

TIME: 45 minutes
TYPE OF ACTIVITY Role-Playing
ACTIVITY CATEGORY Communication/Facilitation Relationships/Partnerships 
TARGET AUDIENCE Directors/Coordinators, Line Staff
OBJECTIVES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants will understand the importance of facilitation skills to providing effective global learning.</li> <li>• Participants will explore ways to effectively facilitate global learning in a way that is engaging and meaningful for young people.</li> </ul>
MATERIALS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chart paper</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• “Role of Afterschool Staff in Facilitating Global Learning” handout</li> <li>• “Maintaining a Safe Space for Global Learning” handout</li> <li>• Chart paper with prompts written in advance (see Activity Instructions)</li> </ul>

## ACTIVITY

# maintaining a safe space for global learning after school

---

### *procedure*

#### INTRODUCTION

Explain that facilitation skills are a key component to providing meaningful global learning experiences for young people. Acknowledge that many people find this challenging. It is normal to feel intimidated and overwhelmed about facilitating activities around topics that are relatively new and that may raise sensitive issues among young people.

Emphasize that staff can build on the facilitation techniques and skills they already have to provide global learning. The same guidelines apply: be prepared, anticipate problems that may arise and devise alternate solutions in advance, and practice with your peers.

#### **!** key point

■ Tell participants that it is important to start off on the right foot with young people and set the tone for an active, collaborative, and inclusive learning environment. Encourage staff to be honest with young people by explaining that while no one person, including themselves, can know everything about the wider world, people can explore new topics together to find answers to the questions they are curious about.

#### ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

Ask the group to discuss this question: “When leading learning activities with young people about global issues or other cultures, what is the role of the after-school staff person or facilitator?” Write down the responses on chart paper.

Then, review with participants the handout “Role of Afterschool Staff in Facilitating Global Learning” and have them highlight any strategies that haven’t yet been mentioned.

Ask participants to rate their level of comfort with leading global learning activities and discussions on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being the least comfortable, and 10 being the most comfortable). Ask for a few responses from the group. Then ask participants who gave themselves a relatively low rating (6 or less) why they did so. Explain that there are aspects of facilitating these kinds of activities that can make people nervous if they don’t have a lot of experience. For instance, staff might worry that young people will be disrespectful of one another when discussing sensitive or personal topics, or might fear that young people will feel bored when exploring global topics. Tell participants that this activity will give them a chance to discuss and practice facilitation strategies that will prepare them to handle these kinds of challenging situations.

Next, break participants into groups of 3–5 people. Explain that you’re going to give them a scenario to role-play in which they will be challenged to maintain a safe space for young people in a global learning environment. Participants should incorporate some of the specific elements from the “Role of Afterschool Staff in Facilitating Global Learning” handout and discussion. One person in each group will role-play the facilitator, and the others will role-play young people (of the same age group that their program serves). Ask everyone to look at the handout “Maintaining a Safe Space for Global Learning,” and assign each group a scenario to act out.

## **maintaining a safe space for global learning after school** *(continued)*

---

Tell them they will have about 15 minutes to prepare and rehearse before acting out their scenario for the whole group. When time is up, ask for a group to volunteer to present first. Before the first group presents, post a sheet of chart paper at the front of the room with the following questions written on it:

- “What worked well?”
- “What was challenging for the facilitator?”
- “What strategies did the facilitator use to address these challenges?”

### **DEBRIEF**

After the first small group presents, ask the audience to identify the specific things the person role-playing the facilitator did to maintain a safe space for global learning. Ask if there are other things the facilitator could have done.

#### **! key point**

- It is important to help participants identify not only actions that are good facilitation and group-management practices in general, but also actions that enhance global learning specifically.

