

Ever and always in demand are good camp fire stunts. A vast array of them is needed to go around; stunts like clothes soon grow old and threadbare and must be cast aside for new ones.

Stunts of a certain sort most certainly have a place at the camp fire, however a word of warning at the outset may serve to good end. Do not make the all too common mistake of allowing your camp fire hour, in many ways your most precious hour of all the camp day, to degenerate night after night into a mere vaudeville show or stunt circus. Have plenty of fun in the greatest variety possible but select your stunts carefully, do not run to seed on them and balance them always with other sorts of entertainment, educational and inspirational.

Especially guard against that jovial chap, nothing more nor less than a stunt artist, who generally gets the "job" of "running" the camp fires. Study each camp fire evening carefully in light of reactions, learn by experience, never repeat a stunt which for any one of many reasons proves undesirable.

The following selection of Fun Stunts is offered here as suggestions of the sort of material for which every Camp Director is constantly looking:

- ▶ The King with a Terrible Temper.
- ▶ The Mob Scene from Julius Caesar.
- ▶ Schneider's Band.
- ▶ The Giant's Sneeze.
- ▶ Flivver Stunt.
- ▶ Sharp Shooter.
- ▶ A One - Man Baseball Game.
- ▶ Slamsome
- ▶ Senator Tankburst.
- ▶ Reedum N. Weepe.
- ▶ Newspaper Race.
- ▶ Bargain Sale.
- ▶ Who Nose Most?
- ▶ Wild Animals.
- ▶ Swat.
- ▶ The Laughing Handkerchief.
- ▶ Ghost.
- ▶ Jack's Alive.
- ▶ Buzz-Fizz.
- ▶ Boots Without Shoes.
- ▶ Oratory
- ▶ A Nail-Driving Contest.
- ▶ Admiral Poof.

1. THE KING WITH A TERRIBLE TEMPER

In this little skit the Patrol Leader or some other member of the Patrol with dramatic ability stands in the front of the group and recites, "There was a king with a terrible temper." After making this statement, he quickly turns to his Patrol and they heartily shout, and bang on whatever tinwares are within reach to verify his statement. The Leader goes on to say, "This king with a terrible temper (anvil chorus) had three daughters. One of exceeding stoutness." After saying this, the herald turns to his Patrol, and one of his court lets out a deep grunt. Then turning again to his audience, he proceeds to say, "One of exceeding thinness." One of his Patrol whistles faintly. Following this, he announces, "And one of exceeding beauty." (All sing two or three notes of some popular air.)

The herald then says, "To this king with a terrible temper (anvil chorus) there came a charming young prince ("Ah!") who courted one of his daughters. Not the one of exceeding stoutness (grunt); not the one of exceeding thinness (whistle), but the one of exceeding beauty (All sing). Then this king with a terrible temper (anvil chorus) got mad (ANVIL CHORUS)."

Note: Try not to dent tinware in expressing anger.

2. THE MOB SCENE FROM JULIUS CAESAR

Divide your group into three equal units, secretly instruct each group what they are to say on signal. Group one says: "This way--that way," gesticulating first with right hand then left hand in time with their speech. Group two says with great feeling: "Walla Walla" and the third group says: "Rhubarb."

All groups start slowly at a whisper, gradually increasing the volume until it is a shout. The riot is complete. Only Caesar can restore order!

3. SCHNEIDER'S BAND

Select a popular tune--a march is best--start very softly humming the tune with a rum, tum, tum, imitating the band coming in the distance. Then it approaches, passes and dies away. Keep with the leader and this little stunt will bring no end of fun.

4. THE GIANT'S SNEEZE

Split your group into three main divisions. One says: "hish," another "hash," and a third "hosh." Repeat this preliminary training three times until unison is accomplished, then repeat and drag out the last letter --hishe-e, hashe-e, hoshe-e, and after three times, kahishe-el, ka-hashe-e, ka-hoshe-e.

