

Alphabet Who?

Aim

to explore the effects of participating or not participating for young people

Age

6 years and older

Time

20 minutes

Materials

long piece of string or wool tied in a loop, large space

Note to Leader

Instead of letters you could form numbers or other shapes.

What to do

Everyone stands in a circle holding the string. Explain that no one is to talk until the end of the game. As a group they have to form letters of the alphabet without letting go of the string at any stage. Ask everyone to close their eyes and explain that you are going to tap one person on the shoulder. That person does not participate though they have to remain silent and holding the string. The others have to try and work out who is not participating. The group can open their eyes. Begin by asking the group to form a particular letter. Allow about two minutes for this.

Ask everyone to close their eyes again. This time tap two people on the shoulder (you can use the same person as before or two new people). Ask the group to

form another letter. After a further two minutes, ask everyone to close their eyes for a final time. Tap three new people on the shoulder and ask the group to form a final letter.

Explain that the game is over and everyone sits or stands in a circle. Ask the group who they think were the non-participants. Now ask the non-participants to reveal themselves. What happened in the game? What did it feel like to complete the tasks? What effect did the non-participants have on the completion of the tasks? How did the people who weren't participating feel during the game? How did the rest of the group feel about the people who weren't participating?

Starter Games from Around the World

Carrots (Ireland)

The group sits or lies on ground with arms linked and feet sticking out. They are the carrots. One person has to try to pick a carrot by pulling the participants by their feet. If they succeed, then that person helps them. If you have a large group, begin with two or even three pickers.

