

Creative Games, Games, Games

Handout of Games Presented by Current and Former
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Calling All Vegetables

Kayla Nelson

Size of group: 5-20+ (The more people, the more challenging the game becomes.)

Age group: 8+

Directions: Have the participants sit in a circle (close enough for everyone to hear).

Ask everyone to choose a vegetable name for themselves (for example, cauliflower, cucumber, celery, etc.). Going around the circle, have each person say his or her chosen vegetable name.

One participant starts the game by saying "Cucumber (his or her own name) calling carrot (another participant's name)." Carrot then calls another participant and so on.

HOWEVER, all participants must speak with their lips covering their teeth and cannot show their teeth during the entire game. By doing this, words sound funny and usually cause a game of laughter.

If participants show their teeth during the game either by laughing or forgetting the rules of the game, they are out.

Be creative. Be silly. Don't be afraid to laugh!

Catch Me If You Can

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Players are paired up with a partner. Players stand in two lines, shoulder to shoulder, with partners facing each other. Participants are given approximately 30 seconds to look at their partners, taking in all details about the individual.

The leader then instructs the two lines to turn around and face away from their partners.

Both lines have 15-20 seconds to change one thing in their appearance (for example, change their watch to their other wrist, unbutton a button, remove a belt or jewelry, etc.). The change must be discrete, but visible to the partner.

The players are told to turn back to face their partners and have 30 seconds to discover the physical change that their partner has made. Repeat several times, then change partners.

Variation: Depending upon your group, you can have only one side make a change at a time.

Create A Game

Tanner Ogden

You will need: A wide variety of unrelated objects found around the house, office, classroom, outdoors, Dollar Tree, etc. Anything and everything can be used. Examples include: plastic coat hangers, pillow cases, balls, rolls of tape, newspaper, spoons, cups, stuffed animals, etc. Paper or plastic bags (optional)

How to Play: Place assorted items in a pile or in a bag. Players use all or some of the objects to invent as many different games or activities as possible. Sky's the limit!

Variation: Divide the participants into two or more groups. Give each group a bag or box containing various items and articles of clothing. Establish a time limit during which each group is to make up a skit using all or most of the items. Have each group perform the skit for the others.

Adaptations: Adaptations can be made so that all group members can be involved.

Source: Dr. Joe Wilson & Twyla Misselhorn's book, "Easy To Do & Inexpensive, Too."

"Create a Game is an excellent, no-cost, spur-of-the-moment activity. It can be setting-specific . . . by using objects found in the backyard, on a hike, in a motel, on the beach, etc. This activity is an excellent way to involve family members and friends in creative play together." (Wilson & Misselhorn, 1990)

Disney Sensory

Jerra Buster

For the senses you will use:

- **Mouth:** Trivia questions written on index cards (rather than food so you don't have to deal with food allergies).
- **Ear:** Listen to and identify Disney songs/soundtracks.
- **Eye:** Character cards (Print pictures of various Disney characters on cardstock).
- **Nose:** Smell (Put various items in small plastic containers for the players to smell, but be careful not to include items that people might be allergic to).
- **Hand:** Touch (Place various items in paper bags, one item per bag, for players to identify by touching them without seeing the items).

Other Materials Needed: Make a game board that has spaces going around the perimeter or zig-zagging around the board. On each space put either a mouth, ear, eye, nose, or hand, plus a gold star as the final space. These will determine which sensory object the player must identify. Provide some small object as the marker for each player, and use a single dice to determine the number of spaces to move. You will also need a CD player or other device on which to play the Disney music.

Directions: Have the first player throw the dice and move that many spaces. If he or she can identify the corresponding item correctly, he or she can take a second turn. The player who first reaches the gold star at the end is the winner.

Variations: This game does not necessarily have to be Disney themed. Use family pictures for character cards, favorite foods or cologne for smell, family memorabilia to identify by sight or touch. This game would work great for any client/patient and can improve motor and cognitive skills. The game would also be great with clients/patients who have had a stroke and have aphasia. Or theme the game to a color, such as for yellow, play the song "Yellow Submarine," and use photos of characters that are yellow (such as the man in the yellow hat). This game can be themed to anybody or anything! So have fun and get your senses going!

Four Corners

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Materials: Plain paper, pencils

Setup: Distribute a pencil and sheet of paper to each player.

