

Quick Little Games

by David Fletcher

Labah jadeeda! (Labah jadeeda is Arabic for "new game.")

Hoshengoggle! Each person holds up no fingers, one finger, or two fingers. Find the total and count to that number from the end person to find an "It" person.

Circle Games

Wink Switch

Form a circle with one person in the middle. People who are part of the circle randomly wink at other people, then try to switch spots before the person in the middle can hop into the spot.

Murder Wink

A person is chosen to be the the detective and leaves the room. Someone is chosen to be the murderer. The detective returns and stands in the middle of the circle. The murderer winks at victims. When winked at, the victim dies a big elaborate death.

Stare Game

The leader says, "Look down," and everyone in the circle looks at the ground. When the leader says "Look up," everyone looks at someone else in the circle. If the person you are looking at is looking back at you, you're both out. Die a big elaborate death, if you wish. Or run around the circle as in Duck, Duck, Goose (race each other in opposite directions back to your respective spots).

Popcorn

The leader jumps up and says "One." Random people then jump up and say the next numbers. If two people jump at the same time, start over. Try to get to 50.

Paint My Rainbow

The person who is It walks around the circle and asks random people, "Will you paint my rainbow?" The response could be "No" (nothing happens), or "Yes" (everyone must run across the centre point and find a new spot). The last person in place becomes It. Or, It could call, "If...you're wearing jeans!" or "If...you have blonde hair" etc., and all the people who fall into that category have to move.

Exaggeration Circle

The first person says a simple statement or gives a plain excuse. The next person takes that line and adds to it. How elaborate can the lie become?

Group Juggling (many items)

Person #1 calls someone's name and tosses the item to them. Person #2 does the same and tosses it to #3. Keep going until everyone has had a turn. Once they all have, the item goes back to Person #1. Go through the group again, this time adding in more items, and it will go faster and faster. Try going in reverse!

Snort

The person with the power of snort snorts to the person to the right or left of them. Eye contact must be made. If the person laughs or smiles upon receiving the snort, they are out. If not, they get the power.

Rutabaga

Same as Snort, but say "rutabaga." Go only in one direction until someone says, "Bong!" Then the direction is reversed. Saying "Zing!" sends it to whomever you look at. Anyone who laughs is out.

Farmer Brown's Chicken

Split the circle in half. It's a race to see who can go through all their people the fastest. The first person says to the second person, "Farmer Brown's chicken laid an egg!" Person #2 says to #1, "A what?" and #1 says, "An egg!" Person #2 says, "Oh!" Then #2 says to the next person, "Farmer Brown's..." (The only people who will be able to remember what the chicken laid are the people in the #1 position, so...as this progresses down the line, people are always having to check with the person beside them...all the way to #1, who says, "An egg" and this message ("an egg") is sent down the line to the person who just asked, "A what?"

Twizzle

The group moves around in a circle. The leader gives commands: go, freeze, jump, turn, or twizzle (full 360-degree jump). Elimination-style play.

Hand Slap

Get down on the ground and overlap hands. Put all hands palm down on the ground. Slap once means continue in that direction. Slap twice goes the opposite way. Miss or stall, and that hand is out. Both hands out, and you're out. Works best in groups of six.

Whoosh Ball

Pass an invisible energy ball around the circle. For instance, say "Whoosh!" to the person to the left or right of you, making the motion of the pass as you do it. Introduce new rules as players become familiar with the game. For instance, call out "Ramp!" and the whoosh goes over the person beside you to the next one down the line; "Double ramp" goes over two people; "Pass!" goes to the person you throw the ball to. As the whoosh comes to you, there are a number of things you can do: continue the motion of the ball by whooshing it on; yell "Wah!" (with hands up) as the energy ball is being thrown, which stops the pass; yell "Dance Party!" so everyone must dance on the spot for a few seconds.

Sculptures

Form two circles of the same number of people, one circle inside the other. People in the inside circle face out; people in the outside circle face in. People in the outside circle are sculptors. They will pose their partners in the inside circle in amazing positions. The "art class teacher" will come by and have them explain the significance of the pose. Randomly, the teacher will shout, "Shuffle!" at which time all sculptors move one position to the right and continue working on someone else's project. If the teacher shouts, "Transformation!" the sculptures come to life and take the place of the sculptors. "New sculptures" should begin like blob of clay.

Human Bongos

Each person (not more than eight people per circle) says their name in a weird way or makes a crazy sound. The leader then plays the human bongos by tapping people on the

shoulder—when tapped, each person makes their sound. Try to make a song out of the sounds.

