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“GBL for soft skills development” Booklet for primary school teachers

**GAMES: Games for students with Autism as an effective
Methodology in Education for the development of Social Skills**

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....2

Part 1 Theoretical Background.....3

Part 2 Guidelines.....8

Part 3 Classroom Group Games.....13

Foundation Skills.....13

Interaction Skills.....30

Affective Skills.....46

Cognitive Skills.....65

References.....81





Introduction

The present booklet is created with respect to social skills learning (SSL) approaches capable of developing cognitive and social skills in autistic children who attend mainstream classes. Its primary objectives are the secure inclusion of autistic children into school settings with the use of adaptive games that promote social awareness and unity among classmates. The positive outcomes of play activities are globally accepted and preferable, especially in the smaller classes of primary school; hence, it was necessary to create a teacher's handbook that includes games that can be implemented in class settings for educational purposes.

The booklet is composed of three parts:

Part 1 – Theoretical background

Theory behind group games learning, scope & aims

Part 2 – Guidelines

Information about how to conduct games, rules to follow, ethical principles

Part 3 – Classroom Group Games

Classroom Group Games corresponding to the four social skills areas: Foundation Skills, Interaction Skills, Affective Skills, Cognitive Skills

Within each of the topic areas you will find a list of games with the following information:

Background – with method & approaches

List of games – with titles & references

Guidelines – with illustrations

The materials needed

Summary of the topic – with infographics

Checklists – that can also be used for self-assessment and self-monitoring



Part 1: Theoretical background

...WHAT IS AUTISM...

Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by deficits in social communication skills, social relatedness, and a restricted repertoire of activities and interests (Chung et al., 2007). It is now recognized as a "spectrum" disorder due to the wide variation in the type and severity of symptoms experienced by individuals.

According to the latest version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), Autism Spectrum Condition (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects how individuals interact with others, communicate, learn, and behave (DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association 2013). The effects and severity of ASD symptoms vary for each person and change over time. Although ASD is a lifelong, persistent condition, individuals can live independently, pursue higher education, and be socially productive.

DSM-5 (2013) characteristics of ASD fall into two categories: deficits in social communication and patterns of behaviour. The symptomatology of ASD is not unique and may vary depending on educational, cultural, and social factors.

In a more detailed manner, social communication skills encompass social interaction (reciprocal exchange of information, relational components, and aspects such as relationships, friendships, acceptance, belonging, isolation, and loneliness) and communication (an interactive process of information exchange through multiple means such as body language, speech, facial expressions, and gestures) (O'Keeffe & McNally, 2021). On the other hand, behavioural issues may include repetitive patterns of behaviour, repertoire, interests, or desirable activities.

These characteristics are usually categorized into three levels based on the severity of symptomatology or communication skills. Individuals at Level 3 typically require very substantial support, those at Level 2 need substantial support, and those at Level 1 require only minimal support (DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

In terms of terminology, Autism Spectrum Condition is widely acceptable in academic and medical circles. However, studies have shown an increased consideration for the use of different terms. Research by Bury S. M et.al (2020) on the Australian autistic



population revealed a significant preference for the term "autistic person" by autistic societies. Similar results have been found in studies in the UK (Kenny et al. 2016), emphasizing the importance of language use in minimising biases in ethical, cultural, and educational settings. In respect to those findings, in this booklet, the terms 'autistic people,' 'autistic students,' or 'autistic children' will be used when referring to these populations.

Differences in the social communication skills of autistic children are apparent from early infancy and include difficulties in initiating and responding to joint attention, understanding non-verbal communication, and difficulties in peer relations and friendships.

Throughout all stages of life, individuals face enduring challenges that manifest in social-emotional reciprocity, non-verbal communication, and the development and understanding of relationships. These difficulties persist across various life phases, impacting how individuals engage with others and navigate the complexities of interpersonal connections. Moreover, the difficulty experienced in communication can be more obvious or compounded by increased social demands and expectations, particularly affecting peer relations and the quality or quantity of friendships.

In general, the success of autistic students in an inclusive setting like schools can be impacted in several ways by their specific characteristics and preferences. Autistic students may encounter difficulties when trying to participate actively in the classroom (Keen, 2009), such as struggles in comprehending and effectively adapting to the classroom environment due to issues such as sorting out irrelevant information (Wainwright-Sharp & Bryson, 1996) or experiencing challenges in shifting focus of attention (Ochs, Kremer-Sadlik, Solomon, & Sirota, 2001). Individuals may face challenges in focusing on important aspects of the learning environment, especially when these aspects are not clearly stated (Klin, 2000).

4

Autistic students often remain on the periphery of classroom. Social challenges persist throughout the school years of autistic children and extend into adolescence. Autistic individuals attempt to navigate the complex social world around them, with poor abilities in forming and maintaining friendships, resulting in loneliness, bullying, and victimization (O'Keeffe & McNally, 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to develop a handbook containing various activities to help teachers overcome educational challenges within the classroom while enhancing social awareness and skills among students.



..SOCIAL SKILLS INTERVENTION IN AUTISTIC CHILDREN & GROUP- BASED INTERVENTIONS...

There are several examples of social skills training that have been used for autistic people such as social stories, peer-mediated strategies, video modelling, cognitive behavioural training, pivotal response training, and Theory of Mind (Wang & Spillane, 2009).

Spillane (2009) notes that Social Skills Training (SST) is a widely accepted child-specific intervention for various childhood developmental difficulties. It entails teaching specific skills, such as maintaining eye contact and initiating conversation, through behavioral and social learning. Group-based SST is especially beneficial for autistic students, providing them with an opportunity to naturally practice newly learned skills while interacting with their peers (White et al., 2006). By definition, group-based interventions in this context involve more than one person and often take place in school settings, where an autistic child may be placed in a group with typical peers, only with other autistic children, or in a mixed group (Alalet, 2018).

There are several examples of group-based social interactions for autistic children. The most commonly utilized school intervention for the specific population is Social Skills Group Training (SSGT), which involves several students of similar ages participating in a small group setting with a trained adult facilitator, whose responsibility is to guide the participants to interact. One method used in SSGT is peers engaging with each other in play (Silveira-Zaldivara et al., 2021).

Similarly, Group Social Skills Interventions (GSSIs) are often recommended for autistic children, typically classified within levels one and two of the spectrum. GSSIs vary in terms of content, teaching strategy, mode of delivery, and therapy intensity (Wolstencroft et al., 2018). GSSIs target the following social skills areas: nonverbal communication (eye contact, facial expressions, posture, gestures), verbal communication (tone of voice, humour and jokes, nonliteral language such as metaphors, sarcasm, figures of speech), social interaction (friendship, joining, maintaining/ leaving a social interaction, conversation, empathy), and/or social problem solving (conflict in relationships, bullying/teasing, controlling negative emotions, good sportsmanship). In GSSI, some interventions may involve typically developing peers and/or siblings in the same group with autistic children (McMahon et al., 2013). Among several teaching strategies in GSSI, 'performance' interventions are the ones that elicit social skills through play (Wolstencroft et al., 2018).



...PLAY AS AN INTERVENTION STRATEGY...

Play is considered to be an important aspect of a child's development. Play is fundamental in a child's socio-emotional and cognitive development, as well as in a child's education and learning. It is defined to be pleasurable, voluntary, intrinsically motivated, and flexible with a non-literal orientation, while the focus of the play is on the process, not the end product and it requires active engagement (Kossyvaki & Papoudi, 2016).

The play offers a naturalistic platform for the development of social communication and social relationships within educational contexts. It is the primary medium of social interaction in early childhood. Play has been associated with multiple aspects of social interactions and communication skills including turn-taking and sharing, collaboration, negotiation, social reciprocity, development of the theory of mind, development of friendships, peer acceptance, joint attention, joint engagement, gestures and body language (O'Keeffe & McNally, 2021).

Of significance, autistic children tend to play differently compared to their typical peers, as they may have restrictions in play. More specifically, autistic children usually experience difficulty in play, beginning from infancy, in spontaneous interactive social play, and later on at social play or group play. These difficulties are due to the nature of autism which involves substantial difficulties at social interaction, communication and symbolic thinking. Autistic children usually show interest in the sensory qualities of the objects in a play and their play can be considered as stereotyped and/or repetitive. Autistic children may face challenges in various aspects of play, including sharing imaginative play, making friends, showing interest in peers, engaging in peer play, symbolic play, functional play (e.g., pushing a toy car), and pretend to play (e.g., making the sound of a car's wheels). Additionally, autistic children may demonstrate differences in the quality and quantity of their play compared to their peers and children with other developmental disabilities. Autistic children are unlikely to get engaged in functionally appropriate play without specific and explicit teaching (Kossyvaki & Papoudi, 2016).

Despite these play limitations of autistic children, play can still be used as an effective tool in their education with appropriate guidance and mentoring, helping them develop social skills and fostering their participation in inclusive settings (Kossyvaki & Papoudi, 2016). Play has been used as a practice-based intervention to support the social communication skills of autistic children (O'Keeffe & McNally, 2021), and there have been studies that recognise the benefit of play as an intervention strategy for autistic children in school settings (Kossyvaki & Papoudi, 2016).



Broadly, play-based interventions for autistic children are divided into two categories: (1) interventions that focus on improving social play skills, and (2) interventions that use playful methods to target other social outcomes. The association between social play and the development of social skills, language development, and communication skills has been the basis for several therapeutic interventions for autism (Gibson et al., 2021).

Peers play an important role in developing social and communication skills in autistic children (Mastrangelo, 2009). Peer play experiences are significant for a child's development, socialization, as well as cultural participation (Wolfberg et al., 2015). Markedly, in peer play, children support each other's play in unique ways that cannot be replicated by adults. For example, children co-create social and imaginary worlds, sharing meanings within these collaborative environments. Among several methods, the Integrated Play Groups (IPG) model, which emerged for the inclusion of children into common peer-play experiences, is also recognised as one of the established best practices for supporting autistic children. IPGs engage autistic children (novice players) with more capable peer-play partners (expert players), who are typical peers or siblings, in mutually engaging play experiences facilitated by a qualified adult in regular inclusive social settings (Wolfberg et al., 2012).

...SCHOOLS AS NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS FOR PEER INTERACTIONS...

Schools may be characterized as environments that foster relationships and allow for naturalistic peer interactions for autistic children, in contrast to clinical settings (O'Keeffe & McNally, 2021). However, it has been documented that mere exposure to peers and social interaction settings may not be sufficient to help develop the age-appropriate social skills of autistic children (Chung et al., 2007). Without sufficient support, autistic children could be at risk of further isolation, emphasizing the necessity for early interventions to support their social communication development within formal school settings (O'Keeffe & McNally, 2021). Additionally, as more autistic children are now spending time in mainstream education, educators should focus on ways to facilitate and enhance social interaction between autistic students and their typical peers (Silveira-Zaldivara et al., 2021).

Peer-mediated interventions (PMI) have been effective in enhancing both the social skills and academic engagement of autistic students in a school setting. PMI can be implemented in short periods and small groups, during play periods such as recess, via whole-class interventions, or after-school programs (Silveira-Zaldivara et al., 2021).



It is crucial to consider the value of group social skills training and peer play within the naturalistic school environment and explore ways to stimulate peer interactions in inclusive school settings.

While the value of play in mainstream education has been widely investigated, it appears to be somewhat neglected in school practice. Many teachers, whether in mainstream or special education, tend to overlook the importance of play beyond the early years and its contribution to effective teaching for autistic children (Kossyvaki & Papoudi, 2016).

Engaging autistic children in play activities poses additional challenges for teachers (Kossyvaki & Papoudi, 2016). Hence, teachers may require appropriate guidance, training, and resources to implement peer-play strategies in mainstream classroom education. This booklet aims to provide a guide for teachers to implement classroom group-based activities (classroom group games) for autistic children, facilitating their development of social skills in mainstream education in a mixed play environment with their peers.

Part 2: Guidelines

The primary concept behind developing this booklet is to take familiar games often played in school settings among peers and adapt them to provide additional benefits for autistic children. The goal is to empower autistic students with various social skills without compromising their reputation or subjecting them to stigmatization among their peers, using fun and easy tasks. These adapted games enable all students to participate without highlighting their differences, as they are based on well-established educational approaches adapted for inclusive classroom procedures.

This booklet is specifically designed with a focus on the unique characteristics of autistic students. Its main objectives are to enhance their communication abilities and equip them with effective strategies to navigate challenges within the school environment, ultimately helping them reach individual goals and maintain determination. Its utilization is essential, considering the distinct traits of each child and harnessing the collective strength of the group in the school setting. Teachers have the freedom to



employ these classroom group games in a way they deem most beneficial, considering the unique dynamics and knowledge levels of their students.