How to Play: Have each player divide his or her sheet into four boxes/rectangles either by folding the paper in half twice (vertically and horizontally) or simply by drawing horizontal and vertical lines that cross in the middle.

In each rectangle, each player will describe themselves in the form of drawings. Choose the four topics in advance. For example, in the top left rectangle, everyone could draw their "Favorite hobbies;" while in the top right, people could illustrate "Favorite place on earth for vacation;" the bottom left could be something like "If you were an animal, which one would you be?" and the bottom right could be something like "What are the most important things in your life?"

Feel free to be as creative, hypothetical, or deep as you like.

Allow five to ten minutes to draw. When everyone is finished, gather the players together and have them share their drawings as a group. This icebreaker is an excellent way for participants to show-and-tell what makes them unique!

Adaptations:

- Ask the players for input on which four topics they would like to illustrate.
- For players who would have difficulty doing it themselves, prepare the sheet of paper for them in advance by drawing the lines and pre-printing the topics. Then photocopy as many pages as you will need.

Four-Line Poems

John Moellers

Materials: Paper; pencils, pens, or markers

How to Play:

1. Hand out a piece of paper and an appropriate writing instrument to each person.
2. Ask each person to write a poem about something that they are interested in or something they enjoy doing without actually naming the object or activity.
3. Explain that the poem must have four lines, and the second and last lines must rhyme.
4. Give examples of topics to write about.
5. Make sure people are not giving away the topic in their poem. Read a poem that demonstrates how to do it correctly.
6. Each person will read their poem aloud.
7. Have people guess what each poem is about.
8. End by saying how this activity is a way to get to know others better.

Variations:

- Make different lines rhyme.
- Pair up people instead of having the whole group figure out the topic of the poems.
- Have people act out their poems instead of reading them.
- Put various topics in a bag and have each participant draw a topic to write about from the bag.

Adaptations:

- Limit the topics so that it is easier for people to write poems.
- Use markers so the poems are easier to see.
- Use different colors of paper so the poems are easier to see.
- Have some lines already written on the paper and have participants complete the rest of the poem.

Source: I found this activity in *Life and the Arts*. Project Life, University of Missouri, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, 624 Clark Hall, Columbia, MO 65211.

Giants, Wizards, and Elves

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

This active game is similar to "rock, paper, scissors." Divide the group into two teams. Each team huddles together in their respective safe zones and chooses to be giants, wizards, or elves for each round. They then come to the middle to face the other team.

When the leader says “Go,” each team mimics the gestures and sounds of their chosen character.

- **Giants:** stand on tippy-toes and roar.
- **Wizards:** crouch down and pretend to cast a spell while saying "Shazam!"
- **Elves:** get down very low and cup their hands onto their ears to mimic pointy ears while screaming "eeee!"

Giants beat elves, elves beat wizards and wizards beat giants.

The winning team of each round then tries to capture as many members of the other team as they can before they run back to their safe zone or time is called. If both teams choose the same character, they all go back to their respective huddle and choose again. Play continues until one team has captured all the rest of the participants or until the time is up.

Guard the King

Shannon Poe, CTRS
Camp Courageous of Iowa, Monticello, Iowa

Active Group Game

Create a large circle (dimensions vary according to group size and ability). Two players stand in the middle of the circle: the King and the King's guard. The guard's job is to keep the King from being hit with a soft playground ball (or similar ball). The guard cannot catch the ball, only bat it away with his or her hands. Everyone else stands outside the circle and tries to hit the King with the ball. The throwers may enter the circle to get the ball, but must be outside the circle to throw the ball. Throwers can work together and pass the ball to each other in an attempt to make an open shot. When the king is crowned (hit with the ball) the thrower becomes the King, the King becomes the King's guard, and the guard becomes a thrower.

Variation: You can add more balls and more guards to make the game more exciting.

King Elephant

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Arrange chairs in a circle, and ask the players to take a seat. Each seat in the circle represents a different animal, arranged in order from the top of the food chain (the King Elephant) down to the bottom of the food chain (a slimy worm). Designate one person to be the King Elephant and then inform the players what animal they each are in food chain order and demonstrate their gesture. Typical gestures for the animals are:

- King Elephant – hold one arm out, extended away from your nose, while the other arm wraps around and holds your nose.
- Bear – hold your two hands out in front of you like giant bear claws.

