

STAGES

Engaging with social issues
through creative activities



people's
palace
projects

Queen Mary University of London

Stages Toolkit has over 100 creative exercises for university, college, and secondary school students. Here are 62 of those exercises adapted for primary school ages, 8-11 years old.

These exercises for primary school students can also be found in the online Toolkit, www.stagestoolkit.org. From the Homepage, select 'All Exercises' and search 'Primary School'.

We would like to hear about your experience using the toolkit, please get in touch if you would like to give us your feedback: info@stagestoolkit.org

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Choosing an Exercise

	KS2 CURRICULUM AIMS				KS2 THEMES & LIFE SKILLS			
EXERCISE TITLE & NUMBER	English (Speaking & Listening)	Citizenship Education & Critical Thinking	Drama, Creativity and Media	Religious Education (Identity, Belonging and Pre- conceptions)	Teamwork (Collaboration Using your voice & Group Dynamics)	Social Development (Empathy, Equality, Social Awareness)	Personal Development (Self Expression, Self Esteem & Imagination)	Communication (Non-verbal, Oral & Written Communication)
Alphabet Association (001)	X			X				
Word Association Circle (002)				X	X		X	X
Association Game (004)	X			X	X			X
Stages Tableaux (005)	X	X	X		X			X
Topic Identification/ Discussion (007)	X		X	X	X	X		
New World (008)	X	X	X		X			
Grandmother's Footsteps (009)			X		X			
Enter & Exit (010)	X		X					X
TV Programme (012)	X		X		X			X
Thematic Sculptures (013)	X		X					X
Warm-up 1 (016)			X			X		X
Amplification Circle (017)			X		X			X
Notions of Identity (019)	X	X	X			X		X

Myths and Facts (020)		X		X				X
Storytelling (021)	X							X
Ball Game (022)	X	X	X			X	X	
Puppets (025)		X	X					X
Build - ups (026)		X		X	X	X	X	
Physical warmup: Plating (028)			X					
Fortunately, Unfortunately (029)	X	X			X			X
Greetings (031)		X						X
Language of Object (032)		X	X		X	X	X	X
Orange Exercise (033)		X		X	X			
Step In (034)		X						
2 Truths 1 Lie (035)	X	X						X
What am I? What Do I Want? (036)	X	X		X	X		X	X
Shapes (038)					X			
Follows (041)				X				X
Poster Me (043)		X	X	X		X	X	X
Soundscape (044)	X		X					
Chair swap (045)		X			X	X	X	X
Identity (049)	X	X					X	X

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Choosing an Exercise Continued

	KS2 CURRICULUM AIMS				KS2 THEMES & LIFE SKILLS			
EXERCISE TITLE & NUMBER	English (Speaking & Listening)	Citizenship Education & Critical Thinking	Drama, Creativity and Media	Religious Education (Identity, Belonging and Pre- conceptions)	Teamwork (Collaboration Using your voice & Group Dynamics)	Social Development (Empathy, Equality, Social Awareness)	Personal Development (Self Expression, Self Esteem & Imagination)	Communication (Non-verbal, Oral & Written Communication)
Guessing Game (051)	X	X			X			
Image Theatre (052)			X					X
Belonging (053)		X		X	X	X		X
In Common (054)	X	X			X		X	X
Animal Farm (056)			X					
Listening and Talking (059)	X		X					X
Categories (060)	X							X
Exaggerations (061)	X					X		X
Single Word Dialogue (062)	X		X		X	X	X	X
Machine (064)			X		X		X	
Movie (066)	X		X		X			X
Lines of Emotions (068)			X			X		X
Follow Your Nose (069)			X				X	
10 Second Object (070)		X	X		X			X

Stretch (073)			X				X	
Imaginary Box (074)			X		X			X
Vocal Warm Ups (075)			X				X	X
Welcome (076)			X				X	X
Funky Chicken (077)					X			X
One-Line Story (078)	X						X	X
Passing Balls (082)			X					
Story Of My Name (083)	X						X	X
Mirroring (084)					X			X
Melting Snow People (085)			X				X	
20 Word Poems (087)	X						X	X
Object In The Room (089)			X	X			X	X
Eye Contact - Circle Swap (093)	X		X		X			X
Just Listen (094)	X	X			X	X		X
We Have to Move Now (096)	X		X		X		X	X
Carrier Bag Game (097)			X				X	X

Summaries of Exercises Adapted for Ages 8-11-year-olds

Here is a list of suggested exercises that you can use as a creative entry for Primary school students (KS2). You can either choose one activity or combine several to make your own short workshop. Browse through all of the exercises and resources on the Stages Toolkit website.

Alphabet Association (001) - Participants pick a topic, find words for each letter, make freeze frames, and discuss the connections between the words and the personal emotions evoked by the words.

Word Association Circle (002) - Participants form a circle and each create a frozen image from words contributed by the teacher, then discuss interpretations and reflect on associations.

Association Game (004) - Participants form a circle with one person in the middle, holding up two items. Individuals take turns sharing words describing the items' meanings to them, discussing personal associations and diverse interpretations of objects.

Stage Tableaux (005) - This activity teaches participants about discrimination and stereotypes through devised scenarios, frozen images, and discussions.

Topic Identification and Discussion (007) - This activity helps participants explore important topics relevant to them, using creativity, teamwork, and simple tableaux Presentations.

New World (008) - This activity sparks participants creativity by having them imagine and present their own unique new worlds.

Grandmother's Footsteps (009) - One person acts as "Grandmother" facing the wall, while others try to sneak up and grab an object placed behind "Grandmother" without being caught.

Enter and Exit (010) - Participants use neutral masks to convey emotions through body language and discuss the impact of masks on non-verbal communication.

Creating a News TV Programme (012) - Participants learn about persuasive news reporting and media literacy by creating and presenting news programs, exploring biases, and discussing reliable sources.

Thematic Sculptures (013) - Participants form a circle, with one person in the middle pointing at others and assigning words for them to act out, while the individuals on either side contribute their actions, fostering collaborative physical expressions and discussions about the interpretations and understanding of given words.

Warm-up 1 (016) - This exercise brings concentration and focus within the group by using a physical activity where participants repeat movements and sounds.

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Amplification Circle (017) - Participants stand in a circle and take turns progressively amplifying and adding excitement to a simple action initiated by the previous person, emphasising precision and attentiveness rather than speed or excess.

Notions of Identity (019) - Encourage participants to listen with focus and empathy. Highlight common themes of identity within the group to evoke mutual understanding.

Myths and Facts (020) - Participants make a list of true or false statements about fairness, equality, and cultural understanding, then choose a paper indicating their belief, discuss their opinions, and receive explanations from the game leader.

Storytelling (021) - Participants sit in a circle, passing around a ping-pong ball to music. When the music stops, the person holding the ball shares a short story, encouraging reflection on the experience of sharing and listening to personal stories.

Ball Game (022) - An ice-breaker activity to bring concentration to the group and easily learn people's names.

Puppets (025) - Pairs engage in a role-playing activity where one person becomes a puppet and the other a puppet master to create short scenes in different settings. They are encouraged to reflect on the experience of each role, and the power dynamics of various situations.

Build-ups (026) - An exercise to encourage positive group relations by asking participants to write/say something nice about their classmates.

Physical warm-up: Plating (028) - Physical warm-up that enhances coordination, supports motor skills and concentration.

Fortunately, Unfortunately (029) - The group uses prompts to create a story together which then can be played out as an improvised scene.

Greetings (031) - In this interactive game, participants explore various ways people greet each other around the world, teaching cultural diversity and promoting cultural understanding, respect, and fostering social interaction, while encouraging creativity and physical activity.

Language of Object (032) - Explore non-verbal communication and talk about the different languages spoken in the group.

Orange Exercise (033) - Participants engage in a creative activity where they characterise and create unique stories about individual oranges, reflecting on the importance of recognizing individuality and avoiding stereotypes and prejudice.

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Step In (034) - Participants engage in an interactive circle game where they step forward or switch seats based on statements to discover commonalities and differences, fostering understanding and communication within the group.

2 Truths and 1 Lie (035) - Participants take turns sharing two true statements and one false statement about themselves in a circle, as the rest of the group tries to identify the false statement, fostering understanding and challenging quick judgments.

What am I? What Do I Want? (036) - Get in touch with what makes us different or similar, identify and appreciate the many layers identities have, share feelings that might arise in the group.

