

Arts & Communications • Leading Games

Project Skills:

- Youth will learn how to effectively lead games.

Life Skills:

- Friendship

Grade Levels: 4-5

Time: 50 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- Several copies of the "Games to Play with Elementary Age Youth" handout

Foxes and Squirrel Activity

- 3 soft balls
- Flip Charts and markers

Do Ahead:

- Become familiar with the two games that you'll lead in this session

BACKGROUND

Why do we play games? It may be for fun, to develop sportsmanship, learn teamwork, build confidence, to compete, improve physical skills, use excess energy, or facilitate social interaction. Games are important aspects of our society. This activity plan will help youth understand the value of games and how to lead them.

WHAT TO DO

Activity: Instant Replay

Explain to the youth that you will give directions and they will play the game "Instant Replay." When it is time to stop the game or any other activities during the day, you will yell "Freeze!" At that time all activity will stop so the group can gather together for discussion. You may want to designate a part of the room where everyone is to gather for these discussions.

"Instant Replay" is a good get-acquainted game. Taking turns, each person announces his or her name and does an action. Everyone repeats the name and gives back an "instant replay" of the action. At the conclusion of the game, say "Freeze!" and move to the designated area for discussion.

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- How did the game go?
- What did the game help us do?

Apply:

- How was this different than everyone just going around and saying their name?
- When we are in a group, why is it important to learn each other's names?



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WHAT TO DO

Activity: *Foxes and Squirrel*

“Instant Replay” had a purpose, but now we’ll play a different game. After we play it we’ll talk about the purpose of the game. It is called “Foxes and Squirrel.”

Everyone stands in a circle. Provide three soft balls, two representing foxes and one representing a squirrel. Foxes must be passed hand to hand with the statement “Fox.” The squirrel is passed hand to hand or tossed across the circle with the statement “Squirrel.” Balls may be passed either right to left or left to right. The object of the game is for a “fox” to tag the “squirrel.” After the group has had time to enjoy the game, say “Freeze!” and move to the designated area for discussion.

TALKIT OVER

Reflect:

- How did the game go?
- What do you think is the reason we played the game?

Apply:

- What are other reasons we play games? What can we learn by playing games? (Ask a youth to write responses on a flipchart.)
- As a leader of this game, what did I do to make the game successful? (e.g., give directions, provide supplies, be prepared ahead of time, know how to play the game, understand why we are playing it, include everyone, make sure everyone can hear, give demonstrations of what to do, explain how to be safe.) As the youth answer, have one of them write responses on a flipchart. Use probing questions to help youth think about all the things a leader needs to do to successfully lead a game.

WHAT TO DO

Activity: *Youth Lead Games*

Now it is time for a new leader for a game. Ask for a volunteer. Pick a game that they know and does not need a lot of supplies. The volunteer will explain the game and the group will play it. After the game is over, the volunteer will ask how we liked the game and why we played it. We’ll then look at our list and talk about the things the volunteer did to make the game successful.

If needed, help the volunteer give clear directions. For example, leaders may skip a direction because the game is so familiar to them. When the game is over, or after it has been played a sufficient amount of time, say “Freeze!” and bring the group together. The youth volunteer who led the game can then ask:

- How did it go?
- What was the reason we played the game?
- What did we learn? What skills did we practice?

As a group talk about what the volunteer did to make the game successful. Refer to the list that was generated by the group. They may come up with new items to add to the list.

If time allows, have the person who led the game select another youth to lead a game. Follow it with a review of what the youth did to be successful.

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- Think about the games you have learned today. (Review list of games.) What was the reason we played the game? What did you learn?
- How did it feel to be the leader of a game?

Apply:

- What skills did you need to lead a game/
- Where else can you use these leadership skills?
- How can you further develop these leadership skills?



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EXTEND

Host a second learning session that is led totally by volunteers. Have everyone think about a game that they want to lead. Remind participants that it needs to be played in the space available. If it requires supplies, the volunteer leader will need to bring them with OR request them of you prior to the scheduled session. If participants can't think of a game to lead, invite them to choose one from the "Games to Play with Elementary Age Youth" handout."

ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY

Enhance for Older Youth:

The "Instant Replay" activity may be enhanced by having the group repeat all previous names and accompanying actions after each person is introduced.

Simplify for Younger Youth:

If no child volunteers to lead a game after you play "Foxes and Squirrel," suggest games such as "Simon Says," "Duck, Duck, Goose," "Leap Frog" or others that many children are familiar with so that they can be confident in leading the game. Or ask if there are two youth who would like to volunteer to lead a game together.

HELPFUL HINTS

- There are many sources of games on the Internet and at the public library. Find games that are appropriate to the youths' abilities and to the physical environment (inside/outside, small/large room) in which you'll be working.
- This activity plan may be done indoors in a large open room or outdoors. Before getting started, specify the ground rules for play, such as physical boundaries and safety.
- To encourage shy youth to take leadership, the group might brainstorm a list of games after you do the "Foxes and Squirrel" activity.
- Save the flipchart lists for the next session.

Source:

- Created by Denise Retzleff, 4-H Youth Development Agent, UW-Extension, Fond du Lac County
- Sites with active kid games: www.kidwizard.com/index.htm and www.funattic.com/home.htm.



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GAMES TO PLAY WITH ELEMENTARY AGE YOUTH

1. **Amoeba Tag:** In this game, "It" chases players until someone is tagged. Once a player is tagged, they join hands with "It." They run together and chase people. The person that they catch links hands with the chain. Once four people are caught, they can either stay together or split into two even groups. As more people are caught, they can stay together or split apart in even numbers at will. Play until all are caught. Note: An amoeba is a one-celled animal that constantly changes shape as it moves.
2. **Instant Replay:** A good get-acquainted game. Taking turns, each person announces their name and does something. Everyone repeats the name and gives back an "instant replay" of the action.
3. **Find Your Mates:** Divide the players into Cows, Ducks, and other distinctive barnyard animals. Have them close their eyes and find their fellow animals by sound alone.
4. **Pairs:** Assign names of things associated in pairs (e.g. Ham and Eggs, Beans and Franks, Needle and Thread) by passing out cards with half of the pair written on each card. The players then go around looking for their "pair-partners" by saying what they are to one another. Be sure no two people have the same word on their cards.
5. **I Sit in the Grass with My Friends:** Seat everyone in a circle with one empty seat. The two seated on either side of an empty chair are to try to occupy the empty seat, with the winner saying "I sit..." Their vacant seat is then taken by the person who was next to them, saying "in the grass" The next in line to that person then moves to that vacated seat, saying "with my friend _____" (by either supplying the name of someone in the circle, or pointing at someone in the circle). The selected person moves to the empty seat, and the whole process begins again over a new vacated chair. Keep things moving quickly!
6. **Choo Choo:** The leader "chuga-chugs" up to someone and asks their name. Then the leader hoots and toots, raising each of their arms and legs while saying the person's name. That person becomes the caboose. Together, they "chug" to another person, repeating the hooting, arm and leg movements and name, then (reversing the line by each turning around), the second person (the caboose) now becomes the engine, the third is added as the caboose, and the first person, who is now in the middle, becomes a train car. This continues, with everyone becoming first a caboose, then the engine, and then a car within the train.
7. **Foxes and Squirrel:** Everyone stands in circle. You will need three soft balls: two balls that are alike become the foxes, one ball that is different becomes the squirrel. Foxes must be passed hand to hand with the statement "Fox." Squirrel is passed hand to hand or tossed across the circle with the statement "Squirrel." Balls may be passed either right to left or left to right. The object of game is for a "fox" to tag the "squirrel."
8. **Cat and Mouse:** The group forms a circle. Someone who plays a cat stays outside the circle, while someone playing a mouse goes inside the circle. When the cat moves into the circle, the mouse exits and the cat must follow the same path the mouse takes, weaving in and out of the circle and tagging him. Variations could have the circle joining hands, opening and closing "mouse holes" by raising and lowering hands with a chant as the mouse and cat scramble through it.



