

Learning Through Drama:

An Akanksha Drama Manual



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The drama manual was developed and prepared by Stephen Hanmer D’Elia with special assistance from Rajshree Doshi and help from Meher Gandevia, Sue Garland, Lopa Gandhi, and Shaheen Mistri. The manual has been specifically created to be used in Akanksha education centers.

Most of the drama activities presented in the manual have been taken and adapted from the 1995 Yale Dramat Children’s Theater Manual. Three activities (“1,2,3”; “Peelelo-Ho”; Bade Miyan/ Chote Miyan) have been taken from the Bombay Thalia Group.

Drama empowers children to express themselves effectively and creatively. Drama endows children with essential qualities- self-confidence, initiative, control, and cooperation- that help them cope effectively with their often challenging and changing circumstances. By teaching children to lose their inhibitions, drama allows children to push themselves beyond their usual limits and gain a better perspective of themselves and their surroundings. This manual aims to provide an enjoyable, easy-to-use, and effective format for teaching drama activities.

A) Why learn through Drama?

Simplified, easier, more enjoyable teaching and learning experience.

Simplified:

- Readily available teaching activities.

Easier:

- Does not require, extensive preparation, props.

Enjoyable:

- Body movements, voice modulations, active, focused, involved and FUN!

B) What do you learn through Drama?

Aims/Objectives:

- Loosening up
- Coordination
- Team work
- Concentration
- Non-Verbal communication
- Freedom of expression
- Losing inhibitions
- Self-confidence (leadership skills)
- Use of imagination and creativity
- Vocabulary building
- Verbal Communication
- Release of emotions
- Fun!
- Etc...

C) How do you learn through Drama?

An easy to understand and implement format

To facilitate the implementation of drama activities, the manual provides an easy to follow and understand format.

To plan a drama class, a teacher selects one activity from each of the following five categories and implements them in their respective order.

1. Body Warm-up Activity (5minutes)
 - E.g. Shakedown (p. 9)
2. Body/Voice Warm-up Activity (5minutes)
 - E.g. Shei-Shei Koole (p. 15)
3. Acting Warm-Up Activity (5 minutes)
 - E.g. Camera Click (p. 18)
4. Acting Activity (5 minutes)
 - E.g. Restaurant Scene (p. 29)
5. Focus and Concentration Activity (5 minutes)
 - E.g. Pass the Clap (p. 40)

The categories in their respective orders provide a natural progression from simple body stretching activities (e.g. “shakedown”) to more complex expression and acting activities (e.g. “restaurant scene”) ending with concentration and closure activities (“pass the clap”) Just like runners need to warm up before starting to run, children also need to warm up before acting. It is therefore important to follow the order provided above. By the time the children reach the acting activity, their stretched and focused bodies and minds will be ready to act. The focus and concentration activity will help to bring closure and control back to the class.

An Easy to Adapt Format

The above format aims to facilitate the implementation of drama activities, but can be changed according to the needs of both teachers and children. There is no right or wrong way of teaching any of the activities as long as they are relevant and effective. Teachers should feel free to adapt activities depending on group sizes, age groups, learning requirements, etc.... Once both teachers and children have become accustomed to the use of drama activities in class, they might choose to spend one period just doing one activity, such as an acting scene.

A Note on the Appendices

The manual includes appendices of Learning Names, Group Cooperation, and Action Game activities that can be used for different class lessons and events. For example, at the beginning of the year, you can use “learning name” activities for new children to get to know each other. Action games can be played during outdoor and free-play activities.

D) When do you learn through Drama (implementation of Drama activities in class)

1) Weekly Class Period

- Replace either group games, outdoor play, or only English.
 - Follow the format described in section C.

2) Incorporation into class activities

- Use drama activities to teach themes, concepts, maths, grammar, etc...
- A few of the activities listed in the manual include an “extension activities” section with recommendations for uses of the activities in various class activities.

E) Guidelines for Effective implementation of Activities

i) Inhibitions

Before starting any drama activities the most important thing is for teachers to feel comfortable and disinhibited. It is normal for teachers to feel embarrassed by many of these activities. The easiest way to overcome such inhibitions is by trying to do the activities. After a few times, teachers will become more comfortable and accustomed.

ii) Focus

Teachers should be clear as to why are they using a particular drama activity: is it for fun? For a language concept? Revision of Maths, etc..... For example, if they are teaching children even numbers using the shakedown game (see p. 10) they should focus not on the height the children move their legs, but their use of numbers.

iii) Controlling Children

Throughout the activities it is essential for teachers to have control over the group.

Effective control techniques include:

a) Body Miming

- Leader moves her arms, legs, etc... and the children copy what she does.
 - Effective way to control group without the use of noise.

b) Peelelo-Ho

- Leader says Peelelo and the children respond with Ho using the same tone and noise level.
 - Effective way to control the group if they are being noisy and not paying attention.

b) Circle formation

- Allows you to have direct eye contact with all the children.
- Everyone is facing everyone.
- Specific place and shape that has to be maintained.

c) Eye contact

- Let's children know you are paying attention.
- Non-verbal and non-disruptive way of stopping inappropriate behavior.
- Encourages concentration and focus.
- Non-verbal way of communication that requires attention (e.g. an activity in which children have to imitate your facial expressions: you pretend to be sad and the children, without you saying anything, imitate you)

d) Positive reinforcement

- Focuses attention on positive behavior to change negative behavior.
 - You praise a child following directions to draw the attention of the child not following directions, who will then seek positive attention.

e) Active involvement by everyone

The person leading the activity should ensure that everyone- from teachers to volunteers to children- is actively involved in the activities.

- Teachers/Volunteers
 - Because many of these activities can inhibit children, it is crucial for teachers to be actively involved. If children see their teachers doing the activities they will become less shy. If teachers are not actively involved children will tend to not be involved. It is also important to involve volunteers, who can later lead the activities, thus facilitating the teacher's job.
- Children
 - A disruptive child will affect the whole group by diverting attention.
 - Children not willing to participate should be encouraged to do so.
 - Children should also be given the opportunity to lead activities.

f) Dividing into smaller groups/teams

- With large and/or disruptive groups it helps to divide them into smaller groups
 - One group participates while the group sits down and then they swap places.
 - The divided groups can be motivated to participate by having them compete against each other.
 - a. For each activity:
 - i. The team sitting down can get 3 points (1= for not talking, 1= paying attention, 1= being respectful; not making fun of the team participating)

- ii. Team participating can get 3 points (1= actively participating, 1= paying attention 1= working as a team)

Body Warm Up Activities

Objectives:

- Warming up.
- Loosening bodies, stretching.
- Focus on the group.
- Getting children into active mode.

Shakedown

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. The teacher tells the children to take their right hand and shake it counting to five. Do the same with the left hand, right leg, and left leg. The first time start counting slowly and loudly. The second time count very quickly.

Hints:

It is important for the activity to be done in control. The children should count at exactly the same time as the children. Therefore, if the teacher counts slowly, so should the children. The game can also be done counting down and starting on ten. Everyone shakes their right hand extended out away from their bodies ten times. They then shake their left hand ten times, then their right foot ten times, then their left foot ten times. The next time, everyone starts on nine, counting down as they shake each body part nine times. This goes until: "one-one-one-one!"

Extension Activities:

Counting, Numbers, learning right and left.

Do the Impossible

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle, and each child in turn suggests something to try that is impossible (or nearly so, or only a few can do it). Some examples: "Touch your ear with your back," "Wrap your legs over your shoulders and cross them behind your back," "Click your tongue as loud as this (click!)." As they do these various activities, they will be stretching their bodies.

Hints:

There are many things big kids (like us) cannot do, which small children can. They can and will make fun of us for that.

Extension Activities:

Body parts, action words, imagination, thinking skills.

Mad Mad Puppet

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle, slumped over. You tell the children they are a puppet attached to strings. There is person/puppeteer who loves to control their every movement and is imaginary and is not part of the group. The leader tells the group what the puppeteer is doing while also participating. For example, the leader can say: "The puppeteer pulls your right arm" and then both the leader and the whole group pull up their right arms. The leader can then say the puppeteer lets go off the right arm and pulls their left arm. The Puppeteer can also pull up on bellybuttons, eyebrows, noses, legs, etc.... Eventually, you get a pair of scissors and as the puppeteer pulls the strings you cut them off (e.g., when he pulls your right arm you cut the strings attached to the arm). By the end, free from the strings, everyone should be completely slumped over again, and you can then tell them to roll up on a silent count of 10. They will then end this game focused and stretched!

Hints:

You can then stretch whatever feels not stretched. Instead of a puppeteer, you could say that their bodies are magnetic and there is a magnet on the ceiling.

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You can then stretch whatever feels not stretched. Instead of a puppeteer, you could say that their bodies are magnetic and there is a magnet on the ceiling.

Extension Activities:

Actions related to themes, following instructions, vocabulary building, thinking, imagination.

Pass the Energy

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle, holding hands. You explain that you are a power plant. You begin to gently shake the hands of the child next to you, passing them "energy." He then passes this energy on to the child next to him, until the whole group is gently shaking with your electricity. Then, as the energy source, you turn up the power a little with a little stronger shake. Finally, you pass a strong current of energy that shakes your entire body. The game ends when you shut off the power.

Hints:

Great for waking up sluggish groups! Let other children be the leader if they can handle it.

