

# Friendship Juggle



Play a simple game with a partner to practice friendship skills | FOCUS: EMPATHY & ACTIVE LISTENING

## Objective

Students will increase empathy skills as they practice sharing similarities and differences and active listening in this ball toss game. Learning to take turns and build common ground are important to building relationship skills.

## Time

45 minutes

## Materials

Bean bags or rolled up socks (optional)  
Blank paper  
Crayons or colored pencils

## Extension

Pairs can create and perform a special handshake or greeting to the class.

Pairs can draw a special flag with symbols to show connection and display it.

## ENGAGE

Making a new friend is easier when we learn something special about them. Did you know that making conversation with people can be hard even for adults? How do you know what to share about yourself or what to ask the other person? Actively listening by tuning in to the other person takes practice we call this active listening.

### 3 A's of Active Listening:

**ATTENTION**- Listen to not just the words but also pay attention to the speaker's face and body language.

**ATTITUDE**- Be open and encouraging so the speaker will share with you.

**ADJUSTMENT**- Adjust to the style of the speaker. Try matching your energy level to show empathy for the speaker.

In this activity we will toss bean bags and take turns speaking and listening to a partner. The skill we are developing today is Empathy.

## ACTIVATE

The two important building blocks of friendship are the ability to care about another person (**Empathy**), and the willingness to take turns (**Reciprocity**). An important skill of Empathy is **Active Listening**. This kind of listening takes a lot of focus. Tossing a bean bag can help students get into a rhythm and also practice taking turns asking a question and answering with their whole attention.

- Pair up students and provide pairs with bean bags or rolled up socks and **Friendship Juggle Questions**

on **Sheets 1 or 2**. First person holding the bean bag asks their partner an open-ended question.

- Second person catches the bean bag and answers the question, then asks their partner a new open-ended question.
- Use a bell or other signal to stop the action and call out questions or display questions on a screen. If needed, use a timer to give equal time to each student to answer the question.
- Pairs take turns answering and tossing the bean bag. As students get the rhythm of tossing and answering and actively listening to their partner, the teacher can stop timing and display remaining questions as appropriate.



## VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

If you are teaching virtually:

- Ask students to find socks at home and make a sock ball.
- To take turns, call out the first student's name and pretend to "toss" a ball to them. They can pretend to "catch" the ball (tossing the socks in their room). Then the student answers the question.
- Continue "tossing" and taking turns answering questions.
- Students can go into small breakout rooms if appropriate to practice active listening.

### Virtual Classroom Extension

Pairs create a virtual "greeting" handshake with emoji or silent signals with hands.



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## REFLECT

After all the groups have finished the activity, ask reflection questions in the whole group or have them write a reflection in their journal.

- *How did it feel to have someone actively listen to you? And in reverse-- how did it feel to really focus on another person and actively listen?*
- *What's harder for you: speaking about yourself or listening to your partner?*
- *What's something you learned about yourself in **Friendship Juggle**?*
- *What is one thing you learned about your partner?*
- *How does **Friendship Juggle** help you make friends?*
- *What skills here can you use later for making friends?*

Share with students the idea of a “**Friendship Mindset**” A friendship mindset is the perspective that anyone can be a friend. Not everyone will end up becoming a close friend, but we can get along with most people if we try. What if we shifted our thinking to a “Friendship Mindset?”

In a **Friendship Mindset**:

- *Everyone here is a potential friend.*
- *Friends can be different from us.*
- *Being friendly encourages others to be friendly.*

When you have a **Friendship Mindset** when you are with others, you might be surprised sometimes that people are friendlier. And you may discover new friends in people you didn't expect. Let's look for opportunities to make friends with people who are different from us.

Using Empathy, Active Listening and **Friendship Mindset** can help you make friends.

## EVEN MORE LEARNING

Now that your students have an understanding of the building blocks of friendship, you can deepen their engagement with one another and foster empathy-building with Red Nose Day in School's **Everyday Heroes Classroom Routine**.

This flexible routine honors students who are showing empathy and kindness every day. Students nominate a classroom Everyday Hero each week, and the child that's selected receives a certificate and their name on the classroom poster. This activity will build classroom community while helping students recognize the goodness in each other. **You can download this free routine at [RedNoseDayinSchool.org](https://www.rednosedayinschool.org).**



Grades 2-5

Lesson 2  
MAKE A FRIEND  
Questions Sheet 1

# Friendship Juggle



cut on line give questions to each group

## FRIENDSHIP JUGGLE QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

- If you were a superhero, what would your superpower be?
- If you could be invisible for one day only, what would you do?
- If you could rename fruits, what would you call them?
- What makes a nice friend?
- If you could create a new color, how would it look? What would you call it?
- What foods do you love and why?
- What's the first thing you want to do when you're at the beach?
- What makes you awesome?

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IN SCHOOL

# Friendship Juggle



cut on line give questions to each group

## FRIENDSHIP JUGGLE QUESTIONS FOR OLDER STUDENTS

- What are some of your top traits? Why those?
- What's the difference between smart and wise?
- If you could change the world, how would you do it?
- What are you looking forward to the most about growing up?
- Where is your favorite place to spend time?
- Did you ever get your feelings hurt? How did you deal with it?
- Out of everything you learned as a kid, what do you think you'll find most useful as an adult?

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# 3A's of Active Listening:

## ATTENTION

Listen to not just the words but also the face and body language.

## ATTITUDE

Be open and encouraging.

## ADJUSTMENT

Adjust your listening to the style of the speaker.

# Friendship Mindset

Everyone here is a potential friend.

Friends can be different from us.

Being friendly encourages others to be friendly.

With a **Friendship Mindset**:

People are **friendlier**.  
You **may discover friends** you didn't expect, even with people who are different from you.

