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Get to Know you Games

Blind Man's Bluff

Materials

A blindfold.

Preparation

None.

Action

Have the group sit in a circle. Ask for a volunteer to sit in the center. This person is blindfolded. All the other players now change places. When everyone is settled, the blindfolded person points in various directions and asks people to make a noise. They can ask the person pointed at to make a specific noise or can let the person choose their own sound. The object is to identify the person who is making the noise. Anyone who is recognised and named then takes a turn in the center.

Variation

To make this game very easy, have the players speak or read a sentence from a book instead of making a noise.

Comment

It is a good idea to ensure that all players know each other by name and sound of each other's voices. A good memory and concentration game.

It Ain't Me Babe

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Ask people to randomly pick a partner. Give them 5-10 minutes together to introduce themselves. They may not speak to one another during this time, writing is also not allowed. You may allow drawing, but probably isn't needed. Players need to communicate whatever they feel is important about themselves to their partners. At the end, players report out to the group what they learned about their partner. Allow a brief time for a rebuttal and/or corrections from the person just described

Who are you?

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Have your group brainstorm a list of ten or so questions. Narrow the list down to two or three questions people like best. Provide pens and paper to record- if wanted. Try to balance factual, personal (non-intrusive), humorous and unusual questions. Allow participants to mingle and have a conversation.

4 corners

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Ask participants to listen to the question and choices first, which you will repeat. Then have participants move towards the corner that they are most interested in. Questions can be as silly or serious as you want. Example: what is your favorite activity 1) Recreation 2) Arts and crafts 3) Nature 4) Performing arts. Once you have asked the question and designate each corner be sure to repeat so everyone knows.

Who's in Charge Here?

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Have participants create a circle or oval shape. Ask two participants to volunteer, be sure to pick one at a time. One participant will be the detective, the other will be the leader. The detective will go outside, or close their eyes and cover their ears. While the detective is away a leader will be chosen. The leader will do movements that everyone else will have to follow. The goal is for the detective to figure out who the leader is in three guesses or less.

Silent Lineup

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Have participants line up without talking. Lineup based on things they can see or should know. Examples: Line up tallest to shortest, Lightest hair to darkest hair, Youngest to oldest, or based on the first letter of your first name. Once the lineup happens, allow talking to see how close the lineup was to how it should have turned out.

Rule Based Games

Simon Says

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Pick one participant to be “Simon”. Everyone has to do as “Simon says”. Simon will do the action regardless of if they say “Simon says”. Participants should only do the movement when “Simon says”. Participants are out if they do something that Simon didn’t say or misses what Simon said.

Do This Do That

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Children must follow the leader and do whatever they do when they say to “do this”. Players must sit down (until there are five others) if a mistake is made. A mistake is: (1) not doing what the leader does when they say “do this”; or (2) doing what the leader does when they say “do that”.

All Change!

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Ask players to choose a partner. If there is an odd number the person who is left over can be the leader. Partners face each other and the leader calls out commands such as:

“Stand back to back!”

“Shake hands!”

“Hold hands!”

“Make funny faces!”

“Link arms!”

“Stand on one leg!”

After a pre-set time, or when the leader chooses, the leader commands: “All change!”

Now each player must find a new partner. The leader also tries to find a new partner.

Whoever is left surplus becomes the leader and calls out the commands.

Variation

Military parade. Form the players into a military formation of three in a line. The leader calls out military commands like:

“Quick march!”

“Left turn!”

“Right wheel!”

“Halt!”

“Salute!”

“Slow march!”

“Right turn!”

“Left wheel!”

“Double march!”

Anyone not complying or seen to be doing the wrong action becomes the leader.

Comment

The commands can include vigorous movements and exercises or, alternatively, adopt a more gentle approach, according to the requirements and mood of the group.

Tag Based Games

Bean Bag Tag

Materials

Bean bags, one per participant

Preparation

None

Action

Put the bean bag on the participants' heads. Everybody is “it”. If the bean bag falls off, you are out. If you are tagged, you are out.

