KS3

Northern Ireland
Curriculum

Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stage 3

CONTENTS

Active Learning and Teaching Methods Rationale

The Revised Curriculum aims to empower our young people to develop their potential as individuals and to make informed and responsible decisions for living and working in the 21st century.

Our society today needs young people who are flexible, creative, and proactive – young people who can solve problems, make decisions, think critically, communicate ideas effectively and work efficiently within teams and groups. The 'knowing of knowledge' is no longer enough to succeed in the increasingly complex, fluid, and rapidly evolving world in which we live. In order to optimise life-long learning and potential success it is now widely accepted that young people need to have opportunities to develop personal capabilities and effective thinking skills as part of their well-rounded education.

These skills are an integral part of the Revised Curriculum for Northern Ireland. Increased flexibility in the curriculum in terms of content and time will offer teachers the opportunity to develop their pupils' skills and capabilities concurrently with knowledge and understanding. It is hoped that this approach will actively engage students in their learning, making the learning a more relevant, enjoyable and motivational experience. Additionally, teachers will have opportunities to further develop their own skills as creative curriculum developers.

The following collection is not intended to be a definitive resource, but one which provides practical advice to teachers on a varied range of methods which they may wish to integrate into their daily learning and teaching activities. It is hoped that teachers will find it a helpful tool in planning and creating a stimulating, enriching, challenging and focused environment for both their pupils and themselves.

[Section 1]

How to get the most out of using the resource

It is hoped that Active Learning and Teaching Methods will be dipped into and referred to regularly rather than simply read and shelved, so as to provide you with innovative ideas and strategies to integrate into your teaching.

Getting started – a checklist of things to think about

Below are some key issues and questions that you may find helpful to consider whilst planning future learning activities.

Teacher Motivation

For many teachers there is always more to do and they are always striving to find ways of doing it better – the area of effective learning and teaching is certainly no exception. It is important that you take the time to ask yourself:

- Where are you now in terms of your learning and teaching practice?
- What is your motivation behind integrating active learning and teaching methods into your existing classroom practice?
- How can you build on your existing practice?
- What do you hope to achieve?

Pupil Motivation

By using active learning methodologies it is hoped that pupils will not only come to a deeper understanding of the issues involved, but also that their motivation and enthusiasm will be heightened. You may wish to think about the following points in order to increase pupils' motivation:

- Is the activity age-appropriate?
- Are pupils completely aware of the aims and objectives?
- Are there opportunities for pupils themselves to facilitate the activity?
- Will everybody have an equal chance to participate in the activity?
- Is there enough variety?

Classroom Dynamics

Every pupil and teacher brings with them into the classroom a diversity of skills, experiences, needs and expectations. It is factors such as these which will play a large part in shaping the dynamics within the classroom. It is important that you reflect on the dynamics of your class. Some questions to think about:

• How well does the class know one another or is it a new class coming together?
• Have you ever taught the class before?
• Are there any specific needs/circumstances of individual pupils that you need to take into consideration?
• What is the profile of the class e.g. size, single sex, mixed ability etc?
• Are there any specific needs to be taken into account in order to aid inclusivity?

Preparedness

Many teachers and pupils will be at different stages of experience, confidence and skill development in relation to active methodologies. This needs to be factored into the planning of lessons.

Some questions to think about:

• Have the group engaged in this type of learning before?
• Have you employed active learning strategies before in your teaching? – if yes how confident do you feel?
• How do you see your role changing?
• How comfortable do you feel/think you will feel in this type of classroom environment?

Practicalities

Classroom surroundings influence how teachers and pupils feel and how they act. The classroom environment must be supportive of active learning and teaching.

Questions to think about:

• What is the allocated timetable time for your classes?
• Are your classroom surroundings conducive to active learning e.g. how much space is in your classroom, is there display space, what are the seating arrangements, where is your desk positioned etc?
• How much preparation time is available?

The Role of the Teacher

The active and participatory classroom has implications for the role of the teacher. There is a shift from a teacher-centred model to a learner-centred approach to learning and teaching. There is also a shift from product-driven learning to process-driven. These changes encourage teachers to reflect not only on the key principles of learning and teaching but also on their role in the process.

From – To grid showing shift in the role of the teacher in creating an active classroom environment

From:	To:
Teacher-centred classroom	Learner-centred classroom
Product-centred learning	Process-centred learning
Teacher as a 'transmitter of knowledge'	Teacher as an organiser of knowledge
Teacher as a 'doer' for children	Teachers as an 'enabler', facilitating pupils in their learning
Subject-specific focus	Holistic learning focus

These changes in the role of the teacher will inevitably result in transforming the role of pupils in the classroom.

From – To grid showing shift in the role played by pupils in an active classroom environment

From:	To:
Being passive recipients of knowledge	Active and participatory learners
Focus on answering questions	Asking questions
Being 'spoon fed'	Taking responsibility for their own learning - reflective learners
Competing with one another	Collaborating in their learning
Wanting to have their own say	Actively listening to opinions of others
Learners of individual subjects	Connecting their learning

The Teacher as Facilitator

In an active classroom environment the role of a teacher is often that of a facilitator, supporting pupils as they learn and develop skills in, for example, assessing evidence, negotiation, making informed decisions, solving problems, working independently and working with others. Pupil participation and involvement in their learning is essential.

Sometimes it is appropriate for the facilitator to take on a particular role/function in an attempt to enhance the learning within the class or to challenge their thinking in a new way. Some of these possible roles include:
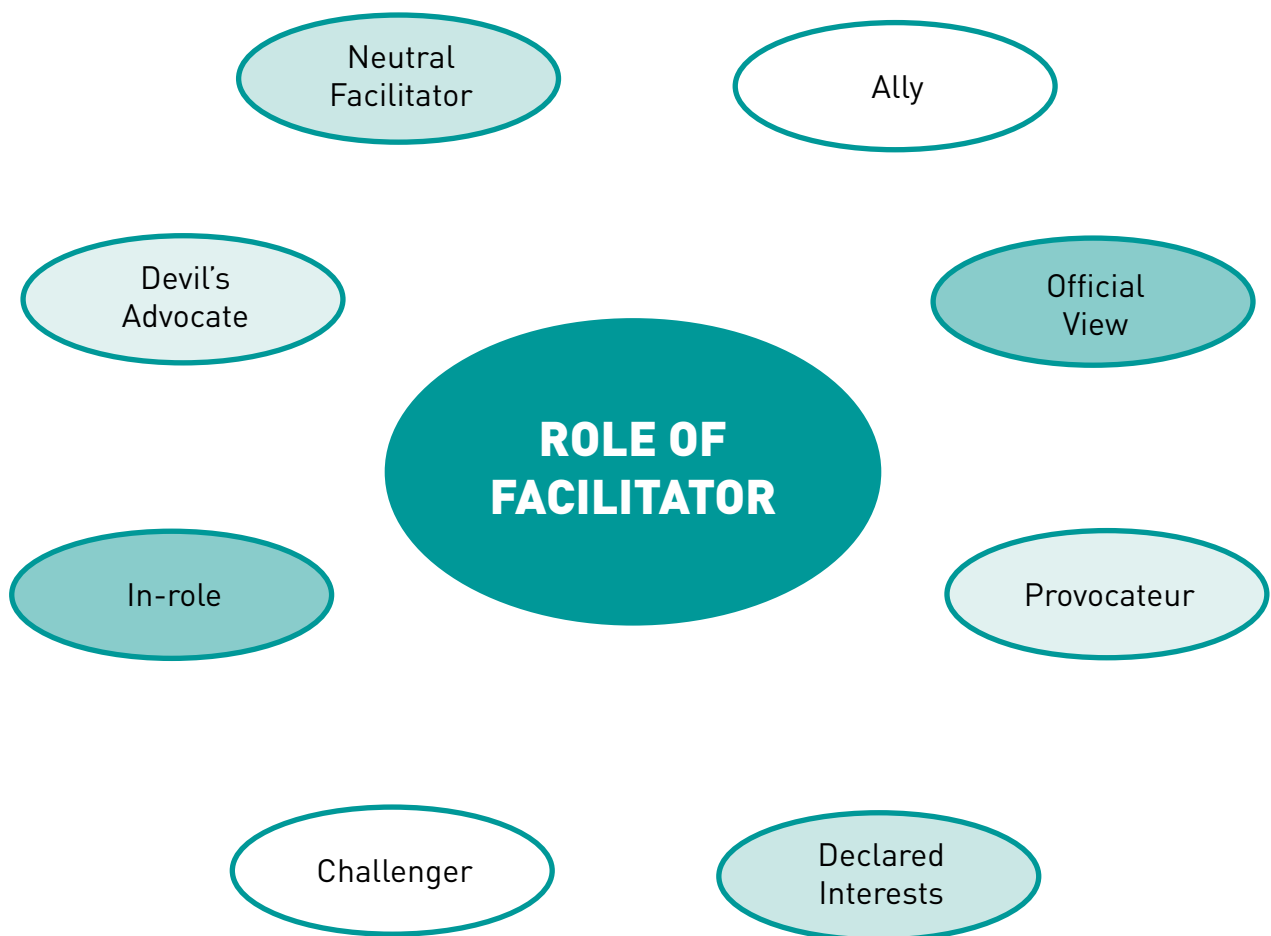
- **Neutral facilitator:** The facilitator enables the group to explore a range of different viewpoints without stating their own opinion.

- **Devil's advocate:** The facilitator deliberately adopts an opposite stance to confront people, irrespective of their own views. This method is slightly 'tongue-in-cheek'.

- **Declared interests:** The facilitator declares their own position so that the group knows their views.

- **Ally:** The facilitator supports the views of a particular sub-group or individual (usually a minority) within a group.

- **Official view:** The facilitator informs the group of the official position on certain issues e.g. official organisations, the law etc.

- **Challenger:** The facilitator, through questioning, challenges the views being expressed and encourages the pupils to justify their position.

- **Provocateur:** The facilitator brings up an argument, viewpoint and information which they know will provoke the class, and which they do not necessarily believe, but because they are authentic beliefs of other individuals or groups, they present them convincingly.

- **In-role:** The facilitator may "become" a particular person or caricature (for example a church leader or a politician), putting across their arguments and position to the class.

The above facilitation roles have their advantages and disadvantages and it is important to weigh these up in planning your lessons. Questions to think about may include:

- How will I feel about taking on these roles?
- Can I think of areas in my existing practice to which some of these roles may be applied?
- Do I sometimes take on some of these roles unconsciously?
- Are there any specific needs in my class to be taken into account?
- What strategies can I use to deal with difficult and challenging issues that may be raised?
- Am I clear as to what my learning intentions and outcomes are for the lesson etc?

ROLE OF FACILITATOR

Neutral Facilitator

Ally

Devil's Advocate

Official View

ROLE OF FACILITATOR

In-role

Provocateur

Challenger

Declared Interests

[SECTION 2: TOOLKIT]

ART SPIRAL

Skills
• Being Creative
• Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
• This activity allows pupils to personally reflect and communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings in a creative way on a particular issue.

Implications for classroom layout
• A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction. Alternatively, if pupils are seated at desks, they can use an individual piece of paper which can then be made into a group collage/spiral.

How does it work?
1. A large spiral of paper is placed in the centre of an open space. The paper should be large enough to allow for easy movement and space for all pupils' contributions.

2. Everyone in the group selects a free space on the spiral and draws something which represents their thoughts on a particular topic. The pupils might be encouraged to include a few words which spring to mind on the topic beside their drawings.

3. After an allocated time pupils might move onto another free area of the spiral and graphically represent their thoughts on a related issue.
   For example:

> Topic: Personal Development
> • How would you represent your past?
> • How would you represent your hopes for the future?
> • How would you represent your fears?

4. After completion of the activity, the facilitator should allow time for pupils to look at the whole spiral and view other people's contributions. Pupils might be encouraged to develop or add to other people's contributions.

5. A **debrief** afterwards might encourage pupils to communicate verbally their initial individual thoughts on the issue and then their emotions after viewing the drawings of the whole class. Were their thoughts and feelings modified as a result? How did they feel if someone developed their own contribution?

BACK-to-BACK

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Problem-Solving

What is it?
- This activity encourages pupils to work together and to develop clarity in communication and observation. It also promotes active auditory skills. It can be easily transferred into different learning areas.

Implications for classroom layout
- Facilitators might wish to arrange the room in such a way that pupils are sitting back-to-back. Alternatively, pupils may sit in pairs, although care must be taken that they do not peek at each other's visual!

How does it work?
1. Pupils sit back-to-back with chairs touching, so that pupils can hear each other when the activity begins. They must not look over their shoulders at any time.

2. One pupil (pupil A) receives a visual stimulus, the second pupil (pupil B) receives a piece of paper and pen/pencil.

3. Pupil A describes the visual to pupil B who must aim to draw it as accurately as possible, taking into account size, shape detail and annotation.

4. Pupil B may ask as many questions as necessary, although the facilitator may wish to set an overall time limit for the activity.

5. After the allocated time, pupils compare their drawings.

6. Pupils might then swap roles.

7. A **debrief** afterwards might concentrate on the nature of communication within the pairs and why the end product was close to the original, or not, as the case may be.

CAF (Consider All Factors)

Skills
- Managing Information
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Problem-Solving, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This methodology encourages pupils to think about *all* the relevant factors when making a decision or considering an idea. It is a useful tool before deciding and planning a particular course of action, and can be used in conjunction with a possible **carousel** activity to gather together a comprehensive list of factors which may determine a decision or idea.

