Rainy Day Kit & Icebreakers

Indoor activities and games for camp on rainy days

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Icebreakers

1. The Original Name Game

Purpose: Help each group member learn names of other team members.

Population: Age – 9 and up
   Group size - 8 to 15 people

Supplies and space: Enough room for group to stand in a circle.

Procedure: Group stands or sits in a circle. Ask group members to think of an animal, adjective, action or food that begins with the same letter as their own name, i.e. mongoose Mike, great Gayle, mighty Mike, gazelle Gayle. One person starts and gives his/her name and descriptor. The next person tells their own name and all of the individuals that have gone before them. The last person must name everyone in the circle. Usually the leader should go last or at least attempt to go around and do everyone's name. If an action is chosen, it can be a funny face or a gesture.

Variation: For most groups it is important to explain that it is O.K. to ask for help if someone forgets a name or descriptor.

Reflection: Does adding a descriptive word make it easier to remember someone's name? Who had to do the most memorizing?

Comments: For some groups, signs are not appropriate because they may be interpreted as gang related signs.

2. Name by Name

Purpose: Help each group member learn names of other team members.

Population: Age – 9 and up
Group size - 8 to 15 people   .

Supplies and space: Open space

Procedure:
1. Have your group form a circle. Going around in a circle, everyone is going to say their name once, LOUDLY and CLEARLY! (The "loudly and clearly" part is very important!)
2. Now, without any talking, motioning, signing, etc, your group needs to rearrange the circle in ALPHABETICAL ORDER according to the first names that were just said. Yep, it's tough!!
3. Once they are situated, have everyone go around the circle saying names again.
4. Give them another chance to rearrange themselves if they weren't perfect the first time (of course they won't be, don't worry!). Try to do this in the least amount of tries!

Reflect:
You might want to reflect with your group about the challenges this activity posed. What was it like not being able to talk or sign and having to arrange yourselves a certain way, having only heard names a limited amount of time? Your group might get a good discussion going. Was it helpful for learning names?

3. Beach Ball Bonanza

Purpose: Help each group member learn names of other team members, and learn about each other.

Population: Age – 9 and up
Group size - Unlimited

Supplies and space: Open space, beach ball with get-acquainted questions written on it.

Procedure:
1. Have your group form a circle. Going around in a circle, everyone is going to say their name once, LOUDLY and CLEARLY! (The "loudly and clearly" part is very important!)
2. Start passing the beach ball around the group. When someone catches the ball, they should answer the question that is closest to their right thumb (or whatever finger you choose).
3. Continue passing the ball around the circle until everyone has had at least one chance to share.
4. Repeat as many times as desired.

4. Warp Speed

Purpose: The group tosses a ball around the circle as quickly as they can.
Population: Age – 7 and up   Group size - 8 to 25 people
Supplies and space: Stopwatch or watch with a second hand
                            Ball (fleece, Nerf, Koosh, or something soft)
Procedure:
1. Ask the group to form a circle and include yourself. Tell them you want to toss the ball around the circle until everyone has had it once, ending back at the first person.
2. Begin tossing the ball. To make this go smoothly, have the children who haven't had the ball yet hold their hands in a ready position.
3. Ask the group to remember who threw them the ball and whom they threw it to.
4. When this sequence is done, ask them to repeat it, only this time have someone in the group be the official timer. If they have trouble remembering the order, give them a practice round before introducing the clock.
5. Once you have an initial time established (usually about five seconds per child), ask them to reduce that time by working together more closely as a team. After a few more attempts, they should be able to get their time down using more cooperation and teamwork. Tell them you think they can reduce their score even more – perhaps by another five seconds.
6. Encourage the group to brainstorm strategies and then to try one idea at a time. Remember, the two basic rules are: (1) each person must catch the ball, and (2) the ball must be tossed in the established order. Here are some ideas they may develop: rearrange the circle so that the person you toss to is next to you; arrange everyone's hands so that the ball has a ramp to travel down.
7. Eventually the group should reduce their score to below five seconds. Congratulate the group on reaching warp speed!

Reflection: Ask the group to rearrange themselves in the original circle and to sit comfortably. How did the group go about cooperating and getting a better score? Did you listen to and try everyone's ideas? How did you decide which ones to try? Were there ideas that the group didn't try? Why? What were the positive ways that you worked together?

