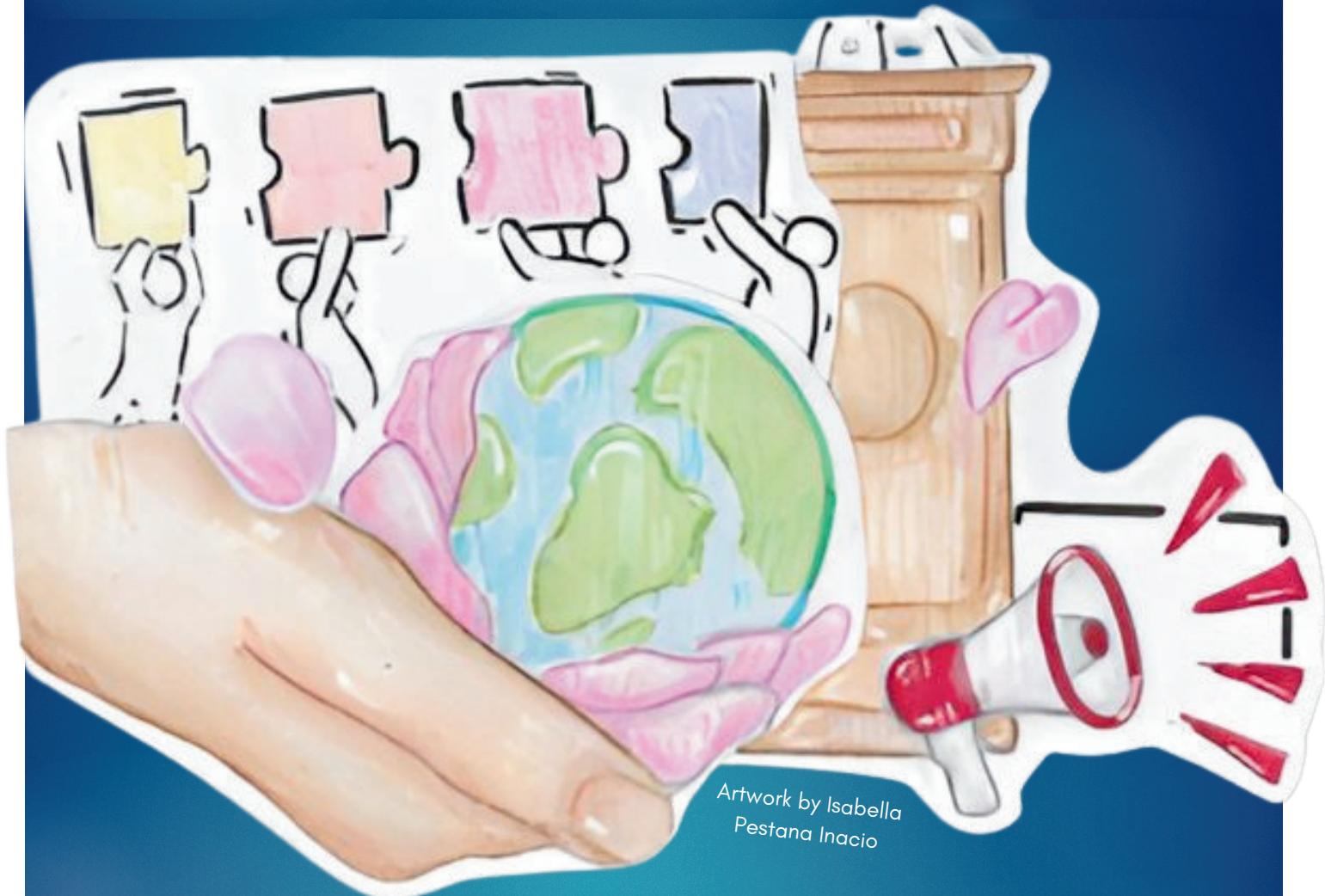


Mercy Ambassadors' Programme

Creating Global Citizens for the 21st Century



Artwork by Isabella
Pestana Inacio

An Educator's Handbook and Toolkit

Developed by Sarah Terry

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Whenever you see a topic that is underlined
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Introduction

This handbook captures the heart and structure of a modular programme developed at St Teresa's School in Johannesburg, rooted in the values of the Sisters of Mercy and designed to equip young people with the tools, language, and the courage to become compassionate global citizens.

While it has been piloted in South Africa, **the framework is intentionally designed to be adaptable for use in Mercy communities and schools anywhere in the world.**

Each of the ten modules in this programme explores a specific theme—ranging from Mercy identity and heritage to feminism, equity, advocacy, and global justice—**guided by the voices of Catherine McAuley, contemporary changemakers, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.**

The programme is **built around the belief that young people learn best when they are invited to reflect deeply, engage critically, and take meaningful action in their own contexts.**

This handbook is structured in two main parts:

- A brief overview of all ten modules, to provide a sense of the programme's arc and thematic progression.
- Detailed session guides for each module, including learning outcomes, activities, discussion points, and suggested resources.

As this programme expands into new regions and school contexts, guidance will be given on which elements can be used universally and which may need local adaptation. These indicators are built into each module, offering flexibility while remaining faithful to the Mercy charism.

Thank you for engaging with this work. Whether you are an educator, facilitator, or Mercy partner, **I hope you find in these pages a practical, values-based approach to global citizenship education—one that empowers young people to lead with justice, empathy, and purpose.**

A Brief Overview:

Session 1:

Foundations of Mercy and Identity

- Students are introduced to the core values of St Teresa's School and the aims of the Mercy Ambassadors' Programme.
- They explore identity, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity as key components of global citizenship.
- The session highlights the power of theatre and the arts in promoting reflection and transformation, alongside the practice of mindful communication.

Session 2:

Heritage and the Legacy of Catherine McAuley

- Students deepen their understanding of Catherine McAuley's life, her mission, and her ongoing influence.
- They reflect on the role of heritage and storytelling in shaping identity and values.
- The session encourages critical questioning of how Mercy values apply in today's world.

Session 3:

From Values to Action – Mercy and the Sustainable Development Goals

- Students connect Mercy values with global issues by engaging with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- They define and explore key justice concepts: social justice, bias, diversity, transformation, equity, and equality.
- Mindful communication continues to be practised as a tool for empathy, listening, and respectful discussion.

Session 4: Justice Starts Here - Examining Our Own Environment

- Students consolidate their understanding of social justice terms, especially as they relate to their school context.
- They creatively reflect on the inclusivity of their environment, using metaphors such as imagining the school as a person.
- The session prompts students to envision how their community can become more just and inclusive.



Session 5: Gender and Justice - Introducing Feminism

- Students explore the Sustainable Development Goals further, focusing on actions they can take to support them.
- The session introduces feminism through videos and discussion, prompting students to challenge gender stereotypes.
- Mercy values are linked with a commitment to gender equity and justice.



Session 6:

Women of Mercy –

A Feminist Lens on Heritage

- Students examine Catherine McAuley as a woman who resists injustice in subtle yet impactful ways.
- They reflect on personal and cultural understandings of womanhood and how these are shaped by bias.
- The session uses journalling and media to foster critical thinking about gender, representation, and values-based leadership.



Session 7:

Privilege and Power – Recognising Responsibility

- Students identify different forms of privilege and explore how these shape lived experiences.
- The concept of privilege is framed as an opportunity for advocacy and responsibility, rather than guilt.
- Reflective exercises guide students to consider their own positions in systems of equity and justice.





Session 9: Identity, Intersectionality and a Global Perspective

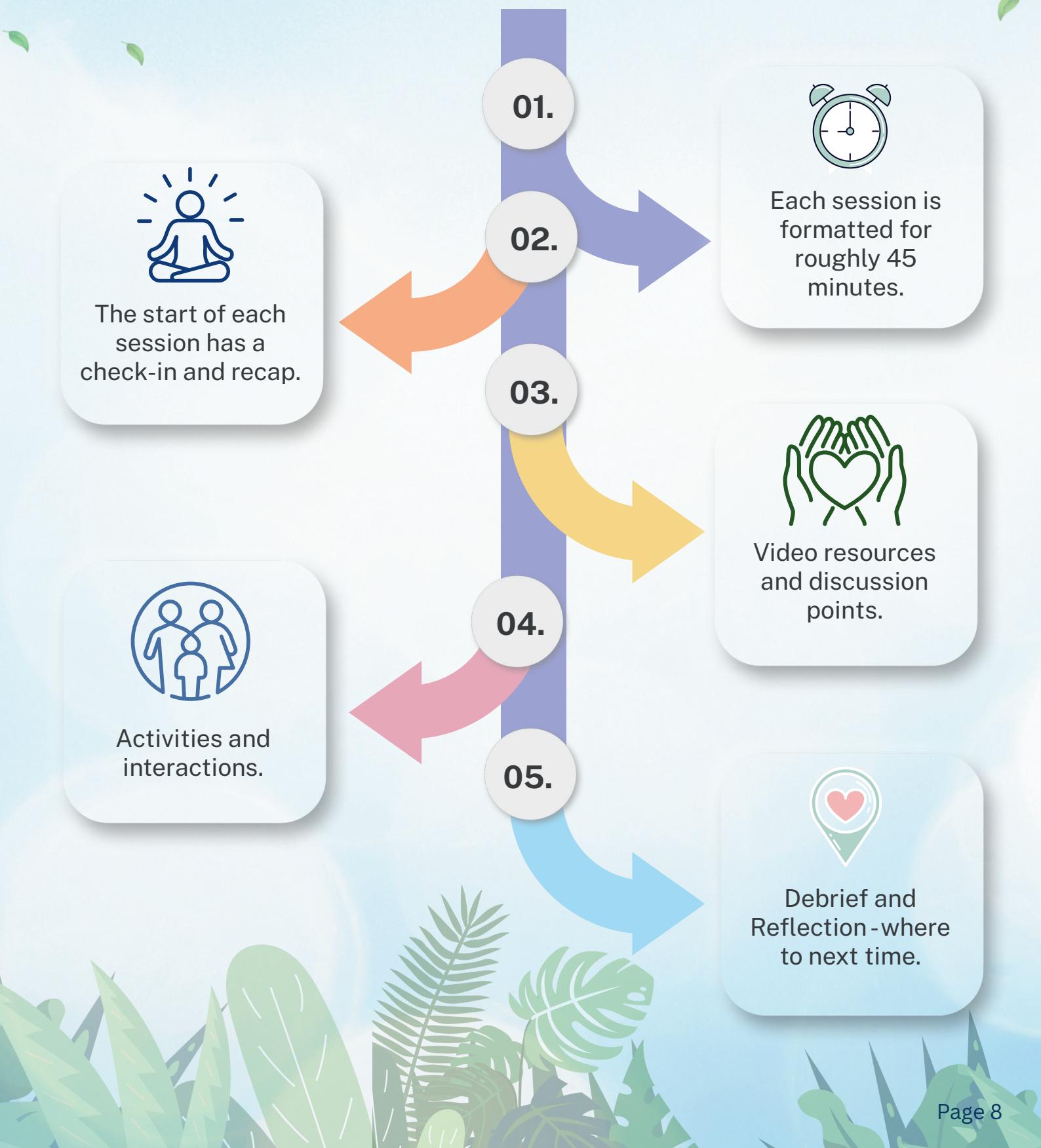
- Students revisit identity using tools such as the “Power Flower” and “Identity Bubbles” to explore intersectionality.
- They reflect on how overlapping aspects of identity and privilege affect their perspectives and experiences.
- Miss Terry shares insights from her visit to the United Nations, connecting the programme’s themes to global advocacy.



Session 10: Voices of Courage – Reflection and Visioning

- Students consolidate their learning and reflect on how their values have deepened over the course of the programme.
- An open forum allows students to share their thoughts, ask questions, and look ahead to their continued journey as Mercy Ambassadors.

