

SPARK Winter Holiday Games

Written & Shared by SPARKfamily.org Members - Dec. 2011



"I know, I know. He's much healthier since doing SPARK, and it's much better for him...but it just doesn't seem right somehow."

SPARK Holiday Games

Rex Terwilliger Powder Springs Elementary Powder Springs, GA

Reindeer Tag

Grades K-3

Ready

- 20 cones for boundaries
- 10-20 yarn balls (snow balls)
- 4 IT identifiers
- 20-35 Velcro Flag Belts (reindeer antlers)
- Holiday Reindeer Christmas Music (“Rock ‘in Rudolph” or “Run, Run, Reindeer”)

Set

- Create large (20X30 paces) playing area.
- Use cones to mark circular area.
- Allow 6’ between cones and Gym walls for throwing and catching area.
- Scatter the yarn balls against the gymnasium walls, outside cone area.

GO!

1. Today’s activity is *Reindeer Tag!* The reindeer are running around in the snow-covered meadow and the Elves (ITs) need to get them back to Santa’s barn.
2. The object is for reindeer to avoid getting an antler taken by elves (Velcro flag).
3. On the music, elves (ITs) will attempt to pull antlers (flags) from the running reindeer.
4. If a reindeer’s antler is taken, the elves will hand back the flag to the reindeer. He/she will raise the flag (antler) above their head while walking outside the perimeter towards the gym wall and pick up 1 snowball (yarn ball).
5. To reenter the game, the reindeer must practice tossing and catching the snowball to themselves 20X or partner toss and catch 20X. (*Throwing and catching is a nice “cool down” activity before restarting in the chase and tag game.*)
6. **Challenges**
 - Can you toss the snowball (yarn ball) high against the wall and catch it 10X?
 - Can you and your partner toss and catch 20X without a drop?
 - Students to travel in different ways: Running, skipping, galloping, sliding, etc.

Safety First

- Be sure to travel safely in general space and stay in bounds.
- When tossing and catching stay between the gym wall and perimeter cones.
- If your antler is pulled, hold it high above your head and walk outside the cones (the ITs will know you have already been tagged).

Did you know?

- When you are doing different locomotor movements you are exercising not only your heart muscle but also your leg muscles.
- Your leg muscles are very large and consist of the quadriceps and hamstring muscles with your quadriceps in the front of your legs and your hamstrings in the back.
- Reindeer also have very large leg muscles, which allow them to gallop around the meadow.

SPARK Holiday Games

Ashley Grimes

Pinellas County Schools

Largo, FL

Battle of the Poles Tag

Grades 3 - 6

Ready

- 9 Cones to Create a Grid
- Tossables (e.g., Balls, Koosh balls, Beanbags, etc.)
- 8 Pinnies (For Toy Protector Elves; 2 per grid)
- 5 Hula Hoops
- Fitness Skill Cards (SPARKfamily.org)
- Music (optional)

Set

- Create 4 Grids (30 x 20 paces) in activity area (or use basketball court).
- Create a Workshop Area in the center using a Hula Hoop, Place all of the Tossables in this area.
- Divide students evenly in the grids.
- Select 2 players in each grid to be the Toy Protector Elves, each wearing a pinnie.
- Play holiday music (optional)

GO!

1. Today's activity is *Battle of the Poles Tag*. In this game, the Elves from the South Pole are angry that the North Pole gets all the credit for making all the presents.
2. The object is for the North Pole elves to protect their respective workshop and tag the South Pole elves before they take the toys from the workshop.
3. When the music starts (or on start signal), the South Pole elves will try to take a toy (tossable) from the central workshop and bring it back to their sleigh on the edge of their grid area.
4. When tagged, move outside the grid area. To get back in the game, complete a loop around the playing area and complete a Fitness Skill Card activity.
5. **Challenges**
 - Add a third North Pole Elf, who can retrieve the items from the perimeter.
 - Assign point values to the various tossables and keep score for each grid.
 - Exchange tossables with letter cutouts and have elves spell out holiday vocabulary words.

Safety First

- Be sure to travel safely in general space, watching for others around you.

Did you know?

Just like the South Pole, the North Pole goes for months each summer with constant daylight and months each winter with no daylight. When it's summer in the Northern Hemisphere, it's winter in the Southern Hemisphere; when it's winter in the Northern Hemisphere, it's summer in the Southern Hemisphere.