Shapes (038) - Participants move around the room, continuously finding empty spaces while responding quickly to instructions to create different shapes with their bodies, promoting teamwork and reflection on collaboration dynamics.

Follows (041) - Participants form a line, close their eyes, and engage in a game where they try to figure out who has a sticker on their back and then imitate their actions, exploring nonverbal communication, empathy, and the dynamics of being singled out or following others.

Poster Me (043) - Students create posters/ collages from magazines and newspapers to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

Soundscape (044) - Generate soundscapes and noise patterns for a performance or simply use as a playful warm-up exercise.

Chair swap (045) - A fun physical exercise where participants make statements and get to know each other. It can be used as an ice breaker game or a starting point for discussion on discrimination and power.

Identity (049) - In this exercise participants talk about the origin of their names and their impact on identity.

Guessing Game (051) - Teams compete to guess a common classroom item by asking “Yes or No” questions, emphasising the importance of strategic questioning and exploring the dynamics between open-ended and focused inquiries.

Image Theatre (052) - Pairs create frozen pictures to depict a personal experience of unfair treatment, followed by acting out the story as a play to explore ways to improve fairness and develop empathy through Image theatre.

Belonging (053) - Participants answer statements and talk about community and culture.

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In Common (054) - In this exercise participants explore common values and beliefs by physically grouping themselves in the space.

Animal Farm (056) - Participants take turns pretending to be animals in chairs, passing their animal to others through sounds and movements while avoiding passing it to the person next to them, emphasising quick thinking and challenging stereotypes.

Listening and Talking (059) - Pairs take turns as Talker and Listener. The Talker talks about something, while the Listener actively listens and summarises the main points, fostering communication skills and understanding.

Categories (060) - Nonverbal communication game where participants line up based on a given category without using hands or talking. Participants then create their own category and communicate non-verbally to arrange themselves accordingly, fostering creative communication and teamwork skills.

Exaggeration (061) - Participants take turns acting out and exaggerating emotions, passing them along to others, resulting in a fun and exaggerated display of feelings.

Single Word Dialogue (062) - Participants use imagination and improvisation to create a story using a set number of words.

Movie (066) - Use improvisation and imagination to enact suggested scenes from different movie genres.

Lines of Emotions (068) - Participants move around the room, embodying various emotions when prompted. The leader then creates a neutral sentence and selects someone to say it in an emotion of their choice. The rest of the group then tries to identify the emotion expressed.

Follow Your Nose (069) - A physical exercise, useful for warming up and exploring your body in the space.

10 Second Object (070) - Participants have 10 seconds to form shapes with their bodies based on shouted-out objects, discussing the results and exploring their creativity and teamwork skills.

Stretch (073) - A simple warm-up activity for the beginning of every session.

Imaginary Box (074) - Participants take turns “opening” an imaginary box, expressing their imaginative ideas through actions and body language without using words, fostering creativity and appreciation for each others’ ideas.

Vocal warm ups (075) - Some variations of different vocal warm-ups.

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Welcome (076) - An exercise that can lead to a discussion about cultural differences, migration and communication barriers by creating still images demonstrating the idea of 'feeling welcome/unwelcome'.

Funky chicken (077) - A physical warm-up exercise. Suitable for younger groups.

One-line story (078) - This is an improvised group storytelling exercise where participants add a line one by one to create a narrative.

Passing Balls (082) - A physical activity to encourage imagination and memory skills.

Story of my name (083) - This activity works well as an ice breaker where participants talk about their names' origin and get to know each other better.

Mirroring (084) - Enhance collaboration and focus with this physical theatre technique where one person does a movement and the group follows.

Melting snow people (085) - A fun physical warm-up to get you started. Suitable for younger groups as well.

20 word poems (087) - Write a short poem, using only 20 words. This creative exercise also works well with new English learners.

Object in the room (089) - Identify the overall mood of the group at the start of a workshop.

Eye Contact – Circle swap (093) - An ice breaker activity to help introduce the group and learn each other's names.

Just Listen (094) - Pairs engage in active listening by taking turns speaking about random topics while their partner attentively listens and then summarises the main points expressed, promoting understanding and open-mindedness in communication.

We Have to Move Now (096) - Participants act out a scene using different emotions which the group needs to guess.

Carrier Bag Game (097) - This is a fun object guessing game where participants use their imagination and creativity to communicate effectively.

EXERCISES

Alphabet Association (001)

Encourages participants to think about a chosen topic and express what it means to them.

1. Pick a topic you would like to discuss or ask your group for a topic. For example, if the topic is "Friendship," you would then write each letter - F.R.I.E.N.D.S.H.I.P - on large pieces of paper and stick them on the wall.

2. Ask everyone in the group to think of words that start with each letter in the word "Friendship." Here are some examples:

F - Fun, faith, forgiveness, family

R - Respect, reliable, reunion, responsibility

I - Interest, inspiration, inclusion, integrity

E - Empathy, excitement, encouragement, equality

N - Nurture, nice, neighbourly, negotiation

D - Dependable, delightful, dynamic, dedication

S - Support, sharing, sympathy, sincerity

H - Happiness, honesty, helpful, humour

I - Imaginative, important, influence, inclusion

P - Patience, peace, play, positivity

3. In pairs or small groups, choose three of the words from the paper and create three 'freeze frames.' A 'freeze frame' is when you use your body to make a picture, like a statue, that tells a story. You can use your whole body, or just part of it, and you can work together with your friends to make a bigger picture together.
4. Each group makes three 'freeze frames' that tell a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end, and each 'freeze frame' will show one of the words you picked.
5. Talk about why you think some words go together. Where did you get that idea from? Does thinking about those words make you feel happy, sad, or something else? How did your 'freeze frames' help show what those words mean?

Note: You can increase the impact of the freeze frame image by asking the group to close their eyes until the 'performers' have formed their image, then ask them to open their eyes once the performers are ready.

Word Association Circle (002)

Explore different understandings, perspectives and personal interpretations of various words and concepts using a creative approach.

1. Everyone stands in a circle facing *outwards* with their eyes closed.
2. The leader says a word, like "home," "scared," "family," "fitting in," "labels," "being unfair," "freedom," "welcome." "family," "scared," "being unfair", "being treated unfairly", "home," "feeling left out."
3. When the leader says a word, each person turns to face inside the circle and makes a pose or a gesture that shows what the word means to them. They keep their eyes closed so they're not seeing anyone else's pose.
4. Once they've all made their pose, the leader tells everyone to open their eyes. They look at each other's poses and talk about what they see. If some people made similar poses, they can show them together as a group.
5. Some questions you can ask: Why did you think of that pose? What do you think about other people's poses? Can you think of another way to show that word? What do you think made you come up with that particular pose?

Notes: Some people might show the word exactly as it is (like, for the word "family," they might pretend to hold a baby), while others might think of it in a more creative way (like, for "family," they might make a heart shape with their hands). The leader can help everyone talk about how their poses are similar or different. It's always valuable to praise different interpretations and reinforce the idea that there are no "right" or "wrong" responses or ideas when working creatively.

Association Game (004)

This exercise shows how specific objects can have different meanings for participants. For example: A red apple could remind someone of the story of Snow White, or it could make someone else think of a healthy snack, or even a gift for a teacher.

1. Ask everyone to stand in a circle, and pick one person to stand in the middle.
2. The person in the middle holds up two objects (they could be anything, like a pencil, a toy, a hat, etc.)
3. Ask the participants to think of a word that *describes* one of the things the person is holding up, like 'sharp' for a pencil or 'soft' for a stuffed animal. Then ask everyone to think of a word that expresses what the other object that's being held up *means* to you, for example, a hat might make you think of 'adventure' because you wear it when you go outside to play. Don't let the group take too long to pick their words.
4. Lead a discussion with the young people about the words they picked and why they picked them.

Stage Tableaux on Discrimination and Stereotypes (005)

Understanding the concepts of Discrimination and Stereotypes and their impacts on others in a way that is age-appropriate and promotes empathy.

