



Rural and Farm Safety Escape Mail Suggested Adaptations Due to COVID-19

We recommend registered groups follow current provincial health guidelines established for their particular setting when determining the degree of adaptations necessary for safe participation.

Regular game play is designed to be interactive between an entire group of “recruits” participating together in the same room. While adaptations to reduce close contact and shared handling of materials can be made, at a certain point, they may become a barrier to the collaborative element required to successfully finish the game effectively and efficiently. You may wish to consider delaying your group’s participation if there is less tolerance for shared space interaction than these adaptations allow.

Game Adaptations:

- 1.) As in regular play, recruits are “paired” and receive 1 participant package to share between them with each player receiving their own pair of red-lens glasses.
Shared handling of the enclosed 6 module puzzle manipulatives can be reduced by:
 - dividing physical assets so paired players will handle 3 each themselves for solving. Partners will still need to problem solve together while one or the other handles the assigned assets in the way that is required to solve each puzzle until all 6 puzzles have been completed.
 - portal inputs are entered on a device shared by partners OR completed by facilitator.
- 2.) There are “2 Ways to Play” outlined in the Facilitator Guide. “Option A” outlines the facilitator leading the progression of the game (recommended for grades 3 and under). This option gives opportunity to instruct somewhat distanced players, when adapted to all grades, structured to interact safely within each of the modules by:
 - delegating the process for each team’s assigned partner to complete the requirements for each module, pacing the game, and then surveying the recruits to verify the answer. Facilitator enters each module’s solved code into the game portal which is displayed for the whole group on a large screen at the front of the room. Multiple attempts entering the code into the portal are often required before getting it right. Calling on different groups in rotation gives the opportunity for pairs to suggest their answers, until the group as a whole has come up with the correct code to progress.
- 3.) In regular play, there are 16 metapuzzle sheets, divided amongst pairs of recruits that require designated actions before advancing to the next module. When all modules are solved, the individual puzzle pieces are combined with the rest of the groups’ individual pieces, coming together collaboratively and physically to manoeuvre the individual pieces to solve the final “Metapuzzle Challenge”. Metapuzzle adaptation requirements would be:

- facilitator retains metapuzzle sheets for display at front of room. Repositionable tape, magnets or thumbtacks secure the sheets in a random order in a horizontal row. Upon verification of individual module codes, an instruction is issued to do with the metapuzzle sheets. The facilitator assigns a recruit (singular or by rotating through the roster) to come to the front to either advise facilitator to undertake the action on their specification, or complete the task themselves.
 - Once all 6 modules are complete, facilitator can quiz recruits for their strategies to unscramble the word puzzle. Discretion and player level of advancement will determine the amount of “leading” required to assist in solving, without handling sheets for themselves. The red lens glasses are an element that individually, recruits can take turns viewing the sheets, and still collaborate somewhat distanced as a whole, with either the facilitator or an individual moving the sheets around to spell out the correct message.
- 4.) In the case where each player can access the online portal individually on their own device, rather than sharing one device between two, or solely following the facilitator main screen at the front, efficiency and autonomy can be enhanced for older players. Pairs still work together with their shared or divided package of manipulatives to solve each module, inputting each module code for verification to their own device, as they progress together. This option works best to leave all metapuzzle elements to the end with adaptations described and implemented above.

Remember, escape room logic requires problem solving skills and perspective that are often not the habitual way of thinking. Players who are used to knowing the answers right away, or those that don’t get it can be frustrated when not having success. This can be compounded by less interaction due to adaptations and some may feel discouraged before understanding what is required for them to solve the puzzles. The benefits of teamwork, collaboration and the insights and encouragement of others when working together can be lost in adapted play or without setting the stage for a “team against the puzzle” creative mindset. Engaged facilitation and use of the supplied hints will help to achieve a positive outcome in both regular and adapted play.

Ag for Life is here to support your group’s success in earning their ticket to Mars. If you have any questions please contact our program coordinator.

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