

Minute Meetups

Summary

In this icebreaker activity, students rotate from one partner to another in 1-minute increments. With every new partner, a new question is posed that partners take turns responding to. It is a fun and accessible way to make students feel more connected to their peers before beginning to engage with each other in potentially more serious conversation topics.

Outcomes

Students will:

- Learn at least 3 new things about fellow participants
- Have the chance to share at least 3 new things about themselves with others
- Become more at ease in their peer group

Details

For Who?	Any age, any experience level with constructive dialogue
How Long?	This activity's duration depends on how many questions you choose to ask and how long you make every sharing period (whether 1 minute or 2).
Supplies Needed	None

Activity Purpose

Trust-building activities are important for any group work, no matter the purpose. This activity can be used when a group is newer to one another to ensure that a group is prepared to constructively navigate difficult or controversial topics.

Detailed Agenda

1. Set the Stage

- a. Divide the group into two evenly-sized subgroups. Invite them to stand in two circles: one outside circle and one inside circle. Students in the inside circle should face outward, and students in the outside circle should face inward.
- b. In this arrangement, an outside person should be facing an inside circle person – this is their first partner for the activity.

2. Read Through Conversation Prompts

- a. Read through the first prompt, and invite pairs to take turns responding (1-2 minutes).
- b. When the time is up, invite the inner circle to shift one person to the left, while the outer circle stays in place. This means everyone should be facing a new partner.
- c. Read the next prompt, and set the timer for 1-2 minutes again. The activity will progress until the prompts run out. At least 6 rounds of prompts can achieve the outcomes of this activity.

Suggested Prompts

- What is your favorite holiday?
- What is your favorite food?
- What is the last song or musician you listened to?
- Is there any kind of music you hate? If so, what is it?
- Where are you from? What is something you like and dislike about where you're from?
- What animal are you most like? Why?
- What is your school like?
- What is your closest friend like?
- What is your favorite thing to do on a Saturday?
- What is your favorite place in the world?
- What is something you love about yourself?
- What is something you are really proud of?
- Who is your role model?
- What is a dream you have for your future?

Wrap-up

Debrief Questions

Once you've cycled through at least 6 rounds of prompts, ask students to share their reflections. This can happen in the full group or in smaller groups.

- What was that like for you?
- Did you discover similarities? Differences?
- Did anyone learn something new or surprising they'd like to share?

In the full group, you might choose to prompt a deeper debrief about dialogue moving forward:

- It sounds like there are a lot of similarities, but also a lot of differences, too. How do you think our differences will affect the types of conversations we have here?

Tip: Prompts can be crafted to fit the stage of group development. If the group is reluctant to share personally, prompts can be lighthearted, like “What’s your dream vacation?”. If a group is ready to go deeper into sharing and listening, try more personal prompts, like “Who is someone you look up to and why?”.

Instructor Considerations

Virtual Version

Virtually, this activity can have random pairs in breakout rooms for the same short 1-2 minute segments, with a pre-assigned prompt.

To switch pairs, bring everyone back to the full room, share the new prompt, and break them into new pairs in breakout rooms for 1-2 minutes.

Higher Education or Adult PD Adaptations

This activity can be easily modified by shifting the nature of the prompts to fit the audience. They can be topic-specific, or they can invite in more depth of sharing, with longer time frames for each pair.