



calvin crest outdoor school initiatives



GROUP INITIATIVES UNIT

Contents:

INTRODUCTION	3-4
FACILITATOR GUIDELINES	4-6
INITIATIVES LESSON PLAN:	
Leadership Introduction	7
Activity #1: Name Game	7-10
Activity #2: Safety Contract	11-13
Activity #3: Minefield	13-15
Order of Remaining Initiatives	15
Outside Initiatives	
TP Shuffle/Ants on a Log	16-17
Incomplete Bridge	18-20
The Spider Web	20-22
The Wild Woozy	22-24
Shock Wave	24-26
Nitro Crossing	26-27
Miwok Walk	28- 29
***The Beam (8th Grade)	29-32
***The Wall (8th Grade)	32-34
***Faith Fall (8th Grade)	35-37
Inside/Outside Initiatives	
(Inside Option for TP Shuffle/Ants on a Log and The Spider Web)	
Ball Toss	38-39
Shark Tank	39-41
Mastermind	41-43
Human Knot	44-45
Marble Relay	45-46
Magic Carpet	47-48
Shrinking Circle	48-50
Icebreakers/Cool Down Activities	
Egg, Chicken, Dinosaur	50
Look Down, Look Up	51
Space in Between	51
GENERALIZATION AND TRANSFER	52-53
ACTIVITY DEBRIEF QUESTIONS	54-55
DEBRIEFING THUMBALL	56
INITIATIVES COURSE MAP	57

OBJECTIVES:

The student shall learn:

The importance of working together with others as part of a team.

How to responsible for his/her safety, as well as the safety of teammates.

How to have fun while being challenged, solving problems, and learning from mistakes.

How to risk embarrassment and be accepted or accept others for taking that risk.

MAJOR CONCEPTS:

- ~ Safety
- ~ Teamwork and interdependence
- ~ Encouragement and positive reinforcement
- ~ Trust
- ~ Team vs. individual success
- ~ Effort
- ~ Problem solving skills
- ~ Communication skills

MATERIALS NEEDED:

(Some materials and structures kept at initiative locations.)

- ~ Small plastic balls
- ~ Rubber chicken
- ~ Short rope lengths
- ~ Orange cones
- ~ Carpet squares
- ~ Rope
- ~ PVC pipe halves
- ~ Marble
- ~ Tarp
- ~ Debriefing Thumball

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES:

Rohnke, Karl. Quicksilver: Adventure Games, Initiative Problems, Trust Activities and a Guide to Effective Leadership, 1995.

Rohnke, Karl. Cowstails and Cobras II: A Guide to Games, Initiatives, Ropes Courses, & Adventure Curriculum, 1989.

GROUP INITIATIVES - INTRODUCTION:

The Group Initiatives course is unlike any of the other Outdoor Education courses. The purposes of the course are to: develop skills that enable individuals to work together to achieve common goals; to experience success as a team, not as individuals separate from others; to use problem solving skills to overcome obstacles; to foster an atmosphere that is positive and encourages the participation of every individual; to challenge every participant physically, mentally, and socially; and to have fun doing all of the activities.

The Group Initiatives course has elements that can be physically challenging, but no experience is necessary to participate in the activities. The guidelines for each activity explain: the challenge/goal of the activity; the procedures to follow; the safety considerations to be addressed; any commands that are necessary to give.

Each activity is challenging, and **none can be completed without cooperation from all team members**. It's necessary for every student to understand the importance of that concept. They must **all** work together; they must **all** help and encourage one another; they must **all** communicate well with one another - both as speakers and as listeners; they must **all** give 100% in order to accomplish their goals. If they do these things they will **all** experience success, and have a great time doing so.

The Group Initiatives course allows you, the teacher, to see your students in a different light, from how you normally see them in school. You will be able to see how well they communicate, cooperate, and encourage one another. The activities promote improved communication skills, particularly the vital skill of listening to others. Most of us like to have our point of view heard, but usually are not quite as willing to listen to others. These activities provide opportunities for learning that communication skill. Others, normally reluctant to speak out or express their viewpoints, have the opportunity - and need - to be encouraged to do so. One of the great joys of a course like this is to see a student who seldom speaks what's on his or her mind express an idea for solving a problem, have the others in a group try it - and find that it works. That's success at its best!

Your students also get to see you in a different light. Normally, you as the teacher, tend to tell them what to do, and how to do it. This is not the case in the group initiatives. Although you will definitely be tempted at times to "help them out" by making suggestions, please don't make the mistake of doing so. Allow them the experience of figuring out for themselves how to overcome the obstacles they face. Be an encourager, be a **safe** facilitator, but be willing to allow them to "fail." Actually, the only way to fail in this course is to fail to try. In fact, you will find that students may not be able to complete the objective of an

activity, but that does not constitute failure. They will have succeeded if they gave their best effort, if they communicated well, if they encouraged one another, if they laughed with each other, if they used problem solving skills to address the problem they faced. The emphasis of the course needs to be on the **processes** that take place, not on the achievement of the particular “goal” of each activity. You will have succeeded if you allow those processes to take place, and have a good time doing so, yourself. You will find this course a joyous, challenging, at times exasperating, rewarding course to offer your students.

Facilitator Guidelines:

It is vital for the success of this course that you take the term “Facilitator” to heart. Your responsibility in running this course is to ensure a safe and educational experience for your students. This is not a course where you, as the teacher, get to share all of your knowledge and insights with your students. In fact, it is essential for you to avoid doing that very thing. As noted above, you will succeed in this course if you allow the processes to take place that require your students to depend on each other, not on you, to successfully solve each problem given them.

Activity Orientation

Before a group participates in an initiative experience, the facilitator should spend a few moments getting to know the group members and briefly orienting them to the experience. This pre-activity time together involves both gathering and giving information. It is an extremely important time for establishing an appropriate climate and attitude for the activities. It must be approached with seriousness, but also with a spirit of adventure, excitement, and anticipation.

Activity Walk-Through

Prior to doing a particular course component, the facilitator should take time to explain the activity with all necessary safety rules.

Operational Procedures for Group Initiatives

Group initiatives are problem-solving activities that are accomplished through the combined effort of a group of 6-12 participants. Each employs an apparatus (component) in an activity designed by the facilitator to accomplish a particular objective or group of objectives. Objectives might include increased self-confidence, increased trust in others, cooperation towards a common goal, communication, teamwork, group building, and development of problem solving skills.

In leading the group towards the accomplishment of desired objectives, the facilitator may add his/her own ground rules to better achieve the objectives, or to adapt the activity to the specific needs of the group or individuals. Examples of ground rules a facilitator might add include:

- ◆ Role reversing
- ◆ No talking by anyone, or only certain persons may talk
- ◆ Blindfolds
- ◆ “Break” or limit the use of an arm or leg (for over-aggressive/dominant members).
- ◆ Other handicaps.

However the activity is structured, it is imperative that the facilitator place total responsibility for its completion on the group. The group members discuss the activity and then decide the “whats” and “how-tos” of doing the activity.

Throughout the activity, the facilitator’s primary responsibility is to maintain the safety of the participants. Therefore, even though the group is supposed to accomplish the task unaided by the facilitator, (s)he must address any safety problems that arise. Some responsibility for safety may be shared by the group. This can be done by asking such questions as “Is your procedure safe?” “Is it as safe as it could be?” “How can you make it safer?”; etc. The final question on safety, however, always falls to the facilitator.

Although each initiative component has its own set of safety rules and procedures, certain ones are common to all:

- ◆ Check the site for sharp or otherwise dangerous objects.
- ◆ Check overhead for possible “dead falls”.
- ◆ Remove all jewelry (sometimes including eyeglasses) and everything from the mouth and pockets.
- ◆ Check the component for stability and look for possible breaks, rot, and vandalism.
- ◆ Carry out your role as facilitator including:
 - ◆ Focus attention on the activity at all times (ignore all distractions).
 - ◆ Insist that participants follow all safety rules. Be consistent.
 - ◆ Position yourself close to the activity in case safety problems or emergencies arise.
 - ◆ Establish “**STOP!**” as a command to freeze, because something that is happening is not safe.
 - ◆ The responsibility of the facilitator is safety. (S)he should never be a participant in the initiative activity.
 - ◆ Establish and practice a clear sequence of spotting commands, by which everyone knows when spotting begins, and when it ends.

The facilitator's role is also to help prepare the group to process the experience. As the group deals with each component, various issues will surface. The facilitator should note these for discussion during the debriefing at the conclusion of the activity. The **Focus Questions** included with each activity description, as well as the questions included at the end of the unit, can serve as a basis for your debriefing. Again, it is up to the facilitator, and his/her goals for the group, to determine the most appropriate way in which to discuss the activities.

Group Size

If your group size exceeds 12 persons it is best to split your group into two smaller groups for each of the activities. When you do so, at each activity have one group attempt to solve the problem while the other sits to one side and quietly observes. The observers cannot make any comments to the active group. They should not give any suggestions or criticisms. They may discuss among themselves how they might undertake the solution of the problem, but their discussion must not interfere with, or distract, the other group. After giving the active team an appropriate (based on your judgement) amount of time, or number of attempts, to solve the problem, have teams change roles and let the second group try to solve the problem. Again, no comments should be made by the observers. If neither group succeeds and both groups want to try again, give them another opportunity. Again, success is a willingness to work together, not give up, and do their best. The only failure is the failure to make an effort. Note that with two groups you will not complete as many of the activities. That's o.k.

