

Memory and Remembrance

- Who thinks they have a good memory?
- What is memory?
- What is your first memory?

MEMORY GAMES

The following drama-based activities will help develop students' observational and listening skills, with a focus on memory.

They are practical, fun activities for the class that can be used as an interesting starting point for discussions about memory.

Game: "I went to the shops and bought ..."

A simple, round the circle game, where each student adds another item to the shopping list:

Player 1 – I went to the shop and I bought a guitar ...

Player 2 – I went to the shop and I bought a guitar and a bag of green apples ...

Player 3 – I went to the shop and I bought a guitar and a bag of green apples and two lollipops ...

Challenge the group and see if you can get around the circle twice without a mistake.

Game: Silent Message

A non-verbal version of the game "telephone" where, instead of whispering a message down the line, players send on a series of physical actions or a pose.

Once the action or pose gets to the final player look at any changes from the original "message".

Game: Change One Thing

A student is asked to leave the room – when they return they should have changed one thing (e.g. removed a jumper, altered their hair etc.) The class needs to guess what is different about their classmate.

This can also be played in pairs, so the whole classroom is involved at the same time.

Another variation is to have one student leave the classroom. Whilst they are outside, the rest of the students decide on a change for the classroom. The student returns and needs to guess what has changed.

Name and Action

Students stand in a circle and announce their name whilst performing a movement. It can be as simple or as complicated as you like (however, it is important to ensure that all the students in the class will be able to copy it easily and don't feel left out).

Attempt to communicate with each other using only the movement. For example:

Nick's action is a kick, Laura's action is a clap and Declan's action is a star-jump. Nick starts by presenting his kick and then performing a star-jump. The action has now shifted to Declan. He responds with his star-jump and then does a clap which passes the action to Laura.

See how long the group can keep passing their actions.

OPTIONS for Online Learning: While some of these games may not translate to online video conferencing of classes, there are some fun options in there for families to play together.

Reflective discussion:

- How good was your memory?
- What makes a good memory?
- How do we remember?
- Which activities did you find easier? i.e. did you find it easier to remember something that you heard or something that you saw?

MY MEMORIES

How do memories change?

You may like to give your students some notice of this activity the day before – so ask them to pay close attention to their morning routine ...

Have students write about their morning – prompt and encourage them to be as detailed as they possibly can. This could be written as a simple list or a story or a journal / diary entry.

Collect their work.

Revisit this activity the following day or, even, the following week. Ask students to write about the same morning they originally wrote about. Prompt them to be as detailed as possible.

Compare the writing and use this as a starting point for a discussion about memory, and will lead onto the next activity:

- What aspects of the morning did you remember?
- Why do you think you remembered it?
- What parts of the morning did you forget or change in the second version of the story?
- Was there anything that happened that morning that you really wanted to remember?
- What is an important memory you would not want to forget?

Capture a Memory: The Memory Jar

A writing and art-making activity in which students are asked to “capture” one, very special memory.

Materials:

- Brightly coloured squares of cardboard / paper
- A jar for each student with a lid
- Sticky labels
- Decorative bits and pieces

Ask students to think of one very important, very special memory they would never want to forget. Students can bring in items from home to help them remember this moment – photographs, souvenirs, maybe even a piece of music.

Students have the opportunity to share their memory with the class. They should use the items they have brought from home to help them talk about this moment they want to capture.

You can make this a very informal sharing of memories, a show and tell or a more structured talk to the group. Once the students have shared these moments give them some writing prompts to respond to. Each response should be written on a different, brightly coloured card:

- What is the memory? What happened?
- When did this happen?
- Where did this happen?
- How did it make you feel? How old were you?
- Why is it so important to you?

Create the “memory jar” to capture and keep this important memory safe. Take photos of items that students cannot and or do not want to keep in the jar. Fold up the written responses and add them to the jar.

Create the labels and attach to the jar (along with any other decoration you see fit).

REMEMBRANCE

How do others remember?

Ask your students to explore and investigate how people from different cultures, religions or times remember their loved ones. You may wish to focus on one particular area with your students (e.g. Ancient Egypt) or allow them choose an area of personal interest:

- The past: Exploring ancient times
- Cultures
- Religions
- Festivals

Send the students on a 'scavenger hunt' to discover information from a variety of sources. For example:

- Books
- The internet
- Documentaries
- Images
- Magazines

Depending on the level of your group their research could be presented as:

- A speech
- A PowerPoint presentation
- A brainstorm
- A written assignment
- A poster presentation

Reflect with the students about the similarities and differences in the different beliefs and cultures.

CELEBRATE LIFE

Let's focus on love and life!

A Letter to Myself ... From the Future

Print out a photograph of each student – ask them to please have their happiest or silliest face on for the photograph (or, alternatively, bring one from home).

Ask students to write the future them a letter. This letter is aimed to remind them of how awesome they are. Prompts include:

- A top-ten list (top-ten things about you)
- Three things my classmate says about me ... (ensuring this is positive)
- The best day of my life ...
- I laugh when ...

Seal their letters in an envelope with “DO NOT OPEN UNTIL XXXX” clearly labelled on the front.

A Loved One

Discuss with the class about the special and important people in their lives. Ask them to reflect upon a memory they shared with this person.

Ask the students to write a letter to this person – let them know how special they are and share the importance of that memory with them.