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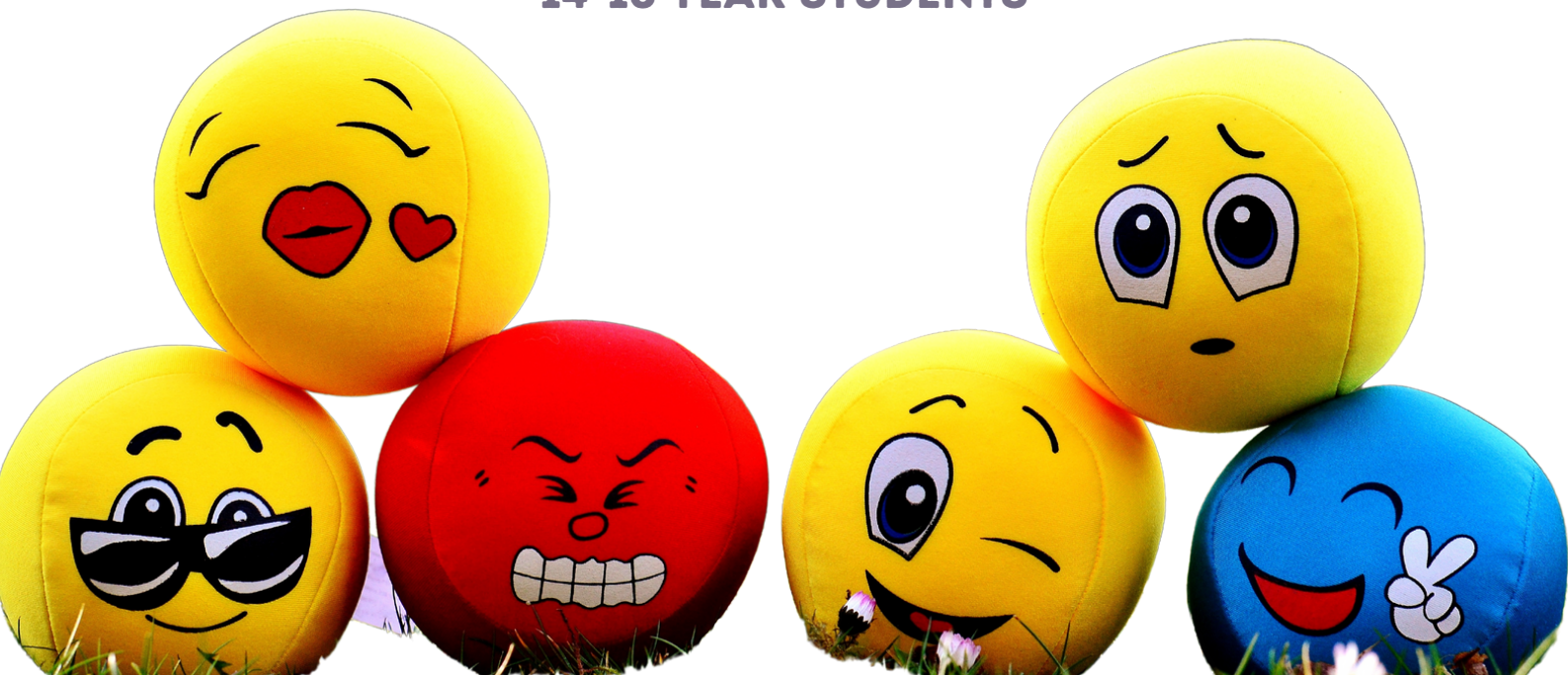


**EIFNEG**

# **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE FOR A NEW EUROPEAN GENERATION (EIFNEG)**

**PROJECT N.: 2021-1-CZ01-KA220-SCH-000032552**

**A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS  
ON HOW TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN  
14-18 YEAR STUDENTS**



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# FIRST CHAPTER. INTRODUCTION



**EIFNEG**

# Introduction



## Introduction

This handbook for teachers is part of the project **EIFNEG - Emotional Intelligence for the New European Generation**, implemented in the framework of the Erasmus+ program. The consortium of this project is formed by 2 organisations from Romania (CPIP and Liceul Teoretic "William Shakespeare"), 2 from Spain (Growth Coop and Colegio Seneca), 2 from the Czech Republic (Institut Evropských Profesionálních Studií and Gymnázium Jiřího Gutha-Jarkovského) and 1 from Portugal (ASDPESO).

The EIFNEG project aims to **create a subject for students aged 14 to 18** that strengthens their ability to manage emotions and empathy, enhances their creativity, and teaches them to adapt to new situations.

As a starting point of the EIFNEG project, a State of the Art was carried out to collect all the information related to the emotional situation in secondary education in the consortium countries. In the project's second phase, a series of focus groups were implemented in each participating country with professionals and experts from the sector. The objective was to obtain qualitative information through their experiences and opinions on the situation of emotional intelligence in secondary education.

After analysing the information, important conclusions were drawn from these phases. These conclusions were that there is a lack of emotional education content in school curricula, a similar lack of mental health programs, and a great need for teacher training in emotional intelligence.

Taking these results into account, the consortium selected the 10 key areas that are fundamental for working on emotional intelligence with students. About the 10 selected key areas, this handbook for teachers has been produced.



# Introduction



## Introduction

In the first chapter of the handbook, the introduction of the EIFNEG project is presented, how the subject of emotional intelligence is structured, the methodology to be followed to develop this handbook in the classroom, how to manage the attention to diversity and how to evaluate if the established objectives have been achieved.

In the second chapter of the manual, the contents of the subject are presented. These are presented **in the form of 10 didactic units** or areas to be worked on in the classroom. The didactic units have the following sections:

- Justification or Rationale
- Objectives and competences
- Concepts
- Methodology
- Evaluation
- Suggested bibliography

This set of didactic units will serve as a **conceptual guide for teachers** to implement the subject in the classroom, creating a system of training in Emotional Education for students from 14 to 18 years of age based on real experiences in the school, family, and a group of friends context.

The third and final chapter of the manual presents a set of practical resources for classroom work related to the 10 didactic units developed in the previous chapter. It is a set of **50 training tools** to work in class, in groups, or individually, and **30 tools to work at home** to reinforce the developed contents in the classroom.

# Rationale



In 2018, the World Economic Forum updated its Future of Jobs report highlighting the skills that workers will need in the future and that teenagers should learn how to adapt to this new scenario. Emotional intelligence was one of the key aspects as an umbrella for the development of skills such as initiative, creativity, or global citizenship. These skills are in demand in the labor market today and will be essential in the coming decades. But are schools aligned with this challenge? Are students learning today what they will need tomorrow? Are they being prepared for the world they will face? These skills are not easy to learn on their own, these skills require practice and demand rich human interactions.

Today, teachers are seen as key actors in the emotional development of students and are expected to have competencies in emotional intelligence. On the other hand, the training that teachers often receive in this area is very scarce. They are asked to do something for which they have not been trained.

For these reasons, the EFNEG project partnership has developed this **handbook for teachers** to support them in the process of teaching emotional intelligence to 14 to 18 years of age. This age group is where the transition to adulthood is assumed, whether it is access to the labor market or the start of higher education. It is therefore a critical point where emotional intelligence has been revealed as a key factor in personal and professional development. In addition, teaching young people to identify and manage their emotions allows them to have control over what happens to them, which is fundamental for the correct development of self-esteem and self-concept.

# Methodology



The English Language Dictionary demonstrates that a methodology represents a set or system of methods, principles, and rules for regulating a given discipline or a branch of pedagogics dealing with analysis and evaluation of subjects to be taught and of the methods of teaching them.

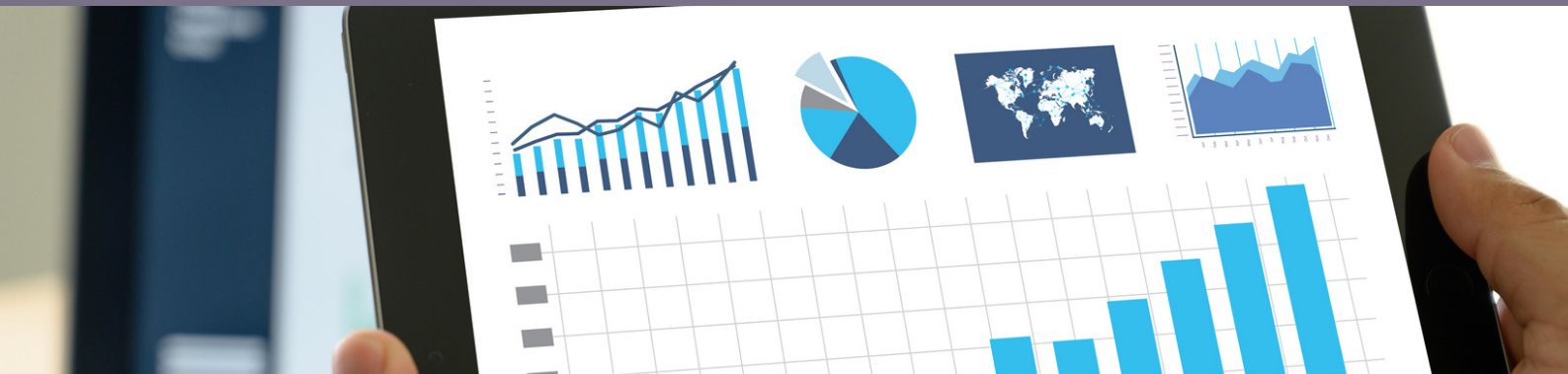
Taking into consideration the fact that the final result of our project, EIFNEG (Emotional Intelligence for New European Generation), is to create a **subject to be taught in schools, for students between 14 and 18 years old**, through which they receive training in emotional intelligence, devising a general methodology appears to be a must.

The Methodology is the most complex aspect of all, as it refers to how to approach this subject. To facilitate the understanding of the new subject and to make its practice possible it is necessary to consider the following aspects.

Each area or didactic unit to be developed will have a duration of between 3 and 4 sessions. The sessions will be carried out as follows:

- First session. Introduction: lead-in and applying a preliminary questionnaire/pre-evaluation. Presentation: presentation of the key area, subareas, competences, objectives.
- Second session. Practical activities. For example, videos, real-life examples, case study.
- Third session. Practical activities. For example, discussions, debates, games, role-plays.
- Final session. Feedback: final questionnaire/post-evaluation, general feedback, and conclusion.

# Methodology



The Methodology is the most complex aspect of all, as it refers to how to approach this subject. To understand the new subject and to apply it in practice, it is necessary to consider the following:

## Educational area & Environment

- Indoor + Outdoor + Home(work)

## Learning & teaching methods

- One or more school classes
- Potential to be integrated into extracurricular activities
- Home(work)
- Peer-to-peer interactive learning
- Dialogical learning approach
- Learning sessions with group discussion
- Individual learning sessions + Pair learning sessions

## Basic time approaches (suggested)

- 5 activities/area/didactic unit (= 50 activities)
- Indoor and/or outdoor: 5 activities/area
- Home(work): 3 activities/ area
- 1 didactic unit = 1 key area - 1 hour/week - 1 area/month =4 hours/month

## Criteria of effective Methodology

- Not be biased by your own opinion = It is impartial
- Set ground rules (e.g. allow equal participation, respect the opinions of others)
- Advise of scheduled breaks, anticipated end time
- Consider logistics (such as school room and refreshment) or any technical equipment



# Attention to diversity



Inclusive education is currently the trend in schools with mainstream educational systems. For teachers, this means in practice that they can have a truly diverse group of pupils in the classroom. In this chapter, you will find an overview of tips on how to work with these pupils in your lessons. It is important to remember that an individual approach is still needed and that every pupil is different.

## **Diversity of pupils in schools with mainstream educational system**

### Visual impairment

Visually impaired persons are people with various types and degrees of reduced visual abilities. Visual impairment affects activities in everyday life, and ordinary optical correction is no longer sufficient. We do not include people wearing dioptric glasses (i. e. those with a weak visual impairment) and who are as such not limited in daily activities, access to information, orientation and independent movement, etc. Selected principles of education of students with visual impairments in the mainstream education are:

- enough time to work
- enlargement of text entries
- use of visualization (diagrams, descriptions)
- verbalization of instructions
- assistance when visiting unfamiliar areas
- work with compensatory aids (optical aids)
- a place to sit near the blackboard
- respecting the needs of the pupil
- use of group work

### Hearing impairment

The hearing-impaired are a diverse group of people who have different degrees and types of impairments. These are deaf, hard of hearing and late-deafened people. Hearing impairment is the result of an organic or functional defect.

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# Attention to diversity



However, it is necessary to distinguish between the terms "*hearing loss, hearing disorder, hearing impairment*", etc., which indicate a certain objective hearing deficiency, and the term "*hearing defect*", which is its social consequence-

Selected principles for working with a hearing-impaired student in the mainstream education:

- a place to sit near the blackboard preferably in a row by the window
- the light should fall on the face of the speaker
- reasonable distance of the speaker
- the speaker must move in the pupil's field of vision, making eye contact
- speech must be clear and distinct
- notification of change of speaker or change of topic
- visualization
- continuous check of the level of understanding
- when choosing a Czech sign language communication system, the use of a Czech sign language interpreter, or a transcriber for the deaf

## Impaired communication ability

We speak of impaired communication skills if any of the language levels (phonetic-phonological /acoustic form of language/; lexical-semantic /quality of active and passive vocabulary/; morphological-syntactic /grammar/; pragmatic /use of speech in practice/), or several levels at the same time, have a disruptive effect during the communication process despite the fulfillment of the person's communicative purpose. It also includes non-verbal means or non-traditional communication channels.

# Attention to diversity



In a mainstream school, we can most often meet pupils with **dyslalia**, delayed speech development and developmental **dysphasia**. Pupils may need a different level of support, so it is necessary to approach individual pupils individually, taking into account developmental peculiarities. Tips for working with a student with impaired communication skills:

- communicate instructions and directions gradually and comprehensibly
- choose a smaller amount of (structured) information
- provide enough time to work
- do not insist on precise labeling of terms
- be illustrative to a higher degree
- verify understanding of the task
- promote appetite for speaking
- provide a relaxation moment

## Physical disability

Physical disability is defined as any disability of the locomotor, supporting or nervous system that results in a limitation or loss of mobility. It has a negative impact on a person's entire personality, because motor skills are closely connected with the emotional, perceptual and cognitive spheres. Pupils with physical disabilities are mostly educated in a regular primary school, unless the disability is associated with another more severe disability.

A few tips for educating a student with a physical disability:

- use of aids facilitating movement (canes, prostheses, wheelchairs, etc.)
- use of a personal assistant, teaching assistant

# Attention to diversity



- adjustment of temperature conditions, light, and free space for object manipulation
- support of group work, work in pairs
- include relaxation moments
- provide more time to work
- enter structured information
- give clear instructions

## Mental disability

Mental disability is a congenital impairment of mental abilities. It is the **inability to achieve an adequate level of intellectual development**, i. e. less than 70% of the norm, which is manifested by the inability to understand one's surroundings and adapt to them to the required extent, even though the individual has been sufficiently stimulated. From the beginning of his/her life, a person does not develop according to the standard way of development. The disability is permanent, but some improvement is possible depending on the cause and the quality of the individual's stimulation.

The main signs of mental retardation include: insufficient development of thinking and speech, limited ability to learn, difficult adaptation to normal living conditions.

In the mainstream educational system, mostly includes pupils with mild mental disabilities.

The following principles are used in the education of pupils with mental disabilities:

- clarity of the curriculum
- student activity in teaching



# Attention to diversity



- alternating activities
- dividing the task into smaller tasks
- adequacy of the curriculum
- intensive feedback
- positive attitude
- individual approach to the student

## Autism spectrum disorders

Autistic spectrum disorders (abbreviated ASD) are the preferred designation in the Czech Republic for a group of disorders of childhood mental development. The word spectrum indicates that the **symptoms of autism spectrum disorders can be diverse and manifest to varying degrees**. Pupils with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders can therefore differ considerably from each other.

In connection with autistic spectrum disorders, we are talking about the so-called triad of problem areas. This is mainly the area of communication, social behavior, imagination and perception. Due to this disorder, the development of an individual is disrupted from an early age and its consequence is non-standard behavior that manifests itself in the daily life of the individual.

In mainstream schools, we mainly meet pupils with Asperger's syndrome, childhood autism and atypical autism. When working with a student with an autistic spectrum disorder, several basic rules must be observed, which result from the very nature of the autistic spectrum disorder:

- exact rules
- clear instructions and predictability assurance

# Attention to diversity



- clear and concrete motivations
- higher level of tolerance
- consistent approach
- higher degree of visualization
- use of touch
- appropriate and effective exercise strategies
- a superior solution to attention difficulties

## Specific learning disabilities

The causes of specific learning disabilities (SLD) are not due to impairment of the intellect. They are attributed to central nervous system dysfunction, which may be hereditary, or to a syndrome called minimal brain dysfunction. Specific learning disabilities can be defined as: an unexpected and unexplained condition that may affect a child with average or above average intelligence and is characterised by significant delays in one or more areas of learning. SLDs are designated by the prefix "dys" attached to a specific word base to characterise the impaired function.

**Dyslexia** is a SLD, in which a child cannot learn to read despite good instruction, a suitable family background, and appropriate aptitude. Not only the reading speed is affected, but also the correctness and technique of reading, as well as the comprehension of the read text. **Dysgraphia** is a specific disorder of the graphic aspect of language, the inability to imitate and remember the shape of letters, the inability to write legibly, evenly and neatly. Written expression is slow and the person writes laboriously.



# Attention to diversity



**Dysortographia** is an SLD that affects the acquisition of grammar. It manifests itself in errors in certain orthographic phenomena. It is also one of the causes of inability to apply grammatical rules. **Dyscalculia** manifests itself as a specific disorder of mathematical abilities, in which a person performs significantly worse in mathematics than would be expected based on his/her intelligence. This includes difficulties in reading and writing mathematical symbols, marking quantities, etc. Other, less common forms of learning difficulties are e. g. **dysmusia** (specific disorder of musical skills), **dyspinxia** (specific disorder of drawing), **dyspraxia** (specific disorder of dexterity).

The general principles for working with children and adolescents with SLD can be summarized in the following points:

- do not expose the student to activities that the child cannot perform optimally due to his/her disorder
- build on the student's successes and recognize partial successes and efforts
- let the child discover his/her abilities and find out his/her strengths
- assess and evaluate only what the child managed to make
- do not compare a student's performance with that of other children
- allow the use of corrective tools
- consider the appropriate seating arrangement for the child within the classroom
- help the child to begin the task
- respect the slower pace of work
- teach the child to work systematically and responsibly within his/her capabilities.

# Attention to diversity



SLDs do not mean the student "does nothing" in the classroom. Be supportive and try to structure the lesson so that the child has a sense of accomplishment while with other children and does not suffer.

## Conduct disorders and hyperkinetic disorders (ADHD)

Currently, there are several classification systems for classifying behavioral, attention, emotional and other disorders. Specialist publications are based on the International Classification of Diseases or the Diagnostic Manual DSM-IV. The term **ADHD** is the most common in practice. It is an abbreviation of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. It is a disorder in which an attention deficit is combined with hyperactivity in childhood. The child is unable to maintain focus, is more impulsive and hyperactive, and the individual components may predominate or be expressed in different ways. In academic literature we often also find the diagnosis ADD (attention deficit disorder), which does not include hyperactivity. The difficulties associated with ADHD escalate over time if they are not recognized and treated appropriately, stimulatively and adequately.

**Conduct disorders** are characterized by repeated and persistent aggressive, antisocial or defiant behavior and are long-term (six months or more). This includes, for example, antisocial conduct disorder characterized by a combination of persistent dissocial or aggressive behavior and significant, pervasive disruption of the individual's relationships with other children. Socialized conduct disorder, where the disorder manifests in a person who is integrated relatively well into a peer group (bullying at school).

# Attention to diversity



Oppositional defiant behavior usually occurs in younger children. It is characterized by marked defiant, disobedient and disruptive behavior, but does not involve criminal acts or extreme aggressive or dissociative behavior.

Truancy is characterized by running away from school or unexcused absences. This is usually done out of fear, a desire to avoid unpleasant things or evaluation. In addition to the defense mechanism, it can also be a disregard for norms, obligations and the teacher's authority.

The principles for working with children struggling with the above-mentioned disorders cannot be clearly defined. However, they are very important for school practice:

- acceptance of the child including his/her specificities
- setting clear rules and implementing them consistently
- encourage and praise the child's positive expressions
- allowing physical activities and relaxation
- positive motivation and confidence building (praise, express trust, teach to convey appropriate responses)
- solve problems calmly (or discuss with another professional)
- do not criticize or reprimand unnecessarily
- try to listen - the "yes, and..." technique (focus communication on solving the problem)
- allow more time for tasks
- find an appropriate seat that meets the individual needs of the pupil
- help with integration with classmates (choosing a suitable arrangement for group work, ...)



# Attention to diversity

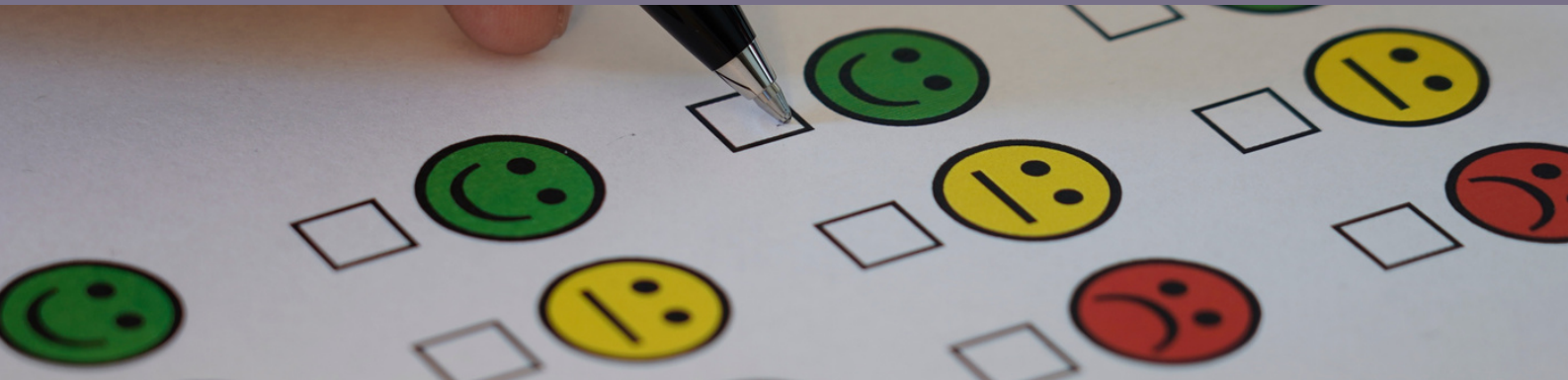


The school also teaches children with other special educational needs. That is, pupils who need support measures to fulfil their educational potential and to exercise their rights on an equal footing with others. These include pupils with a different cultural and life background (social disadvantage), pupils with a different mother tongue, gifted and exceptionally gifted pupils, pupils with so-called double exceptionality (a combination of intellectual giftedness and special educational needs) and, last but not least, pupils who need educational support due to a medical condition (psychiatric or other illness).

## Sources:

- Lechta, V. (2010). Foundations of inclusive pedagogy: the child with disabilities, disruptions and threats in school (Základy inkluzivní pedagogiky: dítě s postižením, narušením a ohrožením ve škole)
- Slowík, J. (2016). Special pedagogy, 2nd updated edition (Speciální pedagogika, 2. aktualizované a doplněné vydání)
- Thorová, K., (2016). Autism spectrum disorders: infantile autism, atypical autism, Asperger syndrome, disintegrative disorder (Poruchy autistického spektra: dětský autismus, atypický autismus, Aspergerův syndrom, dezintegrační porucha)
- Vágnerová, Marie. (2008). Psychopathology for helping professions (Psychopatologie pro pomáhající profese).

# Evaluation



Evaluation is a very important aspect, if not the most important of all, because it allows teachers/trainers and learners to assess the situation before and after having covered a certain area of study (pre and post questionnaires) as well as the teaching and learning process (learning outcomes).

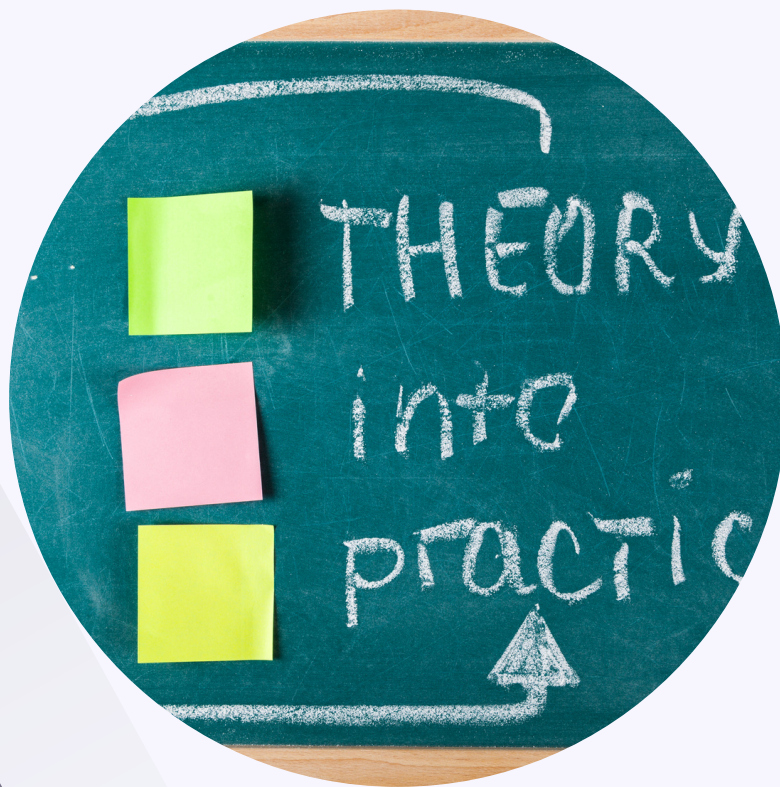
As a method of evaluation for each of the didactic units, the tool of **pre- and post-evaluation** will be used, based on a questionnaire. In each of the didactic units in the evaluation section a questionnaire has been created for each didactic area/unit. This questionnaire contains **5 questions in total**, 1 question for each of the sub-areas in which each of the didactic units are divided. This questionnaire will be carried out in the **first and the last session of each didactic unit**. It is essential to leave time in these two sessions to be able to do this evaluative questionnaire.

The aim of using this evaluation tool is to check what knowledge the students had before receiving the training on each didactic unit, and what knowledge they have acquired afterwards and whether the proposed objectives have been met. Taking emotional intelligence as an umbrella, EIFNEG aims to equip adolescents with skills such as creativity, conflict resolution and cognitive flexibility as protagonists in a process that also includes trainers/teachers on their capacity to adapt and their capacity to be innovative in the application and teaching of these new and essential skills.

In other words, it is essential to be able to identify whether the development of this subject has improved students' skills and knowledge in terms of their emotional intelligence. Finally, evaluation tools can also help in the identification and analysis of other unplanned effects that the project may be having, both positive and negative.



# SECOND CHAPTER. DIDACTIC UNITS



**EIFNEG**

# Introduction

In this second chapter of the manual, the contents of the subject are presented. These are presented in the form of 10 didactic units or areas to be worked on in the classroom. The didactic units have the following sections:

- **Justification or Rationale** - refers to the importance of studying a particular area, to motivating students by focussing on the learning outcomes.
- **Objectives and competences** - are described for each area, in the beginning of the unit. These two concepts are closely interconnected as reaching the lesson's objectives means having succeeded in developing the students' competences in that particular area.
- **Concepts** - this aspect refers to presenting the students theoretical aspects connected to a particular area, do some research on the subject and present statistics and specialised opinions.
- **Methodology** -is the most complex aspect of all, as it refers to how to approach this subject. It is how and what teachers need to teach so that their students learn about emotional intelligence.
- **Evaluation** - is a very important aspect, if not the most important of all, because it enables teachers/trainers and students to evaluate the situation before and after having covered a certain study area (pre and post questionnaires), as well as the process of teaching and learning (the learning outcomes).
- **Suggested bibliography** - are mentioned for each area, but teachers/trainers are encouraged to do research and to update the bibliography they use.

This set of didactic units will serve as a conceptual guide for teachers to implement the subject in the classroom, creating a system of training in Emotional Education for students from 14 to 18 years of age based on real experiences in the school, family, and a group of friends context.

# DIDACTIC UNIT 1. COMMUNICATION



# 1. Introduction

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Communication is an essential element, as we spend most of our lives in relationships. It is important to learn to understand, communicate and work well in social situations. Certain communication skills help us to improve interpersonal relationships.

According to H. Mendo and Garay (2005), we can think of communication as "A process of social interaction of verbal or non-verbal character, with the intentionality of transmission and that can influence, with and without intention, the behaviour of the people who are in the coverage of such emission". It is an act of making and allowing individuals to communicate with others.