Implications for classroom layout
- If used in conjunction with a carousel activity, pupils might need to rotate in groups to different desks in a room. Alternatively, pupils could remain seated and pass a flip chart sheet to the group beside them after the allocated time.

How does it work?
1. The facilitator might want to discuss with pupils the importance of considering all factors in decision-making and planning. For example, if an important factor is forgotten, a route of action which may seem right at the time may ultimately turn out to be wrong.

2. In groups pupils could fill out the **Consider All Factors** template.

> Example CAF Scenario
> A planning application has been made for a new terminal and runway at Belfast City Airport to cope with the growing number of tourists and business interests to Northern Ireland. Business and tourism chiefs are for the plan, but local residents and environmentalists are opposed. What factors should be involved in the final decision?

3. Once the CAF sheets are completed, pupils might rotate in groups and view the factors which other groups have noted. They may wish to use the **Two Stars and a Wish** strategy as a means of peer assessment.

4. Pupils could then be given time to modify or add to their original factors based on what other groups have written on their sheets.

5. A **debrief** afterwards in order to bring together all factors as a whole group might be beneficial.

CAF Template

Idea/Issue/scenario to be discussed:

Factor 1	Advantages/pros
	Disadvantages/cons
	Interesting Factors

Factor 2	Advantages/pros
	Disadvantages/cons
	Interesting Factors

Factor 3	Advantages/pros
	Disadvantages/cons
	Interesting Factors

After discussion of all factors, I think that...

CARD RANKING

Skills
• Working with Others
• Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
• This activity allows pupils to prioritise ideas and information and discuss justifications for their choices. See **Diamond Ranking** for a further prioritising activity.

Implications for classroom layout
• Pupils can work at a board or wall space. Alternatively, groups can work around a table.

How does it work?
1. Pupils in small groups receive a range of cards.

2. Pupils arrange them in order of importance/priority. They might do this in a straight line or build up tiers.

3. Pupils might then compare each other's ranking as a starting point for class discussion of the issue.

4. A **debrief** after this activity might be beneficial.

5. Further tools such as **Five Questions** might be used to explore ideas further.

CAROUSEL

Skills
• Working with Others
• Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
• This is a structured information or thought-gathering activity which generates a reasonably concise list of pupils' thoughts and responses on a particular topic. Pupils work in small groups to convey ideas or to make suggestions as regards the issue at hand. They also have the opportunity to assess collaboratively the ideas of other groups and to use them as a possible basis for forming their own responses to questions. See **Opinion Finders** or **Post-Its Collection** for some more useful small group information-gathering activities.

Implications for classroom layout
• Pupils might need to rotate in groups to different desks in a room. Alternatively, pupils could remain seated and pass their flip chart sheet to the group beside them after the allocated time.

How does it work?
1. Pupils are divided into small groups.

2. Each group is given a flip chart sheet or an A3 sized piece of paper with a question relevant to a particular topic at the top. Each piece of paper might have a different question.

3. Pupils work in their groups within a time limit to write down their responses, thoughts and ideas which stem from the initial question.

4. Each group might be given a different colour of pen to allow for easy identification of responses afterwards.

5. After the allocated time pupils rotate to another sheet with a different question.

6. They read the responses of the previous group and discuss whether they agree or disagree. If they agree, they tick. If they disagree, they could justify this by writing an explanation.

7. Pupils then write down their own thoughts on the issue. If their ideas have stemmed from the previous groups' written responses, they could connect the ideas with an arrow.

8. The carousel could be continued, if time permits, until each group has had the opportunity to see and respond to each question.

9. A **debrief** afterwards is beneficial.

10. Carousel is also a useful evaluation tool. Questions might include: what have you learned today? What was the most surprising/shocking/interesting/useful thing for you today? What might you have done differently?

CLUSTERING

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making
- Working with Others

What is it?
- This activity might be a useful tool for transferring factual information amongst pupils and for encouraging pupils to seek connections and links between statements and/or facts. See **Each One Teach One** for another activity useful for transferring information.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction. Alternatively, if there is not enough room, small groups of pupils could cluster the cards around a desk. Each group might then present and compare their clusters.

How does it work?
1. A piece of card with a particular statement or fact is distributed to every pupil. Ideally there should be a different statement for every pupil.

2. Pupils read their statement to ensure that they understand its meaning.

3. Pupils move around and compare their statement with other pupils' cards.

4. If two pupils decide that there is a link between their statements they form a cluster.

5. Another pupil might join the cluster if their statement is connected to other statements in the cluster.

6. Pupils might decide to break into sub-clusters if they see patterns within the connections.

7. Pupils might want to give their cluster a name.

8. Pupils might introduce their cluster and explain why they have formed a group and/or sub-group.

9. Main findings might be written on a board or flip chart whilst pupils are presenting their formations.

10. A **debrief** afterwards is beneficial.

COLLAGE

Skills
- Working with Others
- Being Creative
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This kinaesthetic activity asks pupils to represent their views on an issue or concept in a visual, creative and engaging way. It encourages pupils not only to communicate effectively, but also to develop their interpretation skills of other people's work.

Implications for classroom layout
- Pupils might work in groups around a desk or set of desks. Ease of movement may be needed so that pupils can view other groups' productions at the end of the activity.

How does it work?
1. Pupils get into groups of between two to four.

2. Each group is given a relevant word, idea, issue or concept which they must represent using a range of provided materials. Such materials might include magazines, newspapers, sticky shapes, coloured card and paper, marker pens, scissors, glue and felt-tips.

> **Example Collage Representations: Citizenship**
> - Discrimination
> - A particular Right from the Human Rights' Convention
> - Inclusion.

> **Example Collage Representations: Historical Events**
> - First landing on the moon
> - Guy Fawkes
> - The Battle of the Somme.

3. The facilitator may wish to establish a certain criteria for the collages in order to add a challenge aspect to the activity (i.e. the collages must contain a number of colours, images and words and be completed within a certain deadline, etc).

4. Once completed, pupils could move around the room carousel-fashion and view the work of other groups. They could try to guess what word, issue or concept each group in turn is trying to represent.

5. An allocated presenter from each group could then present their work to the rest of the class, explaining why they chose certain magazine clippings and words in their piece of work.

6. If time allows, pupils could then peer assess each group's work using the **Two Stars and a Wish** method.

7. A **debrief** afterwards might concentrate on the nature of the group work. Were roles allocated effectively? Who was the timekeeper, the resource manager, the presenter, the quality checker? Did groups consider and plan the overall design before starting? Did pupils choose all their resources before starting? Or did the collage 'evolve' as time progressed? Who presented effectively and why?

CONSCIENCE ALLEY

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making
- Working with Others

What is it?
- This role-play strategy allows pupils to gain a quick synopsis of all the issues related to a specific topic. It has the advantage over 'standard' role play in that it can be carried out reasonably quickly. It might be particularly useful for younger or less able pupils since they do not have to remain in role for very long. They also do not need to know a great deal of information about the issue as their role card will simply state who they are and how they feel about the particular scenario being discussed. See **Hassle Lines** for a similar activity involving role-play.

Implications for classroom layout
- An open space is needed for ease of movement and interaction.

How does it work?
1. Explain the scenario to the pupils (e.g. a bullying incident that took place at school has resurfaced again in the local youth club. The school has been asked to deal with the situation).

2. Then place each pupil into role by giving him or her each a role card which tells the pupil who they are and briefly how they feel about the situation (e.g. a bully, the victim, victim's friend, bully's mates, parent, youth worker, form teacher, etc).

3. Get pupils to stand in two lines facing each other with a pathway up the middle.

4. Select a pupil randomly and ask them to state their role.

5. Ask remaining pupils to think of one statement they would like to make to this individual.

6. The selected pupil then walks between the lines and the remainder of the class make their statements as they pass by. (You may need to repeat this a number of times, encouraging pupils to "get into role").

7. Debrief by asking the selected pupil which arguments they found convincing and what their view is on the scenario.

8. The activity can be repeated by selecting other pupils to walk in role through the "Conscience Alley".

CONSEQUENCE WHEEL

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
- Managing Information

What is it?
- This activity encourages pupils to think about the direct and second order consequences of a particular event or action. Pupils map these consequences in a visual manner. See the **Fishbone Strategy** for another activity which asks pupils to explore causes and effects.

How does it work?
1. Pupils write the main event or action in a centre circle in the middle of the page (see example).

> **Example Events or Actions:**
> - Global Warming
> - War in Iraq
> - Homelessness
> - Human Cloning

2. Pupils write a direct consequence of the event in a circle which is linked to the main circle with a single line. Pupils try to think of as many direct consequences as possible.

3. Pupils then consider second order consequences. These are drawn once again in circles and linked to the direct consequences with double lines. Third order consequences have a triple line, etc.

4. Pupils could colour circles depending on whether the consequence is positive or negative.

5. Feedback afterwards could compare and contrast pupils' consequences as well as lead into deeper exploration or arising issues through the use of tools such as **Consider All Factors**.

6. A **debrief** after this activity may be beneficial.
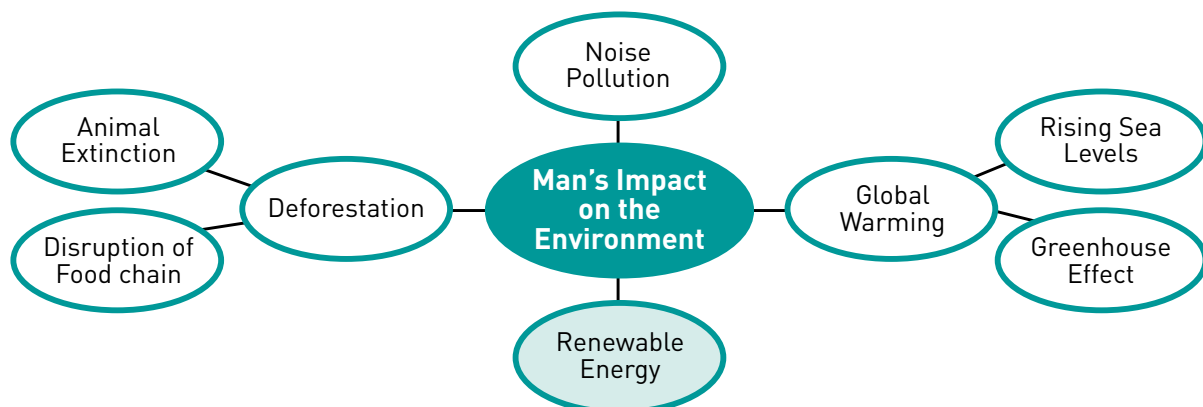
CONSTRUCTING WALLS

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This activity allows pupils to consider what points may be most relevant when considering a key question. It subsequently asks pupils to prioritise ideas and information on the question and discuss justifications for their choices. See **Card Ranking, Ideas Funnel, Zone of Relevance** or **Priority Pyramid** for further prioritising activities. This activity might be preceded by a **Post-It Collection** in order to generate ideas before prioritising.

Implications for classroom layout
- Pupils can work at a board or wall space on a large sheet. Alternatively, groups can work around a table using A3 or A4-sized sheets.

How does it work?
1. Pupils can work in pairs or groups.

2. Each group is given a set of cards with words, phrases or pictures which relate to a key question. Alternatively, pupils might write down their own ideas on a piece of paper or post-its and use them to 'construct' their wall.

3. Each group is also given the Wall Template (see example below) with the key question at the top. Alternatively, each group might draw their own Wall.

4. Pupils work through the cards (or their own post-its), deciding as a group on how relevant each one is to the key question. Most important factors form the bottom line, least important factors the top etc.

5. Groups then give feedback on their decisions, justifying their choices if they happen to contrast with the decisions of another group.

6. As an extension activity, pupils may wish to use the **Fishbone Strategy** or **Consequence Wheel** to explore in greater depth the points they deemed to be relevant.

Wall Example – What led to the fall of the Berlin Wall?

Dissatisfaction with the "Stasi" state	West German media, particularly TV	
Increasing demonstrations in East Germany	The collapse of Communism in Hungary	The collapse of Communism in Czechoslovakia

CREATIVE MATRIX

Skills
- Being Creative
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
- Working with Others

What is it?
- This activity encourages pupils to think creatively about a series of (hypothetical) scenarios, options, ideas and events. It stimulates thinking and problem-solving skills and may allow pupils to see issues from fresh perspectives. Pupils work in groups to explore alternatives and to build constructively and creatively on the ideas of others.

How does it work?
1. Pupils are presented with a matrix of possible scenarios based on a particular issue:

CREATIVE MATRIX – My Community

Problem: What?	alcohol/ drug abuse	smoking	racism	violence	pollution
People by whom?	OAP's	parents	ethnic minorities	families	teens
Place where?	at work	at school	in town	at home	on holiday

2. Pupils might be asked to identify, in their opinion, what the most likely and least likely scenarios are, choosing one option from each of the rows above and putting them together. For example:

   - **Most likely = alcohol abuse – teens – on holiday**
   - **Least likely = violence – OAPs – at work**

3. Pupils may be asked to justify their choices when comparing and contrasting responses with other groups, and to explore whether there are times when even their least likely scenario may possibly happen;

4. This activity might be used as a planning tool to stimulate creativity with a range of ideas:

CREATIVE MATRIX

What might be the most lucrative food business?

