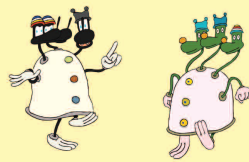


Tête à Tête à Tête



Teacher's guide and student worksheets

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

The goal of most parents and teachers is to help children move from dependence to independence. However, **Tête à Tête à Tête** challenges us to consider the idea that no one is completely independent and in fact, the human condition, like the ecosystem, is more compatible with the idea of interdependence, where we are both dependent on and independent of others. Like the animated characters in **Tête à Tête à Tête**, we are often “connected at the hip” to others (usually our families), and the challenge in conflict situations is to recognize the basic human condition of interconnectedness or interdependence while still striving for individual expression.

Children need both autonomy, the psychological freedom to live their own lives and make their own choices, and relatedness, the ability to identify with others, build emotional connections and accommodate their lives and their choices within a family, school or community. When a conflict occurs, children need to understand their own needs as well as the needs of others. **Tête à Tête à Tête** explores these ideas in a comical and poignant way.

TEACHING IDEAS FOR GRADES 4–10

Integration into curriculum

This lesson can be integrated into any school curriculum that encourages the development of interpersonal skills such as conflict resolution, communication, listening and reflective thinking. Examples include Guidance and Career Education, Religious Education, Health Education and Family Studies.

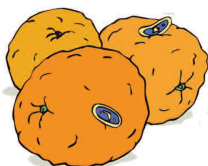
Focus

Students will be introduced to the idea that in everyday conflict situations at home and in class, we need to assert our own needs AND we need to understand how our needs connect to the needs of others.

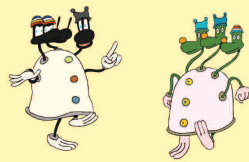
Preparing the classroom for cooperative learning

These activities work best if the classroom climate respects and supports different opinions. Cooperative warm-up activities are recommended to encourage this type of climate. Teachers may need to move desks or rearrange the room to create space for warm-up activities and small or large group discussions. Ground rules may need to be established, such as:

- no putdowns
- no interruptions
- everyone participates in all activities in some way



Tête à Tête à Tête



Lesson

Duration: 45 minutes

Teacher preparation

- View the film **Tête à Tête à Tête** with the discussion questions and/or student worksheet (page 5 or 6) in hand. Write down your own observations and add any questions/comments not included in discussion or student worksheet.
- Photocopy the worksheet for students.
- Order a DVD projector for the classroom.

Materials and resources

1. A large blanket for every 8 students or one sheet of newspaper for every other student.
2. DVD—**Tête à Tête à Tête**.
3. Large group discussion questions (see Activity D) and/or student worksheets.
4. FOR EXTENSION ACTIVITIES: Copy of *Love You Forever* by Robert Munsch and or/lyrics to “I Am a Rock” by Paul Simon.

Learning objectives

Students will:

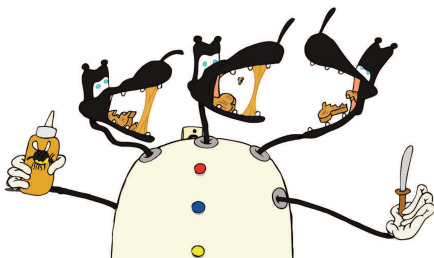
1. Identify the difference between cooperation and competition after playing the game *Everybody is ON the Island*.
2. Identify how the characters rely on each other in **Tête à Tête à Tête**.
3. Describe what happens when one of the characters makes an unpopular choice.
4. Explain why people make unpopular choices and do not tolerate differences.
5. Apply the lesson of the film (that we need each other AND we need to be our own person) to everyday family/classroom conflict situations.

Activities

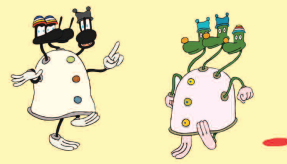
A. Warm-up to cooperative learning: *Everybody's ON the Island*

After setting up space in the classroom and establishing the ground rules above, you may wish to play this game to enhance a cooperative spirit in the classroom:

1. Ask students to break into circle groups of 8.
2. Explain that while reality TV shows like *Survivor* kick people off the island, in the classroom we want to welcome everyone ON the island.
3. Place a blanket (or 4 sheets of newspaper) in the centre of each circle.
4. Ask students to stand.
5. Explain that the object of the game is to make sure everyone is ON the island (blanket or sheets of newspapers) when you say STOP.
6. Ask students to walk around the blanket until you say STOP and then scramble to get everyone on the blanket.
7. Ask students to divide the blanket (or number of newspapers) in half and then repeat the exercise.
8. Ask the students to divide the blanket (or sheets of newspapers) into half again and repeat.
9. Make sure each group gets everyone ON the island.
10. As a class, ask students to think about the game and the difference between cooperation and competition. Establish that in class discussion and activities, you are encouraging students to cooperate and support each other.



