

POSITIVE GOSSIP – ANONYMOUS APPRECIATION TOOL



10-30



30-45'

Short overview

To create a positive and safe group climate through a structured peer-appreciation exercise, aimed at developing empathy, group cohesion and the ability to give constructive positive feedback. One element that worked particularly well in practice: connecting the activity to the concept of "Socrates' three sieves" (Is it true? Is it good? Is it necessary?) - a simple, memorable way to help participants reflect before speaking about someone else.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- formulate appreciation messages to peers in a concrete and respectful way
- identify positive qualities and behaviors in others
- reflect on the emotional impact of mutual appreciation
- contribute to a group climate based on support and trust
- practice positive expression in interpersonal relationships

Tool type:

participatory activity
reflection method

Duration:

Ongoing (weekly or monthly sessions, 30-45 minutes)

Number of participants:

10-30 (adaptable up to a whole class)

Necessary materials

- small paper slips (or cut sheets)
- pens or pencils
- a box/large envelope ("the appreciation box")
- (optional) board or flipchart for the rules

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction

The facilitator explains the purpose of the activity: creating a safe space where participants express appreciation for their peers, anonymously or semi-anonymously. Clear rules are set:

- messages must be positive, respectful and genuine
- irony, sarcasm or negative comparisons are avoided
- focus on observable behaviors ("what the person does"), not general judgments

3

Writing the appreciation (10-15 minutes)

Each participant writes a note in the format: "[Name], I appreciate that you..."

Specific phrasing is encouraged, for example:

- observable behaviors
- attitudes
- moments from group interactions

4

Collection (2-5 minutes)

All the slips are placed into a shared appreciation box or envelope.

2

Drawing names (5 minutes)

All participants' names are written on slips of paper. Each participant:

- draws a random name
- checks that they haven't drawn their own name (if this happens, they draw again)

Reading messages and discussion (10-15 minutes)

- The facilitator reads the notes aloud (or participants do, if the group is ready and time allows). After each message, a short pause can be given for natural reactions (smiles, reflection, silence).
- Guiding questions for discussion:
- How did it feel to write the message?
- How did it feel to receive an appreciation?
- What did you notice about your peers that you might not have noticed before?
- How do messages like this affect the group's atmosphere?

5

Risks/challenges

- messages that are too general ("you're okay") - need guidance
- risk of superficiality if no examples are given
- possible strong emotions when receiving appreciation
- need to maintain a strictly positive framework

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- create a safe and respectful space
- clearly explain the rules of positive communication
- monitor the quality of messages (before reading, if needed)
- ensure no participant is excluded
- support emotional reflection without forcing participation
- manage group dynamics in a balanced and calm way

Skills developed

- empathy
- positive communication
- group cohesion
- self-confidence and confidence in others
- attention to constructive behaviors
- emotional intelligence

Implementing suggestions

- provide clear examples before starting
- encourage specific messages, based on observed behaviors
- maintain a relaxed atmosphere, free of pressure
- repeat the activity periodically for a cumulative effect
- you can create an "appreciation wall" where selected messages are displayed
- avoid evaluation or comparison between participants
- consider using the "Socrates' three sieves" concept as a simple philosophical starting point for the activity
- where possible, the physical format may offer a deeper connection with the facilitator

Urban Symbols: Decode & Create



5-12



90'

Short overview

To develop visual literacy, symbolic interpretation and critical thinking by exploring local murals and graffiti, analyzing messages and optionally creating participant-inspired artwork.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- Analyze local murals and graffiti for symbolism, composition, color and hidden messages
- Identify social, political, or emotional commentary conveyed by the artwork
- Interpret meanings and reflect on connections to community, history or culture
- Optionally create personal artwork inspired by the analysis, applying symbolic thinking

Tool type:

art workshop
symbolic analysis

Duration:

90 minutes (creation phase optional)

Number of participants:

5-12

Recommended team: minimum 2-3 facilitators - identifying and discussing symbols/messages requires active support for each small group

Necessary materials

- photos of local murals or graffiti
- paper, markers, paints or collage materials
- optional mural wall or outdoor site

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction

The facilitator introduces the activity: exploring local urban art to interpret symbolism and messages. Key terms like symbol, composition, social commentary, and visual storytelling are explained.

3

Group discussion

Groups share observations with the class. Facilitator guides discussion, highlighting different interpretations and encouraging reflection on perspective and bias. Optional QR codes linking to artist stories or background can enrich understanding. It's normal for some participants to be initially reluctant to share their interpretations - they tend to open up over time, with encouragement.

4

Optional creation phase

Participants create their own artwork inspired by the analysis. They apply symbolic thinking:

- Choose a message or theme to communicate
- Use paper, markers, paints or collage materials
- Share creations with peers and explain the symbolic choices

2

Observation and analysis

Participants observe selected images or visit a local mural/graffiti site. In small groups, they discuss:

- What symbols, colors, or patterns are used?
- What message or emotion is conveyed?
- How does the artwork connect to community, history or culture?
- How might the artist want the viewer to feel or think?

5

Reflection and conclusions

Facilitator guides a discussion - allow generous time for this stage, as it tends to generate the most valuable insights and the most active participation:

- How did interpretation differ between participants?
- What symbolic elements were most effective?
- How can street art inspire social awareness or personal expression?

