

Abacadabra

Introduction

We are going to play a game called Abacadabra. In this game, I will make a series of movements – your job is to notice when I repeat the first movement and call out “Abacadabra!” when you see me do it. As we play, you will need to concentrate on my movements. When we concentrate on something small, we can focus our attention on the present moment so we can calm down in times of stress.

Steps of the Activity

1. Tell students you are going to make a series of movements for example:
 - Claps his hands three times;
 - Waves hello;
 - Turn around and so on.
2. Tell students to copy your movements as you go. When students recognize the first movement (i.e., three claps), they should say “Abacadabra!” If online, students can do movement instead of shouting “Abacadabra”. For example, students can turn on a flashlight, wave an imaginary magic wand, or clap.
3. Before each round, tell students you are going to start with a new movement, and they should look for only the new first movement; they can forget or “erase” the old movement.
4. Encourage students to take a deep breath and as they breathe out, have them pretend they are erasing a white board or chalkboard in their mind.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus your attention (in or out of school)?



Target skills:
Focus



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- If you notice students beginning to lose focus throughout lessons, play a quick round of Abracadabra to re-energize and refocus attention.
- Start slow with just a few movements (e.g., one hand clap, one foot stomp, one jump). As students get used to the game you can add in more movements and more complexity.
- Invite the students to become the leaders of the game. Students can demonstrate their own movements, increasing the complexity and number of movements each time.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Make this game more challenging over time by adding more movements, inviting students to lead, or inviting students to share ideas of different movements to include.

Active Listening Games

Introduction

Active Listening is important, because it shows others that we're focusing on what they're saying when they're talking to us. There are different ways we can show someone we're being Active Listeners, such as looking at them, staying quiet to listen, and nodding our heads, and we can choose which Active Listening strategies we want to use. Today, we're going to do an Active Listening Game to practice our Active Listening skills.

Steps of the Activity

1. The teacher reads a list of words to students and asks students to clap every time students hear a specific word (for example) "cat."
2. Read each group of words separately and pause for a few seconds in between. For example, say:
 - cuts coat horse cut dog cow cat
 - horse coat cat cow cut dog cat
 - coat cute horse cat cute cow dog
3. Play one more round with a longer list of words. For example, say:
 - cat shoes pants coat cute dress cut
 - coat cut pants shoes dress cat shoes
 - cute coat cat pants cat cat coat

Reflection

- What makes it easier or harder to be an active listener?
- What strategies did you use to actively listen? What strategies do you want to try?
- Why is it important to be an active listener?
- What does it look like when someone is *not* being an Active Listener?
- How else could we play this game?



Target skills:
Listening



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Younger students may need more support understanding what it means to be an active listener. Before playing, consider facilitating a version of the Kernel “Looks Like, Sounds Like, Feels Like” to help students understand how to actively listen to others.
- When students are familiar with the game, let them make groups and ask them create their own word lists with special words that require the group to do a special action (clapping, jumping, doing a silly dance, etc.)

For students in grades 5-6:

- To make the game more difficult, increase the number of words and actions.
- Play other variations. Try one of the following variations to practice active listening:
 - **Active Listening with a Partner:** Have students find a partner. Students take turn responding to a question for 30 seconds while the other person listens without interrupting. Increase the time to one minute to increase the challenge.
 - **Story Builders:** Students will work together to create a story. Share the first line of the story (e.g., I was at my friend’s house when something really surprising happened...). Alternatively, ask a volunteer to start. After that, go around the group/circle asking each person to contribute one sentence to flesh out the story. Remind students that they must use their Active Listening skills to create a story together that makes sense.

Catch Sounds

Introduction

This game is about focusing our attention to listen for specific sounds and remembering when to use a motion.

Steps of the Activity

1. Choose a specific sound (can be a letter, beginning or ending sound, or syllable) and a movement that students can do from their seats (touch their nose, stand up, wave their right hand, etc.).
2. Tell students to listen for the specific sound while you read aloud a paragraph or short story. Every time they hear the sound, students should do the motion.
3. Continue reading until the end of the paragraph; students should do the motion as quickly as possible so they can get ready to listen for it again. Make sure the sound occurs many times in the story you select.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When and where the skills to focus and to listen to others help you in your life?



