Tower Wars

Mission: the thief locked the mascot behind a building trap, and one team has to out-build the room to crack it. Win the tower wars, unscramble the blueprint code on the whiteboard, whisper the password, open the box, free the mascot. Character trait today: **Social Awareness**.

1 · Tallest in Two (5–16 min) — same paper each, 2-minute build, tallest standing wins

Warm-up full paper, generous tape, 2 minutes. Coach the idea: "wide base won't tip, fold paper to stiffen it."

Copy 15 seconds to study the tower that won last heat, then build. Ask a team to name what they are copying.

Cap half the paper, same 2 minutes. Smart beats tall. Hands off at the buzzer, 5-second wobble check.

Diff TK–2: more paper, 3-min clock, coach the build aloud, every tower cheered. 3–8: strict cap (10 sheets, arm-length of tape), wobble test, single-elimination bracket, students referee and measure, captains assign roles.

2 · Siege Tower (16–31 min) — survive the storm and hold the ball for a 5-count, last tower standing wins

Setup same paper and tape, 3-min build. Coach fans each tower a 5-count from the same distance, then a paper ball sits on top for a 5-count. Topple or drop = out.

Build wide heavy base, short fat tower, tripod or rolled-tube base. Let a tall skinny one fall once, then ask "why did the short wide one win?"

Ramp R1 gentle fan + light ball, R2 stronger fan + second ball, R3 fan + a table nudge. Between rounds: "whose tower took the storm? Build like that."

Diff TK–2: gentle fan, light ball, longer build, every tower cheered. 3–8: stronger storm from two angles, heavier load, winner-stays-on (streak of 3 = point), students run the storm and judge, captains defend the base plan.

3 · Blueprint Code (31–45 min) — unscramble the build steps, the letters spell the password

TOWER write shuffled, correct order: T "Tear the paper into strips," O "Open out a wide base," W "Wind tape around every joint," E "Elevate one level at a time," R "Rise to the top and check it stands." Reads T-O-W-E-R.

TOP three steps, T "Tear the paper," O "Open a wide base," P "Pile it up high." Reads T-O-P. Good for a first round or younger team.

Diff TK–2: TOP set, coach reads and sorts with them, blank line per letter. 3–8: 6-letter TOWERS (add S "Steady it and stress-test it stands"), 3-min race, wrong guess = 30-sec sit-out, teams design a code for a rival and referee it.

4 · Finale + Wristband (45–60 min)

Open Winning team announces the password to the room, coach turns the key, mascot lifts out, big cheer. Optional "thief's note" inside: "You out-built my trap. I surrender!"

Award the **Social Awareness** trait wristband to detectives who watched the room and learned from others ("I copied their wide base", "I listened to my teammate's idea").

3–8 For older kids and the two middle schools, run the whole hour competitive: fixed teams, score every game on the whiteboard, visible timer each round, crown a champion here. Games bank adds **Detective Mafia** (2–3 Culprits + a Detective, 5–7 min rounds) — the one middle schoolers ask to replay.

Detective's Oath (say together, magnifiers up): I am a detective. / My brain is my best tool. / I don't guess, I reason. / I follow the clues to the truth.