When you split the class into two groups, do so at each activity in a separate manner so that there is no competition among groups. The objective is not to see which is the best team. The objective is to work together no matter who you are with. Examples of ways to split groups could include (but not be limited to): boys and girls; numbering off by twos; line up by birthdays and then split the group in half; line up tallest to shortest and split the group in half (being tallest is not always an advantage); split the class into groups of 3 or 4, and then combine these groups in a manner you deem appropriate. The one way we would **NOT** recommend dividing groups is to allow students to choose. Inevitably, whoever is chosen last will feel left out and unwanted.

INITIATIVES - LESSON PLAN

Leadership Introduction

Introduction: "What the day will be about."

- A. Meeting challenges
- B. Working together
- C. Learning to be a leader

Requirements of being successful

- A. Effort - 100%
- B. Teamwork
- C. Communication - In order for good communication to take place there must be one person talking while the others listen.
- D. Characteristics of a good leader
 - 1. Ask group what they feel makes a good leader
 - 2. Introduce 3 R's & 3 F's
 - a. 3 R's = Respect, Responsibility, Resourcefulness
 - b. 3 F's = Fun, Fail, Forward (Let's have FUN. If you FAIL, it's o.k. get right back up, learn from failure/mistake, and move FORWARD toward goal.)

Activity #1: Name Games

Activity Overview

If you know all the students in your group and they all know one another, it is not necessary to do this activity. However, if you do not know all of the students' names, or if they don't know each other's names, this activity is extremely helpful as a starting point for this course. One of the most basic needs in communicating effectively is for individuals to know one another's names. This activity is an excellent way to make that happen. If all of the students do know one another, one of these activities could be helpful in establishing the importance of using names in effective communication.

Focus Questions

- 1. Can you name everyone else in your group?
- 2. Why is it important to know a person's name?
- 3. How do you feel when it seems everyone knows everyone except for you?

4. How does using the name of the person to whom you are speaking allow you to communicate more effectively?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity every student in the group should be able to:

1. Say the other students', cabin leader's and teacher's names correctly.
2. Understand that each of us appreciates others using our name correctly and that it shows consideration and respect toward others when we get to know their names correctly.
3. Know that others know his/her name.
4. Understand that getting to know a person's name is the first step towards getting to know that person.
5. Be able to use others' names in the activities that follow in this unit.

Time Required

10 - 15 minutes

Location

Near the climbing wall, in the open area uphill from the benches. Or wherever you start the Initiatives class.

Option 1: Who's Who??

In this activity, students will toss a ball to one another, saying the names of the persons to whom they are tossing. After catching the ball, the student who received it will continue the process by tossing it to someone else who has not yet had it. This continues until everyone has had it once. Continue, and complicate this process, and the fun really begins.

Materials

- Two balls
- Rubber chicken

What to Do

1. Get everyone, including yourself and your cabin leader(s), in a circle facing each other.
2. Explain that you would like to get to know everyone's name. Also, tell students that it will be very helpful for them to know each other's names.
3. Start with yourself, say your name, and then have each person say his/her name as you work your way around the entire circle. You may find it helpful to repeat each person's name as it is said.

4. Find out if anyone in the group thinks (s)he can say everyone else's names.
5. Explain that even though some of them may be able to do so, you can't and need help to remember names.
6. Introduce the "Who's Who?" Game.
7. Get a ball, say a person's name and toss it to him/her.
8. When that person has caught the ball, (s)he needs to say someone else's name and toss the ball to that person.
9. The goal for them is to toss the ball to every person in the group without anyone receiving the ball twice. If the ball is tossed to a person a second time before all have received it, return the ball to the last person who tossed it and have that person pick another person/name to whom (s)he will toss it.
10. Make sure everyone gets the ball once before it comes back to you.
11. Repeat the activity, but speed it up this time. Encourage them to toss it to someone they don't really know.
12. Do this a third time, only part way through the process, toss in another ball. The first ball should continue being tossed, but now you will have two balls going. At this point in the activity it is alright to toss a ball to someone who has already received a ball. Now the goal has changed to keeping both balls going as rapidly as possible, remembering that each time a person receives one of the balls (s)he must call out another name before tossing it to the person named.
13. While these two balls are being tossed around, add the rubber chicken to the activity. Everyone always gets a kick out of the chicken. It adds to the fun and also requires people to keep up with the game and learn names.
14. When it appears that most of the group has learned others' names collect the three objects you've been tossing.
15. Explain that now we'll go around the circle again, only this time none of you will say your own name. When it comes to you, **everyone else** will say your name. Then everyone else will say the name of the person next to you (except that person) and so on. This will reinforce names you're not certain of yet.
16. Now have everyone in the circle change places with others in the circle. Repeat step 15. This is a good way to be sure everyone is learning names to match faces.

Option 2: Name Circle

In this activity, everyone stands in a circle and says their name and performs an action to go with their name. Then the whole circle repeats the name and the action together. After the next person says their name and action it is repeated by the group along with the names and actions of the previous students. By the end of the circle everyone should be able to say the name and perform the action of everyone in the circle.

Materials

None

What to Do

1. Get everyone, including yourself and your cabin leader(s), in a circle facing each other.
2. Explain that you would like to get to know everyone's name. Also, tell students that it will be very helpful for them to know each other's names.
3. Say your name and perform an action that you want to be associated with your name.
4. After you have said your name have the whole class repeat your name and action.
5. Move to the student to your left and have them say their name and perform an action.
6. After they have finished, have the group say the students name and perform their action, then have the group repeat your name and action.
7. Continue around the circle like this until everyone has said their name and performed their action.
8. Explain that now we'll go around the circle again, only this time none of you will say your own name. When it comes to you, **everyone else** will say your name. Then everyone else will say the name of the person next to you (except that person) and so on. This will reinforce names you're not certain of yet.
9. Now have everyone in the circle change places with others in the circle. Repeat step 9. This is a good way to be sure everyone is learning names to match faces.

*Variations of the action used in this activity could be:

- Favorite animal
- Favorite physical activity
- Anything else you can think of

Activity #2: Safety Contract

Activity Overview

Students will enter into a contract with one another and with you regarding the activities they'll be participating in. They will hear the terms of the contract, respond affirmatively to the conditions, and be bound to carry out their part of the contract. You will inform them as to your responsibilities under the terms of the contract and guarantee that you will fulfill your duties contained in the contract.

Focus Questions

1. What is a contract, and how does it affect the parties who agree to its terms?
2. Why is it necessary to specify the terms of the contract?
3. What might happen if one of you fails to fulfill your responsibilities?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity every student in the group should be able to:

1. Explain his/her obligation under the terms of the contract.
2. Understand that anyone who agrees to a contract is obligated to fulfill his/her part of the contract.
3. Depend upon the other people in the group to fulfill his/her part of the contract and do their best to complete the objectives of the activity.
4. Understand that (s)he should be able to count on everyone in the group to participate fully.
5. Have confidence that the person in charge will be responsible for the safety of all participants.

Terms

Contract: a binding agreement between two or more persons or parties.

Obligation: a commitment, something that one is bound to do.

Materials

None

Time Required

5 - 8 minutes

Location

Same location as “Name Game” activity

What to Do

1. Everyone in the group needs to be able to see each other (form a circle).
2. Explain that the group environment is a safe environment.
 - ◆ We can speak honestly and openly with each other.
 - ◆ We can explore feelings and learning associated with each experience.
 - ◆ We can listen and receive constructive feedback from others.
3. Explain to students that they will be undertaking a variety of physical challenges as they work together to solve problems and overcome obstacles. Further explain that in order for them to do so safely and successfully, it is necessary for them to enter a contract with one another and with you.
4. Ask students for a definition of the term contract. Accept all answers and use them for a discussion to ensure that everyone understands what a contract is.
5. Explain that although most contracts are now written on paper, contracts can be entered into simply by having all parties agree to the terms given.
6. Ask for a definition of the term obligation. Again, use answers as a basis for discussion, and be sure that everyone understands that if they agree to the terms they are bound to carry out their part of the contract.
7. Assure them you will carry out your obligations under the terms of the contract.
8. Here are the ground rules for success in the initiatives.

Let's define success:

 - ◆ Group success, not individual success
 - ◆ All members cooperate with each other
 - ◆ Group decision making
 - ◆ Practice team work.
9. Go over the conditions of the contract, one at a time, and after saying each condition, ask the students if they will agree to the terms. They **all** need to respond with a verbal “Yes” before you go on to the next condition.

All students must agree to:

 - A. Try new things.
 - B. Practice safety.
 - C. Participate fully; give a 100% effort.
 - D. Be willing to risk (embarrassment, not being able to successfully complete the task at hand, or the immediate action undertaken). ***It is perfectly alright and acceptable to try something and not succeed; it's not acceptable to not try because you think you might not succeed.

- E. Encourage one another, make positive comments.
- F. Not make any put downs or negative comments to others, or yourself.
- G. Work together to solve problems faced by the team.
- H. Communicate with other team members by offering suggestions, and by listening to their ideas.
- I. Immediately stop whatever they're doing upon hearing the teacher/facilitator say "Stop!"
- J. Follow any guidelines given for each activity they will participate in.

The facilitator/teacher must agree to:

- A. Ensure that all participants will be safe throughout the course.
- B. Act as a spotter for each activity to ensure falling students are not injured.
- C. Say "Stop!" immediately if (s)he observes any unsafe conditions.

10. After they have agreed to do their part, you need to do the same about your obligations.

Spotting

Be certain cabin leaders (and students who help spot on other activities) use correct techniques when spotting:

- ◆ Make sure knees are bent, one leg is forward, one back.
- ◆ Both hands are held palm forward, shoulder height, elbows are bent.
- ◆ Face straight ahead with head slightly back.
- ◆ Have a volunteer stand on the platform, and fall back towards you.
- ◆ Break the person's fall with your hands, and make sure the faller gets safely to the ground.