Target skills:
Listening and memory



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- To make this more challenging over time, choose two sounds that are similar, and give each sound a unique motion ("ch" = touch your nose, "sh" = stand up).
- Increase the number of sounds to listen for and add different motions to do for each sound.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Invite the students to independently create a text for the activity and become leaders in teams. You can also ask students to "catch" those sounds, letters, letter combinations or even words that are related to educational tasks. students can "catch" metaphors, synonyms, epithets in Ukrainian language and literature lessons; whole numbers, decimal fractions, units of length in math lessons, etc.

Categories

Introduction

Leaders listen to others and create opportunities for them to share their ideas. The teacher also notes that students will have the opportunity to become a leader during the activity, proposing others relevant and interesting ideas for the community. Then, the teacher explains that the main task of the participants during the "Category" activity will be to listen carefully to the leader - the host of the game: the host will name a certain category, and others will need to name the words that fit the proposed category (for example, food: apple, pizza, candy, etc.).

Steps of the Activity

1. Choose one child, who is going to become the leader of the game and to stand in a circle. (The teacher and students can find and propose interesting ways how to choose the leader, e.g. by date / month of birthday, rolling a ball, nursery rhymes, etc.)
2. One person is the leader and names a category such as foods, animals, colors, etc. Then going around in a circle each student names something that fits in that category.
3. After a few students have named something, the leader calls out a new category. The next student in the circle must switch their thinking to name something that fits into the new category. After a few students have named something in that category, the leader announces a new category, and so on.
4. Choose a new leader after a few rounds of play. To add a challenge, play at a faster pace, or switch categories more frequently.

Reflection

- When you were the leader, what was hard for during the activity? What was easy?
- When you were the follower, what was it like to name the words that could fit the category? Why?
- What strategies did you use during the activity? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to use leadership skills?
- When do you need to follow a leader?



Target skills:

Leadership, listening, and self-control



Materials:

None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Use Categories in between activities to help students transition to a new topic. Call out a category and select 3-5 students to name an item which fits in the category.
- Generate a list of categories for leaders before playing with students or use some simple categories “Edible/Inedible” to begin.
- Speed up the game by suggesting the leaders change categories more often.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Have the leaders choose categories that will be related to the educational disciplines and topics they are currently studying, such as: mammals, carnivores, algae, flowering plants, conifers, verbs, nouns, adjectives, whole numbers, decimals, etc.

Find the Secret Agent

Introduction

Solving problems requires careful attention and focus. We are going to play a game to practice focusing attention. The point of the game is for the detective to figure out who is the leader. To meet the goal, you will need to pay attention to follow along with a changing pattern while trying to figure out who is leading the pattern. When you focus your attention, you can solve challenging problems around you.

Steps of the Activity

1. Before you begin, choose a student to be the detective, and ask that student to leave the room (or close his/her eyes, or turn around so he/she can't see). Choose another student to be the leader without letting the detective know who it is (you can tap the leader on the shoulder or point silently if the detective is in the room with eyes closed).
2. The leader begins the game by doing a simple movement, such as tapping her or his pencil or waving his or her hands.
3. Students should follow along by copying the leader's movements. The leader will make gradual changes to the movement (i.e., switch from clapping to snapping) and all students try to follow along closely, so that it is not obvious who is leading the pattern.
4. The detective should say "I found the leader!" when he/she thinks he/she knows who is leading the pattern.
5. Play multiple rounds with a new detective and new leader each time.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus at home or at school?



Target skills:

Attention and problem solving



Materials:

None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- If necessary, invite the students to practice following the secret agent's instructions quickly and changing movements without choosing a new detective.
- Invite two participants to become Detectives to make the task easier and to find the secret agent faster together.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Complete the activity in teams rather than as a class.
- To increase the challenge, require the secret agent to change the pattern more frequently.

Four Corners

Introduction

To make our classroom community strong and successful, it's important that we focus our attention on the words that our classmates and our teachers say. Today, we are going to play a game where you will need to focus your attention. First, I will teach you a chant and hand motions to match. After we practice, you will have to focus your attention to match the words with the motions. Here's a tip: Look to your classmates if you need help!

