

ARTISTS

STRIVING TO END POVERTY

Open Source Games Guide

Many thanks to all of the ASTEP Volunteer Teaching Artists who have contributed their games and made this resource possible.

ASTEP Open Source Games Guide

Please enjoy picking your fellow Teaching Artists' Brains and sharing in their activities. Note: not all games are going to be appropriate for all groups of students or participants. Use site or program best practices to guide you in selecting an appropriate game for your purposes, always erring on the side of making your students feel safe, comfortable, and able to freely participate.

ASTEP Open Source Games Guide	2
Wax Museum	7
Ensemble, Concentration, Focus, Listening	7
Movement, Storytelling	7
Donkey	7
Ensemble, Listening, Concentration, Focus	7
Storytelling, Silliness	7
Word Connect	8
Listening, Improvisation, Creativity, Quick Thinking	8
Storytelling	8
Baffling Ball	8
Communication, Memory	8
Movement, Storytelling	8
Alphabet Soup	9
Collaboration, Creative Problem Solving	9
Movement	9
Dance Improv Circle	9
Collaboration, Creativity	9
Dance	9
Move the Hat	9
Imagination, Creativity, Use of Space	9
Storytelling	9
Giants, Wizards, and Elves Version A	10
Teamwork, Physical exploration, Silliness, Commitment to a role	10
Movement	10
Giants, Wizards, and Elves Version B	11
Teamwork, Physical exploration, Silliness, Commitment to a role	11
Movement	11
Vocal Improv	11
Improvisation, Imagination	11
Music/Sound	11

Baa- Baashiva!	12
Teamwork, Confidence, Readiness, Rhythm	12
Music	12
Monster	12
Listening, Creativity, Teamwork	12
Storytelling	12
Stone Cold Dance Off - Version A (Dance Battle)	12
Creativity, Silliness, Commitment to a role	12
Dance	12
Dance Battle Version B	12
Confidence, Creativity	12
Dance	12
Tableau	13
Collaboration, Creativity	13
Storytelling	13
Tea and Toast	13
Listening, Collaboration, Silliness	13
Movement	13
Name Game Version A:	13
Silliness,	13
Movement	13
Name Game Version B (Extended Version)	14
Memory, Silliness	14
Movement	14
Superhero Name Game Version A:	14
Creativity, Self-esteem Building	14
Vocalizing	14
Superhero Name Game Version B (Extended Version):	14
Creativity, Memory, Self-esteem Building	14
Verbal Storytelling	14
Walk, Stop, Jump, Clap:	14
Listening Skills, Agility, Concentration, Focus, Impulses	14
Movement	14
Number Focus:	15
Mindfulness, Taking turns	15
Meditation	15
Pony:	15
Silliness, Creativity, Communication	15

Music, Dance, Singing	15
Rant:	15
Communication, Quick Thinking	15
Storytelling	15
Entourage	16
Collaboration, Teamwork, Silliness	16
Teamwork	16
You	16
Communication, Volume, Projection	16
Vocalizing, Storytelling	16
What are you doing?	17
Creativity, Problem Solving, Quick Thinking	17
Storytelling, Improvisation	17
This is a Watch:	17
Creativity, Quick Thinking, Communication	17
Storytelling, Improvisation	17
One Word Story:	18
Narrative Building, Improvisation	18
Storytelling	18
Sing Out Louise!	18
Teamwork, Confidence building	18
Singing	18
Go To the Zoo / Slow Motion Mr. Hit:	19
Team building, Collaboration, Silliness	19
Storytelling, Movement	19
Zombie:	19
Silliness, Teamwork, Silliness	19
Storytelling, Character work	19
The Game of Ha:	20
Teamwork, Collaboration, Confidence	20
Movement	20
The Levels Game	20
Teamwork, Memorization	20
Movement	20
Ninja	21
Improvisation, Building patience	21
Movement	21
Bah!	21

Building patience, Rhythm	22
Dance/Performance	22
Wah!:	22
Interpretation, Peer trust, Teamwork	22
Movement	22
As You Cometh and Halteth:	23
Following Directions	23
Art Form:	23
Mr. Hit / Duke Frederick	23
Following Directions	23
Art Form:	23
Five Seconds:	24
Following Directions,	24
Movement	24
Statue Game:	24
Teamwork, Peer trust	24
Movement	24
No Seeing/No Speaking	25
Teamwork, Peer trust	25
Movement	25
Wind in the Willows:	25
Gentleness, Moderation, Safe Physical Interactions	25
Movement	25
Silent Scream:	25
Physical Exploration, Meditation	25
Movement	25
Three Way Conversation:	26
Creativity, Improvisation, Silliness	26
Improvisation	26
Marker Dance:	26
Silliness, Physical Exploration and Movement	26
Dance	26
Zip Zap Zop	26
Collaboration, Silliness	26
Dance	26
London Statue	27
Creativity, Communication	27
Dance	27

Pass the Sound and Movement	27
Collaboration,	27
Dance	27
The Yarn Game	27
Improvisation, Group participation	27
Storytelling	27

Wax Museum

Ensemble, Concentration, Focus, Listening

Movement, Storytelling

Requirements: 3 or more players and a spacious, safe room.

