

COMMON GROUND ICEBREAKERS

2 Truths and a Lie

Ask each person in the group to think of two true facts about themselves, and one lie.

Each person in the group takes a turn telling the group their three items.

The group then has to agree on which fact they think is a lie. Once the group announces their decision, the speaker tells the group the correct answer. The group then can talk about any of the interesting things they just learned about the new person.

Variation: Each person writes down their 2 truths and a lie on a piece of paper and hands it in anonymously. Read each card randomly one at a time. The group has to decide who the person on the card is, as well as the lie.

Candy Ice Breaker

Put about enough candy in a bowl for each person in the room to take at least 5 pieces, (for larger groups take 3). After that is done tell everybody they can grab 1-5 pieces of candy. Each camper then has to tell something about themselves for each piece of candy they took. (Example: If Claire took 5 pieces of candy she'd have to tell 5 things about herself.)

Cross if you....

Have everyone sit in a circle with you in the center. You can either sit in chairs, or have place markers (book bags, etc) behind each person. Name off something you have, have done, or can do (i.e. "Cross if you have ever jumped out of a plane, if you own a dog, have blue eyes). Those people that can give a positive answer to the question will cross the circle and find an open seat of someone else that answered positively. Since you have one less chair then there are people in the group, and you found an opening quickly, there should be one person left in the center. This person then gets to pick the topic.

Face to Face

The leader has the group randomly pair up. Once introductions between partners are made, the leader gives the group a topic to discuss with their partner for 30 seconds or so.

At the end of the time, the leader will call for the group to switch partners and call out a new topic. Try to choose topics that are both fun and insightful. Examples include:

"If you could have lunch with anyone from history, who would it be?"

"If you could be granted one wish, what would it be?"

Have you ever? or Postman

Everyone stands or sits in a circle. The one person without a chair or a place marker is "it". The "it" will say something about themselves. For example, "Have you ever gone swimming in the Atlantic Ocean?" Anyone in the circle that has that in common must move to a new spot in the circle. Each move has to be at least two place markers or chairs from where they started. Whoever is left without a place marker will be it and will tell something about themselves.

Joke & Punch Line

Set-up: Write a joke on one card and a punch line on another. Be sure to mix the cards up. The number of different jokes you use is up to you. Give each person a card. Explain that they may have a joke or a punch line on the card. On a given signal, they are to walk amongst the crowd trying to find the other part of their joke/punch line. When they find their other half, you may ask them to get to know their new partner by asking things like favorite ice cream or dream vacation etc...When this is done, everyone can return to a circle and, with their partner, tell their joke.

Prejudice

I have a game that you might be interested in to help people understand their prejudices. You make up index cards that have descriptions of different types of people. It could cover race, religion, disabilities, whatever you come up with. Each person has an index card placed on their back and they don't know what they have been labeled with. Each person has to guess what their label is by the way others act towards them. I think that you could make a more serious activity by having quite a bit of processing afterwards to talk about why others acted towards you in a stereotypical way, and how they need to recognize these stereotypes and prejudices that they knew they had or just recognized with this activity. Good Luck!

Sets

Have the kids sit down. Pick two or three kids that have something in common, like stripes on their shirts, no shoelaces, or the same first letter in their name. Have them stand up. All the kids try to figure out what makes them a "set."

Silent Interviews

Divide the group into pairs - try to make mix the group into pairs of folks who don't know each other well. Ask the participants to introduce themselves to their partner.

Instruct the group that from this point forward, speaking is not allowed. This includes whispering, mouthing words, and making sounds, too! Inform the group that they must tell their partner 3 things about themselves without speaking, similar to a charades game. These things can not be physical characteristics. Once all of the partners have finished miming to each other, call everyone back into a circle. Ask for each pair to verbally introduce their partner to the group, as well as the three things that they learned (or think they learned). If you are working with very young children, you can do this as a group activity, where one child acts out a hobby for the group to guess.

Stand up, Sit Down

The kids can start out in a standing or sitting position. You ask them questions, such as "do you have a sister?" or "are you wearing pink?" if their answer is yes they change to the other position. If no then they stay the same.

Ten Fingers

This activity is great for the first day or just when ever your group has free time. It works best with more people, and everyone should be honest when playing. Have everyone sit in a circle or close enough to be able to hear everyone. Tell them to hold up all 10 fingers. A counselor can start off by stating one fact about themselves. For ex: "I have never been to Florida." or "I have blue eyes." Then the participants who have been to Florida, or don't have blue eyes, will put one finger down. This will continue around the circle, having each person share one fact about themselves until someone is all out of fingers. *Its better to try and use less obvious, unique facts about yourself because there is a chance that more people will have to put a finger down if they can't relate to your fact. Who ever has the most fingers left at the end of everyone's' turn wins! This is a great way to pass the time and learn about each other while having simple fun.

The Big Wind Blows

Everyone stands in a circle with one person in the middle. Something marks the spot of each person in the circle (a shoe works well!) The person in the middle says:

"The Big Wind Blows for anyone _____ " they fill in the blank with something like "wearing socks", "who has a birthday in September"... etc.

