

LESSON 6

THE MOVEMENTS

BRIEF LESSON SUMMARY

- Defining 'front' (introduction of Boletus the Gnome)
- Movement game activities (which direction, how many squares)
- Memory game activity (passing from different coloured squares)

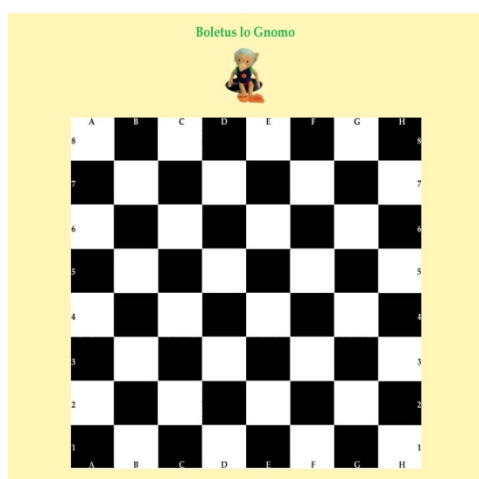
EQUIPMENT : giant chessboard – name cards and holders – soft toy on a pedestal (Boletus the Gnome) – containers to hold prize caps (safes) - plasticized coloured cards (15x15 cm) with points written on one side (treasure chests) – prize caps (plastic soft-drink bottle caps)

THE FAIRY TALE

"In the castle there lived a gnome by the name of Boletus, who was both a friend and trusted advisor of the king. Alas, he had the unfortunate habit of playing little tricks on everyone, such as squirting people with water or messing up their hair. Needless to say, everyone became very wary and whenever they passed Boletus they never turned their backs on him for fear of becoming his next victim. So remember to always keep your eyes on Boletus the Gnome.

BOLETUS THE GNOME!

NOTE: In this and subsequent lessons alpha-numeric coordinates are present on the giant chess board as per the diagram.



The character Boletus the Gnome is introduced to the class so as to provide a frontal reference point. He is a soft toy that sits on a pedestal or stool outside the chessboard on the side of the chessboard that starts with A8 and finishes with H8, (see the diagram). If you are facing Boletus, you are facing front. Note that when a game of chess is being played, the board is in the correct position when the corner square to the right of a player is white. From this point on a vertical direction is when you follow a straight forward path on any of the squares from 1 to 8 or vice versa, The horizontal direction is when you follow a straight path between the a-column and the h-column or vice versa.

THE FAIRY TALE

"The king kept his vast wealth in his castle; ever fearful of being robbed, he divided up his treasure and put it in different rooms. This way a thief would only get a part of the treasure if he managed to get into the castle. Each parcel of treasure was locked away in magic treasure chests that could only be opened when an exact combination was loudly announced: The first part of the combination was the movement used to get to the treasure chest (right horizontal, left horizontal, forward vertical, or backward vertical); the second part of the combination was a number (the number of rooms entered). This worked very well as the thieves were not very clever and were not able to remember so many details.

ACTIVITY 1

TEAM GAME ACTIVITY: LOOK INSIDE THE TREASURE CHEST, AND SEE WHAT'S THERE!

Main instructions for the children

- Go into the castle and enter the room indicated by your teammates.
- Make a movement as indicated by your teammates.
- When you reach the room with the treasure chest, say out loud the type of movement you made (forward vertical or backward, or left or right horizontal) and how many rooms you entered (don't count the room you started from).
- Pick up the treasure chest and say out loud how many points you have won.

- You can't open a treasure chest if you make a mistake when you say the type of movement or the number of rooms entered.
- Go and collect the same number of prize caps as there are points and put them in the team safe.
- Paths taken by other teams cannot be used, but you can choose the same treasure chest.
- Remember to keep facing Boletus!

