

## **Back-to-School Team vs. Salamander Sly** **By Carol Montgomery**

Performance Time = less than 11 minutes

Readability = grade 2.3 (the announcer parts are harder, I think)

Cast (5-10+) =

Announcer #1:

Announcer #2

Professor Snap-on-snazzle

Salamander Sly

Voice #23

Voice #17

Voice #5

Voice #9

Voice #3

Voice #15

School Team (basically a chorus: includes all the Voices plus extras)

NOTE: For a very small class you may cast one announcer and have one or two students speak the Voices parts using different voices for each (e.g., high, low, accent...).

### **Vocabulary:**

Distractions  
ruthless  
disturbances

## **Back-to-School Team vs. Salamander Sly** **By Carol Montgomery**

**Announcer #1:** Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to “Kids Talk Sports.” Today we have the game of the fall.

**Announcer #2:** Oh, we’re going to see some falls today?

**Announcer #1:** You may. But, I meant the game of the fall season. You know, autumn?

**Announcer #2:** Oh, yeah. Falling leaves not falling bodies. Duh!

**Announcer #1:** Right. But, this fall’s game is not like any other you’ve ever seen. It’s not football. It’s not soccer. It’s not basketball. It’s not baseball. It’s not hockey. It’s not even Sharks and Minnows!

**Announcer #2:** Too bad.

**Announcer #1:** We’ll be watching two teams..... the Back-to-School Team coached by Professor Snap-on-snazzle and the Distractions Team coached by Salamander Sly.

**Announcer #2:** Oooooooo, he sounds tricky.

**Announcer #1:** He is. Some say he’s ruthless.

**Announcer #2:** That sounds bad. So, how do you play?

**Announcer #1:** The rules are easy. Everyone on the Back-to-School Team has a ball of some size--big, little, heavy, light. Each one on the team has to follow the rules and get his or her ball across the goal line to score **within the time limit**. That’s it.

**Announcer #2:** So, what about Salamander Sly’s team?

**Announcer #1:** Ah, that’s the tricky part. Salamander Sly’s team, The Distractions, is invisible.

**Announcer #2:** Oh, yeah--those invisible Distractions. I’ve heard of them...(pause) I think! That’s so strange playing against an invisible team.... What do they do, anyway?

**Announcer #1:** The Distractions create weird disturbances on the field trying to prevent the School Team from scoring. They also steal balls. The School Team gets one point for every ball that crosses the goal line. Distractions get a point every time they get and KEEP a School Team ball. It only counts if they KEEP the ball.

**Announcer #2:** Got it! Looks like they're about ready to start! I hear we have microphones down on the field today.

**Announcer #1:** That's right. We have mikes to hear the School Team; plus, both coaches consented to wearing mikes--for our ears only. The teams won't hear our broadcast. Oh, I hear Coach Snap-on-Snazzle now....

**Professor:** All right, School Team! Let me hear your cheer before you start today!

**School Team:** Back to school helps me refuel;  
I will do my BEST!  
Back to school is really cool;  
Best is now my quest!

**Professor:** Great! Let me hear it again, louder, please!

**School Team:** Back to school helps me refuel;  
I will do my BEST!  
Back to school is really cool;  
Best is now my quest!

**Professor:** You can do it! Each of you has a ball to get across the goal line. Focus on **your** ball. You know, Salamander Sly's team is hard to beat. He ALWAYS has crazy ideas on how to win. But, I believe in you. Do your best and we'll all win.

**School Team:** (*cheers*) B...E...S...T  
B...E...S...T  
B...E...S...T.....we're the BEST!

**Announcer #2:** They sound excited!

**Announcer #1:** They are. Most of them beat Salamander Sly last year, so they know they have the winning edge.

**Announcer #2:** Uh-oh. I hear Coach Salamander Sly now.

**Salamander Sly:** (*impatient*) Come on, come on! Get those popsicles down to the field now! But, keep them a secret!

**Announcer #2:** Pop! Sick! Kills! He IS ruthless!

**Announcer #1:** Shhhhhhh...they're ready to start. Every player on the School Team has a ball. Look at that variety!

**Announcer #2:** Wow! Impressive! All sizes, all colors, and I assume all weights.

**Announcer #1:** There they go!

**School Team:** Back to school helps me refuel;  
I will do my BEST!  
Back to school is really cool;  
Best is now my quest!