Everyone who fits that description has to go into the middle of the circle and find a new place to stand, the one rule is that they cannot stay in their own spot and they cannot go to the spot immediately beside them. The person in the middle tries to get a spot on the edge of the circle and this leaves someone in the middle who makes the big wind blow again!

Toilet Paper

You will need 2-3 rolls of toilet paper depending on the size of the group

1. Have the group sit in a circle
2. The leader tells the group to pretend that they are going on a camping trip overnight.
3. The group leader then passes out the rolls of toilet paper and tells the group that they'll need to bring enough toilet paper for one night in the forest.
4. Once they have taken their sheets, tell them that for every piece of paper that they took, they need to tell the group one fact about themselves.
(Or you could set it up ahead of time that they earn their toilet paper by revealing facts about themselves...one sheet of TP for every bit of info!)

Vortex

Set-up: Ask everyone in the group to find a partner, if there is an odd number, the leader can participate with group member. It is very important that everyone has only one partner. Have partners face each other and introduce themselves. Ask them to decide which of them is most like an apple or a lemon. The object is give each partner an identifying title. Advise the partners to remember each other's names and faces. Have the "apples" make a large circle facing outward. Once the circle is constructed, have the "lemons" find their partners and face them. You will have two circles, one inside of the other.

The activity: Ask the group to discuss various topics with each other for 1 minute. Once the minute is up, have the inside circle collectively rotate a number of

partners in one direction. Now everyone has a new partner. Have partners introduce themselves, and give the group a new discussion topic. Repeat, repeat, repeat.

Sample topics include: If you could have lunch with anyone, alive or dead, who would it be, what would you talk about? What is your favorite movie? If you were to donate a million dollars, which charities would get your money? Why? You can tailor the topics to the age group. The "Book of Questions" is great for topic ideas.

ICE BREAKERS – HIGH ACTIVITY

Band-Aid Tag

One person is "it." Whenever someone is tagged by "it" they must hold a Band-Aid (their hand) on the spot where they were tagged. Then the game continues. When someone runs out of Band-Aids, (they get tagged three times), they are frozen until two other people come over to them and "operate." The two other people need to tag the frozen person at the same time and count to five. Let the game continue for as long as it remains exciting and fun. Switch the person who is "it" often.

Bobsledding Bodies

This is a team relay. Form teams of 4 - 6 players. Teams sit in a line and wrap their legs around the person in front of them. Place masking tape about 10 - 15 feet away to mark the end line. On "GO", teams must only use their hands to slide their way to the end. If a team breaks apart, they must get back together before they continue.

Chivalrous Couples

One person with a loud voice will stand on a chair or other high place so that they can be seen above the heads of the group. After you have explained the game and everyone is ready the person on the chair will call out one of the following couples: Knight and Queen, Prince and Princess, and Horse and Rider. When one of these three couples is called people must get into pairs. If Horse and Rider were called one of the people in the pairs will be the Horse and one will be the Rider. Then the pairs will get into the correct formation. Each of the three chivalrous couples has its own formation that goes with it. The Knight and Queen's formation is one person as the "Knight" down on one knee and the other person as the "Queen" sitting on the "Knight's" knee. The Prince and Princess formation is one person as the "Prince" will have the other person, the "Princess," in their arms. The Horse and Rider formation is the "Horse" will be standing up and the "Rider" will be riding piggy-back on the "Horse." The last pair to get into the correct formation is either out of the game or they "Take 5" off to the side of the group. After one chivalrous couple has been called and one or two pairs of people have been eliminated have the group mingle. Then randomly call another couple. Have the group try to get into pairs with different people at every round. Play as long as it is still fun and exciting.

Hint: If you have kids and adults or big and small kids let them know that it will be easier to have the littler person of the pair as the "Queen," "Princess," or "Rider."

Clump

Have everyone stand at least five feet apart, so that when you spread out your arms, you're not touching anyone else's arms. The leader then shouts out: "Clump of [some number]" Everyone then has to huddle together in a group huddle or "clump" of that many people. There should usually be people left over because there aren't enough people to form a full clump. If you can't form a clump, then you're out! The game ends with a clump of two, and those two win the round!

Crocodile Race

Form teams of 4 - 10 players. Each team stands in a straight line. One person is the leader and all of the others on the team need to put their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. Then the team should crouch down, forming the crocodile. Races can be out to a point and back or whatever adventurous, but safe, idea you can come up with.

Fifty Yard Scream

Everyone runs screaming and stops when they've run out of breath. Then go back and try to beat your score.

Group Knot

Have the campers stand in a tight circle, with their hands in the center. Then have them grab other hands at random. The puzzle is for the whole group to work together to get themselves untangled. Sometimes you'll find that the group has actually formed several smaller circles.

I Have Never

Everyone is sitting in a circle of chairs except for the person in the middle. The person in the middle calls out something they have never done. For Example "I have never been to New York." or "I have never been Sky Diving." The people who are sitting in the chairs who have DONE what this person has NEVER done must get up and switch seats. However, they cannot switch seats with the person sitting directly next to them. The object is for the person in the middle is to quickly take a seat from those that are switching seats before they become occupied again. This is a great way to learn about people.

I Love My Neighbor

There is a circle of people and one person in the middle. The person in the middle says, "I Love my Neighbor because they are wearing blue..." Or anything they want to. Then everybody in the circle who is wearing blue gets up and moves around the circle to the next available marker (bookbag, etc) that every one is sitting on. The person who does not find a marker to sit on is in the middle and becomes the next caller.

