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Best practices collection

Focusing on the development of underperforming talents

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INTRODUCTION

Underachieving, disadvantaged children/young people are simply called 'weird' children/young people by the major society. In many cases, the peer group is unable to deal with this odd situation, so they push them to the fringes of society instead of providing solutions. Underachieving gifted young people are often face a sense of failure, which is coupled with a loss of self-worth and intrinsic motivation. The objective of this collection of best practices is to publish these practices focusing on overcoming disadvantages of underachieving gifted children/young people with the aim of offering a set of practices for teachers, parents and professionals working with young people in similar situations that can provide real and practical help in compensating disadvantages. Best practices could reflect on personal development, motivation, self-esteem, self-awareness, learning competences and communication competences. The aim is to produce a set of methodologies that will help and support underachieving children/young people with fewer opportunities in a complex way. The aim is to introduce a collection of best practices that will provide parents, teachers and the NGOs concerned with a professional support a long-term solution to overcome disadvantages.

The collection of best practices is based on the talent areas identified by Howard Gardner.

- Logic - Mathematics (e.g.: maths club, IQ club, chess and other logic activities, development of learning strategies, and enrichment programmes related to the Public Knowledge subjects not elsewhere classified);
- natural (e.g., all kinds of science-related activities, nature walks);
- Linguistic (e.g., mother tongue and foreign language programmes);
- Physical-kinesthetic (e.g., sports programmes, dance, movement culture);
- Spatial-visual (e.g.: visual arts, filmmaking, craft activities, folk crafts);
- Music (e.g., all kinds of singing and music programmes);
- Interpersonal (e.g., drama, acting, communication, leadership development);
- Intrapersonal (e.g., self-awareness sessions).

On this basis, the following best practices are presented

1. Developing the confidence and coping strategies of disadvantaged, underachieving gifted young people through bibliotherapy sessions
2. Skills development without borders
3. 'Playful steppingstones' - 'kaleidoscope of futures'
4. Self-awareness, self-confidence workshop

5. Teamwork and development for underachieving students using drama pedagogical methods
6. Music and emotion
7. Health Promotion Talent Management Programme
8. Logical-mathematical development of underachieving, disadvantaged talents
9. The legacy of our ancestors - our traditions - Arts in everyday life

BEST PRACTICES 1: DEVELOPING THE CONFIDENCE AND COPING STRATEGIES OF DISADVANTAGED, UNDERACHIEVING GIFTED YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH BIBLIOTHERAPY SESSIONS

Best practice objectives

Developing the self-confidence, self-esteem, effective communication and cooperation skills and coping strategies of disadvantaged, and underachieving gifted young people aged 13-20 by using bibliotherapy.

Professional justification

Young people involved in the session were subjected to a preliminary survey according to the *Renzulli-Hartman scale*. The survey confirmed our professional hypothesis that disadvantaged gifted children and young people have less intrinsic motivation than non-disadvantaged gifted children, and that they also have problems with self-esteem, self-confidence, social integration and coping strategies.

RENZULLI - HARTMAN SCALE	
Learning characteristics	• They spend only as much time learning as is absolutely necessary. They are less independent in their learning and need external help. • They avoid heavy reading, read little. • Half of the group has a well-developed vocabulary and a richness of expression.
Motivational features	• They are less motivated to learn independently and require guidance from teachers and family. • They can fully immerse themselves in the tasks and topics that really interest them. • They need little external motivation for tasks they are open to from the start. • They soon get bored of monotonous, routine tasks. • Half of the group is said to be striving for perfection.
Creativity Characteristics	• They have a good sense of humour compared to their peers. • They like risk, they are adventurous. • Half of the group have a well-developed sense of beauty and pay particular attention to the aesthetic qualities of things. • They show a high degree of emotional sensitivity. • Half of the group have no inhibitions about expressing their opinions.

Management-peer characteristics	• Half of the group think that their classmates don't like them. • They do not like to take the lead, preferring to follow the orders of their peers and friends. • They have little self-confidence with their peers and adults. • They are cooperative. • They are less able to adapt to new situations.

It should be emphasized that the survey showed that children read little, so we included the development of their interest for literary texts and their interpretation for self-awareness among the objectives. To strive for perfection, reduce performance anxiety and strengthen intrinsic motivation we supported them to use the bibliotherapy sessions not to meet external demands but in a self-reflective way to explore their own inner world and to connect with each other.
Underachieving young people often find themselves in competitive situations, from which they often emerge with a sense of failure despite their talent. Even when they stand out, they admit to lacking self-confidence and find it difficult to maintain peer relationships. Therefore, the aim of our teamwork is to help young people to get to know each other and themselves by focusing on their strengths, to create a relaxed atmosphere of cooperation and support rather than competition, and to identify their differences as valuable assets rather than disadvantages. To do this, we used playful communication exercises and text therapy tools.

Talent areas concerned

The best practice presented here focuses on the following talent areas:

- interpersonal, as it aims to improve relationships with peers, parents, teachers and other people in contact with young people in order to increase their self-empowerment, social inclusion and peer support,
- intrapersonal, because an important part of best practice is to reinforce self-awareness so that underachieving young people have a more realistic self-image by the end of the sessions.

Number of best practice trials

The elements of best practice presented in the collection have been used in the past 6 years on more than 50 occasions in the talent support group sessions held within the framework of the Hungarian Association of Talent Support Organisations (MATEHETSZ) Talent Hungary Programme, the *LÉTRA - Cross Your Borders! Community Association*
, as well as in the framework of developmental bibliotherapy sessions for different target groups of young people from other disadvantaged backgrounds.

Target group

The series of exercises presented in this best practice is aimed at underachieving young talented teenagers from all backgrounds. Small groups of 6-12 children is ideal as group dynamics are less effective with smaller groups, and with larger groups the difficulty may arise that we cannot focus on the children individually, as there is not enough time for individual expression. It is important to take age into account when breaking up groups, with different tasks for 10–14-year-olds than for 15–18-year-olds.

Location

The ideal place for teamwork is a classroom or meeting room that can be used to create a circular, intimate arrangement by spreading the furniture out. It is better if the session takes place outside the school, as the school can remind them of their daily experiences of failure and the tensions this can create. At the same time, if they have good experiences in a classroom, this can also reflect on their performance in school, fixing in them a more positive self-image of themselves and their learning environment. Within the room it is useful to have desks where they can write. These should certainly not be in a classroom layout, but rather pushed to the back of the room or placed on one side of the room in the form of a large communal table where young people can sit in a circle.

Presentation of best practice

Bibliotherapy as a talent development method

As a method bibliotherapy (also known as literary therapy) uses poems, stories, lyrics or film clips to provide a surface (the text itself) that is slightly removes from everyday reality to help identify and communicate emotions, see problems from another perspective and to suggest alternative solutions and constructive discussions. During bibliotherapy sessions young people do not feel that we are ‘prying’ into their private lives, nor do they have to engage in the often-uncomfortable physical activities that adolescents often have to do. They can tell us exactly as much about themselves as they want and in the way they want while their self-awareness and creative and problem-solving thinking are constantly developing. As a group therapy method bibliotherapy develops young people's empathy, communication, debate, and tolerance of each other.

Composition of the group

In the developmental bibliotherapy group boys and girls are generally mixed with a wide range of age and ability. Some do not stand out in one talent area but show a spark of talent in several areas making it difficult for them to decide what they really want to do in the long term.

Although the motivation for young people to participate in a talent programme is not fundamentally the same our experience suggests that the group sessions quickly develop similar goals: clarifying career orientation, building relationships with peers with similar interests, helping them to navigate their peer and other human relationships, practising public speaking, developing self-awareness and self-confidence. In the case of underachieving gifted young people this may be complemented by coping with failure and difficulties, setting appropriate goals, and practising the skills needed to achieve.

There is usually a big difference between the verbal abilities of young people, and there are also more introverted and extroverted types among them.

However, differences (gender, age, type of school, interests, communication skills) are not necessarily a disadvantage they provide an opportunity to develop empathy, tolerance and a broader world view.

Setting the rules of the game, common framework

It was very important for us together with the children to lay down the rules for our interactions. This as opposed to the unilateral communication of rules in schools fosters a sense of responsibility and involvement in young people and gives them the opportunity to move consciously in a democratic atmosphere as well as helping to develop their cooperation skills within the group therapy framework. The rules in our case are as follows:

- you can go to the toilet without asking for permission
- mobile phones should be switched off but if the call is important you are allowed to go outside
- you may react to each other any time
- do not argue with each other, ask inquiring, probing questions instead and add your own experiences and perspectives to the conversation
- you are allowed to inform others about the sessions, but you are not permitted to post it in a public place or on the the internet.

Introduction, getting to know each other

From the outset we emphasised their personality traits rather than their talent areas. The introduction and recording of names were done as follows:

- Use the first letter of your name to describe yourself and introduce yourself to us. For example “Lelkes Lilla’ (Lilla the Enthusiastic).

- Name snake: each person says the name of the person to their right then their own. Then all the others. Then the seed bag is thrown and whoever gets it has to say the name of the person who throws it and then the name of the person to whom he or she throws it.

Mood introduction with poem therapy

We thought it was important to introduce the habit that young people should dare to talk about their moods and feelings in the group sessions. The easiest way to illustrate this through bibliotherapy was to hand out a poem and say: “I will read a poem. It's not important what the author thought, it's important what thoughts and feelings you have about it. Share it if you recognised yourself in any of the lines or even write a line or two about yourself based on it.’

We constantly stressed to them that this was not a literature class, that the aim was not to find out what the poem was about or what the poet was thinking, but to express their own feelings and thoughts inspired by the poem. Of course, they can also relate to each other but only in a constructive way, i.e., either by asking clarifying and inquiring questions to each other or by sharing their related thoughts, similar feelings or stories with the group. This is the best way to develop their communicative and empathic thinking, their debating skills, and their self-awareness through the insights they gain.

Storytelling with Dixit cards

We asked young people to draw a Dixit card that they felt was typical of them. Then sit in pairs and tell a typical story about themselves that comes to mind from the card. When they have finished, we ask the pairs to present each other's stories.

The aim of the exercise was still to arouse and maintain interest in each other and themselves without any performance situation. Sharing a story in pairs provided a safer and more protective environment than performing in front of the group. Listening to each other and recalling what they had heard required empathy and patience with each other while the intimacy of the situation also deepened trust.

Living Library

For this exercise, we have already introduced the idea of sharing talent areas with others but we approached it from the perspective of making everyone feel unique and interesting.

Before the meeting we asked them to give themselves a book title based on their interests and areas of talent.

- Tell us what title you have chosen for yourselves.
- Let's put the addresses in alphabetical order (line up).

- We put a chair in the middle, the first one sits there. He/she starts talking about himself/herself as he/she were a book, we ask questions, and he/she answers. We open him/her up, 'read' him/her deeper and deeper and get to know him/her in ways that were previously hidden from us.
- Write a recommendation for each other's books because you should read them. Each person writes their 'book title' at the top of a page and passes it around.

By the end of the exercise everyone had a list of why they are valuable and unique in the eyes of others, which was a real confidence booster for the children. The exercise develops empathy skills as well as consideration and tolerance for each other. It is also very useful in settings where some young people are prejudiced.

Supporting career choices through creative writing

Invent a profession/craft for yourself that others have never even heard of!

As many people struggle with the problem of not yet having a clear idea of what they want to do in the future we have called on their imagination and creative writing techniques.

- Find a fantasy craft for yourself, the more detached from reality the better.
- Add a classified ad looking for someone in this profession! What are you looking for? What skills do you need?
- Read the classified ad then show off what you've come up with. Let the others try to guess what it is.

As well as a lot of laughter we tried to deconstruct what strengths and skills they would most like to use in their future careers. Then we asked them to put this paper away because it might be important to look back over a lifetime to see what their innermost wishes and desires were.

Musical Literature Therapy - Dream Journey

We talked about the talent based on *Gigi Radics and Viktor Varga's* (young Hungarian singers) *"Álomutazó' (Dreamtraveller).* We listened to the music and then handed out the lyrics which were pre-printed.

Based on our rules we had an informal discussion with young people about the importance of following your dreams, what it takes to be talented, what the word itself means, whether it is a good thing or has its downsides, and how to live it. As underachievers it is particularly important to focus the conversation on setting realistic goals and the challenges of achieving them as well as perseverance. To conclude the exercise young people should also be given a role model whose life story they can study to help them gain confidence and belief in their own success.

Film Literature Therapy – "Fight Club'

This film and selected scenes from it should be watched with older students aged 16-20. Our aim was to guide them through a process of self-discovery based on the film by watching the scenes we had selected and then deepening their self-discovery by solving and discussing different exercises.

