

MARTIN WILLIAMS

101 More Games To Play Whilst
Socially Distancing: Book 2 - For
Children Aged 3-7

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1

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2

Introduction

How shocked I was at the response to the publication of *101 Games To Play Whilst Socially Distancing* (the prequel to this book).

I received hundreds of positive emails and messages from all around the globe. I particularly remember an email from a lady in Botswana who was super-excited to get started with trying out some of the games from the book.

Also, the scale of the interest on release was immense. There was over 10,000 downloads during the free promotion in the first two days.

But I knew that the book was only really a starting point in the previously uncharted world of social distancing games in early education. There was definitely more I could add.

So, *101 More Games To Play Whilst Socially Distancing* became a new project.

The huge challenge for me was that the first book contained literally every well-known early education game that I could think of that involved social distancing in its rules. To write 101 new ones, I would have to be more creative and inventive than ever before.

And so I have talked to numerous people to gain ideas, I have read countless articles, and watched videos, trying to gain little sparks of inspiration for games that would tap into children's interests, and get them engaged in activities that are both safe and socially distanced.

This book is the end product.

There are a huge number of brand new games that you will never have heard of before (largely because many never have existed before now).

Same as the first book, I hope it is a collection of games where the human spirit and interaction is central.

The themes of this book are very similar to the first, and I've tried to go even heavier on outdoors activities, and games that promote wellbeing, and human connection.

Here is what we have learned over recent times.

Government Advice Will Change Quickly

Across many different countries, advice is changing rapidly.

One moment schools are socially distancing, the next they are not. Then they might be using masks, then not.

I think this process will continue for the long-term, and there will be all sorts of changes of direction, from place to place, and country to country.

This book tries to transcend this. It is, quite simply, a book of games that will work in the context of social distancing should you need them. There is no more complexity to it.

Wellbeing Should Be Top Of The Agenda

Mental health of children has been challenged in an unprecedented way over recent times.

I am sure that most educators believe that wellbeing and mental happiness should be central to return to education that is happening in most countries. It is the single biggest feature of all of these games.

Outdoors

Outside areas are crucial for many reasons.

There is significant evidence that there is a much lessened risk of virus transmission outdoors.

Also, outdoors is the best place to boost immunity, and engage in physical exercise that promotes good health.

Every single one of the games in this book can be played outside, and many of them need to be.

Things Cannot Be Perfect

When you work with young children, things will be going ‘wrong’ pretty much all the time. The unpredictability of this age group is one of the beauties of working with them – witnessing their endless comedy and surreal ways of looking at things.

When you do these games, there will be lots of breaches of social distancing.

Children will end up sitting in the same place, or tagging each other’s hand, or hugging their friend. That is just the way things are.

Socially Distanced Games Are Just Part Of The Big Picture

There are so many influences that will impact and reduce the possibility of virus transmission.

These include staggered drop-offs, track and trace of some sort, cleaning procedures, and many other things.

This book is not about any of that. It is purely about 101 games that you can play in the context of social distancing.

The Rules Of The Games

The basic rules of the games are:

- i) They are games that involve no touching each other
- ii) The children are generally spaced out throughout the entire game
- iii) There are mostly no objects, or if there are objects then they are only handled by each individual child.

The over-arching emphasis of this book is in the practical games themselves. I have tried to explain them as simply as possible, and to offer lots of ideas to either extend the difficulty or to make them harder.

Once again, I have tried to cover more or less the entire curriculum.

So, with all that said, it's time to get stuck into the juicy goodness of the activities themselves...

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Non-Contact Tag Games

Tag is one of the ultimate games in early childhood. Children love the chasing element, and there is a kind of undertone of hunting and being the hunted.

It is great for health, both physical and mental. It really bonds children, and gets them interacting in a natural and fun context.

It is also one of those games that seems to be played in similar forms the world over, in different countries and contexts.

Of course the big problem is thinking of some tag games that you can do without any contact. In the first 101 Games book I set out Shadow Tag as the ultimate tagging game. In that one, you simply stand on other children's shadows to tag them.

This chapter now goes a whole load further.

I have really thought hard about how to extend the concept of

tagging without touching, and applied it to some of the ultimate themes that children love.

Targeting interests is a one of the best ways of guaranteeing their interest and engagement. These games include some of the real classic themes – Frozen and Elsa, Harry Potter, creepy crawlies, and a few other ideas thrown in as well. Here we go...

1. Magic Tag

At least one child is going to be 'it', although it could be several children.

They are going to have a pretend wand (something like a pointy finger is perfect for this).

They run round after the others, and when they get reasonably close to another child they 'fire' their magic at them through their finger, and possibly shout some kind of spell.

The spell could be pretty much anything, but some examples include:

- i) Abracadabra!
- ii) Hocus Pocus
- iii) Alakazam!
- iv) Shazam!

You get the idea. These are just a selection of magic phrases that have been used down the ages.

When a child has been fired at, they freeze.

You can play the version where all the children keep on running until there is just one left that is not frozen. They are the champion.

The other way of doing it is that the children that are running around are allowed to free the frozen people in some way. You could have a remedy or a counter spell. Some simple ideas, are the children do some of these:

- i) Point your own finger at a frozen child and shout 'free'
- ii) Shout 'Black Magic'
- iii) Run in a circle around them once

This game can definitely be jazzed up in different ways. For example, the magician could be Harry Potter, for example.

You could free people by shouting 'Gryffindor' or some other word like that. The magicians/wizards could also be:

- i) Merlin
- ii) Gandalf
- iii) Yoda!

2. Cats And Dogs Tag

This is a more structured tag game, that is good for organised adult-led sessions.

This games is also best done outside, as you need some shadows

on the ground.

It works well if half the children wear some kind of band, or bib, or something that is visible throughout the game.

The children with the bands (or similar) on are going to be the dogs. The children without are the cats.

Shout out which animal is going to chase the other. So for example, 'Dogs chase cats'.

This means that the children who have the bands on are going to chase the others. It's back to shadow tag now. That basically means no touching, and you stand on someone's shadow to tag them.

There is quite a lot of tactics involved in this, because the shadows only go away from the sun, and so you have to attack these shadows from one side only.

If you are tagged then you freeze.

You can leave the children frozen, or the others could try to un-freeze them by running near them and shouting 'free.'

After half a minute or so, the roles are reversed. Call out 'Cats chase dogs'. Everyone is instantly free, and the cats are tagging the dogs.

The children find this transition quite amusing, and the general concept of cats scaring the dogs is one they really like.

Keep going like this, switching from one to the other.

When they understand what to do, you can have a child that is giving the instructions about whether it is the cats or the dogs that is chasing the other.

3. Lazer Tag

This is a tag version of the classic game ‘blink murder’ (or ‘wink murder’ if you are feeling very ambitious, and have children that are able to wink – definitely not as easy as it sounds).

This is another that is best done adult-led to start with, though they can probably play it by themselves with a bit of practice.

One child stands in the middle of the group of children. They are the ‘detective’, and they close their eyes.

Silently pick a ‘murderer’, probably by pointing (whatever method you choose, just make sure the ‘detective’ doesn’t know who it is).

Then the children are going to start walking round (or running slowly). It’s best not to run fast for this game, as there is quite a lot of looking at others, not always where you are going.

The idea is that the ‘murderer’ is going to fire their ‘eye lasers’ by blinking at others. If you are blinked at, you are going to freeze where you are. (It’s best not to lie down like blink murder

to avoid getting trodden on)

The children keep walking round, and freezing if they are blinked at.

The 'detective' is trying to work out who is doing the blinking.

This is a spectacular game for eye contact.

When they've worked it out, let another child have a go of being the 'detective'.

4. Spider Tag

This is one way of getting different types of movement into the tag structure.

Have a few children that are 'it'. They are the spiders. They have to walk around on all fours, with their bellies facing up.

The other children are the flies. They walk on all fours with their bellies pointing down.

When the 'spiders' get near to the 'flies' they fire a 'web' at them from their hand.

The 'flies' are then stuck in the web, and sit down.

Once again, you can do the version where the others free them,

or just play it till all the flies are stuck.

Then swap roles.

5. Snails V Slugs

The idea of this is similar to the cats and dogs tag from before, but instead with the children moving like snails and slugs. It combines moving in different ways with the fun tag element.

Half the children will be slugs, and will be slithering on their bellies. The other half of the children will be snails, and they will be crawling.

Shout out which animal is chasing the other. For example, say 'Slugs chase snails' and off they go!

Tag other children by some kind of agreed method that doesn't involve touching. It could simply by pointing and shouting 'tag'.

When they are tagged, they freeze, or sit up.

Then after about thirty seconds, switch places, so the snails will be after the slugs.

6. Elsa Tag

This is a great one for tapping into one of the greatest child interests know to mankind – Frozen.

Either one child is ‘Elsa’, or you could have several ‘Elsas’ all working as a team.

It’s very simple – the ‘Elsas’ run after the others, and fire their hand towards them when they get close enough and shout ‘frozen!’

The others can free their friends by running near them and shouting ‘Arendelle’ (or something else like that). Great fun for all the Frozen enthusiasts, of which there are many.

7. Code Tag

This is a harder version of hide and seek for children from about 6 upwards.

One child is ‘it’, and you probably want about three other children that are going to be running away. Any more makes it trickier – it is not impossible with more, but I would start with the easier version first.

The idea is that the three children who are going to be running away decide together what their ‘code’ is.

The three children pick a word with three letters in, or they could pick a number with three numerals. You basically just need one letter or number per child.

For example, the word cat be 'hat'. Alternatively, the number code could be '648'.

They each take one letter or number from the 'code'.

Start the game. It's a shadow tag one. The children run away, and when they are 'tagged' then they freeze, and must say their letter or number, e.g. '8!'

