

EP for YOUth

ideas not only for local actions on European topics



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Introduction

This booklet was developed within the project EP4YOUth, which tried to educate and inform young people from the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia to the matter of public interest and cooperation in Europe and active involvement in decision-making processes. Its goal is to share with youth workers, teachers and animators groups of youth of different activities that we implemented in the project. We chose this activity, which are easily transferable and can serve as an inspiration for other similar activities.

The publication has two main parts. The first dedicated portal www.disputeabout.eu, which was running the project and the second part activities carried out during the final meeting with the participants of that project.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the website www.disputeabout.eu. The header includes the site logo, navigation links (home, eParliament, politics, economy, environment, people, culture, cities and places), and utility links (what is Disputeabout.eu, publish, teachers, glossary, newsletter, partners, contact, and a language selector). A search bar is located in the top right.

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- What is Disputeabout.eu?**: A brief introduction to the site's purpose for young people interested in European issues.
- Log in**: A login form with fields for 'log in' and 'password', and a 'Log in' button. Below it is a link for 'Are you new here and do you want to sign in? Registration'.
- Publish your articles**: A section encouraging users to share their views, articles, pictures, or videos on the portal.
- News**: A list of recent news items, including 'New technology updates - No more changing rooms in clothes stores!', 'International Essay Contest', and 'France has banned the burqa'.
- News in eParliament**: A section for news related to the European Parliament, featuring 'Game is over' and 'Get further information about the European Parliament'.
- Thought of the month**: A section titled 'Sir W. Churchill' with a quote about democracy.
- Articles locations**: A map showing the geographical locations of various articles.
- Teachers**: A section with links to resources for educators, such as 'Website on multicultural education' and 'Presentation about the European Parliament'.
- New articles**: A list of recent articles, including 'GMO - brief introduction into problem', 'European Parliament for youth - It is worth it!', 'Some people dream of success... while others wake up and work hard at it', 'Do you know the EU well?', and 'Being the member of the European Union'.

At the bottom of the page, there is a 'Publish your articles' section with a small cartoon character and a 'Read more >' link. The footer contains logos for the European Union and the project, along with a disclaimer and the copyright notice: © 2011 disputeabout.eu.

Disputeabout.eu for you use and inspiration

Web portal www.disputeabout.eu is a space for young people, who are interested in Europe, public matters around them and who believe that writing and discussing them can be meaningful. This communication platform for young European Citizen tries to build up community awareness and strengthen their European standpoints and citizenship. Disputeabout.eu is focused on young people, but provides support also to teachers and youth workers.



Disputeabout.eu as a tool for publishing student work

The main objective of the portal Disputeabout.eu is increasing the interest of youth in public events, society, and their close surroundings. Preparation of various papers, essays and vintage work is an essential part of high school studies. Possibility of publishing student work on a public server and discussion above it is more motivating for youth than a similar preparation work „in a drawer.“ Disputeabout.eu works is based on editorial system, where youth can publish their articles on various issues. The articles unlike are not published automatically, but must be approved by the editor of the portal. If the article is not good enough, the editor will send to the author comments or suggestions for improvement. At the beginning young people have to receive some methodological guidance on how to prepare a good post, or they have the possibility of direct consultation with the editor at redakce@dvorek.eu. We try to encourage young people to propose their own solutions and to take small steps forward.

Which steps should you follow when writing an article?

- look around you,
- choose an interesting event, problem or a topic from your community,
- find as much information about it as possible,
- look at the whole topic in European consequences,
- write a report, commentary or a short essay or create a picture gallery or make a short movie,
- and publish your presentation on Disputeabout.eu.

Why should you do that?

- Who does nothing, can spoil nothing,
- when people speak about something, things can move in the right direction,
- I can learn about others' view on my opinion,
- I can meet other interesting people.

You can find inspiration for your articles in the section „How to write a good article?“ which was prepared for you by Disputeabout.eu editors. You will find it here: <http://www.disputeabout.eu/clanek/how-to-write-a-good-article.do> .

