



Children As Philosophers

Collection of Case Studies



The Bliss Charity School
Endowed 1674 Northamptonshire



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Children As Philosophers

About the project:

Through a series of collaborative activities, the CAPs project aimed to develop the skills and competencies of staff in employing enquiry-based strategies and tools that support and promote children's philosophical thinking skills.

Key strategies and activities learnt during the joint staff trainings were implemented back in schools.

This publication, organised into the 3 thematic areas plus 1 area for pupils' exchange activities, shows the work produced as a result of the activities carried during the 2 years of the project.

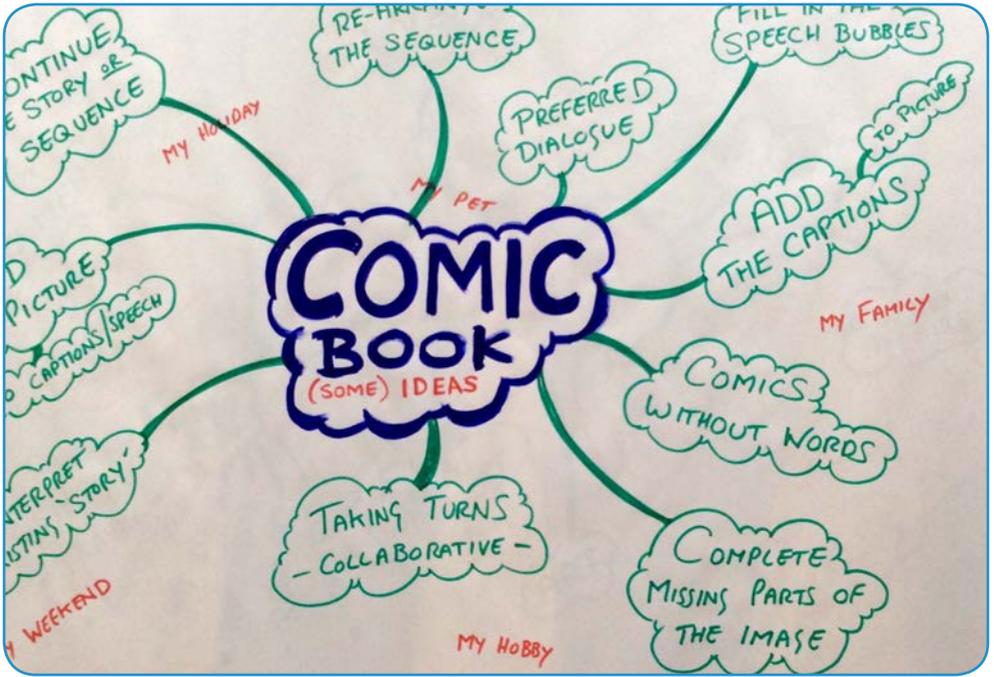
More details on the strategies and activities referred to in this booklet can be found in the resource section on the project website.

You can find out more about the project and access additional materials at:

<http://www.childrenasphilosophers.com>

Principles of Philosophy & Creative Thinking

Activity title	Teaching ideas using creative thinking cards
Thematic area	Principles of philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed during the Visual Narrative training courses.</p> <p>It involved using two sets of cards to help participants generate creative teaching ideas to take back to their school.</p> <p>One set of cards ‘Visual Narrative’ contained ‘ideas’ or subjects that had been covered during the training week, such as news, sit-com, character design, art, comics, etc.</p> <p>The other set of cards ‘Opportunity’ contained topics relating to literacy learning such as comprehension, drama, phonics, reading, writing, etc. They are called ‘Opportunity’ cards as they provide an opportunity to develop new ideas relating to the teaching of the item stated on each card in a more creative way. Each group picked up one ‘Visual Narrative’ (subject) card and one ‘Opportunity’ card.</p> <p>The group then discussed and formulated ideas on how the teaching of the ‘Opportunity card’ could be achieved within the subject matter of the ‘Visual Narrative card’.</p> <p>For example, ideas on how to teach comprehension (Opportunity card) by utilising comic books (Visual Narrative card).</p> <p>Each group made a mind map of ideas and then discussed which idea would best suit their context. They then expanded on the idea and prepared a full lesson plan.</p> <p>In reality the mind map can be described as concepts, while the chosen idea can be described in terms of how it would be delivered in a classroom.</p> <p>Although these cards were specific for Visual Narrative, they could be adapted to use with other subjects.</p>



Examples of mind maps generated using the creative thinking cards

LEAP Language Education & Partnerships Ltd Visual Narrative	LEAP Language Education & Partnerships Ltd Visual Narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photo Journalism Art Films (fiction) Instructions News Visual Diary Character Design Visual Signifiers Anchorage Video Games Visual Sequencing Symbols Graphic Novels Comic Books Body Language Documentary Storyboards Sitcom Picture Games Game Show Travelogue 	LEAP Language Education & Partnerships Ltd ity	LEAP Language Education & Partnerships Ltd Opportunity
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Visual Narrative Creative thinking cards

Activity title	Visual Communication Displays
Thematic area	Principles of philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed during whole week staff training courses such as Visual Narrative, Wellbeing, ICT, Forest learning, Creative teaching etc. It was used as an end of week evaluation to review the learning and to devise an action plan for implementing new techniques experienced and learnt during the training week into the participants' own schools. The activity involved the participants working in groups of 6-8 people. Each group is given a paper tablecloth with coloured felt pens. On a separate table, group members could access different craft materials including natural materials if the activity was conducted outdoors. The trainer displayed the following:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">What have you been thinking about?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Visually present the key elements of what you have seen, felt, observed, lived during this week ...</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Use pictures/symbols more than words!</i></p> <p>The groups were given 45 minutes to complete their display. At the end of the 45 minutes, each group in turn invited the other groups to share and explain their display. The other groups were given the opportunity to ask further questions and to make additional comments.</p>



Examples of the end of week visual displays.



Individual mind map of a display.

Activity title	Utopia
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>The activity called “Utopia” was used with a class of 6 and 7 years old.</p> <p>The children were asked to sit in a circle.</p> <p>To aid behaviour and bring structure to the session the teacher used a ‘Respectometer’.</p> <p>The elements of the Respectometer are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit nicely (body ready for learning) • Listen to each other • Look at the person that is talking • Take turns • Show great thinking <p>Using the whiteboard, the children created the ‘Respectometer’ like a thermometer with incremental scales and monitored and evaluated these elements of the session using this tool themselves.</p> <p>An (invisible) ‘talking token’, where children indicated they had the token, allowed them to take turns to speak.</p> <p>This structure enabled the facilitator (teacher) to stand back and watch the children as they led/ managed their own session competently.</p> <p>A warm-up activity ‘The Name Game’ was played with the aim of relaxing the children and getting them to listen, think and respond quickly to each other.</p> <p><i>The Name Game:</i></p> <p>Standing in a circle, one selected child (child A) called another child’s name (child B) and both walked towards each other and crossed in the middle of the circle and swapped places in the circle. Child B then called the name of another child (child C) and they swapped places in the same manner. This continued until all the children had swapped places.</p> <p>After this warm up activity, the children were then asked to sit around a large map, a boat and a globe that the teacher had provided for this activity.</p>

Description of the activity

They were told that they were going to travel to a new uninhabited island and this island would be called Utopia.

The children were then told that they could each choose one item to take with them. The children drew or wrote these items on paper. These items were shared with the whole class and then the children were asked to group the items.

The children were then told that the whole class could only take 5 items and they had to vote for which 5 they wanted to take.

Using a voting counter, the children individually voted and explained their reasoning.

The children were expected to reason and justify their answers.

Using creative, critical and collaborative thinking, the discussion was centred around these justifications and reasoning.



Children reasoning and justifying their decisions about what to take to the island.

Activity title	Utopia
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>Following the training in Italy in December 2017, the principles of the Utopia activity were disseminated with staff at The Bliss Charity school.</p> <p>The staff were told that for this activity the children were asked to sit around a large map, a boat and a globe that the teacher had provided.</p> <p>They were told that they were going to travel to a new uninhabited island and this island would be called Utopia.</p> <p>The children were then told that they could each choose one item to take with them. The children drew or wrote these items on paper. These items were shared with the whole class and then the children were asked to group the items.</p> <p>The children were then told that the whole class could only take 5 items and they had to vote for which 5 they wanted to take.</p> <p>The children were expected to reason and justify their answers. Using creative, critical and collaborative thinking, the discussion was centred around these justifications and reasoning.</p> <p>Using a voting counter, the children individually voted and explained their reasoning.</p> <p>Having explained the activity during the dissemination meeting it was proposed to staff that every class in the school would take part in the Utopia project.</p> <p>It was agreed that the project would build week on week and that it was expected that classes would have a different experience of the project due to each class responding differently;</p> <p>The expectations were laid down and agreed amongst staff and reporting procedures were discussed.</p> <p>The meeting included the staff role playing the activities as presented during the training in Italy.</p> <p>Afterwards, they discussed possible models of</p>

Description of the activity

implementation for their school. The discussion included a set time and length that each class would spend per week on the project.

The staff talked about how the older children could draw and create their own Utopian island while in the younger classes a large map and boat would be supplied.

Staff discussed the factors that could be considered during the project:

- an uninhabited island has just been discovered and the children have an opportunity to move there;
- children to decide what they will take
- children to decide who to take
- children to decide whether adults would be allowed to the island
- what type of accommodation they would live in
- rules for their island
- who will govern the island
- consequences if rules are broken
- trading
- what would happen if an unknown person came to the island.