1. Theme, 'What you have is what you get.'

   Write it down on a piece of paper:

   - What are the 3 things you would most regret if they were to go wrong?
   - What are the 3 things you would sacrifice for a new life?
   - What are the 5 things that would make a difference to your life?
2. Theme 'I would never want to belong to a club that would accept me as a member'
   - Have you ever made a big effort to get into a team?
   - Do you prefer to be a big fish in a small pond or a small fish in a big pond?
   - Where would you most like to get involved now?
   - What would you do for it?
   - What is the limit to what you would no longer do for it?
3. Who is your 'shadow personality'?
   - What are the 3 things you don't have inside you and wish you would have?
   - What are the 3 things you have inside you that you want to get rid of?
   - Finish the sentence: "If none of my friends could see me…'

Of course, after each exercise we shared the answers (whoever wanted to) and had long discussions about how we see each other's dilemmas, life experiences, how we can connect with each other in a constructive way.

Supporting self-awareness and self-confidence with poem therapy

As underachievers often have a negative self-image. It is important to talk about this and to articulate and raise awareness of their own good qualities and those that need to be developed. Talking about the poem below can be an important way of helping young people to accept themselves and to take a more realistic view of themselves.

Wislawa Szymborska: In the smouldering

I am who I am.
An incomprehensible case
as in all cases.

They could have been
other ancestors of mine,
already from another nest
I would have been thrown out,
from under another tree trunk
I would crawl out scaly.

In nature's wardrobe
have attire enough.
Spiders, seagulls, gulls.
All of them as if they were poured on us
and wear it obediently
until it is torn apart.

Nor have I chosen
but I'm not complaining.
I could have been something
much less personal.
One of the swarms, the flock, the buzzing knot,
a windswept fragment of a vision.

Something much less fortunate,
bred for their fur,
for the festive table,
floating on a slide.
A tree tied to the ground,
which is approaching a conflagration.
Through inexplicable events
a trampled blade of grass.
A guy under a dark star,
that shines for others.
And if they put fear in people,
or just disgust,
or just pity?

If not the right
I was born into a tribe
and the roads would close in front of me?
Fate until now
was merciful to me.
What if I didn't remember
to what was good.
What if I didn't lean
to make comparisons.
If it were me - but without wonder,
or
someone else entirely.

Helpful questions:

- What else could you have been? What is better and what is worse?
- What is good about the way we are?
- How do others see us?
- How do we see ourselves?
- Is it worth comparing ourselves?
- How would it be good to relate to ourselves?
- How would it be good if others were to relate to us?
- What are you special at?

Taking stock of our qualities through a short story

Use a text for the exercise - for example, *Ervin Lázár's* short story “The Miracle Pharmacy’ - and the discussion it generates can help you to recognise the relativity of good and bad qualities and the multiple perspectives of people.

Suggested questions for working through the text:

- What do you remember about the text?
- How do you think others see/imagine you? What do they think you are good at/ you can't do?
- How do your parents/siblings and classmates and teachers see you?
- Do you see yourself the same way when you talk to other people?
- Do you dare to admit your good and bad qualities?
- Do we have qualities that can be both good and bad? What are they?

Working method

Developmental bibliotherapy sessions are based on sitting in a circle and discussing in groups. Creative writing tasks are done at a common table. It is of particular importance to have longer breaks between task blocks and to intersperse reflective exercises with movement elements.

Requested tools

For the bibliotherapy session the following tools are needed: whiteboard or flipchart, A/4 papers, labels, markers, pens, glue, post-it notes, printer for printing poems and short stories.

Human resources needed

The series of sessions requires one or two session leaders.

Timeframe for implementing the best practice

The presented best practice consists of 6 sessions. One session is 45 minutes.

The best practice was produced by

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stress management and effective communication facilitator, “happiness hour’ group leader, communication, and training mental health support specialist - *LÉTRA - Cross Your Borders! Community Association*

BEST PRACTICE 2: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT BORDERS

Best practice aim

The aim is to relieve the tension in disadvantaged and underachieving children/young people to improve resilience, increase stamina, motivation, and mental balance, develop mental balance, coordination, and concentration and last but not least, to body awareness, self-awareness and the ability of attention to their peers.

Professional justification

Young people involved in the session were subjected to a preliminary survey according to the *Renzulli-Hartman* scale. The survey confirmed our professional hypothesis that disadvantaged gifted children and young people have less intrinsic motivation than non-disadvantaged gifted children and that they also have problems with self-esteem, self-confidence, social integration, and coping strategies.

Target group

The best practice can be used for children aged 6 to 20.

Talent areas concerned

Best practice focusing on small and large movement tasks can develop all areas of talent.

Number of best practice trials

The sessions presented in the best practice have been tested at least 10 times.

Working method

The “Skills without limits’ best practice can be implemented in small and large groups using cooperative work.

Location

Typically, these sessions are held outdoors or in a room.

Demonstration of best practice

We start with basic exercises in the introductory phase of the session in order to enable each participant to acquire the skills needed to deliver the session effectively and successfully.

Breathing exercises

Learning different types of breathing: preparatory breathing, abdominal breathing, rib breathing, upper breathing, full good breath, other breathing exercises: hissing, bellows, cleansing etc.)

Introduction of **basic yoga exercises** to improve the sense of balance, coordination of movements, calm the nervous system and eliminate feelings of fatigue.

Roller-skating basic exercises as required to develop coordination, balance sense.

Implementing best practice

Skills development - **with sticks**

<u>Walk in a circle behind each other</u>

- With feet turned outwards, stick behind back elbow to elbow - heel, stick in back cross-leg stance, chest out - alternate knee lift, stick in front centre stance. Legs braced, feet back. Back straight.
- Stick hold in front mid stance on beat elbow back, arm reach forward 'cart' - on toe, stick hold in high stance with stretch - heel, stick hold behind body in low stance, step arm raises with 'wing lift'.

Running:

- In a spread formation, stick hold in front of body at shoulder width, wrist movement up - down 'motoring'. Mark: - closed stance, high stance, stretching 'garage stance' - vertical support of stick on the ground, running around it in a circle - in a circle - backwards.
- In a spread formation, stick grip in back squat position on cue: looking for a pair, standing facing each other, stick grip in low stance on both sides of the body a) in place, squatting on even feet at the same time b) in place, squatting on one foot with change of stance c) in place, squatting from squatting to standing, alternating 'limbo'.

Gymnastics: positioning in a scattered formation

- Spreader stance, stick in middle front grip. With arm flexion, pushing both to chest with shoulder lock 2. With arm extension, sticking to core with stretching 3. With arm flexion, pushing both to chest 4. Back to start position 'weightlifting' /arm, shoulder/
- Cross-leg stance, stick grip shoulder-width apart, palms facing up, elbows pressed against torso.
- Arm bend, with knee bend 3x big ones to tighten the movement. 4. Back to starting position 'weightlifting' /arm curls/.
- Starting position: cross-legged position, stick grip in core hold 1. Bending at the back of the head, knee bend, push off 2. Bending at the back of the head, knee bend, touching the ground with the stick 3. Bending at the back of the head, knee bend, push off 4. Back to starting position / shoulder, arm, back, thigh/.
- Starting position: spreading, stick grip in core hold 1. Tribal bend with left turn, vertical stick support on the ground between the two legs 2. Back to starting position 3. Tribal bend with right turn, vertical stick support on the ground between the two legs 4. Back to starting position 'looking at each other with tapping' / stretching trunk, shoulders, hamstrings.
- Starting position: bended seat, support behind the body, stick on the ground in front of the feet 1. With toes raised, touch the ground in front of the stick 2. With heels, touch the ground behind the stick 'over the fence and back'.

- Starting position for adults: lying on your back, standing, stick placed under the back of the head, stick grip shoulder width 1-2. Head, torso raised with back straight, gradually 3-4. Return to starting position / abdomen. Starting position for small children: lying on back, footrest, stick grip in low position in front of body 1. Head, torso lifted, stick touching thigh 2. Stick touching knee 3. Head, torso lowered, stick touching thigh.
- To a starting position: prone, stick grip under shoulders 1. Head, torso lift 2. Arm extension to core 3. Arm pull to shoulder 4. Back to start position 'rowing' / back, arm, shoulder girdle/.
- Starting position: squat, stick in low position 1-2 Squat 2x 3-4 Exit to left in straddle position squat 2x, stick swing into high position, arm pull 2x.

Gymnastics: positioning in a scattered formation.

1. Starting position: spreader stance, stick grip shoulder width apart in deep stance, 1st arm extension into high stance. For big ones in stretch 3x arm pull back 2. Back to starting position / arm, back/.
2. Starting stance: cross stance, stick grip shoulder-width apart, 1-4. Pair lunge 4x left in front of body 5-8. Pair lunge in front of body 4x right 'Ferris wheel' /arm, shoulder.
3. Starting stance: spreader stance, stick grip at the back of the neck, 1-3. Reverse torso to left 3x 4. Return to starting position 5-7. Return to starting position 'looking around' / shoulder, back, torso/.
4. Starting position: cross-legged, stick grip shoulder width apart, deep stance, 1. Knee bend with straight torso, pulling both to chest with elbow lift.
5. To a starting position: Stretched seat, stick crossed over thighs, palm rest on stick. 1. forward bending of trunk with stick rolling, arm extension 2. back to starting position 'rolling of dough' / back, stretching of thigh flexor/.
6. To a starting position: Lying on back, legs extended in vertical position, stick grip at hips, palms on thighs. 1. Roll stick upwards, towards knees, lifting head, torso 2. Return to starting position 'rolling dough on upturned table' / abdomen/.
7. To a starting position: Lying on prone, stick grip in core hold 1. Lift arm, head, torso, pull stick to back of head 2. Turn torso to left 3. Turn torso to right.
8. Starting position: kneeling support, arching back 'cat's back' / stretching back/.

Skills development **– with ball**

Walking: walking in a circle behind each other on tiptoe, ball on high, alternating stretching, rolling between palms - heel lift, ball holding in back squat stance - backwards, ball holding in

front mid stance, ball turning - with space, ball holding in front of chest, dropping ball on raised knee with each step.

Heel, holding ball on left side, tucked between arm and torso, swinging right arm back and forth. Heel to toe roll over, ball held high, ball rolled between palms.

For the little ones with ball throwing, catching, for the big ones with ball driving with left / right hand.

Imitations: in dispersed formation

- palms - feet 'bear walk', ball between the knees
- in a "spider's web', ball in lap
- even-legged 'kangaroo throw', ball between the ankles

Gymnastics: positioning in a scattered formation

1. Starting position: cross-leg, ball in front of body in low position
2. Starting position: spreader stance, arms in side-medium position, palms facing up, ball in left palm 1. Extend arm slowly into front-medium position with exhalation 2. Turn ball over into right palm 3. Extend arm slowly into side-medium position 4. Opposite side also 'dexterous waiter' / arm, shoulder, upper back/.
3. Starting position: basic position, ball held high 1. Stretch upwards 2. With arm flexion, release ball onto head 3-7 Ball roll across face, chest, abdomen, hip, thigh, knee, shin, ankle, ankle, torso slowly bending from vertebra to vertebra 8. Ball roll on the floor with back straightened 8-1 Counting backwards, perform ball roll 'ball goes to wander'/arm, shoulder, back, balance, fine motor skills.
4. Starting position: spreader stance, trunk bend forward, palms loosely on ball on the ground 1. Trunk bend to left foot by rolling ball with two hands (as far as possible) with left foot rounding from front 2. Return to centre position 3. Trunk bend to right foot by rolling ball with two hands (as far as possible) with right foot rounding from front 4. Return to centre position. Also, with change of direction. 'Tame the ball' / torso, hamstrings stretch.
5. Starting position: kneeling support with forearm support, abdomen, torso tight, ball in left knee bend for big ones, ball in hand for small ones 1. Left leg raised bent, slightly above horizontal, sole facing up
6. To a starting position: sit bent, support behind body, ball at ankle, holding ball by cocking foot 1. Lift legs to horizontal position, roll ball between knee and ankle 2. Return to starting position 'balancing with ball' / abdomen/.

7. To a starting position: prone position with legs apart, palms resting on ball, 1-2-3. Stretch to left with ball roll 4. End position stretch to left 5-6-7. Ball roll back to starting position 8. Starting position: also 'ball walk' to opposite side / torso, back, shoulders.
8. To a starting position: stretched seat, ball in lap in low position 1. Curved back trunk bend forward with ball roll 2. Insert ball between ankles 3-4-5. Stand behind body, squeeze ball with ankles 6. Curved back trunk bend forward 7. Lift ball between ankles.

Gymnastics: positioning in a scattered formation.

