



Building Your Program Quality 20 Minutes at a Time

Leadership & Reflection Activities You Can Use!

Authors: Anne Stevenson, Anita Harris, Barb Piehl, Carol Skelly , October 2010

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Building your programs 20 minutes at a time: leadership and reflection activities you can use!

Author contact information:

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- **Anita Harris**, Extension Educator aharris@umn.edu Phone: 320-203-6106
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2

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2

The importance of reflection

For over 100 years, educators, philosophers and practitioners have promoted **reflection** (aka debriefing, processing, and reviewing) as an essential part of learning. Yet, most of us are not taught to be reflective learners nor are young people offered much opportunity to pause and reflect as part of their typical school day or out-of-school program schedule.

Kolb's **Experiential Learning cycle**, upon which 4-H bases its educational opportunities, includes **reflection** on the doing, and then application based on **reflection**. This **complete cycle** is necessary for learning to take place, and for transfer of learning to occur. Reflection is what creates value in the learning.

As educators, volunteer staff, and others who work with young people, we play this critical role in helping young people or other youth workers reflect on their experience or their practice. Facilitation is a skill, as is facilitating reflection or debriefing with a group. Like any other skill, we get better with practice. Recent research on brain-based learning and brain mapping give us scientific proof that time for reflection and the use of a variety of reflective techniques facilitate learning. (Check out [Teaching with the Brain in Mind](#) by Eric Jensen).

This workshop and resource booklet were designed to help you get started and to build your skills and toolkit for guiding reflection. For an excellent yet manageable overview of reflection, try the opening chapters of the book: [A Teachable Moment](#) (Cain, Cummings, Stanchfield, 2005). Other resources can be found on the resource page in this booklet.

Flip this page for a few tips from their book!

3

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Here are a few tips from the book “A Teachable Moment” to get you started:

- Create a safe and positive learning environment. Help your group create behavioral norms regarding discussion and sharing.
- Allow group members to pass during processing. This empowers participants to have control over their learning and practice reflective feedback at their own pace.
- Participants can experience valuable reflection even if they do not share it with the group.
- The facilitator does not have to hear everyone’s comments for it to be quality reflection. Use solo, paired or small group options as well as full group experiences.
- Individual time away from the group gives learners time to reflect on things that may not come up during a group discussion. It balances and supports group process.
- Mix up your methods and consider processing tools that reflect multiple intelligences and various learning styles.
- Reflect yourself! Start keeping a journal or log of your tools and experiences facilitating reflection. You will learn from your own experience and will see your growth over time.

4

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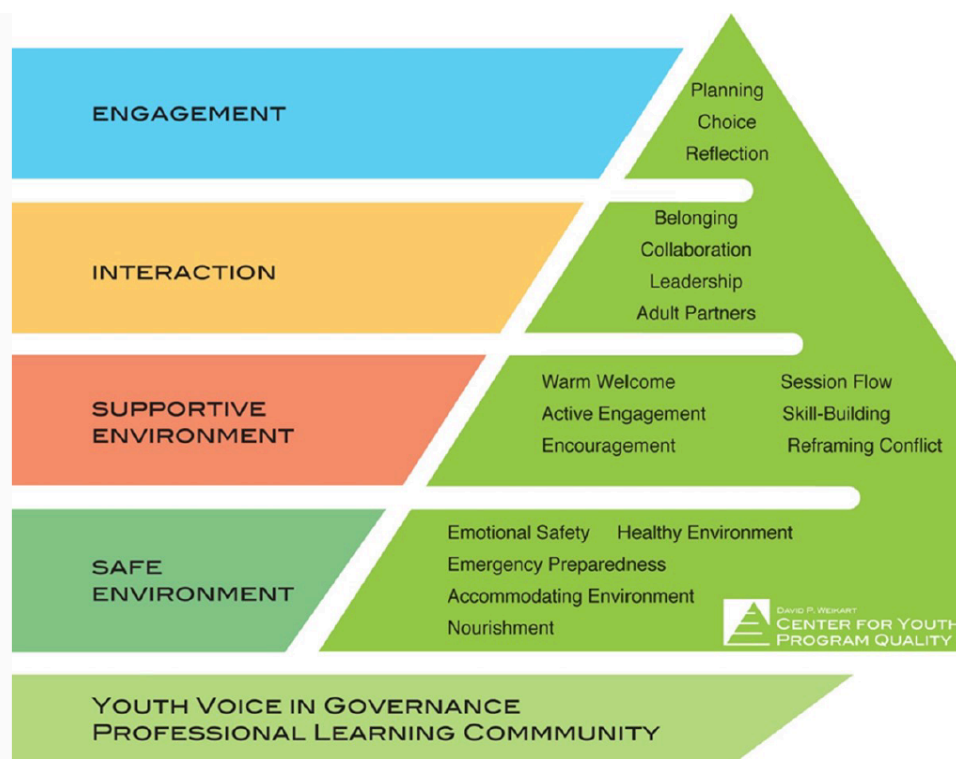


