

GAMES TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

These games are a mix of name games, ice-breakers and general activities that will help getting to know each other. The games are divided in *name games*, *ice-breakers* and *general*, hopefully making it easier to spot what's what. Several of these activities can be used to demonstrate the commonalities or diversities within a group, and can help a group to start talking. It can also help facilitators to understand the diverse backgrounds and knowledge levels of the group before beginning the main activity.

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE,

general

Materials: paper, markers and tape

Players: As many as you like

Time: 30 – 60 minutes

How to play: Everyone write two things about themselves which are true and one which is a lie. The paper with the three sentences is taped on your chest and now everyone can read it. It is up to the person reading it to guess which one is the lie. Of course the aim is to tell the story behind the truths. You can also ask questions about the different sentences – be a detective.

Variation: Everyone stands in a circle. One by one you tell something about yourself. For each sentence everybody puts out their right thumbs - up if they believe it and down if they don't believe it. The one who said the sentence is the last one to turn the thumb to show everyone if it was true or false. A sentence could be "I love bananas" or "I climbed Kilimanjaro". Follow up questions to the statements can be encouraged if there is enough time.

SPEED DRAWING, *ice-breaker*

User comment: I observed this game at a Nordisk Samarbetsorganisation för Ungdomsarbete (NSU) event in Denmark, and it was interesting to see how the participants cooperated with so little time on their hands. It was also a good way to get to know one another, by explain why the portraits are (or aren't) a good representation of themselves.

User comment: I have directed this with a group of 4H'ers, and even though they knew each other well, they found the game very interesting and funny! It will probably work great with people who don't know each other that well too.

Materials: One piece of paper per person, different coloured markers, 1 per person

Players: 16 – 60

Time: 18 – 60 minutes according to group size

How to play: The participants sit in two circles: the inner circle is facing the outer circle, and the outer circle is facing the inner. Every participant in the inner circle must be facing one participant in the outer circle, and vice versa. They participants are told that they will draw a portrait of their partner, but with a twist: they will only get 15 seconds to draw before they have to move to the left and continue drawing on another portrait. When everyone has drawn on every portrait, the pairs switch places and the new outer circle is now

to draw. When everyone is finished, the participants can present their own portraits and explain why it is a good portrait of them, or why it's not.

HAPPY SLAPPING, *name game*

Materials: a rolled news paper and chairs for everyone.

Players: 6 - 25 people

Time: 10-15 min.

How to play: Everyone is sitting in a circle

except for one person, who is standing in the middle. Everyone including the person in the middle present themselves by their name. Now one starts saying a name of someone in the circle and the person in the middle has to hit that person with the news paper before that person says a new name. If you get hit before saying a new name/saying a wrong name/the name of the one in the middle you get the news paper and have to be in the middle. When changing from being in the middle you are the one who starts saying a new name. You have to say the new name just before you sit down. If you sit down first the new person in the middle can hit you.

User comment: This is a recurring activity at all the events I've been to. Why? Because it's a great way to learn names quickly!

SITTING BEHIND A BLANKET, *name game*

User comment: I've facilitated and played this game at several RYEurope events (Autumn Seminar, Conference, etc.) and it's fascinating how involved one can become! A little competition is always good, and to win you have to learn as many names as possible.

Materials: a blanket

Players: 10-20

Time: 10 - 20 minutes

How to play: The participants are split into two groups. Both groups sit on the floor and a blanket is placed between them so they cannot see each other. One person from each group sits directly behind the blanket. Then the two persons holding the blanket let it fall, and the two persons directly behind it have to say the name of the other person as fast as possible.

The first person to say the name of the other person wins. The loser joins the winning team. Repeat.

FINDING SIMILARITIES,

general

Material: None

Players: 30 minutes

Time: 15 minutes

How to play: Participants have to form groups according to the statements we

give them. They have to talk to everyone so they can form their group. For example we say "everyone who's last holiday was in the same country" so the participants have to go around and find all the other people who had their last holiday in the same country.

Example statements: similarities: same last holiday country, same number of siblings, same age, same relationship status, same job, same time of attending a RYEurope event.

User comment: I observed this game at the RYEurope Autumn Seminar in Austria 2017, and it was interesting to see how you can learn so much about each other in such an easy fashion, not to forget so short time!

MY ANIMAL NAME IS/THAT'S WHAT I LIKE, *name game*

Materials: none

Players: 6-20 people

Time: 10-20 min

How to play: The first person in line/circle must say his/her name and something they like that begins with the first letter of their name. "My name is Andy and I like Adventures". The next player repeats this and adds their own. "This is Andy who likes Adventures, I am Fred and I like Football". Continue around the circle until the last person has to reel of everyone's name.

Variation: Instead of saying something you like, a silly action can be done instead such as an animal impression. Or, each person introduces themselves with an adjective or animal starting with the first letter of their name, and does a gesture to illustrate it: e.g. "Adventurous Andy," "Huge Hannah," "Boozy Bob"; "Tom the Turtle"; "Emma the Elephant" etc.

User comment: This is also a game I have been part of several times, at many different events. All from small meetings to big camps! It's a great and easy way to learn names, and to involve everyone.

BEAUTIFUL TREES, *general*

User comment: I was first introduced to this activity during my studies, and I find it to be a very good way to demonstrate how we all see the world differently. It's also a super way to address the important issue of communication!

Material: Paper, pen, tape, wall

Group size: 10 – 30

Time: 45 minutes

How to: Every participant has three minutes to draw a beautiful tree. When everyone is done, the participants put their trees on a wall. The facilitator explains that the trees look different because beautiful trees are different to everyone. All of us have different points of views, different underlying values and different understandings of the world, topics and our societies. The facilitators continue to explain that these differences may

lead to conflict and misunderstanding, and emphasizes the importance of communication. The group can then discuss how they best can communicate, to get the best possible outcome of the event.

SPEED DATING, *general*

Materials: Access to information, something to write on/with

Time: 20 – 120 minutes

Group size: 20 – 40

How to: This activity can be used as a get to know each other game, or as a different and interactive way to introduce participants to a new topic. Before the actual “speed dating” begins, the participants are given different sub topics (e.g. different articles in the Declaration of Human Rights) and 10 – 20 minutes preparation time. When the participants have read about their topic, the group split in two and make two circles: the inner circle facing the outer, and vice versa (it is important that every participant has a “partner”). Next, the pairs are given 2 – 10 minutes (depending on group size and topic) to teach each other what they’ve learned. Make sure the participants in the inner circle has not gotten the same topic as the participants in the outer circle. When the 2 – 10 minutes are up, the participants in the outer circle moves to the left. When every participant in the inner circle has spoken to every participant in the outer circle, the facilitator ends the sessions with the key points about the main topic, or a discussion about what the participants found most interesting and/or important. Instead of a circle, a rotating system can be created with tables and chairs.

User comment: I observed this activity at the RYEurope Autumn Seminar in Austria 2017, and it was interesting to see how many good conversations came out of it. It’s a great game for several occasions!

For more methods to get to know each other

<https://www.ecyc.org/projects/ecyc-game-book-0>

<https://icebreakerideas.com/people-bingo/>

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/>