1. Start position: cross stance, ball in core 1. Pull ball to chest 2. Push ball to centre front 3. Pull ball to chest 4 Back to start position / arm/.
2. Starting position: cross stance, ball in low position 1. Pivot part way into core position with torso turning left 2. Back to starting position 3. Pivot part way into core position with torso turning right 4. Back to starting position 'we would throw the ball' / torso, arm.
3. To a starting position: Stretched seat, support behind body, ball in lap 1. Hip raise to back squat, lower ball to ankle, feet back apart 2. Hip return to stretched seat 3. Stretched leg raise, roll ball back into lap 4. Stretched leg return to starting position 'ball court' /trunk stretches, abdomen, thighs/.
4. To a starting position: seat bent, support behind body, ball in lap 1-3. Knees up, legs in horizontal position, ball pressed to belly, shoulders forward 3x (big ones with arms lifted) 4. Back to starting position 'making a lufty ball' / belly, balance/.
5. Starting position: sitting in a corner, holding the ball in front of the body 1. Turn of the trunk to the left, throwing the ball next to the body - catching it 2. Back to starting position 3. Turn of the trunk to the right, throwing the ball next to the body - catching it 4. Back to starting position /trunk, coordination of movements/.
6. To a starting position: lying on back, legs in vertical position, ball held between inner soles of feet, arms low to the ground 1. Knee bend, ball close to abdomen (big ones can kick 3x) 2. Back to start position / abdomen, thighs approaching/. To a starting position: lying on the ground, ball held high 1. Head, torso with ball lift, drop, catch 2. Small all - large multiple - drop, catch back to starting position after drop /back, movement coordination/.
7. To a starting position: prone, left arm resting on the ball in a high position, right arm in a low position next to the body 1. Head, torso lifted, change arm hold without moving the ball 2. "He wants to escape!' /back/.

Skills development **– with ribbon**

Walk: round behind each other

- holding the tape in the middle with the left hand in a low position, arm swinging into a high position next to the body
- grip the strap shoulder-width outstretched in a high hold with alternate stretching
- 4 step toe band hold shoulder width apart in high hold, 4 step heel band hold shoulder width apart in low hold.

Walking: in a circle behind each other with high knees, holding the tape hooked in the neck in a side middle hold, arm grip - tape grip on the ends of the tape, with a pair of arms, crossing the tape - tape grip shoulder width apart in a high hold, rolling from heel to toe.
Running: in scattered formation with tape wrapping, repetition signal: squatting, back arching, knees rolling over, tape tucking between thighs and abdomen.

Gymnastics: positioning in a scattered formation

1. Starting position: cross-legged, left arm in high position with band grip, right arm in low position behind body 1-4. Lunge forward alongside body 4x 5-8. Reach backwards alongside body 4x ‘giant circles’ / arm, shoulder/.
2. To a starting position: bending in a spreader stance, stretching the trunk, grip the strap hooked to the neck in a side hold 1. Turn trunk to the left, touch right hand to the ground 2. Return to starting position 3. Turn trunk to the right, touch left hand to the ground 4. Return to starting position ‘motolla’ /trunk, thigh/.
3. Starting position: cross-legged, trunk bend forward, arms close to the ground, grip the band at both ends, 1. Trunk lift left trunk bend arms swing to core 2. Back to starting position 3. Trunk lift right trunk bend arms swing to core 4. Back to starting position /trunk/.
4. Starting position: turkish sitting, band hold to shoulder with shoulder blade closure, inhaling 1. Elbow closure in front of face, arching back with exhaling 2. Back to starting position ‘inflatable turkish basa’ / chest, back/.
5. To a starting position: stretched seat, arms in side-centre position, tape grip in left hand. 1. Lift left extended leg (big ones with foot back), underneath transfer tape to right hand 2. Lower leg to extended seat, swing arms into side-centre position, release tape (also with arm and leg posture swap) ‘sewing’ /arms, abdomen/.
6. To a starting position: lying supine with footrest left leg in high position, band stretched out in front of chest held in wide grip, elbow rest on floor 1. Trunk lift with inversion: right arm stretched to left outer ankle on lift exhale 2. On lowering inhale with arm and leg position exchanged ‘little monkey climbing a tree’ /belly, side/.

7. Starting position: push-ups, band on floor at knee level 1. Hip thrust back, left arm stretching under body at knee, band grip 2. Hip lowered to straight posture, left arm swinging into side mid-position 3. Hip thrust back, left arm stretching under body at knee, band drop 4. Return to starting position opposite side also 'back in place'/ torso tensors, shoulder, arm/.
8. To a starting position: lying on prone, left arm in high position, band grip in the middle with left hand, right arm in low position behind the body 1. Trunk lift swing arm horizontally, wide arc 2. Back to starting position with arm hold exchange 'to let the mosquitoes fly away' / back, shoulder, arm/.

Running: in a spread formation, gripping a ribbon at both ends behind the body by lifting a canter. Mark jumps up with tape jump - rotation around own axis, - squatting, knees over knees

Gymnastics: positioning in scattered formation holding a ribbon in the middle for the small ones and at one end for the big ones.

1. Starting position: cross-leg, left arm in low position with band grip, right arm on hip 1. Arm extension through lateral mid-leg into high position, wrist movement to help the band to fly 2. Back to starting position 'butterfly' / shoulder, arm, wrist/.
2. Starting position: standing cross-legged, left arm in a high position with a band grip, right arm on hip 1-4. Lunge left in front of body, starting movement 4x 5-8. Reach left in front of body to start the movement 4x (slowed down at first) / arm, shoulder/.
3. Starting position: standing cross-legged, left arm in a high position with a band grip, right arm on hip. 1-3. Lunge to right in front of body starting movement 3x 4. Strain bend to right, left arm extended to right with 'wave' /arm, torso/ 1-2-3. Perform exercises with arm hold-change.
4. To a starting position: bent seat, grip tape stretched shoulder-width apart, mid-chest. Bigs: leg stretching into a hovering position over the extended band. Little ones: tape touch with even feet 2. Back to start position / abdomen, balance/.
5. To a starting position. Lying supine on footrest, arms low to the floor, tape grip in middle left hand 1. Hip raise 2. Slide tape under body to right hand 3. Right arm out with tape 4. Lower hip 'hiding under bridge' /trunk stretches, buttocks/.
6. To a starting position: prone position, arms raised, band grip in the middle of the left hand. 1. arm position in low posture behind body 2. transfer tape to right hand behind body 3. arm position in high posture 4. transfer tape to left hand in starting position /back, shoulder, arm/.

7. Starting position: closed stance, arms in side 1. Left leg extended with ankle strap, forward, backward 8x 2. Return to starting position, change stance with strap over, balance.

Skills development **- using your own body to imitate animals**

Walk: round behind each other

- with alternate knee position, arms in lateral middle position 'stork'
- the 'stork' stops on one foot every 4 steps
- knee stretched with push-ups, hands clasping behind the body, step by step lifting 'hen's nut'
- with trunk flexion, rounded back, hand support on the knee 'bear'
- jumping: - galloping 'horse jump' - with change of feet - jumping on even feet 'kangaroo'

Run: in a scattered formation while running everyone takes a card from the tables (the cards have a picture of animals on them). After the tasks are completed, the card is returned to the same table and a new one is always chosen from another.

Gymnastics: positioning in a scattered formation

1. Starting position: 'big bird' squat, arms low, hands on the ground beside the body 1. swing arms into high position through side mid stance.
2. Starting position: "Dachshund' kneeling with arms bent, support under the shoulders, palms facing inwards, chest close to the ground. Progress forward/ arm, shoulder girdle strengthening, pectoral muscle stretching, spinal mobilisation.
3. Starting position: "Stretch the kitty' kneeling position, head between arms, arching back 1. Slide left arm forward into high position, lower chest.
4. Starting position: "Worm climbing' stretched seat, support next to body 1. With knees bent, raise hips, push forward behind heel 2. At end position, lower to floor 3. Stretch legs into stretched seat, place support next to body /shoulder, trunk/.
5. Starting position: "limp pulley' stretched seat, arms on hips 1. Advance forward with alternating leg thrusts from hips/trunk.
6. Starting position: "Cobra lying on stomach', hand support under shoulders 1.Slowly stretch arms until hips rise off the floor, inhaling to hold a little in end position 2.Exhale back to starting position / stretch abdominals, strengthen arms/.
7. Starting position: 'Elephant' kneeling support with forearm support, step by step lifting one arm to the high position, together with the opposite leg lifting, stretching to horizontal /arm, shoulder, torso, balance/.

8. Starting position: 'Bear walk' on palms and feet with hips raised /stretch shoulders, torso, hamstrings/.
9. starting position Kneeling support. 1. rounding of back, head tucked between arms 'cat's back' 2. rounding of back, head raised 'dog's back' / torso, spine mobilisation/.
10. Initial position: Turkish sitting with trunk forward, hands on knees 1. Inhale air by lifting trunk, arms extended into a cross-legged core hold 2. Exhale air by bending trunk forward 'inflate Turkish bass, pull the plug' /chest, trunk.
11. Starting position: lying on your back, arms low, feet on the ground. Mark Head, arms raised to front mid-stance, legs raised to upright position, slightly flexed, limbs moved quickly and forcefully 'scrabbling bug' / abdomen, arms.
12. Starting position: prone, arms held high 1. Alternate arm raise with torso. 'Hungry crocodile' /arm, back/.

Requested tools

The following equipment is needed to carry out the "Skills without limits' session: stick, hoop, ribbon, bean bag, chair, roller skates**.**

Human resources needed

The series of sessions requires one or two session leaders.

Timeframe for implementing best practice

The small and large movement activities shown should be repeated at least 5 times. One session lasts 45 minutes with the children/young people involved.

Best practice made by

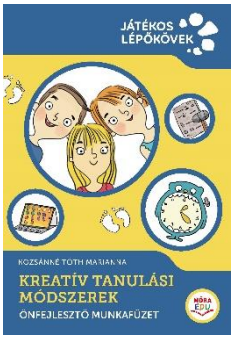
Éva Plaszkó educator - *LÉTRA - Cross Your Borders! Community Association*

BEST PRACTICE 3: "PLAYFUL STEPPINGSTONES' - FUTURE PLANNING KALEIDOSCOPE

Marianna Kozsánné Tóth: 'Playful SteppingStones' I. Creative Learning Methods[1] : processing the motivational and organisational part of the workbook in practice based on the workbooks of the same name from the alternative textbook catalogue (TANOSZ 2022).

Best practice Objective:

The "Playful SteppingStones' learning self-awareness programme aims to be a complex, multi-disciplinary, self-awareness support, targeting toolkit and web-based support platform. Appropriate learning self-awareness is the cornerstone of children's differentiated development. Its development is not only a common task for teachers in terms of learning methods and tools. In everyday school life and in specialised lessons it provides a new, innovative approach and motivation, opening new **opportunities for students who are lagging behind as well as for those who are standing out in a particular area and performing above average.** The essence of the "Kozsán method' and the aim of the sessions is not only to focus on material knowledge and practical skills (lexical knowledge), but also to give children experience, confidence and motivation in the everyday processes of planning, learning and organising their lives. Once the context is understood they arrive at their own insights (competence development), which lay the foundations for lifelong learning. The aim is then to strengthen independent task-solving and life management skills. By working through the workbook, I have compiled and solving the tasks I have chosen, they receive important information - 'steppingstones' - for setting goals, planning a conscious vision of the future and for independently preparing the right agenda, timetable and optimal time planner.



[1] Marianna Kozsánné Tóth: Playful Stepping Stones I: Interactive Learning Methodology Guide to Effective and Joyful Learning for 10-15 year olds Kozsán Talent Workshop, 2018, Dunakeszi, ISBN: 9786150031675

and Kozsánné Tóth Marianna: Playful Stepping Stones I. Creative Learning Methods Móra Könyvkiadó, 2020, Budapest ISBN: 9789634866817

Professional justification

Supporting children's learning in and out of institutions has been a pressing issue since the beginning of the century. Methodological ideas, subject-specific development packages, articles and studies aimed at deciphering learning types have all outlined the difficulties of motivating children to attend school and to engage in learning processes. For almost 20 years teachers have been targeted by methodological training to provide sufficiently interesting and colourful lessons for students to keep them motivated. Yet the process has stalled, until we realised that it is not the teacher's arsenal and toolbox that needs to be expanded, perhaps not even the children in the first instance, but rather a different approach.

As a first step the concept is based on the premise that learning self-awareness is an outstanding area of our time that needs to be developed even as a ‘preparatory’ for primary and secondary education since children today are exposed to a wide range of environmental influences making the world's course of events in all aspects untraceable. This lack of conscious planning is often linked to the beginner's difficulty in managing life, so that eating and sleeping habits become irregular in their daily lives and organisational difficulties become more acute with the inevitable consequence that this has an impact on school life. This disorder is reflected first at the level of the family then at the level of the peer group and finally at school. The depth and motivation of the relationship with learning is already apparent from the start of school at the age of 6 or 7 and into adulthood. In the initial stages children usually “stumble through’ the process with their parents and teachers as they are accompanied by two teachers in the lower school but when the 'subject scissors' open in the upper school and new subjects are added to the educational palette the teaching/learning process takes on a new colour. The result is that attachment does not develop in the same way for this age group, so stability and safety nets are sometimes felt to be unravelling beneath them. Parents also see the difficulties of the toddler and the older adult but from them it is most difficult to take suggestions precisely because of their age specificity. Differentiation is increasingly lacking as it is difficult to focus on the individual development of 30-35 students in specialised classes. We are left with students who are unable to plan and select what is important and what is not. This is partly the reason for the rise in the number of children who are hyperactive or considered to be so. The flood of information they are faced with and the variables that make it difficult for them to absorb the expected amount of information such as the number and type of teachers, teaching methods, the pace of delivery, changes in the classroom, increased staffing levels, etc., also require new adaptations, and changes to the learning processes and time allocated to learning. The most important time for developing self-awareness of learning, including group work on

organisation is therefore before starting school at the age of 6-7, at 10-11 when entering upper secondary school and at 14-15 at the latest when moving on to upper secondary school. With so much new ground to cover children often become rather underachieving or superficial under the pressure of a sense of achievement or duty, and after a while without success, disinterested. At the other extreme there is the pressure to conform to external motivation where a child always wants to achieve excellence in line with parental or teacher expectations. Fear of failure on the other hand, raises the stress factor and after a while the whole development and learning process can be transformed into a form of behaviour that is failure-oriented and success-oriented, which is also driven by external motivation and reduces the possibility of building learning as a joyful process in this form. and can also lead to serious self-esteem problems. Maintaining the motivation to learn and the joy associated with the success of the steps in the learning process can give new impetus to building learning habits for the following years, laying the foundations for Lifelong Learning.

