

FACILITATION STRATEGIES

CORE LESSON

1 PREVIEWING ACTIVITY

AN ALPHABET OF ACTIVITIES

- Explain that you are going to have the students participate in a 'brain drain' activity.
- Divide the students into groups of three, and assign each group three letters of the alphabet, beginning with ABC, etc.
- Review the meaning of 'verb' or 'action word.' (Ask for several examples of 'doing words'.)
- Provide each group with a dictionary, chart paper and markers. Assign a recorder for each group.
- Explain that the task is to brainstorm as many 'doing words' or 'verbs' as they can, using the three letters of the alphabet they were assigned. They may use dictionaries if they wish, but they will only have five minutes to complete the task.
- At the end of five minutes, post the charts and have each group share their 'brain drain' ideas. Ask for additional 'doing words' from the other groups and add them to the lists.
- Explain that today they will be using their imaginations to think about all the things that they do well.

2 LINK TO THE COMMERCIAL

- Ask them to select several things from the list that they can do. Encourage traditional as well as non traditional activities.

RATIONALE

Pre adolescent boys need to be aware of their personal strengths, talents and abilities. They need to make the positive connections between their attributes and their sense of self worth in an effort to channel their energies positively.

PURPOSE

To help children realize that 'Nobody is good at everything, but everybody is good at something', as a means of recognizing, appreciating and valuing their individual strengths.

FOCUS FOR VIEWING: WHAT'S YOUR THING?

As you watch this commercial, think about the things that boys do which may or may not be on our list. Be prepared to add them to our list.

VIEW THE COMMERCIAL

WHAT'S YOUR THING? (60 SECONDS)

3 POSTVIEWING ACTIVITY

'WHAT'S YOUR THING?' TALENT SHOW

- Discuss the activities that they viewed in the commercial. Add any that were missing to the master lists.
- Explain that they will have an opportunity to put on a class talent show to display their special talents. Ask them to work with their group of three to prepare a very short sample (2-3 minutes altogether) of special talents that others may or may not be aware of. Each person is encouraged to find something that they can display.
- Provide the rest of the period for planning their 'mini-talent show'. Remind them to consider props, music, costumes, etc.
- Schedule the performances, either as one show, or as several mini shows over the next several days.

CLOSURE

Turn to a partner and discuss why you think that focusing on personal talents may help your self-esteem. Be prepared to share your answers.

Think about a talent that you have and were reminded about today. Put your hand up if you wish to share.

One of the young boys in the video states, "Everybody's gotta have a thing." Do you agree? Turn to a friend and tell them what talents your parents have. What about your pets? What do you think you should do with this information? Why?

SKILLS EXTENSION ONE

▶ PHOTO SHOOT

SUBJECT FOCUS: MEDIA LITERACY, HEALTH, LANGUAGE

Materials Needed: Several 'action' pictures from magazines, Cameras (one per group, preferably disposable)

Educator's Note: *Approach your School Council for funds to purchase the disposable cameras and develop the films. Explain that this will be part of an effort to improve self-esteem in your school. If cameras are unavailable, ask the students to use their hands as a manual camera and 'freeze frame' a picture that they can sketch.*

- Explain to the children that they will have an opportunity to become 'school photographers'. Show several examples of 'action' photographs from magazines and ask the students what makes the photo appealing. The discussion might include:
 - close range
 - captures the action
 - shows the expressions
- Divide the students into teams of five or six and explain that they will be going on a 'photo shoot' in the school playground at recesses over the next few days.
- Explain that they are to capture students from their school, 'doing their thing'. Encourage them to observe a variety of activities and to remember that we often don't recognize some of the everyday activities like skipping, singing or looking for bugs as talents. Their task is to capture the talents of as many different students as possible on film.
- Tell them to aim for a balance of boys and girls, of all ages.
- Explain that, just like real photographers, they are responsible for asking permission to take the picture and then copying down the correct age and spelling of the people in each picture.
- When the films are completed, have them developed and display them in the school lobby, with a banner that reads, 'Everybody's good at something. What's your thing?'

CLOSURE

What effect do you think our Photo Shoot will have on the self-esteem in our school?

What reactions have you noticed when people look at the bulletin board?

How do you feel about your own self-esteem? Tell a friend. What can you do to improve how you feel about yourself? Share with your partner.

A Step Further

Ask the students where else the photos could be displayed. Consider taking them to a community center, church, municipal building, local merchant's window, their community television station, etc.

SKILLS EXTENSION TWO

▶ LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

SUBJECT FOCUS: MEDIA LITERACY, LANGUAGE, HEALTH

Materials Needed: A video camera

- View the commercial again and ask the students to count the number of activities they viewed in 60 seconds.
- Explain that there were more than fourteen talents expressed in just 60 seconds. Ask the students how they think the camera person was able to capture so much in such a short time. Discuss.
- Explain that the camera people who put together this ad have years of experience capturing action on film and that it is no simple task. They were able to focus on just a second of activity and then move rapidly from one scene to the next without losing the viewers' interest.
- Tell them that over the next several days, they will have the opportunity to be 'camera crews'. Explain that they will work in teams of five or six to film exciting 'happenings' on the school ground. They must follow the following guidelines:
 - Each film must be no longer than two minutes, and must contain at least five talents.
 - Only one person in each group will do the filming.
 - The other members of the team will select the subjects and activities, obtain permission from the students to be filmed, copy down their names and ages and select an appropriate short segment per activity which will be filmed.
- Set up a schedule for each crew and meet with the camera persons to review operation of the camera.
- When all of the footage has been collected, view and enjoy the collective talents of your school!

