

Lily Pad

Source: Chuck Wurth. It has been used at 4-H Camp Palmer Inc. for many years. Origins unknown.

Background:

One of the many activities that can be used to help leadership, cooperation and problem solving develop in a group.

Objective:

To have participants cooperatively cross an area by only stepping on carpet squares while avoiding stepping on the floor.

Time required:

Depending on the group's creativity and the facilitator's restrictions I would allow one half hour for a group of 15 to 30, but do not be surprised if it goes longer or shorter.

Materials:

Carpet squares of approximately 9 inches square for each participant. Will also need a space about 30 to 40 feet long to conduct the activity.

Directions:

- Give each participant a carpet square to be now known as a lily pad
- Participants are frogs getting across a pond on lily pads and not falling in to pond.
- Instruct participants they can only step on lily pads and not touch the floor
- Participants must always be in contact with pads or they will be lost (taken away)
 - Pads may be in contact with foot, hand or any body part
 - Common mishaps would be throwing pads to the ground or stepping off before another participant was in contact with the pad.
- If a participant touches the floor the whole group starts over with one pad apiece
- If a pad is lost but the group has not touched the floor the activity continues
- Activity is finished when all participants have crossed the area without touching the floor.

Processing:

- Did this seem like an easy task at the beginning?
- When did you see progress that you felt good about?
- Who took on leadership roles? Was there a leader?
- What have you discovered about yourself?
- What have you discovered about this group?
- How can you take something from this activity and apply it in your life?

An advanced activity is to split the group in two and have them start on opposite ends. Do not tell them they are on the same team solving the same problem. See if the group can discover that for themselves. It should only take half as long if they would collaborate.

Then additional questions to ask would be:

- Did you believe or act like it was a competition?
- When did it occur to you were solving the same problem?
- Did you share what you knew to help your partners on the other side?