Mature talent areas

The first best practice of the 'Steppingstones' package of programmes is linked to several activities in the ***Gartner Talent Areas*** as it aims to develop learning self-awareness, time planning, building learning habits, possible ways of working through text tasks. First, the **intrapersonal area can be linked to a complex and differentiated employer package aimed at developing learning self-awareness.** In this context it is further linked to the logical-mathematical area with the development of learning strategies and enrichment materials linked to the general knowledge subjects. For the linguistic development with games in the mother tongue and in foreign languages with learning tactics to extend vocabulary and support communication, for the physical-kinesthetic area with movement games between theoretical and creative tasks, for the visual and musical area with related games, with practice-oriented tasks requiring musical creativity aimed at developing short- and medium-term memory. Self-confidence development, communication games, debating skills are all linked in a creative task stream aimed at developing the whole personality. Based on the ***Renzulli revolving door model*** we see a developmental process that can be addressed by all children. This is a great opportunity and a novelty for Hungarian institutions as it could be used as a subject to be integrated into every classroom enabling the student to organise his or her own life, approach to learning and thus to shift motivation from external, parental and teacher influences to an internalised process relying on internal reinforcement to set his or her own goals for the end of the learning process. These methods help to lead them back from the online space of computers and mobile phones to the 'offline' world of real life and to create a temporal balance

between virtual and real-life experiences according to their age. The QR-code tasks support the learning of protected games on the Internet that offer a real sense of achievement and development, the safe movement in the online space by completing the tests and the avoidance of addiction by means of appropriate 'conscious planning packages', i.e. the development of computer use and the competences required for online tasks is also a targeted area for the development of learning self-awareness.

Number of best practice trials

The number and direction of the trials was diverse, so the possibilities were endless. **Since 2015 several individual and group development activities have been carried out.**

Target group

Individual and group development sessions are recommended for the 8-16 age group. Recommended number of children:

- up to 15 persons/group (half a class in an institution or school),
- 4-6 people for optimal small teamwork,
- individual development for children with SNI and BMI and for children with exceptional talents in a particular area.

Location

The location required for the process is an activity room which can comfortably accommodate 15 people and a courtyard or room where the children can also perform the movement activities. For smaller groups one or two terrace in an open space are sufficient but there is also the occasional need to work indoors near a table, so it is worth looking for a location where this can be done. Ideally the room should have a projector and projection facilities for the talent workshop games as well as computers and internet access for the assessment and the final diagnostic questionnaire.

Presentation of best practice

The following steps are building blocks of the best practice which in this case means that developmental tasks that are good in their own right will achieve the **intended effect with the best possible results if we 'walk all the steppingstones' with the children at some point**. An important aspect is that no element should be left out, no playful task should be skipped over permanently. The **colour-coded differentiation** provided by the workbook gives some leeway between tasks that are popular and those that seem less exciting but skipping any of them is not a good idea because development is focused on the **10 areas that are being**

stimulated and if something is missed that area will not move forward or not significantly. As **the areas are built on each other** missing an element of the puzzle can result in a truncated picture.

Step 1: Preparatory exercises

a, 'Spoken'

The opening methodological block starts with stimulating playful exercises. These will help us to identify together what is needed for effective teamwork. After a word search in the word search box there are several possibilities for differentiation based on colour coding. The child is also given the opportunity to choose tasks based on age and competence. Our task is to help them choose the most appropriate level to keep them motivated regardless of the difficulty of the task in a playful way. The key words for good teamwork are patience, respect, trust, strength, and drive. It is an exciting exercise to put these phrases into sentences by using the statements in the first person singular declarative mode, e.g. 'I trust my parents, my peers, etc.' Often omitted from the list is: 'I trust myself'. The importance of this idea should be discussed with the children and the same should be done with respect and trust, because they often scold themselves while learning even though they could solve the problem if they had a little trust and patience. Already here this task develops social competence, social thinking, and the ability to take on personality traits.

b, 'Thought-hiding'

This is followed by an interpretation of the ***Herbert quote***, 'The ability to learn is a gift, the way to learn is a skill, the willingness to learn is a matter of choice.' (Appendix 1) They should make up a complete sentence using mixed words and then explain what it means to them. All ages like this seemingly easy but not easy task. Another way of creating a relaxed atmosphere is to choose the card that best suits me after looking at the Dixit card pictures and explain why I chose it. Then the children are happy to play in a relaxed atmosphere. With 15 children I create groups of 3 to 3 and ask them to discuss the cards they have chosen. At several stages in the process, we recall who chose what. This can be a great tool for memory development.

Step 2-3: The 'My future is in the palm of my hand!' game

We wanted to bring children closer to the fairy-tale idea as well as the forward-looking statement and psychological research that:

'If you can imagine something and believe it, you can make it happen!'-Walt Disney

This combined task which develops creativity and imagination, engages both the right and left brain. In a drawing exercise I ask children to imagine themselves as adults. Draw a picture of what they can imagine themselves to be. Where will they live, what will they do, where will they go to work and what will they wear? Do they have a family, a pet, a home, a car, etc. This game can be seen as a combined task because in addition to the two areas already mentioned it helps them to solve a problem of necessity and it strengthens their ability to filter the stimuli they receive by being able to separate the things that fit their needs from the unnecessary things in their everyday lives. I recommend that they record their successful drawings as motivational pictures next to their desk or learning space or look at them weekly to see what they have been able to add to their distant goals in the past week. This is where we usually clarify the meaning of setting near medium- and long-term goals, understanding why it is necessary to look far ahead in our dreams. The neurological and psychological hypothesis is slowly being confirmed by research that certain areas or points in the brain are responsible for the ability to filter, to plan, to find pathways to the achievement of the goals we have set. This exercise is aimed at this ‘planning point’ which has been shown over the years to maintain a kind of signal stream in the brain until we reach our goals. When we reach them, we immediately set new goals, always ‘higher’ and higher, more and more courageous when we receive confirmation and feedback on life situations. With young people and young adults, we use this game to bring the future we dream of and desire closer, giving new impetus and confirmation to our goals. Those who like to draw can use any tools for colouring: felt-tip pens, pencils, even watercolours and ink. The verbal team will also find a solution: ‘Five fingers, five dreams, five words from my bucket list.’ This exercise also works well at talent festivals or creative afternoons. The drawn hands don't stay in the notebook but are put on a piece of paper and then displayed in the room or tent at the end of the session. It's a great experience to watch the ‘future generation’, to see them in the process of realising their dreams and drawing their plans. After

the intermediate task there is a verbal and social skills game in which the teacher is the reporter and welcomes the 'adult' in a conversation where questions can be asked to the 'invited guest', the child who has grown up. The peers and the teacher can ask questions, we are all time travellers, we are talking about 20-30 years from now on a radio show. The game also involves interpersonal development as brave questioners should be encouraged to respect the communication lanes, i.e., 'Whoever turns the microphone towards you, asks the questions, speaks.' It is an exciting 'future adventure together', often involving professions that do not even exist today only in the minds of children. It is an exciting game to ask them what they want to know about each other's adult lives. From this point on the workbook becomes a diary even a nice souvenir of adulthood. Children often ask to have the finished drawing laminated so that they can show it to their children.

Step 4: 'Sizing' or measuring learning and self-awareness

In all cases the development process is preceded by a professionally sound assessment. The first workbook is an opening exercise on the path of discovery:

this is the **learning diagnostic questionnaire**[2] . This questionnaire has been developed by the *Eszterházi Károly Teacher Training College in Eger, and the Kozsán Talent Workshop* has been granted the right and permission to use the ready-made online diagnostic platform for the assessment of learning self-awareness. This interface is open and can be filled in by anyone after registration, thus enabling them to find out about their own learning habits. **Ten areas are** measured, the definition of which is the backbone of the whole workbook package, as these are the most important areas of development involved in mapping and developing learning habits. The development tasks are no longer supported in the original online interface, but the workbook package is designed to provide a set of tasks to boost the areas that are outstanding or in need of development.

Once the **learning diagnostic questionnaire** has been completed through a learning development programme the results are evaluated together with no one giving exact

[2] student-development.ektf.hu

percentages of their own data but only ticking the areas they were satisfied with and some of the areas they think need improvement. Working together here consists of **outlining our own strengths and weaknesses**, committing to plans of the group, setting a pace, setting deadlines for progress. Then during the facilitation during the discussions, learners realise that until they know the learning styles, methods and tools that are best suited to them the realisation of these goals may seem distant. This is followed by the setting of plans, with the teacher offering a timetable for younger learner and the older learners setting their own deadlines. But to do this we need to know our own learning style.

Step 5-6: 'I'm connected'

The next step is to get to know the types of learners which is done by a simple test. Here the children tick the statements in the workbook that characterise them and the summary shows whether they are most characterised by auditory, visual, kinesthetic, verbal, or logical learning styles. The functioning of the brain hemispheres starts with a little theoretical learning but only in an empirical (experiential) way through playful exercises. We will discuss the functioning of the two hemispheres and then introduce the concept of 'bridging' here as an important way of making thought-consciousness-imagination connections. The task of the two brain hemispheres, the connection between them will be enriched with small video and drawing exercises and games on QR code to see the percentage of brain hemispheres working. Torrance's circular test with the related innovation of the quadratic test will conclude this session with a creative task.

Step 7: 'My order'

Here the joint work continues in a shared way. Working individually at home children take photos of their own learning environment and then stick them in their workbooks, paying particular attention to the order of the table, room, and their arrangement. When the pictures are ready, we discuss together the ideal learning environment from lighting conditions to the objects around us. Review, quality background organisation and conscious planning techniques are part of the process as well as working cooperatively in a small group, respecting each other's personal, intimate space, and viewing only what you want to show your peers. By this time a circle of trust has been established during the above exercises, so the experience is that they are happy to play decorator, style advisor, listening to each other while focusing on their own pictures. They describe what an ideal learning environment looks like and how it helps to develop good learning habits. This is independent, reflective work, the main task being

to 'create order', to optimise time management in life and in learning. We will look at how this makes learning easier, shortens learning time and speeds up our workflow.

Step 8: '~~Good~~ student, ~~bad~~ student?'[3]

In small group work we collect verbal and non-verbal cues that tell us whether we are prepared for the lesson and what kind of behaviour is appropriate in a questioning situation based on the text read out. In the context of successful self-determination, we make ourselves aware that we often hang the labels around our own necks with the intention of 'I won't look you in the eye in case you don't see me' or 'I haven't studied, put down a 1'. We also shed light on how we can avoid unexpected and anxiety-provoking answers. With regular preparation behind them students understand how much better it is to answer when we are in control with a well-defined thought process to give an account of our knowledge. 'Then there is no anxiety because I am the one who answers, I know what is being asked, there is nothing to be nervous about.'

Step 9: 'Reloaded'

Designed for individual work and with the aim of regular self-monitoring we will again fill in the opening measurement as an outgoing questionnaire to monitor the partial results. Using the percentages from the opening measurement we can compare the values obtained at the end. In general, the evaluation of the joint work shows that at this stage of development there is an increase of at least 20-25% in the areas to be improved in the external conditions for learning, positive self-image, self-confidence, motivation, learning planning. Sometimes other areas also progress in parallel although their development will be presented in our next best practice which will focus on the time planning programme. At the end of each concluding unit we will make it clear that we will not let go of the team's hands so we will create working groups in the online space even across several forums and agree on the dates of the control meetings. To keep track of our results we plan to follow up at least once a month and provide one-to-one support to students who are stuck if needed. At the end of the session the children usually conclude that it was not so tiring after all. How true the statement: '**Kozsan is a talent workshop where learning is a play!**

Methods and ways of working

The most appropriate working methods we have used to implement the tasks are described in detail in the detailed description of the tasks, here we will only give a short list without being

[3] Balázs Kozsán Kozsán: Good student, bad student? in Kozsánné: i.m. pp. 20-21.

exhaustive: institutional level, classroom, large group, small group, pair and individual solutions. The learning of theory and practice is done in an empirical way, the summary is given a lecture character, and the accompanying videos, which are only 1 to 1.5 minutes long are rather discussion starters. Face-to-face meetings are our preferred format, but we also support online development processes when needed. For example, during the active period of COVID we have delivered online learning self-awareness lessons in Year 5. The children closed this period of online work with me with words of appreciation. Alongside this form of distance learning there is always a strong emphasis on developing intrapersonal skills within the community.