Extension Activities:

Concentration, Non- Verbal communication; actions, loosening.

Pass the Face

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. Without talking, one child makes a face to the child next to him/her. This second child mirrors the face back to the first child and then makes a new face to his/her neighbor on the other side. This goes around the circle once. The next time around, the children can not only use their face, but they can also use noises. The third time, they can use their upper bodies, too. The game progresses each time around the circle until everyone is making full body movements. By the end, there should be no lag time between each passed movement.

Hints:

This game is often used as a concentration game, with just one face being passed. For more advanced or older groups, make the movements more complex, such as lines from movies or songs.

Extension Activities:

Emotions and expressions, non-verbal communication, concentration.

Pass the Motion

Requirements:

A little motor coordination

Description:

The group gathers into a circle and sits facing in. To begin, everyone extends their hands to the center of the circle, palms up. You, as the leader, slowly curl your fingers, one by one, from the left to the right. Then, the child to your left curls his/her fingers up in the same manner, and then the next child in the group, and then everyone continues around the circle, smoothly and fluidly. After the wave returns to you, you pass another motion and add a sound. Then, you can pass any other motions, like standing up, raising your hands above your head, jumping, or whatever you can think of.

Hints:

If things get out of hand, you can return to the original finger rolls.

Extension Activities:

Action words, concentration.

Zoom Eek

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone sits in a circle. You, as the leader, begin by passing the word "zoom" around the circle by turning to the child on your right and saying "zoom" That child must turn and say "zoom" to the child on their right. The zoom should go around the circle about three times. Once they have gotten the hang of it, you can introduce "eek." As zoom is the sound of a car, eek is the sound of its brakes. "Eeks" simply change the direction in which the zooms are going around the circle.

Hints:

When the group is really focused you can stand and let them walk in a circle while continuing the same zoom-eek exchanges.

Extension Activities:

Theme words, sight words, nouns.

Screaming Toes

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. You explain to everyone that their toes have just been stepped on, which has resulted in excruciating pain. Instead of voicing the scream, however, the toes use movement to Scream: by straining out in front, shaking around, etc. Slowly, you direct the "scream" to move up the bodies of the children, from the knees, to the belly buttons, to the vertebrae, and up to the head. You should keep reminding the children that all of the screams are voiceless. Once all of the major body parts are stretched out, you can then isolate the body parts by moving them in unexpected ways or doing different speeds. The group will catch on and hopefully individualize their movements for each body part. This game culminates when the scream reaches the throat and is finally voiced.

Hints:

This is a great game for stretching, particularly if your group is very wound up and needs focus.

Extension Activities:

Action words, imagination, non-verbal communication.

Five Second-Stand**Description:**

Everyone sits in a circle except for four children standing. The rule is: four children must be standing at all times, but children can only stand for five seconds each. The group sitting counts to five and the four children sit down and four others randomly stand up. If more than four children stand up they have work it out so that only four remain standing.

Hints:

This is a really quick game to play. It's a nice one to play right after getting in a circle and before another game that requires that everyone be in a circle. It's also a great way to get your children's attention if it is slipping.

Bade Miyan/ Chote Miyan**Requirements:**

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. The leader shouts the different names given below and the children have to carry out the corresponding action to each name.

Bade Miyan- stand straight and stretch your hands up and join them (or make up your interpretation of Amitabh Bachchan)

Chote Miyan- Pretend to be short (Govinda)

Hrithik Roshan- Dance and sing Kaho Na Pyaar Hai.

Aamir Khan- Ask the person next to you "Aati Kya Khandala" three times.

Govinda- Dance in Govinda's style saying "ooh" "lala" three times.

Aisharya Rai- Pretend to have a lemon in your hands and do the steps of Nimbuda-Nimbuda

Tun Tun/ Sumo- Spread your hands in the style of a sumo wrestler and spread your legs and inflate your mouth and remain in that position for a while.

Mami-Papa/Maa-Baap- Pointing their fingers at the person next to them, shout Ye Mat Karo- Who Mat Karo- Dishoom-Dishoom-Dishoom....

Paagal/Mad man- Say Aiwa Aiwa while jumping and with your hands near your face.

Rubber- Say rubber and everyone behaves like jelly.

India- Sit in a meditative position, close your eyes and say Ommmmmm.

England- One hand on the mouth and one on the head.

China- Jump while shouting your name.

Hints:

To control the group effectively it helps to use "England," which requires silence, throughout the game. There are a lot of different variations to this game, which can be adapted depending on teachers' own experiences, etc.....

Extension Activities:

Theme words with related actions; introduce simple action words.

Body/Voice Warm Up Activities

Objectives:

- Focus on Body movements.
- Coordination of voice modulations with facial expressions.

Shei-Shei- Koole
Requirements:



A lot of energy for the leader

Description:

The group forms a circle. The teacher makes body movements as she chants the words. The group repeats each line and motion.

Words:

Shei-Shei Koole
She-Kavisa
Kavisa La La
La La Kila la
Chi Ayende
Chi Ayende

The game can be repeated a number of times. The leader can also add emotions while saying the words (for example, pretending to be sad, happy, angry, cold, etc...) Once the children become used to the game the teacher can select a child to lead the activity.

Hint:

Shei-Shei Koole can work well to control the group. If the children seem to be getting too excited the leader can whisper shei-shei koole and do slow body movements. In this way, the children will calm down.

Boom chick-a-boom

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. The leader says each line in a particular style (e.g. happy). The children repeat each line in the same tone and style as the leader. The first time the leader says the verse in a normal tone and style.

Words:

I said a boom chick-a-boom!
I said a BOOM chick-a-boom!
I said a boom chick-a-rock-a-chick-a-rock-chick-a boom!
Oh yeah!
Oh yeah!
One more time! (blank) style!

You are in charge of setting the style, based on your imagination or the following suggestions. The group then proceeds to do the next verse in that style. Some ways to sing include: louder, softer, lazy, underwater (using finger to flap lips around, imitating bubbles), cricket player, opera, ballet, Hindi movie dance, horror movie, or any emotion. For example, if you do it pretending to be a cricket player, say the words while miming the actions of a cricket player.

Hints:

In this game, the leader is in charge of the energy level, so you can end it however you want. You can also let the group suggest other variations on the theme.

Singing in the Rain

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. Singing in the Rain has a beat and a song that everyone sings together, then you, as the leader, call out the actions which everyone repeats. Besides the special actions, children are free to dance around however they want.

WORDS

DESCRIPTION

Everyone:

We're singing in the rain,
just singing in the rain.

Sing according to the traditional song

You:

Hold it!

Cross Arms to stop action.

Everyone:

(repeats your words and actions)

You:

Thumbs down!

Arms held out in front with thumbs down.

Everyone:

(repeats your words and actions)

Everyone:

Choo chu-cha-da (repeat 3 times)

Turn around 360 degrees making silly body movements.

The song is then repeated, except that everyone dances with the added motion. This is then repeated with "elbows back," "knees together," "toes together," "bend over," "tongue out," and any other things you can think of. The last action is "sit down" and everyone crashes to the floor. During the various repetitions you can add emotions and actions to the singing (e.g. sad, happy, quickly, sad)

Extension Activities:

Parts of the body; vocabulary building; voice modulations.

Acting Warm Up Activities

Objectives:

- Increase self-awareness.
- Focus on self.
- Interacting with others.

Camera Click

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. One child is the photographer. Tell the children you are going to pretend to take photographs. Ask them if they know what a photograph is. Ask them if photographs move (no). Ask them if photographs talk (no). Tell them that, just like photographs, they will be unable to move or talk. To see if they understood ask them to move in their place and when you say "freeze" to stop moving and talking, just like a photograph.

The photographer, holding an imaginary camera, turns her back to the group and calls out a feeling or animal (such as happy, sad, angry, dog, cold), which the group has to create. The photographer counts to 3 and turns around and pretends to take photographs of the children pretending to be the feeling, animal, etc... the photographer asked them to be.

Hints:

Once the children have become familiar with the game, the teacher can choose children to lead the activity.

Be Masala Dosa

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. You, as the leader (although the lead can be shared by several children) start by saying "Be Masala Dosa!" Everyone then becomes Masala Dosa, as best they can, whether it be by sizzling, standing straight up, or any other variation on a situation Masala Dosa can be in. You then say "Be (blank)," and everyone will be whatever you say, like an ice cream cone, a bird, or a car. Any of these things can be taken in any context someone can think of. After a couple of tries, you can encourage other children to suggest what everyone will be next. When you are ready to quit, you just say "Be Masala Dosa" again, and everyone freezes as Masala Dosa and the game ends.

Hints:

For older or more experienced groups, try concepts, such as, "peace" or "a soul." Also, feel free to make a story around your masala dosa, like "be cooking masala dosa," "be masala dosa that's being chewed" - you can take suggestions from the children here, too! (this game is very similar to camera game)

Mirrors

Requirements:

An even number of children, a group that is not nervous about pairing off.

Description:

The group is divided into pairs. Each child now has a partner, and each partner is the other's mirror. To start off the game, one partner, we'll say Devdas, is the leader, and the other, we'll say Soonita, is the mirror. Soonita copies Devdas's movements (although at no point can she touch him). Devdas should start off slow, moving just the arms or just the hands. Eventually, Soonita and Devdas can change levels (i.e. sit or squat), move different parts of the body at the same time but in different ways, or try to incorporate face movements. Then the partners should switch roles, with Soonita leading and Devdas mirroring.

