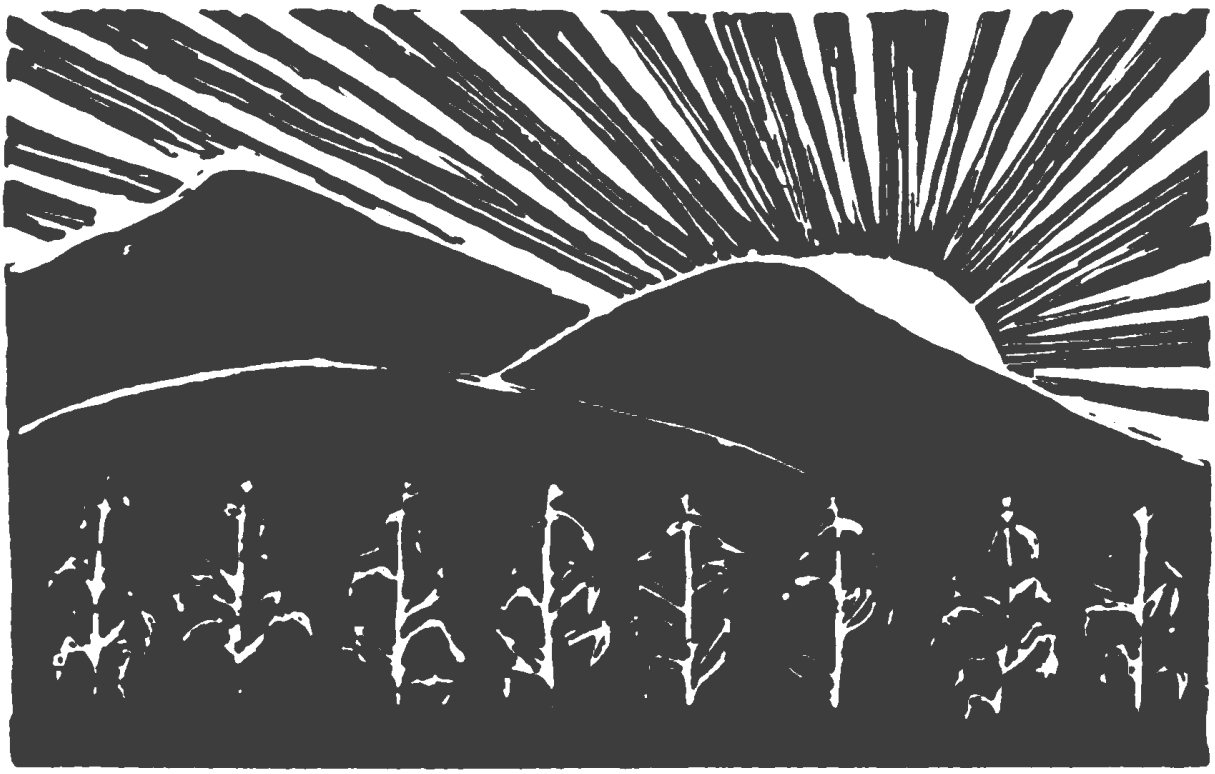
An Introduction to Popular Education



Community Capacitation Center

Multnomah County Health Department

N. Wiggins, Multnomah County Health Dept., 1999.

An Introduction to Popular Education

Workshop Objectives

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- ❖ Increase their understanding of the main sources, the ultimate goal, the principles, and the values of popular education (PE)
- ❖ Be able to use several PE methods and understand how those methods support and embody the principles and values of PE
- ❖ Understand and be able to use the action-reflection-action (or practice-theory-practice) circle in PE

Workshop Agenda

• Introduction	15 min
• Dinámica	20 min
• Brainstorming: What do we already know about Popular Education?	30 min
• Dinámica	10 min
• Radio Play: History of Popular Education	30 min
• Break	15 min
• Cooperative Learning: Reflection on Radio Play	45 min
• Lunch	50 min
• Dinámica	10 min
• Sociodrama/Problem Posing: Identifying the Problem and Developing Critical Consciousness	60 min
• Break	10 min
• Dinámica	10 min
• Cooperative Learning: Moving to Action	15 min
• Evaluation	15 min
• Conclusion	5 min

Brainstorming and Sociodramas

Ground Rules for Brainstorming

- All ideas are accepted without judgment.
- There are no right or wrong answers.
- As much as possible, the facilitator should write down exactly what people say. (This means: Don't try to improve on other people's ideas!)

