



Cap sur l'école inclusive  
en Europe



## Best Practice

### The Philosophical Debate

#### Section of the module / Reasure

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#### 1/ Context

All pupils at the school participate in these debates.

#### 2/ Goals

Maintaining sustained attention during a debate listening to other people

Showing one's agreement or disagreement with other people

Positioning oneself in communication with the other and producing clear statements (diction, construction of sentences, lexicon)

#### 3/ « Best practice » conduct

- Team composition

In our school, we process as follows:

We have 7 classes ranging from CP (first grade) to CM2 (fifth grade) + a ULIS class (Unité Localisée pour l'Inclusion Scolaire, dedicated to pupils with SEN) and a CLINT class (pupils from an IME or Medical-Educational Institute).

So there are 9 teachers; we re-form the 9 class groups by sharing out the pupils of these classes between all of them.

For example, a group may consist of 3 CP (1<sup>st</sup> grade), 3 CE1 (2<sup>nd</sup> grade), 4 CE2 (3<sup>rd</sup> grade), 2 CM1 (4<sup>th</sup> grade), 3 CM2 (5<sup>th</sup> grade), 2 ULIS and 1CLINT (annexed class of a medical-educational institute)

- Definition of the adults' role during the philosophy workshop and more specifically the teachers' role

The teacher's role is limited to making the pupils work and not working in their place. The debate must not settle between them and him: a situation in which the teacher always has the last word since he/she is defending an authoritative thesis. It is really about bringing pupils to debate among themselves. The teacher is the referee or animator: a new, crucial and delicate role. His/Her responsibility is as much on form (defining rules and ensuring their application) as on substance (underlining and structuring the content).

- Examples of covered topics

Themes we discuss regularly (ie once a year):

- difference (handicap, color of skin, ...)
- respect

These seem unavoidable to us for the following reasons:

They allow the verbalization of questions that pupils ask themselves about the astonishing behaviour of others in the playground... for example, a pupil may be surprised by the fact that one of his/her peer could be striking him/her while speaking to him/her and that he/she cannot obtain any other response than this one despite repeated requests; exchanges among them allow them to realize that others are confronted with this kind of problem, then they exchange the solutions they could find; all of this ultimately ends up playing down potentially tense situations on a daily basis.

By contrast, the words from ULIS and CLINT pupils are heard in these debates in the same way as those of others and share the same value.

- Necessary equipment

A classroom with a "talking stick". This latter guarantees a good distribution of speech and listening to the group.

No specific material but provide the starting support for the discussion which can be an album, a poster, a film ...

- Course of the sessions

We try to organize a debate once in a month or a period, but there is no precise rule; if news require to make one (cf attacks or particular violence noted in the school), we do not hesitate to set it up.

As in other situations, AVS assistants follow the pupil they care for. However, they can intervene to help one pupil of the group to speak.

The teacher in charge of the CLINT class keeps with her the pupils whom she considers as more fragile.

In contrast, all of the ULIS pupils are generally included during that time; we are vigilant in the composition of the groups, the school director asks for the opinion of the teacher in charge of the ULIS class during their formation. When possible, we can also appeal to the “civic service” employees that are permanently in the school in order to help that the debate run smoothly, that is, to ensure every pupil is sitting with the others, listening to them and eventually speaking.

#### 4/ Evaluation of best practice

The school atmosphere in the playground and in the classroom is more relaxed and serene. Pupils talk more to each other and to adults.

Teachers find the idea of the mixed group interesting; it allows them to discover or follow up pupils from the school

The climate of the school is a good indicator of the effect produced by these debates. All the pupils know the adults and vice versa which allows an easy exchange in the playground for example.

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#### 5/ Limitations

It is difficult to involve some pupils from the ULIS or CLINT classes whose problematic does not allow them (or with difficulty) to access this type of activity (example: autistic pupil, language disorders ...).

#### 6/ Prospects

It might be interesting to offer extracurricular staff to participate in these debates.