

# *Wiggle, Wiggle, Wink, Wink*

*172 Classroom Games  
For 5-11 year olds*

*By Teresa Evans*

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## *Hints for Using Games*

**Consider Safety** – Always consider safety of the students. Be aware of situations that could cause an injury.

**Establish Safety Rules** – Before beginning give clear instructions about what is permitted and what is not permitted, e.g. how students are to move, what areas are out of bounds, etc.

**Have Clear Signals** – Have a signal that is used for all students to stop, look and listen. It may be a whistle for outdoor games or a word that is called out for indoor games. Some teachers like to clap a pattern as a signal for students to stop, look, listen and the students then clap the pattern back to the teacher.

**Promote Sportsmanship** – Stress the importance of good sportsmanship and discourage poor sportsmanship. Students could role play the behavior of good sports and poor sports. A Good Sport's Code could be created with the students. Qualities of a good sport could be listed on a chart and displayed in the room.

**Always Be Prepared** – Like a good boy scout, it is important to always be prepared, i.e. have all equipment and resources ready before beginning, make sure you are familiar with how the game is played and the rules of the game.

**Include All Students** – Involve as many students as possible in the games. This keeps students interested and attentive if they are actively participating. If there are only 2 students playing, each could represent a team. One side of the room verses the other side is a simple way to divide the class into 2 teams.

**Give Praise** – Give praise for unsuccessful attempts as well as successful ones. Emphasize that it is participation and 'having a go' that is more important than winning.

**Discuss Relevance** – At times you may allow students to play a game just for the fun of it but at other times it is worthwhile explaining the relevance of the game and the reason for playing it. Students can also be asked to suggest the benefits of a game after playing it.

**Use as an Introduction** – Games can provide a great introduction to a lesson. E.g. Use a Drama game as a quick warm up for a drama lesson. Play Find It First before a reading or phonics lesson.

**Use as a Conclusion** – Games can also be a fun way to finish a lesson. E.g. Finish a language lesson with Four in a Row Bingo or Reading Rhythm. Play a game of Pineapples after a lesson on spelling skills.

**Establish Ownership** – Allow students to feel ownership of the game by using some of the following strategies.

- **Involve Students in Selection** – Students can be involved in selecting which games to play. Let students read the instructions and then explain the games to the others. (a valuable reading comprehension activity and a great speaking activity) Offer students a selection of games to play and allow them to choose which they would like, e.g. Here are 3 different games. Which one would you prefer to play? OR You know how to play these 3 games. Which one would you like to play now?
- **Involve Students in Preparation** – Students can be involved in preparing equipment for the games, e.g. gathering what is needed, creating cards, cutting out cards etc. This lightens the teacher's workload, develops responsibility and gives students a sense of ownership of the game.
- **Allow Students to Create Games** – Students can also be involved in creating their own game. They can do this by changing the rules, adding new rules, or making up their own version of a game. Games can also be adapted to suit students' interests and needs, e.g. in word games use words that are relevant to students.
- **Involve Students in Evaluation** – Students can also be involved in evaluating a game. After playing discuss – What went well? What did you like? What didn't go well? What could be improved? How could we make it better? What changes will we need to make?
- **Develop Leadership** – Students can also be actively involved in leading the games. They can prepare the equipment, give instructions etc. This will develop responsibility and leadership skills.

**Adapt to Students' Needs** – Games can be adapted to the abilities, needs and interests of the students. Games can also be adapted to suit different localities, seasons, holidays or topics being studied. The Minister's Cat can be Santa's Sleigh at Christmas time. Jumbled Sentence can use a sentence relating to Thanksgiving. In Riddle Match, riddles about farm animals can be used in a farming community. The game Seahorse can become Snowman in winter. "I went shopping...." can be "I'm going camping...." before a school camp.

**Use as a Reward** – Games can be a great incentive. Reward the class with a game for work well done or for homework being done well. Allow a student who has worked well to be the one to select the game or to run the game.

**Use as a Reading Activity** – Allow the students to read the instructions of a game and explain how it is played to other students. This is a valuable comprehension activity and great practice at giving instructions.

**Have Some Birthday Fun** – Allow the birthday child to select the game to play. Playing Pass It On is an ideal way to give the birthday child a gift.

**Observe and Evaluate Students** – Game time is a great time to observe students and student behaviors. Games require many different skills other than academic and physical skills. Use games to observe social skills, communication skills and leadership skills. Use games to evaluate needs of the group or needs of a particular child. Games can then be selected to meet these specific needs.

**Games are an ideal teaching tool for the classroom. While everyone has fun, minds are opened and students become sponges absorbing more and more. Learning takes place without the students even realizing it. Games also develop higher order thinking skills and problem solving skills that are instrumental to success in school and in life.**

**Games have much to offer. They bring fun, joy, learning and the development of vital life skills into the classroom and into the lives of our students. So do yourself and your students a big favor. Play a game today!**

**Wishing you fun and games always,**

**Teresa Evans**



# Getting To Know You Games

1

## Animal Groups

5+ years

A noisy game but fun! Ideal for sorting children into groups!

Need – cards with names or picture of animals (several of each)

Each child is given a card but told not to show it to others.

On 'GO' children start moving around the room making their animal's sound and trying to find the others of their kind. Children quickly gather all of their kind in a group. Can be played just for the fun of it or the winners can be the first team to make their complete group (tell the children how many there are of each animal).

---

2

## Do You ...?

5+ years

A fun way to learn more about each other!

Need – a blindfold

Students stand in a circle. Choose a child to be IT. IT stands in the centre with a blindfold on. IT spins around 4 or 5 times and then points straight ahead. IT then asks a question of the person that she is pointing to, e.g. 'Do you like pizza?'

The person answers in a sentence, e.g. 'Yes I do like pizza.' IT has to try to guess who they are pointing to using the voice and the answer as clues. If IT is correct she has another turn. If not correct the person IT pointed to is the new IT.

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3

## Five Favorites

7+ years

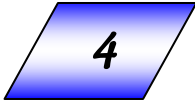
A great game to help everyone learn more about each other!

Need – pencils, paper, hat (or bowl)

Decide what 'favorites' everyone is to record. Choose favorites according to the age group, e.g. favorite food, fruit, color, animal, place, sport, book, song, movie, band, singer, actor, ice-cream flavor, TV show, cartoon character. List the favorites on the board.

Everyone is given a piece of paper and they write their name and their favorites for the five categories on it. Everyone puts their paper in the hat. One by one the favorites are read out and the students try to guess who they belong to. Students can each record the name of the student and score a point if correct.

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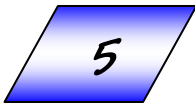
## *Groups*

6+ years

A fun game that gets everyone moving!

Players walk, dance or run around. The caller calls a number from 2 to 9. Players have to form themselves into groups of this size and hold hands in a circle. Any players not in a group of the right size are out. Play can continue until 3 remain and the caller calls 2. The 2 players will be the winners.  
HINT – Caller can call out math equations instead of numbers, e.g.  $7+2$ ,  $3 \times 1$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 12 etc.

---



## *Guess Who*

6+ years

A great game for helping everyone get to know each other!

Need – pencils, paper, hat (or bowl)

Everyone is given a piece of paper and on it they write their name and 5 likes and 5 dislikes.

Everyone puts their paper in the hat.

One by one the likes and dislikes are read out and the group tries to guess whose it is. Try to get the group to agree upon one guess. The owner of the likes and dislikes can try to persuade the others that it isn't theirs by suggesting someone else.

Variation

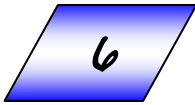
Other topics can be written on the paper instead of Likes and Dislikes, e.g.

**I wish ....** (What do you wish for yourself or what do you wish for the world.)

**When I am older...** (Where would you live and what job will you have.)

**Did you know I have .....** (Name pets, toys, instruments etc)

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## *I'd Like You to Meet...*

6+ years

Ideal way to encourage speaking and listening while getting to know each other.

Divide students into pairs.

Here are 2 suggestions for selecting the pairs.

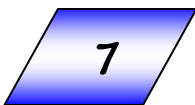
- Have students make a circle. Students number off around the circle, 1, 2, 1, 2 etc. All of the 1's then take a step forward to form a new inner circle. Both circles hold hands and the inner circle moves around in a clockwise direction while the outer circle moves anticlockwise. When the teacher calls stop the inner circle faces the outer circle and the pairs are formed.
- Have the students form 2 lines. Number one line from 1 to the end starting at the beginning of the line and number the other line from 1 to the last person starting at the opposite end of this line. Then call 'Ones' and these 2 students meet and find a place to sit. Repeat for 'Twos' etc until everyone has a partner.

After students have been divided into pairs, give everyone about 2 minutes for one person in the pair to tell the other person about themselves. Then give another 2 minutes for students to reverse roles. (One minute may even be enough time for younger students.)

After this everyone comes together as a group and each person must tell the class about their partner, starting with "I'd like you to meet ....(Tom)." Students must tell 3 facts about their partner. (This could be increased to 5 facts for older students.)

e.g. "I'd like you to meet Tom. Tom has a red bike. He broke his leg when he was 6 and he has a kitten."

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## *Liar Liar*

6+ years

Students have some fun while learning more about each other!

Need – each student needs a pencil and paper

Each student writes five facts about themselves on a piece of paper. Four of the facts have to be true and one of the facts is false. They will also need to write their name on the paper if Version 1 of the game is being played.

This game can be played in 2 different ways.

### Version 1

The teacher collects the pieces of paper and reads them one by one without reading the name of the student. After each is read, the students must try to

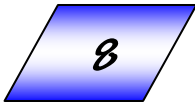
guess who the facts belong to. When the class has guessed correctly, they must then guess which of the facts is false.

### Version 2

Students can read their own facts to the class and have students try to guess which fact is false.

HINT – Encourage students to try to trick the class by writing unusual true facts about themselves that other students may not believe.

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## *Line Up*

6+ years

Really gets students interacting!

Need – may need paper for each student

This can be played with the class as one group or the class can be divided into 2-4 groups. First select the criteria that students will use to line up in order.

Without talking, students have to arrange themselves into order. If this is done in groups, the first group in the correct order sits down in a line and is the winner.

Suggested categories to use for lining up in order

- order of height from smallest to largest
  - order of birthdays (write them on paper to show each other)
  - alphabetical order of names (write them on paper to show each other if students aren't yet familiar with each others names)
  - alphabetical order of favorite food (write on paper to show each other)
- 



## *Partners*

6+ years

Students learn about each other quickly!

The teacher gives instructions to the class starting with, “Find a partner with ….” Students move about the room questioning classmates or observing classmates until they find a partner and sit with the partner on the floor. Students without a partner are out and move to the edge of the room.

Ideas for partners – Find a partner with the same – eye color as you; hair color; number of sisters; kind of pet; number of letters in their first name.

---

10

## *Picture Puzzle Pieces*

6+ years

Ideal for sorting students into groups!

Need – 5 to 8 pictures laminated and cut into 4 to 6 pieces each. Each person needs 1 piece of a picture, e.g. for 28 students use 7 pictures cut into 4 pieces each. Calendars provide ideal pictures.

Everyone is given a piece of a picture. Students wander around comparing pieces and trying to find the people with the rest of the pieces to complete the picture. Can be done for fun or the winners can be the first group finished. Can be repeated several times with pieces being collected and given out again.

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11

## *Please Tell Me*

6+ years

Students learn each others names and learn about each other.

Need – a soft foam ball.

Students stand in a circle. The teacher throws the ball to a child and says their name then asks them to tell something about themselves, e.g. Jackson, please tell me how many brothers you have.

The child then answers appropriately in a sentence, e.g. I have no brothers.

The child who answers then throws the ball to another child saying their name and asking them to tell something about themselves.

Encourage students to only throw to those who haven't had a turn.

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12

## *Similar and Different*

7+ years

Students talk about themselves, listen to others and compare.

Students are divided into pairs. Don't let students choose their own partners as they will choose a friend. If there are an odd number of students, the teacher can also have a partner.

SEE – 'I'd Like You to Meet....' or 'String Match' in this section for ideas for dividing students into pairs.

When everyone has a partner, each pair has to find 5 things about themselves that are similar and 5 things that are different. Students may like to list these on paper.

Encourage the students to give a variety of responses, e.g. comparing physical attributes, likes and dislikes, family, pets, homes, sports etc.

When everyone is ready each pair shares their similarities and differences with the rest of the class. One person in each pair tells the similarities and one tells the differences, e.g.

Similarities - We both have green eyes. We both like pizza. We both have 1 sister. We both have our birthday in June. We both live in a brick house.

Differences - I have black hair and -- has brown hair. I have no brothers and -- has 2 brothers. I have a pet goldfish and -- has no pets. I have always lived in the same house and -- has lived in different houses. I like surfing and -- has never been surfing.

---

13

### *String Match*

6+ years

A fun way to sort students into pairs!

Need – lengths of string - one length for each child. Strings are to be varying lengths but cut so that there are pairs of equal lengths.

Each child is given a length of string. On “GO!” students move around and compare lengths of string until they find their partner with the same length.

A team game can then be played. Students then form themselves into 2 groups. One person from each pair goes to either side of the room.

On “GO!” each group has to sort themselves into order according to the length of their strings. This becomes more complex if done silently.

The first group to get themselves into a line in the correct order wins.

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14

### *What Am I?*

8+ years

A fun and noisy game that everyone loves!

Need – a card and pin for each child, each card has the name of a thing from one particular category, e.g. animals, jobs, fruits or foods.

Children are told the category. A card is pinned onto the back of each player without them seeing what it says but players can see each others cards.

When each player has a card, they all mingle asking each other yes/no questions about what they are, e.g. Can I fly? Do I have 4 legs?

First player to guess what he is, wins but continue playing until all have guessed.

---

A fun game that helps children get to know each other!

Older children will also enjoy making up silly voices!

First the players agree upon what is to be said. Make up a nonsense rhyme that is relevant, e.g. 'Who am I, can you tell? Does this voice ring a bell.'

Children all sit facing the same way.

One child is IT. IT stands at the front with his back to the others.

Choose a child to say the nonsense rhyme. Encourage the child to disguise her voice.

