

NCR-SARE PDP - Favorite Hands-On Activities Shared by Educators
Grand Island, NE
June 6, 2012

1. Activity: Penny Ice-Breaker and others

Shared by Laura Kieser, MN

- A. Have a coffee mug or bowl of pennies with different years on them
- B. Pass around so that each person gets a penny
- C. Take turns, giving each person a chance to share something significant in their life during the year on their penny.
 - a. If they were not born yet by the year they got on their penny, they can share something about a family member or ask the group to share something in that year.

Laura tries to help the women find that comfortable space at the start of each course. She tells them about herself and shares that she is still learning more about all the topics that will be covered, too.

Since women are usually asked to introduce themselves each week for the benefit of the guest instructors, she tries to mix it up.

- Bring a favorite ag magazine to share during the intro
- Ask them to tell their favorite tractor along with their name, ect...
- Ask them to bring a photo to share, can show these on the screen too, or make a collage

Laura communicates each week via email. She shares relevant resources with the group and encourages them to send her resources they like to share with the other women.

2. Activity: Fruit Groups and the Meaning of Words

Shared by Willie Huot, ND

To encourage women to meet new people in the class:

- A. Offer bowls of various kinds of fruit
- B. Ask the women to sit/group with others who chose the same fruit to enjoy for a snack

To help women realize the difficulty we sometimes have in understanding others:

- A. Tell them you will give them a word, and you would like them to think of as many synonyms or short definitions as they can in the next 60 seconds.
- B. Give them all the same word. It might be “empowerment” or “farm”
- C. They will come up with many different definitions. Give each table/group 1 point for each same definition.
- D. Then ask them to choose a word of their own. Give them 60 seconds to define it.
- E. The scores will go up a little, but still they will have many definitions.

This helps illustrate that family communication can be difficult. People assign different meanings to even common words. So we have to work carefully to make sure we are understood and not make assumptions about shared meaning of words. This takes 15 minutes.

3. Activity: Silly Putty – “Take it Slow” and Ring and Chain – “It’s All in the Details”

Shared by Ruth Hambleton, IA

Today, Silly Putty is made out of soybeans. Let the women play with the Silly Putty. What happens if you stretch the Silly Putty too fast? It snaps or breaks. What happens if you stretch the Silly Putty slowly? It lengthens into a long strand. Take it slow - farm families need to be stretched slowly – introduce new ideas, methods over time so family members don't snap or break. But even if there is a break-down, we can put families back together and try again, just like we can put the Silly Putty back together.

4. Ring and Chain – Decision Making and Pay Attention to the Detail

Shared by Ruth Hambleton, IA

Ruth says she will look for the original instructions for the ring and chain slight of hand demonstrations – she has used them a long time, and is not sure she can locate the original directions!

Information + Knowledge = Decisions

Incorrect Info + Knowledge = Bad Decisions

Correct Info + No knowledge = Bad Decisions

Correct Info + Knowledge = No Guarantees

- A. The chain is fluid. It's always moving and changing just like information. The ring is a circle of knowledge, its solid, we want it to grow. It's the combination of good information and good knowledge that helps us make good decisions. To illustrate, if she does everything right, the chain will catch the ring, everything comes together. But still there are no guarantees. She still might drop the ring. And others have a different perception. Even though everyone observed Ruth doing this, they may think she did something differently. With a little encouragement, we can teach others to catch the ring. That is what happens when information and knowledge comes together, it is with-in everyone's reach.
- B. Use Ruth's second demonstration with the ring and chain, which was a bit like Cat's Cradle or crocheting, to introduce hard topics, like grain marketing. Somebody will always get it quicker than others, but with practice and patience, everyone can learn to do this. Demonstrate and let the women try on their own.

5. Get Over It

Shared by Ruth Hambleton

As a way to encourage change and positive thinking, Ruth asked the audience to re-assure themselves by saying "Get Over It". I'll ask her to share her lines, and you can make up your own too.

6. Activity: Annie's Project is "Hands-On"

Shared by Melissa O'Rourke, Sioux County, IA - From Heidi Carter, Page County, IA

You will need cutouts of a hand for all participants and pens or markers . Ask the women to work at their small group tables.

(OR, have colored paper and markers and ask them to draw their hand)

- A. Say, Annie's Project is "Hands On." Take a hand and pen and write on the hand.

- On the palm, write your name.
- On the thumb, write the name of the town in your address.
- On the index finger, write down your favorite chore on the farm.
- On the middle finger, write down one thing you can teach your fellow participants.
- On the ring finger, write down your favorite flower.
- On the pinky, write down with whom you will share what you learn in Annie's Project.

B. The facilitators will go first. Ask each person to share what they wrote.

- My name is Heidi Carter. I live in Clarinda. My favorite chore was checking the herds. I can teach someone how to make quick breads. My favorite flower is a rose. I will share what I learn with Tim.
- The facilitators may need to stand at each table and crowd the participants while they are sharing with others at their table. You don't want sharing to turn into story telling.

7. **Numbers** (This is about communication, but don't tell them that at first!)

Shared by Lynn Heins, MO

- Pass out two copies of the numbers sheet for each participant.
- Tell them you would like them to find and circle the numbers in order, 1, 2, 3 and so on, and to get as far as they can in 30 seconds.
- Ask how far they got.
- Now tell them to fold the next paper into fourths. They now have quadrants. Tell them you are going to give them a little bit more information. They should start in quadrant one and work clockwise to find the numbers consecutively in each quadrant as they go around.
- Ask how far they got.
- With a little more information, direction or instructions, they were able to do the job much more effectively. The same is true on family farms. Even a little bit better directions can help family members and employees do their work so much better, or understand things a lot better. This takes 15 minutes. Lynn says it's a good one before discussing leases.
- See sheet of numbers example on next page.

29	9	93	42	78	14
	81	69	18		
			6	38	58
73					66
	17	37		54	
			10		34
21	5		22	82	62
					70
65	45	89		46	94
					90
41	53	25	50	74	2
85				86	
		57			98
	49		30		26
36				79	
		28	43		35
	52		95	3	47
72					59
		44		67	19
32	8		11		51
	24			39	7
12	20	60	71		27
				99	
68					87
	76	88	15	55	20
84		56			75
	92		83		91
	4			63	31