

PLAY ISN'T ALL FUN AND GAMES— IT'S ALSO AN IMPORTANT TEACHING TOOL!

Think of it as recess and study hall all rolled into one. Through play, kids learn how to interact with others and develop these skills critical for childhood development.



Hone
Communication
Skills



Develop
Physical
Skills



Increase
Creativity



Improve
Cognitive
Abilities



Enhance
Social
Skills



Express
Emotions

Get Fun Ideas
for Year-Round
Activities
see reverse side



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Play Ideas at
thegeniusofplay.org

the GENIUS of
PLAY
.....
It's more than play!

Animal Walks

For
Ages 3+



This is a great game that kids use their imaginations to become any animal they like. Just call out the name of an animal and have each child pretend to walk like that animal. Maybe they're a bear walking through the forest, a crab walking on the sand, a snake slithering along the desert floor, a frog jumping from lily pad to lily pad! Wild, right?



Musical Feelings

For
Ages 4+



Label index cards with some emotions - Angry, Happy, Sad, Scared, Silly, Surprised, Bored, Confused, Tired, Relaxed and lay them face down in a circle. Play some music and let the kids walk around from card to card. Stop the music and yell FREEZE! Each child must take a turn making a face or describing the feeling on the card they've stopped on without saying the word to anyone. The first one to guess correctly, wins!



The Picnic Game (No Ants)

For
Ages 7+



Have the youngest player begin the game by saying, "I went on a picnic and I brought..." something that begins with the letter A. The next player repeats the phrase and the food that began with A, and then adds their own picnic item that starts with the letter B. The game continues with players adding items alphabetically...the tricky part is remembering all the picnic foods in order!



Auto Alphabet

For
Ages 5+



Great game for car rides! Give each child a sheet of paper with the letters of the alphabet written on the left side of the page, going down (letter A is on the first line, B on the second, all the way to Z on the 26th line). Then have each child look for things outside that begin with each letter (e.g., a bird for B, a store for S). After a designated amount of time, see who has the most words.



Scavenger Hunt

For
Ages 6+



Make a list of things to find (indoors, maybe a spool of thread, a book, a blue sock, etc.; for outdoors, maybe a green leaf, a rock, some soil, etc.). Write a list of a dozen or so things the kids should look for (for younger children, a shorter list is recommended), and see how many of those things they find. This is a great game to play, indoors or out!

**From TheTaylor-House.com*



Bottle Bowling

For
Ages 2+



Arrange the bottles in an equilateral triangle with one of the "points" facing the bowler. Designate a foul line, the line a bowler cannot cross. Have the bowler roll the ball toward the bottles. Count how many bottles are knocked down. If more than one player, take turns bowling and resetting the pins, being sure to note how many bottles were knocked down each turn. After each person has bowled 10 times, the child who's knocked down the highest number of bottles wins.

