

Icebreakers & Activities:

Candy Toss:

Objective: To learn more about the interests and hobbies of the class and discover what they have in common.

Needed: 5-10 pieces of wrapped candy per person

Description: Have the group sit in a circle. Give each person 5-10 pieces of wrapped candy. Tell the group that they may not eat any of the candy until the end of the game. Give a topic for each round (below.) One person starts by telling the group something unique he/she has done, accomplished or experienced in life on the selected topic. Anyone in the group who has not done the same thing must gently toss a piece of candy to that person. Continue in this manner around the circle until everyone has had a turn. There should be four or five rounds of varying topics. At the end of the game, players may eat the candy they have collected.

Suggested topics:

- Name one thing that you have done that you are proud of
- Name the strangest thing that you have ever eaten
- What is the most unusual compliment you have received?
- What kind of pet do you or have you had?
- What are you most afraid of?
- What is one thing that you want to do in your lifetime?

One Common Goal:

Objective: For group to learn more about each other and find things they have in common

Needed: Paper and pencils or pen

Description: Break the class into teams of 3-5. Give each team a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask the groups to make a list of all the things that they can think of that they have in common, ie. 2 eyes, love pizza, all same age, etc. Set a time limit. At the end of the time limit, ask each group to read their list for the rest of the group. If you like, see which group has the longest list and declare them the winning team.

Mix It Up or Group Up:

Objective: To create inclusion and get kids out of the groups/friends that they usually are with.

Description: Have everyone stand up in a cleared area of the room or go outside. When you say go, everyone walks around saying “mingle, mingle, mingle” until you call a number. When a number is given, everyone must try to get into a group that matches that number. Those who aren’t in an appropriate group, are out for that round. When down to 1 or 2 people, start over with characteristics instead of numbers, such as: students of the same height, hair color, eye color, live in the same city, have the same first initial, favorite foods, etc.

Name Tag Grab:

Objective: Group fun

Materials: Sticky-back name tags and marker

Description: Give out a name tag and marker to each person. Tell them to write their own name on the name tag but do not take off the sticky back. Collect all of the name tags. Have everyone stand in a circle. Mix them the name tags and randomly put them on the back of students as long as someone doesn't get their own name. After this, when you say go, everyone must move around the room, trying to locate their own name but protecting their back from having the person whose name is there finding it. Once a person finds their own name tag, they grab it off and put it on their chest. Everyone stays in the game until everyone finds their own name.

Telephone Charades:

Objective: Communication and to help students come out of their shells and have fun doing it

Materials: A list of funny scenarios

Description: Divide the groups of 4-5. Select one group to go first. Ask of but one member of that group to leave the room so that they cannot hear what is going on. Tell the remaining member and the other teams a scenario (see below.) Then tell the rest of the group to come back and all of them must stand with their back to the first person in their group. The first person (the one who knows the scenario) taps the second person in line and acts out the scene. The other remaining members must face the other direction so they can not see what is going on. Then after the first member has acted out the scene, the second member turns, taps the 3rd member. They face each other. The 2nd member acts out what he remembers from the scenario. The group continues until everyone has had a turn to see the scenario. They try to guess the scenario. Then the next group tries a different scenario. It is quite hilarious to watch people trying to act out what they saw.

Suggested scenarios: Plunging a plugged up toilet, a ballet dancer who rips her tights, eating a superhot food, spiderman swallowing a bug while flying through the air, a mime that gets caught in a box, riding a bike when the tire falls off, getting caught drinking milk/juice out of the carton, putting in too much soap in the washing machine, a huge bubble pops all over someone's face when chewing bubblegum, etc.

What Can You Do With This?:

Objective: Teamwork

Materials: A number of odd/unusual objects, paper and pens/pencils

Description: Select objects such as a stapler remover, a wire whisk, kitchen tongs, a strainer, etc. Place the object in a paper bag. Divide the group into teams or 3-4. Pull the object out of the bag and say, "Each group needs to make a list of all the things that this object can be used for-and be creative! Give a time limit. At the end of the time, ask the groups to come back together and have one representative from each team share his/her list with the larger group. You may give points for each original idea, for the total number of ideas or no points at all, just simply laugh at all of the crazy ideas.

Personal Trivia

Objective: To learn interesting, little know facts about each other

Materials: 1 index card or small piece of paper per person, paper, pens/pencils

Description: Pass out the index cards and pens/pencils to the students. Each person must write down his/her name and five little-known facts about him/herself. Then collect all of the cards. Read aloud the facts on one card but don't reveal whose card it is. At this point, students try to guess whose card it is. You can just have students guess each card or you can number each card and have students write down the card # and whose card they think it is. At the end, help the class to figure out whose card each one is.

