

Ten-Minute Time Fillers

Why do we need "time fillers" anyway?

There will be many times during a troop meeting when an activity took less time than you planned or you may find that plans have changed, leaving you with some extra time. In these instances, time fillers can help make a good meeting a great meeting! Write down a few of these time fillers on slips of paper and keep them in a box or can. If you find yourself having some spare time at your next meeting, simply have a girl select one of the time fillers and have fun! Listed in this guide are several ideas for time-fillers. You can find many more suggestions online.

Games:

Dream Machine

Start with one girl. Have her do an action (like tap her foot) and make a sound (like whistle). Add girls, one at a time, each making a different sound and doing a different movement. The girls may attach themselves to one another if they like (i.e. hand on shoulder). This game can be very loud. The girls essentially make a human machine that continually moves and makes noise. Variations: have the girls do the activity using only quiet sounds, participating with their eyes closed, etc.

Giant's House

Divide into three or four groups. Have girls rejoin into a big circle. To the tune of "Mulberry Bush," sing, "We're going to the giant's house, the giant's house. We're going to the giant' house to see what we can be." Have leader shout out something for the pre-determined groups to become such as "table and chairs," "a car," etc. When all groups are done, rejoin the circle and start singing again.

Observation Game (Kim's Game)

Gather a number of objects such as a rock, a leaf, a stick, hair barrette, etc. Place the objects on the table and cover with a bandanna. Have the entire group hide their eyes while one person removes one or two objects. The first person in the group to determine what's missing is the next "hider."

Charades

Act out book titles, characters, feelings, or whatever is appropriate for the age group.

Daffy Definitions

Give the girls big words or nonsense words and let them make up the definitions.

Simon Says - the Girls Are Great Way

Use "I fooled you" instead of "you're out." All children continue playing-no one leaves the game.

Hot and Cold

One person hides a selected object. The rest try to find it. The "hider" tells the seekers "hot" if they are near the object and "cold" if they are not. The players try to hone in on the object until someone finds it. The person who finds it becomes the next "hider."

Octopus

One player is the "octopus," the rest are "fish." The Octopus swims in the "ocean," with sticks or rocks, designating outer boundaries of the playing area, as well as the shore or goal at either end. The fish stand behind one of the goals until the Octopus calls out "Fish, fish, swim in my ocean!" At this command, the fish swim across the ocean to the opposite shore. If the octopus tags a fish, that player turns into "poisonous seaweed" and must remain rooted to the spot. The Octopus repeats the invitation to the fish who made it to the other shore. This time, the fish can be tagged by the Octopus and the seaweed. The game ends when all the fish have been tagged.

My Father Keeps a Grocery Store

The players sit in a circle. One begins by saying, "my father keeps a grocery store and in it he sells...". She gives only the initial letter of the commodity she has in mind. Example: "c" (cinnamon). All call out whatever they think the commodity to be, and the first to guess correctly is the next lead off.

Pass It On

Pretend you have an object in your hand (example: an ice cube, a lit match, a cup of tea, a snowball, etc.) Tell what it is and pass it around the circle. Have fun noticing the different ways each object is handled by the girls.

The Animal Sounds Game (This is a great game to go with *3 Cheers for Animals Journey*)

The girls form a circle. The leader picks out three or four animals that make sounds the children can imitate. The leader whispers the name of one of the animals to each of the girls. Everyone now closes her eyes and starts to make the animal sound. The girls form groups by listening for the animal sounds.

Silent Game

This game involves purposeful movement without talking—direct the girls to get in order by birth date, first or last name, height, etc.

Odds and Ends:

- Make up a new verse to an old song.
- Practice for an upcoming event such as flag ceremony or special song.
- Practice your knots with your shoelaces.
- Have joke telling session.
- Teach a magic trick.
- Act out a familiar story.
- Twenty questions.

Pretending: using your body

Pretend you are a bowl of jello, a rag doll, bacon frying, a rubber band, a tired puppy, a balloon, etc.