Steps of the Activity

1. Teach students the following chant and hand motions:
Chant: *My desk has four corners, four corners has my desk. If it didn't have four corners, it wouldn't be my desk.*
Motions: point to yourself each time you say the word "my", hold out both hands in a flat surface for the word "desk", hold up four fingers for the word "four", point to your bent elbow for the word "corner/s", and shake a finger for the words "didn't" and "wouldn't".
2. Do the chant multiple times. The first time, tell students to be silent every time they get to the word "my", while continuing to do the correct hand motion.
3. The second time, tell students to be silent on the words "my" and "desk", while continuing to do the correct motions at the correct times.
4. The third time, tell students to be silent on "my" "desk" and "four"; and so on.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- What strategies did you hear or see other people use that you want to try?
- When do you need to use focusing skills (in or out of school)?



Target skills:
Focus



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Use a shorter chant or fewer motions.
- Encourage students to watch classmates to help them remember. Write the chant on chart paper, and draw accompanying pictures, if helpful. Then post it up in the room, so students can see it as you sing.
- Change the order of the words that students will skip to make the activity more challenging.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Invite students to create their own activity and lead the game in small groups.

Hocus Pocus

Introduction

This game is about listening carefully as we count and remembering the right motion for a key number. When we practice will practice self-control, focus, and attention. If we practice these skills, we can organize our thinking and behavior to engage deeply in learning with each other.

Steps of the Activity

1. Gather students in a circle. If online, determine an order before the game begins. For the first round, go around the circle and count to 10 so that each person counts one number.
2. After the tenth person has said "10," the next person should say, "Hocus Pocus, everybody focus!"
3. Facilitate several rounds so that participants memorize the sequence of activities.
4. Suggest that students not call out a number but replace it with any movement. For example, instead of saying 5, have students clap their hands.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus at home or at school?



Target skills:

Self-control, focus, and attention



Materials:

None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- To make the game easier for younger students, try shortening the phrase to just “Hocus Pocus” or only ask them to count to 5.
- Invite students to form teams and have one of the participants lead the game.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Invite students to create a tongue twister and complete the activity as a group or in teams.
- Create additional challenges that have an academic focus. For example, every time you get to a certain number, name something from a subject you’re studying, such as:
 - Country names
 - Capitals of different countries;
 - Regions of Ukraine;
 - Different kinds of angles;
 - Types of angles;
 - Minerals;
 - The main characters of works being studied;
 - Adverbs/ interjections/pronouns, etc
- Encourage the last student (i.e., the student who says “Hocus Pocus, Everybody Focus”) to make up the next challenge.

Hot Potato

Introduction

This game is about remembering what you're supposed to do while doing a different motions, like passing a hot potato as quickly as possible. We are playing this game to practice memory and attention. If we practice memory and attention, we can keep track of important information to use at home and at school.

Steps of the Activity

1. Have students stand in a circle. Use an object that can be passed around the circle, such as a ball, a water bottle, a chalkboard eraser. Pretend it is a "hot potato" that has just come out of the oven or off the fire; it is steaming hot and you can't hold it very long or it will burn.
2. Pass the hot potato around the circle as quickly as possible without dropping it.
3. The next round, before starting, give students a task or sequence of actions (such as jump, turn around, tap your head).
4. Explain that students will pass around the object while music is playing, and whoever is holding the object when the music stops must remember and do the correct task.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus at home or at school?
- How else would you like to play this game?



Target skills:

Memory and listening



Materials:

Music

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- To decrease the challenge, play the game at a slower pace and limit the number or complexity of the actions.
- Let students take turns deciding the sequence and number of actions for each round.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Ask an academic question (e.g., math question) before you start the music. Students should not answer the question right away but keep the question and answer in their minds as they play the game. When the music stops students can share the response to the question.
- To add a challenge, increase the number of tasks or the complexity of actions (e.g., go to desk, write on paper the name of 3 animals and 1 food). To make this game even harder, have two potatoes, each with a different assigned task.