The Format of Each Session

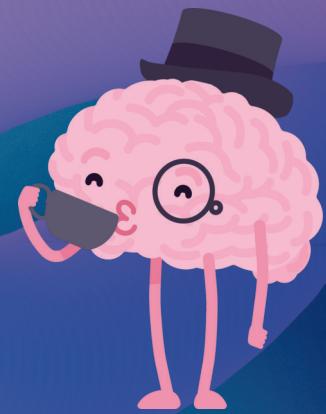


Session One

foundations of Mercy in Human Rights

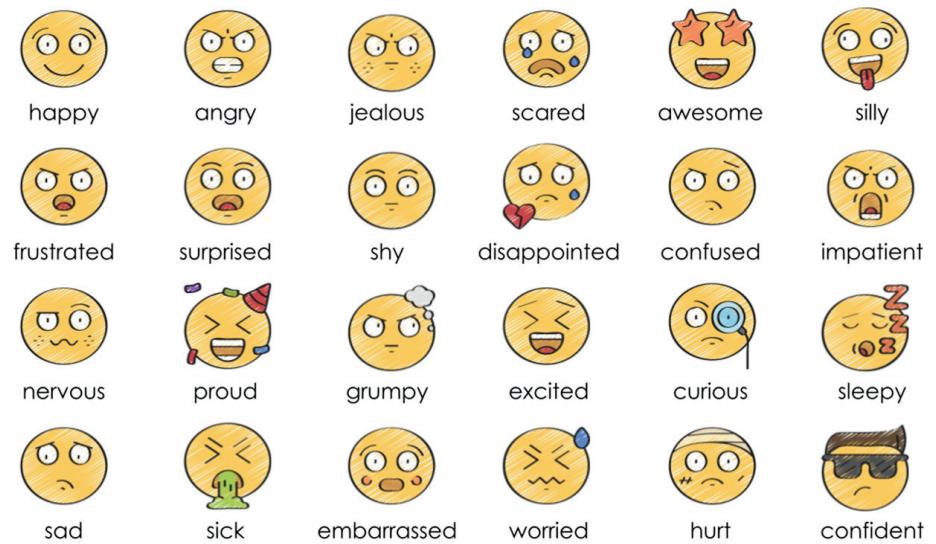
Top Tip:

Always start the Session with an 'EMOJI CHECK'. Or something similar. This gets students engaged and thinking.



Checking In

Right now, I am feeling...



I used this one
from:
<https://www.mindfulpe.com/>

Introduce the Programme Objectives

- To explore St Teresa's mission and **values of faith, compassion, integrity, excellence, open-mindedness and respect for other people.**
- A **commitment to the Mercy charism and values.**
- **Flexibility when facing new or unexpected situations** and the ability to **adjust to new cultures and ethnic backgrounds.**
- **Expanding our knowledge** of the Sisters of Mercy and their work in different places.
- **Understanding social justice, transformation, diversity and advocacy in context.**
- Individual Reflection and Development.*

Of course you can adapt these to your specific circumstances, socio-political context and school ethos.



The Power of Art to Process



“Artists take risks, tell stories people aren't always ready to hear, and hold up a mirror to reflect the realities – both good and bad – of our society ...

They are actively shaping the culture around us, as theatre raises the antenna of people's social and political consciousness.”

- Tara Bracco

“Theatre remains any society's sharpest way to hold a live debate with itself ... If it doesn't challenge, provoke or illuminate, it is not fulfilling its function.”

- Peter Hall

“Dramatic Arts engages us with past and present narratives that talk to the complexities of being a South African. **It makes no attempt to hide the truths associated with the complex issues we manage on a daily basis.** The subject provokes us to consider our individual subject positions and collective attitudes, and **to interrogate our thinking about our historical past and contemporary present as South Africans.”**

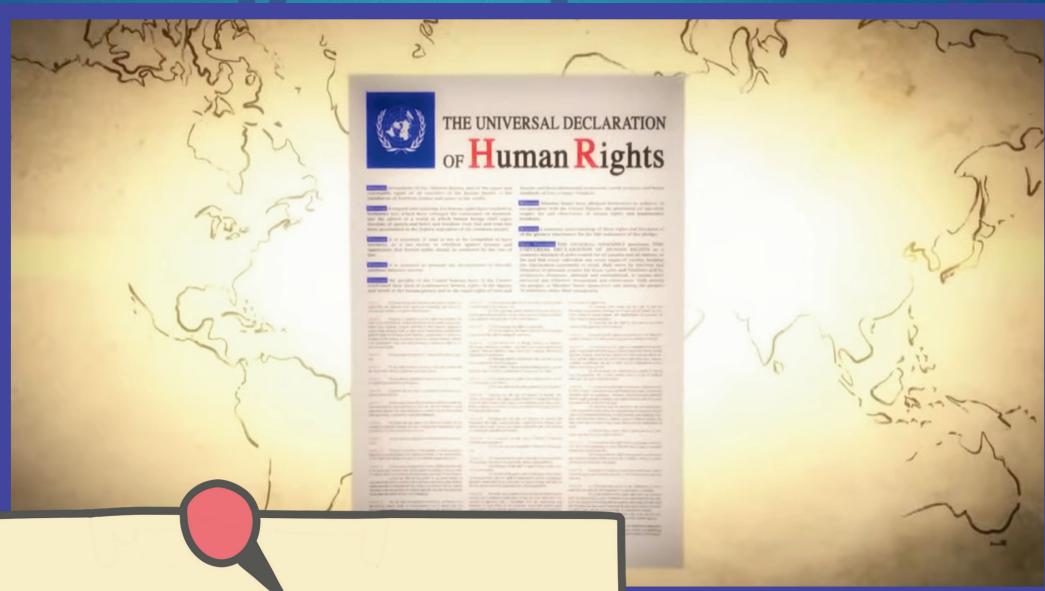
- Dramatic Arts Subject Assessment Guidelines, 2024



Facilitators will then introduce the seed of what we would like to see, tangibly, at the end of the process, and why. This will allow students to keep this in the back of their minds throughout. You might want to find similar types of quotations or sources which speak to your specific socio-political contexts.



An Introduction to Human Rights



This is an excellent video resource titled **THE STORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS**. Click on the image to watch the video.

I asked my students their thoughts after watching it and this led to a very interesting discussion.



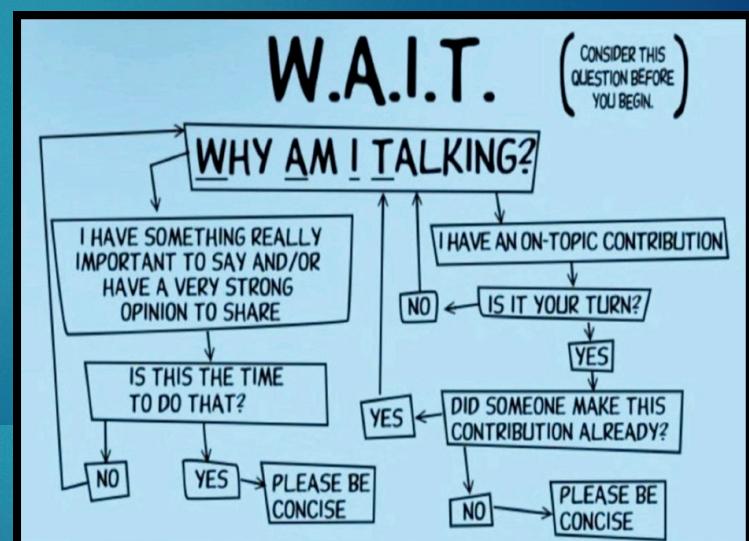
Useful Tools for Reflective Discussions and Active Listening

I found these two tools particularly helpful when dealing with group discussions and reflective time.

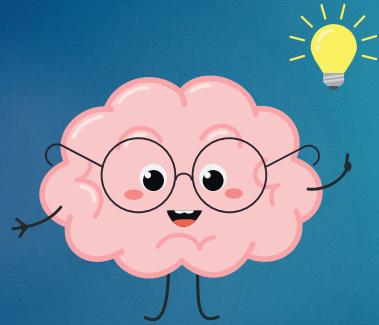
Mindful Communication	Non-Mindful Communication
In the present	Thinking of other things
Genuine listening	Waiting to give your opinion
Open to different view points	Stuck with old fixed ideas
Taking turns to speak	Competing to dominate conversation
Honesty	Hidden agendas
Tolerance	Criticism and judgment

This is
from Jill
Jacques'
*Living in
the Now.*

...and this is
called Why
Am I Talking?
by Tom
Barrett.



Homework for the Next Session



Facilitators are encouraged to set up a Google Classroom (or similar platform) where they can engage with students, share the slides from each session, and provide additional resources.

Students were asked to **write a brief reflective paragraph** about what they had learned in Session One.

I recommend that each student keeps a journal for the duration of the programme.



This was one of the reflective paragraphs I received after Session One.

In this session, I felt very informed especially after the video. I felt I understood human rights a bit more and felt confident that if any one asked me what human rights were, I could deliver. The video was very powerful in that sense and carried a meaningful message. Also providing a small history lesson about the timeline and how human rights came about. Ms Terry explained the slides and video really well leaving me feeling informed and having more of an understanding of how the Sisters of Mercy link and have a massive role in the topic of Human Rights.

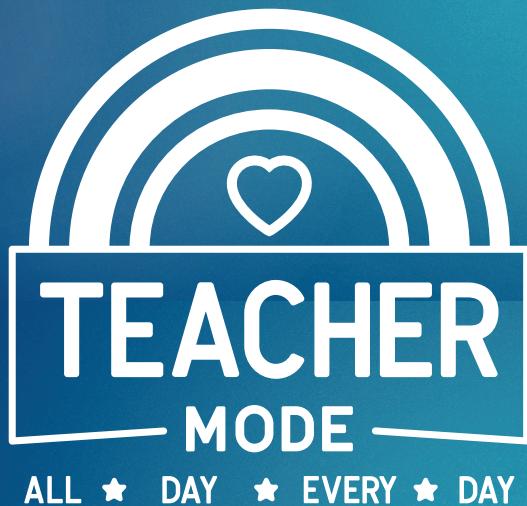
Session Two

Heritage and the Legacy of Catherine McAuley

Remember to do your check-in with your students to start.

Another one I like to do is WORD - SOUND - ACTION.

Students either give one word to describe how they feel, or one action or even a sound. Sometimes actions and sounds can express feelings better than words.



Sometimes you might find that the students are feeling particularly down and you may need to investigate that for a couple of minutes before starting.

Recap and Reflect on Session One



Image Source

Ask students what they remember from last time and whether they have had any further insights on the topic of Human Rights.

Who was Catherine McAuley?



Image Credit: Chris Ryan, Once Films

The beautiful film of Catherine's life is shown to students in Session Two. This can be found on the Mercy International Association's [Website](#). This evoked some interesting questions, such as why Catholics were not allowed to practice their religion during Catherine's time. My suggestion is to discuss some of them, but also to request that students go away and research others, to share with the group in Session Three. The facilitator should guide a discussion around how Catherine advocated for Human Rights in her setting and time era.



Session Three

from Values to Action: Mercy and the Sustainable Development Goals

Remember to do your check-in with your students to start.

Another useful exercise here is ONE TO FIVE.



Ask the students to raise a hand with the number of fingers that represent how they are feeling. One is very low and five is fantastic.

Ask whether there are any students who would like to share why they are feeling that way.

Be sure to have a balance between 'ones', 'fives' and somewhere in between.