Capture the Flag

Materials

Something to act as the flag

Preparation

None

Action

Split your group into two groups. Decide where your jail is going to be located, ensure that there is a way for the taggers to reach the jail without leaving their side. Have them discuss as a group who their 1 tagger is and everyone else be seekers. Taggers are the only people able to tag anyone. Taggers had to stay arms length away from the flag. The taggers also have to stay on their half of the playing field. Seekers who get tagged go to jail. Taggers are the only people able to get their seekers out of jail.

For those with visual impairments, you can ask them which color was easier for them to see, to search for. For those with mobile impairments they had the option to use a scooter chair, a walker chair, or crutches.

Cat and Rat

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Two participants are selected, one to be the cat and one to be the rat. Everyone else forms a circle. The cat is outside and the rat is inside the circle. The following conversation takes place.

The cat: "I am the cat."

The rat: "I am the rat."

The cat: "I will catch you!"

The rat: "No! You can't!"

The cat then chases the rat, attempting to tag them. The circle protects the rat by letting them enter and leave the circle. When the rat gets tagged the cat becomes the rat and a new cat is selected.

Duck Duck Goose

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

All players except one stand in a circle, the one not in the circle is IT. They walk around the outside of the circle, touching each player as they go by. As they touch the other players' heads they say "duck or goose". The player who is the goose chases the one who is IT around the circle, trying to tag them before they reach the goose's empty space. The goose is now IT.

Pairs Squared (Pairs²)

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

- Everyone as a partner to start the game
- The game is tag; if you are it, you must tag your partner- no one else
- When you are tagged, you must spin 360 degrees; or count to three before tagging your partner back
- There is NO RUNNING allowed during the game, walking only
- You may not go outside the boundaries during the game

Play

Ask each pair of people to choose another pair as new partners, hence two pairs of two. One pair is designated as IT, the others must escape. If a tag occurs, the newly tagged pair must perform the requisite spin before tagging back. Walking is the only form of movement. One very important rule to consider: you may want to prohibit people from trying to move between two people who are linked together. Squeezing between two people holding hands can produce a choking movement and/or can wrench people's shoulders and wrists. Use your discretion.

Minnesota Mosquito

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Select one or two players to act as mosquitoes. They will have “stingers” that are pool noodles/foam swords. When a player is stung (no head hits) they are frozen. To get unfrozen, two unfrozen players encircle the frozen player with their arms and shout “DEEP WOODS OFF” before getting stung themselves. If a player can touch a mosquito above the waist without getting hit saying “Take that”- the player who touched the mosquito can unfreeze one player.

The players trying to keep from getting stung can band together hand-in-hand in groups of eight (minimum). The player can then whack their partners on the back (before the mosquito can sting anyone in the group) which ends the skeeter and the game.

Immunity

Materials

Something to act as an immunity idol, one or two depending on group size.
Sponge/foam block.

Preparation

None

Action

Pick what the playing field is, we will be moving from one end to the other. This will ensure people do not run into each other. You can set a limit to how many people can be touching the immunity at once, usually one or two people. To get the immunity idol yell “immunity”. Select one or two participants to be taggers.

Variations

Add an action to get the immunity idol for those who have speech/hearing. For those who have mobility you can give them a pool noodle to create distance between equipment and participants. You can do three variations to the tagging, 1) outbreak: when you get tagged you also become a tagger, 2) freeze: you are frozen if you get tagged until someone unfreezes you, or 3) sit out: you sit out of the game if you get tagged until a new round starts.

Octopus Tag (aka Spider Tag)

Materials

Hula hoop, zip ties, pool noodles

Preparation

Zip tie pool noodles to hula hoop

Action

Have one participant volunteer to be IT. IT will be the octopus who will have the pool noodle hula hoop. Everyone else will be fish. The goal is for the octopus to tag all the fish. When fish are tagged, have them wait outside the boundaries of play until a new round starts.

Variations

Have the fish travel from one side to the other on cue, this will reduce the risk of running into one another. If you have enough of the supplies you can have multiple octopus taggers.

