

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 7: How to develop a democratic atmosphere in the classroom

If a teacher decides to organise the classroom more democratically this is connected with a big goal. The following table shows the steps that could be taken.

1. Where do I stand in which aspects?
2. Which aspect do I choose for tomorrow, for next week, next year?
3. How do I act as a teacher in order to make my school benefit from my learning progress?

| Short-term objectives | Medium-term objectives | Long-term objectives |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher reduces use of extremely authoritarian expressions | Teacher develops habitual use of reversible expressions | Mutual understanding between students and teacher |
| Teacher gives reasons for his/her selection of subjects and materials | Teacher offers alternative subjects and teaching materials | Joint lesson planning by students and teacher |
| Teacher explains learning objectives to students | Teacher presents alternative learning objectives to students | Joint selection of learning objectives by students and teacher |
| Teacher gives reasons for his choice of teaching methods | Teacher presents alternative options of teaching methods | Joint decision on teaching methods by students and teacher |
| Teacher gives reasons for his marking of students' performance | Teacher explains problems of marking | Self-assessment by students |
| Introduction to democratic modes of conflict resolution | Teacher ceases to make authoritative use of power to resolve conflict | Conflict resolution by means of co-operation and communication |
| Teacher explains principles of how work in the classroom is organised | Students' suggestions on work organisation are considered | Students participate in decisions on organising work in the classroom |