

YMCA Games Packet

*Icebreakers

Sets

Have the kids sit down. Pick two or three kids that have something in common, like stripes on their shirts, no shoelaces, or the same first letter in their name. Have them stand up. All the kids try to figure out what makes them a "set."

Clump

Have everyone stand at least five feet apart, so that when you spread out your arms, you're not touching anyone else's arms.

The leader then shouts out: "Clump of [some number]"

Everyone then has to huddle together in a group huddle or "clump" of that many people. There should usually be people left over because there aren't enough people to form a full clump.

If you can't form a clump, then you're out! The game ends with a clump of two, and those two win the round!

Group Knot

Have the campers stand in a tight circle, with their hands in the center. Then have them grab other hands at random. The puzzle is for the whole group to work together to get themselves untangled. Sometimes you'll find that the group has actually formed several smaller circles.

Who is missing?

The children sit in a circle and close their eyes. Then, the person running the activity walks around and taps one person on the shoulder. The person that got tapped leaves the room or hides somewhere where no one can see them. Everyone opens their eyes and tries to find out who is missing. To make it harder, have them stand up and move them around so they don't know who is near them.

Bumpity Bump Bump

Arrange all players in a circle. Give them time to ask the names of the players on either side of them.

Once the names are known, the person in the middle goes up to a player and says "(name)____, bumpity bump bump bump." That person then has to say the names of the people sitting/standing beside him/her before the middle person finishes saying "bumpity bump bump bump."

Stand up, Sit Down

The kids can start out in a standing or sitting position. You ask them questions, such as "do you have a sister?" or "are you wearing pink?" if their answer is yes they change to the other position. If no then they stay the same.

Silent Interviews

Divide the group into pairs - try to make mix the group into pairs of folks who don't know each other well. Ask the participants to introduce themselves to their partner. Instruct the group that from this point forward, speaking is not allowed. This includes whispering, mouthing words, and making sounds, too! Inform the group that they must tell their partner 3 things about themselves without speaking, similar to a charades game. These things cannot be physical characteristics. Once all of the partners have finished miming to each other, call everyone back into a circle. Ask for each pair to verbally introduce their partner to the group, as well as the three things that they learned (or think they learned).

Icebreakers continued

Astronaut

Camp Leader says: 'I'm going to outer space. And im going to take a...'

The leader picks out an object/animal/food that has the first letter in their name. (i.e. Melinda would take a Marshmallow. Josh would take a Jacket.)

And so on. Pick three people that know the trick and then do it. (Lets say the three people's name is: Josh, Mariah, Katie)

Then you start the game by the Leader saying:

'I'm going to space and I'm going to take a JACKET. (Because the Leader's name was Josh. So J&J.) Mariah, would you like to go to space?'

'Yes.'

'And what are you going to bring?'

'I'm going to bring a MUFFLER.' (Mairah and Muffler. M&M.)

'Okay. We're going to space, Katie would you like to come?'

'Yes!'

'What are you going to bring?'

'I'm going to bring a KITE.' (Katie and Kite. K&K).

Ten Fingers

This activity is great for the first day or just when ever your group has free time. It works best with more people, and everyone should be honest when playing.

Have everyone sit in a circle or close enough to be able to hear everyone. Tell them to hold up all 10 fingers.

A counselor can start off by stating one fact about themselves. For ex: "I have never been to Florida." or "I have blue eyes."

Then the participants who have been to Florida, or don't have blue eyes, will put one finger down.

This will continue around the circle, having each person share one fact about themselves until someone is all out of fingers.

*Its better to try and use less obvious, unique facts about yourself because there is a chance that more people will have to put a finger down if they can't relate to your fact.

Who ever has the most fingers left at the end of everyones' turn wins!

This is a great way to pass the time and learn about each other while having simple fun.

You, Me, Left, Right

Have the group form a circle, with the facilitator in the middle serving as the first "caller."

Ask the participants to introduce themselves to the people directly on their left and right sides.

