

Games

Animal kung fu

The group stands in a circle. They learn four actions, the monkey, the lion, snake and elephant. A kung fu master is chosen. On 3, everyone does an animal pose. (can make a kung fu noise too if they want!) Those who did the same pose as the kung fu master are out, and sit down. The winner is the last person standing.

Balance your bread!

Get the children in a circle. Give two kids a foil cake tray each (you can get these from the supermarket) with a bread roll balanced on top which they have to hold with one hand only. In their other hand they will need a rolled up newspaper taped together, which they have to use to knock the other persons bread roll from their tray (no hitting of body parts allowed!) They first person to loose their bread roll swaps with another child to play the winner of the previous round. Continue until all children arrive.

Ball through the legs game

Equipment: softish bouncy ball

The group stands in a circle, with feet shoulder width apart, feet touching the person standing next to them so there are no gaps. The aim of the game is to bat the ball around the circle and through other people's legs to get them out. You can defend with one hand, the other hand stays behind your back. If someone is out they remain in the circle. If the ball is batted through their legs they are in again, and the person who put it through their legs is out. It's important to remember who is in or out.

Balloon on a string game

Equipment: balloon and string for each person

Each person has a balloon tied round their ankle with string. The winner is the last person to have an popped balloon round their ankle.

Balloon Volley Ball

Equipment: balloon

Get the children sat in two lines with feet touching, they have to bat the balloon over the heads of the children sat opposite to get a point.

Bicycle Inner Tube Game

Equipment: two bicycle inner tubes

Get the group to stand in a circle, holding hands. Break one pair of hands apart, thread an arm through the bicycle inner tube, then rejoin the hands. The aim is to get the bicycle inner tube around the circle as quickly as possible. With two tyres either run this as two groups competing, or, once a group has got the hang of one tyre, give them a second which must go around the circle in the opposite direction to its counterpart (the tyres must cross twice).

Cat and mouse

Choose one child to be a cat and the other to be a mouse. Get the other kids to stand in rows in a square shape (e.g. 5 X 5 kids!) with their arms held up to create rows. When you say 'turn' they have to move 90 degrees so they now link arms with the person who was behind and in front of them, creating columns. Release the cat and mouse at different ends into the grid of children and say 'change' whenever the cat is getting close to the mouse to create a wall between them! The idea is for the cat to catch the mouse.

Catch it, push it.

Equipment: ball

Get the group to stand in a circle with you in the middle. When you throw the ball to a child you say either 'catch it' or 'push it' (so they push it back towards you) but they have to do the opposite action. After a practice run, children are out and have to sit down if they do the wrong action.

Charades

Write down themed things on bits of paper and get the kids to take it in turns to act them out one at a time whilst the others guess.

Clump

Everyone mingles around in the room until the leader shouts a number. All the players must try to get into a group of that number. Any groups that don't succeed are out. Can also do it so children have to get into groups of things they have in common, such as shoe size or birth month.

Crows and Cranes

The children stand in two single files, with their closest foot touching the closest foot of someone from the opposite team. A leader stands at the head of the two lines (on a chair if needs be!). The leader names one team 'Crows', and the other team 'Cranes'. When they say either 'crows' or 'cranes,' the corresponding team has to try and reach the wall on their side of the room before their opposition partner catches them. There's no penalty for being caught; just damaged pride! If the leader is feeling mean they can use misleading arm gestures for which team should run and which should chase.

Death by chocolate

Wink murder with chocolate! Get the children sat in a circle, get one child to go out of the room. Pick a murderer and give them a square of chocolate. Get the child outside to come back in and stand in the centre of the circle. The murderer has chocolate in their mouth, when they open their mouth to show chocolate to someone; the victim who catches their eye has to pretend to die by falling backwards. The child in the middle of the circle has to work out who the murderer is before everyone dies!

