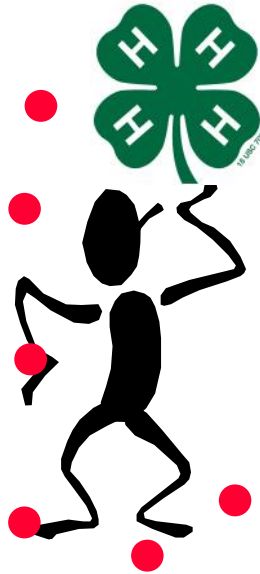
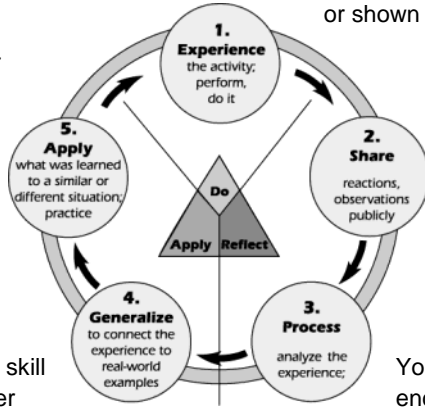


Games and Activities  
for Learning & Fun!



# Experiential Learning

Youth use the new life skill experience in other parts of their lives.



Youth do before being told or shown how.

Youth describe results of the experience and their reactions.

Youth connect the life skill discussion to the larger world.

Youth relate the experience to the targeted life skills.

Information from "A 4-H Afterschool Resource Guide, Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs" 2004.

## Facilitation Tips—4 Elements for leading a Successful Activity

**Focus:** You need to have a plan. Know the purpose of the activity, WHY you're doing it (to have people get to know each other, teamwork, etc.), the audience, and what the rules are. Have details done before you start; have alternate activities planned. We never prepare to fail, we only fail to prepare! Also, think about starting with easy activities and then move to more challenging ones.

**Flexibility:** You need to be able to adapt to the circumstances. While you have prepared, not everything will go as planned—so WING IT. This is a great time to use humor, creativity, and an open mind.

**Flow:** Keep the activities exciting, successful, and challenging. Know your audience and their ability level. Trying something too difficult for the group is NOT fun. Also, if it's too easy, they will be bored. When do you stop the activity? When the group is REALLY into it—**Kill it While it's Kicking!** Stop at the high point, so youth remember the fun and want to do it again!

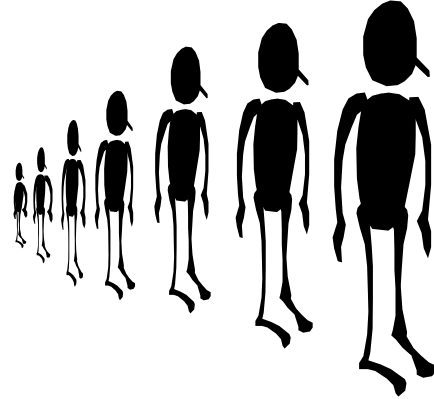
**FUN:** FUN is a basic rule for ALL to follow, especially the facilitator and ALL other staff. You are the role models; if they see you being playful and having fun, they will too!

## Silent Line-Up

Have people line up in one of the following order. Depending on the age of the youth, have them do it while talking first and then have them do it WITHOUT talking. You may need to help them figure out how they can achieve success.

- Alphabetically by first, last or middle name
- Age
- Birthday month
- Shoe size
- Or any other way you or the group may think up.

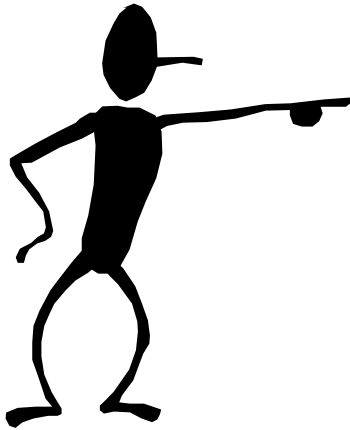
Once everyone is lined-up, have the group form a circle (if room so everyone can see each other), if youth don't know each other, have the person introduce him/herself, and find out how well the group did lining up. If the group didn't do too well, help them brainstorm ways for them to find success.



