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SHOULDN'T EVERYBODY SCAMPER?

Scamper: To run playfully about as a chil? ...

And when you stop to think about this definition, there is really nothing much wrong with scampering. In fact, it might be a good thing to do, especially if you are looking for imaginative ideas. Everybody can have ideas, lots of ideas, sometimes good ideas. Running playfully about in the world of make-believe is a visionary activity that helps to produce ideas. Of course, there are ways to go about scampering that will make an individual a better player. And that, of course, is exactly what we hope to do.

It is the express purpose of this book to assist children to maintain and, hopefully, to improve their imaginative ability. In some cases, adults may also benefit. Scamper games provide an opportunity to learn and practise idea-getting techniques that are the craft of authors, inventors and composers. These same techniques have been successfully put to work in business and industry to: create new products, improve methods of operation and solve a variety of problems.

Imagination is an act of forming mental images, pictures of what is not actually present to the senses. It is the ability to see the unseen. Creative imagination is the ability to form unique, novel and original mental images.

The process of creative imagination is one of rearranging or manipulating information that is drawn from the memory store. Knowledge recalled is subject to adaptation, combination or other intellectual operations that serve to produce creative ideas. It has been found that checklisting techniques are of great value in the production of creative ideas. In brief, a checklist contains questions or suggestions that prompt and stimulate an individual to form creative ideas. The "Scamper Techniques", which appear as Figure 2 on page 11 draw heavily from the famous "Idea-Spurring Checklist" developed by Alex Osborn.¹

In playing the Scamper games individuals are cued to think imaginatively through the application of the checklisting techniques which are incorporated into the games. In so doing players are guided into fanciful and imaginative thought. Elegant, fantastic and unrestrained visualization is brought about when creative thinking processes are applied to familiar objects or situations. Existing information in the form of knowledge and experience provides the material to be manipulated in the quest for new and original images.

¹ The letters forming the word *Scamper* are taken from the initial letters of the Checklist found in *Applied Imagination*, pp. 286-287, by Alex Osborn. Used by permission of the publisher, Charles Scribner's Sons.

DIRECTIONS FOR PLAYING: (To be read aloud)

We are going to play a game called *Scamper*. In playing the game you will be asked to scamper about, but you won't really run around. This is a pretend game. When we pretend we use our imagination. When you use your imagination almost anything can happen. Making strange and unusual things happen in our imagination is fun. In playing the Scamper games we hope to have fun. Here are the rules of the game, listen while I read them to you.

(Rules of the Game)

1. I will tell you about something and ask you to think about it? ... to imagine and pretend.
2. Sometimes I may ask you to do something? ... You won't be expected to do it, but you can pretend that you are doing it. You know, just imagine that you are.
3. Remember, we are just pretending. Don't speak out when I ask you something. You may nod your head "yes" or shake your head "no".
4. The best way to pretend is to put your hands over your eyes and close them, or to close your eyes and fold your arms in your lap. When you do this you try to see and pretend to do what I am telling you about.

All right. Let's play a practice game. Are you ready?

... Are your eyes closed?

... Nod your head "yes" if you are ready and your eyes are closed.

... Good. Let's pretend that there is a dish of ice cream sitting right there on the table in front of you.

... Do you see it?

... Nod your head "yes" if you see it.

... What flavor is it? Don't answer out aloud. Just answer to yourself.

... Put a spoon on the table alongside the dish of ice cream.

... All right. Now pick up the spoon and take a bite of the ice cream.

... Is it good?

... Go ahead and eat all of the ice cream in the dish.

... Is there any ice cream left in the dish? Shake your head "no" if it's all gone.

... Fine. Now open your eyes.

... Do you think that you know how to play the game?

... Do you have any questions about playing the game?

... Take time to answer questions.) I believe we are ready now, let's go ahead and play the first Scamper game.

CARDBOARD BOX

Many kinds of things come in a cardboard box. Can you think of some? ... You can take things out of a box, and you can put things into a box. Can you change a little box into a big box? ... Can you change a box into a kennel? ... Sure you can, it isn't hard at all . . . if you use your imagination.

This game is called **Cardboard Box**. Close your eyes and we are ready to start.

Pretend that you have a cardboard box about as big as a chair.

... Put it on the floor in front of you.

... Make it whatever size you want it to be.

... Make the box bigger and change the color. . . .

Now we are going to pretend that we are putting some things into the box. Think about the many different kinds of good things you could put into the box.

... Put them in.

... Keep putting things into the box until it is full.

... Now pile things on top.

... Keep piling things on top.

... Do you have things piled high?

... Now, like magic, make everything in the box go away.

... Is the box empty? . . .

Take a long flat box and put some wheels on it.

... Make it into a billycart.

... Make it be a red billycart.

... Jump into your red billycart and steer it as it whizzes around the room.

... Stop the billycart and get out.

