

Back Words

for

Back to School

A Vocabulary Brain Teaser

by Margaret Whisnant



Being a child at home alone in the summer is a high-risk occupation. If you call your mother at work thirteen times an hour, she can hurt you. ~Erma Bombeck

Labor Day is a glorious holiday because your child will be going back to school the next day. It would have been called Independence Day, but that name was already taken. ~Bill Dodds

I am always ready to learn although I do not always like being taught. ~Winston Churchill

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Back Words

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Back to School



Since we tend to prefer leaving the past behind and moving forward, our language should logically be saturated with *forward* words and phrases. But upon closer inspection, it's obvious that we have actually collected more *back* words. Perhaps this is because we often move forward by going back, as is the case with our long-standing tradition of going *back to school*.

Now that the inevitable has happened, why not get your thinking skills rolling forward by identifying the following collection of *back* words? Study the clues and then write the missing letters in the individual blanks to the left. Spelling counts!

back _ _ _ _ _

1. In basketball, the flat surface to which the basket is attached is called the back _____.

back _ _ _ _ _

2. Another word for sass is back_____.

_ _ _ _ _ back

3. A person riding an unsaddled horse is said to be riding _____back.

back _ _ _ _ _

4. If the results are the opposite of what someone has planned or expected, then his/her scheme has back_____.

back _ _ _ _ _

5. Someone who is afraid to do or stand up for what is right might be encouraged to get a back _____.

_ _ _ _ _ back

6. To say that someone is riding _____back, means that he/she is being carried on someone's back or shoulders.

back _ _ _ _ _

7. A back_____ is an excavating machine that has a bucket with movable jaws for scooping up soil or other materials.

_ _ _ _ _ back

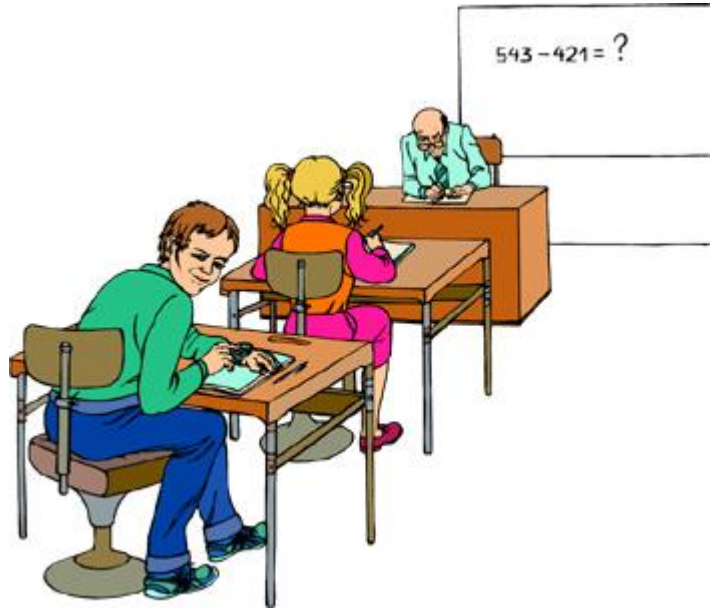
8. The type of rattlesnake with ◇-shaped markings on its back is called a _____back.

