EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

-MODELS AND EXAMPLES -

ROMANIA



Experiential learning activities, a means of better learning

Carmen-Ioana Radu

Motto: *The purpose of life is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience*. (Eleanor Roosevelt)

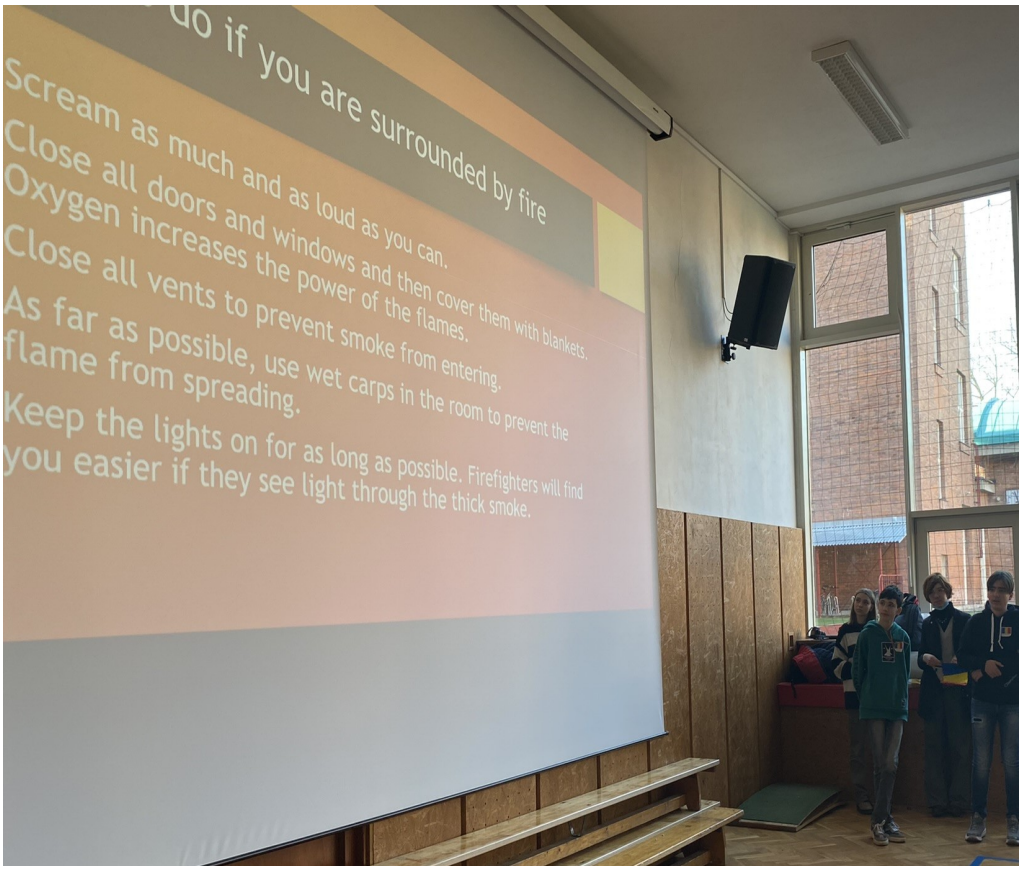
Experience is basically at the core of everything, especially when it comes about the teaching – learning process. Hours of arid explanations cannot equal ten minutes of activities based on the students' experience. Students understand better, learn better, are more involved in activities based on *experiential learning* and produce more interesting essays or projects when they think about their own experience.

As a teacher, I enjoy most such activities based on *experiential learning*. I have been running a debate club in our school for some years and I still like teaching my students how to debate. School debates are always connected to real life in the sense that they bring in motions like: *Mobile phones should be prohibited in schools*, *School uniforms should be compulsory*, *Reading a book is a better option than watching a movie* or *Zoos should be banned from our country*. Whenever the students engage themselves in a debate and they argue pro or against the motion, they always give examples from what had happened to them or from what they had read or learned about and that involves them more actively in the debate. Not only the students who debate, but also the ones who watch the debate, take part in the *experiential learning* process. The latter category is in favour of one team or the other when imagining different situations or real-life scenarios illustrated by the students in the two debating teams. They sometimes change their point of view depending on the arguments that had been presented by their colleagues. In debates students offer solutions to problems from a multi-perspective point of view and they learn how to develop plans for the solutions they suggest. Taking part in a debate always increases their self-esteem and their communication and critical thinking skills. Persuasion skills are also developed to a great extent.

School debates are therefore an example of *experiential learning* activity that functions like a boomerang: it brings in life experience and it enhances the students' life experience at the same time.

Within the Erasmus+ project *The Future We Choose*, most of the activities that the students did were based on *experiential learning*. The most common activity was the project. In small groups they had to produce projects about crisis situations, about natural disasters, about personalities that marked the last one hundred years, about the constitution of our country, about tolerance and about poverty, migration and unemployment in Romania. For each project they firstly had to do some research about the current situation in our country, they had to identify problems and solutions to them and also to explore specific needs inside the community. Defining the statement of the problem was a challenge in itself especially when they had to do projects about poverty, migration and unemployment. Inside their teams, the students had different points of view and they had to bring in arguments about the specific situation to support them. Projects are always about cooperative learning and creativity skills. When they did projects on tolerance, they had to think about those specific moments in their lives when they were tolerant to each other. All the projects done by students in school were first presented in front of the classroom and then by those students who took part in mobilities in front of their colleagues from the other countries: Belgium, The Czech Republic, Estonia, Portugal and Turkey. Thus, presentation was also one important *experiential learning* activity that we did in this international project. Presentation means that a group of students or an individual student talked about a specific subject from real life, identifying a problem of their country / region and eventually suggesting solutions to the problem. Presentations do not only develop the students' critical thinking, but they also improve their confidence and emphasize real world issues.


an earthquake that had
ea County, Romania. It was a 7,4
earthquake on the Richter scale and lasted
seconds, so it was enough to affect the capital city
of Bucharest and enough to be felt in almost all of
South-Eastern Europe and both Moscow and Sankt
Petersburg.
The total death toll in Romania was 1578 people, with
1424 in Bucharest and more than 11,221 thousand
people wounded by it.
A 1978 World Bank report estimated a total loss of
$2.048 billion, with Bucharest accounting for 70% of
the damage.


do if you are surrounded by fire
Scream as much and as loud as you can.
Close all doors and windows and then cover them with blankets.
Oxygen increases the power of the flames.
Close all vents to prevent smoke from entering.
As far as possible, use wet carps in the room to prevent the
flame from spreading.
Keep the lights on for as long as possible. Firefighters will find
you easier if they see light through the thick smoke.

Another *experiential learning* activity that the students did inside the project *The Future We Choose* was the interview. In their small groups, they had to interview each other on the topic: *What would you change if you were the headmaster of your school / the mayor of your city / the president of your country*? In order to do the interview accordingly, they first had to identify real problems of their school / city / country and then to think about effective solutions to those problems. When doing the interview as such, they had to think about strategies journalists use when they interview someone and that is just another real-life situation. Apart from giving specific and clear roles, the interview also gives some real-life content and is an interactive activity which has a goal to achieve, an explicit time for the students to interact. Taking and giving interviews is an *experiential learning* activity that also improves the students' listening and communicative skills.





Experiential Learning: Learning English Through Real-World Exploration

Laura Berteanu

Experiential learning activities are designed to help students learn through immersive experiences. In such activities, students dive into real-world scenarios, combing learning with practical application. Here are some examples of English language experiential learning activities that will empower students to learn by doing.

1. Engaging Storytelling:

This activity immerses students in captivating English stories that align with their interests. These stories will introduce new vocabulary and sentence structures in context, making the language more engaging and memorable.

2. Interactive Language Workshops:

The workshops will feature interactive games and exercises. For instance, a murder mystery game will require students to communicate and collaborate in English to solve the case, enhancing their speaking and listening skills in a dynamic way.

