

# GAMES TO HELP BREAK THE BOREDOM!



## NAME GAME

The first person to start says, "My name is \_\_\_\_\_." The next person then points to that person says, "This is \_\_\_\_\_ and my name is \_\_\_\_\_." It continues around the group until everyone has the chance to state the names of the people in front of them and their own name. The last person will say everyone's name before saying their own.

Objective: Get acquainted

## SORTING PEOPLE

Players line up in order according to a direction you give. After the direction is given, players must seek information from each other to put themselves in order. Here are some examples of the kinds of things to line up according to:

- \* Birthdays, January to December
- \* Alphabetical order using first names
- \* Alphabetical order using last names

Variations: Players must do it without any noise – no talking, grunting, etc.

Objective: Listening, get acquainted, communication

## CHANNELS

Items Needed: A PCV pipe cut in half for each member (it works best if you use pipe 1 inch in diameter and 2 feet long). You also need a few marbles or golf balls and a bucket.

Have each person grab one pipe and line up. Place the bucket approximately 50 feet away from the group. The goal of the activity is to transport the marble from the starting point to the bucket without the marble contacting the ground or being touched by those holding the channels. The rules are: 1) during the activity your channel belongs to you and you cannot let others touch it or hold it; 2) once the marble is in your channel you cannot move your feet; 3) no one other than the

facilitator can touch the marble; 4) the marble cannot touch the ground; 5) the goal is achieved when the marble is in the bucket. When the group is ready, drop the marble onto the first PVC pipe and let it roll. Once they have passed the marble on to the next person, they must run to the end of the line and be ready to receive it again. If the marble drops, they must start over at the beginning. (It sometimes helps to have them alternate on which side they are standing so they aren't squished together.

Variations: 1) Have two groups going at the same time and have them race each other. 2) Take away some of the pipes so that they have to pass it on to the next ones standing in line. 3) Prohibit talking. 4) As they get better, add more balls to create more of a challenge.

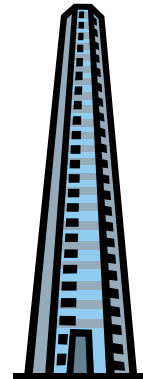
Objective: Communication, teamwork

## BALLOON TOWER

Items Needed: a bunch of balloons (different shapes work best) and a roll of masking tape.

Give a time limit (20 - 30 minutes) and each team must work together to build the tallest free-standing tower of balloons. They can only use the balloons and tape they were given to do it.

Variations: Paper (and nothing else)  
Raw spaghetti and marshmallows or tape  
Gumdrops and toothpicks  
Drinking straws and paper clips  
Drinking straws and tape  
Paper cups and a pack of chewing gum  
String, paper cups, and drinking straws  
Cookies



Objective: Teamwork

## SQUARE PUZZLE

Items Needed: Square pattern cut out beforehand. Have one set for each team. If the group is small enough, you can put one puzzle together.

Give the group the pieces and tell them that they need to form a square. Pieces can not be torn, folded or overlapped. All pieces must be used.

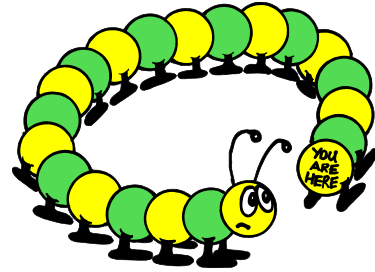
Variations: Also can use a “T” shaped puzzle.

Objective: Teamwork, communication, everyone important

## HUMAN CENTIPEDE

Items Needed: Large balloons (one less than the total number of participants)

Each person blows up their balloon. Everyone then lines up and places the balloon between them and the next person. They have to be standing close enough that the balloon is held up between them. No hands can be used. They then are instructed to walk, step over objects, go up and down stairs, etc. If someone drops their balloon, the whole group must start over.



Variations: Can do in teams and race. Can also give “disabilities” to different people – blindfold, mute, hop on one foot, etc.

Objective: teamwork, communication, patience, diversity

## STEPPING STONES / ACID RIVER / MARSHMALLOW RIVER

Items Needed: Carpet samples (one less than the total number of participants)

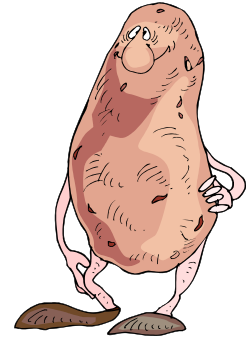
Have everyone stand behind the starting side, then give the following instructions. The goal of this activity is to get everyone across the open area between the starting side and the finish side without anyone touching the ground. The rules for this activity are: 1) you can only use the carpet samples to accomplish the goal; 2) the carpet samples can only be used to cross over the open area once; 3) everyone has to be off the starting side before anyone can step onto the finish side; 4) the activity is over when everybody is on the finish side; 4) if anyone touches the ground with any part of their body: a) the whole group has to start over; b) the group has to give up one more carpet sample; c) the individual will receive a “disability” (blindfold, mute, etc.)

Objective: teamwork, communication

## MY FRIEND, THE POTATO

Items Needed: One potato for each person (can also use apples)

Distribute one potato to each participant. Do this very solemnly to make it more of a gag. Give everyone a minute to get to know their potato. Next ask each person to introduce their potato to the group, pointing out its unique shape, size, and other characteristics. Once all the potatoes have been introduced, put them all in a bag and mix them up. Return a potato to each person, then have everyone try to find their own potato.



Objective: Diversity

## SLAMMERS AND CREEPERS / QUARTERS

Items Needed: A 4 to 8 foot table and a coin.

Divide players into two groups with a leader or captain for each. Teams sit at opposite sides of the table. One team passes a coin from hand to hand under the table while trying to conceal its movements from the other side (this can be done easier if everyone is pretending to pass at the same time).