Hints:

If the group is especially focused, you can suggest that neither pair is designated as the leader, and the movements develop from both children at the same time.

Extension Activities:

Concentration; symmetry; synchronizing.

Pair Sculpting

Requirements:

An even number of children who are comfortable with dividing up into pairs.

Description:

The group divides into pairs. In each pair, one child (we'll say Sumitra) relaxes her body. The other participant, we'll say Lalita, sculpts Sumitra's body into whatever position she wants including the face. Sumitra should hold the positions. Lalita can experiment however she wants with sculpting techniques and the balance of the body. After about 5 minutes, the partners switch places. You can give children different emotions/activities, which they sculpt their partners (e.g. sculpt sad). This will help children to cooperate and focus on ways to express themselves through their bodies.

Hints:

This game works really well as a warm-up to Sculpture. Partners should be of the same gender.

Sculpture

Requirements:

Children who are comfortable touching each other, enough blindfolds for everyone in the group, and an even number of children.

Description:

Everyone puts on their blindfolds. One child from outside of the group, we'll say Ram, places children in pairs and puts the hands of the sculptor on the body of the child being sculpted. They then begin to sculpt, and Ram calls out to switch jobs after a couple of minutes. After a few more minutes, Ram switches the pairs, repeating the hand placement. Then, he can get creative, putting one child sculpting two bodies or two children sculpting one body. Eventually, he should increase the numbers interacting until one half of the group is sculpting the other half of the group, making sculptures in which everyone is touching in some way. This is also a good game for a de-briefing, that is (I know what you were thinking!) a talk about how everyone felt after it is over: what they liked, did not like, felt comfortable or uncomfortable with, etc.

Hints:

This game should be played after the children have already done Pair Sculpting- whether or not it was in the same session.

Machines

Requirements:

None

Description:

The object of the game is to create a machine using children as parts. You tell the children to create a specific type of machine, such as an ice-cream making machine, bus making machine, etc.... You then select one to start making the machine. He will make a simple motion and sound, and then other children will join the machine by adding another motion and sound. You, as the leader, should control the rate at which children join the machine by clapping every time it is appropriate for someone new to join in. You can then speed up and slow down the machine by saying that the "boss's spoiled son" is at the controls and is playing around. In another variation of the game, called Transport, you give parameters for the machine, such as three feet and two hands touching the floor, or everyone can only be connected at the knees, and then they have to try to move.

Hints:

There is no right or wrong way for making machines although the more creative the better. Encourage different levels of the machinery; some children should be squatting, some standing, some jumping, and the best machines do not just have a bunch of children standing in a line!

What are you Doing?

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle and one child, Anjali, starts doing something, such as hammering a nail into a wall. The child standing next to her, Dinesh, asks “what are you doing?” Anjali replies with something she is not doing, such as walking like a chimpanzee, while still pretending to hammer a nail. Dinesh then begins to walk like a chimpanzee. Nahima, standing next to Dinesh, asks him “What are you doing?” and Dinesh makes up something, such as eating an ice cream. Nahima begins to eat an ice cream. The game continues around the circle.

Extension Activities:

Verbs; only English; imagination.

Pass the Object

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. You, as the leader, begin with a single imaginary object, such as a toothbrush. You establish, through physicalization, what the object is. You then pass it to the child on your right. This child uses the same object. After about three of these examples, you tell the group that you now have a magic object, for example a telephone. You start by using the telephone in its normal use, and then pass it along to the next child, who has to find a new use for the telephone. The more creative, the better.

Extension Activities:

Uses of the object; introduction to new objects/words; logical thinking skills.

Pass the Focus

Description:

Everyone finds their own space in the room and freezes. One child we'll say Meher, begins with the "focus." She walks around, moving and speaking however she chooses, and then passes the focus on by touching another child, we'll say Rajshree. Meher is now frozen, and Rajshree can move in a new way until she decides to pass the focus. The focus can continue going around until everyone has it at least once and the group gets bored. You, as the leader, should reclaim the focus at the end.

Hints:

For an advanced group, do not "pass" the focus, simply have someone begin after one has had the focus for a while. This encourages listening, not only for the child with the focus, but for the other children in the group and each other. You can also name a theme, such as the market place, sky, family, etc....., which can later help to build a scene.

Extension Activities:

Theme related sentences and actions; imagination.

Occupation**Requirements:**

None

Description:

Everyone splits into two teams. One team gets together and, as a group, chooses an occupation, like bus driver or teacher. When they are ready, both teams line up a few feet from each other. The other team starts the game by beginning the following dialogue:

Team 1: What do you do?

Both teams then walk towards each other until they are only a few feet apart. Without talking, the first team begins to mime the occupation they chose earlier. The second team tries to guess what occupation the other team chose. As soon as someone guesses the occupation, the second team then gets together and chooses an occupation which the first team must guess. Both teams line up again and start the game.

Extension Activities:

Team work; theme work; oral English; question formation.

Emotions/Motions**Requirements:**

None

Description:

One child, we'll say Leesa, goes out of the room. While Leesa is gone, the rest of the group chooses an emotion (sad, happy, etc...) or a motion (quickly, slowly, etc...) After the emotion/motion is chosen, Leesa returns to the room and names an activity, (e.g. "tying your shoes"). The group then mimes this activity in the style of that emotion/motions and Leesa guesses what the emotion/motion is. She can give lots of different activities, continuing until she gets it correct.

Hints:

More than one child can leave the room at one time, especially for big or young groups. For smaller groups, try to make sure that everyone gets at least one turn to leave.

Extension Activities:

Actions; concepts, numbers, following instructions; learning emotions.

Didi Says

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle, and one child is designated as Didi. Didi tells the others to do actions, one at a time. Sometimes, Didi says: "Didi says (action)" and so Didi says: "(action)". In the latter circumstance, anyone who does the action is out. This can be made more equal, and often more interesting, by giving each child a chance to be Didi for one line. In order to "theatricize" this game, you should encourage children to say "Didi says do this" followed by an action/emotion (e.g. pretending to be sad, happy, scared, etc...)

Extension Activities:

Theme related instruction; language sentences; counting concepts; leadership.

Requirements:

None

Description:

One child is the leader, for example Santosh. Santosh must approach anyone else in the group and say, "I like you, and if you like me too, please, please smile." Santosh may elaborate on this basic request however he likes, and he may use his body in any way he dares, but he may not touch the child. The approached child, let's say Senna, must always respond, "I like you Didi/bhaiya, but I just can't Smile." The aim is for Santosh to make Senna smile and for Senna not to smile. If, during the entire exchange Senna ever smiles, then she becomes the new leader. Santosh has 10 seconds to try to make Senna smile by always using the same line. If he fails he goes on to another child. If Senna does not smile, then Santosh continues approaching others until he gets someone to crack a smile.

Hints:

This game really lets the group laugh and feel close.

Tiger of Mumbai

Requirements:

Someone with enough energy to be the Tiger of Mumbai!

Description:

One child, we'll say Sanjay, is designated as the Tiger of Mumbai. He stands at the front of the area, with his back turned to the rest of the children. The other children pretend to eat Behl-Buri. Sanjay lets out a deafening roar, which is the signal for everyone to lie down on the floor as if dead. He then circulates among them sniffing and snorting and nudging. If anyone moves-laughing is the most common-they are no longer a Behl-Buri Wallah, but join Sanjay as the Tigers of Mumbai. The game continues until you have almost all tigers.

Extension Activities:

Animals; professions.

Animals

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. You, as the leader, name three different types of animals. For each animal, everyone thinks of a noise that the group will use. Then, everyone closes their eyes. You name one animal and then go around the circle, tapping about one-third of the group. The children are that animal. You do the same for the other two animals, until everyone has been tapped for exactly one animal. When you say "begin," everyone makes their noise and action, and, through listening but no words, each "animal" finds its own kind. A good way to end the game is to choose three different animals, but tap all the children with the same animal. That way, when the children open their eyes, they will all be the same animal.

Extension Activities:

Animal sounds; animal actions. Replace animals with professions or other themes to learn.

Bopitty Bop Bop Bop

Requirements:

None

Description:

To start off, everyone stands in a circle except one child who is in the middle, we'll say Lopa. Lopa is trying to get out of the middle by challenging the members of the circle. The first way to do this is through the words "Bopitty Bop Bop Bop." Lopa can say one of two variations to any one member of the circle (we'll say Zarin): "Bop" or "Bopitty Bop Bop Bop." If she says "Bop," Zarin must remain silent. If she says "Bopitty Bop Bop Bop," Zarin must say "Bop" before Lopa finishes saying "Bopitty Bop Bop Bop." If Zarin makes a mistake, she goes to the middle and Lopa becomes a member of the circle.

Additions to the game: Another way to "catch" a member of the circle is through action commands. These new commands involve three children: Zarin, who Lopa points to, and the children on her left and right. These children must then make the correct formation before Lopa counts to Five, or else the child who makes a mistake must go into the middle. Examples of common Bopitty Bop formations:

Elephant - Zarin makes an elephant trunk, and the children on the sides make huge ears.

House - The children on the sides tilt their arms to the middle to make a roof, and Zarin says "Come in, come in" and beckons madly.

