

TOP PROGRAMMING IDEAS

Morning Warm-Ups

I've run our camp since 2006 and have realized that the warm-up games are great for getting campers moving in the morning. These simple, quick games can be played with campers three years old and up:

Cockroach Tag

The object is to tag each runner with a "noodle." Depending on the number in the group, there are about 3 to 4 taggers with 15 or so campers. Each camper gets a turn to be the tagger. When the music starts, everyone starts running in the gym or outside. Once tagged, the camper must lie on her back and act like a cockroach. Another runner may free the tagged cockroaches by rolling them over to get up and run again. After about 45 seconds, switch taggers and play again.



Hot Dog Tag

The object is to tag each runner with a "noodle." Choose a few campers to be the taggers. Start the music for the campers and taggers to start running. Once tagged, the camper lies on his or her back, becoming the "hot dog." In order to be complete as a hot dog, each hot dog needs a bun. Two other campers can lie down beside the

camper (hot dog) on either side of the tagged camper, thus creating a complete hot dog with a bun. After, all three may get up and participate again in the game. Change taggers so that all get a turn to be the taggers.

Shooting Stars

The object is to run to a polyspot or star and throw a bean bag into a crate, which is in the middle of the surrounding spots or stars. Each team gets a certain colored bean bag to throw from a starting point. Divide the campers into even teams that line up on the starting line. One from each team runs to a star or spot, stands on it, and throws the bean bag into the crate. If the throw lands in the crate, the camper picks up the spot or star he or she was standing on and then gets the bean bag from the crate. He or she takes the spot back to their team and thus scores a point for the made shot. Those who miss the crate just retrieve the bean bag and run to the starting line.



Play continues until there are no more spots or stars left around the crate. Each team compiles the total number of stars or spots earned. It is a great underhand toss game that any age can play.

MELISS SALTAFORMAGGIO

Academy of the Sacred Heart
Summer Camp Director
New Orleans, La.

Interactive Clue

A favorite activity at Camp EDMO is to play an all-camp game of Clue. Campers build collaboration skills by working as a team, solve problems while figuring out the mystery, get to know the staff and learn the layout of camp—all while having fun!



Here's how it works:

- The camp director (CD) writes and illustrates a mystery story in which Space Mo goes missing. The solution always includes a humorous, happy twist, like he went on vacation and forgot to tell anyone, for example. The CD also prepares corresponding worksheets that list counselors, camp places, and common camp objects to use in the game.

- At morning rally, the CD tells the story of the mystery using the illustrations and asks campers to find the solution.

- Campers divide into teams of mixed ages with older kids appointed team captain. Each team gets a set of worksheets.

- Counselors, instructors, and other staff members disperse to the listed places with the objects. They all know the solution.

- Camper teams set out to solve the mystery:

- At each location, teams make a "suggestion" by saying: "it was <person> in the <place> with the <object>".
- Staff respond by revealing one part of the "suggestion" that is incorrect: "it was NOT <person/place/object>."
- Campers use the powers of deduction to continue making "suggestions" in different places.
- When they think they have the solution, they make an "accusation."
- The first team with the correct "accusation" wins!

HEATHER KNAPE

Camp EDMO