

# Place Settings

Work as a team to accurately recreate place settings

**TIME**  
20-30 minutes

**MATERIALS**  
Paper, plates, cups, napkins, forks,  
knives, spoons, pens

**TEAM STAGE**  
Storming,  
Norming, Performing

## Learning & Development Outcomes

Participants will collaborate to put information in an order that makes sense. They will make judgments and decisions about how to organize and interpret data.

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

- Leveraging strengths of others to accomplish a common goal.
- Identifying and asking significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions.
- Identifying areas for continual growth while pursuing and applying feedback.
- Effectively managing conflict, interacting with and respecting diverse personalities, and meeting ambiguity with resilience.



## Preparation & Logistics

### Set Up

- Designate an area that will hold all of the pieces of paper (placemats), plates, cups, napkins, forks, knives, and spoons.
- Designate an area (preferably a table) where the place settings will be made.
- Prepare a slip of paper for each participant (minus one) and write one of the items (placemats, plates, cups, napkins, forks, knives, or spoons) on each slip.

### Safety

- Make sure participants understand that there is to be no throwing of utensils or running while holding utensils.

### Additional Considerations

- Set aside additional time for a debrief.

## Instructions

### Summary

Participants will work together to try and accurately recreate a series of place settings.

This activity is suitable for all ages.

### Step 1: Set up each role

- Designate one participant to start as the director. Tell the group that only the director may speak during this activity.
- Give each participant who is not the director a slip of paper. Whatever item is written on the piece of paper is the only item that they may touch during the activity.
- Have all of the participants form a line in front of the director.
- Give the director one of the diagrams from the Place Settings worksheet.

### Step 2: Recreate the first place setting

- The director starts by asking the first participant in line to place a specific item in a specific location. For example, "place the knife on the left side of the table."
- If the participant is allowed to touch that item, they may place it where they were asked and then move to the back of the line. If they are not allowed to touch the item they were asked to place, they simply move to the back of the line.
- The director then asks the next participant in line to place a specific item in a specific location.
- This continues until the place setting has been successfully recreated.

### Step 3: Re-create the next place setting.

- Whoever places the final item in the place setting becomes the next director.
- They will give their slip of paper to the previous director, who will read it and then get in line.
- The new director will be given a new diagram from the Place Settings worksheet and ask the participants in line to place items one at a time until the place setting is successfully recreated.

### How to end the activity

- Continue recreating place settings until all of the diagrams on the Place Settings worksheet have been used, each participant has had a chance to be the director, or a set amount of time has elapsed.



Can participants point at items or locations?

"No, participants cannot point. The director must use words to describe where they need each item to go, and participants may not point to hint at which item they are allowed to move."



## 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 made this activity challenging?
- What strategies did you use when you were the director? When you were not the director?

### So What

- Why does everyone need to be actively engaged in a collaborative task like this?
- What happens when group members are not aligned?

### Now What

- How can you ensure that everyone in your group stays engaged and aligned on collaborative tasks?
- What can you do to remain accountable to your group?

## Adjustments for...

### Large Group (25+)

- Switch to a new director after every item is placed rather than after a place setting is finished. This will allow more participants to have a turn as the director.

### Small Group (1-9)

- Give each participant more than one item that they are allowed to touch.

### Risk Level

- To lower the risk level, allow participants who are not at the front of the line to communicate with the director. The participant at the front of the line still cannot speak, but other participants can help the director remember which item the participant at the front of the line is able to touch.

### Group has prior experience

- Create different, more complex, place setting diagrams instead of using the ones on the Place Settings worksheet.

