

# Charades

Have fun acting out words and phrases.

**TIME**  
10-20 minutes

**MATERIALS**  
None

**TEAM STAGE**  
Forming, Storming, Norming  
Performing

## Learning & Development Outcomes

This activity is the perfect way to practice new forms of communication like using movements to express words or phrases! Participants will need to adapt to their group's needs in order to be successful in conveying the message.

Outcomes are focused on developing *21st Century Skills* and the *National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Career Competencies*, including, but not limited to:

- Adapting to varied roles, jobs responsibilities, schedules and context.
- Articulating thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts.
- Understanding the importance of and demonstrating verbal, written, and non-verbal/body language, abilities.
- Communicating in a clear and organized manner so that others can effectively understand.



## Preparation & Logistics

### Set up:

- Divide the group into two teams. (See adjustments below for how to cater to larger or smaller groups).
- Give each team five minutes to come up with an order for their team to follow during the activity.
- Have each team write words or phrases on individual pieces of paper.

### Safety:

- Ensure there is enough space for participants to move around without running into anything.
- If you have the participants write their own words and phrases for the other team, look through them to check for appropriateness.

### Additional Considerations:

- Set aside additional time for a debrief! 10-15 minutes is recommended.
- [Click here to watch it live!](#)

## Instructions

### Summary

Teams compete to act out and correctly guess words and phrases written by the opposing team(s).

This activity is appropriate for all ages. Here are some different options to use for different levels:

- **K-2:** Have participants can come up with a list together of all of the animals they can think of and that becomes the words that are acted out.
- **3-4:** Have participants brainstorm a list of emotions or feelings to act out. This can be a helpful way to introduce topics like emotional intelligence and how to read other's emotions as well as portray them yourself.
- **5-6:** Have participants brainstorm a list of leaders or professions they see in their community. For example: Teachers, Policeman, Fire Fighter, The President etc. This can be a helpful way to introduce topics like qualities of a leader or how they act/ behave.

### Step 1: Share the Rules

- Explain that each team will have seven minutes to get through as many words or phrases as they can and they will go in the order created prior to starting the game.
- While one participant is acting out a word or a phrase, the rest of the participants on the other team should be quiet.
- A participant can choose to skip a word only once during the activity.
- Remind them that while acting, participants may not speak, mouth words, or use props to get the word or phrase across to their team.
- When a team successfully guesses a word, the next person on the list will come up quickly and choose another word from the pile. This cycle will continue until they reach the end of the pile of words or the seven minutes is up.

### Step 2: Begin the Activity

- When you are ready to start, have each team switch the words and phrases they came up with. They pile should be flipped over so that no one can see the first word or phrase.
- Set a seven minute timer and have the first team start. Remind them that participants go in the order they wrote, picking one slip of paper and word or phrase to the rest of their team.
- After one team finishes their seven minutes, the next team has seven minutes to get through as many words or phrases as they can.

### Step 3: Administering the Rules

- Be sure to watch out for any speaking, mouthing of words or using props.
- Remind the other team to be quiet and respectful when one team is acting out their words or phrases.

### How to end the activity

- The team that correctly guesses the most words or phrases wins!



What if both teams guess all words?

"This is a good reason to keep an eye on the timer! If both teams end up guessing all of their words, the winner will be the group that did it faster."



## Debrief Questions



These questions are a starting point to guide your debrief. Pick the ones that best match your group's experience and add or change questions as needed!

### What

- What was the goal of this activity?
- Did your group do well? What could have improved?

### So What

- Why is it important to have good communication skills?
- What are some qualities of a good teammate?

### Now What

- What is one thing you learned about yourself as a communicator in this activity?
- How can you keep a good attitude through both success and failure?

## Adjustments for...

### Large Group (25+)

- Split the group into more than two teams. Multiple teams can go at once from different sides of the room to save time.

### Small Group (1-9)

- Split the group up into partners and provide a shorter time limit.
- Have mini debriefs inbetween each round to discuss what is working, not working, and allow strategies to form.

### Risk Level

- To have more control over the activity as a facilitator, you can create the two or more lists of words and phrases before facilitating the activity. Using these lists instead of having the teams come up with them will save time and will allow you to control the difficulty and appropriateness of what is being acted out.

### Online

- Everyone must be able to turn on their camera and microphone.
- Utilize breakout rooms to give them time to come up with an order for their team as well as a list of words or phrases for the other team.
- Use the chat function to send the participant their word or phrase to act out



Each adjustment is its own unique idea for how to facilitate this activity for different groups and situations! Choose any or all that work!