

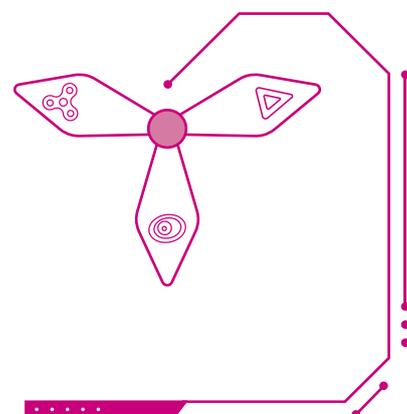


LESSON PLAN | MIDDLE

# THE EMPATHY CIRCLE

**Subject:** Arts & Design, Humanities, Moral Education

**Years:** Cycle 2 / Middle



• **CONNECTING MINDS**  
UAE FROM PARTICIPATION  
TO HOSTING



## EXPO CONNECTION

Expo 2020 Dubai is bringing the world together to share ideas and work together to try and find solutions to the world's challenges. When we communicate openly and with empathy, new dialogues can open the door to amazing opportunities for all.



## HOLISTIC AIM

To recognise that when we seek to understand others, and are mindful of the way we communicate our emotions and words, we are practising empathy.



## LESSON PLAN SUMMARY

Students discover the impact of negative thoughts in a practical demonstration. They consider how, when people don't listen to us it's frustrating and we can't solve our problems. They then explore an 'empathy circle' activity to see that when they choose to listen to others, they can have a positive effect on the people around them. Students generate ideas for a 'Majlis space' at Expo 2020, designed to help visitors connect and feel positive about the future.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

We are learning to:

- Describe what it feels like to be truly listened to
- List some positive differences we might see in the world if people really listened to one another
- Share creative ideas for a 'Majlis space' at Expo 2020.



## MATERIALS/RESOURCES REQUIRED

- **The Power of Thought** Activities & Handouts sheet – one copy for yourself (or more, if you want students to try this in small groups)
- **Helping or Hindering?** cards from the Activities & Handouts sheet, cut out – one set per pair
- **Empathy Circle Guide** Activities & Handouts sheet – one per group of four
- **Connecting with the World at Expo 2020 Dubai** Activities & Handouts sheet – one per pair

### Preparation:

- Web links:
  1. The UK Pavilion design:  
<https://www.thenational.ae/uae/design-for-uk-pavilion-at-expo-2020-dubai-revealed-1.774413>
  2. Next Gen World Majlis for schools:  
<https://omp.expo2020dubai.com/news/students-envision-future-cities-at-next-gen-world-majlis/>
  3. Expo 2020 website:  
<https://www.expo2020dubai.com/en>



## STARTER:

# IS ANYONE LISTENING?

18 MINUTES

**12 minutes**

### The power of thought

- You can demonstrate this with one student, or if time permits, try this in small groups.
- Follow **The Power of Thought** Activities & Handouts sheet instructions. It's important that the student tries their best when imagining different thoughts.
- Ask the volunteer how they felt each time – when they felt bad or good about themselves. Could they feel the difference?
- Explain that this demonstrates how our thoughts can affect how we feel and how we act:
  - When we feel or do negative things, or they are done to us, we feel bad about ourselves and can't do our best
  - If we feel or do positive things, we feel good about ourselves and can do our best.
- Highlight that in the activity, the volunteer thought these negative or positive things themselves, but what if it was the other students saying the unkind or kind things to the volunteer? This shows the powerful effect that our thoughts – often shaped by the actions of those around us – can have on our abilities.

**6 minutes**

### How do we help or hinder one another?

- In pairs, students take 3 minutes to read the **Helping or Hindering** Activities & Handouts sheet example cards.
- Ask students to identify something that was missing in the scenarios (listening). How did this make the person feel? Whether or not we feel listened to can have a big effect on how we feel – and what we do. And listening is the first step towards supporting or helping someone.
  - In groups, students 'rewrite the story', considering how different the scenario might have been if the person had listened, and what they might then have done, to support the person.



