



WAIT FOR IT

ALL GRADES

WHAT IS IT? A game to build executive function skills.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT? Practicing self-control.

WHY DO THIS?

THE BIG IDEA

This game is about exercising self-control to wait before doing a series of motions.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Say **THE BIG IDEA**.
2. Say: "First, I will say or do a series of movements. Then we will stand very still and count to five."
3. Then, say: "When we are done counting and I say 'GO,' I want you to repeat the same movements, in the same order."
4. Example 1: Point to two body parts, count to five, then say 'GO,' and have students do the movements in the same sequence.
5. Example 2: List a series of movement instructions (e.g., "touch your head, stand on one foot, squat down"), then wait, and have students carry out those movements in that order.

»» **MUST DO:** Must require students to remember a series of movements and wait for a specific word before carrying out the movements.

↪ **CAN ADAPT:** Change the movements and the number of movements in the series.

MATERIALS

✂ None required.

IF WE...

practice slowing down and thinking before we act...

WAIT FOR IT

THEN WE...

will be in charge of what we say and do...

SO WE...

can engage deeply in learning with each other.



AFTER THE ACTIVITY, DEBRIEF...

- Was it easy or hard to wait when playing this game? Why?
- What strategies or skills did you use to help you wait to begin?
- What skills or strategies did you use to remember the movements/instructions?
- Are there other times during the school day that you have to wait? To listen/remember directions? What about at home or at school?

TIPS FOR SUCCESS



For students who may need more support, start with two movements. As they become comfortable with two movements, gradually increase the number of movements.

Play background music with a beat as you play to help everyone do the moves at the same time.

ADAPTATIONS

- To make things more challenging: increase the number of instructions in each sequence, increase the wait time, or add intentional distractions (e.g., other students singing a song or doing jumping jacks in view of the students trying to remember the sequence).
- To make the game more challenging, incorporate “rules” associated with each movement. In the “opposites” game, students must remember the rule and complete the opposite movement when they see it (e.g., “Look tall” and students squat down). “Rules” can also be specific to each game, such as “When I touch my elbow in the sequence, you have to touch your head when you replicate the same sequence.” For added challenges, add multiple rules per sequence.
- Another advanced option with a “rule”: Students assign a movement to numbers (touching your head is 1, fist in the air is 2, smiling is 3). The leader carries out a series of those movements in front of the class, and students must then report out (or write down) which number sequence matches the movement sequence they observed (e.g., “You did a 3, 2, 3, 3, 1.”).