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# Book Title

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# Keystone: Normal Ain't In The Frameworks

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## Historical Definition

key·stone

'kē,stōn/

*noun*

noun: **keystone**; plural noun: **keystones**

1. 1.

a central stone at the summit of an arch, locking the whole together.

## Arkansas State Definition

The Keystone course is designed to help ninth and tenth graders successfully navigate high school. Students will receive instruction on study skills, self-awareness, and goal setting strategies. This transition course will create a sense of belonging among students by having them become productive citizens of their school and community. Students will receive guidance in investigating their own interests and aptitudes in relation to possible *Career Pathways* and life-long learning and will begin developing a flexible education plan for high school.

## Bryant Freshmen Definition

“Fun!”

Hannah H.



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# Keystone: Education At It's Best.

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The average Keystone student is between 14-16 years old. Therefore, they know all there is know in life.



Most feel they only need to be let out of school, given a job that will put gas in a 4-wheel drive, money for the area fast-food restaurants and life will be GOOD! They think ALL will be going to college to become our boss. The truth is that 66% of high school students enter college ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov), 2012). Now, out of those 66%, depending on where they go to school, an average of 1/3 high school students graduate with a college degree. The highest college graduation rate in the state of Arkansas is the U of A. They graduate only 57.9% of incoming freshmen. UALR doesn't fair as well. They only graduate 21% (and that's rounded

up!) ([www.arktimes.com](http://www.arktimes.com), 2012). These numbers do not lie.

The teachers for Bryant Keystone believe the goal of Keystone is not to only develop the student but to develop the future tax-paying, community leading, mother/father, person that hides deep down in that freshmen. It's a job that many say is a calling. If that's the case we may not should have answered the phone. Others say we are special, No. Some even say crazy. BINGO!

According to Forbes.com, the top 5 things employer's are looking for are not test scores but the ability to work together and solve problems. The list looks like this:

Here are the 10 skills employers say they seek, in order of importance:

1. Ability to work in a team
2. Ability to make decisions and solve problems
3. Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work
4. Ability to communicate verbally with people inside and outside an organization
5. Ability to obtain and process information
6. Ability to analyze quantitative data
7. Technical knowledge related to the job
8. Proficiency with computer software programs
9. Ability to create and/or edit written reports
10. Ability to sell and influence others

([www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com), 2013)

Notice that standardized test items don't ever show up until number 7.

So, what does this information mean for Keystone, you may ask. Well, it means that we look at education and educating the primal teen differently. We must use different methods other than worksheets and test. Remember: Play is not a bad four letter word!

For those of us who have or have had small children we did not tell them to go study for the up coming standardized test they would be taking in a couple of years. Or to go tweet their friends or see how many "likes" they can come up with on Facebook. No, we told them (and got told many times) to go play! A child's unstructured play often time leads to a messy room or back yard but more times than not it leads to learning through disappointment and re-doing. Real life stuff.

According to Plato (is it just me or is that name really close to play-dough...something to think about) "You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation." But for today's educational landscape, play must have the 4 "p"s: Purpose, Planning, Preparation, and Presentation (Michalelis, O'Connell, 2004). Keystone uses play for this reason. Each and every activity listed in this booklet is designed to help the instructor to teach at a deeper level. While the author of this booklet believes there are correct answers to things, there may be a lot of different ways to get to those answers. Play helps to develop and reveal those issues to the learner (the kids). And it's fun!





determine what activity you want to play. I believe that you have the freedom to alter activities to fit your classroom. If you use a series or natural progression of certain activities no one will know your class as well as you will. This will help to determine what activities you will want to play later.

A simple look at the 4 P's starts with Purpose. Play must have a purpose in Keystone. And that's the easy part. In their book, *The Game and Play Leader's Handbook: Facilitating Fun and Positive Interaction*, authors Bill Michaelis and John O'Connell explain purposeful play as examples of getting to know each other, develop teamwork or groupness, or to get to know each others names (p. 21). This author as thinks problem solving and values can be taught using activities, if planned correctly. Purpose is determined by the Keystone teacher at the particular time and lesson. Just like the "real" classroom teachers.

Planning, according to Michaelis and O'Connell is simply determine the activity you want to use, what you want to achieve with the activity and how do you plan on getting there. You will need to

Preparation can be costly (p. 26). It's gathering materials needed for the activity. But it also doesn't have to cost anything (ex, Mine, Mine , Mine or Who are You). It's more about gathering what you need and where you want to play. It also involves knowing your surrounding. Try to make sure there isn't any dangerous stuff that could twist an ankle or trip someone.

The fourth P is the art. It's the presentation (p. 28). This is where you, as a teacher, must shine and never be seen. You must listen but be heard. You must use your personality to help students reach what you are wanting to teach. It's simply the hardest part of the P's. (Did I use enough oxymorons?)



# What Does It Take To Teach Keystone?

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## **State Requirements:**

The easy answer would be for someone who just lost their mind or on the verge. But that's another book. To teach Keystone for the state you will need: a copy of the Keystone frameworks and the completed Keystone Teaching Endorsement completed through your mentor. Most of this you will already have but need to put it in a binder for when the big dogs

come. The endorsement includes a current teaching license and other endorsements, CEP list serve subscription, a syllabus, how you plan on modifying for special needs students, and complete a few of the activities you will have the kids complete. Those include values assessments, aptitude assessments, personality typing and short term/long term goals.

