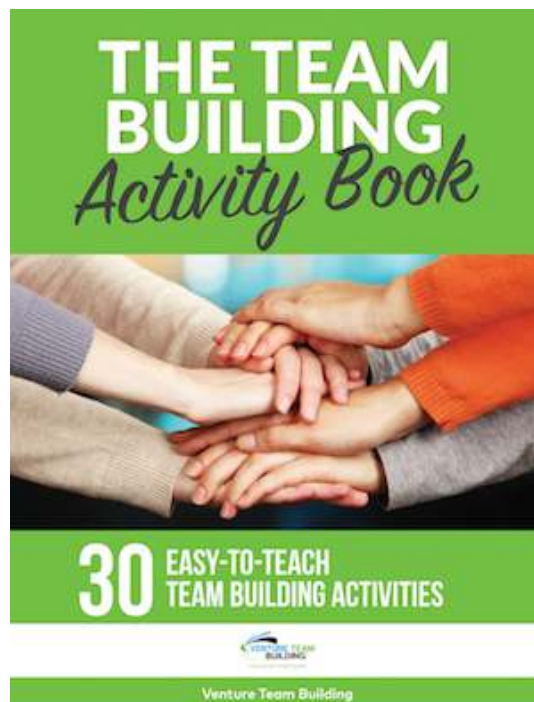


5 Fun Team Building Activities

An Excerpt of The Team Building Activity Book



www.ventureteambuilding.co.uk

MINEFIELD

ACTIVITY NOTES

Overview

The team has come to a battlefield that has been laid with mines. One person at a time must attempt to cross the battlefield without stepping on a mine. Once a team member steps on a mine, they must return back to the start position and the next person must try to navigate their way across the minefield.

Resources: Minefield (8 x 8 squares) set out on a giant chess/checkers mat, tarpaulin (with taped squares) or carpet tiles and route card/s

Space Required: Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

Group Size: 2-20 people. Works better with larger groups.

Total Time: 60 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 35-45 minutes to achieve outcome
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

Running the Activity

- Lay out your Minefield on a flat area with plenty of space.
- Organise the group and brief them on the task: The team has come to a battlefield that has been laid with mines. The entire team must cross the minefield without stepping on a mine.

Rules

- Only one person is allowed on the Minefield at any time.
- Every person in the team must attempt to cross. If unsuccessful, they must go to the back of the line and the next person must try to cross.
- Once a participant is on the minefield, the rest of the team must be silent.
- Active participants can only move one square at a time. A move can be in any direction.
- Only the facilitator knows which squares are safe and will indicate appropriately (use the route cards provided in this guide).

Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Decision making
- Memory chunking
- Problem Solving

Activity Guidance and Notes

There is no solution as such for the challenge; participants are required to work together and use collective memory chunking – breaking large problems down into more manageable pieces.

The group is likely to be working as individuals and not as part of a team. This means that every person is trying to memorise the whole board. If the large problem is broken down into smaller pieces (i.e. instead of trying to remember the whole board individuals just remember one row), the task becomes a lot more achievable. The rules also state that no talking is allowed once a person is on the minefield. This still allows the group to create another form of communication i.e. clapping to prevent the same mistake reoccurring.

Variations

Blindfold the challenger who is on the Minefield with the rest of the team guiding them through the maze without using speech e.g. by clapping or making animal noises. To achieve success, the team will need to work together to agree and remember a code (e.g. 1 clap = forward, 2 claps = turn 90 degrees left etc)

For a switched-on group, and to focus on communication, 'pen' the team in an area that is around 10 meters away from the Minefield, so they do not have full view on the challenge. As each participant comes off the Minefield, they must try to communicate their route effectively to the next person.

Coaching points

Large problems are best tackled by breaking them up into smaller pieces. By correctly **identifying the problem** (in this case memorising the board and communicating with each other), you can then pool your resources and **plan** how to cross the minefield.

Review

Suggested questions to ask:

What was the problem? How did you solve this?

How did you feel when you failed?

Why was failure important for this challenge?

