

The Forgotten Period

Camps vary in the degree to which they program various aspects of the day. At one extreme, there are camps that let the children freely wander around camp most of the day, where activities are open all the time on a drop-in basis. At the other extreme, campers are slotted from the moment they open their eyes until they close them again. In either case, the time right before children at resident camp go to sleep often isn't something that is given much thought.

Counselors sometimes tell stories, just talk, or let the kids mill around until a lights out warning is called. Before hand, the kids will brush their teeth and do other bed preparation activities. In my experience, this "period" sometimes goes well, and sometimes it is a missed opportunity.

Certainly, campers need time to just be kids with each other. Some evenings of that are great, but the children likely get that opportunity much of the day already. At night, the cabin group has the opportunity to take the time and make it something extra special and magical. Counselors sometimes do that already, but others don't realize the potential, or don't have the ideas and experience to do something. Creating a resource (knowledge management binder – see that resource) will give staff ideas and inspiration.

Variety can be the spice of the night, especially if the children stay for a long period of time. To start off with a few ideas, some rough examples are included below. Your philosophy is an excellent guide for thinking of other activities. Staff will generate a lot of ideas -- a brainstorming session during orientation is always fruitful, as is sharing ideas at weekly staff meetings. Over time, the binder will be overflowing with great, inspiring ideas that will reap dividends well into the future.

Evening Embers

(Stoke the fires of wish and wonder.. If you can stay awake, that is)

Evening Embers are one of the things that can be the difference between having a good cabin or having a *great* cabin. Since we want all our cabins to be great, it's important to know how to lead an evening embers. To break down the basics of cabin chatting, we'll use the five W's of journalism.

Who—Just you and your cabin. No one from another cabin should be around, because things may be said that aren't anyone else's business. However, the village leaders and others will likely sit in on a few of your cabin chats. Village leaders should be there frequently. If you tell your cabin that these people are special, honored guests, their presence is quite positive.

What—You can talk about just about anything. Make sure your topic is appropriate for camp, your age group, and your individual cabin. A couple of suggestions include topics that you know your campers want to discuss or that they may need to work on as a group (DON'T single out individuals). There are topics that are off limits. Sex, drugs, suicide, death, and divorce are not to be discussed. See the village leaders if you want to discuss these.

When—Any time of day is a good time for an evening ember. This isn't just a before-bed activity. If you finish an activity with your cabin, you can sit down and have a chat immediately (examples—when your children climb, Yuba, etc.).

Where—Anywhere. Just make sure that your setting is private enough to prevent eavesdropping or distractions. This can be in the cabin, in the woods, Maidu Village, etc. Different locations can make it more special and memorable.

Why—They serve several important functions. First of all, they provide an opportunity for your campers to express their feelings in a group setting. Also, they provide an opportunity to discuss topics about which children may have strong feelings or questions but are afraid to ask about or discuss. Children will understand their own emotions and feelings better if they hear different points of view on topics. During evening embers, children have the opportunity to help each other cope with and understand feelings. Finally, they allow you to get to know your campers more personally, which is always an advantage (you may learn something, too!).

Here are some suggestions for setting up a successful evening embers:

- Have everyone sit in a circle. That way everyone can see and hear everyone else.
- Set some ground rules. These should include the following—no yelling, no personal attacks, no interrupting, respecting others feelings, don't offer problems without some idea for a solution, and anything else you feel is necessary to promote open conversation. Make sure that your campers know that everything discussed during evening embers stays within the group (make it a "safe zone").
- Give everyone a chance to speak. Your campers aren't required to speak if they don't want to, but they have to pay attention and be respectful.
- No time limit. You will never have a problem if you are late for an activity because you were having a breakthrough cabin chat. Don't let them go on forever, though.
- Use props. Play a song and talk about it, or read a story, or talk about a picture. Have a special candle. Set the mood. Make friendship bracelets while doing the chat. Carve a talking stick. Use a quiet feather as the talking stick. Use your imagination.
- LISTEN! Your campers hear you all day. You'll be shocked at what you can learn from your campers.

- You are facilitating, not telling them what to think. Allow them to disagree with you and each other, but make sure they are civil when they do it (if they can do that, they're doing better than most adults). Try going first or adding another story/point if things get stuck. Ask the question in another way. Allow people to pass.
- Don't be too serious. These chats should be a learning and growing experience, but they should also be fun (like everything else at camp).
- Don't lie to campers. If they ask you a question you don't want to answer, you are under no obligation to answer. There are also some questions that you can't personally answer (examples: have you ever had sex, have you ever done drugs, drinking, etc.). Always be a good role model.