Slap Jack

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

The players stand in a circle formation with hands held behind their backs. One child, who is selected to be IT, runs around the outside of the circle and slaps, or tags, another player. It continues to run while the player who was tagged runs in the opposite direction. Both players try to get back to the vacant place in the circle. The one who does not reach the vacant place in the circle is now IT and the game is repeated.

Creative Games

Cage Ball

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Place the children in a large circle. Be creative and think up things they can do with it, such as pushing the ball around the circle. Other suggestions are: see how far they can roll it, see if they can pick it up, or see if they can bounce it. Try to use the “cage” ball in a simple ball game such as “club snatch” in place of the club.

Blindfold Stroll

Materials

1+ blindfold(s), at most you want about half the number of participants

Preparation

Setting up collection items/obstacle course

Action

This can be done in pairs or as a full group. Have one person be blindfolded. The rest of the group or pair will be giving them directions, this can be done verbally or with noises (like clapping your hands). The goal is to get the blindfolded person to collect items (like water or cones) and bring it back to the designated location. Making sure that the entire group or pair knows what word/noise is used for each movement.

Fantasy Tag

Materials

Scrap paper

Preparation

None

Action

Set up

Start by giving each person a piece of scrap paper, preferably paper that is similar so no one can identify someone else's piece by size, shape or color. Ask players to write down a fantasy on the paper; the fantasy should be something that they have always wanted to do and that they won't mind being read publicly. It can be anything real or fanciful, so long as it is something each person has a desire to do. Collect all the pieces of paper and then read the fantasies one by one. After reading them all, re-read them to be certain that everyone playing has heard them all.

Play

Divide the group into teams of three or four players. One group starts by trying to identify who belongs to a specific fantasy. If the guess is correct, that person becomes a member of the guessing team and the guessers get another chance. The same team keeps guessing until they make a guess that is wrong. *The Cardinal Rule:* People must be honest in "owning" their fantasy when it is guessed.

Number Formations

Materials

Card, string, and a magic marker

Preparation

Cut the card into pieces about six inches square. Sort the cards into sets of whatever number is needed for equal teams and number them, starting at 1. Attach a piece of string to each card so that it can be hung round someone's neck.

Action

Form the players into teams and give each team a set of cards. Players hang the cards around their necks. Now call out numbers of up to the numbers on the cards. The teams quickly form the number called out. The first team in the correct order wins a point. Then another number is called out. The game continues in this fashion.

Variations

Complicate the game by making players add, subtract, divide and multiply to arrive at the number.

Comment

If it is required to use 0, instruct the players to leave a space between each other. When asking players to add, subtract and so on, work out the sums before the game begins to ensure that the answers can be formed with the numbers on the players cards.

Lost in Translation

Materials

Paper and writing utensils

Preparation

Images for the participants to describe and draw

Action

You can do this in pairs or trios. In a pair you have one person describing the drawing and the other drawing. In trios you have one person describing to the "translator", the translator can not use english and must convey to the drawer what they should draw. The instructor should have many drawings that vary in difficulty based on the participants ability. The instructor will show the drawing to the describer, who will then describe it to the drawer.

Variations

For added difficulty you can make it where it also tries to match the colors used, so multicolor vs one color. The drawings could look like something or could be random shapes thrown together, make sure to match participants based on abilities.

Occupations

Materials

Slips of paper and a bag

Preparation

Write an occupation on each slip of paper and place them in a bag

Action

This is a miming game. Seat the group so that the person doing the mime can be seen by everyone. Have a player come out and dip into the bag containing the pieces of paper. The participant then mimes a series of actions, imagining themselves doing the job. The rest of the group try to guess what it is. Set a time limit, with points for players whose occupations are guessed.

Variations

1. Allow each member to think up the occupation they will mime
2. Have the players mime a job they have done themselves
3. Use as a team game. Each team has to guess an occupation mimed by a member of their own team.
4. Use other themes: hobbies, proverbs, titles of books, plants and so on.