Pretending you are a different person

Example: your troop members are part of a news program. Have each girl become the weather girl, interviewer, entertainment reporter, anchor girl, upcoming events sports commentator. Do a newscast about Girl Scout camp activities, your troop's cookie sale, or a community service project.

Pretending: situations

What would you do if...a stranger offered you candy, you got lost in the woods, etc.

Cloud Pictures

Have children look up at the clouds and see what they think the clouds look like.

Poem Writing

Start a poem and have each person add a line until you are satisfied the poem is complete. Can be funny or serious.

Tap a Tune

One player must tap out the melody of a popular tune and the others must guess what song it is. The correct guesser gets to tap out the next song.

The "How Many Can You Fit" Game

Create a small area about the size of a cafeteria tray. Use your imagination. See how many children can fit into or onto the area.

Rain

Sit in a group and close your eyes. The leader does the following sounds in progression with the girls imitating her. Rubbing fingers together, rubbing hands together, snapping fingers, slapping alternate thighs, tapping feet alternately, then do sounds in reverse. This should sound like a rainstorm coming and going.

Alphabet Sentence

Try to make a sentence using the alphabet in order. For example: A Bad Cat Digs Eggs Frequently...

Alphabetical Songs

Each member takes a turn naming a song title alphabetically such as "Alfie", "Bingo", "Chim Chimney", etc.

Barnyard Fun

Organize girls into a circle. Go around the circle and whisper the name of a different animal into each girl's ear. With eyes closed, the girls will make the sound of the animal assigned to them and try to find other girls who are making the same sound. Once they find each other, they should stay with their group until all the girls have found their animal group. Before starting, determine how many groups you would like to make. If you plan on creating three groups, use three different animals; four groups, use four animals, etc. (For older girls, consider using familiar songs instead).

Go Around

Form a line or circle. Name a city starting with the last letter of the previous city. WiltoN, NashuA, AkroN.

Knot Game

Form a circle. Have girls extend their arms and grab the hands of two different people that are not standing next to them. Now try to untangle the "knot." People will have to step over, go under, etc. to accomplish the task. This is a great problem-solving game.

Spiral

Form a circle with everyone holding hands. Have the leader (who knows the game) let go of one hand and start walking in a tight spiral into the center of the circle with everyone following her. When the leader gets into the center of the circle, have her turn and walk out on the same spiral she walked in. When you are done, you should have your circle back, but everyone should be facing out, open and ready to experience new things.

Pantomime

Pretend you are a mime pulling a rope, trying to get out of a glass box, etc.

How would I feel if: I was scared, happy, sad, hot, cold...

How would I walk if: I had skis on, there were puddles in my way, I had a nail in my shoe...

When I grow up I would like to be: doctor, dancer, singer, teacher, camp director, garbage collector...

Three Changes

Divide your group of girls in half, each half facing each other about three feet apart. Ask each girl to observe the person opposite her. Then everyone turns away from the partner and changes three things (clothes, jewelry, hair, etc.) Then all turn back and guess what things the partner changed.

Pass the Prop

Gather everyday objects and have the girls pass them around, making it become something else. Example: a pencil becomes a ski pole, a laundry bottle becomes an earring, etc. The rest of the group guesses what it is. The more unique the object/prop, the more outrageous and mind-expanding the newly-created one will be. Encourage your girls to use their imaginations and think outside the box!

Shipwreck

You need a big space for this one. You have a rower who is blindfolded, a lighthouse keeper who will try to guide her safely to shore, and boulders that do not talk or move. The rower doesn't talk either-it wouldn't help as the noise of the surf is deafening. The rower follows the very specific directions of the lighthouse keeper, but if she hits a boulder the boulder suddenly can speak and yells, "crash!" Then new people are picked to navigate the dangerous waters.

Body English

The group is divided in half. One group attempts to use their bodies to spell out a word or phrase and the second group tries to guess what it is. No pantomiming or finger spelling.

Party Games

One person is designated as the party host; everyone else is given a specific trait or quirk that they must enter with (poison ivy, shoes too tight, a particular persona, etc.). Each person rings the doorbell and the party host tries to guess what's up (or who they are). The guest may interact with the other guests and the host to give clues.

