

Mini forum theater



OBJECTIVES:

- Identify children's competences.
- Co-construct group solutions to overcome difficulties and problems.
- Develop empathy and solidarity.



AXES:

Collective Emotional Intelligence
Active identification and resolution of problems/ challenges

AGE GROUPS:

Boys and girls from 9 to 12 years old divided into at least 3 groups.



STEP BY STEP DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

» Introduction to the activity

Explain to the children that they are going to do 2 theater experiences.

» 1st part of the activity: Introduction to image theater

Introduce image theater to the children with the whole class. Make it clear that:

- They will act out a word with their body, without speaking or moving.
- They do not have to give any information to the audience about what they represent, as the audience has to guess.

Facilitators can give an example beforehand, representing themselves one of these words (friendship, love, zoo).

» 2nd part of the activity: Practicing image theater

Once the explanation is done, separate the children into groups of 4 or 5 people. Once separated, give one word per group (in secret) to act out. The groups have 2-3 minutes to agree on how they are going to act out this word.

Once they have agreed, they act it out in front of the rest of the class, who have to guess which word they are acting out.

» 3rd part of the activity: Introduction to forum theater

Once the image theater presentations are finished, explain to the children that they are going to act out challenging or obstacle situations, what we call forum theater.

Challenges or obstacles may include the following:

- A child is sick and cannot go to school.
- A child is isolated and feels sad
- We wanted to give a gift to the teacher but we don't have any money.
- A child does not speak or understand the language very well.

(for older groups, they can propose challenges experienced in class themselves, or if there are obstacles occurring at the time, teachers could propose them).

The children will act out one of these situations per group. The facilitator can give each group the situation to act out, written on a piece of paper.

Important: You represent the conflict, not the solutions. The solutions will then be discussed in the group.

» 4th part of the activity: Presentation of the situations with the forum theater

A first group is invited to act out the situation assigned by the facilitator. Once the scene is finished, the audience is asked:

- What did you see in this performance?
- What is the conflict?
- Can this happen in real life?
- How can this situation be changed to make it better for the protagonists?

If a child proposes a potential solution, invite him or her on stage or in the performance space to take the role of the person who wants to replace the invitation and act out the possible solution. Once finished, you can ask questions of the audience:

- What did you see that was new in this performance?
- Does it help resolve the conflict?
- Is it realistic?
- Does anyone want to propose another solution?

If a child proposes another potential solution, repeat the above steps.

Once you have finished working on this scene, you can move on to the performance of another group and go through the same steps.

» Closing of the activity

Ask : What have you learned?

Finally, a short reflection on the skills used in the different scenes and to what extent they can be useful for collectively tackling other problems.

MATERIALS:

- Small roles representing crisis situations

METHODOLOGY:

Forum theater and image theater

PREPARATION

Print out the papers with the situations

TIPS FOR THE PERSON DOING IT

- Promote the participation of all students and their resources, encouraging collective creation.
- Make it clear that it is not a problem if they don't want to do theater, they can also suggest to their peers ways to perform, or act as a storyteller.
- This activity is designed for older groups (9-12 years) if you would like to do it with younger children, think about adapting it: in the forum theater, suggest a solution in the performance, and then ask questions to the audience about what the problem is, why this problem occurs, what seems to be the solution proposed by the actors/actresses and what other options they could have chosen.

WHEN:

There is no particular time to do it

DURATION: 2h

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Augusto Boal, Theatre of the oppressed: methodologies of image theater and forum theater.