

GUESSING GAMES

Eye Witness

How to Play: One person stands up and everyone looks at him or her. That person then leaves the room and changes something about himself or herself. (*Example: A shirt gets tucked in.*) When he or she returns, the group guesses what the person changed. Whoever guesses correctly gets the next turn.

Guess Who?

How to Play: One person sits with his or her back to the group. One child is chosen from the group to say a predetermined phrase. The person sitting facing away from the group has to figure out who is speaking.

Guess Who's Missing

How to Play: The students sit in a group and close their eyes. The person running the activity walks around and taps one person on the shoulder. The person tapped leaves the room, or hides where no one can see him or her. Everyone opens their eyes and tries to determine who is missing.

Variation: To make it harder, have them stand up and move them around (while their eyes are closed), so they don't know who is near them.

Mr. and Mrs. Judge

How to Play: Have a student be the "judge" and put his or her head down on the table. Choose a student from the group to come up behind the judge and disguise his or her voice and say, "Good morning, Mr. (or Mrs., if it's a Girl) Judge." Then the student goes back and sits down in his or her original spot. Have the judge look up and try to guess, *within three guesses*, which student spoke. If the judge is right, the person he or she guessed will become the next judge. If the judge is wrong, he or she must do it again.

RACE, TAG, AND RELAY GAMES

Balloon Relays

Supplies: Balloons

Set-Up: Set up a relay course.

How to Play: There are three different types of relays.

- **Three-Head Relay** (*draw a face on the balloon*): Two students have to hold the balloon between their heads.
- **Balloon Smash:** Two students have to walk the course with the balloon between their backs. If they drop it, they start over.
- **Balloon and Plate Relay:** Let the students decorate their own balloon. This game is like the egg-and-spoon race, but balancing the balloon on a paper plate.

Barnyard

How to Play: You will need pictures of several animals to show the child what he or she is for the game. Each child is shown a picture of an animal, with three children being shown the same picture. No one is allowed to tell another which animal he or she is. At the signal, each child makes the noise of the animal he or she has been given. The first group of three animals to find each other, and sit down, is the winner.

Don't Wake the Dragon

Supplies: Tennis Ball (*or an item for treasure*)

How to Play: One student is the dragon and sits in an open area on a chair or cushion. The other students are knights who need to steal the dragon's treasure (*tennis ball*) without waking the dragon. The dragon goes to "sleep" (*teacher monitors to make sure they keep their eyes shut*). One at a time, a silent signal is given to each knight to try to sneak past the dragon and steal the treasure. If the dragon hears footsteps or a noise from the knight, he or she wakes up and roars. The knight is toast, and goes to the end of the line. A successful knight becomes the next dragon. *This game requires the WHOLE group to stay quiet. It's a challenge, but it's great to see the different ways students try to sneak—we've had students "sniper crawl" across the classroom, take off their shoes, et cetera.*

Inch-by-Inch

Supplies: Yarn

Set-Up: Random-sized pieces of yarn are cut up and hidden throughout the room (*can be an outside activity as well*), with some pieces hidden in easy-to-find areas and others in hard-to-find spots.

How to Play: Divide the students into two teams. Students try to find as many pieces of yarn as they can by the end of the time. The game usually takes five to ten minutes, or until you think they have found all of the yarn. Then teams tie all of the found pieces of yarn together and see who has the longest rope.

As the yarn is cut into different sizes, quantity does not matter; the length of the string is what is important. How the yarn is tied also makes a difference in how long the rope is.

Indoor Snowball Fight!

Supplies: Socks or knee-high nylons, boxes (*optional*)

How to Play: Create “snowballs” by using the old socks, rolled up, or knee-high nylons. If using knee-highs, stuff the toe with prolific then tie a knot, add more prolific then tie another knot, and repeat three or four times until the end of the knee-high. Cut between the knots on the knee high and you’ll have a few snowballs. Students could build forts out of boxes. Divide groups into teams and play a game of capture the flag.