The other team gets to decide when the team with the coin should stop passing. When the leader of the guessing team says, "Arms Up," all the coin-passing group must place their elbows on the table, with their hands closed in a fist. The opposing team then chooses whether they want "slammers" or "creepers." When "slammers" is called palms are slapped onto the table with enough noise to cover the clink of the coin. When "creepers" is called players, lay fists on the front edge of the table and slowly extend fingers until their hands are flat against the table, trying to conceal the location of the coin.



At this point, the leader of the guessing team may point to hands which must be raised from the table and opened. After each hand is raised, it should be put on the owner's lap. The object is to find the hand covering the coin as quickly as possible. Each hand which is opened and put in the lap counts as a point for the coin passing team. Teams alternate with the coin.

Objective: Teamwork

## TRAFFIC JAM

Items Needed: Carpet samples (one more than the total number of participants)

Divide the group into two teams with the open carpet sample between the two groups. After dividing the team, have them step on the carpet samples and give the following instructions. The goal of the activity is to have each group switch places without anyone touching the ground. Group 1 is going clockwise and Group 2 is going counterclockwise. There are two acceptable moves: 1) a person can move to any open space next to him/her, and 2) you can move to an open space on the other side of anyone going in the opposite direction (like jumping in checkers). Moves that are not acceptable are: 1) any move backwards; 2) moving around someone going in the same direction; 3) exchanging places; and 4) moving around more than one person. If any of the group touches the ground with any part of the body or clothing or anyone makes an unacceptable move the whole team must start over.

Variation: Can use a 2x4 board that they must stay on. They must completely switch their order without stepping off the board. (eg 1,2,3,4,5 should become 5,4,3,2,1)

Objective: Teamwork, communication

## TRACE THE STAR

Items Needed: Picture of Star, pencil, and blindfold for each pair

Each pair selects one person to be blindfolded. The blindfolded person is then given the picture and a pencil. The person not blindfolded then needs to instruct the blindfolded person as they try to draw between the lines of the star.

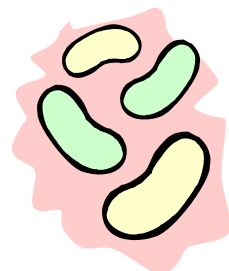
Variations: Can use different shapes depending on the skill level of the group.

Objective: Communication

## BEAN GAME

Items Needed: 10 beans per person

This game is best played over a period of time. Each person is given a number of beans. The object of the games is to try to have all of your beans at the end of the game. Anytime that a



person is caught tearing someone (or themselves) down, the first person to call them on it gets one of their beans.

Objective: Self-esteem, kindness

## **HAND OVER HAND**

Items Needed: None

Everyone forms a circle (can be on the floor or around a table). Everyone reaches out to the right and places their right hand on the table or floor, palm down. Next, everyone in the circle reaches out to their left, placing their left hand, palm down, to the left of the neighbor's right hand (wrists will be crossed.) One person begins a motion around the circle by rocking their hand up and tapping their fingers back down on the table. The motion travels in the direction that the fingers of the starting hand were pointing, to the next hand in order in the circle. That hand is rocked and is tapped back down. The motion continues around the circle until players get the hand of the motion. Hands are to be lifted and tapped in order around the circle.

Once play begins, hands that are moved out of order are removed from the circle. A hand that is tapped twice on the table reverses the direction of play. The game continues until only two hands are left in play.

Objective: Communication

## **HUMAN KNOT**

Items Needed: None

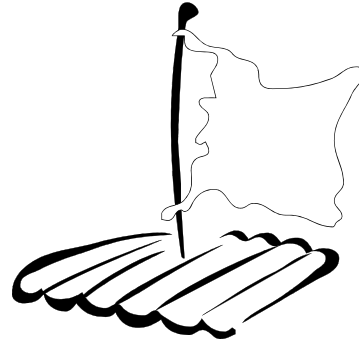
The group starts out in one or two tight circles. Everyone in the group reaches across the circle with their right hand to grab another group member's right hand. The group then reaches in with their left hand to grab a different group member's left hand. The object is to untangle the group without letting go of hands until a circle is formed. If the group is having extreme difficulty, you can administer "knot first-aid" and break one set of tangled hands (with group consensus), otherwise group members may not let go at any time.

Variations: Have some members blindfolded, don't allow talking

Objective: Communication, teamwork

## STRAW RAFT

Items Needed: Each team needs: 10 drinking straws, a roll of masking tape (or you can give them a certain number of inches), and a pair of scissors to cut the straws. You will also need 1 or 2 pans with about 1 inch of water in them and 100 pennies.



Give each team seven minutes to design and build a raft. They may only use the straws and masking tape that they were given. The object is to build the raft so that it will hold the most pennies before sinking. When they are finished, they are to bring the raft up to the pan of water for the “official float.” Do not let them try to see how well they float before the official float. The team members themselves will take pennies and place them one at a time on the raft. They may put the pennies anywhere on the raft that they want to. They will keep adding pennies, one at a time, until the raft goes under water. The total number of pennies on the raft before it sank is their official total.

Objectives: Teamwork, communication

## DRAWING BACK TO BACK

Items Needed: Two 8x11 sheets of paper for each pair. Each sheet of paper is divided into six sections. One sheet has writing or images in three of the sections. The other sheet has writing or images in the other three sections.

The pair sit back to back. Person 1 describes for each person 2 in detail what is written or pictured on his/her paper. Person 2 has to write or draw in his/her empty sections what is being described by person 1. Then person 2 describes for person 1 what to write/draw. When they are done their papers should look the same.

Objective: Teamwork, communication