Recommendations:

1. Have the players gather in a large room, called the "Museum." One person, who is "it" should then leave the room and count to 20.
2. The players then pose like statues all over the space (with a theme such as the super hero room, or the zoo animal room, the space room etc.) and the person who is "it" comes back and pretends to be a museum guide.
3. The guide has a 'torch light' that whenever they shine it on whichever statue, those must remain frozen.
4. When the guide has their back to the statue, or is not looking in their direction, they can move or make a different pose until the guide looks back again.
5. When the guide spots someone moving, that player becomes a tourist, and must then follow the museum guide.
6. Continue to play until only one statue is left. They become the new museum guide.

Donkey

Ensemble, Listening, Concentration, Focus

Storytelling, Silliness

Requirements: 5 or more players and a spacious, safe room.

Before starting, make sure that you have 5 or more players and a spacious, safe room.

1. Players stand in a circle with the leader in the center. The leader points to a player and calls out a figure.
2. That player, plus the two players on either side of him or her, rushes to make the shape of that figure before the leader counts three. For example, if the leader calls "Elephant one-two-three," the player pointed to makes a long trunk with one arm, while the people on either side each form an ear in a "C" shape. If any of the three people fail to get into position by the time the leader counts to three, that player switches places with the leader and calls the next shape.

Possible Variations:

Besides shapes, the center player can also point to a player and call "Donkey one-two-three", which simply means player must FREEZE in place. If the player pointed to moves when "Donkey" is called, they switch places with the center player.

Possible shapes include:

- **Palm Tree:** The center player throws their arms up in the air and sways back and forth while the players on either side turn inwards and repeat that same motion.

- **Flemingo:** The centre person makes themselves a beak and the two players either side stand on one leg facing middle person.
- **Toaster:** The player pointed to jumps up and down in place (the bread), while other players hold hands across his/her front and back to make the toaster.
- **Elephant:** The player pointed to makes a long trunk with one arm, while other players form ears in a “C” shape on either side.
- **Bippity, Bippity, Bop:** When the caller says “Bippity, bippity bop” the player pointed to must say “Bop” before the caller does. If caller just says “Bop” the player must say nothing

Possible Variations:

Create Your Own Shapes: Use vocabulary from the curriculum and have the students create a three person shape to represent the vocabulary word.

To make the game less difficult, the leader can count to 5 (or however high seems appropriate) instead of 3.

Word Connect

Listening, Improvisation, Creativity, Quick Thinking

Storytelling

Requirements: 2 or more players.

1. Start this activity in a circle.
2. The activity begins with one person saying any random word.
3. Turn by turn every person says another word which is related to the previous one.

For example: if someone says red, the next person can say apple or blood etc. It is wise to give content parameters around this game so that it remains appropriate for all students.

This game allows the students impulses to fly. It’s a great way to not overthink and just say the first thing that comes to your mind. Certain choices made by the student can help us understand their unconscious thoughts/likes/dislikes/fears.

Baffling Ball

Communication, Memory

Movement, Storytelling

Requirements: 5 or more players, a soft ball of any kind, and a spacious, safe room.

1. Have the group stand in a circle and throw the ball across to someone else.
2. As they do step 1, they need to say the name of the person to whom they are throwing the ball.
3. Once everyone has been thrown the ball, you start again continuing the same order that is was thrown before. If the ball is dropped you have to start again.

This game helps with multitasking. The group has to throw the ball, remember names, remember the order, and work together all at the same time.

Alphabet Soup

Collaboration, Creative Problem Solving

Movement

Requirements: 8 or more players. This game is great for bigger groups.

1. Divide the groups into teams of 4 or 6.
2. You, as the teacher, call out different letters of the alphabet. The groups then have to form that letter using their bodies. They must be lying on the floor and everyone on the team has to be used for each letter.
3. Go quickly between letters so there isn't much downtime and keep a score for each team.
4. The students have to work as a team and communicate clearly with each other while making the letter. The first team to complete gets a point.

Dance Improv Circle

Collaboration, Creativity

Dance

Requirements: At least 3 people, and a spacious, safe area to spread out. This is a good ice breaker.

1. Have the group stand in a circle and explain that one person at a time will do some movement. It doesn't have to be specifically dance, and the rest of the group repeats it together.
2. Go around the circle until everyone has gone.
3. Then reverse the circle and have the group come up with different moves.

Possible Variations:

There could be a theme that goes along with this. You could do animal impersonations around the circle or tap steps if you're in tap class. Get creative! Play music! This collective work gets the group to work well as an ensemble.

Move the Hat

Imagination, Creativity, Use of Space

Storytelling

Requirements: This activity is great for any age group and size.

1. Establish a "start" and "stop" line around 10 feet apart, or just enough room for them to work with!
2. Students Individually or in small groups are told there is an object in front of them on the floor, in this case: a hat. For the purposes of the exercise, it can be any manageable object that is around or even invisible/imaginary.

3. The student is then instructed that they are to move the hat from the start line to the stop line, but they have to move it according to the prompt the teacher gives.
 - a. Some examples: it weighs 500lbs, it's on fire, it smells very bad, etc. Anything the instructor can come up with! Optional addition: rather than announcing the prompt out loud, the teacher can tell only the active student the prompt and the students in the audience guess what it was! There is no "wrong answer" to this game, and it can be adapted in a variety of ways depending on the students' needs.

Giants, Wizards, and Elves Version A

Teamwork, Physical exploration, Silliness, Commitment to a role
Movement

Requirements: 6 or more players. Involves no materials and can be played inside or outside.

