3.10 CONNECTEDNESS

3.10.1 Classroom Transformation

Brief description, and rules of the implementation of the learning activity

Classroom transformation is a technique and learning activity where the room is temporarily turned into a themed, real-world–like setting that connects directly to the lesson, and students take on roles or do activities tied to that context. It is similar to simulation in that learners get to practice skills in a safe, low-risk environment, but it adds atmosphere, narrative, and sensory elements to boost interest and make the content feel more real. The goal is to weave curriculum content into the immersive experience, so students become active participants, helping them better understand and retain what they are learning

Because transforming a classroom takes time, this learning activity is designed to be used across multiple subjects and themes. Teachers can reuse the same layout in different lessons (language, social studies, science, art/design, digital culture), simply by swapping tasks around while maintaining the connection structure. This invests resources and atmosphere worthwhile over several lessons or a whole thematic unit.

Skill focus

- **Primary Skill Focus**
  - Connectedness
- **Complementary/Secondary Skill Focus**
  - Valuing People and Nature

Age group	Student number	Duration
6-10 years old	Whole class	45 - 70 minutes (or split into 2 sessions)

Proposed step by step implementation of the learning activity

The teacher chooses an immersive transformation theme that naturally invites connectedness and layers of belonging – examples: a Community Heroes Headquarters (superhero-style), a Global Pen Pal Post Office (adventure/explorer news vibe), a Welcome Hub for New Friends, or a Connection Café. The space is decorated with props, role badges, ambient music or visuals, and simple “story boards” showing how classroom, school, and community fit together. Kids get clear role cards (e.g., greeter, storyteller, connector, reporter, helper), and there are step posters that guide them: start by connecting with classmates, then reach out to others in the school, think about neighbourhood links, and finally consider someone farther away.

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Instructions to give the students:

"Today our room becomes a real place where people come, talk, help, and belong. You have a role – maybe a helper, storyteller, or welcome ambassador. First, you'll connect with someone in our class, then with others in the school, think about our neighbourhood, and even imagine friends far away. Use kind words, listen carefully, and help make someone feel part of the team. We'll do something together that shows how connected we are."

Running the activity – step-by-step practical description/instructions

Step 1: Set the scene and begin in the classroom: Teacher introduces the transformed setting (e.g., "Welcome to Hero Headquarters!" or "This is the Welcome Hub"). Children get roles and a quick demo of one interaction, such as greeting a classmate and finding one thing they share.

Step 2: Expand to school-level connection: Students, still in role, reach out to another class or "visitor" (could be a teacher, older student, or a recorded video from another class) to exchange a welcome message, story, or idea. They use prompt cards to ask about what makes that group feel included.

Step 3: Community link task: Children do a mini project within the immersive narrative that ties to the neighbourhood – for example, creating a "Kindness Map" of places people help each other, designing a "Welcome Kit" for a local community helper, or recording a short "newsflash" about something good happening nearby.

Step 4: Global / wider perspective moment: Through story prompts, a "world mailbox," or a shared video/story from a distant classroom or culture, students compare what they've done locally to similar actions elsewhere and identify shared values (e.g., how heroes help in other countries, how welcomes look different but mean the same).

Step 5: Create a shared artifact: Teams collaborate to make something that makes the connection visible "Connection Wall" poster, a collage of "Who We're Connected To," a hero mission board listing actions taken, or a class welcome message combining classroom, school, and community notes.

Step 6: Quick reflection and next small step: Still in the transformed space or just beyond it, children answer a simple prompt (draw or say): "Who did I connect with?" and "What will I do next to keep that link?" They place a sticker or write a mini-pledge on the shared artifact.

Indoor/Outdoor Classroom layout notes

Mostly indoor (transformation works best in the classroom), but can include an outdoor "HQ mission" if desired:

Indoor layout options: open circle for HQ briefing; teamwork stations around the room; a central HQ wall/board for the Connection Map.

Optional outdoor link: a short "community space check" outside (How do we keep shared spaces welcoming for people and living things?) then return to HQ to add one action.

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How does this learning activity develop this particular skill?

