

# diversity through the arts

Lesson Plans for Educators  
in Primary Schools



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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# background

This pack aims to offer some simple ideas for using the arts to introduce a diversity perspective to our work with children.

In 2006 Comhlámh piloted a unique series of workshops for primary school teachers promoting creative approaches to anti-racism, interculturalism, and global awareness in the classroom. The project highlighted some of the ways art might be used to promote inclusion, build participation, challenge discrimination and celebrate diversity in today's classroom, with a particular focus on drama, music, visual arts and storytelling.

Participating teachers worked with anti-racism specialists and arts facilitators to explore intercultural and anti-bias education within the context of the primary education curriculum and NCCA Intercultural Education in the Primary School, Guidelines for Schools (2006). Participants also gath-

ered some practical ideas to help them put such principles into action.

We hope that this resource pack, based on that workshop series, and compiled with the help of the original course facilitators, will provide teachers with a further tool for the classroom. For further information about Diversity through the Arts training contact Comhlámh on 01 4783490 or visit [www.comhlahm.org](http://www.comhlahm.org).

The lessons will also be available to download through the Comhlámh website [www.comhlahm.org](http://www.comhlahm.org). We hope that you and your students will find them both useful and enjoyable!

This project was supported and funded by grants from the National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR), the Dormant Accounts Fund, and the Community Foundation of Ireland.

## diversity through the arts

### WHY TEACH INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION?

Intercultural Education (ICE) focuses on nurturing each child's sense of identity and belonging (both individual and group). Children are supported to explore and appreciate our similarities and differences. Intercultural Education fosters critical thinking about diversity and power, and cultivates each child's ability to stand up for themselves, and others, in the face of injustice.

NCCA's 'Intercultural Education in the Primary School, Guidelines for Schools,' is available free to download at [www.ncca.ie/uploadedfiles/Publications/Intercultural.pdf](http://www.ncca.ie/uploadedfiles/Publications/Intercultural.pdf). This invaluable document provides a context for Intercultural education in primary education and offers guidance on policy issues and school planning, classroom planning and language support as well as a selection of exemplar materials.

### WHY FOCUS ON DIVERSITY?

Children are exposed to, and are participants in, diverse societies, both locally and globally, yet they receive very little in the way of support to address the complexities of these relationships.

We need to provide education that meets the needs, and positively reflects the lives, of all the children in our care, not just those from mainstream backgrounds. This will benefit everyone in the class, as a commitment to diversity in education is an attempt to build and strengthen a learning community that explicitly respects all children and their families. It nurtures the healthy development of the whole child and, ultimately, a respectful society.

Beyond the classroom, as world citizens, children need a framework to think through the myriad of ways their lives are linked with those of others around the world, in an increasingly interdependent web. Locally, with over 160 nationalities now living in Ireland, the need to positively

address diversity and anti-racism issues at home is more pressing than ever.

### WHY USE THE ARTS?

The creative processes of the arts provide an ideal way in which children can express their own ideas, values, and feelings. They provide enormous scope for the kind of experiential learning and exploration that is not always easily available in the rest of the curriculum. This pack contains activities that draw on children's imagination and their ability to put themselves in another's shoes, and that encourage them to imagine alternatives. The arts can also help children to use their creativity in response to rigid thinking and stereotypes. Finally, they allow us to ease into difficult, complex and sensitive issues with more subtlety and nuance than might otherwise be possible.

### OBJECTIVES OF THIS PACK

Comhlámh hopes that this resource will assist teachers in exploring diversity, anti-racism, and intercultural issues, mainstreaming these issues across the curriculum, and incorporating the Intercultural Education in the Primary School guidelines into their classroom activities. We hope this resource will support both the creation of a school where diversity is celebrated, and the challenge of preparing children for living in a diverse and multicultural world.

# using this pack

## HOW TO USE THIS PACK

This resource is designed to be used with primary school aged children (aged 5-12 years). It is intended to be useful for teachers who are not arts specialists.

The activities in this resource are structured to reflect the cross-curricular nature of intercultural and anti-bias education. The activities are designed for a range of ages and intersect with diverse strands of the curriculum. While a general guide is provided in each section introductory page and in each activity to the appropriate class level, activities can easily be adapted.

Some of the activities in the pack are designed to be used together, while some are designed to be used as part of a lesson or to support a lesson, and others are extended activities that can be used over a longer time period and across the curriculum. The length of time spent on an activity will vary depending on how it is applied to classroom work.

## METHODS USED IN THIS PACK

This pack uses active methodologies advocated in the Primary School Curriculum, which encourage children to work together and develop skills of communication, participation and co-operation as they explore their own values and those of others. It provides suggestions on how to encourage display, presentation and discussion, and provide opportunities for peer teaching and learning throughout the school. It advocates approaching diversity education with a sense of respect for children as active agents of their own learning. This is not about giving lessons in political correctness, nor is it something we can do 'to' them. It is a process to engage in together.



Primary school teachers take part in the Diversity Through the Arts programme run by Comhlamh during 2006

## STRUCTURE OF THIS PACK

This resource is divided into six sections: one introductory section for teachers, a resource section at the back, and four other sections that have been loosely divided under the headings of visual arts, drama, music, and storytelling. However, many of the activities touch on more than one of these different art forms.

Each section has an introductory page which has advice on the use of the art form of the section and how it complements the aims of Intercultural Education. It also outlines the activities in that section and how they can be used, the age group they are aimed at, and how they can be applied to Intercultural Education concepts and across the curriculum.

## USING IMAGES

'Images are one of the most direct ways of introducing the world into the classroom, however they are complex and there is a danger of reinforcing negative stereotypes. When selecting images consider: Does the image convey a message that can be clearly understood by children? Is it of sufficient quality and clarity? Are the subjects of the image presented in a dignified manner? Is the image authentic or has it been cropped or edited in a way that distorts the actual facts? Does the image present a balance of ethnicities and role models? Does it show the diverse realities of everyday life and challenge prevailing expectations?' (Adapted from Comhlamh's 'Images of the Global South' guidelines available to download at <http://www.comhlamh.org/resources-library.html> or to order from 01 4783490).

When choosing images it is advisable to base your choices on respect for the dignity of the people concerned, belief in the equality of all people, and acceptance of the need to promote fairness, solidarity, and justice. A useful resource is the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages available at [www.comhlamh.org/resources-library.html](http://www.comhlamh.org/resources-library.html). For further reading and advice on how to use images in the



Participants mix colour during the Diversity Through the Arts programme run by Comhlamh in 2006

## IDENTIFYING RACISM

*"...a serious impediment to tackling the problem of racism in Europe is the broad denial that racism exists at all."*

– Mary Robinson, as High Commissioner for Human Rights

In Ireland the assumption is often made that racism only reared its ugly head with the arrival of significant numbers of refugees to the country in the late 1990s. ('Significant', in 1997, meant a total of 3,500 people within the asylum process — approximately 0.1% of the population at the time). The notion that refugees brought racism to Ireland suggests a belief that racism is actually caused by its victims.

The truth, however uncomfortable we find it, is that racism has been a part of life here for generations. The increased diversity in Irish society may have magnified and intensified its expression, but racism is home grown, and 'victim-blaming' is an obstacle that needs to be overcome if we are to deal with it effectively.

## RACISM AS A KEY DEVELOPMENT ISSUE

Racism is underpinned by the bogus, and relatively recent, notion that human beings can be neatly categorised according to a hierarchy of separate 'races', each with distinct physical, moral and social characteristics.

From its conception, it has been a vital aspect of the colonialism and predatory economies through which Europe and North America 'developed'. 'Race' was conceived to justify invasion, slavery, genocide, exploitation and white people's entitlement to plunder the world. It reinforced a 'God given' sense of superiority and lent an allegedly objective scientific validity to the ruthless treatment of the Global South.

The theory of separate 'races' has since been completely discredited. However, the concept has been difficult to shake. Global relations are still characterised by gross exploitation of Southern nations and peoples for the enrichment of the few. Racism is still used to legitimise invasions, land-grabs, resource-theft and torture. It is used to label those who resist as inherently violent terrorists. It is used to make the system appear less offensive, less damning to those who profit from it. Us! It enables us, the 20% of us who consume over 80% of the world's resources, to see the situation as somehow regrettable, but natural.

## BARRIERS TO CHALLENGING RACISM

*"Children are too young to hear about racism. I don't want to shatter their innocence"*

It's crucial for us to remember that talking about injustice with children does not create problems with racism. Staying silent, however, probably will. If we teach children to ignore injustice we are not 'protecting' their innocence; we are giving them lessons in fear and cynicism. Providing encouragement and tools to explore and challenge unfairness actually supports their sense of integrity.

*"I don't see colour"*

Admitting we can see skin colour does not mean that we value people according to their 'race'. Racism is not about 'difference' but about the way our differences are unequally valued. In refusing to admit that we 'see colour' we are surely lying, both to ourselves and to the children in our care, and creating confusion for them. Ignoring difference is tantamount to denying minority children's identities while white settled identity is reinforced as the unspoken norm. What conclusions are children then likely to draw about how we value and respect all identities and communities?

*"Children don't see colour"*

Despite clear evidence to the contrary, many people maintain that children literally do not see skin colour, and is therefore not an issue in schools. Denial of differences makes 'difference' appear to be the problem and puts discussion, criticism and action on racism off the agenda.

