



Pestalozzi

Training Resources

Diversity of World Views and World Knowledge in the Classroom (VIEWS) Confrontation of World Views on the Issue of Homosexuality

by

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Editor: Olga Ferreira



The Pestalozzi Programme
Council of Europe Training Programme for education professionals

Diversity of World Views and World Knowledge in the Classroom (VIEWS) Confrontation of World Views on the Issue of Homosexuality

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The opinions expressed in this work are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe.

Theme: How much difference can you stomach?

General aims

- To address the issues of homosexuality and homophobia based on one's personal world views and the realisation of one's skills to effectively deal with these issues;
- To stress the importance of including controversial issues in “world knowledge” and of providing reliable information.

Target group

Type of training	School level	Subject area
Initial and in-service teacher training	All educational levels	Interculturalism in the school class

Brief description of the unit

The training unit begins with a gentle introduction to the issue of homosexuality and homophobia through mass media's portrayal and its impact on one's world views on the subject. Providing a safe-distance experience on the topic, it challenges teachers to develop skills to analyse and be critical when consulting different mass media sources and to recognise different points of view, prejudice, bias, as well as accurate and reliable information on the subject; in the next activity, participants are faced with case studies based on true stories that occurred in educational contexts; this is followed by a plenary discussion; the last activity includes a role play on the topic of conflict resolution and raises questions about the materials to be used in schools and the necessary sensitivity and preparation on the part of the teacher when dealing with these issues.

Methods/techniques used

Power point presentation, case studies, role playing, reading children's books, and discussions (both in groups and in plenary)

Time 5 hours

Preparatory activity	▶ 15 minutes
Activity 1	▶ 80 minutes
Activity 2	▶ 60 minutes
Activity 3	▶ 120 minutes
Evaluation	▶ 25 minutes

Resources

- A short version of the power point on world views (by Susana Gonçalves, translated if needed);
- Music video clip and lyrics of Katy Perry's song "I Kissed a Girl";
- Newspaper articles on the films "Brokeback Mountain", "The Kids Are Fine", "Straight Story" (a Greek movie);
- Magazine articles with comments on gay kissing in Greek prime time series;
- Children's books on gay families;
- Case studies based on true stories in Greek public schools provided by the Sex Medical Institute Athens, Greece

Tips to trainers on the overall unit

- Inform participants about preparatory reading: The Basic Assumption Document of the trainer training module series on world views;
- Be confident of your own personal skills in dealing with such a controversial issue and be ready to deal with the risks it might involve.




Activity 1 Mass media's portrayal of homosexuality and its impact on one's world views

minutes

	Notes
<p>▶ General aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ To analyse mass media sources and recognise different points of view, prejudice, bias, as well as accurate and reliable information on the subject. <p>▶ Specific aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ To develop critical thinking skills and to realise the impact that mass media might have on the formation of one's personal world views on such controversial issues. 	
<p>▶ Methods/techniques used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Studying of material, discussions and presentations. 	
<p>▶ Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Music video clip and lyrics of Katy Perry's song "I Kissed a Girl", gay columns in free press magazines, newspaper articles on series dealing with gay issues, newspaper reviews of films with gay main characters. 	
<p>▶ Practical arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Make your computer and internet connection ready before you start your training. 	
<p>▶ Instructions/Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The trainer presents of a power point on world views (15 min); 2. The participants form small groups of four or five and have a discussion about the portrayal of homosexuality by the mass media (both in their own country and abroad - movies, series, songs, music, etc) (15 min). 3. The facilitator provides information material about the portrayal of homosexuality by the mass media 	

<p>and asks participants to reflect on them (20 min); then each group gives a 5 min presentation on the topic addressing the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How and by what different means is the issue of homosexuality presented? ➤ What similarities and differences can be observed? ➤ Can you think of something that is NOT presented? ➤ What kind of thoughts, feelings, challenges were experienced by participants while studying the material? ➤ How are those thoughts, feelings, challenges related to their world views? 	
<p>▶ Tips to trainers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Help the participants understand that in the analysis both what is presented and what is NOT presented in the media is of importance - the ability to see what is omitted is a skill to be developed. You can refer to the hidden curriculum as an example. 	
<p>▶ Debriefing/reflecting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reflection on how mass media can influence children's world views on this issue and the contradiction between adults' (parents' as well as educators') discomfort to talk about it and the daily information overload children are exposed to. 	

