



RAINY DAY GAMES

Sports Rule!

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NAME

GAMES

Bumpity Bump Bump

Type of Game: Name game or energizer

Group size: 10 - 20

Approximate time: 10 - 20 min depending on variation

Props: none

Basic Objective: Participants will attempt to complete given action before the person in the middle finishes the phrase "bumpity bump bump"

Instructions: Have participants arrange themselves into a circle. Teach them the phrase "bumpity bump bump." Instruct participants to find out the names of the people to their right and left. Explain the four possible commands, "me, bumpity bump bump," "you, bumpity bump bump," "right, bumpity bump bump," and "left bumpity bump bump." Facilitator should be the first participant in the middle of the circle to act out the game. The participant who is "it" (in the middle) will go over to one participant and use a two handed point while at the same time saying one of the four (4) commands. The participant who was chosen needs to say the name of the person who corresponds to the command before the person who is "it" completes the phrase "bumpity bump bump." If the participant is successful, he, she, or ze will remain part of the circle. If not, they will take the place of the person who is "it." Have students say their name when they take their place as "it".

Variations: add challenge by adding actions that involve multiple people such as speed rabbit, Charlie's angels, elephant, etc. or increase the number of people who are "it"

Debrief: None or a simple thumb-o-meter

Notables: Be aware that the size of the group could change the difficulty of this exercise. Encourage students to use their real names and not nicknames. Try to use appropriate actions based on the age/knowledge of the participants.

Name Juggle

Type of Game: Name game or initiative

Group size: 8 - 20

Approximate time: 10 - 20 min depending on variation

Props: throw-ables at facilitator's discretion, stop watch

Basic Objective: Toss throw-ables from one person to another without changing order and without dropping the objects while saying the name of the receiver.

Instructions: Have participants arrange themselves into a circle. Next choose an object with which to start the game. Instruct participants that they are to throw the object back and forth across the circle remembering who they threw it to and who they received it from. Each time they throw the object they are to say the name of the person they are throwing it to. When they receive the object they are to say thank you and the person's name that they received it from. No one participant may receive the object twice and the final person to receive the object will be the first person to throw it.

Variations: Facilitators may choose to add the challenge of continuous improvement through timing with a specific number of objects. Facilitators may also choose to continue to increase the number of objects to see how many the group can keep in motion at one time without drops. This may be used as a name game or an initiative depending on the needs of the group.

Debrief: If this game is used strictly as a name game there is no debrief necessary. However, if you choose to enter time into the challenge, you will want to debrief for what worked and what did not as well as facilitate for ideas on how this activity may be completed more quickly. If you choose to use multiple throw-ables and add number of drops as a challenge you may also want to use this to discuss priorities and balancing life's different aspects. You may also choose to discuss the concept of respect as it relates to the use of names to address people and the concept of saying thank you.

Notables: be aware that the size of the group could change the difficulty of this exercise. Watch for type of language used as well as appropriateness of objects. Encourage students to use their real names and not nicknames.

Name Roulette

Type of Game: Name game refresher

Group size: 10 - 20

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: Spots, hula hoops, or none depending on group

Basic Objective: Participants will attempt to remember the names all participants in the group and grow the size of their circle.

Instructions: Arrange the group into two even sized circles using a group splitting technique. Select a marker for a hot spot where the two circles come closest to each other (within a foot). Have participants face the inside of their own circles looking only at the ground. Once the game is set, have each circle rotate clockwise with participants passing over the hot spot as the circles turn. At a point the facilitator says stop! The two participants from each circle located on the hot spot turn around and attempt to say the name of the person across from them first! The participant with the faster memory gets to escort his or her new teammate into his or her circle. Facilitators may continue play until there is a clear winner or choose to call the game at any time.

Variations: Be creative.

Debrief: None

Notables: Be aware that the size of the group could change the difficulty of this exercise. Encourage students to use their real names and not nicknames.

ICE BREAKER GAMES

Categories

Type of Game: Ice-breaker

Group size: More than 10 people

Approximate time: 10 - 20 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Your group splits into a variety of smaller groupings according to a series of categories you announce.

Instructions: Ask your group to separate according to the categories or groupings you are about to announce. For example, if the category is favorite color, everyone who loves blue with group together and everyone who loves red will group together. Sometimes individuals may find themselves alone, but in most cases, small groupings of commonality will develop. For mixing purposes, alternate between two-group splits and multi-group splits.

Variations: Be creative! Allow time for sharing or keep the pace fast depending on group comfort levels.

Debrief: ask group to notice those who share similar likes and dislikes from themselves as a method to learn about one another

Notables: Be silly.

Human Knot

Type of Game: Icebreaker

Group size: 10 is ideal, can be done with 7 to 16.

Approximate time: 15-20 minutes.

Props: None

Basic Objective: Participants form a circle reach out and shake hands with someone across the circle. The group tries to unravel the "human knot" without letting go.

Instructions: Announce to the group that you would like them to form a close circle. Then instruct the group to close their eyes and reach their arms forward and when told find two hands to clasp. Once everyone is holding hands have the group open their eyes. Now instruct players they are to untangle themselves back into a circle.

Players are not to lose contact with the hands that they grabbed although if they begin to lose the grip they can re-grip. If there is no progression after about 10 minutes, you can offer the group one unclasp and re-clasp. The group will need to work together to decide where the re-clasp will be most beneficial.

Variations: With more players you can make more than one circle.

Debrief: Discuss what was difficult for you in this task, whether it was physical or emotional. You may want to ask the group what worked and what did not work. How can you relate this to your life?

Notables: Be aware that some people may be uncomfortable with the close proximity.

Cross Town Connection

Type of Game: ice breaker

Group size: 8 - 50

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: none

Basic Objective: Participants will meet and greet other group members through a series of handshakes.

Instructions: Have participants stand in a circle. All over the world people use handshakes as a way of introduction and initial contact. Different cultures have their own methods with regards to this. Today, I would like to teach you just a few of the handshakes that I have learned from my travels.

From here teach participants your first hand shake. Then ask them to find someone that they do not know, perform the hand shake, and return to their spot in the circle. Be sure to tell students to remember their partners for each of the handshakes presented. Continue this process with three or four more handshakes. Once you are done teaching this process, tell participants that you will call out a handshake. On this command, they must find their original partner for this handshake, perform the handshake and then listen for the next command. Repeat this five to six times with increasing speed. Potential handshakes: webby to webby, lumber jack, Wisconsin cow farmer, roller coaster, fireworks.....

Variations: Make up new handshakes!

Debrief: None

Notables: Be aware that the size of the group could change the difficulty of this exercise. Try to use appropriate actions based on the age/knowledge of the participants.

Eye Scream

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Group size: 8-20 would be ideal, but no less than 6 and up to 30

Approximate time: 5-10 Minutes

Props: None

Basic Objective: Get a group going and not afraid to be loud.

Instructions: Form a circle. The commands will be "Look down" and "Look up". When you look up, you attempt to make eye contact with someone. If you don't make eye contact, wait for the next command. If you DO make eye contact with someone - it's time for a screaming match. Immediately upon eye contact, both individuals begin to yell as loud as they can for as long as they can. The one who screams the longest wins!

Variations: Can be used to divide teams up. Can have winners stay in circle, and losers form a losers' circle.

Debrief: How did it feel to leave your comfort-zone of the usually "indoor voice"?

Notables: Challenge by Choice will come into play if you see an individual who is purposely trying to not make eye contact with others. Eventually they will have to make eye contact (when there are only 2 people left in the circle).

I Love Ya, Honey, But I Just Can't Make You Smile

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Group size: 10-30

Approximate time: 10-15 Minutes

Props: None

Basic Objective: Get a group going and not afraid to be loud.

Instructions: All the players are seated in a circle. One person starts off as the person in the center. The center person approaches one of the people in the circle and says, "I love you honey, but I just can't make you smile." The object is to say it in such a way that the person will smile or laugh. If the person smiles or laughs, then, she or he becomes the person in the center. In order to help people feel comfortable with this activity, please **no** overtly sexual or demeaning actions or remarks. Use your other skills to make this person to laugh or smile.

Variations: Can change the saying. Pick different characters out of a hat and try to do an impression of their voice while saying the phrase.

Debrief: What was so difficult about this game? Why was it so hard not to laugh? Did you feel uncomfortable? Have you ever been in such an experience? Perhaps --a situation when you have asked to be serious and simply just cannot suppress the silly mood?

Notables: www.Spikyheaded.com helped us with our write up of this icebreaker, and has many more.

Bulls Eye!

Type of Game: Ice-Breaker

Group size: More than 8

Approximate time: 5 - 10 min

Props: Two lengths of rope or one length of rope and a hula hoop arranged as a bulls eye in the middle of the group.

Basic Objective: Participants move in and out of the zones of the bull's eye depending on their comfort levels with the statements of the facilitator.

Instructions: Have your group stand around the outside of the final rope marker. Explain to them that the inner most circle represents their comfort zone. They should enter this zone only when they feel completely comfortable with statements that you make. The next zone from the center is their stretch zone. They should enter this zone when they are willing to confront their hesitations and fears around statements that you make. The final and outside zone is the panic zone. Participants should enter this zone when they are not comfortable at all and unwilling to face their fears regarding the statement made. Once participants understand the meaning of each zone, ask them a series of questions about how comfortable they are with certain statements, scenarios, or things. Participants should move to the appropriate zone without comment. Give them a second to realize who is in their zone and then move on to the next statement. Be sure to move from non-threatening and low risk statements to higher risk statements as you feel appropriate with your group.

Variations: Do it in silence, allow for discussion after each statement, be sure to encourage participants to acknowledge who is around them and think about where their stretch and panic zones are located.

Debrief: discuss when learning is possible and why the stretch zone is so important to the group as a whole!

Notables: This may be high risk for some!

Two Truths and a Lie

Type of Game: Ice-breaker

Group size: More than 10 people

Approximate time: 10 - 20 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Arranged in a circle, group members attempt to guess which of three statements made by another group member are truths and which are lies.

Instructions: Arranged in a circle, ask group members to make three statements. Two must be true, and one must be a lie. They can say these statements in any order that they would like. Upon completion, group members will attempt to guess which statement is a lie. Continue until all group members have had a turn. Be sure to start with yourself as an example to ease the tension and bring humor into the game.

