

Traffic Jam

Introduction

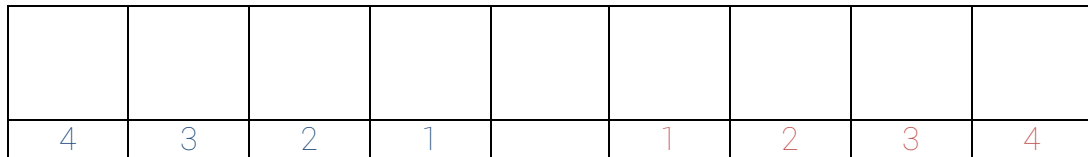
Traffic Jam is an activity that involves the use of teamwork, as well as other Essential Skills, as students try different approaches to complete the task of moving two groups of students from one end of a line to another.

Materials

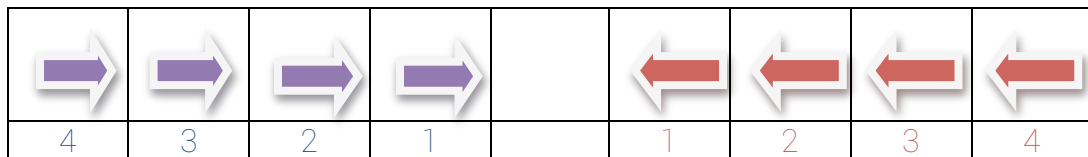
- At least nine "spot" markers (as an alternative you can use pieces of paper, tape, chalk, or use the square floor tiles as spots).

Instructions

- Place spot markers on the floor. The squares should be set up on the floor as follows:



- Divide students into two equal groups. If there are an odd number of students, one student can serve as a traffic cop or coach. That student can observe and give feedback to the group to help them solve the problem.
- Have students stand on a square (with one student to a square) facing the other group. To start, leave the square in the middle empty. The initial setup should look like this:



- The goal is to get students standing in the red squares to where the students in the purple squares are and vice versa.
- Students may have as many attempts as necessary to complete the task in the time allowed.
- Once the group is successful, you can try these alternatives.
 - Give students a time limit.
 - Blindfold or instruct students to close their eyes.
 - Instruct students not to speak for the duration of the activity.

Rules

- Students can only move forward. No one can move backwards.
- Students may only move into an empty space in front of them or around a person facing them.

- Students may move around a person who is facing them, to move into an empty space. They cannot move around someone who has their back to them.
- When students have no more "legal" moves, they need to start over.
- If any students in either group violate a rule, both groups must start over.

Discussion

- What helped the group be successful in completing this challenge? What prevented the group from being successful?
- Did it take multiple attempts to be successful? What strategies were successful? What strategies were not successful? Why do you think this was?
- What did you learn from the groups' unsuccessful attempts to solve the problem and achieve the goal?
- Did the group eventually find a solution? If not, do you think there even is a solution? If you think there is no solution, why not? After discussing it, tell them it is possible and show them the solution.
- Did anyone in the group give up or become frustrated? How did your group manage to overcome those challenges?
- Did all group members participate equally? In what ways did group members participate differently? In what way did each role contribute differently to the group's success?
- What have you learned from this activity that can be applied in the future when working on a team?

Reflecting & Connecting

- This activity gives students an opportunity to practice a number of the Essential Skills. They are given a challenge/goal to achieve and they are asked to successfully complete that challenge, as a team. Students need to be physically agile while also thinking creatively and making adjustments along the way. Some students may want to quit or may think this task is impossible, while others will persevere. Many students may emerge as leaders.
- This activity is designed for students to work together and achieve a common goal. In order to be successful, students will have to use effective speaking skills and be active listeners, as well as being open to different ideas and perspectives. Students should consider how both speaking and listening skills are necessary to being effective communicators, and how communication is crucial for successful teams.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS™

TEAMWORK









- Students will need to persevere by working through unsuccessful attempts, re-evaluating what's not working and changing their approach. Explain that working together isn't always easy but you can utilize perseverance and agility to overcome challenge.
- Students are not allowed to move backwards. Just like in life, once you make a move, you cannot take it back. This is a reminder to be careful before making a decision that you cannot take back.

Solution









Start

								
4	3	2	1		1	2	3	4









Move # 1

								
4	3	2	1	1	1	2	3	4









Move # 2

								
4	3		2	1	1	2	3	4









Move # 3

								
4	3	1	2	2	1	3		4

Move # 4

								
	4	1	3	2	2	3	1	4









Move # 5

								
1	4	2	3	3	2	4	1	









Move # 6

ESSENTIAL SKILLS™









TEAMWORK

								
1		2	4	3	3	4	2	1









Move # 7

								
1	2	3	4	4	3		2	1


Move # 8

								
1	2	3		4	4	3	2	1

Move # 9

								
1	2	3	4		4	3	2	1

Move # 10 – Have students turn around and face the other ½ of the group.

								
1	2	3	4		4	3	2	1