

Games

Friend Musical Movement

Materials needed:

- Bear and Goose badges (miniature copies of templates found in the reproducible pages could be used), appropriately marked in pairs (see below)
- Energetic music

Activity:

Before the activity, pair up a bear and a goose and mark them in a similar way – either with matching stickers, colors or designs.

Tape a bear or a goose badge to each child.

Explain that they will dance to the music until you stop the music, getting all mixed up. When the music stops, they have to find their matching friend – the goose (if a bear) or bear (if a goose) who has the same design as them.

This could be used as a way to pair off for other games, like the Mirror game or emotional role-playing.

Standards: LM 2.3 Sort, categorize, classify and order objects by more than one attribute.

“What Are You Doing?” Game

This game is challenging and requires paying close attention. It is best suited to the school-aged child or older preschooler, and will not likely work with the very young!

Materials needed:

- Space enough for everyone to sit in a circle

Activities:

Everyone sits in a circle.

One person acts out doing something from their spot in the circle (like brushing their teeth, tying their shoes, fishing, etc).

The next person around the circle asks the first, "What are you doing?" The first person has to reply with any other activity a person can do in the circle, but NOT the one they are actually doing. For example: "I'm eating spaghetti."

Now the second person has to act out what ever the first said (eating spaghetti), while a third person asks the second person, "What are you doing?" Again the reply should be something entirely different.

The game should move quickly around the circle from one person to another, without anyone repeating any actions. For an extra challenge, anyone who makes a mistake is out, but simply playing and laughing without winners and losers can be exciting enough!

*Standards: AL 2.3 Demonstrate capacity to maintain concentration over time on a task, question, set of directions or interactions, despite distractions and interruptions.
RL 1.2 Follow simple and multiple-step directions.*

--Thanks to Tina Riviello for finding this activity. Adapted from Odyssey of the Mind.

Charades

Expand your nonverbal communication practice with a game of Charades.

Materials needed:

- Animal picture cards, or cards with nouns and/or emotions on them (optional)

Activity:

In a traditional game of charades, the object is to make everyone else guess your word using only actions – no speech, no sound effects. This may be too difficult for many children, particularly the very young, so you may want to allow sound effects – but still no words.

The game can be played by each player deciding what to act out off the top of their head, but it makes for a smoother game if everyone acts out something assigned them, by picking a card that says what to act out. Here are some variations – choose which works best for your group.

For non-readers, use animal picture cards. Each player acts like the animal on their card and everyone else guesses what animal that is.

With a school-aged group, incorporate written words. Try this emotion-reading variation. Have TWO card piles: one of nouns (people or things) and one of emotion and feeling words, ranging from basic emotions like happy and sad to other kinds of feelings, such as hungry, cold or sick. Each player picks one card from BOTH piles and must act out the combination – an excited snake or a frightened telephone.

*Standards: CA 3.1 Represent fantasy and real-life experiences through pretend play.
RL 1.4 Recognize expressions, gestures and body language cues.*

Follow the Leader/Mirror Games

Goose wants to do everything Bear does, but how easy is it to REALLY do everything someone else does? You need to pay attention to play these games!

Materials needed:

- A relatively open space

Activity:

Ask the children to follow you, doing just what you do. You can stand in front of them and move in various ways, or you can all play an actual game of Follow the Leader in which you all walk in a line in various ways. The first way is easier for a younger group to watch. Part of the challenge for many young children is paying attention for changes in the routine: Don't skip ahead! Watch carefully!

Then, with older children, split into pairs and play the mirror game. One half of each pair moves, while the other half tries to copy them exactly as a mirror image. Then switch who moves and who copies.

A similar game to try is in the Songs and Fingerplays section, "Going on a Bear Hunt."

Standards: AL 2.3 Demonstrate capacity to maintain concentration over time on a task, question, set of directions or interactions, despite distractions and interruptions.

PS 2.6 Pay attention as required by the task.

PH 1.7 Perform a variety of movement skills alongside and with a partner.