3. Cultural Exchange Projects:

Students will participate in cross-cultural projects where they will connect with students from English-speaking countries. Through video calls and collaborative tasks, they'll learn about each other's cultures while practicing their English communication skills.

4. Virtual Travel Experience:

Using virtual reality, students will "travel" to English-speaking countries, navigating everyday situations like ordering food, asking for directions, and shopping. This will give them a taste of real-life language use.



5. Role-Playing Simulations:

Engage in role-playing simulations of job interviews, debates, and negotiations. These activities will help students build confidence in expressing themselves clearly and convincingly in English.

6. Language in the Arts:

Explore English through art, music, and movies. Students will analyze song lyrics, watch films, and discuss their themes, allowing them to appreciate language nuances and cultural expressions.

7. Outdoor Language Challenges:

Take your learning outside the classroom! Students will conduct interviews, surveys, and scavenger hunts in English. These outdoor activities will enhance their language skills in natural settings.

8. Culinary Language Adventure:

Experience English through food by following recipes and cooking instructions in English. Students will not only learn culinary skills but also expand their vocabulary related to ingredients and cooking techniques.

9: DIY Science Experiments:

Students will engage in hands-on science experiments while using English instructions. This will help them grasp scientific concepts in English and improve their ability to understand and follow procedural instructions.

10: Community Engagement:

Students will contribute to the community by presenting a project entirely in English. Whether it's about environmental awareness or a social issue, they'll learn to express their thoughts and ideas confidently to an audience.

Conclusion: Through this experimental learning activity, students will discover that learning English goes far beyond textbooks. By immersing themselves in diverse and exciting experiences, they'll build language skills that are not only practical but also deeply meaningful.



Activity: English Language Market Day

Introduction: The teacher welcomes the students to English Language Market Day and tells them that today they'll step into the shoes of entrepreneurs and shoppers, all while practicing your English language skills. This interactive activity will immerse them in a real-world scenario where they will negotiate, describe products, and interact with others—all in English.

Activity Setup:

1. Divide the class into groups, with each group representing a stall at a market.
2. Each stall will have a unique theme (e.g., fruits, clothing, electronics), and students will need to prepare products to "sell."
3. Provide a variety of play money for transactions.

Activity Steps:

1. Product Preparation:

- Each group researches and selects products related to their theme.
- They create price tags, product descriptions, and promotional materials, all in English.

2. Setting Up the Market:

- Students set up their stalls in the classroom, displaying their products.
- They decorate their stalls and practice describing their products fluently in English.

3. Shopping and Negotiations:

- Students take turns being shoppers and sellers.
- Shoppers interact with sellers in English, asking questions about products and negotiating prices.

4. Role Rotation:

- After a set time, roles switch, giving everyone a chance to be both a shopper and a seller.

5. Language Challenges:

- Introduce language challenges, like using specific grammar structures or vocabulary in negotiations.

6. Reflection:

- Gather the class and discuss the activity.
- Have students share their experiences, challenges faced, and how they overcame language barriers.

Learning Outcomes:

- Improved spoken English skills through real conversations and negotiations.
- Enhanced vocabulary related to products, shopping, and negotiations.
- Increased confidence in using English in practical situations.
- Strengthened teamwork and collaboration skills.
- Cultural awareness through exposure to various products and negotiation styles.
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Conclusion: English Language Market Day offers an immersive and enjoyable way for students to practice English in a real-world context. By engaging in negotiations, describing products, and interacting with peers, students not only learn the language but also gain valuable life skills. This activity demonstrates that learning English can be exciting and relevant to their everyday lives.



Experiential Learning in Geography Classes

Nicoleta Popa

Geography, the science of the Earth, offers students the opportunity to understand the multitude of natural phenomena that occur around them and affect their lives during class hours. Experiential learning in geography classes leads to the development of various skills in children:

- team communication skills
- analytical abilities and critical thinking
- spontaneity in problem-solving

All of these can be achieved through conducting geographical experiments or simulations in a controlled environment.

Here are some examples of experiential learning activities:

1. The Difference Between Representing the Earth's Surface as a Globe and a Map

- sudents use an inflated balloon;
- they sketch the outline of a continent (e.g., Africa) on the surface of the balloon;
- they deflate the balloon and place it on a table;
- they observe the outline of the continent on the deflated balloon;

Through direct experience, they conclude that a map (which is a representation of the Earth on a flat surface, like the deflated balloon) is a distorted representation of the Earth's surface, while the globe (associated with the inflated balloon) is a representation closer to reality.

2. The Succession of Days and Nights Due to the Earth's Rotational Movement

- students use a globe and a powerful flashlight;
- in a darker space, they direct the lit flashlight towards the globe;
- they rotate the globe from west to east, simulating the rotational movement around its own axis;

- they observe the continent of Africa throughout a complete rotation;
- when the continent of Africa faces the light (associated with the Sun), it is illuminated (daytime), while when it faces away, it is dark (night). Repeating the rotation, they notice the alternation between when the continent is illuminated and when it is dark.

Through direct experience, students conclude that the Earth's rotation causes the succession of day and night.

3.The Role of Oxygen in Sustaining Combustion

- students use a candle and a glass globe;
- they light the candle and observe it burning;
- they cover the lit candle with the glass globe;
- they wait and analyze what happens: the candle burns for a period and then extinguishes.

Students understand the role of oxygen in sustaining combustion: in an environment where air cannot enter, the candle burns until all the oxygen is consumed, after which it extinguishes.

4. Air Movement

- a candle is used in a room where the air temperature is higher than the outside temperature;
- thestudents open the window, light the candle, and place it near the window;
- they observe the candle flame.

Students associate air movement with temperature differences. The flame does not remain still but moves towards the room. They understand that air moves from areas with lower temperatures to areas with higher temperatures, creating winds.

5. The Action of External Morphogenetic Agents on the Relief

- materials used: a tray, sand, and ice cubes;
- sand is shaped into a small mound at one end of the tray;
- ice cubes are placed on top of the sand mound;

- the students wait for the ice to melt and observe what happens.

Students understand how water, as an external morphogenetic factor, shapes landforms. Water infiltrates the sand and flows down the slope, moving some sand particles away from their initial location and accumulating them at a distance from where they originated.

6. Volcanic Eruptions

- materials used: a glass container, clay, baking soda, vinegar, red food coloring;
- students construct a volcanic cone out of clay using an image of a volcano as a model, surrounding the glass container;
- baking soda and food coloring are added to the container;
- when the construction is complete, vinegar is poured into the container.

Students observe how the substance associated with volcanic lava begins to flow from inside the constructed volcano. It can flow down the slopes of the volcano, reaching its base. The "eruption" stops when the pressure inside the matter becomes too low.

Experiential Learning - a Requirement of Contemporary Learning

Iulia Borzan

Experiential learning, or learning through experience, is a process by which the student acquires new knowledge through direct experience, actively engaging in the learning process.

For this, the teacher is obliged to envision a series of interactive methods to stimulate the motivation of their students, which becomes a very important part of learning. Without real, motivated, active participation from the student, this process cannot take place, and it is the teacher's duty to awaken curiosity in their children, leading them to leave the comfort zone of disinterest in classroom activities and guiding them into a world of curiosity to discover on their own.

The era of lectures, dictation, and explanatory approaches from the lectern has long passed - or at least we hope so. The accumulation of knowledge is increasingly abandoning its theoretical nature and focusing on its practical aspect. "How You Learn" has become "How You Live" - learning for life, with real benefits in real life, resulting in better preparation for the future by experiencing situations that future adults will encounter in reality.

When it comes to the fields of science and practical activities, things are clearer. However, the human profile, which includes the study of literature, with its intricate paths that I try to familiarize my students with, raises certain unknowns: what paths should we take to facilitate the achievement of objectives and competencies through what we call experiential learning?