Effective communication between two people happens when the recipient clearly interprets the message in the meaning intended by the sender, in this sense assertive communication is a key element that involves communicating and expressing thoughts, feelings and opinions in a way that clearly understands the views and needs of others, without underestimating their thoughts, feelings or opinions, since, in assertive communication, both individuals are considered equally important.

To achieve assertive communication it is necessary to develop emotional intelligence, one depends on the other, as assertiveness is a behavior derived from a deep respect for oneself and for others, it is a harmonious and constructive exchange based on qualities such as honesty, fairness, and reciprocity.

We all find ourselves in a difficult communication situation at some point, no matter how old we are, and it is not a very good one. These didactic units aim to help students acquire a deeper knowledge of communication and improve their communication skills. We have created this unit to share what we now know about communication, because they are going to learn how to talk and how to listen effectively.

## 2. Objectives

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The objectives show what the students will acquire after the development of this didactic unit.

- To define and learn the concept of communication.
- To understand and differentiate the 5 specific sub-areas.
- To provide the conceptual strategies necessary for them to understand and transmit their message effectively using assertive communication.
- To provide sufficient resources for identifying emotions, and developing skills such as confidence, self-acceptance, respect and empathy.





# 3. Competences

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Competences enable students to integrate their learning, to relate it to different types of content and to use it effectively when needed in different situations and contexts. The competences presented below are closely interconnected, since achieving the objectives of the lesson on communication means having succeeded in developing the students' competences in the field of communication.

- Mastering effective communication.
- Fostering interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.
- Development of emotional intelligence.
- Developing effective communication in different situations or places.
- Mastering verbal and non-verbal communication resources.
- Use non-verbal communication appropriate to the feelings to be expressed in different circumstances and in front of different people.
- To know the importance of the Emotional Intelligence construct for assertive communication.
- Generate critical thinking, being able to put aside any assumptions or judgements and limit themselves to analysing the information they receive.

## 4. Concepts

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The concepts and the specific sub-areas that will be worked on with the students in the development of the didactic unit of communication are defined. This aspect refers to introducing the students to theoretical aspects related to this specific area.

The following are the 5 specific sub-areas that can be used to facilitate an effective communication process, according to J.A. Aguado (2004) based on the typology of different authors such as J. Miller and D. McQuail, these are the most important ones:

- 1. Intrapersonal communication:** This is about communicating with oneself. It includes ideas, thoughts, and everything that goes through the mind.
- 2. Interpersonal communication:** This is communication with another person. Thoughts, feelings, and messages are expressed between two people who become the sender who sends the message, and the receiver, who is the recipient of the message.
- 3. Communication between groups:** In this case, communication can be expected between three or more people. It is the process by which messages, knowledge, and thoughts are exchanged with a larger number of participants in the communication process.
- 4. Organisational communication:** communication within a company or institution. Here two options can be specified: internal communication, among the employees themselves, such as meetings, sending emails, or external when there is external communication, such as sending periodic announcements.
- 5. Intercultural communication:** between different cultures or social groups. In this case, it is important to know different customs, languages and ways of life in order to establish very effective communication processes.

# 5. Methodology

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This didactic unit is based on a communicative approach and will follow an active, participative, and creative methodology. It will involve learning practical exercises based on the student's previous knowledge, enabling them to develop the strategies and knowledge necessary to communicate effectively in a real situation.

In this sense, it is necessary to relate the context of communication in the classroom with that which takes place outside the classroom. For this reason, we work with real materials and look for communicative situations that are close to everyday life and the world of the adolescent, so that they can perceive the direct applicability of what they have learned.

The activities will be dynamic and innovative, designed from simpler to more complex levels, depending on the level of the classroom. In this sense, the teachers will place special emphasis on the self-learning of each student and the attention to diversity to work on the 5 sub-areas necessary to promote communicative skills. It will be encouraged cooperative learning and alternating individual work with group work. One of the strong points of this unit is also working with new technologies to bring the contents closer to the everyday life of young people, making them more motivating and attractive.

The communication didactic unit will have 4 sessions and will be carried out as follows:

- **First session (1 hour).** The first 15 minutes of the session will be used to carry out the assessment tool: a pre-assessment questionnaire on the students' level of communication knowledge. After the questionnaire has been completed, 25 minutes of class time will be used to introduce the concept of communication and the objectives to be achieved and to explain the concepts (intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, communication between groups, organizational communication, and intercultural communication). To do this, teachers can use resources such as multimedia material, educational platforms, examples of real cases, etc. In the last section of this unit, you will find links to videos about communication and materials that can be used.

# 5. Methodology

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The last 20 minutes are spent brainstorming in small groups on why it is important to develop communication, what types of communication there are, and how communication influences relationships and situations. They are asked not to evaluate each other's ideas, to be as creative as possible, and to build on each other's ideas. As a last step, the main ideas are written down on a blackboard or a piece of paper to conclude with the main ideas.

- **Second session (1 hour).** The second session will be developed more practically, the aim is for the students to internalize the communication area dynamically, in which the student is the protagonist of their learning. Communication is essential for life, and everything will be easier at school or in their personal life if they know how to communicate well. This session includes **3 practical activities** that they can work on individually and in groups to understand and internalize key communication skills.
  1. In the first activity (25 minutes), the teacher will present a hypothetical scenario to work on in groups. The game is called "The broken telephone" to become aware of the transformations of an oral message in the chain of transmission between different interlocutors and the importance of active listening and effective communication.
  2. In the second activity, a role-playing game is presented (20 minutes). Students will be asked to think of an experience of a serious breakdown in communication, involving frustration because they were not understood, could not explain well, or did not know how to react. They will be divided into pairs and will have to act out the scene with each participant taking on role A (sender) and role B (receiver). Through this exercise, they will work on intrapersonal communication and interpersonal communication.
  3. The third activity is a discussion (15 minutes) on barriers to effective communication between people or groups. In this activity, the student will be asked to list the factors that cause misunderstandings or lack of communication. This will be a reinforcement activity that the students will have to do with the help of their families to work on at home and check the factors by answering a couple of questions.

# 5. Methodology

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- **Third session (1 hour).** Below are **2 practical activities** related to communication skills that can have different applications in the classroom, as it is up to the teacher to adapt them to a specific topic. In sum, they are flexible and configurable depending on the level of development of the group of students and the attention to diversity. The third session will also focus on practical exercises to further develop communication skills.
  1. The first activity (25 minutes) is about drawn understanding. It is an active listening exercise, it is above all about being able to understand certain disadvantages and turn the negative aspects into positive ones. This should illustrate how hard it is to give clear instructions as well as how hard it is to listen, and can also show how things are easily misunderstood and misinterpreted. This dynamic is great for promoting communication between pairs or small groups.
  2. The second reinforcement activity is "discussion projects" (35 minutes). This activity will consist of establishing a series of guidelines to check that progress is being made and to review the plan made by each student. For this activity, families also will have to collaborate with the students.
- **Final session (1 hour).** In the last session of communication, it is necessary to draw conclusions and to fill in the questionnaire for post-evaluation. First, the teacher should ask all students what they worked on during the 3 sessions and let them explain (20 minutes). Then the teacher has to ask the students a series of questions (25 minutes) such as:
  - What have they learned?
  - what did they like most?
  - what did they like least?
  - Have these sessions helped you to improve your communication skills?

Finally, the last 15 minutes of the lesson will be used to carry out the post-questionnaire which is shown in the next section.



## 6. Evaluation

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A pre-post questionnaire will be used as an assessment tool. A pre-post evaluation questionnaire has been designed to measure the change over time in the level of knowledge of the group of students. This type of evaluation allows the teacher to take into account the level with which the students started before the beginning of the didactic unit and what learning they have obtained after the implemented sessions. The questions are based on: the objectives and learning outcomes to be achieved after the implementation of the didactic unit on communication.

Below are the questions for the pre-and post-questionnaire for the students adapted to the didactic unit on communication:

1. How would you explain what communication is?
2. What types of communication do you think there are? Could you name any?
3. How would you describe good/effective communication?
4. Give 3 examples of how you can use effective communication with others. Why is it important to use effective communication?
5. Is there a way we can measure or assess effective communication?

It is expected that after the development of the 4 sessions on communication the students will improve in the competencies established in this didactic unit and the objectives set will be achieved. In the process of communication, they will learn to be sensitive to the communication styles of the people they talk to and choose their words, gestures, and facial expressions wisely, making sure that the right message gets through to the receiver.

Good and effective communication can make life easier in many ways and prevent avoidable conflicts. They will recognize its value, importance, and potential in their daily lives and actively train in communication skills.

# 7. Additional resources

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- **10 Barriers to Effective Communication.** Jijo's Skill Factory  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5Tao6KHV5w>
- **Effective Communication in the Classroom: Skills for Teachers**  
<https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/communication-skills-for-teachers>
- **Use Humor to Teach Your Students About Careful Communication**  
<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/use-humor-teach-your-students-about-careful-communication-maurice-elias>
- **Non-Verbal Communication- For the Birds.** Pixar.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihKXQbYeV5k>
- **Using Debate as an Educational Tool.**  
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/using-debate-educational-tool>
- **Uno.** A fun card game for learning about strategy and pattern matching, developing communication skills and coping with defeat.



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- Grupo de Orientación Universitaria UMA. Comunicación y escucha activa. Formación específica tutores 1.  
<http://www.webgou.uma.es/archivos/comunicacion.pdf>
- Portero Tresserra, M & Bueno Torrens, D. (2019). Cerebro social y competencias comunicativas durante la adolescencia. Didáctica de la Lengua y de la Literatura, núm. 84 (pp. 40-46). Universidad de Barcelona  
<http://diposit.ub.edu/dspace/bitstream/2445/150135/1/689922.pdf>

# **DIDACTIC UNIT 2.**

## **CRITICAL THINKING**





# 1. Introduction

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Critical thinking is a term frequently used in contemporary modern pedagogy. The concept of critical thinking can be viewed from many points of view (e. g. philosophers view critical thinking as the ability to think logically and argue, whereas literary theorists consider it to be the sum of skills related to intellectual grasp, delineation, evaluation, and decision-making) (Picha, 2014, p. 7).

In psychology, pedagogy, and andragogy, the starting point can be the concept of critical thinking, which accentuates critical thinking as a process based on higher thought activity, in which there is a deliberate and careful analysis, synthesizing, logical reasoning, problem-solving, decision-making, reflection and evaluation when considering the available facts (Novotná, Jurčiková, 2012, p. 62).

Pedagogy and psychology define the concept as follows: “Critical thinking means grasping an idea, examining it thoroughly, comparing it with opposing views and with what we know about the topic. Critical thinking is about curiosity, using various strategies to find out information, asking questions and systematically seeking answers, keeping a healthy amount of skepticism, finding alternatives to the usually established procedures, and doubting ready-made opinions. It concerns not only questioning, but also reaching decisions, taking stands and the ability to rationally defend one’s opinion while carefully considering the arguments of others and examining the logic of those arguments” (Klooster In Grecmanová, Urbanovská, Novotný, 2000, p. 8).

In accordance with Klooster (2020), we consider the ability to take responsibility for one’s learning as one of the most important competencies. It is the optimal goal with a characteristic of value. In other words, it is a state in which the teacher is not the only one responsible for the results of the students, but rather is a guide who helps and supports the students in this process. The importance of developing critical thinking in contemporary schools is also supported by Stieglová’s (2019, p. 23) statement that critical thinking is a key competence for modern society.

Working with 14-18-year-olds to develop critical thinking is very important because this age group is in a critical stage of cognitive and social development. During adolescence, young people's brains undergo significant changes that affect their ability to think abstractly, reason logically, and evaluate information critically.

Here are some reasons why it is important to work with 14-18-year-olds to develop critical thinking:

1. Helps prepare them for adulthood
2. Helps them navigate complex social issues
3. Fosters creativity and innovation
4. Encourages independent thinking.



## 2. Objectives

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- To learn the concept of critical thinking.
- Understand and differentiate five selected sub-areas of critical thinking development.
- To acquaint pupils with the methods of critical thinking used in the Czech Republic and in the world.
- Create a safe environment for work at school.
- Motivate students to a research approach to learning and work.
- Support work with materials that develop higher thinking activity.
- Work with reflection methods across subjects.
- Familiarize students with learning principles and methods.
- Gradually work on independence in responsibility for the result of work and learning.



# 3. Competences

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Competencies refer to the skills and abilities that teenagers need to develop in order to become effective critical thinkers.

By developing these competencies, teenagers will be better equipped to analyze information, evaluate evidence, and make decisions. These competencies are important not only for academic success, but also for success in future careers and in navigating complex social and political issues. Ultimately, developing critical thinking competencies helps teenagers to become more informed, engaged, and responsible members of society.

- Learn to define the term critical thinking.
- Distinguish five selected sub-areas of critical thinking development.
- Get to know the methods of critical thinking and gradually develop the skill of working with the selected methods.
- Learn to work with mistakes as part of the learning process.
- Learn to make connections between familiar topics and develop the ability to share information.
- Work with different types of materials and learn to evaluate the relevance and truthfulness of sources.
- Learn to reflect on the acquired knowledge in the form of discussion, debate, etc.
- Learn to take responsibility for the results of your learning and work.



## 4. Concepts

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Based on professional literature, 5 sub-areas of critical thinking development were chosen. We chose to define them through the lens of the pedagogical process.

- 1. A safe and accepting environment for pupils.** For the development of critical thinking, schoolwork without stress, anxiety and fear of making a mistake is essential. It is essential to work with pupils' expectations and ideas. A teacher is not just an expert, an "owner" of knowledge and skills, but rather a guide.
- 2. Motivating pupils to work, supporting a research approach to learning.** Here we are already in the phase of activation and evocation. There is substantial work with pupils' preconceptions, support for sharing and mutual learning. The introduction to the topic is realized in contexts. Discussions and interactive methods of working with individuals and groups are used.
- 3. Support in the assimilation and accommodation of knowledge** (according to J. Piaget). Through further work, the student integrates new information into his/her knowledge system or modifies his/her current thought framework according to the information currently found. We are in the analysis phase (in the broadest sense of the word). The teacher supports the pupil in active work with the materials, teaches him to distinguish the essential from the unessential, and to distinguish the relevance of the findings. It helps in the application of higher-order thinking or applying more complex thought operations.
- 4. Work with a reflection.** In the phase of knowledge application, ways of thinking for further work are acquired. This subfield is often neglected in contemporary education, but experts often point out that it is one of the most important moments of the pedagogical process. Here, the student practically uses the newly acquired skills and knowledge, he can use them in contexts and in the long term.
- 5. Student's responsibility for own learning.** If the teacher applies the principles of the concept of critical thinking, the student gradually becomes independent in learning, he can choose the methods and principles of learning that suit him, he makes his own decisions and also takes social responsibility for his own steps in life.

# 5. Methodology

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Critical thinking is independent thinking. In a classroom where critical thinking is taught, everyone creates their own opinions, values, and beliefs. Students can only think critically for themselves. Therefore, an inevitable condition for critical thinking is the relation between individual ownership and ideas. Students and pupils must feel the freedom to think for themselves, to decide on complex issues that concern them (Klooster, 2020).

The aim will therefore be to develop abilities and skills which are closely related to the concept of critical thinking through:

- a) Promoting a **free and safe environment** for creating and expressing one's own ideas.
- b) The use of **modern pedagogical methods** which activate students, give them space, support them in the development of more complex thought operations, are often interactive, and promote discussion and cooperation in teaching units.
- c) Implementing a variety of **experiential activities** for classes or study groups.

The development of such skills (or rather that of the effective implementation of the goals which develop critical thinking) is one of the great challenges for the school in the 21st century (Sieglová, 2019).

- **The first session (1 hour).** The first 15 minutes of the session should be used for doing the assessment tool pre-assessment questionnaire to the students. After the questionnaire, 15 minutes of class time will be used to introduce what critical thinking is and what is important for the learning of these skills (a safe and accepting environment for pupils, motivation to learn, support in the assimilation and accommodation of knowledge, reflection of activities, responsibility for own learning). The teacher then divides the pupils into three groups (20 min.). Choose a topic, e.g. animals living in zoos vs. animals living in the wild and meeting their needs for a good life. Each group is given two texts and two photos of animals (one from the wild, and one from the zoo). Students will work on the concept E-R-R. Teachers have to explain the principle of the methods to the pupils at the beginning of the activity. In the evocation phase, one group uses brainstorming, the second uses a mind map, and the third uses free writing. In the realization of the meaning stage, every group uses the I.N.S.E.R.T. method.

# 5. Methodology

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- Afterwards, there will be a reflection with the pupils (10 min.). Students will look for arguments, distinguish fact from opinion, and be willing to change their minds based on arguments e.g. by cube method.
- **Second session (1 hour)**. The first 5 minutes will be devoted to reviewing critical thinking methods. In the next 10 minutes, students will brainstorm the topic of fake news. What do they know about fake news? What are the characteristics of fake news? How does it work with readers' emotions? The teacher writes (and completes) the information by writing on the board. Then divide the pupils or students into groups of 3-4. The groups are given a shocking text with a picture. Their task will be to decide whether it is fake news or not and why (15 min.). This is followed by a discussion (15 min.) on what makes fake news: shocking headline, large letters, illustrative photo or photo montage, unknown source, unreliable source, personal opinions, etc. This is followed by an assessment of whether the news was true or false. The final 15 minutes will be devoted to how to verify the information: checking claims in texts, searching reputable and news websites and comparing information, searching for information in professional print publications and journals. Homework: Choose one article on the internet and critically evaluate whether or not it is fake news. Support your claim with arguments.
- **Third session (1 hour)**. This lesson will focus on methods and strategies for effective learning, as these are very important for critical thinking. The first 10 minutes will be used for free writing on the topic. How do I learn? E.g. What works and doesn't work for me? Then students will be divided into groups of 4-5 to exchange ideas amongst themselves. Together they will write on the prepared paper what works or doesn't work for everyone and what only works for someone (25 min.). Why do students think certain techniques work or don't work? Afterward, the exchange of views with each other will take (15 min.). The teacher summarizes the information and shows students Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve. The teacher will explain how human memory works, followed by watching the video 13 Study Tips: The Science of Better Learning for learning tips (can be used as a summary, 10 min.). Homework: Students or pupils will try to put into practice some of the learning tips you have learned today.

## 5. Methodology

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- **Final session (1 hour).** The final lesson will be devoted to summarizing the information students have learned about critical thinking. The teacher asks the students what they remember from the lessons, what they found important, what surprised them, and what methods of learning and critical thinking they will use in the future (15 min.). This is followed by handing out the cognitive bias chart and some selected points the teacher can zoom in on (the survivor fallacy, stereotyping, anchoring, etc.) to give a prompt for further study for those already interested at their discretion (25 min.). This is followed by the distribution of the post-questionnaire and its completion (20 min).





## 6. Evaluation

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The development of critical thinking is a long-term process and should start from childhood. Critical thinking enables people to think independently, and rationally and helps them to understand the logical connections between thoughts. It is a way of thinking and questioning things that will help pupils and students make better decisions in their future lives.

A questionnaire will be used as an evaluation tool. A pre-questionnaire will be distributed at the first meeting to find out what students know about the topic of critical thinking. This will be followed by two hours of practical activities aimed at developing skills in critical thinking, which will be conducted in an experiential way. In the last session, students will again receive a post-questionnaire which will allow the teacher to assess the progress of the students.

The pre- and post-questionnaire for students of the critical thinking didactic unit will have the following questions:

1. What is critical thinking and what are the sub-areas of its development?
2. What critical thinking methods do you know?
3. How do you distinguish true from false information?
4. What methods do you know for effective learning?
5. Where you would look for sources to verify information?

# 7. Additional resources

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- **CRITICAL THINKING - Fundamentals: Introduction to Critical Thinking [HD]:**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cum3k-WgIfw&list=PLtKNX4SfKpzX\\_bhh4LOEWEGy3pkLmFDmk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cum3k-WgIfw&list=PLtKNX4SfKpzX_bhh4LOEWEGy3pkLmFDmk)
- **Critical Thinking: Why, How Examples:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBAdfJye2QU>
- **Critical Thinking Part 1: A Valuable Argument:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSZ3BUru59A> (and other videos by <https://www.youtube.com/@techNyouvids>)
- **Critical thinking Cube:** <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1583>
- **Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve:** <https://elearningindustry.com/forgetting-curve-combat>
- **Mind Mapping | Teaching Strategies #3:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCjFipyRE>
- **Understanding Arguments (Episode 1.2.)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPgJCMd9a6k>
- **What is Critical Thinking? (Episode 1.1.)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0yEAE5owWw>
- **5 tips to improve your critical thinking - Samantha Agoos:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dltUGF8GdTw>
- **13 Study Tips: The Science of Better Learning:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVlvxHJdqI8>

## 8. Bibliography

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- Kognitivní zkreslení: <https://www.krimys.cz/kriticke-mysleni/>



# **DIDACTIC UNIT 3.**

## **EMOTIONAL SELF- AWARENESS**



# 1. Introduction

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Self-awareness in the classroom is a key component of social emotional learning. Without the ability to recognise your feelings, you cannot control them. This inevitably influence your disposition both personally and socially. The ability to understand what may trigger different reactions means you can handle them to be more productive, happy, and healthy.

Emotional self-awareness is not something that you achieve once and then you are done with it. Rather, every moment is an opportunity to either be self-aware or not. Why is it important to teach students to recognise these things within themselves? Social-emotional learning emphasises skills that help students manage their emotions and behaviours along with connecting with others.

It is extremely important for teachers and students to understand and talk about how learning and thinking differences affect daily life. Self-awareness means recognising positives as well as negatives. Often young students do not know their strengths, or they are not yet able to articulate their interests and skills. Helping youth identify and use their strengths is critical: it is a way to motivate them to develop the skills they need to succeed in the school environment and later in life.

Self-awareness facilitates the learning process and personal self-knowledge and strengthens the relationship between teachers and students by:

- Pointing out the positives (try to correct the students' misconceptions. Humor can help redirect this way of thinking).
- Fostering a balanced perspective (find a balance between helping students gain self-awareness and making them self-conscious)
- Discouraging comparisons (help students resist comparing themselves to friends or siblings)
- Providing opportunities for independence (becoming more independent is part of being self-aware).



## 2. Objectives

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The objectives of this didactic unit enhance the ability to explore personality and learning styles in a more concrete way. These facilitate the opportunity:

- To define and assimilate the implications of emotional self-awareness
- To understand the influences of self-awareness in relation with assumptions and biases
- To improve the knowledge on emotion regulation and self-action to achieve performance
- To improve ability to respond to change
- To recognise and understand the levels of self-awareness



# 3. Competences

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Competences provide teachers and students with a common way to harmonise, select and develop talent. Competences accompany learning outcomes and support the teaching materials being integrated in specific course lessons. There are specific contexts in which students take as much time as they need to learn, practice, and review a skill until they have shown complete competency with it, without moving on to new ones that they might not be ready to learn.

When students master a skill, they often have a long-lasting understanding of it and can apply the skill in multiple contexts, situations, and other problems. Wasted time and resources can lead to complacency, frustration, and ultimately burnout for both teachers and students. This didactic unit has both generic and specific competences.

## **Generic competences:**

- Development of emotional self-awareness
- Good understanding on the influences of self-awareness in relation with assumptions and biases
- Practicing self-awareness inside and outside the classroom

## **Specific competences:**

- Demonstrating self-awareness, regulate and control the impact of emotions
- Recognising and avoiding assumptions and biases
- Improving the ability to respond to change
- Distinguish between assumptions and biases
- Mastering self-action to achieve performance

## 4. Concepts

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The concepts or cognitive units of meaning to be worked on with the students in the development of this didactic unit are defined and support the autonomy over the learning process. This aspect promotes an equitable learning environment and enables teachers and students to learn at their own pace and thus provides better flexibility of education.

Considering the research and conclusions made by experts in emotional intelligence, the following 5 specific sub-areas can be used to demonstrate self-awareness:

1. **Regulate and control the impact of emotions** - Emotion regulation is the ability to exert control over one's own emotional state. It may involve behaviours such as rethinking a challenging situation to reduce anger or anxiety, hiding visible signs of sadness or fear, or focusing on reasons to feel happy or calm.
2. **Avoid assumptions and biases** - This is the crucial skill required to differentiate between: assumption as a thing that is accepted as true or as certain to happen, without proof; and bias as an inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair.
3. **Levels of self-awareness** - One major theory of self-awareness, developed by Philippe Rochat, PhD, suggests that there are five levels of self-awareness.
  - a. Differentiation
  - b. Situation
  - c. Identification
  - d. Permanence
  - e. Self-consciousness
  - The first step for teaching self-awareness is to make students aware of what it means and why it will help them to be successful in the classroom.
4. **Self-action to achieve performance** - Being able to "manage yourself" to achieve performance is an attribute for individuals who are well organised, understand their role and are always looking to increase their skills.
5. **Improve ability to respond to change** - Being able to step back and observe the singular change/transition within "the bigger picture" of your life up to that point helps to moderate how you think and feel about a certain event. In order to become self-aware, students need to be taught how to think about their own feelings, thoughts, and behaviours.

# 5. Methodology

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The methodology facilitates the teaching-learning process and promotes the most effective methods of assimilating information through practice and entertainment. It summarises the key steps for both teachers and students and makes learning in the classroom but also outside a method of relaxation and collective involvement. Concepts such as "learning by doing" or "student-centered approach" are integrated into the methodological process. It is a hands-on approach to learning, meaning students must interact with their environment in order to adapt and learn. A set of practical, friendly, and attractive activities will be demonstrated in the classroom and at home (as homework). The indoor-outdoor method is the "foundation" in this methodological process and facilitates the learning sessions.

The methodological process of teaching and learning is supported in this didactic unit by four independent sessions of skills development.

The sessions will be carried out as follows:

- **First session (1 hour). Introduction, Pre-assessment & Learning objectives**

The first 10 minutes of this session are dedicated to the pre-assessment tool: the teachers share the (already prepared) pre-assessment questionnaire with the students. Once finalised the pre-assessment process, the teachers continue by introducing the main objectives of this didactic unit, mentioning the practical activities and positive influences of the social-emotional learning, but also by emphasising the learning benefits that this didactic unit offers to students. No more than 30 minutes should be used for this part of the session. The last 20 minutes focus on the students' emotions and behaviours along with connecting with others. This part of the session facilitates self-awareness and clarifies each student's way of action depending on the context. The teacher groups the students in pairs and asks them to reflect and answer some questions by identifying similarities and/or differences. The teacher concludes the first session by summarising the main ideas but also by encouraging the students to further reflect on the benefits of being self-aware.

- **Second session (1 hour). Group dynamics and practical learning**

The second session focuses on interactivity, communication, and student activity in the classroom. This session aims to demonstrate the full benefits of 3 practical activities. Each activity should have 15 minutes of "work" plus 5 mins of conclusions. The 1st activity is directed to emotion regulation and plans to help students to know themselves better, and to be aware of their behavioral reactions and feelings. This 1st activity is built around self-awareness and personality.

## 5. Methodology

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At the end, they will reflect on how they can avoid irony as a negative consequence of humour.

The 2nd activity is about understanding and avoiding assumptions and biases. This will be delivered in a practical and interactive way. The students will be divided into two groups. They will reflect on a given context.

The interactivity of the activity is given by the fact that each group mimics the found solution and the other group will guess what they thought of and vice versa.

The 3rd activity is played around the different levels of self-awareness. A “Self-awareness worksheet” including five areas will be given to every student. They will have to take advantage of their self-consciousness, identify, and differentiate between their strengths and weaknesses. A collective debate will take place to summarise the main findings.

### • **Third session (1 hour). Practice and exercise for self-awareness performance**

The third session is focused on practical exercises to build paths to self-action.

The 1st activity should last 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for conclusions, and it is dedicated to self-action to achieve performance. It is mainly about turning negative aspects into positive ones.

The 2nd activity is about improving the ability to respond to change, and it should last 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for conclusions.

Teachers will ask students to divide into two groups: a group must think and present a major change that they intend to make in that class (for instance to stop taking notes on a notebook but directly on a laptop, phone, or PC).

The other group will find strong arguments for opposing or not this change and justify their decision with concrete results. A collective debate will take place to summarise the main findings.

### • **Final session (1 hour). Final questionnaire/post-evaluation, general feedback and conclusions**

The final session is directed to the post-assessment, overall feedback, and key takeaways. The students have 10 minutes to answer the post-assessment questionnaire. Then they have 30 minutes to create a collective checklist about what is and what is not self-awareness about.

Once finalised and shared, in the last 20 mins the teachers will ask students to draw an emoji to express their feelings after the sessions (for instance a smiling face or an unhappy one).



## 6. Evaluation

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A pre-post questionnaire will be used as an assessment tool. Pre and post questionnaire is designed to measure the students' growth in knowledge of a particular topic. The whole point of the pre and post questionnaire is not only to guide the content of the didactic unit but also to track the students' progression and hopefully their growth!

This initial testing will assist you in understanding the students' weaknesses and the students who may need an extra challenge when this didactic unit is covered in the classroom.

