



Self-Management

ABOUT CENTER FOR THE COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM

The Caring School Community (CSC) program is a nationally recognized, research-based program for grades K–6 that builds classroom and schoolwide community while developing students' social and emotional (SEL) skills and competencies.

Teambuilder, Tea Party

By: The Caring School Community

Tea Party

ABOUT "TEA PARTY"

"Tea Party" is a cooperative structure in which pairs circulate around the classroom and meet with other pairs to form groups of four. On your signal, pairs begin moving around the room. When you call "Tea Party," they stop moving, turn to the nearest pair, introduce themselves, and share information on a suggested topic. Do as many "Tea Parties" as seem appropriate for the topic and the students' interest. Use "Tea Party" discussions throughout the day in any content area.

Lesson Purpose

Students:

- Get to know one another
- Move responsibly around the room

The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

Have the students gather in a circle. Remind them that they have been meeting different partners so that they can get to know all their classmates better and build a community in their classroom. Explain that today they will be doing an activity called "Tea Party," another way to get to know each other by working with partners to form groups and talk.

BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON



Point out ways in which you and the students moved responsibly to form your group of four. (For example, “When we were moving around the room, we walked slowly and were careful not to bump into anyone.”)



If you have an odd number of students, act as a student’s partner for the purposes of moving around the room and forming groups. When the students are sharing in their groups, leave your group and have them share as a trio.

2 MODEL “TEA PARTY”

Explain that in “Tea Party,” partners will move around the room and find another pair to form a group of four. When they are in their group of four, you will tell them what to talk about.

Briefly model “Tea Party” by asking a student to be your partner and another pair of students to stand up. Explain that on your signal, you and your partner and the other pair will begin walking around. When you call “Tea Party,” the pairs will turn and face one another to make a group of four. Demonstrate moving and forming a group of four.

3 PRACTICE MOVING AND FORMING GROUPS

Pair the students by having them turn to the person sitting next to them. Have the partners stand up and tell them that they will practice “Tea Party.”

Practice “Tea Party” by giving the signal for partners to walk around the room. After a few seconds, call “Tea Party.” Have the students stop, find the pair closest to them, and form a group of four.

Share your observations of how pairs moved responsibly around the room and point out one thing for them to focus on the next time they move. (For example, “The next time we move, remember to stay with your partner while you walk.”)

Have the students practice moving and forming groups until they know the procedure.

4 DO “TEA PARTY”

Tell the students that when they do “Tea Party” this time, they will talk about a topic in their groups of four. Give the signal for partners to begin walking around the room. After a few seconds, call “Tea Party.” Have the students stop, find the pair closest to them, and form a group of four. Signal for their attention. Ask them to take turns introducing themselves and discussing:

Q What is your favorite thing to do on the playground?

After a few moments, signal to get their attention.

Class Meeting Lessons

Tell the students that partners will move again. When you call “Tea Party,” they will stop, find a different pair from the one they are with right now, and form a new group of four.

Give the signal for partners to walk around the room. After a few seconds, call “Tea Party.” Have the students stop, find the pair closest to them, and form a new group of four. Ask them to take turns introducing themselves and, this time, discuss:

Q What is your favorite thing to do in the classroom?

Do one more “Tea Party,” this time having the groups of four discuss their favorite snack.



Depending on time and student interest, you may want to add or reduce the number of “Tea Parties.”

5 REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY

Have the students return to the circle. Ask and briefly discuss:

Q What was one new thing you learned about a classmate today?

Using some of the student’s examples, point out that learning more about their classmates will help them build a stronger community. (For example, “[Jessie] told us that [Melissa] likes to play four-square. When you find out that someone likes to play the same games you do, you might want to talk to her and find out more or ask her to play with you.”) Ask:

Q How did you do walking around the room with your partner?

Have a few volunteers share their thoughts with the class. Have the students return to their seats.