

Quality “teampay” can lead to quality “teamwork!” A group that plays together can learn to work together. TEAM: Together, Everyone Achieves More. There is no argument around the power of teams, collaboration, and mutual support for getting things done; from learning together to building effective organizations, teambuilding is a part of lifelong learning for everyone.

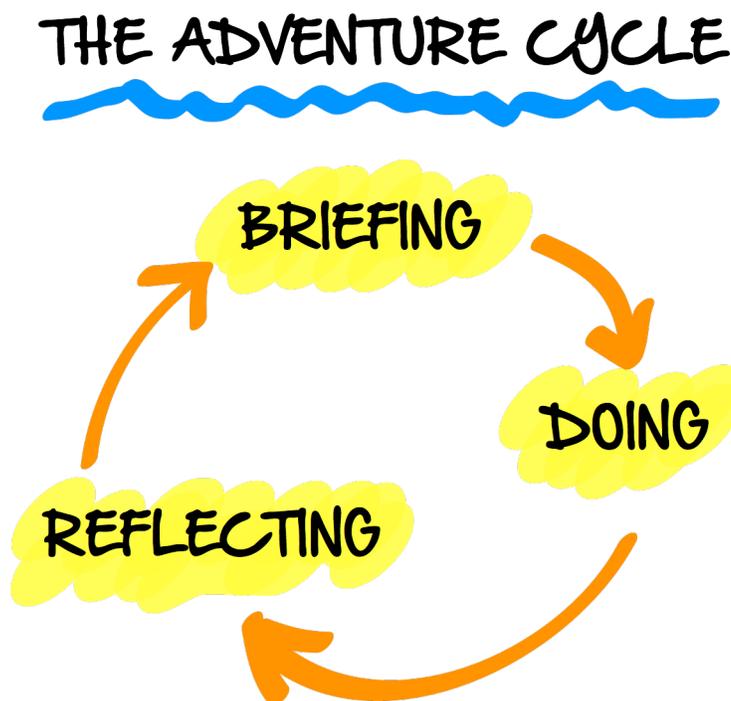
Effectively facilitated adventure activities can support increased esteem, personal insight, social awareness, communication skills, physical activity and emotional intelligence. A practiced “facilitator” can guide the adventure down many pathways toward successful learning. As long as you know why you are doing what you are doing, and how you intend to get there, a little planning and an open mind can lead to a positive experiential lesson.

Adventure activities in the classroom serve to teach collaboration and win-win scenarios where all students can practice interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. In this age of digital overload, the one thing we can’t download is real-life team experience. In our pursuit of the spirit of adventure let us not teach the alternative acronym for TEAM: Teams Evolve Around Me! Other people often help us soar to higher places. Building that awareness and skill set gives classroom teachers another opportunity to prepare students for the rigor and adventure of the real world.

## Adventure Education in a Nutshell

For over forty years, organizations like Outward Bound and Project Adventure have capitalized on the power of adventure. Adventures are activities where the outcome is unknown and some risk is involved. We may not be climbing mountains or crossing raging rivers, but we can use the power of metaphors to create adventure experiences in the classroom.

Equipped with basic understanding of a handful of time-tested adventure games and team-initiatives, a teacher can facilitate a short activity through the process of **briefing**, **doing** and **reflecting**. This is the basic formula of the experiential learning cycle. There is the activity, but more importantly there is the reflecting and connecting to content that matters. The teacher asks questions to guide the students toward a deeper understanding (Socratic questioning). A successful adventure activity is holistic: cognitive, affective and behavioral. It involves thinking, feeling and doing which supports the pursuit of an active lifestyle.



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**ATTITUDE** More than anything, using these activities is about your attitude, approach and style of delivery. The more you model a positive spirit of adventure and lead by example, the more your students will connect with you, others and the potential lessons they offer.

**PLAN** Prepare to lead the activity. Think ahead of unforeseen issues. You know your students and some of their abilities. After using these activities you will begin to see how far you can take some of the adventures in the classroom. Gather props and activity directions. Think about your questions.

**SPACE** Create a physically safe area for adventure to take place. Designate areas in or near your classroom. Create a plan executed by students that permits a quick and well ordered rearranging of furniture. This could be its own adventure activity.

