

Workshop: „ The Methodical Roundabout of Intercultural Dialogue “

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Workshop content/theme

In this workshop the participants tried out several methods, exercises and games on how they can work on the topic of Intercultural Dialogue.

Aims

The methods should enable:

- to see the relevance values have for us and to find out where ideas about culture have an impact
- to see that in a group people have a lot in common and many differences
- to make values transparent and to see that values are changeable
- to see that the “picture of the other” is influenced throughout life from childhood on by different factors like family, education...
- to learn how to deal with other attitudes and perspectives

Method(s)/Approach

The participants split up into five teams, got the instructions and materials for the methods, tried them out and evaluated, if they would be useful for their teaching.

See exercises on the following pages!

Further tips, sources, resource material or links

See below.

Questions for workshop reflection

What are the important/interesting things you learned about “Intercultural Dialogue”?

How far can you use and adapt the methods of the workshop at school, in the lessons or in your project?

Impressions, Outcomes

Teachers:

“We learned to put ourselves in the shoes of others to understand that every person has a unique set of values, thoughts, burdens etc.

Team building activities make us more flexible.

We don’t have to agree, but we should be okay about showing our differences – these activities help students feel comfortable talking about their ideas.

These activities provide a forum to exchange ideas and are very adaptable to school, projects etc.

Always wear nice socks, because you never know (*concerning the energizer*)!

Energizers are the key in relaxing students and breaking up lessons. As teachers we just wish we had more time with students to use them.”

Students:

“We are not used to play this sort of games (*concerning the “cha-cha thing” on the evening the day before*). Sometimes we feel a bit awkward, because some games are childish, however we want to be seen as grown-ups. Some methods make us relaxed.

We think that our colleagues would not like to work with those exercises shown in this workshop, because they are not used to interactive games and would not be interested in it.”

Methods and Exercises

Whom would you like to live with?

Aim (what for?)	An exercise to show the power of prejudices and to start discussing implicit values and preferences in a group and come to a common conclusion.
Group (whom for?)	Up to 25 persons
Material needed	Paperboard, list of "possible tenants for the house" (see next page)
Duration	45 min group work and 1/2 hour debriefing (or longer)
Description	Prepare a drawing of a house on the (paper)board. The facilitator tells the story of family Miller:

"In this house live Mr. and Mrs. Miller with their 20 year old son David. The family lives quite happily together in this house. One day a bad accident happens and father and mother Miller loose their lives. David inherits the house of his family and lives a single and satisfied life, untill one day David looses his job. David is no longer able to afford the live in the big house by himself. With his last money he decides to split the house into 6 apartments and puts them up "for rent" in the newspaper."

Now, imagine you are David and that you have to choose five tenants from the list of people applying to your add, in order to be able to keep the house.

Task for the participants:

1. choose 5 tenants from the list - individually (approx. 20 min.)
2. in group of 5 to 6 persons choose 5 tenants that the whole group agrees on (approx. 20 min.)
3. debriefing:
 - Has the group found 5 common tenants? Yes /No? Why (not)?
 - How did the group work together to find those common tenants? What was difficult, what was easy?
 - Discuss the reasons why you decided for these persons.

This exercise shows very well the impact of prejudices and different pre-conceptions we have about other people. To have no prejudices is almost impossible, the most important is to understand that these are prejudices and that discussions about differences and getting to know people better can change opinions.

Attention! The debriefing is the most important part of the exercise. Take care of the possible emotions in the group!

Material sheet: "Possible tenants for the house"

With whom would you like to live in the same house ?

1. A single mother with a 3 year old child whose father is Tunisian. He visits his son occasionally and sometimes bring along a few friends.
2. A Yugoslavian migrant workers family with 5 children between 1 and 12. Father works in steel industry, mother would take the position of the concierge.
3. A family with a 17 year old daughter attending 11th grade at a secondary school. Father is an accountant in a bank, mother is a teacher.
4. A single 70 year old lady living on minimal retirement payment.
5. A group of 7 polish refugees, all working in the kitchen of a large restaurant.
6. A group of 5 young people living an alternative life-style rejecting the materialistic ideology of consumption.
7. Three Palestinian students who are politically engaged.
8. A gypsy family of 5 persons. Father works occasionally and is unemployed in between times. They are a part of a larger family which has strong ties and likes to hold festivities.
9. An American couple without children. Husband is working at the International Atomic Energy Authority, wife is taking care of the household and 3 poodles.
10. Two artists, approx. 40 years old who live rather a bohemian and unconventional lifestyle and have many artist friends.
11. A girl studying piano and singing at the konservatorium, who has to practise regularly in the afternoons.
12. A black American with his Austrian girlfriend. He is trying to get work permit as an engineer.
13. A religious Muslim family which lives strictly according to the Koran, the mother leaving the house only veiled.
14. A gay men who's single, but invites a lot of man during the week in his apartment.
15. A young men, he's wheelchair user and live with his 76 years old mother.
16. A girl, who is blind, she lives alone with her dog.

Abigale

Group Size

At least 5 participants, and at the most 30 (larger groups can be split and can also do the evaluation separately).

Time

Total between 1 hour 15 minutes and 2 hours and 15 minutes

- 5 minutes introduction
- 10 minutes individual reading and rating
- 30-45 minutes small group work
- (optional) 30 minutes in larger group
- 30-45 minutes evaluation in plenary

Step-by-step

Introduce the exercise to the students as being one about finding out about different values. Ask everybody to read the story (*next page*) by him/herself and to rank each character (Abigale, Tom, Sinbad, Abigale's mother, and John) according to their behaviour: Who acted worst? Who second worst? Etc. After most of the people have done their ranking, ask them to get together in small groups (3 to 6), to discuss about how they perceive the behaviour of the characters. The task of the small groups is to come up with a common list – a list that everybody in the small group can agree on. Ask them to avoid using mathematical methods in order to establish the list, but rather to build that list on the basis of a shared understanding of what is good and what is bad.

