

# ICEBREAKING in the Classroom

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**OPEN: WIDE MINDS WILL FIND ECO VIRTUAL  
STEAM SOLUTIONS TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE!**  
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# WHEN ARE ICEBREAKING ACTIVITIES USED?

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## **First day of classes:**

It facilitates acquaintance between teacher and students.

## **At the beginning of group work:**

It accelerates the harmonisation of group members.

## **Seminars and workshops:**

Breaks down barriers between participants.

## **Online environments:**

Increases engagement at the beginning of digital meetings and lectures.



# IMPORTANCE OF ICE-BREAKING ACTIVITIES (1)

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Icebreakers play a very important role in the classroom by encouraging a positive and engaging learning environment. For example,

## **Creating a Welcoming Atmosphere**

- Make students comfortable and involved, especially in the first days of a course, since they help to reduce the anxiety or awkwardness in the first encounters among the students.

## **Facilitating Introductions and Building Rapport**

- Allow students to become familiar with each other and themselves, which is an important activity in establishing class rapport. Such familiarity may translate to better communication and collaboration in the course of study.



Sources: <https://www.eur.nl/en/impactatthecore/knowledge-platform-impact-driven-education/designing-impact-driven-education/educational-activities/lecturers/ice-breaking-activities-warm-classroom>;  
[https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/1480538/How-to-Energise-Your-Learners-with-Icebreakers.pdf](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1480538/How-to-Energise-Your-Learners-with-Icebreakers.pdf)



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# IMPORTANCE OF ICE-BREAKING ACTIVITIES (2)

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## Enhancing Group Dynamics

- Reveal the group dynamics and individual personalities, thus giving educators insight into how students will interact.
- Helps in the identification of variable levels of students' prior knowledge, whereby instructors can adjust their teaching strategies.

## Promoting Engagement and Participation

- Encourage active participation in activities. Students will more easily discuss and engage in groups when they feel comfortable with one another.
- Serve as a warm-up for further learning activities and increase overall classroom engagement.

## Fostering Teamwork and Collaboration

- Emphasise teamwork and promote a sense of unity and collective responsibility



# SOME FACTS ABOUT ICE-BREAKING ACTIVITIES

Studies proved a statistically significant increase in students' self-reported attendance and engagement after participating in ice breakers!!

- One study reported that **female students** showed **more interest** in icebreaker activities compared to male students, indicating a gender-based difference in effectiveness
- **90%** of students agree that ice breaking is a fun activity.
- **83.3%** of students believe that using icebreakers can help them relax.
- **73.3%** of students think that applying icebreakers can increase their confidence.
- **66.7%** of students believe that using ice breaking can improve their comprehension.
- **60%** of students report that their anxiety can be reduced by using ice breaking activities
- **90%** of students prefer jokes as an ice-breaking activity
- **80%** like body movement activities
- **76.7%** enjoy games and clapping activities



Sources: <http://e-theses.iaincurup.ac.id/7274/1/Bachelor%20Thesis%20-%20Andrea%20Reffalleo.pdf>;  
<https://ijssr.ridwaninstitute.co.id/index.php/ijssr/article/view/566>; <https://ejournal.lppm-unbaja.ac.id/index.php/jeltl/article/download/2793/1416>



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# THREE GOLDEN RULES(1)

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Not all the icebreaker activities will suit you like a glove. As a teacher, it is important to select questions that best suit your class, teaching objectives, and student profiles:

You should ask these questions to yourself before starting your activity:

## **What will I do with my icebreaker activity?**

Is that students learn their classmates, learn their teacher know, set up a collaborative atmosphere...? Bear in mind those targets may be different whether they would take place at the very start of term or during revision sessions before exams.



# THREE GOLDEN RULES(2)

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## **Does my icebreaker fit within the overall class?**

When possible, an icebreaker should be relevant to the course and pedagogical project. With carefully-crafted yet simple icebreakers, have fun with the course's themes, ask students to share their struggles with the class or start short games around learning objectives.



# THREE GOLDEN RULES(3)

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## Is my icebreaker sensitive to everyone's feelings?