Since the game Disputeabout.eu is based a lot on writing, we enclose some advice how to write a good article. We have to start with mentioning one general truth: a universal „recipe“ for writing a good article does not exist. However, we can recommend you to be aware of the fact that you write it for the readers, not for yourself.

To achieve success, you need little bit of talent, a lot of creativity, and the ability to observe and look around you. On the other hand, you also need to practice your writing skills (it means to write, write, write) and to know the rules and the tricks.

If you truly wish your article was published, you should think about following:

- to know what exactly you want to say,
- to choose appropriate genre: reportage, interview, essay, feuilleton etc.,
- to search for relevant information and facts,
- to arrange them and choose the most important and interesting ones,
- to find the border between the core of the text and redundant words, so that your article contains enough information but remains readable at the same time.

At the beginning, you can seek for inspiration from professional journalists e.g. International Herald Tribune, Financial Times or BBC. If you are open to comments on your articles and you regard them as the feedback, your writing style will gradually improve. The knowledge of a foreign language is a great advantage too because it widens the scope of your possible inspiration.

Decalogue of writing article methods or what you should keep in mind:

- Choosing appropriate topic and title.
- Looking for information and sources, verifying credibility.
- Arranging your text - writing contents.
- Writing the article itself.
- Rewriting the title if you changed your former topic while writing the article, and writing the lead.
- Enclosing interesting photos to your text - illustrative or your own.
- Correcting grammatical mistakes.
- Choosing a person who does not know much about the topic, let him or her read it, and ask him or her about their opinion.
- Sending the article to the editors to approve it.
- Publishing the article and getting the feedback in the form of comments, discussion etc.

Although it might seem that it is not as important as the content, it is fundamental to use the formal language and avoid making grammatical mistakes. Not many people have thorough knowledge of orthography but it is paradoxically the first thing to be criticized by the reader.

From article to local action and back again

When one begins to think about things around him and begins to write about them, he is not far from their possible change and from possible action. Concerning the citizenship, nowadays it is an important task to make young people taking a meaningful action(s) that express(es) their opinions. And this is great opportunity for non-formal education methods.

Therefore educational activity should meet the following minimum criteria:

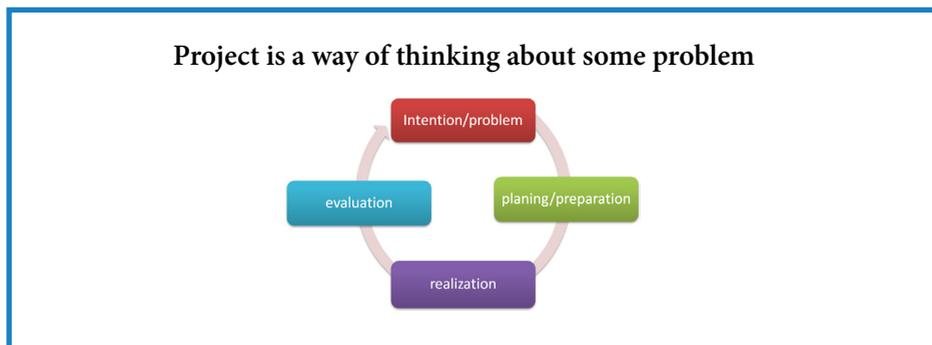
- design method based on a theory of education based on experiences and experiences
- the project must include a focused and organized learning activities
- concentration of the curriculum around a central core, or problem
- outlet projects into practical action and results
- youth assumes the responsibility for project management

Lot of teachers and youth workers things, that project teaching must be something interdisciplinary, long-term, totally spontaneous, preferably whole school. On the contrary, school-wide, year-round and super interdisciplinary projects are very demanding on coordination, timing and cooperation within the school team. Although the results of such a large success project are tempting, this approach can only recommend schools with good experience with smaller projects. Because it may lead to inefficiency project easily, to poison teacher or

youth worker forced to engage in such exaggerated project and then the day is just fun, and pretext for idleness of participants.