Activity #3: Minefield - Leadership Introduction

Activity Overview

In this activity, students are given the task of crossing a minefield at three different times, and in three different ways. They will try to cross alone, blind, and as partners. If they step on a land mine, touch another person/team, or step outside the boundaries they will blow up and die. The goal is to not die. Each time they try to cross there is a lesson to be learned. The minefield activity is designed to give students an introduction to initiatives and especially the concept of taking responsibility for one's own actions which can then transition into taking responsibility for the actions of others (the two levels of leadership).

Focus Questions

1. Why is it important to think for yourself?
2. Where you able to get across safely when you were unable to see? Why or why not?
3. What changed to make it possible to get across while not seeing?
4. Are there people in your life you trust? And what makes them different than others you don't trust?

Materials

- 30 balls of assorted colors
- 15-20 blue rope sections
- 4 orange cones

Time Required

20-30 minutes

Location

Same location as previous activities.

What to Do

1. Set up 4 cones to form border of square ~ 20' X 20' (smaller if inside a building)
2. Arrange balls and ropes randomly throughout the square to form a minefield.
3. Divide students into 2 even-sized groups facing one another from opposite ends of minefield.
4. Remind students of 3 R's (responsibility, respect, resourcefulness)
5. Introduce concept of **"Stage 1" Leadership: students can make good decisions for themselves.**
 - ◆ Have students maneuver from one end of minefield to other without touching a mine or another person.
 - a. Point out individuals who diligently complete this task.
 - b. Focus on 3 R's and how they came into play.
6. Students repeat procedure, however, this time have them start with eyes closed, and run. Set it up so that they know you are serious. Say, "Go!" then as soon as they start to move, IMMEDIATELY stop them.
 - ◆ Point out that all who began to move made a decision that is uncharacteristic of a "Stage 1" leader - makes good decisions for themselves."
 - ◆ Relate this experience to real life situations that result from not being a good "Stage 1" leader:
 - a. Smoking - over 400,000 people die every year from smoking; over 52,000

- die from second-hand smoke.
 - b. Strangers approaching you and “inviting” you in, or offering you something to get you to go with them.
 - c. Drugs, alcohol, friends who make bad choices
 - d. “Just say ‘No’” is good “Stage 1” decision-making.
7. Introduce concept of **“Stage 2” Leadership: I can help make good decisions for someone else.**
 8. “Trust Walk”: At minefield pair all students up, having one partner stand behind the other. Student in front will have eyes closed, student in back (Guide) will practice “Stage 2” skills.
 9. Guide will take front students through minefield by gaining their TRUST, and COMMUNICATING. Student in front must TRUST and LISTEN.
 - ◆ Before switching roles, ask questions about how students felt and why. Look for words such as “safe, comfortable, trusted, good directions,” etc.

Order of Remaining Initiatives

As you take your students through the initiatives course you have a variety of options as to which activities to do and in which order you should do them. You will develop a feel for which activities fit best into your plans, and you may even find that as you observe student interaction and teamwork (or the lack thereof), you may change your plans as to which activities to do. That’s perfectly o.k. You be the judge as to what your students are capable of, while allowing them the opportunity to surprise you with their resourcefulness.

Please feel free to try any of the options you want, with the understanding that we do not want to have 6th graders do the Faith Fall or the other 8th grade options. You do not need to complete all of the activities. In fact, it is probably more realistic to limit yourself to 4 - 5 events, and use more time for reflecting and evaluating after each event in order to improve communication skills, leadership development, problem solving skills, and overall cooperation. Make the Group Initiatives course fit your group’s needs and goals.

The following pages provide descriptions of each of the activities.

Outside Initiatives Course

TP Shuffle/Ants on a Log

Activity Overview

The above initials stand for “Telephone Pole” shuffle. In this activity the group stands on a log that is lying on the ground. The group is divided in half and each group tries to get to the opposite end of the log from where they started. Those who start out in the middle must move past the opposing team and end up on the opposite end of the log. Their team must end up lined up behind them in the same order as they started. See the diagram below:



The students must make these position changes without anyone in the entire group touching the ground. Students are not allowed to step on the support logs either. If anyone touches the ground or the support logs, the whole group must start over, or the individual who fell must start over at the end of their half of the line. This activity breeds lots of laughter and group togetherness through physical closeness and touching. It also helps sixth graders deal with their perceptions about how terrible it is to work together with a person of the opposite gender. This is a very challenging activity. If students are having too much difficulty, you may change the guidelines to allow 3 touches before penalizing a team. Also, if you have more than 14 students in your group you may want to split into two groups. One group can help out as spotters while the other group is working on the problem. Spotting is very important in this activity. Spotters need to be in position on both sides of the log.

Focus Questions

1. Does it make any difference in what order we line up?
2. What is the most effective way two students can move past each other without falling off the log?
3. Is everyone getting a chance to offer suggestions, and are we all listening to those suggestions?
4. Do gender biases prevent us from working effectively together, and if so, how can we overcome those problems?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Describe the most effective way for two people to move past one another.
2. Explain why good communication is essential in completing an activity like this.
3. Explain how biases prevent us from working effectively together, and how they limit our understanding of others.
4. Describe the importance of teamwork in problem solving.

Materials

- Log

Time Required

15-20 minutes

Location

Large log on the ground near the archery range 200 feet uphill from the climbing wall.

Goal

Have all members of both teams exchange places without touching the ground.

What to Do

1. If you have more than 14 people in your class, divide into two groups.
2. Split each group in to two teams. Have the teams line up as in the diagram above.
3. Explain the scenario as outlined in the Activity Overview.
4. Station yourself and your cabin leader(s) in positions to spot effectively.
5. Have students try to solve the problem without falling off the log.
6. If you do have two groups, remind the observing group that they can make no comments to the active group (or use them as spotters).
7. After an appropriate amount of time, or a predetermined number of attempts, have the two groups switch (the observers now get an opportunity).
8. When the groups have been successful, or after about 20 minutes, end the activity. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

The Incomplete Bridge

Activity Overview

This component is made up of three separate platforms set in line with one another, with an 8 foot space between each platform and the next. Each platform is approximately 6-12 inches above the ground. The center platform has a surface area approximately one fourth the surface area of the end platforms. The group must work together to get from one end platform to the other end without touching the ground. The only props that may be used are two boards, (7 feet long and 4 feet long) neither of which is long enough in itself to span the gulf between the platforms. This is an excellent initiative for developing and/or discovering communication patterns and for observing problem solving capabilities within a group. For some groups, this activity could be done in silence. Oftentimes in this initiative one or two people tend to take over and lead the rest of the group. Sometimes it is helpful to “handicap” these individuals. Perhaps they have broken legs or arms, or maybe they are unable to speak - the choice is up to you. The facilitator and cabin leaders must be alert to spot the group carefully during this initiative. Spotters need to be on both sides of the two boards acting as bridges as many students fall during this activity.

Guidelines are as follows:

1. The entire group must move from platform “A” to “B” to “C” without touching the ground. The two end platforms can be described as shorelines, while the center platform represents an island in the middle of a raging river.
2. The two boards provided are the only two props that may be used. No belts, ropes, pants, shirts, etc. may be used to complete this activity.
3. Neither board nor any participant may touch the ground at any time. (Exception - the area to the sides and the back of the two end platforms are on shore and are safe zones. However, the shorelines extend in infinite straight lines beyond the front edges of the platforms. No one may step beyond these lines, or that person will be swept away in the raging torrent.
4. If a board is dropped to the ground (even if only one end has come into contact with the ground), or if a group member should step or fall off a platform or section of the “bridge”, it constitutes the end of one attempt for the entire group. The facilitator can have the group resume the activity right where they are, can have the person who touched the ground return to the starting platform, or can have the entire group start over. An arbitrary limit of 3 attempts may be set by the facilitator.

Focus Questions

1. What is the most effective way to get from one platform to the next?
2. What is the most efficient way to use the two boards?
3. How important is the order of persons crossing the raging river?
4. How important is it to be willing to listen to new ideas, even if they sound farfetched?
5. How can knowledge of simple machines be useful in solving this problem?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Describe the most effective use of the two boards to facilitate the crossing.
2. Describe how scientific principles involving simple machines can help solve this type of problem.
3. Explain why clear, effective communication, observation, evaluation, and creativity are necessary for group problem solving.
4. Explain why the most vocal leaders are not always the best leaders.
5. Understand that each student's full participation is essential for the team to succeed in its task.

Materials

- 3 Platforms
- 2 Boards

Time Required

30 minutes or more

Location

50 feet beyond the log for Ants on a Log, next to the archery range.

Goal

To get everyone on the team from one large platform to the other, via the smaller center platform, without touching the ground.

What to Do

1. Divide the class into two groups if you have more than 12 students (follow guidelines as before).
2. Have one group get on platform "A", the one closest to the archery range.