Did you use teamwork for completing the exercise? If yes, how?

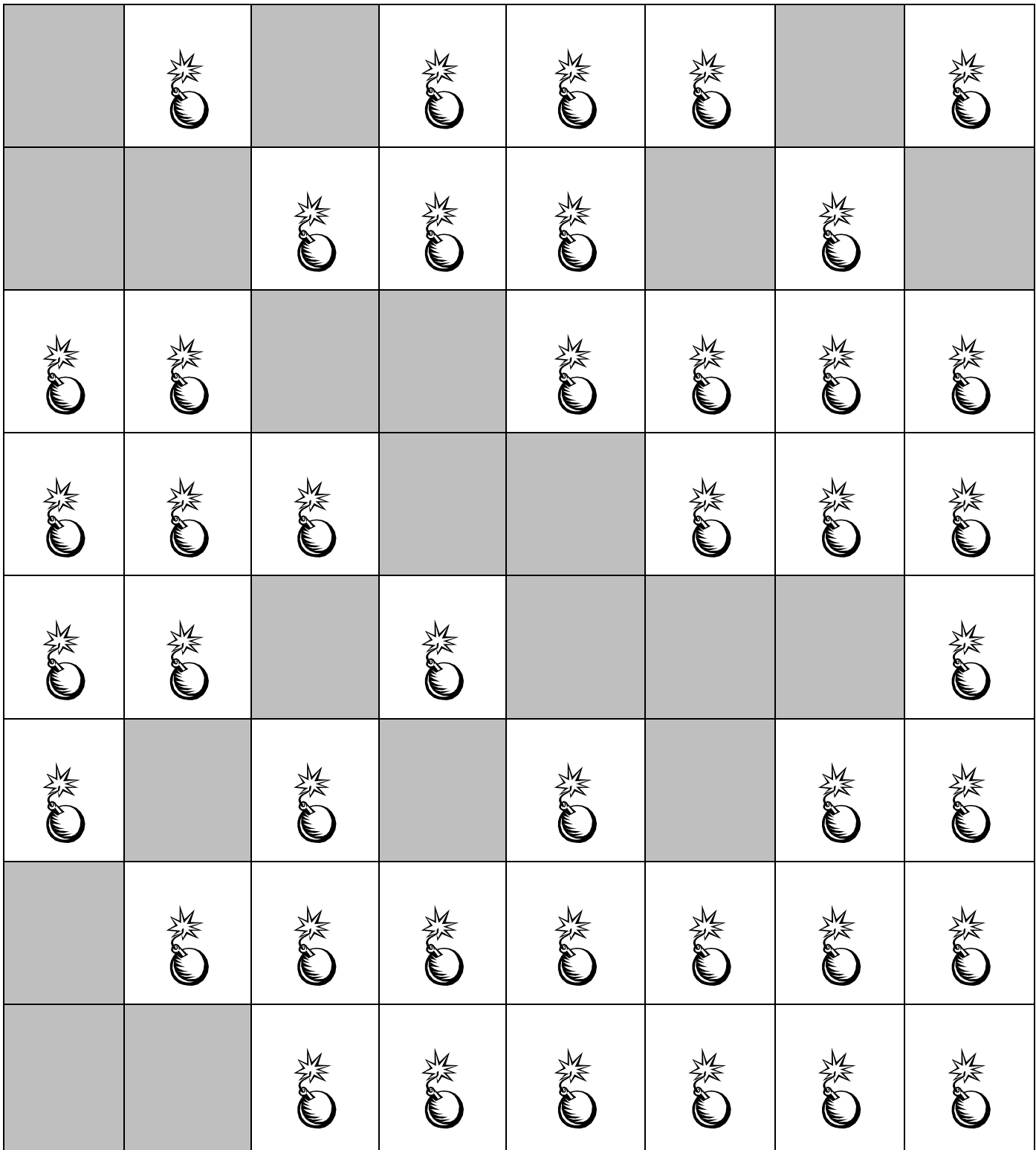
Why was teamwork important?

How did you plan a strategy for completing the challenge?