Variations: Be creative! Allow time for sharing or keep the pace fast depending on group comfort levels.

Debrief: None or possibly a pair-share or concentric circles, keep it low risk

Notables: Be silly.

Elimination Twizzle

Type of Game: Like Simon Says with a twist.

Group size: 15 to 30

Approximate time: 10 to 15 min.

Props: No props necessary

Basic Objective: To listen to the commands and be the last person in the circle.

Instructions: Have the students form a large circle facing clockwise. I will go over the terminology. Go, Stop, Turn, Jump, and Twizzle. The students are to walk in a clockwise circle. As they are walking Josh or I will yell out a term and the students must perform this skill and freeze. If Josh or I see a student not totally frozen they will be eliminated and come to the center of the circle and become a judge. This goes on until one person is left.

Terminology

Go - walk in direction that you are facing

Stop - stop moving and Freeze

Turn - make a half turn (180 turn) and freeze

Jump - jump and make half turn and freeze

Twizzle - Jump and make a full (360 turn) and freeze

Variations: You can make the walk a little faster. You can come up with different skills to do. Make the students come up with some skills to do.

Debrief: Balance, good reaction time, and fast eyes if you are a judge. Quick feet are also a useful skill. The faster we walked the harder to freeze. To have everyone involved.

Notables: This might be a tough game to play with younger students who might not have total control of their bodies. Younger children tend to not be able to balance that well yet so freezing can be difficult.

Taps

Type of Game: Just for fun

Group size: 8 - 20

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Participants will attempt to send a tap around a circle without interruption or mistake.

Instructions: Have participants arrange themselves in a circle either around a table or on their hands and knees. Place both hands in front of you. Take your right hand and place it on the ground over the left hand of the person to your right. During the first round we are going to attempt to send a tap in a continuous motion around the circle to the right. Taps should happen in succession of how hands are arranged in a circle. Send the tap around once in each direction without interruption. If the group is able to complete this task, you may add a time factor and see if they can improve or finish within a certain amount of time, or you can introduce the double tap to change direction of the momentum. Participants must pay attention to be sure that they do not tap out of turn.

Variations: Use feet, use as an elimination style game!

Debrief: None

Notables: The close proximity may be high risk for some participants.

Simon Says

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Instructions: One person is chosen to be "Simon" the others stand in a straight line. The Simon then calls out an action for the children to follow. It can be anything like.... touch your toes jump 10 times on 1 foot..... The Simon when giving an action can simply state the action by itself..."touch your ears" and whoever does it is out and has to sit

down. Or the Simon can say "Simon says, touch your ears" and then everyone must follow the instruction. You can vary the actions according to the age group of children you are playing with. The last person who is standing can then be "Simon"! This game is very common and easy to play.

Follow The Leader

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Instructions: Line the children up and enlist one of them to be the leader, whatever the leader does, the rest must do! For the younger ones you can call out the moves for them. You can have lots of fun with this! Make them jump on one foot, bark like a dog, skip while patting their head with one hand, and so on. The older ones can make up their own moves. You will have many laughs with this game! At this age it is very beneficial for their coordination and listening skills.

Mother May I?

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Basic Objection: By following different commands the winner of Mother May I is the first one to reach the "mother"

Set up: Choose who will be the mother. Have the mother stand at one end of the playing area and the rest of the children line up side by side at the opposite end of the yard.

Instructions: "Mother" calls each child by name one at a time and tells them to take a random number of steps towards them. For example the "mother" will say "Bobby, take 3 giant steps." Before the player takes the steps they must ask the "mother" .. "Mother may I?". The mother then answers "Yes you may." The player then may take the steps towards the "mother". If the player forgets to ask "Mother may I?" after getting directions on the type of steps he should take he must go back to the starting line or home. The first player to reach "mother" gets to be the new "mother". The types of steps should vary with each child. Some examples are: giant, tiny, baby, crawling, twirling, backwards, marching steps.

Variation: The word "Captain" can be exchanged for "Mother".

Beach ball Info

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Props: One or two beach balls and a marker

Instructions: Get one or two beach balls. Write questions all over the beach ball i.e. favorite ice-cream, most embarrassing moment etc. Have everyone stand in a circle and pass the beach ball around the circle by throwing up in the air. The person who threw the ball will then pick a finger i.e. left thumb. The person who caught the ball must then read out the question and answer (questions nearest to left thumb).

A What?

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Props: 2 objects

Instructions: The leader of the game starts by passing the first object to the person on their right (Person A) and saying, "This is a what." Person A replies, "A What?" The leader would then clarify, "A what." Person A then turns to the person on their right (Person B) and says, "This is a what." Person B, "A what?" Person A, turns to Leader, and asks, "This is a What?" Leader to Person A, "A what!" Person A to Person B, "A what!" Person B then turns to Person C, and the game continues...

Variations: This game can be confused by adding an additional object called a Watt in the opposite direction. Eventually, people are receiving and passing two words at time...

TOMATO

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Instructions: Everyone sits in a circle. One person who is it stands in the center of the circle. This Person is called "It". Each person asks the person who is "it" an appropriate question. The only answer to every question has to be answered as "Tomato ". The first person to make the center person "it" laugh wins a try in the middle. Ex: What color is your hair? Tomato. What do you brush your teeth with? Tomato. (Obviously other funny Questions can be used for variety)

Ah soh koh

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Instructions: Everyone sits in a circle, and learns the 3 commands and their movements.

- 1) Ah – the person says "Ah" loudly, and takes their left or right arm across their chest, pointing at the person next to them
- 2) Soh - the person says "Soh" loudly, and takes their left or right arm above their head, pointing at the person next to them

3) Koh – the person puts both arms together in front of them and point to someone else, anywhere in the circle. The phrases must always go in that order, and each phrase needs its correct hand motion. You go when you are pointed at by someone next to you using “ah” or “soh,” or by someone across from you using “koh.” When you are “koh”ed at by someone you can either start again with “Ah” or put your hands up and say “nooooooo.” If you say “nooooooo” then the person who said “koh” has to start again with “Ah.” If you mess up, you step out of the circle and walk around the outside trying to confuse people by shouting random words.

Drop it-Catch it

Type of Game: Ice Breaker

Props: A Ball

Instructions: Get your group to stand in a circle all facing the center. Have them spread out arms length. One person is in the middle with a ball and passes it back and forth to the other players surrounding them. The player in the middle with the ball must say "drop it" or "catch it" before tossing the ball to one of the players. The player then must do the opposite of what is being told to them. If the player in the center says "drop it", then the other player must catch it and vice versa. If they do the wrong motion, they must switch places with the person in the middle.

ENERGIZER

GAMES

People to People

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 10 people

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Standing in a circle, people respond to the call of a person in the middle to make contact with matching body parts of their partner's body.

Instructions: Split your group into partners. Explain that you, the person in the middle, will call out the name of any body part (elbow). On this command, everyone turns to their partner and touches matching body parts (elbow to elbow). This may be repeated with different body parts. After two or three repetitions, the person in the middle yells "people to people". At this point, everybody is obligated to leave their current partner and look for a new one. Activity repeats, changes pace as desired.

Variations: Use non-matching commands, use foam blocks or balls to separate people and each tension created by touch, create space where the person in the middle varies as the game progresses by removing or adding yourself into the game as necessary creating one person without a partner each round

Debrief: None.

Notables: Be silly.

Rock Tree Bridge

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 6

Approximate time: 5 - 10 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Group will move from one designated point to another across an open space using a series of movements in a pre-determined order.

Instructions: Your group is trapped in an enchanted forest. One that will not let anyone person make it through without becoming lost. The only way to make it out alive is to mimic the features already found in the forest in an effort to trick the enchanted creatures into letting you pass. The forest begins at the starting point and ends all the way over there at the final boundary. Ok, here are some features and actions that you can use to safely get your team through this dangerous area. First we must learn how to be a rock. Please crouch down and hug your knees becoming as small as possible. Next someone must become a tree. Trees will stand tall with their branches (arms) out at angles from their trunk. Finally, someone must become a bridge. Bridges will arrange themselves as if they were about to do a push up with their backs in the air. It is extremely important that these features be created in this order as you attempt to cross through the forest.

So everyone please form a line over here at the starting point. The first person in line will become a rock. The second person will climb over the rock and become a tree. The third person will climb over the rock, go around the tree, and become a bridge. The

fourth person will climb over the rock, go around the tree, go under the bridge, and become a rock. This will continue in order until your entire group is out of the forest. When you run out of people in your line, the original first person should follow the last person and continue the progression. Good luck!

Variations: Come up with different movements/symbols! Turn it into a competition with two or more teams.

Debrief: None

Notables: Good for early morning programs and for getting a tough group to move around! Make it loud!

Finger Fencing

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: Even number of participants

Approximate time: 5 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Two people, connected by their right or left hands with their index fingers extended, attempt to be the first to tag the other below the waist.

Instructions: Split your group into partners and have them find a space to engage in a grand duel. Invite one promising "swash-buckler" to step forward to help you demonstrate this exercise. First you need to bow to your partner and then extend both of your right or left hands forward to join in one of those funky handshakes, you know, those cool clasp-your partner's- thumb-on-top handshakes. From this position, you each extend your index finger out as if you were pointing down the forearm of your partner. Announce that this finger is your foil. Place your other hand elegantly in the air behind you 16th century style, turn Side-on, and lift the toe of your front foot, and voila, you're ready to engage in "mortal combat." With a call of "on guard!" the match begins. The first person to touch the other with their foil somewhere on the body below their waist exclaims "touche" and is declared the winner.

Debrief: None

Notables: Be silly.

Gotcha

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: 6 - 50

Approximate-time: 5-10 min depending on version

Props: None

Basic Objective: In a circle with their index fingers pointing downward into their neighbors' open palms, everyone tries to catch the juxta-positioned finger at the same time.

Instructions: Have the group make an elbow to elbow circle. Please take your right hand and place it out in front of you palm up. Now move that hand so that it is in front of the person to your right at about belly button height. Take your left hand and point to the sky. On the count of three bring that left index finger down into the hand in front of you and make the best crashing sound you can. (Encourage loudness and crazy sounds until you are satisfied.) This is a game of capture and escape. When you hear the magic word "-----," you will attempt to catch the finger in your palm while at the same time trying not to get your own finger caught (demonstrate)!

