

Gradable and ungradable adjectives pelmanism card game with useful vocabulary for writing reviews

Spread the pack of cards across the table. Your teacher will tell you if they should be face up or face down. Try to pick two cards which you think are both gradable or two cards which you both think are ungradable/ extreme. If you think they don't match, put them back (exactly) where they came from. If you think they do match, say "It's absolutely..." with both or "It's fairly..." with both depending on which kind of adjectives you think those cards are. If your partner agrees that both sentences sound correct, you can keep both cards and score two points. If not, you have to put the cards back in the same places and get no points. If you're not sure, you can:

- try the same thing with "very" and "totally/ utterly/ completely" (because "very" doesn't go with gradable adjectives)
- check that both ungradable adjectives mean "very + gradable adjective"
- try to think of gradable versions or ungradable versions of those adjectives

When you finish the game, match up cards which have similar meaning but have different grammar (are gradable and are ungradable). There is always one of each kind in each pair.

Check your answers below.

Play a similar pelmanism game, but this time matching pairs of gradable and ungradable adjectives with the same meaning.

Fill the gaps in the blanked worksheet.

Test each other in pairs. See if your partner can:

- Identify gradable adjectives and ungradable/ extreme adjectives
- Identify which one is which in a pair of one gradable adjective and one ungradable adjective/ extreme adjective
- Identify gradable and ungradable/ extreme adjectives and make the other one of the pair
- Make as many pairs of gradable and ungradable/ extreme adjectives as possible (including ones not here, with you helping if they get stuck)

Cards to cut up/ Suggested answers

amusing/ funny	hilarious	tasty	delicious
scared/ frightened	terrified	hungry/ peckish	starving
interesting	fascinating	crowded	(cram)packed
warm/ hot	boiling	loud	ear-splitting
tired/ sleepy	exhausted	cool/ cold	freezing
big/ large	huge/ enormous/ massive	small/ little	tiny/ minuscule/ minute
angry/ irritated/ annoyed	furious	bad	terrible/ awful/ dreadful/ disastrous
good	brilliant/ fantastic/ fabulous/ terrific/ splendid/ perfect/ flawless/ impeccable	happy	delighted/ overjoyed
nice	lovely/ delightful	distinctive/ original	unique
pretty	gorgeous/ stunning	memorable	unforgettable
exciting	gripping/ thrilling	moving	heart-wrenching
confusing	mind-boggling	expensive/ overpriced/ pricey	exorbitant

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above, brainstorm as many words as you can into each gap below. Other words not above may also be possible.

amusing/ funny			delicious
	terrified	hungry/ peckish	
interesting			(cram)packed
warm/ hot			ear-splitting
tired/ sleepy		cool/ cold	
big/ large		small/ little	
	furious	bad	
good		happy	
nice		distinctive/ original	
pretty		memorable	
exciting			heart-wrenching
	mind-boggling		exorbitant

Check above. Other answers are possible, so please check if you wrote something different.