Risks/challenges

- Skipping the creation phase may reduce engagement
- Some murals may contain sensitive political or cultural messages
- Participants may interpret symbols very differently; facilitator must guide discussion constructively
- Identifying and discussing symbols can be more demanding than it appears - hence the recommendation for a team of 2-3 facilitators

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- Select murals or graffiti appropriate for age and context
- Guide observation and discussion, encouraging multiple perspectives
- Ensure all participants feel included and supported - including shyer participants, who may need more time to open up
- Explain symbolism, cultural context, and artistic techniques
- Support the optional creation phase and facilitate sharing
- Work alongside 1-2 co-facilitators, to support each small group in identifying symbols

Skills developed

- critical thinking
- visual literacy
- creativity
- teamwork and collaboration
- cultural literacy
- observational and interpretative skills

Implementing suggestions

- Provide QR codes or short artist bios to enrich understanding of local context
- Encourage peer discussion to explore multiple interpretations
- Use reflection questions to link art to social, political, or personal themes
- For the creation phase, emphasize symbolic intent over artistic skill
- Rotate participants in leading discussions or presenting artwork to strengthen teamwork
- Explicitly allocate more time for the final reflection and discussion stage



Bridge Between Generations



5-30



1 hour

Short overview

To foster intergenerational learning, mentorship, cultural exchange and mutual understanding through creative activities, discussion and collaborative projects.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- Engage in mutual learning and knowledge-sharing across generations
- Introduce seniors to new technologies, including AI and digital tools
- Learn from seniors' life experiences, historical context and cultural knowledge
- Practice empathy, active listening and self-expression
- Reduce social isolation among seniors and combat generational stereotypes

Tool type:

intergenerational workshop
participatory activity

Duration:

1 hour weekly (flexible) - start with slow-paced, low-pressure activities

Number of participants:

a classroom + seniors (5-30)

Necessary materials

- paper, pens, markers
- tablets, computers, or other digital devices
- optional art supplies (paints, collage materials)
- printed prompts or games for collaboration

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction / Icebreakers

Facilitator introduces participants and the goals of the session.

Simple icebreakers to build comfort and engagement (e.g., sharing a favorite memory or hobby).

Always start with low-pressure activities - this was confirmed essential for reducing the initial distance between generations.

2

Shared exploration

Participants engage in activities such as storytelling, digital art or collaborative games.

Young people may introduce seniors to AI tools, apps, or digital art programs. Seniors share personal experiences, historical knowledge or cultural insights.

3

Reflection and discussion

Group discussion about emotions, personal experiences, or cultural knowledge revealed during the activity.

Facilitator encourages dialogue, active listening and cross-generational questioning.

4

Optional creative projects

Collaborative creation: stories, drawings or digital media inspired by shared experiences.

Participants can present their work to the group and discuss the creative process.

5

Conclusions

Facilitator summarizes learning points: intergenerational understanding, mutual respect and cultural exchange. Encourage participants to reflect on what they learned from the other generation and how they might continue collaboration.

Risks/challenges

- Differences in energy, mobility, or tech literacy between teens and seniors
- Seniors may feel intimidated by technology; facilitator must support them patiently
- Teens may dominate conversation; facilitator ensures balanced participation
- Sensitivity to potentially emotional or personal stories
- Language or expression differences may arise, especially in groups with participants from diverse backgrounds (migrants, rural areas)

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- Create a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment
- Adjust pace according to different energy levels and tech familiarity
- Support seniors in using digital tools while encouraging teens to teach patiently
- Guide discussion to ensure all voices are heard
- Encourage empathy, reflection, and cross-generational mentorship
- Provide optional creative projects without pressuring participants
- always start with simple, low-pressure activities, especially at the first meeting
- use icebreakers to reduce the initial distance between generations

Skills developed

- empathy
- active listening
- communication
- critical thinking
- digital literacy
- mentorship
- collaboration and teamwork
- cultural literacy

Implementing suggestions

- Start with slow-paced, low-pressure activities to build comfort
- Include icebreakers to break generational barriers
- Encourage teens to act as mentors for digital tools while learning from seniors' experiences.
- Make creative projects optional but meaningful
- Emphasize active listening and reflection after each activity
- Repeat weekly to build long-term connections
- Feedback from pilot testing confirms: discussion and shared games, alongside genuine exchange between generations, remain the elements most valued by participants, regardless of age



THE HAT OF TRUTH



5-10



1 hour

Short overview

To distinguish between truth, misinformation, emotional framing and rational arguments through interactive improvisation.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- Explore how different perspectives shape narrative understanding.
- Practice critical thinking while improvising.
- Construct and deconstruct stories from multiple viewpoints.
- Recognize signals of truth, exaggeration, bias and manipulation.

Tool type:

participatory activity
improvisation
storytelling

Duration:

60 minutes

Number of participants:

5-10 (with or without an audience)

Necessary materials

one hat (or box)
role notes (e.g., truth, exaggeration, fear, rationality, etc.)
paper hats or labels (optional)
printed scenarios
markers
simple props
optional: digital/video support

Description of the activity – step by step

Introduction

1

The facilitator explains the concept: each participant receives a “hat” that represents a way of telling a story: truthful, emotional, misleading, rational, exaggerated, overly optimistic, etc. The audience’s job is to analyze the performance and identify which perspective is being used.

Improvisation scenario

3

The facilitator reads a simple scenario such as: “Your town is planning to build a new park. You must convince the audience why your perspective is the right one.”

