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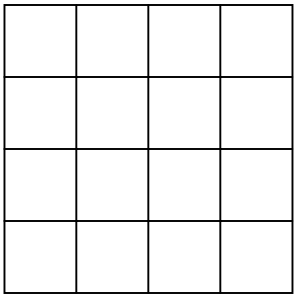
Middle School Computers

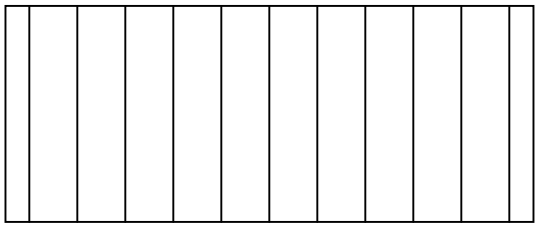
I'm sure you have heard of many of these ideas before, but here are some activities that I have used with several of my middle school keyboarding classes and the kids have really enjoyed them.

BOGGLE

I created an overhead grid that looks like the diagram to the right. I allow the students to pick the letters that will be placed in each box. The students will be given a period of time to create words using the letters chosen. The rules I use are:



1. The letters must touch either horizontally, vertically or diagonally.
2. Words must be 3 or more letters
3. Names are not allowed.
4. They can only use each letter once. Unless it is given twice in the puzzle.



FOOTBALL

Divide the class into two fairly equal teams. I assign each student on each team a letter trying to match people of equal ability (15 wpm vs. 19 wpm not 15 wpm vs. 40 wpm). I give my students 1-minute timings usually using sentences but paragraphs can be used as well. At the end of the timing I have each student figure his/her speed. I will then have a student randomly draw which letter/student's score will be used. The lower score is subtracted from the higher score and the difference is the number of yards that the higher score team's football is advanced toward their goal from the 50-yard line. Mark the position of the football on an overhead field. Another timing is given and two new players are selected randomly. Again subtract the lower from the higher and advance the football that distance. If there is a tie, the football is not advanced. Whenever one team scores a touchdown by reaching the goal, it receives six points and play resumes with both teams facing each other on the 50-yard line. This game could be played emphasizing speed or accuracy.

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BASEBALL

I use this game especially during the fall with the World Series. Follow the same set up procedure as in the football game. Again, I give my students a 1-minute timing using sentences, but paragraphs could be used as well. At the end of the timing, I have my students count the number of completed lines typed. You can randomly select a student's letter or you can use everyone on the team. The number of lines typed is the number of bases that the team will advance. You can modify this also by emphasizing accuracy or by adjusting the requirement for a base hit.
Ex. 5 words = 1 base

MY DREAM SCHOOL, ROOM, ETC.

I haven't actually tried this project yet, but it is one I found on the Internet that I thought my 7th grade computer class would enjoy doing. The student will design a dream school or room using the drawing program. Grading will be done using a rubric.

A STORY ABOUT ME

Here is another idea from the Internet that I'm going to use in both my 7th grade and 8th grade computer classes. Students will be writing their own biographies using the past week, year, etc. As part of their biography, students will use the Draw or Paint program to draw a picture of them. On the 8th grade level, students can create a PowerPoint presentation about themselves.

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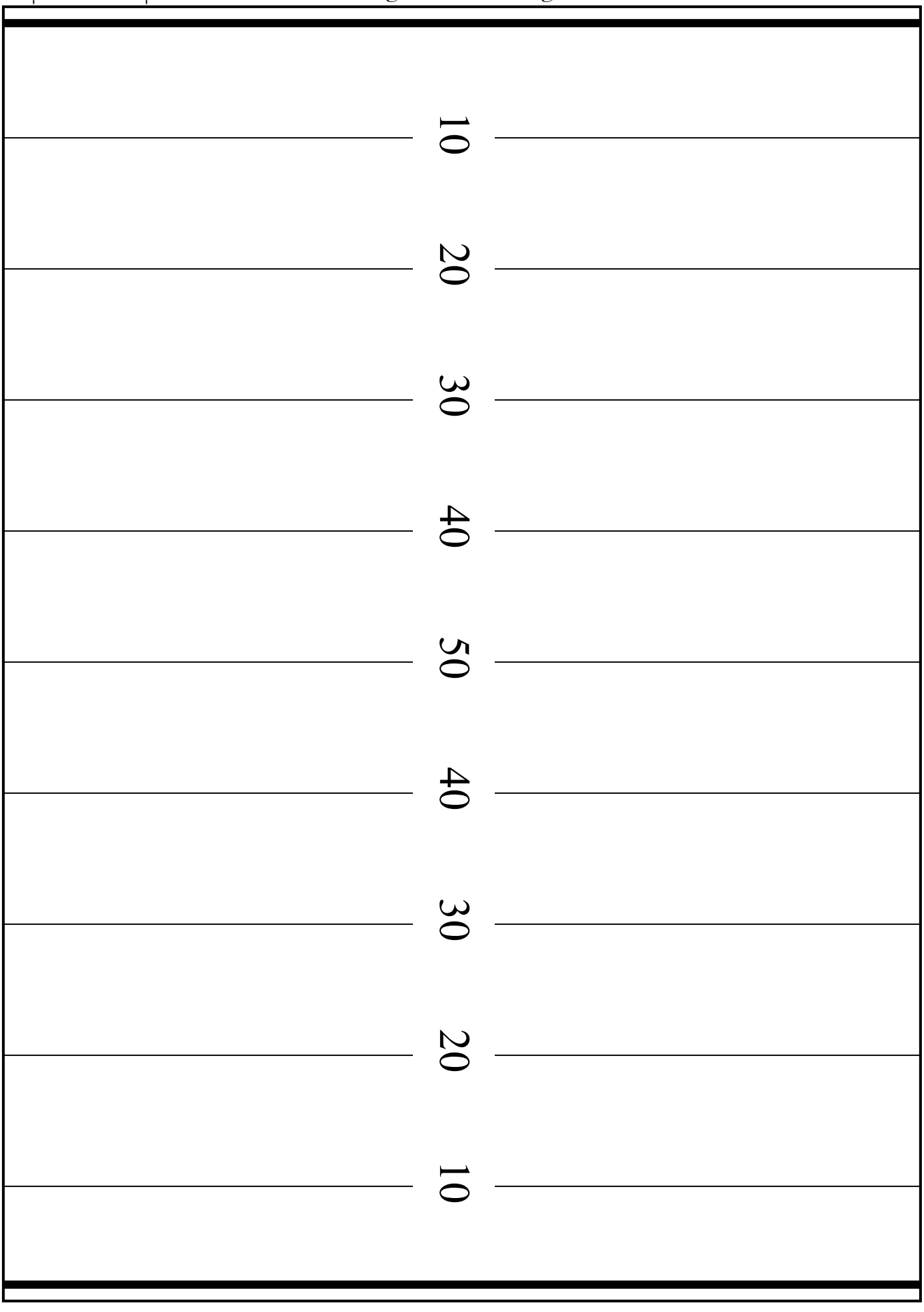
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