The child tagging tries to remember, and when they are all tagged, then the secret code is revealed.

If children can't work out what the secret word is then this is not a disaster. The main emphasis is revealing the 'code'. However, if they can work it out, then so much the better (and certainly some will be able to).

The number code can be found in any order.

8. Zombie Tag

This is a bit of a silly game, that I would probably play at the end of an organised movement session before a warm-down.

Everyone is basically transformed into zombies! They put their

arms out in front of them, and the really tricky bit is that you can't bend your legs.

Play tag, where the zombies are firing a force-field at those close to them.

9. Different Kinds Of Movement Tag

This is a more open-ended version of zombie tag.

Basically, all players are going to be moving in a specified way whether they are chasing or being hunted.

A simple example could be jumping.

Everyone is going to jump, and you can't move any other way.

Have some kind of socially-distanced way of tagging again – such as shadow tag, or throwing a force-field.

Other good ways to move are:

- i) Moving like animals – monkeys, elephants, snakes, mice etc
- ii) Moving in different ways – hopping, jumping, skipping

4

Copy The Leader Games

The simple concept of copying others can be the basis of many different games that teach all sorts of skills across the curriculum.

These games seem kind of ‘natural’. Children enjoy imitating visuals, movements, sounds, voices – anything that they experience.

Some of the following are whole group games, some are pairs games, and some can be a mixture of the two.

1. Copy Cats

This is a great game for eye contact, and the children all enjoy looking at the person who is ‘it’ and trying to copy their movements. It’s also good for spatial awareness, as well as being

an excellent movement game.

One child is 'it', and everyone else is the copy-cat.

It is a good idea to have a more skilful child as 'it' first, or even have an adult play that role to start with. It is always a good idea to get off to a good start (in anything!).

The person that is 'it' is going to move around whatever space you have in a certain way. The others are going to copy the movement.

They don't need to follow the direction that the person who is 'it' is going – they just need to move in the same way.

So, for example, the person who is 'it' jumps like a frog. Everyone copies. Then they tip-toe sideways, and the rest copy.

Vary the moves. Some simple ideas are:

- i) Move like different animals – e.g. a bird, a snake, a kangaroo
- ii) Do simple jumps, hops, skips etc
- iii) Move really fast/slow, high/low

2. Copy Cats Freeze

Now it's time to 'up the ante' slightly. Here's the harder version.

This game is basically the same as the version above, but this time there is a 'trick move'. The 'trick move' could be 'hop on

one leg', for example.

Start the game again, with all the copy cats following the person who is 'it'.

However, whenever that person starts hopping on one leg they have to freeze!

If you start copying, you are out. You could possibly sit down for a moment, but probably not for too long.

Another variation of this game is that when the person that is 'it' does the 'trick move', the others have to do something different. So, it might be when 'it' starts jumping, everyone has to do anything apart from jumping (hopping, skipping etc).

3. Copy Cats Pairs

This pairs game is pretty much the same as the group version of 'Copy Cats.'

Pair up with someone, and one of you is the 'leader' first. The leader moves in different ways – fast, slow, high, low, like animals and all that kind of thing – with the other person following.

Shout 'switch' after a couple of minutes, and they swap roles.

Same as with the group game, this can be extended in different ways, such as:

- i) Have a 'trick move' where they freeze
- ii) Have a 'trick move' where they have to do their own different move

4. Pied Piper Game

This is probably the simplest 'follow the leader' game, and is great for even very young children.

One child (or maybe the adult to start with) is at the front. The rest are going to follow behind the first, all trying to keep a reasonable gap in between each other.

The person at the front can move however they like, and the others are going to follow.

Some good moves are:

- i) Long or short footsteps
- ii) Travelling low, or reaching up high
- iii) Going fast/slow
- iv) Moving like animals

You can move in a straight line, or you can loop round all over the place.

5. Follow The Leader Freeze

This is a bit like the Pied Piper game, with a bit of a vibe of 'What's the Time Mr. Wolf?' added to spice up the mix.

One child is at the front. They are going to walk in any direction, and the other children are going to follow in a line behind them.

They can walk normally, or they can mix up the movements same as before (to make it slightly harder).

Every so often, the person at the front is going to spin round. They could also say something like, 'Who's there!?'

Everyone is going to freeze.

If the person at the front sees you moving, then you have to go to the back of the line.

If you are just walking in a line, then you will be frozen in a normal standing position.

However, if the leader is moving in different ways, then the children will be frozen in much more challenging and comical positions!

The leader can really get them moving in the most elaborate ways possible, before spinning round and getting them to hold that freeze.

6. Follow The Leader Mystery

This game is just a little bit trickier. It's a bit like 'Wink Murder' (or 'Blink Murder'), but is also a simple 'follow the leader' game at the same time.

Pick one child to be the 'detective'. This child is going to close their eyes.

Then silently select one child to be the 'leader'. Pointing at them is probably the best way of doing this.

Just before the 'detective' opens their eyes, the children are going to start playing the original 'Copy Cats' game from before.

The 'leader' moves in a certain way, and the children all copy, moving around the space in different directions. You don't follow the leader in a line in this activity, as that would give the game away.

Now it's time for the 'detective' to open their eyes.

They are going to try to guess who is the 'leader'. They have at least three guesses, and maybe more with younger children. Alternatively, you could just keep going until they guess correctly.

This is another fantastic game for eye contact.

7. Follow What I Say, Not What I Do

This is a very funny game, and a great listening activity.

It's a bit trickier, and I would probably not play this with children under the age of 5.

Basically, whoever is 'it' (either child or adult) is going to give instructions on how to move, but then move themselves in a different way. The other children are going to follow what they say, not what they do.

As an example, the 'leader' says, 'jump', but then hops backwards. The children have to jump themselves (not hop backwards).

There are tricks the leader can do to make it harder such as:

- i) Do several movements and instructions in a row that are 'correct', then throw in a wrong one
- ii) Have only a subtle difference between the movement and the instruction. For example, say 'Jump backwards', and yourself jump forwards.

8. Stepping Stones Lava Follow The Leader

How exciting would it be to combine 'follow the leader' and 'the ground is lava' into one game? I'll tell you – unbelievably exciting.

For this you need some rubber spots all over the place. These are the stepping stones over the lava.

The children are going to gather in a socially distanced line, with the person who is 'it' at the front.

The leader is going to begin stepping over the lava on the rubber spots, and they are going to move in different ways as they do it. The rest are going to try to follow.

So, the leader might:

- i) Jump sideways
- ii) Do big giant steps
- iii) Try stepping backwards
- iv) Step low or high

9. Mirror Balances

This is kind of like a fun yoga game.

The children all stand in pairs facing each other.

One child in each pair is going to be the 'leader' to start with, and the other is going to copy.

The 'leader' will do some kind of pose. The other child will copy it.

Some good poses to try include:

- i) Stand on one leg
- ii) Put your arms out like a tree
- iii) Stretch up tall
- iv) Go down small

You could be as imaginative as you want with these poses. The 'leader' has a few goes, and then the two children swap roles.

10. Mirror Sequence

The idea of this game is similar to the mirror poses above.

The children face each other in pairs. One child is going to do two actions, and then the other will copy. Both are going to say '1, 2' as they do them.

For example, the 'leader' might go, '1' (reach up), '2' (clap). The other child is going to copy the sequence, saying, '1, 2' and copying the actions.

You can extend to three actions, and possibly more if they are doing OK.

Simple actions to model and try out include:

- i) Jump
- ii) Hop
- iii) Clap
- iv) Pat a part of your body
- v) Pull a facial expression of some sort

5

Listening Games

1. Elephants V Monkeys

This first listening game is an excellent physical activity that can be done either with a small group, or with a larger class.

First, split the children into two in some kind of way.

It may be a good idea for the children in one team to have some kind of bib or band of some sort that only they will touch, and that they put on in some way. This is just to signify which team they are in (and will be a lifesaver if they all get confused).

Basically, the children in the bibs are going to move like elephants around a designated space, and the other half are going to move like monkeys.

You know the drill – long trunks and big ears for elephants, and general ‘monkey arms’ and beating their chests for the monkeys.

Move around for a while, before you call out ‘change.’ They swap roles – the monkeys becoming the elephants and vice versa. It’s as simple as that – keep going swapping about every twenty seconds or so.

If things are going well, you could extend it to different animal movements. For example, it could be:

- i) Snakes and kangaroos (slithering and hopping)
- ii) Mice and giraffes (crawling low versus stretching tall)
- iii) Sloths and cheetahs (slow v speedy)

I think it helps to have two animals that are pretty diverse in their movements (such as the slovenly sloths, and those super-rapido cheetahs.)

Of course, the children could come up with their own ideas for the animals, and the more ownership you can give them in activities like this the better.

2. Animal Freeze

It’s a good idea for the adult to be ‘it’ in this game to start with, and the children can have a go of that role when they have lots of ideas.

This game is a bit like musical statues, but with the statues all looking different every time.

You can use some spots on the ground for this one, if you want to keep the children all safely apart.

Put some music on, and the children all start dancing on their spot.

When you stop the music, shout out an animal for them to freeze like. For example, you might shout out 'tiger'. All the children do their best grizzly tiger pose, with bared teeth, claws and all the rest of it.

Put the music on, all dance again, and then freeze with a different animal position.

Some simple animals to start with are:

- i) Elephant
- ii) Monkey
- iii) Horse
- iv) Snake
- v) Shark!
- vi) T-Rex

Later on, transition to a child being 'it.'

3. Animal Musical Statue Bumps

This is a mix of musical statues and musical bumps in one go.

Play the Animal Freeze game as before, only this time there is a 'special animal'. For example, it could be a 'mouse'.

