

Games Workshop

Ice Breaking Games

TWIZZLE AND/OR COMPETITION ELIMINATION TWIZZLE

This is a Simon says... type of game with a literal twist. It was offered to me by Tom Fuchs of Cortland SUNY, which scholastic venue is all inhabited by those persistent players and PA trainers, Tom Quinn, and Tom Steele. So when I refer to Tom in this article, I really mean Tom.

The following write up is mostly by Tom.

Beginning Formation: Large circle, all students facing clockwise and NOT holding hands.

Terminology:	GO	-	Walk in the direction that you are facing.
	STOP	-	Stop moving and freeze!
	TURN	-	Make a half turn (180) and freeze!
	JUMP	-	Jump and make a half turn (180) & freeze!
	TWIZZLE	-	Jump and make a full (360) turn & freeze!

Instructor says: The name of the game we are about to play is TWIZZLE. After we try some basic twizzling, we will attempt a couple rounds of Competition Elimination Twizzle - which is just plain old Twizzle with an arbitrary rule that eliminates you from the universe if you mess up.

* Explain the terminology, then have the students practice each command as you loudly bark out a few, GO, STOPS and TURNS. The important thing to emphasise is that players must totally FREEZE after each command - with the exception, of GO. Can't GO if you're frozen, if you know what I mean.

* After some practice time, actually play a game where no one is eliminated, to emphasise the fun of the game. When you think everyone understands the rules and commands, announce that "We are now going to play COMPETITION ELIMINATION TWIZZLE, but first we must all take the player's oath. So, raise your right foot and repeat after me...(Sample oath follows)

"I (your name), do solemnly swear from time to time, but I'm trying to watch my tongue..do solemnly swear to do my best, to give it that old college try, to demonstrate the utmost integrity, honesty, sportsmanship, perseverance, and endurance while participating in this world renowned game of COMPETITION ELIMINATION TWIZZLE! I promise that if it is discovered by the referees that I do not totally freeze in my tracks, and are therefore honestly eliminated from this game that I truly love, I will not moan, cry, whine, freak out, carry on, chastise or criticise, even if someone near by accidentally lets one go.

I further promise to smile, laugh, and idiotically giggle upon being caught, and to take my assigned and rightful new place in the centre of the circle, thus positioning me to seek personal revenge and justification for having been so rudely snatched from my comfortable playing position.”

So it has been spoken. So it shall be done.

- * Arrange you students so that they are lined up in a circle and let the game begin.
- * When a student is caught, have him/her come to the middle of the circle and join you as a co-referee. If you hear grumblings or complaints, remind the transgressors about the oath just administered and accepted.
- * Continue playing until there are about 3-4 people left. Designate these lucky people as members of an endangered species and remind them that it is their solemn responsibility to repopulate the earth with their kind.

Tom reports that, “This fun activity was borrowed from Donnie Osman, and that he got it from someone else...”, and that’s the way it goes.

STICKY WICKET

I picked up this variation of the Carabiner Walk from a creatively crazy guy in Wallingford, CT - Tom Dooley. Tom suggests..having people line up shoulder to shoulder, facing alternatively in opposite directions; i.e. ventral to dorsal. Offer a full roll of 1” masking tape to someone in the file. Ask that person to stick the tape end firmly to his/her body at about waist level (take a round turn), and pass the roll to the next person in line, who sticks the tape to him/herself (no round turn) and passes it on, etc., etc. When the tape is eventually used up (an interesting process in itself), the sticky queue is given a destination that they must try to reach as an encircled group and, of course, without parting the tape, which is akin to - a breach of faith, tearing the group asunder, ripping up shreds of intent or, more seriously, rending the group functionally impotent.

The name, Sticky Wicket, is apt, considering that it has nothing to do with the activity, but sounds like it should. The sticky part obviously refers to the tape. The wicket is fun to say, but remains nebulous enough to make people think devious thoughts without consequence - perfect.

It occurs to me that if you inadvertently or sadistically chose a roll of fiberglass tape for this encircling problem, the group bonding might be a bit more permanent than you bargained for.

YOU BET YOUR BUDDY

An amusing, action betting game that generates feelings of excitement, rejection, teamwork, loyalty and deception.

Teach the game Rock-Paper-Scissors to those in the group who have never played or forgot how; i.e. became too mature. Quick review - Rock (fist) breaks Scissors; Scissors (two fingers) cuts Paper; and Paper (flat hand) covers Rock.

Divide your group in half. (Here's a quick and innocuous 50/50 split technique. "Everyone fold your hands. If your right thumb is on top, you are in group A; if your left thumb is on top, team B is your alliance.")

Before getting together for the first team R-P-S confrontation, each team must huddle and decide what hand configuration their designated throwers (DT's) will show. Two sequences are chosen in case the first throw is a tie.

The game becomes more intense as the players decide which team members will represent pawns (chips) for the upcoming bets; i.e. bets as to which team will win the R-P-S showdown.

With the two DT's facing one another, that team with the most left-handed people gets to establish the first bet. For example, "Our team bets two pawns." (Two players on both sides, who at this point must disengage themselves from the groups and stand aside, as part of the "pot".) The other team must accept the bet, and is allowed to raise one pawn if they desire.

The R-P-S action ensues, determining a winner. The winning team receives the bet pawns from the other team. If the first throw is a tie, the betting team can (1) up the bet and continue, (2) withdraw to re-sequence, (3) continue. Pawns can switch roles after each winning sequence.