## MAIN ACTIVITY: THE EMPATHY CIRCLE

23 MINUTES

### 3 minutes

#### What is Expo 2020?

- Ask students what they know about Expo 2020 Dubai.
- Can students name the Expo's theme? (Connecting Minds, Creating the Future)
- Can students name Expo's three sub-themes? (Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability)
- Explain that each sub-theme will have its own pavilion at Expo 2020 – a unique building filled with exhibits and activities that bring the theme to life
- Explain that Expo 2020 will showcase lots of ideas about how we can create a better future, not just in the UAE but around the world, to the 25 million visitors expected to come, and who can share their inspiration around the world.
- If you have more time, use the [Expo 2020](#) web link to explore more together.

### 20 minutes

#### Hold an empathy circle

- Explain that students are going to practise active listening and learn what it means to be a good listener.
- Ask students to form groups of four. Review the instructions on the **Empathy Circle Guide** Activities & Handouts sheet.
- Groups take turns to share and be listened to, as they share their hopes and excitement about Expo 2020. Each student should speak for three minutes at most, so steps 1–3 take six minutes each.



## MAIN ACTIVITY:

# WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO BE LISTENED TO?

5 MINUTES

**5 minutes**

### What was it like to be listened to?

- Ask students to share how they showed their partner that they were really listening to them – this (along with remembering what was said) is what it means to be attentive.
  - Now ask students to share what it felt like to be truly listened to, and how they could recognise that this was the case.
  - How accurately was their own story told back to them?
  - Congratulate students on showing that they can each become a better listener.
- Discuss as a class:
    - If we all took the time to be better listeners, what difference might it make in our lives and the lives of others?
    - When could we each have a positive effect on others by listening to them?
    - Think back to what students discovered in the starter activity. How could being listened to help us feel better and do better?



## PLENARY:

# CONNECTING WITH THE WORLD AT EXPO 2020

15 MINUTES

**15 minutes**

### Connecting with the World at Expo 2020

- Explain that millions of visitors – over 70% from outside the UAE – are expected at Expo 2020, when they will be able to explore exhibits and pavilions from over 200 countries.
  - Use the [UK Pavilion](#) design weblink to briefly explore how the UK pavilion will use embedded LEDs and AI (an artificial intelligence program) to create poetry from words that visitors suggest, turning their thoughts and ideas into an interactive experience – a novel way to ‘listen’.
- Ask students:
    - What barriers might stop visitors from connecting with other visitors from around the world?
    - What could help visitors to connect, instead?

- Explain that a Majlis is a traditional forum in the UAE. The Majlis (council) has traditionally been an essential part of Emirati social and political life, serving as a forum for members of the community to discuss issues among themselves and to raise important matters. All members of the community are entitled to attend these forums to offer their opinions on topics of the day.
- In pairs or small groups students use **Connecting with the World at Expo 2020 Dubai** Activities & Handouts

sheet to generate ideas for 'Majlis spaces' around Expo 2020, which could support planned or impromptu Majlis between visitors, as a way to get to know one another, cross any cultural divides and feel positive about the future.

- Students share ideas and explain how Expo 2020 might take visitors' ideas and share them with other visitors to Expo 2020, to create meaningful connections between people and a positive outlook on the future.



### EXTENSION ACTIVITY 1:

## QUESTIONS TO CREATE THE FUTURE

### Questions to create the future

- Students generate ideas for questions they think it will be important to ask in order to create a better, positive future for everyone.
- You could link this to the three sub-themes of Expo 2020, Opportunity, Mobility and

Sustainability, and to the 17 [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/). (See <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>)

- Students can create a display of their ideas or share on the school's website.



### EXTENSION ACTIVITY 2:

## LET'S BECOME BETTER LISTENERS

### A listening campaign in school

- Students could identify how they could promote better listening in school, not only during lessons but between students as friends and peers.

- They could use assemblies and posters to promote their ideas and research and create a list of '5 ways to be a better listener' to display in each classroom.

## EVALUATION:

Use this grid to help you evaluate students' understanding of the Lesson Plan.

Outcome/objective	Emerging (fair)	Developing (good)	Mastery (very good)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Describe what it feels like to be truly listened to.</li><li>List some positive differences we might see in the world if people really listened to one another.</li><li>Share creative ideas for a 'Majlis space' at Expo 2020.</li></ul>	Students can follow directions and repeat information back accurately, showing a basic understanding of content.	Students can confidently use the vocabulary and content in familiar contexts.	Students demonstrate clear understanding of the vocabulary and content by using it confidently, and applying it to unfamiliar contexts.