

COMMUNICATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING ACTIVITIES

STOP THE GAME

Aim of the game: To use a range of basic communication skills in a simple sports setting.

How to play: Split the group into 3 equal teams (a, b & c). Explain that teams a and b are going to play a basic invasion game. Set a couple of basic rules like how to score and obvious safety points then set them off. Explain to team c that their job is to stop the game and give a rule. If they stop the game well (loud voice/whistle etc) and introduce their rule appropriately (using demonstration if needed) then they will be allowed across to the other side of the playing area.

The actions you are looking for, is that the leader:

- Moves to become more easily seen
- Claps, shouts or uses a whistle to get attention
- Waits for attention before starting to speak
- Removes distractions / takes the ball
- Explains rule clearly
- Demonstrates rule
- Questions "does anybody not understand"

Allow team c to introduce a rule before rotating.



WHO CAN SHOUT THE LOUDEST?

Aim of the game: To highlight the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication, examining communication choices leaders make.

How to play: Split the group into pairs and number player 1 and player two within each pair. All player 1s must stand on a given line, and all player 2s must stand on a line facing their partner. Instruct all player 1s on the count of three they must shout to their partner, telling them three things they like to do. They must do this with their voice only, so hands must be behind backs! Once they have communicated, ask player 2 if they understood the message. Now ask all player 2s to communicate their favourite three things, but this time only using non-verbal communication.

Adjustments: Stand the group further apart.

Leadership point: This highlights the importance of non-verbal communication. There are times when there is too much background noise to compete with – so shouting loudly doesn't help. Using body language – hand signals or a whistle, is often a better way to get a message across. The group should make their own decisions on how best to communicate when leading.

BENCH GAMES

Aim of the game: To develop verbal and non-verbal communication and problem solving skills.

How to play: In groups of 6-8 pupils stand on a bench in any order. The task is then to reorganise themselves into a different order but without stepping down off of the bench. The pupils need to communicate and devise a strategy to organise themselves in the required order as quickly as possible.

Orders to consider include:

- Height order
- Birthdays
- Alphabetical order by surname

Adjustments:

- Pupils can only communicate non-verbally
- Only one designated leader is allowed to speak.



CROSS THE RIVER

Aim of the game: To develop communication and problem solving skills to get all participants safely across the river and reach the other side.

How to play: Teams of 4-6 have to cross one side of the imaginary river to the other using only their lily pads (hoops). If a player steps into the river outside of a hoop the team has to return back to the start. First team to get all of their team safely across the river wins.

Rules:

- Lily pads cannot be thrown across the river.
- Pupils cannot use their feet to slide their lily pads across the river.

Adjustments: Change the number of hoops.

HUMAN KNOT

Aim of the game: The aim is to develop communication, problem solving and cooperation. Starting in a circle, participants connect hands with two others people in the group to form the human knot. As a team they must then try to unravel the "human knot" by untangling themselves without breaking the chain of hands.

How to play: In teams of 6-8, form a circle.

- Put their right hand up in the air, and then grab the hand of someone across the circle from them. Repeat with left hand, grabbing a different person's hand
- Check that everyone is holding hands of two different people.
- They must now try to untangle themselves to form a circle without breaking the chain of hands. Allocate a specific time to complete this challenge (10-20 minutes)
- Get participants to take their time in order to limit injuries. Ask the group not to tug or pull on each other and spot participants as they pass over other participants. Monitor throughout the challenge and stop them if you need to
- If the chain of hands is broken at any point, they must then start over again.

Adjustments: Increase the size of the group.

