Circle Games

**The Wind Blows**

This is a good game for mixing up cliques and a variation of fruit bowl which you already know. Put chairs in a circle. Turn one chair to face out. Choose someone to stand in the middle. They (or you) can call: “The wind blows for………..

Everyone wearing a watch

Everyone who supports Arsenal

Everyone who can swim a length

Everyone who had breakfast today

Everyone who likes ice cream etc.…

If the statement applies to a pupil, they must get up and change places. The caller finds a seat. The last pupil left standing becomes the new caller. No one can change places with the person sitting next to them.

**Fruit Bowl**

As above but everyone is a fruit e.g. apple, pear, banana. When you call that fruit, the person standing tries to find a seat. Call Fruit Bowl for all to change.

**Catch a Story**

Have a ball or (better) a beanbag. Begin a story. Throw it to the person who must continue the story. This is better than dragging around the circle and shy people can get rid of the story after only one word. A variation on this is “fortunately, unfortunately”. Each person must add a sentence, changing the sentence of the main character.

E.g. unfortunately the plane’s engines failed.

Fortunately the pilot had a parachute.

Unfortunately the parachute would not open.

Fortunately there was a haystack underneath. Etc.

**Storm**

Pupils build up a storm by joining in teacher –led sound effects one by one. It builds to a crescendo and dies down to silence. It was still and quiet. A gentle breeze was heard. (Teacher rubs hands together. children to her right gradually join in)

The breeze grew louder. (Rub more vigorously)

A patter of rain was heard. (Tap hands on palms)

It began to thunder. (Stamp feet)

This is reversed, dropping one noise at a time until all is quiet.

**Zoom Eek**

A Zoom (car) is passed around the circle. Anyone can stop it and reverse it by shouting “EEK!” It must then change direction. No one can say “EEK” more than once. If you are feeling very strong, you can send two cars in opposite directions but that takes a lot of concentration.

**Change the Action**

The pupils must copy your PREVIOUS action every time you shout change, so:

Teacher claps hands. Pupils sit still. Teacher shouts CHANGE and begins to pat her knees. Pupils begin to clap their hands. Teacher shouts CHANGE again and begins to click her fingers. Pupils now pat their knees. This is a good concentration builder.

**Master Master, Who Am I?**

You need a blindfold for this one. Blindfold a volunteer. A pupil selected by you must approach them quietly, disguise their voice and ask Master Master, Who Am I? If the volunteer guesses correctly, they get another go. If they are wrong, the successful “voice” gets a turn.

**Quick Change Artist**

Have everyone sit in a circle and choose one person to be the quick change artist. Have the artist go out of sight and change something on him/her self that is visible (i.e.-put shorts on backwards, change hair, tie/untie shoes...). When the artist is done, have him/her walk into the middle of the circle and turn around slowly to give everyone a chance to see what has been changed. Then go around the circle having each person guess what has been changed. The first person to guess correctly is the next artist.

**Someone Moved**

Have all players sit in a circle and then chose a person to be “it”. The “it” is to leave so that “it” cannot see or hear. Have one to four players move in the circle. When “it” returns he is to figure out who has moved in the circle

**Stations**

Everyone sits in a circle and is given a destination (name of a town) and in the middle, the station master stands with all the destination names on a card. He/she then chooses certain names; for example Bradford/Leeds. The two corresponding people then have to get up and exchange seats. In the meantime the station master has to try to jump into one of these seats. More than two destinations can be called out and then ultimately,

“All Change”.

**The Ministers Cat**

This is an alphabetical word game.

Everyone gets in a circle and claps hands to the beat.

Start with A.

Example:

"The minister’s cat is an Angry Cat"; "the minister’s cat is a Black cat" etc.

**Hula Hoop**

Everyone stands in a circle holding hands. Have two people break hands and put their hands through a hula hoop and re-join hands again. The hoop must be passed the whole way around the circle without breaking hands. Sometimes it goes over and sometimes under...doesn't matter. It is also fun to time the first try without telling the kids. Tell them at the end after discussing what helped and what made it difficult. Then try to "beat" the first "time".

**Chief Ape**

Have all players sit in a circle and then chose a person to be “it”. The “it” is to leave so that “it” cannot see or hear. Choose one person to be the chief and he will act out short movements. Examples are clapping hands three times, stomping feet 4 times, etc. All other players must do what the Chief does. Have “it” return to the group to figure out who is the Big Chief, you can give him up to three guesses if there’s a large group.

