

Belonging, identity and equality

– some classroom activities

These classroom activities can take place in a range of National Curriculum areas, but for convenience are grouped according to the National Curriculum's principal subjects. Variations of them can be used with most age groups. The rationale for them is explained in *Here, There and Everywhere: belonging, identity and equality in schools* by Robin Richardson for Derbyshire Education Department, published by Trentham Books in 2004.

Art

Everyday life

Learners compare and contrast depictions of everyday life in Egyptian wall paintings, Greek vases, the Bayeux Tapestry, Indian miniatures, Japanese and Chinese art, Breughel the Elder, modern photography, advertisements, family snapshots and archive photographs. They create images of their own daily life and of life in their community and neighbourhood, using some of the same methods and approaches.

Posters

Learners examine and discuss a collection of posters and publicity material on themes such as sustainable development, equal opportunities, respect for the disabled, racial justice and human rights. They establish criteria for evaluation of such posters with regard to colour, composition, shape, font and format in the lettering, register of language, and images and assumptions relating to people and situations. They design and create their own posters.

Fusion

Learners study the principal international influences on Picasso and other artists of the last 100 years and the ways their work represents fusion of a range of traditions, cultures and genres. Learners then create their own work, similarly drawing on a range of genres and traditions.

Puppets

Learners examine with care, curiosity and respect stick puppets from India, Indonesia and Thailand, and design, make and use their own. Instead or as well, they design and make shadow puppets and theatres.

Citizenship

Media analysis

Learners study differing accounts of the same event, for example the differences between a report on the website of BBC News and reports in various tabloids. In their analysis they use the questions suggested in *Citizenship and Muslim Perspectives* by Muhammad Imran and Elaine Miskell: What is fact and what is fiction? What language is used? Is there an attempt to present a balanced argument? Are ideas presented as clear-cut, or can you see that even people directly involved are uncertain? Whose voice do you hear through the report? Does the report tell you what to think, or are you presented with evidence so that you can make up your own mind? Who is the target audience?

We are Britain

Learners study and perform the poems in *We Are Britain* by Benjamin Zephaniah and write similar poems about themselves, illustrated by photographs similar in style to the ones in Zephaniah's book.

I too sing

Learners commit to memory the poem *I too sing America* by Langston Hughes, readily downloadable from the website of the Academy of American Poets at www.poets.org. They then write similar poems about themselves and their feelings about Britain and also write similar poems using other personas.

National identity

Learners create and illustrate time-lines showing relationships over the centuries between England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, noting different perspectives and stories in the four nations at different times, and in different social classes, and the impact of urbanisation and the Empire. They investigate current views of British identity and of how it is changing.

English and literacy

Journeys

Using a resource such as *The Journey* by Marcia Hutchinson learners conduct interviews with people who took part in a major journey (from another country to UK, or from one part of UK to another) in their youth and construct pieces of prose which tell their stories. They include expectations before the journey began; things that happened on the way; initial feelings on arrival; and tasks of settling down and developing a sense of belonging.

Identity and struggle

Learners read and study the stories for teenagers in *Walking a Tightrope* edited by Rehana Ahmed and comment in various genres of writing, and in various oral styles, on character, setting and mood; author perspective and voice; significant detail; starting and finishing; and creativity in language and narrative. They then write similar stories themselves.

Race and diversity

Using the collections from Badger Publishing entitled *Celebrating Difference: positive images of race for infants* and *Challenging Racism through Literature: positive images of race for juniors*, learners write reviews and give talks; write to the authors; and take part in a mini literature festival at which awards are made to the books considered best.

Geography

Guided walk of local neighbourhood

Using *Global Reading*, published by Reading International Solidarity Centre (details and a quiz at www.risc.org.uk/introgame.html) learners consider their immediate neighbourhood and ask: Where does this road lead to? Where did the stone for this building come from? How did the person who built this house make their money? Why is this street named after a place in India? Where do goods come from in the shops? After further research, some of it including the use of digital photography, they add information on outline maps of the area and produce a world map display, highlighting the places to which their area is linked. They build up their local-global map, adding appropriate symbols and a key. They then develop a guided walk with activities at each stage to introduce the variety of ways in which the area is linked to the rest of the world.