Certainly, to achieve this, it is useful to move the educational process out of the classroom by organizing visits to museums/historical houses, thematic excursions, and cultural exchanges. During such an activity, we visited the memorial house and museum dedicated to a great Romanian storyteller, Ion Creangă, and the children had direct contact with the reality of his era. They were able to understand the narrative and emotions conveyed by the novel studied in class in an empathetic and stimulating manner. Creating an author profile in

Canva based on the information observed "on-site" became an enjoyable task, as the children were curious to discover interesting details about the writer's life in the places they visited and in the museum's presentation.

However, experiential learning can also be achieved in the classroom through various interactive and co-participatory methods designed to pique students' curiosity. Role-playing is one such method that allows children to embody characters, immerse themselves in their roles, and gain a much better, more personal understanding of the relationship between characters, their living environment, and even aspects related to the context of the respective era. Moreover, a notion related to the field of communication, such as dialogue, can be learned through this method, starting from prior experience. Thus, I invited a small group of children to engage in a discussion on a topic of interest to them, during which their peers played the role of observers, paying attention to both verbal and nonverbal language, as well as paraverbal cues. At the end of the dialogue, we shared observations regarding the positive and negative aspects of the exchange of remarks.

In this way, we manage to establish the norms of a polite dialogue following an experience that was occasionally amusing, and the children will be able to consciously apply these rules in their daily lives once they have directly experienced the effects of impoliteness. As a result of this experience, students will deepen their understanding of the norms of respectful dialogue, hopefully avoiding the pitfalls that often accompany conversations among young people: interruptions, raised voices, insults, excessive interjections, off-topic digressions, oral expression errors, etc.

Another method enjoyed by children, in addition to role-playing, could be the literary process. I asked students to interpret various roles and, in this way, form/exercise their own critical thinking. Children filter the behaviour and language of the characters, embodying them and putting themselves in their shoes with the enthusiasm and dedication typical of their age. They defend or accuse the protagonist, participating with their entire being in this imaginary "process," which has the effect of developing critical thinking, stimulating creativity,

assimilating information without taking it "as it is" from various sources, and becoming familiar with certain intricacies of the human soul.

Before judging someone, children have the opportunity to learn in a playful way, to understand, to ask questions, thus avoiding labelling and developing perhaps the most beautiful trait of human nature - empathy.

Games as experiential learning activities

Isabela Constantin

In the academic years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, I had the opportunity to participate in two mobilities within the Erasmus+ strategic partnership "The Future We Choose" (in Portugal and Turkey). During these mobilities, I learned many things about the history, personalities, and traditions of these countries, as well as their education systems. In Portugal, I attended a course on experiential learning, a method that I will try to exemplify through some games I practice in my classes, both in French and as a homeroom teacher.

This type of learning places the students' experience at the center of the learning process, encouraging personal initiative. In practice, experiential learning becomes experiential when elements of reflection, support, and transfer are added to the basic experience, turning a simple activity into a learning opportunity. During an experiential activity, the teacher's role is to find activities that build students' self-confidence. They help students conceptualize their experiences so that they have concrete data on which to draw conclusions and make generalizations. Without reflection, we cannot learn from experience; we can only say that we've experienced it. Therefore, at the end of a game, a reflection moment is crucial. To make this method a relevant learning experience, four stages need to be followed: the stage of experimentation, reflection, generalization, and transfer/application.

Game Title: My Name Represents Me

Time required: maximum 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Writing materials, colored sheets of paper, tape

Game Objectives: By participating in the game, students will be able to:

- Develop their teamwork communication skills.
- Get to know each other better.
- Identify positive personal characteristics.

Game Rules:

- Negative traits are not allowed.

Game Preparation Stage: Students choose a coloured sheet of paper and colours.

Game Description: Each student must write their name and come up with a personal characteristic for each letter of their name. Then, they stick the sheet anywhere in the classroom. Finally, they must explain their choice of color and the location where they placed the sheets. Each student will share their characteristics with the group.

Example : DIANA

Dynamique
Intelligente
Ambitieuse
Noble
Amusante

Reflection and Evaluation Questions:

- Did you enjoy the game?
- Was it difficult to come up with personal characteristics?
- What did you learn from the characteristics shared by your peers?

Generalization and Interpretation:

- Is there something new you discovered about yourself? What about your fellow classmates?
- Do the colours you chose represent anything?
- In what real-life situations have you realized this characteristic about yourself?

Transfer or Application:

How did you find the game? Was it useful? Why?

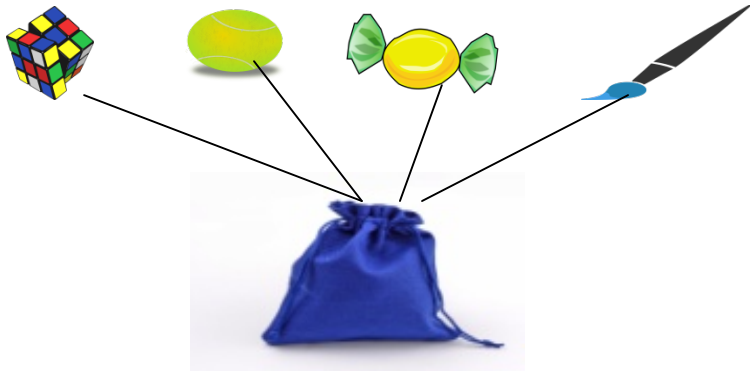
Would you change the order of qualities on your sheet now? Why?

What do you plan for the near future?

Recommendations for Teachers:

Provide words of encouragement to all participants.

Game Title: The Magic Bag



Time Required: Maximum 10 minutes

Materials Needed: Colors, paper bags, various personal objects belonging to students

Game Objectives: By participating in the game, students will be able to:

- Develop their communication skills.
- Get to know each other better at a personal and interpersonal level.

Game Description: Each student receives a medium-sized paper bag that they can decorate as they like. In this bag, each student will place four objects that will help them share a few things about themselves with their classmates. All objects

must fit inside the bag. The next day, the student will bring the bag to school and share a few things about themselves with their classmates.

Reflection and Evaluation Questions:

- Did you enjoy the game?
- How did you feel about talking about yourselves?
- Was it difficult to choose only four objects to represent you?

Generalization and Interpretation:

The teacher can continue the discussion, challenging students to share a real-life experience where they had to make a difficult choice.

Transfer or Application:

What other objects could you have chosen besides the four you picked? Why?

What are your plans for the near future?

In conclusion, we can say that games are very helpful in experiential learning. When students participate in their own learning experiences, they learn better and are more engaged than in other activities.

Role-Playing

Cătălina-Felicia Pleșoiu

Going through four stages - experimentation, reflection, projection, and application - *experiential learning* has the ability to create an upward spiral of learning through action, cooperation and discovery. Experiences are structured to encourage children to take initiative, make decisions and be responsible for outcomes. In doing so, they explore and construct their own values.



For example, role-playing games provide a special opportunity for children to explore different roles, often those of adults or people who are important in their lives.

In drama games, children are actors who create their own characters using expressive means (intonation, mimicry, pantomime).They reproduce their own actions, imitating the character. In the game, the content, roles and actions are conditioned by the subject of certain situations, but reproduction is not strict; it serves as the foundation for improvisation. Improvisation applies not only to the content of the text but also to the children's stage actions. Drama games can be played without spectators or with spectators if done in a simplified theatrical format (stage, curtain, set, costumes etc.).

When playing, young people experiment with the possibility of becoming more flexible in their thinking and problem-solving. School theater's goal is not to train professionals but to educate and instruct students through theater for theater.

Children transform themselves and, at the same time, transform the world they live in. It is said that *you cannot choose a path to the future without knowing your past*. It is our duty to make important events in the history of the nation, acts of bravery and national heroes known to students. How can we not be proud that our country has given the world so many poets, writers, artists, inventors and scientists? The revival of spiritual and cultural values through the presentation of traditions and customs during celebrations represents our connection to the past, to our ancestors.

