



## **CAMP HO MITA KODA INITIATIVE FOR EXPLORATION, CONFIDENCE, TEAMWORK & LEADERSHIP**

### **Games & Activities that Promote the Sense of “DISCOVERY” *Ages 3-5***

#### **The questions of facilitation:**

##### *Discovery:*

- What are some new things that you tried today?
- Why is it important to try new things?
- What are some famous discoveries?

##### *Discovering Your Voice:*

- Did you have any ideas for the group?
- Did you tell the teachers when you needed something?
- Did you ask your friends to stop doing something if it bothered you?

##### *Discovering Your Passions:*

- What was the favorite activity you did today? Why did you like it?
- Why is it fun to be outside and in nature all day?
- What was your favorite game that you played?

##### *Discovering New Friendships:*

- Did you make a new friend today? What was his/her name?
- How should you act to make new friends?
- What are ways that friends treat each other?

#### **Communication strategy:**

Children should be learning to express themselves in positive ways. They should develop assertiveness in order to get their needs met in a safe way. Children should learn to ask questions to get to know their peers and teachers. Children should learn manners, taking turns, and listening to instructions.

**Initiatives:** *PLEASE note that all games/activities can be mini-initiatives for 3-6 year olds. Even the silly, simple games can be followed by great debriefs and questions that enable children to attain the senses of wonder and discovery that we are seeking.*

### **Frantic**

Frantic can be played with balls or balloons:

With balls: If you have 20 kids put 20 balls in a pile in the center of the group.

The object is for the group to keep all the balls in constant motion. Any ball stopped is a rapid nugget. Each time a ball stops the referee yells. The yell is called "berserks." The group gets 3 berserks per round. Every few seconds roll a ball into the mix. See how long the group lasts and see how many balls they have. At the end of the round count the balls and see what their time was.

Using balloons: Each person has a balloon. The group tries to keep the balloons from hitting the floor. Keep adding in a balloon and any balloon hitting the floor is a scream.

### **Nature Scavenger Hunt**

Make a list of things to have kids find. Examples can be very specific, birch tree, or examples can be words like, adventure, and kids must explain why they pick certain things to describe words chosen.

### **Silent Sit**

Have kids sit in a circle with their backs facing the inside circle and shut their eyes. Give them 30 seconds to identify how many different noises they can hear. When times up have them tell everyone what noises they heard and what they think it was. To add on to this activity you can have them sit for 30 more seconds and see if they can see what all the noises they heard were coming from.

### **Desert Island**

Designate an area with tiles, rope, chalk (maybe 1 yard square or smaller). The group has to see how many people they can fit on the island.

### **Sharks & Minnows**

Start the game with everyone being shark; the person with a ball is the minnow. The minnow throws the ball and whoever is hit becomes a minnow. As the minnows grow in number, the person with the ball cannot run or take any steps with the ball. Everyone must stay in the boundaries of the ocean. If you step out of bounds as a shark, you will become a minnow.

### **Clean up the yard**

Sock it to the other team! This game is for 4 or more players and should be played in an open area. To play, you need lots of balled up socks. You'll also need a way to divide the playing field in half. Divide into two teams, A and B. One side of the playing field is Team A's backyard; the other side is Team B's backyard. Players all get down on their hands and knees. On the word "go," they have one minute to throw as many socks as they can into the other team's yard. The team with the fewest socks in their backyard after one minute is the winner.

### **Match Box**

Each child/pair gets a small container. The teams must then try and place as many different things in their container as possible in a set amount of time. Once time is up each team will show what they have in their container.

### **Last Detail**

Pick 5 people to leave the group. They are to make 5 changes in their appearance... the smaller, the better. Once they make their changes they return to the group. The group has to figure out what the changes are.

### **Balloon Up**

Campers and counselors form a circle and hold hands. One facilitator throws a balloon into the circle. The group tries to keep the balloon from touching the ground without letting each others' hands go for as long as possible. Facilitator can set time or kick goals with the group, or add more balloons. Remember: Do not let go or let the balloon touch the ground. If you do, the whole group starts over!

### **Monkey See, Monkey Do**

Time to monkey around! This is a game for 3 or more players. But the more players you have, the more fun it is to play! To play, one player is the guesser, one the monkey and the rest follow the monkey. Decide which player will be the guesser. That player leaves the room. While the guesser is out of the room, the rest of the players then decide who will be the monkey. The other players have to do whatever the monkey does. If she scratches her head, the rest of the players have to scratch their heads. The guesser tries to figure out who is the monkey. The monkey should try not to get caught changing the action. If the monkey gets caught, then she becomes the next guesser.

### **What time is it, Mrs. Fox?**

Can you outfox the fox? This game is for 3 or more players and should be played in an open area. The object of the game is to walk past Mrs. (or Mr.) Fox without getting caught. To play, pick someone to be the Fox. Everyone else should line up on the starting line. The Fox will stand about 20 feet away with her back turned. The rest of the players say, "What time is it Mrs. (or Mr.) Fox?" If Mrs. (or Mr.) Fox answers a time like, "It's five o'clock" players take five steps forward. If she answers, "It's one o'clock" players take one step forward, and so on. The players can take any size step they want. If Mrs. Fox says, "It's time to hug you!" she turns around and chases the other players back to the starting line. If Mrs. Fox catches someone, he becomes the next Fox.

### **Frog Hop Relay**

This game is for 6 or more players, and should be played in an open area. To play, form two even teams. The first players from each team get into frog position, squatting with their hands on the ground. While making frog sounds, they then have to "frog hop" to the end of the playing field and back. Then, the next person on each team goes. The first team to finish wins.

### **Copycat**

Campers are given a spot to stay in, and the leader emphasizes everyone having personal space, and being aware of not touching others during the activity. Then the leader starts doing different movements, starting with stationary ones (ex: stomping feet, clapping, swinging arms). Once campers have the idea of being aware of their space, the leader starts to do more movement- oriented actions (ex: jumping, moving like a certain animal, etc.) Give campers the chance to be the "cat" if they want to try it.

### **Airports**

Using cones or whatever is available, mark off square sections that are designated "airports." You can use music as a start/stop signal, but if not available, just say "blast off," and "ready for landing," or something along those lines. Campers are to run around like airplanes when the music starts (or blastoff!), and when the music stops they are to move to an airport and "land" by balancing on one foot with their arms out. Each round, choose a kid to pick a type of flying object- (hawk, jet, helicopter) and the next time around everyone is to try and "fly" like that object.

### **Snowflake**

Campers pretend to be snowflakes. Instructor will say, 'snowflake, snowflake, falling down, snowflake, snowflake, \_\_\_\_\_(put in a locomotor move) around.' Students then move around performing the

indicated locomotor move. When instructor says "freeze," students freeze. Then it starts over again. Examples of moves include walk, jump, skip, hop, skate, gallop, run, tip toe, crab walk, roll, slither, walk silly, dance like a monkey, etc. the more creative the better.

### **Turtles, Dogs, and Elephants**

In groups of 4-5 (group size can vary), have one camper pretend to be a turtle on the ground. The next camper climbs over the "turtle," and gets into a position like a dog. The third camper climbs over the turtle, crawls under the dog, and stands in a position like an elephant. The fourth camper goes over the turtle, under the dog, runs around the elephant, and starts it all over again by being a turtle on the ground. So many options- give campers the choice of changing animals, making up their own stances for their animal.

### **Nature Walk Bingo**

This is a good one for the little ones (3-4). Each group has to collect certain items for their "bingo sheet". Categories could be something green, blue, white etc. Something made of wood. Something square shaped. Something furry. Get creative and just use stuff that is around the area you are using. After each team has filled there bingo sheet go and look at what each team has collected.

### **Smell**

Prepare at least five film canister sized jars with smelly stuff inside them. Use items like a fragrant plant, sunscreen, hot cocoa, orange peel, or peanut butter etc. Ask the campers to close their eyes. Walk around with the first substance, holding it under each camper's nose. During this time make sure the campers do not speak. After each scent has gone around, ask for raised hands, trying to guess which each one was. Have students wet their nose and walk around with the canisters again. This time, the campers should experience an increase in their ability to smell the objects because wet nasal passages capture the scent.

### **Peak a Who**

Split your group into two even groups. Hold a blanket in between the groups, making sure you can't see their feet. Each group nominates one person to be "the guesser" which will be right next to the blanket, when the facilitator drops the blanket "the guesser" must say the other team's "guesser's" name. Whoever says the correct name first wins and the non winner must go to other team.

## EXPLORATION

### *Ages 5-6*

#### **The questions of facilitation:**

##### *Exploration:*

- What are some new things that you tried today?
- Why is it important to try new things?
- What would the world be like without explorers?

##### *Creativity:*

- Did you have any ideas for the group?
- What did your friends think of your ideas?
- Did you feel like people listened to your ideas?

##### *Honesty:*

- What does it mean to be an honest person?
- Is it important to be an honest person?
- What can happen to people if you tell lies to them?