Of course, icebreaker questions permit more relaxed interactions among participants. However, remember that each student has his own values, beliefs and experiences. Teachers should refrain from making students share personal information and should keep their icebreakers light and safe.



# A SMALL TIP

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You can start your lesson by asking some **opening questions!**

Such opening questions prepare students emotionally and mentally for the lesson and establish a strong bond between the teacher and the students. It also helps students to express themselves, develop their self-confidence and make the classroom environment more friendly.

For example:

- How was your week/day?
- If you had a new superpower today, what would it be?
- If you were an animal, which one would you be and why?
- Choose a colour and how does that colour make you feel?
- What would you like to know more about?
- Where would you like to travel the most?
- What would you most like to do this weekend?
- What is your favourite game or activity?



# SOME ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY IDEAS (1)

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## The Story of All of Us:

This activity is a story completion activity used to develop students' creativity, encourage co-operation and start the lesson in a fun way. Students take turns to continue the story, increasing class participation and creating a common product.

**Step 1 - Starting the story:** The teacher gives an introduction with two or three sentences that can be the beginning of the story (e.g: 'One morning while walking in the forest, Alex heard a strange noise. He wondered where the sound came from...').

**Step 2 - Students continue the story:** The first student continues the story by adding two sentences where the teacher left off.

**Step 3 - Taking turns Participation:** All students take turns adding two sentences to the story and the story begins to take shape. Everyone participates in this process. If teacher wants, she/he can turn the story into a topic related to climate change, and can intervene and direct the story.

**Step 4 - Completing the Story:** The last student finishes the story in an interesting or entertaining way. The story is then read aloud to the class and evaluated together.

# SOME ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY IDEAS (2)

## Snowball Activity:

This activity helps students get to know each other while engaging them in an active and playful way!

**Step 1 - Three Facts About Themselves:** Each student writes three interesting things about himself or herself on a piece of paper.

**Step 2 - Crumple the Paper:** The students then crumple the paper to resemble a snowball and get ready for the snowball fight.

**Step 3 - Snowball Fight:** Students have a snowball fight for about one minute, tossing their crumpled papers around the room.

**Step 4 - Find the Author and Share:** Each student takes a snowball, attempts to find the person who wrote the facts on it, and, once they find their partner, brings them to the front of the class to share what they learned about their new friend.



# SOME ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY IDEAS (3)

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## Lost at Sea:

This activity promotes teamwork, critical thinking, and communication skills, as participants must work together to prioritize resources for survival.

### Step 1 - Scenario Description:

‘You have chartered a yacht and are on holiday in the Atlantic Ocean. Unfortunately, a fire destroys most of the yacht and the captain and crew lose their lives.’

### Step 2 - Giving a List of Supplies:

Students are given a list of 15 salvaged items. You are asked to rank these items in order of priority for survival.

### Step 3 - Individual Rating:

Each student ranks the 15 items from 1 (most important) to 15 (least important).

### Step 4 - Group Discussion and Decision:

Students break into groups and discuss which materials are the most important, comparing their rankings. Finally, they decide on a common ranking as a group.

Sources: [https://insight.typepad.co.uk/lost\\_at\\_sea.pdf](https://insight.typepad.co.uk/lost_at_sea.pdf); <https://drop-in.eu/wp-content/uploads/12-lost-at-sea.pdf>



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# SOME ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY IDEAS (3)

