

Back Pocket Activities and Action Songs

These handouts are designed to be references. Please feel free to adapt them anyway you would like to fit the needs of your group. These activities and songs have been used in both a school setting and many camp settings.

Back Pocket Activities are activities that can be done on short notice with minimal equipment and often in spaces that are small. Not all are for small spaces but many can be done in a classroom.

Action Songs are songs that have one or more actions that accompany the song. Any song that has been printed in this handout is a public domain document.

Activities:

Elbow Tag:

Elbow is a high energy tag game and can be done in a relatively small space as only two children are running at a time. One of the runners is a tagger and the other runner is the child being chased. All the remaining children need to be partnered. The partners stand side by side and hook their elbows together. The other hand is placed on their hip so that they have another handle that can be hooked onto. The child that is being chased can choose to hook onto any pair scattered around the playing area. The catch is however that there can only every be 2 children hooked together. This means that when a child hooks on the side not hooked onto must release from the new pair. That newly released child is now the child being chased. If the tagger manages to catch the child they are chasing the roles immediately reverse. The child being chased who just got caught is now the tagger and child that was the tagger is now being chased. Periodically you might have to stop the group and pair the runners up so that some other children have a chance to run or to help the tagger that might be getting very tired. If the children hook on frequently everyone gets plenty of running time and the taggers get very tired as safeties are being used often.

Everybody's It Tag:

The game is just as it sounds. Everyone playing is a tagger. Everyone is trying to get all other children frozen without getting frozen themselves. If a child gets tagged they are frozen for the remainder of the game. There is no way for a frozen player to reenter the game. I have the frozen kids sit down with crossed legs or kneel down. This allows the other players to determine who is frozen. If two children tag each other at the same time they are both frozen. If the children cannot tell who got whom then I have them both be frozen and I explain this in rules. The game ends when only one player remains or all players are frozen. If you find the last few players are not challenging each other I do a countdown and they have long to make something happen or that game ends and we begin another game.

Black Magic:

This is a game that requires someone else to know the outcome of the game. It is a mystery game. Two people have to know the riddle and the others try to guess how the others appear to read each other's mind. Don't let the other players know that player knows how the game works. The second player leaves the game area and doesn't look or see an object selected by the group. When the group has chosen an object the player that left the room returns to the play area. When the player returns to the area the group leader begins to ask that player questions about objects in the room. The player answers based upon knowledge of the game. The trick is the leader will not ask questions about anything black until the object just before the correct object. The object asked about before the final object must have black on it so that it is noticeable. Once the object with black is asked about the next object asked about should be the one chosen by the group. This should be guessed correctly by the player who left the room. The clue is the item always followed by the black item is the correct item. The remainder of the group tries to figure out how the person who left the room knew the correct item.

Night Watchman:

The night watchman places him/her self in the center of the room. All of the other players position themselves around the night watchman. The object of the game is to tag the watchman without being seen moving. As the night watchman looks in other areas the player not being looked at try to move to get closer to the night watchman. If a player is seen moving they must go back to their original spot.

Create a Game:

Games can be created using any materials you have on hand or no materials at all. The bonus of create a game is that it can be done in any space. Set up certain criteria that the group must meet and then let the brainstorming begin. Once a group has created a game they must share the game with the other groups so everyone gets a chance to play.

You can use to a grid to specify ways of movement and groupings and equipment used for the game creations. The groups use the grid by rolling a die and whatever number they role is the used method in the grid. The more specific your grid is the more refined the game will become. An example grid might look like the one below.

Movement Method	Groupings	Equipment
Run	Pairs	1 piece of equipment
Walk	Choice	All available equipment
Skip	Small Groups	2 pieces of equipment
Slide	Large Group	Choice
Choice	Triads	3 pieces of equipment
Crawl	Individual	No equipment

Lateral Thinking Puzzles:

A lateral thinking puzzle is a question that is asked where the group tries to find the answer to the riddle by asking only yes or no questions. An example of a lateral thinking puzzle is:

An art collector goes to an auction and purchases a piece of art for 1 million dollars even though he knew the art was not worth anything. Why?

The answer to the riddle is the dealer knew the frame was worth a great deal of money.

The music stopped and she died? What did the music stopping have to do with her death? She was a blind or blindfolded tight rope walker who listened for the end of the music to know when she was at the end of the tight rope. The conductor stopped the music early so she would fall to her death.

A man was driving down a street wearing a scuba mask. Why?

He had been scuba diving and lost his prescription glasses and his mask was prescription so he wore the mask so he could see to drive.

A man walked into his house and saw Fred lying dead in puddle of water with glass all around. What happened?

Fred was a gold fish and his bowl had been knocked over and it shattered, without water Fred died.

Songs:

A Boom Chicka Boom

I said a-boom-chick-a-boom! [Group echoes.]

I said a-boom-chick-a-boom! [Group echoes.]

I said a-boom-chick-a-rock-a-chick-a-rock-a-chick-a-boom!

[Group echoes.]

Alright! [Group echoes.]

Okay! [Group echoes.]

This time! [Group echoes.]

Let's try it the Hawaiian Way! [Group echoes.]

