

100 YOUTH GROUP GAMES



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PREFACE

Far too often we as youth pastors can be made to feel guilty about the fun side of our ministry. If you go to the right seminar you might even hear someone lament the lack of discipleship in a pie-in-the-face trivia.

Don't get me wrong, I am the first person to say that theology has to be at the center of what we do. In fact, my book *Reclaiming the Lost Soul of Youth Ministry* is a practical field guide to help youth ministers see the ways wesleyan theology and history helps decide how we do ministry. It is based on a deep commitment that what we do must flow from what we believe. Though theology is the heart of youth ministry, that does not mean it is all Bible quizzes and lecture. I believe there is room for a theology of fun.

In fact, I think that part of God's prevenient grace comes in the form of fun. Jesus talks about it in Matthew 5:45 when he says, "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." Jesus is talking about how God gives blessings and gifts to everyone regardless of whether they believe in God. True, these blessings come in the form of food and water, but they also come in the form of beautiful flowers and awe-inspiring sunsets. It comes in the forms of an enjoyable date and a hilarious joke. And yes, it comes in the form of Grog and Cell-Phone Shootout.

Why does God do this? Why does God give us the ability to have fun and laugh and marvel at the earth? The primary reason is that God loves everyone, and because he loves us, he does wonderful things for us. Just like he did in the garden of Eden, he gives us these gifts in the hopes that he might woo us to follow him. We are given these gifts so that we will choose to follow Jesus. If that isn't theologically important, I don't know what is.

That is why we need to be experts at fun. We need to get our PhDs in the science of games, and I have good news on that front. There is no need to fail spectacularly in front of teens and parents. There is no need to design your own course of study through the school of hard knocks. There have been many pioneers in the world of fun that have gone before you and developed the prevenient techniques of great youth games. We have bombed in front of groups and endured many groans from teens until we developed our own brand of fun in the form of a game or ice breaker. Now, we offer those to you. Go fourth and offer the power of God through these proven means of God's prevenient grace!

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Why icebreakers?

Icebreakers are a youth group staple. Even when they're cheesy and lame (and let's be honest — that's often), they can still play an integral role in helping young people connect with one another in a group environment. Often, icebreakers can also enhance your teaching by helping to stimulate cooperation and participation or by supporting an overall theme.

They can provide positive momentum for small group study and discussion by encouraging cooperation, listening, and teamwork. Icebreakers also create a good atmosphere for learning and participation by helping newly formed groups get to know one another and new members, helping young people feel comfortable together, and facilitating better connection with adult leaders.

What makes an icebreaker game successful?

- Be enthusiastic! Always. No matter what happens.
- Choose student volunteers carefully to avoid embarrassment. If a student looks like they really don't want to participate, don't make them.
- If something is not working move on quickly. Don't force it.
- Length is important. Use only a few icebreakers as a 15-20 minute introduction. As soon as students start to become disengaged, wrap it up. You want to end a game while people are still enjoying it.
- Choose icebreakers appropriate for your group of students. Your understanding of what will and won't work with your group is your biggest asset in planning a successful set of icebreakers every time.

With a few tweaks, many of the games below can be played as either on-stage icebreakers with a few students serving as entertainment for the rest, or as fully inclusive games for large groups.

GAMES BEST PLAYED BY AN ENTIRE GROUP

Grog

You take apart a flashlight and hide the parts throughout the area of play. One kid is the Grog, which is a monster that can freeze you in place by tagging you. Everyone has to work together to find the parts, assemble the flashlight, and shine it on the Grog to defeat “it.”

Sardines (Christians in the Catacombs)

This is your basic game of sardines, but explained it with the story of the early Christians meeting in the catacombs, while still increasing in number. One person hides in a dark place, and then as people find them, they join in hiding, until one person remains. It’s hide and seek, backwards.

Scatterball

Dodgeball with a twist. To start, everyone must have a hand on a Nerf ball. Throw the ball up in the air and everyone scatters. Somebody grabs the ball in the air or off the ground. Whoever has the ball can only take two steps. After two steps, the player must throw the ball—dodgeball style—at another player. If the ball hits a player, that player sits down right where they are. BUT, they can still play, they just can’t move from their seated spot. If a player is hit by the ball and catches it, then the throwing player sits down. At any time sitting players can snag the ball if it rolls by, and they can throw it at standing players trying to get them out. The game ends when only one player is standing. Note: it’s a good game for larger groups but it’s lacking in action if you have less than 10 people.

Lifesize Clue

The youth group gathers in the evening when the church is dark. They congregate in one lit room and one person goes to hide a large doll (any stuffed animal will work). That person also hides (separately) a “murder” weapon, then comes back and releases people out of the room one at a time. Goofy items—like a spatula or telephone are the best murder weapons to keep it lighthearted. One random person will be given a flashlight, designating them as the “killer.” Players walk around and have to find the weapon and victim (doll). Players also need to discover who the “killer” is without getting caught. Players are caught when the “killer” flashes the light at you. If the “killer” catches a player, they are out and have to go sit in the main room.

Photo Scavenger Hunt

Assign points for odd items that students can find around the church property or within a designated area and take a picture with. Get creative with your lists. Plan to do this at a time like VBS when much of the church staff is present so you can include silly ones like “do the air guitar with the worship pastor” or “do the disco with the children’s pastor.” Give them a time limit and deduct points for every minute they are late returning. An added bonus of this game is that you’ll have some great photos of students that you can use in your youth room.

Red-Hot Poker

Everybody stands in a circle and holds hands. You have something in the middle of the circle (anything works, try a big 50 gallon trash can) and it is the red-hot poker. You then try to drag, push and pull one another into the red-hot poker. If you touch it or break hands then you are out. Play until only one person remains.

Slip 'N Slide Kickball

If you have a group of athletic, competitive students this one is for you. Basically, it's kickball but you add a slip 'n slide between the bases. Keep some Band-aids on hand for this one just in case.

Capture the Flag

This one needs no explanation, but feel free to add twists. Include more than one flag, take turns having the teams play offense and defense, play with three or four teams going against each other, etc.

Tug of War

This is another classic, but is always a hit with youth groups. Make it extra fun by doing it once a year and utilizing interesting competitions: students vs. leaders, boys vs. girls, senior high vs. junior high. The key to a good match-up is to put a small number of the strongest against a large number of the weakest. For example, take a handful senior high boys and place them against 30 middle schoolers.

Ultimate Duck-Duck-Goose or Duck-Duck-Goose-Inception

When there are more than 50 students, this game is a lot of fun. Play duck-duck-goose as you normally would, however when a few people get tagged and they go to the middle, then they begin another game of duck-duck-goose. I've played this game with 100 students before and they began a game within a game within a game within a game. Two other twists you can initiate are using a sponge while the person is going around and ducking to hold over people's heads or having more than one person go around at a time.