1. This game involves two teams who will act as one of 3 characters: giants, wizards, and elves. It's a combination of "Rock, Paper, Scissors" and "Capture the Flag."
2. When a player acts out a character, he or she does the specific hand motions and also makes the noise associated with the character:
 - a. Giants. Stand on your tippy toes, raise your arms like a giant, and make a menacing growling noise: "Rarr!"
 - b. Wizards. Crouch slightly, as wizards are a bit shorter. Wave your fingers as though you're casting a magical spell, and make a magical noise: "Shaazaam!"
 - c. Elves. Crouch down very low, cup your hands around your ears, and make a high pitched elf noise: "Eeeee!"
 - i. The following determines who beats who: Giants beat elves, because giants are able to "squash" elves. Elves beat wizards because they outsmart them. Wizards beat giants because they are able to zap them with a magic spell. If both teams show the same character, no one wins. Rounds keep repeating until one team wins (the other team is completely captured). Make sure everyone knows the motions and sounds, and you can practice until everyone knows each character. Split students evenly into two teams and divide them into separate sides of the room in a designated "safe zone."
3. For each round, both teams huddle and choose if their entire team will become a giant, wizard, or elf. When ready, both teams then line up and stand facing each other, about five or six feet apart. At the start of each round, the leader says "Three, two, one, go!!"
4. At this point, each team acts out the character they chose (giant, wizard, or elf). As soon as they do this, the winner tries to catch the loser — converting many people over to their team as they can. The loser tries to retreat back to their own side to be safe for that round. If captured, a person now belongs to the other team.

Giants, Wizards, and Elves Version B

Teamwork, Physical exploration, Silliness, Commitment to a role

Movement

Requirements: 6 or more players and a spacious, safe room. Works well for large groups.

1. Divide group into two teams by counting off (1,2,1,2,1,2...).
2. Establish boundaries. Each team has a "goal line" that is equidistant from the middle "no man's land" (perhaps no person's land is better) - this is a 3 foot swath of space that neither team enters until the chase.
3. Teams meet and decide - as a group - whether they are going to be giants, wizards, or elves. ALL PLAYERS ON THE TEAM MUST BE THE SAME THING.
4. Both teams approach the no man's land and stand on their side so there's 3 ft separating them.
5. A judge counts to 3 and on 3 each team does the symbol of the character they chose.
 - a. Giants - hold both hands up, growl;
 - b. Wizards - hands in front like you are casting a spell;
 - c. Elves - squat and put your hands on either side of your head with one finger up like you have elfish ears.
 - i. It's like paper rock scissors: giants beat wizards, wizards beat elves, elves beat giants. The team that "beats" the other chases the team that is "beaten". Members of "beater" team try to tag members of beaten team before the "beaten" team gets to their goal line. Anyone who is tagged goes to the other team. If both teams put up the same symbol no one chases each other both teams return to their own goal line to conference and decide what symbol they will do in the next round.
6. After the round the teams re-gather by their own goal line to decide what symbol they are going to do next time, then re-approach no man's land and the process starts over. The goal is to get all players on your team.

Vocal Improv

Improvisation, Imagination

Music/Sound

Requirements: 3 or more players.

This is originally something I did in vocal ensembles, but can be applied to other performance types.

1. One person (often the instructor) starts with a repeating sound (for example, a sung melody, beat boxing, body drumming rhythm, soft clapping or snapping).
2. Then the remaining students join in, copying this "loop."
3. Then one at a time, students create their own "loop" to layer on the existing one(s) to build a fully collaborative piece/"song."

It's different every time, and allows students to engage at their comfort level and hopefully get bolder in their choices over time as they get comfortable. Also, students get to use a different sort of active listening for non-verbal sounds as communication. Plus, no requirements needed other than the students themselves!

Baa- Baashiva!

Teamwork, Confidence, Readiness, Rhythm

Music

Requirements: At least 4 players

1. Everyone stands in a circle and creates a beat with their hands.
2. One person, usually the leader of the exercise, shares the baa with the person beside them by saying "BAA!" and they carry the baa through the circle with each student sharing the baa on the beat.

Possible Variations:

Once everyone understands the basic baa and it goes around the circle a few times, you can change the rules by adding a change in direction, throwing it across the room, etc.

Monster

Listening, Creativity, Teamwork

Storytelling

Requirements: At least 4 students

1. Have students' group in clumps of 4-10 people. Introduce themselves to the instructor or leader of exercise as one unit/monster.
2. Instructor asks the monster questions. They must listen to each other and answer as one using more than one-word responses.
 - a. Use yes or no questions minimally.
3. They must focus on listening and releasing expectations. Instructor and students should also be mindful to not let one individual monopolize the monster's speech. Probably works best with larger groups and older students.

Stone Cold Dance Off - Version A (Dance Battle)

Creativity, Silliness, Commitment to a role

Dance

Requirements: At least 4 students, and a safe, spacious room. Works well with small and/or younger groups, and students who have a lot of energy.

1. Everyone stands in two lines facing each other.
2. Two people dance with straight faces. They must stare and look at each other the entire time with a stone-cold face.
3. They dance battle until one student breaks their stone-cold face.

Dance Battle Version B

Confidence, Creativity

Dance

Requirements: 4 or more players, and a safe, spacious room. Works well with larger groups of students.

