

Activity **Movie Poster**

Purpose

- To decide issues
- To create an agenda
- To explore how the group sees things
- To express what is important in participants' lives

How We Do It

1. Ask people to divide into two or more groups, depending on the size of the whole group. Ask group members to imagine that a movie will be made of what happens in their lives in their neighborhood, community, school, family, or other groups or settings that are important to them. Participants should consider what is going on in their lives, including the positive and negative things that happen where they live. What makes them angry or happy? What are they afraid of? What frustrates them? Ask them to think about what would be in the movie about their lives.
2. Ask each group to create a poster to advertise their movie, representing the things they have been discussing. Each group will draw a poster on which the only written words should be the title. You might suggest that participants consider what they want people to understand about their lives by looking at their poster.
3. Once all of the groups have completed their drawings, display them. Take each poster in turn, and ask the groups that did not create the poster what they see while the creators listen quietly. Ask a variety of questions that get other groups to describe the other posters: What do they see in it? What does the title mean to them? Do they see themselves in the poster? Make a list of the responses on chart paper. After you have made a thorough list, ask the group who made the poster whether what people have seen is what they intended, and whether they think anything has been left out. Everything that is said is valid and is recorded, even if it is not what the artists intended.
4. Once the first poster has been fully discussed, move on to the next one until all posters have been considered.

5. After all of the posters have been discussed, the list is put on the wall. This is a list of problems and concerns that will form the group's agenda.

Variations, Adaptations, and Developments

This exercise can also be used with professionals. You might ask them to consider the lives of the people they work with. It is important to develop the exercise by using the information gained.

Why We Like It

- People are not used to expressing themselves through drawing, and the exercise may help participants to articulate different aspects of their lives than they would if they answered verbally.
- This activity creates camaraderie.
- It is particularly freeing for adults.
- It is fun.
- There is no need for reading or writing at this stage of the exercise.
- The pictures can stay in the room.
- This activity is good in bilingual settings.

When You Can Use It

This is a versatile exercise that is appropriate for use with many groups. We have used it with such varied groups as street children in Moscow, teachers in America, and young people on estates in Britain. (Estates are called *housing projects* in the United States.)

Issues to Consider

- The exercise can take some time because people need to discuss, agree, and decide how to depict things and then actually draw them, and then additional time is needed to discuss the posters.
- It is important to reassure people that this is not an artistic competition and that any quality of drawing is fine.
- This is a good exercise to use near the beginning of a group or course because it lets participants tell you about what is important in their lives.

- It is crucial that information about people's lives be used; this is not an activity for the sake of it.

Materials

Pens of many colors, flipchart paper, masking tape for putting posters on the wall.

Source

Centre for Social Action and the Guinness Trust, 2000.