SIX DEGREES OF SEPERATION

Purpose of This Activity
The Activity is designed to allow students the opportunity to uncover some of the common bonds they share. Students will be able to make connections and see how small the world truly is.

Goals: Help students discuss common bonds, develop connections, as well as, strengthen intra- and inter-group communication.

Estimated Time
25-30 minutes

Materials
• Paper
• Writing utensils

Introduction
Have we all heard the saying that we are all connected to every person in the world by as few as six connections? Each of you will have the opportunity to identify some of the ways in which each of you are connected to one another.

How to Play
1. Encourage students to find a partner. This should be someone they know little about.
2. Students will begin by having a conversation with their partner. Each student should write down ten things they have in common with their partner.
3. Once partners have identified ten commonalities they must then break and find a new partner in the group.
4. The second pairing should identify at least one item that they share in common with one another that is on at least one of their lists.
5. Then break and find a new partner.
6. Students should continue repeating step three until they have identified five new people they have connections with.

Debriefing Questions
1. What are 1-2 words that describe what this activity was like for you?
2. What was this experience like for you?
3. What were some of the connections that were made?
4. Was anyone surprised by the connections they made?
5. Did anyone have a hard time finding connections? What was this like?
6. Were any assumptions made about members of the group that affected the way in which you chose partners?

**Things to Consider**
- This activity has some risk that students may not be able to identify connections. Understand that this may be uncomfortable for some. If a student is unable to identify connections discuss this during the debriefing.
- This activity requires students to move around the room to find new partners. Recognize that some students may have mobility restrictions and that the room should be set up with this in mind. Aisles should be clear and students should be encouraged not to move too far.

**“I AM” POEM**

**The Purpose of This Activity**
The goal is to demonstrate that there is much more to a person than what comes out in face-to-face encounters, to take some time for self-exploration and declaration, and allow students to get to know who is in the room with them. This also encourages participants to ask meaningful questions and find out more information about their peers.

**Estimated Time**
8 minutes to complete the poem; 2-3 minutes for each participant to share; 5-10 minute debrief

**Materials**
- Paper for all participants
- Writing utensil for all participants

**Introduction**
Sometimes it can be difficult to share your entire identity with someone in a first encounter because there are so many pieces to it. Think of each other as icebergs—there are a few things you can see and guess based on appearances, but most of what makes a person who they are is below the surface. Remember that this is a safe place and you can share what you’d like!

**How to Play**
1. Have all participants take a sheet of paper, and write “I am” ten times going down the page. (You may direct them to fill in the last statement with a community message such as “I am part of the Loyola Community.”)
2. Instruct participants to fill in each statement with a true piece of their identity. Let them know they may include lighthearted fun-facts, high-risk disclosures, and other pieces of information that falls in between.
3. After everyone seems to be done (5-10 minutes), allow a minute to wrap up the poem and get ready to share it with the group.
Suggested Debriefing Questions

• How did it feel to share a wide range of information?
• Were there pieces that you left out? Why?
• How did you decide what to share about yourself?
• Did any of your peers’ responses surprise you? Why?
• Would you have written different responses in another setting? Explain.

Things to Consider

• Participants can choose to disclose high or low risk responses. Be open to anything that participants may want to share, and encourage them to say what is important to them at the time of the activity.
• Encourage participants to repeat this activity at a later time, as responses often change.
• Sometimes participants take this opportunity to express their creativity. Encourage this, and be ready for rhyming, rapping, and other creative expressions.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO KNOW

The Purpose of This Activity
This activity will allow participants to introduce themselves by giving them the opportunity to declare who they are and what they need from the group.

Estimated Time
4 minutes each participant + 15 minutes debrief

Materials

• Tape
• Sheet of paper for each participant; writing utensil

Introduction
This activity will give you the chance to introduce yourself to the group in your own words, and will help you relate to one another more easily as we begin our time together.

How to Play
1. Hang a sheet of paper up with the following questions:
• What I think about me …
• What others think about me …
• What might be misunderstood about me …
• What I need from you …
2. Explain that participants will be completing the four prompts to whatever degree they are comfortable. This is a written activity.
3. Introduce the four prompts to be said of each participant by modeling them yourself.
4. Allow each person time to state their names and complete all four prompts.
5. Move on to debrief questions to get conversations about each person started.
**Suggested Debriefing Questions**
1. What are 1-2 words that describe what this activity was like for you?
2. What was it like to introduce yourself in this manner?
3. Did you feel affirmed in the group? Why or why not?
4. What are some things you can do in this diversity training/workshop/activity session to make your peers comfortable and included?

