

WELCOME TO THE OPERATION SOAPBOX TEACHERS' PACK

Southbank Centre and architecture practice AOC have produced this pack to support the work that you will be doing with the young people in your school or youth group.

Operation Soapbox – a space for creative expression

Operation Soapbox is an exploration into how we choose to express ourselves and how new ideas form. The lead explorers in this task are young people, guided by teachers/group leaders and their own imaginations.

The project asks young people to think about an issue or idea that matters to them, and to use their Soapbox Satellite to creatively communicate that issue or idea to others. What they produce in response will be shown in a special exhibition at Southbank Centre in summer 2008. AOC will create a special structure out of soapboxes to showcase the young people's work.

Your role

In its simplest form, the project can be summed up in a paragraph:

'Using your Soapbox Satellite as a catalyst, work with your students to consider the issues and ideas that matter most to them. Then, use and transform the Soapbox Satellite in any way you wish in order to communicate an important issue or idea to an external audience. Send back your Soapbox in some form for an exhibition at Southbank Centre in June 2008. The project can take as little or as much time as you like.'

We want this project to be interesting for you as well as for your students. So if you are the kind of teacher who just likes to take an idea and run with it, you could stop reading now and just get on with it. However, if you prefer to have more guidance, then this pack offers a number of activity suggestions and discussion points as springboards for focused work with your students.

There are no right or wrong ways of going about your project, and what you make of Operation Soapbox is entirely up to you. But please, whatever you do, don't forget to share it with us and with other participating groups by:

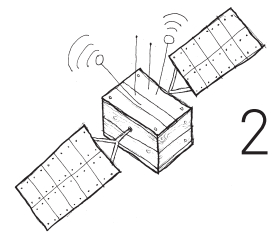
- a) contributing to the project website, where you can see what other schools and groups are up to.
- b) sending back your Soapbox Satellite and your findings, in one form or another, in May 2008.

Your responsibilities

Southbank Centre takes overall responsibility for running this project. We will cover the costs of sending you your Soapbox, and provide you with all the information you need. However, we ask you to take responsibility for the following four areas:

- 1) Giving us accurate information about where to send the box, and ensuring that there is someone there to receive it.
- 2) Providing and paying for any art materials or other equipment used by your group in the course of the project.
- 3) Sending back the 'findings' of your project (your Soapbox in some form) by May 2007. We say 'in some form' because we do expect you to cover the costs of sending the box back. For this reason, you may decide to send us images or footage of your box (or even a small part of your box) rather than the real or whole thing.
- 4) Ensuring that any activity as part of the project is covered under your own Health and Safety guidelines and insurance policy. Southbank Centre is not insured for any activity undertaken by you as part of Operation Soapbox.





This Teachers' Pack is your handbook as an educator to the Operation Soapbox process. It puts everything practical you need to know in one place, as well as offering prompts to your own creativity and imagination as you deliver the project. It has four sections:

1 SECTION 1: GENERAL BACKGROUND AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT.

2 SECTION 2: DETAILED INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE ON THE PROJECT STAGES.

3 SECTION 3: DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY SHEETS, FULL OF IDEAS FOR USE IN CLASS, ON KEY PROJECT THEMES.

4 SECTION 4: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON OTHER RESOURCES, CURRICULUM LINKS, INSETS ETC.

The Teachers' Pack is designed to be used alongside the Soap Operations Manual, an illustrated poster guide to the project for young people. This will be sent inside the Soapbox. It sets out:

- the overall project process, and the five stages, in a graphic diagram
- some background to the idea of soapboxes as a tool for expression
- examples of ways in which different communication styles can be used to express a point
- examples of the ways in which soapboxes might be used

Throughout the year, you will be sent additional inspiration via monthly email updates featuring guest artists. These will focus on ways of using your Soapbox Satellite:

- to explore issues with young people
- to communicate the issues that matter to them to the rest of the world

You will also have a page assigned to your school/class on the project website.

www.southbankcentre.co.uk/soapbox is a space – a virtual soapbox you might call it – where you can post up news about your own Soapbox projects, and make links with schools who are looking at similar ideas.

If you have any questions about the project that this pack does not answer, please do contact Southbank Centre Learning & Participation at soapbox@southbankcentre.co.uk or on 020 7921 0871.

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SECTION 1: OPERATION SOAPBOX PROCESS

Project background

In June 2007, Southbank Centre and AOC built a maze of 1500 soapboxes on the South Bank of London's River Thames, opposite the Houses of Parliament. For four weeks, members of the public of all ages and nationalities wrote and drew ideas and issues that mattered to them all over the walls of this Soapbox Maze. Having found the centre, they were asked to consider the question – 'If you could ask the rest of the world one question right now, what would it be?' – and to write down their answers. (Pictures of the maze can be seen on the project website.)

Operation Soapbox has a five-stage learning journey. This journey can last as long as you like. It could take place over the course of an afternoon, or over many months.

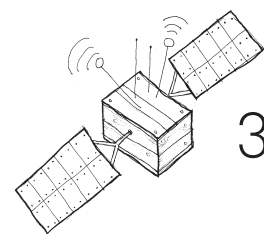
1) Receive – welcome the Soapbox Satellite to your class and open it up. (see Section 2, page 5)

2) Respond – use the Soapbox and its contents to stimulate an initial discussion about the project, and to provoke ideas about what you might do next. (see Section 2, page 5)

The next two sections are closely connected to each other, and may take place at the same time, or even the other way round, depending on how your project evolves.

3) Remake – use the Soapbox to start to explore and express the issues and ideas that matter to your students. No rules here – the box is yours to do what you like with. Simply use your imaginations. (see Section 2, page 6)

4) Reflect – take time to decide together what it is that you want to say to the rest of the world at the exhibition at Southbank Centre, and how you

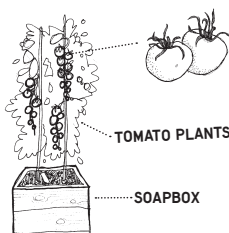


want to say it. What are the issues that are most important to you? What are the ideas you want to share? And how might you communicate these to others? (see Section 2, page 7)

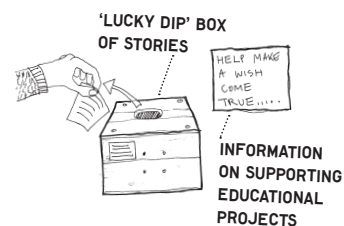
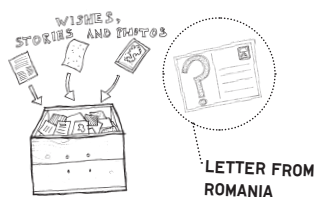
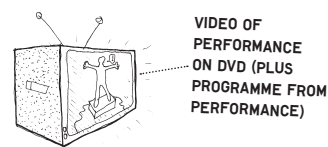
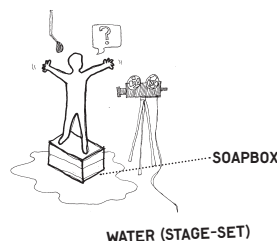
5) Return – send back your Soapbox to Southbank Centre in some form. You do not have to send back the Soapbox itself – it may be that you send back the outcomes of your creative exploration in some other medium. (see Section 2, page 7)

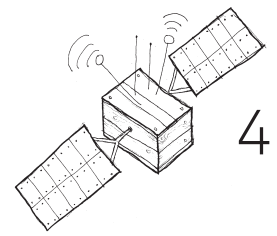
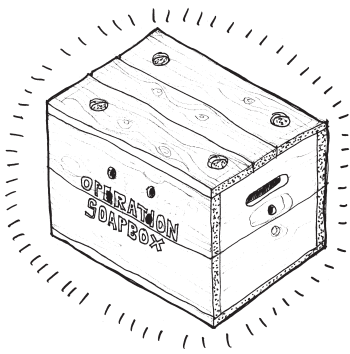
Examples of complete project cycles:

WHAT THEY DID



WHAT THEY SENT BACK





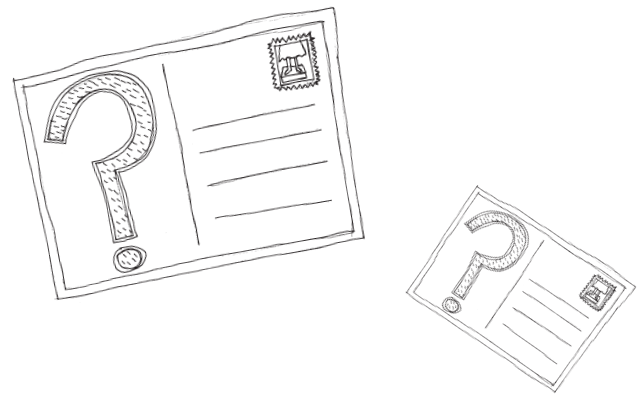
Operation Soapbox in an afternoon

- 1) Anderson School, a primary school in the north of Scotland, Receive and Respond to their box in half an hour.
- 2) They immediately start to discuss the core issues about the project: what one would and should say to the world if one could say anything one wanted. What messages they would like to send to an audience at Southbank Centre, and what that audience might be interested in.
- 3) The teacher sets small groups the challenge of coming up with ideas of how they can use or transform their box in the space of an hour.
- 4) After a short whole group discussion, the group decide to cover the walls of the box with stories and facts about their local area and themselves, as well as images (photos and drawings) of daily life in the village.
- 5) The group decide to send back the whole box. (But they could easily have taken some photos and emailed or posted these back.)