*"I don't care if a child is black, white, purple or green - I treat them all the same"*

'Treating everyone the same,' may come from a desire for equality, but sadly it doesn't create it. We are not all treated 'all the same' by society. Pretending we are doesn't help children whose experiences in a racist society can involve intense confusion and pain. Focusing on 'sameness' can result in treating everyone as if they are white, settled, middle-class and Christian and ignoring all other identities.

*"We don't have a problem with racism in our school because there aren't any Traveller or black children here."*

All children need to be prepared to understand and confront racism, whether their school is mono or multicultural. It may be true that the arrival of minority ethnic children to a setting that was previously (perceived to be) monocultural can create issues for educators, and may make the problem of racism more visible – but it's essential to understand that the problem existed long before their arrival.

*"White children will feel bad if we start talking about racism."*

...And minority ethnic children will feel bad if we don't! In fact so will white children. In a racist society (like ours), white children are taught to ignore brutality while benefiting from it, resulting in guilt. Once we understand racism as a systemic, structural and societal problem, we can stop blaming individuals, start learning to think critically about bias, and taking action to make things fair. Both children and educators can see themselves as activists for justice.

*"I wouldn't know how to deal with a topic like this; it's best to leave well enough alone."*

Many educators feel ill equipped to tackle this issue. No-one is expected to have all the answers. Some of the most important qualities we can bring to this work are a willingness to learn, to ask questions, and to be open. It's fine to admit to children if we can't answer their questions ("Let's find out.").

# What is culture?

## EVERYONE HAS CULTURE

All children should get to explore, appreciate and share their cultural heritage. If we celebrate diversity in a way that allows white, settled, Christian culture to remain as the undisputed, unexplored norm, with 'Other' cultures as a kind of decorative aside, we will reinforce notions of inferiority and superiority about those groups. In other words, we will reinforce racism.

Understanding culture as shared and varied provides a number of valuable opportunities:

- Mainstream children 'de-centre' from the unquestioned 'White/Settled is Right' perspective.
- Children from marginalised cultural backgrounds enjoy the experience of having their heritage included, respected and seen as equal to that of others in the classroom.
- Children develop critical thinking and consider how cultural norms are created and maintained rather than seeing them as a natural phenomenon. They ask whose interest these norms serve.
- Children develop 'cultural competence' which helps them to navigate and share experiences between diverse cultures in a respectful and productive way.

## SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

In addressing cultural issues with children, we should be conscious of our own cultural perspective and biases and how these express themselves. For example:

- Who is considered 'different'? Are differences recognised as something that we share (we are different from each other) or something that marginalises one group at the expense of another ('they' are different, 'we' are normal).
- Is diversity an aspect of our practice year-round, and reflected throughout the curriculum, or an occasional project? Are we careful to avoid singling any child out to be a spokesperson for their culture? Have we considered what it suggests to the children if we promote the notion that a single person can adequately represent a culture or country?
- Whose culture and festivals are presented as a part of 'normal' life and celebrated routinely? Whose are 'exotic' and approached as a special (short-lived) theme? Are we clear that when approaching religious celebrations, the aim is for children to learn about and appreciate the culture being explored and not just to enact rituals?
- Are we conscious that every one of us has an ethnicity? Do we recognise white people as the world's ethnic minority?
- Do we recognise that "...people who are different (from you) are not necessarily that same (as each other)?"
- Do we respect and acknowledge multiple identities?
- Do we remember to include the diversity indigenous to Ireland, such as Traveller and black Irish?

## BEYOND THE SCHOOL

As well as reflecting the cultural diversity within the school, educators may decide to reflect a wider range of cultures, beyond those represented amongst the children and families

present. Careful consideration should again go into who is represented, why, and how?

'Multicultural' resources must be chosen carefully, as some still present stereotypical, tokenistic, or even inaccurate images, such as Dutch people wearing wooden clogs. They may portray particular places as exclusively rural (Africa as one enormous savannah) or present exceptional images as the norm (Native Americans wearing ceremonial outfits) or use out of date images (Inuit communities with igloos and dogsleds).

## TO COUNTER STEREOTYPES

- Ideally work on specific countries, rather than whole continents.
- Don't generalise: every country contains enormous diversity of faiths, classes, landscapes, and so on.
- Draw attention to the connections between the children, their families and the wider world.
- Encourage children to think critically about images and to identify and challenge their assumptions. They may have already absorbed quite strong stereotypes. (For example, a child may react to a picture of a group happily playing in a Nigerian village with, "They are sad.")
- Focus on people and their everyday experiences, rather than 'touristy' or 'exotic' snapshots of a place.
- Focus on human beings before animals.
- Challenge the widespread and false idea that the Global South survives on charitable hand-outs from the North. Point out the ways that Ireland benefits from other lands and peoples, (including the food we eat, the fuel that runs our cars and heats our homes, the manufacturing that provide our clothing).
- Talk about the unfair rules that hurt Southern countries and people. Highlight fairtrade as one better alternative and encourage thinking about more just systems.

## CULTURAL DISREGARD

To have one's heritage used to educate or even amuse others can be stressful and humiliating. Educators must be sensitive to the feelings of minority ethnic children and families. Suddenly the very aspects of their identities that are too frequently greeted with ignorance, racism, tokenism or stereotyping are on the agenda for celebration! Celebrating diverse cultures without also acknowledging the discriminatory treatment other cultures often face could actually become an exercise in denial that protects white settled children (and educators) from the realities of racism. Minority ethnic families may come to the conclusion that while their culture is of interest to the mainstream, their community and their struggles are not.

If a child is 'invisible', and cannot see themselves and their life reflected in school, they will not feel welcome or entitled to be there, as this story vividly illustrates:

*"...an Irish Traveller preschool child came home excited and told his mother, 'I was at school today!' The mother replied that, of course, she knew that. The boy, however, kept insisting and saying, 'No, I was really at school!' The next day, the mother mentions this to the kindergarten teacher. The teacher explained to her that the day before she had given the children a new puzzle, which had a picture of a Traveller community with its trailers."*

(Vandenbroeck 1999)



Drama is a tool to celebrate diversity and to encourage empathy and understanding. It can provide a great way for people to learn through experience and reflection. Children can gain a great deal of understanding and compassion through identifying with a person's story before learning about the facts and statistics of an issue.

Educational drama differs from performance drama in that there is no focus on producing an end-product. It requires no script and no audience as it exists only for the benefit of the participants. Children are involved in creating and developing the drama, in deciding what happens next and in solving problems. It involves active learning rather than learning by passively receiving information.

The ideas produced here are part of series of workshops exploring Drama and the Rights of the Child that have been published in a pack for teachers called Together we Play, Learn and Understand - A Resource Pack for language support teachers and teachers in culturally diverse classrooms (see the resources section at the back). These workshops use a range of drama techniques as a way of helping the pupils engage with the issues.

### CREATING SAFETY

Before any drama session takes place the group must feel safe and comfortable with each other. Discuss with the class that is important that no one should be hurt physically or emotionally during the activity. It is also essential that they understand that they must work with everyone in the class and no one should be excluded. You may choose to draw up a contract with the class before starting the first session. The first activity in this section is an example of a game that can be used

to create safety, team-spirit and co-operation. Some children may not want to take part to the same extent as other children, and this should be facilitated while still including them in the activity.

### INTERCULTURAL GUIDELINES

'The fictitious lens that Drama brings to bear can provide a safe space in which the child can develop a positive emotional engagement with and understanding of different people and their perspectives, and can explore the emotional impact of discrimination and inequality... Aspects of life can be explored closely enough to afford effective examination but distant enough to provide safety to the child. (It) allows the child ... to experience, understand and practice the life skills needed in reality... (and it) promotes empathy... As with intercultural education, the curriculum focuses on the use of drama to explore feelings, knowledge, and ideas, leading to understanding' (NCCA, 2005; 85).

#### THESE ACTIVITIES SUPPORT THE DRAMA CURRICULUM & THE STRANDS: EXPLORING AND MAKING DRAMA REFLECTING ON DRAMA, CO-OPERATING & COMMUNICATING IN MAKING DRAMA

TITLE	CLASS LEVEL	CURRICULUM STRAND	ICE CONCEPT
Forming groups	All	English: receptiveness to language competence & confidence in using language	Identity & belonging
What do children around the world share?	All	PE: games Maths: number	Similarity & difference
The rights of the child	All	SPHE: myself & the wider world, Geography: human environments	Human rights & responsibilities
Superheroes	Senior	SPHE: myself & others English: developing cognitive abilities through language	Discrimination & equality



## forming groups

This is a warm up that can be used before any activity to divide children randomly into groups and to build trust and co-operation with new children.

### Learning Objective

That children work and communicate with everyone in the class.

### Class level

Junior/Middle/Senior

### Preparation

Ask children if they can count to five in any languages other than English. Write the numbers of the board before you start as reference for you and the class.

### Activity

1. Ask children to walk around the room, making sure not to bump or touch anyone else.
2. Ask them to freeze and call out a number between one and five (or more).
3. Ask them to call out a number again while listening carefully for other voices.
4. Ask them to get into groups with those who have called out the same number.
5. Then ask them to walk around the room again, call out another number, and repeat the process.
6. Repeat as above using other languages.

