

MIND MEMORY

DESCRIPTION:

In the shadow world of spying, having a good memory is extremely important. A spy cannot always take notes. If their cover is blown and they are caught in enemy territory, any notes or documents can be held against them. In addition, spies live undercover and must memorize their cover details (their name, place of birth, date of birth, and other important details that fleshes out their alias). Therefore, memorizing mission details, cover details, and important intelligence is critical to their success and often, survival. This activity is based on a game described in the novel, *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling, in which the hero, Kim, plays the game during his training as a spy. You will sometimes see this activity referred to as “Kim’s Game.”



TIME: 15 -30 minutes

GRADE LEVEL: Kindergarten and up (through adult)

MATERIALS:

- 35 random objects (ex: paperclip, sugar packet, toys, figurines, notes with numbers on it, photograph, postcard, etc.)
- 1-2 Briefcases or boxes
- Large sheets of paper and sharpies or markers / or blackboard
- A hallway or space with at least 10 feet of running space
- Stopwatch or timer
- Optional: tape to mark a starting point on the floor

PROCEDURE:

- 1) Divide your students (AKA “recruits”) into small team of 10 or less
- 2) Place 15 random objects in a briefcase or box at the end of a hallway – and maybe even around a corner.

CONTINUE 

- 3) Tape a starting point – or mark a starting point at least 10 feet away from the box/briefcase.
- 4) Brief the recruits using the description above.
- 5) Start your timer.
- 6) Have each recruit run the distance to the briefcase without stopping, looking at the box/briefcase and seeing as many objects as they can then return to HQ (tape line).
- 7) When all recruits are back at HQ write their time down at the top of a large sheet of paper taped to the wall or blackboard.
- 8) Have each recruit say one item they observed and go around the group until they can't think of any more items. They or you can write them down on the board/paper.
- 9) Compare their list to a master list of items – or bring the box down to HQ to compare.
- 10) Debrief on their success and teamwork.
- 11) Try it again with 20 items and you can even limit their time to 1 or minutes depending on size of group.