Lemonade

There are two sides (teams). It doesn't matter how many are on each side and it doesn't have to be even. It's sort of like Charades, but instead of acting out a word or phrase, you act out occupations. Each side gets in a "huddle" at their "home base" to decide what occupation they will act out and which ever side is ready first begins.

That "team" yells loudly (while walking towards center line "Where are you from?" Answer (while the other team is also walking forward): [insert place here] Ex. "China!"

The other team yells, "What's your trade?"

Answer: "Lemonade!"

Then the other team yells, "Show us some if you're not afraid!!!"

The team starts acting out its occupation (such as painters, auto mechanic, etc...) and when the other team guesses correctly, the "acting" team has to run back to its "home base" without any member being tagged by the other team. If they make it, they get to do the acting again.

Pail Lifting Game

Divide the group into smaller groups of five or six people. If you only have 5 to six people, this activity can become an opportunity to "break" a world's or camp's record for the longest time balancing a pail of water with feet. Everyone removes their shoes and socks. The teams are asked to balance the bucket using only their feet. Their hands must be on the ground at all times. The winning team gets to put on their shoes and socks. The losing team has to remain barefoot and sing a song or do some other silly thing (nothing too embarrassing-agree on this before you begin).

People to People

Everyone stands in a circle with one person in the center. The person in the center yells, "people to people" and claps their hands together after each time they say people. They say "people," clap, "people," clap, twice and after the second time they will say 2 body parts. For example, they could say "head to foot." Then everyone including that person must try to find a partner and have a head touching a foot, whoever doesn't find a partner is then in the center.

NAME GAMES

Action Syllables

With the group standing in a circle, have the participants each choose an action for every syllable of their name. Example: Elvis has 2 syllables, so he does a hip shake with "El" and snaps his fingers for "vis". Once Elvis has done his action while saying his name, the whole group repeats. After the 2nd person does his/her name, the whole group repeats, then does Elvis's again. And so on 'til everyone's done it.

Bumpity Bump Bump Bump

Arrange all players in a circle. Give them time to ask the names of the players on either side of them. Once the names are known, the person in the middle goes up to a player and says "(name)___, bumpity bump bump bump." That person then has to say the names of the people sitting/standing beside him/her before the middle person finishes saying "bumpity bump bump bump."

ADDED TWIST: The person in the middle can randomly yell out bumpity bump bump bump and everyone has to find a new spot on the edge of the circle. Then repeat

Chuck-A-Name Game

This activity starts off like the traditional name toss. In case you aren't aware, here are the common rules:

- 1) Arrange the group in a circle.
- 2) One person starts off by saying the name of someone else in the circle, and tossing the ball to them.
- 3) That person then in turn says the name of a different person, and tosses the ball to someone else who has not yet received the ball.
- 4) That continues until everyone in the circle has received the ball once.
- 5) Generally, the objective is to pass the ball around the circle without dropping it. If the ball is dropped, the group restarts until completed without dropping.
- 6) You can add a "thank-you, (name)" from the receiving person if you like...

For ADVANCED...

- 1) Once the group has accomplished the task as described above, add a second item (ball, rubber chicken, etc.) and instruct the group that it, too, must travel in the same pattern.
- 2) You can add more items as you see fit. For a more "team-building" type game, add 4-6 items, and hold the rules in place. For a more "ice breaker" type game, add as many items as possible, particularly goofy props, and you will see the group get sillier and sillier. You can slowly take props out after a few minutes and end on one last round of the name toss.

Compass Name Game

Have participants stand in a circle. One volunteer stands in the middle of the circle and starts the game as the "caller." The caller points at a member of the circle and says one of the following: You, Me, Left, or Right. Based on which direction the caller says, the person being pointed at must correctly name that person. "You" is the name of the person being pointed at. "Me" is the caller. "Left" or "Right" are the people on the person on the circle's left or right side. Once the caller points and says the direction, he/she must count to five aloud. The person must correctly identify the name before the caller reaches five.

If the person in the circle incorrectly identifies the name, or doesn't speak in time, that person becomes the new caller in the middle of the circle. If the person correctly identifies the name, the caller must move onto a new person of their choice.

Double-Whammy Name Toss

Start the activity with the traditional name toss.

- 2) Once the group has successfully completed the task, instruct them to pass the ball in the exact REVERSE order.
- 3) Once the group has successfully completed that part, introduce a second ball or object of a different color/style/shape. Instruct the group that they must pass the ball in the original order, and the second ball in the REVERSE order at the same time.

Eventually, the objects will cross at one person. Good times!

First Names

Have everyone count the number of letters in their first name. Now ask them to find someone who has the same number of letters. Those two are now partners. If a person can't find someone let him/her use another name s/he is called by (i.e., a student named Matthew may use the name Matt and then look for someone with 4 letters instead of 7.) If they still can't find someone pair up with a person who has the closest number of letters.

