

CATCH UP!

THEME: LISTENING



Red een Kind (ReK) is a Christian, child-focused development organization working with local Partners in Asia and Africa. Internationally the organization is known under the name Help a Child (HAC).

Help a Child wants every child to have a loving and dignified existence and a promising future.

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This document is part of the **CATCH UP!** activities book from the complete **CATCH UP!** package for children's clubs:

- **CATCH UP!** How to organize and facilitate a children's club
- **CATCH UP!** Activities Book
- **CATCH UP!** Training

This complete package is available at the knowledge portal
<http://howto.helpachild.org>



INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the following information:

- **WHO** is this activities book for?
- **WHY** is this activities book written?
- **WHAT** is this activities book about?
- **WHERE** and **WHEN** can this activities book be used?
- **HOW** can this activities book be used most effectively?

Please read these pages carefully before you begin to use the activities!

WHO?

This activities book has been written for all the children's clubs of REK, Help a Child. The book can be used by all partners and volunteers who are facilitating children's clubs.

The stories and activities are focused on children in the age of 8 to 14 years. But most activities have options to make games easier or harder, so you can choose the level that fits your children's club, even if the children are younger than 8 years or older than 14 years.

WHY?

After a little research we found out that some partner organizations are struggling to make the children's club a success and to keep it running. Some of the partner organizations pointed out that more guidelines for the club would be helpful. We were planning on giving more directions to the children's clubs. Hopefully this book will help you organizing the clubs and make it full of original and informative activities.

WHAT?

The main focus of this activities book is to support the development of children by using different themes. This book will give you information about the development of children and why support in the development is important. Besides that the activities book gives you lots of subjects to talk about and games to play at the children's clubs, that will help the development of the children.

The book contains 5 different themes:

- **EMOTIONS**
- **LISTENING**
- **RESPECT**
- **SETTING BOUNDARIES**
- **WORKING TOGETHER**

This document only contains the theme: LISTENING.
Check out the knowledge portal for the other themes and the complete activities book:
<http://howto.helpachild.org>

Each theme is divided in three parts. The first part of each theme is the **information**. This chapter contains information and tips about the theme and the development of children around this theme. The information forms a foundation for the rest of the activities around the theme.

After every introduction you can find a **bible story** about the theme. It starts with a short summary, followed up by the complete story. After the story you find questions about the story and the theme that you can use to have a group conversation with the children. There is always a bible sentence you can teach the children and a prayer to close the bible time.

Every theme contains 8 different **games** you can play with the children. All games are about the theme and help children to understand, to practice and to learn, but are also fun to do. Every game has 'options' in the end, if you don't think the game fits your children's club, check the options to make it fit. There are options to make it easier, harder, different or a contest. Also there are options if you don't have the materials that are needed or there are children with a disability at your club. At last there is often the option 'afterwards' which contains questions and subjects to talk about with the children after the game is played.

WHERE AND WHEN?

Use this activities book at the children's clubs at the place where you facilitate it. Per game it is made clear if the game can be played inside or outside. Feel free to use this activities book for other occasions or clubs!

HOW?

There is not one right way to use this activities book. It's up to you to see what you can use and how you can use it. See and discuss with others what will fit your children's club the most. The themes are placed in alphabetic order, the book does not have to be used from the first page until the last page.

The themes are really related to each other, so it is easy to combine and let the themes follow up. The order of rank doesn't matter: emotions are important while setting boundaries or working together. But setting boundaries is also about working to get together and respect each other. Just like it is respectful to listen to each other and respect emotions of others. Look at your child club and see which one can be used the best at this moment.

The bible stories

The bible stories aren't obliged, it's up to you if you want to use it at your children's club. The stories don't have to be specifically used for Christian children. They can also be used as a way to talk about the theme with each other and enlarging general knowledge of the children.

The games

The games are placed in random order, see which game fits your club the best as introduction which can be used more deepening. You are not obliged to use all games, feel free to combine games from different themes at your club gatherings!

We chose to give a lot of games to do at the club gatherings because of the positive effect of playful learning. By playing children develop locomotion, creativity, fantasy, mental capacity, and special insight. They learn to work together, handle frustrations and they get to know their selves and their skills and interests. Playful learning is the most natural form of learning. It challenges children to come in action and move their borders. So the games at the children's clubs will give a positive support in growing up and developing themselves!

