



Author: Victoria Reinholdsdóttir, Class teacher

School, country: Víkurskóli , Vík, Iceland

Subject: ART – Agression Replacement Training

Title of activity: ART games

Justification and description of the activity: In working with groups of students at vastly different stages of maturity and cognitive and social skills, it is very important to create an atmosphere where everyone can feel safe and accepted. This is often done by training the students in paying attention to each other, listening without interrupting or commenting, training them to have an opinion and how to justify that opinion. It is also important to teach them how to have simple fun without it being at the expense of someone else. This can be achieved by „silly“ games with the sole purpose to laugh together. Many of these games, of course, intergrate in their purposes, training more than one skill at the same time.

Sequence of activities:

- 1) First you determine witch kind of game you want to teach the students, what is the goal of the game:
 - Training to voice an opinion and practicing reasoning.
 - Training to pay attention to what others are saying or doing.
 - Training students to make eyecontact and interact with the other students.
 - Creating a relaxed atmosphere with a „silly game“.

- 2) Choose a game that you think could suit the group.
Do not explain your purpose with the game before you play it, just explain the rules and how to do it.
If it is a group of student who do not know each other very well or a group with a history of conflicts or social difficulties, you would preferably start with a short session of a fairly simple task, for instance a game of „whitch do you prefer?“

- 3) Play the game.

- 4) Evaluate and discuss with the group. What did the students think of the game?, why did they like / dislike it? , what do they think the purpose of the game was?

Training students to have an opinion and reasoning:

To train students to have an opinion can be a very difficult task, especially if you are working with teenagers who can be very guarded against their peers and not very willing to share their thoughts.

A good start is to do a game where they have to choose between two different options. They might not like either of the options, but still they have to choose the lesser of the two evils, and then try to explain why they chose it.

Trained students can answer short questions or statements that the teacher read out to them and they have to „defend“ their point of view. In a more advanced group you can read a short story where there is a moral issue and the students have to make a choice between different options how to solve the issue. This is often done by dividing the classroom into areas and the students go to the area with the solution they prefer. They then have to justify why they think that particular solution is the best. Students are allowed and encouraged to discuss the issue and to try to convince each other. The teacher can then elaborate on the story, adding new information, and the students can then change their minds or stand fast, again justifying their point of view.

To train the students ability to reason and think logically you can use the game of „customs“.

Training students to pay attention:

Working and playing with groups of students often involves the art of keeping their attention while they are performing a task. Often you have to give them additional information about the task while they are doing the work, and using a game to train this can be a fun way to do it. I might be a bit chaotic before they get the idea, but they will enjoy the process.

Training students to make contact and interact.

There are some easy games that you can use to make students more comfortable to make eyecontact and interact with other students, even

though they don't know each other so well. These games can also be beneficial for students who are shy or an outsider in the group, as there are no demands to talk to each other, just eyecontact and action. Be aware though that this can become quite „rowdy“ and loud games where you will need a lot of space, and no breakable things around.

„the winking game“ and „the chair game“

Games to create a good atmosphere and have fun.

These games are mainly to ease up the tension in the group and do something just for fun. Some of these games coincidentally train multiple skills as for instance attention and reflexes, as well as just being for fun.

„the winking game“ , „the chair game“ „the fruitbasket“ and „finding the leader“

The games

- **„Witch do you prefer?“**

In this game you line the students up in a single row in front of you, one student behind the other, facing you. Make sure there is enough space between them so they don't touch.

Then you give them two options, one is your right hand and the other your left, for example you can ask:

Witch do you prefer, carrots (right) or cucumber (left)?

Students now take one step to the side, left or right, depending on witch they prefer. Then you ask ONE student why he/she chose the way he/she did.

Allow some discussions of differences of opinion, as long as they're civil and valid.

Then everyone step back in the middle and you ask them a new question.

Sometimes students tend to wait for a friend to choose before they step to the side (or do as everyone else). If this happens a lot you can let the students wear a blindfold while playing.

- **„The winking game“**

Put chairs in a wide circle, one chair less than there are students. Let the students sit down on the chairs and the student without a chair stands in the middle of the circle.

This is a fast game, and what the students sitting down have to do is to make eyecontact with someone else in the circle and both have to wink at each other. **(It is not allowed to wink at the person sitting next to you.)** Quickly the students should change seats, and the one in the middle should try to „steal“ one of the seats. If he succeeds, the one without a seat is in the middle.

Many students do this at the same time so there will be a lot of people running and they have to take care not to crash into each other.

- **„The chair game“**

In this game you pair the students, except for one who will be alone.

