

## **Summer Games**

By Susan Ellis

This article is a bunch of summer games you can play at camps, dryland training, or with your friends. It's a collection I've had on my computer for a while. Some are more active than others, some are to get to know your group better, some are high activity, and some are just plain silly and fun. Enjoy!

### **Active Introductions**

Everyone stands in a circle. One person starts and they say their name and do an action (jumping jack; bend down and touch toes; sticks out tongue, etc.). The person to the right of them has to repeat that person's name and action and then make one for themselves. You go around the whole circle this way, with everyone repeating all the names and actions that came before them. When you get to the starting person, they do everyone and the game ends.

### **Animal Match / Language match**

Number of players: 6 or more

Ages: 5 and up

Objective: Find the same animal as you and group together

Level of activity: Medium physical activity

Equipment: None

Directions: Each person will be assigned an animal identity. This identity should be kept a secret. The students then need to find other students that are the same animal. They must do this by making the noise of their assigned animal. There should be no talking among the students, just animal noises. The students should be in a herd of each animal kind at the end.

Variation: Use odd animals. Also put the name of animal on a person's back and they have to figure out what it is. They can only ask yes/no questions about it.

Use foreign languages.

### **Back to Back**

Players stand back to back with a partner with their elbows interlocked. Using each other's back for support, the partners must try to sit on the floor and stretch out their legs. Then, while keeping their elbows locked, the partners must now try to stand up without slipping or falling down! (Not as easy as it sounds!)

### **Capture the Flag**

The group is divided into two teams (we usually put different coloured war paint on faces to tell who is on what team). Each team has a flag and hides it on their side of the playing area. Once the game starts both sides try to find and capture the flag from the other side. But if someone touches them they are caught and have to go to jail. The only way they can be released from jail is if someone from their team gets to their team's jail (on the other team's side) and tags their teammate in the jail. The game ends when time runs out or whenever one team gets another one's flag.

### Cockerel Fighting

Similar to Sumo, but definitely rougher and for this reason I don't use it much. Players fight by standing on one leg and arms folded, hopping around attempting to unbalance their opponent. A player is out as soon as they put both feet down or forced out of the ring.

### Electric Maze

Materials required: A large tarp, with a grid marked on it in duct tape, so it looks something like this:



To play: The challenge is for the entire team to cross from one side of the tarp to the other, by stepping on the appropriate squares. The problem is that some of the squares are "electric" and will "zap" any player who stands on the wrong square. These squares are not visibly indicated on the tarp – the leader of the challenge needs to have a sketch of the playing area on a small piece of paper that the players can't see. Players try to cross the maze one at a time. The leader of the challenge will indicate whether the player is on a safe square or an electric one. Players may move horizontally or vertically but not diagonally.

As the game progresses, the group will slowly figure out what the safe route across the tarp is. The game is over once every player on the team has safely crossed the maze. An example of a possible game board is given below, with the "safe" squares indicated in the order they would need to be stepped on. Note that the players must step on each square in order, otherwise they are "zapped" and the next player on the team gets their turn.



## **Elves, Wizards, Giants**

'Elves, Wizards and Giants' is a team version of the old game of 'Scissors-Paper-Stone', but has funnier actions and noises which each team has to act out. Each character (Elf, Wizard, Giant) has a specific action or noise.

Elf: Squatting down and imitate pointed ears by holding two fingers up by your ears (similar to making bunny ears). Make "Eeeking" noises while doing this.

Giant: Standing on tip toe, arms raised in frightening posture making growling/roaring sounds.

Wizard: Standing normally but with arms outstretched as if casting a spell. Make appropriate spell casting noises.

As with Scissors-Paper-Stone each character/icon can win against one character or lose against the other. In this case, if wanted, teams can make the appropriate actions for winning or losing.

### Winning team

Elves shoot Wizards: Elves win

### Actions

Elves pretend to shoot an arrow, Wizards make dramatic gestures as though struck in the heart.

Wizards frazzle Giants: Wizards win

Giants pretend to shrink.

Giants squash Elves: Giants win

Giants pretend they are squishing something small.

Each team finds a quiet corner and decides on a character to be as a team, after choosing their character each team stands facing each other with hands behind their backs. On the count of three the whole team acts out their character with the points going to the team that chooses the winning character. If both teams pick the same character there is a draw.

## **Raiders II (Enhanced Elves, Wizards & Giants)**

Equipment: One life band per team.

One base per team.

A number of tokens marked either Elf, Wizard or Giant.