Possible set up of children's club gathering:

1. Welcome the children and start up a song, a dance or a yell
2. Short group conversation about the theme of the day
3. A short and easy game to introduce the theme
4. A bible story about the theme with questions and prayer
5. A game about the theme that takes a long time
6. Sing a song (maybe you know a song about the theme or the bible story)
7. A last game to 'close' the club
8. Short talk with the children about what they think of the club today and an invitation for the next time

Feel free to adjust games or stories you learned when you were little. It is nice to pass through games and stories that are typical for your culture.

Be sure you prepare the children's club gathering very well! Know which theme you work on, prepare the story you are going to tell and know before the start of the gathering which games you are going to play. Be sure you know how the games work so you don't need to read the explanation again while the children are waiting. Good luck!

INFORMATION



LISTENING

Listening is really important in life. It consists of showing interest, giving someone space to tell, showing that you are listening, asking questions and giving feedback. It maybe sounds obviously, but it can be really difficult. That is why it is important children learn to listen and have the space to practice it.

Listening starts very early: in the 21th week of pregnancy the embryo can already hear. The actual listening: hearing voices, recognizing them and reacting on it, starts growing from the 36th week of pregnancy. In the years that follow the child develops more and more skills in listening. The children at the club can work on specific skills to improve their relationships with others and their selves.

By listening very well, you increase in knowledge and you become more wise. Besides that it improves your relationships with people in your environment. If you listen well, people will find that you are a nice person. Listening is a very important part in working together.

How to listen well

- Give the speaker space: let him finish his talking, do not rush him.
- Keep having contact with the speaker: make eye contact, nod and make sounds that you understand what he says.
- Give the impression that you listen very good: summarize what the speaker says, ask if you understood him well.

Good listening is not a passive action: the art of good listening also contains asking good questions. Ask the speaker a question to explain something he says to show your interest, to be critical or to let the speaker think about something he says. By asking questions you let the speaker know that you have listened and the conversation gets more meaning.

Concentration. To listen very well, you need to concentrate. If you don't pay attention, you miss for instance important information or the story line. Especially for children it is hard to concentrate, because there are so much distraction in the environment. At the children's club you ask the children to concentrate for a long time, for example when you are telling a Bible story. The more you learn the children to concentrate, the more they are able to concentrate for a longer time. You can set a goal for the children, or tell them that they have to listen very well because you will ask a few questions at the end of the story. That will give the children motivation to pay attention. The younger the children, the shorter the time that they can concentrate and listen. Make the child club really interactive and be sure there is variation.

Talking Stick. A fun and good way to learn children to listen to each other is by using a talking stick. In former times the Indians invented the talking stick to communicate with each other in a kind way. The one that is holding the talking stick may talk, the rest is silent. When the stick is being passed to the next person, that person can talk and the rest is silent. A talking stick can help you to let children listen to you and to each other at your children's club.

BIBLE STORY: JONAH AND THE STORM



Summary

In this story God sends Jonah to go to Nineveh, but Jonah decides to run away, he doesn't listen to God. God makes clear that He thinks it is not ok that Jonah doesn't listen to Him. You can find this story in the bible in Jonah 4:1-11.

The story

A prophet named Jonah was giving the word of the Lord to the Israelites. To Jonah the Lord spoke, saying: "Go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it, for its wickedness rises up before me."

But Jonah did not wish to preach to the people of Nineveh, for they were the enemies of his land, the land of Israel. He wished Nineveh to die in its sins, and not to turn to God and live. So Jonah tried to go away from the city where God had sent him. He went down to Joppa and took a ship for Tarshish.

But the Lord saw Jonah on the ship and the Lord sent a great storm upon the sea, so that the ship seemed as though it would go to pieces. The sailors threw overboard everything on the ship. When they could do no more, every man prayed to his god to save the ship and themselves. Jonah was now lying fast asleep, and the ship's captain came to him, and said: "What do you mean by sleeping in such a time as this? Awake, rise up, and call upon your God. Perhaps He will hear you and save our lives." But the storm continued to rage around the ship and they said: "There is some man on this ship who has brought upon us this trouble. Let us cast lots and find who it is."

Then they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. They said to him, all at once: "Tell us, who are you? From what country do you come? What is your business? To what people do you belong? Why have you brought all this trouble upon us?" Then Jonah told them the whole story, how he came from the land of Israel, and that he had fled away from the presence of the Lord. And they said to him: "What shall we do to you, that the storm may cease?"

Then said Jonah: "Take me up and throw me into the sea; then the storm will cease and the waters will be calm; for I know that for my sake this great storm is upon you."

