

# Textra Games

## A Brief Definition

A *textra* game combines the effective organization of written materials with the motivational impact of playful activities. Players begin by completing a reading assignment before participating in a game that uses peer support (and peer pressure) to encourage the recall, transfer, and application of what they read.

Here are brief descriptions of two textra games:

### 1. RECALL ROULETTE

**Basic idea.** Participants work in teams to prepare question cards and chance cards. They exchange the cards and play a question-and-answer game.

**Reading materials.** Articles, job aids, reprints, technical papers, product specifications, or case studies.

**Sample reading assignment.** An article on blogging as a marketing tool.

**Learning outcome.** Increased understanding and recall of information.

**Flow.** Distribute copies of the handout to participants and ask them to study independently. Assemble participants into teams and ask each team to come up with 20 question cards (with questions on one side and correct answers on the back). Ask each team to add five chance cards (that award extra turns or take away turns). Take the packet of cards from each team, shuffle the cards, and give them to the next team. Ask team members to take turns to read the question on the top card, give the answer, confirm the answer, and earn points.

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## What's in a Name?

The term *textra game* was coined by my friend Roger Greenaway, a prolific game designer who lives in Scotland. *Textra* is a portmanteau word that combines *text* and *extra* to emphasize that the game adds extra instructional value to the text.

## 2. THIRD DEGREE

**Basic idea.** Several participants hurl a rapid series of questions at a selected participant. This person quickly responds to the questions. The procedure is repeated with other participants.

**Reading materials.** Handouts, articles, reports, and product specifications.

**Sample reading assignment.** Technical specifications about a software program.

**Learning outcome.** Greater understanding and recall of details

**Flow.** Ask teams to review the content, preparing and answering sample questions. Ask a member of Team 1 ("victim") to come to the front without the reading material. Ask representatives of other teams to come to the front with the reading material. Ask these representatives to make up questions using their reading material and keep firing the questions at the victim. Continue this for 2 minutes. Repeat the procedure with victims from other teams. Rank the victims and announce the results.