

EXTREME SPORTS

Lesson Plan

Portmanteau Practice

Lesson Plan for *Motocross*

Grade 4

Objective

To help students understand portmanteau terms and practice determining meanings of new words.

Things Needed

- *Motocross* book
- A 3 x 5 notecard for each student
- Merriam-Webster online dictionary:
<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/portmanteau>
- Whiteboard

Before the Activity

Read *Motocross* out loud as a class.

Activity

Call on a volunteer to read the text on page 13 out loud: “By the 1950s, this style of racing was called *motocross*. This name combines the French word for motorcycle, *moto*, and the English word *cross-country*.”

Explain that a term (like *motocross*) made by combining two words is called a portmanteau. Pull up the Merriam-Webster online dictionary and read the definition of *portmanteau* out loud to students: “a word or morpheme whose form and meaning are derived from a blending of two or more distinct forms (such as *smog* from *smoke* and *fog*).”

On the whiteboard, write out the following examples of portmanteau:

- spoon + fork = spork
- breakfast + lunch = brunch
- video + blog = vlog



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Pass out the notecards to students and invite them to create their own portmanteau. Students should invent a new food, sport, activity, or object and blend two other words to name it. Instruct students to include the following information on their notecards:

- the student's name
- the new word
- the two words it combines
- a definition of what the word is/means

Then collect all the cards to create a classroom dictionary. Read each word aloud to the class, having students brainstorm together to guess what it means. Then read the definition from the notecard.

Evaluation

Did each student make up a new word by combining two other words? Did students provide definitions for their new words that blended the two other words' meanings? Could students guess the probable meanings of their classmates' words?

Standards

This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' language standards, grade 4 (RI 4.4).