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## Name Circle

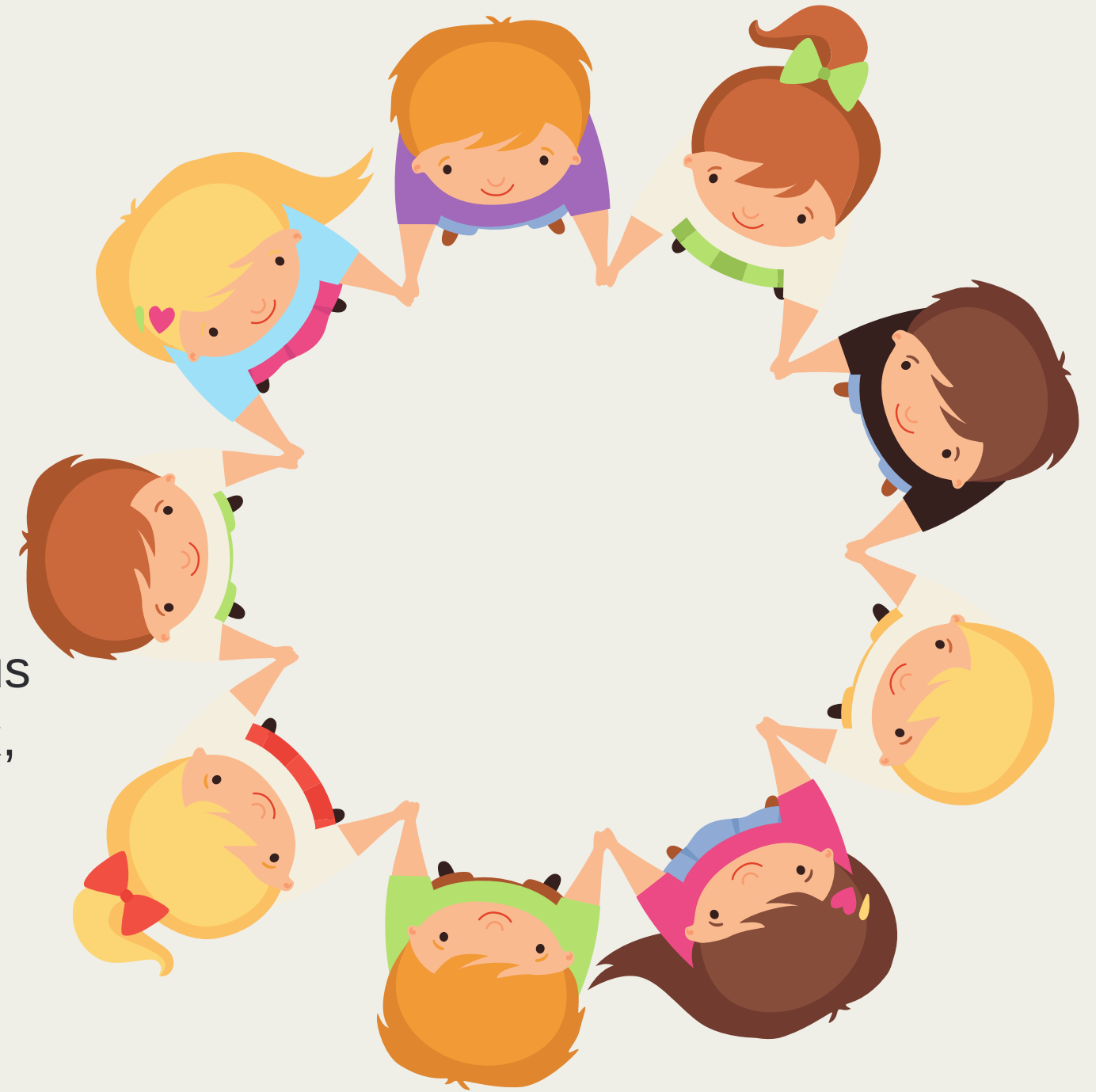
This activity helps participants learn names in a fun and creative way.

**Step 1 - Circle Up:** Everyone stands in a circle.

**Step 2 - Introducing** The first person starts by introducing themselves, stating their first name with an adjective to describe themselves or a favourite thing that begins with that letter.

**Step 3 - Repeat & Add:** The next person repeats all of the previous names and adds their own. For example: "Joyful Jane, Mighty Max, and Soccer Sam."

