

4-H is a great way to get involved with youth leadership in your community. Contact your county's Extension office to find out more information.

4-H is a **community** of **young people** across America who are learning **leadership, citizenship** and **life skills.**



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**Activities compiled and facilitation tips
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9 Awesome Activities for Leadership and Teambuilding



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Youth Development

*Keep me from going to sleep too soon
Or if I go to sleep too soon
Come wake me up. Come any hour
Of night. Come whistling up the road.
Stomp on the porch. Bang on the door.
Make me get out of bed and come
And let you in and light a light.
Tell me the northern lights are on
And make me look. Or tell me clouds
Are doing something to the moon
They never did before, and show me.
See that I see. Talk to me till
I'm half as wide awake as you
And start to dress wondering why
I ever went to bed at all.
Tell me the walking is superb.
Not only tell me but persuade me.
You know I'm not too hard persuaded.
-Robert Frost*

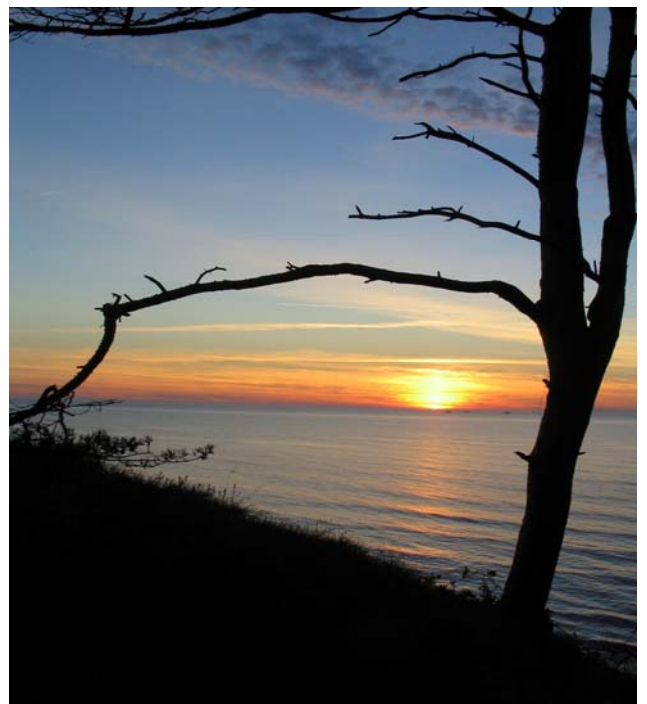
Facilitation And Activity Notes

This booklet is intended to provide a few activities that can be facilitated for groups of people ages 12 and up. The activities are aimed at increasing leadership skills and enhancing teamwork within a group. These activities are ones that we believe are fun and effective— by no means is this booklet comprehensive. Please consider it as a framework and an inspiration. Additional resources for experiential activities can be found at the back of the booklet.

Your role as a facilitator

Some points to consider

- ✦ Students must feel safe emotionally and physically. It is your job as a facilitator to set the ground rules for this.
- ✦ It has to be fun. Warm up with some fun, silly, or energizing activities first.
- ✦ Don't be afraid to change the activity to accommodate your students. Be flexible and meet them where they are at. It is crucial to set them up for success!
- ✦ Help your students interpret their own experience; do not interpret it *for* them. The power and meaning of an experience comes from these internal realizations.
- ✦ Remember the Seven Ps: Proper Prior Planning Prevents Painfully Poor Performance. In other words: plan ahead and practice and you'll have a better activity.



The Finer Points of Facilitation...

The difference between a *fun* activity and an *educational* activity is CONTEXT. Students must have a context to place their new experiences and knowledge into. Have a specific reason and outcome in mind when doing an activity; don't use it just to kill time

Here are two simple ways to give context to an activity:

Frontloading— setting the tone for the activity. An example would be: “Ok everybody, this activity is going to be about leadership, so I want you to keep that in the back of you mind.” or “be conscious of the roles you take during this activity...”

