

1 What are my values?

Introduction

This activity is designed to support learners to think about their own values and beliefs, and what they consider to be important in life.

Taking time to think about this is important in its own right, but can especially help when working with others.



Key Stage: 2

Time: 60 mins

Learning Style: teacher-led
(+ group learning)

Why should we think about this ?

All thinking and doing involves our values. When we are weighing up whether or not to take particular actions, or deciding what we think about something, it is our values that are informing us. They are often an important item in the backpack of our identities (see core Time2Think activity *What's in my backpack?*).

Although learners may hear a lot about what they should and shouldn't do, it is important they are given time and space to consider what they think and believe, and to be honest that not every human being's values are the same.

When should we think about this ?

This activity fits very well into PSHE, but could also act as a valuable speaking and listening activity in English.

It could be used to help a class define their learning agreement or class rules at the beginning of a term, but might be better used to do or refine this with a group that you know well after some time learning together.

It could also be a good activity to use/return to/reference in order to help your learners respond to particular events in the news, both locally and globally.

Learning Activities

What do I think about... MY VALUES ?

Explain to the class or group the meaning of values in this context. Here are three definitions to help you:

- 1) Principles or standards of behaviour; one's judgement of what is important in life;
- 2) A principle, standard, or quality considered worthwhile or desirable;
- 3) Representing the ethical ideals of the organization, and what ideals you consider to be important.

Ask learners to think about the things that are important to them in life. Allow them to write down anything they like, and value any answers, for example "my dog" or "my Nintendo DS".

How can I develop my thinking ?

Sheet A on p.5 provides a template of individual cards that share different values or 'things that are important in life' as shown below.

ambition cleanliness helpfulness respecting elders
 enjoying life peace beauty equality
 friendship love unity with nature wealth

Photocopy Sheet A and cut up into individual cards with one set of cards for each group of learners.

Ask each group to see if they can agree six values that they consider 'more important' than the others. They can then present their ideas to each other, giving reasons for their choices.

As teachers we need to learn how to be the facilitator, devil's advocate and challenger to learning rather than the instructor. For advice on developing these skills see the **Time 2 Think** CPD materials **Facilitator Skills** and **Critical Thinking** as support to this activity.

What do I think now ?

Form a circle or another arrangement (for example sitting on a carpet together) for a short discussion. Consider some of these questions as a group:

- Is it possible to have all twelve values at once?
- Can you think of any situations where the values might clash or cause a problem? (e.g. having ambition might mean you have to work hard a lot and don't have time to enjoy life?)
- Can we group values together to make sets of values that have something in common? Could we add more values to these?
- What happens when some of your values clash?

Why do I think this ?

This question deepens the critical literacy skills of learners. Where learners are able to trace the origins of their thoughts and feelings (family, experience, peers, media etc) they can become confident to challenge their own thoughts and engage with the ideas and opinions of others.

This is also the most challenging part of the process and teachers/facilitators will need to decide whether to include this stage when working with younger or less able learners. We feel it remains vital for teachers/facilitators to be aware of and reflect on this stage for themselves as it may help to deal with responses and reactions from learners, and identify future learning needs.

If you feel confident to explore your learners' thoughts and feelings in greater depth you could gently encourage learners to think about the following questions/issues in relation to this activity:

- *What parts of my life or things in my backpack make me think the way I do?*
- *As I grow up, will my values change? Why?*
- *Can I guess some of the things that might make other people think differently to me? Does that mean I can 'see their point of view'?*
- *Is every value 'right' or are there some 'wrong' ones too? How do we know?*

Extension ideas

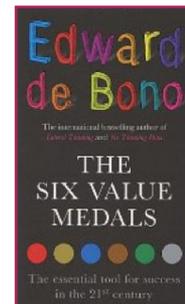
► Where can we take this thinking ?

For the teacher:

Edward de Bono, the author of *Six Thinking Hats*, has written a book called *The Six Value Medals* which explores values and what they mean to us professionally and personally in more detail. It raises some interesting challenges for teachers including what to teach, how to teach, and what we should be teaching for.

Lifeworlds Learning are running a project on these themes under the key question What is Learning for? and you can find out more details about this at:

www.lifeworldslearning.co.uk/wilf.html



If you have used this activity in your classroom and have any examples you would like to share or would like to provide any comments or feedback as a teacher then we'd love to hear from you.

We want Time 2 Think to evolve into a community of practice to further develop ideas and organise events and opportunities, but for this we need the involvement of users such as yourself.

Send any contributions, or contact us to find out more, at ask@lifeworldslearning.co.uk

Sheet A: Values

(cut into cards - one set per group)

ambition

cleanliness

helpfulness

respecting elders

peace

enjoying life

beauty

equality

friendship

love

unity with nature

wealth