

From Competition to Collaboration: 10 Games Reimagined

Overview

This guide transforms well-known competitive games into powerful collaborative learning tools. Inspired by *Broken Squares* and *Blokus: Collaborative Edition*, each example flips the goal from individual victory to shared success — helping groups experience how generosity, coordination, and empathy create stronger outcomes.

| Game | Traditional Goal | Collaborative Reframe | Learning Focus |
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| Tetris | Outlast or outscore others by clearing lines. | Work together to fill the entire grid without gaps, alternating moves or agreeing on placements. | Shared strategy, pattern coordination, and collective timing. |
| Jenga | Be the last player before the tower falls. | Build the tallest, most stable tower as a group, measuring height or endurance. | Risk management, patience, and collective focus. |
| Dominoes | Empty your hand or score the most points. | Use all tiles collectively, maximizing coverage and patterns. | Systems thinking, negotiation, and sequencing. |
| Scrabble / Bananagrams | Score the most points with words. | Collaboratively fill the board or create the longest connected network of words. | Shared creativity, flexible thinking, and language building. |
| Connect Four | Get four in a row before your opponent. | Create as many four-in-a-row sequences of any color as possible together. | Pattern recognition, cooperation, and joint planning. |
| Chess / Checkers | Capture the opponent's pieces or king. | Teams agree on each move collectively or solve preset board challenges together. | Strategic empathy, reasoning, and consensus-building. |
| UNO / Crazy Eights | Be the first to discard all cards. | Team wins only when all players have played all cards. | Communication, sequencing, and shared problem-solving. |

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| Carcassonne | Build and claim territories for points. | Jointly construct the map, aiming to complete all cities and roads. | Spatial negotiation, planning, and resource sharing. |
| Settlers of Catan | Reach 10 victory points first. | Reach shared island prosperity where all players achieve a set point threshold. | Cooperation, resource generosity, and balancing goals. |
| Tic-Tac-Toe | Get three in a row to win. | Fill the board completely without making three-in-a-row. | Pattern awareness, foresight, and balance. |

How to Facilitate

- **Set the shared goal:** Make it explicit that the objective is *group success*, not individual win conditions.
 - **Encourage reflection:** Ask what changed in behavior or mindset when success became collective.
 - **Compare dynamics:** After playing collaboratively, try a competitive round and debrief differences in tone, speed, and inclusion.
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Key Insight

Every game here mirrors the *Broken Squares* principle: success emerges when participants release ownership, coordinate purposefully, and think systemically. Transforming competitive mechanics into collaborative ones builds the same emotional intelligence, empathy, and group flow that drive high-performing teams.