- 1.** Begin by discussing the concept of discrimination, e.g., when someone treats another person unfairly or unkindly because they are different in some way, such as their appearance, where they come from, or their abilities.
- 2.** Introduce the concept of stereotypes, e.g., that stereotypes are generalisations or beliefs about a group of people based on what some people from that group may be like. Stereotypes are not always true and can be hurtful.
- 3.** Tell the students they will work in small groups to create simple scenarios to better understand discrimination and stereotypes.
- 4.** Divide the class into small groups (3-4 students per group) and provide each group with the scenario of representing a stereotype or discriminatory situation. For example:
Scenario 1: A student is teased because they prefer apples to the majority of students prefer bananas.
Scenario 2: A student is excluded from a game because they have blue/brown/green eyes.
- 5.** In their groups, ask students to create a frozen tableau (a still picture) representing the scenario they were given. They should use their bodies and facial expressions to show what's happening in the scenario.

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6. After the groups have created their tableau, have them share it with the rest of the class.
 7. After each presentation, facilitate a discussion with the whole group by asking questions like:
 - What do you see in this picture?
 - How do you think the person in the picture feels?
 - Is this fair or unfair? Why?
 - Have you ever seen something like this happen? How did it make you feel?
 8. Summarise the key points, for example, discrimination is unfair treatment based on differences, and stereotypes are not always accurate. Emphasise the importance of treating everyone with kindness and fairness, regardless of their differences.
- Optional: Role-Play:* Ask each group to choose one of the scenarios that was presented and create a short role-play that shows a better way to handle the situation. Encourage them to demonstrate kindness, empathy, and understanding.

Topic Identification & Discussion with Creative Tableaux (007)

Explore and discuss current events and topics through creativity, critical thinking, and teamwork.

Materials Needed:

- Age-appropriate newspapers or news articles.
- *Optional:* Large pieces of paper and markers for drawing.
- *Optional:* Basic props (e.g., hats, items of clothing and objects the students may have)

1. Explain that you will be exploring important current events and topics taken from news articles.
2. Provide the students with a selection of newspapers or news articles with age appropriate topics or headlines. Discuss several topics/headlines briefly.
3. Divide the students into smaller groups or pairs, depending on the class size. Ask each group to choose one topic that interests them.
4. In their groups, ask the students to brainstorm ideas about their own understanding and perhaps experiences related to their chosen topic. Encourage them to think about key aspects or elements of the topic. Then, have each group create a simple tableau (frozen picture with their bodies) that represents their topic. Optional: The presenting groups can also say a one-word or a short phrase as part of their still image.

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5. Invite each group to present their tableau to the class. After their presentation, they can briefly explain what their tableau represents, or ask the rest of the class what they think the topic of the still image was?

Optional: After all groups have presented, hold a class vote to choose the most effective tableau. Encourage students to discuss why they think a particular tableau was the most effective at representing their topic.

New World (008)

Imagine a New World - encourages creativity, critical thinking, and teamwork while exploring the concept of a new world.

Optional Materials: Paper, markers and a timer.

1. Divide the students into two equal groups.
2. Explain that they are about to embark on an exciting journey of imagination. Their task is to plan and present a new world. This world can be anything they can dream of - it could be a perfect society, a world of talking animals, or even a planet in another galaxy.
3. Give the groups a time limit and this topic: "You have (five) minutes to plan a new world".
4. Once the time is up, each group will take turns presenting their new world to the rest of the class.
5. After each presentation, engage the class in a discussion by asking questions such as:
 - Why did you choose this particular world?
 - What kind of society will this lead to?
 - Can any of your ideas be applied to our society?
 - What would need to change?
 - How would people live and work in your new world?
 - What are the rules and values that govern this new world?

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Notes: Encourage all students to participate and share their ideas, and emphasise that there are no wrong answers in this creative exercise. Adapt and modify the exercise as needed to meet the specific needs and dynamics of your class. Celebrate the uniqueness of each group's ideas and highlight the positive aspects of their new worlds.

Examples of New Worlds:

- The Floating Island Paradise: A world where islands float in the sky, and people travel on airships. The government is a council of wise elders who make decisions based on the needs of the community.
- Animal Harmony Planet: Humans and animals coexist in perfect harmony, communicating with each other. There is no need for a formal government as decisions are made collectively by all beings.
- Galactic Explorers' Colony: Humans have discovered a new planet with unique flora and fauna. They work together to learn from and live in harmony with the environment, establishing a democratic system to make decisions.

For 8-11 year olds: after the fantastical elements are established, a focus on how decisions are made will require more guidance from the teacher, addressing the concept of governments and laws of the land.

Grandmother's Footsteps (009)

This exercise 'wakes up' the body and mind, encouraging quick thinking, observational skills and physical work.

1. Choose one person to be the "Grandma" and have them stand on one side of the room, facing the wall. Everyone else should be on the other side of the room facing "Grandma".
2. Put a toy or object on the floor right behind "Grandma." The goal of the game is for everyone to try to sneak up behind "Grandma" without getting caught, and to be the first one to grab the toy.
3. "Grandma" quickly turns around from time to time, and everyone else needs to freeze and be very quiet. If "Grandma" sees anyone moving, that person has to go back to the far wall where they began, and start over again.

Notes: Try making up new rules for the game, like pretending the floor is made of sticky bubble gum so you have to move very slowly. Or, put some other things in the room, like a hat or a chair, and say that everyone has to touch each of those things before they can try to grab the object.

This game gets everyone moving around. The funny ways that people try to sneak up on "Grandma" can also give you ideas for other games or stories. Try adding different masks or costumes (pieces of clothing like scarves, hats, or gloves) to the game to make it more fun and creative.

Enter and Exit (010)

Explores the use of neutral theatre masks (or simple homemade neutral masks) to convey emotions through physical expression and non-verbal communication. Highlights the importance of physical expression in communication, especially in situations where language may be a barrier.

1. Divide the students into two groups, Group A and Group B.
2. Group A participants will be the first performers, while Group B will be the audience.
3. Group A puts on their masks and takes turns entering the performance area one by one. Each actor walks into the designated performance space, then notices the 'audience', and uses a gesture to express a feeling. (Encourage the actors to be creative and use their whole body to convey their feelings.) Then the actor leaves the 'performance area'.
4. *Discussion:* Ask Group B to share what emotions they perceived from the performers. Discuss how the masks influenced their interpretations.
5. Group B's turn to be the performers, while Group A observes.
Group B puts on the masks and takes turns entering the stage, following the same instructions above.
6. Ask Group A to share their observations and interpretations of the performances by Group B.
7. Ask both groups about the differences in their experiences as performers and audience members.

Discuss how the masks affected their ability to convey and interpret emotions. For example:

- How did wearing masks change the way you expressed yourself?
- Did you find it easier or harder to understand the emotions of the performers with the masks on?
- How can body language be a powerful tool for communication, especially when words aren't used?

Creating a News Programme (012)

Explore what makes a news piece persuasive and promote media literacy.

Materials Needed:

- Age-appropriate news articles or news stories suitable for children, avoiding topics that may be too sensitive or complex for primary students.
- Whiteboard or chart paper and markers for brainstorming and discussion.
- *Optional:* props for creating a news set.

1. *Choose a Topic:* Start by presenting a selection of age-appropriate news articles or stories. These could be about current events, scientific discoveries, or local community news. Guide the students in selecting a topic that interests them. Encourage them to consider why this topic is important and how it might affect people.

2. *Establish Characters and Roles:* Discuss the different roles in a news programme (e.g., presenter, guest, weather person, correspondent, interviewer). Have the students decide who will take on which role. Encourage them to think about what each character's role is in presenting the news.

3. *Prepare and Rehearse:* Give the students time to prepare their news programme. This includes planning what each character will say, creating a script, and gathering any props or visuals they might want to use. Emphasise the importance of clear communication, engaging storytelling, and accurate information.

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4. *Presentation and Feedback:* Each group presents their news programme to the class. After each presentation, allow for constructive feedback from both the audience and the facilitator. Encourage the students to reflect on what worked well and what could be improved.

- Discussion on Persuasion and Credibility: How did the news programme try to persuade the audience? Did they use facts, emotions, or both? Why? Were there any persuasive techniques used (e.g., interviews, visuals, statistics)?
- Discuss the importance of credible and convincing sources. Help the students identify what makes a source trustworthy.
- Introduce the concept of fake news. Explain that sometimes people might spread false information on purpose or by accident.
- Discuss tips for identifying reliable sources and checking the credibility of information.

Encourage the students to continue exploring news topics and to think critically about the information they come across. Being informed citizens and thinking critically about the information are important aspects of being part of a community.

Thematic Sculptures (013)

Enhances communication skills by using non-verbal actions to represent and explore words or concepts. Fosters creativity, group interaction, and collaboration.

