



Live It

Spin-the-Bottle Dear Ben (20–30 minutes)

This game takes the advice given about friendship in Sirach 6:5–17 and connects it with everyday experiences. It is best done in groups of five to eight young people.

Materials Needed

- empty 2-liter plastic bottles, one for every five to eight participants
- copies of resource 4–A, “Game Cards for Spin-the-Bottle Dear Ben,” one for every five to eight participants
- a pair of scissors

Before the Session

- Cut apart the game cards from each copy of resource 4–A so that you have one identical set of cards for each small group.

Step 1

When doing this component as an independent activity. If you are doing this component independent from the other session components, at the beginning of this step, you may want to proclaim Sirach 6:5–17 and share the commentary in step 4 of the Study It component.

Have participants sit in circles of five to eight people, and place an empty 2-liter plastic bottle and a set of game cards from resource 4–A in the middle of each circle. Ask the young people to open their Bible to Sirach 6:5–17 to refer to during the game.

Explain that they are going to play spin the bottle a little differently than it is traditionally played. It’s actually going to be a combination of spin the bottle and an advice column. The game begins with the youngest person in each group picking a game card and reading it aloud. The card asks Ben Sira for some advice on a friendship situation. After reading the question, the person spins the bottle. The person the bottle points to when it stops spinning must give the advice asked for on the game card. The adviser should try to give advice that reflects Sirach’s wisdom, but in his or her own words.

If someone has trouble thinking of appropriate advice, they may ask the group for help. And after each response, the group members should give their reaction to the advice. Do they think it would work? Is there anything they would add? Is it really what Ben Sira would say?

Step 2

When you are done explaining the game, begin playing. After each person’s turn, continue playing by having the person who gave the advice read the next card and spin the bottle. The person must keep spinning the bottle until it points to someone who has not had a chance to give advice yet. Each person in the small group must have a turn at giving advice in response to at least one card before anyone else in the group gets a second chance.

**Step 3**

If you have time, after all the groups are finished, ask each group to share with the large group one piece of advice that it really liked. Summarize the activity by putting the following points into your own words:

- There are several levels of friendship. On one level, friends are the people whom we know by name, see occasionally, and have casual conversation with. On a deeper level, friends are the people whom we see more often—the people we work, study, or socialize with. At the deepest level, friends are the few, close friends with whom we can talk about our innermost feelings and important decisions. A balanced person has friends at all levels.
- For someone to develop a friendship at the deepest level takes time and commitment. We should be careful of letting someone in at that level too quickly or too easily.
- To have friends at that deeper level is truly a blessing. As Ben Sira says, “Whoever finds one has found a treasure” (Sirach 6:14).

Alternative Approach**Friendship T-Shirts**

Have all the participants bring an old, plain white T-shirt to the session (men’s undershirts work great). Or you could ask people in the parish to donate some. Direct the young people to use fabric markers, pens, or paints to make their own friendship T-shirts.

There are at least two different ways to create the shirts. One way is to have each person decorate their own shirt, writing on it slogans from the friendship bumper stickers (if you did that activity from the Study It component) and phrases from Sirach. The second way is to have the whole group decorate the shirts together. Instruct everyone to write on their shirt their name and a short slogan on friendship based on the advice given in Sirach. Then tell them to pass their shirt around the group and have each person write his or her slogan on it and initial it. This is probably the most fun and memorable way to create the friendship T-shirts.

The young people can keep their friendship T-shirt and use it as a nightshirt or wear it to other youth activities.