

## ACTIVITY ONE: BUILDING CLASSROOM COMMUNITY THROUGH DRAWING

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When learners feel more connected to their classmates and teacher, it is easier to overcome other classroom challenges such as discipline and motivation. Art can be a great way to bring your learners together and create a supportive, nurturing environment that values all learners' contributions to the language learning classroom. This week's Teacher's Corner shows you how to develop a strong sense of classroom community through a drawing version of *show and tell*. Show and tell is an activity where learners bring in a personally important object or story and share it with their class.

This is a simple activity that requires little preparation and time, but offers the benefits that come with creating and maintaining a strong and cohesive group.

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### LEVEL

Any level

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### LANGUAGE FOCUS

Speaking, Listening, and Writing

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### GOALS

During this activity, students will:

- Draw a picture of three things: their home, something that they are good at, and an important person in their lives
- Share and explain their drawings in small groups and eventually with the class
- Prepare and ask questions about their classmates' stories

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### MATERIALS

- Paper and pencils for students
- Any other art materials such as markers, crayons, magazines, if available

- Colored paper or stickers

### PREPARATION

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- Prepare your own drawing to use as a model in class.
- Before class begins, make sure to gather all of the necessary materials.
- On the board, write the things that learners are going to draw.
- Fold pieces of colored paper or stickers and put into a bag for drawing. If you have 40 students, you'll want 20 colors/stickers and 2 of each color/sticker.

### PROCEDURE

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1. Tell learners that they are going to express themselves through drawing. Make yourself a part of the discussion and model the activity by sharing your own drawing with the class. Point out parts of your house that are important to you; explain the activity you are good at and what you like about the activity; and share the person that is important to you and offer your own reasons about why you chose this person. Once you've shared your drawing, encourage questions from students. If students are unwilling to ask questions, model some good questions.
2. Give everyone a pencil and piece of paper.
3. Tell students to draw three pictures on their paper: their home, something they are good at doing, and a picture of someone who is important to them. Explain that they will have to share their drawing and explanations of their drawings with the class.
  - a. Depending on how familiar you and your students are with each other, you can offer other ideas for their drawings, such as a favorite meal or holiday or something they love to do with their friends. It is important to pick three aspects that are relatively personal, but that learners would feel comfortable sharing with the class. Remember that the drawings should also encourage questions and discussion.
4. Give learners time to draw and/or create.

- a. It is not important that students draw well, but that they are free to create. This will encourage more discussion and explanation among learners in English.
  - b. If you have the materials available, give learners opportunities to create these images in ways other than drawing. For example, if learners have access to magazines, they can cut and paste pictures onto the paper. If they have crayons, markers, or paint, they can add color and more details. The purpose is to use the activity as way to express who they are without initially relying on language. The language component of the activity follows this creative part of the activity.
5. Once learners have finished their drawings, put learners into pairs. One creative way to do this is to have learners choose a piece of colored paper or sticker from a bag. Learners who choose the same colored paper or stickers are put into pairs. Make sure you have enough for every student to draw from the bag and two of every different color or sticker.
6. Now have learners share their drawings with their partners.
- a. For beginner learners, the students, in pairs, label their pictures with words from their vocabulary. For example, when students label their houses, they can point to things on their drawing that they think are important such as: 'kitchen; we eat meals as a family here' or, simply, 'kitchen'. For beginners, it is a chance to practice communicating what they've drawn while also writing down keywords that highlight what they want to say.
  - b. For more advanced learners, tell each pair to write five sentences about their partner's pictures as their partner tells them about each picture. One student might describe his/her house and who lives there while the other writes it down on the picture.
7. When learners have finished explaining their pictures to their partners, have them share in larger groups. To do this, combine two to four sets of pairs together.
- a. Learners can share their drawings at the beginning of each subsequent class with a different group of learners until all learners have heard from all of their classmates. This

might require five minutes at the start or end of each class for a week or a few weeks, depending on the size of your class.

- b. Alternatively, bring all learners together and have each learner share their drawings with the whole class.
8. As learners share, each student listening must ask one question about each image.
- a. Possible questions to ask: Why is this person important to you? You are good at \_\_\_\_\_ .Do you also enjoy doing \_\_\_\_\_ ?