IT then has a number of chances (2-3) to guess who spoke.

If IT is correct, she has another turn.

If IT isn't correct the player who spoke takes her place.

Hint – If children don't know each others' names allow them to point.

Variation

### *Who Said It? - Animal Sounds*

Instead of saying a rhyme the student could make a series of animal sounds, e.g. woof, woof, meow, meow, oink oink.

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## Concentration Games

16

### Animal Sound Patterns

5+ years

Listening game that can be adjusted for different ages!

The teacher or a student says a sequence of animal sounds, e.g. woof, hiss, chirp.

Students repeat the sequence, then a student is asked to give the animal names in the correct order, e.g. dog, snake, bird.

For older students add more sounds and repeat some of them, e.g. neigh, meow, meow, roar, roar, quack – horse, cat, cat, lion, lion, duck.

Examples of simple patterns for younger students –

woof, chirp, croak – dog, bird, frog

roar, quack, meow – lion, duck, cat

squeak, neigh, oink – mouse, horse, pig

moo, buzz, purr – cow, bee, cat

Examples of more advanced patterns for older students –

gobble, gobble, cluck, cluck, hiss, neigh, neigh – turkey, turkey, hen, hen, snake, horse, horse.

roar, squeak, squeak, hiss, tweet, tweet – lion, mouse, mouse, snake, bird, bird  
chatter, chatter, quack, buzz, oink, oink – monkey, monkey, duck, bee, pig, pig

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17

### Bing Bang Bong

9+ years

A great concentration game that older children enjoy!

Players sit in a circle. IT is in the centre of the circle. IT walks up to a player and says BING (or BANG or BONG) and then counts to 5. The player that IT has spoken to has to respond appropriately.

If IT says BING – the player says the name of the person to her left.

If IT says BANG – the player says the name of the person to her right.

If IT says BONG – the player says her own name.

The player has to respond correctly without hesitating while IT counts to 5.

If the player is successful, IT moves onto another player. Play continues until IT gets someone out and this person then becomes the next IT.

---



18

## *Bing Bang Bong Bounce*

9+ years

Try this game once players have mastered *BING, BANG, BONG.*

Need – soft foam ball

Players stand in a circle. One player has the ball and bounces it to another player and says BING (or BANG or BONG) and then counts to 5.

If he says BING – the player says the name of the person to her left,

If he says BANG – the player says the name of the person to her right.

If he says BONG – the player says her own name.

The player has the count of 5 to respond. If she is successful, she bounces the ball to another player. If incorrect, the player sits down. Last one standing wins.

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19

## *Disguises*

8+ years

An interesting game of observation!

IT leaves the room or asks other players to turn away.

IT then makes an agreed number of simple changes to his clothing. It might be 3 changes or 5 changes. This could include undoing a shoe lace or button; taking off an earring; turning a collar up; moving a ring to a different finger, etc.

IT then returns to the room or asks others to turn back.

Other players have to guess the changes to ITs appearance.

Variations

### *Disguise the Room*

Played in a similar way but this time IT makes 5 changes to the room while the other players close their eyes.

---

20

## *Forbidden Letter*

8+ years

A challenging game that requires students to really concentrate!

Choose a letter to be the forbidden letter, e.g. 'n'. A child is chosen to be IT. IT comes to the front of the room and students ask IT questions. The questions can be about the student or about a topic being studied in class. IT has to answer the questions but must not use a word containing the 'Forbidden Letter' in the answer. IT is out if they use a word that contains the 'Forbidden Letter' and the person who asked the question becomes the new IT.

HINT – For a real challenge make the 'Forbidden Letter' a vowel.

---

21

## *Hat and Rat*

8+ years

Not as confusing as it sounds. Requires lots of concentration!

Need – 2 small items (comb, pen, spoon), not two of the same

Players sit in a circle.

Teacher sits in the circle too.

The teacher passes the first item to the 1<sup>st</sup> person on the right and says 'This is a hat.'

1<sup>st</sup> person says 'A what?'

Teacher replies 'A hat'.

1<sup>st</sup> person passes to 2<sup>nd</sup> person (next person to the right) and says 'This is a hat.'

2<sup>nd</sup> person asks 'A what?' of the 1<sup>st</sup> person who must ask 'A what?' of the teacher. Teacher replies 'A hat.' 1<sup>st</sup> person tells 2<sup>nd</sup> person 'A hat.'

Continue around the circle each time passing the 'A what?' question back to the teacher. And then passing the answer 'A hat' back to the final person.

Sounds easy so far! Now let's get tricky!

Once the group has the idea, the teacher can then introduce the 2<sup>nd</sup> item to the left and call it a rat.

The teacher has to concentrate and answer to the left and right.

The game becomes really interesting when the items cross over in the circle.

Challenge the group and see if they can get both items back to the teacher with no mistakes. Good Luck!

22

## *I Went Shopping*

6+ years

A great memory and concentration game for any age!

Play around the room or have students sit in a circle. The first player says, 'I went shopping and I bought .....(names an item, e.g. cherries).' Next player repeats this adding another item of her choice, 'I went shopping and I bought cherries and ice-cream.' Next player repeats adding his item, 'I went shopping and I bought cherries, ice-cream and sausages.'

Game continues with the list becoming longer and longer until a child is unable to remember the list in order.

Variations

*I went to the beach and I took..... I went to on holidays and I took.....*

*I went to the circus and I saw..... I went on a picnic and I took.....*

Make up your own version that is relevant to children.

23

## Jingle Jangle

5+ years

A game to develop rhythm! An ideal way to quickly get the attention of the whole class!

Clap a 4, 6 or 8 beat pattern and have students clap it back to you. Repeat changing the pattern. As students get better at this the pattern can become more complex. Students also enjoy creating patterns for others to copy.

Train the class to stop, look and listen when they hear you clap a pattern and then repeat the pattern for you. This is an ideal way to get everyone's attention.

---

24

## Motorcycle, Rowboat, Helicopter

7+ years

A fast and challenging game requiring students to remember 9 different actions!

Students sit in a circle. As the game is played the caller calls out "Motorcycle" (or "Rowboat" or "Helicopter") then a student's name. The person whose name is called and the person to the left and right are the people who have to quickly perform the actions. To begin have 3 students demonstrate the actions. Person 2 is the person whose name is called. Person 1 is to the right. Person 3 is the person to the left.

**Actions for Motorcycle** - Person 1 sits facing others with knees up to chest and holds arms up to the sides at 45° angles to be the handlebars of the motorcycle.

- Person 3 sits facing Person 1 with knees up to the chest leaning forward and puts hands onto the shoulders of Person 1.
- Person 2 is the motorcycle rider and faces Person 1, straddling the arms of Person 3 and holding the hands of Person 1.

**Actions for Rowboat** - Persons 1 and 3 sit and face each other. Their legs are spread apart and meet feet to feet. Arms are spread apart and they lean forward and touch hands. These people form the rowboat.

- Person 2 sits between the legs of the others moving arms in a rowing motion.

**Actions for Helicopter** - Person 2 sits with knees up to chest and arms held to the side to be the blades of the helicopter.

- Person 1 sits in front of Person 2, facing Person 2 with knees to chest and head down and back curved. This is the front of the helicopter.
- Person 3 sits with back to Person 2 and knees up. Arms are held out in front with hands meeting to be the tail of the helicopter.

**Variations** - Allow students to create their own version using actions for a different theme, e.g. occupations – Musicians, Hairstylists, Firefighters.

---

25

## Noah's Ark

9+ years

A quick thinking game to challenge students!

Need – a soft ball

Children stand in a circle. One child has the ball.

The ball is thrown to another child and the thrower calls – Earth, Air, Fire or Water.

- If Earth is called, the child who catches the ball must name a land animal.
- If Air is called, he names a type of bird.
- If Water is called, he names a type of fish.
- If Fire is called, he names something that can withstand fire, e.g. rock.

The player who threw the ball counts to ten. If the catcher gives a correct answer in that time, then he continues the game by throwing to someone else. If the catcher can't give an answer in that time he is out and sits down.

No answer can be given twice in the same game.

HINT – Encourage children to throw to someone who hasn't had a turn yet.

---

26

## Pass the Name

7+ years

A great challenge for a large group!

Children stand in a circle and start clapping a beat, e.g. clap, clap, stamp, stamp, clap, clap repeat.

First player then says a name at the end of the pattern, e.g. clap, clap, stamp, stamp, clap, clap, Tom.

Tom then has to add the next name at the right time without breaking the pattern, e.g. clap, clap, stamp, stamp, clap, clap, Amanda.

Repeat as many times as possible keeping the rhythm going until someone makes a mistake.

---

27

## Secret Sound

5+ years

Develops listening skills!

One child is chosen to be IT. IT stands at the front of the room with his back to the others. Another player is chosen to move about the room and use something in the room to make a sound. IT has to guess what the sound was and how it was made.

Encourage children to be inventive with the sounds they make, e.g.

- pull a tissue out of a tissue box.
- tap a pen on the table
- open and close a draw.

(No pulling hair or pinching someone is allowed.)

---

28

### *Who Said Hello?*

5+ years

A great classroom game for the little ones but  
older ones have fun with it too!

Children all sit facing the same way.

One child is IT.

IT stands at the front with his back to the others.

Someone then chooses a child to say, 'Hello .....(name of IT)!' Encourage the child to disguise his voice.

IT then has a number of chances (2-3) to guess who said Hello.

If IT is correct, he has another turn. If IT isn't correct the player who said Hello takes his place.

---

29

### *Who's Missing?*

5+ years

The more players, the more difficult it becomes!

Players walk or dance around the room.

When the caller says 'Freeze' everyone stands still and closes their eyes – no peeping allowed.

The caller walks around the room, taps a player on the shoulder and that player tip toes out of the room.

Caller then calls 'Who's missing?'

Everyone opens their eyes, looks about and tries to be the first to identify 'Who's missing?'

---

30

### *Who's the Initiator?*

8+ years

Children love this game of observation  
and will beg you to let them play!

Children sit in a circle.

One child is chosen to be the Spotter.

The Spotter leaves the room or turns his back while a child from the circle is chosen to be the Initiator.

The Initiator chooses the repetitive, rhythmic movements that everyone will make without standing or moving from their places.

Movements might include

- nodding heads
- tapping hands on head, shoulders, head, shoulders etc.
- hands clapping on knees, knees, shoulders, shoulders, knees, knees etc
- clap hands in front twice and behind twice

Encourage the Initiator to be creative with his actions.

Once everyone is making the Initiator's movements, the Spotter returns to the room and starts to observe the group.

The Spotter's job is to guess who the Initiator is in 3 guesses.

The Initiator changes the movements as often as possible without being seen by the Spotter. Everyone follows copying the Initiator's movements.

After 3 guesses or when the Spotter guesses the Initiator's identity, a new game begins with a new spotter and a new Initiator being chosen.

HINT – Children may need to be encouraged not to look at the Initiator as this will give the game away to the Spotter. Instead they can scan the group and change movements when they notice others changing their movements.

HINT – Game can also be played with children standing. This allows for a larger variety of movements.

---



## *Wiggle, Wiggle, Wink, Wink!*

8+ years

A fun, action game that makes children concentrate! Great for developing coordination also!

Students and teacher stand in a circle.

Teacher makes a series of movements for students to copy, e.g. Wiggle, wiggle, (wiggle bottom), wink, wink, clap, clap, stamp.

Students copy the series.

Make the series more and more complex each time.

Allow students to create a series for others to copy.

HINT – Can be played as an elimination game with students who are incorrect sitting down. (You may need help spotting those who are incorrect.)

---

## Yes No Game

7+ years

A fun game to fill in a few spare minutes!

One child is chosen to be IT. IT must answer questions but is not allowed to say Yes or No or any version of Yes or No, e.g. yeah, nuh. IT can't nod or shake her head either.

Some children find it very difficult to answer even a simple question like, 'Are your socks blue?' They don't think to say, 'They are.'

HINT - Trick IT by asking questions like, 'I don't want to play anymore. Do you?'

HINT – Try to fire questions at IT quickly so they don't have time to think.

---

## Drama Games

33

### Expressions

7+ years

A fun game that encourages expressive speaking!

Need – set of cards with words telling various expressions or emotions (can be played with or without cards)

VARIATION 1 (no cards)

Players sit in a circle. Decide upon a simple statement that will be used, e.g. 'Where are you going?' 'It's hot today.' 'Today is my birthday.' 'A dog has a tail.' Nonsense sentences can also be used. e.g. 'I like to eat smelly socks.' 'My cat can play the piano.' Each person in the circle has a turn at saying the sentence in a different way, i.e. using a different emotion or expression.

VARIATION 2 (with cards)

Played as above but a card tells each person how to say the sentence. Possible words for cards – angry, bored, accusing, questioning, answering, happy, laughing, confused, shy, dull, ill, scared, proud, vain, surprised, sarcastic, annoyed, crying, sleepy, tired, upset.

Players sit in a circle with the cards face down in the centre. Students can be shown the words on the cards and discuss each before beginning.

Each student selects a card and has a turn saying the chosen sentence in the way shown on the card. Other students try to guess what is on the card.

VARIATION 3 (with cards)

Played as in Variation 3 but 2<sup>nd</sup> set of cards is included with sentences on them. Each player selects an emotions/expressions card and a sentence card that tells them what to say.

---

34

### Fairy Tale Freeze Frame

8+ years

Lots of fun with everyone involved!

Divide the class into groups of 5 or 6. Groups don't have to have even numbers. Each group must select a fairy tale and choose a scene to freeze, i.e. form the group into a scene from a fairy tale and freeze like statues.



Remind students that the scene must give enough clues for others to guess what the fairy tale is and what the scene is showing. Some props may be used, e.g. tables, chairs etc.

When each group has discussed and chosen their scene, they show the other groups who have to guess the fairy tale and the scene. It is best for students to turn away while the group forms themselves into their scene.

HINT – It may be necessary to list and discuss various fairy tales before starting.

Examples of scenes

- The big bad wolf might stand on a table and freeze in a position about to climb into a chimney while the 3 little pigs cower in a corner, looking terrified.
  - Cinderella might freeze in a running position while the prince holds up a shoe (her glass slipper) and marvels at it. She is running towards the coach driver who is sitting on a table (for the coach) holding reins while the mice kneel in front of the coach.
- 

35

### *Gestures*

8+ years

A fun game to play and watch!

