



ACTIVITY: 'OUR LITTLE DILEMMA'

TIME: Approx. 10 minutes

SIZE: Groups of four or five

SPACE: Room for small groups to work around a desk

RESOURCES: 30–50 piece jigsaw or Picture Puzzle (p.83 or SenseAbility CD), one envelope for every group of four or five students

The aim is for students to experience the dynamics of a group environment.

The result should be that students gain an appreciation of the roles that they can play in groups, and that small groups can themselves play important roles in larger groups.

1. Calculate how many groups of four or five your class will divide into, then break your jigsaw puzzle into that number of separate envelopes (e.g. if you have six groups, distribute the 30-piece jigsaw puzzle into six envelopes each containing five pieces).
2. Break the class into groups of four or five.
3. Allow a few minutes for each group to come up with a team name for itself, and a rhyming chant about why they are excellent. Quickly allow each group to try out its chant.
4. Give each group one envelope containing puzzle pieces. Explain that the aim of the activity is to assemble the puzzle in their envelopes as quickly as possible. However, each group must divide itself into two types of competitor: **speakers** (who can't touch the puzzle) and **assemblers** (who can't speak). Groups can apportion the ratio of speakers to assemblers as they see fit.
5. Tell the groups that they have two minutes to solve the puzzle and start the clock.
6. Groups should see after a minute that their puzzle isn't going together well. Do not say anything! Eventually, students will realise the fact that there is only one puzzle distributed among the many groups, and all groups must work cooperatively to assemble the puzzle.
7. Stop the clock/activity. Commence discussion.



DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- What did you think about the other groups before the clock started ticking?
- What did you think about your role in the group? How was it decided? How did that make you feel?
- What did you think and feel about the rest of your group mates?
- What were your thoughts when you realised the puzzle wasn't going together? How did that make you feel? What did you do?
- Did you think and feel differently about the other groups after you realised that they were in the same boat as you? In what way?
- Have you ever felt this way in real life? What could you have done differently in that circumstance? Who might you have sought some help from?