

TEAM BUILDING GAMES FOR TEACHER TIME

These games will work best if you divide your class into dorm groups, this makes facilitation easier and students get to know their dorm mates better in the process. You will probably not get to all of these games in one hour, read through them first and pick out the ones you want to do the most. *Have Fun!*

WAGON WHEEL (15 min)

Purpose: A good beginning game, in this activity team members learn facts about each other that they will need to know for the next game.

Materials: Attention getting noise, white/chalk board and dry erase pens/chalk.

Setup: Half of the dorm stands in a circle facing out and the other half of the dorm stands in a circle facing in so that every person in the outer circle is looking directly across at someone in the inner circle. Explain that you will give them a question and they will have to find out the answer from the person across the circle from them (both people give answers). You will then get their attention, remind them this means they will need to freeze and listen. When everyone is listening you will give them all a new question, but before they ask or answer it the outer circle will rotate one person to the right while the inner circle stays in the same place (this gives everyone a new partner). Let them know this will happen for each new question – outer circle will rotate; inner circle will stay in the same place.

Questions:

- 1) Find out what that person's favorite animal is.
- 2) Does this person have siblings? If so, how many sisters and how many brothers?
- 3) What is their favorite kind of food?
- 4) Do they have any pets? If so what kinds?
- 5) Who are that persons favorite musicians?
- 6) What is their favorite thing they've done at Outdoor Ed?
- 7) Any other questions you want!

TOUCH & GLUE (7 – 10 min)

Purpose: This activity introduces the idea of teamwork, getting over fears of being together, and serves as an example of games being FUN, not competition.

Materials: A loud attention getting noise

Setup: Dorms are seated in a circle during instruction, and then stand as a dorm for the game. Explain that every time they hear the attention getting noise, the entire dorm needs to freeze in whatever position they find themselves, close their mouths, and open their ears, because new instructions are coming. Do a practice round with the dorm standing. Good practice round combinations can be:

“Take your right hand and put it on the head of somebody wearing blue.”

*(Now wait for the students to find their positions give your attention getting noise when you think everyone has found an appropriate head. Students should only be touching students **in their own dorm.**)*

“Now with your right hand still on that person's head, take your left hand and put it on the shoulder of somebody wearing white shoes.”

Game: Once the students understand the concept, you can use information they learned in wagon wheel and you can begin making the combinations more complicated: “Put your nose on the shoulder of somebody whose favorite animal is not a mammal.” “Put your foot next to somebody’s foot who has 3 siblings.” “Put your elbow on the knee of somebody who made you laugh this week.” Remember to use the attention getting noise between instructions so that all students can hear. For added difficulty, once the dorm is sufficiently tangled, have them all take three steps to the right, or try to rotate clockwise, or try to sit down.

Notes: It may take a while for them to get the hang of quieting down when they hear the noise, especially because they may have their nose on someone’s shoulder, but they will learn to do so – the more they talk, the longer they have to smell someone who’s been hiking all day. Be patient, and enjoy the silliness! 😊

MOUNTAIN BUILDING (7 – 10 min)

Purpose: To encourage teamwork and mutual effort.

Materials: Four volunteers

Setup: Dorms should be sitting in a circle during instructions. Choose two volunteers from one dorm **who are about the same size** to come to the front. Have these students sit on the floor, back to back, with their knees bent and their feet planted firmly on the floor (be sure to SAY these positions so that all participants know the appropriate beginning position). Have them push against each other’s backs and push down on the floor with their feet until they both stand up (no hands allowed). Then, pick two more volunteers of approximately equal stature from the same group. Have them sit back to back in the same position as your first two volunteers, and have the two back-to-back pairs sit right next to each other, link elbows with the person NEXT to them but the people on the ends link elbows with the person behind them. Point out to everybody that their backs are to each other and that they are all linking elbows. As a group of four, have them stand in the same way as the first two.

Game: As a dorm, they are trying to have everyone stand up as a pair. Once a pair is successful, they should try it in groups of four, then of six, then of eight, until eventually their whole dorm is standing as a unit.

Notes: This one can get out of control, especially with the boy dorms. A word about safety is needed during setup. When they’re all seated, they’re less likely to fling their classmates over their backs. This is especially difficult for larger students; you may want to pair with them. Not all dorms can stand up as one group, so encourage them to make multiple groups as large as they can.

QUEEN BEE (7 – 15 min)

Purpose: Reign in the energy and focus, observation.

Setup: Dorms sit in a circle for instructions and then stand in a circle for the game.

Game: There are lots of instructions, so explain them succinctly and clearly.

- 1) When we start, everyone will stand up and one of you will stand in the middle of the circle and close his/her eyes.

- 2) Once their eyes are closed, I will come around to each dorm and touch one person on the shoulder. That person is your Queen Bee.
- 3) The Queen Bee will start doing some motion (demonstrate different motions he/she could do – disco, clapping, twirling, raising the roof – anything school appropriate).
- 4) Whatever the Queen Bee does, the rest of the dorm has to do as well (i.e. everyone raising the roof).
- 5) Once the whole dorm has started doing the motion, someone tell the person in the middle to open his/her eyes. With their eyes open, the dorm continues to do the actions and the middle person will try and figure out who the Queen Bee is.

**IMPORTANT: The whole dorm keeps following the Queen Bee. He/she should change motions fairly often; otherwise it's not fair to the person in the middle!*

- 6) The person in the middle has three guesses to guess who the Queen Bee is. If they guess correctly, then they go to the outside of the circle, and the old Queen Bee comes to the middle and closes his/her eyes. Then, the person who was just in the middle of the circle gets to choose the new Queen Bee, and the game begins again! If the person in the middle doesn't guess right in three tries, then they still switch places – it just means that the Queen Bee won.

Notes: You will want to circulate to make sure they understand what's happening, and to make sure that their actions are school-appropriate. You can tell your students it's okay to play this game in the dorms if they have extra time.

ZEN COUNTING (5-10 min)

Purpose: encourage teamwork and develop patience

Setup: Students will sit or stand in dorm circles (if you have a large dorm you may divide them in half for smaller groups).

Game: Students in the dorm try to count to a certain number, say 10, without anyone talking at the same time. They must start with 1 and work toward 10 in order, each number can only be said once and there can't be any planning. If teammates talk at the same time, or say the same number, the team must start again at 1. (Another one they can play in the dorms!)

HULA-HOOP PASS (10-15 min)

bring a hula-hoop up from the rec shed for this one.

Purpose: Whole class teamwork!

Materials: A hula-hoop

Setup: Students will stand in a circle holding hands for the game.

Game: Explain that the goal is for the class to pass the hula-hoop around the entire group without using hands or breaking the loop. Once they stand up they will hold hands with the hula-hoop over one person's arm (as if it is a bracelet). This one is fun as a speed challenge, time them and see how quickly they can do it (usually 3-4 times is enough).