Post testing is seen as a process of "confirming" the progress achieved following the delivery and assimilation of the content and activities of this didactic unit. The questions are based on the objectives and the learning outcomes to be achieved after the implementation of the didactic unit.

Below you can find the pre and post questionnaire for students tailored to the didactic unit on self-awareness:

1. What does self-awareness mean to you?
2. Do you think having a good level of self-awareness helps in educational flexibility? Why and how?
3. What is the last situation where self-awareness helped you make the right decision? Did it help you avoid a problem? Was it related to friends, schoolmates, or family?
4. Give 3 examples of contexts in which self-awareness is crucial. What barriers might arise in expressing self-awareness?
5. If you had to give a piece of advice to those around you about self-awareness, what would it be? Why?

# 7. Additional resources

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- **Self-Awareness for Kids. (n.d).** [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yWgddTi5g0>
- **Petrosillo, M. (2022, March 9). Teaching Self Awareness in the Classroom: What Elementary Teachers Need to Know in 2022. Clutter-Free Classroom | by Jodi Durgin.** <https://jodidurgin.com/teaching-self-awareness-in-the-classroom/>
- **Self-Awareness in the Classroom. (2021, April 4). The Social Emotional Teacher.** <https://www.thesocialemotionalteacher.com/self-awareness-in-the-classroom/>
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- **Self Awareness : Know your Inner Potential. (n.d).** [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). Retrieved February 9, 2023, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pv5j2WY2goY>
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# **DIDACTIC UNIT 4.**

## **EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL**



# 1. Introduction

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Emotional self-control is the ability to manage disturbing emotions and remain effective, even in stressful situations. In Daniel Goleman's framework of Emotional Intelligence, the goal is to 'Self-Regulate' and to exhibit 'Emotional Self-Control'. When we are working on regulating our emotional reactions and building Emotional Self-Control, it is important to remember: our reactions are not always rooted in the present. Demonstrating emotional self-control does not mean we suppress or avoid our emotions. On the contrary, this competency begins by cultivating greater Emotional self-awareness.

Emotional self-control is the ability to regulate your responses to avoid undesirable behaviours, increase desirable ones, and achieve long-term goals. Practicing self-control allows you to improve it over time. However, self-control in the short term is limited. Teaching self-control in the classroom to students is quite arguably one of our biggest jobs as educators. Self-control is related to everything! Self-control refers to your ability to manage your behaviour to achieve goals, improve positive outcomes, and avoid negative consequences.

Having self-control helps students and teachers in all areas of life. But it is especially important when it comes to socialising. Being in control of their actions and reactions helps students fit in and make friends.

Self-control facilitates the learning process and personal self-knowledge and strengthens the relationship between teachers and students by enhancing:

- Movement control (students are not constantly moving in inappropriate ways called hyperactivity)
- Impulse control (students put on "mental brakes" and stop and think before doing or saying something)
- Emotional control (students can keep going even when upsetting or unexpected things happen)



## 2. Objectives

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The objectives of this didactic unit enhance the ability to explore personality and learning styles in a more concrete way. These facilitate the opportunity:

- To define and assimilate the implications of emotional self-control
- To understand the influences of self-control in relation with decision fatigue
- To improve the knowledge on emotional regulation and aversive stimulation
- To demonstrate a balance between self-discipline and stress management
- To recognise and understand the internal and external stressors that impact self-control



# 3. Competences

Competences provide teachers and students with a common way to harmonise, select and develop talent. Competences accompany learning outcomes and support the teaching materials being integrated in specific course lessons. There are specific contexts in which students take as much time as they need to learn, practice, and review a skill until they have shown complete competency with it, without moving on to new ones that they might not be ready to learn.

When students master a skill, they often have a long-lasting understanding of it and can apply the skill in multiple contexts, situations, and other problems. Wasted time and resources can lead to complacency, frustration, and ultimately burnout for both teachers and students. This didactic unit has both generic and specific competences.

## **Generic competencies:**

- Development of emotional self-control inside and outside the classroom
- Good management of internal and external stressors that impact self-control
- Practicing self-discipline

## **Specific competencies:**

- Demonstrating self-control and self-discipline in stressful situations
- Recognising internal and external stressors that impact self-control
- Assimilating emotional conditions and acting accordingly
- Distinguish between resisting temptation and stressful situations
- Mastering self-control in meaningful and productive debates

## 4. Concepts

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The concepts or cognitive units of meaning to be worked on with the students in the development of this didactic unit are defined and support the autonomy over the learning process. This aspect promotes an equitable learning environment and enables students to learn at their own pace & thus providing better flexibility of education.

Considering the research and conclusions made by experts in emotional intelligence, the following 5 specific sub-areas can be used to demonstrate self-control:

1. **Decision fatigue in self-control** - Self-control has important implications for good decision-making. Decision fatigue harms this ability. If possible, avoid making important decisions at the end of the day when your brain is exhausted. For instance, too much homework can decrease the student's motivation to continue the learning process.
2. **Emotional regulation and aversive stimulation** - Emotional regulation refers to the process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express their feelings. Aversive stimulation is used as a means of increasing or decreasing the likelihood of target behaviour.
3. **Emotional self-discipline for stress management** - This is the ability to push yourself forward, stay motivated, and take action, regardless of how you are feeling, physically or emotionally. It can be practiced through school and extracurricular activities.
4. **Internal and external stressors that impact the self-control** - The school system involves a series of internal and external stress factors for teachers and students. Self-control plays a big role in learning to manage stress. Self-control helps you to handle both internal and external stressors tailored to personal feelings and emotions in difficult situations.
5. **Creating a “calm-down kit”** - Create a “calm-down kit” with items students enjoy. These kits can be customised based on students and based on what works for the classroom environment. The goal is simply to provide students options to help calm, self-control and regulate themselves as they become more aware of their emotional responses during the school day.

# 5. Methodology

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The methodology facilitates the teaching-learning process and promotes the most effective methods of assimilating information through practice and entertainment. It summarises the key steps for both teachers and students and makes learning in the classroom but also outside a method of relaxation and collective involvement. Concepts such as "learning by doing" or "student-centered approach" are integrated into the methodological process. It is a hands-on approach to learning, meaning students must interact with their environment in order to adapt and learn. A set of practical, friendly, and attractive activities will be demonstrated in the classroom and at home (as homework). The indoor-outdoor method is the "foundation" in this methodological process and facilitates the learning sessions.

The methodological process of teaching and learning is supported in this didactic unit by four independent sessions of skills development. The sessions will be carried out as follows:

- **First session (1 hour). Introduction, Pre-assessment & Learning objectives**

The first 10 minutes of this session are dedicated to the pre-assessment tool: the teachers share the (already prepared) pre-assessment questionnaire with the students. Once finalised the pre-assessment process, the teachers continue by introducing the main objectives of this didactic unit, mentioning the practical activities and positive influences of the social-emotional learning, but also by emphasising the learning benefits that this didactic unit offers to students. No more than 30 minutes should be used for this part of the session. The last 20 minutes focus on the students' emotional regulation along with connecting with others. This part of the session facilitates self-control and clarifies each student's way of action depending on the context. The teacher plays a song. Students will dance while the music plays, and when the music stops, students will freeze. This is a great opportunity for students to be very mindful of their movements and practice body control. The teacher concludes the first session by summarising the main ideas but also by encouraging the students to further reflect on the benefits of being self-controlled.

- **Second session (1 hour). Group dynamics and practical learning**

The second session focuses on interactivity, communication, and student activity in the classroom. This session aims to demonstrate the full benefits of 3 practical activities. Each activity should have 15 minutes of "work" plus 5 mins of conclusions.

# 5. Methodology

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The 1st activity is directed to decision fatigue in self-control and plans to help students to know themselves better, and to be aware of their behavioral reactions and feelings. This 1st activity is built around self-control. A “Self-control worksheet” will be distributed to students. It will include some approaches for “this is self-control” and “this is NOT self-control”. Students will be divided into two groups, and they will cut the boxes at the bottom out and put them in one of the two columns where they belong. At the end, they will reflect on their ability to identify self-control situations. The 2nd activity is about emotional regulation and aversive stimulation. This will be delivered in a practical and interactive way. The students will be divided into two groups. They will reflect on a given list of reactions for out of and in control. At the end, they will reflect on how they experience and express their feelings.

The 3rd activity is played around emotional self-discipline for stress management. A worksheet named “My Stress Bubbles” will be given to every student. They will have to fill each bubble with something that makes them stressed and angry. They will use the bigger bubbles for things that make them more stressed and the smaller bubbles for things that make them a little bit stressed.

## • **Third session (1 hour). Practice and exercise for self-control performance**

The third session is focused on practical exercises to build paths to self-action. The 1st activity should last 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for conclusions, and it is dedicated to internal and external stressors that impact self-control. Teachers give students a worksheet including the main internal and external stressors.

After ticking the stressors, the students will create a Stress Plan. The 2nd activity is about creating a “calm-down kit”, and it should last 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for conclusions. Students will practice several methods to calm down during the school day when feelings get out of control. A collective debate will take place to summarise the main findings.

## • **Final session (1 hour). Final questionnaire/post-evaluation, general feedback and conclusions.**

The final session is directed to the post-assessment, overall feedback, and key takeaways. The students have 10 minutes to answer the post-assessment questionnaire. Then they have 30 minutes to create a collective checklist about what is and what is not self-control about. Once finalised and shared, in the last 20 mins the teachers will ask students to draw an emoji to express their feelings after the sessions (for instance a smiling face or an unhappy one).



## 6. Evaluation

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A pre-post questionnaire will be used as an assessment tool. Pre and post questionnaire is designed to measure the students' growth in knowledge of a particular topic. The whole point of the pre and post questionnaire is not only to guide the content of the didactic unit but also to track the students' progression and hopefully their growth!

This initial testing will assist you in understanding the students' weaknesses and the students who may need an extra challenge when this didactic unit is covered in the classroom.

Post testing is seen as a process of "confirming" the progress achieved following the delivery and assimilation of the content and activities of this didactic unit. The questions are based on the objectives and the learning outcomes to be achieved after the implementation of the didactic unit.

Below you can find the pre and post questionnaire for students tailored to the didactic unit on self-awareness:

1. What does self-control mean to you?
2. Do you think having a good level of self-control helps in educational flexibility? Why and how?
3. What is the last situation where self-control helped you make the right decision? Did it help you avoid a problem? Was it related to friends, schoolmates, or family?
4. Give 3 examples of contexts in which self-control is crucial. What barriers might arise in expressing self-control?
5. If you had to give a piece of advice to those around you about self-control, what would it be? Why?

# 7. Additional resources

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- **Teaching self-control.** <https://parentingscience.com/teaching-self-control/>
- **Self Control: Teaching Students About Their Greatest Inner Strength with Nathan DeWall.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2jYdEO18nU>
- **Teaching Self-Control in the Classroom.**  
<https://heartandmindteaching.com/2021/10/teaching-self-control-in-the-classroom.html>
- **How To Model & Teach The Art Of Self-Control In Your Classroom.**  
<https://stanfield.com/teach-self-control/>
- **Research every teacher should know: self-control and learning.**  
<https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2018/feb/08/research-every-teacher-should-know-self-control-and-learning>
- **Why do students lack self control in the classroom?**  
<https://longafterthebellrings.com/why-do-students-lack-self-control/>



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<https://confidentcounselors.com/2017/11/13/self-control-strategies-classroom/>



# **DIDACTIC UNIT 5.**

## **EMPATHY**



# 1. Introduction

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Empathy is a state of mind or feeling that one can feel the same as other people in terms of opinion, emotion, thought or argument (Donnerstein et al., 1975). Empathy skills allow one to have a mindset of respect for the feelings of others and to be considerate of them. Empathy suppresses threatening behaviour, induces altruistic behaviour, and plays a decisive role in fostering emotional bonding among group members (Singer, 2006). Thus, it could be considered as an essential factor to coexist with others.

In other words, empathy is related to perspective-taking, sympathy, and personal discomfort. Perspective-taking refers to the tendency to adopt the cognitive point of view of the other; sympathy to the tendency to care about or feel concerned for the other; and finally, personal discomfort to the tendency to feel uneasy or uncomfortable in tense interpersonal spaces involving others and their needs (Eisenberg et al., 1995; Eisenberg, 2000a; Hoffman, 1987; Underwood and Moore, 1982). Several studies focused on analysing empathy have shown its special relevance in the infant-juvenile stage, since this is when personality is built and the way of feeling, thinking and acting within group norms is developed.

The benefits of empathy are manifested:

- In the way of being: it improves positive self-concept.
- In the way of feeling: it helps to have greater emotional stability and to connect with other people's emotions, both negative and positive.
- In the way of thinking: it helps us to understand how others think and feel.
- In the way of acting: it improves social adaptation, favouring cooperative and prosocial behaviour, and reducing violent behaviour (bullying or cyber bullying).

Putting meaningful leempathy should be addressed as a positive and favourable strategy to initiate a timely and initiate a timely holistic development of students from within the education system. Empathy facilitates the understanding of ideas and concepts, as well as establishing a close relationship between emotions and academic results, building knowledge through the articulation of the feelings of others, demonstrating that it is possible to learn in socio-educational environments by developing intrapersonal intelligence.

## 2. Objectives

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The objectives show what the students will acquire after the development of this didactic unit.

- Understand the concept of empathy and its influence on personal and educational development.
- Learn and differentiate the 5 selected types of empathy (cognitive, emotional, sympathy, ecpathy, and empathy for animals).
- Promote respect, cooperation and empathy. Students learn to relate to others in a respectful and positive way, and learn to cooperate and collaborate with others.
- Learn to recognise and understand the opinions, behaviours, and feelings of oneself and others.
- Learn to listen actively to others.
- To put into practice activities and tools to improve the ability to empathise with other people and with animals.





# 3. Competences

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Competences enable students to integrate their learning, relate it to different types of content and use it effectively when needed in different situations and contexts. Competences and objectives are closely interconnected as reaching the lesson's objectives means having succeeded in developing the students' competences in that particular area.

- Know the characteristics that define empathetic people.
- Develop the capacity to be empathetic towards other people and animals.
- Develop the ability to understand and recognise one's own and other people's opinions, behaviour and feelings.
- Develop the ability to be helpful and cooperative with others.
- Developing the ability to actively listen to others.



## 4. Concepts

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Afterwards, the concepts or cognitive units of meaning to be worked on with the students in the development of this didactic unit are defined. This aspect refers to presenting the students theoretical aspects connected to a particular area.

The concepts, which will be included in the emotional intelligence subject, related to empathy are:

1. **Cognitive empathy.** Gallagher and Frith (2003) define it as the ability to explain and predict the behaviour of oneself and others by attributing to them independent mental states, such as beliefs, desires or intentions.
2. **Emotional empathy.** The affective component of empathy is a vicarious or shared feeling for another person's emotional experience; this can lead to positive feelings and behaviours such as compassion and altruism, or to negative emotional experiences such as distress and aversion (Davis, 1980, 1983; Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987).
3. **Sympathy or empathic concern.** Sympathy is a concern for the experience of others, which arises from being able to identify and feel it in one's own skin, and which often results in helping (prosocial) behaviour. It is therefore a further step in the empathic process.
4. **Ecpathy.** Ecpathy is a new complementary term to empathy, which allows the appropriate handling of emotional contagion and induced feelings. While empathy is "putting oneself in the other's place", ecpathy is "putting oneself in one's own place", both qualities are necessary.
5. **Empathy for animals.** This type of empathy is related to biophilia. Biophilia is the innate emotional connection we feel for other living things. Animal empathy is the ability to identify the basic emotions of animals and to learn to respect and care for them.

# 5. Methodology

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The methodology that will be followed to carry out this didactic unit will be active and participative. Students will "learn by doing" and "applying knowledge" through a series of individual and group practical activities. Some of the activities will be carried out in the classroom and others will be reinforcement activities. During the development of the didactic unit, teachers will have to put special emphasis on students developing their own learning, including the use of ICT, collaborative work and attention to diversity.

This didactic unit will have a duration of 4 sessions. The sessions will be carried out as follows:

- **First session (1 hour).** The first 10 minutes of the session should be used for doing the assesment tool: pre-assessment questionnaire to the students. After the questionnaire, 20 minutes of class time will be used to introduce what empathy is, objectives to achieve and to explain the concepts (cognitive empathy, emotional empathy, sympathy, ecpathy and empathy for animals). Teachers can use resources such as videos, presentations... for this purpose. The next 20 minutes are for research groups. Ideally there should be no more than 5 participants per team to create the working groups of students. Students have to research why it is important to develop empathy, what types of empathy there are and how empathy influences the personal and educational context of people. The last 10 minutes of the class will be for students to discuss in groups what the results of their research have been. In addition, the teacher will ask students to do a reinforcement activity at home. This activity will be an observation activity. Students have to observe empathic behaviours in people.
- **Second session (1 hour).** The second session will be developed in a more practical way, the aim is for the students to internalise each area in a dynamic way, in which the students are the protagonists of their learning. In the first 5 minutes of the class, the teacher will summarise what has been worked on in the previous session. After 3 practical activities will be carried out. The first activity will be a ROLE-PLAY (20 minutes). In this activity the educational technique of dramatisation is used, which is very effective for working on empathy. The students will be divided into four teams, and each group will have to act out a scene.

## 5. Methodology

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- The second activity (15 minutes) will be a body expression game. Each student will have to gesturally represent an emotion and the others will have to guess it. The third activity will be "your problems are my problems" (20 minutes). Each student will anonymously write down a problem they have and the others will have to comment on possible solutions to that problem, trying to put themselves in that person's shoes. In addition, the teacher will ask students to do a reinforcement activity at home. This activity will be "chain of favours". Each student at home has to help/collaborate with their family members.
- **Third session (1 hour).** This third session will also take place in a practical and active way, the aim being for the students to internalise each area in a dynamic way. In the first 5 minutes of the class, the teacher will summarise what has been worked on in the previous session. The first activity will be the development of a debate among the students. Debate is understood as a situation or communicative technique in which two or more subjects express, share and even confront each other with their opinions and perspectives on a given, usually controversial, topic. The second activity will be to introduce a mascot in the classroom, With this activity students learn values in a playful way, including the development of empathy. In addition, the teacher will ask students to do a reinforcement activity at home. The last reinforcement activity will be: "conversations with parents". This activity consists of the children having to ask their parents questions to listen them.
- **Final session (1 hour).** This is the last session on empathy. To close this didactic unit, it is necessary to do the final conclusions and the post-evaluation questionnaire. First of all, the teacher has to ask all the students what they have worked on during the 3 sessions and let them explain it. Then the teacher will have to ask the students a series of questions such as: what they have learned, what they liked the most, what they liked the least, and if they feel that it has helped them to be more empathetic with others and with animals. Finally, the final 15 minutes of the class will be used to do the post-questionnaire shown in the next section.

## 6. Evaluation

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A pre-post questionnaire will be used as an assessment tool. A pre-post evaluation measures the change over time taking into account the initial state of the group of students. In this case, impact is measured as the difference between the situation before and the situation after an intervention. In other words, this type of evaluation makes it possible to take into account the school level with which the students started before the beginning of the didactic unit and what learning they have obtained after the implemented sessions. The questions are based on: the objectives and the learning outcomes to be achieved after the implementation of the didactic unit.

This assessment tool will be used as a pre- and post-questionnaire for students to assess learning related to the didactic unit on empathy:

1. How would you explain what the concept of empathy means?
2. What types of empathy do you know and what does each type of empathy mean to you?
3. Give 3 examples of how you can show empathy for others. Why is it important to cooperate with people?
4. When a person is telling you something, in what ways can you show empathy?
5. What aspects of your personal and educational development are influenced by empathy?

It is expected that after the development of the 4 sessions on empathy the students will improve in the competences established in this didactic unit and the objectives set will be achieved.



# 7. Additional resources

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- **Sparking Empathy in Youth/Alison Brand & Marissa Getts.**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKpWYi6j55w>
- **How to Teach Empathy in the Classroom**  
<https://www.graduateprogram.org/2021/01/how-to-teach-empathy-in-the-classroom/>
- **How to Build Empathy and Strengthen Your School Community**  
<https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-educators/how-build-empathy-strengthen-school-community>
- **Teaser/The Diversity of Empathy**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urpDWKEhfFM>
- **The Power of Empathy | Audrey Moore | TEDxYouth@SHC**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HLPABYNcso>
- **Empathy in the Classroom: Why Should I Care?**  
<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/empathy-classroom-why-should-i-care-lauren-owen>





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# DIDACTIC UNIT 6.

## MOTIVATION



# 1. Introduction

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There are multiple definitions of motivation and different authors who define it according to the area to which the motivation refers, whether it is work, education, personal... In the following paragraphs motivation is defined in a general way with a mention to the educational field.

Trechera (2005) explained that the term motivation comes from the Latin "motus" and relates to all the internal and external aspects that lead a subject to perform an action.

According to Santrock (2002), motivation is "the set of reasons why people behave the way they do. Motivated behaviour is vigorous, directed and sustained" (p. 432). Ajello (2003) points out that motivation should be understood as the fabric that sustains the development of those activities that are meaningful to the person and in which he or she takes part. On the educational level, motivation should be considered as the positive disposition to learn and to continue to do so in an autonomous way. Motivation is essential for students to show interest in their education and willingness to learn. The more motivated a student is, the more involved they will be in their studies, the more dedication and attention they will pay to their tasks and, consequently, the easier it will be for them to achieve their academic goals.

Emotional Intelligence involves five different capabilities that are basic: discovering one's emotions and feelings, recognising them, managing them, creating motivation and dealing with personal relationships. People who know how to control their impulsivity and expect to be rewarded, achieve effectively and are satisfied with their achievements.

Motivation in learning is important because without it there will be no interest of the learner to perform the tasks involved in learning. It is therefore clearly necessary for teachers to ensure that their students keep the engine that will drive them to new knowledge running, because if they do not manage to keep their students motivated, they are likely to become blocked and thus create resistance to learning.

## 2. Objectives

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The objectives show what the students will acquire after the development of this didactic unit.

- To learn the concept of motivation.
- Understand and differentiate the 5 selected subareas of motivation (task-related goals, choice-related goals, self-esteem-related goals, social goals and external goals).
- Implement a set of action guidelines to motivate adolescents towards school learning.
- Promote a balance between different goals to encourage adolescents' interest and effort necessary to facilitate learning and other school achievements.
- Awaken the interest of adolescents by getting to know their preferences and concerns.
- Set a series of goals to achieve, create and undertake small personal projects.
- To guide the adolescents' efforts by supporting them and guiding their steps in case they need it.



# 3. Competences

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Competences enable students to integrate their learning, relate it to different types of content and use it effectively when needed in different situations and contexts. Competences and objectives are closely interconnected as reaching the lesson's objectives means having succeeded in developing the students' competences in motivational area.

- Learn the concept of motivation.
- Learn to differentiate the 5 types of goals that are worked on in this module.
- Learn to know one's own interests, preferences and concerns.
- Learn how to set different types of goals.
- Learn how to motivate oneself through different sources of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation).
- Learn to show interest and effort for the objectives to be achieved.
- Learning to be responsible in order to obtain the results one intends to achieve.



## 4. Concepts

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Afterwards, the concepts or cognitive units of meaning to be worked on with the students in the development of this didactic unit are defined. This aspect refers to presenting the students theoretical aspects connected to a particular area.

The concepts, which will be included in the emotional intelligence subject, related to motivation are:

- 1. Task-related goals.** This category includes two types of goals: 1) The desire to increase one's own competence. It is assumed that when the subject learns something - new knowledge, new skills - there is a rewarding emotional response linked to the perception of competence. 2) To feel absorbed by the nature of the task, overcoming boredom and anxiety, because of what is new and revealing about it.
- 2. Goals related to the possibility of choice.** That is, the experience that the task is "my task". The emotional experience of choosing a task is rewarding, just as the experience of being forced to do something is aversive.
- 3. Goals related to self-esteem,** Sometimes students have to perform their tasks in such a way that they reach a socially pre-established level of quality. This situation makes subjects seek one of two goals: a) To experience that they are better than others. b) Not to experience that they are worse than others. These are goaling whose achievement or non-achievement has important repercussions on self-esteem and self-concept.
- 4. Social Goals.** The goals related to this category have to do with the emotional experience that derives from the social response to one's own achievements or failures.
- 5. External Goals.** Goals related to the attainment of external rewards. In this type of goal - earning money, getting prizes, etc. - the subject makes a selective effort to achieve different accomplishments.



## 5. Methodology

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The methodology that will be followed to carry out this didactic unit will be active and participative. Students will "learn by doing" and "applying knowledge" through a series of individual and group practical activities. Some of the activities will be carried out in the classroom and others will be reinforcement activities. During the development of the didactic unit, teachers will have to put special emphasis on students developing their own learning, including the use of ICT, collaborative work and attention to diversity.

This didactic unit will have a duration of 4 sessions. The sessions will be carried out as follows:

- **First session (1 hour).** The first 15 minutes of the session should be used for doing the assessment tool: pre-assessment questionnaire to the students. After the questionnaire, 25 minutes of class time will be used to introduce what motivation is, objectives to achieve and to explain the concepts (task-related goals, goals related to the possibility of choice, goals related to self-esteem, social goals and external goals). Teachers will have to explain these concepts to the students, they can use some technical support to help them, e.g. prepare a presentation or play a video. The last 20 minutes are for research groups. Students have to research why it is important to develop motivation, what types of motivation there are and how being motivated influences their personal and educational development. The first reinforcement activity that students will have to do at home with their families is the "listening space". Parents will have to ask their children a series of questions about their motivations and listen to them without judging them.
- **Second session (1 hour).** The aim of the second session is that students internalise this area in a dynamic way. The first 5 minutes of the class will be used for students to discuss what they worked on in the previous session. In motivating students, teachers and their role models play a key role through the attention and social reinforcement they give them. It is therefore essential to support and guide them in their learning process. For this purpose, 3 practical activities will be carried out in this session.

## 5. Methodology

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- The first activity (15 minutes) will be a "peer interview". They will be paired up in class and will have to ask each other a series of questions that will be set out in order to get to know themselves. The second activity (20 minutes) will be a digital questionnaire that students will have to answer in relation to their tastes, interests and abilities. The answers will be discussed together. The third activity (20 minutes) is called "Goal setting". This will be an activity in which students will have to set themselves a series of medium and long-term objectives. The reinforcement activity that students will have to do at home will be with the help of their parents/family they will have to set themselves a series of goals/tasks to achieve the objectives that have been set in class.
- **Third session (1 hour).** This session will also be developed in a practical way and the students will be the protagonists of their teaching-learning process. The first 5 minutes of the class will be used for students to discuss what they worked on in the previous session. The fourth activity (40 minutes) will be that the students will have to draw up a plan for achieving their objectives, with dates and tasks to be carried out, and with the rewards they will achieve as they reach their objectives. The last activity (15 minutes) will be the praise wheel. All the classmates will tell each other positive and encouraging things. The last reinforcement activity is "check your progress". This activity will consist of establishing a series of guidelines to check that progress is being made and to review the plan made by each student. For this activity, families also will have to collaborate with the students.
- **Final session (1 hour).** This is the last session on motivation. To close this didactic unit, it is necessary to do the final conclusions and the post-evaluation questionnaire. First of all, the teacher has to ask all the students what they have worked on during the 3 sessions and let them explain it. Then the teacher will have to ask the students a series of questions such as: what they have learned, what they liked the most, what they liked the least, and if these sessions have helped them to feel more motivated. Finally, the final 15 minutes of the class will be used to do the post-questionnaire shown in the next section.

## 6. Evaluation

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A pre-post questionnaire will be used as an assessment tool. A pre-post evaluation measures the change over time taking into account the initial state of the group of students. In this case, impact is measured as the difference between the situation before and the situation after an intervention. In other words, this type of evaluation makes it possible to take into account the school level with which the students started before the beginning of the didactic unit and what learning they have obtained after the implemented sessions. The questions are based on: the objectives and the learning outcomes to be achieved after the implementation of the didactic unit.

The assesment tool (pre- and post-questionnaire) for students of the motivation didactic unit is as follows:

- 1.How would you explain what the concept of motivation means?
- 2.What types of goals do you know?
- 3.Why do you think it is necessary to set goals and objectives?
- 4.What tools do you know that can help you to achieve your goals?
- 5.How can you check whether you are achieving your goals?

This questionnaire for the pre- and post-evaluation of students' knowledge of motivation will be used to make a comparison between what they knew before implementing the sessions and what they have learned afterwards. In addition, it will also serve to see to what extent the proposed objectives have been achieved. If they have not been achieved, this evaluation can help to improve the motivation sessions with another group of learners.