Seated Basketball

This one is a favorite because it requires strategy and teamwork. The game is divided up between two teams. The goal is to get a ball into a basket. This can be a basketball hoop, but I have found it just as fun playing it with laundry baskets placed on a table. Each player has their own chair and is played in rounds. At the beginning of a round, the players have a short amount of time to place their chairs in a position. Once placed, they are not allowed to move from their spot. They then must pass the ball to each other, without it getting intercepted by the opposing team. After each round the players become more strategic and shift from focusing on offense and defense. Whereas one round may consist of one

team placing all their chairs around the opposing goal, they'll quickly realize that they are unable to shoot from their location. Likewise, a team that has no one in the middle of the field is unable to make an adequate pass to their teammates. An interesting side effect of this game is the loner and unpopular student will often become the most passed to player. They are the ones that are open, because the opposing team neglects to place a chair next to them to guard.

Penny Chinny

Give everyone a penny. On 'go' they must balance the penny on their chin while trying to knock everyone else's penny off. This means the penny will lay flat on the chin and the students will be looking up into the air. Last one standing with the penny balanced wins.

\$1,000 Bill Exchange (or The Penny Challenge)

For this game you need to print your own, clearly fake money (or provide a lot of pennies). Each player receives 10 of the bills (or pennies). They are to try to win as many as possible from their peers by challenging them one on one doing one of three things: Thumb wrestling, flipping a coin, or playing "Rock, Paper, Scissors."

Rules:

- The challenged player must accept
- Sudden death, no two out of three
- Challenger has to have a coin and is "heads" on the coin toss.

Spaghetti And Marshmallow Tower

The Spaghetti And Marshmallow Tower is a classic game that you may well have played yourself. To make it happen, split your group into as many teams as you have supplies (keeping around 3-4 members in a group). Provide each group with one pack of spaghetti and one pack of large marshmallows. Teams are charged to use their supplies to build the tallest freestanding tower they can (meaning that holding the tower up for measuring is against the rules). Give the groups a certain time limit during which they can construct their tower – anywhere from 5-15 minutes generally works well – and give them a one-minute warning before their time up. The winning team is the one with the tallest freestanding tower, as measured by the game leader. Break any ties by having the teams move their tower across the room and measuring again, not allowing them to fix any breakages.

Note: Some teams will get creative and incorporate the spaghetti box and marshmallow bag into their structure. There is no rule against this.

Alphabet Pockets

Divide into teams of four or five. Everyone on the team searches through his or her own pockets, wallets, purses, etc. – basically anything they have in their current possession – in order to collectively

come up with one possession which begins with each letter of the alphabet. The winning team is the one to have objects representing the most letters.

Ankle Balloon Pop

Give everyone a balloon and a piece of string/yarn and have them blow up the balloon and tie it to their ankle. Make sure the string isn't too long or too short – somewhere around 6-8 inches from the ankle after tied on is ideal. The goal of the game is for each student to try to stomp out other people's balloons while keeping their own safe. The last person with an inflated balloon wins.

Barnyard

This is a good game to divide into teams for the day/evening. Have pre-made cards for more than enough kids. So, if you predict 35 kids, make forty cards — four groups of ten. Come up with as many animals as you want teams that night (for example, if you want four teams, have four animals). Each group of ten cards will have a particular animal written on it (so you will have 10 chicken cards, 10 cow cards, 10 donkey cards and 10 pig cards). Hand out cards randomly to the kids and tell them to not tell anyone their animal. When you give the signal, have them make the sound of their animal as loud as possible until they find their entire group. First group to totally find each other wins.

Put a twist on the game by putting in only ONE card that says “donkey” and giving it to a very secure student (but don't tell him/her they're the only donkey). Sure, it's sort of mean, but it's also pretty funny... so make sure to give it to a student who will appreciate the humor.

Communication Challenge

Start by giving everyone a number. Their objective is to arrange themselves in numerical order, but there's a catch: no speaking or holding up fingers. Students will typically end up making up their own sub-language or sign-language and it often is pretty amusing. For a potential second round, have people arrange themselves in order of birth or in calendar months.

Do You Love Your Neighbor?

For this game, you will need one less chair than you have students. Arrange the chairs in a circle, with the chairless student standing in the middle. The person standing approaches someone who is seated and asks him, “Do you love your neighbor?” The seated person can answer two ways. If he says, “No,” then the people seated directly next to him have to switch seats as quickly as possible so that the standing person doesn't get one of seats. If he says, “Yes,” he must add a qualifying statement such as, “But I don't like people who have blue eyes.” Anyone who matches the description must get up and find a different seat. Whoever is left standing is then the “asker.”

Football Team Quiz (NFL)

This game is great for a group of any size. For a big group, break up into teams of four, requiring at least one person on each team to be a football fan. Pass out one copy of the following list of clues of pro-teams to each team.

For small group, provide one sheet per person. (Answers in parentheses; of course you'll copy this list off without the answers.) The first team – or individual – to bring their completed, correct list to you wins. Give prizes to each team member (a candy bar, mug, etc.).

What are these pro football teams??? Based on the clues, figure out the names of the NFL teams.

1. A dollar for corn (Buccaneers)
2. Native American epidermis (Redskins)
3. Sun-tanned bodies (Browns)
4. What you pay (Bills)
5. They don't dodge or male goats (Rams)
6. 747, B1B, Concorde, F15... (Jets)
7. 7 Squared (49ers)
8. David could stone them (Giants)
9. Iron workers (Steelers)
10. Black birds of prey (Falcons)
11. Norse warriors (Vikings)
12. Kodiak, black, polar, koala... (Bears)
13. Not sinners but... (Saints)
14. Red birds (Cardinals)
15. Rodeo animals (Broncos)
16. Native American Leaders (Chiefs)
17. Called bald (Eagles)
18. Ocean going birds (Seahawks)
19. Hostile invaders (Raiders)
20. Credit card users (Chargers)
21. Boxers (Packers)
22. King of beasts (Lions)
23. Look like fish, but are mammals (Dolphins)
24. One-time British enemies (Patriots)
25. American gauchos (Cowboys)
26. Certain type of tiger (Bengals)
27. Young and fast horses (Colts)
28. People from the Lone Star State (Texans)
29. Spotted cats or expensive cars (Jaguars)
30. Heavy breathers (play on phonics) (Panthers)
31. Large birds of the crow family (Ravens)
32. Remember them (Titans)

Grab It!

Divide students into two teams. Put them into two parallel lines and next to one another (about 3 feet apart) sitting down and holding hands. At the back of the line put a bucket of water with a bar of soap in it between the two lines. If this is on carpet, put a layer of towels down - the water tends to splash, then drip.

