

Game pedagogy

Meaning and objectives of group games

Group games have many meanings:

Fun, tension, concentration

Learn, accept and sometimes exceed rules

Play is often a reflection of social coexistence. Various aspects of daily life can be seen here: competition, joy, performance thinking, solidarity, discrimination, power, border experiences, experiences and incorporate defeats, experience and make one's own strengths and weaknesses and make them aware.

We – children, teenagers and adults – can experience all this in the game: with fun, together, playfully. Playing promotes social behaviour and engagement with oneself. Games promote certain skills: social competence, self-confidence, coordination, cooperation, body awareness. For this it is important to:

Which game for what?

There are different categories for influencing group dynamic processes, e.g.

Getting to know games

Trust Games

Cooperation games

Competitive games

Warming up body and mind

Concentration Games

Aggression and Tobe Games

Roleplay

Some games can also be assigned to several categories, e.g. certain catch games for getting to know each other, warming up and for cooperation.

Role of the pedagogue

The pedagogue is largely responsible for the success of a game action: initiates and explains the games, motivates the participants and is the reference person for them, is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of the participants, influences the group dynamic process.

For preparation, it is important to:

For whom?

Which target group (age, number, gender, cultural and social background, previous experience with games, etc.)

Why?

What is the aim of the game action? Is it about fun/ warming up/ promoting (self-)confidence/ strengthening group cohesion/ addressing conflicts or certain topics such as discrimination, bullying, etc.? (see also categories)

What?

Game selection and compilation (order, dynamics)

Where?

Creating a safe space for participants: physical and emotional

How?

Presentation of games and rules, gender-appropriate language (for the visibility of all genders in the group), group division, attention to safe atmosphere, safety of participants (physical and emotional), how and when to end the game and, if necessary, follow up with the group

Social-political dimension

For children as well as for teenagers and adults, group games have an enormous social-political dimension, although or because they work so easily and playfully serve and uncover various aspects of social coexistence. I have observed that cooperation games are little known, including in the pedagogical field. Mostly group games are based on competition/competition. Since the game is often a reflection of social coexistence, the observation clearly shows how our society works. If we are more interested in coexistence, we should bring more cooperation games into our pedagogical work. There are many competitive games that can be converted into cooperative games by simple rule changes/variations.

Depending on the objective, other game categories must not be neglected.

Competitive and role-playing games are good for self-experience, taking other positions, observing group dynamics, experience of discrimination, hierarchies, etc. Through the reflection of the game after the end of the game (accompanied by the pedagogue) they promote the engagement with themselves, the view of the group and the strengthening of the social fabric.

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