**Activity: Reflection activities**

**Introduction:**

Here are some activities you can use to encourage your students to reflect on their learning.

Activities include:

* Group Mural
* Benefits to Society
* Clay Sculptures
* Cross Word Ending
* The Skills Box
* The Swimming Pool
* Shuffle Left, Shuffle Right
* Leave a Message
* All my neighbours who …

**Activity 1: Group mural**

**Learning intentions:**

* Students reflect on the impact of an experience for themselves and on the impact of an experience for the group as a whole.

**Equipment:**

* Paper (a sheet of A4 or A3 for each student, and a long roll of butcher’s paper or other suitable paper), paint, crayons, felt pens, scissors and glue.

**Description:**

* Students create a picture that represents the activity or experience for them personally. It is important to tell the students that this picture will become part of a larger picture which may mean they will have to cut it up or glue it together with other people’s pictures. Allow about 20 minutes for this.
* Students briefly share their pictures and what they mean to them.
* Students use their individual pictures to create a mural that represents the experience or the activity for the whole group. Roll out a length of butcher’s paper for the students to use for this. Everyone’s individual picture must be incorporated into the group mural in some way. They can draw or paint on the butcher’s paper to link up the individual pictures. Allow 20 to 30 minutes for this.
* The completed mural can be hung on the wall.

**Activity 2: Benefits to Society: Think globally – act locally**

**Learning intentions:**

* To encourage students to consider how they transfer skills and knowledge they have learnt in one context to another context.

**Equipment:**

* Visual prompts are helpful for this. Draw the following titles on paper plates, index cards or laminated paper. Adjust this list so it is relevant to the group you are working with and the learning programme you have completed.

Me My partner Our school

Our society The whole team Our country

Other groups/teams Other countries My family

Our community The whole world Our class

Future generations Our customers Our families

**Description:**

* At the completion of a learning programme, ask the class what skills they have learned or developed while completing the programme.
* Ask the students how this skill benefits the various individuals and groups listed.
* Allow participants a few moments to consider each of the groups listed. Remember, not all forms of review require verbalisation. Even while participants are considering the list, they are reflecting on their experience.

**Activity 3: Clay Sculptures**

**Learning intentions:**

* To provide a hands-on and lasting approach to reflection.

**Equipment:**

* Modelling clay and plastic mats if doing this indoors.

**Description:**

* Have enough plastic mats so each person can work individually if indoors. If outdoors ensure there is enough space for everyone to sit and work comfortably.
* Give each participant a blob of clay and ask them to make a sculpture that represents what they have learnt during the activity or learning programme. Discuss the meaning of metaphors with younger students.
* Consider playing some instrumental music in the background to set the mood for creative work.
* Once the clay has dried the students can paint their sculptures.
* When everyone is finished, any student who wishes to share the story of their sculpture should be given the opportunity to do so.

**Activity 4: Crossword ending**

**p mural**

**Learning intentions:**

* To encourage studentsto identify key words or phrases to describe an activity, experience or concept and create a crossword using these.

**Equipment:**

* A large piece of paper or poster board and markers.

**Description:**

* Invite students to come up with words that describe what they think or feel about an activity or experience; words that describe things they learnt; or phrases to describe a concept they have been investigating.
* Draw a crossword grid on a large sheet of paper and begin to place the words on it.
* Words can be invented or created if needed to make things fit on the crossword.
* Post the crossword on the wall of the classroom as a reminder of the experience or activity.

**Activity 5: The Skills Box**

**Learning intentions:**

* To encourage students to think about what they have gained from an experience or activity and the talents and skills they have to offer as a result of what they have learnt and what they have from prior experience.

**Equipment:**

* An ornate box or container – or use your imagination if no container is available.

**Description:**

* Place the container in the middle of the group. Each person reaches into the container and imagines they are taking out some valuable skill or talent they have learnt or further developed during the learning programme e.g. ability to interview someone. The teacher/facilitator may need to start with an example.
* Each person must put back into the container a skill or talent they have to offer to the group. This step is essential as the container cannot become empty.

**Activity 6: The Swimming Pool**

**Learning intentions:**

* To explore different ways of learning and what is comfortable for each person and develop caring thinking skills.

**Description:**

* Mark out a swimming pool on the ground, making one end the deep end and other end the shallow end.
* Ask students to reflect on how they felt about a particular experience or activity and position themselves somewhere along the length of the pool depending on how they felt about the experience (shallow end if they were bored and deep end if they felt out of their depth)
* Ask students to move to the part of the pool where they are most comfortable when learning something new. Some might like to take it slowly and be sure of themselves and move to the shallow end, others might like to throw themselves into an activity and literally ‘jump in the deep end’!
* Ask students to reflect on how this relates to how they like to learn in the classroom.
* Ask students to look where others put themselves along the pool. Does seeing someone at the opposite end from themselves help them to understand why they behave in the way they do when learning something new?

**Activity 7: Shuffle Left, Shuffle Right**

**Learning intentions:**

* To keep students engaged through kinaesthetic movement while reflecting on an activity or experience.

**Description:**

* Form a circle with everyone facing inward and standing up.
* The teacher/facilitator offers everyone a chance to ‘have their say’. This could be in response to specific questions or general comments about an activity or experience. The teacher/facilitator may want to go first to demonstrate the style and length of comment expected. This is useful if the group have not done a lot of reflecting in this way.
* The activity begins with the group shuffling to the left.
* At some point the teacher/facilitator says stop and gives their comment.
* The teacher then says ‘shuffle to the right’. The whole group shuffles to the right until someone else says stop and has their say. They then say ‘shuffle to the left’.
* When it seems that no one has anything left to say, count down from 10, 9, 8…if someone still has something to say, they should call out, “Stop” have their say and then shuffle on.
* The activity continues until the countdown reaches zero.

**Activity 8: Leave a message**

**Learning intentions:**

* Students use a process to review and assess how they are going as they work through a project, activity or journey.

**Description:**

* The teacher/facilitator informs the group that their upper level managers have contacted them and would like an interim status report on their progress in completing the task on time.
* The managers have left a telephone number, and would like the group to leave a brief message in the next ten minutes. The teacher can limit the length of the message (from 30 seconds to two minutes) that can be left for the managers.
* This can be repeated at appropriate points through a project or an experience.

**Activity 9: All my neighbours who..?**

**oup mural**

**Learning intentions:**

* To involve students in an active reflection process.

**Description:**

* Make a circle with one person standing in the centre. You can begin with the teacher/facilitator, who can set the tone with their response.
* The centre person completes the phrase: “All my neighbours who…” Whatever they call out must relate to something they felt or experienced during the activity. Examples might include: “All my neighbours who were frustrated at some point” or “All my neighbours who learnt something new today”
* Everyone who experienced or felt something similar steps into the centre and celebrates by giving each other a high five.
* Invite another person to step into the circle and say, “All my neighbours who …”
* Carry on until the group has said all they need to say.

***Acknowledgements:***

*Except for Activity 1 and Activity 6, these ideas come from:*

*Cain, J., Cummings, M., Stanchfield, J. (2005). A teachable moment: A facilitator’s guide to activities*

*for processing, debriefing, reviewing and reflection. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company: Dubuque, Iowa.*