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*Charlie's Angels or Sympathy for the Devils?
A full RE lesson plan on the Paris attacks*

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Charlie's Angels or Sympathy for the Devils? A full RE lesson plan on the Paris attacks

by Jakob Werdelin, 2015

The following is a **scalable, instantly applicable RE lesson plan** related to the Charlie Hebdo attacks, replete with differentiated sample materials for secondary. It uses the structural approach to Cooperative Learning to foster **tightly controlled discussions of controversial materials in a safe environment**, and includes strategies for assessment, evidence of learning and SMSC integration.

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to *describe, correlate, criticise, and synthesise some of the viewpoints and arguments about freedom of expression, religious tolerance, the role of media, Islamic vs. secular (British) values, and consequences of terrorism, specifically related to the attacks on Charlie Hebdo.*

Using this lesson plan effectively

The lesson is composed of three simple Cooperative Learning Interaction Patterns (CLIPs). Timeframes given for the stages and steps of the CLIPs are indicative guidelines only. The point is that CLIPs do not dictate the rhythm of your lesson, rather they adapt to the time you have available, the materials you have chosen, and the needs and capabilities of your individual class. In addition, you will find ample room to insert your own questions to facilitate your own unique aims under the "optional" headings. It is also an option to spread stages over several lessons.

Regarding assessment, please see the article [Monitoring and real-time feedback in the Cooperative Learning classroom](#). To provide written evidence of learning, note-taking is integrated into each step of the lesson, and the final stage includes individual writing tasks. The strategies outlined are extracted from Module B in [Islam in RE: Religious Literacy and Controversy through Enquiry](#), which has been designed to facilitate the best practice outlined in Ofsted's RE report *Realising the Potential*.

Accessing and using lesson materials

All materials are unedited expression of opinion in on- and off-line media by stakeholders in the crisis. Links for downloading are found in the related post on cooperativelearning.works, [Charlie's Angels or Sympathy for the Devils ...](#), which will be updated with new, relevant materials as they appear in the media. As with any lesson, you need to decide which materials you wish to use. Any suggestions are welcome and may be mailed to me directly or simply added to the post in the comments section.

For this lesson, you need *at least two texts* representing conflicting views on the topic you wish students to explore. Texts should be of roughly equal length, and word volume should be scaled to match circumstances in the individual class. Here using extracts may be a necessity, but will help focus on learning objectives.

The texts must be distributed evenly. Using two texts in a classroom of thirty-two students, print 16 sets of Text A and 16 sets of Text B, so that each individual student has a copy of *one* of the texts.

Aside from materials, the post includes valuable reflections on assessment, materials, the SMSC element of the lesson, and its optional use in primary and/or in other subjects.

RE lesson on Charlie Hebdo				
<i>At the end of this lesson, students will be able to describe, correlate, criticise and synthesise some of the viewpoints and arguments about freedom of expression, religious tolerance, the role of media, Islamic vs. secular (British) values, and consequences of terrorism, specifically related to the attacks on Charlie Hebdo.</i>				
Stage	Time	Stage aims	Instructions	CLIPs, step-by-step
1. Lead-in & set context	As little as 10 minutes, all included	<p>To generate interest in the topic of the Charlie Hebdo attacks and to enable students to understand the context of materials they will be presented with.</p> <p>To confirm, through unobtrusive monitoring of these discussions, that students have sufficient basic knowledge to contextualise the materials.</p> <p>To correct key misapprehensions.</p>	<p>Teacher:</p> <p><i>Today we are going to look at some of the responses to the attacks on Charlie Hebdo.</i></p> <p><i>Partner up with the person next to you. Take turns asking each other everything you know about the attacks.</i></p> <p><i>Start your sentences: "Do you know what, ... when, ... who, ... which, ... how..."</i></p> <p><i>Write down the answers in your notebooks/logs!</i></p> <p><i>If you don't know, just say so and ask you own question as you normally would.</i></p> <p><i>In turns, one question per turn, (X) minutes in total, go!</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Ping-Pong-Pairs (w. written element)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher poses question /organises task. 2. Partners takes turns until time runs out. <p style="text-align: center;">e.g.</p> <p>A: "Do you know what Charlie Hebdo is?"</p> <p>B: "It is a French newspaper. Are you finished writing? Ok, my turn ... Do you know why Muslims attacked it?"</p> <p>A: "They had made drawings which made fun of Islam. Do you know who the editor was?"</p> <p>B: "... uh, no... Hmm, ok my turn. Do you know who the editor was? Is he even dead?"</p> <p>A: Hey, that's two questions. But I think he is dead. My turn...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTE: Often, 1-2 minutes are ample.</p>
		<p>Open class feedback as necessary, correcting any key misapprehensions² and giving students a chance to ask clarifying questions.</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Open class feedback</p>	

¹ Note that good Cooperative Learning integrates a written element at every turn. These notes provide both support for the student during oral exercises and logs provide the written evidence of learning.