What surprised you about the exercise?

What learning lessons can you take away from the activity?

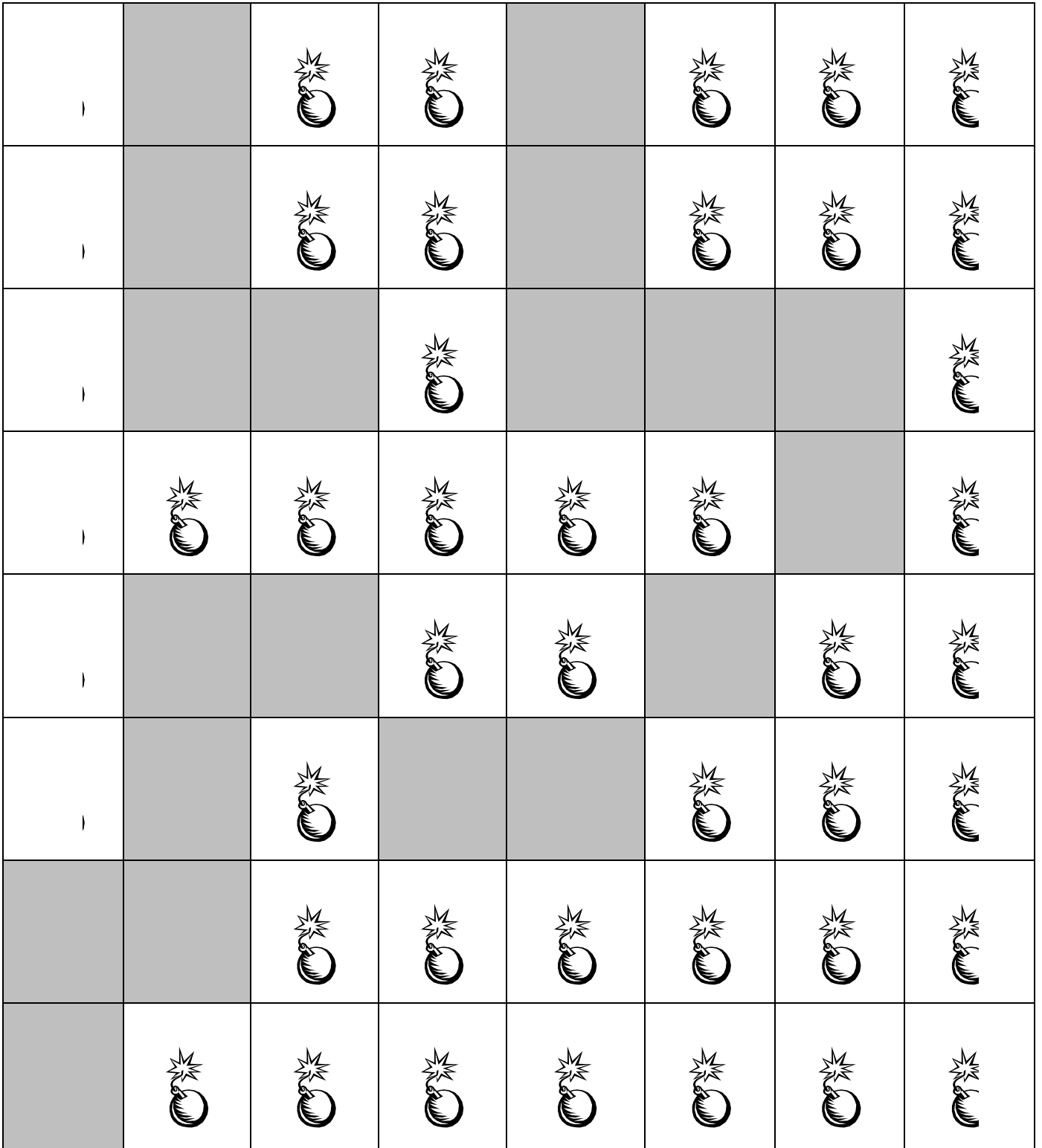
**ROUTE 1
START**



FINISH

