

Lift the Weight

7. *Jumping Jacks and Jumping Jills*

Spatial Requirements: Classroom with moderate space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 3-12

Group size: 6-10

Time: 15-20 minutes

Introduction: In society, laws and rules are created to help us be unified in solving problems. This activity will require students to work together in order to solve a difficult problem.

Materials:

- 1 sheet of cardstock paper for each student; plus one additional sheet

Activity:

Place the sheets of cardstock in a straight line on the floor for each participant in the group to stand on, then create the “empty” space using the additional sheet. Make sure each sheet is one foot apart.

Divide the group into two teams (Team A and Team B) and arrange the two teams as shown in the diagram below to stand on the pieces of cardstock paper.

The following example is for an even number of people (6 or 8):

Person A1	Person A2	Person A3	Empty	Person B1	Person B2	Person B3
Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock

The following example is for an odd number of people (5 or 7):

Person A1	Person A2	Person A3	Empty	Person B1	Person B2
Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock	Cardstock

The two teams stand on the cardstock as shown above. The goal is to have team A trade places with team B with as few moves as possible. A person moves to an empty space (cardstock) one of two ways.

First way: If a person is next to an empty space, they can move to it.

Second way: A person can move to a blank space by passing (going around) one person and moving to an open space. A person cannot move past two people to an empty space.

Give the two groups time (around two minutes) to strategize how they will accomplish the task.

Instruct the two teams that Team A will be the only team that can talk and give directions during the activity. Team B will follow the directions without talking or giving any feedback. When the two teams have accomplished the task, they will reverse roles. Do not tell the teams that they will be reversing roles until they have accomplished the task. During the second round, Team B will give directions and Team A will follow directions. Team A will be able to give feedback to Team B during the process. Challenge the teams to accomplish the task with fewer moves on the second round. When they finish, each member should be back to their original starting positions.

Processing the Experience:

- How many moves did it take the first round?
- How many moves did it take the second round?
- How did Team B feel during the first round when they could not give any feedback?
- Was the group more unified during the second round? Why?
- How does group unity help us be more efficient in solving problems?
- What made the team more or less efficient on the second round?
- How did your team do following the rules?
- Was it helpful for Team A to give feedback on the second round?
- In our society, we try to solve problems by establishing rules. What would happen if everyone “did their own thing” and ignored the rules?