It's crucial to emphasize that this handbook is intended for educational and learning purposes only. The main objectives revolve around enhancing social awareness, nurturing cognitive skills, and encouraging acceptance among peers. Under no circumstances should it be considered a therapeutic or intervention strategy for autistic children or an extension of special education therapies. Instead, it must serve as a collection of game proposals, influenced by familiar activities and adapted to empower social skills through play. Its primary aim is to assist teachers in promoting unity within the classroom by using tools that positively impact the learning process. Overall, the games have been designed to have the potential to help students develop their social skills in a fun and motivating way.

In summary, this booklet is a valuable resource for any teacher seeking to enrich social awareness, foster acceptance, promote unity, and encourage social interaction among students, using globally recognized games adapted to empower these skills. It also aims to minimize biases and negative attitudes towards peers.

The games presented in this booklet align with the social skills identified in the project's curriculum, which encompasses four distinct areas:

1. **Foundation Skills:** Rooted in fundamental social interactions, these skills primarily rely on nonverbal cues.
2. **Interaction Skills:** Essential for engaging in verbal interactions with others, these skills encompass the ability to communicate effectively through speech.
3. **Affective Skills:** This category involves the capability to recognize and understand someone's emotions, facilitating empathetic and emotionally attuned interactions.
4. **Cognitive Skills:** Necessary to sustain more intricate and complex social interactions, these skills involve processes such as problem-solving and critical thinking.

The games provided in this booklet have been carefully crafted to target and enhance these specific areas of social skill development. Basically, the aim of the group games in this booklet is to help autistic children acquire social skills in question by practicing them in real-life-like settings.

The games in this booklet are for Level 1 autistic children; however, some games are also applicable to Level 2. The games developed in this booklet can be implemented for primary school first-year students, and the level of competencies depending on age,



social skills development, and other factors can be altered by the teacher based on the dynamics of the class.

The methodology of each game varies, drawing from various accepted educational approaches, including:

- **Strategic Exercising:** This approach is designed to help students develop skills in self-control and handling peer pressure.
- **Naturalistic Settings and Real-World Relevance:** This approach allows students to practice assertive behaviour in contexts they may encounter in their daily lives.
- **Systems Thinking Approaches:** This approach aims to help students understand how various elements interact and affect each other.
- **Peer Interaction:** Peer-based interventions are evidence-based practices that teach strategies to typically developing peers for facilitating social interactions with autistic children.
- **Instance Debates:** This approach enables students to grasp the dynamics of interpersonal interactions and gain insights into the emotions that arise when they are not heard by others.
- **Role-Playing Approaches:** Role-playing allows students to explore different roles and perspectives, enhancing their cognitive flexibility.
- **Visual Supporting:** Visual supports, such as visual cues, schedules, and visual instructions, are incorporated to enhance understanding and promote independent engagement.

10

Tips and Instructions for Teachers

In the following section, we provide tips and instructions for maximising the effectiveness of the booklet. It is highly recommended to carefully consider and implement these notes in the classroom, as they are developed with a strong emphasis on ethical considerations.

- It is essential to acknowledge that participation in the games must be voluntary, and instructions should be provided in a manner that does not highlight any differences among students. This principle should be upheld at every stage of the game implementation, including when asking for feedback from students.
- Additionally, it is crucial to adhere to all ethical guidelines and principles, ensuring the proper use of respectful terminology when discussing the unique attributes and strengths of each student. Every teacher must be diligent in



avoiding phrases and terminology that could potentially harm the reputation of their autistic students.

- It is highly advisable to be mindful of the challenges that autistic students might encounter during the implementation of these games. The expectation is that they are used in a manner that does not cause harm or frustration to any classroom member. The primary emphasis is on fostering and improving communication skills rather than solely assessing right or wrong responses.
- In the event of any application difficulties, when deemed necessary by the teacher or trainer, it is recommended to pause or end the games to prevent any harmful outcomes. Overcoming limitations and difficulties necessitates adequate training and preparation of the school environment in a manner that sparks and sustains the students' interest and enthusiasm.
- These games serve as examples that teachers can build upon and make them more suitable for their students. Each game can be adapted to the age, abilities, preferences, and needs of students, as well as the requirements of a given situation. Teachers have the freedom to lead the game in a way they find most useful, and by being flexible, they can serve as role models for their students, teaching them flexibility and tolerance to changes.
- The responsibility of the teacher or game facilitator is to create an environment that facilitates the learning of social skills in each student and encourages participation by allowing everyone to engage to the extent and in the way that suits them best. This is particularly beneficial for autistic students, as we do not want to convey the message that it is wrong to be different or that they must mask or camouflage themselves. The goal is to help autistic students navigate their social environment more easily. Therefore, the focus is on learning skills that enable autistic students to communicate their wants and needs in a way that works for them, teaching self-advocacy skills, expanding their understanding of language, recognizing and understanding their own emotions, and developing self-regulating strategies and problem-solving skills. The emphasis of the games for all students is centred on imparting the understanding that we are all unique, with diverse communication styles. Improved communication is achievable when we embrace and accommodate each other's individual communication needs.
- It is crucial to avoid setting goals for autistic students that encourage masking and camouflaging behaviours. Examples of detrimental social skills goals may include modifying tone of voice, forcing eye contact, mimicking neurotypical body language, imitating neurotypical facial expressions, suppressing natural listening styles, conforming to interactive play norms, pushing for peer play



initiation, emphasizing reciprocal play, demanding excessive change tolerance, and discouraging interruptions, among others.

As the games are intended for learning social skills in autistic students, it is good to follow general rules that have been shown to be effective:

- Consider each student's unique set of strengths and difficulties to achieve optimal results.
- Set clear school and classroom rules, together with your students if possible, and ensure everybody understands and accepts them.
- Be a role model for your students and set a positive example for them with patience, a calm and peaceful tone of voice, and a friendly attitude toward others
- Value other people's individuality.
- Encourage everybody to take part in a game as much as they like, to stop and leave the game if they feel uncomfortable - everybody's feelings and sensations must be considered.
- Use explicit and clear instructions.
- Tell them what TO do, instead of what NOT to do.
- Use visual supports whenever possible. For autistic students, a picture is worth a thousand words or more!
- Be mindful of the requirements of the senses and avoid circumstances that might lead to sensory overload because of the prevalence of sensory sensitivities among autistic people.
- Provide opportunities to practice and repeat what they have learned, in different environments if possible. Do not assume autistic students will generalize.

12

Finally, some fundamental principles for the implementation of this booklet in a school setting may include:

- Ensure that all participants have a clear understanding of the task guidelines.
- Taking into consideration the specific preferences of individual children or the group, as research suggests that this can enhance interest and motivation (Koegel et al., 2010).
- Recognizing the importance of priming effects, providing appropriate feedback, and having a solid grasp of each educational activity. This knowledge can activate prior learning and assist students in making connections with new classroom content (Koegel, Koegel, Frea, & Green-Hopkins, 2003; Gately, 2008).
- It's highly advisable to follow the established schedule and classroom routines when implementing these games. Consistency provides a sense of security and familiarity, which can be especially important for autistic students who may find unexpected changes challenging (McIntosh, Herman, Sanford, McGraw, &



Florence, 2004). At the beginning of each class, review the daily schedule, and give advance notice of any schedule alterations, including if there will be a substitute teacher.

- Minimise environmental biases and create a comfortable classroom. Many autistic students have sensory issues that can impact their ability to concentrate.
- In case of any discomfort during the game application, it is highly recommended to pause or end the activities, to prevent any emotional or physical harm to students.
- Lastly, if any discomfort or difficulties arise during the implementation of these activities, it is strongly recommended to adapt the games in a way that fosters positively the group and individual dynamics, rather than emphasizing them in a negative light.

Part 3: Classroom Group Games

13

Foundation Skills

Background

The chosen area of focus for this methodology is foundation social skills, specifically targeting eye contact, personal space, gestures, and mimicking. These foundational skills play a vital role in facilitating social interactions and establishing meaningful connections with others, particularly for [specify age group or grade level] autistic students.

Methods and Approaches

To enhance foundational social skills, the methods and approaches used in presenting these games are designed with every day, familiar items that resonate with the students, such as cards, visual and auditory cues, and handcrafted materials (sensory input).

In developing effective games and activities for social skills development, we employ the following methods and approaches:



Role-Playing: Games such as 'Interpreting Body Language,' 'Mirror Me,' and 'Emotion Theatre' allow students to assume different roles and perspectives, enhancing their cognitive flexibility and gesture recognition through role-playing approaches.

Peer Interaction: Demonstrated through the game 'Collaborative Art Project,' these activities facilitate children's development of effective foundation skills through interactive experiences with their peers, visual stimulation, and observation.

Strategic Exercising: This approach is exemplified in games like 'Statues,' which help students develop skills in self-control and handling peer pressure.

List of games

1. Interpreting body language
2. Mirror Me
3. Collaborative Art Project
4. Emotion Theatre
5. Statues

Game No: 1

14

Title: Interpreting Body Language (Role-Playing)

Game Objective:

To raise awareness of facial expressions and the role of body language in feeling and expressing emotions, fostering affective skills. This game is designed for autistic students at Level 1 and is inclusive and suitable for children of all ages.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Prepare questions or use Empathy cards based on class dynamics and needs.
2. Create a role-playing scenario where students must express their feelings in response to task demands.

Facilitating the Game:

Brief the children about the game and provide them with a situation to plan and act out through mime so the kids would understand the task and emotion expression.



The teacher can start the exercise by explaining what mime is by saying 'Today, we're going to play a fun and exciting game that involves using our bodies and facial expressions to communicate without speaking. It's called 'Mime.' Mime is like acting, but without words. Instead, we use our bodies and facial expressions to tell a story or convey a message. It's a great way to express emotions and ideas without saying a single Word.

Example questions include:

- How would you feel if today were your birthday?
- How would you feel if you were late to school?
- How would you feel if it began to snow?
- How would you feel if you were listening to your favourite music?
- How would you feel if you were told off in class?
- How would you feel if it were the beginning of the summer holidays?

Alternatively, you can use Empathy cards. Each card prompts students to imagine how they would feel, helping them become more in touch with their emotions. If they can correctly identify their own feelings, they will be better equipped to name the feelings of others in similar situations. The cards can be incorporated into a circle time activity or used when teaching students to reflect more on themselves and their behaviour.

15

Debriefing:

Facilitate a group discussion on the importance of understanding someone's or your one feelings. This step can easily be achieved by specifying simple questions to each child like:

- Which part of the assignment did you like the most?
- Would you do anything differently?
- Were there any difficulties performing the task?

Illustrations

You can use different card illustrations as shown here.

Material

Designated play area

Empathy cards



Summary

1. Set up a comfortable space.
2. Prepare role-playing scenario/questions or empathy cards.
3. Introduce the game to students.
4. Ask students to perform about different situations.





Checklist

Did you introduce the game clearly and emphasize the learning objectives?

Did you prepare the material properly?

Did you set up a comfortable space?

Did you ask the properly questions?

Did you give them the properly cards?

Did you provide support to students who needed assistance in recognizing emotions?

Did you provide the students different situations to perform?

Did you promote positive sportsmanship and supportive interactions throughout the game?

Game No: 2

Title: Mirror Me (Role Play Gaming)

Game Objective:

The objective of the "Mirror Me" game is to enhance self-awareness, empathy, and non-verbal communication skills in participants. Specifically designed for individuals at Levels 1 and 2 of the autism spectrum. This inclusive game fosters foundational skills such as mimicking and gestures. It is suitable for children of all ages.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Create a comfortable and open space for the game, ensuring participants have ample room to move freely.
2. Form pairs from a group of participants, ideally numbering between 4 and 20.
3. Prepare an assortment of props or simple objects that participants can use during the game, such as scarves, hats, or balls.

Facilitating the Game:

- Start by explaining the rules and objectives of the game to the participants by saying that this game is not only interesting but also a lot of fun. I'll start by demonstrating the game, and I invite everyone to follow my moves as a group. Once we've practised together, we'll form pairs and continue the game in pairs."



- Ask each pair to stand facing each other.
- Instruct one person in each pair to be the "Leader" and the other to be the "Mirror."
- The "Leader" begins by performing a series of slow and deliberate movements. The "Mirror" must replicate these movements exactly, as if they were looking in a mirror. Encourage participants to focus on their partner's body language, facial expressions, and gestures.
- Gradually increase the complexity of movements, incorporating props if available, and encourage participants to be creative.
- Allow each pair to take turns being the "Leader" and the "Mirror."
- Observe the participants' interactions, providing feedback and guidance as necessary.
- Emphasize the importance of non-verbal communication, focusing on body language and facial expressions.

