

Class Meetings in ACTION©

This workshop is based on field-tested class meeting activities focused on:

- getting students on their feet, moving, interacting, learning, and exploring
- building teamwork and creating a classroom culture of caring and inclusion
- stimulating meaningful discussions

Topics covered include:

- Team Building Activities
- Team Building Curriculum Connections
- Improvisation Activities
- Fairy Tales on Trial
- Ethical Decision-Making Activities
- Books, Books, Books

Team Building Activities

- **Beginning** – Focus on remembering names, getting acquainted
 1. **Pass the Applause** – shared fun; success depends on listening to one another
 2. **Count Off** – listening
 3. **60-Second Stories** – respond to a personal story prompt
 - Concentric Circles** – using an inner circle/outer circle configuration, students talk to a partner, shift partners, talk again
 - Virginia Reel** – two lines facing one another, talk to a partner, shift, new partner
 4. **Gettin' It All Together** – forming and reforming groups in silence
 5. **Give Me Five** – respond to a question with five talking points
 6. **Sock Circle Juggle** – eye contact and focus
 7. **Snowball Fight** – getting to know others' fears and expectations

<p>Contact Sue Black for complete activity instructions. sue@YouandMe-BullyFree.com 630-983-1329</p>
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Sue Black: Class Meetings in ACTION©
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- **Middle** – Focus on getting along, getting to know one another better, understanding others’ strengths and weaknesses, communication
 8. **Minefield** – objects in the ‘minefield’ represent what stands in the way of our success; partners work on guiding a teammate through the minefield
 9. **Talent Chairs** – discover our own and other’s strengths; identify similarities and differences; foster inclusiveness
 10. **He/She Said What?** – pair with 60 Second Stories (#3); groups of two become four and repeat their partner’s story
 11. **Newspaper/Knees** – Is it possible to ignore that newspaper between your knees?
 12. **One-Minute Wonders** – responding to ‘What would you do if?’
 13. **Monday Morning Check-in** – small groups create lists of weekend activities; similarities and differences; report to larger group on what someone else did
 14. **Fast Four Corners** – small group in each of the room’s four corners; time for all to answer a question; report to larger group using ‘we’
 15. **Cross the Line** – cross the imaginary line down the center of the room if....
 16. **Treasure Hunt** – questions help teammates uncover clues about one another
 17. **Snowflakes** – clear communication and listening

- **End** – Focus on strengthening the team, working together
 18. **Hula Hoop Activity** – physical cooperation
 19. **Replication** – teams work to replicate the position of objects through communication between builders, runners, and lookers
 20. **Highs and Lows** – getting personal in small groups once a relationship has been established
 21. **Have You Ever?** – similar to musical chairs with questions starting with ‘Have you ever ..?’; no losers – person without a spot asks the next question
 22. **Well-Oiled Machine** – individuals’ sound and action combined to create a unique whole

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Team Building Curriculum Connections

- **Science**

23. **Egg Drop Competition** – teams work together to create a protective device that will allow an egg to drop from a distance without breaking

- **Writing**

24. **Autobiography Poem** – students create poems about themselves based on prompts

25. **10 Question Poem** – students create a 10 word poem about an event based on responses to a prompt

26. **Telling Your Own Once Upon a Time** – simple story format focused on obstacles students have faced and how they were successfully overcome

27. **One Obstacle Story** – want, obstacle, action (risk) to achieve

- **Reading**

28. **Freeze Frame Scene** – small groups recreate the people and objects in a single scene; focus on action, emotion, consequence

- **Math**

29. **How Much Longer?** – teams work in silence to create the longest object from a given number of materials

30. **Can You Draw What I See?** – partners attempt to recreate line drawings with various forms of communication and no visual cues

31. **Building Models** – similar to Replication (#19); teams use marshmallows and toothpicks to create a model; another team tries to replicate using Builders, Messengers, and Explainers

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Improvisation Activities

Use improvisation to help students understand the dynamics of human interaction. The keys to successful improvisation are listening to, appreciating, and acknowledging the views of others. Through improvisation students will:

- learn the perils of making assumptions and the consequences of not listening
 - develop people skills
 - move out of the mindset of “*this is how it is*” and into one of “*this is what’s possible*” (Frank McDade)
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- **Accepting, Moving Forward**
 - 32. **Word Association** – developing ideas through word association
 - 33. **Yes, And...** – accepting, building
 - 34. **Story/Story – One Word at a Time** – listening and agreement create a story; group thought
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- **Solution-Focused**
 - 35. **Details in the Middle** – creating a story knowing how it ends
 - 36. **Last Line** – focused on the solution (end) and how to get there (rather than the causes of the problem)
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- **Exploring Emotions**
 - 37. **Show vs. Tell** – exploring character(s) through what they have, say, do
 - 38. **Lights, Camera, Action** – word choice matters; characters enter a scene based on spoken words
 - 39. **Silent Scene** – reading visual cues and body language
 - 40. **My Sister Has Red Hair** – exploring emotions in voice and body language
 - 41. **Scene Changers** – experimenting with a different response: submissive, assertive, aggressive

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Fairy Tales on Trial

In this book by Janis Silverman, students work in teams to experience the process of a trial and the critical thinking that is required to prepare their ‘case.’ Each case is based on a familiar folk tale and develops an appreciation for considering another’s point of view. The author provides an easy-to-navigate framework that allows for plenty of creativity from one case to the next.

Ethical Decision-Making Activities

Charis Denison has created The Daily Dilemma Archive – Ethical Dilemmas for Classroom Discussion. With over 30 scenarios already in the archive, each scenario includes the situation, notes for the facilitator, and discussion questions. There are lots of opportunities here for expanding the discussion to include improv, short dramatizations, writing assignments, and continued discussions at home.

www.goodcharacter.com/dilemma/archive.html

Books, Books, Books

Use picture books at all grade levels to get your class meeting conversations started. Use chapter books to introduce topics. Let your students experience the freedom of talking about book characters’ behaviors rather than individuals in the classroom. Check out the always-expanding list of recommended books on Sue’s website.

<http://www.YouandMe-BullyFree.com/downloads/SuggestedReading.pdf>

Sue Black

Student Assemblies, Parent Workshops, Teacher Trainings, and Class Meetings in ACTION©

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