Comment

A relatively easy game to play which encourages participation, especially when players mime an occupation they themselves have done. This also helps players get to know one another and share information. After each mime, use the exercise to encourage members to talk about their experience of the job, when applicable.

Reverse Musical Chairs

Materials

Chairs or carpet squares

Preparation

Setting out "placeholders"

Action

Start with one less placeholder than you have participants. Play music and have participants moving around. When the music stops, have the participants find a placeholder. Make sure to mention that people will NOT be out. Rather than having the person without a placeholder be out, see if a placeholder can be shared to keep the person in.

Variations

Try to let participants figure out on their own that they don't have to be fully on the placemat. Example rather than sitting/standing on the placemat they place only their hand or just one finger. See how few placemats can be used

Ball Games

Bounce Dodgeball

Materials

Carpet squares/ placemats, ball

Preparation

Place placemats in designated play area

Action

The object of the game is not to get hit by a bounced ball (the bigger the ball, the less potent the throw), while you are moving between safe zones. Being safe requires that a player stands on the placemat. The catch is that there is one spot less than the number of people playing. Simple rules are the best rules. Mark out the boundaries before the game starts, remembering that a smaller playing area invariably results in more action, less elitism, and a faster paced game. Anyone who runs outside the boundaries automatically becomes a bouncer. To begin, designate two people as bouncers.

Pass the Ball

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Split the group into two teams and have the opposing players sit in a line facing each other. Ask the first player in each team to extend their legs, keeping their ankles together. Place a ball on each pair of extended ankles. The balls must now be transferred to the next person in the team using legs only. If a ball is dropped, it must go back to the beginning again. The first team successful in getting their ball to the end and back again is the winner.

Variations

Place the ball under the first player's chin. It is then passed to the next player who holds it under their chin. The use of hands is not allowed. As an alternative to having two teams, the ball can be passed around a circle in this manner. Also, instead of a ball, use an orange or a matchbox.

Comment

This is an excellent touching game. It is a good idea to ask players to remove their shoes before the game starts. People who do not like being touched may find the variation difficult. It is better to lead up to it with less threatening touch games. Try to place tall and short, thin and fat people next to each other.

Touch ball

Materials

Balls for throwing

Preparation

None

Action

Everyone forms a circle, one person who is IT will stand inside the circle. A ball is passed from player to player around the circle and across the circle. IT must try to tag the ball. When they do, the child who throws or touches the ball last becomes IT.

Variation

Place three or four players inside the circle. These players attempt to catch the ball thrown by the players in the circle. A player who is successful in catching a ball changes places with the player who threw the ball.

Up Chuck or Barf Ball

Materials

Each player has their own ball. Soft ball that is ok getting thrown and hit.

Preparation

None

Action

Standing in a circle or cluster, or however the group wants to arrange themselves, ask everyone to toss their balls aloft to a height of at least 10 feet, and attempt to catch a ball that they did not throw. Count the number of balls that are missed (not caught); that's the group's negative score for that round. After some discussion, ask the group to make as many attempts as they would like, toward achieving the result of no balls missed. As this task is eventually achieved, see how many all catch rounds can be made before a miss occurs. To make the team effort initially more difficult, start with one ball being thrown aloft. After one ball is successfully caught, try two, and so on until all the balls are thrown simultaneously and caught. If a ball is missed the group starts over with one ball being lifted.

Canadian Dodgeball

Materials

One soft throwing ball

Preparation

None

Action

Everyone starts by touching the border of the playing field, usually a wall. The instructor will throw the ball up in the air and say “canadian dodgeball”, that is the signal to the participants that they can move and the game has started. When holding the ball you MAY ONLY take THREE steps. If the ball hits you, you are out. If you catch the ball the thrower is out. Participants who are out should sit on the sidelines to avoid getting stepped or tripped over. If the person who got you out gets out you are back in.

Variation

You can add a rule that if they make a basket everyone is back in, however if they miss the basket they are out. It is up to the instructor if they are going to allow a drop/roll and re pick up method. If the group is small, or if participants struggle to throw a distance, you can also try to make the playing field smaller.