4

Pyramid of Program Quality

Youth & School-Age Program Quality Assessment

Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality
www.cypq.org

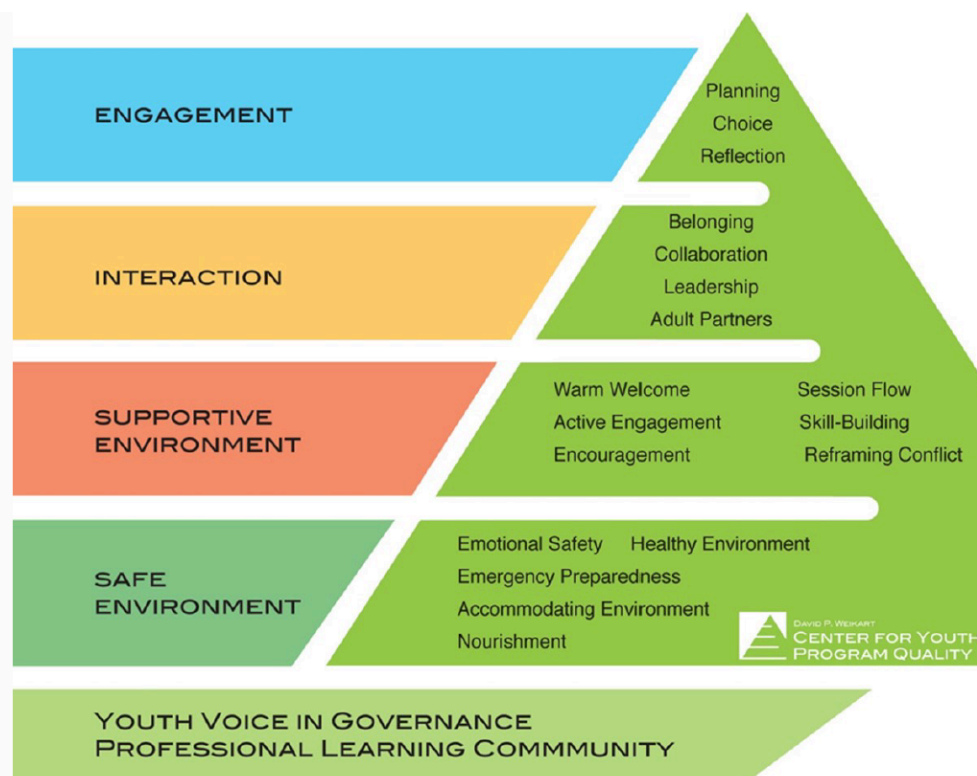


5

Pyramid of Program Quality

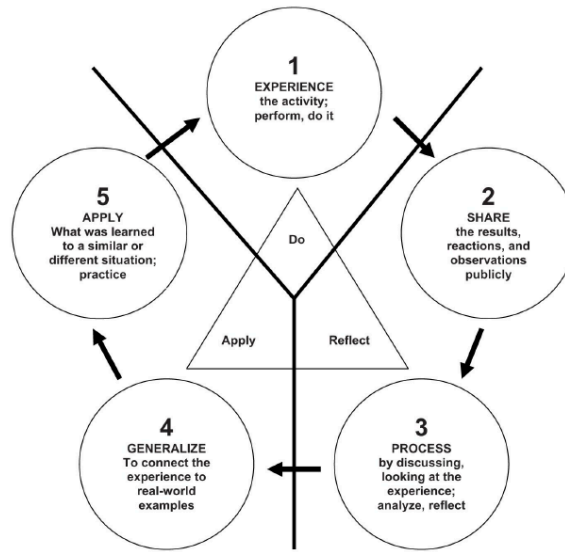
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5

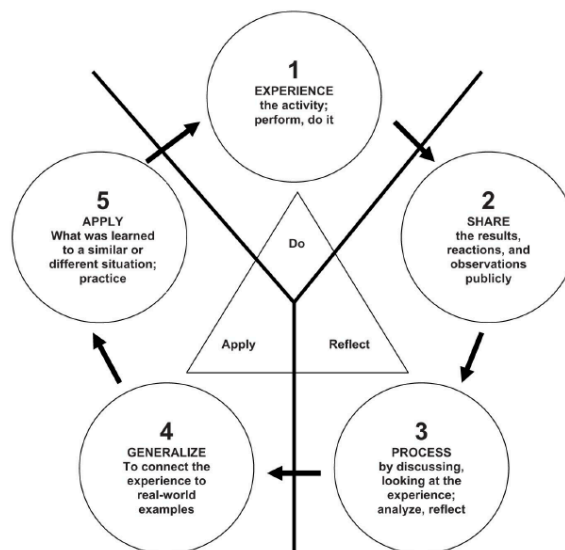
Experiential Learning Model



Experiential Learning Model adapted from Pfeiffer, J.W. and Jones, J.E. (1985). *The Reference Guide to Handbooks and Annuals*, Vol. 1-10, 1972-1985. San Diego, CA: University Associates Publishers and Consultants.