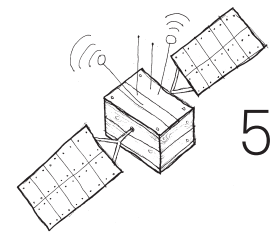
Operation Soapbox over a year

- 1) Blackfriars School, an inner-city secondary school, receive their box at a time of great change for the school. They have just started to improve the school dinners, with a focus on healthier meals, and on reducing the distance that food travels to reach the table.
- 2) They are excited to find that the initial question sent to them in their box is about how we can create healthier communities. They connect with the question, and decide to explore these issues in a number of curriculum subjects.
- 3) The young people decide to Remake their box by using it to grow fresh vegetables. Over the course of a number of months, they nurture seedlings into young plants.
- 4) When they Reflect at the end of the year, they decide that they would like to send back their Soapbox findings in the form of an example of how easy it can be to develop urban agriculture.

- 5) As the plants are still growing, they Return images of the plants growing in the Soapbox, but they create to accompany them a short booklet on urban agriculture and a recipe for marrow chutney.



★ NOTES



SECTION 2: PROJECT STAGES

1) RECEIVE

The Soapbox Satellite docks in your class. Open it up.

When you open your Soapbox, you will find the following cargo:

- 1) a gold envelope containing a question collected at the Soapbox Maze
- 2) Two copies of the Soap Operations Manual – the young people's brief guide to the project
- 3) a piece of sandpaper in case you want to clean up your soapbox

Suggested activity

(i) Make a ceremony of it: The Soapbox and its cargo will be your guest for up to eight months. Why not make its arrival something special? Consider the way in which you bring the Soapbox into the room. The way you open it. The way you consider its contents. What kind of welcoming ritual might be appropriate for the start of your journey of creative exploration?

(ii) Record the arrival process and/or ceremony: Please do record your opening moment or ceremony. You might take a photo, make a drawing, painting or collage, write a report or paragraph, or interview each other about it. Then why not upload what you produce to your page on the project website, setting a marker for the start of your project timeline.

(iii) Give your group the background to the project: This might be a good time to let your group know where the Soapbox Satellite has come from, and where it will be going back to in May 2008. Tell them about the Soapbox Maze, and the way in which the public contributed their ideas and questions to the project. (See page 3 of this pack and the website for further information on this. There are also photos that

you can print off and download, and links to other photos on flickr and similar sites).

For additional activity ideas for this stage, see the Freedom page of project activities, (page 11).

2) RESPOND

Use the Soapbox and its contents to introduce the project, and to provoke ideas about what you might do next.

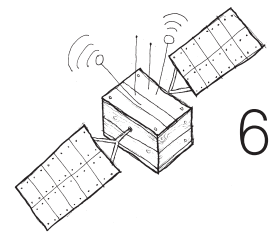
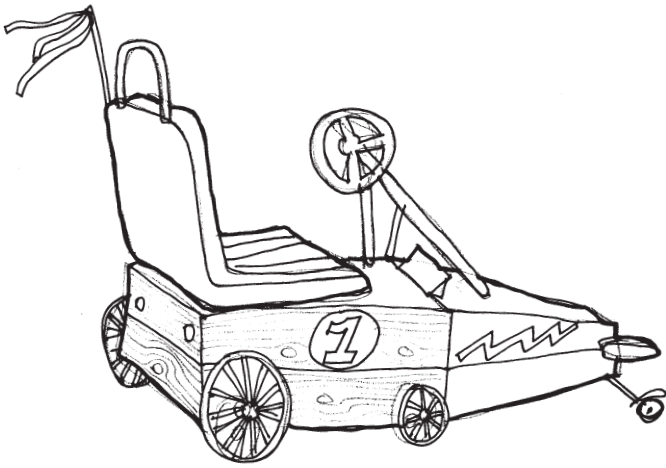
- a) Respond to your question: The gold envelope contains a question contributed by a member of the public who visited the Soapbox Maze in summer 2007. Most cards contain the name of the person who invented the question, as well as the name of the place where they come from.
- b) Respond to the Soapbox itself: The Operations Manual contains a short section on the origin of the Soapbox idea. You may decide to use this as the basis for a class discussion to explore the concept of Soapboxes and get people thinking about how they might use theirs.

At the end of this stage, you may decide to focus your own Soapbox project around the question you found in your box. However, you may also simply use that as an initial stimulus, and decide instead to find your own issues and questions.

Suggested activity

(i) Discuss your question and the circumstances around it. You may spend as much or as little time as you like on this. We suggest exploring some of the following:

- Do you understand what this question is about?
- Who do you think might have asked this question?
- Why do you think they asked it?
- Do you agree that this is an important question?
- How might you find out the answer? Do you have any instinctive answers?



- What kind of question do you think this is? eg: does the person really want to know the answer? Or are they trying to make a point by asking the question?
- How would you like to start exploring this question further?

(ii) Discuss the concept of a soapbox. Use The Soapbox Story in the Soapbox Operations Manual as a basis for this conversation. You might look at the following questions:

- Do you like the idea of soapboxes?
- How might the kind of thing people say on a soapbox differ from what official politicians say in official places?
- Why do you think soapboxes were used for this purpose as opposed to other boxes?
- What are the ways on which people 'get on a soapbox' in your daily life?
- Where would be a good place to put a soapbox today?

(iii) Have a go at using your own Soapbox in the traditional manner: Over the course of the project you will be encouraged to use your Soapbox in new and inventive ways. But why not start off by performing a traditional Soapbox activity? Take it in turns to stand on your Soapbox for a minute or two and tell your classmates about an issue that matters to you. If you could tell the rest of the world any one thing, what would that be?

For additional activity ideas for this stage, see the Questions and Freedom pages of project activities, (pages 9 and 11).

3) REMAKE

We recommend reading this page in close connection with Reflect, as the 2 stages are interchangeable, and closely related to each other. If you are doing this

project over a period of weeks or months, you may go to and fro between these stages a number of times.

Use the Soapbox, in any way you like, as a tool to stimulate exploration by the young people about the issues that matter to them.

It is completely up to you how you use your box. The two example projects in Section 1 of this pack show how two imaginary groups might choose to do it. One over a day, and one over many months.

You don't have to have a 'brilliant' idea upfront. Just remember that the overall aim of the project is to use your Soapbox, in some form, to express an issue or idea that is important to your group. You might try out or discuss a number of ideas before deciding on the form that is right for your message.

Do record your explorations on the Operation Soapbox website blog. You can also upload images of what you are doing.

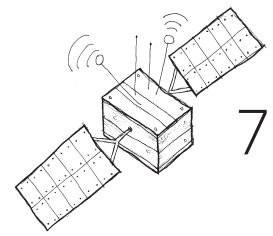
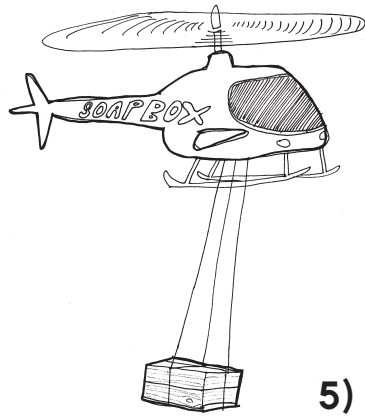
(i) You might use your Soapbox to help you draw out ideas about what matters to the group, in order to decide what issues to focus the project on. You might:

- take it in turns to stand on the Soapbox in the traditional sense
- or use it as a suggestion box in which people can put ideas about issues to focus on (either in the classroom or in the school hall).

(ii) Or you might already have a brilliant idea from initial conversations about how you want to use the Soapbox. For example – you might decide to take it out in your local shopping centre and ask members of the public to stand on it and tell you what they think about plans for the new housing development in your area.

(iii) Or you might decide to put your box aside for now, and focus on exploring ideas that matter. Then decide how you want to use your box to express those ideas later.

For additional activity ideas for this stage, see the Idea page of project activities (page 13). The Message and Dialogue (pages 16 and 19) also offer relevant activity suggestions.



4) REFLECT

This stage should be carried out in close relation with Stage 3 – Remake.

Think about the best way to communicate to others the ideas that are emerging / have emerged from your creative explorations.

- What is it that you want to say or show to others? How might you sum that up in words and/or by other means?
- How might you communicate to others the process through which you reached your decision about how to use your Soapbox?

Activity Suggestions

(i) Document the process of arriving at your decision. Using words, pictures or movement, explore ways to creatively and imaginatively express one or all of the following:

- How you decided what overall issues were important to you
- How you explored these issues or learnt new things about them
- How you decided what specific messages to communicate to the rest of the world
- How you decided the best way to do that.