Explain to the group that the person in the middle will point to someone in the circle and say either "You" "Me" "Left" or "Right" and count to five at a reasonable pace.

"You" is the person being pointed at.

"Me" is the caller.

"Left" is the person to the left of the one being pointed at.

"Right" is the person to the right of the one being pointed at.

The person being pointed at must correctly name that person before the caller counts to five. If they succeed, the caller moves onto a different person of their choice. If they do not succeed, they become the new caller.

You can add multiple callers as the game moves on.

*Fillers

Big Booty

Everyone in the group gets a number. The leader starts out by making a step/clap rhythm. The leader starts by saying "Big Booty Big Booty Big Booty, oh yeah, big booty." Then the leader...the "Big Booty" calls to someone in the circle...number 4 for instance by saying "Big booty number 4" then number 4 says "number 4, number ___" then that person goes.

If you mess up, you go to the end, and everyone's number shifts up one. The goal is to make the "big booty" mess up, so they go to the end, and you can become the "Big Booty"

Frogger

First sit everyone down then have them all close their eyes tight. Tell them that you are going to tap one person on the head and they are the frogger.

The frogger's role is to stick their tongue out at people. When they do this it will "freeze" that person.

There will also be a detective chosen before the frogger they will leave the circle as the frogger is chosen then come back and try to guess who the frogger is. The detective should be given 3 guesses.

If one of the campers sees that the frogger has stuck their tongue out at them they should wait ten seconds before they freeze. Once frozen, the camper should make a funny face and hold it.

The game continues until the frogger is discovered or the detective runs out of guesses.

People to People Twister

Pair up in groups of two and stand back to back. Make sure participants introduce themselves to one another.

Then the leader will say different combinations that the group has to try to get to while staying back to back (right hand to right hand, left foot to right foot, head to head, right hand to left leg, etc...). The pairs must maintain all called combination until they switch partner.

Once the leader says People to People they will then go switch partners.

If you have an odd number of participants, the odd person is the leader. Once pairs switch, the odd person out is the new leader.

Minute Mysteries VI

Present the clues to the group. They can ask only yes or no questions to try to solve the mystery.

Clue: One week after visiting a park a woman calls the police to report a murder. What happened?

Answer: The body was undetected until it showed up in some pictures she took which had to be developed.

Who is it?

Have all the kids stand up. You secretly think of one. The kids then ask any Yes or No questions, for instance, "Is it a boy?" If the answer is "No", all in that category (for instance, all boys) sit down. All the kids can ask questions, even if they're sitting down. Go until the kids have figured out who you have secretly picked.

Telephone

The group sits in a large circle. One person starts the game by whispering a short message into the ear of the person sitting to the right of them. The message is whispered once, then the new messenger passes the message on to the next person, so on and so on.

When the message reaches the person to the left of the person that started the game final the message is announced out loud and the first person can announce the original message.

Village Chief

Everyone sits in a circle, and one person leaves, then one person is selected to be the 'Village Chief' or the 'It'. Everyone else in the circle has to follow the movements that the "Chief" does ie-clapping, snapping, banging the ground. The person who stepped out of the circle then comes back and tries to see who's movements everyone is following, and guess who the "chief" is.

Snake's Tail

The group will line up single file and place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them.

On the word "GO" the person in the front of the line tries to catch the person at the back of the line. The line cannot come apart. Rotate the group from front to back or back to front for each round of play.

Once the group has caught their own tail once or twice, have them try to catch the tail of a different "snake."

Pipety-pop

Players sit or stand in a circle, and It is in the middle. He points his finger at someone in the circle and says either "Pipety-pop," or "Popety-pip." If Pipety-pop is said then the player that is pointed at must say pip before the entire phrase is said by the pointer. And for Popety-pip, the person must say pop before the phrase is finished. If they do not say the correct word or do not say it in time then they become the person in the middle.