Palm Tree - Zarin imitates a palm tree, the children on the sides do the hula and hum "Aloha Oe."

Airplane - The children on the outside are airplane wings, say "neeorw", and Zarin is the pilot with goggles made like raccoon eyes.

Children to Children

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everybody mingles around, greeting one another normally (thus the title "Children to Children"). You, as the leader, stop movement by shouting "Elbow to elbow!" or "Knee to ear!" The group must form whatever configuration you say by finding someone to touch elbows with or a knee to put an ear on. When you say "children to children," the mingling and greeting begins again. The game becomes more creative when you announce animal configurations, like "Elephant to elephant!" or "Snake to Snake!" or "Alien to alien!" These can lead to "Trunk to Trunk!" and "Tail to Tail!"

Hints:

This game makes a good ice-breaker and movement exercise; it's great in large or rowdy groups. Do not forget to turn the children back into children before moving on to the next game.

Extension Activities:

Body parts; teamwork.

Follow the Leader

Requirements:

For a large group, a very large space, preferably outdoors

Description:

Everyone lines up. You, as the leader, stand at the head of the line and lead the group, filed behind you, around the area. The children repeat everything you do and say, such as skipping, jumping, singing, crawling under a table, circling around a chair. There will be a delay effect for the children further down the line who imitate your action only when they see the child in front of them perform it.

If you feel children in your group have sufficient initiative, you can hand the leadership down to the child behind you at some point by tapping them on the shoulder. You can then skip to the back of the line and join everyone in following the new leader until they hand the leadership down to the child behind them and get in line behind you. You can repeat this until everyone has had a chance to lead or becomes restless.

Hints:

This is a great game to play outdoors.

Extension Activities:

Concentration; counting.

Group Juggle

Requirements:

One ball for every three children in the group

Description:

The group spreads out in a random pattern on the floor. Some children may stand and others may sit (it is good to get a couple of levels). You, as the leader, begin tossing a ball to someone, and they in turn pass it to another child. Everyone gets their moment with the ball, with no repeat catchers or tossers. The last child returns the ball to you. Now that the pattern order has been established, you start the ball around the cycle again and slowly add in the other balls. You can also add twists by having one ball travel in reverse through the group, or to start a new pattern altogether and to have one ball travel in the new way and one in the old way.

Hints:

Children should look into each other's eyes as they catch and pass the balls, for this aids concentration. You can play this silently, or have children call out their names (a great way to learn names!) as they throw and catch. With younger children the activity can be kept more simple with children sitting once they receive the ball (this way the children left standing know who has yet to receive the ball)

Acting Activities

Objectives:

- Focus on group and individual interactions.
- Self-awareness and self-expression development.
- Dialogue development.
- Develop ability to have a different perspective.

Restaurant Play

Description:

Children stand in a circle. Teacher selects 3 children who stand in the middle of the circle and enact the following role-play:

waiter: What do you want?

customer 1: I would like a coke please.

customer 2: I would like a chai please.

waiter: Ok.

(waiter pretends to go back to prepare drinks. She then returns to the customers.)

waiter (to customer 1): Here is your coke.

customer 1: Thank you.

waiter (to customer 2): here is your chai (by mistake he pours the chai on customer 2)

customer 2: What have you done?

customer 1: Don't worry, you can clean it.

After enacting the role-play in a normal way the teacher then tells the children to enact the same role-play using the same words, but pretending to be angry, sad, scared, etc.....

Before the role-play starts, the children in the circle shout: "Lights, Camera, Action."

Hints:

The play can be done in Hindi to make it easier for children to focus on the acting and not worry about language. The above play serves simply as a reference and can be adapted or completely changed.

Extension Activities:

Themes; oral English.

Bear Hunt

Requirements:

None

Description:

Bear Hunt is a follow-the-leader call and response game. You say a line and the group repeats it. Everyone marches throughout it, in a circle if there is not much room. As the leader, you should say the words to a beat, with great enthusiasm, and taking your time.

DIRECTIONS

I'm going on a bear hunt!	March, moving arms, with kids in a line behind you
I'm not afraid!	Point thumb to chest on "I'm"
I've got my trusty dog,	stroke the dog's back by your side
And he's right by my side.	point down to dog by your side
Wait !	Stop marching and look surprised and wary.
I see some sticks!	Point in front of you
Bear, are you in there???	Cup hands around mouth, lean forward, and yell put hand to ear, Lean forward, and create a pause
Nope.	Shake head disappointedly
Well, we have to go over the sticks!	Jog with knees high, snapping your fingers

At this point, you can repeat this verse while substituting anything for "sticks," from "Wait!" to "Nope." Some ideas: going through a swamp with slurping noises, going up a tree while imitating climbing, swimming through a lake while imitating swimming, etc.... Then:

Wait !	Stop and look surprised and wary.
I see a cave!	Point in front of you, squinting.
Bear, are you in there???	Cup hands around mouth, lean forward.
(yell) Yes!!	Turn around and look terrified.

(Hurriedly, go back the way you came, repeating all the motions in reverse order as you return back)

And we're home! Sit down

Hints:

This game is a great warm-up, and all hands and mouths are kept busy, so it is great for acquiring or regaining control. Of course, you can vary this game as you see fit, maybe even mentioning locations which the kids know in Mumbai, etc....

Invisible Cricket

Requirements:

None.

Description:

This game is simply a game of cricket, but the ball, bat, etc... are invisible and no one can talk. Children must pay attention and communicate well to keep track of where the ball is and what it is doing.

Hints:

This game encourages already cooperative groups to work even better together, and it is a great way to get energy up at the beginning of a workshop.

Bus Stop

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everybody stands in a line as though they were waiting at a bus stop. The game is then shaped by your directions as the leader. They can be in the style of emotions ("You are all very happy"), sensations ("It is very hot"), or time ("It is eight o'clock in the morning"). In addition, you can create individual characters: "You are a businesswoman who is in a hurry." The game ends when the bus comes.

Hints:

This game works very well with younger children. In an advanced version, Bus Stop can be played with just two children at the bus stop, where they have to construct a scene. You can also choose different locations (e.g. waiting for the train, etc....)

Circle Story

Requirements:

A relatively uninhibited leader (that's you!)

Description:

Everyone gets into a circle and walks around in it. As they walk, you begin to tell a story while they act out the scenes. A good way to begin is to have them wake up and climb out of bed; they mime this while still going around in the circle. You can also do the crazy, for example: turn them into electricity, send them through hair dryers, let them swim the depths of a ponderous ocean. After the story gets going, you can ask the group for suggestions or let them take turns telling part of the story.

Hints:

For an older group or cast, after the game has been played a number of times, you can have someone else begin the entire story.

Acting Activities

Helping Hands

Requirements:

Possibly props for the scene, but they aren't necessary

Description:

Two children, well say Prashant and Lalana volunteer out of the group. Prashant serves as the helping hands for Lalana by standing behind her, with his arms acting as hers. Lalana clasps hers behind her back. The group decide a scene, such as hammering a nail, for them to act as one character. Once the children become used to the activity you can involve more pairs in creating a role-play.

Extension Activities:

Themes; profession related actions; coordination.

Bubble

Description:

Everyone finds a comfortable place in the room. You, as the leader, ask everyone to close their eyes and imagine themselves in a bubble. You ask many questions about the bubble that each child answers in their head, like "What shape is the bubble?" "What color is it?" "What temperature is it?" and more. After a while, you ask everyone to open their eyes and move around in their bubble. You continue asking similar questions, to which children can react by investigating that particular aspect actively. After a few more moments, the bubbles can change (become smaller, larger, harder, prickly, etc.) You can then direct children's attention to other bubbles asking how they feel about the presence of others ("Do you think his bubble is like yours?"). Eventually, two bubbles join and the two children spend a while exploring the space together, still not talking out loud but communicating otherwise as you continue to ask questions. Slowly, all of the bubbles join into one giant bubble that leaves the group in a tight blob. You then tap one child to leave this giant bubble and walk around it. You ask specific questions this whole time, like "How do you feel: you want to go back to the group? and more. After a few moments, this child selects another child to replace them outside of the circle, and they re-enter the bubble. Everyone should have time outside the bubble. Once everyone is done, they, can discuss how they felt.

Hints:

There are a number of recommended variations on this: no leader is necessary, as long as the game is sufficiently explained beforehand and no one objects to organic development. In addition, blindfolds can be used. Like Sculptures, in this chapter, this game is excellent for groups who are uncomfortable with touching or physical space.

Extension Activities:

Themes; vocabulary.

Boundaries

Requirements: None.

Description:

You first divide the room into four parts. Each quadrant should be assigned a quadrant (which will be referred to as a "land"). For example, Curvy Land, Jumping Land, Slow Motion Land, and Sticky Land could be your four lands. The children practice moving differently in each land and paying attention to how to transition from one land to another. If they are doing well, you can make it more complex by combining qualities (Slow Curving Land, etc) or making the requirements more challenging. For example, you could make a land where only one foot and one hand can be touching the ground, a land where you close your eyes, a land where you must be touching someone else, etc. Also, the game can become verbal: Accent Land, English Land, Hindi Land, Non-sensical Land etc. Adverbs can also be assigned to each land.

Extension Activities:

Related actions; adjectives; concepts.

