

THE CANDY CANE TOSS GAME

Object, Preparation, Introductions, Procedures for Play

OBJECT OF THE GAME

To have your team get the most points, by having the most candy canes either touch the ribbon or hang on the ribbon

PREPARATION

(1) To make the “**candy canes**,” get some 12” white and red chenille stems, sometimes known as “pipe cleaners.” You will need at least 9 white and 3 red. Twist together 3 white stems. Then wind a red stem around it to resemble a candy cane. Bend each end back about 1/2”. Use a pair of pliers to make sure the wires on the ends are not sticking out, so as to poke someone. Bend a well-rounded hook at the top. Now make two more “candy canes,” just like them.

(2) Buy **small prizes** for the winning team, unless you just want to play for the fun of it and not worry about prizes. If you want to give prizes, you might consider buying some medium to large candy canes for the winning team. You could buy some miniature candy canes as consolation prizes for the losing team, if you wish. That way the children won’t be too disappointed.

(3) Make **ribbon necklaces to identify the teams**. Cut a piece of red curling ribbon about 2 yards long. Tie a big loop, leaving about 18” for each end. Cut another piece of red ribbon about a yard long. Tie it into the knot you made in the other piece. Now do the same with the white ribbon. Curl all the ends with a pair of scissors. You only need one necklace of each color, which will be passed on to the next team members who play.

(4) Prepare **numbers to draw**. On small pieces of paper, write enough consecutive numbers, beginning with “1,” for the maximum number of people that might be there to play the game. Write “red” in parentheses behind all the odd numbers and “white” behind all the even numbers. Clip the papers together in numerical order. Put them in a basket or bowl that the guests can draw from.

(5) Provide **paper and pencil for the scorekeeper**. A clipboard with paper, spiral notebook, or large pad of paper will work.

(6) Find a **measuring tape**, preferably the kind a carpenter uses, rather than the kind a seamstress uses. This will be used to measure the distance from the target ribbon, equal to their height, that each player should stand.

(7) Prepare the **ribbon for which players will aim**. Cut a piece of curling ribbon, preferably green or some other color besides red or white, about 2 yards long (or about 6 yards if the chairs you will be using have solid backs). Then cut 2 pieces, each about a yard long. (See #9)

(8) Place all the **items for the game in a box**, including these pages, so you can grab it when it’s time to get ready to play the game.

(9) JUST BEFORE YOU ARE READY TO PLAY THE GAME, prepare the target ribbon. Place 2 chairs side by side, about 24” apart. Tie one end of the 2-yard (or 6-yard) piece onto one of the chairs, just above the top of the seat. Stretch the ribbon straight across and tie it to the other chair. Tie one of the 1-yard pieces into the knot on each chair. Curl all the ends with a pair of scissors. Now move the chairs so that they are only about 18” apart, leaving about 6” of slack in the ribbon.

INTRODUCTIONS (CHOOSE ONE)Introduction #1

We are about to play the “Candy Cane Toss” game. Did you ever wonder how the Christmas candy cane came to be? If you didn’t, I’ll tell you anyway. According to the website at *candyhistory.net*, the candy that eventually evolved into the modern candy cane started out as a plain white sugar stick in Germany in the mid-1600’s. The first known use of candy canes for celebrating Christmas was in 1847, when a German-Swedish immigrant from Ohio decorated his Christmas tree with paper ornaments and white candy canes. In the early 1900’s candy makers began adding stripes and mint flavoring to candy canes. In the 1920’s a man in Georgia began producing the striped candy canes in large amounts at his candy company. They were difficult to make by hand. In the 1950’s his brother-in-law, who happened to be a Catholic priest, invented a machine to mass-produce them.

For many years the most common color combination of the candy cane was red and white. If someone said the words “candy cane,” the image that would automatically pop into many people’s heads would be a red and white candy cane. Some people have attached a special symbolic meaning to those colors, in relation to Jesus. White stands for purity. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that while Jesus lived on the earth He was tempted in every way that we are. Yet He never committed a single sin. Red stands for blood. Ephesians 1:7 tells us that, through the blood Jesus shed on the cross, believers are forgiven of their sins. As you know, today you can buy candy canes in just about any size, color, and flavor. But the candy canes we will use in the game we’re about to play are red and white.