Guess Who

Objective: For students to gain familiarity with each other

Materials: Sticky name tags or masking tape and pens

Description: Hand out the name tags and ask each person to write down his/her name on their own tag. Then collect all of the tags, mix them up and put one tag on each person's back without letting them know whose name is on their back. Each person must then mingle with the group and ask different people questions that can be answered by yes or no about whose name is on their back. Once a person correctly guesses the name that is on his/her back, they put it on the front of their clothes. Keep going until everyone has guessed who is on their back.

Variation: Instead of having students' names on their backs, use names of famous or well-known people to put on the name tags.

Pictionary

Objective: To have fun

Materials: Prepare several words written on individual note cards. These are the words that will be drawn, and that teammates will try to guess. Each word(s) should be labeled as one of the following five categories (or be creative and come up with other ones):

- *Person, Place, Animal* – A person, place, animal, or other creature that is/was living (e.g. Tiger Woods, a bear).
- *Action* – Something that can be done or performed (e.g. ballet, shooting a basketball).
- *Object* – Something that can be seen or touched (e.g. a truck, a chocolate chip cookie).
- *Challenge* – Something difficult (e.g. The Grand Canyon).
- *All play* – A word from any of the above categories. Both teams draw simultaneously

Description: Split the group into two teams. Give each team paper to draw on. On a team's turn, they choose someone to draw. The judge prepares a one-minute timer (or stopwatch) and gives the player a card. The judge says "Go!" and starts the timer. The player begins to draw a picture of the word(s). The goal is for the team to correctly guess

the word (or basic idea of the word) within the allotted time limit. If the team correctly guesses the word, they receive a point. Then it's the next team's turn. Another option is to get a copy of the game and use the cards from the game.

Who Is the Leader?

Objective: Teamwork and fun

Materials: A pillow and a source of music

Description: Gather the group in a circle. Send one person out of the room so they cannot hear what is being said. Then select one person in the group to be the leader. Tell the rest of the group that they are to follow the movements of the leader. Have the leader start by clapping and bring the person who is out of the room back in. Discretely, the leader should change the motion/movement. The person who was out of the room walks around the group and tries to figure out who the leader is. Once they think that they have found the leader, they can take a swing with the pillow at the person. This continues if they have not picked the right person. Then someone else goes out of the room and the game starts over.

Human Knot

Objective: Promote teamwork and working together

Materials: none

Description: Have the class stand in a circle close together/big clump. Then tell them to grab arms with people across the circle from. They must lock hands with two different people. Then tell them that when you say go, they must try to untie/untangle themselves without leaving go of their hands.

Team Musical Chairs

Objective: Inclusion and fun

Materials: A source of music and one chair less than the number of students

Description: Set the game up as you would for a regular game of musical chairs. Place all of the chairs in a circle facing outward with room for people to walk around the circle of chairs. There should be one less chair than there are students. If there are too many students, you can make two teams. Start each round with everyone standing in a circle, spreading the team members out so they are not all standing next to each other. Start the music. Everyone walks in the same direction. Once the music stops, everyone quickly tries to find a vacant chair to sit in. In this game of musical chairs, no one ever gets out. More than one person can sit on a chair. But if there is anyone still standing, you take away a chair. Eventually, the group will not be able to sit on the chairs and each other's laps and the game is over.

Puppet Show

Objective: For the group to pool their resources and be creative when solving a problem

Materials: A table or large desk that you cannot see under (use a tablecloth or sheet), paper, pen/pencil

Description: Divide the group into teams of 2-5 each and give each group paper and a pen/pencil. Each group needs to create a short puppet show to be performed for the rest of the group. Each person must participate in the show. The group must create puppets out of whatever they can find or are given-paper, paper bags, socks, hats, their hands, etc. You can provide them with some odds and ends for them to use (tape, markers, glue, yarn, etc.) Give the groups a certain amount of time to prepare. Set a time limit for the puppet shows-say 2-3 minutes. Then ask each team to present their unique puppet show.

Discussion Questions: Was it easy or hard to be creative in a group? What part of the activity went the smoothest? What part of the activity was the most difficult? How was the communication of your group?

Flip

Objective: Problem-solving, teamwork

Materials: One or more old tarps or a sheet or blanket

Description: Find a tarp/sheet/blanket that is large enough for the whole group to stand on while leaving a ¼ of it empty. Once the whole group is standing on the tarp, challenge them to completely turn or flip the tarp over without anyone stepping off of the tarp.