By involving students in this extracurricular activity, I aimed to encourage their creativity and utilize their free time in a useful and enjoyable way. The goal was to develop the students' creative and interpretative skills. They were put in the position to actively participate in the staging of the presented fragments, as well as in the selection of costumes. In this way, they were able to develop their imagination and artistic sensitivity.

At the same time, through this endeavor, I demonstrated to students that nothing should be lost in culture; everything must be passed on to the next generation, who will embrace and produce beauty from it.



Within the Erasmus+ project "The Future We Choose", we conducted several activity games with children, such as:

- ***Persuade the Audience!***

Before taking on and interpreting a role, students selected information they considered most important and instructive, using both the knowledge acquired in class and consulting additional materials. The students took turns being actors and spectators-commentators. The role was constructed according to the following scheme:

a) Who are they?

b) When and where do they live?

c) Two facts/events they participated in.

d) Why they are considered an important figure?



Fellow spectators were able to make assessments regarding the fluency of the presentation and the actor's persuasive abilities (the power of arguments).

- ***Justify the Decision!***

Aimed at putting the student in a position to play a role, understand the other's way of thinking, and develop critical thinking and creativity. We established the following steps:

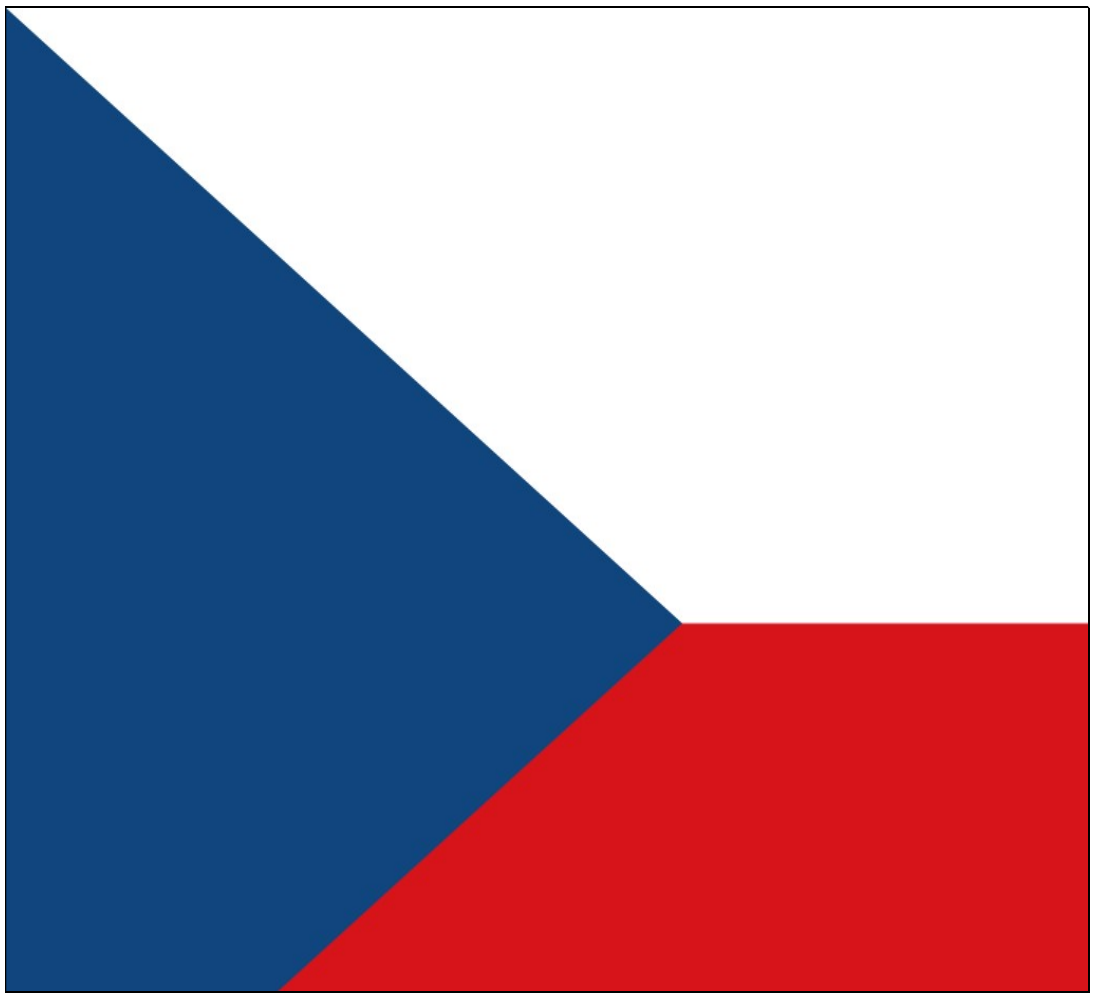
- Each student chose a political figure or a historical event.
- Students wrote three probable reasons that led to the adoption of a decision by the respective personality or triggered an action, event, or fact.
- Each student presented their reasons based on the assumed role.



The roles played by students contribute to the development and enrichment of knowledge about the art of theater through experience. Through these activities within the project, we responded to the interest that children show in the world of national heroes, with their high moral qualities, helping them understand the events: the causes that generate them, their real unfolding, and their consequences.



THE CZECH REPUBLIC





INTRODUCTION

As for us, teachers of the Grammar School of Josef KajetánTyl, we are very well aware of taking themethods of Experiential Learning into consideration asan essential part of a modern approach and education for several reasons, as it offers a dynamic and effective approach to education and personal growth and development. Here are some reasons we bear in mind when applying experiential learning to the existing as well as new projects at our school.

It is our pleasure to introduce to you the following "Ten Commandments" that follow the principles of Experiential Learning taught and created by: **Lukáš Merkl, Petr Dohnal, František Jahnátek, Alex Bonomini Bláha, Libor Hanzlíček, Tomáš Kotler, Soňa Čapková, Michal Dočekal, Iveta Krausová, Lukáš Bohuslav** and many others.

1. **Active Engagement**

Experiential learning engages learners actively in the learning process. Instead of passively receiving information, students participate in activities, experiments and real-world experiences, which can lead to better retention and understanding of the material.