Guaranteed absolutely to dispel grouches, blues or imaginary troubles.

5. THE FLIVVER [Old Car] STUNT

A very good camp fire stunt can be worked out by five boys. Four of the boys with blankets thrown over their backs go down on all fours, bent up to resemble wheels. One of these boys has an old tin can with a few pebbles in it which he rattles when the engine is being cranked up. Another has a paper bag blown up, while a third has two paper bags blown up. The fifth boy with a suitable impromptu disguise represents the driver. He goes to the front of the Ford and pretends to crank up. Immediately the engine starts rattling, but stops before he gets into the imaginary driving seat.

This happens two or three times until eventually the four wheels slowly crawl forward with the driver using the brim of a campaign hat as a steering wheel. Suddenly the boy with the one paper bag bursts it, in imitation of a punctured tire, and falls flat on the ground. The rattle of the engine at once stops, the driver gets out and with appropriate noises pretends to pump up the wheel until it resumes its normal size again. He again starts the engine, gets in, but has scarcely moved forward a few feet when the other boy with the two paper bags bursts one and falls flat.

Again the engine stops and the driver descends and blows it up, but not looking at what he is doing he pumps in too much air with the result that the tire rises higher than the others, when the boy bursts the second bag and falls flat, to give the impression that this time the tire is completely exploded. The driver can then apply to the audience for help in pushing the thing home!

With very little rehearsal and with someone who can take the part of the driver well this proves a most amusing and original camp fire stunt.

6. SHARP SHOOTER

The equipment for this is a box of soda crackers and a Fourth of July cap pistol. In the stunt the announcer introduces Buffalo Bill of Sharp Shooting fame. He lines up the members of his Patrol, each of whom is supplied with a number of crackers tucked away in the pocket. The announcer then calls for a member of the Patrol to hold his cracker up, at which the sharp shooter will fire. At the crack of the gun the boy breaks the cracker between his fingers, giving the impression that it had been shot out of his hand.

The shooter stands in many different positions in hitting one cracker after another. Finally he asks all of the boys to stand in back of each other, holding the crackers in such a way that they will appear in a straight line. He then calls out the number of the cracker which he expects to shoot. The fun begins when his team purposely fails to cooperate in breaking crackers which were not called for.

Note: You will find a broom quite essential after this performance. A half-dozen cheap glasses or pop bottles may be used instead of crackers and broken from the bottom with a hammer, the party holding the "targets" to be concealed behind a screen or a curtain hung in a doorway.

7. A ONE-MAN BASEBALL GAME (Burlesque)

"Nuff sed."

8. SLAMSOME II (Burlesque)

Strong man take off. After repeated efforts and with terrific display of strength breaks a match. Lifts heavy weight (made of cardboard) which, when he bows to acknowledge applause continues to move aloft. A long piece of black thread has been attached to it and passed over chandelier or anything else convenient. Someone in the rear pulls the thread. Breaks handcuffs, etc. Gives demonstration of chest expansion (using football bladder). May do some real stunts as handstand, etc.

9. SENATOR TANKBURST

The noted orator makes an earnest speech simply repeating over and over the letters of the alphabet, placing the emphasis now on one letter and now on another, with suitable inflection and violent gestures.

10. REEDUM N. WEEPE

The famous mind reader! Appears in turban and flaming robes (bath robe). Has audience write questions on slips of paper. Takes one folded, presses to forehead. Takes a question and answers it, then opens the slip, reads it and uses the question for the next slip. Substitutes all sorts of humorous questions and answers. A little careful planning will enable Reedum N. Weepe to poke a lot of fun at different Scouts, if well prepared this is a good stunt.

11. NEWSPAPER RACE

Each contestant is given two newspapers, one for each foot. He places one newspaper forward and steps on it with the right foot. Then he picks up the other and steps forward on it and so on, being allowed to step only on newspaper. The race is to a given line and back.

