

# Teaching Habits Of Mind – Using Habits of Mind Cards

Aim: To develop a broad understanding of each of the 16 Habits of Mind, and to develop students language skills in relation to the Habits of Mind.

## Activities

All of the following activities use the Habits of Mind cards. (Copies at the end of this document)

### Preparation

Photocopy and cut up the Habits of Mind cards. You will need one set per group of students. Students work in groups of 2-4. It can help to laminate the cards and put an identifying mark on the back of each set so the sets don't get mixed up (alternatively photocopy each set onto a different color paper). For the Concentration game, it is useful to ensure that the paper is thick enough so students can't easily see through it.

### Prior Understandings

Students should be familiar with the idea of what a habit is, and had some introduction to the concept of Habits of Mind. Perhaps a detailed investigation of one or more of the Habits of Mind could be undertaken before these activities so students appreciate the depth inherent in each.

## Activity One – Habit Matching

Conduct a brief discussion about each of the 16 Habits of Mind. Discuss the meaning of the words as well as the significance of the icons. Having poster on the walls of each of the habits can aid this.

Remove any posters from the walls.

Have students shuffle the cards and then attempt to match up the Habit of Mind with its; icon, identifying phrase, short definition and a quote. Depending on the age of the students, and the sophistication of the understanding required one or more of these card types could be removed.

As students attempt to match the cards for each Habit it elicits a surprising degree of discussion about what each of the Habits of Mind mean.

Allow students to check their answers from the posters or a set of cards that haven't been cut up.

Repeat the activity as needed, perhaps with a different subset of categories used.

Conduct a follow up discussion about any parts that students had trouble with.

## Activity Two – Concentration

This will be a familiar game. Simply choose two or more of the types of cards (name of habit, icon, phrase, quote etc), shuffle and place face down on the table.

Students take turns, turning over cards attempting to match all the pieces for one Habit of Mind.

When cards are turned over, all students are shown what the card is before it is placed back, face down, on the table. Students attempt to remember where each part of each habit is on the table.

### Modifications

Both activities can be modified to suit different groups or needs. Some suggestions are:

Where 16 habits are too many for a group, simply reduce the number of habits or the number of types of cards.

Allow students to create their own phrases and definitions etc for each of the habits.

Similar cards can be made from the results of a "Looks Like, Feels Like, Sounds Like" activity for each of the Habits of Mind.

## Reflection

I conducted this activity with groups of 12-14 year olds. I was amazed at the level of discussion and degree of engagement displayed by the students. In just over an hour (both activities) students had become familiar enough with the names, icons and definitions of the Habits of Mind that I was able to use the language freely in class and have it understood by most students.

In this way I am now able to discuss all of the Habits of Mind in all my classes. I can point out opportunities for the students to engage in specific Habits of Mind, as well as identify when I see particular Habits being displayed in the classroom. This in turn has allowed me to integrate the ongoing development of the students understanding and application of Habits of Mind in all of my classes.

Each class also has a 90-minute class each week called "Thinking Skills" where we further develop student understanding of each of the Habits of Mind.

At The Grange we are working towards students building digital portfolios based in part on the Habits of Mind. It is my hope to have a set of rubber stamps made up with the icon's for each of the Habits so that I can stamp student work, or their diaries, when I see them exercising the Habits of Mind. I hope this will help them more easily recognize the Habits of Mind in their own actions. This would not have been possible if they did not first have this basic language.

### Reference:

Costa, A. and Kallick, B. (2000) *Habits of Mind. A Developmental Series*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

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