But the men were not willing to throw Jonah into the sea. They rowed hard to bring the ship to the land, but they could not. Then they cried unto the Lord, and said: "We pray thee, O Lord, we pray thee, let us not die for this man's life; for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee."

At last, when they could do nothing else to save themselves, they threw Jonah into the sea.

At once the storm ceased, and the waves became still. Then the men on the ship feared the Lord greatly. They offered a sacrifice to the Lord, and made promises to serve him.

And the Lord caused a great fish to swallow up Jonah, and Jonah was alive within the fish for three days and three nights. In the fish Jonah cried to the Lord, and the Lord caused the great fish to throw up Jonah upon the dry land.

Notice all through this story that, although Jonah was God's servant, he was always thinking about himself. God protected Jonah and saved him, not because he was such a good man, but because he wanted to teach him a great lesson.

Think!

Why was Jonah angry?

Why didn't Jonah listen to God?

Why did God sent Jonah to Nineveh?

Is it hard to listen to God?

Learn!

"God isn't late with his promise as some measure lateness. He is restraining himself on account of you, holding back the End because he doesn't want anyone lost." - 2 Peter 3:9 (MSG, The Message)

Pray!

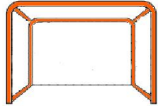
Dear God, thank You for the stories in the Bible that teach us how we should live. Help me to remember that listening to you is much more important than only listening to ourselves. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

THE CLAP GAME



LISTENING

GOAL



- Listening very strictly
- Reacting fast
- Talking in the group

MATERIALS



- No materials needed

TIME



- **10 - 15 minutes**

THE GAME

Let the children sit in a circle. Tell them that they are going to play a handclap game. The clap game contains four steps:

Step 1: Clap both of your hands on your upper legs.

Step 2: Clap your hands once

Step 3: Point with your right thumb over your right shoulder

Step 4: Point with your left thumb over your left shoulder

Step 5: Start again with step 1

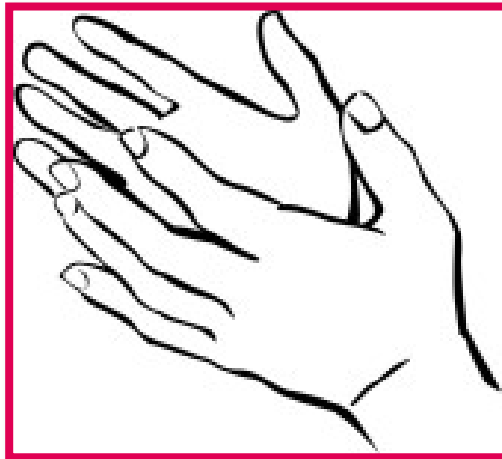
All children follow the steps. Now give one child the order to say his own name when he points his right thumb over his right shoulder, and say a name of a child in the circle when he points his left thumb over his left shoulder.

In short:

1. Let the children sit in a circle
2. Explain the game to the children
3. First practice the clap rhythm until everyone can do it
4. Then you start the game, so follow the steps, call your name and the name of a child
5. The game is over when all of the names of the children have been called at least once

OPTIONS

- **Big group of children:** how bigger the group, how harder it is to listen, so make it easier by splitting up the group and play the game in small groups.
- **Make it a contest:** as option you can make this game a contest. When a child does not react on his name within 3 seconds, he is out of the game. The last 3 children are the winners.
- **Make it harder:** to make it harder for everyone, speed up.
- **Make it harder:** instead of calling names, you can come up with something else. For instance the color of t-shirts, first name the color of your own t-shirt 'blue' and then the color of the t-shirt of someone else 'red' (the t-shirt game can only be played in small groups, when there are two children in a pink shirt, the game can't be played).

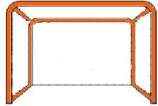


THE HUMAN KNOT



LISTENING

GOAL



- Listening to each other
- Working together

MATERIALS



- No materials needed

TIME



- **15 - 20 minutes**

THE GAME

Create a human knot and make a circle again without letting go of hands. The ultimate game to practice listening to each other and working together!