Stand at the head of the lines and flip a quarter so only the first person in line can see the result. They are not to yell out how the quarter landed or even look back at their team. If the quarter lands on heads, the line leaders squeeze their hands. When the next student feels their front hand squeezed, they squeeze the hand of the person behind them, until eventually the last person in the line feels their hand squeezed, communicating that the quarter is indeed heads not tails. Once the last person in line feels their hand squeezed, they are to try to grab the soap out of the bucket before the last person on the other team does.

The person successful in retrieving the soap gets to go to the front of the line. The problem arrives when the message is wrongly communicated to the person in back and they grab the soap only to find out that the quarter was actually tails. At that point the person in front must go to the back of the line. The first team to get their entire team forward in line (back person to front- not front to back), wins.

Note to leader: Be sure to give the game a few seconds to play out before re-flipping the coin. Even if the coin is tails, one team could still be squeezing in error.

How's Yours?

Choose one student to go out of the room and way out of earshot. While that student is gone (with an adult volunteer, just to make sure), you stand in front of the rest of the kids and pick one object (usually a body part or an article of clothing) that everyone has.

Once you have decided upon an object as a group (for instance, nose, big toe, shoes, mouth, car, mom, etc.), call for the student who was outside to come back in. When he/she comes in, he/she will go around the room and ask everyone, "How's yours?"

The other students' responses need to be one or two words describing that object that was selected. Have the kids use very vague adjectives to describe the object. For example, if your object is your nose, make sure you explain to the kids describing their noses not to use something obvious that will give it away (like runny). They can use words like red, sore, big, narrow, loud, etc. After everyone has had a chance to describe how theirs is, the student who went outside must try and guess what object everyone's talking about.

Note: If your group is larger, maybe only have 10-15 students per round describe "How's Yours" to keep the game moving and minimize the repeat answers.

Newspaper Name Nail (or Whomp'em)

Great game for new groups and/or students who don't know each other well. Have everyone sit in a circle as close as they can get. Have each person give their name and make sure each name is clearly said so that all others can hear it. After going through the names once or even twice, have someone start in the middle by asking someone to call the name of someone in the circle. The person in the middle proceeds to find the person and try to whomp'em with a rolled up newspaper (or pillow) on their knee before that person can say both their name and someone else's name in the room.

If they get whomped before they can say their name and someone else's name, they are now "it". The person who is in the middle takes the place of the person they whomp. This helps people learn each other's names and mixes kids around with each other.

Psychiatrist

Note: This game is a blast, though it can take a long time. Be prepared to make it your only game for the night.

Prior to the start of the game, one student, "the psychiatrist," leaves the room with a leader and is briefed on the rules of the game. It helps if the person playing the psychiatrist has never played before.

While they are gone, the remaining students decide their diagnosis. The diagnosis is a problem shared by all patients, and should NOT be a clinical one, like schizophrenia. For example, they might believe they are the person sitting next to them on their left.

The psychiatrist's goal is to try and diagnose everyone's problem. He should do this by asking questions and analyzing their answers to discover the true nature of their problem. For the sake of his patient's confidentiality and anonymity, he is not allowed to ask them their names. Nor may he ask them what their symptoms are. If they knew what was wrong with them, they wouldn't be coming to him for help!

The patients' goals are to answer questions as truthfully as possible, without revealing the true nature of their problems. In the example diagnosis, they believe that they are the person sitting next to them on their left. So when the psychiatrist asks them a question, they must answer as if they were the person on their left. If they answer incorrectly, someone who catches their mistake, must yell "psychiatrist" and then they all must stand up and switch seats with someone else. When this happens they take on the characteristics of the new person they are sitting next to.

To win, the psychiatrist must diagnose that everyone believes that they are the person sitting on their left, and then he must diagnose why they are saying Psychiatrist and switching seats.

Sentence/Picture Game

The only thing you need for this game is a pen and a stack of $\frac{1}{4}$ sheets of paper for each student. Begin by handing the first student a random sentence on a piece of paper. After reading it, they will place the sentence at the bottom of the stack and illustrate the sentence on the top, blank sheet of paper and pass their drawing to the person on their right. That person looks at the picture, moves that piece of paper to the bottom on the pile, and writes a sentence about the drawing they saw. Then they pass it to their right. The third person reads the sentence, puts the paper on the bottom of the pile, draws a picture about the sentence, and passes the stack on. Do this until they all have their first sentence/drawing back. It's extremely funny what the sentence becomes.

Who Hit Me?

This game is ideal for small groups (up to 25). Have two students lie down on the floor (face up, side by side) and put a blanket over them so that they cannot see. Everyone in the crowd forms a circle around

them, and one person in the crowd has a rolled up newspaper. The newspaper is passed around to someone who takes it and hits one of the students under the blanket with it (make the newspaper thin-ish so it doesn't hurt).

The "smacker" then gets back into the circle, leaving the newspaper on the blanket. The student who has been hit counts to five, comes out from the blanket, and tries to guess who hit him. If he guesses correctly, the person who is guessed goes under the blanket in his place.

These are the instructions given to the crowd and to the players. However, one of the students under the blanket has been clued in ahead of time that he will be given the newspaper and he will reach over and smack the student laying next to him with it, then pull his arm in under the blanket real fast and play dumb. The student who is hit will jump up, and his guesses will always be wrong. (Hit the clued-in student once in a while so that it won't look quite so rigged.)

Encouragement Game

This game works best for groups that know each other reasonably well and has the potential to make a strong positive impact.

Sit in a circle and give everyone a piece of paper and pen. Each person should write their name at the top of the piece of paper, then pass it to the person on their left. Each person then writes one or two (or more) positive characteristics about the person whose name is at the top of the paper.

After 30-60 seconds, everyone passes the pieces of paper around to their left again. This continues until everyone has written on everyone else's paper. Once the paper has made it all the way around the circle (but before it gets back to the owner), collect the papers, review them to make sure all comments are appropriate and positive, and hand them back to the correct student one by one.

Photo Night

This is a great game night activity, but is too time consuming for an icebreaker. Basically, it's the longer version of Photo Scavenger Hunt, mentioned above. Split into groups of 4-5 (make sure there's one leader in each group), and give each group a camera (or they can use their phones if they want).

Draw up a list of things/objects/situations they need to try to capture on film. Be creative with the list - make sure you include some simple tasks, but also some trickier things to find (or do). These don't necessarily have to be limited to the church building, as long as you obtain permission from parents to take students off site and have responsible leaders.

Allocate points to each item depending on the difficulty.

For example: You get ____ points for a photo of _____.