Instead of misleading them, tell them what they asked is a personal matter and you feel it would be inappropriate to answer. Then, tell them if they have other questions about _____ they should ask their parents when they go home.

Follow up on this by telling the parent that their child had a question about whatever it was they asked about when the parent comes to pick them up at the end of the session. The parent will love you forever if you do.

Evening Embers Ideas

Reflect

Reflect on the group

Active

Discussion props

Learn about each other

Issue resolution

Story telling

Just for fun

Creativity

Reflect

- Rose, thorn, bud (highs, lows, looking forward to later). What was learned from the thorns? You can rephrase this as well to cater to older campers. Oak counselors found that something like "a moment that rocked your socks" worked better.
- What did you learn today? (think broadly!)
- What part of the day would you take a photo of? Why? What part would you erase? Why?
- What was one expectation you had of camp? How is camp different from your expectations?
- What was the one thing you wanted to achieve (2nd day)? Revisit that at the end.
- Last day: What will you miss about camp? What did camp teach you that you'll take home?
- Magic Kettle, good for start of the session. "I have a magic kettle. I am going to take out energy and put in patience." The idea is that everyone in the group contributes something they have a lot of, and takes out something they need. They can take out anything, regardless of what has already been put in.
- Have the kids keep a journal, and have them talk about things they were writing if they feel comfortable sharing elements. Counselors should also journal and share some pieces of it.
- Be Yourself: This should help the campers identify good qualities about themselves. Ask them to name famous people they look up to and why. Then ask them to name qualities about themselves that other people admire. Discuss with the kids why it's important to like yourself and be who you are. Ask the campers questions about why certain qualities are more important than others. If the cabin is mature enough, ask them if they can think of times when they were not themselves (i.e. an outgoing child who was shy). They may also have stories about people in their lives that act "fake" or were not themselves. Encourage the children to like who they are and who other people are.
- Forgiveness: A good way to begin is to ask the campers if they've ever had to forgive someone and share a story of your own. After they share their stories, ask them to define forgiveness. Discuss with them the importance of forgiving people then lead into being forgiven. Ask them to identify their feelings when they forgive someone and when they are forgiven. Also have them explain how forgiveness helps resolve situations and why it's a good thing.
- Friendship: This can cover a number of different ideas. One possible one would be to define what a friend is. The campers can list off characteristics of a good friend and why that's important. They can also give examples of good friends in their lives. You can also talk with them about friends at camp and within the cabin. If the cabin has problems getting along, ask them what they can do to get along better. If the cabin gets along great, ask them why they think they get along so well. There is a wide variety of ways to discuss friendship and being a friend, so use your imagination and let the kids help you.
- If campers could take a photo of any one thing at camp, what would it be and why?
- Talk about rumors and gossip and what they do to people.
- Discuss personal goals for the week and for life away from camp.
- Friday night idea -- discuss feelings before camp and feelings about leaving camp.
- Beginning of the week -- discuss what makes an ideal counselor and LISTEN to them.

