

GROUP-BUILDING GAMES

IMAGINARY BALL

Make believe there is an imaginary ball in your group and throw it back and forth. To add excitement, ask everyone to change the shape and weight of the ball before tossing it. When it gets going, holler out, "It's hot—move it fast!"

MOTORMOUTH

Make believe your small group is a motor. See how much speed you can achieve. At the word GO, the first person turns their head to the right, making the sound for the specified motor; then the next person turns their head to the right, repeating the sound, etc. The first group to finish the specified number of laps should cheer.

Round One:

Go-carts ... for five laps ... and the sound is "putt."

Round Two:

Motorcycles ... for seven laps ... and the sound is "rrrrrr."

Round Three:

Racing cars at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway ... for 10 laps ... and the sound is "zooooommmmm."





CHARADES

Place a name tag (*Little Red Riding Hood, Goliath, Romeo or Juliet, Dallas Cowboy Cheerleader, John Wayne, etc.*) on the back

of each person in a group of up to 8. First person stands and turns around so the others in the group can see the tag. Then, in silence, the group members act out this thing or person until the one with the name tag guesses

who they are. When that person guesses correctly, the next person stands and turns around. The group acts out this thing ... etc. until everyone in the group has guessed.

RHYTHM

First, count off around your group: *one, two, three*, etc. Then, altogether, slap your knees; clap your hands; snap your right fingers; and then your left fingers. This is the rhythm to keep repeating. Then, after everyone gets the hang of it, the number one person calls out their number ("*One*") as they snap their right fingers ... and then somebody else's number (such as "*Three*") as they snap their left fingers.

When your number is called, you respond with your number when you snap your right fingers ... and somebody else's number when you snap your left fingers.

NONVERBAL RHYTHM

Same rhythm as above, except you use signs instead of numbers. First, everyone thinks of a crazy action and demonstrates it to the group. You could *scratch your ear*, another might *rub their stomach*, another *pull their hair*, etc.

Now, after your group has slapped their



knees twice and clapped their hands twice, the number one person does their sign (such as pulling their hair) ... and somebody else's sign (such as scratching their ear). Then, everybody slaps their knees and claps their hands in rhythm and the one whose sign was given shows his or her sign ... and someone else's sign, etc.

If anyone breaks the rhythm or fails to come in when their sign is given, they go to

the end of the line and everyone moves up a seat, *but keeps their own sign*.

CATEGORIES

Same rhythm as above, except that instead of numbers or actions you use categories: *football players, famous singers, nursery rhymes*, etc., and a little different procedure.

First, everyone thinks of a category, preferably one that has two words or syllables. Everybody slaps their knees and claps their hands, and then the number one person calls out "*Cate*" as they snap their right fingers and "*gory*" as they snap their left fingers. Everybody continues the rhythm while, the next person in the group (going clockwise) responds by calling out a particular category, such as *auto ... mobiles* as they snap their fingers. Again, everyone continues the rhythm and the next person must answer by naming something within the category, such as *Chev ... rolet*, as they snap their fingers.

The group keeps going until someone cannot think of an auto. Then the person simply says, "*Cate ... gory*," and the next person must call out a new subject. Repeat the procedure.





SCULPTURING

In 2s: One person is the modeling clay and one is Michelangelo. Sculpture feelings like fear, joy, tension, despair. *In 4s:* Two people are the clay and two are Michelangelo. Sculpture relational words like distrust, trust, confrontation, affirmation. *In 8s:* Four are clay; four are Michelangelo. Sculpture collective terms like celebration. *In 8s:* Everyone can be clay—or any substance! Sculpture a Rube Goldberg Machine (a complex machine doing a simple task) ... and then Christian community.



PASS THE BALLOON

Form groups of about 10 people and give each group a balloon. The object of the game is to throw the balloon to each other as quickly as possible so that you are empty handed when the whistle blows. If you are caught, here are the penalties. *First offense:* must stand up and sit down before you pass the balloon. *Second offense:* must stand up, turn around and sit down before you pass the balloon. *Third offense:* must stand up, turn around, laugh like a hyena and sit down before passing the balloon. *Fourth offense:* must stand up, turn around, laugh like a hyena, flap your arms like a bird and sit down before passing the balloon. The leader blows the whistle after about 10 seconds of play and enforces the penalty to those caught holding the balloons.



Remember, you need one *"In the pond"* and two *"Kerplunks"* for every frog. Here's the catch! If you mess up, you have to go back to *one frog*. So it is a race of skill as well as against time.

BUZZ-FIZZ

Count up to 50 as fast as you can, but instead of saying, *"five,"* or any multiple of five, call out, *"BUZZ."* Instead of saying, *"seven,"* or any multiple of seven, call out, *"FIZZ."* For example, each person, in turn, around the group will sound off with *"one," "two," "three," "four,"* and the next person will say, *"BUZZ,"* the next, *"six,"* the next, *"FIZZ,"* etc.

When you get to 35, which is a multiple of both five and seven, say *"BUZZ-FIZZ."* If you mess up, start over again at *one*. The first group to reach 50 should cheer.

ONE FROG

Work together on a riddle about a frog: first, one frog; then, two frogs, etc., until you get up to 10 frogs. Here is the first riddle:

One frog.

Two eyes.

Four legs.

In the pond.

Kerplunk.

Kerplunk.

One person in the group says, *"One frog,"* the next person says, *"Two eyes,"* the next *"Four legs,"* the next, *"In the pond,"* the next, *"Kerplunk,"* and the next, *"Kerplunk."*

Then the next person says, *"Two frogs,"* the next person, *"Four eyes,"* the next, *"Eight legs,"* the next, *"In the pond,"* the next, *"In the pond,"* the next, *"Kerplunk,"* the next, *"Kerplunk,"* the next, *"Kerplunk,"* and the next, *"Kerplunk."*



THIS IS A CUP! A WHAT?

Form groups of 8 to 12. Pass a cup and a saucer around the group at the same time in opposite directions. One person holds the cup; the person on their left holds the saucer. At the word GO, the person with the cup turns to the person on their right, passes the cup and says, "This is a cup!" That person asks, "A what?" The first person answers, "A cup!" Then the second person turns to the one on their right, passes the cup and says, "This is a cup!" The third person asks, "A what?" Then the second person must turn back to the original person and ask, "A what?" The original person replies, "A cup!" and the second person turns again to the third person and says, "A cup!"

In other words, each time the cup is passed, the "A what?" must be asked all the way back to the original person, and the answer, "A cup!" must be returned all the way.

At the same time the cup is going to the right, the saucer is being passed to the left. "This is a saucer!" "A what?" "A saucer!" etc.

Do this as fast as you can, but beware—you must start over if anyone makes a mistake. The first group to finish should cheer.

PASS THE FOOTBALL

Form groups of 6 to 8. Each group passes a balloon around their circle five times ... using only feet and ankles. The first group to finish sits on the balloon and pops it.

