

RETRO recess

This is a collection of games that were often played during recess in one room schoolhouses during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Though some of these games may seem familiar to many of us have you ever thought about the origins of these classic games? The origins and uses of these games can tell us a lot about what growing up during this period was like.

You will notice going through these games the simplicity of many of the activities. This is because there was not a lot of materials available to people so children's games relied on finding creative ways to have fun!

We hope you can also get creative while encouraging activity and movement!

- Frontenac County Schools Museum



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Clapping Games

Type: miscellaneous game

Players: 2+

Clapping games have a long history but they gained mass popularity in the 1960's. Used to pass time, play with a large circle of friends, or even just to warm your hands on a cold day. One of the most popular "adult with child" clapping games *Patty Cake* was first recorded in 1698. It was until 1820's in France that the existence of "child with child" clapping games was documented. Many clapping games originated in America from African-American traditions and popular music. There is a strong tradition of clapping games especially with young black girls who used it as a way to learn musical practices and the "rules" of black social identity.

Miss Mary Mack

Miss Mary Mack is a very widespread and popular clapping game that combines the sung rhyme with the clapping pattern.



Rhyme:

Miss Mary Mack Mack Mack

All dressed in black black black

With silver buttons buttons buttons

All down her back back back.

She asked her mother mother mother

For fifty cents cents cents

To see the elephant elephant elephant

Jump over the fence fence fence.

He jumped so high high high

He touched the sky sky sky

And he never came back back back

Till the fourth of July-ly-ly.

Clapping Pattern:

1. Clap own hands together
2. Cross arms in front of chest
3. Clap own hands together
4. Clap hands with partner three times

