



(Group-Builder Games)

4 fun and involving ways to build group unity

the envelope, please

Overview: Teenagers will guess information about each other to learn how well they actually know each other.

Time Involved: 10 to 15 minutes

Supplies: marker, legal envelopes, 3×5 cards, pencils, and paper.

Preparation: With a marker, write a consecutive number on an envelope for each member of the group. Then shuffle the envelopes.

Give each teenager one envelope. Tell them each to place their envelope face down so the numbers aren't visible. Then give each person a 3×5 card and a pencil.

☛**Say:** Write one statement about yourself on your 3×5 card. One example of a suitable statement is, "I'm great at math, and I'll probably be a rocket scientist someday." When you're finished, put the card in your envelope and make a mental note of the number on the front. Then give your envelope to me.

When you've received all the envelopes, give each



teenager a sheet of paper. Have them each write the consecutive numbers down one side of their paper. While they do this, put the envelopes in order.

Take the cards from the envelopes one by one. Give the number on each envelope, and then read each statement aloud. Have the group members each guess whose statement it is by writing that person's name beside the number on their sheet of paper.

When you've read all the cards, go down the list together and have group members identify which facts were theirs.

Then ask: **Why was it difficult in some cases to guess who wrote these statements? How is this like or unlike drawing conclusions about one another based on a few facts? What's the problem with judging or making conclusions about people based on only a few facts?**

Say: **We need to make a real effort to get to know one another so we won't draw the wrong conclusions.**

bodyguard

Overview: Teenagers will act as "bodyguards" to protect each other.

Time Involved: five to 10 minutes

Supplies: none

Preparation: none

Have teenagers form groups of three. Have each group choose one player to be the Star. The other two players will be the Bodyguards. Choose one group to go first, and have that group move to one end of your playing area. While one group is in the spotlight, the rest of the teenagers are the Fans, and they gather at the other end of the room.

Explain that the object of the game is for the Fans to tag the Star without being tagged by the Bodyguards. The Star and Bodyguards will try to travel from one end of the playing field to the other without the Star being tagged. The Bodyguards will join hands and travel in front of the Star as protection. If a Bodyguard tags a Fan, the Fan is out of the game and sits down. If a Fan tags the Star, they change places and play begins again.

After the game, discuss how no person can succeed totally alone and how we all need someone to protect us at times.

put your hand on the can, man!

Overview: Teenagers will try to place as many fingers as possible on a soft drink can to illustrate each group member's importance to the group.

Time Involved: five to 10 minutes

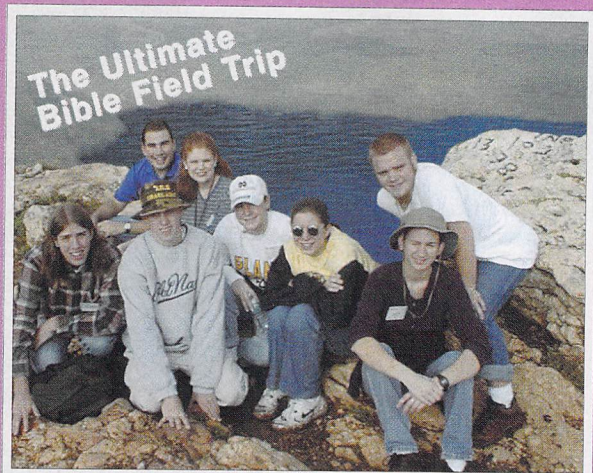
Supplies: an empty soft drink can for each team of five to 10 young people.

Preparation: Clean out the cans.

Have group members form teams of five to 10 people, and give each team a soft drink can. Teams will try to get as many team members' fingertips as possible to touch the top and bottom of their team's can without touching the sides of the can. Allow teams up to 30 seconds to strategize and get their fingers positioned before you count which team has the most fingertips touching the tops and bottoms of cans. If you have small teams, have them work to get as many fingertips as possible on only the top or the bottom of the cans.

Have teams play several rounds of this game. Then ask: **How did you feel as you worked with your team to**

Take Your Youth Group to the Mountain Top!

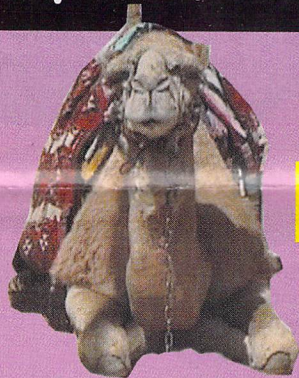


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get the most fingers on your soft drink can? Explain. How would you describe the efforts of your team to touch the can with as many fingertips as possible? Explain. What did you learn about teamwork in this game?

☛ Say: We had to work together to get everyone's fingers on the can. Everyone was important.

☛ Ask: How should we work together similarly to make everyone in our group feel accepted? feel important to the group? Why is this important? What are some practical ways we can do this?

in your own words

Overview: Teenagers will paraphrase Scripture passages.

Time Involved: five to 10 minutes

Supplies: Bibles, Bible dictionaries or other reference books, concordances, paper, and pens.

Preparation: none

Have teenagers form groups of three or four.

Give each group a Bible, a Bible dictionary or other reference book, a concordance, paper, and pens. Assign each group the same Scripture reference, and explain that they'll have five minutes to translate the reference into their own words. After five minutes, ask a spokesperson from each group to read aloud the paraphrase. Then discuss similarities and differences in interpretation.

After this discussion, assign each group a different Scripture reference. This game is a wonderful tool to assess learning and retention of material you've taught. ■

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