

Categories and Line Ups

Focus: Mixing with others, learning more about each other, appreciating diversity, perspective taking

Materials: None

Sequence: Ice Breaker

Sources: See *Journey Toward the Caring Classroom* (2004) by Frank. See also "Find Your Place" and "The Line Forms Here" in *Adventures in Peacemaking* (1996) by Kreidler & Furlong, "Chronological Line up" in *Silver Bullets* (1984) by Rohnke, "Where in the Circle Am I?" and "Name by Name" In *Quicksilver* (1995) by Rohnke & Butler, "Line Ups" in *Teamwork and Teamplay* (1998) by Cain & Jolliff, "Line Up Like This – No, Line Up Like That" in *Adventure Education for the Classroom Community* (2007) by Frank and Panico.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Clear away an area so that people can move around with ease.
2. Ask the class to line up according to:
 - a. Alphabetical order by first name
 - b. Alphabetical order by last name
 - c. Alphabetical order by mother's first name
 - d. Birthday
 - e. Shoe size
 - f. Height (shortest to tallest)
 - g. Hair color (darkest to lightest)
 - h. Skin color (darkest to lightest)
 - i. Thumb size (shortest to longest)
 - j. Etc.
3. Or have them get into groups according to a certain category:
 - k. Fold your hands, which thumb is on top?
 - l. Fold your arms, which arm is in front?
 - m. Number of siblings (count step and half bothers/sisters)
 - n. Season in which they were born
 - o. Favorite ice cream
 - p. Favorite day of the week
 - q. Eye Color
 - r. Types of pets at home
 - s. Plans for after high school
 - t. Shirt color
 - u. Types of holidays you might celebrate in winter? (Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanza, Ramadan, None...)
 - v. What generation are you in this country?
 - w. Etc.
4. Each time take a moment to notice the diversity in the room. Make and take comments about what people observe. Maybe there are a lot of chocolate ice-cream lovers in the room, or everyone seems to like the same day of the week. Why is that?

Sample Processing Questions:

- What do we seem to have in common in this group?
- What are some of our differences?
- How do you like the idea of this kind of diversity?
- What are some of the other things that make you unique?

Facilitation Notes:

This activity can be repeated throughout the year. Each time, the categories and line-ups can be used to explore diversity issues to a deeper level. Have students create their own categories and line ups. Then use one as a warm up for class.

Sometimes a student may not know the answer to a question, such as mother's first name, or what generation s/he is in this country. Make sure that students know that Challenge by Choice is in effect, and that they can choose to observe, use another family member's name, or join any group they wish. The object is not to be legally correct about such things, but to learn more about others.