

- All players but one leave the room. Give that person an every day task to mime e.g. make a sandwich, ride a bike, doing home work.
- One at a time, players come back, watch the mime and then mime to the next player to come back.
- Last player does the mime to everyone else & says what the action is. Then others add other guesses for the original action. To end, the 1st player does the original mime & names it. (TIP: encourage players to make their mime clear & exaggerate it a bit.)

Mime Whispers

- Players sit in a circle/line so they can whisper to their neighbour but not hear others.
- The first player is given a short phrase and whispers it quietly to his/her neighbour. The neighbour then passes on the message on.
- The game continues until the end player announces the message that they have received – often completely different to the original.

Chinese Whispers

- Players take an imaginary trip through the alphabet. For example, the first player declares "I'm going to Africa," the rest respond "what will you do there?" where upon the first player answers using the same letter: "I'm going to act *absolutely angry*." Player two takes a turn using "B" words etc.

Animal Alphabet

- The leader starts with the name of an animal that starts with the letter "A." From there, go around the circle and have each person say the name of an animal each beginning with the next letter in the alphabet. Repeat using fruit, names, sports etc.

Alphabet Story Challenge

- Can you make a story where the first letter of each successive word is the next letter of the alphabet? Can you get to z? For example "Alan began climbing down eventually..."

Bippity Boppity Boo

REMEMBERING NAMES GETS TRICKY UNDER PRESSURE.

- Everyone stands or sits in a circle with one "It" person in the middle.
- "It" walks up to a person and says either "me, Bippity Boppity Boo," "you, Bippity Boppity Boo," "left, bippity boppity boo" or "right, bippity boppity boo."
- If "it" says "left, bippity boppity boo," then the person must immediately say the correct name of the person on their left before "it" finishes saying "bippity boppity boo".
- If the player says the correct name, "it" continues going to other people in the circle. If they make a mistake or don't say the name in time, they become the new "it."

Guess Who

- A player leaves the room & while they are out someone from the group hides.
- The person is called back & has to guess who is missing.

Fox & Squirrel

THIS HAS NO WINNERS BUT IS STILL A LOT OF FUN.

- Form a circle of people, about 3 feet apart from one another.
- Start the foxes and squirrel at different points in the circle.
- Players can only pass a "fox" to the person beside them, but the "squirrel" can be tossed anywhere in the circle. Have players call out what is being passed ("Here comes a fox.")
- As the leader, you can call out a reversal once in a while.

Grandma's Pyjamas

- Someone is given the job of asking questions about anything they wish, to anyone in the group.
- Every question they ask must be replied with "grandma's pyjamas."
- Anyone who laughs is out. For variety, instead of "pyjamas", try "bananas" or "knickers".

Bird, Beast, or Fish

YOU HAVE TO THINK OF WORDS FAST FOR THIS GAME.

- Everyone sits facing the leader who points to a player and says either "BIRD," "BEAST," or "FISH."
- The chosen player must come up with the name of an animal that fits the category before the leader counts to ten. No repeating!
- If the player does not respond in time, he/she is out. The round continues for a set time or until only one player remains. *After a few rounds it can be hard to think of new words.*

On the Bank, in the River

- All players line up behind a marked line. They are "on the bank."
- If you call "in the river" they must jump to the other side of the line. If you call "on the bank" they stay still. If you call "on the river", they stay still too.
- Mix things up and try to catch players out.

Heads Down Thumbs Up

AN OLD FAVOURITE GUESSING GAME.

- Players close their eyes, put their heads down and one hand up with a thumb sticking up.
- Three players are chosen to pick a thumb each which they push down like a switch and they then stand up at the front.
- Calls 'heads up' and those whose thumbs were pushed have one guess each at who did it.
- If they are correct, they swap places with the player named, otherwise the player gets another turn squeezing a thumb.

Touch Blue

AN EASY ICE-BREAKER. (FOR MORE ICE BREAKERS LOOK ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE.)

- Everybody stands in a circle. The leader calls "touch blue".
- Everybody must move to touch something blue.
- Add different colours, categories. Get creative.

Lion King

REMEMBER OTHER PLAYERS ANIMALS AND RISE TO THE TOP OF THE KINGDOM. Play with a group size of 6-8.

- STAGE 1: Each player has a unique animal and action (chosen by the player). Go round the group announcing your animal and doing the action.
- To play, the first player does their action, followed by another player's action. THAT player has to straight away do their action and a different action to the immediate previous player.
- STAGE 2: Rank all animals from highest to lowest. (Lion at the top, a snail at the bottom?) If anyone makes a mistake, they get demoted to the bottom and everyone who was below them moves up.

Don't Forget these!

Simon Says... I Spy... 20 Questions... Hotter-colder

For more games ideas visit our website

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OSCN's little book of Active Games

Time Fillers
Ice Breakers
Having a Laugh



What are Ice Breakers?

ICE BREAKERS HELP THE MEMBERS OF GROUPS TO MIX AND MINGLE EASILY - "BREAKING THE ICE".

All sorts of games can be ice breakers, but the ones we mention here tend to be easy to join, easy to play and encourage players to interact in an easy-going way. They are more about interaction than competing and avoid putting players "on the spot"; having to do something while being watched by a larger group.

Action Spelling

SPELL SIMPLE WORDS WITH A MIX OF WORDS & ACTION.

