

Communications Activities

Activity 1: The 1:1 - Communication, Engagement, and Sense of Place

Introduction

This activity helps model good listening skills, creates connection between people, and provides a personal connection to climate change through identifying special places.

Material List

Small pieces of paper, pens/pencils, and timer.

Procedure

1. Hand out a small piece of paper to each person. Have them think of a place that is special to them. This place can be anywhere inside, outside, local, or away. Give people a couple of minutes to describe their place or draw it on their paper (the description can be a drawing, bullet points, written explanation, etc.).
2. Have participants pair up with a person they do not know and designate Person A and Person B.
3. Person A has 1 minute to describe their place to Person B when the timer starts. They are to talk for the whole minute but will have to stop when we tell them to stop. Person B may NOT TALK. They can nod but cannot add anything else to the conversation.
4. Now, Person B has 30 seconds to tell Person A what they heard them say about their place.
5. Reverse roles and repeat steps 1-4. This time Person B is talking for 1 minute. They cannot reference Person A's place in their description.
6. Debrief with the participants. What did you notice? Was it hard to listen and not add your thoughts while the other person was talking? How did it feel to describe your special place the whole time without interruptions? Discuss the following:
 - Listening: People have a desire to connect with others. However, we often interrupt someone speaking with us to agree with them about what they are saying, but in doing so, we end up taking over the conversation. When discussing issues close to our hearts, like seeing environmental changes in our communities and special places, it is important to actively listen to each other. Only add your voice when someone has completed their thought. By remembering how it felt to be heard and truly listened to, we can create meaningful dialogue about tough topics.
 - Places: When everyone is thinking about a special place, it unites them in that commonality. Though everyone has a different special place, they find a common ground that allows more understanding to enter the discussion and answer questions.
 - Relating your place to climate change: How would it feel if your special place was at risk? Is your special place at risk due to climate change?