Tête à Tête à Tête



B. Warm-up to film

1. Students stand beside each other in groups of 3.
2. They link arms (the person in the middle will have both arms linked, the outer two in the group will each have one arm free).
3. Ask students to sit down (in sync) and with their unlinked hands collectively untie and then tie each of their shoes.
4. See how quickly each group accomplishes this cooperative task.
5. Students describe the difficulties and the benefits of working in threes.
6. Identify strategies that helped them work faster through the difficulties.
7. Explain that in conflict situations we are often not able to solve the problem unless EVERYONE works together.

C. View *Tête à Tête à Tête*

- Show the film.
- Check to see if students understand that the film title is a play on the French word for head, *tête*, and the expression *tête-à-tête* (a conversation between two people).
- In a large group, ask open-ended questions, such as: *Who was your favourite character in the film? What was your favourite image? What do you think the filmmaker is trying to say?*
- In a large group lead the following discussion by asking students more in-depth questions listed below. (IMPORTANT NOTE: Questions 1-4 are more appropriate for junior grades and questions 4-7 are more suited to intermediate grades. Both groups can discuss number 8.) Or you can divide students into groups of 2 and ask them to fill in the worksheet (page 5 or 6) together.

D. Large group discussion

1. How do the characters in the film rely on each other in everyday life?
2. What happens in the film when the “Têtes” can't work out their differences?
3. What problems sometime arise in your family or in the classroom when someone decides to make a different (independent) choice from the rest of the group?
4. What problems arise when people think alike and continue to do everything exactly the same as one another?
5. At the beginning, the main characters are completely “in sync” with each other and seem to be of the same mind. Why do you think the third “Tête” gives up this comfortable way of behaving and decides to choose a different hat? Why do you think the others do not immediately tolerate this different choice?
6. Who is responsible for solving the problem of fitting into a classroom or a family? Should the one who is different try harder to fit in, or is it a group responsibility to be more accepting of differences?
7. Should any independent choice someone makes in a family or classroom ALWAYS be respected? What kinds of choices should be tolerated in families and classrooms? What kinds should not?
8. How do the “Têtes” resolve their differences? What can you learn from their approach?



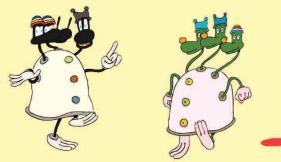
E. Closing reflections

- Ask students to hand in worksheets and to re-group for a closing discussion.
- In a large group, ask students to each **share one thing** they learned from the film or ask them write **a reflective paragraph** on what they have learned to be handed in at the end of class or completed for homework.

Suggested assessment and evaluation

- Completion of worksheet.
- Participation in warm-up activities.
- Participation in large group discussion.
- Evaluation of worksheets and reflective discussion/paragraph to determine if learning objectives (page2) were successfully met.

Tête à Tête à Tête



Extension

Here is a follow-up lesson for older students or gifted learners.

Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate understanding of the human life cycle by identifying dependence, independence and interdependence in worksheet diagram.
2. Identify the dependence, independence and interdependence cycle in the book **Love You Forever**.
3. Identify dependence, independence and lack of interdependence expressed in the lyrics of Simon and Garfunkel's "**I Am a Rock**."
4. Identify the irony found in the song.
5. Apply concepts of dependence, independence and interdependence to their own family lives and explore obstacles to interdependence.

Materials and resources

- A copy of the book *Love You Forever* for primary/junior grades; lyrics for the Simon and Garfunkel song "I Am a Rock" for junior/intermediate grades.
- Overhead or slide of the LIFE CYCLE sheet (page 7)

Activities

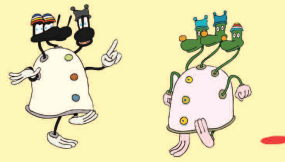
- Ask students to read "I Am a Rock" silently. Then you can read it (or ask a volunteer) aloud to the whole class. Read *Love You Forever* aloud to younger students.
- Ask open-ended questions such as: *Who do you identify with in the book or song (i.e., who is most like you)? What do you think the author is saying?*
- Define the words DEPENDENCE, INDEPENDENCE, INTERDEPENDENCE as they relate to family life: **Dependent** (needs are totally met by others); **Independent** (needs are mainly met by yourself); **Interdependent** (you meet others' needs and have your own needs met by others).
- Show LIFE CYCLE overhead to describe how dependence, independence and interdependence are a continuous circle throughout our lives, moving from infancy through to adolescence, adulthood and old age.
- Explain how some life stages are often dominated by either DEPENDENCE or INDEPENDENCE. For example, infancy is out of necessity dominated by DEPENDENCE, and adolescence by INDEPENDENCE. Ask the class for examples.
- Ask students to identify these notions in the book or song.
- Identify contradiction found in the song lyrics; i.e., *is the person in the song truly alone—a rock—or does he or she feel pain about wanting to connect to someone? Is anyone truly alone?*



Closing reflections

Ask students to draw a life cycle of their own families and identify which stage each member of the family is presently in, in terms of dependence, independence and interdependence. Remind them that not all of the cycles relate to age: for example, a seriously ill grandparent living with the family might be considered to be in the dependent stage. Ask students to identify at least two obstacles to interdependence. **Students may choose to do this as a journal exercise that is only shared with the teacher.**

Tête à Tête à Tête



Name: _____

Tête à Tête à Tête Worksheet (Junior Grades)

1. Describe how the main characters (the three “Têtes”) in the film rely on each other in everyday living. (How do they eat? How do they walk? How do they communicate?)