Back Words for Back to School—continued

- back _ _ _ _ _ 9. When a project falls off someone's to-do list, it is said to have been put on the back _____. (two words)
- back _ _ _ _ _ 10. A back _____ is a road located away from a town's main thoroughfares. It's also the name of an American boy vocal group from the 1990s..
- _ _ _ back 11. Another word for *revenge* or *just deserts* is _____ back.
- back _ _ _ _ _ 12. To *back* _____ is to change or reverse one's original opinion or stand on a matter. This word also refers to the action that slows the forward motion of a bicycle.
- back _ _ _ _ _ 13. A passenger who offers the person operating the vehicle unsolicited advice, warnings, or criticism is known as a back _____ driver.
- _ _ _ _ _ back 14. In a movie or a novel, shifting from the present to an event from the past is called a _____ back.
- back _ _ _ _ _ 15. The word *back* _____ means *to go back over the same route or course by which one has come*
- _ _ _ _ _ back 16. The name given to a wild or semiwild hog with a ridgelike back is _____ back. With an added s, this *back* word is the mascot name of the University of Arkansas football team.
- back _ _ _ _ _ 17. A strong or violent reaction, especially to social or political change, is known as back _____
- _ _ _ _ _ back 18. _____ back is a slang term for an American paper dollar.
- _ _ _ back 19. The remote bush country of Australia is called the _____ back. (Capitalized word)
- back _ _ _ _ _ 20. Hikers use a back _____ to transport equipment and supplies and a student might use one to carry books.
- _ _ _ _ _ back 21. A large American discount chain store, headquartered in Bentonville, Arkansas, entices shoppers by a type of discount known as a _____ back, in which an item's price is cut to a previous amount.
- back _ _ _ _ _ 22. Tile or other materials attached to the wall behind a kitchen counter as protection against splattering liquids is called a back _____
- _ _ _ _ _ back 23. Something that hinders progress or is an undesirable part of a plan, a treatment, etc. can be called a _____ back. (Hint: This word begins with the letter *d*)
- _ _ _ _ _ back 24. On a football team, the _____ back lines up directly behind the center and directs the offense of the team.
- _ _ _ back 25. An unfortunate event that delays or stops progress is often called a _____ back. (Hint: *S* is the first letter of this word.)

Back Words

and Phrases for Back to School (A Continuance)



Mr. Casey eagerly anticipated *feedback* from his band of scholars.

Here's a second collection of *back*-word clues to keep the forward momentum in your brain moving along. This time there are phrases and titles scrambled into the mix. These items are slightly more difficult in comparison to those in the first set.

Write the missing letters in the individual blanks to the left. Spelling still counts.

Back to the

___ _ _ _ _

1. In 1985, Michael J. Fox starred in Stephen Spielberg's popular science fiction comedy *Back to the* _____. There were two more movies in this series.

back _____

2. The hair-styling technique known as teasing or ratting is also called back _____

_____ backs

3. During the American Revolution, British soldiers were called redcoats or _____ backs because of the red coats they wore.

back to the old

___ _ _ _ _
___ _ _ _ _

4. When things go wrong and starting over is the best strategy, someone might say, "Well, back to the old _____."

back to _____
one

5. In addition to the phrase in #4, starting over can also be characterized as going back to _____ one.

___ _ _ _ back

6. A person who seems to be in a perpetual state of calmness is said to be _____ back.

___ _ _ _ back

7. An animal or plant that exhibits characteristics of an earlier or more primitive version is called a _____ back.

back _____

8. A person who tries to discredit another by underhanded means such as gossip is a back _____.

back-___ -___

9. Events that occur one after the other, or items arranged in close order, are said to be back-___ -___
(hyphenated term of three words)

no _____
back

10. Sometimes, once a decision is made and a process is started, there is no _____ back.

Back Words and Phrases for Back to School—continued

- _____ on
his/her back.
- back _____
- _____ that broke
the _____' back
- back _____
- _____ my
back
- _____ back
- _____ back
- _____ back
- _____ beat
- The _____
Strikes Back.*
- one _____
_____ behind my
back.
- back _____
- back _____
- back _____
- back _____
11. A person addicted to drugs is often described as having a _____ on his/her back.
12. The word *back* _____ can refer to a slap across the face or a tennis stroke.
13. The final insult or the last intolerable event that finally brings change is said to be the _____ that broke the _____ back.
14. A person applying for a job at a school would most likely be subjected to a back _____ check.
15. If someone did something that affected you, and you were purposely not informed, you might say that it was done "_____ my back."
16. Money or other valuables accepted as a bribe is known as a _____ back.
17. Now that we are in the age of electronics, we can choose to buy books in hardback, _____ back, or as e-books.
18. Performers or athletes who fall out of favor but eventually return to their former popularity and/or prosperity have made a _____ back.
19. One characteristic of rock music is the _____ beat, or the accentuation of the second and fourth beats in 4/4 time.
20. One of the six Star Wars films is entitle *The _____ Strikes Back.*
21. If you are one-hundred percent confident of your abilities, you might boast, "I can do that with one _____ behind my back!"
22. Remote or isolated forested areas are sometimes referred to as the back _____. The term is also used to describe unsophisticated or uncouth behavior.
23. One definition of the word *back* _____ is an accumulation of uncompleted work.
24. A convenient escape route from a house or an office complex is the back _____.
25. The area located behind a house is the back _____.