Masha Says

Introduction

This game is about listening carefully for a key phrase to decide if you should or shouldn't do a motion. When we listen carefully before doing a motion, we are practicing self-control. Self-control helps us think before we act.

Steps of the Activity

1. Tell students they should copy your actions only if you say "Masha Says" first. For example, when Masha says, "Masha Says, touch your nose," students should touch their noses. If Masha only says, "Spin around in place," students should not spin around in place (instead, stand still).

Sample actions include:

- Jump up and down
- Wave your hands
- Touch your toes

2. Play several rounds. End with "Masha says sit down for our reflection."

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to use self-control at home or at school?
- How else would you like to play this game?



Target skills:
Self-control



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Speed up or slow down the pace of the game according to the needs of your students.
- Invite students to come up with phrases other than “Masha says..” that will also indicate that the movement should or should not be performed.

For students in grades 5-6:

- For an added challenge which practices cognitive flexibility, change the rules of the game. Students should now copy the actions only when the leader does not say “Masha says.”
- To make it more challenging, the leader can do the actions whether or not he or she says “Masha Says,” which tempts the players to follow instead of listening carefully.

Names

Introduction

How can we communicate with each other to build positive relationships? Remembering people's names, their interests and preferences is necessary to build healthy and positive relationships with each other.

During the "Names" activity, the students will need to remember the name, favorite activity and corresponding movement of each participant, and then repeat them in the correct order. If a new student joins our class, we can play again to get to know each other better.

Steps of the Activity

1. Split the class into two groups. If online, determine an order for students to share in advance. Tell students to think of something they like to do in their free time and an accompanying action or motion. For example, if I like to run, my action could be running in place.
2. Choose one student to go first. The student will say their name, favorite thing to do and the motion. All the participants repeat the name, their favorite thing, and demonstrate the motion. (e.g., "My name is Karina, and I like to read." Karina claps her hands and opens them like she is reading a book. All students repeat: "Her name is Karina, and she likes to read." Students then repeat the action) .
3. Then the next student will represent themselves in the same way. After each student shares his/her name and hobby, the whole class will repeat the name, favorite thing to do and the motion of the previous participants as a whole group.
4. At the end, point to a few students out of order and see if the class can remember what they said and their motions.

Reflection

- What about this game was hard for you? What was easy?
- What strategies helped you to remember the names, the things and the motions of other participants? What strategies did you hear other people use that you want to try?
- What new information did you learn about your classmates? What are some other ways you can learn new things about others? Where and with whom would you like to play this game again?



Target skills:
Focus



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Try a variation to play in less time. Instead of having students state their favorite thing to do, students can say their name and the movement which represents their favorite hobby at the same time.
- Make sure everyone can clearly see and hear the teacher who can help prompt them to remember what each student shared. When you notice that a child has forgotten the name, favorite activity or movement of another participant, help them by naming and reproducing the movement together.
- Ask students to share the name of an activity that begins with the same letter as their name.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Encourage students to share more complicated statements in more details. For example: "My name is Karina. I like to read fiction, especially detective stories and comics."

On My Pizza

Introduction

This game is about listening to others, remembering their contributions, and repeating them in the correct order. It's important to practice our memory and listening skills because it helps us remember others' contributions. When we remember one another's contributions, we can build a strong classroom community.

Steps of the Activity

1. Students stand in a circle (or sit at desks if there is not enough room to stand)
2. One student goes first and says, "On my pizza, I like _____," naming one ingredient such as cheese, pepperoni, sausage, or even something silly like chocolate.
3. The next student says, "On my pizza, I like..." and has to repeat what the first person said and then add one item. The third person does the same, repeating what the first two people said and then adding a new item.
4. After everyone has a turn, the entire class will say, "On my pizza, I do NOT like..." and will take off each of the items mentioned, starting with the most recent addition and removing each ingredient in reverse order.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What would you like to do differently next time?
- In what life situations do you need the ability to remember information about others?



Target skills:
Memory and listening



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Play this game using many different variations. For example, instead of saying “On my pizza” students can say “I’m going to school, and I will take _____,” naming one object such as a pencil, book, etc. “
- Draw or write ingredients and encourage students to reference the list.
- For a greater challenge, ask students to add two items at a time.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Encourage students to lead the game and create new versions of the game.

