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## **OUTDOOR ED ACTIVITIES**

### Section 1: Conundrums/Lateral Thinking Problems

For each of the scenarios below, students are told the scenario and then need to flesh out what actually happened. They can only ask questions to which the facilitator can answer “Yes” or “No”.

#### **Scenario 1: The lighthouse keeper**

A man gets into his pyjamas, turns out the light and gets into bed. In the morning he is woken by his radio. A minute later he gets out of bed, goes to a cupboard, gets out a gun and shoots himself. Why?

**Answer 1:** He is a lighthouse keeper. The light that he turned out was the lighthouse light. When the radio comes on in the morning he hears a news item explaining that a passenger ship has run aground on the rocks which his light was supposed to warn ships away from, with hundreds of people killed. He realises that he is to blame and decides to shoot himself so that he doesn't have to live with the guilt of what he has done.

#### **Scenario 2: “A man walks into a bar...”**

A man walks into a bar. He approaches the bartender and asks for a glass of water. The bartender produces a gun from under the bar and points it at the man. The man says “Thank you” and walks out of the bar. What actually happened?

**Answer 2:** The man has hiccups and wanted the glass of water to cure the hiccups. The bartender heard that the man had hiccups and produced the gun to give the man a fright. This cured the man of hiccups so he no longer needed the water. He then thanked the bartender for curing him of his hiccups and walked out of the bar a happy man.

#### **Scenario 3: The lift**

A person lives on the thirteenth floor of a building. Every day they take the lift to go down to the ground floor to go to work or to go shopping. If it has been raining, when they return they take the lift to the thirteenth floor but if it has been dry that day they take the lift to the seventh floor and then walk up the stairs for the remaining six floors to reach their apartment on the thirteenth floor even though they hate walking. Why do they follow this routine?

**Answer 3:** The person is a dwarf and can only reach up as high as the seventh floor button except when it has been raining. On those days they carry an umbrella and can use this to reach the thirteenth floor button.

#### **Scenario 4: Death in a field**

A man is lying dead in a field. Next to him there is an unopened package. There is no other creature in the field. How did he die?

**Answer 4:** The man in the field was a parachutist and the unopened package is his parachute.

**Scenario 5: “How big was it?”**

A man is found dead in a phone booth. There is a parcel wrapped in brown paper on the shelf in the phone booth. The receiver of the phone is off the hook and is dangling down. What happened to the man?

**Answer 5:** The man had been fishing and caught a big fish, which he was carrying home wrapped in brown paper. As he walked home he decided to ring his wife to tell her that he would be home soon and was bringing home a fish for them to eat for tea. She asked how big the fish was and he, in his excitement, flung his arms out to show the size of the fish. In doing so he put both hands through the side windows of the phone booth, severing the arteries in his wrists and then bleeding to death.

**Scenario 6: The hanged man**

A man is found hanging in the centre of a room. The room is 10m x 10m, with a 4m ceiling. The rope around his neck is 1m long and is attached to an exposed beam in the ceiling. There are no windows in the room and the only door into the room is locked and the key is in the lock inside the room. There is no furniture or ladder in the room. It is not possible to climb up the walls or along the exposed beam. The man hanged himself. How did he do it?

\*\*Additional information which can be given if answer taking too long to reach is that there is a puddle on the floor.

**Answer 6:** The man had placed a large block of ice on the floor under the rope. He then climbed up on the block of ice to reach the rope. When the ice melted he was left suspended by the rope over a metre above the floor and thus hanged himself.

There are many other lateral thinking puzzles which can also be used. Be careful to make sure that you know the group that you are working with as some puzzles, particularly those with suicides, may not be appropriate for all groups.

**Other activities: The next five (5) activities work best if your group is seated in a circle.**

**The furry woolly sheep from Woolloomooloo (FWSFW)**

Equipment needed: Nil

Ask your group if they have heard of the furry woolly sheep from Woolloomooloo. If not, explain to them that he is a very special sheep, with very well defined likes and dislikes. Explain that you will give them some examples of things that he likes and things that he dislikes and that you then want them to come up with something that he likes and something that he doesn't like. Invite students who know this activity to still participate but to be subtle with their answers. Ask students not to tell other students the solution if they know it or work it out during the activity.

Begin the activity with examples such as:

The FWSFW likes grass but doesn't like hay.

The FWSFW likes paddocks but he doesn't like fields.

The FWSFW likes wood but he doesn't like timber.

Invite students to suggest both something that he likes and something that he doesn't like. Work around the circle telling students whether their answers are correct or not and explaining which bits of their answer was correct and which bits were wrong.

If you have gone around the circle several times and still have people who don't know the answer, tease them a bit with clues such as:

The FWSFW likes running but hates to run.

The FWSFW likes swimming but hates to swim.

The FWSW likes food but doesn't like to eat.

Before telling the group the solution if there are still people who haven't worked it out and you want to wind up this activity, get them to think of all of the things which he likes and see if these things all have something in common. Do the same with all of the things which he dislikes. What do these all have in common?

