This icebreaker is great for one of the first meetings of a class or other group getting to know each other. It helps people start talking to each other and find unexpected commonalities.

In groups of 5, take the next five minutes to find 5 things that everyone at your table has in common. Your goal is to find commonalities among your group that are unique, things that aren’t true about the other groups here. You’re going to have to investigate and be creative. Ask questions.

(If you want to make it a competition.) After five minutes, ask each group to read off their list. If any other team generates the same idea then it must be crossed off the list. Any idea that was not included on another team’s list results in a point for the team. The team with the most points after all the reading of the lists is declared the winner.

Debrief:

■ What was this activity like for you?
■ What can we learn from this activity?

from Moving Beyond Icebreakers, by Stanley Pollack and Mary Fusoni