Participants improvise according to their hidden role.

Assigning roles

2

Participants take a small “role note” from the Hat of Truth (one shared hat). Each note corresponds to a specific narrative style:

- Truth-teller
- Exaggerator
- Fear-monger
- Rational analyzer
- Misinformation spreader
- Emotional storyteller
- Skeptic
- Optimist

The role is secret - the audience does NOT see the notes.

Audience analysis

4

After the performance, the audience discusses:

- Which player represented which narrative style?
- What clues made the style obvious?
- How did each style change the understanding of the story?
- Which arguments sounded credible or manipulative?

Allow generous time for this stage - the reflection part tends to need more time than it first appears, for the information to truly sink in.

Conclusions

5

The facilitator highlights how storytelling perspectives influence perception, emotions and credibility. Participants reflect on how similar techniques appear in media and public debates.

Risks/challenges

- Participants may focus more on acting than on reflection.
- Some players may over-dramatize the role.
- Misleading styles may cause confusion if not debriefed properly.
- Facilitator must balance creativity with learning goals.

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- Prepare clear role notes and simple scenarios.
- Ensure psychological safety and encourage creativity.
- Explain narrative styles in simple terms.
- Keep participants focused on improvisation, not performance quality.
- Guide the audience to analyze both emotional and manipulative cues.
- Rotate roles between rounds if time allows.

Skills developed

- critical thinking
- communication
- empathy
- improvisation
- teamwork
- media literacy
- storytelling

Implementing suggestions

- Provide one short demonstration before the activity starts.
- Rotate roles in a second round to help participants try new perspectives.
- Encourage exaggerated but believable performances to show how manipulation works.
- Use very simple scenarios at first (e.g., “extra homework”, “new school rule”).
- Keep the core message clear: the way a story is told changes how it is understood.
- Where possible, use multimedia material (short clips, video news) alongside printed scenarios - it adds authenticity to the exercise.
- Don't rush the final reflection stage - it's worth allowing extra time beyond what's planned.



Draw what you hear – Emotional music interpretation through drawing



4-10



1 hour

Short overview

To develop emotional awareness and creative self-expression by translating music into visual art. Participants listen to a musical piece with their eyes closed and immediately draw what they feel, imagine or associate with the music. Make the connection between this exercise and the broader project theme (media education, critical thinking) explicit from the introduction - pilot testing showed this link isn't always obvious to participants unless stated directly.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- interpret music emotionally through visual expression;
- reflect on how sounds influence inner states and imagination;
- compare different personal perspectives on the same audio stimulus;
- articulate feelings and sensations through drawing and dialogue;
- understand that artistic expression is subjective and non-judgmental.

Tool type:

art workshop
emotional exercise
participatory activity

Duration:

45-60 minutes (recommended) or up to 2 hours (extended format) - allow flexible time for the reflection stage, without rigid fixed breaks

Number of participants:

min. 4 - max. 15

Necessary materials

- paper (A4 or larger)
- pencils, markers, crayons
- music player / speakers
- optional headphones (for individual sessions)
- comfortable seating
- (optional) projector for ambient visuals or mood lighting

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction (10 min)

- The facilitator explains the purpose: not to create “beautiful art,” but to express feelings freely.
- Introduces the idea of drawing with closed eyes after listening to music.
- Clarifies that participants work individually but will share in pairs or small groups afterwards.
- Presents the selected music genres: preferably instrumental pieces without lyrics (classical, orchestral, ballet music, film scores).

2

Artistic activity (20-30 min)

- Participants sit comfortably and close their eyes.
- The facilitator plays a 2-4 minute musical piece.
- While listening, participants focus on emotions, colors, sensations, shapes and spontaneous imagery.
- When the music stops, they open their eyes and immediately draw what they felt, not what they “think they should draw.”
- Drawing continues for 5-10 minutes, using simple materials (pencils, markers, crayons).
- Optional: repeat with a second contrasting piece of music (slower vs. dynamic).

3

Media analysis (5-10 min)

Guiding questions:

- What type of music did you listen to? How would you describe it?
- How did the sound influence your imagination or emotions?
- What elements of the music (tempo, rhythm, mood, instruments) affected your drawing?
- Would a different genre (pop, electronic, jazz) create a different drawing? Why?

5

Conclusions (3-5 min)

- The facilitator highlights the importance of emotional expression through art.
- Reinforces that there is no “right” interpretation - only personal experience.
- Encourages participants to observe how sound affects imagination and mood.

4

Reflection/discussion (10-15 min)

Participants share in pairs or small groups:

- What did you feel during the music?
- What does your drawing represent?
- How is your drawing different from your partner's?
- Why do you think the same music produced different images?

After pair discussions, the group can reconvene for optional collective sharing. Allow generous time for this stage.

Risks/challenges

- participants may feel insecure about drawing ability
- some may struggle to identify emotions
- the music may trigger unexpected emotions
- distractions may reduce focus during listening
- the connection to the broader theme (media disinformation) may remain unclear to participants if not explained directly

How to manage: Emphasize process over skill, offer reassurance, choose music carefully, maintain a calm atmosphere; clearly explain the connection to media education.