SPARK Holiday Games

Aaron Foster

Indian Hills Elementary

Aloha, Oregon

Candles, Candy Canes, and Icicles

Grades 3-12

Ready

- 1 Swimming noodle per student (3 colors: yellow, red, blue) cut in half (~24-30")
- Holiday music (optional)

Set

- A large playing area (30 x 30 paces)
- Divide class into 3 groups, each group having 1 color of noodles
- Start with each group in a designated area of the gym

GO!

1. Today's activity is called *Candles, Candy Canes, and Icicles*.
2. The object is to avoid being tagged by players on other teams, while also trying to tag other teams' players.
3. All tagging must be done with your noodle. All tags must be made below the waist.
4. Each team has 1 team that they can tag, and 1 team that can tag them.
 - Candles (yellow noodles) can only tag Candy Canes (red noodles) because Candles melt Candy Canes.
 - Candy Canes (red noodles) can only tag Icicles (blue noodles) because Candy Canes break Icicles.
 - Icicles (blue noodles) can only tag Candles (yellow noodles) because Icicles put out Candles.
5. When tagged below the waist, hustle to a sideline and do 5 jumping jacks (*or any other exercise designated by the teacher*). When the exercise is complete return to the game.
6. Begin on signal (or music).
7. **Challenges**
 - Can your team tag all of the other team's players?
 - Can each person on your team make 10 or more tags during the game?

Safety First

- Keep eyes looking forward to avoid collisions.
- Keep tags below the waist.
- No throwing of noodles.

Did you know?

- Did you know that 1.76 billion candy canes are made each year and that the longest candy cane ever made was 36 feet 7 inches!!
- Did you know that throughout history candles have been made out of things such as beeswax and whale blubber!!

SPARK Holiday Games

Cedric Philo

Northpark Elementary Rock Springs, WY

Grinch Tag

Grades K - 2

Ready

- 4 cones for boundaries
- 25-40 beanbags or other small objects
- 4 hoops for present collection
- 4-5 pinnies for Grinches

Set

- Create large (30X30 paces) playing area.
- Scatter beanbags in a large circle in the middle of the playing area.
- Place the 4 hoops just outside the boundaries to designate safety zones for present collection.
- Select 4-5 students as the Grinches (wearing a pinnie) to protect their presents.
- Remaining students are Santa's Helpers and are divided around 1 of 4 designated hoops in safety zones.

GO!

1. Today's activity is called *Grinch Tag*.
2. The object is for Santa's Helpers to get as many presents as they can in 30 seconds. Do that by using the designated locomotor skill to get 1 beanbag at a time, then bring it back to the hoop in your safety zone. Try to avoid being tagged by a Grinch.
3. If Santa's Helpers get tagged, freeze with a hand in the air. Get unfrozen when a teammate gives a high-five.
4. Grinch's start just outside of the circle of presents.

Safety First

- Grinches, tag gently with 3 fingers while calling tag so the helper can hear and feel it.
- Look before you move to avoid bumping into another helper.

SPARK it up!

- Scooter time!
Allow students to use scooters to play this game. Students can ride on their pockets, knees, stomach or 1 knee.

SPARK Holiday Games

Jerrod Jacoby

Lockhart Middle

Orlando, FL

Holiday Grinch

Grades 6-8

Ready

- 6-10 red foam balls; 6-10 green foam balls
- 6 painted boxes (as houses)
- 6-12 cones for marking playing area

Set

- Create large (40X50 paces) playing area with cones as boundaries.
- Set-up 2 painted boxes (as houses) on each side of the field to place the holiday decorations (e.g., foam balls) along with 1 extra safety house.
- Mark centerline across the field to separate teams.
- Split students into 2 equal teams and send each to a designated side of the field.

GO!

1. Today's activity is *Holiday Grinch*.
2. The object is to avoid being tagged on your opponent's side of the field while you try to steal the Holiday decorations and bring them back to your safety house.
3. If you are tagged while holding a decoration you must give it back and return to your homeland (your side of field) to continue playing.
4. If a decoration is dropped while running it goes back to its home.
5. Players may not pass decorations to teammates after stealing it.
6. HINT: Keep some students at home to play defense while some play the Grinch, trying to steal decorations.
7. **Challenges**
 - Can your team steal all the other decorations before yours are stolen?
 - Which team of Grinches can steal more decorations in 5 minutes?

