

Activity 1: The screaming game

Participants stand in a circle, looking at the ground. The game master stands in the middle. When he gives a signal, everybody tries to look into the eyes of the person on either his left or his right side. If their eyes meet, both of them scream and “die”.

Activity 2: Remembering the names with balls

Round 1. The game master has three small balls, all of them should be different. Takes the first ball, looks at somebody, asks his/her name, then throws the ball, saying the name at the same time. Then hides his/her hands behind the back. The person with the ball performs the same procedure choosing from people whose names haven't been asked (they have their hands in front of their body). Repeat round 1 (participants always throw the ball to the same person).

Round 2. Do the same with another ball. This time participants have to choose another person to throw the ball to.

Round 3. Do the same with the third ball. Participants have to throw the ball at another person again.

Round 4. Do the activity with all the three balls launched after each other.

Round 5. The same as Round 4, but participants are wandering around in the room.

Activity 3: Dance it – a name learning activity

1. Participants stand in a circle. They find an adjective with the same sound their first names start with (it's great if this adjective really describes the person; it isn't a problem if they choose a noun instead of the adjective). Participants also invent a dance move (only 2-3 seconds long) which they will perform as they stand in the middle of the circle and say their name with the adjective. Perform the same activity 2 or 3 times so that everybody could observe other people's movements and memorize their names.

2. Participants step into the middle of the circle, they say their names and perform their dance move. The others repeat the name and the dance move.

3. The game master stands in the middle of the circle and points at someone. The chosen person doesn't move, all the others perform the dance move and say his/her name with the adjective.

4. Participants are divided into smaller groups of 5-6 people. They are given a piece of music each. The task is to compose a choreography for that piece of music using all the dance moves of the people in that smaller group. They are also free to include other movements (from the other groups or anything they would love to). Don't forget to set the time for preparation. Perform the choreographies and enjoy.

It was a powerful way to create an illusion, a distraction of the task. A good task for multicultural groups or when somebody feels a bit outside. You distract students from their internal monologues and internal conflicts. The focus is on the task and the rules are inclusive, so a feeling of mutual belonging to the group is created. Participants can feel connected after the performance.

Activity 4: Zip-zap-zup

Participants stand in a circle. They will need to turn to a neighbour and send a clap around the circle.

1. Zip: the clap goes to the left. (Do one or two rounds.)
2. Zap: the clap goes to the right. (Do one or two rounds.)
3. Play with both zip and zap.
4. Introduce zup (zoop): you can pass on the clap to anyone in the circle. BUT: the chosen person can say 'NO'. In this case another person has to be chosen.
5. Play with zip, zap and zup.
6. Introduce shboing (or something like that): you can choose anyone in the circle – if you say shboing, this person has to turn around.
7. Play with zip, zap, zup and shboing.

Activity 5: Frisky Whiskers

1. Participants stand in a circle. Make sure there is enough space behind the participants.
2. The game masters turns left and says “frisky whiskers” to the person on his/her left. This person will do the same. Do some rounds.
3. Now introduce “whisky friskers” – people say it to the person on their right.
4. Play with both expressions. If somebody bakes a mistake or starts laughing, they have to run around the circle.

Activity 6: Fruit salad

1. Arrange chairs in a circle (number of participants minus one). Prepare post-its in three colours (blue, pink, yellow) and put them on the backs of the chairs. The game master stands in the middle of the circles, other participants sit. The game master says a colour (naturally one of the three colours on the backs of the chairs). People sitting on those chairs jump up and try to sit on another chair – so does the game master. The person who fails to sit on a chair will stand in the middle of the circle and say the next colour.
2. Introduce “colour” – if the person in the middle says this, everybody will have to stand up and find another chair.
3. Replace colours with habitats, and play as in stage 1.

blue = sea

pink = farm

yellow = jungle

4. Introduce “animal kingdom” to make all the participants move.

5. Arrange participants in three groups according to colours. Give sticky notes to each group and set a time limit for the activity. Task: write the names of the animals that live in the habitat of the relevant colour. Each animal name should be written on a separate post-it.