Debriefing— a series of questions posed by the facilitator after the activity. The idea is to funnel the big picture of what happened into some tangible specifics that students can then apply to NEW situations. One way looks like this:

WHAT: “What happened during the activity? How did you feel? What did you observe?” Etc.

SO WHAT: “So what do you think this activity was about? Why was the group successful or unsuccessful? What strategies did you use? Why do you think (a certain thing you observed) happened?” Etc.

NOW WHAT: “If you could do this activity again, what would you do differently? How could you use this knowledge at home? What real life situation would this activity apply to?” Etc.

Sitting or standing in a circle is the most powerful and effective arrangement for debriefing an activity. Everyone can see and hear each other. Don't be afraid to engage learners in ways besides discussion...try art, role plays, song, or other imaginative activities to engage all the senses.

Experiential activities are powerful because students draw out meaning for themselves. Your job as a facilitator is to help them do this by asking good questions, providing observations and helping them interpret metaphors.

Most importantly...**HAVE FUN!**



Additional resources for leadership and team building activities

Web:

<http://4-h.org/getinvolved/volunteerresources.html>

National 4-H website with resources for volunteers

<http://www.aee.org/>

The Association for Experiential Education. Resources, educational opportunities, accreditation.

<http://wilderdom.com/games/>

Wilderdom. A comprehensive resource of games, initiatives and curriculum. Check it out!

Print:

Cain, J. and Jolliff, B. (1997) *Teamwork & Teamplay*. Dubuque: Kendall Hunt

Frank, L. and Stanley, J. (1997) *Manito-wish Leaders' Manual: Teachers Edition*. Milwaukee: Hare Strigenz.

Rohnke, K. (1995) *Quicksilver: Adventure Games, Initiative Problems, Trust Activities and a Guide to Effective Leadership* Hamilton, Massachusetts: Project Adventure

(check out numerous other titles by Rohnke)

Shipwreck List of Items:

(feel free to modify this)

Small outboard motor
Large sheath knife
Swiss Army knife
A large tarp
12 bottles of power-aide
Binoculars
A book of maps
Cooking pot
Bottle of sunscreen
Extra bag of clothes
watch
Shovel
Saw
Box of matches, in a waterproof bag
Tent
Sleeping Bags (number in group)
Small cook stove
First Aid Kit
Book about edible wild foods
A sail that might fit the lifeboat
Hand held mirror
Wood glue
Beach towels
A box of granola bars
Plastic garbage bags
Army survival book printed in 1944
Tool box: hammer, nails, wrenches
One gallon of gasoline in a jug
\$1000US in \$20 bills
Cellphone from United States
Fishing pole, with line and hooks
A .45 revolver, with 6 bullets

List of supplies required for Toxic Waste

30-50 feet of rope (approximately 1/2" dia.)
Small container (1/4-1 gallon)
Balls or water to place in small container
Large container (plastic bucket or garbage can)
Numerous lengths of string (6-10 pieces of various length)
~1 foot section of bungee cord or elastic
A bunch of other items: paper clips, scissors, tape, ribbon, sticks or boards, random metal objects. These are things that aren't necessary to complete the challenge, but make it more interesting (red herring)

Optional: clean bandanas for blindfolding some participants

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Throwing Name Game

Type: Learning Names

Environment: Indoor/Outdoor

4+ Participants

1-5 throwable items. Rubber chickens, balls, soft Frisbees, rubber snakes, and small stuffed animals are fair game

Timeframe: 5 minutes

Procedure:

Have participants stand in a circle, so that there is some space between them and the person next to them. Start by having each person in the circle say their name (and an interesting fact about themselves). Next explain the rules. The person who has the throwable item will say "catch it!" and the person's name that they are throwing it to. Example: "Catch it Mike!". The person who receives the item says "Thanks ...Jane" to person who threw it and then tosses it on to somebody else. "Catch it...." Once the item has made it to everyone, speed up play by introducing more throwable items. Things tend to get pretty hectic once multiple items are in flight.

Debriefing Questions:

This activity probably doesn't need to be debriefed.