Activity details for the teacher

- The class is divided into 4 teams; each one has a safe in which they keep their prize caps.
- 10 or so coloured cards are placed at random on various squares of the chessboard. They are facing down so the points written on one side are not visible. The points range from 1 to 5 (treasure chests with different amounts of treasure).
- In turn, one member is chosen by the team, and sent onto the chessboard and goes to a square indicated by their team mates (generally a border square is chosen).
- Their team mates guide the member on the board, indicating what movement they make to reach the treasure chest.
- When the team member reaches the chosen treasure chest square, they name the type of movement they made and say how many squares they entered, and then see what treasure there is (the number of points).
- You cannot leave from a square that has already been used, but you can choose a treasure chest already reached (a nice memory exercise as the children try to remember the chests with the biggest treasures).
- The team earns prize caps with the same value as the points in the various treasure chests. If the movement type and number of squares entered is not said correctly by either the team or the player, they do not turn over the treasure chest card and thus do not receive any points. Each member of the team collects their prize caps and puts them in the team safe.
- The team that collects the highest number of prize caps wins.

NOTE

The first square a child leaves from is not included in the 'room' count. The child stands in the square with the treasure chest, which is included in the count.

ACTIVITY 2

WORK IN PROGRESS

Main instructions for the children

- Go into the castle to the room indicated to you by your teammates.
- Do the movement indicated by your teammates.
- When you reach the room with the chosen treasure chest, say out loud the movement you made (forward or backward vertical, or left or right horizontal) and how many rooms you entered.
- Pick up the treasure chest and see how many points you have won.
- You don't win any points if you make a mistake when you say the direction or the number of rooms you entered.
- Teams gets a prize cap for every point they find.
- You can't use a path that has been taken by your team or other teams, but you can choose the same treasure chest.
- You cannot pass through rooms that have treasure chests as they are being filled. You must change your path.

Activity details for the teacher

- a) This is similar to the previous game activity but with some important differences.
- b) The treasure chest cards are face up and thus the number of points is visible.
- c) You cannot go onto a square where there is a treasure chest card when moving to the treasure card chosen by your team, (remind the children that the treasure chests are being filled - work in progress - and nobody can enter a room when this is being done; they must change their route).

ACTIVITY 3

NO NEED TO STOP

Main instructions for the children

- Go into a room indicated by your teammates.
- Do a movement as indicated by your teammates.
- When you reach the room with the treasure chest, say the type of movement you made (forward vertical or backward vertical or left horizontal or right horizontal) and how many rooms you entered.

- Pick up the treasure chest and say out loud how many points you have won.
- You don't win any points if you make a mistake when you say the direction or the number of rooms entered.
- Your team gets the same number of prize caps as there are points.
- You cannot take a path already taken by another team, but you can choose the same treasure chest.
- You can collect points from other treasure chests provided that they are on your path; when you come across a treasure chest on your way, don't stop. The number of points is visible so you can call them out without stopping.

Activity details for the teacher

- a) This game activity is similar to Activity 1.
- b) The coloured treasure chest cards are turned face up so the points can be seen.
- c) You can collect points from treasure chest cards that are on the same linear path to the destination treasure chest. The side of the cards with the numbers on them are face up so the children do not need to stop if there is a treasure chest on their path.
- d) This time the instructions to the children are 'When you are moving towards a room with a treasure chest, keep going without stopping, like you are on a motorway'

ACTIVITY 4

GAME ACTIVITY IN PAIRS: THE BLIND PERSON

Main instructions for the children

- Go into the castle in pairs.
- Face each other standing in different coloured rooms, and then take each other's hand.
- Decide who is going to be the 'blind person' and who will be the 'guide'.
- Before moving, the blind person looks at the colour of the room they are standing in and then closes their eyes or puts on a blindfold.
- The guide leads their companion either vertically or horizontally (or both) one differently coloured room at a time. When you reach the edge of the castle, change direction.

- The blind person cannot open their eyes and must be guided by their partner.
- Immediately stop where you are when instructed.
- The blind person must keep their eyes closed until receiving a light tap on the head (or told to open them); they then say what colour they are on without looking.
- After checking if the colour called out was correct, change roles: the guide becomes the blind person and the guide becomes the blind person

Activity details for the teacher

- a) 4 or 5 pairs of children go onto the chessboard and face each other on adjacent squares, holding both hands, After the game activity is explained to them, they decide who will be the blind person and who will be the guide.
- b) The blind person closes their eyes after noting the colour of the square they are on. The guide leads the child one different coloured square at a time, pausing briefly after every step.
- c) After the children have made a few steps call out *Stop!* and the pair must stop where they are. The blind person keeps their eyes shut until given a light tap on the head or called by name, at which point they must say the colour square they are standing on without looking.
- d) After the child checks if they are correct or not, the pair reverse roles.