Silly Stories

Introduction

One way we can learn with each other is by slowing down and thinking before we act. When we slow down and think before we act, we are practicing self-control. Self-control helps us be in charge of what we say and do. We will practice self-control in a game called Silly Stories. This game is about listening carefully to a story and remembering to do a silly opposite of certain words you hear.

Steps of the Activity

1. Tell students you are going to read a story. (see sample stories on the back of the card). Every time students hear a certain word in the story, they should perform a different action than the word they hear.
2. Tell students what words will prompt them to perform an action. For example, every time students hear the word “drums” in the story, they should pretend to play the guitar, and vice versa.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to use self-control (in or out of school)?
- How would you change this game for the next time we play?



Target skills:
Self-control



Materials:
Sample Silly Stories

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Decrease the challenge by reading the story more slowly or posting the words on the screen with visual representations of key words.
- Increase the number of actions in the story or read it faster.
- Invite students to come up with their own stories in teams and choose certain movements.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Choose a story related to educational tasks.
- Invite students to create their own story in teams.
- Invite students to create stories and add actions with objects from the classroom space.

Examples of stories:

- Svitlana loved to swim but her football playing brother, Sasha, would never come swimming with her. Whenever she went to watch him play football, she asked him to join her for a swim, but Sasha just stayed on the football pitch everyday. Even after Svitlana would play football with Sasha and his friends, Sasha would tell his sister that he would stay on the football pitch while she went for a swim. (Words to change the action: play soccer, swim)
- Diana and her friends played music the other night. Diana was the singer, Daryna played the guitar, Dmitry played the drums, and Daniel played the xylophone. Poor Dmitry, he banged those drums so hard they broke, and a piece hit Daryna's guitar and broke it too. Diana had her eyes closed and just kept singing. She did not even notice that the drums and guitar weren't playing! (Words to change the action: guitar, drum)

Sing it Silly

Introduction

To make our classroom community strong and successful, it's important to think before we act. When we think before we act, we are practicing self-control. Today, we are going to play a game where you will need to focus your attention and practice self-control.

Steps of the Activity

1. Teach students how to sing "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" (point to corresponding body part at the right time):
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes, Knees and Toes.
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes, Knees and Toes.
Eyes and Ears and Mouth and Nose.
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes, Knees and Toes
2. Invite the students to repeat the sequence, singing the words and pointing to the corresponding body parts.
3. When students are familiar with the song, switch it up by changing the order of the body parts in the song (knees, toes, shoulders, head, etc.)
4. Students should try to follow along with the teacher and do correct motions.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus at home or at school?
- How else would you like to play this game?



Target skills:
Self-control and focus



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- To make this game simpler, keep the words and motions in the correct order but ask students to sing a different way each time: fast, slow, like a robot, etc.
- Invite students to write their own words to the song

For students in grades 5-6:

- Sing the song in the correct order but tell students to do the opposite of what you say: when you say “head” they touch their shoulders, and vice versa; and so on.
- Use the words and actions from “Four Corners” and add the challenge of mixing up the order of movements.
- To make the game more difficult, increase the number of words and actions. For an extra focus challenge, facilitate two games at once. Students will need to ignore the distraction of the other group singing!

Sing With a Partner

Introduction

This game builds self-control and focus. We will sing a song as a whole group, and you will try to resist signing during another person's turn. You will need to pay careful attention to your partner's words and try not to sing over their voice. When we focus and practice self-control, we can practice thinking before we act. This will allow all of us to learn deeply together.

Steps of the Activity

1. Play this game in pairs. Students should either stand so they are facing their partner or, if online, ensure they can see their partner's face on the screen.
2. Choose a song that is familiar to students, and practice singing as a whole class.
3. Then, explain that students will continue singing as a whole class, but will take turns with their partner, trading back and forth who is singing each phrase of the song.
4. When one partner is singing, the other is silent, and when the singer stops, the other person must jump in quickly so they do not miss any words in the song.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus at home or at school?
- How else would you like to play this game?



