

## **Bat & Moth (Marco Polo)**

Need:

Open area indoors or outdoors

Blindfold

8-30 kids

15-30 minutes

Have kids explain how bats find their food using echolocation, which is that bats send out a high-pitched signal that bounces off of objects and back to the bat. This is similar to our modern day sonar and radar, which also use sound waves to locate objects. Make sure that students know bats are not blind, but since it is dark when they hunt they rely on their sense of hearing.

Have students form a large circle but small enough that they can reach out and touch the hand of the person next to them. Choose a child who will be the bat. This person will be blind folded in the center of the circle. Another child (1-2) will be the moth and will not be blind folded. The rest of the children will be trees. Trees stand with their roots planted in the ground, branches spread and they don't talk unless the bat is going to run into them, then they may softly say "tree." When the game begins the bat says "bat" and the person(s) who is moth answers "moth". You can change the size of the circle and the number of moths to make the activity easier or more difficult.

## **Mice & Coyote**

3-30 kids

2-6 adults

30-45 minutes

Outdoors

Divide all adults and children into 2 equal sized groups. One half of group is mice and will be hiding all together in the same place. The other half of the group is a coyote and seek out the mice after they have hidden as a group. Have the mice hide while distracting the coyote group in a song or game or counting to at least 150. Once the mice have hidden the coyote group can call to them only 3 times. Each time the coyotes call by short, loud barks, the mice have to answer after the call with "squeak, squeak, squeak" in a very small voice. The coyote group move together like one animal and can call a second time and then listen for the mice to reply. Repeat a third time if necessary. Once the coyote group finds the mice then switch the roles so that everyone has a chance to hide and seek.

## **Cold Weather Warm-ups**

### **Count Down**

2-5 minutes

Stand spread apart and begin shaking one body extremity at a time.

Right arm, Left arm, Right leg, Left leg

First round shake each 8 times

Second round shake each 4 times

3<sup>rd</sup> Shake 2 times

4<sup>th</sup> shake each once

Repeat as many times as needed and as fast or slow is necessary to start generating heat & laughter.

### **Triathlon**

2-5 minutes

Pretend that you are going to participate in a triathlon. Begin with some warm up stretches. Then dive into the water and swim like crazy doing whichever swim strokes you like or want to make up. Next, get out of the water and on to the bike. Pretend you are going on flats, up huge hills and speeding down the other side. Finally, the running part, pace yourself but don't forget the sprint to the finish line.

### **Foot Tag**

5-10 minutes

Have everybody get in a close circle and put their arms around the shoulders of the people next to them. Without breaking the circle have one person start as "it" and they have to tag the foot of someone else. Whoever is tagged becomes "it" and tries to get someone else. Anyone can be tagged at anytime. To make it more challenging tell kids they can only tag someone not standing next to them and there are no tag backs.

*When trying to stay warm the key is to create heat. We can do this by adding fuel; i.e. eating food; burning fuel i.e. staying active or adding warm layer i.e. put on a hat, coat, and gloves. Did you know 80% of your heat goes out your head? And your little extremities go cold quick so keep fingers and toes covered but keep them moving so they don't go numb.*

*Involuntary shivering is one of the first signs of mild hypothermia; it's your body making you burn fuel. So go outside, but stay warm by staying active!*

## **Group Challenges**

### **Zen Counting**

5-20 people

5-20 minutes

This is a game for working on listening & speaking skills. The object of the game is to count to 10 in numerical order, but without planning who will say which number. Any one can start by saying “1” then another person says “2”, but then four people may say “3” and so then the group starts over at “1.” This game is spontaneous and people should laugh when more than 1 person answers at the same time. But then start over and try again. It may take a long time or it may go quickly.

### **Human Knot**

~8-12 people per knot

15-30 minutes

Remove all hats, sunglasses & bags before beginning. Start with everybody standing shoulder to shoulder in a tight circle. Everybody reaches into the circle and grabs hold of someone else’s hand. Do not hold both hands of the same person or hold hands with the people next to you. Now the group is in a tangled mess and may be yelling. Have the group begin untangling themselves without letting go of hands. You may also have to encourage doing this without screaming. If they break apart, start over. It is o.k. if hands are let go to adjust a hand hold, but do not move where the hands were held at. Most knots can be solved, sometimes there may be 2 circles and sometimes they may be impossible. Challenge the group to continue problem solving for at least 15-20 minutes.

## **Sardines**

15-30 minutes

6-30 kids

indoors or outdoors

day or night

*\*When I play this outdoors at night the kids have the kids hide & seek in pairs.*

Before starting the game decide on a boundaries to play within. Explain that a child will be “it” and have to the count of 100 to go and hide. Choose a child to go and hide by his or herself. Have all the kids form a circle facing in or put their heads down so they don’t peek. Everyone counts to 100 together then on your signal they can go out and search for the hidden “it.” Whenever another child finds the “it” child they have to hide with that person. Eventually, all children will find the hiding spot and they will be crammed together like a can of sardines.

## **Camouflage**

Great trail game that can be played at anytime. I explain that prey animals never know when a predator might show up so they shouldn’t ask to play the game because it will be played when they least expect it. Before playing show kids what things to look out for i.e. red anthills, wasp nests, poison ivy. When the kids are hiking the trail leader can call “Camouflage!” They then count down from 10 with their eyes closed and all kids must find a place to hide where they can still see the predator/trail leader. Once the trail leader gets to zero they can look for the prey/kids without moving from where they are standing. If the predator sees a child they describe them and where they are hiding and that child has to come in. Once prey have been caught they cannot tell the predator where more prey are at. The predator can stop searching when they have found as many as possible and all the kids must return to the trail. To keep kids from running and hiding far away, I tell them that they must be able to see how many fingers I’m holding up in front of me. Then when I call them in they must very quietly tell me what number of fingers I was showing. That way the prey/kids learn they had their eyes on the predator but did not get caught because of their excellent hiding abilities.