

MATERIALS

1. Copies of “My Name” by Sandra Cisneros

ENERGIZER AND TEAM BUILDER

Spot the Leader

One person from the entire group is asked to step outside the room. The remaining group determines a leader among them. The group sits in a circle and the leader begins a gesture or movement (clapping hands, leaning head side to side, twiddling thumbs.) The remaining group mimics the leader. While the entire group is engaged in uniform gesture, the person outside the room enters and observes the group to determine the group leader. Every minute the leader needs to change her gesture and the group needs to change gestures simultaneously in order to protect the leader from being detected. The outside observer guesses. If she guesses incorrectly, the suspect is eliminated from the game. The observer guesses until the true leader is detected.

POETRY SHARE

Share “Five Ways of Looking at a Dead Crow” poems. Every participant reads their

Work. Praise and give critical feedback.

DISCUSSION: NAMES

1. Focused Free Write

10 Minutes

Ask the group to engage in a free write for 7 minutes continuously on the topic and questions below. Tell the group that this is not a poem or a piece of art but just a way of scribbling everything that is going through their minds on to paper. In the process of the free write they must be committed to keep the pen on their paper for 7 minutes entirely (they can’t remove their pen even once!). If mid-way through writing they can write, tell them to write exactly what they are thinking “I cannot write, I cannot write, I cannot write...” The point is to write freely on the proposed topic.

Free Write Topic: My Name

- What does your name mean?
- What does your name mean to you?
- Do you like your name?
- How many names do you have
- If you could change your name, what would you change it to?

Why?

- Does your name reflect you are?

2. Discussion

Ask the group to share segments from their writing. Ask the questions listed above and ask for a more guided discussion.

3. Poetry Read: “My Name” by Sandra Cisneros

Read Sandra Cisneros “My Name.” Before reading the poem, premise with some background: Here is a girl growing up in a hard, cold city of the United States. Just as we have been talking about our names, she too has been thinking about her name and written a little poem about it.

4. Discussion Questions

What is your favorite part of the poem? What can you tell about this young girl, even though you haven’t met her or don’t even know her name? Why/How do you know all these things? (Questions should lead to how Cisernos’ gives us depth into the girl by re-visioning her name, like a poet.)

5. Brainstorming Personal Names

Ask participants, if there name was a NUMBER or COLOR, what would it be? Then, ask them to consider their names with the 5 senses. What does your name smell like? Taste like? Feel like? Sound like?

WRITING ACTIVITY: MY NAME

Write your own personal “My Name” poem. Give the following form.

My Name

My name is the color.....

My Name is sounds like

My Name smells like....
My Name feels like....
My Name is (write your name).

CONCLUDING ACTIVITY

Check-Out

Go around the room and ask the group to “sign” how they felt about this session. Thumb up, Great Session. Thumbs Down, Bad Session. Thumbs Sideways, So-so session.