Bowling

Materials

Ball and pins

Preparation

Setting up pins

Action

Have participants roll a ball towards the pins. See how many pins the participants can knock over. This can be done as a group or individually.

Variations

Allow the participants to do a “baker’s”. A baker is when every participant gets one frame and the scores are put together as one score rather than as individuals. See who can knock down the most pins in the least amount of rolls. Use different size balls based on abilities.

Horse

Materials

1+ basketball and a hoop

Preparation

None

Action

To begin the game, pick a player to go first. That player gets to do anything they want before shooting. If they want to spin around 5 times and then hop up and down before shooting, they can do it. They make the rules! If they hit their shot, the other players have to do the exact same thing. But if they miss, the next player gets to make up their own wacky shot for the others to try. Any player that can't make the first person's shot gets the letter H. Everyone keeps playing the game and making up crazy shots until someone misses enough times to spell out the word HORSE. The player who does not spell HORSE is the winner!

Variation

Depending on the group you can change the word being spelled. The common words being spelt are HORSE, PIG, or LIGHTNING.

Earth Ball Games

Circle Time Trial

The whole group lie down on the floor in a circle or oval shape with heads in the center and feet on the outer. Place the earth ball on the participants stomach at the start point and encourage the group to roll the ball around the circle/oval. Use a stopwatch and see how quickly the group can successfully get the ball rolling once around at a time. Spotters stand outside the circle and push the ball back on when it rolls away.

DodgeBall

Use a defined space and eliminate players who come into contact with the ball with other than their hands. You can restrict movement by ruling an area where they must stay within and keep one foot on the ground at all times.

Earth Ball Pass

People form a line or the beginnings of a circle if space is limited. Pass the earth ball with arms above your heads and the people on the end of the line run around and extend the line taking another turn.

End Zone

Two opposing teams play indoors to defend a wall at each end of the room. The team earns a point each time the ball is allowed to touch the opposition's wall. Make rules disallowing constant contact with the ball to stop it becoming a crush. No kicking.

High Jump

If you have a parachute you can use it to catapult the earth ball into the air. Place the ball in the center with participants holding the edges of the chute. Pull it back as a team and send the ball into the air. See how high it can go.

Keep It Up

This works like pass and catch where more than one team member will usually be required to do so. Teams earn a point each time they can keep the ball off the ground for (10) catches on the full. Use one bounce maximum as a variation.

Obstacle Courses

These can be as simple or complicated as you choose. For children mark a line to follow or a roadway. Set up boxes and barricades for the ball to go around or over.

Roll Over

Set up a goal for each team to defend (2-4 teams) using old tyres, inner tubes or hula hoops. The team earns a goal each time they get the ball to sit on/in the goal circle.

Soccer

Two teams use pushing and hands (no kicking) to try to get the ball to the back line or goal of the other team. It's one point for each goal and you need to watch for rough play.

Two Ball Teams Roll

Materials

Two identical earth balls

Action

Two teams lie down on the floor in parallel straight lines, head to toe alternatively. Place an earth ball at the start end of both teams and on “go” they race to roll the ball across their stomachs to the finish line at the other end.

Volleyball

Use a solid wall rather than a net and we are probably talking about NEWCOMBE BALL where the ball is caught with a three second limit before being thrown back over.

Movement based Games

Easter Egg Hunt

Materials

A lunch sack for each child, various colors of construction paper or wallpaper samples, scissors, glue, or stapler.

Preparation

Cut the lunch sacks in half and use the bottom halves to make baskets. For each basket, cut a handle out of a different colored piece of construction paper or wallpaper and glue or staple it to the sides of the sack. Then cut six small egg shapers for each basket from paper that matches the handle. Hide the eggs in various places around the room.

Action

Give children each a basket and let them go on an easter egg hunt. When they find eggs that match their handles, have them put the eggs in their baskets. Continue the game until all the eggs have been found.

Hint

Hide the eggs for each child according to age and ability.

Variation

Let the children help make their own baskets. Before attaching the handles, let the children paint their lunch sacks green. Then, if they are able to use scissors, let them cut fringes along the top edges.