Staff undertaking the Utopia training session

Activity title	Utopia Island
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative Thinking
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to children aged 5 years old. The children, together with their teacher, sat in a circle. The teacher then asked the children to imagine an island where they could live very well. They were then shown a picture of an island and the teacher asked them questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we need? • What don't we want to bring? • Where should we build our houses? • Who decides the rules? • What are the rules we need? • What happens to those who do not respect the rules? <p>After discussing these issues with the children, the teacher introduced some new questions: "What happens if a thief arrives on the island and he asks for asylum? What happens if he says that he wants to give us everything he has stolen from other people?" The children discussed these issues for a good while and could not find a compromise. The issue was in fact so compelling for the children that they spontaneously discussed it during the following days. To further facilitate the discussion, the teacher read them a picture book called "Velvet" by Silvana D'Angelo e Antonio Marinoni, that tells the story of a very strange thief, who steals not objects but stories and smells. The problem of the thief is not resolved yet. There are still doubts and differences of opinion which the children still continue to discuss.</p>



Details of the Utopia Island model



Details of the Utopia Island model: drawings of the thief and the "Velvet" book

Activity title	Nothing in Excess
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to children aged 5 years old. The children were introduced to a quote, as stated by the philosopher Solon, “Nothing in excess”. The children then discussed what they thought this meant and what it meant to them.</p> <p>Following the discussion, the teacher then asked the children to build a very high tower with wooden cubes. When the tower collapsed, the teacher asked the children to explain why this had happened and stimulated a discussion around the idea of “limits”.</p> <p>In the following days, the teacher introduced other activities connected to the topic. She firstly asked the children to think about what could happen if some parts of the body were too big and invited the children to draw examples and to think about the consequences of this. A drawing of a thermometer was then created that measured “excesses” in different situations and the children were asked to pay close attention to every situation and if they felt that something was passing the limit they should report it to others.</p>



The children were trying to build the highest possible tower with wooden cubes



Some of the towers at the end of the activity

Activity title	Riddles to Introduce the Principles of Philosophy
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>Following the joint staff training meeting in Modena, this activity was delivered to a group of 17 kindergarten teachers.</p> <p>After a short introduction on how to engage a philosophical discussion with children, the teachers were invited to form three small groups. A philosophical riddle was presented to each group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The statement by Solon “Nothing in Excess” • The Amartya Sen’s story - Three Children and a Flute • Aesop’s fable about the concept of limit <p>Teacher were then invited to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to introduce the riddle to their children • What questions would they pose to the children in order to stimulate a debate • What doubts would they introduce to foster the conversation <p>The three groups then met up and each one, through a group speaker, reported the results of their discussion to the rest of the teachers.</p> <p>The conversation then focused on which philosophical concepts were crucial in each of the three riddles and also on how to help children develop their own reflections about them.</p> <p>The group who discussed the statement by Solon “Nothing in Excess”, as well as the one focused on the Aesop’s fable about the concept of limit, reported that the idea of limit was a key point in their discussion. The concept of justice was a crucial point for the third group. To introduce these topics to small children (aged 3 to 6), the teachers thought about practical activities that could help children to experience them in a real life situation.</p> <p>After the debate, the teachers were invited to introduce the riddle they had focused on into their classroom.</p>



Teachers attending the training session held by Luca Mori

Activity title	The House in the Park
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to a group of children aged 4, during a 1 hour long session.</p> <p>The children were firstly asked if they ever imagined moving away and living somewhere else. They started discussing where they would go and why.</p> <p>The teacher then invited the children to imagine that they could all move together to a new house for a couple of days and asked them how this new house should be. They discussed how to organise spaces and how to share activities in the house.</p> <p>The issue of house rules then came up and the children spent a good while debating on how to make sure that everyone respected the rules. They also talked about what to do in case someone broke the rules and the issues around justice and the use of force were also addressed.</p> <p>After a free conversation among the children, the teacher suggested that they could design a “map” of the activities and behaviours they had discussed, dividing them into “good” and “bad”, “useful” and “dangerous”, in order to be happy and live together.</p> <p>The map came out as a sort of “Snakes and Ladders in Water” game. The path started from the house in the park and reached a box with medals; at each step, the children could decide whether an action was good (step forward) or bad (step backward).</p>



Children playing the “Snakes and Ladders in Water” game they created after the debate

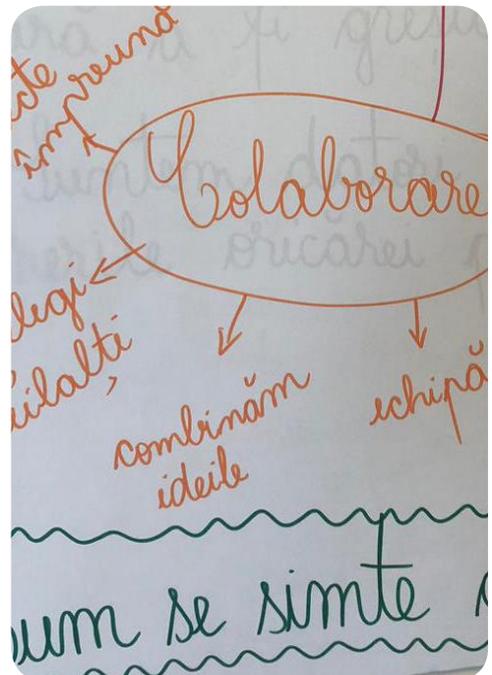
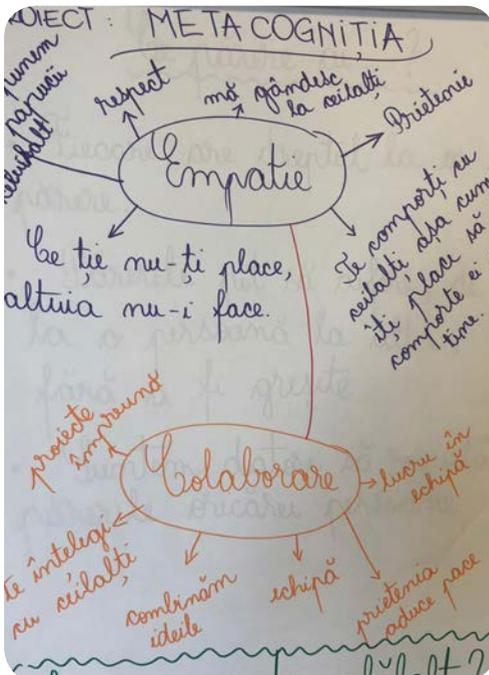
Activity title	What is empathy? What is collaboration?
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>A total number of 456 children aged between 6 and 11 years old were involved in activities about metacognition. Throughout September and October, a series of activities took place related to EMPATHY and COLLABORATION.</p> <p>The teacher explained to the children that Empathy means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • putting yourself in somebody else’s shoes and seeing things through their eyes • seeing a situation from somebody else’s perspective • appreciating a different or opposed point of view • trying to understand the opinion and ideas that are different from yours. <p>The following definitions for Empathy were obtained from the children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Don’t do to others what you wouldn’t want done to you!” • I put myself in someone else’s shoes • friendship • understanding • listening • care • good • respect • I think about the others • You treat others like you would like to be treated • We realise what they are worried about • kindness • feelings towards others • being tolerant. <p>Collaboration</p> <p>We considered the ways in which children can collaborate in team activities, we observed and learnt what collaboration means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To negotiate and reach an agreement with others • To achieve a goal you cannot achieve on your own • To solve a task more quickly • To support those in difficulty

Description of the activity

The children were involved in defining attitudes and skills from their point of view.

The following definitions for **Collaboration** were obtained from the children:

- “A friend in need is a friend indeed!”;
- “All for one and one for all”.
- team-work
- group projects
- getting on with the others
- Combining ideas
- friendship brings peace
- support
- accepting ideas
- helping others
- working together
- sharing
- communicating
- accepting different ideas
- listening to other opinions
- respect.



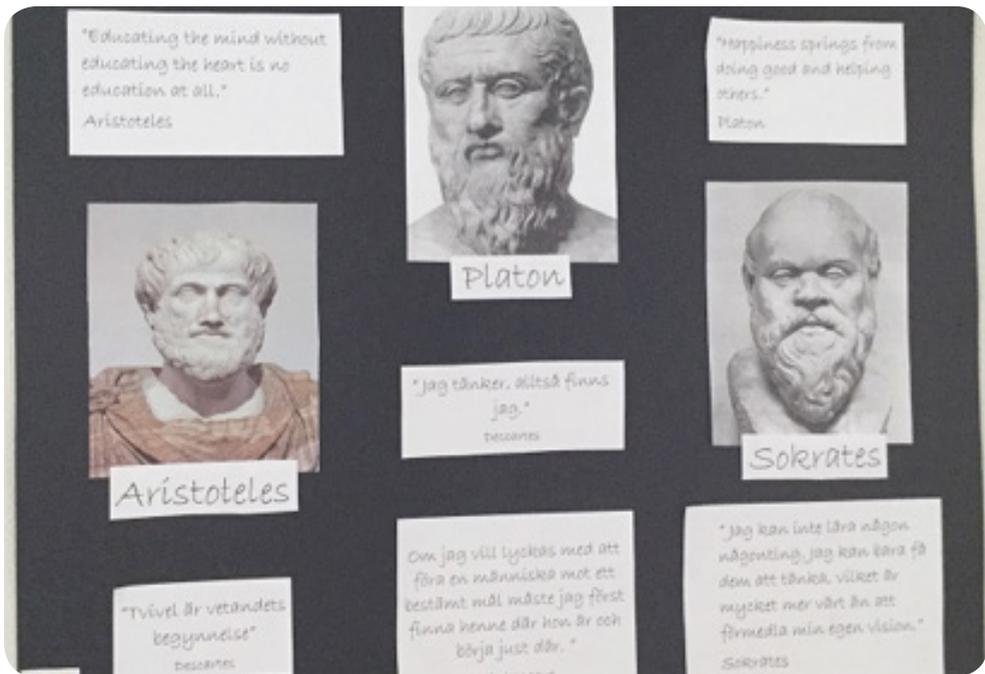
Pictures representing the two concepts. Children in action

Activity title	Dangle
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative thinking
Description of the activity	<p>The children sit in a circle and watch a short film called <i>Dangle</i>.</p> <p>https://vimeo.com/channels/618647/46383515</p> <p>The short film is about a man who walks up a hill, where he finds a rope dangling from the sky. He doesn't know what to do, but finally he decides to pull the rope. The lights go off. He pulls it again and the lights come on. He plays with the rope until the rope falls to the ground and the world is left in darkness. He runs away feeling very scared.</p> <p>After watching the video, most children said it surprised and puzzled them. The emotion they identified was fear, saying they did not feel comfortable watching the film, not knowing what might happen in the end.</p> <p>Children were divided into groups of four and asked to share their thoughts about the film.</p> <p>Then, within their groups, the children wrote a philosophical question inspired by the short film. These questions were presented and discussed and then placed on the ground within the circle.</p>

