

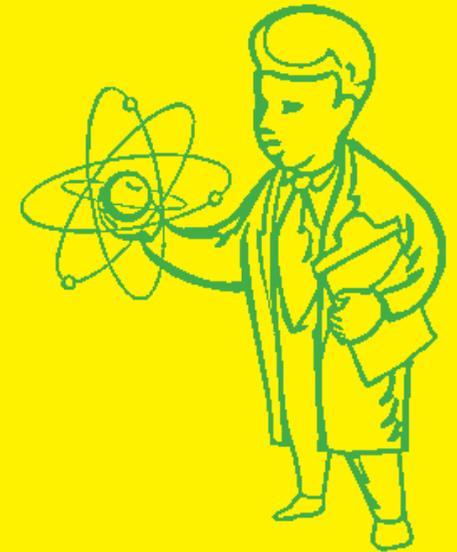
# **Book** of **facilitation** **tricks** **by AAEE** **environmental** **educators**

**Ideas to spice up your next  
workshop or gathering.**



# 69 Facilitation tricks

These were generously shared by members of the Australia Association of Environmental Education in a webinar in February 2017. Hope you enjoy them!



## Icebreakers and energisers

Tell us something we wouldn't guess about you. (Leonne)

What native animal do you feel like today? (Lisa and Doug))

Groups of 4-5: each a story about yourself, something really crazy, then report only 2-3 back in the whole room. (Liz)

Human knot - get group to reach in and join hands with others. The group then has to untangle themselves without letting go of hands. A good get physical one for later in day too. (Anni)

Similar to human knots, but using 1m lengths of rope (Anonymous)



Give yourself a fruit name that starts with the first letter of your name e.g Chantelle Cranberry. And that's your name for the day. (Chantelle)

At a recent upcycling workshop I asked everyone to draw a picture (for example a Christmas Tree) step by step on a paper plate held above their head. Participants were both adults and children. The results gave everyone a good laugh. (Anonymous)

Stack of images. Pick an image from the stack and say why it describes how you are feeling. (Leonne)

I have a pink pig toy I use for timekeeping. It makes a horrible noise but it's memorable. (Andy)

Mime your favorite hobby and people with the same hobby can chat and then introduce someone with a new hobby. (Christine)

Hokie pokie is a winner ('You put your right foot in' etc) (Sierra)

Pairs: one is the brain & one is the pen. They stand back to back and you provide a small card with a simple picture. The brain has to describe the picture but cannot use words directly related to the picture. The pen has to draw according to the picture. Very good communication ice-breaker & very funny. (Liz)

Ask people to mime their day. (Sierra)

Play scissors, paper rock with everyone in the room. When someone loses, they become the winners cheer team. You end up with two players and a very loud room! (Lena)

A great list of icebreakers here (Anni)

<http://wilderdom.com/games/Icebreakers.html>

Cosumes: I dress as a Princess bee when facilitating native bee workshops and people laugh and relax and we have great props for them to use. (Lyn)



Room map. One corner in the room is Perth, one is Darwin, one is Sydney and one is Hobart. Everyone has to arrange themselves in a kind of map of where they come from. (Jacqui)

Share your story about how you first got interested in working on the environment. It can bring up lovely childhood memories. (Nicola)

Describe their favourite natural place and why. (Jacqui)



I was once asked to draw something that represented my feelings of belonging in the environment and then tell a story about how the drawing came about. (Ruth)

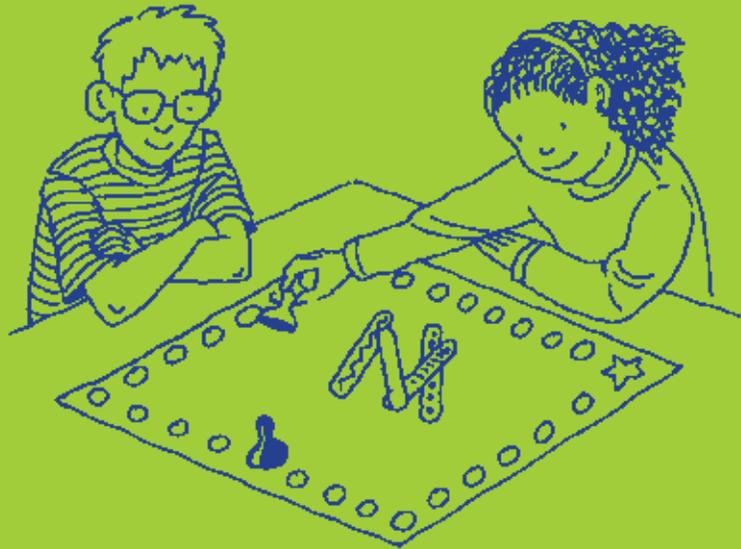
Share one highlight from the last year and one thing you are super excited about in the next. (Nicola)