1. Start in a circle.
2. Go around the circle and have each student say their name and do a dance move.
3. Split the room into groups of three.
4. Each student picks their three favorite moves and teaches them to their group.
5. Once all students have done this they have a dance with nine moves.
6. The groups face off in a dance battle.

Tableau

Collaboration, Creativity

Storytelling

Requirements: 2 or more players

1. Divide the class into two groups.
 - a. Group A is the audience and Group B pick a scenario out of a hat like "daycare center", "the Olympics", or "fire".
2. Group B, one by one, then forms a tableau of the scenario (e.g. one student lays down as a toddler having a temper tantrum, one student pretends to play with blocks, one student poses as the teacher).
3. Group A guesses the scenario.

Similar to charades, though scenarios are used in place of media selections.

Tea and Toast

Listening, Collaboration, Silliness

Movement

Requirements: 4 or more players and a safe, spacious room

1. Students are in a circle. Three students are involved in each action.
2. If you point at a student and say "tea!", that student links arms with the two students next to them and they form a teapot pouring tea to the right. The student on the left links the right arm and puts their left hand on their hip. The student on the right makes a spout with their right hand and links with their left hand.
3. If you point at a student and say "toast!" they remain still while the students to their right and left turn towards them and open their arms to make a toaster. Then the center person jumps up as if they are "popped".

Name Game Version A:

Silliness,

Movement

Requirements: 2 or more players. Works well as an ice breaker.

1. Students stand in a circle.
2. Teaching Artist starts by explaining the game and is the first to say their name along with an action.
3. The whole class repeats the name and action, and moves on.

Name Game Version B (Extended Version)

Memory, Silliness

Movement

Requirements: 2 or more players. Works well as an ice breaker for small groups.

1. Students stand in a circle.
2. Teaching Artist starts by explaining the game and is the first to say their name along with an action.
3. The whole class repeats the name and action, and moves on.
4. The person saying their name/action has to start by doing everyone's prior to theirs and ending with their own personalized name/action.

Superhero Name Game Version A:

Creativity, Self-esteem Building

Vocalizing

Requirements: 2 or more players. Works well as an ice breaker.

1. Students stand in a circle.
2. Teaching Artist starts by explaining the game and is the first to say their "superhero name" (i.e. Leaping Lizzy) along with an action.
3. The whole class repeats the name and action, and moves on.

Superhero Name Game Version B (Extended Version):

Creativity, Memory, Self-esteem Building

Verbal Storytelling

Requirements: 2 or more players. Works well as an ice breaker for small groups.

1. Students stand in a circle.
2. Teaching Artist starts by explaining the game and is the first to say their "superhero name" (i.e. Leaping Lizzy) along with an action.
3. The whole class repeats the name and action, and moves on.
4. The next person saying their name/action has to start by doing everyone's prior to theirs and ending with their own personalized name/action.

Walk, Stop, Jump, Clap:

Listening Skills, Agility, Concentration, Focus, Impulses

Movement

Requirements: 3 or more players and a safe, spacious room

1. Have the students walk around the room changing direction every so often.
2. Then ask them to touch a certain color that is present in the room.
 - a. You can use a countdown depending on the group. You can ask for the group to: (1) form a line diagonally or horizontally with a countdown, (2) gather in the center as close as they can and (3) as far away as they can. Each time, return back to walking around the room. Then introduce the 4 cues: "Walk", "Stop", "Jump", and "Clap". Make sure to explain each cue: say that walk means walk, stop means stop and so on.

3. Call out these cues multiple times in random order. Then rearrange the cues. Say something like, "Now Walk means Stop and Stop means Walk". Reiterate that Jump still means Jump and Clap still means Clap.
4. After a few times, switch Jump and Clap. Remind the students of the previous switch of Stop and Walk. Speed up the cues and see what happens.

Variations/Adaptations:

- Start off slowly, one command at a time, with younger children and add to the challenge only when ready.
- For more of a challenge with older students, could create other words and assign motions to them.
- Add the words "Twizzle" and "Swizzle" and assign them each a different movement. Those words become opposites when all words are reversed.

Number Focus:

Mindfulness, Taking turns

Meditation

Requirements: 2 or more students and a quiet space.

1. Students sitting in a circle focusing either energy into the center, and not on each other.
2. Count to 25 and one person speaks at a time. Once two people talk at the same time, it's time to start over.

Pony:

Silliness, Creativity, Communication

Music, Dance, Singing

Requirements: 5 or more players

Song:

Here comes _____ (insert student's name) ridin' that pony / Ridin' on that crazy pony / Here comes _____ ridin' that pony / This is how they do it / Front to front to front my pony / Back to back to back my pony / Side to side to side my pony / This is how they do it!!!

1. The group stands in a circle in sings the song below, while one student is in the middle, busting out their craziest dance moves!
2. When it comes to "front to front to front," the student in the center goes up to someone in the circle and dances with them first from the front, then back to back, then side to side.
3. Now the student from outside of the circle moves to the center and the song begins again.

Rant:

Communication, Quick Thinking

Storytelling

Requirements: 4 or more players and a safe, spacious room

Arrange students in a circle. Explain what the word RANT means.

Pair students up: one student is Student A and one is Student B. Suggest various topics for students to practice RANTING about to their partner.

