

Name Tag

Collaborative Skill: Participating Fully

Focus: Hearing and sharing names

Materials: Stop Watch

Level: Grades K and higher

Suggested Procedure

1. Have students stand or sit in a circle so that everyone can see everyone else. Tell them this community building process begins with easy, nonthreatening activities and is designed to get increasingly more difficult. With that in mind, everyone must remember their own first name.
2. Tell the person to your right (or left) that you will say your name, then he will say his, the person next to him will say hers, and so on, until everyone has said his or her name in order. This will be timed. Try it, then announce the time.
3. Do it again, moving in the same direction. Announce the time. Then do the activity in the other direction a couple of times.
4. Now tell the group that, as promised, the task will get more difficult. It will now go both directions. When you say your name, the people on each side of you say their names, then on down each half of the circle. It will cross in the middle somewhere and everyone will see which side finishes first.
5. Try this dual method a few times, each time holding up your hand for the side that finishes first.

Sample Processing Questions for Name Tag

- Who won? Why?
- Was this a competitive activity?
- Was it possible to learn names this way? Why or why not?
- Were you rooting for one side to make it back first? Why or why not?
- How did the people caught in the middle feel? Were your classmates supportive of your difficult situation?

Facilitation Notes

This is an activity that does not necessarily need to be processed. It is enough to hear the names and enjoy the activity. There are times, however, when the people caught in the middle are the objects of some teasing if they have trouble with passing the names along. This can be a teachable moment to address putting others down versus supporting each other. For added challenge and fun, try having people say their names backwards (i.e., "Carol" would be "lorac," "Jim" would be "mij" and "Bob" would be "bob").

For younger students, use items to pass, so that they say their name when they get the item to help them focus.