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Mill to music

Planning reflection

Materials: Music

This is similar to the popular children's game 'musical chairs.' Play music either with a musical instrument or recording (upbeat music without words tends to work well). While the music plays, have young people move around the room— they don't have to dance or even move to the beat; they simply mill about. When the music stops, ask them to form pairs with those to whom they're standing closest. Give young people a question to respond to with the person who is closest to them. Pairs take a few minutes to ask and answer the question to each other. Start the music again and participants "mill" again. You can repeat this through several rounds.

For example, play South American dance music and ask young people to mill about. After participants move around for several seconds, stop the music. Say, "Find a partner close to you." Once they have done this, say, "Ok, share with your partner what you did over the weekend." After a minute or two, play the music again and do the procedure again with a different question.

Mill to music questions can be general, like "How do you feel?" or specific, like "Tell your partner the steps you took to complete your project." Mill to music can work particularly well in combination with Back-to-back, a grouping strategy.

7

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7

“Tower of leadership” - Jenga questions

Materials: A Jenga set with consecutive numbers written on each piece (or use numbered stickers).

Directions: Group plays Jenga as normal but each person calls off a number on each piece. Facilitator reads a question for that person or the group. Play until all have had a chance to participate or the stack falls over.

1. What best describes your leadership style...behind the scenes, vocal, out in front, helper, etc.?
2. Do you like interacting with large groups of people? Why or why not?
3. Are you spontaneous or do you always need a plan?
4. What is your greatest strength as a person?
5. Are you generally introverted or extroverted?
6. What one word would others use to describe you?
7. Who is someone that you look up to?
8. What talent can you contribute to this group this year?
9. What is your favorite season and why?
10. Where was the best place you have gone on vacation?
11. How do you work to resolve conflicts or problem solve with others?
12. What do you consider the most important event of your life so far?
13. Who has had the most influence on you?
14. What do you consider your greatest achievement?
15. What is your best memory?
16. Who is the person you respect the most, and why?
17. Who would you turn to when desperate for help?
18. Do you tend to address conflict directly or avoid it?
19. What is your most treasured possession?
20. What makes you laugh?
21. What are your pet peeves?
22. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
23. Name one thing you consider yourself very good at.
24. Name one thing you consider yourself bad at.
25. What goal do you most want to accomplish in your lifetime?
26. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
27. What one word best describes your personality?
28. Have you ever been out of the country? If not, where would you like to go?
29. What is your favorite holiday?
30. What is your favorite thing to do on your birthday?

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Labeling others - deck of cards activity

Leadership group dynamics

Group of people (works best with 15-40 people)

Materials: deck of playing cards

Time: 8-15 minutes depending on size of group

Directions: Give everyone in the group a card and tell them not to look at it yet. Ask everyone to hold up their card to their forehead so that others in the group can see it. Everyone should then mingle around the room and interact with other students according to the following standards:

- People with an ace, king, queen or jack are to be treated with the most respect. These are people to know; seek them out.
- Those with a 2, 3 or 4 should be avoided at all costs.
- Those whose cards are numbered 5-10 should be treated at a level according to their number, that is, they should be spoken to but not in depth or for very long. (10 is more important than 5 or 6, etc.)

If desired, assign the group a topic to talk about, such as “Our group is trying to plan a weekend ski trip” or “Discuss your favorite places to travel.” Let the group mingle for about two minutes, then have everyone guess what card they have. After that, they can look at their cards.

Process the activity with these or other questions of your own:

- What card did you think you had on your forehead?
- In what ways did the others in the group react to you?
- How did those with low cards feel during this activity?
- How did those with high cards feel during this activity?
- What kind of things do we notice when we label people?
- Share an experience when you labeled someone else.

After discussion, stress the need to treat one another as the “high cards” if we want to include others and be a positive leader.

Source: Source: Hupfer-Reidel, P. (2000). 100 Awesome Icebreakers. Dayton, OH: Lorenz Educational Press.

www.millikenpub.com

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9

Plan the worst event in 4-H history

Leadership planning

This activity is meant to be a fun way for participants to think about an event or program they want to plan, and what they would do to make it the worst event in history. Then they make a plan to do the opposite, in order to ensure success of the event.

Materials: Copies of “Plan the Worse Event in History” worksheet OR blank paper on which participants will create their own, pencils.

