



Title: Romantic and Loving Relationships: Love

Level: Fourth

Code: 4.1.1

Links to Curriculum for Excellence

Experiences/Outcomes

- I understand the importance of being cared for and caring for others in relationships and can explain why. HWB 4-44a
- I understand and can explain the importance of, and need for, commitment, trust and respect in loving and sexual relationships. I understand the different contexts of such relationships including marriage. HWB 4-44c

Benchmarks

- Justifies why commitment, trust and respect are central to being cared for and caring for others.
- Explains the importance of shared values and goals in sustaining a loving and sexual relationships, for example, mutual respect, agreement on sex.

About this activity

This activity starts our focus on **romantic and loving relationships**. We start with *love*. Research about young people's sexual health and wellbeing shows that a focus on the meaning and experience of being in love helps adolescents think about relationships and responsibilities to others. This is because young people associate love with positive concepts such as trust, commitment and respect. The quotes used in this activity come from research with young people in Scotland.

At the outset and throughout this series of learning activities, it is important that the teacher/educator emphasises that young people should not feel they have to be in a relationship, or that being in a relationship is something they must do anytime soon. It will be helpful to those young people not in relationships to have this recognised as a positive choice.

Resources to support this activity

- Accompanying slides/images
- Discussion cards
- Poems

Activity

1. Introduce the session along the following lines:

*We will be thinking and talking about romance and love. Some people might be in a relationship, thinking about being in a relationship, or maybe you have decided a relationship isn't right for you just now. Wherever you are with such considerations, it's always good to have thought about it. A good place to start is with the question: **What is love?***

Take some first suggestions from the group.

2. To continue the discussion split into groups and share the **What is love? discussion prompts/cards**. Explain that there are 4 quotes from Scottish young people, talking about what love means to them. Have groups discuss the quotes one by one, emphasise that *we may have different views, that's okay there are no right or wrong answers here*.
3. Get some feedback on what young people think about the quotes/cards, perhaps reading the card out one-by-one. If it doesn't come up in conversation, ask: *In quote no. 2, the young person mentions 'trust'. What do you think they mean by that? Why would they think that matters?*
4. Use the slide/write on the whiteboard the title: **The ingredients of a loving relationship**. On sheets of paper have the small groups think about all of the elements that a loving relationship would have for them. Suggest that it's a bit like a recipe, creating a loving relationship from a set of essential ingredients – they might like to think about whether each ingredient is something you need a lot of or is essential, or something that would be good but less important. Then, after some consideration get some feedback and look for agreements and diversity of opinion.
5. Acknowledging all the contributions, tell the group that scientists actually investigate what love is, and that Psychologist Robert Sternberg, from Yale University in the United States, studies love. He asks: **'What does it mean to love someone?'** Share the diagram/slide: **The triangular theory of love**.
6. Explain it along these lines: Sternberg says (emphasise here they can disagree) there are 3 factors, and, he says, every couple needs at least 2 factors to have *a good enough relationship*, but all 3 are needed to be *in love* with someone. Explore what the understanding is of each of the factors: *What do you think he means by Intimacy? Passion? Commitment?* If it is helpful, go straight to the slide with definitions and explain the meaning of each to start the conversation.
7. Encourage some discussion, exploring what the young people value or want most from a relationship? Why so? Is what they want within the model Sternberg suggests? Ask the young people to be critical of his theory: Is having one element enough? Does it take time to build these things anyway?
8. Introduce the idea that artists and poets have always been interested in love.

Either:

Explain that we have love poems to share, ask the group to listen and see if these poems fit their feelings about what love should mean. Read (one/more) of the selection provided (or find others) and discuss. If members of the class/group are willing, have them read the poems, some will foster groans or laughter, find out why?

OR/AND:

If the poems are too complex, or using one is enough, set the young people a task of remembering and sharing lyrics from their favourite songs about love or romance. They can use phones/tablets to capture a few lines, read them out and have others guess what the track is. Encourage discussion: Why are so many songs about love? Do the songs talk about different things? From whose point of view?

9. Final discussion point: *So, how important is the idea or the experience of love to young people today?*

Additional ideas

- All RSHP learning provides the opportunity to work across the curriculum; this block of activities certainly lends itself to some connected work in terms of Literacy with English Department colleagues.

Connecting with home

The following could be the basis of a short email/message home to parents/carers about this series of learning activities.

As part of our RSHP (Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood) learning, we are considering the theme of romantic and loving relationships. To help us think about this, we will have some sessions looking at love, then the theme of living together, marriage and civil partnerships. We will also be looking at how we can make relationships work and the qualities that the young people themselves want from a partner. We recognise that some young people are not in a relationship, nor do they want to be. The lessons support young people to understand that whether they choose to be in a relationship or not, their choice can lead to positive experiences. Some of the lessons include activities and discussions you can also have at home; ask your child. The work we do together on these topics is about helping the young people to consider the importance of being cared for and caring for others in relationships.

Further learning activities are available that connect to this RSHP curriculum content

- 4.1.2 Living together, Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- 4.1.3 Making a relationship work
- 4.1.4 Qualities of a partner and talking about relationships

Practitioner Notes

