

Summary of Activities / Community Builders

Name my Name

Circle up. Everyone in the group states their name (nice and loud) going around in a circle. Then, *without speaking*, the group is told to arrange themselves in the circle in alphabetical order. (Don't give them too much time!) Tell everyone to freeze and without anyone in the group moving or rearranging, go around the circle to see how the group did. Have them, once again, all at once, reposition themselves into a more correct order. The third (or fourth) time, see if they can reposition themselves with complete accuracy! Talk about failure leading to success after they got it "perfect".

Gotcha!

Hold up your right hand and put it off to your right side palm face up in front of the person next to you! Hold up your left index finger and place it in the palm of the person on your left. When the word, "Gotcha!" is shouted, you will try to capture the finger in your palm while at the same time lifting your finger out and escaping the grasp of your neighbor. Now, switch to the other side. Now, step into the circle, cross your arms and try it.

Magic 11/Sum It Up

These games are played like "rock, paper, scissors".

Three to four people in a group use one hand and at the same time, flash a set of digits in an attempt to have the group's total number add up to 11. Have several rounds until each group is successful. No conspiracies or planning ahead of time. Must be completely random.

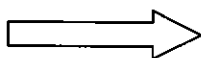
Sum it Up: Now using 2 hands, flash random sets of digits. Make it a contest between the 3-4 participants to see who can add up the digits the fastest. Ask the group which game they prefer and to explain why.

Rain

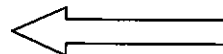
Done as a "round"—like Row, Row, Row Your Boat. Facilitator begins rubbing his/her hands together on one side of the room and then it spreads to the other side of the room. As the other side of the room continues the rubbing, the side that began the rubbing, moves to taps on the forearm and then it spreads across to the other side of the room. Then to snaps; then to patting the legs and stomping feet for thunder. As the storms begins to end, return to patting the legs; then to snaps; then to taps; then to rubbing. At the end, everyone takes a big breath!

ABC Hunt

In groups of 3, 4, or 5, each group receives a handout with the alphabet written down the page in a vertical fashion (or just have them write their own alphabet on a blank sheet of paper, it's cheaper!). Tell the group that they will get 3 minutes to find as many items beginning with each letter of the alphabet as possible. The item may only come from things they have with them, not from anything in the room. Encourage creativity. They are to write the name of the item on the list and place the item in the middle of the circle. Call time when it seems most are finishing. Note: it's best to cut this sooner than later. As a facilitator, call out a letter. Each group holds up that item and states what it is. You can also do a survey to find out which group covered the most letters. For application to curriculum, have them write words associated with the subject!



And Just in case you'd like to try a couple of new ones....



Human Camera

In pairs, one person is the camera; one person is the photographer. The person who is the camera keeps her/his eyes shut until the photographer "takes" a picture—squeezing the shoulders of the human camera. The photographer guides the "camera" with her/his hands on the shoulders of the camera and leads her/him to various things in the room to photograph. When the camera is "activated" the eyes of the camera act as a shutter, opening and closing quickly, thereby taking a "picture."

Scream Ball

Throw the ball in air. When it is in the air, everyone screams. When it lands in your hands, everyone immediately stops!

Memory Pegs

Number	Peg	Brain Break
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

Brain Breaks

A way to increase learning efficiency and alertness through various activities (yes, some are very weird...).

- "Please stand up! When I say 'Go,' touch two walls, greet two people with a high five and find yourself returning to your seats."
- "Everyone take a deep breath! Let it out slowly. And take another deep breath and say, 'Life is s-weeeeet!'"
- To randomly pair people up, find someone with the same color shirt, eyes, hair, shoe size, height, initial in their first name, month of birthday or anything else.
- Thumb wrestle with a partner. Thank your partner when you're done.
- "Turn to the person next to you and say... 'You are a powerful learner.'" (Or anything pertaining to your lesson, affirmations, etc. The goal is to have a choral response.)
- "Put your right hand above your head, now your left hand, bring them down to wrap around your skull and give yourself a brain massage."
- While teaching an interesting fact, ask "Can I have an 'Oooooo' on that?" Other options Ahhhhhh, Hmmmmm, Ah-Ha, Cha Ching, and Oh Yeah!
- "Put your right hand in the air, now reach back and pat yourself on the back for doing a great job!"
- Rain: start by rubbing hands together, then snaps, pat thighs, stomp your feet. Then to finish, reverse the order. For lightning effects have someone work the lights!
- "Jump up and down as many times as there are letters in your first, middle and last names."
- Make up your own. Be outrageous! Have fun!

Student reactions to Brain Breaks:

They eventually love them! At first, they are not too sure how to take it. Even after they get used to the fact that it is going to be happening, some of them will still look at you as though you are a complete geek for making them do this. Labeling the activity as "stupid" actually helps them to feel more comfortable doing it.

- Clare LaMeres The Winner's Circle, Yes I Can!

Remember: A teenager's brain can concentrate for one minute for every year of age (plus or minus 5 minutes!). Giving Brain Breaks at regular intervals and "reading" your audience, can assure you that everyone is taking a break together, which can in turn mean everyone is also paying attention to the lesson together!