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- choose appropriate music (instrumental, expressive, no lyrics) based on the emotional objective;
- create a calm, safe, non-judgmental atmosphere;
- emphasize self-expression over artistic skill;
- guide participants to trust their spontaneous imagery;
- encourage open conversation and emotional sharing;
- adapt the music length and complexity to the group's age;
- - clearly explain the link between the exercise and media education - allow flexible time for reflection, without imposing rigid breaks.

Skills developed

- emotional awareness
- creativity
- communication
- artistic literacy
- self-expression
- active listening
- reflection skills

Implementing suggestions

- Use a variety of music genres: orchestral, ballet scores, classical suites, atmospheric film soundtracks.
- Avoid lyrics, as they can influence interpretation too strongly.
- Try contrasting pieces (slow vs. energetic) to show emotional diversity.
- Allow sharing in pairs first: safer for shy participants.
- Encourage participants to display drawings in a mini-gallery at the end.
- Optional: repeat the activity at different times to compare emotional states.
- Allow extra time beyond the plan, especially for the reflection stage - participants may otherwise feel rushed.
- Explicitly explain, at both the start and end of the activity, the connection to media education and disinformation.



Knowledge is power – Reconstructing information and critical reflection



5-10



1 hour

Short overview

To help participants understand how incomplete or misleading information (visual or textual) influences perception, emotions and interpretation and to foster awareness of intuition versus verified knowledge.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- reconstruct incomplete visual or textual information (artworks or news headlines);
- reflect on their assumptions and intuitive reasoning;
- discuss how missing information can influence understanding, emotions, and decision-making;
- compare initial perceptions with verified facts.

Tool type:

media analysis / critical thinking
exercise
participatory activity

Duration:

1 hour

Number of participants:

min. 5 - max. 10

Necessary materials

- fragmented images or headlines (printed)
- paper for notes
- markers or pens
- optional projector for displaying examples
- optional handouts with reflection questions

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction (10 min)

- Facilitator introduces the activity: exploring how incomplete information affects perception.
- Explains that participants will work with fragmented artworks or headlines.
- Clarifies that the goal is to notice intuition and assumptions, not to “guess correctly” immediately.

2

Reconstruction exercise (15-20 min)

- Each participant receives a fragmented image or incomplete headline.
- Using paper and markers/pens, participants attempt to reconstruct the original artwork or story based solely on intuition and imagination.
- Encourage them to annotate thoughts, guesses and assumptions while working.
- Careful selection of the image fragments is pedagogically essential - they need to be ambiguous enough to spark diverse interpretations, but not so unclear that they discourage participation.

3

Comparison and verification (10-15 min)

- Participants receive the full artwork or complete article.
 - They compare their reconstruction with the original.
- Facilitator prompts reflection:
- How close were your assumptions to the actual content?
 - What did you fill in based on prior knowledge or bias?
 - Were there emotional reactions caused by missing information?

4

Reflection/discussion (10 min)

Guiding questions:

- How does incomplete information influence perception and interpretation?
- Did intuition help or mislead you?
- How does this relate to news, social media, and everyday information consumption?
- What strategies can help verify information before forming judgments?

5

Conclusions (5 min)

- Facilitator summarizes key lessons: critical thinking, the role of verification and awareness of personal bias.
- Emphasize that perception is subjective but can be improved with careful analysis and reliable sources.

Risks/challenges

- participants may over-rely on intuition without verification
- some may feel frustration if guesses are far from the original
- sensitive content in news examples may trigger emotional reactions
- too strong a focus on visual art may make the activity less relevant for participants with other interests (music, writing) - vary the type of material used

How to manage: Start with simple examples, maintain a safe discussion environment, focus on learning from the process rather than “right” answers, and guide reflection on personal assumptions.

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- prepare fragmented artworks or incomplete/misleading headlines in advance;
- guide participants to reflect critically without judgment;
- start with simple examples and gradually increase complexity;
- encourage discussion about assumptions, bias and emotional reactions;
- connect the exercise to broader media literacy skills and real-life information evaluation;
- adapt the type of content (visual art, music, text) to the group's interests - the tool works very well, but can end up too centered on visual art if not diversified

Skills developed

- critical thinking
- media literacy
- observation skills
- reflection and self-awareness
- communication (discussion and sharing)
- optional artistic literacy / storytelling

Implementing suggestions

- Begin with simple, recognizable images or headlines.
- Gradually increase the difficulty of fragmented or misleading content.
- Use a mix of art and news to show different types of information processing.
- Encourage participants to annotate assumptions and emotional reactions.
- Link the activity to everyday media literacy: social media, news articles, and advertising.
- Actively adapt the tool to the type of participants - if the group has interests beyond visual art, use the lyrics/script/story variant described below;
- Optional: create a “gallery walk” to share reconstructed images and reflect collectively.

**You can also use lyrics, scripts, or stories, not only visual artworks. Participants can create an ending or interpretation for a story, song, or scene based on incomplete material, then compare it with the “original” ending. The activity can be adapted to different media types: music, written stories, or visual art. For more effective reflection, participants can be divided into groups by media type (e.g., one group works with music, another with writing, another with visual art). After completing the exercise, groups can share their interpretations, compare outcomes, and discuss how incomplete information produces different perspectives. For music-based exercises, allow more time to listen, respond and reflect.*



From reaction to reflection



5-12



1 hour

Short overview

To help participants recognize, reflect on and manage their emotional responses to news and media content, while developing self-awareness and constructive communication.