For example, in scenario 3, where a pair of students is bored by research, try to elicit from participants the idea that they could redesign the activity to focus on personal or local connections to the issue of world hunger, to make it more relevant and meaningful for young people—as opposed to, for example, asking students to present their research in a rap rather than a presentation as a way to increase engagement. Both strategies might be successful, but the first would deepen both engagement and learning, whereas the second might deepen only the level of engagement.

Switch groups and repeat the debriefing process.

### **CLOSING**

Emphasize that this type of role-playing activity is an important strategy to enhance and improve facilitation skills, and something that staff can continue to practice among themselves before facilitating global learning activities with young people.

## HANDOUT

# role of afterschool staff in facilitating global learning

---

- **Maintain a safe space** for global learning by ensuring that youth and staff hold each other accountable for following a set of group guidelines (sometimes called group promises or group norms).
- **Model the kind of communication and behavior** you want to see young people using.
- **Use instructional strategies** that draw upon the diverse cultural assets among participants, families, and communities. Games, art, music, discussions, and peer interviews can help you find out the languages children speak, the international issues they care about, the artistic and cultural things they value, and the stories of their lives.
- **Introduce young people to new countries and cultures**, including those represented in their communities and beyond
- **Present balanced viewpoints** on global issues, and assist young people in viewing issues from multiple perspectives.
- **Help young people make connections** between personal, local, and global contexts. Young people can relate to the urgency of world issues when they understand how people in their communities, or their peers elsewhere, are affected.
- **Use various forms of media, arts, and technology** to design and implement activities to maximize youth engagement.
- **Empower youth to collaborate effectively** with individuals from different backgrounds and/or with different beliefs, and to take action on global issues. Model these kinds of interactions in your own relationships with youth and colleagues.
- **Value the process:** Focus on getting young people to participate in discussions and activities without being overly worried about arriving at the “right” answer to an issue or question.
- **Give young people space to reflect** on their own learning experiences. Even those who are less vocal during activities are absorbing information. Give them a chance to process their learning and reflect their feelings individually by doing reflection writing or journaling on a regular basis.
- **Keep in mind (and remind participants) that no one is an expert**, but that everyone knows something. Everyone has something to contribute to discussions, and having a wide range of opinions and thoughts is an asset.



# HANDOUT

## **maintaining a safe space for global learning**

---

Consider each of the following scenarios: What could you do to maintain a safe space for participants in each case?

////////////////////////////////////

### SCENARIO 1

Your group is going to research a country they know very little about. You decide to introduce this country by playing some examples of its music. While the music is playing, you notice a group of young people in the back of the room giggling and making fun of it. When the music finishes, you ask the group for their reactions. One of the participants who was laughing earlier makes an insulting comment about the music and the people from that country. Another student in the group has family from that country and is clearly upset by the remark. How might you respond?

---

---

### SCENARIO 2

Your group is working on a family-history project. You've asked participants to interview a relative at home about when and how their family first came to the United States, and to bring in a write-up of the interview to share with the rest of the group. One student, whose family recently immigrated to the United States from Guatemala and who began attending your program only recently, hasn't completed the interview. When you ask him about it, he says that he forgot to do it. When you tell him he can have another opportunity to do it and ask him to bring in the write-up for the next session, he looks uncomfortable but doesn't say anything. How might you respond?

---

---

### SCENARIO 3

Your participants have broken into pairs to research basic facts about hunger around the world and create a presentation for the whole group. Some of the pairs are busy, but a couple of them seem disengaged. You overhear a participant in one of the less-engaged pairs make a comment to her peer that she is bored and that the project is not interesting. Another pair of students, across the room, has their heads down on the table. How might you respond?

---

---

### SCENARIO 4

Your participants have been studying various forms of dance from around the world and are preparing for their culminating performance. They have broken into smaller groups to prepare and rehearse dances from particular world regions. You have asked each group to research their dance style and prepare a short presentation to explain the origins and significance of the dance to the audience. When you check in with each group, you discover that one group has created a presentation based only on their own assumptions and hasn't conducted any research. How might you respond?

---

---