

Activity Ideas for Your Program

FIRST LEGO League Jr. is a great tool to introduce STEM concepts to younger participants. The program actively engages participants with hands-on activities that spark their interest while positively impacting them throughout their education and into their careers! These activities are designed to inspire children to become the next great scientist, or to enable them to get creative with their LEGO models, or simply just to have fun! Continue reading for a list of ideas you can use to keep your participants engaged from start to finish.



IDEAS THAT INSPIRE CREATIVITY

Inspiring creativity in children is important to help them become critical thinkers and develop skills to be innovative when problem solving. There are simple ways to provoke creativity like asking impractical questions to promote creative thinking. Below are easily adaptable ways your *FIRST LEGO League Jr.* program can inspire creativity while strengthening your curriculum lessons.

1. PASS THE CHICKEN!

Materials: A rubber chicken

How to Play:

- A. Instruct all the children to sit in a circle
- B. Select one child to be the “chicken holder”
- C. Give the child holding the chicken a task (i.e. Name five U.S. states). Then say “Pass the chicken!”
- D. The child holding the chicken passes it to the right and will begin their assigned task
- E. Children in the circle will then quickly pass the chicken around the circle
 - a. If the chicken returns to the “chicken holder” before they can name the five U.S. states (or the assigned task), then they are still “the chicken holder”
 - b. The child who has the chicken at the time they finish, will be the new “chicken holder”

Note: One fun way to adapt Pass the Chicken! to FIRST LEGO League Jr. is to assign participants with tasks related to your current session i.e. “Name 5 slimy insects!” or “Name 5 things astronauts wear!”

2. SIGHT AND SOUND

Materials: Reading material, paper and colored pencils/markers/pens

How to Play:

- A. Read a book, magazine, or any piece of material related to your *FIRST LEGO League Jr.* session
- B. Allow participants to draw a picture that illustrates what they hear
- C. Once all participants are finished their illustration, allow them to explain what they drew and heard
- D. Set up a visual board to display the artwork

3. TEAM DANCE

Materials: Radio and music

How to Play:

- A. Allow participants to form small groups (4-6 youth)
- B. Play a song of interest (i.e. song from a movie or a popular appropriate song)
- C. Allow each small group 10 minutes (change time as needed) to choreograph a dance routine
- D. After the time is up, have a “DANCE OFF” where the teams go one at a time showing their moves
 - a. If you have some participants who would rather not dance, designate them as the judges and provide categories to vote the best dance crew (i.e. best choreography, funniest, most energetic)

Note: One fun way to adapt Team Dance to FIRST LEGO League Jr. is to have the small groups create dances related to your current session i.e. “create a dance as if you are on the moon with no gravity.”



IDEAS TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS

Empowering children to take ownership in their learning is essential to their future. As they progress through their education, their hunger for knowledge decreases without a firm interest or goal in mind. *FIRST LEGO League Jr.* motivates participants by challenging them to participate in Expos to showcase their knowledge and creations as a team. Below you’ll find some suggestions for how to keep participants engaged.

1. HIGHLIGHT THEIR STRENGTHS

When working in teams, allow students to take on different roles (i.e. builder, programmer, etc.). This will build a sense of ownership and purpose. Additionally, if your school has access to multimedia equipment, sharing videos of men and women working as teams, with varying roles related to your current session is a great way to expose participants to teamwork and careers in STEM!

2. PROMOTE LEADERSHIP

Actively include participants in the decision-making process. Encourage their input and ideas on ways to complete challenges. This will inspire them to remain engaged in STEM while enhancing new skills.



IDEAS JUST FOR FUN

FIRST LEGO League Jr. isn’t just about robotics. In addition to exposing participants to opportunities that open doorways into lively careers in STEM, *FIRST LEGO League Jr.* also understands the importance of having FUN at the core of everything. Look at a few “just because” activities that will surely energize your *FIRST LEGO League Jr.* program!

1. Pictionary

Materials: White Board, Dry Erase Marker, Word List, Watch/Timer

How to Play:

- A. Break participants out into two teams
- B. Encourage the teams to decide who will illustrate/draw for each team per round
- C. Have each team choose a word to draw
- D. Start the timer (30s-60s) and allow the illustrator/drawer for each team to begin drawing their word
 - a. Participants draw as many words from the word bank as they can until the designated time runs out, receiving 1 point per word

Note: Play as many rounds as you want; the team with the most at the end of the game wins.

Game Variation: Each round, the words increase in difficulty and the point value rises accordingly.

2. JEOPARDY!

Play a traditional game of Jeopardy with answers customized to reflect your *FIRST* LEGO League Jr. session!

3. NO HANDS CUP STACKING RACE

Materials: Paper cups, Rubber band, String

How to Play:

- A. Divide participants into teams
- B. Set 6 or 10 cups on each table
- C. Each participant in the group ties a string to the rubber band
- D. Instruct participants to hold onto one of the strings attached to the rubber band
- E. Participants will work together as a team, stretching the rubber band around the cups, in order to lift them, and carefully stack them into a pyramid
- F. First team to finish wins!

4. JUMPING THE LINE

This is an energizer game, perfect for the end of the session. A line is drawn on the floor; one side of the line will be marked 'true' and the other 'false'. The children are asked to stand on the line. The leader will pick a child and say a statement based on what was taught. If the child thinks that it is true, they have to jump to the true side or to the false side. If the child's assessment is wrong, they have to go back to their desk. Continue the game and the last child standing will be the winner for the day.

A successful *FIRST* LEGO League Jr. program will include various resources to motivate, engage, inspire, and encourage your students.

Gearing your program to the demographic of your students is an additional way to bolster confidence in one's ability. Work with as many creative mediums available such as the LEGO Education WeDo 2.0 activities resources found [here](#) and don't be afraid to try something different!



We hope you find success implementing your *FIRST* LEGO League program. For assistance please reach out to Collin Fultz at cfultz@firstinspires.org, or the FirstPic, Inc. team at 443-302-2080.