This game focuses on building vocabulary skills through reading simple words as players progress through the game. Players can be asked to spell the word, read it, name its opposite, or make a sentence with the word. It can be adapted to focus on letters, letter/sound blends, sight words, certain vocabulary themes, or decodable words.

Directions:
To make the game:

1 Cut a large rectangle out of a piece of paper; cardboard, carton, or any other hard, flat surface that can be written on.

2 Divide the rectangle into five rows and six columns. (This can be adapted to make the game shorter by reducing the number of rows and columns, see the picture below.)

3 Label one corner square ‘Start’ and the opposite corner square ‘Finish’ or ‘End.’ (See picture below.)

4 Select a list of 25 words (can be sight words, opposites, words from a story, themed words, etc), and write them in the other boxes. Be sure to leave three blank spaces in different places on the board.

5 In these three blank spaces, write an action, such as “sing a song” or “jump up and down,” something that the targeted players will be able to do easily.

6 Draw three “snakes” between any two squares on the board (except Start and Finish). (See picture below.) The “snakes” will let the player slide down, closer to the Finish, so be mindful of where you place them.

Skills Developed
Letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, vocabulary

Reading Level Targeted
Beginner/Advanced readers

Materials Needed
- Cardboard/paper
- Colours/markers
- Coins or bottle caps for playing pieces
- List of 25 words
- Die or coin that can be used as a die
Draw three “ladders” between any two squares on the board (except Start, Finish and where you placed the “snakes”). The “ladders” make the player move back, closer to the Start, so be mindful of where you place them.

Select playing pieces for the players. This can be a coin, a stone, a bottle cap, etc.

Find or create a die by folding a piece of paper into a square and drawing on it. Or you can use a coin and select one side of the coin for moving two spaces and one side of the coin for moving one space.

To play the game:
*Read through all of the directions before playing. This game can be played on teams or between two players, but is best played with fewer players.

1. Divide the players into teams and select who goes first from each team.

2. Place the playing pieces on the Start square.

3. The first player rolls the die or flips the coin and moves that many spaces.

4. The player must say the word that appears in the square where they have landed. (This can be adapted by having the players spell the word, name its opposite, or make a sentence using the word.)

5. If the player lands on a “snake,” he or she moves the piece DOWN to where the “snake” ends. If the player lands on a “ladder,” he or she must move the piece UP to where the “ladder” ends. Players can only move DOWN on a “snake” and UP on a “ladder.”

6. The first player to get to the Finish square wins.