**Wink Murder**

This is similar but the murderer kills other pupils by winking at them. The detective must spot the murderer before there is a massacre. They link this if you specify a gruesome method of murder for them to act out.

**I’m Going Hunting**

You play this game in a circle and your memory counts. One person in the circle will start the game off by saying, I’m going hunting and I’m taking an arrow. The next person will have to repeat what the person next to him said and then add something new from the next letter in the alphabet. I’m going hunting and I’m taking an arrow and a bow. You keep this going around the circle until one person cannot remember what he is taking.

That person is out and you see if the next person can complete the phrase. You don’t necessarily have to choose something that you would normally take hunting-it can be funny. You can also modify this game to a specific topic. This is a variation of My Aunt

Maud went hopping.

Cross the Circle

Everyone is numbered around the circle as 1, 2, and 3. Then you call their number, everyone must cross the circle in role as…..a ballerina……….a panther………a moonwalker……..someone who’s stuck in the mud……..a fashion model……whatever you can think of.

**Cross Differently**

Name a child to cross the circle to an empty chair in any way they like…walk…commando crawl…hop….twirl…whatever. They call someone else who must cross in a different way.

***Energetic Games***

**The Line Game:**

Divide the pupils into equal groups. You will announce an order that you wish them to line up in, first group to do it and sit in a line on the floor wins a point. Use any of these categories: ages (oldest in the front - youngest in the back), alphabetically, shoe size, birthdays, telephone numbers, Mother's first name, etc.

**Stick in the Mud**

A basic tag game. If pupils are tagged, they must stand with their legs apart (stuck in the mud) until someone crawls through and releases them.

**Tea Pot Tag**

Work in pairs to make a teapot (as in I’m a Little Teapot).

Have one chaser and one chased. The teapots stand still. If the chased wants to escape, they link onto the handle of a teapot. The spout immediately becomes the chased; the handle turns into the spout.

**Led By the Nose**

Pupils must imagine that strings are attached to various parts of their bodies. Move around the room led by that part e.g. right thumb, nose, and knees. Eyelashes etc.

**Pip, Squeak Wilfred**

Everyone stands in a circle. You call them in turn, Pip, Squeak, Wilfred. You call e.g.

“Squeak”, all the Squeaks step outside the circle and walk clockwise around it. When you call “Home”, all the Squeaks must run IN THE SAME DIRECTION back to their original place. Last one back is out and must sit down in their place. CARE! Everyone standing must stand still not swinging their legs out. Everyone sitting must sit up and not lean back on their hands or they’ll get trodden on.

**Shazam**

This is like Scissors, Paper Stone but played by a whole group. You divide the class into two. I usually play this after a partner activity and send them As one way and the Bs another. The group must secretly decide whether they are Knights, Giants or Wizards.

Knight beats Wizard

Giant beats Knight

Wizard beats Giant

The group confer secretly and come forward to face the other group. You count one two three and the groups simultaneously make the appropriate noise and action.

The wizards brandish an imaginary wand and shout “Shazam!”

The giants stamp their feet and say “ Fee, fi, foe fum”

The knights draw their swords and shout, ”en garde”

It’s often a draw. I usually play best of three

***Calming Down***

**Guided Mimes**

Individual silent mimes, talked through in detail by you. E.g.

Walking the dog

Learning to juggle

At the beach

Riding the big dipper

**Magic Chairs**

Everyone puts a chair in a space and moves away to the side of the room. The teacher explains what sort of chair it is and the pupils move to it and sit in it appropriately. Staying silent and concentrating on their mime. The chairs might be: In a restaurant, highchairs, dentists chairs, in a plane etc.

**Leaving the Room**

**Adverb Exit**

Pupils must act their way to the door. E.g. “If your name begins with A, leave anxiously,

B, bossily, C, cheerfully etc.

**Alphabet Exit**

Line up. Give a topic e.g. food, country etc. Everyone must give noun beginning with the

Next appropriate letter of the alphabet as they leave the room e.g. “Cars” Aston Martin,

Bentley, Chevvie etc.

***Warm ups and End games***

**Fruit bowl: to mix children up**

Each child is given the name of a fruit, when their fruit is called they change seats.

**Clapping**

Going round the circle one clap continues the direction, 2 changes the direction back.

**Keys**

One child stands in the middle of the circle blindfolded. The other children pass something noisy around the circle. When the child in the middle thinks they know where the keys are they shout ‘stop!’ and point in that direction.

**Shopping**

‘I went to the shops and bought…’ each child remembers the previous items and adds one of their own.