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9. **Volcano:** Form two concentric circles with each of those in the outer ring standing behind someone in the inner ring, and one person ("It") in the center. The volcano begins to "erupt" when "It" starts clapping and the inner ring joins in with the clapping. Those in the outer ring must start running madly about shouting in panic. When "It" stops clapping, the inner ring also stops. Then "It" and the panicking villagers must each find a spot behind someone in the inner ring. The one without a spot becomes the new "It".
10. **No Lose Hot Potato:** Form a circle and start passing a ball around. Leader counts to a number between one and twelve and shouts "Hot Potato!" The person caught holding the ball joins the leader, and chooses the next number to count to and play starts again. Younger youth like counting games like this.
11. **Rattlers:** Form players into two or three lines of 8-10 each, hands on hips of the person ahead. Stress that snakes must not "run" and must remain "intact." First and last in line are the "Head" and "Rattle," respectively. The object is for heads to capture by tagging rattles. The goal is to become the longest snake in five or ten timed minutes. Tactics such as coiling are allowed. A variation is to have the snakes "shed skin."
12. **Quack:** Everyone stands with feet slightly apart, hands on knees or ankles, looking back through their legs. Then they start moving backwards. Those who make any contact with another player must say a loud "Quack!" This game will loosen up a group!
13. **Bubbles:** This is free-form play. Try to keep it relaxed. Gather everyone in one corner. First they form bubbles as they pass through two parkers (the "bubblepipe"). Any number of people holding hands in a ring is a "bubble." Bubbles drift slowly around the field, sometimes joining with other bubbles into bigger bubbles, or breaking into smaller bubbles. There are lots of variations. When bubbles "pop," they return to the "bubblepipe" and start over.
14. **Wildlife:** Each person has an animal identity, e.g., buffalo, frog, bear, snake, or ape. "Slap, slap, clap, clap, (your animal name)...(someone else's)." Failure to do in the proper order moves you to the bottom of the line. Variation: For older youth or and smaller groups, each adopts hand signals for their animal.
15. **Zip Zap Zop:** A group seated in a circle moves an invisible ball around the circle as follows: The player with the ball says "Zip" and places either hand on top of their head, pointing either to the left or right, indicating the current direction. The invisible ball continues around the circle like this, until someone either "zaps" it (saying "Zap" and reversing the direction with a hand held under the chin, pointing the other way) or "pops" it across the circle (saying "Pop" and pointing across to someone who then must pass it on with a Zip). The object is not to fumble the ball (make a mistake in correct words or gestures) while continually passing it on.
16. **Bean Game:** Take a number of large beans, or small items, to hold in your hands. Decide on a number to work on, like the number "eight." Have a player count out eight beans. Place the beans in your hand and hide them behind your back. While they're behind your back, put some beans in each hand, e.g., three in one hand and five in the other. Show the player the beans in one hand. They must tell you how many you have in the other hand. Play this again using another combination. This helps younger youth learn all the combinations of a number sum.



