

Lesson 4

Our first issue!

Where do we go from here?

Learning objective	The students are able to conduct an open discussion and they become aware of the implications and consequences of continuing the newspaper project. They are able to make a decision and to take responsibility for it.
Student tasks	The students must form opinions and decide about their future involvement in a follow-up project.
Resources	Blackboard or flip chart.
Method	Plenary discussion.

Conceptual learning

A discussion (an exchange of arguments, derived from the Latin, *discussio*) is a specific form of verbal communication between two or more persons in which one or several issues are addressed, with each side presenting their arguments. A discussion should be held in a spirit of mutual respect. A good discussion style requires the speakers to allow and even encourage the expression of views and opinions other than their own, considering them carefully instead of rejecting them out of hand. Personal qualities such as serenity, composure and politeness will be advantageous to both sides. The best type of discussion will lead to the solution of a problem or a compromise that everyone involved can accept.

In modern societies, discussions are a civilised, that is, non-violent means of handling controversy and dealing with conflicts of interests and objectives. Conflicts are not suppressed, but solved. By practising their discussion skills, students learn a basic tool for working towards and maintaining peace in society.

The lesson

After the teams of editors have posted their articles on the wall and reported briefly on their working experience, the next focus will be on the question of whether to continue the wall newspaper project. Now that all students have some idea of the time they would need to spend on it and the organisational problems that need to be solved, they can have a realistic discussion on the question of continuation.

The teacher may help to give clarity and structure to the student discussion by providing the following on a flip chart or on the blackboard.

Organisation	Personal aspects	Co-operation	Time management
If we continue: – What must we take into account? – Will time be a problem? – What technical means do we have? – How can we prevent our newspaper from being vandalised? – What financial means will we need? How can the funds be raised?	Who is interested? – Editor-in-chief? – Committee of editors? – What is the role and position of the teacher? – Names: – – – –	– How can we attract the interest of other students? – Which other teachers would we like to join our project? – Can we arrange visits to local editorial offices (print media, broadcasting or electronic media)? – Can we interview a journalist as an expert?	

As soon as teachers begin a project such as this they will realise that not everything can be planned. It requires a process of continual reflection by all participants. It is a lively, fascinating, but also a difficult and sometimes even frustrating process.

Teachers who already have experience of project work with classes will know the sequence of steps that will be needed and they also know that strong leadership is necessary. Unless care is taken, however, an over-strong leadership can, of course, also destroy the students' motivation and initiative. Participation in projects such as this benefits students by giving them important experience in civic and human rights education.

Teachers should exercise their leadership skills to ensure that, by the end of this lesson, clear decisions have been made and an appropriate time frame has been set for the follow-up steps.