- Lion – connect your hands above your head to make a circle, and make a growling face.
- Alligator – extend your arms out in front of you, with one hand facing up, and the other down. Clap your hands together like an alligator’s jaws.
- Monkey – puff out your cheeks, while pulling your ears out.
- Bird – touch your thumbs together and flap your hands like a bird flying.
- Snake – make a slithering snake movement with one of your arms.
- Chicken – place your hands under your armpits and flap your arms.
- Fish – hold both your hands together and imitate a fish swimming upstream.
- Worm – wiggle one bent finger.

Encourage players to also make funny, exaggerated animal sounds along with their gesture. Depending on your players’ ability to remember, it might be helpful to place a piece of paper with each animal’s name and picture on the floor in front of each chair.

How to Play: King Elephant is a rhythm game in that all players must stay on the beat set by the King Elephant. Depending on which chair he or she is seated in, each person must correctly give their animal signal (gesture and sound as described above) when called upon, and then make another animal’s signal to choose the next person.

The rhythm speed is set by the King Elephant who begins the game. He or she can alter the speed as desired for each round but should start out rather slowly until everyone catches on. Everyone follows the rhythm of a 1-2-3-4 pattern, where 1 is a pat on the knees, 2 is a clap, 3 and 4 are left and right thumbs (or when called upon, the animal signal). At the start the King Elephant repeats this general pattern a couple times, then does his or her own elephant signal, followed by another animal’s signal.

So, for example, a round would look like this:

- King Elephant starts the rhythm: *knee pat, clap, left thumb, right thumb*.
- King Elephant continues: *knee pat, clap, elephant signal* (his or her own signal).
- King Elephant signals another player: *knee pat, clap, bear signal* (another player’s signal).
- Bear continues: *knee pat, clap, bear signal* (his or her own signal).
- Bear signals another player: *knee pat, clap, fish signal* (another player’s signal).
- Fish continues: *knee pat, clap, fish signal* (his or her own signal).
- And so on.

When a player, including the King Elephant, fails to keep the rhythm going during their turn or makes a mistake on their signal (or does a signal when they aren’t supposed to) then they become the new worm by moving to the last chair and everyone else moves up the food chain by sliding up a seat. Those who change seats take on the role of that chair’s animal, and the current King Elephant starts the game again. The goal is to try to be the King Elephant by knocking out anyone in front of you. Great fun!

Variation: If you wish, you can let players choose their own animal and/or invent their own gestures and sounds. Decide where a new animal fits in the food-chain order.

Little Sally Walker

Hannah Lang

Objective: Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

Description: Have participants stand in a circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle walks around the inside of the circle while everyone else sings, “Little Sally Walker walking down the street. She didn’t know what to do so she stopped in front of me.” (At this time, the person in the middle chooses someone to stand in front of and does a dance move). People in the circle continue to sing: “Hey girl, do your thing, do your thing, don’t stop. Hey girl, do your thing, do your thing, don’t stop.” The new person is now “Sally Walker” and the game continues.

Adaptations:

- This game is extremely inclusive so no matter the disability everyone can have the opportunity to participate.
- Use props or costumes to assist in the dance moves.
- Allow small groups of people to be in the middle instead of individually.

References:

<http://www.ultimatecampresource.com/site/camp-activity/little-sally-walker.html>

Editor’s note: If you are not familiar with the tune, search for the song online to hear it sung, although some of the words are likely to be different. One such site is:
http://www.nutsie.com/song/Little%20Sally%20Walker/2146482&album_id=2814017

M&M Game

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Pass a bowl of M&Ms around the group and instruct everyone to take as many M&Ms as they would like. Tell the participants that they will be able to eat them later, but not yet. After everyone has gotten a chance to reach into the bowl, tell them that for each piece they took, they need to tell the group something interesting about themselves.

Variation: One variation on this game is to color-code specific questions, such as:

- RED** Favorite indoor leisure activity.
- ORANGE** Favorite outdoor leisure activity.
- BROWN** Favorite movie.
- BLUE** Favorite pet and why.
- GREEN** An interesting fact about yourself that no one else knows.
- YELLOW** Name one of your fears in life.
- PURPLE** If you could live anywhere where would it be and why?
- PINK** If you had one million dollars what charity would you give money to and why?