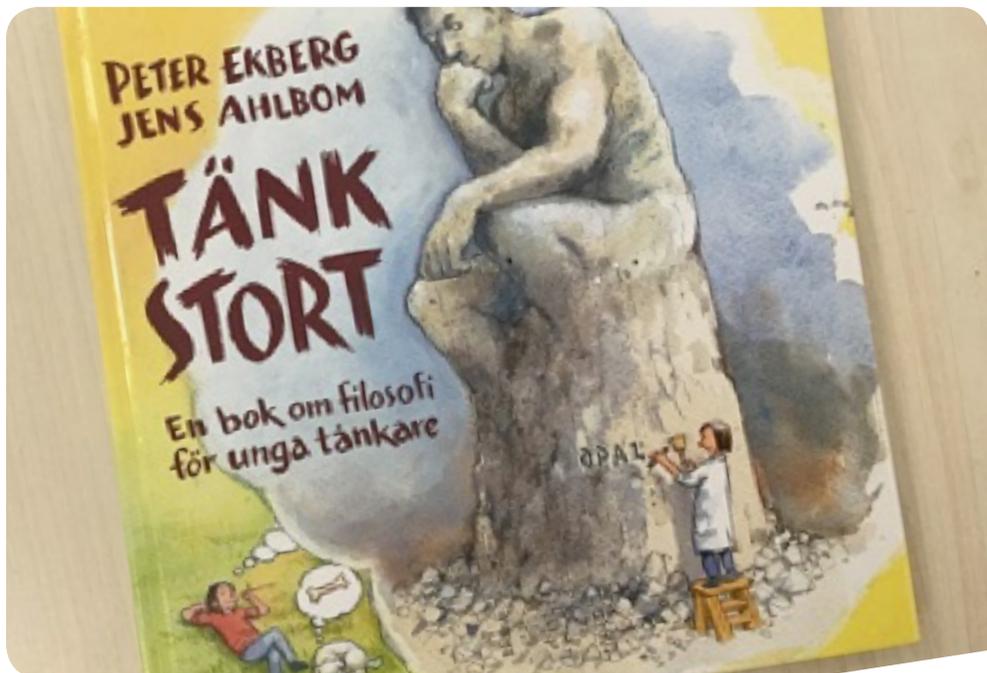


Children watching the film.

Activity title	The philosophers
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative Thinking
Description of the activity	<p>The children started to read about the philosophers Aristotle, Plato, Socrates in the book "Tänk stort" by Peter Ekberg & Jens Ahlbom.</p> <p>They discussed different "cases" from each philosopher comparing similarities and differences.</p> <p>The children then worked in groups to produce a poster, researching and discussing the different philosophers, and added quotes from the philosophers.</p>



Poster



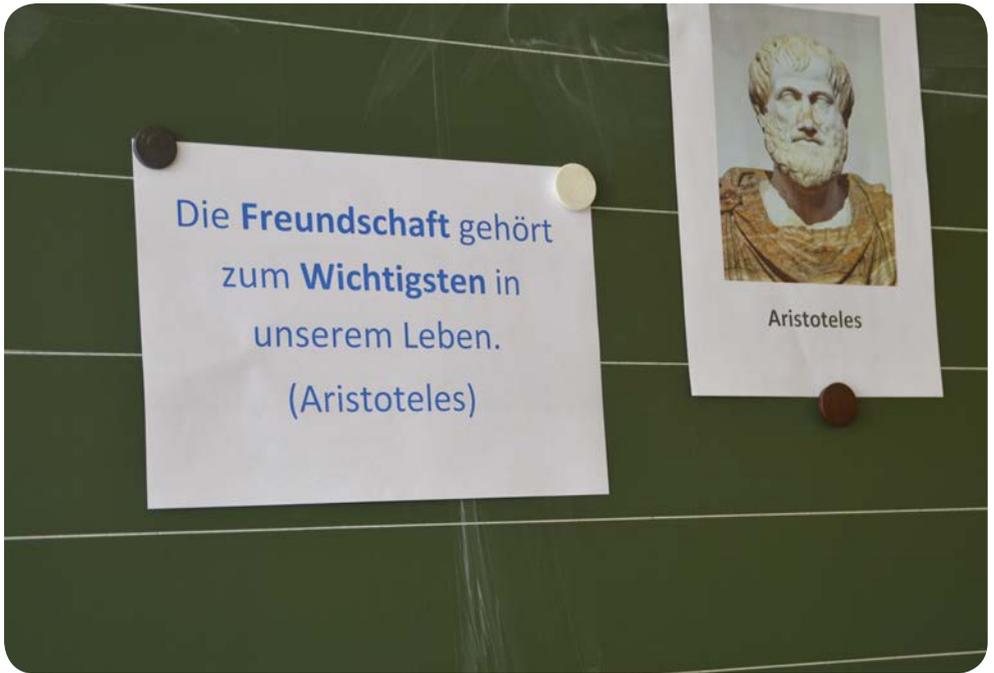
The book we used

Activity title	The desert island
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative Thinking
Description of the activity	<p>The children were given a task based on the following scenario:</p> <p><i>You are stranded on a desert island together with four other persons.</i></p> <p><i>One day a package with 5 kg food shows up. How will you split the food between everyone and why?</i></p> <p><i>The persons on the island with you are of different ages, sex and have different needs.</i></p> <p>The children worked individually and had to think for themselves and then write down their thoughts and decisions.</p> <p>Each child then had the opportunity to tell the rest of the class about their decisions and why they had made them.</p> <p>The children then split into groups to discuss the issues raised further. Many of the children had very interesting and varying thoughts around the problem.</p>



Discussion in group about “The desert island”

Activity title	Dissemination of the activities after the Joint staff training in Modena (Italy)
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative Thinking
Description of the activity	<p>During the 1st Joint staff training in Modena the project partners visited the “Scuola dell’infanzia – Modena Est” so that they could be inspired by the many different philosophical activities that are successfully carried out in this kindergarten.</p> <p>In one group, for example, it was evident that even the youngest children were already familiar with some of the famous philosophers and their thoughts. This idea was taken back and disseminated at our meeting.</p> <p>At the beginning of the lesson, the philosopher Aristotle and his statements about friendship were presented to the third graders of the primary school in Cham.</p> <p>The famous book “Little Prince” by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry was also used, which contains statements about friendship, such as <i>“It is only with the heart that one can see rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye.”</i></p> <p>The children were asked what they thought could be meant by this statement.</p> <p>In the last part of the lesson, the children discussed their thoughts about friendship showing great interest in their discussions.</p>



Stimulus 1 on the topic – Aristoteles



Stimulus 2 on the discussion in plenum

Activity title	Utopia for children – Dissemination after the Joint staff training in Modena (Italy)
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative Thinking
Description of the activity	<p>One of the most successful and interesting activities of the 1st Joint staff training in Modena was an activity called “Utopia”,</p> <p>One of the kindergarten groups spent an afternoon exploring the idea of the “Utopia” island. Their task was to “populate” and “equip” this island - they were allowed to decide who could live on the island, whether adults could also be there, which things are allowed and which must be forbidden.</p> <p>The children discussed very vividly and learned to listen to each other and to compromise.</p> <p>In the second half of the afternoon they drew their “Utopia” island on a large sheet of paper incorporating all their ideas and decisions into their artwork.</p>



Discussion about how to organise the “Utopia” - first thoughts about this topic



The final picture of the “Utopia” made by the pre-school children

Activity title	Utopia for teachers
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative Thinking
Description of the activity	<p>A dissemination meeting was held after the staff training in Modena. About 22 teachers participated in the training which included two presentations.</p> <p>The first presentation showed the teachers the different tools and approaches that they can use in their daily work to develop children's' critical thinking. The teachers were taught in different styles of learning, what if – conception, brainstorming, etc.</p> <p>Then, the teachers were introduced to the Utopia for children activity. It included instructions and questions that teachers can use at school when they start teaching philosophy with their children.</p> <p>Ready-made materials and banners of the island, which were prepared in house by teachers and children of the school, were handed out to the teachers to display in their classrooms.</p> <p>All of the teachers at school planned to implement philosophy lessons into the curriculum.</p>



Cascading the knowledge during a teachers' meeting



Presentation of 'Utopia' activity

Activity title	Utopia for children
Thematic area	Principles of Philosophy and Creative Thinking
Description of the activity	<p>As a result of the staff training in Moderna we introduced the Utopia Island activity to different classes of children, aged between 8 and 12 years old. The sessions took 3 hours per week.</p> <p>The children were organized in a circle and the teacher started the conversation.</p> <p>“Let’s imagine that an unknown and uninhabited island has just been discovered in the ocean. Let’s now suppose we have the chance to move there and make it a good place to live in”</p> <p>Using a talking tool, the children had a deep conversation about the Utopia island. This was followed by a series of different activities related to their island.</p> <p>For example, the children were asked to do the following activities:</p> <p>Primary needs: Draw the island as you want it to be. Describe its climate, nature, vegetation, animals. Describe how will we organise our lives.</p> <p>Most of children decided to draw their own Utopia island.</p> <p>Things from Civilization: Make a list of things from the civilization you want to have on the island. Assess what is necessary and why.</p> <p>How will we organize our lives? Draw or describe how we live on the island.</p> <p>Laws: If you decide to have laws, write down why you need them and what they will be like. If you decide not to, write why.</p> <p>Government: If you decide to have a government, write down why. If you decide not to, write why.</p> <p>Money: If you decide to have money, write down why. If you decide not to, write why.</p> <p>Draw or write the currency - what is its value, what can be bought with it?</p>

Description of the activity

School: If you decide to have a school, write down why. If you decide not to, write why.

Institutions: If you decide to have institutions, write down what they will be and how they will be managed. If you decide not to, write why.

Friends: Write a list of your friends on the island.

New people: Write down what you would do if you noticed new people coming to the island. How do you imagine them? Describe how you will meet newcomers. Will you change something in the world already organised by you?

The children were so excited with this activity. They really liked “Utopia island” because it developed their creativity and imagination.