Directions: Write the name of the event you wish to plan in the center of the paper. In the circles surrounding this, fill in the top half of each circle with a specific strategy for making sure your event is a failure. (e.g. If you want to plan the worst hayride party ever, some strategies might be: forget to schedule the event, don’t tell anyone the date, forget to buy snacks, etc.) After discussing the worst event ever, write down the opposite of what you wrote in the top to ensure that your event is a success.

Note: If using blank paper, write the name of the event in the center and draw circles surrounding the center, large enough to write in. Draw a horizontal line in the center of each circle. Write your “worst” strategies in the top half and your strategies for success in the lower half.

Source: Hupfer-Reidel, P. (2010). Level II Leadership Camp Curriculum. Wisconsin Association of School Councils, Inc. Adapted by Anne Stevenson, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota Extension. Used with permission.

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Ping pong pasta challenge

Problem solving

Challenge: Divide into groups of 3-5 people. Can you work as a team to build a tower out of pasta that will balance the most ping-pong balls and is at least 14 inches tall?

Materials: Each group will need: 3 rubber bands, 18 Inches (45 cm) masking tape, 25 pieces of pasta as listed: 2 pieces lasagna, 10 pieces linguini, 5 wagon wheels, 4 penne, 4 rigatoni
Leader needs: up to 20 ping pong balls

Time:

PLAN: You will have 3 minutes to TALK about how to design and build your tower. You cannot use any materials yet.

BUILD: You will have up to 10 minutes to design and build your pasta tower on which you can balance ping pong balls. It should be at least 14 inches high. Your tower must stand without anyone holding it up.

Test

You will have 1 minute to balance as many ping pong balls as you can on your structure. (You may not use any additional tape or rubber bands). The pp balls must stay on for at least 15 seconds in order to be counted. Your team gets 1 point for each pp ball successfully balanced on the tower.

Tally up your score when you finish! Way to go!

This activity was adapted from Destination Imagination by Anne Stevenson, Extension Educator, Univ. of MN

11

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Green light, yellow light, red light

Planning reflection

Materials: easel paper

Post a piece of large paper (easel paper works well) or use a whiteboard, and draw three columns labeled Green Light, Yellow Light, and Red Light. In the Green Light column participants list the things that they would like to start doing in the group. In the Yellow Light column participants list the things that they would like to continue doing in the group (with or without modifications). In the Red Light column participants list all the things they would like to stop doing in the group. This can lead to a discussion about norms, decisions, and ultimately a plan based on the lists they generated.

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Puzzle pieces - you are an important piece of the bigger picture

Reflection

Puzzle pieces that you can draw on are a wonderful tool for individuals, small groups and large groups. Invite participants to draw or write on their piece; use a reflection question that meets your needs (e.g. a goal you have for the group, a strength you bring, feeling about how the project has gone, etc.) Have participants put the puzzle together as they share their reflection with the larger group. Participants can work individually, as a pair, or in a small group. Consider using it with a committee and asking members: What is your part of the puzzle? What do you contribute to the committee? Then fit the pieces together like a real jigsaw puzzle! Save and mount the puzzle if the group will come together again in the future. For committees, members might take their puzzle piece home with them as a reminder of their contribution to the whole.

Ordering information: Oriental Trading at www.orientaltrading.com

14" puzzle pieces- Item #57/6045 2 dozen @\$14.99- Small 4" (9 pieces) puzzles 24 puzzles \$4.99 Also available from S&S Worldwide at www.ssw.com

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Picture cards or road sign cards

Reflection

Materials: Set of Picture Cards or Road Sign cards. Make your own by using clip art of random pictures and printing one picture on each 4x6 index card. Laminate for durability. A set of 25-40 cards works well for larger groups. You may also cut photos from magazines. To make Road Sign cards, use clip art of various road signs and create cards as above.

Directions: During or after an activity, place cards face up on the floor and invite participants to choose one that somehow represents what they experienced or how they are feeling about the activity or the groups' work. This can be used at any time to get a read on the group, or at the end as a wrap up. Ask each person to show the card they've chosen, and explain why they chose it and how it represents what they are thinking, feeling or experiencing.

Often called "Metaphoric Cards," there are a variety of them on the market: Chiji Cards, Expression Cards, Metaphor Cards, and are sold by vendors in the experiential education or training field.

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Design your own clover

Planning reflection

What: 4-H is for you – what you want to do in 4-H determines what you do. The things your group decides to do should be the things the members of your group want to do.

Materials: Markers/pencils, A clover drawn out on a page with space for participants to draw or write. Choose to have questions already printed on each leaf of the clover or list them on a chart for all to see. Questions might include:

- I would like to learn...
- We could help our community by...
- What are your hobbies? What do you like to do?
- Every 4-H club needs activities “just for fun...”
- A leadership skill I would like to get better at is...

Adapted from Mississippi State 4-H Youth Development Department, Information Sheet 701 – (09-01) by Joseph Campbell, Program Leader, Volunteerism, 4-H Youth Development, The Ohio State University.