Think, Pair, Share (to prepare for brainstorming)

- Think . . . about the question individually
- Pair . . . off to discuss question
- Share . . . with the group what was said in pairs

Problem – Posing Questions (for use after sociodramas)

- What did you see (in the picture, in the skit, etc.)?
- What is the problem?
- What is the cause of the problem?
- How does this problem affect our community?
- How can we work together to resolve this problem?

Essential Elements of a Successful Role–Playing Activity

- Prepare participants for role–playing. Provide either information or a model.
- Create short scenarios ahead of time.
- Ask for volunteers.
- Give volunteers the scenario and tell them how much time they have. When appropriate, give them a few minutes to prepare.
- Don't let role–plays run long. Call them if necessary.
- Analyze the role–plays:
  - ❖ Ask participants what went well and how to improve.
  - ❖ Ask the observers what went well and how to improve.
  - ❖ Give your own feedback.

N. Wiggins, Multnomah County Health Dept., 1999.

Steps for Planning and Conducting a Popular Education Class

Before the class

⇒ Identify several key points people need to know or skills they need to possess.
Example: People need to know three methods for doing outreach.

⇒ Turn the key points into learning objectives.
Examples: "By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to name three methods for doing outreach."

⇒ Identify some methods for teaching the knowledge and skills in an interactive way.
Examples: Role plays, skits, cooperative learning activities, games.

⇒ Develop a lesson plan with time allotments. (See attached lesson planning form.)

⇒ Prepare materials.

During the class

⇒ When you arrive at the workshop site, create a welcoming physical space.
Examples: Arrange chairs in a circle, make sure the temperature is comfortable, provide food.

⇒ When you are ready to start, do an activity to help people feel at ease. (See attached list of dinámicas.)

⇒ Find out what people already know.

⇒ Fill in the gaps in knowledge and skills with interactive activities.

⇒ Give people a chance to practice what they have learned.

⇒ Evaluate the class.

N. Wiggins, Multnomah County Health Dept., 1999.

Things to Do In the Introduction to a Popular Education Class

⇒ Welcome people to the presentation. Thank them for inviting you to present.

⇒ Introduce yourself. Explain who you are, what you do now, and your experience with the topic of the presentation (i.e. develop your credibility).

⇒ If you are **not** going to do a *dinámica de presentación* (introduction game), ask participants to go around and introduce themselves now.

⇒ Present the **objectives** for the presentation.
Reason: If people know what they are supposed to learn from a class, they are more likely to learn it.

⇒ Present the **agenda** for the presentation.
Reason: When people know what is coming, they can relax and get into the presentation. Also, presenting the agenda further establishes your credibility. It demonstrates that you know what you are doing.

⇒ Explain that you will be using **Popular Education**. Explain that this methodology may be new to some people, but that they can relax and enjoy themselves.

⇒ Explain a little about the **origins and philosophy of Popular Education**.
Example: "Popular Education comes from Latin America. It was developed to teach poor farmers to read and write. Some of the main ideas of Popular Education are: 1) We are all teachers and we are all learners; 2) Everyone knows a lot as a result of her/his life experience; and 3) The goal of education should be to create healthier communities."

⇒ Ask people if they have any questions before you proceed.

⇒ Proceed to the *dinámica de presentación*.

N. Wiggins, Multnomah County Health Dept., 1999.

Cooperative Learning Methodology

Why use Cooperative Learning?

In order to make our communities healthier and better places to live, it is essential that we all work together. We need everyone's skills, opinions, and ideas. Cooperative Learning methodology helps us gain the skills we need to work together effectively.

Where does Cooperative Learning come from?

Cooperative Learning was developed by two brothers, David and Roger Johnson. It was developed for use in public schools in the U.S., but it has been used successfully with groups of all ages in many parts of the world. The best short book about Cooperative Learning is called *Circles of Learning.*

BASIC PRINICIPLES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

1. A large group is divided into small groups of 3 – 6 participants. Four is the ideal number of group participants.
2. Everyone in the group is assigned a role. Roles are chosen and designed to give people an experience of success.
3. The group is given a task.
4. In order for the group to complete the task, everyone must participate.
5. Everyone has a responsibility to assure that everyone participates.
6. Before participants can ask the facilitator a question, they must ask other members of their group.
7. On–going skill development is an essential part of cooperative learning. This means that after each activity, we talk about how our group functioned and how it can function better. We also spend time talking about how to be successful in all roles.
8. Over time, all participants have the opportunity to play all the roles.

