

Turn the Page

Original Name of activity: Turn Over a New Leaf

Type of activity: Verbal debrief

Equipment: Single tarp. tape if needed.

Procedures:

1. Clear the desk or tables away. Break the class into smaller groups of 8 to 12.
2. Have each small group stand on an open tarp.
3. Tell them that the object is to turn the entire tarp over without anyone stepping off the tarp.

Adaptations:

- Use different size tarps for every group.
- The smaller the tarp the more challenging it will be.
- Once they have accomplished the task one way, challenge them to find an alternative solution.

Expected outcomes: This activity tests your group's ability to work physically close together while observing exactly what the problem is and work toward a solution as a group through a process of trial and error. Develops a leader and requires patience of a group trying to accomplish a task. Also it can be linked to leaving the past behind and beginning something new. Communication, teamwork and working towards a common goal, is something the group should strive for.

Notes for facilitating: Account for group size. Facilitators should watch out for the tarp size. If the tarp is too big, use tape to make smaller.

Reference:

Frank, L. S. (2004). *Journey Toward the Caring Classroom*. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: Wood 'N' Barnes Publishing & Distribution

Matthew Grady
3/14/13
ODED 2140

Verbal Debrief Reflection

This activity with verbal debrief was a lot of fun, I learned a lot. My facilitation partner was Hailey, and she was great to work with! Our activity was called “Turn the Page.” Which involved participants to gather on top of a tarp, work together as a team to turn the tarp over without stepping off, it was quite comical to watch. In Hailey’s and myself pre-facilitation meeting we decided to change up and adapt the activity just a little bit to add a bit more of a personal touch. We gave participants the option to gather together and form a common goal that they wanted to work towards and write it on a strip of masking tape. We then put this strip of masking tape on the opposite side of the tarp, so as the team worked to flip over the tarp, it’s as if they are leaving the past behind and working towards beginning with something new.

When Hailey and I first started we had no idea whether or not the tarp we had was big enough, or if it was too small. This was kind of nerve racking coming into the activity, for myself, because the size of the tarp was everything. If the tarp was too big, then the level of challenge for the participants would have been low and everyone may not have been interested, and the same with a smaller tarp. So immediately we had participants gather around and place themselves on the tarp, so we could gauge the tarp’s size, and luckily the tarp was just right.

After that I began by introducing the activity; giving all the rules, a quick safety debrief, asked if anyone had any questions, then had a participant repeat the instructions back for all to hear. Hailey then introduced the metaphor of working together as a team by choosing a goal to “turn over the page.” I personally think the participants liked this extra step. There seemed to be a sense of “ah this should be fun” aura once Hailey finished with her explanation. One of my facilitation goals for this activity was, that as a facilitator I hoped to gain a sense of responsibility for myself, my fellow facilitator and participants.

Once the activity had begun we noticed that one participant in particular had immediately took charge, and was quite quickly leading everyone through the challenge with ease. One question that we had agreed on asking participants prior to beginning the activity was if anyone had done this activity before? It was quite obvious that this particular participant had. The question totally slipped our minds and we both forgot to ask. Once we realized the activity was not going as planned we had a quick “mid activity intervention” in which we decided, once they had finished. To start again new, but this time to make the tarp a little bit smaller, and have everyone play a key role in leading the group at some point in their journey of turning over the page.

The second time around everything went quite smooth! We were in a bit of a time crunch, which stressed me out, just a bit, I get extremely nervous when racing against the clock. But never the less we still had our debrief to complete. Since we did have a the “mid activity intervention” we did have to change a few questions in our debrief, which I thought might make me a little more nervous, but made the transition quite smooth. I started off the debrief with the question, what was the main difference between the first time through the activity and the second time through? Which led to a little discussion on how everyone fell into the leadership role somewhere along the activity. I thought this

was really cool to watch happen, during the activity, for the participants to think back on it, and realize that this really did happen, and it worked! As the debrief went on there was some great discussion amongst the group, which was really fun to see.

Some of the participant feedback we received, was quite clear to me once I thought back on it. During the time of facilitation I was just so “in the moment” that I just glanced over things that needed to be addressed.

One of the big things that really stuck with me was that during the debrief Hailey and I asked our questions a little too fast. I think at one point I followed up Hailey’s question with another question, and I think participants were easily confused. This was a fun experience facilitating this activity with Hailey. She’s great to work with, it was clear to see that she enjoys the debriefs, in the aspect where participants can express themselves. Overall I have a few things I need to work on, such as slowing down my pace to become more calm, so I won’t skip over anything important. Also letting participants answer the first question before I ask another.