For additional activity ideas for this stage, see the Dialogue and Message pages of project activities. (pages 16 and 19). The Idea page may also offer relevant activity suggestions (page 13).

5) RETURN

Send back your Soapbox to Southbank Centre in some form. You do not have to send back the Soapbox itself – it may be that you send back the outcomes of your creative exploration in some other medium.

By March 2008, you should be starting to decide what you would like to send back to Southbank Centre in order to communicate your ideas to the rest of the world. The Operations Manual contains some examples of what schools might send back, but they are only three of thousands.

The key thing you need to decide is: In what form shall we send our ideas back?

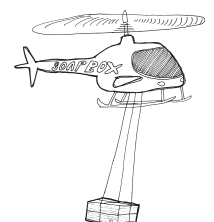
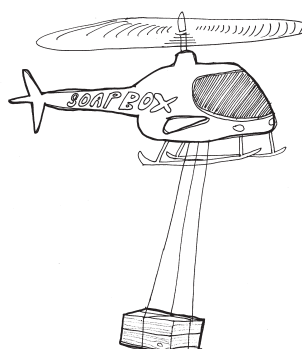
- Will you send back a representation or recording of what you have done?
- Will you send back a physical artefact or object that communicates what you have done?
- Will you send back a piece of writing, a painting or a sculpture?
- Will you send back the Soapbox itself, or something in its place?

Practicalities

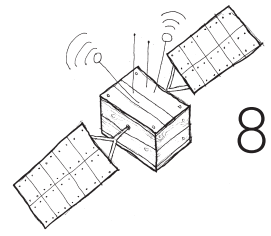
We will send you full instructions for returning your soapbox in March 2008.

If you are sending back something that people interact with, you must ensure that it is constructed to be safe to use.

For activity ideas for this stage, see the Message page of project activities, (page 19).



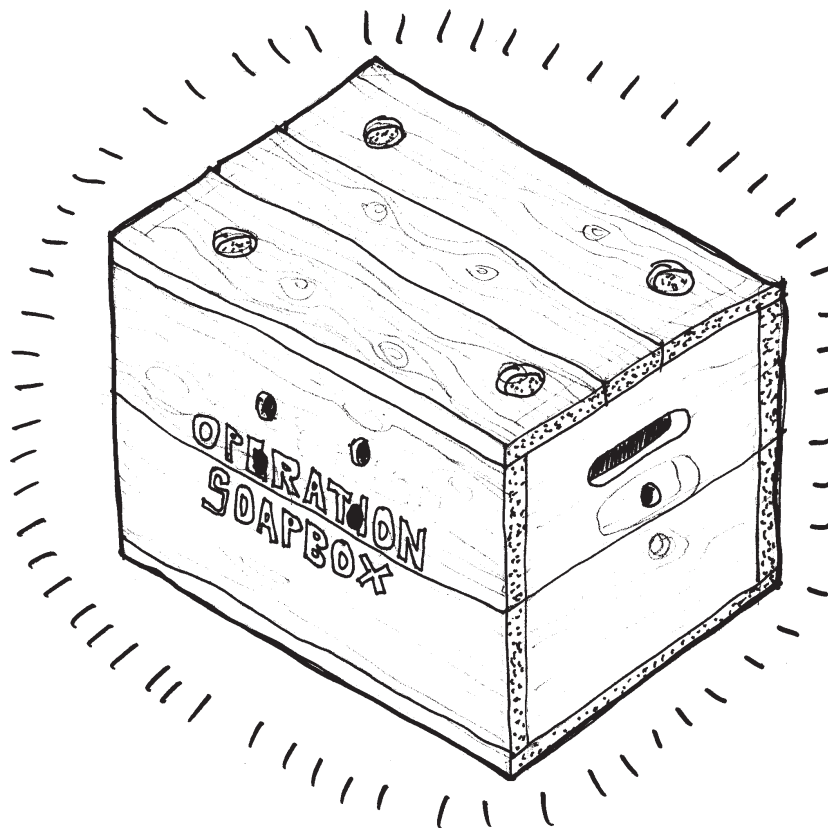
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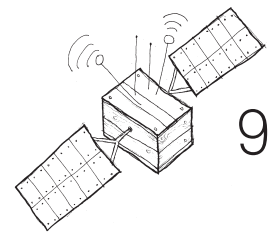
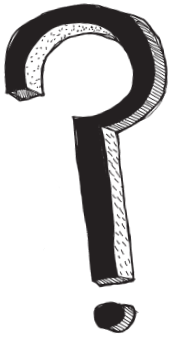


SECTION 3: ACTIVITY SHEETS

In each group of pages, we invite you to explore a relevant keyword or concept around creating and expressing ideas. We have suggested ways of getting started, avenues to explore, questions to answer along the way, and activities to keep the project alive. The sheets are intended as sparks to your own imagination, not prescriptive activities.

- 1) **Questions – the importance of.**
- 2) **Freedom - looks at the issues around freedom of expression, setting boundaries, censorship, cultural sensitivity etc.**
- 3) **Idea –looks at how new ideas emerge.**
- 4) **Dialogue – looks at ways that a group of people can compare different ideas and opinions.**
- 5) **Message – looks at the different ways to communicate a point.**





1) QUESTION

Operation Soapbox begins with questions: hundreds of questions collected from visitors to Southbank Centre, then sent out to groups of young people around the country. What the young people do next is up to them. If the question interests them, they may decide to spend some time investigating the answer. Or they may simply use it as a jumping-off point to ask their own questions about the world. They may even decide to send back their Soapbox message to Southbank Centre in the form of a question.

Core Questions

What is a 'good' question?

How do I decide what information I need?

Do all questions have answers?

Is the question more important than the answer?

Thinking paths

1) Questions are some of the most powerful communication tools we have. In their most basic definition, questions are things that we ask others in order to gain knowledge or information. However, in practice, the way we use questions is more complex. Questions are fundamental to disciplines such as learning, science and research, therapy and philosophy. By asking the right questions, not only of others but also of ourselves, we can understand more about the world we live in, our place in it, and our own identity.

- Discuss: How do questions enter your life? How do you and the people around you use questions? When do you use them? What kind of questions do you use? Students could keep a diary for a day of all the questions that they come across, and then compare these in class.

2) Rhetorical questions: Not all questions are meant to be answered. Questions can also be used to engage people in a particular issue or to make a point. We call these questions 'rhetorical questions' after 'rhetoric'

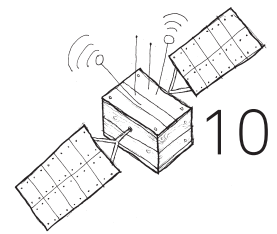
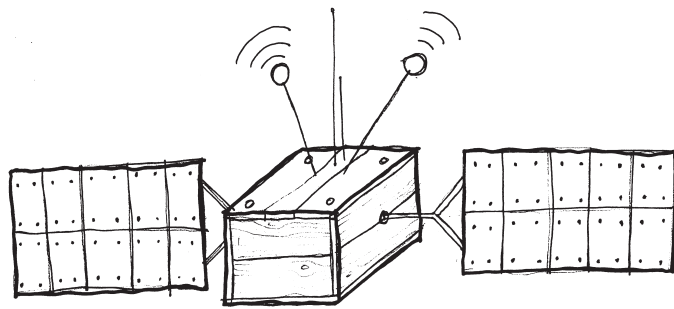
– the art of persuasion. By encouraging the listener to think about what the answer to the question must be, the point that the speaker wishes to make sinks in more deeply than if he or she had simply stated it. For example, when a sports coach asks 'Are we going to win or lose today?' the answer is clearly 'win', but the act of questioning encourages the players to really think about the act of winning. An aid charity might ask, 'Is it right that a nation starves while we throw so much food away?' The answer is clearly 'No', but the listener is encouraged to engage in the issue through the question form.

- Discuss: Do you ever use rhetorical questions? Does your teacher or group leader? Or your parents? Think of some examples of rhetorical questions that you might use, at school and at home.

3) Socratic questioning: Socrates was a Greek philosopher and teacher alive over 2000 years ago. One of his pupils, Plato (who also became a famous philosopher – see Idea), wrote about a particular teaching method that Socrates used to get the most out of students. Rather than tell them things, Socrates would carefully ask the students a number of questions about a subject, encouraging them to use their own existing knowledge, plus innate powers of critical thinking, to draw out learning, and to form logical conclusions. In doing so, they would develop their powers of critical thinking, and be able to ask others good questions in turn. This method is still the basis of much education today, and is an important part of legal and medical training.

- Discuss: a) Is Socratic questioning ever used in your school or group? In what kind of situation is it used? b) Why do you think Socratic questioning is a particularly useful tool for trainee lawyers and doctors?

4) Parliamentary questions: The asking of questions to seek information or to press for action is a fundamental part of the UK parliamentary system. Members of Parliament (MPs) have to keep a check on how the Government is running the country. They do this by asking questions at a daily Question Time. Once a week they are able to ask the Prime Minister questions. Questions have to be 'tabled' in advance, which means that ministers know what they are going to be asked and can prepare their answers in



advance. About 80,000 questions are asked each year, of which about 3,000 are answered orally in the Chamber.

