

SMALL GROUP TEACHING TOOLS

Using a mix of the activities below might help break up small group time and engage campers who learn in different ways.



Everyone learns in different ways,

- Visual (spatial) – prefers pictures and images
- Aural (auditory-musical) – prefers using sound and music
- Verbal (linguistic) – prefers words, both in speech and writing
- Physical (kinaesthetic) – prefers using body, hands and sense of touch
- Logical (mathematical) – prefers using logic, reasoning and systems
- Social (interpersonal) – prefers learning in groups with other people
- Solitary (intrapersonal) – prefers working alone

Scenarios

Write (or google!) scenarios which link to a key issue you are talking about. Use questions to help people think about the topic. (eg Thinking about what we learnt from the passage, how could we respond to poverty?)

3 Questions

Before you start ask people to come up with three questions they want you to answer. Collect them and shuffle them up. At the end of your workshop read out a card. See if anyone can answer it based on their knowledge and small group discussion.

6 Hats

Each individual / pair is asked to consider the same passage, situation or problem and look at it from their 'hat's' point of view. Allow time at the end for each group to come back together and share.

<i>White hat</i>	facts and figures
<i>Yellow hat</i>	good points, the benefits and reasons why something is likely to work
<i>Red hat</i>	feelings about a subject
<i>Black hat</i>	asks questions which are likely to expose weakness
<i>Green hat</i>	looks for alternatives, new ideas and solution
<i>Blue hat</i>	think about their thinking (least important)

Map it (visual)

If you're talking about a big journey that someone has taken, whether physically or metaphorically, use a map to help youth keep track of where the person is at. Alternatively you could give them a blank map and they could fill it as the story, or passage, is read.

Illustrated Timeline (visual)

Have people draw a line up on paper as they read through the passage to help summarise a long or complicated event. Another option is to give a piece of paper with words or pictures of an event to each person and, without talking to others, put it in order on the floor. This activity could also be used to refresh people's memories of a story that was told previously.

Parking Lot

Divide paper into quarters with ! ? + - in one each. At the end of the workshop ask people to write their thoughts or feelings on postit notes and stick it on the poster. This helps track their ideas as an individual and a group. (! = exciting; ? = questions; + = great things; - = not so great stuff)

Think: Pair: Share

Ask people a question and give them time to think about it on their own, discuss it with a partner, and then share with the whole group.

Soapbox

Each person writes their response to a statement or answer a question and then passes it to the person on their left. When they receive someone else's response people underline words or phrases they think are significant and pass it onto the next person. This continues until all group members have seen each answer. The recorder can then write down all the underlined statements on a separate sheet and this gives a clear picture of what the group is thinking.

Questioning

Use open ended questions (eg What did you learn? What would you do differently?). Ask questions that require people to make a decision (eg What was the most interesting part?). Follow up people's responses with deeper questions (eg Why? Do you agree? Can you give an example?).

Stations (physical)

Ask people to respond to different questions or statements at the top of a page. When they've answered the majority of them ask people to share the thoughts recorded on the last one they've written on with the rest of the group. It's an easy way to get people moving and share ideas quickly.

Laying it on the line (physical)

Ask people to imagine a line, or lay a rope down, and explain that one end is strongly agree and the other is strongly disagree. Read questions or statements (starting off easy and getting more controversial / personal) and have people move to which part of the line reflects their opinion. Ask a few people to explain what influenced their decision.

Pictures (visual)

Have images (photos or drawn) linked to a passage for people to look at to help them identify how a certain character maybe feeling or what's going on 'behind the scenes'. You can ask them questions like, Who do you think is left out of this picture? If this or that person was there how would the meaning of the picture change?

Graffiti Wall (visual)

Display a variety of pictures linked to a topic and ask people to choose the one that most represents how they are feeling about the issue.

Group Banners (visual)

Using a large piece of paper and textas, ask people to record 5 words or draw 5 pictures that show what they learnt during the previous workshop. Display the banner and ask people to share about one thing they contributed.

Unanswered Questions

At the end of the workshop ask participants to write down any questions they feel have been unanswered. Encourage honesty and openness. Allow discussion once everyone has read one of their questions.

