

THE GREAT GET TOGETHER

INSPIRED BY JO COX

THE GREAT GET TOGETHER: SIXTH FORM ACTIVITY PACK

#greatgettogether #moreincommon



The Linking Network



YOUTH SPORT TRUST

PSHE Association



Introduction

The activities in this Great Get Together activity pack are designed for secondary schools and sixth forms to commemorate and celebrate Jo Cox MP, using her life and work to help young people develop their understanding of identity, diversity, community and equality.

Feel free to pick and mix activity suggestions in a way that allows you to use what is most suitable for your own communities, learners, ages and attainment levels.

Assembly

1. Opening slide: “We have more in common than that which divides us.”

Reflection question: What does this mean? Why is this such an important message to focus on in today's society? Reflection question: what does this mean?

2. Telling Jo's story

Key points about Jo's life and work:

- At school Jo worked very hard and her favourite subject was Geography. Jo's Geography teacher was the son of Bernard Kenny, the man who tried to ward off Jo's murderer.
- In Jo's last year at school, Jo took on the Headteacher (her first campaign!) making the case for cancelling lessons ahead of exams and replacing them with home study time.
- Jo was really sporty – she loved swimming, tennis and running and she once won all the medals at a swimming gala!
- Jo loved dancing and singing. She performed routines to dances in her pyjamas at school and took part in a production of Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat.
- Jo always dreamed of being an MP in her home constituency in Yorkshire.
- When Jo was 15, she went to London on a school trip and this was the first time she visited No.10 Downing Street.
- Jo was quite shy and focused on working hard and made the decision herself to go to Cambridge University. She found it difficult and didn't feel like she fitted in because she sounded different to everyone else. However, she persevered and in the end made some great friends and studied politics and the world we live in.
- After university, Jo travelled and worked in some of the world's most dangerous war zones, campaigning to make the world a fairer place.
- Jo spent many trips volunteering across the world, including in an orphanage in Bosnia.

- In 2015 on a car journey, Jo made the decision to become an MP. The decision wasn't easy to make and she deliberated long and hard about whether she could be a good mother as well as a good MP.
- In 2015, Jo was elected as the MP for Batley & Spennings Dale in Yorkshire. She went back to work there and loved having the connection with her hometown.
- Jo worked extremely hard but always put her kids first – she even voted in the Chamber in the House of Commons wearing her cycling gear so she could get home in time to put the kids to bed.
- In her short time as an MP, Jo achieved so much and worked across all parties in the Houses of Parliament.
- Jo cared about a whole range of issues and spoke out about them in parliament – from loneliness to civilians in conflict zones and women in politics to the NHS.

3. Reflection question: What strikes you about Jo's life and the causes she cared about?

4. Great Get Together: Introduce The Great Get Together and the ideas behind it



Assembly

- Jo was killed because of her beliefs. Jo believed everyone has the right to their own beliefs and opinions but that we all have the responsibility to respect those of other people. The person that killed Jo was put on trial and found guilty and is now in prison.
- The weekend of the 22nd-24th June marks Jo's 44th birthday and is around the second anniversary of Jo's death. Jo's friends and family didn't want to mark her birthday and anniversary with a sombre occasion. So, the plan is to hold celebrations to unite communities across the country.
- Get Togethers of all different shapes and sizes are being organised, from street parties to bake-offs, football matches to village fairs and rowing races to picnics – hopefully you can be a part of the fun!
- The message behind The Great Get Together is a simple one: that we all have more in common than that which divides us.
- Jo's family have said Jo would have been thrilled by the idea of The Great Get Together because it's a chance to bring our communities together and celebrate what unites us. They feel there could be no more fitting tribute to Jo's memory than The Great Get Together

5. Video: To promote The Great Get Together

6. Reflection question: What could you/we do to get involved in The Great Get Together or to celebrate diversity in our community?

