

# Cat and Mouse

## Purpose of the game

To experience collaborating with others to accomplish a task.

## How to play

The children sit in a circle. They pass along a ball that represents the mouse from person to person. The counsellor then brings into the circle a second ball representing the cat. The children must pass along the cat in the same direction as the mouse, until the cat catches up with the mouse! When the cat succeeds in doing so, switch directions and have the cat chase the mouse the opposite way around the circle.

If there are enough children in the group, a third ball can be added, representing another mouse. The counsellor can make the game more challenging by having the children switch directions at his or her request.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- Is it easy for the cat to catch the mouse? Why?
- In your opinion, does this game have a winner and a loser? Why or why not?
- What do you have to do to succeed in this game?

This game was suggested by a friend from Burundi. Thanks!

# Your Smile is Contagious

## Purpose of the game

To have children become aware that our emotions can influence others and affect the dynamics of the group.

## How to play

The children sit in a circle. One child turns to his or her neighbour and smiles brightly at him or her. The neighbour smiles back, and then turns to the next child passing along the smile. The goal of the game is to pass on the smile until all the children are smiling.

The counsellor can also invite the children to pass on other emotions: surprise, pride, fear, etc.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- How do you feel when someone smiles at you?
- What happens when you smile at someone?
- What are some signs that make it possible for you to know how others feel?
- What can we do so that everyone feels good at camp?

# The Curtain Comes Down

## Purpose of the game

To help the children get to know each other better.

## How to play

The children form two lines facing each other approximately 1 metre apart. Ensure that each child is directly facing another child along the opposite line. Two volunteers hold up a sheet between the two lines, so that the children cannot see the other children facing them.

The counsellor asks, "What's the first name of the child across from you?" Next the volunteers let the sheet drop to reveal the child opposite. All the children must then call out the answer to the question as quickly as possible. If a child can't answer, he or she must ask the question to the child facing him or her. Then, the volunteers hold up the sheet and the children change places along the same line.

Once the children know the names of all the group members, the counsellor can ask other questions, like country of birth, favourite colour, number of brothers and sisters, etc.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- How did you feel when the sheet came down?
- Can you tell the group some things you learned about other children in the camp while playing this game?
- Were you happy when another child remembered your name? Why?

# The Caterpillar

## Purpose of the game

To experience collaborating with others to accomplish a task.

## How to play

A child gets down on their hands and knees. A second child gets down on their hands and knees behind the first child, placing his or her hands on the first child's ankles, and so on until all the children are linked together in this way. The first child then begins moving forward, and all the others must follow maintaining the rhythm set by those ahead.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- What needs to happen for the caterpillar to be able to move forward without coming apart?
- What would you do differently if we played this game again?
- Do you know any tricks for working well as a group?

You can download other games from the following website:

<http://www.equitas.org/toolkit/>

# Talyat-Malyat

## Purpose of the game

To sensitize children to language diversity.

## How to play

The children stand in a circle. The counsellor stands in the centre of the circle. He or she explains that the inside of the circle represents the lake and the outside, the land. When the counsellor says, "lake," the children must advance into the circle with one jump, and when he or she says "land," they must move back from the circle with one jump. The counsellor starts slowly, then accelerates the rhythm. As the rhythm picks up, the children will begin to make mistakes.

The counsellor then resumes the game using the Indian terms talyat (in the lake) and malyat (on land). He or she can then use the French expressions "mer" (sea) and "terre" (land). The counsellor can also ask the children to find equivalent expressions in their mother tongue

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- What language do you normally speak at home?
- What are the advantages of speaking several languages?
- What can we do to help those who are attempting to learn our language?

This game was suggested by a friend from India. Thanks!

# The Beast Awakes

## Purpose of the game

To experience collaborating with others to accomplish a task.

## How to play

The children sit 2 by 2 back to back and link their arms together. They must try to stand up without unlinking their arms and without losing their balance. The counsellor then has the children play the game again, this time in teams of 3, then 4, 5, or 6 children.

## Reflection

- Is it easy to stand up without losing your balance?
- What would you do differently if we played the game again?
- Do you like teamwork? Why or why not?
- What strategies do players have to use to succeed in this game?

# Random Words

## Purpose of the game

To learn to express ourselves and to welcome the ideas expressed by others.

## How to play

The children sit in a circle. One child begins by saying any word that comes to mind. His or her neighbour then says another word that is associated with the word that their neighbour just spoke, and so on around the circle. When each child has given 3 words, everyone stops and tries to follow the chain back to the beginning by each child repeating, in the correct order, the word that they gave.