Good practice in educational project

There are many examples of educational projects for pupils and students. Range of activities can be carried out during normal school hours. The project can be divided into blocks and selecting a suitable and attractive theme of motivation can achieve that part of the project will be processed through homework. It is very useful project to promote activation measures and other methods (game, simulation, etc.)



How to prepare a local action

It is recommend to make a good plan and early start of work for a local action. What do we mean by the term „local action“? In our project - any meaningful activity that highlights, promotes or solve a problem connected with the chosen theme. The action should exceed a threshold of your youth group or class, ideally should be targeted at the citizens of your city. The specific target group action is not given, but must correspond to the selected topic. Examples of such a local action: it may be public discussions with interesting personalities, educational happening or campaign, exhibition, concert, student study on a chosen topic, simple survey or presentation of such a survey and many others. Organizing of events must respect good manners, rules of etiquette and seamless co-existence, or get the support of school management, or other authority.

Don't forget to write about your action an article to www.disputeabout.eu or some other media.

Roma and EU

Motivation

This activity has been inspired by motion for voting „ROMA and EU“: <http://www.disputeabout.eu/clanek/25683> . It was reacting on actual event when French authorities decided to deport Roma people from France to Romania. This action was followed by many discussions. The questions remain: „Was it fair?, Did France have the right to do it?, Why did not Roma stay in France?, Who has the truth?“.

For more than one thousand years, the Roma have been an integral part of European civilization. Today, Roma are the biggest ethnic minority in Europe, present in all EU Member States with an estimated population of 10-12 million people. Most Roma are EU citizens, so they have the same rights and duties like other EU citizens.

However their situation is still characterised by persistent discrimination and social exclusion. Roma are at risk of poverty, unemployment, stereotypes and prejudice.



Aims:

The participants will analyze the topic from different perspective, outside of their habitual thinking style. The participants will suggest system changes, approach changes on local, national, European level. They might to prepare self to understand clearly the terms like racism, minority versus majority, stereotype, prejudices, ethnocentrism, discrimination, xenophobia, intolerance, social exclusion.

Materials:

6 hats (made from paper or real, etc.), flip - chart paper (at least 6 sheets), markers

Time estimation:

90 min – 2 hours (depends on time for reading of articles, preparation, final reflections)

Group size:

Minimum 6 people, but more people in the groups bring more ideas.



The description

This activity is based on method „Six thinking hats“ – an analyses tool developed by Edward de Bono.

First divide the participants in 6 groups, each group choose one hat (it can be folded from colourful paper, you can also bring six different types of hats, etc.).

Ask the participants to read the articles in the bottom of the motion:

<http://www.disputeabout.eu/clanek/25683> - the links are also in the resources.

Here is the description of single hats:

<p>The White Hat is the information hat. This covers facts, figures, information needs and gaps. Are you missing any information or data that would help you to analyze the proposal?</p>
<p>The Red Hat represents emotions. This covers intuition, feelings and emotions. Say how this proposal makes you feel emotionally: scared, threatened, excited, energized, etc. Also try to think how other people will react emotionally. Try to understand the responses of people who do not fully know your reasoning. It is important to get the feelings expressed, as they can be hidden reasons why people would oppose or support a proposal.</p>
<p>The Yellow Hat is the hat of optimism. This is the logical positive: why something will work and why it will offer benefits. Say what is good about this topic. Even if you think the idea is not your cup of tea you have to find some good points and redeeming qualities about it.</p>
<p>The Black Hat is the pessimism hat. This is the hat of judgment and caution. Everyone has to find fault with the idea. Even if it was your idea and you are very proud of it you have to point out some drawbacks and disadvantages.</p>
<p>The Green Hat is the hat of growth and possibilities. This is the hat of creativity, alternatives, proposals, what is interesting, provocations and changes. Everyone has to suggest ways in which the idea could be adapted or improved to make it work better.</p>
<p>The Blue Hat is the process hat. This is the overview or process control hat. It looks not at the subject itself but at the 'thinking' about the subject. It is used to check if the process is working well. When you wear it, you discuss whether the method is used in the most effective way.</p>

Debriefing and evaluation

Ask the groups to share their „Hat“ conclusions one by one. After that invite the participants to reflect upon the conclusions and to come up with suggestions of what could/should be changed on local, national, European level to avoid the situation which was mentioned above.

