

Fish bowl

Intercultural communication skills:

Observes, Inquires, Reflects, Respects

Years 4-12

Purpose

Fish bowl activities develop students' abilities to listen to the experiences and perspectives of others while withholding judgement. In this activity, a small group of participants discuss an issue or problem while the rest of the class silently observes. In the follow-up session, students are able to clarify and reflect on their perceptions.

Preparation

Select a 'fish bowl' group and a focus question or problem for students to discuss. The focus question might be drawn from a theme or text the class is working on or could relate to students' interests and social lives.

Instructions

- Students sit in a circle and are provided with a stimulus to discuss. The rest of the class are 'observers', and sit around the outside of the circle.
- A group leader facilitates the discussion and ensures that everyone has a chance to speak. The **intercultural communication question cards (inquires, respects)** can be used to extend the discussion.
- The 'fish bowl' students are required to stay on topic, but are encouraged to extend their thinking and develop their ideas. Observers are required to remain totally silent, pay close attention, withhold judgement and note different perspectives while the discussion is in progress. The **intercultural communication question cards (observes)** can be used to guide participants' thinking.
- After the 'fish bowl' discussion, students share their observations in small groups. The groups should include a blend of participants and observers. The task of the group is to clarify and reflect on the discussion, not to express new opinions or reject the ideas of the 'fish bowl' group. The **intercultural communication question cards (inquires)** can be used to prompt students' questions.
- Finally, bring the class together to reflect. The teacher can use the **intercultural communication question cards (reflects)** to guide the discussion. Questions might include:
 - How did it feel to share your thoughts whilst being observed? ('fish bowl' group)
 - How did it feel to listen without making judgements?(observers)
 - Did anything surprise you? (everyone)
- Finish the exercise by giving students time to write a personal response to both the activity and the stimulus question.

Text takes

Intercultural communication skills:
Compares, Takes risks, Reflects
Years 6-12



Purpose

This activity demonstrates how issues can be viewed from a range of perspectives. Students are encouraged to think about the biases of authors and how we all view and understand the world through a 'cultural lens'.

Preparation

- Collect excerpts from fictional texts, poetry, newspapers, magazine articles, pamphlets, poems, quotes, transcripts of interviews and letters which examine the same topic from a number of points of view. You may wish to include some texts which address contentious issues or challenge participants to consider new perspectives.

Instructions

- Students are grouped and provided with a text. A group facilitator is chosen to ensure that the group is conducted fairly and stays on track.
- Students connect the content of their text to their own experiences and their knowledge of the world. They may also refer to other texts and experiences which help to illuminate the stimulus material. Challenge students to consider alternative interpretations of the stimulus text. The **intercultural communication question cards (reflects)** can be used to guide and focus the discussion.
- Next, bring the class together and allow each group to explain its text to the rest of the class and to suggest the intended purpose and audience.
- Finally, the students reflect on the range of interpretations and viewpoints which have been elicited by the activity and record their ideas in a reflective journal or workbook. The **intercultural communication question cards (reflects, empathises)** can be used to support students in their writing.

Describe, interpret, evaluate

Intercultural communication skills:
Observes, Reflects
Years 5-12

Purpose

In our daily lives we may make assumptions about people based on our 'knowledge' of the groups that we associate them with. Identifying and rejecting these generalisations will enable students to be more open to discovering new possibilities and new ways of viewing the world.

Preparation

Collect a set of images which rely on stereotypes. These may be from cartoons, magazines, videos, picture books, artworks, textbooks or online sources. Divide the class into small groups and distribute an image to each group. (This lesson assumes that students are familiar with the concept of stereotype and the key visual literacy concepts.)

Instructions

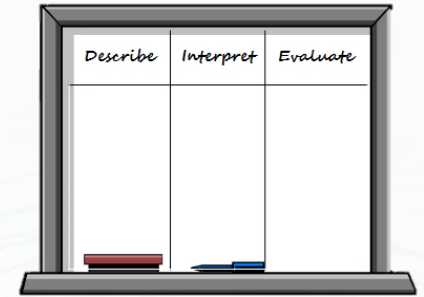
- One student is given the role of leader and ensures that everyone has a chance to contribute. Students examine the images closely and describe 'what they see', sharing their observations in small groups. **The intercultural communication question cards (observes)** can be used to prompt discussion.
- Students discuss the messages behind the images and the assumptions they depend on. The **intercultural communication question cards (reflects)** can be used to guide questioning at this stage.
- The class comes back together to present their responses. The teacher will model the process of deconstructing an image by categorising responses as either description, interpretation or evaluation. **The intercultural communication question cards (reflects, inquires)** can be used to develop and clarify students' thinking.
- Finally, discuss the role of assumptions and stereotypes. Explore how our assumptions exaggerate, distort or modify the way we interact with the world around us and the people we encounter.

