



## Bob's Top 10 Team-Building Activities

Bob Lipman has been involved with OM for about 30 years. He has coached 22 teams (kinder-11<sup>th</sup> grade) and is currently the Teams Coordinator for Region 1. These are some of his favorite team-building activities actually used with teams.

**Name Juggle** A good activity early on. Have two different looking objects to toss (different colored nerf balls work well). Standing in a circle, start with one ball and pass it to a person across from you that hasn't had that ball yet. You must say that person's name before you toss the ball. Once the path has been decided for that ball, each person receiving and passing the ball and it ends with the first person, have the team practice that path 3 times. Then introduce the other (color) ball. Start that ball at a new person with the direction, "You must throw this ball to a DIFFERENT person than you did with the first ball." Establish the path for that ball and practice 3 times. Now it's time to juggle. Review the first ball's path then start the second ball at the same time.

**TP Tell All** A get-to-know-each-other game. Pass a roll of toilet paper around the circle with the only instructions, "I want each of you to only take as much TP as you think you'll need for this practice." Demonstrate by breaking off about 5 squares and passing it to the next person. Once everyone has their amount of TP, say, "For each square I want you to share one thing about yourself." Demonstrate by going first, revealing 5 things about yourself...I like otters, I like to draw, I have 2 brothers and a sister, etc. You can give the kid who took enough TP for 3 days a break and stop them after 10 squares.

**Name Whomp 'em** Another name-learning game to try early on. You need a Pool Noodle or rolled up newspaper as a whomping stick. Team members stand in a circle within whomping distance from the person in the center with the whomping stick. Someone in the circle calls out a team members name that's standing in the circle. The whomper tries to whomp that person on top of their head BEFORE they say someone else's name in the circle. The person in the circle who gets whomped becomes the new whomper. You may want to have the whomper use their less dominant hand (usually their left hand) to lessen the power of the whomp.

**Silent Line-up** Draw a line on the ground with sidewalk chalk. Have the team stand on the line in any order. In SILENCE, they must arrange themselves in a certain order WITHOUT taking both feet off the line (moving only one foot at a time, keeping the other foot on the line). This gives them practice working together and communicating information nonverbally. Start by having them line up by height, point to where you want the shortest and tallest on the line. Then alphabetical order by first name. Then by birthday (January to December).



**Trashball** Divide the team into two teams. You join one of the team if you have an odd number. Find two objects to serve as baskets (hats, empty boxes, or small trashcans work well). Crumple up 1-3 sheets of paper from the recycle bin. This is your ball. Teams have one person holding the “basket” for their team. They can move it to catch the ball but they cannot move their feet. The other players may pass or shoot the ball at their basket. They CANNOT MOVE THEIR FEET when they have the ball. Have team members trade off being the basket. First team to 3 baskets wins (that round).

**Improv Air Band** My daughter’s team loved this one. Have the team choose a part in a band (drums, guitar(s), keyboards, lead singer). You might want to hand out objects to use as instruments (pencils-drumsticks, wooden spoon-microphone, tennis racket-guitar, towel-keyboard) or they go “old school” and play the “air guitar.” Play at least 3 different styles of music that feature several band members and the team has to pretend to be that band in a music video. Rotate band positions for each song. You only need to play about 1 minute of each song.

**Improv Cat Walk** I used this with my Primary team to get them used to using their whole body to convey something. Designate a walkway that you want team members to walk down. Then tell them you want them to pretend that the walkway is completely covered with ICE! Show us what it might look like to walk on ice. Have each team member walk down the “ice.” Then change the substance they are walking on...hot sand, thick grass, the surface of the moon, water up to their shoulders, etc.

**Minute-to-Win-it Activities** There are a number of these [online](#). It used to be a TV show. Contestants have a minute to complete a task. My team’s favorite was always Cookie Face.

**Back-to-Back** This is definitely a teamwork activity and should be done on a soft carpeted floor or grassy area. Team members pair up and sit back to back interlocking their elbows. They must try to stand up together by pushing against each other’s back and eventually getting their feet underneath them. Use of hands is not allowed. Trade partners a couple times. Then see if the whole team can stand up while joining elbows

**Big Booty** This is a rhythm game that’s easier to understand if you see and hear a group doing it. [HERE](#) are instructions I found on YouTube. The video shows a group sitting. I usually have the team do it standing in a circle and write BB, 1, 2, 3, etc. on the ground with sidewalk chalk, when they are first learning the game. I say it’s similar to playing 4-square where you are trying to be the server, only in this game the server’s name is Big Booty. My team would do the starting chant a little different from the video. We say “Oh Yeah” by raising our hand up on the oh and slapping our thighs on the yeah to start the rhythm. My team would often do this at the tournament as they were waiting their turn to go into Spontaneous.