Dragon, princess, knight

This is a bit like rock, paper, scissors but in teams. The group is split into two even teams. They stand with quite a big gap in between them, opposite each other. Each group huddles and decides whether they want to be a dragon, princess or knight. There are actions for each of the characters. The teams approach each other and on 3 they must perform the action of their character. The dragon kills the princess, the princess makes the knight fall in love with her and the knight slays the dragon. The team that wins chases the other team and tries to tag them before they get back to their starting place. If a member of the losing team is tagged, they join the other team. This can go on until there are no members left in one team.

Egg, chicken, dinosaur, superhero

The children start off as an egg. They play rock, paper, scissors, and the winner becomes a chicken, whilst the loser stays an egg. They then play a fellow chicken, and the winner becomes a man. The loser would become an egg again. The man would play another man and the winner becomes a superhero, whilst the loser becomes a chicken. The superhero plays another superhero and the loser would become a man. The game goes on for an allotted amount of time and those who are superheroes at the end of the game win.

Eggs waddle on the ground in a little ball, chickens walk whilst flapping their 'wings' and clucking, dinosaurs roar and superheroes pretend to fly.

Fruit Salad

Get the group to sit in a circle. Go round the group assigning each person to one of four categories, each named after a fruit. When you call out a fruit all the members of that group have to get up and run round the outside of the circle as quickly as possible. You can then call out multiple fruits or even 'Fruit salad,' where everybody runs!

Getting ready to eat the chocolate

Set a large bar of chocolate on a chopping board with the scarf, hat, gloves, knife and fork next to it. Get the children sat in a circle around it. They take it in turns to roll the dice, if they get a 6 they can go put the hat, scarf and gloves on and attempt to get some chocolate with the knife and fork before the next person rolls a 6. Keep going until the chocolate has been eaten.

Getting across the gap

Before the session starts mark a 'gap' on the floor with a line of masking tape at each end of the room. Divide the group into two teams; give them each a 2 sheets of paper. The aim is to get across the room, or 'gap' using the pieces of paper. They are not allowed to touch the floor.

Giant's house

The children are in small groups of 4+ children and the leader has a list of objects that the children must create with their bodies. For example – a car, or a four poster bed. They might have 2 minutes to make each one, and then the leader judges which is the best/most imaginative. You can tell a story to go along with it – 'I was walking through a giant's house and I saw...'

Grab that sock

Two teams; one team has a sock tucked in a little to their trousers (but so most of the sock is still showing!) The aim is for the other team to try grab all the socks as quickly as possible from them. You can time how long it takes them, then swap the socks over so that the other team can try beat their time.

Group scavenger hunt

Divide the children into teams. The leader will shout out objects the children might have on them and they have to race to be the first team to deliver them to the leader – e.g. a white sock, hair bobble, shoe.

Heads and tails

Equipment: Coin

All children stand up and have to choose heads or tails. They put their hands on their heads for heads, and hands on bottom for tails. When everyone has decided the leader flips a coin and the children who are right stay standing. This continues until you have a winner.

In the river on the bank

One person plays the role of the caller, the group is split and stand in two lines facing each other about two meters apart, the gap between the two lines is the river. When you give instructions to them jump to the relevant location, either on the bank or in the river. When the group become familiar with these two call you can try to get individuals out by calling false calls, such as 'on the river' or 'in the bank'.

Islands

Equipment: large sheets of newspaper, music

Paper islands are made on the floor with a sheet of newspaper. Music is played and when the music stops everyone has to be standing fully on a piece of paper. Each round the paper is made smaller, so it's harder to fit on. Anyone who isn't on some paper is out.

Jelly slurp – Race in pairs

Each pair has to wheelbarrow to the first jelly pot. The "wheelbarrow" sucks up the jelly with the straw and wheelbarrows home. Then they change places and the pusher becomes the wheelbarrow and eats the second jelly pot. When they finish, the winning pair are the first ones back home and sitting quietly on the floor.

