



PHILADELPHIA
OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL

BACK TO SCHOOL

Our Favorite Activities from This Summer

Glossary of Terms:

ICEBREAKER

An icebreaker is a team activity intended to help members of a group begin the process of forming themselves into a team. Icebreakers are commonly presented as a game to "warm up" the group by helping the members get to know each other and form relationships. They often focus on sharing personal information such as names, hobbies, etc. Icebreakers are a great way to start your virtual session or can be used intermittently to keep your attendees engaged and focused.

EMOTIONS CHECK-IN

Activities intended for participants to name their emotions, express themselves creatively, or practice self-reflection. Naming emotions and creative self-expression takes practice, so allow for varying types of sharing in the large group. Taking the time for virtual attendees to identify how they feel and name emotions promotes introspection and can help build empathy and community between group members, no matter the distance!

TEAM BUILDING

Activities intended to encourage group collaboration and communication. Activities typically have specific learning outcomes and can help the group form as a team. Taking the time to intentionally build a strong foundation of teamwork, communication and collaboration is integral for remote teams.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Activities intended to build community among team members through peer to peer recognition, sharing, and promoting honest dialogue. Providing your virtual attendees with community building activities are not only fun, but they increase engagement through observation and active listening. They promote self-confidence and sense of belonging.

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Activity Category	Activity Name	Intended Audience	Learning Outcomes	Activity Description	Facilitator Observations	Materials Required	Activity credit (if known)	Time Frame
Emotions Check In	Emotion Fishbowl	All	Self-Awareness & Social-Awareness	<p>The person leading the activity will ask participants to bring 5 index cards and a writing utensil (markers are fun if they have them) to the meeting. Participants are asked to write 5 emotions, one on each card, that describe feelings they have experienced in the past week. Participants are encouraged to write legibly, but to stylize their words to reflect the emotion. Then, either in the main session, or in breakout rooms, participants will have others guess one emotion at a time on their cards.</p> <p>Round 1: Participants show a face that describes an emotion. Once an emotion is guessed, another participant will start the process again, until all emotions have been guessed (or however it works best within your timeframe).</p> <p>Round 2: Participants describe each emotion while refraining from using the word that's on their card (ex. "sad" could be described as "a sinking feeling in your stomach" or "when you're experiencing low energy"). Facilitator could debrief on the concept that different emotions may feel differently to different people.</p>	<p>Jack Organ: I like Emotions Fishbowl because it hits multiple participant needs in one activity. Participants get some time to individually reflect on their own emotional responses to a given event or time period. The guessing part is pretty fun because folx make exaggerated facial expressions to help the group guess that emotion. And folx are sharing real emotions that they really experienced in a group setting in a non-threatening way, and the facilitator can use it as a jumping off point to further explore how folx are doing, or to look into the similar and different ways that we emote and read each other's emotions.</p>	Piece of paper and marker	Project Adventure	15 minutes

Emotions Check In	Emotion Wheel	All	Self-Awareness & Social-Awareness	The person leading the activity will ask participants to identify an emotion on the feelings wheel that represents how they currently feel (or feel about a particular activity or prompt). The facilitator may ask participants to identify a feeling, and then take 5 minutes to draw what that emotion looks like to them.	Kim Glodek: I appreciate the time I spent either observing or facilitating this experience with students and staff. Individuals often shared detailed information about their feelings and emotions related and unrelated to the pandemic, and had fun acting out and guessing the feelings. It was balanced with speaking and movement.	Use this Emotions Wheel or search "emotion wheel" to find one that meets your classes need.	Dr. Gloria Wilcox	10-15 minutes
Community Building	Triad Commonalities	All	Social-Awareness	The person leading the activity will split the larger group into smaller triads of 3. Once in smaller groups, they have 8 minutes to figure out 3 things they have in common with each other. Facilitator can encourage the group to go beyond the surface level of "we all go to the same school" and create an incentive, or challenge, for groups to "dig deep" and find commonalities that are unique and specific to that group. After a set amount of time, bring the small groups back and invite them to share what is special and unique about their small group!	Lauren Stables: After the participants completed the activity, they were asked how difficult or easy the task was. The majority of participants agreed that it was more difficult than imagined, but rewarding because once they got talking, they realized they weren't so different after all.	None	POBS Program Team	10 minutes
Community Building	Connect 4 Treasures	All	Self-Awareness & Social-Awareness	The person leading this activity may send this prompt out prior to the session starting, or introduce it prior to a scheduled break. The leader will ask participants to collect 4 treasures/items within their home that represents the following (1) An item that reminds them of their strength (2) An item that reminds them of a person they trust (3) An item that reminds them of something challenging they have overcome (4) An item that reminds them of what they	Dan Hoffman: I love this simple, direct activity. No tricks, frills, or complex instructions. Instead, this activity gets down to the heart of what we've all been craving and needing over these past few months-- human connectivity and reflection. This activity encourages participants to be vulnerable and share, which naturally promotes community, trust, and honest conversation. Furthermore, it	Four items that represent the four questions we're all hoping to answer, a piece of paper & writing utensil, <i>or</i> a slide that	POBS Program Team	10-15 minutes