Four On The Couch

Have everyone write their name down on a piece of paper. Put the pieces of paper into a hat and mix them up. Go around the circle making sure everyone receives a paper with a name on it. Everyone gathers in the circle and sits down on their chairs, with an empty chair beside one person. There must be two guys and two girls on the couch at the start of the game. The person to the right of the empty chair calls out a name and whoever has that name on their paper goes and sits in the empty chair. Those two people then exchange names (papers). The next person who is at the right of the chair that is now empty calls a name, but cannot call the name that was just previously called, they must choose another name. Try to get either the two guys or the two girls off the couch, and then get all four spaces on the couch filled with guys or filled with girls. The game ends when there are four guys or four girls on the couch.

High-Five Name Toss

Follow the traditional name toss rules, but instead of tossing a ball, participants cross the circle, exchange high fives and take each others spots in the circle. Great way to avoid catching/throwing anxiety, or way to play if you don't have an object to toss.

Mixed up Name Toss

Start the activity with the traditional name toss. Once the group has accomplished the task successfully, tell the group that they have until you count to five to move to a new spot in the circle. Once the group as rearranged it self, instruct them that they must pass the ball in the same name pattern as before. This is a great variation! This little twist really helps participants learn each other's names and faces.

Name Bop

This is a test for once everyone thinks they know everyone else's name. The group sits in a circle, with one person "it" sitting in the middle. "It" has a soft club (like a long sock with another sock balled up in on end). The leader begins by saying someone's name. That person must say their own name and the name of someone else before they get "bopped" (softly on the leg). And so it goes 'til someone messes up, or gets bopped, then they become "it".

Name Line

Get everyone to stand in a line or sit in a circle. The first person says their name and a favorite thing. The second person then says their name and a favorite thing, as well as the name and thing of the person before them. Each person after that adds the names and items of all of the people before them.

Variations: For younger children, you can have them say just the names. You can have anyone who makes a mistake be out...

Name Relation Games

Get the group into a circle. Then start out by saying your name and a food that begins with the same letter. Then the next person does theirs, plus yours. Then the third person does theirs, the second's and the first's name and food. It then moves on down the line, so that the last person has to do everyone with in the group. Different variations of this can be played but it is great for getting the group to know one another and the names.

Name Roulette

To play this game you need to form two equal circles, one inside the other. Set the circles up so one person from each circle is physically standing back to back to one member from the other circle. (I use a spot on the ground to mark the spot for each circle). These circles both start moving in clockwise motion, ensuring each member of the circle passes through the "spot". Someone who is not in either one of the circles and not facing them, will call stop. At that point the people on each spot must turn around and face each other. The person who names the other first wins that round and the "loser" joins the other circle.

Name Toss

Here are the common rules:

- 1) Arrange the group in a circle.
 - 2) One person starts off by saying the name of someone else in the circle, and tossing the ball to them.
 - 3) That person then in turn says the name of a different person, and tosses the ball to someone else who has not yet received the ball.
 - 4) That continues until everyone in the circle has received the ball once.
 - 5) Generally, the objective is to pass the ball around the circle without dropping it. If the ball is dropped, the group restarts until completed without dropping.
 - 6) You can add a "thank-you, (name)" from the receiving person if you like...
- As always, feel free to change the rules, and make this activity work for you!

Nod-Wink Toss

You may want to start the activity with the traditional name toss. You can however, play this as a stand-alone activity. Once the group has successfully completed the task, instruct them to be completely silent. Tell them that they must now pass a wink or nod to someone, who in turn, passes the nod/wink to a different person. To pass a wink, a person simply winks at a different person, who 1) winks back at them to acknowledge that he/she "caught" the wink, and then winks at a different person in the circle. And so on...

Variation: 1) Instruct the group to begin passing winks as described above. Then tell the group that you will also have nods, nose-thumbing, tongue sticking-outings (?), and others. 2) Participants do not need to stay in any particular passing order - however, if you receive a nod, you must pass a nod, receive a wink, pass a wink, etc.

Peek-A-Who

Split the group into two teams. Each team sits behind one side of the sheet so that they are out of the view of the other side. One person from each side will sit facing the sheet.

When the sheet is lowered, the team that says the name of the person on the opposite side first gets that player on their team. The game ends when everyone is on the same side.

Reverse Name Toss

Start the activity with the traditional name toss. Once the group has successfully completed the task, instruct them to pass the ball in the exact REVERSE order. People will quickly realize that they didn't really pay attention to the person that passed the ball to them.

The Toilet Paper Game

Description

Take a roll of toilet paper and ask a person how many squares they want, but don't tell them why. Set a Limit From 5 to 50.

2. Count out the squares, Rip after the last square and give all of the squares to the camper.

3. Repeat until all the campers have desired amount.

4. Then go around and have each person say stuff about themselves for each square until they are finished. The first square has to be their name.

Who am I?

The group forms a circle. One person is chosen to be the Guesser and they go into the middle of the circle. The Guesser is blindfolded or asked to keep their eyes closed.

Note: Be sure to ask that the Guesser is comfortable playing the game blindfolded. If they are not, let them know its alright and choose another person to be the Guesser.

The game begins with an adult spinning the Guesser around in a circle. The group is asked to spin around in a circle as well, but in the other direction. When the spinning stops, the Guesser points in the direction of one of the people in the circle and says the name of an animal. That person must make the noise that that animal makes. The guesser will then try to guess who the person is by the sounds they make.

