



Activity: **Structure**

Overview

This activity gets your group to construct teams by building structures. First, your team breaks into smaller groups and with a limited amount of plain paper and tape. The team is then asked to build the tallest structure possible from the resources provided. Each group will begin construction independently, but will soon realize that pooling their resources may be the answer.

Set Up

Props

- 40 Sheets of copy or printer paper
- 1 Roll of scotch or masking tape

Set Up

Divide your team into 4 groups. Equally distribute the paper and approximately 5" of tape to each group. Have each group find a nice flat place to work apart from each other.

Instructions

The team must build the tallest freestanding structure possible. "Team" may be interpreted by your participants as everyone, or each individual group.

The team may only use the props that have been handed out and has only 15 to 20 minutes to accomplish its task.

Groups may pool and/or share resources to build one tall structure (leave it to them to come to this conclusion).

In a grand fanfare, judge the height of each structure when time has expired.

Sample Story Line

"Your team is an assembly of the brightest architectural engineers and construction workers from around the globe. You have been handpicked and brought here to participate in an unconventional and somewhat strange challenge. Your team must build the tallest freestanding structure possible—not out of mortar, brick, steel or concrete—but out of plain paper and tape. You will have 15 to 20 minutes for planning and construction. I will judge height when time has expired. As smart as you are, I imagine that you will succeed with a very good-sized structure. Use your resources and the brains that got you here."

Variations

Try a conservation approach by challenging workgroups to build a six-foot structure using the FEWEST resources possible. This will peak curiosity, promote a little healthy competition, and unlock your group's creative potential!

Safety

If you use common sense, safety shouldn't be a concern.

Reflection

Questions to explore after teams participate in *Structure* include:

Discover: "How well did you use your resources? Did you set a goal for how high you wanted to build your structure before you began your construction phase? If not, why? If so, how did it help your planning?"

Connect: "Where do you find planning to be most important in your life? When do you find yourself being most innovative? What problems do you like working on most?"

Create: "What are the three major points you need to consider when planning future projects? What's the most important one for you? How will this exercise prepare you for future projects?"