

Face to Faith



LESSON

Essentials of Dialogue . Lesson 1: What is Dialogue ?

By the end of this lesson your students should **know** what Dialogue is and is not, **understand** the importance of listening to one another, and **have experienced** reflecting upon it's importance.

Assessment Criteria.

Students understand the significance of Dialogue – that it is a particular kind of conversation, and that there are particular skills to be used.

Starter Activity

“What happens when we don’t listen to one another”

Stimulus to individual thought & response.

Have the question up on the board – but explain to students that you are going to approach it in a new way – introduce "Sharing our Ideas" as the method by which they are going to share their answers.

Feedback – Ask students to share their pair’s best 2 ideas either by oral feedback, or by making new pairs.

Metalearning feedback (Can be helpful if students are dubious about the activity) Get students to total up how many different ideas they came up with – this will be many more than they would have done had you just asked for ideas – and from many more people too.

Main Activities

Dialogue Case Study – the Imam and the Pastor.

Students consider an example of where dialogue has been used to help build peace. Please feel free to substitute a more culturally appropriate case study if relevant.

Ask your students to read the “when people forget to listen” worksheet. Alternatively, read the worksheet out loud to them.

Make the link between the student’s skills in this lesson (listening to others, engaging in dialogue, group work and empathy) whilst understanding the conflict and the peace building efforts.

Show your class the 10 minute clip from the film “the Imam and the Pastor” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oapAAOXUaH4>). Please note that there are some distressing images in this film so ensure you are comfortable with your students watching it before showing it.

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LESSON

Essentials of Dialogue Lesson 1; What is Dialogue?

The film is an inspiring story that describes the transformation that took place in the lives of Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor Jame Wuye in Nigeria, moving them from armed militia members to co-workers on reconciliation efforts.

As students watch the film ask them to write down the things that stick out to them most about what they see and hear. After the film is finished ask them to share these thoughts with the person sitting next to them and then use these thoughts to start a class discussion.

Points for a class discussion.

- Causes of the conflict
- Barriers to peace
- The role of dialogue in building peace – use the two quotes from Imam Ashafa and Pastor James to stimulate discussion on this from page 2 of the worksheet.

Finally, ask the students to reflect on where they think that there are peace related issues in their community. Could dialogue be used to help build peace in this situation too?

Further Resources:

The Pastor and the Imam talk about their peace-building project in Kenya's Rift Valley after the post-election violence in 2008, when around 1,000 people were killed and tens of thousands displaced from their homes and farms:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-11734436>.

A transcript of an interview with Pastor James and Imam Ashafa in which they talk about their history and work: <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-pastor-james-wuye-and-imam-muhammad-ashafa>

For more in depth information on Nigeria and the conflict situation there visit the Tony Blair Faith Foundation's Religion and Geopolitics website:
<http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/religion-geopolitics/country-profiles/nigeria>

Extract from a videoconference between a UK and Nigerian school involving Tony Blair, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Sultan of Sokoto:
<http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/foundation/news/action-reconciliation-nigeria>

For more information on religion in Nigeria you can view this film in which John Campbell, former US Ambassador for Nigeria, answers 5 questions about religion in Nigeria: <http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/religion-geopolitics/commentaries/backgrounder/five-questions-onreligion-nigeria>

If you wish to purchase the full film about Pastor James and Imam Ashafa to show to your class you can do so here: www.fltfilms.org.uk.

Dialogue is / is not.

Face to Faith understands dialogue as: *An encounter with those who might have different opinions, values and beliefs to my own, dialogue is the process by which I come to understand the other's lives, values and beliefs better and others come to understand my life, values and beliefs.*

All students are given the cards accompanying this activity (Dialogue is/ Dialogue is not card sort)

On their own students sort the cards into two piles according to whether they think the description on the card refers to dialogue or to a different form of communication.

Working with a partner, students scrutinize one another's lists and discuss their decisions and make any changes that they agree on. Any descriptions they cannot agree on should be kept to one side.

End with a class discussion about the descriptions including what students had written on the blank card.

Extension – Students to write a guide or recipe for good dialogue so that they are thinking of the necessary skills for effective dialogue.

Challenge – Students could research some dialogue thinkers who have influenced the work of Face2Faith, for example: Martin Buber, Diana Eck, Paulo Freire, Emmanuel Levinas and David Bohm.

Plenary Activities

The most useful plenary for this lesson, which we suggest you use to help you make decisions about activities in the next lesson is the “What’s my Dialogue Score” activity. In this activity, students assign themselves, or their partners, a score on a number of key dialogue skills. You can use this activity in a number of ways in preparation for the next lesson –

Students can complete the sheet on their own, or with a partner (the latter is often better – as it tends to drive deeper reflection).

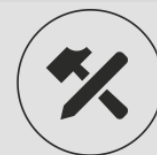
Use it (in conjunction with the document “Dialogue, a Checklist for teachers” and your professional judgment), to assess the strengths and weaknesses of your class in terms of dialogue skills.

You can then use this information to determine the activities upon which you are going to concentrate in the next lesson – if your students’ lowest score is in “Speaking” for example, then try to pick activities that might improve that. You might even divide your class up and give difference groups different tasks to do , according to their strengths and weaknesses.