Scream Machine

Everyone stands in a tight circle, with their heads down looking at their shoes. When 'Heads Up' is called, everyone looks up and stares at someone else in the circle. If that person is staring right back at you, then you scream real loud and jump back out of the circle. If the person you're looking at is not looking at you, but your head back down and wait for the next round. Keep going until there are two winners.

Eye Spy, Twenty Questions, How's yours



*Small Group Games

Elbow Tag

Everyone gets a partner and links arms. Two people are chosen to split up. One will be it and the other will be chased. Whenever the person links with a pair of players, the person on the opposite end must break off. They will now become chased. If the person gets tagged, they become it. Variation: When the person on the opposite end breaks away, they become it and must chase the person who was originally the chaser.

Catch, Don't Catch

One camper goes into the middle of the circle with a ball. They go around the circle saying catch or don't catch to the campers. If a camper catches a ball and the person in the middle said don't catch they are out and vice versa. As the campers get better speed it up, the last person standing is the new middle person.

Do as I say... Not as I do

(Played in a circle) First person SAYS one thing he/she likes ("I like to jump up and down"), but DOES another (flaps his/her arms).

The second person DOES what was just SAID (jumps up and down), but SAYS something he/she likes ("I like to rock climb").

This pattern continues around the circle.

For an added bonus, make it a group goal to remember both the SAID action and the DONE action for every person.

Honey if you love me...

The group starts in a circle with one person in the middle. This person tries to get others to laugh by saying "Honey if you love me you'll smile." The person on the outside must respond without smiling or laughing saying "Honey, I love you but I just can't smile." The person in the middle can do various things, without touching anyone, to get another person to smile. If the person does smile then they will become the center person.

Dead Fish

What do Dead Fish do? Exactly... nothing! Explain that the rules are to be the best Dead Fish by being as "lifeless" as they can. Give them a few seconds to get all the wiggles and laughs out. As soon as you start, walk around and tag people 'out' that are moving or laughing. Allow those that are out to help you by trying to get people to laugh and respond.

Pigs Fly

The children should stand in a group facing the leader. Each child should have enough room to make full "flapping" movements with their arms. The leader calls out "Ducks Fly", "Owls Fly", "Pigs Fly"...and so on. If the animal that is called out really does fly, the children should continue flapping their "wings". If the animal is the type that does not fly, then the children should stop flapping.

Shoe scramble

Have all of the participants take off their shoes and place them in a large pile in the center of the room.

Then go and mix up the shoes so that no two alike are next to each other.

Place the group a distance away. On the word go they race to the pile, have to place their own shoes on and back to the spot.

Small groups continued

Dragon Race

Form two equal lines with players in a single file line. Each player reaches his left hand through their legs and grabs the right hand of the person behind them. This forms the Dragon Chain. The object of the game is to have each Dragon run around a given point or person and back to a place without breaking. Any time a team breaks, the kids have to run back and start over.

Elephants, Cows and Giraffes

Get into a circle with one person in the center. This person will then call out elephant, cow, or giraffe. The person that is pointed out, as well as the person on each side of him/her will have to coordinate their actions and make each animal as described.

Elephant: center will stick both hands in front of their nose in a cylinder to form a trunk. On each side of them they will form the ears by leaning over placing one hand by the center persons hips and the other by their head.

Cow: center person will enter lock their fingers and turn them upside down so that the thumbs point down forming udders. The outside people will then milk the udders.

Giraffes: center places their hands directly over their head and together forming the neck, while the outside two arch their backs touching the middle person's toes to form the legs.

If they do not get into this position by the count of 5 by the pointer then the last to get into position will become the center person.

What time is it Mr. Fox?

Mr. Fox starts out at one end of a field, room, or designated area with his back to the group. The group at the other end then yells out "What time is it Mr. Fox?" Mr. Fox then calls out a time that is on the even hour (1 o'clock - 12 o'clock). The group then takes that many steps. When the group gets to where the fox is, but not past him, and asks the time, the fox can yell "Midnight!" They then turn and chase the group. Those that he catches are to sit out. The last one left becomes the fox.

