



Shuffle the Deck for Groups

Please DO NOT underestimate the importance of “Shuffling the Deck” for Groups. While each group member will be answering the “Shuffling the Deck” questions in their own study time, “Shuffling the Deck” for Groups is designed to loosen up your group for discussion, allow the members to get to know one another better, and (psssst! our secret agenda) get the creative juices to start flowing before you break out the scissors and work on your cards. “Shuffling the Deck” for Groups is an integral part of SPS in a group setting; you will find that skipping it puts your group at a disadvantage.

Below is a collection of ideas you can choose from to warm up your group. Most of them require gathering a few supplies ahead of time. Allow 15 minutes or so for each activity, depending on your group size.

Yarn

- 1) Cut a length about 4-5 feet long. Divide into pairs. In turn, each pair will answer, “What can this string of yarn become?”
- 2) Cut 2 ft. of yarn per person. Holding your arm straight in front of you, drop your yarn on the table. Decide what the yarn looks like and share with the group.

Building Blocks

20-30 children’s wooden blocks in a variety of shapes and sizes

- 1) Create the floor plan of your favorite room in the house. Tell the group why it's your favorite.
- 2) Fashion a representation of the animal that best describes your personality. Why?

PlayDoh

Approx. 1 tub divided between every 2 group members. Provide baby wipes to clean hands and paper plates as a sculpting surface.

- 1) Sculpt your favorite home appliance. Explain why.
- 2) Mold something to do with your favorite pastime or hobby. Share with the group.
- 3) Each person starts with a lump of dough. Divide your portion in half and begin sculpting. Don’t tell anyone what you are making. After 2 minutes, pass it to the person on your left.



Take the “new” sculpture and begin adding more parts, pieces and details. After 2 minutes, pass it to the person on your left. Take the “new” sculpture and continue adding features. When time is called, each person must introduce the “work of art” sitting in front of them. Explain what it is, and the creative vision behind its genius.

Paper, Scissors and Crayons

With a variety of colors in crayons and some plain white paper for doodling, do one of the following:

- 1) Place paper and crayons in the middle of the table. Using these crayons, draw your family portrait. Include your pets. Share it with the group.
- 2) Hand each person a piece of paper. Folding, tearing, wadding is ok, but no tools allowed! “What can this paper become?” Share it with the group.
- 3) Using one sheet of paper, begin by drawing a doodle near one edge. Fold the paper to cover the majority of the doodle and pass it to the next person. They will then continue the doodle and fold over their part, leaving just a little bit peeking out, and pass it to the next person. Continue around the group until everyone has doodled. Then open up the paper and enjoy your collective masterpiece!
- 4) Before your group meets, copy one of the following storylines at the top of a sheet of paper, (one sentence per line of paper):
 - “Ingrid did not realize she carried the keys out of the house with her. It was just so unlike her to be forgetting things like this. She decided the stress of being a doctor’s administrator was going to end, and it was going to end soon.”
 - “We were almost out of plant food. That would cause complications when Patty came to water the violets while we were away for 5 weeks.”
 - “Surprisingly, the roly poly is not an insect, but is actually related to the lobster. It breathes through gills and has a reticulated body.”
 - “‘Ain’t nothin’ better than a BLT sand’ich and an ice cold soda!’ he raved as the sweat dripped from his brow.”
 - “The Garage Sale. Signs nailed to every street corner, card tables lined with old clothes and broken electronics, early morning vultures scavenging for that one hidden find that will make them a millionaire. While it is not distinct to America alone, we sure have our own way of doing it.”



- 5) Pass it on to the next person, who will add a sentence. They will then fold down the paper to reveal only their sentence and pass it on around the group. Once the paper has made it all the way around the group, read your collective story aloud. (Hint, if you have less than 5 people in your group, have each person write 3 sentences rather than just one. Then fold down the paper to reveal only the last sentence written.)

Food

- 1) Have each group member bring a sampling of their favorite treat to share with the group. It can be anything edible.
- 2) As a group, taste each treat in turn and discuss what comes to mind with that particular treat. (Alternatively, the group leader can be responsible to provide 4-5 different tastes to explore.)

Mish Mash

- 1) Bring a variety of items and ask group members to choose 3 things.
 - One to represent where you used to be in life
 - One to represent where you are right now
 - One to represent where you want to be in the future
- 2) Share with the group why you chose these things.

Suggestions for items: candle, alarm clock, Bible, toothbrush, diaper, toy car, space alien, small flower pot, helium balloon, sketch book, silk flower, band aid, piece of fruit, small doll, party hat, Big Gulp cup, flashlight, map, trophy, slippers, toy gun, rubber band, dead leaf, baseball

Polaroid Stories

Take random polaroid or digital pictures of objects, places or animals. Instead of polaroids, you can cut images out of magazines and collage them together to make a 'scene'. You need as many pictures or collage scenes as there are members in your group.

Attach an envelope to the back of the picture (a paper clip should do).

Cut up slips of paper big enough to write 2-3 sentences on. Each person in your group will need 6 slips of paper.

- 1) Give each member a picture, with attached envelope, and 6 slips of paper.
- 2) Ask everyone to write "Who?" at the top of one slip of paper and then write 1-2 sentences answering the question "Who?" about their picture.



- 3) When they are done, tell them to put the slip of paper in the envelope and pass it to the next person.
- 4) Next, ask everyone to write "What?" at the top of one slip of paper and then write 1-2 sentences answering this question about their picture.
- 5) When they are done, tell them to put the slip of paper in the envelope and pass it to the next person.
- 6) Continue doing this with "When?", "Where?", "How?" and "Why?". If you have less than 6 people in your group, you can leave out some of the questions or each person can get the same photo more than once.
- 7) After answering the last question, have each person read the slips of paper in order (who, what, when, where, how, why) for the picture they have.

A Song of Songs

Everyone in the group needs a blank sheet of paper and a pencil.

- 1) At the top of the page have everyone write one line from any song they know.
- 2) Have them fold down the page so that their song line is covered up.
- 3) Pass it on to the next person, who will add a line from a song. They will then fold down the paper to cover up the line they have written. (No one will ever see the previously written lines.)
- 4) Once the papers has made it all the way around the group, read each of your new Song of Songs aloud.

(Hint, if you have less than 5 people in your group, rotate the papers around twice.)