Now listen carefully... (As facilitator feel free to trick them up using words that sound like your magic word or begin with the same letter. Keep them on edge and it is more fun!)

Variations: Use your feet and then combine the two. Also feel free to use different "magic" words as they fit your program. Be creative!

Debrief: May use this as a lead in to your day or a way to explain part of your full value contract. Debrief as you see fit. Sometimes it may not be necessary depending upon how you use the game.

Notables: This game is fantastic because it is easy to adapt to students with different ability levels or restrictions.

Alaskan Baseball

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 12

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: One throw-able object other than a ball, I suggest a rubber chicken, pig, or fish.

Basic Objective: Two teams will attempt to earn runs in a wacky game of baseball!

Instructions: Form two teams. A long time ago, I had the privilege of traveling to Alaska with some friends. While there we met a world renowned baseball team and they asked us if we wanted to play the great American pastime. We agreed that it would be fun and a good way to warm up only to find that they played baseball a little different. Picture this, its -30 degrees outside and you are standing all alone in the outfield. Sounds a bit cold right! In order to stay warm, they revamped the game a little bit. In their version, the batting team throws the Alaskan baseball as far as they can. The other team then goes to retrieve it. The thrower's team then huddles in a clump to keep warm while the thrower does laps around his or her huddled team. Each lap counts as one run. While this team is attempting to earn as many runs as possible, the opposing team is retrieving the Alaskan baseball.

Once one team member has it in his or her hands, the team lines up and passes the object over the head of the first person, under the legs of the second person, and then repeats this cycle until the last person in line has possession of the object. He or she then throws the object as far away from the other team as possible and the two teams switch roles. The top and bottom halves of each inning end upon the pitch of the opposing team. Continue for as many innings as needed to get warm enough to battle the intense Alaskan cold!

Variations: Get creative!

Debrief: None

Notables: Good for early morning programs and for getting a tough group to move around! Make it loud and be silly! Get groups to pretend that they are really in Alaska trying to stay warm!

ESP!

Type of Game: Energizer!

Group size: More than 8

Approximate time: 5 - 10 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Participants attempt to read each other's minds while back to back. On the count of three they will turn around and make an action, hoping that their mind reading was *effective!*

Instructions: Break your group into pairs and then conduct a whole group discussion that will result in an agreement of three to four distinct, definable physical gestures. Your program goals will dictate what style of gestures they will be (i.e. values, rock-paper-scissors, sporting movements). Next, practice these gestures a few times to ensure that everyone has got them locked in. Now ask each of the pairs to find a little space to play, and stand back to back with their partner. Whilst waiting for the countdown, each person is silently attempting to read the mind of his or her partner and decide which of the gestures he or she will choose to do. Then, on the count of three, each person turns around swiftly to face their partner whilst demonstrating/performing one of the gestures. Instruct people to be gesturing as they turn around, to *prevent* a little sneaky cheating. Repeat 5 or 6 times encouraging pairs to keep track of how many times they can match gestures. At the end survey the group!

Variations: May be used to introduce or exemplify full value contract by using actions to exemplify your groups chosen values

Debrief: May be necessary with some groups around full value or risk and fun/reward, how does cheating play in

Notables: Be sure that actions are appropriate!

Birdie on a Perch

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 12

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: None.

Basic Objective: Concentric circles rotate in opposing directions (one of birdies and one of perches), upon the command birdies try to find their perches as quickly as possible!

Instructions: Create partners and ask them to decide which partner is a birdie and which will be the perch. Birdies please say good bye to your perch and fly over here to see your other birdie friends forming a circle. Perches please now arrange yourselves in circle surrounding your birdies. On "go" I am going to ask that birdies please rotate your circle in a clockwise direction while perches will travel in a counter clockwise direction. When I say "Birdie on a Perch," birdies will reunite with their perches as quickly as possible being sure that both feet of the birdie are off the ground. Be creative as this does not necessarily mean that birdies have to be lifted by their perches.

Ready, go! Feel free to repeat a few times!

Variations: Get creative! You could turn it into an elimination game adding other movements or jobs for those eliminated or you could allow anyone to yell birdie on a perch at any time rather than only the facilitator having that power.

Debrief: None

Notables: Can be dangerous for less physically active groups due to the potential lifting element.

Hula Relay

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 8

Approximate time: 5 min

Props: 1 hula hoop for each group

Basic Objective: Participants quickly pass a hula hoop around the circle as quickly as possible while holding hands without breaking connection.

Instructions: Arrange your group in a circle holding hands. Put a hula hoop around your arm during this arrangement. Explain to your group that it is their job to pass this hula hoop all the way around the circle until it is back to you. In this process they may not break connection or use their hands in any way. Encourage a lot of laughter and crazy movements to make it work! Try both left and right if you have time, see if one way is harder!

Variations: Do it with eyes closed, add a time element, have groups compete

Debrief: None or simple what worked and what didn't discussion

Notables: Be silly.

Captain is Coming (Shipwreck)

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 15

Approximate time: 10 - 20 min

Props: None, boundaries

Basic Objective: individuals and small groups respond as quickly as possible to the "captain's" instructions to perform a series of tasks on board an imaginary ship.

Instructions: With everyone gathered around, teach your group a series of sea-worthy chores to perform on your imaginary tall ship's deck. First of all, point out where or along which boundaries the bow (front), stern (rear), port (left), and starboard (right) sides of the ship can be located. Next describe the appropriate actions for the following commands:

"Attention" or "Captain is coming" - sailors stand to attention saluting the captain with the right hand

"Sailor overboard" or "hit the deck" - sailors drop to the floor on either the port or starboard edges of the deck

"Abandon ship" or "life boats" - three people form a single file line, sit down, and pretend to row a boat singing "row, row, row your boat"

"Land ho" - two people, one gets on their hands and knees while the other puts their foot up on their back and searches for land with a telescope or hand to their forehead.

The game starts with everyone standing on the deck. The captain will then issue a series of commands, including instructions to send everyone to the bow, stern, port, and starboard sides of the deck. You need to understand that the captain is a masochist, because he or she loves to send people to the bow, then to the stern, to hit the deck, stand at attention, then back to the stern, then to the life boats all in a matter of 30 seconds!

Variations: Add challenge by adding actions, elimination variation

Debrief: None

Notables: Be silly.

Evolution

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 15

Approximate time: 10 - 15 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Physically portraying one of five distinct evolutionary creatures, a person attempts to win a quick game of rock-paper-scissors with other like creatures, to elevate their status and ultimately become a supreme being.

Instructions: Ask your group to help you create five evolutionary creatures. At the bottom of the food chain, we have the egg, followed by the chicken, then the dinosaur, then a Ninja turtle, and finally the all knowing Supreme Being. Each of these creatures has a unique physical representation. Invite your group to copy these movements and sounds as you show them.

Egg - crouch down into a little ball with legs, and make muffled sounds

Chicken - flap your arms by your sides and make clucking sounds

Dinosaur - raise your arms above your head, take big heavy strides, and make scary noises

Ninja Turtle (Kung Fu Master) - make like a kung fu champion slicing air with lots of karate chops and kicks

Supreme Being - fold your arms like a genie, look calm and wise

Now explain that everyone will start the evolutionary cycle at the lowest level. To progress through the five phases, each creature must find another like-creature, and play a quick game of rock-paper-scissors. Whoever wins steps up one evolutionary phase. The loser simply remains at the same level he or she was at. Once you become Supreme, you are no longer required to play and they can simply stand out to the side with their arms crossed looking very self-righteous. It is not possible to have everyone reach Supreme status. Often you will have one remaining creature at each evolutionary stage.

Variations: Be creative and adapt to your group!

Debrief: None

Notables: Be silly.

Front-Back

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: 6 - 20

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Participants will attempt to respond correctly as a whole group to a series of commands and maintain an understanding with the facilitator.

Instructions: Have the group make a circle holding hands. There are only four commands possible for this exercise: front, back, right, or left.

Movement as a result of these commands may take the form of a small hop or a step in the appropriate direction. This activity is one of call and response both verbally and actively with 4 rounds.

1. Round 1: instruct participants to "Do what I say and say what I say!"

2. Round 2: instruct participants to "Say what I say and do the opposite!"

3. Round 3: instruct participants to "Do what I say and say the opposite!"

4. Round 4: instruct participants to "Do the opposite and say the opposite of what I say!"

Have fun with it and give participants time to regroup every once in a while so that they do not get frustrated. Be sure to encourage laughter and a sense of humor as we all forget our left from our right and effectively mess up what appear to be simple commands!

Variations: Be creative.

Debrief: None; if you are working communication with your group you may choose to discuss how communication messages can become confusing and how misunderstandings can interrupt group process.

Notables: Be aware that the size of the group could change the difficulty of this exercise. If touch is an issue, it is possible to do this activity without holding hands. Also base your type of movement and speed on the ability levels of the group (i.e. hop vs. step).

Skake 8's

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 6

Approximate time: 5 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Standing in a circle, participants will shake different parts of their body on command while counting down from 8.

Instructions: Form a circle. First off, I want to know if all of you can count backwards from 8. Ready now all together, 8 - 7 - 6 - 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1!!

Ok, now do you know your right from your left? Show me your right hand, ok left hand, ok right foot, ok left foot. Good! Now we can play! Here's what you do! On "go" we are all going to shake our right hand and count to 8. Then we are going to do the same thing with our left hand, followed by our right foot, then our left foot. To top it off we are going to turn around and shake our behind counting to 8. The next round we will follow the same pattern except count to 7. The game will continue until we count down to 1. I want you to get louder and faster with each round! Ok ready GO!

Debrief: None

Notables: Good for early morning programs and for getting a tough group to move around! Make it loud!

Volcanoes and Craters

Group size: Any size

Type of Game: Energizer/team building

Approximate time: 5-10 minutes

Props: 30 disc cones

Basic Objective: The object of the game is to get all the cones facing up or down depending on which team you are on.

