

Kindergarten Readiness Study Games
Megan M. McClelland Ph.D. & Shauna Tominey, Ph.D.
Oregon State University



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These games were designed to help children practice paying attention, following directions, remembering rules, and demonstrating self-control.

Red Light, Purple Light. Like *Red Light, Green Light*, a teacher acted as a “stop light” by standing at the opposite end of the room from the children. The “stop light” held up different colors to represent stop and go. We used different colors, such as purple for “go” and orange for “stop” and then did the opposite. We also used different shapes to represent stop and go. For example a yellow square for “go,” but a yellow triangle was “stop.” Children also had a turn being the stop light!

The Freeze Game. Children and teachers danced to music. When the teacher stopped the music, everyone froze. We used slow and fast songs and had children dance slowly to slow songs and quickly to fast songs. Once children mastered these skills, children tried moving to opposite cues: children tried to remember to dance quickly to the slow songs and slowly to the fast songs!

Cooperative Freeze. Related to the *Freeze Game*, when the music stopped, children found a mat to stand on and froze. Teachers removed mats so that children had to cooperate with one another to find a space for everyone on fewer mats. We also taped different colored paper to each mat. When the music stopped, a teacher held up a specific color and children stood on the mat with the matching color.

Sleeping, Sleeping, All the Children are Sleeping. Children pretended to sleep when the circle leader sang, “Sleeping, sleeping, all the children are sleeping.” Once children were pretending to sleep, the circle leader said, “And when they woke up... they were [monkeys]!” Children woke up and pretended to act like monkeys. The circle leader then repeated the song and suggested other animals. Children who were pretending to sleep were called on to give suggestions for other animals. We made this more complicated by showing 3 different colored circles (ex: red, blue, purple). On the red circle was a picture of a snake, on the blue circle was a picture of a butterfly and there was no animal on the purple circle. When it was time to wake up, the circle leader pointed to one of the circles and the children acted out the animal on that circle. Pointing to the purple circle (the circle with no picture) allowed the leader to choose any animal. After a few rounds, we removed the pictures and children had to remember what animal was on each circle.

Conducting an Orchestra. Every child used a musical instrument. The circle leader used a drum stick as a conducting baton. When the conductor waved the baton, children played their instruments. When the conductor put the baton down, children stopped. Children played their instruments quickly when the baton moved quickly and slowly when the baton moved slowly. Children were also asked to respond to opposite cues. For example, when the conductor waved the baton, children stopped playing their instruments and when the conductor set the baton down, children played their instruments.

Drum Beats. Teachers used drum beats to represent different actions that children can do while sitting (e.g., clapping or stomping) or while moving around the room (e.g., walking or dancing). For example, children walked quickly to fast drumming, slowly to slow drumming, and froze when the drumming stopped. Teachers also asked children to respond to opposite cues (walk slowly to fast drum beats and quickly to slow drum beats). Teachers also associated different actions with specific drum cues. For example, slow drumming meant stomping feet and fast drumming meant jumping jacks.