Hot and Cold

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

All children are grouped together with the exception of one who is hiding their eyes. The group picks an object within the room. The person who was hiding their eyes must walk about the room trying to guess the object. The group, by clapping their hands either loud for “hot” or soft for “cold”, directs the person to the object. When they guess the object a new person is chosen to hide their eyes.

Going Through the Motions

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Form the group into a circle. Start the game by performing an action, or have a player think of one. This could be tapping your foot. The player next to you then repeats the movement you performed and adds on their own. The third player now does the first two actions, plus a third. This continues on around the circle until everyone has added a movement.

Variation

It helps other players to remember, and can be more fun, if all the players who have performed an action do all the movements together each time. Then the person whose turn it is adds their own. Eventually, everyone is in motion together.

Comment

Movements can be kept simple or made more energetic. This is a good memory exercise.

Fan the Balloon

Materials

Newspaper, balloons, and chalk

Preparation

Blow up the balloons

Action

Form the group into teams. Draw a line some twelve to fifteen feet away from the first player in each team. Place a balloon on the floor in front of the team leaders and give them a newspaper. They must now fan the balloons to the line and back. The second player in each team does likewise and so the game continues until everyone has fanned the balloon. The first team finished is the winner.

Variations

1. Instead of newspapers, use a brush. Players have to sweep the balloon to the line and back again.

2. Stand behind a line each player throws a balloon as far as possible. Mark the spots with chalk or matchsticks. This is more difficult with shaped balloons.
3. Tie a balloon to each player's ankle and give them a rolled-up newspaper each. The object is to burst as many opponents balloons as possible, using only the rolled-up newspapers. When a player's balloon bursts, that player is out. The last player left with his balloon intact wins.

Comment

Balloons give a jolly atmosphere and bring out a sense of fun in people.

Mickey Mouse

Materials

One ball

Preparation

None

Action

Stand in a circle, this is our mousetrap. Put the ball in the middle, this is our cheese.

Then number around the circle by three's until everyone has a number. You must remember your number and place. The leader of the game is Mickey Mouse. They call out a number. If they call "Two" each child whose number is two starts to run. Mickey also runs fast around the circle and back to their own space, which is empty. It is a hole in the mousetrap. They run through the hole to the center. If they are first, they grab the cheese. The person with the cheese is Mickey for the next round.

Ring-O-Peg

Materials

Two deck tennis rings and one batting tee

Preparation

Two lines ten yards apart

Action

Divide participants in half, one group placed on each of the two lines. The participants stand side by side facing the other line and the batting tee is placed in the center of the two lines. One deck tennis ring is given to each line. The ring is passed up and down the line of players until the instructor gives the signal to "ring" and then whoever has the ring races to the center to place on the peg. The participant who gets the ring on the batting tee first.

Variations

To get the rings back to the lines, call names for two children to see who can get the ring off the peg and back to their line first.

Try using balls and a waste basket in place of the rings and batting tee. The container must be small enough, or the balls large enough, so that one ball will sit up on top of the other ball when both are in the container.

Floor Darts

Materials

Bean bags

Preparation

Creating a dart board, if needed

Action

Hand each participant three bean bags. Let participants take turns throwing the bean bags into the circle. There should be at least two circles, one inside the other, with the smaller circle being worth more points.

Variations

You can offer to make trick shots that land in the circle's double points. Trick shots can be a backwards throw, between the legs, etc. Based on ability choose a good distance to throw the bean bags from.

Dice Tic Tac Toe

Materials

Six Bean bags (3 of each color), placemats or chalk

Preparation

Create the board, you can do this with a 3 by 3 of carpet squares or using chalk.

Action

Using a set of dice you roll three times attempting to get a double, if you get doubles before your three rolls are up you end when you get the doubles. Once you roll doubles you place a bean bag on the tic tac toe board, each team only gets three bean bags which can get moved once all three are in play. Play until there is a winner or time runs out.

Variations

Create space between where the rolling and board are and have participants race in between. Have the participants show a dance move when they get doubles before they are allowed to place a beanbag.

