

## **THE MAZE**

**Overview:** Using team-building activities can be a great way to teach and model sportsmanship as well as offer opportunity for problem-solving and teamwork. There are two different variations of this activity – one that is simple for younger students, and one that is a bit more complex for older students.

### **SD Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success:**

#### **K-12 College, Career, and Life-Ready Competencies for Every Student:**

- B-LS 2. Creative approach to learning, tasks, and problem solving
- B-SMS 5. Perseverance to achieve long- and short-term goals
- B-SMS 6. Ability to identify and overcome barriers
- B-SS 2. Positive, respectful, and supportive relationships with students who are similar to and different from them
- B-SS 6. Effective collaboration and cooperation skills

### **VARIATION 1:** The Maze (for younger students)

**Consideration:** This activity works best for a group of 10-15 students. For larger groups, do two different mazes and utilize two facilitators to run the activity simultaneously.

**Estimated time:** 15-20 minutes

### **Materials:**

- Either use sheets of paper taped to the floor two feet apart from each other, square tiles on the floor, or tape a grid on a tarp to make a 4x4 square grid.
- The Maze Answer Key

### **Instructions:**

1. Ask students to define sportsmanship.
2. Tell students the Oxford Dictionary defines sportsmanship as “fair and generous behavior or treatment of others, especially in a sports contest.”
3. Ask students to share some examples of what sportsmanship looks like in an activity and in school. (Examples: winning without bragging, losing gracefully, treating classmates/teammates and opponents with respect, etc.)

4. Explain to students that they will be doing an activity that involves working together both individually and as a team.
5. Bring students to the maze.
6. Tell students that their task is to have all members successfully go through the maze without stepping on the incorrect bases. Show students where they are supposed to start on the maze (the entry spot). Explain that the group will successfully go through the maze when all students have gone through without stepping on any incorrect bases.
7. Have the students line up to facilitate them taking turns.
8. Share the following rules:
  - a. You will enter the maze at the entry spot.
  - b. Each person must pass through the maze, not just one person.
  - c. One person at a time may enter the maze and navigate through it.
  - d. You will step on each base, but only once, to successfully navigate through the maze.
  - e. If you step on a wrong base, the facilitator will signal the mistake by making the buzz sound. The student's turn ends and he/she will go to the back of the line, and the next person will begin.
  - f. If a student successfully navigates through the maze, that person is done.
9. Allow the students to attempt to navigate the maze, one person at a time.

