

THE AFTERSCHOOL GUIDE

FOR CREATING OUTSTANDING

TEAM-BUILDING GAMES



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ICEBREAKER GAMES

A Story of Three Words

Write three words that have nothing to do with each other on three separate index cards. Divide the participants into groups of three. Give each group a card. Give the groups two to three minutes to come up with a scenario that inputs all three words.

After the time is up, have each group present their scenario as a skit, commercial, or anything creative! This is great for groups that know each other or don't know each other. It will get them talking and the juices of conversation flowing.

Paper, Not Floor

Start with large sheet of paper and the instruction that everyone in the group must be touching the paper, and not the floor. When they succeed, fold the paper in half and repeat. Continue until it is too small to fold---they will have to get creative, but it can be done! Typically, groups start off the first several rounds by simply all standing on the piece of paper. After a while it gets too small for that, and that is when they have to start working together to figure it out.

Bulls-Eye

Everyone must get into a circle, hook arms, and look down. The facilitator says "1,2,3, DRAW!!" and everyone lifts their head at the same time and looks at one and ONLY one person.

If you make immediate direct eye contact with the person you looked at, shout out "BULLSEYE!" and they become partners. Play a few practice rounds and have them choose a different person each time so people get new partners. Have the pairs introduce themselves to each other and answer questions such as, what are your short/long term goals, hidden talents, scary/proudest moments, etc.

Change Your Spot

Supplies

A spot marker (i.e. a post-it note or piece of tape) for every member in the circle (one person is 'it' and they will be in the center of the circle, with no spot markers.)

How To Play

Start with the group standing in a circle, with their feet on a spot marker. The facilitator stands in the middle of the circle and presents the rules of the game.

Whomever is in the middle of the circle is "It." "It" will ask a question "Have you ever?" followed by something they have done. EXAMPLE: "Have you ever ridden on the back of a motorcycle?" Anyone in the group who has done the same thing, must move to a different, empty, spot. No one may move to the spot right next to the spot they were standing on. The person who was "It" must move onto an empty spot. Whoever is unable to get to a spot before all spots are full, becomes "It."

Me in a Nutshell

Have students use a paper bag and bring in items that represent each of their personalities. The students will each present to the class as a great way to get to know everyone.

String Toss

Players

Groups of eight to twelve

Supplies

A ball of yarn for your group

How to Play

Have the children sit in a circle. Give one player a ball of yarn. That person has to find the end of the ball and then toss the ball to anyone else in the circle while still holding on to the end of the yarn. Then the tosser must ask that player one or two questions.

If Sam, for example, tosses the ball of yarn to Joy, he might ask her "What is your favorite color?" or "What animal are you most afraid of?" Then Joy has to answer the question and hold on to her part of the yarn and toss the rest of the ball to someone else who hasn't received it yet. If Joy tosses the ball to Pam, she might ask "What is your favorite song?" or "What is your least favorite food?"

Play continues until everyone is holding on to a piece of the yarn and you have created a web that includes all the players.



Ice Breakers Ice Cube

Break the ice at your morning meetings or at any time of the day! Students will love reaching into the high-quality, glossy box for a card to initiate a getting-to-know-you activity. Thirty-five thought provoking question cards and 15 engaging activity cards are sure to involve students in a positive learning experience.

Wall to Wall

This game is great for helping students to recognize the similarities they have with their classmates and to appreciate the differences that exist in their class.

To play this game the teacher reads questions that have two possible answers. The teacher designates two different walls in the room to represent the answers. For example the right wall could be yes and the left wall could be no. The students move to stand by the wall that represents their answer to the question. Optional: after the students have moved to the wall that designates their answer have the students discuss their answer with a classmate who had the same answer.

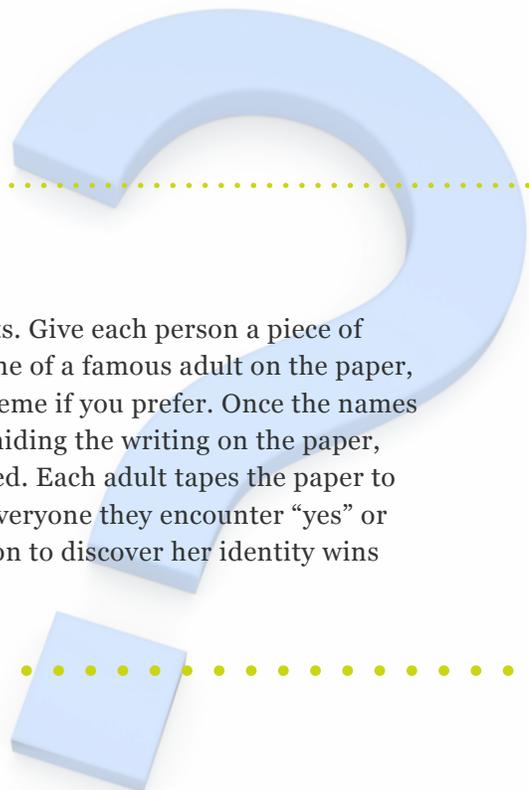
Before playing be sure to specify that students must not run while playing this game.