- 10 A green vehicle
- 20 All the members of your group on a swing
- 30 A member of your group shaking hands with an old man
- 5 A McDonald's sign

- 30 A member of your group behind the counter at McDonald's
- 10 A dog
- 30 A member of your group holding a dog
- 5 A stop sign
- 10 A personalized license plate
- 5 Members of your group at a bus stop
- 5 Members of your group on a pedestrian crossing
- 30 A member of your group in a swimming pool
- 10 Your whole group 'planking' in a park
- 20 A member of your group filling up gas for a stranger
- 20 A receipt for less than a dollar
- 10 A coin from 1987

Be sure to set a time limit when people need to meet back. Tally up the points and whomever has the most is the winner! If you have time, share the photos on a big screen. Other variations include using a video cameras (rather than still photos), or tagging photos on Instagram using a predetermined hashtag, and/or tweeting on Twitter for 'live' updates during the night. Make sure to add all the photos to Facebook or your youth group web site!

Human Knot

Everyone stands in a close circle - puts both hands out - and randomly grabs hold of someone else's hand, creating a massive knot. Without letting go of hands, the group should try to untangle itself.

Clothespin Mixer

Pass out about 4-5 clothespins per kid in the room and instruct them to pin them on their own sleeves. Explain that when the music begins, the object of the game is to get all clothespins off themselves and on to someone else. Turn off lights and turn on strobes and music, if available. (You may want to put girls on one side of room and guys on another; guys can get a little frisky sticking clothespins on girls). Once a student gets rid of all their clothespins, they leave the game area and return to their seat. When the lights come on, one or two people should have about 100 pins on them - pull them up and parade the winner.

At the end you won't want them playing with the pins all night during the talk, so dress a tough kid or leader up front in protective gear (motorcycle helmet with face shield, chest protector or thick jacket, turtleneck, scarf, gloves, shin guards, thick pants, etc.); and put a bulls-eye on their chest. Tell everybody to grab all their clothespins and bring in your human target. As you play music have them throw/pin their clothes pins at the person. Kids can't believe they are doing this, and when you stop the music, all your pins are gathered up at the front.

Clusters

Have the group mill around and call out a number. Students have to arrange themselves in groups of that number. Students in groups of too many or too few are eliminated.

Rock, Paper, Scissors

This is a classic game, but with a fun twist. Play as usual, but when a student loses to another student, they become the winning student's cheer section while the winning student competes with another winning student. The winning student of that matchup keeps their original cheer section, as well as acquires the cheering of the student they beat and his/her cheer section, until have the group is cheering for one student and the other half is cheering for the other. This is a fun way to infuse energy and encouragement early.

Hunt the Leader

This was one of my favorites. Take the youth group to a large shopping mall or main street (depending if it's day or night) and all the youth leaders dress up or disguise themselves somehow — for example, have a homeless looking man, a guy with a mustache, a girl with a pillow up her top to make her look pregnant, etc. Some costumes were a bit ridiculous and the leader would stand out, others were really subtle yet effective. Also have a combination of youth leaders sitting in the one spot (like a cafe) and others wandering around (like a cleaner with a broom).

The basic idea is to split the youth into groups with the job of hunting down the leaders to get their signatures (or stamp) on a piece of paper. The winning group is the one that first finds all the leaders.

A note of caution - ensure the students are adequately supervised. Depending on the age of your group, you may need to ensure there is a leader (not in disguise) with each group for their safety. Also ensure the group is aware of the "boundaries," and agree on a time to meet back.

Pass the Present

For "Pass the Present," pre-wrap a prize (like a box of chocolates or iTunes giftcard), then add multiple layers of wrapping (up to 20 times), hiding a smaller prize within each layer, along with a challenge card. Challenges should be fairly simple, such as singing a song to the group, telling your most embarrassing moment, doing 20 pushups, etc. The group sits in a circle and "passes the present" around the group with some music playing in the background. When the music stops, whoever is holding the present unwraps one layer and performs the challenge in order to keep the small prize hidden within that layer.

Random Acts of Kindness

This isn't really a game but more a general theme for an activity you may wish to do with your group. The concept is to basically organize your group to participate in "random acts of kindness," which can vary depending on your group size, age ranges, community needs, and other factors.

The best way to describe the concept is to give a few examples:

- Identify a family that may be struggling and volunteer to help out around their house - weed their backyard, mow their lawns, vacuum and mop the floors
- Visit a local retirement village and simply spend time talking to the people there
- Volunteer for a night at a soup kitchen or homeless shelter
- Pickup trash at a nearby park

- Beautify the church garden
- Have a free car wash

Imagine the impact these activities have on everyone involved - those receiving the gift, those giving, those observing. This is one of those activities that everyone ends up on a high!

Toilet Roll Game

Split into groups of 5-12 people. Give a roll of toilet paper to a student and ask them to tear off as many sheets as they normally use, then pass (or throw) the role to another member of the group to do the same. Don't explain the purpose at this point. Continue until everyone in the group has torn off some paper. You'll find some people will take only a couple of sheets, others will reel off heaps! (You may need multiple toilet rolls)

Once the roll has been around to everyone, you explain the next part. For each piece of paper individuals tear off, they have to reveal one fact about themselves.

Two Truths and a Lie

Everyone in the group has to think of three things to share about themselves - two must be true, but one must be a lie.

When a person has shared their three things, the rest of the group must decide which of the three is a lie. After the group guesses, the person reveals which one was, in fact, the "lie."

It's amazing some of the things you learn about people when playing this game. People will be keen to trick the group, so it encourages people to share some of the more outrageous things they've done in their lives.

Anyone Who?

This activity is a good icebreaker — perfect to get people mingling and talking. You need to print out a piece of paper for each person with something like this (you can obviously change the questions to suit your group):

- Someone who has been to the Grand Canyon
- Someone who prefers yogurt over ice cream
- Someone who roots for the Tennessee Titans
- Someone who has been on an airplane in the past 12 months
- Someone who reads comics
- Someone who knows the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet
- Someone who has been skiing
- Someone who is wearing red
- Someone who still owns a teddy bear

People then have to find someone in the room who fits the criteria, and have them sign or initial their name in the box - for example, if someone has been to the Grand Canyon, they can sign their name in

the box. When all boxes are complete, you are done! It can either be a competition to see who finishes first, or simply an exercise everyone completes.

Year of the Coin

A quick simple get-to-know-you game. This game works for groups of between 4-10 people. Start with a handful of coins (making sure the years of the coins are appropriate for the ages of the students) and hand out one coin to each person.

You then go around the group and each person has to look at the year their coin was made and tell the rest of the group what they were doing in that year. It can be something significant or very insignificant - the whole aim is to learn something about each other.

Interview

Divide the young people into pairs. Ask them to take three minutes to interview each other. Each interviewer has to find three interesting facts about their partner. Bring everyone back to together and ask everyone to present the three facts about their partner to the rest of the group. Watch the time on this one, keep it moving along.

My Mame Is?