**Step 4 - Continue Around the Circle:** Each person follows the same pattern until everyone has introduced themselves.



# SOME ONLINE ICEBREAKING TOOLS (1)

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## Mentimeter:

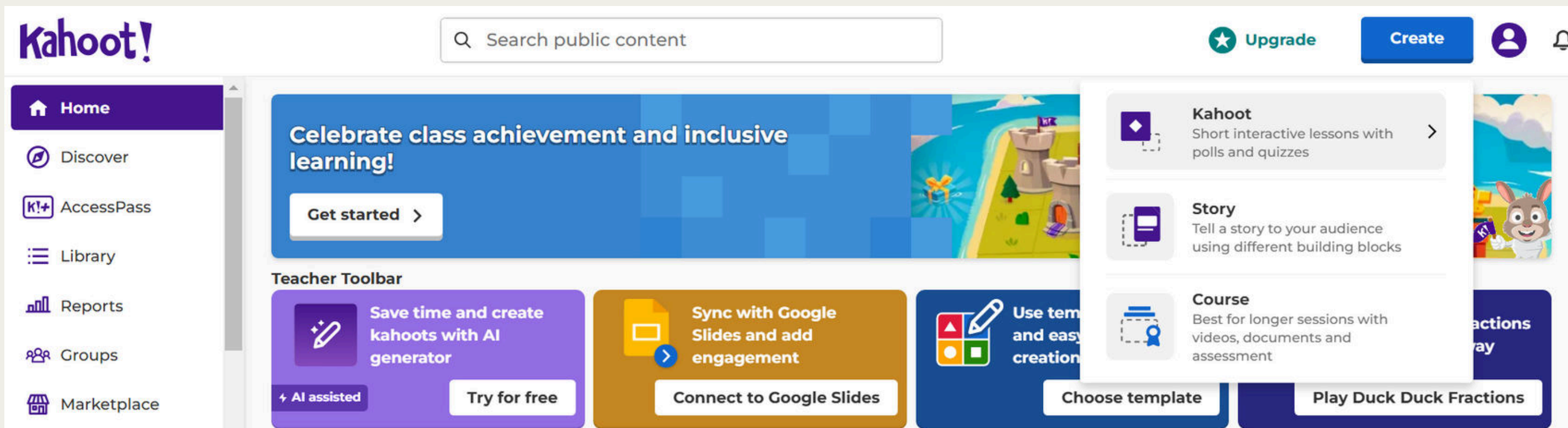
Mentimeter is the perfect tool for preparing live surveys, word clouds, and quizzes. Students can answer anonymously to the questions given by the teacher and see the results on the screen immediately. It is especially ideal for activities such as 'Express yourself in one word today'. It enlivens the classroom atmosphere by allowing students to quickly share their ideas and feelings.



# SOME ONLINE ICEBREAKING TOOLS (2)

## Kahoot!

Kahoot! is a platform to create interactive quizzes and games. Students can quickly answer the questions prepared by the teacher through their phones, tablets, or computers. While this creates a fun competitive environment in the classroom, students get to know each other better.



kahoot.com/



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# SOME ONLINE ICEBREAKING TOOLS (3)










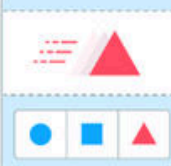





## Wordwall

Wordwall is an online tool used to assist teachers in devising a set of stimulating, interactive activities for both classroom and virtual teaching.

Teachers can choose from a wide range of activity types, including multiple-choice quizzes, matching pairs, word searches, anagrams, and more. This variety helps cater to different learning styles and subjects.

**Find out about our templates**

Select a template to learn more

	<b>Match up</b> Drag and drop each keyword next to its definition.		<b>Quiz</b> A series of multiple choice questions. Tap the correct answer to proceed.		<b>Speaking cards</b> Deal out cards at random from a shuffled deck.
	<b>Spin the wheel</b> Spin the wheel to see which item comes up next.		<b>Group sort</b> Drag and drop each item into its correct group.		<b>Flash cards</b> Test yourself using cards with prompts on the front and answers on the back.
	<b>Complete the sentence</b> A cloze activity where you drag and drop words into blank spaces within a text.		<b>Anagram</b> Drag the letters into their correct positions to unscramble the word or phrase.		<b>Unjumble</b> Drag and drop words to rearrange each sentence into its correct order.
	<b>Find the match</b> Tap the matching answer to eliminate it. Repeat until all answers are gone.		<b>Matching pairs</b> Tap a pair of tiles at a time to reveal if they are a match.		<b>Open the box</b> Tap each box in turn to open them up and reveal the item inside.
	<b>Wordsearch</b> Words are hidden in a letter grid. Find them as fast as you can.		<b>Labelled diagram</b> Drag and drop the pins to their correct place on the image.		<b>Spell the word</b> Drag or type the letters to their correct positions to spell the answer.

# USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ICEBREAKING ACTIVITIES! (1)

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It is known that artificial intelligence is used in almost every moment of our day. So why not use it to create a very useful process for students? With the help of artificial intelligence, we can create many icebreaking activities! Thus, we can both make students relax and communicate with each other more easily and increase their connection with technology!

For example:

**Step 1 - Imagination speaking:** Ask the students to create a creative and fairytale world in which they can go on holiday.

**Step 2 - AI places:** Using AI websites such as ChatGPT and Canva, you can create different holiday scenarios such as “a tropical island full of hidden treasures” or “a city made entirely of chocolate”.

**Step 3 - Visualise and share:** You can share the places you have created with the class and create a fun discussion by asking students what they can do in the new world they have created!



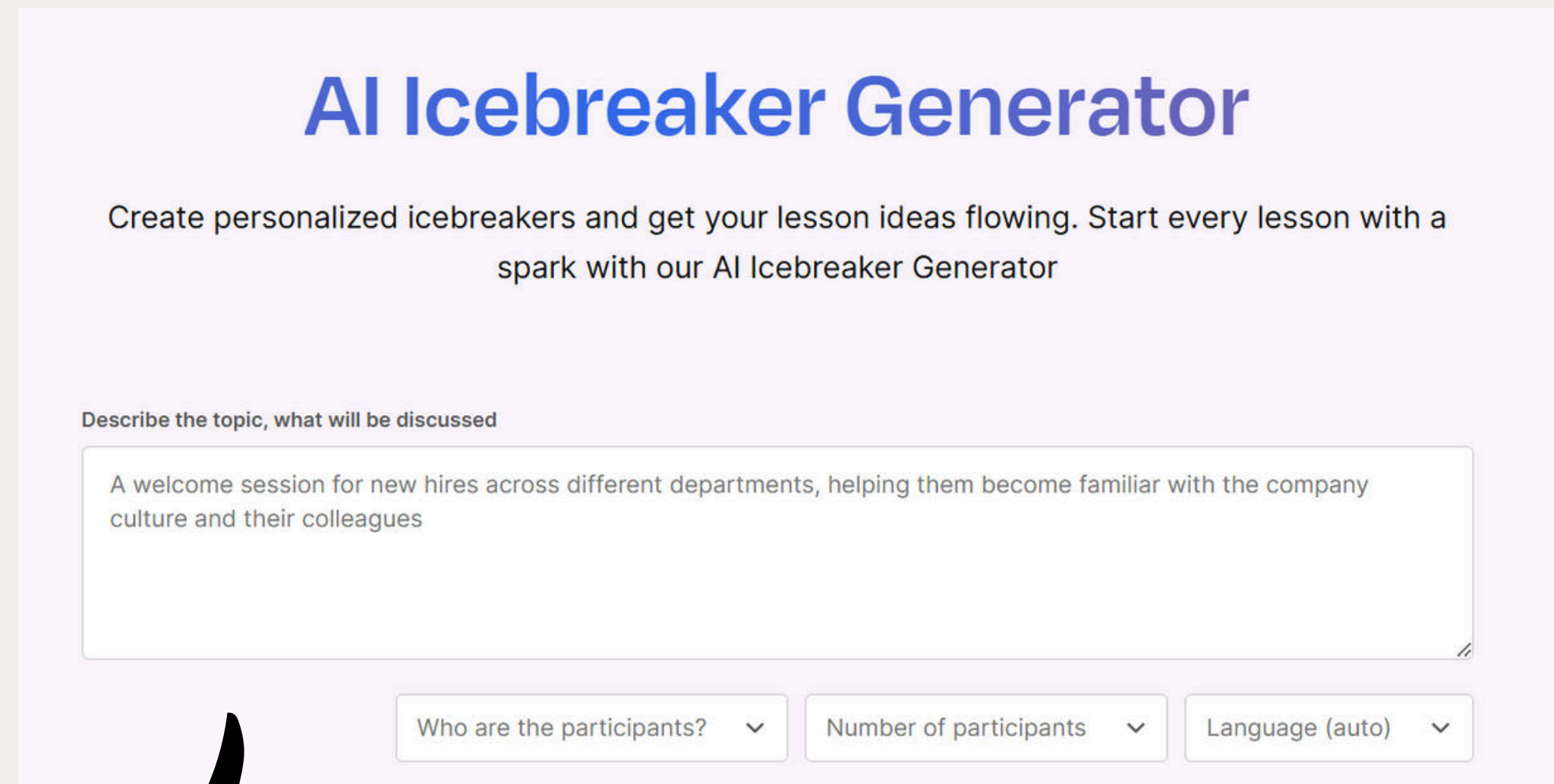
# USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ICEBREAKING ACTIVITIES! (2)

