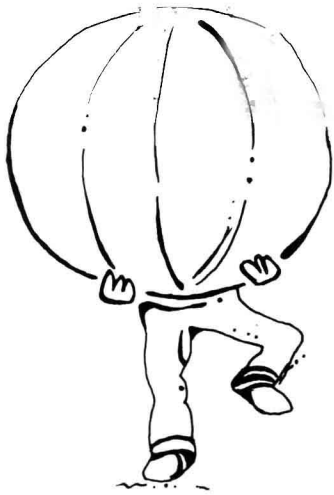
How to Change the Games Children Play

Second Edition

G. S. Don Morris

How to Change the Games Children Play

Second Edition



G. S. Don Morris
California State
Polytechnic University
Pomona, California

Illustrated by
Mark Sullivan

Macmillan Publishing Company
New York
Collier Macmillan Publishers
London

Consulting editors

Eloise M. Jaeger
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Robert M. Clayton
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado

Printed in the United States of America
Library of Congress Catalog Number 79-56429
ISBN 0-02-384141-9

Macmillan Publishing Company
866 Third Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10022
Collier Macmillan Canada, Inc.

Printing 6 7 8 9 10 Year 7 8 9 0

To Pat, Kari, and Peter

THE FAMILY CIRCUS **By Bil Keane**

"We made it up ourselves. You don't need nine guys on a team, or grownups, or uniforms. . . . It's like baseball, only better!"

(*The Family Circus* by Bil Keane, reprinted courtesy of The Register and Tribune Syndicate, Inc.)

Foreword to the First Edition

This book is different. Instead of the usual game-books which contain descriptions of games and generalized statements of philosophy, this book presents the thesis that the very structure of the game must be analyzed in terms of the specific objective sought – "specific outcome behaviors".

This is an interesting and an important notion. It asks teachers to look at games *before* they use them in their programs, rather than attaching *values* to the games as justification for use; values that may not be there due to the very structure of the game.

The second notion of the book, and equally important for educational use of games, is the plea for alternatives and changes in the structure of games. This, Dr. Morris suggests, will include more students. The exclusion of students who *need* to participate will be diminished and perhaps will even disappear.

Dr. Morris offers a model for the analysis of games and guidelines for discovering and creating new ones. These operational tools can serve an excellent means for the teacher who has to interpret models into practical ways of "doing it."

Throughout the book the author projects a sense of respect for the individual's ability to think, to feel, to make decisions and to cooperate with others – to join together in both the analysis and design of games and the sheer enjoyment of playing them.

Muska Mosston

Preface

This book is designed for everyone who teaches games to children—elementary and secondary teachers, physical educators, special educators, and recreation directors.

It is important to clarify a few points that have been raised by readers of the first edition. The term *behavior*, as used in this book, refers only to the observed performances of game players by game leaders. This means that the term *behavior* incorporates such items as the number of players actually moving in a game, how long they are allowed to move, where they move, and the quality and efficiency with which they move. A major concept presented in the book is that the game structure can influence the effectiveness of the behavior that occurs in a game. In addition to the kinds of behavior identification above, there are many other types of behavior that the teacher or game leader can identify. This book presents a model that will help game designers design, develop, and analyze games as they are played. Games are, of course, just *one* medium teachers can use to teach children more about themselves.

There have been several changes in this second edition. The games analysis model has been expanded to explain further the structure of movement games. The expanded model is much easier for any game designer to use than the old model. I also introduce another concept, known as the "games analysis process," which serves as a strategy for engaging players in the analysis and design of games. Many other uses for the games analysis process are suggested, too. Public Law 94-142 has been operational for several

years. Teachers and recreators must be able to include many different skill levels in a single game form. This edition helps game designers incorporate all skill abilities into one game and demonstrates how one can match movement tasks to developmental skill levels. Another chapter provides strategies that help game participants become more skillful (i.e., improve the efficiency of their movements). Finally, many new games have been added to the book—games to promote skill development and games just for fun.

I have attempted to retain all of the positive aspects of the first edition and have added to and improved the original concepts. I don't believe that the games analysis model is the *only* model that allows us to examine games. As a matter of fact, I hope it will lead many of you to create your own models that will be tailored to your specific needs.