Go around the group and ask each young person to state his/her name and attach an adjective that not only describes a dominant characteristic, but also starts with the same letter of his name. For example: Generous Graham, Dynamic Dave, etc. Write them down and refer to the student by their descriptive name for the rest of your time together.

Conversations

Each person is given a sheet of paper with a series of instructions to follow. This is a good mixing game and conversation starter as each person must speak to everyone else. For example:

- Count the number of brown-eyed boys in the room.
- Find out who has made the longest journey.
- Who has the most unusual hobby?
- Find the weirdest thing anyone has eaten.
- Who has had the most embarrassing experience?
- Who knows what 'Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia' is a fear of? (long words)

Nearest guess wins. If that's too easy you can try Arachibutyrophobia (fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of one's mouth), Alektorophobia (fear of chickens and other fowls such as roosters), Ephebiphobia (fear of teenagers) or Anglophobia (fear of England or the English people)

The Question Web

You need to have a spool of string or wool for this game. Ask the young people to stand in a circle. Hold on to the end of the string and throw the ball/spool to one of the young people to catch. They

then choose a question from 1-20 to answer. A list of 20 sample questions is given below. Adapt for your group.

Holding the string they then throw it to another member of the group. Eventually this creates a web as well as learning some interesting things about each other! At the end of the game you could comment that we all played a part in creating this unique web and if one person was gone it would look different.

In the same way it's important that we all take part to make the group what it is, unique and special.

- If you had a time machine that would work only once, what point in the future or in history would you visit?
- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
- If your house was burning down, what three objects would you try and save?
- If you could talk to any one person now living, who would it be and why?
- If you HAD to give up one of your senses (hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, tasting) which would it be and why?
- If you were an animal, what would you be and why?
- Do you have a pet? If not, what sort of pet would you like?
- Name a gift you will never forget?
- Name one thing you really like about yourself.
- What's your favorite thing to do in the summer?
- Who's your favorite cartoon character, and why?
- Does your name have a special meaning and or were you named after someone special?
- What is the hardest thing you have ever done?
- If you are at a friend's or relative's house for dinner and you find a dead insect in your salad, what would you do?
- What was the best thing that happened to you this past week?
- If you had this week over again what would you do differently?
- What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about God?
- What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
- If you could ask Christ to change one problem in the world today, what would you like him to change?
- What book, movie or video have you seen/read recently you would recommend? Why?

Name That Person

Divide into two teams. Give each person a blank card and ask them to write five little known facts about themselves on their card. Include all leaders in this game too. For example, I have a pet iguana, I was born in Iceland, my favorite food is spaghetti, my grandmother is called Doris and my favorite color is purple.

Collect the cards into two team piles. Draw one card from the opposing team pile. Each team tries to name the person in as few clues as possible. Five points if they get it on the first clue, then 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. The team with the most points wins. Note: if you select the most obscure facts first, it will increase the level of competition and general head scratching!

Two Extremes

Create an imaginary line from one end of the room to the other. Instruct people to move to a point on the line to indicate where they stand on a particular issue. For example: “Move to the left hand side of the room if you like chocolate, the right hand side if you like strawberry.” If people don’t have a strong opinion they stand in the middle.

Continue with other examples / extremes:

- Folded toilet paper or scrunch?
- Sleep in or get up early?
- Big party or intimate dinner?
- Dance or alternative music?
- Would you rather go to a football game or a concert?
- Sweet or savory?
- Do homework or do the dishes?
- Facebook or Twitter?
- Summer or winter?
- Surf or skate?
- Would you rather be beautiful or smart?
- Be taller or shorter?

When everyone chooses a position, read out the next one and everyone moves again. Students love to express themselves so this is a good game to get them to explore and express their opinions on some things.

GAMES BEST PLAYED BY A FEW STUDENTS ON STAGE

Name That Tune!

Divide students into teams and have one student face off against another student from the other team. Play five seconds of a popular song from iTunes and have them guess. If both students don’t know, let anyone call it out.

Real World Bible Drills

Bible drills can be fun but with a twist on an old classic game, students can translate it into real life skills. Instead of saying a specific Bible verse like John 3:16, have them find narrative stories like David and Goliath. After doing a few of these narrative type stories, branch out even further. Have them lookup a passage of the Bible that someone can use if they feel deep sadness, struggle with addiction, feel lonely, etc. This really challenges the students to use critical thinking and provides them with skills they can use later in life.

Jeopardy

Devise a number of questions and set up a board to play Jeopardy. A fun twist to add is to create one or two categories that have nothing to do with the Bible. I always try to add one about myself because it is easy to think of questions and it helps new students get to know me.

Cell Phone Shootout

Call three student volunteers to the stage where you will have set up a table covered in various “prizes.” These can be serious, silly, or ideally, some combination of both (for example, an iTunes gift card, a box of rocks, a bag of candy, a coffee mug, a t-shirt, a Starbucks gift card, a bouncy ball, a pair of socks, a birthday card written to someone else, etc.) Over your projector, rapid-fire images of each item from the table, making each image visible for only 1/6 of a second. When you give the cue, the student must snap a picture with their cellphone of the screen, trying to capture whatever they want to win. They take home whatever item they actually take a picture of.

Dance Your Hat and Gloves Off

Have three students come to the stage and put on a wool knit cap and rubber gloves. The goal is to be the first student remove the hat and gloves only by whipping their body parts around. “Smurfing” (wearing one’s cap loosely and high on the head in the manner of a Smurf) is not allowed. Two points are awarded for removing a hat, with one point each for the gloves; ties are broken based on audience applause.

Late Night Air Drum Challenge

Three student volunteers play air drums (similar to air guitar) along to a short drum-heavy instrumental track played over the audio system (you choose the song). The winner is selected by audience applause.

Competitive Spit-Takes

Two pairs of students compete. One student will be spitting and one student will be receiving. The spitter takes a sip of water, and then the receiver recites the punch line to a provided joke (the joke is up to you), at which the spitter performs their best spit-take. Audience applause determines the winning team. If time allows, have the spitter and receiver switch positions.

Spanx But No Spanx

Two teams of three male students race in a relay to pass a Spanx body-shaping undergarment over their bodies as fast as possible. The first person steps into the garment and then pulls it over his head. The next team member then pulls the garment over his head and off over his feet. The third team member reverses direction once again and pulls the garment on feet-first. After pulling the garment over his head, the third team member then races to deposit the garment in a basket (the “Spanx Bank”). The other team members may assist in the passing of the garment, but cannot bunch it up or fold it onto itself.

Name That Guy

Three students are selected to come on stage, where they are shown on the projector images of non-famous men and must guess the names of those men. The images of non-famous men flash quickly. The first two contestants get a single guy to name, but the last contestant plays the “lightning round”, where they try to name eight guys in 20 seconds. It’s impossible, but it’s good for a laugh.

