

Intended for Grades: Pre-K - 3

Estimated Time: 20 - 30 min.

July, 2021

Lesson Title: SHAPING UP!

Lesson Purpose: Students will:

* Practice teambuilding and communication skills

Materials & Preparation:

* *Shaping Up!* Activity Instructions

* One or two long ropes: Paracord (parachute cord) works well as it holds its shape. 20 to 30 feet long.

Considerations:

- Adjust cord length according to size of group; each person needs about 2-3 feet.
- Depending on class size, you may need to split into groups. (maximum 8 per group for Pre-K and K, and maximum 12 per group for grades 1 and 2) One group can participate while the other team(s) observe.
- If unable to find Paracord, look for a rope that can hold its shape.

Background Information:

Shaping Up is an exercise that helps participants develop an understanding of how essential communicating is when working with others. Communication is a skill that we all need to become proficient at in order to have a community of understanding.

Each culture has different practices and beliefs about communication. For example, Hawaiians practiced, "*Nānā i ka maka, ho`olohe pono, hana ka lima*", which means to look with detailed observation, listen well, and work with your hands.

Steps:

1. Facilitate this activity using the following Instructions to *Shaping Up!*

- a. Tie the rope into a circle large enough for everyone to hold a section of the rope with both hands.
- b. Everyone stands in a circle facing each other. With both hands, each person holds a section of the ring of rope.
- c. The instructor gives directions to form the rope into a particular shape: circle, square, triangle, rectangle, etc.
- d. The group attempts to coordinate their movements and then lay the rope down on the floor with the shape, as instructed. Instructor asks participants to step back and observe if the shape is to their satisfaction. If not, they can try again. Call out 2 more shapes, then the next group(s) rotate and play the game.

Grade 1, 2 and 3: Repeat steps a - d, but this time instruct students to try it without words or even hand gestures.

2. Reflection questions below.

Reflection Questions:

Pre-K – 3:

- *Was this game fun? Why or why not?*
- *What shape was the easiest to do?*
- *What shape was the hardest one to do?*

Grade 1, 2, 3: (additional questions)

- *What happened when you couldn't talk to each other while making the shapes?*
- *How did you feel when you were not able to talk with each other while trying to make shapes?*

Optional art activity: Have students draw a large square or circle on a piece of blank paper, then have them turn on their observational skills and walk around the classroom for a couple of minutes trying to find objects matching their shape. Students would then go back to their seat to draw one of the objects they observed that matched their shape. They can use crayons to color the object. Allow one student at a time to go in front of the class and share about the picture they drew. To practice speaking skills, ask them to speak loud and clear enough for everyone to hear and understand. This is a great skill to practice, and helps build confidence. (30-40 minutes)