STRUCTURE OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING GROUPS

1. Facilitator
    a. Animates and motivates the group.
    b. Keeps the group on task.
    c. Makes sure everyone is heard.
    d. Asks for consensus.
    e. Provides helpful and supportive feedback.
2. Recorder
    a. Keeps notes of the group's work, either on newsprint or notebook paper.
3. Reporter
    a. Shares the group's work and ideas with the larger group.
4. Timekeeper
    a. Makes sure group completes the task within the time provided.
5. Observer
    a. Pays special attention to how the group is working together, i.e., Is everyone participating? Is anyone dominating the group?
    b. After the activity, shares her/his observations with the group.

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Note: To order books from the Hesperian Foundation, visit http://hesperian.org/. Many of the other books on this list are available from bookfinder.com or at Amazon.com.

Dinámicas
for Popular Education

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Community Capacitation Center
Multnomah County Health Department
March 1999

N. Wiggins, Multnomah County Health Dept., 1999.

Introduction

"Dinámicas" are games used in Latin American popular education. They are also commonly used by popular educators in the U.S. Unlike the "icebreakers" used in the U.S., dinámicas are used intentionally with a specific purpose. They can be short or long, simple or complicated, funny or more serious. I learned the dinámicas included in this booklet while working in El Salvador from 1986-1990. Many of them are also included in a book called, *Dinámicas Para la Educación Popular* (Dinámicas for Popular Education) published by Alforja, a Costa Rican publisher of materials for popular education.

I hope that you will enjoy the dinámicas in this booklet and use them often!

Noelle Wiggins
March 1999

DINÁMICAS WITH A LOT OF MOVEMENT

Piña y Naranja/Pineapple and Orange

Purpose: To help people get to know one anther's names
Seating Pattern: Everyone seated in a circle
Number of Participants: Can be done with as few as six, but works better with 10 or more. Can be done with a very large group (40 or more).

Process: The leader stands in the center of the circle. Go around the circle and have everyone say her/his name. The leader points to someone and says "piña" or "naranja." If the leader says "piña," the person must say the name of the person on her/his ***right***. If the leader says "naranja," the person must say the name of the person on her/his ***left***. If the person says the wrong name or takes too long, s/he comes to the center and becomes the leader.

If it appears that everyone knows the names of the people to their right and left, then the leader can say "canasta revuelta," (fruit basket turnover.) Everyone must get up and find another seat. While they are moving, the leader finds a seat. Whoever is left in the middle becomes the leader.

Los Vecinos/The Neighbors

Purpose: To help people get to know one another's names; animation
Seating Pattern: Everyone seated in a circle
Number of Participants: At least 8; can be done with as many as 20-30.

Process: The leader stands in the center of the circle. Go around the circle and have everyone say her/his name. The leader asks someone in the circle, "¿Te gustan tus vecinos?" (Do you like your neighbors?) If the person answers "yes," then everyone stays where they are. If the person answers "no," then the leader asks, "¿Con quién quieres cambiar?" (With whom would you like to exchange?) The person who is asked names another person on the other side of the circle. Then, the neighbors of the person asked and the neighbors of the person named must switch places. ***The person asked and the person named do not move***. In the meanwhile, the leader also looks for a place to sit. Whoever is left standing becomes the leader and must ask, "¿Te gustan tus vecinos?"

Regálame Fuego/Give Me a Light

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: Participants seated in a circle

Number of Participants: This dinámica works best with more than 8 people and can be done with very large groups.

Process: The leader stands in the middle of the circle. S/he goes to someone sitting in the circle and says, "Regálame fuego. (Give me a light.)" The person says, "Vaya al otro rancho. (Try the next house.)" The leader continues to ask for a light and people continue to send her/him away for awhile. Then, someone who is asked for a light answers by saying, "¡Se me quemó el rancho! (My house burned down!)" At this point, everyone in the circle has to get up and find another chair. The leader also tries to get a chair. Whoever is left standing in the middle of the circle then becomes the leader and has to go around asking for a light.

