

# Using the Icebreakers for Remote Learning

All of these instructions are based on holding meetings on [Zoom](#), which seems to be a frontrunner for videoconferencing. If you prefer another platform, you will need to adapt these instructions to fit that tool instead.

For all of these games, it may be helpful to have students write a short reflection afterward sharing a few things they learned about their classmates.

Before attempting any of these options, do a trial run with a smaller group to make sure you have the technology set up correctly.

## **BLOBS AND LINES**

This icebreaker requires Zoom plus a hack I call the “Avatar Classroom.” Watch [this video](#) to see it in action.

- Gather with students in a Zoom meeting. On your computer, you’ll need to have two other programs running: the Blobs and Lines slideshow (using PowerPoint or Google Slides) and a separate, blank Google Slide where you’ll create your Avatar Classroom.
- Share the blank Google Slide with students (give them editing privileges) and have them each create a text box with their name. Students may need some help learning how to toggle back and forth between Zoom and the Google Slide. Since all students are “in” the Avatar Classroom slide, you don’t have to screen share it in the Zoom call.
- Once everyone’s card is created, show the first Blobs and Lines question by sharing your screen. Have students move their name cards in the Avatar Classroom in response to the question. Once they have sorted themselves, students can either informally talk in the Zoom or use the “chat” texting option to share their reactions.

## CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

For this one, you just need Zoom and your icebreaker slideshow.

- Gather with students in a Zoom meeting. On your computer, have the Concentric Circles slideshow (using PowerPoint or Google Slides) ready to launch in presentation mode.
- Show the first question by sharing your screen.
- Create [breakout rooms](#) to put students into groups of two; that means if you have 20 students, you'll need 10 rooms. Choose to have them set up automatically instead of manually.
- Have students discuss the question in their breakout rooms (set a time limit for about 3-5 minutes...you may need to experiment with this), then return to the larger group. For the next question, choose "recreate," which will delete the existing breakout rooms and set up new pairings.

## THIS OR THAT

Probably the best way to manage this one is similar to the recommendations for Blobs and Lines, where you'd use an [Avatar Classroom](#).

- Gather with students in a Zoom meeting. On your computer, you'll need to have two other programs running: the This or That slideshow (using PowerPoint or Google Slides) and a separate, blank Google Slide where you'll create your Avatar Classroom.
- Share the blank Google Slide with students (give them editing privileges) and have them each create a text box with their name. Since all students are "in" the Avatar Classroom slide, you don't have to screen share it in the Zoom call.
- Once everyone's card is created, show the first This or That question by sharing your screen. Have students move their name cards in the Avatar Classroom according to the question. Once students have chosen a side, you can call on individuals to talk about why they chose one option or the other.