Requested tools

Equipment requirements for a group

Financial resources requested:

Eszköz neve	Beszerzési helye	Darabszám	Ár	Végösszeg
Kreatív tanulási módszerek munkafüzet	Móra Könyvkiadó	30	3 000 Ft	90 000 Ft
Niceday 107,5x75cm flipchart tábla	Office Depot	1	38 999 Ft	38 999 Ft
ICO Süni A4 famentes 20db rajzlap	Office Depot	2	529 Ft	1 058 Ft
Fabriano Copy 3 Office A4 80g másolópapír	Office Depot	1	1 899 Ft	1 899 Ft
Faber-Castell színes ceruza Grip 12 darabos	Iskolaszeráruház	2	3 345 Ft	6 690 Ft
Progresso (24 db-os)	irodaoazis.hu	1	6 364 Ft	6 364 Ft
Tűfilc készlet, Stabilo, 20 darabos	Kespapír	1	9 010 Ft	9 010 Ft
Ragasztóstift, 40 g, HENKEL "Pritt"	Kespapír	10	990 Ft	9 900 Ft
Barkácsolló 13 cm, hegyes, jobbkezeseknek	Kespapír	10	430 Ft	4 300 Ft
Kingston 32GB Flash Drive	Office Depot	1	2 699 Ft	2 699 Ft
Post-it piros/sárga/kék jelölőcímke	Office Depot	1	3 199 Ft	3 199 Ft
Post-it Basic 12x43mm 5x2	Office Depot	1	1 599 Ft	1 599 Ft
Post-it Super Sticky 127x76	Office Depot	1	1 099 Ft	1 099 Ft
				176 816 Ft

The financial resources requested for the implementation of the best practice will cover the cost of workbooks, the remuneration of teachers and development professionals working with children and the provision of the equipment listed above. The cost depends on the group and the number of students but for a group of 10 students with a total budget of 18-20 lessons per session with two teachers: 5,000 HUF/hour/teacher, i.e., 200,000 HUF in total at present.

(Taking the tools listed above as a sample the amount of the permanent tool will reduce the price of additional training, e.g., blackboard, blackboard felt, etc.)

Human resources needed

- A teacher with professional competence in gifted education, a psychologist, a teacher with at least 5 years of experience, a mental health professional, a remedial or developmental teacher who has completed the accredited training course for teachers in the 'Playful Steppingstones'.
- Teaching assistant supporting the implementation of pedagogical processes.
- A supportive parent who acts as a facilitator in children's self-determination through an appropriate supportive attitude.

Timeframe for implementing best practice

The 'Playful Steppingstones' learning methodology exercises are built on each other, so it is worth planning the implementation over 3 days where children/young people are developed in 4x45 minutes a day.

Best practice made by

Kozsánné Tóth Marianna - LÉTRA - Cross Your Borders! Community Association

BEST PRACTICE 4: SELF-AWARENESS, SELF-CONFIDENCE WORKSHOP

Best Practice Objective:

The aim of the workshop which focuses on self-awareness and self-confidence is to help and support children/young people in the following developmental processes.

- Increase confidence when performing, in competition, in school exams, in a peer group, in sport or even in a foreign environment.
- Developing communication skills.
- Identify talent and think about the direction and possibilities for development. Trusting your abilities and taking on what you really want.
- To reduce stress.
- Improve your time management.

Professional justification

We know that it is more common than average for talented young people to find it difficult to fit in and that they often 'stand out' in some way. This is magnified when it comes to underachieving, disadvantaged children/young people. Thus, in their case there is an even greater need to develop their emotional intelligence, self-awareness, conflict management and problem-solving competences.

Target group

The workshop sessions are recommended for children/young people aged 13-18.

Working method

The 10–12-person workshop will be carried out individually and in groups using a variety of development tools. Depending on the weather and the space requirements of the toys used individual and teamwork can be carried out both outdoors and indoors.

Best practice presentation

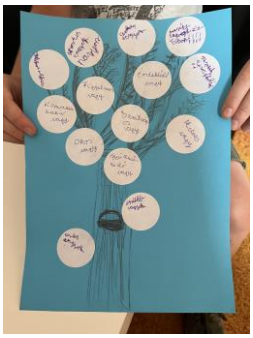
During the individual and group experiential sessions children/young people can share their feelings and thoughts while the group leader develops their self-awareness, communication

and cooperation skills and creativity through experiential and art therapy methods. They can learn useful techniques for stress reduction and more effective time management.

The tasks are playful, sometimes requiring individual reflection, sometimes joint thinking or even cooperation, and are initiated by the group leader who also guides the group safely, but each person determines the goal and pace of their individual development. An important benefit of the sessions is the interaction between the group members as the discussion always takes place at group level, where members can help each other to interpret and resolve situations.

1. Step 1 Talent identification: talking to the child/young person then taking a test focusing on creativity, motivation, attention, learning habits
   After discussion and evaluation of the tests individual and group development starts.
2. Step 2: Development activities are tailored to the needs of the children/young people and consider the results of the talent identification.

Individual sessions



Based on the results of the first exploratory interview and the pre-completed tests the location of the subsequent individual sessions will be determined. Based on this the individual session can be combined with a walk or sport (bicycle, roller skates, scooter). During the sessions, we can make a ***tree of praise*** which means that the child/young person makes his/her own tree, and the tree is decorated with positive characteristics and qualities. The tree of praise helps to develop self-confidence and self-esteem.

We use games that focus on developing self-esteem and self-confidence:

- 100 cards for resource activation couching,
- self-awareness card games,
- Soul pillow board game,
- Relativity board game,
- Positivity board game.

Group activities

Depending on the weather group development can take place outdoors in nature or indoors.

1. Step 3: at the beginning of the group session, we start by introducing ourselves and setting the group rules together.
2. Step 3: then we get to know each other through ice-breaking games.

3. Step 1: after the introduction each participant completes a test focusing on creativity, motivation, attention, learning habits and then the first session is closed. This can take the form of a closing round question or a closing game.
4. Step 3: when organising the next group session, we consider the results of the tests and focus on the areas that the tests have identified as areas for improvement.

Location

Depending on the weather, sessions can be both outdoor and indoor activities to suit the needs of children/young people.

Requested tools

- 100 cards for resource activation couching,
- self-awareness card games,
- Soul pillow board game,
- Relativity board game,
- Positivity board game,
- The big diamond heist (this game is typically played with a team already together).

Timeframe for implementing best practice

The workshop should be held 6 times. The time frame for one session is 2x 45 minutes.

Human resources required

To run a development session, you will need a key professional with expertise in self-awareness and confidence development.

Number of best practice trials

It has been implemented more than 10 times.

Best practice made by

Patricia Csemer social policy expert, talent development trainer - *LÉTRA - Cross Your Borders! Community Association*

BEST PRACTICE 5: GROUP WORK AND DEVELOPMENT FOR UNDERACHIEVING STUDENTS USING DRAMA PEDAGOGICAL METHODS

Best practice aim

In the classroom we face many challenges. Sometimes a student may not be able to show his or her strengths despite his or her good abilities. What might be the reason for this? And how can best practice help learning? We've all heard of or know of a child who 'has such a good head' but simply doesn't do very well in school. There are many reasons why a student may not be able to show his or her strengths and talents in the classroom. To do this let's first look at the factors that influence school performance. Every child has expectations from his or her environment. These expectations are often not consciously conceived or even necessarily expressed. The adult thoughts of the child as something - among other things - the young person may be bright, clever, talented, or clumsy. But in doing so even if not explicitly stated we are building expectations that influence the child's behaviour. These expectation becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: for example we may give someone easier tasks, fewer challenges, if we assume they are not as skilful. As a result they will have less opportunity to improve and may indeed be more clumsy later on compared to children who have learned how to cope with more difficult tasks. Setting expectations too low can be a problem but so can setting expectations too high. Expectations that are unrealistically high will not be met - for example, never bringing home a black mark, never getting a grade lower than a 4 or 5 or doing a task that is not yet expected of a child of his or her age. The task will be perceived as a failure, which may make him less enthusiastic or motivated to try later. The expectations placed on the child will shape his or her personality. The labels that children are exposed to therefore play an important role in their performance at school. Are you considered smart? Are you perceived as clever? Are you seen as a bad child who is always messy? So, we can see that a child who is perceived as having good ability, who develops easily is given more opportunities to show it. It is easier for him to experience success. Success teaches him to cope with new situations. This increases his self-confidence, i.e., his belief that he has the qualities and skills he needs to solve problems or to move forward (for example, to learn well). Self-confidence and self-assurance help him to adapt to new situations, to do new tasks, to learn new rules he has not seen before. This is very important in school where students are faced with new rules, new knowledge, and new situations every day. It is important to stress however that this does not mean that the more perfect we think a child is the more perfect he or she will be. As I have

written before too high expectations can have difficult consequences. The following best practice therefore aims to improve the performance of students in a group using drama pedagogical methods with the aim of encouraging them to perform better in the coming period by helping them to develop their various skills.

The aim of drama pedagogical methods:

- increase activity within the group
- students' self-awareness is enriched
- develop their flexible thinking
- makes teamwork more colourful and intense
- gives you behavioural courage
- creates an easy and natural relationship between the sexes
- shows a possible alternative for a meaningful leisure time

Professional justification

A school is a complex organisation, and its complexity may have some internal conflicts. This may be the case for example that the following current educational guidelines are opposed to being sensitive to individual differences. It affects most of the young people in our project since as they enter lower secondary school underachieving children may experience a kind of 'disenchantment' with school. The best practice for underachieving students described in detailed below aims to slow down or avoid this process and show young people a way out. Through this best practice, teacher helps underachieving and gifted students to: provide them with a necessary complex approach to giftedness, with personal follow-up, supportive discussion and personalised coordination over several months or even years; ensure the development and enrichment of the under-achieving and gifted young person's outstanding areas of talent, assisting their possible participation in individual and group programmes; help the students to actively engage in school activities and to increase their performance. The teacher of this type of student is therefore the facilitator/partner who alongside the underachiever is the most important pillar of the whole system. He or she is the one who helps and supports the underachiever (and other teachers and colleagues) in implementing the student's individual development plan. It is not expected that this teacher should be the best expert in any of the talent areas of interest of the underachiever. Rather a competent person with having the right information and knowledge of the underachieving students' strengths, areas for development, goals, family and school background, involving and mobilising the parents, class teacher, peers as appropriate and at the right time and provide the best possible support, in person, in writing, individually or in groups. The teacher of underachievers should

be empathetic, supportive, and positive in his/her approach to support the progress of this type of student seeking the solutions he/she sees necessary with a constructive critical sense, and able to give effective feedback to students involved in the best practice. The best practice presented here are a cross-section of practices that teachers who have been involved in this system for one or more years have put together for their group development activities, to help their colleagues to share best practice, to inspire others and to enrich the process of talent support with their own experiences. The purpose and function of the best practice presented here illustrates whether the programmes help to develop underachieving talents in a complex way or whether they have a developmental and thus beneficial effect in a separate field of activity.

Target group (age group and number of people)

13-14 years old, up to 10 people maximum

Location

Room for 10-15 people.

Demonstration of best practice

The group of underachievers to be presented below should be composed of up to ten 13–14-year-olds in 7th and 8th grade of primary school if possible. A particular advantage for such exercises is that they should all be students of the same institution. Students usually have a wide range of interests including sport, science, music, visual arts and writing, but in reality, they do not achieve the expected results in any of these. Some of them may also play sport: football or a sport that is new in Szeklerland, namely Frisbee. Some may have tried their hand at folk dancing and music without much success. There may also be students who would like to deepen their knowledge in the natural sciences and some who have a wide range of interests and are not sure which area they are most interested in. In terms of their academic performance all of them have a low average or close to average academic performance. They are not only under-motivated in their studies but also find it difficult to keep themselves occupied outside the classroom as they do not attend specialised classes, do not prepare for training, competitions, and do not prepare applications. There may also be a student with a disability such as a hearing-impaired student who receives special education support for his or her attention deficit, and whose academic performance is therefore very uneven. Nevertheless, there is much to interest such a student: music, dance, writing, art. However, they are often extremely under-motivated in both individual and group sessions. This is partly due to their

family background and partly to a school climate that is not very accepting or supportive. It is to be hoped that the extra care and personal attention will also help to increase the motivation of these students. Although they may know each other, they have the advantage of coming from the same institution and thus also sharing some of the same interest experience shows that they do not know much about each other. When organising group activities, it is important to help students discover common characteristics and common points of contact. This is also to strengthen their desire to learn and work. Such pupils come predominantly from large classes so that they are not able to develop an equally intense, emotionally deep, and complex relationship with all their classmates. A small group of peers based on living, satisfying relationships plays a key role in the development of their personalities. As professionals we must offer them a specific form of organisation, group activities in which we try to create a bonding environment for them. The use of drama games in these activities should also be seen as an exciting and effective tool, because if we listen to each other during the games, we can learn a lot of information that can strengthen the bond between us and the small group.