I wish to thank my elementary students in Eugene, Oregon, and in Bozeman, Montana, and in Diamond Bar, California, for demonstrating to me that the games analysis concept really does work. And I want to thank my high school students in Upland, California, for prompting me to reconsider what games really do to students. The many teachers who have used these ideas also receive my thanks—it is because of their comments that this edition is possible. Special thanks are extended to Vicki Cowett for typing and otherwise assisting with the manuscript. Mark Sullivan's drawings have received many plaudits from the readers of the first edition, and his work is much appreciated. Finally, my family deserves my praise—their patience and input made this book possible.

G. S. Don Morris
California State Polytechnic University
Pomona

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction to Games Analysis

People of all ages play games—many of us play games our entire lives, while others of us feel that games are played only by the young. As we enter the 1980s, we find that more and more people are playing games throughout their lifetime as more leisure time becomes available. Recently there has been a fairly significant boom within the games community, making the games business a contributor to everyone's lifestyle.

Games exist in many forms. This book will focus upon games that require physical movements, such as those found in sports, physical education classes, and recreational settings. Within each one of these settings, games tend to be played for specific purposes. For example, we often engage in movement games so we can: (1) learn how to move more efficiently, (2) learn team strategies, (3) learn how to interact socially with our peers, (4) experience a feeling of self-worth, (5) spend some time with friends, and (6) play and simply have fun. Certainly we play games for many other reasons that you, the reader, can identify.

The author believes that the game leaders (i.e., teachers, recreation leaders, coaches, or anyone who has designed a game) need to understand that the design and/or structure of a game seems to contribute a great deal to the kinds of experiences the participants have while playing a game. Unless a game leader understands that it is necessary to attend to the structure of a game, the performance outcome experienced by the participants will not necessarily match the initially stated or desired purpose of game play.

Within the educational community, educators use games as a means to an end. During the 1960's and even through much of the 1970's, it was popular for many writers to criticize the direction games were heading. Certainly this author cast a few stones in that direction. However, criticism or constant evaluation of programs is not necessarily unhealthy. Those of us who use games to promote specific educational goals and objectives should constantly analyze what we are doing for and to our students or game participants. We need a tool that permits us to evaluate games and their outcomes.

A concept known as games analysis provides games teachers, and for that matter all teachers, with a model that can help them develop games designed to meet the needs of both leaders and participants. Since the introduction of the games analysis (g.a.) model in 1976, many games leaders across the United States have used it in many different ways. Physical educators have used games analysis to design game and sport activities commensurate with the skills of their students; special educators have used the model to enhance the mainstreaming concept; and recreation leaders have found it useful in designing new and enjoyable games for people of all ages.

GAMES ANALYSIS—A MODEL AND A PROCESS

The games analysis model attempts to provide a framework in which all movement games can be described and thus analyzed. The original games analysis model was presented in very simple terms. Since 1976 the author has expanded the model to assist game designers with their analyses of movement games. By no means is this model an absolute—rather, it is expected that many other people will add to or delete items from the model, thus developing their own model. The concept that is of paramount importance is that game designers must critically analyze a game's design in relation to its stated purpose and to the actual performance of the participants. What follows is a model that has met the needs of this author as well as hundreds of other games leaders and players. It is hoped that the remaining pages provide a sound and practical working tool that can be used by all game designers.

INITIAL MODEL

All movement games seem to possess players, equipment, rules, organizational patterns, movements, and rationales for playing. Several authors have suggested that games are made up of many different categories.* The initial games analysis model has six categories: players, equipment, movement, organizational patterns, limitations, and purposes. Each category comprises a number of components. A concrete description of any movement game can now be demonstrated. The games analysis model (Table 1-1) shows a variety of randomly chosen components placed in the appropriate categories. Game components are nothing more than additional game descriptors. The model allows the game designer to study any game he or she wishes to analyze and to assign the game's components to the appropriate categories. Once this has been accomplished, it is possible to provide a wide range of uses of the model to all games designers, many of which are educational, as well as recreational by design.

COMPLEX MODEL

The old games analysis model has been expanded in response to requests from game designers all over this counrty for more information to facilitate the analysis of games and thereby lead to more effective use of the g.a. model. What follows, then, is the newer model with explanations and descriptions of the categories (Table 1-2).