Instructions: Place half of the cones facing up, and the other half facing down. Split the group into two teams. One team is 'volcanoes' and the other team is 'craters'. Each team has to try to flip the cone to the correct side for their team. For example, the volcano team has to get the cones to look like volcanoes by flipping them upright and the crater team has to get the cones to look like craters by flipping them upside down. The time limit for the game is about 1-2 minutes. When the time is up, the winner is the team with the most cones flipped.

Variations: Size of teams (tournament style, individual players), size of playing area, number of cones.

Debrief: Discuss what type of skills are being taught in this game (Balance, agility, speed, coordination, cooperation)

Notables: This game can be played with all ages!

Run and Scream

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: More than 5

Approximate time: 2 min

Props: None.

Basic Objective: Run and scream until you lose your breath!

Instructions: Please get in a shoulder to shoulder line facing me. On my command, we are all going to run as far as we can while screaming as loud as we can. When you run out of breath or cannot scream any more, stop and sit down. (Demonstrate what

cheating might look like!) Ok take a few deep breaths and ready, go! After everyone is sitting you may choose to be done or you may add to the challenge by having them start where they have just landed and attempt to do the same thing to return to the original start line. See who can make it back!

Variations: Get creative!

Debrief: None

Notables: Watch for people with asthma!!!

The Hand Game

Type of Game: Energizer

Group size: Three or more preferably more

Approximate time: Varies depending on the number of people playing

Props: No props necessary

Basic Objective: To be one of the last two people left in the circle at the end of the game.

Instructions: Everyone must lie down on their stomachs with their hands in front of them. Each person puts their left hand under the person's hand to the left of them. Each person puts their right hand over the person's hand to the right of them. So, left under and right over. The hands must be flat on the floor, so that you can slap easily. When looking down at the floor you should see someone else's hands in between yours: For example: my LEFT hand, then the person on my left's RIGHT hand, then the person on my right's LEFT hand, then my RIGHT hand, and so on. It sounds confusing, but it is really simple when you do it. Just remember left under and right over. Pick a person to start the slapping. They tell the direction that the slapping will be starting in, either Left or Right. That person then slaps their hand to start the game. The hand next to that person's hand goes next. You can single slap or double slap. A single slap keeps the slap going in the correct direction; a double slap sends the slap in the opposite direction. If someone slaps out of turn, they must remove that hand. Also, if the direction changes and a person slaps as if it were the original direction, their hand is out. People who take too long to slap can also be eliminated depending on how you want to play the game. The last two people left in the game are the winners. You want to play faster as the game progresses. If you make a mistake, you take out your hand and when both hands are out, you leave the circle.

Variations: Can play it sitting at a table, or lying down on your belly.

Debrief: What skills were used to be successful at this game? -patience, hand-eye coordination, quick reaction time. What was difficult about this game? -going faster, making sure someone did not double slap, paying attention, reacting quickly

What was the purpose of this game?

-to have fun, to involve anyone that wanted to play, to serve as an ice breaker

What was good about this game? -anyone can play it, it's easy to play, does not need any props to play, etc

Notables: May not be good to play with winners and losers for younger kids. The Hand Game may not be good to play at a faster speed with younger kids. Younger children do not need to be out if they do not slap their hand quick enough.

Boxball

Type of Game: Energizer

Basic Objective: Boxball transforms two sidewalk squares into an outdoor version of ping-pong or, perhaps more accurately, a postage-stamp-sized game of tennis.

Instructions: Each player serves, volleys, and defends his square. The lines (or "cracks") around the concrete define the court; the seam between the two squares is the imaginary net. Players choose or volley for first serve. Serve is maintained by winner of the volley or rotated every five points. In some games, only the server wins a point; others play so that either player can win any point. Twenty-one is usually the winning score, with the requirement of winning by two points. The ball is slapped back and forth between boxes with an open palm. Slap the ball into your opponent's box; he or she returns it back to your box after one bounce or on the fly. If you step into the playing court, fail to return a shot, or if your return shot's first bounce lands out of your opponent's box, you lose the volley. You can choose whether you can use both hands, or one hand only (where you can use the back of the palm for a "reverse shot").

Reverse shots aren't easy to control, since the back of the palm is not as flat or flexible as the front, but they're sometimes necessary in order to protect the full box. Players can try to hit the ball with force--or with a cutting motion to give the ball more spin, or "English," and make it more difficult to return. Boxball is quick game with soft spinning shots, slams, and pinpoint shots to the corners. It's simple, intimate and intense.

Notables: Use only soft playground balls

Blind Cow

Type of Game: Energizer

Instructions: All players sit in a circle facing the center. One person is blindfolded and is the "Blind Cow." The "blind cow" should be spun around and then brought to the center of the circle. The bell should then be passed around the circle and rung. The "blind cow" will then follow the sound of the bell. The game leader points at the person who should stop the bell. The "blind cow" now has to guess who is holding the bell (by pointing). If the person is right, the chosen person becomes the cow in the next round. If they are wrong, he has to go again (until he guesses right).

Beat the Bunny

Type of Game: Energizer

Instructions: The bunny (small ball) is started first and is passed from person to person around the circle. When the bunny is about half way around, the farmer (large ball) is started in the same direction. The farmer can change directions to try and catch the bunny, but the bunny can only go one way, until the farmer changes direction.

4 Corners

Type of Game: Energizer

Instructions: One person is "it" and closes his/her eyes. The rest of the class goes to one of the 4 corners (or 4 designated spots) of the room. "It" calls a number and children in that corner sit down. If they don't sit down, they are 'out'. Continue until there are 6 or 8 left, then you tell them there must be only 2 in each corner or when 4 left - one in each corner. The last person left - gets to be "it".

Limbo

Type of Game: Energizer

Props: A limbo stick, broomstick, rope or hose

Basic Objective: See who can limbo under the stick at the lowest point.

Set up: Choose 2 people to hold the limbo stick (or rope) and then ask everyone else to line up single file behind them.

How to play Limbo: Have the two people holding the limbo stick start the game by holding the stick about 4 feet from the ground. Everyone in line must then go under the stick by walking forward and bending backward under the stick. If someone touches the stick they are out. Once everyone has had a turn going under the limbo stick start again by lowering the stick about 6 inches. Continue lowering the stick each round until there is only one player that can make it under the stick.

If everyone gets out in a round start that round again until one person can make it under successfully.

Variations: Instead of walking forwards try walking backwards, or make they go under sideways.

Wolf's Dinner Time

Type of Game: Energizer

Instructions: One player becomes the wolf and he/she will stand with his/her back turned to the others about 15 feet from the others. The others call out, "What's the time Mr. Wolf" and the wolf turns to face the others and shouts out a time. E.g.: 9 o'clock. The others would then take 9 steps toward the wolf. The group will take the same amount of steps toward the wolf as the amount of hours in the wolf's time. e.g., 4 o'clock = 4 steps, 6 o'clock = 6 steps etc. etc. The wolf will then turn his back to the group again for them to yell "what's the time...." (He looks at the group only when he shouts the time at the group"). When the group comes close to the wolf the next time the group yells "what's the time Mr. Wolf" the wolf will say "Its DINNER TIME" and run after the group who are running back to the start line, and hopefully catch one of the group who will then be the wolf. It sounds noisy, but is an interesting game.

Hen and Chicks

Type of Game: Energizer

Instructions: Have two safe points such as trees some distance apart. One person is in the middle as the Hen trying to round up her chicks. When she calls for her chicks all the little chicks run from one point to the other while the mother hen tries to catch them. If they are caught they have to stay in the middle and help mother hen. The last chick caught gets to be the hen for the next round.

Variations: Change it to whatever animal you want to fit a theme.

Jackpot Football Game

Type of Game: Energizer

Instructions: Usually we play that 100, 300 and 450 are bankrupt numbers. All other players go a good distance from the thrower and get prepared to catch the ball. The thrower then throws the football and at the same time yells out a number (25, 100, 30...). This is the point value of the throw and all the players try to catch the ball. The player that catches the ball gets the points and is the new thrower. Players cannot go over the set winning number or they go bankrupt and have to start again. The thrower can also call out "Bankrupt" as he throws the ball and anyone who catches it loses all their points.

Variations: Along with a number called out when throwing the ball the thrower can call out different ways the ball must be caught such as: handcuffs - ball has to be caught behind the back, seal - ball has to be caught with the palms only, freeze - players have to freeze and catch the ball where they are standing. If the ball is caught differently than what the thrower calls out the catcher loses all their points.

Hot Potato Game

Type of Game: Energizer

Instructions: Start the music and have the children start to pass the hot potato around the circle. When the music stops the person holding the hot potato is out. Continue the game until there is only one person left in the circle. They are the winner.

Variations: For children's parties the "potato" can be any item - it make the game even better if an object from the party theme is used.

Handkerchief Game

Type of Game: Energizer

Instructions: Teams line up on opposite sides and a handkerchief is placed in the middle. At random the "caller" calls out a number. The players that have been assigned that number both run to the middle and try to be the first one to grab the handkerchief. The player who grabs the handkerchief first gets a point for their team.

Variations: If there are a lot of children playing you can divide them into 4 equal groups and have them line up on facing each other - like the four sides of a square.

Lilly Pad Leap/ Ice Berg Jump

Type of Game: Energizer

Props: Newspaper

Instructions: Set out various news papers folded into squares and tell kids they are the Lilly Pads or Ice Bergs! Have the kids run around until you shout "here comes the hungry fish, or hungry walrus!" Then they have to jump on a lily pad or ice berg to be safe. When the creature says "no food here I guess" the kids know it's safe to come off, then take away one of the newspapers, keep doing it until you are down to the last news paper. Any frog or penguin that gets caught or falls off the safe spot has to help you catch the others.

Red Rover Game

Type of Game: Energizer

Basic Objective: Break through the other teams line.

Set up: Split kids into two equal teams. Teams line up holding hands parallel to each other with lots of space in between.

Instructions: The first team will choose a player from the other team to try and break through their line. After the child is chosen the team will yell “Red Rover, Red Rover ... let _____ come over.” (Fill in blank with the name of the chosen child.) The chosen child will then run to the other team and try and break through the hands of any two children. If the runner breaks through then they choose someone from that team to take to their team. If they don’t break through then they must join that team. The game ends when all the children are on one team.

Notables: Break through at the weakest point and take the strongest player with you.