12. BARGAIN SALE

Mark on slips of paper numbers from 1 to 50, or as high as is necessary to provide one number for each Scout present. Pass these out one slip to each

person together with ten beans. Ask the Master of Ceremonies to select one of these numbers as the "lucky number" and write it secretly on a piece of paper to be kept by him until the sale closes. The object is to see who will have the most beans and who will hold the lucky number at the end of the sale. Each Scout must make at least two sales and two purchases. At a signal, buying begins, the purchasers sometimes bidding against each other for a number they believe is the "lucky number." Allow ten to twenty minutes (depending upon the size of the crowd).

13. WHO NOSE MOST?

Form a complete circle about the fire, each Scout squatted on the ground. Select an "It," and equip him with the hollow cover from a safety match box. The game is for "It" to place this cover upon the end of his nose. He must then start about the circle by transferring the box to someone's nose in the circle, that Scout in turn must pass it on to the right, while "It" by talking but never touching, is endeavoring to get some camper to laugh so hard that he drops the box. When this happens "It" may sit down in the place of the boy who dropped the box, while he in turn becomes "It" and the game starts over anew.

It is well to have a supply of box tops, as they do not last long under such treatment.

14. WILD ANIMALS

Divide the camp fire circle into two equal groups. Secure two large dark colored blankets. Have all of one side cover their faces in their arms while the other side selects a man to be "It." He then gets down on all fours on the camp fire circle and a blanket is thrown over him. He may walk, crawl, dance or in any other way move about upon all fours, while the opposing side guesses who he is. When he has been discovered sides change and go through the same thing. Some very, very funny things will happen and all will enjoy the game greatly if it is not indulged in for too long a period.

15. SWATT

Roll a big log into the camp fire circle--one large enough for a boy to lie over in comfort (A stool or chair may be used). An "It" is chosen, who takes his position over the log, his eyes closed, his trousers drawn tight over the seat. The other campers gather about; one is given a soft slipper or moccasin. The game is to strike the down man without getting caught. The instant the slipper strikes, "It" opens his eyes and rises quickly. If he sees the slipper in someone's hand, the player becomes "It."

16. THE LAUGHING HANDKERCHIEF

Let the leader throw his handkerchief high into the air, every camper being instructed to laugh heartily while the handkerchief is IN the air but to cease the instant it touches the ground. Every camper that fails to stop that instant must entertain with a song, a story, a joke, a conundrum, etc., which in order to be acceptable must make the crowd laugh. If the group fails to laugh then another effort must be made.

17. GHOST

Ghost is another game that lends itself to this idea nicely. Start about the circle spelling a word, each camper in order adding a letter to the word but being careful not to complete the word. In case a word IS completed the boy adding the fatal letter becomes a half a ghost and ties his handkerchief about his left arm to so designate himself. As quickly as a word is completed another word is started and so on round and round. Make it very snappy. If a boy adds a letter and cannot give the word he is spelling he becomes a WHOLE ghost and puts his handkerchief about his neck. Two half ghosts make a ghost and when the game lags a bit stop short. All ghosts must do a stunt acceptable to the group.

18. JACK'S ALIVE

This is another fun maker that helps a backward and bashful lad unbend. Take dry corks or better yet bits of dry punk wood and light them until they burn sufficiently to make a red glow when blown upon. There should be several "Jacks." They are started about the circle, each camper passing them to the boy at his right, but before doing so he must blow upon them until they show red, whereupon he says, "Jack's Alive" and gets rid of it quickly. When a "Jack" dies on your hands you are given half a mustache with the charred end by the Leader. When any player has gained a full mustache and a beard or three dead "Jacks," he must do an acceptable stunt as before.