ROUTE 2

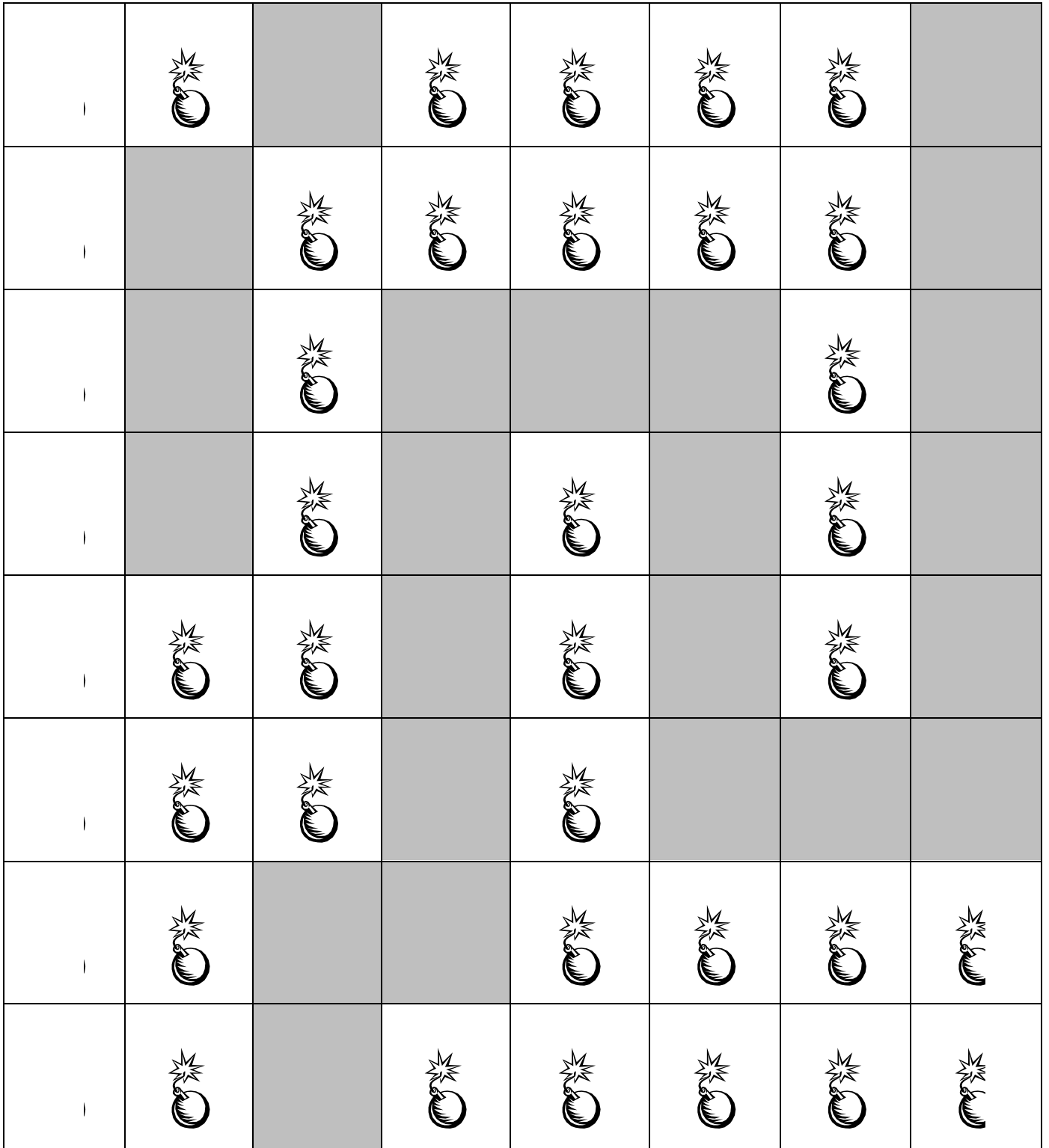
START



FINISH

ROUTE 3

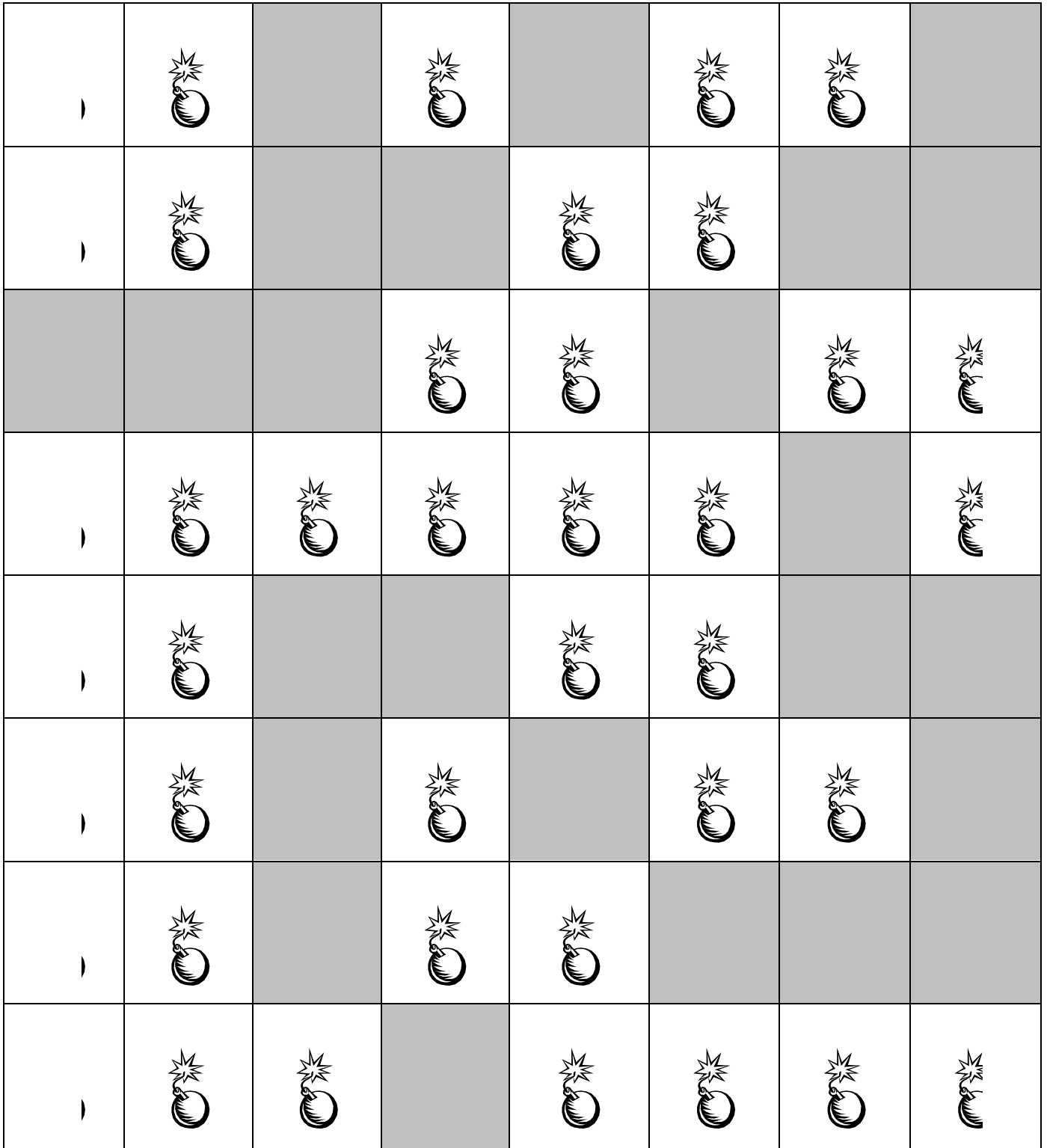
START



FINISH

ROUTE 4

START



FINISH

MINEFIELD

CHALLENGER BRIEF

SCENARIO

Your team has come to a battlefield that has been laid with mines. The entire team must cross the minefield following strict rules for their own safety.