Adaptions for sixth form

- Incorporate participation by having members of the school or local community speak in the assembly about some similarities and differences they share (e.g. the head teacher and one of the lunchtime supervisors; members of two different faith communities).
- Reference social media as a way to promote the message (e.g. #moreincommon, #greatgettogether).
- Alternative videos to use could include: 'Momondo: The DNA Journey' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyaEQEmt5Is&t=2s>) or 'All That We Share' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jD8tjhVOITc&t=7s>), both of which challenge the judgements we make about people and celebrate diversity. 'All That We Share' is a film made in Denmark about diversity. Please note: teachers should watch this video in advance to check it is in line with your school's policies.

Classroom activities

Below is a range of activities that could be used with students in the classroom to reinforce and revisit messages delivered in the assembly. These may be suitable for use as part of an off-timetable day, in PSHE or Citizenship lessons or during tutor time. The activities include suggested timings, but these are flexible.

Jo's voting record (15-20mins):

Students may appreciate looking at examples from Jo's voting record in order to facilitate a discussion about how Jo lived her beliefs through her actions. Here's a link to Jo's voting actions: https://www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/25394/jo_cox/batley_and_spen.

Pledge Cards (10-15mins):

Students write on a postcard explaining which of the issues Jo supported matters most to them and why. They could outline what they are going to do differently or how they will change their behaviour as a result of the learning they have taken part in. This could follow the assembly or other activities selected above. Completed pledge cards could be displayed on a 'pledge wall' in a communal space in school.

Celebrating Multiculturalism (5-10mins):

Ask students to mind map or list ideas of what their school or local community could do to promote and celebrate diversity or to tackle discrimination.

Year group swaps (30 mins):

One of the issues Jo cared deeply about was loneliness. After work carried on by Jo's friends Rachel Reeves MP and Seema Kennedy MP, the UK government now has a Minister for Loneliness. The Great Get Together is one way to tackle loneliness as by meeting up with others we can reduce loneliness.

In tutor time groups across school could meet others from another year group e.g. sixth form tutor groups and Year 7. The mixed groups could write pledge cards, find things they have in common and record similarities and differences. Students could also think about what they could do to tackle loneliness in their community.

Invisible Similarities and Differences (15mins):

Explain that we all have similarities and differences, but that some of these can only be discovered by talking to and getting to know one another and by asking questions. Examples of invisible similarities and differences might be hobbies, food, favourite subjects at school, favourite films or where you were born.

It works well to model the game first. Working in pairs, students speak to one another to find three or more invisible similarities, and three or more invisible differences between them. You can then bring the class together and ask for volunteer pairs or groups to share any similarities they have found.

Possible extensions:

After working in pairs, you could ask students to get into increasingly larger groups (e.g. of 4, 6 or 8) and try to find two similarities between all of them.

Creative Activities (30-45mins):

Having taken part in the assembly, students could make #moreincommon and #greatgettogether posters representing things they have found in common with others in their community. Examples of students shared work could be photographed.

Projects Planning (15-20mins):

In groups, students can work together to contribute ideas to plan a Great Get Together event, thinking about what the event would be and where it would be held, who they would invite, how they would advertise, and the resources and deadlines they would need to meet their aims. NB: schools will be invited to upload photographs to Twitter using the hashtag #moreincommon or #greatgettogether if they wish to.

Sport and physical activity

Sport is a fantastic way for young people to be physically active and be the best they can be irrespective of their age, gender, ability, religion and environment. The Chief Medical Officer's recommendation is 60 minutes a day for sixth form students.

Here are some ideas from the Youth Sports Trust on activities to bring students together through sport:

International Inspiration (30 mins):

Use these resource cards (https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/international_inspiration_traditional_games_resources_full_set_part1.pdf) to engage pupils in traditional games from across the world, teaching them about different cultures and games and encouraging them to build communities that allow people to help and support each other to lead happier, healthier and productive lives.

National School Sport Week:

Celebrate playing and learning together by signing up for free resources (<https://www.youthsporttrust.org/national-school-sport-week>) as part of the Youth Sport Trust's National School Sport week. The resources contain lots of ideas for bringing an active element to your school's Get Together.

Why not consider a sports festival with an opening and closing ceremony celebrating different cultures or set up a range of sports activities giving students the opportunity to understand the importance of coming together through leading, coaching and officiating.