

Icebreakers and Name Games for High School Programs

I. Active Icebreakers

- **Name ball toss**
 - (Need a small ball) Stand in a circle. One person has a ball and tosses it to anyone else in the circle. Every time the ball is tossed the thrower needs to say 3 names: the name of the person who sent it to them, their own name, and the person they are throwing it to. See how fast you can get as a team!
- **Balance**
 - (No supplies needed) Two people stand facing each other with their feet together, pointed forward. They place their hands facing flat to meet like playing patty-cake. Without grabbing or holding hands, the competitors take turns pushing each other's hands to make the other person lose balance. You may warn your students that creativity usually outweighs strength in this game
- **Floodwaters**
 - (Need a blanket) Climate change has flooded campus and this blanket is our raft, everyone needs to get on! Once students are standing on the blanket, we discover the raft is upside down and must be flipped right side up. We need to work together to flip the whole blanket over without losing anyone overboard.
- **Ultimate Ninja**
 - (No supplies needed) Students start standing in a circle, close to one another. On the count of three, shout "Ultimate Ninja!" and everyone jumps back. Now, everyone is frozen until it is their turn. Rotating clockwise, each player has a chance to make 1 smooth attack per turn. Their goal is to slap the hand of another player without getting their own

hand slapped. Players lose by moving out of turn or getting their hand slapped.

- **Sing down**
 - (Need 2 pens, paper) Divide the students into two team and give everyone one word (i.e. “money” “rain” “free” “sunshine” “night” “party”). Set a timer, and have each group list as many songs that use that word as they can. After each round, have groups take turns singing their song, including the part with the word. Award one point for each song and repeat.
- **Copycat**
 - (No supplies needed, but music might help) Everyone stands in a circle, but one student who is “it” must leave. Everyone else decides on one person to lead the group in a dance move. “It” returns to the center of the circle as everyone is doing the same dance move. Every once in a while, the leader should change up the move and everyone should copy. “It” needs to guess who the leader of the pack is.
- **Artist**
 - (Need markers for half the group, drawings, blank paper) Everyone is paired off. One partner (the artist) is given a blank paper and a marker. The other partner (the narrator) is given a drawing. The narrator has to describe the picture to the artist so the artist can draw the most accurate copy without seeing the original design. Easy alternatives would be drawing a book cover, a person in the room, or an emoji.

II. Introductory Icebreakers

- **Silent Introductions**
 - (No supplies needed) Students are paired up with someone they don’t know. They must each share 3 things about themselves with their partner. The catch is you can’t speak at all, and the things you share can’t be about physical appearance. Once they’ve shared with each other, we report back to the group and each partner reveals what they think they learned.

- **ID Card Swap**
 - (Need IDs or nametags): Everyone pulls out an ID and shares 3 statements about themselves with a partner (info that's not on the ID). Once they've both shared, they switch IDs and assume the identity of the ID they are holding. Find a new partner and repeat. Catch: you can't go back to the ID owner if you've forgotten something! Just get as close as you can to what you remember. At the end, share the facts of the ID you're holding and see how far from the truth we've all gotten!
- **Something similar**
 - (No supplies needed) Split the group into pairs, each pair spends a few minutes getting to know each other. They need to find the most interesting thing they have in common (not physical). When finished, share with the group and everyone will vote on the most interesting similarity.
- **Bet you didn't know**
 - (Need scraps of paper, hat or bag, pens for everyone) Everyone thinks of something about them that most people might not know. They write it on a piece of paper, fold it, and put it in a hat. After mixing the pieces of paper up, take turns pulling out of the hat and guessing who belongs to each paper.
- **The wind blows**
 - (No supplies needed, but everyone needs a placeholder) The group stands in a circle with one person in the middle. Everyone places a placeholder in their spot, such as a shoe, hat, water bottle, book etc. The person in the center says "the wind blows for those who..." and finishes the phrase with something a statement that matches them. For example "those who are only children" or "those who love anime." Anyone who matches that description must run across the circle to find a new spot. Whoever is left in the middle without a new spot now stands in the center and repeats.
- **Name Aerobics**
 - (No supplies needed) The group stands in a circle. Choose a person to start introducing themselves by doing an action for each syllable of their

name. The entire group repeats the name and motions. This continues until everyone has introduced themselves

- **Simple Name Game**

- (No supplies needed) Everyone sits in a circle. One person starts by using an adjective starting with the same letter as their first name, followed by their first name, for example Sweet Silvia, Handsome Hank. The next person repeats the adjective and first name of the first person, and then adds their own. Continue around the circle, with the last person having to repeat all the names in order and adding their own.