“Masala Dosa” and “Idli Sambar” Persuasion

Description:

Two children volunteer from the group. One is designated as the persuader, well say Ranju, and the other is the child being persuaded, well say Neeta. The rest of the group then thinks of a situation that requires persuasion: e.g. “Get him to wash your clothes,” “Convince her to take your test for you,” or “Persuade her to go to a movie with you.” Instead of using language to convince each other, Ranju can **only** use the words “masala dosa” and Neeta can **only** say “idli sambar.” In this, they will focus less on language and more on non-verbal communication/expression and voice modulation.

Hints:

More specific objectives and directions can be given for more advanced groups. The point of the game is to force the children to use inflection and gestures to communicate, rather than just words.

Blah Blah Blah Drama

Requirements:

None.

Description:

The group thinks of a particular scene and instead of using words they instead use the words “blah blah.” In addition they exaggerate everything. In this, they will focus less on language and more on non-verbal communication/expression and voice modulation.

Hints:

This activity is similar to “Masala Dosa” “Idli Sambar,” but more advanced since the scenes can be more complex.

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone but the leader, you, crouches down, eyes closed, like a seed. If the children are preparing for a play, you should tell them to think about their character, otherwise, give the group a little bit of time to think about any character which they would like to create. You slowly narrate, giving generous pauses after each sentence. All of the children should follow and do what you say, thinking of their character. You should say something like: “You are the seed of a character. Slowly, you are growing, raise your head as your character would. Stretch. Stand up the way your character stands, finding the kind of standing which fits. How do you hold your arms? What is your facial expression? Now, open your eyes and look around, and what do you see? Take a few steps and see how you walk. What scares? Think about it. What do you most like to do? Do it. What do you want the most? Imagine how it makes you feel. Now, try out your voice, experimenting until you find one that you like.” The narration can obviously be changed, depending on how much time you have and on what the children are interested in

Hints:

With a more advanced group, you can continue and have the characters interact and have conversations.

Scenery

Requirements:

None

Description:

The group collectively decides on a place, like the ocean. Then, everyone should brainstorm about what various things are found there. Each member, or several members, should form a different object with their bodies (a shell, a treasure chest, sand, water, etc....). The aim is that everything formed is inanimate but necessary. When the scene is formed, the leader or leaders walk or swim through the scene, pointing to the scenery they see, opening doors and treasure chests, dusting furniture, etc.... The group freezes for a moment at the end to imagine themselves as their place.

Hints: The activity can be adapted and given to a few students who create a scene the rest of the group has to guess.

Extension Activities:

Themes.

Acting Activities

Film Scene

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. Five to six children are chosen as volunteers and stand in the middle of the circle. The rest of the group gives the volunteers a word, such as “cow.” The group closes their eyes and counts to 10. Working together, the volunteers must then form a scene that reflects the word. For example, if the word is “cow,” the scene can be a cow formed out of children, or children pretending to milk a cow, or even looking for a cow. The rules are that the volunteers cannot speak and can communicate only by looking at each other. They must freeze when everyone opens their eyes. After about five different words, the group can switch.

Tuna Fish/ Vacation

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Two children get a location from the other children. They then perform a scene based on that location, except that the scene must begin with the word “tuna fish” and must end with the word “vacation.” The scene must make sense.

Hints:

The scene can be structured however the children want. Other words instead of “tuna fish” and “vacation” can be used

Freeze

Requirements:

None

Description:

Two children begin by performing a scene for the group based on a suggested location or professional relationship. Everyone else stands in a circle around them. The scene does not have to last that long, however, for, at any point, someone in the group can say “Freeze” and clap their hands. At this point, the two actors freeze, the child who called “freeze” enters the scene, takes the place of one of the actors, and begins acting out an entirely new scene, based on the position the actors were in. Thus, the actors can be fixing the underside of a car, someone can call, enter the scene, and be painting.

Directed Story

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Divide the children into two groups. One group will first function as the audience and the other group as the actors. First, you must ask for a location from the audience. For example, the chosen location is the beach. Then you can ask the audience to think of two characters, who might be at the beach, like a grandmother and a policeman. At this point two of the children from the other group will designate themselves as these parts and start some sort of scene talking to each other. Your job as leader is to ask periodic questions to the audience in order to further the plot. You clap your hands, and the actors freeze. The key here is to ask questions which give you some control over the action, let the audience feel as if the story is being directed by them, and leave some room for the actors to interpret. For instance, good questions are: "Why is the grandmother in the beach?" "What does the policeman want?" There are no wrong questions or answers and you should do minimal editing of the audience responses if possible. After each question is answered by someone in the audience, you repeat the answers to the actors, clap your hands, and the action resumes. It is important to involve all the group of actors. They can enter the scene not only as children, but also as objects (e.g. trees) and animals, etc...."

Extension Activities:

Dialogue vocabulary; story building; themes.

Object Scenes

Requirements:

One random object for every four children- anything, as long as it is big enough to be seen and small enough to be manageable.

Description:

The group splits into small groups of about three or four children each, and each group gets one object. Each group then spends a few minutes creating a scene involving their object. However, the object cannot be used as it is in normal society. For example, if the object is a telephone, the group cannot use it to call someone in the scene; it should be used in an innovative way.

Hints: If the children are well-versed in improvisation and have become used to this game, you can switch objects among the groups and have them do spontaneous scenes.

Extension Activities:

Imagination.

Verbal focus acting

One-Word Stories

Requirements:

None.

Description:

This game begins with five volunteers. They line up in front of the other children, and you, the leader, acquire a title the children have never heard before. You instruct the five volunteers to tell a story, but each of them can only say one word at a time. From the beginning, you should specify they must have two characters and names of those characters in the story, but it does not matter who introduces them. Then, starting at the right, each child says one word, trying to form good sentences. When it gets to the end of the line, the child on the right says the next word. After at least two groups of five have done this, you can add children to the group until everyone is participating.

Extension Activities:

Story building; teamwork.

Whose Story is It?

Requirements:

A group that can function without constant supervision

Description:

The group divides into smaller groups of three or four children. The children in each smaller group tell a story about their childhoods. The smaller group, let's call them Imran, Vikas, and Soonita, then decide on one favorite story they want to use, maybe Soonita's. The three then return to the larger group, and each of them tells Soonita's story as if it were his/her own. The larger group can ask them questions, and they must try to answer realistically. They can stick to what they know or elaborate freely. Then, the larger group tries to decide whose story they have really told.

Simultaneous Story

Requirements:

An even number of children.

Description:

The children pair up and focus on each other's eyes. First, one child in the pair is designated as the leader. The follower will try to say the same words at the same time as the leader, stringing together a story. Then, the follower becomes the leader. Those short rounds will warm them up for the goal of having no leader. The story does not need much structure, although individual sentences should make sense; this keeps partners from tricking one another. The leader should be encouraged to go slow to help his partner follow.

Hints:

If children have trouble starting they can build up momentum with "Once upon a time there was a..." and go from there.

Alphabet Game

Requirements:

Knowledge of the alphabet.

Description:

Two children begin, with the rest of the group giving a location or situation. Based on this suggestion, the children begin a scene. The catch is, they must start each sentence or line with a successive letter of the alphabet. For example:

Child 1: A fine day we're having, isn't it?

Child 2: By jove, you're right.

Child 1: Could we go swimming?

Child 2: Does sound like a good idea to me.

Hints:

This game might be very difficult in English, but it can be tried with the whole group helping.

Focus and Concentration Activities

Objectives:

- Good way to achieve closure.
- Calms and focuses children.

Pass the Clap

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone stands/sits in a circle, about an arm's length apart. One child begins, we'll say Naida, by turning to the child to her right and clapping. The child on her right, we'll say Shaheen, must clap at the same time as Naida (so that it sounds like one clap) while looking at each other's eyes. Shaheen then turns to her right and does the same action with the child to her right. This continues for a couple of times with the clap going around the circle. As the group improves, the clap can be made to go by faster and faster.

Hints:

This game may take a couple of times to learn in order to work correctly.

Pass the Pulse

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle and holds hands also closing their eyes. You, as the leader, are the generator of the pulse and you want to send a pulse around the circle. You pass the pulse by squeezing the hand of the child to your right or left. The child who just received the pulse from you is a conductor and passes the pulse to the child on their other side by squeezing that child's hand. The pulse should travel around the circle a couple of times, with you passing it just like everyone else. While this pulse is travelling, you can send a new pulse. You can keep sending them, especially in the opposite direction of the original pulse. You should try not to overload the "circuit," however. The game ends when you progressively stop all of the pulses.

Hints:

The game Lighthouse is an interesting variation on this, where there is also a designated lighthouse in the circle, we'll say Neeta, who beeps every time the pulse passes her, and a designated guesser (Manna), who leaves the room before the pulse starts to pass. Once it is decided who will be the source of the pulse, Marina comes back in and listens to Neeta's beeps to guess who is the child beginning the pulse. This variation is good for children who need a tangible goal in their games.

Rain Noises

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone spreads out in the game space and faces you, the narrator, standing up. You narrate in the different elements of a rain storm and mime the corresponding noise for the children to imitate. This sounds extremely cool when the group changes from one step to another very slowly, starting from one end of the group to the other.

wind: blowing air through teeth or pursed mouth or pursed mouth (becomes louder and louder until gale)

first raindrops: snapping fingers, alternating right then left hands.

heavier rain: hammering the ground with palms, getting louder and faster

thunder: jumping up and down, or swish palms together then clap.

lightning: clap

pounding rain (to alternate with thunder and lightning): stamp ground with feet

After this, you narrate that the storm is quieting down, returning up the list.