3. Have the other group (observers) sit on the benches nearby.
4. Present the scenario described in the Activity Overview. Go over the guidelines.
5. Have the teams take turns attempting to solve the problem presented.
6. Be certain to spot carefully. The boards used to construct the bridge can shift suddenly and you must always be prepared for falls. Stay close to the participants.
7. Give each team several opportunities to cross the river. Students really get into the challenge of this activity, so let them do their best. At the same time, don't let it drag on indefinitely.
8. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

The Spider Web

Activity Overview

The objective of this activity is to transport each member of the group through an opening in the Spider Web without shaking the web, ringing the bell, and waking the venomous spider. If it awakens it will inject its venom in the hapless victim and the victim will die. The results of such a death are detailed in the guidelines that follow. This initiative has the potential for injury since individuals are being lifted entirely off the ground by the group. At least one part of them might possibly be unsupported for a short period of time on one side or the other of the web. Therefore, the facilitator should take great care that proper spotting and safety are ensured. The guidelines are below:

1. The group may use each hole in the web a specified number of times as determined by the facilitator (usually each hole is used only once or twice).
2. No one may go under the bottom rope, over the top rope, or outside of the side ropes of the web.
3. No props may be used.
4. If any participant touches the ropes with enough force to ring the bell and awaken the spider, it constitutes the end of one attempt. The entire group must start over from the beginning, or as an alternative, that particular individual must start over.
5. Careful spotting is essential! This is potentially one of the most dangerous group initiatives. Team members not helping lift an individual should be helping spot, as should the facilitator and cabin leader(s).
6. "Ghost spotters" (i.e. an individual or two who spots, but does not physically assist the participant going through the web) must be used at the beginning and end of the

activity for the first and last persons passed through the web. The facilitator may assist as a ghost spotter if the group isn't large enough to supply their own.

7. Participants are not allowed to dive through the web, or stand on anyone else's back or shoulders in order to get through the web.
8. Once an individual has gotten through the web, they must spot and help support the weight of the other participants being passed through the web.
9. This activity can be done as one large group, or you can split the class into two teams as in previous activities.

Focus Questions

1. What is the most effective way to pass the individuals through the web?
2. How important is size in making our decision as to what order we should go in?
3. How can we best prevent anyone from being dropped or injured in this activity?
4. How can we best communicate with one another as we carry out this activity?
5. If we are not successful at first, how can we learn from our mistakes and have greater success in future efforts?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Explain the importance of proper spotting and maintaining the safety of both teammates and themselves.
2. Describe the necessity of being a responsible teammate.
3. Understand the value of trust in a relationship.
4. Understand the necessity of effective communication (with both talking and listening.)
4. Describe the necessity of working together in order to achieve success.

Materials

- Spider Web
- Bell

Location

About 50 feet downhill from the TP Shuffle log, near the climbing wall

Time Required

15 - 20 minutes

Goal

Get all students safely through the spider web without shaking the web, ringing the bell, waking the venomous spider, and becoming hapless victims.

What to Do

1. Determine whether or not you will divide your class into two groups. If so, the second group can act as spotters, or can observe. Switch roles when appropriate.
2. Describe the scenario as presented in the Activity Overview.
3. Stress the importance of proper spotting, and demonstrate the proper technique to ensure students can do so safely.
4. Have the students participate in the activity.
5. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

The Wild Woozy

Activity Overview

This activity utilizes a cable stretched between three trees forming a horizontal V shape, and a rope that is suspended from one of those trees. The point of the V is attached in such a way that movement on either side of the cable affects the other arm of the V, and the person(s) on it. Students work with partners to travel as far as they can on the cable without falling off. The activity provides opportunities to develop teamwork and trust, and to understand the phrase, "Lean on me." Total interdependence is the key to success.

Focus Questions

1. How can two people work together most effectively to overcome this problem?
2. Does the size of the partners make a difference?
3. Do you trust your partner completely?
4. Should your partner be able to trust you?
5. After your first attempt, how could you improve your performance?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Explain why two people must fully cooperate to successfully complete this task.
2. Describe the positive aspects of trust, and the negative aspects of lack of trust in a relationship.
3. Explain why careful observation is a valuable learning tool.
4. Explain why the only failure is a failure to try.

Materials

- Cable attached to three trees
- Rope

Location

About 15 feet downhill from Incomplete Bridge next to archery range.

Time Required

15 - 20 minutes

Goal

Students work with partners to walk on the cable from the point of “V” as far as possible towards the two trees at the opposite end.

What to Do

1. Have all students form a line by the tree with the rope suspended from it. The line should extend uphill away from the cable.
2. With you and your cabin leader(s) acting as spotters, have each student attempt to cross the cable from that tree to the tree forming the point of the V using the rope as a balancing aid. Students should keep their feet perpendicular to the length of the cable, so as to minimize “splits” type falls. Spot carefully, falls are usually most critical on the downhill side of the cable.
3. After all students have made an attempt to cross that cable, inform them that they were simply getting practice balancing on a cable.
4. Inform the students that each of them needs to pick a partner to work with on this next challenge. If there are an odd number of students, the person left over can become a partner with one of the groups of two and they can take turns.
5. Have the partners now line up by the tree at the V, again forming a line extending uphill away from the cables.

6. Describe the challenge before them:
 - ◆ Each of them needs to get on the cable, one on each side of the V. They will start out at the point of the V.
 - ◆ Their goal is to see how far they can work their way out on the cables away from the point of the V. There is no end line; they are to go as far as they possibly can before falling off or touching the ground.
 - ◆ They cannot use the tree or the rope to assist them, they must depend on each other.
7. The most effective way to spot this part of the activity is to have spotters on the outside of the two cables, and one person in between the cables. The person in the middle should bend over at the waist, keep head down and brace himself/herself with hands on knees, and walk between the two students as they move along the cables.
8. Most falls are inward on this event, thus the person in the middle acts as a cushion to minimize the impact of falls.
9. Have all teams attempt the cable walk. Allow a second chance if time permits.
10. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Shock Wave

Activity Overview

This activity utilizes the same area as the Wild Woozy. The cable stretched between three trees forming a horizontal V shape, and a rope that is suspended from one of those trees. Students must work together to get everyone out of the inside of the enclosure. All students must stay connected to one another through the entire activity and no one may touch the cable or rope. Interdependence is the key to success in this activity as well.

Focus Questions

1. What is the most effective way to accomplish this task?
2. How do you make sure no one touches the electric fence?
3. How do you give support to the person crossing over the electric fence without breaking the chain?

Goals

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Describe the most effective to get everyone out of the enclosure.
2. Understand the importance of teamwork and helping one another to accomplish a task.
3. Explain why good communication is essential in completing an activity such as this.

Materials

- Cable attached to three trees
- Rope

Location

About 15 feet downhill from Incomplete Bridge next to archery range. (Same site as Wild Woozy)

Time

15 - 20 minutes

Goal

Students must work as a team to get everyone out of the enclosure formed by the cable on all three sides. They must do so while being “connected to one another” and without touching the cable.

What to Do

1. Remind students of the need to communicate effectively, plan well, work together, and be safety-conscious throughout the activity.
2. Describe the objective and give guidelines/rules as follows:
 - A. Describe a scenario (cattle in a pen trying to escape, P.O.W.s trying to escape, etc.). The only barrier is an “electric fence” (the cable). Anyone touching the fence is electrocuted. The team gets 3 “deaths” to get everyone out. Any person suffering death by touching the cables must go back inside the enclosure.
 - B. Students can help one another over the barrier (The rope). No one can go under it, and no one can use the trees for support. No props are allowed.
 - C. Students must maintain continuous contact with one another (the team must form one long continuous chain (electrical wire). If the contact is broken by someone letting go (etc.), the line shorts out and a “death” occurs. Contact can be hand-to-hand, or hand-to-shoulder, or whatever else (within reason) as long as physical contact is maintained.

- D. Teacher and cabin leader(s) act as spotters on either side of student trying to get out of the enclosure.
 - E. No running or jumping over the rope - someone will get hurt.
3. Carry out the activity
 4. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Nitro Crossing

Activity Overview

In this activity, students will attempt to swing across a “nitroglycerin-filled abyss” to a safe zone (platform) on the far side. If they touch the ground, not only are they blown to smithereens, but they must return to the starting point, along with anyone who has already made it safely across. While this activity requires each individual to make it across the abyss alone, it requires a team effort on everyone’s part to be successful. Problem solving, communication, perseverance, and cooperation are focused on in this activity. (Most students love this!)

Focus Questions

1. How do we get the rope?
2. How do I overcome my fear of not making it? (There is no shame in being afraid.)
3. How can we help our teammates be successful in this activity?
4. How can I encourage the person who is hesitant to try?
5. What is the best thing about being a part of a team in an activity like this?
6. How can I apply what I’ve learned here in other situations?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Understand the importance of trying creative approaches to seemingly difficult obstacles and that problems that appear impossible to solve often have simple solutions, though those solutions may be hard to see.
2. Express the value of encouragement and support from teammates.
3. Explain why it is o.k. not to be successful when you attempt a difficult feat.
4. Explain the importance of not giving up, but rather persevering.
5. Explain why group success is more satisfying than individual success.

Materials

- Rope suspended from cable
- Platform
- 4"x4" board set in the ground

Location

Downhill about 100 feet from the low climbing wall to the left of the power line

Time Required

20 - 30 minutes

Goal

Get all students from behind the boundary beam across the "nitroglycerin filled abyss" to the safe zone (platform) on the far side of the abyss.

