

# Game of Lies: Grill the Teacher

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<b>Levels</b>	<b>All</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<i>Improve speaking skills (oral grammar and pragmatic competence)</i> <i>Create and ask questions (present perfect/simple past)</i>	
<b>Class Time</b>	<b>20–30 minutes</b>	
<b>Preparation Time</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>	
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Video Tutorial</b>	YouTube link
<b>Cost</b>	<b>Free</b>	

**T**his game gives students the opportunity to listen to claims by the teacher, “liar extraordinaire,” and to use question forms to determine which statements are true and which are lies. Some students may have difficulty with question forms; therefore, the opportunity to do so in a fun way can help them to develop the skills necessary to “grill” and catch the teacher in a lie. Furthermore, more proficient students can learn about pragmatic awareness and competence related to asking personal questions.

## PROCEDURE

### Before the Game

1. Review the use of question forms with students (present perfect/simple past). This can include both *wh*- questions (e.g., What is your name?) as well as yes/no questions (e.g., Are you telling the truth?).
2. Come up with 10 statements about past experiences (present perfect or simple past), including five true statements and five lies. Here are some examples (the stranger the better):
  1. I have been to Disneyland.
  2. I have climbed a mountain.
  3. I have met the mayor of our city.
  4. I have lived in Japan.
  5. I have eaten an insect.
  6. I have seen a ghost.
  7. I have been on TV.
  8. I have jumped from an airplane.
  9. I have swum with dolphins.
  10. I have gone skinny dipping.

### During the Game

3. Write/display the 10 statements on the board or screen, and then read, with confidence and gusto, the statements to the class.

- Break the class into groups (three to five students per group, depending on class size). Each group has 7–10 minutes to come up with some “grilling” questions, and they then take turns asking you about the suspicious claims. They need to use question forms (past tense). For example, they may want to ask about why and when you were on TV. Here are some examples:

Student/Group 1: Why were you on TV?

Student/Group 2: When were you on TV?

Student/Group 3: What was the name of the program?

- Of course, the truth is not necessary on your part; you can and should “channel Pinocchio” while weaving some tall tales—the taller the better. (I.e., you should lie convincingly!) The groups can ask about any of the claims and ask as many questions as they can in the allotted time (e.g., 10–15 minutes).
- The groups then have 5 minutes to determine which claims are true and which are lies. You could put a chart on the board to tally the results. The group with the most correct answers is the winner. Here is an example:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Team 1	T	T	F	F	F	T	T	F	T	F
Team 2	F	F	T	T	T	F	T	T	F	F
Team 3	F	T	F	T	T	T	F	F	T	F
Team 4	T	T	T	F	F	T	F	T	F	F

True answers: 3, 4, 6, 7, 10

False answers: 1, 2, 5, 8, 9

According to these results, Team 2 wins with the most correct answers (6/10).

### After the Game

- You can elaborate on the true statements and let the students ask some more questions if they have any. (E.g., Why did you live in Japan? What was it like?)
- Ask the students to write some true and false statements of their own.

### CAVEATS AND OPTIONS

- This game can be played with online platforms, such as Kahoot ([kahoot.com](https://kahoot.com)) and Poll Everywhere ([www.poll.everywhere.com](https://www.poll.everywhere.com)).
- This game can be turned into a student-centered activity. Students can write their own true and false statements, and students in groups can ask about them (jigsaw activity).
- This game is great for developing pragmatic awareness related to asking personal questions. You can help more advanced students to understand politeness strategies. (E.g., Do you mind if I ask why you went skinny dipping?)
- The game can also be adapted into a Sherlock Holmes-themed activity. The students become the detectives grilling the suspect, the teacher, about the dubious claims. The students could also play the role of the prying lawyer in court as they grill the witness (the teacher).