



2 PRIMING THE PUMP

Attention Stage

Rationale

In the old days, you had to prime the pump to get water. You had to add water to get water. You had to wet the appetite of the old pump to get any interest in delivering what you wanted - some water!

In learning to communicate effectively, we as leaders have to apply the same principle. By priming our members, we wet their appetites to want to learn and yes, even apply, what they learn.

How do you wet the appetite of 4-H members to want to communicate more effectively? Not by giving them a pile of information, facts and figures for which they see little relevance. Not by being the best speaker you can be. Nor by enticing them with public speaking contests soon to come.

Rather, we can wet the appetite of the 4-H member by providing short and interesting activities - activities that are perceived by members as non-threatening, fun and stimulating - activities that are not labelled public speaking exercises - activities that have a purpose of simply creating a need to want to know more.

Sometimes we as leaders are driven by our needs or the needs of the organization. "We're going to have a speaking contest, therefore you members have got to learn to speak better".

The focus here is on first creating a need in the member's minds. "Priming the Pump" contains 20 attention-getting activities.

Tips on Using Prime the Pump activities

What follows is a series of 20 "Prime the Pump" activities. Before you begin your planning, take a few moments to review how they can best be used.

- There is no need to do all 20 activities. Select the ones you feel most comfortable with, that you have time to do and that you feel will have greatest interest with the members.
- Activities are 5 to 10 minutes in length. They are intended to be attention getters, not lessons or lectures.
- All activities can be done with the entire club. Dividing your club into small groups is suggested where appropriate.
- When using small groups, ensure you have a leader appointed at the beginning of the activity for each group. This leader may be a senior member who can help keep the group focused on the activity.
- Every small group will be different. Some will complete the activity quicker than other groups. Visit with the quicker groups to ensure completion of the task and to get some feedback. Avoid debriefing with any particular group. Wait until you have the attention of



all groups before you debrief.

- Many of these activities are good openers for a club meeting. Incorporate these activities into your club meetings rather than to make them a separate public speaking activity.
- “Priming the Pump” activities can be used in the early fall when your club reconvenes after the summer break. Some activities help members get to know one another using communication as a vehicle. Of course, you can use these activities any time in the year.
- The key is fun. Hopefully members will enjoy doing these activities. With a fun atmosphere, members will be keen to keep doing more communication activities.



FIVE ALIVE

Purpose

To encourage members to express their ideas and thoughts.

Materials

Paper and pencils

Instructions

1. In this activity, we're going to focus on five different things about each member.
2. Explain that each person will be asked five questions about themselves. Question one will be answered with one word where possible; question two will be answered with two words where possible, and so on.
3. Tell participants there will be some time given between the questions for them to write their response. At the end of the five questions, each participant will be invited to share their responses. You may pass with any question.
4. Here are the five alive questions:
 - #1. One place you'd like to be?
 - #2. Two things you do well?
 - #3. Three things that are important to you?
 - #4. Four words to describe how you feel about this club?
 - #5. Five words to describe yourself in ten years?

Tips

- When asking members to share their responses, you can do it in at least two ways:
 1. Ask each member to respond to all five questions before going to the next member.
 2. Ask members to respond to the same question before moving on to the next questions.
- If time is limited, have members share in smaller groups.



STRING ME ALONG

Purpose

To develop spontaneity and flexibility in speaking.

Materials

String and scissors

Instructions

1. Form participants into groups of four to six.
2. Have each group appoint a group leader or suggest to the group that the leader is the one with the darkest hair, the person with a birthdate closest to today's date, or whatever.
3. Provide each group with a ball of string and a pair of scissors.
4. Instruct the groups that they are to pass the ball of string to each person in their group. Each group member is to take as much string as they need. The string can be cut using the scissors.
5. After everyone in the groups has their string, ask each group leader to begin by talking to the group. While the leader is talking, he/she is to wind the string around one of their fingers. The leader stops talking when the string has been completely wound around his/her finger.
6. The person to the right of the leader is then invited to do the same as the group leader. That is, he/she is to talk to the group while winding the string around a finger. They are to stop talking when the winding of string is completed.
7. Continue in each group until all have had the opportunity to participate.

Tips

- What do the members talk about? You may want to suggest that they talk about a subject they know best themselves.
- The amount of string participants take is up to them. You may want to advise them that the ball of string is the limit for the group. If every member of the group is to participate, then individual members should consider this when they are taking their own piece of string.



THE 4-H CLOVER

Purpose

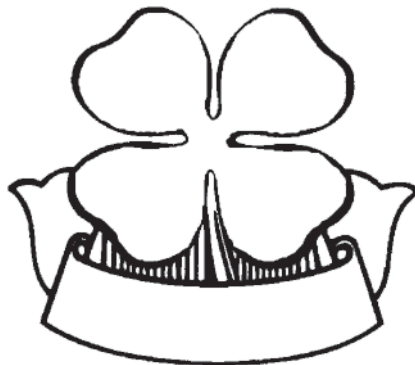
To introduce members, using the 4-H emblem.

Materials

Copies of the 4-H clover (optional)

Instructions

1. Provide each person with a copy of the 4-H Clover (reduced copy below), or have each member draw a large 4-H emblem on paper.
2. Prepare the 4-H emblem by having members write one of the headings below in each of the leaves of the 4-H clover.
 - Things of my head
 - Things of my hands
 - Things of my heart
 - Things of my health
3. Ask each member to find someone in the 4-H club that they would like to get to know better.
4. Participants will print the name of their partner at the base of the 4-H Clover. Each member of the pair is to interview the other. The information that they get from the other person is based on the four headings on the 4-H Clover.
5. The members can now be asked to introduce their partners to the whole group. Give some tips on how to creatively introduce a person. (E.g. leave their name till last, give three clues and then guess).
6. You may want to post these emblems. Information can always be added to the page as members learn more about each other.