Evaluate the exercise in plenary by first bringing together the results and by discussing the similarities and differences between them. Slowly move on to ask on which grounds people made their ranking. How could they decide what was good and what was bad behaviour?

Reflection and evaluation

One focus of the evaluation is the relevance values have for us to determine what we think is good and what is bad. After having established that insight, the next step is to look at how easy or difficult it is to negotiate about values when having to establish a common list. You can ask people how they managed to come up with a common list – which arguments worked to convince them, and why, and where there was a border of being able to understand and/or follow the other. A possible follow up is to then look at where we learned what is good and what is bad – and what that tells us about what we have in common and what makes us different.

Abigale

Abigale loves Tom who lives on the other side of the river. A flood has destroyed all bridges across the river, and has left only one boat afloat. Abigale asks Sinbad, the owner of the boat, to bring her to the other side. Sinbad agrees, but insists that Abigale has to sleep with him in return. Abigale does not know what to do and runs to her mother and asks her what she should do. Her mother tells Abigale that she does not want to interfere with Abigale's own business.

In her desperation Abigale sleeps with Sinbad who, afterwards, brings her across the river. Abigale runs to Tom to happily embrace him and tell him everything that has happened. Tom pushes her away bluntly and Abigale runs away.

Not far from Tom's house, Abigale meets John, Tom's best friend. She tells everything that has happened to him as well. John hits Tom for what he has done to Abigale and walks away with her.

1. Read the story by yourself!
2. Rank each character (Abigale, Tom, Sinbad, Abigale's mother and John....) according to their behaviour. Who acted worst, who second worst...?

Can You?

Aim
(what for?) This game is good as a prelude to any anti-oppressive projects. It demonstrates in a clear, fairly quick way the inequalities that can exist within society. Numbers are not important but it can be fun with a large group. It aims to highlight an individual's experiences and inequalities within everyday activities.

Group Any, but good with a large group

Material A copy of the questions
A copy of the roles already cut up (*see next page*)
Space!

Duration 30 minutes

Description Step-by step description:
1. Hand out a role to each member of the group. Ask them not to discuss it with anyone else. Make sure that whatever the group size you have always given someone the white, male heterosexual card.
2. Read out the situations on the sheet. Explain that the young people should take two steps forward for each situation that they feel their card could do easily, one if it is possible, and to stay still if it impossible. Start at an agreed point and set a finish line across the space or room.

Can you use public transport?
Do you feel safe going home alone at night?
Do you feel comfortable kissing your partner in public?
Do you feel that people listen to you?
Do you feel welcome at your local youth club?
You go into a club full of white men: do you stay?
Do you feel comfortable drinking in a pub on your own?
If you are competing with people of a similar standard for the same job, do you feel you have an equal chance of getting it?
Do you see yourself represented on TV?
Can you easily adopt a child?
Do you think you receive fair treatment from the police?
Do you feel comfortable moving into a shared house?
Would you get a job as a nanny easily?
Can you play football easily?

Reflection and evaluation:
Once the 'race' has taken place discuss how it felt with the young people still in character and in their finishing position. Were they surprised where they finished? What other emotions did they feel? How does it feel to be at the "front" or "back" of the field?

Role cards

You are a Muslim girl, living with your religious parents, who come from an Arabic country.

You are a 24 old male refugee from Ruanda.

You are white, male and heterosexual

You are born in Vienna, 37 years old and your parents work as teachers at a gymnasium.

You are the 18 year old son of Chinese immigrants, who successfully run a restaurant.

You are 32 years old and gay.

Space for further role cards...

A Value to D.I.E. For

Time required

30 minutes

Objectives

1. To clarify the differences between description (D), interpretation (I) and evaluation (E).
2. To demonstrate that people tend to begin with interpretation and evaluation, rarely description
3. To demonstrate how personal experience and cultural values influence our interpretation and evaluation
4. To provide practice in describing, stressing the importance of observation

Materials

- 1 or 2 ambiguous objects
- Flipcharts
- At least one picture from a different cultural setting, either national or workplace, for every five members

Process

1. Introduce an ambiguous object (kitchen gadget, tool from another country. etc.), something you feel confident that participants will not have seen before. Pass the object around and ask participants "Tell me something about it." Charts responses on a sheet of paper in three unlabeled columns representing Description, Interpretation, and Evaluation.
2. Present the concept of D.I.E.

Description	What I see	It is metal. It is gold.
Interpretation	What I think about what I see	It is jewelry.
Evaluation	What I feel about what I see	It is beautiful.
3. Ask participants to generate alternative interpretations and evaluations
4. Place participants in groups of 5 and give each group a picture from different cultural settings. Ask the group to discuss the picture using the D.I.E. technique: describe, interpret, and evaluate.
5. Ask the group to show their pictures and share their responses.

Debriefing Questions

1. What happened? What is most difficult? Easiest? Why?
2. How did you feel when you were asked to describe without interpreting or evaluating?
3. How might personal and cultural values influence the interpretation or evaluation?
4. What did you learn?
5. How can you use what you learned in your everyday life?

Debriefing Conclusion

1. People tend to jump to interpretation and evaluation without first describing and entertaining alternative interpretations and evaluations.
2. Our interpretations and evaluations are based on our own experience and cultural learning.
3. When we can first describe, then look for alternative interpretations and evaluations, we are likely to be more accurate and more effective cross-culturally.

Where do you stand? - Statement Discussion

See explanation for this method at:

http://www.youth-partnership.net/export/sites/default/youth-partnership/documents/Publications/T_kits/4/4_methods01.pdf

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