Buzzwords

Select several students to roll a twenty-sided die with a letter on each face (these can be found in the game Scattergories). In one minute, the student must name as many words as he or she can think of that start with that letter, with rules such as no proper nouns, no long pauses between words, etc. The student who comes up with the most words for their letter is the winner.

Copy Machine Match Game

As students arrive before program, subtly pull one student aside and have them go with you to photocopy their face (preferably this is a student you’re familiar with, but not the most popular kid in your group). For the icebreaker, give two different student contestants the photocopy, at which point they must find the photocopied person in the audience. The contestant that finds the photocopied person fastest is declared the winner. For fun, you may give either the winner or the photocopied person (or both) a ream of copy paper as a prize.

What’s Mine Is Yours

Have five students each donate one of their possessions to a communal “jackpot.” As the leader, you may spice it up by adding an iTunes or other gift card, as your possession. While this is happening, write the five students’ names on slips of paper and add them to a basket. Pull out a slip of paper to eliminate students until only one is left. This person wins everything in the jackpot.

Put It On a Cracker

Two students compete. Each is blindfolded and fed a cracker with three different foods on top (such as pepperoni, peanut butter, and Swedish fish). They must try to name as many of the ingredients as they can. The winner receives a \$300 gift certificate to Whole Foods, while the loser gets to interact with a celebrity impersonator (such as Abraham Lincoln or young Santa Claus) (and is also given a \$150 gift certificate to Whole Foods).

Ready Set Flow

Three students compete. They are each given three nouns (an object, a place, and a name - e.g. Barbie Doll, France, and Charlie Sheen) they must work into a 30-second freestyle rap. The winner is determined by audience applause.

Tell Us What You Know

Three students compete. Each is given a topic and 10 seconds to give as many words as possible relating to that topic. After time is up, they are given a score by the game leader.

Smooth Operator

This game is similar to The Dating Game. A female student is blindfolded and three male student “suitors” try to impress her by reading a random pick-up line selected from a master list projected on the screen. The female student then selects the suitor who she was most impressed by.

Winds of War

Two student volunteers blow into a straw to try to push a ping pong ball off their opponent’s end of the table. You may play several rounds with different student challengers, resulting in a faceoff between the two best players.

And the Winner Is...

The game leader acts as a presenter at an awards show for the category of “Winner.” Three students are nominated, and whichever person’s name is in the envelope comes to the stage and gives a five-second acceptance speech before being played off. You may do several “awards.”

Teleprompter Limbo

Three student volunteers come to the stage, are made up to look like Jersey Shore cast members and have to read quotes from that show from a teleprompter on the screen which runs increasingly faster. The contestant who is able to read the longest without making a mistake is declared the winner.

Baby Bird

Two teams of two students compete. On each team, one student acts as the mother bird and the other acts as the baby bird. The “mama bird” grabs (gummi) worms from a pile of “dirt” (smashed up Oreos) using their mouth and then spits them into the mouth of the “baby bird”, who then spits them into a nearby eggshell. The team with the most worms in their eggshell at the end of 20 seconds wins. Ties are broken via bird-calling contest.

Cone Collar Derby

Two students are fitted with large clear plastic conical collars (similar to the Elizabethan collars used by veterinarians—you can buy these online, or improvise your own using poster board). One at a time, they are given 30 seconds to make a lap of the audience. Random students in the audience are given two foam balls (one for each contestant), which they try to throw into the collars of the running students as they pass by. The running student who collects the most foam balls is declared the winner.

Silent Library

Invite six students to play a few rounds of the semi-popular ex-MTV game Silent Library. For three rounds, one of the six contestants is chosen at random using playing cards (assign each student a number 1-6 and pull six cards — A-6 out of the deck for use in the game). The student whose number was pulled must complete a laugh-inducing stunt within a specified time frame, but all members of the team must stay quiet enough to avoid setting off a noise meter. Each contestant earns a small prize

for a completed stunt, but loses that prize if the leader deems the group made too much noise or they fail to complete the stunt.

Examples of tasks might include “Eat Cake,” where one person has three cupcakes snapped against his or face using a slingshot, but a good idea would be to use your knowledge of students. For example, if one participating student hates cats, have someone wear a cat mask and come out and mess with them. Playing on jokes that exist already are good ways to bring students to laughter.

Pretty Boys

Two teams of two male students play and flip a coin to determine roles. Whoever loses the coin flip should be made up (usually sloppily) by his teammate according to a theme, such as “prom.” Audience applause determines the winning team.

Do the Blank

Two students, male and female, are invited to the stage for a dancing competition and are placed on either side of a small barrier (so that they can not see each other). The leader then calls out names of made-up dances, which the students perform for a few moments while music plays. Dances might include “The Bro-Bot,” “The Freaky Frog,” “The Elevator,” “The Disco Dentist,” “Hand Dancin,” “The Flying Tornado,” and “Pogo Stick Paperboy.” Winner is determined by applause.

Pumpkin Bowling

During the fall season, pit students against each other in a game of pumpkin bowling, where student volunteers bowl two frames apiece using pumpkins of various sizes instead of bowling balls.

Random Object Shootout

Two students (or a student and a leader) take turns trying to make successfully make baskets using random objects like a telephone, a spatula, or a bowl of cereal.

The Instrument Game

If your group has a live band that’s willing to share their instruments, have two students alternate playing simple songs (such as “She’ll Be Coming ‘Round the Mountain” or “Jingle Bells”) on a randomly selected musical instrument that neither have any experience playing, trying to get audience to correctly guess what they were trying to play.

The Long Pour

Two students must attempt to pour three cans of coke, one at a time, first into a mug and then from the mug into a large graduated cylinder. The pouring is complicated by a broomstick, both ends of which are affixed to their wrists, so that their arms are completely outstretched when attempting the pour from the bottle to the mug. The person with the most liquid in the cylinder at the end of the game wins.

Home Run Derby

Two students each hit large foam balls off a tee into the audience using a large plastic bat. The audience is divided into three scoring zones. Each player hits three balls (and perhaps a final “superball” worth double points). Points are awarded according to the ‘scoring zone’ in which the ball lands..

Egg Russian Roulette

Two students sit facing each other in front of an egg carton where eight of the eggs have been hard-boiled and four have been left raw. The students then take turns choosing an egg from the carton and smashing it against his or her own forehead. The first person to smash two raw eggs on his or her head is the loser.

Sounds... Good?

Three students compete. Each is given a song to sing karaoke-style – with the catch that they will be wearing noise-cancelling headphones (if available) or regular headphones loudly playing static sounds so they cannot hear themselves sing. The winner is determined by audience applause.