A class session on “Utopia for Children”

Metacognition

Activity title	Connecting people, the brain and learning
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was undertaken during a training session on the general topic of wellbeing.</p> <p>It was used as an icebreaker that led to the introduction of how creativity and metacognition work and impact on children's understanding of their own learning.</p> <p>The activity involved using a ball of string and a large area where a group of educators could stand in a circle. The trainer started by stating something about themselves such as a like, a passion, something they were proud of and giving a reason.</p> <p>If someone had something in common, they raised their hand and the trainer, holding the end of the string, threw the ball of string to that person.</p> <p>The person catching the ball of string confirmed what they had in common and then added something else about him/herself and then threw the ball to a new person who had raised their hand to show a common interest.</p> <p>The activity continued in this way and a net/web of string started to build within the circle.</p> <p>Once everyone had finished, the trainer asked the group to imagine that the net/web represented the brain and its neurological links.</p> <p>The trainer then asked one side of the circle to physically react to a specific emotion such as fear, happiness etc. while still holding their part of the string. Movements such as shaking with fear or jumping with happiness generated a reaction movement elsewhere in the net/web which could be felt in several parts of the circle.</p> <p>In doing so, the trainer led the group to understand and discuss how emotions and brain functions can affect the way we act in life and therefore how this can impact on the way we learn.</p>



Generating the net



Group discussion on their teaching practice on how metacognition impacts on pupils' learning

Activity title	Running dictation
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed during different courses but primarily during the Visual Narrative training courses. It was used to start a discussion about the skills and competencies different pupils may need to successfully complete a task and communicate messages.</p> <p>The teacher selected a picture and a text (this can be a page from a children's book) and placed them at the front of the classroom on a table away from the children. The teacher then divided the class into groups of approximately 6-8 participants.</p> <p>Each group then selected: 2 'secretaries', 1 to write and 1 to draw.</p> <p>The rest of the group were 'runners': half of them would be memorising and reporting back on the text and the other half on the picture.</p> <p>When they were ready, two runners from each group (one for text and one for the picture) ran to the front of the class and looked at the picture or text. They then ran back to their group and described or dictated to the relevant secretary what they had seen or read.</p> <p>When the first two runners had returned to their group, two more runners would go to the front and repeat the process.</p> <p>Only the secretary was permitted to write or draw. Participants were encouraged to report quietly to the secretaries to avoid other groups overhearing.</p> <p>The first group to finish the task ran to the trainer and rang the bell which indicated the end of the activity.</p> <p>After the bell had been rung, the trainer distributed a copy of the image and text for each group to check the accuracy of their work.</p> <p>This allowed each group to review several aspects including any strategies used during the task.</p> <p>This also helped them identify the skills and competences that children may require when completing similar tasks and how they can improve their performance.</p>



Runners memorising information



Secretaries reproducing images and text given by the runners.

Activity title	Dangle
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>Prior to the children entering the classroom, the teacher placed a rope dangling from the ceiling. The children entered the room and were asked to sit on chairs in a circle and watch this short film: https://www.literacyshed.com/the-thinking-shed.html</p> <p>The short film shows a man walking up a hill where he finds a rope dangling from the sky. Curiosity gets the better of him and he decides to pull the rope. The consequence of his action is that all the lights go off in the world. He repeats this and they come on again. Unfortunately, he pulls it once too many times and the rope falls from the sky to the ground leaving the world in darkness.</p> <p>The children were asked to close their eyes and reflect on the film they had just seen. Then, in pairs, children discussed what they had seen. Going around the circle, the children, in turn, offered their first thoughts on the film and any concepts it may have evoked.</p> <p>Then, in groups of 4, the children wrote a philosophical question inspired by the short film. These questions were presented and discussed and then placed on the ground within the circle. Each child was then given two voting tokens and asked to place their counters on the two questions they thought would generate the best philosophical discussion. The question with the most votes was written up on a flip chart for the group to discuss. The children then put their hands into the circle if they wished to offer their view. The children were encouraged to critique each other's ideas in a constructive and creative manner.</p>

Description of the activity

The teacher acted as facilitator, only intervening when necessary and to bring the discussion to a conclusion or natural ending. Finally, the children offered a final word or thought going around the circle.



Children taking part in the activity

Activity title	Running dictation
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was carried out after the training in Romania and it was used to encourage children to reflect upon their metacognition skills. In particular, collaboration, questioning, self-managing, memory strategies, retrieving and relaying information skills were of a particular focus for this session.</p> <p>The teacher led a discussion about the task to be completed before taking the class out-side where the children were divided into 4 teams.</p> <p>Prior to the activity, the teacher had selected a text relevant to one of the current class topics and placed them at the end of the playground.</p> <p>Each team had to select 1 'secretary' for scribing the text whilst the rest of the group organised themselves as the 'runners' who would run to the text, retrieve the information and report back on the text to the secretary. Only the secretary was permitted to write.</p> <p>The first group that finished the task sat quietly behind their text so that the teacher knew they had finished.</p> <p>Once all teams had finished, the teachers took the children back to the classroom and led a reflective discussion on how they had worked as a team to complete the task successfully.</p> <p>A copy of the original text was distributed to the 4 teams. Each team then marked their text for accuracy and punctuation.</p>



The secretary scribing the text



Children participating in the activity

Activity title	The Door of Ideas
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to children aged 4 years old. The children were asked to sit in circle and the teacher started a discussion by asking the children to recall some of the activities and discussions they had had in class over the previous weeks related to the idea of “limits”.</p> <p>The teacher then asked them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Where do ideas come from, in your opinion?” • “How do you find them out?” • “Do ideas come out when you are alone or in group?” <p>During the discussion that followed, some children said that ideas come through a door that they have in their mind.</p> <p>The teacher then decided to build a door made of hard, paper cardboard. Parents were asked to help and they were informed of the reason for building this door. When the door was ready, the teacher placed it in the classroom.</p> <p>Before sitting in a circle, the teacher invited the children to step through the ‘door of ideas’.</p> <p>In the following days, the children were asked to step through the door before sitting in a circle and starting a new philosophical discussion.</p>



Parents building and painting the "real" door of ideas



Children discussing ideas by the "real" door of ideas

Activity title	Reflecting in a Group or Reflecting Alone?
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to children aged 5 years old. The teacher asked the children to sit in circle and read them the book “What do you do with an idea?” by Kobi Yamada.</p> <p>Then she stimulated a discussion by asking the children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you sometimes have funny ideas that come into your mind? Which ones? • Do you sometimes have some weird ideas come into your mind? Which ones? • Do you ever have ideas in your mind that you don't like? Which ones? • Are there any ideas that you like but that your friends don't like? • Are there any ideas that you like but that your teachers don't like? • When your friends don't like some of your ideas, do you tell them anyway? • Are there any ideas that turned out to be very important for you? <p>After about 30 minutes of class discussion, the teacher wrote some of the children's responses on paper notes and displayed them on a board in the classroom. She then asked the children to close their eyes and individually think about their own answers. After about 5 minutes, the children were asked to open their eyes and were split into groups. They then had a group discussion about their ideas for about 10 minutes.</p> <p>Finally, the teacher asked the children if reflecting alone was easier than discussing in a group and why. After 15 minutes of conversation, the teacher summarised the answers and brought the activity to an end.</p>



Children reflecting alone



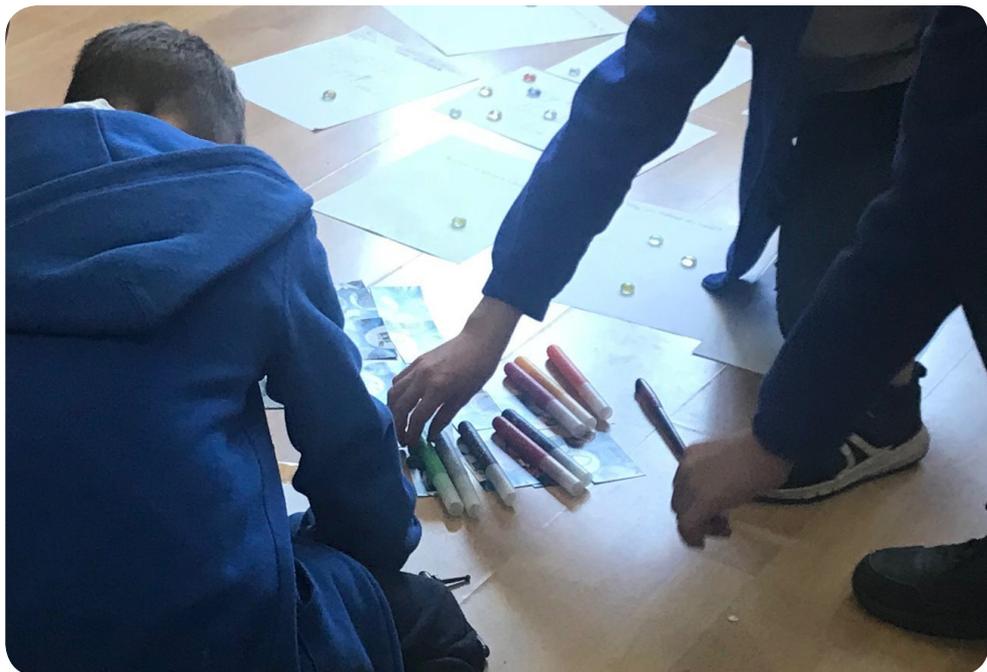
Children discussing about the differences between thinking alone and in a group

Activity title	A World to Feel Good In
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to a group of children aged 6, during a 1 hour long session.</p> <p>The children sat in a circle and the teacher showed them a tiny piece of paper with a message written on it: “Hi children, I’m writing this message from another world, which is so full of so many things that I can’t stay here anymore. Can you help me?”</p> <p>The teacher then invited the children to express their own opinions about the message, stimulating them to analyse the image of a “world full of so many things” and to put themselves in the sender’s shoes.</p> <p>After a discussion, the children decided to design some solutions that could help their pen-friend to arrange his world in order to live better. They decided to identify two different sets of things: those to throw out and those to keep.</p> <p>The children also tried to imagine all the possible problems their friend could face in his world. The possibility that other people lived with him was also discussed by the children.</p> <p>They decided to send him some suggestions about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to manage daily routines • How to address the need for rules • How to live peacefully with friends.



