



Skittles Starters

OVERVIEW

The participants use multicolored candies to determine their topics for conversation. This is a good check-in activity for classes or group meetings and a small-group builder for longer sessions. You can use this activity several times in one session, changing the topics each time.

Suggested Time

The length of this activity depends on the number of people in the group and the number of rounds. Two rounds in a group of six people is likely to take about 10 minutes.

Group Size

This strategy works with any size group. However, if you have more than fifteen participants, you may want to form smaller groups.

Materials Needed

- ☀ a bowl or bowls, one for each group
- ☀ a bag of multicolored candies, such as Skittles, M&M's, or jelly beans
- ☀ resource 5, "Conversation-Starters" (optional)
- ☀ newsprint and markers
- ☀ masking tape

PROCEDURE

Preparation. Empty a bag of multicolored candies into a bowl. If you have more than one group, you will need one bowl for each small group.

For each color of candy, you will need one conversation-starter. You may choose the topics from resource 5 or make up your own. Be sure that your categories can elicit multiple answers from the same person in case someone happens to choose the same color of candy each round. Write the conversation-starters on newsprint and indicate what color of candy is associated with each one. Post the list.

1. Put a bowl of multicolored candy in the middle of the group. Point out the list you posted and explain that in turn each person will pick a candy from the bowl and talk about the topic associated with the color he or she chose.

2. Ask for a volunteer to start, or choose a person at random. Hold the bowl above eye level for the first person while he or she randomly chooses a candy. Encourage the young people to listen carefully to one another and not get distracted. Be sure to include yourself in the conversation.

Go through as many rounds of conversation-starters as you have time for or the young teens have interest in.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

- ⊙ Any object that comes in multiple forms can be used for this activity. For example, you could use animal crackers and associate each animal with a category. Use all the pieces of Alpha-Bits cereal that spell out the name of your group or church, and associate each letter with a category. Or use nonfood items such as marbles, Lego bricks, or small squares of colored paper.
- ⊙ Use this as a learning or review activity by changing the categories so that they cover the material. For example, if you are teaching a group about the New Testament, you might see how much they already know by choosing topics such as these:
 - ⊙ red: something about the Gospel writers
 - ⊙ yellow: something about the friends of Jesus
 - ⊙ green: something about the New Testament letters
 - ⊙ orange: something about the parables of Jesus
 - ⊙ purple: something about the miracles of Jesus
- ⊙ You may want to end the activity by having everyone take a turn choosing the category that they want to address.

NOTES

Use the space below to jot notes and reminders for the next time you use this strategy.



Conversation-Starters

- “ something about your family ”
- “ something that is a favorite of yours ”
- “ something about school ”
- “ something your friends would say about you ”
- “ a hobby, or something you do outside of school ”
- “ a question you’ve always wondered about ”
- “ something that is a least favorite of yours ”
- “ something that makes you angry ”
- “ something you would like to ask God ”
- “ something you haven’t done that you would like to do someday ”
- “ a place you would like to visit someday ”
- “ someone you know whom you really admire ”
- “ something that caused you stress recently ”
- “ something that makes you laugh ”
- “ a historical person you would like to have known ”
- “ something your family likes to do together ”
- “ something that worried you recently ”
- “ a good thing that happened to you recently ”
- “ a not-so-good thing that happened to you recently ”
- “ something you hope to own in twenty years ”
- “ something you hope to be doing in twenty years ”
- “ a nice thing that someone did for you recently ”
- “ a nice thing that you did for someone else recently ”
- “ something that makes you happy ”
- “ a tradition in your family ”