5. All Knotted Up

Purpose: The group tries to untangle itself from a human knot without letting go of one another's hands.

Population: Age – 8 and up
                  Group size - 10 to 20 people

Supplies and space: Large open space

Procedure:
1. Stand in a circle. Reach across to grab someone else's hand until every person in the group is holding hands with two different people. Do not hold the hand of someone directly to your right or left.

2. Try to untangle the group without letting go of hands. (When everyone is untangled, some people may be facing out and others in. You may have more than one circle.)

Variation:
1. Have group begin in a circle and try to get into a knot. Have group form a circle and join hands with the people next to them. Step over and under the hands of others in the group to form a knot.

2. Have group untangle from the knot without talking. Or, designate one person to talk. Choosing a quieter group member will give them a feeling of accomplishment and empowerment.

Reflection: Who decided how to untangle the knot? Did you offer any suggestions out loud? Did you have any ideas that you didn't share? What was your individual role in the activity? Were you a leader? A follower? An Encourager? A timekeeper? What made your group successful?

6. Humongous Poemamongus

Purpose: The entire group writes a poem together.

Population: Age – 8 and up
Group size – 8 to 20 people

Supplies and space: Newsprint (one sheet per group)
Markers (one per group)
Work table

Procedure:
1. Fold a piece of newsprint accordion-style, in as many pleats as there are people in your group.

2. Describe the process of writing a "Humongous Poemamongus." One person will begin the poem by writing one line of a poem about camp on the first fold of the pleated newsprint sheet. The second person in the circle will read the first line, write a second line, and fold the poem so that the third person can read only the second line. The third person writes a line and refolds the paper again, so that only her third line shows. Continue until every person has contributed one line to the poem.

3. Read the poem out loud and hang it up on the wall.

Reflection: Is the poem very different from one that you would have written by yourself? If so, how? How can we share this poem with the group?

7. Human Bingo

Purpose: To help the group have fun, learn names and break the ice.

Population: Ages – 8 and up   Group size – 8 to 30

Supplies and space: Open space, paper and pens

Procedure:
1. Have each person in the group take a piece of paper and create a large bingo board with squares on it.
2. Give them a few minutes and have them circulate in the room and have others sign in the squares. Once their squares are full, have them sit down.
3. The game is played just like regular bingo; the group leader/counselor draws names from a hat and the players cross off names that have been called.
4. You can either play short patterned games (row, 4 corners, plus sign, etc.) or blackout bingo.

Reflection:
To add a little extra fun to the game, players who's name has been called could stand up and introduce themselves as their name is called.

8. Identification

Purpose: To break the ice and help the group learn each other's names.

Population: Ages – 8 and up   Group size – unlimited

Supplies and space: Open space and nametags for each participant

Procedure:
1. Ask the participants to stand in a large circle. Each participant puts their nametag down on the floor in front of them.

2. At the leader's direction, the circle moves in a direction (similar to musical chairs). When the leader says stop, the participants will pick up the name tag in front of them and find the owner.

3. When everyone has found their name tag owner, they should sit and introduce themselves and have a short conversation.

4. Repeat as many times as needed.

9. Impulse

Purpose: To break the ice and help the group to have fun.

Population: Ages – 8 and up   Group size – 4 to 25

**Supplies and space:** Open space

Procedure:
1. Have the group form a circle and hold hands.
2. Tell them that they are going to send an impulse around the circle by squeezing the hand of the person next to you.
3. Start by squeezing one of the hands you are holding onto and have the impulse go around.
4. Once it goes around once, time the group, and try to beat some records!

Reflect:
How successful was the impulse? When was the impulse successful? When was it not successful? What would have happened if one person had not participated? What can we learn about this? What does this have to do with working together?

10. Toilet Paper
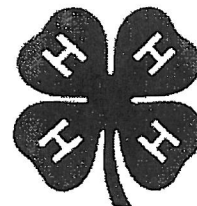
Purpose: Group says one interesting thing about themselves for each item they have. This gives the group an opportunity to learn about their peers and what they may have in common with them.