This activity works noticeably better with smaller groups of participants who genuinely want to be there, rather than an entire class. Pilot testing directly compared a 22-person whole-class group with a 14-person volunteer group: the smaller group was visibly more engaged and produced more insights.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- Identify three positive and three negative emotions triggered by a news story
- Reflect on how media content affects their thoughts, mood and perspective
- Share insights with others in a respectful, constructive way
- Understand their own biases and reactions

Tool type:

participatory activity
reflection method

Duration:

1 hour

Number of participants:

5-12

Necessary materials

- printed news articles
- worksheets
- pens
- markers
- flipchart (optional)
- projector (optional for online/hybrid)

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction

The facilitator introduces the activity, explains the goal (moving from immediate emotional reaction to thoughtful reflection) and distributes the news articles or offers a selection to choose from. Participants are reminded that emotions are personal and valid.

2

Emotional identification

Participants read the chosen news story individually. They list three positive and three negative emotions the article triggers. They can express these emotions through words, quick sketches, symbols or short notes.

3

Reflection

Each participant reflects on questions such as:

- Why do I feel this way?
- What part of the story triggered this?
- How does this influence my perception of the issue?

Participants fill in a short worksheet or write freely.

4

Group discussion

In pairs or small groups, participants share some insights (only what they feel comfortable sharing). They compare emotional reactions, notice differences, and explore how media framing shapes feelings.

5

Conclusions

The group comes together to summarize what they learned about emotional reactions, media influence and personal interpretation. The facilitator reinforces the importance of self-awareness when consuming media.

Risks/challenges

- Participants may feel vulnerable when sharing emotions.
- Some news topics may be too sensitive or triggering.
- Risk of disagreement if emotions differ widely.
- Facilitator must maintain psychological safety and respect.
- Large groups (20+), especially whole classes rather than volunteers, tend to reduce individual engagement and participation

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- Provide safe, non-judgmental space for emotional sharing.
- Choose appropriate news stories (not overly traumatic).
- Encourage participants to express emotions without fear of criticism.
- Guide reflection with simple questions.
- Clarify media literacy concepts (bias, framing, emotional language).
- Support participants who feel overwhelmed.
- Ensure respectful communication at all times.

Skills developed

- critical thinking
- media literacy
- emotional awareness
- communication
- empathy
- active listening
- self-reflection

Implementing suggestions

- Choose news stories that are relevant but not emotionally overwhelming
- If possible, involve a psychologist or media expert for deeper reflection
- Use simple visual tools (emotion cards, color coding) to help participants express themselves
- Encourage journaling as a private option for those who don't want to share publicly
- The activity works very well with a trainer who has experience in youth communication or journalism
- Whenever possible, recruit participants on a voluntary basis rather than running the activity with an entire class - this was confirmed to make a significant difference in engagement and depth of reflection - for larger groups, consider extending the duration slightly (1h to 1h30) and adding a short break between the emotional identification and reflection stages



Art and Democracy: a journey through time



classroom



1 hour

Short overview

To explore historical periods and cultural contexts through art and to develop critical thinking, media literacy and interpretative skills.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- Analyze artworks from different eras and cultural backgrounds, including propaganda pieces
- Compare personal interpretations and perspectives
- Understand the historical and societal context behind an artwork
- Identify visual codes, symbols and messages (explicit or hidden)

Tool type:

educational game
media analysis exercise

Duration:

1 hour (Can be run weekly or monthly; maximum 4 artworks per session - no more to avoid cognitive overload)

Number of participants:

Minimum 5 – maximum: a full classroom

Necessary materials

- Reproductions of artworks (physical or digital)
- Printed worksheets or question prompts
- Paper, pens, markers
- Projector or screen (optional)

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction (5 minutes)

The facilitator introduces the topic: how art reflects society, democracy, daily life and cultural values across different historical periods. Participants are briefly presented with the theme of the session (e.g., fashion in different eras, everyday life, propaganda, cultural contrasts).

2

Group Formation (2 minutes)

Participants are divided into small groups (3-5 people) and each group receives a set of artworks from different eras, cultures, or political contexts.

3

Individual Observation (5 minutes)

Participants silently observe the artworks. They note what they see, feel and associate with the image: symbols, colors, people, objects, emotions, context clues. Optional/consider skipping: pilot testing showed participants have a natural tendency to verbalize their intuitions right away. If the group seems eager to discuss directly, you can skip the individual observation step and move straight to group analysis, without losing discussion quality.

4

Group Analysis (10-15 minutes)

Each group discusses the artwork using guiding questions provided by the facilitator.

Examples:

- What do you think is happening in this artwork?
- What period or culture might it represent?
- What message is the artist sending - explicit or hidden?
- How does this artwork relate to ideas of society, freedom or democracy?
- What does it say about daily life in that time or place?

5

Comparative Reflection (10 minutes)

Groups compare artworks from different time periods or cultures and identify contrasts:
How do depictions of society differ?
What changes can be seen in fashion, roles, values or power?
How might two cultures portray the same historical moment differently?

6 Creative Interpretation (10 minutes)
Each group summarizes their interpretation and prepares a short presentation, either verbally or visually (mind map, quick sketch, collage). They highlight key messages and how the artwork communicates ideas related to society or democracy.

7 Group Presentations (10-15 minutes)
Groups present their interpretations to the whole class. Participants are encouraged to ask questions, agree/disagree respectfully and offer alternative readings.