Debriefing:

At the end of the game, gather the participants in a circle and facilitate a group discussion. Ask participants to share their experiences, insights, challenges faced, strategies used for non-verbal communication, and the impact of mirroring.

This step can easily be achieved by specifying simple questions to each child like:

-What strategies did you employ for effective non-verbal communication?

-Did you find certain cues more helpful than others?

-How did the mirroring aspect influence your understanding of communication?

-Did it enhance empathy or self-awareness?

18

Illustrations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqfRH0Ah9Ik>

Material

Open space for movement.

Props (scarves, hats, balls, etc.)

Summary

1. Set up a comfortable space and gather participants in pairs.
2. Explain the rules and objectives of the game.
3. Designate a "Leader" and a "Mirror" in each pair.



4. Initiate the game and gradually increase the complexity of movements and encourage creativity.
5. Allow each pair to switch roles.
6. Observe and provide feedback during the game.
7. Debrief.



(<https://www.asphaltgreen.org/blog/rep-game-mirror-mirror>)

Checklist

- Did you set up the chairs in pairs, facing each other?
- Did you explain the objective of the game clearly?
- Did you ensure participants maintain eye contact during the game?
- Did you designate roles of "Leader" and "Mirror" for each round?
- Did you switch roles between participants for each round?
- Did you encourage participants to reflect on their experiences?
- Did you facilitate a debriefing session on empathy and its application in daily life?

Game No: 3

Title: Collaborative Art Project (Peer interaction)

Game objective: The objective of this game is to foster teamwork, creativity, and cooperation among participants. By collaboratively working on a shared canvas or artwork, participants will learn to collaborate, communicate their ideas, and contribute



to a collective creation. This activity is designed to enhance advanced non-verbal communication and interaction skills, making it suitable for autistic students at Levels 1 and 2, and inclusive for children of all ages.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Prepare art supplies: Gather materials such as paper, paints, brushes, markers, coloured pencils, or any other art supplies you wish to provide.
2. Create groups of 3-5 students, ensuring a balanced mix of abilities and personalities within each group to promote diverse collaboration.
3. Arrange tables or designated areas with art supplies for each group.

Facilitating the Game:

- Explain the collaborative art project, emphasizing the importance of teamwork, idea sharing, and respect for each other's contributions.
- Emphasize the importance of respecting each student's drawing style and promoting a positive and inclusive creative environment within the team or classroom.
- Assign a theme or topic for the art project. It could be nature, friendship, or a topic related to a specific subject you're teaching in class.
- Encourage brainstorming by asking each group to discuss and brainstorm ideas related to the theme. Encourage creativity and diverse perspectives.
- Assign roles within each group, such as a leader/facilitator, timekeeper, and materials manager. Rotate these roles for subsequent art projects.
- Let each group begin working collaboratively on their art piece. Encourage them to communicate, share ideas, and collaborate effectively.
- Aid and guide as needed, while allowing students to take ownership of the creative process. Offer suggestions and promote problem-solving when challenges arise.

20

Debriefing:

After the allotted time, students place chairs in a circle facing inward and share their experience participating in the game. The teacher can ask those questions:

- How did you feel working as a group?
- Did you make mistakes that were not in accordance with the instructions?
- What would you do differently if given the opportunity to play again?



Illustrations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n52qEAXaZ8M>



(<https://www.etsy.com/listing/1501082065/summer-collaborative-art-poster-i-end-of>)

21

(<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Summer-Collaborative-Art-Poster-I-End-of-the-Year-Craftivity-I-Bulletin-Board-9616019>)

Material

Paper (various sizes and types)

Paints, brushes, and water cups

Markers, colored pencils, or crayons

Glue, scissors, and other art supplies as desired

Easels or drawing boards (optional, for larger artwork)



Summary

22

1. Prepare the material and the workstations.
2. Assign groups of students.
3. Introduce the game.
4. Have a brainstorming session about the theme of the art project.
5. Allocate roles within each group and let each group begin on the the collaborative artwork.
4. Debrief reflecting on the team-working experience.



Checklist

- Did you provide clear instructions and expectations for the collaborative art project?
- Did you assign groups with a balanced mix of abilities and personalities?
- Did you provide appropriate art supplies for each group?
- Did you introduce and discuss the theme or topic with the students?
- Did you support students in brainstorming and sharing ideas effectively?
- Did you rotate leadership and roles within the groups for equal participation?
- Did you provide guidance and assistance while allowing students to take ownership of the creative process?
- Did you facilitate a debriefing session to reflect on the collaborative art experience?

Game No: 4

Title: Emotion Theatre (Role-Playing)

Game Objective: To enhance social interactions by practising observation and imitation.

This game is designed to foster advanced non-verbal communication and foundation skills and is suitable for autistic students at Level 1. It's inclusive and appropriate for children of all ages.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Set the classroom as a comfortable and open space for the game and divide the students into two groups.



2. Emphasize the importance of keen observation and highlight the significance of carefully noting team movements, gestures, and actions.

Facilitating the Game:

- Introduce the game to the children by explaining that today we will engage in emotional theatre and provide a brief overview of mimicking and gesture communication approaches.
- Explain the different emotions to the kids by saying for example "Joy is that warm and happy feeling you get when something wonderful happens, like winning a game, receiving a compliment, or spending time with people you love."
- Ensure that each child fully understands the game instructions and how to express specific emotions.
- Provide each team with a scenario with a dominant emotion and ask them to perform a play based on that. The opponent team aims to find what emotion is been described.

The scenarios could be:

- **Happy Scenario:**

When a team is selected to act on a "happy scenario", describe the situation by saying "Picture a beautiful sunny day, and you are filled with joy. Demonstrate how you would walk and express your happiness."

Encourage the group to act out the scenario using body language, facial expressions, and gestures. Remind them to smile and move in a lively and cheerful manner.

- **Sad Scenario:**

When a team is selected to act on a "sad scenario", describe the situation by saying, "Imagine you disagreed with a friend, and you are feeling really sad. Show us how you would behave when you're sad."

Prompt the group to act out the scenario by conveying sadness through body language and facial expressions. They can depict sadness by walking slowly, slumping their shoulders, and avoiding smiles.

The teacher can adapt the game by focusing on different emotion and scenarios.

Debriefing:

After the allotted time, students place chairs in a circle facing inward and sit to share the experience of participating in this game. The teacher can ask those questions:

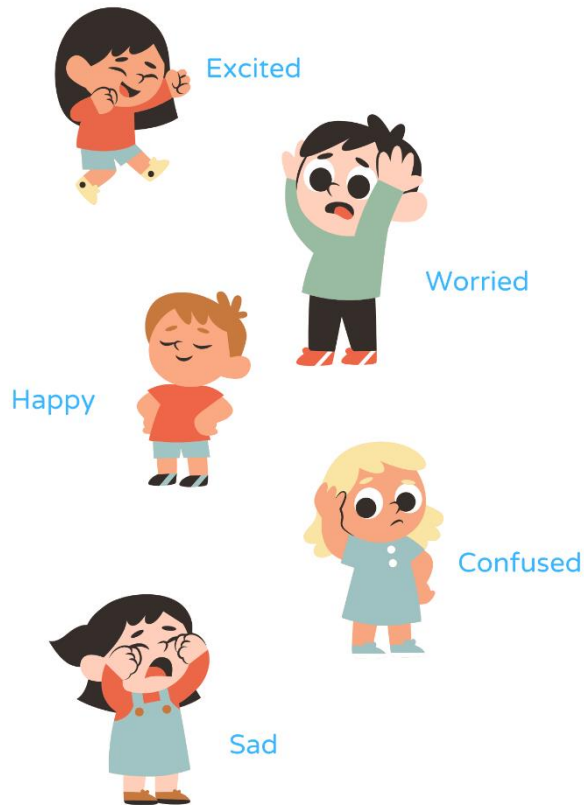
-What would you do differently to play again?



-What did you notice about the way we express different emotions?

-Which emotion was more difficult for you to express?

Illustrations



Material

Open space

Crops

Summary

1. Set up a comfortable space for kids to act.
2. Divide the class into two groups.
3. Introduce the game.
4. Provide each team with a scenario.
5. Let each team act out the scenario using body language, facial expressions, and gestures.



- 6. Let the other group observe and find out the emotion being described.
- 7. Debrief.



Checklist

- Did you pair students appropriately, considering their abilities and comfort levels?
- Did you provide clear instructions for the game?
- Did you encourage active observation and accurate imitation during the game?
- Did you monitor and provide support to students who struggled with observing or imitating their partner's movements?
- Did you emphasize the importance of observation and imitation in social interactions?
- Did you create a positive and inclusive environment for all students to participate in the game?

26

Game No: 5

Title: Statues (Strategic Exercising)

Game Objective: Promoting focus, self-control, and creative expression among participants, this game is designed to foster advanced non-verbal communication and foundation skills. It is suitable for autistic students at Levels 1 and 2, is inclusive and



appropriate for children of all ages, requiring no reading or complex communication skills.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Clear a designated play area with enough space for participants to move freely.
2. Choose a theme for the game (e.g., animals, nature, emotions).
3. Prepare a variety of theme-related poses or actions for participants to imitate.

Facilitating the Game:

- Explain the game's objective to students.
- Share the chosen theme and demonstrate a pose or action related to it.
- Instruct students to spread out in the play area.
- Start playing music or use a timer to indicate the duration of each round.
- When the music starts or the timer begins, participants must move and express themselves freely.
- At random intervals, pause the music or stop the timer.
- When the music stops or the timer ends, participants must freeze in a pose or action related to the theme.
- Walk around and observe the participants' frozen poses or actions.
- Restart the music or timer to continue the game, allowing participants to move and express themselves again.
- Repeat several rounds, incorporating different poses or actions each time.

27

Debriefing:

After the game, gather the students in a circle for a debriefing session. Ask them to reflect on their experience playing the game and pose questions such as:

- What would you do differently if you played again?
- How did you feel doing the exercise without talking?
- Which part of the assignment did you like the most?

Illustrations

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7xIZgsN1jk



(www.Centervention.com)

Material

Designated play area

Music player or timer for indicating rounds

Summary

1. Set up a play area and the music station.
2. Choose a theme and prepare a variety of theme-related poses or actions for students to imitate.
3. Spread out the students in the play area and explain the game.
4. Start and stop the music at intervals.

28



5. Observe for students to freeze in a pose each time the music stops.



6. Debrief.

Checklist

Have you cleared a designated play area with enough space for participants to move freely?

Have you chosen a theme for the game and prepared a variety of related poses or actions?

Did you explain the objective and rules of the game clearly?

Have you provided a music player or timer to indicate the duration of each round?

Did you demonstrate a pose or action related to the theme as an example?

Did you ensure participants spread out in the play area before starting the game?

Have you paused the music or stopped the timer at random intervals for participants to freeze?

Did you walk around and observe participants' frozen poses or actions during the game?

Did you facilitate a debriefing session to discuss participants' experiences and the importance of self-control and creative expression?



Interaction Skills

Background

Interaction skills, encompassing the ability to initiate, maintain, and conclude conversations, listen actively, respond to questions, navigate social rules, express shared interests, and adapt to diverse situations, play a crucial role in shaping our social lives.

These skills are fundamental for establishing meaningful connections and friendships. The selected area of emphasis revolves around the use of games designed to foster and enhance interaction skills. These games create a conducive environment for learning, promoting tolerance, and fostering acceptance of diversity.

The primary goal is to address and improve the social competence of all children involved, with a specific focus on enhancing the overall quality of life for students on the autism spectrum. The key skills targeted in this context include:

- Initiating and responding to social interactions
- Engaging in conversations, which involves staying on topic and taking turns in speaking
- Interpreting non-verbal cues and understanding unspoken social rules
- Adopting another person's perspective
- Learning to collaborate and work together
- Sharing moments of enjoyment

30

By addressing these skills within the framework of interactive games, we aim to create a positive and supportive learning environment conducive to the social development of all children, including those with autism.

Methods and Approaches:

The methods and approaches used in presenting these games are designed to enhance interaction abilities. This is achieved by leveraging everyday, familiar items that resonate with the students, including cards, visual and auditory cues, as well as handcrafted materials.

To develop interaction skills within this package, we employ various approaches:



- Peer Interaction: This method is demonstrated through games such as 'Broken Telephone,' 'Draw a pizza together' and A Secret Place. These activities facilitate children's development of effective communication skills through interactive experiences with their peers.
- Instance Debates: This approach is exemplified in the game 'A good and a bad listener'. This game enables students to grasp the dynamics of interpersonal interactions and gain insights into the emotions that arise when they are not heard by others.
- Systems Thinking: The 'Castle' game aligns with a system thinking approach. It aids students in comprehending how various components interact and influence one another within a broader context.

