable definition for the word while the person with the dictionary writes down the actual definition, (using the same kind of paper). If there are multiple meanings for the word, just use the first one.
- Players give their invented definitions to the person who chose the word. That individual mixes them up, placing the actual definition within the slips of paper, and then reads aloud all of the definitions as the players listen for the one that is most convincing.
- As the leader reads the definitions a second time, each player votes for the one that she/he believes is the real one.

Scoring is as follows, if you want to keep score: A person gets one point for each vote received by her/his definition. Any player who guesses the actual definition gets two points.

Here's an example: Suppose the leader chooses the word "ukase" (noun). Which of the following is the real definition?

- A. A leather carrier for a musical instrument
- B. An edict of a czar
- C. A tropical plant that yields a substance used in the manufacture of rubber
- D. A soft, white Scandinavian cheese

The correct answer is B. Each person who voted for B would get two points. Individuals who wrote the other definitions would receive a point for each vote cast for their definition.

Adapted from *The Book of Think* by Marilyn Burns. (Little, Brown and Company)