Circle Scramble

Type: Learning Names, Learning about Others

Environment: Indoor/Outdoor

5+ participants

Timeframe: 5-10 minutes

Procedure:

The group stands in a circle. Each person says his or her first name so that everyone can hear it. Then, without any type of communication (verbal or non-verbal) they must attempt to get in alphabetical order. Once they think they have it, each person says his/her name to see how close they came. Then go to round two, attempting to fix the mistakes. Go further rounds if necessary. You can also try this with last names, birthdays, etc. Anything sequential can work. The more people, the better.

Debriefing Questions:

This activity probably doesn't need to be debriefed.

Source: *Manito-Wish Leaders' Manual*, p. 53

M & Ms

Type: Perspectives on conflict

Environment: Indoor/Outdoor

2+ participants

Required Materials: M&M candy

Timeframe: 10 minutes

Procedure:

With students paired up, place a pile of M & Ms next to each pair. Describe the rules. They arm wrestle for the M & Ms. Each time one student presses the other's hand to the ground, s/he wins an M & M. The object is to win as many M & Ms as you can in one minute. At the end of this minute survey how many M & Ms each student won. Ask if they see another way to increase their numbers while still playing within the rules and let them try again. (Facilitator hint: the answer is to work together rather than compete: then both participants can gain lots of M & Ms. Win-Win versus Win-Lose)

Sample debriefing questions:

How did you first approach the task?

What strategy did you use?

What were the results?

After the first try, did you think of a different way to do the challenge?

What assumptions did you make about arm wrestling? About this activity? About who would get the M & Ms?

How did you think this activity would end?

What are your assumptions about conflict?

Can you think of a situation in real life that ended as a win-lose, but could have been a win-win?

Have you been involved in a win-win?

How does this activity relate to being a leader? In what ways do leaders have to deal with conflict and competition?



PBJ

Type: Communication

Environment: Indoor/Outdoor

4+ Participants

Required Materials: paper, pens, peanut butter, jelly and bread

Time Frame: 20 Minutes

Procedure:

Split students into two equally sized groups. In this activity each group writes down instructions on how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. After the groups are done writing down the instructions, a student from each group volunteers to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich based **solely** on reading the written instructions they were given by the other group. At the end of the activity, the students discuss any of the communication problems encountered during the activity.

Sample debriefing questions:

How did your instructions work for the other group?

What assumptions did you make in your instructions?

What did it feel like to be on the receiving end of the 'instructions'?

As a leader, where might this situation come up in real life?



Bumpity Bump Bump

Type: De-Inhibitizer, Learning Names

Environment: Indoor/Outdoor

5+ Participants

No additional supplies required

Timeframe: 5-10 minutes

Procedure:

The group stands in a circle, four or five steps back from the center. The facilitator begins in the center. The person in the center points at somebody in the circle, says that person's name and then says "BUMPITY-BUMP-BUMP!" This person must respond with the name of the person to their left (or right, facilitator picks) before the person in the center finishes saying "BUMPITY-BUMP-BUMP". If they flub the name, they have to go in the center of the circle and the process continues. Play tends to proceed quickly. Let this one run until everyone has been in the center, or until it seems like participants have had enough.

Debriefing Questions:

This activity probably doesn't need to be debriefed.

Source: [Quicksilver](#), p. 84

People To People

Type: De-Inhibitizer

Environment: Indoor/Outdoor

Best with larger groups

Requires an even number of participants, facilitator can fill in if needed.

Timeframe: about 10 minutes

Procedure:

The basic idea is that the facilitator says the command: "People To People", which means that everyone travels about the group and finds a partner. Then the facilitator can order the group: "People To People-Foot-to-Foot" or any other appropriate combination of body parts. Usually it is most hilarious if a few body part pairs are simultaneously in play between partners. When things get too ridiculous, the facilitator says "People-To-People" and participants search for a new partner. For extra fun, this search can have a type of movement assigned to it: i.e. "People-To-People crabwalk" etc.

Debriefing Questions:

This activity probably doesn't need to be debriefed.