List of games

1. Broken Telephone
2. Draw a Pizza Together
3. A Secret Place
4. Good and Bad Listener
5. Castle

Game No: 1

Title: Broken Telephone (Peer Interaction)

Game Objective: Enhance communication and listening skills, and improve cooperation through turn-taking, rule-following, and observing communication norms. Engage students in a discussion to identify mistakes in the retelling of the story.

This game is suitable for Level 1 or 2 autistic students, focusing on advanced communication, collaboration, and rule-following skills. It is adaptable for kids of all ages, with story content and length adjusted based on group dynamics and age.

Guidelines

Setting Up the Game:

1. Arrange a comfortable space and gather all students in the classroom.
2. Prepare a story appropriate for the students.
3. Explain the game to the students.



Facilitating the Game:

- The teacher selects one student to start, who stays alone in the class while others leave.
- Students draw numbers (or pick from a hat) to determine the order of re-entry.
- The teacher reads the story preferable a non-known one to the first student (you can find some examples in the materials section) and ask him to memorise it.
- This student retells the story to student with the number 2.
- The process continues until the last student hears the story.
- The teacher observes and guides students, fostering a supportive environment.
- In a debriefing session, the teacher reads the original story to all students.
- Students compare the final story with the original.
- The teacher facilitates a group discussion, emphasizing the game's goal of recognizing and understanding communication misinterpretations. Explain that unintentional noise and interference can affect communication—what is said may differ from what is heard, even with careful listening.

Note: You can adjust the length and content of the story in respect to the age and dynamics of the class.

Debriefing:

The teacher can ask participants questions:

- How did you feel about collaborating all together?
- What would you do differently to play again?
- What outcomes do you feel the games gain you?

Illustrations

Sample visual, representing the chosen story

Family lunch



(gettyimages)



Material

Examples of the stories:

The Enchanted Key:

In a magical forest, there was a hidden garden with a special key. This key could unlock the door to a world of surprises. The wise owl, Ollie, guarded the key.

One day, a curious squirrel named Sam found the key. To prove himself, he had to solve riddles set by Ollie. Along the way, he befriended a butterfly named Bella, who helped him navigate the garden.

With teamwork, Sam unlocked the door, revealing a garden of wonders. The once-hidden key now invited other creatures to discover its magic.

The Brad Braidhair story:

Eighteen people are sitting in the waiting room of the Health Center in Copacabana. The largest number of people are sitting in front of the door that says: "Dr. Brad Braidhair, physician, Nurse: Mary Smith." The people sitting in the waiting room are: a general in civilian clothes, a man in black shoes, a woman with a little three-year-old boy, a woman with curlers on her head, several young girls and boys, and a man with a big nose. Suddenly, a sharp sound of quick steps in the corridor is heard and a handsome forty-year-old woman enters the waiting room, followed by a chubby, but frowning man. The woman sniffles. They enter the doctor's office without knocking. The sound of cars and wind is heard from outside. It's autumn. The general in civilian clothes had just coughed loudly when one of the young men in the waiting room thought he heard a strange noise. A forty-year-old redheaded woman storms out of the doctor's office. Dr. Braidhair starts to run after her holding his head. A little three-year-old boy starts to cry.

Family lunch:

John's mother is preparing a family lunch. Uncle Mark, his wife Camilla, and their children Ethan, Simon, and Jane are coming to visit. Ethan has a lot of toy cars, and his favorite is the ice cream truck. Simon likes to play football and never goes anywhere without his ball. Jane loves to sing and enjoys performing in front of audiences. Uncle Mark has a big silver and black van. John likes to play with his cousins and they always play games like Simon Says, Hide and Seek, Freeze Dance, Tic-tac-toe, and Jump-Rope.

John's mother decided to make duck with orange hazelnut stuffing, smoked salmon pasta, green beans with garlic, and chicken parmesan pizza for the kids. For dessert, she decided to make an apple pie. But she founds that she is missing the necessary ingredients. She asks John's dad to pop over to the store and buy green beans, garlic, eggs, milk, sugar, and whipped cream. But there are no apples in the store, so dad buys



blueberries instead. The pie was delicious to everyone except Simon, who doesn't like blueberries.

Summary

1. Arrange a comfortable space and prepare the story.
2. Pick one student and tell him/her the story.
4. Let students re-tell each other the story one by one.
5. Collect students and read them the original story.
6. Discuss communication and misinterpretations comparing the final story to the original story.
7. Debrief.



Checklist

- Did you choose the story appropriate for the students?
- Did you set up the classroom and materials?
- Did you explain the rules and objectives of the game clearly?
- Did you ensure a supportive and non-judgemental environment during the game?
- Did you encourage participants to reflect on their experiences?
- Did you facilitate a debriefing session recognizing and understanding how communication works and its application in daily life?

Game No: 2

Title: Collaborative Pizza Drawing Game (Peer Interaction)

Game Objective: The objective of this game is to foster cooperation, mutual understanding, and tolerance among students. It aims to teach students the value of





contributing their unique perspectives and set of values to collaborative interactions. Specifically designed for Level 1 or 2 autistic students aged 6 and 7, the game focuses on enhancing communication, collaboration, and interaction skills.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Create space in the classroom and arrange desks to provide each student with a designated place to sit.
2. Form groups of participants, ideally ranging from 4 to 20 individuals.
3. Prepare A3 papers featuring a pizza template without ingredients on top for each group or pair of students. Additionally, provide crayons and a set of written "Rules for Drawing a Pizza with a Partner(s). If you want to further engage students in the process, you can also ask them to draw the pizza template and collaboratively create the 'pizza rules.'
4. Divide participants into pairs or small groups of three or four, ensuring each group has a quiet space to draw together.

Facilitating the Game:

- Begin by explaining to each group or pair that they have a pizza template without any ingredients and written "Rules for Drawing a Pizza with a Partner(s)." Their task is to collaboratively design and draw the pizza, including sauce and toppings, and give it a name.
- Provide a clear introduction before distributing drawing materials, ensuring all students understand the instructions.
- Read the "Rules for Drawing a Pizza with a Partner(s)" aloud and provide a copy of the rules for each team.
- Conduct a short role-play demonstration emphasizing the use of supportive words and questions.
- Clearly outline prohibited rigid words and statements, encouraging phrases like "Do you agree?" or "What do you think?" while discouraging criticism or diminishing contributions.
- Emphasize the importance of working together, planning, and discussing ideas before drawing. Discourage participants from dividing the pizza into "my part and your part."
- After completing the task, allow teams to present their drawings to others and encourage them to share impressions of their collaborative work.

35

Debriefing:



At the conclusion of the game, engage participants in a discussion about the challenges they faced:

1. Ask participants about the difficulties they encountered during the game.
2. Inquire about the aspects they enjoyed the most.
3. Encourage reflection on whether they would approach anything differently in future collaborative activities.

Illustrations

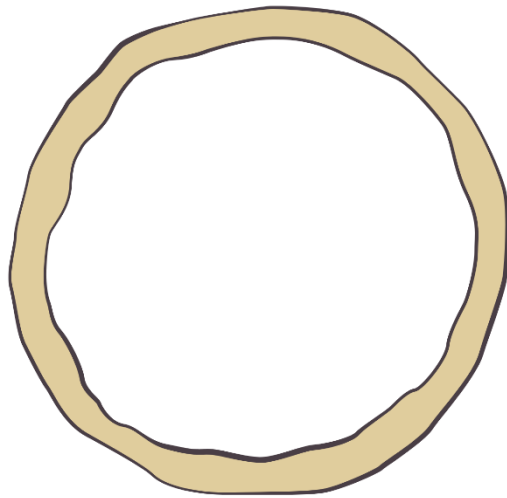


(dreamstime.com)

Material



Draw a pizza with a partner



Chef's Name:



Chef's Name:

Written "Rules for Drawing a Pizza with a Partner(s)"



Neither person is in charge. Work together.

Talk and plan before you start drawing.

You have to agree on what is on the pizza - the sauce and the toppings

Use words like this when you are talking and planning:

What do you think?

What are your ideas?

How about...?

How would it be if we...?

Do you agree?

I disagree. What about if we try...?

A3 papers with the image of a pizza without any ingredients on the top for each group or pair of students

Crayons

Written "Rules for Drawing a Pizza with a Partner(s)"

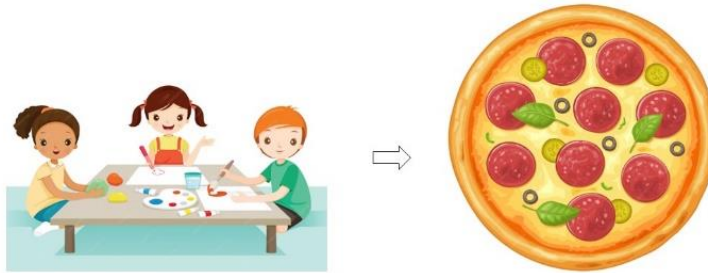
- Neither person is in charge. Work together.
- Talk and plan before you start drawing.
- You have to agree on what is on the pizza - the sauce and the toppings
- Use words like this when you are talking and planning:
 - What do you think?
 - What are your ideas?
 - How about...?
 - How would it be if we...?
 - Do you agree?
 - I disagree. What about if we try...?

Summary

1. Prepare the drawing materials, the workstations and the rules.
2. Group the students and explain the game.
3. Allow each group to draw together.



4. Debrief.



Checklist

Did you set up the classroom and materials?

Did you explain the objective of the game clearly?

Did you divide participants into pairs or small groups?

Did you ensure participants draw together in peace without being interrupted?

38

Did you encourage participants to use and practice supportive words and questions?

Did you encourage participants to reflect on their experiences?

Did you facilitate a debriefing session on their contribution during the work and on their working in teams?

Game No: 3

Title: A Secret Place (Peer Interaction)

Game Objective: To enhance cooperation and mutual understanding among students. To learn to cooperate by observing and listening to what others tell us non-verbally - with movements, body posture, and gaze. To learn how to convey a message and your wishes to others without using words. To become more patient (wait for your turn or give priority to others).

This game is suitable for autistic students who are Level 1 as it focuses on more advanced conversation, empathy, and perception skills. It is preferable for kids at the ages of 6 and 7 as it does not require any reading or writing skills.



Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Form groups of 4-5 students, instructing them to join hands with one hand extended in the middle of the circle and open fists facing the floor.
2. The teacher can demonstrate this with the help of one or two students.
3. Once the groups are formed, proceed with the instructions.

Facilitating the Game:

- The teacher explains the task: "You have 30 seconds to imagine a secret place in the room to which you would like to take the members of your small group. Do not verbally share what place you envisioned."
- After 30 seconds, the teacher instructs: "You have 5 minutes to perform the exercise and take the group to your secret place. During this period, no talking is allowed, and hands must remain joined. Avoid rough behaviour such as pulling or pushing others."
- After 5 minutes, participants sit in a circle and share their experiences and observations during the game and group work.
- The teacher encourages a mutual exchange of experiences through debriefing questions.

39

Debriefing:

"How did you feel doing the exercise without talking?"

"In what way did you convey your idea to others?"

"Is there any group that has not visited all the 'secret places' that the group members imagined? Can you explain why?"

"How can you relate this exercise to your behaviour in everyday life?"

Illustrations



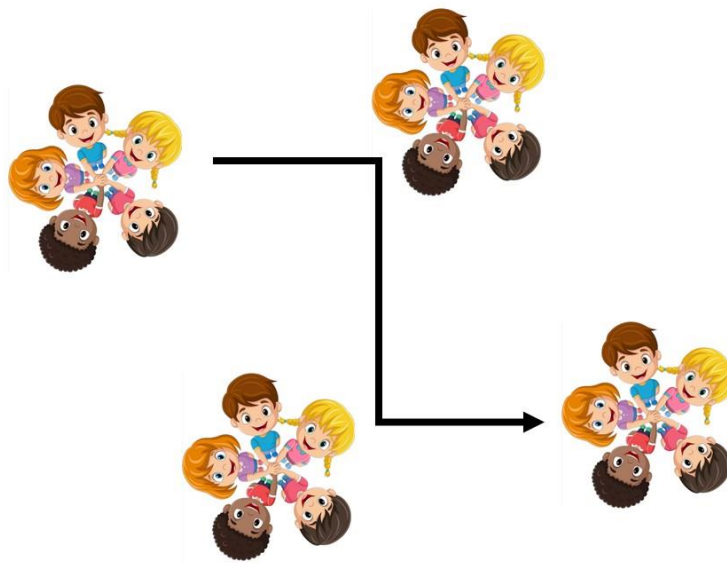


Material

A room in which participants can move freely.