Hints:

Do not be afraid to let a child direct this game!

Maah

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone sits in a tight circle, facing inward, with their hands stretched out pointing to the center of the circle. The leader chants the word “Maah” and everyone else joins in and imitates her. She can vary the loudness of the chant by raising or lowering her hands; add rhythm by pushing her hands in and out rhythmically; change the pitch by holding her hands closer to herself or further into the circle. She can abruptly cut off the chant by crossing her arms. After a few minutes she can pass the “Maah- power” to someone else, who becomes the new leader.

Roll-Up

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone is standing in a circle, bent forward with legs spread for balance. Everyone counts to 10 in their minds and slowly comes up. The aim of the game is to concentrate and quieten the group.

Hints:

This is a great, quick way to get a group in focus.

Count to Ten

Requirements:

None.

Description:

The children stand in a circle, holding hands with their eyes closed. They must then count to ten in random order, with one child calling out, "One," another saying, "Two," another, "Three," and so on. The counting must be absolutely random, and if two children ever speak at once, the entire group must start over again at the number one.

Hints:

If you are having trouble and there are, let's say, fourteen in your group, try first to count to fourteen, with each child speaking only once. This game is very difficult at first, but it becomes easier as children listen with more and more patience.

Doctor

Requirements:

An older group of children with good patience and concentration skills.

Description:

One child, we'll say Manije is told that each member of the group, excluding herself, has a problem. She must figure out what the problem is. Manije leaves the room, and everyone else sits in a circle. The group decides that they will answer Lynn's question for one another according to a certain pattern. For example, each child will answer for the child to their left. Manije returns and begins to ask yes or no questions to specific group members. For example, "Lalana, are you wearing red shoes" Lalana will answer for the child to her left as best she can. Lynn continues asking questions, after a while moving into more complex or interesting ones. The game continues until she guesses the problem

Chief

Requirements:

None.

Description:

To begin each round of this game, one child is chosen to leave the room, we'll call him Ashok. Those left behind select a "chief" to be the leader for that round, we'll say Dinesh. The children sit or stand in a circle, facing each other, and Dinesh begins a motion on a regular beat, like clapping her hands or rubbing her stomach. Ashok comes back in and tries to guess who the chieftain is. Dinesh must subtly change the motion, like from clapping to tapping her hands on her elbows, all the children keeping the beat. The children who are following must be not to look at Dinesh, but instead to try to mirror one another. Ashok has three chances to name Dinesh as the chieftain. After he has used up his guesses or guessed correctly, then Dinesh leaves the room and someone else becomes the chieftain.

Hints:

For more advanced groups, try switching leaders mid-game or even imitating the child in the middle to make things a little more interesting.

Circle Numbers

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle around one child, we'll say Shaheen. Shaheen assigns everyone a number, from 1- to the number of children in the circle, around the circle in order of how they are standing. Shaheen does not get a number. Shaheen calls off two numbers. Those children who have those numbers must switch positions. When they switch positions, they keep their numbers, so the numbers are no longer in order around the circle. Shaheen tries to take one of the spots in the circle. If Shaheen gets the spot, then she takes the number of the child she replaces. If not, she calls off two other numbers.

Hot Seat

Requirements:

None

Description:

Three children sit in a row. The child in the middle, well say Rajshree, is in the hot seat. The child to her left begins a conversation with her, talking for about thirty seconds. Then, the child to her right begins a conversation on a different topic. It can be a conversation about anything, real or imagined, it only has to try to get Rajshree's attention. She then will try to pay attention to both of the conversations at once, turning from one child to the other every thirty seconds or so and making appropriate responses to what they are saying.

1-2-3

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Divide the group into pairs. In each pair, the children count 1,2,3, one child after the other. After some time replace number 1 with a clap and continue a few more times. After some time replace 2 by wiggling you fingers with your thumb on your nose while continuing to replace 1 with a clap. After some time replace 3 by sticking out your tongue, while continuing to replace 1 and 2 with their respective actions. By the end of the activity, the all the numbers will have been replaced by actions that the children have to follow.

Hints:

You can increase the group sizes and have the counting go up to 10, each number eventually replaced by an action.

This is What?

Requirements:

As many small, different objects as there are children playing (you can usually find them already in the room or on the children playing).

Description:

Everyone sits in a circle, with all of the objects in a pile in front of one child, who we'll call Jyoti. Jyoti turns to the child on her right, Devdas, takes one of the objects, we'll say a pen, and says: This is a pen.

Devdas replies, looking to her left at Jyoti: A what?

Jyoti: A pen.

Devdas: A what?

Jyoti: A pen.

Devdas: Oh, a pen.

Devdas then turns to the child on his right, and begins the same exchange. Jyoti, however, begins with the next object and Devdas, so he has to turn his head to continue both conversations. This game continues until all objects are in play and the whole group is saying the lines above simultaneously. Everyone says the same lines at the same time, just substituting the name of the object.

Hints:

This game helps to improve the concentration of the children. It is a difficult game, but once learnt, can be a lot of fun.

Put your feet to Sleep

Requirements:

None

Description:

This game is similar to a song or a chant in that you, as the leader, tell a story and the kids join in movements. You should attempt to get the children familiar with the story so they can repeat key phrases with you. Everyone begins in a circle with their legs straight out in front of them.

WORDS	DIRECTIONS
<p>It is late at night and time to put your feet to sleep. So, take your feet out</p> <p>First, take the feet to the bathroom. Open the door. Turn on the light. Brush their teeth. Give them water.</p> <p>Dry their faces.</p> <p>Take them to their room. Open the door. Turn on the light. Put the feet in the bed. Give them a big goodnight kiss. "Good Night Feet." Turn off the light. Close the door.</p> <p>Now, you walk down the stairs. And you turn on the TV and relax.</p> <p>Upstairs, the feet do not want to go to sleep. First, the left foot whispers to the right foot. Then the right foot whispers to the left foot. And then both feet start to jump on the bed.</p> <p>You hear the noise. And you go upstairs Open the door. Turn on the light. And say "feet go to sleep."</p>	<p>Lift the legs and put them in front of you.</p> <p>Slap the floor with your feet (to pretend to walk) Clap your hands (to pretend to open the door) Snap your fingers (to pretend to turn on the light) Pretend to brush their teeth. Pretend to give them water (you can make glug noises) Pretend to dry them with a towel.</p> <p>Slap the floor with your feet Clap your hands Snap your fingers Pull covers over the legs. Mime giving each foot a big kiss.</p> <p>Snap your fingers. Clap your hands.</p> <p>Slap the floor with your hands. Pretend to turn on TV and relax.</p> <p>Tip left foot to the right, whispering noises. Tip the right foot to the left, whispering noises.</p> <p>Shake feet uncontrollably</p> <p>Slap the floor with your hands. Clap your hands Snap your fingers</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">WORDS</p> <p>So the feet say they will go to sleep. You cover them with the blanket.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DIRECTIONS</p> <p>Pull covers over the legs.</p>

<p>You give them a big kiss. “Good Night Feet” Turn off the light. Close the door.</p> <p>Now, you walk down the stairs. And you turn on the TV and relax.</p> <p>But the feet still do not want to go to sleep. They start whispering. And jumping on the bed. Not just up and down But they also jumped across each other, jump in circles, triangles and squares!! And the feet decide to hide under the bed.</p> <p>You hear the noise. So you quickly walk up the stairs. Open the door. Turn on the light.</p> <p>But the feet are not there!!! Oh no, where are the feet. We look in the closet, we look out the window, under the dirty clothes on the floor, but they are not there. Suddenly you see the feet under the bed But you pretend you do not see them. You say “I’m going to go outside and look for the feet,” You turn off the light. You close the door. And you PRETEND to walk down the stairs, but you really don’t.</p> <p>The feet think you are downstairs so they come from under the bed and start to jump. You open the door. Turn on the light. And say: “Feet go to sleep.” This time, the feet are really tired and want to go to sleep. So you cover them with the blanket.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WORDS</p> <p>And give them a big kiss. “Good Night Feet.”</p>	<p>Mime giving each foot a big kiss.</p> <p>Snap your fingers Clap your hands</p> <p>Slap the floor with your hands. Pretend to turn on TV and relax.</p> <p>Shake feet up and down.</p> <p>Cross and uncross feet. Move feet in the appropriate shapes. Sit on knees with feet underneath.</p> <p>Slap the floor with your hands. Clap your hands Snap your fingers</p> <p>Mime appropriately.</p> <p>Slap the floor with your feet Clap your hands Snap your fingers</p> <p>Snap your fingers Clap your hands Slap the floor with your hands.</p> <p>Shake feet uncontrollably Clap your hands Snap your fingers</p> <p>Yawn.</p> <p>Pull covers over the legs.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DIRECTIONS</p> <p>Mime giving each foot a big kiss.</p>
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<p>You turn off the light. You close the door. You walk up the stairs. You open the door to your room. You turn on the lights. You get in bed. You turn off the lights. And you go to sleep.</p>	<p>Snap your fingers Clap your hands Slap the floor with your hands. Clap your hands. Snap your fingers Pretend to get in bed. Snap your fingers Pretend to sleep.</p>
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Hints:

It might be difficult for many children to understand the English so it is important for the teacher to explain part of the story in Hindi, but work so that the children eventually understand it in English. With younger children the story should be told in Hindi. Although this activity is not necessarily concentration activity it works very well to finish a session.

