First Day Ice-breaker:

This is an easy first day icebreaker that needs no special materials, and can be done in 30 minutes or less if you are short on time.

Part I: Ask each student to get out a piece of notebook paper and create two columns, one for names and one for “an interesting fact.” Insist that students stand and walk around for this activity. The object is for each student to meet as many people as possible in the time allowed (perhaps 15 minutes?) and write down each person’s name and the “interesting” fact that each person tells about him/herself. Important: people cannot repeat the same fact about themselves over and over: they have to think of something new each time.

It helps for the teacher to model the activity first with one or two students, showing that everyone needs to come up with a new piece of information about him/herself each time. You might also mention the kind of information that works well. People can share:

* Something they did during summer or winter break
* Something about family: how many siblings, how many kids, etc.
* Special interests or skills: sports they play, languages they speak, hobbies, prizes they have won
* Specific favorites in music, films, or books.
* A favorite trip they have made, or would like to make

In 15 minutes, most students will have met and jotted down information on 4 or 5 students. You can allow more time if you want, of course.

**Part II**: Once everyone sits down, start calling off names from your roll sheet. Ask, “Who talked to so-and-so? What did she tell you about herself?” Everyone who talked to that person should speak up. Usually, fun information comes up and interesting coincidences occur as I go down the list. If you participate (which I recommend), students like reporting what they have learned about you.

I don’t go through the whole roll sheet, as it takes too long and may get a bit old. You can do half the roll sheet one day, and half the next, or just leave it as a sampling of names the first day.