

# A Complete Parent Night

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For your homeschool co-op

This evening activity is geared to helping your homeschool community find more things in common with each other and becoming a tighter knit group. There are two parts to this activity. Plan for at least 2 hours to complete all of it.

## **Before the evening of the activity:**

- Tell all of the parents that they will need to bring a physical copy of their favorite book. -Not a core book but a childhood book, a recent read, or one that they have enjoyed many times. Books that have made an impact on their life. Books will not be passed around as part of the activity, so if it's a special book it should be safe in its owner's hands.
- Take the attached page and cut up the strips. Fold them and place them in a jar - make sure you can easily access them from the jar as parents will be retrieving them from the jar with one hand. If you would like to do this activity more than once, try writing them on craft sticks with an answer on each side.
- Set up the chairs in a circle.

## **Bring:**

- 2 large skeins of yarn that are easily unwound. If you have a large group, take more.
- Horton Lays an Egg by Dr. Seuss
- Your favorite book
- The attached either/or scenarios in a jar

## PART 1

Gather everyone into a circle. If there are many new to the group, take a moment to have everyone share their name and how many kids they have (or another simple, straight -forward question. Open ended questions will take up too much time at this part of the activity.)

### Explain:

Tonight we are going to focus on building the community.

- *What benefits do we have with a tight community? What qualities are consistent with relationships within a tight community?*

The more invested families within the community naturally will want to do their best, help with extra projects, support one another outside of co-op, and even serve in leadership amongst each other.

It can be difficult getting that tight community. And ultimately, it comes down to time together and serving one another. But this evening will be a stepping off point to help us find common ground. Share an experience about when the relationships in the community were a personal benefit. Did a certain friendship help you through a difficult time? Did the wisdom of a community member help you while teaching a class? Share your feelings. (Sharing from your heart will naturally begin to bring your community together.)

We will take turns answering an either/or scenario. The person will have 10 seconds to answer. There is no right or wrong answer and you MUST choose one. If you feel like you can't associate directly, then be creative..if the question is "lipstick or lipgloss" and you don't like either, then which one does your favorite person like or which one was the last one you wore or kissed? What did you prefer when you were a teenager? What does your teenager prefer? Everyone needs to answer, no skips!

Ask the person the either/or question. "Facebook or twitter" -You don't need to give any explanations or coaching. Everyone is capable of coming to their own answer. You must respect their process of coming up with an answer.

After they have given their answer, give a count of 3 and have everyone raise their hand who had the same answer. Starting with the person who gave the first answer, unwind the yarn and pass it around so that everyone who raised their hand is able to grab ahold the yarn. This will make a large web of yarn as the evening progresses. This is what you want. It is to show our connectedness.

Explanations of why they chose that particular choice is not necessary.

Move to the next person in the circle and ask them the next question. Continue until everyone has had a chance to answer at least one question.

### Debrief

When you are finished, debrief the activity. Suggested discussion points:

- What did we learn about each other?
- What can we do to make our string tighter?
- Did you notice anyone that wasn't included in as many choices?
- How can we improve our community?

Take a 10 minute break.



Netflix or blu-ray	Sweet or savory	Dog or cat
Facebook or Twitter	PB&J or PB& banana	Swimming or sunbathing
Mobile games or Console games	Apples or oranges	Fall or spring
music or podcasts	Maranara sauce or Alfredo	Selfies or group photos
iOS or Android	Indian food or Thai	Rich friend or loyal friend
staycation or vacation	Orange juice or apple juice	Work hard or play hard
TV or book	Bagels or muffins	laundry or dishes
garden or farmers market	e-book or paperback	Bath or shower
Horror movie or Comedy movie	Peanut M&M's or regular	Passenger or driver
laptop or PC	Dark chocolate or milk chocolate	intelligent or funny
shoelaces or crocs	job you love or job that pays a lot	Blue or red
Card game or board game	Peanut butter or jelly	Extra Money or free time
mashed or baked potatoe	Taste or smell	Dancing class or cooking classes
Book or e-book	cook dinner or clean up dinner	Massage or facial
TV shows or movie	Costume party or pool party	FBI agent or local police
Action movies or dramas	Harry Potter or Lord of the Rings	Clean-shaven or facial hair
Comedy or thriller	Pants or shorts	Hugs or kisses
Romances or documentaries	toddlers or teenagers	Early bird or night owl
Reality or fiction	Brains or beauty	Save or spend
Adventurous or cautious	Introvert or extrovert	Boat or plane
Long or short hair	Amusement park or beach	Painting or drawing
Swimming pool or lake	Pen or pencil	Reading or writing
Frozen pizza or Domino's	Toilet paper: over or under	Singing or dancing
Loungewear or jeans	text or talk	T-Shirts or sweaters
Blonde or redhead	Strategy game or bingo	Flowers or vegetables

## Part 2

Keep everyone seated in a circle.

Have everyone bring out their favorite book. Go around the circle and have everyone give a thought or two about why that book is so important to them. Ask everyone to be respectful and not to interrupt each other as they are talking. Also, ask that your comments be limited to 30 seconds or so to sell the book and to give why the book is so meaningful. Encourage everyone to make note of the books in case they want to read it later.

Once everyone has spoke about their book, have everyone get comfortable. Read them the story of Horton Lays an Egg. Use voices, pauses, and various speed to keep your audience engaged. Practice ahead of time.

Suggested discussion:

- Out of all of the books out there, why would this book be selected to be read to you?
- How is this book similar to your favorite book that you brought tonight? Do you recognize similar threads?
- Since we are an educational focused group, what similarities do you see between this story of Horton and education?
- What similar threads of education do you see between your favorite book and education?
- Bonus: Can you tie our previous activity together with education?

After the discussion, share your heart when it comes to your community and education. Tell them why, for you, the two are so connected together. Share how the education of your co-op has blessed your life and your family's life.

When we have a strong community, our education will naturally follow suit as we strive to do our best to teach those we love. When we feel supported in our community, when difficulties in classes come up, we will work together to overcome the challenges instead of ignoring them or walking away from them. Encourage everyone to continue to build relationships with everyone in your community.