

CLASS & GROUP ACTIVITIES

To get started Use these activities with your class or group to introduce the idea of silence, without explicitly saying what the theme is. The going deeper exercise, opposite, will help you explore the theme further.

What a laugh! Ask for a volunteer – someone who thinks that they will be able to keep a straight face. Ask other volunteers to see if they can make them laugh. How easy is it to keep the silence and not break into a smile? You could keep a league table and time individual students.

Count to 30 This activity requires good listening skills. Everyone sits on a chair in silence. Invite the group to count to 30 – this happens by one person at a time standing a counting in sequence. If two or more people attempt to count at the same time, you must start again at 1. Students can only count one number at a time and must take turns (so the same student cannot count from 1-30 on their own), and you can't simply go around in a circle. Do you get to 30? How long does it take?

Birthday line Ask students to line up in birthday order – but they must form the line without communicating verbally. How easy is it to do this silently? Test their success by asking students to reveal their birthdates once the line is complete.

Charades The classic silent game! Divide everyone into two teams. The players from the opposing teams pick the ideas that the other team will have to act out. The ideas can be anything from movies to books to songs to bands. Use your imagination. If you have decided to write them out, place them in a container and pass it to the opposing team. One person must stand up in front of the group and act out the idea they have in their hand. Remember: All acting has to be done in complete silence.

Compass One student stands in the middle of the room wearing a blindfold or with eyes closed. The other students choose a corner to stand (north, south, east or west – you'll need to write these on paper and stick them on the wall). The student in the middle calls a corner and all those students in this place have to sit down. Keep going until there is a winner. Students have to be quiet or else the one in the middle will know where they are.

Going Deeper

Exploring not having a voice

Aim The aim of this session is to get your students thinking about what it means if they're not listened to by society

Intro You could play a game of charades, or Pictionary, where people aren't allowed to talk but have to get a message or word across. Some ideas of words to describe: voice, silence, justice, campaign, million, minutes, charity, fundraising...

Activity Give everyone copies of newspapers (both local and national) and magazines.

Invite people to go through them and pull out anything they find which talks about young people (You can choose what age to include in this. At Million Minutes we're focusing on young people up to 25 years old).

Once people have found everything in the papers about young people, get them to sort them into two columns: those which are positive and those which are negative.

What do people notice? Are there more on one side than the other? What sorts of things have people found? Are people surprised by what they have found?

Is this your experience? Think about your own local community, your school and area. What are the positive things which young people do?

You may want to think about young carers, young people visiting elderly people (perhaps with the SVP), going to Lourdes (with the diocese or HCPT, etc.), fundraising, campaigning on the environment, etc.

You may also want to encourage the group to think of some of the negative aspects young people bring to their local community.

Moving on Ask people whether they feel they have a voice. Do they feel they are listened to? Ask them to make two lists: those who listen to them and those who don't listen to them. What's the difference? Why do they think some people listen and others don't?

How do we encourage people to listen to young people? How can the voice of young people be heard? What are some of the modern ways to have a voice? What could people do? Ideas about the internet, social media, emails, blogs, newspapers, radio, TV, posters, press releases – ways of letting people know about issues and concerns which affect young people, and the challenges they face.