

And you thought “tag” was just a game...

Rachel Oden was playing Elbow Tag with her fifth grade class. When Rachel debriefed the first round of the activity many of the kids were very angry. They said they felt excluded and unable to participate. As Rachel asked questions about the activity, the class talked about how important it is to include everyone and came up with ideas about how to go about including everyone. The next round of the game included everyone. As Rachel led the kids through a debrief they talked about how much more fun it was, and then... THE CLASS STARTED TALKING ABOUT HOW MUCH MORE FUN AND HOW MUCH BETTER IT WOULD BE IF THEY MADE AN EFFORT TO INCLUDE EVERYONE IN ACADEMIC LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM. THEY TALKED ABOUT WAYS THAT THEY COULD INCLUDE EACH OTHER IN ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND HOW MUCH BETTER THEIR LEARNING WOULD BE AS A RESULT!

Andrea Slack was playing another tag game with her class called “Everybody’s It” (this is my personal favorite - find it in the Warm-Up Activities section of the website or see Can’t Wait newsletter Volume 1 #2). When they were debriefing the game IT TURNED INTO A GREAT DISCUSSION ABOUT ACADEMIC GOAL SETTING!

They were just two tag games. But they turned into much more. With the *right frame and debrief* kids came up with their own ideas about how to help each other learn and how to set academic goals!

If you can get to those points with tag games, just think about how far your students can go with a well framed and debriefed trust or problem-solving activity.