- Discuss: If you could put a question to the UK Parliament, what would you ask?

Further Discussion

1) The American writer Zora Neale Hurston said that 'There are years that ask questions, and years that answer them.' What do you think she meant by that? Think about this year – does it raise a question or an answer? What about some other years over the last century?

2) Discuss the difference between direct and indirect questions, for example, 'What is your favourite food?' versus 'Tell me about your favourite food'. Which do you think are more effective and why? Does it depend on the situation?

Activity Ideas

1) What? Who? Where? Why? When? and How? Journalists are taught to use the formula What? Who? Where? Why? When? and How? to gather information for news stories. Ask students to practise interviewing other people in the group about 'The worst thing that ever happened to me' using this formula. Did you get all the information you wanted? Which questions were the most useful in drawing out information?

2) Question Trails: Asking ourselves questions even when we think we already know the answer can be a useful exercise to help us think about things in new ways. Working in pairs, ask each student to make a statement about something that is important to them, perhaps something that they do or don't believe or think. For example: 'I think homework is a waste of time.' The other student should then ask a relevant Why question eg: 'Why do you think that?' When the first student replies, the second student should again ask a relevant Why question eg: 'Because it is boring working on your own', 'Why is it boring working on your own?', 'Because you work better when you talk to people?', 'Why does talking to people make you work better?' etc. Students should keep going until they can't ask any more questions, or until they reach an interesting or unexpected place. Discuss the process afterwards. How does the questioning process make their minds work?

3) Question Maps: Give the group a 'big' question – the kind of question without an easy answer. It might be the kind of question that human beings have been struggling to answer for centuries, such as 'Why are we here?' or it might be more practical, such as 'Are human beings the only intelligent life in the universe?' Working in pairs or groups, ask students to draw a question map of all the questions that one might need to ask in order to answer that question. Explain that it might look a bit like a family tree, with one question sparking off another set of questions. Present back the question maps, and discuss the types of questions that people have written down.

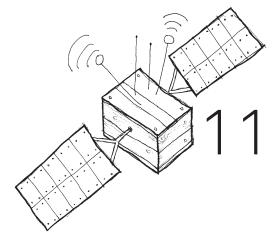
Additional activity: Ask students to write or draw how their minds were working as they produced their question maps. What kind of jumps, connections or stretches did they make?

Additional activity: Can the students group the questions they asked into different types of questions? What kind of categories can they develop? What, Why, How, Where and Who questions are one type of classification, but what others can they think of? They may come up with their own labels such as 'Fact Questions' and 'Imagine Questions'. You might want to introduce other systems of classifying questions, such as Bloom's Taxonomy, and ask your students what they think of these systems.

Further resources

www.criticalthinking.org: website of the American Center for Critical Thinking, a foundation established to promote critical thinking and questioning at secondary and university level. Useful reading and resource lists.

www.theyworkforyou.com: find out how many questions your local MP has asked in Parliament recently and what kind of questions he or she has asked.



2) FREEDOM

Operation Soapbox grew out of a commitment to freedom of expression. Not only are hundreds of Soapboxes being sent out around the country as an invitation for young people to say what they want to say to the rest of the world, but the questions that are being sent to you to kickstart the project were also collected through a very open process. For four weeks, as part of a Literature Festival themed around 'freedom of expression', members of the public wrote and drew anything they wanted on the walls of a specially constructed Soapbox Maze. They then posted the questions that they would like young people to think about in the centre of the maze.

Now, of course, before we sent these questions out to you, we edited them carefully, removing anything that you might find offensive or inappropriate. Censorship you might call it. And that's where 'freedom of expression' gets really interesting. In a responsible society, is it ever a good idea to be truly free to say whatever you want?

Core questions

Can I say and do what I like? Should I be able to say and do what I like?

Does anyone have the right to tell me what I can say and do?

Is there any place where I can say and do what I like?

If I can't say and do what I like, what freedom of expression do I have?

Thinking Strands

1) Freedom of expression, or 'freedom of speech' as it is sometimes called, is the concept of being able to express oneself however one wants without being censored. It is seen as being an essential part of life in modern democracies – a 'human right' – and is protected by international law. The first document to enshrine this as a right for all human beings, and not just a special few, was "The Declaration of the Rights of Man" a fundamental document of the French Revolution (published in August 1789). John Stuart

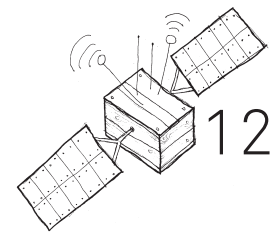
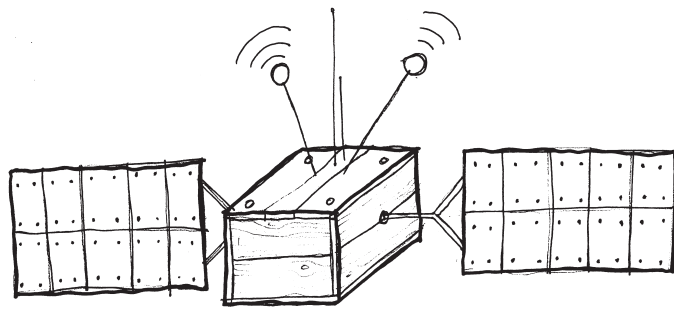
Mill's 'On Liberty' (1859) stressed the importance of freedom of speech to social and intellectual progress. Every idea should be carefully considered, because even a bad idea might have truth in it. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights are two important documents currently in use.

- Discuss: Can the group agree what freedom of expression means? Is it important to be able to? What are the potential implications of freedom of expression? Do you agree that it is important even for things that are wrong or untrue to be allowed to be heard?

2) Censorship: In practice, genuine freedom of expression is rarely achieved, and the right to freedom of expression is not absolute. Censorship is the withholding of information from a population by a controlling body. It is often associated with repressive regimes, where governments may prevent information that challenges the status quo from circulating. In Burma, a woman called Aung San Suu Kyi symbolises the struggle of Burma's people to be free. She has been under house arrest at different times during the past 17 years for her pro-democracy work opposing the military government. She has called on people around the world to join the struggle for freedom in Burma, saying, "Please use your liberty to promote ours". She asks people to take a stand against companies that are doing business with the Burmese military regime.

- Discuss: Can one person ever change the way rulers treat their people? What would you be prepared to do to protect freedom in your country if it was under threat? In a lesser way, censorship is also a feature of life in most democracies. Can it ever be a good thing? If everyone was totally free to say and do exactly what they wanted, what would the effect be on your school, your youth club, your home, your friends?

3) The Internet: The development of the World Wide Web has opened up a whole new set of issues for freedom of expression. It has certainly made it harder for nations that try to repress certain ideas to do so, as people can both publish and access information more easily. Some countries have decided that certain



information must be repressed; these countries use special versions of search engines to prevent people being able to access information that the government doesn't want them to see. The web has also caused challenges for more democratic countries, as people are able to post offensive, illegal or dangerous information that may cause harm to others. For example, in 2007 a number of teachers called for sites such as You Tube to be shut down because they were being used as tools for bullying, posting death threats to teachers online, as well as mobile phone videos of teachers and pupils being attacked and humiliated.

- Discuss: What do you see as the particular problems, challenges and opportunities for freedom of expression that the Internet offers? Does any kind of censorship already operate on the Internet (peer or self censorship for example) or should any rules be enforced? Do you agree that sites like You Tube are dangerous?

Further discussion

1) The Danish philosopher Kierkegaard said 'People demand freedom of speech to make up for the freedom of thought, which they avoid.' What do you think he meant by that and do you agree with him? Why might people wish to avoid freedom of thought? How does freedom of thought differ from freedom of speech?

Activity Ideas

- 1) Soapbox guidelines: Draw up a set of guidelines regarding expression for your own Soapbox project. What should people be 'allowed' or 'not allowed' to say during the course of your project?
- 2) Living archive: In the film *Fahrenheit 451* by Francois Truffaut all books are banned, rounded up and burned. In response, groups of rebels memorise whole books by heart, in order to save the texts for humanity. If all books were banned now, and you were responsible for saving and learning a particular text, what would you choose to learn and why? Optional extra: all members learn a particular couple of lines from the text that they would save and perform them to each other in class.

3) Expression through the arts: The arts have always been a way of expressing ideas and opinions indirectly. In the time of Queen Elizabeth I, political criticism was frowned upon. Playwrights like Shakespeare found ways round that by disguising political messages in stories about the past, which were really about the policies of Elizabeth's ministers. Later, when theatre was banned because of its dangerous tendencies, puppetry became a means of spreading political criticism. The famous figure of Mr Punch started life as a subversive character, making risky comments about the state. Ask the students to think of an issue or opinion that is important to them. Ask them to imagine that they live somewhere where those ideas cannot be put in words. How might they express them in another medium in order to get past the censors?

4) Managing freedom of expression: Imagine that the group has been commissioned to create a piece of art on an issue that concerns them using a graffiti wall. Ask them to decide what content would be appropriate and inappropriate, and to sketch out a plan for their piece, if the artwork were to be displayed in: an old people's home, a youth club, the nursery class, a local luxury hotel, the school hall on parents' evening, a report to the local council or to school governors.

