Games & puzzles to enjoy! - week 1

3D Noughts and Crosses /3D Tic-tac-toe - Players: 2

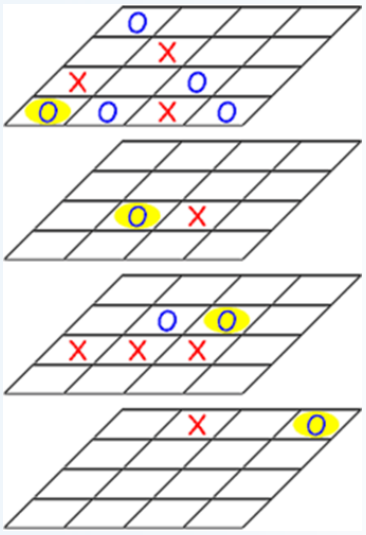
Players take turns in marking squares on a 4 x 4 x 4 grid. The first player to get four squares in a row wins.

Description:

To make the board draw four 4 x 4 grids stacked vertically, representing a 4 x 4 x 4 cube. It is easier to visualise the cube if you draw the grids in perspective.

The players take turns in drawing their symbol, O or X, in one of the cells. The first player to make a line of four cells in any direction wins. Winning lines can be horizontal, vertical, diagonal within one grid, vertical between grids, diagonal between grids, or diagonal in all three dimensions.

Example:
In the following game O started, and won by making the line shown highlighted:



Art Gallery - Players: 2 or more

The players take turns in naming an object which they each have to incorporate into a drawing.

Description

This is a non-competitive picture-drawing game that's great for playing with children. It's also good as an ice-breaker with adults.

Each player starts with a blank sheet of paper. The players then take turns in naming an object, which all players must incorporate into their drawing. Players should wait until everyone has finished drawing before naming the next object.

At some agreed point, usually when one player cannot fit any more objects into their picture, everyone agrees to stop and reveal their drawings.

Example

For example, if the players named: "Sun", "Star", "City", "Tree", and "Plane", one player's drawing might look like this:



Pictionary - Players: 4 or more

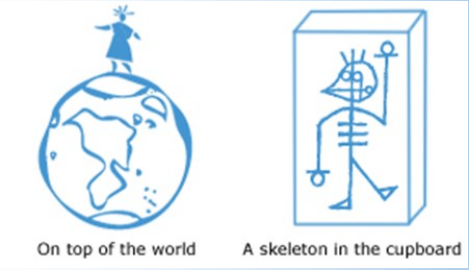
One player has to get the other players to guess a word by drawing a picture.

Description

The players should be in two teams. One team secretly writes down a common phrase and shows it to one member of the other team, chosen as the artist.

The artist then has to get the other members of their own team to guess the word by drawing a picture. They are not allowed to give clues by talking, or drawing letters or symbols.

Here are some examples:



Variations Instead of a common phrase, players can try and guess the title of a book or film. Another variation is for the artist to draw the picture with their eyes closed.

Categories

Draw a grid on a piece of paper - a square filled with smaller squares.
The number of squares can vary, depending on the attention span of your child.

Down the left side, put some letters of the alphabet (for example, you could spell out a child's name: LISA).

Across the top, write categories - for example, girls' names, boys' names, animals, colours, cars, places.

You can make this harder or easier by changing the categories.
Players take turns writing in words that fit the category and start with the letter in the left-hand column. (Next to the letter L, in this example, you might have Laura, Liam, lion, lavender, Lexus and Labrador.)

Give extra points for words that nobody else thought of.

LETTER	GIRLS' NAMES	BOYS' NAMES	ANIMALS	COLOURS					
example **L**	Lori	Luke	lion	lavendar					

Alphabet Categories

This simple game is suitable even for very small children who have just learned their ABC.

Pick a category. It might be breeds of dogs, street names in your town, kinds of vegetables, people's names, names of flowers, etc.

Moving clockwise, each player names an item in the chosen category starting with successive letters of the alphabet. For example, if the category chosen was names of countries, the game would go something like this:

Player 1: Australia Player 2: Brazil Player 3: China Player 4: Denmark, etc.

There isn't any winning or losing in this game; the kids just have fun seeing if they can find words to fit all of the letters.

If you've recently been studying a specific topic (astronomy, the weather), you might want to choose those categories so the kids can review their knowledge. Pick categories you feel that everyone will be able to contribute to.