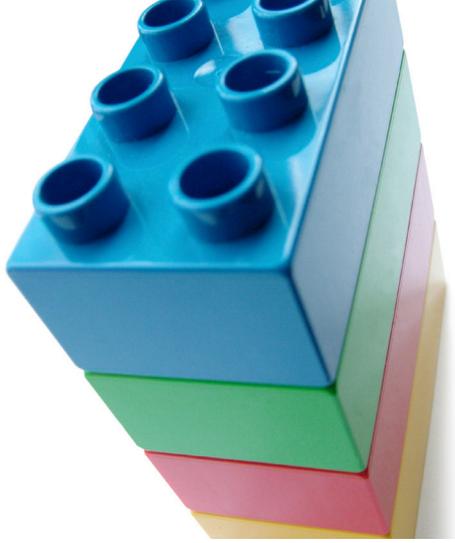
Example questions:

- Do you like pizza? (yes or no)
- Do you ride the bus to school? (yes or no)
- Do you have siblings? (yes or no)

Who's on My Back?

This is a fun icebreaker and problem-solving workshop for adults. Give each person a piece of paper and some fabric tape. Have each participant write the name of a famous adult on the paper, obscuring the paper so that no one else can see. Use a related theme if you prefer. Once the names are written, allow the group to circulate for a few minutes, still hiding the writing on the paper, and then pair up with the person next to them when time is called. Each adult tapes the paper to the back of the other. Now participants circulate again, asking everyone they encounter “yes” or “no” questions to determine who is on their back. The first person to discover her identity wins this activity.





Student Team Builder

GAMES

Up, Up

Give the group a balloon, and instruct them to keep it up in the air. Everyone in the group should count out loud each hit. Participants may not hit it twice in a row, must remain silent (except for counting), and they may not move their feet. After a minute or so let them discuss what might be a more effective way to keep the balloon in the air. Try again.

Captains Coming

There are six commands. Each command has a specific role that players will be asked to act out. After a command is given, all players gather together accordingly, in groups of two, three, four, five, or six. When someone is unable to join any group because of the size restrictions, they can either step outside the playing area and cheer on their friends or if you want an endless game, let them join in the next round. If a group does the wrong action after the command is given, they are out of the round and must wait until there's one group of two left.

Commands

“Captains Coming” - All players come to attention and salute.

“Swab the Deck” - All players pretend to mop the floor.

“Lighthouse” - Two players give each other a high ten, palms remain in place and the players spin around in a circle (Like a Lighthouse), yelling “Beep.....Beep....”



Wink (Kiss) of Death

One person is chosen in secret. Everyone is scattered about in the classroom. If that person chosen in secret winks at you, within five minutes you will die a slow agonizing, cheesy, death in front of everyone (carefully). Try to figure out who is the winker of death. Only one guess per person.

Spaghetti Marshmallow Tower

The group needs to choose one person to be the leader before any instructions are given. Once the leader is chosen, instructions are given. The task is to create the tallest tower using only uncooked spaghetti noodles and marshmallows. The group is then told that the leader is only allowed to guide and cannot physically help create the tower. Give them ten minutes to brainstorm and create, and see what they come up with!

FFEACH (from Ultimate Camp Resource)

FFEACH is a charades race and the categories are Fast Foods, Electrical Appliances, and Cartoon Heroes.

Teams compete against each other to complete a predetermined list of items. We use the term “compete” loosely, as it is a charades race, after all. Divide the group into two or more teams. Have the group spread out so that they can’t overhear the next team’s answers. Ask one member from each team to come to the facilitator. The facilitator will then whisper the first word into the ears of the volunteers, and release them to their groups at the same time. Once a member of the group guesses the word correctly, someone new runs to the instructor for the next word. Advise the group when you are giving instructions that no one can come up for a word twice until everyone has gone up once. This helps ensure that everyone participates. The team members must tell the instructor what word their team just guessed, and the instructor tells the new volunteer the next word on the list. The object of the game is to complete the entire list without cheating. Here is a sample list - you can change the list as you see fit, based on participant age, interests, etc.