Active Games

Body Hide

The detective leaves the room. Others try to hide someone with their bodies. The detective comes back in and tries to identify the hidden person.

Atom Game

Call a number (e.g., “three”) and players must link together in groups of that number (e.g., groups of three). Vary it by calling body parts as well (e.g., “five heads”—link together touching heads).

Horse, Knight, Rider

Leader will call “Horse!” (one person on their hands and knees, the other sits on back), “Knight!” (one person flat on their belly, the other with one foot on the person’s back and sword pointing victoriously toward the sky), or “Rider!” (either one person kneels with a knee up and the other sits on the knee or—if you’re more adventurous—one person jumps into the other’s arms). The last pair to get into the position is eliminated. You can play the entire game as a couple or play a roaming version where you never know who you’ll be with.

Statues

The person who is It walks into the room and finds everyone frozen. As It walks around, the statues try to change positions without It seeing them move. If It sees them move, It calls the person’s name and that person becomes the new It.

Link Tag

Only three to a link. If the person who is It joins on to the end of a link, the person at the other end becomes It.

Ha-Zoe

Get a partner. Practise bringing a fist from over your head into your other hand while shouting “Ha-Zoe!” (“Ha!” is said as the fist is coming down; “Zoe!” is said as the fist hits the other hand). As you say “Zoe!”, change the fist into rock, paper, or scissors. Once you’ve played with a partner for a while, the “real” game begins: You and your partner battle. The loser becomes the winner’s “train,” joining up behind with hands on the winner’s waist. The winner goes to find someone else to play with; again, the loser gets added onto the train. Groups of 100 can be reduced to two trains within a minute!

Evolution

Everyone rolls around like an egg until they bump into someone to play rock, paper, scissors (RPS) with. To evolve from an egg to a chicken, you must win the RPS. If you don’t, then you’re still an egg and must find another egg. If you’re a chicken, flap your wings and cluck until you find another chicken. If you win at RPS as a chicken, then you become a dinosaur (stomp and roar, etc.), and from there you become a superhero! However, if you lose as a chicken, you become an egg again, and likewise for the other characters (you take one step back in evolution).

Rock, Paper, Scissors Baseball

Set up a very small baseball diamond. Team A will go one way around the bases and the other team will go the other way. The two groups face off in lines at home plate. The first two people do rock, paper, scissors. The winner goes his or her way around the bases (walking heel to toe) and the second person on the other team goes the other way to cut them off. Where they meet, they do rock, paper, scissors. The winner continues going their way. Goal: to get to home plate.

Rock, Paper, Scissors Extreme Stretching

Partners face each other with their feet positioned in one line (i.e., my feet are placed heel-to-toe, and my front toe is touching your front toe). Play rock, paper, scissors in this position. The winner puts his or her front foot behind his or her back foot and the loser slides his or her front up until he or she is again touching toe-to-toe (loser is now stretching as he or she is not allowed to move his or her back leg). Continue playing until someone is unable to continue.

This or That

The leader calls out something like "Chocolate or vanilla!" Chocolate lovers go to one end; vanilla people go to the other side. Other ideas for calling out:

- Coke or Pepsi
- Edmonton Oilers or Calgary Flames
- white meat or dark meat
- PC or Mac
- tent or hotel
- Nirvana or Jimi Hendrix
- beach or mountains
- Xbox or PlayStation
- snowboard or toboggan
- The Beatles or Led Zeppelin
- *Transformers: The Movie* or *Star Wars*
- the NFL or the CFL
- Barbie or Dora the Explorer
- the 1960s or the 1980s
- Tupac Shakur or Bob Marley
- be covered in spiders or be covered in snakes
- give up all your possessions or give up all your rights

Ha-Goo

Two lines face each other. One person from each team (at opposite ends of the lines) steps out. They bow to each other and say, "Ha-Goo." They must then walk to the other end (while staring at the people from the other team as they pass them) without laughing. People in the lines try to make the person from the other team laugh. The first person to laugh goes and stands behind the enemy line, and they score a point. The first team to win five points wins.

Shoe Mingle

Everyone takes off one shoe and throws it into the middle. Everyone grabs a shoe, then goes on the hunt for their own shoe. Shoe holders ask random questions about themselves (e.g., Where am I from? What kind of pet do I have? What's my favourite cartoon?). If you get the answer right, you get your shoe.

