

**Title:**

**“SNAP!”: A game to elicit word associations**

**Description**

Participants get to activate their minds by tapping on their ability to quickly come up with words on a certain theme, listen actively, and react rapidly when something special happens.

**Why This Game?**

“Snap!” is a fast-paced, intensely fun game that can be deployed with three aims:

- Energize participants: activate people’s brainpower in a very short time
- Create a sense of bonding among participants through shared emotions and laughter
- Learn from participants about what concepts they associate with [core theme of event] – for example “climate change”, “forecast”, “Red Cross”, “Corporate Social Responsibility”, etc

**Facilitator Skill Level**

2 out of 5

**Intended Audience**

Very flexible game, can be used with a broad range of participants

**Number of Players:**

6 to thousands (if sound system available)

1 Game Facilitator

**Time Needed for gameplay/discussion**

5 to 15 minutes (depending on experience of facilitator, group size, and desired level of discussion during gameplay)

**Materials:**

One sheet of paper and a pen for every 3 players

**Playspace Requirements**

Any configuration, as long as pairs and trios of players can interact (preferably while standing up)

**Game Play**

0. INTRO. Facilitator asks participants to form duos, then explains rules with a partner:
  - a. Forming Deck: Each player creates an imaginary deck of many many cards containing numbers 1 to 10. Each player then physically ‘shuffles’ own deck of imaginary cards, then take half of the deck and give it to the other player (thus creating a mixed deck of imaginary cards)
  - b. Flipping Cards: Holds the imaginary deck of cards, both and simultaneously flip the ‘top’ card and say the number on card, loud and clear, simultaneously (for example, I might say “two!” and you might simultaneously say “eight”. If there is no match (i.e. numbers are different), they keep flipping. It is best to use body language so both players can see

- agree to say their words exactly at the same time. If your partner is not ready or fails to say a word, it's ok, just allow a moment for regrouping and start again, synchronized.
- c. Snapping: If both players say the same number, the first player to loudly say "Snap!" (and point to the other player with index finger) gets all the imaginary cards already flipped, and wins an imaginary point. They continue playing right away for about one or two minutes until facilitator says "Time is Up"
  - d. Goal: The objective is to "snap" as many times as possible. We will play three short rounds. Ready? Go!
1. NUMBERS: Participants now play the game "for real", with the first round involving numbers 1 to 10. The room usually gains energy and laughter; nurture that as a facilitator. Keep this going for 1-2 minutes. In debriefing this round, note how some duos snapped more than others, and how it was evident that sometimes it was hard to converge into a snap, or to even notice the coincidence and remember to snap.
  2. ANIMALS: For the second round, facilitator asks participants to form new duos, and play a second round with almost the same rules, only that now the deck of imaginary cards has no numbers, but the names of animals. Any animals (but remember the goal is to snap as much as possible). Play on for 1-2 minutes. After the round, highlight as facilitator that even though everybody can think of dozens of names of animals, this round seemed much harder than the 'numbers' one for players... And the third one will be even harder – be ready!
  3. CORE THEME: Ask participants to return to their original partner. The game will be the same, but with a new deck of imaginary cards. Players have about 10-15 seconds to come up with words in their imaginary deck of cards... which in this round will be "words that you associate with the concept of [core theme]". The core theme can be 'climate change', 'Red Cross', 'forecast', 'gender', or whatever matters given the topic of the event / session. For example: "words you associate with the concept of leadership", "things you think our team should invest in", "objects at risk of damage if a hurricane hits this place", etc.

The first cycle is easy and fun, it promotes bonding and awakens people's brains. Then complexity grows until in the third cycle players tend to confront a 'clogging' of ideas that builds people's appetite for crystallizing concepts they associate with the topic of the session.

#### 4. WRITING WORDS

An additional, short group activity elicits the concepts evoked during the third round on the core theme: Ask participants to form trios, and take four minutes to agree about the four most important words they associate with the concept of [core theme]. Each word will be written in a separate piece of paper, or 'word card', before the deadline. Then the facilitator can invite each trio, one at a time, to choose one of their words and say it aloud – if any of the other trios also wrote that word, they must shout "Snap!" (this will help all in the room get a sense of what other people thought about when asked to write something about the core concept).

#### 5. WORD CLOUD

The facilitation team can collect the cards with the key concepts from each trio, then create word clouds that illustrate and show the current state of understanding of the issue. The same activity can be deployed in less than 5 minutes first at the beginning of the event and then again at the end of the event, for a quick and fun way to assess whether the participants' understanding of the core theme has evolved in any way as a result of the activities. The images below depict the word clouds resulting from the use of "Snap!" *before* and *after* a participatory activity about microinsurance at the recent Community Based Adaptation Conference in Nepal.