Concentration

Two girls are secretly given two separate topics and both begin talking about their topic simultaneously without being sidetracked by the other. The trick is to be so interesting that your partner starts to listen to what you're saying and gets thrown off. Start out with a one-minute limit.

Who's Missing?

This is a great observation game for younger girls. Have the group run, jump, skip, waddle, or crawl around, mixing themselves up. On your signal have them freeze and close their eyes. When you are sure no one is looking, tap someone and have the person hide out of sight. Have the group open their eyes and see if they can guess who's missing.

Cat and Mouse

This activity works best with large groups. Divide your group into four even parallel lines, with two left over girls. Have the girls raise their arms out so their fingertips touch are touching, collectively creating a "maze." The two left over girls are the "cat" and "mouse." The cat tries to catch the mouse, who runs through the maze created by the group. Neither the cat nor the mouse may break through the "walls." On your signal, each girl makes a quarter turn to the right with fingertips touching again. (You might want to practice this a few times.) aThis shift makes it fun (and challenging) for the cat and mouse to make their way through the maze. Continue to signal the girls to make quarter turns to the right. Once the cat catches the mouse or the mouse escapes from the maze, it's time to pick new ones.

Funny Headlines

Divide the group into smaller groups of five or six girls. Have each group either create a news headline or provide the girls with real-life headlines. Have the girls arrange themselves for a "photo" that would accompany the big "news." Take the headlines and photos and put them together into a "newspaper."

Humdinger

Brainstorm a list of songs that everyone knows (Happy Birthday, BINGO, Old McDonald, etc.) Write the songs on slips of paper (each song at least twice) and pass out to the girls. Everyone hums their song and tries to find their song-mate. When found, they link arms until every one finds each other.

Car& Driver

This is a variation on the classic "trust walk." Divide girls into pairs-the one front is the car, the one in back is the driver. The car is blindfolded but may use her hands as "headlights." The driver puts her hands on the shoulders of the car and carefully guides her around. After a few minutes, car and driver switch. Add car noises and an obstacle race course, but make sure they don't try to race. Safety first!

Hand signs

Have the group stand in a circle with their eyes closed. Walk around the circle to each girl giving her one of two hand shapes (molding her hand to the right shape). With eyes closed, they must mingle and find all the others with the same hand shape and form groups. No talking allowed. This is a fun and interesting way to divide the group in half for an activity that may follow.

Forfeits or Consequences

1. Make faces in three different ways at three different people.
2. Act out a girl on the phone talking to her best friend.
3. Enter the room in three different manners.
4. Repeat 'Blue Bread' five times fast.
5. Crow like a rooster.
6. Bark like a small dog and then like a big one.
7. Quack like a duck.
8. Repeat, "Big black bear bit a big blue bug" five times fast.
9. Repeat, "Bugs black blood" five times fast.
10. Imitate a cat lapping a saucer of milk.
11. Spell your last name backwards.
12. Spell your first name backwards.
13. Laugh three different ways (Guffaw, Chortle, Titter, Giggle, Devious laugh, etc.)
14. Shake hands with three different people with three different handshakes
15. Repeat, "Shoes and socks shocked Susan" five times fast.
16. Act out a girl brushing her hair before a mirror.
17. Act out a girl putting on her makeup before a mirror.
18. Post as the Statue of Liberty
19. Rub your tummy and pat your head at the same time-then reverse.
20. Act out a dentist who is pulling a tooth that's really hard to get out.
21. Smile three different ways at three different people.
22. Act out a person driving a jeep over a very rough road.
23. Act out a babysitter taking care of a squalling baby.

Ecology

Grass Whistles

Materials: Long blades of grass from 3/8 to 1/2 inch wide.

Procedure: hold a grass blade parallel between both thumbs, held vertically and tightly press together. Blow through the vertical cracks between the thumbs and around the taut blade of grass. A squeaking whistling noise can be made.

