

## Forming Groups

**Purpose of Activity:** To put forth a number of ideas that may be helpful to teachers when they have to form equal teams or groups.

No need to have "boys vs. girls" or "picking teams" anymore in our PE classes. These ideas should provide developmentally appropriate ideas to get students into groups of your liking.

### 1. **Standers and Sitters** (forming 2 teams)

Have everyone get a partner. Have one person sit and the other stand or one person raise their hand. Standers or hand raisers move to a teacher designated area and they form one team. Sitters or non hand raisers become a team. Typically this eliminates best buddies and the higher and lower skilled being on the same team all of the time.

### 2. **Group Face** (forming small groups)

Have the kids move around in general space doing whatever you want them to do (skipping, jogging, etc.). When you call out a number, that is the size of the group the students they have to get into (i.e., "4" is called, so the teacher should see groups of 4). Call out several numbers or equations until you are happy with the groups that are formed. Have students that are unable to form that numbered group come to you and see if they can form a group.

### 3. **Equipment Fun/Forming Groups**

Spread equipment throughout the playing area. Have students enter the play area and select any piece of equipment and toss to themselves 5 times and move and repeat with another different piece of equipment. After about 2-3 minutes instruct the student{s} to find the student{s} with the matching piece of equipment. If you want groups of 5 you will use 4 different pieces of equipment. For example if you have 20 students you will have 5 beanbags, 5 red balls, 5 deck tennis rings and 5 yellow balls.

#### **4. First Names** (forming partners)

Have children count the number of letters in their first name. Now ask them to find someone in the class who has the same number of letters. Those two are now partners. If a child can't find someone ask him/her what other name he is called by (i.e., a student named Matthew may use the name Matt and then he may look for someone with 4 letters instead of 7). If they still can't find someone then have the children come to you so you can pair them up.

Now that they are in pairs have one partner whose name starts with the letter closest to the letter "A" get a ball. I tried this with my first graders and they loved it. It was great seeing them talking with one another to find a partner.

*Submitted by **Mickey Ryan** who teaches PE at Como Park Elementary School in Lancaster, NY.*

#### **5. Barnyard** (forming small groups)

Students are each given one tongue depressor marked with the name of an animal (i.e., dog, cat, cow, duck, etc.). (The number of different animals used depends on how many groups you want to form. For example, for a class of 30 ending in groups of six, use 5 different animals.) On signal and staying within a marked boundary, students begin to move around general space using a teacher determined locomotor movement (slow movements work best). While students are moving around they are to make the sound of the animal on their tongue depressor. Students "look" (listen) for anyone of the same animal category and hook up with them. Continue moving through space until all of your animal buddies have been found and are all together. Students should keep their tongue depressors in their hand but they shouldn't show it to anyone. Do not allow "human" communication for this activity and it is best to tell students to make the animal noises using a soft voice.

*Submitted by **Nancy Hennefer** who teaches PE at Creekside Elementary School in Stockton, CA.*

## **6. Finding a partner for Square Dance**

**Girls (or boys) remain outside the gym doors (or they can just turn around and close eyes) while the boys (or girls) remove one shoe and place it in the middle of the activity area. The girls (or boys) file in and choose a shoe. The boy (or girl) owning the shoe comes forward and the two become partners for the period.**

*Submitted by **Andrea Gehweiler** who teaches at Dunleith Elementary School in Marietta, GA.*

## **7. Mingling and Making**

**Everyone moves around in the playing area, you could be moving to music, or whatever, so long as people are mixing around.**

**The leader then calls out a number and an object. Participants quickly form groups of that number, then use their bodies to make the object. For example, "2, rocking chair!" and you'll suddenly see pairs forming themselves into rocking chairs.**

**Once everyone's made their object then it's time for more mingling and the next object!**

**Some suggestions are:**

- **hot air popcorn popper**
- **goal post**
- **piano**
- **elephant**

**Whatever number you use for the making of the last object it should be the number you want for the group game.**

React and Act involves some preparation; however, this is part of the fun! Pass out sheets of paper and pens to the players. Have each person write an event. Tell them to be creative! Select 5 people and one at a time act out one event each. The person or team who guesses the most events wins. The following are some examples:

- You made a hole in one
- You just won an Olympic Gold Medal
- You bowled a perfect game
- You aced someone in tennis
- Making the game winning pass to win the Super Bowl
- Pitched a perfect game
- Broke the freestyle world record
- Hit for the cycle in softball or baseball