Players pair off. Each pair teams up with another pair.

One person from each pair stand and face each other. They are the speakers. Speakers will have a conversation while they hold their arms still by their sides. The other players stand behind the speakers. They are the gesturers. The gesturers have their arms out around the speakers and do the gestures for the speakers. After some practice allow each group to perform for the others. Add an interesting twist and see if a conversation can take place without any laughing.

---

36

### *How Is It Done?*

8+ years

A game that requires children to be creative!

IT leaves the room and everyone decides upon an adverb, i.e. a word that tells how something is done and ends with 'ly'.

E.g. slowly, quickly, angrily, happily, anxiously, nervously, fearfully, playfully, shyly, jerkily, lazily etc

When IT returns she asks players to move or mime things in this way, e.g. run this way, walk this way, brush your hair this way, eat this way, jump this way etc. IT has to guess what the adverb is.

---

37

## *Mirrors*

6+ years

An interesting game of movement!

Players stand in pairs, facing each other. One is the mirror and one provides the actions.

The player who does the actions is mirrored by the other player, i.e. if the player who makes the actions lifts his left arm, the mirror will lift his right arm.

Players vary their movements, moving arms, legs, head and body.

Start with slow, easy movements and then have movements get faster and more difficult.

After a while have partners swap roles.

---

38

## *Movement Chain*

7+ years

A great game that requires concentration!

Players stand in a circle facing into the middle.

First player makes a simple movement or sign like a clap of hands.

Next player makes this movement and then adds her own, clap hands, wiggle hips. Continue around the circle adding a movement each time.

The game is played silently. When someone makes a mistake or forgets, she is out.

---

39

## *Mystery Mime*

5+ years

A miming game for any age!

First select a category, e.g. jobs. First child mimes something from the category, e.g. doctor. As the mime ends the child asks, 'Who am I?' Others try to guess.

Variations

*What animal am I? What sport am I?*

---

40

## Opposite Actions

5+ years

An active game that develops body awareness!

Students spread out and find a place of their own.

The teacher calls out an action and the students must do the opposite, e.g.

When the teacher calls out 'Run' the students should walk.

Can be played as a warm up activity or an elimination game, i.e. any student who makes the wrong move is out and sits down.

If playing as an elimination game the teacher or caller may require assistance spotting the students who make the wrong moves.

Suggested action words – run, hop, jump, crawl, sit, stand, spin, move, sprint, stroll, roll, freeze, shake, sway, shrink, grow.

VARIATION – When 'CHANGE' is called, players have to do the action and not the opposite until 'CHANGE' is called again. This version is more challenging.

---

41

## Pass the Mime

8+ years

An interesting miming game that is just as much fun to watch as it is to play! A miming version of Chinese Whispers!

Four children are chosen to be in. They stand in a row with the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> person facing away from the first person.

The first person is taken aside and told in a whisper a situation.

The situation can be simple or more complex for older children, e.g.

- taking a bite of an apple and discovering that it has a worm in it
- making a slice of toast and putting peanut butter on it
- picking a bunch of flowers, sniffing them and having a bee sting your nose

Several different situations could be written on cards and the first child could pick a card to describe a situation.

When the 1<sup>st</sup> person knows what the situation is, he taps the 2<sup>nd</sup> person on the shoulder. (This is the signal for that person to turn around and watch the mime.)

The 2<sup>nd</sup> person watches while the 1<sup>st</sup> person mimes the situation.

Then the 2<sup>nd</sup> person taps the 3<sup>rd</sup> person on the shoulder.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> person then repeats the mime for the 3<sup>rd</sup> person who in turn repeats it for the 4<sup>th</sup> person.

The 4<sup>th</sup> person then has to tell what situation the mime was showing.

Usually the 4<sup>th</sup> person suggests a very different event to what the 1<sup>st</sup> person was told as the mime becomes distorted as it is passed.

You can then ask the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> person to tell what they were miming.

HINT – Encourage children to mime carefully and accurately or other players won't be able to relay it on.

---

42

### *Persuasion*

7+ years

Encourages creative thinking!

Need – an object – can be anything, a classroom item, ruler, marker, a book; a piece of fruit; an item of clothing etc.

The object is placed at the front of the room. Two players are chosen to persuade the others that he or she should be given the object.

One at a time each player comes to the front of the room and creates a story trying to persuade the others that he or she should be given the object.

The story that they create can be completely fictitious. After both players have given their stories, the class votes on who was the most persuasive.

---

43

### *Rhyming Mime*

6+ years

A fun way to learn about rhyming words!

Need – pencil, paper

Select someone to be IT. IT selects a word that has lots of words that rhyme with it and writes it on a piece of paper. IT tells the class a word that rhymes with the word. The others try to guess the word by taking it in turn to mime words that rhyme with the word IT has told them.

E.g. IF IT's word is HOOK, IT might tell the others LOOK. They might then take it in turns and mime, COOK, SHOOK, BOOK then HOOK. The player who mimes HOOK is the winner.

---

## Simple Charades

6+ years

An easy to learn version of Charades!

Need – 20+ word cards (easier if they are nouns and verbs)

Divide the group into 2 teams.

One player from the first team is given 10 cards with words on them.

He mimes the word on the card for his team. The team scores a point for every word that they get right.

Second team has a turn next.

HINT – Decide beforehand if a time limit will be given. Time limits could be given for each teams turn or time limits could be given for each word.

This game can also be played with a new person from the team coming out to mime each new word.

---

## Language Games

45

### *Add a Word Story*

8+ years

A quick thinking game that develops the imagination!

A great way to create some interesting stories!

Need – pencil and paper if you choose to write the story

A story is built word by word with each player adding a word.

The story can be done verbally - encourage everyone not to hesitate.

OR the story can be written down with each player adding a word.

Writing it down is a little slower but players then have a record to reread.

Variations

#### *Add A Sentence Story*

Played in a similar way but this time each player gets to add a whole sentence.

HINT – It may be necessary to discuss with students what is acceptable and what is not acceptable to include in the stories.

---

46

### *Alphabet Adjectives*

7+ years

Fun way to reinforce the concept of adjectives!

Students sit in a circle.

Decide upon a noun to be described, e.g. car, table, bird, house.

Going around the circle, students take turns to give an adjective to describe the noun. Each adjective given must be in alphabetical order, e.g. **a**wful car, **b**roken car, **c**olorful car, **d**irty car, **e**xpensive car.

See if students can go through the entire alphabet without anyone hesitating to give an adjective.

---

47

## *Alphabet Names*

7+ years

A quick game to revise alphabetical order!

The teacher selects 3-7 children to stand at the front of the room. Another student is chosen to sort the children into alphabetical order. Students can be given cards with their names on them to hold if preferred. HINT – Select names according to the ability level of the students. Younger students might sort – Tom, Cathy, James. Older students might sort – Jordan, Jodie, Jaime, Jessica.

---

48

## *Alphabet Washing Line*

7+ years

Interesting way to study alphabetical order!

Need – Rope strung up to be a washing line. (tied between 2 chairs is fine), pegs, cards with words to be sorted into alphabetical order. The cards to be sorted into alphabetical order are pegged to the washing line. A student selects the first word in the alphabetical order and pegs it to the beginning of the line. Next student places the second word in the correct place. Continue until all words are in correct order. HINT – Students names are good to use to practice alphabetical order. OR Use words from a category that is being studied, e.g. planet names, animal names, foods, countries etc.

---

49

## *Banned Word*

7+ years

One to make everyone think! More fun if played quickly!

Choose a student to be IT. IT chooses a word to be the Banned Word. It is best if the word is a small common word, e.g. the, it, on, in, and. IT then asks the other players questions and they must answer quickly but are not permitted to say the Banned Word. When a player says the Banned Word, she is out. Last player left is the winner. Can be played with the person chosen to be IT as the one who answers the questions. IT is out when he uses the Banned Word and another IT is chosen.

---



50

## *Beat the Bomb*

6+ years

A good challenge for all ages!

Need – an object to be the bomb (shoe, cap, box)

Players sit in a circle and pass the bomb around quickly.

The caller calls stop and a letter of the alphabet.

The player with the bomb then has to name a certain number of things that start with that letter, while the bomb is passed around the circle.

The number of things he has to name depends upon the number of players, the more players the higher the number. The player wins if he can beat the bomb.

---



51

## *Bluff Words*

10+ years

A fun game that encourages creative thinking!

Need - pencil, paper, dictionary.

The teacher or a student chooses an unusual word from the dictionary and tells the students what the word is. The teacher (or student) then writes down the definition on a piece of paper. Each of the students also make up a definition and give it to the teacher (or student).

The definitions are shuffled and 3 or 4 are chosen to be read along with the correct definition. Number each one so students can write the number of the definition that they think is genuine. Students score 1 point if they choose the correct one. Allow a new student to select the next word and repeat.

---



52

## *Can You Please...?*

5+ years

Fun listening activity that can be adjusted for different ages!

The teacher gives a series of instructions to be followed then names the person to carry out the instructions.

The student who is chosen must carry out the instructions in the correct order.

Other students watch and put hands on heads if the student makes a mistake.

Instructions can be simple for younger students -

e.g. "Can you please go to my desk, pick up the blue box, take it to the bookcase and put it on the bottom shelf, Joshua?"

Instructions can be more complex for older students –



e.g. "Can you please go to the board, draw a blue circle, draw a green square beside the circle and draw the letter P in the circle, Courtney."

Students can also have turns at giving the instructions for other students.

HINT – Always give the name of the student after the instructions not before.

HINT – Encourage students to visualize what they have to do as the instructions are given.

---

53

## *Categories*

8+ years

A fun quick thinking game!

Categories can be related to the curriculum!

Need - pencil, paper, list of categories.

Each player is given the list of 10 categories, e.g. cities, animals, fruits, plants, movies stars, singers, colors, toys, clothing, book titles. Make the categories appropriate for the age of the players. Players are told a letter of the alphabet. Within the specified time (5 minutes) they write down as many things as they can for each category. Each thing must start with the letter of the alphabet, e.g. B

- cities – Boston
- animals – bear, buffalo, blue whale.

When time is up, players count up the number of items that they have, scoring 1 point for each. An additional 5 points is given if they have at least one answer for each category. Player with the highest score tells others their answers so they can be checked. This player is the winner of the round.

HINT – Students also enjoy playing this game in teams or pairs.

---

54

## *Circle Categories*

6+ years

A fast game for any age!

Students stand in a circle. Decide upon a category, e.g. cars, fruit, sport, countries. Going around the circle, players take turns to name something from the category. Each player follows the other without hesitating.

If a player can't answer in 3 seconds, he is out and sits down.

Obviously players can't repeat something that another person has said.

---

55

## Coffeepot

8+ years

Really makes kids think! Great for studying homonyms!

Three or four children are chosen to be IN and sent out of the room. Others select a homonym pair (words that sound the same, but are spelt differently and have different meanings, e.g. see, sea; here, hear; night, knight). The students then return to the room. The others now give sentences containing one of the words but replace the word with the word 'coffeepot', e.g. I can 'coffeepot' you. The 'coffeepot' is calm today. The first student to guess the homonyms is the winner. Ask the winner to spell both homonyms.

---

56

## Complete a Rhyme

5+ years

Fun listening activity!

Teacher reads a nursery rhyme to students and stops without saying the last word of the line e.g. "Baa, baa black sheep, Have you any \_\_\_\_." Students say the next word. Use rhymes or poems that students aren't familiar with and let students use the rhyme as a clue, e.g. "What can I buy with my money? I would like a jar of \_\_\_\_."

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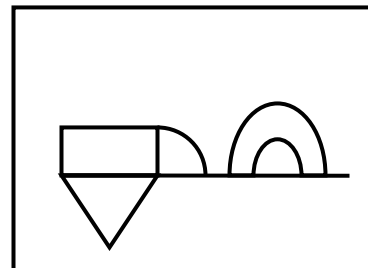
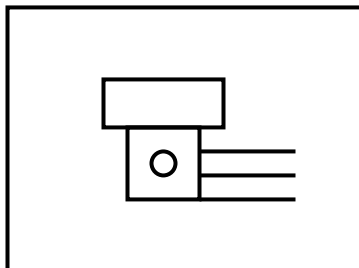
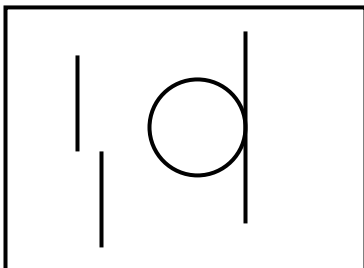
57

## Copy Cat

6+ years

Lots of laughs when everyone shares their drawings!

Need – pencil, paper for each player, set of simple drawings on cards  
Make a set of simple drawings on cards. Design cards to suit the age group, e.g.



One of the students selects a card. He can not show the others and must give instructions on how to draw what is on the card. He can use words only and can not use his hands or signs to show the others what to do.

Everyone shows their drawings.

Winner is the player with the most correct drawing. She can be the next IT.

---



### *Dictionary Race*

9+ years

Fun practice at looking up words in a dictionary!

Need – Each student needs a dictionary

Teacher writes a list of random words on the board. 8-10 words are ideal.

Students then race to be the first to find all of the words.

Students must find the 1<sup>st</sup> word in the list first before moving onto the next word and either –

- quickly show the teacher who checks the word is correct and says “Yes” .
- OR Students can write down the word and the page number of the word.

First person to find the final word is the winner.

HINT – Meaning of the words could then be discussed.

---



### *Fortunately, Unfortunately*

10+ years

A game that creates an interesting story!

First player starts with a statement beginning “Fortunately…….”, e.g.

“Fortunately, I found a pot of gold.” or “Fortunately, I went to the circus yesterday.” or “Fortunately, I’ve been given a new bike.”

Next player has to add an “Unfortunately, ………” to follow the first sentence. This has to be done in a limited amount of time.

Play continues with players alternating between Fortunately and Unfortunately stories. This game can be played with players being out if they don’t respond within a certain time.