#### Spanish

- 1 = uno
- 2 = dos
- 3 = tres
- 4 = cuatro
- 5 = cinco

#### Polish

- 1 = jeden
- 2 = dwa (dva)
- 3 = trzy (T-r-zh-ih)
- 4 = cztery (ch-te-R-yh)
- 5 = Pięć (P-i-ew-ch)

#### Swahili

- 1 = Mo-jah
- 2 = mmBeelee
- 3 = TAH-too
- 4 = NN-nay
- 5 = TAH-no

#### French

- 1 = un
- 2 = deux
- 3 = trois
- 4 = quatre
- 5 = cinq



## what do children around the world share?

The following activity provides easy and non-threatening ways to introduce drama into the classroom. It can form part of lessons exploring differences and commonalities.

### Learning Objective

That children explore feelings, knowledge, and ideas through drama.

### Class level

Junior/Middle/Senior

### Activity

1. Divide the class into groups of five. Explain to the group that a frozen picture is an image, like a photograph, showing a moment frozen in time.
2. Demonstrate a frozen picture in front of the class with a group of five volunteers using one of the examples provided.
3. Explain that everyone in the group should be included in each picture and that a different person should play the child each time.
4. Ask all of the groups to make the following frozen pictures showing what children around the world have in common. The following activities are suggestions. You can use other activities if preferred.
  - A child playing with friends in the playground before school.
  - A child celebrating a birthday with his relatives who give homemade presents.
  - A child who is unwell being looked after by relatives or health professionals.
  - A child having a celebratory meal with their extended family.
  - A child going to school on their first day.
5. Following each frozen picture ask the children to imagine what the person they are representing might be thinking.
6. Ask them to suggest 'speech or thought bubbles' for the person they are representing.
7. As they become more confident ask them to bring the frozen picture to life by adding movement to the speech, and acting out the situation.

### Discussion

Talk about what things the children in the images have in common.

What other things do children have in common?

What difference might place or culture make?

How might that first day be different depending on the climate, the distance to school, and how they travel to school?

For example, how might people celebrate birthdays in different ways, perhaps with different games and songs?

How might the homemade presents be different depending on where they are made, what materials are used?

You can use pictures to prompt this activity and the following discussion. See page 3 for guidelines on using images.



Children drumming at the festival of world cultures in Dun Laoghaire.  
Photo: Rachel Dempsey.



## the rights of the child

This activity provides an easy and non-threatening way to use drama to explore the rights of the child.

### Learning Objective

That children explore human rights through drama.

### Class level

Junior/Middle/Senior

### Preparation

Talk to the children about the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Explain that all children have the same rights. The convention promotes these rights and emphasises that children are important and valued members of society. Many countries around the world have signed up to the convention and agreed to defend children's rights.

### Activity

1. Divide the class into groups of four or five. Ask each group to think about one of the following rights of the child.
  - The right to healthy food and safe water
  - The right to a safe place to live
  - The right to education
  - The right to play
  - The right to be cared for and looked after
2. Ask each group to create a frozen picture which shows the right they have been given.
3. Then ask them to suggest speech or thought bubbles, saying what the person they are representing might be thinking.
4. Next ask them to bring the picture to life by adding movement and acting out the situation.
5. Ask each group to present their mini-drama to the class.



These pictures were drawn by pupils in Donegal for the Together we Play, Learn and Understand Resource Pack. Photos: Ali Leahy

### Discussion

Talk about the rights represented during the activity. How would they feel if that right was denied them? Which of the rights do they, as children in Ireland, take for granted?

How might it be difficult to recognise everyone's human rights, for example children playing and being noisy might disturb other children trying to work.

In their groups ask children to think about the responsibilities that are linked to their right. For example:

- It is our right to have access to safe water so it is our responsibility to use water carefully and wisely.
- It is our right to have equal access to a good education so it is our responsibility to do our best to benefit from it and not to interfere with the right of other children to educate themselves, for example by not disrupting the class.

### Extension

Ask groups to create a frozen picture or mini-drama showing the responsibility that is linked to their right. Record what children have experienced and learned, by taking photographs and or by asking them to make a poster, draw a picture, write a story, and display.

### Resources

See back of pack.



# superheroes

This activity enables children to recognise the contribution of diverse peoples to our communities and to identify qualities of courage and perseverance displayed by people in everyday life.

## Learning Objective

That children will explore the notion of “hero” and how heroic qualities transfer to the lives of everyday people.

That children will be aware of a diverse range of role models.

## Class level

Senior

## Preparation

Ask children to name heroes that they have seen on television or in books and comics. It is likely that they will identify ‘super heroes’. List and discuss the qualities of these characters. You could provide comicbooks or cartoon clips.

Explain that there are also real people, all over the world, who, even without the benefit of magic powers, lasers or supersuits, are also heroes. Some people call them ‘role models’ because they give us ideas about how we could be ourselves. Ask the children to name some real heroes.

## Activity

1. Divide children into groups and ask each group to choose one of the real heroes they have identified during the discussion.
2. Ask them to list and discuss the qualities of their hero’s character.
3. Ask them to think of an important moment in their hero’s life and to imagine what they might have felt or thought at that time.
4. Ask them to write a story, that includes dialogue, based on that moment.
5. Ask them to use this story to improvise a dramatic scene.
6. Each group performs their drama for the class.

## Discussion

As a class discuss each group’s drama.

How did they choose their heroes?

What motivated their heroes?

How did their heroes affect their communities and make people’s lives better?

During the discussion point out that real heroes are people who are brave, even when they feel afraid; who try really hard to make wrong things right; who care about others and themselves; and who work really hard, for a long time, for their dream of making the world a safer and fairer place for all of us.

Remind them that real heroes, unlike the ‘super’ variety (who often seem to work alone) know how important it is to work together. Although someone might become famous for doing a special thing to help their community, there are many people who work together to help and work for that same dream. Discuss how people working together can make a real difference in the world.

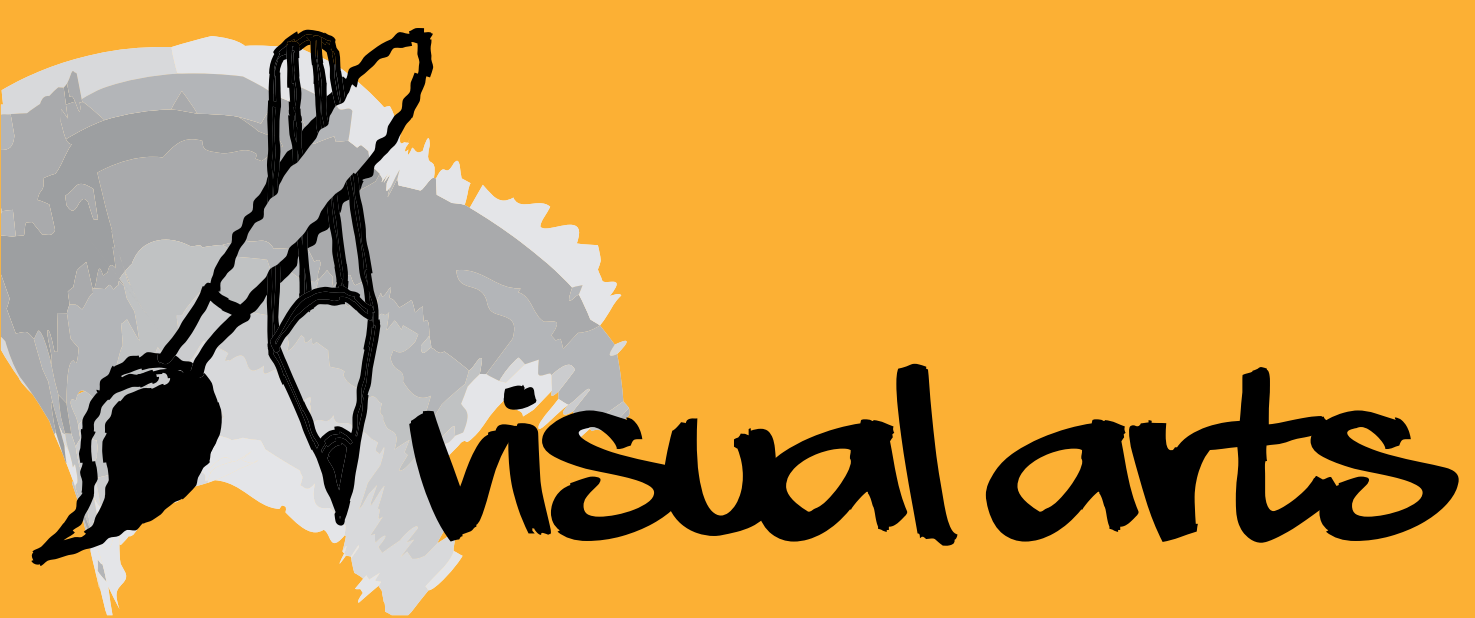
## Extension

For children to see themselves as activists they need inspiration and role models. However, profiles of heroes and prominent figures often neglect the contribution of people outside of the white, male, Northern mainstream. Even beyond the obvious examples of Dr. Martin Luther King (15 January), Gandhi (2 October), Nelson Mandela (18 July), Aung San Suu Kyi (19 June), Barack Obama (4 August), and Bishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu (7 October) there are so many opportunities to correct this imbalance by highlighting the work of inspirational individuals and movements at home and around the world.

