

## TA TIP SHEETS

### TEACHING ASSISTANT'S Guide to Icebreakers

The information below has been adapted from the UVic TA Manual (the full version can be found at <http://www.ltc.uvic.ca/servicesprograms/taprod/documents/UVicTAManual.pdf>). Not all suggestions below may be applicable in all departments on campus. Please use the information as a guide only.

Icebreakers are an important activity for building community in the classroom. Icebreakers can take a very minimal amount of time or could be incorporated into learning activities. The list below provides suggestions for differing types of icebreakers. Enjoy the activities and the success these bring to building community in your classroom!

1. A standard technique is to have students pair-up and have one introduce the other to the class. You can suggest they find out what their favourite food is, or what sports they play.
2. Another is to go around the class with each person introducing all the other members in the class that have already been introduced. The first person introduces her or him. The second introduces the first and him or herself. Each subsequent person introduces all the previously introduced students and themselves.
3. You might want to know more about your class:
  - where are they from?
  - what languages do they speak?
  - have they studied this subject before?
  - have they written essays or reports?
  - what would they like to get out of this course?
4. **Two truths and a lie.** Each person tells three things about themselves, but one is a lie. Everyone else has to guess which three is the lie. This is a great icebreaker to get to know some very interesting facts about people.
5. **Question ring:** you start off with a question and the next person has to construct a question that is about your question. The question construction continues around the whole room, with each subsequent question addressing the question posed before.
6. **For Geography:** take index cards and write a major city in the world on one card and a major attraction from that city on another card. Do this for as many cities as needed for half the class. One half of the class gets a card with a city name on it and the other half gets a card with a major attraction from that city written on it. The class then has to find who in the room is their match.
7. **Name game:** students take a few seconds to think about their name – who they're named after, what their name means, etc. They then tell that story and people remember names more easily.