

What do I need to consider?

Creating a safe environment

Discussing migration can lead to lively debates. The educator can help to create a safe environment for young people to express their opinions and test their ideas. It is also important that an environment is created where everyone feels comfortable to work as part of the group.

You can do this by creating a group contract with the students at the start of the activities. You can support young people to develop a set of ground rules on how they want to work together and create a comfortable working environment for everyone. If discussion falters or becomes too lively you can draw students back to these rules. Below is an example of a set of rules.

Example ground rules:

- > Participation is the key and makes things more interesting!
- > Everyone has the right to express their opinion and ask questions.
- > We will own our feelings and be sensitive to those of others.
- > Everyone agrees to respect others talking, asking questions and expressing their opinion.
- > If we do not agree with what someone has said, we can challenge this in a respectful and constructive way.
- > We agree to challenge the behaviour, not the person.

Awareness of migrant children in the group

Think about whether any of your students are likely to be affected by the topics in the activities. If this may be an issue, talk with the students about the activity content beforehand. They can be given the opportunity not to be present as well as the opportunity to prepare to talk about their experience if they would like to.

Be sensitive to the needs of all in the group before introducing a discussion. Remember that migrant children may have experienced trauma in their home country and they may have seen members of their family injured, killed or arrested. Such events cannot easily be discussed in classroom settings.

Migrant children may not want to talk about their circumstances because they might feel it could affect their chances of staying in the country, it's too traumatic or because they do not want to feel different from other children.

Making sure migrant children feel secure, while raising awareness of the circumstances that have brought them to this country is vital. Popular misconceptions should be challenged to enable all the young people to develop as positive global humanitarian citizens. Ensure that the activities chosen are sensitive to the needs of migrant children whilst still addressing the issues.