



Activity Booklet

Learning to Live Together

Sample Activities For Educators To Use
With Children During The Covid-19
Pandemic

For Children Aged 4 to 18

INTRODUCTION



The current situation in the world with the COVID-19 pandemic has forced 1.2 billion children out of school and into remote learning modalities. Educators from all around the world have been called to quickly adapt to distance learning modalities to continue supporting children's learning and well-being during this period.

Despite the challenges that this situation poses, remote learning can still be engaging and highly participatory. With the world's current ethical challenges and demands, it is paramount to create opportunities – online or onsite as children slowly return to school - for them to reflect on ethical challenges, develop their imagination, critical thinking, and connect with one another, while still practicing safe physical distancing.

This document suggests five educational activities for children to be implemented by educators in remote learning contexts or in the classroom with the students at educators' own pace.

The suggested activities are adapted from the [Learning to Live Together: An Activity Booklet for Children during Covid-19 Pandemic](#). The booklet was inspired on the Ethics education for Children flagship Program: Learning to Live Together – An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education, which you can find online by clicking [here](#).

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Objective:

Provide opportunities for children to deeply interact with themselves, to wonder why and how things happen, and to acknowledge how they feel, their ideas, reflections and memories, while expanding their understanding of themselves, others and the world.

Materials:

A plain notebook or blank sheets of paper folded as a booklet, coloured markers and a pen.

How you can do it:

1. Introduce the concept of using a special journal or notebook to the child: It is a private 'friend', to whom they can talk, share ideas, thoughts, feelings, challenges and learnings as they go through the day. They can express themselves through drawings, writing, making a collage with images, or simply talking. Children shall be reassured that it is private and that no one else will ever read it or force them to share what they have written in the journal. Of course, if they wish, they can share.
2. Give a notebook to children or ask them to use an old empty notebook they might have at home; and ask them to decorate it and give it a name.
3. When to use it: The child can use it freely whenever they want to write down a learning, new idea, challenge, feeling, etc. Make sure to intentionally invite and create at least one moment during the day for the child to write in their journal.
4. Here are some ideas of what to write in it:
 - Write or draw one thing you feel grateful for today
 - Share an emotion for the day. What did you do when you felt that way?
 - Something new that you have learned to do, to build, to play, or that you have discovered
 - Something you learned about yourself
 - Something you want to do
 - Something difficult you went through
 - Something they enjoyed during the day
 - Something meaningful that someone told them or taught them.

WHAT I STAND FOR

AGE GROUP
6-11 & 12-18

Objective:

Get participants to stand for what they believe in. To allow participants to reflect on their own beliefs and discover those of others.

Materials:

Appropriate materials are needed to make a line down the centre of the room or playground, e.g., chalk, adhesive tape, a roll of cloth. Two large signs marked 'I agree' and 'I disagree'.

In case you are doing it in remote learning spaces, you can ask participants in advance to have three colours or paper available, and write on them:

Green – I Agree, Yellow - I am not sure, and Red – I Disagree.

How you can do it:

1. Draw a line down the centre of the room and put the two signs on either end. Ask children to line up along the centreline facing you. Instruct them to respond to a series of statements by moving closer to the sign that matches their opinion, agree or disagree.
2. In case you are doing it through remote learning, instruct participants that you will play a game and that you will read a series of statements and that, as you finish reading, they shall raise the green paper if they agree, the yellow in case they are not sure and the red if they disagree.
3. Reassure children that, as you discuss the statements, they are free to change their minds and move place/ change the colour of the paper.
4. Read out a few statements — **here are some examples for ages 6-11**
 - All children should be able to go to school
 - During an emergency, children should not be allowed to go to school
 - Children can only learn in school
 - All children should have access to learning while not attending school
 - During this time everyone should keep physical distance from others to avoid further spread of the coronavirus
 - All children should live with their families
 - All children live in peaceful families
 - Everyone should protect and respect the environment
 - I do not cause harm to the planet



How you can do it: (cont.)

5. Read out a few statements — here are some examples for ages 12-18
 - All children should be able to go to school.
 - During an emergency, children should not be allowed to go to school.
 - All children should have access to learning while not attending school.
 - People are responsible for their own safety and health.
 - Everyone should have equal access to health services.
 - Daily-wage workers who are unable to work and other vulnerable groups should receive social support.
 - Everyone should practice physical distancing to avoid further spread of COVID-19.
 - Price hikes by business during social distancing and curfew circumstances should be allowed.
 - People should be allowed to stock up on goods freely as much as they can afford.

These questions are phrased so that children may find themselves with contradictory positions, which should encourage reflection.

6. When you have finished reading out the statements, have the children sit in a circle and ask some of them to talk about their answers. Discuss some of the issues that they did not understand or felt confused about, and why.
7. If children find it difficult to respond to the questions, ask them why they think this was so. A major point to come out of the discussion is that the world is not simple and that it is not always easy to decide what to believe and when to take a stand.
8. Conclude the exercise by emphasising how people have different beliefs and ideas and how those beliefs and opinions should be respected, even though we may not all have the same ones.