Me Voy A Paris/I Am Going to Paris

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: Participants standing in a circle
Number of Participants: 4-12

Process: The leader stands in the circle with the rest of the group. The leader turns to the person to her/his left and says, "Me voy a Paris. (I am going to Paris.)" The person to her/his left responds by asking, "¿A qué? (What for?)" and the leader answers, "A comprar un molino. (To buy a mill.)" The leader starts to crank an invisible mill with her/his right hand. The person to her/his left responds with pleasure or surprise or horror, as desired. Then s/he turns to the person to her/his left and says and does the same thing. Continue around the circle 'till everyone has spoken and everyone is cranking an invisible mill.

Continuing to crank the invisible mill, the leader says to the person to her/his left, "My voy a Boston (or wherever). (I am going to Boston.)" The person asks again, "¿A qué? (What for?)" and the leader answers, "A comprar una silla mesadora. (To buy a rocking chair.)" The leader starts to rock back and forth, while still cranking the mill. Continue around the circle in the same manner.

Continue to add more actions until the group is tired. Other things to buy include: *una bicicleta* (a bicycle), and *una hoola* (a hoola hoop).

El Pueblo Manda/The People Rule (or Say)

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: Any formation
Number of Participants: From 1 to 100+!

Process: This game is somewhat like Simon Says but it is not exactly the same. The leader stands in front of the group where everyone can see him/her. S/he explains that when s/he does an action (like tapping his/her head with his/her hand) and says "El pueblo manda que hagan esto (The people say do this)" everyone should do that action.

However, if s/he does an action and only says, "Que hagan esto (do this)" without mentioning the *pueblo*, then no one should do it. The leader begins to do actions and say "El pueblo manda que hagan esto. (The people say do this.)" At some point, the leader does an action and only says, "Que hagan esto. (Do this.)"

There are various possibilities when participants "mess up" and do an action that the people didn't tell them to do. These are: 1) The people who mess up have to sit down and you continue with the dinámica until only one "champion" is left standing; 2) The person who messes up has to lead the dinámica; or 3) Nothing happens and everyone just continues to do the dinámica.

Variations: Since this dinámica does not require that participants speak, you can teach the dinámica in any language. Or, you can start in one language and then switch to another. If people who mess up have to lead the dinámica, it's a good way for them to learn a few words in another language.

El Cartero Trae Cartas/The Mail Carrier Brings Letter

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: Everyone seated in a circle
Number of Participants: 6-50 (at least)

Process: The leader stands in the middle of the circle of chairs, and says, "El cartero viene de Madrid y trae cartas para todos los que tienen zapatos negros. (The mail carrier comes from Madrid and brings letters for everyone who has black shoes.)" Everyone in the circle who has black shoes must get up and find another seat. They cannot take the seat next to them. In the meanwhile, the leader also tries to find as seat. The person who is left standing becomes the leader and must say, "The mail carrier comes from (somewhere else) and brings letters for everyone who (some other characteristic)."

Elefante y Girafa/Elephant and Giraffe

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: Everyone standing in a circle
Number of Participants: 8-20

Process: The leader stands in the middle of the circle. S/he points to someone in the circle and says either "elefante" or "girafa." If s/he says, "elefante," then the person pointed to must put out his/her hands, making the trunk of the elephant. The people to her/his left and right must make the ears of the elephant by shaping their arms into large circles next to the "elephant." If the leader says, "girafa," then the person pointed to must put his/her arms up in the air to make the long neck of the giraffe. The people next to her/him must put one arm up to the giraffe and one arm down to the floor, making the legs of the giraffe. If any of the three people make a mistake or don't

respond quickly enough, that person becomes the leader and must say "elefante" or "girafa" to others.

Calles y Avenidas/Streets and Avenues

Purpose:	Physical activity and animation
Seating Pattern:	Participants stand in rows and columns, like this: . . . .
Number of Participants:	19-28
Special Note:	This dinámica requires a lot of space. It is best to do it outside.

