

# 5 Play to learn and learn to play



“Why are clear rules important in games?”

After playing soccer and basketball with unusual rules, such as no ball, no hands, or no talking, students reflected on how rules help games work. They explored how rules support cooperation, safety, fun, inclusion, and responsibility.

Working in groups, the students were challenged to design an original active game, without using board games. They had to think creatively about movement, teamwork, safety, and how to make sure all players could participate, including people with disabilities. Through inquiry and experimentation in P.E., they tested materials, space, and physical challenges to improve their games.

In English and French, students practiced giving clear instructions, using appropriate vocabulary, organizing ideas, and adapting their explanations for different audiences. They drafted rules, tested their games with classmates, received feedback, and made changes to improve the experience.

Throughout the project, students discovered that rules are not only restrictions, but tools that help people communicate, collaborate, and enjoy playing together.

## Teacher's reflection

This project allowed the students to develop much more than language or physical skills. Throughout the process, the girls strengthened collaboration, problem-solving, creativity, communication, and critical thinking. Designing a game required them to negotiate ideas, organize responsibilities, and consider the experience of others. Many groups discovered that creating clear instructions was more difficult than inventing the game itself, which led to important conversations about audience, clarity, and empathy.

It was especially meaningful to observe how the integration of three subjects created authentic learning opportunities. In P.E., students considered movement and safety; in English and French, they focused on communication and explanation. The project highlighted the power of play as a meaningful context for inquiry and demonstrated that students learn deeply when they create experiences for real audiences and real purposes.

## Student's voices

"We learned that rules are important because without them people can get hurt."

"At first our game was too complicated and didn't make sense, so we had to change many things."

"Explaining the game to others helped us notice problems we didn't see before."

"Good rules make the game better for everyone."

"Explaining the game to others was hard because we had to think about what they needed to know."

"Rules need to be adapted for different people."

**When students create, test, and share their own games, they discover that rules are not barriers to fun, they are bridges that help people communicate, participate, and connect with one another.**