Who Stole the Cookies From the Cookie Jar?/Who wants a Cookie from the Cookie Jar?

Group (sings): Who stole the cookies from the cookie jar?

(Insert name of camper) stole the cookies from the cookie jar!

Camper: Who, me!?!?!?

Group: Yes, you!

Camper: Couldn't be!

Group: Then who?

(Camper uses another campers name) stole the cookies from the cookie jar!

Song keeps going until each camper's name is used. Perfect for bus rides!

You, Me, Left, Right

Have the group form a circle, with the facilitator in the middle serving as the first "caller." Ask the participants to introduce themselves to the people directly on their left and right sides. Explain to the group that the person in the middle will point to someone in the circle and say either "You" "Me" "Left" or "Right" and count to five at a reasonable pace. "You" is the person being pointed at. "Me" is the caller.

"Left" is the person to the left of the one being pointed at.

"Right" is the person to the right of the one being pointed at?

The person being pointed at must correctly name that person before the caller counts to five. If they succeed, the caller moves onto a different person of their choice. If they do not succeed, they become the new caller. You can add multiple callers as the game moves on. This is a quick-paced silly activity that helps move people around and memorizes names.

ICE BREAKERS – LOW ACTIVITY

Alphabet Letters

Players should be in groups of four. When the leader calls out a letter, the groups must form that letter using their bodies.

Astronaut

Camp Leader says: 'I'm going to outer space. And I'm going to take a...'
the leader picks out an object/animal/food that has the first letter in their name. (i.e. Melinda would take a Marshmallow. Josh would take a Jacket.) And so on. Pick three people that know the trick and then do it. (Let's say the three people's name is: Josh, Mariah, Katie) Then you start the game by the Leader saying: 'I'm going to space and I'm going to take a JACKET. (Because the Leader's name was Josh. So J&J.) Mariah, would you like to go to space?'

'Yes.'

'And what are you going to bring?'

'I'm going to bring a MUFFLER.' (Mariah and Muffler. M&M.)

'Okay. We're going to space, Katie would you like to come?'

'Yes!'

'What are you going to bring?'

'I'm going to bring a KITE.' (Katie and Kite. K&K)

And so on. Then ask the kids. It as a fun activity to get their brains thinking.

Barnyard

Each person is given the name of an animal with approximately three-five people having the same animal.

Spread the group across a field, court, classroom, etc. No one is allowed to tell another which animal he is. At the signal each person makes the noise of the animal that he has been given. The first group to find all of their animals and sit down are the winners.

Beach Ball

Get one or two beach balls. Write questions all over the beach ball i.e. favorite ice-cream, most embarrassing moment etc. Have everyone stand in a circle and pass the beach ball around the circle by throwing up in the air. The person who threw the ball will then pick a finger i.e. left thumb. The person who caught the ball must then read out the question and answer (questions nearest to left thumb).

Bed Sheet Ping Pong

Form two teams. Each team holds an opposite end of a bed sheet. A ping pong ball is placed in the middle of the sheet. The object is to get the ball to fall off of the other teams side, for a point. The sheet can be raised and lowered as needed but remind the players to be careful not to "launch" the ball as they will be very inclined to do so.

Bibbity Bibbity Bop

One person is in the middle of the circle. He walks up to someone in the circle and says, "Bibbity Bibbity Bop". That person must respond with "Bop!" before the person in the middle says "Bop". If the person in the circle is too slow, or doesn't say "Bop" at all, he switches places with the person in the middle. The person in the middle can also try and trick the other person by saying things like "Hibbity Hibbity Hop" or "Bop! Say Bop!" If the person in the circle says "Bop" when he shouldn't, he is in the middle. Meanwhile, everyone else in the circle is busy winking and gesturing at each other to try and switch places without getting caught. If the person in the middle sees that people behind him are trying to trade places, he can run to an empty space and take someone's spot.

Birthday Line Up

Have the group get in a line. Tell them they must, in silence, get in order by: birthdays, height, name, age etc.

Bubble Gum Art

Give each participant a piece of bubble gum to chew, a toothpick and an index card. Allow them 10 minutes to chew the gum, place gum on index card and then design something on index card using only the toothpick as a tool (No Hands). The person with the best and most creative design is the winner. If you have quite a few players you can have several categories of winners, like "most ingenious", "most creative" and of course the "What is that?" Award.

Campinp

The leader (teacher in this case) announces that the group is going on a camping trip,

& each person must bring one item; the item's name must begin with the same letter of the person's name. My name is Selena, so mine would go something like this: Hi! My name is Selena, & I'm bringing the sea salt! You can also have everyone repeat the people before them. "Selena is bringing the sea salt, Neil is bringing the neodymium, Hadley is bringing the hacksaw, Tim is bringing the thermometer, & I'm Casey, & I'll be bringing the coriander!"

Count 10

Ask the group to stand in a circle. Someone starts counting from 1 and say's one or two numbers. Then moving in a clockwise direction the next person says one or two numbers counting up from where the last person left off. A person is eliminated when they have to say "10." The game continues again from "1" starting with the person left of the person just eliminated left. Ex. "1", "2,3" "4,5" "6,7" "8" "9" "10" then the person who said 10 is eliminated.

