

PREP:

Materials: 2 sheets of blank paper and the Description Paragraph

1. On one sheet of paper write "YOU ARE A BURGLAR"
2. On the second sheet of paper write "YOU ARE A REAL ESTATE AGENT"
3. Don't let the class see either sheet before the activity.

Activity:

Divide the class in half. Tell one half to close their eyes. Show the other half the "YOU ARE A BURGLAR" paper. Then tell the other half of the class to close their eyes. Show the other half the "YOU ARE A REAL ESTATE AGENT" sheet. (no talking at all is allowed-just get them to nod that they understand).

Then tell the whole class that you are going to read them a scenario and that they need to write down 5 details (or more) that they are important to them (through their assigned role)

Read the following Description Paragraph:

Two boys, Ryan and Daniel, had decided to skip school for the day. They were going to head to the mall but Ryan said "No, let's go to my house". My parents both work and there won't be anybody home until six o'clock. As they drove out to the house Dan commented on how far out in the boonies they were.

Yeah, I know, replied Ryan. Our nearest neighbour is at least half a mile away. They finally reached the driveway which wound through a beautiful and spacious yard. Ryan pulled the car up and pushed the remote to open one door of the spacious double garage. After parking the car the boys headed inside. Dan was amazed at the large and open living room they walked into. The room had an extra high ceiling with a large skylight overhead to let in the natural light.

Look at that flat screen T.V.! Ryan exclaimed, and the sound system! This would be a great place to have a party!

Yeah, said Dan, and I have to admit that our pool and hot tub would be popular too. They walked into the kitchen to grab a snack and Ryan was impressed again. The kitchen was also large and roomy with large glass cupboards and a brand new gas powered stove. The boys grabbed a couple of pizza pops, threw them in the high tech microwave and flipped on the ipod that was propped in a docking station that was sitting on the table. The kitchen was certainly well kept, but Ryan did notice a leak under the sink when he went to throw out his napkin. Before they left the room Ryan hesitated for a moment. What's this he asked? Pointing to a display on the wall.

Oh, that's just my mom's spoon collection. Pretty lame but she says they're pretty valuable. Apparently they are worth about five hundred bucks because they're real silver or something. Let's go up to my room Ryan said.. I wish we could use the games room but it's pretty wet down there. We always have problems with flooding in the spring. It's a real pain because then we can't use the home theatre or the ping pong table. As they headed upstairs Dan noticed numerous works of art on the wall.

Ryan caught him looking and commented, “My Dad’s crazy about art. I’d love to take one of these paintings and trade it in for a new car though” Once upstairs they walked past three other rooms before they reached Ryan’s.

What was that last room for? Dan asked.. The one with all the trophies?

Oh that’s just my parents’ work room. They just keep the computer and a small stereo in there, and of course my dad’s safe. He thinks I have no idea it’s behind the filing cabinet ha ha. As for the stereo, my dad says he works better when there is music in the background. It’s really nice having so many rooms upstairs though. I demanded to have mine as far away from my parents’ as possible. That way I can play my music a little louder and it doesn’t bother them. Of course if it’s really late I just listen to my ipod.

Hey, was that another bathroom I noticed? Dan inquired.

Yup. said Ryan. There are four all together if you include the private one off the master bedroom. That one is the best, it even has a jacuzzi tub in it. Dan walked back to the master bedroom and peeked in. What struck him first was the amount of jewellery on the vanity table. Wow, your mom sure has a lot of stuff!

C’mon, said Ryan. Enough looking at the house. I’ve got some music I want to download...and the boys headed off.

Follow-up

After you have read the paragraph ask each group (in turn) to share the details they noticed. See if each group can guess the role that the other was given based on what they say.

Then lead class discussion about how people can be given EXACTLY the same information but notice completely different things, or interpret it differently based on their biases/histories/viewpoint etc.