

Games

Wilderness or Not

Supplies: Paper and pens.

How: Give each camper two slips of paper. Ask them to put a large “W” at the left edge of one. On this slip of paper, ask campers to write something they learned to do that was hard or complicated. Encourage them to think of things that others might think were easy and that they are comfortable talking about. For example, some who didn’t grow up in the church might use “learning the Lord’s Prayer,” or someone who grew up in a vegetarian home might say, “eating chicken nuggets.” On their second piece of paper, ask campers to write something they do all the time that is easy for them. This could be “brush my teeth,” or “walk to school”-anything that is ordinary. Collect all the slips of paper in a container and mix them up. Let campers take turns drawing one and explaining why it is a wilderness experience, and making up a story to explain it. The group will then vote “Wilderness” or “Not”. The camper who drew then reveals if the paper had a “W” on it or not. If the group gets it wrong, the camper reading gets a point. If they get it correct, the group gets the point. Play until everyone has drawn twice and all the prompts are gone. You could also add some extras without telling the campers, so there are extra simple tasks in the container.

Redlight the Leader (Based on Day 3)

How: This game is a mashup of Redlight–Greenlight and Follow the Leader with some additional twists. Campers line up single file or in two rows if you have a larger group. In the front are two campers who will be called “Day” and “Night”. Another leader, named “Moses,” will walk alongside the campers to serve as a judge. Campers follow Day and Night, follow the leader style, going where they go and moving as they move (jump, crawl, hop, etc.). If Day or Night yells, “Rest,” everyone must stop following and pretend to pick up manna from the ground. Anyone who keeps moving must go to the end of the line. When they say, “Follow,” everyone starts following again. If Moses sees anyone not following fully, they can send that person to the back of the line. Along the way, Moses can also call out, “Sunrise,” which means “Day” is now the leader

speaking or “Sunset,” which means Night is now the leader. If either of them speaks when it is the other’s turn, they trade places with the first camper in line and go to the back as a follower.

Try This: Play on your way to worship, making a long journey around the camp, ending up in a place where you can worship God outdoors. If you have a traditional hike location or a high place, this would be a great way to get there.

I Cannot Lie (Based on Day 5)


How: This game has three special roles for campers. One will be Esther, whose job is to identify both Mordecai and Haman. Mordecai can only answer statements truthfully. Haman can lie. Everyone in the game is allowed to ask yes/no questions, but nothing more. People answer with a simple “yes” or “no.” Esther and the rest of the people are trying to discover who Mordecai is and who Haman is as they wander around asking each other questions. Once Esther is ready, she can shout, “It’s time to see the king!” At this point, everyone forms a circle, and Esther can either give her answers for each or ask the group, “Who do you think Haman is?” with the group responding by pointing at who they believe it is. She may also ask, “Who do you think Mordecai is?” to get the people’s response. If Esther is wrong about either, Haman wins the game. Play a few times, changing roles and allowing for creative approaches from different campers assigned to be Haman.

People in our Neighborhood (Based on Day 6)

In Advance: Collect simple items for groups to collect from various stations around camp. This could be numbered pieces of paper or something for them to carry. You decide how complicated to make this.

You will also want a task or trivia question at each station. Make sure a couple are really hard so that the campers will need to ask for help.

How: This game is played in groups or teams of 5-15. Explain that there are stations they must visit around camp and tasks they must complete at each station to



collect each designated item. Have extra adult leaders around camp and invite the campers to ask them for help if needed. One of those adults should be a “Person of Prayer,” who, when asked for help, makes the group sit in a circle and name things they are thankful for before wishing them good luck in the game. One person should be a “Person of History” who has the group sit to hear about another time they played a game at camp before wishing them luck and sending them on. One person should be a “Person of Samaria” who will have them sit in a circle, and then give clues to the more difficult stations. Occasionally, this person may also walk with them to help complete the task. Once all the groups have completed all the tasks, the game ends, and you have a great conversation starter about the blessing of those who got real help and those who were just delayed. If you have time, dive into a conversation about the support some of us get in the world and the experience of frustration others have. Is it fair? Is it based on our faithfulness or what we deserve? Of course, you can also just play this one for fun, but it has the potential to be a great total camp activity.