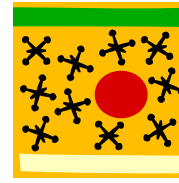


I wonder if you can guess the theme of our PAL Project this month? Many children around the world have long vacations from school at this time of year, and so are looking for ways to have fun and entertain themselves. There are many different games that are famous all around the world. Can you name some? Here are some clues to give you ideas -



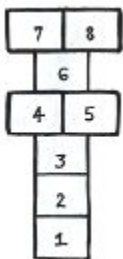
Maybe you thought of checkers, cards or chess; dominos, dice or jacks; or outdoor games like horseshoes or jump rope. In many countries children play team games like soccer or basketball, or enjoy playing board games like Ludo or Monopoly that they can buy in a store. But of course in many countries there are MILLIONS of children that are so poor that they cannot buy the things needed for such games - maybe not even paper and pencil, or a simple ball!!! So what do THEY play?



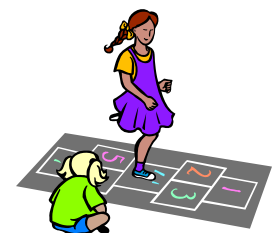
Well, I'm happy to tell you that children don't have to have special toys to play games, and they can have a lot of fun using everyday things around them! I just returned from a visit to Togo in West Africa, where most of the people are very poor. I visited both the city and some remote villages, and although I didn't see ANY toys the whole time I was there, I saw LOTS of happy children playing!! In this photo you can see that two boys are using an old plastic gasoline container as a set of drums, while other children are singing and dancing. I have to tell you that they played their "drum" VERY well and it sounded as good as a "proper" set of bongo drums! I thought it would be interesting to find out about simple games that children enjoying playing in different countries around the world - games that don't need anything "special". Here are several - maybe they remind you of ones YOU play. Isn't it interesting that so many children

all around the world are playing similar games?

1) **Rayuela** - María C. López from **Colombia** writes:



When I was a little girl, I used to play games with my friends in our neighborhood. Rayuela, as it is called in Spanish, was my favorite game. There can be any number of players, and a stone is the only object you need to play it. You draw a figure on the floor with a piece of chalk, then you throw the stone inside square one. After that, you have to hop into each square, starting with square 1 and ending in square 8. If there are two squares together, you jump landing with one foot in each square; but if there is only one square, you must hop on one foot. When you reach squares 7 and 8, you have to turn back jumping again until square 1. Then you continue playing the next level, where you begin by throwing the stone into square number 2. Then next time into square number 3 and so on until level 8. The first player who does all the levels is the winner. The most important thing is that the player has to skip the square where the stone is. If any of the following happens, the player has to stop and another player takes a turn. The player can't put his/her foot or feet on the lines of the square. The player can't jump with two feet in squares 1, 2, 3, and 6. The player can't fall down.



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### 2) **Caught You!** - Cheng Limin from **China**

When I was a child, I loved to play a Chinese traditional game which was called *Caught You!* In this game, you need a large group of people (about 20-30 people), a piece of cloth, and a small ball or stone. You all sit down side by side in a large circle except for one person who sits outside the circle with eyes blindfolded. The ball is passed around the circle from one person to the next until the one who is blindfolded shouts "Stop!" Then the one who has the ball in their hand has to stand up and sing a song or tell a story. The person outside the circle is replaced every 5 minutes.

### 3) **Kelereng** - Hasanuddin Rachman from **Indonesia**

*Kelereng*, an Indonesian game of marbles, is a children's game for two players or more. The main equipment is a set of marbles--small, round balls made of solid stuff, usually transparent and of different colors. One set of marbles is placed at the center of an approximately 10 by 15 square foot ground or floor arena, in the form of a triangle or square. The number of marbles may vary from 2 to 8 or even more, depending on the number of players. Each game may last from 20 to 30 minutes. Each player has his or her own shooter marble to shoot the set. Shooting is done

by placing the shooter marble between the index finger and the thumb and moving the thumb outward to shove the shooter marble in order to hit the marbles in the set. Player number one starts the game by shooting at the set and goes on playing until he/she misses hitting any of the marbles from the set. Then, it is the other player's turn to shoot the set. Each player temporarily keeps any marbles that he/she can hit and move out of the triangle or square. All the players take turns and if a player's shooter marble gets hit, he/she loses and must give his/her temporary wins to the one who hits him/her. At the end of the game, the winner takes all.



### 4) **Numbers game** - from **Africa**

From the Mbundu tribe in Angola, West Africa, this Numbers game is played by children as soon as they are old enough to count. The numbers one, two, three, four, and five are called out in the Mbundu language as mosi, vali, tatu, swala, and talu. The children in East Africa, would use the language of Swahili to call the numbers as; moja (MO-jah), mbili (mm-BEE-lee) tatu (TAH-too), nne (NN-nay), and tano (TAH-no.) It is best to play this game with a large group. One player is chosen to be the Caller. The remaining children gather in a circle.