1. One person in the circle begins by saying "(any word)." The person to the right then says "which is like (any word)" This continues around the circle. **Introduce a beat** so that students do not have much time to *think* about their word. (**Free association, no right/wrong answer**)
2. When one person in the circle likes another person's "any word," they can shout "RANT!" The person who originally said the word then goes into the center of the circle and **RANTS** about that word – *passionately!* Their rant can be nonsensical, as long as they keep speaking. (The other students in the circle should find a way to support the person in the middle. For example, lean in and snap on a beat, encouraging them on.)
3. Then, when a person likes a word that the **RANTER** says in their **RANTING**, that person can shout that word. The **RANTER** goes back to his/her spot in the circle, and the person to their right takes that word in and says "which is like (any word)," which continues around the circle until another **RANT** is requested.

Entourage

Collaboration, Teamwork, Silliness

Teamwork

Requirements: Even number of players. Good for a large group.

Everyone in the group begins with a partner.

1. Each couple plays rock/paper/scissors until someone wins. The loser becomes a member of the winner's entourage, cheering them on as the winner seeks out another winner to play another round of rock/paper/scissors. (TA can model crazy wild cheering.)
2. As additional rounds are played, the number of winners becomes smaller and smaller as the entourage groups become larger and larger. Eventually the entire group becomes the entourage of one person.

This game moves very quickly and is a lot of fun. It is fantastic with a large group, and it gets the positive energy in the group pumping. There is no let down of "I lost" or "My team lost" because the losers are immediately absorbed into a new team of winners - everyone feels like a winner!

You

Communication, Volume, Projection

Vocalizing, Storytelling

Requirements: 5 players or more and enough space to create a circle.

1. Participants stand in a circle. One person starts by gesturing towards someone else in the circle and saying "You."

2. That participant then gestures and says "you" passing it to another person in the circle. There is no particular order or sequence for the "you", but as it is passed, the energy of gesture and volume of the "you" increases. This continues until one participant achieves such energy and volume that the person to whom she is passing the "you" realizes that this level of energy cannot be topped.
3. The energy and volume then begins to decrease in steps until the gesture disappears and the "you" is not heard, only mouthed. From there, the mouthing stops, the "you" is passed with movement of the eyes, and eventually nothing happens to indicate who has the "you", but it is still being passed around the circle.

This activity promotes listening skills, energy regulation, and helps students connect.

What are you doing?

Creativity, Problem Solving, Quick Thinking

Storytelling, Improvisation

Requirements: 4 players or more and enough space to create a circle.

1. Participants stand in a circle. One person is in the middle, performing an action- i.e., digging a hole.
 2. Someone in the circle joins them and performs this action and asks, "Hey Ryan, What are you doing?"
 3. The original person says something that they ARE NOT doing, i.e., roller-skating under water.
 4. Then they exit the circle while the new person "roller-skates under water", a new person joins and performs this actions...asks "what are you doing" and this repeats until everyone gets a turn.
- This can also be done in a circle where everyone continues their action until they get a new one (everyone is doing an action at the same time).

The object of the game is to pass the object or objects around the circle without stopping or breaking the rhythm of the script - eventually, the group should be able to complete a circle in which everyone has an object.

This is a Watch:

Creativity, Quick Thinking, Communication

Storytelling, Improvisation

Requirements: 5 players or more

Materials: As many one-syllable objects as participants.

1. The GIVER has a watch, and turns to the person on her right:

Script:

GIVER: (*Offering watch*) This is a Watch.

RECEIVER: (*To GIVER*) A What?

GIVER: (*Replying*) A Watch.

RECEIVER: (*Repeating*) A What?

GIVER: (*Replying*) A Watch.

RECEIVER: Oh, A Watch. (*Takes watch*)

2. The RECEIVER now has the watch, and becomes the GIVER with the person to her right, who is now the RECEIVER, and they repeat the same script.
3. When there are two objects in the circle, someone is the GIVER and the RECEIVER simultaneously, and must say both sets of lines.

Notes: It is best to move from one object to two, then to three, and so on from there. Do not add another object until the group has successfully completed a circle with the number before.

One Word Story:

Narrative Building, Improvisation

Storytelling

Requirements: Any amount of players!

“We have been talking about theatre and plays and essentially what we are talking about is a story. Actors and everybody else involved in making a play are really just trying to figure out the best way to tell a story. Also, everybody works together to create the story. So today we are going to tell a story together. However, we are only going to be able to tell this story ONE WORD AT A TIME. We will go around the circle two or three times and see if our story can have a beginning, middle, and end. Everyone will say one word to keep the story going. Even if you feel like the person who went before you did not make sense, try to incorporate that into your story!”

Sing Out Louise!

Teamwork, Confidence building

Singing

Requirements: 5 players or more

This is a super simple, no strategy warm-up for almost any age group to do to get them warmed-up and working together.

1. The group gets together in a circle
2. One person starts singing any kind of song they know. They could be pop songs, musical theatre, happy birthday, anything.
3. As soon as someone else around the circle hears a WORD or PHRASE that reminds them of another song, they jump into the middle, tap the person out, and immediately LAUNCH into their song.
4. The group works to protect the one in the middle and empower. People can help with lyrics, clap, sing along, etc.

Go To the Zoo / Slow Motion Mr. Hit:

Team building, Collaboration, Silliness

Storytelling, Movement

Requirements: 6 players or more. Works well for large groups.