Sneaker Seeker

The seeker is blindfolded. The caller tosses a shoe in the middle. The seeker, on all fours, is directed to the shoe by the caller. However, the caller can only use one word or sound the whole time! When the seeker has the shoe, the seeker must find the caller and put the shoe on the caller's foot before the blindfold can be removed.

Catch Me If You Can

Form a box around the leader. Ask players to memorize who is beside them, who is across from them, and where they are in relation to the leader. Tell them that their goal is to always get back into this position according to the position to the leader. The leader then takes off and stands somewhere new. As players get into position, the leader swivels or takes off again.

Balance Pros

Pick three spots on the floor (or use three items). Touch these with your fingers without bending your knees. Stand on one leg and do the same. Close your eyes. Close your eyes and stand on one leg.

Meet in the Middle

Partners walk to the middle of the room, each doing the same thing (the leader calls out the style of movement or asks someone to pick a style: do-si-do, grapevine, jumping jacks, etc.).

Posers (or The Same Game)

Two people, either with their backs to each other or on opposite sides of a blind, are given a topic (e.g., love, sports, summer, winter, water, kitchen, school, dance, weapons, getting ready in the morning, etc.). They start acting out an action related to this topic. If they are doing the same thing, they are out and get replaced by others. Not doing the same thing? Yell "Switch!" and they come up with another action related to the same topic. When the topic gets old, change the topic. Variations: Have one person do one action the whole time. When the other person does that action, they're out! Have many people up (blindfolded) and once they replicate, they are out (elimination-style play).

Murder Handshake

Everyone walks around shaking hands. One person is designated murderer, and that person does "the creepy handshake" (with one finger folded in). The second time you shake hands with the murderer, you die! A designated detective watches from the sidelines. The object is for the detective to try to solve the case before the third death.

Human Mirrors

Two people stand face to face. One person is the leader; the other tries to mirror the leader's moves.

Speaking in Pairs

Same as Human Mirrors, but with speech.

Dustball

Everyone except the cleaner interlinks as tightly as they can. The cleaner tries to break up the dustball. When players are separated from the dustball, they help the cleaner.

Railroad Game

Groups of four people line up and place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. The leader gives commands. "Go!" means the train moves ahead, "Change!"

means the engine (the first person) drops out and goes to the back, "Switch!" means the middle people swap with the end people, "Rotate!" means everyone turns 180 degrees, "Tunnel!" means everyone must shut their eyes until the leader says "End of tunnel!", and "Train wreck!" means everyone scatters and finds a new group of four.

Games that Need Supplies

Pulse/Electricity/ Dice Game

Two lines face each other. The teams are stretched out and holding hands. The only players who have their eyes open are the two people next to the leader. The leader rolls dice continually. If doubles are rolled, the two with their eyes open squeeze the next person's hand, who squeezes the next hand, and so on. When the "electricity" reaches the person at the end of the line, that person sprints to the front to grab an object. The first person there wins a point for their team. Play to a predetermined number of points.

The Present Game

In the middle of a circle of people, place some clothes (e.g., a toque, big jacket, scarf, mitts) and an unbreakable present wrapped in many layers of paper. Players pass around a tray with a pair of dice on it. Players roll the dice as the tray comes to them. If a player rolls doubles, he or she races into the middle and starts dressing. Once the player has all the clothes on, the player can start trying to unwrap the present (no using teeth or anything but hands, which are in mitts!). When someone else rolls doubles, time is up; the next person races in and starts putting on the clothes and unwrapping the present.

Slingshot

Four people stand in a Lycra tube (5 m of Lycra material, French-stitched together) at an equal distance from one another. Everyone holds up their right hand. The first two people (opposite each other) run at each other (giving a high-five as they pass) and they hit the Lycra tube. This propels the other two to go...and so on.

Satellite

A group stands in a Lycra tube; one person pushes out, spins behind the backs of the players, and comes back to the same spot.

Hula Hoop Scramble

Scatter a bunch of hula hoops around the courtyard. Call out a number (e.g., "three"); everyone must get into a hoop with that number of people. Elimination-style play.

Hula Hoop Relay

The group forms a big circle and everyone holds hands. Break the line somewhere, so that two hula hoops can be inserted (hung on the wrists of two people), and then reattach the circle. When the leader says, "Go!", the couple with the hula hoops around their wrists attempt to thread themselves through one of the hula hoops and send it onto the next person down the line. The game ends when both of the hula hoops arrive back at the original couple. (Suggestion: Set a time to beat, and continually reduce that time.)

Visit <http://www.teamworkandteamplay.com/resources.html> for more quick little games ideas.