



Three Blind Mice

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This game was created in a class of third through fifth graders. I presented the students with the challenge of using the story and language of the song to create the game. The class members decided that the characters in the game would be three people representing the mice and one person representing the farmer's wife. They agreed that the song suggested a chase. Space was limited so they tried a circle formation and line formation. After several enjoyable experiments, they decided that a circle formation would be the best.

They soon realized that the concept of "blind" mice was difficult. They considered blindfolding the mice, but if there was a chase, a safety problem would be created. Their solution was that the mice should turn away as the "wife" was chosen, keeping them uninformed, "blind," as to the identity of the "farmer's wife." To look the part, the mice were to wear tails. By experimenting in different ways, they finally arrived at the following game.

- The students discovered that the word mice occurs three times in the song and decided that a person would walk around the circle as the song was sung and on each word "mice," the person would give the scarf to the closest person.
- After the mice are selected, a person walks around the circle and selects the "farmer's wife" at that point in the song. The "farmer's wife" remains seated in the circle with the identity unknown to the mice.
- As the song is sung, the mice run around the outside of the circle.
- When the words "farmer's wife" are sung, the "farmer's wife" gets up and tries to get as many tails as possible.
- The "mice" must stay on the outside of the circle but may change directions trying to avoid losing their tails.
- The "farmer's wife" may cut through the circle at any point in an effort to get as many tails as possible.
- The action stops at the end of the song. The mice who keep their tails get another turn to be a mouse and the game continues with a new unidentified "farmer's wife."

Addendum: Over the years the students have occasionally adapted the chase to be something other than running. They have tried jumping, side-stepping, fast walking among many others which has added another dimension to an exciting game. I hope you enjoy this with your students.