



10. Follow the leader - Choose a leader using the above rhymes. People follow the leader's actions.

11. Statues - One person, chosen with the above rhymes, sings (whilst not looking at the players) - sometimes a song, or just la, la, la. When they stop singing, everyone has to be a statue. Anyone moving goes out. The last person left wins. They become "it".

I get a little embarrassed if I have to sing.

12. Monkey bars - My favourite game is to swing on the monkey bars. I usually do this with Jill.



Playground Games in the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney

A recent survey at a primary school led to the discovery that Year 5 children, aged about 10 to 11, were playing eleven games during recess time.

They managed without any specific supervision, though the teacher on playground duty was occasionally called to settle disputes. These were caused mostly when there were collisions with other pupils who were rushing around aimlessly.

The activities were:

BLACK CAT, a chasing game, beginning with two players touching each other at arm's length.

ELASTICS, a skipping game related to what is often called French Skipping.

HANDBALL, played on painted or chalked courts, mostly with doubles as in tennis.

TIP FOOTBALL, a less violent variation of Rugby but now and again leading to more physical conflict.

SKIPPING, using a long rope, not often accompanied by the traditional chanting of rhymes.

SOCCER, using bins instead of posts.

HAND CRICKET, played with a tennis ball, also using bins, this time to replace stumps.

POISON IVY, played with a basketball thrown high against a wall, and an opponent jumping over the ball in a straddle as it bounces back.

HOP-SCOTCH, on a painted or chalked court, using a flat stone in the style of so many great-great-grandparents.

FLY, a game in which participants leap over a succession of small sticks placed at intervals in increasing stages of difficulty.

EGG, with a tennis ball hurled against a wall, regarding skill in catching and tactics.

Compiling the survey helped in the development of spoken and written communication. The action was recorded on super-8 film without rehearsal and during a normal school playtime.

Observations have shown that conflicts in playgrounds increase when children do not involve themselves in group activities such as those listed.

David Bateson,
Bondi, N.S.W.



Finally...

Not last night but the night before,
24 robbers came knocking at the door.
I went downstairs to let them in,
They knocked me down with a rolling
pin.
Now the rolling pin was made of glass.
It fell down and cut my arse.
I went upstairs to fix it later
I burnt my dick on a radiator.
I went downstairs to cool it off
Some little bastard shot it off.

(from Frances Sutherland,
Collected Princes Hill,
May 1984. Two girls
about 10 years.)

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