

Lesson 6: Citizenship lessons

AIM	To use explore issues of mental wellbeing and neuroethics as presented in <i>Mind the Gap</i>
OBJECTIVES	To understand the nature of panic attacks and anxiety. To engage emotionally with issues that the individual may not have experienced. To use research to inform dramatic exploration. To work as a group to explore sensitive issues.
NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS	<p>Knowledge and Understanding About Becoming Informed Citizens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">c: the work of parliament, the government and the courts in making and shaping the law;d: the importance of playing a part in democratic... processes;f: the opportunities for individuals and voluntary groups to bring about social change. <p>Developing Skills of Enquiry and Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a: research a topical political, spiritual, moral, social or cultural issue;b: express, justify and defend a personal opinion;c: contribute to group and exploratory class discussions and take part in formal debate. <p>Developing Skills of Participation and Responsible Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a: use their imagination to consider other peoples' experience... critically evaluate views that are not their own;b: negotiate, decide and take part responsibly in school and community-based activities;c: reflect on the process of participating.
RESOURCES	Pens, paper, large classroom/ drama space
ACTIVITY	<p>Activity 1</p> <p>Recap the character of Vijay with the class: Ask the class to remember what they can about the character of Vijay. Read this extract from the synopsis with the class:</p> <p><i>'A young girl is pushed under a train at an East London tube station. The culprit, Dino, an 18 year old male with a history of substance abuse, is convicted of her murder and is due to be sentenced.</i></p> <p><i>The girl's boyfriend, Vijay, standing next to her at the time of the murder is</i></p>

undergoing counselling for post-traumatic stress disorder. Six months on and Vijay leaves the security and comfort of his family home to go on a relatively short journey across London to the Law Courts where Dino is about to be sentenced.

For Vijay it is the ultimate test of his ability to cope with the aftermath of Tania's death. If he can get to the court by public transport, alone, under his own steam to see Dino sent down, then a spell will be broken and, he concludes, the tortuous six months of constant flash backs, panic attacks and blackouts will evaporate.

With Dino incarcerated, Vijay reasons, he can become a whole person again, his tortured psyche can be eased, he can forget what he was made to witness on that fateful day.'

In groups of 4/5 hot seat the character of Vijay.

The questions should focus on his panic attacks, how he feels etc. Ask one of the group to play Vijay in role then rotate so everyone in the group gets a chance to ask questions and be asked questions.

Share some of the questions and answers.

Development:

Ask the group to write a diary entry for Vijay after he has taken a pill to help him forget Tania. Is it all happy? Has he lost some other memories? What is the emotional impact of forgetting things?

Plenary:

Share some of the entries. Ask the group what positive things come from forgetting things?

Activity 2

Starter:

Do a brainstorm with the class about all the things that they might do to help their memory before an exam.

Development:

Introduce the idea of being able to take a pill that would enhance their memory before an exam.

Class discussion:

Ask the class:

- What do you think the problems of taking this pill are?
- What are the arguments for and against?
- Who would get to take the pill? Why?
- What is the difference between taking a pill and the other ways that we enhance our memories and ability to learn?

Task:

Ask the class to individually, produce a short report or poster for the government warning them of the possible problems of developing this pill to enhance memory.

Plenary:

Class vote, ask the class:

- Who would take a pill to enhance their memory of if it was offered to them?

Activity 3**Starter:**

Recap on the play. What were the key issues? What were the problems faced by each of the characters? What were the ethical issues raised.

Introduce the idea of brain scanners being used in schools to detect behavioural problems.

Development:

Split the class into four groups and assign them with one of the following roles: Scientist, teacher, school child and parent. In these groups they should brain storm their reaction to the proposal of brain scanners being used in school. Will they all have the same reaction? Are they clearly for them being used in school? Or clearly opposed to it?

Draw the class together again and debate the issue of brain scanners being used in school. Students should put forward ideas in role.

Plenary:

Ask the class.

- What are main arguments for and against brain scanners?
- What should be done if they found a child who had behavioural problems?
- Are there issues to do with personal freedom?

Lesson 7 Drama: Improvisation

AIM	To explore the emotional life of the characters from <i>Mind the Gap</i> . To explore the complex ethical issues surrounding scientific research into the brain.
OBJECTIVES	To explore and to devise work based on <i>Mind the Gap</i> . How to create, interpret and communicate a role or character. To use forum theatre to understand different points of view.
NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS	AQA 8.1, Group 2: unscripted work - Theatre In Education presentation; 9.1 Option 1: Devised thematic work (in response to a specific stimulus or theme); 9.3 Option 3: Improvisation (in response to a specific stimulus or theme); 10.3: Response to live productions seen during the course. Edexcel Unit 1 - Live theatre performances; - Newspaper and/or magazine articles; Unit 2 - Develop and realize ideas in response to the play; - Understand the social, cultural and historical context of the play. OCR Area of study 4: Improvisation - Using a variety of exercises to develop confidence in improvisation; - Giving work dramatic integrity so it matches intention; Area of study 5: Genre, Style and Convention - Hot-seating; - Theatre In Education; - Naturalism.
RESOURCES	White board and pens A large empty class room or drama studio

Starter:

Ask the class to work in pairs taking turns to complete the following sentence. 'I was waiting for a tube and.....'

Tell the students that their sentences can be:
Outlandish, realistic emotive or creative.

Development:

Recap the scenario with the class about Dino and Vijay.

Remind them that Vijay's girlfriend was pushed under a tube train by Dino.

Just a minute exercise, class have to deliver an immediate speech, in role as Vijay, on why Vijay should be given a 'forget it pill.' (A pill that would make him forget painful memories)

Share a few of these.

Class then have to prepare a speech as Dino on why he should be allowed to take a 'forget it pill.'

Share a few of these.

Improvised scene:

Ask the class to work in pairs and improvise a scene using the scenario below.

Setting:

In the tube station Dino and Vijay talking

- Vijay has taken a 'forget it pill':
- What happens?
- How does he feel?
- What can he remember?
- What can't he remember?

Ask the class to work in same pairs and improvise another scene this time with the scenario below.

Setting:

In the tube station Dino and Vijay talking

- Dino has taken the 'forget it pill'
- How does Vijay react?
- What can Dino remember?
- How does this change their relationship?
- Does it take away Dino's guilt?

Plenary:

Ask the class

- What are the issues surrounding this sort of research?
- How much do you want to remember?