



GROUP COUNTING

Number of players: 6 +

Space: Room enough for a circle

Materials needed: None

Procedure:

Have the group stand in a circle. Explain that the group's task will be to count from 1 to 20. However, there will no established pattern (such as going around the circle one at a time) or non-verbal communication about who should say a number next. Instead, anyone can say a number whenever they wish – although they cannot say two numbers in a row. And, if two people say a number at the same time, the group begins again with 1. To begin the game, have everyone close their eyes or focus on the center of the circle. [Placing an object in the center can often provide a useful focus point.]

Possible side coaching:

- "Take your time. There's no need to rush. Working together takes time."
- "Try to sense when it might be your turn – whatever that means to you."
- "Having a teacher assign you a number is easy; taking responsibility for contributing a number to the group is hard."

Variations:

For younger groups, it can be useful to just count to 10 so the group can feel successful and then increase the challenge as is useful. For older groups who are comfortable with the sense of give and take required by this activity, try counting beyond 20 until a mistake is made. Also, instead of numbers, try reciting the alphabet one letter at a time. Repeat this activity often and chart your group's progress throughout the year.

Processing points:

- When did you choose to say a number? When did you choose to stay silent?
- How would you describe how our group tried to solve the problem?
- What skills does it take to make something like this work? How might we use those skills in our classroom?

Possible learning areas:

Problem-solving, group process, give and take, teamwork.

AKA: Counting in the Dark

Source: Training to Imagine by Kat Koppett