



ACTIVITY: 'HOW ARE THEY COPING?'

TIME: 10 minutes a day over several days
SIZE: Individuals or small groups
SPACE: N/A
RESOURCES: Newspapers, periodicals, online news website printouts

The aim is for students to exercise skills in order to work as a productive member of a group.

The result should be constructive discussion about what 'makes' a group and how individuals can add value to a group through their actions and life experiences.

1. Allocate to students (or allow students to choose) a personality likely to appear in the news over the next few days or weeks (depending on timeframe) e.g. a politician, a football player or swimmer, a musician or a lobbyist. Ensure the subjects are members of some sort of group, e.g. a band, a political party or interest group, a comedy troupe, a sporting team, or even a crime family.
2. Students collect articles in periodicals and newspapers/news sites about their chosen subject over a number of days.
3. Next to each clipping, students write a few short paragraphs about how the event in the news article might be affecting the subject's Sense of Belonging e.g. if the subject is a footballer, something he has done may have put his place on the team in jeopardy; if she is a politician, her actions may have brought her party some moment of glory or brought it into disrepute. They should write what their subject might have felt about how his/her actions affected the group that he/she belongs to, and also how the members of his/her group might feel about those actions. They should consider how alternative ways of thinking may have resulted in different actions.
4. If the students follow the subject over the course of a number of days or weeks, consider asking students to chart the progress of their subject's Sense of Belonging, rating it from strong to weak.
5. Consider having students present their summaries to the class in the form of a short talk.



DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- How would you describe the subject's Sense of Belonging? Why?
- What actions affected their Sense of Belonging?
- What might they have been thinking and feeling in order to take that action?
- How might they have acted differently? How would those different actions impact on their group?
- If you were part of your subject's group, what would you be thinking and feeling about the subject?
- Did the subject's actions make the group more or less cohesive? Why?
- Were/are there any situations in your own life that are similar to the one described in the article you analysed? What did you learn from that experience?