

ME AND THE GROUP

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Target audience

Pre-service teachers/ Formation initiale

- Primary teachers / Enseignants de l'école primaire
- Secondary teachers / Enseignants du secondaire
- In-service teachers/ Formation continue
 - Primary teachers/ Enseignants de l'école primaire
 - Secondary teachers/ Enseignants du secondaire

Itinerary

- Identity exploration

Abstract

The activity is meant for the very first session(s) and aims at getting to know each other. The main focus is group building which is one of the important issues at the beginning of the course. The activity starts with speaking about names, moves on to becoming acquainted in pairs and introducing each other to the rest of the group. Then onto introducing oneself through objects, finding similarities and differences between objects and rounds up with making a group poster that characterises the group from various angles. As a follow-up the participants discuss the activities; their educational, linguistic and cultural objectives, benefits/risks, and alternative ideas and options.

Rationale

The material focuses on names and objects that reflect a person's ancestry or personality as the part of personal identity and cultural complexity. The set contains 3 worksheets with the aim of creating a supportive and cooperative atmosphere for further studies. The purpose of the worksheets is to raise awareness of oneself as well as to learn to appreciate and understand diversity. The last worksheet brings the group together in finding similarities within the group.

The participants are also encouraged to discuss the activities and worksheets and think about to what extent these are applicable in the classroom environment on their own.

Personal and social dimensions

- Observing the linguistic and cultural diversity of contexts and individuals;
- Recognising the linguistic and cultural complexity of individual and collective identities
- Bringing together a group of students who have not worked together therefore encouraging cooperation, openness and understanding

Professional dimensions

- Enhancing the school as a focal point of social and cultural development
- Observing, analysing and making use of the diversity that exists in one's teaching environment
- Creating, experimenting with and evaluating educational projects ultimately aimed at developing plurilingual and pluricultural skills

Worksheet 1

NAMES

Timing :45'

Material required: One question sheet per student

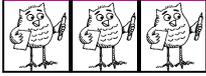


I. Answer the questions

1. Write your 1st name and your family name here.
2. Can your 1st or family name be translated into English? Does it have a meaning?
3. How would you like to be addressed as an individual (name) and as a cultural group (e.g. African American, Asian, Estonian, Black, a person of colour, etc) or social group?
4. Do you know the origin of your 1st or family name?
5. Can your name be shortened (like Alex for Alexander)?
6. Do you know why your parents named you as they did?
7. In what way(s) are you like your name?
8. Do you have nicknames given by members of your family or friends? How did they arise?
9. Would you like to change your family name on marriage? Why?
10. Is your name usually pronounced and spelt correctly by other people? How do you feel and what do you do if it's not?
11. If you could choose another name (as an alias) which name in your language or some other language would you choose and why?



II. Discuss and compare the answers in pairs.

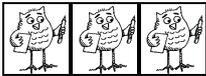


III. Mix and mingle, introduce yourself and talk about your name to at least five people in the group.



IV. The students are seated in 2 rows facing each other. Everyone writes his/her 1st and family name on the slip of paper and writes 3-5 words about him/herself and draws 1-2 symbols that are important for him/her.

The pairs facing each other exchange the slips. They go through the information on the slips. After that they can ask questions of the partner(s) about the symbols and make notes.



V. The partners introduce each other to the rest of the group.

Worksheet 2

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ME

Timing: 45'

Material required: objects that reflect something about ancestry/home/ culture/ personality, or just objects that are important for students which are brought by students into the classroom.

Description of the activities



- I. Sit in a circle and talk for 2-3 minutes about your object and its links to you, your culture and your family. When you are done, put it on the table inside the circle.
- II. When one has finished with his/her story questions may be asked or stories can be commented on.
- III. When all the stories are heard, the students are encouraged to bring out similarities and statements which have surprised them - for their own objects and the objects of their peers.



Optional follow-up

- IV. The students are paired and are asked to write about the other person's artefact. Before writing the writer can ask additional questions to clarify matters. Then the students exchange their writings and the owner of the artefact can add to or correct the sample. Then the final versions are displayed on the walls of the classroom for everyone to read.

Worksheet 3

BRINGING TOGETHER INDIVIDUALS: GROUP FORMATION

Timing: 60'

Material required: large sheets of paper and pens

Description of the activities



- I. The students sit in a circle and a 'secretary' is chosen. The students take turns to ask questions from who in the group they would like to get answers to concerning their names, e.g. I wonder who in the group has a middle name. The students either put up their hands or give the answers (it depends on the language level of the group). The trainer can ask additional questions if necessary. The 'secretary' writes down the answers, e.g. 5 students in our group have middle names, etc
- II. When the name round is done, the object round follows. When there is time left the trainer might suggest other rounds, e.g. hobbies, education, family, etc
- III. The posters are displayed on the wall.

Assessment

Notes to the trainer:

After the activities are done 30 minutes are left for discussion. The discussion could be carried out in different ways and the topics for discussion could be the following:

Did you like the activities? Why?

What could be the educational, cultural or linguistic aims of these activities?

Why might these activities be beneficial for establishing a good classroom atmosphere?

What are the risks of using these activities? How can you avoid these risks?

How can you adapt or develop the activities for pluricultural classroom use?

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