Red light Green Light

Materials

Red and green paper/objects

Preparation

Creating a light system, if needed

Action

On red everyone stops moving, if they move they restart from the beginning. Everyone moves on green.

Variation

You can add music to make it a dance party, this also helps those with visual impairments.

Evolution

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Explain the 3+ stages of the life cycle, along with movement. Example: arms in X over chest is a seedling, arms tucked to the side with hands out is a sapling, arms making a triangle over your head is a tree. In order to Evolve you play rock paper scissors with someone who is at the same stage as you. The winner of rock paper scissors moves up to the next life cycle.

Variation

You can also add a devolution. This would mean that whoever loses the game of rock paper scissors would move down to the previous stage in the life cycle.

Obstacle games

Obstacle Course

Materials

Chairs, or other items which can be used as obstacles, and blindfolds.

Preparation

Prepare a series of obstacles which will obstruct players as they walk across the room in a straight line.

Action

Ask for two volunteers. One person is blindfolded. The other player, giving only verbal instruction, now guides their partner across the room and around the obstacles. Once across the room, the person who was blindfolded becomes the guide for the return journey. When the course has been completed, another two players have a go. The players who cross the room and return in the quickest time can be acclaimed the winners.

Variations

1. To make this game more difficult, turn the blindfolded play around three times before they commence the journey. Also move the obstacles about after the blindfold has been applied.
2. Have several couples crossing the room in different directions at the same time. Amid all the noise and various shouted commands there is a tendency to follow wrong instructions.

Comment

A good trust exercise. Unless players are confident, it is better to begin the game gently and work up to the more difficult variations.

Ring Toss

Materials

Five rings and pegs

Preparation

Setting up pegs

Action

Allow participants to throw the rings attempting to get them to land on/around the pegs. Create a line, about 5-10 feet away from the pegs, that is where participants throw from.

Variations

You can assign different point values to different pegs.

3-D MineField

Materials

Objects (various shapes, sizes, weight)

Preparation

Setting up the field

Action/Rules

Here are a few rules and helpful hints to help you get started on your own mine field:

1. Use more or less obstacles to increase or decrease the difficulty of getting to the end of the mine field.
2. Operate in pairs. One participant is blindfolded (eyes closed) and is located within the mine field enclosure. The second member of the pair is sighted and must stay outside the obstacle enclosure. Only verbal clues are allowed: the sighted player cannot touch the blind player. Allow all the blindfolded players to enter the obstacle course simultaneously to increase the difficulty of careful movement and of being heard.
3. If the blindfolded player touches any obstacle, they must return to the beginning and try again, or simply count the touches for later comparison.
4. After a successful traverse or at the end of a time period, ask the players to switch roles.
5. As an added challenge, ask two blindfolded players to attempt a hand-in-hand traverse. Other challenges include: see how few steps can be taken; see how fast the traverse can be made.

Games for Littles

Disappearing Ducks

Materials

Something for the kids to hide behind, a divider

Preparation

Setting up divider if needed

Action

Have the children pretend to be little ducks and line up behind you. Lead them around the room and have everyone recite the poem below. Begin the poem with the number of children playing.

(number) little ducks went out to play

Over the hill and far away

Mother duck said "Quack, Quack Quack" (softly)

And (number minus one) little ducks came waddling back

As you waddle around the room, go behind the divider. Have the child at the end of the line crouch down beyond the divider while the other children continue to follow you.

Keep repeating the poem, each time leaving a child behind. When all the children are behind the divider change the last line of the poem to read:

"And no little ducks came waddling back."

Then recite the last verse of the poem below and have all the children come waddling back out again.

No little ducks came out to play

Over the hill and far away

Mother Duck said "Quack, Quack Quack" (loudly)

And (number) little ducks came waddling back

Dice Action

Materials

Colored or pictured dice

Preparation

Creating a colored die, if necessary

Action

Have the children sit in a circle. Let one child roll the dice and name the color that comes up. Next, have a child call out an action. Everyone who is wearing the color does the action. Let the children take turns rolling the die and calling out a new action.