² By noting mistakes during unobtrusive monitoring of peer discussions, but correcting them anonymously in open class, students are spared the usual open class embarrassment.

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2. Individually investigate materials & uncover issues	Depends on text level & volume	<p>Spot and extract key points from allotted text (using highlights and/or notebooks/logs).</p> <p>Optionally: If necessary, recap relevant reading techniques, such as skimming, and define "key points" as the pivotal arguments of the text.</p>	<p>Teacher:</p> <p><i>I am going to hand out (X) sets of different texts, representing different perspectives on the attacks.</i></p> <p><i>When you have familiarised yourselves with your texts, you will join classmates with the same text to form a team, and help each other understand the arguments presented. Do it well, because you are going to confront and try to win over opponents from other team(s) holding different views.</i></p> <p><i>You might not personally agree with the views you will be defending. Just remember you are playing a role.</i></p> <p>Teacher hands out texts, clearly labelled. Simple colour markings will help form team cohesion. <i>"We are the red team..."</i></p> <p>NOTE: In this lesson, the amount of individual texts is irrelevant, as long as you have more than one. To deploy three or four texts, in a class of thirty-two, have 16x2 texts, or 12x3 texts, or 8x4 texts. In the following, we assume two texts are used.</p> <p>Teacher:</p> <p><i>You have (X) minutes to read your texts, note down all key points. Start now.</i></p> <p>...</p> <p><i>Time's up. Round up your notes. Ok, now you are going to help your team prepare your arguments.</i></p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Students read texts individually.</p>

Stage	Time	Stage aims	Instructions	CLIPs, step-by-step
3. Collaboratively check understanding & prepare arguments	Recommended minimum for exercise: 5 minutes per task	<p>Argue for their choices of key points by formulating their meaning and impact in a discussion.</p> <p>Ask critical questions to these key points, producing as many counterarguments as possible.</p> <p>Prepare a defence against these counterarguments.</p>	<p>Teacher presents CatchPartner interaction steps (preferably on IWB or butcher paper). <i>Students with red materials, go to this side of the classroom, students with green materials, go to this side of the classroom. Bring your notes and a pen. You may only partner with your own colour until I say otherwise. Go!</i></p> <p>Teacher-set tasks for CatchPartner:</p> <p>T1: <i>Take turns presenting what you believe to be one key point in your text, and check if your partner agrees. If not, why? If your partner is convinced, they add it to their list of key points on their own paper.</i></p> <p>...Switch after X minutes...</p> <p>T2: <i>Remember your views are going to come under attack, but you do not know the arguments in your opponents' texts.</i></p> <p><i>In turns, Partner A presents a key point, and the Partner B tries to come up with as many counter arguments as possible. Help each other to find good defensive strategies. Write them down in bullet-points.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Optionally:</p> <p>T3: <i>With your new partner, look at your list of key points and counter-arguments. Now take turns using these to attack the content of the text, while your partner defends it.</i></p> <p>To guide students towards specific objectives, such as rule of law, relevant questions you would normally ask in open class are simply related to the texts, e.g.</p> <p>T4: <i>How do you think the (British value of) respect for diversity relates to your text? Do you think your author is for or against respect for diversity?</i></p> <p>Optionally: replace with or add you own.</p>	<p>CatchPartner (input from teacher)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students mill about until teacher gives signal* to pair up. 2. Students pair up with closest neighbour, not previously engaged. 3. Teacher sets a task and gives pairs a moment to consider. 4. Partners discuss the question. 5. After a set time, teacher gives signal* to mill about again. 6. Partners bid farewell, find a new partner and proceed from step one. <p>* <i>Signals</i> may be anything you are comfortable with from verbal commands to raised hands.</p>

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<h2 style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">4. Debating with a live opponent</h2>	<p>Recommended minimum for exercise: 15 minutes (10 minutes per engagement (excluding instructions, etc.))</p>	<p>To present a case.</p> <p>To listen attentively for key points and spot weak arguments in opponent's case.</p> <p>To deploy prepared arguments into a relevant context.</p> <p>To refute opposing views with sound arguments.</p> <p>To negotiate the meaning of key terms, such as "freedom."</p> <p>To experience identifying and accepting superior argumentation.</p> <p>To operationalise common knowledge related to politics, history, religions, etc.</p> <p>To operationalise relevant subject knowledge related to ethics and religions, specifically Islam.</p>	<p>Teacher:</p> <p><i>You are now going to have one-to-one discussions with a person from the other team(s), holding vastly different views from your own.</i></p> <p><i>Your task is to convince him/her by arguing your case and undermining your opponent's.</i></p> <p>Teacher presents CatchIPartner interaction steps (preferably on IWB or butcher paper).</p> <p><i>Students with red materials find students with green materials. Bring only your notes and a pen. I am going to give you (X) minutes for each step. So you need to make every second count when you present your case. Go!</i></p> <p>NOTE! The timing for each step depends on multiple factors, such as levels and complexity of materials, Unobtrusive monitoring of the previous exercise should be used as a guide here.</p> <p>NOTE! As a rule of thumb, students should never be allowed access to the original text when presenting, due to the risk is that they will end up reading out from it, rather than phrasing the arguments in their own language.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CatchIPartner (input from student materials)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students mill about until teacher gives signal* to pair up. 2. Students pair up with closest neighbour, not previously engaged. 3. Partner A presents his/her opinion. 4. Partner B presents his/her counterarguments and an open discussion follows. 5. Partners switch roles. 6. When the teacher prompts, partners bid farewell, thank each other for sharing, and proceed from step one. <p>For tasks such as these which require time and note taking, consider letting students sit down at random desks. In this case, the "milling about" serves only to randomise pairs.</p> <p>Other alternatives include CELTA classics such as Ladders and Carousel. See Norwich High School for Girls: A tailored workshop lesson#2 on cooperativelearning.works for full details.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">* <i>Signals</i> may be anything you are comfortable with from verbal commands to raised hands.</p>