GAMES THAT CAN BE ADAPTED FOR AN ENTIRE GROUP OR FOR A FEW STUDENTS ON STAGE

Battle of the Instant Dance Crews

Prior to the start of the program (while students are mingling) assemble two dance crews and have them each choreograph a dance routine in the several minutes before icebreaker time. If your group is small enough, the entire group can be split into two teams and choreograph the dance as part of the actual activity, rather than in advance. Winners are determined based on audience applause for the former or by leaders for the latter.

Cotton Projectile Wars

Divide into two teams and give each member a straw and a pile of Q-tips. One team member from each side sits on their side of the room on a chair with a paper cup on their head. The object is to knock the opposite team’s paper cup off the person’s head by blowing the Q-tips through the straws. No blocking Q-tips by anyone during the battle.

Flour and Gumballs

Student volunteers must search for gumballs in a pie pan or a large bowl. The catch? The gumballs are covered in and hidden by flour. Using only their face/mouths players must find locate a gumball, chew it, and successfully blow a bubble (the flour inhibits this). The first bubble wins.

Fear Factor

Set up several stations that vary in grossness or scariness. Break kids in two teams and let them choose which stations they play. Assign points for each activity earned then add them up at the end to determine the winning team.

Cuisine Station: Fill several large plates or bowls with your choice of sardines, pigs feet, frog legs, seaweed, etc. (look in the foreign food section at your local supermarkets). Place another empty container at the other side of the stage or the other end of the room. The student has a designated amount of time to grab one of the items in their mouth, run across the room and drop it into the empty container. They must transfer as many food items as possible in the amount of time given.

Here's a fun, sneaky trick: melt a snickers in the microwave for several seconds. It will look like something else entirely and it takes some time before students realize its candy.

Free Fall Station: Contestant stands on raised platform and falls backwards into arms of catchers. Use mats just in case.

Proof is in the Pudding Station: Contestants dig sardines out of chocolate pudding with their toes. Use time limit for elimination.

Digging For Gold: Fill a huge (clear) Rubbermaid storage container with water and enough potting soil to make it cloudy and dirty looking, along with a few worms, and a few other gross things (be creative). Put several coins in it and each team member has to grab two coins out.

Don't Crack Station: Put garbage bags down for this one or go outside. Put eggs under both of the students' heels. They must stand on their toes to avoid crushing the eggs. The person who can last the longest without crushing their eggs wins for their entire team.

Get creative with different station ideas and customize it to fit your students.

Four on the Couch

Depending on the size of your group, this game could work as an on-stage game (for a large group—the group watches while a few do the activity in front of the group, entertaining the rest) or as a Mixer (for a small group—in a group of 8-12 kids you could involve almost everyone).

Create a circle with chairs and one couch, enough seats for everyone playing plus one extra seat. Two girls and two guys start off by sitting on the couch, while everyone else sits in the chairs. Give each person playing a paper to write their name on. They are to turn their names in to you.

Mix the names up and redistribute them back to the players, making sure no one gets their own name. They are not to tell which name they have. The purpose of the game is for the guys to get all four guys on the couch and the girls to get all four girls on the couch. The person to the left of the empty seat calls out a name of someone in the circle. Whoever is **HOLDING THAT NAME** (not the one whose name it is, i.e. John calls Amy's name, and Jeff is holding Amy's name) gets up and sits on the empty chair. The person who called the name and the person who sat on the chair, then exchange papers

with names on it (that way the same name does not stay with the same person, it makes it more challenging). The person to the left of the new empty seat calls a new name. (The same name cannot be repeated twice in a row).

Again, the purpose is for the guys to get the two girls off the couch and vice versa. It takes some thinking but is fun and competitive in a non-athletic way. This is a really fun game but it can last a long time.

Minute to Win It

This is a game show on NBC and its full of mini-challenges that must be completed within one minute. On the NBC website, you'll find a list of all the games including a video tutorial, official rules, and a list of supplies needed for each game. There are more than 50 games you can choose from! Pick a handful of the ones you want to use then make sure you have all the necessary supplies on hand. Watch an episode of the show on the website to play it like the pros do or create your own twist on the game.

Draw It

There are two teams, each with a white board. Give them a word and the team has to guess the word they drew. This would be a good icebreaker activity before a lesson if you tie in themes from the lesson into the drawings.

Tap It Out Telephone

This one's great because you don't need any supplies. It's like telephone but instead of whispering something, you use your finger and draw the word on the person's back. Everyone is in a straight line, with multiple teams doing this. Show the last member of each row a hand-drawn picture (a house, a cat, a Christmas tree, etc. are good examples). When you give the go ahead, the last person in the row draws the picture on the back of the person in front of them, who then draws the picture on the back of the person in front of them. The first team to get to the front person and correctly guess the picture wins.

Toast

Set up a table and have your participating students in a circle around it. On the table should be a piece of toast and a bunch of random condiments (ketchup, mustard, butter, hot sauce, honey, etc.) At the same time there is a piece of bread in the toaster. While the bread in the toaster is cooking the students take turns adding a condiment to the toast on the table. When the toast in the toaster pops the person currently adding a condiment has to eat a bite of the toast on the table. Then you start over with the fresh piece of toast that just came out of the toaster.

Another variation of this game is to have students sit in a circle and quickly say one thing about themselves while the toast is cooking. When the toast pops up, the person talking has to eat the toast with whatever topping you (the leader) decides. Start off with simple ingredients such as jam, butter, etc. and slowly add more unusual ones (like potato, ice cream, mashed banana).

Guess the Person (or Name Game, or Fishbowl)

This game works best with smaller groups - around 8-12 people, so if you have a big group, it's best to split up and play multiple games.

Each person should write down the names of 10 people - either famous people or people everyone in the group knows. Get people to cut their pieces of paper up so there's one name per piece of paper. Go around and collect them in a basket or hat. You should have quite a few names in the basket.

Split into 2 or 3 teams (each team having around three or four members).

Round One.

Pick a team to start - one member of that team gets the basket of names, picks out a name, and has to try and describe that person to the other members of his team. Once they guess correctly, pull out another name from the hat and so on. The team has one minute to go through as many names as they can. If they get stuck on a name, they can pass and move onto the next name. Names that are guessed successfully are put in a separate pile, and those that are 'passed' are put back in the basket. When the minute is up, add up the total number of names guessed, and add that to the team's score. Move onto the next team who do the same as above. This continues until all the names have been used up or 'guessed'.

Round Two.

Similar to Round 1 but you can only use one word to describe the person to your group. The group will be aware of all the names in the basket (from round 1) so it is easier than it sounds. Score a point per name guessed as above.

Round Three.

Same as previous rounds but this time, you have to 'act' out the person without speaking.

Add up the scores at the end to see who wins!

Name Game

You start with a famous person's name, real or fictitious (Tom Cruise). The other team must come up with a name starting with the last letter of the name (Edward Scissor-Hands). Another variation would be to use songs instead of names.

