

Games for Traditional Classrooms

Why are you here today?

Okay, this one isn't a game, but it's a great question for the first day of class!

Apples & Oranges

- One person stands in the middle of the circle. This person is the "cheese" because they must stand alone. Their goal is to get one of the spots on the outside of the circle.
- The "cheese" says their name, followed by a personal fact ("I'm Jess, and I have a younger sister"). If that fact is also true for a person standing on the outside of the circle, that person must change spots. RULE: a person may not change spots with the person next door.
- As people change spots, the "cheese" tries to steal an outside space. As they do, a new person is in the middle (and is therefore the new "cheese").
- I find it best to play this game with those in the outside circle sitting in chairs.

Line Game

1. Goal: the group is tasked with lining up by height. Be sure to designate which side of the room is for the shortest person, and which side of the room is for the tallest. RULE: no talking. When the team feels like they've accomplished the task, everyone can raise their hand at the same time.
2. Goal: the groups is tasked with lining up by birthday (January to December). Same rules as above. After the team has raised their hands, have them say their birthdays out loud in order to see if they are correct.

Line Game on a Spectrum

- Tell the group that the line now changes to reflect a spectrum. They will find a place on the line that best represents them.
- First, no talking. Assign one side of the line as introvert, and one as extrovert. The team should raise their hands when they have completed the task.
- Now allow the team to talk to those around them to see if they are in the right place. They can reshuffle as needed. Again, the team raises their hands when they feel they've completed the task.
- Ask students to share out why they landed in that position as you go down the line.
- You can use any items that work for your curriculum! One mentioned today: processed food vs. unprocessed food.

Four Corners

- Assign a title to each corner of the room. Ask students to choose a corner. Today we did coffee, tea, soda, and juice. You can add discussion time like we did for the line game. This allows students to make sure they are in the correct corner and can choose to move after discussing.

Image Theatre

We started this game by identifying problems we have at NDSU. You could start here, or have the problem decided already depending on your curriculum.

Tell students that you are going to be creating a still image. It will look like a photograph but will be created by students in the room--like statues. Be sure to decide if it's okay for students to touch each other. If this is allowed, a student should always ask permission before they touch someone else--and it is okay for anyone to say no. Also tell students that they can model a pose or use their voice to explain what they would like to see. If they have something specific, especially an emotion shown on their face, they should model it.

First: Problem Image

1. Ask the class to think of what the problem is. What would a picture of this problem look like?
2. Ask for one volunteer to create this image at the front of the classroom.
3. Ask for volunteers to "stage" the image.
4. After the image is staged, ask the person that created it to talk about what they made.
5. Celebrate the image and the creator. Then ask the group to discuss. Do we all agree that this is the perfect image of the problem we are tackling? How might we change or edit this image. As students chime in, ask them to either physically get up to change the image OR ask the team to enact what they are saying.
6. The goal is to get everyone to agree. However, this may not happen depending on the time you have for this work. It's okay to compromise, but you should lead that if it happens.
7. Optional next step if time allows: tell the actors/statues on stage that their character is thinking something in this moment. Say that you are going to come around to each of them. As you put your hand over their head, they should speak their character's thought. Another way to do this is to ask the audience to collectively assign a line to each of the actors/statues on stage.

Second: Ideal Image

- Now ask students to visualize what the ideal image would look like. What would it look like if this problem was solved? This image can use the same actors or be something new depending on the subject. Complete the same steps.

Third: Transition Image

- Finally, ask students to visualize the thing that needs to happen in order to transform the image from the problem to the ideal. Complete the same steps.

Having students create a picture/statue of a subject (problem or not) is a good way of creating an active discussion!

Other Resources

Teaching and Performing: Ideas for Energizing Your Classroom ([here](#))

- For those interested in exploring how the front of the professor's classroom is their stage.

Zoom games:

- The Red Barn Learning Center offers virtual game ideas on Youtube ([here](#)). Most are getting to know you / team building games.
- I have played Apples and Oranges on zoom. For this, have the "cheese" be the only person with their video on. If the statement is true for others, they have to turn their screens on as fast as they can. The last person to turn their screen on (sometimes hard to tell, but the instructor watches and makes the call) is the new cheese.
- The line game can be adjusted for zoom as well. Put participants in smaller break out rooms and have them order themselves through discussion.