##### *Co-operation:*

- What does it mean to co-operate with someone?
- Why is it good to co-operate?
- What happens when people do not co-operate?

#### **Communication strategy:**

People Respecting Other People Speaking (PROPS): Use as a tool to keep people focused during circle-ups.

**Initiatives:** PLEASE note that all games/activities can be mini-initiatives for 3-6 year olds. Even the silly, simple games can be followed by great debriefs and questions that enable children to attain the senses of wonder and exploration that we are seeking.

#### **When the Wind Blows**

Camper in the center of the circle says something that (s)he likes to do. If the campers on the outside of the circle also like the same activity, then they need to get up and find a new spot in the circle. The camper left without a spot in the circle then becomes the one in the middle.

#### **History of an Item**

Have each kids look for a natural object. They must come up with a story of where the object came from and what it is used for. Kids can partner up to create teamwork with coming up with an elaborate story.

#### **Big Chief**

One person leaves the circle; this person will be the guesser. The group picks one of the remaining campers in the circle to be the Big Chief; this person will be the guide for the group. Everything the chief does the group members do. The group does not want the guesser to figure out the Big Chief is.

#### **People to People**

The group forms a large circle and everyone partners up. One person in the center of the circle calls out three commands, body part to body part. Each pair must follow each command until the caller

says "People to People!" at which point everyone shouts and runs to the center of the circle grabbing a new partner. Whoever is left without a partner is the new caller.

### **Save the Tree Tag**

Kids get a circle linking elbows with no more than 10 kids, becoming one big tree. One person stands in the middle of the circle, "the cambium." One person stands on the outside of the circle, "bark beetle," trying to tag the inside person. All of the kids linked in the circle must protect the middle person by blocking the outside person "bark beetle" out. The bark beetle cannot climb over or under anyone to reach into the middle and the middle person is not allowed to move.

### **Lion Tamer**

One person is chosen as the "Lion Tamer," and everyone else lies on the ground as sleeping lions. The objective of the lion hunter is to awaken all of the lions. This is done by getting the lions to laugh. The tamer may not touch the lions, and the lions may not bury their face or close their eyes. Once a lion is "awakened" by a tamer, than they also transform into a lion tamer.

### **Blind Walk**

Divide group into pairs with one member of each pair blindfolded. The seeing partner leads the blind partner on a walk. The walk should be challenging, including such obstacles as climbing over tables, crawling under chairs, walking up or down hills, etc.

### **Name Train**

Group forms circle. Pick two people to help. Leader strolls up to someone in the circle and introduces himself. Once you get the person's name you start cheering the person's name. After you cheer then the person hooks on to you. Putting hands around the waist. Both people chug off and introduce themselves to another person. Again the new person's name is cheered loudly. Keep adding on until everyone is in line.

### **Bean Bag Toss**

You'll need 2 different soft objects such as bean backs, stuffed animals, football etc. Group up in a circle & before you start go around the circle and have campers introduce themselves. To begin, one person tosses the bean bag to another, and as they toss they say "Here you go,\_"! The camper that caught the bean bag must say "Thank you,\_"! Campers need to cross their arms if they've already had the object. Continue until everyone has had the object. Challenge campers to repeat the same pattern. Once they have mastered it again you can add in additional objects or have one object start the pattern in reverse.

### **"Everybody's It"**

Everyone in the group is given three lives. Once you are tagged 3 times you are out and have to sit down. Everyone is against each other.

### **Hospital Tag**

Everyone in the group is given three lives. Each time a person is tagged they have a gaping wound that they must cover with a band aid. The 2 band aids are their hands. Once someone is tagged twice, then the person has to tag carefully with the elbows. By the time someone gets to this point, someone will tag them just to take them out of their misery. Once you get tagged 3 times you are out.

### **Dragon's Tail**

Divide the group into 4 equal teams. Have them make a line holding on to the person's waist in front of them. You place a cloth in the back pocket of the last person in line. This line is now a dragon. The head of the line is the dragon's head and the rear the tail. The head is chasing its tail to get the cloth. If the line breaks then stop the group and reset the line. Once the tail has been removed the dragon falls asleep. The head can move either direction, same thing for the tail. Have them try that first. Then separate the dragons and go dragon against dragon. Once a dragon's tail is pulled, the game is over.

### **Electricity**

Divide the group into two teams. Have each team's members sit one behind the other, holding hands with the person in front and behind them. The two teams are next to each other, with a ball in between the very last two people. The first person in each line will be the only person that can have their eyes open, and they will watch the coin flipper flip the quarter. When the quarter lands on HEADS, the first person in line is to squeeze the next person's hand. This will cause a chain reaction and each person should squeeze the next person's hand after they feel their first hand being squeezed. The last person in line will then retrieve the ball is the winner for that round. After a winner is declared, the person from the end will go to the beginning.

The idea is to be the first team to have the person who started at the front, return to the front.

### **Barn Yard**

Give each person an animal sound to make. Don't let other people hear what you are giving them. The group spreads out, closes their eyes and starts making the sounds loudly. They must find other members of their group before they can open up their eyes. This is also a nice way to break up the group into smaller groups.

### **Switch, Change, & Rotate**

Break group up into lines of 5. Each group should be facing you for directions.... Say the word "Change!" and the group turns 180 degrees. Say change, they should be facing away from you. Say change again and the group should be facing you. Say the word "Switch!" and the first person in line or the line leader peels off and goes to the end of the line. Try switch, switch, and see what happens. If you say the word "Rotate!" the front player moves to the back, and the last person moves to the front, making a new line leader. Rotate, rotate, and see what happens. The last command is "Move!" The line leader and the group slowly walk forward. When you say the word "Freeze!" the group stops.

### **Alphabet Soup**

Take 26 paper plates and write a letter of the alphabet on each one. Make a circle and randomly place the letters face up. The groups challenge is to assign each person a letter(s). Only one person can be in the circle at a time. It also cannot be the same person doing all the work. The challenge is to go A-Z as quickly and the most efficient way. Each person must go in order and not break the plain of the circle. If you get more than one person in the circle at a time, the group must start over. This is a race against time.

### **Oh Captain, My Captain**

Group faces caller and follows commands with actions— Port! (lean left), Starboard! (lean right), Captain's Coming! (salute!), Jellyfish! (ouch, ouch!), Man Overboard (throw a line!), Crow's Nest (scramble up), Galley (eat, eat, eat), Too much grog / sea sick (throw up), land ho (hand to your eyes looking around), walk the plank (out of your boat / pretend you're under water)

### **Huckle Buckle Beanstalk**

Pick a smallish object. Hide it in plain sight, where nothing has to be moved to find it. The kids look for it, and when they find it, instead of picking it up or pointing to it, they sit down off to the side and say, "Huckle Buckle Beanstalk!" By leaving it there, everyone gets a chance to find it. If they need help, you can play the hotter/colder game. The first one to find it gets to hide it the next time.

### **Who is it?**

Have all the kids stand up. You secretly think of one of the children. The kids then ask any Yes or No questions, for instance, "Is it a boy?" If the answer is "No," all in that category (for instance, all boys) sit down. All the kids can ask questions, even if they're sitting down. Go until the kids have figured out who you have secretly picked.

### **Pigs Fly**

The children should stand in a group facing the leader. Each child should have enough room to make full "flapping" movements with their arms. The leader calls out "Ducks Fly," "Owls Fly," "Pigs Fly," and so on. If the animal that is called out really does fly, the children should continue flapping their "wings". If the animal is the type that does not fly, then the children should stop flapping.

### **Stonehenge**

As a group, create the most elaborate structure that you can in five to ten minutes using only stones and rocks. You may give the structure a name, take photos of it etc. You may leave the structure up for a day or have some fun breaking it down before moving on.

### **Bat and Moth**

While talking to your campers about nocturnal animals, ask them if they know how bats find their food during the night. Explain the theory of echolocation. Bats send out a screech and it bounces off their prey, and the amount of time it takes to come determines its location. This is an adaptation bats have to better enable them to survive.

Activity: Have the campers circle up. Get two volunteers; one is the bat and the other a moth. Blindfold the bat. Everyone in the circle is the bat's habitat (trees). If the bat bumps into the trees the trees say "Tree!" The bat claps and the moth must clap back. The bat is trying to tag the moth. Try to let everyone in the group have a chance as one or another.

### **Deer Ears**

Think of a good story. Have your campers face you. Explain that you are going to tell them a story while walking away from them. And as soon as they cannot understand what you are saying, they must raise their hand. Mark the spot of where you are, when everyone has raised their hand. Go back and have them close their eyes and cup their ears and tell the story again while walking away from them. The spot should be further from the group than the first spot.

### **Camouflage**

One camper stands in place, shuts his eyes and counts to thirty while the rest of the group hides. When the camper opens his eyes they have to scan the area and try to find the rest of the group without moving. They can pivot on one foot. Those who are hiding must be able to see the person who is "it" from their hiding spot. Once the spotter has found all he can find he closes his eyes again and counts to ten. Those still hiding must find a new hiding spot that is closer to the one who is it. This continues until everyone has been found. The last one to be found is the new "it."



