

TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Take pictures

Bring a camera to school. Take individual pictures of each student. Have the students create picture frames. After school, develop the film at a one-hour studio and ask for double prints. That evening, STUDY! Start learning names and faces. Keep one set of pictures at home. You'll love having them as momentos. Bring the other set to school. Put them in the student-made picture frames and feature them on a bulletin board. After the first two weeks or so of school, let the students remove the pictures from the bulletin board and place them in their time capsules to be opened at the end of the school year.

Give a Reading Attitude Inventory

Find out how your students feel about reading. This will be a great thing to give again at the end of the year. You can set goal about how dramatically your students' attitudes toward reading will improve.

Check out: www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/mla/sampread.pdf
www.uwinnipeg.ca/~hkatz/Courses/3103/interview2.html

Give a Learning Styles Inventory

Find out how your students learn best. Give this inventory:

<http://home.att.net/~clnetwork/co-op/misurvey.pdf>

Create a Goal Wall

Have each student decorate an 8 1/2 by 11 piece of paper with one academic goal for the year. Decorate a space in your classroom with these goals.

Create a time capsule

Use empty Pringles cans, cardboard paper towel rolls, Ziploc bags or other easy to come by containers. Inside have students place some of the following:

- Completed student interest inventory
- A handwriting sample
- A tracing of his/her hand
- A self-portrait or picture
- Letter to self about expectations, goals, etc.
- Height (include a string that is the same length as the student)

Place items in time capsules, decorate with colored tissue paper, yarn ribbon, glitter, etc. and have a sealing ceremony. At the end of the year, have students complete similar activities (new writing, handwriting samples, interest inventories etc.). Have an opening ceremony, take down the time capsules and open them. Have students compare and complete written reflections about the experience and how they've changed.

Make "Me" Boxes

Ask students to bring shoeboxes to school. For homework, they should fill the boxes with 6 or 7 things that tell about themselves. Students can share the boxes with partners first and then with the whole class. After everyone has shared their box, have students brainstorm topics (connected to Me Box items) to write about during Writing Workshop.

Friendship Quilt

Help students to create quilt squares using whatever art materials you have available. The quilt squares could include: their name, favorite activity, family member names, favorite book. Have students glue the squares onto larger construction paper squares of different colors. Hole punch all four corners of each square and “quilt” them together with yarn. Display in the room or in the hallway if allowed by your school.

“Who Am I?” Book

Have the children share facts about themselves by creating a “Who Am I?” riddle book. Students write 4 or 5 statements about themselves. The last line is the question, “Who Am I?” These books should be added to the classroom library and shared throughout the week.

Create a “We Go Together Bulletin Board”

As each student arrives, give him/her a piece from the puzzle. Have them draw pictures or symbols and write words that describe them and their families. When all the students have finished, allow them to assemble the puzzle, attaching the pieces to the board. For easy assembly, write numbers on the back of each piece.

True or False?

Write four facts about yourself on the overhead in the form of a true/false test. Three of the facts should be true. One of the facts should be false. Let the students take the test. Survey them for the results. Go back over each question to see what they thought about each statement. This gives you a chance to tell them a little about yourself. On a sheet of paper, have students write three interesting facts about themselves that are true and one that is false. Throughout the first few days, give a few students and opportunity to stump the rest of the class.

Student Biographies

Write biographies about each other. <http://home.cogeco.ca/~rayser3/writing.htm#biogr>

Introduce Hands are Not for Hurting

The Hands are Not for Hurting Project, a nonprofit organization located in Salem, Oregon, is dedicated to education children and adults about their moral and legal right to live free of violence. Visit the site: www.handsproject.org/home.html and learn about the official Hands are Not for Hurting program. Introduce the idea of violence prevention and non-violent conflict resolution in an activity based on this program and end by having all students learn and recite the pledge: “I will not use my hands or my words for hurting others or myself.”