

Faces games

Teaching aims

By showing expressive facial movements (stet) and movements having no particular meaning (stet) but bringing into play the tongue, cheek sandlips, the child is encouraged to mobilise facial muscles for improved expression and articulation. He will also be made aware of internal sensations.

Level for use

From the age of 4, individually or in a group.

Description of the material

- 32 photographs on stiff card (15 x 21 cm)
- 4 lotto boards (15 x 21 cm)
- 32 lotto cards (5 x 7.5 cm)
- teaching instructions

The photographs show 16 faces of a boy, 16 faces of a girl.

Both of the faces has 16 expressions:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 indicating a feeling<ul style="list-style-type: none">– laughing– smiling– admiration– fear– anger or displeasure– astonishment– dreaminess or thoughtfulness– sadness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 indicating a praxis<ul style="list-style-type: none">– puffing out cheeks with air– puffing out a cheek with the tongue– poking the tongue up to the nose– drawing lips back at the sides– pushing lips forward– mincing lips– tucking the bottom lip under top teeth– tucking the top lip under bottom teeth |
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Teaching approach

Feelings

Facial movements expressing feelings require the same effort as those above, but, even more, they will engage the child in a level of communication which involves expression of the personality. They will lead the child by way of this drama game to fruitful discovery of his own body and living experience.

He will learn how to express feeling voluntarily and non intuitively and inversely how to translate orally a facial expression seen in the photographs.

Praxies

The number of children who do not know how to execute these movements nor to tell in what way their tongues are functioning in their mouths, is quite surprising.

Those concerned with this aspect of child development should be aware of the importance of these exercises for early detection of difficulties in articulation and speech. With each movement the child will be led towards physiotherapeutic awareness, to voluntary mobilisation of the face and mouth muscles and to an effort inducing suppleness and toning.

Some movements moreover relate to a particular aspect of articulation:

- raising the tongue corresponds to articulation inside the mouth of the “l” sound,
- drawing lips back at the sides, to articulation of “e, s, z”,
- pushing the lips forward, to articulation of “ch, j”,
- catching the bottom lip, to articulation of “f” and “v” sounds,
- mincing the lips, to articulation of “p, b, m” sounds: this movement will also work on the toning up of closing the mouth, particularly in the case of children tending to gape and those who dribble.

Use of the game

Individually

1. With the lotto cards

The lotto game will promote play with association of identical pictures. It is the opportunity for the child’s initial contact with recognising the pictures and practice of the expressions they portray. The child will first be encouraged to use the boards and pictures showing the praxies and then those corresponding to feelings, and only after that will the pictures be mixed up, to avoid the game being made too difficult on first contact.

2. With the small cards only

The child can be encouraged to play according to a theme:

- two children getting married using the same movements or suggesting the same feeling.
- looking for opposites; laughing, crying; lips drawn back, lips pushed forward; bottom lip, top lip.
- looking for pictures sharing a same aspect
 - positive feature: happiness, surprise, admiration, dreaminess...
 - negative feature: fear, anger, sadness...
 - features either positive or negative: dreaminess, surprise, thoughtfulness (sadly or happily).

This discovery will be fruitful at both the oral and the gestural experience levels.

3. With the large photocards

The activity can be rendered interesting using a mirror, the child holding photo in one hand and mirror in the other trying to reproduce the feeling or the praxis shown in the photo, in the mirror. The wedding and opposites exercises can also be exploited in this area, in the suitable pictures have already been sorted out.

In groups

1. The lotto game

Using the traditional lotto rules, each child will pick up a card in turn and explain or mime what he has picked up.

2. The large photocard game

This game is intended to meet the wishes of many teachers for large format documents so that the whole class can participate.

• Identification game

32 cards are distributed to the children. A child comes to the front concealing his card and imitates the expression. He will be joined by the child whose card corresponds to this imitation. With teh same rules the child may simply be asked to show his card without imitating it.

• Talking game

This time the child explains what he sees and the child who recognises his card as cor responding to the explanation joins him.

• Portrait game

Each child expresses in front of the others a movement (praxis or feeling) or describes his card (feeling only). The child who discovers what the movemmentor feeling is wins the card. The winner is the one who gets the most cards.