**TIME** Keep it simple and short to start out. This time should involve physical movement in a confined space. Keep the briefing short, the activity time reasonable, and a short reflection time.

**TEACHER'S ROLE** Present the challenge, manage safety, pay attention to all the positive attributes you see from your students. Help connect the learning for the students (process the adventure). Bring the activity to a close. Evaluate and adjust for next time.

## GENERAL WISDOM ABOUT ADVENTURE EDUCATION

- Invite everyone (Challenge By Choice); you get to choose your level of participation.
- Use behavior guidelines (Full Value Commitment): Safety First, 100% Effort, Communicate.
- Present the Goal/Expected Outcome: why we are doing what we are doing.
- We learn by doing. And if we don't succeed, we call it "failing forward." Keep at it!
- It's OK to laugh and have fun. Trust the process.
- To adventure is to risk. We ask our students to risk, now we get to risk too! We will miss 100% of the shots we don't take. Adventure On!

## MEASURING SUCCESS IN ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

Active, intentional teamwork can be measured through outcomes, indicators and products. However, measuring the ultimate results of success can be summarized through this reading.

**To laugh often and much; To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; To appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded. *Ralph Waldo Emerson***

## NO PROP ACTIVITIES (NO SUPPLIES NECESSARY)

- **Zany Exercises** (Push-Ups, Toe-Touches, Chin-Ups, Adventure Run – Branch, Log, Bear, Mosquito). These alternative “calisthenics” proves that our adventure activities are “a little different.” Things aren’t always the way they seem. There are other ways of viewing the world.
- **Simon Says** This classic game is usually played through elimination. Not us though. The objective is getting people to pay attention and move their bodies. It’s quick, crazy, and even if you get out, you can come back in. End the game through a guaranteed elimination round like: “everyone now come up to the front so I can see you better” or “Simons Says Jump Up!”
- **Bumpity Bump** Standing in a circle, an individual attempts to call the name of another person as identified by “the bumper” as quickly as possible to avoid becoming the bumper. “Left, bumpity-bump-bump-bump” or “right, bumpity-bump-bump-bump.” Add in, “you” and “me.”
- **Heel Clicks** Stand with your feet apart. On the count of three, jump into the air, click your heels once. Land with your feet apart. Can the entire class do this in cadence? How about forming groups of 2 and holding hands, then 3, start adding on until the whole class is connected.
- **Quick Line-Up** Four teams of people move quickly to return to their pre-determined positions relative to the person standing in the middle of the teams. Once the teams move into place, they raise hands and exclaim: “we did it!” Then the leader spins again for the next Quick Line-Up.
- **Switch** Small teams travel in single file to reach an objective while having to follow directional commands of “go, stop, turn around, change and switch.”
- **RPS** Classic game of rock, paper, scissor, show! The “defeated” partner attaches to the shoulder of the winner as the chain grows longer and longer until there is a friendly competition.
- **Team RPS** Teams of 4 or 5 agree on their “sign,” then face off with another team. The “losing” team gets to choose someone from the winning team to join the losing team. That’s different!
- **Gotcha** (Index Finger, Thumb, Toes) Standing in a circle with their index fingers pointing downward into their partner’s open palm, on the count of 3, everyone tries to escape with the right hand, while capturing with the left.
- **Human Knot** Starting in a circle, people extend their arms and grasp the hands of two other people, and then attempt to untangle themselves without letting go.
- **Look Up Look Down** (“Hey!” “We’re Good” “You’re Great” “Let’s Go!”) People standing in a circle, look up and then down as instructed, in an attempt to share a mutual glance with another person. Multiple circles of 6-8 people are scattered around the room.
- **Who’s the Leader** A leader is chosen in a circle of people. The observer stands in the middle and tries to guess who the leader is by attempting to discover who is initiating the movements.
- **Snap, Crackle, Pop** In a circle try to pass a signal around as fast as possible. Try various patterns. Two or more people passing the same signal at same time, requires a restart. Start with finger snaps, then claps, then stomps. Or create new signals: names, two foot-stomps, hops, etc.
- **Galloping Hands** In a circle, each person slaps their open hands on the floor/desk as quickly as possible in sequence around the circle. Or stomping feet, or sitting down, etc.

