Looking for a quick, energy-building no-prep activity that gets students conjugating verbs and speaking in world language classes without any materials? This no-prep verb game turns a five-minute burst of practice into a lively, formative check of verb knowledge. It works for beginners through intermediate learners, fits any classroom layout, and requires nothing but the Wheel, copying and pasting verbs and subjects and students' participation.

Why this works

This activity focuses on recall, oral fluency, and rapid retrieval—three skills that build automaticity with verbs. Because it is fast-paced and low-stakes, students are more willing to risk answers aloud. The movement and competition elements increase engagement and attention, which helps learning stick.

What you need

- **No printed materials** — just a list of verbs and pronouns to go in the Wheel.
- **Optional:** mini whiteboards or paper for written rounds.
- **Space** for students to stand or move a little if you want to add a kinesthetic twist.

Basic game setup

1. Tell students you'll do a rapid-fire conjugation round. Choose a tense to focus on, for example present simple.
2. Decide how you will call on students: random volunteers, clockwise around the room, or with students standing and sitting (standing = still in game).
3. Pick a subject pronoun (yo, tú, él/ella, nosotros, vosotros, ellos/ellas) and an infinitive verb (hablar, comer, vivir).
4. Call out the pronoun and verb. The next student must speak the correct conjugation aloud within 3–5 seconds. This is great to do with mini-whiteboards. All students write down the word on their board. This allows people to quickly see and learn the correct answers.
5. Classes can also do this in teams.
6. Consider allowing students to use textbooks or materials. This is a fun way to sneak in some studying.

Example round (Spanish, present tense)

- Teacher: “Tú — hablar”
- Student: “hablas”
- Teacher: “Nosotros — comer”
- Student: “comemos”

Variations to keep it fresh

Change the challenge level or add different focuses by using one of these tweaks.

- **Conjugation Chain**: Each student must conjugate the verb and use the conjugated form in a short sentence before the next student goes.
- **Tense Switch** for More Advanced Learners: Randomly call out a tense (present, preterite, future) and a verb. Students must conjugate in the asked tense.
- **Action Mix**: Combine charades with conjugation. Student must perform an action representing the verb and say the conjugation aloud.
- **Write-and-Check**: For quieter practice, students write the conjugation on mini whiteboards and show them at the same time.
- **Team Relay**: Two teams compete. A correct conjugation scores a point for the team. First team to X points wins.
- **Pronoun Pop**: Teacher yells only verbs; students must call out the correct conjugation for a pronoun the teacher announces after the verb.
- Consider two wheels – one with verbs and the other with subject pronouns. Keep two tabs open and switch between them.

Adapting to different levels

- Limit verbs to regular -ar, -er, -ir forms in present tense.
- Provide stems or model forms if students struggle.
- Use visual cues or gestures to prompt meaning.
- Include irregular verbs and compound tenses.
- Ask for negative forms, reflexive pronouns, or object pronouns inside the same round.
- Increase speed or require full sentences for bonus points.

Classroom management tips

- Set a short time limit for each response to keep energy high and prevent long pauses.
- Celebrate effort and occasional mistakes to maintain a safe risk-taking environment.
- If noise is an issue, switch to chorally saying answers in unison, then phase into individual responses.

Assessment and follow-up

Use this activity as a quick formative assessment. Note which verbs or pronouns cause the most errors and plan targeted follow-up practice. For a short written check, ask students to write three conjugations they struggled with before the lesson ends.

Why every language teacher should keep it in their toolkit

This no-prep verb game is flexible, scalable, and engaging. It is virtually no-prep yet yields high-value practice in conjugation, listening, and spontaneous speech. It fills awkward five-minute gaps, warms up a class, or breaks monotony mid-lesson. Most importantly, it gives students repeated retrieval practice—the single most effective way to build automaticity with verbs.

Quick starter list of verbs and subjects.

Spanish

- tú – comer
- ella – aprender
- yo – leer
- ellos – correr
- yo – beber
- vosotros – responder
- ella – vender
- nosotros – aprender

- tú – leer
- ustedes – temer
- él – deber
- yo – comprender
- tú – correr

French

- **ils – courir**
- **je – boire**
- **vous – répondre** *(using “vous” for plural, like “vosotros”)*
- **elle – vendre**
- **nous – apprendre**
- **tu – lire**
- **vous – craindre** *(as a good equivalent for “temer”)*
- **il – devoir**
- **je – comprendre**
- **tu – courir**

Use this list as a rotation. Swap in verbs tied to current grammar targets or unit vocabulary.

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