



! H O R N E W B E R R Y

RECREATION ACTIVITIES TO JAZZ UP 4-H MEETINGS

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WHY RECREATION?

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Recreation is an integral part of the 4-H program because it provides an opportunity for youth and adults to gain leadership skills through a fun and exciting experience. Recreation is also important for several other reasons:

- It is the sneakiest way to get older youth involved and keep them interested.
- Recreation is a great way to teach life skills to younger kids in a more relaxed atmosphere.
- Recreation is a low-anxiety way to get people to interact.
- It provides opportunity for youth and adults to be creative.
- Recreation can have a profound impact on mental and physical health—it is used in therapy for injuries, illnesses and disabilities. It can be healing, relieving stress and tension.
- Recreation encourages laughter which we often don't do enough in a positive manner.
- Positive humor can help build positive self-esteem and promotes unity.

The research tells us that people learn in a variety of ways, but the statistics show us that they learn best when they are active. Here are some statistics on how much information is retained through various methods:

- We retain 20% of what we read
- We retain 20% of what we hear
- We retain 30 % of what we see
- We retain 50% of what we hear and see
- We retain 70% of what we say
- We retain 90% of what we do

There are many life skills that are cultivated through recreation experiences. Activities can be adapted to teach specific life skills or they can address many at the same time. Look for recreation activities that focus on building one of these life skills, not just a fun game!

Communication
Teamwork
Problem-Solving
Responsibility
Initiative
Determination
Positive Self-Esteem

Discipline
Decision-Making
Goal Setting
Trust
Patience
Respect
Leadership



KEYS TO EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING

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There are several important items to remember when conducting any kind of programming with an audience. When recreation is involved, several of these are even more important for the instructor to remember.

- First Priority is always the safety of participants. Make sure that any hazards are removed from the area so that there are no obstacles that might harm participants.
- Never force a child to participate in an activity that they may feel uncomfortable doing.
- Avoid belittling or laughing at a child – it is okay to laugh with them!
- If you are going to be conducting recreation that will require specific clothing, try to notify your audience in advance so that they can be prepared and won't be left out.
- Keeping control of your audience will help the activity go smoothly. The next page will provide some specific examples of how to do this.
- Adults who actively participate in the program will draw kids in to participate. It is okay to play games, sing silly songs and laugh! If everyone is doing it, then no one can be critical. Kids learn by watching your actions.
- If youth are asked to plan and conduct an activity, work with them to plan by giving hints and guidance. Do not do the work for them. Allow them to use their own creativity and talents. Step back and watch their leadership develop. If we, as coaches/leaders do everything for them, they will not develop the skills to succeed.



GROUP MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

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Before you try to implement any of these techniques, you must first be sure and explain the method you are going to use for the day to the group so that they all know and understand what is expected. As you begin the session, start by saying:

“Today we’re going to be doing some great games that I hope each of you will enjoy but before we start, there are some ground rules that we must all follow!

- 1. We are all going to play fair and not try to intentionally hurt one another.*
- 2. Today we’re going to concentrate on saying nice things and not putting down each other. If we can’t say something nice, we won’t say anything! We want everyone to have fun!*
- 3. When I am talking (or any of the other leaders are talking), we will all be quiet and listen so that we understand the rules of the game or activity.*
- 4. Today we’re going to use this method of getting your attention when we need to give you instructions. (Pick one thing you’re going to use and then get them to practice that method using the information below.)*

Okay, does anyone have any questions before we get started? Great! Let’s go!”

Here are several strategies that can be used to gain the attention of the audience to signal it is time to listen for instructions.