15

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Chat with your neighbor

Reflection

1. Turn to the person next to you so that you have a partner. Each person takes a turn and shares your answer to this question. (Allow a minute or so for each person to answer)
 - Name one new thing you have learned in this workshop
2. Next turn to the person on the other side of you so that you have a new partner and share your answer to this question. (Allow a minute or so for each person to answer)
 - Where and how could you use something you learned today? This could be in school, at work, in your family, with another group, in your personal decisions, etc.
3. In a large group ask if anyone would like to share to the whole group something from their “Chat with their Neighbor”?

Note: Reflection is all about giving time to think about what was just experienced and wonder about how to apply the learning.

Adapted by Barb Piehl, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota

16

Chat with your neighbor

Reflection

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 - Name one new thing you have learned in this workshop
5. Next turn to the person on the other side of you so that you have a new partner and share your answer to this question. (Allow a minute or so for each person to answer)
 - Where and how could you use something you learned today? This could be in school, at work, in your family, with another group, in your personal decisions, etc.
6. In a large group ask if anyone would like to share to the whole group something from their “Chat with their Neighbor”?

Note: Reflection is all about giving time to think about what was just experienced and wonder about how to apply the learning.

Adapted by Barb Piehl, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota

Reflection questions

Taking time to think back on an experience is an important part of learning by doing in 4-H! Leaders can help young people stop and take a quiet moment to think, ponder, process and wonder. The following sample questions can be used with a group or individuals to reflect on an experience. In a group, it is important that the leader set a tone of respect so participants feel comfortable sharing out loud. Youth can also be asked to reflect in their head, without needing to share their response.

1. Tell about a new skill you learned.
2. Tell one thing that surprised you during this event/project.
3. Something I worked hard for is....
4. Something I wonder about is....
5. I took a risk when I.....
6. I like about how this group works together because...
7. One thing I'd really like to see us accomplish this year is...
8. As a group, we need...
9. What ideas worked well and did any of your ideas not work so well?
10. One thing I would personally like to get out of being involved in this group is....
11. I am proud that I keep healthy by...
12. What is something you are proud of about this experience?
13. What great idea did you get from another person today?
14. What skills did you use in this activity that you could use as part of a team in real life?
15. What challenges did you have?
16. How do you help other team members when they are struggling?
17. One of my favorite activities today/this month/this year was.....
18. Something new I learned (or was reminded of) about myself was
19. What is one thing you learned about listening today?
20. What was it like working with a partner? What things are easier with a partner? What things are harder with a partner?
21. What did you learn about leadership today?

Compiled by Anne Stevenson, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, Univ. of Minn. Extension

17

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22. Tell about a new skill you learned.
23. Tell one thing that surprised you during this event/project.
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25. Something I wonder about is....
26. I took a risk when I.....
27. I like about how this group works together because...
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41. What was it like working with a partner? What things are easier with a partner? What things are harder with a partner?
42. What did you learn about leadership today?

Compiled by Anne Stevenson, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, Univ. of Minn. Extension

Yes, no or 1,2,3 cards

Reflection engagement

Materials: Each person needs a set of 3 cards. On one side of each card put yes, no or ?. On the other side of each card print 1, 2 or 3. Different color paper for each card adds interest. (e.g. the green card has yes on one side and 1 on the other, the orange card has no on one side and 2 on the other, and the blue card has “?” on one side and 3 on the other).

Do Ahead: Make a list of questions relevant to the topic covered that each person will be asked. Questions could be about rating something, a yes, no or do not know, or a simple multiple choice.

Directions: Each participant has a set of the cards. When the leader asks a question each person selects an answer and holds it up to their forehead so others in the group can see their answer. In some situations no discussion is needed. Discussion can follow.

Developed by: Barb Piehl, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota

18

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Developed by: Barb Piehl, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota

The debriefing thumbball

Reflection

Materials: Debriefing thumbball

The Debriefing Thumbball™ was designed to help facilitators ask debriefing questions in a sequence that makes sense to participants. It can also shift some of the responsibility for successful processing from the facilitator to the participants.

Instructions: Answer 3-6 questions per color. Orange first. Green second. Blue third. Throw it. Catch it. Look under your thumb. Answer it.

Orange: Fact-Finding Questions: These questions will ask general questions about what happened in the group. It asks factual questions or questions that simply summarize the events of the experience.

Green: 'Why-Is-This-Important?' Questions: The green questions ask WHY questions and elicit feelings from the participants. They also help participants analyze the significance of the experience.

Blue: Transference Questions: The blue colored questions tie the specific experience to future experiences and to everyday life--after learning from an experience, how can participants apply this knowledge?

ORDERING INFORMATION: Training Wheels at www.training-wheels.com

Item# DeTB - \$18.99

19

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19

Goals sculpture

Planning: Involve all group members in creating a sculpture out of foam core board which showcases each person's interests or goals for the 4-H year ahead!

