



Pioneer Games to Play

Included in this learning lab are a number of games that were popular in the 19th century and some of which may still be popular, but with varying rules and different names. There are outdoor games and indoor games for the possible snowy or rain filled days of fun.

Fox & Geese (Indoor version)

10 to 30 players can play this game.

One player is the fox and another the gander.

The remaining players are the geese.

How to play:

Geese stand in a line behind the gander, each with their hands resting on the shoulders of the player in front of them. The fox tries to tag the last goose, while the gander, with arms raised to the side, jumps about and tries to protect the geese. The geese assist the gander by twisting their line, going first one way and then the other. If the fox tags the last goose, the fox becomes the gander, and the goose that has been tagged becomes the fox.



Winter Fox and Geese Game

When the grass is covered with snow, and you just want to go outside and play with friends you could have some fun playing this old-fashioned tag game.

1. In the snow, mark off the shape of a large wagon wheel that has 6 to 8 spokes and a hub (small circle in the middle).
2. Choose one player to be the fox. The rest of the players will be the geese.
3. The fox is “it” and must catch all the geese. When the fox succeeds the last goose to be caught becomes the new fox.
4. The fox will chase the geese up and down the spokes and along the rim of the wheel.
5. All the players must keep to the paths in the snow. The fox and the geese may run on any of the paths in any direction.
6. Any goose who goes off the path and breaks the rule will immediately become the fox.
7. The hub of the wheel is where a goose is considered to be safe. Only one player at a time, can be in the hub of the wheel at one time.



*Outdoor recess game at the Elk Creek School 1939-1940
Campbell County Rockpile Museum Photo # 1981.016.0097*

Tiger in the Corner

Five people are needed to play this game of tag.

How to play:

Four people stand to make corners of a large square.
The fifth person is the “Tiger,” who stands in the center.

When the tiger shouts, “Tiger wants a corner!” the other players must switch corners. The Tiger tries to run to a corner before one of the other players does. If the Tiger gets there first, the player who lost a corner becomes the new Tiger.



*Elk Creek School winter baseball game in 1939
Campbell County Rockpile Museum Photo # 1981.016.0097*

Dare Base

Any number of children may play this game

Two teams need to be formed and the two teams must have the same number of players.

How to Play:

Two bases are made about 30 yards apart. The teams are called A and B. Members of team A see how close they can go to the base of team B without getting tagged. This is continued by each team alternately with the opposite team. Any person tagged must go to the opposite base as a penalty. The object of each team is to see how many members or players they can get for their base. The team capturing the largest number of players at the end of the given time wins.

Dumbo Crambo

Two teams are needed for this game.

How to Play:

Members of team 2 leave the room while Team 1 picks a word, such as “pie,” as well as a rhyming word to offer as a clue.

Team 2 re-enters the room and is told that the secret word rhymes with “sky.”

Team 2's job is to act out the secret word. If the players on team 2 are wrong, the Team 1 players hiss loudly. Team 2 keeps acting until the players guess the right word. Then Team 1 leaves the room while Team 2 picks a new word.

Taboo

Players decide on a letter of the alphabet that will be forbidden in the game. One person is chosen to be It. The other players ask IT questions that might force him/her to use the forbidden letter. For example: If the letter D were chosen, one player might ask “What animal has hoofs?” It would answer “a lamb.” If IT answered “deer,” he or she would have used the forbidden letter. The questioning continues until IT is forced to use the taboo letter. For a more difficult version of the game, the person who is IT must answer in sentence form without using the taboo letter anywhere in the sentence.

Cross Questions & Crooked Answers

Players each receive two different colored slips of paper, sit in a circle. Everyone writes down a question on one slip of paper. In turn, each player whispers their question to the person on their right and writes the answer down on the other slip of colored paper. Questions & answers are then gathered separately and passed back to players in mixed order. Each player asks out loud the player to the right the question on their piece of paper. But this time that player must read the answer found on the slip of paper they have just received.