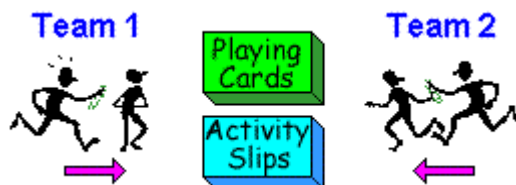
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17. **Exchange Change Game:** This is a learning game about money combinations, played in groups of two or three. For each group you'll need 15 pennies, 10 dimes, six nickels and a die to start. The first player rolls the die and takes as many coins as rolled on the die (1-6). If they roll a six they can take six pennies, but then they have to exchange 5 pennies for a nickel. After a few times of having to exchange them, they'll learn to pick a nickel and one penny. The next player will do the same and take the allotted amount. On the player's next turn they take the allotted coins, but if they end up with five pennies they exchange them for a nickel and if they have two nickels they have to exchange them for one dime. When all the dimes are gone the game is over and all players count their change. The person with the highest number wins. For the next level of learning money combinations, add 10 quarters. For the third level, add dollar bills.
18. **Apples to Oranges:** For this game you will need one apple, one orange, some paper and pencil, a container and music. Label six slips of paper. Write these phrases on the slips, one phrase per slip: before the apple, the apple, after the apple, before the orange, the orange, after the orange. Make a second set in case some slips become detectable after use. Place the slips into a container and mix them up. Have players stand in a circle. (If you have a large group, set up several circles or a circle within a circle.) Give the apple to one person and the orange to someone else across the circle. Then start the music. Participants are to pass the fruits until the music stops. When the music stops, have someone pull out a slip of paper and read it. If the paper reads, "before" the orange or apple, the person standing before the person holding the fruit is out. If the slip reads, "after" the fruit, that person is out. If the slip names a fruit, the person holding that fruit is out. So, not only do participants have to worry about holding the fruit, but also they have to worry about where they are in relation to the fruit in the circle.
19. **Circle Delight:** For this game you need two balls. Form two teams. The two teams form a single circle with teammates alternating, i.e., every other person is on the same team. A player from Team 1 takes a ball. A player from Team 2 on the opposite side of the circle takes the other ball. At the signal both starters toss balls to their next teammate in the circle, going either clock wise or counter clockwise. Both balls must be going the same direction! The goal is to move the ball from teammate to teammate as quickly as possible, to see if one team can pass its ball so fast that it overtakes the ball from the opposing team. If this happens, the team scores one point and the game begins again. The first team to score three points wins. Note: The ball must be relayed between players of one team without hindering the opposing team.
20. **I'm Going Hunting:** A good memory really helps in this game! Form a circle. One person starts the game by saying, "I'm going hunting and I'm taking an arrow" (or something else that starts with the letter "A.") The next one in the circle repeats what the first person said and then adds something new starting with the next letter of the alphabet, e.g., "I'm going hunting and I'm taking an arrow and a bow." Keep going around the circle until someone cannot remember what he or she is taking. That person is out. The next person tries to complete the phrase and the game keeps going until only one person is left. Note: You don't have to choose something that you normally take hunting. The object could be something silly or funny.



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21. **Blanket Identification:** For this game you will need a blanket that you cannot see through. Two people hold up the blanket as if it were a curtain. Separate the rest of the players into two groups and place them on opposite sides of the blanket. Each team selects one player (very quietly so the other team doesn't hear), who then stands next to the blanket. Make sure the two opposing players cannot see each other. Each team selects a player who will shout out the name of the opposing player standing at the blanket when the blanket is dropped. The one who shouts the name correctly first gets a point. The first team with 10 points wins. Hint: Do not tell them the game or the rules until the blanket is up and the teams are separated.
22. **Fitness Mania:** In this game players do a variety of fitness activities to improve their levels of physical fitness: strength, endurance, flexibility, and appearance. You will need playing cards (larger sizes work better) and activity slips (e.g., Do ___ sit ups). Each card represents a number, with Jacks counting as 11, Queens as 12, Kings as 13, and Aces as 14. Divide into two teams. Each team will line up single file on opposite sides of the card and activity slip piles. To play the game, the first person in line on each team runs to the center and picks up a card and an activity slip. The players run back to their groups, then read the activities out loud. Their cards tell them how many times they must do the activity. Each group then performs their activity as a group, e.g., "Do 10 sit ups." The next person in line then runs to pick up a second card and slip. The game continues until all cards or activity slips are gone. The team that finishes first wins. Notes: If a player picks up an activity that the team has already done, then they must pick another slip. For safety's sake, players should allow plenty of space for the running and activities.



23. **Weather Vane:** For this game, youth should stand, scattered throughout the classroom or play area. Give everyone lots of room to move. Start by pointing to North, South, East and West, the four points on the compass. Then have the participants point along with you as you go through the four points of the compass again. Be sure everyone understands them. When all the participants are ready, call out one of the four directions. Players are to jump in place, turning in the air to face the direction that has been called. Make sure all players turn in the same direction. Anyone that lands in the wrong direction is out of the game. If a direction is repeated (e.g., North is called and participants are already facing North), you could have them jump or stand still. If they are supposed to stand still, those that move would be out of the game. The winner is the last one standing.