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## Homonym Bingo

8+ years

Fun way to reinforce correct usage of homonyms!

The teacher lists 10 pairs of homonyms to be studied on the board. Students each create their own Bingo card by writing 6 of the words on a piece of paper. Only one word from each homonym pair can be used. The teacher then says one of the homonyms and a sentence containing the word, e.g. “buy - Where did you buy this?” Students cross off the word if it is on their card. The first student to cross off all of the words calls Bingo and is the winner of the round. The teacher then checks that the correct words have been crossed off. Students can then create a new card and play a new round.

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## I Spy

5+ years

An old favorite for children of all ages!

IT thinks of a thing she can see without telling the others. She says, ‘I spy with my little eye something beginning with (letter name).’ Others guess what it is.

Variations

*I Spy With Sounds.*

Instead of a letter use the starting sound. e.g. ‘I spy with my little eye something beginning with (sound of the sh in shell).’

*I Spy With Ending Letter or Sound.*

A more advanced game! Instead of the starting letter or sound, name the ending letter or sound. e.g. ‘I spy with my little eye something ending with ‘b’.

---



## Label Mix Up

5+ years

Fun word recognition practice!

Need – flashcards naming items in the room

Create flashcards to label items around the room. Have students read the labels and put them on the correct items.

Have all students close their eyes or face away from the area you will be swapping cards. Swap 2 of the labels while students aren’t looking.

Move around the area and not just to the 2 items as this will make it less obvious which items you have been to.

Students are told to open their eyes and have to identify which 2 labels have been swapped. The student who identifies them correctly can have the next turn at swapping labels.

---



## *News Reporters*

9+ years

Players create their own bizarre News Reports and then present the news.

Need – paper and pencils

Each player has 2 pieces of paper and writes down the side of each Who, What, When, Where, Why.

The players then outline a nonsense story by filling in one of the pieces of paper.

E.g. **Who** (name a character, celebrity, historical figure etc) e.g. Snow White

**What** (What did they do?) e.g. died her hair blonde

**When** (When did it happen?) e.g. after she married Prince Charming

**Where** (Where did it happen?) e.g. at the seven dwarves cottage

**Why** (Why did it happen?) e.g. because she wanted to have more fun.

When all players have completed their outlines, they then start the 2<sup>nd</sup> outline but only fill in the name of the character that they have on their first outline.

This is then folded under so no one else can read it.

This is then passed to the next player, so each player receives a paper with WHO filled in but they are unable to read this.

This player then fills in the WHAT copying from their own original outline and folds this under to hide it. Players continue to pass the papers, each time filling in one section and folding it under. When each section has been completed, the paper is passed to the next person who must make a news report out of the outline. Players take turns to present their news report using the details on their paper. Each news item should be quite original and quite funny.

Encourage children to role play the News Readers.

**“We have just received a fascinating report from a tropical island in the Pacific where last night at midnight, Snow White won a gold medal in boxing because it was raining!”**

---

64

## *No Ums or Ahs*

7+ years

Not as easy as it might sound! Great speaking activity!

Give a student a topic to talk about. Tell the student how long they will have to talk. (1 or 2 minutes depending on the topic and age group)

Topics can be broad or general depending on the age of the child, e.g. dogs, my house, cars, shoes, milk etc.

Topics can be written on pieces of card and students can draw one out.

The child then has to talk on this topic for the given amount of time and must not pause or say 'um' or 'ah'. Not as easy as you might think, even for adults.

---

65

## *Nursery Rhyme Nonsense*

4+ years

A fun listening activity for younger students!

Students need to be familiar with nursery rhymes.

Teacher says a nursery rhyme but changes one word to a different word.

Students listen and quickly put hands on heads when an incorrect word is said.

HINT – If students aren't familiar with nursery rhymes, read the rhyme correctly the first time and then students can listen for a change the second time.

VARIATION

### *Poetry Nonsense*

Read a poem to students and then reread making subtle changes. Students listen for the changes and put hands on head when they hear one.

---

66

## *Odd One Out*

6+ years

Encourages students to think!

The teacher writes 4 words on the board and students have to select the odd one out. Select words according to the ability level of students. Students could each record their answer.

To make students really think, vary the common theme for the similar words, e.g. words of a similar category

- [banana, grapes, **pen**, orange] others are fruits
- [Canada, Brazil, **London**, China] others are countries

words with a similar sound

- [ball, **house**, baby, beach] others begin with b

- [finish, polish, **charge**, splash] others end with sh
- words with a similar number of syllables
- [**glass**, table, robot, button] others have 2 syllables
- words with prefixes or suffixes
- [impossible, postpone, midterm, **journey**] others have prefixes
  - [childhood, helpful, **perfect**, portable] others have suffixes
- compound words
- [playground, **feather**, surfboard, snowflake] others are compound words
- HINT – Students may identify a different Odd word to the one intended, e.g. [childhood, helpful, perfect, portable] Odd One Out could be **perfect**, as others have suffixes or it could be **childhood** as other contain letter/sound p or it could be **portable** as others have 2 syllables. If students can reasonably justify their answers, allow them to be correct.
- 



## Opposites

6+ years

A great concentration game for all ages!

One player is chosen to be IT. IT is asked Yes/No questions but must answer with the opposite answer, e.g. 'Do you have a tail?' IT must answer, 'YES'.

IT is out when she gives the correct answer instead of the opposite answer.

HINT – Fire questions at IT quickly to try to trick her.

HINT – Try to break her concentration by asking silly questions.

HINT - Encourage questions that everyone knows the answer to. (If IT is asked, 'Do you have a dog?' and no one knows the answer, you won't know what ITs answer should be.)

HINT - To make the game more interesting add the rule that if IT laughs or smiles, IT is out.

---



## Robots

6+ years

Great practice at giving instructions!

Need – blindfold, small object or toy

IT is the Robot. The Robot is blindfolded and placed in the centre of the room.

The other players place the object or toy somewhere in the room.

HINT – Move around a lot so that the robot can't hear where you put the toy.

The players have to give instructions to the robot to guide him to pick up the object, e.g. Take 3 steps forward, turn right, take 2 steps forward etc.  
HINT – Make sure the room is clear of any objects that the Robot might trip over.

---



## *Secret Word*

7+ years

A game that challenges the contestants and the audience!

Choose two students to compete. They stand in front of the board. The teacher writes the secret word on the board where everyone except the two contestants can see it. The contestants take turns selecting a student with a hand raised to tell them a one word clue to help them to guess the secret word. Either contestant can call out a guess of the secret word at any time.  
e.g. The secret word could be **puzzle**. Students could give these clues – **game, pieces, tricky, fun, confuse, solve, riddle, problem.**

Secret words for younger students – milk, horse, ship, tree, straw, dress, bread, circus, baby, party, glass, ladder.

Secret words for older students – garage, danger, parents, vacation, yacht, mountain, noise, scary, juice, tower, sneeze.

Secret words for advanced students - machine, straight, rough, horizon, unique, polite, photograph, recycle, heavy.

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## *Simon Says*

10+ years

A different version to help teach nouns, verbs and adverbs!

Need – Cards with nouns, verbs and adverbs written on them.  
Divide the class into 2 groups. Boys and girls make it easy to distinguish groups. One group is the verb group. When the teacher shows a verb this group must do what is on the card while the other group must freeze.  
The other group is the adverb group. When the teacher shows an adverb this group must move in this way and the other group must freeze.  
When the teacher shows a noun, both groups must freeze.  
Students who do the wrong move are out and move to the side.  
Suggested words for cards



- NOUNS – use words of own choice.
- VERBS – hop, skip, run, jump, wink, crawl, roll, spin, shuffle, clap, blow, grow, swing, sit, stand, shake, wiggle
- ADVERBS – quickly, slowly, quietly, noisily, gracefully, wildly, sadly, happily, jerkily, wobbly, stiffly, floppily

A simpler version of this game can be played with younger students using only nouns and verbs. The students do what is on the verb cards and freeze for the noun cards.

---



## *The Minister's Cat*

8+ years

A challenging game for teaching adjectives!

Players sit in a circle. Players slowly clap a 4 beat pattern. I prefer Clap hands, Clap hands on knees, Clap hands, Clap hands on knees (repeat).

1<sup>st</sup> player says, 'The Minister's Cat is a (adjective starting with A) cat.' Adjective could be angry. This is said to the 4 beat pattern.

Clap the 4 beats again then 2<sup>nd</sup> player uses a different adjective, e.g. aging cat. Play continues with each person having a turn and keeping to the pattern – clap 4 beats, say the sentence (while the clapping continues), clap 4 beats, next person says the sentence. See how many can have a turn before someone falters or can't think of a different adjective. Then have a turn using B adjectives.

Variations

### *A-Z Minister's Cat*

Younger children may find it easier to start with a different version where players go through the alphabet as they give adjectives, e.g. awful, busy, cute, dirty etc.

### *The Minister's Cat - Verbs*

A more challenging version is to add a verb to "The Minister's cat ...." moving through the alphabet from A-Z, e.g. The Minister's cat advises. (bathes, cries..)

### *The Minister's Cat - Adverbs*

As above but this time add an adverb to "The Minister's cat moves... (alertly, boldly, cautiously...)

### *The Minister's Cat - Nouns*

A simpler version for younger students! Use this sentence and add a noun. "The Minister's cat likes ...." (acorns, bananas, carnations.....) Make sure students don't add a verb, e.g. running.

---

72

## *Twenty Questions*

7+ years

Encourages children to listen and to think!

One player thinks of an object and tells if it is animal, vegetable, mineral or mixture, i.e. animal - an animal or derived from animal; vegetable - a plant or derived from plants; mineral - from the mineral world and has never been alive; a mixture – a combination. The others then ask up to 20 Yes/No questions to guess what the object is. If someone guesses they then choose the next object. HINT – Encourage broad questions rather than wild guesses, e.g. Am I found in a house? Can I move by myself? NOT Am I a pen? Am I a leaf?

VARIATION

### *Twenty Questions - What Word Is it?*

This game is played as above but instead of thinking of an object, the player thinks of a word. Other players have to guess what the word is.

Questions could include, “Does it have any of the letters in the word star? Does it have less than 6 letters? Does it have 2 syllables? Does it have 2 vowels?”

---

73

## *What Is It?*

8+ years

Teaches the concept of adjectives!

A student looks around the room and selects an object to describe. The description must have only adjectives in it, e.g. It is small, long, wooden, useful, patterned and round. What is it? (a pencil) Others guess what the object is. HINT – Have students write down the name of the object then list as many adjectives as possible before beginning.

---

74

## *What Would You Spot?*

5+ years

A fun quick thinking game that develops creative thinking!

Need – Cards to write on, 2 boxes for the cards.

The students decide upon 5 places to be used for the game. These could be natural places or man made places, e.g. beach, forest, desert, park, bowling alley, cinema, kitchen etc. The 5 places are written on cards and the cards are placed in a box.

Next students write 2 adjectives each on separate cards. The adjectives could describe a color, e.g. red; a physical quality, e.g. fluffy, long, round, smooth; or another quality, e.g., useful, delicate, annoying etc. The adjectives are then placed in the other box.

The game is played with one team playing against another. A player from one team draws out one place card and 2 adjective cards. The teacher then creates a question using the cards, e.g. What would you spot that is **long** and **fluffy** in the **desert**? Someone from the team must give a reasonable answer within 30 seconds. (A student can act as the timer.) A point is scored for a correct answer or a point can be scored for each correct answer given in the 30 seconds.

HINT – Teacher may need to act as the adjudicator and give the final word on whether an answer is acceptable or not.

HINT – If using only natural places, decide before starting if only items found in nature can be used, i.e. Is a broken bottle an acceptable answer for “What would you spot in the forest that is dangerous and shiny?”

HINT – Use this game when studying different natural environments. It really makes students think about what is found in that environment.

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## *Which Witch?*

7+ years

Revises correct use of homonyms!

Need – Each student needs small cards to write homonyms on. Students write homonyms to be studied on separate cards, e.g. whose, who's. Teacher gives a sentence using the homonym and students pick up and hold the correct card, keeping it covered until teacher calls “Show!” Students score 1 point if correct. Repeat several times then select a new set of homonyms to study.

HINT – Students can also give sentences for the game.

---



## *Witnesses*

7+ years

A great game for making kids think!

Need – board or whiteboard (or paper), something to write with.

IT leaves the room while one player draws a simple design and shows it to the other players, the Witnesses.

To begin with, the design might have to follow simple rules, e.g. It may only contain 2 shapes and 3 straight lines.

The design is then removed from the board or hidden if on paper.

IT returns and has to draw the design by questioning the witnesses.

Decide beforehand if IT can ask any question or only questions with a yes/no answer.

---

# Spelling/Phonics Games

77

## Acrostic Sentences

8+ years

A challenging game to revise spelling words!

Need – pencils, paper.

Before starting the game, choose a category, e.g. fruit, animals, flowers, cities. The first player selects a 5, 6 or 7 letter word from the chosen category, e.g. TIGER.

Each player has to write a sentence with the first letter of each word spelling out TIGER, e.g. The irate goats each rushed.

This game can be played just for fun or points can be awarded to the fastest player to make a sentence.

A fun game can be made if the acrostic sentences are collected. When you have a collection of sentences for different words, read a sentence to the class and have students quickly identify the word working it out mentally or writing the first letter of each word on a piece of paper.

HINT – Use spelling words as the words for the acrostic sentences.

---

78

## Alphagrid

9+ years

A great challenging team game!

Need – board and different colored chinks or markers

Divide the class into 2 to 4 teams.

The object of the game is to make as many words as possible. Each letter can only be part of one word.

Draw a grid of 8 squares X 8 squares on the board.

Teams take turns putting letters into the grid.

Teams can put any letter that they choose into any square that they choose when it is their turn. Each team uses their own color of chalk or marker.

As teams add letters they try to make words of 4 letters or more and to stop the other teams from making words. Words can read across or down.

The game finishes when the grid has been filled and all of the words are counted.

A team can only count words that are in their color. A letter can only be used in one word.

HINT – Encourage strategies such as blocking the other team with a letter that you can use yourself. Or try putting 3 letters in a row like **ree** so that if you are blocked at the start or end, you can still make **tree** or **reed**.