Celebrate birthdays, or other significant days, of heroes and activists by talking about their achievements, dressing up or acting out mini-dramas. Create a gallery or calendar of heroes by drawing, painting or cutting out pictures, framing them with tinfoil, and displaying them with captions or short life-stories.

## Resources

See back of pack.



The Visual arts curriculum emphasises three starting points for the child’s art activities: the child’s own experience, the child’s imagination, and the child’s observations. All are central to establishing children’s view of their own identity and of the diversity that surrounds them. The following activities begin to explore children’s perceptions of identity and diversity through art.

### INTERCULTURAL GUIDELINES

‘Intercultural education involves facilitating the emotional, cognitive and moral development of the young person. It places a particular emphasis on their capacity to empathise with different people and to understand the views of other people. Arts education has an important role to play in such imaginative and emotional development. Intercultural education also

seeks to recognise the normality of diversity — showing, exploring and valuing cultural differences, such as differences in modes of representation and in the form and function of the arts. Intercultural education seeks to facilitate the development of a strong positive sense of self-identity and self-esteem’ (NCCA, 2005; 83).

#### THESE ACTIVITIES SUPPORT THE ART CURRICULUM AND THE STRANDS: DRAWING, PAINT & COLOUR, CONSTRUCTION

TITLE	CLASS LEVEL	CURRICULUM STRAND	ICE CONCEPT
Exploring Identity Part 1: Self portrait	Middle/Senior	SPHE: myself	Identity & belonging
Exploring Identity Part 2: Wants & needs	Middle/Senior	SPHE: myself Geography: environmental awareness & care	Similarity & difference
Necklace of solidarity Part 1: Potato shapes	Junior/Middle	SPHE: myself	Identity & belonging
Necklace of solidarity Part 2: I’m special	Junior/Middle	Maths: shape & space SPHE: myself	Identity & belonging
Necklace of solidarity Part 3: The necklace	Junior/Middle	SPHE: myself & the wider world, Science: materials	Similarity & difference
Barbie Girl & Commando Ken	Senior	English: develop cognitive abilities through language SPHE: myself & the wider world	Discrimination & equality



# exploring identity

The following activities allow children to appreciate difference by exploring skin colour. Teachers may decide how many lessons are necessary to get the most out of the following activities. A background of different types of global music is helpful for stimulating children to reflect on sensations of difference during activities.

## Learning Objectives

That children will become more aware of the subtleties of colour through trial and error.

## Class level

Middle/Senior

## You will need

Brushes (medium and small); primary acrylic paints or crayons; mirrors or ask the children to bring photos of themselves.

## PART 1 | SELF-PORTRAIT

### Activity

1. Ask children to mix primary colours and investigate different shades.
2. Then ask them to look in the mirror or at their photo and try to match their own skin colour,
3. Do the same for eyes and hair.
4. Ask children to paint a self-portrait, paying attention to skin colour, eye colour and shape, hair colour and texture.

### Discussion

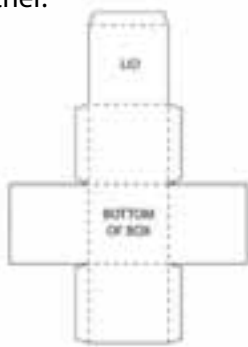
Talk with children about what they like about their portraits and why. If they had to change some aspect of their portrait, what would it be?

What did they learn from observing their skin? What colours did they find?

Was it difficult to identify the right colours?

### Extension

Divide children into pairs and ask them to paint a portrait of each other.



## PART 2 | WANTS AND NEEDS

### Preparation

Ask children to imagine they have to leave their own home for good because of an emergency. They have the time to choose only the four items that they consider most important. Point out that these items do not include people. Discuss what they might choose and why.

### Activity

1. Ask children to name the four objects, to draw them, and then to colour or paint them.
2. Ask children to fold up their portraits from the previous activity to create a small box and place the four objects inside (see diagram below).
3. Divide children into groups and ask them to share the importance of their four chosen items.

### Discussion

Ask children to think about what the items they chose say about them.

How did they feel about having to leave behind everything they owned except for four items?

How did they choose what to take?

Having seen the items other children choose did they change their mind about their own items?

Did they take the same objects as other children or not?

### Extension

Carry out the activity above allowing children to first choose six objects and then reduce to four. Discuss with them how they decided which two objects to leave behind. How did they feel about having to make that decision?

Discuss times when people have to leave home for good because of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or a conflict. Ask children to think about where people go when they can't go home.

### Resources

See back of pack.



# necklace of solidarity

Necklace of solidarity enables children to recognize and appreciate that everybody is similar, and different, in a number of ways. It contains three activities that are designed to be used consecutively. Children create a necklace of solidarity, using potatoes. The learning objective and class level below are the same for all three activities.

## Learning Objectives

That children will explore difference and identity as positive aspects of community through art.

## Class level

Junior/Middle

## You will need

Potatoes; white paint; brushes; A3 paper; crayons; acrylic paints; brushes; string.

## PART 1 | POTATO SHAPES

### Activity

1. Distribute a potato to each child and ask them to study it. They should touch it, smell it, look at its shape and size, and look at any bumps or lumps on it.
2. Gather the potatoes and place them in a bag. Mix them up and then pour them out on the floor. Invite children to find their own potato.
3. Paint the potatoes white and while they are drying go on to the next activity.

### Discussion

Ask children how they were able to identify their own potato.

Discuss how the potatoes are different but point out that while each potato is very different on the surface, it still remained a potato inside.

Explore how humans are alike and different in similar ways.



Examples of potato 'beads' made for a necklace of solidarity.

## PART 2 | I'M SPECIAL

### Activity

1. Ask children to consider ways in which they are proud to be different from everyone else in the class. In doing this, they are investigating their own identity and should consider their physical appearance, skills, talents, personality, likes and dislikes as well as family, relations and friends — all the things that make them special.
2. Ask children to write a heading 'Me, I'm Special' on A3 paper and illustrate ways in which they are proud of their identity.

## PART 3 | THE NECKLACE

### Activity

1. Ask children to colour their potatoes making them as individual as possible.
2. When the paint is dry use a screwdriver to make a hole in each potato and put the string through the holes, creating a giant necklace of solidarity from the coloured potatoes.
3. Display with a colourful explanation, with the A3 'Me, I'm Special' pages from the previous activity and, for greater effect, with photos of the activity. You could also make a necklace from the A3 'Me, I'm Special' pages from the previous activity.

### Discussion

Discuss how even though all of the children are different from each other they are able to work and play together in the same classroom. Why is this?

Do their differences sometimes create difficulties?

Are there times when their differences are good?

Explain that the term solidarity refers to the ties between people and the idea that although people are different and have different interests they rely on each other and work together. Discuss how this happens within the classroom.



# barbie girl and commando ken

This activity enables children to investigate how stereotypes are over-simplified or exaggerated images of a whole group and do not allow for individual differences. Children will examine the dangers in assuming that all people from a particular group are the same, especially where groups in society label other groups to keep them in their place.

## Teacher's notes on Gender

People are born male or female, but they learn to be boys and girls who grow into women and men. They are taught what the appropriate behaviour and attitudes, roles and activities are for them, and how they should relate to other people. This learned behaviour is what makes up gender identity and determines gender roles. These roles are culturally, socially, economically, and politically determined and change over time. (Oxfam definition)

## Learning Objective

That children will learn about stereotypes through visual art.

## Class level

Senior

## You will need

Barbie and Commando Ken or similar stereotypical female and male dolls; toy catalogues; cardboard; glue; materials to create a collage (magazine pictures, natural materials such as pressed leaves).



Barbie and Ken dolls. Photos: Joseph Leahy

## Preparation

Ask children to list stereotypes. Explain that while stereotypes enable us to categorise information and make sense of the world around us, they are very powerful and we have to be aware of and careful about how we use them.

Ask children to list 'positive' stereotypes. Discuss the effect of these stereotypes on individuals. Ask them to think about how the stereotype was created.

Ask children to think of examples of stereotypes that adverts use to sell products, such as the 'mad-professor' or women who only care about their hair or nails.

Display or hand out the stereotypical dolls. Ask the children to imagine that they are visitors from another planet and, in groups or as a class, to discuss what they think Earthlings are trying to teach their children about men and women with these toys.

## Activity

1. Divide the class into groups and give each group a toy catalogue.
2. Ask each group to create a collage based on the images of men and women portrayed in the toy catalogues.
3. Then ask children to make another collage (perhaps in shape of a person) inspired by her or his unique interests, skills, talents, heritage and experiences. These collages may be much more personal and abstract than the previous ones.
4. Decide on a title for this collection of work and display them on the board.

## Discussion

Looking at only the first collage ask children to consider the following questions:

What words and impressions are created in response to the collage? Do these images reinforce stereotypes?

What effect might these images have on young children? What happens to children who don't fit the stereotype, for example, a boy who likes to do ballet, or a girl who wants to play rugby?

Does the collage expose other stereotypes, such as ones about skin colour or the 'ideal' family? How can we challenge stereotypes in our school?



# storytelling

Storytelling is simple and enjoyable but involves extended and exploratory learning, developing a wide range of skills, values and attitudes across a range of subjects as well as bringing lots of enjoyment and pleasure to participants. Children don't have to do it alone. They may develop skills in oral communication, listening, taking turns, singing, writing, rapping, drawing, colouring, clapping, use of instrument, observation, social skills and active participation, while also developing confidence in their own ability to express themselves creatively.