In short:

1. Let the children stand in a circle
2. Explain the game to the children
3. Everyone has to grab with their right hand, the hand of a child
4. Now everyone has to grab with their left hand, the hand of another child
5. Now there is a human knot!
6. Let the children talk, listen, climb and crawl to undo the knot
7. Important rule: it is forbidden to let go of hands!
8. The game is over when the knot is undone and there is one or more circles of children

OPTIONS

- **Make it easier:** give specific hints to the children about what they have to do to undo the knot.
- **Make it easier:** play the game in separate, smaller groups so the knots are smaller and easier to undo.
- **Make it harder:** give one child the task to undo the knot. He has to tell what the rest of the children have to do, they have to listen to him.
- **Make it harder:** let one child (or do it yourself) make the knot by saying for each child individually how he has to stand and which hands he has to hold. He can make it extra hard for the children.
- **Make it harder:** make up some rules to make the game more difficult, for instance: 'one person can speak at the time', 'the words yes, no, you and here are forbidden' or 'no one can speak'.
- **Afterwards:** talk with the children about how they experienced the game: was it hard or was it easy? What helped them to undo the knot? And what did not help them to undo the knot?

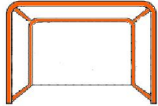


THE WHISPER GAME



LISTENING

GOAL



- Listening very strictly
- Training to remember sentences

MATERIALS



- No materials needed

TIME



- **5 - 10 minutes**

THE GAME

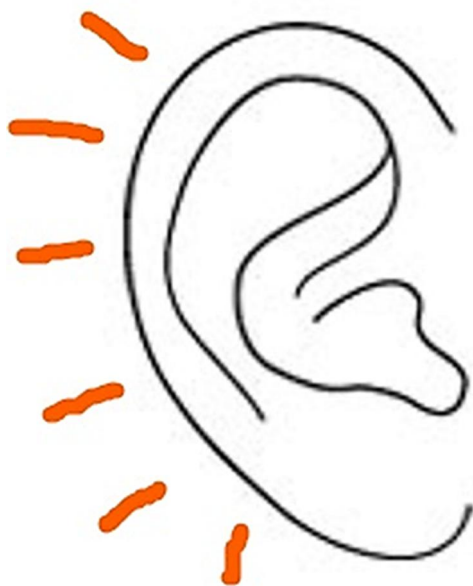
The whisper game asks for good listening and concentration. Besides that it is a good and fun way to practice this skills with the children. This game can also be used as a short game to fill up a short time of waiting.

In short:

1. Let the children stand in a line
2. Explain the game to the children
3. Make up a funny sentence and whisper it to the first child in line. For instance: 'Uncle John went in his red car to the city to paint the hair of Sarah blue.'
4. That child has to whisper that sentence in the ear of the child next to him
5. That child has to pass it through by whispering the sentence in the ear of his neighbour
6. This goes on until the sentence has 'arrived' at the last child
7. The last child has to tell what the sentence is
8. Talk with the group about what has changed in the sentence: has everybody listened well?

OPTIONS

- **Make it easier:** make the sentence really short to start with.
- **Make it harder:** make up a really difficult sentence by yourself and pass it through the group.
- **Make it different:** let one of the children make up a sentence.

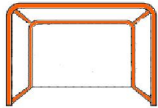


COMMANDO PINKY DRUM



LISTENING

GOAL



- Listening very strictly
- Reacting fast

MATERIALS



- Chairs
- A table

TIME



- **10 - 20 minutes**

THE GAME

At the game Commando Pinky Drum there are a couple of movements.

- Pinky Drum: drum with your pinkies at the table
- Flat: two hands flat on the table
- Cave: all the tops of the fingers on the table, create a small 'cave'
- Ball: the back of the hands on the table, all fingers up in the air, like the hands are holding a ball

Important rule: when the game leader says 'commando' before he calls a movement, everybody has to do the movement. When the game leader says only the movement, without 'commando', no one has to do the movement.

In short:

1. Let the children sit at a table and explain the game to the children
2. You are the game leader so you have to say what everybody has to do, start with 'commando pinky drum!' and do it yourself, the rest has to do it also
3. Name a new movement, for instance 'commando flat!', everybody has to do it
4. Now name a 'false' movement, for instance 'cave!' and do the movement yourself
5. The children who are also making the cave are out of the game because you didn't say 'commando' before the movement
6. Go on with naming movements with and without the word 'commando' until there is a winner

OPTIONS

- **Make it easier:** play the game without 'losers'. Everybody can stay in the game, the mistakes don't count.
- **Make it harder:** when all of the children know how the game works you can let them lead the game so they can practice in leading others and speaking in front of others.
- **Make it harder:** make up more movements, for instance 'commando flags': the thumbs on the table and the other fingers waving in the air. Or 'commando up': two arms in the air. You can also let the children come up with new movements. The more movements, the more difficult this game.
- **Lack of materials:** if you don't have tables and or chairs to use you can let the children play the game on their legs. Only the 'pinky drum' will become a clap on the leg, so there is a sound with the movement.
- **Afterwards:** talk with the children about the game, what was difficult? What is important in this game?