Dollar Dollar

Sit one person in the middle of a circle whose role will be to guess where the "dollar" is. Each person places their left hand on their left knee cupped to receive the "dollar". With the other hand each person pretends to take the "Dollar" from their own left cupped hand and place it in the cupped hand of the person to their

right. All sing the song and do the movement in rhythm to the song. Have the person in the middle close their eyes while the rest sing the song through twice. The person in the middle then opens their eyes and guesses at where the "dollar" is all the while the rest continue the song and movement. If they guess wrong then the person who does have the "dollar" gets to be in the middle. If correct gets to stay in the middle. (You can give the guesser one, two or three guesses.) "Dollar" can be a quarter or small stone Warm-up: Your hand, your neighbor's hand (repeat until hand pattern set) Song: Dollar Dollar how I wonder, from the one hand to the other, is it fair or is it square to keep poor (person in middle's name) sitting there? (Repeat as needed.)

Ducks and Cows

This is a great way to divide a large group into two smaller groups. Players close their eyes while one person goes around tapping them on the shoulders designating them either a duck or a cow. On a given signal, players keep their eyes closed and must find other members of their duck or cow team by "mooing" or "quacking".

Elephants, Cows and Giraffes

Get into a circle with one person in the center. This person will then call out elephant, cow, or giraffe. The person that is pointed out, as well as the person on each side of him/her will have to coordinate their actions and make each animal as described. Elephant: center will stick both hands in front of their nose in a cylinder to form a trunk. On each side of them they will form the ears by leaning over placing one hand by the center persons hips and the other by their head. Cow: center person will enter lock their fingers and turn them upside down so that the thumbs point down forming udders. The outside people will then milk the udders. Giraffes: center places their hands directly over their head and together forming the neck, while the outside two arch their backs touching the middle person's toes to form the legs. If they do not get into this position by the count of 5 by the pointer then the last to get into position will become the center person.

Evolution aka Ultimate Person

Have the group in a circle. Everyone starts out as an egg and places their hands above their head and together so that they look like an egg. When you say go each person will find another egg. Once they found that person they will then farkle (Rock, Paper, Scissors). The loser stays an egg and the winner becomes a chicken, placing their arms as wings and making chicken noises. The chicken then looks for another chicken while the egg looks for another egg. When you win as a chicken you become a dinosaur, placing your hands out and roaring like a dinosaur. If you lose as a chicken you drop back down to an egg. Dinosaurs then find other dinosaurs, where they will play to become the ultimate people. Ultimate people put their hands over their heads like superman and look for others like them. If you lose as a dinosaur you go back to being a chicken, looking for other chickens. If the Ultimate person loses to another Ultimate person they go back to a dinosaur, and if they win they stay as ultimate people.

Finding Twins

Decide ahead of time on a category such as animals, famous people, occupations, emotions, sports, etc. and prepare slips of paper with specific examples of the category you have chosen. Make two slips for each example (one set of three for an odd number). After distributing the slips, each person makes a noise associated with the example and/or performs a movement. The group circulates until partners have been found.

Fruit Basket

Each person chooses a fruit or vegetable (with no repeats!). One person is in the center, without a fruit or vegetable name. The one in the center has to say a fruit three times before the person who has claimed that fruit says it once (ie, center must say "orange, orange, orange" before the one who picked orange says "orange"). If the center wins, they switch spots, and former center is now "orange", and former orange is now center, with no fruit or vegetable at all. When the new center gets someone out, they take that fruit name, and that person is now in the center. They have to stay on their toes and listen to when the center is saying their fruit, or they'll be in the center quite a bit! Variation: use names, but don't forget that center is nameless, and takes the name of the person he/she got first! Don't forget that they can only say their fruit when the person in the center is saying it. (and they can only call out their own fruit as well!) Longer fruits are harder to get out, i.e. pomegranate or alligator fruit

Hand Land

Have the group lie on their backs, with their heads together, ear-to-ear, like spokes in a wheel. If there are more than eight of you, this can be problematic. So, make two groups or more even. Put your hands up. Now participants can observe the weirdness of all those hands in the air, apparently without owners. Let your hands get to know each other. Engage in profound dialogue.

Huh Game

This game works best with more people. You get in a circle and declare a "Huh master" (usually a counselor). Everyone puts their hands above their head as if they are clapping. Everyone then bends at the waist and makes a samurai sound. The "Huh master" then puts his/her hands up and then points to a player across from them in the circle and says "HUH!" (Hence "huh game") The player who was chosen then puts his/her hands directly up, while the players on his/her left and right "strike" he/she as if they were striking a gong. Then the person who was struck picks another person across the circle and continues the pattern. The object is to keep the pattern going without getting out. A player may get out by messing up the pattern by getting off beat, or being unclear who has been chosen.

In my Grandmother's Attic

The first player says, "In my grandmother's attic, I found... and ..." and names something that starts with "A." The next player says the same phrase, the object beginning with the "A," and then something that begins with a "B." Continue this way, each player reciting the previous items and adding another, all the way through the alphabet, to "Z."

It Could be Worse

Set up the group in a circle or in pairs. The starting player says something innocuous, like "I almost overslept." Next player says something like "It could've been worse. You could've been late." Then the next, or other, says something worse, like, "It could've been even worse than that. You could've been in your underwear." And then the next or other tries to find something worse than that. Or, the next person says "it could be better..." And so it goes.