1. Ask everyone to stand in a circle and pick one person to stand in the middle.
2. The person in the middle points at someone and says a word, for example, 'rain.' The person they point at must act out 'rain' using their arms or their whole body.
3. The two people standing on either side of the 'rain' person add their own actions to make the 'picture' even better. So now, you have a group of three people acting something out together.
4. The person in the middle keeps pointing at different people and saying different words like 'sunshine,' 'wind,' or 'snow,' and every time, the person they point at and the two people next to that person act it out.

Note: Try using words related to stories the young people know or things they're learning about. For example, you could use words like 'friendship,' 'adventure,' or 'bravery.' Then, talk about what the actions made you think of and how they helped you understand the words better.

Warm-up 1. (016)

Bring concentration and focus to the group with this warm-up exercise.

1. The group spreads out in the whole space. Ask one person at a time to perform a physical movement which the others need to copy.
2. Participants can add a sound to the action, first a word and then a sentence. For example, one person does a movement, such as stretching their back. They may add a loud inhale/exhale or say a line like 'I feel a lot of pain in my back today'.
3. Everyone needs to repeat the movement and sound, but can do so in their own way (for instance, changing the pace and intonation).

Notes: Discuss the difference of intonations in the sentences - did this create a particular atmosphere?

Amplification Circle (017)

Encourages collaboration and group focus through physical activity.

1. Everyone stands in a circle. The first person does a small, simple action, like wiggling their fingers.
2. The person standing next to them takes that action and makes it a bit bigger. For example, they might wiggle their whole hand instead of just their fingers.
3. The next person makes the action even bigger. So, if the second person was wiggling their whole hand, the third person might wiggle their whole arm.

Note: This game isn't about being fast or super wild but about accuracy with exaggeration so try to be precise with your movements and really focus on what you're doing.

Notions of Identity (019)

Find common grounds in the group by discussing similarities and differences.

1. Divide the participants into pairs and ask them to sit on the floor facing one another.
2. Instruct the partners to share a significant moment from the week with each other. One person from each pair will share their story as the teller. The other person will focus intently as the listener but remain silent.
Explain that the purpose of the activity is to listen to your partner with total focus and with your whole body, and to try to catch the three main messages of the story they have picked.
3. After the tellers have shared their stories, instruct the listeners to stand up in front of the tellers and create three frozen images (tableaux) based on their perceptions of the story they have just heard. The images can be realistic or abstract.
4. The listener and teller swap roles and repeat.

Notes: After the pairs have exchanged their stories and images, you may want to hold an image gallery. The first listener from each group may select one of the three images which best represent the heart of the story and hold the image. The tellers from all of the pairs can walk around the space, looking at the different images from each group. Do the same after the listeners and tellers have swapped roles.

Following the exercise, you might prompt the group to find similarities and differences in the images and stories. What were common themes of identity? What did you see? How does this exercise make you feel as a listener and as a teller? What prejudices or preconceptions were raised? Do you notice any commonalities (for example: some people are feeling anxious, or are observing the same holidays/traditions, etc.)

Myths and Facts (020)

An exercise that explores participants' assumptions, knowledge and beliefs in a safe, collaborative way.

1. First, make a list of "True" or "False" statements about topics like being fair, treating people badly because of their race, everyone being equal, and understanding different cultures. The group leader then puts three big pieces of paper on the floor or sticks them on a wall. Each paper should have one of these words written on it: "True," "False," or "Not Sure."
2. The group leader reads out each statement from the list, and everyone else walks over to the paper that matches what they think about the statement. After everyone has chosen, you can all talk about why you agree or disagree with the statement, and the group leader can explain if the statement is true or false.

Here are some statements you might use:

- Some groups of people are better than others. (False)
- Only people who were not born in [your country] can experience being treated badly because of their race or origin. (False)
- Being unfair happens when someone or a group of people act on their wrong ideas about others. (True)

(over)

- Being unfair happens when someone is treated differently because of their religion or because they belong to a particular group. (True)
- We can't do anything to stop being unfair and racist. (False)
- Understanding different cultures is about promoting fairness and challenging inequality. (True)
- Human rights are for everyone, no matter which country they're from. (True)

Storytelling (021)

Encourages participants self expression by using their imagination to tell a story.

1. Ask everyone to sit in a large circle.
2. Pass around a ping-pong ball or a small, stuffed animal (or any other small toy you have) while some music is playing.
3. When the music stops, whoever is holding the 'toy' has to tell a short story. For example, it could be a story about their favourite place, or even just a word or two from younger children.
4. Continue the game this way, so that when the music plays, the ball is passed around, and when the music stops, whoever has the ball tells a story, or even just says a couple of words.

Notes: At the end of the game, you can talk about how it felt to share stories. Was it easy or hard? How did it feel to share something personal? What did you learn from hearing other people's stories?

Ball Game (022)

An ice-breaker activity to bring concentration to the group and easily learn people's names.

1. Ask the group to stand in a circle and pass a ball around
2. The person throwing the ball says a word and the person who catches the ball needs to say an association - the first thing that comes to their mind.
3. Ask participants to move around the space while doing the exercise.

Notes: This is a good warm-up exercise and can be used in groups where the participants do not know each other, in which case the ball needs to be passed on by saying a person's name and passing it on to them.

Puppets (025)

Encourages older KS2 students (10-11 years) to think about who has control or power in different situations.

1. Split everyone into pairs - one person is a puppet and the other person is a puppet master.
2. The puppet master, after asking for permission to touch the other person's hand and back of their head, can gently guide the puppet's movements by placing one hand on the back of their puppet's head and another on their hand.
3. The puppet master also talks for the puppet. The puppet moves their mouth silently and moves as the puppet master guides them.
4. Think of a certain situation for the puppets to be in (like a birthday party, a playground, or a school bus) and each pair can act out a short scene in that setting.
5. After a while, have the pairs switch roles and imagine a different setting.

Questions to ask after the game: How did it feel to be the puppet? How did it feel to be the puppet master? Did anything surprise you? Or made you think differently about power or authority.

Notes: If anyone is nervous about acting things out, you can give them some time to plan their scene before they create it and show it to the group.

For KS2 children, this will need more guidance and modelling of how to handle and manipulate each other (breaking it down into a few options of how to move them). Perhaps separate out the person doing the puppet movements and another person being the puppet's voice.

Build - ups (026)

This exercise helps you build trust and teamwork within the group.

1. Stick a piece of paper on the back of each participant.
2. Ask the group to go around and write something positive (a 'put-up' as opposed to a 'put-down') on each person's back.
3. Ask the group to sit in a circle, read what has been written about them and discuss how this makes them feel.

Examples: Some questions the facilitator could ask are: Is there anything written that surprises you? Anything you don't believe? Why? Does anything reiterate what you know about yourself? What did you expect to see on it? How does your expectation differ from reality?

Notes: This exercise is a great way of providing each participant with an awareness of how they are perceived in a positive way. It can also serve as a starting point for a discussion on the process of 'classification'.

Vocal warm-up (027)

Highlights the importance of voice in performance and in public speaking, pronouncing and projecting words, dialogue, etc.

Breath Support:

1. Fricatives: fricatives are unvoiced sounds like th, ff, sh, and ss. You can do these in all positions: you can lie flat, sit, stand, etc. Do these in sharp or prolonged breath intervals (blowing out air) and place special emphasis in the movement of the diaphragm.
2. Sigh out on an open vowel sounds: uh, ah, oh, oo, ee (adding an 'h' sound can really help).
3. Counting as far as you can, then releasing and trying again. Repeat 3 times.

Resonance and freeing the voice:

1. Resonance scan: hum and feel the resonance in various spots around your body. Try to feel the vibration on your head, throat, chest, back, crown and face.
2. Lip Trills or horse lips: blow on a, p, or b sound through soft lips. You can go through your range like this also.
3. Hum and yawn.
4. Singing scales can also be great for increasing your range.

Notes: Make sure that you don't push your voice too hard, this is a warm-up after all.

Physical warm-up: Plating (028)

Highlight the importance of doing vocal and physical warm-ups before performance or other group activity.

1. In a wide stance, imagine a plate is on the up-turned palm of your right hand. Explore the full range of movement you have whilst being careful not to let the 'plate' drop off your hand.
2. Your palm must always face the roof. In long circular movements, stretch out the front, to the back, to the side. Keep exploring how far you can stretch and contract this movement, exploring its full range whilst keeping your feet planted.
3. Repeat with the plate on your left hand.
4. Combine the movements, as if you had a plate on each hand, and explore the relationship of the two sides, with the aim of creating fluid complementary circular movements.