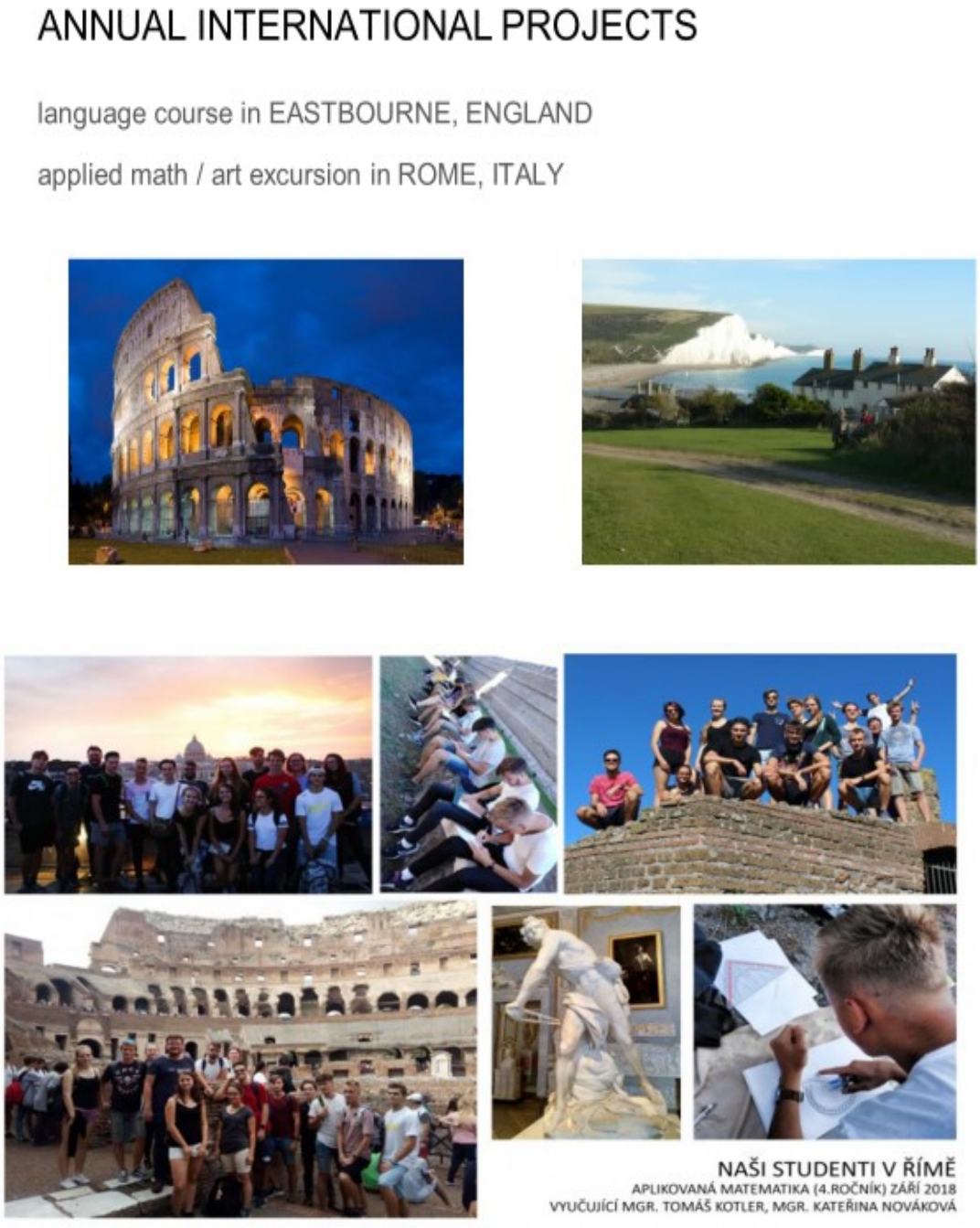





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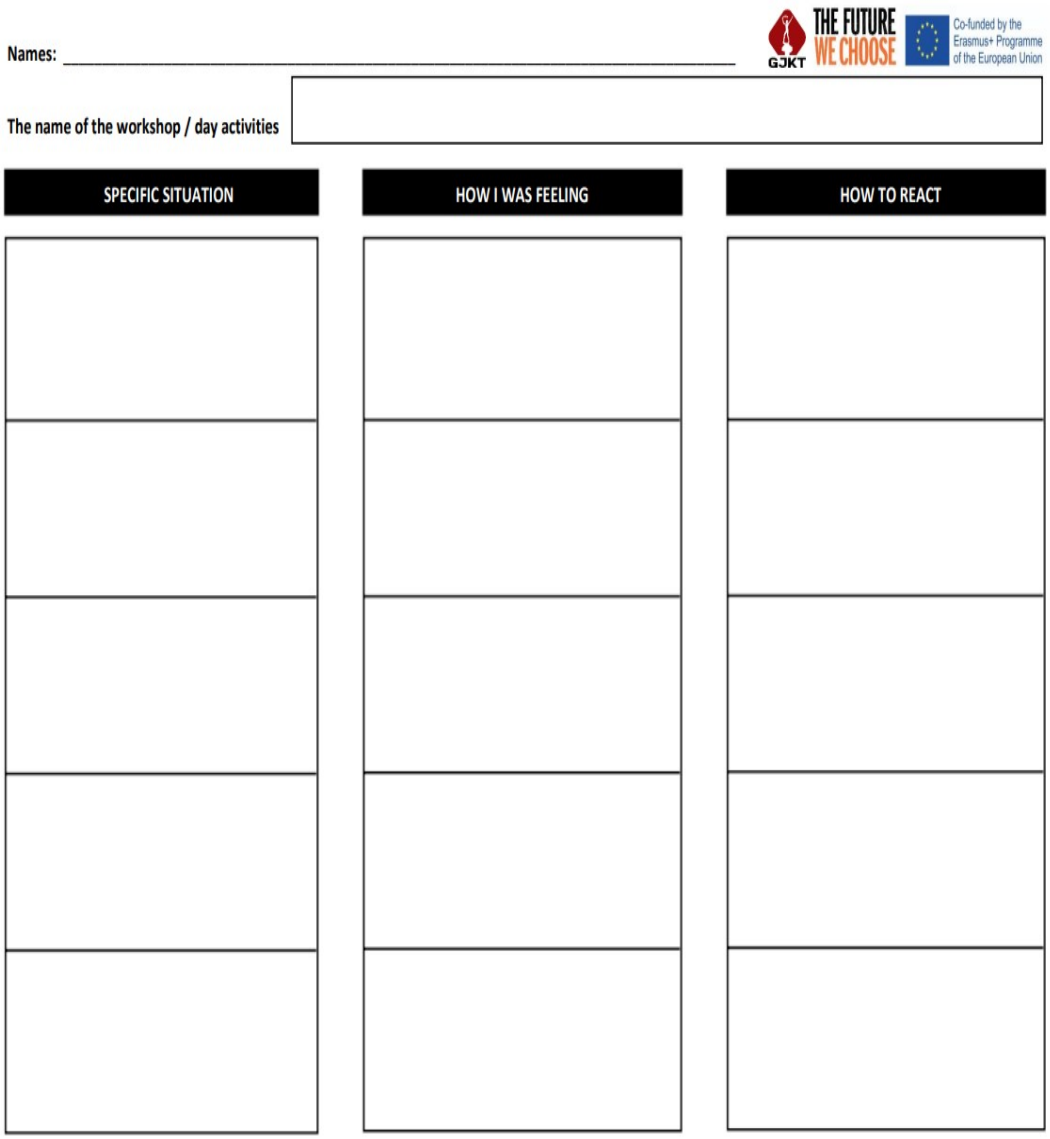
2. Practical Application

It allows learners to apply theoretical knowledge in practical situations. This helps bridge the gap between theory and practice, making the learning more relevant and useful in real-life scenarios.



3. Personalized Learning

This approach of the Experiential Learning can be tailored to individual learning styles and preferences. Learners can choose projects or experiences that align with their interests and goals, making the learning process more meaningful and motivating.



Names: _____

GJKT THE FUTURE WE CHOOSE Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

The name of the workshop / day activities	

SPECIFIC SITUATION	HOW I WAS FEELING	HOW TO REACT




WIEN

4. **Skill Development**

Experiential learning helps develop a wide range of skills, including communication, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, and creativity. These skills are highly valuable in both academic and professional settings.

ANNUAL DOMESTIC PROJECT

MY SCHOOL – a week project about successful graduates and sought after personalities of our grammar school





5. Critical Thinking

Experiential Learning encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills. When faced with real challenges or situations, learners must think critically to find solutions and make decisions, fostering intellectual growth.



EXPERIENCE PRAGUE

INSTRUCTIONS:

1) Go to all the places marked on the map in any order.
2) Which photograph was taken there?
3) Which term and quote do you think fits best with the atmosphere of the place?
4) Vote for the quote that best summarizes your experience of Prague.
5) Mark the answers on the separate answer sheet.

Prague never lets you go... this dear little mother has sharp claws. -Franz Kafka

In Prague, they hanged the Socialists and the priests. Thus a fraternity of the hanged was born. -Milan Kundera

People who prefer e-books...think that books merely take up space. This is true, but so do your children and Prague and the Sistine Chapel. -Joe Queenan

Prague was ideal, Prague was absolutely ideal because thanks to communist inefficiency the 18th century was untouched. -Milos Forman





QUOTES ABOUT PRAGUE:

In Rome, the statues, in Paris the paintings, and in Prague the buildings suggest that pleasure can be an education. –Caleb Crain








te se PRAVDY


JALTA


Bata

QUOTES TO MATCH WITH THE PHOTOS:

a) "People must fight against the evil they feel equal to measure up to at that moment."
b) "Wealth cannot exist where the people are busy with mutual cheating, have no time for creating values and wealth."
c) "The human race, whose intelligence dates back only a single tick of the astronomical clock, could hardly hope to understand so soon what it all means."
d) "If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree."
e) "Seek the truth, hear the truth, learn the truth, love the truth, speak the truth, hold the truth and defend the truth until death".
f) "It began with the division of Europe. It can only end when Europe is whole."
g) "God has not created poverty.....it is we who have created it."