Musical Bingo

Laura Brady, CTRS
New Aldaya Lifescapes, Cedar Falls, Iowa

This is a game that you can play with any age group and any number of participants. The music can be adapted to fit youth, teens, as well as the age group I work with, the geriatric population.

To run this program you need someone who can sing or play the music, or use a CD or mp3 player with the songs you plan on using for your group.

There are sources that you could use to purchase a musical bingo set, or in our case we crafted our own and use poker chips as our markers.

To play, start the music and give the participants an allotted amount of time to hear each song and to put a marker on the appropriate spot on his or her bingo card. You can adjust this timeframe depending on the participants you are working with and the level of difficulty you are looking for. As I said in the session, you can allow the participants to sing and guess out loud or you can ask them to keep the answers to themselves until the end of each game.

Thank you and have a great time with this activity.

Mystery Ring

Klay Queck

Mystery Ring is a simple, easy game that can be played pretty much anywhere. All you need is a piece of string or yarn and a ring. Place the ring on the string and then tie the ends of the string together to form a circle. The participants stand in a circle and hang onto the string. One person stands in the middle of the circle. This person then closes his or her eyes, and the group counts to 10 while they pass the ring around the circle in any direction. When 10 is reached the person in the middle opens his or her eyes and gets three guesses to discover whose hand the ring is in. The person holding the ring then changes places with the person in the middle.

Adaptations:

- You can have players sit on chairs placed in a circle or have people sit on the ground, depending on your population.
- An alternate way to play would be that if the person in the middle correctly guesses whose hand the ring is in, then he or she stays in the middle until he or she guesses incorrectly.

Orange Relay

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Divide the participants into two equal groups. Half of each group then goes to the opposite sides of the room and stands in a line facing their teammates who also stand in a line.

Give the first person on each team at one side an orange and have them place it between their knees.

When the leader says “GO” the participants run as fast as they can to their teammates at the other side without dropping the orange. When they get to their respective teammates they hand their orange to their own teammate at the head of the line and go to the back of the line. Repeat until everyone has had a turn.

If an orange is dropped, that player must go back to where they started and try again.

The game keeps going until the teams are back in the order they started from.

Product Slogans

Leah Mick

Benefits:

- Mental: memory, creativity
- Emotional: feelings of success, competence, challenge
- Social: group interaction, conversation

Greeting Suggestions:

- Have participants say their own names.
- Have participants think of their favorite advertisements.
- As a group, brainstorm to make a list of name-brand products.

Activity: We often identify products with the slogans used to advertise them over the years. This activity will challenge the participants to remember and connect products with the appropriate slogan.

There are three different ways that you can use this activity with your participants.

1. Matching. Write 5-10 slogans on a large sheet of paper. Hand out pictures of the products and have participants match each with the corresponding slogan.
2. Guessing. Read a slogan and ask participants to call out the corresponding product. This may be done in teams or individually.
3. Create a Slogan. Have individuals or small groups create their own slogans for a number of products. See if the rest of the group can guess the right product for each slogan.

Conversation Starters:

- What products have you bought because of the advertisement?
- What products would you never buy because of the advertisement?
- How do you decide which products to buy?
- Does advertising serve a useful purpose?
- What is your favorite slogan?
- Create a slogan to promote your talents.
- Create a slogan for each month in the year.
- Do you think that slogans are more effective on T.V., over the radio, or in the paper?
- What is the oldest slogan you can remember?

Adaptations: Depending on which variation of this activity that you use, there are different adaptations that can be made.

1. Make the pictures large enough that someone with a visual impairment would be able to see them with ease.
2. Use option 1, Matching, for participants with a hearing impairment so that they can fully participate.
3. Use option 2, Guessing, for participants with a visual impairment so that they can fully participate.
4. Use a fewer number of slogans so that participants can put more focus into those slogans and not become overwhelmed.
5. In option 3, Create a Slogan, give participants the option of speaking their slogan or drawing/writing it out.
6. In option 3, Create a Slogan, provide markers and crayons that are larger for someone that may have trouble holding them. This will help the participants have a greater sense of independence.

