

10-Minute Activities

Telephone Game

Arrange children in a circle. Have one person whisper a message to the person next to them, and so on, around the circle. Have the last listener announce the message to the entire group. Although the objective is to pass around the message without it becoming misheard and altered along the way, part of the fun is that this usually ends up happening, regardless!

Make a Human Machine

This fast and physical game gets participants moving and working together in a way that generates energy and promotes collaboration. One at a time, members of the group become parts of the “machine,” each one making a distinct physical motion and a sound, until the whole group is working together in motion, as one human machine.

See details here: <http://toolbox.hyperisland.com/human-machine>

Note: This activity works best with fewer than 20 people. If you have more than 20, consider breaking the larger group into subgroups.

Name Game Variations

1. Tell us your name and one detail about yourself (I have a cat, I like the color green, I love strawberries, etc.). The next person repeats name of person to their left and then introduces themselves.
2. Ask the kids to say their name and to make a motion that uses the first letter of their name. For example, Tired Tina (folding hands under head). Then you can go around the circle with names and gestures and do a second go ‘round with just gestures. Leader can pick a gesture and ask the group to whom it belongs.

Beanie Baby Balance—A Cooperative Game

Each child balances a beanie baby on their head. If the beanie baby falls, the child is frozen until another person places the object back on their head. Do this while playing music and walking around the room.

Other Cooperative Games

A [good list of cooperative games](#) can be found here.

Musical Hearts

Cut out lots and lots of construction paper hearts (at least one for each attendee) and tape them at random spots around the room. Play music and have kids mill about; when the music stops, they must stand on a heart, or touch someone who is standing on a

heart. Remove a few hearts and start the music again. Eventually get down to one heart, with all the kids holding on to one another.

Another variation of [Musical Hearts](#) can be found here.

Act Out a Classic Story

Have kids volunteer to act out a well-known story (e.g., The Three Little Pigs, Little Red Riding Hood, Three Billy Goats Gruff, Rapunzel), while you do the narration. Be as hammy as you want and give the kids room to improvise.

. . . Then Tell a Different Version, and Vote

Read the same story from an alternative point of view. Examples:

- *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* (the wolf's perspective)
- *Honestly, Red Riding Hood Was Rotten* (the wolf's perspective)
- *Seriously, Cinderella Is SO Annoying!* (the stepmother's perspective)

(All are available at the Robbins Library in Arlington. To find other alternative versions, search for "the other side of the story" on the Minuteman Library Network Catalog [website](#).)

After considering both versions, have the kids vote on what they think the REAL story is.

UU Hokey Pokey

You put your helping hands in,
You put your helping hands out,
You put your helping hands in a
And you shake them all about.
You do the Happy UU, and you turn the world around —
That's what it's all about!

Other verses:

You put your thinking head [or open mind] in . . .
You put your loving heart in . . .
You put your feet for justice in . . .
You put your whole UU self in, and you don't take yourself out! . . .

Encourage the kids to suggest additional verses.

Questioning Games

Below are some suggestions. You can also Google "Icebreaker Questions for Kids" or use some of the great questions found [here](#).

1. Continuum lines

Take one step forward:

- if you think best friends need to like the same thing.
- if you think best friends share their lunch with you.
- if you are afraid of elevators
- Etc.!

2. One step forward / one step backward:

- if you are more like a clothes line than a kite string.
- if you are more like an apple than an orange
- if you'd rather jump on a trampoline than ice-skate
- if you'd rather have wings or a tail
- if you'd rather be able to fly or be able to be invisible
- Etc.!

3. Snap - Clap: Go around the circle and ask kids to answer these questions, while keeping the snap-clap rhythm:

- What's your favorite story?
- What's your favorite flavor of ice cream?
- What's your favorite thing to do before going to bed?
- Etc.!