



Before And After

Inspiration and design thinking activity developed by CatalyticAction

Before and After is an activity in which the facilitator presents case studies of spatial interventions, showing a space before and after an intervention, enabling children to discuss its impact and to highlight what they like and dislike. The selection of case studies is a process of design thinking that the facilitator conducts to present examples and concepts that are relevant to the project. From the discussion, children learn and gain the confidence to design their own spaces.

Preparation:

- Print an image of the site of intervention.
- Research and print images of case studies of spatial interventions. Make sure the case studies you select are: (1) Relevant to the project. For example, if the project is to design a school courtyard, collect different examples of school courtyards that reflect important design values for the project, showing pictures and explaining the key impact of the school courtyard design: group seatings, educational murals, etc. (2) Diverse and illustrating both negative and positive impacts.



Purpose:

To think about spatial design as a decision making process that can change according to their needs, and can inspire them to think of how their environments can change.



Duration:

15 minutes



Group size:

Variable



Suggested Age:

6+



Materials:

Image of the site of intervention (e.g. the parking you want to transform into a playground), print-outs of images of spatial interventions showing the space before and after. We encourage you to research examples that speak to your project.



Space:

Classroom or open calm space.

Step by Step

- Introduce and discuss the concept of Design, the different ways it is applied in the world and how the choice of design can impact people's experiences.
- Explain that design can have a positive and negative impact on a person, and this experience is relative.
- Ask if anyone can think of an example of design and how it has impacted their lives. You may begin by offering a simple example of design from the room or space you are in.
- Show the first case study you have prepared and ask participants to quietly observe it for a couple of minutes .
- Then start the discussion by asking: What do you notice?... What else do you notice? Try to bring back the discussion to noticings, as this guides participants to share observations as a group before jumping to conclusions or analysis.
- Move to interpretations by asking: What does each image make you feel? And ask them to elaborate on the elements that bring out such feelings.
- Go through the rest of the images then wrap up by showing them the image of the site of intervention. Talk about the project, sharing that you will be working on a design intervention together to transform the space.
- Discuss what inspired them in these case studies asking them 'What would work in the site of intervention?'



- Ask the participants 'What would you like the space to make you feel?' and take note of their answers on a white board or flipchart.
- Thank everyone for participating in the activity and conclude with the key themes of the discussion around design, their likes and dislikes, enhance the importance of design with an emphasis on the capability of everyone to design in order to increase their confidence in taking part of the design process.

Tip: Talking about emotions can be triggering to children who have faced trauma. Be sensitive to the words you choose in the discussion and acknowledge any emotions participants express, letting them know they are heard, allowing them to let their emotions out in a safe and understanding space.

