

Initiative Games

Initiative games are an integral part of the COPE program. They help participants prepare themselves physically for the low course. They promote stretching and increase heart rates. They encourage interaction within the group, establish a tone of cooperation and heighten the willingness of participants to explore the COPE events that follow. Initiative games challenge the physical and mental activities of the participants within the group.

Leading the Reflection

Lay the Ground Rules for Discussion

Have participants sit so they can see each other, and ask them to agree not to interrupt or make fun of each other. Let them know they are free to keep silent if they wish.

Facilitate the Discussion

As a leader, avoid the temptation to talk about your own experiences. Reserve judgment about what the participants say to avoid criticizing them. Help the discussion get going, then let the participants take over with limited guidance from you. If you describe what you saw, be sure your comments do not stop the participants from adding their own thoughts. Above all, be positive. Have fun with the activity and with the session.

Use Thought-Provoking Questions

The following types of questions are useful in reflecting:

- **Open-ended questions** prevent yes and no answers. "What was the purpose of the game?" "What did you learn about yourself?"
- **Feeling questions** require participants to reflect on how they feel about what they did. "How did it feel when you started to pull together?"
- **Judgment questions** ask participants to make decisions about things. "What was the best part?" "Was it a good idea?"
- **Guiding questions** steer the participants toward the purpose of the activity and keep the discussion focused. "What got you all going in the right direction?"

- **Closing questions** help participants draw conclusions and end the discussion. "What did you learn?" "What would you do differently?"

Remember, reflecting on an activity should take no more than ten to fifteen minutes. The more you do it, the easier it becomes for both you and the participants. Remember that the value and the values of Scouting often lie beneath the surface. Reflection helps you ensure that these values come through to Scouting participants.

A Model for Reflection

Discuss what happened. Direct open-ended questions toward specific incidents. For example, you might ask, "Who took leadership? What did they do to make them a leader?" or "How did decisions get made?"

Make a judgment. Ask the group to decide if what happened is good or bad. Try to focus on the good things first. Direct your attention toward specific skills. For example, you could ask, "What was good about the way decisions were made?" Then you could ask, "What didn't work so well about the way you made decisions?"

Generalize the experience. Try to get the participants to see the connection between the game or activity and regular Scouting experiences. You could ask, "How can we use the ideas we learned today in our own units?" If you can, be more specific. "How can we use what we learned about decision making on a unit campout?"

Set goals. Begin with the positive. Ask the participants what skills they used today that they would like to keep doing. Then ask what things they need to change to work together better.

COUNSELING, EVALUATING & REFLECTION
HANDOUT

Counseling is about helping people solve their problems, gaining their trust and building their confidence

Evaluating is about measuring performance, balancing the needs of the group & job and helping the group work together and looking for ways to improve performance.

Reflection is learning about experiences by talking about them so you can understand what you have learned.

People two people

Props: None

Purpose: Breaking physical barrier

Procedure:

Form pairs facing each other. A single player at the end of the line is designated the "caller." As the caller yells "toe to toe," "knee to knee," "elbow to foot," etc., the pairs perform the described connection. On the call "people to people" the players switch partners. The player without a partner becomes the new caller.

Clock

Props: None

Purpose: Planning, Communicating, Teamwork, goal setting

Procedure:

Define a large circle by having the group join hands. Mark one spot inside the circle as "12 O'clock" and another as "6 O'clock." Have the group rotate in one direction, returning to the start position, in as little time as possible. After discussing strategies, the group can try to improve its previous record.

Candle

Props: None

Purpose: Test Balance

Procedure:

Each participant balances on one foot, tucking the other up against the inside of the other thigh. Put palms together in front of the chest and, while keeping palms together, raise hands over the head. Close eyes as hands pass eye level. Maintain balance for ten to fifteen seconds. Switch legs and repeat.

Octopus

Props: Two foam balls

Purpose: Fun

Procedure:

Create two end boundaries. Designate one person as the octopus. Give the octopus the two foam balls and place the octopus between the two boundaries. The the rest of the group on one of the boundaries. The group runs from one end to the other trying not to get hit by one of the foam balls thrown by the octopus. Players who get hit become stationary octopi trying to tag people as they run by.