Teams are taken to their base where each team member is given one life band and token of their choice (elf, wizard or giant). The token stops arguments as to who beats who.

Giant beats Elf

Elf beats Wizard

Wizard beats Giant

Each team member then goes out to try and get a band off opposing team members. The winning player gets the other's life band and returns it to their base. The loser

returns to their base to collect another life band and change tokens if they wish. If tokens are the same nothing happens.

At the end of the game the winning team is one that has the most life bands.

### **Eyes, Body, Voice**

This game is best played in a gym or some open area. Split your girls into groups of three. Two of the girls are blindfolded, the third is permitted to see. One of the blindfolded girls is the "body"; she can move but is not permitted to see or speak. The other blindfolded girl is the "voice", she can speak but can neither see nor move. The third girl is the "eyes", she can see but can't speak or move.

For each team of girls, place a ball somewhere within the playing area. Also place one traffic cone (pylon) somewhere in the playing area. Each team's goal is to guide their "body" to their team's ball, pick it up, and then tag it to the pylon. The "voice" and the "eyes" for each team will have to give the "body" directions to find the ball. This is much more difficult than it sounds as the "eyes" and "voice" need to be able to effectively communicate with each other in order to give directions to the "body". A great communications game!

### **Giants, Wizards, Trolls**

This game is very similar to the ever-popular "Paper, Scissors, Rock", but much more active! The game is best played in a gym or other similar room. Divide the girls into two teams. The teams gather at opposite ends of the gym and decide which creature they want to be for the first round: either Giants, Wizards or Trolls. The whole team must be the same creature. When both teams have decided, they line up, facing the other team, in the middle of the gym. Everyone together yells "Giants! Wizards! Trolls!" and then whatever creature their team has decided to be. For example, a team who is Giants would yell: "Giants! Wizards! Trolls! GIANTS!"

Now here's the catch: Giants step on Trolls (i.e. Giants beat Trolls), Trolls tickle Wizards, and Wizards zap Giants. In each round, whichever team "beats" the other team must chase the losers back towards their side of the gym. (For example: If one team yells "Giants!" and the other yells "Trolls!", the Giants have won (remember Giants step on Trolls). So the Giants chase the Trolls back to their side of the gym.) Anyone on the losing team to be tagged before they can touch their wall of the gym now belongs to the other team. In rounds where both teams end up being the same creature, consider it a tie and start over. Play the game until most of the girls are on one team.

In addition, there are actions to do for each of the creatures during the yell that starts off each round. Giants: raise arms high overhead; Wizards: arms in front of body as if throwing a magic spell; Trolls: hunch down curl arms inwards.

### **Going to the Moon**

This is a guessing/deductive game in which the first person establishes a word pattern for everyone else to figure out. He or she says, "I'm going to the moon and I'm going to take (name an object)." Everyone else follows by repeating the same phrase but naming

a different object with the same pattern. Patterns could include words that start with the same letter as the speaking person's name, words with double consonants, or words that begin with the last letter of the previous word.

### **Group Walk**

Players line up shoulder to shoulder, each girl's right foot next to the left foot of the person to the right. The challenge to the group is to 'walk forward' as a group – with each group step every person steps forward with one (and only one) foot (keeping their feet touching the feet of the person on either side of them). Not easy!

### **Human Alphabet Soup**

This game can either be played using the whole group or with the group split into teams. The first thing to try is to get the group to make the letter "A" by laying on the ground, using their bodies as parts of the letter. Once this is figured out, see how fast you can go through the entire alphabet. If you are using teams, race the teams against each other to see which team can form a letter first. Once the group has become comfortable with the game, get the teams to spell whole words with each member of the team forming one letter.

### **Human Juggler**

Materials Required: A number of balls, preferably of different sizes.

To Play: Arrange your group in a circle. The goal of the game is to be able to pass a series of balls around the circle in a pattern without dropping any of them! Start with one ball. The leader takes the ball, calls the name of another player somewhere else in the circle, and tosses the ball to them. This player then calls the name of a second player, and tosses the ball to them. This pattern repeats until everyone in the circle has received the ball once and the ball has made its way back to the leader. It is important that everyone remembers who they tossed the ball to.

Practice tossing the ball around the circle in the established pattern until everyone is comfortable with this stage. Then you can introduce a second ball, then a third, then a fourth... and see how many balls the group can manage at one time!