Bring Backs

A way to effectively gain student attention quickly and respectfully
(without being annoying...).

- Raise your index finger (or pinky) and point to the sign on the wall and let's read it together...
- "17" (Yell out any number, say "go" and start clapping and silently counting. You can achieve an "all silent and focused" moment at the end as your class gets good at this.)
- Please press pause... continue to pause... thank you for pausing.
- Look at my elbow (or any other untraditional appropriate object like: a bottle of bubbles, feather duster, zit on my face, etc.)
- If you can hear me... clap twice... say "Macarena"... snap six times... flex your biceps... pat your head and rub your tummy...
- Dexterity check (5 claps, 5 claps, 3 claps, cross over, back, clap, say Ugh!)
- Take a deep breath and say "I'm sure glad I'm here"
- Find yourself sitting tall, eyes bright, and give me that Colgate smile!
- Music or sound affects: When you hear the train whistle find yourself pausing. (Set up ahead of time)
- KAIZEN (with sign language)
- Rhythmic clap (or class clap) repeated
- Join me when you can (Touch your shoulders, head, raise hands above your head and then ask them to join you. Then change or add one thing. Keep asking them to join you!)
- Make a sound like a cow.
- Put one hand over your head and with the other grab your writing implement.

Reminders when creating your own Bring Backs:

1. *Frame in the positive*
2. *Use action words*
3. *Use various voice inflections, accents, and sound affects.*
4. *Be outrageous (the brain listens to unusual things)*
5. *Use as many modalities (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic) as possible.*
6. *Read, and be sensitive to, your audience.*
7. *Play and enjoy your students!*

Dark Doodling

1. Start with your paper sideways for our trip to the Rockies and draw some mountains across the horizon.
2. Now draw a nice cool refreshing lake in the valley below the mountains.
3. Since it hasn't warmed up yet, let's put some snowcaps on the mountains.
4. Now we'll need some fish in the lake so we can catch some dinner.
5. Since it is around dinnertime, draw the sun going down behind the mountains.
6. We'll need to set up our tent before it gets dark. Let's put it next to the lake.
7. The clouds seem to be rolling in. Let's put a few clouds in the sky.
8. It's getting to be a bit cooler now that the sun is going down, let's build a fire ring and a fire close to the tent - be careful, not too close.
9. The elk are coming out to graze. Draw some elk along the sides of the mountains.
10. One more thing. It would be nice if we had some trees to block that cool wind coming in.
Draw two trees near the lake.

Debrief Questions

What were some of the feelings that were coming up for you during the activity?

When have you had these same feelings in the past?

Was there any point during the drawing when you gave up? Why?

Was there any point during the activity when you just thought it was silly? Why?

What comments were made during this activity?

Did anyone peek? Why?

What do you think the lesson of this drawing might be?

How can you apply this to your real life?

Big QUESTION Game!

What is the “voice inside your head” saying right now?

What is the last movie you remember seeing? What was it about?

What would you do with a million dollars?

If you could live any time in history or the future, when would it be? Why?

If you could have 50 pounds of anything (not \$ or gold), what would it be?

Tell about a time when you were afraid.

If you could have dinner with anyone past or present who would it be?

What is the coolest thing on your classroom (or office) wall? What meaning does it hold?

If you could do anything with your life, and money was no object, what would you do?

If you were given a free hour in your day, how would you spend it? (sleeping doesn't count)

What's your favorite animal? What does that say about you as a person metaphorically?

If you had to pick one thing to eat for the rest of your life (assume you stay healthy) what would it be?

If you could stay one age for life, what age would you pick?

Do you think the world will be better or worse 100 years from now?

Would you accept a million dollars to leave the country and never come back? Where would you go if you did?

What would constitute a “perfect day” for you?

Whom do you admire most? In what way does that person inspire you?

If you could wake up tomorrow having gained one new ability, what would it be?

Is there anyone you would want to trade lives with? Who? Or if not, why not?

Where is the coolest place on earth you have traveled? Why did you like it so much?

What is one of your most treasured memories?

If you knew there was going to be a nuclear war in one week, what would you do?

What is the greatest accomplishment in your life? Is there anything you hope to do that is even better?

Do your close friends tend to be older or younger than you? What does that say about you?

Your house, containing everything you own catches fire; after saving all your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a final dash to save any one item. What would it be?

How do you react when people sing "Happy Birthday to You" in a restaurant?

If you could have free, unlimited service for five years from an extremely good cook, chauffeur, housekeeper, masseuse, or personal secretary, which would you choose?

If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living?

Would you like to be famous? In what way?

If you could choose the sex and physical appearance of your soon-to-be-born child, would you do it?

What do you most strive for in your life: accomplishment, security, love, power, excitement, knowledge, or something else?

Does the fact that you have never done something before increase or decrease its appeal to you?

Since adolescence, in what three-year period do you feel you experienced the most personal growth and change?

If you could change anything about the way you were raised, what would it be?

