

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
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.

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.

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.