Safety First

- Keep your head and eyes open when running.
- Do not dive after a loose ball.

Did you know?

- Approximately 150 million holiday lights are sold in the world every year! The majority of them are sold in the USA.

SPARK Holiday Games

Andy Hoffer Greenlee Elementary Denver, Colorado
Santa and His Reindeer
Grades 3 - 6

Ready

- 4 mesh equipment bags
- 6 small, light items in each bag (e.g., foam ball, jump rope, bean bag, etc.)
- 6-8 hula hoops scattered just inside the activity areas perimeter
- 1 pinnie per student (4 assorted colors)

Set

- Create large activity area (30 X 30) paces.
- Select 4 students to be “Santa,” each with a different color pinnie.
- Place small items in bags, 1 bag per sideline.
- Pile pinnies on each sideline, 1 sideline designated for each color, 1 bag per sideline.
- Scatter remaining students (reindeer) in activity area.

GO!

1. Today’s activity is *Santa and his Reindeer*.
2. The object is for each Santa to collect X number of Reindeer, then give away all presents.
3. Santa does that by moving through the area tagging X students (designate number).
4. When tagged, reindeer move to the North Pole (sideline). They’ll move to the sideline with the same color pinnies as the Santa that tagged them. After arriving at the North Pole the reindeer will put on a pinnie, then jog in place.
5. After collecting the correct number of reindeer, Santa will give away his presents by emptying the bag into the chimneys (hula hoops), 1 item at a time.
6. Do that with reindeer arranged in a line in front of Santa. The lead reindeer moves around the area (*choose locomotor movement*) with the team following closely behind.
7. When the bag is empty, Santa calls “To the North Pole!” Then, his team leads him back to the sideline where they started.
8. Challenges:
 - Have multiple items back at the North Pole. When the bag is empty, go back and fill it up with no more than 6 items and change Santa.
 - Play with Santa riding on a scooters to deliver presents.

Safety First

- If space is limited, have students walk instead of doing vigorous locomotor movement.
- If playing this game with k-2nd grade limit number of students on a team and/or only play part 1.

Did you know?

- Reindeer are found in the most northern parts of the world from Canada all the way to China and are even found in the states of Washington and Maine.
- Rudolph was not an original reindeer in the early story of Santa Claus. He was added in the 1939 story, *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*.

SPARK Holiday Games

Chuck Jones III Southside Elementary Siloam Springs, AR

Santa Tag Grades K-3

Ready

- 2-3 red pennies
- 2-3 old pillows or 2-3 halves of old foam balls
- 2-3 large belts or flag belts
- 2-3 24" noodles
- Holiday music

Set

- Use half to full gym court (20X20 paces minimum)
- Pillows or halved foam balls are placed on the stomach of "Taggers" and secured with a belt. *(You can also sew elastic bands on small pillows to criss-cross over the shoulders.)*

GO!

1. Today's activity is *Santa Tag*.
2. The object is for Santa or Mrs. Clause tag as many Reindeer as they can. This is one of the many Reindeer Games played at the South Pole.
3. Each Santa or Mrs. Clause will dress in Santa uniform. On the Teacher's signal "Ho! Ho! Ho!" each Santa will chase the reindeer around the area, trying to tag them with the "Christmas Wand" (small noodle).
4. If a reindeer is tagged, freeze and stand in a stop position (feet together, hands in front of chest, palms out).
5. To get unfrozen a free reindeer must "high 10" the frozen reindeer and exchange the magic words, "Merry Christmas." Reindeer are safe if they are freeing another reindeer.
6. **Challenges**
 - The Santas or Mrs. Clauses try to freeze all the reindeer.
 - The reindeer work to keep all the other reindeer free.

Safety First

- Always watch where you are running. Never run and look behind you.

Did you know?

- 30 minutes of daily exercise can burn away a small plate of cookies.
- How did it feel to carry around that pillow? Did it affected your ability to move? Daily physical activity is important to keep our bodies fit. What is a healthier snack for Santa, instead of cookies? What about the milk? Should Santa drink whole milk, low-fat milk, or chocolate milk? Did Santa make a good choice?