

Recess Games of the Past

Clap In and Clap Out (Indoor)

Divide the players into two groups, the boys in one group and the girls in the other. Number each person in each group and send the boys out of the room. The players in the classroom stand behind chairs. A doorkeeper goes to the other group and calls one of their numbers. When the boy whose number has been called enters the room, all the girls clap. He then sits down on a chair. If the girl behind the chair happens to have the same number as his, he stays there. If she does not, the girls clap him back out of the room. The game ends when each person has found the chair with a player behind it with a matching number. This can also be reversed; girls leave the room.

Hicky, Hikey, Hokey, Pokey (Indoor)

Arrange the group in a circle. Designate someone to be "it." He/she walks about within the circle, then suddenly stops in front of a classmate, points his/her finger at that classmate and says, "Right—hicky, hikey, hokey, pokey," or "Left—hicky, hikey, hokey, pokey." The player pointed at must give the full name of the person on his/her right or left before the "it" finishes saying hicky, hikey, hokey, pokey. If that classmate fails to get the name out, he/she is "it."

Simon Says (Indoor)

Choose someone to be Simon. Simon clenches his/her fists with thumbs pointing upward. He says, "Simon says, 'Thumbs down' or 'Thumbs up' or 'Wiggle Waggle', suiting the action to the command. All the other players must follow his/her command. If, however, Simon does not say the words "Simon says", and simply says, "Thumbs down," etc., all must remain quiet on penalty of being "out" or becoming Simon if caught moving. (Or you could play our more modern version of "Simon Says.")

Wink (Indoor)

Arrange chairs in a circle. Have the girls sit on the chairs with a boy behind each chair. There is one vacant chair. The boy behind this chair makes an effort to steal the partner of some other boy. He does this by winking at one of the girls. The girl at whom he winked must rush to the vacant chair. If she is tagged before she can get to the vacant chair, the boy behind the vacant chair must continue winking at other girls until he is successful in getting someone for his chair. The one who loses continues to game the same way. Variety is introduced by having the girls and boys change places.

Lame Fox and Chickens (Outdoors)

Place the fox's den at one of the play areas and the chicken yard at the other. Choose one player to be the fox. The other players become the chickens. The chickens bait the fox by going near his den. If he thinks they are near enough, he rushes out taking only three steps. After those three steps, he must hop on one foot. The chickens must also hop. If the fox catches a chicken before their yard is reached, this chicken immediately becomes a fox and tries to catch more chickens. The last one caught is the fox for the next game.

Andy, Andy, Over (Outdoors)

This game is suitable for almost any age and especially good for school children in the one room school. Any number may play. Choose sides and place one team on each side of the building. Some player starts the game by throwing a ball over the building, shouting, "Andy, Andy, Over!" The team on the other side tries to catch the ball. If anyone does, their team all runs around toward the opposite team. The one with the ball tries to hit or tag as many of the other players as possible, while, all on the other team try to escape to the other side of the building without being tagged with the ball. The teammates act as guard dogs; they help the tagger. Those caught become players of the side catching them. If the ball is not caught, the side that missed it must throw it back over the building, calling out, "Andy, Andy, Over!" as a signal to the other side. The ball must be caught on the fly and not on a bounce. The game ends when one team has captured all the members of the opposing team.

Leapfrog (Outdoors)

To play Leapfrog, all the players line up in a row with one player behind the other. The first person in the row bends over in a crouched position called a "back." The next person in line puts his/her hands on the first person's back and leaps over. Then he/she makes a back in front of that player. The next leaper jumps over the first and second backs, one at a time, like a frog. Play continues with each new leaper jumping over the others until he/she reaches the front of the line. The last person in line then leaps over all the other players. The game continues as long as the "frogs" keep hopping!

Fox and Geese (Winter Outdoors)

Fox and Geese is a game of tag played in the snow. Using their feet, players mark a large circle in the snow with a smaller circle in the center. Several paths lead out from the inner wheel. The center circle is the "safe" area. One player is the fox, and the rest of the players are geese. The fox tries to catch the geese, and everyone must stay on the paths. The geese can run into the center, but if they stay too long, they become trapped! When a goose is tagged, s/he becomes the new fox.