When the children hear the word 'mouse' then they are going to sit down straight away, a bit like in musical bumps.

The rest of the time you are going to be saying 'lion' and 'elephant' and all that kind of thing, and the children will be freezing in their best pose that mimics this animal.

It's not every day that you find a game that combines two absolute classics of the repertoire such as musical bumps and musical statues, so it really is happy days.

4. Bob Up

This is quite a well-known listening game that can be played with young children, but I have also seen it done with 8 to 10 year olds as well.

The basic idea is that to start with the children will be sitting in some kind of socially distanced group (maybe on spots).

You ask them questions which might apply to them. For example, say something, 'Bob up if you like cakes.'

If a child likes cakes, then they will stand up, and then sit back down ('bob up'). That is pretty much all there is to it.

Some other questions could be on topics such as:

- i) Likes
- ii) Dislikes
- iii) Things they have done
- iv) Things they want to do
- v) Questions about friends and family

'Bob Up' can be used as a discrete game on its own, but it is also very useful to 'throw in' to other activities or group-led times. You could, for example, read a page of a story, and then do a quick 'bob up' predicting what will happen next. E.g. 'Bob up if you think the mouse is going to get eaten by the Gruffalo.'

5. Bob Up Funky Moves

This game combines the 'Bob Up' concept with 'throwing some funky shapes' as well.

You ask a question, but instead of 'bobbing up', the children will do some kind of pre-agreed movement instead. It might be a star-jump, for example.

Other things they could do include:

- i) Jump up
- ii) Run to a point and back
- iii) Turn round twice

6. Sheep And Shepherd

This activity can be played as a whole group game, though I have usually played it as a pairs game.

To describe the pairs game first, all children get into twos, and one child will be the 'sheep' and one the 'shepherd'. It is probably better to allocate this at the start, rather than having any fall-outs over who is who.

The sheep will stand with the shepherd a couple of metres behind them.

Now, quite simply, the shepherd is going to tell the sheep where to go, and the sheep is going to (hopefully) obey.

Typical instructions are things like, 'Go forward,' 'Go backwards six steps', 'Go sideways nine paces,' and all that kind of thing.

That's all there is to it! It's a fun game of listening and following orders.

The group game is a bit more complicated. Have one shepherd and everyone else are the sheep.

Same again, the shepherd gives instructions, and the sheep obey. This time they will all be moving in and out of each other, and there is a lot more spatial awareness involved.

7. Action Stories

This is a nice active listening game, that combines storytelling and imagination as well.

You quite simply make up some kind of story, and the children try to act it out in some way, moving around a big space.

For example, 'One day the giant came stamping out of his castle.' The children stomp around, looking angry.

'He saw a beautiful unicorn galloping towards him, and leaping over fences.' They run around like leaping unicorns.

'Suddenly a witch flew down on her broomstick, and put a terrible spell on the unicorn.' Swoop around on broomsticks, and then fire your magic at the unicorn.

Keep going like this. If any of the children can offer their own ideas to add to the story, then brilliant! That is exactly what you want. If they can't though, don't worry. Just keep going. The listening and acting out the story is the important part.

8. Hurray/Boo!

This is another quite simple listening game, that is probably best led by the adult for optimal results when you start off.

The adult is going to say imaginary scenarios to the children

that are either good or bad. If it's something good the children cheer by going 'hooray!' and they throw their arms up as well. If it's something bad, then they all go 'boo!' with thumbs down.

It works even better if you have some kind of puppet for this game.

So, the children sit in a socially distanced way, and the adult tells them things that have happened to the puppet.

An example might be, 'Today Max The Monkey ate lots of delicious chocolates.' Everyone cheers – 'Hooray!'

Some good things could be:

- i) Today Max found out he was a superhero with magic powers
- ii) He got a lovely present from his brother
- iii) His friend invited him to his party

Some bad things might be:

- i) Today there is going to be a terrible storm where Max lives and he is scared
- ii) The Second Little Pig, who is Max's friend, had his stick house blown down today
- iii) Max is feeling really upset today

6

Circle Games

Circle games are perfect for social distancing.

They keep children at a healthy distance from each other in a fun way just by the nature of their rules.

Also, circle games are a fantastic vehicle to encourage all those crucial social skills – eye contact, cooperation, sharing, turn-taking, and just generally interacting with others.

Rubber spots are brilliant for all of these games. Place them on the ground in a socially distanced circle, and you are ready to go.

If you haven't got any spots, do not despair. You can just train the children to sit at a safe distance from others.

1. Empty Spot Game

A super easy one to warm up with.

Have a socially distanced circle of children sitting on spots (or not, if you don't have any), and have one spot that is free.

Pick a child to go first. Simply say their name, and that child will stand up, walk over to the free spot and sit down.

Then that child will say someone else's name, and they will walk over and sit on the newly vacated spot. Simple as that.

2. Empty Spot Noise

This is a harder version of the empty spot game.

Start the same, with a circle and one empty spot. This time pick a child, and also give them a noise to make. Animal noises are a good one to start with.

For example, you might say, 'Imran, snake.'

Imran will go to the empty spot and make a noise like a snake – 'sss'.

Then he picks a child, and also an animal sound for them to make when they sit on the vacated spot.

You could potentially extend this game for older children.

You could, for example, say a child's name, and when they get to the empty spot, show them a word to read. Or give them a calculation to solve.

So it could be, 'Bethany, one more than 5.' Bethany moves to the spare spot and tries to answer 'one than 5'. A slow walk gives them a bit of extra thinking time – and one or two may want to utilise this to their full advantage.

3. 1, 2, 3, Look!

This is a fun trust and eye contact game.

Sit in a socially distanced circle.

Everyone closes their eyes. Then, all at the same time, you say, '1, 2, 3, look!'

Everybody opens their eyes. If you are looking directly at someone else, and they are looking back at you then you are both 'out'.

In fact, you could play one of two versions. Number one is that if you are looking at someone mutually then you have 'won'. The other way, as I just described, is that you are 'out'. Take your pick.

Eye contact games like this are brilliant for children with autism, or many other children that dislike looking directly into the faces of others (and there are lots of children that applies to).

4. 1, 2, 3 Happy!

This is another version of the last game, that will, if I'm honest, occasionally entail a bit of cheating.

It's another great eye contact game, however, as well as getting the children really thinking about emotions.

Sit in a socially distanced circle, and have one child stand up to go first.

Once again, the others close their eyes.

The idea is that the child that is standing up is going to pull some kind of face that shows an emotion.

The three to start with are 'happy', 'sad', and 'angry'. I know some people try to discourage the words 'happy' and 'sad' (from a literacy perspective, and trying to get the children to expand their vocabulary in terms of emotions). If that's the case, you could go for something more elaborate like 'joyful' or 'miserable' if you wanted to.

It works well to have simple pictures of these three emotions on cards that you can put in the middle of the circle to remind the

child standing up.

Everyone goes, '1, 2, 3...' and then they say an emotion of their choice, for example, 'angry.'

All the children will hopefully be saying different things (or at least some will – you always get a few copiers).

They open their eyes.

Have they guessed the right emotion? Briefly talk about which emotion it was and why (e.g. we can see her angry teeth!)

Then someone else stands up and repeat the process.

This can be extended in these ways:

- i) Add more possible emotions – 'shocked' or 'thoughtful' perhaps
- ii) Use a range of different words – 'elated', 'ecstatic', 'mortified' etc

5. Dance The Names

This game combines a simple early phonics game with a bit of a boogie.

Everyone stands up in a socially distanced circle.

The first child in the circle will say their name, and they will do

a move for each syllable.

For example, Billy might go 'Bill' (touch your toes), '-y' (jump up high).

Everyone tries to copy. Do each name a few times.

The easiest way to do it is that the adult comes up with the moves, and everyone copies.

It's slightly harder when the children come up with their own moves, but that is what you are aiming towards.

You can jazz this one up with funky dance moves! So 'Billy' might be 'Bill' (jive to the left), '-y' (jive to the right).

If you are really doing well, the next step is to add last names as well. This really spices it up for older children in particular.

6. Swap!

This sounds simple, but takes a bit of practice in reality.

The children all sit in a socially distanced circle. One child goes first. They stand up, point at someone and say 'swap.' The child they point at is going to stand and let the other sit in their place, whilst the new child goes into the middle of the circle.

They point at someone, say 'swap' and the process repeats.

A good one for children that get a bit territorial about where they are sitting.

7. Multi-Swap

This is the extended version of the 'swap' game.

This time there are at least two children that start, but you could have 3 or 4. It depends how many children you have playing. If you have 12 or more, having 4 children that are 'it' will work fine. 8-11 use 3, and below use 2.

All the children that are 'it' will stand up and point at someone, and say 'swap.'

That child will give up their seat and go and find someone else to swap with. There will be lots more children moving around at the same time in this game.

8. Frogs And Flies

This is a bit like blink murder, but with the added joy of having a bit of frog role-play thrown in.

One child will be the 'detective'.

They sit in the middle of the circle and close their eyes.

The adult picks one child to be the frog silently by pointing (so the 'detective' doesn't know who it is). The rest of the children are going to be the 'flies.'

Then the 'detective' opens their eyes.

The idea is that the frog is going to be sticking their tongue out towards other children. If you see the frog pull a tongue at you, then you lie down. The fly has been 'eaten'.

The 'detective' is going to try to find out who the frog is. You could have three guesses, or you can just play until they work it out.

9. 1,2,3 Game

This is a really simple early counting game, but you can add layers of extra difficulty and skill for older children as well.

In it's simplest form, sit in a socially distanced circle.

The first person in the circle will say '1'. The next says, '2', and the third child says '3.'

