IPA Hunt: Rules and Gameboard

Contents: This rules/gameboard sheet, one per team.

Setup: Divide players into two teams. Teams of two players are best.

Gameplay: Fold the sheets in half so that teams cannot see each other’s gameboards. Each team circles five groups of IPA symbols in their home grid at the bottom of this sheet: two small groups (size 2), two medium groups (size 3), and one large group (size 4). Each group is made up of adjacent vowels in a straight line. Groups can be oriented vertically or horizontally, and they may touch, but they cannot overlap.

Choose a team to start. Teams alternate turns.

On your team’s turn, call out a vowel using phonetic terminology. It must be precise enough to target a specific symbol. For example, to target [ø̈], you could call out “centralized front upper mid round vowel” or “near-front upper mid round vowel” or “retracted front upper mid round vowel”, all of which have the same meaning here.

If the opposing team has no group containing the symbol you called out, they call out “miss!”. Then you should mark an X on the corresponding symbol of the enemy grid on your sheet, so you know not to call out that cell again and that your opponents do not have a group there. Your opponents should do the same on their home grid.

If instead the opposing team has a group containing the symbol you called out, they call out “hit!”. Then you should mark an O in the corresponding cell of the enemy grid on your sheet, so you know not to call out that cell again and that your opponents have a group there. Your opponents should do the same on their home grid.

If you get a hit that results in one of the opposing team's groups being completely found, they call out “you found a small group” or “…medium group” or “…large group”, as appropriate. In that case, cross out the corresponding group at the bottom of the sheet and take an extra turn by calling out another vowel. You could chain extra turns if you can keep finding the last symbol in different groups.

Your turn ends when you get a miss or when you get a hit that does not finish a group. The opposing team then begins their turn.

Winning: The team that finds all fourteen symbols in all five of their opponent’s groups wins.