Keys under the chair game

Equipment: keys, chair, blindfold

One child sits in the middle of the circle, on a chair that has keys under it. They are blindfolded. One child from the circle is chosen to crawl up and grab the keys. If the person on the chair hears them move, they must point at where they think the 'thief' is. If they point accurately then they have won, and they sit down. The 'thief' must take their place on the chair.

Lining up game

Put the children into teams of around 6 and ask them to line up in order of age or birthday, shoe size, first letter of middle name without speaking to one another. They have to invent their own kind of sign language. This is made better if the children stand on a bench, and are not allowed to touch the floor as they rearrange themselves on the bench.

Maltesers in flour

Two (or more) teams line up, with a table about 20 meters away that has a plate on it. On the plate is a pile of flour, with lots of maltesers hidden in it. They go up one by one and try and grab a maltesers

but they can only use their mouths. (It is useful to have a leader at every plate if possible to help them and give them a towel afterwards).

Number cards

Equipment: Pack of playing cards

Get twelve cards, from Ace to Queen (and preferably of the same suit), and place them face down in a four by three grid. The aim is for the group to turn the cards over in order, but they can only turn over one card at a time, and if they turn over the wrong card they have to turn all the cards face down again and start all over again. This can be a race against the clock, or competing with another team.

Pictionary

Divide the children into teams of 3 or 4. Give each a pencil and paper. The leader has a list of things that the children must draw (see below) One child from each team runs to the leader and are told the first thing they must draw. They run back to their teams and draw it (no talking!) and their team has to guess what it is. Once they've guessed correctly one child tells the leader what it was and is told the next item to draw. The first team to complete the list wins

Pirate ship

The group are members of a pirate ship. One side of the room is designated 'starboard' (right) and the other port (left). The leader calls out instructions which each person has to carry out as quickly as possible.

Captain's coming – Everyone has to jump to attention and salute saying 'Aye aye Cap'n'

Captain's lady – Everyone curtsies

Scrub the decks – Down on their knees doing a scrubbing action

Climb the rigging – Everyone pretends to climb

Man overboard – Do a swimming action

Walk the plank – Children have to walk in a perfect straight line, one foot in front of the other with arms outstretched to the sides

Admiral's coming – Same as captain's coming but they have to stay saluting until the command admiral's gone – so they can be caught out

Shark attack – Use arms as a big snapping jaws of the shark

Hit the deck – Lie down on floor as quickly as possible

Port – run to left of the deck

Starboard – run to right of the deck

Bombs overhead – crouch on floor with hands over head

Rapidough

Equipment: Tub of playdough for each team, list of objects to mould

Each team has a tub of playdough. The leader has a list of objects/items that the teams have to sculpt. One member of the team will run up to the leader, who will whisper the item to them. They have to go back and their team has to guess what they are making. Once they have guessed, another team member runs up and gets the next item on the list. The first team to complete the list wins.

'Shoe in pan' game!

Equipment: 4 pans

Divide the group into 4 teams. Each team has a corner of the room. Each member takes off their shoes and puts them in the centre of the room. The aim of the game is to bring back as many shoes as possible to your team, using a pan, not your hands. When the game starts, one member of each team runs to the centre of the room with their pan and brings a shoe back. Only one member is allowed out at once, like a relay. They take it in turns until there are no more shoes in the middle. The team then gets points for each shoe they have. They get 2 points if the shoe belongs to someone in their team, and 1 point if the shoe belongs to a member of another team. This adds an extra challenge, to try and find their own shoes in the pile. The team with the most points wins.

'Signals' game

The group sits in a circle. One member, the 'spotter' leaves the room. Each member of the circle decides on a signal, (as silly as you like) e.g. jumping up off their chair, pretending to brush their hair,

showing off their muscles. The group will signal to one another by doing someone else's signal, whilst the 'spotter' tries to work out where the signal is. Before the spotter comes back in, decide who is going to start. The spotter enters the circle and stands in the middle. The first person will do their signal, then the signal of the person they are 'passing' to. The next person must do their signal then the signal of another person they are passing to. The spotter must 'catch' the signal when someone is 'passing' it. So the aim of those in the circle is to avoid the spotter seeing the signals, and they must be fast in passing it on.

