

ARTS • BASED SKILLS & STRATEGIES

• middle school •
• elementary • • high school •

title

Alteration Observation

skill



theater

about the strategy

Concentration, observation, and imagination are essential skills for every student. This activity is a challenging and fun way to focus on those skills. Whether used as an ice-breaker or a warm-up, participants benefit from the process of focusing attention and observing the actions of their classmates.

visual

Observing detail

kinesthetic

Altering personal appearance

instructional steps

objective Students observe the appearance of others, identify alterations in appearance, and relate them to the members of the group.

materials None

procedure

- Divide the class into groups of three or four.
- Designate one person as the person to be observed. The other students memorize this person's appearance.
- The other three turn away from that person who then makes three small changes in his/her appearance, such as taking off an earring, untucking a shirttail, or buttoning a button.
- The students turn around and try to identify the changes. Each person in the group takes a turn making changes.
- Repeat the process, each time adding to the number of changes. Your students will have to be more and more creative to think of ways to change their appearance as the game continues.

Alteration Observation

strategy for curricular connections



science

- Keep a plant diary by drawing a daily picture of a sprouting plant, being careful record tiny differences from one drawing to the next. Number the drawings on the back of each page. Have students exchange drawings and arrange in sequential order.



language arts

- Give students a very basic one-paragraph story. Each group adds details to make the story interesting and different from the original. Share.
- Play a game of “What Changed?” Re-tell a story and change several details. Students identify what has changed.



music

- Challenge groups of students to add details to a well-known tune such as “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” to create variations. Listen to Mozart’s *Variations on Ah Vous Dirai-Je Maman* (which is the same tune as “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”). Identify the techniques used to create variations.



visual arts

- Students create their own “Spot the Difference” drawings: each student makes a black pen drawing which is then photocopied. Then make ten minor alternations to the original and display the two drawings side by side. Students identify as many differences as they can during a gallery walk of each others’ work.
- View artwork based on the repeated use of the same image (e.g., works by Andy Warhol or Michael Snow). Identify the variations.

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Alteration Observation

multiple intelligences target



visual • spatial



bodily • kinesthetic



interpersonal

adaptations

to simplify

- Limit the students to making one change in their appearance instead of three. Provide verbal cues to the students guessing.

to challenge

- As the game continues, it naturally becomes more challenging to find ways of altering one's appearance.

special needs

- This lesson is accessible for most learners.
- Use to reinforce basic clothing/body part vocabulary for ESL students.
- Students with limited movement can be assigned partners to help make changes.