Fortunately, Unfortunately (029)

Use improvisation and imagination to build on your creative and public speaking skills.

1. Stand in a circle. Create a story as a group by going around the circle and adding a sentence each.
2. The only rule is that the lines must alternate between: "Unfortunately...." and "Fortunately....".

Example: "Unfortunately my flight hit some turbulence." "Fortunately it didn't last too long." "Unfortunately the turbulence caused an engine to fail." "Fortunately there were parachutes on board." "Unfortunately there weren't enough to go round." ...etc.

Notes: The group can develop this exercise and create a short improvised scene - ask participants to act it out - present the story physically in the space as opposed to telling it only with words.

Greetings (031)

Helps participants learn about and respect different cultures.

1. Explain that people from different places in the world say hello in different ways.

For instance, we often shake hands. Now, everyone walk around the room, meeting each other and shaking hands. As you shake hands, say, 'Hi, my name is...' and say your name, while looking at each other.

2. Then, the leader will call out 'stop!' and teach a new way to say hello from another place in the world. For example, in some places in Tibet, people stick out their tongues to greet each other. So, everyone will go around again, greeting each other by saying, 'Hi, my name is...' and sticking out their tongue.

3. The leader can teach a couple of more ways to say hello from around the world, like bowing. Then, ask the young people if they know any other ways people say hello in different countries or if they can make up their own fun way to say hello.

4. To finish the game, ask the young people what they thought about all the different ways to say hello. Make sure to talk about why it's not okay to laugh at how people from different cultures say hello. It could just be because it's new or different, but it's important to respect all different ways of saying hello.

Notes: This game helps students get to know each other better and feel more comfortable playing together. It is also a great way to get them moving and laughing. It is essential to emphasise that physical contact, such as shaking hands or simulating a kiss, should only be initiated if students are comfortable with such actions.

Language of Object (032)

Explore the importance and essence of non-verbal communication and highlight the richness of different languages.

1. The group sits in a circle and has an object on the floor in front of them. They have to describe the object in any language but preferably not in English, unless only English speaking. They must relate the information to topics such as:

- a.** Use and function of the object
- b.** How it makes them feel
- c.** What it reminds them of

2. Once the first round of explanations has taken place, discuss how much was understood from what was being said.

Possible questions to ask: How important was non-verbal communication during this exercise? How did you feel when others were laughing and seeming to understand what was being said but you could not understand? Was it easier or harder in a different language to express yourself? Were you aware of getting non-verbal feedback when you were talking? During this session, a very recognisable black cup was used. We suggest trying this exercise with a recognisable object as well as an unfamiliar object to the group.

Notes: Some participants will recognise many languages, particularly if many of them come from cultures with Latin roots. Others might feel displaced as the roots of their languages will be less recognisable for others. Help the group identify and welcome their differences.

Orange Exercise (033)

Explores Identity and Diversity and teaches participants about how we see other people and why we shouldn't judge people based on their group, but should get to know them as individuals.

1. Everyone sits in a half-circle around a big piece of paper. Then brainstorm answers to the question, "What is an orange like?" For example, an orange might be round, orange-coloured, and sweet. Now write down all the ideas on the paper.
2. Split into small teams. Each team picks an orange from a pile on the floor. Each team has ten minutes to make up a story about their orange.
3. After ten minutes, each team will tell the story of their orange to everyone else.
4. Then, take all the oranges, mix them up, and put them back on the floor. One person from each team will have to find their team's orange. Even though all the oranges look alike at first, usually each team can find their own orange because now, it's not just any orange - it's a unique orange with its own story.
5. Talk about what made each of the oranges special - maybe it has a certain mark, or a name, or their special story.
6. Remember the list made at the beginning, of what an orange is like? Even though the oranges are unique, they all share some things in common.
7. Discuss how we might think of some people as being all the same because they belong to a certain group. But, just like the oranges, every person is unique and has their own story. This is a good way to think about words like "Stereotyping" and "Prejudice".

(over)

Notes: You can do this game with other fruits, like apples or bananas. The game helps students to talk about important topics, for example, how unfair treatment can start when we only think of people as part of a group, and not as individuals with their own unique stories.

Key themes identified by Primary School teachers are: Diversity, Difference and Life Experiences.

Step In (034)

Helps participants learn more about each other, seeing what they have in common and what's different about each of them.

1. Everyone stands in a large circle.
2. The leader says something like "Step in if you have brown hair." Those with brown hair take one step forward into the circle. Those that don't stay where they are.
3. After each statement, everyone steps back to their original place. Do this with different instructions, like "Step in if you like pizza" or "Step in if you have a pet."

Notes: Be careful not to make the statements too personal, especially if the group is just getting to know each other. The questions should be about things everyone is comfortable sharing with the group.

Emotions and thoughts of the day could also be included. For example, "Step in if you all came to school today looking forward to this class", or "Step in if you woke up feeling happy".

Variation: This game can also be played sitting in a circle of chairs, with one person standing in the middle. The person in the middle says something like "Switch seats if you like pizza." Those that like pizza try to find a new seat, and the person in the middle tries to sit down too. Whoever is left standing in the middle asks the next question, and the game goes on.

This exercise helps the leader and students learn about the differences and similarities between each other. If the leader participates in the game, it encourages young people to also engage and commit to the game.

Two Truths and a Lie (035)

Helps participants understand why it's not good to make quick judgments about people or groups. Recognise preconceptions and stereotypes.

1. The whole group sits in a circle.
2. One of the students will go first and tell two things that are true about themselves and one thing that isn't. For example, "I have a pet dog, I love broccoli, and I've been to Australia."
3. The rest of the class will try to guess which statement is false.
4. After they guess, the class can talk about how they identified the false statement. For example, what clues did they notice? Did the person look or act differently when they were making the false statement?

Notes: Sometimes, we make guesses about people based on what we think we know. It's important to remember that what we think isn't always correct.

What am I? What Do I Want? (036)

(Adapted from Augusto Boal, Games for Actors and Non-Actors)

Through this activity, participants can express themselves, reflect on what makes them unique or part of something, and respect differences.

1. In pairs, the participants tell their partners:

- a.** Three things about them that are the same as everybody else in the room
- b.** Three things about them that are the same as some people in the room but not others
- c.** Three things about them that I feel make me different from everyone else in the room
- d.** Three qualities/characteristics that I feel other people in the room have that they do not have. Ask the group: how did it feel doing this exercise? Do you ever feel different to others and what does it feel like? Explain we can be all different yet equal.

2. Distribute a pen and a blank piece of paper to each person. Anonymously, each person writes down three definitions of themselves answering the questions: (a) What am I? and (b) What do I want?

3. For 'What am I?', each person lists three words in order of importance to describe themselves. A person may write 'I am a man, an artist and a friend'.

4. For 'What do I want?' Each person writes three words that describe what they want. This may be love, happiness, success, etc. When everyone is finished, collect the pieces of paper, place them on the floor, face up and read what is written. Then analyse what you see, asking the group for their responses.

Shapes (038)

Encourages participants to work together as a team.

1. Start by asking the students to move around the room, making sure they're always moving towards a space in the room that's empty.
2. Then the group leader calls out different things for the entire group to make together with their bodies, and they have to do it as fast as they can. For example, "make a shape of a car with all of your bodies" or "now, make a shape of a train". No need to discuss, just do!
3. After each task is finished, ask the group to start moving around the room again until the next thing is called out.

Notes: Remind young people that when playing games like this, it's not just about what is done individually, it's about how everyone works together.

After the exercise, you can talk about the group dynamic, for example, did the students notice that some people are leading, while others are following.

Follow (041)

Encourages participants to understand how we can communicate without words and what it feels like when we think we're being singled out.

1. The group stands in a line and closes their eyes. The group leader will secretly place a small sticker on someone's back.
2. When the group leader says go, everyone starts walking around. The aim is to figure out who has the sticker on their back and copy what they're doing without making it obvious; they have to be careful not to give it away.
3. After a few minutes, ask the group to freeze and ask the student who has the sticker on their back to raise their hand.
4. Then, ask the group to line up again and close their eyes. This time, the group leader pretends to put a sticker on everyone's back, but won't actually put a sticker on anyone's back.
5. Repeat steps 2 and 3. Everyone will think they're the one with the sticker.
6. Questions the group leader might ask at the end of the exercise: If you thought you had the sticker, how did you feel when no one was copying you? Did you find yourself copying others? Why do you think you did that? Did you notice any special patterns or rules while you were playing?