When using this section, remember that every storyteller has a standpoint; no story is neutral. Exploring story is enjoyable and is also an opportunity for children to develop their critical faculties.

## INTERCULTURAL GUIDELINES

'Language is central to the development of cognitive abilities, and of emotional and imaginative capacities. Talk and discussion will be a crucial context for the exploration of emotion throughout the child's life in school. The development of empathy for other people,

for those who live with the effects of discrimination or inequality, and the development of a positive response to diversity will be facilitated through language use' (NCCA, 2005; 80).

THESE ACTIVITIES SUPPORT THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM, & IN PARTICULAR THE STRANDS: COMPETENCE & CONFIDENCE IN USING LANGUAGE, EMOTIONAL & IMAGINATIVE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LANGUAGE.

TITLE	CLASS LEVEL	CURRICULUM STRAND	ICE CONCEPT
Who am I?	Middle/Senior	English: emotional & imaginative development through language. Music: performing, composing	Identity & belonging
Big bang!	Junior/Middle	SPHE: myself & others, English: emotional & imaginative development through language	Conflict & conflict resolution
Whose voice?	Junior/Middle	Science : sound	Discrimination & equality
Farmyard tales	Junior/Middle	Science: living things	Conflict & conflict resolution
Harry Potter: Language matters	Senior	English: developing cognitive abilities through language	Discrimination & equality



## Who am I?

This is a simple and informal non-threatening exercise which may be used at any level and may be built into a large composite statement of a class's identity. The activity itself is contained and fairly short. However, performance might take place at intervals over an extended period of time. There should be an emphasis on creativity and fun.

### Learning Objectives

That children will develop different styles of storytelling through shared activity, cutting across language barriers, and involving multi-faceted creative approaches.

That children will recognize and appreciate the fact that human beings are similar, but that each person is different and unique in their own way in terms of cultural background and modes of expression.

### Class level

Middle/Senior

### Preparation

Ask children to prepare a story or song about their country, their background, or something they like. Suggest that they ask their parent or guardian for ideas if they have difficulty thinking of a story.

Discuss the different way in which they can tell their stories, such as writing a poem, singing or composing a song, rapping, painting, or drawing. Point out that stories do not have to be written down.

Ask those who have a musical instrument to bring it to class.

### Activity

1. Pair children and ask them to tell their story to their partner.
2. Encourage them to use their different talents to tell their story, for example by using the musical instruments, drumming, clapping, or singing.
3. Over time each child can present their story to the class.
4. If children are shy pair them with the teacher, their best friend, or in a group and start with a simple topic, such as favourite colour.
5. You could also include parents by asking them what their children love to do at home or by inviting them to come and support their child.

### Discussion

Explore the parts of the stories which are important to children's identity and diversity and that focus on their diverse talents and experiences.

What was the experience like?

What have they learnt?

What was the value of the storytelling session?

In what ways are they proud of their stories?

How do their stories make them different from everyone else in the group?

Ask them to consider that it is their skills, talents, personality, likes, dislikes, life experiences, and physical appearance which make up their identity.

Finally, ask them to talk about their impressions of their classmates' performances and appreciate the diversity of talent and experience in the class.

### Extension

A simple song can be generated from the exercise, learned by the class, and performed for fellow students and parents.

Record and display children's work and give it to them to take home at the end of term.

Take photographs to display in the class or school.



# big bang!

This activity encourages children to explore pre-conceptions and misrepresentations as well as helping them to express their own feelings.

## Learning Objectives

That children will express feelings about being treated unfairly or witnessing unfair behaviour.

That children will explore feelings of isolation and discrimination, and develop empathy.

## Class level

Junior/Middle

## You will need

A balloon (or you can use a paper bag or an imaginary balloon); *Big Bang!* Worksheet on the next page.

## Preparation

Discuss how we all have feelings; lots and lots of them! Sharing our feelings is part of how we communicate with our friends and family. What happens when we don't let our feelings out? The boy in this story doesn't feel safe to tell anyone about what's happening to him and he starts to feel like a balloon that's going to EXPLODE.

## Activity

1. Tell the story to the children.
2. Follow the instructions on the worksheet and during the story, inflate and deflate the balloon to show that every time Malik has to keep his feelings in, the pressure builds up inside.
3. Invite children to join you in miming this by breathing in or by using their arms to indicate a balloon inflating little by little and then deflating.

## Discussion

Talk about Malik's feelings and, discussing the issues at an appropriate level, ask children to add stories or examples of their own (but not to name specific children). Have they ever felt like Malik? Many issues may arise around discrimination, bullying, self-protection and assertiveness.

## Extension

A reflective response through drawing and painting or composing a poem is an effective means of consolidating emotional learning.



Pictures drawn by primary school pupils in response to this activity. Photos: Ali Leahy.

Malik goes to the school in town. He likes going there because he plays with his friends Ali and Molly. Their teacher is called Rebecca and she does lots of fun stuff with them. Malik loves reading.

One day, two boys in the class started picking on Malik. When he was sitting at the book corner or playing on his own they came over and hissed a mean thing at him.

It upset him but he hoped they would stop. So he said nothing. The upset feelings stayed inside.

*Inhale, inflating the 'balloon'.*

But they didn't stop. The teasing happened nearly every day.

*Inhale, inflating the 'balloon'.*

He thought about telling his friend Ali but he seemed to be friendly with the bullies.

He was afraid that Ali would take the bullies side. So he said nothing. The fear stayed inside.

*Inhale, inflating the 'balloon'.*

They told him he was stupid and that no one wanted to play with him. He wanted to tell Molly how horrible it felt.

But he was afraid that maybe the mean things they said were true. So he said nothing. The horrible feelings stayed inside.

*Inhale, inflating the 'balloon'.*

He thought he should tell the teacher, Rebecca, because she always says 'no teasing here!' But he worried that she might think that he started it. So he said nothing. The feeling of blaming himself stayed inside.

*Inhale, inflating the 'balloon'.*

At home, his mum noticed the change in Malik. First he became quiet and sad, then he became grumpy and angry with his family. He said mean things to her. He hit his little sister. The feelings inside were bursting to get out.

*Inhale, inflating the 'balloon'.*

One day after school his mum sat down with him. She told him she loved him. She told him she noticed he was unhappy. She asked him to tell her if there was something wrong.

He seemed so full of feelings that he was ready to explode. She told him that she had time for all his feelings. He started to tell her the whole story and the feelings poured out of him.

What kind of feelings do you think came out?

Pause and invite children's ideas.

Yes, Malik felt...

... A N G R Y ...

...hurt...

...Sad...

*Lonely...*

...ashamed...

...Helpless...

... **FURIOUS**...

and...

...**Relieved** *phew!*

- to finally get those feelings out.

*Deflate the balloon or let out a long deep breath, like a balloon deflating.*

Malik's mother spoke to the teacher about all these feelings and Rebecca spoke to the children who were bullying him. They thought about how it felt for Malik to be bullied and they spoke to Malik and said sorry.

Malik spoke to his friends, Ali and Molly. They don't want that kind of bullying to happen to another child, so they want you to remember:

"There are people who can help. Find someone you trust and tell them how you feel"



## whose voice?

This game provides a gentle way to begin talking about how messages and ideas, especially those about other people, can be distorted, and how this can be hurtful. It reminds that you need to go to the source to really know what was said or what a person is like.

### Learning Objective

That children investigate how the image of an individual or a group can be distorted and learn to question second hand judgements.

### Class level

Junior/Middle

### You will need

A kitchen paper roll cut in half

### Activity

1. Sitting with the children in a circle, hold the roll up to the ear of the child beside you and whisper a simple sentence.
2. Then pass on the roll. The child repeats what she's heard to her neighbour and continue around the circle until the sentence has travelled right way around.
3. What did the last child in the circle hear? Tell the children what you said to begin with.

### Discussion

Talk about how important it is to check where words and stories about other people come from, and if they're true.

How would they feel if something that was said either by them or about them got distorted?

## farmyard tales

This game provides another gentle way of talking about how messages and ideas, especially ideas about other people, can be distorted.

### Learning Objective

That children investigate how the image of an individual or a group can be distorted and learn to question second hand judgements.

### Class level

Junior/Middle

### You will need:

A selection of toy farm animals and the Farmyard Tales Worksheet on the next page.

### Activity

1. Perform the drama on the worksheet. For very young children use toy farm animals. Place them in a row starting with the cow. Have a toy dog ready but out of sight for the 'finale'.
2. Older children can read out or perform the parts themselves.

### Discussion

Ask children what happened in the drama.

Why were the animals afraid of Dog when he arrived at the end?

How might Dog have felt?

What can we do to make sure that we don't behave like the gossiping animals?

Discuss some examples of how stories about children are invented or inflated.

## FARMYARD TALES WORKSHEET

*The first animal, Cow, turns to the horse and says casually:*

"Dog came over to my home yesterday for tea. He was telling me a funny story and when his tail started wagging, he broke my teapot! I was a bit upset but it was an accident and he's going to come back to fix it. So that's ok."

