



Journeys in the Spirit Games Supplement



Gathering, active and reflective games suitable for children and young people aged 5-18



How to use this resource

The games are not separated into categories, but they roughly come in the order of: name games and ice-breakers, followed by energisers, followed by reflective games.

Each game has a number, title and a box with:

- description of the game type (ice-breaker, energizer, reflective etc.)
- timing
- equipment needed
- size of group to play it with and whether it involves the whole group together or splitting into small groups
- appropriate ages for the game.

Following is the process for playing the game, and some games have a 'theme alternative' suggesting how to change the game to reflect on or explore issues within a theme.

Games

1. Beanbag toss

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Ice-breaker and name game, stationary	2 - 5 minutes	Beanbag	5+ Whole group	5+

Standing or sitting in a circle, each person says their name and where they've travelled from. Then, the first person states the name of someone else, whilst tossing them the beanbag. Person 2 does the same, and so on. Once everyone is familiar with names, see how fast you can go through everyone's names.

Theme alternative: everyone answers a question about the theme stated at the start.

2. Initials

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Ice-breaker and name game, stationary	2 - 5 minutes	None	3+ Whole group	5+

Each person takes the initial letter (see note) of their name and finds a quality that they feel describes them, using that initial, e.g. 'I'm Samantha and I'm smiley'.

Note: younger participants may use the sound of the start of their name instead of the letter.

3. Memory game

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Ice-breaker and name game, stationary	5 – 10 minutes	None	5+ Whole group	8+

Everyone sits in a circle. One person starts by stating their name and sharing an interesting fact about themselves, e.g. 'I am Katie and I have been to Spain 3 times'. The person next to them then states their own name and shares something about themselves, before introducing the person that started, e.g. 'I am Pramod and I play tennis, and this is Katie and she has been to Spain 3 times'. The person next to Pramod then introduces themselves and Pramod, and so on.

If you have time, repeat the game remembering everyone before you, instead of just one person. The last person in the circle will have to remember all the names and facts.

Theme alternative: everyone says something more specific about themselves, relating to the theme of the session.

4. The sun shines on

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Ice-breaker, active	5 – 10 minutes	None	8+ Whole group	8+

Everyone stands – or better still, sits on chairs - in a tight circle. One person stands in the middle. They say 'The sun shines on [e.g. anyone who had cereal for breakfast]', and everyone who that applies to has to get up and swap places with someone else. The person in the middle should try and get someone's seat, so there's a new person in the middle each time.

5. Marooned

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Get to know you game, stationary	5 – 10 minutes	None	4+ Whole group	8+

You pretend you are all marooned on your own desert island. What five (or more or less, given how much time you have) items would you have with you if you had to choose? Share them, going round the circle.

6. Question ball

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Ice-breaker, stationary	2 - 5 minutes	Ball	5+ Whole group	5+

Everyone stands or sits in a circle. One person starts by throwing a ball to someone and asking a simple question, e.g. 'what is your favourite colour?'. The other person catches the ball and answers, before throwing it to someone else with their own question. Each time the ball should be thrown to someone who hasn't had it before.

7. Commonalities

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Get to know you game, active	5 - 10 minutes	None	8+ Small groups	8+

Everyone gets in pairs and finds something they have in common with the other person. Then each pair finds another pair and the group of 4 finds something they all have in common. If the group is large enough, each group of 4 could find another group of 4 and do the same.

8. Two truths and a lie

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Get to know you game, stationary	10 - 20 minutes	None	6+ Whole group	12+

Everyone sits in a circle and thinks of two truths and one lie about themselves. One person starts by telling their truths and lie, in any order. Everyone else then asks some questions to try and figure out which one is the lie. The group come to a consensus before guessing. The first person tells if they are correct. Then everyone else gets to tell their truths and a lie in turn.

9. Machine maker

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Energiser, creative, drama, active	5 - 15 minutes	None	8+ Small groups	8+

Everyone walks around the room until you call out a number, or hold up a sheet of paper with that number. People then get into groups of that number. Then ask everyone to create a machine or object using just themselves, e.g. a washing machine. Give a time limit of 1 minute, after which every group can demonstrate their machine. People then start walking around again until you call another number and repeat the process.

Theme alternative: make up machines or objects relating to the theme, e.g. a peace machine.

10. Egg, chicken, dinosaur

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Energiser, funny, active	5 - 10 minutes	None	8+ Whole group	12+

Everyone starts out as an egg (see note below), walking around the room. When eggs find another egg, they play rock-paper-scissors. Whoever wins rock-paper-scissors becomes a chicken. The loser stays an egg. Chickens walk around the room looking for other chickens and when two chickens find each other they play rock-paper-scissors. The winner of this becomes a dinosaur. The loser goes back to being an egg. Dinosaurs walk around the room looking for other dinosaurs and when two dinosaurs find each other they play rock-paper-scissors. The winner of this has completed their evolution and steps out to the side of the game. The loser goes back to being a chicken. The game is over when there is just one egg, one chicken, and one dinosaur remaining.

Note: when someone is an egg, they walk around trying to be small and close to the ground. When someone is a chicken they walk around crouched down slightly and flap their wings. When someone is a dinosaur they walk around tall, with their claws held out in front of them.

11. “What are you doing?”