19. BUZZ-FIZZ

The players are seated in a circle. The game starts by one player saying "One." The player next to him says "Two," then "Three," and so on; only, every seventh player says "Buzz." That is--whenever "seven" or a multiple of seven is reached the player must say "Buzz." When the count gets to 71, the players say "Buzz one," "Buzz two" and so on. If he misses, he drops out, and the next player starts in as "One." The game becomes intensely interesting if in addition, "Fizz" is substituted for "Five" and its multiples. The game can be played by requiring a forfeit if a player fails to say "Buzz" or "Fizz" when he should, or if he says either in the wrong place.

20. BOOTS WITHOUT SHOES

All the boys are seated about the fire, except a group that are sent far enough away in the woods so that they cannot hear what is going on. The leader calls them to him one at a time and proceeds. The leader says to any Scout of his choice: "Say just what I say. Say, 'Boots without shoes'" (with a short pause after boots). The victim may repeat the whole sentence, and the leader says, "No, I want you to say 'Boots, without shoes,' " and thus it may go on until the leader has given the simple statement in all sorts of tones and expressions, till finally the player realizes that when told to say "Boots, without shoes," he must simply say "Boots."

21. ORATORY

Select two or three Scouts to address the assemblage at the same time, each on a separate topic of his own choice. Let the other Scouts vote which orator delivered the best speech under the circumstances. The same may be done successfully with songs, yells, and the like.

22. A NAIL-DRIVING CONTEST

Give each of a number of Scouts a board, a certain number of small nails and a tack hammer, to see who can drive the most nails in a given period. Usually, it is a practical demonstration of the tortoise and the hare.

Another way that adds to the competitive feature is to use one hammer and allow one boy to use it thirty seconds at a time, when he must pass it to his neighbor. This is very exciting.

23. ADMIRAL POOF

This stunt is splendid for camp fire programs and can easily be made to serve a real educational purpose, being excellent training in accurate observation.

First Round

The person introducing the stunt places a table and chair or substitutes in a place where everyone can see, and an old cup is put on the table. The challenge is now given by the introducer that no one in the audience can repeat in the right order what he, with a few simple actions, is about to perform. He will do the stunt twice, then anyone else can have a try. He assures them that there is no catch in it anywhere.

Now, sitting down in front of the table he lifts up the cup with the first finger of the right hand round it, at the same time saying, "Here's a health to Admiral Poof." He takes one imaginary sip at the cup, places it down on the table once, and with the first finger of the right hand wipes his imaginary moustache first to the right and then to the left.

With the same finger he taps the top of the table at his right side and then with the first finger of the left hand taps the top of the table on his left side. Then he touches the underneath of the table with his right finger on his right side and with his left finger on the left side. Next he stamps on the ground with his right foot once and then with his left, and finishes up by rising a few inches from his chair and sitting down once.

Second Round

With the first and second fingers of his right hand around the cup he says, "Here's here's a health health to Admiral Admiral Poof Poof."

He takes two imaginary sips of the cup and follows by placing it down twice on the table. With his first two fingers of the right hand he makes two imaginary wipes to the right of his upper lip and two to the left.

Then two taps to the top of the table with his right two fingers and two taps to the left with the first two fingers of his left hand. Then two touches underneath the table to the right with the first two fingers of his right hand, and two touches to the left with the first two fingers of his left hand, finishing by two stamps on the floor with first the right and then the left foot, and by getting up and sitting down twice.

Third Round

With three fingers round the cup he says, "Here's here's here's a health health health to Admiral Admiral Admiral Poof Poof Poof the third and last time." He sips three times and continues as above doing everything three times over.

Then is the time to let some one from among the lookers-on have a try, and it is an extraordinary thing that though the person knows and sees exactly what has happened, when he comes to do it he is almost bound to make some little mistake which immediately disqualifies him, and the next one takes his place.

It has been known to go the round of thirty people without any one of them doing correctly what is apparently such a simple little sequence of ideas and actions. Be sure, however, when doing this stunt to practice it well beforehand yourself, so that you are sure you have got it. You will be surprised at the keenness and interest which can be aroused.

PLAYLETS

Campfire Helps