



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ #: \_\_\_\_\_

## Team Building with Your Peers & Family Tarp Launch

**Estimated Time:** 20 – 30 minutes

**Age range:** All grades

**What you need:** at least two participants, a blanket or tarp, several small, lightweight objects to launch (stuffed animals, pillows, foam balls, etc.), paper (optional), writing utensil (optional)

### Background Information:

Tarp Launch is a great activity for building communication and teamwork. You need at least two participants in order to play, however, the more participants—the more challenging and strategic this activity becomes.

Safety considerations include using an object that is small and light enough that it will not injure anyone if it hits them, as well as making sure the area you are using is clear from any tripping hazards.

It's important to consider that even if all the challenges presented are not completed successfully, you can still learn from—and

*celebrate*—your experience! If your group is struggling, try looking at the **debrief** section and discussing some of the reflection questions provided. It can help to take a break and discuss with your group what is going well, and what could be going better.

Follow the instructions on the next page to get started.

### New Words

In an **active role**, you typically are one of the main speakers/leaders of a group, and introduce ideas and/or strategies that are used while trying to complete a challenge.

**Debriefing** is a method of team and self-reflection, typically involving asking questions about strategies, such as what went well and what could be improved upon.

In a **passive role** you generally don't speak as much, and follow what the group is doing as a whole.

**Scaffolding** refers to educational methods that help students or participants gradually build to a greater level of understanding and independent learning.

## Tarp Launch Activity

1. Start with each participant holding the tarp flat in the air at about waist height, with the object in the center of the tarp.



2. The goal of this activity is to launch the object into the air, and flip the tarp so that the opposite side is facing up. This needs to be done quickly enough that you can catch the object as it falls down from the launch.



3. There are a few rules to know before getting started:

- Every participant must have two hands on the tarp at the start of the launch.
- Every participant must have two hands on the tarp when catching the object at the end.
- The tarp must be in a flat position at the start (launch) and end of the activity (catch).
- If your object hits the ground, you must reset positions and start over.

4. Not enough of a challenge? You can try **scaffolding** this activity:

- Start with a simple challenge, using one object as described in the above instructions. A stuffed animal or pillow is a good first object to use, as they are less likely to bounce off the tarp.
- If you successfully complete the first challenge, try using a *bouncier* or *rounder* object, like a rubber or foam ball. These are typically a bit harder to catch because they tend to bounce and roll around on the tarp.
- For a final challenge, try using multiple objects at the same time. Start with two easier objects, like stuffed animals. If your group is up for it, you can try using more difficult objects or even try to launch three objects at once!



Now it's time to reflect on our experiences!



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## Tarp Flip Debrief

Now that you have completed the activity as a team, take some time to reflect on what happened with your teammates. These prompts can be used to have a group discussion. Feel free to write down your answers!

Consider the following:

Did everyone in your group agree on the best way to approach this challenge? Why or why not?

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Did you feel the same way throughout the entire activity, or did your emotions change as the activity progressed? How?

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What emotions did you feel at the start of the activity? The end of the activity? In the middle? Choose one word to describe how you felt during each phase.

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If your group feels comfortable sharing, have each member share the word that they picked with the rest of the group, and why they felt that way. Which words were chosen?

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Hearing how everyone else felt during this activity, would you change anything about the way you communicated with the group? How?

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Did you feel like you had a role in overcoming the challenges of the activity? What was that role? Were you more active or passive?

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Were there any ideas you had that you did not get the chance to share? What were they?

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Consider the following:

**What might be a benefit of taking a passive role over an active role?**

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**If you completed this challenge again, what would you do differently?**

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**Pick one thing that your team did well, or learned to do better by the end of the activity. What did you choose and how could you apply it to your daily life and communication?**

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Finally, give someone in your group a “shout-out”. You should all be proud of yourselves!