

AMOEBA TAG

WHAT TO SAY

Skill to Introduce – Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Our eyes and bodies communicate to others – and sometimes other people rely even more on our tone, volume and nonverbal behavior (i.e., body language) than the content of our words themselves.

It's important to remain aware that our nonverbal behaviors can communicate things we do or don't want – and that the risk for miscommunication is high (which can lead to conflict).

Requires Resources? No
Grade Level: 3-5; 6-8; 9-12
Indoor/Outdoor: Outdoor
Group Size: 10+

WHAT TO DO

▶ An amoeba is a type of cell that eats other cells by wrapping itself all the way around it, engulfing it and making the cell grow bigger. This is the basis of Amoeba Tag. One person starts as the amoeba. Every time the amoeba tags somebody, they join hands and become part of the amoeba. The amoeba must remain connected at all times by holding hands. Progressively more and more people will become part of the amoeba.

▶ To tag the next person, they must form a circle around them by connecting their outside hands. (The amoeba can run as a chain but must form a complete circle around someone in order to catch them). If anybody gets caught in the completed amoeba circle, they must become part of it.

▶ The smaller amoeba is faster, but as it gets bigger it requires more teamwork and communication to work as a group to catch people. Everybody in an amoeba must be holding hands and remain in a chain/circle at all times.

Variation: Start with two different amoebas. (Hint: one amoeba can 'eat' the other if they're able to form a circle around all people in the other amoeba.)

WHAT TO ASK

▶ What helped you work together when you were connected? (Pull for use of verbal communication to clarify direction, and paying attention to nonverbal communication or body language to figure out what direction people are going.)

▶ How effectively did you communicate with each other? What did you observe with regards to words, tone, or body language?

▶ Did everyone in the amoeba agree with the strategy to capture new people? If not, how did you communicate this? OR Why didn't you tell the others you didn't agree?

▶ How were disagreements settled? Were these successful? (Pull for use of assertive communication and respectful/nonjudgmental communication of opinions.)

▶ To what extent did people in the amoeba listen to one another? To what extent did folks talk over one another? Was this helpful or hurtful in working together?

▶ How might these skills transfer to your conversations or disagreements with peers, in school, or at home? How might they be helpful when working with others (e.g., during group school projects)?

COMMUNICATION