

Transition Game

The transition game is a method to teach and tighten up the transitions in your classroom. While this example uses extra recess time as an incentive, you can also use extra time in any preferred activity.

The Introduction:

When there are about 15 minutes left before recess begins, ask your students if they would like to end the lesson and go out to recess early.

Explain to your students that you are all going to play the transition game and when the entire group wins the game, you will all go out for recess.

If you have a paraeducator or any other adult support in your classroom, they should be stationed at the door, ready to assist you in monitoring the students as they play the game.

How to play:

Have all the students sit at their desks. Explain to the students the rules of the game. Depending on your students' developmental levels, the rules may be adapted. These rules are an example:

1. Every student must be silent or at least very quiet (voice level 0-1). You should determine the voice level requirement by assessing your particular cohort.
2. There can be no body contact with anyone (hands to ourselves)
3. When you say, "go" or uses a designated sound/signal, the students are to all get up and line up at the door for recess. As you have already taught them a system/routine/ritual for lining up, then this is what you are prompting the students to do.
4. At the end of the process, each student should be standing quietly in line (voice level 0) with their hands held behind their backs (or at their sides/at their hearts/across their chests).
5. Once ALL the students are able to follow the rules to the EXACT criteria, they can all immediately go to recess.
6. Use a timer to track how long it takes for the transition to be completed
7. If any of the students make an error, it is very important to stop the game immediately and send everyone back to their desks. DO NOT wait until everyone has gone through the whole process then redirect them to start again.

8. If there is an error, be sure to avoid calling out a particular student (s) who made the error. Use a general class redirection and call all the students back to their desks to start again.
9. As soon as the class has met your criteria, provide verbal praise and write down the amount of time that the transition took, then immediately go out for recess. Do not ask students to stand in line and wait for long. Get them outside ASAP.
10. Keep track of the amount of time it takes your students to transition appropriately. Share the data with the students and talk about “beating our time,” the next time you play. If appropriate, incorporate the data into a graphing lesson.
11. If you have played the game multiple times and your students still have not been able to reach their goal, continue to be positive, saying that they can try again at another time. Then start recess at the normal time.
12. You will know if you have done this intervention appropriately, as your students will be asking when they get to play the transition game again.

Notes:

In order to be effective, the criteria you set must be met by all the students. If you provide the incentive without the class meeting your criteria, the game will backfire on you.

If you have one or two students who continually are unable to follow the routine, there are specialized interventions that can address this. Please reach out to me for assistance.

*If your class is unable to reach your criteria and win the game, it may be that you will need to adjust the criteria for your students’ developmental levels.

And most importantly, this is supposed to be a fun activity and your goal is to have the students earn the incentive. If you find yourself frustrated, reach out for help.

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