

Word Square Workshop

HOST GUIDE - includes solutions | US Letter | v1.0.0

2-6 players, with an adult host | Suggested ages 8-11 | Plan 20-30 minutes

Keep this guide with the adult host. Let the group try before offering hint 1, then hint 2. Read the explanation only when the group is ready to check its work.

Support your group

Draw a box for each letter and cover unused bank words with a pencil mark. An adult can read the bank aloud. For a shorter session, use the three-letter warm-up and the final square.

Warm-up: a three-letter square

Hint 1: Row 2 starts with A.

Hint 2: Row 3 starts with T.

Answer: CAT / ARE / TEN

Column 1 reads CAT, column 2 ARE, and column 3 TEN. The second letter of CAT fixes the start of row 2.

Round 1: make every column agree

Hint 1: Only AREA begins with A.

Hint 2: Try LEAD in row 3, then read column 3.

Answer: BALL / AREA / LEAD / LADY

The last two rows both start with L. Row 2 fixes their second letters, and the D in row 3 fixes row 4 column 3.

Round 2: check before you commit

Hint 1: Read the first row to find the first letter of every row.

Hint 2: The third row must start with N.

Answer: SAND / AREA / NEAR / DART

Rows and columns both spell SAND, AREA, NEAR, DART. Row 4 begins with D because column 1 must read SAND.

Final: repair the mixed rows

Hint 1: The first column must spell WALL.

Hint 2: Column 2 must start with A and match row 2.

Answer: WALL / AREA / LEAD / LADY

The draft fails because column 2 is AARE, not LADY. Moving AREA to row 2, LEAD to row 3 and LADY to row 4 makes every column match its row.

How to close the session

Finish when everyone can read the final square across and down and point out the same four words in both directions. Each player names one crossing that helped them decide.

If a result differs, return to the stated rule and compare the written steps. An answer revealed by the host is help, not an independently solved puzzle.

Mechanism reference: Project Gutenberg 49137, WORD SQUARES.. New session instructions and examples.

Age and time are planning estimates. No child playtest or physical print trial is claimed.