1. Start in a circle. The first game is **GO**: The group says “AS YOU LIKE IT” together three times to create the beat.
2. Then the first person says “AS”, the second “YOU”, the third “LIKE”, the fourth “IT”, and the fifth “GO”.
3. Then add another GO at the end (“As You Like It Go Go”). Add a “GO” each time (3, 4, etc).
4. The person who messes it up will be the leader in **ZOO**:
 - a. The leader jumps into the middle of the circle and points to someone in the circle – the two people standing on either side of him/her have to help him/her create an animal shape that the leader calls out. There are three animals the leader can say:
 1. Giraffe: middle person uses both hands to shape the long neck and the other two people kneel down to become the legs of the giraffe.
 2. Elephant: middle person’s hands become the elephant nose and the other two make the big ears of the elephant.
 3. Rabbit: middle person makes a rabbit face with their teeth out and makes a rabbit tail with their hands. The other two raise their arms as rabbit ears.
5. If anyone makes any mistakes, they becomes Mr. Hit:
6. When Mr. Hit is trying to get you, you have to call out the name of someone in the group, and that person becomes Mr. Hit. This part is played all in slow motion.
7. When someone is caught by Mr. Hit or makes a mistake, everyone goes back to the circle and begins again with GO.

Zombie:

Silliness, Teamwork, Silliness

Storytelling, Character work

Materials: 1 chair per student.

Requirements: 4 players or more

Similar to Musical Chairs

1. Everyone begins sitting in a chair. To start the game we need one volunteer. Place the volunteer some distance away from their chair in the room. (Remind kids to be safe!)
2. The zombie wants to sit in an empty chair and everyone else wants to prevent the zombie from getting to an empty chair. The only way to prevent the zombie from getting to an empty chair is to sit in the chair yourself, thus creating a new empty chair!
3. Once you get up, you **MUST** find a new chair.

Zombies must move like a zombie (slow shuffle, low moaning etc), but all other players may move freely at whatever speed they wish.

4. If the zombie reaches and sits in a chair, he becomes human again. Anyone remaining standing becomes the new zombie. If there are multiple people standing, the last person standing must be the new zombie.
5. All new zombies MUST get down on the ground in body or spirit and pretend to come back to life.

The Game of Ha:

Teamwork, Collaboration, Confidence

Movement

Requirements: 5 or more players. Works well with larger groups.

The leader and students should remove shoes, socks and rings for safety.

1. Form a standing circle. The leader of the game introduces the sound HA, it is deep and guttural. The students should repeat it at least three times. The leader then demonstrates the game.
2. **To begin the game the first step you need to make eye contact with someone across the circle (form a non verbal agreement).** Next you run to that person and stop in front of them and at the same time both people jump as high as they can in to the air. At the peak of their jump they clap a double high five and both say HA.
3. The person who just ran now takes the receiver's position. The receiver must now make eye contact with someone else in the circle and repeat the same sequence of movements. Side coaching is helpful.
4. When the students succeed with one fluid train of energy, introduce another train without announcing it. Make eye contact and start a new HA train. The students must then pay closer attention- then the awareness in the circle will heighten. If two trains of HA are working, introduce a third.

The levels game should be played with bigger groups. Start in a standing circle.

The Levels Game

Teamwork, Memorization

Movement

Requirements: 4 or more players.

Level one: Names.

1. Everyone in the circle starts with one hand raised. The Starter (chosen by TA) says the name of someone in the circle.
2. When one's name is called, they drop their hand and call someone else's name in the circle until all names are called.
3. The last person with a hand up says the Starter's name. Complete this cycle 4 times.

Level two: Ball.

1. Use a soft, safe ball (tennis ball, juggling ball, wiffle ball, etc.). Appoint a different Starter. Everyone starts with one hand raised, and when selecting someone to throw the ball to

in level two, it has to be somebody other than the person's name you called in level one. Use eye contact.

2. When the ball has made it all the way around the circle, the last person with their hand raised receives the ball and returns it to the starter. Add level one and repeat 4x's.

Level three: Numbers. (This can be substituted with animals, character names, foods, etc.)

1. Start similarly in that a new Starter and a new pattern, but this time the Starter begins with "1" and whoever they choose continues with "2" and so on.
2. Add levels one and two in and repeat 4x's.

Level four: Movement. New Starter, new pattern:

1. Starter will use eye contact to take the place of someone in the circle who has their hand raised who will then move to someone else's place in the circle and so on until everyone's place has been taken by somebody else.
2. Incorporate levels one, two and three (it will be a bit tougher with the new physical formation for the circle) and then put it all together and attain ultimate victory!
3. Introduce a new level with each workshop.

Ninja

Improvisation, Building patience

Movement

Requirements: 4 or more players.

1. Group stands in a circle to begin. On the count of three, students all assume the most ninja-like pose they can muster.
2. Beginning with the facilitator, each person gets ONE move to try to smack (touch/tap/etc) the hand of the ninja to their right. That person, in turn, has ONE move to avoid the hit.
3. Play continues around the circle. If/when contact is made, that student is "out" and steps out of the circle leaving a gap that must now be crossed by the ninja before them. Play continues until one ninja remains.

• DEFENSE – Students can be given the option of taking the "Defense" posture (hands held at chest, like "prayer position" in yoga) when avoiding another ninja. If a player chooses "Defense," they forfeit their attack for that round.

• Variations:

1. Add Sound
2. Students who are "out" sit down and become an obstacle rather than leaving the circle. Safety can become an issue in this case and the facilitator should keep an eye out to be sure nobody is stepped on.