## **CONFIDENCE**

### *Ages 7-9*

#### **The questions of facilitation:**

##### *Self-confidence:*

- Do you feel more confident in your own abilities? How?
- What can you do now that you couldn't do before?
- Did you learn something about yourself? About one of your friends?
- Can this new confidence help you at home? At school?
- How does your confidence help other people?

##### *Self-awareness:*

- What new insights into yourself have you seen?
- Were you provided feedback? If so, how did you use it?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- What areas in your character would you like to work on?
- When were you most happy with yourself? Why?

##### *Consideration of others:*

- How have you helped other people?
- Have you gone out of your way to help yourself or the group?
- How considerate and kind do you think you are?
- Are there times when you think you could be nicer to others?
- How does it feel when people aren't nice to you?

##### *Responsibility:*

- What does it mean to be a responsible person?
- Is it more important to be responsible to yourself or to others?
- What are some ways that people in your family are responsible to each other?
- Is it ever okay to not be responsible?
- What are some ways that you could be more responsible at home? At school?

#### **Communication strategy:**

Complaint, Need, Request (CNR): A great way to facilitate children assessing their concerns in an assertive manner. What is your complaint? What is your need that is not being filled? What is your request?

#### **Initiatives:**

##### **Wind in the Willows**

Campers and staff form a tight circle around a person in the middle. The circle stands in spotting position with their hands out in front of them. The staff or camper in the center states, "One way that I could feel supported this week at camp is if you..." (S)he then closes his eyes and sways like a willow in the wind while the rest of the group supports him and prevents him from falling.

##### **Big Knots**

Have everyone evenly spaced holding a throw rope. The goal is to tie a knot in the rope without letting go of the rope. Groups can start with simply overhand knots and work up to something really tricky like a figure 8.

##### **Loop-de-loop**

Have the campers stand in a circle and hold hands. Start one hula hoop hanging over one pair of joined hands. Each person in the circle must pass the hoop over him/herself and on to the next person WITHOUT letting go of hands. It is possible to do this with 2 or 3 loop/hoops going at the same time in different directions.

### **Minefield**

Draw boundaries with objects in the ground. One person is blind-folded and his partner is not. The seeing partner must verbally guide his blindfolded companion through the obstacles.

### **Group Juggle**

Group stands in a large circle and passes a ball (or more) around the circle in a specific order. The goal is to time the activity and see how fast the group can do it. See if the group can reverse the order.

This can also be turned into a name game for the beginning of the week.

### **M&M Feedback Game**

Have each color of M&M represent a different type of feedback. For example, blue is positive to the right, red is positive to yourself, orange is constructive and positive to everyone, etc. Give everyone 4-5 M&Ms and go to town!

### **Drippy Cup**

At some source of water (river, lake, faucet) you need to place a bucket or water barrel a certain distance from water (closer=easier; further=harder). The group will also have a container with multiple holes in it that leaks water (a drippy cup). The group must fill the bucket from the water source using the drippy cup. Team members cannot make back to back trips. Multiple team members can go at a time.

### **Maze**

Use duct tape, jump ropes, anything you can think of to set up a grid on the ground. It can be any size you want- I've done it with 5 spaces horizontal, five vertical, each space big enough for a person to fit both feet inside it. Everybody lines up, and there is no talking. The instructor has a specific way that campers must get through the maze, but only gives the starting spot away. From there, the first person decides where to step next, choosing from any adjacent square. If it is correct, the instructor says nothing, and the camper chooses again. If the camper chooses incorrectly, the instructor says "Nope," or whatever they want to say, and the camper must retrace his/her steps to exit the maze. Then, the next person in line gets a turn. The goal is to get through the maze in as little time as possible. Everybody must try to pay attention so they can choose by process of elimination, being careful not to choose the same wrong square twice!

### **Have you ever?**

The group gets in a circle. One person will be in the middle asking the question "Have you ever... then followed by something they have done in their life. Anyone in the group that has done the event must go across the circle to get a new spot. The last person left in the middle is the next caller. The topics must be appropriate, and something that person has done. Game continues until everyone has gotten a chance to be the caller.

### **Ancient Numbers:**

Tell the group that you have studied ancient numbers. Make a big show about arranging the sticks on the ground. Then ask the group what number is represented. Rearrange the sticks to represent a new number. The trick is to rest your hands on the ground next to the sticks with your finger showing what number it is. For example, if you want them to guess three, after arranging the sticks, rest your hands on the ground with 3 fingers out and the rest tucked into your fist. Kids and adults will go crazy trying to figure out how the pile of sticks they see represents the number 3 and they will want to try it on others once they learn the trick.

### **Ghost**

Three or four players are chosen to be the ghosts. The rest of the group needs to scatter across the playing space and choose a spot to stand in. All players need to close their eyes. The ghosts will roam about the playing space. They will try to eliminate the others by standing close behind the players for 10 seconds without them knowing. If this happens, the ghost will tap them on their head and they will sit down quietly. If a person suspects a person behind them, they would ask, "Is there a ghost behind me?" If they are right, then they become a ghost. If they are wrong, they are out and should sit down.

### **Interpretive Story**

Sit in a well-spread-out circle. Give one participant a piece of paper and a box of thin markers or colored pencils, and have them write a sentence of no more than 10 words at the top of the paper. No one else may know what this sentence is. Pass the paper and markers to the next participant, and have them draw a picture in the space below the sentence according to the sentence. Fold the paper back so that the sentence cannot be seen but the picture can. Pass the paper to the next participant and have them write a sentence of no more than 10 words to describe the picture. Fold the paper so that the picture can no longer be seen, and so on until the paper reaches the creator of the original sentence. Share the progression of the story. You may need more than one piece of paper. You can have more than one story going around at a time or split up the groups to keep everyone busy.

### **Corporate Maze**

Using carpet squares make a grid at least four by four. Draw out for yourself an order in which the campers must step on the squares (depending on the difficulty you can have them only go sideways and forwards or add diagonals and backwards). Have the campers gather on one side, and tell them that they must get across the maze by stepping on the next right square in sequence. Tell them where the beginning and ending sides are but nothing else. If they step on a wrong square make a buzzer sound and send them to the back of the line and let the next person in line try. This is a great activity to do silently. Eventually they will get the order and everyone must get through.

### **Count as a Group**

As a group you need to count up to the total number in your group or to a random number you choose, in random sequence, everyone saying one number once. If anyone says a number at the same time you have to start over. If you master this try the whole alphabet. This is a fun one to do while you are waiting for a few kids here and there.

### **Helium Tent Pole**

Have the group stand facing each other. If you are using a tent pole have them stand in two lines, if you are using a hula-hoop stand in a circle facing in. Have them put out both hands with their index fingers out as if they were pointing at one another and then have them zipper their fingers. When they are ready, place a tent pole or hula hoop across everyone's fingers. Without grabbing (keep a straight finger, not a bent one) they must get the pole to the ground as a group. Usually one end of the pole, or the whole pole will rise up.

### **Yurt Circle**

Create one circle of rope (with a reliable knot). Each person in the group should hold one piece of the rope and pull tight/lean backwards. The group can try and sit down together, then stand up together. Add blindfolds or put half the group on the inside of the circle to increase difficulty. Or recap on the week while leaning back.

### **Never-ending Knots**

Tie a series of knots on a length of rope making sure there is one knot for every camper in the group. Each camper should put one hand on a length of rope between two knots. (Each length of rope between knots should have only one camper's hand on it.) The group's task is to completely untangle the rope, until no knots remain. Once each camper places a hand on the rope it is automatically glued to the rope; they

cannot open their hand wide enough for the knots to slip through but they can let the straight rope slide through their hands.

### **Circle? Square? Tetragon?**

Give the group one circle of rope. The group's task is to create each shape that you give them; anything from a circle to a triangle, square, pentagon etc. as difficult as you want it. To make it more difficult, blindfold the group.

### **Don't Spill the Tea**

All of the campers sit in a circle with a bucket of water in the middle. Using their feet, they lift the bucket and then lower it back to the ground. They can also try taking one foot off the bucket or have a couple of campers take their shoes off.

### **Jedi**

Have the campers stand in a circle with one volunteer in the center. Explain that when some senses are taken away, others work overtime and compensate. You can use the example of Luke Skywalker training with Obi Wan Kenobi with the blast shield and light saber. If you don't know it, a kid will. Explain that the person in the center will be blindfolded with a bopper (finger) and an object that they are standing over. They must sense when a person from the outer circle comes to steal the object and point directly at them with their finger. The group must be silent while this is being done. Choose one person from the circle to go and grab the object. Also, set a limit on the number of points the "Jedi" gets.

