

GAME 47 Prepositions and Me

Indoor/Outdoor

- Either

Equipment

- 4-inch-by-5-inch index cards
- Possibly pictures

How

- For children who cannot read: make index cards depicting prepositions (*on*, *under*, etc.) by using downloaded pictures from the Internet.
- For children who can read: make index cards with prepositions (*on*, *under*, etc.) written on them.
- Have the child pick a card and act out the picture or word. For example, have the child show you what *under* means by crawling under a table. Or the child can demonstrate “on the chair” or “beside the stove.”
- If your child has difficulty understanding how this game works, show the child by picking a card and saying, “on the chair: Mommy is sitting on the chair.”

Purpose

- **Language development:** This activity provides a way to teach prepositions through actions. It is exciting to hear children use prepositions correctly once they experience the concept themselves. Once your child has played this game several times and starts to get these concepts, help the child generalize the knowledge further: give the child directions that include prepositional

concepts about how to find things or what the child needs to do, and see if the child can follow them.

WHY Children with neurological difficulties often have difficulty conceptualizing prepositions. It is possible to make a child memorize the word *under* by showing the child a word paired with a picture of “under a bed” over and over again. Sometimes when children learn these concepts in a two-dimensional manner (on paper or computer) they do not internalize these kinds of concepts. So when they see the word during reading, it does not translate automatically to their understanding of spatial concepts in their environment, which impacts their reading comprehension.

GAME 48 What’s Missing?

Indoor/Outdoor

- Indoor

Equipment

- A swing or a large exercise ball

How

- Swing your child on a swing to the rhythm of a familiar song or rhyme, such as, “Row, Row, Row Your Boat Gently Down the Stream,” several times.
- Then swing the child and leave off the ending. For example, leave off the word *stream*, and wait for your child to finish the song or rhythm for you.

ifying academic concepts through fun games and activities will help increase your child's opportunity to learn them.

Three-dimensional manipulation of objects and one's body as a way of learning is not the norm as our children progress up the grade levels. Within a few years of your child's entering school, most learning becomes pen-and-paper based (two dimensional) or computer based (one dimensional). But as we've seen, children with autism, Asperger's, or sensory disorders learn best in the three-dimensional world, by interacting in or with the environment, which is often a prerequisite to two- and one-dimensional learning. Learning in a three-dimensional way allows the brain and body to internalize complicated concepts to such a degree as to be able to understand the gestalt of the concept, thus allowing generalization of the information to other settings. Further, learning through experience, meaning active engagement in the learning process, has a much more powerful and residual imprint on our brain and body, thus establishing a stronger base for higher-level processing.

WHY The *why* of this chapter is the same for each activity. Using three-dimensional learning as a way of imprinting preacademic and academic concepts in your child's repertoire of information will increase your child's opportunity for success in the classroom.

GAME (63) Whose Turn Is It Anyway?

Indoor/Outdoor

- Either

Equipment

- Weighted ball (medicine ball, gym ball, therapy ball)

How (First Level)

- Create a series of simple questions. Gear the questions toward the participants' language level or interests. For example, "When you have the ball, say your name and your favorite animal," (substitute favorite TV show, favorite food, etc.).
- The person holding the ball is the speaker, singer, or actor.
- The participants will pass the ball among themselves.

How (Second Level)

- Move the activity up to the concept or category level, such as by saying, "Name something green," or "Name something that lives in the ocean."
- Suggestion for younger kids: have the person with the ball say an animal and the sound that goes with it.
- Suggestion for older kids: have the kids tell a story by having each successive participant add to the story as the ball is passed.

Purpose

- **Social interaction:** Turn taking, paying attention to others, and being the speaker in social situations all promote social interaction.
- **Attention skills:** Paying attention to others promotes one of the basic skills required to "get along" in a classroom environment.

■ **Turn taking:** This activity uses sensory input to promote basic turn taking. The weighted ball serves as a visual reminder to the other children as to whose turn it is, as well as giving the child whose turn it is the cue to participate. This form of reminder is more effective than having an adult continually prompting children verbally, "Pay attention," or "It's your turn."

GAME (64) What's in My World?

Indoor/Outdoor

- Either, but preferably outdoor

Equipment

- For younger children: notebooks for storing pictures, pictures taken from the Internet
- For older children: a notepad

How

- Younger children prepare a notebook of pictures of people, animals, buildings, and so on that they expect to see during an activity (e.g., animals at the zoo).
- Bring the notebook to the activity, and have the child mark off the items he sees with a check mark or some other notation, such as a sticker or stamp.
- Have the child note a few things that he sees that were not included in the list before getting to the activity. The child might draw a picture of these things in the notebook.

- For older children, have them write a list of the things they expect to see and make checkmarks next to what they see.

Purpose

- **Observational skills:** This activity increases the child's awareness of his environment.
- **Visual projection:** Projecting what will be in the environment is a skill that helps decrease anxiety.
- **Memory:** This activity uses a visual support to aid children in remembering what they are looking for on a specific trip.
- **Language:** This activity is an effective way to attach language to visual information in the environment.

GAME (65) Back Writer

Indoor/Outdoor

- Indoor

Equipment

- Writing utensil
- Something to write on such as a piece of paper or small whiteboard

How (First Level)

- First write out the child's name on a piece of paper or whiteboard, and put it in front of the child.
- Rub the child's back as if erasing a whiteboard, using deep pressure.