Then the fourth child will say '1', and you continue like that '1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3' all around the circle.

To spice it up a bit you can use some different voices.

Do one circuit in your normal voices, and then for the second circuit we are all going to say our number like a ghost (as an example).

Other great voices include:

- i) Whispering voice
- ii) A T-Rex
- iii) An alien
- iv) A robot

10. 0-10 Game

This is the harder version of the 1,2,3 game.

Once again you count round the circle, but this time from 0. The first child says '0', the next '1', with each child saying a number until you get to '10'.

When you get to '10', the next person is going to say '9'. Then the next '8', and you all count backwards to '0'.

Once again spice this up with different voices every time you get back to zero. So, the first time use normal voices, the second time like a T-Rex, and so on.

A really good rote counting game for those that are getting more proficient at counting forwards and backwards to ten.

For older ones you can potentially extend it in the following

ways:

- i) Count to 20 or beyond
- ii) Count forwards and backwards in 2s, 5s or 10s
- iii) Change direction whenever you get to a certain number, e.g. 6. This is really challenging.

11. Name Games

This is a bit like a simple memory game, and is great for eye contact and also a good name ice-breaker.

Probably about eight children is the maximum for this game.

Either a child or the adult goes first. They have the easiest role, as they are just going to say their name, for example, 'Jenny.'

Then the child next to them says the first name, plus their own. For example, they might say, 'Jenny, Yusuf.'

Then the next child (Tim) will say something like 'Jenny, Yusuf, Tim.'

Keep going like that. It gets harder to further round the circle you go.

12. Word Circle Game

This is the much harder version of the name game above.

This is realistically for children from about the age of 6 upwards.

Pick a theme. You could go for superheroes, animals or vehicles as examples of topics that are reasonably easy to start with.

Let's say we have picked the theme of animals.

The first child will say an animal, such as 'sheep.'

The next child says the first animal, and also adds their own. For example, they might say, 'Sheep, lion.'

The next child says, 'Sheep, lion, shark.'

Keep going like this until you can go no further!

7

Balloon Games

A great way to start children off with simple balls games, is by using balloons.

These are far easier to catch for them because they come down so slowly. They are also easier to throw without going miles away and wrecking the game.

With just a couple of pieces of kit, you can try out lots of different games with balloons that adhere to social distancing, as well as containing a host of other skills.

Pretty much all these games (apart from one) use paper plates. Each child will only handle their plate, and not touch anyone else's. These plates act as rackets. They are much safer than using tennis rackets, or anything else like that, as if you hit your friend by mistake with the plate nothing bad can really happen.

Using the plates means the children will not be touching the

balloons with their hands.

1. Pass The Balloon

This is a super easy game to start with.

It is best played with groups of about 4 to 6 children. You could have one group, or several groups could be playing it at the same time.

Each child will have a paper plate, and you need one balloon per team.

One child will be designated in each team to touch the balloon. They will start with the balloon, and also be the person to pick it up when it falls on the floor.

In 'pass the balloon', the children stand in a circle, each with a gap in between them and the others.

The designated child has the balloon and tries to balance it on their plate. They pass the balloon by kind of rolling it onto the next person's plate. That person passes it onto the next child, and so on round and round the circle.

Good for concentration, and teamwork.

2. Balloon Hit

In this game, stand in the same circle of between 4 and 6 people, each with a plate.

The designated balloon holder is going to start with the balloon. They hit it up into the air using the plate racket. Whoever the balloon goes near is going to hit it up into the air themselves with their plate.

The idea is you can't let your balloon hit the floor.

Keep on hitting it up with the plates, and working as a team.

This is really great for cooperating, and communicating towards a common purpose.

If the balloon hits the floor, remember only one person (the designated child) is allowed to pick it back up and start the process again.

3. Say A Name

This is a great ice-breaker.

The designated leader in each team starts with the balloon on their plate. They say someone's name and hit the balloon towards them with their plate.

That person will try to hit the balloon and say someone else's name.

Keep going like that.

4. Hit The Number

This is a game that combines simple rote counting in different ways, along with cooperation and good old fashioned fun.

The easiest way to do it is to start counting upwards from 1.

The designated child starts by hitting balloon with their plate and saying '1'. The next child to hit it says '2'. And just keep going like this.

You could encourage them to go in order round the circle, but realistically what happens is that just whoever is nearest to the balloon normally hits it.

You can try counting in different ways.

For example, you could try:

- i) Counting backwards from 10 to 0
- ii) Count backwards from 20 to 0 for older children
- iii) Start counting upwards from a given number, e.g. 6
- iv) Count in 2s, 5s or 10s

5. Hit The Numeral

For this game you need about four balloons that have already been inflated per team.

Once again, the children stand in a circle, each with a paper plate.

Each balloon that the team has will each have one number on it. For example, you might have a balloon with a '6' on, one with a '4' on, and so on.

I just write the numbers on with permanent marker, or at least a pen that works on balloons ahead of the activity.

The children could also potentially write the numbers on themselves (probably not using permanent markers, but some kind of washable pen that works on balloons).

A good trick is to write the number on each balloon several times, on different parts of it. For example, for the '7' balloon, write '7' on one side, then the opposite side, and then the top.

This really helps children to see the number when the balloons are in motion.

Once again, only the designated balloon holder will touch the balloons. They pick up one first, and hit it up in the air.

For example, let's imagine it is a balloon with a '4' on it. The

first person to hit it says '4' as they strike. Then the next person says '4.'

After you've done this a few times, add a second balloon (for example, '8'). Everyone says '4' when they whack the first balloon, or '8' when they hit the other.

Keep adding balloons until it becomes too hard!

This game is great for simple numeral recognition.

You could also make it much harder in some of these ways:

- i) Say one more of the number that you are whacking
- ii) Say one less
- iii) Say the number that adds to it to make a number bond. E.g. if you were practising number bonds to 5, then hit '3' and say '2.' (tricky!)
- iv) Try extending the difficulty of the numbers, for example 2 or 3 digit numbers (depending on the age of the children)

6. Multi-Balloon Whack

This is similar to the last game, in that you need at least four balloons per team. This time, there is no need to write numbers onto the balloons.

Basically, start with one balloon again. Everyone keeps it up in the air by whacking it with their plates.

Then the designated person adds a second balloon. Then a third.

Keep hitting all the balloons up in the air and don't let them hit the floor!

7. No Hands Allowed

For this game, no paper plates are required.

Instead, the children are going to use different body parts to keep the balloons up in the air.

These games are a little harder than the hitting with plates games, and I would only really try them with children at least 5 and upwards.

The simplest way to start is by picking a body part for them to try.

For example, they can only kick the balloons with their feet. Or they could use their arm.

Pick a body-part, and see how long they can keep the balloons up in the air.

8. No Hands! (More Options)

Of course, you can extend the no hands way of playing the game, and try all sorts of games that I described using the plates.

Some good examples are:

i) Freestyle – the only rule is you can't use your hands. Try to keep the balloon in the air as a team. You can use any other part of your body, so be creative!

ii) Say a name – say someone's name as you hit it, and they go next, keeping the balloon off the ground with any part of their body other than their hands. Continue

iii) Counting – Again try forwards/backwards, and counting on or back from a given number

iv) Number whack – hitting balloons with numerals on

v) Many balloons at once

Football Games

It is such a relief that children can play football (soccer) safely during this pandemic.

There are so many of them that are super-enthusiastic about this, and it is a great starting point for teaching so many other skills. The games here include numbers, literacy, cooperation, teamwork, and so many other skills.

I've tried to include the simplest football games that exist, and also many that delve into other areas of the curriculum.

For most of the games, the big rule is you can kick the ball with your feet, but you can't use your hands.

1. Piggy In The Middle For Feet

I'm sure you know the classic 'piggy in the middle' game, and this is just a way of adapting it so you use feet instead of hands.

Three children is the minimum required for this game, although you can have more.

If you have three children, then one is the 'piggy' in the middle. They stand in the middle with one child a few yards in front of them, and one a few yards behind.

If you have a few more children you could have two or even three 'piggies' in the middle, and this makes it a more complex game.

To go back to the simple version, basically the two children who are not the 'piggy' are going to have one ball between them. They kick the ball to each other without the 'piggy' being able to touch it. If the 'piggy' manages to kick it, then whoever kicked it last before that is the new 'piggy.'

Remember not to use your hands!

There are lots of tricks and tactics that children will pick up if they play this (hopefully), including:

- i) Communicating with your partner is crucial
- ii) Doing lots of secret pointing is definitely a good thing

If you have many children playing this game, and two or three 'piggies', then it is much harder to get it past them.

2. Boules

This is probably a game for about 3 to 6 children at once.

Each child has either one ball, or something like a beanbag works really well for this game as well. They will only touch their own ball.

Have some sort of target, such as a spot on the ground, and also some kind of spot where they are going to throw from. You probably want the two spots to be at least 5 metres apart.

Each child takes it in turn to stand on the spot and roll or throw their ball so that it lands as close as possible to the target.

The closest one is the champion.

A surface like grass or sand is easiest as the balls don't roll far. Something like concrete is much trickier.

3. Football Tennis (Cooperating)

This is a beautiful and very simple game of cooperation.

It is basically two children standing a few metres from each other, and kicking a ball slowly from one to the other. This is the tennis match!

Very young children will do a lot of running after the ball, and moving all over the place during this game. Many 6 and 7 year olds will hopefully have developed more control, and be able to stay roughly in one area.

This is a good game for a single pair of children to play independently, but it could also be done with many pairs playing at the same time over a wide area.

It's a good idea to play the simple tennis game, before moving onto the trickier version...

4. Football Tennis (Competitive)

Again, this could be played by just one pair, or you could have lots of pairs of children all playing at the same time. Realistically this is for children from about the age of four upwards.

