

## CONTESTS, GAMES, & PRIZES

### Purposes of games

challenge  
 standard to achieve  
 Bribe  
 Prod  
 Indication of the leaders' appreciation  
 A means to get many participating

### How many can win?

Only one winner  
 All can win first prize even though they take more time [*weeks, months*]  
     Reach 10,000 point and get a . . .  
 One team wins  
 Elimination *keep this one to a minimum*  
 First or fastest  
 Performance reigns supreme  
 Effort only— "Better to lose with effort than to win with ease"

### Focus

Fun, enjoying doing things with other people  
 Ice breakers—getting to know each other,  
     opposite sex, older or younger, out of your clique, visitors, shy, grown-ups,  
     different interests  
 Attendance  
 Accumulated points over 3 months [or a summer]  
 Teamwork & cooperation  
 Physical level:           a. sweat producing, b. changing chairs, c. thinking only  
 Brain games  
     bump the brightest off the throne  
     trivia  
 Bible knowledge  
 Slapstick & laughing  
 Generating ideas, solutions, problem solving, produce the most points, collect the most \_\_\_,

### Principles for leading games

1. IT HAS TO BE FUN FOR ALL, NOT JUST FOR A FEW!
2. One goal is 100% enjoyment for 100% of the kids.
3. A different goal is that everyone plays first string. There is NO loser.  
     No one gets left behind.
4. Another goal is maximum participation minimum "observation only."  
     *It should also be enjoyable for those who for some reason can't participate bec. of physical, intellectual.*
5. There should be very little lag time [*looking for or setting up equipment, quieting down the group, announcing scores, clearing the area, detailed instructions, standing in line, waiting for a turn, calculating scores, arguing about score, posting the score, etc*]
6. Everyone should be glad he participated.

### How to give lousy instructions [or good ones]

1. Tell first-graders “stand in a circle.” [*or a straight*].
2. Give instructions before you have attention.
3. Speak loudly enough so that only those who are quiet or close by can hear.
4. Don’t repeat anything 3 times.
5. Mumble while you explain.  
Or point the megaphone at one team while you explain the rules to everybody.
6. Take several minutes trying to get everyone to be absolutely quiet.
7. Choose games which have 26 rules
8. Go over each rule 14 times, take all questions from kids, have them repeat the rules
9. Change your mind in the middle of giving instructions.
10. Never make it clear exactly what it takes to “win” [*or finish*] just how to play.
11. Never say, “This is how you score a mark” or “This is how you finish phase one” or “This is how to get 20 points.” Instead, leave the object vague.

Good rules - Be sure to demonstrate how to finish, or win.

1. Make the objective clear.  
first team to be seated  
person with the most points wins or balloons broken or capture most members of the enemy or the team with the least members “captured”
2. Keep the 30-second rule in effect. Never let 30 seconds go by when nobody knows what is going on.
3. Bail out or quit when you know it is a failure.
4. apologize for a foolish rule or a mistake in explaining the rules.
5. Keep excitement high with excitement in your voice, volume, and excitement.
6. Play down participants mistakes or misunderstandings others make.
7. Take the blame for everything that goes wrong [*but only for a second*] and then crank it back up.
8. Congratulate everyone.
9. Allow the winners to enjoy winning, and make sure the losers enjoy it, too.
10. Use NO sarcasm or ridicule.
11. “Be hearty with you approbation and lavish with your praise!” Charles Schwab
12. Recognize **effort** far more than results. You can even give the last place an award if they truly gave the greatest effort.
13. Command attention by your enthusiasm, not only by your volume.

#### Props

Keep them simple

Have enough

Ingredients in your game closet

pens & paper

orange cones

bases

cups, spoons, a bucket, 5-gallon pail,

darts

balloons, hose

bean bags

paper plates

poster board for signs

balls: 5 sizes

rope, string

masking tape, duct tape, scotch tape

megaphone, whistle, airhorn

spray striping paint [*water soluble*]

brooms

#### Prizes

1. If prizes are given, have lots of winners  
\*fastest, slowest, most mediocre, hardest to identify, most mundane, most curly, least complex, shortest, tallest, most biblical, scariest, prettiest, most original, greatest effort, least intricate, most bland, hardest to guess  
\* have extra judges ready to create new categories
2. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, . . . 11th, 12th

### Shuffling talent periodically

1. Forming teams
 

alphabetically [sometimes by middle names]	
by height	by shirt color
by grade	by favorite dessert
by school	by house number

### Choosing team captains

1. Usually choose leaders among those who have ability:
  - \*to create team Spirit and unity
  - \*to involve others
2. Not only raw talent
3. Sometimes appoint a shy “asst. captain” who picks his “team captain”
4. Not necessarily by personality [*rah-rah or volume or vivaciousness or height or age*]
5. Select the team captains randomly and spread the privilege around. arbitrarily.
6. Allow a quiet person or youngest or a thoughtful person to appoint team captains some times.
7. Don’t “load” the order of members according to talents.
8. Once in a while allow the group to select team captains. Remember, it is **their** game, not **yours**. You have veto power over their suggestions, but use that power sparingly.
9. Determine when adult staff can join on a team or the other, *and when they can’t play with their total energy.*

### Dealing with problems

1. Remember some kids will be intentionally unresponsive [*some will try to get thrown out so they can sit out or even disrupt from the sidelines*].
2. Don’t expend your best energy trying to enforce the “everybody plays!” rules, trying to coerce them to play.
  - \* Don’t give them the opportunity to sow seeds of discord among their “followers” who will join them on the sidelines.

### Pacing

Work on developing a rhythm that pleases most of the participants.

- Some want everything to be competitive.
- Others like a mix.
- Most like lots competition games, but not everyone.
- Others get tired of the AWANA circle.
- Some like permanent boys v. girls.
  - or Central high school v. Westside high
  - or born on odd year v. born on even year
  - or \_\_\_\_\_