

## ROLE PLAY GAMES

### Identifying the object

**Focus center:** touching the object

The participants form a circle. One of the participants stands in the middle of the circle with his hands behind his back. The teacher slightly places an object in his hands. By using their tactile sense they have to guess the object. The object should be common and easy to recognize and still not one for everyday use (eg.: a pencil sharpener, a stamp, a comb).

**Directions during the game:** *What color is it? What shape does it have? How big is it? What is it used for?*

### Animal, bird or fish

- I. The participants sit on chairs, in a circle. One stands in the center. He points at one of the other partners and asks “Animal, bird or fish?” and then repeats one of the categories – eg: “Fish” – then starts counting to 10.

The chosen partner has to name one species of fish until the other one finishes counting down from 10. If he doesn't succeed or repeats a species that's already been named, he goes to the center and the one in the center takes his place on the chair.

- II. The one standing in the center asks “Animal, bird or fish?” and adds, for example “Eagle”. The chosen partner has to name the category - “Bird”.

### Buzz

The participants form a circle. One of them starts the game by saying “1” ; the next says “2” and continue counting up to “7” which will be replaced with the word “buzz”. The participants keep on counting and replacing every number that contains “7” with “buzz” (eg.: 17, 27). It also applies to any multiple of 7 such as 14, 21. When they reach 70, the counting continues like this “buzz – 1”, “buzz – 2”, and 77 is “buzz – buzz”.

The participant that says “buzz” at the wrong time, says the number instead of “buzz”, or says another number is taken out of the game. The counting keeps going. The game ends when there is only one left.

### Example of games adapted to math – Buzz

**Game description:** The students stand in a circle and pass a ball (real or replaced by a clap of the hands). While they pass the ball, the first one says a number (from 1 to 10), the second one says another number and the third says the sum of those two and so on; number-number-sum.

**Rules of the game:** The student that throws the ball too hard, in the wrong direction, doesn't catch it, gets the calculation wrong, mixes up the order is eliminated, but remains in the circle with his hands relaxed. If someone throws the ball to a student that has been eliminated it means he wasn't paying attention and is also eliminated. The winner is the only one left in the game.

**Observation:** The game's level of difficulty can vary and depends on the teacher's creativity:

- Counting
- Buzz
- Subtraction
- Multiplying and dividing: the first one says a number and the second one another

number; if the second one is smaller than the first, the third student has to divide them; if the second one is bigger than the first, the third student has to multiply them. Eg: 6-2-3; 2-4-8.

- Geometry: Any triangle has three angles. The sum of those three angles is 180 degrees. The first student says a number "n" that's smaller than 179 (it's easier if it's a multiple of 10) and throws the ball to the next student. The second one says another number "m" that is also smaller than 179 and throws the ball to the next one. The third student says a number "p":  $p=180-(n+m)$

**Example:** S1 has the ball and he throws it to S2 saying "90". S2 calculates  $180-90$  and says a number smaller than 90, for example "30" and throws the ball to S3. S3 calculates  $180-90-30=60$  and says "60" and throws the ball to S4. S4 announces "180" and says another number, as S1 did.

## When I leave for California

Teams of 10-12 players stand in a circle.

Part 1: The traditional game. The first player says "When I leave for California, I'll take with me a kite" (or any other object). The second player says "When I leave for California, I'll take with me a kite and a hat". The third says the kite, the hat and adds another object. The player that forgets an object is out and the game goes on until there's only one left.

Part 2: The game is similar but instead of naming the objects they have to mime it. Instead of saying "I'll take my shoes" he will put on invisible shoes. The next one repeats the action and adds a new object – plays the guitar. And the game continues like this, non-verbal.

## Rimed words

The participants stand in a circle and one in the center. He says a one-syllable word and points to a colleague that, while the one in the center counts down from 10, has to say a word that rhymes with the first one. If he doesn't succeed he takes the place in the center. If he succeeds the game continues. Repeating a word that's already been used by another player is also considered a mistake.

## Geography

The participants stand in a circle. One starts the game by naming a city, let's say, Denver. The next player has to say another city that starts with that city's last letter – "R": Rockford, and so on.

The player that doesn't succeed to name a city in a reasonable amount of time steps out of the game. The cities' names are not to be repeated even though there is more than one city with the same name. The game continues until there is only one player left.

## Six objects

The participants sit down on chairs placed in a circle. One of them is standing in the center of the circle with his eyes closed. The other players pass an object along the circle. When the student in the center claps his hands the one holding the object keeps it until the one from the center says a letter. When the one that has the object received the letter he needs to pass the object and name 6 objects that start with the given letter while the object completes a lap (if the circle is small, there should be 2 or 3 laps). If he doesn't succeed in doing this in time he has to switch places with the person from the center.

- Applicable in geography, grammar...

## Line up

The team should be formed out of 4 or more students. They have to walk out of the room and run back in and place themselves into a line up (random, but each one needs to remember his place) and then run back out. The students calmly walk back in, in a different order than before. The students that watched have to rearrange them and form the initial line up. If needed, the ones in the line up will make corrections in the end.

**Observation:** this is an excellent warm up for any observation related games, for all ages.

## My ship comes from London

This game similar to "When I leave for California". The difference is that the objects have to be in an alphabetical order. For example, the first student says "My ship comes from London loaded with apples". The next one repeats and adds "bananas" and so on until the end of the alphabet.