Children debating

Activity title	My Totem
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to a group of children aged 6, during a 90 minutes long session.</p> <p>The children were asked to divide into pairs, possibly choosing a friend they already knew.</p> <p>In the middle of the room, children found a cardboard totem resembling an animal. The teacher then invited the children to imagine the totem as a sort of “wise guide” for the day.</p> <p>Then the teacher asked the children to discuss, with their partner, the characteristics and aspects that they mostly identified with. Some questions helped the conversation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you were an animal, which would it be? • If you were a natural element (like trees, plants and vegetables), which would it be? • If your partner could choose an animal or element as being like you, which would he choose? • If your parents could choose an animal or element as being like you, which would they choose? <p>After discussing in pairs, the children were then invited to draw their own totem, choosing the characteristics and aspects that had been identified and they had recognised in themselves.</p>



Children working together



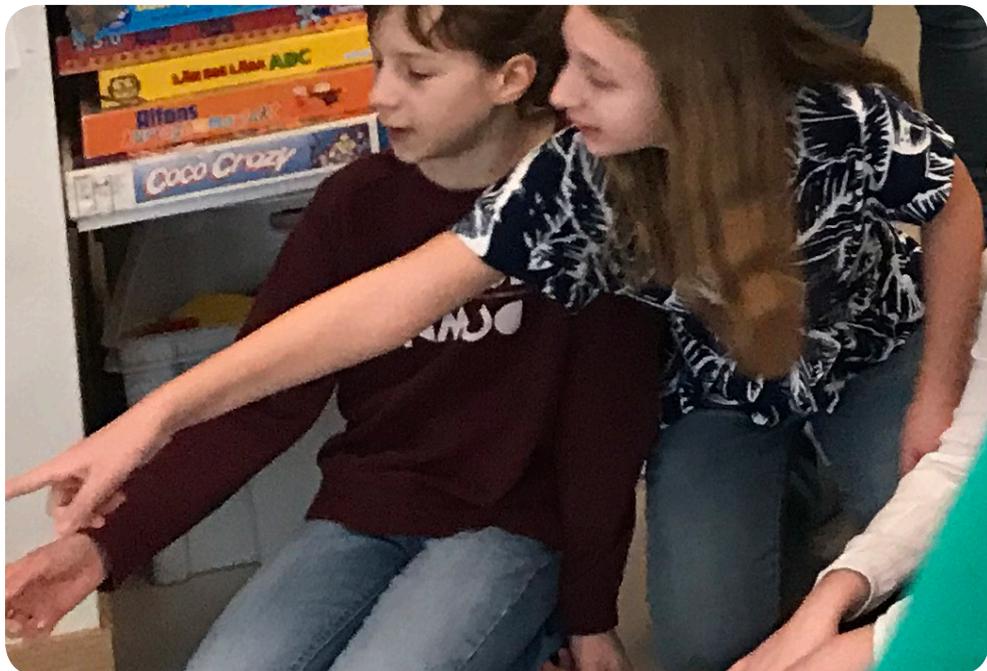
A child drawing her own totem.

Activity title	The important book
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>Children sat in a circle, the teacher told them they were going to see a short film about an important book. The teacher asked them to think about some features that this book might have. The teacher wrote their answers on a large piece of paper. Then, they watched the video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS6F2EBWyk4</p> <p>The story is about a list of objects and natural phenomena (spoon, grass, rain, etc) and their most important features. The teacher asked the children to think about the qualities and purposes of each object presented in the story and construct a reason why it was important and special. The teacher asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which reasons were facts? • Which reasons tell what it looks like? • Which reasons tell what it does? • Which reasons made you wonder? • Which reasons surprised you? <p>Then, the children were asked to think and write a short text entitled <i>The important thing about me</i>. They wrote their texts, the teacher collected them and made a class book which was later displayed in school.</p>



Children at work!

Activity title	The flying books
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>The children watched the film “The Flying books” and were asked to write down what they felt and thought as they were watching it.</p> <p>After the film, they had a metacognitive discussion, based on the method learnt in Romania, using the question:</p> <p>“What would happen if the words disappeared”?</p> <p>It turned out to be a very good discussion with a lot of thoughts and reflection around the question.</p> <p>The children showed good collaboration skills within the group and out of the four final questions they were able to finally agree on one question.</p>



Group discussion around the question – What would happen if the words disappear?

Activity title	Running dictation
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>The children did a ‘Running dictation’ in class using a book called Abrakadabra by Lennart Hellsing, however any book with text and images, appropriate to the age group, can be chosen by the teacher.</p> <p>The teacher found a suitable page in the book and placed it open at the far end of the classroom so that the page could not be seen by the children.</p> <p>The children were then divided into groups of a minimum of four.</p> <p>They were given different tasks within the group - one child would be the “writer”, one child would be the ‘artist’ and the rest would be the ‘runners’ who had to run and collect the information for the group.</p> <p>The ‘runners’ in 2s had to run to the open book, look carefully at either the text or images, memorise some of it and then run back to their “writer’ or “artist’ and whisper the details they can recall. The runners are not permitted to write or draw , they can only communicate through speech.</p> <p>This action continued for a set period of time (as decided by the teacher according to the difficulty of the text and/or image) .</p> <p>When the time ran out, the groups shared their drawings and text with each other , noting accuracies and inaccuracies and discussed in general how they felt about the task.</p>



Selection of images and texts

Activity title	Metacognition for teachers
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>A dissemination meeting was held after the staff training in Cluj-Napoca. About 40 teachers participated in the training.</p> <p>The first presentation was about the theoretical part of what metacognition is about and how we can apply the principles of it in our school.</p> <p>Next, the group were presented with different daily teaching activities and tools to help develop metacognition among children.</p> <p>One of the activities was a <i>Philosophy for Children</i> lesson to help teachers to better comprehend how the principles of metacognition can be taught through critical and creative thinking.</p> <p>Some ready made materials were given to the teachers to use and to put in their classrooms.</p> <p>We agreed that <i>metacognition</i> will be the school' s new project for the next year and that all the teachers in primary school would plan to implement metacognition activities into their teaching for the next year.</p>



Teachers in action

Activity title	Running dictation
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>The Running Dictation activity, as presented at the 2nd Joint staff training in Cluj, was presented to the children. The children were already familiar with a version of this activity but this new task included the extra dimension of using an image.</p> <p>In a classic running dictation, a text is divided into small sections which the teacher distributes around the classroom. The task of the children is to run to a location, look carefully at the section of text and memorise it. They return to their seat and write down the text they have memorised. They then run to a different location, read the text, memorise it and run back and write down what they have read and memorised. This continues until all sections have been completed.</p> <p>The variation of this activity included the teacher adding an image to the task. The children had to carefully look at the image, memorise it and recreate the image they had seen.</p> <p>This activity was new to the pupils and they found it very exciting to draw the picture in addition to just writing text.</p> <p>This activity can also be used in kindergarten, before the children learn to write and read. It can help children to express themselves, develop memory and their sense of detail and also their linguistic competence, which is particularly important for migrant children.</p>



The children had a lot of fun drawing the pictures



Children were highly engaged in memorising as many details of the picture as possible

Activity title	Dissemination after the 2nd Joint staff training in Cluj (Romania)
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>A dissemination meeting for teachers and educators was held to present the activities delivered at the joint staff training sessions in Cluj.</p> <p>Philosophy is supposed to be introduced to Kindergarten children in Germany but it is not yet established everywhere. The teachers therefore showed great interest in the activities and were looking forward to the new materials that will be compiled in the course of the project.</p>



Approximately 20 team leaders of kindergarten groups took part in the team meeting



After the presentation, the participants enjoyed a valuable discussion

Activity title	Express yourself
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was introduced into school following the staff training in Cluj.</p> <p>The teacher showed four pictures to the children. The first picture showed a labyrinth, the second one, stairs, the third one, a tower and the last one, a bridge. Each child then had to think about which picture identified the way they learn at school.</p> <p>The pictures were then placed on the floor and the children stood next to the picture that they had identified themselves with.</p> <p>Each group then discussed why they had chosen to be in that particular group. They also discussed the common elements between the four pictures and the different ways they learn.</p> <p>A representative from each group then explained to the whole class the main features of this type of learning. When the last group had finished presenting, the children were permitted to either stay in their same group or they could change their minds and join a different group if they felt that the way of learning suited them better.</p> <p>This activity allowed the children to realise that changing your mind is not wrong if you are given good reasons to do so.</p>



Children choosing the picture that represented the way they learn at school

Activity title	Metacognition
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>A dissemination activity was held after the staff training in Cluj.</p> <p>Approximately 10 teachers participated in the training. The teachers were given information about the good practices relating to metacognition and were shown the different activities and materials used.</p> <p>Teachers planned to use these materials and to prepare similar activities in Bulgarian to use in their everyday schoolwork.</p>



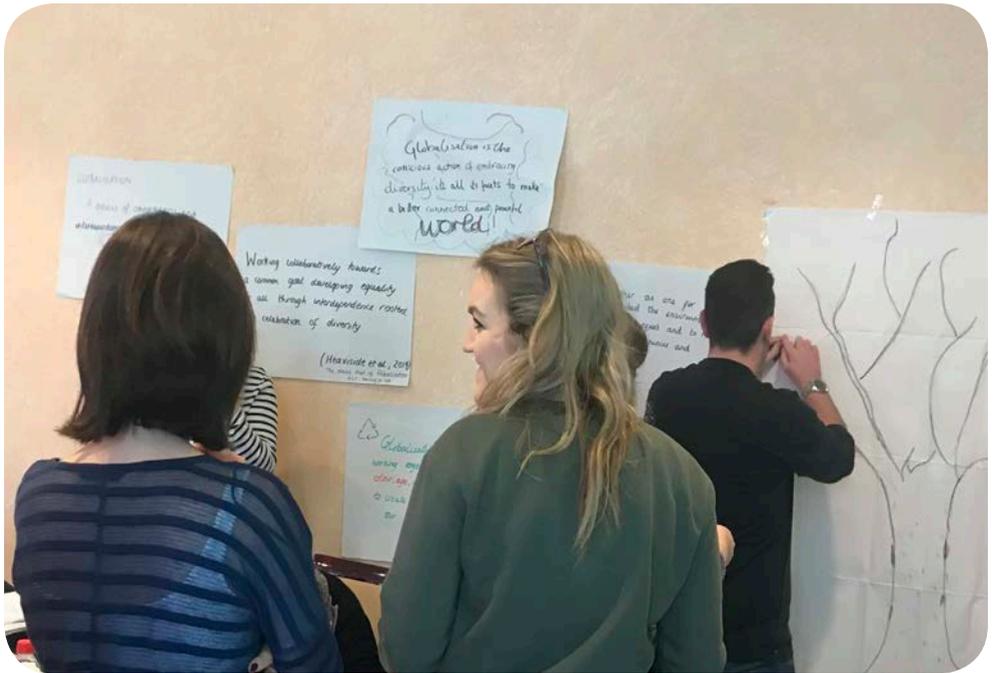
Teachers observing the materials brought from Cluj