Variations: If you break through then you can only choose one of the two people you broke through to take back to your side.

PROBLEM SOLVING GAMES

Mine Field

Type of Game: Problem solving

Group size: More than 8

Approximate time: 20 min

Props: Throw-ables and rope boundaries

Basic Objective: pairs will attempt to traverse the minefield without stepping on any mines

Instructions: Arrange your boundary for about a 20' x 20' square playing area.

Ask your group to help you arrange your objects spread out evenly throughout this area. Now get your group into pairs. Have them choose which pair will be blindfolded first and *offer* the option that "blind" people may simply close their eyes if the blindfold seems like it may be too much! Explain to the group that their goal is to get all the blindfolded individuals across the minefield without touching any of the mines. If anyone person touches a mine, the entire group will have to start over. Ok now it is time to play. Have the blindfolded partners standing on one side of the square while their partners stand across from them on the other side of the square. On go, the sighted partners must stay where they are while attempting to verbally guide the blindfolded individuals across the mine field. When mines are hit and the group needs to restart, allow time for all group members to do mini processing and talk about what they need to change to be successful. Emphasize the group process! Eventually groups may decide that hearing their individual partners is too difficult if they all go at once and may decide that one group of partners will go at a time. Many other solutions are out there!

Variations: use different amounts of objects based on the level of challenge appropriate for the group, also maybe allow for the closing of eyes rather than using actual blindfolds, make it a pair centered or a group centered activity based on your instructions, allow pairs to physically guide each other rather than just verbally.

Debrief: The key to this game is an extensive debrief with well planned questions that probe! What did it feel like, how was it being blind, being sighted? What difficulties did you face? Did your partner react differently to your commands than you had expected at any point? What did it take to be successful? At what points in your life have you felt blind and had to find someone to follow? How can this relate to future challenges that you may face?

Notables: Be aware of the risk in asking people to blindfold themselves!

Tie My Shoe

Type of Game: Problem solving

Group size: More than 8

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: None but half the group must have lace up shoes

Basic Objective: Using their non-dominant hands, two partners will attempt to tie a shoe.

Instructions: Separate your group into partners in which at least one partner has tie-able shoes. Ask each partner to hold out their dominant hand (the hand they write with). Now put it behind their back. On go, using the two remaining hands, partners must untie and retie one of the tie-able shoes.

Variations: Eyes closed, time limit, use dominant hands for younger groups

Debrief: Perception and ability

Notables: Use with appropriate age groups; also encourage persistence even if it becomes frustrating

Turnstiles Variation

Type of Game: Problem solving

Group size: More than 10

Approximate time: 20 min

Props: A large playing area and 30' length of rope to swing (may want an additional boundary for a start line)

Basic Objective: the entire group will attempt to get from one side of a swinging rope to the other by figuring out the correct number combination

Instructions: You are all now stuck in a castle guarded by a wicked old witch. To escape this castle you must pass through a magical combination lock. Your goal is to figure out the wicked witch's combination (made up of numbers) and pass your entire group through the locked drawbridge to safety. Now the way to do this is to pass through this swinging rope. If the rope hits one of you, you will hear this horrible buzzer sound (made by the facilitator) and the witch will magically whisk you back to the locked side of the drawbridge. Also, if you do not send the right number of people through at any given time, the rope will stop swinging and you must all return to the locked side of the drawbridge in an attempt to retrieve your stranded group members. Now the way the combination lock works is that the number of people that you send through represents the next number in the combination. For example, two people could go through at a time to represent the number 2 in the witch's lock. A number is only accurate if all the group members making up that number make it through the swinging rope at the same time (no extra swings so $2+1$ does not equal 3, only 3 running at once = 3). The numbers that make up the combination will add up to the total number of people in your group. Good luck!

Variations: It's all in the framing! See turnstiles.

Debrief: The key to this game is an extensive debrief with well planned questions that probe! What worked for your group during this activity? What didn't work? What did you change between each attempt? How were you able to become more successful as the group continued? What key elements contributed to the success of your group? How can you apply this to your school, work, and social environments? What can you learn from this activity to use in future challenges?

Notables: be sure to figure out your combination ahead of time as well as who or what will hold the other side of your swinging rope! Do not answer too many questions and be sure to make it clear that all group members must remain on their feet at all times. No diving!

Monster Walk

Type of Game: Problem solving/team building

Group size: Teams of 6 or 7

Approximate time: 10-15 minutes

Props: None

Basic Objective: The object of the game is to get your team from point A to point B under the following conditions:

1. All players in the group must stay connected.
2. The group may only move on a certain number of body parts

Instructions: Start off by breaking the group into teams of 6 or 7. Once broken into teams, set up the starting point and the ending point. To start the game, assign the teams a number of body parts equal to their group number. For example 7 members may use 7 body parts. They will solve this quickly, usually by holding hands and hopping on 1 foot, after the teams accomplish that task, the team must now attempt the challenge with 1 less body part. The goal is to move your team from start to finish on the fewest number of body parts. To give you an idea of body part count, 1 person walking is 2 body parts" 1 person crawling is 4 body parts, etc.

Variations: vary the distance from start to finish, size of teams (no less than 5 but not more than 9).

Debrief: Talk among teams the importance of communication, cooperation, and critical thinking. Also what would they do different after having played the game.

Notables: Play with grades 3-12. The higher grades will generally have a wide variety of ideas.

Pyramid, Piggyback, Portage

Type of game: Problem Solving

Group size: 10-20

Approximate Time: 10-20 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: To be the first team to complete the missions and finish the race.

Instructions: Teams are lined up at one end of a playing field. This will simulate a wilderness trip, where the team first portages a canoe, then climbs a mountain, and finally backpacks home. First each team selects one person to be the canoe. All other team members from two lines facing one another and link arms. The "canoe" lies down on the row arms and the team "portages" (runs) the canoe down to the end of the "wilderness". Upon arrival, all team members but one form a pyramid and the single team member climbs over the "mountain". It is then time to backpack home. In pairs, teammates take turns "backpacking" (piggybacking) each other back to the starting line.

Variations: You can switch up the course and make the pyramid go first and so on.

Debrief: Bring up the two words "teamwork" and "leadership" and have the students talk about how important they were in being successful in this challenge and in the real world.

Notables: Make sure everyone is having fun and make sure they are comfortable with the game and other teammates.

Key Punch (a.k.a. Calculator)

Type of Game: Problem solving

Group size: 10-15 unless you will run multiple groups

Approximate time: 20 min

Props: 30 numbered spots, a circular rope boundary, and a smaller boundary line, stop watch.

Basic Objective: the entire group will attempt to touch numbered spots in order as quickly as possible

Instructions: Set up: Using a permanent marker, consecutively number gym spots 1 through 30. With a rope of some kind, mark off a 15'-20' diameter circle at one end of your playing area. Inside this circle place the numbered spots. Be sure to separate consecutive numbers as best as possible. Some facilitators like to arrange in so that even numbered spots are on one side and odd numbered spots are on the other. Be sure that all spots are at least one full step inside the boundary. About 30'-40' away create another boundary with a 10' length of rope or string that will act as your starting line and planning area.

Framing: You are a sports team that is attempting to recruit new players. Each numbered spot in the circle represents one of these new players. On "go" your goal is to have each member of your team meet at least one of the new players in order in the quickest time possible. A "meeting" takes place when one of your group members touches one of the numbered spots. All new players must be met in order! Also, you will

received a penalty for any players "met' out of order as well as having more than one group member inside the meet and greet area at any time. I will now give you 2 minutes to plan your 1st attempt.

Game Play: The entire group must start and finish behind the start line. All planning must also happen behind the start line. The time begins when the first person steps over the start line and ends when the last person crosses it. Only one person may be inside the circle at a time, at any point that there are 2 people inside at one time, a penalty occurs. You will also be penalized for numbers touched out of order. Repeat 3 times with about 1-2 minutes of planning time in between. Be sure to inform groups of their time and number of penalties in between each round.

Variations: It's all in the framing! Eliminate the idea of a penalty. Complete with multiple groups combining to an entire group score.

Debrief: The key to this game is an extensive debrief with well planned questions that probe! What worked for your group during this activity? What didn't work? What did you change between each round? How were you able to become more successful as the rounds continued? What key elements contributed to the success of our group? How can you apply this to your school, work, and social environments? What can you learn from this activity to use in future challenges?

Notables: Be sure you have an accurate way of timing and counting faults!

Phones & Faxes

Type of Game: Problem solving

Group size: More than 12

Approximate time: 20 min

Props: Throw-ables and 2 circle boundaries depending on needs of group

Basic Objective: Small groups will attempt to catch as many throw-ables as possible.

Instructions: Arrange your large group into three or four smaller groups of roughly equal size. Set up your two circle boundaries so that there is an inner circle about 4 feet in diameter and an outer circle 10-15 feet outside of the inner circle. Arrange your throw-able objects on the ground so that all group members can see what they are about to catch. Give groups about 1 minute to come up with a goal of how many objects they think they can catch as a group. Once you have all the goals from each group select the order in which the groups will get their chance and then let the fun begin. Have your first group stand with their feet touching the boundary of the inner circle with their eyes fixed on the ground between them. Have all other group members arrange themselves with their feet touching the outer circle while holding one or two of the throw-able objects based on numbers. On a count of three, the group members on the outside will throw their objects at an arc, into the middle of the group in the center. At the same time, the group in the center may look up and try to meet or exceed their goal for caught objects by any means that they have decided. Repeat this with 3 rounds looking for new goals each round and encouraging mini group debriefs about what worked and what didn't during the planning stages prior to each round.

Variations: Have goal setting include one specific throw-able that the group would want to attain, change objects to fit the group's needs

Debrief: The key to this game is an extensive debrief with well planned questions that probe! Goal setting, what does it take to reach your goals, what was different between the first, second, and third rounds, what can you learn from your mistakes, what goals do you have in life, what priorities do you juggle, what can you take away from this exercise,

Notables: Use objects that will not roll away or inflict harm if they hit someone! Be sure to emphatically stress the type of arching throw that you are looking for!

Steal My Keys

Type of Game: Problem solving

Group size: More than 6

Approximate time: 10 - 15 min

Props: Set of keys or another noisy but small object and a hula hoop

Basic Objective: Participants attempt to get a set of keys past the traffic cop without his or her knowledge.