Would you like to know the precise date of your death?

If you were to get a tattoo, what design would you have and where would you put it?

Would you be willing to give up all television and movies for the next five years if it would induce someone to provide for 1,000 starving children in Indonesia? If so, what would you miss the most?

Would you prefer to be blind or deaf?

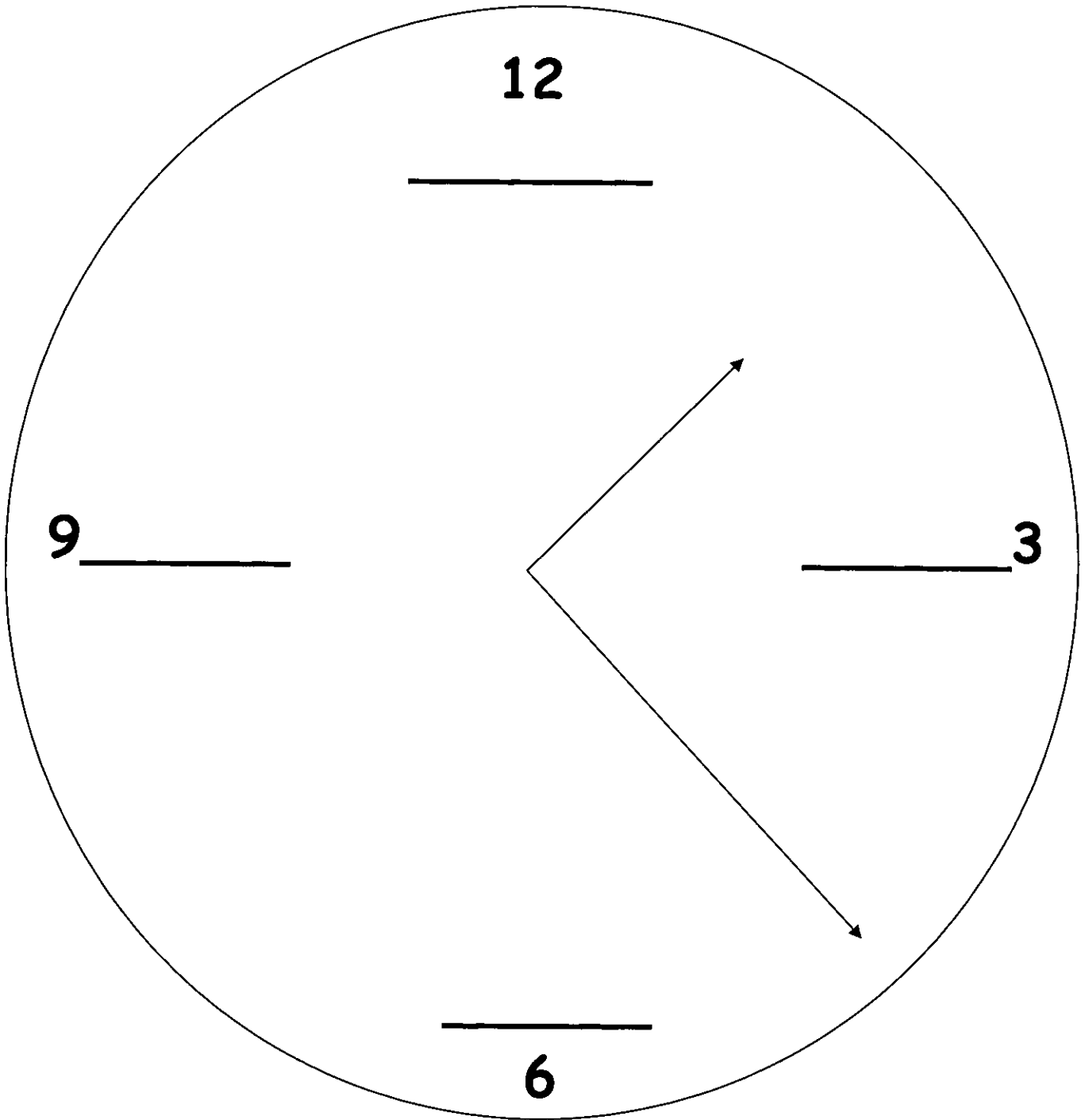
How many of your friendships have lasted more than ten years? Which of your current friends do you feel will still be important to you ten years from now?

What do you like best about your life? Least?

If you could script the basic plot for the dream you will have tonight, what would the story be?

Most questions were taken from The Book of Questions
by Gregory Stock, Ph.D.

Appointment Clock



OUTCOME SENTENCES

Today...

- 1. I learned...**
- 2. I was surprised...**
- 3. I'm beginning to wonder...**
- 4. I'm getting clearer about...**
- 5. I rediscovered...**
- 6. I promise I will...**
- 7. I am feeling...**
- 8. I'm pleased that I...**
- 9. I wish that I...**
- 10. I now realize...**
- 11. I would someday like to...**
- 12. I would conclude...**
- 13. I cannot agree with...**
- 14. I would like to find out more about...**