PUBLIC INTERVIEW

Purpose

To get members thinking on their feet.

Materials

None

Instructions

1. Form participants into one large "U" shape.
2. Place a chair at the head of the "U" shape.
3. Have each participant write their name on a slip of paper.
4. Put the slips of paper into a container (E.g. hat or box). Have a member draw one slip of paper from the container.
5. The person whose name appears on the slip of paper is invited to be seated at the head of the "U". The other club members will interview this person. This person has the right to participate, to defer until later or to not participate.
6. Questions are asked to the person being interviewed. See sample questions listed under tips.
7. The person being interviewed may choose to answer the question or to pass. It is important the right to pass is made clear.
8. Either the person being interviewed or the leader may terminate the interview at any time.
9. Another name is drawn or this activity is continued at another meeting. Keep the names of those who have yet to participate.

Tips

Some sample interview questions are:

- What is your favorite food?
- What would you do with \$1000?
- What is your idea of a perfect Saturday afternoon?
- Have you ever invented anything? What?
- What is the best news you could get right now?
- What kind of TV programs do you watch?
- If you had three wishes what would they be?
- What is the best thing that ever happened to you?
- Do you want to say something to the club members that would be good for them to hear?



PASS THE FRUIT

Purpose

To develop a sense of humor and an ability to think on your feet.

Materials

Fruit with thick skin.

Instructions

1. Divide participants into groups of 6 to 8 people.
2. Give a piece of fruit to each leader of the group.
3. Have each group practice passing the fruit to each other. When passing the fruit, establish eye contact with the receiver before you pass. Pass to someone who hasn't received a pass as yet. Pass slow enough for the receiver to catch.
4. Now begin with the group leader. Have them respond to one of the questions listed under 'tips' before they pass the fruit.
5. Each person is to attempt to continue talking until club leader - says, "pass". (Usually about 30 second intervals).
6. Each person is to respond to the same question before they pass the fruit.
7. First round ends when all have received the fruit once and have responded to the question.
8. Continue activity with a new question.
9. Conclude activity when interest or time has run out.

Tips

Some sample questions for this activity include:

- What can you tell us about this fruit?
E.g. This fruit is not grown here. It grows in a warmer...
- How are the fruit and you alike? (good for humorous responses.)
- How is this fruit like a good speech?
- If this fruit could talk, what would it be saying right now?
- Why might we choose this fruit to be our club logo?
- What games could you play with this fruit?
- Tell the group anything you want about the fruit.



4-H BINGO CARD

Purpose

To develop an awareness and knowledge of others.

Materials

Paper, pencil and chips

Instructions

1. Pass pieces of paper to all participants. Have them draw a large square on the paper. Then draw three lines across the square and three lines down the square. You end up with 16 boxes within the huge square.
2. Have participants write wild card in one of the squares.
3. Now provide a statement (samples in tips) for participants to write in a box of their choosing. Participants will end up with writing 16 statements in their boxes (which includes wild card).
4. With a completed bingo card, participants are then to circulate among the group, seeking to match a person with a statement. When they find a match, the person signs the matching statement. No person can sign more than two statements on any one card.
5. Members continue to match a person with a statement, collecting signatures as they go. Allow two minutes for this. Encourage them to get as many signatures as they can.
6. Now have members return to their seat. They can now sign up to five more statements themselves, if they match each statement.
7. Now play bingo as you normally would. Players can play only those squares that have been signed. Use chips to cover squares.
8. "Bingo" is reached when a participant has a horizontal, vertical or diagonal row of chips across the card.

Tips

- Use statements based on what you already know about the members. Sample statements include:
 - clever
 - plays (piano)
 - only child
 - skier
 - likes liver
 - new member
 - has a pet
 - swimmer
 - collects coins
 - in grade 5
 - cooks
 - bilingual
 - uses computer
 - loves bingo

Recognize winner by having him lead another bingo, etc.



MIND SET

Purpose

To assess knowledge and attitudes towards speaking.

Materials

Paper and pencils

Instructions

1. Pass out a piece of paper to each participant. At the top of the page have them print the word "speaking".
2. Down the left hand side of the page, have members write the 26 letters of the alphabet.
3. Explain that in a minute participants will be asked to write as many words as possible that come to mind when they think of the topic "speaking".
4. You can have them work on their own or work in groups of two. This will depend on the age range and your own judgement.
5. You may want to provide a few examples to ensure clarity.
E.g.
A: announcement, answer
B: brave, bold
C: calm, collect thoughts
D: do it
E: exciting, easy
6. Tell them they will be given three minutes.
7. "Any questions? Ready. Begin."
8. At the end of three minutes, announce, "stop".
9. Have participants share their responses. You may want to begin with one person and ask for their 'A' word(s). If they do not have an 'A' word, they can say "pass". Go to the next person and ask for either an 'A' word or a 'B' word depending on the first response.
10. Continue until all the letters have been responded to. If after several tries, no one has a word for the letter, see if the group can come up with a word.

Tips

- Listen to the words the members respond with. This will tell you a lot about their vocabulary range, their knowledge and interest levels about the topic word.