Recap and Reflect on Session Two

After
watching *In
God Alone -
The
Catherine
McAuley
Story.*

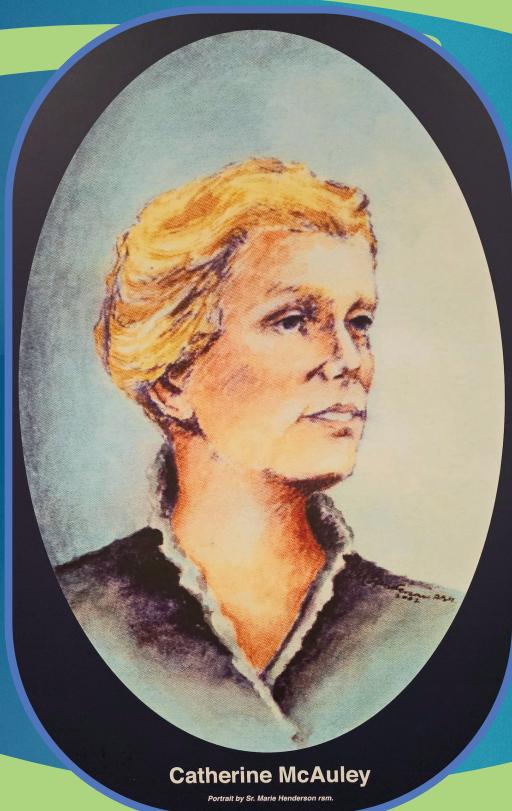


Photo taken in the
Heritage Centre at
the Mercy
International
Centre, Dublin.

Students are asked to provide feedback to the questions that they needed to research after watching the film in the previous session. They should also be given the space to reflect on any further insights about Catherine McAuley and her work since watching the film.

In order to Introduce the topic of Transformation and Diversity ...

I found this quotation particularly useful.



“

If one were to ask (Catherine) to choose her name for the virtue implied in what we call 'embracing cultural diversity', her one word would probably be **courtesy**. **She would not mean superficial politeness, that may sometimes mask coldness and inhospitality, but rather genuine respect for and generous consideration of others**; the kind of thorough courtesy that creates a large space for the differences between ourselves and others, and **that honours their otherness and welcomes it into a deeper unity**.

Mary Sullivan (RSM)

“Welcoming the Stranger: The Kenosis of Catherine McAuley”

”

facilitators can then link...

LEADING WITH MERCY

With the **UN's Sustainable Development Goals.**
Find more information about these 17 Goals for our Future [HERE](#).



[Image Source](#)

This Video Resource is Very Helpful:



This video from [UN WOMEN](#) is short and to the point. It links the SDGs to Gender Equality, which suited my context, being in an all-girls' school. However, the UN has made numerous videos about the goals. Check out their Youtube channel.

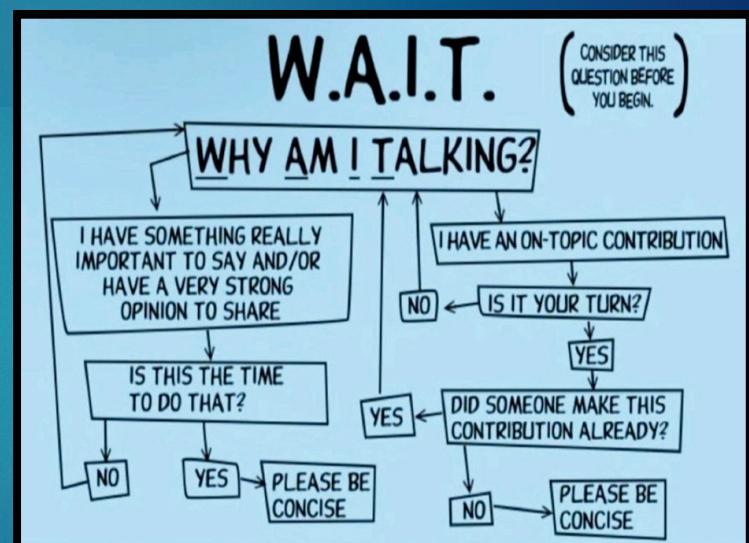


After watching the Video remind the students about these guidelines...

Mindful Communication	Non-Mindful Communication
In the present	Thinking of other things
Genuine listening	Waiting to give your opinion
Open to different view points	Stuck with old fixed ideas
Taking turns to speak	Competing to dominate conversation
Honesty	Hidden agendas
Tolerance	Criticism and judgment

This is
from Jill
Jacques'
*Living in
the Now.*

...and this is
called Why
Am I Talking?
by Tom
Barrett.



Discussion Time GROUP SESSION

Then ask the students to get into smaller groups to discuss what they think the following terms mean:

SOCIAL JUSTICE

BIAS

DIVERSITY

EQUALITY

EQUITY

TRANSFORMATION



HOMEWORK

Look up the official definitions
of these words.

Did they match up to what you
discussed in your groups?

SOCIAL JUSTICE

BIAS

DIVERSITY

EQUALITY

EQUITY

TRANSFORMATION



Session four

Justice Starts Here. Examining our Own Environment.

Remember to do your check-in with your students to start.

Use whichever exercise appears to have worked best for your students.

Ask the students if they have any questions or concerns about the sessions so far.

Give some thought as to what might come up here.

Ask the students who would like to share their research from Session Three.

[The students were asked to find definitions for various terms.]

These were the definitions I used:

“



SOCIAL JUSTICE: is the belief that everyone deserves equal rights, opportunities, and treatment regardless of their race, economic status, sexuality, or gender identity. (Dolan-Reilly, 2013)

BIAS: is any thought or action that discriminates or disproportionately favours one person or group of people over another based on superficial or inaccurate perceptions of the person or group.

DIVERSITY: Diversity means having a range of people with various racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds and various lifestyles, experience, and interests.

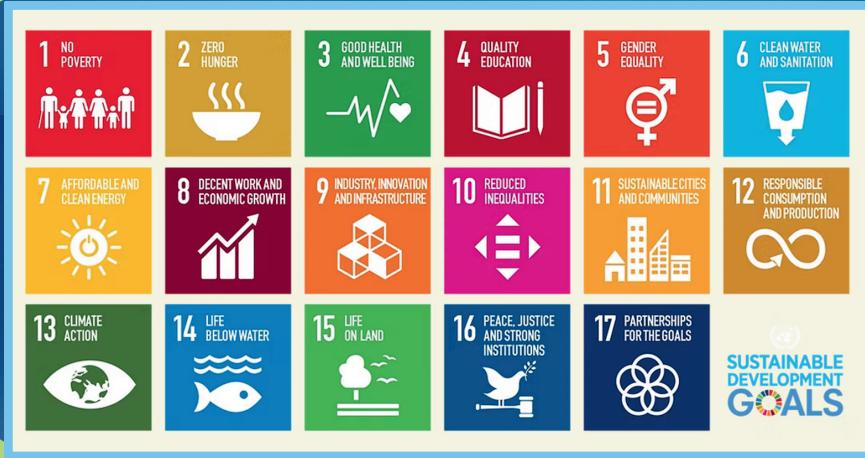
TRANSFORMATION: In a South African context, the term “transformation” is generally used to express a change from the systems in place during colonialism and apartheid to something that is in line with our democratically developed Constitution, and which achieves real lived equality and non-discrimination in all spheres of life.

EQUALITY: the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities. (Oxford Dictionary)

EQUITY: The term “equity” refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality: Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognising that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. The process is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures.

”

Recap and Reflect on Session Three



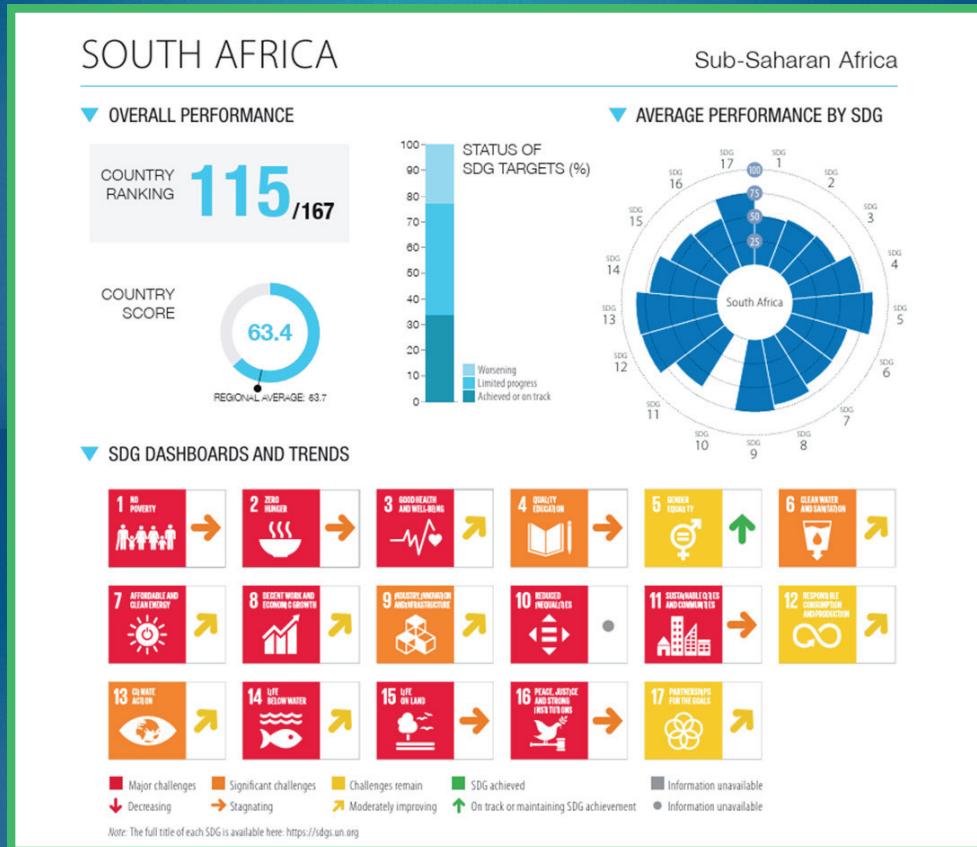
[Image Source](#)

Click on the Image above for the video I used to reconnect with the SDGs.

This Video is titled
What are the SDGs?



I then brought up South Africa's SDG Performance Profile



To find your own country's profile click [HERE](#).

I then asked the students what their thoughts were on South Africa's overall performance.

We then moved onto how we thought St Teresa's, as a school was doing at achieving the SDGs.

It looked like this...
I found visual graphics worked really well for my students as they found them tangible resources to work with rather than just plain statistics.

This is the discussion section for Session Four.

Activity for Session Four

Students were asked to find a picture that they felt represented our school as a person and then to share with the group.



These were some of my favourites



They even included a picture of our principal Elsa de Bod, saying that she epitomises the values of our school - which really touched me, and her.



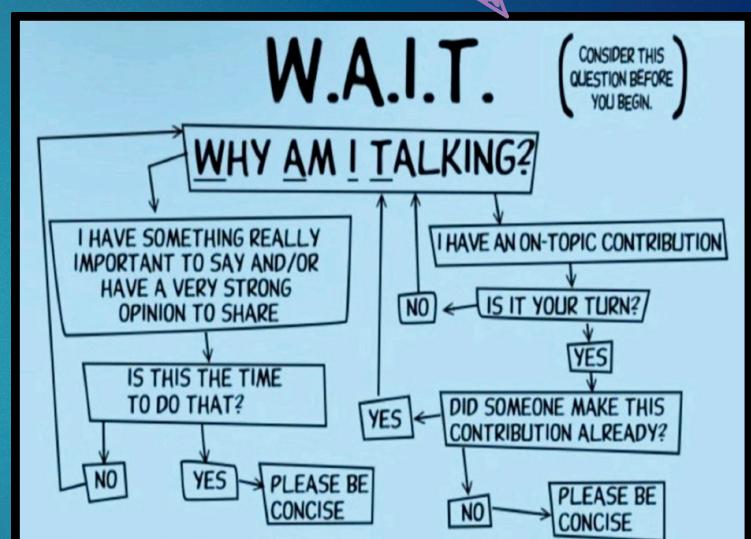
Activity for Session Four

Continued ...

Students were then asked whether they thought they fitted into these pictures and how we could make our environment more inclusive to help achieve the SDGs at our school.