Type:	Indian	French	British	Chinese	Italian
People:	OAP's	professionals	ethnic minorities	families	teens
How?	on a conveyer belt	meals on wheels	drive-thru	pic'n'mix	do-it-yourself at a service station

Once again, pupils might be asked to choose the most and least lucrative potential business idea. For example:

- **Most lucrative = Indian – for professionals – on a conveyer belt**
- **Least lucrative = French – for teens – meals on wheels**

5. A **debrief** afterwards might ask pupils to consider their work within groups – were groups able to build on ideas? How did the groups structure their discussions? Was there a facilitator? Was agreement reached, and if so, how?

6. This activity might lead on to further exploration of relevant topics. Tools such as **Consider All Factors, Plus-Minus-Interesting, Other People's Views**, and **Opinion Finders** may be beneficial in order to consolidate and deepen pupils' understanding of key issues arising from the **Creative Matrix**.

DARTBOARD EVALUATION

Skills
• Self-Management

What is it?
• This evaluation technique is a useful quick method for receiving feedback on an activity or event. It is non-verbal and involves no writing.

Implications for classroom layout
• If targets are spread around the room, pupils will need to move around the room easily. Otherwise, targets might be placed at the front of the room.

How does it work?
1. A target consisting of three or more concentric circles is drawn on a board or on a flip chart.

2. The evaluation question relating to the target is placed at the top of the sheet.

3. Pupils are given a sticky dot to place on the target. The more they agree with the question, the closer they will place their dot towards the centre of the target. If pupils had reservations about the activity they might place the dot in the second circle from the centre. If they did not find the activity worthwhile their dot might be placed at the outmost region of the target.

Did you enjoy the activity?
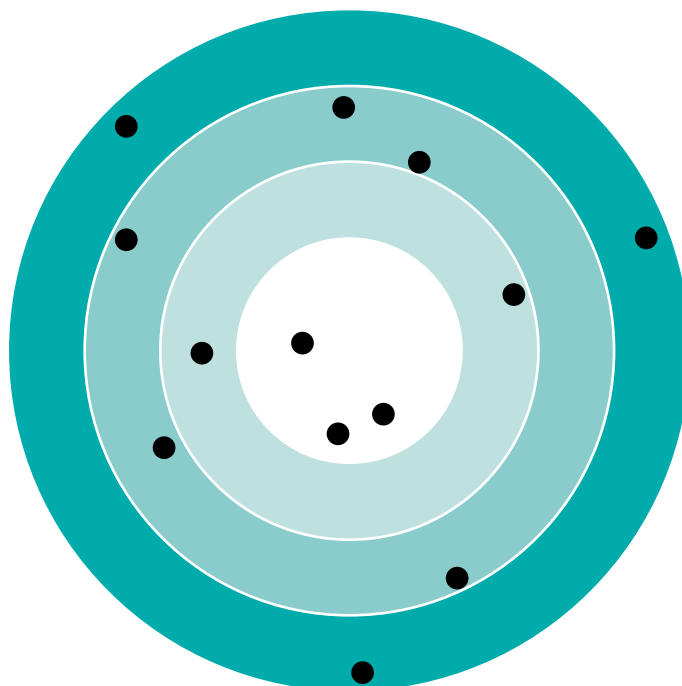
DIAMOND RANKING

Skills
• Working with Others
• Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
• This is a small group activity aimed at prioritising information and ideas. It can be a follow-up activity used after information-gathering sessions such as **Post-Its Collection** and **Ideas Avalanche**. It encourages pupils to consider and express their justifications for placing certain issues above others. See **Card Ranking** for another possible prioritising activity.

Implications for classroom layout
• Pupils can work at a board or wall space. Alternatively, groups can work around a table.

How does it work?
1. Pupils receive (or write out beforehand) nine ideas based on a particular question on card or post-its.

2. They place their first priority card at the top, followed by two in second place, three in third place, a further two and then the card which represents the lowest priority at the bottom. This forms a diamond shape.

3. Pupils should strive for a consensus amongst themselves. This may involve various discussions on the order of cards involving justification.

4. Top priorities might be explored in greater detail using activities such as **Five Questions**.

> Example Ideas for Discussion:
> • How to reduce crime
> • Measures to prevent environmental pollution
> • Making our roads safer.

DOT VOTING

Skills
• Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
• This evaluation technique is a useful quick method for prioritising a set of ideas or options. See **Ideas Funnel** for an activity which asks pupils to justify their priorities.

Implications for classroom layout
• Pupils should have access to a flip chart, board or overhead projector at the front of the room. Alternatively, the piece of flip chart paper could be passed around the room.

How does it work?
1. A set of options or ideas in response to a particular question or topic is created on a flip chart, board or overhead projector transparency.

2. Pupils receive three sticky dots each.

3. They must place their three dots beside the ideas or options which they think are most important. Alternatively, they might use different colour dots to highlight what they believe to be the most and least important options (i.e. red = least important, green = most important).

4. This activity may lead neatly into an extension task such as **Plus-Minus-Interesting, KWL** and **Consider All Factors**.

5. A **debrief** afterwards might be beneficial in order to gauge why pupils chose certain options above others.

DRAMA TECHNIQUES

Skills
- Thinking
- Being Creative
- Working with Others

What is it?
- The activities outlined below emphasise the use of drama techniques as learning tools. These may be useful for initiating further explicit exploration of topics and issues. See **Hot Seating, Tableau, Freeze Frame, Hassle Lines** and **Conscience Alley** for further drama-based methodologies.

Mantle of Expert
1. Pupils are given something to research, such as a topical issue or artefact, with the aim of becoming an expert on it.

2. Pupils must then take on the role of expert in front of peers and are questioned on their 'specialist' subject.

Role Reversal
- One group shows how they think another group might act or react to a particular situation.

Vox Pop
- Pupils enact short, quick-fire interviews related to relevant topics.

Thought Tracking
- This technique can be used in conjunction with **Freeze Frame** or **Tableau**. A pupil can further develop a character or situation through improvisation, such as a monologue.

Forum Theatre
1. A group of pupils enact a scene.

2. This scene is observed by others.

3. The action can be stopped at any time by the actors or the observers in order to discuss or refine arising issues.

4. New roles may be added, and/or onlookers may take over existing roles.

EACH ONE TEACH ONE (also known as Get One – Give One)

Skills
- Working with Others
- Managing Information

What is it?
- This is an alternative way of transferring a large amount of factual information amongst pupils. Rather than the teacher lecturing or dictating, pupils share a selected piece of information relevant to the topic with their peers. See **Clusters** for another useful activity for transferring information.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction. Alternatively, if pupils are seated at desks in groups of four, two pupils could change group after the allocated time.

How does it work?
1. A slip of paper with a particular fact or statistic is distributed to every pupil. Ideally there should be a different statement for every pupil.

2. Pupils read their statement to ensure that they understand its meaning.

3. Pupils move around and share their statement with other pupils. They should aim to explain their fact or figure with as many people as possible.

4. Pupils could be encouraged to extend their explanations by giving examples, if relevant, or by linking their statement with those of other pupils.

5. After adequate time for communicating their facts, pupils might work in smaller groups to classify the information they have acquired during the process of the activity.

6. In a subsequent **debrief** pupils could explain and justify their classification system.

7. They could also be asked to share their reactions upon hearing various facts/ statistics. What surprised them? What shocked them? Did any particular statement make them feel sad or happy? What particularly interested them?

8. Pupils might also be asked to think about their own learning. What pieces of information did they find easiest to remember and why? Which did they find most difficult?

9. Main findings for all debriefing activities might be written on a board or flip chart.

FACT or OPINION

Skills
• Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
• Working with Others

What is it?
• This activity asks pupils to judge whether something is a fact or just an opinion (value-laden). In an increasingly pluralistic society, distinguishing fact from opinion based on evidence is an important skill. This challenging activity encourages pupils to consider the nature of knowledge – often there may be no clear-cut answer. Pupils work in groups to discuss their stance. An effective approach to this activity will include a **debriefing** session afterwards.

How does it work?
1. Pupils are presented with a series of statements which are based on a particular issue. These may often include the position statements of key stakeholders on both sides of the issue in question.

> **Topic: Geography – Wind Farms**
> • At present less than 3% of Britain's electricity comes from alternative sources.
> • Almost all the UK's electricity generated from renewable sources comes from the two hydroelectric dams in Scotland.
> • The UK is one of the windiest countries in Europe so it makes sense to harness the energy.
> • The wind does not blow all the time so we would need to use a battery technology to store the energy, which is expensive to do.

2. Pupils analyse the statements and decide whether they are fact or opinion. Pupils consider the justifications for their choice and present these to the class during a whole-class feedback session. Pupils could further explore any similarities and differences in judgement between groups.

3. In a **debrief** afterwards pupils could concentrate on the processes which led to judgements being made. How did groups arrive at a judgement? Where there a variety of opinions? Was consensus reached? Were judgements justified effectively? Were judgements articulated effectively? Were there allocated roles within the group?

4. Based on feedback pupils may wish to explore the issues further using a **Plus-Minus-Interesting** or **Consider All Factors** approach. A **Consequence Wheel** or **Fishbone Strategy** may also be employed to consider cause and consequence.

FISHBONE STRATEGY

Skills
• Working with Others
• Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving

What is it?
• Using a particular effect as a starting point, this activity encourages pupils to consider and generate a list of causes which may feed into the effect.

Implications for classroom layout
• Pupils can work at a board or wall space. Alternatively, groups can work around a table.

How does it work?
1. Pupils in small groups receive a page with the outline of a fish skeleton.

2. Pupils place the effect at the tip, or nose, of the skeleton.

3. The four bold lines (or fish bones) represent possible main causes.

4. The smaller horizontal 'bones' add further detail to the main bones.

CAUSES

CAUSES

DETAILS

too many alcopops

alcoholic drink

conflict and tension

an absent parent

family life

EFFECT
Teenage
Alcoholism

CAUSES

CAUSES
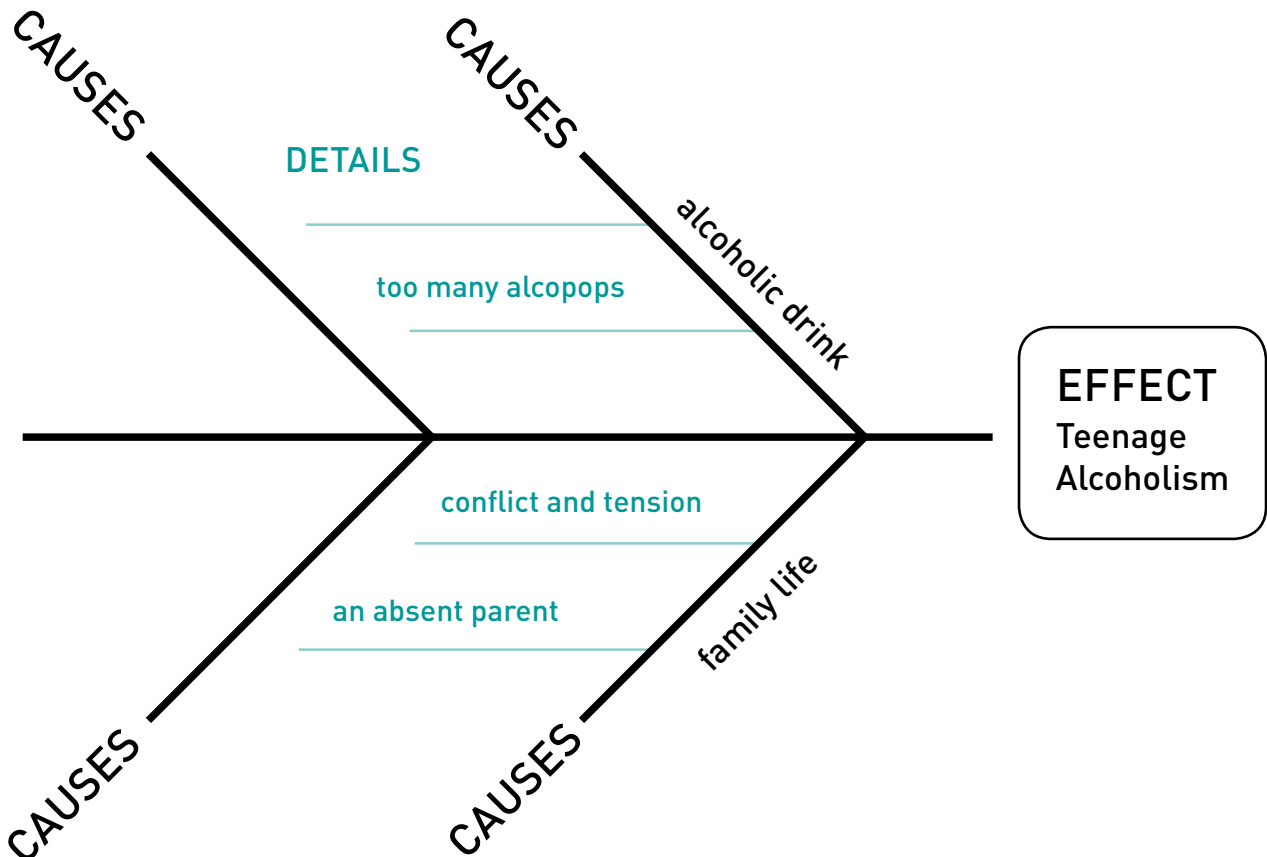
FIST-TO-FIVE

Skills
• Self-Management

What is it?
• This simple activity encourages pupils to determine how confident they feel that they've achieved what was expected by the end of a lesson or session. It might also be used by pupils as a means of expressing how confident they are that they know the response to a question which has just been posed by the teacher/facilitator. For the latter, this activity allows an instant assessment of how well a class or group may have grasped an issue or topic. See **Thumb Tool** for another activity which encourages pupils to think about their learning.