**Announcer #1:** The School Team is a united machine. Each player is dribbling a ball. Wait a minute....one ball seems to be stuck.

**Announcer #2:** Oh, it looks really heavy.

**Professor:** You can do it! Focus! Don't give up!

**School Team:** I can do this. I can do this. I can do this. I can do this.

**Announcer #1:** Whoa! I thought one might be left behind there for a moment. But, I can hear the School Team cheering each other on...

**School Team:** You can do this. You can do this. You can do this. You can do this.

**Announcer #2:** Hey, it's Coach Salamander Sly again...

**Salamander Sly:** Don't pay any attention to them! Get that television screen out there where all those kids will see it. I know them. That TV screen will stop them in their tracks. Then, we sneak up and...

**Announcer #2:** Well, what do you know? There's a huge TV screen on the field now live streaming the game! Oh, no! I see a baker's dozen of the School Team stopped in front of the screen. There's number 23, 17, 5, and more!

**Voice #23:** (*points*) Hey, look that's me on the screen! And there's you!

**Voice #17:** (*waves*) Hi! ..... Hey, Team! Wave to the fans! ..... Hi, Grandma! Hi, Mom and Dad! Hi, Twiddley Tweet!

**Voice #5:** (*waves*) Hi, everybody! Watch this!

**Announcer #1:** What's this? Number 5 is showing off in the middle of the field. And now the Distractions are stealing number 5's ball!

**Professor:** Number 5, focus! Distractions are stealing your ball. Grab it back! Quick!

**Announcer #2:** Number 5 is running back to get the ball. Where IS that ball? Ah, the Distractions must have tripped and dropped the ball. I see it, now. But, can Number 5 get there in time?

**Voice #5:** You can't get away with that, Distractions! That's MY ball. And, this time I'm going to cross the goal line. You can't fool me again!

**Announcer #1:** Wow! Number 5 has regained the ball, so the School Team is moving forward as a unit and cheering...

**School Team:** We can do this. We can do this. We can do this.  
Focus. Focus. FOCUS!

**Professor:** Good job! Stay alert. Salamander Sly isn't done with you yet! He's very tricky. Look out! He's bringing out the BIG ONE!

**Salamander Sly:** (*impatient*) Move it more into the center so everyone will see it. This Daydream Machine NEVER FAILS to slow them down...

**Voice #9:** I'm tired of doing this. I'd rather be.....

**Salamander Sly:** (*slyly*) Yes! It's working already! Go ahead, School Daydream Team. Your goals aren't important. You have plenty of time to goof off...

**Announcer #1:** Uh-oh. Some of the School Team seems to have lost focus. I see number 9 and a few others staring off into space....

**Professor:** HELLO! Wake up! Wake up! Focus now or The Distractions will steal another ball!

**Announcer #2:** Too late! Three balls have disappeared!

**School Team:** We can do this. We can do this. We can do this.  
Focus. Focus. FOCUS!

**Professor:** Quick! Knock the Daydream Machine over so you can get the missing balls!

**Announcer #1:** Well, what do you know. The whole team has rallied and knocked the Daydream Machine over!

**School Team:** No more daydreams; we're the BEST team!  
No more daydreams; do your BEST!

**Announcer #2:** Looks like the School Team still has all the balls in play. While Salamander Sly and his Distractions Team have been stealing balls, somehow the School Team has managed to get them all back.

**Professor:** Way to go, School Team!

**School Team:** (*cheers*) B...E...S...T  
B...E...S...T  
B...E...S...T.....we're the BEST!

**Salamander Sly:** I hate that cheer. Let's see what they say when we steal ALL their balls before the goal line! Distractions, bring out the popcorn, the candy, and the Popsicle Party Wagon!

**Announcer #1:** What in the world? Salamander Sly has done it again! Now it's impossible to get to the goal line without going through a HUGE party!