### **Electricity**

Split your group up into two groups, and line them up single file facing each other. Campers can be sitting or standing and they will need to be holding hands. The facilitator is at one end of the lines and the "prize" (stuffed pig, shoe, water bottle) is at the other. Everyone's eyes are closed except for the person closest to the facilitator. When the facilitator's thumbs are up, the camper with their eyes open squeeze's their neighbor's hand and the "electricity" goes down the line. When the last person on the team feels a squeeze they grab the prize. If the facilitator's thumbs were down and your team squeezed hands, that team did not win. For every time a team wins they scoot down a spot and move the last person to the front. The goal is to get campers to the same spot they started at.

### **A What?**

The facilitator starts by passing the first object to the person on their right (Person A) and saying, "This is a Purple Dragon."

Person A replies, "A What?"

The leader would then clarify, "A Purple Dragoon."

Person A then turns to the person on their right (Person B) and says, "This is Purple Dragon"

Person B, "A what?"

Person A, turns to Leader, and asks, "This is a What?"

Leader to Person A, "A Purple Dragon!"

Person A to Person B, "A Purple Dragon!"

And so on...This game can be confused by adding an additional object called a Pink Hippo in the opposite direction. Eventually, people are receiving and passing two words at time.

### **Ultimate Paper Rocks Scissors**

Tell your group to find a partner and play paper rock scissors. Whoever the winner is the conductor of a train and the non winner put their hands on the winner's back (creating a train) and shouting the winner's name. The train goes around finding more trains to play paper, rock, scissors with and the non winner's join the train and the shouting. At the end there should be two long trains with lots of shouting.

## **TEAMWORK** *Ages 10-12*

### **The questions of facilitation:**

#### *Teamwork:*

- What are some example of you contributing to the team?
- Did you ever feel that you picked the team up when they were feeling down?
- Did you ever feel like you brought the team down?
- What is something you can do if you ever feel yourself bringing a team down?
- What makes a good team? Was your team like this? Why?

#### *Decision Making:*

- How were the decisions made in your group?
- How did you contribute to this process?
- How did you feel when you made decisions?
- How did you feel when others made decisions for you?
- How were the decisions made for your group? Could that process have been improved?

#### *Tolerance of Others:*

- How have you handled situations where you have been better than someone else at something? Worse than other people at something?
- Why is it important to be tolerant of others?
- Have you ever lost your temper with someone? What was the end result of that? What did you learn from that experience?
- How tolerant do you think you are? Could you be more tolerant?
- What are specific ways you could be more tolerant at home? At school?

### **Communication strategy:**

What's up? Own up! Moccasins? Plan! (WOMP): A great conflict resolution tool between two people. What's up? What do you take ownership for? How would you feel if you were in that person's shoes? What's your plan for success?

### **Initiatives:**

#### **Win/Win**

Line campers up in arm wrestling position against another camper. Instructor says, "The goal of this game is to win as many times as you can. Make sure to keep track because every time you win, you get an M&M." Campers that work together simply continue to win back and forth back and forth back and forth.

#### **Stick Strength**

Give a kid a stick and ask them each to break it. Now, take the same number of sticks bundled together and give the kids an opportunity to break the bundle together. Pass around the bundle to the group and give everyone a chance. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

### **Tarp Turnover**

Have all of the campers stand on one side of the tarp. The challenge for them is to flip the tarp over beneath them without anyone stepping off. This can be framed 1000 different ways, so be creative!

### **Magic Hat**

All students must get from one side to the other, but you must have the magic hat on in order to touch the ground. Once you've worn the hat in one direction, you cannot wear it back again.

### **Ask for Help Maze**

Put all members of group blind-folded in a large triangle or other shape that you formed with old rope. Tell them, "There is a way out of the maze. If you need help, please raise your hand." Everyone who raises their hands gets pulled out of the maze by a staff member (under the rope) and gets to watch the others potentially struggle by refusing to ask for help.

### **Human Knot**

In a tight circle, have everyone put their right hand in the circle, thumbs up. Now everyone reach in the circle and grab someone else's right thumb with your left hand. Untangle the mess!

### **Goal Jumping**

Explain to the group that the goal is to see how far they can jump collectively. Have one person jump at a time, each person taking off from where the other person landed, so that they are collectively gaining progress down a road. Once everyone has jumped, send everyone back to the initial starting line to do it again, but this time put a bag of goodies or some group incentive about 5 feet beyond where the last person landed. Now that they have a goal to jump for, they will dominate.

### **Line-ups**

Get creative with challenging your group. Put them on a log, can't talk, blindfold, whatever... and make them line up in some kind of order... birthdays, height, whatever...

### **Xerox Game**

The goal of this game is to get your campers communicating specifically. Sit back to back as one student describes a picture in front of him while the other student must attempt to redraw the picture from the descriptions.

### **Yurt Circle**

Create one circle of rope with a reliable knot. Each person in the group should hold one piece of the rope and pull tight/lean backwards. The group can try and sit down together, then stand up together. Add blindfolds or put half the group on the inside of the circle to increase difficulty. Or recap on the week while leaning back.

### **Raging River**

The group must cross the River of Despair and they can only stand on the magical lily pad bandanas. The only problem is that if there is a lily pad in the river somewhere without a camper's foot to hold it down, it will get washed away.

### **Silent Circles**

Get everyone in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Next, have everyone take 3 big steps back, so now you are all in a well-spaced out circle. From this point, no one can talk. The goal is to get everyone back

into the small circle by taking three big steps back in, BUT no one can take more than one step at a time, and no two people standing next to each other can take consecutive steps.

### **Builder, Middle Man, Constructor**

In groups of three, have one camper build something from natural materials. The middle man must describe what he is building so that the constructor can try and build the same thing without looking at the original structure.

### **Blind Shapes**

Group is blindfolded with a long rope in their hands. The goal is to make simple shapes of your choice without being able to see.

### **Fingertip Hula Hoop**

In groups of 4, have all campers put the tips of two fingers from each hand under the hula hoop. The object is for the group to be able to lower the hoop to the ground without anyone's fingertips coming off. Their fingertips must be in contact with the hoop at all times. To make this even more challenging, you can have the students try it without allowing any talking.

### **Group Juggle**

Get a number of tennis balls or other soft balls. Group makes 1 pattern. Group must remember who they throw the ball to and who they get the ball from. Once a pattern is established and practiced then the fun starts. Start the pattern and keep adding in balls. Remind the group that any balls dropped or over thrown must be left. At the end of a minute the group counts the balls. All balls must be thrown underhand and group must say person's name before they throw a ball to that person.

### **Yurt Circle**

Group gets in a circle and counts off by 2s. Have the group join hands. 1s lean in and 2s lean out. If the group does this right the group should start to support itself. The group will realize that they can trust each other.

### **Everybody's Up**

Start with partners sitting back to back. Sit down and stand back up. Start out with 2, then 4, then 8, etc. until you have the whole group sitting back to back trying to go from sitting to a standing position.

### **Where's My Ducky?**

The counselor stands ~100 feet away from the campers. Make a line for the group to stand behind. Place an item (like the stuffed animal from the box of tricks) at your feet. The goal is for the group to get the item back across the line. When you say "Green Light," you turn your back to the group and they can run towards you and the object. When you say "Red Light" the campers must stop running otherwise they go back to the starting line. If you notice that the object is gone you get one guess as to who has the object. If you guess right the object is returned and that person goes back to the starting line. If you guess incorrect, the game continues. When your back is turned the campers can pass/throw the object to another person and try and get it back to the line. The object must be carried across the line though.

### **Tarp Volleyball**

The group is playing volleyball using tarps (one per team). They must work together to catch and throw the ball over the net. Everyone must be holding onto the tarp with both hands at all times or else it doesn't count. Score it like regular volleyball. Also, you could do this as one big group where the goal is to get the ball as high as possible in the air and then designate a target (using a hoola hoop or rope) for them to hit that is a distance away.

### **Traffic Jam**

Materials: Carpet squares (1 more than people in the group) or chalk/tape to mark a place for people to stand. Set the carpet squares either in a V-shape or straight line (straight line is harder and less people get involved). Have the group stand on the carpet squares leaving exactly the middle one open. The 2 groups are facing each other. The groups are attempting to switch the group positions while staying in the same order. Group A ends where group B started and group B ends where group A started. Students are only allowed to move forward into an open space or move around a person into an open space. Students are not allowed to move backwards, around someone facing the same direction, or move two students at a time. If they get stuck, shout traffic jam and they must start over.

Considerations: When the students make a mistake and have to start over, have the person in front of the traffic jam move to the rear. This will involve more campers in the decision-making process. This can be a very difficult initiative- be prepared to spend a lot of time or maybe experience failure with the group.

### **See No Evil**

Have the kids get into groups of three. One can only see, one can only hear, and one can only talk. Use blindfolds where appropriate. Two of the kids will stay behind a line directing the camper who can only hear, to an object a certain distance away. One of the two campers who are behind can talk but is not facing (cannot see) the object, the other is facing the object and can see it but cannot talk. Give the campers a few moments to come up with a system of direction. The first group to get the object in hand wins. You can also add elements of difficulty by making them hit the other team's blindfolded member with the object or by not letting them use English. Make sure you play this on even flat ground.