How does it work?
1. After a session pupils are asked how confident they are that they have met the objectives. One of three hand gestures might be used:
   – Full hand up with all fingers and thumb if they are very confident that they have achieved the objectives and what was expected;
   – Three fingers if they feel that they have had partial success in meeting the objectives, but some more work might be needed; or
   – Just fist if they consider that they have made little or no progress towards meeting the objective.

2. If the tool is being used in response to a specific question from the teacher during the course of the lesson, the following statements might apply:
   – Full hand up with all fingers and thumb if they feel very confident that they know the answer;
   – Three fingers if they may know part of the answer or if they are slightly uncertain as to the accuracy of their response; or
   – Just fist if they definitely feel that they do not know the response.

3. If the tool is used at the end of a session, a **debrief** may explore issues such as how the objective was met, what else pupils feel that they would like to achieve and how they could go about doing this, what might have hindered progress towards the objective and how they can prevent future similar obstacles.

FIVE QUESTIONS

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making
- Managing Information

What is it?
- This is an information gathering activity which also allows pupils to explore the issue in more depth or to break it down into smaller sub-themes or tasks. It gives pupils the opportunity to unpack complicated topics. It allows an exploration of all kinds of possibilities which may lead to action planning and target-setting. See **Ideas Avalanche** and **Post-Its Collection** for further information gathering activities.

How does it work?
1. A large, wide sheet of paper and a marker are needed.

2. A question is posed to pupils using 'How' or 'Why'.

3. Suggestions are written on the flip chart.

4. Teachers use the same question word to develop ideas and explore further ideas.

5. Teachers continue to use questions with the same question word until the idea/ suggestion has been explored fully.

Learning Concept: Local Citizenship
- **How** can we get young people involved in the community?
  – Promote issues which interest young people.
- **How** can we promote issues?
  – Raise awareness of youth issues.
- **How** can we raise awareness?
  – Develop an online forum.
- **How** can we develop an online forum?
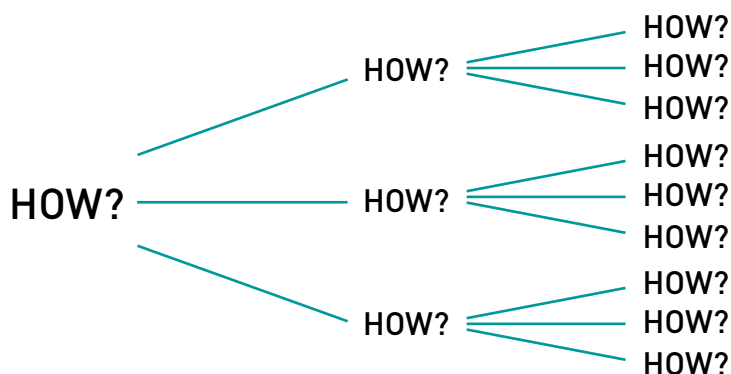
FREEZE FRAME

Skills
• Working with Others
• Being Creative
• Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
• This physical activity can be a useful tool for encouraging pupils to engage in discussion about a particular issue. Pupils are asked to pose as a still image representing a particular significant moment. See **Tableau** for a similar activity.

Implications for classroom layout
• A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction.

How does it work?
1. Pupils get into small groups.

2. They are asked physically to pose in a snapshot representation of a specific, significant moment.

3. Pupils could work together as a group to discuss what they are being asked to depict and how it might look in a freeze frame.

4. Alternatively, pupils could act out a role and, on the facilitator's command, freeze in scene.

5. Groups could take it in turns to move around and view other groups' freeze frames.

6. A **debrief** afterwards could focus on the nature of body language used in the freeze frame, why pupils decided to depict the scene in the way they did, and why others might have depicted the event in a different way.

7. As an extension, groups could enact different developments in a particular issue and take photos, creating a photo-story.

Possible Freeze Frame Scenarios:
• Resisting a peer pressure issue, such as refusing cigarettes or alcohol;
• Acting out a particular Right from the Human Rights' Convention; and
• Helping a friend.

GIANT STEPS

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This is a useful activity for exploring diverse opinions and emotions as regards a particular issue. It might be used as a lead into a particular topic and to gauge pupil interest and base understanding of the issue in question. It requires pupils to take a stance on an issue and allows everybody to have a voice, even if they do not speak out. The aims of this activity are similar to those of the walking debates, such as the **Four Corners Debate**.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction.

How does it work?
1. Pupils stand in a long line. In order to get pupils in the line and to break the ice as regards discussion, the facilitator may ask pupils to create a spectrum based on the issue at hand. For example, pupils might be asked to form a line from the most optimistic to the least optimistic, the most organised to the least organised, etc. Pupils should be able to justify their position in the line.

2. Once all pupils are in the line, the facilitator reads out a statement. Sample statements might include, for example:

> Topic: Personal Development
> - People should do what their friends do at all times, even if they know what they are doing is wrong.
> - It's OK to provide an alibi for a friend.
> - Bullies have a high self-esteem.

3. The pupil then takes a step based on how comfortable they feel about the issue or based on whether they agree with the statement or not. If they disagree or are totally uncomfortable with the statement, they take a step backwards. If they agree/ are comfortable, they take a step forwards. If they are not sure they stand still. The degree of the step may also indicate just *how* comfortable or uncomfortable they may feel. A small step forward, to cite an instance, might mean that a pupil agrees but with perhaps some reservations.

4. As pupils move, they should explain why they have taken their particular step. Views could be obtained from those who have moved forwards and those who have moved backwards, as well as those who remained still.

5. Subsidiary questions could be used to draw out more complex issues and to refine the initial statement.

6. A **debrief** after the activity could discuss the issues upon which there was widespread consensus and issues that divided the class.

GRAFFITI BOARD

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving

What is it?
- This activity encourages pupils to record their thoughts, feelings, ideas and suggestions around a particular topic. The methodology is similar to that of the **No Easy Answers Board**.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large wall space may be needed.

How does it work?
1. A particular area of the room is dedicated as a graffiti board where pupils can write and record their thoughts on the issues being discussed.

2. Pupils might be asked to contribute to the graffiti board at different times using a **KWL** perspective – what they think they '**k**now' about an issue, what they '**w**ant' to know and what they have '**l**earned' at the end of the topic.

3. Any comments which arise as a result of **debriefings** may also be noted.

4. Pupils should feel free to contribute to the graffiti board at any time during the course of a topic.

5. The graffiti board could be used at the end of the topic for summarising issues and drawing conclusions.

HASSLE LINES

Skills
• Thinking, Decision-Making
• Working with Others

What is it?
• This role-play strategy allows for a broad examination of perspectives relating to a particular topic or theme. It might be particularly useful for issues relating to conflict simulation and resolution scenarios.

Implications for classroom layout
• An open space is needed for ease of movement and interaction.

How does it work?
1. The class forms two groups.

2. The two groups form two lines facing each other.

3. Pupils in line one are assigned a role.

4. Pupils in line two are assigned a different role.

5. The scenario is explained.

6. Each pair should then act out the scenario.

7. At any point the teacher can call out "freeze". Pupils should then hold their pose (this allows body language to be analysed in discussion).

8. If time permits, roles could be reversed.

9. A **debrief** might be beneficial, including questions such as: what did it feel like being in that role? Does anyone have any good solutions to share with the class?

10. The activity might be repeated with different scenarios.

HOT AIR BALLOON

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
- Managing Information

What is it?
- This activity can be used as a planning tool. It encourages pupils to confront an issue, explore its implications in a comprehensive manner and adopt a structured approach to future preparation and planning.

Implications for classroom layout
- Pupils can work at a board or wall space. Alternatively, groups can work around a table.

How does it work?
1. Pupils are presented with a picture of a hot air balloon.

2. Pupils are given a structured set of questions around a particular issue, including:
   - **Who needs to be in the balloon?** Pupils write the names of key stakeholders around the issue - people who need to be on board in order for it to go anywhere.
   - **What needs to be in place for the project to be successful?** On the balloon itself, pupils note all the elements which they think are necessary in order for the project (planning) to be successful.
   - **What is holding it back?** Next to the anchor pupils note the issues which may hinder a successful start to the project.
   - **What will make it fly at great speed?** Pupils note above the hot air balloon what developments would allow the project to move forward effectively, such as commitment, motivation and creativity.
   - **What might blow the balloon off course?** On either side of the balloon pupils note the problems which may arise during the course of the project.

3. Once completed, pupils could compare and contrast their balloons to further enhance planning.

4. Additional tools such as **Five Questions** might be used to explore ideas further.

HOT SEATING

Skills
- Working with Others
- Being Creative
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This creative in-role activity can be a useful tool to encourage discussion about a particular issue and share information.

Implications for classroom layout
- A single hotseat should be placed facing the group. Alternatively, in order to facilitate more relaxed interaction, the hot seat might be placed in the middle of a circle.

How does it work?
1. Pupils are allocated a particular character, or alternatively they think of a role themselves relevant to the issue in question.

2. Pupils could research the role in groups or individually.

> **Possible Characters/Roles:**
> - Young person with ASBO
> - UN troops in Afghanistan
> - Factory owner in India employing children
> - Henry VIII

3. Other pupils in groups could be encouraged to think up challenging questions for the person in the hot seat.

4. The character in question is put in the hot seat and questioned by fellow pupils. This may help pupils to feel empathy for a particular person or viewpoint, particularly a view which they do not normally share.

5. An idea or issue could also be placed on the hot seat, such as the war in Iraq, human cloning, the use of wind farms. Using this technique, answers can come from anyone in the class. Alternatively, for the latter example a Geography teacher might be brought in to share his or her views on the hot seat.

6. A mystery game could also be played out using this technique, with class members having to guess the identity of the person in the hot seat.

7. A **debrief** afterwards could involve asking pupils what they learned, what they found interesting and if they would challenge anything which the person in the hot seat said.

8. It is also useful for teachers/facilitators to assess what gaps may exist in a group's level of knowledge and what future planning may be needed. A **KWL** grid could be created by pupils to plan future work around the issue at hand.

9. As an additional competitive game, pupils might be given a topic or character to research and then hot seated for one minute to share as much information as possible with the class without hesitating or repeating themselves. If a possible infringement occurs, pupils might make a challenge to oust the person from the hot seat.

IDEAS FUNNEL

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving

What is it?
- This activity involves a process of generating all possible ideas and options, followed by a period of prioritisation. It encourages pupils to justify their choices and to negotiate within their own group and the whole class group in order to reach an agreed set of priorities within a specific time period. This activity can be a useful starting point for a new topic, and it may be interesting to compare and contrast ideas or priorities generated through such an activity both at the start and end of the topic. See **Diamond Ranking** for a prioritising activity.

Implications for classroom layout
- Pupils can work at a board or wall space. Alternatively, groups can work around a table. A flip-chart for presenting purposes may be useful.

How does it work?
1. Pupils in groups of four-to-six receive a large piece of paper.

2. Pupils decide on their roles within the group. Such roles might include scribe, timekeeper, facilitator and presenter.

3. The groups generate as many ideas or options as possible around the given topic, and note them on the top half of the piece of paper.

4. Groups then prioritise their ideas by selecting the five which they believe are most important or relevant to the given topic. They write these on the bottom half of the sheet.

5. The presenter in each group brings their A3 page to the front and presents their findings and five priorities to the class.

6. In groups once again, pupils decide upon the one idea which they feel is the most relevant to the topic. This may be an idea from their own list or one from another group which they have heard during the group presentations. Each group should aim to reach agreement on their choice through negotiation and justification.

7. The one idea from each group might be noted on a flip chart and similarities or differences between groups could be discussed. The ideas noted on the flip chart could also be referred to at various times through the course of the topic.

8. A **debrief** after this activity may ask pupils to concentrate on the nature of the group work. How well did pupils fulfil their roles within their group? Was the facilitator able to generate productive discussion and communication? Would the presenter do anything differently next time? Was agreement easy to reach? What were the processes which led to agreement? Who was particularly effective in putting across ideas and why?

9. Further tools such as **Five Questions** might be used to explore ideas further.

JEOPARDY

Skills
• Managing Information
• Thinking

What is it?
• This activity encourages pupils to think about the quality questions which may lead to a particular answer. It has the potential to stretch more able pupils who may think creatively about possible alternative questions.

How does it work?
1. Pupils are given the answer to a question which may be of relevance to the topic being explored. Answers may range from purely factual, such as a date, a name or place to an emotion or abstract concept.

> **Example answers and questions:**
> • **1066** (When was the Battle of Hastings?)
> • **Angela Merkel** (Who is the first female German Chancellor?)
> • **Humiliated** (How did black people in South Africa feel during Apartheid when they weren't allowed on the buses?)

2. Pupils must think of the question that matches each answer.

3. If the answer does not have a straightforward question, pupils compare and contrast the questions they have come up with and justify how they arrived at a particular question.