Remember that as these are skills – everyone can improve (even students who are already very good), and that regular practice is often the secret to swiftly developing the skills.



A C T I V I T Y



S K I L L S

Sharing our ideas

You will need a timer for this activity - preferably one that is visible to the students. You can download one from <http://www.teachit.co.uk/702>

- Get students working in pairs - pair them up with; someone at their desk, a usual partner, someone that they choose, or use numbers / cut up pictures to pair them. (Hand out cards with numbers on - 2 of each number - when students come in, then ask them to find the student with the same number).
- Outline the question for the students. The question for this activity should be open-ended, and encouraging divergent (creative thinking), so it works best when you are asking students to either
 - reflect back upon what they have learned ("remind each other what we covered last lesson"),
 - come up with a variety of possible answers to a question ("how many answers to the question X can you and your partner come up with")
- Allow some silent individual thinking time - 20 seconds maximum.
- Establish who is going to start - use quantitative ideas - person with longest hair, birthday nearest today, wearing most colours, shortest / longest name, initial comes first in alphabet.
- Establish how much time students will have (one minute is optimum)
- Students then take turns sharing their ideas or responses - they have to move quickly, and share as many ideas as possible - ideally there should be no hesitation - they should be trying to share as many ideas as possible in the time allowed.
- When the time is up encourage students to
 - Reflect upon what they've exchanged (write down your best 2/5 ideas, Share your ideas with a new partner)
 - Provide positive feedback to their partner (either a simple "you were great", or finish the sentence "I enjoyed working with you because...")

Active Listening
Cooperation
Critical Thinking
Global Communication
Reflection



WORKSHEET

When people forget to listen...

Nigerian context



The Nigeria population is made up of 250 distinct ethnic groups who speak over 100 languages. Its population is mainly Christian and Muslim with the majority of Muslims living in the north and the majority of Christians in the South. Political power has in the past been divided between Christians and Muslims, but this system appears to be breaking down.

Nigeria's religious landscape changed dramatically in the twentieth century. In 1900, it is estimated that the population of Nigeria was 27% Muslim and 2% Christian. The rest of the population followed traditional religious beliefs. During the twentieth century Christianity grew rapidly in the South and in the Middle Belt and there are Christian minorities now in the predominantly Muslim North.

Conflicts, fuelled by religious and ethnic divides, inadequate governance and economic problems, have increased throughout Nigeria. In the Plateau State, one of the poorest states in Nigeria, its capital Jos sits along the Christian-Muslim fault-line that divides the country. Issues around unequal rights and the balance of power have repeatedly led to violence between Muslim and Christian communities. In Plateau State, at least one thousand people were killed each year in 2001, 2004 and 2008. In Kaduna state a controversy over the implementation of Sharia law led to 3 days of violence in January 2000 where Christian and Muslim youth gangs killed 2,000 people and destroyed much property.

Pastor James and Imam Ashafa's story

Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye are Muslim and Christian religious leaders respectively who live in Kaduna State. Today they work together to help others to resolve their conflicts; but they did not start out as peacemakers.

In the 1990s, Pastor James and Imam Ashafa led opposing, armed militias and were dedicated to defending their respective communities. Pastor James said he formed a Christian militia group because he wanted to protect his people "My hate for the Muslims then had no limits and no Muslim ever impressed me for whatever reason." Violence broke out in Kaduna State in the 1990s and Christians and Muslims fought each other, destroying each others' homes, crops and attacking each others' families. In fierce battles, Pastor James lost his hand and two of Imam Ashafa's close relatives were killed.

Despite this hatred for each other the two men met unexpectedly in May 1995. The meeting took place at a gathering UNICEF had organised about health issues in their communities. A mutual friend was present at the event and during a break he put Imam Ashafa and Pastor James' hands together and said "I know you have the capacity to keep the state in peace. I want you to talk."¹

Over the course of the next year Imam Ashafa initiated contact with Pastor James and slowly their relationship evolved. Pastor James came to believe that he could not preach Christ with hate in his heart

¹ <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-pastor-james-wuye-and-imam-muhammad-ashafa>

and that forgiveness was important. And, Imam Ashafa heard a similar message about the teachings of the Quran and Allah's love for all mankind and how the Prophet forgave those who persecuted him.

The Interfaith Mediation Centre

After much talking and relationship building between them the two men eventually reconciled and decided to work to bring peace to their community. As a result in 1995 Pastor James and Imam Ashafa together launched the Interfaith Mediation Center, an organization with now over 10,000 members providing interfaith training to young people in schools and universities, to women, religious leaders and politicians. The center brings youth, men and women of both faiths together in dialogue and to mediate.

"There is an understanding that it is not about being Muslim or Christian, it's not about debates between the two, or winning and losing. It is about dialogue and focusing on issues that affect both of us and how we can move our society forward." Imam Ashafa.

"We are grateful to God that we have learned this ability to hear one another and create a safe space to dialogue - without which we will always be assuming things from afar, and you can kill someone based on assumption. We have learned a bitter lesson." Pastor James.