Poster Me (043)

Encourage self-expression and critical thinking with this reflective exercise.

1. Bring a selection of magazines and newspapers and research one story that relates to you - any situation you find yourself in currently or feel strongly about.
2. Find another story that has an opposing viewpoint to the story you first selected.
3. Make a collage using images, words and drawings, to illustrate your feelings and emotions.
4. Go around and add something to someone else's poster – a sentence or a doodle, etc.
5. Discuss.

Notes: Ask questions to help establish the motivations behind the choices made, for example: What stood out for you in this particular article? How did you feel if someone added something to your poster that you did not like?

Soundscape (044)

Generate soundscapes and noise patterns for a performance or simply use as a playful warm-up exercise.

1. One person hides behind a curtain or elsewhere and makes random noises at various intervals (thumping, singing, screaming, clapping, etc.)
2. The rest of the group is on the other side and walks around the space, making noises in response to the original noise. They can copy or interpret the sound they hear.
3. Slowly build up the volume and frequency and then stop.

Notes: This warm-up exercise is based on reports coming from various places in the world during the Coronavirus lockdown which discussed the use of sounds to communicate with friends and relatives. For example, music and clapping. This exercise is good for generating soundscapes and noise patterns. Depending on the type of performance, this simple improvisation may lead to the creation of a soundscape for a scene or similar (especially if the participants are not trained actors and are not familiar with other devising techniques).

Chair swap (045)

This activity can be used as an ice-breaker game or a starting point for discussion on discrimination and power.

1. Sit in a circle.
2. Choose someone to stand in the middle and take their chair away.
3. The person in the middle has to make a statement such as 'Change places if you like Drama'.
4. The seated members of the group swap seats with someone else if they agree with the statement. The person in the middle also needs to find a seat.
5. The person who is unable to find a seat must move to the centre and make another statement like 'Change places if you have blonde hair' and the game continues.

Notes: It is important to discourage pushing in this game, as sometimes people may get carried away in their desire to find a seat. If participants are reluctant to play, ask them to avoid personal statements (such as political views or preferences) and instead focus on facts, such as appearance (for example - blue eyes, blonde hair, etc.).

Think of how this exercise metaphorically evokes a discussion on discrimination and exclusion?

Identity (049)

Discuss the importance of names for identity while highlighting aspects of preconceptions and stereotyping.

1. In pairs, each person tells the other about their first name - who they were named after or what their name means.
2. Repeat back to the whole group. Partner A shares the meaning behind B's name, partner B shares the meaning behind A's name.
3. Each person tells their partner what their surname is and where this originated from.

Notes: This exercise could lead to discussion around the importance of names - for example, how does it make you feel when someone mispronounces your name? Is your name linked to your sense of identity? What does identity mean to you? On completion, participants will have knowledge of issues around diversity and identity including stereotyping.

For carrying out this exercise as a group activity (rather than in pairs) to break the ice, see 'Story of my name (083)'.

Guessing Game (051)

Participants practise focused communication and understand the role of open-ended and closed-ended questions in conversation. (A game of charades.)

1. Divide the group into two equal teams. Ask one person from each team to step out of the room for a minute and think of a common item you'd find in a classroom (like a book, a pencil, or a backpack).
2. When they come back, their team will try to guess what the item is by asking only questions that can only be answered with a "yes" or a "no". They can ask as many questions as they need, but remember, it's a race against the other team.
3. A few rounds can be played to see which team is the fastest.
4. After you finish, talk about what was learned. Here are some things to think about:

If you only had one chance to ask a question to figure out the object, what would that question be?

Maybe something like "What's the item?"

- That's a closed-ended question. Closed-ended questions are great when you need to learn something quickly, like a fact, like what's the temperature? Close-ended questions are narrow in focus and are usually answered with a single word or a couple of words.
- Open-ended questions are broad and can be answered in detail, using many words, e.g., "What do you think about (fill in for your group)." These questions have more than one possible answer and allow you to explore ideas, share perspectives, engage in meaningful discussions, and deepen your understanding.

Image Theatre (052)

Learn how to understand what people are feeling just by looking at their faces and bodies. Encourages the use of physical, non-verbal representations to explore and raise awareness of current social issues.

1. Let the group know that this exercise is about making a short, fictional ('pretend') play, e.g., 'This play can be based on a time when you felt someone wasn't fair to you or to a friend. Maybe they treated you differently because of how you look, or because of something you like or don't like. You can also make up a pretend story about being treated unfairly.'
2. Now divide the group into pairs. 'In your pairs, share your stories with each other about a time when something wasn't fair (if you're okay with sharing about that), or make up a pretend story about being treated unfairly. Then, pick one of the stories and show it in three "frozen pictures" (like a start, middle, and end of your story).'
3. 'The whole group will try to guess what the story is that you're showing in your pictures.'
4. 'Then, you can act out the story, with words and dialogue, like you're in a play. This can help us think about times when things aren't fair and about how we could make them better or fairer.'

Note: This exercise is called "Image Theatre" because it's a way to explore ideas, feelings, and real-life situations by making still images or "frozen pictures" with your body. 'Image Theatre' was created by Augusto Boal and often included asking some of the people who were watching the play to *'step in'* (replacing the actors) so they could try and create a better or fairer ending to the play.

Belonging (053)

Talk about the concept of community, culture and diversity. What does it mean and how are communities formed and sustained?

1. Divide the room into two areas - Yes or No.
2. One person reads out a list of statements and asks the group to move around the room according to the statement. For example, if the statement is 'those who go/do not go to a place of worship regularly', those who do will move to one corner, those who don't will move to the opposite corner.
3. The group will form a 'community' or a 'cultural group' based upon the statements.

Suggested Statements:

- Those who go/do not go to a place of worship regularly
- Those who play/do not play in a team sport regularly
- Those who play/do not play a musical instrument in a band/orchestra; or sing/do not sing in a choir
- Those who are concerned/not too concerned about environmental issues
- Those who belong/do not belong to school/youth club
- Those who do/do not eat meat
- Those who frequent/do not frequent pubs/clubs
- Those who belong to a middle class/working class community

4. Afterwards, discuss and dismantle the idea of the homogeneous community - we can form communities with other people with different experiences, preferences and viewpoints and these are usually called cultures.

In Common (054)

Explore common values and beliefs.

1. Stand in a circle.
2. One person calls out characteristics based on appearances (such as hair colour, gender etc).
3. People who share the same characteristics should form a smaller circle. While grouping, notice the size of each group.
4. Call out characteristics based on internal values (such as personality, beliefs, ethics), for example, 'if you're funny', 'if you are honest', 'if you are creative'. While grouping, notice the size of each group.
5. Discuss the difference in group sizes between what unites/divides the group in your common values.

Notes: The facilitator could then encourage conversation on where these values and personality traits originate. Are they from a family? Cultural background? Or the country of origin?

Animal Farm (056)

Gets the group moving and thinking fast. Encourages teamwork.

1. Arrange 5 chairs in a row. Each chair is allocated to an animal. This does not change throughout the game.
2. Invite five children to take a seat in the chairs and be the animal allocated to that chair. They should make the sounds and movements of their chosen animal. Here's the list:
 - a. *Lion*: Raise your hands like claws and roar like a lion.
 - b. *Gorilla*: Pretend to thump on your chest and make a gorilla noise.
 - c. *Snake*: Wiggle your hands like a slithering snake and hiss.
 - d. *Crocodile*: Make your arms snap together like a crocodile's mouth and say 'snap snap.'
 - e. *Bird*: Use your hands like a bird's beak and chirp or squawk.
3. The children then "pass" their animal to someone else by making their animal noise and movement and saying their animal sound to the sound of another animal.

For example, the "Lion" could start by roaring and then saying 'Roar to... Snap Snap'. Then the "Crocodile" would go next, saying 'Snap Snap to... Hiss Hiss,' and so on. Remember the rules:

 - a. You can't pass your animal to the person right next to you.
 - b. Once you've been given an animal, you have to pass it on right away. No hesitating.
 - c. You have to make the right sound and do the right movement for your animal.
4. If you make a mistake, you're out and everyone moves up a chair. A new participant comes in to take the empty spot. The five chairs always represent the same animals. So, whoever sits in the lion's chair is the lion, etc.