JIGSAW

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
- Working with Others

What is it?
- This activity can be used as an icebreaker for new groups, as a team-building activity, as a means of gathering information, as an introduction to a particular topic or as a first step for future planning, decision-making or extended discussion. It can add an interesting and motivational twist to a set of tasks. See **Lifelines** for another activity with similar aims.

Implications for classroom layout:
- Pupils will need ease of access around the room in order to find other people with a part of their jigsaw. Alternatively, groups which have already been allocated may be given their jigsaw to assemble at desks.

How does it work?
1. Beforehand, the facilitator creates a jigsaw with a set of challenges written on it. This may be created simply on A4 paper/cardboard and cut into pieces or by using an IT application.

   Icebreaker:
   - Write down the name of everybody in your group.
   - Each person in the group draws a picture of their favourite hobby.
   - Find out one claim to fame from each person.

   Topic: Safety in the Laboratory
   - Write down two important rules when moving around the lab.
   - Think about five dangers which you may come across in the lab.
   - Note three safety precautions to prevent accidents.

   History:
   - Write down two big events in your life in the past year.
   - Write down three big news events in the past year.
   - Think about what we may have learned from these events.

2. Pupils receive a piece of the jigsaw.

3. Pupils must move around the room to find others with a piece of their jigsaw. Jigsaws, for example, may be colour-coded.

4. Once pupils have found their random group, they work as a team to put the jigsaw together and to complete the challenges.

5. The facilitator may wish to set a time limit to add an element of competition.

6. A **debrief** after this activity may be beneficial.

7. This activity could be followed by an extension task such as **Opinion Finders**.

JUST A MINUTE

Skills
• Managing Information
• Self-Management
• Thinking

What is it?
• This activity encourages pupils to select and present key information from researched material. It also fosters active listening skills and may be linked with the **Hot Seating** technique.

Implications for classroom layout
• A single hot seat should be placed facing the group. Alternatively, in order to facilitate more relaxed interaction, the hot seat might be placed in the middle of a circle.

How does it work?
1. Pupils research a relevant topic and highlight what they consider to be key information. Pupils could research the role in groups or individually.

> Possible Characters/Roles:
> • History: One of Henry VIII's wives
> • English: Falstaff
> • Geography: Greenpeace Activist
> • Citizenship: a local political party.

2. After adequate research time, pupils are hot-seated and asked to present their key findings/information in just one minute.

3. Other pupils must listen carefully – if they suspect hesitation, deviation or repetition they may challenge the person in the hot seat. If a challenge occurs, timing is stopped for its duration.

4. A facilitator or group of facilitators must decide whether the challenge is valid and justify their decision.

5. If the challenge is deemed to be valid, the pupil in the hot seat is out and must leave the seat. The pupil who made the challenge receives a point.

6. If the challenge is rejected, the pupil continues until another challenge is made or until the minute is up. If the pupil manages to stay in the seat until the end they receive a point.

7. As an extension activity, pupils may do a **Mind Map** to bring together and to structure all the information they have gathered during the course of the activity.

KWL (Know – Want to Know – Learned)

Skills
- Managing Information
- Self-Management

What is it?
- This method can be used as an introductory strategy in order for pupils to document their present level of knowledge and what gaps may exist in that knowledge, to structure progress in their learning and to analyse what new information has been learned after research. This activity builds upon prior knowledge and understanding and develops teamwork skills. If the K-W-L is carried out in groups, it may consolidate communication skills and teamwork.

How does it work?
1. On a K-W-L grid (see below), pupils write under 'K' what they think they already know about a particular topic or issue. If pupils are working in groups, they may wish to use a **Post-It** style activity before writing their combined ideas onto the grid.

2. Pupils are then encouraged to think about the gaps in their knowledge by filling out what they *want* to know in the 'W' column.

3. Once the topic is completed, pupils might return to their grids to fill in the final 'L' column. Here they confirm the accuracy of their first two columns and compare what they have learned with their initial thoughts on the topic in the 'K' column.

Topic: Tanzania

K	W	L
• developing country • Masai tribes • Mount Kilimanjaro • lack of health services • safari	• about schools • imports/exports • cost of living • tribal life • other geographical points of interest	• tribal life based around cattle herding and warrior manship • Ngorongoro Crater

LIFELINES

Skills
• Thinking

What is it?
• This activity can be used as an icebreaker for new groups, as a team-building activity, as an introduction to a particular topic or as a first step which may lead to future planning, decision-making or extended discussion. It encourages pupils to reflect and think on their own experiences before comparing with others.

How does it work?
1. Everyone receives a 'Lifeline' sheet with different ages noted along the line.

2. On the Lifeline, pupils document experiences in their lives since they were born that are relevant to the topic under discussion.

> **Icebreaker:**
> • My favourite toys at different ages.
> • My favourite TV programmes at different ages.
> • My favourite holidays at different ages.

> **Topic: Rights and Responsibilities**
> • When I was allowed to make decisions.
> • When I was deemed old enough to try new things.

3. Once completed, pupils could share their experiences with others, or a large lifeline could be placed on a wall and an example from everyone's individual lifeline placed on it.

4. Pupils could, as a team-building exercise, discuss the similarities and differences which emerge from their documented lifelines.

5. The lifeline activity could be used to stimulate further discussion. Why, for example, are certain rights granted at 12,14,16,18,21 etc?

6. Pupils might also specify a particular age and run an **Ideas Avalanche**. To cite an instance, what decisions should an 8 year old be allowed to make and why?

MEMORY GAME

Skills
- Thinking
- Working with Others
- Managing Information

What is it?
- Much learning depends on active and effective use of memory and memory skills. This activity provides pupils with relevant contexts in which they can become aware of memorisation strategies and therefore helps make them more effective learners. The memory game focuses pupils' attention on the importance of accuracy and detail, and it can be a more interesting way to deliver factual information. It also promotes teamwork, communication and concentration.

Implications for classroom layout
- Pupils work in groups. There must be easy access for each pupil to the front of the room.

How does it work?
1. Pupils cluster in groups of three or four.

2. Three copies of the same sheet are placed at the front of the room. The sheet might contain eight to ten sentences containing factual information about a particular topic or issue. Different colours and images may also be used.

> **Topic: Modern Languages – Food and Drink Context (statements in the target language).**
> - On Mondays I eat fish.
> - On Tuesdays I eat chicken and rice.
> - On Wednesdays I eat potatoes, vegetables and meat.
> - On Thursdays I eat pasta, fruit, crisps and chocolate and drink milk.
> - On Fridays I do not eat!

- Pupils from each group come to the front to view the sheet. Each person might be allowed to view the sheet only once, for thirty seconds. For example, if there are four people in a group, the group will have four chances to view the sheet, with each person taking a turn for 30 seconds (timings and frequency may need to be changed depending on the difficulty of the sheet).

- Pupils must write out the sheet as accurately as possible in their groups, including any images, words underlined, different colours, etc. This should be done against-the-clock.

- After the first person from each group has viewed the sheet, they should summarisewhat the sheet is about to their group. Pupils should then spend some time deciding how they are going to transfer all the information from the sheet at the front to their own as accurately as possible. In other words, what memory skills are they going to employ and how are they going to work as a team in order to ensure success? For example, pupil one might tell pupil two where to concentrate on looking when he/she goes up.

- At the end, each group's final effort can be compared with the original version.

- A **debrief** afterwards might concentrate on the memory strategies that were used, which were most or least effective, how teams worked together, what brought about success, etc.

MIND MAPS

Skills
- Managing Information
- Self-Management
- Thinking
- Being Creative

What is it?
- Just like the brain stores information by connecting tree-like branches, learning is most effective when connections are made and then structured. Mind Maps reflect this and are useful as planning and revision tools. They appeal to different learning styles such as visual and kinaesthetic and encourage pupils to think about connections in their learning content. They oblige pupils to use both sides of the brain. If used for planning, they can be added to and extended as the topic continues. See the **Consequence Wheel** and **Fishbone Strategy** for similar visual activities which ask pupils to think about cause and effect.
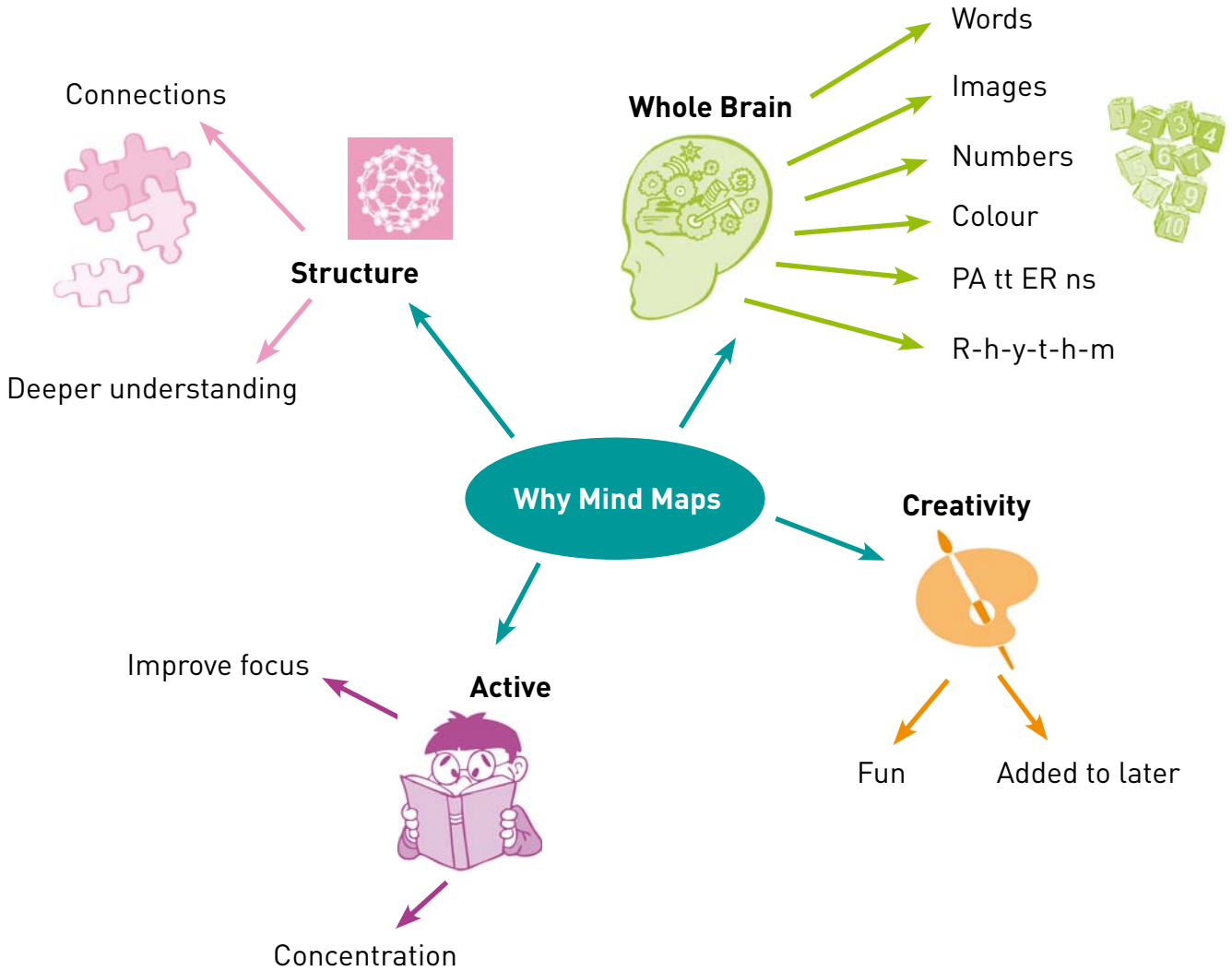
How does it work?
1. Pupils write the main topic or issue in the centre of a large page.

> **Example Topics for mind-mapping:**
> - Geography: rivers
> - English: characters or themes in a book
> - History: the Armada
> - Modern Languages: vocabulary based on the context 'leisure'.

2. Using branches, pupils draw the main ideas around the central concept, connecting them to the centre. Pupils could use a different colour for each main idea and highlighters to underline key words and concepts. Pupils could also add images to enhance further the visual aspect of their map.

3. Pupils draw sub-branches in order to highlight ideas connected to the main branch.

4. If used as a revision tool, pupils might want to use the mind map as a springboard for more extensive revision. They might, for example, wish to develop revision notes on a postcard – one postcard for each sub-branch. These postcards could contain the same colours and images as the relevant sub-branch on their mind map.

5. A **debrief** after completion of the mind map may encourage pupils to think about why they clustered particular ideas together as well as how the map has clarified their thinking.

SAMPLE MIND MAP

Connections

Structure

Deeper understanding

Whole Brain

Words

Images

Numbers

Colour

PA tt ER ns

R-h-y-t-h-m

Why Mind Maps

Creativity

Fun

Added to later

Improve focus

Active

Concentration

MIND MOVIES

Skills
- Being Creative
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving

What is it?
- This creative activity can be a useful tool for introducing a topic, encouraging pupils to engage in discussion about a particular issue and sharing ideas.

How does it work?
1. Pupils close their eyes.

2. The facilitator reads a short story or explains a scenario to the class.

3. Pupils are asked to imagine what is happening or what is being explained in their minds.

4. Once the story or explanation has been completed, pupils are asked to continue where the reader left off and develop the story/scene in their minds for a further period of time.