Resources

Stereotypes intercultural communication: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQQtoyStMe4>

Pictures of Muslims wearing things: <http://muslimswearingthings.tumblr.com/>

Prejudice and stereotypes: http://bit.ly/HR_stereotypes



Describe

What I see (what I observe)

Interpret

What I think (about what I see)

Evaluate

What I feel (about what I think - positive or negative)

QRR activity

Intercultural communication skills:
Observes, Reflects, Inquires
Year 2-10



Purpose

This graphic organiser can be used during and after viewing or reading a text to promote deeper questioning. It can be employed as a guided activity, with the teacher prompting discussion and scaffolding student responses. Alternatively, it could be used by a small group as a framework for discussion or by individual students while reading.

Preparation

Choose a suitable text, and distribute or display the QRR graphic organiser.

Instructions

- Use the question column to record questions students have about an activity, text or encounter. The **intercultural communication question cards (inquires)** can be used to elicit questions.
- Record student reactions ('gut feelings' and initial reactions) in the second column using the **intercultural communication question cards (observes)** as a guide.
- In the third column, students record reflections, connections, or any other information that would provide additional meaning and context. The **intercultural communication question cards (reflects)** can be used to support student reflection.
- This graphic organiser helps lead students from questioning towards reflecting and synthesising.

Questions	Reactions	Reflections

Questions

Reactions

Reflections

Culture capsules

Intercultural communication skills:
Observes, Inquires, Compares
Years 3-9

Purpose

‘Culture capsules’ provide opportunities for students to observe and reflect on a specific aspect of culture and make comparisons with their own experiences. Students are exposed to or research a specific aspect of culture (e.g. table manners), and explore similarities and differences with their own culture. The activity helps students to appreciate cultural diversity and to begin to understand the nature of culture and its importance in people’s lives.

Preparation

Information on the target culture can be provided by the teacher (e.g. YouTube videos, magazine articles, TV shows). Alternatively, individual students or small groups examine different focus cultures and present a short ‘culture capsule’ to the class. Choose topics which will be interesting and appropriate for your students’ ages and abilities. There are some suggestions for a cultural focus in the table below. Students can use a Venn diagram or another graphic organiser to record their observations.

Instructions

- After viewing the stimulus material, students can use the **intercultural communication question cards (observes, inquires, compares)** to make observations and compare the target culture with their own experiences.
- Keep the focus of the capsule reasonably tight to allow for an in-depth examination of the topic.
- Discuss and record your observations using one of the attached graphic organisers.

Family roles	Life cycle	Relationship to place	Pets and other animals	Manners	Education	Communications
Entertainment	Discipline	Food preparation	Personal appearance	Growing up	Meals	Friendships
Hygiene	Time	Personal space	Health and hygiene	Music	Work	Religion
Body image	Traditions	Holidays and celebrations	Relationship to nature	Recreation	Dress	Art

Target culture

Home culture



How are they alike?



How are they different ?



Venn diagram

Target culture

Home culture

Similarities



Critical incident role-plays

Intercultural communication skills:
Empathises, Reflects, Takes risks
Years 4-10

Purpose

Critical incident role-plays can be used to increase awareness and understanding of human attitudes, expectations, behaviours and interactions.

Preparation

- The critical incident stimulus provides a description of a situation in which a misunderstanding, problem or conflict has arisen as a result of cultural differences. The teacher can use examples from existing materials, or create new examples relevant to their own class. Students may also be able to volunteer examples from their own experiences. The stimulus should provide enough information to set the stage, with a brief summary of the interactions and responses of the setting and protagonists. It should not explore the cultural differences that underlie the situation as the students will explore this in the role-play.

Instructions

- In small groups or pairs, discuss the incident and imagine that the scenario it describes has just taken place.
- Students act out the scenario, trying to identify with the motivations and feelings of their role. The **intercultural communication question cards (empathises, takes risks)** can be used to guide thinking.
- Students swap roles and try to empathise with a different protagonist's role. Students discuss how the protagonist's behaviours and responses reflect their particular values and beliefs.
- Students then alter, extend and innovate on the scenario in order to show how intercultural communication skills might lead to a more positive outcome.
- Finally, the students can perform the scenarios for the whole class and share their reflections. Use the **intercultural communication question cards (empathises, reflects, takes risks)**.