RULES

- There can only be one person in the minefield at any time.
- The team must take it in turns to cross. If unsuccessful in their attempt to cross, the team member must go to the back of the line.
- Once a team member steps into the minefield, the rest of the team cannot talk.
- Each move must be one square at a time.
- A move can be in any direction.
- Only the facilitator knows which squares are safe and will indicate appropriately.
- Once a team member steps on a mine, they must return back to the start.

SAFETY

- Please be careful if the minefield is wet/muddy as it becomes slippery.

SCRAPHEAP CHALLENGE

ACTIVITY NOTES

Overview

Scrapheap Challenge involves a whole heap of scrap and lots of creative thinking. In this challenge, teams are tasked with building a product made of scrap to protect an egg when dropped from a height.

Resources: Scrap (anything and everything), old newspapers, scissors, eggs, paper, pens and sellotape.

Space Required: Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

Group Size: 8 to 50 (split into smaller teams of 4-8).

Total Time: 60 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 10 minutes to design and plan
- 30 minutes for build
- 10 minutes for launch/testing
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

Running the Activity

- Organise the group into smaller teams.
- Introduce the activity: In your teams, you must build a product to protect an egg when dropped from a height. Each team will be provided with an equal amount of scrap to build their product. You have a total of 40 minutes to plan and build your product.
- Provide teams with equal amounts of scrap and then allocate ten minutes for teams to plan and design their product. During this time, they are not allowed to build.
- Once they have planned their design, give each group an egg (or water balloon) and let them start building their product. If a team breaks their egg, then they are automatically disqualified from the activity.

Launch

Once the time is up and their builds are ready for launch, each team must nominate one person to bring their build forward to the facilitator. The facilitator will then launch the item from either a raised height e.g. window or by throwing the item in the air.

Once all the builds have been launched, the facilitator with the help of the selected team member must unravel the builds one at a time to find out whether the egg has survived the fall.

Rules

- Only resources provided can be used for the build.
- Team members may not interfere with another team's build.
- If any guidelines are broken, the group will be penalised (or even disqualified from the activity).
- Designs must be freestanding (not requiring any support from any person or object) and must be portable.

Activity Guidance and Notes

If you have time, you may want to do some introductory scored activities to build up to the main scrapheap challenge exercise. The team with the most points will get the most amount of scrap to use, while the team with the least amount of points will receive the least amount of scrap.

Try a few of the quick team building activities in this book, such as human knot or photo finish. These activities can be scored based on teamwork, communication and planning by either the manager, teacher or facilitator.

Check before the activity to ensure nobody has an egg allergy. If they do, simply replace the eggs with water balloons instead.

Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Cooperation
- Creative thinking
- Problem solving
- Time management

Review

Suggested questions to ask:

How easy was it to design your product?

What considerations did you have to factor in when designing?

Did everyone in your team have input into the final build?

Did you change the design while you were building it? If yes, why?

How important is it to change and adapt a plan?

Did everyone have a role within the team? Did you designate a team leader?

How did you manage your time?

Is there anything you would do differently?

Are you happy with your design?

SCRAPHEAP CHALLENGE

CHALLENGER BRIEF

SCENARIO

Your team must design and build a product to protect an egg when dropped from a height.

Each team will be provided with an equal amount of scrap to build their product.

You have a total of 40 minutes to plan and build your product.

RULES

The designs must meet the following criteria:

- They must be freestanding (not requiring any support from any person or object).
- It must be portable.
- Only resources provided can be used for your build.
- Team members may not interfere with another team's build.
- The first 10 minutes **MUST** be spent on planning – **NO BUILDING**
- If any guidelines are broken, your team will be disqualified from the challenge.

SPIDER'S WEB

ACTIVITY NOTES

Overview

The objective of this challenge is to get the entire team from one side of the web to the other without using the same gap twice and without touching any of the web.

