

Exchange Event

This is a pack to help you lead an exchange event, where you bring 2 different groups of young people from 2 faith communities together. This pack is designed with a group of Muslims and Christians in mind, but can be easily adapted to suit another faith(s).

The venue for this would ideally be in the area of either one of the faith groups, giving a chance for one group to see where the other lives. This creates a natural second meeting, where the visitors from this encounter host the other group and show them their area.

The event takes 4 hours in total, starting with activities that help young people get to know each other and start building trust between them. This is really important in setting the right atmosphere to before they start talking about their faith, so worth taking time and thought over. The session then goes on to interesting ways to talk about their faith with each other. It finishes with sharing a meal, where more informal conversations can happen, or continued discussions from the day.

The faith discussions in this event are quite light as it's a first encounter. The sort of topics we're asking young people to engage with in this session are on how they celebrate festivals, and about their everyday life and their faith. There is opportunity to go deeper if the young people want to, but there is no pressure or expectation to do so.

This pack includes a timetable, leader's notes, and some of the materials to run a successful event. You can adapt these to suit your group.

Session Outline

Time	Activity	Description	Materials
5min	Arrive	Get people to make name labels. Introduce day, house-keeping	Labels, pens
15min	Ice-breakers	String name game Human (signature) bingo	String Bingo sheets, pens
30-45min	Photo challenge	Send people out in groups of 4-6. Set a time limit.	Photo challenge sheets, 1 camera per group
10min	Drinks	Use this time for mingling and uploading photos. Also for the young people to write down anonymous questions for the other group.	
5min	Show pictures		Projector/pictures
10min	Guidelines for dialogue		Guidelines
15min	What's your life like?	Flip-chart questions dotted around the room, travel in small groups	Flip-chart paper with pre-written questions
10min	Game	Balloon game	
20min	What's Christmas/Eid like?	In faith groups devise a short sketch that shows what Christmas/Eid is like in your house. Present to other group	
15min	What's important for you?	Small group discussion in mixed faith groups. Questions in envelopes.	Questions, facilitators
30min	Food		Food!
10min	Question time	Chance to answer questions written during break/meal	Question box/bowl
10min	Feedback	In a circle go round - best thing about today. Something new you've learnt.	

Leader's notes

Arrive

It's really important to make people feel at ease as they come in, especially as some might be particularly nervous. Making name labels takes the pressure off learning names, which is hard in a big group.

It might be an idea to play some music as people come in, and make sure leaders are welcoming and chatting to the young people informally.

Gather everyone together and use this time to do the house-keeping (toilets, emergencies etc).

Ice Breakers

You might have some of your own - these are two ideas. No matter what you do try to do one that helps learn names, and one that shows people have something in common. Keep them fun and easy.

String name game

You'll need a piece of string (or rope) about a metre long. Pass the string around the circle starting with yourself. When each person receives the string they have to tell the group their name, and a bit about it (eg. whether it's short for something, what it means, why their parent's named them that, what they would have been called if they were the other gender etc). As they talk they wrap the string around their hand - if they do it fast they don't need to say a lot, and if they do it slow they can talk for longer! This is a great way of learning names and allows those who want to talk to talk, and those who don't an easy way out!

Human bingo

Also known as signature bingo. Each person is given a pen and a bingo grid which they have to fill by collecting signatures of the people in the group. For example 'someone who likes Maths' needs to be signed by someone who genuinely does like Maths! Each person can only sign a person's sheet once, and players may not sign their own grids! (If the group is smaller than 16 then allow people to sign each sheet up to 2 times). There is a sample bingo grid in Appendix 1 which you may photocopy and use. This game is a great way of getting people to mix and find out things about each other, including commonalities.

Photo Challenge

There is no better way for the host group to introduce the visiting group to their area than with a photo-challenge! It's great fun so helps to continue to break the ice, get the group to work together to build trust and is the start of an insight into a different community. There is a sample photo-challenge included in Appendix 2, but you might wish to adapt it for the area you're in. If you are concerned about the group going too far give them a map with clear boundaries of where they can go.

Split the group into smaller groups, ensuring that there are even numbers of faiths represented in each, as far as is possible. Make sure you set a time limit and then send the groups out!

Guidelines for Dialogue

These are essential in setting the right tone before entering into faith discussions. They are available on our website <http://www.thefeast.org.uk/about/what-we-do/> simply click on the link to download. There are many ways you can go through them with your group, here at two ideas.

Method one

Take turns reading out a guideline each, going round a circle. Elaborate on what some of the mean, and ask why the young people think they're important. At the end make sure everyone agrees to try to stick to them.

Method two

Give everyone a few minutes to read the guidelines by themselves quietly. Then ask each person to say which one is their favourite, and why. If your group are particularly shy give an example of which is your favourite first.

