

Choosing SPHE resources – questions to consider

There are extensive resources to support teaching and learning in the resources section of the SPHE toolkits.

The resources in the SPHE Toolkit were selected on the basis that they:

- can support planning for quality teaching and learning linked to the current SPHE curriculum
- are relevant to the Irish context
- are up-to-date, creative, engaging and relevant to students' interests and needs
- were developed by a state agency or an agency/organisation with a proven educational track record
- are not seeking commercial benefit
- are freely available online
- can be used across the diversity of school settings

The Toolkit does not provide a prescriptive list of teaching and learning resources and it is important that you decide what resources are best suited to supporting learning in the context of your students' needs, stage of development and school context.

The following questions will support your resource choices:

- What learning outcome(s) will this resource help achieve? Is it relevant to the curriculum and to my plan of work?
- Is this resource relevant to my students' lives and needs? How do I know?
- Will the resource appeal to my students? Will it be accessible to them – think about the language, layout, variety of methodologies. Can I use or adapt the resource to enable students with SEN to engage in learning alongside their peers?

- Does this resource promote active and experiential learning? Will it prompt critical thinking, questioning, discussion and reflection?
- Is this resource age and stage appropriate? Remember that students frequently complain that SPHE materials are childish or patronising.
- Is this resource inclusive of a diversity of families, backgrounds, cultures and beliefs? Does it respect the range of backgrounds and experiences in your class and in the wider community? Does it prompt students to consider different perspectives and viewpoints?
- Is this resource seeking to promote a particular worldview, belief system or set of values? Are these in line with the values underpinning the SPHE curriculum?
- Is this resource reinforcing or challenging bias and stereotypes in relation to gender, social class and dis/ability?
- Does this resource meaningfully reflect the lives of people of all gender identities and sexual orientations?
- Who funded the development of this resource? For example, is it funded by the drinks industry or another commercial interest?
- Has this resource been developed by a reputable source and include up-to-date, evidence-informed content and methodologies? If in doubt, always check it out.
- Does this resource confuse the distinctive roles of SPHE and RE within the curriculum?

Before you use a resource in class, check with teaching colleagues to ensure they haven't already used it with your students. And be sure to evaluate any resources you use – both with your students and with other teachers.