You need two goals for this, created using something like cones. One goal is about two metres wide, and the other goal the same facing it from about five metres away.

Basically, both children stand in opposing goals facing each other, and they try to kick the ball into their opponent's goal. The other child tries to stop them by using only their feet. Then they kick the ball back towards the other goal.

Whenever you get a goal, you score a point. Get the ball back, and start again from the goal line.

5. Foot Golf

Foot golf is one of the easiest ways to introduce children to kicking a ball.

Every child that plays needs one ball each – something like a big rubber ball would be perfect.

Have some sort of huge target areas that are the golf ‘holes’. Something like massive circles that are at least two metres across drawn on the floor with chalk would be ideal.

These could be the ‘holes’, or they could be the ‘force-fields’, or the ‘target zones’. Different terms might appeal better to your children.

Start from some kind of position, like a spot, and start kicking the ball towards one of the ‘target zones’. The idea is get the ball to cross over into the zone. Have as many kicks as you want.

Then simply go onto the next.

Remember, only use your feet (not hands), and this game keeps the children safely apart as they play.

For children from about 5 upwards, you could introduce the concept of counting the kicks that it takes you to get to the ‘hole’. The smaller the number the better.

However, for children under this age, just kicking the ball around

is the way to go.

6. Foot Golf – Numbers, Letters, And Other Variations

This concept of foot golf can also be used to teach all sorts of number and literacy skills as well.

A simple idea is to label each 'hole' or 'target zone' with a number. This is good for simple numeral recognition.

You can also order – children can go in sequence around the holes like a real golf course, starting at hole 1, going onto hole 2, and so on.

You could write all sorts of things in the holes, such as:

- i) Letters
- ii) Sight words
- iii) Three letter words
- iv) Mathematical challenges, such as $4+3$, that the children solve when they reach the hole

You could also use adult-led verbal challenges as they complete the course.

So, for example, the adult says something like, 'What's one more than six?' The child tries to work it out using mental methods, and then kick the ball to the correct 'hole'.

Other options are:

- i) Have shapes for holes, and get them talking about 'triangles', 'squares' and all that kind of thing
- ii) Have holes of different sizes that are worth points values

Of course, I have listed numerous options here, but pick out what is achievable for the children you are working with at any particular time.

7. Goal Ball

This game is good if you own some kind of balls that you don't mind drawing numbers or letters onto permanently. If not, you could potentially tape numbers on that are written on something like post-its, and you could probably use these for at least enough time to do the activity once. Then just take the post-its off at the end.

This is another extremely open-ended activity, that is another one that uses feet but no hands.

Have a range of rubber footballs, or something similar, for this one, and some kind of pen that will work to write on them.

You will also need some kind of goal, which could be as simple as two cones, or you could use a football goal if you have one. If you use the cones, it's good to put them near the wall, so the ball bounces off it back to the children, rather than them having to travel a long way to fetch it after every go.

Write some numbers, letters or words onto the balls, depending on what you are targeting at that time with your children. It is good to write whatever it is on both sides of the ball, so they can always see it, whichever direction the ball is facing.

Space the balls out in a line in front of a goal, and the children line up in a socially distanced way behind the balls. Probably about six children is the maximum that can play this at one time.

Give the first child a number or word to kick, e.g. '6'. That child runs forward and tries to kick the correct ball into the goal. Then they go to the back of the line.

Then the next child goes.

When they have got the idea, a child can become the person giving the challenge numbers or letters.

Retrieving the balls should be done with feet if possible. This could be done by the adult or the children.

If you are using numbers, some ways to extend it are:

- i) Find one more of a number. E.g. What's one more than three? The child kicks the number '4' ball
- ii) Find one less
- iii) Add two quantities mentally, and kick the answer
- iv) Go in order – first child kicks number '1', the next kicks '2' and so on

If you are going for a literacy focus, then think about some of these ideas:

- i) Read sight words
- ii) Have a 'yes' and 'no' ball, and ask questions, e.g. 'Do you like eating cabbage?'
- iii) Have three-letter words on the balls

8. Football Obstacle Course

Children really love the concept of an obstacle course, and you can mix this up with kicking balls around.

Have any kind of obstacles that you have at your disposal in an array of some kind. It could be:

- i) A few tyres dotted round
- ii) Some crates
- iii) Some cardboard boxes

Then, quite simply the children are going to try to weave around the obstacles, by only kicking the ball.

You could maybe have races with an egg-timer or stop-watch from one point to the other.

9. Football Pairs

This is very open-ended. Basically, working in pairs, children can tackle lots of different tasks.

The obstacle course would be a good example.

Pair up with someone else, and work as a team to kick the ball and not let it touch any obstacles.

You could all try to kick a ball around a 'map' on the floor, or from one point in the outside area to another, for example, from a bench to a tree.

Physical Education Games

I think that physical education is one of the areas that is going to look the most different during the pandemic. It's a great idea to have a full bank of games that you can play that involve no touching, and that have lots of safe distancing interwoven into the structure of the game.

1. Planes

This game is great for all the vehicle enthusiasts out there, which is always a huge number of children.

The children are all going to pretend to be planes, with their arms outstretched for wings, zooming around the space you are using.

There are lots of different commands and associated actions

that you can teach them, for example:

- i) *Time to land* – zoom downwards and lie on floor
- ii) *Take off* – run quickly
- iii) *Loop the loop* – fly in a circle
- iv) *Fly* – soar around
- v) *Propeller* – swing your arm round
- vi) *Slowing down* – go slow
- vii) *Speed up* – go faster
- viii) *Fly high* – go on tiptoes
- ix) *Fly low* – crouch as low as you can whilst still flying

I would start by teaching them two or three words at a time, see how they get on, and then expand from there.

Just simply shout a command as you play, and let them have a go for twenty seconds or so before changing to a new way of moving.

Feel free to add your own ideas, or if the children come up with some good ones then have a go of those.

2. Transformers

This is another active listening game, that is based on the planes game.

The children are now all transformers (mega-exciting). They are able to shape-shift into many different types of vehicles (like real transformers).

Some vehicles that would be great include:

- i) *Train* – using ‘chugging arms’
- ii) *Racing cars* – running around fast
- iii) *Helicopter* – arms spinning round above your head
- iv) *Dinky car* – crawling on ground
- v) *Monster truck* – make yourself as big as possible
- vi) *Plane* – arms out, gliding round

Call out different vehicles every few seconds.

A good way to do games like this is to change the speed with which you give commands.

Start slowly, but speed up at certain points. The children find it very entertaining switching at high speed between a car, a plane, and back to a car, and it really gets them thinking and listening.

3. Big Scale – Rock, Paper, Scissors

This is the bigger movement version of the classic game.

You could have just one pair play this, or you could have anywhere up to a whole class.

The children stand in pairs, each facing the other from a few metres away.

Together they go, ‘1, 2, 3...’ and jump into a position.

The positions are:

- i) *Rock* – crouch in a ball
- ii) *Paper* – stand up tall, with your arms stretched high
- iii) *Scissors* – star jump shape

It's the classic rules: rock beats scissors, scissors beat paper, and paper beats rock.

You could potentially have a kind of 'rock paper scissors Olympics.'

Children have a best of 3 against their partner, and then the winner faces someone else. Keep whittling it down until you have a head-to-head in the final.

4. Video

This is a movement and listening game.

Basically the children are going to pretend to be videos, and they are going to move in ways that suits a series of commands.

Some of the actions they do with the instructions are the following:

Play – walk around

Fast forward – run

Pause – freeze and do a silly face

Rewind – move backwards

Skip – jump forwards repeatedly

5. Train Driver

This game is fantastic for all those train lovers that you get when you work with young children (which can be anywhere from half a class to pretty much everyone).

The basic idea is that the children are the train drivers, and we're talking drivers of steam trains here.

It's another listening game, with the adult giving lots of instructions for the children to follow, such as:

Shovel the coal – pretend to be scooping coal with a spade

Whistle – pull the imaginary lever twice

Open the doors – arm outstretched, pull the imaginary door open

Off we go – move around the space with 'chugging arms'

Full speed – drive around quickly

Slowing – slow down

Through the tunnel – go straight through an imaginary tunnel

Round the bend – curve your movement

Sidings – Lie down

The adult can begin by giving the instructions, but you can potentially move on to a child giving them when they have got the hang of it.

Once again, start simply with maybe three instructions to begin with, and expand as they get better.

6. Life-Boats

For this game you can use large rectangular or square gym mats on the floor, or you could chalk large squares onto the ground.

These are the lifeboats that children will be safe in.

The children move around the space. They are on the deck of an imaginary ship.

Shout 'Lifeboat' and then give them a number, e.g. 3.

The number can be anywhere from 1 to 4.

The children are going to try to have that number of children standing on each lifeboat.

The trick is that you are only allowed to stand on the corner of the square or mat. You could possibly put some rubber spots at the corners to help them understand that point.

So, if the number is '3', then 3 children will hopefully stand on the corners of each 'lifeboat.' (There will often be a remainder on one lifeboat – this is just what will happen and tell them this is no problem.)

This is a great game for problem solving and simple counting.

Get them to move in different ways around the space – jumping, hopping, crawling, and all that kind of thing.

You could do the harsh version, where anyone who is the remainder is out, and you keep whittling them down until there are some champions at the end.

7. Body Part Shuffle

This is a simple idea that gets children moving in ways they probably never had before. It is best done on some kind of smooth surface, or on grass.

Shout out the name of a body part that children must have in contact with the ground as they move.

For example, it could be 'knees'.

They have to move with their knees in contact with the floor.

Other good body parts are:

- i) Elbows
- ii) Belly
- iii) Back
- iv) Toes

You can extend this game by shouting out two body parts, for example, 'One elbow, and knees.'

