

# Change It Up - Levels C - D

# PLAY

To support the life skill of adaptability by helping students experience change in a safe, playful way. Through changing rules in a familiar game, students learn that it's okay to feel unsure, make mistakes, and try again. Inspired by Pluto, this activity highlights that being different, flexible, and curious helps us grow.



## Learning Intentions

Students aim to follow changing rules during a familiar game.



Students aim to practise staying calm when things change or feel unexpected.

Students aim to keep playing and trying even when they feel confused or make mistakes.



## Success Criteria

I can listen for new rules and try to follow them.

I can keep playing when the rules change.

I can stay positive and try again if I get mixed up.



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**Duration:** 10 - 15 minutes

## **Objective**

To support the life skill of adaptability by helping students experience change in a safe, playful way. Through changing rules in a familiar game, students learn that it's okay to feel unsure, make mistakes, and try again. Inspired by Pluto, this activity highlights that being different, flexible, and curious helps us grow.

## **Players**

Whole class or small groups  
Suitable for 4 - 26 students

## **What You Need**

Clear open space  
No equipment required  
Optional: music for transitions  
Visual cue cards (optional, recommended)

## **Setup**

1. Revisit the Pluto page from *The Playful Astronauts*.
2. Use concrete, simple discussion prompts:
  - “What happens when rules change?”
  - “How does your body feel when things are different?”
3. Normalise uncertainty:
  - “It’s okay to feel confused.”
  - “This game is about trying, not getting it right.”
4. Explain clearly:
  - “We will play a game that changes.”
  - “The rules will not stay the same.”
5. Model calm language and tone before starting.

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## Gameplay

### Step 1: Start with a Familiar Game

1. Begin with Simon Says (or another well-known listening game).
2. Play for 1 - 2 minutes using simple, predictable instructions.
3. Ensure all students understand the base rules before changing anything.

### Step 2: Pluto Changes the Rules

1. Pause the game and announce clearly:
  - “Simon has gone to space.”
  - “Now Pluto is in charge.”
2. Introduce **one change at a time**. Examples:
  - Only follow instructions if they are said in a silly voice
  - Do the opposite action
  - Everyone adds a clap after each movement
  - Get creative and have fun with this!
3. Model the new rule once before continuing.
4. Restart the game slowly.

### Step 3: Keep It Flexible

1. Add or change rules gradually, not all at once.
2. When students get mixed up, respond with reassurance:
  - “That was tricky, let’s try again.”
  - “You’re still playing, that’s great adapting.”
3. Pause briefly between changes to reset attention.

### Reflection Pause (Short)

Ask one or two simple questions with wait time:

- “How did it feel when the rules changed?”
- “What helped you keep going?”

Students may respond verbally, by gesture, or using AAC.

### Winning the Game

There is no winner.

Students are successful when they stay involved, try again, and keep playing despite change.

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## Sensory-Seeking / Sensory-Sensitive Learner Variations

### For sensory-seeking learners:

- Add strong movements (jump, reach, spin arms)
- Use upbeat music during rounds
- Allow students to help demonstrate new rules

### For sensory-sensitive learners:

- Reduce movement size
- Use fewer rule changes
- Offer a quiet observer role (watch and signal thumbs up/down)
- Allow seated participation

Students may step out briefly and rejoin at any time.

## AAC-Specific Supports

### 1. Pre-teach Key Words:

- change, stop, go, same, different, try again

### 2. Visual Rule Cards:

- Show the new rule before playing

### 3. Choice-Based Participation:

- Students indicate “same” or “different”

### 4. Leadership Option:

- AAC users can be “Pluto” and select the next rule

### 5. Reflection Support:

- Sentence frames or symbols:
  - “Change makes me feel \_\_\_\_.”
  - “I can try again.”

All communication methods are valid.

## Accessibility Notes

- All movements can be adapted to upper-body actions.
- Wheelchair users may:
  - Use arm movements
  - Signal actions
  - Lead the game as Pluto
- If space is limited, use gestures, facial expressions, or sounds only.



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## Inclusion Notes

- Celebrate effort, not accuracy.
- Expect and normalise mistakes.
- Pair students thoughtfully to support regulation and confidence.
- Use affirming language throughout:
  - “You kept going.”
  - “You adapted.”
  - “That was tricky and you stayed calm.”

## Closing Reflection / Affirmation

Say together:

“Change can feel tricky, but we can adapt, try again, and keep going.”

## Teacher Notes

“Change It Up – Levels C & D” provides structured exposure to unpredictability in a playful, emotionally safe way. The activity strengthens flexible thinking, emotional regulation, and resilience, while reinforcing that differences, like Pluto itself, are not problems, they’re strengths.

