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Learning Games

Teacher's Guide





Learning Games

Playing games to learn about social interaction

Young children love playing board games. With their decorated boards and different pieces, such games serve as a natural focal point around which pre-schoolers can hone a wealth of different skills, learn about different real-life activities and “play grown-ups” – all while having lots of fun together.

Taking advantage of the special appeal that board games hold for children, and the important social dimension to playing them, LEGO Educational Division has developed a brand new product called Learning Games. A complete learning solution, Learning Games is built on a unique set of interchangeable boards, and contains all the LEGO® bricks and elements needed to play four different games covering a wide range skills.

The games described in this guide follow LEGO Educational Division’s four-step approach to learning: **CONNECT, CONSTRUCT, CONTEMPLATE and CONTINUE**. This approach allows children to draw on their natural interest in playing games to learn about how people interact in different situations and to practise interacting themselves in fun ways. In addition, the games promote social skills such as taking turns, following instructions, listening carefully to others and expressing needs and wishes – while helping children gain insight into topics ranging from shop-keeping to caring for animals.

Developing social relations with LEGO EXPLORE

Every product from LEGO Educational Division is designed to support and expand one of the four play worlds that comprise LEGO EXPLORE, our new platform for pre-school products. Learning Games forms part of **explore together**, where the main goal is to help children explore social relations with their peers and grown-ups. The set allows children to do so by encouraging them to participate in such

relations appropriately through playing the games, and investigating themes such as shopping and care of animals.





Key learning aspects

Learning Games from LEGO Educational Division provides educators with a tool for not only helping the children in their care investigate social relations, but also for covering many aspects of early education curricula. Here are some of the key learning aspects:

- Developing cooperation skills
- Taking turns and sharing
- Enriching vocabulary
- Developing communication skills
- Following instructions
- Learning how to win and lose
- Sharing ideas and experiences
- Strengthening cognitive skills

Using Learning Games in the classroom

This set contains everything you need to play the Learning Games in your classroom. A special board insert is included, which allow you to switch easily between the different games while also saving space. Many of the LEGO® elements contained in the set are used in more than one game – examine the pictures to see which elements go with which games. Instructions for playing the four games are

presented below, but this guide provides more than simple lists of rules. The CONNECT section helps you to link the game to the children's previous knowledge, while the rules of the game are presented under CONSTRUCT. The CONTEMPLATE section provides "food for thought" relating to problems raised by the game, and CONTINUE contains ideas for further play, generally at a more advanced level.

Before you start

Familiarize yourself with the bricks and accompanying stickers, and use the colour codes to apply the stickers. Note that the stickers should only be ap-

plied by an adult, as they cannot be removed after ten seconds.



Match It!



CONNECT

Have you ever worn socks that didn't match? Or had trouble finding the mate to a sock you really love? How do you know that one sock matches another? A matching pair of socks might be the same colour – or they might share the same design. What other things might be the same about two socks that match? Name some other things that can match, and discuss how!



CONSTRUCT

- Start by lining up all the farm animals and grocery and fodder items around the board. Take turns rolling the die. Each time you land on a colour, pick a square on the board and discuss with the other players which animal or item "matches" the picture on the square. When you have agreed on an answer, place the animal or item on the square. If you roll a star, you can choose any square you like! Continue playing until you have filled all the squares on the board.



CONTEMPLATE

- Take turns explaining one of the matches you made while playing the game. Tell as much as you can about why the one thing matched the other.
- Choose one square on the board and work together to find all the animals and items that match the square in one way or another. Discuss why these things match the square.
- What makes a better match – two things that are the same colour or two things that have the same shape? Why?



CONTINUE

- Play the game as above, but try to collect pairs of matching animals or items. If you roll the colour of a square already containing an object and can add a matching object, you get to take the pair of objects and add them to your collection. The player with the most pairs wins!
- Try using the items to play "Memory". Turn the items upside down. Then take turns flipping an item over and trying to remember where an identical item is on the board. If you make a match, you get to keep the pair. The player who collects the most pairs wins!



CURRICULUM

- Fine motor skills, eye-hand coordination
- Recognising shapes and colours, sorting and categorising
- Sharing ideas and experiences, following instructions
- Patience, turn-taking, interaction, teamwork



Shopping



CONNECT

Shopping can be lots of fun – especially when toys are on your shopping list. But what else do we buy in shops? What do you buy in a clothes shop? What do you buy at the bakery? What do you buy at the vegetable shop?



CONSTRUCT

- Start by building the four shops – the vegetable shop, the toy shop, the clothes shop, and the bakery – and placing them in the middle of the board, as shown. Then, divide the item bricks up by type (so they fit with the four shops) and place them in front of the shops as shown in the picture.
- Each player chooses a shop to “keep”, a shopping list and – of course – the character that matches his or her shop. Shopkeepers sell the goods in their shop, but also use their shopping list to buy items from other shops.
- Take turns rolling the die and moving clockwise to the nearest colour you roll. If you roll a star, you can choose which colour you want to move to.
- When you land on one of the two spaces that belong to a shop, ask the shopkeeper for the item you need and place it on your brick.
- The first player to buy all the items on his or her shopping list is the winner!