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Energiser, funny, drama, active	10 - 15 minutes	None	8+ Whole group	12+

Everyone stands in a circle. One person starts by going into the centre of the circle and mimes an action. When the person on their right asks “What are you doing?” the first person replies that they are doing something completely different; for example they mime swimming and say “I am washing my hair.” The person to their right then takes their place in the centre and has to mime what they said they were doing (washing their hair). Someone else in the circle can then ask “What are you doing”, and the process continues.

Theme alternative: everyone must act out something relating to the theme.

12. Elephant, palm tree, monkey

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Energiser, funny, active	10 - 15 minutes	None	10+ Whole group	8+

Everyone stands in a circle. This game involves three people creating a figure using set actions. Before you start, demonstrate the actions to the group:

- Elephant – person in the middle creates a trunk by waving an arm in front of their face. People either side create ears by holding their arms in semi-circles to the side of the person in the middle.
- Palm tree – person in the middle creates the trunk by standing with their arms stretched above their head and waves their hands. People either side create the leaves by waving their arms to the side.
- Monkey – person in the middle creates the face by sticking out their tongue and pulling at the sides of their ears. People either side create the arms by scratching their armpits with their outside arms.

To begin the game, someone stands in the middle of the circle and points to someone, calling “elephant”, “palm tree” or “monkey”. That person and the people wither side of them then have to do the actions for that figure. The last person to do the action, or the person that does a wrong action, then replaces the person in the middle of the circle.

Once everyone is familiar with those actions, you could add more figures:

- Fish in a bowl – person in the middle puts their hands together and moves back and forth to create the fish. People wither side create the bowl by making a circle with their arms around the middle person.
- Helicopter – person in the middle creates the blades by holding their arms out horizontally and turning around. The people on either side create the body by bobbing down into a crouched position.
- Toaster – person in the middle jumps up and down to create the toast. People on either side create the toaster by holding their arms out around the middle person.

13. The question game

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Reflective, stationary	15 - 30 minutes	Slips of paper to write questions on, bowl for each group	5+ Whole group or smaller groups if more than 8 people	12+

Write out some questions on slips of paper, fold them in half and put them in a bowl. They could be general getting to know you questions, e.g. 'if you were an animal, what animal would you be?', or more deep questions, e.g. 'do you believe in God?'

If you have more than 8 people, split up into groups of 4-7 people. Explain that the game should include periods of silence for reflection. Each group sits in a circle with a bowl of questions in the middle. One person will take a question and read it out. After some time for thought, they will answer the question aloud. Then anyone else can answer the same question, leaving periods of silence in between each answer. When it seems that everyone who wants to answer has done so, another person will take another question and repeat the process.

Theme alternative: write questions that all relate to the theme. You could also use this game as a discussion starter.

14. Magic blob

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Creative, funny, stationary	5 - 10 minutes	None	5+ Whole group	5+

Stand in a circle. One person starts by taking the 'magic blob', imaginary material used to make anything, and shaping it into something, e.g. a hat. This is done in silence. Everyone else then tries to guess what it is before the blob is passed onto the next person, who then remakes it.

Theme alternative: everyone has to shape the magic blob into something that relates to the theme.

15. Group drawing

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Reflective, creative, stationary	10 - 20 minutes	Paper, pens, pencils, or crayons, chalk	2+ Whole group	5+

Each person has access to crayons, colours and sheet of paper in the middle for all to draw something which links together- the group might need to talk about this as they are doing it.

Theme alternative: encourage everyone to think about the theme as they draw.

16. This speaks to me

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Reflective, creative, stationary	10 - 15 minutes	Buttons, pebbles or other similar objects	4+ Whole group	5+

Put the buttons, pebbles, or other objects in the centre of the circle. Invite everyone to choose the object that most speaks to them – if there are very young people you could say the object they like the best. Everyone sits back in a circle and sits in silence. Invite people to share why they chose their object, leaving space for reflection between each contribution.

17. The weather game

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Reflective, stationary	10 - 15 minutes	None	2+ Whole group	8+

Everyone sits in a circle. One by one, everyone shares how they are feeling through a weather description. For example, “I am feeling cloudy with a bit of rain because I’m a bit confused, but some ideas are starting to fall into place,” or “I’m feeling sunny with a rainbow because I’ve had a big realisation.”

Theme alternative: everyone shares how they are feeling about the theme, or something specific to do with the theme, using a weather description.

18. Sacred spaces

Game type	Timing	Equipment	Group size	Ages
Reflective, creative, stationary	20 - 30 minutes	Postcards of scenery, landscapes etc. Card, pens, pencils, scissors, glue	5+ Whole group, or pairs if more than 8 people	5+

Put out a selection of postcards of scenery, landscapes, etc. Ask people to choose one that they like. In pairs, or in the whole group, share why you choose it, what do you like about it?

Ask them to think of somewhere where they feel ‘spiritual’ – this could be up a mountain, in a park, at meeting, on their own somewhere. Give each person a piece of card and ask them to create their own ‘postcard’ representing their sacred space/special place with the art materials. When they’ve finished ask them to pair up with someone and share their picture, or share in the whole group.

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About this resource

This games resource is a supplement to *Journeys in the Spirit* and can be used for work with children and young people aged 5-18.

Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

The children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5–12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

The youth edition for work with 12-18 year olds comes out yearly.

You can subscribe to *Journeys in the Spirit* by contacting the CYP administrator using the details below, or go to <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/journeys-in-the-spirit-subscription> and fill out the form.

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