Materials: Sharpie or other permanent markers of all colors, odd shaped pieces of foam core-1 per person, hot glue gun and glue sticks, extension cord, board approx. 6"X12"or larger OR box for base of sculpture.

Do ahead: 1. Cut foam core into odd shaped pieces, using a box cutter type utensil. Pieces should be 4-8 inches wide/high—there is no set size but larger pieces make for more impressive sculptures. You will want a variety of shapes/sizes. 2. Obtain wood or cardboard base for the sculpture. It needs to be sturdy enough or the sculpture will tip over.

Directions: Leader explains that in order to make this a successful year in our 4-H club/group, we need to know what members want to do and learn, and what our goals are as a group. We are going to create a sculpture of what you'd like to learn and do this year. Members (and family members if desired) choose a piece of foam core. Ask everyone to think about 2 things: 1) Things I like to do or am interested in learning about and 2) a goal I have for this 4-H year (for yourself or for the club). Use the markers to draw your name on one side of the foam core, along with pictures or designs showing your interests and things you like to do. On the other side, write or draw a picture to represent your goal for the year. It works best if the artists use a lot of color on their piece! When members finish, invite them to come up to the base board/gluing area and add their piece to the sculpture! **Gluing:** An adult or older teen should help at this station. Put a heavy amount of hot glue along one edge of the foam core piece then place it on the board. The member can help hold it in place for a few minutes so that it doesn't tip. A few pieces get glued to the board, with the rest getting glued onto the other edges of those pieces, slowly building a sculpture that juts out in all different directions.

Share and reflect: At the end of the building time have each member share some interests and their goal with the group. Talk about all the things it takes to "build" a successful year for all members and families!

Adapted by Anne Stevenson, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota

20

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Pipe dreams

Planning

An exercise for setting realistic goals and reaching them.

Size: 5 – 50 **Time:** 15 minutes

Materials: a pipe cleaner (or chenille stem) for each person in the group

Discuss the idea of setting personal goals. Goals are dreams with deadlines. If we write down our goals we'll have a better chance of achieving them. Goals don't work unless they are "**SMART**" goals, an acronym for these characteristics:

Specific
Measureable
Attainable
Responsibility
Timeline

Give Examples:

- If I want to be an Olympic gymnast and I'm thirty years old, that is not a very **SMART** goal.
- If I want to attend the gymnastic finals at the next Olympics, that is as **SMART** goal because it is realistic and attainable if I do some planning.

Give each member a pipe cleaner. Tell them to decide on a goal that they would like to accomplish this school year...by the end of this retreat...by next week...before this class is over. (Give them the specific time frame.) Make sure they apply the **SMART** philosophy to it. Have them write it out if you'd like. Have them form a symbol out of the pipe cleaner that will remind them of their goal. Each person should share his or her goal with the group. The group can challenge the **SMART** aspects of the goal to help each member clarify what they hope to achieve.

Adapted by Anne Stevenson, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota

21

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Adapted by Anne Stevenson, Extension Educator, Center for Youth Development, University of Minnesota

The talking stick

Reflection

Materials: a stick, ball, stuffed animal or another item easy to hold

Participants sit in a circle and use the “the talking stick” item to designate who can speak.

Only the person who is holding the object may speak. The role of the others in the circle is to listen. It is the role of the group leader to ensure that no one else speaks when the person with the talking stick is speaking.

It is important to ensure that each person’s opinion or reflection is listened to and respected. This may take a little time the first few times a group engages in a talking circle, but once established and honored, this process can be very effective for individuals to share what is on their mind or heart. When the person is done speaking, they pass the talking stick to someone else. (Pass the talking stick to the next person or hand it across to another in the circle.)

Some potential questions you could use include:

1. One thing I learned from this activity is _____.
2. Something I really enjoyed about this activity was _____.
3. Something new I got to try was _____.
4. Something that surprised you about yourself _____.
5. Something I’d do differently next time is _____.
6. Something I wondered about was _____.

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22

Picture, diagram or collage

Planning reflection

Materials: Different art media (magazines, paints), paper, markers/crayons, etc.

Have young people create visual representations to depict what they will do, or did, in a particular project or activity.

Some planning examples:

- Before a gardening workshop, have young people go through gardening magazines and cut out pictures they like. They then assemble those pictures into a collage about how they may envision the garden they will help create.
- Have young people draw a diagram of a boat they will construct out of cardboard boxes, plastic bags, and duct tape.