### **Alphabet Actors**

Divide players into groups of three or four. The leader then calls out a letter, and the groups must then form that letter using their bodies. The groups can decide if they want to build the letters standing or laying. You can have the different groups spell out words as well.

### **Circle? Square? Tetragon?**

Give the group one circle of rope. The group's task is to create each shape that you give them; anything from a circle to a triangle, square, pentagon etc. as difficult as you want it. To make it more difficult, blindfold the group.

### **How's that again?**

Divide the group into three teams, and line them up into three parallel lines. The object of the game is for the team on one side to try to get a message to the team on the other side by shouting out the message, while the third team, in the middle, tries to drown out the message by making distracting noises. Teams can be given a few minutes to devise strategies, and to make up messages, each time the game is played teams can switch places.

### **Magic Carpet**

All campers stand on the Magic Carpet (tarp). Their goal is to turn the magic carpet over without touching the ground surrounding the "carpet". All students must be in contact with the carpet at all times.



## **LEADERSHIP** **Ages 13-16**

### **The questions of facilitation:**

#### *Leadership:*

- Why are leaders necessary?
- Were you ever in a leadership position? How did it feel?
- How does it feel when your ideas are listened to and acted upon? What about when your ideas are ignored?
- How does it feel when other people take the lead in a group situation?
- What do you do when you have ideas in a group? How do you respond when other group members put forward ideas?

#### *Communication:*

- How would you describe good communication? Is communication important?
- What happens when people don't communicate well?
- What role does listening play in communication?
- How do we use the other parts of our body to communicate?
- Why is good communication needed in your life at home? At school?

#### *Trust:*

- Is trust between people important? Why?
- How do people lose the trust of others?
- How can you help people trust you more?
- Have you ever betrayed another person's trust?
- Is it hard to trust other people?

#### *Reaction to Challenge:*

- What happens when people are not challenged?
- Is challenge the same for everyone?
- What has been your biggest challenge?
- What do you do when you find yourself complaining about things?
- Have you met your challenged recently in this program? At home? At school?

### **Communication strategy:**

Goal, Plan, Action: A great tool to keep older campers on task. Set a goal, set a very specific plan to reach that goal, and then take action.

### **Initiatives:**

#### **Positive Influence Leader, Negative Influence Leader (PIL,NIL)**

Have a camper stand on a large rock, stump, bucket, etc. It is a lot more difficult to pull someone down off the bucket than it is to pull someone up on the bucket. Similarly, it is a lot easier for negativity to spread in a group than it is for a positive leader to help others feel better. However, once you have several people up off the ground (or a positive group), it gets a lot harder for the person on the ground to continue bringing people down.

### **Perspectives**

Draw WOW in the sand and have groups of campers on each of the 4 sides of the drawing. Have everyone in the group decide what they see from their angle. Some will say WOW, some MOM, some 303, and others EOE. Are they wrong? No, but they are just seeing the same thing from different perspectives.

### **Monster**

Group must cross a given area with only a certain number of hands and feet on the ground. Also, they should all be connected. For example, for a group of 10, it would generally be great to start with 6 feet and 6 hands on the ground to start, and if they accomplish that easily, do it again... but make it harder.

### **Build & Destroy**

Break the group up into three teams and have each team build a nice sandcastle, nature structure, whatever. You can really get them hyped if you tell them it's a competition to build the sweetest castle. You can even have them present their castles to the group for judging. Then, have each group stand in front of another group's project and tell them that the next race is to see how fast they can destroy their opponent's sand castle. Lesson is that it takes a long time to build up something great but it can be quickly destroyed.

### **Lava Island**

To set the game up, make a circle on a flat or partially sloped area using rocks, sticks, or whatever is available; the circle should be large enough to comfortably fit the participants in and allow them working room. Everyone should have a small object (a water bottle works well). Next, instruct all participants to lie fully stretched out on their backs around the outside of the circle, with their feet touching the perimeter of the circle. Make sure the participants are evenly spaced. Now everyone places their object (water bottle) on the ground at the top of their head. Then the participants get up and get inside of the circle.

Explain that they are now surrounded by a pool of lava and the only safe spot is the "island" they are now standing on, which is marked by the ring you created with rocks, sticks, etc. The goal is to retrieve all of the water bottles outside of the circle without touching the lava and without using anything other than themselves (no hats, gloves, bandanas, etc.)

### **Blind trust walk**

Blindfold group except for a helper. Put the group in a line and lead the group to their next destination. You can also have the group break up into partners and one lead the other around.

### **White Out**

#### **Supplies:**

- 1 set of blindfolds; should have enough blindfolds for each camper
- A set of long ropes over 100 ft long

#### **Preparation:**

- Counselors must set up a white out course previous to the arrival of the campers. A white out course is one continuous rope or set of ropes that go around/over/under trees, tables, posts, etc. (any obstacles that are there). It is imperative that the campers do not see the course before they go through it.

**Activity:** White Out is meant to be a team building and trust building activity. While out of sight of the course, set the scene for the campers by explaining they were in some situation where all of a sudden a white out occurred. They have no radio no phones and cannot see. The only thing they have to rely on is each other. The better the story and the more you get into it, the more the kids will too. Either before or after telling the story each camper is blindfolded and placed into a line with a hand on the shoulder of the person in front of them, similar to that of a trust walk. When the story is finished and everyone is

blindfolded, the line is led to the beginning of the course and the first person's hand is placed on the rope. You tell them that this rope is their only life line to get out of the white out. From that point, it is up to the campers as to what happens. You can institute rules like no talking to increase the difficulty. Once they reach the end the campers can then take off their blindfolds.

**Boundaries/Safety:** Make sure that at difficult spots there are counselors there to spot the campers. Also make sure to watch out for breaks in the line and if people get lost. And check the course over to make sure that there are no dangerous aspects of it; ie: if they are crawling under something and there is glass.

### **Oh Deer!**

Introduce this activity by discussing animals' requirements for survival. All animals need food, water, and shelter. Next, line students up on opposite sides of a playing field facing one another. Half the students should be in each line, and lines should be 20 to 30 feet apart. Explain that one line of students will represent the deer, and the other line will represent the food, water, and shelter. Resources will be represented by hand placements—food will be represented by hands placed over the stomach, water will be represented by hands placed over the mouth, and shelter will be represented by hands placed tent-like over the head. Have students practice each of these motions. Ask lines to turn around and face away from one another. Students in the resource line will decide which of the 3 resources they want to be and make the appropriate hand sign. Students in the deer line will decide which of the 3 resources they will need to get this round and make the appropriate hand sign. On the signal, students will turn around and face one another again, maintaining their hand signs. Deer will then walk to the resource line and choose a person displaying the same resource they are displaying. "Caught" resources are taken back to the deer line, representing deer survival and reproduction. Deer who don't find a matching resource die, decompose, and become a resource for the next round.

Play at least 5 or 6 rounds of the game. After each round, graph the number of deer in the population on a line graph. Introduce droughts (no water resources), forest fire (no shelter), water pollution (all the deer who chose water die and become a resource), etc. When the activity is done, sit down with the students and talk about the graph and the fluctuation in the deer population. Talk about how a forest habitat provides resources for the deer. Discuss what happens when there are too many deer. Introduce the concept of carrying capacity. Could this game work if we substituted humans for the deer? Show the students that humans too need food, water, and shelter and are subject to carrying capacity.

### **Frozen T-shirts**

A few days before this project dip a few large T-shirts into water and fold it up while they are sopping wet and put them into large zip lock bags. Freeze the bags for a day or two. Divide the campers into groups of 5 to 6. Give each group a frozen zip lock bag. The teams need to work together to get the shirt out of the bag and thawed out enough for one of the team members to put the t-shirt on. There are several ways to get them thawed out, but we let our campers figure it out for themselves.

### **Tent put up**

Give each team member a disability. No eyes, ears, arms, legs etc. Have the team put a tent up. This can be made easier or harder depending on the type of tent and peoples abilities. Be creative with the abilities given for example the person who can see has no arms or legs. The person who has full mobility can use all their other limbs. This could also be done with a partially disassembled bike.

### **Shrinking Island**

Take a tarp and lay it out. Get the whole team stood on the tarp. Have the team fold the tarp in half without stepping off the tarp. Have them fold it again and again until it is as small as possible.

### **Sheep and Shepherd**

One person is the shepherd; the shepherd can only communicate with a whistle and cannot move from a designated place. The rest of the group are sheep and are blindfolded. Once the sheep are blindfolded they must be silent and will be led to various places in the playing area. Once all the sheep are in place the

instructor will place a “holding pen” on the ground using a rope or cones. The shepherd must then direct the sheep into the holding pen using only the whistle blows. The key to success is good planning so a designated planning time should be given to the team where they can openly communicate and try ideas.

### **Global Positioning System**

The team has to get from a start point to a finish point. The team has a designated time to plan a route. Once their planning time is up the whole team is blindfolded and must get from the start to the finish. Good planning is the key to success.