Activity 2 Work on cases studies in educational contexts and discussion

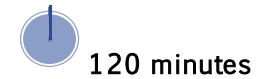
 60 minutes

	Notes
<p>▶ General aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To become aware of one's own world views concerning the issue of homophobia and their limitations; ➤ To create a safe learning environment respecting individual learning needs. <p>▶ Specific aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To be able to see things from a different perspective; 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To develop the skills to deal comfortably and effectively with controversial issues; ➤ To recognise the challenges and threats for social cohesion in the school environment from diverse world views on sensitive issues. 	
<p>▶ Methods/techniques used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Case studies; ➤ Discussion. 	
<p>▶ Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Case studies based on true stories provided by the Sex Medical Institute of Athens, Greece (Appendix 1). 	
<p>▶ Practical arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The participants are divided in groups of five and are given copies of the case studies as well as flipchart paper and pens. 	
<p>▶ Instructions/Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction and reading of the case studies given (one case study per group) considering the following questions (5 min): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What would you do if you were the teacher involved? ➤ What are the principles and values that make you decide on the appropriate measure to handle this incident? ➤ What is the impact of occurrences like these on the educational processes? ➤ In case study 4, discuss the relationship between social gender and biological sex. 2. Discussion: note down the principles and values that are implicit in the way you choose to deal with the problem presented (25 min); 3. Activity outcome: make a list of principles and activities that were discussed, present it to plenary and pin the list on a wall so it can be seen by all participants (30 min). 	
<p>▶ Tips to trainers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The trainer must have knowledge on the subject of human sexuality in order to be able to clarify things and provide reliable information on the issues that might be raised during the discussion. 	

<p>▶ Debriefing/reflecting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reflection on the overall role of educators: do they have the right, the skills and the attitudes required in order to get involved in such personal issues? Where do we draw the line? What does it depend on? 	
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Activity 3 Children’s books, discussion and role-playing conflicts



	Notes
<p>▶ General aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To recognise the skills needed and the risks linked with the handling of sensitive and controversial issues. to develop multiple perspectives <p>▶ Specific aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To develop conflict management techniques and problem solving strategies. 	
<p>▶ Methods/techniques used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reading; ➤ Discussion; ➤ Role playing. 	
<p>▶ Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Books: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lesléa Newman’s “Heather has two mommies” (Alyson Books); b. Michael Willhoite’s “Daddy’s Roommate” (Alyson Books). ➤ Copies of the two books as well as flipchart paper and pens. 	

<p>▶ Practical arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The participants are divided in groups of five. 	
<p>▶ Instructions/Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants are split in groups and each group is given both children's books to read (10 min) and discuss (20 min) considering the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Would you use either of the books as reading material to your students? Justify your decision based on your world views, ➤ What age group would you use it for? ➤ Do you anticipate comments, reactions and from who (school principal, parents, colleagues)? How would you cope with such challenges? 2. Prepare and role-play in two groups the two following conflict scenarios (30 min): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Between the teachers - who want to use one of the books in the classroom - and the school principal - who refuses to allow it b. Between the teachers - who use the story in the classroom - and an angry parent of one of the students 3. Questions for the discussion in plenary after the role playing (20 min): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How did the "actors" feel? What was difficult, easy, comfortable or uncomfortable? ➤ Did they solve the conflict? If yes, how did they manage to achieve this? If not, why didn't they? ➤ Were the members who watched the role playing convinced by the arguments presented? ➤ Whose arguments were more convincing and why? Do they have other suggestions for the solution of this conflict? 4. Discussion and debriefing in plenary (10 min). 	
<p>▶ Tips to trainers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Violent reactions and comments on the content of the books on the part of the participants, especially the one portraying the male same-sex couple raising a child, because it can be provocative and challenges world views on sexual orientation, family and parenthood. 	

► Debriefing/reflecting:

- Listening to Ben King's song "Stand by me" and reflecting on the lyrics.
- Debriefing focused on the following concluding questions:
 1. To what degree is it possible for an educator, once he/she becomes aware of his own world views on controversial issues, not to let them interfere with the impartiality needed in order to safeguard equal learning opportunities?
 2. What are possible individual strategies to safeguard the aforementioned impartiality?

Evaluation and assessment

Participants were asked at the beginning of the workshop to keep a personal journal and to write down – whenever they felt like it – any thoughts, feelings, discomfort, challenges they faced during the activities. They hand them over to the facilitator at the end of the training unit.

Appendix 1

CASE STUDIES

1. You are a high school teacher and a 15 year old male student of yours asks you to discuss in private something that has been bothering him. At the end of the day, after everybody else has gone, you have a conversation with him and he confesses that he is gay and does not know what “to do with it”.
2. You are a High school teacher implementing a project on Human Sexuality with 3rd grade students. In this class there is a male student who is very effeminate in his appearance as well as his speech and gestures. His classmates make fun of him, call him names and verbally abuse him. He does not respond but gradually he withdraws, becomes remote and distant and decides not to participate in the project anymore.
3. One of the new teachers in your high school is very effeminate and lately you have noticed that the rest of the teachers have started commenting negatively on his appearance. Every time he steps out of the office other teachers make comments and call him names behind his back. You haven't been involved in this but when getting into the office today you hear one of the other teachers asking your colleagues to have a word with him, demanding that he “pulls his act together” as he sets a very bad example for the male students of the school.
4. Lately you have noticed changes in the behaviour of a 16 year old female student who shows symptoms of depression. You suggest the two of you should have a talk, and when you ask her what her problem is, she reveals that she thinks she is a lesbian and in tears asks you “if you know of a pill she can take to become a woman”.