Listening and Talking (059)

Learn how to express your desires and dreams. Practice listening skills and non-verbal communication with a partner and use what you've learned to understand and relate to the other person.

1. Split the group into pairs. In each pair, one person will be the "Talker" and the other will be the "Listener". The Talker gets to describe what they'd love to do on a dream vacation, but they can't name a specific place. The Listener's job is to listen carefully to everything that's being said.
2. After a few minutes of active listening, the Listener summarises the three main things the Talker wants for their dream vacation.
3. *Optional:* Depending on students' knowledge of places around the world: the Listeners can become 'vacation planners'. They could try to convince the Talker about a specific, perfect vacation spot, based on what the Talker has described.
4. After a quick chat about how well the Listener was able to listen and understand, the two should change roles and try the exercise again.

Note: The teacher could begin by sharing a story and the entire class identifies key points in the story. The students can write down the key points or call them out.

The teacher could also ask the groups to talk about their favourite food or place (to avoid any student feeling excluded because they have not been on holiday).

Categories (060)

Find new ways to communicate without talking or using gestures. Participants think about new ways to express themselves and work together.

Version 1: The group leader calls out a category, like "height". Then, everyone has to get into a line from the tallest to the shortest, but no one can talk or use their hands to help them line up.

Version 2: This time, the group leader doesn't say a category. The group has to figure out a category all by themselves, but they still can't talk or use their hands.

Some categories they could think of are:

- Height (from tallest to shortest)
- Eye colour
- Birthday month (from January to December)
- Hair colour

Exaggerations (061)

Physicalising emotions and expressing feelings in an exaggerated, theatrical way.

1. Ask the group to spread out in the room and choose one person to act out an emotion, like being happy or sad. Then that person walks over to another person and gently taps them on the shoulder.
2. The person who was tapped on the shoulder has to copy the same emotion but make it a little bit bigger or more intense. Then, they pass it on to someone else.
3. This keeps going with each person making the emotion bigger and bigger each time.
4. The game keeps going until either everyone has had a turn and the emotion is extremely exaggerated or the leader chooses another participant to act out a different emotion.

Note: It can be helpful if the teacher begins by identifying and demonstrating a few emotions and then asking students to express the emotion on a level from 1 to 10. If the teacher participates in this demonstration, it can encourage students to engage and be less inhibited in their expressions. Reassure students that it is okay to be silly and enjoy the exercise.

Single Word Dialogue (062)

An improvised storytelling exercise that points out aspects relating to power, authority and privilege.

1. Sit in a circle and improvise a story.
2. Give a theme or a title as stimulus for the story, for example 'You are not welcome here'.. Each person contributes a single word to the story, going around the circle.
3. Begin to allow three words per person, then four and so forth. You can choose one person to have more or less word allowance.
4. The group collectively builds a narrative within a restricted number of words.

Notes: This exercise explores constraints in how much power we have in directing the narrative of the story. The less words that you can use - the less power you have in directing where the narrative is going. Your idea of how you think the story should go gets diverted by other people when it's their turn to continue it.

Machine (064)

Explore societal structures with this warm-up activity that strengthens collaboration and fosters imagination.

1. Give an example of an abstract machine, for example, a cheese-making machine. Then ask participants to create a machine with their bodies.
2. One at a time, enter the space and perform a repetitive physical and vocal gesture based on the prompt.
3. Others join in with a new sound and gesture until everyone becomes part of the machine.

Notes: Apart from being a fun warm-up activity that strengthens collaboration, this exercise helps participants identify how society is made up of structures. The machine is a simple example of how without one part - the machine doesn't work. For example, without education, the workforce cannot grow.

Movie (066)

An improvisation exercise to create short sketches and scenes.

1. Two people stand in the middle of the stage (the 'actors'). Two sit on chairs at one side of the space (the 'audience').
2. The audience suggests a type of movie (such as action, romantic comedy or suspense). They then create a narrative with three scenes in the movie - a beginning, a middle and an end in the suggested genre.
3. The actors then enact the scenes using any props and furniture pre-set on the stage to improvise the scenes.

Notes: By selecting and acting out specific genres as a group we identify that we all recognise certain characteristics of those genres. This is the same process that we do in recognising different communities/ cultures in society, whether it's through language, etiquette, etc.

Lines of Emotions (068)

Exploring non-verbal communication through the expression of emotions.

1. Ask the group to walk around in the space, avoiding eye contact with each other.
2. After some time, call out an emotion (angry, excited, etc.). Each person must demonstrate this emotion by the way they are moving, for example, stomping when angry or skipping when happy.
3. The group leader then says a simple line that's neutral. For example, "It's raining outside", or "The bus is coming", and asks a participant to repeat that line with any emotion they choose.
4. Ask the rest of the group to identify the emotion expressed.

Variation:

1. Hand out cards of emotions to the group or have a stack of emotions on cards in the centre of the space and ask a participant to pick up one of the cards (which are facing down).
2. The participant reads the emotion on the card and says the line in that emotion.
3. The rest of the group has to guess the emotion being expressed.

Use emotions that the age group understands, for example: happy, sad, angry, scared, surprised, worried.

Notes: You can teach the young people about emotions first, then play this game. For example, "frustrated" could be taught by asking if they remember a time when something was not going their way or when they were trying to do something and it was not working. They can share their story and show a facial expression of the emotion. Everyone can copy this emotion.

Follow Your Nose (069)

This is a physical exercise, useful for warming up and exploring the space.

1. Move around the room, filling up space, changing pace and direction. Meanwhile, be aware of other people in the space.
2. Let your nose lead you around the room, following it wherever it goes.
3. Try to use different parts of the body - being led by your stomach, little toe, knee, back, etc.

Ten Second Object (070)

Work together as a team and learn to use the body in different ways.

1. The group leader calls out the name of something, like a car, a tree, a house, or a bicycle.
2. Everyone in the group has to quickly work together to use their bodies as components of the whole object and make a shape that looks like that thing. They only have (ten) seconds to do it, so they have to act fast. (The leader can count down as the group works together.)
3. After the group has made that shape, or a series of different shapes called out by the leader, the group can talk about each one: what parts looked really good and what parts were fun or difficult to make.

Note: This can be done with the entire group. Or the group leader can start the exercise by shouting out a number (for example 5) and the participants have to divide themselves into groups of that number. Optional: the group leader can change the size of the groups throughout the exercise before they call out the next object.

Stretch (073)

Highlight the importance of doing a physical warm-up (even a brief one) before every session. It helps participants relax and bring their focus into the space.

1. Stand in front of the group and ask participants to find a space in which they are free to move.
2. Start by stretching out the body and then doing a spinal roll - starting with bodies hanging loose from the waist and rolling up slowly.
3. Lead participants through gentle neck stretches and moving their heads side to side, up and down and drawing circles with their noses.
4. Make your way down to other body parts – shoulders, elbows, wrists, hips, knees, ankles. You can continue to move in circles or whatever feels more comfortable for participants.
5. Do not rush but rather ask them to really feel each muscle and to be aware of every part of their bodies.

Imaginary Box (074)

Explores participants' imagination and interpretative skills.

1. This exercise is best played sitting in a circle, with the teacher modelling opening an imaginary box and taking something out so that children can see how this exercise works. Then the teacher can pass around the invisible box, like it's a special gift that you're going to share with each other.
2. Each person will take their turn to "open" the box and explore what might be inside. Remember, each time someone opens the box, there can be something different in it.
3. As children hold the imaginary box, ask them to think about how big they want the box to be, how heavy, and what they think might fit inside. They can show this through their actions and body language.
4. At each turn, children should share what they think is inside the box without using words, only through actions, using body and facial expressions to show what they're imagining.

Notes: The goal of this activity is not for the group to guess what's in the box (although it can be), but to see and appreciate each other's imaginative interpretations.

Teachers could also play Carrier Bag Game (097) as an introduction to this exercise, as that game uses a tangible object (Carrier Bag) and asks students to change it into whatever object they want. This would engage the students' imaginations to begin with.

(over)

For those students that have Special Educational Needs (SEN), e.g., on the autism spectrum, and find it difficult to imagine a box, the teacher could bring an actual empty box to encourage these students to participate in a way that doesn't make them uncomfortable. Teachers could also come prepared with a list of ideas for those students that may struggle to come up with their own imaginary object. However, for some of these students just guessing other's objects is a form of participation, if they don't want to, or can't, imagine an object of their own.