What to Do

1. Get everyone in the area on the side of the 4"x4" board that is away from the platform. This 4"x4" represents the shoreline next to the nitro-filled abyss.
2. The objective is to get the entire group on the platform at the same time.
3. The only way to get onto the platform is to use the rope to swing across the space between the board and the platform without touching the ground.
4. Only one person can swing at a time.
5. No other props may be used besides the rope. No belts, shirts, branches, poles.
6. Students must figure out how to get the rope, do not give it to them.
7. **No one is allowed to run and jump for the rope. That is dangerous.**
8. Spotters need to be on either side of the rope as each person is swinging.
9. Students who have made it safely to the platform can assist the one who is swinging to the platform, but cannot step off the platform, or touch the ground. If they do so, they'll contact the nitroglycerin - and you know what that means!
10. The team gets 3 "deaths" to get everyone across. Upon the third death everyone who has already safely made it across to the platform must return to the other side of the beam and start again.
11. If you have more than 12 students, this activity should be done in two groups.
12. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Miwok Walk

Activity Overview

This activity utilizes a cable that is stretched out around a group of trees so as to form a trapezoidal type route the students will attempt to maneuver. The objective is to get everyone from the starting point all the way around the course to the ending point without anyone touching the ground. Students can touch the trees, and one another to traverse the course, but can use no props to aid them. This activity brings out the need to work together, to develop strategies, to encourage one another, and especially focuses on interdependence.

Focus Questions

1. What is the best method for getting all the way around the course?
2. Can one person make it on his/her own, or is it better to work interdependently?
3. How do my actions affect others in the group?
4. Why is good communication as important as physical agility in accomplishing the team's goals in this activity?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Explain the necessity of helping one another to achieve greater success than is possible attempting some things alone.
2. Describe the benefits of interdependence.
3. Describe how their actions can have a positive or negative affect on others.

Materials

- Cable attached to a group of trees forming a rough rectangular design

Location

Downhill about 75 feet from the climbing wall

Time Required

15 - 20 minutes, or longer

Goal

Get all of the students from the starting point all the way around the course to the ending point without anyone touching the ground.

What to Do

1. Have all of the students form a line by the uppermost tree at the small end of the trapezoid (the upper right-hand tree, if you are standing uphill from the cables looking down at them).
2. Explain that the objective of this activity is for the entire group to walk on the cables from this beginning point completely around the course and back to the same tree. They are to move in a counterclockwise direction, beginning with the shortest section between trees, finishing with the longest section between trees.
3. They can use no props, but may hold on to trees as they reach them, and they may hold on to one another.
4. If a person falls off, or touches the ground, (s)he must return to the starting point and get in the back of the line of those waiting to try the course.
5. Tell them that before they start, you will give them two minutes to develop a strategy as a team.
6. Before they are ready to begin, be sure to have spotters in place.
7. This activity works most successfully by splitting larger groups into two teams. While one team is making its attempt to negotiate the course the other team can help out as spotters.
8. It is most important to have spotters on the downhill sides of the cables as that is where the falls could be most serious. Remind spotters of proper spotting techniques.
9. After a predetermined number of touches (5-7 [lots of falls will occur]), have teams switch roles.
10. Allow each team several attempts to complete the course.
11. Remind them of the need for careful observations, and for effective communication and problem solving skills.
12. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

The Beam (8th Grade and Older)**

Activity Overview

The beam is an 8-10 foot long log attached between two trees, parallel to and approximately 7-8 feet above the ground. The objective is to get the entire group safely up and over the beam, and onto the ground on the other side. This is an excellent initiative to help groups develop planning and problem solving skills, as well as group cooperation,

trust, and support. While everyone can, and in fact should, help, have the strongest do the majority of the “grunt work” (i.e. lifting, assisting from the log [beam], etc.). Safety procedures must be followed to prevent injury.

Focus Questions

1. What is the most effective way to get everyone over the beam?
2. What safety measures can we take to be sure that no one will get hurt?
3. What factors do we need to consider as far as physical characteristics of our team members, and how do we address those concerns?
4. How can we be sure we are communicating effectively as we undertake this task?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Explain the importance of preplanning and taking into account the consequences (both good and bad) of decisions and actions we take.
2. Describe the value of observation, evaluation, and making changes as needed to ensure success in any undertaking.
3. Express the importance and value of effective communication.
4. Take pride in effective teamwork.
5. Explain the importance of trust in a relationship.
6. Know the satisfaction of being a responsible, trustworthy team member.

Materials

- Suspended beam between two trees

Location

Downhill about 20 feet from the Nitro Crossing activity

Time Required

20 -30 minutes

Goal

Get the entire team **safely** up and over the beam and onto ground on the other side.

What to Do

1. Emphasize the **EXTREME IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY** in this activity. Review, demonstrate proper spotting techniques, and stress that if students aren't actually helping lift someone, or helping let someone down, they must be spotting. (Team #1 acts as spotters for team #2, and team #2 acts as spotters for team #1.)
2. Emphasize importance of planning effective strategies before attempting to overcome the challenge. Good communication is **ESSENTIAL**.
3. Climbers must be spotted 360° at all times by the entire group until their legs are locked around the log, or they are safely back on the ground.
 - A. It is essential that spotters are 360° around the climber, as well as directly beneath them as they climb.
 - B. Spotters must take care to protect themselves since there is a great potential to be kicked by the climber.
 - C. Anytime there is motion on the beam, everyone on the ground must be spotting.
4. Spotting commands must be used by the climber (C) and the spotters (S):

C: "Spotters ready?"
S: "Ready?"
C: "Climbing?"
S: "Climb on!"
C: "Set!" (This command used by the climber when both legs are locked around the log.)
5. The same set of commands needs to be used when the climber is dismounting from the log.
6. To dismount, the climber should swing his/her legs over the beam while going to their stomach and allow the group to lower them to the ground. **NEVER ALLOW CLIMBER TO JUMP!**
4. There must be a maximum of two participants assisting from the beam at any one time:
 - A. Legs must be locked beneath the beam and another participant below must spot them by holding their feet.
 - B. Their heads must not go below their waists.
 - C. If their legs come unlocked with no one spotting them, the facilitator must say, "Stop!" and everyone must get down and start over again.

Safety is imperative - no exceptions.

5. The trees that the beam is attached to cannot be used for support, or as an aid for anyone getting onto, or off of, the beam.
6. Props and human pyramids are not allowed.
7. Once a participant has gone over the beam and reached the ground on the other side, they may not physically assist remaining climbers in their attempts to get up to the

beam. They may help lower climbers to the ground on their side of the beam, as this is considered spotting.

8. Remember to switch teams either based on 3 “deaths”/falls or after a predetermined time limit.
9. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

The Wall (8th Grade and Older)**

Activity Overview

The object of this activity is to get the entire group safely over a twelve foot high wooden structure. This is an excellent initiative to help groups develop planning and problem solving skills, as well as group cooperation, trust, and support. Starting on the smooth surface of the wall, the group members help each other go up and over it while observing the safety guidelines.

Focus Questions

1. How can we get our entire group up and over this wall?
2. What safety measures can we take to be sure that no one will get hurt?
3. What factors do we need to consider as far as physical characteristics of our team members, and how do we address those concerns?
4. How can we be sure we are communicating effectively as we undertake this task?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Explain the importance of preplanning and taking into account the consequences (both good and bad) of decisions and actions we take.
2. Describe the value of observation, evaluation, and making changes as needed to ensure success in any undertaking.
3. Express the importance and value of effective communication.
4. Take pride in effective teamwork.
5. Explain the importance of being a trustworthy team member and the value of trust in a group situation.

Materials

- The wall

Location

Downhill about 50 feet from the low climbing wall.

Time Required

20 -30 minutes

Goal

Get the entire group safely over the 12-foot high wooden structure.

What to Do

1. Emphasize the **EXTREME IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY** in this activity. Review, demonstrate proper spotting techniques, and stress that if students aren't actually helping lift someone they must be spotting.
2. Emphasize importance of planning effective strategies before attempting to overcome the challenge. Good communication is **ESSENTIAL**.
3. Attempt the activity as entire class or split group into two teams. If splitting class, one team gets 3 attempts (falls) as the other team acts as spotters. Then the teams switch roles.
4. Climbers must be spotted at all times by the entire group until both feet are on the platform on the backside of the wall.
5. The following series of commands must be used by the climber (c) and the spotters (s):
 - C: "Spotters ready?"
 - S: "Ready!"
 - C: "Climbing?"
 - S: "Climb on!"
 - C: "Set!" (This command is used by the climber when both feet are firmly planted on the platform.)
6. Responsibilities of the climber:
 - A. No fingers in cracks or holes in the wall.
 - B. Stay on the face of the wall. No climbing up the sides.
 - C. The head must be higher than the feet and knees at all times. **NO** hanging upside down.
 - D. No walking or running up the face of the wall. (Demonstrate spring effect of climber walking on the face of the wall.)

- E. Only one participant climbing up the face or down the ladder on the backside at a time.
4. There should be a maximum of two participants assisting from the platform at any one time. Their feet must be on the platform and their hands may not go lower than their knees. The people on the platform must watch their safety since they are not spotted.
 5. No props such as belts, pants, ropes, tree limbs, etc. may be used.
 6. Human pyramids and stepping on backs are not permitted.
 7. Spotters must spot 180° tight to the wall, and out in front of the wall, and watch for pendulum falls.
 8. Discuss the three types of falls (i.e. straight down, pendulum to the left or right, or out away from the wall.)
 9. The entire group is responsible for spotting the climbers on the face of the wall, as well as when they come down the back side. The above set of commands must be used on the back side as well as on the front.
 10. Spotting procedures:
 - A. All participants not climbing, assisting the climber, or on the platform, must be spotting.
 - B. Spotters must keep one hand in front of their faces to protect against kicking feet and falling dirt. The other hand should follow the climbers as they climb in order to be able to help catch them should they fall.
 - C. If one participant is not spotting, the activity should be stopped and the entire group must start over from the beginning. The emphasis is on safety first with the climber being spotted at all times while off the ground.
 11. The facilitator should position himself/herself so as to monitor safety at all times. This includes watching spotting on the back side as well as the front, and being close to the group in case backup spotting is needed. Cabin leader(s) should likewise be available.
 12. Once a participant has gone over the wall and has touched the ground on the back side, (s)he cannot physically assist any other climber in getting up the wall. However, (s)he must help spot other climbers at all times.
 13. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Faith Fall (8th Grade and Older)**

Activity Overview

As the name implies, this is an exercise in building faith/trust within a group, as well as within each individual. The procedure involves falling backwards from a waist - chest high platform into the outstretched arms of the group below. Although potentially one of the most dangerous initiatives, this activity has the potential to build a great deal of trust and cooperation within a group to a degree that few other initiatives can achieve. Care and support are the key ingredients the facilitator provides to make this a successful activity.

