

Tearing Off Your Labels

9. Panning for Gold

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 4-12

Group Size: 12 or more

Time: 15-25 minutes

Introduction: When we put energy and strength into positive goals, we tear off negative labels. This activity will help students identify and focus on their strengths.

Materials:

- 1 3x5 card per student
- 1 pen or pencil per student
- 20 gold-colored paper “nuggets,” numbered 1 through 10 (twice)
- 3 or 4 bonus paper “nuggets” with 20, 30, 40 etc.
- 1 hat or other container to put nuggets in
- Extra credit: Instead of using the paper nuggets in a hat, you may number gold-painted rocks and place them in a box with sand or sawdust for students to dig for.

Activity:

Divide the group into even teams of three to seven people. Give each team member a 3x5 card. Each person will then write his/her name on the card and number it from 1 to 10. Tell each person they will have 30 seconds to answer each question. They may write only one response per question, and may not use the same response more than once.

As the facilitator, read the following questions:

1. Name your favorite vacation place or one you would love to go to someday.
2. List one thing you like about yourself.
3. Share one trait that others like about you.
4. Write one positive accomplishment.
5. Name one talent you have.
6. List something you value a lot.
7. Share one positive goal for the future.
8. If you were interviewing for a job and were asked to name your greatest strengths, what would you say?
9. List one of your favorite hobbies or activities.
10. If you had to give yourself a positive label, what would it be?

You may select a handful of these questions if time is short. Feel free to create your own questions. The focus should be on students' strengths/uniqueness. Once all questions are answered, have each team tally up their total number of responses for each question. Each team can then share its responses for each question with the whole group.

Now it is time to pan for gold. Mix the paper gold nuggets or the gold-painted rocks in the hat or other container. Make sure that each nugget or rock has a number written on it (including the bonus nuggets), then allow a representative from each team to come up and “pan for gold.” This is done by simply drawing out a paper nugget and reading its number.

Start with question one and work through question ten. When the team member reads the number on the nugget, multiply that number by the team's total number of responses to the question you are on. This will be the number of points the team is awarded. For example, if you are on question one and the team member draws a 7, that team will be

awarded 35 points. Delegate a scorekeeper to keep a running total of these points on the whiteboard. Each team will pan a number for each question, giving each team member an opportunity to pan. Once a nugget is panned, it is out of play. Continue the process until all ten questions are panned.

Processing the Experience:

- Why is it important to focus on our strengths?
- How will strengths and positive goals help us tear off negative labels?
- Did everyone have the same talents and strengths?
- Is diversity a strength or a weakness?
- Discuss what this statement means: “Believe in the Real You, NOT in the label.”
- How do positive labels help us reach our goals and dreams?
- When you tear off a negative label, how will your life be different?
- Is it important to like yourself? Why?
- What could you do in your own life if you worked hard toward a goal and wanted to accomplish it?