- **Hands Up, Mouth Shut** – Any time the leader raises his/her hand, that means that everyone else is to follow their lead and raise their hand and close their mouths. This is a visual cue that should not require the leader to tell the group what to do after they explain the rule at the beginning of the session. As soon as all hands are up and no one is talking, tell the group thank you for being quiet and proceed on with instructions.
- **If you can hear me, clap once** – If the group is not listening and paying attention to the instructions, say in a normal voice where those closest to you can hear you, “If you can hear me, clap once.” Those that hear you should clap one time. Repeat the command, changing up the number of claps until you have the attention of all of the group and they are responding correctly to your instructions.



GROUP MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

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- **If you can hear me, squat down** – same concept as the previous example, except, it seems that the mouth and squatting down are connected! They seem to listen better when they are squatting! You might want to have the group seated until you complete instructions so that everyone can see the demonstration and hear you clearly.

Another variation of this might be to demonstrate instead of speaking. If you are squatting, others will follow your example and do the same.

- **Hey, Hey – Ho Ho** – Any time you shout, “Hey, Hey” the group should respond “Ho, Ho” and then be quiet. Repeat until the group responds together and are quiet.
- **Removal of participants from the activities** – If you have the support of the staff and feel comfortable in doing this, ask for participants who continually disrupt you and are causing problems to sit out of the game. Try to bring them back into the group after the game is complete if they agree to behave.
- **Come up with your own unique way of crowd control.** Maybe develop a catchy word combination like “Hey Hey – Ho Ho” that you can use! Maybe you can ask the kids to come up with something with you so that they have buy in to the method.



DIVIDE AND CONQUER

! I O R N C W A

Many games and activities require that large groups be broken down into smaller teams to complete a task or compete in a game. There are a variety of ways to accomplish this that help to keep the group under control and organized. Below are some examples of ways to divide large groups into smaller teams.

1. **Number off** by the number of groups you need. Ones form one group, twos form one group, etc.
2. **Colored Tokens** – have the number of tokens of different colors in a hat that you want in a group. For example, if you want groups of 5 and you have 20 people, have 5 red, 5 blue, 5 green, and 5 yellow tokens. Each person draws a token and that color is their group. (NOTE: You can purchase small tokens at WalMart in the educational toys section or at any teacher supply store.)
3. **Pixie Sticks** – same method as the colored tokens above.
4. **Playing cards** – if you need 4 groups and you have 40 people and you want 4 groups of 10, have 10 diamonds, 10 spades, 10 hearts and 10 clubs in a hat for them to draw. Their suit is their group.
5. **Colored pieces of paper** – Used the same way as the colored tokens described above.
6. **Birthdays** — January - June birthdays in one team, July - December birthdays in one team — If teams are uneven, choose a month and ask that month to move to the other team until you have two fairly balanced teams. This will work okay if the teams don't have to be exact!
7. **Boys against Girls** – Use this method if the activity is not a physical game and the genders are fairly even. Examples would include activities where their team is working on a project at a table together such as a tower building contest.
8. **Odds & Evens** – have group number off from 1 to whatever number there is in the group. Odds form one team, evens form the other team. If you need more than 2 teams, you can split the odds into two groups and evens into two groups.



PEEK- A- WHO!

! I O R N C W A

Objective: This activity will challenge youth to become familiar with the names of people in the group.

Supplies: A tarp or blanket that participants cannot see through

Instructions:

- Divide your group into two teams. Each team will gather up in a tight group, one group on each side of the tarp.
- Use two volunteers if not enough leaders are present to hold the tarp between the two groups where they cannot see each other. Make sure the tarp touches the ground so teams cannot see under the tarp. Taller group members may need to squat down where they cannot be seen.
- Each team will select one person to be “it”. They are to move close to the tarp and face off with someone on the other side of the tarp. Other team members will back away but not out of sight of the other team.
- On the count of three, the tarp is dropped and the first person to call out the name of the opposing team member wins the round. The loser is now a member of the other team and joins that team for continued play.
- Each round, the teams choose someone new as “it” and the teams face off. The winner is the group who ends up with the most team members after a set time. You can determine the length of time to play (usually no more than 15 minutes) or until someone wins. If the game goes quickly, start a new game and mix up the teams.

