



Follow the Leader

Math Concepts: Patterns - creating, identifying, extending

Materials: None

Players: Whole class

Set up: Get in a large circle so that everyone can see and hear each other. Assign one person to lead things off.

Play: The leader creates and displays a pattern of some reasonable length. There are a huge variety of possible patterns for this person to create from, such as:

- Movement patterns: stepping, jumping, waving, nodding, kicking, arm movements
- Sound patterns: clapping, knee slapping, tongue clicking, foot stomping
- Loudness patterns: soft, medium, loud

The pattern created can be a mixture of these ideas, or perhaps it will involve some others. Once the pattern has been shown to the whole group, the leader starts off the pattern around the circle. For example, suppose the pattern is: step, clap, jump. The leader would do the step, the next person would clap, the third person would jump, and the fourth person would step, and so on around the circle.

Goal: Have fun as a group and learn about patterns.

– DISCUSSION AND TIPS –

Understanding properties of objects and identifying patterns is a central part of mathematics. Use this activity to practice working with patterns, both identifying them and extending them. This can provide a good movement break between quieter activities.

– VARIATIONS –

Elimination or Cooperative: You can make this an elimination game by removing anyone who makes a mistake. However, it's friendlier to just fix the mistake and keep on going around.

Adding Complexity: Once the pattern has gone completely around the circle, you have several choices.

- Add one more element to the end of the pattern and go around again.
- Let the next person create a new pattern.
- Bounce the pattern back in the opposite direction and do the pattern backwards.