

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming activities involve children expressing a wide variety of ideas without comment. This is a useful way to find out what children already know or assume about a particular theme.

Learning objectives

- to share ideas;
- to work towards solving a problem;
- to develop confidence in presenting their work;
- to listen to each other and take turns.

How?

- ◆ Set up small groups and appoint a scribe.
- ◆ Give the groups a subject, theme or question to brainstorm, asking them to come up with as many ideas as they can on the subject.
- ◆ The scribe writes down every idea briefly. There is no discussion about ideas at this stage. 'Best' writing and spelling is not required. Bilingual children who can write in their own scripts can work together.
- ◆ Time limit the activity to concentrate thinking.
- ◆ Before groups share any ideas with the rest of the class they should discuss what's been brainstormed and talk about where there is consensus or disagreement.

Some more ideas

- ◆ Brainstorm at the start of a theme or topic to find out what children know.
- ◆ Use it at the end of a unit of work to find out how children's perceptions and knowledge have changed.
- ◆ Brainstorm questions around an historical artefact.
- ◆ Brainstorm what comes to mind when you hear particular words, eg 'Pakistan' or 'fair trade'.



From Family album

Example:

Weddings and promises

I was working with a Y3/4 class at the beginning of an RE topic on 'Weddings'. I wanted to find out what the children already knew or what assumptions they were making. The children's work showed their knowledge of different religious customs and the effect the media had on their thinking. Later in the topic I asked them to brainstorm 'promises' that might be made before marriage. I was particularly impressed with the quality of their responses.

