

2nd Annual Oregon Arts Education Congress Teambuilding Activity

Title of Activity: THREE THINGS IN COMMON and BIRTHDAY CIRCLE

Facilitator Name: Sarah Langan

Introduction: The group is asked to pair up and to discover three things they have in common with their partner using a variety of methods; the group is asked to non-verbally put themselves in a standing circle in order of birth date.

Ideal group size for this activity: Ten and above

Age Range/Appropriateness: Eight and above

1-3 Learning Outcomes:

- The goal of the exercise is for students to get acquainted with each other by thinking quickly and creatively.
- The goal of the exercise is for students to work as an ensemble and communicate in a non-verbal way.

Materials needed: None

Procedure:

THREE THINGS IN COMMON

1. Ask the students to find a partner. Explain to them that they have a few minutes to find three things in common with their partner *without using words*.
2. Pairs quickly share what they have in common with the rest of the class.
3. Ask the students to find a new partner.
4. Explain to the students that they have a few minutes to find three unusual things they have in common; three things that they do not think anyone else in the room have in common. For example: A pair learns that they both have grandmothers who were born in Tennessee.
5. Pairs quickly share what they have in common with the rest of the class.
6. Tell the students to find a new partner. This time they must find three things in common without using words that have to do with _____. (You, the teacher, fill in the blank.) It can be a word that is a theme of a play or story such as ambition, loneliness or love.
7. Pairs quickly share what they have in common with the rest of the class.

BIRTHDAY CIRCLE

1. Ask the students to arrange themselves in a circle according to their birthdays – to the teacher's right is January 1 and to his/her left December 31 (the year of birth is not important.) They must accomplish this task without speaking. Depending on the size of the group, give them approximately two minutes to complete the task. Whether the task is complete or not, tell the students to commit to a place in the circle.
2. Ask the students to go around the circle in order (beginning with January) and state what his/her birthday is. There will be some people in the incorrect place – note it and continue around the circle. Once everyone has stated their birthday, give the students who are out of order ten seconds to rearrange themselves (again non-verbally.)

Opportunities to expand/follow-up questions: For Three Things in Common, how difficult or hard was it to find things you had in common with your partner? How did working non-verbally make this task less or more difficult? Did you learn anything surprising about your partner? Was it easy or hard to find things in common with the word _____?

For Birthday Circle, in what ways did you communicate information to the group without speaking? If you were someone who was out of order, what hindered you from being in the correct spot? Were you successful on your second attempt?

Notes from the facilitator: Be sure that the students are working non-verbally when asked to do so. Set time limits for each activity- don't let either of these games drag out too long. For Three Things in Common, don't be afraid to assist a pair who might be reticent to start talking. Ask questions to help get the ball rolling, such as: what movie did you last see, or have you ever been out of the country?