A variation is to allow each child who is tagged to become an honorary fox and help catch people.



*Large Group Games

Crows & Cranes

Divide the children into two equal teams.

Have teams face each other across from an imaginary line. You could use a rope divider if you like.

Assign one side to be "Crows" and the other to be "Cranes."

The leader stands at the end of the group in the center so all players can see and hear him/her. The leader calls out either "Crows" or "Cranes."

If "Crows" are called, the Cranes must turn and run a short distance to their "base" before the Crows tag them. If any Cranes are tagged, they become Crows, and head to the other side for another round. The same applies when "Cranes" are called.

Play until everyone is on one side.

Giants, Wizards and Elves

Split group up into 2 teams, designate 2 safety zones, one on each teams side, and designate a middle area. Each team then gets in a huddle and picks what they want to be as a team, a giant, a wizard or an elf. Giants put their hands up over their heads, wizards put their hands out straight in front of them wiggling their fingers, and elves make pointy ears on their head with their pointer fingers. Once the teams have decided their thing to be, they come up to the center spot and line up face to face, then on a count of 3, everyone does whatever action their team picked. Giants beat elves, elves beat wizards and wizards beat giants, so the team that beats the winning team chases the other and tries to tag as many members on the other team as possible before they reach the safety zone. The members from the team that get tagged become a part of the other team.

Sharks and Minnows

The group starts out on one side of the field or room with one person in the middle of the room.

The person in the middle will call out sharks (boys) or minnows (girls). He will then specify how he wants them to cross the room (running, backwards, hop on one foot etc...).

It will then chase in the same manner that he called out. If one of the sharks or minnows are tagged they sit right where they were tagged and become seaweed.

This seaweed has to stay on their backsides, but they can tag other that are crossing as long as they are sitting. If tagged by seaweed the participants become seaweed as well.

Wink Elimination

This game is best played in a large group. Sit all of the children in a circle, and have them all put their heads down. Tap one person on the head, this person is the 'assassin' and has to eliminate the others by winking at them. If you are winked at, silently count to 10, then safely fall down. If you think you know who the 'assassin' is, before you get eliminated, you can say you have a suspect. If you are wrong, you are out. If not, you win and the game begins again.

Alaskan Baseball

Start with 2 teams. One team is given a throwable object, their team then forms a circle around them and that person throws the object. After he has thrown the object then he goes around the circle saying everyone's name in order of the circle. Every time he makes it around the circle it counts as a run. Meanwhile the other team is chasing the object. Everyone forms a line behind the first person that has gotten the object. They then pass the object between their legs until it reaches the last person, where it is then passed overhead back to the first person in line. When the first person gets the object the team yells out, and the other team stops counting runs. The first person in line that retrieved the object now has a circle formed around him and he throws the object and the process reverses.

Large groups continued

Counselors Car Lot

Have all the kids line up on one side of a play area. Pick two volunteers to stand in the middle of the area. The volunteers then pick the names of three cars.

Then assign one of these chosen car name to each child standing in line.

When the volunteers in the middle call out a car name, those campers with that particular car name have to run to the other side without getting tagged. If they get tagged, then they join the two middle kids and help tag the rest of the kids. The callers continue to call car types. When you say "Counselors Car Lot," all campers from both sides have to run to the other side without getting tagged.

Guess Who

It is like the board game guess who. You divide the group into two teams sitting in neatly set up rows of chairs. One person from each team is picked to guess who the judge has in mind from the other team. (The judges must write the name down as proof.)

The pickers switch off asking yes or no questions (i.e. does he wear glasses). Anyone who doesn't fit in with the answer must sit down until the picker guesses who.

That team gets a point and two new people are picked and you do it all over again.