FFEACH List

1) Superman, 2) Curly Fries, 3) Spongebob Square Pants, 4) Curling Iron, 5) Remote Control, 6) Pepperoni Pizza, 7) Incredible Hulk, 8) Dishwasher, 9) Microwave, 10) McNuggets, 11) Fruit Juicer, 12) Scooby Doo, 13) Batman, 14) Portable CD Player, 15) Bacon Double Cheeseburger, 16) Defibrillator, 17) Papa Smurf, 18) Blender, 19) Wonder Woman, 20) Onion Rings.

Titanic Challenge (from Ultimate Camp Resource)

Players

Groups of eight to twelve

Supplies

Hula hoops

How to Play

Explain to the students that they will all be aboard a sinking ship (behind the start line; use half of a volleyball court or similar area for the start and finish lines). They may only use lifeboats (the hula hoops) to get to safety (the other line). The object is to get all the people safely off the boat as quickly as possible using only the life boats.

Students may only step in the hoops and may pick up hoops, but only those that are empty. Hula hoops cannot be dragged or tossed. Teams may take any number of passengers on the lifeboats but if any passenger steps out of the hoops all the people in the lifeboat must return to the ship. Teams may step out of the lifeboat only when they have reached the finish line but they may not throw the hoops back to the boat. (They will need to put one hoop in front of the other until they reach the finish line, but do not tell them this unless they absolutely cannot figure it out).

Human Knot

Have the group make a large circle. (This game also works well as a race between several circles in larger groups.) Have everyone put their left hand in the middle, and hold hands with someone in the circle, not directly next to them. Repeat with the right hand, and be sure to hold hands with a different person, who is not directly next to them. Then the group must use teamwork to unravel themselves into a circle again without coming disconnected.

Life Size Scarecrow



Students start by brainstorming what materials are needed for their scarecrow. Any disagreement of ideas is open for discussion to see how they could collectively work together.

After brainstorming, the students need to work together collecting clothes and other items to form their scarecrow. The students will also need to work together to collect old newspaper or something else for stuffing their scarecrow.

Once all the items are collected, the collaboration of assembling, can begin. Have the students lay the materials in an order that is conducive to a production line.

The children can take a “VOTE” for the scarecrows name. And then go around the room and see the other kids’ creations.

Sneak a Peek

Supplies

Building blocks or something similar (i.e. Lego’s®, Popsicle® sticks, etc.)

How To Play

The facilitator must build a small sculpture or design with some of the building material and hide it from the group. Place the original sculpture in a place that is hidden but at an equal distance from all the groups. Divide the group into small teams of two to eight members each. Give each team enough building material so that they could duplicate what you have already created.

Ask one member from each team to come at the same time to look at the sculpture for five seconds and try to memorize as much as possible before returning to his/her team. After they run back to their teams, they have twenty-five seconds to instruct their teams how to build the structure so that it looks like the one that has been hidden. After the twenty-five seconds are up, ask each team to send up another member of their group who gets a chance to “sneak a peek” before returning to their team. Continue in this pattern until one of the teams successfully duplicates the original sculpture. Build different sculptures for any additional rounds of this game.

The Newspaper Dress

Divide the group into teams with equal number of members and give each team a stack of newspapers, string, scissors, tape and pins. Assign a separate working area for each team and set a time of thirty minutes for each team. The teams have to design a costume from all the materials provided. Get a panel of judges to judge the costumes and declare a winner.

Passing the Hula Hoop

Divide the group into teams and ask them to join hands. Place a hula hoop in one of the person's hands. The objective is to pass the hula hoop around the circle without letting go of the hands. If the link breaks, they are disqualified. The team that manages to finish first wins.



Getting Smaller

Use a rope to create a circle large enough for the students to stand in and have them stand in it. Tell them to get out and make the circle smaller, and then get back in. Each time the students get in and out of the circle, make it smaller. Eventually, students have to work together to fit in the circle because it is so small. Measure the circle when the students cannot go any smaller. The next time they play, tell them they must work together to create a smaller circle than last time.

Balloon Tower



In Balloon Tower, students are divided into groups and given a bag containing a set number of balloons (these can be various sizes) and a roll of masking tape. The objective is for students to blow up the balloons and build a freestanding tower using nothing but balloons and tape. The balloons cannot be taped to the floor. The group that builds the tallest tower in a given amount of time wins.

