



## Home-made Didactic Games

**Danijela Horvat Samardžija**

University of Primorska, Faculty of Education (Slovenia)

[danijela.horvat@pef.upr.si](mailto:danijela.horvat@pef.upr.si)

### Abstract

*The purpose of tutorials in the course of Social studies early learning, that 2<sup>nd</sup> year students have majoring in Preschool education is, among other, that students learn about and test home-made didactical games by which they can discuss and/or consolidate a variety of social topics with children in kindergarten in a pleasant and entertaining manner. The purpose of the tutorials in which students meet with more than fifty didactical games, is also for students to realise that with a little imagination, will and effort you can create many things. Therefore, it is an assignment of students to create a simple didactic game themselves, to which they have to determine objectives of the field of society, using curriculum. The resulting games are every year more original, giving confirmation, that tutorial Didactic games in kindergarten is achieving its purpose, for every time are presented newly created games. Ideas for home-made didactic games that students meet in tutorials were created and are created on the basis of frequent class observations in kindergartens, where governesses and their assistants warn that kindergartens do not have sufficient financial resources and there cannot afford to buy didactic games with which children would play and through which they would learn. Due to lack of financial resources, which is – let be real – recently found in almost all, if not in all educational institutions, kindergartens have obsolete didactic games. Didactic games are missing pieces for the game, fragments for assembly, tiles for installation, etc. The paper presents some of didactic games, which were inspired by observation of children and games that children bring from home every day and which they prefer playing in free time activities before morning snack.*

### On didactic games

A basic activity in a life of every pre-school child is play, not only free play which offers relaxation to a child, but also play through which a child acquires certain knowledge while not being aware of it. The examples of games through which a child learns subconsciously are didactic games which, if chosen well, support a child's motorics, fine and rough one, co-ordination, all the five senses, enable easier learning of letters, figures and foreign languages, geometry, geography, animal world, develop logical thinking, better a child's spatial, temporal and emotional perception, face a child with different challenges and we could enumerate many others [12]. Didactic games are games with rules that have to be followed, and they consist of some tasks that have to be completed, and some objectives that have to be reached through the game. We talk about a didactic game as a good learning method when »a child's interest, their mental effort is put into a game, and not into the task itself that has to be accomplished, or into the content that has to be memorised [4: 3,4]«, when a child »is not forced to think, to concentrate or remember on purpose by the consciousness that they have to learn something, but attracted by a form that we gave to this task [4: 4]«. Learning that goes on without any purpose in a relaxed atmosphere and in an attractive setting is faster, and above all, it enables lasting memorising of something learnt.

We know many types of didactic games [4, 9]. Let us have a look at only those that we can find most often in the kindergarten, in stations intended for learning through play:

- domino → building chains out of connected notions → learning about grown-up animals and their cubs, the first letters in a word, geometrical figures
- memory → searching the same, similar pairs → learning about professions, sports, fruits, vegetables, animals
- Black Peter → searching the same, similar pairs → learning about animals, the means of transport
- Man Don't Get Mad About It → moving figures on the playing board in accordance with a number, colour that a cube shows → learning about numbers
- puzzles → putting together pictures, objects → learning about the calendar, four seasons, fairy tales
- coverings → covering a picture with a picture cut in pieces → learning about clothes typical of a certain season, animals, numbers, the parts of body, colours



- bingo → covering parts of a card → learning about numbers, letters, geometrical figures
- tombola → covering parts of a card → learning about numbers, letters, geometrical figures
- connecting holes → connecting holes by a rope → tying laces on a shoe, connecting holes in a cheese with holes by a rope
- a box tower → building a tower from boxes of different sizes → learning about colours, seasons, fairy tales, geometrical figures.