**Things to Consider**
If the group is large, you may consider breaking up into groups and then posting each response for others to read.

**JUST BY LOOKING AT ME**

**The Purpose of This Activity**
This activity will allow participants to disclose some personal information that they may not have had the opportunity to share yet. The goal is to demonstrate that there is much more to a person than what comes out in face-to-face encounters. Goals: To begin to understand the importance of looking beyond appearances, encouraging self-reflection, and allowing for meaningful group dialogue. This also encourages participants to ask meaningful questions and find out more information about their peers.

**Estimated Time**
2-3 minutes each participant + 15 minute debrief

**Materials**
None

**Introduction**
When we allow ourselves to judge someone based on their appearances, we miss out on getting to know the real person and important information about them. “Just By Looking At Me” allows us to disclose a piece of our identity that is not “obvious” to others. You will also be asked to share why certain parts of your identity are important for you to disclose.

**How to Play**
1. Form a circle with chairs or sitting on the floor if participants are able.
2. Participants will be asked to say the following prompt: “My name is ____ and I am from _____. One thing you cannot tell just by looking at me is ___. This is important for me to tell you because ____.”
3. For students with different learning and remembering capabilities, it will be useful to write this out on a sheet of paper to pass around as a “script.”
4. Demonstrate the prompt by filling it in and reciting your own to model the exercise.
5. Allow participants to share their own after emphasizing listening skills and respect.
**Suggested Debriefing Questions**
1. What are 1-2 words that describe what this activity was like for you?
2. How did you feel when you said your statement?
3. How did you decide what to share about yourself?
4. Did any of your peers’ responses surprise you? Why?
5. How can you find out meaningful information about your peers in the future? What is the value in that?

**Things to Consider**
- Participants can choose to disclose high or low risk responses. Be open to anything that participants may want to share, and encourage them to say what is important to them at the time of the activity.
- Depending on group size, you can have participants share 1-2-3 things, etc.

**THE PUZZLE**

**Purpose of This Activity**
Puzzle Activity is designed to allow students the opportunity to work together to solve a particular task while relying on one another. This is an opportunity to discuss leadership styles, group dynamics, self-advocacy, as well as intra- and inter-group communication.

**Estimated Time**
30-45 minutes

**Materials**
- Four similar – but not identical -- 25 piece puzzles. Puzzles should have a common theme (like all Sesame Street puzzles or all food puzzles, etc). For example puzzles could all have „The Simpsons“ characters, but the setting can be different, i.e. a beach, playground, etc. The goal is to have the puzzles mislead the group into thinking they have all the right puzzles pieces.
- Four large gallon sized sandwich bags
- Can be adapted depending on your group. We recommend ideally 4-8 people per puzzle group.

**Introduction**
Every one of us belongs to at least one group. These groups can exist in our families, academic majors, workplace, ethnic backgrounds, religious affiliations, etc. There is some common element that we identify with that connects us to others in some way. This activity is one that will allow you the opportunity to work in a group and allow you to further develop some of the connections you have with others in the room today.
**How to Play**
1. Puzzles should be split evenly into the four bags. Consider puzzles to be A, B, C, and D. Two bags should contain pieces from Puzzle A and B. Two bags should contain pieces from Puzzles C and D. No bag should have one completed puzzle.
2. Divide students evenly into four groups.
3. Explain the rules that no student may talk and that students may only use one hand.
4. Ask groups to separate and find a part of the room to work in.
5. Tell students the objective is for them to finish their group’s puzzle as soon as possible.
6. Allow students 10 to 15 minutes to complete the task.
7. If students talk/ask questions be sure to remind them they are not permitted to talk.

**Debriefing Questions**
1. What are 1-2 words that describe what this activity was like for you?
2. What were the leadership styles that came out?
3. What was it like to not be allowed to talk?
4. For this activity you had to rely on other groups, describe what that was like for you?
5. What strategies did you employ in order to communicate with others?
6. How do you apply the lessons from this game to the real world?

**Things to Consider**
- Students should understand that they must reach out to the other groups in order to complete their puzzle. However, this may not always be the end result. This activity has a variety of outcomes. Some groups may end up competing with others and never complete the puzzles.
- Talk with each group individually to make sure directions are clear. Demonstrating or modeling may be useful with this activity, keeping in mind that there are a variety of learning styles.
- You can also assign different roles: someone can’t see, have observers outside of each group, etc.