### **Strip the Willow**

Nine tiles are placed on the floor (can be 5 or 7 to make it easier (younger groups) or 11 to make it harder). Team members stand on the tiles in this order 1 2 3 4 X 5 6 7 8. Each number is a person on a tile and the X is a blank tile. Team members can make 2 types of moves: one step forward onto a blank tile OR step around one person onto a blank tile (all moves must be forward). The goal is for the team to end up in the following order 5 6 7 8 X 1 2 3 4 using only the moves stated above.

### **Raft Build**

Each team gets a certain amount of material. Bamboo 20-30 sticks, tape, rope and a tarp as a minimum. The team must construct a “raft” out of their materials that can transport one person from point A to B and back. Raft designs are normally cup shaped and are pretty unstable but people have been known to go a long distance (200m) using well constructed rafts.

### **Map Maker**

In a group have the team make a map of an area (a classroom, playing field, glade etc). This can be done on a whiteboard getting each person to contribute something that they see around them. Maybe a building, picnic bench, grass area, flag pole (whatever is around). Then use the map to do some orienteering. In pairs, they place an item somewhere and then show their partner where it is on the map. Their partner will then go and find the item, bring it back, and then repeat the process.

### **Climb Up**

Bean bags, bandanas or climbing protection are placed on some climbs. There should be the same number of items on the cliff as people. Then the group must retrieve all the items in a set time. However, group members will have various constraints. An example for a group of 10 would be: 5 regular climbers 2 blindfolded climbers, 1 one-handed climber, 1 climber who has to climb with something in their hands, and 1 one-legged climber. The climbers can have one wild card which can be redeemed for one regular climbing group member, but that will give them 5 minutes less time.

### **Sinking Ship**

To do this you need a minimum of 3 canoes on the water. A canoe is sinking and the team must rescue its occupants and the boat. They cannot tow the rescued boat as it will sink! They must take the rescued boat and people to the shore. This can only be done on calm days or when well upwind from your desired finish beach.

### **Everybody Up**

Have everyone pair up. Each pair sits on the group facing each other, toes opposed, knees bent and hands tightly clasped. Ask them to stand up from that position. As each group of 2 masters this, have them try groups of 3, 4 and more until all campers are involved as one group attempting to stand. As an alternative, have them sit back to back and attempt to stand.

This is a great warm up for larger challenges and to start the trust process.

### **A Slice of Life**

Take some time to learn about trees as a group. What do they need to live? What are the leaves for? What is the bark for? How do they grow? What can we learn from a slice (cross-section) of a tree? Tree rings

represent the age of a tree. If the ring is thick that meant the tree grew a lot that year; if it is thin then it was a bad year for the tree and it didn't grow a lot.

On a paper plate, make your own tree slice to represent your own life. Be sure to include important events and years in which you feel like you grew a lot. Have the campers use the thickness to show when there was a good year and when was a tough year. Share at least some of your tree with the group.

## Silly Camp Games

### **Slap Around**

Have everyone set their hands on the table in front of them, or on their knees if they are sitting. Start a slap going around the circle. The slapping changes direction at any time if someone double slaps. If you flinch, or slap when you shouldn't have, that hand is out.

### **Catch the Finger (different from Pull my Finger)**

With everyone in a circle, have everyone hold out their left palm in front of the person on the left. Next, put your fore finger down into the palm in front of you. On the count of 3, you have to try to catch the person's finger to the left, while not letting your finger get caught by the person on the right.

### **Giants, Elves, & Wizards**

Divide group into 2 teams. The sequence is giants/elves/wizards. The giant: is everyone stands up on their toes, and in a giant voice say "Giants!!!" The Elves: is everyone squats down and makes themselves very small. In a very small and quiet voice they say: "Elves" the Wizard: is everyone stands up and waves their hands out in front of them like they are casting a spell on someone. The sequence is Giants/Elves/Wizards. Each team picks 2 signs. The 2 teams come up to the line and they go thru the sequences of Giants/Elves/wizards. After they do the initial 3 signs the team then throws their first sign at the opposing team. If my team throws giants and the other team throws elves. Then my team chases the other team and tries to tag them before they get across their safe line. The deciding factor is which sign beats the other. In case of a tie the 2 teams just reach across the line and shake hands. The groups go back thru the sequence and throw their 2<sup>nd</sup> sign. Once a team is chased both teams must go back to their side and pick 2 more signs to use.

### **Green Glass Door**

Tell the kids that you have a Green Glass Door and that certain things can be behind it and certain things cannot. For instance, books are behind the green glass door, but magazines are not. Trees are, but a forest is not. Kittens are, but cats are not. The trick is that only things with a double letter in the word are allowed behind the green glass door.

### **Bob the Weasel**

Group stands in a tight circle, shoulder to shoulder with "it" in the center. Group chants, "Bob the Weasel, keep it going, keep it going" The group is passing an item hand to hand behind backs. Person in the middle tries to figure out who has the weasel. If a group member holds up the weasel so everyone sees, the group says, "I saw the weasel."

### **Screaming Look Up**

With everyone in a circle, have everyone look down. Then tell everyone to look up and stare into the eyes of one person. If that person is looking back at you, you both scream at the top of your lungs and are eliminated from the circle.

### **Group Count**

The group tries to count to 10 but shouting out numbers with no established order. Any time 2 people say the same number or speak at the same time, the whole group starts over.

### **Bat & Moth Tag**

The group makes a circle, and inside the circle are the participants... the bat (who is blindfolded) and the moths (who are clapping).

### **Smaug's Jewels**

The person in the center has a bandana in between his legs. The rest of the group one at a time sneaks over to try and steal the bandana. If the person in the center points at the person, then they are out.

#### **Down Under Tag**

If a person is tagged, the only way they can become unfrozen is if their pre-assigned partner crawls through their legs.

#### **Amoeba Tag**

If tagged, join up to the amoeba! The game ends once the "blob" has tagged all of the campers.

#### **Steal the Bacon**

Divide the group into 2 teams. Each camper in each of the smaller groups gets a number (1-?). An instructor calls out a number, and then the person from each team who has that number runs to the middle and tries to grab a bandana equi-distant from the starting lines. Once the person has grabbed the bandana, he tries to get it back behind his line without being tagged.

#### **Coffee, Not "T"**

King George is going on a vacation, and he's only going to bring things that he likes. Students must figure out that he likes anything without the letter T in the spelling. Keep repeating, "King George likes coffee, but he does not like "T."

#### **Black Magic**

The instructor asks questions regarding anything that is visible as the group answers Yes or No and tries to figure out the pattern that you answer "Yes" to the object referred to immediately following a black-colored object.

#### **Ancient Tracking**

The first instructor talks about this ancient method of tracking animals, and brings out a special object. Have the group stand in a circle, and place the special object in the middle of the circle. Instructor then leaves the circle, and while he's gone, someone in the circle moves the rock to another area in the circle. The instructor returns and makes a big show of smelling, tasting, listening to the object. To identify who moved the rock, the second instructor stands in exactly the same manner as the person who moved the rock.

#### **Crossed & Un-crossed**

The group sits in a circle and passes two of the same object around. This person will pass the sticks to one of the people next to him; the sticks can either be crossed or un-crossed. When they are passed, the person passing says "I am passing these to you crossed OR un-crossed." The group then decides whether they have been truly passed crossed or un-crossed. The real answer is whether the passers legs are crossed or un-crossed.

#### **Picnic**

Invite everyone to your picnic and tell them what you're bringing. The items that you can bring start with the first letter of your first name. If Eric can bring an eggplant, then Sarah can bring saliva. Ask everyone what they're bringing, and only let them come if they get the game right.

#### **Toe Fencing**

Two people face each other and grab each other's arms around the elbows. The goal is to step on your opponent's feet. Once one of you has gotten both of your opponent's feet, you are the winner.

#### **Screaming Walk**

Set up a starting line. One at a time, campers get to walk past the line for as long as they can keep yelling and walking at the same time. Once you're unable to scream anymore, you stop there and see who can get the farthest.

### **Off Balance**

Pairs face each other, feet together, palms out, and try to knock each other off balance with palm to palm contact.

### **Veggies**

With everyone in the circle, have each student pick a vegetable. You have to say your veggie, and then someone else's to pass it to them. However, if you show your teeth... you become a frozen vegetable of choice.

### **Honey, I love you!**

Person in the middle tries to get people in the circle to laugh by saying, "Honey, I love you, would you please, please smile?" The person he is talking to must respond with, "Baby, I love you. But, I just can't smile."

### **Crab, Frog, Horse**

Campers all start off as a crab, and pair off and play 'rock, paper, scissors.' The winner turns into a frog, and must jump around like a frog until they find another frog to play in 'rock, paper, scissors.' Whoever wins between two frogs, then becomes a horse, and can gallop like a horse, or do something 'horsey' until they find another horse to play in rock, paper, scissors. If you lose the rock, paper, scissors match, then you go back to the animal you were prior to the match.