- Challenge Yourself: This should encourage the campers to challenge themselves in some way whether it be physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual. Ask them to think about ways in which they can grow and one (or more) challenge(s) they could give themselves. This could also come after the cabin has had a big day. For example if a camper was terrified about High Ropes, and they finally work up the courage to do it, you could ask them how it made them feel to finally accomplish it. Or, instead of pointing out an individual camper(s), ask the group what's the hardest thing they've overcome so far and how they've grown from it and to say something they're working on now.
- Respect: A lot of teenagers do not experience being respected. Focus on respect at camp and how it's a give and take process: the counselor will respect the campers and vice versa, but if it's taken advantage of then the respect level will decrease. You can ask them to name something they respect about someone in the cabin or at camp or another person in their life and why. It's also a good idea for you to say something you respect about each of your campers as well. It will not only let them know you respect them for who they are, but also perhaps help them see something they were blind to. You could also talk about stereotypes on teenagers (i.e. a teen walks into a store and the salesperson follows them around thinking they will steal something) and why they exist.
- Overnight embers ideas -- talk about respecting the environment, listening to nature, etc.
- If a camper was the Director of Camp Augusta and there was one thing they could keep and one thing they could change about camp, what would they be and why?
- Goodbye Ceremony -- talk about the good things they've done throughout the week. It's a good opportunity for cabin members to thank each other.
- Why did campers choose the clinics that they did- If it was something new and they are enjoying it, will they continue doing that activity after they leave camp?
- Review the first week, talk about achievements and areas that can be improved for second week.
- Put pen to paper and write without stopping. Write down the first seven words that come to your mind when you think of what really matters to you. Here's one list: wisdom, integrity, warm weather, intimacy, sleep, helping others grow, security. The more we know what we deeply value, the more we can align our lives to reflect those values.
- Flow: a state of mind when we are performing at our best, are involved fully in a task, and enjoy ourselves most. It turns out that we only experience flow when we are challenging ourselves, not when we're sitting around being bored couch potatoes. What could you do that could increase the possibility of experiencing flow? One way to get started is to write down three times you've felt most alive. What were you doing? How could you do that more? The more we challenge ourselves—mentally, physically, emotionally—the greater a sense of gratification we will experience.
- If you don't feel as happy as you would like, maybe it's time to ask yourself one simple question: where do I need to stretch so that I feel excited to be alive? Is it mentally by learning something new or taking on a new job? Is it physically by training for a 10k race or committing to working out three times a week? Is it emotionally by learning new habits or relationship skills? Is it spiritually by exploring your sense of connection to the infinite? This stretching ourselves is what William Butler Yeats meant, I believe, when he wrote: "Happiness is neither virtue nor pleasure nor this thing nor that but simply growth. We are happy when we are growing."

Reflect on the group

- What was challenging for the cabin, and how did they deal with it?
- Pick one person in the cabin and explain why that person was important to you. Make sure everyone gets picked.
- Have camper break 1 stick, then increase number either with each camper or at once (depending on age group) until the number of sticks reaches 6 (symbolizing cabin) and discuss the importance of teamwork and community.

Active

- Trust walk with a discussion afterwards.
- Take campers outside and have a moment of silence (one or two minutes). Look up at the stars or sky. Point out how small we are and how there are so many components to life that we don't realize are there. Have everyone name someone who has achieved great things. Explain that even though we are small, everyone plays their part and they can achieve anything they work hard at.
- Random Acts of Kindness: This can take place in two parts. The first part should explain the idea of random acts of kindness: doing things for people just because and to brighten their day (i.e. a card saying thanks or have a good day or a hug just because). Challenge the campers to perform a random act once a day for the week. They don't have to be for people in the cabin, but can also be for people in their clinics, people they see having trouble (i.e. carrying food, tying their shoe, etc). The second part should discuss the outcomes of the random acts: how they helped people, how they made people feel, how the campers felt, etc. Talk with the campers about how they can incorporate random acts into their daily lives at home, school, with friends, with strangers, etc.
- Gypsy Falls -- watching the nature at night and talk about the beauty that surrounds us all.
- Take your cabin stargazing on the lake or the field for an hour and talk about the stars, the galaxy, and universe. If you or your staff doesn't know much or anything about the subject, I highly recommend Terence Dickinson's Night Watch. Bring popcorn and some juice. Have the campers spin around looking up until they fall down and watch the night sky spin out of control! If the moon is out, howl at it.
- Provide your campers with a personal firespinning show (find a hero to help if you can't do it yourself). Discuss things that amaze them afterwards. Why?
- Instead of putting campers names on the cabins before they came, prepare just shapes and ask kids on the first night to decorate them. Ask them to put something special about them on their piece. After they're done go in a circle and present them. It might also make your awards prep easier.
- Find some cool places at camp. Inside climbing wall!!! Great place! And craft shack. Hot rocks.
- Web of Friendship -- This one is great for the end of the week. One counselor starts holding the end of a skein/ball of yarn. He/she passes the ball to someone else in the group, and shares why that person is special. That camper holds onto the yarn where it reaches him/her from the counselor, and passes the ball to another person in the group. Continue until everyone in the cabin has received the ball 2-3 times. At the end, you can talk about how the web formed by the yarn connects the members of the cabin and how they got to know each other in a short period of time.

Discussion props

- Play a song, and have everyone pick their favorite line and discuss it. (Sunscreen song is great)
- Glow stick cabin chat. Turn out the lights. Use a glow stick as a talking stick (whoever has the glow stick can talk). If the kids aren't working well as a group, use a few and show the difference between when you have them separated and when you have them together. Talk about your light as a group.

