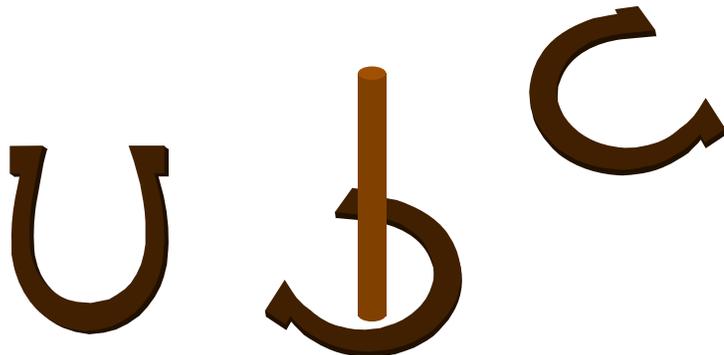


Games Leadership

Presented by

Tony Miller



Recreational activities can be very helpful tools in accomplishing many necessities in our everyday lives. They can help us socialize with others, learn valuable life skills, maintain a level of physical fitness, and just make life more fun to live. In this session we will explore many games and how to use and lead them to accomplish these things.

Below you will find some things you may want to consider when you begin to plan a recreation program.

- ♥ Your audience
 - ages
 - male, female, mixed
 - physical abilities
 - how many will be present and the age and sex breakdown
 - how they will be dressed (some games are not appropriate when gals are in dresses, etc.)
 - in some cases – religious orientation
 - educational level, maturity level
 - social background (at-risk kids with pool noodles can be scary but you learn a lot about your audience!)
- ♥ The facility where you will be doing the games (outside, in a gym, in a living room, will you need a sound system, etc.)
- ♥ The supplies that you will need for each game
- ♥ The amount of time that you have to fill
- ♥ What are the desired outcomes of your program (just fun, meet new people, burn off some energy, teach a skill, etc.)

What you need to do when leading a recreation activity or program:

- ♥ Know your material inside and out
- ♥ Keep the groups Safety in mind. If your play area isn't suitable for running, change the rules to walking, etc.
- ♥ Plan more activities than you can use
- ♥ Have your supplies ready and available as much as possible
- ♥ Speak loudly and clearly (be sure your audience understands what you want them to do)
- ♥ Be enthusiastic about what you are doing and having them do.
- ♥ Be flexible. If something isn't working, do something else.
- ♥ Play only to the height of excitement, don't let the game get boring
- ♥ Keep similar formation games together so you don't spend all of your time moving the group around.
- ♥ Sequence your games. Don't kill the group with all high activity games at once.

I usually try to play one of my most exciting games first to get the crowd's attention. Once you have the group's attention and they are having a good time, the whole program gets easier.

TRAINWRECK

Place chairs (one less than the number of players) either in a circle or in parallel lines. The person without a chair is "IT." He or she stands in front of the group, introduces themselves, and calls out a characteristic and every player who fits into this category must find a new chair while "IT" is also competing for a chair. Whoever is left without a seat then becomes "IT." When "IT" calls "TRAINWRECK!" everyone has to get up and find another seat.

Examples:

1. I.U. Fans
2. More than two brothers and sisters
3. If your last date was a disaster
4. If your birthday is between Christmas and Easter
5. If you are wearing red

TRIANGLE TAG

A hand-held triangular game for four people. Use this as a quicky warm-up activity. One person in the triangle is designated as the chasee and the other two hand-holders act as blockers or protectors. The fourth person is IT, and must try to tag the designated odd person in the triangle, but cannot purposely try to break the grip. The triangle personnel dance and jump about in semi-coordinated moves to keep the IT at bay. Change roles clockwise every 60 seconds or when a catch is made. Or, never change positions and play the same rules every day for two weeks to measure your classes' potential for civic disobedience.