Sample Slogans

1. "It floats" --- Ivory Soap
2. "The breakfast of champions" --- Wheaties
3. "When it rains, it pours" --- Morton salt
4. "The candy with the hole in the middle" --- Life Savers
5. "You can be sure if it's..." --- Westinghouse
6. "Good to the last drop" --- Maxwell House Coffee
7. "Hasn't scratched yet" --- Bon Ami Cleanser
8. "Chases dirt" --- Old Dutch Cleanser
9. "The flavor lasts" --- Wrigley Gum
10. "It keeps on ticking" --- Timex
11. "Ask the man who owns one" --- Packard
12. "Covers the earth" --- Sherwin Williams Paint
13. "His master's voice" --- Victrola
14. "The pause that refreshes" --- Coca-Cola
15. "57 varieties" --- Heinz
16. "The skin you love to touch" --- Woodbury
17. "Time to re-tire" --- Fisk Tires

18. "From contented cows" --- Carnation Milk
19. "Makes clothes sparkle" --- Oxydol
20. "Squeezably soft" --- Charmin toilet paper
21. "Double the flavor, double the fun" --- Doublemint gum
22. "Which twin wears the..." --- Toni Home Perm
23. "Mm-Mm good" --- Campbell's Soup
24. "Mountain grown" --- Folgers Coffee
25. "Hires to you" --- Hire's Root Beer
26. "Reach out and touch someone" --- AT&T
27. "Snap, Crackle, Pop" --- Rice Krispies
28. "Take me away" --- Calgon
29. "Plop-plop, fizz-fizz" --- Alka Seltzer
30. "How do you spell relief?" --- Roloids
31. "When you care enough to send the very best" --- Hallmark
32. "Have it your way" --- Burger King
33. "What's in your wallet? " --- Capitol One credit card
34. "Save big money" --- Menards
35. "There's a helpful smile in every aisle" --- Hy Vee
36. "Give it to Mikie. Mikie will eat anything" --- Life Cereal

Reference: Sandra Parker, CTRS, Marshall University, from her book *Activities for the Elderly*, Volume 1, Idyl Arbor, 1993.

Sightless Sculpture

Matt Waterman

Divide the participants into groups of three people; you can make a group of four if you need to. Each person in the group will be given the title of either the artist, the model, or the clay; in the group of four there will be two artists. Have the clay close his or her eyes so he or she can't see what pose the model does. The artist then moves the clay's body parts (legs, arms, head, and torso) so that the clay's body is in the same position as the model's body. When the artist feels that the clay looks just like the model, he or she will say WA-LAA. The clay then opens his or her eyes to see if the model looks like him or her. Then everyone in the group gets a different title and the process starts over.

Variations: Depending on your participants, you can have all the groups do the activity at the same time, or have just one group do the activity while the other groups watch. Or have two groups do the activity at the same time, and then have the other groups be the "audience" and vote for the most accurate sculpture.

Modification: The only suggestion I have is that the model should look at who the clay is and only go into a position that the clay would be able to be maneuvered into by the artist.

Reference: I learned about this game in my class called, “Movement Activities for Children” taught by Dr. Ripley Marston, University of Northern Iowa.

Snowball Fight

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Ideal Size: This game will work with any size group.

Use For: Introductions, recapping learning, quiz prep, or to test retention of information.

Time Needed: As long as you can stand it; 20-30 minutes is ideal.

Materials Needed: Paper from your recycle bin would be perfect if one side is blank.

Instructions: If used for introductions, give each participant a piece of paper and ask them to write their name and three fun things about themselves. Have them crumple the paper into a snowball. Divide the group into two teams on opposite sides of the room, and let the snowball fight begin!

When you call stop, each participant is to pick up the nearest snowball and find the person whose name is inside. Once everyone has found their snowman or snowwoman, have them introduce him or her to the rest of the group and read their three items aloud.

Variation. If used for recapping or test preparation for students, ask students to write a question regarding the topic you want to review. Provide each student with several pieces of paper so there is abundant snow. If you want to make sure certain issues are covered, add some snowballs of your own.

When the snowball fight is over, each student will pick up a snowball, read the question, and answer it. Have the students pick up additional snowballs, one per person at a time, until all the snowballs have been picked up, read, and answered.