Process: People form the rows and columns shown above. They link hands down the rows or down the columns. Linking hands one way forms "streets." Linking hands the other way forms "avenues." Two people are chosen or volunteer to be the "gato" (cat) and the "raton" (mouse). The cat chases the mouse up and down the streets and avenues and tries to catch him/her. The leader stands apart from the group and calls out "street" or "avenue." At the leader's command, the people forming the grid drop hands and then link up the other way to form the other formation. This means that just as the cat is about to catch the mouse, the grid may change and s/he may lose her/his opportunity. If the cat catches the mouse, then the mouse becomes the cat and someone else volunteers to become the mouse. The original cat gets to take that place in the grid.

Arroz, Frijoles y Maiz/Rice, Beans and Corn

Purpose:	Animation
Seating Pattern:	The group can be sitting in any formation – a circle, rows of chairs, or theater seating.
Number of Participants:	6-100+

Process: Divide the group into three sections. Explain that one section is "corn," one section is "beans," and one section is "rice." Ask each section to identify themselves by calling out their name. Explain that you are going to tell a story and that in the story you are going to mention the three names. When a section hears its name, everyone should stand up, turn around once, and sit down again. Practice this once. Then tell a story something like this:

Once upon a time there was a great ship. On the ship were many women, men and children. On the ship there was also a lot of corn, beans and rice. The ship set sail from Argentina headed for Spain. For awhile, everything went fine. The people enjoyed the lovely weather and ate lots of corn, beans and rice. But suddenly the wind started to blow and the waves started to get bigger. The corn, beans and rice in the ship's hold started to

bounce and jostle around. The people started to get worried. They said, "What will happen to us if we lose our rice? What will happen to us if there are no more beans to eat? How can we live if the corn falls overboard?" The people got very excited and ran to the ship's hold. There, they saw beans, corn and rice flying everywhere. They tried to catch the beans. They tried to catch the corn. They tried to catch the rice. As the ship neared the Spanish coast, the winds began to calm and the waves grew smaller. The people were happy! They arrived in Spain with all their corn, beans and rice intact. They took all the corn, beans and rice off the boat and shared it with the Spaniards. Everyone was happy.

Variations:

1) Other versions of this story take place in rural areas of Latin America where everyone depends on these basic food items for sustenance. Sometimes there is a plague and the food items are in danger of being wiped out. You can vary the story any way you want. The only essential is that the corn, beans and rice get mentioned often.
2) You can tell this story in any language, even a language that no one in the group speaks. They only have to learn three words in the other language in order to be able to play the game. Sometimes it is more fun if they only know three words and have to listen hard for them.

Las Lanchas/The Lifeboats

Purpose: To sort people into groups of a certain size
Seating Pattern: Everyone standing up in a circle
Number of Participants: 8-100+ (assuming the room is big enough!)

Process: The leader explains that we are on a large boat, like the "Love Boat." S/he asks everyone to follow him/her in walking around the deck. The leader explains that they are having a lovely time on board this ocean liner. The sun is shining, the band is playing, a gentle breeze is blowing, some people are swimming, etc. (Everyone makes happy noises.) Suddenly, (the leader narrates,) the waves get bigger, the wind starts to howl, and it starts to rain and thunder. The ship starts to toss and pitch in the waves. (Everyone makes scared and howling noises.) The leader continues to narrate: The captain comes on board and says that the ship is going to sink, and the lifeboats can only hold 4 (or 2 or 6 or 5 or whatever size you want), so everyone must form groups of 4 (or 2 or 6 or 5 or whatever.) People rush to form groups of the appropriate size. Those who do not join groups will "drown." But in order to get them into groups, the leader can attach them to existing groups so that everyone is "saved" (and everyone has a group!)

Onda a la Derecha/Wave to the Right

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: Everyone seated in a circle
Number of Participants: 4-100+

Process: The leader stands in the center of the circle. When the leader says, “Onda a la derecha,” (“Wave to the right,”) everyone moves one seat to the right. When the leader says, “Onda a la izquierda,” (“Wave to the left,”) everyone moves one seat to the left. When the leader says, “Tempestad,” (“Storm,”) everyone must find another seat on the other side of the circle. The leader also searches for a seat, and whoever is left in the middle becomes the leader.

Whoosh, Whoa, Zip!