8 Facilitator's Context Input (3-5 minutes)
After presentations, the facilitator reveals historical and cultural background information for each artwork, clarifying:

- the real era and location
- the intended message
- political context (if any)
- why artists used certain symbols or styles

9 Final Reflection & Discussion (5 minutes)
Participants discuss what surprised them, what interpretations differed across groups and how art can shape or question societal values. They reflect on the connection between media literacy, democracy, and cultural understanding.

Risks/challenges

- Some historical topics may be sensitive; the facilitator should frame them carefully
- Participants may project modern values without understanding context - guidance is needed
- Strong opinions might emerge; facilitator should mediate respectfully

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- Select appropriate artworks and ensure they are culturally and historically accurate
- Provide simple guiding questions to support analysis and interpretation
- Encourage open discussion and ensure all participants feel safe to share ideas
- Clarify misunderstandings and offer historical or cultural context when needed
- Manage time and keep the group focused on the learning objectives
- Handle sensitive topics with care and promote respectful dialogue

Skills developed

- Critical thinking
- Media literacy
- Artistic and visual analysis
- Cultural literacy
- Empathy and perspective-taking
- Teamwork and collaborative interpretation

Implementing suggestions

- Provide guiding questions (e.g., What story does this image tell? What symbols suggest power, freedom, fear or tradition?)
- Allow free personal interpretation before offering historical context
- Encourage debate and comparisons between artworks
- Start with more accessible or familiar images; gradually introduce more complex pieces

Influencer or manipulator?



5-15



1 hour

Short overview

To develop critical thinking and media literacy skills that help participants evaluate social media posts, detect hidden advertising and understand emotional or persuasive manipulation used by influencers.

Note from pilot testing: participants tended to judge influencers as people rather than the techniques they use. Make it explicit from the introduction that the exercise analyzes techniques and content, not people.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- Analyze social media posts with a critical eye.
- Identify sources, conflicts of interest and persuasive/emotional techniques.
- Detect hidden advertising, misleading claims or manipulative messaging.
- Evaluate the credibility and intentions behind influencer content.

Tool type:

media literacy exercise
educational game

Duration:

1 hour

Number of participants:

5-15

Necessary materials

- printed or digital influencer posts
- worksheets for analysis
- pens / markers
- projector or screen (optional)
- phones or tablets (if working digitally)
- optional: a form sent in advance where participants suggest examples of influencers/posts relevant to them

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction

The facilitator explains the goal of the activity: to better understand how influencers shape opinions, emotions and behavior. Participants are introduced to concepts like emotional manipulation, hidden ads and credibility indicators.

Make it clear from the start that the goal is analyzing techniques, not judging influencers as people - participants tend to conflate the two.

3

Discussion: Credibility and manipulation

Teams share findings. Together, they discuss:

- Is the post credible?
- Does it contain hidden advertising?
- Does it manipulate emotions or create pressure?
- How does the influencer shape their public image?

2

Group work: Post analysis

Participants work in small teams. Each team receives 2-3 influencer posts (printed or digital). They analyze:

- Who is the author?
- What is being promoted?
- Are there sources or evidence?
- Are there potential conflicts of interest?
- What emotions or persuasive techniques are used?

Teams fill in a short analysis worksheet.

4

Role-play variation (optional)

Teams create their own ambiguous or manipulative influencer-style posts (written or sketched). Another team must fact-check and analyze the post using the same criteria.

5

Conclusions

The facilitator highlights the signs of manipulation, the importance of source checking and the impact influencers have on young people's perceptions.

Risks/challenges

- Participants may take criticism of influencers personally.
- Some posts may trigger emotional reactions.
- Risk of focusing on the influencer instead of the techniques used.
- Facilitator must redirect discussions toward analysis, not judgment.
- In an international context, finding examples that resonate across all groups can be difficult.

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- Choose relevant and age-appropriate influencer posts.
- Encourage critical, not personal, analysis (focus on content, not attacking people).
- Guide the discussion on ethics, emotional impact and credibility.
- Explain techniques like framing, exaggeration, aesthetic persuasion and hidden ads.
- Support respectful teamwork and ensure everyone participates.
- Make explicit that the focus is on techniques, not people.

Skills developed

- media literacy
- critical thinking
- communication
- ethical reasoning
- teamwork
- observation and analysis

Implementing suggestions

- Choose influencers currently trending to keep engagement high.
- Include a short debrief on why certain tactics feel manipulative.
- Discuss how influencers construct their public persona through images and words.
- Encourage participants to think about ethical online behavior and transparency.
- Consider splitting into two separate sessions (theory, then application on real examples).
- Send a form in advance where participants suggest examples relevant to them .
- Make it explicit that the focus is on techniques, not on judging people.

Original or Algorithm? Unmasking AI Art



5-15



1-1.5 hours

Short overview

To develop critical thinking and media literacy regarding AI-generated art, foster appreciation for human creativity, and encourage ethical reflection on the role of AI in art and culture.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- identify works created by humans vs AI;
- discuss emotional, creative, and technical aspects of art;
- reflect on career paths that rely on human creativity;
- consider ethical and personal implications of AI in art and culture.