Content and methods of the teamwork, expected results of the development process

Content and methods of teamwork

The group activity outlined below is based on the book *Drama Games for Children, Young People and Adults by Katalin Gabnai* (Tankönyvkiadó, Budapest, 1987). The drama pedagogical toolkit can be used in a complex way. Time of the group activity: approx. 2 hours. The following types of drama games are recommended for the underachieving group:

- building relationships and trust
- exchange messages
- complex communication games
- improvisation.

Description of the group activity

1. **Introduction, getting in the mood**

   Welcome the participants, explain the purpose of the session, and ask them to play together (if someone doesn't feel like joining in no problem, experience shows that after a few minutes everyone is happy to play together anyway).

2. **Creating relationships to music**

   Classical, soothing music is playing. The children move freely to the music, just making sure that they walk, glide, and turn without accidentally touching each other. Then suddenly the music stops and the players sink into the position in which the silence

finds them. Then the music continues, the students pass each other by brushing each other's shoulders. Again, the music stops, the players stop in the position in which silence finds them. As the music continues, they find a mate and hold hands, but only the little fingers interlock. Then they play a mirror game facing each other. One of them plays with his hands, his face, moves away, and the other one does it afterwards as if he sees it in a mirror.

3. **The road to freedom**

The next task is harder but group members usually like it very much. They stand loosely in a circle with one person positioned in the circle. There is about half a metre or so between the people in the circle. There are two ways out of the circle. The person standing in the circle does not know which of the two ways the two players are standing between. If he goes the wrong way the players raise their arms blocking his way. The point of the exercise is to keep everyone focused on their task. No grimacing or squinting. The ‘gate-men’ must think ‘IT CAN GO OUT THERE! The rest of us must think that IT CAN'T GO OUT THERE! The person in the circle must concentrate to find the ‘mental gap’.

4. **Who is this? And where does he live?**

This game is partly a memory exercise, partly an imaginative exercise. The game creates a colourful picture of society that would otherwise be difficult to create together. If the students feel like we can continue the game by letting them make up their own descriptions. Who is this person and what are their living conditions at home? Describe his home, tell us his desires! Auntie: She buys ten kilos of cold cuts from the shop, which she immediately slips into her worn nylon bag. She wears a black knitted hat with a few white socks. Her faux leather bag smells of lavender, its buckle is shiny, its corners are shabby brown. Cigarette-lighting teenager: sitting on a bench in the playground with his peers, smoking with spectacular hand gestures, talking about how he has a good life because his parents allow him to smoke cigarettes and occasionally drink alcohol. His T-shirt, jeans and sneakers are the latest fashion. Man in his 40s: smart leather jacket, grey curly hair, jeans, leather shoes. He gets out of his car, hurries to meet his daughter at school. Young woman: her hands are adorned with discreetly patterned fingernails, her scent is unique and pleasant, her stockings are immaculate, her dress is cunningly simple, her eyes are carefully painted. In her hand is an

expensive phrase book, the first thirty pages of which have been in use for a long time, the others unopened.

5. **Reporter's game (Explain what an editor or reporter does.)**

Part of the company will be set aside. Let's have them stand with you in the exact moment of some realistic-looking event, such as the robbery of a fashion store. We also need one or two witnesses. The group that has been called aside now goes back to the others and together with the witnesses they eagerly explain. Two reporters are selected from the others, and they try to make a report with the selected witnesses. Meanwhile the crowd is not silent, and it is difficult to speak into the microphone. Let's ask two more editors, to whom the two reporters tell what they think happened. You have 30 seconds. Now the editors are given a minute and a half to formulate and read a short news item into the news without being able to talk to each other. They read out the two news items. There will be plenty to discuss and understand the reasons for the variations and distortions.

6. **Playing with semantics, unusual findings**

Have the students make statements based on the following 'unconventional' statements: 1. I am determined. 2. You are stubborn. 3. He is stubborn. 4. 5. You are particularly talkative. 6. He is scandalous. (If the group is small, you can play individually.) Read the following 'I' sentences carefully and find the corresponding 'you' and 'he' sentences. 'I' statements - you can choose from them as you like: 1. 2. I am an optimist. 3. I tend to agree with other people's opinions. 4. I think it's important to be well-dressed. 5. I have a vivid imagination. 6. I sometimes get carried away. 7. I like to keep track of what is going on in my neighbourhood. 8. I am a voice for my rights. 9. I am a shade plumper than I should be. 10. I sometimes interpret the truth broadly. 11. I sometimes put things off until the next day. 12. I do not conform to social conventions. You can then discuss together whose speech uses this 'irregular conjugation'. What is the reason for this? Can you remember any specific cases?

7. **Advertising is done in pairs or small groups.**

Students choose the product to be advertised, which can be real or imaginary. You have one and a half minutes to present the advertisement. It is important that the game is well structured, imaginative, and smoothly executed.

8. **Fairy tales imagination exercise.**

   The questions posed by the referee are often answered with imaginative phrases based on myths. The answer is requested in writing at the group meeting. E.g.: How long has the cat been meowing? Why do people have a heart?

9. **Metacommunication game**

   The task is given to the students on a slip of paper and requires a few minutes of preparation. Tell the teacher and your classmates: - These people next door has started their usual weekend circus again. - Now, you see, they've found what we've prepared for them, but let them fret, they deserved it. Tell the teacher and your classmates: - Son because you have a headache, you have to eat. Come on! - Why the devil can't you keep up your diet? Here's half a kohlrabi and a carrot, eat it! So, you can only say these short sentences, but you are allowed to communicate in every other way imaginable. In the next part of the game, you must use only your voice. Say: I LOVE YOU! Say: You idiot, you messed up again! Say: MY JESUS, WHAT IS THIS? Say: Is this the little thing you brought me as a present?

10. **Play with photos**

    For the next game you need to collect a good number of photos of shapes and faces. You can collect them on cardboard or electronically by projecting the collection. However, you organise the collection of images, the series should be put together in such a way as to give participants as wide a range as possible and to allow the characters to capture their imagination. The selection of images should also consider the need for the group members to relate to the different characters; they should therefore reflect characteristics, feelings and thoughts that are still valid today. At the same time, the facts and figures in the photographs have no history, so the question of who they are cannot be answered by the guide. The game starts with the students choosing a photo and looking at it carefully. They try to form an image of the person in the photo. Identify their social status, age, occupation, social circumstances. The game can be continued in different ways, for example, each participant can say what he or she thinks about the picture while the others look at the photo. Then the group members can also give their opinion on the photo.

2. Closing the session

At the end of the session, ask the students which game they liked the best. Were there any that they did not like or did not like to play? Overall, how did they enjoy this session?

Expected outcome of the development process

Dramatic games led in group sessions benefit all participants as the players gain experiences together in a community that help them to fit into the group. They teach a sense of self-respect for human dignity, independent thinking and the courage to create. The way in which the game is played means that participants value good observation skills, imagination, observance of rules, situational awareness and decision-making, light and expressive movement, and clear speech. The use of dramatic tools is not the only way to build group cohesion, but only one way to operate. We have only given the students a taste of what we have done, but hopefully it has brought the group members closer together and created a trusting relationship between teacher and student. The use of dramatic tools in group activities is highly recommended as the nature and tools of drama play help the players to become richer individuals, with a more realistic view of themselves and the world without losing the serenity they need to go on.

Number of best practice trials

The best practice session has been implemented more than 10 times.

Working method

Teacher lecture, discussion, debate, demonstration, games, observation, organisation, cooperative group work.

Timeframe for implementing best practice

The workshop should be held at least 3 times. The time frame for one session is 2x 45 minutes.

Requested tools: Whiteboard or flipchart, A/4 paper, labels, markers, pens, glue, post-it.

Human resources required:

One lead teacher, one assist

Best practice made by

Bulcsú Erőss teacher - Amőba Foundation

BEST PRACTICE 6: MUSIC AND EMOTION

Best practice aim

To improve the performance of the students in the group through music therapy methods with the aim of encouraging them to perform better in the coming period by helping them to develop their various skills. The aim of the session:

- developing emotional intelligence,
- strengthening social relationships,
- developing personal and social competences:
    - o self-awareness (self-awareness, self-esteem, self-confidence)
    - o empathy (understanding others, recognising their needs, emotional tensions perception), motivation
    - o social skills (communication, cooperation, team spirit).

The aim of the activity is to help underachieving young people to get to know themselves better through music, through the emotions and thoughts conveyed by music. Music is a suitable tool for this as it easily connects us with our inner world and speaks directly to our emotions. It evokes memories, images, feelings, which helps us to get closer to our emotions. Accessing and understanding our emotions helps us to develop self-awareness and understanding of other people's emotions.

Professional justification

A school is a complex organisation, and its complexity may have some internal conflicts. This may be the case for example that the following current educational guidelines are opposed to being sensitive to individual differences. It affects most of the young people in our project since as they enter lower secondary school underachieving children may experience a kind of ‘disenchantment’ with school. The best practice for underachieving students described in detailed below aims to slow down or avoid this process and show young people a way out. Through this best practice, teacher helps underachieving and gifted students to: provide them with a necessary complex approach to giftedness, with personal follow-up, supportive discussion and personalised coordination over several months or even years; ensure the development and enrichment of the under-achieving and gifted young person's outstanding areas of talent, assisting their possible participation in individual and group programmes; help the students to actively engage in school activities and to increase their performance. The

teacher of this type of student is therefore the facilitator/partner who alongside the underachiever is the most important pillar of the whole system. He or she is the one who helps and supports the underachiever (and other teachers and colleagues) in implementing the student's individual development plan. It is not expected that this teacher should be the best expert in any of the talent areas of interest of the underachiever. Rather a competent person with having the right information and knowledge of the underachieving students' strengths, areas for development, goals, family, and school background, involving and mobilising the parents, class teacher, peers as appropriate and at the right time and provide the best possible support, in person, in writing, individually or in groups. The teacher of underachievers should be empathetic, supportive, and positive in his/her approach to support the progress of this type of student seeking the solutions he/she sees necessary with a constructive critical sense, and able to give effective feedback to students involved in the best practice. The best practice presented here are a cross-section of practices that teachers who have been involved in this system for one or more years have put together for their group development activities, to help their colleagues to share best practice, to inspire others and to enrich the process of talent support with their own experiences. The purpose and function of the best practice presented here illustrates whether the programmes help to develop underachieving talents in a complex way or whether they have a developmental and thus beneficial effect in a separate field of activity.

Target group (age group and number of people)

13-14 years old, up to 10 people maximum.

Location

Room for 10-15 people.

Demonstration of best practice

The group of underachievers to be presented below should be composed of up to ten 13–14-year-olds in 7th and 8th grade of primary school if possible. A particular advantage for such exercises is that they should all be students of the same institution. Students usually have a wide range of interests including sport, science, music, visual arts and writing, but in reality, they do not achieve the expected results in any of these. Some of them may also play sport: football or a sport that is new in Szeklerland, namely Frisbee. Some may have tried their hand at folk dancing and music without much success. There may also be students who would like to deepen their knowledge in the natural sciences and some who have a wide range of

interests and are not sure which area they are most interested in. In terms of their academic performance all of them have a low average or close to average academic performance. They are not only under-motivated in their studies but also find it difficult to keep themselves occupied outside the classroom as they do not attend specialised classes, do not prepare for training, competitions, and do not prepare applications. There may also be a student with a disability such as a hearing-impaired student who receives special education support for his or her attention deficit, and whose academic performance is therefore very uneven. Nevertheless, there is much to interest such a student: music, dance, writing, art. However, they are often extremely under-motivated in both individual and group sessions. This is partly due to their family background and partly to a school climate that is not very accepting or supportive. It is to be hoped that the extra care and personal attention will also help to increase the motivation of these students. Although they may know each other, they have the advantage of coming from the same institution and thus also sharing some of the same interest experience shows that they do not know much about each other. When organising group activities, it is important to help students discover common characteristics and common points of contact. This is also to strengthen their desire to learn and work. Such pupils come predominantly from large classes so that they are not able to develop an equally intense, emotionally deep, and complex relationship with all their classmates. A small group of peers based on living, satisfying relationships plays a key role in the development of their personalities. As professionals we must offer them a specific form of organisation, group activities in which we try to create a bonding environment for them. The use of drama games in these activities should also be seen as an exciting and effective tool, because if we listen to each other during the games, we can learn a lot of information that can strengthen the bond between us and the small group.

Number of trials

in numerous cases with external partners.

Target group

The best practice is recommended for 13–15-year-olds in a group of 7-10 people.

Place of implementation

Room for 10-15 people.

