

ACTIVITY 9

This Is Better than That!

Purpose: Learn each other's names and start to build a positive group culture where advisees practice collaboration and get to know one another.

APPROXIMATE TIME:
20 minutes

MATERIALS: NONE

ADVISOR NOTES:

Choose "Get to Know You" Activities with Care

Name games can be anxiety-producing for many students, especially games that put them on the spot to think of something clever, require them to remember and recall new information, or involve a coordination challenge such as catching a ball. When meeting a new group of peers, what many adolescents desire most is to fit in and not stand out by saying or doing the "wrong" thing. For this reason, we recommend that you choose get-to-know-you activities that are fun, low-threat, low-vulnerability, and don't require any special knowledge or skill, while at the same time providing opportunities for students to meet each other in pairs and small groups. In these less threatening situations, your advisees will be more likely to engage in authentic and meaningful conversations, while at the same time retaining what they are learning about their peers.

PROCEDURE:

1. Explain How the Game Works

- Divide your advisory into groups of three and give your advisees time to introduce themselves to each other. Position the groups as far apart from one another as possible so they can't overhear each other's conversations. Provide each group with paper and writing utensils as needed.
- Explain that you will list four objects on the board and then give the groups a problem to solve. Group members have three minutes to discuss how each object could help them solve the problem and then to rank the objects from 1 to 4, most to least useful.
- After each round, you can change groups so advisees work with different peers, or keep the same groups to maintain momentum.

2. Play the Game

- Round 1
 - Write the names of the following four objects on the board: marshmallow, paperclip, basketball, and bunsen burner.

- Reveal the first problem: You are an astronaut, and your spaceship lost power on its return trip from Mars.
- After three minutes, have each group share its ranking and provide a justification for its decisions. Encourage groups to ask each other questions and to notice similarities and differences in their rankings.
- Round 2
 - Write the names of the following four objects on the board: skateboard, blow dryer, coconut, and hammock.
 - Reveal the second problem: You're stranded on a desert island, and you see a ship passing in the distance.
 - After three minutes, have each group share its ranking and provide a justification for its decisions. Encourage groups to ask each other questions and to notice similarities and differences in their rankings.
- Round 3
 - Write the names of the following four objects on the board: spare car tire, stapler, trumpet, and tent.
 - Reveal the third problem: It's a zombie apocalypse!
 - After three minutes, have each group share its ranking and provide a justification for its decisions. Encourage groups to ask each other questions and to notice similarities and differences in their rankings.