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Do you have a great icebreaking activity idea?  
Do you want to make it comprehensive but need practical examples?  
Artificial intelligence can provide you with interesting elements.

## Key features you need to specify:

1. Describe the topic, what will be discussed?
2. Who are the participants? Ages?
3. Number of participants?
4. Language (optional)



The screenshot shows the 'AI Icebreaker Generator' web interface. At the top, the title 'AI Icebreaker Generator' is in blue. Below it, a subtitle reads: 'Create personalized icebreakers and get your lesson ideas flowing. Start every lesson with a spark with our AI Icebreaker Generator'. There is a text input area with the placeholder 'Describe the topic, what will be discussed' and a sample text: 'A welcome session for new hires across different departments, helping them become familiar with the company culture and their colleagues'. Below the text area are three dropdown menus: 'Who are the participants?', 'Number of participants', and 'Language (auto)'.



<https://slidesgo.com/ai-icebreaker-generator>



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# CLIMATE CHANGE RELATED ICEBREAKING ACTIVITIES (1)

During the first work package of the Wi-Mi project, we created **“role-play” cards**.

The role-play involves students embodying different personas, ranging from countries grappling with immediate climate impacts to voices of marginalized communities disproportionately affected by environmental degradation. The narrative explores the diverse consequences of climate change, fostering a deeper understanding of the global crisis. Students are encouraged to brainstorm solutions collaboratively, recognizing the interconnectedness of their roles and responsibilities.



# CLIMATE CHANGE RELATED ICEBREAKING ACTIVITIES (2)

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You can ask “**tricky questions**” to students. This way you can brainstorm through creative and critical thinking and capture the attention of the whole class! For example:

- What is the difference between global warming and climate change?
- What is the difference between weather and climate?
- Why do polar regions stay cold even during summer?
- If all the ice in the Arctic melts, will sea levels rise? Why or why not?
- What happens if we plant trees everywhere? Will it solve climate change?
- Why can't we just filter carbon dioxide out of the air to stop global warming?
- How does using public transport help reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
- If the Earth is warming, why do we still experience extremely cold winters?
- Why do richer countries have a higher carbon footprint than poorer ones, even with advanced technology?

# CLIMATE CHANGE RELATED ICEBREAKING ACTIVITIES (3)

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You can create a game where students can act quickly by giving them true and false information and asking them to take action according to the information. **“Up and Down”** is an example of such a game.

**Step 1:** Present students with a series of short and simple statements, such as "Carbon dioxide is a natural gas and is not harmful" or "Global temperatures have not increased over the last 10 years.".

**Step 2:** After each statement, have the students stand up if they think the statement is true, or remain seated if they believe it is false. Give them only 2 seconds to decide-keep it fast-paced!

**Step 3:** Continue the game until there is only one student or group left standing.



# THANK YOU!

## ANY QUESTIONS?



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