Most of the presented didactic games that children play with in the kindergarten are in a bad condition (figures, cubes, playing cards, puzzle pieces, dominos etc. are missing), and there are no finances to get the new ones. Didactic games that are really of a high quality cost on average 20 euro or more, and if a pre-school institution wants to buy didactic games for all groups or at least two or three for all the age groups, it spends 100 euro or more. But most pre-school institutions cannot afford that money. As I am aware of the importance of learning through play, not only in the kindergarten, but also in the lower classes of the elementary school, some years ago, I started making simple didactic games that need little money to be made, but, what is more important than the saved money, by homemade games you offer a lot of fun and acquired knowledge to children without force, especially if you decide to make a simple game with them, e. g. memory, in which children draw pictures on the cards prepared in advance that you plasticify and can use them many times. In such a way, the game is more interesting for children, as they were involved in its making. Making a game that way takes a lot of time, the game does not meet your expectations many times, but the look at the children who enjoy making it and later playing with it and who proudly show it to their parents and friends in other groups in the kindergarten proves to you that the effort invested was not in vain.

So far, I made more than 50 didactic games that were tested in the work with pre-school and school children.

In the paper, I will present 14 didactic games that can be used to cover the themes connected to the field of society.

## Homemade didactic games

### MAN DON'T GET MAD ABOUT IT with the theme of WASTE DIVISION

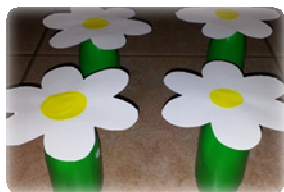
#### Outcome

To divide the waste that you find on your way appropriately and bring the figure to the waste collecting spot as fast as possible.

#### Procedure

The game is played by no more than four players.

Each of them has got their own route to the waste collecting spot and waste in their way. When the player comes to the part where there is the waste, they touch it, put their hands in the bag, and in it they recognise by touch certain kind of the waste and put it in the appropriate dustbin on the waste collecting spot that is in the middle of the playing board. The game winner is the one who first leads their figure to the waste collecting spot.



### MEMORY with the theme of HEARING

#### Outcome

To find as many pairs as possible by listening to the sound.

#### Procedure

Players shake two little boxes simultaneously and try to find a pair. The game ends when all the pairs are discovered.

### COVERING with the theme of ROOMS IN A HOUSE

#### Outcome





To put together a new snail's house and learn about rooms in a house by covering a snail's broken house.



**Procedure**

Players have got a snail with a broken house in front of them and pieces that represent the snail and its new house. Their task is to try to put the pieces that represent the snail and its new house to an appropriate place on the snail with the broken house. When they do that, they notice that the snail's new house has got windows. When they look through the windows to the interior of the house, they see rooms in it and the

furniture, objects that are in them.

**BINGO with the theme of PROFESSIONS**

**Outcome**

To find out solutions to riddles on a card by attentive listening.

**Procedure**

Players listen to riddles on different professions and try to find as many solutions as possible on a card and colour them.



**FIND DIFFERENCES with the theme of BEING DIFFERENT**

**Outcome**

To find 7 exactly the same butterflies and put them on seven flowers.

**Procedure**

Among many differently coloured butterflies, players have to find 7 butterflies that are coloured exactly the same and put them on seven flowers.

**FISHING with the theme of POLLUTION and WASTE DIVISION**

**Outcome**

Eliminate all sad fish with the waste glued on them from a pond and put the waste in suitable dustbins.

**Procedure**

In the pond, there are sad fish which have got the waste glued on them. Players have to catch a sad fish with a fish rod, take away the waste on it, name the waste, put it in a suitable dustbin and instead of the caught sad fish throw to the pond a fish that is happy that it has not got the waste on it.



**PUT ME TOGETHER with the theme of THE MEANS OF TRANSPORT**



**Outcome**

To find suitable pieces of the means of transport and put it together by throwing a cube.

**Procedure**

Players choose a figure of the means of transport on which the parts are signed by numbers from 1 to 6. By throwing a cube on which there are the numbers from 1 to 6, they try to find pieces of the means of transport with suitable number that they put on the figure they chose.

**A BOMB with the theme of VOCABULARY BUILDING**

**Outcome**

To say as many associations as possible in 1 minute.

