Otter Games

Games and play are an essential part of Otter learning. Meetings should include at least one or two “steam-off” games.

Ice Breaker & Warm Up Games

I Like to Move Like This

This is a great way to learn names and get a little bit of movement into the start of a meeting. Stand in a circle. The first player says “My name is [NAME] and I like to move like this!” and demonstrates a movement. Then everyone says “Hi [NAME]!” and does the same movement. Go around in a circle until everyone has had an opportunity to say their name and do a movement.

Steam-Off Games

Animal Habitats

Designate parts of the play area as different types of habitat (plains, farm, forest, lake, etc.) Name an animal, and have the kids run to the part of the play area that they think that animal lives in. Get the kids thinking about how some animals can be found in more than one habitat so not all of them may run to the same place every time. You can add an additional element by having the kids do a specific movement as they go to each habitat, or by having them move like the animal that you call out.

Chuck the Chicken

Divide into two teams (running and fielding) and decide who will start with the chicken.

To begin the game, the player in possession of the chicken will call “CHUCK THE CHICKEN” and then throw the chicken to an open space on the field. As soon as they do so, the running team gets into a tight circle formation and the player who threw the chicken begins to run around the circle, scoring a point for each lap they complete.

To stop the running team from scoring a large number of points, the fielding team must field the chicken. To do so, a player from the fielding team runs and collects the chicken. Once in possession of the chicken, they must wait for the rest of their teammates to line up behind them. As soon as all of the members of the fielding team are in a line, they begin to pass the chicken to the back of the line using an over/under pattern. Once the chicken makes it to the last player in the line, that player calls “CHUCK THE CHICKEN”, throws the chicken, and the teams exchange roles.

The game ends once every player has had a turn to throw and run.

Jackpot

This game introduces the idea of getting warmer/getting colder with guessing or motion. One kid is blindfolded and holds a wooden spoon. Then we place a prize in an upsidedown soup pot. Then they crawl, tapping, trying to find the pot. Kids says 'warmer' or 'colder' to indicate how close the kid is getting. Getting the resounding bang on the pot is very satisfying, and of course, the prize can be as small as you wish.

Tag Variations

Everybody's It

In this Freeze Tag variant, everyone runs around trying to tag everyone else at the same time. If you get tagged, you are frozen until the person who tagged you gets tagged, then you are free to run again!

Board Games & Card Games

Spot It

This is a great game for working on observation. You can easily play with a large group and it is very small and portable, which makes it a perfect option for meetings or camping trips.

OutFoxed

This game takes up a little bit more space and has smaller pieces, so it's best to play at a table, but it's a great game for practicing deductive reasoning. It's a 4 player game, but you can easily play with more by using extra player tokens. It's a cooperative rather than a competitive game, which can also promote teamwork and working together.

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