

# I bet I'm right: A professional tone “gambling” game

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## Target learners:

- ESL
- Undergraduates
- Graduates

## Objectives:

*Students will be able to:*

- Adjust word choices and sentence structures to demonstrate appropriate professional tone in varying contexts

## Preparation:

Students:

- should be assigned a variety of relevant resources to review and/or complete as homework for this class session.

Instructors:

- revise the game items as needed to target the required skill; no more than 10 items are needed.
- printed copies of **BETTING SHEET\_PDF** (enough for all teams)
- printed (and prepared / cut) enough **MUNNY\_PDF** so that each team receives \$100 (\$10 x 10) + money to pay out winning bets (recommended: \$500+)
  - Instructors may choose their own form of “munny” instead, such as coins, poker chips, candies, etc.

## Teacher instructions and tasks:

### [5-10 min] Form groups and explain rules

The instructor should group students in pairs or 3s (no more than 4 per group), and distribute \$100 in **MUNNY\_PDF** and a **BETTING SHEET\_PDF** to each group. Then, the instructor should

explain how the game works and the general rules to follow. These instructions / rules should be displayed for students at the start of the **TONE GAMBLE\_PPT**.

## **[20 min] Round 1 of game**

The instructor should progress through the **TONE GAMBLE\_PPT** for round 1.

The instructor will use a timer to give students 30-seconds for each item in round 1. During these 30 seconds, students will discuss the answer with their team members, quickly consult sources, and place their bet (is it “OK” or “Needs Revision”?) on their **BETTING SHEET\_PDF**. In this round, there is a minimum bet of \$10 and a maximum of \$30

Once 30-seconds have passed, the instructor will check that each team has placed their bet and then reveal the answer on the slide. The instructor will then walk around and either pay out winning bets or collect losing bets.

For example, if a team bet \$20 and their answer was correct, the instructor will pay them another \$20; if a team bet \$20 and their answer was incorrect, the instructor will collect their \$20 bet.

The instructor should not explain the correct answer at this point, only reveal what it is.

Continue until all 10 questions have been completed.

## **[20-30 min] Round 2 of game**

Continue with the **TONE GAMBLE\_PPT**.

At the start of round 2, the instructor should provide instructions as to how this round is played.

Groups should elect 1 “writer/typer” per group. Their task is to revise “Needs Revision” items from round 1 in the game. These items will appear one at a time, and they will have 2 minutes to complete their revisions on the item.

Students may handwrite or type their answers, in print large enough for the instructor to see easily. They may consult any resources needed.

At the end of 2 minutes, the groups will place their bet (on the blank back of the **BETTING SHEET\_PDF**) revealing how confident they are in their answers. In this round, the minimum bet is \$10 and the maximum bet is \$100.

Once all bets have been placed and all writing stopped, the instructor will judge the accuracy of each group’s answer by walking around and reading each result. The answers must:

- (a) have corrected the original error(s)
- (b) retain the original meaning
- (c) have no additional tone errors
- (d) be grammatically correct

The instructor will once again either pay out winnings or collect losing bets. At the end of this payment / collection, the instructor will explain what was wrong with the original item and how to correct it. The instructor may also choose to explain why incorrect revisions still had errors.

Continue until all items have been revised or until time allows.

### **[5-10 minutes] Cashing out and debrief**

At the end of the game, teams should tally up their winnings and use the prize prices (displayed on the **TONE GAMBLE\_PPT**) to select their prizes. Whatever the group selects will be applied to all members of that group (e.g., if a group decides to purchase “erase a tardy”, then each member of the group is now able to erase a tardy in the attendance records).

### **Adaptations:**

While the **TONE GAMBLE\_PPT** has examples of professional tone (suitable for a business communications class), this activity can be used with a wide variety of discrete skills. Only the items on the PPT need to be adjusted. Some example alternate applications have been: academic tone, punctuation rules, APA citations

Additionally, the “Money Exchanged for Bonuses” slide can be adjusted to include any bonuses the instructor prefers to use in their class. Prices are recommended to remain unchanged, however, as it tends to ensure that one group cannot purchase an adverse amount of bonuses.

### **Homework:**

To reinforce learning, it is recommended that students are assigned a more traditional practice for homework so that they can immediately apply what they have practiced. If a practice activity had been assigned for homework previously, they might be now assigned to revise that as needed, for example.

### **Supplementary materials:**

- [BETTING SHEET PDF](#)
- [MUNNY PDF](#)
- [TONE GAMBLE\\_PPT](#)