

## **Driftwood Activity** - Directions to the Driftwood Activity –

### WHAT IS THE DRIFTWOOD EXERCISE? - Kay Pranis “Lessons from Driftwood”

As I mentioned earlier I do this exercise as the first activity of a training, immediately after a welcome and an opening ceremony. The group has not yet done introductions, no agenda has been presented and no teaching about the circle process has happened. The training group is seated in a circle of chairs without desks or tables. There is a small table (card table size or smaller) in the center of the circle. I am holding a bag of driftwood. I introduce the exercise as follows: “We have a bag of driftwood and a table. This activity will be done without talking. We will go clockwise around the circle taking turns. When your turn comes you may take pieces out of the bag and arrange them; you may put pieces back in the bag; you may rearrange the pieces already out. Basically, when it is your turn, you may do what you wish arranging the driftwood. Or you may choose to leave it without making any change. If you decide to leave the driftwood as it is without making any changes, signal non-verbally to the next person that you are passing. We will continue going around the circle multiple times manipulating the driftwood until it comes to a natural ending. We will know we are finished when everyone passes all the way around the circle.”

The exercise is deliberately ambiguous. There is no clear goal or stated purpose for the activity. The ambiguity facilitates the lessons that can be drawn from the process because it creates so much space for individual meaning-making. As the trainer I am also a participant and I generally am active in making some move with the driftwood for the first three times around the circle and then I usually pass and observe what is happening. Sometimes the activity is done in fifteen minutes. Sometimes it takes an hour and a half or two hours.

<http://chqdaily.com/2013/08/01/pranis-how-can-driftwood-solve-conflict/>

**Linking Arms Activity** – A member of the group stands, states their name, where s/he is from and begins to share information about themselves. When another member hears something that s/he has in common with the speaker, that person links arms with the speaker, states their name and where they are from, and begins to share information about themselves. This continues until everyone in the group has linked with someone else.

**Ribbon Tying Activity** - Give each circle member a 3 foot piece of ribbon. Ask them to think about someone that isn't here that they would like to bring to the circle and why. When they have finished talking, tie the ribbon to the person's ribbon on your right. The person on the right will speak next.

**Weather Vane Closing (or Check In)** – If your emotions were weather right now, how would you describe in weather terms?

**Fish Bowl Circles** – Fishbowls can be used in a variety of settings. They encourage discussion, listening and sharing opinions. This technique allows for a richer discussion of any given topic, and it frequently helps build community by focusing attention on the ways that particular group might work together more productively. Fishbowls in the classroom can be a way to use the Socratic Method.

Typically, there is an inner circle of any number of participants which is considered the “fish bowl”. There is an outer circle of observer/listeners. Some fishbowls have an empty chair for observers to enter the fishbowl to share their opinions, comments, questions or advice. Other fishbowls do not have an empty chair, but observers can enter the fishbowl by tapping a fishbowl participant on the shoulder.

The fishbowl can be used to offer support and advice to a person who wants to share a personal dilemma. The speaker sits in the fishbowl with an empty chair. The speaker shares his or her story, and then observer/listeners are given an opportunity to occupy the empty chair to offer support or advice. The speaker only listens, and does not dialog with the person occupying the chair. Someone may take notes summarizing the support or advice given. The speaker then offers feedback regarding the fishbowl experience, and may choose 3 actions that they will take within a designated time period to resolve the dilemma.

**Sentence Stem Check In** - A poster is visible to all members with 6(12) sentence stems. Each person rolls the dice and finishes the sentence which goes with the number rolled.

**Check In Chart** - A poster is visible to all members with descriptors of states of being. Using a talking piece, each person chooses one of the descriptors. (i.e. “I have some things that are bothering me, but I can handle it on my own”, “I would like to talk privately with someone about something that is making me mad/worried/upset”, “I am doing ok today”, “I have good news to share”).

**Rate Yourself - Have** participants rate their participation in any activity by holding up 1 – 5 fingers in regard to a pre-established set of 5 descriptors. (5- I fully participated and listened to others, 4- I participated about 50% of the time, but sometimes was not listening, 3 – I was able to stay in the activity, but I didn’t participate, 2 - I wasn’t listening or participating, 1 – I left the group or was disruptive to the group process)

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# English Language Arts Standards » Anchor Standards » College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

Taken from <http://www.corestandards.org/>

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The K-12 standards on the following pages define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. They correspond to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards below by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

Comprehension and Collaboration:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1**

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2**

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.3**

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4**

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.5**

Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.6**

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner. Being productive members of these conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information; respond to and develop what others have said; make comparisons and contrasts; and analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in various domains.

