

LOW-ENERGY GAMES

Butt Charades

Cut up slips of paper with words on them and put them into a bag. Break up your audience or group into two teams. Get a volunteer from each team to spell the word he/she took out of the bag by moving their hips (spelling the words with thier butts!). (Make sure they do not say a word to give away clues.) If their team (or their side of the audience) does not figure out the word after two spellings, the other team gets to guess.

Make it interesting by the words you choose, try to keep it clean. We don't want any dirty butts!

Counting Game

This can either be played up front, with everyone watching, or as a group with everyone playing.

Have everyone in your group (or the people on stage) pair up and face each other. Each person holds up zero to ten fingers behind their back. On the count of three, have them pull their hands from behind their backs. The first person to yell out the correct sum of all the fingers wins. Do best two of three. Then bring the winners up front to play each other until you have a champion.

Count It Out

Gather youth into a tight circle of 5-10. (If you have more than ten, you can make this a competition game with two or three circles participating at once.) While in the circle, everyone must look down at the ground and may not raise their head to make eye contact with others in their group. The goal of this team building and communication game is to count the numbers 1 to 15 in order, with each person in the group saying at least one number. The students are not allowed to count around the circle consecutively. If two people say the same number at the same time, they must start over again at one. This may sound very easy, but it is extremely hard in reality because you have taken away their ability to see non-verbal cues as to who is going to say the next number. It is a great game for student leadership.

I Need a Shoelace

This game can be played with small or huge groups. The up-front person divides teams (in audiences of rallies or other large gatherings you can make each section of chairs a group).

The up-front person then yells out a demand for a somewhat common item that people might have on them. The first team to bring up that item wins that round. Have each team elect ONE runner to run the item up to the person up front.

Examples:

I need a...

shoelace

student body card

13 shoes tied together

3 belts hooked together

nail file

chewed gum

someone with food in their teeth

sock with a hole in it

movie stub ticket

Driver's License

quarter older than 1980

hair brush

Big Bootie

You can use any size group with this game. Sit in a circle and designate someone to be the "Bootie" (or "Bum" for our cool British friends). Number everyone off (they have to remember their number). In unison everyone must clap their hands once then slap their legs. Do this during the whole game.

Now to the game. At the beginning, chant and clap, "Aahhh, big bootie, big bootie, big bootie, big bootie, ohhh yehhh, big bootie" (or, "Big Bum, big bum...").

The designated "Bootie" says, "Bootie to the two!" No. 2 has to respond and say, "2 to the (any number)!" Make sure that you clap only once as you say "2 to the--!" Then slap your leg once as you say a number. Whoever claps or slaps their leg more than once as they call out a number is out! Like Zip Zap, the game may be confusing at first. But once the kids get it they can go really fast.

Ships and Sailors

This game involves the entire crowd. One person acts as the Caller, who calls out certain commands. After a command is called, everyone in the audience must get in the position with as many people as they need that follows that command. The game is an elimination game, so the last person (or few students if you have a large group) to get into position or anyone doing the wrong move is out.

The commands:

- *3 Men in a boat: three people get together in a line sitting on the ground acting like they are rowing a boat
- *Man overboard: two people get together, one person down on hands and knees and the other person puts their foot on that person's back
- *Attention: everyone stands at attention, saluting
- *Time for dinner: 4 people sit in circle acting like they are eating
- *Hit the deck: lay down on your stomach as fast as you can
- *Portside: everyone runs to the left of the room (their left)
- *Starboard: everyone runs to the right side of the room

Rain Maker

This game involves a large crowd. Explain that you are going to do something once thought impossible: with their help you will make it rain inside.

Divide into 3-4 groups where they are sitting (left, left middle, right middle, and right...sides of the room). Explain that they MUST be absolutely quiet and watch you tell them what to do for this to work. Point to the left side and have them quietly rub their hands together back and forth. Then bring in the next group, and the next, until all are doing it (gets louder as you go).

After the last group has joined in, go back to the first group and get them snapping their fingers, then the next group and so on. Then back to group one to begin patting their hands on their legs...on to the other groups.

Then back to group one to begin patting harder and stomping their feet on the floor...on then to the other groups.

You can do this process in reverse...back to patting legs, then back to snapping, back to rubbing hands, then back to silence. If it is done right, you will hear your rainstorm!