NOTE: This activity may require that you have participants introduce themselves in a circle if they do not know each other. If they are wearing nametags, have them remove them before beginning the game.



ADJECTIVE GAME

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Objective: To help participants get acquainted and share information with the group about themselves.

Supplies: Create cards with one adjective on each card using the attached list of adjectives. You can type and put 10 words on a page and laminate to re-use cards or simply write them on index cards.

Instructions:

- Randomly hand out 3 adjective cards to each participant.
- Instruct the group that they are to look at their cards only and not share them with anyone else yet.
- The object of the game is for each participant to select the card in their hand that LEAST DESCRIBES THEM, and pass that card to another person in the group.
- Each time they trade cards with someone new, they should each introduce themselves. Everyone should have 3 cards in their hand at all times.
- Give enough time for the group to mix well and trade cards at least 15 times (if your group is that big).
- Bring the group into a circle and have each person choose the card in their hand that best describes them. Have each person share their name and the adjective that best describes them with the group. Encourage them to tell why that card describes them!

You can find over 1000 adjectives listed on the website below! Make as many cards as you like from the website or use the list on the next page to get you started.

<http://www.momswhothink.com/reading/list-of-adjectives.html#Adjectives List>



ADJECTIVE GAME

! I O R N U W A

Happy	Sad	Crazy	Naughty
Thoughtful	Lazy	Funny	Mean
Nice	Sweet	Hurtful	Silly
Caring	Respectful	Helpful	Angry
Hungry	Sarcastic	Spiteful	Disappointed
Joyful	Humorous	Prankster	Jolly
Revengeful	Loving	Hateful	Courteous
Ambitious	Humble	Proud	Boastful
Rude	Obnoxious	Talented	Classy
Artistic	Hot	Dorky	Quirky
Beautiful	Handsome	Kind	Secure
Wasteful	Quaint	Upset	Communicator
Attentive	Spacey	Playful	Noisy
Shy	Quiet	Loud	Bold
Sneaky	Mischievous	Procrastinator	Unorganized
Organized	Responsible	Insensitive	Sensitive
Rough	Motherly	Anxious	Cheerful
Smart	Dumb	Impatient	Patient
Reliable	Unreliable	Determined	Strong
Weak	Level-Headed	Stubborn	Modest
Spoiled	Sharp	Dull	Negative
Positive	Bubbly	Spirited	Grumpy
Successful	Creative	Thin	Fat
Clueless	Quick-Witted	Colorful	Stylish
Sloppy	Scholarly	Punctual	Trashy
Adventurous	Educated	Grounded	Well-Rounded
Protector	Wild	Talkative	Athletic
Hungry	Thirsty	Chunky	Smooth
Deceitful	Manipulative	Committed	Dedicated
Centered	Terrible	Ancient	Empty
Simple	Attractive	Small	Big
Fine	Awful	Aimless	Confused
Dazed	Rich	Poor	Solid
Famous	Fabulous	Tall	Short
Old	Young	Blue	Stinky
Incoherent	Seasoned	Wacky	Scary
Pleased	Lovely	Groovy	Tense
Gorgeous	Elderly	Noteworthy	Gently
Amazing	Embarrassed	Disappointed	Bored
Tired	Annoyed	Excited	Unique
Frightened	Interesting	Balanced	Bright
Sleek	Bad	Stressed	Busy
Hopeful	Cruel	Guilty	Content
Awesome	Aspiring	Entertaining	Godly
Feeble	Irritating	Jumpy	Nervous



SEE YA!

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Objective: This game is designed to be a get acquainted activity with a new group. It provides an opportunity to mix the group up and for them to share information about themselves in a non-threatening way while having fun.