THE TERMS TO MATCH WITH THE QUOTES ABOVE AND THE PHOTOS:

Power
Mortality
Enterprise
Cold War
Despair
Reform
Pride

ANSWER SHEET:

Photo number:	Quote letter:	Term:	Place on the map

And your favourite quote about Prague is...

6. Emotional Intelligence

Experiential Learning enhances emotional intelligence by allowing learners to navigate and understand their own emotions and those of others in real-world contexts.

EXPERIENCE THE ROYAL CITY

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GJKT THE FUTURE WE CHOOSE

- Cooperate with your buddies in the group to accomplish the following tasks.
- Photo-document your tasks on your phones – send the pictures to the WhatsApp group.
- Always remember to speak English so everybody can understand.
- After completing the tasks, meet us at 14:20 in front of the school (watch the time)

1 ARCHITECTURAL MUST-SEES

- Groups explore the city - go for a short walking tour around the city centre, + take thematic photos with the most impressive historical sights and share it in the WhatsApp group.
- Suggestions – visit the Main Square, White Tower, The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bono Publico staircase playing music, Plague Column, Old City gardens etc.

2 MEET LOCALS

- Teach and encourage foreign students to speak Czech, foreign students try and talk to Czech people, ask them for directions, time, order in a Café, have fun dealing with the tricky Czech language.

3 SWEET TOOTH

- Go grab a coffee/dessert – chill & chat, enjoy your time off with your new friends.

4 ANIMAL HUNT

- Take a picture with an animal acting as if you were an animal of the same kind.

GOOD LUCK & HAVE FUN!

7. **Holistic Learning**

Experiential Learning promotes holistic development by addressing cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of learning. This approach recognizes that education is not just about acquiring knowledge but also about personal growth and development.



8. Diversity and inclusion

Experiential Learning can be inclusive and accommodating to diverse learners, as it offers multiple ways to engage with the material, reducing barriers to learning for individuals with different learning styles and needs.

22 July

22 July is a 2018 American crime drama film about the 2011 Norway attacks and their aftermath, based on the book One of Us: The Story of a Massacre in Norway — and Its Aftermath by Åsne Seierstad.



The 2011 Norway attacks, referred to in Norway as 22 July were two sequential domestic terrorist attacks by Anders Behring Breivik against the government, the civilian population, and a Workers' Youth League summer camp, in which 77 people were killed.

1

Before watching the movie, here is a capture from ABS News from 2011 right after the accident happened

Norway Victims Begged Shooter for Their Lives

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOpfnAcuTDk

2



After watching, here is a genuine witness confession and an article comparing to what extent the film is authentic, showing the real people and including everything that was missed out in the movie.

Victims´ confession

Norway's New Dawn - Extended Interview with Ylva Schwenke

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiAhOZsg5aU

Movie vs reality

https://www.historyvshollywood.com/reelfaces/22-july/

3

Record, video shoot, or write down your answer for the following questions:

a) How do you feel about the movie?
b) Does the movie help people to be prepared for critical situations?
c) Try to process how you might react in a situation like that? Would you hide, pretend to be dead, try to help the others, attack the terrorist, try to escape swimming across the lake…?
d) Could something have been done better/differently to safe more people or avoid the attack?
e) What security measures should be created to prevent similar situations in the future?
f) Do you know any other tragedy similar to this one caused by radical extremists?

9. **Real-World Understanding**

Experiential Learning enables a deeper understanding of complex concepts by allowing learners to experience them first-hand. This can lead to a more profound appreciation of various subjects.

IF YOU WERE A HEADMASTER...

How would you describe your school?



In what ways is the school doing well?

How is GJKT doing compared to other schools?

What would you like to change in your school?

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

And how would you change it?

IF YOU WERE A MAYOR...



How would you describe your city?

In what ways is the mayor / city doing well?

How is Hradec doing compared to other cities?

...and what about Pardubice?

What would you change in your city?

-
-
-
-
-
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How would you change it?

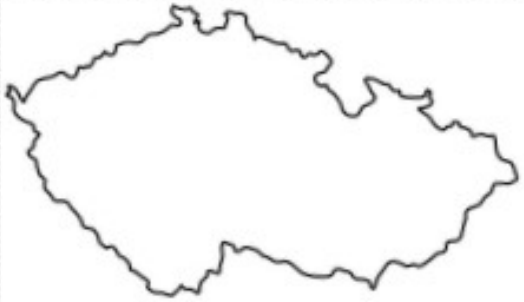
10. Career Readiness

Experiential Learning can prepare individuals for their future careers by providing them with practical skills, industry knowledge, and professional networks.



The Czech Republic





"Where my home is,
where my homeland is,
Water roars across the meadows,
Pinewoods rustle among crags,
The garden is glorious
with spring blossom,
Paradise on earth it is to see.
And this is that beautiful land"

Another fateful year for the country´s democracy began in January 1968. Heading up the Communist Party was newly elected first secretary Alexander Dubček. It seemed the party was ready for a renewal process and to open self-criticism. However, Soviets took a radical step. The 'fraternal' armies of the Warsaw Pact crossed the borders just after midnight on 21 August 1968, to restore the order in our country. Socialism with a human face never got its chance.

The coming of political changes in Europe loosened the strong bonds of the pro-Soviet block. They still denied civil initiatives, with no chance of a more liberal approach to social events, as confirmed by brutal police intervention on Wenceslas Square in January 1989. Only after the fall of the Berlin wall, the events in Poland and Hungary, and in particular the actions of Prague students on 17 November 1989 did the Communist leaders respond. The fall of this old guard was accelerated by their needlessly tough reaction to a peaceful student rally. This at once helped to form the Civic Forum, whose drive to take power was crowned with success when in December 1989 Václav Havel was elected the President. Later, on 1 January 1993, the world map acquired two new States.





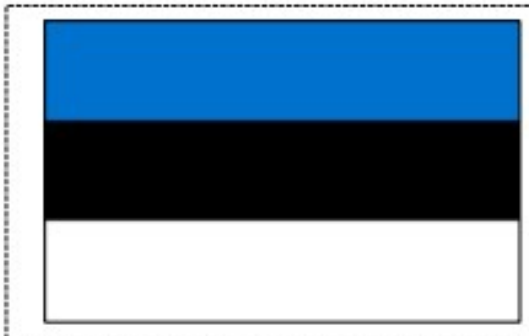


NATIONAL ISSUES – THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Write down the biggest threats The Czech Republic is dealing with inside the map of the country. Include the most recent dangers as well as the general ones.



ESTONIA



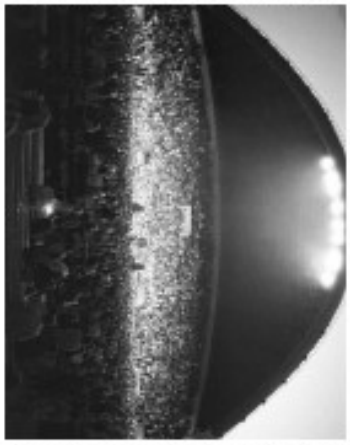


"My native land, my joy - delight,
How fair thou art - how bright!
For nowhere in the world around
Can ever such a place be found
So well beloved, from sense profound,
My native country dear!"

After World War II, the Baltic states had been fully incorporated into the USSR after military occupation and annexation first in 1940 and then again in 1944. The "Five Patriotic Songs" series by Alo Mattiisen premiered at the Tartu Pop Festival in May 1988. In June the Old Town Festival was held in Tallinn, and after the official part of the festival, the participants moved to the Song Festival Grounds and started to sing patriotic songs together spontaneously. The Baltic Way, a human chain of two million people, spanned from Tallinn to Vilnius on 23 August 1989.