From Sierra: Share stories and lessons with a prop on a table. People must pretend it's a key aspect of the story they are sharing. It's funny and the miming focusses the audience and breaks down barriers. (Sierra)

A simple technique from Joanna Macy's "The Work that Reconnects" called Open Sentences. In pairs, each person finishes a sentence you give everyone eg "The most important thing that happened to me this week.." and the other one is not allowed to talk, just listen. (Lisa)

Best, Worst, Grateful: the best thing that happened in your work, the worst and why you were grateful for the worst. (Doug)

Go around the group making a story but everyone only gets to say one word. (Anonymous)

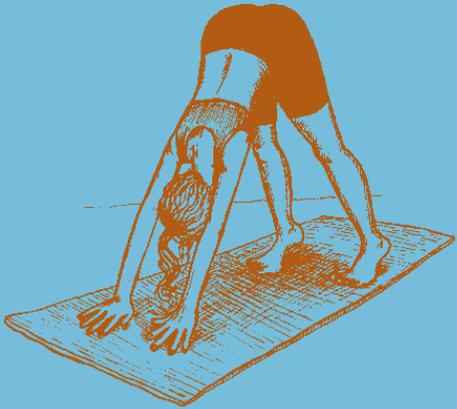


Get people to think of metaphors for their last period of time e.g. year, and explain why. (Sierra)

What you did for Christmas, a recent innovation & upcoming highlights. (Andy)

Wearing costumes ie Enviro Girl with my partner in Crime, Library Fairy, as part of an Ecoliteracy event.

Having a cartoonist capture ideas and thoughts during the gathering.  
(Denise)



Every now and then, stop everyone stand up and do simon says.  
(Nicola)

Circle of love: Say something you enjoy about the person to your left  
(awkward and funny) (Rhiannon)

Ask people to go outside and bring something back and explain why they  
chose it. (Lyn)

A quick guided meditation. (Alina) Or yoga! (Sierra)

Give people clay to use to represent their ideas and focus their thoughts.  
(Sierra)

When everyone gets too sleepy, my colleague makes everyone have  
a nap. (Lisa)

In a circle, people look at ground, then on “heads up” look into someone else’s eyes. If 2 people are looking at each other, they scream and are both out. Continue to see who is last - hilarious. (Anni)

Bring modelling clay to create or workshop ideas. (Denise)



Ask people to describe their perfect day, then incorporate as much as possible of that into your event. (Leonne)

Count to 10 by individuals shouting out numbers - if two people say a number at once you have to start again. (Nicola)

Game of what you prefer e.g. black or white, smooth or rough. Each person moves to the side of the room with the label they prefer. (Anonymous)

Plug in your phone to a portable speaker and play Kate Bush when you want people’s attention (Liz)

Bring along a box full of stimuli for people to enjoy during small breaks. (Sierra)

# Inspirations

The Blessed Unrest video by Paul Hawkins <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iW8BytViI54> (Lisa)

A relevant Monty Python clip.

A clip of all the amazing things that happened last year that people might not know about like animals that are no longer endangered, diseases that now have cures, problems that have been solved, increases in green energy, government resolutions. (Leonne)



Make a timeline of monumental environmental moments with everyone adding to it. Actually see how much has been achieved, big or small. (Anni)

Poems by Mary Oliver or Gary Snyder (Lisa)

Videos of amazing natural phenomena ie sometimes David Attenborough or having natural objects around the space- props or people finding something from outside that inspires them.