Understanding Leadership

Leadership is a complicated topic. People have different definitions for it and leaders have different styles. Here are some ideas to consider about leadership. Compare them to your own.

Leadership Defined:

“Seeing what needs to be done and getting a group of people to do it”

“The art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations”

“The capacity to move others towards goals shared with you, with a focus and competency they would not achieve on their own”

Outward Bound, 2008.

Take some time to reflect on how you and your organization define leadership



Which picture looks like leadership to **you**?

Facilitator Notes

- Include obstacles between the buckets
- Include red herring objects in available equipment
- Toxic Waste is not an easy exercise and most groups will benefit from some coaching along the way.
- The solution involves attaching the cords to the bungee loop, then guiding the bungee with the strings to sit around and grab the toxic waste bucket. Then with everyone pulling on their cord and with good coordination and care, the toxic waste bucket can be lifted, moved and tipped into the empty neutralizing bucket.
- If someone breaches the toxic waste zone, indicated by the circle, enforce an appropriate penalty e.g., loss of limbs (hand behind back) or function (e.g., blindfolds if a head enters the zone) that lasts for the rest of the game. If a whole person enters the zone, they die and must then sit out for the rest of the activity.
- If the group struggles to work out what to do, freeze the action and help them discuss.
- If the group spills the waste entirely, make a big deal about catastrophic failure (everyone dies), invite them to discuss what went wrong and how they can do better, then refill the container and let them have another go.

Processing Ideas

There are invariably plenty of key communications and decisions during the exercise that provide for fruitful debriefing.

How successful was the group? e.g., consider:

- How long did it take?
- Was there any spillage?
- Were there any injuries? (Often in the euphoria of finishing participants will overlook their errors and seem unconcerned about injuries and deaths caused by carelessness along the way. Make sure there is an objective evaluation of performance - it is rarely 'perfect'.)
- How well did the group cope with this challenge? (e.g., out of 10?)
- What was the initial reaction of the group?
- What skills did it take for the group to be successful?
- What would an outside observer have seen as the strengths and weaknesses of the group?
- How did the group come up with its best ideas?
- What did each group member learn about him/her self as a group member?
- What lessons did the group learn from this exercise which could be applied to future situations?

Source:
wilderdom.com



Toxic Waste

The challenge is to move the toxic waste contents to the "neutralization" container using minimal equipment and maintaining a safe distance within a time limit.

This activity is moderately difficult - avoid using with groups who are still in the early stages of group development. This activity can be done indoors or outdoors; outdoors is more dramatic because water can be used as the "toxic waste" instead of balls. Timeframe is 30-45 minutes.

Set-Up

(See list of required supplies in appendix)

Use the rope to create a circle at least 8 ft in diameter on the ground to represent the toxic waste radiation zone. The larger the radiation zone, the more difficult the activity. Place the small bucket in the center of the radiation zone and fill it with water or balls to represent the toxic waste. Place the large neutralization bucket approximately 30 to 50 feet away. The greater the distance, the more difficult the activity. Put all other equipment (i.e., bungee, ropes, string, and red herring objects (optional)) in a pile near the rope circle.

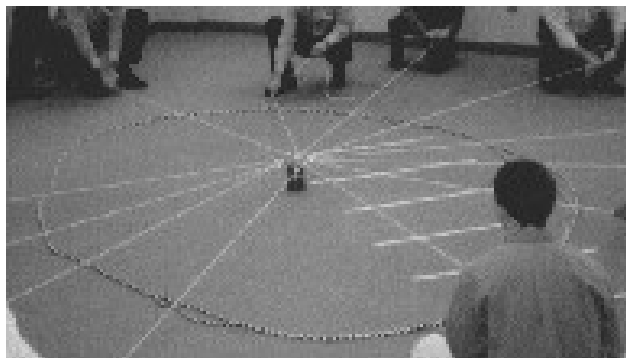
Directions

The challenge is for the group to work out how to transfer the toxic waste from the small bucket into the large bucket where it will be "neutralized", using only the equipment provided and within a time frame. The waste will blow up and destroy the world after 20 minutes if it is not neutralized.