You must also attend a new-teacher in-service for Keystone. Those take place during the summer and, at times, during the fall semester.

You will also need a list of the items that were purchased with Carl Perkins funds. I would suggest working with your Perkins coordinator and try to purchase some of the items for the activities in this booklet.

You will also need someone to bounce ideas off. Someone to talk to about what has worked and what isn't working. What needs to be changed and what can stay the same. How to dig deeper with questions. Even if you are the only one teaching Keystone in your school. If you need to, contact some of the people in your Keystone training or the writer of this booklet. Now, let's get to the fun part...the activities!



# Activities!

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Disclaimer! Here is the disclaimer part. Experiential activities have an inherent danger to them. Some involve movement. Make sure the area is clear. Some involve personal disclosure. Make sure you are prepared for the discussions when this happens. I accept no responsibility for injuries...even though I'll show you the activities. You must

The activities can be divided up into different categories: icebreakers, initiatives, team building, problem solving just to name a few.

Let's start with icebreakers.



# A Few



Icebreakers: Getting kids (and adults if necessary) out of their seats and using activities to break barriers, get to know each other, and to help form teams. Also, they are a great way to let kids use their creativity to do stupid stuff.

In the conventional plan, an icebreaker is any activity that can help a group form or help participants to get to know other participants. But remember, Keystone is not necessarily conventional. So, here are just a few activities that can help peo-

ple to get out of their personal comfort zones.





*Who are you?* Simple question, right? It is until about 20 seconds into the activity and then....you have to think!

**How to play:** Have the students get a partner. They need to sit across from each other and look the other in the eyes. They should take turns and ask one simple question for one minute: *Who are you?* The other person can only answer in ONE word answers, not complete sentences. After one minute, switch.

**What to process:** What did you learn about your partner? What did you learn about yourself? How hard was it to really discover WHO you are?

This is one of those activities that will cause you to think about who you are.



*Have you ever?* Have you ever...jumped over another kid? Have you ever....had to let a student go to nurse because they jumped over another kid?

If you want or need an activity for students to see how much they have in common, this is the activity for you.

**How to play:** The :”best” way is for each participate to stand on a rubber spot (these are available Gopher Sports, [www.training-wheels.com](http://www.training-wheels.com) where they are called



Have you ever squares, just a name a couple of places.) Have the participants form a large circle and then stand on the spot. There will be one person in the center of the circle and they have to finish the statement, “Have you ever....” and they have to have done it. They cannot make something up. Now, if any one in the circle has done what that person said, they have to leave their spot and go to another empty one. But they have to move fast or someone else will get their spot! If you are without a spot, you get to get in the center.

A very cool thing to do is get caught in the middle yourself and add an emotion to the activity. Something like, “Have you ever felt lonely?” This can cause the game to make a turn. This can get deep and that’s one of the places you want it to go. This will cause the kids to look at each other in a different way. Let the kids know this is an activity they can get deep with or stay shallow. Getting deep is more fun.

If you are a teacher that does not mind pushing the envelope (my kind of teacher) just a little, try this in your classroom using chairs. It will get wild!

**What to process:** Did you have fun? What did you find that you have something in common with someone else? Where you surprised by any thing said or that someone moved?

Later in the semester, you can get into a discussion in class and ask what you say now if we played Have you ever again. It gets really good.

*Human Elevator:* Most of the time, we tell ourselves we can and cannot do things. Changing paradigms is what Keystone is all about. This is a great activity to do on a rainy day or a really hot or cold day. This is about the then mental aspect of looking at things and not always the physical. It’s a mental mindset.

Pick 4 people and then pick another person that those 4 should not necessary be able to pick up easily. Have the one person sit in a chair in the middle of the other 4. The 4 should get at strategic locations, two under the armpit (yeah, gross) and two under the knees (not as gross but still gross). Tell them you are going to count and they have to pick the person up over their head, “Now, 1,2,3! Go!” They should only be able to barely pick them up.

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Now comes the freaky part. Tell the 4 to put the one down. Tell them they are all going to have to use their energy, even the persons in the seat, together to lift this person. But, in order to do that they are going to stack their hands over the person's head one at a time starting with their right hand. The order MUST go round the circle and NO HAND CAN TOUCH! If they touch, they have to back away and shake the bad mo-jo out. After their right hands are up, they have to put their left hands above those. Tell them to gather the energy from the person sitting and each other. They have to remove their hand in reverse order without touching and then when you say, "1,2,3 GO!" they have to pick the person up together as high as they can. It's weird because they will be able to do it this time.

**What to process:** What just happened? Why were you able to pick the person up this time and not before? Did you really gather "energy"? How can our minds help us to accomplish things we did not know we could accomplish?

How can we actually do more with people of the same mind set?

Not kidding, I've had little skinny girls pick up big guys. It's weird but it shows how the correct mindset can help you accomplish almost anything.