## BAG OF TRICKS (ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE SIMPLE PROPS)

**Activities that Require “Spots”** (scrap paper, paper plates, foam spots or poly spots)

- **I Like People, Have You Ever, Never Have I Ever** Similar to musical chairs where the person in the hotspot makes a statement hoping to entice people to move their from their spots.
- **Key Punch** Teams attempt to touch all the numbered spots as fast as they can in order according to the rules.
- **Traffic Jam** Two teams of people facing one another are challenged to swap places by following a specific set of rules without becoming “jammed-up.”
- **Line-Ups** A group of people arrange themselves in a particular order, according to a set criteria: height, alphabetical by first name, birth date, etc.

**Rope** (local hardware store, Walmart, retired climbing rope, etc.)

- **Blind Polygon** Small groups are asked to close their eyes and then asked to form various shapes with a length of rope: triangle, square, house, star, octagon, an X, etc.
- **Partner Tag** In groups of two (a partnership), individuals attempt to “chase” their partner in a restricted area by only walking. Variations: *Pairs Tag, Cyclops Tag, NYC Tag*
- **Everybody In** Standing in a circle, the rope is laid out on the floor. The entire group needs to get into the circle. Of course they step inside. Now they need to do it again without stepping over the rope; without using fingers; without using hands, etc. No teeth. Be careful of heads.
- **Human Over-Hand** For the group to tie an overhand knot in the middle section of rope without anyone releasing their hands from the rope.
- **Rope Voting** Rope in a circle on the floor. Ask a variety of questions or present solutions. Stepping in the circle means “agree,” out of circle is “disagree,” stepping on the rope is “agreeing to try,” grasping the rope with your hand means “you have a question or need clarification.”
- **Four Square / Continuum** Any variety of four square categories or choices are easy to lead when creating an X / Y grid on the floor. Which animal represents the type of student you are: lion, turtle, dolphin, or eagle? The possibilities are endless. Any continuum question can work too.

## Tossables

- **Group Juggle / Warp Speed** Toss soft object to others in a sequence, using each person's name, attempting to not have drops, or limit the amount. Can be extended to Warp Speed (to see how fast the group can toss objects in a set order to each group member).
- **Pass the Can (Object)** Sitting on the floor, a group attempts to pass a large tin can or cone around the circle using only their feet in as few “drops” as possible. Use other objects, trying passing using different methods (no feet, no hands).
- **Rescue the Chicken** Groups attempt to rescue the object and return it to safety without being discovered. A friendly competition can occur between two teams.

## Balloons

- **Passing Gas** Each person has a balloon and passes balloons in same direction without any drops as fast as possible. Gently write on balloons with marker for identification purposes. Start easy with hand offs, then easy bounces, and ultimately around the world for the speed record.
- **Boop** Holding hands in a circle, small groups of people (triads or quads) use different parts of their anatomy to keep balloons aloft (Hands, elbows, shoulders, nose, heel, knee, etc.).
- **Frantic** Your group works together to keep an ever-increasing number of balloons aloft for as long as possible.
- <http://www.wilderdom.com/games/descriptions/gamesballoons.html>

---

Challenge Applications is an affiliate of **Playmeo**, which features the world's largest online database of group games & activities specifically designed to help teachers, corporate trainers, camp leaders & experiential educators create remarkably fun & meaningful programs and events.

The library features 250+ activities such as awesome ice-breakers to strengthen new (and old) relationships, simple energizers to wake up a class of sleepy students, innovative problem-solving & teamwork exercises, and fun large group activities.

**Playmeo** offers free samples of activities and you can sign up for a free account to receive over 27 activities. Paid subscriptions to Playmeo help **Challenge Applications** to grow its influence too. Subscription options are monthly for \$8 or \$47 annually. That's quite a bargain. We even offer very affordable group pricing plans.

Go to Dan Ashe's website: [www.challengeapplications.com](http://www.challengeapplications.com)

Click the **RESOURCES** link, then **ACTIVITY RESOURCES**

<http://www.challengeapplications.com/activity-resources-1/>

*The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. Lao Tzu*