

EDUCATION WORKSHOP

An SCM Workshop

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

This workshop aims to explore different understandings of education, inequalities within the current context, and a Christian response. Allow up to 80 minutes for this workshop.

You'll need some music and a way of playing it. You might like to print the discussion questions on a handout. Make sure there are enough Bibles for the group.

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Play some music and ask everyone to mingle around the room. If you want to you can ask people to move around in a particular way, like hopping, dancing, silly walks etc. When the music stops ask everyone to turn to the person next to them and talk about why they decided to go to university/college.

Start the music again. When the music stops the second time ask people to talk about a time in their lives when they have learnt a lot. What helped them learn?

ASK THE QUESTION(S) (10-15 MINUTES)

Depending on the interests of your group and how much time you have, use any or all of these questions as the basis for a group discussion.

The Irish writer William Butler Yeats wrote: "Education is not filling a bucket, but lighting a fire."

- What do you think this means?
- Have you experienced either of these in your time at university/college? What happened?
- Do you think that formal education is primarily focussed on lighting fires or filling buckets? Why is this?
- What educational opportunities have you had?
- What problems do you and other students or young people face in education?
- Have you encountered inequality in education? – When? What happened?
- 43% of young people (30 and under) experience higher education in the UK. How do you feel about this? Do you think more or less young people should go to university? Should higher education be a privilege or a right? What opportunities are there for young people who don't go to university/college?

EXPLORE THE ISSUE(S) (30 MINUTES)

One of the ways that Jesus taught was by using parables.

In small groups of 4-5, read the story of the good Samaritan Luke 10: 25-37 and discuss the questions. After about 20 minutes, come together as a whole group and share your thoughts.

- What strikes you about this story?
- Jesus answers the first question with another question – why do you think he does this?
- Why do you think Jesus told this parable? What was the purpose of telling parables?
- What does it tell us about Jesus' approach to education? How does this compare to the education we have received?
- Who did Jesus teach and where did he do this? How does this compare to our experience of Higher Education?

INVITE THE RESPONSE (15 MINUTES)

Imagine that Jesus walked into your university. What would he see? What or who do you think he'd notice? What do you think he'd do? How does this call us to act?

How can you speak up for those who are excluded from education?

How can you help young people in your area who don't have the same kind of educational opportunities that you have? Does your university run a mentoring scheme for young people in local schools? Could you volunteer at a youth club?

Get involved in Student Action for Refugees' campaign calling for equal access to Higher Education for young asylum seekers in the UK. http://www.star-network.org.uk/index.php/campaigns/equal_access

CLOSING THE SESSION (5 MINUTES)

Close the session by praying for those who don't have access to educational opportunities. You might also like to pray for your lecturers or past teachers. You could ask someone to pray, or here is a short prayer you could read:

*Holy Spirit, be with teachers
everywhere. Put Your righteousness
in their hearts and Your words on
their lips to share with the children in
their daily care. May classrooms not
only fill students with knowledge, but
also wisdom, discernment, and
integrity.*

<https://www.worldvision.org/education-news-stories/pray-children-education>

FUTURE DISCUSSIONS AND MORE RESOURCES

If your group is interested in exploring this theme further, then you could try some of these topics for further discussions or invite a speaker. Get in touch with the SCM office if you need any help or resources (scm@movement.org.uk).

- *Have a discussion or debate on “What is University for?”*
 - *Invite a local teacher or lecturer to speak about their sense of vocation and how they connect faith and work.*
 - *Find out what volunteering opportunities are available in local schools (try your university, college or Student Union’s volunteer co-ordinator, or a local volunteering bureau) and commit to regular volunteering as a group.*
 - *Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paolo Friere*
 - *Presence and Prophecy: A Heart for Mission in Theological Education by Mission Theological Advisory Group. There is a study guide to accompany the book.*
 - *Deschooling society by Ivan Illich*
 - *<http://www.star-network.org.uk> Student Action for Refugees – campaign on Equal Access to HE*
- 