## Simon Says

Instructions: In this version of Simon Says, you'll have to do the actions without talking that Simon says for you to do. Remember to use your whole body, but to remain in your space.

Vary the times you say "Simon Says." The object is to have the youth show the physical differences in the actions. Add additional actions as you wish.



- Walk
- Walk in the mud
- Walk as if you have bubble gum on your shoes
- Walk as if you think someone is following you
- Jog
- Jog with high knees
- Juggle
- Juggle 3 tennis balls
- Juggle 3 elephants
- Juggle 3 elephants
- Brush your teeth
- You're brushing your teeth with shampoo.

## Human Knot

Have everyone stand close together in a circle. Simultaneously, everyone should reach up and grab the hands of two other people. Be sure you are holding on to two different people! Attend to unravel the knot so everyone is again standing in one big circle without breaking grips. If a grip is broken, the group must start over.

### Variations:

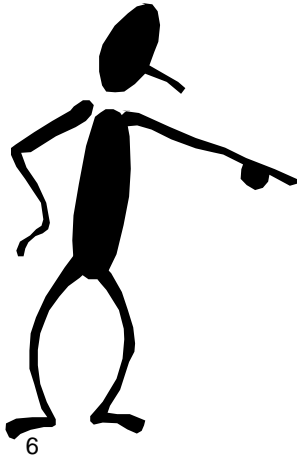
- You can “challenge” some members by blindfolding or muting them.
- If the group is having a lot of trouble, they can perform a “surgery” by deciding on one set of hands to break and rejoin at any place. The group cannot move, however, until they are reconnected.



## Step Across the Line

Have everyone stand in a horizontal straight line.

Have the leader (a teacher or another student) read the following statements. If the statement applies to you, step across the line and turn around so all can see who did and didn't step across the line. Feel free to ask questions of those who stepped across the line to learn more about each other.



Step across the line.....

- If you like summer.
- If you're wearing red.
- If you liked lunch today.
- If you have blue eyes.
- If you like pizza. (If you like \_\_\_\_\_ on your pizza.)
- If you have a brother/sister.
- If you have a pet.
- If you would like to have a pet.
- If \_\_\_\_\_ is your favorite subject.
- If you like to play sports.
- If you like to be outside.
- If you walk to school.

Make up MANY more!

## Catch Your Eye

Have the group form a standing circle. Everyone will look at one another's shoes and find one pair to focus on. When the leader says so, everyone will look up at the eyes of the person wearing the shoes they found. If two people make eye contact, they must scream "Ahhh!!!!" and sit down.

Obviously, more than two people can do this at a time, you might have several pairs sit down after one round. Once there are only two people left, start it all over again!





## Write Your Name

Have the group stand up and spread out so everyone has their own space. Depending on the amount of space, have the youth move through the room, or stay within their space. "Imagine a HUGE whiteboard. Print/write your name and fill-up the board with letters as high and as low as you can reach."

If time, have youth write their name with:

- Non-dominant hand
- Left knee
- Right elbow
- Head
- Non-dominant foot



## Traveling

If the group is large (and/or space small) split the group in half. The groups would take turns or travel from opposite sides of the room to meet in the middle. Participants are to stay in control.

“You are to travel across the room in the way I tell you. Make sure to focus on movement, but concentrate as you need to stay in your space and not make contact with other participants.”



- Slow gallop
- As if someone is after you
- Traveling across the house as if you're listening for a noise
- As if you are a worm
- Giant in "Jack and the Beanstalk"
- Walking on broken glass
- Elephant with peanut butter on their feet
- Walking on hot coals

## Body Speller

Form two or more teams. Each team member will take a turn in front of their team to spell out a word or phrase for the team to guess. The leader needs to have words or phrases ready to give the teams.

