

# *A Holiday Throwback*

What is better than an oldie but a goodie! Board games or tabletop games can be a great addition to your family holiday due to its ability to help create an atmosphere of togetherness. These family activities provide an opportunity to work on many developmental skills at once while creating fun, social interaction, happiness, and enjoyable memories. For example depending on your game of choice you can work on skills such as: fine and gross motor coordination, hand dexterity, hand eye coordination, grip strength, wrist extension, finger and thumb flexion and extension, both verbal and visual communication, and etc. All of this while PLAYING!

As an OT I am guilty each year of assessing my own children's developmental skill level and deciding on what we could actually work on without stressing my child out. I want my children to enjoy developing new skills. If I want to work on my child's FMC fine motor coordination or even cognitive thinking skills then I choose a game that works on that particular skill. The beauty of playing board games with your child allows you to change or adapt the game's design to suit your child's particular skill level. By slightly altering the rules you are able to tailor the game to best fit your child and their current skill level. As they accomplish each level you can gradually grade the game up by making it a little more challenging until you are actually able to play according to the rules provided by the game. Presenting the board game in this fashion allows your child to build success in their developmental motor coordination or skill. This process allows your child to develop confidence in their abilities and promotes growth within. In addition you can always add interesting twists such as adding a bucket for your child to reach in various planes of motion to discard a card or game piece into to work on their shoulder range of motion or even implement play-doh to hide game pieces into to dig out for hand strengthening.

The possibilities are endless! There are many board games for you to choose from depending on the developmental skill and age range of your child. Here are a couple of our favorites at my home and IOT.

*Have fun!*

***Katera Abrams, MS,OTR/L***

# Hungry Hungry Hippos

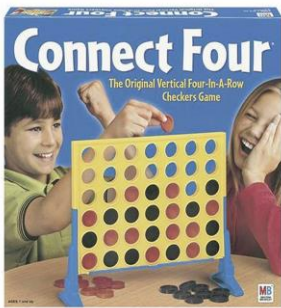
**Number of Players:** up to 4

**Game Purpose:** Collect as many marbles as you can with your hungry hippo.

**Developmental Skill:** Fine Motor Coordination; pincer and tripod grasp, Individual digit strengthening or coordination, Wrist extension, Weight Bearing, Verbal and Visual communication, Learning tool; color identification, counting and sorting



# Connect Four



**Number of players:** 2

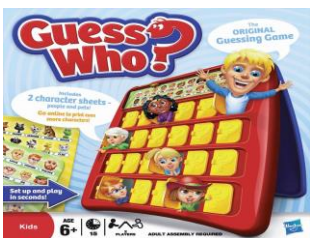
**Game Purpose:** Connect four of your selected color (red/black/yellow) next to each other vertically, horizontally, or diagonally all before your game opponent. But be sure to pay attention to detail to keep your opponent from winning the game!

**Developmental Skill:** Fine Motor Coordination; pincer and tripod grasp, Wrist extension, Combination

Movement; functional reach; shoulder flexion/extension, elbow extension/flexion, and wrist and digit coordination. Reaching across midline, hand eye coordination, Verbal Communication, Learning tool; color identification, counting and sorting, developing patience for turn taking



# Guess Who



**Number of players:** 2-4

**Game Purpose:** Select a card to choose your person/character for your opponent to guess. Ask yes or no questions relating to physical appearance to eliminate candidates to guess who your opponent's person/character.

**Developmental Skill:** Pincer and tripod grasp, Wrist extension, Thumb extension, functional reach; shoulder flexion/extension, elbow extension/flexion. Reaching across midline, hand eye coordination, Verbal Communication, Learning tool; problem solving skills, color identification, developing patience for turn taking

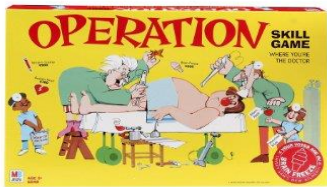


# Operation

**Number of players:** 1 or more

**Game Purpose:** Remove the plastic ailments with a pair of tweezers without touching the edge of the opening that sets off the red nosed buzzer or light. If successful you get to collect the cash allotted for the procedure. Whoever has the most money at the end wins.

**Developmental Skill:** Hand eye coordination, Fine Motor Coordination; fine pincer grasp, hand dexterity, Wrist extension, functional reach; elbow

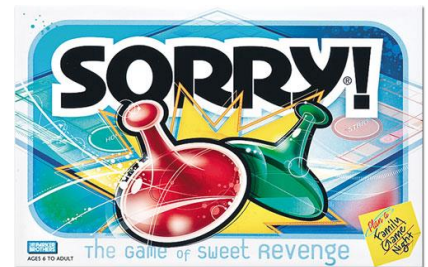


extension/flexion, and wrist and digit coordination. Reaching across midline, Verbal Communication, Learning tool; counting and sorting money, developing patience for turn taking

# Sorry!

**Number of players:** 2-4

**Game Purpose:** Pull cards with instructions to move your colored pawn around the board to get home faster than any other player. There are a lot of tricks with this game to make you move backwards or send the person back to start. Say Sorry!



**Developmental Skill:** Fine Motor Coordination; pincer and tripod grasp, gross grasp, Wrist extension, Supination, and functional reach; shoulder flexion/extension, elbow extension/flexion. Reaching across midline, hand eye coordination, Verbal Communication, Learning tool; color identification, counting and sorting, developing patience for turn taking

# Candy Land

**Number of players:** 2-4

**Game Purpose:** Storyline set game that instructs you to pull cards with color various colors that indicates where you move your game piece. The goal of the game is to move your piece around the board to get home faster than any other player. You can either move backwards or forwards depending on the color card.

**Developmental Skill:** Supination, gross grasp, Wrist extension, and functional reach; shoulder flexion/extension, elbow extension/flexion. Reaching across midline, Verbal Communication, Learning tool; color identification, developing patience for turn taking



# Trouble

**Number of players:** 2-4

**Game Purpose:** Another race to the finish game before your opponent. Game pieces are moved according to the number dice you get by popping the circular plastic in the middle of the game.



**Developmental Skill:** Wrist extension, pincer and or tripod grasp, and functional reach; shoulder flexion/extension, elbow extension/flexion. Reaching across midline, Verbal Communication, Learning tool; color identification, counting, sorting game pieces, developing patience for turn taking