

Restorative Practices:

Classroom Activities to Build Positive Classroom Environments

For students to learn, students should feel comfortable in their classroom environment with teachers and peers. Thus, teachers can engage students in activities to build a sense of community in the classroom.

See below for suggested activities that teachers can use to build a happy and collaborative classroom environment:

1. **Scattergories**

- Group students in teams
- Assign a “writer”
- Provide each team with a pencil and paper
- Provide the following instructions for students:
 - The object of the game is to collect the most points. Each round will be timed for two minutes. For each round, you will see a slide posted with a letter of the alphabet and 12 listed categories.
 - During the two minutes, your team will think of one word that fits into each provided category on the slide. There will be twelve categories per slide. Each word must start with the provided letter.
 - The maximum points you can receive for each round is 12 points; you may only write one word per category.
 - To receive a point for each word, it must be unique. If another team repeats the same word for the same category, no one gets a point.
 - You may not use the same word for more than one category.
 - If a group finishes early, they can yell DONE and the round is over.
 - At the end of each round, writers must put their pencils down.
 - The teacher is the referee. This means the teacher decides whether the word gets a point.
 - At the end of each round, each group’s score will be tallied. The team with the most points at the end of four rounds wins.
- Find a Scattergories list generator here: <https://swellgarfo.com/scattergories/>

2. **“Who Am I” Guessing Game**

This game requires students to ask each other questions in order to guess the individual that they have been assigned.

Provide each student with a post-it or index card and a pencil. Instruct students to do the following:

- Choose a partner. This should be the person sitting next to them.
- Choose a famous person (dead or alive) or fictional character. This person or character must be someone that your peers will know. For example, your peers may know Spongebob Squarepants or Beyonce.

- Write your chosen person or character on your index card. Do not let anyone see. It's a secret.
- When I say go, exchange cards with your partner. Do not look at what is written on the card.
- Place your card on your forehead. Without looking at what is written on your card, you must guess who it is.
- The purpose of the game is for you to interact with each other. You may ask each person a maximum of three Yes or No questions each to guess your individual.
- Once you each have asked three Yes or No questions, move on to the next person to continue guessing.
- Once you have guessed your individual, you may take your card off of your forehead and continue answering questions for others.

3. Identity Charts and Poster Project

- Have students independently create Identity Charts using the resources found here: <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/identity-charts-0>
- Provide students with poster boards and art materials.
- Put students in groups of three.
- Instruct students to create a posterboard using imagery that represents their identity charts. Each person should have at least three symbols on the posterboard.
- Use the posters to decorate your classroom, creating an environment in which students can feel represented.

4. Name, Place, Animal, Thing

- Provide each student with a piece of paper and pencil.
- Instruct each student to create four vertical columns on their paper. Each column should have a title in the following order: Name, Place, Animal, and Thing to Eat or Drink
- Students will have one minute per round. At the beginning of each timed round, write a letter of the alphabet on the board. Students write one word per category on their paper.
- If a student finishes early, they can yell DONE! And the round is over.
- At the end of each round, all students must put pencils down.
- Each word for each category must be unique. If it is repeated, no one gets a point.
- Each word can receive one point. Points are tallied at the end of each round.
- The student with the most points wins the game.

5. Collaborative Would-You-Rathers

- Assign students in pairs.
- Have students create two Would You Rather questions.
- Teacher presents students' Would You Rather questions to the class for students to answer.
- For each round of questioning, assign sides of the room for each response. Students can then move around the room and discuss their reasoning for their response with each other.