The speller is not allowed to speak or mouth the words. The leader will assign different methods of how the youth can spell the words such as

- Index finger
- Index finger of non-dominant hand
- Feet
- Making each letter with their WHOLE body
- Other creative, silly, & FUN ways!



A point is awarded to the first team to guess the word or phrase. The team with the most points at the words “wins”.



## Hand Shake Activity

- Find a partner
- Demonstrate a handshake (possibilities below or make them up)
- Find a new partner
- Demonstrate a different handshake
- Keep repeating for 2-3 more handshakes
- Then ask the group to start at the beginning with partner #1 and go through ALL partners and handshakes



### Handshakes:

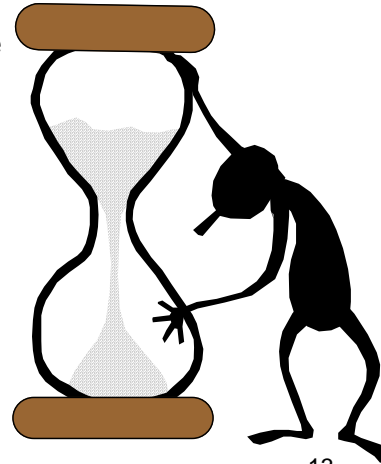
- Traditional handshake while saying, “How do you do?”
- Jumping high-five while yelling, “You did it!”
- The dead fish handshake while saying, “I can’t feel my hand.”
- Right hand to right hand, left hand to left hand saying, “Man! This is confusing!”
- Low high-five to a jumping high-five yelling, “Keep it up!”
- Reach up and over your partner to grab their heel and shake, “You’ve got GREAT balance!”
- Make up your own handshake ideas! Tip: When demonstrating the handshakes, be creative and dramatic. This adds to the excitement and energy being built.

## Zip, Zap, Zop

A group seated in a circle moves an invisible ball around the circle. The player with the ball says “Zip” and places either hand on top of his/her head, pointing to the left or right, indicating the current direction. The invisible ball continues around this circle until someone says “zap”. Saying “Zap” reverses direction as the person puts his/her hand under the chin, pointing the other way. Or someone can “Zop” it across the circle. Saying “Zop” and pointing across to someone who then must pass it on with a “Zip”. The object is to not fumble the ball (make a mistake with words or gestures) while passing it on.

### Modifications/Enhancements:

- Once the group gets the concept, you can see how fast they can go “around” the circle, making sure everyone has a turn.
- You can also see how LONG the group can go without making a mistake. Have a Zip, Zap, Zop time chart so groups can challenge themselves at anytime.



## Buzz Fizz

Separate the group into teams between 5-10, depending on the size of the group. They have to count from 1 to 50 **as a group**. However, at all multiples of 5 they must say "BUZZ!" and at all multiples of 7 AND at any number that contains the number/name of 7, like 17, they must say "FIZZ!"

If the group messes up, they have to start from the beginning. As the groups finish, have them stand up and cheer.



Note:

Buzz Numbers: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50  
Fizz Numbers: 7, 14, 17, 21, 27, 28, 35, 37, 42, 47



## Woosh

Make a circle. The leader pulls an invisible 'woosh' ball from their pocket (or bag). They explain the woosh ball is very light and it just sort of floats in their hand. When passing the woosh ball it actually makes the noise "woosh."

When passing the ball to the left or to the right, it makes a "woosh" sound. The person receiving the woosh ball has many options:

1. They can receive the woosh and pass it along.
2. They can say "Wao" and put their hands up to refuse the woosh. Then the person trying to pass the woosh ball must turn to their other side to pass it.
3. Sometimes when a person gets the woosh ball they get SO EXCITED, the energy of the woosh ball takes over their SOUL and they go "freakalistic," which makes the entire group go "freakalistic."

- Everyone must dance around in the circle and find a new place to stand. The object of "freakalistic" is to get as silly as possible.
4. If someone in the circle falters when they get passed the woosh, or messes up the flow, they must "boing." A "boing" is a physical admission that they messed up the flow of the woosh. They put their hands together above their head and bend at the knees and say, "boing."