Instructions:

- Arrange your larger group into smaller groups of 5-7 people. Five is ideal for this activity. It is fine if groups are not all equal, but keep them fairly balanced.
- As the leader you will give all of the groups the same topic to discuss and determine within their group who matches that criteria in their group. Before the groups discuss the topic, they are to introduce themselves to everyone else in the group and you may give them something else to tell as well.

For example, “Everyone introduce yourself and tell what your least favorite subject in school is and determine in your group who has the biggest shoe size.”

- Allow time for the groups to introduce themselves, share the information you told them to share, and determine the biggest shoe size. This should take a couple of minutes. Ask groups to raise their hands when they’ve completed the task. This is an easy visual to tell you when to move to the next step.
- Once the groups have finished that step, then you will explain that the person in the group who had the biggest shoe size (or whatever the criteria is) will be moving to a new group. In order for all the groups to move at the same time, you will use this cue to move them. You will tell the groups that when it is time to rotate the identified person to another group you will say “One, Two Three!!!” and then all the groups will say “See Ya!” Then the identified person in each group with the biggest shoe size will move to a new group, keeping the groups balanced.
- If there are two people who have the same size foot or meet the criteria the same, both can move!
- You may use the attached list of topics or develop your own list!



SEE YA TOPICS

! I O R N U W A

- Highest number of brothers/sisters (siblings)
- Biggest shoe size
- Smallest shoe size
- Favorite pizza topping is cheese ONLY
- Highest number of pieces of jewelry you have on right now
- Lowest number of letters in your first name
- Highest number of letters in your full name
- Highest number of pairs of flip flops you own
- Dressed up in a costume last Halloween
- The longest hair
- The biggest ears
- Wearing the most orange clothing (or choose the color you prefer!)
- Highest number of years in 4-H
- Writes with their left hand
- Can do a flip off of the diving board
- Has brown eyes (or choose the color you prefer)
- Wearing glasses (or contacts)
- Has hair that is not their natural color (highlighted or colored hair)
- Can stand on their head
- Can whistle
- Owns a pet
- Highest number of songs on their iPod
- Has an iPad
- Has been to a professional football game
- has never played soccer
- Has the most change in their pockets



MOON BALL

! L O R N C W A

Objective: This activity will challenge members to use communication skills, problem-solving, goal-setting and teamwork to accomplish the task.

Materials:

- Large beach ball or other light weight rubber ball

Instructions:

- The task for this activity is to keep the moon ball in the air for a specified number of hits without letting it hit the ground.
- Participants spread out in an open area where they feel their group is covering an adequate amount of space.
- Participants will set a goal of how many times they can hit the moon ball without it hitting the ground.
- Participants may not hit the moon ball twice in a row.
- Instruct participants that if the goal is achieved, they should continue until the ball hits the ground to get the maximum number of hits. Encourage the group to count aloud so that they can all keep up with the number of hits.
- If the group tries a few times without success, encourage them to talk as a group and fine tune their strategy. If their goal is reached easily, have them set a more challenging goal and continue play.

Discussion Questions:

- What were some of the strategies that DID NOT work in this activity?
- Did anyone suggest other options to improve any of those strategies?
- Do you feel that the group used good communication skills? What were some examples?
- If the group met it's goal, to what would you attribute that success?
- How is this activity similar to groups you work with in 4-H? At school?
- If you could summarize a lesson you learned from this activity, what would that be?



FITZLE SPITZLE

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Objective: This activity focuses on developing listening skills and communication skills.

