Cross Phase Teaching Idea 1

(a) The Pointing Game

Sit the students down. Tell them that we are going play a game pointing to different parts of ourselves: we are going to do it quite fast and with either hand to make it more fun.

Ask them to point to their left foot. You can point closely to your left foot encouraging them to follow you. Give them a second or two to do so. Then say: "Point to your right knee!" You point to your right knee, then……."Point to your right thigh!"……"Point to your right wrist!"….."Point to your nose!" etc. Eventually, after pointing to10-20 parts, say "Point to your self!"

This can be quite comical with pupils doing all kinds of strange movements & gestures.

Ask them why they are not sure about such a basic fact ! This gets them thinking about their identity.

You can now go on to explain the Hindu idea behind this i.e. they say that the body is quite distinct from the self (atman) which resides within the body. That self is the source of consciousness and resides in the area of the heart (Not *in* the heart- in the same way that a magnetic field might be in the area of your room but it is not bound by the room.)

(b) The Eating Game

Sit the pupils down preferably in an Indian cross-legged meditative posture. If you want you can do some preliminary breathing exercises to aid relaxation and concentration, (see Teaching Idea 5). Now give each student a biscuit (or do this as an imaginary exercise if you have none!). Ask them to slowly take a bite on the biscuit. Ask them to consider when does the biscuit "become them" i.e. in the beginning there were 2 distinct objects, "a biscuit" & "me"; at what point does the biscuit cease to be a biscuit and become "me"? Is it when the portion of the biscuit enters the mouth? When it slips down the gullet? When it is fully dissolved by the digestive juices or when the nutrients enter the bloodstream?

With this exercise they might see that the biscuit is always external-in fact the whole body is itself external to the conscious self.