8. Crabs And Dogs

Split the children into two. Half will be 'crabs' and the other half will be 'dogs'.

The crabs walk on all fours with their bellies up to the ceiling. The dogs walk on all fours with their bellies pointing towards the floor.

Simply let them all move about like this for half a minute and then shout 'Change!'

The crabs switch into dogs, and vice versa.

9. Crab and Dog Tag

This is a game of cooperative tag, where you are all helping other, rather than it being a competition.

You start again as crabs and dogs. The idea is that you work with someone else to 'tag' each other's feet, by touching sole to sole with another child.

When you successfully 'tag' someone you switch into being the opposite, so the crabs become dogs, and the dogs become crabs.

Keep going like this!

Another way to play it, is that you all start by being crabs. There is a time limit, for example 30 seconds.

The aim is for everyone to tag their foot on someone else's before the time limit is up. When you tag them, you both sit down – you are 'out' (in a good way).

The aim is to get everyone in the group 'out' before the time is up. It's all about working together as a team.

If you have an odd number of children, designate one person that is allowed to tag two people. (And just be flexible! There will often be one person left at the end, but just let someone tag them so they can sit)

10. Elbow Tag Race

Touching each other on the elbow seems to be the new handshake these days, so here are a couple of physical games that practise this skill.

This first game is another timed race, where the children work as a team.

There is a time limit, for example thirty seconds, during which everyone is going to try to touch their elbow onto someone else's and everybody will sit down.

Once again, if there is an odd number of children (or for some

reason there is one person left at the end), just let someone else sitting tag them.

11. Elbow Tag Relays

This elbow handshake is also good for relay races.

It particularly works well if the children are not moving too fast. I wouldn't do an elbow tag if the children are running at full speed, as this could cause all sorts of injuries.

Shuffle races are perfect for this.

In these types of races, you have one body part stuck to the floor. It could be your bum, belly, knees, or even your back.

Sit in socially distanced teams. For example, have spots on the floor at a suitable distance so they know where to sit in lines. Also have a line of cones about ten metres in front of the teams, one cone for each team.

Then tell them the move we are going to try. For example, shuffling along on your bottom.

Ready, steady, go – the first people in each team are going to shuffle up to the cone, round it and back to their team. They tag the next person with their elbow and off that child goes.

Try different slow moves for this.

You can also do:

- i) Animal movements
- ii) Sideways or backwards movements – like sideways jumping, for example

Simple Jump Rope Games

Here are a collection of the simplest possible jump-rope games that I could come up with.

They provide an excellent springboard to get children acquainted with jump ropes, and to develop a platform of skills they can use later for more elaborate skipping games.

These are all games that keep children apart, but also get them moving, cooperating, and enjoying themselves.

For strict social distancing, only one child should be designated to hold one end of each rope before you start, and that is their permanent job in the game.

In most of the games it would also be ideal for the adult to hold the rope, and the children to try the game.

1. Snake!

One child (or an adult) is in charge of holding a long jump rope that is lying on the ground.

There will probably be enough space for about three other children to safely play this game, and not be too close to each other.

The children come and stand near this rope.

The person holding it now waves the rope from side to side. This sends a kind of sideways wiggle down the rope, making it look a bit like a writhing snake on the ground.

The children must not get touched by the snake!

They can jump over it, hop from foot to foot, and just generally try not to get 'bitten'.

You can play the competitive version, where anyone that is touched by the rope is 'out'. Alternatively, just have a go, and keep going even if you get touched.

2. Cross The Sea

This is a slightly trickier version of the snake game.

It's a similar set-up, with one person holding one end of the rope, with most of it lying in a line on the ground, and some children standing nearby.

Instead of wiggling the rope from side to side this time, the idea is now to wiggle it up and down.

This sends a vertical wave down the rope, that makes it look a bit like a wave on the sea.

Keep wiggling up and down, sending waves continually down the rope.

The children are going to try to jump over the rope again and again, without getting 'wet' by touching it.

Once again, you could be competitive, and have a winner, or just play it as a fun game together.

3. Limbo

The classic limbo game is a well-known one, and really good fun, as well as developing lots of physical skills.

Have two children who are designated to hold the ends of a long jump rope.

I'd start quite easy to get children into it, with the rope probably about head height.

Have a line of children socially distanced to start with who are going to play – possibly standing them on spaced-out spots.

One at a time, they approach the rope and try to go underneath it.

In traditional limbo, you try to lean backwards to go under, but with children I always allow any technique. Bending forwards, or sideways, or whatever they can come up with is all good.

Gradually lower the rope each round to make the game trickier.

It could be competitive and have a champion, or just all keep going, enjoying the experience.

4. Different Moves Limbo

Limbo can also be a very creative experience.

There are lots of extra rules or ideas that either you or the children can introduce for getting under the jump rope.

For example, you can try to play it one of the following ways:

- i) Move on all fours
- ii) Move on all fours, with your belly pointing upwards
- iii) Sideways limbo
- iv) Backwards limbo

5. Rope Bridge

The idea of this is that the rope is now a bridge across a deep ravine.

It could be one long rope, or you could have loads of ropes that make a trail. It could be a path from one point to another, for example from a tree to the fence.

The children balance along the ropes, trying not to fall off into the deep ravine below.

6. Rope Relay

Split the children into groups.

Have them sit in a socially distanced way in teams. Each team will have one long jump rope on the ground a few yards in front of them.

Ready, steady, go! The first person in each team gets up, runs to the rope, and balances along it to get to one end, turns round, and walks back along it. They run and sit at the back of the line.

Then the next person goes.

The winning team (if you have winners) is the team to all be sat down and have completed it at the end.

7. Helicopter

This is a slightly harder classical rope game.

You need either a child that is reasonably skilful or an adult to hold a long rope, and then some children to be stood in a circle around that person, each at least 2 metres or a little more away from them.

The idea is that the person in the middle is going to hold the rope above their head, and they are going to try to swing it round, so that it is skimming across the ground around them in a wide circle.

The children are going to be stood near the far end of the rope. They jump over it when it comes their way.

Don't get touched by the helicopter rotors!

A way of extending it is to count every time they successfully jump. See how many rotations they can manage before the rope touches someone.

Classic Outdoor Games (With A Twist)

Here are some variations on a range of classic games, that just require the smallest of tweaks to work brilliantly for social distancing.

They are adaptations of fantastic outdoor games that have been played for generations.

1. Secret Wave

Here's a variation of the classic game 'Hide and Seek'.

You start out as you would normally, with one person counting and the others going away to hide.

You start with one 'seeker' in this game (not lots).

The 'seeker' goes off to find the others. Whenever they find

someone, that child joins the 'seeker' and goes to look for the other children.

As they are looking, if the child that has been found is able to spot another child that is hiding before the 'seeker', then the hider and that child can do a secret wave at each other. As long as the 'seeker' doesn't see this, this releases the child who is helping the seeker, and they will go off to hide again.

If the 'seeker' sees the secret wave, however, then the child who is hiding joins the seeking team.

2. Hide And Seek Jail

Here's another variation.

Start off by playing 'Hide And Seek' as you would normally, but every time someone is found this time they have to go and stand in the 'jail'.

However, the other hiders can release people from the jail, by running over to it and shouting 'free'. As long as the 'seeker' doesn't see this happen, they can all run off and hide again.

3. Corners

This is another classic children's game of the repertoire.

Have a giant square drawn on the ground with chalk (probably at least fifteen metres wide.) Have some spots spaced out in a socially-distanced way at each corner of the square. You need lots of spots in each corner. As a rough example, if you play with 12 children, I would say you need at least 6 spots in every corner.

There is one child in the middle of the square. They are going to close their eyes.

Everyone, as quietly as they can, runs and stands on a spot in one of the corners.

After everyone is standing on a spot, the child in the middle is going to point to one corner of the square. Everyone on that corner is out, and they have to go and sit somewhere away from the square.

Then everyone goes to find a new corner.

Repeat the process, until there is almost no-one left.

4. Jurassic Park

This is a bit like 'What's The Time, Mr Wolf,' but it's jazzed up with a T-Rex added to mix. If there's anything more exciting than this, then I'd love to know about it.

There are two circles required for this game. They could be drawn in chalk on the floor, or probably easier is two circles of cones or spots. There will be a middle circle about 4m wide, and then an outer circle at least 20m wide (with the smaller circle in the middle of it).

One child stands in the middle of the central circle. They are the 'T-Rex' and they close their eyes. They are in the force-field (i.e. the middle circle).

The other children stand anywhere they like on the outer circle to start. When the game begins, they are going to try to sneak to the middle and touch their foot inside the 'force-field.'

However, the T-Rex will be opening their eyes whenever they like. If they see anyone move, that person has to go back to the outer circle and start again. The T-Rex can spin round, or face whichever direction they like.

Of course, if you've ever seen Jurassic Park, T-Rex's only respond to movement, so if you're totally still they can't see you.

5. Hot Chocolate

I had never heard of this game until recently, but I am assured it is an all-time classic.

It's reasonably similar to the Jurassic Park game above.

It's good to play this one on a sunny day, as you need some shadows on the ground to play it.

The person that is 'it' is going to stand with their back facing the others inside a ring of cones or spots. The other children are going to stand behind a line of cones or spots about 20m behind the child.

Ideally, the child that is 'it' should be facing directly away from the sun. This helps the shadows be in the right place later on in the game.

This is another sneaking game. The children are going to try to sneak up on the child that is 'it'. At any moment 'it' is allowed to spin around and open their eyes. If they see anyone move, then they tell them to go back to the start.

In the end, if any child manages to put their foot inside the circle, they shout, 'Hot Chocolate!'

