Using Games while Teaching English to (very) Young Learners

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The terms: “play” and “game” are commonly known and used while discussing the issue of teaching English to young learners.
The term: “play” means a spontaneous activity initiated by participants just for pleasure and finished by themselves, while the term: ”game” means an activity planned, initiated, organised, managed, evaluated and ended by teachers.
Both may mean fun, bring satisfaction and cause happiness in hands of conscious and creative teachers.
Students can easily “take” them home
Games may be used during every stage of the lesson, while presenting, practising and revising the language.
Games may be useful for developing language and social skills.
Playing is a child’s natural way of learning.

A game with all its rules and interaction is a mini social world in which children prepare themselves to enter society.

Through games and play, children learn to accept rules, how to work with others and how to behave.

Games also develop the child’s automatic use of a foreign language, coordination, cognitive thinking.
Why use games?
Language and activity is an authentic combination for these learners – it is one they use in L1. The lg used in games is repetitive and uses basic structures. Children tend to forget they are learning and so use the lg spontaneously. Games are ideal for practising new vocabulary and structures and for varying with different language. Games create a sense of closeness within the class.
Criteria

The game should be relevant linguistically simple to explain, set up and play fun „playable” for everyone have a purpose

The teacher should think about timing students’ age students’ level of English number of students classroom arrangement
Questions to be asked

1. Will the game take you a long time to prepare, compared with the amount of useful work you will get from it?
2. Will it be relatively easy for you to organise in the classroom?
3. Is it likely to interest the particular group of learners you have in mind?
4. Is the language or is the language skill you are to teach intrinsic to the activity? Or are you (honestly!) just forcing it into the game?
5. Is the amount of language and the type of use enough to justify the use of the game? Or do you have another good reason for introducing it?
Guidelines
1. The game must have a clear learning objective and purpose. It should be clear what the students are learning and practicing in the activities and procedures of the game.
2. The teacher should assign students to teams. The grouping may depend on many things but it should ultimately depend on the task the students will be completing. Having fair teams depends on knowing the students’ abilities and personalities fairly well.
3. Be sure to explain all necessary procedures and rules clearly and slowly. Make sure everyone is listening and understands. If necessary, ask the students to restate them. With games that have been played before, ask the students to state the rules and procedures prior to beginning game play.
4. Be prepared. Make sure that there are enough materials, time, questions, etc. As an educator the unexpected always happens: an assembly, absent students, extra or not enough time.
Types of games

Movement games
Card games
Board games
Dice games
Drawing games
Guessing games
Role-play games
Singing and chanting games
Team games
Word games
To start...

A movement game...

ZIP/ZAP GAME
ZIP ZAP GAME

1. The children sit on chairs in a circle. There are no empty chairs.
2. Stand in the middle. Point to a child and say either Zip! or Zap!

3. When you say Zip! the child you are pointing to says the name of a child sitting to his or her left (e.g. Her name is Jane). When you say Zap! the child you are pointing to says the name of a child sitting on his or her right.

4. Once the children get used to the game, keep the pace fast. After a while, instead of pointing to a child, call Zip! Zap! Now all the children stand up and run to a different chair.
CLOTHING COLOUR GAME
Choose a student to be ‘it’. You then say a colour and ‘it’ must find a person with that colour clothing on and touch it. The student who has been touched then becomes ‘it’.
ALPHABET GAME
Give students a letter each at random (prepare a pile of letter cards and shuffle them). Tell them to line up across the room in alphabetical order.
SIMON SAYS
Simon Says (or Simple Simon Says) is a child's game for 3 or more players where 1 player takes the role of "Simon" and issues instructions (usually physical actions such as "jump in the air" or "stick out your tongue") to the other players, which should only be followed if prefaced with the phrase "Simon says".
GESTURE GAME
After introducing the verbs to the students, cut up the cards and put them in a box. Have one student come to the front of class and take a card. The student then should act out the verb using gestures. The students sitting down then must say what verb the student is miming.
RED LIGHT/GREEN LIGHT

In this game, one person plays the "stop light" and the rest try to touch him/her.

At the start, all the children form a line about 15 feet away from the stop light. The stop light faces away from the line of kids and says "green light". At this point the kids are allowed to move towards the stoplight.

At any point, the stop light may say "red light!" and turn around. If any of the kids are caught moving after this has occurred, they are out.

Play resumes when the stop light turns back around and says "green light".

The stop light wins if all the kids are out before anyone is able to touch him/her.

Otherwise, the first player to touch the stop light wins the game and earns the right to be "stop light" for the next game.
IT’S YOUR BALL
This game is useful for teaching the apostrophes for possession (Louise’s), his/her, my/your

The children say: „my/your ball” or „his/her ball” depending on whether they are sending it to a boy or a girl. One child throws the ball to another child, saying: „It’s your ball”. The second child says, on catching the ball: „It’s not my ball” and then pointing to a child says: „It’s his/her ball” then throws it to a third child, saying: „It’s your ball” an so on.
TOUCH SOMETHING GAME
This game is good for teaching colours, certain adjectives and other lexical sets.
Put some drawings or story cards up in different parts of the classroom. Call out the name of what is in one of the drawing you have put up. The children run and stand under this picture.
WRITING ON BACKS
This game is useful for practising vocabulary, the letters of alphabet, spelling of short words and listening to and giving orders.

Ask the children to stand in a circle, one behind the other so that each child is looking at the back of another. Each child writes a number or letter or draws a simple picture on the back of the pupil in front of him, using just his finger.
HANGMAN GAME
This is a classic game that practises and consolidates spelling and can be played as a warm up activity with the whole class.

The teacher writes on the board dashes which fit in with the number of letters in the word that pupils have to guess. Students say letters and if they appear the teacher writes it instead of the dash on the board.
SPELLING SHARK GAME
The game consolidates and develops spelling. The teacher draws a cliff, the sea and a shark in the sea. Next, the tutor draws dashes that represent the number of letters in the hidden word. Children try to guess the letters. Each good letter is written instead of the dash, and each wrong letter moves the players to the shark.
CHINESE WHISPER GAME
In this activity the teacher divides the class into groups standing in lines and passing the message by whispering to their classmates. The last child has to run to the board and writes the message on the board. The winner team can be the group that has the best answer to the original one.
FUNNY MONSTER GAME
It is a writing game, in which each child writes one sentence about a monster on a piece of paper. Next, the learner folds it and hand it to the classmate. At the end a volunteer reads the description and the creature is drawn on the board.
WALL DICTATION GAME
This game is a kind of a race game and is often called running dictation.
The teacher divides pupils into two teams, readers and writers. The tutor tells the rules and sticks a text up on the wall. The readers have to walk or run to the allocated text, read it, memorise, and dictate it to the writers. The writer can ask questions concerning spelling or punctuation. The winner is the group or pair that writes the given word or the whole text without no or few mistakes.
ADVANTAGES OF USING GAMES

games are enjoyable
of motivational value
make the relationship among pupils stronger
develop cooperations
give children some speaking (and other competences) practice
break monotony
MEMORY GAME

blue  green  orange  black

blue
BLUE
NIEBIESKI

yellow
YELLOW
SNAKE GAME
SKILLS GAMES - WRITING
SKILLS GAMES – READING AND WRITING

Write the missing letters.
Wpisz brakujące litery.

G _____ EE ______
B _____ AC ______
R _____ D
YE _____ LO ______
WH _____ T ______
BL _____ E

SKILLS GAMES – READING AND WRITING

B C I S
I K
I Z A

A H T I
R I T
C K
To finish...
A movement game...

TPR GYMNASIC GAME
Thank you so much

Any questions?

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