Mindful Communication	Non-Mindful Communication
In the present	Thinking of other things
Genuine listening	Waiting to give your opinion
Open to different view points	Stuck with old fixed ideas
Taking turns to speak	Competing to dominate conversation
Honesty	Hidden agendas
Tolerance	Criticism and judgment

Continuous reminders



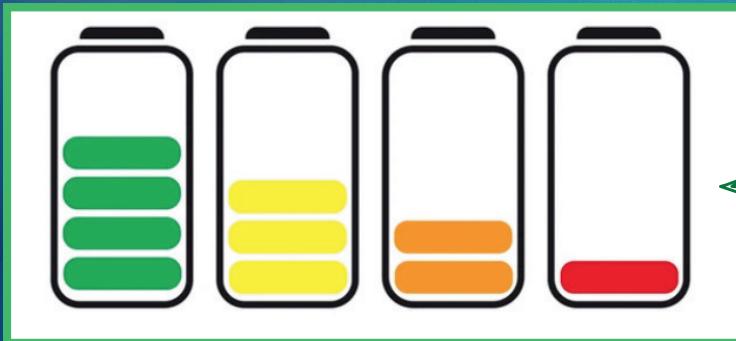
Session five

gender and justice - Introducing feminism

A new check-in exercise
that might be helpful
for today's session...

Give each student a
sticker as they enter the
room.

Ask them to place it on a
print out of this image to
indicate where their energy
is in the current moment.

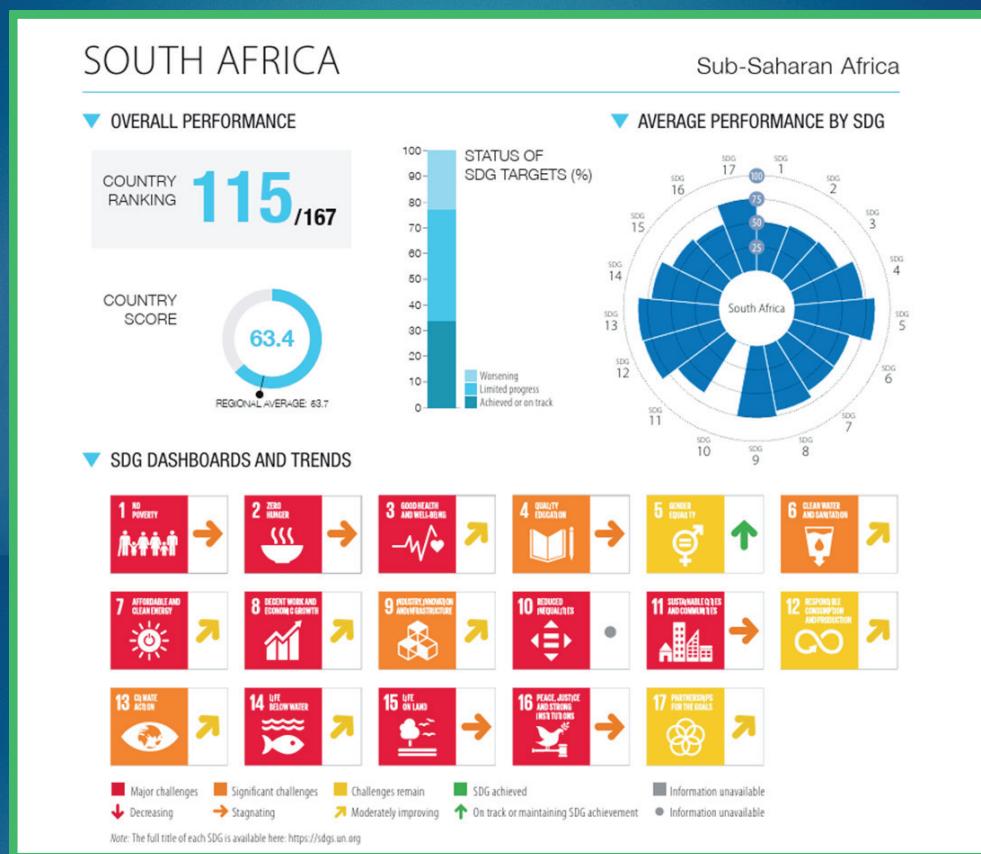


Ask whether there are
any students who would
like to share why they
are feeling that way.

Be sure to have a
balance between 'green',
'red' and somewhere in
between.



Recap and Reflect on Session Four



Find your own country's profile [HERE](#).

01.

I asked the students to take five minutes reflecting in their journals on the following two questions:

- 1) What can I do in my own way to help St Teresa's achieve these goals?
- 2) What can we do as a collective?

02.

We then PAIRED and SHARED for five minutes.

After this, I asked students to share their thoughts. I encourage facilitators to 'play devil's advocate' in order to get the students to engage with multiple perspectives.

St Teresa's students engage with this activity.



Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals

I asked the students which SDGs they thought we were focusing on with this programme and they picked out these.

I would be interested to know how yours would differ in your context.

1 NO POVERTY



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



5 GENDER EQUALITY



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



13 CLIMATE ACTION



So What Does Being a FEMINIST actually MEAN?

Watch this video with your students to get the discussion going.



Although this video is Australian, it speaks to universal themes and introduces the concept of intersectionality in a relatable manner. My students even felt inspired to make a similar video in a South African context.

Page 35



Although I didn't have time to show the entirety of this video...



This is a FANTASTIC resource and if you have time, you should pick and choose parts of the video to show to your students.

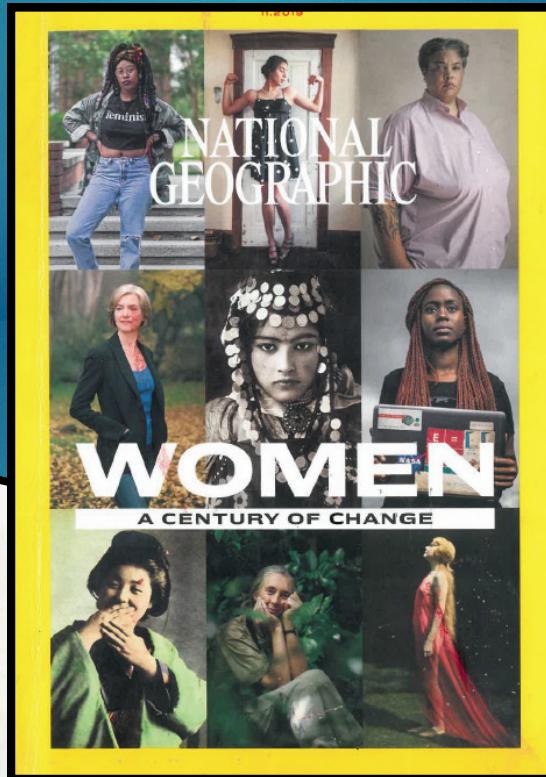
I also put it up on our Google Classroom so that the Grade 10s could watch the full clip in their own time.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a celebrated Nigerian author. Her TED Talk *We Should All Be Feminists* (2012) became a global phenomenon, reframing feminist discourse in accessible, compelling terms. This talk was later adapted into an essay-length book of the same name and famously referenced in Beyoncé's song *Flawless*.

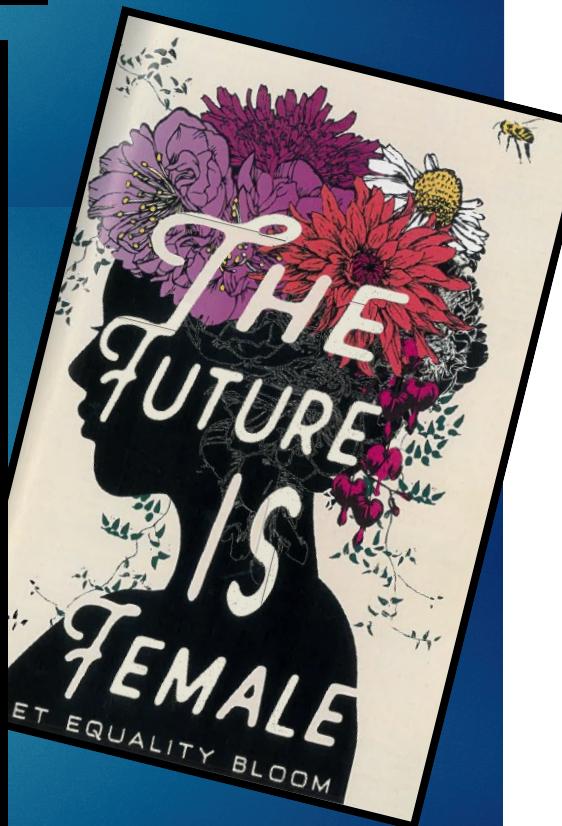
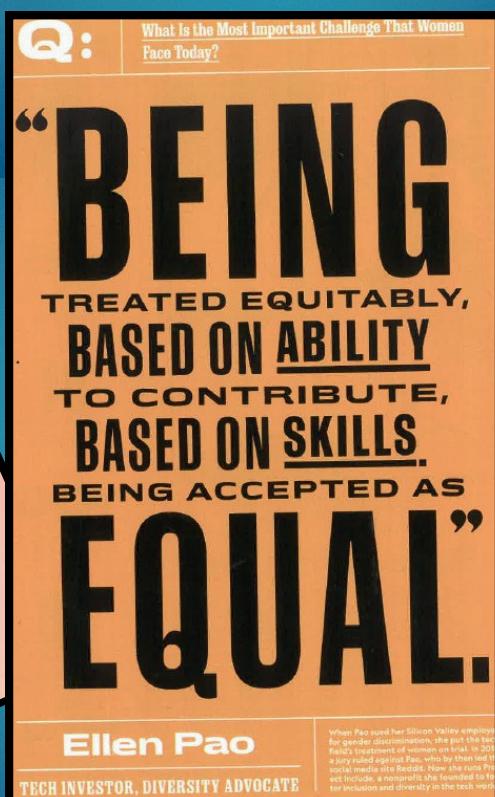
Adichie further expanded her feminist ideals in *Dear Ijeawele, or A Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions*, written as a letter offering practical advice on raising feminist children. **The book urges parents to challenge rigid gender roles and raise daughters (and sons) with autonomy and equality.**



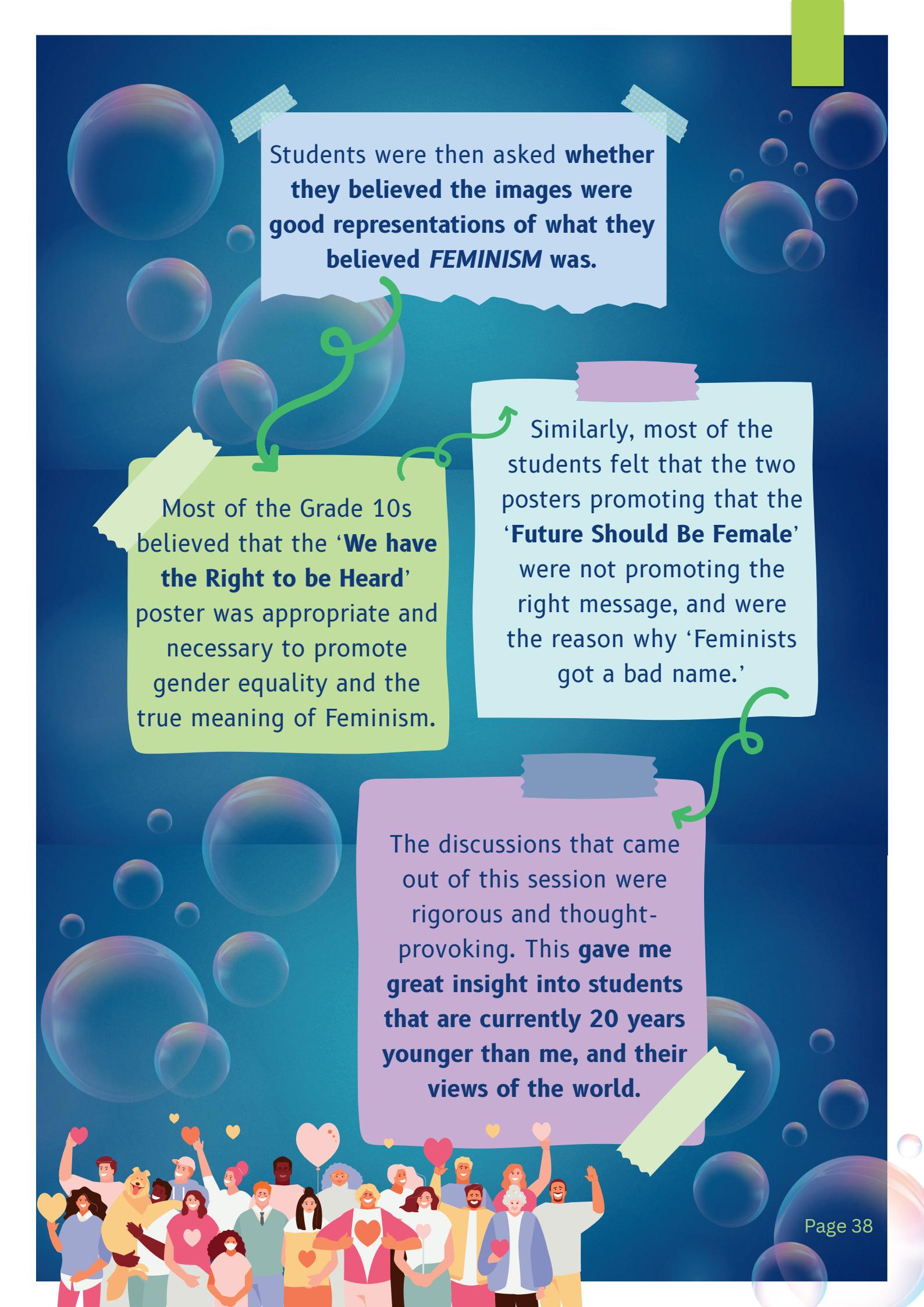
I then put a number of images on the board, which came from this edition of the **National Geographic Magazine**...