Materials: Two small objects to pass around the circle (Koosh Balls, Tennis Balls of different color, sponges, etc)

Description :

- This is a fun game that generally provides a lot of laughs. Have the group form a circle (sitting). Show them your two objects and explain to them that one of them is a Fizzle, and the other is a Spitzle (you don't have to go into very much detail on what exactly a Fizzle and a Spitzle are!).
- The Fizzle will be passed one way around the circle, the Spitzle the other. Below is the procedure for passing the object (applied to both - Fizzle is used as an example):
 - Giver (to receiver to his/her right): "This is a Fizzle."
 - Receiver (to giver): "A what?"
 - Question must be passed from person to person all the way back to the starting point which is you. In practice it will sound like, "A what? A what? A what? A what? ..."
When the question gets to you (the person who starts the Fizzle), you reply to the person next to you, "A Fizzle."
 - The answer gets passed all the way back to the person who is receiving: "A Fizzle. A Fizzle. A Fizzle..."
 - Only then can the receiver accept the object.
 - The receiver turns to the next person and says, "This is a Fizzle." and the process happens all over again.
- The Fizzle and Spitzle are passed in opposite directions, so when they both pass the middle is when it gets REALLY interesting. Soon people are hearing "Fizzle...Spitzle...A what? A Fizzle..." on all sides and they soon forget what they're supposed to be saying to whom. It's a great game! If they start getting bored or frustrated, you can call it off at any time.

Discussion Questions:

- What was the most challenging thing about this activity? Why was this challenge difficult to overcome?
- What strategies did you use to try and work through the challenge?
- What are some examples of times when you feel like you are getting bombarded with lots of different information?
- How do you deal with situations like this in real life?
- Complete this sentence: This activity has taught me that I need to...



BLIND MONEY

! I O R N C W A

Objective: This activity is designed to teach youth to develop trust and communication skills.

Materials:

- 2 quarters for every 2 people
- A bucket, box or garbage can
- Masking tape or boundary markers

Instructions:

- Place a large bucket, box or garbage can in the center of a circle that has been marked off with tape.
- Have participants get into pairs.
- Give each pair 2 quarters and have them stand outside the circle.
- One person in the pair must tip their head back and place one quarter over each eye. Their partner will give verbal directions to them to help them walk toward the bucket in the center of the circle and drop their coins into the bucket. Hands cannot be used in this process!
- If the money is dropped before getting to the bucket, go back to the edge of the circle and start over.
- Switch places and conduct the activity again.
- The challenge in this activity is all teams trying to complete the activity at the same time!

Discussion Questions:

- Did you trust your partner? Why or why not?
- What made this activity difficult?
- Was it harder to give directions or receive them? Why?
- Why are communication and trust both important parts of any partnership?
- Are we ever “blinded” by money? How?
- What are other things in our lives that we can be “blinded” by? How do those things affect our relationships with family, friends, etc?
- What are examples of situations that we deal with in 4-H that relate to this activity and its challenges?



I CANNOT SAY I

! I O R N C W A

Objective: Challenge participants to think about what they say, build concentration skills, and communication skills by carrying on a conversation without using the words “I,” “me,” “my” or “mine”.

Materials:

- Whistle
- Watch or clock with second hand

Instructions:

- Ask participants to pair up and spread out in the room.
- Pairs will carry on a conversation without using the words “I,” “me,” “my” or “mine”.
- If one of those words are used, that person is out and must sit down. Their partner will remain standing until a new topic is announced.
- When a new topic is announced by the leader, everyone finds a new partner.

Sample Topics:

- Favorite vacation
- Favorite book
- Favorite movie
- Least favorite food and why
- Hobbies you like
- Favorite music artists
- Who is your role model
- Characteristics of a great leader
- Favorite Sports Team
- The Olympics
- Any other topics you can think of!

Discussion Questions:

- Why is it difficult not to use those words?
- Why is it important not to use those words all the time?
- When you are working on a team, what types of words should be used to promote a team spirit?
- What can be learned from this activity?

CAPTAIN VIDEO



! I O R N C E A

Objective: To develop non-verbal communication skills.

