SHRDLU

A GAME ABOUT FITTING LETTERS INTO BOXES
FOR 2+ PLAYERS, BY KEVAN DAVIS

Shrdlu is a game of thinking of a word
that fits a set of randomly-dealt
constraints.

GAMEPLAY

Shuffle the deck and deal out a row of
five cards. (If one of those cards has the
“deal out a sixth card” instruction, deal
out a sixth card.)

An example spread would be:

Players then race to think of a word
where each letter of the word matches
the corresponding constraint on that
card, with asterisks allowing any letter.

(So in the example above: a word that
starts with E, T, A, O, I or N; whose third
letter only appears once; and whose
fifth letter is alphabetically later than its
fourth. The second and fourth letters
can be any letter, and the word must
have five letters in all. A valid answer
would be NIGHT.)

The first player to call out a valid word
wins the round.

If a player believes that no word can be
made from the cards, they may call
“impossible!” if nobody else has done
so - their opponents then have thirty
seconds or so to look for a word. If one
of them finds a word, that player wins
the round as normal, but if nobody can
find a word, the impossible caller wins
the round instead. (A player who calls
impossible may not also call a word.)

The winner of a round takes the
leftmost card of the word and keeps it
face-down in front of them for scoring.

After eleven rounds (when there are no
longer enough cards to deal out another
round), the game ends and the player
who took the most face-down cards
wins. If tied, the tied players reshuffle
the deck and play a final tiebreaker
round.

Note: The “repeat any of the final 3 letters” card cannot
choose to repeat itself, if dealt into one of those positions.

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ALPHABETICALLY
ADJACENT TO ANOTHER
LETTER

ALPHABETICALLY
EARLIEST LETTER
IN THE WORD

ALPHABETICALLY LATER
THAN PREVIOUS
LETTER
(IF THIS IS THE FIRST CARD, THEN
LATER THAN THE FINAL LETTER)

REPEAT ANY
OF THE FINAL
3 LETTERS

ONLY 1
OF THIS
LETTER

REPEAT
ANY
LETTER

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