Target skills:
Self-control and focus



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- To decrease the challenge, use shorter songs or phrases.
- Instead of switching singers within a partnership, students can form small groups of 4-6 students and sing with a small group. Students may need to create a signal to decide when they will switch to the other group.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Organize students into 2-3 teams and take turns singing the song.
- To make the task more difficult, ask pairs or teams to choose the song to sing on their own. Students will need to concentrate amidst distracting sounds from the noise of other groups nearby.
- To add a challenge, increase the speed of the song or the frequency of switching turns.

Tailor Shop

Introduction

This game is about remembering what each person has said and repeating it in the correct order. When we practice memory and attention, we can keep track of and use important information. This helps us engage deeply in learning with each other.

Steps of the Activity

1. This game is played in teams. To start, each team should have no more than four students.
2. One student in each team is the tailor at the shop, and the other students pretend to be customers. Customers take turns ordering their clothing of choice, picking one item and its color, length, or style (e.g., "I would like a red shirt please").
3. After the last customer finishes his/her request, the tailor delivers the correct items to each customer (e.g., "Here is your red shirt, here are your blue pants," and so on).

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to use your memory at home or at school?
- How else would you like to play this game?



Target skills:
Memory



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Students may benefit from a concrete representation of the items. Display pictures of common clothing items for students to reference as they play.
- Instead of a tailor shop, students can imagine they are ordering groceries from the market or selecting the characteristics of their ideal football team.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Instead of naming the items in the store, adapt the game so that students draw the “purchased” items.
- For an extra memory challenge, students can share more adjectives to describe the article of clothing. Students can describe the item’s color, length, and style instead of choosing just one descriptor.

Telephone

Introduction

To listen to others, we need to focus our attention on what they are saying and remember the words they say. We are going to play a game called Telephone to help us practice focusing our attention while we listen to others. The goal of this game is focus on the message and repeat it correctly to the next person. Are you ready to focus your attention?

Steps of the Activity

1. Have students sit or stand in a circle. If online, determine an order before beginning the game.
2. The teacher goes first and whispers a silly phrase to the first student, such as "I like dancing like a worm." If online, ensure that everyone except for the teacher and the first student have turned the computer speaker off.
3. Then first student whispers what they think they heard to the next person. If online, the next student should turn on their speaker before receiving the message.
4. The message is passed around until the last person hears it (or back to the first person, if students are in a circle); he/she announces what he/she heard. The goal is to get as close as possible to the original message.
5. Play multiple rounds, switching the order of students so someone new is first and last.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus at home or at school?
- How else would you like to play this game?



Target skills:
Listening and focus



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- To decrease the memory challenge, share shorter phrases of 2-3 words.
- Let students lead the activity for the whole class or in smaller groups.

For students in grades 5-6:

- To increase the working memory challenge, make the original message longer or more complex.
- Share a message that is relevant to academic content. For example, if you are studying the phases of the moon, you could share the message “The moon is a waxing gibbous.”

Ten Questions

Introduction

We are going to play a game about asking questions and remembering responses to solve a problem. You will work with your classmates to ask questions to solve the challenge before you reach ten questions. When we ask questions and remember the responses, we can learn more about specific topics so we can learn together as a community!

Steps of the Activity

1. Choose an age-appropriate, narrow category such as animals, sports, foods, clothing types, etc. Tell students you are thinking of something specific in that category but do not say aloud what it is (e.g., a horse, soccer, milk).
2. Students must take turns asking a total of ten “yes” or “no” questions to guess the item. For example, students may ask: Is it a land animal? Is it a game with a ball? Is it a vegetable? And so on.
3. Pause after five questions and ask the class to remember and review what facts they have learned so far.
4. After ten questions, if no one has guessed the answer, give a hint. Then students have ten more questions to guess. Remember to pause after five questions to remember and review all the facts learned.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What strategies did you hear other people use that you want to try?



Target skills:
Memory



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Ask students to record key information from each question on the board to decrease the memory challenge.
- Encourage students to choose the topic and facilitate the Kernel.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Instead of playing with the whole class, break the class into smaller groups and have students facilitate in their small groups.
- Choose a category relevant to an area of study.