ASSASSIN

Everyone in a seated circle closes their eyes with their head resting on their knees. "It" walks around the circle and touches one person, who becomes the assassin. When "it" signals, everyone opens his or her eyes. Everyone mingles. The assassin nonchalantly winks at people, trying not to get caught. When you get winked, you are "dead" and must die a very theatrical death. If you are alive and suspect the assassin, you and someone else who suspects, must declare the assassin at the count of three. If you both are correct one of you becomes the new "it", if one or both are wrong you "die." If the assassin is successful, the last to die becomes "it."

QUAIL SHOOTER'S DELIGHT

This game can be played indoors or out by eight to thirty people. Equipment needed includes several (one per person) soft items, Nerf balls, knotted bandannas, etc. Ask two or three people (depending on the group's size) to stand back to back in the circle's center. Remaining members pick up one or two nerf balls (or whatever objects are being used.) They should arrange themselves in a circle around the catchers and about fifteen feet away. On the count of three, those around the circle toss objects gently toward people in the center. Those in the middle try to catch as many thrown objects as possible. Rarely do catchers wind up with more than one or two each; often they catch none. Rotate two to three new catchers in until everyone has tried (and failed) in the center of the circle. This game is a great equalizer, as quick, athletic persons usually fare no better than the less active persons do.

HOW DO YOU DO?

Form a circle with one person selected to be "It". "It" walks around the outside of the circle, chooses a member of the circle, and taps that person on the shoulder. "It" then responds "How do you do?". The person selected replies "I'm fine, thank you!" This sequence is repeated two more times. At the end of the third "I'm fine, thank you!" both players take off running around the outside of the circle in opposite directions attempting to make it back to the open spot in the circle. When they meet half way around the circle they shake hands and again say "How do you do?" and "I'm fine, thank you!". The player who fails to make it to the open spot remains or becomes "IT". VARIATIONS: Players must walk or run backwards around the circle.

MUSICAL PAPER PLATES

Distribute paper plates (one per person) to every person except one. Have participants place the paper plates in a large circle on the ground. Instruct them to walk clockwise around the circle while the music is playing. When the music stops, sit on a plate. If you don't get a plate, sit on the lap of a person who is sitting on a plate. Remove one or more plates each time the music is restarted. Continue until everyone is piled up on one plate - or almost.

MOONBALL

Moonball is a game that develops cooperation and fast reactions. Play becomes intensely competitive, as a group competes against its last best effort.

Scatter your group (any number, but use 2 or more balls as the group size demands) on a basketball court or an open field. Use a well inflated beach ball as the object of play. The group's objective is to hit the ball aloft as many times as possible before the ball hits the ground. Rules:

1. A player cannot hit the ball twice in succession.
2. Count one point for each hit.

Do not use a volleyball, basketball, etc. for this game. A beach ball is a non-intimidating, fun-related object of play.

PEEK-A-WHO

Whatever name-game you have been using, this bit of whimsical latter-day peek-a-boo will further cement faces with names. Peek-a-Who is a learning reinforcer and a grand excuse for copious laughter.

Obtain a blanket or bedspread for this game; a sheet will do, but it doesn't have the heft or opacity of a good old USN battleship gray, surplus, keep-the-grass-stains-off-your-knees blanket.

Ask two players (substitute freely) to hold the blanket between them with arms extended upward so that the blanket provides a vertical shield that can be lowered and lifted easily. Two chosen volunteers sit on either side of the blanket. When the blanket is dropped, they must verbally identify one another by name. Second place moves over to the winner's side, and this corporeal action continues until one team has eliminated the other team or competitive ennui sets in.

Ask two players to sit back-to-back (blanket between) and attempt to identify the other player by listening to how their teammates describe the other person. Spelling out names is not allowed.

MUSICAL SQUIRT GUN

Have the group sit in a circle on chairs or on the floor. A loaded squirt gun (or two) is passed around the circle until the music stops. The person who is holding a squirt gun at that time must leave the game. Before he/she leaves, he/she may squirt the person on their left twice or the person on their right twice or once each. After his chair is removed, the circle moves in, and the game continues until only one person is left. The gun must be passed with two hands and received with two hands.