They began their work in Kaduna State by establishing dialogue between youth leaders from the two religious communities. They also offered training to at-risk youth in not only conflict resolution but also in the skills needed to gain work. After riots in 2000 they campaigned for peace using local media and helped to repair both Mosques and Churches. The Interfaith Mediation Center's work now includes a wide range of activities across Nigeria and they have also used some of their expertise abroad such as in Kenya.



WORKSHEET

Face to Faith understands dialogue as:

In an encounter with those who might have different opinions, values and beliefs to my own, dialogue is the process by which I come to understand the other's lives, values and beliefs better and others come to understand my life, values and beliefs.

Sort the cards (on next page) under these headings (one card is left blank for your own ideas!):

Dialogue is

Dialogue is not

The same thing as a debate.

Trying to find out how we are all the same through discussing similarities.

Asking questions to find out more about the lives of others.

Making friends with some one else.

An interview

Listening carefully to what others say and responding to them.

An argument

Trying to understand a different way at looking at something.

Working together to find solutions to shared problems.

A discussion where I feel safe enough to ask difficult questions and to share difficult experiences.

Trying to find out how we are different and understand those differences.

Reading prepared statements to other people.

Waiting for my turn to speak.

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INFORMATION

Dialogue : A checklist t for teachers



SUPPORT

Use this useful checklist to check your students' dialogue skills and to map their progress as they develop these skills.

1. Attitude

- a. My students are open to learning about the lives, values and beliefs of others.
- b. My students have a healthy level of curiosity.
- c. They are confident to share their own lives, values and beliefs with others.
- d. They can suspend judgments in favour of listening with open hearts, minds, eyes and ears.
- e. They are concerned to find solutions to shared problems.
- f. They are able to make others in the dialogue feel safe enough to share personal thoughts.

2. Speaking

- a. My students speak for themselves and not behalf of others in dialogue (using 'I' instead of 'we').
- b. My students can give good descriptions, details and explanations when speaking about their communities, cultures, faiths, beliefs and values.
- c. They can speak from the heart and are not reliant on prepared statements and text.
- d. They do not use 'them' and 'us' language or make unfair comments about those not represented in the dialogue.
- e. They can go beyond describing and explaining events and features to sharing 'meaning' and 'significance'.
- f. They can frame questions within the context of their own experiences.

3. Listening

- a. My students show respectful and attentive body language when in dialogue with others.
- b. My students can process what they hear to ask questions that clarify, challenge and seek a deeper understanding.
- c. They can focus on the 'other' in the dialogue without being distracted by the teacher, their peers or others.
- d. My students listen carefully, process and reflect before speaking again in order to avoid spontaneous responses that might be ill-thought through.

Face to Faith



I N F O R M A T I O N

Dialogue : A checklis t for teachers



S U P P O R T

4. Responding

- a. My students can ask questions that are open-ended and that seek meaning and significance.
- b. My students can ask questions formed by what they hear from others to further their understanding.
- c. They are able to ask questions that explore meaning and significance.
- d. They can articulate how they feel on hearing something from someone else.
- e. They can show that they value the ideas, experiences and beliefs of others even when they do not agree with them.
- f. They are able to respond empathetically to others.
- g. They can challenge others in the dialogue in a way that is respectful and open.

5. Reflecting

- a. My students are able to identify the major influences on their lives, behaviour, beliefs and thinking.
- b. My students are able to place themselves in the local, national and global communities and how they contribute to these groups.
- c. They can find differences as well as similarities between their own lives, values and beliefs and those of others.
- d. They can articulate clearly what they have learned about the 'other' through their dialogue with them, focusing on specific points.
- e. They are able to reflect on their own skills for dialogue (and those of others) and consider how these could be improved in the future.
- f. They can explain how their learning through dialogue may impact their behaviour or choices in the future.



W O R K S H E E T

Score for each column;	1	2	3	Score
	Not like me	A bit like me	Very like me	
I can give good descriptions, details and explanations when speaking about my community, my background, or things that are important to me.				
I'm able to explain my experiences to someone who is not familiar with them.				
I'm able to build upon what other people say to help people understand.				
Speaking total...				
I know how to show people that I'm really listening with body language.				
I know how to show people that I'm actively listening to them rather than just waiting to speak.				
I can reflect upon what I've heard from other people in order to work out what more I would like to know .				
Listening total...				
I can ask good questions based upon what I've heard, to deepen my understanding.				
I can ask open questions that encourage the speaker to develop their explanations.				
I can ask questions that look for deeper meaning, and help me to understand someone else's perspective.				
Questions total...				
I'm able to explain how I feel about other peoples' ideas and experiences.				
I'm able to respond with empathy to other peoples' ideas and experiences.				
I'm able to disagree with someone's views in a polite and respectful way.				
Responding Total...				
I'm able to reflect upon and explain what I've learned in talking to others.				
I can reflect upon and explain the similarities and differences between my experiences and someone else's.				
I can identify and explain the way that my own skills and attitudes are changed by what I hear.				
Reflection Total...				

	Grand Total...

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WORKSHEET