---

79

### *Basketball - Beginning Letter or Sound* 5 + years

A fun way to revise letters and sounds!

Need – a soft ball, a trash can or hoop to throw the ball through

Divide the class into 2 teams. Each team sends a player to the front and the teacher says a letter or a sound. The first of the 2 players to say a word that starts with the letter or sound gets to have a throw. If they get the ball in the goal (the trashcan or hoop) the team scores a point.

VARIATIONS

#### *Basketball - Ending Letter or Sound*

Played as above but students must give a word that ends with the letter or sound.

#### *Basketball - Antonyms*

Played as above but students must give an antonym for the word given by the teacher.

#### *Basketball - Synonyms*

Played as above but students must give a synonym for the word given by the teacher.

---

80

### *Beat the Buzzer*

6+ years

A fun spelling game!

Need – a soft ball

Players sit in a circle. One player starts by throwing the ball to another player and calling out a 3 letter word, e.g. HAT.

The player with the ball has to say 3 words beginning with the 3 letters of the word, e.g. **h**orse, **a**pple, **t**ower.

This has to be done before the player who threw the ball counts to 12 and then says buzz, i.e. 1, 2, .....11, 12, BUZZ.

A player is out if he doesn't Beat the Buzzer.

As the game progresses the counting can be shortened to 10 or even 8.

Older players can be given a 4, 5 or 6 letter word instead of a 3 letter word.

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## Beginning Letter Bingo

5+ years

Kids love Bingo! This version revises initial sounds and letters.

Need - Bingo cards (premade or made by students), counters or cubes

Students can make their own Bingo cards or be given a Bingo card made by the teacher. A Bingo card can have 8 – 12 letters on it. The teacher calls words and students either cross off the beginning letter of the word or cover it with a counter or cube. The first child to cover all of their letters is the winner and calls Bingo. The teacher then checks that the correct letters have been covered.

g	d	t	b
s	l	m	v
r	a	l	p

Variations

### Final Letter Bingo

This game is played as above but this time the final letter is crossed off or covered. Some letters can be repeated if simple words are used and letters like j, a, v, o etc aren't likely to be used.

g	m	n	t
p	l	s	k
d	b	l	m

### Beginning Blend Bingo

This game is played as above but this time words starting with a consonant blend are used.

gl	dr	tr	bl
st	pl	fr	fl
pr	sp	cl	pl

### Final Blend Bingo

Played as above but this time words ending with a consonant blend are used. If there aren't enough blends to be revised, blends can be written twice.

st	nd	ld	mp
nk	ct	nt	ft
sk	lt	lp	lf

---

82

## Build-a-Word Quiz

8+ years

Can be played as a team game!

Need - dictionary.

First select a 3 letter word that is the starting letters of lots of words, e.g. car.

Open the dictionary to the words that begin with the chosen 3 letter word. Select a word that starts with these letters and quiz the class, e.g.

- What am I? I am a **car** that is found under your feet. (carpet)
- What am I? I am a **car** that is a flower. (carnation)
- What am I? I am a **car** that you eat. (carrot)

Players or teams record their answers and score 1 point for each correct answer.

Suggested words for playing Build-a-Word Quiz

**ant, bar, bat, boo, but, can, cap, car, cat, con, den, eve, fin, for, ill, imp, man, mat, met, pat, par, pin, sat, sin, sun, ten, the, win.**

Many other small words can also be used but there may not be many words available that students are likely to know.

---

83

## Circus

8+ years

A great game for practicing spelling skills!

This game can be played with one student against another student; the teacher against the class; one side of the room against the other side.

The object of the game is to add a letter to the spelling of a word but to NOT complete a word.

You must have a word in mind with each letter that you add as the other player can **Challenge** you and ask what word you are making. If you can't give a word you lose the round. If you are **Challenged** and you can give a word you win the round. Here is an example of play.

- First player writes a letter e.g. **G**.
- Second player must add a letter but must not make a completed word e.g. **GA** is good but **GO** would lose the round.
- First player then adds the next letter e.g. **GAT**.
- Second player would lose with **GATE** so he might put **GATH**.
- If the First player can't think of a word that starts with **GATH** he might **Challenge**.
- Second player must then say his word – **GATHER**, and is the winner of this round.



HINT – Children may be upset when they lose for making a word like WIN, and say ‘but I was making WINDOW’. Explain to him that he still made a word and so he loses the round.

---

84

## Crazy Spelling

9+ years

Really makes children think about the way we represent sounds in words!

Select a student’s name to write in crazy spelling. Discuss the sounds in the name and how each sound is represented. Students suggest a crazy spelling for the name telling how to represent each sound and giving an example of the spelling in another word.

E.g. Jodie – g like in giant, ow like in blow, dd like in paddle, ee like in tree – gowddee.

List different crazy spellings on the board. Then give students a chance to tell what the pronunciation of each one might be.

This game can also be played in reverse and words can be written phonetically for students to try to read.

This game is also fun to do with names of celebrities or TV shows.

Mykull Gaksunn (Michael Jackson)

Kammurun Dyass (Cameron Diaz)

Gooleea Wrobbuts (Julia Roberts)

Daze uv ow lievz (Days of Our Lives)

---

85

## Down and Up

9+ years

A challenging game!

Think of a 5 letter word. The word is written with its letters going down the page and beside this with the letters going up the page, e.g. NORTH

Players then try to be the first to find 5 words that begin and end as shown. Each word must have at least 4 letters. First player to have 5 words is the winner.

HINT – To make it more challenging use words of 6 or more letters.

---

N	_____	H
O	_____	T
R	_____	R
T	_____	O
H	_____	N

86

## Down the Ladder

6+ years

A fun way to study common letter patterns!

Students can work in teams or individually. Each team or student needs a ladder to write in. Use a piece of paper folded into 8 rows by folding paper in half, folding again and folding again OR a rectangle divided into 8 sections. The letter pattern is written in the first box. Teams then race to be the first to 'Climb Down the Ladder' by filling the ladder with words that rhyme. Teams either have one person as the recorder or pass the ladder around so each person writes a word.

Simple letter patterns, e.g. at, ill, am, ug, en, op.

More difficult letter patterns, e.g. ight, atch, unch, ound.

ank
hank
tank
plank
sank
thank
blank
drank

87

## Find It First - Letters

5+ years

Revises recognition of letters!

On the board write the letters of the alphabet – use both capitals and small letters. Write the letters low enough for the students to reach them.

Divide the class into 2 teams. Each team sends one player to the board.

The teacher calls a letter and the first person to find it and point to it scores a point for their team. Two new players come to the board for the next turn.

SEE ALSO – *Find It First - Words* in the *Reading Games Section*.

88

## First Letter, Last Letter Duel

6+ years

A challenging game! Ideal for older students!

Need – a set of cards with the letters of the alphabet on them.

Divide the class into 2 teams. One player from each team comes to the front.

Letter cards are mixed up and put into a pile face down. The teacher draws 2 letter cards and holds them up for the students to see. A gap is left between the letters when they are held up. The first student to say a word that begins with the first letter and ends with the 2nd letter is the winner of the round and scores a point for the team. Winner can draw the letter cards for the next 2 players.

89

## Flash Words

6+ years

Fun way to revise spelling words!

Need – a set of cards with the letters of the alphabet on them.

Each child is given a card with a letter of the alphabet. (If there are less than 26 students, some students may be given 2 cards.)

When the teacher calls out a word, students who have a letter in the word race to the front of the room and arrange themselves into the correct spelling order.

Obviously words that contain 2 or more of the same letter can't be used.

HINT – Have students swap cards after each word, so some students aren't stuck with uncommon letters like 'z'.

90

## Grid Words

8+ years

A simple crossword game! One side of the room can play against the other side.

Draw a grid of about 8 squares X 8 squares on the board.

In the corner of random squares place the numbers from 1-8. Then do it again so there are 2 of each of these numbers on the board.

Teams take turns to write words on the board but each word added after the first must join like a crossword.

The first word is written along an edge.

Teams tally their score for each word if the word has a letter or letters in boxes with a number.

If a team can't enter a word, they miss a turn.

HINT – Encourage only words of 3 letters or more.

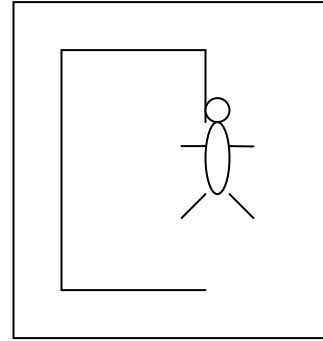
						5	
6		1			6		
8	2		<b>l</b>				7
			4		1		
			<b>e</b>			<b>n</b>	
3			<b>t</b>	<b>i</b>	3	<b>m</b>	<b>e</b>
		7		<b>t</b>			4
			2				
			<b>e</b>				<b>t</b>
	8				5		
	<b>m</b>	<b>a</b>	<b>r</b>	<b>k</b>			

A Great Game for Practicing Spelling Skills!

Need - pencil, paper

Think of a word and draw a dash for each letter .e.g. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Students take turns saying a letter. If the letter is in the word write it above the dash. If it is not in the word, draw the first stroke of the hangman. Play continues until the hangman is completed or a player correctly guesses the word. Teacher is the winner if the hangman is completed, or the player who guesses the word is the winner. Winner gets to select the next word.



Variations

*Phrase Hangman*

Instead of a single word or name choose a phrase or word and adjectives e.g. five fat frogs - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*Sentence Hangman*

Instead of a single word or name choose a sentence. (Silly sentences make it more fun.) I built a sandcastle in the bathtub. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

HINT – Introduce the weeks spelling words with a game of Sentence Hangman. Use a sentence that contains several spelling words to be studied for the week.  
HINT - If you don't want to use a Hangman, use another simple drawing instead, e.g. a flowerpot or a race car.

---

92

## Jumbled Letter Race

8+ years

Students love the challenge of this simple game!

On the board, write sets of jumbled letters of spelling words. Write the sets in a list or number each set.

E.g. y a b b      or  
v e b a o  
y r e v  
y s r o t  
e p r a p  
etc

Set 1  
y    a  
b    b

Set 2  
v   e   b  
a   o

Set 3  
y    r  
e    v

Set 4  
y   s   r  
o   t

Set 5  
e   p   r  
a   p

Students race to be the first to unjumble each word.

Students can race through by showing the teacher each word before moving onto the next word.

93

## Leave Out A Letter Bingo

8+ years

Another favorite! Each student can use their own spelling words!

Each student makes their own Bingo card by listing 8 words each with a letter missing and replaced by a dash.

Students can use spelling words or words being studied in class, e.g. theme words, words with prefix or suffix being studied. Teacher then calls out letters of the alphabet and if a student has that letter missing in one of their words, it is written into the word. Only one letter can be written in at a time.

Teacher keeps a record of letters called.

First child to complete all of their words calls "Bingo" and is the winner. Teacher checks that all the letters were called and spelling is correct.

ag\_\_in  
g\_\_ide  
pain\_\_  
dan\_\_er  
\_\_pple  
mon\_\_y  
wh\_\_le  
youn\_\_

94

## Password

7+ years

A challenging game that can be adapted to the level of the students!

Think of a word to be the "Password". Write it on a piece of paper. Students have to guess what the word is but the only clue that they are given is the first and last letters and the number of letters in between, e.g. p \_ \_ \_ t. Students write down as many words as they can that fit the pattern. Students score 1 point for each word and 5 points if they have the password. For older students choose a longer word. Students can be divided into teams or pairs for this game.

---

95

## Pineapples

7+ years

Children love this spelling game and will beg you to let them play! A great game to revise spelling words!

Children stand in a circle. Teacher gives a word for the children to spell and nominates the person to start. Children give one letter at a time going in a clockwise direction. The child who is after the person who says the last letter says 'Pineapples'. The next child is out and sits down. If a child says a wrong letter, he is out and sits down also. Next person must give the correct letter. When the word is completed, teacher then gives the next word and play continues around the circle. Last child standing is the winner.

---

96

## Poison Letter

7+ years

A fun way to revise spelling words! Similar to 'Pineapples'.

Children stand in a circle or stand behind their seats. A letter is nominated to be the poison letter. (A vowel or a common letter like 't', 's' or 'n' makes the game go faster. Teacher gives a word for the children to spell and nominates the person to start. Students go around the circle or the class giving one letter at a time. When a person says the Poison Letter, they sit down as they are out. If a student says an incorrect letter he is also out and sits down. Continue around the circle with the teacher giving more words. Last person standing is the winner. HINT – To make the game more interesting, nominate 2 or 3 Poison Letters.

---

97

## Prefix Ping Pong

8+ years

A fun game for studying and revising prefixes.

Divide the class into 2 teams.

Select the prefix to be used for the game, e.g. un, pre, mis. Discuss the meaning of the prefix. Remind students that not all words beginning with those letters will be words containing the prefix, e.g. under starts with 'un' but it is a not word beginning with the prefix 'un'.

Teams take turns sending one player at a time to the front to write a word beginning with the prefix on the board. The last team that is able to write a word is the winner. (Or the winning team can score a point if the game is to continue with a new prefix.) This game can also be played verbally with students taking turns to say a word with the prefix.

VARIATION

### *Suffix Ping Pong*

Played as above but select a suffix instead of a prefix, e.g. ful, ly, ness.

---

98

## Prefix Race

8+ years

A fun game for studying and revising prefixes.

**NEED** – Each group requires a large sheet of paper and a marker.

Divide the class into 4, 5 or 6 groups.

Each group chooses a recorder who is given the paper and a marker.

Select the prefix to be used for the game, e.g. un, pre, mis. Discuss the meaning. Remind students that not all words beginning with those letters will be words containing the prefix, e.g. under does not begin with the prefix 'un'.

Give the groups a time limit, e.g. 3-5 minutes to write down as many words as they can that begin with the prefix.

When time is up, each groups reads their words. Count the number of words that each group has written down. Do not count any that do not begin with the prefix.

The winning group has the most words.

The game can be repeated with another prefix.

VARIATION

### *Suffix Race*

Played as above but select a suffix instead of a prefix, e.g. ful, ly, ness.

---

99

## *Round the World - Beginning Letter /Sound*

5+ years

Revises initial letters or sounds. Can be adapted for all ages –

See variations below.

