



The Sharing Circle

Activity 1: Talking About our Feelings

Format:

- Individual Activity

Timing:

- Following the pre-reading discussion

Materials:

- Letter size paper
- Colouring pencils, markers, crayons

Instructions:

1. Guide students to draw a picture of how talking about their feelings makes them feel.
2. Remind them that they can draw many different types of feelings – Sometimes their feelings will be different before and after they share them with someone, sometimes their feelings will depend on how they are talking to or what the situation is.
3. When the students are finished drawing, ask if anyone feels comfortable sharing their picture with the class.

Activity 2: In Our Own Words

Format:

- Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion

Timing:

- While reading

Materials:

- Chart paper, chalk board or whiteboard (something everyone in the circle can see)

- Letter size paper
- Colouring pencils, markers, crayons

Instructions:

1. Guide students to sit comfortably in a circle during the reading of the story.
2. Distribute a couple of sheets of paper and colouring material to each student.
3. At 4 points in the story, stop and ask the students to draw what they think was important was important about that part on their own paper. Give them a few minutes to draw.
4. Ask a few students what they believed the important parts of that section of the story were. Draw those important parts on chart paper (chalk/white board) in the middle of the circle for everyone to see.
5. Repeat steps 1-5 for the 4 parts of the story.
6. After the entire story is told and there are 4 important parts of the story being displayed in the circle, ask one or more students to retell the different parts of the story based on what is displayed on the drawings in the circle.
7. Discuss how different people have different perspectives and different people may have different ideas to what they think are important in that part of the story.
8. Re-read the story to the students for a second time.
9. Discuss whether they think the important parts of the story have changed. Remind students that sometimes when you listen to something again and take in the perspectives of others, you may hear details that you missed the first time.
10. Discuss how this learning applies to conflict resolution and the idea of the sharing circle.

Activity 3: Class Sharing Circle Agreements

Format:

- Part 1: Individual Activity
- Part 2: Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion

Materials:

- Letter size paper
- Colouring pencils, markers, crayons
- Talking piece (something symbolic that will identify the speaker)

Timing:

- Following the post-reading discussion

Instructions:

Part 1 (Individual):

1. Guide students to individually draw what they need to feel safe and brave (emotional needs).

2. When students have completed their drawings, ask them to share some of the ideas they drew. Explain that the goal is to collect examples of what makes them feel safe and brave so that you can create community guidelines together that will help everyone feel that way in the classroom.
3. Collect the drawings and put them on display in the class and/or create a list of community guidelines based on the discussion.

Part 2 (Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion):

1. Invite learners to move into a sharing circle.
2. Introduce your class talking piece and remind students that a talking piece allows the speaker to speak their truth and speak from the heart without interruption.
3. Remind learners about the purpose of the circle: to share, communicate, and/or make decisions. Explain that today, you are going to practice using it to communicate and share.
 - When passing the talking piece to others, we pass it clockwise, the direction of the sun rising and setting, as in a custom from the Anishinaabe tradition.
4. Practice using the sharing circle and talking piece using the following prompts:
 - Introduce yourself and something you are looking forward to this year.
 - How would you describe an ideal learning environment?
 - What does it feel like to be in a space of belonging?
 - How do you demonstrate respect to others?
 - In what ways can we use a sharing circle in our class? How can you use a sharing circle at home, or with your friends?
5. Thank everyone for sharing and respecting the circle.