



what s your role?

purpose • To help youth and adults see the importance of their roles in a team and how best to work together

time Approximately 60 minutes

group size 16 to 36 participants

materials

- One 100-piece puzzle
- Riddle or brainteaser
- Two math word problems (Other “solvable puzzles” can be used.)
- A word problem
- Handout: My Role in the Group and Cooperation and Roles Questionnaire (pg. 162& 163)

prepare ahead Set up “solvable problem” stations in the room prior to beginning this activity. The following are station examples:

- Two math word problems, scratch paper, and pencils
- A 100-piece puzzle
- A riddle or brainteaser (see samples on pg. 164)
- A word problem

introduction

Explain that this exercise gives participants a chance to experience roles they customarily assume in group situations. It helps the partners understand each other better and see that people take on different roles in different situations.



step one

Form small groups of equal numbers of adults and youth. Assign each group to a “station” in the room. Each station should have a “solvable problem” situation for the group to work on.

step two

Give each group 5 minutes to work. Points are to be awarded to each group according to what the group has achieved at each station (i.e., 1 point for minimum work and 5 points for solving the problem). The object is to get the group to work together quickly and effectively.

trainer note: Remind the participants that they are not competing against the other groups. You can award points to teams for working together and for quickly solving the “problem.”

step three

When time is up for the first problem, award points to each group, then move each group to the next station. Continue the procedure until each group has been to all stations. Celebrate their successes.

step four

Gather everyone back and have each person complete the two handouts, the My Role in a Group worksheet and the Cooperation and Roles Questionnaire.



reflection and discussion

When participants have completed the handouts, ask the following questions:

- What are some examples of what you observed?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- How did communication style and characteristics affect the process?
- Why is it important for people to take on different roles?
- From what you just experienced about roles, what is important to keep in mind in order to have an effective youth–adult partnership?
- What are you going to work on to make your partnership work and your work in groups more productive for everyone?

my role in the group

The circle represents all of the time you spent with your small group. How much of the time were you a follower? A leader? An observer? A helper? A clown? A loner? A rebel? Divide the circle into wedges like a pie and label the parts.

Pie Parts:

Follower

Leader

Observer

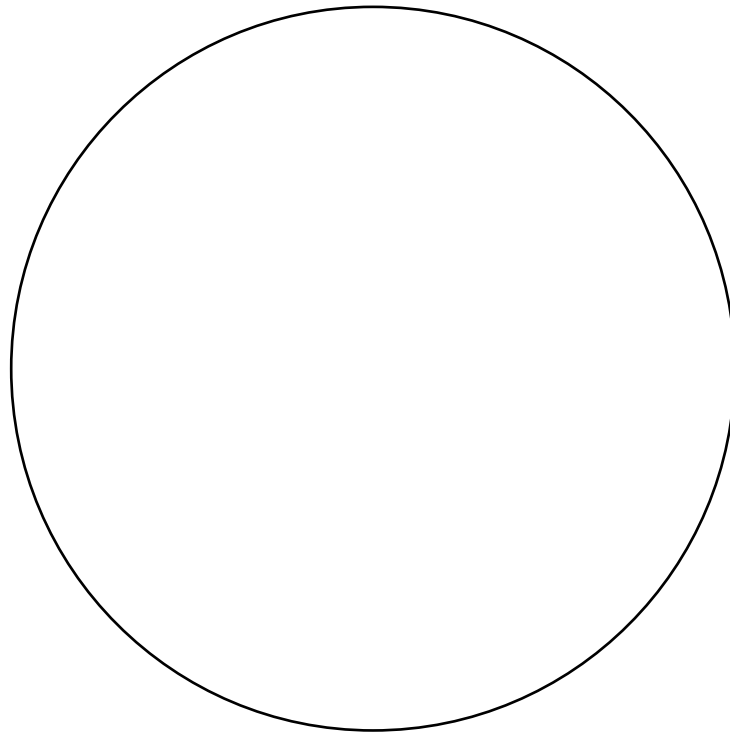
Helper

Clown

Loner

Rebel

Other (specify) _____



cooperation and roles questionnaire

Who emerged as the leader of your group?

Why was that person (or persons) the leader?

Were any group members observers or non-participants?

Did your group have a person who challenged the group's decisions?

How did everyone help with the group's decisions?

Think about the importance of cooperating. How big a role did cooperation play when your group worked at each station? What did you observe?



sample riddles

How can you go without sleep for 7 days and not be tired? (Sleep at night.)

What flies with out wings, propellers, or jets? (Time)

What room has no walls, no doors, no windows, and no floors? (A mushroom)

How many bricks does it take to finish a house? (Only one—the last one)

—From Rosenbloom, J. (2001). *Goofy Riddles*. New York: Sterling Publishing.