A student attempts to move all the way around the class without having to sit down.

One student stands behind the seat of another student.

The teacher says a letter or a sound. The standing student and the one sitting in front of him have to quickly say a word that starts with that letter or sound.

The student who says a word first stands behind the next chair while the other student sits down.

Play for as long as time allows or see if a student can move Around the World (around the classroom).

VARIATION

### *Round the World - Ending Letter/Sound*

Played as above but the students must give a word that ends with the letter or sound that is called.

### *Round the World - Prefixes*

Played as above but instead students give words that contain a prefix.

The teacher says a prefix. The student who is standing and the one sitting in front of him then have to quickly say a word that starts with that prefix.

The student who says a word first stands behind the next chair while the other student sits down.

### *Round the World - Suffixes*

Played as above but the students give a word that ends with the suffix.

---

100

## *Scrambled Letters*

5+ years

Fun spelling practice!

Write 40 - 50 random letters over the board. Keep them low enough for students to reach. Divide the class into 2 teams. Each team uses a different colored chalk or marker. Teams take turns to send one person at a time to the board to spell a word and circle the letters on the board as they spell it. Once a letter has been circled it can't be used again.

Continue until all letters have been used or a word can't be made with the remaining letters. Count the number of letters used by each team. The winning team is the one that has used the most letters.

HINT – Include several of each vowel amongst the letters.

---



101

## Stepping Race

5+ years

Makes students think about words, sounds and letters!

Need - A word card or picture card for each student.

Students stand in a row about 5-7 yards away from a finish line. (Class could be divided into teams and one student from each team could play.)

Each student is given a card (word card or picture card or student's names could be used).

Students are asked to take a step forward if their word (or name or the name of their picture) has a certain quality, e.g. Take a step forward if your word has a 'th' sound. Take a step forward if your word has the letter 'e'. Take a step forward if your word has 2 syllables. Take a step forward if your word is a noun.

The first student to reach the line is the winner.

---

102

## What Letter Is This?

5+ years

Great game for younger students learning about letters!

Students use their body to make the shape of a letter and other students guess the letter they have made.

Groups of 2, 3 or 4 students can try to form a letter with their bodies.

Older students can try to make words with each student or pairs of students making each letter in the word.

---

103

## Where's The Sound? - Actions

5+ years

Students identify the position of a sound in a word.

Teacher tells the sound that students are to listen for, e.g. sh.

Teacher says a word containing the sound, e.g. shell, fishing or wash.

Students close their eyes and put their hands

- on their head if the sound is at the start of the word
- on their waist if the sound is in the middle of the word
- on their bottom if the sound is at the end of the word.



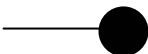
Repeat for more words with the same sound or for a new sound.

Variation

### Where's The Sound? - Dots

Students draw a short horizontal line on their paper. \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher tells the sound that students are to listen for, e.g. sh.

Teacher says a word containing the sound, e.g. shell, fishing or wash.  
Students draw a circle on the line to show the position of the sound in the word.  
e.g. - shell  Circle drawn at the start of the line for the initial sound.  
- fishing  Circle drawn in the middle of the line for the medial sound.  
- wash  Circle is drawn on the end of the line for the final sound.  
Repeat for more words with the same sound or for a new sound.

---

104

## Word Builder

8+ years

Challenging word game! Similar to *CIRCUS* –this section.

This game can be played with one student against another student; the teacher against the class; one side of the room against the other side.

Players take turns to add a letter to make a word.

Letters can be added at the front or back of the existing letters.

The player who can't add another letter is the loser.

Players must always have a word in mind and can be "Challenged" by the other player if they don't believe the letters are part of a word.

E.g. N NE ONE HONE HONEY HONEYB (Next player might challenge here if she doesn't think this can make a word. Player who added the B will be out if he can't give a word but will win if he says HONEYBEE.)

---

105

## Word Chain

8+ years

A simple but challenging game that practices Spelling Skills!

First player says a word, e.g. baseball. Next player must give a word that begins with the last letter of this word, e.g. little. - baseball, little, egg, giant, table.

No word is allowed to be repeated. Children can make written Word Chains also.

See who can make the one with the most words.

Variation

### *Word Chain Categories*

A more difficult version!

Played as above but this time words must belong to a specific category, e.g. fruits and vegetables - tomato, orange, eggplant, turnip.

This makes the game more difficult and certainly makes kids think.

Children can make written Word Chains also.

---

106

## Word Champs

5+ years

A challenge that revises initial letters or sounds.

Two players stand either side of the teacher. The teacher calls a letter or a sound. The first child to correctly say a word that begins with that letter or sound, earns a point. (The teacher holds up a finger on that player's side.)

The first player to score 3 points is the Word Champ.

Hold a "Playoff" with winners playing against each other to find the class Word Champ.

VARIATION

### *Word Champs - Consonant Blends*

Play this game as above but this time tell students a consonant blend, e.g. br, gl, st, and have students give a word that begins with this blend.

---

107

## Word Champs - Prefixes or Suffixes

8+ years

A challenge that revises prefixes or suffixes!

Two players stand either side of the teacher.

The teacher calls a prefix or a suffix. The first child to correctly say a word that begins or ends with that prefix or suffix, earns a point. (The teacher holds up a finger on that player's side.)

The first player to score 3 points is the Word Champ.

A "Playoff" can be held with winners playing against each other to find the class Word Champ.

### *Word Champs - Base Word*

This is a more advanced version of the above game.

Play this game as above but instead of giving students a prefix or suffix, tell students a word that has a prefix or suffix or both added to it. Students have to then tell the base word that this word has been built from, e.g. government – govern, disappear – appear, changeable – change, unforgivable – forgive

---

Challenging game that practices spelling skills.

Divide the class into 2 teams.

Teacher writes a word on the board. (Start with a 4 letter word when first playing.)

Teams take turns to change one letter in the word to make a new word. Words are listed underneath each other.

Only one letter can be changed at a time.

Players can't repeat a word already in the list.

No letters can be added to the start or end of the word.

When a team can't add another word, the other team is the winner of the round.

**w o r d**

**w a r d**

**w a r n**

**b a r n**

**b o r n**

**c o r n**

**c o i n**

**b l a c k**

**b l a n k**

**p l a n k**

**p l a n e**

**p l a n t**

**p l a n s**

**p l a y s**

---

# Reading Games

109

## Circle Words

5+ years

Great way to practice word recognition with young students!

Can be played with different categories. Below are the instructions for -

### Circle Words - Colors

Need – colored objects or shapes, flashcards with the color names

Students sit in a circle and each student is given a colored object.

When the teacher says 'Pass', the students pass the objects around the circle.

When the teacher calls 'Stop', students stop passing and keep hold of the object that they now have.

The teacher or a child then flips over and shows a color word flashcard.

Students who are holding an object of that color are out and leave the circle.

Close the gaps in the circle and repeat until only 1 student remains – the winner.

### VARIATIONS

#### Circle Words - Shapes

Played as above but instead give each child a plastic or wooden shape and then hold up the names of the shape written on cards.

#### Circle Words - Letters

Played as above but instead give each child a letter of the alphabet. Pictures of simple words that children can spell are drawn out and the students who have a letter that is in the word are out.

110

## Compound Match

7+ years

Fun with compound words!

Need – compound words written on card and cut into two words.  
(Use half the number of words as there are students so that each student gets one card.)

Cards are given out to students and they move around the room looking for someone to match with their word to make a compound word.

This is to be done silently. When a match is made both students sit side by side and hold up their cards to make the word.

Cards can be returned, mixed up and given out again so that students can repeat.

HINT – Some cards may be left over as matches can be made that didn't exist when the cards were made, e.g. snowball might be made instead of handball and snowflake. If some students are left without partners just start again.

HINT – For added fun, play as an elimination game, eliminating anyone without a partner. Add a word with no match to ensure at least one person is eliminated each round.

VARIATION

### *Plural Match*

Played as above but cards have singular words and words of the plurals on them, e.g. flower, flowers, child, children, mouse, mice, goose, geese, woman, women.

---



## *Find It First - Words*

5+ years

Fun word recognition game!

On the board write words that are to be studied. 20 - 30 words in a random arrangement is ideal. Write the words low enough for the students to reach them. Divide the class into 2 teams. Each team sends one player to the board. The teacher calls a word and the first person to find it and point to it scores a point for their team.

Two new players come to the board for the next turn. Ideal words for study -

- high frequency words
- spelling words
- words starting with the same letter or consonant blend e.g. br, bl or gr.
- words relating to topics studied in class

VARIATION

### *Find It First Quiz*

The teacher prepares quiz questions about a topic studied in class. The answers are written on the board and students race to be the first to find the answer.

### *Find It First - Antonyms*

Played as above but the teacher calls a word and students look for its antonym.

### *Find It First - Synonyms*

Played as above but the teacher calls a word and students look for its synonym.

SEE ALSO – *Find It First - Letters* in the *Phonics/Spelling Games Section*.

---

112

## Find My Mime

5+ years

A fun way to practice word recognition!

A list of words is displayed for students. These could be spelling words, theme words or words that contain the prefix or suffix being studied.

Students take turns to mime a clue for a word on the list. The other students have to guess the word. e.g. for the word 'grass' a child could mime using a lawn mower, for 'dirt' a child might point to the ground or mime sweeping the floor.

---

113

## Four In A Row Bingo

5+ years

Great game for practicing word recognition!

Need – a grid of 4 rows of 4 for students to write words on, counters to cover words.

A list of 16 words to be studied is written on the board.

Students write the words on the grid in any order that they like. As the teacher calls a word students find the word and cover it. The first student to cover a row or a column is the winner and calls 'Bingo'.

<b>make</b>	<b>said</b>	<b>play</b>	<b>when</b>
<b>that</b>	<b>car</b>	<b>did</b>	<b>was</b>
<b>then</b>	<b>came</b>	<b>baby</b>	<b>like</b>
<b>some</b>	<b>walk</b>	<b>ran</b>	<b>jump</b>

The

student then reads the words covered for the teacher to check.

This student can then be the caller for the next game.

Variation

### *Five In A Row Bingo*

Played as above but a grid of 5 by 5 is used and 25 words are written in the grid.

---

114

## Jumbled Sentence

5+ years

A good game for encouraging reading!

Need – sets of cards with words that make a sentence. Each set can be on different colored card and stored in a plastic bag or envelope.

Selected students are given a card each and have to hold the card in front of them for other students to see.

Students then have to quickly arrange themselves in order to make the sentence.

OR Select a student to tell the others what order to stand in, e.g. Tim, Ben, Nola, etc. Class can then read the sentence that has been made.

HINT – Sets of cards can be used as an activity for individuals. Students can arrange the cards to make a sentence then record the sentence they have made.

Variations

### *Jumbled Proverb*

Similar to above but this time use the words of a proverb for students to unjumble.

### *Jumbled Sentence Washing Line*

Similar to above but this time words are pegged to a rope strung up to be a washing line. Students take turns to peg the words into the right order to make sentences.

---

115

## *Reading Rhythm*

8+ years

Fun oral reading game to develop reading confidence!

Need – a passage for students to read, one copy per child

Select a passage that is fairly easy for students to read.

Start a pattern by tapping or clapping. A simple pattern of 4 even beats is best to start with, e.g. tap, tap, tap, tap.

Students are to read the passage to the beat of the tapping. The challenge is to read the whole passage without breaking the beat.

At first the whole class can read the passage together.

It can be read by using one beat for each word,  
e.g. This / is / a / rabbit. / It / is / eating / carrots.

It can also be read by using one beat for each syllable,  
e.g. This / is / a / rab / bit. / It / is / eat / ing / car / rts.

Once students have practiced reading together try these challenges.

- Read around the class or around a group with each person reading a sentence. The next person must be ready to start the next sentence without breaking the rhythm.
  - Try reading around the class or the group with each person saying a word.
-



116

## Riddle Match

7+ years

All kids love jokes and riddles. A great, stimulating reading and comprehension activity!

Need – large sets of cards with questions and answers for riddles on them or write questions and answers in 2 columns on the board.

Start with about 5 riddles.

Questions need to be labeled with numbers 1-5. Answers can be labeled A – E.

Display the cards for students to see.

Students can either match up questions to answers individually by writing down the number and letter that match or students can work in teams and discuss which questions and answers belong together.

Here are some riddles to get you started.

What did the little hand of the clock say to the big hand? (Got a minute?)

What kind of music does your grandfather like? (Pop music!)

What do you get from nervous cows? (Milk shakes!)

Why don't eggs tell jokes? (They'd crack each other up!)

How do you stop a pig from smelling? (Put a peg on his nose.)

HINT – This makes a great reading activity for individuals with riddle questions and answers on cards. Cards can be stored in plastic bags or envelopes with about 5 riddles per bag. Students can read the cards and sort into riddles.

Variation

### *Proverb Match*

Similar to above but match proverbs to their meanings.

---

117

## Seahorse

6+ years

A simple game that get students scanning and reading a list of words to be studied!

Need – a set of words displayed for students to see. (Use spelling list, topic words, lists of homonyms or words containing the prefix or suffix being studied).

Teacher says a sentence that contains a word from the list but replaces the word with the word “Seahorse”, e.g. “The caterpillar crawled over the **Seahorse**.”

Students scan the list and find a word that could fit in the sentence. (**Flower**)

HINT – After the teacher has given a few sentences, the students can take turns to make up the sentences for the class.

---

118

## Sentence Sense

6+ years

Helps to develop the concept of sentences!

Need – cards with complete and incomplete sentences on them  
Students draw a card from the box and read the card. One side of the room is designated as the sentence side and the other side is for non sentences.  
Students move to the side that they think is appropriate for their card.  
The teacher quickly scans the cards on each side and moves students who are on the wrong side to the centre of the room.  
Collect cards and repeat as many times as you like.  
Nonsense sentences can be used to make the game more interesting  
e.g. The table ran away from the chair. Five frogs fun fingers.

---

119

## Sound Hunt

7+ years

Great game for making students think about  
the sounds in words!