FLIP ME THE BIRD

Use as a "warm-up" activity - no more than three to five minutes. Tie knots in towels to equal half the number of people in the group. These knotted towels are called birds. If your budget and sense of humor allows, buy rubber chickens to equal half the number of people... etc.

Assign two to three people to be IT. To be immune from a tag, a player must be grasping a bird. Since there are only half as many birds as pursues, there is much flipping of the bird. There can only be one bird in the hand (but that's worth two in the bush). In keeping with the name of the game, the bird must be thrown, not passed from person to person.

PAIRS TAG

Find someone you want to choose and/or be chosen by. Don't worry, there's no holding hands in this game. Deciding who is initially IT, that person tries to tag only their chosen partner, who, of course, attempts to keep from being tagged. If a tag is made, the IT designation switches over and the choosee becomes the chooser. Taken as is, this could be a very boring game. The interesting element is that a lot of other pairs are playing the same game in a restricted area; the smaller the group, the smaller the game area. Only fast walking is allowed and three seconds must elapse between tags. Watch for picks.

EVERYBODY'S IT

Sometimes referred to as the world's fastest tag game. When the GO signal is given, everyone is it and must try to touch someone else. If you are touched, you must stand still with hands-on-head. If two people tag each other simultaneously, both are caught. Continue until only two players are left, which pair represents members of an endangered species and must remain uncaught. These two swift-of-foot survivors walk hand-in-hand toward the setting sun.

Restrict the playing area for more action. Head tags do not count.

OLD PLUG

Four players make a line by grasping each other's waists. The rest of the players are in a large circle around them. They try to hit the wrist of the last player in the line (old plug) with a ball. The other three in the line try to maneuver to protect old plug, but they must not lose their hold on each other's waists. When old plug is hit, he joins the circle, and the one who hit him becomes the first man in line. The new old plug is the player who was formerly third in line. A second ball may be added if one isn't enough.

TRIO TAKE-OFF

Any number of players can play this game, but it is most exciting with 12 or more. All but two players divide into pairs and link arms or hold hands with their partners. The partnerships then form a circle. The two remaining players become the chaser and the runner: The latter runs swiftly around the outside of the circle to avoid being tagged. At any time, however, the runner may link arms with one of the members of a partnership. At this point the previous partnership is dissolved and the third member becomes the new runner. When the chaser succeeds in tagging the runner; the runner becomes the new chaser. A new runner is chosen and the game continues.

SHUFFLE YOUR BUNS/SIT DOWN WAVE/GRAB A SEAT

Everyone sits in chairs in a circle. Add one chair to the circle. The player to the right of the empty chair begins the wave by moving to the chair as quickly as he/she can. The rest of the players follow thus creating a wave. Variations: add a second empty chair, or try changing directions.

Select one individual to be in the center of the circle. The player in the center attempts to grab the open chair while the circle tries to keep the wave moving without letting the player in the center sit down. BE CAREFUL because chairs have tendency to slide.

BUMPER BODS

Everyone squats down and takes hold of his or her own ankles firmly. On "go", each person tries to bump everyone else over without letting go of his or her ankles. If anyone is caught with hands not holding ankles, he or she is automatically out. The object of the game is to bump everyone else over while remaining up. There can be only one winner. This is a great game for outside, but may be played inside also where there is plenty of floor space. It's loads of laughs.

BROKEN CAR RELAY

Each one has a role. #1 is a woman driver, who will run up in spurts. #2 has water in the gas, takes two steps forward, one back. #3 has a flat tire, and hops or limps to goal and back. #4 has a broken steering wheel, wanders in a wavy course. #5 has a dead battery and is pushed by #6. #7 has a stuck transmission and goes backwards. #8 has been repaired and runs up and back as fast as possible.

