


Sticks and Stones

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Frontier children didn't get an allowance or go to the mall to buy toys, but they had plenty of imagination. Boys and girls played catching, guessing, and counting games. They used materials

like wood, paper, buttons, and stones. Corncobs became darts, checkers, and dolls.

One game was played using five peach pits. On each pit, a line was drawn on one side. Then the pits were put into a bowl and shaken up by one player. If the pits all landed with the same side up, that player scored two points. If just one pit was a different side up, the player earned one point. Players took three turns each, adding up their points.

Step back into frontier days and have some fun. ♣

Try this Game

In the Game of Graces, two players toss a small wooden hoop back and forth.



1. Tie the ribbon around the hoop, leaving the ends trailing.
2. Two players each hold two dowels, one in each hand, crossed like a pair of scissors.
3. The players stand a few feet apart. One player hangs the hoop over his dowels where they cross.
4. That player pulls his dowels apart quickly, sending the hoop flying off toward the other player.
5. The other player tries to catch the hoop on her dowels. Then, she sends it back to her partner in the same way. The first player to catch the hoop ten times in a row is the winner. Or you can simply play catch.

You'll need:

- ribbon, for decoration
- a 9-inch-diameter wooden hoop
- 4 wooden dowels, 18 inches long

Make this Toy

1. Cut a 3-inch-diameter cardboard circle. Carefully poke two holes opposite each other near the edge. Tie a piece of string through each hole.
2. Think of two things that go together, like a fish and a bowl or a cat and a mouse. Draw one picture on each side of the circle. (Make sure that you draw one of the pictures upside down.)
3. Hold one string in each hand and wind up the thaumatrope. When you stop winding, pull the strings apart. As the circle spins, the pictures should seem to join together. What do you see?

Frontier children also made **thaumatropes**, or spinning paper disks. The thaumatrope created optical illusions when it spun.

You'll need:

- scissors
- cardboard
- about 18 inches of string, cut into two pieces
- drawing materials