Appendix I:

Learning Names/Getting to Know You

Cat Wants a Corner

Requirements:

Space, energy, and if no chairs, place markers for everyone playing.

Description:

Everybody sits in a circle, except for the “Cat,” who is in the centre. Essentially, the Cat goes from child to child in the circle, saying “Cat wants a corner,” except using his own name (e.g. “Ram wants a corner”). Children in the circle respond with specific names (“Go see Pryianka”) The Cat then proceeds to the child named. At any point, probably when the cat is not looking, children may try to change seats, leaving the chair to trade with someone. The Cat will try to grab any open chair. Once someone’s behind has left the seat, he/she may not sit back down in that chair. If the cat is able to grab a chair, the chair-less child becomes the new Cat. At any point, anyone may yell “Everybody” (or some other chosen word) and the entire group must jump up and find another seat.

Hints:

The game can be extended in large groups by taking away another chair and having two Cats. In especially spunky groups, anyone who pushes someone else out of a chair automatically becomes the Cat. Also, a variation of this game can be played by having one empty chair in the circle and one child in the middle. “It” tries to sit in the open chair as everyone else moves around to prevent it, with no “Cat” dialogue at all (called Circle Sit).

Ram

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone sits in a circle and says their name. One child (for instance Pryianka) is labeled as “Ram.” Everyone then keeps a slow beat by tapping their laps and then clapping. Pryianka, now called Ram, begins by saying her own name and the name of someone else in the circle: “Ram, Rupesh.” Rupesh must then respond with the beat, saying, “Rupesh, Lopa,” and then Lopa similarly must call out her name and someone else’s. When anyone messes up (by not responding in time or with the beat, or by calling Pryianka “Pryianka” instead of “Ram”), then everybody shifts their seat one to the left and takes the name of whoever was originally in that seat. This is the tricky part of the game: names remain in a seat, even when children move on. The game continues with everyone’s new identities. Other items, such as a new trait for every child, can be added to complicate the game.

Funky-Walk Names

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. The first child, for instance Manije, does a silly walk over to someone else in the circle. Manije says, “Hi, my name is Manije,” and the second child responds, “Hi Manije, I am Sandip.” The two shake hands. Then, together, they do Manije’s silly walk back to Manije’s original space in the circle. Now, Sandip makes up his own silly walk and approaches someone else in the circle. The game continues until everybody has done a funky walk.

Hints:

This game is a lot of fun with music or drumming, if possible.

Handshake**Requirements:**

An easily-controlled and non-rough group

Description:

All the group, except for one child (e.g. Meher) form a circle, facing in to the centre. Meher walks around the outside of the circle and chooses someone, for example Rupa, by tapping her. Rupa turns around and they both shake hands and introduce themselves, like this:

Meher: Hi, my name is Meher

Rupa: Hi, my name is Rupa.

Then Meher and Rupa run in opposite directions around the circle. When they meet each other on the other side, they stop, shake hands, and introduce themselves again. Then they turn around and run back the way they came. The first child back to the original spot joins the circle there, and the other child walks around the circle and chooses someone else.

Hints:

Play until everyone has had a turn, so that the group can learn each child’s name.

Name and Favorite Blank**Requirements:**

None

Description:

Everyone sits in a circle. Going around the circle, everyone says their name and favorite movie star, food, TV show, or whatever else you can think of. This game can also be jazzed up by making children add something, like a sound (for favorite animal) or theme song (for favorite movie)

Hints:

This is a simple, quick way to learn children’s names and to learn something about everyone.

Name Circle

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. Progressing around the circle, everyone says their name, any word that begins with the same letter as the first letter of their name, and a movement. That child demonstrates, then the whole group repeats their words and motions three times. Each child in the group does this with their own name, and everyone repeats everyone else's name, word, and motion. The second time around the circle, each child simply steps forward, and everyone must remember what the name, word, and motion was. This should be done until everyone remembers.

Hints:

None.

Name Train

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. One child, for instance Chaitali, begins as the head of the train. Chaitali walks across the circle, making appropriate train noises, and approaches someone else in the circle, for instance Lopa, Chaitali introduces herself to Lopa and asks if she would like to hop on the train. Chaitali reverses directions and Lopa hops on the train from behind by holding on to Chaitali's shoulders or waist. Chaitali then travels to another child in the circle and they meet each other. The train turns around (this time with Lopa as the head), and the third child attaches. This continues until everyone in the circle is part of the train. Each child who joins the train adds another sound, and everyone gets to lead the train at one point.

Hints:

This could be made into a "name snake" or a "name plane" just as easily.

Pina

Requirements:

None.

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle. First, everyone reviews their names. You should go through the circle a couple of times, saying the names until supposedly everyone is familiar with them. Then one child at a time has to walk around the outside of the circle, saying each child's name as they pass the child. Then, you add a different twist: they have to go around the circle and everyone's names without taking a breath, circling as many times as they can before breathing in again.

Getting To Know You

I Love My Neighbor

Requirements:

A controllable group and chairs or markable places in a circle

Description:

Children face the inside of the circle on their individual spots, except for one child, for example Anamika, who is "It" and stands in the middle. Anamika starts by saying, "I love my neighbor who...," finishing with a characteristic or description, such as, "I love my neighbor who has an older brother." Then all the children for whom this is true leave their spots and trade with someone else. Anamika then scrambles for the open spaces, and whoever is left without a seat is the new It and must begin again saying "I love my neighbor who..." Each child who is "It" is not allowed to repeat any of the other things previous Its have said.

Hints:

From the beginning, say that no physical descriptions can be used - it is too easy of a way out for It. Also, this game can take up time, since you can play endless rounds.

Mingle

Requirements:

None

Description:

The group mingles around, casually talking to each other. As they continue mingling, you call out a name of a category, like pets. The children then have to find the other children who have that in common with them. Other categories you can try are: someone with the same number of brothers/sisters as you, someone with the same color of t-shirt as you, or someone with one of your hobbies.

Hints:

Let one of the children take your place and be the leader who can call out categories.

How Old Are You?

Requirements:

None.

Description:

The group is asked to line up in order of ascending age, including months and days birth. The trick is that nobody may speak or mouth anything. There are at least five ways to solve problem, and it is even possible for groups to perform this task blindfolded. When the line is formed, everybody announces their birthday and checks the order.

Hints:

This game works especially well as an icebreaker, and it really encourages creativity.

Three Changes

Requirements:

An even number of children (although you can always join in)

Description:

Children pair off in twos and face each other. After studying one another for a few moments, the partners turn around and change three things about themselves. They can make obvious changes, like taking off a shoe or changing their hair, or they can make very subtle changes like changing which wrist their watch is on or moving their pants differently. When both partners are ready, they turn around and try to guess what changes the other has made.

Hints:

This is great for bonding between individuals. This can also be played group-wide, with one child leaving the group, which makes three changes the child has to guess when he/she returns.

Appendix II:

Group Cooperation Activities

Skin The Snake

Requirements:

A hallway or similar long narrow space.

Description:

Everyone stands in a long line, all facing the same direction, with a great deal of space behind the line. Each child moves their legs apart, and, with their right hand, reaches between their legs to grab the left hand of the child behind them (and of course, gives their own left hand to the child in front of them). The whole line is thus holding hands and half bent over. At the starting signal, the last child in line, with everyone still holding hands, slowly lies down. The other child backs over him/her, then lies down too. Soon, everyone has scooted back and is lying down. Now, of course, they have to scoot back up and try to get back as they were.

Hints:

It helps not to wear shoes, and then try and see how fast you can make it go!

Knots

Descriptions:

Everyone stands in a tight circle, facing inwards. Each child reaches in their right hand and grabs someone else's hand. Then each child reaches in their left hand and grabs a different child's hand. You then pass a pulse around to make sure your hands make one complete circle, not two or three. Once everyone is standing there in a good knot, they must, without letting go of anyone's hands, try to step over and under each other and pivot and turn until they untangle themselves into one big circle.

Hints:

This can be played by a larger group, but the group must be divided up.

Stand Up

Requirements:

An even number of children

Description:

The participants divide into pairs. Each pair sits back to back with elbows linked, knees bent, and feet flat on the ground. They then try to stand up without using their hands. Once the pairs master this surprisingly delicate task, they join with other pairs. Three children sit back to back, elbows linked, and try to stand up, then four, eight, fifteen, or thirty children. Any permutations or styles of standing can be tried, also.

Hints:

This game is a wonderful prelude to Group Lapsit.

Group Lapsit

Requirements:

None

Description:

Everyone stands in a circle, with their left shoulder facing the inside. They move as much as comfortably possible, until everyone's front and back are nearly or actually touching. Simultaneously, everyone sits down onto the lap of the child behind them. This might take a couple tries before it works well, but when it works, each child is supporting the rest of the group and being supported. The circle can then try to walk around in that position.

Hints:

This game has been described as "a metaphor for how I expect every new group of participants to act" - it is a very important and well-used game. It forces the participants to get close to each other, at least physical and cooperate. In order to drive home the moral, two or three children should step out of the circle; with everyone working together, it should collapse. A good warm-up to this one is Stand Up.