Globalisation

Learners consider five quotations from various recent reports, lectures and speeches: the UK minister for international development, world reports on The Gambia and Mongolia, a group of Caribbean ministers; and Vandana Shiva's *Respect for the Earth*. They list ten statements or claims about globalisation and rank them in the order in which they agree with them. They then consider the implications for an issue currently

being debated in their own locality. (the texts of the quotations mentioned above, together with many other useful discussion materials, are in *Globalisation – what's it all about?* published by the Tide Centre, Birmingham.

Design and technology

Sustainable development

Taking ideas from the pack *Live well, live wisely* published by the Intermediate Technology Development Group, learners study the concept of sustainability throughout the world; research recycling and waste collection activities in their own locality; and compare and contrast projects in their local neighbourhood with projects elsewhere. They then design and model a waste collection point that could be set up in their own school, and an awareness-raising and publicity campaign to encourage other learners – and all staff – to use it.

A happier place

Learners visit the Ecotastic site of Hagbourne Primary School, Oxfordshire (www.hagbourne.oxon.sch.uk/ecotastic) – ‘we created this website,’ they are told, ‘to help other schools and people at home to be more eco-friendly. We want to share all our eco experiences with others, so the world will be a much happier place for us all to live in...’ They note that the school recently won a major award in the international Childnet Academy scheme (www.childnetacademy.org), so they visit the sites of other winners throughout the world and decide which they consider best.

History

‘We also served’

Learners use the pack developed by Birmingham Advisory and Support Service on the significant contributions made by service men and women from South Asia, Africa and the Caribbean to the British forces in the 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 world wars. Entitled *We Also Served*, the pack contains sixteen fascinating accounts of people who volunteered to fight in the trenches, to fly fighter planes and bombers, to work as seamen, and to serve in field hospitals. The pack is intended for key stages two and three but can be used also with older and younger learners.

Local neighbourhood and community

Learners study ways in which their local area has changed over the course of time. They investigate education, houses and housing, migration and movement to the area from overseas and other parts of the UK; the building of factories; markets; religious observance; treatment of the poor and care of the sick; law and order; sport, leisure and the impact of national and international events and developments.

Hot seat

Learners interrogate a teacher or other adult who takes the role of an Elizabethan buccaneer such as Sir John Hawkins. What is his view of the world? How does he try to justify his actions and exploits? How able is he to imagine the feelings, views and experiences of people to whom he caused suffering? What is his reaction to the writings of Olaudah Equiano, and those of other abolitionists?

Civilisations and stories

In groups or as individuals learners study cultures and narratives such as the following, and report on similarities and differences with regard to issues of equality, resolution of conflict, and justice and fairness between the sexes and between ethnic groups: Islamic civilisations, including Muhammad and Makkah and the empires of Islam in Africa; Imperial China from the First Emperor to Kublai Khan; India from the Mughal Empire to the coming of the British; the civilisations of Peru; indigenous peoples of North America;

African-American people in the Americas and the African diaspora in the UK; West African empires; the Sikhs and the Mahrattas.

Information and communications technology

Evaluation of websites

Learners evaluate a range of websites about race and diversity issues, considering features of style, navigation and content. They use this information to plan and design their own website about racial justice and cultural diversity for a particular audience. They produce a project plan, breaking down work into a series of smaller tasks. In their work they consider efficiency, fitness for purpose and audience needs. For example, they might use ICT to convert and compress graphic files to allow faster download times. They make informed use of automated features in software to create a navigational menu on each page. Where appropriate, they integrate applications. For example, they may include a response form on their site, to collect information from users. They test and refine their site using the school intranet.

Visits to museums and exhibitions

Learners plan a real or imaginary day trip to a museum specialising in issues of cultural diversity and equality, for example the Museum of the British Empire and Commonwealth at Bristol. They use the internet and paper-based materials to find out the entry fees and use route-finding software to determine the distance. They then enter this data into a spreadsheet model prepared in collaboration with the teacher and add data on cost of transport. They use the model to establish the cost per learner. The teacher then provides a number of possible scenarios, for example an increase in the number of learners, and learners explore the model to provide answers. Groups make presentations to the rest of the class about their preferred destinations.

