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 access group’s work.
Resources & References:
- 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.

Extended Lessons:
- Bridges Team Building Lessons 1 & 3
Marshmallow & Toothpick Reflective Questions/Responses Worksheet

1. How did you decide as a group what you were going to build?

2. What were some of the biggest challenges you faced as a group?

3. How did you make sure all members of the group contributed to the construction? What were their roles and how was this decision made?

4. Did you have a leader in the group? If so who? How was this determined?
5. Were there any disagreements? If so, what were they? and how were they resolved by the group?

6. What did you learn about decision making? Communication?

7. What contributed to your tower being successful? What contributed to your tower being unsuccessful? Provide an example for each.

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

Created by Suzanne Glazos, 2018