

CROSS-BRAINSTORMING

Breaking away from initial ideas

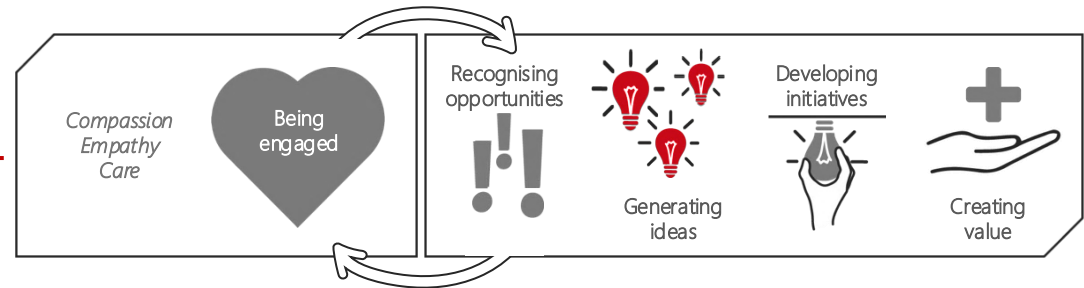
age 4 - 6

age 7 - 9

age 10 - 12



25 min



SUITABLE

- If children get stuck when coming up with ideas.
- If children get stuck on their first idea.

TIPS

- Use a classroom energiser based on opposites as a warm-up
e.g. clap a rhythm and 'rap' to that rhythm:
I say white - you say ... (black)
I say high - you say ... (low)
I say poor - you say ... (rich)

MATERIALS

STEP 1

Write down or visualise the situation for which children are seeking ideas on the board/A3 paper if you notice that the ideas they have come up with so far are very obvious.

STEP 2

Ask the children what they think of when they consider this situation and write down the words.

- What is typical for this situation?
- What do you use for that? Who uses it?
- What feelings does the situation evoke?
- ...

STEP 3

Ask the children for the opposite of the words and write them down next to them.

STEP 4

Let the children come up with ideas for resolving the situation using some new words.
If necessary, first give an example of a 'contrary' idea for such a new word.

- Appreciate all answers. This encourages the children to think more and more creatively.
- To start with, it is best to ask them to come up with counterintuitive ideas for each word. Once the children are familiar with the method, you can ask them to combine several words when coming up with a counterintuitive idea.

Example

CROSS-BRAINSTORMING

Context

During morning circle time, a child brings in an article from the local media. It was reported that an elderly woman from the neighbourhood had fallen and had been calling for help for two days before anyone found her. The ensuing discussion reveals that many children do not really know their neighbours. The teacher takes this opportunity to have the children explore the neighbourhood. They find out that there is little connection in the neighbourhood, no 'life' on the streets, neighbours do not know each other, some people regularly feel lonely, etc. In order to create more community spirit and connectedness in the neighbourhood, many children come up with the idea of visiting people in the neighbourhood or organising a neighbourhood party. Because the children do not break away from these ideas, the teacher starts a reverse brainstorming session.

STEP 1

Write or visualise the situation for which the children are looking for ideas on the board/A3 paper.

connectedness in our neighbourhood

STEP 2 & 3

Ask the children what they think about this situation and write down the (brainstorm) words. Ask the children for the opposite of the words and write them down next to them (reverse brainstorming words).

brainstorm words	cross-brainstorming words
together	alone
people to talk to	no people to talk to
fun days	boring days
outside	behind the window
happy	gloomy

STEP 4

Let the children produce ideas for solving the situation based on the new words.

Boring days → organise a 'most boring day competition'.

The local residents keep a diary or photo album for a week. They write down everything they do or what happens on that day. On Saturday, there is a sharing moment when the local residents read each other's most boring day. A vote is taken to determine who wins the competition. Perhaps local residents will discover shared interests in this way?

Behind the window → 'window decoration walk' to get to know the neighbourhood.

Local residents are invited to decorate their windows and take a walk through the neighbourhood together to hear the story behind the decorations.