Campaigning for justice

Working in pairs, learners create a web page about a particularly important movement, campaign or personality in the development of racial justice. They need to research the subject and then to write a short introduction identifying key facts and concepts, for example, Who? What? When? Where? Why? They also find or create between one and three images that can be scanned in to illustrate their text.

Mathematics

Global village

Learners work with the picture book *If the World were a Village* by David Smith (details in bibliography) and present the same statistical data in alternative forms. The topics include nationalities, languages, ages, religions, air and water, schooling and literacy, money and possessions, electricity, food, and past and present. There are many classroom activities suggested at acblack.com/globalvillage

Identities, belongings and statistics

Learners work with data and materials at the Census at School website, based at Nottingham Trent University (www.censusatschool.ntu.ac.uk). There are questionnaires for them to fill in, downloadable worksheets, an interactive histogram, a poem, a song, factsheets about the 2001 census of population, and a wealth of activities integrating statistical analysis with geography, history, science, ICT and citizenship. There are sister sites in Canada, New Zealand, Queensland and South Australia.

Demography

Learners use from data published by the Office of National Statistics relating to the 2001 census of population and construct, on paper and using ICT, a range of graphs and charts and identify which styles of numerical representation are most suitable for various purposes and contexts.

They then present concise, reasoned arguments, using symbols, diagrams, graphs and related explanatory text.

The state of the nation

Working in groups, learners assemble mathematical illustrations of propositions in official reports and design tests which would establish whether the situation is improving or getting worse. For example, they consider statements in the DfES's five-year plan for education, or in *The State of the Nation* by the Institute for Public Policy Research. The latter is downloadable from www.ippr.org.uk. It contains statistics on wealth and income distribution, social mobility, crime and fear of crime, differentials in the pay of women and men, and levels of child poverty in UK and other European countries.

Modern foreign languages

Interpreting course

Learners with oral fluency in a language other than English are given training to develop their skills so that they can act as interpreters at parents evenings. This involves agreement on whether and how to translate specialist terms and ethical issues around impartiality and confidentiality. The course forms part of the school's curriculum enrichment programme and is linked with a university-run scheme. It leads to a certificate recognised by UCAS and can therefore help students to gain a university place.

The nature of language

Working in groups, learners research key features of various languages, each group taking a different language. Examples include not only modern foreign languages spoken by the learners themselves but also American Sign Language, British Sign Language, Lingua Franca and Middle English, and visual languages such as Media Glyphs. They use www.ilovelanguages.com as their starting point and collect information also through the websites of the Refugee Council and Portsmouth Ethnic Minority Achievement Service.

Music

Story in sound

Learners tell a story in sound about an encounter between two or more cultures, or else in response to an event of local, national or international importance. They explain the original musical ideas, how they were developed and why some of the musical features were chosen. If songs are used, either familiar or specially composed, there is consideration, discussion and appraisal of pitch, duration, dynamics, diction and phrasing.

Choral music

Learners perform the gospel melody *Standing in the need of prayer* and add harmony parts that (a) move in parallel and (b) are modified to fit with conventional harmonies. They listen to gospel music from South Africa, London and the United States, focusing on ways in which changes of texture create variety and interest, and listen with a similar focus to traditional choral pieces from New Zealand, Bulgaria and Pakistan. Finally, they arrange a group performance of a gospel melody and compose their own a-cappella pieces incorporating idiomatic features of one of the styles which they have studied.

Personal, social and health education

Sibel's story

Learners use a Persona doll to construct and tell the story of Sibel, a five year old child from Iran whose family is seeking asylum in the UK. Information is provided by the teacher about reasons for leaving Iran and the dangerous journey to the UK. Imaginary

family photographs are found on the internet and culturally relevant artefacts such as clothing are obtained from friends. Commonalities between Sibel and the learners are established, for example with regard to the likes, dislikes and worries of any five-year-old girl in the world. As the story progresses there is consideration of cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. (For further information and ideas, visit the website of Portsmouth Ethnic Minority Support Service at www.blss.portsmouth.sch.uk/default.htm.)

Moral courage

Learners investigate the story of Rosa Parks and her role in the early days of the civil rights movement in the United States. (Useful books at key stages 1 and 2 include *The Bus Ride* by William Miller and *A Picture Book of Rosa Parks* by David Adler.) They discuss the concept of moral courage, using materials developed by the Anne Frank Trust UK and available at www.annefrank.org.uk, and make real or imagined entries for the Anne Frank Moral Courage Awards programme. They sign up to the Anne Frank Declaration and create posters about this for the classroom and school corridors.

