

COMMON EUROPEAN REPORT

from the national Focus Groups

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Zespół Szkół i Placówek Specjalnych + SEDA

Colegio Adharaz + Forum Educativo

De La Salle + I & F Education

1. COLEGIO ADHARAZ FROM SEVILLE (SPAIN)

INTRODUCTION

For the present study a questionnaire was developed and completed by the teachers in Adharaz School; that is sixty people, approximately, who teach from Preschool to the highest years in High School (0 to 18 years old). These participants aged between 20 and 60 years old, the majority of them female between 20 and 30 years old. A Focus Group was formed in order to evaluate and assess the final results of the questionnaire. Six people were included in the Focus Group: Ms. Ana Martínez (School Headmistress and Secondary Teacher), Ms. Ana Clara Barón (Primary Teacher and moderator of this Focus Group), Ms. Marisa Ruiz (Secondary Teacher and School Librarian), Ms. Paloma Valdés (School Assistant Manager and Secondary Teacher), Ms. Guadalupe de la Puerta (Primary Teacher) and Ms. Isabel Salcedo (Secondary teacher).

FEEDBACK FROM QUESTIONS IN FOCUS GROUP

1. To what extent do you agree with the final list of European values selected?

The members of this Focus Group completely agree with the final list of European values selected. According to the data collected from the questionnaire, the least appreciated value is the Rule of Law, mainly because, basing ourselves in the results, it is the least practised in class according to teachers. We believe these are the results because the Rule of Law is a value that everybody must dive into, understand and have knowledge of. We believe so as in question 6 Within the category of RULE OF LAW please choose 3 values you would like to develop further in your school: 89% of participants selected Justice/Balance and 81% selected Fair Treatment. These are data that lead us to a conclusion: Rule of Law is known and conveyed in class, but possibly its categories were not fully known by teachers in the first place.

On another note, the values of Human Dignity, Human Rights and Equality are considered to be the most important ones by teachers. Besides, they consider Freedom and Equality to be better known and integrated into a class by their students.

2. To what extent do you consider important the application of traditional values through the use of theatre techniques for students?

Theatre is a potent and proven pedagogical tool. In the case of transferring values through this medium, it allows students to internalise and understand their importance by assigning roles. To be able to play a role where these concepts are valued, it is necessary to know them very well, to make them attractive for one's own life and therefore put them into practice.

3. Will you modify the final list of values? If yes, please make your suggestions.

The focus group has considered that the final list fits perfectly with the mission of the school and therefore is within our own scope of work.

4. Do you think that students can improve their personal skills through theatre?

Social skills (assertiveness, empathy), communication skills (oral expression, listening skills), self-management skills (time control, being able to set goals and achieve goals), thinking skills (interpret, analyze) and even research (listen, summarize, organize). We work on all these skills at the centre of our educational project and we think that they can be developed through theatre.

5. Do you consider that teachers in general know how to advise/transmit these values through the means of theatre techniques?

We have introduced theatre in the classroom, but we believe that thanks to this project we can enrich it and approach it from other perspectives that will contribute more to our educational community.

2. DE LA SALLE COLLEGE FROM DUBLIN (IRELAND)

INTRODUCTION

Our focus group gathered 7 teachers from secondary schools in the area and it was carried out in a mixed fashion, both online and face to face.

FEEDBACK FROM QUESTIONS IN FOCUS GROUP

1. To what extent do you agree with the final list of European values selected?

We agree with the final list of European values selected. We believe the core values can be adapted and made relevant for our students through theatre. There is a richness of core values and key messages to be explored in a dramatic and theatrical way.

2. To what extent do you consider important the application of traditional values through the use of theatre techniques for students?

We do think it's an important way to teach traditional values to our students. We use techniques such as expression, and movement in a safe, respectful environment so all students feel comfortable participating. It's an opportunity for all students to learn skills to simulate real-life situations and deal with these issues in a safe environment. Theatre can be a great way for students to express themselves and learn European values.

3. Will you modify the final list of values? If yes, please make your suggestions.

No.

4. Do you consider that students can improve their personal skills through theatre?

We completely agree that students should develop these theatre techniques to improve their personal skills and sense of inclusion against the backdrop of European values. We believe these techniques will ensure that students develop their confidence and resilience and self-esteem. They will be empowered to deal with real-life challenges. We believe core European values allow us to explore many sub-values relevant to all students and highlight the need for teaching these values in a fun and attractive way. The importance of diversity and inclusion and the power of love, friendship, family and support, beating discrimination and bias in religious freedom, equal opportunities, diversity, etc.

5. Do you consider that teachers, in general, know how to advise/transmit these values through the means of theatre techniques?

No, we believe that not all teachers have this skill. Some teachers are not comfortable using role play and drama in the classroom. The teachers that are most comfortable are drama, SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) and creative arts teachers and some English teachers.

3. Zespół Szkół i Placówek Specjalnych from Krakow (Poland)

INTRODUCTION

On June 24th, 2022, the Focus Group of our school organized a meeting to discuss the Project Results (PR1) - national results and Common European Report.

FEEDBACK FROM QUESTIONS IN FOCUS GROUP

1. To what extent do you agree with the final list of European values selected?

Most of the participants (experts) agreed that the values which have been chosen are very important and we should promote them among the pupils of our school as universal values for humans. Two of them mentioned that the important thing is how to interpret the values.

