

Bonus Activity:

Emotional Mirror

This activity aims to raise participant's awareness of differences in understanding body language and expressing emotions based on different cultural backgrounds.

Description

This activity can be used as a warm up activity.

- Players form pairs of two and run around freely.
- The teacher or facilitator gives commands to change emotions (e.g. from sad to happy, from angry to friendly, from bored to excited).
- Now Player A in each pair starts to express this emotional change through body language (facial expression, movements, gestures) in slow motion.
- At the same time, Player B imitates all movements of Player A.
- When the change in emotions is complete, Player B continues to turn it around: for example, she/he changes from happy to sad, and Player A has to imitate.
- When all pairs are done, they start running again until the facilitator gives them another command.

Discussion questions

Reflect

Was it easy/difficult for you to express the emotions? Which body part did you use the most, your face, your arms, the whole body? Were there any difficulties in reading and understanding your partner's emotions/non-verbal signals?

Connect

Why do you think non-verbal communication is important? Have you had situations where you could only use your body language to communicate? Do you know any advantages/disadvantages of non-verbal communication?

Can you think of a situation where you misunderstood someone because of differences in her/his body language based on cultural differences?

Apply

How could you use the advantages of non-verbal communication to communicate effectively?

How could you avoid or solve problems based on misunderstandings in body language?

How can you react more sensitive towards the emotions/ non-verbal signals of someone else?

Facilitation notes

Before starting, create a safe environment for the activity. Tell participants not to judge any expressions made by their partners and explain that there is no right or wrong.

As a variation, players can come up with their emotions independently (without the command of the facilitator). Give time for participants after each emotion to reflect on cultural or personal differences in their understanding of expressing the different emotions. Later on, reflect on these differences and similarities with the whole group.

Number of Teachers or Coaches	1
Number of Students or Athletes	14-20
Typical Age Group	12+
Time Needed	15 min
Space Needed	Big seminar room, sport hall or field
Materials Needed	No material needed
Activity Objective	To observe their partner's emotions closely and express their own emotions precisely: to reflect on their own body language and similarities/differences in the body language of other cultures
Related Units	Unit 1
Related Learning Competences	Change of perspective and empathy, non-verbal communication