Shadows

Learners use the ideas, principles, techniques and practical instructions in *Let the Shadows Speak* by Franziska Ewart to present traditional folktales and to engage the audience in discussion and argument about matters of current importance in the school.

Identities

In groups learners research concepts of identity, belonging and community, using a range of sources of information, including the Britkids website. Each group feeds back to the rest of the class and discuss what they have found out and discuss diversity in Britain in the twenty-first century. Finally, each imagines identity as a mask that reflects aspects of heritage or community, and each learner designs and creates a mask to reflect their various loyalties and affiliations.

Physical education and dance

'Football Unites, Racism Divides'

Learners visit the anti-racism website of Sheffield United (www.furd.org.uk) and make a list of issues relating to the eradication of racism on football terraces and in football management. They draw up a code of conduct for themselves and choreograph a dance performance to illustrate and support it.

Fusion and belonging

Using skills and styles from classical and contemporary traditions, learners create a performance which explores issues of inclusion and ostracising in a friendship group, or in playground or street culture.

Skill and strategy

Learners play broadly similar games from two or more different cultures and note the similarities and variations in terms of skill, purpose and strategy.

Religious education

Reviewing a project

Learners research and study a project such as the Soul of Europe (www.soulofeurope.org), committed to rebuilding and repairing the Ferhadijah Mosque in Banja Luka, Bosnia. They list what they see as the strengths and advantages of the project; note any reservations or criticisms they may have; and list the questions they would like to ask if there were a chance of speaking and meeting with a representative of the project.

To be a British Muslim

Learners attend to the testimony and experience of young British Muslims, as outlined and discussed on the websites of *Muslim News*, *Q News* and the Muslim Council of Britain, and in the 2004 report of the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia. They identify commonalities, similarities and differences in the lives and identities of British Christians, British Jews and British Sikhs, and then also at dual identities such as Black British, Scottish British, Mancunian British.

Problem or solution?

Learners debate three 'Big Myths' set out in *Connect: different faiths, shared values*, published by the Inter Faith Network in association with TimeBank and the National Youth Agency in 2004. The myths are (1) 'Well, they may say they're religious but no-one believes any of that stuff' (2) 'Religious people are just a bunch of fanatics' and (3) 'Religion divides people – all the religions hate each other'. They then sort through some of the stories and case studies in the *Connect* booklet about practical inter-faith projects in various parts of Britain. For each project they ask and consider three questions: What do you see as the strengths of this project? What reservations or criticisms do you have? If you could meet someone from the project what would you ask?

Christian action on racial justice

Learners obtain a copy of *Redeeming the Time: all God's people must challenge racism*, issued by the Churches Commission for Racial Justice (details in bibliography), and seek comment about it from local churches.

Jewish perspectives

Learners study Jewish perspectives on racial justice, as presented in *Making a Difference* by Edie Friedman and *Let's Make a Difference: teaching antiracism in primary schools* by Edie Friedman, Hazel Woolfson, Sheila Freedman and Shirley Murgraff (details in bibliography) and interview members of the local Jewish community in order to obtain their views.

Commemoration

Learners plan, present and take part in a commemorative event about 11 September 2001, using resources published by the Muslim Home School Network, based in the United States, www.muslimhomeschool.com.

Science

Commonalities and differences

In a topic on *Ourselves*, learners make surveys of various physical characteristics, including skin colour, eye colour, gender and height, and of personal interests, for example favourite foods and pets, and draw Venn diagrams to show commonalities and differences.

The spread of knowledge

Learners play a version of the game *Woolly Thinking* in order to study the spread of knowledge in the year 1000. The game vividly illustrates and dramatises interactions between China, India, the Middle East and Europe and portrays science as a universal human activity. Full details and instructions can be found on the website of the Muslim Home School Network, based in the United States, at <http://www.muslimhomeschool.com> – click on Pride and then on educational material. Learners then explore the wealth of material about Muslim science at www.muslimheritage.com and the implications of such material for any British classroom in the 21st century at the website of the Islamic Society of Britain (www.isb.org.uk and follow the links to the Virtual Classroom.)