*The horse turns to his neighbour, the sheep, and embellishes the story. [Speaking a little more excitedly]:*

"Do you know what I heard? Dog broke cow's teapot yesterday and probably all her cups. She's very upset but she hopes he'll fix them...some day"

*And then the sheep turns to the pig [with more concern]:*

"Guess what I just heard? Dog broke into Cow's barn yesterday and smashed up everything in the kitchen. She's terrified he'll come back and do more damage!"

*And the pig turns to the chickens and says [with mounting panic]:*

"Did you hear? A gang of dogs broke into the cow's barn and smashed it up while they were having tea, who knows when they'll be back! Are any of us safe?!"

*Just at that moment, Dog trots over to see his friend Cow:*

"Cow! It's me! I've got the glue to mend your teapot."

*All the animals (except Cow) scream:*

"AHHHH! It's one of those terrifying DOGS!"

*Cow and Dog look at one another:*

"How strange!"

*Shrugging, they go off together to fix the teapot and have some lovely cake and tea.*





## harry potter: language matters

This activity shows how serious and difficult concepts can be explored through a medium that is easily accessible to children. It uses the Harry Potter story, however this activity can be applied to any book in which characters are categorised.

### Learning Objectives

That children explore issues of status and power.

### Class level

Senior

### Teacher's notes on Racism

Racism is not about difference. It is about access to and abuse of power. Our physical differences (e.g. skin colour, sex, ability) do not cause, racism or sexism. Rather, the value that is placed upon our difference is the problem. Labelling people as different, creates an Us and a Them, where They are seen as inferior. In the real world, this is sometimes hidden, but in Hogworths J. K. Rowling has created a world where it is very visible.

### Resources

See back of pack.

### Discussion

1. Write the following words on the board and invite the children to define them: Pure Blood – Half Blood – Muggle - Non-magical folk.
2. Ask for other words used to categorise people according to this hierarchy (e.g. Mud-blood – Muggle-born – Squib – Blood Traitor).
3. Ask them to list which characters use these terms the most, and with what intention?
4. Ask them to consider what impact they have on their targets?
5. Could some characters use these terms 'innocently', without being aware of their negative connotations? (Sometimes insulting or stereotypical terms become part of common language.)
6. Ask children if this kind of name-calling happens in their school?
7. How do they think it could it be addressed?
8. Ask them to think of other terms that are used to classify people (as the term 'non-magical' is used in Harry Potter). They may mention 'non-white' (in apartheid-era south Africa), 'untouchables' (in the Indian caste system) and 'non-national' (currently used in Ireland).
9. Mention any they may have missed and ask them how the terms compare to the use of the term 'non-magical'
10. Ask them to think about why people use this language? Mention that it can be used to justify exploitation, inequality, or violence.
11. Ask them to consider the effect of labelling people as 'what they're not'? What would be the effect, for example, of calling women non-men?
12. Read out and discuss this comment from J. K. Rowling [www.jkrowling.com - under FAQs]:  
"The expressions "pure-blood," "half-blood," and "Muggle-born" have been coined by people to whom these distinctions matter, and express their originators' prejudices. As far as somebody like Lucius Malfoy is concerned, for instance, a Muggle-born is as 'bad' as a Muggle. Therefore...Harry would be considered only 'half' wizard because of his mother's grandparents."

Adapted from the activity 'Naming and Power' at [www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org).



# music

Music can provide an inspiring and exciting way of exploring diversity and inclusion in the classroom. While exposing children to music from other cultures will help to open their ears to new sounds, the emphasis in intercultural education should also be on value judgements made about music and about understanding music in its cultural context. Choosing which music you like is based on many factors including identity, ethnicity, age, social class and groups, personal taste, and family. However, those who study the social and cultural aspects of music and dance in local and global contexts (ethnomusicologists) can see no musical or 'scientific' basis for judging one type of music to be better, or more evolved, refined, sophisticated, than another.

Additionally, music has very different functions and roles in societies and cultures. In many cultures, music and sound is perceived to have more power and significance than in the West, and the types of sounds used in music are not necessarily those which we considered beautiful. Exploring these different sounds, functions and aesthetics can help children accept, appreciate and value diversity in a way which is accessible and fun.

## INTERCULTURAL GUIDELINES

'The aims of the Music curriculum include: to develop the child's openness to, awareness of and response to a wide range of musical genres, including Irish music; to develop the child's capacity to express ideas, feel-

ings and experiences through music as an individual and in collaboration with others; to nurture the child's self-esteem and self-confidence through participation in musical performance' (NCCA, 2005; 84).

### THESE ACTIVITIES SUPPORT THE MUSIC CURRICULUM & THE STRANDS: LISTENING & RESPONDING, PERFORMING, COMPOSING

TITLE	CLASS LEVEL	CURRICULUM STRAND	ICE CONCEPT
The functions of music	Middle/Senior	Science: sound	Similarity & difference
My music world: an individual music record	Senior	Geography: human environments	Identity & belonging
Sounds in the rainforest	Middle/Senior	Geography: natural environments Geography & Science: environmental awareness & care PE : dance Science: living things, sound	Discrimination & equality



# the functions of music

This activity investigates how music can be used. It aims to raise awareness about the diversity of music functions and to highlight that music in certain cultures has a more explicit and powerful function than in dominant western culture.

### Learning objectives

That children will appreciate the diversity and functions of music in different cultures.

### Class level

Middle/Senior

### You will need

Samples of music that fulfil different functions.

- To say who we are; to express cultural or ethnic identity  
Lambeg drum band parading in Northern Ireland: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1YBMLw\\_7po](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1YBMLw_7po)
- To make work easier  
There are many songs that accompany physical work from fishing to digging to mining. For example, women in Scotland re-enacting old practice of waulking (shrinking tweed) accompanied by waulking songs: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=72sL3Gbr4gQ&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72sL3Gbr4gQ&feature=related)

### Activity

1. As a class, brainstorm the places and occasions we hear or play music in our daily lives, such as radio, tv, churches, concerts, school.
2. Then brainstorm the reasons we use music in Ireland, such as entertainment, praise, celebration, advertising, education, singing lullabies to children.
3. Play samples of music to prompt the class, repeat if necessary.
4. Explain that there are other reasons music is used in other places around the world, such as:
  - Celebrating harvest or other times in the agricultural calendar  
Ugandan children singing harvest song: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxUIPytcmYk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxUIPytcmYk)
  - Welcome songs  
Maasi women singing welcome song: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6QXhoX6or8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6QXhoX6or8)
  - Healing  
Georgian folk song to heal sick children: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxTfkoQLr-4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxTfkoQLr-4)
  - To protest against discrimination, marginalisation and other human rights abuses  
Bolivian rap group using indigenous language and music mixed with rap as form of protest against discrimination: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUIk7YwfORg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUIk7YwfORg)

### Discussion

Ask the children to think about why music is used for so many different reasons. Explain that it has the power to change how people feel and that music is able to represent many things through sound.

Ask, is music used in the same way throughout the world? Explain that in some places music is part of nearly everything that happens and in others it is less pervasive.

In some places music and sound are seen as having special powers such as to heal, to make it rain, to make crops grow, and to contact spirits. Ask them to think about if music affects them, and how so.

In what ways do they use music? What ways is music used in their family? What ways do they think they could use music? What ways do they think music could be used in their school?

### Extension

Explore songs from a human rights and multicultural perspective at the Multicultural Song Index website [www.edchange.org/multicultural/arts/songs.html](http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/arts/songs.html)

For younger children the Mama Lisa website features nursery rhymes and songs sung by or to children in cultures around the world: [www.mamalisa.com/world](http://www.mamalisa.com/world).

Note: Parts of this activity are adapted from the 2003 One World Week pack, Peace by Piece, produced by the National Youth Council of Ireland.

### Some functions of music

telling a story | as communication | to feel happy | personal expression | history and tradition | protest religious purposes | advertisements | group identity | create mood (as in film) | propaganda | dancing



## my music world: an individual music record

This is an extended activity that can underpin, throughout the year, the three strands of the Music Curriculum, taking a cross-curricular approach. It also introduces the wide diversity of music across cultures. It can easily lead to project work and may stimulate children to use the Internet as a research tool. Children compile a music notebook/record that draws on their and their families' musical talent and knowledge, while tapping into the diversity in music.

### Learning Objectives

That children listen and respond to music in a wide range of styles.

That children will explore the relevance of a wide variety of music to their own emotions and experience.

### Class level

Senior

### You will need

Samples of different types of Irish, western and world music.

### Activity

1. Play the music samples.
2. Discuss the melody, rhythm, and composition of the different types of music.
3. Guide children towards finding information about the composers and performers, their countries, and the musical styles of those countries.
4. Use the music as a platform for cross-curriculum work in Music, Language and Geography by encouraging children to compile a notebook entitled Music is my World. Notebook entries could include:
  - Favourite songs and melodies of my family
  - Music in my class, school, and community
  - Music I and my class have composed
  - Instruments I can play
  - Describe an instrument I would like to play
  - Inventory of class, school and community instruments
  - Common instruments in Irish music
  - Common instruments in another country and facts about this country
  - Music and melodies from around the world
  - Special places and events that I associate with pieces of music
  - Get Rhythm: Examples of different rhythms
  - Copies of songs and sheet music
  - Description of performances I have given or seen

### Discussion

Much of the discussion around musical experience relates to feelings and emotions and can be stimulated by linking it to other forms of artistic expression such as painting and creative writing. Subsequent discussion of children's responses can, in turn, lead to a deeper appreciation of the musical pieces.