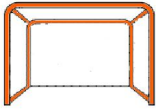


THE LINES



LISTENING

GOAL



- Listening very strictly
- Reacting really fast

MATERIALS



- Something to create lines, this can be drawing chalk, tape, or items (one left, one right) that make clear an 'invisible' line

TIME



- **10 - 30 minutes**

THE GAME

'The lines' is an active game where children can lose some energy. It gives space for them to run and act a bit crazy. At the same time they practice the skills of listening very strictly and reacting really fast. A fun game to do outside.

In short:

1. Create 7 lines (length: 15 meters) with a distance of 5 meters
2. Explain to the children the order of numbers of the line: 1 to 7
3. Let all the children stand at line 1 and tell them to listen very well
4. You call a number of a line, for instance number 5: all the children have to run to line 5
5. The last child that arrives at line 5 is out of the game
6. You call another number, for instance 2: all the children have to run to line 2
7. The last child that arrives at line 2 is out of the game
8. Go on till there is one winner

OPTIONS

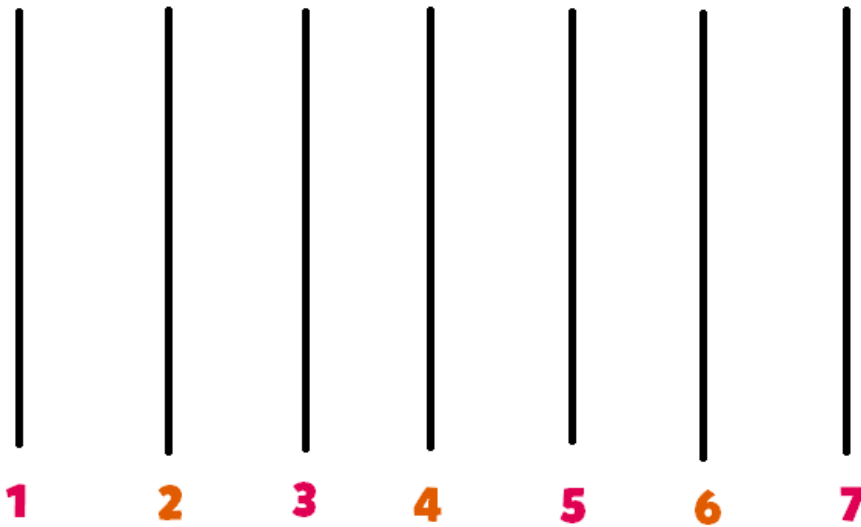
- **Make it easier:** play the game without 'losers', everyone stays in the game for about 10 minutes, then the game is done.

- **Make it harder:** instead of calling the numbers of the line you can choose to clap the numbers, so if you want them to go to line 5, clap 5 times in your hands. Now the children have to listen really carefully and count before they start running.

- **Make it harder:** make some jokes: name for instance 'line 0' or 'line 8', these lines do not exist so the children have to stay at the line their standing at. The children that go off the line are out of the game.

- **Disability:** if there is a child that can't run with the other kids he can be the one who is calling the lines. He can lead the game.

- **Afterwards:** talk with the children about the game: what was important in this game? What was the most fun thing that happened?

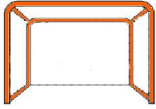


TALKING AND LISTENING



LISTENING

GOAL



- Having different experiences with listening

MATERIALS



- No materials needed

TIME



- **10 – 20 minutes**

THE GAME

A calm game to experience different ways of talking and listening. This game will make children aware of good ways of listening to each other by trying out different reactions.

In short:

1. Let the children make couples
2. Every couple has to stand in opposite position
3. Let them decide: one of them is number 1, the other is number 2
4. Now give them the task: number 1 and number 2 have to tell about what they have done last week, both at the same time for one minute
5. Ask the children how they experienced it, could they understand each other? Or do they only know their own story now?
6. Now give them the second task: number 1 tells about his family and friends and number 2 has to act like he is not interested. So he makes no eye contact, yawns, looks to another couple, etc. Let them do this for one minute, then switch. So now number 2 has to tell about his family and friends and number 1 is not interested.
7. Ask the children how they experienced it, how did it feel for the person who talked? Did he have the idea the other one listened to him?
8. Now give them the third and last task: number 1 tells about what he wants to become when he is older to number 2. Number 2 listens, is interested and asks questions. Switch after a minute and then let number 2 tell to number 1 what he wants to become when he is older.
9. Ask the children how they experienced it, how did it feel for the person who talked? Did he

have the idea the other one listened to him?

