

Classroom Community: Additional Resources

Looking for more activities that will foster community and collaboration in your classroom? Explore these ideas and resources for getting your kids up, moving, and learning together. Choose from a variety of activities that build trust, develop teamwork, and much, much more!

Getting to Know You

Would you Rather: Ultimate Addition

Everyone has opinions, and it can be fun to discover what they are! Divide your classroom into two sides, then present your students with one of these fun "[Would You Rather](#)" questions and have them move to their preferred side. Which option appears to be the most popular? If you want to spice things up, you can give one student from each side the opportunity to persuade others to join their group. Can they convince any of their fellow students to change their mind?

I Am Venn Diagram

Put students in pairs and give them each a blank Venn diagram. Next, give them 5 minutes to chart how they are alike and how they are different. After the initial pairs have completed the diagram, allow the groups to join another pair and create another Venn diagram that shows how the pairs are alike and different. Keep this going and see if you can get all the pairs to unify into one big group! Bonus: if you managed to come together as a class, share the unifying factor on social media with #blueapple.

What's in a Name?

Names are unique things, and sometimes they can hold special meaning. Have your students use one of these [Safe Search](#) websites to discover if their name has a particular meaning. If any student feels comfortable, have them share what they learned with the class. Another possibility is to have students go home and ask their parents or guardian why they chose that particular name. Was it in honor of a relative? Does it have any special significance? Again, if they feel comfortable, have them share what they learned with the class.

Play that Funky Music

Have your students create a unique playlist for your classroom. The twist is, each song represents one of them! Have your students select a (appropriate) song that they feel captures their personality or goals. Then, compile their selections into one enormous playlist. You can build your list using a Spotify account or collecting music videos through YouTube. Be sure to play their music as they arrive and leave class each day!

Establishing Norms

Extra Credit

Providing extra credit can be a great way to learn if it's used effectively. Work with your students to create rules for extra credit which all agree are fair and help students grow. For example, one Blue Apple Teacher agreed to give his students a ½ point on any assignment or test if they could share something new they had learned that week. This incentivized students to collect more data and pay attention in class. Once you have created your rules for extra credit, be sure to set them beside the rest of your classroom contracts.

Classroom Jobs

Does your classroom have plants that need to be watered? Do you have a class pet who needs its cage cleaned? [Create small chores](#) within your classroom and then work with students to create a schedule of who should do what and when. Allow them to negotiate what their chores will be, and help them create a timetable. In doing so, you'll be giving them the opportunity to learn responsibility and make the classroom their own!

Study Buddy

Once your students have gotten to know each other better, give each student a study buddy. Depending on your class, these buddies can be randomly assigned or the students can choose for themselves. Have these pairs form a "Study Contract" which details how they will help each other learn in the coming year. This can include passing on notes and assignments when one of them is sick, or promising to study together for tests. What they choose to include will depend on their age and maturity.

Class Time Capsule

It's not uncommon for students to create a list of rules and goals at the beginning of the school year. This gets them personally invested in classroom behavior and more likely to ensure these goals are followed. Additionally, you can also create a Classroom Time Capsule at the beginning of the year. Have students write down both their personal learning goals for the year. Next, have them work together to determine what they hope to accomplish as a class.

Once these have been determined, put them in the time capsule and reopen it at the end of the year. Did the students accomplish what they set out to do? How have their goals changed?

Engineering Trust

Rockin' Rockets

Turn your students into rocket scientists with this simple activity! Have your class design rockets out of everyday materials, test variables, and discover what makes a rocket fly! Learn more by [following this link to the full activity](#).

Up-Cycled Suspension Bridge

Using everyday products you'd find around the classroom, your school recycle bin, and even your trash can, see if students can build the suspension bridge of their dreams! You can test out

how much weight the bridge can hold also using common items around the classroom. Learn more about the activity [by following this link!](#)

Encouragement Cards

Sometimes all one needs is a little encouragement. Give each student a paper lunch bag and have them decorate it so that it's personalized with their name. Set all their bags to the side of the classroom, then add a stack of notecards and pens nearby. For the next month (or maybe longer) give your students the opportunity to write encouraging notes to their classmates and place them in their bags. Not only will this help inspire your students, but it will also help foster trust between them as a class.

Teambuilding

A Foxy Brain Teaser

It's an old riddle but a good one! A man has to get a fox, a chicken, and a sack of corn across a river. He has a rowboat, and it can only carry him and one other thing. If the fox and the chicken are left together, the fox will eat the chicken. If the chicken and the corn are left together, the chicken will eat the corn. How does the man do it? Have your students work together to solve the riddle. Adjust the number of foxes or chickens to provide your class with an appropriate challenge. Hint: [You can find the answer here!](#)

Helium Stick

Helium Stick is fun but surprisingly challenging, which makes it a great team building exercise for teens and young adults. In this game, students must work together to lower a hula hoop or wooden rod using only their index finger (no pulling)! Each student places an index finger beneath the object, which is placed at shoulder height. Instinct will compel them to lift the object until it's raised almost above their head. The only way to lower it successfully will be to communicate and collaborate with their fellow classmates. You can watch the game in action [with this link](#).

Tandem Stories

If you're feeling up for a little fun (and a lot of chaos) consider having your students write a tandem story. Have students write down a person, a place, and a thing on pieces of scrap paper and place them into 3 separate bowls. In dramatic fashion, draw paper out of the bowl until you've drawn a person, place, and thing. Now have each student begin writing a story about these topics. After a few minutes, have them swap their stories with the student next to them.

Their partner can continue the original story, or take the narrative in an entirely new direction! Swap a few more times before giving students back their original paper. How crazy have their stories become? For young learners, consider having them tell a story with images instead of writing one, or do the story together as a class!