Resources

Critical incidents booklet: www.norquest.ca/NorquestCollege/media/.../CriticalIncidentsBooklet.pdf

Visual literacy teaching resources on Schooltools: <http://bit.ly/vislit>

KWL

Intercultural communication skills: Prepares, Inquires, Reflects Years 1-10

Purpose

A KWL chart activates learners' background knowledge by providing a structure for connecting what learners know ('K') about the world to new learning. Students direct their own learning by clarifying what they want ('W') to know, and deepen their learning by reflecting on what they have learnt ('L'). This activity encourages students to question themselves, others and the world.

Preparation

Introduce the topic and distribute or display the KWL chart.

Instructions

- Begin by introducing the new topic or stimulus material and brainstorming everything students already know about it. Record all the relevant information in the 'K' column of the KWL chart.
- Students then discuss what they want to know about the topic and make a list. A Bloom's question hierarchy could be used by students to support higher level questions. Students list their questions in the 'W' column. The **intercultural communication question cards (prepares, inquires)** can be used to guide students' thinking.
- At the end of the activity, students discuss and record what they have learnt about themselves, others and the world. The **intercultural communication question cards (reflects)** can be used to support the reflective process.

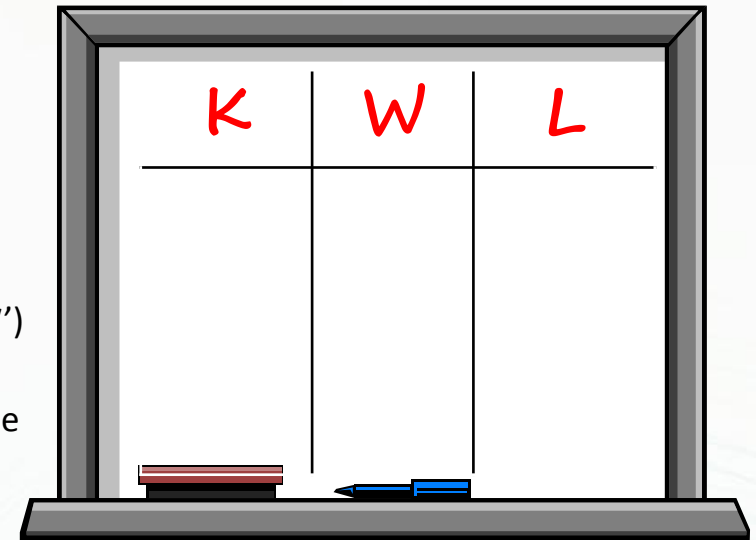
Resources

Example of inquiry learning: http://bit.ly/inquiry_strategy

Teaching with the K-W-L: <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/printouts/chart-a-30226.html>

Using Bloom's to pose questions about an image: <http://www.unc.edu/learnnc/kinetic-connect/noframes.html>

Thought-provoking questioning, Bloom's hierarchy: http://www.learnerslink.com/bloom's_questions.htm



K

What I know

W

What I want to know

L

What I have learnt



A large empty rectangular area for writing, with a faint background image of a globe showing Asia and Australia. The globe is light green and blue, with white grid lines. The writing area is divided into three vertical columns by dark blue lines, corresponding to the headers above.

Hot seat

Intercultural communication skills:
Empathises, Inquires, Reflects
Years 1-10



Purpose

This activity can be used to stimulate deep discussion around a particular issue, relationship or scenario. One student assumes the role of a particular character in a scenario or narrative and takes the 'hot seat'. The 'hot seat' student assumes the role of a character and fields questions from classmates about their character's feelings, motivations and actions. This activity develops the ability of students to empathise and builds understanding of how point of view affects our perceptions.

Preparation

Select a text in which the responses of the characters reflect their cultural background or values. In some instances it may be helpful to provide additional cultural and historical information to give the scenario a meaningful context. Choose a student or students to take the 'hot seat'.

Instructions

- After reading or viewing a text, one student is invited to take the 'hot seat'. The task of the 'hot seat' student is to empathise with a particular role by imagining they are a particular character.
- The 'hot seat' student assumes the thought patterns, mannerisms and personality of the character they are playing. The **intercultural communication question cards (empathises)** can be used to support empathic thinking.
- The 'hot seat' student makes themselves available for questioning by the class. Use the **intercultural communication question cards (inquires)** to help students formulate questions which examine the feelings, motivations, values and beliefs of the character.
- The activity can be extended by 'hot-seating' other characters or by giving different students an opportunity to take the 'hot seat'.
- Finally, reflect on insights provided by the activity using the **intercultural communication question cards (reflects)**.