### **Bibbity Bop Bop**

Everyone stands in a circle facing the person in the middle. The person in the middle points to a player on the outside and says "Bibbity Bop Bop!" Before the player finishes the outside player must say "bop" or they become the middle person. As the game goes on more things are added. Example the person in the middle points and says "Rock Climbing...1,2,3, ...all the way to 10" and the outside player must act out rock climbing before the middle person reaches ten. You can also make up actions that require three people to be involved at a time. Example is "Going off a waterfall!" The person pointed at would put their arms up and scream while the two people next to that person would get close and pretend to be paddling as fast as they can.

### **A Buffalo, Ping!**

Kids stand in a circle and one person starts by saying one of the three words: "Yee Haw" sends it to the person on the left, "Ya Hoo" sends it to the person on the right, "A Buffalo" sends it to someone across the circle that you point to. If someone sends a "buffalo" to you, you can say "Ping!" and send it right back to them to say something else. If someone messes up they can be out until there are only two people left. Or you can just keep playing for good laughs and fun cowboy screams.

### **Call Back**

Everyone has a partner and comes up with a call back (Ex, "CH", "MK"). One partner stands blind folded while the other goes a stands away from their partner mixed between others. The blind folded person must find their partner by distinguishing their call back from the others. Partners can only call back if the blind folded person starts the call back.

### **SPUD**

Players all get a number. One ball is thrown up in the air and someone's number is called. Whoever's number is called must come grab the ball while all the other players run away. The player must yell STOP when they get the ball and all the other players must stop running. The player with the ball is then allowed



three steps to try to toss the ball at a player with the ball from the waist and below. If they hit them the player hit gets the letter S. If they miss they must retrieve the ball and try to hit any of the players who are trying to run back to a base that has been chosen, ex: a tree, without getting hit. If no one is hit then the player with the ball get the letter S. Players want to avoid getting all the letters of SPUD.

### **Sets**

The instructor calls out a number and all the kids need to match themselves up in sets of that number by something they have in common. Ex: "3" - 3 kids stand together that are wearing green shirts.

### **Silly Sailor**

Split up the group into teams. They should be standing single file in a line. The counselors should stand ~20 yards in front of the group with a paddle. When you say "Go!" the first person runs to you, takes the paddle above his/her head and spins 10 times while looking at the blade of the paddle. They then drop the paddle, run back to their team, slap the hand of the next person who then runs to paddle. First team to finish wins. Enjoy the hilarity of this game.

### **4 Shifter Gear Box**

The group stands in a circle. There are four moves you can do. 1) YEEHAW- with an arm movement to the left or right like a cowboy. This passes the move to the person whichever way you YEEHAW. 2) HAYBARN- place your hands together above your head. This skips the person next to you and goes to the next person. (This can only be done after a YEEHAW). 3) GET DOWN LITTLE DOGGY- point your fingers at someone across the circle to make that person it. The new "it" person can follow with a YEEHAW or 4 SHIFTER GEAR BOX. 4) 4 SHIFTER GEAR BOX- person who is it shouts 4 SHIFTER GEAR BOX. Everyone puts their hand in the middle as a fist, yells 1-2-3-4, and moves their hand like they are shifting a tractor. When that is done, the person who is it is the last one to have said "GET DOWN LITTLE DOGGY". If someone messes up they are out and can become hecklers. Better with groups of 7-10 people so that the camper are always engaged.

### **In the Manner of the Adverb**

A volunteer leaves the group. The rest of the group chooses an adverb (slowly, shyly etc.). The volunteer returns and one person must do an action in the manner of the Adverb. The volunteer's goal is to guess the adverb chosen.

### **Create your own Adventure**

Two people leave the group. While they are gone, explain the following to the group. Each time the volunteers ask a question answer "yes" if their question ends with an "s" or vowel, "maybe" if it ends with a "y", and "no" if it ends in a consonant. The volunteers ask yes or no questions to the group about their adventure; thus creating your own adventure.

### **Animals**

Think of a few different animals. Whisper the name of one animal to each camper. With eyes closed have the campers locate and group together with the other "animals" like themselves using only the sound of the specific animal.

### **Facial Expressions**

Like telephone, but instead of passing words, you pass facial expressions. Everyone sits or stands in a circle with their heads down. One person creates a facial expression/silly face, taps the person to one side, and shows her the face. Then, the second person passes the face to the next person in the circle. While the facial expression is being passed, everyone except the two people currently showing or receiving a facial expression keep their head down. When the facial expression makes it around the circle to the last person, have the first and last person stand side by side and show their facial expressions to the whole circle. Great if campers need to be quiet right after the game.

### **FFEASH** (stands for Fast Food, Electrical Appliance, Super Hero)

This game is a relay race and can work very well for large groups. Have teams line up single file. Explain that this game is like charades; they cannot use words and must act out the specific item they are given of the three categories. The counselors stand about 25-30 ft in front of the line and there must be one counselor per group. When you say "GO" the last person in line crawls through everyone else's legs, runs to their leader who will give them a specific FF, EA, or SH. (Examples: Whopper no pickles, phone charger, Captain Planet). The student runs back and charades to the rest of the group. When the group guesses it, the charader goes to the front of the line and it starts over again.

### **Bear, Salmon, & Mosquito**

Create a common center line where two groups will line up and face each other. Create two end zones that are the same distance from the center line, one per team. This game is a full body version of rock/paper/scissors. Show each motion to the entire group: BEAR- arms over head growling, SALMON- a small breaststroke looking like a fish, MOSQUITO- flapping wings making buzzing noises. BEAR wins over SALMON (eats the salmon), SALMON wins over MOSQUITO (eats the mosquito), MOSQUITO wins over BEAR (bites the bear). Each team decides in a group meeting what creature they will show to the other team. Both teams line up, count to three and show their creatures sign at the same time. Whichever team loses has to run back to their own end zone before being tagged by members of the other team. Those who were tagged join the other team. You play until one team does not exist anymore.

### **Rodeo**

A game of tug o war between two people; throw ropes could work, but be careful of rope burn. Both people are on their own milk crates. The first person to fall off or run out of rope is the loser. You are constantly trying to gain as much rope as you can while throwing the other person off balance.

### **Improv**

This is a great way to break down inhibitions. Start a scene about whatever you like using a few people. Freeze is called out by a member of the audience who wants to stop the action and take the place of a person acting in the "scene." Explain this to the group and encourage them to employ a freeze when they have a great idea, someone has been "on" for a while, or the energy of the scene begins to wane.

### **Zumee Zumee**

The group stands in a circle. The leader designates himself as Zumee. The rest of the group counts off 1, 2, 3....etc around the circle until its gets back to Zumee. The campers should know their number but also understand that their numbers will be changing. The group starts a chant that goes: "Zumee Zumay! Zumee Zumay! Zumee Zumee Zumee Zumee Zumee Zumay!" (Two leg slaps followed by two claps repeated). Keep the beat going and the Zumee in beat says "Zumee Zumee Two Two" (any number in the circle). The person chosen has to then choose someone new staying on beat. The pattern though is saying your number first and then the person you are choosing. Ex: "Two Two Four Four". If someone messes up the beat they become the last number and everyone up to that number moves up one spot.

### **Charade Story Telephone**

Have three or more volunteers leave the group. While they are gone, the rest of the group creates a story they will tell to the first volunteer. They call back the first volunteer and tell him the story. Once the first volunteer understands the story the second volunteer is called back. The first person acts out the story; NO TALKING ALLOWED! Once the second person understands the story, the third person is called back and the same thing happens. When you get to the last person that volunteer then tells the group what he/she thought the story was. You can also go to each person and see how the story evolved.

## Name Games & Icebreakers

### **2 Truths & 1 Lie**

Campers introduce themselves and also say two truths about themselves and one lie. The rest of the group has to guess which one is the lie.

### **People Bingo**

Create a bingo sheet that has different things listed such as: climbed a mountain, has blue eyes, loves to cook. The goal is to have everyone in the group sign your sheet if the item describes them.

### **Group Juggle 1**

The group stands in a circle and tosses an object around the circle, saying their name and then the person they toss the object to. Keep the order and see how fast your group can toss the object in that order while saying each others' names.

### **Group Juggle 2**

The group stands in a circle on marked spots with one person in the middle. The person in the middle says his/her name and then says "Have you ever..." Everyone who has must switch spots. The one left without a spot goes to the middle and does it all over again.

### **Deserted Island**

Explain to the campers that they are on a desert island and can only take one item. Have them go around and say their name and the object. If the object's first letter is not the same as the first letter of their name tell them they cannot take it. Keep going until the group figures it out (and you learn their names).

### **3 Questions**

Get group to pair up with someone they don't know. They ask each other 3 questions. Each person introduces their partner to the group. The group sits in a large circle and the game begins. The 3 questions are: 1) movie or dramatic role—what would it be and why? 2) If you could have lunch with anyone dead or alive who would it be and why? 3) If you could interview anyone dead or alive who would it be and why? Members introduce themselves.