Instructions: This is a variation on the old game "red light, green light."

Set up: Have participants arrange themselves behind a designated boundary. About 100 feet away, place a hula hoop on the ground. Now place your keys about 1/3 of the way between the boundary line and the hula hoop. Place yourself, the traffic cop, with your back to the participants looking at the hula hoop which should be about 5 feet away.

Framing: You are a group of professional car thieves with a plan to steal a police vehicle for a little fun! The traffic officer who drives this particular police car has lost his or her keys. Your goal is to retrieve these keys and use them to steal the police vehicle (the hula hoop) without his or her knowledge. Unfortunately for your group of thieves, the traffic cop is aware that he or she lost the keys and is on a search to find them. He or she suspects that someone has attempted to steal them.

Game Play: The police officer has two commands to use during this game, "red light" and "green light." On a "green light" command, his or her back is toward the group of thieves and they may move in an attempt to steal the keys. On "red light" the traffic cop will turn around to face the group and will have two guesses to try and figure out who has his or her keys. The game continues until either the thieves are successful in stealing the car or the police officer correctly guesses who has stolen his or her keys.

Variations: Vary the number of guesses that the police officer has based on the group's readiness.

Debrief: What worked, what didn't work, what challenges arose, how can you relate this to challenges you face in life?

Notables: May become frustrating so keep energy level high!

Obstacle Course

Type of Game: Problem Solving

Props: Use whatever you have on hand, cones, hula hoops, baseball bases, hockey sticks, etc.

Instructions: Set up an obstacle course a hockey stick to jump over, a hula hoop to crawl through, cones to run around, etc. Have kids take turns going through the obstacle course.

Notables: Do this during Sports Week or have your own Olympics and give out medals!

DOGGY DOGGY WHERE'S THE BONE?

Type of Game: Problem Solving

Props: A chair and an eraser or other object.

Instructions: A student plays the part of the dog. He or she sits in a chair with their back to the class. An eraser or another object is put under the chair. That is the bone. While the dog turns around with his or her eyes closed someone sneaks up and steals the bone and hides it somewhere on his person. Then everyone sings: Doggy, Doggy, where's your bone? Somebody's stole it from your home. Guess who it might be you. Then the dog has three chances to guess who took it. Sometimes it was left under his or her chair. If the dog guesses right then he got to do it again. If he guesses wrong than the person who has the bone gets a turn as the dog.

Hopscotch Game

Type of Game: Problem Solving

Props: Chalk, a rock and the sidewalk

Instructions: The two basic rules to remember are that you can only have 1 foot in each square and remember to hop over the square with the rock in it. First player throws their rock onto the first square. They then hop over that square to the second square on one foot. On double squares you must land with your feet side by side. Turn around and come back the same way only when you get to the square with your rock you must balance on one foot and pick up your rock. If completed with no mistakes then the player goes again and throws their rock to the 2 square and so on. You may not at any time: step on a line, miss a square or lose your balance. If you do any of those three things your turn is over. If while throwing the rock you miss the right square or it lands touching a line then you lose your turn.

Variations: Make some squares special by giving special directions for that square. Such as when in that square you have to hop three times or spin around.

TEAM BUILDING GAMES

Blanket Volleyball

Type of Game: Team builder/ Competitive

Group size: 8 and up the larger the group you may need bigger props.

Approximate time: 15-20 minutes.

Props: 2 sheets or blankets, ball, and tape

Basic Objective: Successfully work as a team to throw and catch a ball.

Instructions: Split group into two teams. Have every person grab a piece of the blanket or sheet. Place a piece of tape on the ground to serve as a net. Have one team serve the ball over the net (tape line) by lowering the blanket then raising it quickly in order to get ball airborne. The other team must catch the ball in their blanket. No use of hands is allowed. Team must use teamwork to get timing right and be able to move around to catch the ball. You can choose to set up boundaries if necessary.

Variations: Can use a real volleyball net to add difficulty.

Debrief: Ask the group what strategies worked and what did not work. What changed from your team's first throw to your last? What did your team need to get the ball over the net?

Notables: Groups with physical handicaps may have trouble with this activity. If any group members feel uncomfortable playing they can be used as score keepers or referees.

Crack Up Ball Game

Type of Game: Game play involves each player to individually do their part in staying in the game through creative ways, and working with others to get players certain players out of the game.

Group Size: 4 to 10 players.

Approximate time: 5-10 minutes.

Props: Soft throwing ball.

Basic Objective: The object of Crack Up Ball is to be the last one standing who has survived getting the ball thrown at them but has remained under 5 hits to be able to stay in the game.

Instructions: One player has the ball and is "it". The "it" player can be decided by the instructor asking for a number between one and 20 and whoever comes the closest is "it". The "it" player runs after one or more of the other players to try to throw the ball and hit one of them. The others who are running try to avoid being hit by the ball. Whoever has a ball thrown at them can catch the ball which gives the "it" player (the thrower) a point lost. The game runs on a point system. Therefore, if the ball hits the player they will lose a point. If no one is hit no points are lost. If the ball is not caught and lies on the floor, any player can pick it up and will become the "it". When a player loses 5 points, they are out of the game. The play continues until there is only one player left in the game who becomes the winner.

Variations: If the instructor wanted a shorter game, the players who were hit 3 times instead of 5 could lose that way the game would be quicker.

Debrief: Individuals will work against others communally to come out as the winner.

Notables: Crack Up Ball can be played with elementary grades 3 and up. College students, camps, and neighborhood groups can play this game as well.

Over, Under, And Around.

Type of Game: Relay/ team work race

Group size: At least 2 groups (group size from 5-8)

Approximate time: 5-10 minutes

Props: Per group = One noodle, three Beanie Babies, two hoops and a basketball

Basic Objective: Participants will attempt in their groups to transfer the props from one end of the gym to the other by means of over the head under them and around there bodies.

Instructions: The 2 or more groups will divide evenly. At one end of the gym there will be a hoop on the ground with the noodle, three beanie babies, and a basketball in it. On the other side there will be another hoop on the ground with nothing inside. The group will start on the side with all the objects. The first object to be transfer to the other side is the noodle. The way you transfer the noodle is that you must hold the noodle over your head with your hands. The person at the end of the line can only leave to run to the front of the when the noodle is fully past over the person's head. The only person not holding the noodle must be the runner or a person at the front of the line. When the object has made it to the other side the object must be place in the hoop. The team must go back to the other side and start the transfers of the Beanie Babies. The way you transfer the beanie babies is you must past them through your legs; you may only pass one at a time. When the person at the end has past the last beanie he/she must run to the front of the line. Again when the objects have made it to the other side the object must be place in the hoop. The team must go back to the other side and start the transfers of the basketball. The way to transfer the basketball is you must past the ball from the side. You must past the ball from the opposite side that you received it from. When past the ball you may run to the front of the line. Again when the object has made it to the other side the object must be place in the hoop. When all objects are in the hoop it's a dash to the other side and the first team with all their members past the empty hoop wins.

Variations: Different objects with different size and weight or the number of objects.

Debrief: What do you need to accomplish this goal? And what are the benefits?

The Human Pretzel

Type of Game: Team Builder

Group Size: For an easy game = 5 people; for a more challenging game = 15 to 17 people

Approximate Playing Time: 15 to 20 minutes

Props: None

Basic Objectives: Players form a circle and shake hands with two different people, and try to unravel themselves without letting go.

Instructions: Have students in the class form two even groups. The two groups will have to shake hands with two different people within the group. They must not let go of the people they are holding onto at any time. Each group will be timed. Each group must unravel themselves and form an unbroken circle.

After this is complete, the two groups will then attempt to unravel themselves again, shaking hands with two different people than the first trial. Again, the two groups will be timed, and try to improve their first time. After this challenge is complete, the two groups will form one big circle. The students will again shake hands with two different people than the previous two challenges, and try to unravel themselves, while being timed. After the human knot has been unraveled, the large group will come together again, shake hands with two different people, and try to beat their previous time as a large group.

Variations: This can be played with a large or small group, many circles, intertwined circles and timed games.

Debrief: -*What did you learn about this game?* ~Teamwork, communication, strategy
-*What did you learn from the small group being timed the first time, and then the second time?* ~Group effort, teamwork, strategy, communication, leadership
-*What did you learn from being in the big group after being in the smaller group?*
~Listening, communication, strategy, leadership, the actual challenge of working in a larger group.

Notables: Might be difficult for younger children under 10 years. 10 and up is preferable. Also note that this game might make some individuals uncomfortable about the close proximity of play.

Chair Basketball

Group Size: Two teams of 6 or more people.

Basic Objective: The object of the game is for both teams to pass the balloon from one team member to another eventually reaching the "hoop" at the end.

Instructions: The two teams sit facing each other in a parallel fashion approximately 7-8 feet apart. One person from each team faces the other on opposite ends of the line with their arms out forming a hoop. The players must remain seated throughout the entire game. The game begins with the placing of a balloon between the two teams. The object of the game is for both teams to pass the balloon from one team member to another eventually reaching the "hoop" at the end. Time limits can be set; refs must insure that no one gets up from their chair. If they do then free shots may be allowed.

Dodgeball Game

Type of Game: Team Building

Group Size: Minimum of 4 players

Props: Several playground or soft balls. A large playing area.

Basic Objectives: Avoid being hit by balls the other team is throwing and eliminate the other team's players.

Set up: Divide the playing area in half with a line. Place a line or object in the center of this line to mark it as the middle. Draw 2 attack lines 10 feet from the center line in each direction. Draw an "end line" rectangle at the far end of each team's playing field. Place the balls on the center line - spaced evenly.

Instructions: Players start the game at the end line with one foot in the rectangle. At the whistle teams rush toward the middle and grab the balls only to the right side of the marker on the center line. Team members throw balls at the opposite team only after they have crossed back over their own "attack" line. Players may never cross the middle line or step out of bounds. Players who are hit with the balls are out of the game.

If you catch a ball thrown at you (before it hits the ground) then the thrower is out.

** Bonus: After catching the ball an eliminated player from your team gets to come back. Hitting a player in the face eliminates the thrower.

