

Poker Challenge



Relationship Building

Grade(s): 6–8

learning objective/s or description

Teams compete to complete a series of physical and mental challenges (building a pyramid, singing a commercial, doing 100 push-ups, etc.) to earn playing cards, then use their best five cards to compete in a final poker hand showdown.

materials needed:

- 1 deck of cards.
- A copy of the Challenge List (below).

Any tips or important information

- Designate a clear starting point and finish line before challenges that need them, and remind teams to keep their cards hidden from the other teams.

lesson structure:

Opening Circle

Prompt: "Share the name of a team or group you are part of and one thing you like about it."

Community Builder

Find a partner and discover two things you have in common. Then share one of them with the whole group.

Procedure

1. Divide the group into teams of five to ten members each.
2. Announce different challenges that the groups must each try to accomplish as a team (see the Challenge List).
3. Give each group a turn to accomplish the challenge, and if they do so, give them one playing card from a shuffled deck of cards.
4. Each team should make sure that no one on the other teams can see their cards at any time.
5. Go through several challenges, and hand out at least five playing cards to each group.
6. Next, instruct the teams to select their best five cards for a hand of poker.
7. Each team sends up one player to the front with five cards.
8. Ask one team representative at a time to show their hand to determine who the winner is.

Discussion Questions

- Was this game fair? Why or why not?
- What did your team have to do in order to have a better chance of winning this game? Did your team do this?

- What does each individual have to do in order for a group to be successful when working together to accomplish a task?
- In your life, when do you have to work with others as part of a team?
- What role do you usually take when in a group — leader, follower, contributor, etc.?
- What role would you like to take?
- What can you do to gain the skills needed to take on that role?

Closing Circle

Prompt: "Share one thing your team did well while working together today."

Challenge List

Announce these challenges for teams to accomplish.

1. Build a pyramid.
2. Sing a commercial.
3. As a team, complete 100 total push-ups.
4. In pairs, sit on the ground facing each other with your toes touching. Grab hands and pull each other up.
5. Sit in a tight circle with backs together, facing outside the circle with arms linked, then as a group stand up.
6. Your team must leapfrog from the starting point to a finish line. (Both the starting point and finish line should be designated by the leader.)
7. A member of your team must say the alphabet backwards from Z to A.
8. As a group, name 15 different holidays — and each person on your team must name at least one.
9. Sing a chorus of a song with the word "truth" or "true" in it.
10. Line up by your shoe size without talking.
11. Everyone together must sing a nursery rhyme.
12. Your team members stand in a circle and face each other. You must go for 20 seconds without anyone laughing.
13. One person must do a headstand or handstand and hold it for five seconds.
14. Your team must name 24 animals — one animal that starts with each letter of the alphabet, but you can choose two letters to skip.