6. Make enough space in the room by removing all the chairs from the centre. Put three large sheets of paper on a wall, and arrange three chairs by the opposite wall. If there is enough room around the chairs, ask participants to form three lines. Give one marker to each group and the packet of post-its with the animal names they collected. The first person in the line sits on the chair. When the game master says ‘start’, the second person shows the first animal name to the person sitting on the chair. This person reads it, runs to their sheet, writes the name of the animal, runs back and passes the marker to the second person, who has already passed the packet of post-its to the next person and is sitting on the chair. Repeat until all the words are written on the sheets. You might want to set a time limit before starting this activity. If somebody makes a spelling mistake, he/she must read the name again and run back to the sheet to correct it.

7. When all the words are on the sheets, check spelling and give one point for each correct word. Clarify vocabulary. Then remove the names of animals that appear twice or three times.

8. Arrange the chairs in a circle again and play the original game. This time the person standing in the middle has to say the name of an animal, and people who are sitting on a chair with the matching habitat’s colour have to stand up and change place. For example, if someone says ‘monkey’, people sitting on chairs with a yellow post-it have to stand up and find another chair.

Activity 7: Flies and Spiders

Divide the group into two. Arrange chairs in a circle for half of the group. Flies sit on these chairs with the spiders standing behind them. Flies look around and wink at each other when they want to change places. Spiders have to prevent this by touching flies.

Flies have to sit properly, spiders have to lower their hands.

Activity 8: Follow the Leader

Someone (meaning anyone) in the group gives an order, all the others repeat the words and perform the action.

Activity 9: Follow the Leader 2. (True/false)

Divide the space into two parts (mark the division line with two chairs for example). Anyone can say a sentence like this: “If you have a brother, follow me.” While saying this, he/she moves into the other part of the room.

Activity 10: True or False

You will need two opposite walls and empty space between them. Write “TRUE” on a sticky note and put it on either wall. Write “FALSE” on another sticky note and put it on the other wall. Arrange two chairs in the middle back to back (if one sits on a chair, the walls will be on their right and on their left). Divide the participants into two groups. The members of the groups will take their turns to sit on the chair.

The game master gives a statement, like “The capital of Egypt is Cairo.” The two people sitting on the chair have to stand up and touch the inscription they think is appropriate: true/false. The person who first touches the proper sticky note gets a point for his/her group.

Activity 11: Memory game – duel

You can use the sticky notes from Activity 6, or you can write new ones. Spread these notes around the floor or the wall. Two people compete. The game master says a word from the sticky notes, and the competitors have to touch the sticky note with their hands or with a flapper.

Activity 12: What can it be used for?

Show an object and ask participants what else can it be. (E.g. the flapper could be used as a racket, a guitar, an umbrella, etc.) They can say their suggestions or use pantomime to show it.

Activity 13: Pantomime

Divide participants in two groups. Distribute pens and sticky notes. The groups will have to write 20-20 jobs (as funny and interesting as they can think of). When they are ready, check answers and remove any duplicates.

The members of the first group stand in a line. The last person in the line picks a job and then pats the next person on the shoulder. This person turns around and watches the other person explaining the job using pantomime. When the second person says he/she has understood, it is his/her turn to use pantomime and explain the word to the next person in the line. The first member of the line has to say the name of the profession.

Activity 14: Making groups

Participants walk around the room while music is playing. When the game master stops it, two people have to hold hands and start jumping. When music starts again, they let each other go and walk around again. When music stops, 3 people have to hold hands and jump. Repeat the process until you have the desired number of groups.

Activity 15: Duracell bears

Arrange participants in groups of 3. Two people (the Duracell bears) stand back to back. The third person will be the operator. If he touches the heads of the bears they will start marching (when they meet an obstacle, they stop and march in one place). If the operator touches the right shoulder of a bear, the bear will have to turn right (90 degrees), and go on marching. The operator can also touch the left shoulder of a bear, which means the bear will have to turn left.

Task: the bears will have to face each other.

Variant: one or two people will disturb this process, they can touch any bear’s shoulder, who will have to obey.

Activity 16: Leading each other (trust game)

Arrange participants in pairs.

1. One member of the pair closes his/her eyes and shows a finger (index finger), the other person touches his/her finger with one finger too and leads him/her around in the room.

2. The task is the same but this time participants lead their partners using sounds they have agreed on. (One sound for invitation, another one for signalling danger.)