NOTE:

1. At the beginning it is best to stop the activity after only a few steps, as this makes it easier for the children to accustom themselves to the game dynamic and because it requires less memory work. After a while, the time period with eyes shut can be extended.
2. At the end of the activity, talk with the children about how they felt doing either role and if it was hard for them to keep their eyes shut.

CLOSING CHANT: Here is Boletus, wise counsellor and friend of the king. He loves a naughty joke, so never ever take your eyes off him!

1, 2, 3, yeaaaaaah!

OBSERVATIONS

BOLETUS THE GNOME

Boletus is a very important character for the success of the game activities and is the main reference point for all subsequent activities at the first level: Boletus is central to learning the key topic of frontal direction and thus what the correct direction on the chessboard is for any given exercise; he also introduces an affectionate and imaginative element. Boletus is a character that the children see as both real and fantastic, increasing the fun factor and contributing to quicker learning.

The feelings of affection that Boletus fosters in the children is reassuring and relaxing, and he leads the kids to more coherent movement and logical thought in an easy and immediate fashion.

The teacher can therefore use Boletus to communicate a message of understanding and welcome for all the children and he becomes the wise counsellor when there are problems or conflicts to be resolved.

LOOK INSIDE THE TREASURE CHEST, AND SEE WHAT'S THERE!

This game activity requires the children to deal with a series of rules that must be observed and respected if points are to be won for their team. We have already noted the importance of rules; however, in this specific activity the team as a whole must observe them, with the requirement for each individual member to participate correctly for the activity to be completed successfully.

There are children who don't take much interest in the performance of teammates when they are doing activities. In contrast, there are children that will seek to guide companions from outside the chessboard when they are in difficulty, but who will not intervene when a child is doing the activity confidently and correctly.

This game activity provides the teacher with the opportunity to check if the children have understood and remember the names of the movements, paying attention to those children who have difficulty in working well with their companions. This is important so as to encourage listening and group acceptance of error by an individual group member, which introduces the theme of support.

The activity features treasure chests, points to be won, and prize caps, which stimulate healthy competition as well as supplying the children with a concrete means of calculating how well they have understood the movements they must do on the chessboard.

PRIZE CAPS

In this game activity the concepts of reward and penalty are again present via the points acquired or lost by the team. The objective is to get everyone to participate in the game, which promotes paying attention, also when not directly participating (team work). Gaining or not gaining points helps children to monitor themselves in regard to respecting the rules and getting others to respect them without the direct intervention of the teacher.

All children like to win. The value of this exercise is that it supplies the children with the opportunity to have a healthy understanding of both winning and losing, as well as monitoring performance (via the prize caps held in their safe) so they know if they are performing and participating correctly or not.

MOVING IN A DIRECTION

Walking in different directions, requires the child to maintain *multi-focus vision*, namely maintaining attention on one specific direction without losing contact with surrounding space and companions while executing the correct movements. When a child does the backward Castle Step, suggest that they keep looking ahead, in order to see if they can succeed in maintaining their balance and continue to be aware of the entire space unaffected by the worry that is created because they can't see where they are going.

During the execution of the side step (horizontal direction), children are requested to maintain as erect a posture as possible so as to improve the sensation of stability, and to favour balance during the movement (children can also hold their arms straight out).

THE BLIND PERSON

This game activity presents different significant elements regarding relationship with oneself, companions and the group. The theme *guide and be guided* emerges. The child who guides chooses the space in which they will lead their companion, paying attention not to bump into others. The child being guided has to develop trust in the guide as otherwise they will not succeed in maintaining control of thought directly connected to movement with their eyes shut as well as say the colour of the square they are on when they stop.

Focusing attention internally by removing vision facilitates reflexive thought and the development of perception via the other senses (hearing and touch). The various mental steps are then synthesised to produce a concrete result, i.e. identification of the square's colour.

This blind activity also helps to perfect balance and proprioception capacity. Checking if the children's declaration of colour is correct is done by the teacher, again with emphasis on congratulating a good performance and gentle identification of errors, pointing out with good humour any attempt at 'cheating' such as opening their eyes to see what colour they are on before declaring it! Often it is the children themselves who will regulate matters, 'advising' a companion that they are not following the rules.