**5- minute barrier games**

Incorporating quick and engaging barrier games into the school day can significantly enhance children’s social interactions, communication skills, and overall sense of community within the classroom. These games are specifically designed to be simple and effective, requiring minimal resources and preparation, making them ideal for short windows of time throughout the school day. Whether it’s during morning work, before or after lunch, or any free five-minute gap, these games can easily be integrated into your routine.

You can select any game that feels appropriate for the moment, but it's important to consider the specific needs of the children you are working with. Each game has a clear aim, so you should choose the one that aligns with the skills you want to focus on, whether it’s enhancing communication, building friendships, fostering empathy, or developing listening and problem-solving skills. The flexibility of these activities allows them to be used in a variety of settings, making them a great tool to build social and emotional development.

For children who have been identified as receiving assistance from the communications clinic for social skills —we recommend incorporating one of these barrier games into their daily routine. This consistency can help build confidence, encourage peer connections, and promote the development of social skills over time, all while keeping the experience fun and engaging.

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| Activity | Aim | Plan | Resources needed | Notes |
| 1. Drawing Relay | Learning Outcome: Encourages clear communication, listening skills, and cooperation. | Description: One child describes an image to another child, who draws based on the description. After five minutes, they compare the drawings. | Whiteboards and pens |  |
| 2. Find the Object | Learning Outcome: Enhances problem-solving, listening skills, and teamwork. | Description: One child hides an object in the room and gives verbal clues to another child, who must find it. | An object to hide, an empty room |  |
| 3.Guess the Sound | Learning Outcome: Promotes listening skills and the ability to understand others’ expressions. | Description: A child creates a sound using objects (e.g., tapping a pencil, clapping), and the other child must guess what it is. | Objects to make a sound |  |
| 4. My Favourite Things | Learning Outcome: Promotes self-expression, listening skills, and shared interests. | Description: Each child takes turns describing one of their favourite things without naming it. The other child guesses what it is. | N/A |  |
| 5. Shape Builder | Learning Outcome: Fosters creativity, communication, and teamwork. | Description: One child describes a shape or pattern, and the other child tries to recreate it using blocks or paper shapes. | Blocks, shapes, lego, fuzzy felt, maths cubes  (whatever is to hand and is easy) |  |
| What’s Missing? | Learning Outcome: Develops observation skills, memory, and teamwork. | Description: Place several objects on a table. One child looks away, and the other removes one object. The first child has to guess what’s missing. | Random objects from around the classroom |  |
| 8. Story in a Sentence | Learning Outcome: Builds collaborative storytelling, creativity, and communication. | Description: One child starts a story with one sentence, and the other child continues it with another sentence. They take turns creating the story. | N/A |  |
| Silent Charades | Learning Outcome: Promotes non-verbal communication, body language awareness, and teamwork | Description: One child acts out a word or action without speaking while the other child guesses | N/A |  |
| Pictionary | Learning Outcome: Enhances creativity, communication, and problem-solving | Description: One child draws an image based on a word or phrase while the other child guesses the word. | Whiteboards and pens |  |
| 12. Two Truths and a Lie | Learning Outcome: Encourages self-awareness, honesty, and getting to know peers. | Description: Each child shares two true statements and one false statement about themselves. The other child must guess which one is the lie. | N/A |  |
| 13. What’s the Question? | Learning Outcome: Promotes active listening, critical thinking, and effective questioning. | Description: One child makes a statement (e.g., "I like pizza"), and the other child has to ask a question that would prompt that statement (e.g., "What’s your favourite food?"). |  |  |
| 14. Emotion Charades | Learning Outcome: Encourages empathy, non-verbal communication, and emotional awareness. | Description: One child silently acts out an emotion (e.g., happy, sad, angry, excited) without using words, and the other child has to guess the emotion. | N/A |  |