- Decide on simple actions that will replace certain common letters of the alphabet. E.g. clap for "c", spin around for "o", cross your arms for "t".
- The leader calls words and players have to spell them correctly, substituting these letters with the right action. E.g. "Cat" - Players should respond [Clap] "a, t".
- After a few rounds ask players to suggest more letters/actions, then add them into the game.

MIRROR, MIRROR

PLAYERS START IN PAIRS AND FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OF A CALLER. To get you started, here's a few ideas for calls (then make up your own!)

- MIRROR, MIRROR – stand facing each other with exactly the same pose.
- SANDWICH – stand back to back and call out your favourite sandwich filling.
- TIP TOE – stand on one foot facing each other and touching toes with the other foot.
- BUMPITY BUMP – back to back and bump your backsides together.
- BLAST OFF – facing each other with arms stretched up and touching at fingertips – then countdown from 5,4,3,2,1...
- MIX UP – change partners and shake hands with your new partner.

If there's an odd number of players, the one left out can make the next calls. Can be played with the slowest pair being eliminated for a more competitive activity, but it's equally fun to just throw it open to suggestions from the players for new moves and poses.

Red-Handed

TRY AND SPOT AN OBJECT AS IT'S BEING PASSED AROUND.

- One player is in the centre of a seated circle. They shut their eyes and count to 10 out loud.
- Meanwhile the other players pass a small object (e.g. a marble) hand to hand around the circle.
- After the countdown the middle player looks around and has three guesses who has the object.
- RULE: The object must keep moving! Players should keep their hands on their knees or laps, near their neighbours hands and fake passing to try and throw off the centre player. If they guess right, the centre player chooses the next guesser.
- Harder - each guess also has to specify which hand.

Spot the Squeeze

- Set up the same as Red-Handed above, except the players in the circle hold hands.
- Players in the circle have to "pass a squeeze" in one direction from player to player.
- Centre player is trying to spot the squeezer. Time one-minute and count squeeze laps (undetected.)

Other Ice Breakers

If you want more ice breakers check these games out at our on-line game index, or look for our other game booklets....

Monte Carlo / Blob Tiggy / Run For You Supper
Creep Up / Simon Says / Octopus
Stiff Candles / Traffic Light / Chinese Whispers

What Animal Am I?

- Players take turns asking questions, trying to guess an animal that the leader is thinking of.
- Ask about colour, number of legs, where it lives, what it eats etc.
- Whoever guesses correctly can lead the next round, picking the next animal.

Like guessing games? Find these and other time fillers on-line at www.oscn.org.nz - look for "time fillers".

RPS MOB

ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS (RPS), PLAYED ALL AGAINST ONE.

- Leader faces rest of the group. Play RPS all at once. Only those who win against the leader stay in. (Ties lose!) Losers bobs down.
- Repeat until all remaining players win against the leader, or the leader beats all of the last player/s. Choose new leader and repeat.
- (Useful rule when only a few players still in: those opposing the leader can't discuss their next play.)

odds or Evens

PLAYED IN PAIRS, LIKE RPS (ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS).

- One player is odd, the other even.
- Like RPS players countdown and reveal a hand gesture both at the same time. Players can either show one finger, or two fingers.
- If the total fingers adds to 2 or 4, the even payer wins a point. If the total is 3, the odd player wins a point. Play best of three.

Guess Who?

PLAYERS FACE OFF IN A RACE TO REMEMBER NAMES.

- Split into 2 even teams. 2 chairs are in place facing each other about 2 metres apart. Teams gather behind their chair.
- 2 people hold up a blanket to make a screen so neither team can see the other.
- Each team silently chooses a player to sit.
- The blanket is dropped and the first player to say the name of the person in the other chair wins.
- Either give the winning team 1 point or (for a harder game) the winning team gains the player who lost that turn.
- VARIATION: chairs are positioned facing away from each other. When the blanket drops, teams give clues to the seated players to help them guess who is in the other chair.
- Have a practice round and then players should set clear rules for clues: no letters, no mention of last names etc.

You Spy

THINKING OF WORDS HELPS YOU MOVE FASTER.

- Players start lined up facing the leader.
- The leader says: "You spy with your little eye, something beginning with ...[choose a letter]".
- Players raise their hands if they think of a word for something they can see around them.
- The leader chooses a player to say their word and then they can move one step forward. No repeats of words are allowed.
- When words run out, the leader can announce a new letter. Play until someone can tag the leader.

coffeepot

ASK QUESTIONS TO WORK OUT A SECRET ACTIVITY.

- The leader thinks of an activity, e.g. biking.
- Players ask the leader yes/no questions like this: "Can you coffeepot at the beach?" [For example]. Leader must answer truthfully. Continue until players guess the activity.

The Big Wind Blows

A RELAXED MIXER GAME, WHERE YOU ARE ONLY "ON THE SPOT" FOR A FEW MOMENTS.

- Form a circle with everyone seated in a chair or on a cushion. Start player stands in the middle. There is no free spots for the standing player.
- The standing player calls "The big wind blows everyone wearing blue." [For example.]
- All players wearing blue must get up and go to a new seat while the caller rushes for a seat too.
- The player left standing makes the next new call e.g. "the big wind blows everyone who has a pet." And so on. Look out for chairs tipping in the rush.

Hooper Dooper

- Players make a circle and join hands.
- Separate 2 players and hang a hoop on their arms, then re-join their hands. Pass the hoop all round the circle while keep hands joined.
- For a larger group, use a second hoop.