Simon Says

One person plays the role of "Simon", and he or she stands facing the crowd. Simon explains the rules: "I am Simon. I will give you instructions to do various actions, and you must imitate my actions. I will instruct you to do various things by saying 'Simon says, do something', where something is an action like touching your head, waving your hand, and so on. If you do something without me saying 'Simon says', then you are eliminated for that round."

Simon (the game facilitator) then proceeds to say various commands (while demonstrating the action), sometimes beginning them with 'Simon says', and other times not.

These commands can include the following (be creative!): children can have a go at being Simon too!

- Pat your head
- Smile
- Wave hello
- Flex your biceps
- Touch your toes
- Turn around

Spot the difference

Get a volunteer to stand up in front of all the children, then get them to go out of the room and change their appearance somehow, e.g. hair clip, put a badge on, roll a sock down, take a jumper off, put a hat on, etc. First one to spot the difference gets to go next.

Stuck in the mud

Choose two people to be 'on'. Everyone else has to move around the room and try and avoid being tagged by them. If they do get caught they have to stand with their arms held up. If someone else manages to get under their arm they are free again. The game finishes when everyone is 'stuck' or you think it is time for new people to be 'on'.

Tangle game

Get the children (about 8) to stand in a circle. They then have to join hands with people from all over the circle so they are tangled. They then have to try and untangle themselves without breaking hands, by twisting, turning, going over and under each other etc. The first team to get out of the tangle wins.

Tea towel game

Equipment: tea towel

Divide the group in two. Have the teams line up opposite one another, with a gap in between. Each person is given a number. For example, if there are 12 people in total, each team will have a person who has a number between 1 and 6. A tea towel is placed in between the teams. The leader shouts a number. If it is 2, the number twos from both teams will run from their line. The winner is the first one to grab the tea towel and run back to their line. However, if someone grabs the tea towel, and the other number 2 tags them before they are back in the line, the 'tigger' wins. Give the teams points for each win. You can also call two numbers, so you will have 4 people racing for the tea towel, and the two can work together

Tea towel game 2

Equipment: tea towels, two tennis balls (or wooden ducks if you have them)

Divide the group into two teams. Each team forms pairs, each with a tea towel between them. By holding the tea towel loosely then pulling it tight, pairs should aim to fling the tennis ball/duck into the air, to be caught by the next pair's tea towel. Teams do this until they have conveyed the ball/duck across the room.

Two truths one lie

Get children sat in a circle. Each child has to think of two true things and one lie about themselves. Take it in turns to go around and share your three facts. Everyone has to try and work out which one is a lie.

Who am I?

Equipment: *Post it notes with famous characters*

Write a list of famous characters or people the children will know on post it notes. By asking other children questions with yes/no answers they have to work out who they are. You can do famous pairs, e.g. Wallace and Gromit. The first pair that successfully finds each other wins.

Who's got the key?

Equipment: *key*

Stay standing in a circle. Give the group a long piece of string with a key or a ring on it. Make sure everyone has some string and tie the end to make a big circle. One person goes out of the room while you decide who starts with the key in their hand. They come back in and stand in the centre of the circle. The aim of the game is to pass it all the way around the circle without the person in the middle being able to guess who has it in their hand at any one time. They get three guesses then they're out. You can change people a few times.

http://www.funandgames.org/Games_icebreakers.html

<http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/>

Creative prayer ideas

- Buy a bag of skittles, and assign a category to each colour. For example, green is family, blue is friends, red is food, yellow is school. The children take it in turns to take a sweet, and the colour they take is the category they pray about. They might take a blue sweet and thank God for their best friend, for example.
- Similar to above, a prayer dice, where you roll the dice to decide what to thank God for.