Population: Ages – 6 and up   Group size – 4 to 30

Supplies and space: Open space

Procedure:
1. Have the group form a circle.
2. Pass around a roll of toilet paper, instructing them to take no more than ten (10) squares each. Come up with a funny reason why you are passing out toilet paper.
3. Once everyone has some toilet paper, tell them that for each square they have taken they must say one interesting fact about them. (Favorite food, movie, song, how many pets they have, an uncle just got back from Timbuktu, etc...)

Reflect:
Ask them if they feel like they know each other better after doing the activity. What interesting things did you learn that you did not know before? Do you feel like more of a group afterwards?

11. Ball of Yarn/Spiderwebs

Purpose: Each group member introduces themselves, and helps to get the group to get acquainted with one another.

Population: Ages – 6 and up   Group size – 4 to 30

Supplies and space: Open space, ball of yarn

Procedure:
1. Have the group form a circle.
2. Start the ball of yarn with the loose end, and have one person introduce themselves and answer a question (simple get acquainted type question.) Have them hold onto the end of the yarn, and then toss the ball to another person across the circle (preferably not the person next to them).
3. Continue introducing, answering questions and tossing the yarn across the group until all have shared and there is a web of yarn in the circle.

Reflect:
Ask them if they feel like they know each other better after doing the activity. What interesting things did you learn that you did not know before? Do you feel like more of a group afterwards?

12. The Button Game (M&M game)

Purpose: Each group member introduces themselves, based on the color of button they draw, share something with the group. (This is the same concept as the M&M game, but since candy isn't allowed at camp, buttons are used in their place.)

Population: Ages – 6 and up   Group size – unlimited

Supplies and space: Open space, different colored buttons

Procedure:
1. Pass a brown bag of buttons around the group. Have each person take a couple of buttons.
2. Ask each person to introduce themselves and then based on the color of button they choose, share something with the group. (Make up a key ahead of time for the button colors)
3. Continue until everyone has introduced themselves and shared something based on their buttons.

Reflect:
Ask them if they feel like they know each other better after doing the activity. What interesting things did you learn that you did not know before? Do you feel like more of a group afterwards?

Rainy Day Activities

1. Pin-On-Back

Purpose: A fun interactive game that helps youth communicate and work together.
Population: Age – 8 and up   Group size - Unlimited
Supplies and space: Slip of paper with a word/phrase on it, safety pins
                    Any space

Procedure:
1. Prepare the slips of paper by printing a word on each one. The words can be 4-H projects, 4-H activities, different things in the woods, or any camp-related words.

2. Pin a slip of paper to each persons back.

3. Players must walk around and ask others yes/no questions to try and determine what is written on their slip of paper.

4. Once they have figured out what their word is, they can sit down or continue to help others figure out their words.

2. Passing the Buck

Purpose: Players toss a small object to each other to create a story.

Population: Age – 7 and up
  Group size - 8 to 20 people

Supplies and space: A glove, beanbag, rubber ball or any other tossable object
  Any open space

Procedure:
1. Have everyone stand in a circle. The "buck" is any small object that can be tossed easily from player to player.

2. Toss the buck to a player in the circle. The person catching the buck must begin to tell a story – something made up on the spot.

3. The player holding the buck tosses it to another player who must catch it and continue the story. The story can take any form just as long as there is an attempt to connect it to the last player's contribution.

4. Players must not break the flow of the story no matter how fast the buck is passed. Those who have the buck must speak – if only a few words – and then they can toss it to another.

Reflection: How did the story change throughout the game? Did the person who started the story think that it would end like it did?

3. A What?

Purpose: Students use common objects to create enjoyable confusion.

Population: Age – 7 and up   Group size - 8 to 20 people

Supplies and space: At least 2 small common objects (a key, a glove, a pen, etc.)

Procedure:
1. Players sit in a circle on the floor. The object of the game is to pass two objects around the circle in opposite directions.

2. The leader gives each of the two small objects – perhaps a key and a glove – an imaginary name: "froin" and "bibble." The leader offers one object to the player on the right and says, "This is a froin." The player to whom it is offered asks "A what?" The leader replies "A froin," and the object is passed. The leader repeats the same ritual with the "bibble" and the player on the left.

3. Both players on the right and left continue the ritual, with one exception. When the next player asks "A what?" the person offering the object turns back to the previous passer and asks "A what?" The "A what?" is passed along back to the leader who tells the name which is passed back down the line.