5. Pupils then describe, either in groups or as a whole class, what developments took place in their mind movies. This might be a good way to develop discussion on issues.

> **Example Scenarios:**
> - A Human Rights issue
> - A peer pressure story (boy encouraged by friends to steal from a shop)
> - A simple story in a Modern Language
> - The execution of Marie Antoinette.

6. This activity might be used to encourage pupils to think about alternatives to different scenarios. Pupils' mind movies could be built upon using a **Consider All Factors** or **Plus-Minus-Interesting** activity.

MYSTERIES

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
- Working with Others

What is it?
- This activity asks pupils to use problem-solving and decision-making skills to solve a mystery, make a decision or explore potential explanations for an event. This activity will include a **debriefing** session afterwards. The method encourages pupils to produce reasoned arguments, based on knowledge and understanding of an issue, as well as sound evidence.

Implications for classroom layout
- This activity might be undertaken in a large group with pupils sitting in a circle or semi-circle, or in small groups around a desk.

How does it work?
1. Pupils are given a set of 20 to 30 statements about a particular issue. If this is a whole-class activity, each pupil might be given one statement which they read out to the group. Alternatively, pupils in small groups might be allocated a set of statements.

2. If the statements will lead to a decision being made by the group, pupils could be encouraged to consider each statement in turn in order to establish its meaning and to discuss all possible factors.

> Topic: Modern Languages – Subject Choices (statements in the target language). Pupils must then discuss in the target language which subjects a pupil should choose for 'A' level and why:
> - Jimbob is a keen athlete.
> - Jimbob's geography teacher is very funny.
> - Jimbob hasn't done his geography homework all week.
> - Jimbob would like to be rich in the future.
> - Jimbob loves good food but can't cook very well.

- After time for group discussion, pupils should feed back on their decisions and justify them effectively and articulately, using reasoned argument and evidence, if appropriate.

- In a possible **debrief** afterwards, pupils could concentrate on the processes that led to decisions being made or problems being solved. How did groups arrive at a decision? Where there a variety of opinions? How was consensus reached? Were judgements justified effectively? Were judgements articulated effectively? Were there allocated roles within the group and how effectively were these carried out?

NO EASY ANSWERS BOARD

Skills
• Thinking

What is it?
• This activity encourages pupils to record any thoughts and feelings around topics for which, as the name suggests, there may be no easy answers. The method is similar to that of the **Graffiti Board**, and aims to demonstrate to pupils that nobody has all the answers!

Implications for classroom lay-out
• A large wall space may be needed.

How does it work?
1. A particular area of the room is dedicated as a 'no easy answers board' where pupils can write and record their thoughts on the issues which they cannot find answers to. These recordings may, for example, be formulated as rhetorical questions.

2. At various points during the course of a topic, questions may be revisited in order to see if pupils' thoughts, ideas and opinions have developed.

3. At the end of a topic, pupils might discuss and consequently decide if the question has been answered or not. If yes, the question might be removed from the board. If no, the question may remain and pupils may wish to return to it at a later time.

ODD ONE OUT

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
- Working with Others
- Managing Information

What is it?
- Odd One Out is a useful activity which can be incorporated at any point of a topic – as a springboard for initial exploration of the topic or as a tool to consolidate knowledge. It obliges pupils to think about the characteristics of words, sentences, ideas, places, people or things – depending on the learning area in question. They are encouraged to explore for themselves the similarities and differences between these things, to foster an understanding of any other relationships between them and to categorise accordingly.

How does it work?
1. Pupils cluster in pairs or groups.

2. Pupils are given a set of key words/ideas/places/things or people, depending on the learning area and topic. These may come, for example, in the form of a list or grid on an Overhead Projector or hand-out.

3. Pupils must find the odd one out on each grid or list. Often there may be no right or wrong answers and any word might be the odd one out. Pupils must, therefore, give a justified and valid response as to why they chose a particular word and the nature of the relationship between the other words on the list.

> **Topic: Modern Languages – My House (words in the target language)**
> - bed, oven, fridge, TV, wardrobe, curtains, garage, chair, bath, bedside table.
>   - Garage might be the odd one out because it is the only room;
>   - Curtains might be an odd one out because all the rest either have a floor or stand on the floor.
> This activity can encourage discussion in the target language.

4. As an extension activity, pupils could suggest another related word to add to those which are not odd ones out. Alternatively, pupils could think of their own odd one out list or grid.

5. A **debrief** afterwards might concentrate on how pupils made the connections between the words, the processes involved and whether the group work has helped pupils to see different connections which they otherwise might not have considered.

OPINION FINDERS

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Decision-Making
- Managing Information

What is it?
- This is an information gathering activity in which pupils seek and give opinions on a number of statements relevant to a particular topic. Pupils must then in small groups tally their results and look for connections between opinions. See **Carousel** or **Post-Its Collection** for some more useful individual and small-group information gathering activities.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction.

How does it work?
1. Pupils receive a piece of paper with a particular statement at the top. A different colour of paper is used for each statement. A grid below the statements might be used for recording peoples' opinions. Example categories might include: agree strongly, agree, no fixed opinion, disagree, disagree strongly. An open space for comments might be included after these categories.

2. Pupils read their statement to ensure that they understand it.

3. Pupils move around, giving and collecting opinions simultaneously.

4. Pupils keep a tally of other peoples' opinions on their particular statement in the category grid. They also write down peoples' comments in the open space.

5. Every pupil should give an opinion on every statement.

6. After the allocated time pupils could come together as a group with others who have the same statement as themselves (the same coloured paper). They could tally their own results for the statement individually and then as a group.

7. They could give an account of the comments on their sheet to others in the group and then, as a group, try to classify them.

8. A **debrief** afterwards is beneficial. Results could be noted and classified on a flip chart.

OPV (Other People's Views)

Skills
- Managing Information
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Problem-Solving, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This method encourages pupils to view the other person's/opposing point of view on a particular issue or topic. Pupils think about how sharing opinions can help to gain new perspectives on factors, consequences and objectives that underpin the issue in question. Pupils think about how a particular point of view might be relevant for the person holding it, but how it should not be imposed on others. See the **Consider All Factors** activity for ideas on collating a list of comprehensive factors affecting an issue.

Implications for classroom layout
- If used in conjunction with a carousel activity, pupils might need to rotate in groups to different desks in a room. Alternatively, pupils could remain seated and pass a flip chart sheet to the group beside them after the allocated time.

How does it work?
1. The facilitator should discuss with pupils the importance of involving other people in decision-making and problem-solving activities. People's different backgrounds, interests, understanding and values can enrich and broaden the perspectives of individuals and pupils can gain an insight into the varying perspectives within a topic.

2. Pupils move around the class asking for opinions and noting them on a page. Once they have five *differing* opinions, pupils summarise the opinions at the bottom of the page and say which one they most agree with and why.

> **Example OPV Scenario**
> A lawyer is defending a youth in court who is accused by his next-door neighbour of breaking the window of his car. The youth is also accused of terrorising the neighbourhood – throwing stones at windows, jumping on cars, bullying younger children. Decide the different viewpoints which may exist in this scenario and who might hold them.

3. Once completed, pupils might rotate in groups and view the factors which other groups have noted. They may wish to use the '**Two Stars and a Wish**' strategy as a means of peer assessment.

4. Pupils could then be given time to modify or add to their original opinions based on what other groups have written on their sheets.

5. A **debrief** afterwards to bring together all factors as a whole group might be beneficial.

6. Further simulation activities such as **Conscience Alley** and **Hassle Lines** might be employed at this point to develop certain opinions further and to encourage pupils to articulate particular viewpoints.

PEOPLE BINGO

Skills
- Working with Others

What is it?
- This activity can be used as an icebreaker for new groups, as an introduction to a particular topic or as a means of developing communicative skills. It requires movement and communication with numerous others.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction.

How does it work?
1. Everyone receives a Bingo sheet divided into squares of nine, twelve or sixteen.

2. Each square contains a challenge relevant to the topic or purpose of the activity. For example:

> **Group Icebreaker:**
> - Find three people who have blue eyes.
> - Find three people who have visited America.
> - Find three people who have a pet dog.

> **Topic: Healthy Living**
> - Find three people who cycle to school.
> - Find three people who eat organic food.
> - Find three people who drink more than three litres of water per day.

3. When pupils find a relevant person for a particular statement, they might ask that person two further questions of their own about the statement in question. This might be a good opportunity for extended discussion. For example:

> **Topic: Healthy Living**
> - Find a person who eats organic food.
> Possible extension questions:
> - What organic food do you eat?
> - Why do you eat organic food?

4. In a **debrief** afterwards the teacher might ask pupils what they remembered or an interesting thing they learned from another pupil through the extension questions.

5. If time does not permit for the creation and photocopying of Bingo sheets, the teacher might write numbered sentences onto a board, overhead projector or flip chart. Pupils could then write the numbers down and put the name of the person they find next to the right one.

PMI (Plus – Minus – Interesting)

Skills
• Managing Information
• Self-Management

What is it?
• This method helps pupils to examine all sides of an idea, topic or argument. It steers pupils away from their initial emotive responses to an issue and encourages them to think about the disadvantages of an idea which they may like very much. A PMI obliges them to consider all ideas, even ones they might normally reject at first sight, and to decide their stance on an idea or issue *after* they have analysed it instead of before. See **Consider All Factors** and **Other People's Views** for similar activities.

How does it work?
1. The facilitator may need to discuss with pupils the meaning of PMI and explain what each term means: Plus = a benefit, Minus = a downside, Interesting = an interesting point stemming from the topic under discussion.

2. Pupils use a **Plus-Minus-Interesting template** to note the plus points of the issue as they see it, followed by the drawbacks and then any interesting points. Pupils might hopefully come to understand that ideas which they perceive to be bad can also be interesting, if they lead on to other ideas.

3. A **debrief** afterwards could compare and contrast pupils' PMIs, followed by an exploration of any interesting points highlighted.

POST-IT COLLECTION

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving

What is it?
- This method encourages pupils to generate and gather a list of ideas or options about a particular issue. A Post-It sheet is needed per pupil and a number of sheets for each group. This activity may be undertaken at the beginning of a topic. It allows everyone to give their opinion within small groups as opposed to the whole group.

Implications for classroom layout
- Groups can work around a table. A flip-chart or board space for presenting purposes may be useful.

How does it work?
1. Pupils in groups of four to six receive a Post-It sheet per pupil.

2. Initially, pupils should write down their ideas individually on their own Post-It sheet.

3. Pupils could then come together in groups and discuss each person's ideas – this might lead to some ideas/options being accepted and others rejected.

4. As a group, pupils could write down their collated ideas on Post-it sheets – one idea per sheet.

5. Pupils present their ideas in a group feedback session.

6. Ideas from every group could then be placed on a flip chart. Pupils might then try to cluster similar ideas/options together. This will lead to an easy identification of shared ideas. Different colours of Post-It sheets for each group will allow the facilitator and groups to see how each group's thoughts have contributed to the big picture and will allow for an easy tracking of ideas.

7. This activity could be followed up by a prioritising method such as **Diamond Ranking** or the **Ideas Funnel** and detailed analysis of ideas through **Five Questions** or the **Fishbone Strategy**.

8. A **debrief** after this activity should ask pupils to concentrate on the nature of the group work. How well did pupils present and justify their ideas and persuade others? Would the presenter do anything different next time? Was agreement easy to reach? What were the processes which led to agreement? Who was particularly effective in putting across ideas and why?

9. Post-Its could be placed on a Post-Its board within the classroom. Pupils could add to this board in future lessons, or the class could return to it at the end of the topic to review learning.

