

# What Did (S)He Say?

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## Type of Game

Icebreaker, Language Exercise

## Game Purpose

The purpose of this game is to simulate what it is like to have indirect communication with someone and have to rely on communicating through a third party. For example, someone may need to talk through an interpreter to find out what someone is saying to him in a language he doesn't understand in order to respond appropriately and be understood. The game also simulates how it may take a number of people for youth to communicate with each other or with staff because of language barriers including slang, dialects, idioms, unfamiliar cultural reference, etc.

The game is very simple though it's normal to be confused by the rules in the beginning. After 2-3 rounds, the rules will become familiar and the rounds will run pretty quickly.

## Play Time

1 minute or more (as long as you'd like to play)

## Number of Players

4 or more players. Works best with 6-10 players.

Bigger groups can be broken into smaller groups of 6 or more players.

## Materials

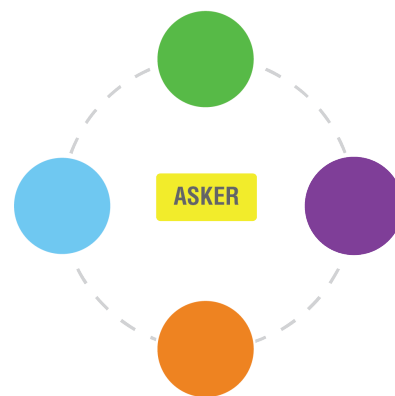
Nothing is required. There is an optional version of playing the game with a medium size ball, like a tennis ball, that is easy and safe to pass around.

## Setup

- One person chooses to be the Asker (or the oldest player can start as the Asker).
- All remaining players should form a circle around the Asker (with about 2 feet between the Asker and the circle).

*Image 1:*

*This is the setup for a 5-person game with the "Asker" (yellow) in the middle of a circle formed by the remaining 4 players (green, purple, orange, and blue).*



## Gameplay

The game is made up of rounds. You can play as many rounds as you wish. The Asker player can change at the end of any round.

Each Round:

1. The **Asker** makes eye contact with one of the players in the circle, called the Responder, and then selects and says out loud one question from the provided Question List or Question Cards.
2. The **Responder** must now turn to look at the player on his or her left, known as the Question Repeater, and asks, "What did he say?" (or "What did she say?" if the Asker is female).
3. The **Question Repeater** now looks at the Responder and repeats the original question (asked by the Asker).
4. The **Responder** now looks at the player on his or her right, known as the Answer Repeater, and answers the question honestly. Responses can be one word or short sentence answers.
5. The **Answer Repeater** now looks at the Asker and repeats the answer that the Responder just gave.

Image 2: Example of a Round

- (1) Female Asker looks at the orange player and says "What day is it today?"
- (2) The orange player (Responder) looks at the blue player (Question Repeater) and says "What did she say?"
- (3) The blue player looks at the orange player and says, "What day is it today?"
- (4) Orange player looks at the purple player (Answer Repeater) and says "Today is Wednesday."
- (5) The purple player looks at the Asker and says "Today is Wednesday."



### Optional Game Modification #1:

#### Multitasking

Requires a tennis ball or a ball of similar size and weight.

One of the players starts with the ball and begins passing the ball by throwing it gently to the person on his or her left. The ball continues being passed around the circle clockwise as the Asker continues to ask questions to different players.

Modification Takeaway:

The use of the ball simulates that there may be other things distracting a child when being asked questions (in court, in school, in daily life) and requires him or her to focus on the task at hand while also balancing other tasks. The ball also helps keep all players engaged in the activity, even if he or she isn't the Asker/Question Repeater/Answer Repeater in the current round.

### **Optional Game Modification #2: Muscle Memory**

*Requires a tennis ball or a ball of similar size and weight.*

To help reinforce the pattern, the ball instead can be passed by the person currently speaking to the person to whom s/he is speaking. **Use image 2 as a guide.**

For each question the ball goes from the Asker to the (1) Responder, then to the (2) Question Repeater, then back to the (3) Responder, who passes it to the (4) Answer Repeater, who finally returned the ball with the answer to the (5) Asker.

### **Game Debrief**

The game reinforces the challenges of having to rely on someone else to communicate on your behalf. A person who is asked a question may feel pressure to answer a question as quickly as possible even if they do not fully understand the question. Instead, the person should follow the protocol, which may require speaking through a third party.

A specific example is when an immigrant child who does not speak or understand English must go to court and answer a judge who is speaking to him or her in English and expects answers in English. If the child answers even a simple question that he does know in English (like "What's your name?"), he suggests to the judge that he does understand English. Instead, to avoid confusion and misunderstanding, the child must resist temptation to answer directly to the judge and instead wait for the interpreter to translate the question into a language with which the child is familiar. Then the child can respond to the interpreter who then replies to the judge.

Also more generally, the game is useful for practicing new languages and vocabulary. Therefore, players can choose any language in which to speak and practice speaking and answering in that language.

### **Demo videos:**

- Basic version - <https://vimeo.com/95412649>
- Passing ball in circle (multitasking version) - <https://vimeo.com/95412650>

## Questions List

*These questions can also be written onto index cards. Then the Asker can just pick a card and read the question.*

1. What's your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What day is it today?
4. When is your birthday?
5. What is your favorite color?
6. What is your favorite season?
7. Do you have any siblings?
8. How often do you go to school?
9. What's your favorite type of music?
10. Where are you from?
11. What did you have for breakfast?
12. What's your favorite sport to play?
13. What's your favorite sport to watch?
14. Do you have any pets?
15. What did you eat for dinner last night?
16. Can you swim?
17. What languages do you speak?
18. What's your favorite animal?
19. What are the colors of your country's flag?
20. Where are you now?
21. What do you want to be when you grow up?
22. What is your favorite sports team?
23. Have you ever seen snow?
24. Do you like rain?
25. What color is your hair?
26. What color are your eyes?
27. What is your mother's name?

*Questions for youth going through removal proceedings (living in the shelter or otherwise)*

1. What is your date of birth (including the year)?
2. Do you have a lawyer (an attorney)?
3. Are you still looking for a lawyer (an attorney)?
4. Have you filed for immigration relief?
5. What type of shelter release are you applying for? (Choices are reunification, federal foster care, or voluntary departure)
6. Where are you living?

*Questions for youth going through removal proceedings and who are no longer living in a shelter*

1. Have you moved since your last court date?
2. Have you moved recently?
3. Have you updated your address with the courts?
4. What are you currently doing in the United States?
5. Who is your sponsor?
6. Are you still living with your sponsor?