CLOSURE

What did you learn about the talents in our school that you didn't know before?

What did you learn about filming and working as part of a camera crew?

What talents do you think your younger brothers and sisters or younger friends should focus on if they want to improve the way they feel about themselves? Be ready to explain your answers.

A Step Further

Set up an assembly for the whole school and show your video. Assign students to give an introduction and conclusion to the viewing experience, focusing on self-esteem.

Encourage students to discover new talents! Call on your local community television station to help you prepare your video.

SKILLS EXTENSION THREE

▶ ON THE SPOT REPORTERS

SUBJECT FOCUS: MEDIA LITERACY, LANGUAGE

A Peer Teaching Idea!

- View the commercial again and ask the students to listen for the dialogue.
- In small groups, ask them to discuss the following statement from the video:
 - “Nobody’s good at everything, but everybody’s good at something.”
 - Do they agree with the statement? Share responses.
- Explain that they are going to be “on the spot reporters” and that they are going to organize and carry out a talent search of things that the people in their school are good at.
- Ask the students to work in partners and to devise an announcement for the PA system to inform students that they will be visiting each classroom in the near future to find out what they are good at. Encourage them to include some unique talents such as the ones they viewed in the video, in order to get students thinking creatively.
- Once the student body has been informed that they will be interviewed, set up a schedule with the other teachers and send the reporters out to gather their data. If possible, provide them with a video camera, or audio tape, or simply a regular camera and recording paper.
- The object of the exercise is to gather the first name, age and grade of every student in their school along with one unique talent they would like to share.
- Once the data is gathered, ask the partners to prepare an interesting method to present the information. Some ideas might include:
 - regular daily announcements, citing two or three talented individuals;
 - a “Book of Talents” to be posted in the school library;
 - an alphabetical listing of names, with a talent beside each, posted in the school lobby;
 - ‘Congratulations’ certificates to be sent periodically to individuals from the “on the spot” reporters;
 - a school newsletter which highlights the collective talents of students by age or skill level.

CLOSURE

Do you feel that you have helped to improve the self-esteem of your schoolmates? Explain.

What is one talent that you discovered as a reporter that particularly interested you? Why?

Did you find boys or girls more willing to share their talents? Be prepared to explain your answer.

A Step Further

Consider contacting your community television station, radio or newspaper and offering to share 'Talents of _____ School.'

MEDIA LITERACY LESSON

ROUGH CUTS

1 PREVIEWING ACTIVITY

- Ask the students to tell you, besides the producer, who else might be involved in the filming of a television program. (Accept all answers.) Once they have given feedback, explain that there is actually a huge production team that helps to make a commercial come together:
 - Writers
 - Producers
 - Directors
 - Camera Crew
 - Sound Technicians
 - Lighting Specialists
 - Set Designers
 - Costume Designers
 - Editors

2 LINK TO THE COMMERCIAL

- Now that they know how many different people work together to create a television program or commercial, explain that they will have a better understanding of all of the elements required to bring them a television production.

FOCUS FOR VIEWING: WHAT'S YOUR THING?

As you watch this commercial, count the number of boys that you see performing.

VIEW THE COMMERCIAL

WHAT'S YOUR THING?

(60 SECONDS)

3 POSTVIEWING ACTIVITY

SHORT CUTS!

- Explain that, although the finished commercial is only 60 seconds, the actual taping of the commercial took over 36 hours! Ask them why they think that might be so.
- Explain that you are going to show them some of the rough footage that went into the making of this commercial. Ask them to imagine what it must be like to have to choose who they will keep in the commercial, what specific few seconds of each activity they will tape, how they will coordinate the sound, lights, voices and action, and how they will get the message clearly across.
- View the footage and discuss the issues raised.
- Divide the students into groups of seven or eight. Explain that they will be producing a two minute commercial to convince adults that adolescents are wonderful people.
- They must complete the following before the initial videotaping of their commercial.
 - a written script
 - a list of props, costumes, background, music, etc.
 - a list of responsibilities which include: producer, director, actor(s), camera person, lighting, set designer, sound manager.
- Once the commercial is ready for taping, the camera crew will videotape the performance.
- View the completed commercials, checking for the following:
 - sound quality
 - audience appeal
 - clarity of message
 - time management (two minutes exactly)
- Explain that although the commercials are wonderful and they represent a lot of effort, the network has just called to say that they must be reduced to exactly 60 seconds.
- Challenge each team to edit their commercial script, maintaining the audience appeal and clarity of message. After several 'dry' runs to check timing, tape the revised commercials and view them, using the same criteria as before.

CLOSURE

What did you learn about the production of a television commercial?

What did your group find the most challenging part of the editing process? Explain.

Do you feel that you were able to cut your commercial in half and still maintain the quality? Explain.

Do you think you could further reduce your commercial to 30 seconds if required? Explain.

A Step Further

Consider inviting parents in to attend a media literacy lesson, delivered by the students. Have them explain the task they had, show the rough cuts of their commercial, and then explain how they edited their work to half of the original length. Ask them to identify and explain the various roles they played in accomplishing this task.

▶ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS COMMERCIAL

Did you know:

- There were 150 boys invited to audition.
- After auditions, 20 boys were put on the 'short list'.
- After many hours of viewing the auditions and discussing the format of the commercial, only six boys were selected.
- The production of the commercial involved three full days of work, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- There were 12 locations and somewhere between 25 and 50 people working behind the scenes to produce this commercial.
- Commercials like 'What's Your Thing' cost between \$250 000 and \$400 000!