Click on the magazine cover to read the full article, written by Michelle Norris, for **National Geographic** entitled, **Why the Future SHOULD be Female.**



Click on each image in order to download it for your own slides.



Students were then asked whether they believed the images were good representations of what they believed **FEMINISM** was.

Most of the Grade 10s believed that the '**We have the Right to be Heard**' poster was appropriate and necessary to promote gender equality and the true meaning of Feminism.

Similarly, most of the students felt that the two posters promoting that the '**Future Should Be Female**' were not promoting the right message, and were the reason why 'Feminists got a bad name.'

The discussions that came out of this session were rigorous and thought-provoking. This **gave me great insight** into students that are currently 20 years younger than me, and their **views of the world**.



Session Six

Women of Mercy - A feminist Lens on Heritage

Remember to do your check-in at the start of your session.

Choose one of the exercises that you feel has worked really well so far.



LET'S PICK UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF...

So What Does Being a FEMINIST actually MEAN?

Click on the image to watch the video. Ask the students to reflect on Session Five, what they learned and whether they have any further insights that they would like to share after watching **this** video.



A Link Can Then Be Made Back To ...



Photograph taken at the Mercy International Centre, Dublin.

Question for Discussion: Was Catherine a feminist?



“Catherine was subject to the limitations of her era, with its religious prejudices, its limited recognition of women, its fixed class attitudes, and its traditional concepts and practices of vowed religious life. **Of these, she could be a polite, sometimes indirect critic.** She was reverent toward clergy, yet on several occasions contested their decisions. She read the spiritual books available to her, yet **developed independent opinions on certain points. She accepted the status and employment that society would allow poor women – yet did not tolerate the violations of their rights.**”

– Mary C. Sullivan RSM

Use the above quotation from Mary Sullivan as a starting point for your discussion.

Students were then asked ...

What does WOMANHOOD mean to you?



A variety of images are then shown on different slides with the heading, "Is it this?", "Or this?" and students are invited to provide the first word that comes to mind when each image is shown on screen.

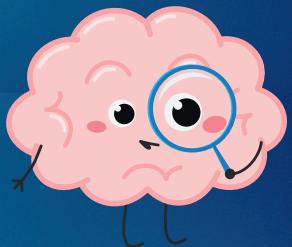
Please click on each image to be taken to its source.

This has now laid the foundation to introduce the concept of ...

INHERENT BIAS

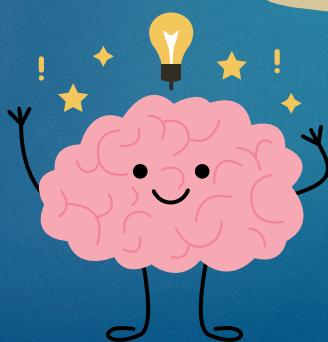
A NOTE TO FACILITATORS:

If you are working within a co-ed environment or an all boys' environment, you might want to adapt this to include the concept of MANHOOD. For both concepts a range of images depicting different aspects should be chosen to show the students.



For the final slides, I used images of Ilona Maher, with the heading "Or Even This?"

Ilona Maher is an Olympic medallist and Team USA Women's Rugby Player.





I asked the students to consider where their biases might lie.



In 2024 Ilona Maher competed in *Dancing with the Stars*. Next we watched the video of her performing on the show.



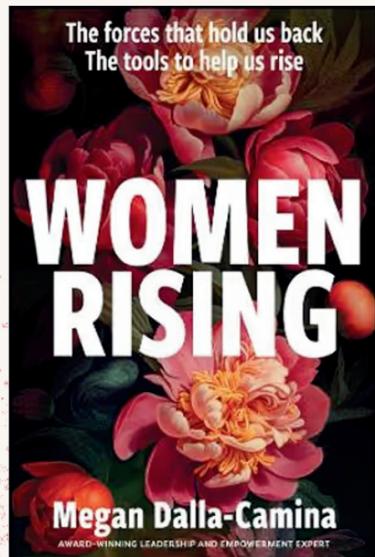
Please click on each image to be taken to its source.

This was really one of those moments where I realised how I continue to learn from my students and exactly where my own biases lie. My Grade 10s thought Ilona looked strong and powerful, and very 'feminine', whereas my ballet background had tainted my viewpoint. I admitted this to them, and we spoke through it.

What did I learn?

Vulnerability and context are always key.

After a very productive session, we linked back to our feminist motif.



The patriarchy fears women who are awake, conscious, unapologetically themselves and fully in their power. Who know what their purpose is and live and lead from their heart. Let's keep waking each other up and supporting each other. **It's the only way we will ever co-create a post-patriarchal world where women can truly rise.**

Megan Dalla-Camina

More and more students were starting to come to me at the end of each session to share their thoughts. I could really feel things happening.

Remember the following:



- Post your slides & resources on your chosen platform.
- Remind students to write any questions they might have in their journals for next time.
- If students find any resources that link to the material being covered, encourage them to share these with the group.

Session Seven

Privilege and Power - Recognising Responsibility

A new check-in exercise that might be helpful for today's session...

**#Where is The Fun?
#Where is The Focus?**

Ask the students to give one word to describe either of these two concepts.

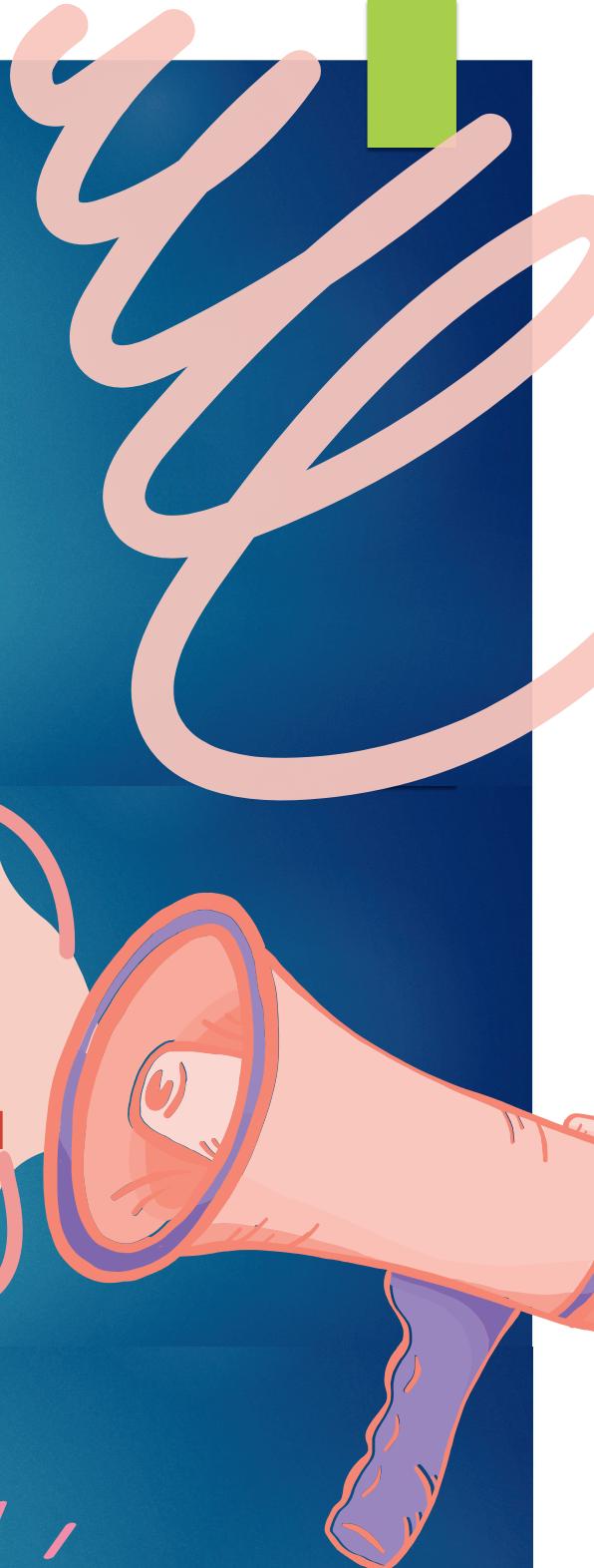
#WHERE IS THE FUN?

#WHERE IS THE FOCUS?



Recap and Reflect

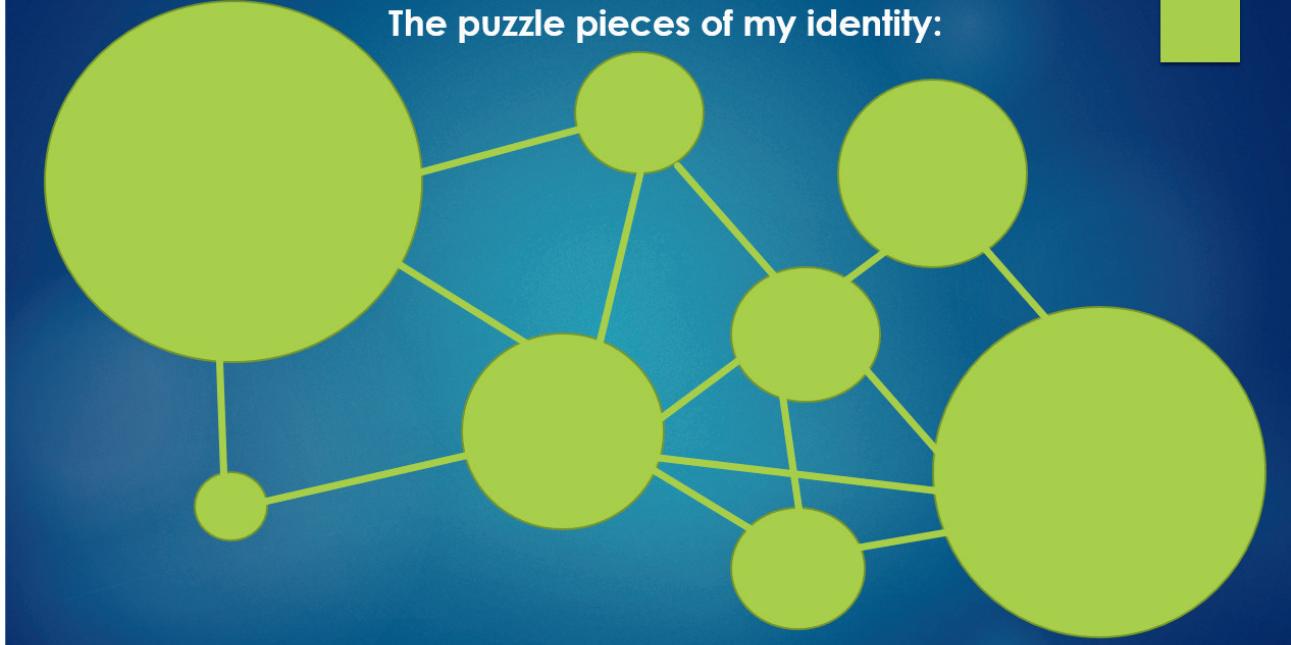
Ask the students to share a sentence from last week's reflection regarding **INHERENT BIAS** and their thoughts on **FEMINISM** and **WOMANHOOD**.



INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY



The puzzle pieces of my identity:



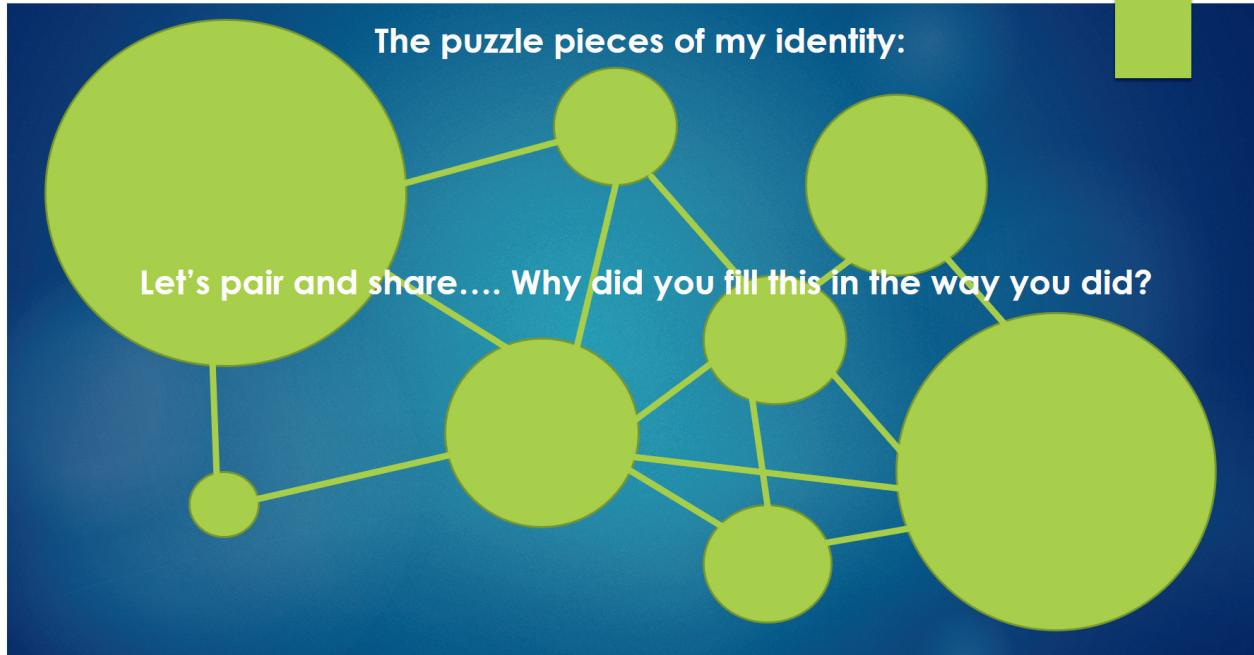
Please click on the image to get the print-out.

Each student is then given a printout of this diagram and asked to fill it in with the 'pieces of their identity'.

For example, parts of a person's identity might be 'female', 'Christian', 'hockey player', etc. It is really up to the student as to how they interpret it.

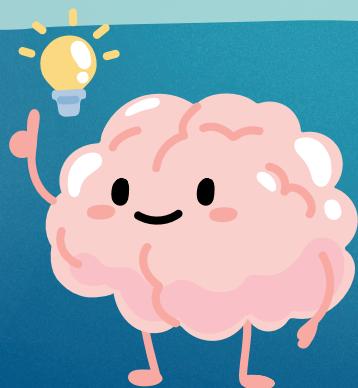
Facilitators should not be too prescriptive here.

Students were then asked to get into pairs and share why they thought they filled the identity bubble in the way they did. Did they purposefully put certain elements in the bigger bubbles, for example?



FACILITATOR TIP:

Now might be a good time to remind the students about the active listening guidelines again!



The Power of Reflection...

Encourage those who are, perhaps, too shy to speak to write their thoughts down like this.

The students certainly found this exercise useful.



“The Identity Bubble Activity challenged me to reflect on who I am and the influence I hold in society. Initially, it felt tedious to decide which aspects of my identity were most important. Looking back, I realised that the differences society often emphasises - such as race and sex - are not the ones I placed in the largest bubbles. While I am proud to be mixed-race and female, I believe what truly defines us is our moral compass and how we choose to treat others. For me, treating people with respect and grace is what truly matters.”

I was proud of their honesty and insight.

This is one of their reflections.



Session Eight

Advocacy in Action - Empowering Young Voices

**Depending how long
Session Seven takes
you to complete ...**

**You may show the next
video at the end of Session
Seven ...**

**Or the start of Session
Eight.**

**The 'Identity Bubble'
Discussion is an
important one, and
may take some time to
engage with fully.**

**Either way ...
Remember your
Check-in Exercise!**



Diversity. Equity and Inclusion. getting it Right...



Please click on the image to view the Video.

Depending on how much time you have, play certain parts of this video for your students. You can always post the full resource on your Google Classroom for them. This is a fantastic link into the next activity... **THE POWER FLOWER**

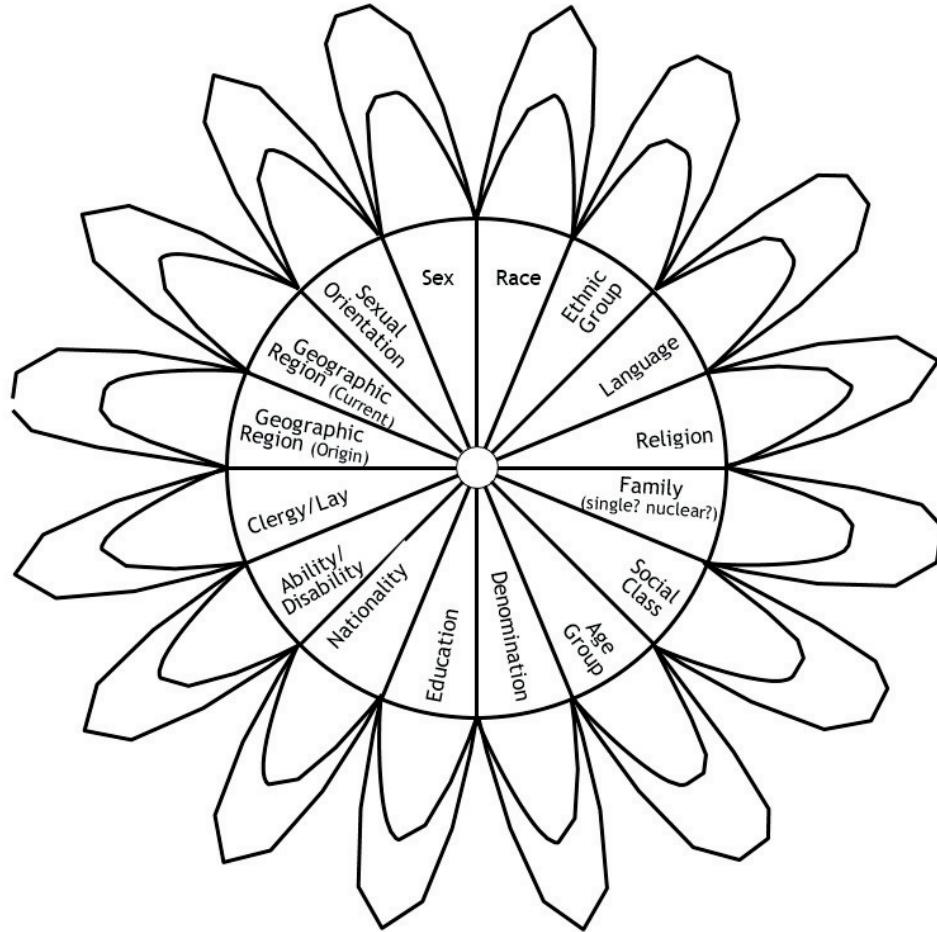
The video is titled *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Learning How to Get it Right.*

by Asif Sadiq



Activity for Session Eight

THE POWER FLOWER



Adapted from *Educating for a Change* by Rick Arnold, Bev Burke, Carl James, D'Arcy Martin, and Barb Thomas (Toronto: Doris Marshall Institute for Education and Action and Between the Lines Press, 1991). Please click on the image for more information and the source reference.

Students are each given a print-out of this image. Or they could draw a basic diagram, if this is easier.

THE POWER FLOWER

Understanding Where your Power Lies

INSTRUCTIONS



Ask students to fill in each petal of the flower according to each individual prompt. You might find some are easier than others!

If they believe this aspect of their life gives them 'power' or privilege, they should put this in the outer petal. If it hinders them in some way, it should go in the inner petal.

Ask students to get into pairs or groups of three and reflect on how they filled in their flowers and where the similarities and differences lie.

Ask students to share what they learned from this exercise with the group. This may bring up some difficult emotions. Facilitators need to be aware of this.

What to Expect

THE POWER FLOWER

TIP:

Some of these questions/stimuli could be for extension work and may not necessarily fit into the original exercise. However, the facilitator should consider them before guiding this exercise.

Personal Social Identity:

- Count how many of your petals are different from the “dominant” petals (the ones that society gives more power to).
- This shows where you might not have the same advantages as others.
- Think about how these differences have affected how you’ve been treated – have you been more privileged, or more marginalised?
- Some parts of identity cannot change (like where you were born or your race). Others can change (like your level of education).

Group Social Identity:

- Look at the whole group’s flower and think about what it says about you as a group.
- In what ways does your group have privilege, and in what ways does it not?
- Compare your group’s “power flower” with that of your community or neighbours.
- If they are very different, think about what that means for your group’s outreach or work in the community.

What to expect

THE POWER FLOWER

- This activity can bring up strong feelings like anger, pain, or denial.
- Sometimes people who feel powerless learn that society still gives them a lot of power in certain areas.
- Others may realise that some challenges they face are caused by unfair systems, not just personal choices.
- Talking openly and supporting each other can help the group separate personal issues from bigger structural problems.
- This understanding is important for moving forward with anti-racism work and fighting other kinds of injustice.

"I came to realise that I do hold power. I think I've been made to believe that because I am a black woman, I am automatically powerless. But after doing that exercise, I learnt that I am quite the opposite. I do hold power and I found I hold quite a lot of power compared to other people. I may not have checked off being white, male or straight, but I checked off almost everything else such as being upper middle class, going to a private school, etc. **I look powerless according to the stereotypes but I'm not and to me that was a really cool thing to find out. I am privileged despite the stereotypes and I am grateful for that privilege."**

This is one of the reflections I received about this activity. It was really very powerful for me.

Homework

Do you know what the meaning of
your name is?
Why did your parents choose it for
you?



WHAT ZONE ARE YOU IN?

Blue



sad



tired



bored

Green



relaxed



loving



mellow

Red



angry



furious



irritated

Yellow



silly



energised



proud

It was particularly important to have a CHECK OUT at the end of this session and to remind the students that I was here for them if they needed me.

Facilitators should always be open to debriefing sessions.