Variation

Cut out pictures of animals and insert them in a photo cube to make an animal die. Let one child roll the die and have the other children pretend to be the animal that comes up.

Funny Animals

Materials

One stuffed animal for each child

Preparation

Place stuffed animals in the middle of the room

Action

Have the children sit in a semicircle in front of the stuffed animals. Let one child at a time walk by the animals while everyone recites this verse:

One day out walking down the street

Some funny animals I did meet.

One made a sound, just like this-

(Child makes an animal sound)

So I took it home and gave it a kiss.

Let the child choose any animal, take it back to the semicircle and give it a big kiss. Continue playing until each child is holding an animal.

Giggle-A-Thon

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Have the children stand in a circle. Choose one child to be in the middle. Then have the other children take turns trying to make the person in the middle laugh. Give each child a half a minute. If the child makes the person laugh they are next in the middle. If the person in the middle does not laugh, let them choose another child to stand inside the circle. Continue play until everyone has had a turn being in the middle.

Variation

Have the child in the middle of the circle turn around slowly when everyone tries at the same time to make them laugh. When the child laughs, or when three minutes are up, choose another child to stand in the middle.

Let's go Fishing

Materials

Small fishing pole or a string tied to a stick, magnet, paper clips, construction paper, scissors, tape or glue, prizes, cardboard box.

Preparation

Tie the magnet to the fishing line or string. Cut small fish shapes from construction paper and attach a paperclip to each fish and seaweed shapes. Put the fish in the box.

Action

Have the children sit in a semicircle around the cardboard box "ocean". Let them take turns "fishing" for prizes.

Comments

You might want to number the fish to correspond with certain prizes. Or use different colored fish to match the colors of the prizes. If the game is to be played at a party, you might want to have the children fish for small metal friction toys and let them keep the toys as prizes.

Variation

Let the children take turns fishing from a deck or in front of a blanked-off area. Have them use a small fishing pole with a weight tied to the end of its line. As each child casts their line, have a hidden adult tie a prize onto it.

Mitten Mix-Up

Materials

A different colored or patterned pair of mittens for each child, small pies or pie shapes cut from construction paper.

Preparation

Cut out pie shapes, if necessary.

Action

Have the children sit in a circle and give them each a pair of mittens. Have each child put one mitten on and place the other mitten in the middle of the circle. Mix up the pile of mittens and let the children search through it to find their mittens' mate. When they have done so, have them put their mittens on and sit back down in the circle. As you play the game, let the children help recite the following poem:

There once were some kittens
Who lost their mittens
And they began to cry,
"Boohoo, boohoo,
Boohoo, boohoo,
Now we shall have no pie."

All the kittens
Went to find their mittens-
At least they'd give it a try.
"Hurray, Hurray,"
They wanted to say,
"We hope our mittens we spy."

At last all the kittens
Found their mittens
And they began to cry,
"We found our mittens,
We're good little kittens.
Now we can have our pie!"

When all the children have found their mittens, pass out small pies or pie shapes. The older children will find their mittens first, making it easier for the younger children to find theirs.

Variation

Instead of using real mittens, cut mitten shapes out of construction paper, felt scraps or wallpaper samples and give each child a different colored or patterned pair.

Color Match Up

Materials

Colored construction paper, wallpaper, or gift wrap

Preparation

Cut a corner of the paper off. Place the cut off corners in a bag.

Action

Let the children take turns drawing one of the paper corners from the bag. Then have each child match their corner to the corresponding placemat.

Variation

For older children, use the same color of paper for all the placemats and cut a puzzle piece out of the corner. Then have the children match the puzzle pieces with the corresponding placemats.

Shoe mix-up

Materials & Preparation

None

Action

Have the children each take off one shoe and put it in the middle of the room. While the children cover their eyes, hide the shoes around the room in various places. Let the children search for their shoes and then put them back on. The older children will find their shoes first, making it easier for the younger children to find theirs.

Hint

Put the younger children's shoes in the more obvious locations