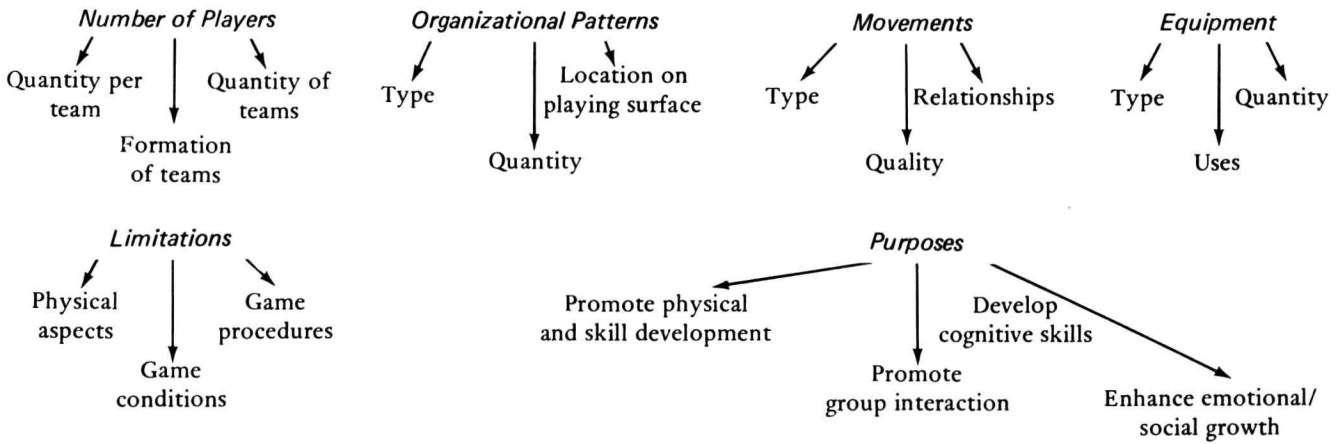
Before proceeding to an explanation of each category, it must be said that the model is dynamic and constantly evolving. The purpose of forming game categories is for ease of discussion and explanation—no doubt some components within the stated categories may overlap. It is the interaction effect of all the categories that results in a game.

*See, for example, Victor P. Dauer and Robert P. Pangrazi, *Dynamic Physical Education for Elementary School Children,* 6th edition (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1979); Glen Kirschner, *Physical Education for Elementary School Children,* 4th edition (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, 1978): E. Mauldon and H. B. Redfern, *Games Teaching* (London: MacDonald and Evans, 1970); and Muska Mosston, *Teaching Physical Education* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Company, 1966).

TABLE 1-1.
GAMES ANALYSIS MODEL—CATEGORIES AND COMPONENTS

Players	*Equipment*	*Movement Pattern*	*Organizational Pattern*	*Limitations*	*Purpose*
individual	balls	running	random placement	3 outs per inning	To win
2 per team	bats	jumping	circle	10 yds for 1st down	To promote cooperative behavior
3 per team	sticks	hopping	columns	boundaries on field	Help develop locomotor skills
4 per team	gloves	skipping	double circles	5 min. per quarter	Promotes problem-solving behavior
5 per team	hoops	walking	files	tag below waist	Aids in eye-hand coordination
six on one team, four on another	plastic bottles	galloping	double columns	only 5 players per team	Helps develop self concept
even number on one team, odd number on other	ropes	kicking	staggered file	4 downs to make a T.D.	Develop competitive spirit
???	bases	throwing	even/odd file	must dribble the ball for every step taken	Promotes sportsmanship
	wands	catching	diamond		
	bowling pins	twisting	triangle		Develop cardiovascular fitness
	individual body parts	rolling	square	???	
	???	???	???		

TABLE 1-2.
COMPLEX GAMES ANALYSIS MODEL



INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

For each of the six identified game categories, the author has chosen to expand his description of the considerations every game designer must contemplate when developing a game. By no means does the author mean to suggest that these are the only considerations, but they should serve as a beginning point that can be added to. It is with this in mind that we examine the first game category, *Number of Players* (Table 1-3).

TABLE 1-3.
NUMBER OF PLAYERS