### **Essence Cards**

Have each camper write something(s) no one else would guess about them. Give them different topics such as: super-power, favorite book. Take them all and read them aloud so the campers can guess which card belongs to which camper. If you have the kids write enough essence cards this can last throughout the session.

### **Ninja Name Game**

Have each camper say their name, make up a ninja name, and have a ninja move they would do. The next person to go will say their name etc. as well as the people who were before them.

### **Concentric Circles**

Have the group make two circles, an inside circle and an outside circle. The campers pair up with a person from the other circle who is directly across from them. Give them a question to discuss for one minute. Then have one circle move to the left, switch partners and start over again.

### **Battle Scars**

Have each camper share a story about how they got a scar on their body.

### **Name Rhyming**

Each camper must say their name and an adjective that rhymes with their name.

**Pressure Cooker**

Divide your group into two teams. Hang a tarp between the 2 teams. 1 at a time players from each team will come up to the tarp. The tarp is quickly pulled down. All they have to do to win is just say the person's name. If 1 side says the opponent's name first then the other player goes to the other side. You can also put 2, 3 4 people up to the tarp at a time.

**Whomp 'Em!**

The group sits in a circle with their legs out towards the center and one camper in the middle who is holding a foam bopper. One person from the circle starts by saying another person's name in the circle. The whomper (camper in the middle) must bop (hit the person's legs) of the individual whose name was stated before that individual can say another person's name from the circle. If the whomper is successful, the person who was hit becomes the new whomper.

**Identity**

Say your name and what object in a catalog that you are most like and describe why. (i.e. My name is Johnny and I am most like a pair of gym shoes because I like to be comfortable and ready to play sports.)

**Name Annacronym:**

Have the campers pair up with someone they don't know. Each person writes their name on a sheet of paper and exchanges it with their partner. They then must make a sentence using their name. Example: Sarah- Sandwiches Are Really Awesome Hoorah!

**Biddley Bump**

The group stands in a circle with one person in the middle. Each person in the circle learns the name of the individuals to the left and right of them. The camper in the middle points to someone in the circle and says either "Left" or "Right". That individual then must say the name of the person indicated before the camper in the middle says "Biddley Bump!" (or any other fun word you know). If the camper in the middle says Biddley Bump first, then the two switch places and there's a new person in the middle. If not, the camper in the middle continues until he/she is replaced.

**Group Map**

Make a map of the U.S./world in the dirt or with a picture. Point out north, south, east, and west. Make a series of statements like, "Stand where you were born, best vacation, or where you want to travel." Have two or three campers say their name and to explain where they are on the map and why they are standing there.

## **BRAIN TEASERS**

### **Crossed or Uncrossed**

Hold two sticks or pens together and ask the campers if “they are crossed or uncrossed.” No matter the actual special relation of the two objects in hand, your answer will always depend on whether your legs are crossed or not.

### **Ancient Native Counting**

Start with a story about how you learned in school how the Natives used to count. They didn’t use the same symbols we use today but instead used 3 sticks. Begin by arranging the sticks in any random pattern and ask the campers what number it is. As you ask, put a hand down near the sticks with a number of fingers out- can be done with both hands. The numbers of fingers is the number the campers should guess. Keep re-arranging & and throwing out different numbers.

### **3 Object Game**

Tell the campers that in this game you will choose three objects that will describe one person within the group. Tell them it is their goal to guess who the person is and the method you are using to describe the person; it is the same method every time. The first one to talk in the group after you say the last object is the person.

### **Johnny Whoops**

Hold up one hand and count from your pinky to your thumb and back while saying “Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, Whoops, Johnny, Whoops, Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, Johnny.” The whoops is the slide down to your thumb and back up to your index finger. Tell the kids to do exactly as you did but they are only right if they strike the same pose you were in when you finished.

### **Black Magic**

Get together with another counselor ahead of time to set this up. Tell the kids that you are wise on the ways of the ancient black magic and that when you leave the circle, they can pick an object in the circle, and upon returning you will figure out what the object is. When you return have the other counselor ask about different items. When the other counselor asks if it is something that is black, that is your cue that the next object will be the one in question.

### **Master Tracker**

Get together with another counselor beforehand. Tell the kids that you are a master tracker and embellish upon any “experience” you have. Tell them that you will leave the circle and shut your eyes. While you are gone have one of the kids walk to the center and touch an object that you have placed (water bottle, hat). Then you come back pretend to track. Meanwhile the other counselor is sitting exactly like the chosen camper so you can figure out who it is.

### **4 is Cosmic**

Tell the campers that the number four is cosmic, and that they can give you any number and you can trace it back to four. The way you do this is by counting the number of letters in each number. Ex: 10 has three letters so the next number is 3. 3 has five letters so the next number is 5. 5 has four letters so the next number is 4 and 4 has four letters and is the only number that has that number of letters.

### **Quick Brain Teasers:**

Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the tallest mountain on Earth?

- a. Mt. Everest, it just hadn’t been discovered

Clara Carter was born on Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>, yet her birthday is always in the summer. Why?

- a. Clara lives in the southern hemisphere

A woman from New York married ten different men from that city. None of these men died and she never divorced. How is this possible?

- a. She is a justice of the peace

How could you rearrange the letters in the words "new door" to make one word? Multiple answer

- a. "one word"

There were an electrician and a plumber waiting in line for admission to the "International Home Show"- one of them was the father of the other's son. How could this be possible?

- a. They are husband and wife

A child is born in Boston, MA to parents who were both born in Boston, MA. The child is not a US citizen. How is this possible?

- a. The child was born before 1776

## Trust Sequence

When you are with your group for the first time, you want them to begin building trust in each other and in you. However you can't go straight into a trust walk or the trust fall. You must start small and build up to these activities.

1. The first activity should be one that breaks down their inhibitions. The group is still getting used to each other and your goal should be for them to start laughing with each other.
  - a. Silly Walk: This activity is a great first activity for groups once everyone has the names down. Set up a small "runway" for the silly walks. Tell the campers that they are all modeling the newest hippest way to walk and that they should be as creative as possible. The first round, each person goes by themselves down the runway. The counselor should go first just to break the tension and then ask for volunteers. After everyone has gone. Have the group pair off and create a funny walk for their pair. Then do groups of three etc. until the entire group does one giant funny walk.
  - b. The Snort Game: The group stands in a circle. The game starts with someone tossing their head to the left or right while letting out a giant snort. This passes it on to the next person who can pass the snort or return it back to the original snorter. If someone laughs or even smiles they are out, even if they are on the opposite side of the circle. Go until there is a winner.
2. The next step is for them to feel comfortable as a group.
  - a. Trust Run: The group stands in two rows facing each other with their arms out and interlocked (like a zipper). One camper runs toward the group. When the camper reaches the group, the group raises their arms allowing the runner to run through the two rows. Campers can run at whatever speed they feel comfortable. Considerations: This is a great warm-up for more difficult activities. Beware of individual campers trying to wreck it for the group. Explain that each person is trusting the group to raise their arms and that once that trust is broken, it will take a very long time to build the trust back up.
  - b. Group Sit
  - c. Yurt Circle

### Trust Sequence 2

3. The last step is having them trust the individuals and the group when they are out of their comfort zone. A great way to set this up is to explain about the comfort zone: Green= real comfortable, in bed, watching t.v. can do this all day long, Yellow= not used to it but willing to try it, ex: Rock Climbing, sailing, being a way from home for a month, Red= real bad, freaking out, peeing your pants bad, ex: Going sailing on the ocean out of sight from land and then being thrown overboard. The goal is for the campers to go into their yellow zone because this is where they grow and learn and to keep them out of their red zone. The familiar phrase challenge by choice is also a great thing to explain to the campers at this point.
  - a. Trust Walk: This is a high trust activity. The campers form a line and hold hands. Everyone in the group closes his/her eyes except for the leader. Make sure that there are enough counselors to help spot for the group and help with any obstacles. The leader takes the group on a walk, a very slow walk, and the leader's instruction must be passed down the line. Also it is a good idea to institute a silence rule.
  - b. Trust Lean: Teach the campers the proper spotting technique before the activity. The proper technique is legs shoulder length apart, one foot in front of the other in a squat position, arm out in front, bent at the elbows with your hands ready to catch and support someone who is leaning. Once the campers understand this, have them pair up. Teach them the commands of each person. They must set up a contract just like when rock climbing. Leaner asks "Is the spotter ready?" Spotter replies "The spotter is ready." Leaner says "Leaning" Spotter replies "Lean Away". Once this contract is set, the Leaner stands stiff as a board, feet together with arms crossed at the chest. The Spotter stands in spotting position right behind the Leaner. The Leaner slowly leans back into the arms of the Spotter. The Spotter catches the Leaner and then slowly brings the Leaner back to the upright position.
  - c. Wind in the Willows: The same rules apply as the trust lean except the group makes a tight circle with one person in the middle. Everyone is in spotting position and the Leaner can lean in any direction. Make sure that at least three hands are on the Leaner when leaning and that no one is pushing; only catching. When the Leaner is done they will stand up and then the next person can go.