Some reflection examples:

- Using watercolors, have young people draw abstract representations about how they felt about their mentoring projects at the elementary school.
- Have individuals draw symbolic representations of what they saw on the field trip and have peers guess what the pictures represent

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A rose and a thorn

Planning reflection

Materials: Paper/Pencil

Have participants write one “rose” or good thing that has happened for them and one “thorn” or challenge. Next have them share this in large or small groups. This can refer to time spent during activities or away. For example, to start off the 3rd session of a group that meets weekly, the adult leader may ask young people to say a rose and a thorn for the past week. One youth may say, “A rose was that I got an A on my math test. A thorn was that we lost the basketball game”. Or at the end of the session, the adult may ask young people to say a rose and a thorn that occurred for them during the activity.

24

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Twenty questions

Planning reflection

Materials: easel paper

After young people select a topic in which they are interested in doing research or a hands-on project, have them brainstorm 20 questions about the topic or area. You can then ask them to narrow the questions down to a handful of the most important ones and address these through research or a project. For example, say a small group wants to address the issue of homelessness in your community. Have them brainstorm and list twenty questions they have about homelessness. Then have them circle the five to which they're most interested in learning the answers. They can then begin their research by focusing on answering those five questions.

25

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Postcards

Planning reflection

Materials: index cards or postcards

This activity is most appropriate at the end or during a day (or more), packed with activities and experiences. Ask young people to mentally review the activities and experiences of the day (or week). You may wish to lead them through a brief guided re-imaging of all of the activities completed (e.g., “On Friday night we arrived and played **Name** and **Motion**. Then we had that campfire and many of you roasted marshmallows...”

Ask participants to take a “mental snapshot” of some experience they had during the sessions that they would “send as a post card” to someone who was not there with them. Ask participants to briefly describe their “post card” to others. You may offer an example to get the group started.

The activity can end with simply talking about their postcard ideas as described above, or you can have young people actually make postcards using art supplies (magazines for cutting out pictures works well). Young people could send their completed postcard to a friend or relative, or you can use this activity in combination with **Letter to Myself**.

26

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26

Backwards planning

Planning reflection

Materials: Easel paper, markers, post-It notes

Young people begin by choosing the final outcome of a project or an activity. Using a timeline or other visual method, young people then work backward to outline all the necessary steps to reach that outcome. If done with index cards or sticky notes, participants can rearrange steps as they go (See Post-It® Planning).

For example, in a pottery workshop, a small group of young people may decide on a particular type of bowl they'd like to make. They write down "shiny purple soup bowl." Then, creating a reverse timeline, they write "glaze it, fire it, smooth all bumps away, create shape on wheel, center clump of clay on wheel, get clay." Once the timeline is in place, young people can begin carrying out the steps, starting at the beginning.

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Bus stop

Planning reflection

Materials: easel paper

Post several large sheets of paper around the room, each labeled with a specific statement identifying a particular issue. Ask young people to stand by the station that they most closely identify with or are interested in discussing. Have participants spend some time discussing with others at their station, then facilitate a large group discussion.

For example, if using for planning, the specific stations might read, “My fears about this project,” “My hopes for this project,” “Things I want to make sure are included,” “Things I want to avoid in this project.” An example for reflection might read, “What I will use in the future from this activity,” “What I learned about myself in this activity,” “What I want to learn more about because I did this activity,” “What I learned about others in this activity.”

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28

Who's at your table?

Materials: Who's at Your Table handout (or make your own), pens or pencils

Directions:

1. Begin with a brief discussion about how leaders need good role models/mentors. We can grow in various leadership traits by connecting with those who have those traits. Discuss how just as a company or a large organization has a Board of Directors to help lead and guide it, so too do we all need to surround ourselves with people who can help us on our leadership journey.
2. Ask participants to use the diagram to create their own Board or Directors or their table of mentors/role models. These may be people living or dead (or even non-humans—one young man had his dog at his table because from the dog he learned unconditional love). They may be people the participant knows personally or just looks up to, people in history, etc. (If you don't have the handout, have participants draw a rectangular "table" and draw 8-10 circles representing chairs around their table. Write each person's name in a chair.

Reflecting:

- If time is limited, this exercise is useful just as an individual activity, with a brief follow-up discussion of why participants might want to keep this somewhere visible to remind them of the support and guidance their table offers. It could also be used as a springboard for journaling.
- If time permits, it is wonderful to have participants share who's at their table and why. I also like to talk about how the people at your table can change, depending on where you are at in your life and your leadership journey, and how some people may always be there. You can also talk about whose table YOU might be sitting at, serving as their mentor or role model. Especially with teen groups, I like to talk about how younger youth look up to them and what responsibilities that carries.

Developed by Anne Stevenson, Extension Educator, MN 4-H Youth Development, Univ. of MN Extension

29

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Yarn web

Reflection

Materials: Ball of yarn (multi-colored makes it more visually fun!)

Group sits in a circle. Explain that we will pass the ball of yarn to everyone in the circle. When you are holding the ball of yarn, it is your time to speak. At other times, your role is to listen to the person holding the ball.