String Game

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Materials: Big ball of string

Preparation: This activity needs a little bit of preparation in advance. Purchase a big ball of string (any color, or multiple colors if you wish). With a pair of scissors, cut the string into various lengths, as short as 12 inches and as long as 30 inches or more. When you are finished cutting, bunch all the pieces together into one big clump.

How to Play: Ask the first volunteer to choose any piece of string. Have the person pull on it and separate it from the other pieces of string. Then have them introduce themselves as they slowly wind the piece of string around their index finger.

The funny part of this icebreaker game is that some of the strings will be extremely long so the person must keep talking for a very long time. This is a good way to get everyone to start talking. People might find out something interesting or new about each other.

Telephone Charades

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Telephone Charades (also known as Charades Down the Line) is an active, hilarious icebreaker in which a person acts out a charade only for the next person in the line, who in turn acts it out for the next person. The final person in line attempts to guess what the original clue was. This game works best with a group of five or six people at a time and is appropriate for people ages 10 and up. It can also be implemented with larger groups by taking five or six volunteers per round. This game is best played indoors.

Preparation: To prepare for the game, write a number of humorous actions to be acted out, one per piece of paper, using large lettering. Some examples are:

- a pantomime
- a nerd's first date
- a cat bathing itself
- going skydiving
- fishing and catching a huge fish

How to Play: Choose five or six people (or ask for volunteers) and ask them to line up in a row, facing the left side of the room. Ask the person at the back of the line to turn around so you can show him or her the first clue to be acted out. Show the clue to the audience as well.

This person turns back around, taps the next person in line on the shoulder, and then acts out the clue for him or her by using classic charades rules (no talking or noises permitted). The second person then taps the third person and acts out his or her understanding of what was acted out. This process continues until it reaches the person at the other end of the line, who must guess what the action is. This game is funny because the acting tends to warp and get distorted based upon each person's interpretation of what is going on.

Variation: A good variation to try is to have two teams line up facing in opposite directions. Have them act out the same clue simultaneously. The team that guesses the clue correctly (or most correctly) wins the round.

The Window

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Objective: The objective of this game is to remember and recite nursery rhymes and to keep the rhythm going without messing up.

Preparation: Players sit in a circle. Instruct all the players to think of a nursery rhyme; give examples if needed.

Start by reciting this phrase in an animated sing-song voice and then have all the players recite it with you to practice it: “The window, the window, the second story window. Can’t find a rhyme, can’t say it on time, then throw it out the window.”

How to Play: Recite the first few lines of a nursery rhyme followed by the above phrase. The next person in line recites a different nursery rhyme followed by this phrase. Keep going around the circle. If anyone messes up or doesn’t say a rhyme, then the leader begins again.

Examples:

- Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water and threw it out the window, the window, the second story window. Can’t find a rhyme, can’t say it on time, then throw it out the window.
- Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet eating her curds and whey; along came a spider and sat down beside her and she threw him out the window, the window, the second story window. Can’t find a rhyme, can’t say it on time, then throw it out the window.

The Lineup

Rebecca Towers

Objective: Players must line up in order without using their hands, talking, or mouthing any words. Inform the players where the line should begin and where it should end, generally left to right. A group of 5-15 players is ideal.

How to Play: The leader gives a topic, such as: birthdays; first, middle or last names; hometowns; states; or just about anything really. The players then must get into alphabetical or numerical order to the best of their ability without using their hands, talking, or mouthing any words. They must come up with their own method to get in line.

Hint: Some of the ways players are allowed to communicate are by blinking their eyes or stomping their feet the appropriate number of times (1 for January, 2 for February, etc.) but *don’t tell them until they have struggled a while to figure out their own method.*

Reference: I learned this game from Shannon Poe at Camp Courageous.

This Is A . . .

Randy Sturm

Materials: Use two objects, for example: a red pen and a blue pen, or a salt shaker and a pepper shaker.

Participants stand or sit in a circle. A group of 8-10 people is a good number.

Objective: One person starts both objects in opposite directions. The objects go around the circle until they get back to the first person. Each player should look at the person they are talking to or listening to. The game is designed to work on the players' communication skills.

How to Play: The first person hands one of the objects to the person on his or her left and says: "This is a red pen." That person says "A what?" The first person repeats "A red pen." Then the second person hands the pen to the third person and says "This is a red pen." The third person says "A what?" The second person says "A what?" back to the first person. The first person repeats "A red pen." The second person repeats "A red pen" back to the third person. Players advance the pen one person at a time and keep saying "This is a red pen" and "A what?" back to the first person each time until the pen gets all the way around.

