

17. Dialogues

Use *Introducing the activity* plus *Basic activity* and one of the *Variations*, followed by *Drawing things together*. Please read the *Basic activity* before making your choice.

Teacher's notes

- You could use this with most of the stories from Jesus' life, and with many Old Testament stories. For Variation 2 it needs to be a story involving a number of different characters.
- Encouraging pupils to answer imaginary questions from characters in the story helps deepen their understanding of the significance of the story.

Introducing the activity

After introducing pupils to the story, ask them to consider the characters within it.

Basic activity

This is a creative exercise in which pupils either write imaginary dialogues between two characters in a story or pairs of pupils acting in character have a spontaneous conversation. The conversations can be done privately or in front of the class, and could be recorded on audio or video.

Variation 1: Spontaneous conversations within a crowd

Each pupil is to imagine they are an ordinary person who witnessed the events of the story. Ask them to consider questions such as, 'How old are you?' 'Where do you live?' 'Do you have a family?' 'What job do you do?' 'Are you well educated or illiterate?' 'Have you travelled much?' 'Do you count yourself as religious?' Once they have decided who they are, you ask them to walk quietly and randomly around the room in character; at a given signal they turn to the person next to them, introduce themselves, and have a conversation about the events of the story. This may be repeated several times, then pupils may feed back their experiences to the class.

Variation 2: Conversations between characters

You will need a story in which several characters have a part to play. Put the class into groups and assign one character to each group. Each group

writes suggestions based on the story and their imagination about what sort of person their assigned character was. Then everyone is paired up with a character from another group, and they discuss the events of the story. This can work well between characters who have very different roles in the story, e.g., Judas and Peter at The Last Supper (Matthew 26:17-35).

Variation 3: Conversations the next day

Ask pupils to imagine a conversation which takes place a day or two after the event. Sometimes it is only after reflection that people start to want to ask questions. What questions would characters in the story want to ask, and of whom? Imagine this conversation takes place. This could be done orally or as a written composition.

Variation 4: Interviews

Imagine that the characters from the story are on a TV chat show. Each group prepares some questions which will lead to discussion between the main characters in the story. Each member of the group becomes one of those characters, with one person as the chat show host. Without further preparation the show 'goes live', in front of a video camera or the rest of the class.

Drawing things together

Listen to pupil feedback from their experiences and questions and answers which arise. Relate issues to their own lives as appropriate.