Further reading

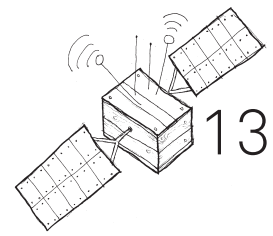
www.un.org/Overview/rights.html: the full text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

www.echr.info: the full text of the Convention on Human Rights.

www.article19.org: global campaign for free expression.

www.indexonline.org: Index on Censorship, founded in 1972, is one of the world's leading sources of writing on free expression issues and reports on censorship issues from all over the world.

www.africaliberalnetwork.org: In May 2007, the Africa Liberal Network launched Freedom of Expression Campaign to unite the liberal political parties throughout Africa behind one common cause.



3) IDEA

Operation Soapbox asks young people around the country to articulate the issues that matter to them. Their points of view will be shared with the general public in an exhibition at Southbank Centre in Summer 2008. However, the core focus of Operation Soapbox is not simply on young people 'having their say'. It is about creating a space in which young people can think carefully about what they want to say, challenge themselves to think deeply about those issues that they care about, and then explore creatively how they might express those issues to others. Perhaps they may even have some ideas for others about how we might tackle important issues, or do things differently.

Core Questions

Where do ideas come from?

How can we capture new ideas?

Is everyone creative?

Can I become more creative?

Thinking Strands

1) What is an idea? An idea is a concept formed in the mind. The capacity to have ideas is said to be unique to human beings, and comes from our ability to reflect upon and reason about the world. The word 'idea' comes from Ancient Greek, where it meant a form, shape or appearance. This suggests that an idea is a thought that you can clearly see in your head and indeed, people often describe ideas as images that appear in their heads.

- Discuss: When people want to draw a new idea, they often represent it through the image of a light-bulb. This is often shown appearing over someone's head. In what other ways could an idea be represented? Try to describe what it feels like when an idea comes into your head. Related activity: express through words and/or pictures the process of an idea forming.

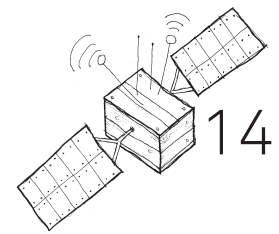
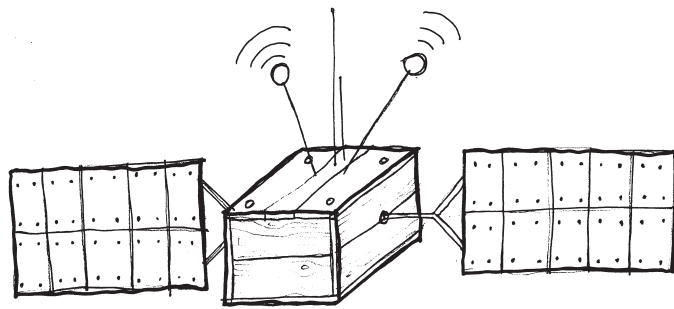
2) Innovation: in the 21st century, new ideas are seen as a very important commodity, particularly in the business world. All kinds of toys and games have been invented to help business people come up with new ways of doing things or new products to sell. However, new ideas are equally important to politics and to broader society. For example, votes for women was a new idea once, but one that caught on and became the norm. There are often said to be four main types of innovation: (i) Product – a new object or service; (ii) Process – a new way of doing things; (iii) Paradigm – a new way of thinking about things and (iv) Position – a new way of presenting or marketing things.

- Discuss: Do you see innovation as important? What recent examples of innovation can you see around you in your life? Are new ideas always the best ones?
- Discuss: Think about what kinds of innovation have happened at your school or organisation in the last few months or years. Which category of innovation do they fit under? Have the new ideas been a success from your point of view?
- Discuss: If you could improve one thing about your school, what would it be? What ideas do you have for how to make it better?

3) Where ideas come from: Over the centuries there have been a number of theories about how new ideas enter society, but none have been proven. Here are two well-known ones: one from the ancient and one from the recent past.

a) Plato's world of ideas: The Ancient Greek philosopher Plato believed that there was a whole separate world of Ideas, parallel to the material world in which we live. The world of Ideas was the real world, and the world in which we live, although real enough to our senses, merely an illusion. From time to time humans were able to get a glimpse of the world of Ideas, and training one's intellect to enquire and reflect helped one to be able to do that. In Plato's theory, all the Ideas are already out there somewhere, and it is our task to capture and articulate them.

b) Dawkins' memes: Biologist Richard Dawkins has applied Darwin's theory of evolution to the spreading of ideas. He invented the term 'meme', which stands for a unit of 'cultural information.' Examples he gives



of memes include beliefs, fashions and ways of making pots, so you could see a meme as being a type of idea. Like living organisms, some memes are able to survive and spread, but may have to evolve in order to do so, and others die out.

- Discuss: What do you think of these two ideas about how ideas develop?
- Discuss: What ideas can you think of that have changed the world? What impact did they have? What would the world be like today if no-one had thought of them?

4) Coming up with new ideas: There are a number of theories and tips about how to generate new ideas. Although one thing is for sure: if you are asked to have a new idea, it usually becomes very hard to come up with anything! Here are some of the most common ideas about ideas:

- a) Taking a new perspective: Forcing yourself to look at something differently can often inspire us to think about that object or activity in a new way.
- b) Combining existing ideas: Sometimes all we need to do is to take two existing objects or ways of doing things and put them together to spark off a thought about a new object or way of doing things.
- c) Improving what is there: This is described as the evolutionary approach. When we have used or done something for ages, we become aware of the aspects of it that don't work so well. That can often be the impetus for thinking of a way to improve it.

- Discuss: What is the best idea that you have come up with in your work this week? Can you remember how you came up with it? What made it come into your head?

Further Discussion

1) Writer Victor Hugo said 'There is only one thing more powerful than all the armies of the world, that is an idea whose time has come.' What do you see Hugo as having meant by that? What kind of power do ideas have? What impact does an idea have upon the world in comparison to an army?

Activity Suggestions

1) Creative Behaviour Body Map: What do I do with my five senses when I'm being creative? Ask the young people to draw their body when they are being creative. Then present their drawings to a partner, explaining through the drawing how they feel when they are being creative.

Around new perspectives

1) New environment: Carry out an activity or lesson together in a different environment. eg.: Drama in the science lab. Ask the students to reflect on how the different environment influenced the way in which they approached or thought about the activity.

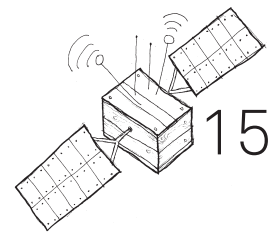
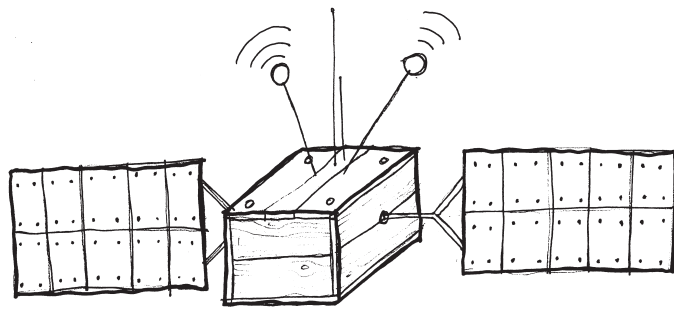
2) New views: Ask students to take photographs of places and everyday objects from a different angle to the obvious one. Suggest that they get down on the ground, up high, close up, far away. Looking at each others' photos afterwards, how do the images make them think about the environment or objects differently.

3) New applications: Give pairs of students an everyday object such as a fork and ask them to come up with as many new uses for it as they can in two minutes. Feedback to the class. This can also be played as a group activity, with the object in the middle of a circle. Going round the circle, each person must suggest a new use for the object in turn, however bizarre that use might be. Keep going until no-one can think of any new ideas.

Around synthesis

1) Both/and game: Give each student two small pieces of card and ask them to draw an everyday object on each. For example: a melon and an umbrella. Then put all the cards in a bag and ask each person to draw out card cards at random.

They must now think about how the two objects might be combined into one new thing, and what that new object might be used for. Ask them to give their object a name. Discuss as a group which objects might have a future. Variation: students can write a noun on one card and an adjective on another. Cards go into two separate bags and each student draws one from each.

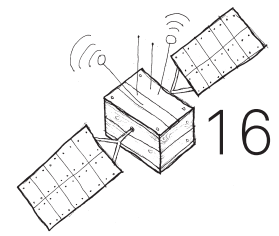


2) Consequences: Traditional games of consequences are always both entertaining and interesting. Each student writes or draws one thing at the top of a piece of paper, folds it over so it can't be seen and passes it on to the next person. With written consequences, the first person writes the name of one person, the second writes the name of another, and so on, until the place where they met, what the first person said, what the second person said, and what happened next, are completed in the same way. The stories can be read back to each other. With drawn consequences, the first person draws a head, the next person a torso, the next some legs, and the final person some feet.

