



thinking space

CONCEPT BUILDING

WHAT IS IT?

Analysing abstract concepts can be tricky. This tool promotes the exploration of ideas around abstract concepts through non-verbal activities such as model-making, drawing and tableaux.

Working in this way provides a new vocabulary for learners grappling with difficult ideas. The products of this creative activity then provide a concrete starting point for rich conceptual analysis through group discussions.

RECIPE

- **No. of participants:** 100 (split into subgroups max. 8 per group).
- **Age of participants:** Suitable for any age
- **Preparation time:** However long it takes to source the materials. Once you have chosen the concepts there is no preparation time.
- **Delivery time:** 5 minutes – 2 hours
- **Materials:** Lego bricks; Plasticine; Musical instruments; Drawing materials; Piles of assorted rubbish; Collection of miscellaneous items.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The facilitator chooses a concept they'd like the group to explore. Alternatively they can provide a bank of concepts (e.g. peace, boredom, justice, beauty) and each group can pick a different one at random. Each group are given their method (model-making, soundscape, tableaux etc.) and a time limit: they have x minutes to create a model of their concept starting... Now!

Model-making: The group use plasticine, lego-blocks or equivalent to create something that represents their concept.

Soundscape: A soundscape can be any collection of sounds – which might include words or song lyrics – made from the materials to hand. They could use the chairs, their bodies or some instruments if you have some available. The finished soundscape can last for any length of time, but ideally not longer than 3 minutes.

Tableaux: The tableaux is a static arrangement of bodies to represent a scene or picture. When they show the finished tableaux they should hold the pose for at least 30 seconds so that everyone in the room can really take in all of the poses. (See 'Dramatic Devices' Tool for a way to extend this process.)

