Extension activities

Lesson 1 - Conversation Skills

Objectives and Outcomes
- I can recognise that people respond differently to different situations and events
- I can recognise the value of difference in skills sets and emotions
- I have shown discipline in crafting and improving my conversation techniques
- I have reflected critically on what communication skills I have developed

Musical Emotions (30mins)

About: Students will explore emotional responses in an abstract way and notice how different responses by others are all valid.

Resources: Music and speakers, drawing paper, pencils/pens, other materials to make marks such as paints or inks.

Activity
Choose a few different pieces of music to play to your group. A good selection of styles and genres of music will work best but ideally without lyrics or voices. You could even play live music if you are able to. If possible, loop the track or link together so the music will play continuously for however long you want the activity to last.

Students listen to the music and try not to look at or be distracted by anything else in the room. Whilst listening, they paint. Encourage them to make gestural marks that represent the things the music is making them think about or feel. Their artwork should lean towards being abstract.

What kind of marks do you think different parts of the music would look like?

Once finished, mix them around and look at the artworks together as a class, without identifying individuals.

- Can we identify parts of different artworks that might have been done at the same point in the music?
- How have different people have approached the same task and responded to the same music? Are all these responses valid and in what way?
- How do we respond in the same and in different ways to other people?

This activity can also be done listening to a poem or even a very descriptive piece of text or a narrative.
Unexpected mark making (30-40mins)

About: Students will use painting as a way to discuss the characteristics of positive friendships and celebrating difference in everyone.

Resources: A selection of natural and gathered materials, e.g. leaves, twigs and petals, cardboard tubes, bottle tops, string or tape, lolly sticks or similar. Paper, paint and brushes.

Activity
Challenge your group to make a set of alternative ‘paintbrushes’. Using lolly sticks as handles, firmly attach a variety of different brush heads made using a wide range of unexpected materials. Think about what different kinds of marks each might create — scratchy lines, fluffy or blurry marks.

It’s a good idea to take photographs of the paintbrushes before you use them as they will look quite different once you have added paint.

Next, students use their alternative tools to paint. Encourage them to test out the marks they can make. Do they work as you expected? How many different marks can you make with each one?

Ask your group to look closely at other paintings to see the types of marks made by the paint or brush. Sometimes marks can be very carefully hidden, and you can hardly see any brushstrokes, but other paintings use the movement of the paint and the brush as part of the work.

This activity can be used as a way into discussing flexibility as well as expected and unexpected behaviour. It can also be about potential and helping your group to think about how different characteristics can produce different outcomes and unexpected possibilities.

- What were the ‘characteristics’ of your paintbrushes?
- How did those characteristics change the resulting marks?
- Did the paintbrush change as you continued to use it?
- What characteristics (hidden and visible) do we have that make us individuals?
- How do these characteristics affect our behaviour?
- How can we work to respect the characteristics of others? Even those characteristics we can’t see or those we have not experienced ourselves?
- How does it feel using someone else’s paintbrush?
- How does it feel to think about someone else’s characteristics that may be different to our own?

Collage Chat (30mins)

About: Students will use a creative activity to reflect on their conversation skills

Resources: A selection of pages already ripped out of the magazines — choose ones that have images which create conversations, background paper, scissors, A4 paper, pens/pencils.

Activity
Working in groups of three, students spend some time cutting out images that jump out at them for whatever reason — it might be colours they like, particular objects or even individual words that they notice.
Ask them to cut things carefully, around outlines so they are quite concentrated on their task, but encourage them to talk and chat quietly within their group.

As they cut things out, ask them to place them onto the shared background sheet without sticking down. Continue until a few different things have been cut out and then ask them to work together to arrange and re-arrange the things they have cut out.

Next, give out paper and pens/pencils to each group. This time **without talking**, they should reflect on what they remember from the conversations they had when they were cutting out. These might have been discussions about what they were cutting out or about other things like football, computer games etc. — it doesn’t matter!

They should take notes on what they discussed — but they don’t need to share these.

- Was it easy to chat at the same time as doing something with your hands?
- How does chatting and talking whilst you work on something affect what you are doing? How does chatting work in school lesson times and why?
- Was one person talking more or less than the others? You don’t need to say who.
- Were you interested in the things the others were saying or were you keen to talk yourself, or both? Try to be honest.
- Was it difficult to reflect on the conversations after they had happened?
- Did the conversations change topic a lot or did your group just talk about one thing for the whole time?
- What do you think this activity is trying to get you to think about?
- How good do you think you are at listening to other people?
- Do you feel listened to? When? And perhaps when do you feel not listened to?
- Would this activity feel different in pair or in larger groups?