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: Everyone standing up in a circle (or seated)
Number of Participants: 4-100+

Process: There are three actions in this dinámica: whoosh, whoa, and zip. The leader turns to the right or left and initiates a "whoosh" - a wave like motion using both arms accompanied by saying "whoosh!" The person who gets "whooshed" either continues the action to the person on the opposite side of him or her, or says “whoa,” putting one hand up to the "whoosher." This action will block the "whoosh." The "whoosher" must then turn to the other side and attempt to "whoosh" again. However, if that person also says "whoa," then the "whoosher" must “zip” by pointing to someone else in the circle and saying "zip!" This will start the whole cycle over again with a new "whoosher."

DINÁMICAS WITH A LITTLE MOVEMENT

Mar, Tierra y Aire/Sea, Land and Air

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: The group stands in a circle with the leader in the middle. (Can be adapted by having people sit in chairs.)
Number of Participants: 6-30+

Process: The leader throws a ball to someone in the group and says, “land” or “sea” or “air.” The person who receives the ball must name an animal that lives in that “region.” S/he must name a specific animal; for example, “bird” is not acceptable for an animal that lives in the air. Also, participants should not name animals that have already been named. If a participant cannot name an animal or names a wrong animal, s/he comes to the center to lead the dinámica.

¿Quién Empezó el Movimiento?/Who Started the Movement?

Purpose: Animation

Seating Pattern: The group stands in a circle. (Can be adapted by having people sit in chairs.)
Number of Participants: 6-30+

Process: One person volunteers to leave the room. When the person is gone, another person volunteers to be the leader. That person starts to do a movement (such as clapping hands or tapping shoulders) and everyone else follows him/her. The person who went outside is called back. S/he must stand in the middle of the circle and figure out who is leading the movement. The leader changes movements from time to time (when the person in the center is not looking) and the whole group follows. When the person in the center correctly guesses the leader, the leader goes outside and the game starts over again with a new leader.

SEATED DINÁMICAS

Este es un Perro/This is a Dog

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: The group sits in a circle.
Number of Participants: 6-12

Process: One person starts the game by turning to the person next to him/her and holding up a pen or other object and saying "This is a dog." The other person asks, "A dog?" and the first person confirms, "Yes, a dog," and hands the "dog" to the second person. The second person then turns to the third person and they repeat the same conversation. This continues around the circle until the first person is holding the object again. S/he starts the process over again, but this time s/he speaks with a definite emotion: fear, anger, frustration, sadness, etc. There's nothing to figure out in this dinámica and no one wins or loses. The point is to be as dramatic and funny as possible.

Variation: Instead of saying, "This is a dog," the first person asks, "Me compra este patito?" ("Will you buy this duck?") The second person asks, "Y pica?" ("Does it bite?") and the first person replies, "No pica." The second person takes the "duck" and says, "Te lo compro." ("I'll buy it from you.")

Pablo Llama a Pedro/Paul Calls Peter

Purpose: Animation
Seating Pattern: The group sits in a circle or semi-circle. A number (beginning with "1") is placed on the floor in front of every chair except for 2. In front of these chairs, there are "namecards" for "Pablo" and "Pedro."
Number of Participants: 6-20+

Process: "Pablo" starts out the game by saying, "Pablo calls Pedro." Pedro answers "Pedro calls Pablo." They repeat this two more times. After they have done it three times, then Pedro can call another number, such as "Pedro calls Number 3." Number 3 can call any other number, or Pedro, or Pablo. If Pablo is called, s/he can **only** call Pedro. If someone (including Pablo or Pedro) makes a mistake, then s/he goes to the last numbered seat and everyone moves up one seat. The goal is to become and remain "Pablo," who is at the top of the hierarchy. (Okay, so it's not a very enlightened game, but it's fun!)

Canción del Sombrero/The Hat Song (a.k.a. The Hot Potato)

Purpose:	Review material already learned or brainstorm on a new topic
Seating Pattern:	The group stands or sits in a circle.
Number of Participants:	6-20+

Process: The leader turns on taped music or plays music on an instrument. When the music begins, the group begins to pass a hat around the circle. Everyone has to take the hat, put it on her/his head, and then pass it along. When the music stops, the person with the hat must do something, such as name a piece of information (something previously learned, like a role of a CHW) or share an idea or opinion (in answer to a question like, "What are some barriers to obtaining prenatal care?")

Variation: If for some reason people are averse to putting on a hat, you can use a potato or other object and just pass it around the circle.