Each student needs a passage or book. Select a particular sound to focus on, e.g. the sound made by ee in tree. Students search through the reading books looking for as many words as possible that contain the sound. List words and discuss how the sound is represented in each word. Winner can be the child who finds the most words with that sound.

Variation

### Letter Pattern Hunt

Played as above but this time students search for words with a particular letter pattern, e.g. tr, bl, ea, igh, ough.

---

120

## True or False

7+ years

A great way to revise current topics being studied!

Need – 2 or 4 pieces of paper for each student, box (bucket or bowl)  
Students write facts about the topic that they have been studying. One fact must be true and one fact must be false. (Or students can write 2 true and 2 false facts) The facts are then put into a box. Each child draws out one fact and reads it. One side of the room is designated as the true side and one side is the false side. Students decide if the fact is true or false and go to the appropriate side. Each student then reads their fact and the other students decide if it is true or

false. Students who have gone to the wrong side are then sent to the centre. Collect facts and then repeat with the remaining facts from the box.

---

121

## *Twisted Story*

9+ years

Fun reading game!

Need – Simple stories are written on a large card and cut into sentences, make several sets and store each in a plastic bag. Divide the class into groups. Each group is given a bag of sentences to sort the sentences into the correct order to make a story. The catch is that this must be done silently. If there are several sets of different stories, groups can swap sets and repeat.

---

122

## *Word Swap*

9+ years

Fun reading game!

The teacher writes 5 sentences on the board or on a large sheet of chart paper. Each sentence will have 2 words which have changed places.  
e.g. How many shelf of cookies are on the packets?  
The brave boy tried cry not to hard.  
The sailing boat sat wind in the water as there was no still.  
It took a whole day the them to climb for tallest mountain.  
Seven birds held all of the cages.  
Each student rewrites the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence with the words in the right places. This is then shown to the teacher who tells if it is correct or not. When the first sentence has been done correctly the student then goes to the next sentence and so on. The first student to finish all 5 sentences can be called the winner but this might encourage students to rush and be untidy.

---

## Active Games

123

### *Bases*

5+ years

A fun game that can be varied for all ages!

Players spread out and face the caller. The caller says a number from 1-4. If the caller says '1' the players must have 1 base on the ground, e.g. 1 foot. If the caller says '2' the players must have 2 bases, e.g. 2 feet or 1 foot and 1 hand.

If the caller says '3' the players must have 3 bases, e.g. 2 knees and 1 foot. If the caller says '4' the players must have 4 bases, e.g. 2 knees, 1 hand, 1 head. The last player to get into the correct position is out.

Repeat until only one player is left – the winner.

HINT – For larger groups the caller may need helpers for spotting who is last.

#### Variations

#### *Yachts, Catamarans and Trimarans*

Played as above but Yachts is called instead of 1, Catamarans instead of 2, Trimarans instead of 3.

#### *Unicycles, Bicycles and Tricycles*

Played as above but Unicycles is called instead of 1, Bicycles instead of 2, Tricycles instead of 3.

---

124

### *Beach, City, Sea*

5+ years

All ages will enjoy this one!

If inside, choose one wall to be the city, the opposite wall as the sea and the floor in between to be the beach. If outside, use two fences or ropes on the ground to be the areas for city and sea and in between as the beach.

All players stand on the beach. Caller calls 'city', 'sea' or 'beach'. Players run to the city area, the sea area or stand still on the beach. Last player to reach the city or sea is out. If 'beach' is called players stand still and are out if they move. Last player left is the winner.

HINT – Callers can bluff by calling 'beee...sting' or 'seee....saw'.

---

125

## *Blanket Toss*

6+ years

A great game for developing team work!

Need – blankets, a large soft ball.

Four players stand each holding a corner of the blanket. The blanket is stretched tight. The ball is placed on the blanket.

By moving the blanket up and down, players toss the ball into the air and attempt to catch it with the blanket again.

Next have players attempt to toss the ball to another group holding a blanket.

Have players attempt to toss and catch the ball from blanket to blanket.

---

126

## *Bomb Ball*

6+ years

Keeps kids on their toes!

Need – a ball

Children form a circle.

A ball is thrown from player to player.

If it is dropped the last person to touch the ball is out.

Last person in is the winner.

---

127

## *Can't Catch Me*

5+ years

A different version of TAG!

Need – coin (a pebble or marble will also do)

One player is chosen to be IT. IT is given the coin.

Others stand in a circle with hands held as though praying, but slightly cupped.

IT walks around the inside of the circle pretending to put the coin into each person's hands but giving it to just one person.

Everyone can pretend that they have the coin but after hesitating a little, the one with the coin suddenly makes a run for the home place. It might be a tree or the fence. The others try to catch her.

If she can make it to Home without being caught, she wins and gets to give out the coin next time.

---

128

## *Captain's Crew*

6+ years

An elimination game that keeps everyone moving!

One player is chosen to be the CAPTAIN. The Captain is the caller.

Players walk, run or dance around the centre of the room.

The CAPTAIN calls out commands and the players make the correct movement.

Last one to do it is out.

The CAPTAIN can call – PORT, STARBOARD, WALK THE PLANK or SCRUB THE DECK.

- PORT- players run to the left wall
- STARBOARD – players run to the right wall
- WALK THE PLANK – players lay down flat and stiff like a plank
- SCRUB THE DECK – players get down on hands and knees

The last player left is the winner.

---

129

## *Cat and Mouse Tag*

5+ years

Lots of fun!

Need – 2 blindfolds

One child is chosen to be the cat and another to be the mouse. Both are blindfolded. Other players form a circle. The cat and the mouse both stay inside the circle. When the cat says 'Meow!' the mouse must say 'Squeak!'

The cat has to catch the mouse. When the cat catches the mouse a new cat and mouse are chosen.

HINT – To avoid injury insist that the cat and mouse walk not run.

---

130

## *Crocodile River*

8+ years

A great games for parties or dances!

Need – music, 2 lengths of rope

Children run or dance in a clockwise direction around the room. 2 lengths of rope are placed across their path about 5-10 feet apart. This creates the river that all children must cross. Play music while children run or dance around the room.

When the music stops all children who are between the ropes are eliminated as they are out. Game continues until only one winner is left.

---

131

## *Crows and Cranes*

6+ years

A chasing game to keep all children on the run!

Need – Designate 2 areas as Crows' Home and Cranes' Home  
Divide students into 2 teams, one The Crows and one The Cranes. Designate Home area to each. Players stand in rows facing each other and slowly move towards the other team. Caller calls out either Cranes or Crows. If Cranes is called, the Cranes have to chase the Crows as the Crows run to their Home. If Crows is called, the Crows do the chasing as the Cranes run Home. Any player who is caught must sit down. No need to score, just start again. Encourage the caller to be clever and try to trick everyone calling 'Crrrrraaaa...tes of ice-cream' or 'Crrrrrr...oaking Frog'.

---

132

## *Dead Ants*

5+ years

A favorite for all ages!

Players walk, run or dance around the room.  
When the caller calls 'Dead Ants' everyone lies down on the floor with their arms and legs in the air.  
When the caller calls 'Freeze' everyone must freeze as they are.  
The last person to take their position is out. The last person left is the winner.

---

133

## *Duck Duck Goose*

5+ years

A favorite with the littlies!

Choose a child to be IT. The other children sit in a circle. IT walks behind the children tapping each child on the head and saying 'Duck, Duck, Duck....' until she taps a child and says 'Goose'. The Goose then jumps up and chases IT around the circle. IT has to try to run around the circle and back to the Goose's place. If the Goose catches IT, the Goose now becomes the new IT.

---

134

## Egg Toss

6+ years

Be prepared for lots of laughs and lots of broken eggs!  
A great game for Easter!

Need – eggs (not boiled) – one for each pair

Divide children into pairs. Stand children in 2 lines facing each other. Each player stands opposite their partner. Start with the lines about 2 yards away from each other. Partners have to toss and catch an egg (not boiled) between each other. After 2 tosses one line takes a step back and then the partners toss again (twice). Pairs are eliminated when they drop their egg. Pairs continue tossing and moving further apart until only one pair remains, the winners.

---

135

## French Cricket

5+ years

A batting game enjoyed by all but it doesn't  
require any special skill!

Need – cricket bat, baseball bat or tennis racket, tennis ball

The batter stands in the middle of the playing area holding the bat in front of their legs. Players toss (throw underarm) the ball at the batter's legs. The batter hits the ball away moving the bat straight out in front of her. The ball is then tossed from wherever it lands or wherever it is stopped. The batter keeps rotating to face the ball. If the ball is caught on the full (without bouncing) the batter is out and the catcher becomes the batter. If the ball hits the batter's legs, she is out and the player who tossed the ball is now the batter. No score is kept. Players take turns batting as they get the batter out.

HINT – Encourage only soft underarm tosses so batter isn't injured if hit.

---

136

## Happy Campers

6+ years

A favorite with the little kids and the big kids too!

Students find a partner. If one child is left over he can be the caller.

Pairs stand in a circle facing into the centre.

One child in each pair is the CAMPER and the other is the TENT.

TENTS stand with their legs wide apart to be the tent door.

CAMPERS sit cross legged in front of their TENT.

Caller calls out either CAMPERS or TENTS.



When CAMPERS is called, the CAMPERS crawl back through the legs of the TENTS, run clockwise around the outside of the circle, back to their TENT, through the legs of their TENT and cross their legs.

The last CAMPER back in place is eliminated with their partner.

When TENTS is called, the TENTS run clockwise around the circle, back to their CAMPER and stand with legs apart. The last TENT back to their place is eliminated with their partner.

Eliminated TENTS and CAMPERS stay in place to keep the circle formed but both players sit. The game continues until only one pair is left.

---

137

### *Head to Head Race*

5+ years

Develops coordination and cooperation!

Can be run as a relay race!

Need – large soft balls

Players stand in pairs facing each other. Each pair has a ball that they place between their foreheads. Players race from the start line to the finish line keeping the ball between their foreheads without using their hands. If a ball is dropped the pair must go back to the start.

---

138

### *Hop, Skip and Jump*

7+ years

Keeps kids moving!

Students are divided into teams of 3. (Any odd ones left could be the callers.)

All of the players form a circle. Players stand beside their team mates.

One player from each team is nominated to be HOP, one is SKIP and one is JUMP.

When the caller calls HOP (or SKIP or JUMP), that team member has to move around the outside of the circle in a clockwise direction using their movement, i.e. hopping, skipping or jumping.

When they return to their team, the other 2 team members are standing one in front of the other with their legs apart (facing into the circle).

The player who has returned crawls through the legs of their team mates and sits cross legged in front of their team. Last team to do so is out and must be seated. Winning team is the last team left.

---

139

## Hot Potatoes

7+ years

A quick game of throw and catch!

No one wins or loses! A great challenge!

Need – several balls

Everyone stands in a circle. A ball is thrown in and players start to pass it around. Before a player throws the ball, he must call the name of the person who is to catch it. Once players are going well, another ball is then thrown in. Keep playing as before. Another ball can be added when players are ready.

See how many balls the group is able to cope with.

---

140

## Mud Flood

6+ years

A game similar to Musical Chairs!

Need – large pieces of cardboard to be rooftops

Players walk or run around the pieces of cardboard.

When the caller calls MUD FLOOD the players all run to a rooftop and stand on it with both feet. Any player who can't fit onto a rooftop is out.

The game continues while pieces of cardboard are either torn or folded to make them smaller or removed.

The game ends with one small piece of cardboard large enough for one person. The last player left is the winner.

HINT – The caller can try to trick players by calling things like “MO...NEYBOX.”

HINT – A great game for school dances if music is added.

---

141

## Plank Race

8+ years

A team work game!

Need – 2 planks (strips of cardboard, about 2 yards long) per team

Divide children into teams. Children race from a start line to a finish line.

Each team has 2 planks. The team has 2 people whose job it is to move the planks while the other team members walk on the planks from start to finish.

The 2 team members move the back plank to the front as the walkers move forward. If you only have 2 planks, time how long it takes each team.

---

142

## Poison Ball

8+ years

An active game enjoyed by older children too!

Need – a large ball

Select a playing field about 5 -10 yards square. (size will depend on number of players) If a field can't be marked out put markers on four corners to make a square. Divide players into 2 teams. One team stands in the square. The other team stands around the square.

The team on the outside has the ball. They bowl the ball quickly through the square trying to hit the legs or feet of the opposite team. If someone is hit they join the outer team. The inside team have to run about trying to avoid being hit by the ball. Last person left in the square is the winner.

HINT – To make the game more interesting use more than one ball.

---

143

## Relay Races

5+ years

The possibilities for Relay Races are endless!

Use your imagination or let children invent their own versions.

Need – balls, sacks, skipping ropes, hoops, balloons

Divide players into teams. Number of teams and number in each team will depend on the number of players. Teams of 4-6 usually work well.

Relays can be set out in 2 different ways.

- Half of the team can line up at one end of the track or course and the other members line up at the other end.
- OR Each team can make one line and the first player can race to a marker, around it and back to their team.

Here are some basic relays

- RUNNING – run as fast as you can or run backwards along the track.
- SKIPPING – use a skipping rope or use a large hoop to skip.
- BOUNCING – use a ball and bounce it along the track.
- BALLOON/BALL – hold a balloon or ball between the knees and run.
- ANIMAL RELAYS – walk/jump like a bunny, kangaroo, duck, crab etc.
- DRESS UP – dress up in several items of clothing before running
- BALANCING RELAY – balance several items on a tray or one on top of the other and then run while balancing them
- OVER AND UNDER – team stands in a line, last person goes up the line going over the first person who is crouching and through the legs of the

next, over the next then under etc. They yell 'NEXT!' when they reach the head of the line and the next person goes.

SEE ALSO – *Head to Head Race, Plank Race - in this section*

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144

### *Rob the Nest - Teams*

6+ years

This is a fast, fun game to play and a fun game to watch.

Need – items to be nests (hoops, buckets or boxes) one per team, many items to be eggs (bean bags, hats, small balls)

A game only requires a few minutes to play but children will want to play again and again. Children also enjoy watching others play.

Players are put into even teams. Nests are put into a large area and each team is assigned a nest. Eggs are spread out around the nests.

Teams stand behind a start line. On the word GO, they run in and start putting (throwing not allowed) eggs into their nest.

