

Creative Games Night

by Julian Celms

One of the magical attributes of being a child is seeing things in a completely different way than adults. Giving youth the opportunity for creative play is often lacking in our structured society where too often youth are scheduled for some type of activity most nights of the week. Here's an idea that is sure to get some of the creative juices flowing. You decide whether to spread the activities over a number of meetings or make it an intensive, game-filled meeting. The focus on these games is working together, cooperation, being amazed at the creativity, and encouraging Cubs to think outside the box.

Start with an old favourite – known by a variety of names: Hit the Deck or Ship's Captain or Port and Starboard. You can find more detail here: http://www.gameskidsplay.net/games/mental_games/ship_captain.htm

Funky Footsteps:

An activity to help think outside the box.

Divide your pack into pairs. Their task as a team of two is to touch all four walls of the meeting place, using the least amount of total footsteps. You may choose to put a time limit on this to make it harder. Do it once, and then ask them to do it again, but differently. Some of the ways your Cubs may accomplish this challenge — one Cub carries the other, they take leaps instead of small steps, or one Cub touches two walls, the other Cub touches the other two walls. Debrief the group and lead a discussion on how there are many different ways of solving a problem or completing a task. Talk about how this may be valuable in the next few activities.

Creative Stations

Assign each Six one of these activities, and time to 'create' (10 to 20 minutes). Tell them the Sixes will rotate through each station. One Cub will need to stay behind to explain the activity to the other Sixes. Take turns switching the Cub that is staying behind so he gets to experience different activities too.

Creative Stations

Ready, set, Create!



Design an Obstacle Course

The Cub Book on page 177 contains some ideas for an obstacle course to be done inside or outside, depending on space and time. If you're in a school, tracking part of the course through the hallway (with the school's permission) will definitely get your Cubs interested. Here's some secrets to great obstacle courses:

- ☞ take advantage of natural course features or obstacles (hallway or stairs in school, swing set in adjacent nearby park)
- ☞ provide tasks that need to be done at certain points (jumping jacks, silly faces, tie a knot, sing verse from a silly song)
- ☞ use different types of locomotion (hopping, crab walk, guide one team member blindfolded, etc).
- ☞ monitor the course for safety. You may want to enlist a few extra parents to help monitor the course as Cubs go through.

Create a Board Game

Supply some 11 x 17 paper taped together, some 4 x 6 pieces of paper

for possible instruction cards or quizzes, two dice, items to be game pieces on the board, and some pencils or crayons. Provide some suggestions/options they might want to consider in creating the game:

- ☞ Is it about amassing the most points?
- ☞ Is it about reaching a point on the board first?
- ☞ Are there activities that must be done at a certain point (draw a picture, answer a quiz)?
- ☞ Are there going to be game cards (move ahead two, lose a point, miss a turn, win 100 points)?

Develop a Game

Develop a game to play with or without props. Have some props ready if they choose to use them; some obvious ones (balls, Frisbee, baseball bat) and less than obvious game pieces (newspaper - can be rolled or scrunched up into balls, pool noodles, balloons, a pair of snowshoes, a pot, etc.). Give them a taste of elements to consider (this is not a finite list) if they need assistance:

- ☞ the type of game - cooperative, competitive, quiet, achievement, etc.
- ☞ the style of game - teams in a circle, square, relay line etc.
- ☞ do the participants have to do something - hopping, slithering, jumping, crawling, etc.

Debrief

At the end of the meeting, take some time to discuss what your youth observed as they were challenged to be creative. What did they find difficult (cooperating, listening to each other, working within a timeline, the success of various parts of their activities) and what worked well? You may find that your Cubs will ask to play their own games again and again. X

– As Program Director for Beavers, Cubs and Outdoors, Julian Celms thinks outside the box often.

Program links:

Red Star A4, B3; Tawny Star B4