

Communication Teamwork



Teachers Information:

The students will use social relations and hands-on science skills for this team building activity.

Materials:

- 1 plastic ziplock bag for each team
- Legos, Tinker Toys, or other multi-piece building sets
- Paper and pencils

Procedure:

- Before the scheduled date of this activity, build a simple model using 10 to 13 pieces of the building set. Some of these pieces may be alike. Copy this model using identical pieces and placing them in exactly the same position for each two students. If necessary, teams of four may work together.
- Keep one extra model as a key.
- Place the models in a plastic ziplock bag.
- On the scheduled date of the activity, one partner of the team must sit at a desk facing one wall of the room. All the "writing" desks must face this same wall. The other partner must sit on the other side of the room facing the opposite wall. These "builders" are given an activity that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. This activity may be a puzzle or quiet, in-class work.



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- The “writing” partner will receive the plastic bag with the model in it and a piece of paper and pencil. The instructions are to look at the model and describe how to build it using only words. Numerical symbols may be used, but no drawings or diagrams are allowed. Such phrases as “it looks like an upside down boat” are acceptable. Fifteen minutes will be allowed for writing. The last two minutes are reserved for disconnecting all the pieces and putting them in the plastic bag. The teacher must monitor so that no “building” partners are able to see the model during this time.
- The teacher then inspects the bags to make certain all pieces are disconnected. Then, inspect the papers for drawing and dismisses the “writing partners” to go to the opposite side of the room. At this transition, it is important to allow NO verbal communication between students. The partners go to their team member’s station and begin to follow the written instructions. They proceed to build the model with the pieces in the bag. Fifteen minutes are allowed to complete the model. The “writers” should be instructed to complete puzzles or any quiet, in-class work.
- When the fifteen minutes have elapsed, the teams meet to inspect their final products. It is important to allow the students time to talk about their models and instructions. After three to five minutes of open discussion, bring out the key model for the “builders” to examine.
- Optional scoring can be done to determine the team which most accurately matched the original model. Extra points will be given for optimal written directions and not breaking any activity rules. One point for each piece in the correct position is the most efficient way of scoring. Prizes may be awarded.

