

Next Word

Twelve cards, one die, a language model. Guess what it says next.

OBJECTIVE

The 12 Model cards are a tiny language model, built by counting which word came next in a six-sentence story. Roll the die to make it talk, one word at a time. Before every roll, guess the next word. After every sentence, vote: did the model remember it from the story, or make it up? First to 10 points wins.

QUICK START – READ THIS, START PLAYING

- 1 Read the two Story cards aloud once. That's the model's training. Turn them face-down.
- 2 Spread the Model cards face-up. Put the coin on START. The Speaker holds the die.
- 3 Count 3-2-1 and everyone says the word they think comes next. The Speaker rolls, reads that face on the coin's card, and moves the coin to the word it names. Said that word? +1. (A card that says Always: nothing to guess, just move.)
- 4 At END, everyone votes thumbs up (remembered from the story) or thumbs down (made up). Flip the Story cards to check. Right vote? +1. Pass the die left.

SETUP

- 1 Lay out the 12 Model cards face-up where everyone can read them. They are public. The model has no secrets, only counts.
- 2 Read both Story cards aloud, once, slowly. That's everything the model ever read. Then turn them face-down.
- 3 Put a coin on the START card. The youngest player is the first Speaker and holds the die.

EACH WORD

- 1 Everyone, the Speaker too, counts 3-2-1 and says out loud the word they think comes next.
- 2 The Speaker rolls and finds that number on the card under the coin. That's the next word. Say it, and move the coin to that word's card.
- 3 Everyone who said that word scores 1.
- 4 If the card says Always, there's nothing to guess and nothing to roll. Just move the coin.
- 5 Keep going from the new card. The sentence ends at END.

END OF THE SENTENCE

- 1 Read the whole sentence back. Everyone votes at once: thumbs up = REMEMBERED (it's in the story word for word), thumbs down = MADE UP.
- 2 Flip the Story cards and check. Every right vote scores 1. Turn them face-down again.
- 3 Pass the die left. The coin goes back on START.
- 4 First to 10 points wins. Ties share the win.

TIPS

- 1 Say the word with the most faces. You won't always be right, but you'll be right most often.
- 2 Bet on MADE UP. About 6 out of every 10 sentences the cards roll are not in the story, even though every pair of words in them is.
- 3 A sentence can sound fine and still be made up. That's the trap.

WHAT THE CARDS TEACH

- 1 Next word: a chatbot writes one word at a time, picking each from what usually came next in what it read.
- 2 The model is just counts: every card was made by counting the story. Check one.
- 3 Likely isn't true: "the cat ate a hat" sounds right but never happened. When a chatbot does that, it's called a hallucination.
- 4 Rolling gives variety. Real chatbots roll too. It's why the same question can get different answers.
- 5 One word of memory: these cards only look at the last word. Real models look back over thousands.