Back Words for Back to School

Answer Keys

1. backboard
2. backtalk
3. bareback
4. backfired
5. backbone
6. piggyback
7. backhoe
8. diamondback
9. back burner
10. backstreet
11. payback
12. backpedal
13. backseat
14. flashback
15. backtrack
16. razorback
17. backlash
18. Greenback
19. Outback
10. backpack
21. rollback
22. backsplash
23. drawback
24. quarterback
25. setback

A Continuance

1. *Back to the Future*
2. backcombing
3. Lobsterbacks
4. back to the old drawing board
5. back to square one
6. laid back
7. throwback
8. backstabber
9. back-to-back
10. no turning back
11. monkey on his/her back
12. backhand
13. straw that broke the camel's back
14. background
15. behind my back
16. kickback
17. paperback
18. comeback
19. backbeat
20. *The Empire Strikes Back*
21. one hand tied behind my back
22. backwoods
23. backlog
24. backdoor
25. backyard

Word Chain Challenge/Bulletin Board Idea:

Challenge your students to begin with the phrase *welcome **back*** and then think of another term that attaches logically to *back* (*ground* in the example below). Continue the chain so that each addition connects sensibly to both the word located *before it* and the word located *after it*. The anchor term **back** can be used more than once. See who can construct the longest chain.

Display the results on a **Welcome Back** bulletin board.

Super Challenge: Construct one, huge *whole class* chain that covers a full bulletin board. Display words individually on index-stock paper.

(Example)

welcome back ground water fall back rest stop sign post office party time out
side kick back flip book store front yard sale price cut back door lock down town
house number one more over work hard back hand made up start over , etc. . . .

Note to Teachers: Use the words and phrases from the two previous activities along with the lists on this page and the next to encourage your students as they create original brain teasers, puzzles, poems, rap lyrics, blogs, illustrations, posters, word walls, personal bulletin boards, etc.

More Back Words and Phrases

A Resource List for Teachers

get off my back
backspace
swayback
tieback
back rub
straight back chair
wingback chair
back against the wall
back draft
back flip
back lighting
double back
don't look back
back down
humpback whale
silver back (male gorilla)
backbiter
back rub
back rest
cutback
back off
backgammon
fatback
stickleback
sweptback
back and forth
back alley

back end
back forty
backache
halfback
fullback
ridgeback
touchback
Zwieback
backslider
backstitch
biofeedback
play back
You scratch my back; I'll scratch yours.
take it back
turn one's back
watch my back
back kick
back lot
in the back of my mind
back stage
back taxes
back stroke
get back on my feet
call back
scale back
horseback
back away

School Words and Phrases

Another Resource List for Teachers

school bus	schoolmaster
school board	schoolmistress
school year	beauty school
school of fish	schoolmarm
finishing school	schoolgirl
preschool	schoolboy
private school	school children
middle school	schoolmate
junior-high school	schoolbook
public school	schoolroom
parochial school	schoolyard
high school	schoolhouse
elementary school	school day
primary school	correspondence school
boarding school	training school
dame school	grade school
playschool	grammar school
school teacher	school crossing
charter school	Catholic school
school zone	after school
secondary school	school work
school of hard knocks	school supplies
tell tales out of school	school bell
school system	law school
school district	medical school
school lunch	back to school
vocational school	prep school
summer school	reform school
Sunday school	home school
Vacation Bible School	night school
old school (outdated, old fashioned)	school of thought
flight school	

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