**Announcer #2:** Look! There's free popcorn, candy, and popsicles! How can the School Team resist?

**Announcer #1:** I don't know. But, if they DON'T resist, they may run out of time!

**Professor:** Party later! Party later! Get your ball across the goal line! Focus! Focus! Don't let your tummy trick you. Don't let your tongue trick you! Don't let Salamander Sly trick you!

**Voice #3:** But, I LIKE popcorn.

**Voice #15:** And, I LIKE popsicles made from juice. Are these juice pops?

**Professor:** It doesn't matter now. Party later! We're running out of time! Focus!

**Announcer #1:** It appears that some of the School Team has found a way AROUND the edge of the party and others are following.

**Announcer #2:** But, there's a small group checking out the Popsicle Party Wagon.

**Voice #9:** I wonder what flavors they have? Hey, it's free food! Come on!

**Professor:** Look out! The Distractions will steal your ball! Get it across the goal line. Focus! You can do it! You're almost there. Party later! Party later!

**School Team:** I can do this. I can do this. I can do this. I can do this.  
You can do this. You can do this. You can do this. You can do this.  
We can do this. We can do this. We can do this. We can do this!  
Let's... just... do it!

**Announcer #1:** I can't believe it! The whole School Team is passing the Popsicle Party Wagon in single file without stopping! Incredible!

**Announcer #2:** And the clock is ticking. Two minutes left.

**Salamander Sly:** (*loudly*) Turn up the music!

**Professor:** Goal! Goal! Goal! Focus!

**Announcer #1:** Looks like the School Team has started making goals and they're cheering their teammates across!

**School Team:** Back to school helps me refuel;  
I will do my BEST!  
Back to school is really cool;  
Best is now my quest!

**Professor:** Louder!

**School Team:** Back to school helps me refuel;  
I will do my BEST!  
Back to school is really cool;  
Best is now my quest!

**Announcer #2:** Coach Snap-on-Snazzle has led the School Team to victory for the second year in a row! And, every ball made it across the goal line!

**School Team:** (*cheers*)

**Salamander Sly:** Just you wait until next time. I almost got you! I'm not finished with the School Team yet! I'll pick you off one at a time.

**School Team:** You don't stand a chance! We are WISE to your ways, Salamander Sly!

**Salamander Sly:** Wise guys!

**Announcer #1:** This has been Kids Talk Sports. Thanks for joining us!

**Curriculum Links (Valid in 2011):**

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/BeginSchool.htm>

Extensive list of back-to-school lessons and teacher resources K-12. Scroll down for Language Arts--includes ESL.

[http://teacher.scholastic.com/back\\_to\\_school/](http://teacher.scholastic.com/back_to_school/)

Back-to-School planning guide with links to articles, activities, and resources from Scholastic for grades K-12.

<http://www.teachingheart.net/firstdaylessons.html>

"First Week Lesson Plans" from a teacher Colleen Gallagher (grades K-3). Note: This teacher also used Readers Theater in her class.

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/back-to-school/teacher-resources/6600.html>

"Back-to-School Headquarters" from Teacher Vision.

<http://teachers.net/lessons/posts/4149.html>

"The Big Bad Salamander and the Three Little Pigs Play". Although this is a creative play written Readers Theater style, you will probably want to retype it or just read it to the students (edit as you choose). There is no ending to the story. The activity is for the students to write the ending!

<http://www.sandiegozoo.org/animalbytes/t-salamander.html>

"Amphibians: Salamander & Newt" from the San Diego Zoo.

[http://www.hellbenders.org/The\\_Hellbender\\_Homepage/Home.html](http://www.hellbenders.org/The_Hellbender_Homepage/Home.html)

"Hellbender" conservation website. "Hellbenders are one of the largest salamanders in the world, growing to over 2 feet long." Photos.

<http://www.naturehaven.com/Frog/salamander.html>

General website for students on salamanders and newts.

<http://www.kidsrunning.com/ask/krask0411spgames.html>

Although "Sharks and Minnows" is typically a pool game this version is a basic soccer-type game.

**You Tube:**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GH\\_5ht5Cgu4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GH_5ht5Cgu4)

"Tiger Salamander Hunting Crickets" 1:20

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP1\\_rh-pZ-8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP1_rh-pZ-8)

"Sharks and Minnows" dribbling game done in a circle. 2:00