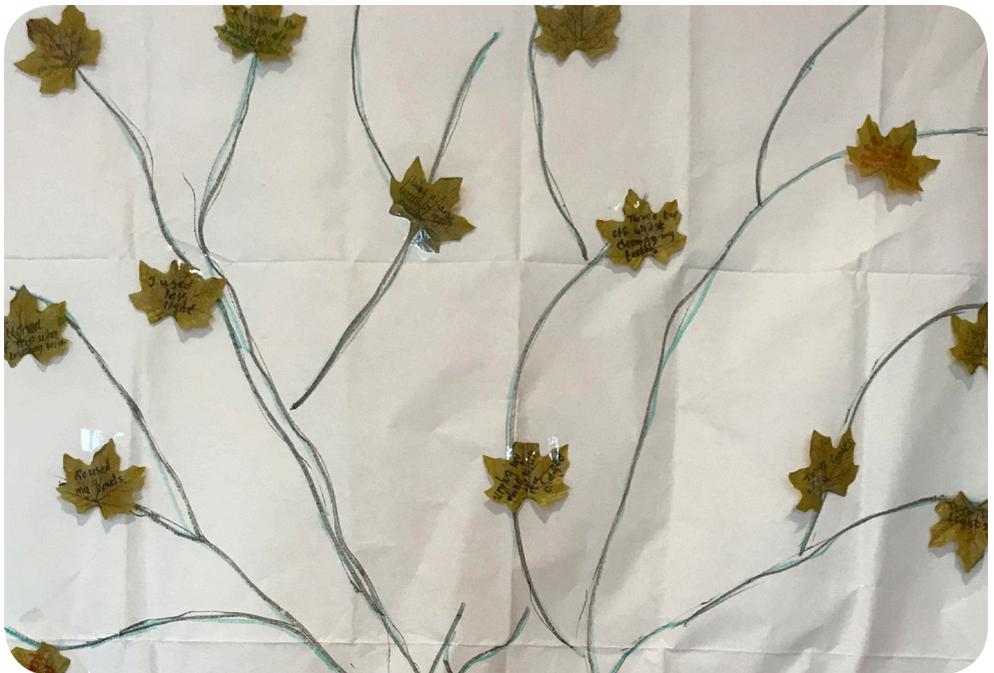
The teacher explains good practice in Metacognition during the teachers' meeting

Social Philosophy

Activity title	Helping the planet leaf by leaf
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed during a whole week staff training course on 'Ideas to develop the Global Curriculum'.</p> <p>It was used as a way to encourage staff to think about what actions they take on a daily basis and their social responsibility towards the planet. This activity could be used with their children to help them develop their sense of responsibility towards the planet.</p> <p>The participants were given leaf-shaped Post-it notes and were asked to think about an action that they had taken on that particular day that could help save the world.</p> <p>They were then asked to attach the leaf to the outline of the tree displayed on the wall.</p> <p>Participants were then encouraged to think about their future actions and to consciously think about whether they could do something to further help the environment on a daily basis.</p> <p>The group as a whole was then given the opportunity to ask further questions and to make additional comments and reflect upon how they could use the activity in their own schools.</p>



Teachers recording their daily actions



Example of a group collection of daily actions to save the world

Activity title	The global perspective
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed during a whole week staff training course on 'Ideas to develop the Global Curriculum'.</p> <p>It was used as a way to encourage staff to think about how they could help their children to develop their understanding of topics such as poverty, wealth, respect, acceptance.</p> <p>The activity involved the participants to work in groups of 6-8 people.</p> <p>Each group was given a paper tablecloth/flipchart paper with felt pens.</p> <p>Each group was asked to draw a compass with 4 specific key words on each point of the compass: social, natural, who decides, economic.</p> <p>Participants then learnt that their compass provided the framework that would help them challenge perceptions and encourage them to ask questions relating to each key area of enquiry.</p> <p>Each group was then provided with a photo as a stimulus and were tasked with devising questions relating to each key area of their compass.</p> <p>The groups were given 20 minutes to complete the task, after which they then swapped their picture with another group and the task was repeated.</p> <p>The groups were then asked to share their questions relating to each photo they were given and had the opportunity to identify how, based on life experience, prior knowledge, assumptions etc., their interpretation of the stimulus would differ and had the opportunity to change their question or challenge questions.</p> <p>The group as a whole was then given the opportunity to reflect and ask further questions and to make additional comments.</p>



Teachers discussion about the stimulus



Examples of groups devising questions relating to each key area of enquiry

Activity title	Social philosophy games
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed after the teacher training in Sweden.</p> <p>Firstly, half the class were told to go outside the classroom and wait for further instruction.</p> <p>The teacher then explained that the children in the classroom were going to be mice; they would act like mice and be very timid and scared if anyone spoke to them.</p> <p>The teacher then went out of the classroom and told the other half of the class that they were going to be lions. They would enter the classroom totally in role as lions – acting as though they were king of the jungle; proud and loud.</p> <p>The lions then entered the classroom in role; very noisily and aggressively over-powering. The mice fled and hid and were very quiet, not daring to approach the lions.</p> <p>After a while, the teacher stopped the children and they came out of role. They then swapped over and the mice went outside and the lions stayed inside the classroom.</p> <p>The teacher then explained to the lions that they were to be slugs and move very slowly and peacefully and try to hide from anything noisy and fast.</p> <p>Then the teacher went outside and told the mice that they were now gorillas – big and bold and ruling the jungle, letting no animal get in their way. The gorillas then entered the classroom beating their chests and jumping noisily around and the slugs slowly disappeared out of sight making no sound at all.</p> <p>After a minute, the teacher stopped the game and the children came out of role. They sat quietly and reflected on the activity. They discussed how it felt to be the loud over-bearing animal as opposed to the timid, quiet one.</p>

Description of the activity

The conversation then changed to the children talking about when they felt they had been a slug or a mouse, or a lion or a gorilla; they discussed situations when they had felt like a mouse and were too timid to talk to the gorillas in the playground or corridors in school. Similarly, they discussed when they had felt like gorillas or lions and only sought the company of like-minded animals, to the detriment of other quieter animals. The conversation then became more philosophical as they put themselves into others shoes and discussed the negativity and harm that these behaviours could portray. Likewise, they also discussed how their behaviours could change and how they could empathise with how other children may be feeling in the playground, classroom or just working in groups.



Year 6 children acting like gorillas and slugs

Activity title	Social philosophy games
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed after the teacher training in Sweden.</p> <p>Firstly, the children in the class were given a coloured sticky note each and told the rules that applied to each: if they received a blue sticky note, they would be ignored by children when greeted; if they received a yellow sticky note, children would greet them by saying “Hi” and that is all; if they received a pink sticky note, they would receive a fantastic greeting by the children. The children then walked around the room and responded to each other according to the rules above. After a couple of minutes, the teacher stopped the children and they changed colours - this happened once again so the children all received a greeting according to each colour.</p> <p>The teacher finally stopped the children and the children sat and were asked how it felt to be greeted according to the rules with each coloured sticky note. The children then had time, to reflect and discuss together about how each colour made them feel.</p> <p>The conversation then turned naturally onto a philosophical discussion about society and the children discussed different situations they had been in when they could equate the feelings to the colour rules in the game.</p> <p>They then went on to further discuss how they could help other children who were maybe feeling ignored in the playground and what they could do to ensure that no-one felt like that at their school.</p> <p>They talked about an area in the playground with a bench where children could go if they were feeling left out and sad and other people would know and be able to help them.</p>



Year 6 children greeting each other according to the colour sticky note that they were carrying

Activity title	The Connection
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>Following the joint staff training event in Sweden, this activity was presented to the children.</p> <p>The teacher stimulated a class discussion about friendship by reading the book: “Gli Uccelli” by Germano Zullo to the children.</p> <p>After these discussions about friendship, the teacher asked the children to divide into pairs and gave them some coloured felt pens.</p> <p>The children were then asked to make a connection and create a balance using the pens. The first connection and balance had to be using their hands (palm to palm), then their heads and then their bellies.</p> <p>The teacher then asked them to make some small movements such as trying to walk backwards and forwards, bending etc..</p> <p>The teacher asked the children to divide into small groups and connect all the group members together with the pens and try to make the same small movements.</p> <p>Finally, the teacher asked the whole class to connect together as one large group and try some movements.</p> <p>Once the activities were finished, the teacher gave the children a few minutes to reflect on what they had done, the difficulties they had encountered and if they found it more difficult to work in pairs or in large group.</p> <p>The children were asked to share their ideas in a circle and they reflected on the importance and the challenges of connection between people.</p>



Children of age 5 working in pairs



Children working in a group

Activity title	The Hero Carpet
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed after the teacher training in Sweden.</p> <p>The children were asked to sit down in a circle. The teacher placed a blue hero carpet on the floor in the middle of the carpet.</p> <p>The teacher asked the children to think about what a hero is and encouraged the children them to share their ideas.</p> <p>The teacher then asked the children to think about an experience of when they felt like a hero, for example when they helped someone or acted brave or kind towards others.</p> <p>The children who liked to share the experience were asked to stand on the “Hero Carpet” and tell the group what they had done that made them a hero.</p> <p>In order to encourage the children, the teacher modeled the activity by being the first one who shared an experience of being a hero, then the children followed.</p> <p>This activity encouraged a positive atmosphere where the children were encouraged to show their good behaviours and qualities and to talk about themselves in a positive and constructive way.</p> <p>Finally, the teacher asked the children to share their ideas about the activity they have done, if they liked it and how they felt when they were telling their experiences.</p> <p>The teacher then brought the conversation to a natural end.</p>



The teacher modelling the activity



Children sharing their experiences of being a hero

Activity title	The Hedgehog's Dilemma
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to a group of children aged 4 and 5 years old during a 60-minutes workshop. The German philosopher <i>Arthur Schopenhauer</i> wrote a parable in his "Parerga and Paralipomena" about the Hedgehog's dilemma.</p> <p>The fable was appropriately adapted for the children and read out to them by the teacher:</p> <p><i>"To get rid of the cold, some hedgehogs decide to sleep grouped together, but once they get close, they get hurt by their own spines and are forced to move away. They then need to look for the "right" distance, so as not to suffer from the cold and to avoid injury."</i></p> <p>The children, sitting in a circle, were asked to comment on the fable and discuss which solution the hedgehogs should adopt to solve this dilemma. They were also asked what they thought the expression "look for the right distance" meant.</p> <p>Afterwards, the children were asked to reflect on the possible existence of similar situations in their daily lives. They discussed the contrast between the need to live together with others and the need not to hurt each other with their respective characteristics and behaviour.</p>



Children getting ready to hear the hedgehog's dilemma

Activity title	Kant's metaphor of the baby walker
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to a group of children aged 6 to 7 years of age, during a 60-minute session.</p> <p>The children were asked to sit in a circle and were told the metaphor of the baby walker, through which Kant illustrates the exit from being a minor to the conquest of autonomy.</p> <p>The children were then asked to list some examples of situations in which they thought that some things were "too difficult to do", situations they thought "they would never be able to do" and situations they finally "managed to do".</p> <p>The discussion that followed helped the children realise that things that seem to be difficult for some people are actually easy for some others.</p> <p>The children were then asked to teach things that they were able to do, to those that still couldn't and vice versa.</p> <p>This activity helped to further develop the children's willingness to collaborate and to support each other in overcoming limits and weaknesses.</p>



