



Activity 1: Silent viewing

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Overview

This activity uses the '*Dear Habib*' animation, but without the sound, in order to engage learners with the visual representation and meaning of the film. The key learning intentions are:

1. to critically engage with the animation and the artistic choices of the animator;
2. to encourage an effective (emotional) connection to the story as well as the cognitive links;
3. to recognise that a range of perspectives and interpretations of an issue may co-exist.



Information

Stories and issues relating to migration, asylum and refugees can provoke strong and sometimes prejudicial viewpoints amongst learners and these can cause harm and distress. It is important to note that this harm or distress may be experienced not only by those who are themselves migrants, asylum seekers or refugees, but also by those who have personal connections, or who are more empathetic towards these issues.

You are advised to ensure you have established a '*safe space*' for the dialogue and enquiry that these resources involve, before commencing with this activity. Guidance on creating safe spaces is provided as a separate unit within this resource.

Once established, the '*safe space*' can be referred to throughout this and other units should it be necessary. Making learners aware of the need for a '*safe space*' and co-creating this with them also contributes towards the SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) requirements of schools to actively promote the fundamental British values of *democracy*, *rule of law*, *individual liberty*, and *mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths or beliefs and for those without faith*.



External link

You will need to access the '*Dear Habib*' animation for this activity and have the means to show it to learners. The film can be found on [YouTube](#)¹ or you can show it from the [Positive Negatives](#)² website, should you have difficulties accessing YouTube.

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_WdprHcOuJU
2. <http://positivenegatives.org/comics-animations/dear-habib/animation/>

Process

1. Without informing learners, show the animation '*Dear Habib*' to learners with the sound turned off so that only the visuals are experienced.
 - a. At the end of this first viewing ask learners what they think the animation is about? *[NOTE: you may wish to give learners a few moments to discuss their ideas in small groups before sharing as a whole.]*
 - b. If they don't bring up, or question, the lack of sound, then prompt learners by informing them that you played the film without sound. Ask them why that decision might have been made?

[Responses might include references to focussing on the imagery, making them think harder about the story, exploring different interpretations etc. You may wish to record responses on a whiteboard for later review]

2. Explain to learners that you are going to show the animation again (keeping the sound off). In small groups of 3-4, or pairs if you prefer, give learners a copy of the 'mood board' *[you may wish to enlarge to A3 size]* and ask them to use this to record their feelings, thoughts, questions in reaction to the animation. The following prompts might be useful if groups are not sure how to use a 'mood board'.
 - As the animation is a story, it may result in a range of different (even conflicting) moods being expressed. There are no right or wrong answers involved.
 - Learners might wish to react as a viewer, but could also position themselves as Habib, or some of the other characters in the animation - what were their feelings, thoughts, questions etc.

3. Once learners have created their mood boards ask them to leave them on view (i.e. on a table) and take a short 'sharing walk' (2-3 mins) around the other boards with their group/partner to see how others responded. Learners should end back where they began at their own board.
 - a. How did their 'mood board' compare with others? Where there any surprising or challenging issues they identified? *[NOTE: you may wish to look at the 'mood boards' yourself during the 'sharing walk' so that you can support and draw out these conversations.]*
 - b. What choices do learners think the animator has made to try and engage moods? Can they give specific examples from the animation?
 - c. Does watching the animation without the sound influence how you engage with the story in terms of the feelings, thoughts, and questions you were recording?
 - d. Does the absence of sound mean we miss out on some things? What might those be?

4. Now play the animation to learners again, but this time allow the sound to be heard. Use some of the following prompts to hold a closing dialogue:
 - How effective do you feel you were at identifying with the story now that you can hear the sound? Was there anything key in the sound that you were not able to take from the visual elements alone?
 - What about the emotions? How does the sound alter the emotions explored in the animation? Does it change the way you engage emotionally with the animation?
 - Does the addition of sound introduce alternative perspectives or challenge some of those you had formed when using the visual alone? What can we learn from this? *[Responses might include that we should not judge by appearance alone; that we should listen to others' stories and not make assumptions.]*



Mood board