Resources:

- 1 x webbing (tracer rope or other rope)
- 4 x secure poles or 2 trees
- 1 x helmet
- 6 x blindfolds
- Marking tape (mine tape)

Space Required: Medium. Outdoors only.

Group Size: 8 to 15 ideally.

Total Time: 20-30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 10 - 20 minutes to complete challenge
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

Running the Activity

- Before you start the challenge, take your time to check the spider's web and remove any potential hazards.
- Introduce the activity: The aim of the challenge is for the whole team to travel through the web. At the moment, the web is blocking your path to safety. Be careful though, as the web is extremely poisonous and any time a team member touches the web, the challenge will be restarted.
- Before starting the challenge, teach and review proper spotting techniques and emphasise the importance of safety during the task.

Rules

- The team must pass through the gaps in the web, one at a time.
- Each gap in the web can only be used once. Once someone has travelled through the hole in the web, it is then closed off for the rest of the activity.
- Nothing (including clothing) can touch any part of the web, or the structure supporting the web.
- No other equipment may be used in this activity.
- The group must complete this activity in a safe manner or the activity will be stopped.
- If any guidelines are broken, the group will have to restart the challenge.

Safety

- Ensure the web is stable.
- In order to prevent injuries when lifting and lowering each other, keep your back straight and bend your knees.
- Team members being passed through the web must do so face up.
- If anyone is being lifted, they are required to be wearing a helmet to minimize the risk of injury.
- Jumping and diving through the web is strictly prohibited.
- All participants must be spotted as they travel through the web.

Setup

Tie 2 ropes from two poles (or trees) to form a rectangle. Connect tracer rope between the top and bottom to form holes which can be a variety of shapes. Ensure when making the holes that there are enough holes for each person in the group and think of the age and size of the group members. Make sure the web is secure before commencing the activity.

It is also a good idea to have cushions, pads or a soft landing area placed under the web structure to minimize risk of injury on a fall.

Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Cooperation
- Communication
- Decision making
- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Trust

Activity Guidance and Notes

Generally, the first and last people to pass through the web will use the lower gaps so they do not need to be lifted. The people that are lifted need to pass through the higher gaps. If anyone is being lifted, then we recommend a helmet is worn. You should also monitor spotting technique to maintain the safety of the participant.

You can use marking tape (mine tape) to close gaps after challengers have passed through them.

If your group is not physically strong enough or mature enough, then do not attempt this activity.

Variation

Allow each challenger or the whole team to accidentally touch the web a certain number of times before being penalised. This number can be reduced each time the web is attempted. When penalising, you can either send the individual back, or the entire team.

Each gap can be given a certain value, and in passing through the web the team must score a certain number of points.

Review

Suggested questions to ask:

What was the goal of the challenge? What was stopping you from achieving your goal?

How important was it to plan? How did you decide on the best strategy?

Who had the best idea? How involved were they with the rest of the challenge?

How did you allocate roles within the team? Did you have a leader during the exercise?

What did you do when your plan wasn't working? How did you adapt your approach to the challenge?

Was everyone involved in the activity and play a part in the success of the task?

Did you fail? How did you cope and what did you do to improve?

How well did you work as a team? What are the key qualities of a team?

Reflecting on the experience, is there anything you would do differently?

SPIDER'S WEB

CHALLENGER BRIEF

SCENARIO

Your team is lost in the Amazon jungle, and you have encountered a spider's web blocking your path. There is no way around the spider's web, so you must get your whole team to pass through it without getting caught.

Great care should be taken, not to touch the web when passing through as it's extremely poisonous.

RULES

- Teams must pass through the gaps in the web (not around it), one at a time.
- Each gap in the web can only be used once.
- Nothing (including clothing) can touch any part of the web, or the structure supporting the web.
- No other equipment may be used in this activity.
- Failure to follow the above rules will result in the challenge being restarted.

SAFETY

- Ensure the web is stable before proceeding.
- In order to prevent injuries when lifting and lowering each other, keep your back straight and bend your knees.
- Anyone traveling through the spider's web must be spotted.
- Jumping and diving through the web is strictly prohibited.