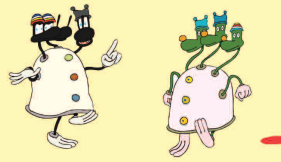
2. Why do you think the other “Têtes” do not immediately go along with this different choice of hat?

3. What happens when the “Têtes” can't work out their differences?

4. What problems sometime arise in your family or in the classroom when someone decides to make a different (independent) choice from the rest of the group?

5. How do “the Têtes” eventually work out the problem of the hats? What can you learn from their approach to working out their differences?

Tête à Tête à Tête



Name: _____

Tête à Tête à Tête Worksheet (Intermediate Grades)

1. At the beginning of the film, the main characters are “in sync” with each other and seem to be of the same mind. Why do you think the third “Tête” gives up this comfortable way of behaving and chooses a different hat?

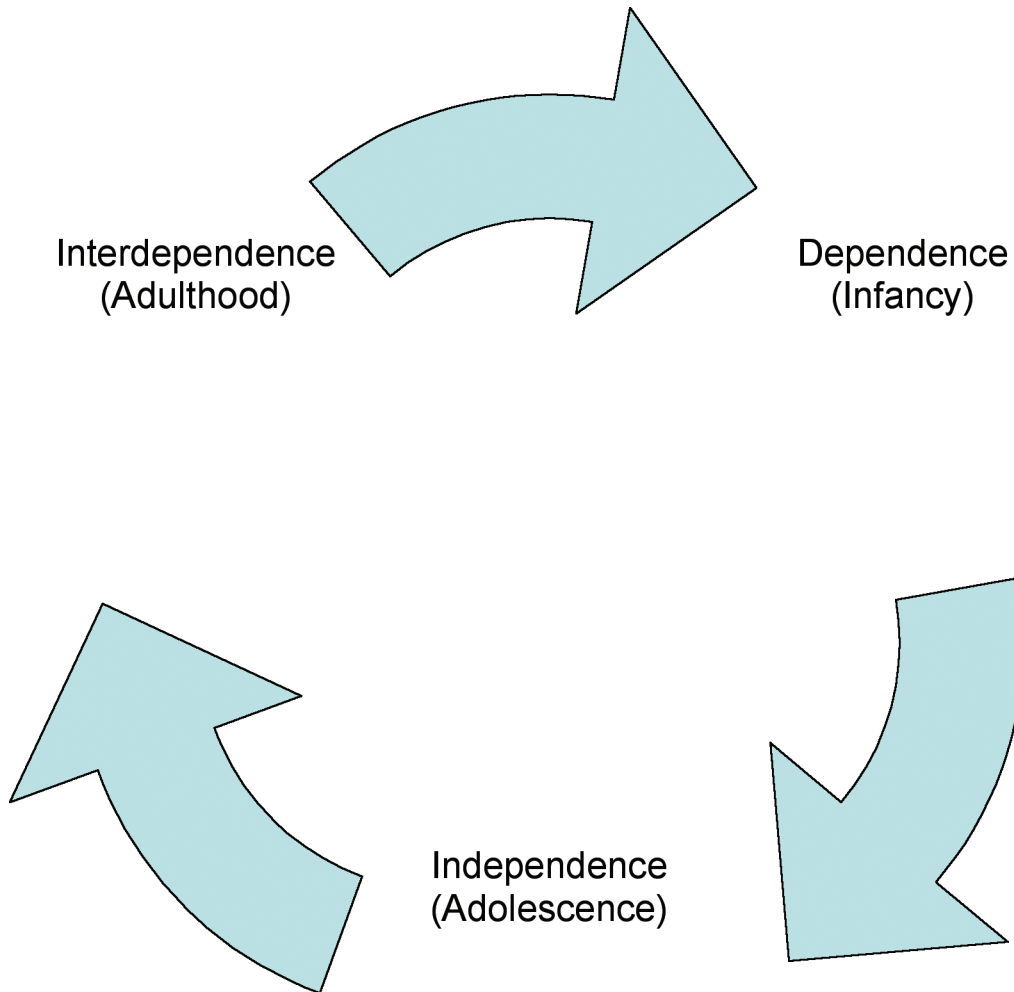
2. Who is responsible for solving the problem of fitting into a classroom or a family? Should the one who is different try harder to fit in, or is it a group responsibility to be more accepting of differences?

3. Should every choice someone makes in a family or classroom ALWAYS be respected? What kinds of choices do you think should be respected in families and classrooms? What kinds of choices should not?

4. How did “the Têtes” eventually work out the problem of the hats? What can you learn from their approach to working out their differences?



THE LIFE CYCLE



DEPENDENCE, INDEPENDENCE AND INTERDEPENDENCE