				want in their future. Remind participants that if they cannot physically bring the item back to draw a picture of it! When the group returns, ask participants to share one or all of their items. Invite participants to revisit these items as daily reminders. For multi-sessions, the leader may ask the group to share one of their items over the course of 4 sessions.	allows participants to actively practice gratitude for what we have, while setting aims for the future!	displays the 4 questions		
Community Building	Value Shields	Youth	Self-Awareness & Social-Awareness	The person leading the session will ask participants to get the required materials and prompt participants to design a shield that represents their personal values using words, images, shapes, whatever they would like. Participants may write a list of their personal values (probably no more than 4) to give them some direction in their design. Give 10-15 minutes for shield creation. Participants can then share their shields with the group if they would like, and explain what is on their shield, and why that value is important to them.	Olive Fine: It was really cool to hear from individual students about what values were important to them and to hear in that activity how many folks said similar values. The engagement and energy around the group value shield came on like a waterfall. It was hard to keep track of all the group values they were saying. Great activity to get on the same page and learn more about who you're on a team with.	A piece of paper and writing utensils		15 minutes
Ice Breaker	Energy Ball	All	Creativity and Goofiness	The person leading the session will start with an imaginary "ball of energy". They will ask participants to imagine the ball- what color it is, what shape it is, etc. The person leading the session will call the name of one of their peers and "toss them the ball". Continue playing until everyone has tossed and received the imaginary ball! Facilitator can add to the challenge by throwing a second "ball" while the first one is still going!	Lottie Appeal: I really like this activity at the beginning of a program as an energizer- it's even in the name! Not only does it give participants an opportunity to be creative, but it also encourages everybody to turn their cameras and microphones on if they are able to. They are engaging one another in a sweet, simple, and funny way.	None	Karl Rohnke Adaptation	7 minutes

Team Building	Space Settlers	Youth & Adult	Group Decision Making	<p>The person leading this role-playing activity will do so while screen sharing the accompanying slides. In this activity, participants will assume the role of a crew of astronauts tasked with starting a human settlement on a new planet. In 2 rounds, they must choose 15 people from a list of 28 applicants (to be shown on screen) to inhabit the settlement and begin a functioning society. All decisions must be unanimous.</p> <p>In Round 1, the group will have 20 minutes to make their 15 choices. For Round 2, move on to the next slide, which will have an extra bit of information about each "applicant." With this new information, the group will have 5 minutes to switch up to 5 choices based on the new information. The titles and facts about each "applicant" can be adapted to reflect people represented in the group, your organization, or be randomized.</p>	<p>Geo Meneses: This has quickly become my favorite activity because of the huge sci-fi story behind it. I love how it allows the group to tap into their imagination and become invested in this challenge. This activity is a perfect way to put group decision making skills to the test, and it's interesting to see what different groups will prioritize when picking their space team. To whoever's facilitating this activity in the future, I recommend playing around with editing the names and people on the cards in the game to fit the students' interests and spark different conversations.</p>	Space Settlers Template		30 minutes
Team Building	Traffic Jam	All (the younger the group, the simpler the puzzle)	Group Problem Solving, Communication of Ideas, Collaboration	<p>The person leading the activity will present participants with a puzzle that involves an odd number of tiles (organized in a straight line) and an even number of moveable puzzle pieces. Half of the pieces are occupying the tiles on the left side of the board and the other half are occupying the tiles on the right side of the board, with one tile left empty in the center (i.e. <u>A</u> <u>A</u> _ <u>B</u> <u>B</u>). The goal of the activity is to move the pieces from each side to the opposite side (effectively switching places with the pieces opposite of them).</p>	<p>Jeff Ladnier: The reason I have recently rediscovered my love for this activity is because of its nature as a truly challenging and interactive puzzle. As we've transitioned to working with students in the virtual world, a lot of the games and activities that we've been embracing have been focused on the question, 'How do we get students engaged and make connections with them virtually?' The result has led us to a lot of activities with a focus on fun and making</p>	Jamboard Template		20-30 Minutes