Instructions:

- This is a new version on an old game called Telephone or Gossip! This time, there's no talking, just the use of non-verbal communication to pass on information!
- Instruct group to stand in a circle. The participants will face in toward the center of the circle while instructions are given then turn to face out when the game begins.
- One person will begin in the center of the circle and will be "Captain Video." They will be the person who will start the non-verbal conversation.
- Captain Video will tap one person in the circle on the shoulder and they will turn to face the center of the circle. Captain Video will create a simple movement and demonstrate it one time for the person that was tapped on the shoulder. (an example of a movement might be to tap the head 3 times and bend over and touch toes with their fingers)
- Captain Video will then switch places with the person he tapped on the shoulder and face the center of the circle.
- The new person in the center — now Captain Video — will tap on the shoulder someone new who is facing outward and then demonstrate the same action they saw for them. Then they switch places and the activity continues until all persons in the group are now facing forward.
- The first person and the last person in the center will face off against each other and on the count of 3, will perform the movement to see how well the non-verbal communication was passed on from one person to the next.

Discussion Questions:

- What was the objective of the game?
- Was the objective accomplished? Why or why not?
- What challenges does non-verbal communication cause when working with a group?
- How can non-verbal communication help in communicating your thoughts? How can it hinder?
- What are situations where problems can occur when good communication is not used?



CREATIVE ARTWORK

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Objective: Each person will contribute to a group project and the group will work together as a team.

Equipment:

- Large sheet of paper for each group
- 10 markers, each a different color, for each group

Instructions:

- Divide the group into teams of 4 to 10 members.
- Provide each team with one piece of paper and 10 markers. Ask team members to choose only one marker each.
- Once team members choose a colored marker, they may not trade markers or change to a different color marker.
- The goal of the activity is for the group to create a piece of artwork. Each member must be involved in the project in some way but may only use the marker that he/she has.
- Once the group finishes their artwork, they will share it with the other groups.

Variations for this game include:

- Blindfold a few members of the group and have the rest of the team members provide verbal instructions only to the blindfolded members to help them contribute to the art project.
- For younger audiences, provide an idea for them to use to draw their art. For example, a summer time activity or a park.

Discussion Questions:

- What made this activity difficult? Or Easy?
- How did the group work together to complete the picture?
- Is everyone in the group happy with the artwork that was created? If not, what could have been done differently to improve the project?
- Why is it important to be able to work with others as a member of a team?
- How does this activity relate to experiences in the 4-H program?



WELDED ANKLE

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Objective: Team challenge that focuses on leadership, communication and teamwork by keeping contact with teammates throughout the activity.

Supplies: Brightly colored rope, cones, or some other object to mark start and finish line.

Instructions:

- Mark off beginning and end lines for the space across which the group must travel.
- Have the group assemble behind the start line and explain that the group must travel from the start line to the finish line while maintaining continuous contact with their feet.
- If anyone in the group loses contact with his/her partner's foot, the entire group must start over.
- While any configuration that satisfies the requirement is allowable, most groups find that they do best with a single line, shoulder-to-shoulder formation. If they want to try another set-up, by all means encourage the group to be creative. Don't provide this information! Let the group figure it out on their own.

Variations:

- Ask several individuals to be "coaches" who stand off from the group and provide verbal assistance. How do they go about providing their advice? How is it received?
- Ask several individuals to be "managers" who provide direction while the group is mute. Try again where the group is able to speak and negotiate.
- Ask several individuals to be "senior management" who say nothing during the activity but who must assess when all is done whether the group was successful or not. From your viewpoint, do they accurately determine success?

Discussion Questions:

- What happened when you first began the activity?
- What skills were needed for the group to be successful?
- Did your group discuss strategies to accomplish the task?
- How did you adapt your strategy when something didn't work?
- Did a leader emerge in the group? Was the group responsive to their leadership?
- What are some examples in your 4-H work when you must approach a project or activity in this way?



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In support of the 4-H club Motto:
“ TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER ”

I pledge my HEAD to clearer thinking,
My HEART to greater loyalty,
My HANDS to larger service,
And my HEALTH to better living
For my club, my community,
My country and my world.

JOIN | THE REVOLUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

