

Messenger Chain

Number of players: Six or more

Age group: 5 years and up

Equipment needed: Paper and pencil

Indoor Outdoor



A leader (non-player) writes out several simple, but detailed sentences, each about ten or twelve words long. Sentences can be unusual, but they must make sense and have words that are easy to pronounce. Try creating a variety of sentences that include some that are descriptive, detailed, and factual. (See examples below)

The game can be played indoors or outdoors with players either standing, seated in chairs, or sitting on the ground or floor, forming an inward facing circle. The leader selects a player to be the “Starter” of the **MESSENGER CHAIN**.

Standing far enough away so the other players can’t hear, the leader quietly reads one of the sentences to the Starter. If the Starter doesn’t understand it, or if they can’t repeat it back accurately, the leader should choose a different sentence.

After returning to the circle, the Starter whispers the sentence – *so no one else can hear* - to the player on their right. That player then whispers the sentence to the next player on their right, and this continues until reaching the last player.

The last player tells the group what they understood the sentence to be. The Starter (or the leader) then says what the sentence actually was.

Depending on the number of details and subject matter in the sentence, the number of players, and player’s ages, the ending sentence may be very close to what the starting sentence was or it may be wildly different. More players are more fun!

EXAMPLE SENTENCES:

- *The tanker sailed slowly up the Mississippi River to Saint Louis.* (Descriptive)
- *The farmer found an umbrella-shaped rock in a wheat field.* (Highly detailed)
- *Water buffalos were originally native to India and Southeast Asia.* (Factual)