Sardines

This game is kind of a reverse "Hide and Go Seek." Turn out all the lights. Have one person go hide. Everyone else is "it" and looks for this person. As soon as one person finds the person hiding, he or she hides with the person. Now there are two hiding.

As soon as someone else finds them, that person hides with them. You end up with a bunch of people packed like "sardines" in one hiding spot with one poor person trying to find everyone.

Egg, Chicken, Dinosaur

The goal of this game is to work your way up by beating other players at Rock-Scissors-Paper to

the "position" of king or queen.

Everyone starts out as an egg. You find another egg and play Rock-Scissors-Paper. The winner "grows" into a chicken who finds another chicken to play against. Whoever wins "grows" into a dinosaur. The loser returns to being an egg.

Once a dinosaur you must find another dinosaur to play against. If you lose you step down to a chicken. The next step is becoming a prince or princess, which of course means playing against another prince or princess. If you win you become a King or Queen and stand off to the side. If you lose, you return to a dinosaur. The game is played until there is one egg, chicken, dinosaur and prince. All other players will be kings or queens.

The fun in all this?: Eggs waddle on the ground in a little ball, chickens walk and squat while flapping their wings and "clicking", dinosaurs "roar" standing up. Princes/princesses "prance" around holding an imaginary scepter while kings and queens stand off to the side victoriously.

Four on a Couch

Depending on the size of your group, this game could work as an Up Front Game (for a large group—the group watches while a few do the activity in front of the group, entertaining the rest) or as a Mixer (for a small group—in a group of 8-12 kids you could involve almost everyone).

Create a circle with chairs and one couch, enough seats for everyone playing plus one extra seat. 2 girls and 2 guys start off by sitting on the couch, while everyone else sits in the chairs. Give every person playing a paper to write their name on. They are to turn their names in to you.

Mix the names up and redistribute them back to the youth, making sure no one gets their own name. They are not to tell which name they have. The purpose of the game is for the guys to get all 4 guys on the couch and the girls to get all 4 girls on the couch. The person to the left of the empty seat calls out a name of someone in the circle. Whoever is HOLDING THAT NAME (not the one whose name it is, i.e John calls Amy's name, and Jeff is holding Amy's name) gets up and sits on the empty chair. The person who called the name and the person who sat on the chair, then exchange papers with names on it (that way the same name does not stay with the same person, it makes it more challenging). The person to the left of the new empty seat calls a new name. (the same name cannot be repeated twice in a row).

Again, the purpose is for the guys to get the 2 girls off the couch and vice versa. This is a really fun game but it can last a long time.

Secret Identity (aka, Who's On My Back?)

Have everyone secretly write down the name of a person on a small piece of paper or a sticker. It has to be a person that everyone in the room would know about - a famous historical figure, an actor or sports celebrity, or a popular politician. Then have them tape the name on the back of the person on their left.

Everyone goes around and asks people yes or no questions about who is on their back. They can only ask each person one question. The person who can do it in the least number of questions wins.

Gargle a Tune

Bring 3 students up front. Hand them each a glass of water. Then, one at a time, show only the person doing the gargling the name of a familiar song. It could be a nursery rhyme or any other familiar song. Have the person take a drink of water and attempt to gargle the tune you have showed them. The rest of the students in the room should be listening close so they can guess the song. Be ready for water through the nose.

Back Artist - aka Touch Telephone

This game is based on the old "telephone game" but involves touch rather than hearing. No talking is allowed. Divide the group into teams of about six each. Each team sits in a line, one behind the other. The last person is shown a simple hand-drawn picture of an object such as a house, a cat, or a Christmas tree, etc. The person who is shown the drawing then tries to draw an exact copy of it, using their fingers, on the back of the person in front of them.

The drawing can only be done once. The second person then draws what they felt onto the back of the person in front of them. This continues until it gets to the person at the front of the line, that person then must draw what he or she felt, on a piece of paper. The team whose picture most resembles the original wins that round.

Clap

This game is a variation of the old faithful "Hot/Cold" game. One person is chosen to be "it" and asked to leave the room so they can't hear or see what is going on in the room. Take about 1 minute and pick an action as a group for "it" to do when he/she returns. (A Jumping Jack, Pick Their Own Nose, etc).