Year Introduction #1 was used: _____

Introduction #2

It’s time for us to play the game called “Candy Cane Toss.” The shape of a candy cane resembles that of a shepherd’s staff. It can remind us of the shepherds who heard the good news of Jesus’ birth the night the angel came to deliver that special message. Why did God choose to send the angel to shepherds? Billy Graham stated on his website that shepherds were humble people. Since being a shepherd was considered a lowly occupation, many people looked down on shepherds. Billy believed that, in having Jesus’ birth announced to shepherds, God was showing His love for every person, no matter what their status. Those who were full of pride and felt they were self-sufficient would not have been overjoyed by the news of Jesus’ birth, as the humble shepherds were. Let’s see if the winning team of our Candy Cane Toss game can remain humble.

Year Introduction #2 was used: _____

Introduction #3

Before we play the game called “Candy Cane Toss,” I’d like to share one of the symbolic meanings of the candy cane. The shape of a candy cane can remind us of a shepherd’s staff. In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus calls Himself “The Good Shepherd.” Sheep are often used to symbolize people in the Bible. Sheep often go astray, and when they are lost they are unable to find their way home without help. Isaiah 53:6 says that, like sheep, we have all gone astray. Jesus laid down His life to save the sheep. John 10 says that the sheep that belong to Jesus know His voice, and they follow Him. When a predator comes, Jesus will never abandon His sheep. Now maybe we will think of the Good Shepherd when we see a candy cane. Let’s get ready to play the Candy Cane Toss game.

Year Introduction #3 used: _____

Introduction #4

Before we play the “Candy Cane Toss” game, let’s talk about candy canes. A candy cane turned upside down, with the hook facing the left, forms the letter “J.” That letter can stand for the name “Jesus” and the word “joy” with a capital “J.” The birth of JESUS brought great JOY to the earth.

- Luke 1:44 says that when Elizabeth was carrying John the Baptist in her womb, the greeting of Mary, who was pregnant with JESUS, caused John the Baptist to leap for JOY in Elizabeth’s womb. That sounds strange. It was apparently a supernatural JOY imparted by the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist would play a great role in preparing the way for JESUS’ ministry.
- Matthew 2:10 tells us that when the Wise Men saw the star that would lead them to JESUS, they “rejoiced with exceeding great JOY.” [KJV]
- In Luke 2:10 the angel told the shepherds that he was bringing news of great JOY that was for everyone. JESUS had been born in Bethlehem that day.

When we start to toss one of the candy canes as we play this game, we will be holding it upside down. It will look like a “J,” reminding us of JESUS and JOY, if you’re looking at it from the right side. Let’s get ready to play.

Year Introduction #4 used: _____

PROCEDURES FOR PLAY

(1) Explain the object of the game:

The object of the game is to have your team get the most points, by having the most candy canes either touch the ribbon or hang on the ribbon.

(2) Explain how the game is played

- We will have **a red team & a white team**. Odd numbers drawn will be the red team, and even numbers drawn will be the white team. If one team has one less person, the last person will take two turns.
- Each player will get **3 chances** to toss a candy cane and try to have it touch the ribbon, or preferably hang on the ribbon.
- You will get **one point** if the candy cane touches the ribbon
- You will get **five points** if the candy cane hangs on the ribbon and stays there.
- Each person will stand back with their toes **the same distance** from the ribbon as their height. Someone will ask their height, and then measure that distance.
- The canes should of course be **tossed by holding on to the bottom, with the hook facing down**. (You may want to demonstrate for young children.)

(3) Ask for **3 volunteers**

- **Scorekeeper**
- Someone to **measure the distance** from which each person will toss
- Someone to **return the candy canes** to the next player

(4) Give the scorekeeper **paper and pencil**

(5) Give the measuring person the **measuring tape**

(6) Ask “Is anyone besides the volunteers **not going to play?**” Pull out **extra numbers** not needed for the exact number of people who plan to play. Scramble the numbers.

(7) Pass around the bowl or basket of numbers and ask everyone playing to **draw numbers**.

(8) Have **Numbers 1 & 2** put on their team “**necklaces**” and take their **turns**.

(9) After Numbers 1 & 2 take their turns, have them **pass on the necklaces** to the next players, Numbers 3 & 4, and so on.

(10) When all have taken a turn, allow the scorekeeper to **add up the points**.

(11) **If there is a tie**, start over, beginning with the first pair, until the tie is broken.

(12) Announce the **winning team**. Hand out **prizes**, if you wish.