Leader

Requirements:

Enough blindfolds for about half of the group, an empty place with a number of rooms or hallways, a leader who knows the empty place pretty well, and an even number of children.

Description:

Everyone is divided into pairs. Among each pair, one child decides to wear the blindfold, and the other one cannot talk. The pairs can decide upon a couple of signals which they can use to communicate directions from the non-talker to the non-seer. You, as the leader, bring each pair to a different place in a designated area. Each pair should be out of sight of each other; usually, you have to do a little bit of pre-planning about this part. The object of the game is for all of the pairs to find each other. Before beginning, you should specify that the rules are the basis of the game - really, no talking or peeking for the children. In addition, no one should be able to call out for each other between the pairs. You should run around and check up on children's progress, give hints if necessary, and switch the seer and talker after about fifteen minutes. All rules apply until all are together again.

Trust Falls

Requirements:

A non-rowdy and strong group

Description:

This game begins with children pairing off into groups of two. One child falls backwards into the arms of the other, who is standing about an arm's length behind. Then the group divides into groups of three, with one faller standing between two catchers who pass the faller back and forth. Finally, if the group is worthy of absolute confidence, you can do grand trust falls. The faller stands three or four feet off of the ground. The rest of the children stand in two lines facing each other, with their arms outstretched, palms up, and fingers touching the body of the child across from them. They then catch the faller when he/she falls.

Hints:

Trust falls like this can be very risky.

Wind in the Willows

Requirements:

A non-rowdy group

Description:

The group stands in a circle, facing in, with one volunteer 'willow,' we'll say Brett, in the middle. Everyone making the circle should be touching shoulders with their neighbours, with one foot further back than the other, arms up, elbows bent, and palms out. This position remains the same throughout the game. Brett stands in the exact centre of the circle, with feet planted firmly in the ground and arms folded across the chest. He should try to keep his back as straight as possible, and he can close his eyes if he wants. When Brett is ready, he falls gently back. The group passes him around equally gently, making wind noises and other soothing sounds. Everyone in the group should get a turn.

Appendix III:

Action Games

Elf-Giant-Wizard

Requirements:

A large playing space

Description:

Essentially, this is a group version of paper-scissors-rock. The group divides into two teams. Each of the teams has to decide which of the following they are collectively going to be: an elf, a giant, or a wizard. The giant steps on the wizard, the wizard puts a spell on the elf, and the elf scares the giant. After consulting, the two teams line up facing each other and have a face-off. After you, as the leader, count off one-two-three, everyone from each team individually acts out their part as the character. Whichever team picks the dominant character chases the other one to a specified home-free line. Whoever gets tagged sits out. If it is a draw, the two teams consult again.

Hints:

This game gets children talking and developing strategies together well.

Tunnel Tag

Requirements:

A large space.

Description:

Tunnel Tag is another variation on a tag game, except that when a child, we'll say Santosh, is tagged, he freezes standing with his legs spread apart so that someone else can unfreeze him by crawling through the legs.

Snake in the Grass

Requirements:

A small playing space: mark of an area if necessary

Description:

One child, we'll say Rita, is designated as the snake. She must get on the ground and slither and slide in a snake-like fashion, making appropriate noises. Everyone else may stand and try to escape her. Once Rita tags a child, that child turns into a snake also and helps her. The game continues until no one is left standing and the whole room is a mass of writhing snakes!

Hints:

If the snake still has difficulties catching someone, you can tell the standing children that they have to hop, appoint a second snake, or reduce this playing space.

Red Light Green Light

Description:

One child serves as the traffic light, we'll say Eric. Eric stands with his back to the rest of the group, who lines up about 20 feet from him (or more). While he is turned around, he calls "green light," and the group may cautiously advance toward him. At any point, however, Eric can turn around and call "red light" with an arm outstretched. At this time, everyone must immediately stop moving. If anyone is caught moving, either as a result of momentum or by sneaking forward, he/she must return to the original line 20 feet away. The child who tags Eric first becomes the next red light.

Hints:

Of course, you can make everyone move in a certain manner, like they are a bird or in water.

Lost Ship

Requirements:

A group that is controllable.

Description:

Everyone but two children grab hands and stand in a circle. These two children, we'll say Joyce and Samara, are the lost ship. Holding hands, Joyce and Samara go around the circle, until they decide to break the hands of two members of the circle. When they do this, they then start to run around the circle as fast as they can. The two children whose hands were disjoined then grab hands and run around in the opposite direction. The two "ships" must run around the circle in a predetermined style, for instance, piggy-back or backwards or galloping, or even through fog (with their eyes closed). Whichever one makes it to the original "port" first gets to join the circle.

Elbow Tag

Requirements:

An even number of children

Description:

One child, we will say Deval, is It, and one child, Manije, is the Target. Everyone else is paired off into groups of two children who have linked arms. These pairs stand with their outside, non-linked hands on their hips to form hooks. Manije can hook onto the outside arm of any pair. When this happens, Manije and the child she has hooked become a new pair, and the second child of the old pair becomes the Target. If Deval tags Manije, the roles of It and Target are reversed.

Explosion Tag

Requirements:

A reasonable tag playing space

Description:

Explosion Tag is simply constructed like a tag game. However, when a child is tagged, we'll say Rahul, he must take a moment to "explode" or feign a horrible and grisly way to fall asleep before falling on the ground. He may get up if another child "revives" him by touching.

Hagoo

Description:

The group separates into two different teams. The teams line up about three feet apart, facing each other, forming a "gauntlet." One child from each team steps forward, each at opposite ends of the lines, and they face each other down the gauntlet. On the word "hagoo," which everyone says together, they begin to approach each other down the gauntlet. Their goal is to make it to the other side of the gauntlet without laughing. Meanwhile, each team tries to make the opposite team's contestant laugh without making their own child do the same. If the child makes it without laughing, he/she rejoins the same team; if not, he/she sits out. Oh, and no touching allowed, but everything else goes.

Hints:

See "Smile Didi/Baiyha," for a similar game.

Pru

Requirements:

A large space.

Description:

Everyone begins by milling around with their eyes closed. You, as the leader, tap someone to be the Prui. That child can then open their eyes, but should keep milling around like everyone else. When you give the word, everyone should start shaking hands. When they do this everyone but the Prui says "Pru?" whenever they shake hands with someone. Once both children have said "Pru?", they move on, eyes still closed. If someone shakes hands with the silent Prui, though, they then open their eyes, join hands with the Prui, and go around silently, still milling around, only shaking hands with their free hands. Thus, if someone with their eyes closed reaches two joined hands, they have to work their way around to finding the end of the Prui. Eventually, all are the Prui!

Hints:

This game is good for getting a group used to a little physical contact.

Anarchy/Monarchy

Requirements:

A soft ball.

Description:

One child is chosen to be the monarch (we'll say Santosh) and one as the page (Chaitali). The rest are anarchists and run around the playing area shouting Anarchy. Anarchy. Santosh's feet are frozen to the ground, and he holds the ball. He throws the ball to try to hit any one of the anarchists as they run around. Because Santosh is immobile, Chaitali fetches the ball back to him. When Santosh hits an anarchist, they also become a monarch. The monarchs can pass the ball with the other monarchs to try to hit the remaining anarchists. The last anarchist left wins the game. For the next game, the winner is the page and the page becomes the first monarch.

Blob Tag

Requirements:

A large space

Description:

The game begins with everyone scattered and one leader running after everyone else, trying to tag one child. When leader succeeds, then the tagged child must hold hands with leader. Together, they become a Blob which chases the rest of the group. When the Blob reaches the size of four, it may split into two independent Blobs of two children each who chase the remaining runners- "The pairs of Blobs may also rejoin into a larger blob, which is especially useful for sweeping across the playing space and cornering the one or two remaining children. In the end, the whole group is part of one giant Blob.

Hints:

Blob Tag is a great bonding game, also, for there is no winner as such and everyone must work together.

DHO-DHO-DHO

Requirements:

A relatively controllable group, a soft floor, a large playing area.

Description:

First, you, as the leader, divide the playing space into two equal halves. The children divide up into two teams and stand on either side of this border, with a substantial area between them. One team picks a member to cross over to the other side. This child, we'll say Dinesh, takes one big breath and goes to the other side, exhaling and saying "dho-dho-dho" the entire time. He tries to tag as many members of the other team as possible. Once Dinesh tags one child, the opposing team can grab him, above the waist, and try to prevent him from returning to the other side. Dinesh must continue exhaling and saying "dho-dho-dho." If he can get back to his own side without running out of breath, the children he tagged sit out. If not, he sits out.

Hints:

A great game to play outdoors!

Dragon Tail

Requirements:

A large playing space and a bandanna.

Description:

Everyone lines up one behind the other, and each child puts their arms on the waist of the child in front of them. The last child in line puts the bandanna, like a tail, in the back of their pants - loose enough so it can get tugged out, but not too loose. Then, on a signal, the child at the front of the line starts to chase the "tail" of the "dragon." Of course, the fun of the game is in the fact that the children in the middle of the line don't know whose side they are on. Once the head gets the tail, it becomes the new tail, and the child second from the front is the new head.

Hints:

If the group is bigger, you can have two chasing dragons