Summary

1. Set up a spacious area and form the student groups.
2. Explain the game and let students play moving around the classroom in circles.
3. Debrief discussing non-verbal communication.



Checklist

- Did you divide participants into teams of 3-5 members?
- Did all the groups manage to connect by hand in the middle of the circle?
- Did you provide a clear introduction before you start with the game?
- Did you clarify what kinds of behaviours are not allowed?
- Did you ask questions to encourage students to provide feedback on the game?



Game No: 4

Title: A Good and a Bad Listener (Instance debates)

Game Objective: To teach students appropriate communication, listening/answering questions, and turn-taking. To encourage effective communication among students. To become aware of feelings when someone does not listen to you.

This game is designed to foster advanced communication and interaction skills and is suitable for autistic students who are Level 1 as it requires more complex communication skills, like empathy. It's inclusive and appropriate for children of all ages.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. This activity is a fun way for students to learn how communication can be divided in terms of listening and not listening. It also provides students with the opportunity to discuss verbal and non-verbal communication.
2. Set the classroom as a comfortable and open space for the game and divide the students into two columns (A and B).
3. Everyone should have a partner to whom they talk.

41

Facilitating the Game:

- The game is designed to demonstrate different aspects of communication through various imagined situations.
- The teacher begins by explaining key terminology related to debating and healthy communication. This could include terms like active listening, interruption, empathy, and effective communication.
- The students are divided into two columns, A and B. Each student in column A is paired with a student in column B.
- Assignment of Imagined Situations: The teacher assigns an imagined situation to each pair.
- There are four situations in total:
 - *Situation 1 - Ignoring:* In this situation, the student from column A talks about "My morning today," and the student from column B intentionally doesn't listen and ignores them. After a brief discussion, they switch roles.



- *Situation 2 - Talking Simultaneously:* Both students from column A and column B talk at the same time about "How I spent (last weekend, New Year, holidays)". Afterward, they switch roles.
- *Situation 3 - Constant Interruption:* The student from column A talks about "My favourite movie," and the student from column B intentionally interrupts them every few seconds. Afterward, they switch roles.
- *Situation 4 - Active Listening:* The student from column A talks about "What do I want for myself this year?" while the student from column B listens carefully without interrupting. Then, they switch roles.
- Students engage in these imagined situations for a few minutes, following the instructions for each scenario. This allows them to experience and observe different communication dynamics.
- After a few minutes, the teacher gives the signal to stop, and the students return to the big circle for a debriefing session.

Debriefing:

The teacher should gather participants in a circle for a debriefing session.

Ask participants to reflect on their experience playing the game.

Ask how communication can be divided in terms of listening and not listening (to achieve an answer on what is good and bad communication).

Ask students how they behaved and what they did when the other student ignored or interrupted them (connect with verbal and non-verbal communication).

Encourage students to express feelings when someone doesn't listen to what they are saying

Encourage students to get as many observations as possible about what belongs to verbal and non-verbal, good or bad communication (e.g. I looked at the clock, turned my head, scratched myself, the difference between not listening, ignoring and interrupting), etc.

Facilitate a group discussion on the importance of effective and active listening.

Illustrations





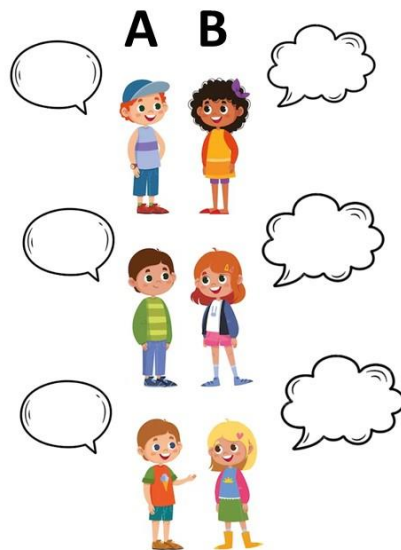
(vectorstock.com)

Material

A4 paper with capital letters A and B

Summary

1. Set up a spacious area and divide students into two columns (A and B), in a way that students from each column are paired up with each other.
2. Introduce the game to students.
3. Give each pair a scenario.
4. Allow students to communicate with each other based on the scenario they have, and later to switch roles.
5. Gather students to debrief.



Checklist

Did you set up the classroom and materials?

Did you explain the objective and rules of the game clearly?

Did you divide students into A and B columns and explain to students from column A to talk briefly to their pair from column B about the assigned imagined situation?

Did you ensure that students switched roles?



Did you prepare four imagined situations for students to practice and play roles?

Did you ensure everyone practiced given imaginary situations?

Did you facilitate a debriefing session to discuss the game?

Game No: 5

Title: Castle (System thinking)

Game Objective: To promote cooperation - working or playing with partners or in groups - participating, taking turns, following the rules, and sharing (interests or objects). To experience the importance of non-verbal communication.

This game is designed to foster advanced non-verbal communication and interaction skills and is suitable for autistic students at Level 1 or 2. It's inclusive and appropriate for children of all ages.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. This activity is a fun way for students to learn about cooperation and working in small groups. It also provides students with the opportunity to communicate non-verbally and realize the importance of non-verbal communication and interaction.
2. Organize school desks in several zones depending on the number of students and divide them into small groups (3-5).
3. Prepare materials and explain the rules of the game.

44

Facilitating the Game:

- The teacher should divide the students into small groups depending on the number of students and decide on the duration of the game.
- Give each group five sheets of B1 paper in different colours, glue, pencils, scissors, tape, and rulers.
- After the dissemination of the necessary materials, the teacher should instruct the students that their task is to make a three-dimensional (3D) castle out of paper that will be able to stand on its own.
- The most important instruction is that from the moment you give them the signal to start, they must do the entire task in complete silence, and they may communicate only non-verbally. For smaller children, the task can be to build the castle from blocks.



- If it is considered necessary, the teacher can show them a video as an example of non-verbal communication.
- When the students start the game, it is highly advisable for the teacher to walk around and closely observe the groups of students. Pay attention to their non-verbal communication, cooperation, and problem-solving strategies as they work on constructing their 3D castles or structures.
- After a few minutes, the teacher gives the signal to stop, and the students return to the big circle for a debriefing session.

Debriefing:

The teacher should gather participants in a circle for a debriefing session.

Ask participants to reflect on their experience playing the game.

Discuss how they felt while doing this exercise without talking to each other, and whether they were satisfied with a constructed castle.

Explore whether they view their fellow group members as adversaries and investigate how they establish mutual understanding through non-verbal communication.

Discuss how participants found common ground in non-verbal language and achieved cooperation in building the castle.

Encourage participants to share their strategies for staying focused and demonstrating creativity and cooperation.

Facilitate a group discussion on the importance of non-verbal communication.

45

Illustrations

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNleqD_RZOM-

Material

Papers in different colours, glue, pencils, scissors, tape, rulers.

Summary

1. Prepare the work stations, materials and student groups.
2. Explain the game to students.
3. Let each group make their castle.
3. Walk around and observe students.
4. Debrief discussing non-verbal communication.



(dreamstime.com)

(<https://www.itsalwaysautumn.com/how-to-make-a-paper-or-cardboard-castle.html>)

Checklist

Did you set up the classroom and materials?

Did you explain the objective and rules of the game clearly?

Did you divide students into small groups?

Did you demonstrate a pose or action related to the assignment as an example?

Did you walk around and observe participants taking care that nobody uses verbal communication during the game?

Did you facilitate a debriefing session to discuss participants' experiences and the importance of non-verbal communication?

Affective Skills

Background

Affective skills are crucial for fostering personal and interpersonal awareness. These skills encompass the ability to recognize and acknowledge others' feelings, demonstrate empathy, interpret body language and facial expressions, and assess trustworthiness.

Skills Addressed in this Section:

- Identifying one's feelings
- Recognizing the feelings of others
- Decoding body language and facial expressions



- Showing interest in others, demonstrating empathy and prosocial behaviours, and respecting ourselves and others
- Accepting individual and group differences (tolerance and diversity)
- Remaining on task and practising patience
- Demonstrating emotional reactions appropriate to the situation, expressing thoughts and feelings verbally and nonverbally
- Flexibility and adjustability abilities
- Stress management – building resistance to stress and controlling impulsiveness
- Handling peer pressure or peer teasing

Methods and Approaches:

The methods and approaches employed in presenting these games are designed to enhance affective skills by using everyday, familiar items that resonate with students, such as cards, visual or auditory cues, and drawings.

To develop cognitive skills within this package, various approaches are utilized:

- **Role-Playing:** Games like 'Music Emotion,' 'Emotion Bingo,' and 'Accepting Individual and Group Differences' incorporate role-playing elements to boost player engagement and interest. Role-playing is an effective method for encouraging creativity, empathy, and problem-solving skills, requiring players to think and react as if they were the characters they portray.
- **Visual Support:** In games such as 'Empathy,' visual cues enhance interest and information processing. Visual supports, including visual cues, schedules, and instructions, are integrated to enhance understanding and promote independent engagement.
- **Naturalistic Settings and Real-World Relevance:** The game 'Identifying One's Feelings' employs scenarios that mirror real-life situations. This approach allows students to practice assertive behaviour in contexts they may encounter in their daily lives.

List of games

1. Identifying one's feelings
2. Empathy
3. Accepting individual and group differences
4. Music emotions
5. Emotional Bingo



Game No: 1

Title: Identifying one's feelings (Real world settings)

Game Objective: To define feelings a person might experience at different times and to increase recognition of these feelings.

Link this activity to situations that have occurred during the week in class, which have been noted down either by the teachers or by the students themselves and which they then comment on in the same way as you propose.

This game is designed to foster advanced verbal communication and affective skills and is suitable for autistic students who are Level 1 or 2. It's inclusive and appropriate for children of all ages.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Distribute face cards, crayons, and the colour monster to students.
2. Clarify that the game involves drawing emotions individually.
3. For those who can't or don't wish to draw, the teacher can use the colour monster, prompting students to choose a colour that represents their feelings.

48

Facilitating the Game:

- The teacher should provide the necessary materials to the students concerning their dynamics or preferences.
- Initiate a discussion on the importance of understanding emotions for better interpersonal interactions.
- Utilize visual aids such as facial expressions, images, or diagrams to illustrate different emotions effectively.
- Ask questions regards to the instruction or raise any considerations regarding the feeling expression.
- The teacher should set up the time provided for the exercise in advance.
- When the students have finished drawing or chosen the colour monster, the teacher can ask each student to present his drawing or cards and present them to the class.
- Following presentations, students can attempt to identify the emotions in the drawings.
- Students take turns demonstrating feelings through body and facial expressions, with others guessing.

Debriefing:



Complement the game: create some dice with the facial expressions drawn on the card and use it as a resource for them to express how they feel during the lessons.

Illustrations

Provide the students a face card to draw the emotions or the color monster.

Once it finishes, you can create some dice with the draws or the color monster.

Material

Card

Pens or markers

Colour monsters

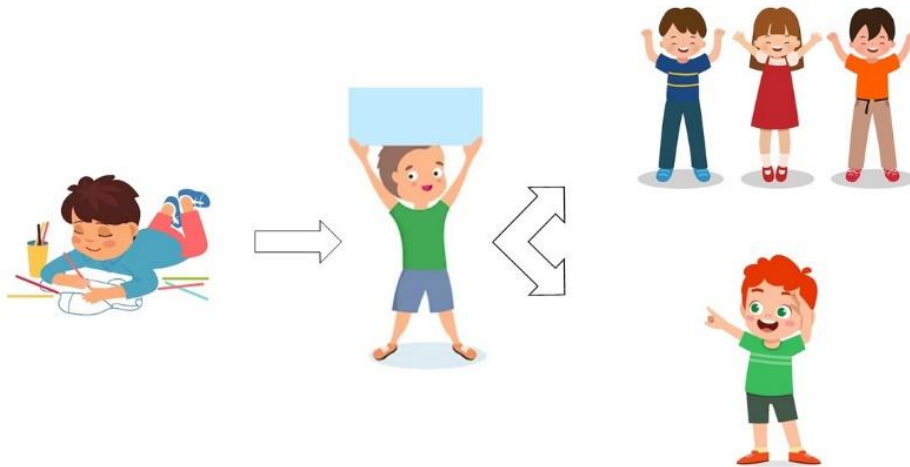


Summary

1. Prepare and distribute materials for each student.
2. Explain the game.
3. Let each student draw emotions.
4. Let students identify the feelings drawn by others, or act out using their body and facial expressions while others guessing.