Ask the question you'd like the group to reflect on, then toss the ball to someone. After speaking, each person would wrap the yarn around their finger (or just keep holding it) before throwing the ball to a new person, slowly creating a web. Process continues until everyone has answered, then the final speaker tosses it to the facilitator who began.

Facilitator asks the group to reflect on the web created: What do you notice about the web? What does the web represent to you? Etc. You may suggest how the web shows we are all connected, if someone drops their part it affects the rest of the group, web is always moving, we can pull others back in if they fall out of the group, etc. End by everyone gently setting the web down on the floor. You could also cut the web into shorter pieces with each person receiving a piece to take with them to remind them of the experience or their commitment to the group.

Variation: You can use this to get to know your group by repeating the process with various questions that help members get acquainted. It demonstrated how we become more connected with more information about one another.

30

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Ask the question you'd like the group to reflect on, then toss the ball to someone. After speaking, each person would wrap the yarn around their finger (or just keep holding it) before throwing the ball to a new person, slowly creating a web. Process continues until everyone has answered, then the final speaker tosses it to the facilitator who began.

Facilitator asks the group to reflect on the web created: What do you notice about the web? What does the web represent to you? Etc. You may suggest how the web shows we are all connected, if someone drops their part it affects the rest of the group, web is always moving, we can pull others back in if they fall out of the group, etc. End by everyone gently setting the web down on the floor. You could also cut the web into shorter pieces with each person receiving a piece to take with them to remind them of the experience or their commitment to the group.

Variation: You can use this to get to know your group by repeating the process with various questions that help members get acquainted. It demonstrated how we become more connected with more information about one another.



Learned so far

Planning reflection

Materials: Index cards

Give participants two different colored index cards. On one card ask them to write one thing they've learned. On the other card they can write a question they (still) have. This can be done with a general statement, such as "What you've learned in this after-school enrichment program," or more specifically, "What you've learned about new technology."

31

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31

Rotation brainstorm

Planning reflection

Materials: easel paper/butcher paper

In small groups (or individually), young people start brainstorming on a piece of butcher paper that is headed with a topic or concept. It's typically good to have each group select a person to scribe. After some period of time the facilitator plays a sound (e.g. slide whistle, tambourine, etc.), calls "Switch," and each group moves to the next station to continue brainstorming where the previous group left off. At the end, make sure to provide time for participants to read all the sheets. If you have enough wall space, you can place the sheets side by side where everyone can see them, and facilitate a large group reflection.

For example, tape three easel sheets up to different walls and label each as follows: Places we could hold our fundraiser; Entertainment at fundraiser; and, Food possibilities. Divide into three groups. Have one group go to each station and start brainstorming. Say, "Please have one person list all the ideas your group comes up with—and go as quickly as possible!" After three minutes, ring a bell and say, "Rotate clockwise." Help groups move clockwise to the next station, where they add to the brainstorm list of the previous group. After three rotations, ask participants to walk around and read over the three sheets.

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32

Matter of opinion

Planning reflection

Materials: easel paper

For this activity, designate corners of the room as: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. You can do this with posters prepared beforehand. Read a statement, and have young people move to a corner of the room that represents their interests or opinions about the topic or statement. Young people then discuss the topic with the like-minded young people in their corner. After some time, each corner can elect a representative to share with the full group what was discussed.

Some example topics:

- “I believe schools should require students to wear uniforms.”
- “I support corporal punishment; that is, I believe the death penalty is necessary in some circumstances.”
- “I believe cats are better than dogs.”

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33

A few of our favorite resources (well, the short list anyway!)

[Active reviewing guide](#) to facilitating reflection, debriefing and transfer by Roger Greenway.

A huge resource on reflection (aka reviewing, debriefing, processing) by guru Roger Greenway! Articles, tips, tools of the trade, archived e-newsletters, research. This is a place to start as you develop your skills, research base, and bag of tricks on reflection!

Book: Cain, J., Cummings, M., Stanchfield, J. (2005). "A Teachable Moment: A Facilitator's Guide to Activities for Processing, Debriefing, Reviewing and Reflection". Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing Co.

Develop and hone your skills in debriefing and reflecting and bring out the full value of experiential learning activities. This book has excellent background and tools, as well as over one hundred reflection techniques! Techniques using multiple intelligences are also shared, to move you beyond the "just talking about it" reflection method. Highly recommended!

Available through the [Training Wheels website](#).

Book: Hupfer-Reidel, Patty. (2010). "100 Awesome Icebreakers," Dayton, OH: Lorenz Educational Press.

More than a book of ice breakers, this is the author's second great book and also includes leadership skill building and team building activities.

Books: Olson, Carl. (2000) "Energizers-Calisthenics for the Mind" & (2005) "Impact! Activities to Enhance Teaching and Learning". Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media Corporation. Great leadership building activities using energizers, games and initiatives.

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