Minefield

How to Play: Students are placed in pairs. One partner keeps his or her eyes closed while the mines are set. (*Teachers rearrange furniture or chairs in the room to make an obstacle course.*) The other partner has to stay at the start line and direct his or her teammate through the course, using only vocal directions. If

The teammate bumps into any obstacles, he or she is out. Play continues with the minefield being reset after each team.

Paper Skating

This activity is best suited to a linoleum or wood floor.

Supplies: Paper plates (*they make perfect ice skates!*)

How to Play: Who’ll skate the fastest from one end of the gymnasium to the other?

BALL THROWING GAMES

Balloon Volleyball

No net or court is needed.

Supplies: Balloons, Tape

Set-Up: Put two rows of tape in the center of the “court” area, as the net.

How to Play: If you step on the tape or you hit the net, it counts as a point for the other team—the same volleyball rules apply. The kids have a blast and get some exercise.

Cone Blast

Supplies: Five to six cones, throwing balls

Set-Up: Space the cones evenly apart and place the throwing balls in the middle. Have five students at the cones, someone to be the ball retriever, and a line of kids along the wall.

How to Play: Pick students to fill all cones. When the teacher says, “Go,” students run to the middle to retrieve the throwing balls. Students must protect their cone with their feet while trying to throw the balls at their opponent’s cones. The ball retriever gathers balls that get away from the group. When a cone is knocked down, that person is out, the ball retriever is in, and the next person in line is now the ball retriever. The game continues until the teacher says, “Stop.”

Common Rules: Students must only throw balls at cones. Cones can be protected only by feet. If a player knocks over his or her own cone, he or she is still out.

Hula Blockers

Supplies: Hula-hoop, Beanbags

How to Play: Each person has a hula-hoop to stand in, and cannot move out of that hoop.

Students throw beanbags and try to land them in another player’s hula-hoop. Students try to knock incoming beanbags from landing in their hula-hoop. If a beanbag lands in a hula-hoop, that student is out.

SPUD

Supplies: Ball (*large, soft ball preferred*)

How to Play: Give each child a number and write it on the palm of his or her hand with a washable marker. This number should be kept secret. One person starts with the ball. The other kids form a circle around that person.

The center person throws the ball in the air and calls out a number. If your number was not called (including the thrower), you run in the opposite direction. If your number was called, you catch the ball and yell, "STOP!" as loud as you can. When you hear the word "stop," you must immediately freeze where you are. The player who caught the ball can take three giant steps (*for younger kids we give them five*), toward any player. After the steps are taken, the player can throw underhand or roll the ball, trying to hit the frozen person. The frozen player cannot move his or her feet from the floor, but can duck and swerve to avoid being hit. If hit, he or she becomes the new ball thrower and gets a letter "S". If not hit, he or she becomes the new ball thrower and the player who missed gets a letter "S". When you get the letters S P U D, you are out. Play continues until there is only one person left.

Snowball Fight/Trash in the Yard

Supplies: Masking tape (*or something to make markings with*), Paper

How to Play: Divide students into two teams. Clear a space on the floor or gym. Use masking tape to make a dividing line on the floor for each team's "space" or "yard." Give each team a stack of paper (*great for your recycling basket*). Have each team crumple up each sheet of paper to make their stock of "trash" or "snowballs." At the word "go," each team bombards the other, trying to get all of the papers over to the other side.

Periodically, the teacher could call a halt to see which side has more snowballs or trash on it. Play continues until one side is completely free of paper.

*Variations: **With older students:** If you get "hit" by a snowball, you are out for two minutes.*

***With the younger students:** If you get "hit" by a snowball, you go onto the other team.*

MORE GAMES

Busy Bee

How to Play: Everyone grabs a partner. The leader shouts out body parts, such as head-to-head, knee-to-knee, or foot-to-foot, and partners connect. When the leader shouts out “Busy Bee,” students must find a new partner.

Clue Hunt

How to Play: This takes a lot of prep work, but come up with a “mystery” that the students have to solve—either a clue game type idea (*the Batmobile Matchbox car is missing: who took it, when, and from where*) or just a silly series of clues to follow. Give a hint to start, then students have to find the next clue. Some are rhymes they have to figure out, sometimes there’s something they have to do to get the next clue, sometimes they have a problem to solve, etcetera. If you want, split students into teams and have multiples of the same clues. Then it will be like the *Amazing Race*, and the team to finish first gets a prize.