**Solution:** The furry woolly sheep from Woolloomooloo only likes things which have double letters eg grass, paddocks, wood, bees, food, beef etc and doesn't like things which don't have double letters eg hay, fields, timber, eating, lamb etc

### **Crossed sticks.**

**Equipment needed:** 2 short (approx. 15-20cm) sticks, or, even better, 2 different coloured white boards markers or textas.

Have your group sit on a circle. Explain to the group that you are going to play a game called Crossed Sticks and that you will demonstrate to the group various ways to hold textas/sticks and will tell them whether they are crossed or uncrossed. After you have demonstrated a variety of both crossed and uncrossed sticks you are then going to pass the sticks around the circle. Each student is to hold the "sticks" however they like and then need to declare whether they are "crossed" or "uncrossed". You will tell them whether they are correct or not. If they are correct, for instance they show you "crossed" sticks correctly, they need to show you the opposite eg "uncrossed" sticks next time. Again, if they know the solution or work it out during the activity they must not tell other students the solution and need to be subtle with their answers.

The facilitator can introduce "distractors" to this activity by doing things such as asking whether a student is left or right handed before telling them whether they are correct or not.

**Solution:** Whether you are correct or not has NOTHING to do with the "sticks". They can be held anyway, or not held at all. The answer is related to the position of the person's legs, not the "sticks". If a person's legs are crossed when they give their answer then the "sticks" are said to be **CROSSED**. If a person's legs are uncrossed when they give their answer then the "sticks" are said to be **UNCROSSED**.

### **Dumb Dumb Stick**

Equipment needed: 1 stick – best if it is fairly straight and 40 – 60cm long

Get your group to sit in a circle. Explain to them that this game is called “Dumb Dumb Stick” and that you are going to give them a demonstration of how it is done and then you will pass the stick around the circle and each person has to repeat exactly what you did. Reinforce that if students know

the activity they can still play but must not give the solution away. Also, if they get the solution during the activity they must be subtle and definitely not tell others the solution.

Cough subtly then hold the stick vertically in one hand and tap it on the ground in time with each word as you say it.

“This dumb stick is a dumb dumb stick”. Each time the stick comes back to you you should vary what you do by using your other hand, using both hands, turning the stick upside down before you start, changing the words that you say eg “This is a dumb stick” or “This is a stick” etc

**Solution:** How you hold the stick, the rhythm that you use and the words that you say are all irrelevant to whether your demonstration is correct or not. The ONLY important thing is that the person coughs subtly before beginning their demonstration. If they do this, they are correct.

**You can vary this activity by changing the subtle cough to a touch of your nose or ear lobe or any other subtle action prior to starting your “demonstration” with the stick.**

### **The moon is round.**

Equipment needed: 1 ruler or stick (30- 40cm long)

Sit your group in a circle. Explain to them that you are about to play a game called “The moon is round” and that you will demonstrate to them how it is done and then they need to copy you. Then get someone in the group to fetch an appropriate stick/ruler. This can be one that you “prepared earlier” or a stick that they find then and there. Thank them when they pass you the stick/ruler. Hold the stick/ruler with one hand. Use it to draw what you describe in words.

“The moon is round (draw a largish circle in the air in front of you) has two eyes (draw these in the circle), a nose and a mouth.”

Pass the stick/ruler on to the person on your left and get them to try to copy what you did. Tell them if they are correct or not. In either case, they then pass the stick/ruler on to the next person. When the stick/ruler gets back to you vary your demonstration by changing the words and image eg “The moon is round, has one eye, a huge nose and a big cheesy grin” and match your “drawing” to your words.

**Solution:** Again, the solution has nothing with the words or actions demonstrated obviously. Rather, whether a person’s demonstration is correct relies solely on whether they thanked the previous person when they handed them the stick/ruler.

### **“I’m going on a cruise...”**

Sit your group in a circle. Explain that you are going on a cruise and that you’d like them to come along with you but the captain of the boat is a bit odd and rather than charging money for your fare, they just demand that you bring something appropriate with you. If you bring the right thing, which can be different from person to person, then you can come aboard.

Begin by saying, “I’m going on a cruise and I am going to bring .....” and name an item. If the item meets the captain’s criteria invite them aboard. If not, apologise but tell them that they can’t come aboard.

**Solution:** The item named must begin with the first letter of their first name in order for them to come aboard. Eg Arjun can bring a avocadoes, Tamara can bring a tornado but Peter can’t bring chips.

If the group know each other well, or some have played this activity before, change the criteria. Instead of using first letter of first name, use second last letter of surname for example.

### **Teams Pictionary**

**Equipment needed:** 1 pen per group and a pile of paper for drawing for each group.

Split group into teams of even size. Best if groups are of 4 – 10 people. 5 is ideal. Spread staff around the work area to monitor for cheating and to remind participants to keep the voices quiet.