Demonstration of best practice

The group in which the teacher holds the group session can be up to ten people. In terms of gender distribution, it is advisable to aim for a roughly equal distribution in the group. It is also a good idea to have a close age range and select a group with most people of the same age. The way in which the professional staff manage to organise children of nearly the same age into a group when forming the group will have a big influence on whether they can form a team in a short time. Nothing will prove this more than the fact that the children will keep in touch with each other outside the group sessions. Underachievers tend to have a wide range of interests. Boys are overwhelmingly most interested in IT, but they all have other interests too. There may be boys who regularly write poetry and stories, boys who are interested in nature, and boys who are less likely to be interested in politics and social and societal issues. Some of the group may play sport regularly and many are likely to be learning to play an instrument. Girls in the group tend to be more interested in the humanities and the arts. They are involved in creative writing, drama, music (instrumental, solo singing, choir) and foreign languages in their free time, but despite many extra-curricular activities their performance at school leaves something to be desired even in subjects that they study in more detail in the afternoons. For the most part they will always come to the meetings with great curiosity and will be open and motivated to absorb new knowledge and experiences.

Content of the activity, methods, expected results of the development process

Session duration: usually 2 hours.

The course of the session

Getting in the mood, welcoming the group. Presentation of the topic (what will be covered) and the course of the session. Discuss and record group rules. Tuning question: who came to the meeting with what feelings and in what mood? Image selection: the '*Getting Acquainted'* card deck can be used for this exercise. From the pictures on the table everyone chooses one according to their mood and then explains why they chose it. Introduce an invited guest (say a clarinet player), then demonstrate the instrument and describe the pieces.

Instrument demonstration - the invited player demonstrates his instrument. He/she will talk about the works played (authors, circumstances of their creation, contemporary music), followed by a mini-concert of a work of the invited artist's choice which is a concert-like performance of the works. This will be followed by a discussion about the works performed and the feelings they evoke, i.e., we will try to develop a free discussion about the works with the members of the group. The following questions can be asked in this context:

- what did you feel while listening to the piece?

- what feelings have taken over?
- what did you think of the play?
- what thoughts did you have?

Then in a guided discussion we will cover the following topics: basic emotions, positive and negative emotions, the difference between feelings and thoughts, the importance of expressing emotions, ways of communicating emotions.

Then we play a game called *Exchange of Feelings* lasting 10-15 minutes and using the following tools: paper, pencil. Draw 3 slips of paper per person with different feelings on them. The slips can be exchanged with others as you wish, but only one-for-one exchanges are allowed. At the end of the exchanges everyone can say what 'feelings' they originally had, what they exchanged or would have liked to exchange, and how they characterise them. The next game is called Playing with Body Language. One member of the group draws one of the paper slips prepared for the previous game and uses non-verbal communication (body language, facial expressions, gestures) to present the feeling on the slip to the group members who try to guess which feeling it is. In conclusion each group member tells the other about their experience of the group meeting followed by the closing of the meeting.

The theme of the development group session is music and emotions. At the beginning of the group session rules of the session are established together, written down on a flipchart and signed by everyone. The rules adopted in the session are binding for everyone:

- listening to each other,
- openness,
- the right to pass,
- acceptance,
- we do not judge.

For the picture-selection exercise you can use the *Getting Acquainted* card pack which is available from any specialised shop. *Let's Get Acquainted* consists of 56 cards, each with a colour picture and a corresponding question. The pictures are varied, humorous, interesting, and inspiring and easily stimulate the imagination and creativity of the participants. As indicated at the beginning the guest of the session could be for example a musician, a well-known and respected teacher at a leading music secondary school. It is important for this type of best practice to be led by a teacher who is himself a music teacher as it is not difficult to find an artist from his circle of acquaintances who will agree to provide live music for the underachieving talents in a group session. In general, the colleagues are happy to accept the invitation, which is very welcome, especially because they know that live music can be a much more intense and rewarding experience than recorded music. In a few minutes of introduction,

the guest talks about how he got into music, what were the most important stages in his career and what he is doing now. When presenting his/her instrument you can cover the following topics (in this case a clarinet player):

- woodwind family (four main instruments in the symphony orchestra, related instruments),
- the use and application of woodwind instruments in different periods of music history,
- the history of the clarinet,
- the structure of the clarinet, how to play it,
- milestones of clarinet literature,
- where it is used (symphony orchestra, wind band, folk music, jazz).

When presenting the pieces, the invited person should always talk about the composers, the circumstances of their creation, their structure and contemporary music: for example, *if Béla Kovács:Hommage á J. S. Bach* is presented to the students, it is necessary to tell them that the composer of the piece, i.e. Hommage á J. S. Bach, is *Béla Kovács,* Kossuth Prize-winning clarinetist and music teacher. He has been Professor of Clarinet at the Liszt Academy of Music since 1975 and Professor Emeritus since 2008. In addition to his teaching work, he has regularly given concerts and published several clarinet textbooks (Everyday Scale Exercises for Clarinet, Learning to Play Clarinet I, II). He has produced clarinet transcriptions of works by many composers and has a considerable number of his own works to his credit. The work presented here is one of a series of pieces in his Hommage series, a study of style and a tribute to J. S. Bach. Invited performers, especially clarinettists, are welcome to choose *Gergely Vajda's Shadow of Light*, and it must be said that the composer composed his Shadow of Light in 1993, when he was 20 years old. One of the most talented members of the middle generation of Hungarian composers, he is a clarinettist and conductor. As a clarinettist, he is interested in both the traditional and modern possibilities of the instrument, which he tries out in this piece. The work, with its special effects and timbres, is characterised by extreme and extreme dynamic shifts, with elements of noise and imitations of the sound of folk instruments (bagpipes, reed whistles). The composer involves the performer in the work by giving him a free hand, within certain limits, in the repetition of certain motifs, in terms of duration and number of repetitions. It is very important that the invited performer also presents the score, explaining in more detail the characteristics of contemporary music and how the music of our time offers the greatest freedom to let our imagination soar, since there are no established conventions to which we must adhere. After listening to these works, we can talk freely about the feelings and thoughts that they evoke. This will be followed by a guided discussion on the following topics:

- basic emotions (joy, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust)
- increasing our vocabulary to describe our feelings which helps us to express them more accurately (if we don't get what we want, then we get what we want) - collecting
- difference between feelings, thoughts
- the importance of emotional expression
- ways of communicating emotions.

Then comes the game called **Exchange of Feelings**. For the game, we prepare in advance the slips of paper on which we write negative (unhappy, gloomy, dissatisfied, worried, sad, annoyed, tense, nervous, grumpy, cranky, angry, violent, pessimistic, helpless, passive, contemptuous, anxious, averse, restless, scared, violent) and positive (happy, energetic, cheerful, open, optimistic, content, hopeful, radiant, peaceful, grateful, excited, joyful, carefree, lively, passionate, elated, amazed, dreamy, wondering, hopeful) feelings in roughly equal proportions. Each person draws three slips of paper with the feelings listed above. The slips could be exchanged for others as desired, but only one-for-one exchanges were allowed. At the end of the exchanges everyone tells what 'Feelings' they originally had, what they exchanged or would have liked to exchange and how they characterised them.

The game '**Play with body language'** consists of one member of the group drawing one of the paper slips prepared for the previous game and using non-verbal communication (body language, facial expressions, gestures) to present the feeling on the slip to the group members who try to guess which feeling it is. The facial expressions and gestures accompanying the emotions help to communicate them. After the game we collect what they are. At the end of the group meeting everyone can say how they felt and what they came away with. The group meetings are almost always in a good atmosphere and the final round of the meeting used to be overwhelmingly positive:

- 'The atmosphere was good.'
- 'I have gained new knowledge.'
- 'I liked the body language game best.'
- 'We got to know each other better.'

Children listen with curiosity and interest to both the instrument demonstration and the mini concert. They will have lots of questions for the performer who will also ask the children many questions making the performance interactive. The experience is that children engage in the conversation in a way that goes far beyond their age group. They enjoy the exercises. They tend to give the most varied and interesting answers to the question 'Who does it make you think about?' which shows that their imagination is being stimulated in a very effective way. Communication and cooperation between the participants during the group session tends to

run smoothly throughout. It is also a very good experience for the group leader teacher to work with this type of children because they are mostly very open and active during the group sessions. Although we almost always accept the right to 'pass' in the group rules, everyone is involved in the games and tasks.

When planning a group activity three aspects should be kept in mind:

- age specificities of the 13-15 age group
- at this age students are less likely to talk about their feelings and thoughts
- make the material interesting and accessible

It is worth looking for exercises and games to help you with the topic of the session:

- to gain self-awareness experiences
- understanding your own communication style
- the development of verbal expression
- the experience of working together in a team.

The elements of the group meeting, the instrument demonstration, the mini concert, the discussions, and the games serve developmental goals as well as a common experience. The balance between the different elements is good as there is no need to change the course of the meeting. Music is one of the many tools for personal development both through listening to music and through active music-making. The potential of musical group activities is enormous, and the expected results of development are manifold and rich. The expected outcomes of the development process are:

- ✓ knowledge growth
- ✓ higher self-awareness, realistic self-evaluation, greater self-confidence
- ✓ a more empathetic attitude
- ✓ developing social skills (communication, cooperation, team spirit).

Working method

Teacher's lecture, discussion, debate, demonstration, games, observation, organisation, cooperative group work.

Requested tools

Pencil, paper, instruments, *Getting Acquainted* card deck.

Timeframe for implementing best practice

The session should be held 2 times. The time frame for one session is 2x 45 minutes.

Human resources needed

A group leader, an invited music teacher, an expert in a particular instrument.

Best practice made by

Bulcsú Erőss teacher - Amőba Foundation

BEST PRACTICE 7: HEALTH PROMOTION TALENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

Best practice aim

The aim of the programme is to develop students interested in science, especially biology but also underachievers in other subjects. Underachieving gifted students are underachieving in school but at the same time they have a lot of knowledge in their area of interest. The aim of the giftedness programme is to develop the strengths of gifted children, improve areas for development, stimulate creative thinking and develop motivation to learn. We also aim to encourage students to lead by example through their lifestyle and health habits. An important aspect in the design of the programme was to ensure that in addition to gaining shared experiences and strengthening cohesion they could demonstrate their ability to complete the tasks in as informal and creative way as possible.

The programme considers what students have learned in the classroom but enriches the knowledge structure of the traditional environment in a complex way by exploring new connections. The principle is that children have fun in the activities and experience the joy of discovery.

Professional justification

To know what you can do for yourself you need credible professional information. To know exactly when, how and to whom to turn. Our health is determined by five factors: our physical condition (22%), our social situation (24%), environmental influences (7%), the health care system (11%) and our lifestyle (36%). Most of all, we depend on our health. We can shape the way we live our lives which can also influence some of our physical abilities. That's why we try to achieve this through extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Keeping all this in mind is particularly important for teachers as there are many health problems among children which may have environmental and lifestyle-related causes, and to understand these we need to know the student's daily life. *David Seedhause's* definition of health is that the optimum state

of health is equal to the set of conditions under which an individual can develop the full range of his or her potential. These conditions include access to adequate nutrition, protection from the weather, access to all information that has an impact on one's life, and the ability to process that information. In addition, understand that people are not isolated from each other, but are communal beings and that you can go as far as you can in developing your own potential without hindering others.

In our daily work we need to remember this definition and if the student is not progressing as well as he or she could we should ask whether he or she has all the conditions to flourish**.**

The health promotion plan also gives special and strong emphasis to first aid. Anyone, anywhere may encounter a situation where an injured person needs help. It is therefore very important that as many students as possible have some basic first aid skills. The aim of first aid, alongside and through the acquisition of skills, is to help reduce preventable long-term harm to health. In Romania a very high number of people die from sudden cardiac death, 80% of these patients could be saved if timely assistance was provided. If someone needs resuscitation every minute that elapses between stopping circulation and starting resuscitation reduces the patient's, chances of survival by 10%.

Lay first aid is crucial because in many serious, life-threatening situations the first three minutes are crucial. This is the interval when medical assistance is most unlikely to arrive on the scene. This is when lay help can save lives.

Target group

13-20 years old, 10-20 people.

Location

Room for 10-20 people, outdoors - park, forest.

Demonstration of best practice

In the *Health Promotion* programme, we present enrichment activities, topics, project ideas and methods for working on them which build on the diverse skills of learners and help them

to develop optimally. We strive to present activities that consider the individual needs of the students so that they can be used to provide extra-curricular support for underachieving gifted young people. The activities presented can be implemented as described or adapted to local conditions and needs. They can be further developed and supplemented with additional developmental tasks.

'Green Days' have a long tradition in our institution. For a few days everyone from prep school to senior high school is immersed in science and open to the world. The '*Green Days'* programme also includes events such as a *pet exhibition, a waste sculpture and poster exhibition, a fashion show with waste, a visit to an institution, a tree planting campaign, an eco-class, a dress up in Earth colours and a Green Walk.* Green Days will also give students a playful insight into health promotion with older students organising first aid lessons for younger ones, interesting experiments, school competitions and games. There are several invited speakers including first aid specialists, biologists, doctors and university lecturers on various health promotion topics.

