

Can I Control This? Cards

Aims and Objectives

This activity helps children identify whether something is within their control or not, helps children develop a deeper sense of self-awareness, better control of their emotions and impact of behaviour on self and others.

Resources/Materials

Can I Control This? Cards
A3 posters.

Facilitators Notes

You will need to Print 2 A3 posters one saying YES and one saying No

Activities

1. (1-1) Place the 'yes' and 'no' cards apart from each other and place the other cards logo face up on the table Allow the young person to select a card at random read and decide if it is something they can control or not, do not prompt. Once chosen discuss their reasons for the decision, the impact of their answer on self and others. How does it make them feel to have control or not on that particular statement, how can they manage emotions around not having control?
2. (Group) Explain the Debate Rules to the Group.
Pin up the 'yes' 'no' posters apart from each other, read a statement card to the group, allow the students to select their answer by going to the relevant poster. Allow each group to discuss in their group the reasons for their answer, and prepare their debate statement. Ask them to select a spokesperson who will represent their voice to read the statement to the other group.
Allow the opposite group to do the same. Allow students to change groups if they have now changed their opinion. Now allow open debate keeping to debate rules. Debate for 5 minutes allowing each side to talk in turn, answering questions from the other group. Allow another opportunity to exchange groups before closing.

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Debate Rules

No put downs. No personal insults or rudeness to others. Allow others the ability to talk without interruption. Challenge the opinion not the person.

1. **Limit debate team size.** In a classroom with 30 to 40 students, this may be difficult to do. Consider breaking up the children into work groups and hold multiple group debates at once. The maturity of the children, along with their willingness and ability to follow your directions, set the tone for the system you use.
2. **Teach *how to debate*.** Young children are prone to make themselves heard by raising their voices. Older children may include personal insults. Teach each new class how to debate before actually using these teaching strategies in your classroom.
3. **Aim homework assignments at debate readiness.** As students realise that the finer points of debating involve a good bit of strategy, use homework assignments to prepare debaters to know, understand and argue both sides of an issue.
4. **Model the separation of opinion from facts.** Even young children can be very opinionated. Since the goal of this teaching method is active learning and critical thinking, it is vital that pupils learn how to differentiate gut-level opinions from fact-backed statements.

Your classroom most likely has children from various backgrounds. Since youngsters are notorious for repeating what they hear their parents say at home, it is not uncommon during a debate to face stereotyping, scapegoating, and overgeneralisation. It is your job to challenge unfounded statements that could be hurtful to other class members. At the same time, be prepared to do so diplomatically and kindly, with an eye on improving collaborative learning. Enjoy your debating!