

# 15. Switch thinking

# 40

Use *Introducing the activity* plus the *Basic activity* and one of the *Variations*, followed by *Drawing things together*.

Please read them all before making your choices.

## Teacher's notes

- Use your RE topic as the subject matter. Use images either from books or the internet. Some LAs have designated web sites with collections of pictures to be used in the classroom that do not need copyright permission. Most newspaper images can be used for educational purposes. This activity unpicks images and raises a query that all is not what it seems.
- This can be useful for teaching about key important religious figures, events, activities, businesses, etc.

## Variation 1: Switch thinking with situations, issues, etc.

Transfer this switching thinking tool to other subject matter, e.g., events, festivals, authorities or organisations. For example, show two pictures of the war in Iraq and ask which is 'liberating' and which is 'de-stabilising'; or pictures of fertility treatments, childless couples and over population figures and ask whether this is 'wanted' or 'needed'? By arguing how it can be both in different circumstances it helps pupils understand the complexity of people's actions, attitudes and beliefs or events in history.

## Variation 2: Creating their own switch thinking

Pupils come up with words that describe events, people, ideas etc. from different perspectives and create a PowerPoint presentation of their thinking called 'Switch thinking with . . .'

## Introducing the activity

Look at the images of Pope Benedict and the late Mother Teresa (see below). Look at the words below the caption in the first slide. In what ways is the Pope an inspiration and in what ways was Mother Teresa controlling? Now look at the next slide and the words have been switched. How do they fit and which words are best? Are they both true in different ways? Think of people who could be said to be both inspirational and controlling. Discuss the outcomes of pupils' choices.

## Drawing things together

The PowerPoints can be kept for future use and developed further with successive groups. Encourage the pupils to appreciate that reactions to people's lives can be variable depending upon the experiences and context in which people find themselves, e.g., crime and punishment in our country has changed considerably over time. The attitudes to black people in America in the 1950s is very different to current times (or is it?) Consider what words we would use to describe the situation now and then.

## Basic activity: Switch thinking with people

Think of people whom one could describe in different ways, e.g., Hitler and Nelson Mandela, St Paul and Jesus, Elizabeth Fry and William Wilberforce. Create words that can be switched, but which may be debatable, and apply to both images.



Inspiring



Controlling



Controlling



Inspiring