

Evening Activity Ideas for Outside

Long Distance Chinese Whispers

Materials required: Long message written on piece of paper per team, Pen and paper per team.

Divide the group into a number of teams and distribute members of each team some distance away from one another. Give the team leader a scrap of paper with a message (around 30 words is a good length). The leader must remember the message and relay it to the next team member who in turn relays it down the line until you get to the final team member. The final team member writes down the message then returns back to the starting point. The team with the message most resembling the starting message wins. The longer the distance the more breathless (and less articulate) and more forgetful the group members become.

Double You're Money

Materials required: Set of monopoly/kids money.

Each player is given a \$1 note at the start of the game. The players must then find the very generous leader with the \$5 note who will swap a \$1 for \$5. The players can then go on to find and swap their currency with other generous leaders going from \$5 to \$10, \$50, \$10, up to \$500. You can award points to the first players with a \$500 note, or split the group into teams before starting and total the money held by a team after a certain time limit. It is easier to have one leader give one type of note but it is workable to have a leader give out 2 different notes as long as there is a few steps between them.

Ensure prior to starting that you have set clear boundaries for the group, the larger the area the more challenging it becomes, if the area is too big the game can start to drag on but if the area is too small then it may be too easier or there may not be enough spots for leaders to hide

Capture the Flag

Materials required: two "flags" (scarves, bandanas and old towels work well), a whistle, flagging tape; also armbands of two different colours, face paint or some other method of telling the teams apart.

An area needs to be established with distinct boundaries. Divide the area into two equal territories, and either run a rope down the middle or mark the boundary with flagging tape. Within each territory mark a "prison" with flagging tape or other suitable material.



The group is divided into two equal teams. Each team wears armbands or face paint to tell them apart, and each team claims a territory. The teams are given ten minutes in which to hide their flags somewhere within their territory. Flags must be visible (i.e. burying them is not allowed), and if hung in a tree, must be low enough for the shortest member of the defending team to reach. The teams can also use this time to plan a strategy on attack/defence.

The goal of the game is for each team to try and find the flag of the other team and carry it back to their own territory, while keeping their own flag safe. A leader blasts the whistle to start the game. Team members trying to invade the enemy's territory must proceed with care, because if they are tagged by a defender, they are sent to prison. Team members can only be tagged by defenders when they are in the other team's territory and it is suggested the capture team members should be escorted to the prison by the defender.

Team members can only be sprung from the enemy's prison by a free member of their own team. If the teams are fairly small, I put a limit on the number of prisoners which can be held at one time. A leader/responsible adult can be allocated to each team's prison to supervise as well.

Coastguards and Smugglers

Materials required: Flagging tape, Armbands for Coastguards

The group is divided into two teams, a small team of "Coastguards" and everybody else becoming "Smugglers". The number of coastguards depends on the terrain. In open spaces smugglers need the advantage of manpower while in woodland, etc where there are a lot places to hide coastguards need it!

Coastguards establish a base which becomes the 'jail' (this should be marked out with flagging tape before the game commences). Smugglers are given time to get away and hide. Coastguards are given armbands to wear so they can be identified by the smugglers.

Coastguards have to catch all the smugglers and play ends when this is done. In the event of this not occurring (as it does frequently) points are made on the number of smugglers still remaining in jail at the end of a time limit.

Smugglers once the game has started have the simple (or not so simple!) task of remaining uncaught. Once a smuggler is captured they can only be released from jail by being touched by a smuggler who is still free.

Coastguards can use whatever technique they want to try and capture smugglers, e.g. hunting as a pack, in pairs or singularly. Capture is by touch (as in "Tag"). Once a coastguard has caught a smuggler they escort the smuggler back to jail (players showing any resistance or cheating can be expelled from the game for not playing fair!).

Coastguards can use one or two coastguards to hang around the jail as jailers. But the number of jailers should be limited and they should only be allowed within a certain distance of the jail. This game is best played in areas where there is cover to hide.