Wonderball

Everybody stands in a circle, passing a ball around the circle like it's a hot potato, everybody says the rhyme:

The wonder ball, goes round and round

To pass it quickly, you are bound

If you're the one, to hold it last

The game for you has surely past, and you are out

O-U-T spells OUT!

Clothes-pin Tag

Hand any number of clothes-pins to all the kids (the more clothes-pins everyone starts with, the longer the game lasts. I use 3-5) and have them pin them to their shirt sleeves, hems, pockets, etc. Then have them all scatter on the playing field. On the signal, everyone runs around snatching clothes-pins from one another, kneeling down to attach their newly acquired prizes. At the end of the game (usually a time-limit), the one with the most clothespins wins.

Dead Ant

A tag game that will wear your kids out!! Make really big boundaries.

One person is "it." This person has to chase the others. When he tags someone, that person must lay down with both hands and feet sticking straight up, like a dead ant (because everyone knows that's what dead ants look like). In order for the dead ant to come alive, four people must tag one limb each.

Once someone has been a dead ant three times (this is on the honor system), they are now "it". It's always possible to have multiple people being "it" and makes it crazier when you don't know who to run from!

Large group continued

Dutch auction

Campers get a set time, e.g. 8 minutes to grab anything they have that can fit in a pillowcase. Then they sit in groups and the auctioneer asks for an item, e.g. a white sock. Then there are points for everyone with a white sock and points for creative efforts. Say they ask for the longest shoelaces, its fair game for the cabin to tie everyone's shoelaces together to make one really long pair. Or a likeness of someone famous, maybe from a book cover, or dressing up a camper. Then there are fun ones like, smelliest feet (points if they smell, extra if their smelliest) loudest burp, best Elvis impersonation, best animal noise, etc. At the end most points win a prize or if you are earning for a pointed game later, everyone keeps their scores. It may actually work better in mixed age groups, and smaller groups

Evolution aka Ultimate Person

Have the group in a circle. Everyone starts out as an egg and places their hands above their head and together so that they look like an egg. When you say go each person will find another egg. Once they found that person they will then farkle (Rock, Paper, Scissors). The loser stays an egg and the winner becomes a chicken, placing their arms as wings and making chicken noises. The chicken then looks for another chicken while the egg looks for another egg. When you win as a chicken you become a dinosaur, placing your hands out and roaring like a dinosaur. If you lose as a chicken you drop back down to an egg. Dinosaurs then find other dinosaurs, where they will play to become the ultimate people. Ultimate people put their hands over their heads like superman and look for others like them. If you lose as a dinosaur you go back to being a chicken, looking for other chickens. If the Ultimate person loses to another Ultimate person they go back to a dinosaur, and if they win they stay as ultimate people.



*Team Building Games

Down to One

Lay Poly Spots in a pyramid shape Have each player stand on a Poly Spot The Goal is to get down to one person on the spots This is done by the group first deciding to remove one player The others are removed by “jumping” players such as is checkers Together the group decides how to get down to one.

Traffic Jam

1. Have each person line up and stand on a poly spot, place the extra spot in the middle of the line
2. The goal of the game is to get side A to side B and Side B to side A, all facing forward
3. The rules are as follows:
 - No moving backwards
 - A person can only move forward to an empty space
 - A person cannot “jump over” their own team mate
 - Only one person may move at a time
 - One spot per person, no sharing
 - If any of these rules are broken, the group must begin again

Speed Pass

The task is to pass an object so that each member of the group, one at a time, physically touches it. Allow for group planning time. This can be a timed event.

Hula Hoop Pass

Have the group form a circle holding hands. Ask two people to let go of their grip long enough for them to place their hands through a hula hoop before rejoining them.

The team task is to pass the hula hoop around the circle in a specified direction until it returns to the starting point.

Another way to play is two use two hoops and have them go around the circle in opposite directions.

You can also use loops of rope (about hula hoop size).

Human Knot

Have the group make a large circle. (This game also works well as a race between several circles in larger groups.)

Have everyone put their left hand in the middle, and hold hands with someone in the circle, not directly next to them.