6. Debrief by dice game.



Checklist

- Did you introduce the game clearly and emphasize the learning objectives?
- Did you set up a comfortable space?
- Did you prepare the material properly?
- Did you give the pupils alternatives in case they cannot draw?
- Did you provide support to students who needed assistance in recognizing emotions?
- Did you promote positive sportsmanship and supportive interactions throughout the game?
- Did you facilitate a debriefing session to reflect on the emotions and encourage sharing?
- Did you reinforce learning by summarizing key concepts and providing positive feedback?

Game No: 2

Title: Empathy (Visual Supports)

Game Objective: The aim of this activity is to assist children in identifying and understanding the feelings of others, promoting empathy. This game, focused on



developing affective skills, is tailored for Level 1 autistic students and is inclusive and suitable for children of all ages.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

This is a two-material-based game depending on visual stimulation with the use of short videos or flashcards.

Facilitating the Game:

- The teacher should explain to the kids that they are going to play a game that focuses on emotions and empathy and brief them accordingly by explaining to them what it means to “put yourself in another person’s shoes”.
- Then, with the use of visual materials (video and cards), will encourage the students to discuss further what they saw.
- The teacher can ask them questions to encourage them to express their impressions and thoughts.

Some examples could be:

Did you like the stories and what did you think was the message of those?

Would you do anything differently if you were in those situations?

Did you believe that the actions of our heroes were correct?

Debriefing:

Following the game, engage students in discussions about various everyday situations they encounter.

Introduce additional scenarios and ask students to speculate on how others might feel in those situations. This debriefing session extends the exploration of empathy beyond the initial game, encouraging ongoing understanding and reflection.

Illustrations

Videos and cards to interpret other feelings.



Material



(<https://coloringhome.com/coloring-page/1995752>)

(<https://coloringhome.com/coloring-page/1936314>)

(<https://www.bestcoloringpagesforkids.com/kindness-coloring-pages.html>)



Sean often hits Oliver.
How do you think Oliver feels?




Has something similar ever happened to you?

Marc had a party
but nobody attended.
How do you think Marc feels?



Can you empathise with Marc?

Juliet won first place in the
athletics competition.



How do you think Juliet feels?
Has something similar happened to you?

Mary had an argument with her
best friend.
How do you think Mary feels?



How do you think Mary feels?
Can you empathise with Mary?

Animated short films and TV or computer to watch it:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27sho6s2eK8>





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yICTKBm538>



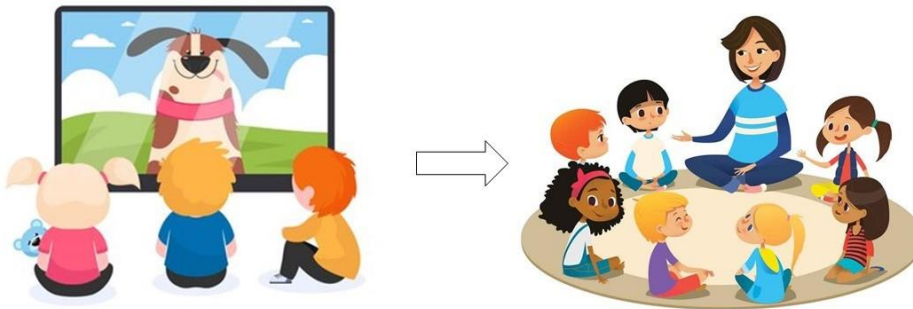
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMZO_zshz1Q





Summary

1. Prepare video or cards.
2. Gather students and explain them the game.
3. Demonstrate the videos or cards to students.
4. Ask students to describe what they saw in terms of emotions, feelings, thoughts and impressions.
4. Debrief.



Checklist

- Did you introduce the game clearly and emphasize the learning objectives?
- Did you set up a comfortable space?
- Did you provide support to students who needed assistance in recognizing emotions?
- Did you promote positive sportsmanship and supportive interactions throughout the game?
- Did you facilitate a debriefing session to reflect on the emotions and encourage sharing?
- Did you reinforce learning by summarizing key concepts and providing positive feedback?

Game No: 3

Title: Accepting individual and group differences (role-playing)

Game Objective: The objective of this role-playing game is to help children understand the messages conveyed by their bodies and recognize nonverbal signs that express



others' feelings. This activity is designed to develop effective skills and is suitable for Level 1 autistic students, ensuring inclusivity for children of all ages without requiring any writing or reading skills.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

Arrange the classroom as a welcoming and spacious setting for the game, ensuring active engagement from every student while the rest of the class attentively observes their responses.

Facilitating the Game:

- Initiate the exploration of emotions by having students choose an emotion from a provided list (Happy, Confused, Disappointed, Angry, Shocked, Scared, Surprised, Proud) or through emotion cards.
- Guide students in responding to questions about a chosen emotion by exploring aspects like facial expressions, tone of voice, voice volume, posture, and gestures. The teacher can effectively convey this emotion either through personal demonstration or by prompting students to act it out.
- All students are encouraged to participate, with others observing.
- After this phase, offer additional activities where students act out scenarios through mime, either provided by the teacher or suggested by classmates.
- Example: Acting out receiving a present at a birthday party, with others commenting on the performance and body language.
- Conclude the game with a circle discussion where students share thoughts on their participation, reflecting on their experiences and observations.

56

Debriefing:

Enhance the debriefing process by posing questions to the children:

- Which part of the assignment did you enjoy the most?
- Is there anything you would do differently?
- How do you think our friend felt while performing the scenarios?

This reflective discussion encourages self-awareness and empathy, reinforcing the learning objectives of the game.

Illustrations

Please find cards below depicting some of the mimes kids could act out.

Material



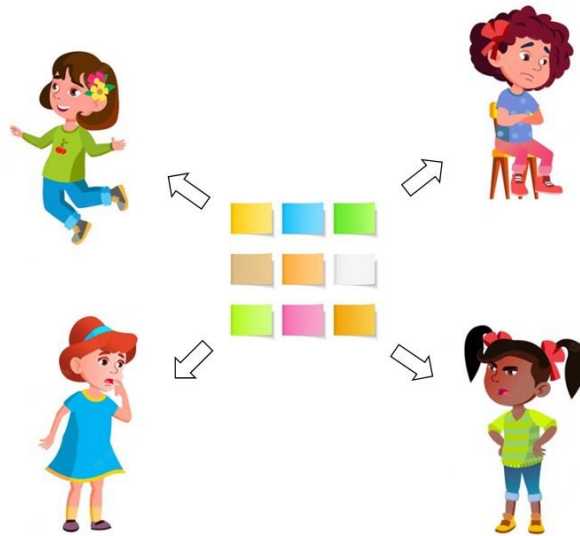
Designated play area, cards



(<https://www.himama.com/learning/child-activities/activity/feelings-chart-for-calming-corner>)

Summary

1. Prepare the play area, emotion cards/list of emotions, and the questions to guide students for discussing the emotions through postures, voice of tones, facial expressions, etc.
2. Explain the game to students.
3. Let students choose an emotion card, discuss about the emotion and act it out.
4. Debrief.



Checklist

- Did you introduce the game clearly and emphasize the learning objectives?
- Did you set up a comfortable space?
- Did you provide support to students who needed assistance in recognizing emotions?
- Did you provide the students different situations to perform?
- Did you give the students sufficient time to think about the situations to perform?
- Did you promote positive sportsmanship and supportive interactions throughout the game?
- Did you facilitate a debriefing session to reflect on the emotions and encourage sharing?
- Did you reinforce learning by summarizing key concepts and providing positive feedback?

Game No: 4

Title: Music emotions (role-playing)

Game Objective: The goal of this role-playing auditory game is to learn that communication can also be achieved through non-verbal means such as facial expressions, body language, and even dance. This comprehensive approach helps individuals understand and convey emotions effectively while also enhancing their ability to interpret the emotions of others through non-verbal cues.



This game is designed to foster affective skills and is suitable for autistic students who are Level 1. It's inclusive and appropriate for children of all ages as it does not require any writing or reading skills.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Prepare a welcoming and spacious classroom, allowing ample space for movement.
2. Ensure active engagement of every student with sufficient room to move.
3. Gather necessary music materials.

Facilitating the Game:

- Demonstrate different aspects of body communication, focusing on movement and facial expressions.
- Introduce relevant terminology and provide examples of body and facial expressions to the students.
- Instruct students that music can evoke various emotions, citing examples like classical music for peace and calm and heavy metal for anger.
- Prompt students to express these emotions through dance or movement around the class.
- Conclude the game with a circle discussion where students can share their experiences.

59

Debriefing:

Ask students what they feel about the different types of music. Explain that with music you can feel different emotions depending on the lyrics, rhythm..

Encourage discussion on various emotions by asking the students:

- What makes you happy/sad/angry/worried?
- How do you behave when feeling this way?
- What do you understand by others' movements?

Teacher's Note:

- Reinforce the idea that it's okay not to feel okay and that experiencing a range of emotions is a normal part of life.
- The debriefing questions aim to deepen students' understanding of their emotions and how others express them, fostering self-awareness and empathy.



Illustrations



(www.alamy.com)

Material

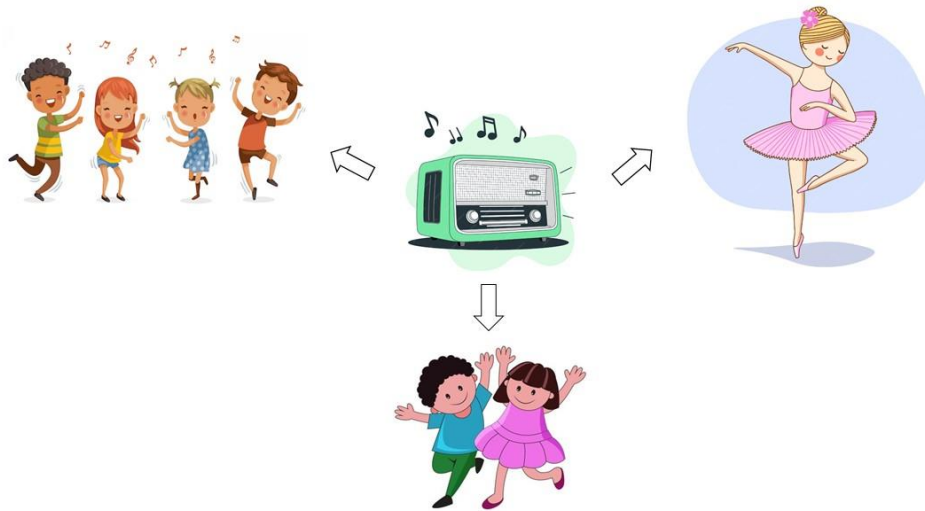
Dancing area

Music

60

Summary

1. Set up a comfortable space and music station.
2. Explain the game to students.
3. Play different types of music.
4. Let students dance while demonstrating emotions through movements according to the type or tone of the music.
5. Have a circle time discussion.
6. Debrief.



Checklist

- Did you introduce the game clearly and emphasize the learning objectives?
- Did you set up a comfortable space?
- Did you play different type of music?
- Did you provide support to students who needed assistance in recognizing emotions?
- Did you promote positive sportsmanship and supportive interactions throughout the game?
- Did you explain what music can make you feel?

Game No: 5

Title: Emotional bingo (role-playing)

Game Objective:

The objective of this game is to enhance emotional awareness, recognition, and communication among participants. By engaging in shared scenarios and conversations, participants develop their ability to recognize, comprehend, and express emotions. The game fosters empathy, self-awareness, and meaningful connections, making it suitable for Level 1 autistic students, with a focus on communication, collaboration, and interaction skills and is preferable for children of younger ages, around 6 and 7.



Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Create bingo cards featuring a grid of emotions, gestures, and mimicking actions, customized based on the needs and abilities of the students.
2. Provide markers or tokens for students to cover the squares on their bingo cards.

Facilitating the Game:

- Explain the rules and objectives, emphasizing that the game aims to recognise different emotions, gestures, and actions and brief the students accordingly if is necessary.
- Distribute bingo cards and markers/tokens to each student.
- Begin the game by calling out a card or verbally describing one, prompting students to cover the corresponding square on their bingo cards. Encourage students to express the emotion, perform the gesture, or mimic the action as applicable.
- Continue playing, calling out different cards until a participant achieves a winning pattern, such as a straight line.
- After the game, engage students in a discussion about the emotions, gestures, and actions encountered during play.
- Facilitate a group discussion on the importance of understanding one's or others' feelings, using simple questions to prompt individual reflections.

62

Debriefing:

Encourage reflection with questions like:

- Which part of the assignment did you like the most?
- Were there difficulties performing the task?
- Did you observe any gestures for the first time?