Each time a leader adds a different variation such as: Rock and Roll, Janitor, English, Eskimo, Vermonter, Opera, Under water

Dum, Dum, Da, Da

Dum, dum, da, da,
Da-dum, dum, da, da,
Da-dum, dum, da, da, da, dum, da-dum, dum, dum
Dum, dum, da, da,
Da-dum, dum, da, da,
Da-dum, dum, da, da, da, dum.

First time through: pat both knees twice, then right hand to left shoulder twice; pat knees twice, then left hand to right shoulder twice.

Second time through: pat both knees once, then right hand to left shoulder once; pat knees once, then left hand to right shoulder once; pat knees, then cross arms, uncross arms and then snap fingers.

Third time through: left hand on right elbow, flutter right hand; right hand on left elbow, flutter left hand.

Fourth time through: brush hands, then right hand on left elbow; left hand on right elbow.

Fifth time through: cross arms, lean alternately forward and back.

T.I.R.O.

Everyone stands in a circle and puts their arms around the backs of their neighbours - important not to pull on shoulders as then you can lose stability. Then everyone moves their right foot over top of their right neighbour's left foot (so that the right foot is between your right neighbour's feet with the leg being over top of the left one).

TIR (*lean to right*) TIR (*lean to left*) TIR (*lean to right*) O (*lean to left*)
TIR TIR TIR O (*same as above*)
TIR TIR TIR O (*same as above*)
TIR TIR O (*same as above*)

O (*lean in*) O (*lean out*) O (*lean in*) O (*lean out*)
TIR (*lean to right*) TIR (*lean to left*) TIR (*lean to right*) O (*lean to left*)
O (*lean in*) O (*lean out*) O (*lean in*) O (*lean out*)
TIR (*lean to left*) TIR (*lean to right*) O (*lean to left*)

Once you've got the actions all figured out, sing it faster!

Dollar Dollar

Dollar, dollar how you wander
From the one hand to the other
Is it fair, is it fair
To leave poor (name of girl in centre of circle) standing there?

One player sits in the middle of a circle. The rest of the players are sitting in a circle with legs crossed. One player starts with a small item in their hand. The item must be small enough to conceal easily in one hand, a coin or small rock. All the players in the circle sit with their land hand resting palm up on their left knee. The right hand is held in a loose fit like it is holding the object. The right hand rests in the left palm. As the song begins the

Tzena

Tzena, Tzena, Tzena, Tzena, (clap on each Tzena)
can't you hear the music playing (hand to ear like listening)
In the village square? (hokey pokey type move)
Tzena, Tzena, Tzena, Tzena, (4 claps)
can't you hear the music playing (hand to ear like listening)
In the village square? (hokey pokey type move)
Tzena, Tzena, join the celebration, (clasp right hands with partner)
There'll be people there from every nation, (clasp left hands with partner)
Dawn will find us dancing in the sunlight, (right elbow swing)
Dancing in the village square (left elbow swing)
*This is a dance that is done with a partner and can be a mixer.

Purple Stew

We're making a purple stew,
Whip, whip, whip, whip (*pretend to stir a huge bowl, circular motion with arms*)
We're making a purple stooobie-doobie-oobie-doobie
Purple potatoes, and purple tomatoes and (*pretend to throw things in from over your shoulder*)
You in my purple stew. (*person in middle points to someone*)
Come help me make my stew. (*the two shake hands*)

(Everyone stands in a circle while one person stands in the middle. While you are singing the song perform the actions. When you say "You in my purple stew" the person in the middle points to someone and that person joins the middle. On "Fancy meeting you..." the person who was just pulled into the circle shakes hands with the person who brought her there.)

Three Blind Mice

Three blind mice, (three steps forward)

Three blind mice, (three steps back)

See how they run, (turn $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to right and 3 steps forward)

See how they run, (three steps back)

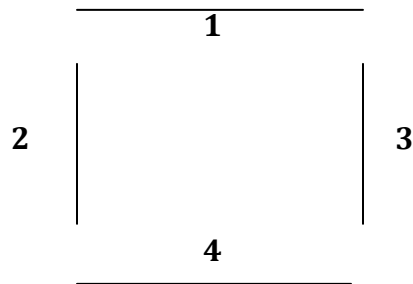
They all run after the farmer's wife, (three steps forward toward center rubbing hands together)

She cuts off their tails with a carving knife, (three steps back to lines rubbing hands)

Have you ever seen such a sight in your life, (shade eyes turn to right in complete circle)

As three blind mice. (three steps in place)

This is a dance with the song being done in a round. It can be done in as many as 4 groups. The groups form a square with some space between the lines. Number the lines 1 through 4. Each group begins after the first line. When I teach this as a round we do the "rule of rounds" the number of groups is the number of times you sing the song and do the dance. If you have two groups have the face each other and begin after the second line.



***Resources – songs can be found on line if you search camp songs or scout songs. Many of these have midi files so you can hear the tune. Many books that contain brain teasers will also contain lateral thinking puzzles.**

The book I displayed in the workshop is entitled:

Classic Brain Teasers – by Karen Richards, Alan Stillson, Bernardo Recaman Santos et al., Main Street Publishing a division of Sterling Publishing 2002

ISBN #1-4027-1067-4