The Singing Revolution lasted over four years, with various protests and acts of resistance. In 1991, as Soviet tanks attempted to stop the progress towards independence, the Supreme Soviet together with the Congress of the country proclaimed the restoration of the independent state. People acted as human shields to protect radio and TV stations from the Soviet tanks. Through these actions the country regained its independence without any bloodshed. Independence was declared on the late evening of 20 August 1991, after an agreement between different political parties was reached. The next morning Soviet troops, according to Estonian TV, attempted to storm Tallinn TV Tower but were unsuccessful.







NATIONAL ISSUES - ESTONIA

Write down the biggest threats Estonia is dealing with inside the map of the country. Include the most recent dangers as well as the general ones.



PORTUGAL





"Heroes of the sea, noble people,
Valiant and immortal nation,
Raise once again today
The splendour of [redacted]*!*
Among the haze of memory,
Oh Fatherland, one feels the voice
Of your distinguished forefathers,
That shall lead you on to victory!"

The Overseas War for the fascist regime, the War of Liberation for the former colonies in Africa that fought their way to freedom or, simply put, the Colonial War. It was a 13-year-long conflict fought between the country's military and the emerging nationalist movements in the country's African colonies between 1961 and 1974.

This war emerged due to the government's refusal to allow the autonomy and independence of African colonies and the war broke out on three fronts: Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique.

The defiance from the ultraconservative regime at the time, the Estado Novo, led to the growth and rise of nationalist movements in the colonies during the 50s and the 60s. However, the regime was overthrown by a military coup in 1974, the Carnation Revolution, and the change in government brought the conflict to an end. In thirteen years of combat, 7% of the active population of this country fought in the war that cost 40% of the Government Budget, about 8000 civilian lives and more than 100 000 got seriously injured or incapacitated.









NATIONAL ISSUES - Portugal

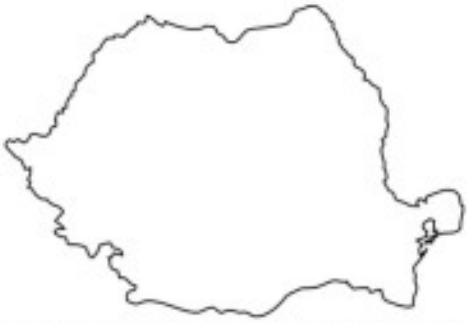
THE FUTURE WE CHOOSE

Write down the biggest threats Portugal is dealing with inside the map of the country. Include the most recent dangers as well as the general ones.



ROMANIA





"Redeem yourself [redacted]
from the sleep of death
you've been sunken
in by the barbarian tyrants!
Now or never, it's time
to sew yourself a destiny,
all your enemies should adore!"

Starting about 1980s until December 1989. The Communist Party and its head Nicolae Ceausescu decided that they need to rationalize basic food supplies, gas and electricity. Basic food such as beans, potatoes, cabbage, eggs, milk, meat, etc were nowhere to be found. Each person in the country, was "entitled" to purchase only 1 litre of oil and 1 kg of sugar per month, rationalized with cards. Food was simply missing from all stores; all shelves were empty.

The government was turning off natural gas and electricity for several hours each day between 5PM and 8PM in the name of "saving electricity". It is said that people have died of cold in the winter, or trapped in elevators because they happened to be there when the electricity was cut-off.

There were only two TV channels in the entire country - TVR1 and TVR2, owned by the state. No private TV channels. They would broadcast only 2 hours per day, between 8PM and 10PM - only news about the Communist Party or political.

After several years of this regime, every single day, people had enough got out in the streets and took down the government.







NATIONAL ISSUES - Romania

Write down the biggest threats Romania is dealing with inside the map of the country. Include the most recent dangers as well as the general ones.



TURKEY





"It is the star of my people, which shall shine;
It is mine; it only belongs to my people.
Frown not, I beseech thou,
oh thou coy crescent!
Smile upon my heroic nation once!
What is this violence, what is this rage for?
Our blood which we shed
for you shall not be worthy afterwards…
Freedom is the right
of my God-worshipping people."

The 1980 coup d'état headed by Chief of the General Staff General Kenan Evren, was the third coup d'état in the history of the country.

The public knew something was wrong when tanks rolled through the streets and soldiers sternly told those who were outdoors in the early morning to return home, but the coup really unfolded when Kenan Evren, then the chief of the general staff, read out over the radio that the army had seized control, making the "declaration" of the military-run National Security Council (MGK).

The coup that changed the lives of millions was the last "done in the chain of command," and today is remembered for its torture, civilian mistreatment and human rights violations that followed it.

The junta also ordered the detention of 650,000 people. Some 230,000 were put on trial and courts asked for the execution of more than 7,000, although only 517 people were sentenced to death and 50 were hanged. Another 14,000 people lost their citizenship, while 30,000 more lost their jobs due to blacklisting by the junta. Among them were teachers, academics and journalists.







NATIONAL ISSUES - Turkey

THE FUTURE WE CHOOSE

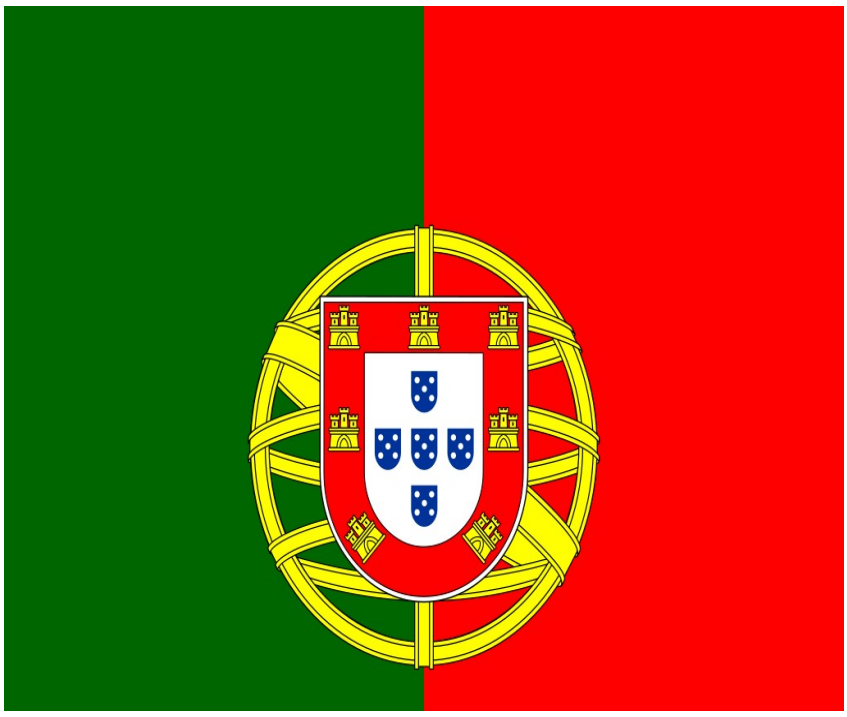
Write down the biggest threats Turkey is dealing with inside the map of the country. Include the most recent dangers as well as the general ones.



CONCLUSION

In summary, Experiential Learning is essential because it offers a dynamic and effective way to educate and develop individuals, promoting active engagement, critical thinking, practical skills, and personal growth. It helps bridge the gap between theory and practice, making education more relevant and impactful in the real world.

PORTUGAL



An example of school work in Philosophy using experiential learning

By Mr.Teodósio, J. (Philosophy teacher)

Examples: an experiential learning (of Philosophy)

Valuing students' <u>experiences</u> for the consolidation of learning

- **Starting from life experiences and the experiences that students have**, in relation to some of the subject contents
- **Value students' contributions, which will be subjected to further reflection**.