TOILET TAG

Mark off playing area for your size group. Designate one or more players to be "It". "It" runs around attempting to tag other players, who are then "dead" and must kneel down on one knee with one arm out and to the side. Dead players can reenter the game only when a free player sits on the dead player's knee and pulls down the extended hand--"flushes the toilet". The game ends when all players except "It" are kneeling.

COTTON BALL MUSICAL BALLOON

Group sits in a circle. In the center is a plate with cotton balls and a plate with a small puddle of hand lotion on it. One person is given a blown up balloon. When the music starts the balloon is passed (NO throwing!) around the circle. You may change directions. When the music stops the person left holding the balloon must get a cotton ball, dip it in the hand lotion, and stick it on their nose. If a person gets caught with the balloon another time they get to point at someone else and that person must put a cotton ball on their nose.

"TOE SHANES"

Get group into pairs of similar size. Each pair puts their hands on the other's shoulders facing each other. Each tries to step on the other's toes. The first person to step on the other's toes three times wins. Be careful not to hurt each other.

GIANTS/ELVES/WIZARDS

This game is very similar to rock/paper/scissors. The giants stand on their toes, stretch their bodies as tall as possible, spread their arms, look very, very fierce, and shout "Giants."

The elves squat down, pull in their shoulders, and make large ears with their hands, and barely peep "elves." The wizards stand hunched over with their hands thrust forward in the best spell-casting fashion intoning their name, "wizzzzards," in as weird and magical a manner as you can imagine. The giants are very strong and can easily overpower the tiny elves; however, the giants are also rather stupid, and thus are easily fooled by the wizards' sorcery. And although the puny elves can be overcome by the giants, they are rather clever and can trick the wizards into casting the wrong spells. So - giants beat elves, who beat wizards, who beat giants. Form two teams. Each team has a goal line approximately fifteen yards apart. Each team decides what they will be for that round. Teams face off in the middle. On the first three counts, everyone says, "Giants, elves, wizards." On the fourth and final count, each team shouts their character and takes the appropriate pose. The overpowering team then chases the lesser team and tries to tag their players. Tagged players then join the other team.

HUMAN TIC-TAC-TOE

Set up nine chairs in three rows - just like the sections on a tic-tac-toe diagram. Then divide your group into two teams. Each team takes its turn by sending one person to sit in a selected chair. The first team to get three in a row wins. To make it more exciting, establish a time limit that each team member has to select a seat. (Five seconds works well)

CROWS AND CRANES

Divide the group into two teams. One side is the crows and the other side the cranes. The two teams are lined up facing each other four or five feet apart. The leader flips a coin (heads-crows, tails-cranes) and shouts the name of the team that won the toss. If he yells "Crows," the crows must turn around and run, with the cranes in hot pursuit. If any of the cranes succeed in tagging a member or members of the crows before they cross a given line (20 to 60 feet away), they are considered a captive of the cranes and must join the cranes' team when play continues. The play reverses for the opposite flip of the coin. The team that captures all the members of the other team is the winner.

MOUSETRAP

Two players form a bridge roof by joining hands over heads facing each other, for all others to go under while music playing. When music stops, the bridge (or mousetrap) falls to catch anyone below. The caught person or persons join the mousetrap and the music starts again. Play until all or most are caught.

STEAL THE BACON

Divide into two teams. Draw a large circle (approximately 15 feet in diameter) with teams lined up on opposite sides. By curving the line-up line all the players can see the activity without interfering with the action of the game. Place the bacon (a rag, sponge, or small ball) in the center. The players line up. The first person on each team, at the whistle, runs to the center and tries to grab and carry the bacon over the circle score line. If the person with the bacon is tagged, then the tagging person receives the point and the losing person joins the other team. If, after a predetermined time (thirty seconds), neither player picks up the bacon, blow the whistle and the next two players may join in the circle. When two team members are working together, they may pass the bacon between themselves.

No kicking the bacon. The team with the most players at the end wins.

