Reference Source Four Square

**Introduction:** Students in the fourth grade will need to use reference sources to find information. This activity provides students with an opportunity to distinguish between four different reference sources while on the playground.

**Grade Level and Subject:** Fourth Grade Reading and P.E.

**TEKS:**
- Reading 9C
- P.E. 1K, 2A, 2D, 3A, 7A

**Materials:** 5–7 soccer-sized balls, chalk, and list of items that can be found in dictionaries, atlases, thesauruses, and encyclopedias

**Resource:** The Ultimate Playground & Recess Game Book by Guy Bailey. ISBN: 0-9669727-2-4

**Activity:** This activity should be played after students have some knowledge of what types of materials can be found in dictionaries, atlases, thesauruses, and encyclopedias.

The teacher will need to draw some four-square courts on the concrete portion of the playground with chalk, enough so that all students can participate in the activity at the same time. Each court should be approximately 16 × 16 feet and consist of four equal squares drawn inside the court. In this manner, each court will have four students playing on it. The teacher may need to draw anywhere from 5–7 courts depending on the size of the class participating in the activity. On each court, the teacher will label each of the four squares. One square will be labeled “dictionary”; the second square will be labeled “atlas”; the third square will be the “thesaurus”; and the last square will be labeled “encyclopedia.”

On the day of the activity, students will walk to the concrete portion of the playground where the four-square courts are drawn. Each student will place themselves in a square, or the teacher can assign squares to the students. If one of the courts does not have four players, that is not a problem. The teacher will hand a ball to one of the students on each court.

The teacher will be positioned where he or she can be heard by all students on the four-square courts. The teacher should have the list of items found in dictionaries, atlases, thesauruses, and encyclopedias. To begin the activity, the teacher will call out a type of information found in one of the reference sources depicted in the four-square courts. For example, he or she might call out, “a map of North America.” The student with the ball will throw the ball to the student in the atlas box, since map references are found in atlases. The student in the atlas box will let the ball bounce once and then catch it. The teacher will then call out another type of information found in one of the four reference sources depicted in the four-square court. The person with the ball will throw the ball to the correct square. The student in that square will let the ball bounce once and catch it. Play will continue in this manner until the teacher feels that the students have had sufficient practice with the four reference sources.

**Evaluation:** The teacher will monitor all activity and answer any question posed by the students.