Remember to play pieces of music several times, as familiarity is very important in connecting to music, particularly when it is outside children's normal range of listening.

Encouraging children to respond, as they feel ready, is usually more productive than trying to lead by directed questions.

By linking musical pieces to countries, movements and historical periods, there is also an opportunity to expand children's understanding of history and geography in a way that they will easily recall.

### Extension

Keep the notebook entries on the computer and print them at the end of the year to provide evidence of learning as well as a powerful statement of individual preference, approach and identity. This can also be used as a teaching resource for future classes. Link with a class in another country to exchange music and musical project work.

### Resources

See back of pack.



## sounds in the rainforest

This activity can be used as a warm up to establish group rapport and improve listening skills. It can be used to introduce work on rainforests and the Baka people.

### Learning Objective

That children investigate and experience a sense of rhythm.

That children establish group rapport through listening and creating music.

### Class level

Middle/Senior

### Activity

1. Ask children to sit on a chair in a circle, with their feet on the ground and their hands free.
2. Explain that a sound message will be passed around the group.
3. The teacher will make a sound, and the person on their right will copy them, and so on around the group.
4. The person to the right of the teacher must copy the action/sound the teacher is doing and continue to make the sound until the teacher stops or changes movement, in which case, they are to do the same.
5. The actions are as follows:

Rub hands together → Click fingers → Clap → Pat thighs → Pat thighs and stomp feet → Stomp feet only → Clap → Click fingers → Rub hands together → Sigh

### Discussion

Ask the children, did they find it hard or easy? Did the sound remind them of anything? Did they concentrate more on looking at what the others' were doing or listening to what was happening?

Repeat the activity if necessary encouraging the children to listen and without allowing any talking during the activity.

Explain that it sounded like a rainstorm in a rainforest. Ask them to imagine what it would be like to live in a rainforest. What are some of the sounds they would hear around them? They might suggest: insects, gurgling water, monkey cries, bird song, leaves rustling, people singing, food being pounded and so on. Explain that different animals and birds live at different levels of the forest, some on the forest floor and some on the top of the canopies.

Ask the children to think about if the hunters can see them, and if not, how do they find the animals they are hunting. The answer is: by listening.

A people of hunters and gatherers, Baka Pygmies live in the rain forest of Cameroon, Gabon and Congo in Africa. Baka people have much more developed hearing than us, because they use it more. In fact, many cultures around the world consider sound to be very important, because they believe that powerful energy is contained in sound and sometimes that spirits are in sound. In Ireland and Western cultures, we usually use our sight more than our hearing. For example, when you understand someone you say 'I see'.

The music of the pygmies of the rainforests of central Africa reflects the sounds of the rainforest, because often there are lots of sounds in the music at the same time, just like there are lots of sounds in the rainforest at the same time.

### Extension

Explore the lives of the Baka and other central African pygmy groups and their music. Use some of the recordings below to further develop children's awareness of the Baka and their musical culture. Use this activity as a way to introduce issue of deforestation, explaining that the Baka and their culture (and music) may disappear soon if deforestation continues.

### Resources

See back of pack.

## DRAMA

### RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

[www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pdfs/NCD-poster\\_e.pdf](http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pdfs/NCD-poster_e.pdf) UN Convention on the rights of the child in child friendly language.

[www.kidsrights.ie](http://www.kidsrights.ie) Unicef's site allows primary school kids in Ireland children to find out all about their rights and the rights of children living across the world. Lots of useful background information for teachers and parents too.

[www.amnesty.ie/live/irish/default.asp](http://www.amnesty.ie/live/irish/default.asp) Amnesty International's Irish Section has an extensive human rights education section for primary schools which includes information on their current resources, events, campaigns and relevant links.

[www.savethechildren.org.uk](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk) See Save the Children's many resources for teachers on human rights and other issues. Wide selection of downloadable material.

[www.oxfam.org.uk/education](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education) A range of activities around Human Rights issues lessons. Full series of lesson plans which explore the difference between wants, needs, and rights for ages 8-10. Activities include designing a poster, debating the issues, and writing letters in support of children's rights.

### SUPERHEROES

Civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday is celebrated as a national US holiday on the 3rd Monday of January. Stevie Wonder's song, 'Happy Birthday', was written to mark this occasion.

On December 1st celebrate the anniversary of Rosa Parks' refusal to obey an order from the bus driver that she give up her seat for a white passenger. This sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and Parks became an international icon of resistance to racial segregation.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's birthday, October 2nd, is a national holiday in India and the UN International Day of Non-violence in recognition of his example of non-violent action for civil rights. More examples from [www.myhero.com](http://www.myhero.com).

You could also celebrate Roma heroes like Joaquin Cortes, and Traveller heroes like weight lifter Anthony Mc Donagh, playwright and campaigner Rosaleen Mcdonagh, actor Michael Collins, and spokesperson for Traveller rights, Martin Collins.

It's also crucial for white children to highlight the contribution of white activists to equality. For example the abolitionist John Brown, suffragette Jessie Daniel Ames, the human rights activist Rachel Corrie, and Mary Manning and the Dunnes Stores strikers.

## VISUAL ART

### GENERAL

[www.irespect.net/schools/index](http://www.irespect.net/schools/index) A great website with good links and resources, such as making 'talking books' and ways of supporting children whose first language is not English.

[www.creativecommunities.org.uk](http://www.creativecommunities.org.uk) This site contains an interesting section on citizenship and diversity and good links to a variety of projects.

[www.makingbooks.com/teachersresources.shtml](http://www.makingbooks.com/teachersresources.shtml) This site contains lots of information on books about bookmaking and instructions on making several kinds of simple books with kids.

### EXPLORING IDENTITY

**Our World Our Future** Resource on development for Senior Primary Geography, Irish Aid, Activity Book 2007. Its focus is on geography but it can be used for a cross curriculum approach. Download at: [www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=844](http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=844)

**Where is home? An Educational Resource on Refugees in International and Irish Perspective** This resource explores three key areas: 'Imaging Global Migration' – why do people flee? Why do refugees come to Ireland? It includes 'Take a Step Forward' (role play) and 'Could You Go There?', a research exercise. Download at: [www.calypso.ie/links.html](http://www.calypso.ie/links.html)

**Global Communities** Free, downloadable, educational resource packs. These packs are filled with loads of activity ideas, up to date information, inspiring case studies and suggestions for further resources and sources of information. Download at: [www.refugeeweek.org.uk/InfoCentre/resources-on-refugees/educational-resources/global.htm](http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/InfoCentre/resources-on-refugees/educational-resources/global.htm)

**One day we had to run** by Sybella Wilks (1997), Evan Brothers Ltd with UNHCR and Save the Children. [www.unhcr.org/help/HELP/46812ca72.html](http://www.unhcr.org/help/HELP/46812ca72.html)

## STORY-TELLING

### HARRY POTTER

[www.jkrowling.com](http://www.jkrowling.com) To see how Rowling directly relates these issues to real historical landscapes such as Nazi Germany.

'Teaching Controversial Issues' A free document available to download from [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/teachersupport/cpd/controversial](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/teachersupport/cpd/controversial) | Oxfam: 0870333 2700 | [education@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:education@oxfam.org.uk)

## MUSIC

### INDIVIDUAL MUSIC DIARY

**Linking between Ireland and the South; A review and guidelines for good practice** (2006) Download at [www.irishaid.gov.ie/uploads/good%20practice%20guidelines.pdf](http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/uploads/good%20practice%20guidelines.pdf) | Irish Aid 014082000.

[www.si.umich.edu/chico/instrument](http://www.si.umich.edu/chico/instrument) Chico Instrument Encyclopedia has information on instruments.

[www.enchantedlearning.com/music](http://www.enchantedlearning.com/music) This site contains information on composers, performers, and world music.

[www.ideaonline.ie](http://www.ideaonline.ie) Contains further information on linking with other schools.

### SOUNDS IN THE RAINFOREST

**Heart of the Forest by Baka Beyond** This CD consists of field recordings of the Baka pygmies in Cameroon, Africa. There are also tracks on the CD of children singing and water drums.

[www.pygmies.info/](http://www.pygmies.info/) Contains more information on Baka culture.

[www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/worldmusic/bakamusic.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/worldmusic/bakamusic.shtml) A radio programme on the music of Baka.

[www.1heart.org/1heart\\_main.html](http://www.1heart.org/1heart_main.html) Contains information on a charity working with Baka people.

## USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

*More information about the following organisations and other useful organisations can be found on Comhlámh's INDEX Contacts List:*

**Amnesty International Irish Section** 1st floor, Ballast House, Aston Quay, Dublin 2, | 01 863 8300 | [www.amnesty.ie](http://www.amnesty.ie)

**Comhlámh 2nd floor, Ballast House, Aston Quay, Dublin 2, Tel: 01 478 3490, [www.comhlamh.org](http://www.comhlamh.org)**

**Galway One World Centre** Bridge Mills, Dominick Street, Galway | 091 530590 | [www.galwayowc.org](http://www.galwayowc.org)

**IDEA** Irish Development Education Association, 5 Merrion Row, Dublin 2, Tel: 01 6618831, [www.ideaonline.ie](http://www.ideaonline.ie)

**Integrating Ireland** 17 Lower Camden St, Dublin 2, Tel: 01 4759473, [www.integratingireland.ie](http://www.integratingireland.ie)

**Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre** 27-31 Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin 1  
01-8546920 | [www.irishaid.gov.ie/centre](http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/centre)

**Irish Refugee Council**, 2nd floor, Ballast House, Aston Quay, Dublin 2 | 01 764 5854 | [www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie](http://www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie).