Bring along bamboo pieces and make bee hives to take home. (Lyn)

Share success with a photo and blurb on what was achieved, to inspire others. (Chantelle)

Take home a relevant gift, a 'pay it forward' fun trophy awarded to a worthy recipient each meeting. (Denise)

Ask everyone to wear something green, a prize goes to the first person who can show they are wearing green underwear (socks can be included). (Erika) I've done this one (Sierra).

Decorate your meeting space - green tablecloth, green lanterns and flags and eat green food. (Anonymous)



## Workshopping methods

Hand out A4 paper and a coloured texture to each person. Ask them to visualise what success might look like and give them only 10 seconds to draw it then you have to ask them to pass it along. You might provide some inspiration at the front of the room or in the middle of each table for those who are not confident. Each person goes home with one. (Liz)

Celebrate success by crafting a group statement that wraps up the day and send it to the GM, mayor someone who can help make a change. (Leonne)



Ask people to brainstorm ideas with Post-it notes to a question/problem then discuss and prioritise with dot-mocracy method. (Nicola)

After a brainstorm of “What I’m doing, what I’d like to do,” every group decides on two stars and a wish - 2 things they’ve done really well and one would like to implement. Share back to group to form action plan. (Julia)

There is a program online where you can make a quiz and everyone answers the questions with SMS and their answers create a wordle. Good for open ended questions. (<https://www.polleverywhere.com> Lets people vote in online polls using text messages. “Ask the audience a question. Then watch their answers come to life on the screen.”) (Sierra)

## For Skype and webinar meetings

Don't jump straight into business, give time to create social capital and allow people to get to know each other. (Erika)

Human emojis! (Erika)

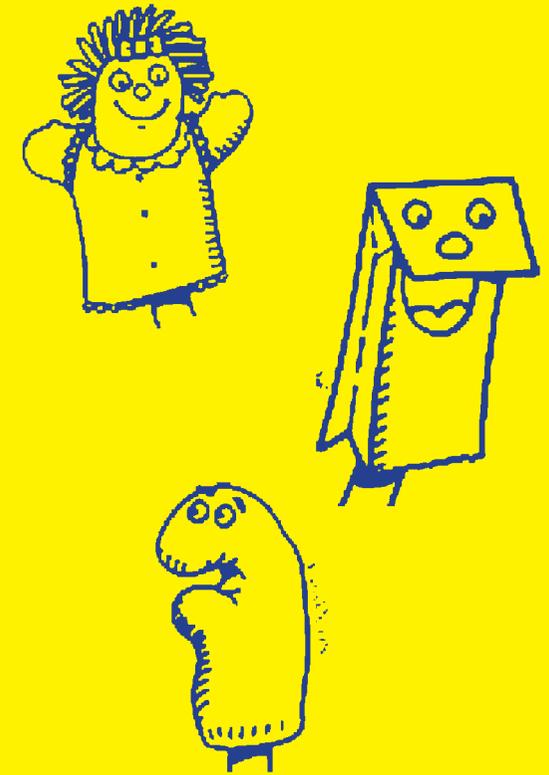
Create a snack break. Make sure people's blood sugar is at an appropriate level. (Sierra) 'Hangry' is a very real thing (Chantelle).

All wear party hats - it really works! (Liz)



Move the meeting to twitter. Use social media to create a flowing conversation. (Nic)

Each person creates a puppet or avatar for the meeting. (Sierra)

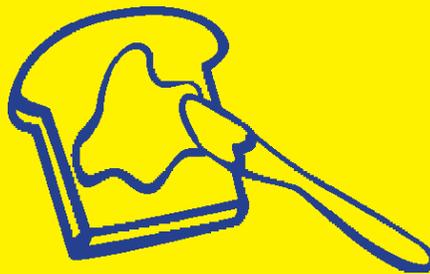


Tell them to wear the silliest hat they can find (or make one), then don't talk about the hats at all. Like an elephant in the room. (Anonymous)

Everybody brings something from their organisation - some collateral, a keep cup, hat, frisbee, whatever & everybody swaps a story. (Liz)

All bring an artefact from their lives and tell why it's special. (Ruth)

"Guess what I am wearing underneath the screen" like newsreaders in their boxer shorts. (Erika) Eek that's rather raunchy! (Liz)



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