Around evolution

1) Handy gadgets: Identify a problem with how your classroom works. How might you improve it? Design a special gadget or tool to do that. Your students might find the work of Heath Robinson inspiring in thinking about their own gadgets or tools. See www.heathrobinson.org

★ NOTES



4) DIALOGUE

Operation Soapbox requires young people to think together about issues that matter to them, and to decide together how they will represent and communicate those issues and ideas to the rest of the world. Those collective thinking and deciding processes can be creative and novel experiences in themselves, offering young people the opportunity to think about how they communicate with, work with, and learn from each other.

Core questions

How do we agree on something when we all have different points of view?

How can we combine all our ideas to make something new?

What rules or principles do we need in order to be able to communicate and work well together?

Thinking Strands

1) Thinking together: Human beings exchange ideas with each other, and reach decisions together, in many different ways. Discussion, debate, argument, conversation – all are different methods for a pair or group of people to communicate ideas. Without the possibility of communicating in this way, human society would not be able to manage itself or to move forward.

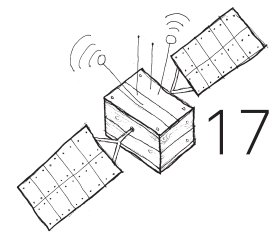
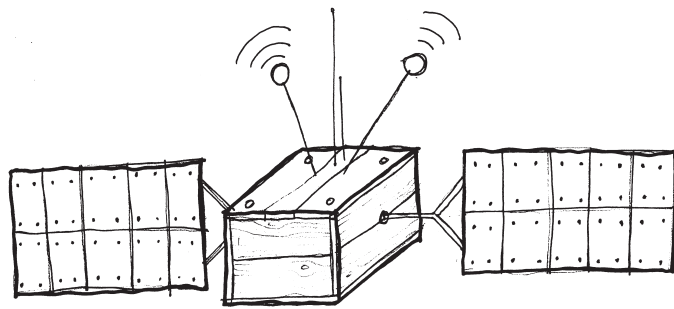
- Discuss: Brainstorm all the different methods that human beings use to communicate, share ideas and reach decisions with each other.
- Discuss: Once you have collected these words, try to define each one. What makes a conversation different from an argument for example? A discussion different from a debate?
- Optional activity: You might carry out the previous discussion as a brainstorm. Place pieces of flip chart around the room, each with one method written at the top. Students should move round as they write their ideas, building up definitions together.

2) Introducing dialogue: Dialogue is a relatively new method for human communication of ideas. Students may have come across the term in English or Drama to describe conversation between characters. However, dialogue as a communication method is something different. A dialogue is a group conversation where, unlike many arguments or debates, participants do not set out to 'win' anything or to convince other participants of a certain point of view. Instead, they commit to listen carefully and respectfully to each other, to share different perspectives, and to say what occurs to them as it occurs to them. Dialogue is used in political, business and creative settings to share perspectives in a non-conflictual way develop new ideas.

- Discuss: What do you see as the differences between dialogue and traditional argument and debate? In what kind of situation would dialogue be useful? And in what kind of situations would debate be appropriate. Think of examples of both kinds of conversations in daily life.
- Discuss: How are decisions made at your school or in your group? In what way is information shared or communicated before decisions are made so that people can make informed decisions.
- Discuss: Does your school or youth group have a student/user council? How useful is it?

3) Pure dialogue: physicist David Bohm developed what many see as the most famous and purest form of dialogue. Bohmian dialogue brings a group of people together simply to explore assumptions about who they are, how they think and what they do. There is no particular end goal, simply a 'free space' where something new can happen. The rules or 'principles' of dialogue are that:

- a) No decisions will be taken by the group during the conversation
- b) Participants will suspend judgment during the conversation, and not attack ideas that they don't like. However, they should be aware of when an idea does make them react negatively, in order to become aware of the 'blocks' in their thinking.
- c) People should be as honest and transparent as



possible. They should share ideas that come into their heads however controversial or 'stupid' these seem.

d) Participants should try to build on other participants' ideas.

e) Participants should really listen to what other participants say.

- Discuss: What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of dialogue? In which situations might it be appropriate and in which less appropriate?
- Discuss: How difficult is it to remove negative reaction or judgment from a discussion or argument? What would blogs and networking sites be like if there was no negative reaction or judgment?
- Discuss: What rules or principles are needed for a class discussion? And how might these be enforced?
- Activity: Draw up a class list of rules.

Activity Suggestions

The activity suggestions below are based around different methods for sharing ideas and reaching decisions together. Groups might try out two or more of these, and then compare the experiences, pros and cons of each method. (NB: You might use these techniques to decide what messages you are going to send back to Southbank Centre, or how you are going to use your Soapbox to communicate them.)

1) Hold a dialogue: Choose an issue that is important to your group and about which people have different ideas and perspectives. Hold a conversation according to the rules of dialogue. Discuss at the end how you thought the conversation went and whether it was easy to stick to the rules. Optional: why not record the conversation, and then play it back to the students. Ask them to analyse their own conversation. What would they do or say differently with hindsight?

2) Hold a traditional debate: Start with a proposition, eg: 'The head proposes that school should close on Wednesday afternoons but open half an hour earlier

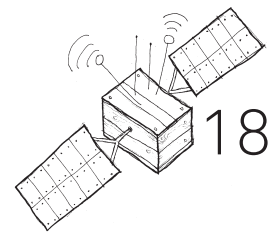
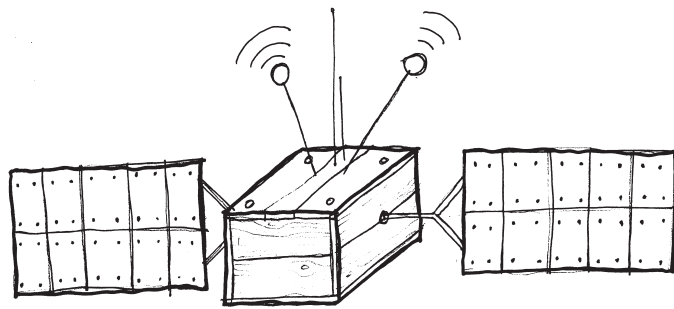
each day'. Help two groups to develop the argument for or against. Decide the maximum number of key points. Identify key points and write them on cards. Elect first speaker, second speaker and chair. Decide length of speeches – a couple of minutes is likely to be long enough for younger children. Instruct the chair to invite speakers in turn, to allow no interruptions, and to invite questions after each case has been put. Team members other than first and second speakers should answer questions. Ask the chair to sum up the argument if possible. Don't forget to vote on the proposition!

3) Make a dialogue wall: Use large pieces of paper, eg: flipchart A1 in landscape view to cover an area of the wall. Add a challenging question, a problem or a controversial opinion or a key word and invite responses. Provide a range of writing materials as well as coloured paper and glue. Select a few contributions to work with each day. Before you set up this activity, agree groundrules with your group, as appropriate, and perhaps appoint arbitrators to monitor the contributions that don't meet the rules. Discuss the pros and cons of posting an anonymous response. Can you come to a group decision?

4) Develop and play a board game: Divide the group into two teams. Ask each to think up reasons for or against a proposition such as 'School uniform should be banned.' In teams, agree at least 12 reasons in support of or against the proposition. Write these on cards. As a whole group, make a board with 54 squares. Mark the first square START and the last one FINISH. Mark 12 squares YOU SAY and 12 squares WE SAY at intervals. Mark six WILD squares. Number the remaining squares (for reference only, when players lose track of their counter). Players take it in turns to move a number of squares around the board as dictated by the dice. Have a maximum of four players per team, and use one counter for each team. The object of the game is to collect as many of the opposing team's cards as possible. There are two ways of doing this:

1) When you land on a YOU SAY square, you must suggest a reason that the opposing team has written on one of their cards. If your suggestion is correct, you win the card for your own side. If it is wrong, you must give the opposing team one of your cards.

2) When you land on a WE SAY square, you can choose



a player from the opposing team to guess one of the reasons written on your cards. If the player guesses incorrectly, they forfeit one of their cards; if they guess correctly, you give them the card.

If a player lands on a WILD square, they have to make a key point both for and against the proposition. If they succeed, they are allowed to move on four spaces.

The winning team is the one that reaches the end with the most cards.

5) Value Statements: Place three pieces of paper in a large triangle shape on the floor. On one piece write 'Agree,' on another write 'Disagree,' and on the third write 'Unsure.' Having agreed a topic for discussion, such as Young People's Behaviour, the teacher stands in the centre of the room and makes a series of statements about that topic. After each statement, students go to the word that best describes their reaction to the statement eg: Disagree. After everyone has moved, invite each person in the largest of the groups to say one sentence in response to the statement. Participants must only respond to the statement, and not to what anyone else has said. Students have the option of passing or saying 'it's been said.' If anyone changes their mind having heard other opinions, they are allowed to move. Ask each group to respond in turn, ending with the smallest so that they have the final say. Once students understand the process, they can take it in turns to stand in the middle and make the statement.