Tool type:

media analysis exercise
participatory activity

Duration:

1-1.5 hours (no breaks) - consider allowing extra time if the schedule permits;

Number of participants:

5-15

Necessary materials

- AI-generated and human-made artworks (images, videos, music, stories)
- devices for viewing or listening (computers, tablets, speakers)
- printed sheets or worksheets for noting observations
- pens / markers
- optional projector or screen for group viewing

Description of the activity – step by step

Introduction (10 min)

1

- Facilitator introduces the activity and explains objectives: analyzing artworks created by humans vs AI.
- Emphasizes the exercise is not about “guessing correctly” but developing critical awareness.
- Shows examples of very simple, easy-to-analyze works so participants can engage without feeling overwhelmed.
- Keep the theoretical part brief - the focus should be on the hands-on activity, not on lengthy explanations.

Discussion / Debate (45 min)

3

Participants share their analyses and justify which works they think are AI-generated.

Group debates the elements that seem “AI-like” vs human, discussing:

- subtle imperfections in human works
- consistency or predictability in AI outputs
- emotional resonance, storytelling, and creativity

Facilitator guides ethical reflection:

- What can AI do well?
- What uniquely requires human creativity?
- How might AI impact future careers in art, music, writing, and other creative fields?

Discussion is dynamic; facilitator encourages respectful debate and reasoning rather than “correct answers.”

2

Analysis (15 min)

Participants individually or in pairs examine the selected works (music, images, stories, videos).

They note features that suggest human or AI creation, focusing on:

- emotional expression or lack thereof
- imperfections or spontaneity
- originality and narrative coherence
- technical style

Facilitator encourages observation of both obvious and subtle cues.

Careful selection of examples is essential for maintaining interest - AI-generated content is becoming increasingly realistic, so examples need to be checked and updated regularly.

4

Reflection / Conclusions (10-15 min)

Facilitator summarizes key takeaways:

- Humans bring unpredictability, emotion, and cultural context to creative work.
- AI can produce impressive technical outputs but often lacks intentionality or emotional depth.
- Recognizing both strengths and limitations fosters ethical, critical, and creative thinking.

Participants reflect on their own preferences, insights, and assumptions about AI art.

Risks/challenges

- participants may overestimate AI capabilities; telling human from AI content apart is becoming harder even for the facilitator, as the technology keeps advancing
- some may focus only on “guessing correctly” instead of reflection
- ethical discussions may be challenging for younger participants
- differences in familiarity with media may influence confidence

How to manage:

- Use simple examples first to build confidence
- Emphasize reasoning over “correct answers”
- Guide discussion to explore both emotional and technical qualities
- Ensure all participants have equal opportunity to contribute; allow enough time beforehand to select and verify AI vs. human examples

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- select simple, accessible examples to start with;
- guide participants to analyze critically rather than only guess;
- encourage discussion of emotional, creative and ethical aspects;
- support debate with questions and examples;
- ensure participants understand the distinction between AI capabilities and human creativity;
- moderate discussions to avoid domination by more vocal participants;
- keep the theoretical portion short and focus on the hands-on activity - provide individual access to devices for research whenever possible - it sparks curiosity and engagement.

Skills developed

- critical thinking
- media literacy
- artistic creativity
- ethical reasoning
- teamwork
- reflection and discussion skills
- observation and analysis

Implementing suggestions

- Start with very easy examples to familiarize participants with AI vs human differences
- Encourage participants to explain their reasoning, not just state guesses
- Focus discussion on creative elements, imperfections, emotional resonance, and ethical implications
- Can be applied across different media types: music, visual art, storytelling, video
- Consider dividing participants into media-specific groups (e.g., one group for music, another for images, another for stories) to deepen focused analysis
- After group discussions, share outcomes collectively to compare interpretations and reflections
- The activity is easy to implement and does not require a break; timing allows 15 minutes for analysis and 45 minutes for discussion/debate
- If time allows, consider extending beyond the standard 15 minutes for the individual analysis stage - provide tablets or other devices for individual research - it turns the exercise into a "detective work" experience that sparks curiosity.



TRUE or FALSE?



small groups



1 hour

Short overview

To teach participants how to verify information using multiple sources and reflect on why emotions and first impressions often influence belief.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- Verify surprising or controversial news using three different sources (official, credible, independent).
- Identify contradictions and emotional framing within a news story.
- Discuss why first impressions shape belief and how to counteract this.
- Reflect on the importance of fact-checking before sharing information.

Tool type:

participatory activity

Duration:

60 minutes

(Can also be used as homework if participants need time to search for sources)

Number of participants:

Minimum 5 – maximum a classroom

Necessary materials

- printed news items (real and fake)
- worksheets
- pens and markers
- internet access (computers, tablets, or phones)
- projector (optional)

Description of the activity – step by step

Introduction

1

- The facilitator explains the objective: verifying information and understanding how emotions impact belief. The rule is introduced: “If you can’t find three different sources, don’t share.”;
- Participants are divided into small groups with a leader and two support roles (note-taker, researcher);
- A short icebreaker at the start goes a long way for engagement. In online sessions, pay extra attention to this step, as it's harder to sustain and often isn't enough on its own.

2

Group analysis

Each group receives one surprising or controversial news item (either the same story or different ones). Their task is to verify it by finding three types of sources:

- an official source (institution, authority)
- a credible source (reliable media outlet)
- an independent source (not connected to the subject)

Groups analyze:

- origin of the news
- data or numbers used
- contradictions between sources
- emotional framing influencing readers

3

Verification and comparison

- Groups document all findings on a worksheet.
- If working online, they can screen-share results.
- Teams compare sources and highlight inconsistencies or verified facts.