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

Type of Game: Team Building

Instructions: Group sits in a circle and chants "Ali Baba and the 40 thieves," while doing one action all together - repeat three times. On the next chant, the group leader changes the action and then on the next chant , the person beside him/her does that action. The action follows its way around the circle and the whole time the group is repeating the phrase. The group leader must change the action after every beat, so that every person in the circle eventually ends up doing a different action.

Sticks & Stones

Type of Game: Team Building

Instructions: First form two even teams, one is Sticks and the other is Stones. Have them stand in two lines facing each other, only a few feet apart. Behind each team (by about 30 giant steps) is a safe line. The referee yells "Sticks" and the sticks take off after the stones who hightail it for their safe line. Any that get caught have to switch sides. Then they reform their lines and do it again.

Juggle Circle Game

Type of Game: Team Building

Instructions: Gather children in a circle and give one of the children a ball. Have them throw it to another child - then that child throws it to another child in the circle. Then introduce another ball and have the children throw both balls around the circle. Then add a third ball ... and a fourth ... and so on. See how many balls you can get to stay moving at one time without dropping them.

Variations: Use balls of different sizes to make it harder. Before a child throws a ball they must call out the child's name they are throwing it to.

Notables: This game is fast paced and is great for hand / eye coordination.

CAPTURE THE FLAG

Type of Game: Team Building

Instructions: There are two teams. Team 1 has the front yard and Team 2 has the back yard, or a field was split between the two teams. The teams are given a time period, like 5 minutes, to hide their flag in their part of the yard. [optional] During this period spies were sent out to see where the flag was hidden as well as look-outs to catch the spies. When the flag is hidden you call out that you are finished. Then you simply try to get the other team's flag. If you get caught and tagged by the opponent on their territory you had to go to jail and could only be freed by a teammate who grabs you when your opponent isn't looking. The first team to capture the flag wins. In most versions you had to both get the flag, and bring it back to your side.

Kickball Game

Type of Game: Team Building

Props: 4 objects for bases and a playground ball.

Basic Objective: Similar to baseball players kick the ball and run around bases without being tagged out.

Set Up: Set up the bases similar to a baseball diamond. Divide kids into two teams. Do a coin toss to determine who will be kicking first. Fielding team decides on a pitcher and the rest of the kids go to the field and get ready to catch the ball and / or tag the runner.

Instructions: The pitcher rolls the ball to the kicker. The kicker kicks the ball into the outfield and runs to first base - or second, third and home if they can make it without being tagged out. Field players must tag the runners while either carrying the ball and touching them, or throwing it at the runner. If the ball is caught the kicker is out. If a fielder throws a ball to get a runner out and misses the runner - the runners can only advance one base. Three outs and teams switch. If a kicker kicks the ball and it goes between home base and either first or second base then it is called a foul and the kicker kicks the ball again. 4 fouls = 1 out. Play up to a certain time limit or whoever reaches 20 first.

Notables: Kick the ball through holes in the fielders and keep it on the ground so there isn't a chance of it being caught.

Human Tic-Tac-Toe

Type of Game: Team Building

Instructions: Mark a tic-tac-toe board on the ground. Split the group into two teams. They then play TTT with the X's standing in one square and the O's placing a chair and standing on it in their squares. No one is allowed to talk until the game is one.

Bed Sheet Ping Pong

Type of Game: Team Building

Instructions: Form two teams. Each team holds an opposite end of a bed sheet. A ping pong ball is placed in the middle of the sheet. The object is to get the ball to fall off of the other team's side, for a point. The sheet can be raised and lowered as needed but remind the players to be careful not to "launch" the ball as they will be very inclined to do so.

Bolf

Type of Game: Team Building

Props: 2 large buckets, 4 of the following: ping-pong balls, tennis balls, volleyballs, basket balls, golf balls, footballs, baseballs, soccer balls

Instructions: Divide the group into two teams and set each one up 15 feet from a large bucket. Each group is given two ping-pong balls, tennis balls, volleyballs, basket balls, golf balls, footballs, baseballs, soccer balls. The object is to sink one of each type of ball into the bin. The first player from each team takes 1 toss with one type of ball. If successful, the ball gets put aside. If unsuccessful, the ball is given to the next member of the team. The player goes to the end of the line to await another try with another type of ball. Players keep tossing the balls, one type at a time, 1 per player, until one of each type has been sunk. The first team to sink one of each wins.

TAG

GAMES

Triangle Tag!

Type of Game: Tag game!

Group size: Multiple groups of 4

Approximate time: 5 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Three people hold hands to form a triangle, and move quickly to prevent a fourth person on the outside from making a tag.

Instructions: Randomly divide into groups of 4. Ask three of the people to form a triangle within the circle by holding hands facing each other. Identify which is designated to be tagged and which two are the protectors of that person. The fourth person is the tagger, and his or her job is to move around the outside of the triangle and tag the "tagee." This is a tough gig - within 15 seconds of high-energy pursuit, I guarantee that most taggers will be ready to quit. I suggest that if a tag is not achieved within 30 seconds, or the tagger collapses beforehand, a new tagger is identified and these two people swap roles. Be sure to describe no-go zones and appropriate methods of tagging.

Variations: Have partners hold shoulders, add more people to the triangle

Debrief: None

Notables: Challenge by choice is key in any tag game!

Elbow Tag!

Type of Game: Tag game.

Group size: At least 6 people.

Approximate time: One minute to endless.

Props: None.

Basic Objective: The objective of the tagger is to tag the runner, for the runner to evade the tagger, and the pairs of people also are trying to evade the runner.

Instructions: A runner and a tagger have to be picked. The rest of the participants have to pair up. The pairs have to hook elbows and spread out among the playing area. The tagger is chasing and trying to tag the runner. The runner is running away and trying to find a pair that it can lock elbows with. If the runner is successful in doing so then the person that is on the opposite side of the pair is now the runner. If the runner is tagged then the roles are reversed for the tagger and runner. After the newly made tagger counts to 5 Mississippi out loud, the newly made runner can run away.

Variations: You can have more taggers and runners, make the pairs stay in one spot, have the new tagger count to a higher number, or have the runner count out loud to a decided number before he can connect to a pair and no longer be a runner.

Debrief: Ask for opinions on how to make the game better.

Notables: Challenge by choice is apparent in tag games.

Pac Man Tag

Type of Game: Tag game

Group size: More than 12

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: Basketball court

Basic Objective: a standard tag game except that the movement of the chasers and chasees is restricted to the lines of a basketball court

Instructions: standing on the painted lines of a basketball court, have your group spread out so that most, if not all lines have at least one occupant. If you have a small group, perhaps limit the action to just half the court. Ask for a volunteer to start as Pac Man, all other players are now ghosts. On "go" each ghost travels along the lines of the court only in an attempt not to get tagged. Jumping from one line to another is prohibited as is cutting corners. Once tagged, a ghost becomes another Pac Man. Play continues until all ghosts have become Pac Mans.

Variations: Get creative! Turn other tag games into basketball court rules.

Heads and Tails Tag!

Type of Game: Tag game!

Group size: More than 10

Approximate time: 5 - 10 min

Props: Boundaries

Basic Objective: On "go" participants declare their allegiance to one of two teams. The chase resumes until everyone on the opposing team is tagged.

Instructions: Instruct participants to spread themselves randomly about the playing field/space. Explain that there are two "teams" - heads and tails- and everyone gets to choose which team they (initially) want to be on. To be on the "heads" team, a participant must place both of their hands on top of their head, while everyone belonging to the "tails" team will place their hands on their bottoms. From the center of the field have everyone close their eyes and then demonstrate an affiliation with either heads or tails. On three, everyone may open their eyes and the chase begins. Heads chase tails and tails chase heads. When a tag is made of a member on an opposing team - removing one hand from a head or tail to make the tag - the person who is tagged automatically becomes a member of the team that just "caught" them. Loyalties may swap many times in a game. It continues until everyone swears allegiance to the same team.

Notables: Challenge by choice is key in any tag game!

Knee Tag!

Type of Game: Tag game!

Group size: More than 8

Approximate time: 5 - 10 min

Props: Boundaries

Basic Objective: Participants attempt to manipulate the safe position and moving position while at the same time trying to tag the knees of others without being tagged themselves

Instructions: Have participants arrange themselves spread out within designated boundaries. The name of the game is knee tag. Your goal is to tag the knees of others in the group without being tagged yourself. The safe position is the only way that you can protect yourself from a tag. Demonstrate safe position and ask your group to follow along by putting your hands on your knees. You may not move when you are in this position.

The only way that you may move is with your hands off of your knees and on your stomach (demonstrate and have group follow). Repeat that you can only move if you are in the unsafe position. If you find yourself in the unfortunate situation of being tagged, simply take a knee and wait for further instructions. Go! After a little while, when a few people have been tagged, institute another rule that those who have taken a knee, may tag any unsuspecting players if they pass too close in an attempt to take them down with them. Go! After even a bit more playing time when you notice a lot of people are on their knees, you may institute a rule that any player who has taken a knee need only raise their hand if they wish to get back in. Other players may choose to tag them back in if they wish in order to keep the game going. Go!

Variations: May be used to introduce or exemplify full value contract by debriefing it in the end using your groups chosen values; can do this in partners, or use claps

Debrief: May be necessary with some groups around full value or risk and fun/reward

Notables: Challenge by choice is key in any tag game!

Blob Tag!

Type of Game: Tag game!

Group size: More than 10

Approximate time: 10 - 15 min

Props: Boundaries

Basic Objective: Two linked participants pursue other co-joined partners in an effort to make a tag and have the latter join the ends of their ever expanding blob of taggers.

Instructions: Separate into pairs according to roughly similar physical abilities. Ask for one pair to volunteer as the initial "blob" or taggers. They will be "it" for the entire game, and must maintain a physical link with each other at all times as they pursue other co-joined pairs. As soon as the blob makes a tag, the newly-tagged pair will separate and

rejoin on either side of the initial taggers (once there were two, now there are four). The blob just got a little harder to escape. The chase continues until everyone is caught, with just a few caveats. If at any time the taggers should break links anywhere within the blob, whoever they are chasing, or perhaps just tagged, is released back into the wild. Vice Versa, if while being chased a couple should lose their grip on one another, they are automatically blobbed. No matter how long the blob becomes, only the two people at the ends can make a tag. Also, despite the attraction of running through the middle of a very wide blob to escape the evil clutches of the end taggers, all action must naturally occur around the outside and not under or over the blobs linked arms.

