

People Bingo Icebreaker

This game has a dual purpose. First, it helps people get acquainted – or better acquainted if they've already met. Second, it introduces some of the lesson ideas. Handout: Give a **People Bingo** card to each person as they enter and let them begin the game.

Here are the instructions.

- **This is not exactly like bingo!** Don't stop gathering signatures when you've filled in one row. The idea is to fill in as many squares as possible.
- **Walk around.** Don't just sit down and wait for the lesson to begin.
- **Find people who match the descriptions in the boxes below.** In order to do that, you have to go up to a person and ask a question. It's not fair to ask, "Which box can you fill in." You've got to ask, "Were you born in Arkansas?"
- **Get them to sign in the box.** It is okay to write their name in the box yourself, but it may be more fun to collect signatures. First names will do.
- **Honor system.** No fair getting one person to sign multiple boxes until after asking everyone else in the room. Obviously, many people will qualify for two or more boxes, but the game's objectives are met when folks seeking signatures connect with a maximum number of people.
- **Person with the most boxes signed wins fabulous prizes!** Leaders can decide what those fabulous prizes will be. You can give away a small item, perhaps something donated by a local business. Or, you can say, "Your 'fabulous prize' is the satisfaction you get from knowing that you won." Be lighthearted about it. No one will expect to win a cruise to the Bahamas.

When the "winner" has been announced, you may want to ask who signed some of the boxes. Sometimes it's a good idea to start with something else, like "doesn't like pizza with pineapple." But then ask, who signed (or would have signed) the box that says, "Has walked across the Arkansas River." Use the statements in the boxes to start discussion of the many fun and interesting things to do in Arkansas. You can use the **Follow-Up Discussion** guide to learn more about some of the activities and events mentioned on the bingo card.

People Bingo – Follow-Up Discussion

Arkansas Post State Park

The park features exhibits, trails, and a movie revealing 300 years of Arkansas' history. Settled by the French in 1686, the remote "Post de Arkansae" was the first permanent European colony in the Mississippi River Valley. Explore the park's complex of five exhibit buildings and learn about life on, and the history of, Arkansas' Grand Prairie and Delta.

Crater of Diamonds State Park

The park is the only diamond-producing site in the world open to the public. In 1906 John Huddleston, a local farmer, found the first diamonds near Murfreesboro, Arkansas, and started the diamond mining rush. After a series of ill-fated diamond mining ventures, followed by tourist attractions, the diamond mine site became an Arkansas state park in 1972. Stop by the interpretive center to view exhibits and learn about the geology of the area. The park features a playground, camp ground and visitor center.

Arkansas Zoos

- **The Little Rock Zoo** began modestly in 1926 with just two animals – an abandoned timber wolf and a circus-trained brown bear. Today, the zoo has grown to include more than 725 animals representing 200+ species, many on the endangered list. But, it's not the only place in the state to see wild animals.
- **Riddle's Elephant and Wildlife Sanctuary** – Currently houses Asian elephants and African elephants, both males and females. Elephant care and elephant management are taught at this elephant haven in the peaceful Arkansas countryside near Guy. The public is allowed to visit on the first Saturday of every month between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- **Wild Wilderness Drive Through Safari** – Wild Wilderness is a family park and drive-through zoo located in Gentry, Arkansas. There are over 85 different species of exotic animals, all placed on an 180-acre landscape exhibit area. In addition to the drive-through exhibit, there are some petting and feeding areas.

Blanchard Springs Caverns

These beautifully ornate, living caverns are near Mountain View, Arkansas. Two paved, lighted trails – one of which is handicapped accessible with assistance – are open to visitors of all ages. Forest Service guides lead tours that wind through water-carved passages, including an underground river and the world's largest flowstone. During the holiday season, you can treat your family to "Caroling in the Caverns" – holiday music is performed in the wonderful acoustics of the Cathedral Room at Blanchard Springs Caverns.

Camping

The Natural State has more than 50 state parks, several national parks and many local park areas. Many of these sites offer camping. If you enjoy camping, it is an economical way to travel, allowing for savings on lodging expenses.

Big Dam Bridge

You can walk across the Arkansas River on the Big Dam Bridge. It is the longest pedestrian/bicycle bridge built specifically for pedestrians and bicyclists and the second longest in the United States. The bridge connects 14 miles of trails on the Little Rock and North Little Rock sides of the Arkansas River. It is 14 feet wide and rises nearly seven stories above the river.

The Blues

In less than a lifetime, blues music emerged from the rural South and became popular worldwide. The city of Helena played an important part in the evolution of blues music. For blues musicians in the 1930s and 1940s, Helena was the place to be, and many of them later became famous blues musicians. During the first weekend in October, the quiet Mississippi River town of Helena (Phillips County), about 70 miles southwest of Memphis, Tennessee, becomes a thriving community of blues musicians and their fans gathered to celebrate the Arkansas Blues and Heritage Festival (formerly the King Biscuit Blues Festival). There is also a Blues exhibit at the Delta Cultural Center in Helena.

Toad Suck Daze

Long ago steamboats traveled the Arkansas River when the water was at the right depth. When it wasn't, the captains and their crew tied up to wait where the Toad Suck Lock and Dam now spans the river. While they waited, they refreshed themselves at the local tavern there, to the dismay of the folks living nearby, who said: "They suck on the bottle 'til they swell up like toads." Hence, the name Toad Suck. The tavern is long gone, but the legend and fun live on at Toad Suck Daze. Toad Suck Daze is a FREE ADMISSION festival. A three-day festival of food, family and fun is held on the streets of downtown Conway, Arkansas, and occurs annually the first weekend in May. Many other Arkansas communities host festivals. Visit the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism web site or see the Calendar of Events booklet to find a festival near you.

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