4. At some point in the middle the two objects are going to cross paths. This all will appear chaotic, but hang on and keep going.

5. The game ends when the objects find their way back to the leader.

Variation: Use more than two objects. Try to increase the speed at which you pass the objects.
Reflection: Was it confusing to not call these objects by their real names?

4. Syllable Symphony

Purpose: Challenge children's listening skills with a fun syllable song.

Population: Age – 8 and up
    Group size – 10 to 20 people

Supplies and space: Open space

Procedure:
1. Everyone sits in a circle. One person is chosen to be It and goes out of the room.

2. The rest of the group picks one word with three or more syllables, such as the word *De-cem-ber*.

3. Count off by syllables so each person has part of the word – the first person would be *de*; the second person, *cem*; the third person, *ber*; the fourth, *de* again; and so on.

4. Pick a song with a simple melody such as "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" or "Yankee Doodle." Each person sings his or her syllable to the tune of the song. For example, one would sing "de, de, de, de," another would sing "cem, cem, cem, cem," and the rest "ber, ber, ber, ber," all together to the same melody.

5. The person who is It comes back into the room. He or she must listen carefully as the group is singing and try to piece together the word.

Reflection: Which words were the most difficult to figure out? Why? Do more syllables make it more difficult?

5. Don't Drop the Ball

Purpose: Practicing teamwork, cooperation & communication
Population: Age – 8 and up   Group size – 9 to 24 players
Supplies and space: Open space, Supply Bag (ziplock bag labeled "Don't Drop the Ball Activity" in rainy day kit), container – bowl/basket
Procedure:
1. Divide the group into teams of 8 or less.

2. Place the container at least 6 feet from the group.

3. Have the group spread out to make a web with the washer and strings.

4. Instruct the group to work together to move with the ball balanced on the washer over to the container, and drop the ball in the container. If they drop the ball, they must start over from the beginning.

Reflection: Which skills did you use in this activity? Did all members participate (why or why not)? Did the group do some pre-planning, and if so, how did that help? How did communication affect reaching your goal?

6. Missing Person

Purpose: This game is a good way to test how well each player knows the others in the group.

Population: Age – 7 and up
Group size – 10 to 20 people

Supplies and space: Open space

Procedure:
1. Keep the group seated in one area, all visible at one glance.

2. One person, selected to be It, faces away from the group and covers his or her eyes.

3. Another person is selected to leave the room while the rest change their positions.

4. At a signal from you, the person who is It turns around and tries to guess who is missing while the group slowly counts to ten.

5. If the It guesses the one who is missing before the group finishes counting, he or she can have another turn. Otherwise, a new person is selected to be It for the next game.

Reflection: Why was it so difficult to figure out who was gone from the group? What could be done to make it even more difficult?

7. Get It Together

Purpose: Players try to sort and group themselves to learn new things about each other.

Population: Age – 8 and up   Group size – 10 to 30 people

Supplies and space: Open space
Procedure:
1. Players line up in order, according to a direction you give. After the direction is given, players must seek information from each other so as to know how to put themselves in order. Here are some examples of the kinds of directions you might give:
   - "Line up according to shoe size, from biggest to smallest."
   - "Line up according to birthdays, from January to December."
   - "Line up in alphabetical order using your middle names. Can you rearrange the group to spell a word using the first letter of each middle name?"

2. Have everyone gather into groups that share certain characteristics. Here are some examples of characteristics you might name:
   - "Gather into groups according to the color of your socks."
   - "Gather into groups according to the number of brothers and sisters you have."
   - "Gather into groups according to your favorite ice cream flavor."
   - "Gather into groups according to your favorite TV show."

Reflection: What worked the best? Did you see any leaders emerge? For the variation: How did you communicate when you couldn't talk?

8. Frogger

Purpose: Players have fun trying to figure out who is the Frogger.

