

GROUP DISCUSSION PROMPT SHEET FOR EDUCATORS



12-16 years

Below is a list of prompt questions that you can use with the class or in individual groups, along with some helpful notes to help facilitate meaningful discussion.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT RISK TAKING

1. Is all risk taking the same?
2. Are some types of risk taking more acceptable than others? Which ones? Why?
 - Encourage the group to think about certain types of extreme sports, being an explorer etc
 - Healthy risk taking is often part of developing skills and part of becoming an adult
 - When considering why these activities are considered acceptable, support the group to appreciate the "infrastructure" around these activities. Often an explorer will have planned their route in great detail, they will have trained extensively in order to minimise the risk, there is often a team around that individual dedicated to risk assessment and immediate action to address any risk that could occur
3. Let's consider risk taking that could be frowned upon - can the group come up with a list of risk taking behaviour that isn't accepted by society? Why is this?
 - Dangerous risk taking is often impromptu (unplanned), likely to happen without any assessment of risk and could cause harm to the risk taker and potentially to the people around them too
 - Dangerous risk taking is sometimes against the law and there could be fines and prosecution for people that engage in this type of risk taking
4. Why do you think so many people end up going along with a risky activity even if they don't want to do it?
 - They feel it would be too embarrassing or that they would "lose face"
 - They don't properly think through the nature of the activity and don't see that it could cause harm/be against the law
5. Is it easy to change people's minds when they have decided they are going to engage in risky behaviour? What sorts of things can you do?
 - The students may volunteer answers related to:
 - ▶ Have a discussion with that person and point out the risks
 - ▶ If you know they won't respond to the risks, you can try to persuade them to do something else
 - ▶ You can make a joke and try to distract them from the risky activity
6. What can you do if you don't want to be part of a risky activity?
 - Make an excuse - you have an appointment/ your mum/dad/carers/auntie wants you home by a certain time
 - Give an example of the consequences of the risk e.g. "I know of an incident where a student dangled their legs over the edge of the platform and a high speed train came out of nowhere and they didn't have time to move - it left them with life changing injuries."
 - Leave the environment: You can do this whether you try and persuade others to leave or not. You have the right to feel safe

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Questions specific to the risk in each photo

ESCALATOR: THE FALL

1. How do you think everyone is feeling in the picture?
 - It's likely that there will be a heightened emotional experience surrounding this scene. Someone has even taken out their phone to capture this event where the young person is misusing the escalators
 - The audience is likely to be very excited. It looks as if the young girl is going down the escalator the wrong way and by sliding down it too, but if we look under the surface there could be some people that could feel anxious rather than excited – did they willingly get involved in this event or were they carried along with peer pressure?
2. What are the risks related to this behaviour?
 - The escalators are being misused and this could cause harm to the young people and to other users of the escalator
 - What about the other users of the escalator?
 - Escalators are heavy machinery; the consequences of misuse can be very serious indeed particularly if an item of clothing gets caught or an individual slips and trips on the escalator
 - The risks could be:
 - ▶ Minor injury, severe injury or death
 - ▶ Action taken by the British Transport Police due to committing an offence, which could result in a fine of up to £1000
3. What could the potential outcomes be for each of the people in the picture?
 - Outcomes could include:
 - ▶ Injury to the young people racing or to a stranger that inadvertently gets caught up in the race
 - ▶ Criminal charges for the young people misusing the escalators
4. Can you identify anything that might prevent someone from speaking up about the potential risk?
 - When a lot of people are all doing the same thing, it could be very overwhelming to try and stop what's happening
 - Individuals within the group might feel that they wouldn't be listened to or might be considered to be trying to stop everyone's fun
5. Is there an opportunity to change the outcome? What moment would be best to do this?
 - If a person is unhappy with the risk and doesn't feel comfortable speaking up, they can make an excuse and leave in order to keep themselves safe
 - There is always power in numbers. If there are good friends within the group, they could try and communicate with each other and share that they are not comfortable with what's happening. They could try and share their worries of getting caught and in trouble or someone injuring themselves, it's often easier for two people rather than one person to speak up against peer pressure

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ESCALATOR: WATCH OUT!

