

Talking Stick

The children take it in turns to say something. Turn-taking in these games could be supported with the use of a talking stick: the children can only say something when they are holding the 'talking stick' (any object could be used as a 'talking stick').

My name is... and I like... (could be a given category, e.g. fruit or something from any category)

My name is Happy Helen (the group members think of a word with the same sound as their own name)

My favourite animal is... (could be any category)

My favourite animal is... because...

Find out one thing about the person sitting next to them and report back to the group. When reporting back to the group, the children take it in turns to talk. This can be made easier by specifying a topic for things to find out, e.g. favourite foods. It can be made harder by increasing the number of things to find out or by specifying, e.g. find out something we can't see.

Roll a Ball

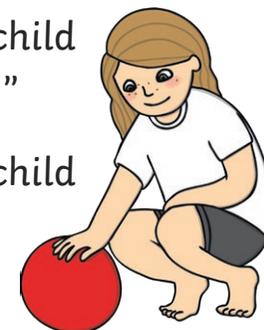
Some children may find that a ball that makes a noise/lights up when you roll it or has iridescent ribbon inside stimulating. This in turn can support their attention to the game.

This can either be played individually with a child or in a small group. In this game, the group members must look at the person they are rolling the ball to.

- Rolling the ball to each other
- Rolling the ball to each other saying, "I'm rolling the ball to..."



- When the child receives the ball, the child has to say, "My name is... and I like..."
- When the child receives the ball, the child has to name an animal, name a food item, name a mode of transport etc.



- The adult gives the child an instruction, e.g. "Roll the ball to...", "Roll the ball to someone wearing blue" or "Roll the ball to someone with brown hair".

Similar games can be played with passing a bean bag or passing an object between the group members.

Pass the Whisper

The adult whispers a message to the first group member.

The group members then whisper the message in turn to each other with the last group member reporting back.

The group members could whisper an animal sound to pass around the group, with the last group member asked to identify the animal.

This can be altered by passing instructions around the group instead of a message. The last group member could carry out the instructions to see if the instructions were correctly passed on, e.g. draw a star.

To extend this, the group members can take turns at being the last group member - the instructions could be parts to make a model or complete a picture, e.g. how to build a house using building bricks/cardboard or what part of a picture to colour in etc.



Simon Says

Players take turns to give an instruction.

If the player starts the sentence by saying "Simon says..." the group must follow the instruction.

If "Simon says..." is not used at the start of the sentence, the group shouldn't follow the instructions.

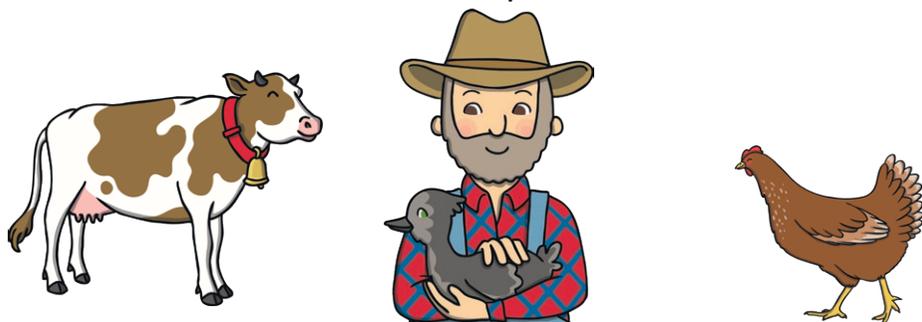
This can be played with instructions of varying difficulty. To make this an easier task, a picture can be shown as the instruction is said, or pictures can be used to support thinking of an instruction to give.



Listening Stories and Songs

Give each group member an object or picture relating to a word in a story. When they hear their word said while listening to the story, they have to stand up.

In a similar way, this can be played with songs and nursery rhymes - for example in 'Old MacDonald', hand out animals from the song, when their animal is named, the child stands up.



These games can be made harder by not handing out the objects/pictures or by giving additional words to listen out for.

This game can also be played by asking the children to listen out for a special word throughout the lesson or activity and stand up when they hear the word, for example, "When you hear the word 'marshmallow' I want you to stand up".

Listening Walk

Take the group on a listening walk.

Walk around the school/playground/park and listen out for sounds.

The group can then report back on what they have heard.

Tick sheets could also be used.

Alternatively, ask the group to close their eyes and listen for one minute while inside. They can then tell each other the sounds they have heard, e.g. shoes shuffling, traffic noise, clock ticking.



Everybody Do This

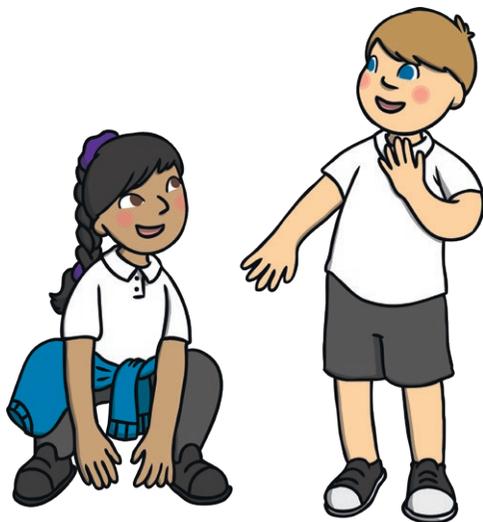
This can be sung by the teacher, e.g. "Everybody do this, do this, do this, everybody do this, just like me!"

The teacher then completes an action, for example, clapping their hands.

This is then copied by the group. The group members can take turns in thinking up an action to complete.

This game can be made easier by using a picture with actions on to support the verbal instruction given or to use as support in thinking of an instruction.

The difficulty can be increased by giving more complex instructions e.g. "Touch your nose and then touch the floor."



Matching Voices

Record the voices of people familiar to the group members, e.g. teachers, friends, etc. saying "hello" or "good morning".

Play the recordings to the group with the group guessing who the voice belongs to. This can be supported by having pictures of the people involved in the recordings with the children matching the pictures to the voices.

This can be made easier by having the people on the recordings saying a longer sentence, e.g. "Hello, it is Thursday today and the sun is out."

This can be made more difficult by having the people on the recordings disguise their voices.

The game can also be played with different group members having a turn at altering their voice with the other members guessing who it is.

This can be done with one group member standing up with their back to the group. One of the other group members then disguises their voice with the child standing up having to guess who it is. This could also be played with animal noises.

Winking Witch

This is a good game to play to focus on eye contact.

Be aware that some children may find eye contact difficult, for these children adaptations may need to be made.

Everyone sits in a circle facing each other and a player is chosen to be the 'witch' or 'fairy'.

The 'witch' or 'fairy' casts a spell on another child by winking or blinking at them. The child pretends to fall asleep.

The rest of the group try to identify the person casting the spells.



Pass the Look

For this game eye contact is essential, therefore it may not be appropriate to play with children who find eye contact difficult.

One group member begins by looking into the eyes of the person next to them.

In order to receive 'the look' eye contact is needed.

'The look' is passed around the group.

This can also be played with a pair of silly glasses or a hat - to get the glasses or the hat, eye contact must first be made.

This game can be made harder by passing 'the look' across the group.