- Book: 39 ways to open up your heart. Great illustrations. Inspiring. Fun and kids like it. Each kid picks out the one they like the best and then they talk about it. Works for all ages.
- The Card Game: A great game for Evening Embers
 - What you need: 13 same suit black cards, 13 same suit red cards, A list of 26 questions, 2 Joker Cards
 - How it works:
 - Have your kids sit down in a circle. In the middle, spread out all the cards like you do in Go Fish. Then, one kid picks a card and tells you what it is. You find it on your list of questions (each card has a matching question, so you need to mark your list of questions as red A, K, Q, etc... and the same for black suit) and ask that child. Make sure the kids do NOT redeposit the card they chose, otherwise the same questions might be asked over and over. As mentioned, two joker cards are placed in the pile. If a child picks that card, then they can get with the rest of the cabin and ask the counselor the same question (appropriateness is mentioned beforehand). They really seem to enjoy that because then we are put "on the spot."
- Read a Book: Pick a book with a good message and read it to the campers. Afterwards ask the kids to name the message in the book and explain how it relates to real life. Some good books are *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein, *The Lorax* by Dr. Suess, or anything else you can think of.
- International counselors can lead a cabin chat on diversity by talking about differences and similarities between home and camp. Invite a special guest to do this one if you like.
- Ring of Affirmations -- Each person in the cabin writes their own name on a piece of paper. The papers are then passed around the group and individuals write something positive or encouraging about the person whose name is on the sheet that they have in front of them. Continue passing papers around until every member of the cabin has had the opportunity to write on everyone else's papers, then give the paper back to the person whose name is on it. This is a memento that they get to keep and read whenever they want to.
- Questions out of a hat -- similar to the card game. Random questions are written on slips of paper and placed inside a hat. Cabin members draw a question out of the hat and answer it.
- Franklin Fibs -- book about the importance of telling the truth. Discussion about the importance of telling the truth after reading the book.
- Princess Creed -- cabin contract with acronym -- Patience Respect Independence Nature Caring/Courage Encouragement Smart Sassy
- Animated story telling -- Cabin tells a story, such as "why cats and dogs don't get along" and all members of the cabin act out the various roles in the story.
- Chain Ceremony -- start a paper chain in the cabin. At the end of each week, campers write their names and something that they gained during their stay at camp on a link, and add it to the chain. Campers get to leave a bit of themselves in the cabin.
- M&Ms -- similar to toilet paper game -- campers take M&Ms (without knowing why they are being offered) and have to share one thing about themselves for each M&M taken (surprise!). Campers need to agree to the "cost" of the M&Ms before the process begins.
- Additional M&M game -- each person takes 3 M&Ms. Each color corresponds with a question, everyone that takes a certain color answers the corresponding question.
- Read story from *Chicken Soup for the child's soul* or *Chicken Soup for the teenage soul* to the cabin, then discuss it afterwards.
- The Book of Questions and the board games *Life Stories* and *Future Stories* have great questions that can be posed to kids and teens one at a time (a different question for each person). The questions need to be carefully selected before hand, as not all of them are good.

- Look at trees. Talk about how some are healthy and thriving, some are partially alive and partially dead - like most Manzanita. Which ones should the cabin be like? What do the campers and counselors need to do to make the cabin thrive? *!!! GREAT CABIN CONTRACT DISCUSSION !!!*
- Have each camper make a small paper box. Have a discussion about the box being the comfort zone, and what it's like when people go outside the comfort zone. Campers get to burn their own boxes when they feel they have challenged themselves and stepped out of their comfort zones.
- Glow in the dark silly putty: Expectations- describe what you expect from camp. Construct the putty in a shape of something they expected. Counselor discusses what was said while shining a flashlight on putty. The light is turned off. The putty glows. The putty is turned over and we discuss how things don't always go as expected.
- Have kids write down 3 goals for their life (places they want to visit, what they want to be when they grow up. Then collect them and read 3 out loud and have kids guess who's is who's (if it's theirs they should try to fake it's not) Then reveal who's it is then do the next 3.