Resources:

More about method „Six thinking hats“:

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_07.htm

Brander, P. et al., 2004. All different, all equal, Hungary: Directorate of Youth and Sports, Council of Europe, ISBN: 92-871-5629-8.

Kovalčík, M., Já, moje romská rodina a Woody Allen – Otázky a odpovědi. Promítej i ty! (online), Available at:

http://www.jedensvet.cz/pit/docs/Woody_Allen/Otazky_odpovedi_Ja_moje_romska_rodina.pdf (accessed 23 Sep 2011)

Education pack All different, all equal , <http://www.eycb.coe.int/edupack/default.htm>

Reveal the memory of the landscape

Motivation

Game leader has to ponder the level of knowledge of participants, the fact, whether activity is carried in unknown or home environment and customize the requirements to the participants accordingly.

Aims

The aim of activity is to stimulate interest of participants on the relation between the history of surrounding landscape and its modern face. Participants should actively find concrete examples of historical elements, events, buildings etc. and create presentations within the specific focus.

Materials:

maps of play area, camera, papers, colours pencils, pens etc., flip - chart paper, markers

Time estimation:

half day to all day long

Group size:

Minimum 6 people divided to two groups, maximum 36 participants (one group optimally 3-4 participants)

Description of activity

Participants are divided in to the small groups (3-4 participants in one group optimally). Game leader can set the group and its members according the personal interests of participants and their ability, or can leave the creation of groups on them.

Every group will have a specific focus, from which will explore the selected area eg. (Botanical, zoological, morphological, historical events, population, local culture, religion, historical buildings, tradition and feasts, language particularity, industrial heritage, local crafts). Game leader has to choose the focuses carefully to be relevant to the investigated landscape)

Table of suggestions of group focuses

Botanical	Common botanical species, biotical condition (biomic classification), climate, endemic species, nature reservations, cultural species and its impact to the landscape.
Zoological	Common wildlife, insect, mammals, protected species, hunting, fishing, domesticated and bred species, birds and birds reservation.
Morphological/geological	Terrain profiles, geological origin, geological processes, mines, quality of soil, hydrological conditions.
Historical events	Important local, regional events or events with global impact, impact on the landscape. Battles and battlefields, monuments and memorials
Local culture	Language particularity, local crafts and arts, local custom, folk costumes, local music and literature, tales and legends, local architecture.
Tradition and feast	Specific way of feasting of different life events (marriages, burials, birth etc.) Feast connected to the year cycle (religious feasts, feasts with pre-Christian tradition), civic feasts.
Religion	Religions and confessions, churches, temples, chapels, cemeteries, propitiatory crosses/stones.
Industrial heritage	Factories, mills, old mines
Historical buildings	Castles, strongholds, observation towers, old routes.

Game leader can modify the focuses according to the examined landscape, can assign two focuses to one group (e.g. tradition + religion, zoology + botany) etc.

For the success of the activity it is important to choose an accurate size of examined territory and give participants enough time for exploration. Optimal time limit is full day (including processing of presentations). Activity can be carried in rarely inhabited landscape, or in urbanized one, but we have to modify focuses accordingly to conditions.

Groups will receive the map (optimally very detailed one) and their task is to create their own map, which will reflect their specific group focus and presentation connected with the map.

Participants are limited by time associated the exploring activity. They have to plan their route, which should be suitably chosen to see as many elements fitting their focus. Participants draw up records (photos, drawings, records of interviews).

When they come back to place where they start, they have to prepare the presentation consisted by the handmade map and computer presentation. Game leader give them time 1 – 1,5 hour to do this.



Debriefing and evaluation

After granted time, participants present their presentations. After each presentation game leader creates a space for questions and do own comments. At the end game leader evaluates the quality of different presentation (originality, factual accuracy etc..)