**Lesson 2 - This is Me**

**Objectives and Outcomes**
- I can recognise that people respond differently to different situations and events
- I can recognise the value of difference in skills sets and emotions
- I have shown discipline in crafting and improving my conversation techniques
- I have reflected critically on what communication skills I have developed

**Parts of Me (15mins)**

**About:** Students will use collage to think about their ‘whole self’.

**Resources:** Either a photograph of themselves as a full body shot or a found image of a human figure they can relate to, collage materials, scissors, glue and drawing materials.

**Activity**

Using a figure image to represent themselves, encourage students to think about the different parts of their personality that they share with others, and the parts of their identity that are more private.

Students cut out the outline of their body and place this onto a larger piece of blank paper. They fill the space around it with drawings and/or collages of things that represent how they think other people see them. For example, being part of a football team, wearing particular clothes, being interested in particular music or games etc.
Then, and this can be done as privately as they wish (it could even be a homework activity), lift the shape of the body away and spend some time thinking about the other things that make up them as a person but that they think is more private or information that they don’t generally share with everyone — perhaps things no-one else knows, or things that only a close friend or family member would know.

Instead of using drawings or words to represent these things, ask them to draw a shape or a coloured dot to represent each thing as they think about it.

- Does everyone have different sides to their personality? How often do you look for different parts of a person when you meet them?
- How can we make sure we help each other recognise the different parts of themselves and value themselves entirely? Do you do this already? How?
- How can we make sure we value ourselves entirely?

**Do you see differently to me? (20mins)**

**About:** Students will explore seeing things from other points of view and how image can be distorted or changed.

**Resources:** Card, scissors, cardboard, loo roll tubes, coloured cellophane (or similar transparent coloured plastic), textured clear plastic packaging, small boxes etc.

**Activity**

Start this activity by asking students to cut two L shapes from some thin card. Use these to create an aperture that can be made bigger or smaller. Encourage them to look around the room at things and think about how they can be framed, or how you can use them to concentrate looking at one small area of a bigger object.

Next, give students access to a selection of materials and encourage them to think about making a set of ‘looking devices’ - lenses that they can use to view things in different ways. Ideally, they should make a few each — perhaps a tube with textured plastic over the end to distort the view, or a pair of cardboard glasses with coloured lenses.

*Use your looking devices to think about how they alter the way we see things. Look at things in detail, cut out the edges of something, change the colour or texture of an object.*

Students can record what they see either by taking photos through the looking devices, or draw what they see. They can swap devices with others and explore the different results.

If your group has taken a selection of photographs, these could be pushed further in simple editing software — again exploring filters or colouration to change the way the image is seen.

- Is it OK to see things or think about things differently to someone else?
- Do you ever think about how you may see something differently to someone else? Can you think of any examples of this?
- Does how you think about something ever change?
- Is the way we think about things open to be distorted or altered? In what way?
- How easy was it to distort an image using your looking devices or the method of documenting them?
- How can we support our own ideas alongside someone else’s different ideas?
- How easy is it to look at something from someone else’s perspective?
Lesson 3 - Are you listening to me?

Group Portraits (10mins)

About: Students will make a visual group portrait.

Resources: Objects, a camera, a large roll of paper and drawing materials (optional).

Activity

Everyone (including the teacher) should choose one item in the room that can represent them. They should think carefully — but try not to give any examples as this will influence their choice. It could be anything: a classroom globe, an object from a nature display, a football boot, a calculator, a fluffy pencil case etc.

The items should be carefully placed onto a large piece of paper on the floor or on a big table where everyone can sit around the collection.

If possible, take a photograph from above of the collection to document the process and display later. Go round the group talking about the choices made.

- Why did you choose your object? How do you think it represents you?
- Would you choose a different object for a different day?

If unable to photograph, you could ask students to take turns in drawing around their object carefully on the background paper whist another activity continues - to give a drawn version of the group portrait.

- How does this collection become a representation of the group?
- How does it say something about each individual in it?
- Are you surprised by anyone’s choices?
- What do we think about how it only shows one single aspect of each person and not the whole picture?
- Do you feel like you listened well to your peers’ answers?
- How could you find out more about someone?