Put chairs in wide circle as many chairs as there are pairs, plus one. One student sits on the chair and his partner stands behind him with his hands on his back.

The student who is missing a partner stands behind his chair and tries to make eyecontact with someone of the sitting students.

When he makes eyecontact with someone he winks at him and that student quickly jumps up and runs to sit on his chair. The student behind the chair tries to stop his partner by taking hold of his shoulders. If he succeeds, his partner will sit down again, but if he fails he will have to wink someone else and try to steal someone else's partner.

- **„The fruitbasket“**

Put chairs in a wide circle one chair less than there are participants.

Students sit on the chairs and one stands in the middle of the circle. Make the students in their minds choose between four – five fruits that you name, for instance apple, pear, banana and melon.

The one in the middle then calls out which fruit should change places, for example apple. All students who chose apple then stand up and change seats while the one in the middle tries to steal a seat.

If the person in the middle says „fruitbasket“, everyone have to stand up and change seats.

- **„Customs“**

This is a game where you train reasoning and logical thinking. One person in the group makes up a rule in his mind which will apply to the things that he/she can bring through the customs at the airport. It can be things starting with the letter S or things of a certain colour and so fourth. He makes up the rule.

Then he says „I can bring through the customs sheep“ The next person tries to guess which is the rule. Here he might think the rule is „mammals“ so he says: „ I can bring through the customs a cow“ The one who made the rule then says yes or no, depending on if the rule allows this thing. Everyone in the group tries to guess the rule and think of things to bring. When everyone has correctly guessed the rule, someone else in the group makes up a new one.

This is often a fun game, but be aware that some students think it to difficult and do not like it. These students might have to get a hint, or if it takes too long for everyone to guess the rule, you can decide just to go one or two circles before disclosing what the rule is.

- **„Finding the leader“**

One person in the group leaves the room. The others in the group chooses a „leader“ who will decide an activity for the group to perform when he comes back into the room. It could be snapping your fingers or clapping your hands. After a while the leader changes the activity into something else and the others immitate him. This he does a few times.

The „outsider“ then tries to figure out who the leader is by studying the others.

- **„Attention game“**

The purpose of this game is to pay attention to instruction and keeping focus on the task at hand.

Cut the instructions into equally shaped stripes (same width) and let the students have at least one instruction each. (some students can handle several instructions)

Keep one set of the instructions for yourself (teacher).

This is a fast game so when the teacher gives the signal everyone reads their instructions and act according to them. The teacher starts.

Instructions to give to the students:

- When the teacher says „begin“ you stand up and shout „GO“!

- When someone stands up and shouts „GO“, you walk up to the white board and write: GO !

- When someone writes GO ! on the whiteboard, you open the door to the classroom.

- When someone opens the door to the classroom, you get a pencil from the teachers´desk and then you sit down in your seat.

- When someone takes a pencil from the teachers´desk, you go and get a book from the bookshelf.

- When someone takes a book from the bookshelf, you stand up and turn around three times and then sit down again.

- When someone stands up and turns around three times, you sharpen your pencil.

- When someone sharpens his pencil, you turn the lights off in the classroom.

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- When someone turns the lights off in the classroom, you say „ My, it’s dark in here!“
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- When someone says: „My, it’s dark in here“ , you go and turn the lights on in the classroom.
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- When someone turns the lights on, you go to the white board and wipe out the word GO!.
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- When some one wipes out the word GO! On the whiteboard, you write your name on it.
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- When someone writes his name on the whiteboard, you drink a glass of water.
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- When someone drinks a glass of water, you go to the whiteboard and write „A, B, C“.
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- When someone writes „A, B, C“ on the whiteboard, you wipe out the name that is written on the board.
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- When someone wipes out the name written on the whiteboard, you get up and run to the teachers desk and back.
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- When someone runs to the teachers desk and back, you stand up and say „hello“.
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- When someone stands up and says „hello“, you stand up and ask him „how do you do?“

- When someone stands up and asks „how do you do?“, you go and make a circle around the letter A on the whiteboard.

- When someone draws a circle around the letter A on the whiteboard, you stand up and bark like a dog.

- When someone stands up and barks like a dog, you get up and walk to the door and back.

- When someone stands up and walks to the door and back, you wipe out the letters A,B and C on the whiteboard.

- When someone wipes out the letters A,B and C on the whiteboard, you write „good day“ on the white board.

- When someone writes „good day“ on the whiteboard, you get up and give your teacher a handshake.

- When someone gives the teacher a handshake, you wipe out the word „day“ on the whiteboard.

Finish!