

# Encountering Faiths & Beliefs



Part of the **F&BF**  
**Building Closer Communities**  
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# Lesson plan for Primary School

## Introduction

To succeed in today's complex and diverse world, young people need to be able to communicate sensitively and effectively with anyone, regardless of beliefs or background.

This lesson enables your students to 'meet' people (speakers) of different faiths, beliefs and identities, telling their personal story of their lived experience of their faith or belief. This is a unique experience, as the speakers are opening up about what their beliefs mean to them, and it offers your students to relate, question, draw out similarities and identify differences in their own beliefs. This lesson enables students to find connection with someone they may not ordinarily meet and explore their own identities.

NB: Lesson length is 60 minutes, but can be broken up into several smaller lessons as required.

## Learning objectives

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- To think about why it is important to meet different people
- To make connections that everyone is similar and different, and that it is good to be open to learning about differences
- To practice skills of empathy and sensitivity

## What you will need

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- Speaker films:  
Go to the F&BF [Encountering Faiths & Beliefs](http://www.faithbeliefforum.org/resources/encountering-faiths-beliefs) webpage [www.faithbeliefforum.org/resources/encountering-faiths-beliefs] and find the 'Story Bank'. Then choose the speakers and stories you would like from the list of films. We advise you choose at least two.
- Safe Space film
- Presentation for class
- Worksheet:  
Copy per student or for use by teacher on whiteboard
- Speaker quizzes:  
Copy per student (optional)
- Activities:  
Extra activities are available from the F&BF [Encountering Faiths & Beliefs](http://www.faithbeliefforum.org/resources/encountering-faiths-beliefs) webpage (optional)

## Total lesson length

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60 mins

**Section, aims & timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Introduction**

5 mins

Aims:

- Introduction to F&BF
- Preliminary thinking about why we are doing this work

Explain that today we are going to ‘meet’ (virtually, in person or on a film) some people that have different faiths and beliefs.

This is a project by the [Faith & Belief Forum](#), which is a charity that gets people with different views, beliefs or religions to meet and talk, so they can better understand each other. They work with 20,000 people each year across the UK in schools, universities, workplaces and communities.

Examples of F&BF work:

- People who don’t follow a religion with people who do
- People who are Muslim with people who are Jewish
- People who don’t eat meat with people who do

Presentation

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Activity 1: Think, pair & share**

Ask the students get into pairs / groups to discuss and answer the following question:

**Why is it important to meet people who are different than us?**

Possible answers:

- So we can understand people better
- So we can respect people better
- So we can make new friends
- So we might learn or discover something new

Ask the students to discuss their answers as a class, which you can either fill in on the class worksheet or alternatively ask the students to fill their answers on the worksheet.

Worksheet (on whiteboard and / or copy for each student)

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Ice breaker**

5 mins

Aim:

Fun activity that will get some energy out, begin making connections that everyone is similar and different, and that it is good to be open to learning about differences

Explain to the class that we will now think a little bit about things that connect us; that there are things that are the same and things that are different between everyone.

**Activity 2: Stand up if (or) Thumbs up if (if online)**

Read out each of the questions on the presentation and ask the students to stand up / thumbs up if they agree with the statement below.

Give example, e.g. if you said 'my birthday is in January', then everyone who also has a birthday in January will stand / thumbs up.

**Stand up if / Thumbs up if:**

- I like bananas
- I prefer the winter to the summer
- My favourite animal is a dog
- School dinners are delicious
- I do my homework every day
- I have a brother
- I have a sister
- I have a cousin
- Football is boring
- I don't like maths

Prompts on the presentation

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Reflection**

Ask the students if they learnt something new about someone in their class. Write or ask the students to write some of these down in the worksheet.

**Section, aims & timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Setting a Safe Space**

10 mins

Aim:

To cultivate the principles of empathy and sensitivity that we are going to demonstrate and use in the dialogue section!

Explain to the students that we are now going to be learning about people's faiths and beliefs.

And that it's really important that we set ourselves up to do this in the best way that we can, so that everyone feels comfortable to share.

Explain that we need to set a 'safe space'. To help explain what safe space means, we will watch the F&BF Safe Space film.

- Watch the Safe Space film

Any questions? Ask if the students understand what a safe space is and if they understand the film.

E.g: curiosity, don't be afraid to ask questions, oops and ouch, no such thing as a bad question.

Presentation

Safe Space film

Worksheet

Paper / books for drawing a poster

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Activity 3: Class safe space**

Ask the students to share or write down in worksheets other words that they might use to set or describe a safe space or suggest things that might make them feel comfortable to share their thoughts with others.

Answers might be:

- People listening to what I have to say
- Knowing nobody will laugh at me
- No interrupting
- Quiet in the classroom

Create a class safe space poster: You might want to create your own class safe space acronym / agreement with the letters / phrases discussed by the students. Or ask the children to create their own safe space posters on some paper or in their books.

A good place to break the lesson would be now.

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Speaker 1**  
10 mins

Explain that we are going to meet the F&BF speakers by watching a film they have made for us.

Choose speaker from 'Story Bank'.

**Play 'Speaker 1' film.**

**Activity 4: Questions for the speaker**

Students have two minutes to come up with questions that they would like to ask the speaker, after which teacher asks students to share and write them up on whiteboard. Please save these questions for when they can be asked directly to the speakers.

Alternatively students can write their speaker questions down in the worksheet.

Explain that the students will be able to ask these questions to this very person safely online at a later date.

Speaker film

Speaker fact sheet  
(if available)

Worksheet

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Speaker 2**  
10 mins

Same as above

Same as above

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Questions for  
both speakers**

5 mins

**Activity 5: Questions for both speakers**

Give students time to think about questions they want to ask **both speakers** and pool answers or ask them to write them down in their worksheets.

If questions are only being directed towards one speaker, try to open them up to apply to the other speakers as well.

If watching films: remind the students will be able to ask these questions online at a later date.

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Optional  
Speaker quiz:**  
10 mins

If appropriate for your class / age group / levels –  
there are some quizzes you can use to assess how well  
a student has listened to the speaker story films.

Speaker quiz sheets

Section, aims & timings	Script	What you will need
<p><b>Plenary</b> 5 mins</p> <p>Aim:</p> <p>Reflect on the experience</p>	<p><b>Activity 6: Think, pair &amp; share</b></p> <p><b>Final question for reflection: what is the difference between hearing a personal story from a person in a film, compared with reading or hearing facts about a faith or belief?</b></p> <p>Discuss with your partner for two minutes followed by short discussion in class.</p> <p>Write answers on class worksheet or ask students to write in the worksheet.</p> <p>Finally thank the class and summarise that it has been great learning together and that it is always so rewarding getting to learn about how we all have similarities and differences and they did a great job of discussing these issues in a respectful way!</p>	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Worksheet</p>

**Section, aims  
& timings**

**Script**

**What you will need**

**Extra activities**

Please go to '[Activity Bank](#)' for more activities you can use with your class in other lessons.

[Activity Bank](#)