

Activity ~ The Story of Mrs. Wright

Directions:

Give each student a 3” by 5” index card. Have them write their name on it or some other identifying mark. Ask students to get up and form a circle (move desks if necessary or move outside the classroom to a space where they all fit). Go into the circle with the Story of Mrs. Wright in hand.

Tell students that you will be reading them a story and that every time they hear the word ‘left’, they will pass their index card to the left. Every time they hear the word ‘right’, they will pass their card to the right.

Do a ‘test run’ with the group. Tell the group: “I’d like to do a test run with you. Ready? Right (pause to let everyone pass their card to the right). Left (pause to let everyone pass their card to the left). Very good. Everyone should now have the card they started with. Now let’s begin the story.”

This is where you begin reading the “Mrs. Wright” story (see story below). Start off slow so students get a chance to feel successful. Then slowly speed up. If everyone does their job, they will end up with the same card they started the activity with.

“Once upon a time, Mrs. Wright took her three left handed children (Wendy Wright, Larry Wright, and Billy Wright) on a vacation. They left on a Monday and planned to return just before the Thanksgiving holiday. Billy Wright left school for the Wright vacation. Wendy left a whole plate of leftovers for her cat to eat during the Wright vacation. But Billy, who is the president of a local leftist organization, was the saddest of all. He left behind all the addresses of friends that he wanted to write to while on vacation. This mistake left Billy’s friends in the dark. By the end of the week, all the Wrights wished they had never left. They still had the weekend left, but Mrs. Wright decided that the right thing to do would be to return home right away. They arrived back at their house, which is located to the left of Fenway Park, in time for Thanksgiving leftovers.”

Debriefing

When they’re done, debrief the activity with them, asking them what they think the intent of the activity was. Typical answers include: that all members of a team are important to the success of a project and that paying attention makes a difference. If one person isn’t doing his or her job then it has a big effect on everyone else.

This activity can be used as an opening to a discussion of the impact of our individual efforts on the whole and has successfully opened the doors to great conversation about the importance of full commitment from those involved in any project.

Students who are interested can write their own story that works out like Mrs. Wright's.

Note: The above teambuilding game description was provided by the International Association of Teamwork Facilitators (<http://www.IATFconnect.com>).

The IATF has members in 34 countries and represents a dynamic community of supervisors, managers, coaches, trainers, facilitators, and educators who are actively working to grow and leverage the most important energy source of our time - - the power of inspired teamwork.

The IATF provides free teambuilding games, free and engaging leadership development TeleSeminars, free and interactive interviews with team development thought leaders, webinars, group and one-on-one coaching, workshops, presentations, books, and multimedia training materials.

We love what the IATF is doing and we urge you to visit the site and access all their great resources. Here's the link: <http://www.IATFconnect.com>