EXAMPLE: The Matchbox car is missing. Start by looking where the car should’ve been. Clue 2, in the car bin, reads, “I

Can take you on a trip, but you don’t go anywhere. You can learn new things or just lose your cares.

Without me you’d be lost, and with me you are found. I can be your best friend even though my pages are bound.” Which should make them think of a book and head into the library for Clue 3, which is a picture cut into pieces showing the location of the next clue, and so on.

Freeze Dance Game

This is a great game for youth to exercise and get some energy out. **Set-Up:** Youth need to space themselves out, so they don’t bump into each other. **How to Play:** Turn the music on and let them go, just like in musical chairs (*you can play any kind of music, as long as it’s appropriate*). When you turn the music down or off, everyone freezes. Whoever is moving has to sit out until someone else has to sit out, at which time, he or she can get back into the game—there are no winners or losers. Set up a panel of three judges. Let them judge who can come up with the best dance routine.

Youth learn to have patience, respect for one another, good sportsmanship, and leadership.

Dead Ant

How to Play: Children need to listen and move to the group according to the number of whistle blows or the number the leader shouts (1-5). Numbers should be called in random order, and this is the description of actions for each number:

If the leader shouts or whistles 5, the children need to form groups of five. One person bends at

waist, making a table. The other four pretend to eat off of the “table.” *Anyone left out of groups of five sits down and is done playing for this round.*

If the leader shouts or whistles 4, the children get in groups of four and sit in a straight line, paddling a boat. Two oars left, two oars right. *Anyone left out of groups of four sits down and is done playing for this round, and joins the others sitting out.*

If the leader calls or whistles 3, the children form groups of three, like a stoplight—one sitting, one kneeling behind, one standing behind with their hands out and “flashing.” *Anyone left out of groups of three sits down and is done*

Playing for this round, and joins the others sitting out.

If the leader calls or whistles 2, the children find a partner, hook elbows, and circle left before they change elbows and circle right. *Anyone left out of groups of two sits down and is done playing for this round, and joins the others sitting out.*

When the leader calls “dead ant,” all children lie on their back with their feet and arms in the air, waving and kicking.

Then the game starts over.

Four Corners

How to Play: One person is “It” and closes his or her eyes. The rest of the class spreads out and goes to one of the four corners (*or four designated spots*) of the room. “It” calls a number (1-4), and children in that corner sit down. If they don’t sit down, they are out. Continue until there are six or eight students left, then tell them there must be only two students in each corner or, when there are four people left, one in each corner. The last person left gets to be “It.”

Freeze Dance/Statues

How to Play: As you play music, have students move in place or, if there is space, have them dance around the room. Every minute or so, stop the music; the students have to freeze in whatever pose they were in when the music stopped. If they move, they sit down and lose a turn.

Ghosts in the Graveyard

How to Play: Everyone lies on the floor on their back, completely still. The leader is “It” or picks three students to be “It.” The leader then walks around, trying to make students laugh or move. If they laugh or move in any way, they are out of the game and must return to their seat.

Hiding Challenges

How to Play: Make stacks of paper hearts, pipe cleaner keys, shamrocks, or whatever ties in to a current event, and hide them. Once you’ve hidden them, let the students come into the room, tell

them how many of the items are hidden, and let them try to work together to find them all.

Human Tic-Tac-Toe

Supplies: Tape

Set-Up: Mark out a giant tic-tac-toe board is made out of tape on the floor.

How to Play: Divide teams into X's and O's—you may want to give them paper with X or O written on it. Each side takes a turn trying to create a tic-tac-toe for their team.

Laser Tag

Supplies: Yarn, Tape

How to Play: Using a hallway, the leader will create an obstacle course using the yarn and tape. Leaders will tape yarn from one side of the hallway to the other, creating zigzag designs that the students will have to crawl under from one end of the hallway to the other, without touching or knocking down the yarn.