You can increase or decrease the number of words each child offers to reflect the size of the group and the time you have available.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- Is it easy to come up with a word without thinking about it for a while?
- What struck you about this game? Can you name some things you have learned about yourself or your friends?
- Do you like expressing yourself in a group setting? Why or why not?
- Do you like listening to others when they speak?
- Why is it important to listen to what others have to say?

This game was suggested by a friend from Burundi. Thanks!

# Electric Shock

## Purpose of the game

To learn to be attentive to others and to the signals they send us.

## How to play

The children stand in a circle, holding hands and with their eyes closed. The counsellor designates a child to start off the electric shock by gently tapping the child on the shoulder. This child discreetly presses the hand of his or her neighbour to transmit an "electric shock" to him or her. The second child then presses the next child's hand to keep the shock moving, and so on. A child can change the direction of the shock by pressing twice on the hand of the person that gave them the electric shock.

Variation: One or more children stand in the middle of the circle with their eyes open. At the counsellor's signal, the children must guess the location of the electric shock.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- Was it easy to transmit the "electric shock" ?
- Under what conditions does the game work well?
- Do you know some effective ways to transmit good ideas – "electrifying" ideas – in a group setting?

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<http://www.equitas.org/toolkit/>

# Count the Contact Points

## Purpose of the game

To experience collaborating with others to accomplish a task.

## How to play

Form several teams with an equal number of children in each team. The counsellor calls out a number. Each team must find a way to touch the ground with their legs, fingers, or any other part of their body so as to create the same number of contact points as the number the counsellor has called out. All teams that succeed in doing so win a point. For instance, if the number selected is 12, a group of 5 children can place their feet on the ground (which makes 10) and two children can each put 1 finger on the ground (which makes 12 contact points).

The counsellor should select numbers that are realistic given the number of children in each team. The level of difficulty of the game can be increased by choosing very small numbers or by adding constraints: for instance, only one foot per child may touch the ground; only one hand per child, etc.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- Is it difficult to work as a team to correctly represent the number asked for? Why?
- Can you describe some strategies or tricks that you used to succeed more easily at this game?
- What are the advantages of working as a group?

This game was suggested by a friend from Burundi. Thanks!

# Blind spots

## Purpose of the game

To become aware that it's easier to work as a group when we set rules or guidelines for working together.

## How to play

A group of 10-20 children place themselves randomly across the play area. The children must each select a point nearby, close their eyes, and try to move slowly towards that point. If a child bumps into someone, he or she must change paths, while still trying to reach that point. Repeat from the beginning 2-3 times, then change the rules: everyone must aim for the same point right from the beginning. There will be far fewer collisions.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- Is this game easier when everyone is moving towards a different point or when everyone is moving towards the same point? Why?
- What happens in a group when everyone goes off in different directions without looking out for others?
- What are the advantages of coming to an agreement as a group?

(Source: Augusto BOAL. *Jeux pour acteurs et non acteurs*, Paris, Ed. La Découverte, Coll. Malgré tout, 1983.)

# What are you doing?

## Purpose of the game

To learn to express one's creativity while appreciating the diversity of likes and dislikes that exists in a group.

## How to play

The children sit in a circle. One child begins miming a particular action (for example, playing tennis). His or her neighbour asks: "What are you doing?" The first child must respond to the question by naming a completely different action from the one he or she is miming (for instance, "I'm eating an apple.") The child who asked the question must then mime that action until the next child asks what he or she is doing. This child must then name a different action from the one he or she is miming, and so on.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- Is it difficult to mime an action whilst naming another action?
- Do you like it when your friends are interested in what you are doing? Do you like it when they ask about what you are doing?
- What are the activities you enjoy doing? Do your friends like doing the same things?
- Do we all like and dislike the same things? Why or why not?

# Follow the Movement

## Purpose of the game

To become aware that all the members of a group are linked and that the actions of some will influence the actions of the others.

## How to play

The children stand in a circle. Each child chooses at random another person to look at. The goal of the game is to remain motionless; however, once the person the child is watching moves, that child must imitate him or her. Since that child is also being watched by someone, who is in turn being watched, there will inevitably be a growing series of movements.

## Reflection

- Did you like this game? Why or why not?
- Did you notice anything surprising when you were watching one person in the group?
- What role did you have in the appearance of movements in the group?
- Are you a positive or a negative influence on others? Why?
- Do other people have a positive or negative influence on you? Why?

(Source: Augusto BOAL. *Jeux pour acteurs et non acteurs*, Paris, Ed. La Découverte, Coll. Malgré tout, 1983.)

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