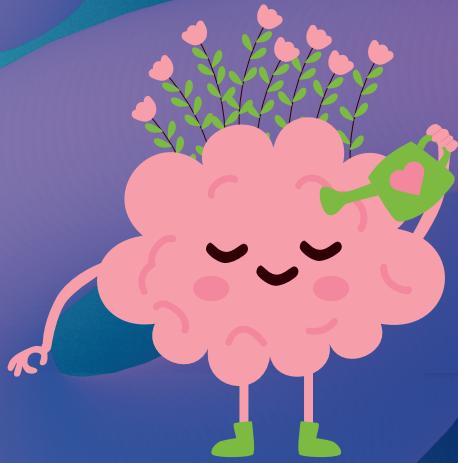
Session Nine

Identity, Intersectionality and a global Perspective

Remember to do your check-in at the start of your session.

A good one to do today might be the **Mindfulness Three Minute Breathing Space.**

Click [HERE](#) to access the guided mediation video on YOUTUBE.



**FOR THOSE OF
YOU UNFAMILIAR
WITH THIS
PRACTICE...**

Seeing as this might be later in the school term/ semester and is later in the programme, mindfulness might be a good grounding exercise.



Homework

Do you know what the meaning of
your name is?

Why did your parents choose it for
you?

Students were asked to consider
these two questions at the end of
Session Eight.

Now ask them to get into pairs
and to share their answers.

Allow 5 minutes for this activity
and then 2 minutes for feedback
from the group.

Some Feedback from the Grade 10s

“It was interesting to see what other people’s names mean, and I learnt that some names have really profound meanings. I found it really amazing how unique everybody’s name was and it made me think about the factors that affect people’s choices of names. I know to make sure my children’s names have very sincere meanings.”



“I never thought of my name to be part of my identity, oddly enough.

My second middle name, “Mbali”, means “Flower” in isiZulu.

My mother brought me home from the hospital after I was born and looked at me and described me as gentle and beautiful like a flower.

I like to think the meanings of people’s names can describe their personalities and I think “Mbali” describes mine.”

Now we head back into the global sphere

Although they may not have realised it,
we have been laying the foundations
with the students to explore the concept
of:

INTERSECTIONALITY

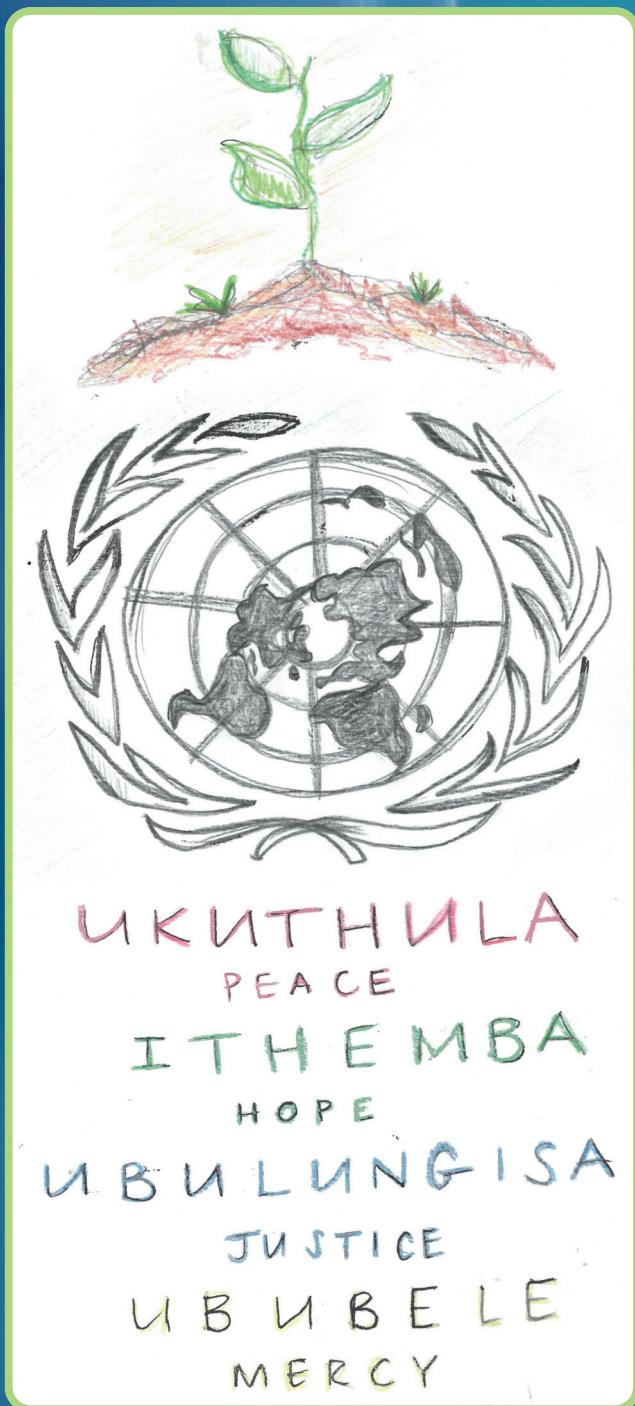
“INTERSECTIONALITY, in social theory, is the interaction and cumulative effects of multiple forms of discrimination affecting the daily lives of individuals, particularly women of colour. The term also refers more broadly to an intellectual framework for understanding how various aspects of individual identity—including race, gender, social class, and sexuality—interact to create unique experiences of privilege or oppression.

The term was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw”

(Britannica)

Time to create a link back to the United Nations

... and how it approaches the topic of avoiding Intersectional Human Rights Violations...



My suggestion to facilitators is to see what is happening at the United Nations at the time that you are implementing the programme and make a link to this.

Session Nine coincided with my trip to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and so I used this session to speak around the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and my experiences of the CSW.

I was also very grateful to be able to draw on the webinars and readings from the Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship, of which I was a member.

We considered the Ideas of global Context and the Parallels to our Local Context ...



“This made me think about **how unfair our society is towards minority groups**, and how the power cycle has remained unchanged for way too long”

Post taken from the [MIAglobalaction](#) Instagram page. All credit must be given to them and my Fellows.

“This allowed me and my peers to expand upon our initial ideas and **find reasons why the status quo is as it is**. I would greatly enjoy future sessions where we hold similar discussions or partake in activities that allow for this type of **personal connection to the social ideas and themes that we unpack**.”

Reflections from the Grade 10
St Teresa's Students.

Fellow Sarah Terry (South Africa) shared her thoughtful reflection on the day:

“Yesterday, we ventured to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, braving the icy weather. What many might consider a mere tourist attraction became, for me, a reverberating exploration of history and identity. To witness the embodiment of liberty in the American context and to trace the poignant journey of countless immigrants through Ellis Island was nothing short of profound. Coming from South Africa, a land shaped by its own intricate history of migration and colonisation, I found myself contemplating the threads that might weave these two stories together—an invitation to reflect on the universal search for freedom, and the complexities of belonging in a land that may not necessarily be ‘your own’.”

Using my experiences as a springboard ...

And Discussed the United Nations and its function



“During these talks and discussions, I have broadened my perspectives about our rights, and it has really been brought to my attention that most of us do not know our rights or only have a broad understanding”.

Post taken from the [MIAglobalaction](#) Instagram page. All credit must be given to them and my Fellows.

“Learning about our rights has really opened my eyes to how many are being satisfied and how many are violated or are in the process of not being observed. It is a very interesting topic, and I think that these talks are very important, not only for women but also for all people in their everyday lives.”

Reflections from the Grade 10
St Teresa's Students.



Using my experiences as a springboard...

I put up some of these quotations ...

... which I had found thought-provoking or inspirational or both. These came from the sessions I had the privilege of attending at the CSW.

The students used these to reflect on in their journals.

"Hope is a discipline.

The reason the rollback is so strong is because the agitation is so strong. It is time to bust the silos further. This is a crisis to unity."

Jess Tomlin.

"That which we carry within us is so much more powerful than that which we are confronted with every day."

Happy Mwende Kinyili



"It is not enough to take a picture and call it advocacy. This requires both sides to engage, not just one side speaking into the void. It is not enough to invite girls into the room or invite them to speak. It is time to listen, to really listen to what they have to say."

Bianca from Romania, a UNICEF Global Girl Leaders Advisory Group member

I could easily have gone on for hours. Please let me know should you like some more material here!

I then reminded the students ...

About what we looked at in Session One ...

“ Artists take risks, tell stories people aren't always ready to hear, and hold up a mirror to reflect the realities – both good and bad – of our society ... **They are actively shaping the culture around us, as theatre raises the antenna of people's social and political consciousness.**”

Tara Bracco

“**Theatre remains any society's sharpest way to hold a live debate with itself ... If it doesn't challenge, provoke or illuminate, it is not fulfilling its function.**”

Peter Hall

“Dramatic Arts engages us with past and present narratives that talk to the complexities of being a South African. **It makes no attempt to hide the truths associated with the complex issues we manage on a daily basis.** The subject provokes us to consider our individual subject positions and collective attitudes, and to **interrogate our thinking about our historical past and contemporary present** as South Africans.”

Dramatic Arts Subject Assessment Guidelines, 2024



Page 66

And watched Amanda Gorman's beautiful performance of The Hill We Climb as inspiration for the students to begin crafting their own artworks in response to the module. Whether it be art, poetry or performance.

Session Ten

Voices of Courage - Reflection and Visioning

My recommendation here is to ask the group which check-in exercise has been their favourite and, seeing as this is the last session, to use the one they have enjoyed the most.

THEN ASK THE STUDENTS FOR ONE WORD DESCRIBING HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT THIS BEING THE LAST SESSION.

FEEL
YOUR
FEELINGS

Facilitators take note of these emotions and feelings whilst conducting this session.

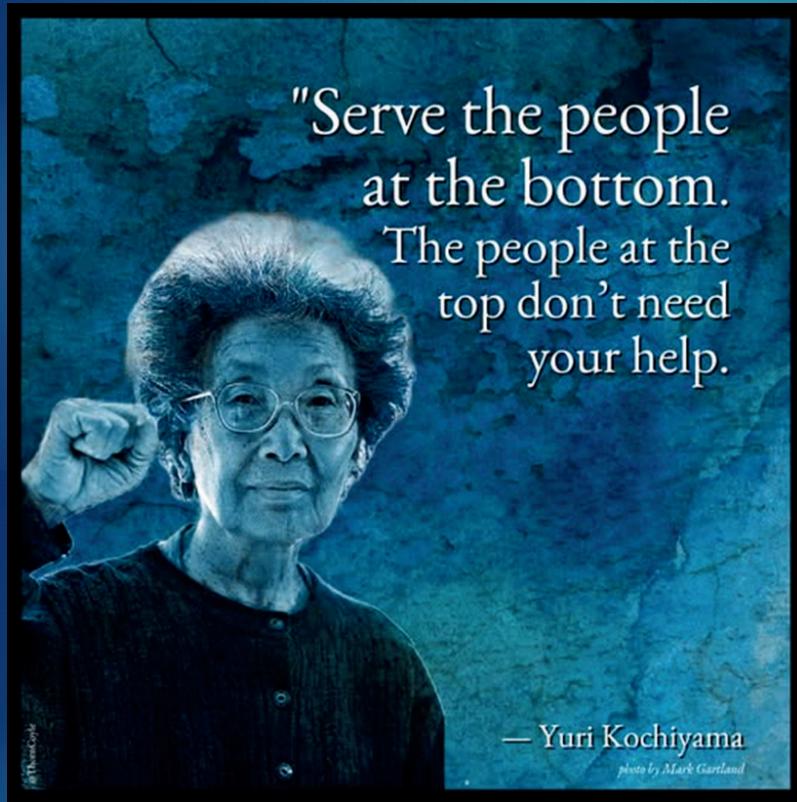
“We can never say “It is enough”. ”

We started the session with some words of inspiration from Catherine McAuley's "Familiar Instructions", and discussed what this meant for the students in terms of what they have learned from the programme.

"I have learnt so many new things and I feel like I'm more open-minded to certain topics and have a better understanding of them that I may not have had before. The discussion on school, how similar we are and human rights, I had known about them before but now I feel like I actually know what it means to be actively aware of them and what human rights are. I feel as though more people should take smaller details of life into consideration and I'm hoping that these past activities have and will continue to do the same for me."



After our Discussions in Session Nine Regarding Liberty and freedom ...