Variations: Allow the blob to strategize on called time outs, give the blob the ability to stop at anytime, release their hold, and switch 180 degrees and rejoin.

Debrief: A bit around team work or full value contract

Notables: Challenge by choice is key in any tag game!

Everybody's It!

Type of Game: Tag game!

Group size: More than 10

Approximate time: 5 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: On "go" everyone is "it"!

Instructions: Start by having the group spread throughout the open space and say "go." This will create a frenzy of contest and self preservation as everyone tries to tag others whilst avoiding being tagged themselves. A compassionate contact made with one's hand on another's shoulder or back is a sufficient tag. Suggest that as soon as a tag is made, the tagedee is obliged to simply crouch down in that spot to indicate to all others that he or she is "OUT. 1fThe action continues until the last person remains. Most people will be "out" within a few seconds - which doesn't necessarily make for a fun time. So I recommend that you don't give the "winner" much time to celebrate. Instead surprise everyone with a sudden "go" and it starts all over again!

Variations: Slow the game down by only allowing taggers to move when you say "step" turning it into "one step tag."

Notables: Challenge by choice is key in any tag game!

Salmon, Bear, Mosquito!

Type of Game: Tag game!

Group size: More than 12

Approximate time: 10 - 15 min

Props: Boundaries

Basic Objective: Two teams of people line up facing each other and on "go" physically demonstrate one of three prescribed characters to determine who chases the other back to their safe zone.

Instructions: First up, identify two "safe" areas approximately 100 feet apart, and a line that represents the mid-point between the two areas. Then divide your group into two roughly even teams. With both teams gathered around you, share any story you care to spin about the three levels of the food chain call the Bears, Salmon, and Mosquitoes.

For each level demonstrate three distinct physical representations such as:

Bear: arms held high above your head and give a loud scary "roaarr."

Salmon: place hands together and create a zigzag swimming motion while saying "blub blub blub blub."

Mosquito: place hands at about ear level making a "chicken dance" hand motion (hands open and close with straight fingers) while making a "buzzzzzz" sound.

As you perform these actions, it's a good idea to invite your group to join in.

Now explain the order of things, much like "rock, paper scissors." If you describe the ranking in terms of the relative size of the organisms it will be easier to understand.

Here bears eat (chase) salmon, salmon eat (chase) mosquitoes, and mosquitoes bite (chase) bears. Each group is then instructed to huddle in their respective safe areas, and agree on which one character their entire team would like to be in the first round.

Have teams also choose a plan B in case they choose the same character as the other team. After 30 seconds, each team lines up side by side about 2 feet away from the center line. On three, each team simultaneously reveals their character unless both teams chose the same character, one team will quickly discover, to their horror, that they are about to be eaten (chased). Each member of the chasing team attempts to tag a retreating group member before they cross into the safe zone. If a successful tag is made, the tagee is obliged to switch teams. Play can continue as long as you wish or until one poor group gets entirely eaten by the other.

Variations: Use rocks, paper, scissors or giants, wizards, elves

Debrief: Team work, sense of community, or full value contract

Notables: Challenge by choice is key in any tag game!

Toe Tag!

Type of Game: Tag game!

Group size: More than 8

Approximate time: 5 min

Props: None

Basic Objective: Starting back to back, two partners spin around on "go" and try to "tag" the toe of their partner before they get tagged.

Instructions: Find partners. Ask everyone to start with their backs to their partner, and on an appropriate signal, both partners spin around 180 degrees to face one another and engage in a dance-like combat. Each person attempts to tag the toe of their partner gently before one of their own feet gets tagged. Be sure to remind your group that you said "tagged" not "stomped."

Variations: Have partners hold hands, attempt to do it in a circle of people holding hands and battling with their immediate neighbors

Notables: Challenge by choice is key in any tag game!

Link Tag!

Type of Game: Tag game!

Group size: More than 10

Approximate time: 10 min

Props: Boundaries

Basic Objective: One person chases another around a group of partners who have linked together, waiting for either the tagger or the tatee to link up with one of the linked partners to immediately create a new tatee or tagger!

Instructions: Ask each person to find a partner and link arms/elbows with them. Their outside arms should be positioned like a tea-cup handle with a hand on the hip. If you have an uneven number of people, create one trio.

Each pair is then encouraged to find their own space so that they are not too close to the other pairs. Two people volunteer to become a cat and a mouse. On "go" the cat chases the mouse. The chase occurs in and around the other pairs, who are fixed in their positions, until they get tagged, or the mouse chooses to link with anyone of the linked pairs' outside arms. If the mouse chooses to link, it's a case of "two's company, three's a crowd." So the partner with whom the mouse did not directly link, will release their arm from their partner and becomes the new mouse. As your group appears to grasp this concept, you may choose to introduce a second and third cat and mouse. Any cat can chase any mouse in this case!

Variations: Create links through elbows or laying down next to each other like logs or in any other way you wish, create time limits, allow both the tatee and tagger to link keeping the tagger from being "it" for too long.

Notables: Challenge by choice is key in any tag game!

Octopus Game

Type of Game: Tag Game

Basic Objective: Stay away from the octopus and the seaweed.

Set up: Choose who will be "it" be for the game. Mark two lines on each end of a large play area or field. The octopus will stand in the middle of the two lines.

Instructions: The octopus calls out "Come _____ in my ocean." (The blank is filled in by what the players must do as they are crossing the ocean. Hop, twirl, swim, run, run backwards, etc.) Then the players must follow the command and try and make it to the other side of the ocean without being tagged by the octopus. Any player that is tagged becomes seaweed and has to stand in the spot where they were tagged. In the next round both the octopus and the seaweed try and tag players as they go by.

Variations: Instead of becoming seaweed the tagged children hold hands with the octopus and help tag players. The tagged players can catch players as they run by so the octopus can come by and tag them.

Frozen Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: if you're tagged by 'it' you freeze until you are rescued. Use your creativity for rescuing techniques: you have to limbo under an arm; the frozen person makes a shape that you have to go through or under; you have to give the person a hi-5; both of the person's hands have to be tapped before they are unfrozen, etc.

Sitting Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: If you get tagged by 'it', then you sit in one place. If you are able to touch someone who has not yet been tagged, then they sit and you are back in the game

Zombie tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: The person who initially "it" is a Zombie. When the zombie tags someone, they also become a zombie and also help tag players who haven't been tagged yet. The game continues until everyone has been tagged. This is a good version of tag when you have players of various ages or running abilities.

Doors & Windows

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: Here, kids form a circle holding their hands. Then they would spread out enough that everyone's arms were straight out, to form large spaces between kids. These were the windows and doors. Then one child would start running, and weaving in and out between children. As they did this the kids in the circle would randomly drop their arms down trying to touch or trap the person weaving their way in and out. Once the person was caught or touched by the arms of someone, they were out. They would then choose which person would be next to weave in and out of the windows and doors

TV Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: When about to be tagged a player must sit down and yell out a TV character. If they yell it out before "it" can tag them then they can't be tagged. "It" must then run after another player.

Hospital Tag or Body Part Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: When tagged by "it" you cannot use the part of the body that you were tagged on. If "it" tags your arms then you cannot use your arm ... if they tag you left leg then you cannot use your left leg (you can hop on your right leg). If "it" tags both of your legs then you can crawl on your stomach or pull yourself with your arms - as long as your arms aren't frozen. Other players can unfreeze (or heal) arms and legs if they tag you. Play stops and "it" picks someone to replace them when no one can move.

Freeze Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: When "it" tags someone in the game the tagged player must freeze where they are and cannot move. The only way to become unfrozen is to be tagged by another player. When "it" has tagged everyone and everyone is frozen "it" gets to choose who will be "it" for the next round.

Rattlesnake Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Basic Objective: Don't let the head catch the tail of the rattlesnake.

Set up: Choose who will be the rattlesnake head and tail. Children then line up single file behind the head with their hands on the player in front of them hips - the tail will be the last in line.

Instructions: When the head says "go!" the snake begins to follow the head while the head tries to tag the tail. The players in the middle move around to keep the head from getting the tail. The rattlesnake cannot come apart. If the head gets the tail then the head becomes the new tail and then person that was second in line behind the head becomes the new head.

Rainbow Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Basic Objective: To avoid being caught by the rainbow catcher.

Set up: Choose a "rainbow catcher". They will stand in the middle of a large play area. Next assign all the remaining players different colors of the rainbow. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple. (Don't let the rainbow catcher hear what colors each person is assigned.)

Instructions: The rainbow catcher then calls out a color. All the players that have been assigned that color try and run past the catcher to the other side of the play area. The rainbow catcher tries to tag as many of children as they can before they reach the other side. The kids who are tagged become rainbow catchers and stand in the middle to help tag other players on the next round. Sometimes the rainbow catcher can yell "Rainbow!!" and all the players must try and reach the other side. The last person caught becomes the new rainbow catcher.

Reverse Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: Played like traditional tag, but reversed. After "it" is chosen everyone else counts to 10 while "it" runs away. Then all players try and tag "it". When someone tags "it" then they become "it" and everyone then tries to tag them.

Pair Tag

Type of Game: Tag Game

Instructions: Kids link arms with one other child and form a pair. "It" then tries to join one of the pairs by linking arms with one of the children. The other part of the pair that "it" didn't link to then becomes "it". Children must always be in a pair. Having more than one person be it is a lot of fun too!

Red Light, Green Light Game

Type of Game: Tag Game

Basic Objective: To tag "it" before they catch you moving.

Set up: Choose who will be "it". "It" then stands - with their back towards the kids - on one side of the yard and the children line up on the opposite side.

Instructions: "It" will call out either - green light - or - red light -. When "it" calls out - green light -, the kids will run towards "it". When "it" call out - red light - the players must freeze because after calling -red light- "it" will turn around and try and catch anyone who is moving. If "it" catches someone moving then they must go all the way back to where they started. Continue until someone reaches "it" and tags them. The person who tags "it" becomes the new "it". Players return to the starting line and begin again.

Notable: Try and stop before "it" calls out - red light - so you don't get caught moving.