**Processing/Application Questions:**

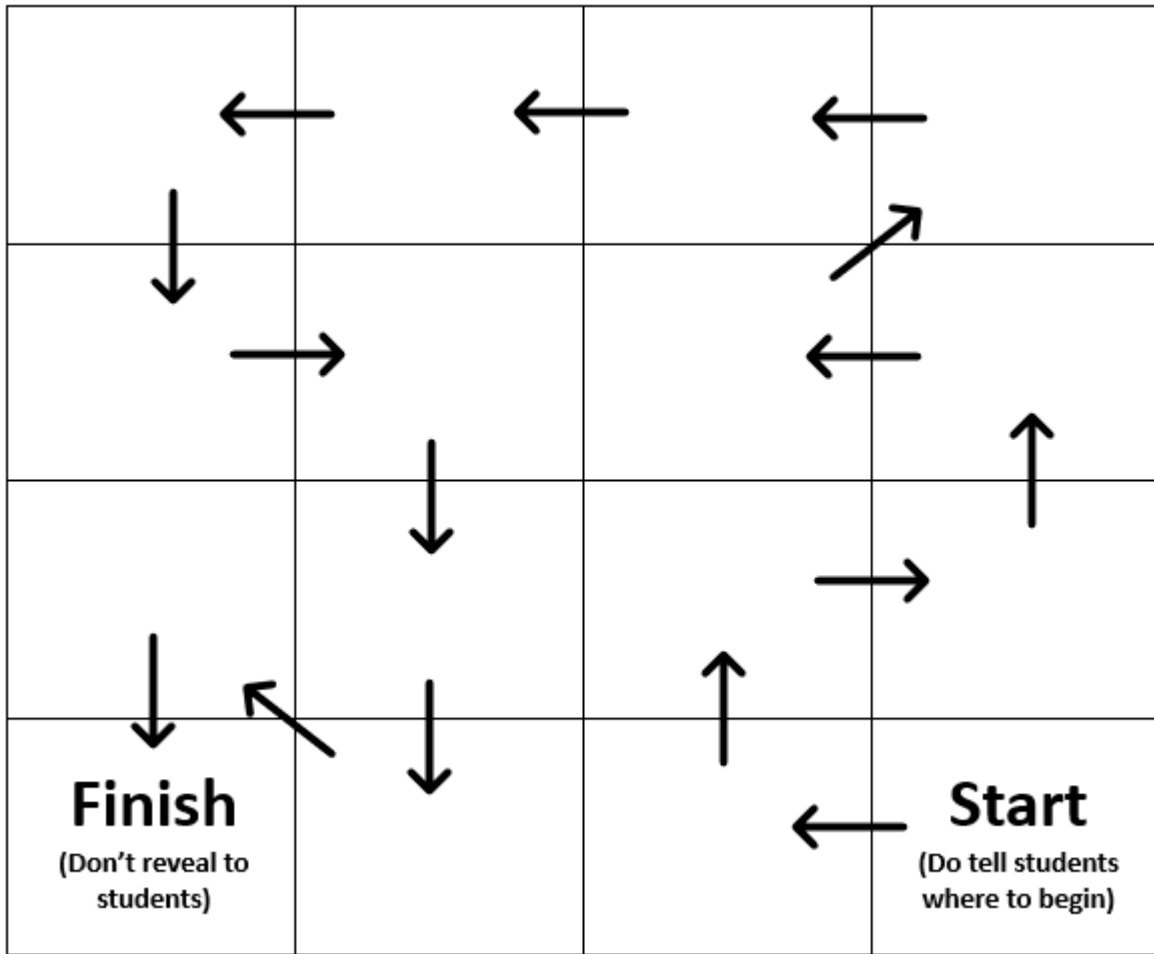
- What did it take for you individually to navigate through the maze?
- What did it take for you as a team to navigate through the maze?
- Who stepped forward to direct the team when it needed help?
- What sportsmanship skills were demonstrated in this activity?
- How might we use what we learned in this activity in school? On a team?

*Adapted from:*

*Icebreaker: The Maze.* (n.d.). Retrieved from: [https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/media/cms/The\\_Maze\\_0921075235CD6.pdf](https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/media/cms/The_Maze_0921075235CD6.pdf).



The Maze Answer Key



## VARIATION 2: The Maze (for older students)

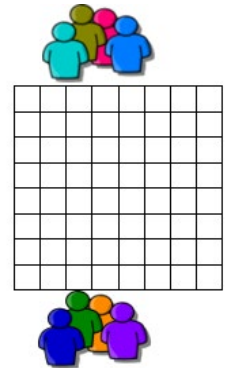
**Estimated time:** 30-40 minutes

### Materials:

- Either a mapped-out grid on a tarp or a taped grid on the floor, with an 8x8 square grid
- 20 poker chips (10 for one group and 10 for the other)
- Copies of The Maze Answer Key for each referee (two refs will be needed)