# 7. Additional resources

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Teachers could use these extra links to know more information about motivation:

- **Student Motivation: The ARCS Model**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYu90ZK2WUA>
- “Cultivating Intrinsic Motivation and Creativity in the Classroom” | Beth Hennessey | TEDxSausalito  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2eRnhBvL\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2eRnhBvL_I)
- **How to Stay Motivated for School**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1ZRZ7PagJo>
- **THE 7 SECRETS OF MOTIVATING TEENAGERS**  
<https://understandingteenagers.com.au/the-7-secrets-of-motivating-teenagers/>
- **Help Students Build Intrinsic Motivation**  
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/help-students-build-intrinsic-motivation/>
- **Motivating Students**  
<https://teach.com/what/teachers-change-lives/motivating-students/>



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# **DIDACTIC UNIT 7. PROBLEM-SOLVING**





# 1. Introduction

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Problem solving is the ability to find solutions to problems in situations where emotions are involved, and to understand how emotions impact decision making. Problem solving is associated with being conscientious, disciplined, methodical, and systematic in persevering and approaching problems. Problem-solving skills help you determine why an issue is happening and how to resolve that issue. In the real (school) world, students encounter problems that are complex, not well defined, and lack a clear solution and approach. They need to be able to identify and apply different strategies to solve these problems. It is important to create a classroom environment in which students are problem solvers.

Problem solving is not just about responding to (and fixing) the environment that exists today. It is also about innovating, creating new things and changing the environment to be more desirable. Students face almost daily problems related to other colleagues, homework, examinations, grades or even communication in class with the teacher. Problem-solving enables them to identify and exploit opportunities in the environment and practice (some level of) control over the future.

It is extremely important for teachers to help students identify specific problems, difficulties, or confusions. Problem-solving is about encouraging independence in the classroom rather than just giving students the answer. Students with good problem-solving skills are highly valued in their personal and professional lives. Problem-solving is an important 21st-century skill because it determines one's personal development, employment prospects, and overall contribution to society. Problem-solving facilitates the learning process and strengthens the relationship between teachers and students by:

- Encouraging brainstorming in a non-judgmental environment
- Pointing out a positive role model
- Strengthening the decision-making component of the problem-solving process

Have you ever wondered why students often struggle with problem solving in real life? This is because problem solving is challenging and difficult. Teaching how to solve problems is even more demanding.

To teach students problem solving skills, a teacher should be aware of principles and strategies of good problem solving in his or her discipline.

## 2. Objectives

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The objectives of this didactic unit show how to manage time properly and develop patience. They also enhance the ability to develop school, social and situational awareness in a more concrete way. These facilitate the opportunity:

- To define and assimilate the influences of problem-solving
- To understand the fact-finding skills in problem-solving
- To improve the knowledge on problem-solving by enhancing the four-step approach
- To demonstrate a balance between risk management and decision making
- To recognise the contributing factors in problem-solving and use creative thinking



# 3. Competences

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Competences provide teachers and students with a common way to harmonise, select and develop talent. Competences accompany learning outcomes and support the teaching materials being integrated in specific course lessons. There are specific contexts in which students take as much time as they need to learn, practice, and review a skill until they have shown complete competency with it, without moving on to new ones that they might not be ready to learn.

When students master a skill, they often have a long-lasting understanding of it and can apply the skill in multiple contexts, situations, and other problems. Wasted time and resources can lead to complacency, frustration, and ultimately burnout for both teachers and students. This didactic unit has both generic and specific competences.

## **Generic competencies:**

- Development of problem-solving skills
- Good management of risks and decision-making approach
- Practicing problem-solving skills inside and outside the classroom

## **Specific competencies:**

- Demonstrating problem-solving skills in different contexts
- Recognising the problems and identifying effective solutions
- Analysing data and contributing factors
- Isolating possible contributing circumstances, and pinpoint what needs to be addressed for a resolution
- Mastering creative thinking for problem-solving

## 4. Concepts

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The concepts or cognitive units of meaning to be worked on with the students in the development of this didactic unit are defined and support the autonomy over the learning process. This aspect promotes an equitable learning environment and enables students to learn at their own pace & thus provides better flexibility of education.

Considering the research and conclusions made by experts in emotional intelligence, the following 5 specific sub-areas can be used to demonstrate problem-solving skills:

- 1. Four-step problem-solving process** - This is vital in finding the solution, applying it and obtaining the desired results. Developing a step-by-step execution plan and acting effectively and decisively is the final touch in the problem-solving process.
  - Define the problem
  - Generate alternative solutions
  - Evaluate and select an alternative
  - Implement and follow up on the solution
- 2. Problem-solving and risk management** - Solving a problem involves a certain amount of risk - this risk needs to be weighed up against not solving the problem.
- 3. Decision-making on resolving the problem** - Problem solving and decision-making are closely related skills, and making a decision is an important part of the problem-solving process as you will often be faced with various options and alternatives.
- 4. Problem identification and fact-finding skills** - This stage involves: detecting and recognising that there is a problem; identifying the nature of the problem; defining the problem.
- 5. Problem-solving between contributing factors and creative thinking** - To solve a problem, you must find out what caused it. This requires you to gather and evaluate data, isolate possible contributing circumstances, and pinpoint what needs to be addressed for a resolution.

## 5. Methodology

The methodology facilitates the teaching-learning process and promotes the most effective methods of assimilating information through practice and entertainment. It summarises the key steps for both teachers and students and makes learning in the classroom but also outside a method of relaxation and collective involvement. Concepts such as "learning by doing" or "student-centered approach" are integrated into the methodological process. It is a hands-on approach to learning, meaning students must interact with their environment in order to adapt and learn. A set of practical, friendly, and attractive activities will be demonstrated in the classroom and at home (as homework). The indoor-outdoor method is the "foundation" in this methodological process and facilitates the learning sessions. The methodological process of teaching and learning is supported in this didactic unit by four independent sessions of skills development. The sessions will be carried out as follows:

- **First session (1 hour). Introduction, Pre-assessment & Learning objectives**

The first 10 minutes of this session are dedicated to the pre-assessment tool: the teachers share the (already prepared) pre-assessment questionnaire with the students. Once finalised the pre-assessment process, the teachers continue by introducing the main objectives of this didactic unit, mentioning the practical activities and positive influences of the social-emotional learning, but also by emphasising the learning benefits that this didactic unit offers to students. No more than 30 minutes should be used for this part of the session.

The last 20 minutes focus on the students' emotions and ability to identify, analyse and work out a solution. This part of the session improves cognitive and social development. The teacher divides the students into two groups and asks them to brainstorm on some given situations and come up with appropriate solutions. The teacher concludes the first session by summarising the main ideas but also by encouraging the students to further reflect on the benefits of being a problem-solver.

- **Second session (1 hour). Group dynamics and practical learning**

The second session focuses on interactivity, communication, and student activity in the classroom. This session aims to demonstrate the full benefits of 3 practical activities. Each activity should have 15 minutes of "work" plus 5 mins of conclusions. The 1st activity is directed to the main steps of the problem-solving process. This 1st activity is built around critical thinking and cognitive development.

# 5. Methodology

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The students will receive a “Problem-solver worksheet” on a specific context and they will take advantage of the four steps of the problem-solving process: define the problem; generate alternative solutions; evaluate and select an alternative; implement and follow up on the solution.

The 2nd activity is about problem-solving and risk management. This will be delivered in a practical and interactive way. The 2nd activity is about problem-solving and risk management. This will be delivered in a practical and interactive way. The students and teacher will create a medium-size box (paper, cardboard etc.) and will work out on a specific case study.

The 3rd activity is played around the decision-making process on resolving a problem. A worksheet on the “Decision-making to rate yourself” will be distributed to every student. They will have to think critically and analytically and connect their personal experience with the ability to solve a problem. A collective debate will take place to summarise the main findings.

- **Third session (1 hour). Practice and exercise for self-awareness performance**

The third session is focused on practical exercises to increase capacity to identify the nature of the problem. The 1st activity should last 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for conclusions, and it is dedicated to problem identification and fact-finding skills. In this activity, students are challenged to use their comparing skills to respond to two short scenarios. Then they will receive a list with several solutions and steps for problem-solving but also with additional statements.

They will have to cut and paste the appropriate solutions/steps to the received scenario. It is mainly about practicing their “solving skills”.

The 2nd activity is about problem-solving between contributing factors and creative thinking, and it should last 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for conclusions. Teachers will ask students to divide into two groups: a group must think and present a major problem in the school environment. The other group will analyse it and propose appropriate solutions. A collective debate will take place to summarise the main findings.

- **Final session (1 hour). Final questionnaire/post-evaluation, general feedback and conclusions.**

The final session is directed to the post-assessment, overall feedback, and key takeaways. The students have 10 minutes to answer the post-assessment questionnaire. Then they have 30 minutes to create a collective checklist about what is and what is not problem-solving about. Once finalised and shared, in the last 20 mins the teachers will ask students to draw an emoji to express their feelings after the sessions (for instance a smiling face or an unhappy one).



## 6. Evaluation

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A pre-post questionnaire will be used as an assessment tool. Pre and post questionnaire is designed to measure the students' growth in knowledge of a particular topic. The whole point of the pre and post questionnaire is not only to guide the content of the didactic unit but also to track the students' progression and hopefully their growth!

This initial testing will assist you in understanding the students' weaknesses and the students who may need an extra challenge when this didactic unit is covered in the classroom.

Post testing is seen as a process of "confirming" the progress achieved following the delivery and assimilation of the content and activities of this didactic unit. The questions are based on the objectives and the learning outcomes to be achieved after the implementation of the didactic unit.

Below you can find the pre and post questionnaire for students tailored to the didactic unit on problem-solving:

1. What does problem-solving mean to you?
2. How do you know when to solve a problem on your own or to ask for help?
3. Can you tell about a time when you predicted a problem before it occurred?
4. Give an example of a time when you had to use your creativity to solve a problem. What were the main risks?
5. If you had to give a piece of advice to those around you about problem-solving, what would it be? Why?



# 7. Additional resources

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- **The Problem-solving Classroom.** (n.d.). Nrich.maths.org.  
<https://nrich.maths.org/12779>
- **Creative Problem Solving Teaching Strategies.** (n.d.). Innovative Teaching Ideas. <https://innovativeteachingideas.com/blog/creative-problem-solving-tools-and-skills-for-students-and-teachers>
- **Problem-solving process whiteboard animation template** | VideoScribe. (n.d.). [Www.youtube.com. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzrMaxn-fL8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzrMaxn-fL8)
- **Every PROBLEM Has A SOLUTION** (Animated Story). (n.d.). [Www.youtube.com. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGexLUctMaM\(...\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGexLUctMaM(...))
- **Guiding Students to Be Independent Problem-Solvers in STEM Classrooms.** (n.d.). Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/guiding-students-be-independent-problem-solvers-stem-classrooms/>



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# **DIDACTIC UNIT 8.**

## **SOCIAL SKILLS**



# 1. Introduction

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Different definitions of the term social skills can be found in the academic literature. One of them describes a social skill as: “age-appropriate dexterity and maturity of an individual to calmly and creatively engage in the social environment” (Gillernová et Krejčová, 2012, p. 117).

An individual's social skills are evaluated by his environment, i.e. parents, teachers, peers and other persons, and there is no clear evaluation criterion. The evaluation depends on the amount of use of adequate forms of social behavior and the current norm of the social group, society, or culture. This defines the range of acceptable forms of social behavior and the influence of this behavior on other interactions, e.g. the quantity and quality of friendly relationships, popularity among classmates, etc. (Krejčová, 2011).

The quality of relationships depends on working with the abilities and skills of an individual, which are influenced by the “ego”, as well as on the way of communicating with other people. These competencies for establishing and maintaining relationships are developed from an early age and continue into adulthood (Valenta, 2014).

Social skills are very closely intertwined with other areas of emotional intelligence, so it is impossible to completely separate them. With the help of experiential pedagogy, we can develop several areas at once. Of great importance is the reflection of the activity.

The school environment is a very suitable environment for the development of various social skills. Modern didactics is increasingly concerned with the development of pupils' personalities and their mental health as indicators of the effectiveness of the educational process. It is therefore no longer primarily about the extent and quality of the acquired knowledge.

## 2. Objectives

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As mentioned in the introduction, social skill or social agility is the ability to establish and maintain relationships with other people. After completing this didactic unit, students will be able to:

- Define and understand the concept of social skills.
- Distinguish 5 specific sub-areas of social skills.
- Promote care for good/friendly relationships.
- To develop empathy and to see the world through the eyes of another.
- Practice respect for others.
- To strengthen the ability of adequate self-assessment.
- Be able to ask classmates or other people for help.
- Develop the skill of cooperation.
- Acquisition of assertive and effective communication techniques.





# 3. Competences

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Social skills and social competences occupy an important place among the key competences that are part of the educational process.

The achieved outcomes (manifested in behavior) will be different for individual pupils, as well as in different age categories of pupils and students. The ideal state of skill is indicated, however, it should be remembered that they can take different forms.

Some students with special educational needs may have more difficulty in this area, such as students with autism spectrum disorder. Social skills training programmes led by professionals (special educators and psychologists) are available in the Czech Republic. However, this is usually a fee-for-service.

- Learn individual areas of social skills in order to develop them.
- Learn to establish and maintain friendly relationships.
- Learn to end relationships that are harmful to you.
- Learn to be empathetic towards your surroundings.
- Learn to respect other people's differences and consider the possibilities of using the diversity of members in the group.
- Recognise your strengths and weaknesses.
- Being able to ask for help from other people.
- Learn to recognize, develop and utilize your teamwork skills.
- Learn to use and develop different communication methods and strategies.

## 4. Concepts

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Based on studies of the social skills of children and adolescents, for example by Caldarella and Merrell (Krejčová, 2011), 5 specific sub-areas were selected in which the level of development of an individual's social skills can be monitored:

- 1. Peer relationships:** This is all interaction with peers. Individuals are able to build lasting friendships and resist the negative influences of the group and end relationships that may endanger them. They tolerate and accept the differences of other people. According to Gillernová (2005a), they also have developed abilities of social perception and recognition of other people.
- 2. Self-regulatory mechanisms:** Thanks to them, the individual can control his/her experience and act in accordance with the set rules, accepting criticism and compromises. He/she focuses on finding an acceptable solution in conflict situations, develops the skill of self-reflection, and checks the appropriateness of verbal and non-verbal messages in relation to the situation.
- 3. Social skills related to self-education:** These are skills related to self-regulation in the educational process. These include interacting with teachers, completing tasks independently, planning and working with time, creating an effective work environment, as well as ability to recognize the need for social support that can be offered by teachers or classmates.
- 4. Cooperation:** An individual mastering this area can adapt to the social rules and requirements of a given group or society, can work in a group including skills of verbalizing opinions and their possible clarification, formulating requirements. He can focus on common solutions and the common goal of activities.
- 5. Assertive and effective communication:** This involves starting and maintaining conversations with others, inviting others into the conversation, and accepting praise and recognition for using appropriate verbal and non-verbal expressions. Furthermore, it can be about asserting one's own opinion, making decisions in specific situations (in some cases also for the group), and planning activities for the future.

# 5. Methodology

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Social skills are among the skills are very important skills to the lives of pupils and students. They play a significant role in family life, school success and future professional and personal life in general (Avcioglu, 2005). Students with sufficient social skills can be successful in all activities that require contact and interaction with other people (Gülay, 2009). School environment in a very suitable environment for practicing and developing social skills. Interactive learning methods, role-playing and discussions are mainly used to learn social skills. Within education, it can take the form of specific and non-specific prevention of risky behaviour. New patterns of behaviour replace undesirable behavioural manifestations, lead to the elimination of conflict situations and bring new attitudes to the perception of oneself and social situations (Běhounková, 2010).

The social skills didactic unit will consist of the following 4 lessons:

- **First session (1 hour):** The first 15 minutes will be used to distribute the pre-questionnaires and fill them in. 5 minutes will be devoted to a short introduction to the topic of social skills, e.g. using the video Social Skills - What are Social Skills - Improving Social Skills or other suitable video. The next 20 minutes will be devoted to introducing the concept of social skills, the goals we are working towards (some students may not acquire a social skill as quickly, so we assess the progress of each student), where we can observe the level of social skills (peer relationships, self-regulation mechanisms, social skills related to self-education, cooperation and assertive and effective communication). The last 20 minutes will be devoted to an activity on human relations. Pupils and students will think about what is friendship and how do I make a friend and how do I know a good friend? They will then split into threes and create a paper maze in which they paste different faces, e.g. from magazines, and then identify two people who are looking for a way to each other. The pupils and students then reflect on why we like some people and not others and on the complexity of interpersonal relationships. As homework, students are asked to find out what kind of relationships they have with people in their lives, who are important people to them, and whether they have a close friend or person they can turn to if they have a problem.

## 5. Methodology

- **Second session (1 hour):** Will focus on people's feelings, self-regulation, communication and expected behaviour. For the first 10 minutes, the students will sit in a circle and say what feelings they have experienced in various common activities. The teacher writes these feelings on the board. The pupils are then divided into groups and given sample texts containing different conversations (10 min.). The pupils think about how the person feels? Who was featured in the excerpt? Then there is a dramatisation of different scenes from everyday life (20 min). We reflect on the activity with the pupils. How did you feel in the role? What do you still need to practise (greeting, thanking, etc.)? How do adults perform in these roles? At the end of the session (20 min.) we focus on the behaviour of girls and boys. How we differ, what we have in common. Questions about jobs, who does what in the family, focusing on male and female roles in interpersonal and social relationships. Homework will be to practise polite conversation in practice e.g. shop assistant, doctor, clerk, driver etc.
- **Third session (1 hour):** Will focus on human characteristics. For the first 10 minutes, we will play an activity where those switch places, who...focus on getting to know the students in the group. This is followed by a brainstorming activity (25 min.), what positive and negative qualities do we have. The teacher asks: What qualities are present in the class? What is a typical positive and negative characteristic? This is followed by the activity What am I like? (25 min.). The teacher divides the class in half. He writes yes on one and no on the other. Students stand on the given half according to how much they agree with the question. E.g. Are you optimistic? Are you friendly? etc. This is followed by a reflection on whether it was difficult to answer truthfully and what surprised the pupils.
- **Fourth session (1 hour):** Will focus on strengths and weaknesses, self-knowledge, reflection on the meeting and filling in the post-questionnaire. In the introductory part (15 min.) divide the paper into two halves and write your name in each half. Use the initial letters and write positive qualities on one half and negative qualities on the other. Then ask what was harder for the pupils to write? When is a weakness an advantage and when is a strength a disadvantage? We then take 15 minutes to complete the post-questionnaire. We spend the rest of the time reflecting on what the lesson has given them and conclude with a task for pupils to think about how they can work with their strengths and weaknesses in their lives.

## 6. Evaluation

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Every teacher works with objectives in their classes because it is not possible to teach randomly, without direction, and then demand results. Objectives are connected to concepts, definitions, competences, appropriate methodology for the topic and assessment.

A questionnaire will be used as an evaluation tool. An pre-questionnaire will be distributed at the first meeting to find out where the students are on the topic of social skills. This will be followed by two hours of practical activities aimed at developing social skills, which will be conducted in an experiential way. In the last session, students will again receive a post-questionnaire which will allow the teacher to assess the progress of the students.

Learning social skills is a long-term process and it is good to revisit this topic regularly. Theoretical knowledge about social skills is a good basis. However, for social skills to develop, they need to be put into practice in a group or by another person. For extrovert students, making contact may not be a problem. For introverted students or students with special educational needs, making conversation can be a nightmare. Therefore, there can be great differences in the skills learned between students and teachers are there to be a support for all students.

5 questions for my pre- and post-questionnaire of my didactic unit:

1. How would you explain what social skills are?
2. How do I know if someone's my friend?
3. Describe how you would make contact with a new person you don't know?
4. Give 3 examples of differences in behaviour between men and women.
5. Which are your strengths and weaknesses?



# 7. Additional resources

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- **Conflicts resolution:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EABFiCZJy8&list=PLVPxIOpo2Vw3Eq16dnJ6XFk-vVdXBBTpj&ab\\_channel=BrainPOP](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EABFiCZJy8&list=PLVPxIOpo2Vw3Eq16dnJ6XFk-vVdXBBTpj&ab_channel=BrainPOP)
- **Friends - Friendships - What is a quality friendship and why are friendships important?** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNzFPPMnF1Y&ab\\_channel=CareerandLifeSkillsLessons](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNzFPPMnF1Y&ab_channel=CareerandLifeSkillsLessons)
- **How to Apologize:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3H\\_GgtE3Tc&list=PLVPxIOpo2Vw3Eq16dnJ6XFk-vVdXBBTpj&index=10&ab\\_channel=watchwellcast](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3H_GgtE3Tc&list=PLVPxIOpo2Vw3Eq16dnJ6XFk-vVdXBBTpj&index=10&ab_channel=watchwellcast)
- **How to Talk to Girls, Boys and Everyone in Between:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_0IJRaaXkM&list=PLVPxIOpo2Vw3Eq16dnJ6XFk-vVdXBBTpj&index=3&ab\\_channel=AMAZEOrg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_0IJRaaXkM&list=PLVPxIOpo2Vw3Eq16dnJ6XFk-vVdXBBTpj&index=3&ab_channel=AMAZEOrg)
- **How To Teach Social Skills To Teenagers:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bg1Ty4clq3c&ab\\_channel=NicholeenPeck-TeachingSelfGovernment](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bg1Ty4clq3c&ab_channel=NicholeenPeck-TeachingSelfGovernment)
- **Social Skills Training for Adults:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaMYercOyjs&ab\\_channel=TrueMedallion](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaMYercOyjs&ab_channel=TrueMedallion)
- **Social Skills - What are Socials Skills - Improving Social Skills:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ku\\_XltAHvjA&ab\\_channel=CareerandLifeSkillsLessons](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ku_XltAHvjA&ab_channel=CareerandLifeSkillsLessons)
- **Social skills for pupils and students with autism and their parents:** <https://learningforapurpose.com/social-skills/>



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# **DIDACTIC UNIT 9.**

## **STRESS MANAGEMENT**



# 1. Introduction

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The definition of the term “stress” is ambiguous. Most of the time, stress refers to an event that causes a reaction in the form of “distress”, which means stress containing negative feelings, or “eustress”, that is associated with a pleasant experience, such as the birth of a child. This term is also used to refer to an event, which is acting as a stressor or in the sense of a response to these events, thus a stress response (Vinay, 2007).

Frequent activation of stress mechanisms may lead to overloading the organism and in some individuals thus contributing to the development of diseases of affluence (Atkinson et al., 2003). It is, therefore, appropriate to deal with the prevention and management of these conditions rather than their consequences. Stress-management is a series of techniques and procedures which help us work with unpleasant life situations with the aim of a positive change. (Machová, Kubátová a kol., 2015).

From the above mentioned, it is clear how important it is to take care of your mental health and psychological stability. Pupils can develop stress-management skills during their early schooling and improve these stress management strategies in adulthood to maintain and improve their quality of life. The purpose of acquiring and developing these skills should be to ensure that life difficulties and the consequences of various problems fall on the individual as little as possible (VÚP, 2011).

It's important to work on stress management with 14-18 year olds because adolescence is a challenging period with academic, social, and family pressures. Developing effective stress management skills can improve mental and physical health, academic performance, and overall well-being. Teaching stress management skills during this critical period can also help young people build resilience and develop healthy habits for adulthood.

## 2. Objectives

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- Adopt and understand the concept of stress-management.
- Learn five selected sub-areas in which stress factors manifest.
- Develop the skill of identifying stressors.
- Learn stress management techniques.
- Appropriately adjust the environment for increasing the efficiency of one's work.
- Adopt and develop conflict prevention techniques in interpersonal relationships.
- Strengthen the ability of self-acceptance and positive thinking.
- Work effectively with time.
- Being able to ask for help in difficult situations.
- Adopt and develop the principles of a healthy lifestyle.



## 3. Competences

During a “lesson”, it is necessary to take into account several factors which influence coping strategies (Kryl, 2004):

- The factors are of an individual nature.
- They are based on the assumption of sensitivity/resistance to stress = this is partly innate and partly acquired through learning over the course of life.
- The importance of personal motivation of an individual.
- Collective motivation (relationships in the group).
- Social support (family and friends).
- State of health of an individual.
- Outlook on life of the person (rational/irrational type; pessimist/optimist).

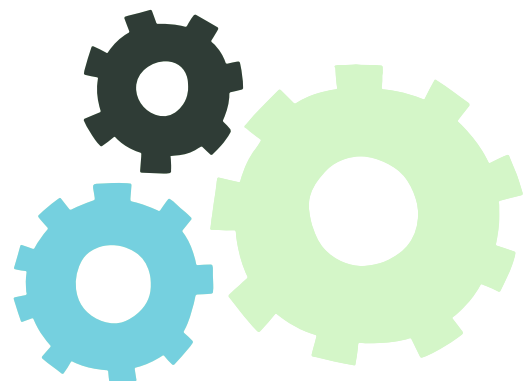
- Learn the individual areas of stress-management so you can work with them.
- Learn to identify stress factors that can negatively affect your study, work and personal life.
- Get to know the tools that will help you prevent and manage stressful situations.
- Learn to work with your work environment and improve the conditions for your own work.
- They will learn to prevent some conflict situations with the help of different techniques.
- Work on a positive mindset and build a good relationship with yourself.
- Learn to work with time-management techniques and gradually implement them in all areas of your life.
- Learn to ask for help in situations that are stressful for you.
- Learn to work with the rules of good living and incorporate them into your life.

## 4. Concepts

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In the following 5 selected specific sub-areas stress factors are manifested, which we have to adapt to and work with in our professional, academic and everyday life:

1. **Physicochemical stressors:** These are, for example, strong light, excessive noise, low or high temperature. Furthermore, exposing the body to pesticides, heavy metals, household and industrial chemicals, etc.
2. **Social stressors:** These are stressors resulting from social situations, e.g. interpersonal conflicts, communication with other people, relationships with other people, infidelity etc.
3. **Psychological stressors:** These are feelings of responsibility, anxiety, fear, anger, frustration, unfulfilled expectations. This area relates to thinking and emotions.
4. **Physical stressors:** They are caused, for example, by high blood pressure, illness or injury, excessive physical activity, hunger, improper lifestyle or lack of sleep.
5. **Task and performance stressors:** Related to performance at work or school, handing in assigned tasks by deadlines, exams, but also with time pressure in everyday life, e.g. getting stuck in traffic and not being able to arrive on time for an arranged meeting, failed time-management.



# 5. Methodology

The methodology of learning about stress management will include a theoretical part - understanding stress. However, practical demonstrations and activities will take up most of the time. Help individuals to identify their stress triggers, such as work pressure, relationship issues, financial stress, health concerns, or other external factors that cause stress.

Teach stress management techniques: Several techniques can help individuals manage stress, such as relaxation techniques, mindfulness, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and physical exercise. Provide training on these techniques and how to incorporate them into daily routines.

Encourage healthy habits: Encourage individuals to adopt healthy habits such as a balanced diet, regular exercise, and adequate sleep to help them cope with stress.

Encourage social support: Encourage individuals to build a support system, such as family and friends, or participate in support groups to help manage stress.

Monitor progress: Monitor the progress of individuals and evaluate the effectiveness of the stress management techniques they are using. This can help identify areas that need improvement and allow for adjustments to be made.

The methodology of teaching stress management involves a systematic approach to help individuals develop skills and techniques to cope with and manage stress. Here are 4 lessons that can be followed in the process:

- **First session (1 hour).** In the first 10 minutes, students will complete a pre-questionnaire. Remember that it is important to create a safe and supportive environment for your students to share their thoughts and feelings. Define stress and five selected sub-areas in which stress factors manifest. Explain that while some stress can be healthy, too much stress can be harmful. (15 minutes)
- **Discuss common stressors:** Have a group discussion about the common stressors that students may experience, such as schoolwork, social pressures, or family issues. Encourage students to share their own experiences and how they have dealt with stress in the past. (20 minutes)
- **Teach self-awareness:** Introduce the concept of self-awareness and encourage students to tune into their thoughts and feelings. Teach them to recognize the physical and emotional signs of stress, such as headaches, muscle tension, or irritability. (10 minutes)
- The rest of the conceptual lessons could include learning about the role of the sympathetic nervous system in the stress response and how chronic stress can lead to physical and mental health problems.