Emphasis on speed: More moving! Less thinking!

Bah!

Building patience, Rhythm

Dance/Performance

Requirements: 4 or more players.

1. Group stands in a circle to begin. Practice saying "BAH!" emphasizing the bursting "Buh!" sound using the tip of the lips. Practice using a booming voice (or projecting) with your diaphragm. Practice making eye contact. Practice throwing the "energy ball" from your hands to your neighbor with a sharp jolt. It should mimic the immediacy and sharpness of a conductor of heat or an electric circuit.
2. One person will start. Clap your hands to the rhythm until person #1 sends the first "BAH!" It should go around the entire circle once before someone can decide to switch directions. Make sure the transferring of energy is rapid and concise.
3. If you make a mistake you must sit out and say "I will gladly sit out!"
4. Start again by clapping your hands at a faster pace. Those who can transfer the "BAH!" the fastest will succeed.

Wah!

Interpretation, Peer trust, Teamwork

Movement

Requirements:

The game of "Wah" is based on rhythm and focus. There are three actions in the game which always happen in order, require the player's hands to be palm to palm, and require the person/people involved to emphatically say "Wah!":

- 1.) "A tree falls down": hands palm to palm in the raised position above the head, then their arms swing down straight towards somebody else in the circle while also making eye contact with them.
- 2.) "Build a tree": The person who finds the fallen tree pointed at them with eye contact, then raises his/her hands (palm to palm) above the head.
- 3.) "Chop down the tree": The players directly next to the new tree on the right and left SIMULTANEOUSLY make a sideways chopping motion, with their hands palm to palm, towards the new tree; REPEAT 1-3 repeatedly.

The goal is to establish a rhythm via steps 1-3 so that you can get to a point where it is clear when someone is slightly off the beat. If that happens, the person responsible for being off (too late with action, too early, no eye contact, didn't say "Wah", etc.) sits down in their place and the last person who made a successful action starts the cycle. The pace of the rhythm should naturally increase but can always be encouraged further. When there are 2 people left they are both declared winners!

As You Cometh and Halteth:

Following Directions

Art Form:

One student is Duke Frederick who fears that everyone is trying to depose him. The secret? Everyone is. One classmate starts as Duke Fredrick on one side of the room with his back to the class. The class stands on the other side. When the Duke calls out "Cometh" the class can advance on him or her. When the Duke calls out "Halteth" the Duke must also turn around. The class must halt. If the Duke sees anyone moving during "Halteth" the mover must go back to the other side of the room saying "All the world's a stage!" First person to reach the Duke becomes the new Duke. As If:

Begin in a standing circle. Hand each student a slip of paper containing a simple phrase from the play. More than one student can have the same phrase. Next, have them make eye contact with someone across the circle. Instruct everyone to meet that person in the circle (all at once) and say their phrase AS IF they were panicked. Then have them return to the circle. Have them make eye contact with a different person, and repeat, having them say their phrase AS IF they were joyful. Continue for as many rounds as you would like. Start using AS IF situations from the play in later rounds (say AS IF you were banished, AS IF you were in love, etc).

Mr. Hit / Duke Frederick

Following Directions

Art Form:

Begin in a standing circle.

This game starts with one person raising one hand and saying "I am Duke Frederick". "Duke Frederick" has to try to tag someone else in the circle by touching them on the shoulder [Student A].

[Student A] can avoid getting tagged by calling out someone else's name [student B] before "Duke Frederick" tags him.

If [student A] says [student B]'s name before "Duke Frederick" tags him, he is safe! [Student B] is the new "Duke Frederick", and the game keeps going.

But, if [student A] doesn't say another student's name before getting tagged, or says the name of someone who is out, or of the student playing "Duke Frederick", [student A] is out!

When someone gets tagged out, "Duke Frederick" gets to say "*You are banished!*" And [student A] has to say "*I shall gracefully withdraw to the Forest of Arden.*" (Add on "*your Highness*" for a lesson on status.)

Play this game with all the students moving around the room and it then becomes a lesson on tactics.

Banishment:

Everyone should choose a character that they want to play. (No one can choose Duke Fredrick).

Have class memorize these four lines:

- (a.) I am banished (b.) I demand audience
- (c.) thou art Duke Fredrick (d.) I am not he

Have everyone close their eyes and choose 2 people to play Duke Fredrick by touching them on the shoulder. Tell them to walk around shaking the hand of everyone they meet and making eye contact. If they meet someone who winks at them they are to count to 7 before saying "I am banished".

If they think they know who the duke is, they may raise their hands and say "I demand audience".

Five Seconds:

Following Directions.

Movement

- 5 seconds to get to that side of the room
- 5 seconds to put your elbow on someone else's knee
- 5 seconds to (carefully) put your feet somewhere other than the floor
- 5 seconds to tell someone a secret
- 5 seconds to make the first letter of your name with your body
- 5 seconds to be very, very alone (whatever that means to you)
- 5 seconds to be very, very close to someone else
- 5 seconds to be very far apart
- 5 seconds to get in a big circle
- 5 seconds to get into a circle with a square in the center

Statue Game:

Teamwork, Peer trust

Movement

Requirements: An even number of players and a spacious, safe room.

1. Begin by finding a partner. Establish a "Communication call" and discuss this with your partner.
2. Split up onto opposite sides of the room. One side is searching for their partner with eyes closed.