Popping Leaves

Materials: Large green leaves without holes in them (grape leaves work well, make sure the leaves you choose are not poisonous)

Procedure: curl one hand to make a circle with your thumb and index finger. Place a large leaf flat over the circle and hit it hard with the palm of your other hand. It should make a loud "pop."

Listening

Sit with your eyes closed and listen for different sounds, such as sounds you like or dislike, occasional and constant sounds, sounds nearby or far away, sounds of the season, sounds of living things, sounds from machines, sounds that make you feel angry, sad, happy, etc. Count the number of sounds you hear in a specific time period.

Meet a Tree

Pair each girl with a partner. One is blindfolded and the other will lead her on a "trust" walk. While walking to a tree about 30 yards away, have the blindfolded girl share what she is sensing through touch and hearing. The sighted partner helps the blindfolded girl to explore a specific tree and to feel its uniqueness by asking questions like "is this tree still alive?" "Can you put your arms around the tree?" "If you rub your cheek on the bark, is it smooth or rough?"

Log survey

Pick up a log and look under it. What type of critters, soil, moisture, etc. do you see? REPLACE LOG WHEN DONE!

Litter Hunt

Divide group into teams and send them out in separate directions to pick up litter for a specific period of time. Make sure you have set up a signal (e.g. a whistle) they can hear when time is up. See who can find the most interesting litter, the most litter, the most biodegradable litter, the most recyclable litter, etc. This should open all kinds of interesting discussions.

Mini Eco-World

Define a very small area (3 inches by 5 inches) for each child. Have each child focus on her area. Have them pretend they are a bug living in their area. What kind of a neighborhood is it? Do they have any company? Is there food to eat and water to drink? Are there any enemies?

Theater Games for Young Performers

Performance

Two actors go on stage. The group leader or another actor freezes them into positions of action. The two actors stay frozen for about 5 seconds and then commence to play a scene to conclusion. Positions depicting conflict or vastly different activities, levels or attitudes initiate the most interesting scenes.

Variation: Actors are also given ages and character types before the scene begins.

Group Improvs with a Given Situation

Two to five actors are given a situation, which may or may not include a specific setting or character types and a short time to confer (30 seconds to one minute). Then they act out the situation to a conclusion. For convenience, the situations can be written on index cards.

Situations:

- Teenagers go for a roller coaster ride. All react differently.
- Bank employees get caught in the safe.
- An airplane has engine trouble.
- Washing windows on the 17th floor.
- First day working at McDonalds.
- Inexperienced waiters in a fancy restaurant.
- Elderly people go bird watching.
- Rookie firefighters go out on their first alarm.
- A hot air balloon ride.
- Small children go exploring and get locked in a closet.
- Robbers break into a bank safe.
- Watching a scary movie on a stormy night.
- Escaped prisoners stop for gas. The station attendant is old and slow.
- Passengers on an airplane discover they are sitting next to a movie star or some other famous person.
- Students in a science lab try to discover new formulas.
- Police stop a speeding car-passengers try to explain.
- Students get called to the principal's office.
- Riders get stuck at the top of a Ferris wheel.
- An elevator gets stuck. Passengers react in different ways: claustrophobia, impatience, giving birth, or heart attack.
- Girls are playing outdoors when one falls and breaks an arm. The others must decide how to help.
- Two people discover they are going to the homecoming dance with the same person.
- Family members in a car are having an argument, and then the car runs out of gas in the middle of nowhere.
- A customer wants a simple haircut/pair of shoes, but the hairdresser/clerk wants to give him/her the latest outrageous fashion.
- Girls bring home a new and very unusual pet, but their parents want it out of the house.
- While playing baseball girls break an old person's window.
- The brakes on a bus give out. On the bus are: newlyweds, a mother with a new baby, someone recovering from surgery.
- Young interns perform a complicated operation for the first time.

Thinking/Problem Solving

Are you in the 2% or 98% of the population?