Repeat with the right hand, and be sure to hold hands with a different person, who is not directly next to them. You can use 1-foot “buddy ropes” to reduce arm twisting if you like.

Then the group must use teamwork to unravel themselves into a circle again without coming disconnected.

Earthball

Using a beach ball or other light inflatable object, the group task is to hit the object, keeping it in the air without letting it touch the ground.

Additionally, no one person can touch the object twice in a row.

Set a goal with the group for the number of hits that the group can make following the rules. This fun activity is much harder than it seems.

Trust Run

Two lines of people facing each other with arms outstretched and staggered with person opposite.

Runner begins several yards away and runs at a fast pace at the line. The folks in the line must drop their arms as the person passes.

The idea is for the runner not to flinch or slow down while the lines try to move arms at the last minute.

Team building continued

PDQ

Everyone starts with their hands in the middle on top of each other. The lead person (usually the person that won the last game) will give everyone a number. Then the leader says "PDQ" and everyone jumps back.

Now the only person that can initiate a jump (straight up in to the air) is the person whose turn it is according to their number.

So, the first person that can jump is #1.

Once #1 has jumped then everyone else can jump if they want. There are 4 ways to get out.

- 1) If someone lands on your feet
- 2) If the initiator fakes and you leave the ground
- 3) if you jump out of order (3 initiates before 2), and
- 4) you simply pivot and both of your feet don't leave the ground.

If you are out then you are out until the next game. If someone is out then you simply skip their number and go to the next number.

The winner of the game is then the leader of the next round.

Jedi Numbers

Everyone stands in a circle, and everyone puts their heads down. They then need to count up to a certain number (usually just the number of people there are in the group, so everyone gets one number) one at a time without two people talking at once. If two people talk at once, the group starts over at one.

FFEACH

This might be one of the best games of all times! FFEACH is a charades race and the categories are **F**ast **F**oods, **E**lectrical **A**ppliances, and **C**artoon **H**eroes. Teams compete against each other to complete a predetermined list of items. We use the term "compete" loosely, as it is a *charades* race, after all...

1. Divide the group into 2 or more teams.
2. Have the group spread out so that they can't overhear the next team's answers.
3. Ask one member from each team to come to the you.
4. Whisper the first word into the ears of the volunteers, and release them to their groups at the same time.
5. Once a member of the group guesses the word correctly, someone new runs to the instructor for the next word. Advise the group when you are giving instructions that no one can come up for a word twice until everyone has gone up once. This helps ensure that everyone participates.
6. The team members must tell the instructor what word their team just guessed, and the instructor tells the new volunteer the next word on the list.
7. The object of the game is to complete the entire list without cheating.

FFEACH LIST

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Superman | 11. Fruit Juicer |
| 2. Curly Fries | 12. Scooby Doo |
| 3. Spongebob Square Pants | 13. Batman |
| 4. Curling Iron | 14. Portable CD Player |
| 5. Remote Control | 15. Bacon Double Cheeseburger |
| 6. Pepperoni Pizza | 16. Defibrillator |
| 7. Incredible Hulk | 17. Pappa Smurf |
| 8. Dishwasher | 18. Blender |
| 9. Microwave | 19. Wonder Woman |
| 10. McNuggets | 20. Onion Rings |

*Other activities you can do with kids

Invent-a-game

Have a basket full of miscellaneous things and have the group of kids pick one thing out and make a game out of that object.

Obstacle Course

Come up with a bunch of different obstacles for the kids to run around, jump over, go under etc....and time them as they go through the course. Have them go a few times and see if they can beat their own time.

Scavenger Hunt

Good to use as you walk on a nature hike.

Ahead of time, walk the trail and find objects -- specific leaves, a flower, specific rock, moss anything of interest. Bring one of that item back with you and place in a sandwich bag or other container. Before your walk, have each camper pick something to look for on the trail. The group tries to find each object during the walk.