### Online

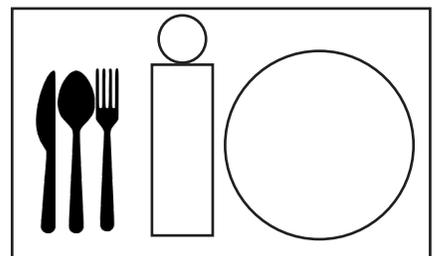
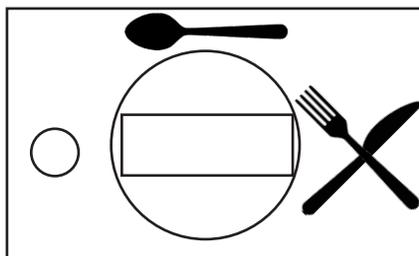
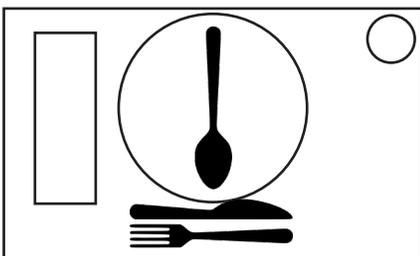
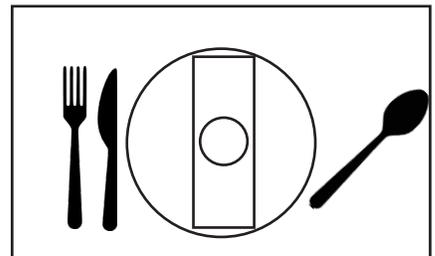
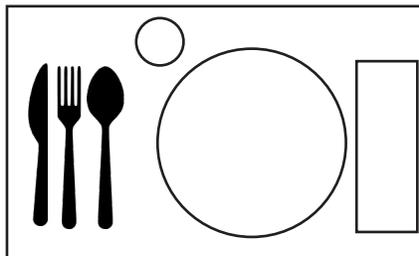
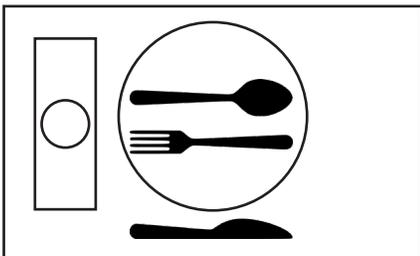
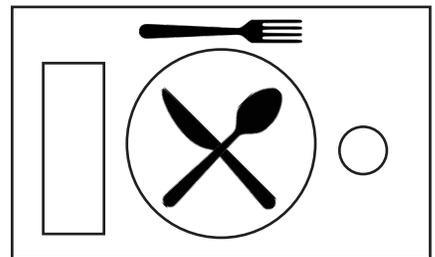
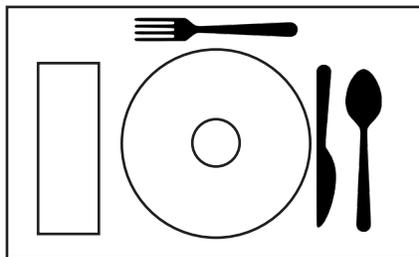
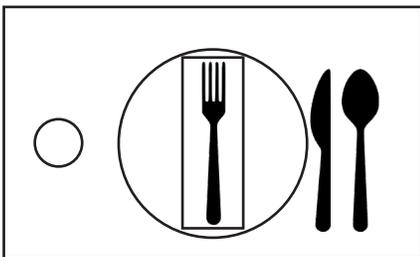
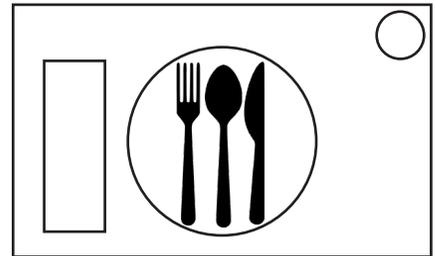
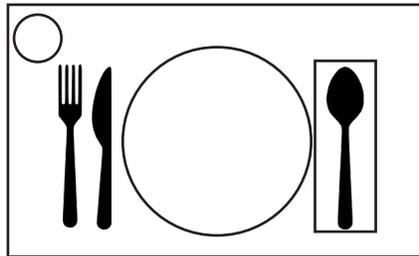
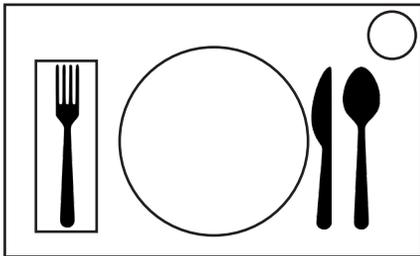
- Create a shared document with a slide for each place setting. On each slide, include an image of each of the items needed for the place setting that participants can move. Put a list of names in the chat to be the order that participants will be asked to move items. Direct message the diagram to the participant who will be the director.



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

# Place Settings

Cut out each of the place settings below. Use them one at a time to be the place setting that the group must recreate.



Worksheet for: Place Settings