

TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES (PART 2)

What's Different? - Students all pair up and get 30 seconds to memorize everything about their partner's appearance. When the time is called, they turn away from each other and change something (i.e. take off a headband or button another button). Which pair can identify each other's changes the fastest?

Line it Up - See how fast your group can get into an alphabetical line based on their names. Better yet, split into boys vs. girls or two randomly assigned groups and race to see which group can get organized first.

Move if You... - Have students sit in a large circle with one person in the middle. The middle person calls out for a certain group of people to move — for example, “Move if you have brown hair” or “Move if you have been to another country.” If the students fit the criteria, they must run to a new seat in the circle. The one student left standing is in the middle for the next round.

Play Catch - Have students stand in a large circle and play catch with a large beach ball. The trick? Write get-to-know-you questions all over the beach ball and whoever catches it must answer the question their hand rests on.

Race for the Truth - Have each person stand on the starting line while a leader lists off general facts. (For example, I have a dog.) If the stated fact is true for any of the students, those students must move forward a step. Whoever crosses the finish line first wins!

Snowball Fight: This is a very oldie, but goodie. To play, students basically write on a piece of paper 2 or 3 interesting facts about themselves that they'd like to share. Tell them not to write their name on the paper! Then, they wad up the paper into a “snow” ball. I like to have all of the students toss their snowballs toward the center of the room (I have an empty space there) on the count of three, and then everyone goes and picks up a snowball. Students take turns reading aloud picked up snow balls and either they or the class as a whole tries to guess who wrote each.

Tried-and-True Tips for Snowball Fight:

- Give students at least five minutes to think before sharing.
- Tell students to WRITE DOWN all (two or three) items before they read them aloud. Otherwise, people tend to forget things and this drags the game out.
- Give students a few examples of “categories” they can draw from if they can't think of anything to say: number of siblings, pets, hobbies, favorite foods, things they like or dislike, places they've visited, and any unusual or interesting characteristic or ability. Believe it or not, injuries are always a popular type of fact.

- Have an idea of where you want students to throw the snowballs BEFORE you say “go.” Otherwise, some students may just whip the snowballs at their frenemies’ faces. Not cool. If I have room, I like to have students throw the snowballs toward an empty space in the classroom. If not, I bring a big tub and students can shoot their snowballs into it. The tub also makes it easier for students with mobility issues to retrieve a snowball to read because they don’t have to crawl on the floor to find one.

Hidden Identity

This is a simple and fun icebreaker game that takes very little preparation and works with any size group.

1. Have each student write down the name of a famous person – an actor, singer, historical figure, etc.
2. Collect the papers and tape one to the back of each student without letting them know who they have.
3. The students then circulate around the room asking yes or no questions to identify what name is taped to their back.
4. They can only ask each person one question, however.
5. The student who guesses their celebrity first wins.

Alphabet Soup

- This fun icebreaker game works well with a large group of students. Split your large group into several teams and give each team a baggie of Alphabits cereal. The teams use the letters to make words or number series. Teams gain points by finding one or more of the following:
 - Words of three letters
 - Words of four letters
 - Words with five or more letters
 - Team member names
 - Years – 1914, 2001, etc.
- You can give extra points for the longest word if you wish.

Two Truths and a Lie

This is another fun icebreaker where you give students a few minutes to come up with a few interesting facts about themselves. On a sheet of paper, students write down two interesting facts that are true and a third item that is not true about them. Then one at a time students read their lists of three items and the other students in the class try to guess which is the lie. This activity always leads to questions about the truths and spawns great get-to-know-you type discussions.

Tried-and-True Tips for Two Truths and a Lie

- Tell students to mix up the order when they read their items (e.g., don't always read the lie last).
- Like with Snowball Fight, students should WRITE DOWN all three items before they read them aloud so they don't forget what they came up with.
- You go first and have students try to figure out your own two truths and a lie.