Focus Questions

1. How much do I trust my teammates?
2. How well can I carry out my responsibility to help catch a falling teammate?
3. Can we work and communicate well enough as a team to help everyone successfully complete the Faith Fall?
4. How can we apply this experience to other situations we might face at home?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Work well together as a responsible, trustworthy team.
2. Explain the importance of trusting others in order to achieve a difficult, and frightening objective.
3. Explain the importance of being responsible and trustworthy, and following safety procedures exactly.
4. Describe the value of encouragement and interdependence.

Materials

Retaining wall

Location

The climbing wall. The students catching will be on gravel in front of the climbing wall. The student falling will be standing on top of the brick retaining wall.

Goal

To build faith/trust within a group, as well as within each individual. Also to develop sense of responsibility and cooperation.

Time Required

20 - 30 minutes

What to Do

1. Falls should be no greater than chest height of the average group member.
2. There must be a minimum of seven (7) and a maximum of nine (9) spotters.
3. Demonstrate how to spot.
 - A. Face each other in two rows, hands alternated in a zipper pattern.
 - B. Arms and hands should not be locked.
 - C. With palms up, arms are bent at 90° at the elbow. Hands should be halfway between the opposing person's wrist and elbow.
 - D. Feet should be planted firmly shoulder-width apart, with one foot forward, and knees slightly bent.
 - E. Heads should be tilted back slightly and the spotters should be watching the faller.
 - F. Remove jewelry such as rings, watches, etc., as well as eyeglasses.
 - G. One spotter should be at the head of the two lines, and is responsible for lining the group up with the faller. This spotter is responsible for protecting the faller's head, neck and shoulders.
4. Position of the faller.
 - A. Hands must be locked in front of the faller by carrying out the following procedure:

With arms outstretched in front and the back of the hands facing each other (thumbs down), cross the arms so that the palms are now facing each other and interlock the fingers (thumbs still at bottom). The hands are then tucked under towards the belly button, and drawn up to the chest with elbows pressed against the abdomen. This position is to maintained during the fall as it prevents the faller from inadvertently swinging the arms out and striking any of the spotters.
 - B. Back and neck should be arched slightly with the head back.
 - C. Feet should be together and knees locked side-by-side.
 - D. Demonstrate the dynamics of the "butt fudge" (reverse pike position).

If a faller fudges as (s)he falls, it is more difficult for spotters to catch the faller as all the weight is concentrated in a small area, rather than being more evenly distributed.

The faller needs to remain "rigid like a board" as (s)he falls to eliminate the "butt fudge" problems.
 - E. The faller should not throw his/her arms, or stick elbows out.

- F. The faller should remove jewelry, eyeglasses, and hats before falling.
5. Describe and explain all commands. (F) - faller; (S) - spotters.
 - F: "Spotters ready?" (Faller waits for a response from **all** spotters in unison.
 - S: "Ready (Student's Name)!" (Group members spot 360° around the retaining wall, in addition to the spotters who will be catching the faller.)
 - F: "Falling?" (Note - this is a question, not a statement. Wait for a response from the spotters before falling.)
 - S: "Fall on!"
 6. Spotters must be ready at all times when someone is off the ground, even though commands have not been given.
 7. Spotters should be spaced according to the height of the faller.
 8. After the faller has fallen and been caught, lower him/her to the ground **feet first**. The last spotters to let go should be the ones at the head and shoulders, who should, in fact, be lifting the faller upright as the feet are lowered.
 9. If even one participant is not spotting appropriately, **stop** immediately and discuss it. Emphasize safety and relate spotting to caring about others. Remember the responsibility of the facilitator (as well as all of the students) is safety. **DO NOT** be afraid to stop, process, and discuss safety rules and problems with an unsafe group. If it becomes evident that the group cannot handle the responsibilities, do not continue this activity. ****You will find that most groups take the activity very seriously and do an excellent job of taking care of one another.**
 10. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Inside/Outside Group Initiatives

An inside option is available for:

TP Shuffle/Ants on a Log

The Spider Web

Ball Toss

Activity Overview

Ball Toss is a multi-tasking activity. The students must stand in a circle and toss balls to each other in the same sequence. During the first round there is only one ball and the sequence is established. To establish the sequence students must say the person's name that they are throwing to every time the ball is tossed. No person can have the ball tossed to them twice while establishing the sequence. As the students complete one sequence then another ball is entered into the circle. The object is to not let any of the balls drop.

Focus Questions

1. In what ways did you have to think ahead to be successful in the Ball Toss?
2. How did sustaining focus prove to be beneficial?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Understand that focus on a particular task is important to succeed as a group.
2. Have the ability to think ahead.

Materials

- 1-10 balls

Location

Any area that is level

Time

10-15 minutes

Goal

To keep the sequence moving without dropping the balls.

What to Do

1. Everyone stands in a shoulder to shoulder circle so that all students can see everyone else in the circle.
2. Explain the objective of the activity to the students.
3. Designate a student to begin the tossing sequence.
4. No student should ever receive the ball more than once in the set sequence. If the ball is tossed to a person a second time before all have received it, return the ball to the last person who tossed it and have that person pick another person to whom she/he will toss it.
5. Once the sequence is established try tossing the ball more quickly in the same sequence.
6. When the ball is being tossed give the starter a second ball, there should now be two balls going in the same sequence.
7. While these two balls are being tossed add another ball to the activity and so on and so on.
8. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

The Shark Tank

Activity Overview

This activity utilizes four carpet squares and four cones. The cones delineate the boundaries for the activity, the carpet squares are utilized to complete the task. The area between the two sets of cones is the “shark tank”, the areas beyond the cones are safe zones (shores). The objective is to get the entire group from one side of the shark tank to the other without anyone being eaten by the sharks. Anyone who touches the ground in any way between the two shores (formed by the cones) becomes shark bait and is eaten. Any person who is eaten must return to the starting side to try again. The carpet squares are magical islands that can move from one place to another. As long as a person is on an island and not touching the ground in any way (s)he is safe from the sharks. Once a person has safely crossed the shark tank (s)he cannot go back to the other side, nor can anyone go around the shark tank. The islands (carpet squares) cannot be carried around the shark tank either. Students must figure out the most effective way to get the carpet squares back

to those on the starting shoreline. The challenge of this activity can be increased by setting a time limit for getting everyone across safely. This activity can be done either as a whole group, or you can split the class into two smaller groups, with the two groups taking turns (refer to guidelines for splitting groups). This activity develops problem solving skills and teamwork. It is useful for discovering communications patterns. For some groups this activity should be done in silence. Another approach is to allow only one person in the group to speak.

Focus Questions

1. How can we get our entire group across the shark tank without anyone being eaten?
2. If we do not succeed in our first effort, how can we improve the likelihood of success?
3. Does it make any difference in what order we cross the shark tank?
4. How can we learn from our mistakes and move forward?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Evaluate different strategies to explain what worked, and why; and what did not work, and why not.
2. Observe the merits of teamwork and effective communications.
3. Describe their personal feelings about the experience.
4. Describe how they might work more effectively as a team.

Materials

- 4 Carpet squares
- 4 orange cones

Location

Any large flat piece of land

Time Required

15 - 20 minutes

Goal

Have all the students safely cross the “shark tank” without becoming shark bait.

What to Do

1. Split the class into two groups if you should decide to do so.
2. Set up the cones to form the boundaries. They should be set up similar to the two end lines to a football or soccer game, with the two end lines about 50 feet apart.
3. Describe guidelines as follows:
 - A. Entire team must get across within set time limit (10, 15 minutes...your choice).
 - B. Only way across is on “portable islands” (carpet squares), no other props.
 - C. No part of anyone’s body may touch the “water” (ground) or (s)he becomes shark bait, and has to go back to the shoreline.
 - D. 3 “deaths” maximum before entire team starts over (everyone who has made it across must come back to starting shore).
 - E. Portable islands can not be carried back around the perimeter, or tossed from ending shore to beginning shore. Must be carried back across shark tank.
4. Allow the group(s) to attempt to cross the shark tank. If two groups are participating, switch groups after the first group is successful, or after an appropriate number of students in the first group have been eaten (3-5).
5. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Mastermind

Activity Overview

Students will work in teams to recreate a “mastermind model.” Only one student is allowed to see the mastermind model and only one student is allowed to see their team’s model. The team must communicate information down the line until they have recreated the mastermind model with their own kit of supplies.

Focus Questions

1. What is difficult about communication?
2. What kinds of things did you learn about how you communicate through this activity?
3. Why was it so difficult to create a model that matched the mastermind model?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Describe what the mastermind model looks like.
2. Explain how communication factored into this initiative and in what ways it was successful and difficult.
3. Explain how they adapted their form of communication to fit the task at hand.

Materials

- Mastermind supplies kits (plastic bag containing identical contents such as buttons, a PVC pipe half, a pinecone, a wooden stirring stick, etc.)
- A visual barrier (the lid for a plastic tub works well.)
- Cones

Location

Any large, level area.

