

# PEER-LED TEAM LEARNING LEADER TRAINING

## CHEMTaboo

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### Introduction

The use of games such as CHEMjeopardy, CHEMtwister, and CHEMTaboo motivate the learning process in a chemical context and provide insight into the topics that are being taught in the class.



The game Taboo is similar to that of charades but instead of gestures, hints are given vocally. This helps students discover principles because they have to think of ways to describe the principle without saying key words which are forbidden, or *taboo*. The object of the game is to earn the most points by explaining words to your teammates, without using the *taboo* words.

### Rules

- ❖ Split into two teams and on the first team's turn: one member of the second team turns on the timer, while another takes the "squeaker."
- ❖ A member of the first team picks up a card that has chemical structures, and describes the Guess structure to her teammates without using any of the taboo words.
- ❖ Teammates must draw out the Guess structure on the white boards (or blackboard).
- ❖ If you use a taboo word or break any other rules for clues, the second team squeaks the "squeaker."
- ❖ When your teammates guess the word, pick up the next card and describe another one!
- ❖ Stop when the timer runs out score 1 point for every word your teammates guessed.
- ❖ The opposing team gets 1 point for every time you used a taboo word.

### Using Activities for Learning

By using familiar games (ChemJeopardy, ChemTaboo, and ChemTwister), students engage in active learning while staying within their comfort zone. Some students tend to lose interest in quantitative and conceptually challenging science classes. Difficult subjects become more approachable by presenting the topics in a competitive manner via games. Students are intellectually stimulated without realizing that they are learning. Games facilitate the building of fundamental correlations better than memorizing specific facts from a text. These games motivate students to think critically in a comfortable environment where students are more apt to acquire knowledge. Further, students work in teams, thus allowing them to help each other. Correlating chemical content to the rules and format of the games requires (develops) creativity on the part of the Peer Leader.

At the University of Texas at El Paso, the general chemistry classes are composed of two hours of lecture and mandatory two hours of workshop. In the first hour, students work in a lab and engage in Explorations in order to experience “wet” chemistry. In the second hour students work in groups in order to understand the chemical concepts; this is where activities, such as games, come in. Games are a great way for students to collaborate and cooperate with each other and as a result learn a seemingly difficult subject. The use of games such as CHEMJeopardy, CHEMTwister, and CHEMTaboo motivate the learning process in a chemical context and provide insight into the topics that are being taught in the class.

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