

Pañuelo

“*Pañuelo*” is a children’s game historically common in several Spanish-speaking countries. Traditionally, the game is played with numbers. A group of children is divided into two equal groups and within each team, each child is assigned a number, beginning with one.

Someone stands in a place equidistant from the two teams, holding a handkerchief. This person in the middle calls out a number, and the child on each team that was assigned that number races to grab the handkerchief before the child from the other team can reach it. The child who grabs the handkerchief first races back to her original position, but if the child who didn’t get the handkerchief can catch her first, then he wins the point, and she loses.

You can enjoy playing this game with any vocabulary, not just numbers. Try assigning children colors, food words, and more. You need a minimum of four players and two category words in order to play, and the game can be played with as many players as you like.

Suggested categories for Level C:

rojo, gris, verde

feliz, triste, aburrido, cansado

cocina, sala, baño, cuarto

grande, pequeño, listo, inteligente

Example:

Aaron holds the *pañuelo* in the middle. Two children are on each team, and one is assigned *feliz* and the other is assigned *triste*.

Each team stands about six feet away from Aaron. Aaron calls out, “¡*Feliz!*” and each child assigned *feliz* begins to run for the *pañuelo*.

Theo from Team 1 reaches Aaron first and grabs the *pañuelo* and begins to run back to his place on Team 1. Mariah from Team 2 races to try to catch him but doesn’t catch him in time.

He makes it back before Mariah can catch him, and so Theo gets the point for Team 1. Mariah goes back to her place on Team 2 to try again on another turn.