Learn about each other

- If you could bring one thing to camp, what would it be and why?
- Talk about embarrassing moments back home, and how they got through them.
- Get to Know You: This is good for Sunday or Monday night. It lets the campers get to know you and each other better rather than just through ice breakers. Let the campers ask you any questions they want (given that they are appropriate). They can range from simple "where do you go to school" type questions to deeper "what do you think about..." questions. It's important for the campers to trust you so this is a good way to show them by opening up about who you are. A lot of times this cabin chat will lead to discussions about all sorts of things going on in the world today.
- Would you prefer fame or respect?
- Which would you rather have and why: Genius-level intellect, world-class talent or stunning good looks?
- Would you declare that greed is necessary for motivation?
- Would you say that you are lucky or unlucky?
- What future discovery are you looking forward to the most?
- What scares you the most about next year?
- What do you want to be when you grow up, and what do you want to accomplish?
- Why are you here at camp?
- Something you'd like to change about yourself, and something you really like about yourself.
- Talk about a time when you were afraid and overcame it. How can you overcome fears at camp?
- Who do you admire and why? How did/does that person affect you?
- Looking back at your life, what has been the most significant "fork in the road"? Do you feel you made the right choice at the time? Would you choose differently now?
- What was the best vacation you've ever taken? What was the worst?
- You have been exiled to a deserted island for one year with no possibility of escape or rescue. Assuming that your basic survival (food, water, shelter) is taken care of, what five items would you bring with you from home?
- If you could time-transport any historical figure to here and now, who would it be and why?
- If you could inhabit the body of any currently living famous person for one week, who would you choose and why?
- Have kids fill in these statements. Beauty is . . . I see beauty . . . I feel beauty . . .
- If I lived on a star far, far away the thing I would most miss about earth would be . . .
- The greatest joy in my life is . . .

- The biggest decision I ever made was . . .
- The thing I love most about life is . . .
- I day dream the most about . . .
- Make up a story with the kids in the cabins as characters, and then talk about it afterwards.
- What part of a S'more would you be and why?
- One person tells a story about themselves. Another person finds a story of their own with a common link and tell it to the group. Keep going until everyone has told a story and is linked together.
- Campers have to find out five things they have in common with the two cabin mates they deal with the least. Everyone then gets back together and shares how much they all really do have in common.
- Blindfold them, put them back to back, ask questions. Do you believe in true love? If you had \$1 million? Who is the person who inspires you the most? Talk to the person who is at their back. Learning about that person, but not looking at the person - that person is just listening. No distractions, because just blindfolded. Rarely do we just sit and listen.
- Each person gets to talk about something that they want everyone else to know about them. The catch is that it has to be something that no one else in the cabin knows about them yet. Talk about the fact that you can always learn more about people no matter how close you are with them.
- Good- for a light, fun embers, esp. during 2 weeks, tell the kids they are on death row and have a choice for the final meal of their life. Include main dish, appetizer, side, and desert. It's fun!
- 3 people throughout all of time that you would invite to a dinner party. Why?
- Have cabin members talk about their greatest joys in life.
- Cabin members name their favorite qualities about themselves and why.
- Discuss things that the campers were scared about before camp, how they feel now, and things at camp that make them happy.
- During the middle of the campers' stay, have each of them anonymously write something they like, admire, or appreciate about each of the other campers on a small piece of paper. Ripped up art paper or quality stationery works well to give the event a special air. On the last day of camp, when everyone is saying goodbye, distribute the papers in named envelopes. More likely than not, you just gave them something they'll keep and treasure.
- Create a newspaper headline you would like to read about yourself
- What are you most grateful for in your life? How/why was this available to you?
- What do you do to help others? Do you give back to the world? How much has been given to you? Do you feel that you give back accordingly?
- Favorites....why?
 - Color you wear.
 - Regardless of size or circumstance, an animal you would like to own as a pet.
 - A flower you would like to grow in your garden.
 - Your lucky number.
 - Hobby
 - Meal
 - Game
 - Book, music, movie, etc.
 - Time of day
 - Place to be in your home
 - Thing to do on the weekend