### Instructions:

1. Bring the group to the maze (either mapped out on a tarp or a taped grid on the floor).
2. This activity works best with an even group of people, with 10-30 people. Divide the group in half, with half of the group on one side of the maze and the other half of the group on the opposite side of the maze.
3. Tell the group the following scenario:
  - a. You are students in school. Your objective is to navigate your way through the maze, which represents the various issues students experience in school (homework, extracurricular activities, stress, testing, etc.).
  - b. The grid is full of unseen obstacles, pitfalls, as well as opportunities.
  - c. Your job is to find a safe path by trial and error and to get all your group members to the other side.
    - i. Your group will have five minutes to plan how you will attempt to figure out a safe path across the grid.
    - ii. Your wits are your only tool here; you may not use pen, paper, or any other technology.
    - iii. After the five minutes planning time, your group may not talk.
    - iv. Your group will have 20 minutes to attempt to find a path in silence.
      1. Your group has 10 talking-tokens; if a team member speaks during the 20 minutes of silence, it will cost one talking-token.
      2. Your group can use a talking-token to get an additional 2 minutes of planning time at any point during the game.
    - v. In your planning, decide the sequence in which group members will attempt to find a path. You must stick to that sequence.
    - vi. One person from your group is allowed on the maze at a time. If that person steps on an "obstacle" square, the referee will make a sound and that person must leave the maze the same way they entered. If they do not, that is considered an "avoidable mistake," and it will cost your team a talking-token.



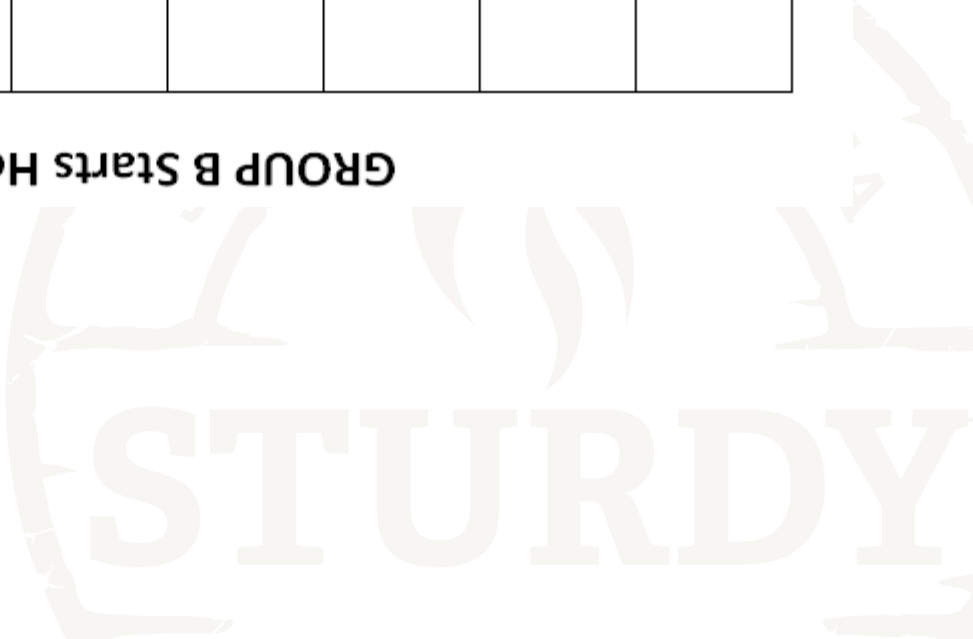
- vii. After that person has left the maze, the next person in the sequence steps on.
  - viii. You may not step over a square; any contiguous move is acceptable (forward, backward, diagonal, sideways).
  - ix. No "Hansel and Gretel." You may not leave any kind of visible trail or make any kind of physical map.
  - x. If you are not the active member attempting the maze, you may not touch the maze. Gesturing wildly is acceptable.
  - xi. If you meet a person from the other group on the maze, you both can occupy the same square at the same time.
4. Use two referees (one that watches one group and one that watches the other) -- watching to see if their groups navigate through the maze successfully, or step on an incorrect square (making a beep sound to signal they mis-stepped). The refs also are in charge of taking talking-tokens from groups if they talk or don't follow the course out of the maze.
5. Complete the activity and then take some time to debrief with the process questions.



**GROUP A Starts Here**

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**GROUP B Starts Here**



The Maze Answer Key

GROUP A Starts Here

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|   | X | X |   | X |   |  |  |
| X |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
| X |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
|   | X |   |   |   |   |  |  |

GROUP B Starts Here