2. To what extent do you consider important the application of traditional values through the use of theatre techniques for students?

According to our experts using theatre techniques with students is an excellent way to improve their drama skills and broaden their knowledge and understanding of social relations. This method is very important in education and we can easily get some efficient results especially by working with kids like our pupils who have a huge problem with communicating and making proper relationships with others. Most of the drama techniques are the best methods to use with students who have language difficulties, problems with expressing themselves in an emotional way, problems with learning and other special needs disabilities.

3. Will you modify the final list of values? If yes, please make your suggestions.

6 of the 10 of our experts agreed with the final list of values. The rest of them suggested that we should add values like belief, patriotism, and Christian traditions.

4. Do you consider that students can improve their personal skills through theatre?

All participants of our focus group are in line with the overall drama strategy and objectives. Making the theatre with students is a good opportunity to encourage many positive features of their personality like creativity, cooperation, communication, empathy, helping each other, and being responsible for the end result of the play. Thanks to drama methods we can create the feeling of being a part of the art community.

5. Do you consider that teachers in general know how to advise/transmit these values through the means of theatre techniques?

During the discussion, Focus Group participants noticed that some of the teachers in our school have previous experiences connecting with conducting the school theatre, mainly in art, music, PE and early school teachers, and also drama is very often used by social therapists. Dus there is the need to organise some workshops and training for other leaders who will provide the practical activities under the project Europe Plus due to improving their skills and knowledge about drama techniques. Furthermore, they have to be taught how to transmit European values through the meaning of theatre techniques.

4. ICS SPERONE PERTINI FROM ITALY

INTRODUCTION

On June 27th, 2022, the I.C.S. Sperone Pertini organised a Focus Group among its teachers and experts on the topics like Theatre, Art and Education on Values. The purpose of the meeting was to show the participants (aka the experts) the EUROPE PLUS project, its aims, objectives and outcomes, as well as to start talking about future activities related to the Project Results (both R1 and R2). The Focus Group also included a discussion on the analysis of the questionnaire results of our local report and the common European report. The Focus Group and its evaluation serve to apply and promote common European values within the school community through performances and to motivate students and teachers to reflect and work on them.

Considering the project reports so far developed, it can be deduced that in all the participating countries students and teachers are aware of the importance of the values in general, but they admit it is necessary to better develop and strengthen some of them. Our local report shows some little differences within some categories, in particular:

SURVEY DIFFERENCES REGARDING TOPIC TO DEVELOP

CATEGORIES	Common European Values	Our school
Human dignity	Awareness	Right to life
Equality	Diversity	Men = Women at work
Rule of Law	Fair Treatment	Legality
Human Rights	Belief discrimination	Sexual discrimination

These little differences don't influence our opinion on the values. They all are important, and all chosen experts agree with the list. When staging the play for R1, all of them plan to focus on some specific values taking into account their own social reality.

During our meeting, it has been stressed that the theatre can represent a privileged language to convey in a more direct way any cultural, or social message. It is therefore a valuable educational tool to promote knowledge and understanding.

Thanks to previous experiences in our school, we can confirm that didactic drama methods as a supplemental tool of teaching have positive effects on a student's cognitive, social, and emotional development and strongly involve students who, experiencing a situation, can have the opportunity not only to interpret but to feel real those values that are proposed. In addition, drama methods promote the development of quick thinking, critical thinking, creativity, and emotional expressiveness. Overall, drama activities improve both verbal and non-verbal communication skills, help to improve school attendance and reduce high school dropout rates, contribute to improving reading and speaking skills, improve self-esteem, and help problem solving, being an extremely effective tool that complements classical teaching.

A positive indicator is that drama games and theatre games are ideal strategies for differentiated instruction too. Students with language difficulties, learning disabilities, or other special needs can shine in drama, whereas they often struggle in traditional schooling. Unfortunately, teacher training and in most courses of study or specializations are not yet provided with a focus on drama techniques. On the other hand, another common opinion among teachers is that most of the time they are not ready to move beyond safe planned lessons to truly creative improvisation based on structured but flexible situations that have real meaning for the students.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions can be drawn from the statements made by teachers from different schools in Europe during the survey. Firstly, the overwhelming majority of teachers say that students' choice of European values in ethics-related subjects is crucial in the educational development of each student. On the importance of the application of traditional European values through drama, the overwhelming majority of respondents conclude that drama could be considered a good tool for students to express their emotions, which can create empathy with their peers, and thus a better development of these values. On the question of modifying the list of European values presented to the respondents, it should be mentioned that several institutions agree with the list in its entirety, although there are others that would have added other values to be taken into account, such as patriotism, the right to life, equality between men and women, among others.

On the other hand, the vast majority of schools that have participated in this survey state that the skills that are usually developed in theatre tend to be of great benefit to teachers in these schools. In particular, assertiveness, empathy, oral expression and listening skills. Other schools have claimed to have teachers who have received previous experience in these fields, mainly because they were heavily involved in the world of theatre and art before they entered the teaching profession, so this factor was more than relevant. However, these aforementioned skills need to be strengthened in those teachers who have never experienced circumstances similar to those described above.

Lastly, on whether teachers are considered knowledgeable about how to transmit these values. The vast majority of schools say that they still do not know how to transmit these values, but that they work every day to improve their oral expression and that they are gradually learning how to do so.