4

Presentation and reflection

Each group briefly presents their findings: Is the news true, false or misleading?

Discussion continues around:

- Why did the story seem believable at first?
- What emotions did it trigger?
- How did emotions affect our initial judgment?

5

Conclusions & recommendation

- As a closing exercise, apply the "broken telephone" game using a real news story - it's whispered or passed along from person to person, then the original version is compared with the final one.
- The facilitator emphasizes evidence-based thinking, source diversity and the need for verification before sharing.
- Participants reflect on how to apply the “three sources rule” in daily life.

Risks/challenges

- Participants may struggle to find credible or independent sources.
- Emotional or controversial news may trigger strong reactions.
- Risk of confusion if stories are too complex.
- Facilitator must provide support and clarity.
- The online version needs a better-prepared icebreaker, otherwise engagement may fall short of expectations.

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- Select age-appropriate and diverse news items (real, fake, or mixed).
- Guide participants in finding and evaluating sources.
- Keep the focus on analysis, not personal opinions.
- Explain the difference between official, credible and independent sources.
- Encourage teamwork and support group leaders.
- Manage sensitive topics with care.
- Reinforce emotional awareness when news triggers strong reactions.
- Prepare a solid icebreaker, especially for online sessions.

Skills developed

- media literacy
- critical thinking
- teamwork
- emotional awareness
- research skills
- source evaluation

Implementing suggestions

- Use a dynamic, timed role-play version where one group creates misleading news and another verifies it.
- Choose short, simple news items for beginners; increase complexity later.
- Encourage creative presentations (infographics, charts, storytelling).
- Reinforce the core message at the end: "If you can't find three different sources, don't share."
- Close with the "broken telephone" exercise, to visually show how information gets distorted.



I AM THE ARTIST

Creative Role-Play with Historical or Artistic Figures



up to 50



1-2 hours

Short overview

The activity aims to develop creativity, cultural awareness and public speaking skills through the first-person interpretation of a real artist or historical figure, using theatrical, expressive and informative elements.

At the end of the activity, participants will be able to:

- research a real artist or historical figure using reliable sources;
- construct a short first-person monologue based on real events;
- reproduce elements of the style, life or context of the chosen character;
- perform in front of an audience using body language, voice and simple props;
- identify the difference between verified information and assumptions (media literacy);
- reflect on how culture and art influence society.

Tool type:

educational game
participatory activity

Duration:

1-2 hours (plus 1 day individual research) - duration should scale with group size

Number of participants:

min. 2 participants + audience up to 40-50 people (recommended: groups of 10-15 max for the best engagement)

Necessary materials

- flipchart, markers
- paper sheets for notes
- simple props (hats, scarves, frames, symbolic objects)
- phone/tablet for research
- cards with artists or historical figures

Description of the activity – step by step

1

Introduction (10 min)

- The facilitator introduces the activity.
- Shows example cards or images of possible artists/historical figures.
- Explains the main rule: participants will perform a first-person monologue.
- The group takes 1 minute to choose their character (if they haven't already chosen one the day before).

3

Media analysis (10 min)

Guiding questions:

- Where did you find information about your character?
- How did you check that it was accurate?
- Which sources seemed credible and why?
- What type of media influenced your perception of this character (videos, documentaries, social media, articles, etc.)?

5

Conclusions (3-5 min)

- The facilitator summarizes the competences involved: research, creativity, empathy, critical thinking, public speaking.
- Highlights the importance of fact-checking when representing a real person.

2

Artistic activity (preparation + performance) (30 min)

- Each participant prepares a 1-2 minute monologue: "I am... and I am known for..."
- They can write down a few key ideas.
- They use body language, gestures, voice modulation, posture and simple props (hats, scarves, frames, symbolic objects).
- One by one, they present their monologue to the group.
- The audience tries to guess who the character is.

4

Reflection/discussion (7-8 min)

Suggested questions:

- How did it feel to "step into the shoes" of this artist or figure?
- What emotions came up?
- What was easy or difficult about performing?
- What did you learn about the historical/cultural context of your character?

Risks/challenges

- participants may feel shy or uncomfortable performing
- fear of public speaking
- finding inaccurate information online
- uneven preparation time between participants
- large groups may require time management

How to manage: Use warm-up exercises, offer examples, provide reassurance and allow optional pair work during preparation.

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

- provide a set of artist/figure cards to help participants choose;
- create a safe and inclusive environment;
- clearly explain each step of the activity;
- support shy or anxious participants;
- encourage the use of reliable sources;
- moderate the discussion and offer constructive feedback.

Skills developed

- critical thinking
- media literacy
- artistic creativity
- teamwork
- communication & public speaking
- empathy
- research skills
- self-confidence

Implementing suggestions

- It is highly recommended that the facilitator prepares a set of artist/figure cards with short descriptions to inspire participants who don't know whom to choose.
- You can include international figures as well as local or lesser-known cultural personalities.
- Pair rehearsals can help build confidence before the final performance.
- In an online version, participants can record and submit their monologue as a short video.
- Scale duration proportionally with group size (roughly 6 min/participant as a rule of thumb) - for participants who need more support during the research stage, consider supplementary general knowledge activities before the workshop