## Who's Bob

Have the group form a circle (sitting or standing). One person in the circle will be Bob. Bob will do actions that the rest of the group must imitate. However, there will be a Detective in the middle of the circle trying to figure out who is Bob.

- Designate one person as the Detective. Have that person stand away from the group so they cannot see what is going on, but can still hear the group.
- Designate one person to be the first Bob.
- Have Bob start the action and the group following, before the Detective is called back.
- Once the action has been started, call the Detective back in by saying "Hey, Detective!"
- Bob may change actions as many times as he or she likes; in fact the game won't work unless Bob changes actions somewhat frequently.
- Once the Detective has successfully guessed who Bob is, the old Bob is not the new Detective, but the old Detective chooses a new Bob.

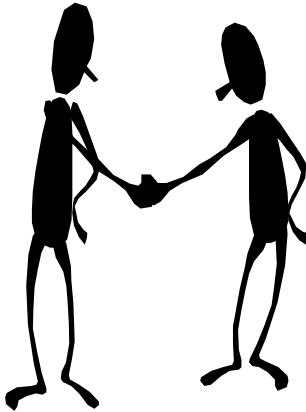
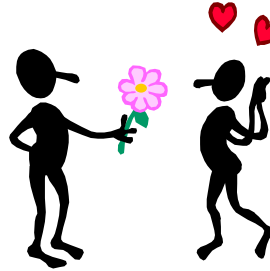


Hint: It works best if the group members do not stare at Bob while the actions are going on. This kind of gives Bob away!



## Freeze-frame Improv

Start with 2 volunteers and decide who is person A and who is person B. When you say “start”, have the volunteers start moving around. When you say “stop”, have person A start a scene based on what their partner reminds them of. Have them continue for 20-30 seconds and then have another student say “FREEZE.” That student then taps one person



“out” of the scene, takes his/her place, and starts a new scene based on the same position the actors were previously in. The person who stayed in the scene needs to go along with the new scene of the new participants. Continue until everyone has a chance to participate.

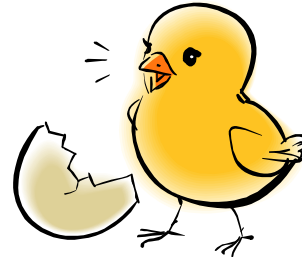
Modification: If students are not used to thinking that quickly on their feet, give them index cards or scrap paper for them to write out possible scenes to choose from (waiting at the bus stop, starting a snowball fight, being at a BIG Packer game, etc.). **Screen the scenes before using.** Then if students have trouble thinking either you or they can say “FREEZE” choose a card, tap someone out and start a new scene.

## Evolution

This game is based on Rock/Paper/Scissors (R-P-S). Make sure everyone knows how to play R-P-S before beginning this game.

Everyone starts out as an egg. Meet up with another egg and play R-P-S, winner evolves to a chicken and the loser stays an egg. Game continues the same with R-P-S being played between two members of the same species. The winner evolves and the loser devolves one stage.

- Egg – squat around on the floor saying “egg”
- Chicken – stand upright and flap your “wings” and clucking like a chicken.
- Dinosaur – using your arms to make a big dinosaur mouth, moving them open and shut and saying “roar”
- Superhero – put one arm up like you are flying away
- Supreme being – cross your arms like you are all “high and mighty”



Once a “supreme being” beats another “supreme being”, they play the leader of the game, you, and if they beat you they are out of the game; if they lose, they must beat another “supreme being” before challenging you again.

## Gimme

Arrange the group in even teams. Have the teams line up single file facing the leader. The first person in line goes first. The goal is to be the first person to get the item to the leader. The leader will say something like, "Gimme one blue pen." The first person in line must find a blue pen. Other team members can help find the item that's needed. Whoever gets it to the leader first earns points/hugs!/high fives, etc.

Gimme Ideas: (Specifics may depend on surroundings—inside, outside, etc.)