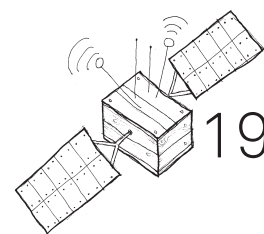
Further Resources

- *On Dialogue* by David Bohm (1996). This is quite a short book and great if you want to develop your understanding of the concept further.
- www.thataway.org: website of the US National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation, offering thousands of resources on communication methodologies.
- *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* by Augusto Boal (2nd edition – 2002). A great resource of dialogue-based theatre games and activities such as Forum Theatre that allow students to explore power relations

in social and political interaction. Good for empathy and role play.

- www.parliamentlive.tv: watch a debate in the UK Houses of Parliament. An interesting discussion could be around what Parliament would be like if everyone had to follow the rules of dialogue.
- www.dialogueyouth.org: an online forum where young people in Scotland can contribute to current political debate.

★ NOTES



5) MESSAGE

At the end of Operation Soapbox, the young people are asked to send back the findings from their journey of exploration into the issues and ideas that matter to them. To be specific, we ask them to think about what message/s they want to send back to Southbank Centre. However, simply sending back a message is not enough. We also encourage them to think about the best form in which to send their message to others in order to really engage their attention. That form might involve words, or it might involve images, or something else entirely, but it needs to be appropriate to the message.

Core questions

How do I get my point across?

What skills do I need to make people interested in what I have to say?

Can I persuade people to agree with my point of view?

What is the best form in which to express my message?

Thinking strands

1) Communication is a process of interaction between two or more human beings that allows them to exchange information. In order for information to be successfully exchanged, the beings have to have some kind of language in common. Otherwise, one person in the exchange might be telling the other about the most brilliant idea in the world, but if the second person cannot understand any of the symbols that the first person is using to describe their idea, then he or she might as well be talking gobbledygook. Much of the time, words are the language used in communication, but communication can also take place through body language and eye contact, or through images or actions.

- Discuss: What are all the communication methods or types of language that you can think of? Which of these different language forms do you use and when do you use them?

- Discuss: Do you ever have difficulty getting

someone else to understand you? Or do you ever have problems understanding someone else? What are the reasons for that lack of communication? (NB. Potential here to look at areas such as 'youthspeak' and slang, text messages etc)

- Activity: Imagine that a foreign student comes to your school. She has no English at all, and you do not speak her language. Find an inventive way of explaining to her how to get from one part of your school to another, or from your school to somewhere else in your area. How many different ways can you think of between you?

2) Messages: There are two core elements to communication: Content (what you say) and Form (how you say it.) When you put your Content in a certain Form you create a Message. You send this Message to a Destination (another person or group of people.) Good communication is all about clearly transmitting a message.

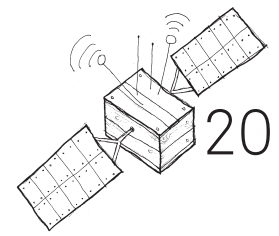
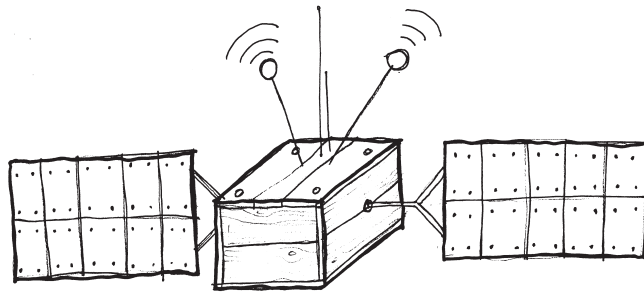
- Discuss: What are the main messages that your organisation or school tries to communicate? (eg: beliefs, rules, achievements) What is the Content and what is the Form? (eg. assemblies, newsletters, uniforms, architecture, crests and mottos). Who are the destination audiences? How successfully are the messages communicated?

- Discuss: Why is good communication important? How does communication help human society work? What problems are caused by bad or miscommunication?

3) The communications' process: One of the more scientific ways of describing communication uses something called the SMCR process. It breaks the overall communication process down into its component parts, stage by stage, allowing us to think carefully about how we manage each stage in the process. Breaking communication down in this way can be useful tool for thinking how we might improve it. The stages run as follows:

1) Source: The person wanting to say something.

2) Message: What the person wants to say.



This message is encoded: turned into a form that will communicate the message to other people. (eg: writing, images, spoken word). Good encoding is a skill – you need to know who your audience are, and the situation or context in which your communication is taking place, and then think carefully about the best way to communicate the message to them. You also need to anticipate possible sources of confusion, such as cultural difference.

2) Channel: The method you use to communicate your message (eg.: email, an article in a newspaper, a dramatic performance). Different channels work well for different messages and situations.

3) Receiver: The audience for the message. The receiver decodes the message in order to understand what the source wanted to say. This is as much a skill as encoding – skilled receivers read and listen well. Some types of decoding, such as appreciating specialist art or music, may require special training. Every receiver is different. The way they understand a message will be affected by their background, education etc.

4) The way in which the receiver/s then react or respond to your message is called feedback.

- Discuss: Take the examples of good communications in the Soapbox Operations Manual and break them down according to the Communications model above. In each case, what is the source, the channel etc? How are messages encoded and decoded? Is there any feedback?

4) The audience: Experts in communication say that the knack to communicating well is not about thinking ‘What do I want to say?’ but considering your audience or receivers instead. Different audiences need different approaches. First work out ‘Who is my audience.’ Then consider: ‘How do I want them to react or respond to what I tell them?’ You can then craft your message accordingly. There is no point in spending lots of time working out what you are going to say of no-one then listens to, or understands, what you tell them.

- Discuss: Through an exhibition in 2008 you will be communicating your ideas and issues to an audience at Southbank Centre in

London. Imagine what that audience might be like. Who are they? What might be the challenges you will have to meet in communicating your ideas to them?

5) Communication breakdown: It is often suggested that communication skills are getting worse in contemporary society. A number of causes have been suggested; too much time watching TV and playing videogames for example; the decline of talk within the busy modern family; the culture of 21st century media built around the sound-bite; and the absence of positive role models.

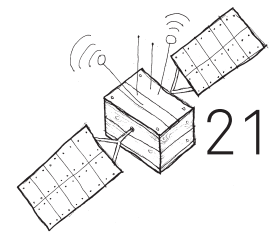
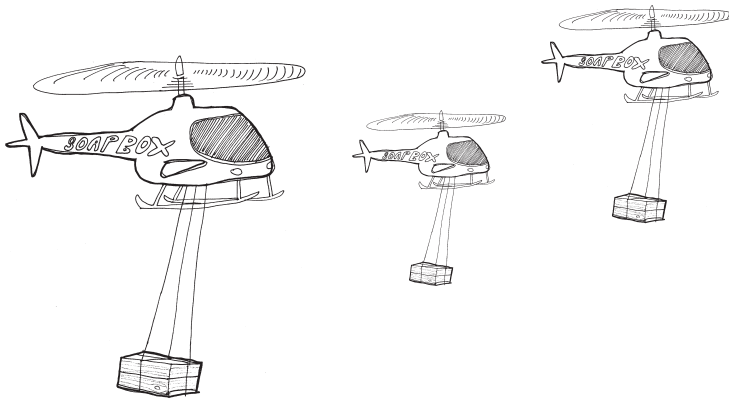
- Discuss: Do you agree that this is the case? And do you agree with the reasons?

Activity Suggestions

1) Fit for purpose: Take an issue or idea that is important to your class/group, and think of an audience to whom you would like to communicate that message. Using the four different examples of communication methods set out in the Operations Manual (making an argument, asking a question, setting an example and using an artform), think of a way that you could communicate that message using each of those methods. Which would work best for your particular message? Variation: Assign small groups one of the four methods and then they each present their own way of communicating that message back – which works best for that particular issue?

2) Website activity: You have a section on the project website to tell people about your school or group. You may already have filled that in. Now think specifically about the Messages you wish to send out to other people reading the website; how can you communicate your school, its achievements and interests to the rest of the world. Update your webpage accordingly.

3) Effective listening activity: Put students in pairs, sitting back to back. One is the ‘drawer’ and one is the ‘describer’. Give all the describers a sheet of paper with shapes drawn on it. Now, the describers must tell the drawers how to draw the same picture on another sheet. The drawer is not allowed to ask questions. Give the students one minute to complete the task. Reveal what the drawing should look like and ask the pairs to show their work. Ask them what



they found difficult about the task and why. Repeat the activity with another picture. This time the drawer may ask questions. The results should be much better. Ask the group why this is the case.

4) Translation game: Using a familiar piece of narrative text – nursery rhyme, poem, song lyric - ask small groups to present the information in another way, for example through mime, sign language, singing or acting. Ask each group to share how they approached the task. Make connections to the creation of new ideas and to good teamwork.

Further Discussion

1) The American dancer Isadora Duncan said, 'If I could tell you what I meant, there would be no point in dancing it.' Are there some messages that can only be shared through certain forms? How does dance communicate with an audience? In what ways do dancers, artists and musicians communicate their messages? Is art an effective way of communicating?

