

Social Engagement Activities

Warm-Ups

Tie social engagement warm-ups to the artmaking:

- Visual Arts - Experiment playfully with the new medium being introduced and then discuss any surprises with a partner.
- Storytelling/Theater - Open with a simple storytelling prompt and have students share briefly in pairs.
- Poetry - Create a group poem, with each person contributing one word or phrase.
- Dance - Teaching artist passes the leadership of warm-ups around the circle so each student leads the whole group in one exercise.
- Music - Create a group rhythm using only claps, stomps, and voice.

Social Engagement Topics

Create questions and prompts for personal story-sharing that can be shared in pairs or groups, and can be altered to work with different art forms:

- Youth - Where did you grow up? What is that community like? City? Country? Did you move around a lot? Do you still live in the same place?
- Family - Do you have siblings? Where are you in birth order? Are your parents still married?
- Travel - What is the most wonderful place you have ever visited? How long ago were you there? Who was with you? Why did you love it so much?
- School - Who was your favorite teacher? Why? Is there a specific memory you have about this teacher?

Artform Resources for Social Engagement

Introduce and utilize resources that demonstrate the artistic skills being taught in the lesson, followed by a facilitated discussion.

Examples:

- Visual Arts - Share an image of work related to the skill being taught.
- Music - Listen to a piece that demonstrates music theory being introduced.
- Theater/Dance - Share a film or video clip related to the style being explored.
- Poetry - Read pieces aloud connected to an upcoming writing assignment.

Facilitation Discussion (either in pairs, small groups, or full class):

- What are your impressions of the art work?
- What do you feel about the art work?
- What do you like or dislike? What stands out for you?
- Does it remind you of any work you have seen before?

The following activities are broken down below into naturally-aligned artistic mediums. However, all of the activities could be used or extended in any artistic medium with simple adjustments.

Storytelling

Object Introductions (15 minutes):

1. Participants bring in a personal object that has meaning to them, or they can choose an object they already have with them. Any item will do, except request that pens, pencils, or water bottles not be used.
2. Participants turn to the person next to them, introduce themselves and exchange one minute stories about their object. What is it? How did you come to own it? What is its importance to you? Is there a story behind it?
3. Partners exchange objects and find a new partner.
4. New partners introduce themselves and exchange the stories they just heard about the new object they are holding. After the story-sharing, they exchange objects.
5. Continue for a few more rounds. Participants only need to remember the object story from the last person they spoke to.
6. Return to full group, with the final object in your hand from the last person you met.
7. Each person will introduce that person to the group, and tell the story of their object. Then they return the object to the owner.

Reflection Questions:

- What are some things you learned about the people you met?
- Did you find you had anything in common? Like what?
- Did you wish you could learn more? About what?
- Was there anything that surprised you about this activity?

Adaptations

- Visual arts:
 - Have the participants bring in a personal object to be used in a still life. After the story-sharing activity, the participants can arrange their objects together in a still life and use them as subjects in their painting.
 - Have the participants bring in an image of an artwork that inspires them and exchange those with the story of what in it they find inspiring.
- Literary arts
 - Have the participants bring in a favorite book or poem in lieu of an object.

Map of the World (10 minutes):

1. Clear an open space in the room.
2. Explain to participants that the open space is a map of the world. Use chairs or tables and directions to create general areas of the world.
3. Have participants stand roughly where they were born. Have each participant verbally share out the name of that place.
4. Have participants stand where their mother was born. Instruct them to turn and talk with someone near them about where that place was, what they know about it, and if they have ever visited.
5. Have participants think about where their grandmother was born and move to that space. In small groups, they can discuss where this place is, if they have ever been there, and if they remember anything their grandmother said about this place.

Note: In every prompt, if the mother figure in their life doesn't work, then change to the father or any other relative.

6. Have participants return to a whole circle.
7. Share what they learned about one another:
 - What were things that surprised them?
 - What do they have in common with other people in the group?

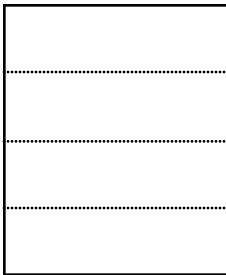
Adaptations

The prompts in this activity can be changed to connect to different artforms. Make the map a color map and then prompt participants to walk to their favorite color. Or use a music map and prompt participants to walk to their favorite music, and so on.

Visual Arts

Exquisite Corpse (10 Minutes):

1. Instruct participants to break into small groups of four to six people.
2. Each participant will fold a piece of paper horizontally; one fold for each person playing the game. When unfolded, it should look something like this:



3. Instruct participants to fold the paper so that only the top panel is visible.
4. Instruct each participant to draw a design on their paper in the top section and just over the edge of the next fold.
5. Each participant will fold their drawing under so it is hidden and the next panel below is visible. They should just be able to see the edge of the first drawing.
6. Prompt participants to pass the paper to the next person and ask them to add to the design without looking at the rest of the drawing. Continue around the whole circle.
7. When a round of drawings has been completed, open the paper to reveal the composite drawing and display it.

Pass Left (10 Minutes):

Use the highest quality drawing utensils possible that most closely align with art skills that are being taught later in class.

1. Participants sit in a circle facing each other.
2. Pass out a piece of paper to each participant with a black line drawn in the middle of the paper. The line is a starting point.
3. Instruct participants to write their name in the upper right-hand corner of their paper.
4. Choose a drawing or marking utensil that will be utilized in the class that day, and pass it out to students.
5. Once participants have received their drawing or marking utensil, offer a prompt that will inspire their drawing.

Examples:

- How does the color blue make you feel?
 - Draw your favorite shape.
 - Draw a place you are connected to.
 - Draw your favorite food.
 - Draw a person who has inspired you artistically.
6. The students can draw anything they like connected to the prompt, but they must connect their drawing to the original line that is already on the paper.
 7. After one minute, instruct participants to pass their paper to the person sitting on their left.
 8. With the new drawing in front of them, ask participants to add to it. Encourage students to continue to draw inspired by the original prompt, but allow the new image to inform their drawing.
 9. After 30 seconds, tell participants to pass their drawing to the left again, and to continue to add to the new drawing in front of them. Continue this until participants get their original drawing back.
 10. Ask the group to talk about the drawings that were made. How did everyone's meanings come together? Do they tell a story? Would they have been able to do this on their own? Emphasize the importance of sharing ideas and thoughts to make artwork personal.