

Group Building and Challenge Activities

Block Party

Supplies: Blocks (Paper and markers optional).

How: Set up a structure of blocks and have enough extras for a group to recreate it in another location. Have the campers sit around their unstacked blocks and select one leader who will go see what the final structure should look like. Take them to the example, and let them take a look, then bring them back to the group. Explain that this expert may guide, but may not speak or point. If the expert would like to go back and look at the example again, they must give up using one hand when they come back. If they look a third time, they lose both hands. See if the group can recreate the example. Play multiple times, rotating roles and changing structures. Make it progressively harder as they get more practice. You can also add in an extra expert or line up all the campers so that they are passing on directions “Telephone” style to the one building.

Debriefing Questions:

- What made this activity challenging?
- What did you learn along the way?
- Where did challenges lead to improvement or discovery?
- How are leadership and communication connected?

Hey, You...

How: Engage campers in one of your regular challenge activities or any traditional group-building game, but explain that no one is allowed to use anyone’s name. This includes last names, nicknames, etc. Allow them to adapt. They might create new names, assign numbers, or find another creative solution. See what they come up with, then debrief the activity and this special rule.

Debriefing Questions:

- What role do names play in communication?
- How did the group come up with its solution to the name problem?
- What aspects of using names could not be overcome?

- How would it feel to be without a name for an extended period of time?
- If we could not use names in the world, how might we adapt?

All in this Together

How: Give campers a series of tasks that can be done around camp and assign them points based on difficulty. The catch is, they must constantly be connected in a circle. You can have campers hold hands, press palms, or have a loop of rope that they all have to hold with both hands. Tasks could be as simple as saying a prayer in a special space, or as complicated as making a basket or brushing someone’s teeth. Use tasks that fit your camp’s recreation resources (everyone takes a turn on a swing), natural geography (get everyone’s hands wet in the pond), and community (tell the camp director a joke). You can set a time limit or make completing the list the end of the activity.


Debriefing Questions:

- How hard was it to stay connected?
- Who was very intentional about the connection?
- Who was very focused on tasks?
- Who was very focused on people’s feelings?
- How do all these different concerns impact each other?
- How can a group best get things done when you are the one in charge?

Wrap or Weave

Supplies: Yarn (enough to cover a ball) and a ball (small enough to be covered by yarn).

How: In advance, make sure you have enough yarn to effectively wrap the ball in its entirety. When campers arrive, present them with the ball, the yarn, and a challenge to transport the ball across your activity space as a group. Explain that once they leave the starting space, no one can touch the ball. Challenge them to transport the ball as quickly as possible. If



you have a very strong group, consider doing a yarn activity in advance where you pass a ball across a circle to form a web. You can make it a name game or have them name positive traits in each other. The forming of a web in one activity may lead them to try and recreate it as a platform to carry the ball. The catch is that just wrapping the ball completely and walking with it as a group is much simpler and faster.

Debriefing Questions:

- How did you decide how you were going to transport the ball?
- What made the process easier or more difficult?
- How did the group treat each other along the way?
- What was the goal of this activity, in your mind?
- What is the difference between working together and being a “group”?