Now the fun begins because players are also allowed to rob other nests and take eggs from another nest to their own nest.

The winning team is chosen in one of two ways.

- The winning team can be the first team to have an agreed number of eggs in their nest. They sit down quickly by the nest and call out 'FULL NEST'.
  - The winning team can be the team with the most eggs in their nest after an agreed time.
- 

145

### *Seated Circle*

9+ years

A great group challenge!

Group stands in a circle with right shoulders facing in.

Everyone shuffles towards the centre so shoulders touch and circle is tight.

Next everyone holds onto the waist of the person in front of them.

Then everyone bends their knees slowly until they are seated on the knees of the person behind them. If successful, everyone in the circle will be sitting down.

Now add another challenge. Have the group stand up, turn around and sit down again. Next – Have the group try to walk while seated in a circle.

---

146

## *Sinking Island*

7+ years

A fun elimination game!

Need - blanket

A large blanket is placed in the centre. Players walk, dance or run around the island. When the caller calls 'Shark!' players run to the island and stand on it with both feet. Any player who is not standing on the island is out. The blanket is then folded in half. The process is repeated with the blanket being folded each time until it is only large enough for one player – the winner.

---

147

## *Squirrels*

5 + years

A fun version of musical chairs played with or without the music!

Need – items to be trees (chairs, hoops, large boxes)

Spread out the trees – one less than the number of children. Children dance around the trees (if there is music) or walk around the outside of the trees. When the music stops or when a caller calls squirrels, each child runs for a tree (sits on a chair, in a hoop or in a box).

Child without a tree is out. Children start moving again and one tree is removed. Game continues until only one tree remains and a winner is found.

---

148

## *Streets and Lanes*

8+ years

A different version of TAG!

Students are arranged standing in rows (about 5 rows of 5 – adjust according to numbers). Students stand about a double arm space apart.

Two students are selected to be IN. One student has to chase and catch the other. When the teacher calls STREETS, the students put up their arms to the side touching the hands of the person beside them, to make rows. When teacher calls LANES, the students turn 90 degrees to right to make columns.

The 'Chaser' has to chase the other student through the STREETS and LANES without breaking through anyone's arms. The teacher continues to call STREETS and LANES until the chaser catches the other student.

---

149

## *Stuck in the Mud*

5+ years

An active and interesting version of TAG!

One child is IT. (2 children can be IT for larger groups) IT chases the other players and when someone is tagged they stand still with their legs wide apart. IT continues chasing others but meanwhile one of the other players can 'unstuck' the caught player by crawling through their legs. IT tries to tag everyone and prevent them being 'unstuck' by other players.

---

150

## *Swimming With Sharks*

6+ years

An active game to keep everyone on moving!

Need – lots of space to run with a wide river marked out (could be two lines on a court, two chalk lines or two pieces of rope laid out) Mark out a wide river for the Sharks to swim in. Depending on the number of children choose 1 or 2 children to be sharks. Sharks stand in the river. Others are Swimmers and stand to the side. On GO the Swimmers have to run across the river without being caught (tagged) by the shark/s. Anyone caught becomes a Shark and helps to catch the Swimmers. Swimmers continue to cross the river until all are caught. Last swimmer caught is the Shark for the next game.

---

151

## *Through the Forest*

8+ years

A quiet indoor team game!

Need – blindfolds (hats or caps over eyes can also work) Divide players into 2 teams. One team stands on one side of the room and puts on the blindfolds. The other team spreads out. They are the trees in the forest. The blindfolded players have to make their way through the forest without touching a tree. If they touch or bump into a tree they are out. Trees are not allowed to move or touch players. Count the number of players who successfully go from one side of the room to the other. Teams swap over. The team with the most successful players is the winner.

---

152

## *Wild Card*

8+ years

Ideal for parties or dances! Perfect for teenagers too!

Need – deck of cards including Jokers, music

Each corner of the room is assigned Diamonds, Hearts, Spades or Clubs.

A sign or a card could be put up in each corner.

Children dance to the music. When the music stops each child goes to a corner of the room. The caller then draws a card and calls out the suite on the card.

All children in that corner are eliminated. If a Joker is drawn, it is a wild card and all remain in the game. When 4 or less children remain, there can only be no more than one child in a corner. Winner is the last child remaining.

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## Just For Fun Games

153

### Balloon Volleyball

5+ years

Simple and safe volleyball fun!

Need - balloons

The idea of the game is to keep the balloon off the ground by hitting it into the air. The game can be played in different ways.

- Everyone can work as a team to keep it up.
  - Each team can have their own color of balloon to keep up.
  - Two teams have a side of the room each to keep the balloon off the ground.
  - Two teams can have a balloon each to keep afloat.
  - Time how long each team can keep several balloons off the ground with a new balloon being added every 20 seconds or so.
- 

154

### Boom

5+ years

A fast moving game!

Need – an object to pass, a timer

Children form a circle. The object is the bomb. It is passed from person to person around the circle. The timer watches the clock and calls out BOOM every 20 seconds. The person holding the bomb when the timer calls BOOM, is out and leaves the circle. The winner is the last person left.

---

155

### Celebrity Hats

8+ years

Lots of fun and makes contestants think!

Need – card, tape, markers, 3 hats

Three children are selected to wear the hats. The names of three celebrities – dead or alive, fictitious or real, human, animal or animated - are written on cards and taped to their hats so everyone can see them except themselves. E.g. Cinderella, Bart Simpson, Tom Cruise.



Each player then asks Yes/No questions about their celebrity. E.g. Am I still alive? Do you see me on TV? When they receive a No answer, the next player starts his turn. The winner is the first player to guess his identity.

HINT – Instead of using hats, players can sit with their backs to the board and their character can be written on the board behind them.

### Variation

#### *Animal Hats*

Give the name of an animal instead of a celebrity. Ideal for younger students.

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## *Chinese Whispers*

6+ years

A quiet game that often gives an interesting ending!

Players sit in a circle or in a row. The first person is told a message in a whisper. It can be something silly like, 'My uncle plays golf with elephants in underpants.' They then whisper it to the next, who repeats it to the next and so on. The fun part is when the last person tells what they think the message is. It is usually become quiet distorted by the end. It can be fun to let each person tell what they thought the message was.

### Variation

#### *Chinese Movement*

For this version, players sit in a line all facing away from the first player. The first player is shown or creates a movement. He then taps the next player on the shoulder so she turns around and watches the first player do the movement. The movement is then passed on to the next player and so on until it reaches the last person.

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## *Draw It*

6+ years

A classroom version of the game Pictionary!

Need – flashcards with words on them (use nouns only for younger students and verbs, adjectives and adverbs also for older students).

Select a student to be the drawer. The teacher shows a word card to the drawer who then starts to draw a picture on the board. The other students have to quickly identify the word by looking at the drawing. The first student to guess correctly becomes the next drawer.

---

158

## *Draw It Duel*

6+ years

A team version of *Draw It!*

Need – flashcards with words on them (use nouns only for younger students and verbs, adjectives and adverbs also for older students).

Students are divided into 2 teams for this version. One person from each team goes to the board. The teacher shows each a word (a different word for each).

The 2 players immediately begin to draw an illustration for the word.

The first team to guess what the word is scores a point.

---

159

## *Gotcha!*

6+ years

A quiet classroom game!

Need – an item to be the treasure (shoe, book, box, ball), blindfold

Players sit in a circle with IT in the centre. IT is blindfolded. The treasure is placed in front of or behind IT. A player is chosen to be the thief.

Everyone has to be still and silent while the thief sneaks over and takes the treasure. IT can catch the thief by grabbing her and calling 'Gotcha' (I've got you.) or by pointing at them and calling 'Gotcha'. When a thief is caught, he returns to his place. IT only has 3 chances to call 'GOTCHA' and be wrong.

If the thief takes the treasure and gets back to her seat, she is the next IT.

HINT – Players must be quiet and still and can't make noises to distract IT.

---

160

## *Heads Down Thumbs Up*

5+ years

A quiet game enjoyed by all ages!

Depending on the number of players 3-4 children are chosen to be IT's and stand in the front. Others are seated. A caller says HEADS DOWN THUMBS UP and players (except for IT's) close eyes and hold thumbs up in front of them. No peeping allowed. Each IT quietly creeps around and puts the thumb of one player down then returns to the front. Caller then says HEADS UP STAND UP. Players, who had their thumbs put down, stand. Each of these players now gets one guess to say which IT put their thumb down.

If they guess correctly they take the place of this IT. If they don't guess correctly, the IT who put his thumb down remains IT for the next round.  
When each player has had a guess the next round begins.

---

161

### *Human Tic Tac Toe*

7+ years

This is a large scale version of Tic Tac Toe!

Need – a large Tic Tac Toe grid – chalk drawn on cement, four ropes laid out or four lines of tape laid out to make the grid

Everyone is divided into two teams – could be boys verse girls or children with hats verse children without. Each team takes turns to send a child to sit or stand on the Tic Tac Toe grid and play as for regular Tic Tac Toe.

---

162

### *Mystery Bag*

5+ years

Especially for the younger ones!

Need – empty cloth bag (pillow case is fine), variety of objects

Place one item at a time in the bag. Allow children to feel it but not see it.  
Children guess what it is.

---

163

### *Number Line*

5+ years

A group cooperation game!

Need – Numbered cards, number 1 to the number in the group.

Each child is given a number without the others knowing it.

On 'GO!' children have to get themselves into number order, but the catch is that they are not allowed to speak. They can show their number card though.

Variations

#### *Blind Number Line*

For an added challenge players can be blindfolded and not allowed to speak.

#### *Alphabet Line*

The same game can be played with players being given a letter of the alphabet instead and then putting themselves into alphabetical order.

---

164

## *Pass It On*

6+ years

An ideal game to play for a student's birthday!

Need – small prizes (small wrapped gift, chocolate bar, small toy)

Players sit in a circle with their hands behind their backs.

One child is IT and sits in the centre.

IT closes her eyes while one person has the prize put into his hands.

IT opens her eyes and players pass and pretend to pass the prize behind their backs.

IT gets 3 guesses to say who has the prize and keeps the prize if correct.

HINT – Tell children to keep pretending so IT can't tell the real passes from the pretend passes.

---

165

## *Rain Storm*

6+ years

A fun and effective game to create the sounds of a Rain Storm!

Players and teacher stand in a circle. Students copy the actions and sounds made by the person to their right, i.e. students don't start or change a movement until they see the person to their right doing it.

The teacher starts and changes the movements and sounds in this order. Start a new movement when the previous one has been passed all the way around the circle.

1. Rub palms together slowly.
  2. Tap two fingers on the palm of the other hand.
  3. Clap hands out of rhythm.
  4. Slap hands on thighs.
  5. Stamp feet.
  6. Slap hands on thighs.
  7. Clap hands out of rhythm.
  8. Tap two fingers on the palm of the other hand.
  9. Rub palms together slowly.
  10. Stop.
  11. HINT – Students love to hear this recorded and played back to them.
-

166

## *Sleeping Dog*

6+ years

A quiet game!

Need – object to be the bone, blindfold

Choose one player to be the DOG. Divide the other players into 2 teams.

Teams make 2 lines with about 4 yards between them.

DOG sits in the middle with the blindfold on and the BONE in front of him.

One player from each team attempts to take the dog's bone without being caught. A player is caught if the DOG points directly to him. A caught player must return to his place. The team to steal the bone the most times is the winner.

---

167

## *Smelly Socks*

5+ years

A fun game that always involves lots of laughter!

One child is IT. The other children ask questions but the only answer IT can give is, 'Smelly socks'. IT has to keep a straight face and is out if he laughs.

Let children ask silly questions to try to make IT laugh, e.g. What is your favorite food? (Smelly socks) What is in your ear? (Smelly socks) What do you want for your birthday? (Smelly socks)

---

168

## *Stay Serious*

5+ years

A seriously funny game!

The object of the game is not to laugh. One child is chosen to be IT and sits on a chair in front of the others. Children take turns at trying to get the child to laugh, e.g. pulling faces, acting silly, singing in a silly way, saying something silly.

If the child laughs he is out and the child who made him laugh has a turn.

---

169

## *Straight Face*

5+ years

Another funny one!

Have the group sit in a circle, except for one child who is in the middle. No one is allowed to speak or make a sound except the child in the centre. This person has to try to make the others laugh. Anyone who laughs is out and joins the child in the centre and tries to make the others laugh. Last child to laugh is the winner.

---

170

## *What's the Rule?*

9+ years

Great game to make older children think!

IT leaves the room.  
Others choose a rule while IT is gone.  
The rule tells how they are to answer questions when IT asks.  
Select a rule appropriate for the age group, e. g.

- rules can describe the way someone is to talk, e.g. slowly, quickly, loudly, softly
- rules can be physical, e. g. turning head to the left, looking up or down, scratching nose
- rules can be about the style of answer, e. g. answers must start with a certain letter of the alphabet, answers must be 3 words, answers must contain the name of a movie.

When IT returns he asks questions trying to guess what the rule is.

---

171

## *Wink Murder*

8+ years

A fun game of observation!

Children won't want to stop playing!

Children sit in a circle. Everyone closes their eyes.  
The teacher walks around the circle and taps a child on the head.  
This child is the murderer. (2 or more murderers can be chosen for larger groups.) Players open eyes and the fun begins. The murderer murders players by winking at them. If a player is winked at, they must say "I'm dead!" and lie down. (Some children like to have a rather dramatic death.)  
Other players have to try to spot the murderer. Game is over when someone guesses correctly. If a child guesses incorrectly, she also has to die.

## RULES

- No winking if you are not the murderer.
  - No talking other than dying or guessing the murderer.
- 

172

## *Woof Woof, Oink Oink*

5+ years

A game with lots of animal sounds!

### Need – blindfold

Players stand in a circle. IT stands in the centre blindfolded. It spins around 4 or 5 times then stops. IT then points to a person and makes 3 different animal sounds of her choice, e.g. quack, quack, baa, baa, oink, oink. The person IT is pointing to has to repeat each sound as IT says them. IT has to guess who it is. If IT guesses correctly, he remains IT and has another turn. If IT is incorrect the person takes ITs place.

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