Battleship

Players: 2

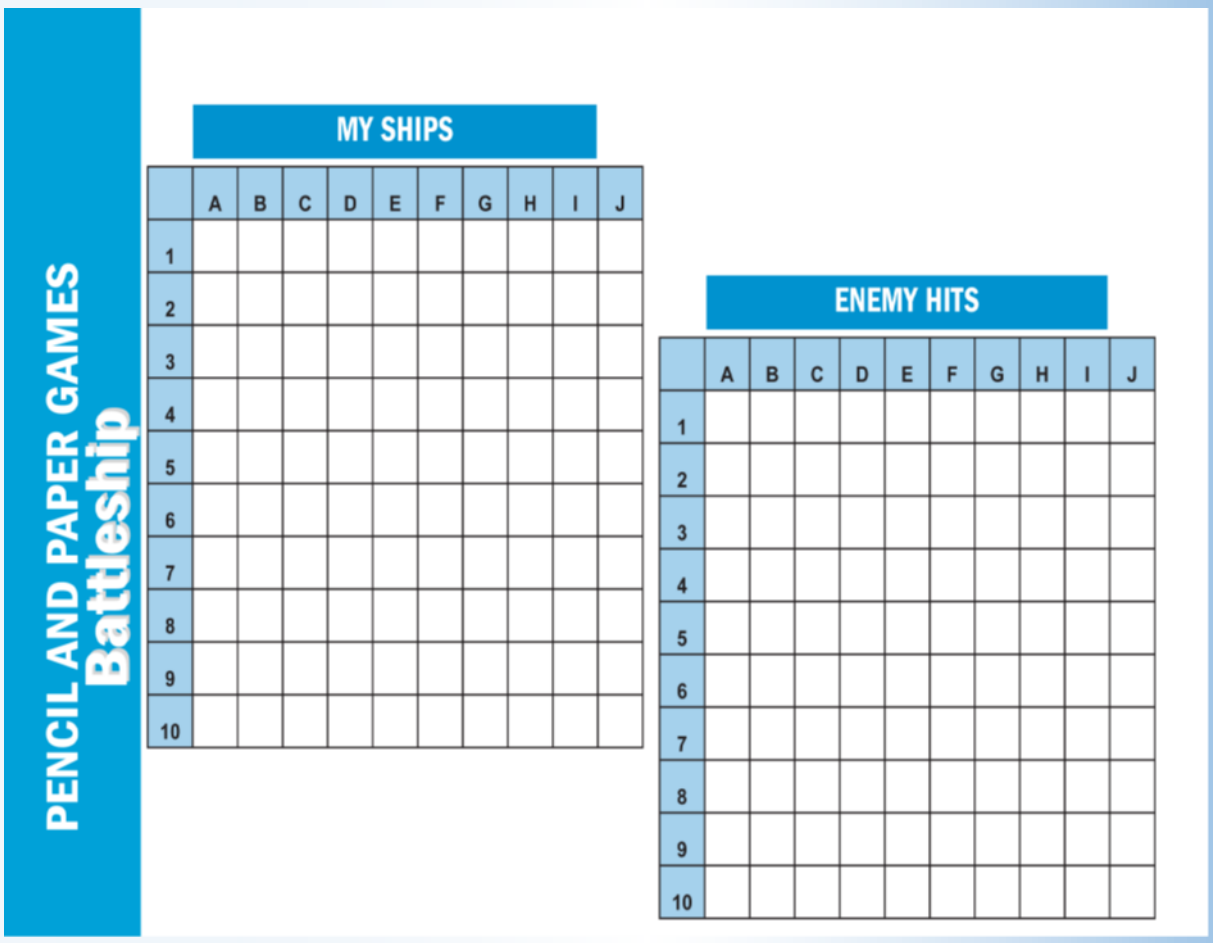
Description:

All you need is graph paper. (or 2 of the ABC to read playing sheets)
Each player needs two grids.

Label each grid by writing numbers across the top and letters down the side, so that the squares are easily identified as A8 or F5.

One grid will be for locating your own ships, the other for recording shots against your opponent's ships.

Each player places three or four "ships" on his grid, then let the guessing begin. The first person to sink all the other person's ships wins.



Sprouts

If you can't quite master drawing a neat grid of dots, you might find this game easier.
Draw dots randomly all over the paper.

The first player draws a line between any two dots, and draws another dot in the middle of that line.

The next player draws a line between any two dots, and puts a dot in the middle of that line.

No lines may cross each other, but they don't have to be straight, so they can loop around other lines.

Only three lines in total can emerge from any one dot.

The dots put in the middle of the lines already have two lines connecting them to the two other dots, so they can only have one more line.

The game continues until no more lines can be drawn.

The person who did the last line is the winner.

Sprouts 2 **- Players:** 2

The players take turns in joining dots according to simple rules, until one player cannot make a move.

Description

Start by drawing two or more spots on a piece of paper.

Players then take turns to make a move, according to the following rules:

Draw a curve joining two spots, or a single spot to itself. The curve must not pass through another spot.

Draw a spot on the new curve.

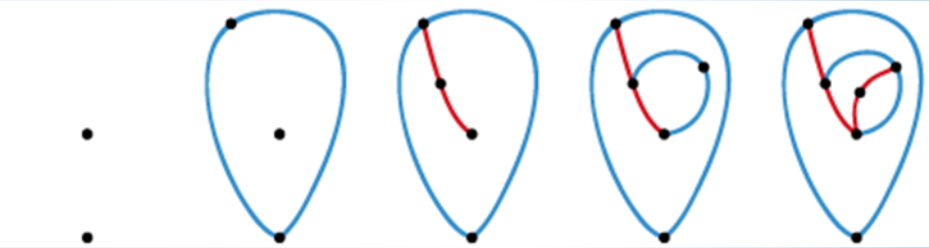
No more than three lines can emerge from any spot.

The last player to be able to move wins.

The game is remarkably complicated, and even starting with two spots leads to an interesting game.

Example

In the following sample game with two spots Blue has the first move, and Red wins after 4 moves because Blue has no move:



Game questions

These questions might help you to remember which games would be suitable for your children:

◊ Interest level for your age child

◊ How long does the game take to play

◊ Is it adaptable

◊ How could you vary it

◊ How could you use it for your children

◊ How do you rate it

◊ Low – 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – high

ABC to read
Assisting Berkshire Children to read