Children discussing about things that looked very difficult but that they are now able to do

Activity title	Talk-listen
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to four groups of children during philosophy sessions. The children were asked to name a few things that made them feel respected at school, at home and within their groups of friends. They named a few such as: being listened to, having their opinion considered, not being interrupted when speaking.</p> <p>Next, the teacher divided the class into two groups: Number 1 children and Number 2. They were then put into pairs – a Number 1 child with a Number 2 child</p> <p>The first part of the game consisted in child number 1 talking (about a hobby, a film, a book, etc) and child number 2 showing no interest. After a minute, they swapped. Then the teacher recorded what they did to show no respect and how they felt being ignored.</p> <p>The second part of the game consisted of a free conversation where they had to show interest to their partner. Again, the teacher recorded their observations about what they did in order to show interest and how they felt being listened to.</p>



Students in action

<p><u>No interest.</u></p>	<p>- signal</p>
<p>- no eye contact</p>	<p>- important / disrespectat</p>
<p>- nu joc cu seisme / nu joaca</p>	<p>- unci so apuci disubia</p>
<p>- nu surse</p>	<p>- te truchiri in time - nu</p>
<p>- nu uit la ceas</p>	<p>- nu mai ai curaj so us cu al</p>
<p>- case</p>	<p>- incapi so te consideri mai important</p>
<p>- nu misa</p>	<p>- respectat</p>
<p><u>Interes.</u></p>	<p>- important / interesant</p>
<p>eye-contact</p>	<p>- deschis</p>
<p>surse</p>	<p>- nu vreau so apesc conversatia</p>
<p>intusari</p>	<p>- blue</p>
<p>numica</p>	<p>- din dorinta de empatie</p>

Students' observations

Activity title	Hand in Hand
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was presented to a class of children aged 9.</p> <p>The teacher divided the children into groups of four and gave each group a large sheet of paper with the shape of a hand on it.</p> <p>The children then had a few minutes within their group to talk about themselves, their interests, the things they are good at, their favourite subjects, etc.</p> <p>After the discussion, using the large sheet of paper, each child wrote on one finger of the hand. They had to write something about themselves that was different to the other children in their group, for example, I'm a good reader/ I'm good at football/ I've got three pets.</p> <p>They were then asked to write, in the palm area of the hand, something that they found they had in common with each other.</p> <p>Finally, each group shared their "Hand" with the rest of the class and the teacher facilitated a discussion with the children about the differences between them, the things they had in common and also the importance of diversity within any community.</p> <p>The "Hands" were displayed around the classroom.</p>



Children talking about their interests



One Hand is on display

Activity title	The Tree
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>The children, aged 5 to 6 years old, were asked to sit in a circle and were told that they were going to imagine being a seed.</p> <p>The teacher then told them a story in which the children are small seeds that grow up to be beautiful, fine trees. One day a man comes and takes down all the trees in the forest.</p> <p>The teacher then asked them: <i>Is it ok to take down all the trees?</i></p> <p>On the floor, the teacher had placed three different papers - one was a drawing of a happy mouth, one of a sad mouth and one was a drawing showing both a happy mouth and a sad mouth. The children were asked to choose the drawing they preferred and move to that drawing. They then had to say why they had chosen to go to that mouth.</p> <p>The teacher then asked the children to imagine once more that they are trees. This time, only some of the trees are going to be cut down and these will be used to make furniture or build houses.</p> <p>The teacher then asked them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Is it ok to take down trees in the forest”? • “How did it feel to be cut down”? <p>The children then repeated the activity of going to the mouth they preferred. A discussion then followed about their thoughts and feelings about the task.</p>



Children 5-6 years old

Activity title	Zoo Mingle
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>For this activity, the children were divided into two groups.</p> <p>The teacher then asked one group to go outside of the classroom.</p> <p>Each group was then told separately that they were going to play the role of an animal using body language only. They could use sounds to illustrate the animal but they were not allowed to talk during their role play.</p> <p>Each group was then given a few minutes to decide on one animal to role play. They discussed how they would act, and what noises they would make.</p> <p>The two groups then merged into one and started walking around the classroom acting out their animal. After a few minutes, the teacher asked them to stop and asked the children if they could figure out which animal had been chosen by the opposite group.</p> <p>The activity was repeated once more with each group choosing a different animal.</p> <p>The children then all sat in a large circle and discussed the different roles they had acted out and how they had felt while doing this activity.</p> <p>Some of the ideas discussed were prompted by questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Some animals take up a lot of space, is it the same with humans”? • “How does it feel to be a little innocent animal comparing to a big dangerous one”?



Children in action

Activity title	Dissemination of the activities after the Joint staff training in Sweden
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>As part of the final Joint staff training , a Swedish organisation “Friends” presented some very interesting topics and activities for teachers to take back and implement in their respective primary schools.</p> <p>The topic of bullying, friends and security, with a particular focus on migrant children in class, was discussed . This topic appeared to be particularly relevant as half of the children in the classroom were migrants and conflicts stemming from different religions and cultures are not uncommon in the community.</p> <p>The children were asked if they could remember any times or situations where they were accepted or felt marginalised or even excluded.</p> <p>Some children then described situations in which they felt uncomfortable. Often there were such situations in school and sometimes even in kindergarten. They then tried to find possible reasons for these feelings.</p> <p>The children were then asked if they had marginalised themselves or treated others unfairly. They were given some time to reflect on their behaviour and think about the reasons for their actions. Together, the children considered how to improve the class climate and whom to approach for seeking help.</p> <p>Friends and family were named as the biggest helpers and supporters and with whom the children felt most comfortable with.</p> <p>Finally, the children were asked to draw their favourite place or favourite person while listening to quiet, meditation music.</p>



"An uncomfortable feeling"



"My favourite place, my favourite person"

Activity title	I am a Hero and Blind Counting
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>Following the third joint staff training, these two activities were presented to future Childcare workers during a training session with the intention of delivering them to children in their care.</p> <p><i>I am a Hero.</i></p> <p>The teacher started by asking the Childcare workers to sit in a large circle. A small mat/rug was then placed in the middle. They were then told that they could step on the carpet if they could claim to have done something good, for example, helped a senior citizen across the street, bought a plate of soup for a homeless person, or comforted a child who had got lost.</p> <p>Initially, many found it very difficult to put themselves in the position of “a hero”. Many showed inhibitions when they had to praise themselves in front of the whole class. Over time, however, new examples of good deeds were added.</p> <p><i>Blind Counting</i></p> <p>The Childcare workers were asked to sit in a circle and close their eyes. One person began by calling out a number and each person in turn had to call out another number that was larger than the previous one . (and every number in a row of numbers had to be mentioned, i.e. 1,2,3,4,...). If two persons called out the same number or if a number was left out, you had to start from the beginning again.</p> <p>The goal of this game is to count as far as possible and permits the participants to show their empathy and sense of community.</p>



"Hero carpet"



"Blind counting"

Activity title	Different but equal
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to children following the joint staff training in Sweden.</p> <p>The children were each given a piece of paper and a pen. They were then asked to think about something unusual and unique about themselves and to write it on their piece of paper.</p> <p>The children then compared their answers with their class mates and all of them had mentioned different qualities.</p> <p>Next, as a class, they had to discuss and find something in common, something that all of them could do.</p> <p>Finally, with the teacher as facilitator, a discussion followed. The teacher helped the children realise the importance of diversity where respecting others, considering others' opinions and accepting "different" people are so important. At school level this is particularly important in order to ease the transition for immigrant children to settle and feel part of the school community.</p>



Children writing something that is unique to them

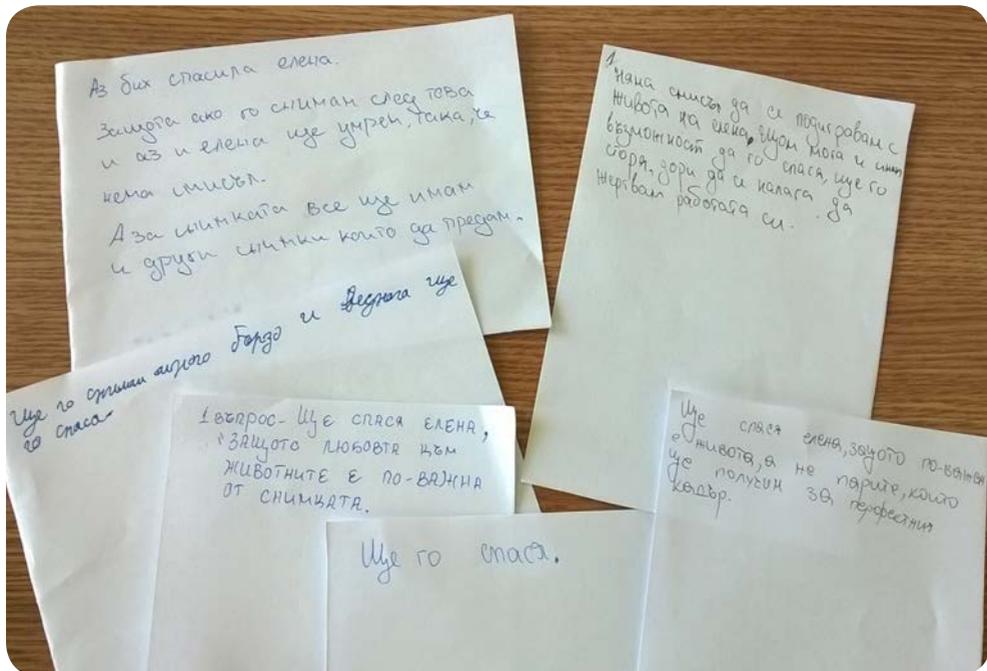


Children writing and comparing their thoughts and ideas

Activity title	The Photographer's Dilemma
Thematic area	Social Philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered following the joint staff training in Sweden. It is intended to promote children's awareness and empathy.</p> <p>The teacher began by asking the children to sit in a circle and listen to a story.</p> <p>The story is about a photographer and a deer. The deer is stranded on the railway track. The photographer thinks that he could take a wonderful photo of this animal.</p> <p>The children were then asked to write down what they would do in that situation: the photographer needs the "perfect" frame but he is in a dilemma because he can either save a deer from being hit by a train or he can try to take a perfect photo.</p> <p>All the children talked about what they had written down and a discussion followed with the teacher as facilitator. Their thoughts and opinions were recorded by the teacher who came to the conclusion that all of the children would save the animal.</p>



