



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY 2 – HOT AIR BALLOON

OBJECTIVE

It consists of reaching an agreement among all students to choose the group that meets the least suitable qualities to develop themselves in a certain situation.

Each group will have to state their reasons to defend their point of view.

TIME REQUIRED

3 hours approximately.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE

In small groups or in pairs.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Paper, pen and computer.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. We present the students with the following situation:

Imagine that you have been chosen by the whole population for your human and professional qualities and also for your communication skills. You have been offered a hot air balloon ride to an unknown land to organize a new society, a better society. This land has climatic and geological conditions similar to those of the place where you currently live, but no one lives there, it is an unspoilt land. At a certain point in the journey, you get close to a mountain that has a very high peak and you realize that the balloon can't take off high enough to fly over the summit. The only chance for the group to survive is for one of you to jump off the balloon with a parachute. You need to set the most rational criteria to decide who will jump.

Classroom management

1. Each pair or small group chooses an occupation that they consider very useful and essential to organize a new society. Occupations are written on the board and cannot be repeated.

2. Each pair or small group writes down the maximum number of arguments or reasons to defend the occupation they have chosen.

The following argumentative scheme is proposed:

Thesis - Counter-argument - Argument or reason - Justification

Example:

Thesis: The medical occupation is essential for society

Counter-argument	Argument or reason	Justification
<p>1.</p> <p><i>We know that, for many years, in some societies there were no doctors and, through natural and unscientific procedures, healers theoretically cured diseases.</i></p> <p>2.</p> <p><i>We know that, in many societies, women deliver babies without the help of a doctor</i></p> <p>3. ...</p>	<p>1.</p> <p><i>But it is obvious that doctors can cure possible diseases effectively.</i></p> <p>2.</p> <p><i>But no doubt can doctors help women deliver babies.</i></p>	<p>1.</p> <p><i>The evidence is, for example, the improvement in the quality of life and the decrease in mortality from the discovery of penicillin.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, vaccines can prevent the spread of diseases.</i></p> <p>2.</p> <p><i>Studies show that when doctors intervene, the mortality of both mothers and children is reduced by 80%.</i></p>

3. In a circular order, and with a limited time of 3 minutes, for example, each pair or small group defends, with a persuasive attitude, the occupation they have chosen. Meanwhile, the other students listen and take notes of the arguments discussed.
4. After listening to the participations, each pair or small group must choose the profession that they consider to be less essential for survival in the new world and therefore, they must decide which person should jump off from the balloon. The decision should be made on the basis of the arguments presented, so that this step is used to refute them.
5. In a circular order, and with great linguistic courtesy, everyone gives arguments for their decision. Representatives of the “affected occupation” may defend themselves and establish turns for give arguments and counter-arguments.
6. The representatives of the occupation that has been chosen as the least essential by the majority, will have to jump off from the balloon.
7. In the event of tie, a speaking turn may be established and the game may end with a vote. If considered appropriate, the tragic end of the game can be avoided by looking for a technical solution that allows the balloon to fly over the summit.

SELF-EVALUATION AND REFLECTION GUIDE

What helped you find the arguments to defend your chosen occupation? Do you think you have given strong arguments? What do you think the weaknesses have been?

- How do you feel about the arguments given by the other groups? Did you find it easy to write them down?
- Do you think that the decision to take some occupations off the balloon and not others was right?
- Has it been difficult to defend the arguments without hesitation and with linguistic courtesy?
- Did you detect any fallacies? Which ones and what kind of fallacies?

Do you think it is useful to know how to argue with good arguments? Why?