Time Required

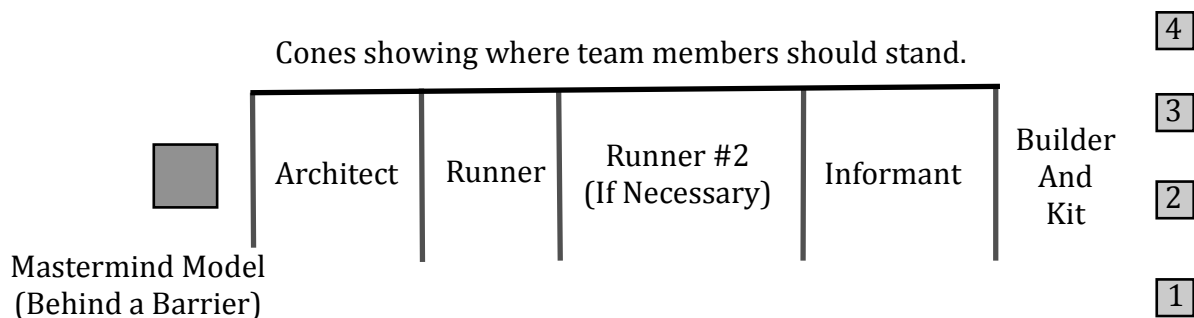
20-25 minutes

Goal

Have teams of students communicate effectively enough to recreate the “mastermind model” with their own kit of supplies.

What to Do

1. Divide the students into teams of four (five if necessary.) Arrange them in long lines with space between each member. Set up cones to show where each member should stand while waiting for their turn.



2. Explain the roles and abilities of each team member to the class:
 - a. The first member of each team is the architect. The architect is allowed to look at the mastermind model and talk to runner #1.
 - b. The next person in line is runner #1. Runner #1 can talk to the architect and the informant (four-person team)/runner #2 (five-person team).
 - c. In a five-person team, the next person in line is runner #2. Runner #2 can talk to the informant or runner #1.
 - d. The informant can talk to runner #1 (four-person team)/runner #2 (five-person team) and the builder.
 - e. The builder is the last person in line. The builder can talk to the informant, and they can see their kit of materials. They may also build with the materials.
3. Set up a “mastermind model” behind a visual barrier at one end of the initiative area. Keep in mind that the intricacy of the model will affect the challenge of the activity and the time it takes to complete the activity.
4. Teams must build their own model to match the mastermind model. (It is helpful if you remind them that the orientation of the model should also be the same.) Architects are the only team members allowed to view the mastermind model. Builders are the only team members allowed to view and build with their team’s supplies kit. Students can only talk to the team members on either side of them and they can only talk to one team member at a time (but they can talk as many times as necessary.) You may want students to face away from their own model and toward the mastermind model to eliminate the temptation to look at their team’s model and/or shout down the line to people to whom they aren’t allowed to communicate.
5. When a team believes they have succeeded, check to see if their model matches the mastermind model. Keep in mind that you can be very picky or a lot more lax, depending on time and the temperament of the class.
6. After the groups have been given time to attempt the activity, you may choose to gather them together, discuss what they have been doing and what they might do differently, and try again with another model.
7. End the activity when one group has succeeded, all the groups have succeeded, or time allotted for the activity has run out.
8. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Human Knot

Activity Overview

Students will form a circle with each student holding a piece of rope. Students will then hold onto each other's rope across the circle to make a "human knot" which they will then have to undo. Students must continue to hold onto each other's rope until the knot is completely undone and the students are back to a circle formation. This activity helps students to communicate effectively and work together in tight proximity with other students.

Focus Questions

1. How do we untie the knot and get back to a circle formation?
2. Is everyone getting a chance to offer suggestions, and are we all listening to those suggestions?
3. Why is it important to try new ideas and see if they work?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Describe how people should move in order to become untied.
2. Explain why good communication is essential in completing an activity such as this.
3. Describe the importance of teamwork and respect in problem solving.
4. Explain why observation and evaluation are important tools in problem-solving.

Materials

-1 short length of rope for each person in group (20)

Location

Any area that is level

Time Required

10-15 minutes

Goal

Have students untangle their human knot without letting go of the ropes.

What to Do

1. If you have more than 20 people in your class, divide into two groups, and switch after the first group completes the activity.
2. Have students form a tight circle by standing shoulder to shoulder, facing inwards.
3. Give each student a short length of rope.
4. Have the students hold their rope in their right hand and extend that hand with the rope towards the center of the circle.
5. The students should then reach out/across the circle with their left hand to grip someone else's rope.
6. Students cannot grip their neighbor's rope, and two students cannot just hold one another's rope.
7. Remind the students that they cannot let go of the ropes at any time.
8. Goal is to untangle themselves using respect, communication, planning, resourcefulness, and responsibility.
9. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Marble Relay

Activity Overview

Marble Relay is an activity where each student is given a piece of PVC pipe that has been cut in half lengthwise. The students must figure out how to successfully move the marble from one end of the group to the other. The marble must pass through every PVC pipe to be successful. This must happen without students touching the marble and only touching the PVC pipe. If the marble drops the activity must be started over. Marble can be started with any student or a different student each time. Activity can be done in a circle or line.

Focus Questions

1. Is there a specific way to hold the PVC pipes together to complete the activity successfully?
2. Is it beneficial to steady the marble before passing it off to the next person?
3. How are you encouraging others to keep trying even when they fail?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Realize that there is more than one way to accomplish a task.
2. Recognize team failure vs. individual failure.
3. Know how to give positive encouragement and advice to teammates after failure.

Materials

- (20) PVC pipe halves
- 1 marble

Location

Anywhere

Time

15-20 minutes

Goal

Safely transport the marble through each student's PVC pipe.

What to Do

1. Hand each student a PVC pipe half.
2. Explain the objective and have students stand in a line or a circle.
3. Warn students not to drop the marble and to not touch the marble with their hands
4. Before starting the marble have students come up with a plan, (direction of travel, how to hold pipes, pipes touching or not, etc.)
5. Place marble on a chosen student's PVC pipe and have the students start the activity.
6. If marble drops, start the activity again.
7. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Magic Carpet

Activity Overview

Magic Carpet is a problem solving task which uses a blue tarp. The object of this activity is to get the entire group to stay on the tarp as they flip it over. The story of the magic carpet is that your students are riding on a magic carpet high above the earth when they suddenly realize it is upside down. Unless they flip the carpet midair they will crash to the earth in a giant explosion. The goal is to not have anyone step off of the magic carpet while it is being flipped.

Focus Questions

1. What was the most effective way to flip the tarp and not lose anyone overboard?
2. How important is it to listen to new ideas even if they seem farfetched.

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Understand that working in large groups can make it more difficult but worth it.
2. Observe the merits of teamwork and effective communication.
3. Gain comfortability through physical closeness during activities.

Materials

- Blue plastic tarp

Location

Any area that is level

Time

15-20 minutes

Goal

To flip the magic carpet upside down while all students remain on the tarp.

What to Do

1. Depending on the size of the group you may want to split the class into two groups to be more successful (maximum of 10 students per group).
2. Lay the magic carpet on the floor and have the students stand on top of it.

3. When everyone is on top of the magic carpet remind students of their objective and have them start.
4. If a student steps off of the magic carpet it is a “death”. After three “deaths” they must start over or switch groups.
5. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Shrinking Circle

Activity Overview

Shrinking Circle is a problem solving task which uses a rope. The object of this activity is to get the entire group standing inside of the rope which is on the ground. As the activity progresses the circle gets smaller and smaller until the only way for everyone to be inside the circle is for the students to have one foot inside and hold onto the person across from them. The activity will show the development and/or patterns of leadership and communications styles.

Focus Questions

1. How can we get the entire group inside the small circle at one time?
2. If we do not succeed at first, what alternatives might we try?

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

1. Evaluate different strategies to explain what worked, and why; and what did not work, and why not.
2. Observe the merits of teamwork and effective communications.
3. Describe their personal feelings about the experience.
4. Describe how they might work more effectively as a team.
5. The group can only succeed if all cooperate.
6. There is more than one alternative approach to solving this problem.
7. The only failure is a failure to try.
8. Good communication is vital for success.

Materials

- Rope

Location

Any area that is level

Time Required

15 minutes

Goal

Get entire group in the circle with no one touching the ground outside of the circle for 5 seconds.

What to Do

1. Split the class into two groups if necessary (refer to guidelines).
2. Show the students the rope and explain the problem they must solve (how to get all of the group inside the circle at one time).
3. Give guidelines as follows:
 - A. All participants must have at least one foot inside the circle, and no part of their bodies should be touching the ground in order to be counted as being in the circle.
 - B. The group must hold their balanced pose for an amount of time determined by the facilitator (a minimum of 5 seconds is suggested). The group can be given any limit on the number of attempts they can have to accomplish this task (3 - 5 attempts is a good limit).
 - C. If the facilitator says, "Stop!" participants must immediately stop.
 - D. The facilitator and cabin leader(s) need to station themselves around the perimeter of the group to act as spotters. In the event of a fall, the spotters must "break" (cushion) the fall of the student(s) falling.
 - E. Demonstrate correct spotting procedures. Be certain cabin leaders (and students who help spot on other activities) use correct techniques when spotting.
 - ◆ Make sure knees are bent, one leg is forward, one back.
 - ◆ Both hands are held palm forward, shoulder height, elbows are bent.
 - ◆ Face straight ahead with head slightly back.
 - ◆ Have a volunteer stand on the platform, and fall back towards you.
 - ◆ Break the person's fall with your hands, and make sure the faller gets safely to the ground.
 - F. Give no further instructions, as it is up to the participants to figure the best method

for accomplishing their task.