- One right shoe
- A half of sheet of paper
- A belt
- A piece of chalk
- A piece of black hair
- A dust ball
- A straw
- A leaf
- A used napkin



## WAH!

Have a group so they can all see you. Tell the group that you are the great ninja master, and they are all of your students. The students will learn 3 ninja actions. An action is made while saying “WAH!” in an aggressive tone. If a student does the same action as the master, the student must sit down.

The actions:

- The Dragon—Place your left hand, palm under your right elbow and your right arm up to the sky with your fingers curled.
- The Fireball—Extend your arms out, placing your wrists together, palms separated and fingers curled in.
- The Bear—Make two fists bringing them to your hips (moving your elbows behind you).

On the count of 3, students do an action and say “Wah!” Those with the same action as the master must sit down.

The goal is to have a single winner so that a new ninja master is established.



## Ship to Shore

Have the group stand all facing the leader. Address the crowd, "I am the captain and you are my crew. The crew must do as I say. If you do not follow, you will be out." Go through all of the actions so participants are clear on the commands. Actions are to be "mixed" up to confuse the crew.



The captain stands at the front and says the commands:

- Port - crew steps to the left
- Starboard— crew steps to the right
- Sea monster - crew gets on knees and puts hands in the air and growls
- Captain's daughter - in a girly voice all say "hey boys" while waving one hand
- Captain on deck - the crew must salute the captain till he says "at ease"  
NOTE: The captain may try to trick the group by calling another command without saying "at ease".
- Three men rowing - groups of 3 in single file and pretend to row a boat
- Four men seasick - groups of 4 stand in a circle and pretend to throw up
- Five men hoisting - groups of 5 stand in a single file line pretend to pull a rope  
If groups are not in the correct number, the entire group is OUT.

## Boppity-Bop-Bop-Bop

Have the group form a circle. One person is in the middle (the Bopper) and will go around the circle and say “Boppity-bop-bop-bop!” The person they are talking to must say “Bop” before the Bopper finishes saying “Boppity-bop-bop-bop” or they are the new Bopper. The Bopper can also just say “Bop” and the person they are talking to CANNOT say “bop.” If they do, they are the new Bopper.



Once the group has this down, add a few new calls. Each of these must be done before the Bopper counts to a certain number, or else the person the Bopper is facing is the new Bopper!

- “Jello”: the person the Bopper is facing just put their hands together above their head and jiggle like jello, while the people to the right and left just join hands around the person to be the bowl.
- “Elephant”: Person makes the elephant trunk with their arms while the people next to them make ears.
- “Fire Hydrant”: Person puts hand together above their head and people to their sides imitate dogs relieving themselves.

There are many more, get creative!

## Drop the Lid

**WARNING: ONE PROP NEEDED** - a lid that makes noise when dropped

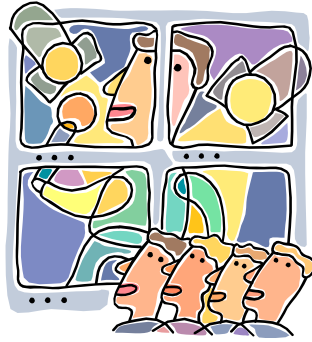
Everyone is in a circle with ONE person in the middle holding a lid. The person in the middle walks around the circle and has 5 seconds to take the hand of someone else. They continue walking around the circle, and the person just picked has 5 seconds to take the hand of someone else, and so on. This continues until the first person drops the lid, which should be before EVERYONE is picked. When the lid is dropped, everyone runs to find a spot. The person without a spot is the new person with the lid, and the games starts over again.

### Variations:

- If the group doesn't know each other, have them pick someone they don't know.
- The leader could set up challenges throughout the picking process by saying, "Pick someone wearing red", "Pick someone who has a necklace."
- For another challenge and to get the group to know each other, the leader could say things like, "If you like pizza, step forward", so the "picker" knows who likes pizza. Continue with other "get to know you questions" such as, "who has a sister", "who likes hockey". BE CREATIVE!!!