Right after starting the red pen, the first person does the same thing with the blue pen going the other way around the circle. It gets fun and tricky when both objects get to the middle and people start to hear the name of both objects at the same time.

Variation: Use just one object and go around in only one direction. I usually do this the first time anyway when I'm explaining it to people. This way they get a better understanding of what to do. Then I try it with both objects going in opposite directions.

Reference: I learned this game during staff training week during my first summer working at Cub Scout and Boy Scout Camp.

Toilet Paper Game

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
Renaissance Park Apartments, Waterloo, Iowa

Materials: A roll or two of toilet paper, depending on the size of the group.

How to Play: Ask participants to sit in a circle, either on chairs or on the floor. Take out a roll of toilet paper and show it to the group. Explain to the group that due to a mistake, this is the last roll of T.P. for the day. Tell them that they need to take as much as they think they will use until the next day.

Pass the roll around the group.

Once everyone has toilet paper, tell them that there is plenty of toilet paper and not to worry.

Next, tell the participants to pass their piece of toilet paper to their right around the group until the leader says "STOP."

The leader then tells the group that for every square of toilet paper they have they must tell the group something interesting about themselves. They cannot use each square as a word in a sentence, i.e. "My name is Trevor; I am eight years old," to use nine squares. They also cannot use a separate square to name each member of their family.

Good Example for 10 squares: "I like popcorn. I have eight brothers. I have one sister. I have a dog named Spike. I like to read. I hate broccoli. I like to swim. I like to watch horror movies. I am shy. I like the color purple."

Two Truths & A Lie

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
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Summary: Which sentences are true and which one is a lie? This is a fun guessing game and a great way for people to get to know one another.

Goal: Correctly guess other people's truths and fool people with your lie.

Preparation: Pass out a pen and a piece of paper to each participant.

How to Play:

1. Have everyone write two true sentences and one false sentence about themselves on their paper. The sentences can be in any order that they want. Make sure that all the sentences are believable and aren't obvious. (Example: I have three cats at home. I am related to a celebrity. I lost two teeth in a biking accident.)
2. One person starts by reading his or her sentences aloud to the group. After hearing the sentences, everyone else will need to decide which two sentences are true and which sentence is a lie.
3. Take a vote on each sentence ("Who thinks the first sentence is a lie? Who thinks the second sentence is a lie?" Who thinks the third sentence is a lie?").
4. The players who correctly identify the lie will win one point. The person who wrote the sentences will win two points for every person that they fool (for every person who voted that the lie was true).
5. Repeat steps 2-4 for the remaining players. Whoever gets the most points wins the game.

Warp Speed

Shannon Poe, CTRS
Camp Courageous of Iowa, Monticello, IA

Group Initiative Game

Form a semi-tight circle. The leader throws a soft playground-type ball to a person on either side of the circle. That person then throws the ball to a different person in the circle and so on until each person has caught and thrown the ball once and only once. Each person has to remember who threw the ball to them and to whom they threw the ball.

After the sequence has been established, start again with the first person and go through the same sequence as fast as possible while someone times them. The group does it again several times and tries to beat their fastest time.

Who Done It?

Lisa Jamieson, CTRS
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Materials: index cards, pens/pencils

This game can be played individually or with two teams. For extremely large groups, choose ten volunteers and split them into two teams of five.

To set up the game, pass out an index card and a pen to each participant. Ask each person to write down one interesting fact about themselves that the other players don't know – the sillier (or more unbelievable) the better. Examples include the following:

- I went skydiving once.
- I drank a whole gallon of milk at one time.
- I have lived in seven different states.
- I ate bugs when I was a child.

Collect all the cards, shuffle them, and then pass them out randomly. (If two teams are playing, shuffle each team's cards separately so each team member gets a card from the other team.)

Each person (or team) takes turns reading aloud the card they are holding. The reader gets one opportunity to guess whose fact he or she has read. After he or she guesses, the guessed person simply says "yes" or "no". If the correct person is guessed, he or she can briefly explain what they wrote (if desired).

The guessing continues until all cards are read. At the end everyone whose card was not guessed reveals which card they wrote.