These debriefing questions aim to prompt thoughtful reflections on the game and its impact on emotional awareness and communication.

Illustrations

<https://wyqualitycounts.org/project/emotions-bingo/>

Material

Bingo cards with emotions, gestures, and mimicking actions (customized for students)



Markers or tokens (e.g., small objects like buttons or coins)



Summary

1. Prepare bingo cards and materials.
2. Distribute to each student.
3. Begin the game by calling out a card or verbally describing one.
4. Let students to cover the corresponding square on their bingo cards.
5. Continue playing, calling out different cards until a participant achieves a winning pattern, such as a straight line.
6. Discussion and debriefing.



Checklist

Did you prepare customized bingo cards with appropriate emotions, gestures, and mimicking actions?

Did you provide markers or tokens for students to cover the squares?

Did you introduce the game clearly and emphasize the learning objectives?

Did you call out cards effectively, using verbal descriptions or card prompts?

Did you provide support to students who needed assistance in recognizing emotions, performing gestures, or engaging in mimicking activities?

Did you promote positive sportsmanship and supportive interactions throughout the game?

Did you facilitate a debriefing session to reflect on the emotions, gestures, and actions and encourage sharing?

Did you reinforce learning by summarizing key concepts and providing positive feedback?



Cognitive Skills

Background

The chosen area focuses on games that develop and encourage social-cognitive skills, promoting learning in a natural and relaxed environment together with peers who can serve as models or offer help. The aim is to encourage tolerance and acceptance of diversity among all children.

By addressing these skills, we aim to improve the social competence of all the children included and the overall quality of life of autistic students.

The skills we address in this section:

- Self-monitoring and self-awareness
- Social Perception and perspective-taking
- Understanding another's perspective
- Ability to analyse information and alternative solutions
- Ability to make decisions
- Problem-solving skills
- Understanding community norms, following the rules
- Joint attention
- Self-advocacy
- Boundaries

65

Methods and Approaches:

The methods and approaches employed in presenting these games are designed to enhance cognitive abilities. This is achieved by utilizing every day, familiar items such as cards, visual cues, and drawings that resonate with the students.

To develop cognitive skills within this package, we employ various approaches:

Strategic Exercising: This approach is exemplified in games like 'Self Control and Peer Pressure.' These games help students develop skills in self-control and handling peer pressure.

Naturalistic Settings and Real-World Relevance: In games like 'I-MESSAGE and Assertive Behavior,' we have created scenarios that mimic real-life situations. This helps students to practice assertive behaviour in contexts they may encounter in their daily lives.



Systems Thinking Approaches: Games such as 'Perspective Gaming' and 'How We Fit Together Gaming' are designed to encourage systems thinking. These games help students understand how various elements interact and affect each other.

By using these approaches and incorporating them into everyday items, we aim to provide an engaging and effective way for students to develop their cognitive abilities.

List of games

1. Self-control and Peer pressure
2. I-messages
3. Perspectives
4. How we fit together - puzzle
5. Resolving Conflicts

Game No: 1

Title: Self-control and Peer Pressure (Strategic Exercises)

Game Objective:

To build self-control, impulse control, and attention during the game. Increase awareness of others and learn to cooperate with peers in achieving goals. This game is suitable for Level 1 autistic students, focusing on advanced communication, planning, and organizational skills, ideally for children aged 6 and 7.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Prepare two or three balloons of different colours.
2. Inform students that their task is to prevent the balloons from falling by working in pairs, holding hands, and moving around the room together. Play lively music if desired.
3. Ensure the game area is cleared of obstacles.
4. Randomly divide students into pairs, providing each pair with an instruction either verbally or in written form. The instructions should be presented silently to maintain an element of surprise.

Examples of instructions could include:

- Hit the balloons only with your hands.



- Kick the balloons only with your feet.
- Hit the blue balloon with your hands and the red one with your feet.
- Obstruct other groups.

Instructions may be identical for different pairs, and the teacher can introduce additional rules or balloons based on the number of participants.

Facilitating the Game:

- Distribute the balloons to the students.
- Emphasize that rude behaviours are not allowed.
- Randomly select students to form teams using lottery tools.
- Allow questions regarding the instructions.
- Specify to children that collaboration is key to the game's success.
- Start the game and monitor for unwanted behaviours.
- Remove a balloon from the game if it touches the floor.
- End the game when all balloons touch the floor or when the agreed-upon time expires.

Debriefing:

After the allotted time, have students arrange chairs in a circle facing inward and share their experiences. The teacher can facilitate a debriefing session by asking questions such as:

- How did you feel working as a couple?
- How did you feel when you saw other couples making "illegal" moves?
- What would you do differently to play again?

Illustrations



(<https://darcymillerdesigns.com/from-the-studio/camp-darcy-balloon-crafts-and-games/>)



Material

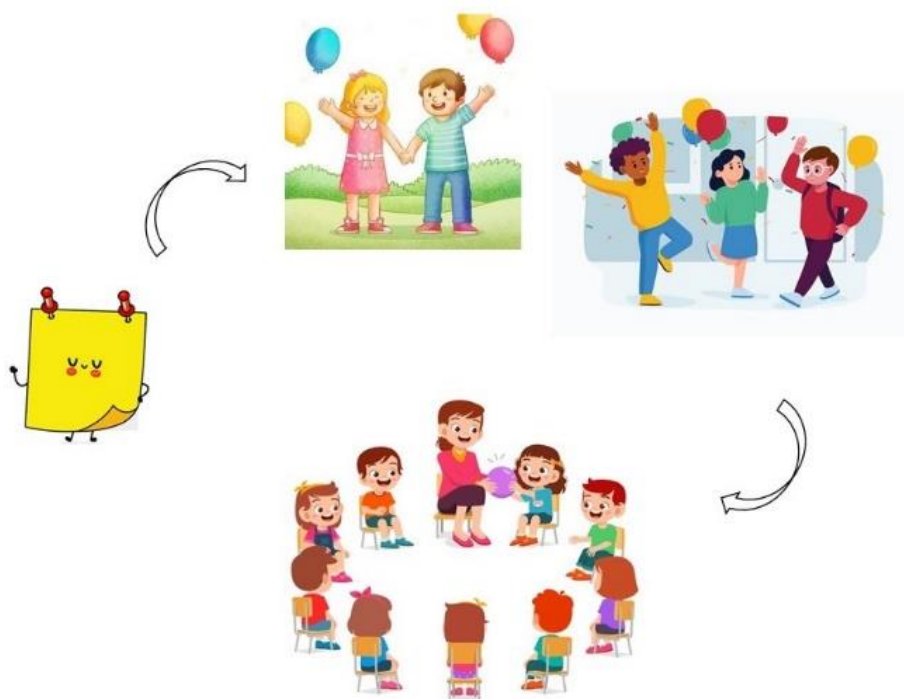
Prepare two or three (or more) balloons of different colors.

Prepare the slips of paper with instructions for each pair on the game.

Clear the room so that the players can move freely.

Summary

1. Set up a spacious area (and optionally a music station), prepare balloons and instructions on note papers and arrange students in pairs.
2. Explain the game to students, and give each pair an instruction to read.
3. Start the game and end when all balloons touch the floor or agreed time expires.
4. Debrief.



Checklist

Did you prepare enough balloons of different colors?

Did you divide students into pairs?

Did each pair receive and silently read the instructions?

Did you explain the objective and rules of the game clearly?



Have you agreed with the students on the duration of the game?

Game No: 2

Title: I-MESSAGES and ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR (Real-world Settings)

Game Objective:

Raise awareness of different perspectives and learn various communication styles. Empower students to use assertive communication, like I-MESSAGES, by practising self-advocacy. Utilizing I-MESSAGES encourages assertive communication, aiding students in expressing their feelings during conflicts or difficult situations.

This game is suitable for Level 1 autistic students and is focusing on advanced conversation and emotional skills. It is preferable for kids aged 7 and 8 due to the incorporation of writing and reading skills.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Arrange chairs in a circle for students to sit, facing inward.
2. Prepare sheets of paper with the I-MESSAGE formula and slips of paper, each containing one sentence (either aggressive or passive) for every student.
3. Briefly explain and show the difference between I- and YOU-MESSAGES, providing students with a sheet containing the I-MESSAGE formula and an example.
 - I-MESSAGES express personal feelings towards an action, e.g., "I'm upset when you take my crayons without asking."
 - YOU-MESSAGES place blame, criticism, or judgment on the other person, e.g., "You took my pencil without asking."
4. Distribute slips of paper, each with three sentences, containing YOU-MESSAGES. Students must transform each sentence into an I-MESSAGE.

69

Facilitating the Game:

- Explain to the students that the game focuses on emotions and communication styles, providing examples of ASSERTIVE, AGGRESSIVE, AND PASSIVE behaviour.
- Reiterate the difference between I- and YOU-MESSAGES, emphasizing that I-MESSAGES express personal feelings while YOU-MESSAGES criticize others without expressing personal emotions.



- Discuss various communication styles with students, inviting questions and considerations.
- Provide a sheet with the I-MESSAGE formula and an example to each student.
- Distribute slips of paper with three sentences, instructing students to transform YOU-MESSAGES into I-MESSAGES.
- Allow sufficient time for completion.
- Have students read aloud both the original YOU-MESSAGE sentence and the transformed I-MESSAGE to the student next to them clockwise.
- After completion, encourage students to compare answers, discuss differences, and reflect on their feelings when listening to the original and transformed sentences.

Debriefing:

Teacher and students can also brainstorm the ideas about benefits of assertive communication to them and write their answers on a large sheet of paper or wall poster.

Illustrations



(freepik.com)

Material

I-MESSAGES

I FEEL

WHEN YOU

BECAUSE

AND I WANT

Chairs arranged in a circle.

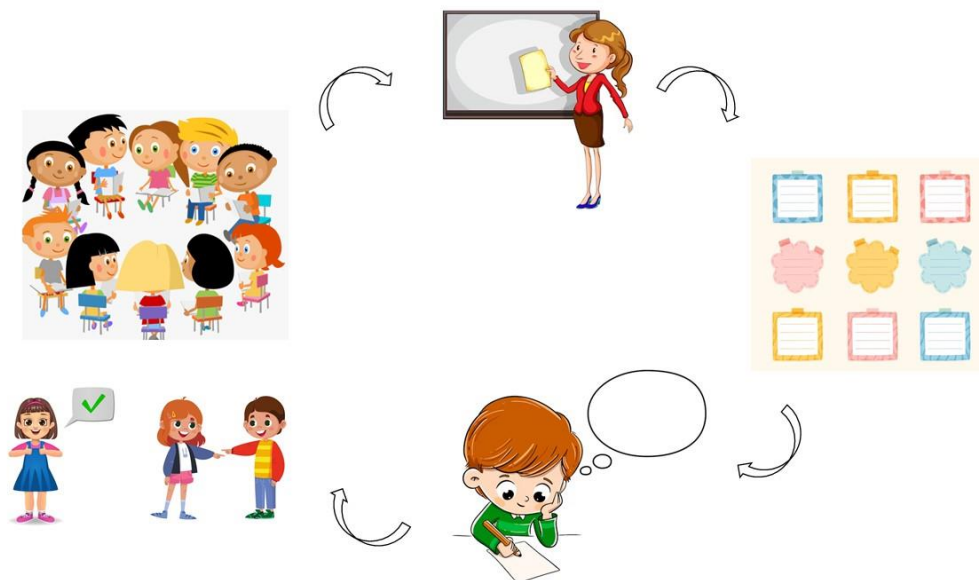


Slips of paper with I-MESSAGE formula for each student.

Slips of paper with one sentence (aggressive or passive) for each student.

Summary

1. Prepare the sheets of paper with formula of I-MESSAGES.
2. Gather students in a circle and explain them the game.
3. Distribute material and let students complete their tasks.
4. Let students read aloud their answers in a clockwise direction.
5. Discuss and debrief.



Checklist

Did you set up the chairs in a circle, facing inward?

Have you prepared slips of paper with the I-MESSAGE formula for each student?

Have you prepared slips of paper with one sentence (aggressive or passive) for each student?

Did you explain the objective and rules of the game clearly?

Did you ensure participants take turns in a clockwise direction?

Did you facilitate a debriefing session to discuss mutual differences and ideas about I-MESSAGES?



Did you encourage students to participate in comparing their answers, self-reflecting, and discussing mutual differences and ideas for I-MESSAGES?

Did you encourage students to brainstorm the ideas about benefits of assertive communication and write their answers on a large sheet of paper?

Game No: 3

Title: Perspectives (System Thinking)

Game Objective: To learn how different perspectives can influence our perception, and the way we think and feel, and to encourage tolerance and acceptance of others.