### 3-5 Frame “Stage-Picture Story”



Students age will determine the number of frames you may use to tell your story. Either have pre-planned stories for youth to choose from or have them come up with their own. They then have to develop a 3-5 “Stage Picture” story. A stage picture is when the action is stopped, the actors are frozen, and the audience can tell the story from the picture on stage. The groups needs to tell the story with 3-5 stage pictures. When performing the story, the director says “Curtain Down” and the audience closes their eyes. The actors get into position for Stage Picture 1. Once the actors are in position, the director says “Curtain Up” and the audience opens their eyes. The director says “Curtain Down” and the audience closes their eyes. This continues until all of the stage pictures are shown. The audience then guesses the story the actors were telling.

Modifications: Divide the group into teams and have them create a “Stage Picture Story” for the same situation. Or, have a group start a situation with 2-3 stage pictures and then have the other group(s) finish the remaining scenes to see alternative endings.



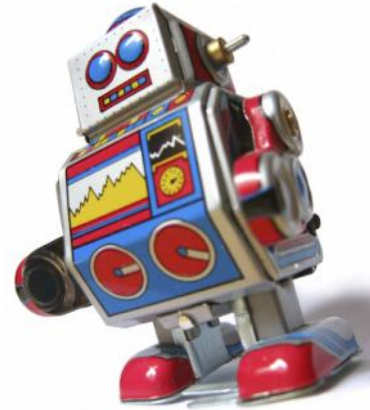
## Machines

Talk about machines and the rhythmic interlocking of parts machines have. Demonstrate a movement appropriate for a machine (e.g. your fist as a hammer moving up and down; arm moving as a saw). Start with one volunteer with a motion, but NO SOUND. The rest of the group members (or half if it's a large group) are to think of a motion that "connects" with the existing part of the machine. This continues until everyone have joined in.

Once everyone has joined in, have them add sound to the machine; ask them to speed up, slow down, move across the room, etc. Ask them what they think the machine does. The answers surprise you.



If the machine doesn't seem to be working or even if it does, start again with a new motion and a new machine.



## Human Sewing

**WARNING: PROPS NEEDED** - teaspoons tied with a LONG piece of string

Split the group into teams of 3 or more. The bigger the group, the crazier it gets!

Give each team a teaspoon with the long piece of string tied on it. The team has to “sew” themselves together. Someone starts with the spoon and threads it through their clothes and passes it to the next person. The spoon works its way around the group by threading the spoon down one person’s top and pants, then up the next person’s pants then top, etc. The goal is to thread the spoon through as many people in the time allowed (3-5 minutes). The group keeps threading until time is called, which means people may be sewn up multiple times! The group with the most people sewn wins!



Challenge: Line up the sewn groups and set-up a challenge for them to do where there is a prize, like a bag of candy for the group. The challenge could be racing through an obstacle course, inside or outside to a designated spot, etc. BE CREATIVE and the group will have FUN!

## I'm Going Hunting

Form a circle. One person starts the game by saying, "I'm going hunting and I'm taking an arrow" (or something else that starts with the letter "A"). The next person repeats what the first person said and then adds something new starting with the next letter of the alphabet, e.g., "I'm going hunting and I'm taking an arrow and a bow." Keep going around until someone cannot remember what he or she is taking. That person is out. The next person tries to complete the phrase and the game keeps going until only one person is left.

### Notes:

- You don't have to choose something that you normally take hunting. The object could be something silly or funny.
- If you think group members may have difficulty thinking of words on the spot, give them slips of paper with a letter and have them write down a word that starts with that letter. Then if someone is stuck, have them come up and pick the paper with the letter and that's what they are taking with them!



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Materials from:

- Crossways Camping Ministries
  - “It’s in the Backpack: On the Go Team Builders” by John de Montmollin, Kenosha County UW-Extension
  - Southern District Leadership Team Activity/Teambuilding Handbook, 2002
  - Team Building Activities, Menasha Afterschool Programs, 8/28/08
  - [www.jubed.com/youth\\_ministry](http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry)
- 

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