

## RULES

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# You've been Sentenced!™

For 3 to 10 Players / Ages 8 and up  
Play Time: 30-45 minutes

### CONTENTS:

540-card word deck  
*(shuffle all 5 packs together)*

Score sheet pad

Sand timer

Pencil

Rules sheet

### Welcome to YOU'VE BEEN SENTENCED!™

You've been Sentenced!™ by McNeill Designs for Brighter Minds™ is a completely original game which utilizes pentagon-shaped cards containing conjugations of funny words, famous names, and familiar places. With a hand of 10 cards, players build sentences, challenging their ingenuity while trying to score the most points per round by constructing a grammatically correct and justifiable sentence. Most words are worth 5 points, but some of the more unusual conjugations are often worth more, based on usage difficulty in a sentence.

### Overview/Object of Game

During play, any player can object to another player's sentence. For example, is the sentence's grammar correct? Is its meaning understandable? The defending player and the objecting player must argue their points to the rest of the players, who form a "Jury." The Jury votes on whether or not the sentence is acceptable. Hilarity ensues when a player tries to defend, explain, and justify a completely ridiculous sentence to the Jury. Only accepted sentences score points. The first player to reach 200 or more points wins!

## First Time Set Up

Open the packs of cards, place on the table, and thoroughly mix all of the decks together. Place the cards facedown back in the tray and place on the table within easy reach of all players. This is the “Word Pool” from which all players will draw their hand of cards.

Show all of the players this sample sentence illustration to show how a sentence is formed using the cards. Use the lid as the discard pile and place all used cards face up.

## Rules of Play

### The Deal

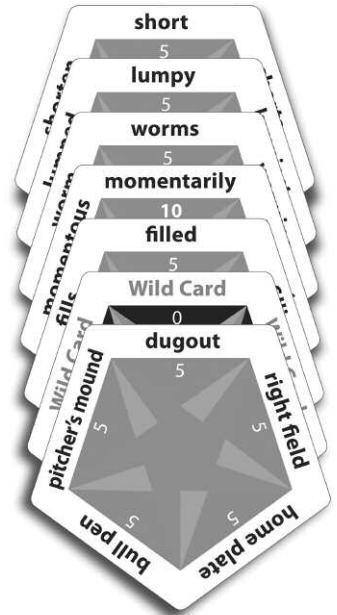
Each player takes **10 cards** from the Word Pool and places them face down in front of them. When all players are ready, flip the cards over and spread them out face up. Don't worry about other players seeing the cards. (This is called “Evidence Disclosure.”)

### The Play

Using a hand of 10 cards, each player tries to form one grammatically correct, sensible sentence with as many cards as possible, trying to score the most points per round. Some versions of a word are worth additional points in a sentence; the larger point value is indicated below the word. The first person to form a sentence they are satisfied with turns over the sand timer. All of the remaining players have until the sand runs out to come up with an acceptable sentence. **Any player without a sentence on the table when time is up receives no points for this round.**

### Court is Now in Session

Starting with the player that started the timer, each player reads his sentence aloud to the Jury (the rest of the players). Any jury member may then issue an “Objection,” if the sentence in question contains a grammatical error or simply does not make sense. The player who created the sentence may then defend it by explaining how it is grammatically correct and/or how it makes sense. This is



### Scoring Example

Short (5 points) + lumpy (5 points)  
+ worms (5 points) + momentarily  
(10 points) + filled (5 points)  
+ “the”: WILD CARD (0 points)  
+ dugout (5 points)  
= 35 point sentence

### A “Justifiable” Defense

“Just as the Brewster Barons were taking the field, a summer downpour drove them back to the home dugout where, astonished, they suddenly found themselves awash in bloated red wigglers.”

called “Sentence Justification”. A defense can be an explanation of the grammar, a short story, or anything else that clarifies the sentence to the Jurors.

After all of the arguments have ended, the Jury then votes thumbs up or thumbs down on the sentence’s justification. The objecting player and the defending player must abstain from the vote. As in a “real” jury, a member may vote according to any objective or subjective method they wish. In layman’s terms, you can vote thumbs-up if you happen to like the sentence or the justification, even if the sentence is not perfectly “correct”. A Juror does not have to explain why they voted the way they did.

If the Jury accepts the sentence, then the Objection is “Overruled” and the player scores the points for the sentence. If the Jury rejects the sentence, then the Objection is “Sustained” and that player scores **no points** for the round. In the event of a tied Jury vote, the objection is Overruled, and the player receives the points.

Play proceeds clockwise around the table, with each player presenting his sentence in turn to be Judged. After all played sentences have been judged and scored, all cards are discarded. 10 new cards are dealt to each player to start the next round.

## **Scoring**

Accepted sentences are scored as follows:

- All words used are worth their marked point value, either 5, 10, or 20 points.
- “Wild Cards” are worth 0 points.

### ***Bonus Points:***

A player receives a 10-point bonus to their score for a round if:

- The player is the first to start the timer in a round and have their sentence accepted.
- The player is able to use all 10 cards from their hand in a single accepted sentence.