**Procedure**

This game is played word written

in two groups. A group player takes a card on which there is a and they have got one minute to say as many associations to this word as possible. A group whose players say more words wins.



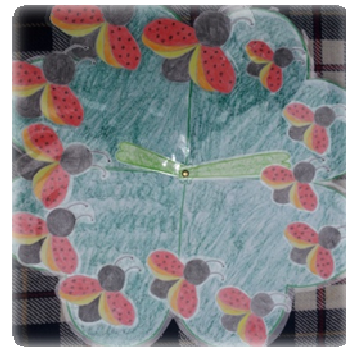
**A LADYBIRD AND TWO CLOVERS with the theme of LEARNING ABOUT THE CLOCK**

**Outcome**

To learn about the clock.

**Procedure**

By listening to a story about a ladybird who ate a bit of a clover every hour and due to that



became a bit bigger, players put to two clovers 24

ladybirds from the smallest to the biggest, and by doing it, learn that a day has

got 24 hours.



**A SNAIL IN THE GARDEN with the theme of LET'S LEARN ABOUT THE WEEK**

**Outcome**

To learn about the week.

**Procedure**

By listening to a story about a snail which each day ate a bit of fruit and vegetable and due to that became a bit bigger, players put to the fruits or vegetables 7 snails from the smallest to the biggest and in such a way they learn that a week has got 7 days.

**PICADO and THE FOOD PYRAMID with the theme of HEALTHY DIET**



**Outcome**

To find in an envelope a picture on which there is a number that is the same as the number got in the picado game and to put it on the suitable place in the food pyramid.

**Procedure**

Players are divided in two groups. Each group has got its picado board and its food pyramid. Players in each group, one by one, close their eyes and



touch picado with a pointed finger. When they touch it, they open their eyes and look at the number they hit. Then they find a picture with a suitable number in the envelope and put it on a





suitable place in the food pyramid. A group which put right all pictures wins.

### **FISH IN THE WATER with the theme of MARINE and FRESHWATER FISH**

#### **Outcome**

To recognise freshwater and marine fish and pin them on the suitable place on the poster by consulting the literature prepared in advance.

#### **Procedure**

Players have got in front of them 16 in which they can find those fish. Their fish and to put them on the suitable to the sea or river, by consulting the



fish and the literature task is to recognize 16 place on the poster – literature.



### **A FAIRY-TALE FOREST with the theme of LET'S RECOGNISE THE HEROES and OBJECTS FROM FAIRY TALES**

#### **Outcome**

To locate an object or hero in a suitable fairy tale and to invent together a fairy tale that does not exist.

#### **Procedure**

Each player chooses in the fairy-tale forest a secret hero or object. When they choose it, they name it and locate it in a suitable fairy tale.

When all players do it, a group fairy tale invention follows. Players say one sentence that has to be connected to the previous sentence. When doing it, they have to use a hero or object that is drawn in the picture.

### **A TRAIN FROM DISTANT LANDS with the theme of LET'S FIND OUT WHAT A TRAIN CARRIES**

#### **Outcome**

Find out what a train carries by touching the things in individual carriages.



#### **Procedure**

A train from distant lands that carries different things arrives to players. Their task is to put their hand in the carriage and to try to find out what it is in it. When they recognise what it is in individual carriages, a game leader takes that thing from the carriage.

### **Conclusion**

I test homemade didactic games tested with children also with my students, future pre-school and school teachers, in practical classes, so that they find out that by a bit of fantasy, will and effort it is possible to create many things. By doing that, we can offer children in the kindergarten and elementary school pleasant and funny covering and/or consolidating of different society themes, not only those, but also all the others that are part of the curriculum for kindergartens and elementary school subject plans.

Students in practical classes make a simple didactic game by themselves. By using the curriculum or subject plans, they define its theme and outcomes from the field of society, and, of course, they write detailed instructions for little players.



I have to say that didactic games which are made year after year are getting more and more original, and this is the proof that Didactic games in the kindergarten and elementary school practical classes, in which I each time present newly made games, have reached their purpose.

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