This task requires the groups to work together as a team in order to build their tower within the amount of time they are given. They must communicate and listen to each other's ideas about how to approach the task. The students must assign themselves jobs and monitor each other's progress. And finally, they must problem solve and plan their approach ahead of time, as once the balloons are taped together it is very difficult to rearrange them!

Once the time was up and a winner was determined, sit down with the students and discuss what their struggles were, and how important communicating and working together is in order to accomplish a goal.

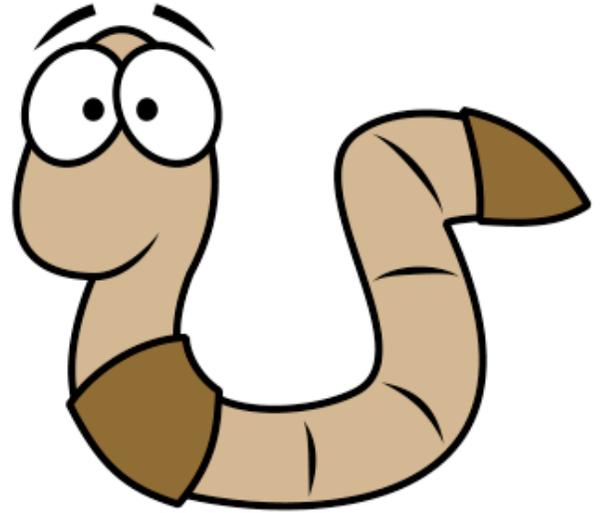
Saving Sam

Supplies

Gummy worms (Sam)
Life-saver Gummies (Life vests)
Clear plastic cup (Boat)
Cocktail stirrers (Oar)
Paper clips

How To Play

Poor Sam is a worm that has found himself in a rather unfortunate situation. His boat has capsized and his life jacket is trapper underneath it! Poor Sam can't swim! His oar, his only means of movement, has fallen into the rocky waters as well! He now sits perched on top of his capsized boat and he needs our help! It is the students' job to SAVE SAM! They will be responsible for flipping Sam's boat over and getting him back inside. He needs his life jacket on him this time, and his oar lying horizontally across the top of his boat.



Here's the catch: You can't touch Sam with your hands. You may only use the two paperclips supplied. Keep in mind we wouldn't want to hurt poor Sam by stabbing him or popping his life jacket by stabbing it! Also, we can't let him touch the water (the floor or desk) because he can't swim!

Bridge

Players

Groups up to or more than thirty

Supplies

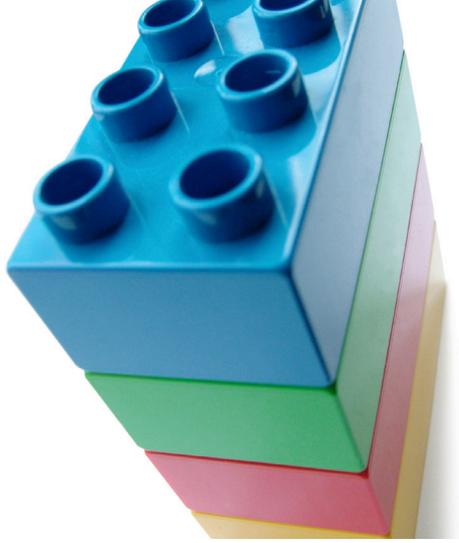
Pool noodles, tape, or cardboard

How To Play

Make a bridge on the floor using tape, cardboard, or pool noodles. Divide the class in half with players on opposite ends of the bridge. The object is to get all the teammates from one side of the bridge to the other without falling off. Add music to create a "pirate" feel. Team with the most players to one side before the music ends wins.

It's a Foot Race!

Have students line up on two straight lines facing each other with a line of tape on the floor halfway between the two rows of students. Students stand with their feet touching the other student on both sides of them. They must move the "chain" forward to the middle line without anyone's foot leaving their partner. This is harder than it sounds and the discussion(s) that come from "how are we going to get this done" are amazing! If someone's foot slips and is not touching, the whole line moves back to the start line and begins again. Let The Race Begin!



Staff Team-Building GAMES

Staff takes Flight

Each staff member upon entering the meeting is given a piece of paper/pen and instructions. The instructions will tell them to write on the piece of paper one place that they would like to fly to, and then fold their piece of paper up into any type of paper airplane or flying device that they can think of.