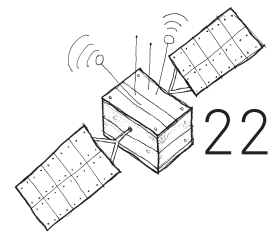
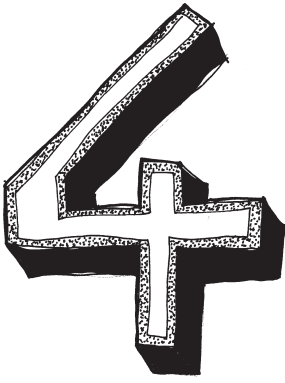
Further resources

www.bteducation.org/resources: BT's Education Programme website offers free resources including DVDs, downloadables and online games.

www.connected-earth.com: BT's Connected Earth site tells the story of communications development

www.historyworld.net: offers stories about the development of communication systems or 'ways to improve upon shouting'.

★ NOTES



SECTION 4: OTHER INFORMATION

Broadening the conversation

Operation Soapbox involves schools and youth groups across the United Kingdom. Why not link up with other Soapboxers, either in your local area or in another part of the country? You'll find details of all participating groups at

www.southbankcentre.co.uk/soapbox

The website has a resource area. Check regularly for new teacher materials, ideas and artist prompts. You can also share how your project is going by uploading notes on your progress in text, photos or film (link to YouTube for film material). Log on to find out more.

Throughout the year there are opportunities for schools, colleges, youth and community groups and individuals to take part in a range of arts-based learning projects at Southbank Centre. Visit the main website, www.southbankcentre.co.uk or email learningandparticipation@southbankcentre.co.uk for more information. We can help you with a funding bid for an arts based project, or advise you on working collaboratively with an artist.

Making more of your soapbox

You may be interested in getting an artist or arts organisation involved in your group's work to transform your soapbox. The following agencies are just a few ways into finding the right partner for you to work with. Southbank Centre can also help you find a partnership – contact Lucy Macnab on 0207 921 0867 or lucy.macnab@southbankcentre.co.uk.

Arts Councils are the national development agency for the arts in the UK, distributing public money from Government and the National Lottery. They are a good place to find out more information about artists and arts projects in your area, and may be able to give you advice about getting an artist or arts organisation involved in your Operation Soapbox project.

Arts Council England: www.artscouncil.org.uk

Arts Council of Northern Ireland:
www.artscouncil-ni.org

Arts Council of Wales: www.artswales.org.uk

Scottish Arts Council: www.scottisharts.org.uk

Cultural Coordinators in Schools work to facilitate arts and cultural heritage visits, events and workshops for their local schools in Scotland. There is a list of contact details at www.scottisharts.org.uk/1/information/publications/1000651.aspx

Creative Partnerships exist to promote and support creativity in schools across England. You can find out more information and details of your local Creative Partnership at www.creative-partnerships.com. Visit the Projects link for examples of CP work in various curriculum areas and the link to the Arts Council/ Creative Partnerships current project, 'Ideas that can change the world'.

Find out how other teachers promote creativity on to the National Curriculum in Action website – www.ncaction.org.uk/creativity. The website also has exemplars of sessions in all English National Curriculum areas by key stage and level.

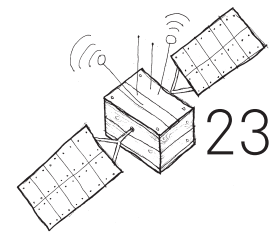
Curriculum Links

Operation Soapbox centres on freedom of expression, developing ideas and identifying issues of importance. Suggested activities in group work, discussion, role play and presenting; in researching, reading and choosing information; in observation, describing and recording; in making written records for a specific purpose; and in investigating and evaluating will meet targets for KS1 and 2 in English, Art and Design, Geography, History, ICT and Science and for KS3 additionally in RE, PHSE and Citizenship.

Some areas for exploration under subject headings are shown below.

ENGLISH

Persuasive writing; setting out an argument; debating. Asking different kinds of questions. Evaluating texts; what is appropriate or suitable for different audiences; graffiti; sacred texts. Finding and developing your own voice; the Bronte sisters writing under men's names; writing from refugee and migrant communities. How to tell a story. Making your own book.



CITIZENSHIP

Government, local and national. The role of the individual in freedom of expression and censorship; rights and responsibilities; living in a community; cultural sensitivity. Equality and diversity.

MEDIA

Freedom of the press. Censorship; portrayal of groups in media. Editorial decisions; having a voice; asking the right questions.

HISTORY

Freedom and non-freedom; slavery; nation development and exploitation; 'freedom fighters and guerrillas'. Freedom of speech.

CULTURAL STUDIES

Beliefs and freedom. Multiculturalism; cultural practice and customs. Equality and diversity

GEOGRAPHY

People and places. Features of an environment; making observations, describing, recording. Environmental change. Sustainable development.

SCIENCE

Projects can be designed to cover all four KS2 and 3 Science attainment targets. A healthy-eating project (see Operation Soapbox Manual) might cover Sc1 attainment aspects as follows:

Ideas and evidence: We'd eat more veg if we grew them ourselves. How do we find out what vegetables we could grow in our box?

Planning: Where could we get tomato plants from? How much do they cost? How big are they? How do we look after them? What happens at half term?

Carrying out: Should we have a rota for watering? What do we do if the plants get blight? Can we cut some green ones for chutney?

Interpreting and evaluating: Our plants have this lifecycle... Why did some plants not thrive? It cost £x to grow each plant...

Recording and presenting data: in different formats and media, for a range of audiences and purposes.

Links can easily be made to other subjects, including ICT, English and Maths.

ICT

The use of ICT will support and enhance many Operation Soapbox projects. A communication-based project (see Operation Soapbox Manual) is ideal for helping students progress in ICT and offers many opportunities to link ICT to other curriculum areas.

SUGGESTIONS FOR OPERATION-SOAPBOX INSETS

You may want to organise a training session for your staff or group leaders to develop how you might work with your soapbox. Here are three suggestions for formats you could use:

Format 1

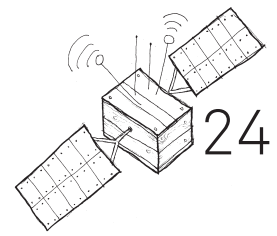
Keyword exploration for a cross-curricular or single-subject KS 2 or 3 session

Introduction: Create a short film, slide show, or presentation on paper. For example, if using the word 'Question', information could include different types of questions; the journalist's approach – who, what, when, why, where, how; writing a short scene using only questions; scientific enquiry; questions and authority in the classroom. Input should come from at least two teachers to create this.

Whole group: Listen to initial responses and establish the primary discussion: questions that participants would like to address during the session.

Workshops: Small groups work on a specific task, eg: creating an Operation Soapbox session on 'Question' for a specified group, including clear learning outcomes, SMART targets and an evaluation.

Whole group discussion: Feedback and forward planning.



Format 2

Answer the question, for example: How can we develop creativity or communication or critical thinking skills in our students?

Whole group: The current state of play and things we might need to consider

Small groups: Knowledge café: In the coffee houses of 17th century London and the cafes of 19th century Paris, intellectuals, gossips and those starting out in business would discuss the burning issues of the day. Knowledge café brings that method to present-day learning. Use this activity to problem solve, share information and spark ideas. Small groups, max four people if possible.

- 1) Set up tables with flipchart paper and a variety of coloured pens; one table per group.
- 2) Identify the topic you want to work on and split into as many headings or areas of enquiry as you have groups; four is ideal. Aim to be as clear as possible so that participants know exactly what they are to consider. You can do this before the session or as part of a whole-group activity.
- 3) Write one heading on each tablecloth.
- 4) Ask each group to consider the heading on the sheet and to write solutions or further ideas. A spidergram-style of recording may be useful, to help make links between ideas. Max 15 minutes.
- 5) Move groups clockwise around the room. Ask each group to comment on what the previous group has written. Make sure each group visits all the other tables before ending up at its original table.
- 6) Debrief by asking one or two people from each group to explain the conversation on their tablecloth.

Small groups: Activity: Resource making or session planning or identifying cross-curricular links and approaches

Whole group: Feedback and forward planning.

Format 3

Topic-based, for example: Hoodies, grannies and illegals: The representation of different groups in the media.

To consider bias; investigate how poorly represented groups could have a voice; make local links – with campaigns, young people's needs, migrant workers, etc.

Introduction: Input for session

Discussion of aims of Operation Soapbox.

Information from/about:

- LIFT New Parliament
- Headliners
- www.anationalvoice.org
- www.helptheaged.org.uk
- <http://oxfamgb.org/ukpp/resources/downloads> Let's talk to the media.

Small groups:
Jack & Jill exercise

Exploring bias in written information:

- 1) Tell group that Jack and Jill are no longer nursery rhyme characters but political protestors, Year 1 children, superheroes, elders, or any other appropriate group.
- 2) Ask the group to rewrite the rhyme as a news story for a designated newspaper or for a TV news bulletin.

Small groups: Resource development session

Whole group: Feedback and forward planning.

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