PRIORITY PYRAMID

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This activity allows pupils to consider what points may be most relevant when considering a key question. It subsequently asks pupils to prioritise ideas and information on the question and discuss justifications for their choices. See **Card Ranking, Ideas Funnel, Zone of Relevance** or **Constructing Walls** for further prioritisation activities. This activity might be preceded by a **Post-It Collection** in order to generate ideas before prioritising. It may be a particularly useful activity for kinaesthetic learners.
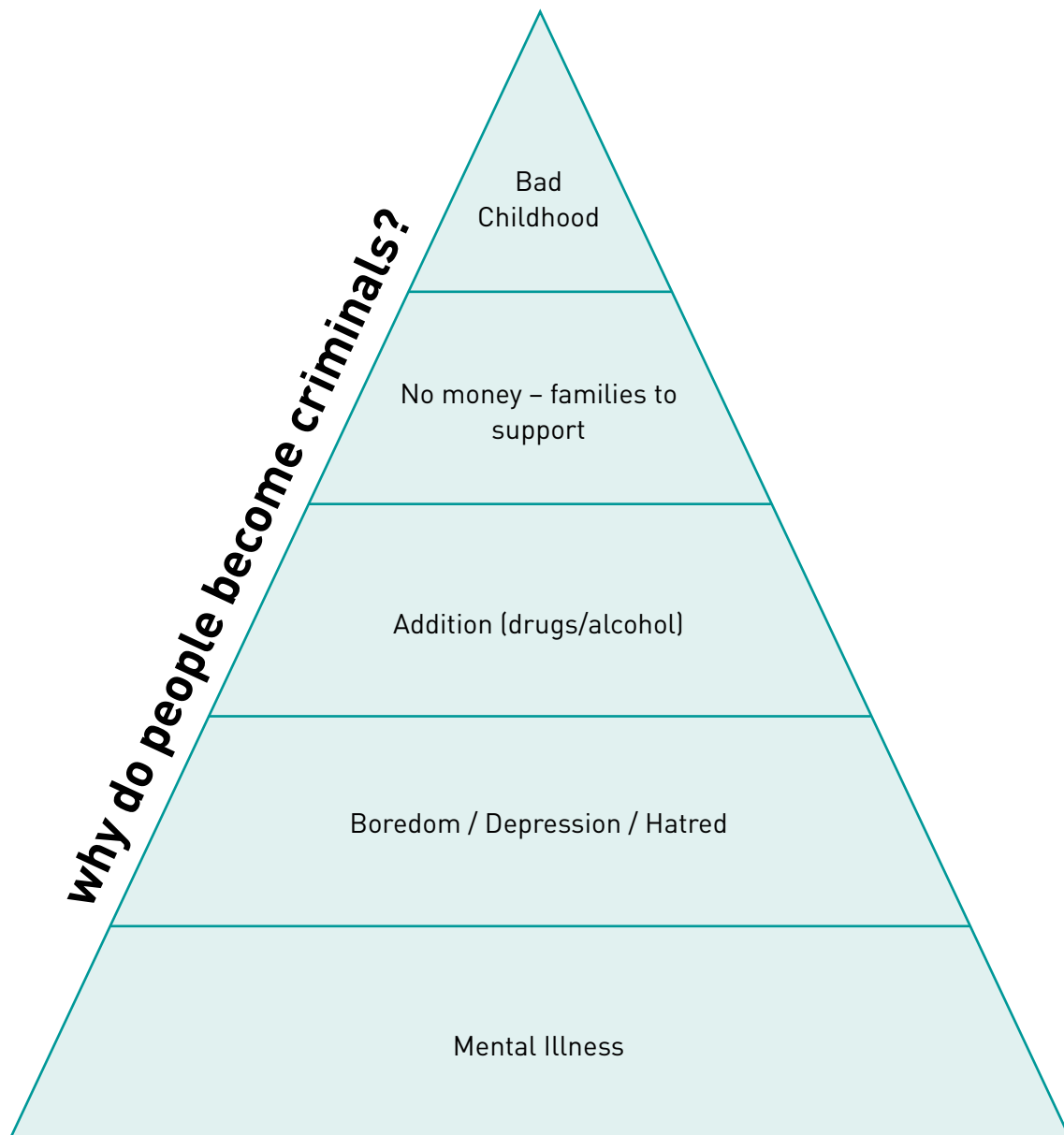
Implications for classroom layout
- Groups work around a table. Pupils may need easy access to equipment such as scissors and glue.

How does it work?
1. Pupils can work in pairs or groups.

2. Each group is given a set of cards with words, phrases or pictures which relate to a key question. Alternatively, pupils might write down their own ideas on a piece of paper or Post-Its and use them to build their pyramid.

3. Each group is also given the Pyramid Template (see example) with the key question on the side. Alternatively, each group might draw their own Pyramid or even construct it in 3D using different colours for the varying sections.

4. Pupils work through the cards (or their own Post-Its), deciding as a group how relevant each one is to the key question. Most important factors form the top section of the pyramid, least important factors the bottom, etc.

5. Groups then give feedback on their decisions, justifying their choices if they happen to contrast with the decisions of another group.

6. As an extension activity, pupils may wish to use the **Fishbone Strategy** or **Consequence Wheel** to explore in greater depth the points they deemed to be relevant.

Pyramid Example

why do people become criminals?

Bad Childhood

No money – families to support

Addition (drugs/alcohol)

Boredom / Depression / Hatred

Mental Illness

REVOLVING CIRCLE

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Problem-Solving, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This method builds up pupil confidence in communication techniques as they engage in short discussions. It also allows pupils to sample a wide range of views without holding a whole class discussion. Pupils may, as a result, refine their ideas or opinions on a particular issue.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction. Alternatively, if pupils are seated at desks in groups of four, two pupils could change group after the allocated time.

How does it work?
1. Pupils divide into two groups.

2. One group forms an inner circle and the other group forms an outer circle Pupils face each other.

3. The pairs exchange views for approximately one minute on a particular issue.

4. The inner circle then rotates clockwise and the outer circle rotates anti-clockwise.

5. The new pair consider the question.

6. The rotation may continue until pupils have had the opportunity to discuss the question with a wide range of partners.

7. A **debrief** afterwards is beneficial.

8. This activity could also be used with **simulations**.

SIMULATION

Skills
- Working with Others
- Being Creative
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This creative role-play activity is a useful tool for encouraging pupils to engage in discussion about a particular issue and to share information.

Implications for classroom layout
- Room is needed for pupils to move around.

How does it work?
1. In simulation pupils react to a specific problem within a structured environment e.g. mock court, parliamentary hearing, council meeting, facilitation meeting. It is extremely useful for promoting expression of attitudes, opinions and values, fostering participation and developing empathy. However, it might also be time-consuming as it requires a considerable amount of preparation. The scenario should be relevant and realistic, provide adequate information to give pupils a comfort zone when acting out their roles and build up pupil confidence by using group simulations before they are asked to carry out individual role plays.

SNOWBALLING

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Problem-Solving, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This technique enables pupils to think about their own responses to issues and gradually begin a collaboration process with those around them to consider their thoughts on the same theme. It is a useful way of encouraging less vocal pupils to share ideas initially in pairs and then in larger groups. It also ensures that everyone's views on an issue may be represented and allows a whole class consensus to be arrived at without a whole class discussion.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction. Alternatively, pupils could form clusters around desks and move seats accordingly.

How does it work?
1. A relevant question is asked or scenario described.

2. Pupils individually write down their thoughts, opinions and/or suggestions.

3. Pupils form pairs and compare answers. They discuss their positions and reach an agreed or compromised position on the issue, which is then recorded.

4. Pupils move into groups of four and undertake a similar process. Another agreed position is reached and noted.

5. The group of four becomes a group of eight and the process is repeated. A further agreed position is reached.

6. As the groups get bigger it will be necessary to elect a spokesperson/facilitator, time-keeper, resource manager, scribe, etc.

7. A final whole-class position is then discussed and justified.

8. The view of any pupil who objects strongly to the agreed position could be recorded if the individual feels that their opinion is not adequately represented.

9. A **debrief** afterwards might explore not only knowledge and understanding, but also the process of the activity: how did pupils come to a decision? How was compromise reached? What skills were they using?

SPECTRUM DEBATE

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This activity is useful for exploring diverse opinions and emotions on a particular issue. It can be used as a lead into a particular topic and to gauge pupil interest and base understanding of the issue in question. It requires pupils to take a stance on the issue and allows everybody to have a voice, even if they do not speak out. Pupils are confronted with ambiguity and grey areas, and it can enable them to see that opinions often have to be justified with informed knowledge of the matter under discussion. See **Walking Debates** for more information on this type of activity.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction.

How does it work?
1. An imaginary line or spectrum is set up across the room – each end of the room represents opposing viewpoints.

2. A range of statements are read out.

3. Pupils are allowed time to consider their opinion.

4. Pupils then position themselves along the spectrum between the two viewpoints, depending on their opinion on the given issue.

5. Pupils should justify their position on the line.

6. If pupils switch their position then they should explain why.

7. This activity could be used as a pre-cursor to methods such as **Giant Steps, Five Questions** and **Stick Debate**.

8. A **debrief** after the activity could discuss the issues upon which there was consensus and issues that divided the class.

   Sample statements might include, for example:

   > **Topic: Citizenship**
   > - Politics is for old people.
   > - Positive discrimination is acceptable (ie, only shortlisting women for a particular role such as MP).
   > - Sport stars who are bad role models should be sacked.

9. Instead of using 'Strongly agree' and 'Strongly Disagree', the facilitator may wish to use True/False, Yes/No or even subject-specific terms such as Democracy/Autocracy, Communism/Capitalism, etc.

STICK DEBATE

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
- Working with Others

What is it?
- This activity lets pupils give their thoughts, ideas and opinions on an issue and makes them think carefully about what, precisely, they would like to say and how best to express it. It encourages pupils to practise not only their active-listening skills, but also to add constructively to what someone previously has said. The activity seeks to give everyone in the group an equal chance to talk and to share their opinions, and it prevents more prominent pupils from dominating the discussion. See **Talking Heads** for a similar activity.

Implications for classroom layout
- Ideally pupils might be seated in a circle or semi-circle. The room must therefore have enough space to allow for this. Alternatively, pupils could still sit at their desks, although this may not allow for easy face-to-face discussion.

How does it work?
1. Each pupil receives three (lollipop) sticks.

2. Pupils commence a debate on a relevant issue.

3. Every time that someone speaks, they must hand in a stick.

4. Once the three sticks have been used the person cannot speak any more. This may encourage pupils to think carefully about what they would like to say and to ensure that they communicate effectively.

5. Everyone should be encouraged to use all their sticks.

6. A facilitator or nominated person may wish to write up important points on a board or flip chart during the discussion.

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving

What is it?
- This method helps pupils to examine all sides of a proposal. It can be used during the preparation stages of action planning to develop possible future initiatives. It may also be a useful tool for the evaluation of a group or event, in order to think about what has gone before and to look for future implications.

Implications for classroom layout:
- This activity can be carried out in different ways. A **paper carousel** may be used to gather information, in which case the facilitator may wish to think about ease of movement for groups between desks. Alternatively, pupils can remain seated in groups and use the template below to consider the issues.

How does it work?
1. The facilitator may need to discuss with pupils the meaning of SWOT and explain what each term means, particularly the possible distinction between 'strength' and 'opportunity', 'weakness' and 'threat'. 'Opportunity' and 'threat' should both concentrate on possible *future* implications, whilst 'strength' and 'weakness' may both involve the generation of a list of positives and negatives of the proposal as it stands, based on a consideration of what has gone before.

2. Pupils are given the proposal to discuss or evaluate. Ideas are placed under the relevant heading (S-W-O-T).

3. The facilitator may wish to concentrate on one heading at a time and get feedback before moving on to the next heading. For example, pupils might be given time to consider 'strengths' before moving on to 'opportunities'.

4. During feedback, the facilitator may wish to use questions such as: what is good? What is bad? What might happen now? What might prevent future progress?

5. A **debrief** of group work might be beneficial.

6. Ideas arising from the activity might be explored further using the **Five Questions** technique.

Strength	Weakness
Threat	Opportunity

TABLEAU

Skills
- Working with Others
- Being Creative
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- This physical activity might be useful as a stimulus in order to encourage pupils to reflect upon and engage in discussion about a particular issue. It may also help to elicit how much understanding or knowledge pupils have of a particular topic. See **Freeze Frame** for a similar activity.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction.

How does it work?
1. Pupils get into groups.

2. They are asked physically to pose in a 'snapshot' representation of a *generalised* moment.

3. Pupils could work together as a group to discuss what they are being asked to depict and how it might look in a tableau.

4. Alternatively pupils could act out a role and freeze on the facilitator's command.

5. Groups could take it in turns to move around and view other groups' tableau.

6. A **debrief** afterwards could focus on the nature of the body language used in the tableau: why pupils decided to depict the scene in the way they did, and why others might have depicted the event in a different way.

7. As an extension of this activity groups could enact different developments in a particular scenario or situation and take photos, creating a photo-story.

> **Possible Tableau Scenarios:**
> - Sailors' activities on a ship
> - An army's battle against the enemy
> - A crowd of people celebrating the New Year.

TABOO

Skills
- Thinking
- Managing Information
- Self-Management

What is it?
- This activity focuses on the art of clear explanation. It develops the communication strategies and competence of pupils and encourages pupils to think in a creative and imaginative manner about what they are attempting to describe. It obliges pupils to think quickly and to explore different ways of self-expression.

How does it work?
1. Pupils cluster in groups of three-four.

2. Each group receives an envelope containing word cards. Each card should contain the key word at the top as well as a list of, at maximum, five words which pupils are not allowed to use in their explanation. The aim of the game is for each group to explain their word to other groups without using the words listed. If a group correctly guesses what the word is, they receive a point. The group doing the description also receive a point.

3. Pupils look over their words and have an allocated time to consider in their groups how they might explain them – pupils should bounce ideas off each other.

4. Each group then takes it in turn to describe one of their words within a time limit. Other groups might write down their guess.

5. A **debrief** afterwards might concentrate on the following questions: what skills were used? What did pupils do as a group in order to reach agreed definitions? How might the process be applied to other things?

TALKING HEADS

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making, Problem-Solving
- Working with Others

What is it?
- Any pupil who is familiar with the novel 'Lord of the Flies' will know about the conch. Whoever was holding the conch could talk uninterrupted without fear of being shouted down. This activity, likewise, offers pupils the chance to give their thoughts, ideas and opinions on an issue without being interrupted. It also focuses on the **active listening** skills of pupils. See **Stick Debate** for a similar activity.

Implications for classroom layout
- The facilitator may wish to seat pupils in a circle or semi-circle. The room must therefore have enough space to allow for this. Alternatively, pupils could still sit at their desks and the facilitator could pass the conch to people who wish to speak.

How does it work?
1. A suitable object is identified as the talking tool. Ideas for a suitable object might include objects with heads (hence the title) such as a cuddly toy (obviously depending on the age and interests of the pupils!!) or a puppet. A hat which pupils can put on when it is their turn may be an alternative.

2. Pupils hold discussions around a particular issue. The only person who is allowed to talk is the person holding the talking tool.