The Last Word

Introduction

Do you think you can remember the last word of every sentence I say? Today, we will play a game which requires memory and listening skills. You will need to remember the last word in each sentence and put them together in the correct order to make a new sentence.

Steps of the Activity

1. Before playing the game, write down a short sentence (noun-verb-noun), such as “goats eat potatoes,” but do not share the sentence with students.
2. Then think of three consecutive sentences, each of which ends with one of the three words from the noun-verb-noun sentence. For example: “Lyuba has two pink **goats**. Stephanie likes to **eat**. Max grows **potatoes**.”
3. To play the game, slowly read the three sentences aloud. Tell students they should remember the last word of each sentence.
4. Then, ask students to put the three words together to make a new sentence.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to use your memory at home or at school?
- How else would you like to play this game?



Target skills:
Memory and listening skills



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- To decrease the memory challenge, use shorter sentences or emphasize the words students should remember.
- Invite students to lead the activity.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Invite students to form teams and facilitate the activity themselves.
- Combine two activities together, for example: “The Last Word” and “Telephone.” Pass the three sentences to each person in the circle and see if the last person can correctly share the shortened phrase.
- To increase the challenge, use longer sentences or ask students to remember a different word in each original sentence, such as the first word or the second-to-last word.

Wait for It

Introduction

This game is about exercising self-control to wait before doing a series of motions. If we practice slowing and thinking before we act, we will be in charge of what we say and do. This can help us to engage deeply in learning with each other.

Steps of the Activity

1. Begin by saying or doing a series of movements. For example, list of series of movements such as touching the stomach, then the head, counting to five and saying, "Go!" Students will then carry out those movements in that order.
2. Next, repeat the order of the movements verbally to the students and ask them to count to 5 in their minds. Say, "Go!" The students then repeat the appropriate movements.
3. Demonstrate 3-4 movements, then the students will count to 5 in their minds. When you say "go," they repeat the movements.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus at home or at school?
- How else would you like to play this game?



Target skills:
Self-control and focus



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- Decrease the challenge by showing fewer movement or doing movements in a set pattern.
- Invite students to become the leaders of the game and making up their own movements for the activity.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Try the “opposites” game, students must remember the rule and complete the opposite movement when they see it (e.g., “Look tall” and students squat down). “Rules” can also be specific to each game, such as “When I touch my elbow in the sequence, you have to touch your head when you replicate the same sequence.” For added challenges, add multiple rules per sequence.
- To increase the challenge, increase the number of instructions in each sequence, increase the wait time, or add intentional distractions (e.g., other students singing a song or doing jumping jacks in view of the students trying to remember the sequence).

Zip Zap Zop

Introduction

When we practice focus and attention, we can organize our thinking and behavior to meet goals. This allows us to engage deeply in learning with one each other. We will use our focus skills to pay attention as we take turns and send the chant “Zip, Zap, Zop” around the circle.

Steps of the Activity

1. Gather students in a circle. If online, determine an order before the game begins. Have students repeat after you: “Zip, Zap, Zop.”
2. The leader will begin by saying “Zip,” and clapping their hands at the next person. Then, the next person will say “Zap” and will clap their hands at a different person. Finally, the third person will say, “Zop,” etc.
3. The chant will continue around the circle repeatedly until each person has a chance to say the chant.

Reflection

- What about this game was easy or hard for you?
- What strategies did you use? What might you do differently next time?
- When do you need to focus at home or at school?



Target skills:
Focus and attention



Materials:
None required

My Notes

Ideas for expansion and adaptation

For primary school students:

- To make the game easier, go around the circle in order chanting “Zip, Zap, Zop.”
- Ask students to gently throw a ball to one another in a random order as they chant “Zip, Zap, Zop.”
- Suggest that students change the chant to one using different sounds, for example: “Bang, bang, bang, bop,” or “Click, clack, click,” etc.

For students in grades 5-6:

- Suggest a song for students to sing and sing one of the verses one word at a time.
- Match each sound to a different movement to have students do the movement and say the sound at the same time. For example, students may match the following sounds and movements:
 - Zip: Clap their hands over their heads
 - Zap: Put their hands on their knees
 - Zop: Jump in the air