

Compliment Tag

..YOU'RE ONE OF
THE SMARTEST PEOPLE
IN OUR SCHOOL!



Preparation:

Establish the boundaries of a play area.

Conceptual Base:

Kindness often starts with looking for what is right about other people and other situations and focusing our attention on the good. Children need practice in giving and receiving positive feedback.

Objectives:

- To give children a chance to give and receive compliments in playful situations
- To give children a chance to hear good things about themselves

Time:

20 minutes

Introduction:

"It is sometimes hard to give or receive compliments. In this game, we are going to get more practice in this important social skill. First of all, look around at the people in the room, and think of something you like about each person. Maybe it is a sense of humor, or a nice smile. Maybe he/she is kind to others, or is helpful. Maybe you admire something the person can do, like play sports, or draw well, or play an instrument, or speak two languages. Think for a minute about honest compliments that you could give the other people in our group. Now think of how you could say that quickly. For example, you might say, 'Great Smile!', or 'Good laugh!', or 'Always kind!'"

Activity:

1. This game is a variation of freeze tag. Players must stay within the boundaries. Have one person start the game by volunteering to be It.
2. When the person who is It approaches another player, if the player can give It a compliment, It must choose another person to tag before he/she can attempt to tag the first person again.
3. If a person cannot think of a compliment before he/she is tagged, he/she is frozen. The frozen person must stay frozen until another player touches the frozen one and gives him/her a compliment.
4. When any three people are frozen at the same time, It wins and a new person is chosen to become It.

Discussion:

"Why do you think people have a hard time accepting compliments from other people?" (embarrassing, don't believe it, think the person is being sarcastic, etc.)

"Do you think people find it easier to see what's wrong instead of what's right?"

"How do you think our school would change if people noticed what was right and commented about that?"

Closure:

"Let's see if we can look for what is right in the world around us. If we appreciate something that someone is able to do, let's tell him or her. If we were helped by something somebody else did, let's thank that person. Maybe we can even do something harder. If we are in the company of somebody who complains about someone or something, let's try to find something good to say to balance things out and remind people of the good stuff."

Hagoo



Preparation:

Define the term “gauntlet” in advance, or just demonstrate it as you proceed.

Conceptual Base:

Peer pressure, for better and for worse

Objective:

To demonstrate the effects of peer pressure, particularly in groups

Time:

15-25 minutes, depending on group size

Introduction:

“The Tlingit Indians, in Alaska, have a word which we’d translate as ‘come here.’ It’s ‘hagoo.’ They played a game in which they would form a gauntlet and invite a challenger to walk the gauntlet without cracking a smile or laughing. Do you think you can do it? Let’s try.”

Activity:

1. Have students form the gauntlet. Ask them to divide themselves into two groups, two lines facing each other, about three feet apart.

2. Have the player at the left end of each team step to the end of the gauntlet, so that the two players are facing each other down the length of the gauntlet.
3. Have those players bow, say, “hagoo” to each other, and walk toward each other, passing each other in the middle. Their task is to keep from laughing, or even smiling, as they walk the gauntlet.
4. The gauntlet’s task is to make the opposing team’s player crack a smile or laugh. They can do whatever they want—without any physical contact—to get the opponent player laughing. (You may need to specify ‘no cursing, obscenities, or anything vulgar,’ etc.)
5. Any player who makes it to the end without smiling or laughing rejoins his/her team. If a person breaks down along the way, he/she has to join the opposing team.
6. The game ends when there’s only one team left, when all players have run the gauntlet, or when people are just laughing too much to continue.

Variation:

One player at a time, coming from alternating sides, just to see who can make it through.

Discussion:

“In this situation, most of us eventually succumbed to the influence of the gauntlet. What are some other situations where it’s wise and even healthy to be influenced by other people?” (mentorship from supportive peers or adult, instruction from teachers, situations that could be dangerous without the proper knowledge, etc.)

“What are some situations where doing what friends want you to think or do could be a serious mistake, or even dangerous? (This could cover virtually anything: lying, cheating on a test, making fun of or harassing someone, shoplifting, graffiti and other vandalism, violence, substance abuse, sexual activity, gang involvement, etc.)

“When was a time you felt pressured to do something you didn’t want to do, but you stood your ground? How did that feel?”

“What gave you the strength to hold on and not give in to what that person or group was trying to influence you to do?”

“For those of us who’ve given in to what someone else was pressuring us to do, what did you learn from that experience?”

“What can we do to keep from getting stuck in those difficult situations?” (Use assertive language to say ‘No;’ use humor to back out of a situation, e.g., ‘Sorry, on my allowance, I can’t afford to use drugs;’ walk away if the other party won’t let up, etc.)

Closure:

“Sometimes it’s fun to be part of the crowd. We all like hanging out with our friends, especially when we’re having a good time. This is fine—as long as it’s a safe and healthy situation. But if someone’s trying to pressure you to do anything that you know isn’t healthy, or safe, or right, you can learn to take a stand. You can stick up for yourself, even if a crowd’s trying to make you choose something you know you don’t want. That may call for some tough decisions, but you can do it.”