

TEACHER ACTIVITY 1: FACILITATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Teaching Activity 1: Facilitating Difficult Conversations

Purpose	To build teacher confidence in managing emotionally charged or sensitive discussions.
Time	25–30 minutes
Materials	Scenario cards, discussion prompts

1. Instructions

1. Facilitators provide teachers with **three short scenarios** representing common difficult classroom moments (e.g. a student expressing an inflammatory opinion, a peer conflict about a news event, an emotional student response to a sensitive topic).
2. In groups, teachers choose one scenario and practise responding using a structured approach:
 - **Pause** – take a breath, remain calm, avoid reacting emotionally.
 - **Clarify** – “Can you explain what you mean?” / “Where did you hear that?”
 - **Frame** – link back to values: respect, evidence, safety.
 - **Guide** – prompt critical thinking rather than shutting down the discussion.
3. Each group role-plays the scenario twice: one teacher responds as facilitator, another as the student.
4. Groups reflect on what helped, what was challenging, and where staff boundaries lie.

2. Sample Scenarios

- A student makes a sweeping statement about a group involved in a recent violent incident.
- Two students argue sharply about an international conflict.
- A student shares a conspiracy theory they saw on social media.
- A student becomes upset when discussing a community event.

3. Debrief Questions

- What phrases helped de-escalate tension?
- Where did professional boundaries feel clear or unclear?
- How did framing the conversation around values support the discussion?