When everyone is done they get up from their seats and throw the air planes around the room until the leader says stop. When the leader says stop, each person will choose one airplane and open it up to read the place they would like to fly to and then they must match the airplane with its owner. After the staff match-up they get a chance to talk to their match for three to five minutes to learn about them. After everyone has had a chance to talk to their person the group meets back up and staff take turns introducing their new friends to the group by starting with, “This is my new friend ____ he/she would like to visit ____.” Then, tell about what else they learned about the person.



Obstacle course

Use items you have on site (hula hoops, boxes, jump ropes, etc.) to create an obstacle course for your staff. Have one staff member close their eyes and try to get through while the other staff provides instructions and encouragement. This exercise teaches trust, teamwork, and communication. Follow with discussion.

Get to Know Your Team Scavenger Hunt

Create a personality scavenger hunt and give your team some time to go around and ask each other questions in order to complete it. You will most likely all learn things you did not know about each other.

Mix, Mingle and Move

Supplies

Brightly colored sheet of paper, masking tape, index cards, or sticky notes (optional)

Before a meeting, workshop, or presentation hang brightly colored posters around the room. Each poster should have one question relevant to the topic of discussion and a simple physical activity with a number of repetitions.

Example

If your staff meeting will cover “healthy snack ideas for an upcoming family event” list questions such as:

- What’s your favorite healthy snack? [Activity: three Jumping Jacks]
- Why is providing healthy snacks important? [Activity: ten squats]
- What is a fun way to encourage students to try new healthy foods? [Activity: one push-up]

How To Play

As attendees arrive, have them pick a poster, do the activity, and consider the question. Facilitate group sharing and reflecting.

Variations

Depending on time, encourage groups to discuss their poster question and share out as a larger group. You could also encourage attendees to rotate posters if they’ve completed the task quickly.

Name that Person!

Supplies

Index cards, pens. A couple days before the meeting, ask all attendees to start thinking about some fun facts about themselves to share with the larger group.

How To Play

Separate the attendees into two groups and have each group come up with a team name.

Give every person six index cards. Ask that they write a fact about themselves on each card, ranging in difficulty for others to guess. Have them attach a point value to each fact, ten being the most difficult to guess and one being the easiest. Using the fact cards from your team, mix them up really well.

Have the teams alternate in reading a fact out loud for the other team to guess which person on your team wrote the fact about themselves. If the team guesses correctly, they will get the points assigned to that particular fact. If they guess incorrectly, they will lose that amount of points.

Humor makes the game the most fun, so be playful with your facts! Ideal team size is between four and eight people. If you have a really large group of attendees, you may want to divide them into more groups.

If you have time and more than three groups you could try a round robin approach, where teams rotate so they can learn the fun facts from each team and the team with the most points accumulated at the end can be the winner.





Persuasion

Distribute card stock and markers. Have each person create a sign by writing her objective for the day in as few words as possible. Ask participants to circulate, silently holding up their signs for all to read. After a minute or so, blow a whistle signaling participants to pair up with the person closest to them. The pair is then given two minutes to discuss their objective and jointly decide which sign to keep. Drop the other sign on the floor. After two minutes, blow the whistle again. The pair finds another pair. Repeat the exercise, again dropping the discarded sign. Depending on the size of the group, you can do this one or two more times. Have the teams find a meeting corner. Give the teams ten minutes to plan and videotape a one-minute commercial to convince the entire room to adopt their objective. Blow the whistle for show time!

Treasure Hunt

Have staff collect items from around the school that reveal something about themselves. They need to say where the item came from and how it relates to them. This helps them to pay close attention to their surroundings and aids in observation skills.

Draw Something

Pass out nametags to everyone. Instead of writing their name on it, have them draw something about themselves everyone else might not know about them. After they are done, go around the table and let each person share what they had drawn. This is a great way to find out a lot about the staff and connect with each other.

House of Cards

Break staff up into small groups of four to six people. Tie the right wrist of the first team member to the left wrist of the second team member. Tie second team member's right wrists to the third team member's left and so on until all members wrists are tied together with a piece of cloth or a bandanna. Give each group a deck of cards and instruct them to build a house together with the cards. Teamwork will be important to accomplish the task. To add an interesting component, in advance, secretly ask one member in each group to sabotage the group effort until a signal is given. Allow enough time after the signal for the group to work together.

Afterwards, process the group's efforts and progress informing them of the saboteur. Remind them that this shows the impact of one person can have on the whole team and what can be accomplished when all are working towards a common goal.

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TEAM BUILDING GAMES
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