

Unit Topic: Team Building**Activity Name: Lesson #2, Marshmallow and Toothpick Towers****Objective/Rationale:**

1. Students will be able to understand the benefits and challenges of team work and the importance that strong leadership and effective communication skills have on the success of the team, by working as a group to build a “Marshmallow and Toothpick Tower.”
2. Students will be able to discuss and apply the information they learned about team building to real life experiences by answering a series of reflective questions upon completion of the Marshmallow Tower.

Time Frame: 50 minutes**Materials:**

- 1 pack of marshmallows per group
- 1 pack of toothpicks per group
- List of questions for students to answer upon completion of activity, pages 3-4 (Feel free to add your own and/or adapt these)
- Group Work Evaluation form, page 5
- Discussion Rubric, page 6

Directions/Procedure:

1. Divide the students into groups of 4. Give each group a small box of tooth picks and a small bag of marshmallows.
2. Explain to the groups that their job is to build the tallest free-standing structure they can, using only the tooth picks and the marshmallows.
3. They will have 20 minutes to do this and their structure will be measured by the instructor upon completion of the structure. All teams will be given the same amount of time to complete the structure.
4. Once the towers have been completed and measured hand out a list of the reflective questions for each group to answer. The answers must be written in complete sentences. Make sure all group members participate. (See page 3-4) Roam around room to monitor discussions.
5. Collect the written responses from each group and have a large class discussion on what they have learned about team building in general from this activity? Use discussion rubric on page 5. Have each student complete the Group Work Evaluation form to assess group's work.

Resources & References:

- Michigan State University:
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/marshmallows_and_toothpicks_help_youth_practice_team_work_communication_and
- Lesson plan adapted by Suzanne Glazos
- Group-Work Evaluation form created by Betsy Picciano

Assessment/Evaluation:

1. Toothpick Towers constructed by the students.
2. Reflective responses to questions by the students.
3. Classroom discussions upon completion of the activity using Discussion Rubric.
4. Group Work Evaluation form.

Extended Lessons:

- Bridges Team Building Lessons 1 & 3

Group-Work Evaluation

Name _____

Group # _____

1. Overall, how effectively did your group work together on this assignment?

Poorly

Adequately

Well

Very Well

2. Out of the four group members, how many participated actively most of the time?

None

One

Two

Three

All Four

3. Out of the four group members, how many were fully prepared for the activity?

None

One

Two

Three

All Four

4. Give one specific example of something you learned from the group that you probably wouldn't have learned working alone.

5. Give one specific example of something the other group members learned from you that they probably wouldn't have learned otherwise.

6. Suggest one change the group could make to improve its performance.

Discussion Rubric

Points	Active Participant	Preparedness	Attitude	Time on Task
4	<p>*Actively participates by listening to others, contributing quality ideas and initiating discussion.</p> <p>*Actively works with group members to answer discussion questions thoroughly.</p>	<p>*Understands the subject matter and can effectively answer discussion questions with other group members.</p>	<p>*Listens openly and incorporates all classmates/group members' ideas & points of view.</p> <p>*Displays interest, motivation and enthusiasm.</p>	<p>*Utilizes discussion time by staying on task & focusing on topic.</p> <p>*Avoids distractions like cell phones, socializing with classmates/group members and personal issues.</p>
3	<p>*Usually participates by listening to others, contributing quality ideas and initiating discussion.</p> <p>*Usually works with group members to answer discussion questions thoroughly</p>	<p>*Usually understands the subject matter and is usually able to effectively answer discussion questions with other group members.</p>	<p>*Usually listens openly and incorporates all classmates/group members' ideas & points of view.</p> <p>*Usually displays interest, motivation and enthusiasm.</p>	<p>*Usually utilizes discussion time by staying on task & focusing on topic.</p> <p>*Usually avoids distractions like cell phones, socializing with classmates/group members and personal issues.</p>
2	<p>*Rarely participates by listening to others, contributing quality ideas and initiating discussion.</p> <p>*Rarely works with group members to answer discussion questions thoroughly</p>	<p>*Rarely understands the subject matter and is rarely able to effectively answer discussion questions with other group members.</p>	<p>*Rarely listens openly and incorporates all classmates/group members' ideas & points of view.</p> <p>*Rarely displays interest, motivation and enthusiasm.</p>	<p>*Rarely utilizes discussion time by staying on task & focusing on topic.</p> <p>*Rarely avoids distractions like cell phones, socializing with classmates/group members and personal issues.</p>
1	<p>*Fails to participate by listening to others, contributing quality ideas and initiating discussion.</p> <p>*Fails to work with group members to answer discussion questions thoroughly</p>	<p>*Fails to understand the subject matter and is unable to effectively answer discussion questions with other group members.</p>	<p>*Fails to listen openly and incorporate all classmates/group members' ideas & points of view.</p> <p>*Lacks interest, motivation and enthusiasm.</p>	<p>*Fails to utilize discussion time by staying on task & focusing on topic.</p> <p>*Consistently distracted by cell phone, socializing with classmates/group members and personal issues.</p>