FIRE IN THE HOLE

It's time to put the balloons away - permanently. You're going to like this! Divide into groups of 3/5. Place 3/5 balloons between your 3/5 person group. Position the balloons carefully at about midtorso level. As in dealing with dynamite charges, it's the placement that counts. Then, put your arms about your partners bodies and prepare to squeeze, BUT before initiating any gross psycho-motor movement, the group shouts together, "Fire in the hole" - that's to warn any bystanders of the impending explosion(s). You don't need any further instructions after the squeeze starts. If a particular balloon is giving your small group a problem, ask for help from other squeezes. I'm sure, volunteers will hurry over to add their contractions and emotions toward a final solution. One-on-one Fire-in-the-Hole is an intense experience to be savoured with a special partner.

Fire-in-the-Hole can be used successfully in a number of hilarious and meaningless ways, including on a dance floor, on rappel, in a pool and en masse on a wrestling mat. Truly a game for all seasons, and not many reasons.

BALLOON BOP

Blow up one of the balloons and tie off the neck. Ask your group of 4-6 people to join hands in a circle and try to keep the balloon aloft (off the floor) by batting the balloon with any parts of their body, including hands which must remain clasped. If the balloon touches the floor, the group loses use of their hands. As balloons continue to eventually and inevitably fall to the floor, keep removing parts of the anatomy that are allowed to strike the balloon; for example, elbows, shoulders, head, thigh, etc. The group that eventually loses use of their feet is out and can then recycle to any point of the game they choose. Watch for high kicks in a small circle.

Addition to BOP

For you trivia buffs, the name BOOP comes from the sound of an elbow hitting a balloon.

Another variation requires the group to sit on the floor while booping the balloons. As a last means of keeping the balloons aloft, allow no body contact, only air pressure; i.e. blowing. Another approach allows a designated person to call out BOOP Commands. For example:

Hands only; Heads only (then clockwise & counter clockwise); sit down and toes only; on your back and hands only; etc. Continue, using as many parts of the anatomy as possible. This is a functional variation in that misses or mistakes have no consequence except laughter.

Finish by ordering the groups to see how long they can keep a balloon off the floor by blowing only.

BEACH BALL BINGO

Divide into two teams without choosing up sides. Choosing up sides is a sociopathic travesty (I'm not sure what that means, but it translates that I don't like the results of choosing up sides). Having the two best friends or the best athletes choosing sides seldom produces even (equally skilled) teams, but does cause the slowest, heaviest, most inept, least popular to be chosen last - again! The two teams then number off and line up facing one another. About 25 feet separates the teams.

Place two sets of three inflated 20" diameter beach balls (total six) on the ground midway between the two flanking lines. Call out two numbers, say 2 and 7. The 2's and 7's from each team (total four) rapidly move-out toward a set of beach balls and, through wild gyrations and morphologic manipulations that defy explanation, attempt

to hold all three balls simultaneously off the ground for five seconds without use of hands or arms. If a group drops a ball in the attempt, the other group wins and gains a point for their team.

Which pair goes to which set of balls? I'm sure that small organisational detail will be compassionately and calmly settled by the designated pairs involved.

Without hesitation, call out another set of numbers. This should be a rapid-fire game, so if there seems to be too much standing around or too many champing-at-the-bit observers, place another set of three balls or as many sets as necessary to maintain interest. If teams are having trouble keeping the beach balls off the ground (nobody is winning), let some air out of the balls; softer balls are more controllable.

BASIC KILLER

Object: For an unknown killer to "kill" all the people involved in the game, before they discover who she/he is.

Set-up: There are many ways to pick a killer, but the easiest and fastest is for the leader to ask all the players to close their eyes, and then walk briskly and obviously around and among the players, touching one of them on top of the head to include his/her sanguine role.

Rules:

To Kill, the killer must wink at a player. If the wink (not a blink) is recognised as the gift of eternal sleep, that player is dead and must histrionically die, ending up flailing about or shuddering on the floor/ground while emitting outrageous sounds of agony, outrage and defeat: this is not meant to be a subtle role. DO NOT die immediately after being killed. Give the killer a chance to move away by waiting 15-30 seconds until your terminal sequence begins.

As the group mills about the playing area, eyeing each other carefully (you must keep your eyes open), and someone thinks he/she knows who the killer is, he/she shouts, "I accuse!" The accuser must be seconded by another player within ten seconds or the initial accuser is eliminated (bumped off) by the referees (your) pearl handled revolver.

However, if there is a second, you (the referee) say, "On the count of 3 I want you both to point accusingly at the killer". If players point at the same person and it is indeed, the mass murderer - the game is over. If the accusers point at different people you quickly reach for your revolver and polish off the two maladroit who have so crassly offended the groups sensibilities. The game continues until the killer is caught or until all the players have been killed, a feat worthy of applause and a couple of rousing good shows.

VARIATIONS

1. Allow the killer to pass on the death knell by shaking hands and pressing the victims wrist with an extend index finger. It is obviously not necessary to kill every time a hand is shaken. So then, here we go about the room enthusiastically shaking hands with everyone and looking frantically for the deadly digit. All the above rules for basic killer apply here.
2. If the vibrations of all this noise and cascading bodies is distressing, try this “nice” variation. Everyone in the group must go around the room whispering something nice to each player encountered. The exception, of course, is the killer, who will whisper something pejorative having to do with one’s demise. For example, “I sure like your knees”, or “That blouse is outstanding” or “Your crew cut is cute”. The killer might say, “Here comes the kiss of death,” or “Tomorrow you die,” etc.
3. If the games are dragging a bit and you want to speed things up, introduce the plague variation.