Crows and Cranes

Props: None

Purpose: Fun

Procedure:

Define a playing area similar to a volleyball court. Divide the group into two teams, "crows" and "cranes," lining them up to face each other across the center line. When crows are called by the leader, they chase the cranes to the rear boundary area, and vice versa. When tagged, players must stand still (or join the other team).

Skin the Snake

Props: None

Purpose: Planning, communication, trust, team building

Procedure:

Have the group line up in a single file line facing forward. Tell the group to put their right hands between their legs. Next, tell them to take their left hands and grasp the right hand in front of them. Tell them that they have formed a snake and they must skin it without letting go of any hands. Tell them if they let go, they start over. Once the snake is skinned, tell them they need to put the skin back on!

Note: There may be large people who may need some assistance getting up. Let the group work it out BEFORE you, as a facilitator, get involved.

Sole Survivor

Props: None

Purpose: FUNN

Procedure:

Define a playing field appropriate for the size group. Have the group sit down on the floor. Tell everyone that their hind ends must stay on the floor and the **LAST PERSON** with **AT LEAST ONE SHOE ON** is the winner!

Black Knight, White Knight

Props: None

Purpose: Team building and Communications

Procedure:

Define a playing field appropriate for the size group. Tell everyone they are a knight. Appoint one person to be "The Black Knight". Tell the Knights they can move like a knight in chess (define or demonstrate if necessary). Allow the white knights to move, the black. If the Black knight tags a white knight, the white knight becomes a back knight.

Note: At the end everyone will be a back knight!

1996 National Camp School, Falley Scout Reservation, Jayhawk area council.

Impulse

Props: None

Purpose: Touching, communication, and team building

Procedure:

Have the group form a circle. Have the group hold hands around the circle. Ask them to send a pulse signal through the group. TIME IT. Challenge the group to do it faster.

Note: If you allow them several opportunities to try this, make sure you have a timer that will display hundredths of a second.

Heart of America Council Project C.O.P.E. staff manual.

Killer

Props: None

Purpose: FUNN

Procedure:

Discretely ask someone to be the killer. Next assemble the group and tell them that there is a killer in the group. Tell the group the killer kills by winking. After someone sees a wink, they are to give the killer 30 seconds before having a dramatic death. If someone thinks they know who the killer is, they need to point straight up in the air and say "I accuse". If someone else puts their hand in the air, on the count of three the two people point to who they believe the killer is. If they point top the same person, that person is to say Yes, I am or No, I am not the killer. If no, then both of the accusers are dead. If yes, the game is over. If the accusers point to different people, both accusers are dead. If no one puts their hand in the air (to be the second accuser), then no one will be accused at that time and the game will continue.

Heart of America Council Project C.O.P.E. staff manual.

Line Up Games

Props: Blindfolds

Purpose: Touching and trust

Procedure:

Give everyone a blindfold and ask them to put them on. Next, tell the group that everyone is MUTE. Ask them to line up by age from youngest to oldest. Add that if two or more people are the same age (ie. 16) they must be in ascending birthdays (ie. Jan, Feb,...and by date if two or more are in the same month).

Note: You can line up by mother's maiden name, birth month, birth year, first letter of middle name, height, weight....

Heart of America Council Project C.O.P.E. staff manual.

Toss a Name Game

Props: Soft objects of play which can be tossed

Purpose: Start communications and team building.

Procedure:

Get the group in a circle. Tell everyone to raise their right hand until they catch an object of play. Give one person an object of play(OOP) and ask him to pass it to someone in the group with their hand up. When passing the OOP, say "This is for you <name of player receiving the OOP>". Once the receiver has taken possession of the OOP they, in turn, should say "Thank you <name of player who sent the OOP>". The receiver then becomes the tosser until everyone is involved.

NOTE: The first person throwing the OOP will be the last receiver. Start additional objects of play in the group after everyone has caught the OOP at least once.

1996 National Camp School Staff Manual for Project C.O.P.E., Boy Scouts of America

The Name Game

Props: None

Purpose: Start communications and team building.

Procedure:

Get the group in a circle. Tell everyone to get an adjective starting with the first letter of their first name and add it to the front of their first name. Then, introduce yourself, and tell the person next to you to introduce you then himself/herself. Each person farther down the circle will then introduce everybody in front of them then finally, himself/herself.

1996 National Camp School Staff Manual for Project C.O.P.E., Boy Scouts of America

Find Your Mate

Props: Sets of 3 X 5 cards with matching animals, enough for each person to have a card.