**Mayfield Community Arts** Old Youghal Rd, Mayfield, Co. Cork | 021 453 0434 | [www.mayfieldarts.org](http://www.mayfieldarts.org)

**No Strings** [www.nostrings.ie](http://www.nostrings.ie)

**Poetry Ireland** 2 Proud's Lane, off St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2 | 01 478 9974 | [www.poetryireland.ie](http://www.poetryireland.ie).

**Spirasi** Spiritan Asylum Services Initiative, 213 North Circular Road, Phibsborough, Dublin 7 | 01 8389664 | [www.spirasi.ie](http://www.spirasi.ie)

**Refugee Information Service** 18 Dame Street, Dublin 2 | 01 645 3070

**Citizen's Information Service** Augustine House, St. Augustine Street, Galway | 091 532 850

## COMHLÁMH RESOURCES

**INDEX** Newsletter for educators on development and social justice issues. Download from [www.comhlahm.org/media-publications-comhlahm-media-and-publications-index-newsletter.html](http://www.comhlahm.org/media-publications-comhlahm-media-and-publications-index-newsletter.html) or join the mailing list to receive a free copy by email [index@comhlahm.org](mailto:index@comhlahm.org)

**INDEX Contacts List 2008/9** This lists a broad range of individuals, groups, organisations, and networks involved in development education, solidarity, social justice, anti-racism, and sustainability. Email [index@comhlahm.org](mailto:index@comhlahm.org) or call 01 4783490

**Images of the Global South** (2009) Updated version of guidelines for primary educators working with images from around the world, can be downloaded at [www.comhlahm.org/resources-library.html](http://www.comhlahm.org/resources-library.html)

**Focus magazine** Free magazine, articles explore development at home and overseas. Download from [www.comhlahm.org/media-publications-comhlahm-media-and-publications-focus-magazine.html](http://www.comhlahm.org/media-publications-comhlahm-media-and-publications-focus-magazine.html) or call 01 4783490

**Myths and Facts leaflet** (2009) Download from [www.comhlahm.org/resources-library.html](http://www.comhlahm.org/resources-library.html).

## OTHER RESOURCES THAT MAY BE OF USE FOR DIVERSITY WORK

**Intercultural Education in the Primary School** Guidelines for schools, NCCA 2006 | [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)

**Together we Play, Learn and Understand** A resource pack for language support teachers and teachers in culturally diverse classrooms, by Joanna Parkes, HSE- West and the Balor Development Community Arts Group 2009 | 074 91 78539

**A Guide to Good Practice in Development Education and Intercultural Education for Teacher Educators** DICE Project 2008 | 01 497 0033 | [www.diceproject.org](http://www.diceproject.org)

**Partners Intercultural Companion to Training for Transformation** An activity book with exercises, processes, resources and reflections for Intercultural Work, by Sheehy, M., Naughton, F. and O'Regan, C. 2007 | 01 6673438 | [partners@eircom.net](mailto:partners@eircom.net) [www.trainingfortransformation.ie](http://www.trainingfortransformation.ie)

**Compass Directions** Free newsletter supporting primary school teachers to incorporate intercultural and development education into their classroom | [www.waterfordoneworldcentre.com](http://www.waterfordoneworldcentre.com) | [info@waterfordoneworldcentre.com](mailto:info@waterfordoneworldcentre.com)

**Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages** can be downloaded at [www.comhlahm.org/resources-library.html](http://www.comhlahm.org/resources-library.html)

**Guide to Development Education Resources in Ireland 2006-8** produced by Irish Aid | [www.irishaid.ie](http://www.irishaid.ie)

**Picture the world, children's art around the globe** by Tracy V Spates. Milet Publishing | [info@milet.com](mailto:info@milet.com) | [www.milet.com](http://www.milet.com)

**Drama in action** DVD and book – Balor Developmental Community Arts Group [www.balortheatre.com](http://www.balortheatre.com) | [balordcagroup@eircom.net](mailto:balordcagroup@eircom.net) | 074 9130424

**Equality and Diversity Picture Sequence Cards** Pavee Point | [pavee@iol.ie](mailto:pavee@iol.ie) | [www.paveepoint.ie](http://www.paveepoint.ie) | 01 8780255

**English - Arabic picture dictionary** by Sedat Turhan and Sally Hagin, 2003, Milet publishing. [info@milet.com](mailto:info@milet.com) | [www.milet.com](http://www.milet.com)

**The arts: the global dimension** DEA 2006 | [www.dea.org.uk](http://www.dea.org.uk)

**To begin at the beginning; Bringing global dimension to the early years**, by Joanna Brightwell and Nickie Fidgin, Development Education in Dorset (DEED), 2005 | 01202739422 | [www.deed.org.uk](http://www.deed.org.uk) | [deed@gn.acp.org](mailto:deed@gn.acp.org)

**Cant lose cant** (2003), Kids own publishing partnership | 07164438 | [info@kidsown.ie](mailto:info@kidsown.ie) | [www.kidsown.ie](http://www.kidsown.ie)

**Centre for Global Education Resources Catalogue 2005** | [www.centreforglobaleducation.com](http://www.centreforglobaleducation.com) | (048RoI / 028 NI) 90241879

**Cross-currents** A guide to multicultural books for young people by Ed. Liz Morris and Susanna Cogland (2005), IBbY Ireland [www.ibbyireland.ie](http://www.ibbyireland.ie)

**Linking between Ireland and the South; A review and guidelines for good practice**, 2006, Irish Aid 014082000 | [www.irishaid.gov.ie/uploads/good%20practice%20guidelines.pdf](http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/uploads/good%20practice%20guidelines.pdf).

Other information on how to link with other schools can be accessed at [www.ideaonline.ie](http://www.ideaonline.ie)

**Our World, Our Future** Development education pack for senior primary with photos and ideas for using images across art, drama and language. Hard copies are available free from Irish Aid | [www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=844](http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=844) | 01 408 2000

**Arundhati Roy, 'The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire'** (2004)

**Celebrate! An Anti-Bias Guide to Enjoying Holidays in Early Childhood Programs** by Julie Bisson.

**Discovering Drama: Theory and Practice for Irish Primary Schools** Murphy, P & O'Keeffe's M (2006)

**The View of the Yeti** Bringing up children in the spirit of self awareness and kindredship, by Michel Vandebroek 1999, Bernard van Leer Foundation | [www.bernardvanleer.org](http://www.bernardvanleer.org)

# contributors

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**Owen MacCarthaigh** has many years of teaching experience with minority children. He has produced teaching resources for Irish Aid, Scoilnet, Amnesty International, the Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education and other providers of equality/human rights/development education. He currently coordinates a government-funded programme to support interagency cooperation in service delivery to Travellers.

**Rachel Dempsey** is a singer, ethnomusicology graduate and development educator. She runs a project called Global Harmonies which aims to use voice, singing and world music as tools to empower people working for personal, local and global transformation, to foster increased intercultural understanding and to inspire people to take action to build a fairer world. She delivers workshops called Musical Journeys in schools and has previously worked for Compass: Development Education in the Primary School | [www.dublin.ie/globalharmonies](http://www.dublin.ie/globalharmonies) | [www.dublin.ie/websites/musicaljourneys](http://www.dublin.ie/websites/musicaljourneys) | [racheldempsey@dublin.ie](mailto:racheldempsey@dublin.ie)

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**Yemisi Ojo** (Yemi) is the Founder & President of IACI (Integration of African Children in Ireland, which aims to promote equality and address the integration needs of African children living in Ireland. She is a consultant/trainer of "Understanding & Celebrating Cultural Diversity" through various means such as: storytelling, fashion, cookery, presentation/facilitation, talk. Other training include: capacity building/personal development, positive parenting skill, stress management, intercultural childcare and so on | [iaciyouth@gmail.com](mailto:iaciyouth@gmail.com) | 086 4023953 | 087 6293828 | 085 7782857



**'Exploring Identity'**

These pictures were drawn by participants of Comhlámh's 2006 Diversity through the Arts programme. Photos: Roni Sidon

This resource pack highlights some of the ways the arts could be used to promote inclusion, build participation, challenge discrimination and celebrate diversity in today's classroom, with a particular focus on drama, music, visual arts and storytelling. The creative processes of the arts provide an ideal way in which children can express their own ideas, values, and feelings. They provide enormous scope for experiential learning and exploration.

This resource pack contains background information, activities that are linked to the curriculum and the NCCA's Intercultural Guidelines, and further resources. The activities draw on children's imagination, and their ability to put themselves in another's shoes and to imagine alternatives. The arts can enable children to use their creativity in response to rigid thinking and stereotypes. They allow educators to ease into complex and sensitive issues with more subtlety and nuance than might otherwise be possible. More copies can be ordered from the address below.



**Comhlámh**

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00353 (1) 4783490 | [www.comhlamh.org](http://www.comhlamh.org) | [info@comhlamh.org](mailto:info@comhlamh.org)

Honorary Patron, Mary Robinson.

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