Cheese Balls to Face

Simple: Split the players into teams and have one volunteer from each team cover their face in shaving cream. Team members then have to throw cheese balls at them and try to get them to stick.

Back to Back

In this game, you start out with two people sitting back to back and asking them to stand straight up without using their hands. Add one person every time they stand up successfully. Our record is ten! The students will be amazed at how it works.

Doggy Doo and Kitty Doo

This game works best with around 5-6 students per team. If you have a larger group, consider having more than two relays going on at once or using as an on-stage game.

To prep, place two kitty litter boxes on the ground at the opposite end of the room and break students into two equal teams. Note: Placing a tarp underneath the boxes will help with cleanup. Fill the kitty litter boxes with cereal like Grape Nuts (or some other type of cereal that looks and feels like kitty litter) and place slightly melted chocolate bars like Baby Ruths, Butterfingers, Kit-Kats, etc. into the trays (enough chocolate bars for each kid on the team). Be sure you cover the chocolates fully in the 'litter' to make it look like the real deal.

Now the race can begin. Students from each team must crawl on their hands and knees from the starting point to the litter boxes. Once there, each student must find, with their mouths only, one piece of "kitty or doggie doo" and eat it fully before returning to the other teammates. Have two leaders at the litter boxes to verify the complete "doo" eating, and also cheer on the students, like "hurry, eat the doo!" Once they make it back to the group they will tag the next teammate who will race down to the litter tray and continue. The first team to complete the race, eating all the "doo" is the winning team.

Desert Island

Announce, 'You've been exiled to a deserted island for a year. In addition to the essentials, you may take one piece of music, one book (which is not the Bible) and one luxury item you can carry with you i.e. not a boat to leave the island! What would you take and why?'

Allow a few minutes for the young people to think of their three items before sharing their choices with the rest of the group. As with most icebreakers and relationship building activities, it's good for the group leaders to join in too!

If

Ask the group to sit in a circle. Write 20 'IF' questions on cards and place them (question down) in the middle of the circle. The first person takes a card, reads it out and gives their answer, comment or explanation. The card is returned to the bottom of the pile before the next person takes their card.

This is a simple icebreaker to get young people talking and listening to others in the group. Keep it moving and don't play for too long. Write your own additional 'IF' questions to add to the list.

- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
- If I gave you \$10,000, what would you spend it on?
- If you could watch your favorite movie now, what would it be?

- If you could talk to anyone in the world, who would it be?
- If you could wish one thing to come true this year, what would it be?
- If you could live in any period of history, when would it be?
- If you could change anything about yourself, what would you change?
- If you could be someone else, who would you be?
- If you could have any question answered, what would it be?
- If you could watch your favorite TV show now, what would it be?
- If you could have any kind of pet, what would you have?
- If you could do your dream job 10 years from now, what would it be?
- If you had to be allergic to something, what would it be?
- If you sat down next to Jesus on a bus, what would you talk about?
- If money and time were no object, what would you be doing right now?
- If you had one day to live over again, what day would you pick?
- If you could eat your favorite food now, what would it be?
- If you could learn any skill, what would it be?
- If you were sent to live on a space station for three months and only allowed to bring three personal items with you, what would they be?
- If you could buy a car right now, what would you buy?

GAMES THAT CAN BE PLAYED BY AN ENTIRE GROUP, BUT FROM THE STAGE (NO SETUP OR MOVEMENT REQUIRED)

Sneaky TEXT Message Game

Tell kids to whip out their cell phones. (That will get their attention!) Then, post your cell phone number on the screen, or simply call it out to the crowd (slowly). Tell them to enter it into their phone and save it under your name.

Now, tell them that you want to see which service provider in your area has the fastest service. Have them pull up a “blank text message” on their phones, select your name or number, and then for the “message” of the TEXT message, have them enter their first and last name. Tell them to STOP at that point.

When everybody has reached that point, tell them that you want everybody to hit SEND at the same time. Say “go” and let them send away. Within seconds, your phone will have EVERY kid’s cell phone number! Randomly choose a person (for instance, the 4th TEXT message you received) to give a prize to. When your game is over, kindly ask them to put their cell phones away because you are moving into a more important time.

When you get home later that night, save their cell phone info to your phone. Now you can send updates, hellos, and encouragement to your students in an instant!

What's that on Your 4 Head?

This game makes a great audience game for those times when you need to keep your crowd together. It will work for any size crowd; just know that the larger the crowd, the longer the game.

Have an adult volunteer come up front to be the “caller.” Ask all the students in the room to stand up. Count “1-2-3, hold” and have all students, with their fingers, hold a number between 1 and 5 up to their forehead and hold it there. The “caller” (who is facing the opposite direction and can't see the crowd) calls out a number between 1 and 5. Anyone holding up the number that was called out must sit down.

Students are then allowed to pick another number (or keep the same one) and the game continues. If a student's number is called out, they are out of the game. Continue until there are only two students left. They can have the same number, and risk BOTH being eliminated, or choose separate numbers and try to win it all.

Sit down if

Get everyone to stand up, then read through the following list. The last person standing is the winner!

- Sit down if you have eaten chocolate today
- Sit down if you are wearing purple
- Sit down if you were born in September
- Sit down if you have blue eyes
- Sit down if you are the youngest child
- You have ever broken a bone
- You have ever gone for two weeks without a shower
- You can speak more than two languages

BLACKLISTED GAMES (SUPERVISION DEFINITELY REQUIRED)

Belly Button War

For obvious physical contact reasons, this game is ill advised. Divide your group into two teams, with each team getting a specific color of duct tape to tape to their navels. The objective? Get the other teams tape.

Chubby Bunny

Chubby Bunnies is a very simple game, but its potential as a choking hazard has earned it the top spot on the blacklist. To play, pick 3-5 kids, and stand them up the front of the group. Give each kid a marshmallow, which they must put and hold in their mouth without swallowing. To advance to the next round, they must clearly say “Chubby Bunny.” Add another marshmallow and repeat until only one person is able to say “Chubby Bunny” with the many mallows in their mouth. Oh, and don’t die.

Put It On Your Face

A handful of student volunteers come to the stage where there’s a bowl of clothespins on a table. Students are given a minute to see how clothespins they can stick to their face in a minute. The most clothespins wins.

This game can also be played with rubber bands, seeing how many students can wrap around their head in one minute.

Banana Hose

For this game, student volunteers have panty hose placed over their heads. They are then given a banana, which they must eat through the panty hose. The first student to finish the banana wins.

Against the Wall

Blacklisted for obvious reasons: Divide your group into two teams and designate your two smallest students, typically middle schoolers, one to each team. Teams are charged with duct taping that smallest student to the wall. Whichever small student stays stuck to wall for the longest wins.



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