

People and Cultures

Common Links

Objective:

Students will work in pairs to identify things they have in common and things that are different between them, and build a chain to represent those things.

Time:

10-15 minutes.

Materials:

Paper cut into strips (about six strips from each sheet of paper), pens or markers, tape.

Procedure:

Give each student 4-8 pieces of paper (depending on the size of the group and the amount of time you have) and a writing implement. Ask them to take turns pairing up with other students in the group (preferably with other students they don't know very well) and for each pair, write their names and one thing they have in common on one piece of paper and their names and something that is different about them on another strip. Explain to the students that they should only include things they would feel comfortable sharing, and ask them not to use anything that someone could tell by looking at them, such as gender, race, height, hair color, etc. Have the students come up in their pairs and share their similarities and differences, and use the tape and their strips to add links to make a paper chain.

Discussion questions:

1. Was it hard or easy to find something that was common or different?
2. Was it harder to find the similarities or the differences?
3. Is it a good or bad thing to have some things in common and some differences? Or does it not matter?
4. Did anyone learn something about their partner that they want to talk to them more about later?
5. Was anyone surprised to find they had something in common with someone they didn't know very well?
6. Was anyone surprised at any of the differences?
7. Do you think this activity would be more or less interesting if most of the people in the group were fairly similar?
8. Is it good to have things that make you unique? Why or why not?