OPTIONS

- **Make it different:** instead of directly letting all children try out the options, you can show it in front of the group, so children see what happens at different actions. Play out the game with two volunteers and talk with the children about what they see. You can also let two children of the game do the little plays in front of the group.

- **Afterwards:** talk with the whole group about listening in general, which one of the three exercises was the most fun to do? Which one felt the best for the talker? And in general, when do they have to listen? And when do others have to listen to them? Is that always going ok? What did they learn?

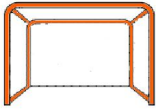


THE DIRECTIVES



LISTENING

GOAL



- Listening very strictly
- Reacting really fast

MATERIALS



- No materials needed

TIME



- **10 - 20 minutes**

THE GAME

Let all the children stand at a place that they can see you and hear you really good. Give the children directions they have to follow. Start simple, for instance with 'jump', 'turn around', or 'blink your eyes'. Once the children can follow simple one step directives, start to make it a little harder with two items of information, like: 'jump two times and blink your eyes'. You can then add three part directives like 'jump three times, then turn around and go sit on the ground'. Keep on adding more directives until it is too difficult for the children. If the children are struggling, take back a step.

In short:

1. Gather all the children around you and make sure they can hear you well
2. Explain the game to the children
3. Start the game by giving them the first directive
4. Check if all children get the game
5. Continue the game by giving the children the second and third directive
6. If the children can follow the directives, make it harder by giving two directives
7. If the children can follow the directives, make it harder by giving three directives, etc.

OPTIONS

- Make it easier: when you're starting the game you may want to give the directions and then show the children what you want them to do. For example, tell them to 'jump' and then jump

yourself to show the movement. This will give children a visual.

- **Make it easier:** if the children are really young, join them in doing the movements so they have the right example to copy.

- **Make it harder:** to make it harder you can play this game with winners and losers. Each time a child makes a mistake in doing the movements, he is out. Keep on playing the game until there is 1 winner. The children who lost can be judges and watch if the children who are still playing the game make mistakes.

- **Disability:** if there is a child that can't do the physical movements with the group, he can be the judge. The judge watches if the children make mistakes and who has to go out of the game.

- **Afterwards:** talk with the children about the game: what was important in this game? What was the most fun thing that happened? When was it hard to listen?

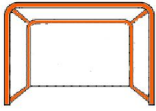


COPY THE SOUNDS



LISTENING

GOAL



- Listening very strictly
- Reacting really fast

MATERIALS



- No materials needed

TIME



- **10 - 20 minutes**

THE GAME

Let all children sit or stand in a circle. Make sure they can see and hear you loud and clear. Make a sound with a part of your body and let the children copy it. Make the game step by step a bit harder by putting more and more sounds together. Check if the children can follow and copy all the sounds you make, if not, take back a step. Examples of sounds are: whistle, click with your tongue, clap a rhythm your hands, stamp your feet, jump, sneeze, grunt, etc.

In short:

1. Gather all the children around you and make sure they can hear you really good
2. Explain the game to the children
3. Start the game by giving them the first sound
4. Check if all children get the game
5. Continue the game by giving the children more sounds after each other
6. If the children can follow the sounds make it harder by giving more sounds

OPTIONS

- **Make it easier:** join the children in making the sounds. First make it yourself and let them listen, ten after that make the sounds again and let them join. To make it more easy, repeat the same sounds a few times before you go on to the next sound-combination.

- **Make it harder:** to make it harder you can play this game with winners and losers. Each time a child makes a mistake in doing the sounds, he is out. Keep on playing the game until there is

1 winner. The children who lost can be judges and listen if the children who are still playing the game make mistakes.

- **Make it harder:** to bring the game to a next level, make one child of the group the leader of the game. He can now make up the sounds the rest of the group has to copy. This will help him to practice in leading a group. Go around the circle and let all the children be the leader for a short time.

- **Disability:** if there is a child that can't do the physical sounds and movements with the group, he can be the judge. The judge watches if the children make mistakes and who has to go out of the game.

- **Afterwards:** talk with the children about the game: what was important in this game? What was the most fun thing that happened? When was it hard to listen?