Anyone who ventures into the radiation zone will suffer injury and possibly even death, and spillage will create partial death and destruction. Therefore, the group should aim to save the world and do so without injury to any group members.

The rope circle represents the radiation zone emanating from the toxic waste in the bucket. Emphasize that everyone must maintain a distance (circle radius) from the toxic waste wherever it goes, otherwise they will suffer severe injury, such as loss of a limb or even death.

Give the group some planning time with no action e.g. 5 minutes. Then start the clock and indicate it is time for action, e.g., 15 or 20 minutes.



Learning about leadership

Leadership itself is not something that can be "taught." However, the skills associated with being a good leader can be learned and practiced

Many experiential activities can be tailored towards leadership. Your role as a facilitator is to draw out the outcomes listed below by front-loading the activity (setting the 'tone'), bringing awareness to the specific behaviors and skills that pertain to leadership, and by debriefing the activity based on those desired knowledge and skills .

Outcomes of learning about leadership:

- ✪ Showing the ability to set goals and inspire and guide others to achieve them
- ✪ Demonstrating the ability to collaborate, communicate, solve problems, and restore conflicts effectively

If all of this seems a little complicated, take a deep breath. Leadership is a natural process in groups. Provide the opportunity for it, make your students feel needed, and encourage them by recognizing their successes!



Tarp Flip

Type: Taking Leadership, Communication, Teamwork

Environment: Indoor/Outdoor

6+ Participants

Required materials: 1 tarp or other sheet of material (plastic, fabric) appropriate for the size of the group

Timeframe: 10-20 Minutes

Procedure:

Set up the tarp on the ground or floor. It should be sized so that all the people in the group can barely fit on it. Consider varying the size to accommodate the needs and skills of the group.

Have participants stand on the tarp. All must be completely on the tarp. Consider having participants remove footwear if it might destroy the tarp, and if the surface underneath is safe.

Explain the rules. The basic idea is that the group has to flip the tarp over to its other side, without anyone stepping off of the tarp. One possible way to do this activity is to have several "attempts". For the first "try" I usually set a time limit of 2 minutes. Total chaos usually ensues. Then I'll let the group re-set, and ask them to try again, this time giving them one minute in advance to plan or discuss.

Other possible variations include a silent tarp flip, or assigning 'physical limitations' to individuals in a high functioning group.

Sample debriefing questions:

What was challenging about this activity during the first attempt?

Was it different on the second attempt?

If you had an idea, how did you get the group to listen?

Did anyone have an idea but was not able to share it with the group? How did that feel?

Who emerged as a leader? How and why?

What is followership? Was it important to the success of the group?

Is communication important when working as a group? Why?

If you were facing a similar challenge, what would you do differently as a group?

Shipwreck!

Type: Collaboration

Environment: Indoor/Outdoor

4+ participants

Required Materials: watch, paper, pens, list of "items" (see appendix)

Timeframe: 10 Minutes

Procedure:

Explain to students that they are involved with a tragic sinking of a cruise liner near a small remote island in the south Pacific (get creative and dramatic). There is one life boat and the ship is sinking quickly. They have three minutes to pick out the items that they, as a group think they would need to survive on the island. **There is only room for seven items in the lifeboat.** It isn't clear if or when help is coming. They must decide as a group.

Sample debriefing questions:

How were decisions made?

Who influenced the decisions and how?

How could better decisions have been made?

Did people listen to each other? if not why not?

What roles did group members adopt?

How was conflict managed?

How did having a time constraint affect this activity?

What kinds of behavior helped or hindered the group?

How did people feel about the decisions?

How satisfied was each person with the decision (ask each participant to rate his / her satisfaction out of 10, then obtain a group average and compare / discuss with other groups' satisfaction levels)

What have you learnt about the functioning of this group?

How would you do the activity differently if you were asked to do it again?

What situations at work/home/school do you think are like this exercise?