Vocal warm ups (075)

It is important to include vocal warm-ups to your physical warm-ups at the start of each session.

- 1.** Start laughing. Start with small laughs then all the way to full, loud belly laughs. Stop and repeat.
- 2.** Imagine that you are chewing a toffee or a sticky gum. The toffee gets bigger and stickier the more you chew and therefore, you need to use your facial muscles more and more.
- 3.** Carefully massage your face. Start with your cheeks, go down to your chin then lips, brows and forehead.
- 4.** Imagine you are blowing out a candle (represented by a finger). Hold the finger in front of your face at different distances and change the force of how much air is blown.

Welcome (076)

This could be the start of a longer devising exercise or a discussion about cultural differences, migration and communication barriers.

1. Individually create still images with your body, demonstrating the idea of 'feeling welcome'.
2. This can be done through a posture, gesture, facial expression, etc.
3. Then, create a still image that shows 'feeling unwelcome'.
4. Finally, create an image that shows 'showing welcome' (i.e. giving welcome to other people/being welcoming).
5. Discuss in what order these images might go in and ask for some to be shared as sequences.
6. This can be accompanied by music or text.

Funky chicken (077)

1. Stand in a circle.
2. Vigorously shake different body parts (right leg, left leg, right arm, left arm).
3. Start with the right leg: shake 8 times, shouting '1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8!'
4. Hop onto the left leg, then right arm, then left arm.
5. Return to the right leg, this time shaking for 6 times. Transfer to the left leg and so on.
6. Repeat this process with a series of 4, then 2, then 1 shake per limb.
7. Finish by jumping up and down and shaking the whole body, shouting 'funky chicken!'

One-line story (078)

Enhance imagination, storytelling skills and collaboration with this creative activity.

1. Stand in a circle.

2. One person starts by saying a dramatic, imaginative opening line.

For example:

- 'it had been 10 years since we had seen each other';
- 'I opened the suitcase and couldn't believe my eyes';
- 'what was that noise?'

or

- 'It was a day like no other'.

Avoid vague openings like 'once there was a man'.

3. Going around the circle, the group takes it in turns to add the next line of the story, building the drama and developing the plot.

Passing Balls (082)

A physical activity to get participants' attention in the space and stir group imagination.

1. Imagine a ball in your hand - describe the weight, feel, texture etc.
2. Throw the ball around the circle so everyone experiences it.
3. After one full circuit, the ball must now change each time it is thrown.

So, A throws a golf ball to B, who catches the golf ball, and then transforms it to become a bowling ball. B throws the bowling ball to C, who receives it as a bowling ball, then transforms it to be a volleyball.

4. This exercise could incorporate sounds with each throw, or alternatively works nicely with music in the background.

Story of my name (083)

Get to know each other and the stories behind different names.

1. One by one, each participant introduces themselves and shares the story behind their name (e.g. what the name means, which country it comes from, who named them, and so on).
2. You can use a nickname or name of choice if you wish.
3. Depending on the size of your group, it may be appropriate to encourage discussion/questions during this exercise.

Notes: This exercise works well both with brand new groups as an introductory task, as well as groups who know each other really well. For the latter, the group can split into pairs, share their name stories, then share with the group the story of their partner's name (see 'Identity 049').

Mirroring (084)

Enhance collaboration and focus with this physical theatre technique

1. Begin in a circle.
2. One person starts doing slow, gentle, expressive movements, and the rest of the group follows.
3. Focus closely on the intricacies of the movement, to be as synchronised as possible.
4. Different members of the group can become the 'leader'.

Notes: You can also do this exercise in pairs where one person is the mirror.

Melting snow people (085)

A fun physical warm-up to get you started. Suitable for younger groups as well.

1. Find a space and stand up tense and firm, as if you are made of snow.
2. Feel the tension in different parts of your body. Focus on your toes, through your torso, right up to the ears.
3. Think about the sun coming out and melting the snow. Slowly your body becomes softer, less tense, more relaxed.
4. The warm - up ends when the group are all lying on the floor as 'melted snow'.

20 word poems (087)

Express your thoughts and feelings with this creative exercise.

1. Each participant is given a piece of paper.
2. Choose a theme and write a short poem on this, using only 20 words – every word counts.
3. Invite everyone to share their 20 word poems.

Notes: This is borrowed from Counterpoints Arts Refugee Week activities, and works well with new English learners and big (as well as smaller) groups. It works best when focussing on one topic. This could be thematic, like ‘welcome’ or ‘human rights’, as an evaluation tool, or culture setting: ‘being kind to ourselves’.

Object in the room (089)

This exercise works well at the start of a workshop to help everyone in the room identify the overall mood.

1. Stand in a circle.

2. One by one, say your name, and choose an object in the room to help you describe how you are feeling.

For example: 'I feel like the lightbulb because I am full of energy', or 'I feel like the corner of the room because I am not quite ready to take part yet'.

Notes: If it is a long session (e.g. all day) this exercise can be repeated as a closing activity. The stimulus can be changed, e.g. if I was a colour, food, weather.

Eye Contact – Circle swap (093)

An exercise to help introduce the group and learn each other's names.

1. The whole group stands in a circle.
2. Each participant has to look at somebody else across the circle, say their name and then walk towards them.
3. The person towards which the participant is walking looks at someone else, says their name and walks towards them before their space is invaded.
4. Repeat until everyone has swapped places a couple of times.

Just Listen (094)

Practise active listening and understand different perspectives. Respect other's thoughts and feelings, even if they differ from your own.

Materials needed: 4 index cards per pair with different topics written on them. Make sure the topics are interesting but not too controversial.

1. Each person finds a partner to pair with. (The group leader may need to partner with one person in the group for this.)
2. Partners sit down in a comfortable space.
3. Each pair should have 4 index cards.
4. One person in the pair will choose a random card and speak about the topic written on it for three minutes. They can share how they think and feel about that topic.
5. The other person in the pair stays quiet and listens attentively to what their partner is saying. They should avoid interrupting or giving their own opinions.
6. After three minutes are up, the listener has one minute to summarise what the speaker said. They should focus on accurately saying the main points and feelings expressed, without agreeing or disagreeing.
7. Then, switch roles. The listener becomes the speaker, and the speaker becomes the listener. Repeat the exercise with a new topic so that both partners get a chance to speak and listen.

(over)

8. After each person has played both roles, end the activity and have a discussion. Here are some possible questions:

- How did the Speakers feel about their partners' ability to listen with an open mind? Did their partners' body language show how they felt about what was being said?
- How did the Listeners feel about not being able to speak about their own views on the topic? How well were they able to keep an open mind and truly listen?
- How well did the Listening partners summarise the speakers' opinions? Did they improve as the exercise went on?
- How can the lessons learned from this exercise be applied in real-life situations, like at school or with friends?

We Have to Move Now (096)

Learn how to express and detect different emotions.

1. Cut several strips of paper.
2. On each strip of paper, write down a mood, feeling, or disposition, like guilty, happy, suspicious, paranoid, insulted, or insecure.
3. Fold the strips of paper so you can't see what is written on it and place them in a bowl or jar. These are your prompts.
4. Each participant takes a prompt from the bowl or jar and reads the exact same sentence to the class, but with the emotion the prompt specifies.
5. The sentence everybody should read is: "We have to move now!"
6. Have the participants guess the emotion of each reader by writing down what they think the speaker is feeling (or what they are supposed to be feeling).
After each participant has had a chance to read the sentence based on one of the prompts, run through the emotions displayed and see how many each participant guessed correctly. Finally, lead a debriefing discussion on how things like tone and body language can impact the way a message is received.

Notes: This is a great exercise to practise not only public speaking and rhetorical skills, but also how to best express certain emotions in a theatre environment, or when working with a character.

Carrier Bag Game (097)

Encourage participation, imagination and communication with this fun activity.

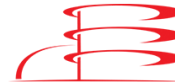
1. Facilitator puts a plain carrier bag (or something as flexible) into the middle of a group circle.
2. Each student steps forward and uses the bag as any other object other than a carrier bag. The group has to guess what the object is.

Notes: Non-verbal communication and imagination is key in this exercise. Things like a guitar, a football, a comb etc. are standard shapes and easy to guess, but some young people have fantastic ideas (like a beard, a leash, a stethoscope etc.). This exercise works well with any age group and encourages participation, imagination and communication.

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