This game is suitable for autistic students who are Level 1 as it focuses on more advanced communication, copying, and emotional skills. It is preferable for kids at the ages of 6 and 7 as it does not require any reading or writing skills.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Divide participants into equal groups of 3-5 members.
2. Instruct each group to choose one representative.
3. Prepare an image of a structure created by Arie Berkulin in 1977 called Swing (Materials).
4. Explain the game rules, highlighting that the aim is to observe the picture and then pass the necessary information to the team.

72

Facilitating the Game:

- Explain to the students that they will play an observation and communication game.
- Call each group representative one by one and show them a picture of the structure created by Arie Berkulin in 1977 called Swing.
- Show each participant a different image of the structure (if there are more than 4 groups, two or more representatives will see the same picture).
- After all participants see the pictures, allow them to return to their group and describe what they saw to the other members.
- Ask another member of the team to draw a picture based on the description.
- During the instructions, ensure that the person who saw the picture has their back turned to the group and cannot see what they are doing.



- Monitor that the procedures run smoothly, and all members cooperate respecting the rules.
- After completing the drawings, ask the groups to show what they have drawn and check with the person who saw the picture how accurate the drawings are, while the rest of the group guesses what it is about.
- At the end of the drawing and assessing procedures, have the groups compare their drawings.
- Reveal that all groups saw and drew pictures of the same object—the Swing construction—and explain that the shape of the construction depends on the observer's location.
- Show students a video demonstrating changes in structure depending on perspective: <https://pixabay.com/videos/swing-ari-berkulin-eindhoven-steel-11369/>

Debriefing:

Finally, the teacher can encourage the participants to share situations from their lives where miscommunication could have occurred due to a difference in perception.

Illustrations

<https://pixabay.com/videos/swing-ari-berkulin-eindhoven-steel-11369/>



Material

Four different pictures of the structure called SWING, created by Arie Berkulin in 1977.

Empty sheet of paper for each group.

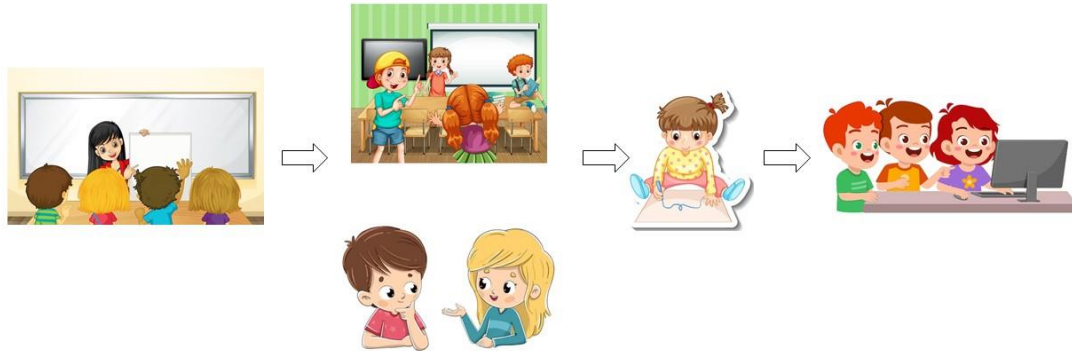
A device (tablet, laptop, or mobile phone) connected to the Internet on which you can watch the video from the link.

Summary

1. Prepare the material, divide students into groups and introduce the game.
2. Call one representative of each group (one after another) and show each of them a different image of a structure created by Arie Berkulin in 1977 called Swing.
3. Let representatives return to their group, describe what they saw, and one member of each group make a drawing based on the description.
4. Let all groups discuss and compare what they saw and their drawings.



5. Reveal the original picture you have shown.
6. Debrief.



Checklist

- Did you divide participants into equal groups of 3-5 members?
- Has each group chosen one representative from among themselves?
- Did you prepare the images of Arie Berkulin’s structure Swing and showed them to the group representatives?
- Did you give clear instructions about group drawing?
- Did all the groups compare their drawings?
- Did you show the students the video of the Swing structure?
- Did you encourage the students to connect and compare this situation with situations from their lives where they have experienced differences in perception among people they know?



Game No: 4

Title: How We Fit Together (system-thinking)

Game Objective: This activity aims to foster cohesiveness and awareness among children through a group drawing exercise. The goal is to help children understand how they collectively "fit together" as a group or class, despite their individual differences.

This game is suitable for autistic students who are Level 1 or 2 as it focuses on developing communication bridges among their peers. It is preferable for kids between the ages of 6 and 7 as it does not require any reading or complex communication skills.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Prepare a large puzzle sheet cut into small, empty puzzle pieces.
2. Designate an area for students to draw individually and another area to assemble the puzzle pieces (either on the floor or on desks).

Facilitating the Game:

- Introduce the activity, emphasizing its goals. The teacher can begin by stating, "As members of a group, it's important to understand how we all fit together. Working well together means recognizing both our similarities and differences."
- Distribute one empty puzzle piece to each student.
- Then, the teacher should brief the students with the necessary instructions by saying: The task is to write a name on one's own part of the puzzle and decorate it according to one's choice, with crayons, drawings, or illustrations.
- The allotted time for this phase may vary (5-15 minutes) based on the students' age or the teacher's assessment.
- Once the individual puzzle pieces are decorated, the task is for students to collaboratively connect all the pieces into one whole.
- During this phase, students work together until the last puzzle piece becomes an integral part of the complete picture.

Debriefing:

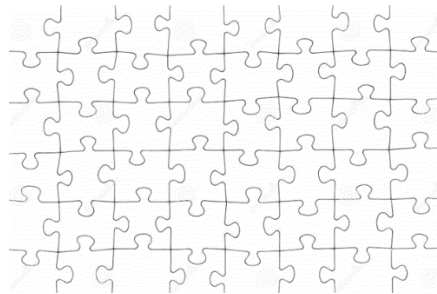
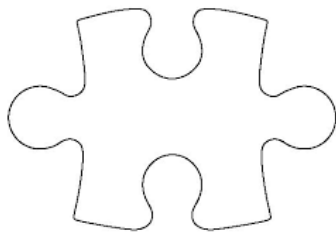
At the end, the students sit in a circle and share their thoughts about their participation as well as the work they created.

Illustrations



Material

76



One big puzzle sheet is cut into small pieces (empty puzzles), one piece for each student.

A place for each student to draw.

Crayons, pencils, stickers.

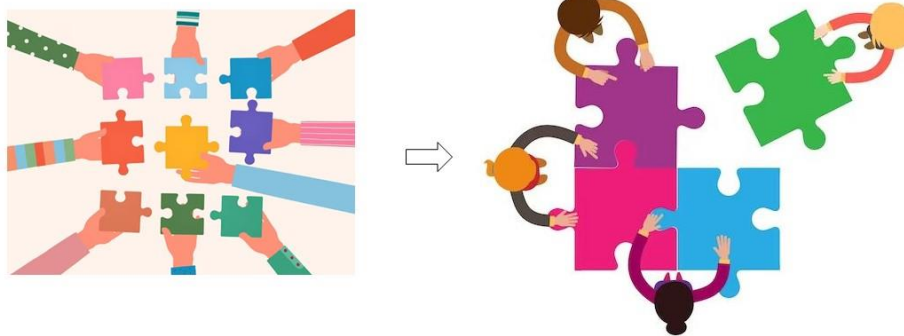
A place where students can put all the puzzles together.

Chairs arranged in a circle.



Summary

1. Prepare a spacious area, pieces of a puzzle and other materials.
2. Explain the game to students.
3. Give each student a piece of the puzzle.
4. Allow kids to decorate their own piece, and all kids combine pieces into a whole.
5. Debrief.



Checklist

- Did you prepare an empty piece of the puzzle for each student?
- Did you provide enough crayons, pencils, or stickers for students?
- Did you provide a clear introduction before you start with the game?
- Has every student decorated their own part of the puzzle?
- Did you clarify what kinds of behaviours are not allowed?
- Did all the students manage to fit their part of the puzzle into the whole?
- Did you ask questions to encourage students to provide feedback on each part of the activity?



Game No: 5

Title: Resolving Conflicts (role-play games/instance debates)

Game Objective: The aim of this activity is to cultivate decision-making skills, problem-solving abilities, and analytical thinking. Additionally, it seeks to promote awareness, tolerance, and cooperation among students.

This game is suitable for autistic students who are Level 1, as it focuses on developing communication and co-operational bridges among their peers. It is preferable for kids between the ages of 6 and 7 as it does not require any writing or reading skills.

Guidelines

Setting up the Game:

1. Prepare a variety of items that students can "take" with them.
2. Create a role-playing scenario where students must solve a problem or make decisions. For instance, imagine being stranded on a desert island and asking students to decide which items to take and how they will survive.
3. The teacher can present scenarios with multiple solutions, and students, working in groups, choose the best option or devise a new one if they find the provided solutions inadequate.
4. Ensure the number of items is odd so that the group choosing first receives one item less than the other group.
5. The groups collectively decide whether they want to choose first. If both groups prefer the same order, a dice game can determine the order, with the higher number winning.

78

Facilitating the Game:

- Prior to the instructions, the teacher should explain to students that this is a two-group game and depends on group decisions.
- Divide students into two groups, emphasizing teamwork and joint decision-making within each group.
- Explain that a variety of items are offered for an imaginary desert island, stressing the importance of respecting others' ideas and opinions without criticism or rudeness. Address any queries about the game instructions.
- The groups take turns choosing one item they agree is most crucial for survival on the desert island.



- The game continues until all items are distributed among the groups.
- During the game, encourage students to discuss the offered items and their potential use on the desert island.
- After distributing all the items, prompt each group to brainstorm additional ideas for surviving on a desert island.

Debriefing:

At the end, the students sit in a circle and share their thoughts about their participation in a group process. Students can share their thoughts about the game and reflect on their participation as well as their satisfaction with group decisions. The teacher can ask questions to encourage students to express their impressions and thoughts.

- Was it easy to make decisions as a group?
- Which part of the assignment did you like the most?
- Would you do anything differently?

Illustrations



(vectorstock.com)

Material

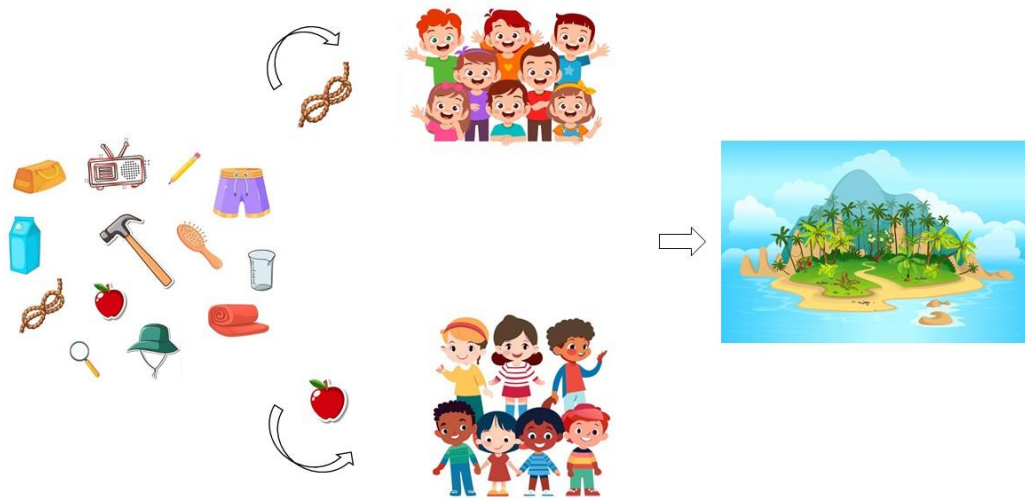
A series of objects from everyday use (e.g., matches, plastic knife, rope, soap, paper, broom, spoon, bag, toothbrush, plastic bottle, clock, lamp, bowl, salt, blanket...)

Summary

1. Prepare a scenario and accordingly the items that students can 'take' with them, and divide the class into two groups.
2. Explain the game to students.
3. Let each group pick one item at a time taking turns, until all items are distributed.



4. Allow groups to discuss their choices during the game.
5. Brainstorm and debrief.



Checklist

- Did you prepare different items from everyday use that students can "take" with them?
- Did you prepare a role-playing scenario with a problem for students to solve?
- Did you divide the students into two groups?
- Did you provide a clear introduction before you started with the game?
- Did you clarify what kinds of behaviors are not allowed?
- Did you encourage students all the students to participate in the decision-making process?
- Did you ask questions to encourage students to provide feedback on the activity?



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