New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication. Digital texts confront students with the potential for continually updated content and dynamically changing combinations of words, graphics, images, hyperlinks, and embedded video and audio.

## English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening » Grade 11-12

The CCR anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

Comprehension and Collaboration:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1**

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.a**

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.b**

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.c**

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.d**

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.2

Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5

Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11-12 Language standards 1 and 3 [here](#) for specific expectations.)

## Fishbowl - Instructional Strategy (taken from "Digital Age Teaching and Learning")



### **Description**

Fishbowl is a strategy used not only in classrooms but also in business meetings and other settings where group dynamics are important. This technique allows for a richer discussion of any given topic, and it frequently helps build community by focusing attention on the ways that particular group might work together more productively. In a literature classroom, it also demonstrates how different groups can collaborate to construct meaning from a text. As students analyze a text and connect their responses with others', they model peer literature circle discussions.



### **Steps for Setting up a Fishbowl**

A small group of students (as many as half the class) arrange themselves in a circle in the center of a room. This small group will conduct a discussion together while the rest of the students watch, take notes, and later pose questions and give comments about what they observed. The teacher can be part of either the inner "fishbowl" circle or the outer circle. To begin, teachers might select students for the fishbowl who are fairly skilled at group discussion -- or might deliberately choose one or two who are new to it so that the fishbowl doesn't seem too "perfect" for those who are observing. Once the group is established, the teacher should set some ground rules. These guidelines ensure that group members practice particular discussion skills, such as taking turns, building upon a previous person's comments, and asking questions to extend thinking. Ground rules might include:

- Students should only state supported ideas, agree with a speaker and add supporting information, disagree with a speaker and offer refuting information, or connect contributions.
- No one may interrupt a speaker.
- No one may speak a second time until everyone has had a chance.

The guidelines for the outside circle may include listening quietly, taking notes on discussion skills, and noting nonverbal communication. Each "outside" student might be assigned an "inside" student to observe specifically, or the "outside" students can be asked to observe everyone. In general, the silent, observing students attend to aspects of group discussion that generally aren't noticed in classroom discussions.

To begin the discussion, the teacher or a student within the fishbowl offers an open-ended question, and the fishbowl group discusses it. Students might initially be self-conscious as part of the group "on stage," but they generally grow comfortable as the conversation flows.

After a set amount of time, the inside circle finishes their discussion and the outside circle discusses what they observed. This may take as much time as the fishbowl

discussion itself, or more. The teacher might begin by inviting the outside circle to add their thoughts on the subject of the fishbowl conversation. The inside participants listen and then respond to the comments. Teachers may also ask those in the inner circle to assess their discussion first, then ask the outside circle to add their comments, as long as everyone can discuss what happened. The session might end with a whole-class discussion about what they learned and how it applies to future discussions.

### **Tips and Variations for the Fishbowl**

- After one round of a fishbowl, teachers might have the two circles change places. When all the students have experienced both the inside and the outside of the fishbowl, the teacher can ask questions like: What was it like being inside the circle? Outside the circle? How are the two roles different? What did you learn from each? How do you think you will carry what you learned from this exercise into small-group discussions? Into whole-class discussions?
- Some teachers leave an empty seat in the fishbowl for an outside participant who wants to speak. He or she should move to the vacant seat and join the discussion until someone else from outside the circle wants to join. That person then taps the first person on the shoulder, and they quietly switch places.
- Many teachers stay out of the fishbowl, since their presence can make the discussion less natural. Whether in or out of the group, however, the teacher must keep time, attend to behavior issues that the fishbowl group cannot handle, and maintain group protocols.

### **Benefits of the Fishbowl**

- Fishbowls are especially beneficial when using multicultural literature. Like K/W/L charts, fishbowls allow the teacher to see what misconceptions students have and address them. They also create a safe forum for students to observe how charged a discussion of cultural issues might become. Because there is always a post discussion analysis, fishbowls also allow a group to handle this together.
- Students in the outside circle of a fishbowl can observe how specific individuals question, respond to, and make meaning of a text, which can model small-group literature circle discussions.
- Fishbowls allow students to practice group discussion skills.
- Fishbowls also teach observation, listening, and community-building skills.
- Fishbowls provide students with the opportunity to identify small-group discussion habits in an effort to improve upon them.



