Introduction

1. What this book has to offer

This book contains a collection of 47 exercises and models for Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) and Human Rights Education (HRE) in schools and also in informal settings of education. These teaching models provide the framework to activate students, and they offer examples and inroads into understanding general principles of democracy and human rights (inductive approach, teaching by example).

The user will find that many of these teaching models require few and simple resources (low budget principle).

In a lesson or unit, preferably not more than four lessons, these models need to be embedded within a context, usually following a three-step structure:

1. The lesson or unit begins with an introduction to clarify the topic of the lesson, its purpose and objectives. The students become interested in the topic.

2. The students receive instructions on how to carry out the exercise and the necessary materials. They then become engaged in their activity.

3. This is a phase of careful reflection, discussion and instruction. Common methods are student feedback, classroom discussion, critical thinking and instruction by the teacher to introduce the key concept underlying the model. Without this third phase, the students will gain the impression they are simply playing a game for its own sake.

Phases 1 and 3 are not included in the presentation of the models (phase 2). The introductions to the chapters provide a briefing on the key concept or issue that is the focus of the exercises in that section; here, support can be found for phase 3. The target group of this book is the more experienced teacher and the teacher who is willing to spend some time preparing the lesson carefully. Preparation is primarily a task of careful thinking, focusing on phase 3. What feedback will my students give me? What feelings will this exercise arouse? What is the key concept that my students should be able to understand? How do I intend to introduce it? How can it be applied afterwards?

Which questions a teacher chooses and how he or she answers them will vary, depending on the specific group of learners, their age and cultural background. We have described examples of how to implement some of the models in this book in the companion volumes of this EDC/HRE edition.

Many exercises are adaptable for different age groups, as the level of reflection may vary. Some models, however, are more complex and abstract than others and therefore more suitable for more advanced students.

2. The shared European approach to EDC/HRE

The user will discover that the models follow different approaches of teaching and learning. Some focus more on creating an authentic experience (e.g. "A bouquet of flowers", or "The jigsaw puzzle"), others emphasise student activity in a role-play setting (e.g. "The tourists"). There is a third category of materials that focuses on specific topics and is more material based (e.g. "Basic concepts of political thought"). Finally, there are designs for project work leading to a product (e.g. "The human rights poster").

The wide variety of approaches reflects the fact that authors from all parts of Europe have contributed to this book. They have drawn on different sources and traditions of teaching and learning, and have selected models that they know from practical experience and testing in class.

However, there is a shared understanding of EDC/HRE that permeates every part of this book: in EDC/HRE, the method carries the message. Teaching *about* democracy and human rights must be reflected by teaching in the spirit of these principles, that is, teaching *through* democracy and human rights. Therefore these models follow the principle of task-based learning and learning by personal experience. This shared understanding of EDC/HRE may truly be called the *European approach*.

The original version of this book was produced to support the teacher training seminars for EDC/HRE in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war (1992-95). The Council of Europe arranged seminars for teachers from 1996 and these activities continued until 2006. The objective of these seminars was to support the peace-building process after the war. EDC/HRE should encourage the young generation to develop a political culture that supports a modern pluralist and tolerant society with firmly established democratic institutions.

In the first two years, the authors of this book were brought together to train teachers across Bosnia and Herzegovina in summer seminars lasting for up to two weeks. We found that the teachers were highly interested and willing to rise to the challenge of educating their students in democracy and human rights. However, they urgently requested materials to guide and support them in their work. Within a year, the first edition of this book was produced. It soon became known as the "Blue Folder", because of its link to the Council of Europe, and was widely used, not only by teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in other countries including the Russian Federation, Moldova, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro. The feedback from these users contributed to an improved edition in 2000. We found that many teachers required guidance and support in task-based learning and integrating task-based and conceptual learning, as outlined by the three-step model above.

We responded by developing teaching models that describe the steps within a four-lesson sequence in detail. Revised versions of these models are to be found in volumes III, IV and V of this EDC/HRE series.

This edition of teaching models in EDC/HRE no longer refers to the specific context of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As the teaching models represent the shared European approach to EDC and HRE, they may also be used throughout Europe and, for that matter, also in other parts of the world. The different authors are united in a choir, as it were, singing the same piece, but with their distinctive voices. This offers users the chance to select and to try out different approaches and traditions within the European approach to EDC and HRE.

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