



**Group Challenges for Middle Schools
Kit for 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade**

Challenges for Middle Schools Students

Making activities relational, relevant, and rigorous for middle school students can be challenging at best. One of the strategies that I have found successful is to divide the class into groups of 4-5 and then have them go to work on a series of activities that they can rotate through. In this kit you will find several types of activities that lend themselves to this type of engagement. Once you have gone through a variety of activities and the students have an understanding of the kinds of activities that interest them, students can also contribute ideas for these rotations.

Build A Story

The purpose of this activity is to have young people practice creative writing skills. To begin with, place a story started at the top of the page. This story starter should be more than a title and should set the stage for the action. Each group then takes a turn working on the story. It is important that each group “plays” off the material that the previous group has written. If the group resolves a conflict then it is important that they set up the next segment of the story for the next group.

Sample Story Starter:

It is a cold, dark night. The fog is covering the ground and as we walk along we can only see about 5 feet in front of us. My friends and I are headed to the library. We’ve told our parents that we are going to study, but the truth is, we are really going

The first group of students might identify the friends that they are with and also what the group is really planning to do (go to the drive-in, join a bowling league, go to a party at another friend’s house....and so on.) This group would then leave the story with some sort of problem or challenge.

Students can work on this story for a week or so. When completed, the last group will read the story aloud to the group. If you would like to take it further, you can have kids edit the story, take a look at repeated adjectives and find new words to describe the action, and so on.

Trivia

There are many TV programs, magazines, and Tweets that provide information about the favorite singers, dancers, stars, programs, movies, sports, and other people of interest to your young people. Find out the facts (this is a perfect thing to have young people help you with, and then pose 5-7 questions for the group to answer. If you have access to the Internet, encourage students to go on line to find the answers.

Sample:

Taylor Swift's newest album

Name 4 stars of the movie Little Fockers

Which pro (football, basketball, hockey, etc.) team has the most wins this year?

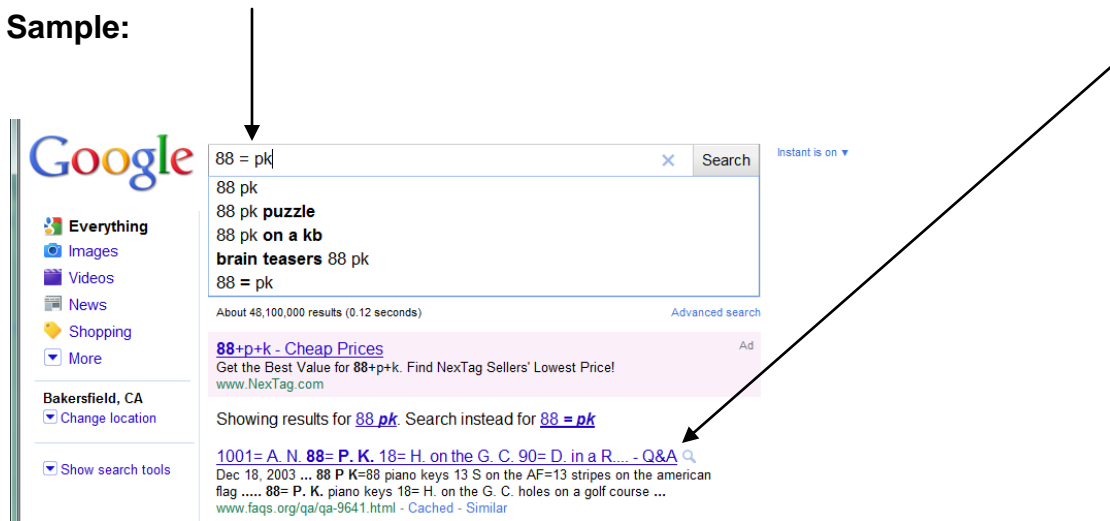
What night of the week does "The Middle" air on TV?

Name the titles of the 7 Harry Potter books

Number Riddles

Numbers and certain items are related in certain ways. For example, there are 88 keys on every piano, so therefore, 88 = PK (88 = Piano Keys). There are many of these associations that are available on line. In the Google search bar simply type <88 = PK> and you will be taken to a list of them. Select 5-7 of these to challenge the students. The group which finds that most associations can either win a point for the team, or enjoy 5 minutes of networking time.

Sample:



The image shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "88 = pk". Below the search bar, a dropdown menu lists suggestions: "88 pk", "88 pk puzzle", "88 pk on a kb", "brain teasers 88 pk", and "88 = pk". Below the suggestions, it says "About 48,100,000 results (0.12 seconds)". An advertisement for "88+p+k - Cheap Prices" is displayed, with the text "Get the Best Value for 88+p+k. Find NexTag Sellers' Lowest Price!" and the URL "www.NexTag.com". Below the ad, it says "Showing results for 88 pk. Search instead for 88 = pk". The first search result is "1001= A. N. 88= P. K. 18= H. on the G. C. 90= D. in a R.... - Q&A" with a magnifying glass icon. Below this result, it says "Dec 18, 2003 ... 88 P K=88 piano keys 13 S on the AF=13 stripes on the american flag 88= P. K. piano keys 18= H. on the G. C. holes on a golf course ..." and the URL "www.faqs.org/qa/qa-9641.html - Cached - Similar".

Where in the United State?

Understanding the geography of the United States, where the states are located, where you might find national parks or monuments, major rivers, mountain ranges, state capitals and so on, is important. In this activity you begin with a large map of the United States and a list of places for the groups to find. You can have an atlas available for them as well so they can use it as a resource. The same is true for the Internet if it is available.

Sample:



Locate the following items on the map:

Mt. Rushmore

Grand Canyon

Tulsa

Lake Erie

Disneyworld

Golden Gate Bridge

The Alamo

Home of the pro-football team the Falcons

Students would number the items and then write the corresponding number on the map. This activity can also be done with locations in the World.



For more information, contact
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www.consultfourkids.com