Thinking and writing about the dilemma facing the photographer



Children's decisions

Pupils' exchange activities

Activity title	Performance poetry: Walking with my Iguana by Brian Moses
Thematic area	Principles of philosophy and Creative thinking Metacognition Social philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed after the UK hosted the children's exchange. It involved performing a famous poem, an idea from the UK team.</p> <p>Firstly, the children (including the Erasmus+ exchange group) listened and watched Brian Moses perform his poem 'Walking with my Iguana' on the interactive white board. They studied the words, rhythm and movement. The children from each country were put into mixed nationality groups to further listen to and break down the poem.</p> <p>The children then went outside in their groups and practiced reading the poem along with drums. They put actions together with the drum beat.</p> <p>The groups took turns to perform the poem to the other children. Each group was given feedback on what was good and how they could improve their performance. The children had time, in their groups to reflect on their performances and prepare for a final performance to the whole group.</p> <p>After the Erasmus+ group left the UK, the Year 5 British children, who had so enjoyed working on and performing this poem collaboratively, decided to perform it to the whole school and parents at the annual summer Poetry Jam.</p>



Children performing



The Year 5 children performing the final version of the poem

Activity title	Creating a self-portrait in the style of a famous artist
Thematic area	Principles of philosophy and Creative thinking Metacognition Social philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was completed after the UK hosted the children’s exchange. It involved using famous artists’ portraits, an idea shared from the Bulgarian team.</p> <p>Firstly, the children studied their own portrait photographs. Then, each child researched and studied the self-portraits of well-known artists from around the world. They looked at how the artists had creatively used colour, light and form to portray their self-images. Each child picked an artist whom they could relate to and connect with, and recreated their own portrait in the style of their chosen artist. A colour pallet was chosen to reflect the colours of their chosen artist and applied to their portrait.</p> <p>The children critically assessed and reflected on their own, and each other’s portraits. Questions were raised such as: did their portrait reflect their own personality? Did it combine their personality with that of the original artist? How could they improve their portrait? Did their portrait truly reflect the style of their chosen artist?</p> <p>The children then used their feedback and reflections to improve their portraits. Finally, the children presented their best version and their portraits were framed and put on display.</p>

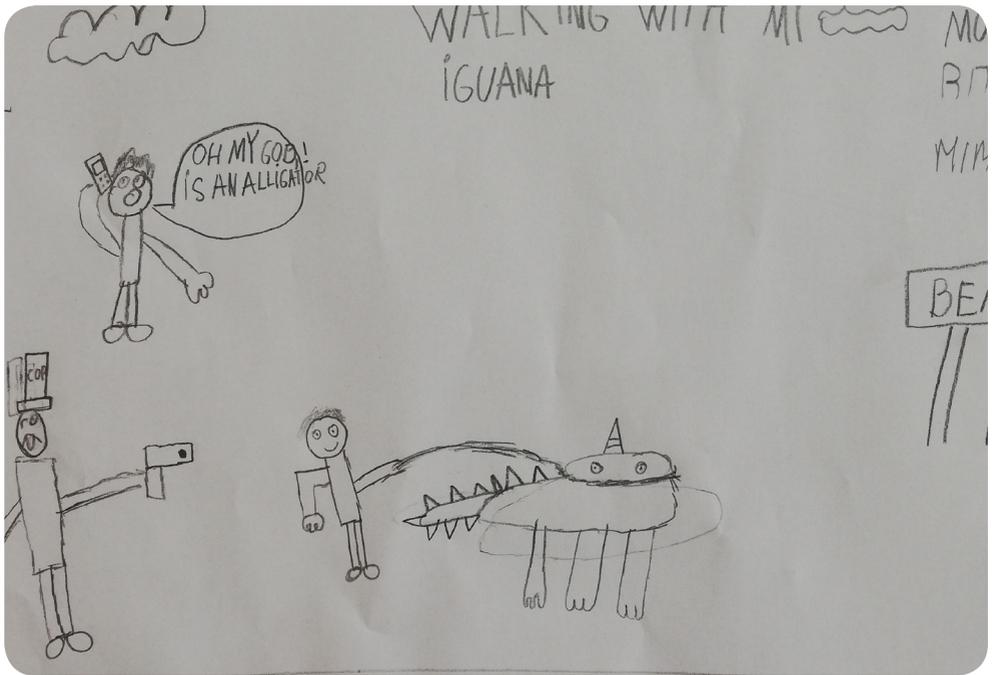


Painting



Year 5 portraits on display

Activity title	Walking with my iguana
Thematic area	Principles of philosophy and Creative thinking Metacognition Social philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered by two of the children who took part in the exchange visit in the U.K in June 2018. The poem “Walking with my iguana” was given to children, aged 10 and 11, who were divided into groups of four.</p> <p>They had to read the poem, find a suitable rhythm for it and then they had to perform it in front of their peers. These discussions were useful:</p> <p>If you were an iguana, how would you move/ what would you do/ what friends would you have?</p> <p>Each group made a poster for their show.</p> <p>All four groups performed and the children gave feedback to their classmates.</p> <p>Finally, the activity ended with each group writing a new poem in which they had to change some of the original words.</p>



Students' poster



Students acting out the poem

Activity title	The play
Thematic area	Principles of philosophy and Creative thinking Metacognition Social philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>This activity was delivered to a group of children aged 9 and 10 during the Pupil Exchange visit in the UK. The children were divided into groups of four and were given an Ani-Mate kit. They started by choosing one scene from the kit - in space, in the city, in the forest or in the jungle. The children then created characters and wrote their own script for their play.</p> <p>Finally, all the children performed their play to the other groups with a feedback session at the end.</p> <p>There were also interesting points of discussion with questions such as “If you could be any type of animal/ creature, which would suit you best? Why?”</p> <p>Each group then made a poster to illustrate their play and the activity ended with each group reflecting on the work they had done. They discussed what they particularly liked and also if any improvements could be made to their play.</p>

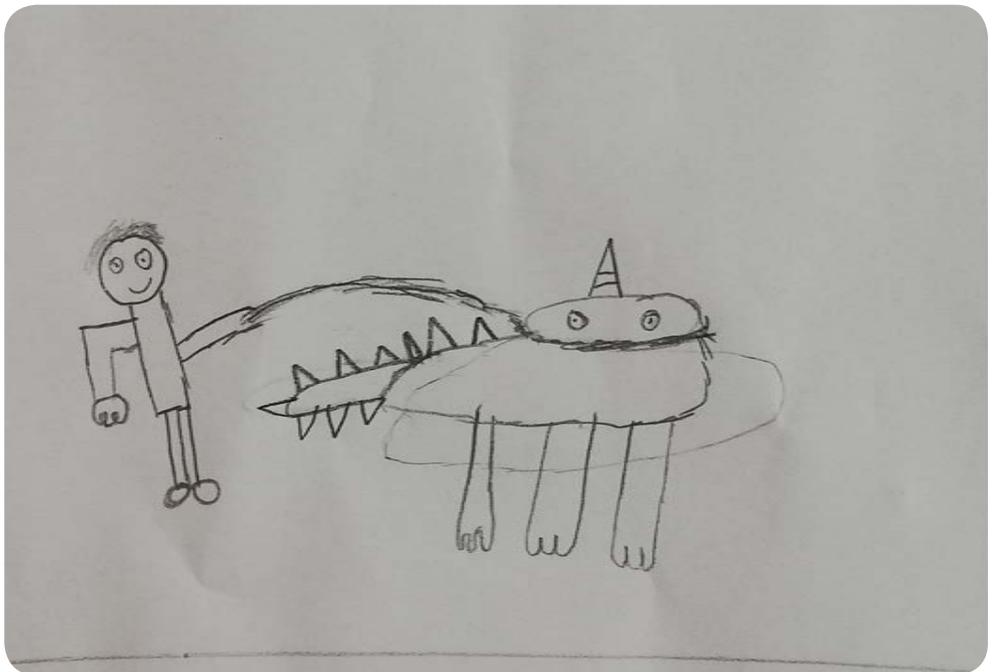


Children creating their characters and writing their script



Children acting out their script

Activity title	My Iguana
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>The children who took part in the pupils' exchange visit to England presented an activity named "My Iguana". The text of the poem was displayed on the screen so that everyone could see.</p> <p>The children then read the poem out loud and asked their classmates to repeat the words after them.</p> <p>The children were then divided into groups and each group was given time to practice the lyrics, add vocals and sounds to their 'song'.</p> <p>After 15 minutes practice they all gathered again and each group presented their "song" to the others.</p>



Walking with my Iguana

Activity title	Stone age in the forest
Thematic area	Metacognition
Description of the activity	<p>The children who went on the pupils' exchange visit to England, took part in a lesson in the forest with the theme of the Stone Age.</p> <p>They built huts and had to think about what they needed in the hut and the layout such as sleeping space and dining area.</p> <p>The activity was done by children aged 7-8 years old. They discussed what they thought was important in the Stone Age and compared the differences and similarities to life today.</p>



Children in the forest

Activity title	Stop-motion animation
Thematic area	Principles of philosophy and Creative thinking Metacognition Social philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>The activity was delivered by children who had taken part in the Pupil Exchange visit held in the UK.</p> <p>The children were divided into groups of four including children who had taken part in the Pupil Exchange visit. These children then began by recounting their experiences in the UK and explained the activity they were about to deliver using a Stop-motion animation kit.</p> <p>They explained that each group had to choose a background, devise a plot and create characters. They would then show them how to create an animation through a step by step process.</p> <p>Each group worked together to create their scenario and on completion it was shared with the other groups .</p> <p>The children discussed and gave feedback on the animations and talked about the characters they had created and the background they had chosen.</p>



Children creating their scenarios



Children working on their plot and characters

Activity title	Explore the UK
Thematic area	Principles of philosophy and Creative thinking Metacognition Social philosophy
Description of the activity	<p>A dissemination activity was held after the Pupils' Exchange visit in the UK and the children who had participated in the visit delivered the activity.</p> <p>The children prepared a short presentation about their great experiences in the UK and the activities that they had taken part in during their stay.</p> <p>They talked about a fun activity called the Iguana Song, they created a Stop-motion animation and they took part in various sports activities.</p> <p>The children also talked about some of the cultural aspects of their experiences in the UK. They visited the living museum of a Victorian village in Ironbridge and also took part in a print making workshop whilst there.</p>



The children disseminating their experiences in the UK



Children learning about the activities experienced during the Pupil Exchange visit



The Bliss Charity School
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