- Spontaneously list as much as possible in 2 minutes: (things you like, dislike, etc.) Then discuss with the group why you wrote them.
- Opinions:
 - What is the first step towards reducing poverty, racism, etc.?
 - What environmental issue concerns you the most?
 - Do you believe a person is defined by what he/she does for a living?
 - What would compel you to go to war?
 - Discuss a current world issue.
- Top 3:
 - Name 3 people you consider geniuses
 - What are the 3 best inventions?
 - List 3 lessons you have learned the hard way.
 - List 3 things you would never do
 - List 3 charities you would donate money to.
 - List 3 things you would not let your children do
- Dreams
 - If you had the talent or the opportunity, you would...
 - Something you wish you could learn with the snap of your fingers
 - Something you wish you could change about your life
 - Something you wish you could change about yourself
 - How do you plan to spend the last years of your life?
 - How would you like to spend the last minutes of your life?
 - What is a dream you have had more than once?
 - Something you dreamed that later happened or turned out to be true.
 - If you could be anyone for a day- end with you "wanting" to be a starving child in Bangladesh or something...so you can appreciate everything you have. We know where our next meal (w/choices) is coming from. You can spend time at camp. You travel. You can be allowed to be a picky eater. Your life is awesome- don't take it for granted. There are a lot of people your age who aren't so lucky!
- Emotions
 - What emotion do you hide from the most?
 - What emotion do you experience the most?
 - The predominant emotion have you felt lately
 - A moment you achieved absolute happiness.
 - A piece of music that makes you sentimental
 - When you are sad, you need...?
 - What has been your proudest moment?
 - What are your favorite guilty pleasures?
 - Happiness scale- have girls sit in a circle with eyes closed and hold up fingers (one through 10) to represent their happiness. Without saying what people choose, have them put down hands and open eyes. Then have them think of three things they could change in their lives (1 physical, 1 mental, 1 emotional or spiritual). Have them imagine that they have accomplished all those goals. Re do the fingers up, eyes closed things. If numbers have changed and they probably will, have them open their eyes and see how happy they all could be. Works great!
- Friends:
 - A friend is someone who . . .
 - What is the best piece of advice you have ever received from a friend?
 - What is the best adventure you have ever had with a friend?
 - Have you ever lost a friend from something other than death? What happened?

- What would happen if you discovered a belief or trait in a good friend that you simply could not respect? (ie. discovered they were racist)
- Have you ever had to seriously forgive a friend?
- Do you have a worst enemy? Why? What would it take to become friends?
- What friend is most like you? Most unlike you?
- If I were to ask my friends, what would they tell me are the qualities they value in me? What would they say it is that makes me as good a friend to them as they are to me? Do I live up to my own definition of what a good friend should be? Do I have qualities that I think my friends undervalue? If so, what are they? Are there aspects of my personality that I would like to "work ON" so that I could be a better friend? If so, what are they?
- Family
 - What do you consider a family to be? Who do you consider to be part of your family? How many families are you a part of?
 - How well do you really connect with each of those members of your family? Are there any changes I need to make to develop these relationships more?
 - What are some things you need in life that a family can not provide?
 - What do you wish your families understood about you?
 - What are you expected to bring to the family?
 - What holidays or special events are most meaningful to your family and why?
 - If you had the opportunity to speak with a family member who is no longer living, what would you ask them? What would you want them to know about you?
- Creativity
 - Do you think of yourself as a creative person? What are your special skills?
 - Who do you know who is really creative? How so?
 - Do you think you take advantage of your creative gifts?
 - When and with whom do you feel the most comfortable about sharing your gifts? Why do you feel more comfortable then?
 - What places seem to bring out your creative spirit? Give an example.

Issue resolution

- Reverse homesickness -- talk about what you are going to miss the most about camp when you go home.
- Two truths and a lie game, followed by talking about how you don't need to lie to be accepted at camp.
- Scapegoating chat -- have everyone ignore one person for two minutes. (Village Leaders=present)
- Talk about how the counselors are there to make camp fun. Have all lights out. Counselors have lights. You can see because we're the light. We are here to show you and help you find your way. At the end, the kids have a candle too.

Story telling

- Story making -- Cabin members work together to create a story to tell to another cabin.
- Tell / read a story. From personal, to fable, to moral, campers are often ready to listen . . . and learn. Progressive stories with each person saying a few words can also be fun. Another twist is getting a word from each camper and then having the counselor tell a tale using all the words. Less unusual, but often popular, is reading a longer book over a week or session. Guest story tellers (directors, village leaders, or others) are often a real treat.

Just for fun / creativity

- Teach your cabin Cat's Cradle (get the klutz book if no one knows how to do it). Card games and friendship bracelets can sometimes be both fun and bonding as well. With children using an average of 40 hours of media a week these days, they often haven't had much experience just playing kid games.

When you come up with a new Evening Embers idea that you and your cabin enjoy, *please*, either write it up for us, or tell us. Almost all our good ideas come from the community. This extends beyond Evening Embers as well. Thank you.

Have Fun!

Favorite evening embers // New embers I have created