MEDIA LITERACY: CRITICAL READING OF NEWS

AGE GROUP
12 - 18

Objective:

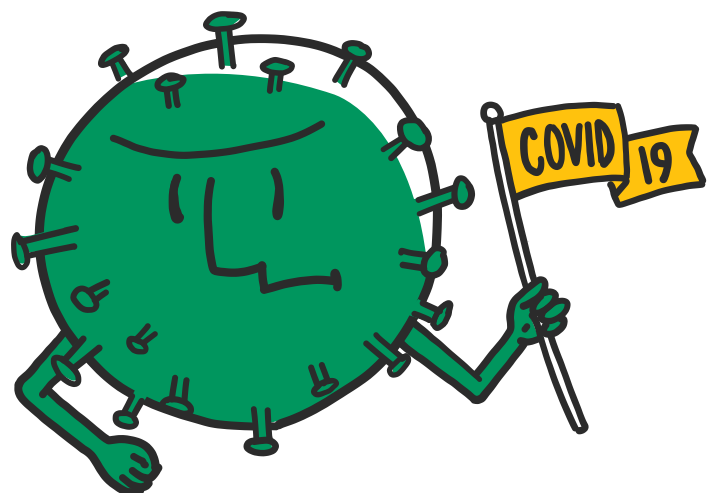
Enhance critical thinking and identify biases of narratives shared on different media.

Materials:

Various news articles, paper, something to write with, and a small bowl/box/hat

How you can do it:

1. Identify a few stories that are shared on mainstream or social media. Include a mix of stories that you believe are factual, those that are biased or those that have false information.
2. Write their titles on small pieces of paper, fold/roll the papers and put them into a bowl/box/hat. If doing it online, you can still have the box and remove the stories yourself
3. Introduce the activity and discuss why critical reading of news is important especially when we have social distancing and isolation, and we rely more on the news than ever.
4. If in the classroom, let children remove a piece of paper one after the other and then read the news item based on the title they pick up. If in remote learning, you can write the pieces in different colours of paper and let students choose the colour and then you read it.
5. Discuss each news item from different angles. You can use questions, like the ones below, to critically look at the news item. It might be helpful for these questions to be written on an A4 or letter-sized paper/ Or shared on the chat box/screen of the meeting software used for the class so they are visible to consider while each news item is being discussed.
 - What is being said?
 - Who is presenting this story? Background of the author/media institution and their track record?
 - Why are they saying it?
 - What is not being said?
 - How can it be said differently?
 - What may be other perspectives or narratives?
 - Who is impacted by this?
 - Who benefits from the perspective/ narrative presented?
6. Finish the activity by reflecting on the importance of thinking critically during these challenging times, and not taking for granted the news shared on different social media.



PROBLEM TREE: VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

AGE GROUP
12 - 18

Objective:

Develop understanding about how social distancing requirements can make some children more vulnerable to violence.

Materials:

A ball, paper, and something to write with

How you can do it:

1. Take the ball and pass it around the classmates. If doing it online, ask students to symbolically pass the ball to a peer. After receiving the ball each student must share one idea about how the current situation can/has impacted or changed the life of children in their perspective.
2. Explain that in this situation some children might be experiencing violence and ask, what type of violence can occur against children in these situations?
3. Introduce the problem tree tool that is described below and co-create a problem tree to analyse the issue of violence against children in the current situation. Start by drawing a large tree/showing on screen or using online applications that support this visually and then identifying the following:
 - Trunk = Problem = Violence against children during COVID-19 related to social isolation. Write down this as the problem near the trunk.
 - Branches = Effects = What can happen? What will be visible for us to see? What are incidents that occur?
 - Roots = Causes = What are the causes for the above effects? Consider the different effects that you identified and identify what may be the causes for these?
4. Ask the students to discuss and identify five things that can be done to help if someone they know indicates that they are experiencing violence at home. Examples: Talk to a responsible adult so they can help as appropriate, or call the child protection helpline.



EMPATHY MAP

AGE GROUP
12 - 18

Objective:

Allow children to develop their self-competency and collaborative skills. Strengthen children's self-reflection and awareness of the interdependence and impact of their decisions and habits.

Materials:

Materials: Blank sheets of paper for writing on, pens and food adjusted to what you decide to cook and have available.

How you can do it:

1. Invite children to identify different groups of people affected by the current situation. For example: children, parents, health workers, daily wage earners. Draw a circle for each group on a large paper/or do it online sharing the screen.
2. Ask them who might be the most vulnerable groups.
3. Ask them who they think the groups are with extra responsibility in this situation.
4. Invite children to consider each of the groups identified and write down a few needs each group may have in the current situation.
5. Invite the children to share about each of the groups, giving them time to really consider each group's situation, ask questions, share their own perspectives and discuss.
6. Discuss any similarities/differences of needs of different groups. Highlight the importance of supporting each other in these situations.
7. Close with a moment of reflection/meditation/prayer or with a song/poem for the well-being of everyone.



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**“May every day find every
one of us continually
embraced in growing peace”**

**—Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President of Arigatou
International, September 21, 2015**

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