3. When they find their partner, they touch them and feel what their pose is, and once they know, they walk back to the other side and mimic this pose.

Note: This game involves physical touch, and should be used only in settings where students have enough of a rapport to opt out. A facilitator should monitor students closely to avoid any inappropriate behavior.

No Seeing/No Speaking

Teamwork, Peer trust

Movement

Requirements: An even number of players and a spacious, safe room.

1. Begin by finding a partner. Partners choose an A and a B.
2. A is leading by holding B's hand. The leader is not allowed to speak, while the person being led has eyes closed and is allowed to speak.

Consider adding an objective for the pairs of students to work towards for enhanced competition (maybe this is a race or an obstacle course).

Wind in the Willows:

Gentleness, Moderation, Safe Physical Interactions

Movement

Requirements: At least 5 players

1. Form circles of 4 or 5. One person is in the center.
2. The center person is kindly passed from one person to the other with gentle pushes.

Note: **This game involves physical touch, and should be used only in settings where students have enough of a rapport to opt out.** Students who play should cross both hands over their chest, opposite hand to opposite shoulder, and a facilitator should monitor students closely to avoid any inappropriate behavior.

Silent Scream:

Physical Exploration, Meditation

Movement

Requirements: A space where students can be loud.

1. Ask each person to scream when shoulder is touched (others watch them) or whole group screams. (Could alternatively start with the non-vocal screaming)
2. Then everybody physicalizes screaming without sound (Physically and muscularly!)
3. Then "Scream out loud!" Students can scream with your toes! Your eyes! Your back! Your stomach! Your legs! Your whole body! Scream out loud!!!! This could be waving a body part, flexing, a gesture, etc.

Possible Variation:

Consider asking students to demonstrate what it would look like to yell with their bodies or without sound.

Three Way Conversation:

Creativity, Improvisation, Silliness

Improvisation

1. Three seated players, A B C. Each end player chooses a topic and engages the center in conversation as if the other player did not exist. Center must converse with two ends, fluent in both conversations, responding and initiating when necessary, without excluding either player.
 2. No asking questions allowed!
- Eventually, you can add people to the ends.

Marker Dance:

Silliness, Physical Exploration and Movement

Dance

1. Imagine you have an invisible marker on different parts of your body and write your name in the air, If instructed, write your name on the ground.
2. Start with right elbow, knee, etc., go to eyeballs, nose, armpits, etc. Maybe ask students to make a suggestion about what body part to use next.

Possible Variations:

Have players close their eyes while playing.

Zip Zap Zop

Collaboration, Silliness

Dance

Requirements: At least 4 players

1. Start with everyone in a circle. Have the group repeat the phrase “zip, zap, zop”. The objective of this game is to “pass” these words back and forth across the circle by stepping/pointing towards someone, making eye contact with them, and saying a word.
2. One person starts by making the above gestures and saying the word “zip!” The person who was tagged then picks someone else to tag saying the word “zap!” That person then tags someone using the word “zop!” And so on.
3. Continue until everyone is tagged, and if you want an extra challenge, see how fast the group can complete a round!

Alternatives: This game can be played as “Zip, Zap, Zoom” or any other three words in a specific order.

London Statue

Creativity, Communication

Dance

Requirements: At least 5 players. Good ice breaker activity.

The facilitator secretly selects a “clown” before each round begins. They will tell that participant their role without the other participants knowing. This could be done with eyes closed, taps on the shoulder, slips of paper, etc.

1. When the round begins, everyone moves or dances in a circle to some music and when the music stops you have to become a statue.
2. The one person who has been assigned to be the clown for that turn has to then make all the others laugh and drop their pose by making faces/sounds etc but without touching them.
3. The first person to laugh becomes the “it” for the next round.

This is a fun way to break the ice between students, and is a creative process because children can explore their options and come up with new ways to make the others laugh

Pass the Sound and Movement

Collaboration,

Dance

Requirements: At least 5 players.

1. Start by standing in a circle. “Pass” a handclap all the way around the circle by clapping towards the person next to you.
2. Once he or she receives your clap s/he can pass it on to the next person by clapping towards them.
3. Next time around, anyone can switch the direction the clap is moving in by clapping back towards the person who clapped at him or her.
4. The third time the game is played, participants can pass the clap across the circle by making eye contact with someone across the circle and clapping towards them.

Possible Variations:

Ensemble Shuffle (Get in a straight line from shortest to tallest, oldest to youngest...etc.)
Cross the line if...

The Yarn Game

Improvisation, Group participation

Storytelling

Requirements: At least 3 players and a ball of yarn.

1. Participants sit in a circle and one person begins holding a ball of yarn. A prompt is given to the group - this can be a question to answer such as “What is something you want to do in the next five years?” or something simpler like “What’s your favorite color?”.
2. The person holding the ball of yarn answers, then holds the end of the yarn and tosses the ball of yarn to someone else in the circle. They answer, and similarly hold the yarn and toss the ball to someone else.
3. Once everyone has answered, a new prompt can be given and the ball can be thrown around the circle again. All participants should be holding onto multiple pieces of yarn in the “spiderweb” that’s been created.
4. After a few rounds, a new prompt can be given with the instruction for the person who answers to wind their piece of yarn back onto the ball, and toss the ball back to the person who last threw it to them. If all goes well, the first person to throw the ball ends up being the last person to receive it, and the yarn is totally wound again.