Close cooperation with universities in the framework of Open Days and lectures by university professors are important activities. There is close cooperation with *Babeș-Bolyai University, Sapientia University and Semmelweis University in Budapest*. Medical students from Semmelweis University give online prevention lectures to students on alcohol prevention, smoking prevention, vaccinations, diabetes prevention, health-conscious nutrition, fashion diets, diabetes, and reproductive health. Our students can participate in Open Days organised by universities, giving them an insight into university life and education thus helping them to make informed career choices.

The *Health Promotion* programme gives priority to multimedia IT tools (computer, camera, interactive whiteboard, phone) and multimedia applications (image and video editing software). Computer-based multimedia gives scope for creativity and self-expression which can reduce underperformance. Activities that can be carried out using multimedia IT tools: taking a photo or video montage of a meal for example, according to the recommendations of the *Smart Plate*, or using a phone app to record and record a pedometer.

The visual representation of information is particularly important in the teaching of learning methods for underachieving students and disadvantaged students. Graphic representations

such as drawings, mind maps, diagrams, charts, tables, etc. help students to learn at school. The creation of mind maps is a method for effective processing of the curriculum. In the gifted and talented programme mind maps are used to organise prior knowledge and to work on new topics.

We also use the Bingo method as part of the *Health Promotion Talent Management* programme. Students individually draw a blank nine-cube bingo grid, the teacher writes 12 key words from the current lesson on the board. Students select nine of these and write them in the bingo cubes of their choice. The teacher then reads out the definitions in any order and the students look at which word is covered by the rule. If they match a chosen term they cross it out. If three crossed-out words are placed next to each other (horizontally, vertically, diagonally), they shout BINGO. This method develops spatial visuality, memory, association skills and flexible thinking.

The purpose of the *Learning Diary* method is to constantly assess the learning process in terms of individual motivation. As a session, students keep a record of what they did in that session, what they liked and why, what they didn't like and why. From these record sheets they put together a diary. The *Learning Diary* helps students to clarify their own picture of their learning. Student's notes give us a picture of their learning characteristics and his or her attitude towards learning. Likes and dislikes indicate the interest and motivation of the learner. In this way both the student and the teacher gain valuable additional information from the diary records. The teacher can spot students who are performing below their potential and find the reasons for poor performance. It is beneficial for the them because it starts a discussion with the teacher.

A fundamental task in talent management is to arouse and maintain interest in the student to create the conditions in which the student can develop according to his or her own abilities. Through the activities and methods mentioned above we try to develop underachieving, disadvantaged gifted children.

Number of trials

The best practice session has been tested more than 10 times.

Working method

Teacher's lecture, discussion, debate, demonstration, games, observation, organisation, cooperative teamwork.

Timeframe for implementing best practice

The session should be held 2 times. The time frame for one session is 2x 45 minutes.

Requested tools

Pencil, post-it, paper, laptop or tablet,or desktop computer, printer.

Human resources needed

Group leader, science teacher.

Requested tools

Pencil, pen, A4 sheets, printer.

Human resources needed

One main group leader and one main facilitator are needed to run the sessions.

Number of best practice trials

Our practice is a proven method as we have implemented the sessions 10 times.

Best practice made by

Mónika Nagy, teacher of biology and health promotion at the *Reformed College in Sfântu Gheorghe* - Amőba Foundation

BEST PRACTICE 8: LOGICAL-MATHEMATICALAL DEVELOPMENT OF UNDERACHIEVING, DISADVANTAGED TALENTS

In our association, activities to support logical-mathematical talent development mainly consist of logical development, the joint organisation of games requiring intensive thinking, the assignment of tasks and activities based around a given theme. We try to use the opportunities offered by related activities to develop creativity in a powerful way.

Best practice aim

- Strengthening and supporting the developmental potential of underachieving gifted children/young people.
- 'Breath-conditioning' and motivation - make the underachieving gifted child/young person experience the tasks assigned to him/her as a positive experience thus stimulating his/her development.
- Supporting and strengthening areas not related to mathematical talent.

Our aim is to ensure that talent support has concrete benefits in the field of science. In addition to mathematical-logical competences the aim is to develop strong work competences:

- flexibility
- creativity
- autonomous decision-making
- confidence
- critical approach
- Exploring opportunities
- sense of responsibility
- capacity to act
- leadership skills
- motivating other people (others)
- learning from mistakes
- networking.

Target group

The association is made up of different groups so there is an opportunity to take advantage of the complex development of different peer groups together. The crossover between age groups can also be a model for real life because we work with children/young people from 8 years to 19 years.

Professional justification

Today's information society constantly mediates global and local science problems. We need to draw from the global and look at local changes where the global affects local change. Students and their environment are part of global events. The approach is that if we can solve local problems and provide answers to the questions raised, we can contribute to solving global problems and difficulties. The problems of the natural and economic issues in and around where students live have an impact on their ability to respond to them and the local environment. The interest, active attention and problem-sensitivity of teachers also have an impact on students' interest which enables them to deepen their understanding of scientific issues and problems. In turn, this immersion and active work can activate resources willing to do something for the common good.

Working method

By using the project approach we can reduce the negative effects of an unfavourable socio-cultural background. It is a good way to catch up disadvantaged people, but also to bring talent to the fore. The method is linked to competence-based education with a focus on the development of key competences (communication, use of ICT systems).

During the sessions continuous monitoring, joint discussions, self-evaluation, and self-monitoring are necessary. These ensure group dynamics. During group work situations may arise where participants talk past each other, do not understand each other or conflicts arise. These do not necessarily have to be related to the subject matter but can be caused by conflicts of personalities or by the dynamics and inter-relationship within the group. It is then worthwhile to enter the process as a facilitator.

The use of collaborative techniques is an essential methodological background for talent management and working with gifted students. A cooperative method is defined by[4] as a set of methods that transform learning into a social activity. It is an excellent method and is based on cooperation. Participants in a group formulate common goals in a cooperative way, considering the personal characteristics of the group members and their level of knowledge. The point is that each member of the group helps to achieve the goal so that each learner is motivated to reach the goal and master the knowledge at hand.

[4] Spencer Kagan Cooperative learning

Cooperative tool	Description of the cooperative tool
Group mosaic	A cooperative method for small groups. It consists of delegating to the learners the subtasks necessary to achieve the final objective as well as the related parts of the materials, resources, notes and learning aids. Through the division of labour, the mosaic of sub-tasks carried out by each member of the team eventually produces the whole. The equivalent of the peer mosaic within groups.
Spoken	The word processor is an intra-group collaborative tool that effectively ensures equal participation in collaborative work. Initially it makes sense to entrust the running of the word processor to a single student. In this way, through guided practice, it becomes natural for everyone in the group to contribute, ask questions, answer questions, and communicate with each other.
Student quartet	One of the most informal, unconnected, cooperative techniques. It involves group members brainstorming, thinking, and working together to find a solution. They also take notes together and check the solution together at the end of the work.
Group rotation	Group rotation is one of the cooperative methods that work at the level of working between groups. Group rotation allows for equal opportunities for expression between groups. The method allows groups to express themselves in turn, one after the other, through their representatives at the same time and in the same form. It is used to collectively check the internal work of small groups or to summarise their contributions and questions.
Expert mosaic	The peer mosaic is a small-group method based on the allocation of resources (i.e., learning material) between groups for content purposes. The content for joint processing and learning can be divided up as many times as there are cooperative project plans. The peer mosaic is the equivalent of the group mosaic at group level.

Demonstration of best practice

Activity 1 - Climate change

Climate change and the fight against it is now an integral part of our children's lives. They are confronted daily with a flood of information dissecting these issues. It is important that they hear as much as possible about it and that more relevant information reaches their environment. However how much we talk about it and how we talk about it is not at all the same thing, because if we portray it in too negative light it can create a hopeless vision of the future. It is better to present a picture based on facts and with the potential to improve their environment and their daily lives.

Steps to employment

1. Step 3: the group gathers and organises the knowledge already acquired (brainstorming).
2. Step 3: with the help of the workshop leader, group the factors - giving practical examples of climate change.
3. Step 1: measurements of internal variations (cloud cover, precipitation, temperature, etc.) and their origins, historical overview.
4. Step 1: external factors - solar activity, volcanic eruptions - the Sun as a star, its role in the formation of life and its influence on life, volcanic eruptions, the functioning of the Earth's plates
5. Step 1: greenhouse effect - development, risks, modelling.

It's important to discuss the course of action, to discuss arguments, to accept the ideas of the team member without wasting time. The biggest challenge is how and how to present the concept of climate change in its full context, based on the steps listed.

Material requirements: cardboard, felt, self-adhesive paper.

Activity 2 - Building an old eco-friendly house

We will organise a field trip with the workshop participants to Ópusztaszer, where you can visit the old rural peasant world in the skanzen: lifestyle, the functioning of the village community and the nature-friendly way of living everyday life.

Steps to employment

1. Step 3: Based on their experience's students share their ideas, feelings and experiences.
2. Step 3: Based on the experience already gained a blueprint for the green house is drawn up.
3. Step 3: Based on the blueprint a mock-up of the house is made.

The exercise helps us to share experiences from everyday life and working cooperatively together also brings about qualitative and attitudinal changes.

Requested tools

Pencil, post-it, paper, laptop or tablet, desktop computer, printer.

Human resources needed

Team leader, expert in natural sciences and logical-mathematicals.

Number of best practice trials

More than 10 sessions have been carried out.

Best practice made by

Attila Perpauer teacher-Móra Ferenc Cultural Association

BEST PRACTICE 9: OUR HISTORY - OUR HISTORY - ARTS IN THE EVERYDAY

Best practice aim

The aim of our practice is to strengthen the identity of underachieving, disadvantaged, gifted children/young people through environmental awareness. We use artistic practices and working methods that enable our students to learn and master the older generation's way of thinking, approach to nature and the world.

Target group

The target group of our practice is the 13-20 age group who are open to the arts and environmental awareness.

Location

Our practice takes place in the family, the school, the community centre, and the whole village.

Demonstration of best practice

The exercise requires a longer period because it requires introductory, grounding lessons during which we explain the problems of our time to the students, have discussions with them and try to analyse some environmental posters, films, or pictures.

This is followed by a first step in the exercise which is a common discussion with the students when the course of the session is explained. We outline the stages of the process step by step. We tell them about the lives of their predecessors possibly showing them pictures of the past. We initiate a discussion with them on the subject. Who has what experience and knowledge that their grandparents shared with them? Then as a primary task after the discussion the students will talk to their parents, grandparents, or neighbours at home about the topic. Whoever has the opportunity they use it to gather information on how to live consciously with our environment

The third step is to have a discussion with the students on the information obtained. This time, they can tell us about their experiences and what information they found interesting and useful. Then comes the main part of the exercise when we come to the concrete practical implementation. The students will start collecting materials. Who finds what around the house, at home, at school, that is already a 'junk' or renewable resource.

A group of students use the materials collected to create artworks. The students are guided by a facilitator in the creation of their artwork. The students can perfect their creations in several lessons or practical sessions. During the sessions several sculptures and works of art are created and exhibited at the Móra István Cultural Association. Another group of students will focus on awareness-raising and will use comic books or posters to raise awareness of the environment about environmental awareness such as: water conservation, water purification, not littering, not using plastic shopping bags, etc...

Even ideas for recycling are coming up and, in many cases, practical implementations are taking place.

Working method

As mentioned above the whole process is divided into several stages. So different working methods are recommended for each stage. First and foremost, the importance of motivation is highlighted. As with all age groups arousing interest and motivating student is of particular importance. For this reason, a very large role is placed on the teachers at the very beginning of the work process to ensure that this can be done successfully. This must happen in the preparatory phase.

In the introductory or foundation phase, the role is played by presentation, explanation, narration, questioning and possibly discussion. Different ways of illustration are used, which are also important in motivation building.

In the practical phase the project method and the cooperative method take over. The previously outlined and given problem is then worked on together with the teacher-students. One or two practical tasks are developed at this stage. The elaboration requires planning and the use of aesthetic sense. It also gives the students the opportunity to work in groups and develop their social skills. During the cooperative method it is important to pay particular attention to the following: formulating objectives together:

- to increase the activity of workshop participants, generating and organising ideas,
- identifying difficulties and solving problems that arise,
- conflict detection and disclosure,
- increase the motivation and commitment of people at work,
- record the tasks, summarise, and conclude the subtasks and the workshop.

At the end of the session students present their work to each other and their teachers, trying to be convincing in their presentation of the topic. A joint discussion or debate concludes the process, during which any disagreements that may arise are clarified.

When the opportunity arises students can present their work to a wider audience or even to the media.

Requested tools

Pencils, post-its, drawing paper, cardboard, paint, glue, scissors, coloured pencils, tempera, recyclable waste.

Human resources needed

One main group leader and one main facilitator are needed to run the sessions.

Number of best practice trials

Our practice is a proven method as we have implemented the sessions 8 times.

Best practice made possible by

Judit Rákos teacher - Móra Ferenc Cultural Association