GAMES TO PLAY ON GROUP VIDEO CALLS

BOX OF LIES

This game comes from Jimmy Fallon's late night show. (Here's a clip so you've got an idea of how it works: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Md4QnipNYqM The Zoom modification is that each person who comes to your Zoom meeting would bring the "weirdest" thing they can find in their house and keep it out of sight of their camera. Then, each person will take a turn describing their object (either lying or telling the truth – they decide). Everyone else holds up either a "thumbs up" for telling the truth or a "thumbs down" for lying. Then the person who was it shows their object, and you can keep points on how many people were right or wrong about the person lying or telling the truth.

TRUE FACTS

This is simple! Everyone privately messages the host a secret fact about themselves, and then the host shares them one by one. Everyone then has to vote who they think it belongs to. For variety you can set a topic such as one thing you did today, favorite movie, a unique thing your family does, if a movie was made about you what actor would you want to play the role of you? This is great to learn about your group, but also for your kids to feel connected to each other.

PARTNERS IN PEN

Have everyone grab a piece of paper, and also some random object from their house. (Nothing too familiar, but something that is mildly obscure.) Then, each person takes a turn describing their hidden item while everyone else tries to draw it from their description they give. The person who is closest wins, and gets to describe their hidden item next.

HOME SCAVENGER HUNT

This is currently the most common way to engage your students on Zoom, while getting them up and moving. Pick a random list of things, and then whenever they arrive at Zoom, ask them to go and get each item (one at a time) and see who gets back with it first.

CHARADES

The host/moderator privately messages a word to the person who is "it." That person then acts out clues to help the other participants guess the word. Unlike playing this live, the host/moderator can mute the person who is "it" to prevent sending verbal or sound clues. Ways to make this competitive would be to time how long it takes each person individually to guess OR, put people onto teams. If team A's representative doesn't guess within a minute, then the turn switches to team B. If team A does guess before a minute is up, then their team gets to go again.

TABOO

The popular Parker Brothers game can be adapted to playing on Zoom. The host/moderator privately messages a keyword and 5 related words that are also taboo to the "giver." The giver then gives clues to help the other participants guess the keyword. However, the giver is not allowed to say the keyword, any part of the keyword, or the 5 taboo words. For example, the giver might have to get his or her team to identify the keyword "baseball" without offering the words "sport," "game," "pastime," "hitter," "pitcher," or "baseball" itself as clues. The giver may not say a part of a "taboo" word; for example, using "base" in "baseball" is taboo. Nor may they use a form of a word; for example, if the keyword was "wedding" and the taboo words are "marriage," "bride," "groom," "nuptials," or "honeymoon," the words "marry" and "bridal" would not be allowed. The giver may only use speech to prompt his or her teammates; gestures, sounds (e.g. barking), or drawings are not allowed. Singing is permitted, provided the singer is singing words rather than humming or whistling a tune. The giver's hints may rhyme with a taboo word, or be an abbreviation of a taboo word.

BALDERDASH

This is played with teams. Participants will want to have paper and pen ready. The host/moderator shares a word that the participants do not know the meaning of and the participants must come up with what they think the word means. Teams take turns providing definitions and trying to identify which is the real definition. The host/moderator sends a private chat message to one member of the team providing definitions with the real meaning of the word (in basic terms, not exact). All other members of that team make up their own definition. After giving everyone a minute to write down the word and their definition, the host then prompts each member of the definition team to share his or her definition. After all definitions have been presented, the guessing team may discuss the definitions and must decide which one they think is the real meaning of the word. Teams then switch roles for the next round.

SCAVENGER HUNT

This is a take on the old game of "first person with a shoe with a hole in it, bring it up." Have about 10 items ready to share with participants. Give them one item at a time and they must run through their house to find it. Give points to the person that makes it back first. Person with the most points wins. Make sure to have a tie breaker ready in case it is needed.

CHANGE TWO THINGS

When it is your turn, turn off your video long enough to change two things that can be seen clearly onscreen, then turn the video back on. Everyone tries to identify what was changed. Honesty is a must for this game. As a check, the person might have to send a private message to the host identifying what has been changed.

FAMOUS FOR TWO MINUTES

Let each participant be Famous for two minutes! Go all out and have them pretend to be on the red carpet if you want ;) All of the participants send/ask questions just to that person that they want them to answer. Encourage totally random, funny questions! For younger kids, you'll probably need to give ideas and suggestions to get them started. Some example questions are . . . "What movie have you starred in (or what movie would you have liked to have starred in)?", "Do you like camping?", "Do you like raisins?", "Who are you wearing?", "Hot dog - sandwich...yes or no?", "Favorite game?", etc.

READ MY LIPS

Fun and very simple! Someone says something on mute and the others have to guess what they're saying. As an honesty and appropriateness check, have the leader send the phrase over private chat or have the person share their phrase with the leader by private chat, otherwise things could spiral out of control ;)