# 5. Methodology

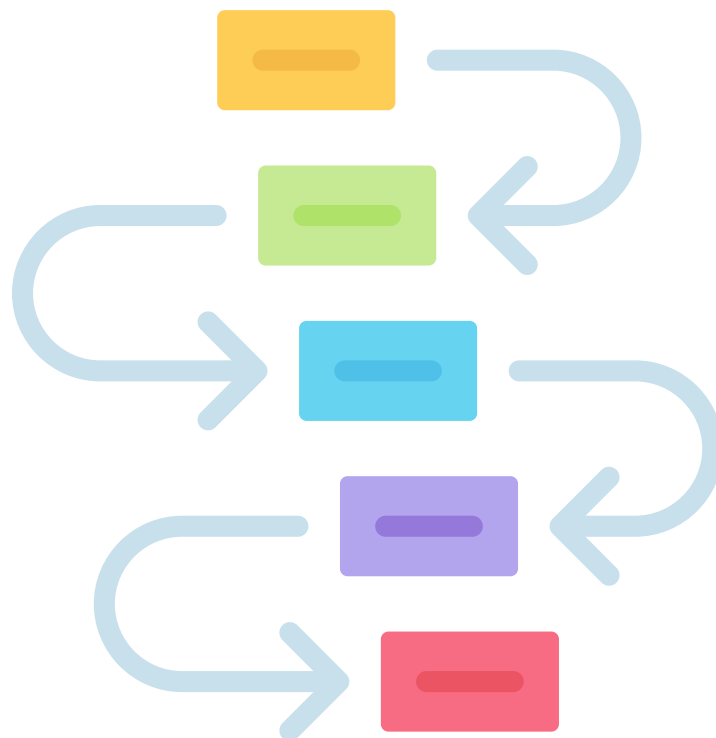
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- **Second session (1 hour)**. Procedural lessons in stress-management teaching could involve teaching specific techniques for managing stress.
- Presentation of stress management techniques (10 minutes): Explanation and demonstration of various stress management techniques such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and guided imagery. Discussion of the benefits of each technique and when it is best to use them.
- Practice exercises (20 minutes). Students will try out several stress management techniques under the guidance of the teacher. The teacher will be available to provide support and answer questions.
- Introduction to mindfulness techniques (10 minutes). Explanation and introduction to various mindfulness techniques such as meditation or yoga. Discussion of the impact of mindfulness on stress management.
- Practice exercises (20 minutes). Students will try out several mindfulness techniques under the guidance of the teacher. The teacher will be available to provide support and answer questions.
- This phasing could help students understand and adopt stress management techniques and strategies for stress reduction. The teacher should keep in mind that each group of students is different and should try to adapt the hour to best meet the needs of the students.
- **Third session (1 hour)**. Experiential lessons in stress-management teaching could involve practicing stress-management techniques in real-life situations.
- Time management and stress reduction strategies (20 minutes). Introduction of strategies for time management and stress reduction, such as task planning and prioritization. Discussion of how these strategies can help in managing stress.
- Then they will learn how adjusting the environment can be an effective way to increase the efficiency of one's work. (15 minutes)
- Then students could practice using relaxation techniques in stressful situations, such as before an exam or a presentation. They could also practice mindfulness techniques, such as focused breathing while performing everyday tasks like washing dishes or walking to class. This will include practical training and discussion. (25 minutes)

# 5. Methodology

- **Final session (1 hour).** Reflective lessons in stress-management teaching could involve students reflecting on their stress levels and stress-management strategies. Students could keep a stress journal to track their stress levels and the effectiveness of their techniques. They could also reflect on their thought patterns and identify negative self-talk and cognitive distortions that may be contributing to their stress levels. This will be done through their feedback and a final questionnaire.
- At the end remind students how important is to take care of mental health, and asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Give them tips on whom they can turn to when they are experiencing stress that they cannot cope with on their own.

By adapting these four learning lessons to stress-management teaching, students can develop a better understanding of stress, learn techniques to manage stress, practice stress-management strategies in real-life situations, and reflect on their stress levels and strategies. These lessons can help students build resilience and develop lifelong skills for managing stress.



## 6. Evaluation

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As with any educational program, it is important for stress-management teachers to receive feedback from their students in order to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching methods and the impact of the program on the students' stress levels.

To evaluate the effectiveness of our stress-management intervention, we will be using a pre-post questionnaire. This type of assessment enables us to track changes over time and take into account the initial state of the student group. Specifically, we will be measuring the impact of our intervention by comparing the students' stress levels before and after the program. By doing so, we can assess the progress they have made and the benefits they have gained from participating in the program. Our evaluation questions are based on the learning objectives we have set for the program, and will help us assess the extent to which these objectives have been met.

Here is a questionnaire for stress-management lessons that can be used as a pre-questionnaire as well as a final one.

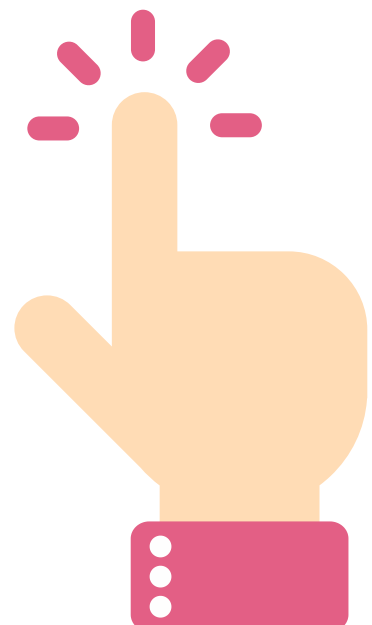
1. What are the main causes of stress in your life right now?
2. How do you currently cope with stress?
3. Do you feel that your current stress management strategies are effective?
4. Which stress-management techniques are you most interested in learning about?
5. What specific goals do you have for improving your stress management skills?

The pre-questionnaire can help to identify the stressors that participants are currently experiencing, and the final questionnaire can be used to measure the effectiveness of the stress-management lessons. For the final questionnaire, the same questions can be asked with the addition of the following question: Have you noticed any changes in your stress levels since starting this course?

# 7. Additional resources

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- **13 Stress Management Techniques.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HB1snh5ArVw>
- **Managing Stress: Good for Your Health.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15GaKTP0gFE>
- **10 Stress Management Techniques.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pD2LtJ7ITTg>
- **Tips on how to manage everyday stress.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKY6YrKamqM>
- **Stress.** <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/stress>
- **TEST YOUR STRESS. Understanding your current level of stress is the first step in taking control.** <https://www.bemindfulonline.com/test-your-stress>
- **Coping Under Pressure. Survive and Thrive Under Pressure.** <https://www.mindtools.com/asq0vw2/coping-under-pressure>



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# DIDACTIC UNIT 10. TEAMWORK



# 1. Introduction

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The ability to work in a team is recognized as a transversal and social competence and is prioritized among the basic competencies to be acquired by students in their learning process. Teamwork refers to a group of people who share objectives, goals, and responsibilities to carry out activities in a coordinated manner (Pacio. A & Bueno. G, 2013).

When working in a team, values such as communication, motivation, leadership, delegation, assertiveness, and problem-solving are fostered (Ballenato, 2005). A team functions and achieves objectives effectively when individual and group work is fostered, i.e. the results of group work arise from the contributions of each of the members.

Cooperation between the members of the same team is a fundamental element for their proper integration and the correct function or development of the role played by each member within the team.

There is a close relationship between teamwork and leadership. In this cooperation, the relationship between the members is closely linked, which can be transformed into impediments or obstacles, or just the opposite. The spirit of cooperation is a prerequisite for productive teams.

This didactic unit focuses on teamwork, which plays a vital role in everyday life. It will enable students to share ideas and tasks, get them involved, feel less stressed, and enable them to be more precise and thorough in carrying out their tasks, which will help them to achieve their goals more quickly.

This unit aims to introduce students to the concept of teamwork and the importance of its integral role in everyday life today, and to help them learn how to create, maintain and be part of a collaborative environment, in which teamwork is essential.



## 2. Objectives

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The objectives show what the students will acquire after the development of this didactic unit.

- Define and understand the concept of teamwork.
- To understand and differentiate the 5 specific sub-areas.
- To provide the conceptual tools to understand and transmit the values of teamwork.
- To provide strategies to learn and work effectively, such as work planning, cooperation, coordination, and sharing.
- To acquire and practice resources to develop socio-emotional skills



# 3. Competences

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Competences enable students to integrate their learning, to relate it to different types of content and to use it effectively when needed in different situations and contexts. The competences presented below are closely related to each other, since the achievement of the objectives of the unit on team work means the successful development of students' competences in the area of team work.

- Encourage collaborative working relationships between students to clarify mutual commitment, achieve consensus on tasks, take on roles, and demonstrate collaborative learning values.
- Participation and awareness of students by inviting them to be part of it.
- Promote self-awareness, adapting techniques to motivate participation.
- Develop creativity focused on problem-solving and focus on specific needs.
- Development of new creative skills to create materials, adaptability, and time management.
- Encourage real, effective, and concrete communication at all levels between all participants.

## 4. Concepts

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The concepts and the specific sub-areas that will be worked on with the students in the development of the didactic unit of teamwork are defined. This aspect refers to introducing the students to theoretical aspects related to this specific area.

Below are the 5 specific sub-areas that can be used to facilitate teamwork skills:

1. **Communication:** Teamwork requires open communication between all team members, and is essential to be able to coordinate individual actions. In any communication process, the importance of who gives feedback and who receives it must be taken into account. It is the sender's responsibility to direct the message appropriately to ensure its success.
2. **Coordination:** the group of professionals has a leader who must act in an organized way to favor the development and viability of the project.
3. **Confidence:** each member of the team must trust in their abilities and those of their colleagues to support each other.
4. **Complementarity:** each member brings qualities to the project. All skills are necessary to develop the work.
5. **Commitment:** it is necessary to have a sense of team spirit and commitment to achieve the objectives not only for personal satisfaction but also for the benefit of all.



# 5. Methodology

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The methodology of the didactic unit is based on teamwork through the teaching-learning process and promotes the most effective methods for assimilating information through practice and entertainment. It summarises the key steps for both teachers and students and it will consist of learning practical exercises based on the student's prior knowledge, enabling them to develop the strategies and knowledge necessary to work effectively in teams in any situation.

Teamwork is a transversal and social competence and is prioritised among the basic competences to be acquired by students in their learning process. For this reason, it works with real materials and looks for teamwork situations that are close to everyday life and the world of adolescents, so that they can perceive the direct applicability of what they have learned. This is a practical approach to learning, which means that cooperative learning will be encouraged and individual work will alternate with group work. Concepts such as "learning by doing" or "student-centered approach" are integrated into the methodological process.

The teamwork didactic unit will consist of 4 sessions and will be developed as follows:

- **First session (1 hour).** As a first step, the teacher will share with the students a pre-assessment questionnaire on the level of knowledge of teamwork (15 minutes). Once the questionnaire is completed, 25 minutes of class time will be used to introduce the concept of teamwork and the objectives to be achieved and to explain the concepts (communication, coordination, confidence, complementarity, and commitment:). For this, teachers can use resources such as multimedia material, educational platforms, examples of real cases, etc. In the last section of this unit you will find links to videos and materials on teamwork that can be used.
- For the last 20 minutes, they brainstorm in small groups about why it is important to work in a team and strategies for learning and working effectively, e.g. planning work, collaborating, co-ordinating and sharing. They are asked not to judge each other's ideas, to be as creative as possible and to build on each other's ideas. As a final step, the main ideas are written down on a blackboard or piece of paper to conclude with the main ideas.

# 5. Methodology

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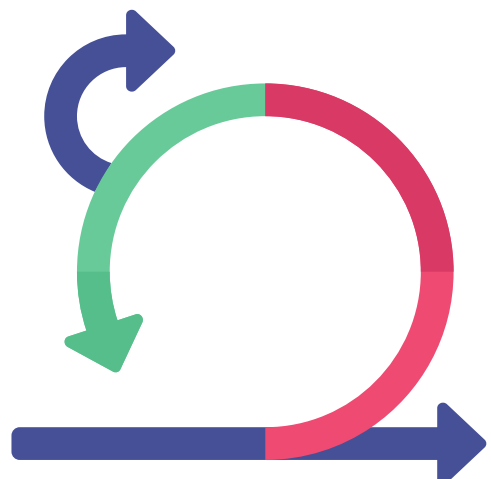
- **Second session (1 hour).** The second session is more practical, to make the students dynamically internalize the area of teamwork, where the student is the protagonist of their learning. It is a fundamental element for their proper integration and the correct performance or development of the role played by each member of the team. This session includes 3 practical activities that they can work on individually and in groups to understand and internalize key teamwork skills.
- In the first activity (25 minutes), the student will be invited to find out what kind of leader they are, through a test to check the results. It will be the first step to evolving their leadership skills and becoming better support for their team. After taking the test, the student will have to answer a series of reflection questions.
- In the second activity, a mediation role-playing game is presented (20 minutes). During this activity, students will go through the mediation process as a conflict management tool. It will be practicing communication, cooperation, stress management, and conflict management skills.
- The third activity is a reinforcement activity about thinking of someone they admire and who is a role model (leader) for the student (15 minutes). Each student describes on a piece of paper the traits, attributes, and/or achievements that make that person worthy of admiration. Finally, they can discuss their choice in class, as this exercise helps everyone to get to know each other better and have a clearer idea of the values and attributes they consider important. It can also help to bring adolescents closer together as they realize that they respect and admire the same people.
- **Third session (1 hour).** Below are 2 practical activities related to teamwork skills that can have different applications in the classroom, as it is up to the teacher to adapt them to a specific topic. In sum, they are flexible and configurable depending on the level of development of the group of students and the attention to diversity. The third session will also focus on practical exercises to further develop teamwork skills.

# 5. Methodology

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- In the first activity, the teacher will introduce story starters for their students (10 minutes). The student at home will write about the same topic and the next day in class they will share their answers in small groups (20 minutes). This is a great activity for adolescents to learn that although we have a lot in common, there can be many different answers to the same question depending on life background, habits, or religion.
- The second reinforcement activity is "team discussion projects" (30 minutes). This activity will consist of establishing a series of guidelines to check that progress is being made and to review the plan made by each student. For this activity, families also will have to collaborate with the students.
- **Final session (1 hour)**. In the last session of teamwork, it is necessary to draw conclusions and to fill in the questionnaire for post-evaluation. First, the teacher should ask all students what they worked on during the 3 sessions and let them explain (20 minutes). Then the teacher has to ask the students a series of questions (25 minutes) such as:
  - What have they learned?
  - what did they like most?
  - what did they like least?
  - Have these sessions helped you to improve your teamwork skills?

Finally, the last 15 minutes of the lesson will be used to carry out the post-questionnaire which is shown in the next section.



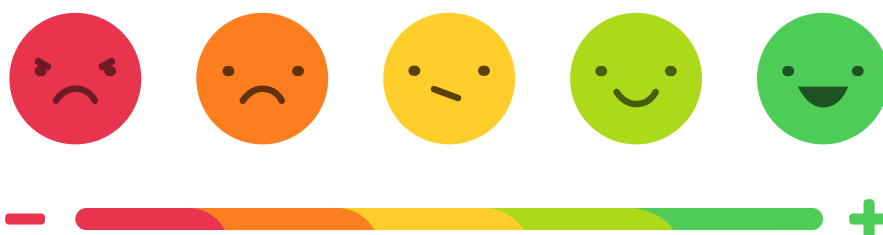
## 6. Evaluation

The evaluation tool will be a pre-post questionnaire. The purpose of the pre-post evaluation questionnaire is to measure the change over time in the level of knowledge of the group of students. This type of evaluation will allow the teacher to take into account the level of the students before the beginning of the didactic unit and the learning they have achieved after the implementation of the sessions. The questions are based on: the objectives and learning outcomes to be achieved after the implementation of the didactic unit on communication.

Below are the questions for the pre-and post-questionnaire for the students adapted to the didactic unit on teamwork:

1. How would you explain what teamwork means?
2. What do you think are the key elements of a good team?
3. How would you describe a good team?
4. Give 3 examples of teamwork: What obstacles might arise when working in a team?
5. If you had to give one piece of advice to those around you about teamwork, what would it be and why?

It is expected that after the development of the 4 sessions on teamwork the students will improve in the competencies established in this didactic unit and the objectives set will be achieved. In the process, the students will learn values such as communication, motivation, leadership, delegation, assertiveness, and problem-solving. They will also learn how to function as a team and how to achieve objectives effectively when working individually and in groups.





# 7. Additional resources

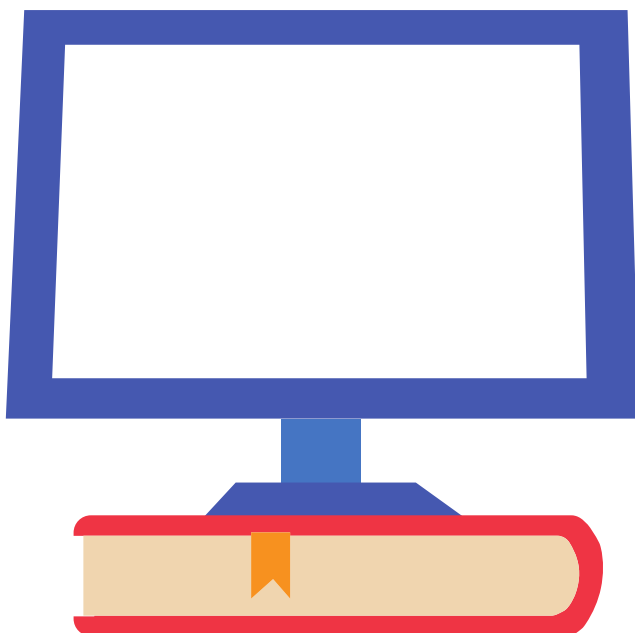
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- **Build Character Build Success: TEAMWORK**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9xB0qFwO5k>
- **The 10 Characteristics of a Good Leader**  
<https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/characteristics-good-leader/>
- **Encouraging teamwork in students through online collaboration tools**  
<https://royalcrownschool.com/encouraging-teamwork-in-students-through-online-collaboration-tools/>
- **Teamwork can make a Dreamwork**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fbE52YDEjU>
- **Conflict Resolution Skills**  
<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/conflict-resolution-skills.htm>
- **Conflict Management Styles**  
<https://www.valamis.com/hub/conflict-management-styles>
- **3 Team-Building Games and Activities for Kids**  
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# THIRD CHAPTER. PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES



**EIFNEG**

# Introduction



Welcome to the unveiling of our Practical Resource Kit (Toolkit). This revolutionary toolkit has been carefully crafted for teachers and students aged 14-18, and its main aim is to move learning from theoretical exercises to the practical application of emotional intelligence in the real world.

In response to the urgent need for a comprehensive approach to emotional intelligence, our project consortium, in collaboration with students and teachers from partner schools, is excited to present an enriching collection of **50 classroom activities** and **30 homework ideas** for students to develop at home, complementing and reinforcing their classroom learning. This initiative is designed to enable educators and students to embark on a transformational journey that goes beyond conventional teaching methods.

The cornerstone of our endeavor is to shift the educational paradigm from the theoretical exercises of *Chapter 1* and *Chapter 2* of this Handbook to immersive and practical exercises. We base our approach on the same 10 carefully selected key areas, introduced in this publication.

Our collaborative effort yields a diverse set of tools, games, exercises, and dynamics intended for use:

- Individually or in groups
- Indoors or outdoors

Join us on this transformative journey as we revolutionize education, making emotional intelligence an integral part of the learning experience.

*Discover. Experience. Evolve.*

# DIDACTIC UNIT 1. COMMUNICATION



# Activity in Class #1

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**Name of activity:** *Broken Phone*

**Key area:** Communication

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 5-6 students per group

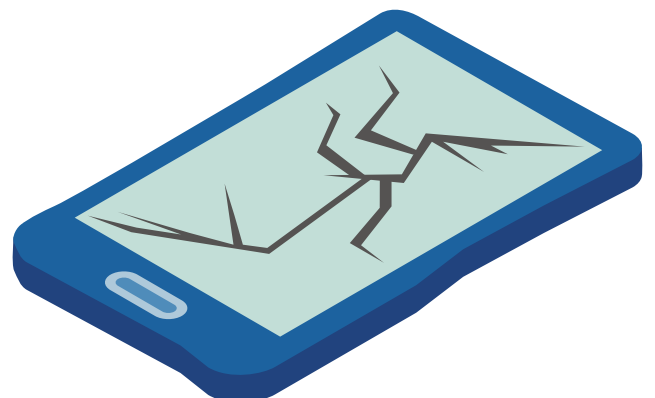
**Target:** Improve active listening and group communication skills by accurately conveying a message through a chain of people.

**Tools:** No tools are required, but it is recommended to find an indoor or outdoor space where participants can form a circle and whisper to each other clearly.

**Instructions:** Group students and form a circle, ensuring a group size of at least five or six students. Select a simple opening message appropriate for the group's age. The first student whispers the message once to the next participant, who whispers their understanding to the following participant, continuing around the circle. The last participant states the received message aloud, and the original and final messages are compared. Distortions or changes in the message are likely to have occurred as it circulates through each person.

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- Why do you think there were changes in the message?
- Were there difficulties in listening carefully?
- Did some participants change the message intentionally or because of misunderstandings?
- How could you apply these lessons in your daily life?





# Activity in Class #2

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**Name of activity:** *Decoding Misunderstandings*

**Key area:** Communication

**Duration:** 20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** pairs, 2 students

**Target:** Improve interpersonal and intrapersonal communication by understanding the implications of a communication error and encouraging the development of skills to communicate effectively.

**Tools:** Prepare cards to display on a screen or print out with different scenarios of communication breakdowns. This can help couples have a clear starting point for role-playing.

**Instructions:** Split students into pairs and assign them the roles: of 'sender' (A) and 'receiver' (B). Provide each pair with a scenario involving a communication breakdown, such as a school event mix-up or misinterpreted text messages. Ask the pairs to role-play the situation of the communication failure, with the 'sender' conveying the message with misunderstandings. They then act out the consequences, which may involve confusion and negative emotions. After each role-play, prompt a discussion about what went wrong, the emotions experienced, and possible solutions to avoid problems.

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- What examples of situations where communication failed were you able to observe during the role-play?
- What were some of the consequences that arose due to miscommunication in the scenarios you acted out?
- What obstacles did you face in trying to communicate effectively in your assigned roles?
- Which strategies or approaches did you discover for enhancing communication and preventing misunderstandings?
- How has this activity helped you understand the importance of interpersonal communication?



# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Breaking Down Barriers!*

**Key area:** Communication

**Duration:** 15-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 3-4 students in a group

**Target:** Identify and discuss typical barriers that can hinder effective intercultural or organizational communication between groups.

**Tools:** An interactive display or whiteboard, chalk or markers, an indoor or outdoor space, a clock or timer, and student writing materials

**Instructions:** Prepare a whiteboard or screen where you can write. Make sure you have enough markers or chalk. On the board, make a list of common barriers to effective communication. You can include examples such as lack of active listening, cultural differences, inappropriate use of technology, and lack of clarity of message, among others. Divide students into small groups and assign each group one or two barriers from the list. Ask the groups to discuss, write about, and share concrete examples of how these barriers might manifest themselves in social environments.

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- Which of the barriers discussed in the activity do you think might be most relevant?
- Have you experienced any of these barriers in your social interactions? If so, can you share a specific experience?
- How might cultural differences affect the way we communicate in a social setting?
- What strategies could we implement to ensure that we are actively listening during discussions?
- In the context of technology and social media, how might we prevent the inappropriate use of technology from becoming a barrier to effective communication?
- How can we ensure that the messages we send are clear and understandable to all?

# Activity in Class #4

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**Name of activity:** *Doodle Dictation*

**Key area:** Communication

**Duration:** 25 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 3-4 students in a group

**Target:** Demonstrate the importance of active listening and clear communication when interpreting instructions and how misinterpretations can easily occur.

**Tools:** Blank sheets of paper, coloured pencils, and sheets with written instructions (prepared in advance).

**Instructions:** Prepare instruction sheets with drawings or text open to different interpretations. Introduce a drawing activity to highlight active listening and clear communication. Divide them into pairs and encourage them to sit on their backs. One receives instructions and guides the other, who interprets the guidance to draw. After finishing, pairs share their drawings, attempting to guess the original instructions. Reveal the actual instructions, discussing differences and the significance of communication clarity.

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- How did you feel trying to understand and represent the concept through drawing? Was it challenging or fun?
- Do you think your drawing accurately reflected the concept you were assigned?
- How do you think this activity relates to real-life situations where it is important to convey ideas accurately?
- What did you learn about the importance of active listening and effective communication by participating in this activity?
- How can you ensure clear and understandable communication through future strategies?



# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *Words Matter, What We Say Builds Our Universe*

**Key area:** Communication

**Duration:** 60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

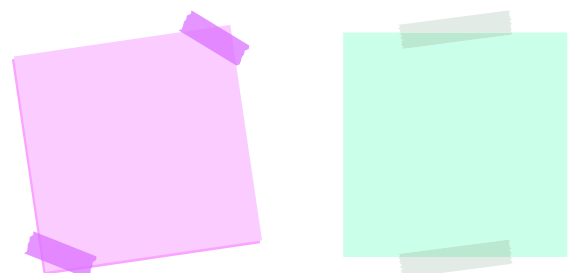
**Target:** To raise students' awareness of the impact of words in our lives and to encourage reflection on the language we use.

**Tools:** post-its and a pen or pencil

**Instructions:** Begin by explaining that the words we use have a profound impact on our thoughts, feelings, and the way we interact with others. Provide each student with several small cards or post-it notes. Each student writes down positive words or phrases that come to mind when they think about communication. Invite participants to share and explain the words or phrases they have written with the group. Facilitate a group discussion on the impact of positive words in our daily lives and interactions and reflect on how they can incorporate this word into their daily communication to promote positivity. As a final step, each person should receive the word or phrase from another person.

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- What positive words or phrases did you choose, and why did you find them meaningful?
- How did the activity change your perspective on the impact of positive words in communication?
- Did you discover any words or phrases that you hadn't considered before?
- Were there any stories or examples shared by others that particularly inspired you or made you think differently about the power of words?
- What commitments are you making to use positive language more consciously in your personal and professional life?



# Homework #1

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**Name of activity:** *Do You Know the True Power of What You Say?*

**Key area:** Communication

**Duration:** 1-2 hours

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Encourage self-expression, clarity in communication, and individual reflection in students.

**Tools:** mobile, computer, or camera

**Instructions:** Choose a topic that generates significant emotions or thoughts, whether personal, recent experiences, concerns, or achievements. Take time to reflect on that topic and organize your thoughts for a monologue. At home, you can do this by writing down some key ideas or points. The next step is to record audio or video of your reflective monologue using a phone or camera. Afterward, you can review or share the monologue with a family member. This enables you to assess your communication skills, your ability to articulate thoughts, and the effective expression of your emotions, especially if you find self-expression challenging.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- Why did you select this particular topic?
- Can you recall specific moments or experiences related to this topic that made you feel a certain way?
- How can you structure your monologue to effectively convey your thoughts and emotions?
- Do you find it easier to express yourself verbally or in writing?
- After recording your monologue, how do you think you did in terms of clarity and expression?

# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *We Are What We Say and How We Say It, Don't You Think?*

**Key area:** Communication

**Duration:** 30-40 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Promote self-awareness and reflection on personal communication styles and their potential impact on how others perceive an individual.

Tools: a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil

**Instructions:** Write down three adjectives or characteristics that you think describe yourself. It can relate to your personality, your interests, your strengths, etc. You then have to choose an adjective that you think describes your communication style, e.g., "clear", "friendly", "direct", "attentive", etc. Use the adjectives from the first part and your chosen communication style to write three short sentences reflecting how you communicate. Finally, you read the sentences you have created and reflect on how your words and communication style can influence how others perceive you.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- Evaluate on a scale of 1-10 how you would like others to perceive you in your current communication.
- Set a goal to improve or adjust your communication style so that it is more aligned with the image you wish to project.



# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *Role Change*

**Key area:** Communication

**Duration:** 30-40 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

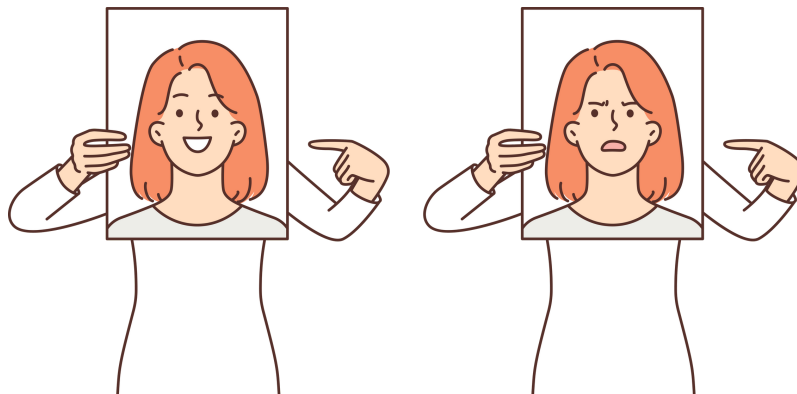
**Target:** Enhance communication skills by fostering empathy and perspective-taking in students.

**Tools:** a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil

**Instructions:** You will choose a time when you can relax and reflect without distractions. First of all, you have to think of a recent communication situation at home that did not go as well as expected. It could be a conversation, a misunderstanding, etc. You have to imagine that you are writing a short story based on that situation and write from their point of view, describing their thoughts, emotions, and perceptions at the time. You then change your point of view and rewrite the story from the other person's perspective, taking into account their thoughts, emotions, and motivations. As a last step, you compare both versions, pointing out differences and similarities.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- What differences and similarities do you notice?
- How does the story change when seen from both sides?
- How could the situation have been approached differently to achieve more effective communication and mutual understanding?



# **DIDACTIC UNIT 2.**

# **CRITICAL THINKING**





# Activity in Class #1

**Name of activity:** *Fake News*

**Key area:** Critical Thinking

**Duration:** 30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups of 3-4 students, joint discussion

**Target:** This activity will engage students in critical thinking, media literacy, and the identification of fake news characteristics while promoting thoughtful discussions and collaboration within their groups.