The one that makes a mistake steps out of the game. The game continues until there is only one left or the alphabet ends.

### Observation game

More objects (real) are placed on a tray. The students form a circle around it. After 10-15 seconds the tray is covered or taken away. Then the students write on a notebook a list with all the objects they can remember. The lists are then compared to the objects on the tray.

### Part of a whole

(many users call this game “The machine”, in the German acting school it’s called “The mechanism”)

**Focus center:** to become a part of a bigger object

One student walks on the stage and embodies a part of a bigger object, or living creature, in movement. As soon as another student understands what the one on the stage wants to express, he goes up and embodies another part of the whole. The process continues until everyone is involved in completing the whole mechanism. The students may propose any movement, sound or position to help complete the mechanism. For example: cars, abstract mechanisms, constellations, statuary groups, a flower, an animal, and body cells.

**Directions during the game:** Use your entire body to portray the part you are embodying! Take risks! Involve yourselves in the game!

### Observation:

This exercise generates spontaneity and joy. Any age category reacts with the same amount of energy. You will observe that the sounds effects come naturally when needed.

Do not give examples! If the game is clearly explained, the participants will find the most interesting objects on their own.

### Drawing the objects

**Focus center:** communicating through images

Prepare a list of objects with simple, yet clear characteristics (train, cow, cat, elephant etc.). Split the class into two groups. One student from each group will come up to the teacher and they will both be given a word (the same word) from the list. Both students run back to their teams and start communicating the word by drawing it on a piece of paper. The first team to identify and shout out the word earns a point. Continue the game until each student has had the chance to

draw for their team. For more advanced students you can also use abstract words (joy, melancholy, triumph, generosity etc.). Synonyms are also allowed.

**Directions during the game:** Draw big! Communicate!

**Observations:**

Drawing skills are not important; this is a *Spontaneous selection* game that allows students to communicate through visual stimuli. Tell the students that shout out words before being given any clues that “*This is not a guessing game.*”

The drawings can be made on a sheet of paper, a flip board, with markers, pens, pencils, paint or with chalk on a black board.

In Ancient Egypt or Ancient China the written word was represented through images. Students that play this game discover pictorial communication.

All age categories enjoy this game and almost every time they consider it useless to keep score.

**Retelling a story by adding color**

**Focus center:** on perceiving the color (the student has to picture the story with as much color as possible while listening to it)

Two students. A tells B a simple story (5-6 sentences). B retells the story he just heard and adds to it the colors he saw while listening. For Example:

A: “I was walking down the street, when, in front of the school I saw an accident between a car and a truck.”

B: “I was walking down the grey street, when, in front of the red brick school I saw an accident between a green car and a brown truck”

**Directions during the game:** See your partner! Let him see you! See the color while listening to the story! Talk directly to one another!

**Evaluation:** Actors, did you add as much color as possible? Did you modify the initial story? Spectators, do you agree?

**Observations:**

1. Tell the students to really look at the partner if you notice that they focus too much on the color and don't pay attention to the story.
2. Other characteristics can be used instead of colors: fabric, smell, sound, shape as adjectives and adverbs.

## Making up a story

### Story

**Focus center:** to continue the story from where the partner left off.

The first student from a team of 4 starts telling a made up story. As the story continues the teacher points to another student and he has to continue the story. The exercise goes on until the story is finished or the teacher stops the game.

### Rimes

The first student says a verse, the next one adds another verse and so on. All verses have to rime. To raise the level of difficulty, the teacher can randomly point to the student that has to add a verse. Also, you can eliminate the students that fail to come up with a rime.

## Making up a poem

Teams of 4 or more. Each student from the group writes down the following: an adjective, a name, a pronoun, a verb, an adverb, each on a piece of paper. Break them down into 5 piles, separating them into the 5 categories. Each student extracts one paper from each pile. Each group then has to make up a poem with those words; they can add prepositions or other words is necessary. When everyone is ready, the groups compare their poems.

## Making up a story/poem for advances classes

**Focus center:** total attention on the spoken word

Part 1: The students form a circle and the teacher names a person to start telling the story. At some point, he randomly indicates another student to continue, even though the first one was in the middle on the sentence/word. The story continues until everyone is involved.

**Directions along the way:** Do not stop the story! Follow the word! Make yourself heard! There should be only one story, one voice telling it! Follow the word! Keep the story continuous!

## Three way conversation

**Focus center:** for the student in the middle – to have two simultaneous conversations; for the ones on the side – to talk to the one standing in the middle.

Student B sits between two other students (A and C). Each student on the side choses a different subject to talk about with the one standing in the middle as if the one on the other side wouldn't exist. B has to answer to both A and C's questions, even initiate conversations, and keep talking calmly, without excluding either one of them. After a certain amount of time, the teacher can say: *Next!* A leaves, B comes to the side, C in the middle and D on the other side. To raise the level of difficulty ask actors to avoid asking short questions or answering simple questions.

**Directions during the game:** Talk and listen at the same time! Don't hurry! Do not ask questions! Let the conversation go where the partner is leading! Talk and listen at the same time!

**Evaluation:** The students avoided asking questions? B stopped listening to A when C was talking? Did A and C copy each other? Did the students take the most out of each conversation? Did B lead the conversation?

**Observations:** Simple subjects are better because information and personal opinions give the one in the center time to think and the 2 simultaneous conversations become 2 separate ones.