3. It is advisable not to simply pass the object around one person at a time. Some pupils might be thinking so much about what they are going to say when their turn comes that they do not listen to what is being said by others. This activity will not work as effectively if pupils feel nervous or even intimidated. The object could be placed in a central place and returned there once people have finished speaking so that somebody else can pick it up.

4. Pupils should instead be encouraged to listen carefully to what is being said and then, if they wish, to comment constructively and progressively, thus enhancing their active-listening skills.

THINK, PAIR and SHARE

Skills
• Thinking, Decision-Making
• Working with Others

What is it?
• This activity prompts pupils to reflect on an issue or problem and then to share that thinking with others. Pupils are encouraged to justify their stance using clear examples and clarity of thought and expression. Pupils extend their conceptual understanding of a topic and gain practice in using other people's opinions to develop their own. A **Snowballing** approach might be adopted to this methodology.

Implications for classroom layout
• If a **Snowballing** approach is adopted, a large space might be needed for ease of movement and interaction. Alternatively, pupils can work in pairs or groups of four.

How does it work?
1. The facilitator presents the class with a particular problem or issue.

2. Using a **Post-Its Collection**, pupils spend a period of time gathering their personal thoughts on the question in hand.

3. Pupils then discuss their thinking and justify their opinions with a partner. They should aim to be clear in their thoughts and consequent explanations, using examples to consolidate their points.

4. The facilitator may wish to give pupils time-out at this juncture in order to allow for peer assessment; pupils might feed back to their partners on how well they put forward and justified their ideas.

5. Pupils might also be given a short period of time to embellish their information and opinions before moving into larger groups of four.

6. A **debrief** afterwards may focus on the structure of pupil arguments, how opinions were expressed and justified and what a persuasive argument consisted of.

7. As an extension activity, pupils might be asked to play devil's advocate and to present a persuasive argument which differs from their own true opinions.

THUMB TOOL

Skills
- Self-Management

What is it?
- This simple activity asks pupils to measure how well they achieved what was expected by the end of a lesson or session. It might also be used by pupils as a means of expressing how confident they are that they know the response to a question which has just been posed by the teacher/facilitator. For the latter, this activity allows an instant assessment of how well a class or group has grasped an issue or topic. See **Fist-to-Five** for another activity which encourages pupils to think about their learning.

How does it work?
1. After a session, pupils are asked how confident they are that they have met the objectives. One of three hand gestures might be used:
   - Thumb up if they are very confident that they have achieved the objectives and what was expected;
   - Thumb sideways if they feel that they have had partial success in meeting the objectives, but some more work might be needed; and
   - Thumb down if they consider that they have made little or no progress towards meeting the objective.

2. If the tool is being used to respond to a specific question from the teacher during the course of the lesson, the following statements might apply:
   - Thumbs up if they feel very confident that they know the answer;
   - Thumb sideways if they may know part of the answer or if they are slightly uncertain as to the accuracy of their response; and
   - Thumb down if they definitely feel that they do not know the response.

3. If the tool is used at the end of a session, a **debrief** may explore issues such as how the objective was met, what else pupils feel that they would like to achieve and how they could go about doing this, what might have hindered progress towards the objective, and how they can prevent future similar obstacles.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Skills
- Self-Management

What is it?
- This simple activity encourages pupils to indicate how well they achieved what was expected by the end of a lesson or session. It might also be used by pupils as a means of expressing how confident they are that they know the response to a question which has just been posed by the teacher/facilitator. For the latter, this activity allows an instant assessment of how well a class or group may have grasped an issue or topic. See **Fist-to-Five** and **Thumb Tool** for other activities that encourage pupils to think about their learning.

How does it work?
1. Pupils are each given a set of three cards – one with a green circle, one amber and one red.

2. After a session pupils are asked how confident they are that they have met the objectives. At this point, pupils choose which circle they are going to show:
   - Green if they are very confident that they have achieved the objectives and what was expected;
   - Amber if they feel that they have had partial success in meeting the objectives, but some more work might be needed; and
   - Red if they consider that they have made little or no progress towards meeting the objective.

3. If the tool is being used in response to a specific question from the teacher during the course of the lesson, the following statements might apply:
   - Green if they feel very confident that they know the answer;
   - Amber if they may know part of the answer or if they are slightly uncertain as to the accuracy of their response; and
   - Red if they definitely feel that they do not know the response.

4. If the tool is used at the end of a session, a **debrief** may explore issues such as how the objective was met, what else pupils feel that they would like to achieve and how they could go about doing this, what might have hindered progress towards the objective, and how they can prevent future similar obstacles.

5. **Adaptation**: as an Assessment for Learning technique, pupils might be presented with a blank traffic light when filling in evaluations of a topic. They could colour in how comfortable they feel that they met the objectives.

TWO STARS and a WISH

Skills
• Working with Others
• Thinking, Decision-Making
• Self-Management

What is it?
• This method can encourage constructive peer assessment amongst individuals or groups of pupils. This peer-assessment technique will ultimately develop a pupil's own ability to evaluate and improve their own work. It allows pupils to see different approaches and outcomes to a task and to modify future work as a result.

Implications for classroom layout
• Ideally, pupils should rotate in groups around different stations within a room. Alternatively, pieces of work could be passed around pupils seated in groups.

How does it work?
1. Before commencing this activity, pupils could review their own work using the two stars and a wish method (see point three below).

2. Once a piece of work has been completed, pupils can rotate in groups to view other people's work.

3. Pupils carry a set of yellow Post-It slips. For each piece of work they review, pupils write down two things they like and express a wish which they think would enhance the work in question.

4. Pupils then return to their own piece of work to read through and discuss what others have indicated on their Post-it slips.

5. They then make a list of stars and wishes for their work and indicate in a short written evaluation how they intend to enhance their work next time.

USING PHOTOGRAPHS

Skills
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Problem-Solving

What is it?
- Photographs can be used to stimulate discussion. They can be used in conjunction with other methodologies in this book such as **Back to Back**. A lot of the following methods will also work with a moving image.

Here are some other suggestions:

- Display a range of images and/or cartoons relating to a particular issue (e.g. poverty) and ask for their immediate response to them. What is the photographer or cartoonist trying to say about the issue? Do pupils agree/ disagree? How do the various images make them feel?

- Pupils could choose a photo (e.g. a favourite or a photo that makes them feel uncomfortable etc.) and then explain to their group why they have chosen it.

- Pupils in groups are allocated an image or photograph and asked to put a caption underneath it (e.g. an illegal immigrant coming into the country). Groups could then compare and contrast their captions, discussing in particular how the choice of caption can elicit a variety of responses (e.g. some will focus on hope, others on despair, charity, shock etc.).

- Give each group a photograph centred on a larger piece of paper (e.g. a photo highlighting a controversial issue). Ask pupils to question the photograph and to record their questions around the outside of the photo (e.g. What is the issue? Who is involved? What does that person standing to the side think? etc.). Questions can be used to stimulate further discussion. Alternatively, pupils might wish to generate ideas on an image by noting around it the thoughts, ideas and words which come into their heads whenever they see it for the first time.

- Ask pupils to develop a role play or simulation based on a photo, image or cartoon. They can name individuals in a picture, invent relationships between them, imagine how each person feels, etc. They should then take on the roles and act out what they think is happening and what might happen next. Each pupil could choose a character from a photograph and take on the role. Other class members can then question them in role.

- Pupils could take photos using a digital camera and incorporate them into collages, presentations, etc.

- Photographs could be used for a **Memory Game** activity, in which pupils are shown a picture or cartoon which they must study in order to remember details. Pupils then write down or draw the details from the picture. This might be good for focussing pupils' attention on extrapolating detail.

WALKING DEBATES

Skills
- Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
- These activities explore diverse opinions and emotions on issues. They might be used as a lead into a particular topic and to gauge pupil interest and base understanding of the issue in question. They require pupils to take a stance on the issue and allow everybody to have a voice, even if they do not speak out. Pupils are confronted with ambiguity and grey areas, and it helps them to see that opinions often have to be justified with informed knowledge of the matter under discussion. There are various types of walking debate. The most common is possibly the Four Corners Debate, which is outlined below. Other varieties include the **Spectrum Debate**, the **Value Continuum** and the **True or False Line**.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction. Alternatively, if there is not enough room, pupils could be given the four statements on a card (agree, disagree, agree strongly, disagree strongly). Pupils could hold up a particular card when each statement is read out.

How does it work?
1. A range of statements are read out.

2. Pupils are allowed time to consider their opinion.

3. Pupils then move to the corner that best describes how they feel about the statement. Pupils could be encouraged not to 'go along with the crowd', as there are no right or wrong answers.

4. Statements should evoke a range of responses (e.g. *"footballers earn too much money"* is a better statement to use than *"all footballers earn too much money"* since the first statement leaves room for some interpretation).

5. As pupils move, they should explain why they are in that corner. Views could be obtained from all corners.

6. Subsidiary questions could be used to draw out more complex issues and to refine the initial statement.

7. Pupils are allowed to move during the discussion of each statement if issues arrive that challenge their original opinion.

8. If pupils do switch then they should explain why.

9. A **debrief** after the activity could discuss the issues upon which there was consensus and issues that divided the class.

Sample statements might include, for example:

Topic: Sport and Personal Health
- Football players should give half their income to charity.
- Sports stars found guilty of doping should be banned for life.
- Chips should be banned from school cafeterias.

WHEN THE WIND BLOWS

Skills
- Managing Information

What is it?
- This activity can be used as an icebreaker for new groups, as a means of exploring the similarities and differences between group members or as an introduction to a particular topic.

Implications for classroom layout
- A large space is needed for ease of movement and interaction. If this is not possible, pupils might show their inclusion in a particular category by raising their hand or by an agreed action.

How does it work?
1. Pupils sit in a circle, with one person (possibly the facilitator) standing in the centre of the group.

2. The person in the centre calls out a sentence starting, 'The wind blows all the people who...', followed by a particular category.

   > **Group Icebreaker:**
   > - The wind blows all the people who have blonde hair.
   > - The wind blows all the people who live in the country.
   > - The wind blows all the people who have two sisters.

3. Pupils who fall into the particular category are 'blown' to another seat.

4. The statements might continue to include more topical or sensitive issues such as:

   > - The wind blows all the people who know somebody who has been bullied.
   > - The wind blows all the people who have specific needs they want the others in the group to know about.

5. The statements might also be used to find out useful information such as:

   > - The wind blows all the people who have coached a team.
   > - The wind blows all the people who have a first-aid certificate.

6. In a **debrief** afterwards, the facilitator might ask pupils to state one interesting fact they learned about another member of the group.

WORD GAMES

Skills
- Thinking
- Managing Information

What is it?
- The activities outlined below are a useful and motivating start to a lesson in order to review previous work. They focus on key words from the topic in question. See **Taboo** for another possible word association game.

Verbal Tennis
1. Pupils work in pairs or threes.

2. Each group is given a set of cards which they must place face-down on the table.

3. Pupils take it in turns to pick a card and say the word. Their partner must quickly think of a word which is associated with the word on the card (usually within a time limit of a few seconds). If a pupil hesitates, takes too long, repeats a word or says an unconnected word, their opponent receives a point. If there is a third person in the group, they could act as referee.

4. Alternatively, two pupils might do the activity in front of the whole class with the class acting as referees.

Countdown
- Pupils are given thirty seconds to unscramble a relevant word.

Pictionary
- Pupils draw a key word on a board as a whole-class activity or on a piece of paper in pairs.

Bingo
1. Pupils are given a Bingo grid (or create one) with key words from the topic.

2. The teacher reads out a definition of a key word.

3. Pupils mark off the word which matches the definition.

4. The first person with a complete line marked off calls "Bingo".

Hangman
1. Pupils are given the number of letters in a key word and say a letter.

2. Pupils must guess the word before the man is completely drawn and therefore hanged!

ZONE OF RELEVANCE

Skills
• Working with Others
• Thinking, Decision-Making

What is it?
• This activity allows pupils to consider what points may be relevant or irrelevant when considering a key question. It subsequently asks pupils to prioritise ideas and information on the question and discuss justifications for their choices. This might be a useful revision technique for exams, as it encourages pupils to think about the most effective and relevant responses to questions. See **Diamond Ranking**, **Ideas Funnel**, **Constructing Walls** or **Priority Pyramid** for further prioritisation activities.

Implications for classroom layout
• Pupils can work at a board or wall space on a large sheet. Alternatively, groups can work around a table using A3 or A4-sized sheets.

How does it work?
1. Pupils can work in pairs or groups.

2. Each group is given a set of cards with words, phrases or pictures which relate to the key question.

3. Each group is also given the Zone of Relevance Template (see example below) with the key question in the centre. Alternatively, each group might draw their own Zone of Relevance.

4. Pupils work through the cards, deciding whether each one is relevant or irrelevant to the key question. If they decide that a card is relevant, they must consider the degree of relevance in relation to the question and place it at an appropriate place within the Zone of Relevance.

5. Groups then give feedback on their decisions, justifying their choices if they happen to contrast with the decisions of another group.

6. As an extension activity, pupils may wish to use the **Fishbone Strategy** or **Consequence Wheel** to explore in greater depth the points they deemed to be relevant.

Zone of Relevance Example

Irrelevant Points

Relevant Points

MOST Relevant Points

Key Question:

What events led to the end of apartheid in South Africa?