

FACILITATION

Facilitation is the art of creating and maintaining a space where others can safely challenge themselves, challenge the group, learn, grow and push their limits. Your job is to make things easier; it is not to tell, it is to show. When you facilitate, your responsibilities are to explain the rules or guidelines, make sure everyone understands, step in when needed, and to let the group figure it out on their own. Most of the facilitation you will be doing this summer is going to be through activities, games and conversations.

Some key things to remember to be a good facilitator:

- * Understand your role: Don't take sides; remember that you are a neutral party. If you are facilitating a discussion between two campers, remember that you are there to help them solve their problems, not to share your personal opinion. Also remember to keep the group on topic and the conversations moving forward.
- * Be patient! Not everyone will understand the rules the first time or accomplish tasks at the same rate. Your attitude coming into the activity will help mentally prepare the group for what you are about to do. If you are confident, they will be too, if you seem unsure, so will they. The group looks toward you to ensure their safety, mentally and physically, throughout the activity, and you set the tone for success or failure from the beginning.

When I facilitate a game, these are some things I think about:

1. Why are we playing the game?

Is it because we need a time filler, or am I trying to teach a lesson?

2. Is this game appropriate for this age group?

Most games can be changed or altered to become more age appropriate.

3. Do I know ALL THE RULES of the game?

Never go into facilitation not knowing the rules. You will come off unsure, unconfident, and may lead the group towards failure.

4. Do I have their attention?

Make sure you have undivided attention while you explain the rules. Be clear and concise, and always ask if anyone has any questions before you move on.

5. What are the boundaries and how much time will we play?

Give the group a designated space to play the game. It is YOUR JOB to step in if (a) the rules are not being followed (remember, each rule is there for a reason), (b) if safety is threatened (this includes mental and physical safety of those playing the game and those around them).

6. How will we end the activity?

Debriefing is an important part of an activity. If you challenged your campers in anyway, put stress on them, or failed an activity, it is essential to touch base afterwards. A failure can be turned into a learning experience if debriefed in the right way.

-> Games! <-

Fun and easy to play. (These work great for time fillers & focusing groups)

Count to Ten!

This is a quick way to get your kids focused. You can have them close their eyes or not depending on the age. The rules: Everyone closes their eyes. The goal is to count to 10. Everyone can only say one number. If two people say the same number at the same time, I'll say "start over." Any questions? GO!

Line Up By...

There are a million and one ways to have your kids line up. It's a quick and fun game that also lets you get to know something about the campers. Some examples are: age, birth month, height and name. If your kids are older, have them do this with their eyes closed, or another handicap. You can also have them get into groups of x numbers, by birthday, ext...

Triangle Tag

Divide your campers up into teams of four. Each team plays its own game. Three people hold hands in a triangle facing inwards. The other person is "it." Of the three, choose one person to be the one who the "it" is trying to tag. It is up to the other two to protect this person while still holding hands. Once the person is caught, switch it up.

Color Tag

This game takes a little preparation. Make different colored tags the size of a note card out of construction paper. Choose two people to play at a time in a small designated area. Tape one colored tag to the back of each camper. The goal is to figure out what color is on the back of the other. There is no physical contact. Whoever yells out the name of the color first, wins.

Bang, bang, bang... Who's Dead

Due to current politics, change the "bang" and "who's dead" to something like, "Zap, zap, zap, who's it." Get all your kids together, and say, "Zap, zap, zap. Who's it?" (While you say "zap" point to different campers). They will try to figure out a pattern to see who it is. The way you determine who is "it," is actually determined by them. The first person to say something after you ask, "who's it" is "it." Repeat until they catch on.

Games that take a little more time.

Blob Tag

A game of tag where you start with one person who is "it," and every person they tag becomes part of the blob by joining arms. Eventually, everyone will be part of the blob. This is an example of a win-win game. *

Group Duck Duck Goose

Divide campers into four groups. Each group sits in a row facing inwards. The "ducker" goes around the circle, like in duck duck goose, but when they "goose" someone, the entire row gets up and runs around the circle and sits back down in the row they got up from. The last person to sit down in the line is the new "ducker."