



#10 Games

WHAT DOES PLAY HAVE TO DO WITH LEARNING?

Play is a voluntary activity. It is fun, and it lets people practise real-life situations in a safe way.

That is what play-based learning is about: How can we connect important content with the experiences we have while playing?

Children, teenagers and young adults learn important life skills through play.

Our brains remember much more when we do things ourselves – this is called learning by doing.

In this session, we will look at how we can use this in a good and effective way.

PROCESS

Nr.	Content	Time	Material
1	Warm-up	10 minutes	?
2	Definition	5 minutes	
3	Game Leader	15 minutes	Posters, Pencils
4	Types of games	10 minutes	
5	Game preparation	20 minutes	
6	Explain a game	60 minutes	
7	Learning through play	15 minutes	

1. WARM-UP

To begin the session, play a name game together as a group. Everyone sits in a circle, and one person stands in the middle. The person in the middle points to someone in the circle and says either “Zip” or “Zap.”

If they say “Zip,” the chosen person must quickly say the name of the person sitting on their left.

If they say “Zap,” the chosen person must quickly say the name of the person sitting on their right.

If the person says the wrong name or does not answer in time, they move to the middle and swap places with the person who was standing there.

Sometimes the person in the middle can also call “Zip-Zap!” Then everyone must stand up and quickly change seats. The person left without a seat goes into the middle, and the game continues.

2. DEFINITION

In play pedagogy, games are used to achieve specific goals. For In play pedagogy, games are used to achieve specific goals. Through games, participants can...

- * move and be physically active
- * relax and unwind
- * learn and practise social skills
- * better understand challenging situations and relationships
- * discover and develop their talents
- * improve their abilities (mental and physical)
- * simply have fun 😊

Important rules for living together can be learned and practised through play. Games can also teach values that help people cooperate and work well together.

For example, in competitive games participants can use their strengths. At the same time, they learn teamwork, fair play, and how to follow rules. It is also important for young people to experience losing and to learn how to deal with disappointment.

3. GAME LEADER

The game leader plays a key role. They are responsible for the group and guide the activity. They should always keep an eye on all participants.

Question for the trainees:

What is important when you lead and explain a game? Why?

For this task, the trainees can be divided into small groups. Each group writes their ideas on a poster. Afterwards, the posters are presented and discussed in the group.

4. TYPES OF GAMES

There are different types of games. Each type has its own focus and purpose and challenges and encourages players in different ways.

The table below gives an overview:

Type of game	Info	Important	Learning goal
Action and movement games	Need plenty of space. Good for large groups.	Watch out for safety risks (collisions, obstacles, slippery floors, etc.).	We grow together as a team and strengthen group cohesion.
Perception games	Stimulate several senses. Train awareness and memory.	Sound: be careful with volume. Taste: check allergies and dietary restrictions.	I can experience the world – and God – with my senses.
Outdoor games	Good for large groups. Require strategy, strength and stamina.	Check the area for hazards. Remove or clearly mark any sources of danger.	We practise fair competition.
Getting-to-know-you games	Help participants get to know each other verbally and non-verbally. Help the group relax and open up.	Include everyone. Choose simple games so that everyone can take part.	The group gets to know each other.
Music and rhythm games	Music is central. You don't need to sing well to join in.	Lead with energy and openness. Encourage participation—without pressure.	Building community – the focus is on having fun.
Material games	A specific object is central to the game.	Make sure the object is safe (no knives, sharp edges, or other dangerous items).	Connecting objects with everyday topics and experiences.

5. GAME PREPARATION

A game has to fit the group. It should be carefully planned and prepared. The following questions can help:

- * How large is the group?
- * How old are the participants?
- * What social skills do they have?
- * Is it a single-gender or mixed group?
- * Which participants already know each other?
- * Which group rules are helpful?
- * What are the room and surroundings like?
- * Which games fit into the programme?
- * Which games are completely unsuitable?
- * Which rules apply to which game?
- * What materials are needed?
- * Where does the game fit into the schedule?

Go through these questions together with the trainees. You can put them on a poster so that everyone can see them.

Questions for the trainees:

Why is this question important?

What could happen if you leave this question out of your planning?

6. EXPLAINING A GAME

The trainees now choose a game. Working alone or in pairs, they either create a short game or look one up on the internet. They have about 15 minutes to find a game and prepare how to explain it.

Then each trainee (or pair) presents their game to the group. If the group is small, you can play each game straight away. In larger groups, choose 3–4 games to try out together.

After a trainee has explained a game (and, if possible, after playing it), they receive feedback on how they explained the game.

Questions for the trainees:

What was good?

What could you do better next time?

7. LEARNING THROUGH PLAY – REFLECTION

Now the trainees think about what we actually learn through games.

The trainees choose one game from this session (a game they have played or explained).

In small groups, they talk about the game and write down their ideas.

They can use the following questions:

- * What do players practise in this game?
- * (for example: teamwork, patience, coordination, listening, courage ...)
- * Which age group is this game suitable for?

- * What can children or teenagers learn for everyday life through this game?

- * How could you change or adapt the game to make the learning goal even clearer?

- * Which short debriefing questions could you ask the group after the game?

Each group presents its ideas to the whole group.

The trainer can then briefly highlight again: through learning by doing and through good debriefing, games can help children, teenagers and young adults learn important things for life.

8. THE ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW

Discussion impulses :

1. Do you like playing or not? And why?
2. What kind of games do you like the most and why?
3. Do you think you can learn through games? Have you perhaps already experienced this?

GOOD QUESTION!

Do you think that God leaves the world to chance, like rolling a dice? Why or why not?

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