

# Grapple Games

## { ask the answer man! }

Have kids form groups of four. Explain that the special guest today is the all-seeing, all-knowing "Answer Man," who can answer any question. Groups will take turns acting as this special guest. Choose a group to go first by determining which group has a member whose birthday is closest to today's date. Explain to the whole group that these four people will act collectively as the Answer Man by answering any question. However, each group member can say only one word at a time. The members of the Answer Man can't confer with one another before answering a question.

For example, a question might be "Will I pass my math test?" The first person might say "Not," the second person might say "on," the third person might say "your," and the fourth person might say "life." Explain that the group's answer can be more than four words; it will just rotate through the group again.

Begin the questioning. After each answer, have another group go next. Continue until each group has had a chance to answer a question.

## ◀ back artist ▶

Have kids form groups of four to six. Have each group sit in a line, one behind another. Whisper the name of a simple object (house, star, smiley face, cat, dog, or tree, for example) in the ear of the last person in each line. That person will then try to draw the object using a finger on the back of the next person in the line. The second person will then draw on the back of the next person. Finally, the person in front should say what he or she thought was drawn.

## { blanket volleyball }

Tie a rope to two chairs and stretch it across your room. Have kids form two teams and have teams stand on opposite sides of the rope. Give each team a small blanket, twin sheet, or towel. Have team members hold the edges of their team's blanket.

Throw several soft, lightweight balls on one team's blanket. Have those team members work together to toss the balls from their blanket over the rope to the other blanket. Encourage kids on the receiving side to try to catch all the balls. Then have them toss the balls back to the other side.

### ◀ chain-gang relay ▶

Have kids help set up an obstacle course using chairs, trash cans, and other classroom items. Have kids form relay lines. Give the first person in each line a crepe-paper-streamer roll. Have the kids on each team use the streamer to tie their left ankles together. Then time each team as kids run through the obstacle course together without breaking the streamer. If the streamer breaks, have the team return to the starting line, tie a streamer to their ankles again, and start over.

### { clothes pinning }

Give everyone five clothespins. At your signal, each player will try to pin clothespins on other players' clothing. Each of a player's five clothespins must be hanging on a different player. Kids will keep moving to avoid having clothespins pinned to them while they try to hang pins on other kids. When kids get rid of all five clothespins, they will remain in the game but try to avoid having more pins stuck on them. They can't remove a clothespin once it has been pinned on them.

### { everybody's it }

This game is best played with shoes off. You'll need clearly marked boundaries for the playing area. Have everyone spread out over the area. Give the start signal and let the fun begin. Literally everyone is "it." The object is for everyone to tag as many people with their hands as they can without getting tagged themselves. When kids are tagged, they must put one hand on the place where they were tagged and keep it there throughout the game. If they get tagged again, they must put their other hand on the place where they were tagged the second time. Since they now can't use either arm to tag, they can use their feet. When they get tagged the third time, they're out and must go outside the boundaries and wait until the round is over.

### ◀ heads up ▶

Pick seven kids to stand up at the front of the room. All the other kids will sit, close their eyes, and hold out their hands in a thumbs-up sign. The seven kids you picked will walk quietly around the room, push down one thumb, and then return to the front of the room. When each of the seven has pushed down a thumb, call out, "Heads Up; Seven Up" and have kids open their eyes. People who had their thumbs pushed down will get one chance to guess who did it. If they're correct, they exchange places. If not, they will remain where they are. Play again. (Got a small group? Play with fewer kids at the front of the room. You'll want at least three people up front.)

## ◀ human jacks ▶

Form a circle. Choose one child to be the Tosser, and hand that person a ball. The Tosser will toss the ball high into the air and begin by calling out “onesies.” Kids must separate into groups of one before the Tosser catches the ball. Then the Tosser will toss the ball again and call out “twosies.” Have kids run to form groups of two before the Tosser catches the ball. If kids can’t find a group before the Tosser catches the ball, they’ll sit down until the Tosser calls the next group number. Continue playing until everyone forms one large group, and then pick another child to be the Tosser.

## { I've got your number }

Prepare ahead by printing out “I’ve Got Your Number Game Instructions,” found on your Grapple DVD. Cut along the dotted lines, and give each person a slip of paper with an instruction written on it. Have kids count off from one to 20. If you have more than 20 kids in your group, split into groups of 20 or fewer kids. If you have fewer than 20 kids, pass out all the slips of paper and have kids count off to 20. Kids may have more than one number, if necessary.

Explain that when you call out a number, the person with that number has to immediately carry out the instruction written on his or her slip of paper. The other people in the group will call out their numbers until that person finds who they’re looking for. As soon as the person finishes and returns to his or her place, call out another number. Keep the game going at a fast pace until you’ve called out all the numbers.

For extra fun, call out more than one number at a time. You may even want to create your own instructions to let kids keep playing.

## ◀ mission impossible! ▶

Have everyone sit in a circle. Ask someone to sit in the middle of the circle, and blindfold that person. Place a set of keys on the floor directly in front of the blindfolded person. Explain that you'll walk around the outside of the circle and tap people on the head. When you tap someone, that person will try to grab the keys and return to his or her spot in the circle without getting caught. (Everyone else will be absolutely silent.) If the blindfolded person hears a noise, he or she will point and say "gotcha" to try to "catch" the thief. If the blindfolded person points at whoever is trying to get the keys, that person must switch places with the blindfolded person.

Keep the game moving by sending more than one person at a time to steal the keys. Also be sure kids understand that you're the final authority as to whether or not a thief was caught.

## { roundabout relay }

Form two teams. Have teams line up across from each other. Give the person in the front of each line a white paper wad. Give the person in the back of each line a different-colored paper wad.

On "Go," have the first person in line pass the paper wad under and through his or her legs to the next person in line. Have the last person in line pass the paper wad overhead to the person in front of him or her. Have team members continue passing this way until both paper wads return to their original position. Time kids as they do this, and encourage them to try to beat their previous time.

## ◀ upkeep ▶

Swish an open 32-gallon trash bag through the air, tightly twist the opening, and seal it with packing tape. The bag will hold air for five minutes to half an hour. Then tape a quarter to the trash-bag ball with a piece of packing tape. (The quarter causes the bag to move in an unpredictable direction.) Encourage kids to see how many consecutive times they can toss the ball into the air without it touching the ground.