King Lizard

Everyone sits in the circle and picks an animal, a motion and a noise for that animal.

One person "sends" the action to another person by making their own noise/motion, and then someone else's noise/motion. That person, in turn, makes their noise/motion, and then another person's. For example, in a game with a cat, a dog, and a monkey, the action might be as follows:

Cat Dog

Dog Cat

Cat Monkey

Monkey Dog

Dog Cat

and so forth...

Cat, monkey, and dog are commonly used, but creativity is encouraged...the sillier, the better! If someone "messes up" (stumbles over their noise, does the wrong combination of noise and motion, or hesitates too long), they're out for that round. Last person still in is the winner.

Mind games –Where can I go

Similar to Sally's Green Glass Door...people go around asking the game leader if they can go to 3 different places. If the person pauses and thinks between the places they name then the leader says yes, if they don't the leader says no. You keep going until someone figures out the pattern.

Moon Trip

One camper announces that he is going on a moon trip and is bringing two things, and names two examples. Camper then says that if you want to go then you have to bring two things, and as the "space commander" he will let you know if you can bring the items you suggest. Go around the group and ask them their name and what they will bring. If their items don't meet the correct criteria, camper can't come into space, and move on the next camper. Repeat this a couple times around the group until most campers guess the secret...The first thing must start with the first initial of camper's first name and the second thing starts with the first initial of last name.

Mr. and Mrs. Right

Have everyone stand. Read the story. When you say "right" everyone takes a step to the right. When you say "left" everyone takes a step to the left.

This is a story about Mr. and Mrs WRIGHT. One evening they were baking cookies. Mrs. WRIGHT called from the kitchen, "Oh, no, there is no flour LEFT! You will need to go RIGHT out to the store."

"I can't believe you forgot to check the pantry," grumbled MR. WRIGHT. "You never get anything RIGHT!"

"Don't be difficult, dear," replied Mrs. WRIGHT. "It will only take twenty minutes if you come RIGHT back. Go to Fifty-first and Peoria, and turn LEFT at the stop sign. Then go to Sixty-first Street and turn RIGHT, and there it will be on your LEFT," declared Mrs. WRIGHT as her husband LEFT the house.

Mr. WRIGHT found the store and asked the clerk where he could find the flour. The clerk pointed and said, "Go to Aisle four and turn LEFT. The flour and sugar will be on your LEFT."

Mr. WRIGHT made his purchase and walked RIGHT out the door. He turned LEFT, but he couldn't remember where he had LEFT his car. Suddenly he remembered that he had driven Mrs. WRIGHT'S car and that his car was in the driveway at home RIGHT where he had LEFT it. He finally found the RIGHT car and put his purchase RIGHT inside.

Eventually, a weary Mr. WRIGHT found his way home. Mrs. WRIGHT had been waiting impatiently. "I thought you would be RIGHT back," she said. "I LEFT all the cookie ingredients on the kitchen counter, and the cats got into the milk. You'll just have to go RIGHT out again."

Mr. WRIGHT sighed. He had no energy LEFT. "I am going RIGHT to bed," he said. "Anyway, I need to go on a diet, so I might as well start RIGHT now. Isn't that RIGHT, dear?"

Nod-Wink Toss

You may want to start the activity with the traditional name toss. You can however, play this as a stand-alone activity.

Once the group has successfully completed the task, instruct them to be completely silent. Tell them that they must now pass a wink or nod to someone, who in turn, passes the nod/wink to a different person. To pass a wink, a person simply winks at a different person, who 1) winks back at them to acknowledge that he/she "caught" the wink, and then winks at a different person in the circle. And so on...

Variation: 1) Instruct the group to begin passing winks as described above. Then tell the group that you will also have nods, nose-thumbing, tongue sticking-outings (?), and others. 2) Participants do not need to stay in any particular passing order - however, if you receive a nod, you must pass a nod, receive a wink, pass a wink, etc.

People to People Twister

Pair up in groups of two and stand back to back. Make sure participants introduce themselves to one another. Then the leader will say different combinations that the group has to try to get to while staying back to back (right hand to right hand, left foot to right foot, head to head, right hand to left leg, etc...). The pairs must maintain all called combination until they switch partner. Once the leader says People to People they will then go switch partners. If you have an odd number of participants, the odd person is the leader. Once pairs switch, the odd person out is the new leader.

Prop-a-Skit

Split all of the campers up into groups of 5-12 (by cabin, or grade, etc). Each group gets a bag of props and has an hour to come up with a skit using all of the props. Each group has the same props in their bag as everyone else. Points are awarded for using the props creatively, incorporating camp theme, etc. For old groups, throw in a "surprise prop" right before they go on that they have to work into their skit somehow. At the end, a group of staff can do one of the skits using the same props as the campers had.

Question game

Everyone sits in a circle, and each person asks a question to the person to their left (or right...it really doesn't matter.) The questions should have interesting answers...like a couple of words... not just "yes" or "no" (that makes this game really boring.) By the time you get around the circle, everyone should have asked and answered a question. You instruct everyone to remember the question that they asked and the answer they gave to the question they were asked. Those are now the only 2 phrases they are allowed to say. You then instruct everyone to get up and sit next to someone new in the circle. Then you will go around the circle and people will ask their original questions, and give their original answers, regardless of their question. It is really funny to listen to how it comes out in the end.

