

## "Play is the beginning of knowledge" (George Dorsey)

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It is a certainty that educational activities become much more effective if they combine static learning activities with movement activities. This goal can be achieved with the help of games.

Play is a fundamental human dimension, regardless of age, which cultivates imagination, the spirit of competition and collaboration, friendship, intelligence, attention. Psychologists recognize that games play an important role in personality development and character building. Each game stimulates and strengthens a certain physical and intellectual energy.



The course it attended was designed by teachers, for teachers was based on play, creativity and the well-being of each individual teacher and it provided an up-close and personal insight into the Icelandic school system as well as a first-hand experience through the *Play To Learn More* methodology.

The SMART TEACHERS PLAY MORE (STPM) approach is inspired by the core skills development activities and the mindfulness theory. This approach combines all learning styles thus allowing the increase in performance and also the well-being of both students and teachers. Albert Einstein reinforced the STPM approach by stating: *Play is the highest type of research.*

In the following lines I will present one of the learned games:

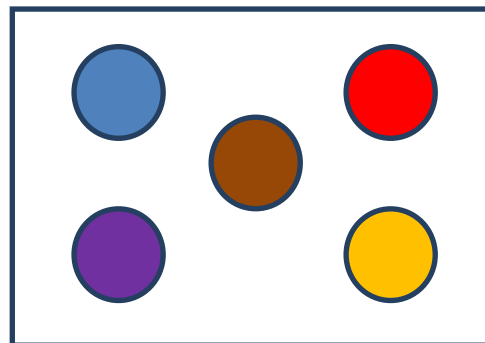
### ***TRICKY LETTERS***

Purpose: developing the intellectual processes by identifying various combinations of letters; cooperation between colleagues in order to accomplish certain tasks.

**Organization:** With the help of some plastic circles, create 5 centers. Place as many plastic letters as possible in the inner circle. The four teams stand inside the other 4 circle.

a) Step 1: At the teacher's sign, one player from each team moves to the inner circle and brings 2 letters (one in each hand) to his team's circle. The baton is passed to the next player who goes after other 2 letters. To make travelling more fun, a special mode of travel can be established (eg: backwards). The players will have 2 minutes to collect letters in their circle.

b) Step 2: In the second part of the game the players from each team will write for 5 minutes as many words as possible using the collected letters. The written word will be written down on a sheet of paper after which the letters can be used to write other words.



After the working time is up, the teams' activity is evaluated with the help of some questions:

- Who has the most words? But the least?
- Who has the longest word? But the shortest?
- Who found rhyming words?
- Who has proper nouns/verbs?

### Example:

**MATHEMATICS:** letters are replaced by numbers and various tasks are given.

- 1) Write as many operations as possible with the numbers collected by the team (the written exercise must also include the result). The figures can be reused when writing another exercise or they can remain in the compound exercise and the following exercises are written with the remaining figures.
- 2) The team is asked to collect numbers to have a certain amount at the end (eg: "Collect numbers so that at the end you have the sum 98!").

**ROMANIAN:** in the inner circle there are words which the team will use to create a story.



At the end of some lessons where we will play more, we will learn that *success is a game: the more you play, the more you win. And the more times you win, the better you'll play* (Allan Pease).

The SMART TEACHERS PLAY MORE (STPM) approach proved to us what George Bernard Shaw said: *We don't stop playing when we grow old, we grow old when we stop playing.*