BLIND SHAPES

ACTIVITY NOTES

Overview

Team are blindfolded and tasked with forming a number of geometric shapes defined by the facilitator.

Resources: Blindfolds (for each person), 6 – 8m of rope

Space Required: Medium. Indoors or outdoors.

Group Size: 8 to 15 ideally.

Total Time: 20-30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 10-20 minutes to complete activity
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

Running the Activity

- Ask the group to line up in a straight line and give everyone a blindfold to put on.
- Get participants to put their hands in front of them and then place the length of rope in their hands.
- Now give them a shape to create with the rope. Start with something simple such as a square. When the team feel they have completed the task, they can take off the blindfolds on your command to check the results.
- Allow time to reflect on the task and review with the group. If time permits, give them another shape to form (triangle, hexagon, or octagon).

Rules

- Participants must hold onto the rope with both hands for the entire activity. Letting go of the rope, even for a moment, is not permitted.
- Blindfolds cannot be removed, unless instructed otherwise.
- Failure to follow the above rules will result in restarting the activity.

Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Problem solving
- Trust

Activity Guidance and Notes

To make the challenge more difficult, tell the group they cannot talk during the challenge. Give them a time limit or get them to form two shapes from the same length of rope.

Doing this challenge with younger children can be quite difficult, so make the challenge easier by only blindfolding half the team (the ones that feel comfortable).

If you have a large group, divide into smaller teams of around 12 people and either get the teams to compete against one another, or give them two different shapes to form.

Another way of teaching this activity is to show a shape to just one member of the team (you can also tell them). They then return back to the group, put on their blindfold, and must then try to communicate the shape to the rest of the group without saying the name of the shape.

Review

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you feel being blindfolded?

Did you find the experience frustrating?

How well do you feel you communicated as a team?

Did you come up with a plan or strategy for creating the shapes?

How did you discuss this as a group?

Did anyone adopt the leadership responsibility within the team? Were they selected?

Why is leadership essential for this challenge?

What's the difference between communication and effective communication?

What did you learn through the experience?

HUMAN KNOT

ACTIVITY NOTES

Overview

Starting in a circle, participants connect hands with two other people in the group to form the human knot. As a team, they must then try to unravel the “human knot” by untangling themselves without breaking the chain of hands.

Resources: None

Space Required: Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

Group Size: 8 to 12 ideally. You must have at least 4 participants to play.

Total Time: 20-30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 10 - 20 minutes for challenge
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

Running the Activity

- Get the group to form a circle.
- Tell them to put their right hand up in the air, and then grab the hand of someone across the circle from them.
- Then repeat this with the left hand, ensuring they grab a different person’s hand.
- Check to make sure that everyone is holding the hands of two different people and they are not holding hands with someone on either side of them.
- They must now try to untangle themselves to form a circle without breaking the chain of hands. Allocate a time limit to complete this challenge (generally 10 – 20 minutes).
- If the chain of hands is broken at any point, they must then start over again.

Safety

- Get participants to take their time in order to limit injuries.
- Ask the group not to tug or pull on each other.

Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Leadership
- Cooperation
- Time management

Activity Guidance and Notes

If you have a group larger than 16, split them into smaller sub-groups to make the challenge easier. If there are too many people in a human knot, it becomes extremely difficult for the group to succeed.

To make the task more challenging, give teams a time limit on this activity (this forces them to focus on time management and the outcome). You can also blindfold or mute participants throughout the activity, especially when you want quieter members of the group to take the lead.

Instead of making groups start over when the chain is broken, you can create penalties like blindfolding or muting a group member.

If you have an odd number, then select one team member to lead the challenge and be the team's eyes from the side. You can swap them mid-way through the challenge, if they're not engaged in the activity.

Review

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you feel during the activity?

Would you say you succeeded as a team?

How would you rate how you worked as a team?

Was everyone actively involved in the challenge?

Did you have a leader for this challenge? How did they help?

Did you communicate well as a team?

Is there anything you would do differently next time?

Did you have a strategy or plan for completing the challenge? Did you adapt this at any point?

Why is it important to review performance?