

Draw Around

The following activity was designed to facilitate small group discussion, specifically, active listening and perspective taking. For demonstrative purposes our group chose to focus on the topic of transitioning, but this activity could be easily adapted for other topics. The people in our group include: Brian Counselman (9th grade teacher), Maggie Ritchie (8th grade teacher), and Mariah Walker (6th grade teacher in an ESL classroom). We felt that all of our student groups have or will be dealing with transitions. All students deal with transitions in unique ways and it is important for their peers and the adults in the school to be sensitive to those feelings. This activity could be used to facilitate small group discussion around this topic

Materials:

1. One piece of drawing paper per group
2. Pencils
3. Drawing Prompt

Activity:

1. Divide the large group into smaller groups of four.
2. Divide a piece of paper into 4 quadrants by folding the paper.
3. The group listens to the drawing prompt.
4. After listening to the prompt, the first student in the group draws their response in the lower left hand corner and extends their drawing into a **part** of each of the other remaining quadrants.
5. After the allotted time, fold the drawing so that only one new quadrant is visible (with nothing on it but the part of the first drawing) and pass it to the next person in your group.
6. The second person now draws their response to the same (or different) prompt. This time keep the drawing in your box alone.
7. Pass the drawing to the third and fourth people in the group having them complete their drawing in the available quadrant.
8. Pass the drawing back to the original artist. Now you can discuss your visual and artistic representation of your group's thoughts on the given prompt(s)
9. Explain to students that during their discussion they will need to make sure that everyone is given a chance to share. Encourage students to share the air by listening to each individual without interrupting.

Extensions:

- If there is time remaining after the discussion, students may choose to share their individual stories about various transitions they have gone through or anticipate going through. This could also be followed by a large group discussion.
- After students have analyzed/discussed the completed drawing, the group could do a collaborated writing about the passage.
- As a large or small group students could discuss all the different feelings that come with transitioning.

Facilitation Notes:

Depending on your group of students, this activity could be done at the beginning of transitioning school year like 6th grade or 9th grade, or at the end of 8th grade (or 12th) when students are about to experience the next transition. This cooperation-level activity will encourage students work on active listening as they will be sharing and listening to the other group members. Hopefully, most students feel willing to share openly. We felt that this is a good topic to use because most all students will have gone through some kind of transition that was not very traumatic (although for some it may have seemed like it at the time). If students are comfortable with sharing other more sensitive stories of transition (divorce, death), the facilitator may choose to lead the discussion in that direction or do a similar activity at a later date.