

# Going on a Picnic

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## Purpose

- Get students to attend to different aspects of words including:
  - a. morphological structures
  - b. orthographic (spelling) patterns
  - c. phonological patterns

## Materials

- Paper or whiteboard; divided in halves labeled “Yes” and “No”
- Pencil, pen, or markers
- Index cards (optional)
- Table A, B, or C printouts and blank paper (optional)

## Instructions

Begin by telling students that you are going on a “picnic.” But this is a special picnic; you can only bring words that follow a certain rule. It’s the students’ job to figure out what the rule is by analyzing the words in the “Yes” and “No” sections, looking for patterns, and testing their hypotheses.

Here, we’ve included 3 examples for picnics that follow 3 different rules:

[Table A](#) follows a **morphological** pattern.

[Table B](#) follows an **orthographic** pattern.

[Table C](#) follows a **phonological** pattern.

The rules you choose should always reflect the prior knowledge of your students. As your students learn new rules about the way words work, they will be able to play using more complex rules.

Once you’ve chosen a “secret rule,” begin to add words to the “Yes” and “No” columns as you tell a silly story about what you can and cannot bring. Using Table A as an example, you might introduce the words by saying, “At our picnic, we can eat **watermelon**, but we can’t have any **apples**.” As you say each target word, add them to the appropriate column so that students can directly compare them. Optionally, you can print the Tables and use a blank paper to expose one row at a time. For a large group, use index cards or write the words on a board. As you add more words, be sure to leave time for students to offer hypotheses and reason out loud.



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When a student thinks they know the rule, ask them to offer examples of words that would be included or not, rather than say the rule. This allows other students to continue the game play, and gives you an idea about how your students are drawing connections between the words. Once the rule is discovered (or if students are stumped), make a new rule and play again!

## Variations

### Supports:

- Write out words on index cards before the game
- Use different colored pens for bases and affixes
- Give students repeated prior exposure to the relevant rule ahead of game play

### Extensions:

- Try using a “double rule” like *“Only compound words with the -s suffix can come!”*
- Have students make their own rule and produce example words
- Explore some of the most interesting words using an etymological dictionary
- Create a story using all of the words from the picnic

We would love to hear about the fun rules you and your students come up with! Reach out to us on our [FB page](#) or drop us a line at [team@wordsinthewild.org](mailto:team@wordsinthewild.org)!



## Going on a Picnic - Table A

Yes	No
<b>watermelon</b>	<b>apples</b>
<b>baseball</b>	<b>soccer</b>
<b>butterfly</b>	<b>bee</b>
<b>grasshopper</b>	<b>grass</b>
<b>rainbow</b>	<b>clouds</b>
<b>airplane</b>	<b>bus</b>
<b>cupcakes</b>	<b>cookie</b>
<b>sailboat</b>	<b>canoe</b>
<b>grandparents</b>	<b>cousins</b>
<b>sunglasses</b>	<b>shade</b>
<b>fireworks</b>	<b>sparklers</b>

Rule: "You can only bring compound words."



## Going on a Picnic - Table B

Yes	No
<b>puppies</b>	<b>dogs</b>
<b>stories</b>	<b>books</b>
<b>babies</b>	<b>kids</b>
<b>fireflies</b>	<b>ladybugs</b>
<b>happiest</b>	<b>smile</b>
<b>messiest</b>	<b>towels</b>
<b>ponies</b>	<b>horse</b>
<b>beautiful</b>	<b>picturesque</b>
<b>pennies</b>	<b>dollars</b>
<b>fairies</b>	<b>magic</b>
<b>discoveries</b>	<b>adventures</b>

Rule: "You can only bring words that change <y> → <i>."



## Going on a Picnic - Table C

Yes	No
<b>basket</b>	<b>bag</b>
<b>cooler</b>	<b>ice</b>
<b>cookies</b>	<b>fruit</b>
<b>camp</b>	<b>tent</b>
<b>lake</b>	<b>ocean</b>
<b>car</b>	<b>bus</b>
<b>pickles</b>	<b>pizza</b>
<b>hike</b>	<b>run</b>
<b>karate</b>	<b>chop</b>
<b>kite</b>	<b>frisbee</b>
<b>cake</b>	<b>pie</b>

Rule: "You can only bring words with the phoneme /k/."

