



Inclusive Games

These games are created or adapted for children with additional needs, including those with very complex needs.

What's the time Mr Wolf

This is played in the traditional way with one 'wolf' and several players. In this version the wolf faces the other players and moves towards them, rather than the other way round.

Choose someone to be the 'Wolf'. Everyone else sits in a circle and asks: 'What's the time Mr. Wolf?' The Wolf answers: 'Two o'clock,' 'six o'clock' etc. and then takes that number of steps across the circle, counting out loud as he/she does so. The wolf can change direction to keep people guessing as to who is his/her 'target'. Once the wolf is very close to someone he/she answers 'Dinner time' very loudly and 'gets' the nearest person/people. Adults can add to the suspense by adding little comments about who the wolf might be heading towards. At the end it can be very effective if the wolf slowly heads directly for someone. The wolf could use big furry mitts and 'pounce' (gently) on his/her target with these 'paws' at the end.

Smelly sock pairs: For this game you need lots of pairs of socks that smell different! For best results store each pair of socks in a small plastic bag with a particular 'smell' (Smells could be strong smelling soap, coffee or spices such as cloves). Try to keep the socks separate until just before you are playing the game so the smells don't get a chance to mingle.

The socks should all be identical, or nearly identical. Each child is given a sock and they then have to find the right 'pair' by asking their friends and comparing their sock's smell with everyone else's. This game can be used as part of the story of Cinderella. Cinderella is given impossible jobs to do and sorting the socks is one of the jobs. Or perhaps she loses a sock and the prince has to find the one that smells right!!

Little Red Riding Hood in the Forest

The children have switches (communication devices) with recordings on. Some of the switches have friendly animal noises, and others have wolf noises. (Classroom assistants or other adults can help with this before the game starts.) Everyone chants the rhyme:

Little Red goes into the forest

Little Red goes into the trees

Little Red goes into the forest

With a one, two, three

'Little Red' chooses an 'animal' and approaches them. The child presses the switch and 'Little Red' either shrieks and runs away or says hello and gives the 'animal' a pat, depending whether the animal is friendly or fierce.

Rain on the Mountain

This game is based on the traditional Tanzanian game Fire on the Mountain but I have given it a Scottish twist.

If you like you can give out rain ponchos, rain hoods, hats, etc. before the game starts.

Game leader chants like this:

'Rain on the mountain.'

And everyone replies like this:

'That's ok!'

This continues with different locations, e.g.

'Rain in Fife'

'That's ok!'

Then the game leader names the place you are:

'Rain in our school!'

Everyone shrieks and the game leader goes round spraying people with water!

Alternatively the leader could name one person in the group:

'Rain on Peter!'

And spray that person. (If the children aren't keen on being sprayed the leader could rattle a rain rattle near them instead and use fingertips to make 'rain' on the backs of their hands.)

Up in the Attic

For this game you need two boxes with lids. Inside one is something 'horrible' (e.g. a squidgy plastic spider) and inside the other is something 'nice' (e.g. a soft scarf) Game leader sets the scene like this:

Up in the attic, in the dusty corner of the attic, are two boxes [or bags]. In one box is something nice. In the other is something nasty...

Handy dandy

Riddley rat

Which box will you have

This or that

Game leader chooses a child. This child chooses a box to open. The game leader builds the suspense. Then either:

Hurrah! There's a lovely soft scarf inside!

Or:

The big hairy spider is going to get you! ['Get' the child with the spider]

Notes on playing the games

- Be prepared to ham it up! Particularly for children with complex needs the atmosphere you create is very important. If you can, be a bit dramatic and try to build suspense. This will really help the participants to enjoy themselves.
- Use names as much as possible. This saves confusion if children aren't quite certain of their role in the game. (E.g. Say 'Henry the Wolf' rather than just 'The Big Bad Wolf'). Children with very limited language comprehension will often understand their name. And we all like to hear our own names!
- Allow a certain amount of chaos and wildness. Celebrate this whilst keeping everyone safe! Remember that children with additional needs may not get the same opportunities for 'letting rip' through play as other children. The 'wildness' may not be able to be expressed through physical activity, so think of other ways to express it. Confetti, balloons and parachutes are all good ways to create a healthy chaos. Noise is another way, but check first as some children with additional needs are particularly sensitive to noise.
- The games are a chance to turn the world topsy-turvy; use them to give power away. The smallest, quietest child gets to be the dragon. And the head teacher gets to wear the silliest hat!

- Include nice sensory experiences in your games and adapt these to suit the needs of the participants. Heat (from hand warmers), cosy quilts, funny hats, furry mitts for paws, party blowers, fans, streamers and nice smells are all good. Remember to include non-visual items.

I would love to hear your feedback or comments on this story – please email me if you get a chance: info@flotsamandjetsam.co.uk

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