CONTEMPLATE

- How many of each item type did you manage to buy?
- Did you manage to sell many items? Why or why not?
- If you had to make your own shopping list, what would you put on it (try making a shopping list).



CONTINUE

- Make up your own shopping lists and divide them equally among the group. Play the game using these new shopping lists. Only include items that are available from the different shops

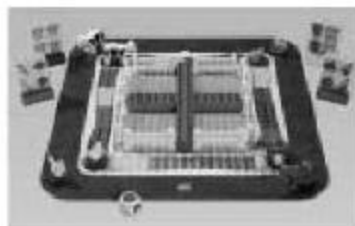


CURRICULUM

- Eye-hand co-ordination
- Being in charge of a shop, categorising
- Investigating everyday activities
- Using specific, descriptive language
- Following instructions, positioning objects in space
- Patience, taking turns, asking for things, interacting, teamwork



Farm Animals



CONNECT

Have you ever been to a farm? Taking care of animals is hard work, since you need to make sure they stay in their own pens and have all the food they need to keep them healthy and happy. What else do farmers have to do to take care of their animals?



CONSTRUCT

- Start by building the four pens on the building plate and arranging the water and fodder bricks as shown in the picture. Each player then chooses one pair of animals – the piglets, the calves, the ponies or the hens – and places one of these animals on one of the four starting circles.
- Players then take turns rolling the die, and moving clockwise to the nearest colour. If you land on a circle, you can take a fodder brick in the colour of the circle you landed on.
- If you roll a star you can choose which colour circle to move to – but you have to give up one of your fodder bricks. If you land on a circle, you can skip to the next circle. If another player is already on the circle you want to move to, you can move to the space just behind the other player.
- Before placing the second animal on your starting circle, you must lead your first animal to its pen. To do so, you have to make it all the way around the board to your starting circle.
- The winner is the first to lead both animals to their pen and to collect a water brick and three different fodder bricks. If you have led your animals to their pen without collecting all the fodder bricks, you must continue moving round the board with your second animal until you have collected the fodder you need.



CONTEMPLATE

- Did you remember to pick up a fodder brick each time you had the opportunity to?
- Was it easier to make your way around the board with your second animal? If so, why?



CONTINUE

- Discuss how the fodder is produced on the farm. What does the farmer need to grow the crops that provide the fodder – tractors, harvesters, fields, fertiliser, etc. How can the animals contribute to making the crops grow more quickly and better?
- Discuss the concept of seasons. When does the farmer have to sow his crops? When will he harvest?
- At what time of year would the animals like to play the "Farm Animals" game? During what season would a simple pen not be enough for them? Try building some winter accommodation for the animals so that they can go indoors if it is rainy or cold, but still get outside for some exercise and fresh air.

CURRICULUM

- Learning names of colours, farm animals and fodder
- Following instructions, positioning objects in space
- Patience, turn-taking, sharing, understanding the needs of others



Stocking My Shop



CONNECT

Has your family ever held a garage sale? Or have you ever tried selling your old toys, vegetables from the vegetable garden, or homemade cookies or drinks on the street where you live?



CONSTRUCT

- Start by turning all the decorated bricks upside down. Each player then chooses a shop and picks up four bricks – being careful not to show them to the other players – and arranges them as shown in the picture.
- Take turns rolling the die and moving clockwise to the nearest colour shown on the die. When you land on a shopping area, ask the shopkeeper for an item that belongs to your own shop. If the shopkeeper does not have the item, choose a brick from the pile.
- Each time you collect a pair of the same item, place the items in front of your shop. The winner is the first to collect all the items that belong in his or her shop.



CONTEMPLATE

- Why did the winner win? Was it skill or mainly good luck?
- Can you think of any other items you could sell in your shop? Make a list of them.
- Are there any items that might be sold in two of the shops? Which ones and why?



CONTINUE

- Share out the bricks between two teams. Then each team has to see how many groups or pairs they can make from their stacks. The winner is the team with most pairs.
- Now see whether you can categorize or group your pairs into larger groups. How many larger groups can you create? Can the different pairs of items be categorised in more than one group?



CURRICULUM

- Memory skills, sorting and categorising, following instructions, planning, choosing, making decisions, concentrating
- Patience, taking turns
- Asking for things, co-operation and social interaction



Visit our web site for more activities!

For more information about how to use Learning Games in the classroom, and for a wealth of additional activities and information about LEGO Educational Division's unique learning philosophy, please visit our web site at www.LEGO.com/education.