RIBBON RIP-OFF

Each player is given two pieces of ribbon, which they tape to the top of the outside of their shoulders. Each shoulder should have a ribbon, and the ribbon should be taped on one end, so most of the ribbon can dangle down freely. Assemble your group en masse in the designated playing area. On the "Go!" command, players race around, trying to rip-off one another's ribbons. As long as a player is wearing a ribbon, she may continue to play. Once both ribbons have been removed, the player must retire to the sidelines. As the number of active players dwindles, the boundary markers should be correspondingly compressed. The last player left, and the player who has gathered the most ribbons from others win.

BOUNCING INFORMATION

Number of People: Unlimited

Materials: A ball that will bounce well.

Time: 10 minutes

Directions:

1. Ask one person to stand in the center of a circle and agree to be the ball bouncer.
2. As the person in the center bounces the ball to various individuals in the circle, those people have to tell something about themselves or something that they like to do. The people in the circle do not hold the ball more than five seconds; they bounce it back to the person in the center. The process goes quickly and a rhythm is established for the bouncing ball.
3. If the ball comes to someone who is not prepared to say something within five seconds, then that person goes to the center.

BALLOON BUMP

Here's an indoor game for moderately sized groups (twenty or more kids). Divide players into groups of four to six or so; place lots of deflated balloons on each chair; then instruct each group to form a huddle, arms around shoulders, in the middle of the room.

On "go" each huddle shuffles to a chair and one member of the team grabs a balloon and blows it up, ties it off, and drops it into the middle of the huddle of people-who, as they move toward another chair to repeat the process, must keep the balloon off the floor by pressing it with their stomachs. At the second chair, they must blow up two balloons; at the third chair, three balloons, and so on, all the while maintaining their huddle and keeping their balloons from falling to the floor.

If a balloon falls, the huddle must stop and put it back in their middle again (which takes time). A huddle cannot visit a chair where there is already another huddle working. Call time at three minutes, count how many balloons each huddle has in its middle, announce a winner, and play again.

TYPHOON

This game is ideal for summer. Have two lines, single file, facing a water source. At a signal, the first person in each line runs down to the water, fills a bucket, runs back to his team, and throws the water in the face of the next teammate. Before the person can throw the water, their teammate must point and yell, "Typhoon," and so on. The first line to finish is declared the winner. For safety reasons, the water thrower should be at least three feet from his teammates, and a plastic bucket should be used.

4 ON THE COUCH

Everyone writes their name on a piece of paper and folds it up. Put all the pieces of paper in a hat or bowl. Everyone takes a new paper out of the hat. Now that is their new name, and they can't show it to anyone. Everyone is sitting in a circle with part of this circle containing a couch or 4 seats designated as the "couch". The couch must have 2 girls and 2 boys seated on it in the beginning. The object of the game is to get all girls or all boys on the couch. It is good if you have a fairly even split between the boys and the girls if not you can assign some girls to be boys or vice versa. In your circle of chairs there should be an empty one. The person on the right of the empty chair attempts to call off a boy or a girl depending on what they are. If they are a boy they will want to call off a girl so a boy could replace them on the couch. They call a name of someone in the group but remember no one knows anyone's name yet. Who gets called goes and sits in the empty chair and exchanges names with the one who called them. Now the one on the right of the new empty chair calls someone. It continues this way until you have all girls or all boys on the couch. It really makes you think because names are changed so often. No one should be giving clues to the person whose turn it is.

Resource List

Cavert and Sikes, 50 Ways To Use Your Noodle. Learning Unlimited Corporation, 5155 East 51st, Suite 108, Tulsa, OK 74135, (918) 622-3292

Group Publishing, Quick Crowdbreakers and Games For Youth Groups. Group Books, Box 481, Loveland, CO 80539

Yaconelli and Rice, Play It, Zondervan Publishing House, 1415 Lake Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49056

Yaconelli and Rice, Play It Again, Zondervan Publishing House, 1415 Lake Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49056

A great web site for finding material is <http://www.fundoing.com/> . Go to the activities section of the site.

If you have questions feel free to contact me at TMGamesRUs@aol.com or (812)867-5835.