



## ACTIVITY: 'CHICKEN RANSOM'

**TIME:** 10–15 minutes  
**SIZE:** Groups of six to 10 or whole of class  
**SPACE:** Room to form large circle/s  
**RESOURCES:** Rubber chicken or stuffed toy, pens, paper

**The aim** is to create a situation where students must think instinctively about themselves in positive ways.

**The result** should be discussion about tools that students can use to speak helpfully to themselves in day-to-day situations.

1. Group/s sit in circle/s. If you have multiple groups, it can be fun to 'race' them, so you may need to act as timekeeper.
2. For each group choose a referee who will keep tally with a pen and paper. The referee should list every participant and beneath each name have two columns (one for positive comments, one for negative comments).
3. The rules are simple: the chicken (or toy) will start in one student's lap. When you say 'go' the student must stand, pass the chicken to his/her left, and while the chicken does three full circuits of the circle, state as many positive things about him/herself as possible.
4. When the chicken finishes its third lap, the speaker sits and the person to his/her left becomes the next speaker to list attributes while the chicken does another three laps.
5. Referees keep count of each speaker's name and their score of positive attributes. They must also challenge false boasts and negative or self-critical comments.
6. The round finishes when everyone in the circle has listed their attributes.
7. Scores can be tallied to decide who or which group generated the most positive comments within each circle.



## DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Was it easy or hard to come up with the positive attributes on the spot? Why/Why not?
- In our society, it can be uncommon to hear people describe themselves in positive terms; indeed, doing so can be seen as 'big noting'. Why might that be? Is that healthy or unhealthy?
- Why is it sometimes easier to find good qualities in other people than it is in ourselves?
- Did you come up with any attributes that surprised you? What were they, and why?
- Were you surprised by qualities that other people attributed to themselves? What were they, and why?
- What were some of the more successful strategies (thinking skills) that people used during the exercise? How could you use these in everyday life?