

ICEBREAKER SUGGESTIONS

1. Quick Change Artist

Bring two people up to the front. Each player is to observe his or her partner's appearance. Then, the players turn around back-to-back and make three changes (mess up hair, take off a shoe, untuck shirt, take arm out of sleeve). When they face each other again, each partner must identify the changes made by the opponent. This game can be repeated several times by changing partners and increasing the number of changes made until a winner is declared.

2. Three In Our Crowd

Have group split off in groups of three and find three things in common (besides the obvious gender or hair/eye color) such as: favorite holiday, season of the year, hobby, phone app, movie, etc. One person then introduces the group and shares the three things they have in common. Depending on your group, you can make it a bit silly by asking the person who does the intro to use a voice like a talk-show host.

3. Pterodactyl

This one is for pure laughs. Students get in a circle and go around the circle trying to say "pterodactyl" without showing their teeth (putting lips over teeth like a person without their dentures in). Students may switch the direction of the game by looking at the next person and doing their best pterodactyl impression (maaach!), again without showing teeth/smiling. Those who crack-up or smile are out.

4. Quick Line-up

Have the group make lines of 8-10. If you have more than one line, they can race to line up in order of:

- Alphabetical by mom's first name, their first name or middle name
- Height, shortest to tallest
- Month of birthday, starting with current month
- After area code, first three numbers of phone number, least to greatest

5. Number Crunchers

Divide into teams of 8-10, up to 20. Have students stand in order between two lines that are 18 inches apart. On the signal, person #1 changes places with #10 without moving outside the lines. Next #2 swaps with #9, #3 swaps with #8, etc. Be sure that #2 and #9 don't move until #1 and #10 have made it to their new places, and so on until all have been switched. First team to finish yells "Crunch!"

6. What's Next?

Ask the group to sit in a circle. The first person starts with any word they wish, like "blue." The next person repeats the first word then adds another word which links to the first, like "berry." The next person repeats the previous word and adds another word link like "pie." To keep this moving, only allow a few seconds for each new word association.

7. Clumps

Divide into pairs. Ask each pair to sit on the floor with their partner, backs together, arms linked. Their task is to stand up together. Once everyone has done this, two pairs join together and the group of four tries to repeat the task. After they succeed, add another two and try again. Keep adding pairs until your whole group is trying to stand together.

8. Human Rock-Paper-Scissors

You can use lots of themes for this game and make up fun poses for the three characters. (How about "Wizard beats Giant - Giant beats Elf - Elf beats Wizard" or "Spiderman beats Batman - Batman beats Superman - Superman beats Spiderman"?) After the poses are decided, break students up into pairs or into two teams. If played as a large group, the team will need to agree on one of the poses for each round (everyone on the same team will need to do the same pose). Give each team a few minutes to strategize. Once the teams have their poses ready, a leader will have them, on the count of three, jump around and do the pre-determined pose. You can play however many times you'd like. Best out of five rounds is a good number for a medium-size group.

9. Blanket Name Game

For each turn, each team chooses a volunteer to stand (or sit) behind the blanket. Count "1, 2, 3?" and drop the blanket. The first player to correctly identify the name of the individual, wins the round, earning one point for her team.

10. Silent But Not Deadly

Students are secretly given a number and they have to arrange themselves WITHOUT SPEAKING in numerical order by holding up fingers or making up their own sign language. For Round Two, have people arrange themselves in order of birth or in calendar months.

11. Can I Come In?

Students get in a circle with one person in the middle. That person goes around the circle asking "Can I Come In?" Most people answer "No" unless they want to be in the middle. While this is happening, other people in the circle use non-verbal communication to run and switch places (but no shimmying - which means trading places with the person next to you). The object is for person in the middle to catch two people switching and move into an empty spot, thus leaving another person in the middle to ask "Can I Come In?"

12. Frown King/Frown Queen

Students pair up and stand back-to-back. On the count of three, everyone faces their partner, looks each other in the eyes and tries to frown, no speaking. The first to smile or laugh must sit down. All who remain standing take a new partner and the activity continues until two people remain. If you have two who are excellent at keeping a straight face, you can divide into teams and the opposite team can heckle to break down the opposing team's player. The last one standing is crowned Frown King or Frown Queen. (Crown is optional!)

13. Human Knot Game

Divide into groups of 6-10 people. Each group forms a tight circle, standing and facing each other. Everyone extends their hands into the circle and by intermingling their arms, grasps hands with other members of the group. Be sure that the two hands they are holding do not belong to the same person. The groups' goal: untie the knot, which results in members of the group having to climb over, under, or through each other's arms to untie the knot of bodies.

14. Destination Imagination

Each student thinks of a city or country they would like to visit or have visited. Then they decide upon three clues to help the other members to be able to accurately guess their destination. The trick to this game however, is that they cannot say their clues out loud - they have to act them out. For instance, if their chosen place is Hawaii, they could do a hula dance. The person at the end of the game, who has guessed the most destinations, wins!

15. Fruit Salad Love

Have students get in a circle and everyone has to pick the name of a different fruit and share it with the group. Someone starts by saying: "_____(their own fruit) loves _____ (name of another fruit that was mentioned). For example "Banana loves Apple." Then, the person who has apple as their fruit continues by saying "Apple loves _____ (names another fruit)." One person is in the middle and tries to tag anyone who pauses. Those who pause step out of the circle. The final two are the winners.

16. "Luke I am your father."

One student is blindfolded and goes to the front of the group. Other students take turns trying to disguise their voice and say a predetermined phrase like "Luke, I am your father" or "Hey there, what's my name?" The blindfolded student tries to guess who it is. If they are successful at guessing who is talking, they get to keep going. If they fail, then the student who disguised their voice takes their place. Play until you have a voice recognition champ!