Locate each group, with their pen & paper, apart from each other and equidistant from you.

Explain that this is a relay race. One person from each team comes out and stands near you. You will start the game by showing a song title to all of these people. They need to read the title and then go back to their group to draw the song title using Pictionary rules eg No letters or numbers, no speaking other than to say yes or no when a group member guesses the song title.

You have a list of 10 song titles and it is the first team to get all 10 songs correct wins. All teams are drawing the same songs so don’t call out the answers loud enough for another group to hear your answer. If you are drawing and you forget the song you can come back to check what it was. If someone in your group gets the song correct, tell them and then get a person from the group to come up to you to tell you the song. If they are correct, show them the next song on the list and send them back to draw that song. If they are wrong, tell them that it is not right and send them back. The drawer can then come back to check the song title and then try again.

Each person in the group must draw at least once. No one can draw a second song until everyone has drawn a first song.

**Variation:** You can use movie titles or band names instead of songs for this activity.

Songs don’t need to be known by students but they must be able to be drawn reasonably easily.

### **Song list 1:**

Walking the dog

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree

Cat people

The lion king

Cows with guns  
Crocodile rock  
Octopuses garden  
Baby Shark  
Butterfly Ball  
One Eyed One Horned Flying Purple People Eater

**Song List 2:**

Swing  
Heart to heart  
Gas pedal  
Bonfire heart  
Its raining men  
Catch my breath  
Demons  
Rock the boat  
Great balls of fire  
Skater boy  
Fireflies

**Song list 3:**

Stairway to heaven  
Jailbreak  
Smoke on the water  
Sledgehammer  
Down down  
House of the rising sun  
TNT  
Money  
Hell's bells  
Iron man

**Song list 4:**

Chandelier  
Hotline bling  
Photograph  
Jar of hearts  
Milkshake  
Lego house  
Wrecking ball  
Freckles  
Around the world  
Dinosaur

**Song list 5:**

Lift  
Crash and burn  
Family portrait

Spray on pants  
Butterflies and hurricanes  
Broken bones  
Assassin  
Rockstar  
Ride  
Castle on the hill

**Band list 6:**

Pitbull  
Arctic monkeys  
One direction  
Train  
Kid Ink  
Diarrhoea Planet  
Jet  
Earth, Wind and Fire  
Boy and Bear  
Red Hot Chilli Peppers

**Song list 6:**

Astronaut  
Spaceship  
Big jet plane  
Rocket man  
Moon river  
Walking on sunshine  
Shooting the moon  
See the bombers fly up  
Straight towards the sun

**Song list 7: Make up your own lists of songs, bands or even movies!**

**Physical Activities**

**1. Rock, Paper, Scissors**

Equipment needed: Nil.

This is a very motivating and often intense activity that most kids love. Definitely not the sort of activity to do as a wind down before bed!

Divide the group into 2 even teams. I generally use a rectangular court such as a Netball or Basketball court (or I mark out a field with cones to mimic this) Rather than using the full court, use ½ court or to the 2<sup>nd</sup> netball third line.

Get the teams to line up in a straight line behind the corners of the baseline/goal line, facing the sideline. The first person in each team then walks around the court and meets their opponent at the midpoint of the opposite end line. The opponents then do rock paper scissors (specify how many times they must hit their fist into their palm before they choose rock, paper or scissors (eg 1,2,3, rock/paper/scissors.) The winner then runs around the outside of the court towards their opponent's corner. If they reach this they score a point for their team and everyone goes back to their starting line. Their initial opponent stays where they were when they lost. The next person in the losing team's line heads out around the court towards the previous winner. When they meet they do rock, paper, scissors at that point. Again, the winner of this contest continues on around the court towards their opponent's corner and the loser stays where they are. "Losers" are released back to their own line if their teammate manages to progress past them around the court.

Hint: Smaller court = more scoring. Bigger court = less scoring.

## **2. Stick relay.**

Equipment needed: Nil but you must have a reasonably large, clear area to do this activity for safety, particularly if doing it indoors. If indoors, have less teams so that they can be placed further apart physically but still kept at least 3 metres from the side walls.

Divide group into even teams. If this is not possible, ask for volunteers in smaller teams and get them to go twice (first & last!)

Teams line up, spaced at least 3m apart from each other. If indoors, I usually use a Basketball or Netball court and get players to run up to either the half line or the 2<sup>nd</sup> netball third line and then back to their starting line. Make sure that runners will have enough room to stop once back and not crash into the wall upon return.

The 1st person in each team stands with one arm held straight up above their head. They must stare at the fingertips on that hand. When you say "Go" they must spin 10 times, looking at their raised hand. Once they have completed 10 spins they have to run out to the far end line and back. When they get back, the next person on their team repeats this process. First team to have all team members spin, run and return and then stand in a straight line wins.

Safety note: Some students will be very unstable/unbalanced when running after spinning. Make sure that the area used is clear of any possible obstructions and tell the group to be careful when running.



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