

## Alphabet Dancing

*Adapted from Getting Started: 100 Icebreakers for Youth Gatherings © 2000*

### Introduction

This activity will help students practice the skill of leadership (and teamwork) while involving participants in a healthy competition. It also works well as an initial icebreaker.

### Materials

- Two sets of index cards with capital letters of the alphabet written on each (one letter per card for a total of 52 cards)
- Suggested word list (below)

### Instructions

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Each team will have their own starting line and a set of alphabet cards arranged on top of two tables that are set about fifteen to twenty feet away from the two starting lines.
- Direct each team to stand behind one of the starting lines.
- Have your list of words ready (use suggestions below or come up with your own words) and when you call out a word, each team must send a player for each letter of the word to the stack of cards. They must find the correct letters and hold them up in the proper order so that you can read the word. For instance, if you say CAT, three people must run to the letters, grab one C, one A, and one T. Then they must arrange themselves in order, and hold up the cards so that you can read the word CAT.
- The team who spells the word correctly first gets a point. After the word is spelled, the letters should be returned to the stack. You can play until one team has earned a designated number of points, or until you've exhausted your list of words. Whoever has the most points at that time wins.
- Sometimes it's good to have two "referees" watching the competition, and they can rule on who completed the spelling first.
- Make sure that each team has enough people for each letter in the word.
- To increase the challenge, you can require teams to complete the task without talking.

### Discussion

- How did you and others in your group act as a leader?
- Did anyone in the group take charge and direct other members of the group?
- What strategy did the winning team use? How was that more efficient than the other team's approach?
- How did the team decide on a strategy?

- Was your team's strategy one person's idea? Did that person have to convince others to use their plan?
- What did you find to be the most challenging part of this activity? How did you overcome that challenge?
- If in the future, what would you do differently?
- Can you identify other Essential Skills that were practiced in this activity?

## Reflecting & Connecting

- Leadership and teamwork are interconnected. Leadership is about empowering yourself and others, approaching challenges strategically and motivating a team to reach a common goal.
- You and your team must communicate effectively with one another in order to find success. Good leaders are able to offer ideas but also accept the ideas of others.

### Suggested words to use:

- Dreams (6)
- Goals (5)
- Driveway (8)
- Chemistry (9)
- Smart (5)
- Fun (3)
- Magic (5)
- Party (5)
- Outlaw (6)
- Listen (6)
- Quietly (7)
- Laughter (8)
- Water (5)
- Blast (5)
- Simple (6)
- Flamingo (8)
- New York (7)
- Angels (6)
- Thunder (7)
- Wishful (7)
- Spring (6)
- Blue (4)
- Pride (5)
- Fair (4)
- Harmonic (8)
- Symbolic (8)
- Rhyme (5)
- Holiday (7)
- Club (4)
- Camp (4)
- Music (5)