17. The Cold Never Bothered Me Anyway

This takes a little prep, but it's worth it. Wet and wad up 5 t-shirts (even better, a youth group t-shirt) and put them in the freezer. Take frozen t-shirts to youth group and divide into five teams. The first team to unfreeze and get the t-shirt on one of its' members, wins!

18. "Would You Rather" Walls of Truth

Give students a list of "would you rather" questions and give them a few minutes to answer. Then have students stand facing forward in the middle of the room with each side wall representing choice A or choice B. Ask the first question. Students step toward the wall that corresponds with their answer. Have them take note of who had similar answers.

19. BINGO is your NAME-O

Make a grid on a piece of cardstock with some fun categories written in each square: "Someone who likes ____ (band name)" or "Someone who has been on a mission trip," or "Someone who watches Netflix too much." Duplicate for everyone in your group and hand out pencils. Encourage the group to mix, talk to everyone to try and complete their card. If one of the items listed on the bingo card relates to the person they are talking with, have them sign their name in that box.

20. Candy Q&A

Pick a bite-sized candy that comes in multiple colors. Pass around a bowl of candy large enough for your group to take a few. **DON'T EAT THEM!** Have questions that correspond with each color. Then go around the group and share the answers that correspond to the candy in your hand. For example, for each green candy: a goal you have in life. For each red candy: a favorite Christmas present. Bonus, after you answer you can eat the candy!

21. Song Scramble

Before the meeting, write out the first 5-6 lines or phrases from several popular songs, only one line/phrase per card. Make sure that only enough cards are used to cover the number of people present. The cards are then scattered on the floor. To start the game, each person grabs a card and tries to find whose holding the other cards that complete the verse or section of the song. The winning group is the first one to correctly assemble and sing their song.

22. Chocoholic

Ask two groups to sit in a circle on the floor. In the middle of the circle place bite-sized candy bars (unwrapped) on a plate, a knife, a fork, and three items of clothing – gloves, scarf and gigantic shoes. Each person in the circle takes a turn at rolling a die. On throwing a six, they run to the middle of the circle, put on the items of clothing, and start cutting the chocolate bars in half with a plastic knife, eating as many pieces as possible with a plastic fork. As soon as someone else throws a six that person runs to the middle puts on the gloves, scarf and shoes, and takes over. Continue until all the chocolate is eaten.

23. My Super Selfie

Give everyone a sheet of paper and something colorful to draw with, such as a crayon or marker. Ask each member of the group to go off into their own corner of the room to think of the super power he or she wishes to have. They need to draw themselves as a superhero (or villain!) with the paper and marker provided. After a few minutes, they come back together and share their self-portrait and describe their super power in detail.

24. Name Game Hot Potato

Ask the group to form a large circle and as you toss a soft object (a small stuffed animal works great), say the name of the person to whom you are tossing. Once that person catches the object, he picks someone else, shouts her name and tosses it to her, trying to go as quickly as possible. Play continues with the one object until it makes it to everyone in the group. Once someone's name has been called, he cannot get it again. Once you have gotten through everyone, add more stuffed animals and let the mayhem begin! Keep going, try to get at least five objects going at once. If your group is large, divide into smaller groups. After a few minutes, mix up the groups and start again so everyone gets to know each other's names.

25. Penguins (or Birdies on a Perch)

Musical chairs goes to the North Pole. Have enough sheets of paper for everyone in your group (these are the blocks of ice) and spread them around on the floor of your room. Have everyone get on a block of ice, one per block. When you start music or blow a whistle, penguins jump off their block and waddle around like penguins (arms stuck to sides) till the music stops and they must get back on a block of ice. While music is playing, remove a block of ice. Remember to tell kids they must not hover around any certain ice block or they are out. Last penguin standing wins!

26. Bible Name Scramble

If ever there was a list of names to scramble, look no further than Matthew 1:1 in the Bible! Challenge them to crack open their Bibles (you can make it easier by doing a scramble of only a few verses) and give them a few scrambled up names like "Rehoboam" or "Zerubbabel." The team who finishes first will have some fun trying to pronounce their winning answers!

27. The Doctor Will See You Now

Assign one person to play the doctor. That person leaves the room. Have a bag with strips of paper listing an ailment or phobia for someone on their team to act out (or even better, have the whole team act it out). Examples: they think they are chickens; they are scared of spiders; they have aliens growing inside of them, etc. The doctor re-enters the room and must figure out what is wrong. He or she may ask any player yes/no questions, but not "what's wrong with you?" After each question, the doctor can make a guess (diagnosis) of what he or she thinks is wrong. After five or so guesses, if they don't get it, the other team gets a turn. The team with the most correct guesses wins!

28. Web of 20 Questions

Gather kids in a circle. Using a ball of yarn, hold on to one end and throw the ball to someone. They then choose a question from 1-20 to answer (project this list up on a screen or have a copy to pass around). Adapt for your group. Eventually this creates a web as well as learning about people in the group.

Ideas for Questions:

- What are the top 3 songs on your playlist?
- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
- What three things would you save if your house were burning?
- What would be your dream concert to attend?

29. Art Collector

Give everyone a piece of paper and a pencil. In 5 minutes, each must draw a picture that conveys who he or she is without writing any words or numbers. At the end of five minutes, collect the pictures. Show them to the group one at a time and have them try to guess who drew it. The person who guesses the most correctly gets to be the "Master Art Collector!"

30. Paper Crazy

Divide into teams of five or six people and give each group a copy of the SAME newspaper. Ask them to spread the newspaper out, then describe a particular ad, article, fact, or picture from the paper. Have the team find it, rip it out and bring it to you. The first team to bring it gets a point. Continue calling out items. The team with the most points wins.