
The Peace Factory: A Mobile Interactive Exhibition on Peace, Conflict, Freedom, Prejudices and the Scapegoat Phenomenon

Name of organisation:
Peace Education Projects

Visiting The Peace Factory

Backgrounds, objectives, methodology and perspectives of the interactive exhibition

1. Backgrounds

By means of the interactive exhibition we want to involve children and young people in a didactic way to social problems and challenges as peace, freedom, conflicts and diversity. The participant will bring in their own experiences and social context in this event. The interactive exhibition will not present ready made answers but we provide with tools to develop their own opinions and to evaluate their own attitudes. By working in the exhibition they will discover the value of their own opinion, learn that these are established in a certain culture and will discover the value of the opinions and attitudes of other people that have a different background. This seems quite idealistic in particular circumstances where the threat of violence is obvious but approaching the matters of diversity is crucial for validity of a democratic society. Keywords are interaction and dialogue, which means meeting different people.

Although we see a lot of adults trying to present society as a clear, objective matter to children, we want to stress that dialogue consists of a curious and open attitude towards other people. That means that we try to avoid a moralistic view as much as we can. The children and young people clarify their social values based on culture, tradition and religious or political convictions. It seems often the exhibition is focused on social matters but all participants will immediately discover that it deal with personal beliefs, thoughts, ambitions and matters. The Peace Factory gives children the opportunity to develop a personal attitude. The methodology is aimed in sharpening the own values by communication and confrontation. The interactive exhibition challenges the pupils on different levels. It is nice to learn about yourself and about others. The means and learning climate is open, self directed, attractive and within an atmosphere of respect for children.

2. General objective

Children and young people gain knowledge, insight in social matters as prejudices, the scapegoat phenomenon, diversity, conflict and dialogue and are challenged to create perspectives to attitudes and behavior in their own social context.

3. Sub – objectives

The participants:

- Explain how different conflicts occur and develop.
- Describe which ways of power can be used in conflict situations.
- Exercise in cooperation.
- Give examples of own (violent) behavior and describe alternatives.
- Scout their limits of tolerance.
- Learn that respect means two sides: receiving and giving.
- Describe the scapegoat phenomenon in the past and the present by means of examples on different levels (personal, social).
- Can describe themselves from a unique historical and cultural point of view.
- Gain insight in own and other's prejudices.
- Relate their own social context to the multi ethnic society.
- Explain the freedom exists by means of common rules.
- Can make connection between the present and the past and here and there.
- Evaluate the personal and social means of opposing injustice
- Image the perspectives of peace and human rights in nowadays life.

4. Perspectives

The objectives are approached from four different perspectives.

- **Intercultural perspective (us and them)**
The multicultural society is a reality which causes a lot of challenges and conflicts. The main question is: what are the common values and how can we together built and share a civic in which conflicts are solved with less violence as possible.
- **Historical perspective (then and now)**
It makes sense to be aware of ones personal history in a social context. Lot of social conflicts and the way we deal with them are based in history. In fact we are subject of history. And finally: history is made by people, so people can make a difference.
- **Global perspective (here and there)**
The world is a global village and there is only one. Children are aware that they are world citizen. Choices made at home have world wide consequences. To understand the small and large relations and discover the interdependency for peace and conflict resolution is extremely important.
- **Personal perspective to act (I am involved)**

‘People want to change but don’t want to be changed’ is the right summary of this perspective. We want children to be the architects of their own houses and lives. We don’t want to offer them ready made houses. Therefore we give them the tool to design and decorate their own houses by communication, dialogue and confrontation.

5. Challenges

In the peace factory, we want to challenge children from 10 - 14 years to use tools:

- To investigate their opinions.
- To unmask their prejudices.
- To analyze their role in violent group dynamics.
- To create perspectives of peace in their daily life.
- To exercise with diversity to live in a multi-ethnic society.

6. Didactic matters

Because all children have different talents, interests, concentration and learning capabilities, the missions and modules are as much divers as possible to make different pupils feel comfortable in the exhibition. The pupils are challenges in the following activities:

- Perceive accurately;
- Analyze situations;
- Evaluate limits and borders;
- Co-operate with other pupils
- Ask questions to themselves, others, history and society (what, where, how, why)
- Empathize with the situation of other people;
- Look for possible solutions
- Express an own opinions;
- Make choices on basis of values;
- Search for perspectives to act;

7. Main aspects of learning

In the learning process of peace education, three aspects are involved:

Knowledge	(to know, to be aware)	Information
Skill	(to act, to be able to)	Exercise
Attitude	(to want, to relate to)	Performance

8. Research outcome

From different social research of universities of Utrecht, Moscow and Belfast the interactive methodology gave the following outcome for the pupils, the teachers and for the methodology in particular:

The pupils

- Experience learning as a pleasure.
- Can handle facts, opinions and prejudices.
- Improve their attitude towards the scapegoat phenomenon.
- Learn effective by interaction with peers.
- Can mention perspectives of peace in daily context.
- Like “learning by doing”.
- Clarify and communicate social values.
- Exercise multi-intelligence tools.
- Can participate with various learning styles.
(cognitive, affective, artistic, physical)
- Experience themselves as a part of social problem as well as a part of the solution.

The teachers

- Are mediators and partners in learning.
- Co-operate in research instead of transforming information.
- Like to teach pupils that find learning a pleasure.
- Experience more satisfaction in their profession.
- Educate children to think by themselves.
- Communicate and clarify social values.
- Exercise all human potentials in problem solving.
- Mention that the learning process has a positive effect on social context.

The interactive methodology

- Contains different learning concepts as an answer to diversity.
- Has a non-moralistic approach.
- Offers innovative means of self directed learning.
- Have positive effects in countries with (violent) social conflicts.
- Presents social problems as a challenge for all people.
- Can be implemented to different means like traveling exhibitions, table exhibitions, educational software, view-boxes
- Involve pupils and teachers in the project from the early start.
- Includes a process evaluation with clear and positive objectives, target group as a source, themes to local context.

9. How to work in the exhibition

The pupils work in pairs and know their fellow participant before they enter the exhibition. At the start each pair gets a starting number in a different modules of the exhibition. In this way every pair gets another place to start and work out all the missions in different order, related to their level.

The exhibition is structured in an interactive way. That means the visitors guide themselves with help of the memo-card and the numbers on the panels. The memo-card cannot be missed to understand the missions and carry out the activities. Pupils can make notes and write down their opinions and answers. Each pupil gets their own memo-card for expressing their opinions.

10. Tasks of teacher and guides

The role of the teachers and the guides is animation and clarification when asked for. We have to prevent teachers and guides from showing pupils how to do it. Ask the children to read again loudly if they don't understand certain missions or stages. Supporting from some distance is possible but the participants have to make their own choices and find their own answers to the challenges.

Most visitors work about one hour in the exhibition. One hour is mainly the limit of concentration because of the interactive way of learning. Some participants need more support and structures, depending upon their level of skills and their capacity to work in pairs.

11. Follow up activities

Essential for the project are the follow up activities in school of youth work. The teacher can discuss certain outcome of the memo-card in class. The treasure of personal information and opinions on social matters gives opportunities to do more specific activities of some meetings or lesson to a project of a week. In the next chapter, we present a few follow up activities.