The Caller shouts out a number between one and five, then the players group themselves accordingly. For example, if the Caller calls out mbili (two), the players then scramble into groups of two. If there are leftover players, they form their own group and shout their number to the Caller. Play continues with the Caller calling out different numbers for three more games, then a new Caller is chosen. For more of a challenge, play this game in several different languages to teach the children about other cultures!



### 5) **Raise Your Hand** - a folk game from **Taiwan** from Yu-Xuen Xiao and Zhen-Bang Zhang

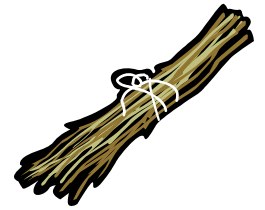
This can be played indoors or outdoors, and is better with 5 or more people (the more the better). The players sit in a circle and choose a girl or a boy to be "IT". IT walks around the circle, and then stops and stands in front of a player. IT points to the player and says "Raise your hand". But the one who is being chosen shouldn't raise his hand, instead, the players who sit next to the person must raise their hands. The one who sits on the right raises his left hand. The one who sits on the left raises his right hand. The one who raise the wrong hand will be "IT" at the next turn. The one who has been IT more than three times will get a punishment - which is to sing a song or tell a story!

### 6) **You Ate the Dead Dog!** - from Pedro Pablo Rodriguez Rovi in **Panama**

A number from 0 to 9 is chosen by one of the children and the child says the number out loud and adds: "Whoever says this number has eaten the dead dog!" The children then take turns counting out loud remembering to skip the selected number. For example, if the selected number is four then the kids have to skip four, fourteen, twenty-four, etc. As they take turns counting out loud. Whoever forgets and says the selected number out loud loses and the other children say: "You ate the dead dog!" This game can be played by 2 or more children and is very effective in helping them practice counting.

### 7) Pilolo Game - from **Ghana**

"Pilolo" means "Time to search for". In this game about four people are needed including the timekeeper and the leader. The timekeeper has to stand at the finishing place and makes sure the players have their eyes closed, while the leader hides certain sticks or stones in palm trees, in the sand and a whole lot of places. Then he will come and announce "Pilolo", while the timekeeper starts his watch. The players must run and search for a stick or stone and get back with it to the finish and the first person back is the winner. His/her time is recorded and then the game repeated. The final winner is the one who found the most in the shortest time.



### 8) Takraw - The national game of **Thailand**

Takraw is similar to the U.S. game hackysack. A takraw is a ball about the size of a grapefruit, and it's quite hard. (Hackysack balls aren't so hard.) The Takraw is made from woven rattan. Players stand in a circle and pass the ball around, using their heads, feet, legs, and shoulders. They can't use their hands. Thais love to play this game. Takraw games often break out on the street among strangers waiting for a boat or a bus. The game might draw 40 or 50 people before the boat or bus arrives to take away some of the players!!

### 9) Clap Clap, Snap, Snap - from Shahnaz Zafar in Islamabad, **Pakistan**

"Clap Clap, Snap, Snap" is a popular game played by young boys and girls in Pakistani schools. It takes 4 to 8 students to play the game. Everyone stands in a circle. The one who starts gives a topic which can vary from names of countries to capitals, cars, actors, flowers, colors, movies etc. Everyone starts clapping and snapping their fingers "clap, clap, snap, snap". Each time it is repeated, the next child around the circle must give an answer (a suitable name) by the time the others "snap, snap". Anyone, who fails to do it, must get out of the circle. The game helps to build and enhance vocabulary. The topic has to take two rounds before it can be changed.

### 10) Blindfold race - from **England**



This is a game that I play with children in many countries that I visit around the world. It can be played with several teams of 6 or more children as long as they are an even number (the more the better). Each team is divided in half, with the members lined up one behind the other at opposite ends of the course. The members of one half are each blindfolded with pieces of cloth. When the race starts, the first blindfolded member of each team must run down the course, trying to reach his/her other team members (who shout to direct him/her). Once the child arrives at the correct team, the first member there takes him/her by the hand and leads him/her back to the beginning. Then the 2<sup>nd</sup> blindfolded team member leaves

to race the course. When all the blindfolded team members have been led back to the start by their partners, the team sits down and the first team to do so wins. I use this exciting race to teach the difference that Jesus makes in our lives - before we know Jesus, we are like the blindfolded person - we are lost and have difficulty going through life because we may fall down, get hurt, lose our way or step in something nasty!! But once we have Jesus as our friend, He guides and helps us to get safely through all the problems of life!

Maybe you can think of a way you can adapt (change) some games you know so they can help tell others about Jesus! In game number 9 above (**Clap Clap, Snap, Snap**) you could get each person to say the name of a book of the Bible, or a place or person in the Bible! In game number 7 (**Pilolo**) you could hide scraps of paper with words from a bible verse, or name of a bible person, instead of sticks or stones! If you can think of any games like that to use facts from the Bible, write and let us know and we can share them with all our friends around the world!

I hope that you have learned some NEW games that you can now enjoy playing!

'Til next time,

love from your friend, Shirley

Games from [www.geocities.com/childrenfolklore/games](http://www.geocities.com/childrenfolklore/games)

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