

# Connection Cards

Breaking the ice and getting to know your fellow class mates.

yLead Connection Cards are perfect for building a closer knit team and uniting a small group. The game allows students to share a little about themselves in a fun and supportive environment. The activity is ideally used in classroom sized groups (15-25pax) where honesty and appreciation is a necessity, for example; home rooms, tutor groups, form classes, leadership teams. This activity can be used to help students get a better understanding of their fellow classmates and /or team; building a strong, supportive and open group of young people.

Connection Cards is an adaptation of a non-competitive learning/communication board game created by Rhea Zakich. It is a game of conversation which 'fosters listening skills as well as self-expression'.

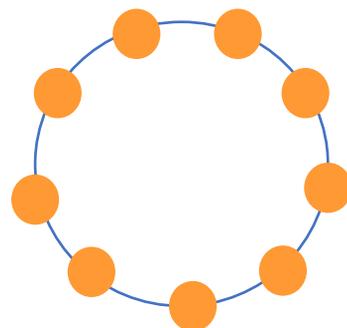
## How to prepare for the activity:

**Learning Sequence:** Expected length (20mins – 35mins)

**Resources:** Connection Cards question kit (*can be downloaded from yLead website*), one chair per student and one for the facilitator. Chairs to be placed in a circle.

**Space:** Suited to a classroom where the furniture is movable or a large clear space in order to create a circle of students (drama room, collaboration space, library). Ensure the room is a quiet space.

**Preparation work for facilitator/teacher:** Print and cut out the Connection Cards. Read through the activity set up below, prepare the space, and gain an understanding of the desired outcomes and aims of the game.



## How to take a group through the activity:

**! The Brief:** (2mins) *Have students already seated in a circle*

This activity is an opportunity to learn more about our team, while having a bit of fun. The aim of the game is to learn more about each other and to value the trait of listening. I will encourage you to be respectful, honest and open. The activity might get you slightly out of your comfort zone, which is great for us to practice together. Everyone will have an opportunity to share a response to a question. We will hopefully learn something new about each other, find a few things we may have in common and /or find out how we can help each other out this year.

## How to take a group through the activity continued...

### 2. Introduction and explanation of the activity: (5mins)

**Rule 1:** Only one person speaks at any one time - the person with the cards in their hands. Allow for awkward silences or moments of thoughts.

**Rule 2:** The deck of cards will be passed around face down. When it's your turn flip the top card over and read the question out loud. When you are ready, answer the question. Once you have answered, put your card on the bottom of the pile and pass the deck of cards to the next person.

**Rule 3:** From time to time the facilitator/teacher may ask everyone in the group to answer the same question once the question is answered by the individual. [This is at the facilitators/teachers discretion. It can provide a great change of state and allow students to talk to each other more. Get them to answer the question with who they are seated next to].

**Rule 4:** All of us must commit to a positive, encouraging and respectful environment.

**Rule 5:** The cards will be handed around the circle in a clock wise direction.

### 3. Time for Activity: (20mins)

Hand the cards to someone you can trust to open the game. Use your discretion as to which questions you open to the floor. Be affirming and supportive. Some students will find answering in front of their peers challenging but just need someone to give a little bit of encouragement. As educators, we know the benefit that is to be gained from stepping outside of your comfort zone.

As the facilitator, we encourage you to participate in the game as well! Students really appreciate it when their teachers are willing to challenge themselves and get involved in their learning process. Lead by example and share things about yourself.

### 4. The debrief: (5mins)

Connection Cards has many learning outcomes. yLead believes that it is always best to allow students to come to their own realisations through quality questioning. Possible questions include:

- What can we learn from this activity?
- Why do you think it is important to have authentic conversations?
- What could you take with you from this activity to use in your everyday life?

Possible outcomes and or final word from teacher/facilitator. Conversation Cards reminds us:

- Of the value of active listening
- To not criticize and judge before getting to know someone
- To talk openly, honestly and from the heart, promoting authentic connections
- How beneficial supportive and respectful environments can be
- Social media, opposed to the importance of building connections offline.

#### **Alternative version - ADVANCED**

Students have a very positive experience during 'Connection Cards' if your group meets regularly, you might not want to stop at just one round. You can write your own questions or have the students write their own. This activity can certainly be used with adults and also used to debrief Terms, projects, events etc.