4. After each success shrink the circle until it is about 1 foot in diameter.
5. Have the groups take turns attempting to solve the problem.
6. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as those included at the end of the unit or questions that you deem pertinent. Questions should be asked in such a way as to avoid put downs, encourage positive input, or at least constructive criticism. The purpose of the questions is to help students learn from their experience, and apply what they learn to other situations.

Icebreakers/Cool Down Activities

Egg, Chicken, Dinosaur, Superhero

What to Do

1. Explain that this game is like Rock, Paper, Scissors with a twist. All students will start as an egg.
2. Everyone will pair up as eggs and play Rock, Paper, Scissors. The winner becomes a chicken and the loser stays an egg.
3. Next round students will pair up in egg-egg or chicken-chicken pairs and play Rock, Paper, Scissors again. The winner of the chicken-chicken competition will become a dinosaur and the loser will turn back into an egg. The winner and loser of the egg-egg competition will follow step number 3.
4. Next round students will pair up in egg-egg, chicken-chicken, or dinosaur-dinosaur pairs and play Rock, Paper, Scissors again. The winner of the dinosaur-dinosaur competition will become a superhero and the loser will turn back into a chicken. The winner and loser of the egg-egg and chicken-chicken competitions will follow the steps above.
5. Superheroes will compete against each other. If they win they stay superheroes and if they lose they turn back into dinosaurs.
6. Throughout entire activity students must imitate what they are through sound effects, and body movements in order for similar creatures to pair up with them.

Look Down, Look Up

What to Do

1. Have group stand in a circle shoulder to shoulder, so that everyone can be seen.
2. When you say “look down” everyone looks down at a pair of feet that is not their own.
3. Then when you are ready you say “look up”. At this time the students look up into the eyes of the person whose feet they were looking at. They must only look at one person or else it will not work.
4. If two people “look up” and are looking directly into each other’s eyes they must both “explode” and they are dead. They can then stand outside of the circle while you repeat the process of saying “look down, look up”.

Space in Between

What to Do

1. Have group stand in a shoulder to shoulder circle, so that everyone can be seen.
2. Give the following explanation of what they should do:
 - A. Each person must pick 2 people in the group. They cannot be the same person and it cannot be themselves.
 - B. When you say “go” each person is going to go and stand between the two people that they chose in their heads.
 - C. Words cannot be used
 - D. They don’t have to be right next to the two people but they must stay in the middle of them.

Generalization and Transfer

Activity Overview

The following questions are to be used to help the students use what they experienced and learned throughout the class back at home and school. This time can be used to focus on generalization and transfer of the concepts of teamwork, communication, the three R's, and the 3 F's.

Activity Organizer

Objectives

By the end of the activity, students should be able to:

1. Understand how there was more to these experiences than just "playing games."
2. Think of ways to apply the concepts of teamwork, communication, and the three R's and F's at home and at school.
3. Think about the practical changes and difficulties to changes they'll face when going home – spending some thought on self- evaluation.

Time Required

30-45 min

Goal

Maximize what has been learned so it can be used back home and at school.

1. Ask how many of them in real life have had to cross a minefield, or swing across a lake of nitroglycerin, or crawl through a giant spider's web?
 - 1 "Do you plan on having to do them in the future?"
 - 2 "If not, then why did we do these during class today?"

Use this as a bridge for the students to start thinking about the concepts they learned and how to apply them at school or at home. Spend some time focusing on teamwork, communication, the three R's, the three F's, self-evaluation, and any other concepts – emphasizing and discussing how these can be applied back at home.

2. Teamwork

- 1 In what situations might you have to work as a team back at home/school?
- 2 What were things that helped you work together as a team?
- 3 What were things that made it hard to work together as a team?

3. Communication

- 1 What was necessary for good communication to take place?
- 2 What stopped communication from taking place?
- 3 What did you do when everyone wanted to talk at the same time?
- 4 What did you do if no one wanted to talk?
- 5 What did you do when you disagreed with others in your group?
- 6 How did you solve disagreements in your group?
- 7 When and how would you use these communications skills at home?

4. The Three R's

- 1 What are some situations back at home that may call for you to have more respect for yourself or others?
- 2 How have you not been taking responsibility at home, and how can you start when you go back?
- 3 When are times that you may need to be resourceful back at home?

5. The Three F's

- 1 How did it feel having to take risks today, knowing that you might fail?
- 2 What did you learn by taking the risk?
- 3 What else could you attempt now at home that might not have before?
- 4 What can you do even if you do fail at home or at school?

6. Self-Evaluation

- 1 What will prevent you from using what you learned when you go home?
- 2 What will you need from others to help you at home? What helped during this course?
- 3 What symbol, statement, or ritual can you use at home to remind you of what you have learned?
- 4 Are you willing to hear feedback from others as to trouble spots they anticipate for you at home or at school?
- 5 When you act differently at home, who will be the first to notice?
- 6 What will they see in you that is different?
- 7 What will be the first signs for you at home that will tell you you're on the right track?
- 8 Now that you've tackled the challenges of the course, what issues will you tackle at home?

Activity Debrief Questions

Debrief each initiative activity using the following discussion questions, questions of your own, or the Debriefing Thumbball.

Discussion

The following questions may be used by the facilitator to enhance discussions after the various activities in the Group Initiatives course. Questions are grouped by categories related to the particular emphasis of that group of questions. Pick and choose questions which you feel are appropriate for your group, or individuals within your group.

Awareness

The objective of these questions is to focus on “here and now” behavior patterns, and others’ perceptions and roles in a non-threatening manner while simultaneously building trust.

1. Did you notice your role in this activity?
2. Are you aware that you were (a leader, in the background, interrupting others, etc.)
3. What were you feeling during the experience? How do you feel now?
4. When you felt _____, how did you behave?
5. Are you aware of your (posture, voice quality, expressed emotions, etc.)?
6. How do others feel when you see (name)’s behavior?
7. Are you aware that you did _____ again?
8. How can we help you raise your awareness about this pattern?
9. Who do you think most noticed your role in this activity?
10. Who in the group do you think was rooting the most for your success?
11. Right now, I am experiencing you as _____ (angry, defensive, passive, etc.)
12. What effect does _____ have in your life?

Responsibility

The objective of these questions is to have students make the bridge as to how their roles and behaviors are similar to what they do at school and at home. We seek to have them become responsible for what they were previously doing automatically or unconsciously.

1. Did you notice that you were controlling, withdrawing, interrupting, etc. again? Do you do this at home or at school?
2. Is this a typical role for you?
3. Have others at home or school ever given you feedback about your _____?

4. What do you think you get out of _____, or how does that serve you?
5. What strengths do you bring to this group?
6. Do you ever use your strengths to excess?
7. Can you accept that _____ (controlling, withdrawing, etc.) may be a pattern of yours?
8. What would it be like if you were always _____ and never changed? How would others respond to you?
9. Does your style fit in well with others? How do others feel when (name) acts this way?
10. How does your family react when you do _____ at home?
11. How do your friends react when you do _____ at school?
12. Can you recall a time when you faced a similar problem and didn't react in this manner? What was different about that situation?
13. How much influence does this _____ pattern have over your life? (1 - 100%)
14. How much influence do you have over this pattern? (1 - 100 %)

Experimentation

The objective of these questions is to give students the opportunity to create new options and choices for themselves.

1. Are you willing to try something different today?
2. What would be a risk for you today?
3. What is preventing you from being more _____ (assertive, expressive, etc.)?
4. How might you sabotage your attempt to take a new risk today?
5. Can you tell others in the group what you are going to do today?
6. How can we support you in your risk today?
7. Would you like feedback from others when they see you _____?
8. How did it feel doing _____ (new behavior) _____ ?
9. What did you learn by taking the risk?
10. What was the hardest part about doing _____?
11. What do you think this might tell you about yourself and your abilities that you would not have known otherwise?
12. What else do you think you could now do after you successfully completed this risk?
13. Holding the two pictures of yourself, the old you with the _____ pattern, and the new you, and comparing them, what do you discover about yourself?
14. How much influence do you now feel you have over the _____ pattern? (1 - 100%)

Debriefing Using a Thumball

The Debriefing Thumball was designed to help teachers and facilitators ask debriefing questions in a proper sequence that makes sense to participants. It also shifts some of the responsibility for positive interactions from the leader to the students/participants. The sequence of:

- 1 - "What happened?";
- 2 - "Why is this important?"
- 3 - "How can I use this information?"

not only helps take participants through a logical progression for processing a specific event, it also presents an overall lesson on proper processing.

Orange Fact-Finding Questions: These are general questions about what happened in the group. They ask factual questions or questions that simply summarize the events/experience. This first set of questions are easy to answer and set the stage for the next two sets/colors of questions.

Green "Why is this Important?" Questions: The green questions are "Why?" questions and elicit feelings from the students/participants. They also help the participants analyze the significance of the experience.

Blue Transference Questions: The blue questions tie the specific experience to possible future experiences and to students'/participants' everyday lives. In other words, after going through and learning from an experience, how can the students apply this knowledge in their own lives?

What to Do:

1. Toss the ball underhand to a participant.
2. When the student catches it, have him/her look under his/her thumb. Have the student Answer the **Orange** question closest to, or under the thumb. That student tosses the ball to another student who will now answer another orange question. Answer 3 - 6 questions in this manner.
3. Now, switch colors and answer **Green** questions (again ~ 3 - 6 questions).
4. Repeat in a similar manner with **Blue** questions.

Initiatives Course Map