Everyone runs back to the safety of the line of cones or spots at the start.

The child that is 'it' chases them and tries to tag their shadows by standing on them. If they tag someone, then that person is 'it' next time around.

6. I Spy

I'm sure you know how to play this classic children's game, although I do think that the simplified versions of this activity often work the best.

I think the easiest way of doing it is with colours.

One child stands in front of the others, or stands in a circle, and secretly picks an object. They say, for example, 'I spy something that is blue.'

The children try to think what it is.

Another way of trying it, is for the child to describe what the object looks like. So, for example, they might say, 'I spy something round, that's blue and white. It bounces.' (It's a rubber ball).

These two versions are definitely easier than saying the first sound in a word, that many children find very challenging.

However, for more skilful children, you can try all sorts of phonic variations, such as:

- i) I spy first sounds

ii) I spy rhyming words, e.g. 'I spy something that rhymes with 'log'.'

iii) Sound the word out

7. Shadow Tag Freeze

This is a non-competitive version of the classic shadow tag game.

It is best played on a sunny day, so you have lots of clear shadows on the ground.

To begin with, one person is 'it' and everyone else is 'frozen.' They stand all over the place like statues.

The person that is 'it' will run around them, until they choose one person and stand on their shadow. That person is now free, and the 'tagger' is frozen.

That person runs off and frees someone else, and freezes themselves. Keep going like this.

8. Shadow Fencing

This is an outdoor game for a sunny day. It is best played in pairs.

The children face each other to start. The idea is that both children in the pair are going to try to stand on the other one's shadow.

There are lots of tactics involved, particularly in trying to get round to where the other person's shadow is (away from the sun).

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One At The Front Games

Here is a selection of party-style games that are excellent for all sorts of skills.

Some are well known but simplified, and others you will not of heard of before.

The basic premise of all of them is that one child (or the adult) stands at the front of the other children and leads the game. There is lots of listening and attention in all the games, as well as a strong element of fun.

1. Charades (Simplified)

Here is an old gem from the repertoire.

The normal way of playing charades is probably too hard for the majority of children in the 3-7 age-group.

However, there are ways of simplifying the game a lot that make it really possible for the majority.

The easiest way to do it is to do impressions of animals.

One child comes to the front and they do an impression of an animal! Unlike standard charades, I would say using sound is fine as well.

So, for example, a child might beat their chest and go 'oo oo oo!' It's a monkey!

Repeat with another child having a go.

Another one to try is superheroes. This is quite a bit harder, but get them to impersonate some kind of superhero. They might be shooting webs like Spiderman, for example, or fly around like Superman.

2. 'My Grandma's Underpants'

This is quite a silly game, that is good as an ice-breaker and a team-builder.

One child stands at the front, and all they are allowed to say is, 'My Grandma's underpants.'

The other children are going to ask them questions.

For example, it might go a bit like this:

‘What is your favourite food?’

‘My grandma’s underpants.’

‘Where do you live?’

‘My grandma’s underpants.’

They find this completely hilarious. It is good practice for asking questions, that many children find really tricky.

Often when they have played it a few times, some children will have a good bank of questions to try out on the person at the front in future.

3. In The Jungle I Saw...

This is a fun variation of ‘Simon Says.’

It may be a good idea for the person at the front to be an adult to start with in this one, and for the children to have a go when they have got the idea.

The person at the front says instructions that begin with ‘In the jungle I saw...’ and then they say the name of an animal. All the children try to do an impression of that animal.

For example, they might say, 'In the jungle I saw an elephant.'

Everyone does a long trunk and big ears.

However, if the person at the front doesn't say 'In the jungle I saw', then you don't do it.

So, they might say, 'A crocodile.'

Don't do a crocodile!

4. Do As I Say, Not As I Do

One child comes to the front, or alternatively the adult could lead the game.

All the other children either stand or sit in some kind of socially distanced array.

The person at the front will give instructions, but do the opposite, trying to trick everyone. You do what they say, not what they do.

So, they might say, 'Pat your head,' but they clap their hands. Everyone is going to try to pat their head.

This is trickier than it sounds.

5. Superhero Stand Up

This is a variation of the classic 'fruit salad' game.

It's a game of speed and reactions, and it is extremely adaptable as well.

All the children stand in some kind of socially distanced way. The adult gives all the children a superhero name. Pick about four, and then point at each child as you go, 'Superman, Elsa, Spiderman, Hulk, Superman...' etc

In the end, hopefully everyone will have one of the four names, and the tricky bit is trying to remember it.

Now, the person at the front is going to say a superhero name, and then '1, 2, 3.' The people who have that name attached to them have to stand up before the 1, 2, 3 is finished.

So, they might say, 'Spiderman! 1, 2, 3.' All the 'spidermen' will stand up before the end of the 3.

You can vary this game for different topics. For example, you could give the children:

- i) Animal names
- ii) Food
- iii) Vehicles
- iv) Or just words related to whatever theme you were working on at that time

6. Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down

This is a simple game that is good to just throw into a carpet time, as it's very quick to play.

The children sit in some kind of socially distanced array, and you simply ask them questions that might have a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

If they think it is 'yes' they show thumbs up, if 'no' thumbs down.

They could be questions that have factual answers, or you could just go for opinion questions.

Some examples of questions could be:

- i) Do you like eating broccoli? (opinion)
- ii) Do you think the wolf is going to eat the girl (in the story)? (opinion)
- iii) Is the moon green? (factual)

7. Blind Mice

For this one, all the children sit in a socially-distanced circle with one beanbag each. Only they will touch their beanbag.

Have one hoop in the middle of the circle.

One child stands up first. They are going to be doing the directing.

Another child stands up with a beanbag. They are going to be a 'blind mouse'. They close their eyes.

The idea is that the child doing the directing is going to tell the child which way to move to be standing over the hoop and finally drop the beanbag into it.

Repeat for different children until everyone has had a go of being both roles.

Ways to make the game trickier include:

- i) Ask the 'mouse' to spin once before beginning
- ii) Have the hoop a long way from the child to start
- iii) Have several hoops, and each child has two or three beanbags. They try to drop one in each
- iv) Have a race between two teams

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Number Games

I think you could probably do a whole book about number games that work well within social distancing.

I've tried to include lots of outdoor ones here, and also games that have a full range of skills in them.

1. Ten Frame Race!

This is probably my favourite ten frame game.

To start with, you need to have some kind of big ten frame on the ground. A ten frame is just a rectangular grid with ten sections, usually in a five by two grid.

A simple way of creating one would be to draw one on the ground with chalk.

Now for the race! I usually play this as a two-player game, and it's a one on one contest.

Select two objects that you have lots of in your outside area. It could be sticks and stones, for example.

One person is going to be the sticks team, and the other the stones.

Say, 'Ready, steady, go!' The person in the sticks team is going to run off, find a stick, bring it back and put it on one box of the ten frame.

The other person will run off and find a stone, bring that back, and put it on another box.

They run back and forth, putting found objects onto the ten frame. The winner is the person to put six or more of their object on the frame.

If they both put five on, then it is a draw.

The children 'tidy up' at the end, by picking up their objects, and taking them away and putting them back roughly where they found them.

This game is great for number bonds, and also great for introducing ten frames in a fun context.

2. Circle Point And Count

This is a simple number circle game.

In this one, a group of probably up to about ten children sit in a socially distanced circle.

The first child is going to say 'one' and point to someone else. That person is going to say 'two' and point to someone else. It really is that simple.

Just keep on pointing and counting.

Ways of extending it include:

- i) Counting backwards
- ii) Count in 2s, 5s or 10s
- iii) Count up to a certain number, e.g. 7, and then count backwards

3. Lightning

This is great for sharpening those reflexes and working on speed, which is always a massive target in early education.

This is also a fantastic number recognition game.

The children sit in a socially distanced circle, and the adult has some number cards.

Before you play, you agree which number is the one for which the children will do an action. For example, it might be that when they see the number '7' they will stand up as fast as they can.

Show the numbers, and the children say them. When they get to 7, they stand up.

You can play it in a non-competitive way, or you could do either of the following:

- i) The fastest person to stand up is the champion (woop!)
- ii) The slowest person is out (the harsh way)

You can also extend the basic idea of the game in the following ways:

- i) Try different moves. E.g. when you see a '3' get up and do a star jump
- ii) Have two or three target numbers, and three separate actions that the children will do
- iii) Try verbal calculations. If the target number was '6', you could say things like '3 add 3'.

4. 1, 2, 3, Shoot!

This is a bit like rock paper scissors, only with numbers.

It's played in pairs, with the children standing facing each other at least 2m apart. You could have just one pair, or a whole class of children teamed up.

They each hold out one hand, and go '1,2,3, Shoot!'

On the 'shoot' they put a certain quantity of fingers up on their hand. For example, one child might show a '2', and the other shows a '3'.

The idea is to get the same number. If you both show the same, then 'Hooray!' You've done it and sit down.

It's a great game for lots of repetitive counting, and recognising what numbers look like.

5. Variations On 1, 2, 3, Shoot!

There are many trickier versions you can try of the above game.

These are really for children from about five upwards.

First, is the adding game. Show each other a quantity, and try to add them. You could do it as a competition, where the first person to work it out is the winner.

Another good game is the number bonds version. Show each other quantities until you finally show a number bond to five, e.g. 4 and 1. Then sit down.

6. Foot Twister

Each child has a piece of chalk for this one. They stand in a socially distanced array, ideally on a surface that you can write on like concrete.

Each child will try to write really large numbers 1-5 on the floor around where they are standing. Don't write them in a line, but in a kind of random array, with a bit of space in between each one.

Now the adult (or a child), is going to say which number to touch and what they're going to touch it with.