Sausage

Everyone sits in a circle. The person who is it stands in the center of the circle. Each person asks the person who is "it" an appropriate question. The only answer to every question can be sausage. The first person to make the center person laugh wins a try in the middle. Ex: What color is your hair? Sausage. What do you brush your teeth with? Sausage.

Scars

Everyone sits in a circle and one person starts by showing everyone a scar that they have on their body, (Keep it clean). Then they begin by telling the story behind the scar. After they are done, continue on around the group until everyone has had a chance to share an experience. This is a great ice breaker because you will be able to see what activities, etc. that the kids are into because the scar usually will be a result of it.

Shake, Rattle and Roll

Take as many film canisters as you have people. In each film canister, put an object. The objects you pick can be like the following: cotton balls, pennies, paperclips, jelly beans, M&M's, etc. If you have 30 people and you want to divide them into three groups of 10 each, you would place a cotton ball in 10 of the canisters, a paperclip in 10 of the canisters, and a penny in 10 of the canisters. Each individual then picks a canister from a bag, basket or some other container. They can not look or smell in the canister. They can only shake the canister to distinguish the different sounds of the objects. The object is for the individual to find persons in the group with a like sounding object and stay with that group. There are many variations on this game.

Silly Sally

This is a brain teaser. See how many campers can figure out the pattern without giving it away to anyone else.

Tell your campers that you have a really weird friend named Silly Sally.

Silly Sally likes doors but not windows

Silly Sally likes puppies but not dogs

Silly Sally likes the pool but not water

Silly Sally likes Jeeps but not cars

Silly Sally likes kittens but not cats

Silly Sally likes the floor but not the ceiling

The Secret: Silly Sally likes things that are spelled with a double letter For example, Silly Sally likes doors but not windows because doors has a double letter (oo).

You can create as many variations as you would like. It depends on how long you would like the game to last!

Slap, Clap, Snap

Arrange your group into a circle. Give everyone a numbered card from 1- however many people you have, make sure you are handing them out consecutively. Have the entire group get the rhythm of slapping their hands on their legs twice, clapping twice, and then snapping twice. Don't go too fast, you won't be able to play the game! Have everyone start doing the slap, clap, snap sequence. Then start the game by having the person with card number 1 say, on the snaps, 1 then another #. The person that had their number called then says their number on the first snap of the next time through the sequence, and another number on the second snap. The game goes on until one person makes a mistake by not saying the correct numbers or not being on time with the snaps. The person who makes a mistake must go to the end of the numbers and everyone after that person shifts up a number. The person who ends up having the first card at the end of the game gets a prize or a treat! This game can go on as long as you like, HAVE FUN!

Speedy rabbit

Everyone stands in a circle and the leader is in the middle. You first teach the group the various poses of the game, each should use 3 people. The leader points to 1 person in the circle, and then that person, and the person on either side of them needs to make the pose that you say. If someone messes up, makes the wrong pose, moves when they weren't supposed to, then they are out. There are tons of these poses and you can make up your own, but a few are:

- 1) Speedy rabbit – the 2 side people face out to make the shape of the ears, and the middle person puts his or her hands in front of them like paws
- 2) Screaming Viking – the 2 side people make rowing motions on the outside, and the middle person bangs their fists on their chest yelling
- 3) Girl Scout – the 2 side people put their arms up on a diagonal and lean in to make a house, and the middle person crouches down and says “want a cookie?”

Stand by me

Have everyone in your group stand around you in some ridiculous pose. Have them freeze and memorize exactly how they are standing. Instruct them that every time you say, “Stand by me” you want them to get in this exact pose. You will be timing them and doing other things to make it fun and interesting (like saying, “Stand by me” during flag raising”).

Who is Missing?

The children sit in a circle and close their eyes. Then, the person running the activity walks around and taps one person on the shoulder. The person that got tapped leaves the room or hides somewhere where no one can see them. Everyone opens their eyes and tries to find out who is missing. To make it harder, have them stand up and move them around so they don't know who is near them.

Woosh

Have everyone in your group make a circle. The leader pulls an invisible ‘woosh’ ball from their pocket. They explain that the woosh ball is very light and it just sort of floats there in their hand. When passing the woosh ball it actually makes the noise “woosh.” So when passing, either to the right or left, it makes the “woosh” sound. The person receiving the woosh ball has many options. They can receive the woosh and pass it along. They can say “Wao” and put their hands up to refuse the woosh, in which case the person trying to pass the woosh ball must turn to their other side to pass it. Sometimes when a person gets the woosh ball they get so excited and the energy of the woosh ball takes over their soul and they go “freakalistic,” which in turn makes the entire group go “freakalistic.” Everyone must dance around in the circle and find a new place to stand. The object of the “freakalistic” is to get as silly as possible. If someone in the circle falters when they get passed the woosh, or messes up the flow, they must “boing.” A “boing” is a physical admission that they messed up the flow of the woosh. They put their hands together above their head and bend at the knees and say, “boing.”