Population: Age – 8 and up   Group size – 8 to 30 people

Supplies and space: Open space and a spot where the "detective" can hide so they cannot see the group at all

Procedure:
Have the group form a circle and select one member to be the first Detective. Explain to the group that one person in the circle will be made the Frogger, and the rest of the circle are flies. During the game the Frogger will inconspicuously stick out their tongue at the others in the circle. If the Frogger sticks his or her tongue out at you, you have been "eaten" and must fall back while a scream, gargle, acking sound, etc. Kids get pretty creative with this part! The Detective will be in the middle of the circle (standing up) and is trying to guess who the Frogger is. Limit the number of guesses the Detectives get. The game is up when there is no one left except the Frogger, or when the Detective guesses who the Frogger is. The Frogger then becomes the new Detective, and the Detective gets to choose the new Frogger. This is done by making sure everyone in the circle is closing their eyes, and that the new Detective is away and cannot see the group. The "Chooser" walks around the outside of the circle and taps the new Frogger on the shoulder. This is done so that no one but the new Frogger and the old Detective know who the Frogger is! To call the Detective back the group yells, "Detective, Detective!" or "Hey, Detective!" Once the Detective is situated in the middle of the circle, the tongue-sticking-out starts all over again!

9. Boppity-Bop-Bop-Bop

Purpose: To break the ice and help the group to have fun.

Population: Ages – 8 and up   Group size – 4 to 25

Supplies and space: Open space

Procedure:
1. Once the group has formed a circle, explain the game. One person will be in the middle (the Bopper) and will go to people in the circle and say "Boppity-bop-bop-bop!" The person they are talking to must say "Bop" before the Bopper finishes saying "Boppity-bop-bop-bop," or else they are the new Bopper.
2. The Bopper can also just say "Bop." If they do so, the person they're talking to canNOT say "bop." If they do, they are the new Bopper.
3. Once the group has this down, add a few new calls to the game. "Jello": the person the Bopper is facing must put their hands together above their head and "jiggle like Jello" while the people to the right and the left must join hands around the person to be the bowl. (THIS MUST BE DONE BEFORE THE BOPPER COUNTS TO A CERTAIN NUMBER, OR ELSE THE PERSON THE BOPPER IS FACING IS THE NEW BOPPER!!) "Elephant": Person makes the elephant trunk with their arms while the people next to them make ears. There are many more, get creative!!

10. Invisible Marble

Purpose: To develop teamwork and communication in your group. Group develops a way to count to a certain number without looking at each other or talking to each other.

Population: Ages – 8 and up   Group size – 4 to 25
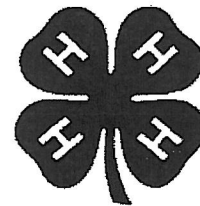
Supplies and space: Open space

Procedure:
1. Have the group form a circle, and tell them that there is an invisible marble on the ground in the middle of the circle, and everyone has to stare really hard at it, for the whole activity.
2. The group will have to count to a number that you give them, without going around in a circle (you can speak after the person next to you does). No one can look away from the invisible marble, and no one can speak except to say a number. If two or more people speak at the same time, you must start all over again at one.

Reflect:
What did we do? What made this activity difficult? Was there something that made it easier? Did we come up with a way to be successful? How did you work together and solve this without using your eyes or mouths?

11. Who's Bob?

Purpose: Just for fun!!

Population: Ages – 6 and up   Group size – 4 to 30

Supplies and space: Open space

Procedure:
1. Have the group form a circle (standing). One person in the circle will be Bob. Bob will do an action that the rest of the group must imitate.
2. The catch is that there is a Detective who will be in the middle of the circle trying to figure out who Bob is. Designate one person to be the Detective and have that person stand away from the group so they cannot see what is going on, but can still hear the group.
3. Then, designate one person to be the first Bob. Have Bob start the action and the group follow before the Detective is called back. Once the action has been started call the Detective back in by saying "Hey, Detective!" or "Detective, Detective!"
4. Bob may change actions as many times as he or she likes; in fact, the game won't work unless Bob changes actions somewhat frequently. Once the Detective has successfully guessed who Bob is, the old Bob is now the new Detective, and the old Detective chooses a new Bob. It works best if group members do not stare at Bob while the actions are going on. This kind of gives Bob away!

Created by:

Dawn Kuelz
Door County 4-H Youth Development Agent
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Jenna Kropp, Brown County 4-H Camp Counselor
Hannah Motquin, Door County 4-H Camp Counselor

Adapted from:
"Icebreakers & Rainy Day Games"
Sarah Schultz, Brown County 4-H Program Advisor