When "it" is given the signal to come back in the room he/she has to guess what he/she is

supposed to do by walking around, touching things in the room or performing random actions. The group will clap louder and faster the closer "it" gets to completing the task.

Remember there is no talking or other clues, but there will be a considerable amount of laughter, and you will be shocked at the detailed and complicated things you can get a person to do simply by clapping.

Flinging Flying Cheese Ball Challenge

This is a challenge where one side of the room competes against the other. Choose a representative from each side of the room. Have the reps come up front, then give them each a plastic spoon and a can of cheese balls. At "go," they will have 3 minutes to fling the cheese balls, one at a time, towards the audience on their side of the room. Teams score a point each time a cheese ball is caught by an audience members' hand. Teams can score 5 points by catching the cheese ball in their mouths! (Each side of the room needs to have a judge keeping official score.) The team with the most points at the end of the three minutes wins.

NOTE: If you have a really big group, you might want to bring up 2 or 3 tossers for each side of the room.

Mafia

Great game for limited space or if you're stuck indoors. Also good for smaller groups or over-nighters.

The object of the game is to not get eliminated. It takes a lot of explaining, but once you get it, it will quickly become a favorite. You need at least 8 players to make the game interesting. You need a deck of cards, or slips of paper with the identities on them. For 10 or more, there should be 2 Mafia, 1 detective, and the rest townspeople. For less, have only 1 Mafia. Try not to play with more than 30, because it turns into a huge shouting match. Distribute the identities secretly. Everyone should keep their identity a secret, but if they choose to they can reveal it as part of strategy later.

Here is an outline of how to play each round:

FIRST GET IN A BIG CIRCLE SITTING DOWN.

1. Narrator says "Town go to sleep." All players put their heads down and close their eyes.

2. N: "Mafia wake up" Only the mafia open their eyes and look at narrator.
3. N: "Mafia, who do you want to kill?" Mafia have to point to someone in the room and agree on that person. Narrator nods to let them know they understand.
4. N: "Mafia go to sleep" Mafia close eyes again.
5. N: "Detective wake up" The cop opens eyes. "Who do you think it is?" Detective points to someone they suspect is a mafia. Narrator either nods yes or no. Now the Detective has an advantage for later. " Detective go to sleep"
6. N: "Town wake up" At this point, everyone opens their eyes, and the narrator announces the evening news – who has been eliminated and how. The story of the elimination always ends with “And we know it’s the mafia because there were sand crabs nibbling on their toes. Townspeople, you’re outraged!” Everyone gasps in horror. Then the narrator says, “Who do you think the mafia is?” And then the accusations fly.
7. Narrator asks for accusations as to who the town thinks the mafia is. It's usually a good idea to limit it to 2 or 3 per round. To make it more interesting, I always insist on the accuser making up some creative reason why they are accusing so-and-so. (like, "I heard them leave their house last night" or "look how muddy their shoes are!")
8. Narrator then allows each of the accused to defend themselves. This whole process can get really rowdy, and you need to be careful not to offend the sensitive kids. Narrator must remain neutral, but can egg on either side with "facts."
9. After a few minutes, narrator should announce that it's time to vote. By a show of hands, go through each accused. The one with the most votes gets "eliminated" by the town.
10. Repeat.

When someone is "eliminated" they cannot participate in the accusations. They are not allowed to talk. However, they get to keep their eyes open and find out all the answers to the mystery. Remind students not to cheat, because the temptation is great to do so! The game ends when either both Mafia are eliminated (town wins) or are the only ones left (mafia wins).

Win, Lose, or Draw

This is the same as the old TV version by the same name. It's played like Pictionary, either guys against girls or team against team.

A word is given to one member of each team who tries to draw symbols and pictures to lead his/her team to say the word that was given to them. You may not use numbers, letters or the "number sign" (#), anything else is okay. You also may not say anything or do any kind of gestures, to help your team guess the word.

You may point to a team member who is on the right track or very close to saying the answer, but no other gestures may be used.

You may nod your head to say "yes, that's right" or "no, wrong." Use Pictionary cards if you have them or make up a list of words yourself.

Whoever has the most points (words guessed) at the ends wins. If it is a tie, give each team another word and see who can do their word the fastest.

The Point: Use words to introduce your topic, or words to fit the season, i.e., Manger, Wise Men, Christmas tree, etc.