Resources:

<http://vitejtenazemi.cenia.cz/krajina/>

<http://www.forumfyi.org/taxonomy/term/228>



The EU Water Framework Directive

Motivation

Several different numbers are written on poster. Game leader is asking participants which element is connected to these numbers. (Water, wind, fire, soil,..). All numbers describe some characteristics of water. Start discussion on questions: Describe for what purposes is water being used? (not only for drinking, cooking, washing etc., but also car transport, industry and lot of technical infrastructure use water). Is there enough water in my surroundings? What is the origin of water in the pipe in my bathroom?

The Water Framework Directive is the most important piece of water legislation. It is a mechanism to drive and achieve sustainable water resources in Europe, to manage and control impacts on sources and to collaborate in the long term. The Water Framework Directive requires all inland and coastal water to reach 'good chemical and ecological status' for surface waters and 'good status' for groundwater in terms of quality and quantity by 2015.

Example of numbers:

71% from surface of Earth are oceans; 2 600 000 000 of people lack daily access to clear, drinking water; only 3% of water is freshwater; the human body contains from 55% to 78% water; family on the US East Coast paid up to US\$70 per month for water etc.

Aims

Participants will recognize the importance of water and its management.
Participants will be able to identify other people's attitudes and be able to prepare a simple problem analysis.
Participant will be able to work make a survey.

Materials:

papers, pens, flip - chart paper, markers, if is possible computer for evaluation survey, camera

Time estimation:

half day to all day long

Group size:

Minimum 6 people divided to two groups, maximum to 30 participants (one group optimally 3-4 participants)

Description of activity

The core of this activity is to make a simple survey with people about water management problematic. The activity can be done during trip or walk in area connected with some river, basin or lake. It is essential to think about good organisation of the trip and suitable amount of potential respondents (based on our own experience of canoeing trip along recreational area)



Preparation

Participants in small groups will be given information about area where they will make the survey. Participants prepare list of themes for survey and formulate questionnaire. While making the questions, they should use information received at the beginning of activity. The aim of the research should identify and describe the biggest problems of water use in the area. Questionnaire should contain open type of questions for problem analysis and closed type of questions for statistical evaluation.

Example of questions:

What is the biggest problem with water usage in your area/town? Do you know what to do, where to get information etc. in case of flood? Do you think that water in this river is of good quality? What causes pollution of this river/lake? What is the economical usage of this river/lake?

Survey

During trip or walk along the river, lake or town, participants make short interviews with inhabitants or visitors while using the prepared questionnaire. Questioners are in small groups and can also document different facts connected with issues of the survey. Each group has to make interviews with at least five respondents.

Debriefing and evaluation

At the end of this activity all groups evaluate together the collected information and opinions. They prepare a short presentation of their research. Leader of game takes care also about formal requirements, such as methodology of survey, number of respondents, form of presentations etc.

Resources:

<http://www.edu.plymouth.ac.uk/resined/QUESTS/index.htm>

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/info/intro_en.htm



About the Program Youth in Action

The Youth in Action (YiA) is a program of the European Commission to promote non-formal education. It is characterized by the fact that it is voluntary and that allows for active participation of people in training. This is an organized process with educational objectives, which are scheduled to have led to the development of skills for life.

The program aims to encourage young people to be active citizens who are interested in not only their immediate surroundings, but also themes that have long transcend national borders.

General target group are young people (13 - 30 years) and youth workers, regardless of age.

Projects should reflect at least one of four permanent priorities (European citizenship, culturally diverse, inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, active participation of young people) can be given several calls per year.

YiA program is divided into 5 actions:

Action 1 - Youth for Europe

1.1 Youth Exchanges

1.2 Initiative Youth

1.3 Youth Democracy Projects

Action 2 - European Voluntary Service

Action 3 - Youth in the World

Action 4 - Youth Support Systems

Action 5 - Support for European cooperation in the youth field

Project for European Parliament for Youth was realized in Action 1.3 - Youth Democracy Projects. Their goal is to increase the active participation of young people in public life at local, regional, national or international level.

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