This simulation develops Connectedness by giving students repeated practice in:

- Creating a sense of belonging ("I am included") – Starts with safe, immediate belonging – kids notice similarities and begin seeing themselves as part of a group.
- Bridges beyond the classroom, showing that other groups are part of the larger school community and worth learning from.
- Makes the positions students as active participants and contributors of the classroom "life".
- showing mutual respect (listening, appreciating, fair turn-taking),
- recognizing interdependence (how people and groups support each other),
- taking responsibility for social cohesion (small actions that strengthen community),
- and extending thinking from class → school → community → wider world.

The immersive setting makes social links visible and meaningful, while the shared artifact turns "connections" into something concrete and ongoing.

What do we want to achieve regarding primary skill development (student understanding and/or behaviour)?

As a result of this activity, students will be able to:

- recognise they belong to a classroom and school community
- practice listening, kindness, and inclusion to strengthen relationships
- identify how different people/roles connect a community
- respect similarities and differences across groups and places
- take one small responsibility action that builds social cohesion (and supports caring for shared spaces/nature).

Suggested use, and practical subject-related examples

General curriculum connection examples

- Science: The classroom becomes a "Young Scientists' Lab" where students wear pretend lab coats, use simple tools to investigate materials, explore animal habitats, or act as weather reporters predicting tomorrow's forecast.
- Math: The room transforms into a "Math Market" where students role-play as shoppers and cashiers, using real coins or play money to practice counting, addition, and making change through hands-on math tasks.
- History/Social Studies: The space becomes a "Time Travel Museum" or "Explorer's Camp" where students dress up, handle replicas or images of historical objects, and take on roles like historians, villagers, or community helpers to explore life in the past.

Dinosaur Conservation Research Station (Jurassic Park–style)

- Narrative: The classroom becomes a mini research outpost where students are palaeontologists and community stewards studying "ancient creatures" to learn how people, habitats, and history connect.

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- Classroom: Teams research “local fossils” (could be school artifacts or symbolic “bones”) and share stories about who in their class helps each other survive and thrive—mapping relationships like ecosystems.
- School: Students create a “School Species Portal” with profiles of classmates (strengths, things they care about) and display them in a “Habitat Hall,” showing how everyone contributes to the school’s ecosystem.
- Community: Outreach to a local park/museum or elder to collect “connection stories” (e.g., how older residents remember the area), linking past and present.
- Global: Compare their “ecosystem of care” to people in other places (e.g., pen pals sending pictures of their own community “habitats”), highlighting interdependence across distances.
- Roles: Lead Researcher, Story Collector, Habitat Designer, Community Liaison.
- Props: Field notebooks, “fossil” replicas, maps with connection lines, “research badges.”
- Small action: Make a “Connection Fossil” poster that names who in the class has helped whom and why.

Community Heroes Headquarters (Superheroes-inspired)

- Narrative: The room becomes the HQ for everyday heroes who protect and strengthen their world by connecting with others – superpowers are kindness, listening, helping, sharing.
- Classroom: Students identify classroom “hero strengths” (e.g., someone who comforts, someone who shares) and build a “Hero Network” chart showing how their actions support each other.
- School: Teams create “Hero Missions” to support other classes (welcome notes, shared resources), reinforcing that connectedness spreads beyond one group.
- Community: Students interview local helpers (crossed with real roles: librarian, bus driver, family member) and compile a “Hero Wall” showing how those people keep the community strong.
- Global: Explore stories of heroes from other countries (via video, books, or simplified stories) and find common values – “What do helpers everywhere do to make people feel connected?”
- Roles: Mission Planner, Connector, Reporter, Welcome Ambassador.
- Props: Capes/badges, “mission scrolls,” hero profile cards, communication wristbands.
- Small action: “Hero High-Five” campaign – students recognize someone’s helpful act and add it to the HQ board.

Global Explorer Newsroom (Adventure / travel documentary vibe)

- Narrative: The classroom transforms into a newsroom where young explorers report on how communities are linked through stories, goods, customs, and helping.
- Classroom: Children interview each other about what makes them feel part of the class and produce short “connection reports” (drawings or audio).
- School: Combine reports into a “School Bulletin” that highlights collaborations between classes, clubs, and shared traditions.
- Community: Students gather mini “field reports” from local businesses, families, or events—what connects the neighbourhood?
- Global: Feature a “World Spotlight” segment where students learn and share a small story from a different country, then compare it to something in their own community.
- Roles: Reporter, Interviewer, Editor, World Correspondent.