**Tools:** several shocking news articles with pictures (both real and fake), board or projector for discussion

## Instructions:

1. Group Formation: Divide the students into groups of 3-4. Ensure each group has access to a shocking news article and its accompanying picture.
2. Fake News or Not? (15 minutes): Each group should examine the provided news article and picture and collectively decide whether they believe it's fake news or not. They should also provide reasons for their decision. Encourage them to look for signs of reliability and credibility, such as sources, context, and evidence.
3. Group Discussion (10 minutes): After analyzing the news articles, bring the groups together for a discussion. Each group presents its findings and reasoning for their decision. Facilitate a conversation around the characteristics that make fake news, including: Sensational or shocking headlines. Large, attention-grabbing letters. Illustrative photos or photo montages that might be manipulated. Unknown or unreliable sources. Inclusion of personal opinions or biased language.
4. Assessment (5 minutes): After the discussion, reveal whether the news articles were true or false. Discuss the actual credibility of the sources and the methods used to verify the information. This helps students understand the importance of fact-checking and skepticism in the era of fake news.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- What were the main signs of fake news that your group looked for in the activity?
- How did your group's discussions affect your ability to judge the credibility of the news articles?
- In what real-life situations can you use the skills you learned today to identify fake news?
- Why is it important to be able to distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources in the age of information?

# Activity in Class #2

**Name of activity:** *How Do I Learn*

**Key area:** Critical Thinking

**Duration:** 30-40 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual/group

**Target:** Learn about effective learning methods. Evaluate which methods can help to remember new material and what conditions students need for effective learning.

**Tools:** picture with Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve, papers, pens

**Instructions:** Everybody need paper and a pen. The first 10 minutes will be used for free writing on the topic How do I learn. Pupils will be thinking about questions about their learning: What works and doesn't work for me? When is the best time for learning? Which conditions do I need?

Then students will be divided into groups of 4-5 to exchange ideas amongst themselves. Together they will write on the prepared paper what works or doesn't work for everyone and what only works for someone. Do students have the same answers or not? Why is that? The teacher then shows the students strategies for effective learning. For example, the five P method (in Czech, all words begin with the letter P): environment, time planning, breaks, notes and work with text, memory.

Other tips and methods: multi-sensory involvement, mnemonic aids, visualisation (chaining words, colouring text), making associations, PQ4R method, dictionaries, mind maps, etc. And also introduces the Ebbinghaus forgetting curve. It's important to remember that we are all different and may need different support to learn new things. But we all forget and so we look for ways to help us not forget learning what we need. Then the teacher can play a video for them to summarise the lesson.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Why do you think certain techniques work or don't work?
- Which techniques you didn't know?
- What helps you personally in your learning?
- How much time do you need to learn?
- What can you improve?



# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Create Fake News*

**Key area:** Critical Thinking

**Duration:** 30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups of 3-4 students, joint discussion

**Target:** The aim will be to deepen the knowledge about the different signs of fake news, to promote students' critical thinking, but also to strengthen students' creativity.

**Tools:** writing and drawing instruments, papers

**Instructions:** Your task will be to write a newspaper article that meets the criteria of Fake news. The instructor can translate the topic suggestions to the students listed below.

Fake news has for example following characteristics:

- Falsity: the news contains false information that has no basis in facts.
- Intent: Fake news is created with the intention of manipulating or influencing public opinion, whether political, social, or otherwise (the websites of government ministries tend to list websites that manipulate their readers).
- Sensational headlines: Fake news often contains sensational and conspicuous headlines to attract the attention of readers (many exclamation marks, etc.).
- Anonymity or untrustworthy sources: This news may come from anonymous sources or from media and websites that are not known for their credibility.
- Lack of verified facts: Fake news often lacks verified and reliable sources of information. Information is often presented without citations.
- Manipulative images and videos, photo montages, and images created by artificial intelligence.
- Expressive language - which reinforces the negative attitude of the author.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- Historical finding: dinosaurs had a popular rock band!
- Historical Finding: prehistoric humans invented selfies and photobombs!
- Archaeologists discover a secret 5,000-year-old pizza recipe!
- Astronauts discover a space station full of space dolphins!
- Scientists have discovered how plants talk - They have their own language of flowers!

# Activity in Class #4

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**Name of activity:** *Cognitive Bias*

**Key area:** Critical Thinking

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual/group

**Target:** Pupils will learn about types of bias in everyday life. How they influence our thinking and behaviour and what we can do about it.

**Tools:** board for teacher, pen, papers, pictures

**Instructions:** Students sit on chairs in a circle. The teacher asks the students if they know the terms prejudices or bias. Do they know some of them e.g., anchoring, ostrich effect, etc.? The teacher divides the pupils into groups of 3-4. He hands out the pictures he has prepared. Also, papers. Pupils have to decide who is: rich, who would steal alcohol from a shop, who brings children to school, who has a big house with a garden, who works in an office, who studies math etc. Then discuss the pupils' decisions. The teacher hands out a chart with cognitive biases. The teacher explains to the pupils some of the possible prejudices we may encounter in life. Tips for preventing prejudice-based behaviour (the last question of reflection) can be written on the board by the teacher.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Have you encountered any of the biases in real life?
- Has anyone ever judged you by their biases?
- Have you treated someone badly based on first impressions?
- How did you feel?
- What can we do to make sure we don't treat other people based on prejudice?

*Example pictures:*



# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *Animals in the ZOO*

**Key area:** Critical Thinking

**Duration:** 20 minutes for the activity, 10 minutes for feedback

**Organizational form of the activity:** students are divided into 3 equally sized groups, followed by a group discussion

**Target:** This activity will enable students to critically evaluate acquired information, learn to determine the author's intent, distinguish facts from opinions, and practice argumentation. Moreover, they will become familiar with the concept of E-R-R and the I.N.S.E.R.T method, which are essential in the realm of critical thinking.

**Tools:** sheets of paper, texts, and photographs (see Annexes), writing supplies

## **Instructions:**

**EVOCATION:** Each group will receive two photographs - see Annex 1 (bear in the wild, bear in captivity). The task is to compare both animals - their appearance, behavior, and the reasons for both. Questions to help: Where are the animals located? How do they differ? Why? Describe their behavior.

**REALIZATION OF MEANING:** Students will receive two texts - see Annex 2. One is from the website of the Prague Zoo, and the other is from an anonymous private blog. The students' task is to estimate who the authors of the texts are and determine their intent. Groups will work using the I.N.S.E.R.T. method. This means that while reading the articles, they will highlight information they already know with a "✓" symbol. Information that is new to them will be marked with a "+" symbol. Information that they find not truthful or with a different opinion will be marked with a "-" symbol. Finally, information they don't understand and need a deeper explanation for will be marked with a "?" symbol. After individual reading and marking of information, a group discussion will follow.

**REFLECTION:** Finally, students will take into account all the facts they've sorted and decide whether they would like to have a zoo in their city or not (or potentially keep or remove the zoo located in their area). They will write down their observations in bullet points. This is followed by a discussion between each group of students to compare their findings.



**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- Did you find any information in the text or photos that influenced your opinion?
- How did the I.N.S.E.R.T. method help you in your decision-making?
- Were there any common themes or patterns in the observations that different groups made during the discussion?
- Were there any surprising findings?
- Have you gained any new tools or skills during the activity?

*Annex 1:*

*Annex 2:*
**TEXT 1:**
**Our Mission**

Zoos today operate in a world where the species diversity of natural ecosystems, or biodiversity, is increasingly under threat. It is these institutions that have the opportunity to affect the full range of conservation activities, from research to ex-situ conservation (including endangered species breeding and education) to participation in in-situ projects on the ground.

**Education and Training**

Every year, more than 600 million visitors of all ages and interests come to Zoos around the world. At Prague Zoo, the number of visitors has doubled over the last three years to more than 1.2 million people a year. This is a great challenge and commitment.

The Zoo thus influences the general public and interest groups with its educational and training activities. Thanks to the invaluable potential of live animals, the Zoo is able to influence visitors' views, attitudes, values, and behavior.

**Ex-situ Protection**

Zoo Prague has long been involved in the protection of ex-situ animals. It creates insurance breeding groups for species that are immediately endangered in nature, but for which efforts for their return are already underway or can be expected.

### **In-situ Conservation**

The Prague Zoo is increasingly involved in in-situ projects aimed at protecting animals directly in their habitat. These include involvement in the reintroduction of endangered species into reserves and the wild, or methodological and material assistance in these areas.

The programs concern, among others, the Przewalski's horse, the lowland gorilla, the adax, the rock ibis, the bison, the black stork, the bearded eagle, the brown vulture, the spotted vulture, the common gopher, the nightjar, the white-tailed kite, the barn owl and the common tit.

**Source:** [www.zoopraha.cz/en](http://www.zoopraha.cz/en)

### **TEXT 2:**

In zoos, children are taught from an early age that it is okay to remove animals from their natural habitat, lock them up, and treat them as objects. This is often referred to as educational support. Can animals kept within walls or behind bars, showing almost no elements of natural behavior, serve as an educational tool? Animals kept this way only laze around the whole day and behave completely differently from how they would in their original environment. They only teach us to exploit living creatures and systematically dull our positive attitude toward nature conservation. The only things in the zoo that serve educational purposes are the signs near the enclosures.

Zoos are animal prisons. In most of them, animals are deprived of everything natural to them. Running, climbing, traveling, migrating, flying, searching for food and water, defending territory, choosing a mate, and living in a pack are all denied to them. Instead, they spend their entire lives in boredom, and loneliness, devoid of control over their lives, far from their natural homes. Most of them spend the whole day hunched in cages on concrete floors behind metal bars.

What we use as punishment for criminals are common conditions for animals in zoos. Most zoo exhibits do not provide animals the opportunity to behave naturally; they cruelly limit their space, privacy, and the possibility of natural physical exertion. Such conditions often lead to self-destructive behavior and psychological disorders. These are most common among bears and big cats, which repetitively pace in circles. Primates and birds often become aggressive and harm themselves. Giraffes twist their necks and bend their heads back and forth. Elephants often sway their heads from side to side.

Most people believe that zoos serve as rescue or breeding centers for endangered species. This is not true. Separate, non-public specialized centers exist for these purposes. Unlike them, zoos have very limited success in captive breeding. Moreover, animals bred in captivity are rarely returned to the wild.



# Homework #1

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**Name of activity:** *Critical Thinking Cube*

**Key area:** Critical Thinking

**Duration:** individual, within about an hour

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** The critical thinking cube contains different aspects that can be explored when analysing a text. Analytical methods allowing to look at a topic from different perspectives.

**Tools:** nothing

**Instructions:** The teacher hands out a cube template printed on hard paper to the students. The cube allows for six assignments, views. Each face is a prompt for what the student should do with the topic, how they should think about it. Below are options for how to explore the topic, or students can make up their own assignments. Then present the students with different topics, students choose one and use the cube to try to critically evaluate the topic. They can also use the text on zoos from the first Critical Thinking lesson.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- ASK (what the topic looks like, what we see...)
- SIMILAR (what it looks like, what it differs from...)
- ASSOCIATE (what comes to mind when you say...)
- ANALYZE (what does the thing consist of)
- APPLY (how you can use it)
- ARGUMENT (pros and cons - pros and cons)



# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *Distinguishing Fake News from Reliable Sources*

**Key area:** Critical Thinking

**Duration:** individual, within about an hour

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** To practice the skills learned in class by identifying a fake news article and a reputable article on the internet.

**Tools:** computer, tablet, mobile phone with internet connection - for searching articles on the internet, writing materials

## Instructions:

Search the Internet and select one article that you consider to be an example of fake news and one article from a credible source. Make sure both articles are on the same topic or current event. Also, write down the exact citations of the articles (URLs and date of publication).

Analyze the content of the article that represents Fake News and provide arguments that support your opinion that it is fake. Consider factors such as sensational headlines, untrustworthy sources, biased language, and lack of credible evidence. Be specific and provide examples. Likewise, analyze the article from a credible source. Look for attributes such as credible sources, balanced reporting, citations, and verifiable facts. Again, be specific and provide examples.

Summarize your findings in writing. Explain why you believe the first article is fake news and why the second article is from a credible source. Focus on the main differences between the two articles.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- Why did you choose these articles?
- What factors convinced you that the trustworthy article you selected came from a reliable source?
- How does the writing style of these two articles differ?
- Did the credible article provide reliable sources while the fake one did not?
- What difficulties did you encounter in identifying fake news and reliable sources?

# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *How Can I Improve My Learning?*

**Key area:** Critical Thinking

**Duration:** individual

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students reflect on the learning methods they use. They try out some of the new methods they have learned about in class. Finding the learning method that suits them best.

**Tools:** papers, pens, text from teacher

**Instructions:** The teacher prepares a short text to distribute to the pupils at home. Pupils will try to make short notes from the text using the methods mentioned in class e.g. creating a mind map, visualising notes, etc. They can also try to find out what time suits them for studying, how they like the light, the temperature in the room, whether it is quiet or not, whether they can plan their homework so that they have enough time, whether they prefer to study alone or with a friend. Students can think of this task as an experiment. They can then find out the conditions and methods that suit them personally and that will support their further learning.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- Think about why you are learning. (Is it your parents, good grades, a teacher, etc.?)
- How much time do you spend at home preparing for school every day? Could it be less or more?
- Which is the best place to learn? (In your room, at school, in a café, etc.)
- What is the best learning resource for you?



# **DIDACTIC UNIT 3.**

## **EMOTIONAL SELF- AWARENESS**



# Activity in Class #1

**Name of activity:** *The Ideal Me*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Awareness

**Duration:** 20-35 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** pairs

**Target:** Students will reflect on their levels of self-awareness. They will have the chance to reflect on an ideal self and illustrate it visually through drawing and creativity.

**Tools:** paper, pencils

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are divided into pairs. Individually they answer the question 'What does your ideal "you" look like?' Pupils must describe in a few sentences what they would look like in their 'ideal version'. After that, in pairs, they share the sheets of paper on which they wrote their description.

Each of them must now draw the other's ideal self-starting from the description made. The students are free to use their creativity and to sketch the other's ideal as best as possible. At the end, in pairs, they share the drawing and discuss their perception of the other's ideal.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How do you understand the ideal portrait?
- Is it easy for you to describe the other person through drawing and creativity?
- What qualities should the ideal me have?
- Is it difficult to be aware of your qualities?
- What would you do if you were not aware of your qualities?



# Activity in Class #2

**Name of activity:** *Box of Positive and Negative Emotions*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Awareness

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group (two main groups depending on the number of students in the classroom)

**Target:** Students will reflect on their self-action to achieve performance. They will have the chance to understand their emotions both positive and negative.

**Tools:** box, paper, tickets with different emotions

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are divided into two groups. One group will receive the box with negative emotions and the other group will receive the box with positive emotions.

Each group will appoint a leader who will choose a ticket from the box: the leader from the group with the box of positive emotions will choose from the group with the box of negative emotions and vice versa. The leader will first share the contribution considering the emotion in the ticket. Then each student will share his contribution until everyone has had the right to express himself.

*The box with negative emotions will include:*

1. I feel afraid when...
2. I feel unhappy when...
3. I am annoyed when...

*The box with positive emotions will include:*

1. I know I can trust...
2. I am optimistic when...
3. I feel joyful when...

Note that teachers can include other emotions in the box.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How do you understand the emotions?
- Is it easy for you to express your emotions?
- How do vulnerabilities influence the emotions?
- Is it difficult to be aware of your emotions?



# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Tree of Biases*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Awareness

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group

**Target:** Students will reflect on their levels of self-awareness. They will have the chance to reflect on and differentiate between the influences that biases have nowadays.

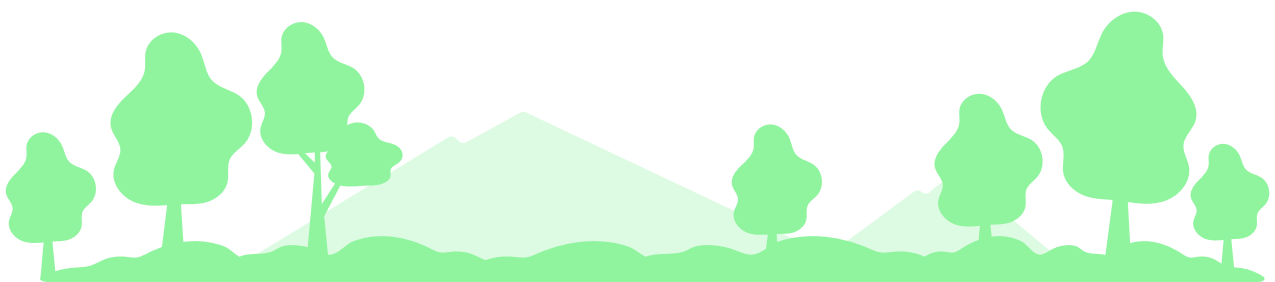
**Tools:** blackboard, chalk (or alternatively flipchart, paper and pencils)

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are divided into three or four groups of at least 4 pupils each (depending on the number available). The teacher draws on the blackboard (or flipchart or paper) a large tree with bare branches. The teacher can also ask a student to draw a tree if he/she is talented at drawing.

After that, each group will find at least 2 biases/prejudices that they know or have even experienced and will appoint a leader who will write them on the tree. In the end, each group will think of a solution that could help to avoid those biases.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How do you understand the biases?
- Is it easy for you to describe the influences of prejudice?
- How can biases be avoided?
- Is it easy for you to make judgments about a person?
- What would you do if you had to help avoid a prejudice?





# Activity in Class #4

**Name of activity:** *Regulate Your Emotions*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Awareness

**Duration:** 15-20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will reflect on their levels of self-awareness. They will have the chance to reflect on the reasons that make them calm and happy. The 3-step worksheet will help them build an awareness of their strengths.

**Tools:** paper (3-step worksheet) and pencils

**Instructions:** Pupils and students will work individually on the 3-step worksheet. They should be honest and meditate on what makes them calm and happy.

## 3-step worksheet

1. *My passions, interests, and talents are:*

- 
- 
- 

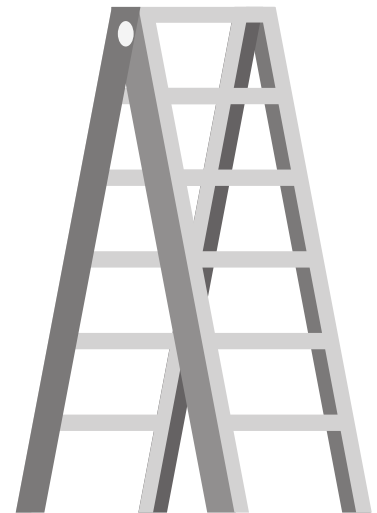
2. *I am strong in these areas:*

- 
- 
- 

3. *The most pleasant part of my school day is:*

- 
- 
- 

# 3



## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How do you understand the self-awareness skills?
- Is it easy for you to be aware of your qualities?
- How can your qualities help others?
- Is it easy for you to regulate your emotions in tense situations?

# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *Get Out of Your Comfort Zone*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Awareness

**Duration:** 20-25 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group

**Target:** Students will reflect on their levels of self-awareness. They will have the chance to explore the benefits of moving away from their comfort zone.

**Tools:** chairs

**Instructions:** Pupils and students sit in a circle, on chairs. At the beginning, the students are asked to sit where they prefer. Then the teacher clap the hands and have them move to a different seat. The teacher asks the students to think about how their perspective changed in moving to the new seat and why. The teacher asks the students to go back to their favorite place.

After a minute, the teacher claps his/her hands again and asks the students move to a different seat again. The teacher observes if students behave the same way the second time. At the end, the teacher and students discuss why they may have changed their choice the second time around (for those who moved to a different seat).

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How do you understand the comfort zone?
- Is it easy for you to describe your comfort zone?
- How can your comfort zone influence your choices?
- Is it easy for you to get out of your comfort zone?
- What would you do if you had to leave your comfort zone?



# Homework #1

**Name of activity:** *Life Vision-Mission*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Awareness

**Duration:** 10 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will figure out where they should use their energy in life. Expanding their emotional vocabulary will allow them to articulate themselves better.

**Tools:** the Fun Diagram, pen

**Instructions:** Students are asked to focus on building The Fun Diagram so they have a higher chance of success. This activity can become a habit and can be repeated weekly or monthly.

| The Fun Diagram   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| FUN   | ABILITY  | DEMAND  |
| Please write here what you wish you could do all the time:<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>• | Please write here something you are very good at:<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>• | Please write here what people in the world <u>actually</u> need or want, and will pay for:<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>•<br>• |

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- What is stopping me from achieving my goals?
- What is the key motivational factor in achieving goals?
- Where do I feel most comfortable? At school or at home? Why?
- What was the last obstacle overcome?

# Homework #2

**Name of activity:** *Self-Exploration Questionnaire*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Awareness

**Duration:** 10 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will get clarity on how they see things and think about what they want out of life and what they appreciate the most.

**Tools:** Self-exploration questionnaire, pen

**Instructions:** Students are asked to find out who they are by completing a self-exploration questionnaire. This activity can become a habit and can be repeated monthly.

## Self-exploration questionnaire

1. *What is your current state of mind?*

•

2. *What is your greatest fear?*

•

3. *When and where were you happiest?*

•

4. *If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?*

•

5. *What is your greatest regret?*

•

6. *What do you most value in your friends?*

•

7. *What is your greatest extravagance?*

•



## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- What is stopping me from being happy all the time?
- How do life's regrets keep me from evolving?
- How does my home environment help me relax?
- What prevents me from exercising my talents?

# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *Feedback Circle*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Awareness

**Duration:** 10 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will reflect on their self-awareness and will get an overview on how they behave and how they are understood by those around them.

**Tools:** none

**Instructions:** Students ask family and friends they trust and who know them the best to provide feedback, be it positive or negative, on different aspects of their life. This activity can become a habit and can be repeated daily for at least 1 week.

*Questions for the feedback circle (at the end of the day students can ask a friend or their family to answer the following questions):*

- What did you like about me today?
- What didn't you like about me today?
- What would you like me to improve in my behavior?

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- What prevents me from changing my behavior?
- How well do you communicate with those around you?
- How does the home environment contribute to my daily happiness?
- How does my talent help me make friends?



# **DIDACTIC UNIT 4.**

## **EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL**



# Activity in Class #1

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**Name of activity:** *Check-In Worksheet*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Control

**Duration:** 20-25 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** pairs

**Target:** Students will (better) understand their feelings and learn how to cope with them effectively.

**Tools:** paper, pencils, Check-in worksheet (annex)

**Instructions:** Individually, pupils and students start with an emotions check-in worksheet to assess how they are feeling (see annex). They are asked to write down what they might need to feel their best for the rest of the day. Then each student chooses a color.

In pairs, the students change colors (each takes the color chosen by the colleague next to him). Students close their eyes, and they must draw 3 things that are that color.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How do you understand the self-control?
- Is it easy for you to get out of your comfort zone?
- What is the most difficult step in managing emotional self-control?
- Is it difficult to be aware of your emotions anytime?
- What do you do when you can't control yourself?

*Annex – Example of Check-in Worksheet (English)*





| <b>Check-in Worksheet</b>                          |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Right now, I am feeling:</b>                    |  |
| <b>I feel this way because...</b>                  | <b>To feel (even) better today I need...</b> |
| <b>My positive self-talk quote for today is...</b> |  |

# Activity in Class #2

**Name of activity:** *I Would Be In This Zone If...*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Control

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will reflect on their self-control and will describe their moods and feelings by matching them into a specific emotional zone.

**Tools:** cards or paper with hypothetical situations, red-green card zones (or colored red-green paper)

**Instructions:** Pupils have two zones, RED ZONE - the zone of unpleasant emotions and GREEN ZONE - the zone of positive emotions.



Pupils are given 5 hypothetical situations in which they have to decide which zone they would place them in if it happened to them. They have to place the situations in their chosen zone and justify their choice to maintain a collaborative class discussion.

**Hypothetical situation 1:** Today you are taking the group school picture and you got your favorite t-shirt dirty.

**Hypothetical situation 2:** The teacher asks you to read a lesson out loud, but you don't know how to pronounce two words.

**Hypothetical situation 3:** You have a test today, you studied but you feel unprepared.

**Hypothetical situation 4:** You were supposed to go to cinema but it started raining.

**Hypothetical situation 5:** You are watching a presentation at school today on a subject you don't like.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How do you understand your feelings?
- Is it easy for you to practice self-control?
- How do emotions influence social skills?
- Is it difficult to be aware of your emotions?

# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Create a Break Center in Your Classroom*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Control

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group

**Target:** Students will reflect on their levels of self-control. They will be able to create their own space in the classroom where they can relax during breaks or calm down when they feel that certain situations are out of their control.

**Tools:** paper, pencils, decorative items, scissors, colored paper, etc.

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are divided into two groups. Under the supervision of the teacher, each group has the freedom to create ornaments, draw, be creative, and come up with pleasant things that will be placed in a corner of the class (preferably in the back of the class). That corner of the classroom will be called the 'Relaxation and Regaining Space'.

An empty box will be placed in that corner of the classroom. In that box, the children will be able to write to the teachers on an anonymous note that makes them lose their self-control.

This corner will be used during breaks by children when they want to relax or when they feel that they are not in control of certain situations.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How do you understand self-control in tense situations?
- Is it easy for you to practice self-control?
- How much do relaxation techniques help in managing self-control?
- What helps you the most when you feel that you are not in control of something?
- What would you do if you had to help someone practice self-control?

# Activity in Class #4

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**Name of activity:** *Role-Play*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Control

**Duration:** 15-20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group

**Target:** Students will practice self-control in tense situations. Role-playing is a great activity to help students practice acceptable behaviors. This activity helps students build emotional self-control by practicing responses to different scenarios that may trigger strong emotions.

**Tools:** self-control cards, pen, paper

**Instructions:** Pupils practice emotional self-control by rehearsing responses to two different self-control cards that may trigger strong emotions.

## **Group A** – *Self-control card 1*

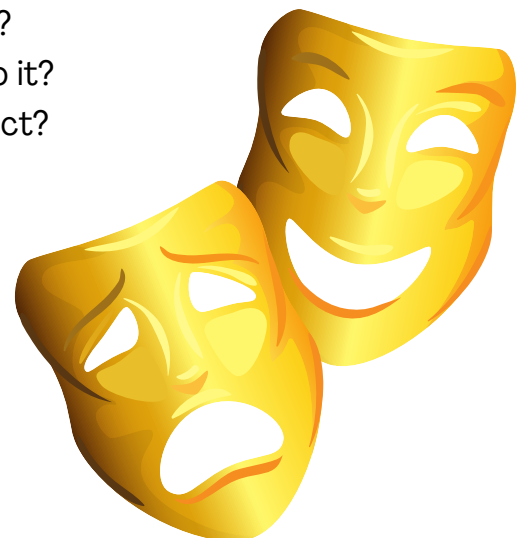
‘Your school colleague asks what you think about his t-shirt. You don’t really like it.’ What would you say?

## **Group B** – *Self-control card 2*

‘John feels nervous about a school test today. He tells himself he can do it.’ What would you say? Is he using self-control?

## **Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How do you understand the emotional self-control?
- Is self-control just about telling yourself you can do it?
- How can you manage self-control in a school conflict?
- Is it easy for you to practice positive behaviour?



# Activity in Class #5

**Name of activity:** *Feelings Thermometer*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Control

**Duration:** 15-20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will understand the intensity of an emotion they are feeling.

**Tools:** feelings thermometer, paper, pen

**Instructions:** Pupils are asked to analyse how they feel at that moment. Depending on the emotions identified, they must choose a section on the feelings thermometer having slightly angry, less confident, and nervous. Then students are asked to propose strategies for things to do to reduce or avoid those emotions.



## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How do you understand the intensity of your emotions?
- What worries me most about the self-control?
- What matters most in my life?
- Which is worse: failing or never trying?

# Homework #1

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**Name of activity:** *Visualising Your Self-Control Power*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Control

**Duration:** 10-15 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Visualisation is a nice activity that can improve children's focus, emotional regulation, and stress management.

**Tools:** pen, paper, pencils

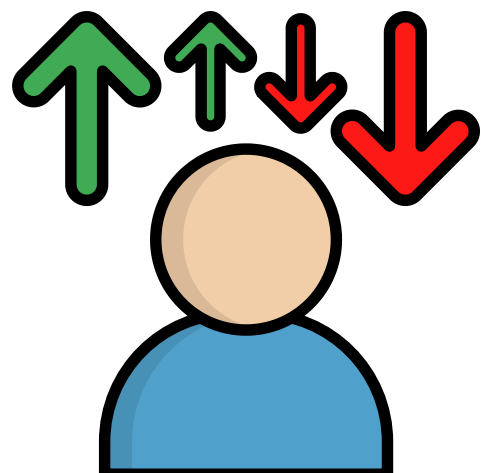
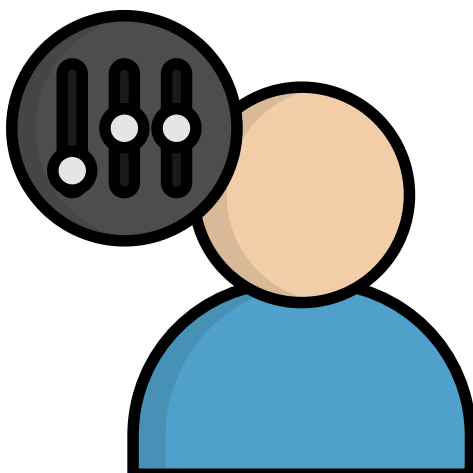
**Instructions:** Students are asked to close their eyes and imagine a calming scene in which they can fully immerse themselves (it could be their favourite place). They must visualise a change in that place, which could be anything.