What's your life like?

This is a discussion activity to get young people to start talking a bit more about themselves. First put them into small groups of about 4-6, ensuring there are even numbers of faiths represented. Spread questions on flip-chart paper around the room and send the groups off to chat about each question for a few minutes. If you like they could write some of their answers down too.

Ideas for questions (choose about 4);

- How many people are in your family? Who are they?
- Do you ever go to a place of worship? What to do you do there?
- Do you ever pray? How and when?
- What are your hobbies?
- Do you listen to music? What are your favourite bands/artists?
- What's your favourite religious festival/event? Why?

You might want to end this section by asking a few people something new they learnt about someone else.

Game

It's good to break up the day with a few games, keeps the atmosphere fun and helps prevent restlessness. Here's one you could do;

Balloon game

Everyone had a balloon and piece of drink and has to blow up the balloon and attach it to their ankle. Their task is to keep their balloon inflated, and try to pop other people's. Once someone's balloon has popped they are out, and cannot pop anyone else's balloon.

You may wish to set boundaries for this if playing outside.

What's Eid/Christmas like?

This activity gives both faith groups a chance to get together to present to the other group. Depending on the confidence of your group adapt this activity to suit it best.

Method one

Ask each group of devise a sketch showing the other group the kinds of things that happen on Eid or Christmas day. Encourage them to think about funny family or cultural habits as well as the religious elements., showing them what actually happens, not just what should. Let each group perform to each other.

Method two

Ask each group to prepare a short presentation about Eid/Christmas for the other group. Ask them to tell the other group what would happen on a typical Eid/Christmas day, the religious aspects and the cultural. Again encourage an insight into family life, not just what should happen.

What's important for you?

Get the young people back into small groups, perhaps the same groups from the earlier activity. Give each group an envelope with questions cut up individually inside. Tell the groups they are to take turns pulling a random question out the envelope, read it aloud and then tell the group their answer. After they have answered if anyone else in the groups want to give their answer they can. Once everyone who wants to say something has the envelope should be passed to the next person and the process repeated. Attached are a list of questions you can use, or adapt for this activity. You'll notice some are more serious than others. Put an adult with each group, but encourage them to speak less and allow the young people to say what they think.

Food!

Sharing a meal together is a great way to finish the day. Try to get some local cuisine, just make sure that everyone can eat it (eg. halal meat, or vegetarian food).

Questions

People might have questions they want to ask the other faith which hasn't come up, or they might be shy about asking. A great thing to do is the give the young people a chance to write down some questions anonymously and put them in bowls/pots using a different colour and

pot for each faith. As the meal draws to a close read the questions aloud asking a young person to volunteer answering the questions. Try not to let the adults in the room answer, instead encourage the young people to do as best they can.

Feedback

There are lots of different ways you can get feedback. The easiest to collate are forms, but these can be a bit boring and tedious for young people (although, arguably, some do love them!)

Here are two alternative methods for feedback.

Feedback circle

Stand or sit in a one big circle. Use a bean-bag or juggling ball and take turns throwing it around the circle saying that you enjoyed most about the day, ensuring everyone gets a chance to answer. Do the same asking people to say something they've learnt today.

Action replay!

Splitting the group into 4-6's ask them to prepare a news report on the day capturing the highlights, and then perform it to the whole group. This will highlight to you the things that have been most enjoyable/ important to them.

Appendix 1: Human Bingo

Got up after 11am this morning	Watches a soap opera	Is wearing nail varnish	Likes Maths
Speaks a language fluently (other than English)	Has been abroad	Has a younger brother	Enjoys school/college
Knows how to make a cake	Is wearing trainers	Has been on TV	Was born in another Country
Would like to be famous	Likes chocolate	Can ride a bicycle	Wears glasses or contact lenses

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Appendix 2: Photo Challenge

In your groups takes pictures of the following out and about in the local area.

- 1) Your whole group in height order.
- 2) Your whole group in age order
- 3) A scene from a film
- 4) A sign/writing in a language other than English
- 5) A church
- 6) A mosque
- 7) Something you wouldn't usually see in your local area (visitors)
- 8) Something with 4 legs
- 9) Your whole team outside a local shop
- 10) Your whole group in disguise
- 11) Peace
- 12) Friendship

Appendix 3: Faith questions for envelopes

What's the best thing about being a Muslim/Christian?

What's the hardest thing about being a young person of faith?

What would like to do when you finish school/college?

Who inspires you?

Do you have a favourite passage from Scripture? What is it?

Have you always had a faith? If not when did you start believing?

Do you ever get annoyed by what some people from your faith do? What?

Have you ever had a prayer answered?

What do you think makes someone a Muslim/Christian?

How much does your faith impact your everyday life?

What do you think makes someone a good friend?