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- Props: Microphones (fake), map with pins, “news desk,” headline board, postcards.
- Small action: Create a “Connection Newsflash” to share with another class or family about one thing learned.

Materials and tools needed for implementation

Minimal "starter" bundle

- Written scenario/storyline + background cue images (ppt)
- Basic props & backdrops
- Briefing and debriefing templates
- Simple rubric for content + role performance
- Student reflection prompts
- Collaboration aids (shared worksheets, discussion stations)

Theme/storyline/script for context

- Role descriptions and student tasks
- Layout plan (how space will be reconfigured)

Atmosphere and sensory elements

- Props and set pieces (furniture rearrangement, thematic decor)
- Visuals/backdrops (posters, signs, printed "environmental" materials)
- Soundscape (ambient audio, effects, background music)
- Lighting adjustments (lamps, filtered light, coloured accents)
- Costumes or simple wearable role indicators (badges, hats, nameplates)

Narrative and immersion tools

- Character/role cards
- Scenario scripts or prompts
- Fake artifacts/documents (e.g., dossiers, maps, mock reports)

Assessment and feedback

- Rubrics tied to both content mastery and role performance
- Observation checklists for facilitator
- Self-/peer-reflection prompts post-activity

Infrastructure and logistics

- Flexible classroom furniture
- Storage area for props/setup
- Timer/pace management tools

Guiding questions

- What helps someone feel like they belong?
- How can we include someone who is quiet or left out?
- What did you learn about a classmate that you didn’t know before?
- How do different people in our school/community help us stay connected?

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- What is one respectful way to speak and listen during missions?
- How can we care for shared spaces, so everyone feels welcome (people and living things)?

Tips and Tricks for dealing with challenges

- **Challenge:** Some students dominate role-play; others withdraw.
  Tip: Assign rotating roles and use a "one voice at a time" rule. Give quiet students a powerful role (Reporter/Mapper) and ensure everyone answers at least one prompt.
- **Challenge:** Kids treat it like pretend play only, not skill practice.
  Tip: Keep missions short with clear outputs (Connection Map links + action statements). Remind: "A hero mission is complete only when we make a real connection."
- **Challenge:** Students struggle to connect beyond their friend group.
  Tip: Use mission cards that require speaking to someone new and provide sentence starters ("Hi, can I ask you…?").
- **Challenge:** Time runs out before whole-class synthesis.
  Tip: Reduce to 3 missions (class + school + artifact). The wider-world moment can be a quick story card.
- **Challenge:** Some children use labels or exclude others.
  Tip: Pause and re-teach respectful language. Use the HQ rule: "We talk about behaviours, not about people."

Difficulty level tailoring

- **Beginner learner (6-7 years old):** At this level, keep the transformed scenario very narrow (e.g., a simple welcome desk), give explicit scripts ("Say your name and one thing you like about school"), provide strong adult modelling, limit the number of layers (focus on classroom → one school connection), and use one quick reflection question.
- **Advanced learners (8-9 years old):** At advanced level, expand the narrative (e.g., hero HQ with school and neighbourhood missions), allow children to choose from a small menu of roles, include structured peer sharing across two layers, and prompt them to name at least one common value and one next action.
- **Expert learners (8-9 years old):** At expert level, learners help co-design the transformation or add their own layers (e.g., suggesting new community partners), take leadership in their roles, link their immersive experience to a follow-up real-world plan (e.g., organizing a mini welcome event or creating a thank-you for a neighbour), and reflect with less adult prompting on how their actions made others feel connected.

Debriefing and Reflection questions

- Where did you practice Connectedness today? What did it look like?
- Who helped you feel included, and how?
- How did you help someone else feel they belong?
- What did you learn about our school/community connections?
- How can we keep our Connection HQ actions going this week?
- How does caring for shared spaces (and nature) help people feel connected too?

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