**Using Games at the Middle School Level**

Games can be great ways to engage students in the learning process. They provide the students with the opportunities to enjoy class and put forth their best effort. The following information contains feedback from the *Student Engagement Series Part 2,* PD facilitated by Valerie Bailey on Friday January 9, 2015.

**Games are best planned when keeping these 5 points in mind:**

1. Directly connected to instruction
2. Self-correcting
3. Different levels of difficulty
4. Ways to monitor what is done
5. Element of chance

A few examples:

1. **Acrostic Competition**
   * You can use this strategy to brainstorm or review
   * Students are placed into groups (ideally 4-5 but 3 or 6 works as well)
   * Students line up facing a piece of chart paper that has a term written using the acrostic format:

|  |
| --- |
| **A M E R I C A** |

* + Students have 30 seconds to look at the term and discuss what words they will write that relate to the topic (then talking should end but you can accommodate if you’d like:

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| --- |
| **A** (Andrew Jackson)  **M** (Michigan)  **E** (Executive Branch)  **R** (Representatives)  **I** (Independent Country)  **C** (Colonies)  **A** (Alaska) |

* + Each student can only write one word then passes a marker to the person behind them then goes to the end of their line.

1. **Toss Review**
   * Use an inflatable “Beach Ball” type object
   * Students stand in an oval and toss object to a student
   * Once a student catches the object they have to say a detail they learned (teacher can design the appropriate response detail, summary, question…)
   * Students toss the object until all students have had a chance to share
2. **The $25,000 Pyramid**
   * Design an upside triangle with terms (3 bottom row, 2 middle row, 1 top row—or whatever is best in your classroom
   * Divide students into pairs, one facing the location the triangle will be shown, the other facing their partner (so their back is to the location of the triangle)
   * Once you say go, students facing the triangle have to describe the term until their partner gets it
3. **Basketball Review**
   * Obtain a small indoor basketball net and ball (ones that are foam basketballs and the net hangs on the back on a door
   * Divide students into teams
   * Show them where 1,2, and 3 points are questions are from
   * Ask students if they want a easy, medium, or hard question (1,2,3)
     1. If the spokesperson (it rotates each round) is correct they can take a shot from the appropriate location to earn bonus points
   * Explain procedures and rules about how to return the ball, no jumping , violent tossing, or defense…

I found quite a few good games using Pinterest and Google as well:

https://www.pinterest.com/mandi1m/classroom-review-games/

**Accommodations**:

* Share notes in advance with students who need
* Could be multiple terms in each box
* Pictures in certain boxes
* Separate paper with pictures, translations, sentence starters, or other hints