



Take a step forward

Theme Poverty

Age group 10-13

Group size 10-30

Time 60 minutes

Overview

In this activity children imagine being someone else and consider poverty as a source of discrimination and exclusion.

Objectives

- To promote empathy with others who are different
- To raise awareness about the inequality of opportunities in society
- To raise awareness of the consequences of being poor

Material and room

- Seminar room with chairs and tables put on the side
- Role cards
- List of situations

Preparation

- Copy the role cards and cut out a role for every participant.

Instructions

1. Explain that in this activity everyone will imagine being someone else.
2. Distribute the role cards. Everyone should read the card silently, without letting the others know who they are. If they don't understand something, they can ask the facilitator.
3. Ask the participants to imagine their person in their heads. Ask them some questions to help them imagining their role. They should keep the answers for themselves.
 - What was it like when you were little?
 - What is your everyday life like now? What do you do in the morning? In the afternoon? In the evening?
 - What sort of work do your parents do? Do you have a good standard of living?
 - What do you do in your holidays?
 - What makes you happy? What makes you sad?
4. Now all participants should line up beside each other. Explain that you are going to describe some things that might happen to a child. If the statement is true for their role, they should take a step forward. Otherwise they should stand still.
5. Read out the situations one at a time. Wait between each statement, so everyone can think about if they step forward.



6. At the end, invite everyone to look around to see where the others stand. Ask everyone to read out their role card to the others.
7. Ask everyone to become themselves again. They should close their eyes, count to three and then shout out their own name.

Debriefing

- What happened in this activity?
- How easy or difficult was it to play your role?
- What did you imagine the person you were playing was like? Was it a person similar to you? Do you know anyone like that?
- How did you feel stepping forward – or not?
- If you stepped forward often, when did you begin to notice that others were not moving as fast as you were?
- Did you feel that something was unfair?
- Is what happened in this activity anything like the real world? How?
- What gives some people in our community more opportunities than others? Fewer opportunities?

Statements

1. You and your family always have enough money to meet your needs.
2. You live in a decent place with a telephone and television.
3. You are not teased or excluded because of your different appearance or disability.
4. The people you live with ask your opinion about major decisions that concern you.
5. You go to a good school and belong to after-school clubs and sports.
6. You are not afraid of being stopped by the police.
7. You live with adults who love you and always have your best interests at heart.
8. You have never felt discriminated against because of your or your parents' origins, background, religion or culture.
9. You have regular medical and dental check-ups, even when you are not sick.
10. You and your family go away on holiday once a year.
11. You can invite friends for dinner or to sleep over at your home.
12. When you are older, you can go to university or choose any job or profession you like.
13. You are not afraid of being teased or attacked in the streets, at school or where you live.
14. You usually see people on TV or in films who look and live as you do.
15. You and your family go on an outing to the cinema, the zoo, a museum, the countryside or other fun places at least once a month.
16. Your parents and grandparents and even great-grandparents were all born in this country.
17. You get new clothes and shoes whenever you need them.
18. You have plenty of time to play and friends to play with.
19. You have access to a computer and can use the Internet.
20. You feel appreciated for what you can do and encouraged to develop all your abilities.
21. You think you are going to have a happy future when you grow up.

This activity is taken from 'Compassito: Manual on human rights education for children' (Council of Europe, 2007, page 163)



Role cards

Adapt the role cards, or make your own, so that they fit best to the reality of your community. These are ideas.

<p>You are eight. You and your two brothers live in a nice house with a big garden and a swimming pool. Your father is the manager of a bank in your town. Your mother takes care of the house and family.</p>	<p>You were born in this town, but your parents moved here from Asia. They run a nice restaurant, and you live in rooms above the restaurant with your sister. You and she help in the restaurant after school. You are thirteen.</p>	<p>You are ten years old. You live in a farmhouse in the country. Your father is a farmer and your mother takes care of the cows, geese and chickens. You have three brothers and one sister.</p>	<p>You are a Roma child of twelve. You live at the edge of a small village in a small house where there is no bathroom. You have six brothers and sisters.</p>
<p>You are an only child. You live alone with your mother in an apartment in the city. Your mother works in a factory. You are very good at music and dancing. You are nine.</p>	<p>You were born with a disability and have to use a wheelchair. You live in an apartment in the city with your parents and two sisters. Both your parents are teachers. You are twelve.</p>	<p>You are eleven. You have lived in an orphanage since you were a baby. You don't know who your parents were.</p>	<p>You are nine years old and have an identical twin. You live in an apartment in the city with your mother, who works in a department store. Your father is in jail.</p>
<p>You are nine years old and an only child. You live in an apartment house in a town with your parents. Your father is a construction worker and your mother delivers mail. You are very good at sports.</p>	<p>You and your parents came to this country to find safety from the war going on in your home country in Africa. You are now eleven and have been here for three years, since you were nine. You don't know when you can go home again.</p>	<p>You are thirteen, the oldest of six children. Your father drives a truck and is away a lot, and your mother is a waitress who often has to work at night. You have to babysit a lot.</p>	<p>Your parents divorced when you were a baby. Now you are twelve. You live with your mother and her boyfriend. At the weekends you visit your father and his new wife and their two small children.</p>
<p>You are eleven. You have lived with different foster parents since you were a small child because your parents couldn't take care of you. Your foster parents are nice. Four other foster children also live in the same small house as you.</p>	<p>You are eight. You and your sister live with your grandparents in a small town out in the country. Your parents are divorced and your mother works as a secretary in the city. You rarely see your father.</p>	<p>You are eight and the youngest of three children. Your family lives in a small apartment in a big city. Your father is a mechanic but he is out of work right now, so you don't have much money. But your father has more time to play with you.</p>	<p>You are eleven years old. You live in a village in the country with your parents and a younger brother and sister. Your parents run a bakery. You are sometimes teased because you are rather fat.</p>
<p>You have a learning disability that makes you two classes behind in school. You are ten and taller than all the other kids, who are only eight. Both your parents work so they don't have much time to help you with homework.</p>	<p>You and your older brother are very talented at mathematics, physics, languages and, in fact, most things. Your parents are university professors. They send you to special courses and training camps all the time to prepare for competitions.</p>	<p>You are the child of the American ambassador in your country. You go to the international school. You wear thick glasses and stammer a little. You are eleven.</p>	<p>You have asthma and have to miss a lot of school because you are sick, especially in winter. You spend a lot of time at home in bed watching TV, surfing on the Internet and playing with a Gameboy. It's lonely because both your parents go out to work. You are thirteen.</p>