

# “THE BIG WIND BLOWS”

Activity developed by: Andrew Fluegelman and colleagues



## OVERVIEW

It is a perfect intro exercise – fast and physical but still gives us a chance to get to know a little about each other. Good for participants who are up for fast physical games.

### TIME



10 minutes

### PARTICIPANTS



4 – 15 participants

### MATERIALS



Chairs (one chair less than the numbers of participants)

## OBJECTIVES



- Icebreaker – help people to relax a bit and ease into the group. In a playful way it can help shy participants to deal with being the centre of attention and express themselves. It can be a helpful exercise in groups where participants do not share the same language. Speed makes sure that participants do not have much time to think.
- This exercise helps participants to feel the boundaries of their comfort zone and also to challenge it.

## STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS



1. Ask participants to sit in a circle with one chair less than the number of people in the group.
2. The person left standing up, e.g. the facilitator, then states something about him or herself such as “The big wind blows if you like gardening” or “The big wind blows if you live in a different country from the one you were born in.”
3. After the statement of the person standing in the middle, everyone stands up. They can then take a moment to recognise if the sentence is true for them and with whom they share the statement and with whom they do not.
4. When the facilitator claps everyone tries to find another chair where to sit down.
5. The person who did not find a seat stays in the middle and has to say a sentence about herself or himself and the second round happens the same way. Facilitators make sure that the rounds do not slow down.

## HINTS



Try to keep the speed of the game. Try to keep the light and sometimes even funny statements which help participants to play the game more easily.

It is an exercise that can evolve to a deeper exercise If you slow down the rhythm, the statements may sway to more sensitive zones.

Facilitators can also propose statements if they want to address certain topics.

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## VARIATIONS



This is a popular activity; you can play it with kids and adults alike. The Big Wind Blows (or Cold Wind Blows/Change Chairs if) was developed in the 1970s as part of the New Games movement, developed by Andrew Fluegelman and colleagues. There are also a lot of variations available for the same game.

For more you can read: <https://www.tefl.net/elt/ideas/games/change-chairs-if/>



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