Purpose: Icebreaker

Procedure:

Get the group in a circle. Tell everyone they may not speak. Give each person a card with an animal on it. Tell them to find their mates by doing something that animal would do. Start them all at the same time.

1996 National Camp School Staff Manual for Project C.O.P.E., Boy Scouts of America

Trust Circle

Props: None

Purpose: Trust and Team building

Procedure:

Have the group form a circle. Have each person stand in a spotting stance. Ask for one person to get in the middle and be a faller. **BE SURE TO CLOSE IN THE CIRCLE ONCE A FALLER HAS ENTERED INTO THE CENTER!** Use the spotting commands. Have the faller fall all directions so all spotters are utilized. Allow everyone an opportunity to be a faller.

NOTE: Spotting and the Trust Circle should be done **BEFORE** the cookie machine.

1996 National Camp School Staff Manual for Project C.O.P.E., Boy Scouts of America

Spotting

Props: None

Purpose: Trust

Procedure:

Set the tone that this is a **SERIOUS** event. Get the group in a half-circle so they can watch you demonstrate the spotting technique. Get a faller. Talk through the event before demonstrating.

Faller

Hands crossed, fingers intertwined, arms folded up to prevent instinctive flailing of arms which could injure spotters

Feet together, to prevent a fall to the side

Head slightly back

Back slightly arched

Entire body stiff

Spotter

Knees and elbows bent to absorb shock and allow for response to faller's line of fall

Feet apart side to side and front to back, to provide better balance/stability.

Fingers together and palms cupped to prevent finger injuries and /or poking of faller's back

Be alert, aware, and focused entirely on the faller

Commands

Faller	Spotter	Meaning
"Spotter Ready?"		"I'm ready to start"
	"Ready!"	"I'm ready to help you"
"Falling"		"I shall fall as soon as I get your go-ahead"
	"Fall on!"	Go ahead

Cookie Machine

Props: None

Purpose: Trust, Teamwork, communication

Procedure:

Have the group form two lines facing each other. Have the participants stand shoulder to shoulder in each line with their arms bent at the elbow and their palms up. The arms from each of the two lines should overlap. Place one person on the front of the cookie machine and have the group pass them back. Half way through the machine the cookie should be flipped.

Note: It helps if each person chooses a type of cookie and it is chanted by the group as the person is passed through the machine.

Heart of America Council Project C.O.P.E. staff manual.

Have You Ever

Props: Everyone playing the game will need a chair

Purpose: Ice breaker. This is a "get to know your team" game

Set up

The chairs need to be arranged in a circle with the seats pointing out.

Rules:

1. One person will be in the middle of the circle (this is usually the facilitator). This person will say "have you ever..." and will list something that they have done. At that time, everyone who has done that activity **MUST** change chairs.

2. When changing chairs, the participant may not move to the chair immediately to the left or right of the chair they are currently occupying.

1991 National Camp School Participants handbook, Boy Scouts of America

Tangled Knot

Props: None

Object: The group must create a human knot by grasping the hands of other group members. Then, they must untangle the knot

Purpose: Teamwork, trust, communications, leadership

Procedure:

Get the group in a tight circle. Have the members of the group reach in with their right hands and grasps one of the right hands available. Next repeat the procedure with their left hands. The ask them to unravel the knot. People may not let go. The circle of hands is to remain unbroken. However, it may be necessary to change grips due to the angle of arms and bodies.

Note: If success does not seem likely, the facilitator may alter the knot. In many cases, their may be interlocking circles or separate circles in the knot.

1991 National Camp School Participants handbook, Boy Scouts of America

Touch My Can

Props: Can (variation is multiple cans of decreasingly smaller size)

Object: For the group to touch the can.

Purpose: Teamwork, communication, planning, and TOUCHING

Procedure

Get the group around the can. Tell the group they must all be touching the can at once.

All Aboard

Props: All Aboard

Purpose: Communication, problem solving, touching

Procedure:

Challenge the group to get all the teams feet off of the ground. Let em go!

Trolley

Props: Trolley

Purpose: Team Building

Procedure:

Line the trolleys up side by side. Have the group step onto the trolleys-left feet on one and right feet on the other. Have the group move a preset distance on the trolleys.

