



Games to Improve Executive Functioning Skills

Executive Functions are the processes in our brains to help us accomplish all tasks from beginning to end. We use them when we plan our day, organize our materials, begin a chore, focus on important information, use our time wisely, and work through challenges until we accomplish a goal.

Specific skills include:

- **Planning**
- **Organization**
- **Time Management**
- **Task Initiation**
- **Working Memory**
- **Self-Control**
- **Attention**
- **Flexibility**

Here are some games for practicing executive functioning skills:

BLURT - Skills used: **Self-Control**

- In this game, a definition of a word is read and players have to figure out the word itself. Example: Question: What is a partially dried grape? Whoever blurts the answer first, gets a point. (Raisin)

SCRABBLE - Skills used: **planning, organization**

- Kids use random letters to build words and keep score as they go. Players build off words of other players.

PICTIONARY - Skills used: **Flexibility, Time management**

- Players draw phrases on paper or a whiteboard that others must guess correctly. Phrases must be drawn before the time is up.

DISTRACTION - Skills used: **working memory, attention**

- In this card game, players work on remembering numbers given to them while encountering distractions, including questions they have to answer.

5 SECOND RULE - Skills used: **Time management, task initiation**

- Players must name 3 things that fit a given topic. Categories differ greatly.

FREEZE - Skills used: **Self control and attention**

- Freeze is a game where you play music and allow players to be silly and dance. At any moment, say '**FREEZE**' and the players stand completely still. It takes a lot of self control to stop dancing to a song you're into.

JENGA - Skills use: **Self control, flexibility, planning**

- Players take turns pulling blocks from a tower carefully. They must plan and be careful so they are not the one who causes the tower to fall over. You can add questions they have to answer before removing a block.