				<p>For example, right to left, and left to right, <u>B</u> <u>B</u> <u>A</u>). However, there are rules to movement, and those rules are as follows:</p> <p>1) All pieces may only move in the direction of their goal, they cannot move backward.</p> <p>2) Any piece may only move into an open tile. Two pieces may not share a tile.</p> <p>3) A piece can move forward by either moving directly into an open space in front of it; or, jumping over another piece into an open tile on the opposite side (no more than one piece may be jumped at a time, and you can't skip over two pieces in a row.)</p> <p>4) If the pieces are moved to a point where no more moves can be made, then the board resets and the puzzle starts over.</p> <p>The puzzle is solved when the correct sequence of movement is found and all of the pieces are on their new sides! The simplest version is 5 tiles and 4 pieces, and there is a significant jump in difficulty once you increase to 7 tiles and 6 pieces (go much larger than that and it becomes incredibly challenging!)</p>	<p>connections, but not quite as much challenge. This activity can be an exciting and surprisingly interactive challenge for your students if they are starting to seem a little 'funned out' or are itching to really get some use out of those brain muscles!</p> <p>Particular struggles groups may face with this game include: conceptual problem solving, communicating thought processes with one another, learning to solve problems as a group, and finding a role in a team when something feels too challenging.</p>			
Team Building	Remote Island	All	Group Decision Making, Compromise	The person leading this fun team activity will brief participants on the following dilemma, "You and your team are about to visit a remote island together for 7 days!" Then, the	Brock Weir: What I find so great about this activity is the way it breaks down barriers, and causes the participants to come up with some of the most	Drawing materials if you wish to show a design of	POBS Program Team	20-25 Minutes

				<p>facilitator will place participants into small groups of 3 or 4, and give the small groups 8 minutes to decide on one thing to bring to the remote island. The items selected must benefit more than one individual and should support the whole group during their time on the island! All group members people must eventually agree on the item!</p> <p>After the small group time, the groups will come back together in the main session, and present what they will be bringing and why your group decided on that item!</p>	<p>interesting and mind-boggling answers! This usually ends with some good laughs, and thought-provoking strategies, while discussing which items they would be bringing with them. It also deftly requires people to work together and get on the same wavelength, as you can see participants forming this item in their individual minds, and eventually becoming one mind, one thought, one team. Hence the barriers being broken down and a true team forming can take place.</p>	<p>said item, or if you have a larger group to create a list of items then allow the group to pick and debate what to bring</p>		
Team Building	Whiteboard Xerox	High School & Adult	Communication Social-Awareness, Perspective	<p>The person leading the activity will need to find simple images for the participants to draw and describe. Then, the facilitator will split participants into breakout rooms. One person will be designated as an "artist" while the other will be the director. If you want to have a breakout room of more than 2, you can have multiple drawers, but it's best to stick with one director.</p> <p>Only the person in the director role will be able to view the image assigned to their group. The director will have 5 minutes to describe the image to the artist(s) in an attempt to have the artist replicate the image to scale! The director cannot use words that explicitly describe exactly what the picture is, but must find other ways to communicate! Participants will come back together, reveal their images, and discuss the challenges</p>	<p>Jeremy Cothran: What separates this activity from other activities I've facilitated, is the amount of problem solving, critical thinking, and precise communication it requires. It was first time I saw the students really begin to struggle with a challenge. There was a moment where students were trying different things and getting slightly flustered that some of their attempts were not working. You could watch on the whiteboard as the students made progress . . . slowly. I believe if they were given more time, or a moment to step away and come back with a strategy, they would have had much more positive results. Although the students were not able to fully complete the drawing, we were able to debrief the activity with a</p>	<p>Zoom Whiteboard and this image</p>	POBS Program Team	10-20 minutes

				and overall communication strategy. If participants do a second round, the partners will alternate roles while using a second image to replicate.	conversation on the importance of understanding each other's perspectives and communication styles.			
Team Building	Quote Scramble	All	Communication Problem Solving, and Planning	<p>The person leading the activity will share a slide or Jamboard with participants that has a scrambled quote on it. The facilitator can choose the quote. For a reference, a quote of 8 words would generally be considered "easy" while the difficulty of the activity will increase based off the size of the quote. Participants must work together to unscramble the quote, and then discuss it in a large group. After they have the quote unscrambled, facilitator can debrief by talking about the message and meaning of the quote itself.</p> <p>The facilitator could consider having 3 different quotes with varying challenge levels in order to create a progression for participants.</p>	<p>Laura Gates: Students really liked this one! I think it's challenging enough that they have the opportunity to work together and debate, but almost always end with some amount of success. It's also pretty easy to customize for difficulty, and you can relate it to almost any theme based off the quote you choose.</p>	Jamboard or similar Platform		10+ minutes