**Birthdays**

Call a month of the year, children whose birthdays are in that month, run around the circle back to their original chair.

**Words**

Start with a word and 2 claps in between, the next child must say a word associated to the start, e.g. tree, clap, clap, leaf, clap, clap, caterpillar…

7. Squeeze

Hold hands around the circle, and pass a gentle squeeze from hand to hand.

**Smile**

A smile is passed around the circle.

**Arm link**

Say a number, the children have to link up with the correct number in their group, then cross the circle linked.

**Hunt the pair**

Prepare paired picture cards, e.g. bucket and spade, each child takes a card, then must find their pair without speaking.

**Musical islands**

Place large sheets of newspaper on the floor, when the music stops all feet must be on the paper. Slowly take the pieces of paper away.

**I know your name**

Take turns to call someone’s name and swap seats, continue until everyone has been called.

**Dracula**

A child is Dracula, they say a victims name and start to walk towards them, the victim must say another name to change the victim, and Dracula changes direction towards the new victim, if a victim is caught, they become Dracula.

**99**

A child leaves the room while someone is nominated. When the child enters the room they stand in the middle of the circle, the nominated child says ‘99’, trying to disguise their voice. The first child tries to guess who spoke.

**Chinese mimes**

All stand facing the back of the person in front, with eyes closed. The leader taps the person in front on the shoulder, when they turn around mime an action. The mime is passed around the circle to see if it changes much.

**Remote control**

Children suggest actions for some of the buttons on a remote control when that button is pressed they perform the action.

**Body to body**

Group children around the circle; say how they must be joined, e.g. finger-to-finger. Children carry out commands.

**Follow the leader**

The leader begins miming and action; clapping, etc. the others in the circle must copy. Change leader after 2 or 3 actions.

**Introductions**

Introduce yourself and the person sitting next to you. Continue around the circle.

**What am I?**

Choose a positive adjective to describe yourself, go around the circle in turn.

**Who are we?**

One child says their name and points to another child, who stands up and repeats until all are standing.

**Colours**

If I were a colour, I would be … because…

**Listening**

All close eyes and listen for 2 minutes, then go around the circle to say what sounds were heard.

**Instruments**

If I were an instrument, I would be… because…

**Storm**

Leader starts by wiggling fingers for the rain, this passes around the circle until everyone is wiggling their fingers. The leader then changes the action to other aspects of the storm, e.g. wind – arms waving, thunder – slap knees. End with the sun - mime a circle.

**Mirrors**

In pairs A/B A is the leader, B is the mirror and must copy the actions, go slowly at first. Swap roles.

**Belonging game**

Make enough cards for each child to have one, make 3 or 4 with each number from 1-5, then one of each number 6,7,8. Children must not talk, but must find the others in their groups, when they find a fellow number, they must act very pleased to see them and continue walking as if a group, when all members are found sit down. If someone with a different number tries to join, act as if they are not welcome. Talk about the feelings of belonging, how it felt to be left out, how it felt to reject others.

**Changes**

Someone goes outside, 2 people in the circle swap places, and the outsider tries to guess who has moved.

**A sticky situation**

One person in middle calls out ‘Help, help! Others reply ‘What’s the matter?’ first person makes up a situation: e.g. stuck up a ladder, chased by killer bees. Others reply ‘Who do you want to help?’ first person makes up random criteria: e.g. tallest, kindest, best at tables. Others nominate person to help, they swap places with one in middle. All good at different things, we can all help each other.

**Feelings**

Child takes a feelings card and an action card, e.g. eating dinner – excited. Child acts in appropriate manner, others guess. Children could make up on feelings and actions.

**How do you do?**

Play music, children move around room. When the music stops children greet each other (any culturally appropriate greeting) then ask each other one question, eg what do you like doing? What is your favourite colour?

**Building community**

Say ‘come into the circle and join hands if you… (have long hair, wear glasses)’ continue until most in circle, end with ‘come into the circle if you are in class…’ All shout ‘We are!’

**Hello, how are you?**

One child crosses the circle to shake hands and ask a question, then returns to their place. The questioned child then crosses the circle.

**The lining up game**

Without help, the children need to line up quickly in: register order, birthday month order, house number order (if the house only has a name it counts as 0).

**Hedgehogs**

Move around the room to the music, when the music stops children curl up on the floor like hedgehogs. Put a curtain over one child, the others stand up and guess who is under the curtain. Return to seats and share a round to say what we like about the curtained hedgehog.