Stage	Time	Stage aims	Instructions	CLIPs, step-by-step
5. Debriefing	Recommended minimum for exercise: 15 minutes (excluding seating & instructions)	<p>To promote awareness of learning process.</p> <p>To discuss and digest intellectual content from own viewpoint.</p> <p>To integrate the experience of the role with own sense of self.</p> <p>To discuss emotional experiences and release tension.</p> <p>To guide towards specific lesson aims by using a peer-based interview format to let students <i>describe, correlate, criticise, and synthesise some of the viewpoints and arguments about freedom of expression, religious tolerance, the role of media, Islamic vs. secular (British) values, and consequences of terrorism, specifically related to the attacks on Charlie Hebdo.</i></p> <p>To provide teacher with further assessment on learning and next steps.</p>	<p>Teacher divides the class into teams of four, preferably in two pairs on each side of a desk, so everyone has a "shoulder partner" and a "front partner."</p> <p>It is useful to decide whether to mix students with various texts, or to ask students with same text to form these teams. If the texts are very toxic, the latter may be preferable.</p> <p>3-Way-Interview instructions:</p> <p><i>All right, everyone, turn to your shoulder partner.</i></p> <p>Teacher poses general or specific question to guide attention towards the lesson aims as outlined, e.g.</p> <p><i>"Interview your partner about his experience promoting these views: what did he learn ... how did he feel..."</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">or</p> <p><i>"How do you think the author of your text feels about respect for diversity? How do you feel now?"</i></p> <p><i>OK, time is up. Now, turn to your front partner. (Same question is posed.)</i></p> <p><i>Ok, starting with the person sitting closest to where I am standing, recap what the partner you interviewed told him.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>3-Way-Interview</u></p> <p>Divide the class into teams of four. The four team members form two pairs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In each pair, Partner A interviews Partner B. 2. Swap roles, i.e. B interviews A. 3. Taking turns, team members share what they learned from the team member they interviewed. <p>TIMING: Three minutes for step 1 and 2 each, eight minutes for step 3 giving each of the four students 2 minutes to recap.</p> <p>Team members should take notes while listening to the viewpoints of their 'partner' at the time. They then can refer to these notes during Step 3.</p> <p>The accountability afforded by Step 3 means that intense listening is required from each student.</p> <p>When summarising someone else's answers, one assumes their perspectives, which promotes empathy.</p> <p>A resource for a slightly more complex variant of 3 Way Interview including a pupil handout, is found on Bill's Teaching Notes.</p>

Stage	Time	Stage aims	Instructions	CLIPs, step-by-step
6. Follow-up: next steps/homework	N/A	<p>Provide thoroughly prepared reflections on the lesson in written form.</p> <p>Assist memorisation of key concepts, topics.</p> <p>Summarise.</p> <p>Form synthesis.</p> <p>Criticise.</p> <p>Negotiate.</p> <p>Vet and integrate with prior understanding.</p> <p>Provide written evidence of learning and inspire next steps.</p>	<p>Phrase any lesson objective in relation to SMSC as a written tasks, e.g.</p> <p><i>Phrase a reply to the text you had to promote in class, using your classroom opponent's counterarguments.</i></p> <p><i>Imagine you are a journalist who attended a public debate between these antagonists. Write an article, summarising the arguments.</i></p> <p><i>Imagine you are an MI5 operative: where do you see threats to [insert suitable British Value here].</i></p> <p><i>Imagine you are a human rights activist. What would you write about?</i></p> <p><i>Imagine you are a negotiator: Write a letter to these antagonists, trying to find a reasonable middle way.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p> <p>These "Imagine..." texts by students could be inserted into a new round of CLIPs and set against each other, e.g.:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Next round:</i> <i>Big Brother and the Bleeding Hearts: MI5 Agents vs. human rights activists.</i></p>

My notes: