Fertile Question: Where do I draw the line?

Core Content Area 1: Ethics, values and morality

TOPIC 1.2: Considering the other

Extending Knowledge: Values, motivation and behaviour.
Is graffiti self-expression or vandalism?

In this lesson students will explore the issue of graffiti and their responses to it in the light of the explicit values of respect, responsibility and freedom.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson that come from the Australian government Values education website.

For students to explore the issue of graffiti and their responses to it, select from the following activities:

1. Explore the issue of graffiti as an ethical issue using the resources of the Values education website.
   a. Identify what is meant by graffiti and the ethical issues associated with it.
      i. View the first ten minutes of the Australian Graffiti documentary. What evidence in the clip is there about graffiti as self-expression and graffiti as vandalism?
      ii. Review the nine values of the Australian curriculum.
      iii. Complete Activity One Responding to graffiti. In pairs, use a PMI strategy to identify your beliefs about graffiti. Compare with at least one other pair.
   b. Research the differing points of view about the impact of graffiti on Australian society.
      i. Form groups of three to five to complete Activity Two. Allocate each member of the group one or two of the resources listed in the activity. Investigate the impact of graffiti. Some research questions include:
         - How has graffiti been used historically and politically?
         - What types of graffiti are there, and what functions do they serve?
         - Are some types of graffiti more acceptable than others? Consider tagging, stencil art, murals, etc.
         - Is graffiti vandalism or art?
         - What’s the difference between visual advertising and graffiti?
         - How might graffiti affect the rights of others?
         - Does banning graffiti intrude on the freedom of others?
         - Whose responsibility is it to manage graffiti?
      ii. Discuss as a class the various points of view identified.
      iii. Identify where you would draw the line on this issue.

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