

### **Top Rock Climbing Games and Activities**

- 1) (Per rope) One student climbing, one student as a backup belayer one student as a rope wrangler (keeping the rope on the tarp) and one student can always be a photographer.
- 2) Keep a couple of strands of retired climbing rope (activity rope) on hand. Kids can practice tying figure eights and instructors can go over more advanced knots depending on the group.
- 3) Knot races (figure 8's, bowline, clove hitch, etc.)
- 4) To explain the different forms of climbing instructors can draw out a diagram (or print one) to explain lead climbing vs top rope. The differences in sport vs trad.
- 5) Explain the different types of holds to kids (jugs, crimps, slopers, side pulls, under clings, pockets etc.) and then have the kiddos not climbing attempt to find examples of these at the base of the climb.
- 6) Blind-folded climbing can help kids focus on really feeling the holds while the kids on the ground can help guide the blind-folded student.
- 7) As a further challenge students can play "Climbing communication breakdown"- Climber is blind-folded. One student on the ground is facing the climber but cannot speak; another is facing away from the climber but is allowed to talk. The non-speaking student facing the climber must non-verbally communicate to the student facing away from the crag the instructions. This student must then tell the climber what to do (all the while unable to see if their directions are correct).
- 8) Skill focus- Have students climb with tennis balls in their hands. The students can only touch the tennis balls to the rock and not their hands- this helps kids to focus on using their feet to climb instead of just their hands (great for non-vertical slab). Additionally if this is effective, kids can try to climb with no hands at all (behind their backs).
- 9) Showing kiddos a guide book. This can help when explaining the rating system, types of climbs, types of rock how to get to a climb, what gear is needed etc.
- 10) Once instructors show students a guide book, have kids make their own topo or map of the climb site, route (the way they climbed it) etc.



11) Show the kids different kinds of gear and how it is used. When kiddos aren't climbing they can practice placing trad gear. If kids are really getting it you can show them how to make an anchor and they can practice making anchors on the ground.

12) Bouldering- if there is a site with bouldering, teach kids how to be good spotters and they can take turns climbing and spotting one another.

13) Having kids learn how to flake and coil a rope. This can later turn into flake or coil races.

14) Rock game- Have each kiddo find a rock on the ground, it must be bigger than a quarter and small enough to fit in a closed hand. Once they have all found a rock, really studied it (even name it!) then have them turn the rocks over to the instructor. Have them get into a tight circle, shoulders touching with their arms behind their backs and eyes closed. The instructor will place one rock into the hand of the first student. Based off of touch alone, the student must figure out if it is their rock... if it is they will hold onto it and keep passing along the following rocks, if not they will pass it along to the next student and will receive another rock. This continues until each student has a rock that they think is their own. Once everyone has on they can hold out their hand and see if they indeed found their rock. This can help to show kids how important touch is when identifying a hold/ how positive it is and how it can come in handy when trying to find holds on a seemingly blank face.

15) Narrated climb- Go over different climbing terms/holds/techniques. Have a blind folded climber (or seeing climber) climb using only instruction from another student on the ground, but the student must "spew beta" using only climber lingo they have been taught.

16) Beta games- One person completes the route; every student must climb the route using that person's beta exactly.

17) Climbing for points- Have students try to complete a route with the least amount of moves. A fall costs one point, a takes costs two. Have students not climbing keep track of moves made, and cheer their teammates on.

18) Simon says- You can play this with a group of people. There is a leader (Simon, I suppose), this leader gives the group 15 seconds to get off the ground and stay there. After that time, the leader calls out various commands: "Simon says... move your left foot." for example and everyone must move the nominated limb to a new hold unless the command is not prefixed with "Simon says". Players are out if they fall off or do not obey the commands.