1. How do you think everyone is feeling in the picture?
 - The main subject is totally unaware of the risk they are exposing themselves as well as the other people on the escalator
 - The main subject is distracted and not in charge of their belongings
 - It's likely that the other people on the escalators are feeling annoyed and angry at the lack of care that the person ahead of them is taking
2. What are the risks related to this behaviour?
 - Misuse of escalators
 - Not looking after belongings
 - Inappropriate use of phones
3. What could the potential outcomes be for each of the people in the picture?
 - Outcomes could include:
 - ▶ Injury to the young people and the other people on the escalators
 - ▶ Criminal charges for the young people misusing the escalators
 - ▶ Damage to personal belongings
4. Can you identify anything that might prevent someone from speaking up about the potential risk?
 - This scenario doesn't present a case of peer pressure. However, it's likely that individuals on the escalator may tolerate unsafe behaviour rather than vocalise a warning to the young person, as shouting out could be perceived as rude
5. Is there an opportunity to change the outcome? What moment would be best to do this?
 - It's important to use escalators appropriately
 - The individual featured in the photograph is not paying adequate attention in order to use the escalator appropriately. They should put their phone away and ensure they are able to take care of their belongings. This would guarantee their own safety and the safety of other people using the escalators

PLATFORM: DANGLING LEGS

1. How do you think everyone is feeling in the picture?
 - Whilst enjoying each other's company and in positive spirits, everyone is unaware of the risk and potential danger of a train arriving or even falling onto the track
 - In the picture with the phone, the group are engaged and distracted by what is happening on screen, oblivious to any risk
 - It could be possible that one of the members of the group, whilst appearing positive, could be feeling anxious and concerned about a train arriving or passing through the station, but afraid to challenge the group's actions
2. What are the risks related to this behaviour?
 - A train could arrive very quickly at the station leaving very little time for the people in the photograph to move, especially due to the blind spot from the curved track and tunnel
 - Life changing injuries could be sustained in an accident of this nature
 - If an accident happens it's important to remember the other people that could be affected: the train driver, the emergency services, the friends and family of the young person that received injuries
 - Even if a train doesn't arrive, action could be taken by the rail network or the police as this behaviour is dangerous
3. What could the potential outcomes be for the people in the picture?
 - Life changing injuries or in extreme circumstances death
 - Action taken by the British Transport Police due to committing an offence, which could result in a fine of up to £1000
4. Can you identify anything that might prevent someone from speaking up about the potential risk?
 - Individuals might feel that they wouldn't be listened to or might be considered to be trying to stop everyone's fun

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5. Is there an opportunity to change the outcome?
What moment would be best to do this?
 - Someone should stop it happening before someone even goes near the edge of the platform
 - If a person is unhappy with the risk and doesn't feel comfortable speaking up they can make an excuse and leave in order to keep themselves safe
 - If they are good friends they could try and communicate with each other and share that they are not comfortable with what's happening. They could try and share their worries of getting caught and in trouble or someone injuring themselves
3. What could the potential outcomes be for each of the people in the picture?
 - Life changing injuries
 - Criminal prosecution
4. Can you identify anything that might prevent someone from speaking up about the potential risk?
 - Even in close friendships people can be worried about speaking up
5. Is there an opportunity to change the outcome?
What moment would be best to do this?
 - Suggest a different place to take a selfie which is safer
 - Question why they want to take a photo in such a precarious position
 - In a true friendship, it should be ok for both friends to establish boundaries
 - At times we can get swept away when we are having fun but it's important to remember the risks associated with the rail environment

PLATFORM: SELFISH SELFIES

1. How do you think everyone is feeling in the picture?
 - All of the people in the photograph look as if they are having a good time, however, it's likely that the level of risk has escalated
 - Perhaps the friends started out taking selfies elsewhere on the station and then as they have become too comfortable with the environment their attitude to risk has changed
 - What about the individual nearer to the tracks?
 - How quickly would they be able to react if a train appeared at short notice? For more information about top speeds for trains and how long they take to stop, you may want your students to complete the **Track Facts, Get Switched On quiz**
2. What are the risks related to this behaviour?
 - One of the friends could fall onto the tracks.
 - In some locations there is a third rail which looks the same as other rails. It is always live and can cause life threatening electric shocks if touched
 - A train could appear at short notice