Follow these instructions and answer the questions one at a time and as quickly as you can:

- Think of a number from 1 to 10.
- Multiply that number by 9.
- If the number is a 2-digit number, add the digits together.
- Now subtract 5.
- Determine which letter in the alphabet corresponds to the number you ended with (i.e. 1=A, 2=B, etc.)
- Think of a country that starts with that letter.
- Remember the last letter of the name of that country.
- Think of the name of an animal that starts with that letter
- Remember the last letter in the name of that animal.
- Think of the name of a fruit that starts with that letter.

Are you thinking of a kangaroo in Denmark eating an orange?

If not, you're among the 2% of the population whose minds are different enough to think of something else.

98% of people will answer with kangaroos in Denmark when given this exercise!

Riddles

1. If you went to bed at 8:00 pm and set the alarm for 9:00 in the morning how many hours of sleep would you get?
2. Some months have 30 days, some 28. How many have 28?
3. How many birthdays does the average person have?
4. If it takes 10 people 10 days to dig a hole, how long will it take 5 people to dig half a hole?
5. A farmer had 178 sheep. All but 9 died. How many does the farmer have left?
6. Take 2 apples from 3 apples and what do you have?
7. How much dirt may be removed from a hole that is 3 feet deep, 2 feet wide, and 10 feet long?
8. If your bedroom were pitch dark and you needed a pair of matching socks, how many socks would you need to take out of the drawer if there are 10 white socks and 10 blue socks?

ANSWERS:
1. One Hour: the alarm would go off at 9:00 pm. 2. All of them. 3. One-just like everyone else. 4. Ten days. 5. Nine. 6. You have two apples. 7. You cannot take dirt from a hole! 8. Three.

Perception

1. Hold a pencil above your friend's slightly open fist and ask her to catch the falling pencil by closing her hand. It can't be done! Try it on yourself; you will succeed. Why? It has to do with reaction time.
2. See if you can write your name if you make circular movements with your leg at the same time.
3. Roll a piece of writing paper into a tube and look through it with your right eye. Hold your left hand open on the left next to the paper. Surprise, you will discover a hole which apparently goes right through the middle of your hand!

One-Minute Mysteries

1. A man is at work. He wants to go home but he can't because the man with the mask is behind him. What kind of a job does he have?
2. It's as light as a feather, but the strongest person can't hold it for more than five minutes. What is it?
3. The more there is, the less you see. What is it?
4. You can find it in Mercury, Earth, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, but not in Venus or Neptune. What is it?
5. There are three houses. One is red, one is blue and one is white. If the red house is to the left of the house in the middle, and the blue house is to the right of the house in the middle, where's the white house?
6. What travels faster, heat or a cold?
7. A cowboy rode into town on Friday. He stayed in town for three days and rode back out on Friday. How is this possible?
8. Where on earth do the winds always blow to the south?
9. What kind of can never needs a can opener?
10. A queen bee was buzzing, a worker bee was buzzing, and a honey bee was buzzing. How many bees were in buzzing?

Answers

1. He is a baseball player and the man with the mask is the umpire.
2. Their breath
3. Fog
4. The letter R
5. Washington, DC.
6. Heat travels faster because you can catch a cold!
7. His horse's name was Friday
8. The North Pole
9. A pelican
10. One. There is only 1 "b" in buzzing.

Change of Pace

1. **RAINSTORM**

Sit in a circle and make noises that sound like a rainstorm.

Sit in a group with eyes closed. The leader does the following sounds in progression with the girls imitating her. Rubbing fingers together, rubbing hands together, snapping fingers, slapping alternate thighs, tapping feet alternately, then do sounds in reverse. This should sound like a rainstorm coming and going.

2. **PIZZA HUT**

To the tune of "Ram Sam Sam"

"Pizza hut, pizza hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken,

And a Pizza Hut (repeat)

McDonald's--McDonald's

Kentucky Fried Chicken and a Pizza Hut (repeat)

3. **LAPSIT**

Make a tight circle--shoulder to shoulder

Everyone faces left and takes one step toward the center.

On the count of three, everyone sit down on the knees of the person behind them.

4. **VIN-VANG CIRCLE**

Make a circle--hold wrist to wrist. Count off 1-2-1-2...

On "GO", all 1's lean in and 2's lean out a "balance.