The students open their eyes for 10 seconds, then close them again and visualise who they would take in that calm scene (best friend, family, etc.)

This activity can become a habit and can be repeated whenever students want to improve self-control and emotional resilience.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- What am I really scared of?
- What matters most in my life?
- What do I want most in life?
- What would I do if I had to give bad news to a friend?



# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *I Would Rather...*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Control

**Duration:** 10 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** This is an impulse control activity for children and helps them practice problem-solving skills, and open-mindedness.

**Tools:** pen, paper, pencils

**Instructions:** Students are asked to understand their mood and emotions and to complete the ‘I would rather...’ sentence as many times as possible following their wishes, feelings, and doubts. For instance, ‘I would rather watch TV than do my homework.’

In this way, they will be more aware of what they really want at that moment but also of their doubts that prevent them from spending their day the way they want.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- What do I need to change about myself?
- What is my favorite way to spend my day?
- What scares me the most about expressing my real emotions?
- What do I want most from myself?





# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *Musical Challenge*

**Key area:** Emotional Self-Control

**Duration:** 15-20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** This is an activity that helps students differentiate between pleasant music and music they don't like, but also how to control their unpleasant emotions caused by unwanted songs.

**Tools:** internet, smartphone, computer/laptop

**Instructions:** Students are asked to play their favourite song. After that, they have to play a song they don't like or even hate. The most important thing is to listen to the unpleasant song until the end. After listening to the two songs, the students must meditate on the emotions given by both songs and analyse their self-control and ability to listen to the unpleasant song until the end.

It is good to meditate on how they relate this activity to real life where they must control themselves even in unpleasant situations.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- How difficult is it to listen to an unpleasant song until the end? Is it like that in real life?
- How difficult is it to listen to the opinions of others who are different from yours?
- Can you control yourself when you are not in your comfort zone?
- What would I change about myself?

# **DIDACTIC UNIT 5.**

## **EMPATHY**



# Activity in Class #1

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**Name of activity:** *Emotional Theater*

**Key area:** Empathy

**Duration:** 40-60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 5-6 students in group

**Target:** Being able to interpret fictional emotional situations and convey them faithfully. Being able to identify emotions in others, understand them, and label them.

**Tools:** none

**Instructions:** The students will interpret a situation where various emotions and feelings are portrayed. They will act using their empathy when interpreting their characters, expressing the emotions as if they were their own and trying to convey them to the audience in the most believable way possible. After each performance, the other students who were the audience will comment on the emotions they have been able to identify in the scene.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Have there been any emotions that have been difficult for you to portray?
- Which emotions are easier to identify? And which are more difficult?
- Do you think we are always aware of other people's emotions?
- Do you think there is any situation where at least one emotion is not present?



# Activity in Class #2

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**Name of activity:** *Emphatic Mime*

**Key area:** Empathy

**Duration:** 30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 5-6 students in group

**Target:** Consistently conveying an emotion and being able to identify them in others.

**Tools:** paper

**Instructions:** The teacher will randomly assign each student an emotion, and only they will know the emotion they have been assigned. Subsequently, they will take turns coming forward one by one and must portray their assigned emotion using only mime. Gestures and sounds can be made, but speaking is not allowed. The student who correctly guesses the emotion first will earn 1 point.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Is it easy to recognize emotions?
- Which emotions are more difficult to portray?
- Which emotions are more difficult to identify?
- In your day-to-day life, do you identify emotions in other people and in yourself?



# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Anonymous Problems*

**Key area:** Empathy

**Duration:** 20-45 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual and in large groups

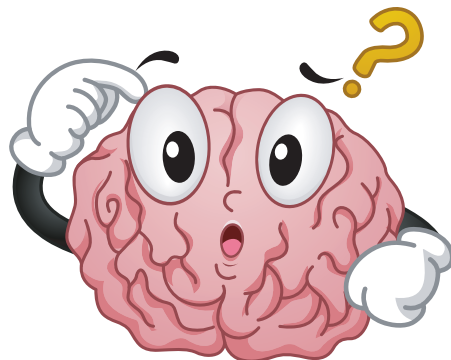
**Target:** Being able to empathize with someone in a difficult situation, recognizing the emotions they may be experiencing, and considering solutions that can help.

**Tools:** cardboard mailbox

**Instructions:** A mailbox will be created, and throughout the week, students can anonymously submit problems or concerns. On the last day, these submissions will be read aloud in class, and they will be analyzed to determine the causes, consequences, and emotions associated with each problem. Finally, possible solutions or advice will be sought for the anonymous individuals who shared their problems.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Are you aware of the problems and concerns that your classmates may be experiencing?
- Do you think it's necessary to put yourself in someone else's shoes and offer help?
- Which negative emotions have surprised you among the problems that have been shared?
- Do you believe that empathy is necessary in problem-solving?
- We have used a mailbox to anonymously share our problems, but do you think we could replace those mailboxes with each other? Would it be beneficial? Why?



# Activity in Class #4

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**Name of activity:** *Emphatic Animals*

**Key area:** Empathy

**Duration:** 60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** 3 groups

**Target:** Facilitating the expression and recognition of emotions through interaction with animals.

**Tools:** some dogs and emotional scale cards

**Instructions:** Animals are often a great medium for expressing and recognizing emotions, and they can be particularly helpful in various therapies, such as for individuals with autism. They provide a safe environment and assist in understanding emotions through non-verbal expressions.

In this case, we will introduce three domestic dogs from a nearby animal education association or an animal shelter. Each group will spend time with the dog, playing and petting them, among other activities. Afterward, when saying goodbye to the dogs, each student will individually fill out a form that includes a list of different emotions grouped into categories: my classmates, the dog, and myself. They will mark the degree to which each emotion was present (from 0 to 5) for each subject.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- Is it easier or more difficult to express feelings with a dog? Why?
- What emotions have you felt during the activity?
- Do you think the dog has experienced emotions? Which ones?

# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *Who is Who?*

**Key area:** Empathy

**Duration:** 30-40 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Identifying the emotional qualities that define a classmate and being able to identify one's own.

**Tools:** paper and colored pencils

**Instructions:** The teacher will assign each student a classmate for whom they will create a portrait and add a list of emotional qualities that define them. Once all the portraits are completed, each student will choose the portrait they believe represents them. Finally, each student will reveal which portrait they have chosen, and its creator will confirm if they guessed correctly.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- What qualities and emotions have they portrayed best about you? What do you think is the reason behind it?
- What qualities and emotions have they not been able to capture about you? What do you think is the reason behind it?
- What is easier: representing the physical aspect, the qualities, or the emotions of your classmates?
- Does the image you have of yourself match the image others have of you?





# Homework #1

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**Name of activity:** *Empathy Journal*

**Key area:** Empathy

**Duration:** 5 or 10 min each day for a week

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Identifying emotions in everyday contexts (family situations, with friends, on television, social media, etc.).

**Tools:** a small notebook or notepad

**Instructions:** Each student will create a small diary where they will record the emotions they identify in their day-to-day life in specific situations, whether they are their own, those of family members, friends, or identified through social media or other means. In the diary, they will detail the situation that occurred and the emotions they believe the person in question may have felt.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- Have you always been aware of the emotional burden that exists in day-to-day life?
- How important do you consider it to be able to identify the emotions that arise in everyday situations?
- Do you think people generally pay attention to the emotions and feelings that occur in any given situation?



# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *In-Depth News*

**Key area:** Empathy

**Duration:** 30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Identify the emotions and feelings that can arise in response to a social event.

**Tools:** notebook and TV

**Instructions:** Watch the news on television, choose 3 news stories, and analyze the emotions and feelings that the protagonists of each news story might be experiencing using an empathetic perspective. Note down the news story and the related emotions in a notebook to present in the classroom.

The news can cover any topic: current events, sports, politics, local news, international news, etc.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- Were you aware beforehand of the emotional repercussions behind each news story?
- Are there more news stories associated with positive or negative emotions?
- Do you believe that all events that occur are connected to an emotion, both for the protagonists and for those who hear the news?



# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *Letter to a Senior*

**Key area:** Empathy

**Duration:** 20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Empathizing with the elderly, their reality, and their history, creating an intergenerational bond of respect, and showing genuine interest in listening to others.

**Tools:** paper, envelope, and pen

**Instructions:** Elderly individuals often experience loneliness and appreciate it when others, especially younger people, remember them. Write a letter to an elderly person (grandparent, neighbor, someone from a nursing home, etc.) expressing gratitude for their attention and asking about an important event in their life. Specifically inquire about the emotions that event made them experience and why they still remember them today. Try to maintain correspondence with that person beyond the first letter.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- What emotions do you think the other person may have felt upon receiving your letter?
- Is it difficult for you to put yourself in the shoes of the other person despite the age difference?
- Do you believe you experience emotions in the same way as an older person currently or in the past?



# DIDACTIC UNIT 6.

## MOTIVATION



# Activity in Class #1

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**Name of activity:** *Ain't No Mountain High Enough*

**Key area:** Motivation

**Duration:** 40-60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Improving motivation through musical resources and acquiring it as a tool to stay motivated in any situation.

**Tools:** computer and speakers

**Instructions:** Each student will write a song that they find motivating. With all of them, the teacher will create a playlist on a music application like Spotify or YouTube. In class, several of these songs will be analyzed randomly, asking how many students find them motivating and their reasons.

This song list will be shared with the students and can be used, if all the students agree, in agreed-upon situations such as exams, relaxation sessions, sports activities, etc.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Does the same music motivate you as your mates?
- In what situations in your everyday life do you play music? Why?
- Is the music you listen to while studying different from what you listen to while training or relaxing?
- In what situations and for what emotions can music be beneficial?
- Is the music you listen to when you're happy different from when you're feeling down? How does it differ?



# Activity in Class #2

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**Name of activity:** *Idols*

**Key area:** Motivation

**Duration:** 40-60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Identifying motivating patterns in other people, selecting good role models, and applying some of other people's experiences as examples.

**Tools:** paper, pencils, computers

**Instructions:** Each student will conduct research and give a presentation about a close person or a public figure who serves as a motivating role model for them. Firstly, they will gather information about their life, achievements, and attitude towards challenges, using the Internet or other sources. Subsequently, they will write a brief script highlighting the most important aspects of that person's life and provide a reflection on why they are a motivating role model. Finally, they will orally present their choice, the gathered information about that individual, and their reasons for considering them as their idol to their classmates.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Why is it important to choose a good role model and identify their positive actions and possibly questionable actions?
- How can examples of overcoming challenges and effort help with our own problems?
- Are there people who can serve as role models in areas closer to you? Who could be examples of this and why?



# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Bounty Hunter*

**Key area:** Motivation

**Duration:** 45-50 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups of 4-5

**Target:** Cooperate and work as a team to achieve a common goal. Differentiate between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, as well as value the tendency to create balanced and healthy rewards.

**Tools:** cards

**Instructions:** The teacher will hide cards around the school grounds and different places in the school, indicating intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Once teams are created and named, the treasure hunt will begin with a time limit of 30 minutes. When the time is up, all teams will gather with the teacher to report their results and do the final scoring. 1 point will be awarded for each extrinsic reward found, and 2 points for each intrinsic reward found, with the team having the highest score at the end of the time being the winner.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Are intrinsic or extrinsic rewards more important? Why?
- What rewards do you usually receive? Are they satisfying?
- What rewards would you like to receive?
- Do you think rewards influence your motivation and effort when studying or engaging in any activity?





# Activity in Class #4

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**Name of activity:** *Compliments Hallway*

**Key area:** Motivation

**Duration:** 40-60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** all together

**Target:** Accepting kind words and compliments from others, being able to praise others, creating a positive classroom environment, and improving motivation and self-esteem through camaraderie.

**Tools:** none

**Instructions:** At the end of each day, as a farewell activity, create a hallway with all the students. Each student will walk through the hallway one by one. During the walk through the compliments hallway, classmates must give compliments and kind words to the person walking, and physical contact like patting on the back, shoulder, or head, applause, and cheers are encouraged. If the student feels comfortable, they can walk through the hallway with their eyes closed to be more aware of everything, at a slow pace.

The student who starts the hallway will be the one at the end after completing the walk.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- Do you find it difficult to accept compliments from others? Why?
- Do you find it difficult to give compliments to others? Why?
- In your daily life, do you compliment people close to you who positively influence your life?
- Do you believe that compliments, kind words, and good gestures can improve motivation?

# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *Motivational Wall*

**Key area:** Motivation

**Duration:** 30-40 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** in pairs

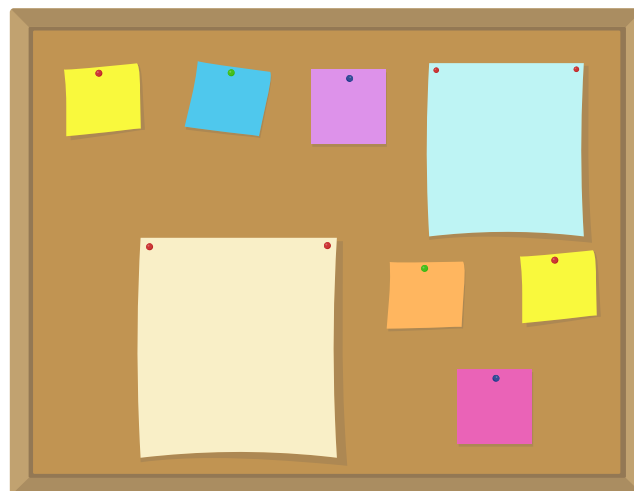
**Target:** To contribute to improving the motivation of others and to be able to create artistic and digital compositions with motivational purposes.

**Tools:** computers/tablets and printer

**Instructions:** In pairs, they will work with a computer or tablet and the Canva application. The teacher will provide simple instructions on how to use the application and tips on its usage. Each pair should design a poster with a motivational message, images, and photographs, making it eye-catching and visually appealing to viewers. The posters will be placed in different areas of the school with the aim of being seen by as many people as possible.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Do you believe that art or literature can be a motivating factor?
- What similar elements to the created poster have you seen in your daily life? Do they motivate you?
- To what extent do you think the created posters can help the people who see them?



# Homework #1

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**Name of activity:** *Vision Board*

**Key area:** Motivation

**Duration:** 5 or 10 min each day for several weeks

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

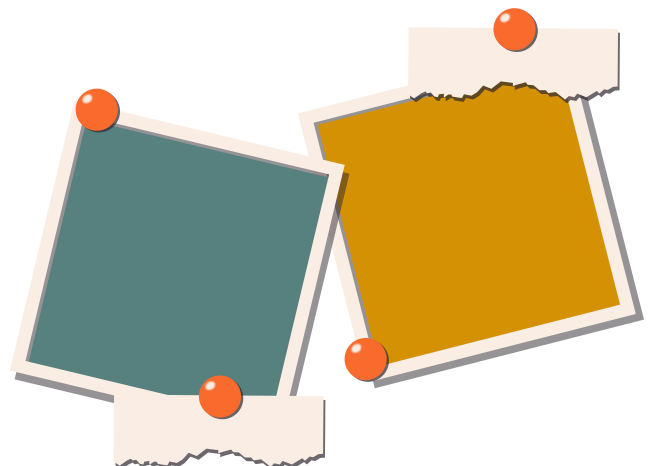
**Target:** To help visualize goals and maintain motivation to achieve them while being aware of and appreciating daily achievements.

**Tools:** cardboard/corkboard, paper, scissors, pencils

**Instructions:** Create a small mural on cardboard or corkboard and hang it in a visible place in their rooms. Daily, they should add green post-it notes or cards with achievements accomplished that day or events they are proud of, along with the date. Weekly, they will add at least one purple post-it note representing a challenge to overcome that week.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- Does writing down and keeping your achievements and good deeds visible in your room make you more aware of them?
- Does increasing your self-esteem have an impact on your motivation to achieve your goals?
- Do you think you could maintain a similar habit over time (keeping diaries to record your actions, making a list of goals, etc.)?



# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *Creativation*

**Key area:** Motivation

**Duration:** 30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** To use creativity to enhance motivation, visualize the achievement of goals, and evoke emotions related to the moment.

**Tools:** paper and drawing materials

**Instructions:** Create a comfortable and motivating environment by playing music you enjoy, preparing a drink, etc. Before you begin, think about something you want to improve in your life or a goal you wish to achieve (e.g., learning a new language, exercising regularly, improving your academic grades, etc.). Close your eyes for a moment and imagine how you would feel upon reaching that goal. Open your eyes, take the paper and drawing materials, and create a drawing that represents your achieved goal and the positive emotions you envisioned during the visualization. Don't worry about your artistic ability; let yourself be guided by your feelings and the creativity of the moment.

Remember to hang or keep the drawing in a place where you'll see it often, reminding you of that inspiring and motivating moment.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- Did you feel good during the activity? Would you repeat the experience on other occasions on your own?
- Do you consider it important to find a moment to pause and think about your goals and visualize a successful future?
- In what other ways could you harness creativity to enhance motivation?

# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *Motivational Letters*

**Key area:** Motivation

**Duration:** 20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Create motivational and positive letters for your loved ones and identify and appreciate positive qualities in others.

**Tools:** paper, envelopes, pencils

**Instructions:** Write motivational letters for the people you care about, such as family members or close friends. Express your gratitude, appreciation, and encouragement towards them. Recognize their achievements and highlight their positive qualities. Encourage them to continue pursuing their dreams and goals. Decorate the letters with colors, patterns, and designs; you can add drawings, illustrations, or any other creative elements to make them more special.

Deliver the motivational letters you have written to your loved ones in person, or if not possible, send them by mail. The act of giving and receiving these letters can be an exciting and motivating experience for both parties. These letters may come back to you, meaning that some of the recipients might respond with correspondence that also motivates you.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- What feelings do you think the recipient of your letter might have experienced? Do you think their motivation has improved?
- Would you consider continuing to write letters like this in the future, even without being part of a school activity?
- What kind of qualities do you find easier to compliment (skills, attitudes, physical aspects, etc.)? And which ones do you find more difficult to identify?

# **DIDACTIC UNIT 7. PROBLEM-SOLVING**



# Activity in Class #1

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**Name of activity:** *Group Drawing*

**Key area:** Problem-Solving

**Duration:** 20-25 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group

**Target:** Students will reflect on their ability to make a good decision to solve a problem. Students will become familiar with the process of solving a problem and will be more confident in expressing their opinions.

**Tools:** paper, pencils

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are grouped in groups of 3. Each student on the team has one of the following roles:

1. *Talker*
2. *Viewer*
3. *Observer*

**Talker.** The talker starts with the following problem ‘The classroom is noisy.’ The talker uses his creativity and draws the reasons why a class could be noisy, talking at the same time.

**Viewer.** At the beginning, the viewer describes what the talker drew without seeing the drawing. Then the viewer sees the design. But he/she is not allowed to talk and must communicate his/her opinion nonverbally to the talker.

**Observer.** The observer analyses the reaction of the viewer and the talker without speaking and notes how well they managed the situation.

The activity ends when the talkers say they are satisfied with the non-verbal communication of the viewer.

## **Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How do you understand problem solving?
- Is it easy for you to solve a problem?
- What qualities should you have to successfully solve a problem?
- Is it difficult to be aware of the problems around you?



# Activity in Class #2

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**Name of activity:** *Memory Game*

**Key area:** Problem-Solving

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group

**Target:** Students will reflect on their ability to detect and recognize a problem and identify the nature of the problem.

**Tools:** paper, pencils, cartoons, and other resources

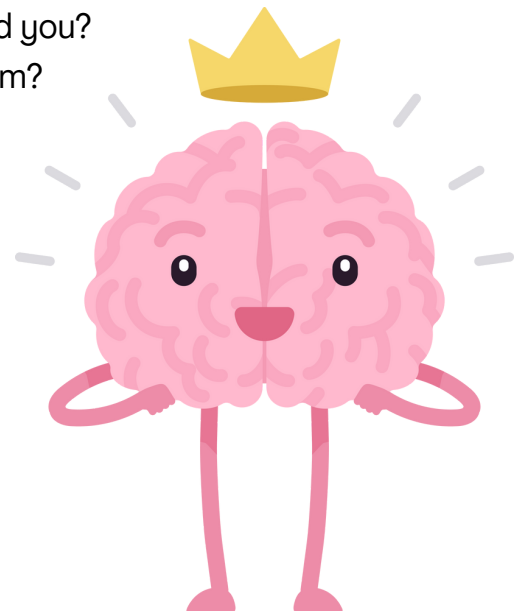
**Instructions:** Pupils and students are divided into two groups. Starting from the word 'learning', the two groups of students look around them and bring at least 5 different objects related to the given word.

Each group places the objects on a table. After all the objects are placed on the table, the students have 30 seconds to memorize the objects. After that, the teacher asks them to close their eyes and takes 3 objects from the table.

At the end, the teacher asks them to open their eyes and gives them 1 minute to figure out which objects are missing. The group that guesses the fastest wins.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How do you recognize a problem?
- Is it easy for you to share a problem with those around you?
- What emotional barriers appear in accepting a problem?
- Is it difficult to ask for help in solving a problem?



# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Key Hunting*

**Key area:** Problem-Solving

**Duration:** 15-20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group

**Target:** Students will reflect on their ability to act in situations of pressure and learn how to manage their emotions to successfully face the problem.

**Tools:** key

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are divided into two groups. The teacher hides a key in the classroom or somewhere outside if the activity is delivered outdoors. The teacher asks the students to imagine that the key is the only way to get out of a locked room.

The two groups of students start hunting for keys. The group that finds it first wins.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How do you react in tense situations?
- How easy is it to lose control?
- What emotional barriers appear in recognizing a problem?
- Is it difficult to act in difficult contexts?



# Activity in Class #4

**Name of activity:** *Survivor Scenario*

**Key area:** Problem-Solving

**Duration:** 15-20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** group

**Target:** Students will reflect on their ability to think creatively to solve a problem. They will also learn how to think critically in stressful situations.

**Tools:** paper, pencils

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are divided into two groups. The teacher shares the following scenario with them:

*'The students are stranded on an island. They have a limited amount of food and water and must create shelter from items around the island. They asked for help but received an answer that it cannot arrive faster than 2 days.'*

Each group must think and propose how to make it through the two days as safely and comfortably as possible.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How do you understand alternatives to solve a problem?
- How easy is it to make good decisions in tense situations?
- What emotional barriers appear in communicating the problem?
- Is it difficult to think critically to make good decisions?

# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *The Precision Game*

**Key area:** Problem-Solving

**Duration:** 20-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

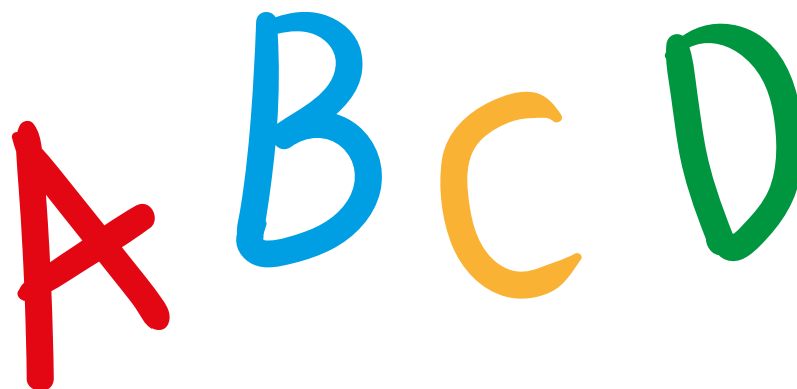
**Target:** Students will reflect on their ability to determine a problem and find suitable solutions without breaking the rules of the game.

**Tools:** chairs (or none)

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are seated in a circle either on chairs if they are available, or standing. The teacher says a word-category and each student must find words/items that fit the given category but must be in ALPHABETICAL ORDER. For instance, the category is 'animals'. The first student says a word with A, the next student says a word with B, and so on that fits the category of animals. The student who says the last word correctly in alphabetical order wins.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- What has been your biggest failure?
- Do you consider yourself a problem solver or problem maker?
- What did you learn by solving a recent problem?
- Could you have done this a different way?



# Homework #1

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**Name of activity:** *Become a Hero*

**Key area:** Problem-Solving

**Duration:** 10-15 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will be stimulated to think of new ideas. In the comfort of their home, they will do a stimulating activity of how they would act to solve a problem. This will help them to be better prepared for the tense situations in which they will have decisions to make.

**Tools:** none

**Instructions:** Students are asked to put themselves in the shoes of a famous person who has to make decisions in a critical situation. It is about self-meditation. They should propose solutions and refer to their experiences up to that point.

*Problem solver: You are someone very famous. You were contacted by journalists for an interview on a sensitive topic, but you didn't have time to answer. As a reaction, the journalists published an article criticising your lack of interest towards the public and society. Which are the choices you would consider? How will you do this?*

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- What distracts you when you have to make a decision?
- How difficult is it to put yourself in someone else's shoes?
- Is it easy for you to solve problems under time pressure?
- Does your home environment help you make better decisions?



# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *Problem Solver Questionnaire*

**Key area:** Problem-Solving

**Duration:** 10 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will reflect on how to think creatively and critically and improve their problem-solving skills.

**Tools:** self-exploration questionnaire, pen

**Instructions:** Students are asked to find out what prevents them from making decisions to solve a problem and what helps them in solving a problem.

## Problem solver questionnaire

1. *What is your greatest fear in making decisions?*

•

2. *How quickly do you react to solving tense problems?*

•

3. *If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?*

•

4. *What is your greatest regret when trying to solve problems?*

•

5. *What do you most value in yourself?*

•

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- What is stopping me from being honest with myself?
- Is it difficult to accept your weaknesses?
- How does my home environment help me relax?
- How easy is it to accept a problem?

# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *Newspaper*

**Key area:** Problem-Solving

**Duration:** 5-10 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will learn to recognize and accept the problems they have even if they are not complicated. They will learn to reduce the negative thoughts behind a problem and get to what is really problematic.

**Tools:** pen, paper

**Instructions:** Students are asked to write their problem (it can be one from home or from school) as if it were a headline in a newspaper. Then students are asked to explain their problem in up to 30 words. Then cut it down to 20 words; then to 15 words; then to 10 words and finally to only 5 words. These 5 words are the root of their problem.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- Is it difficult for me to accept my problems?
- How often do I communicate my problems to my family?
- Is it easy to ask friends for help with a problem?
- How much does my home environment help me meditate when I am stressed?





# DIDACTIC UNIT 8.

## SOCIAL SKILLS



# Activity in Class #1

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**Name of activity:** *How We Find Friends*

**Key area:** Social Skills

**Duration:** 20-45 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 3-4 pupils/students in group

**Target:** Students will reflect on what friendship is and on the complexity of human relationships. They will think about how much value friendship can have.

**Tools:** glue, paper, scissors, pictures of faces (magazines, newspapers)

**Instructions:** Pupils and students are divided into groups of three. They take newspapers and magazines and choose faces that catch their attention. The group must agree together how to proceed, who will work earlier and who will work later, as well as the space for working on the paper is limited. They then glue the faces onto the paper. They then identify two people (faces) who are looking for each other, that could be friends. They divide the paper with different lines that they draw. Each pupil or student has his/her own colour of the line. Together they create a paper maze. The lines will be smudged, but care must be taken that the pairs can meet. The whole picture will show the intricacies of human relationships and the complexity of finding a way from one to the other.

**Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How do you understand the created picture?
- How do you make friends?
- Is it easy for you to make friends?
- What qualities should your friend have?
- Why do we like some people and not others?
- What was it about some of the faces that put you off or intrigued you?

# Activity in Class #2

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**Name of activity:** *Human Feelings*

**Key area:** Social Skills

**Duration:** 50-60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual, then groups of 3-4 students

**Target:** Recognize the difference between describing an action and using a verb to express feelings. Developing verbal and non-verbal communication in everyday life situations, developing empathy, and appropriate responses for different situations. Awareness of the differences between men and women in different life situations.

**Tools:** board for teacher, pen, prepared printed interviews, cards with situations, cards with jobs

**Instructions:** Pupils sit in a circle. The teacher asks them how they felt in certain situations, e.g. a weekend at grandma's, I got a present, I got hurt at football, I had to study, etc. The teacher can write some of the answers on the board. The teacher then divides the pupils into groups. Each one gets a piece of text with a conversation from everyday life (appropriate to the age of the students). The students' task is to think about how the person is feeling. Who was featured in the excerpt? Did they treat the person correctly? Then the students draw a card in their group with a situation that they will act out through dramatization: at the doctor's, in the shop, at home, at school, etc. We then focus on the behaviour of boys and girls. How do men and women behave in society? How at home? How at work? The teacher has prepared pictures of different "masculine, feminine jobs", but also those in which men and women normally work. Why are some jobs more suitable for men and others for women? Students defend their opinions. Reflection follows.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- How did you feel in the role?
- What do you still need to practise (greeting, thanking, etc.)?
- How do adults perform in these roles? Can you tell me the differences?
- What do men and women have in common and how do they differ?
- How do you feel about "male and female" professions? What is your opinion?

# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Human Characteristics*

**Key area:** Social Skills

**Duration:** 25-35 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual/group

**Target:** Expanding knowledge of what human characteristics exist. Awareness of the attitudes that students have towards them in relation to their own personality. Mutual, closer acquaintance between students.

**Tools:** board for teacher, pen

**Instructions:** Students sit on chairs in a circle. First, they play a game where those who are black, like ice cream, talkative, curious, etc. The teacher can work with the information he has about the students. The game starts with more general information and gradually moves to more specific information about human characteristics. The teacher then asks the students, in a brainstorming format, what human characteristics they know. He writes the students' answers on the board and makes no comments. Then the teacher creates groups of traits from the answers and asks the students which traits can help a good atmosphere in the classroom, promote group work, which ones disturb the peace in the classroom, do not promote friendly relations, etc. Reflection follows.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- What qualities are present in the class?
- What is a typical positive and negative characteristic?
- Which characteristics are missing in the classroom?
- What qualities should we value in the classroom?



# Activity in Class #4

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**Name of activity:** *What Am I Like?*

**Key area:** Social Skills

**Duration:** 20-25 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Getting to know classmates in the classroom. Learning about one's own personality traits and how others perceive them. Refining one's view of one's own personality and its characteristics.

**Tools:** board for teacher, pen, sticky tape

**Instructions:** First, quickly review with the students what human characteristics we know. The teacher divides the class in half. He writes yes on one and no on the other. Students stand on the given half according to how much they agree with the question. If they are unsure of the answer, they stand closer to the marked line. Are you optimistic, friendly, tolerant, envious, reliable, aggressive, punctual, messy, lazy, willing to help anyone? The teacher observes the students' reactions. Reflection activity follows.

## Questions for reflection after activity:

- Who would like to respond to the activity that took place?
- Have you always answered truthfully?
- How difficult was it for you?
- Were you surprised by any of your classmates' opinions of you?
- What was uncomfortable for you?
- Did your opinion match that of your classmates?



# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *Light and Shadow*

**Key area:** Social Skills

**Duration:** 15-20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual, then groups of 3-4 students

**Target:** Enabling you to know your strengths and weaknesses. To look at yourself from different perspectives. Focus on self-reflection.

**Tools:** paper, pen

**Instructions:** First, students will work independently. Everyone will need paper and pen. Students will divide the paper into two halves. Each person will write his or her name on both parts of the paper, from top to bottom, letter by letter. To the right of each letter, students will write a few of their positive qualities. To the left of each letter, students will write a few of their negative qualities. They then break into groups of 3-4 students. Each person in the group can share what they want from their list. Others can add and elaborate as they know it. As students think, remind them that everyone has strengths and weaknesses, they just differ.

## Questions for reflexion after activity:

- What was harder for you to write?
- What tools of self-knowledge do we have?
- Can you find a situation where a "weak" side is an advantage and a "strong" side is a disadvantage?
- What does this imply for each of us?



# Homework #1

---

**Name of activity:** *People In My Life*

**Key area:** Social Skills

**Duration:** individual, within about an hour

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will reflect on their relationships in their lives. They will consider how people around them can help them in case of a problem (e.g., psychological, material).

**Tools:** nothing

**Instructions:** Students are asked to find out what kind of relationships they have with people in their lives, who are important people to them, and whether they have a close friend or person they can turn to if they have a problem. Students map the situation and get an idea of the "safety net".

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- Who's my real friend?
- When, where, and with whom do I feel comfortable?
- If I'm not feeling well, who's always there for me (at school/at home)?
- Do I know a number, an app, or a website for psychological help?
- Who can help me if I am in a difficult financial situation?





# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *Polite Conversation in Practice*

**Key area:** Social Skills

**Duration:** individual, within about an hour; can continue longer into the future

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will use their knowledge of polite conversation and practice it in everyday life.

**Tools:** nothing

**Instructions:** Students will actively seek out situations in which they need to be polite and communicate. Decent behaviour and appropriate responses in everyday life situations are essential for functioning in human society. The degree of mastery of these skills can affect students' academic, professional, and personal lives.

Students will actively seek out situations in which they need to be polite and communicate e.g., shop assistant, doctor, clerk, driver, etc.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- Can I do the task or do I need more help with it, e.g., from a teacher, parent, or friend?
- Am I worried about contact with strangers? Is it OK for me or not?
- Do I know how to start and continue a conversation?
- What must I not forget? (greeting, thanking, appropriate non-verbal responses, etc.)
- How did you manage the task? What still needs to be improved?



# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *My Strengths and Weaknesses*

**Key area:** Social Skills

**Duration:** individual, within about an hour; can continue longer into the future

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

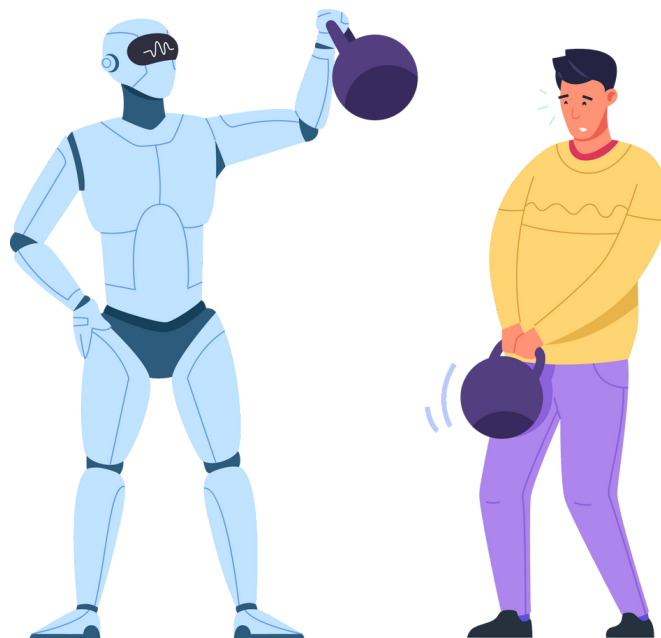
**Target:** Students will reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. They will think about how they can work and use their weaknesses and strengths in their lives.

**Tools:** nothing

**Instructions:** Students try to find their strengths and weaknesses, which each of us has. They reflect on how these qualities and personality traits affect them in everyday situations and what advantages or disadvantages they may bring. Some students may only gradually discover these strengths and weaknesses in the future.

**Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- What are my strengths and weaknesses (other than what was said in class)?
- Do I know myself?
- Who or what can help me know myself?
- Do I have real friends/persons around me who are honest with me?



# DIDACTIC UNIT 9. STRESS MANAGEMENT



# Activity in Class #1

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**Name of activity:** *Stressometer*

**Key area:** Stress Management

**Duration:** 20-45 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** everyone works individually, and joint discussion

**Target:** This activity will allow students to express their stress levels, but will also create a space to discuss the topic of stress and help raise awareness of their own mental health.

**Tools:** sheets of paper, coloured markers

**Instructions:** First create a colour scale from 1 to 10, where 1 represents minimum stress (I feel totally relaxed) and 10 represents maximum stress (I am totally helpless). Discuss with students various situations that can contribute to stress at school, such as exams, tests, presentations, homework load, etc. Introduce the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale (see attachment), which has been used in psychology for more than 50 years. Remind students that stress can be brought on by positive situations in life, but also that stress cannot be measured objectively - everyone experiences it differently. Then have everyone create their own Stressometer with the same scale of 1 - 10. Everyone matches the value on the scale with a situation that corresponds to their stress level. They then also rate their current stress level on the scale. Students can use colored markers and creativity to decorate their Stressometer. They can add pictures, words or symbols. Matching specific situations to each stress level will help students better identify and understand exactly what is stressing them out. This may allow them to better focus on these situations and seek effective strategies for coping with stress. After completing the Stressometer, students can show each other their creations and briefly share what led them to a particular placement on the scale. Encourage them to share their own experiences with stressful situations.

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- How did you feel about assigning situations to each level on the Stressometer?
- What techniques or strategies would you like to try for coping with stress?
- What positive situations or events in your life usually bring you to higher levels of stress?
- Has creating the Stressometer helped you gain a better understanding of your stressors?

# Activity in Class #2

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**Name of activity:** *Relaxation Techniques*

**Key area:** Stress Management

**Duration:** 40-60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** the number of students is not limited

**Target:** The aim of this activity is to show students different relaxation techniques including deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery and mindfulness to help them manage stress.

**Tools:** quiet space, suitable mats to allow lying on the floor

**Instructions:** Explain the importance of relaxation techniques, including deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery, and mindfulness, for managing stress and promoting well-being.

Deep Breathing Exercise:

Instruct the students to find a comfortable seated position with their feet flat on the floor and hands resting on their laps. Guide them to take slow, deep breaths in through their nose, counting to four, and then exhale slowly through their mouth, counting to six. Encourage them to focus on the sensation of their breath entering and leaving their body, letting go of any tension with each exhale.

A short mindfulness exercise:

Introduce the concept of mindfulness and its benefits for managing stress and promoting awareness of the present moment. Invite students to focus on the present moment and to focus on their breath, sensations in their body, sounds in the environment, the temperature of the environment, and the smells that surround them. Encourage them to observe their thoughts and emotions without judging them, simply acknowledge them and let them subside again. Guide them to gently bring their attention back to the present moment whenever their mind wanders elsewhere in their thoughts. Invite students to slowly bring their attention back to the classroom. Briefly discuss with students how they feel after practicing these relaxation and mindfulness techniques. Encourage them to incorporate these techniques into their daily lives whenever they feel the need to relax, reduce stress, or cultivate mindfulness.

### Progressive muscle relaxation:

Guide students through a progressive muscle relaxation exercise similar to the previous description. For this activity, it is ideal to assume a lying position. Begin the exercise by calming the breath. Then instruct them to tense each muscle group in the body for a few seconds and then release the tension and focus on the feeling of relaxation. Begin with the toes, move to the feet, and gradually move through the legs, abdomen, arms, and gradually the entire face. Help students by instructing them on which muscles and muscle groups to engage at what point. Encourage them to release any tension.

### Guided imagery:

Describe a peaceful and quiet setting, such as a beach or a quiet forest, and invite students to imagine themselves in that place. Lead them to engage their senses by describing the sights, sounds, smells and feelings they might experience in this peaceful environment. Give students moments of silence to allow them time to fully immerse themselves in the visualization.

### **Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How did you feel during the relaxation?
- Was it easy or difficult for you to relax and fully engage in the techniques?
- Which technique did you find most effective or enjoyable?
- Will you try to apply these relaxation techniques to your daily life?
- What other stress management strategies or techniques would you like to learn?



# Activity in Class #3

---

**Name of activity:** *Anti-Stress Ball-Making Workshop*

**Key area:** Stress Management

**Duration:** 45 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** students in pairs

**Target:** This activity aims to equip students with a practical relaxation tool to help them cope with stress while promoting self-awareness and self-care.

**Tools:** air balloons (different colors), rice, flour, or sand (as filling), string, funnel or containers for pouring the filling (plastic bottles with narrow necks), scissors

## **Instructions:**

First, explain to the students that in this activity they will create anti-stress balls. Students will discover how anti-stress balls serve as a physical tool to relax, relieve stress and tension. Squeezing them can effectively help calm the mind and relieve anxiety, handshaking, etc.

Then divide students into pairs. Each pair will be given at least 4 colored balloons, material for filling such as rice, flour, or sand, and also scissors. Following the instructions, students stretch the balloons by blowing air into them to make them flexible and easy to handle. Working together in pairs, they use funnels to fill the balloons with the chosen material, tie them tightly and cut the mouth tube.

They then take the other balloon and leave it empty. They carefully pull it over the filled balloon so that it fits snugly. This two-layer construction will increase its durability. They then re-tie the balloon and cut off the excess mouth tube. And voila! The anti-stress ball is ready to use.

## **Questions for reflection after activity:**

- How do you think squeezing the stress balls can help in managing stress and tension?
- Do you think the colors or textures of the balls have any impact on their effectiveness? Why?
- How do you plan to incorporate the use of stress balls into your daily life for stress management?
- Did you find the workshop calming or stress-relieving?



# Activity in Class #4

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**Name of activity:** *Organize Your Story*

**Key area:** Stress Management

**Duration:** 15-20 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** students work in pairs

**Target:** The activity combines time management, effective organization, collaboration, and creativity in story creation. Students will practice the skill of efficiently using time constraints to achieve their goals.

**Tools:** large cards with pictures (randomly shuffled), blank papers, pencils

**Instructions:** Divide students into pairs, and they will collaborate to reorganize the space to make it efficient and well-utilized. Simultaneously, they will have to arrange the pictures in such an order that they can create a story based on them.

Give students 5 minutes for planning and organizing the space. Then, they will have 10 minutes to arrange the pictures, create a story, and briefly write it down. During this time, they should discuss and cooperate on making the most of their time and crafting an engaging story.

After the allocated time, stop the activities and have each pair present their result. Students should read their story and describe how they worked together to create it.

In conclusion, focus on the importance of time management, efficient work organization, and how students can apply these skills in their daily lives. Discuss how they managed their time during the activity and the role played by collaboration, creativity, and most importantly, planning.

## **Questions for reflection after the activity:**

- How did you handle the time constraints for planning and completing the task?
- What time management skills did you learn or improve during this activity?
- Did you find it challenging to be creative while being time-constrained?
- How was it to present your results to others? Was it beneficial for you?
- What would you consider changing or improving in your planning process?

# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *Role-Play: Managing Exam Stress*

**Key area:** Stress Management

**Duration:** 40 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** the number of pupils is not limited, divide the group into 3 smaller groups

**Target:** Students will practice stress management techniques in real-life scenarios, improve their problem-solving skills, increase their self-awareness and ability to handle stress in different situations.

**Tools:** papers and pens for notes

**Instructions:** "Preparing for an important exam". For this activity, the teacher can also choose his own topic and adapt it to the classroom situation. Students are preparing for an important exam that is crucial for their future study plans. They face high expectations, uncertainty and a lot of nervousness in preparing for the exam.

Divide the class into 3 groups that represent each role in the scenario, such as students, parents, teacher or friends. Each group will be tasked with a different stress management technique in preparation for the exam. Secretly assign a specific stress management technique to groups so they don't know each other's techniques.

1. The group can focus on strategies for effective learning and time management.
2. The group can focus on support and communication with family and friends.
3. The group will focus on relaxation techniques.

Give students at least 15 minutes to prepare. Then each group will present their scenario to the class and demonstrate their approach to stress management in preparation for the exam (minimum 5 minutes each group).

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- How satisfied are you with how you handled the scenario?
- What strategies for managing stress during exam preparation did you notice in the scenarios of other groups?
- Which stress management strategies do you find most effective and why?
- What other stress management strategies or techniques would you like to learn?

# Homework #1

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**Name of activity:** *Relaxation Diary*

**Key area:** Stress Management

**Duration:** individual (maximum 15 minutes per day)

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** This diary should serve as a tool for self-introspection, reflection and also to deepen the skill of effective relaxation.

**Tools:** relaxation diary sheet for each day

**Instructions:** Students will spend at least 10 minutes each day on one of the relaxations they have been introduced to in class. They can choose from the following techniques: deep breathing, mindfulness, imagination, progressive muscle relaxation, listening to relaxation music, or some of their own. They can choose the method that suits them best on a given day, they can alternate or combine techniques. Students will record their experiences in a short relaxation journal. Students should be honest and open in their notes. Through the journal, they can monitor the long-term effect of regular relaxation on their feelings and stress levels. It is helpful to provide students with the journal template below.

## **Design of a relaxation diary:**

Date:

Length of relaxation:

Technique of relaxation:

Feelings before relaxation: *(Describe how you feel physically, emotionally, and mentally.)*

Course of relaxation practice: *(Describe how you performed your chosen relaxation technique. How you moved, how you breathed, how you concentrated, etc.)*

Feelings after relaxation: *(Describe how you feel now that you have completed the relaxation practice. How your physical, emotional, and mental states have changed.)*

Effect on feelings and stress: *(Evaluate how this relaxation practice has affected your feelings and stress levels. Did you feel calmed, relaxed, improved mood or reduced tension?)*

Comments or observations:

# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *To-Do-List*

**Key area:** Stress Management

**Duration:** individual (maximum 60 minutes)

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** During the task completion, students will learn to plan their study and personal time to avoid unnecessary time stress. They will learn to monitor their plan to effectively manage their time and fulfill all their commitments.

**Tools:** daily list for each day, colored pencils/markers

**Instructions:** Students are tasked with planning important activities for the entire following week. First, they will consider the tasks and activities they have ahead (e.g., school work, tests, homework, sports and leisure activities, personal projects, family commitments).

They will use one sheet of paper for each day. The form can be chosen based on their preference, but they must follow these rules:

1. For each day, they will write down what needs to be done and prioritize their activities – using red, they will jot down or underline the most essential tasks (the ones that are necessary). They will use blue to mark tasks that would be good to complete. Finally, they will use green to mark everything they will focus on if they have spare time, i.e., what has the lowest priority.
2. They will set a deadline or time frame for each task. They will estimate how much time each activity will take (e.g., 10 minutes, 2 hours, etc.).
3. Once a task is completed, they will cross it out. If any tasks remain, they will transfer them to the following days.



# Homework #3

**Name of activity:** *Stress Plan*

**Key area:** Stress Management

**Duration:** individual

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Students will create an individual stress plan to help them identify and manage stressful situations.

**Tools:** printed chart, pencil

**Instructions:** Students will create or be given a chart based on an example. They will write a list of stressful situations they face and how they feel about them. They then match them with strategies and techniques that help them cope with these situations. They may include strategies such as deep breathing, physical activity, meditation, seeking support from friends or family, etc. Finally, they will evaluate the effectiveness of their strategy, or describe where they would make changes, and what they still need to learn.

Students will then develop a plan for how to use these strategies in stressful situations and how to integrate them into their daily lives. Upon completion, students should present and share their stress plan with other classmates.

This assignment will allow students to identify their specific stressors and select the strategies that work best for them.

*Example (in English)*

| <b>Stressor</b><br>(Describe specific situations that cause you stress or anxiety.) | <b>Feelings that the stressor evokes in me</b> | <b>Strategies, tools, methods for coping with stress</b> | <b>Reflection and evaluation</b><br>(How effective is my coping strategy? Is there anything else I need to learn?) |
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# DIDACTIC UNIT 10. TEAMWORK



# Activity in Class #1

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**Name of activity:** *What Kind of Leader Are You?*

**Key area:** Teamwork

**Duration:** 25-45 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 5-6 students per group

**Target:** Promote self-awareness and understanding of various leadership styles among students while fostering teamwork and group discussion.

**Tools:** The teacher will create cards describing different leadership styles, such as democratic leadership, authoritarian leadership, transformational leadership, task-oriented, people-oriented, etc.

**Instructions:** Each student picks a leadership style card without showing the content to the others. Students are asked to read the description of the leadership style on the card and reflect on how it relates to their own way of leading. Once the participants have understood their assigned leadership style, give them time to think about how they would describe that style to others. In small groups, ask them to prepare a short presentation (1-2 minutes) that includes examples of how they would apply that leadership style in everyday situations. After all the presentations, lead a group discussion about the different leadership styles and how each student feels about their assigned style.

## **Questions for reflection after the activity:**

- Do you think your assigned leadership style aligns with your perception of how you lead or relate to others?
- Did you feel more identified with a particular leadership style?
- Was there a leadership style that you found more challenging to understand?
- What aspects of your leadership style would you like to strengthen and develop further?
- What important lessons about leadership and communication do you take away from this activity, and how do you plan to apply them in your daily life?



# Activity in Class #2

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**Name of activity:** *Shifting Perspectives*

**Key area:** Teamwork

**Duration:** 20-40 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 3 students per group

**Target:** Enhance teamwork and negotiation skills among participants through a structured role-play scenario.

**Tools:** The teacher prepares and assigns each group a conflict scenario, such as selling a house or a business owner looking to sell their small business.

**Instructions:** Organize the participants into groups of three: a seller, a buyer, and a mediator. Once the teams decide on the roles. The seller and buyer must then negotiate the prices of these items. The observer's role is to watch the negotiation process without intervening, but if disagreements arise between the seller and the buyer, the mediator intervenes to facilitate communication and help both parties find common ground. The mediator must ensure that both parties feel heard and understood. After a few minutes, they will have the chance to switch roles. This activity will conclude once every individual has taken on each of the three roles.

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- How did your team approach the different roles of seller, buyer, and mediator?
- What were some successful strategies used by the sellers to persuade the buyers?
- How did the mediator contribute to the interactions between the seller and the buyer?
- Were there any instances of conflict during the negotiations?
- Did role rotation affect team dynamics?
- What did you learn about the importance of effective communication and empathy in the context of negotiations and conflict resolution?

# Activity in Class #3

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**Name of activity:** *Discovering Heroes Together*

**Key area:** Teamwork

**Duration:** 15-30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 3-4 students in a group

**Target:** Promote a deeper understanding of teamwork by identifying real-life examples and inspiring students to embody these positive attributes in their own collaborative efforts.

**Tools:** a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil

**Instructions:** Students explore and reflect on role models in their lives who may be public figures, family members, friends, or teachers who have inspired them. In silence, the students write down who they consider role models, describing their admirable qualities. Each one describes on a piece of paper the traits, attributes, and/or achievements that make that person worthy of admiration. Then, as a group, they brainstorm what makes a role model significant. Finally, a group discussion is facilitated based on the adolescents' reflections.

## Questions for reflection after the activity:

- Why did you choose the person you mentioned as your role model?
- What did you discover during this activity about what you value in a role model?
- Is there a quality or action you have identified in your role model that you would like to cultivate more in yourself?
- Is there a current situation in your life where you could apply the lessons you have learned from your role model?
- What specific steps can you take to incorporate the lessons of your role models into your goals and aspirations?



# Activity in Class #4

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**Name of activity:** *Once Upon a Time*

**Key area:** Teamwork

**Duration:** 30-40 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 3-4 students in a group

**Target:** Encourage reflection on different perspectives, understanding of diversity, and the importance of empathy in considering different backgrounds and life experiences.

**Tools:** flipchart or projector to show initial story ideas

**Instructions:** The teacher will introduce the story-starter concept within the classroom. These prompts will encompass universal themes but will maintain sufficient flexibility to allow for diverse interpretations based on the individual student's viewpoint. Following this, students will write brief stories at home using the teacher's opening as inspiration. In the next class, students will meet in small groups to exchange and discuss their stories. After the small group discussion, there may be a whole group discussion or reflection session where students share what they have learned about how personal perspectives influence how they interpret and interact with the same initial story ideas.

## **Questions for reflection after the activity:**

- How do you think individual experiences played a role?
- Did you notice any common themes or differences in the ways your peers interpreted the same story starters?
- Did any of your group peers' stories inspire you or provide a new perspective on a story starter?
- Did this activity emphasize the importance of empathy and open-mindedness when considering others' viewpoints?
- How could the things you learned from this activity affect how you interact with different viewpoints in your life?

# Activity in Class #5

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**Name of activity:** *Strategic Planning*

**Key area:** Teamwork

**Duration:** 30 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** groups, 3-4 students in a group

**Target:** Encourage teamwork and collaboration among students as they work together to establish guidelines for effective monitoring of progress in the educational environment.

**Tools:** flipchart or whiteboard to write down group ideas and writing materials

**Instructions:** Students form small groups to collaboratively establish guidelines for effective progress tracking and review their individual plans. In groups, they write goals, discuss measurement methods, and generate specific ideas. Then, the groups compile a list of guidelines that they can use to track their progress and adjust their plan. These guidelines could include milestones, indicators, actions, and timelines. Each group will share their guidelines with the rest of the class and at home with their families. At the end, ask each student to reflect on the established guidelines and how they can apply them to their own development plan.

## **Questions for reflection after the activity:**

- What guidelines do you think are most important?
- If you follow these guidelines, will you be able to stay focused on your goals and make adjustments as needed?
- Can you recall any suggestions or approaches from another group that stood out to you?
- How do you think collaboration and discussion with peers can enhance your focus on learning and goal achievement?
- Would these guidelines apply to other aspects of your life besides your studies?

# Homework #1

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**Name of activity:** *Positive Wall*

**Key area:** Teamwork

**Duration:** 60 min

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Promote reflection on teamwork and create an inspirational mural reflecting the values and positive ideas related to collaboration.

**Tools:** paper or post-its, coloured pencils, and access to a wall or space where the mural can be displayed

**Instructions:** Reflect on your past experiences related to teamwork and write on Post-it notes or small pieces of paper your positive thoughts and reflections on teamwork. These can be motivational phrases, examples of successful collaboration, or even drawings depicting teamwork. On a large piece of paper or cardboard, organize the sticky notes in a creative way to form a mural. You can use different colours, draw connections between the notes, or create a thematic design related to teamwork. As a final step, you can present the mural to your family. During the presentation, you can explain the meaning behind your choices, highlight the most important aspects of teamwork that you want to emphasize and have a discussion about your observations and positive messages related to teamwork.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- What were the most significant or memorable messages or drawings on the mural?
- How did the process of creating the mural influence your perspective on teamwork?
- Did your family members share any inspiring ideas or insights on teamwork?
- What aspects of teamwork do you feel were emphasized the most through the mural's content and design?
- Were there any surprising or unexpected contributions to the mural that challenged your preconceptions about teamwork?
- Did the mural activity encourage open communication and a sense of unity among your family members?

# Homework #2

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**Name of activity:** *Weaving Threads of Teamwork*

**Key area:** Teamwork

**Duration:** according to the student's needs

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Develop and improve teamwork skills while working on a personal project.

**Tools:** computer or mobile phone, digital calendar to schedule your activities, task management applications, and a notebook or diary

**Instructions:** Find a personal project that interests you and that you can complete individually, such as learning a new language or developing a technical skill. Identify specific teamwork goals, such as time management, self-discipline, collaboration with online resources, and communicating effectively with yourself. Create a detailed plan with short- and long-term goals using time management tools such as a calendar or task-tracking applications. Regularly evaluate your progress towards your teamwork goals. If possible, join online communities related to your project to practice collaboration and networking. Participate in discussions, share your knowledge, and learn from others. This will help you develop collaboration and networking skills.

## Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:

- What did you learn from this activity?
- How did you approach the challenges you encountered?
- Did you successfully reach the objectives you established for this task?
- What were the most significant insights or takeaways for you?
- What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them?



# Homework #3

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**Name of activity:** *Weaving Threads of Teamwork*

**Key area:** Teamwork

**Duration:** according to the student's needs

**Organizational form of the activity:** individual

**Target:** Promote self-assessment, self-awareness, and the development of essential teamwork skills among participants.

**Tools:** an individual evaluation sheet or online questionnaire such as Google Forms, including a list of teamwork skills and a space for them to rate their own skills.

**Instructions:** Create a list of skills and competencies important for teamwork, such as effective communication, empathy, collaboration, conflict resolution, group decision-making, etc. For each skill or competency on the list, rate your current performance from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Urgent Improvement Needed" and 5 being "Excellent". Be honest with yourself in your ratings and identify your strengths and areas for improvement. For each area of improvement identified, create an individual action plan. This plan should include specific steps you can take to develop those skills. For example, if you identify effective communication as an area for improvement, your plan might include reading books on communication, enrolling in a workshop, or practicing active listening in your daily conversations.

## **Questions for students, which can help them in this homework:**

- What could you have done differently to improve teamwork?
- How do you communicate and collaborate with others?
- What was the most challenging aspect of the activity for you?
- Did you achieve the goals you set for yourself during this activity?
- Did you notice any strengths or weaknesses in your problem-solving or decision-making skills during the activity?
- How does what you learned in this activity relate to your broader personal or professional goals?



# Conclusion

The EIFNEG project, which focuses on the development of emotional intelligence in students aged 14 to 18, is based on extensive research and analysis in secondary education which resulted in the selection of 10 key areas that are essential for the development of emotional intelligence.

This handbook, which begins with a comprehensive introduction that includes methodology, evaluation, and an important chapter on attention to diversity, is rich in content and offers 10 didactic units with well-defined sections that provide teachers with a solid framework for introducing emotional education into the classroom.

The final chapter of the handbook, a guide for teachers, provides a treasure trove of practical resources - 50 learning activities for classroom use and 30 tools for home practice. Together, these resources not only enrich the learning experience but also set the stage for a transformational journey into the field of emotional intelligence.

In essence, this handbook serves as a roadmap for educators and students alike, highlighting the transformative power of emotional intelligence in shaping the educational environments. Here's to a future where emotional intelligence isn't just taught but embedded in people and fosters a resilient and empathetic generation.

*Educate. Inspire. Transform.*



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