So, you might say, 'Foot on 4.' The children will try to put their foot on 4. 'Other foot 2.' They copy this.

Keep going, getting them to put their hands and feet on different numbers.

I never bother with 'left' and 'right' during this game, though some six and seven year olds might be beginning to understand which is right and left.

7. Detective Clue Trail

This is a very simple ordering numbers game, with a bit of mark-making thrown in.

Over a big space outside, write the numbers 1 to 10 on the ground. Write them so they are in a random order all over the place.

Enter the 'detectives'. Armed with a piece of chalk, they are going to walk around the 'trail', and try to find a number.

Ideally they are going to go in order. They find a '1' and write their own '1' next to it. Then they go and find '2', and write their own '2' next to that.

It's as simple as that.

This game is another one that could be adapted and extended in all sorts of ways. You could, for example:

- i) Have a trail of sounds or letters
- ii) Have sight words, or words they can sound out
- iii) For older children, have small sentences written on the floor, and the 'detectives' write the answer

Found Objects Games

Hunting for random objects is always a big favourite amongst young children, and also fits in perfectly with social distancing.

The children are staying apart, they are outdoors, and also they are handling objects that only they themselves will touch.

The following activities are very much the tip of a mammoth iceberg, and you could write whole books filled with found objects activities.

Here are a selection, however, to delve and forage into to get yourselves started.

1. Scavenger Hunt

An all-time epic classic of the repertoire to open up with. The all-conquering scavenger hunt.

This is literally one of the most exciting things you can do, especially with three-year olds (and even a bit younger).

It's good for them to hold something like a bucket each so that they can collect things as they go.

Simply walk around outside, picking up anything interesting on the way, and putting it into your bucket. Sounds simple on paper, but spectacularly exciting for many.

After the hunt you can use the things you've found in lots of different ways, such as:

- i) Arrange them in a 'map' on the floor of your walk
- ii) Explore the objects you found, as well as those of others
- iii) Create a 'map' on big paper by laying them out, and draw lines in between them to show your walk

2. Lump Of Play Dough Hunt

This is another really simple one, that can be done by children certainly from the age of three upwards, and many two year olds will be able to have a go as well.

All the children that are going on the hunt start with a large ball of play dough in their hands. They simply go on a scavenger hunt again, but whenever they find anything reasonably small (like a twig, stone, or leaf) they stick it into the ball of dough.

In the end they will have a dough ball containing all sorts of beautiful treats that can be examined later.

You could also try this with lumps of clay or plasticine, though this just takes a bit more dexterity to prod the objects into.

3. 1 To 5 Race

For this game, you need the number 1 to 5 written in a vertical line on the ground in chalks, with 1 at the top down to 5.

If you are playing it in teams, then have the numbers 1 to 5 repeated for each team on a different part of the ground.

The children are going to work together in a team to get the correct number of objects next to a numeral.

So they run off, find things, and bring them back. In the end, hopefully, you will have one object (such as a leaf) next to '1', two objects (such as stones) next to '2' and so on.

A fantastic matching numeral to quantity game.

Older children can extend to numbers beyond 5, or also explore

different ways of making the same number.

4. Copy Your Partner

For this game the children work in pairs. It could be one pair, or you could have lots working together at the same time.

Each child has a circle chalked on the floor in front of them, and the circles will be about 2 metres apart.

Half the children will close their eyes, whilst their partners go and find some objects to put in their circle. One might put in 4 sticks, for example.

When they are finished, the children with their eyes closed finally open them. They are going to try to copy what is in the circle. They try to copy the object and the quantity.

So, for example, the partner goes away, finds four sticks, and brings them back.

To keep it easy, stick to one object.

If you want to make it harder, then encourage the children to get two or more objects.

They could also copy:

- i) A pattern

- ii) An addition sentence, e.g. three sticks add two stones
- iii) A number bond

5. Transitional Art

This is a huge area of activities in it's own right – there are so many things they can do.

But the basic idea is to use found objects to create pictures.

A really good way to get them going with this is to use a picture frame. Have one frame per child, and the children find objects and create a picture within the frame.

Another way is to have large pieces of paper on the ground, or a large wooden board, or just something to act as a kind of 'canvas'. This really helps the process.

One thing that children really love when they try this is create characters. You can make goodies, baddies, and extend it in all sorts of ways, such as giving them names, funny voices and a back story.

If you check out my book 'Loose Parts Play – A Beginner's Guide,' there are probably at least ten more transitional art ideas that work brilliantly for found objects (plus a couple of hundred more loose parts activities as well).

6. Fill The Racetrack

This is a fun race, that is great for counting whilst gathering lots of found objects.

The adult draws a large grid on the ground. It will have about 4 boxes horizontally, and approximately 8 going up vertically.

Put one different object into the first box at the bottom of each of the four columns. For example, put a stone in the bottom box of the first column, a leaf in the second, a twig in the third, and a pine-cone in the fourth. (Use objects that you have lots of in your outdoor area).

The idea is that the children are going to run off and find one of the objects, and bring it back to the box. They fill the column up, above where the first object is. For example, a second leaf goes in the box directly above the first leaf.

The idea is to fill the grid, so you will end up with a tower of 8 stones, then 8 leaves, and so on.

You could do it as a race, and see which object wins by filling its 8 boxes first. Or you could have a different child in charge of each object.

The simple way is just to let them all find the objects, and work as a team.

Final Thoughts

And with that we have reached the end of the 101 games.

Along with the content of this book, I am delighted to offer you a selection of bonus materials completely for free. These can be found at <https://earlyimpactbooks.com/101-bonus/>

They include:

- The Cheat Sheet - all 101 games on one handy piece of paper
- 5 Bonus Socially Distanced Games (not found in the book)

If you have enjoyed this book, I would be so grateful if you could leave a review on Amazon. These reviews really help to promote the book to a wider audience, and hopefully spread the impact that these ideas can have.

All I can say is best wishes through the bizarre times ahead, and

FINAL THOUGHTS

good luck!

THE END

P.S. Please remember to download your free book if you haven't done so already. You can find it here: <https://earlyimpactbooks.com/50-games/>

101 MORE GAMES TO PLAY WHILST SOCIALLY DISTANCING: BOOK 2 - FOR
CHILDREN AGED 3-7



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About the Author

Martin Williams is the founder of the training company Early Impact. He has worked in early education in the UK for ten years, teaching children between the ages of 3 and 5. He is driven by a determination to make early learning exciting and engaging for both children and adults.

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He blogs and writes about all the educational topics he believes he can make a difference in, and he is strongly committed to sharing information and helping others as much as he can. You can find his blog by going to earlyimpactlearning.com

He is passionate about the 'practical' nature of learning both for adults and children. All of his courses are fast-paced, interactive, and contain a multitude of real-life resources that attendees try

out.

He runs hands-on training courses in face-to-face venues across the North of England and the Midlands, specialising in early phonics, mathematics, fine motor and mark-making.

He delivers popular online training sessions through Early Impact's website which you can find here - earlyimpactlearning.com/online-courses/

Also by Martin Williams



101 Games To Play Whilst Socially Distancing

The Amazon #1 Bestseller in the UK.

Attempting social distancing with young children raises many questions: how is it possible? How can we incorporate it into games and activities? How do we help and support children with this lack of human connection? These are the questions that this book answers.

Split into 12 areas of the curriculum, this book offers 101 scintillating games to play in the context of social distancing for children aged 3-7.

Reviews

Rosie on Amazon

I have been on several of Martin's courses...and been blown away by all the ideas and suggestions he has for Early Years. This book is no different!! Superb!

Rosie, Review on Amazon

I am so excited about this book!! This book is a GODSEND. It is so well written and well structured, so easy to read... I wholeheartedly endorse it. I love the way the author has included the educational aspects of the game, and appropriate elements of developmental psychology. Such a handy resource!!

Sunshan, Review on Amazon



Loose Parts Play - A Beginner's Guide

Looking to unleash the powerful learning potential of loose parts play, but don't know how to begin...

Loose parts play offers a magical and wonder-filled way to deliver learning across the whole curriculum. But there are many things you need to know to get started on the correct footing (and many things that will go wrong if you don't)...

What is loose parts play? What are its benefits? How do you set it up? Where do you find ideas? How can it make a real IMPACT?

Bursting with more than 200 practical ideas, activities and provocations, this is the perfect guidebook for anyone looking to develop an outstanding loose parts curriculum either at work or at home.

Reviews

I particularly like that this is a child-led approach and that the resources are simple everyday objects. It is great to see the imagination and creativity it encourages in our pupils – this is the reason why most of us entered the profession. This is a brilliant book and I will be digesting its ideas for some time.

Gregg, Review on Amazon

Excellent insight into loose parts play. Accessible for both teachers and parents, lots of inspiring ideas and examples. Wish I had read

this for my children! Would highly recommend.

Nicky L, Review on Amazon



Squiggle, Fiddle, Splat! 101 Genius Fine Motor And Early Writing Activities

Early education teachers have a major problem on their hands – many children just aren't interested in anything to do with fine motor or early writing any more.

The number of children with fine motor difficulties is increasing year on year.

Teaching early writing becomes harder and harder with every passing day.

So, what's the answer?

Read this book to find out all the answers, and particularly to learn how to provide games that are scintillating...inspiring...alluring...that are strongly tapped into the interests of the children, and are something they cannot resist!

Review

What a fabulously practical resource!

If, like me, you have accumulated a pile of 'teaching books' that you never get around to reading– buy this and put it straight to the top of your list. READ IT STRAIGHTAWAY! Whilst based on sound educational theory, this book goes straight to simple, practical and achievable ideas that you can implement with few adjustments to your classroom resources.

Helen Dillon, Review on Amazon

