

Thinking and discussing

Nelson Mandela: The Official Exhibition includes some complex and sensitive material and issues. It can be useful to build-in structured time for students to think about, discuss and reflect on some of these.

Key concepts

Before a visit to the exhibition, try these discussion starters to help students prepare for their visit:

- Freedom is...
- Activism is...
- Belonging is...
- Identity is...
- If I had 10,000 days I could...
- Why do people protest?

They could begin by writing down individual responses and then use these to support a group or class discussion. They could then revisit these following a visit to the exhibition. Did their ideas and perspectives change? Why?

Reflecting after the visit

Try these simple exercises to help students reflect on their visit, and organise and process their responses.

Ask students to spend 2 minutes thinking about their visit to the exhibition. Keep them on task by quietly prompting them with reminders of their visit e.g. think about...

- What was the first thing you saw when you entered the exhibition?
- Was the exhibition how you expected it to be or different?
- Who were you with?

Do students have any questions or issues to raise?

Keeping the mood calm and reflective, ask students to write down answers to the following questions. Ask each question in turn with time for thinking and response before moving on to the next one:

- What interested you most?
- What was your favourite image or object? Why?
- What surprised you?
- What challenged you?
- What do you think everyone should know?

Alternatively, students could work in groups of three to explore these questions, using the 'Questioner, Speaker, Listener' model below.

Decide whether students should simply keep these answers to themselves/their groups, or discuss them with the rest of the class.

Students can then write an individual or collective response to the prompt:

I/we will be part of Nelson Mandela's legacy by...

Questioner, listener, speaker

This is a useful model for structuring discussion, developing speaking and listening skills, and making sure everyone has an opportunity to voice their own opinion and feel listened to. It is best used for discussions about feelings, thoughts and opinions rather than 'facts and figures'. It can be used to help students reflect on different themes associated with the exhibition and students' own experiences and responses to them.

Students work in groups of three. Each student adopts a different role and remains in this role for five minutes:

- Questioner
- Speaker
- Listener

The Questioner asks the Speaker as many questions as they have time to respond to within the five-minute timeframe. For example:

- What interested you most about the exhibition?
- What was your favourite image or object? Why?
- What surprised you?
- What challenged you?
- What do you think everyone should know?

After the five minutes is up, the Listener describes back to the Speaker what they heard. Depending on the students, they could also reflect on the Speaker's facial expressions and body language.

They rotate roles until each person has had a go at being the Questioner, the Speaker and the Listener.