Total *possible* bonus points for a single player per round: 20.

## **Notes/Rulings**

Sentences can be as short as 2 cards, or as long as all 10 cards. **You do not have to use all 10 cards in your sentence.**

**Sentences are acceptable as long as they are grammatically correct and make some sort of sense to the Jury.**

Sentence fragments, like newspaper headlines, ARE NOT SENTENCES. They are sentence fragments and do not count.

Wild Cards may be used for any single word, a proper name, or the addition of “apostrophe s” (’s) to an existing word.

All punctuation and capitalization is assumed, otherwise the words are used “as is.” You cannot add -’s to a word. You may use a Wild Card for -’s to make a subject possessive if you wish.

A “Wild” “\_” Name” may be used for any name beginning with the letter featured on the card.

Unlike a standard “Wild Card,” a “Wild “\_” Name” is worth 5 points when used in an accepted sentence.

Once a sentence is submitted for Judgment, it cannot be altered in any way. This includes any Wild Card words.

Once read, the sentence stands “as is” to be Judged.

If no one objects to a sentence, no defense is necessary and the player receives the points.

Younger and beginning players may be given help if needed (called “Attorney’s Advice”).

### **How to Win in Court**

After each round, when everyone has had a chance to present his or her sentence to be Judged and scored, draw a line on the score pad up to the total value of the sentence plus any previous round’s score. The first player to reach a score of 200 (or more) points wins the game and becomes the “Sentence Champ.” If two or more players meet or exceed 200 points, the player with the highest point total is determined the winner.

### **Hung Jury**

In the unlikely event of a tied score of 200 or above, those players go into a “Final Summation” round. Each tied player draws a new hand of 10 cards and attempts to make a last, best sentence. During this round, no one is allowed to Object. Each finalist then reads his sentence to the Jury and the Jury votes on which sentence is best. The winner of the vote is the “Sentence Champ.” In the event that the vote is tied, the Jury is “Deadlocked” and all tied players are declared winners.

## **YBS is a GAME SYSTEM!**

*There are many different ways to play "You've been Sentenced!" Here are a few variations we like. Use one at a time, several, or all at once for a truly insane game.*

**Casual:** A good way to play the first couple of games. Instead of using the sand timer, the first player to form a sentence knocks on the table. Once a player "knocks", they cannot change their sentence. This process continues until all players have knocked the table, signaling that they too are ready for sentence presentation and judgment. The first player that knocked presents first. All other rules remain the same.

**Move On!:** If players are taking too long to debate a sentence, any player may start the sand timer. Sentences may be discussed only until timer runs out. When the time is up, the Jury must cast a vote.

**Team:** If you have a large number of players, divide up into teams. Each team draws 10 cards and makes/defends their sentences together.

**Popular Vote:** After all sentences are judged, players take a vote to determine who had the "best" sentence this round. Everyone gets one vote. The winner gets a 10-point bonus. In the event of ties, no one gets the bonus.

**Not-So-Casual:** Same as Casual, except the last person who knocks gets ZERO POINTS for the round.

**Card Discard:** After the deal, but before making sentences, a player has 30 seconds to discard and re-draw 1, 2, or 3 cards from the Word Pool. A player can only redraw once per round. Since you will likely end up with larger sentences, we suggest playing to 300 points.

**Lightning:** After the cards have been drawn, and everyone is ready, start the timer and turn your cards face-up. Everyone has until the sand runs out (90 seconds) to make a sentence.

**Longer/Shorter:** Play to fewer (100, 150) or a greater number of points (300, 400, 500). You can also play a set number of rounds (3, 5, 10, etc.) and the highest score at that point wins.

**Deadwood:** This variation is only recommended for experienced players. Any cards not used in an accepted sentence stay in the player's hand. Rejected sentences go back into a player's hand. Draw as many cards as needed to get back to a 10-card hand at the beginning of a turn. Otherwise, you have to make do with your "deadwood".

**Wild:** Every player gets, at the start of the game, 1 "wild card" to keep. Players draw 9 cards per round, using the wild card as the 10th card. When you discard, keep a wild card and draw 9 cards for all subsequent rounds.



# Got Game? Now Make It Your Own!

Visit us at

[www.McNeillBrighterMinds.com](http://www.McNeillBrighterMinds.com) for:

- Rule variations
- New ways to play
- New games and activities using the YBS word deck
- Contests and new releases
- Printable score sheets

## New Add-On Decks

You've been Sentenced!<sup>™</sup> is now fully expandable. Visit your retailer for new 80 card Add-On Decks featuring:

- Pop Culture
- Sports
- Sci-Fi/Fantasy
- Gourmet Cuisine
- The official Readers Digest NATIONAL Word Power Challenge<sup>™</sup>

Is there an add-on deck subject you'd like us to feature in future months? Just drop us an email at [sales@McNeillBrighterMinds.com](mailto:sales@McNeillBrighterMinds.com).



## And now...Play Online at [www.YBSgame.com](http://www.YBSgame.com)!

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