

peace pledge union

COOPERATIVE GAMES

Energising

Early Morning

It is the morning, and all the animals begin to awake. Across forest, jungle and savannah they stretch, yawn and greet each other with their voices... The children start lying down, then slowly get up, move around and greet each other with their chosen animal sound.

The Storm

Stand in a circle. One person acts as the conductor of the storm and starts off this symphony by rubbing their hands together, which the person next to them imitates, and then the next person and so on, until everyone is performing the same action. This is the increasingly heavy rainfall. The conductor then repeats the whole process with a new action – snapping fingers, clapping hands, stamping feet etc – which makes the sound of the crescendo of the storm. As with any sudden storm, the conductor decreases the volume of the storm symphony by going through the above steps in reverse until the last person rubbing hands is silent.

Zoom

Sit in a large circle. Imagine 'zoom' as the sound of a racing car. Start by saying 'zoom' and turning your head either to left or right of the circle. The person on that side passes the word 'zoom' to the next person, and so on until the word has been passed around the circle. If you wish to change direction, then you say 'eek' like the screech of car brakes. 'Zoom' takes you off again after 'eek' in the opposite direction. It is probably best if you restrict the word 'eek' to one use per player.

Observation/ Concentration

Mirrors

Stand in a circle. Watch the leader. Leader moves very slowly using just hands, then other parts of the body and face. The others must move with the leader as if they were their reflection. The leader should stress the slowness and togetherness of this game. Illustrate the difference between mirroring and following. Alternatively this activity can be carried out in pairs.

Throw the Mask

Sit in a circle. The adult can choose someone to start, who makes a 'mask' of their face (as gruesome or funny as they like!). That person puts their hands up to their face, takes the 'mask' and 'throws' it across the circle to someone else who catches it, 'puts' it on their face by imitating it before wiping it off and making one of their own. They then pass the mask on to someone else, repeating the steps above.

Elephant and Palm Tree

Begin with everyone standing in a circle. One person stands in the middle and points to someone in the circle, saying 'elephant' or 'palm tree'. To make an elephant the person pointed to leans forward clasping their hands and swinging arms to form a trunk. The person on the left makes the elephant's left ear by holding up the left elbow and touching

the top of their head with their left hand. The person to the right of the elephant trunk does the same with their right arm to form the elephant's right ear. To make the palm tree, the person pointed to stands with arms straight up (the trunk). Those on each side hold up their outside arms, hands drooping, to make the fronds.

Bonding

Funny Foot

Form a circle. One person starts by saying 'this is my foot' but pointing at their elbow. The next person says 'this is my elbow' but points to another body part. Continue around the circle. Someone will soon forget about it having to be the wrong body part!

Snap Actions

In pairs choose 3 actions (e.g. cross legs, star jump, straight arms and legs). Then the pair count to three and do one of the actions. It's 'snap!' if they both choose the same action. This can also be played in threes.

Yes! No!

In pairs, one says 'yes' all the time and the other says 'no'. There can be variations in persuading (i.e. volume, tone of voice). Make sure both people have a turn. Initially this can be a disagreement. Can the participants change it into an agreement?

Cooperation

Role-play

The children decide on a conflict that happens to them frequently (e.g. another child wanting to borrow their bike and they don't trust them with it). Two volunteers act out the situation in front of the rest. At any point anyone can take the place of one of the actors and try to get a win-win solution, by asserting rather than using aggression or giving in unwillingly. Discuss afterwards where there was aggression, assertion or reluctant submission.

Group Jigsaws

Groups of 5 can play this game. Each one in a group is given an envelope with jigsaw pieces that are all jumbled up but which will make 5 different animals all together (each animal jigsaw is cut into three pieces). The game is to place your pieces right-side-up in front of you. There are three rules: no-one must talk, no-one may take a piece from another person but you can give your pieces to others. The aim is to complete the jigsaw animals and you can only do this by receiving pieces, never by taking them. When it is finished it is helpful to talk over with the children how they felt when they were longing to take a piece that they saw would fit into their jigsaw.

About Peace Pledge Union:

The Peace Pledge Union is the oldest secular pacifist organisation in Britain. Since 1934 it has been campaigning for a warless world. For more information see: www.ppu.org.uk