**Ice Breakers for Older Students**

1. **Take a Stand** - Place a line of tape on the classroom floor and read "either-or" statements that will assess a variety of preferences and attitudes. Have students move on one side of the tape or the other, depending on their opinion/preference. If they are undecided, have them straddle the line. Once you do this a few times, you could add this to your closure routine. Show or orally share some content-related statements and ask kids to choose their side. **Once students choose their preferences, ask some follow-up questions! ☺**

Here are a few generic statements to get you started:

*Reading or writing Love or money*

*Early riser or late sleeper Movie or sports event*

*Ravens or Orioles Dress up or hang out*

*Oldest or youngest Travel or homebody*

*Slow but steady or speed demon Saver or spender*

*Alone or crowds Meat or vegetables*

*English or math Sweet or salty*

*Open-minded or opinionated Countryside or city*

1. **Categories** - Tell students you are going to announce a category-related question (for example, "What is your favorite color?") and that students should organize themselves into groups based on their answers. Once everyone is organized, ask them to take turns sharing their preference or opinion about that category and appoint a person to summarize the group’s responses with the rest of the class. **Ask follow-up questions!**
2. **True/False Quiz or "Two Truths and a Lie"** - Have students write a 10-question quiz about themselves and have the other students figure out what's wrong or right. The second activity involves students sitting in a circle and listing two true things about themselves and one lie. Have the other students figure out which statement is false
3. **Party Time** – Help students generate a bank of questions that they would either like to be asked or would like to ask their peers. Project this list on the screen and let them choose three questions they want to ask – one per partner. Give students a set time to “mingle” and to ask their questions and share their answers. They also must be able to remember their peers’ names. You may want to create a small template for this. Allow 3 minutes per conversation and tell them to switch partners. Use music to mingle to the next partner. When the music stops, students must converse. At the end, choose students to share what they learned about each other.
4. **Roots and Leaves -** Provide students, either individually or in groups, with paper and markers and ask them to draw their own personal tree(s). It must include ROOTS: things about you that are not easily visible (where you are from, values, important life events, achievements, things you struggle with, long term goals, dreams, etc.) and LEAVES: things that are readily visible (hobbies, preferences, style, important people in your life,

distinguishable personal traits, favorite music, things you do well, etc.) Have students share and describe

to the whole class. You could share a few each period, and at the end of the week, put them on a bulletin board or hang them on real branches to display in your room.

1. **Fear Bag** - *Things required: Strips of paper, a big bag to collect the paper;* ***set a tone of respect for all***  
   Distribute strips of paper to each student and ask them to pen down their deepest fear, without mentioning their name. After a couple of minutes collect the strips of paper into the bag, shuffle and ask students to analyze the strip of paper that they pull out; you could do this in pairs or groups of no more than 4. While they analyze the fear, they could also brainstorm how to prevent and/or alleviate it. Groups share out with whole class. Obviously, you may want to model this and ask students to only be as personal as they feel comfortable (Best to do later in the fall).