Discussion Questions: How did you come up with a plan? Did someone take the role of the leader or did everyone make suggestions? Was everyone involved in helping to meet the challenge?

Line Up

Objective: Communication

Materials: Blindfolds (optional)

Description: Gather the group and ask them to line up without talking, using the following criteria:

- Tallest to shortest
- By birthdates
- Total number of letters in your first name (shortest to longest)
- By the first letter of your name (alphabetically)
- Shortest to Tallest
- Number of people in your immediate family (smallest to biggest)

Variation: do the same thing with students closing their eyes or using blindfolds

Mystery Object

Objective: Develop good listening skills

Materials: None

Description: Select two students who must secretly select an object in the room. In an attempt to get the rest of the group to guess what the object is, they must carry on a conversation about the object without directly saying what the object is. Meanwhile, the rest of the group is listening and attempting to identify the object. Once the correct object is guessed, two more students select a new object and start a new conversation.

Variation: Select anything to have the conversation about-it doesn't have to be in the room. Or write down different objects on pieces of paper and let each pair draw one slip of paper.

Ducks Fly

Objective: Using careful listening in order to not become “it.”

Materials: None

Description: Select someone to be “it” and have him/her stand in front of the room. This person calls out, “Ducks Fly, Seagulls Fly, Ladybugs Fly, Cows Fly, etc.” Whenever “it” says an animal that flies, the group flaps their wings. When “it” says an animal that doesn’t fly, the group stops. Whoever keeps flying is out. The game continues until one person remains. That person becomes “it” for the next round. The person who is “it” can use any animals that he or she can think of.

Toilet Paper Game

Objective: To allow people to open up about themselves

Materials: One roll of toilet paper

Description: Start by telling a story. You are a group getting ready to go on a journey through the wilderness. You will be gone for a week and you will be camping out every night. Then pull out the toilet paper roll. Tell them to take as much toilet paper as they think that they will need for the journey. After the roll of toilet paper has been passed around to every student, tell them that they must now share something about themselves for each sheet of toilet paper that they have taken.

Sing A Song

Objective: To get students talking and feeling comfortable

Materials: A list of words

Description: Break students into 2-4 groups of approx. 4 students each. The teacher stands in the middle with the groups surrounding her/him. Take turn, one group at a time. The teacher calls out a word* and counts to 10-20. The group has that long to think of a song with that word in it and sing that part of the song. You can either keep score for each correct song or you can eliminate a group if they miss. If necessary, shorten the time that the group has to think of a song.

*Word Suggestions: sunshine, snow, rainbow, lamb, night, love, walk, blue, up, child, angels, light, etc.

Name Game

Objective: Get to know each other better

Materials: Paper, markers, etc.

Description: Divide students into groups of 3-4. Make a banner that represents all of their group-their names and something about each of them. Then the group makes up a short song, rap, poem that includes the name of each person in their group and one thing about each person.

Secret Word

Objective: To encourage interactive communication among the group

Materials: None

Description: Select one person in the class to leave the room for a few minutes.

Everyone else selects a “secret” word. It can be anything. When the student who left the room returns, everyone attempts to get this person to say the secret word without tell him or her what it is. The group may ask the person questions, engage in conversation or whatever it takes to try to get the person to say the secret word. Once the word has been said (or a reasonable time limit), select a new person to leave the room for another round.

Back to Back

Objective: To learn to lean on one another for support

Materials: None

Description: Divide the group into pairs (make a group of three if necessary.) Challenge each group to sit down on the floor with their backs to each other. Link elbows and then stand up without unlinking their arms. After the pairs have successfully done this, have them find another pair and do the same thing with 4 people. Continue until the whole group links arms and stands up as one big team.

Toilet Paper Wrap

Objective: Fun and teamwork

Materials: 1 roll of toilet paper per team

Description: Divide the group into teams of 3-4. Give each group one roll of toilet paper. Give them ten minutes to decorate one member of the group using the toilet paper. The person may be decorated as anything that the group comes up with-nurse, sailor, statue of liberty, tree, etc. Encourage the groups to be creative and hold a fashion show at the end with each group explaining their creation.

Bible Jeopardy

Make two teams and ask questions about the lesson. Taking turns between the teams, give one point to each team for a correct answer.

How Many Words Can You Make?

Write a word or phrase on the board. Give students a time period and see how many new words that they can make by combining the letters in the word/phrase.