[Image Source](#)

And, particularly with everything that was currently going on in the world (this session was facilitated on Wednesday 3rd April 2025 - two days before our school closed for the Easter break). I encouraged the students to consider these two quotations (from Catherine McAuley and Yuri Kochiyama) in a moment of stillness away from the busyness of the school campus.

Facilitators may link this to whatever the current socio-political context is, both globally and locally, at the time of facilitation.

DID YOU KNOW?

Yuri Kochiyama was an American civil rights activist born in San Pedro, California. She was interned at the Jerome War Relocation Centre in Arkansas during World War II, an experience that influenced her later views on racism in the United States.



It's Time for an Activity!



all you
NEED

... IS A DECK OF PLAYING
CARDS AND SOME BLU TAK
(IN SOUTH AFRICA WE CALL
THIS PRESTIK!)

THE PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE IS FOR THE STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND THE WAY WE TREAT OTHERS IN SOCIETY WITHOUT EVEN REALISING IT, OFTEN DUE TO THEIR PROFESSION, SOCIAL CLASS AND SO ON. THE AIM OF THE EXERCISE SHOULD NOT BE REVEALED BEFORE THE ACTIVITY IS COMPLETED.



INSTRUCTIONS

***IDEALLY YOU SHOULD RUN THIS AT LEAST THREE TIMES TO PROVIDE STUDENTS A CHANCE TO EXPERIENCE A RANGE OF 'CARD NUMBERS'.**

- 01.** Pass each student a card. They should not look at it.
- 02.** Each student should stick the card to their forehead so that it can be seen by the group, but so that the individual cannot see it themselves.
- 03.** Provide the group with a scenario. For example. 'You are at a red carpet event.'
- 04.** Instruct the students to react and behave towards their peers according to the card they have on their foreheads. Encourage them to be as realistic as possible.
- 05.** 'Ace' is the lowest card and 'King' is the highest. For Example, everyone wants to socialise with a King and no-one wants to socialise with an Ace.
- 06.** Allow the scenario to run for roughly a minute and then ask the students to order themselves in a line according to where they think they fit into the card order - they will look at their peers and their cards to gauge where they should stand.

Feedback on Session Ten's Activity

It is important to **allow a space for debriefing post this activity.**



I found the students had a lot of fun with this exercise whilst it was going on, especially if they had been given a higher card and were being treated well by their peers.

However, when it came to the discussion afterwards, and they were asked about their experiences of being given a higher card versus a lower card, **the seriousness of the message of the task started to hit home.**

Even the quietest of participants from previous sessions spoke out.

Although some students made the obvious connection between the exercise and race, **wondering whether this was how people of colour felt during Apartheid** (feeling the way they did when they had received a lower card) **others wondered whether the homeless people, so often seen on street corners in South Africa, begging at street lights, felt this sense of abandonment.**

It was a profound final moment of the module. **The Grade 10s didn't want the session to end, and neither did I.**



Artwork and Performance

I was thrilled with the calibre of artwork, poetry and performances I received in response to the programme; one of which is on the cover of this handbook and was created by Grade 10 student, Isabella Pestana Inacio.

Over the next pages, please click on the images which represent performance pieces in order to watch the full pieces. If you click on their titles, you will be taken to the written text.



"Little Red Riding Hood and the Big Bad Metaphors"

BY MIKE VAN GRAAN

Here you will see Grade 10 students performing various scenes from Mike van Graan's play titled, "Little Red Riding Hood and the Big Bad Metaphors".

Please click the image to watch the scene and click on the name of the playwright and the title of the play to read more about them. The play was written to educate audience members about the Sustainable Development Goals.

I am incredibly grateful to Mike, a good and dear friend of mine, for allowing us to use his work. He is a champion of the Arts and for Human Rights alike.

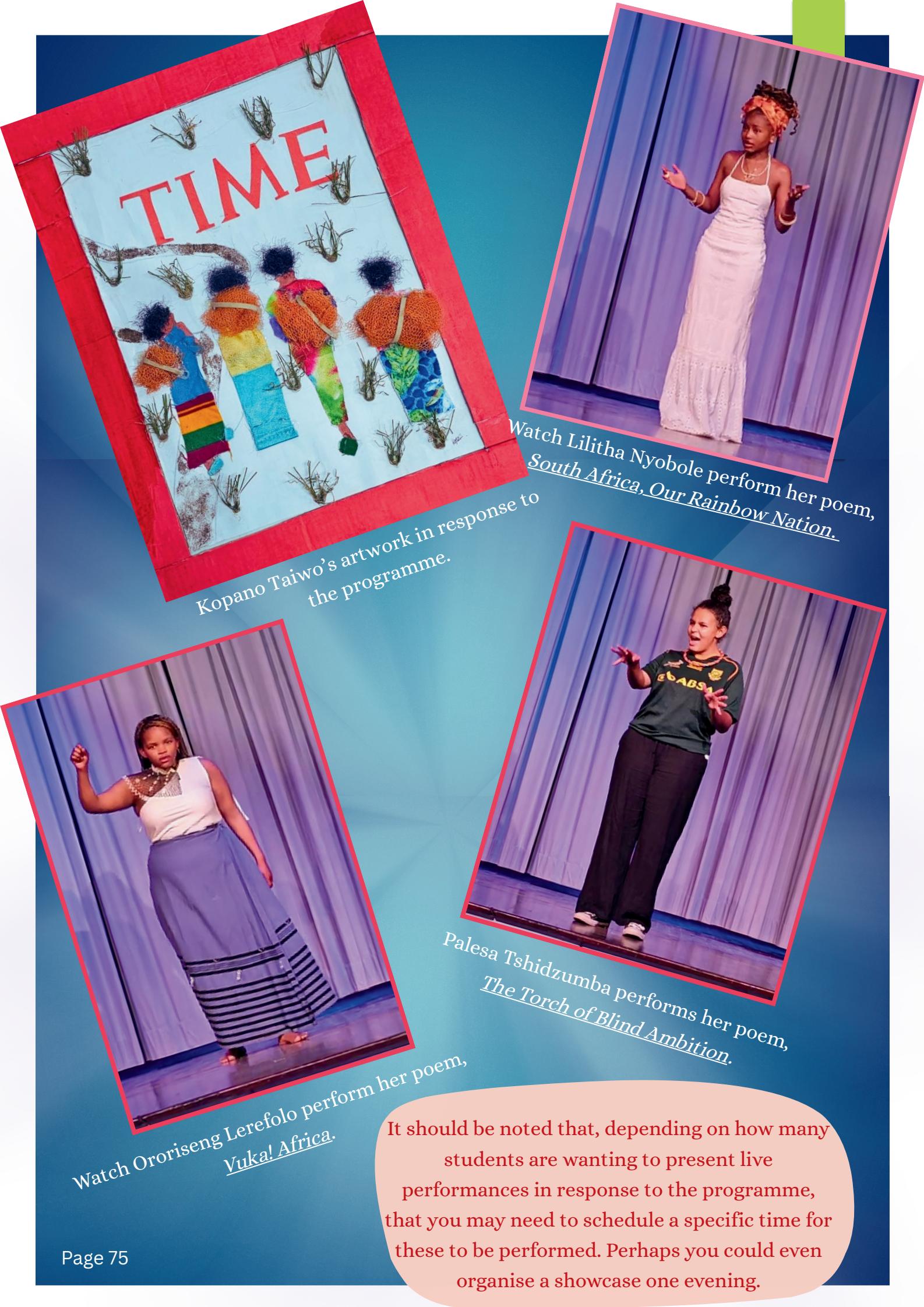


The Sea of Poverty,
where Jonah the Whale
lives on Plastic and
White in Shining
Armour doesn't
understand Sustainable
Development.

The Three Little Pigs, move to the big city where everything costs money and they are forced into the slums. The Big Bad Wolf is on the prowl. He is a politician ready to sell them empty promises.



A Debate at the UN, where Little Red Riding Hood tries to convince World Leaders that the youth's future is on the line, but are they willing to listen?



Meet the Ambassadors



From Left to Right:

Back Row: Alissa Kanyika, Gabriella Zarmaos, Botshelo Nkomo, Mihlali Tshili, Aahana Suri

Middle Row: Georgia Sarjoo, Tarumbidzwa Chidawanyika, Meghan Evans, Gabriella Kalify

Front Row: Thandolwethu Biti, Onwaba Mviko, Emily Strydom, Nina de Bod, Lilitha Nyobole,

Lethabo Seeisho, Palesa Tshidzumba



Kopano Taiwo
See her artwork on
Page 75

Isabella Pestana
Inacio
See her artwork on
the Front Cover



Ororiseng Lerefolo
See her performance
on Page 75



REFERENCES and RESOURCES:

Please click on the links to be taken to the sources

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- [Emoji Check](#)

Page 11

- Independent Examinations Board, Dramatic Arts [Subject Assessment Guidelines](#) for Dramatic Arts (2024)

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- [Image Depicting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

Page 17

- [In God Alone - The Story of Catherine McAuley](#) - Image Credit: Chris Ryan, Once Films

Page 20

- [Welcoming the Stranger: The Kenosis of Catherine McAuley](#) by Mary Sullivan (RSM) (1996)

Page 21

- [Image of the SDGs](#)
- Information on the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). (Also Page 34)

Page 22

- [Youtube Video: The Facts About Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- United Nations [Youtube Channel](#)

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Definitions for;

- [Social Justice](#)
- [Transformation](#)
- [Diversity](#)
- [Equity](#)
- [Equality](#)
- [Bias](#)

Page 28

- Youtube Video: [What are the SDGs?](#)

Page 29 (and Page 33)

- [SDG Reports and Country Profiles](#)

REFERENCES and RESOURCES:

Please click on the links to be taken to the sources

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Images taken from:

- <https://www.stteresas.co.za/>
- <https://www.nelsonmandela.org/profile-malala-yousafzai>
- <https://www.shutterstock.com/search/beauty-standards>

Page 35

- YouTube Video: What is Feminism?

Page 36

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TEDX talk, We Should All be Feminists.

Page 37

- Why the Future SHOULD be Female, by Michelle Norris, for National Geographic

Page 39

- Instagram Video; Norway's International Women's Day

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- The Path of Mercy, The Life of Catherine McAuley by Mary Sullivan (RSM)

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Images:

- Mother and Child
- Women Standing Together
- Lady Macbeth by John Singer Sargent
- Black Liberation For Women

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- Images of Ilona Maher
- Dancing with the Stars video.

Page 44

- Women Rising by Megan Dalla-Camina

Page 51

- TedX Video: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Learning How to Get it Right. by Asif Sadiq

Page 52

- The Flower Power Exercise, adapted from *Educating for a Change* by Rick Arnold, Bev Burke, Carl James, D'Arcy Martin and Barb Thomas.
- Power Flower Print-Out.

REFERENCES and RESOURCES:

Please click on the links to be taken to the sources

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- [Mindfulness Practice](#) - Three Minute Breathing Space.

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- [Definition of Intersectionality](#)

Page 62

- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women ([CEDAW](#))
- [Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW\)](#)

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- Mercy Global Action [Instagram Page](#)

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- Jess Tomlin and Happy Mwende Kinyili, speaking at [Stepping Up, Standing By and Speaking Out For Women's Rights' Movements](#) held on 11.03.2025
- Bianca speaking at [POWER4GIRLS](#) held on 11.03.2025

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- Amanda Gorman's Performance of [The Hill We Climb](#) (2021)

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- Catherine McAuley's [Familiar Instructions](#).

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- [Yuri Kochiyama's quotation](#)

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- [Performance](#) of [The Sea of Poverty](#)
- Performance of [The Three Little Pigs](#)
- Performance of [Debate at the UN](#) from [Mike van Graan's Little Red Riding Hood and the Big Bad Metaphors](#)

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- Palesa Tshidzumba's [Performance](#) of her Poem [The Torch of Blind Ambition](#)
- Lilitha Nyobole's [Performance](#) of her Poem [South Africa, Our Rainbow Nation](#)
- Ororiseng Lerefolo's [Performance](#) of [Vuka! Africa](#)