Safety tip: If anyone drops a ball in the sequence, all the players need to be paying attention and grab the other balls and stop the play. This will help prevent mass chaos. Once the dropped ball has been retrieved, play can resume.

### **Lap Sit**

Number of players: 15 plus.

Ages: 8 and up.

Objective: Get everyone in the group to sit on each other's lap without falling.

Level of Activity: Low Active.

Equipment: None.

Directions: Have players form a tight circle. Then have players all turn the same direction, to their either right or left, to form a single file circle. Players need to be close

to the person in front of them and when a signal is given the players slowly bend their knees to be able to sit comfortably on the person's lap behind them without falling. Once the players are sitting comfortably on each other's lap then they can try to walk by having one person count to three and tell everyone which foot to move at once. The players need to move one foot and the other in a synchronized motion.

### **Mine Field**

Concept being taught: Cooperation and communication skills objective: To have the group of students discuss different ways to complete a given task and then as a group complete the task.

Grade level: 3-5.

Equipment: Enough carpet squares or poly spots to make a 10x10 square.

Playing area: Gymnasium.

Cues: Share, listen and cooperate.

Game description: The teacher picks a specific path from one side of the square to the other. The students' job is to try to figure out the path without talking to each other. The students start on one side of the square by stepping on a carpet square/poly spot. If that carpet square is correct the teacher does not say anything. If that carpet square is not one in the correct path the teacher tells the student that his/her turn is over and that child goes to the end of the line. Now the next student in line gets a turn. The game is over once all the students have had a turn.

Modifications: Have the student that is the first to successfully complete the path create the next pathway. You could also allow the students to talk and help each other or allow each student one question.

### **Neighbor Intro Game**

Arrange chairs in a large circle minus one seat. 50 people = 49 chairs. The extra person stands in the middle of the circle. The person in the center walks up to anyone in the circle and shakes hands with the person sitting in a chair. As they shake hands the person standing says "Hi, my name is (whatever her name is)", person sitting says "Hi, my name is (whatever her name is)", person standing says "Do you like your neighbors?" The person sitting (looking at neighbors on both sides of her) can say one of two things:

1) Yes, I like my neighbors. But, I don't like people with ????. She can choose anything in the world that she wants to say. Adults can get pretty carried away with it. Ex. I don't like people with red hair. I don't like people with blue eyes. I don't like people who have cats. I don't like people with blue underwear on, etc. When the person says what it is she doesn't like, everyone in the circle who has or does that thing has to jump up and find another empty seat. They can't sit in their original seat. The person that was standing will also be jumping into a seat so someone will be left standing. That person then walks up to someone else and shakes their hand and it goes on and on.

Or they can say:

2) No, I don't like my neighbors. For this, the people on either side of you must exchange seats while the person standing is trying to grab one. Person left standing moves to the center and chooses another hand to shake.

### **Pass the Ball**

Have your group sit down on the ground in a circle with their legs out in front of them. Squeeze everyone tight together so that your legs are touching your neighbour's. Place a tennis ball between the ankles of one player. The goal of the challenge is to pass the ball around the circle, from person to person, without using your arms at all. If the ball touches the ground you must start over. A good exercise in patience! This game can also be played with everyone sitting side-by-side in a line with their legs out in front of them.

### **Team Walker**

- Take two 2x4 pieces of wood, around 8 feet long.
- Drill 6 holes into the wood, spaced evenly down the length of the piece of wood. Drill the holes large enough to put a piece of rope through. I drill a larger hole around the hole on one side (the bottom side) so you can sink the knot – so if the board is lying on the ground, the knots don't stick out and the board can lie flat.
- Tie 4' pieces of rope through each of the holes. (It's best to use cotton rope-- something that's not going to get bristles in your hands.)

Now, lay the two planks side by side, about shoulder length apart. Pick a team of six people. The people stand in a line, each with one foot on one piece of wood and one foot on the other. Each person should place their foot so it is immediately behind a piece of rope and they should pick up and hold that piece of rope.

Now they try to walk. :)

It's actually harder than it sounds – it takes a lot of teamwork to do it. After they get pretty good, you can have races. If that doesn't challenge them enough, have them try to walk up or down a hill.

### **Underwear Relay**

Required: Extra extra large white cotton underwear.

Players: Small to large groups.

Separate players into teams and give each team one set of underwear. Show all players what point they are to run to during the relay. Once all players understand the course then have them line up into teams. Then inform them that there is one more rule to the game, it takes two players per team back-to-back in the underwear to play the game. The first team to complete the course is the winner.