An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

Operational example:

- Working groups formed.
- Maximum 3 or 4 students a group.
- Curricular contents of the 10th grade: **Logical Argumentation and Speech.**

TASK:

- *Identify, in some **speeches** that you have recalled (in sports, politics, advertisements) the fallacies that may be present on them.*
- *Explain, in your own words, what they consist of and the intention of the speaker using them.*

An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

- This implies students to remember and reflect about a realistic situation that may demonstrate, after students' self-inspection, the validity of the argumentation in a given speech.

- The group will carry out an analysis and reflection on the chosen speech and assess its quality, regarding the logic argumentation.

- Requires previous readings in the manual and guidance from the teacher.

- It's expected that, later, this task prepares them for the refusal of invalid, false and therefore fallacious speeches in real life.

FINAL PRODUCT:

Writing a Dictionary of Fallacies, published in *Moodle platform,* whose technical terms to be defined are the fallacies explained from the cases analyzed in the speeches chosen by the students.

An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

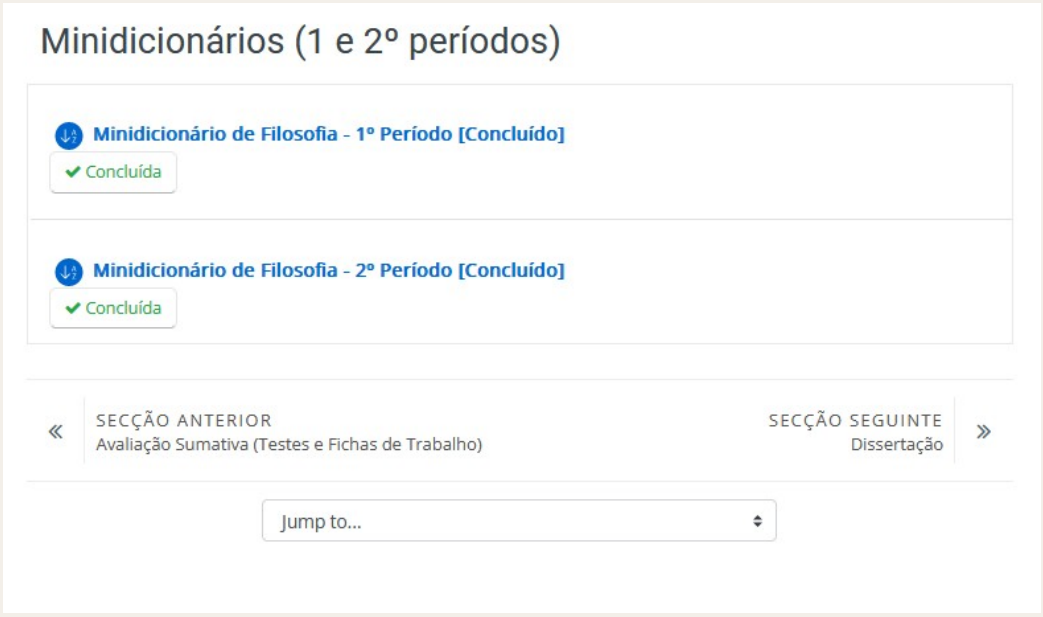
FINAL PRODUCT:

Writing a *Dictionary of Philosophy*, published in *Moodle platform*, whose "technical" terms to be defined are also the fallacies explained from the cases analyzed in the speeches chosen by the students.

The Dictionary is shared by all the students of the same level and may work as a self-made school manual under several specific subject contents.

An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

An example of a dictionary of Philosophy,* published in *Moodle platform, written by the students:



An experiential learning (of Philosophy)



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Examples: an experiential learning (of Philosophy)

Valuing students' experiences for the consolidation of learning

- **10th grade. Unit:** argumentation and rhetoric. The means of rhetorical persuasion proposed by Aristotle: *ethos, logos and pathos*.

- **Clarifying** students about the importance of rhetoric in today's world, especially in the fields of politics and justice in democratic societies with market economies.

- It is suggested the integration of the subjects of Law, Economics and Portuguese, **taking into account today's scenario of curricular flexibility**.

An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

Proposed learning situation:

- use the Philosphy contents to **make a film or poster in order to persuade an audience using Aristotle rethorical strategies.**

<u>Themes proposed by the students for films and /or posters</u>:

- **Fire prevention; alcohol and driving prevention; improve the environment condition, preventing domestic violence or *bullying*; promotion of tourism in the region; promotion of healthier lifestyles**, (…).
- Need to carry out are search, outside the scope of the subject, regarding current *marketing* and advertising techniques. Interactions with other school subjects are expected.

An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

Criteria:

- **It has to include one of the means of persuasion suggested by Aristotle.**
- It has to include, implicitly or explicitly, one of the three studied non-deductive arguments.
- **It may include, if necessary, one or more of the informal fallacies studied before.**
- It reveals creativity.
- It reveals clear and correct Portuguese text in syntax, punctuation and spelling.

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An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

- Students have about a month to complete their work.
- Presentation to the class (or other classes) of the final product (10 to 15 minutes).
- The presentation of the works to the class or to other classes requires that, at the end of the presentation of the final product, the group explains to the class(es) what were the main persuasion strategies that are present (according to Aristotle's proposals) and were used, as well as the typification of arguments present in the work.
- Classmates who attend the presentation can ask for clarification regarding the effectiveness of the means of persuasion used and suggest alternatives.

Examples: an experiential learning (of Philosophy)

Involving students in carrying out (valuable) projects

The class as an opportunity for involvement in **actions with value** that may make the world socially fairer.

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An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

Activity (learning situation) to be proposed:

Contents to be learned: Values. (10th grade):

1 –**Identifying and analyzing** cases of human rights violations in 20xx, according to **Amnesty International**.

2 – Groups of students write an **argumentative text** aimed to persuade countries governments, where there are evident situations of Human Rights violations, to change their practices.

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An experiential learning (of Philosophy)

Action in the Value Project

3 –Inclusion in the **Amnesty International** project, Marathon of *Letters*: it consists of sending signed postcards to Government officials in countries where situations violating human rights are identified and denounced. So:

The students involved in the activity include their texts in this project and the school sends them to Amnesty International, who will take them to their destination.

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Example of the Marathon of Letters, by Amnisty International in 2018: the cases of the year

MARATONA DE CARTAS 2018

RESISTIMOS JUNTOS, VENCEMOS JUNTOS

OS CASOS DA MARATONA DE CARTAS



Atena Daemi – Irão

Tal como tantas outras pessoas, Atena Daemi sonha com o fim da pena de morte no Irão. Criticou o recorde de execuções do país nas redes sociais, distribuiu panfletos e participou num protesto pacífico contra a execução de uma jovem mulher, entre outras ações.

Inacreditavelmente estas simples ações foram usadas como "provas" para a condenar a sete anos de prisão. O seu julgamento demorou apenas 15 minutos e, já na prisão, foi alvo de ataques violentos e degradantes. É mais um exemplo cruel de como o Irão silencia o ativismo pacífico. Atena Daemi deve ser libertada hoje!



Marielle Franco – Brasil

Marielle Franco lutou destemidamente por um Rio de Janeiro mais justo. Lutou por mulheres negras, pessoas LGBTI, jovens e condenou as execuções ilegais cometidas pela polícia. Infelizmente foi silenciada, assassinada a tiro no seu carro. Uma ação que faz parte de uma tendência no Brasil, onde pelo menos 70 defensores de direitos humanos foram mortos em 2017. No Brasil, as pessoas que defendem os direitos humanos vivem com um medo permanente. Queremos justiça por Marielle Franco!



Nonhle Mbuthuma – África do Sul


RESISTIMOS
JUNTOS
VENCEMOS
JUNTOS
MARATONA
DE CARTAS
www.amnistia.pt/euassino
GERALDINE
CHACÓN
MARIELLE
FRANCO
VITALINA
AMNISTIA


RESISTIMOS
JUNTOS
VENCEMOS

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TURKEY



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN OUR SCHOOL

Burcu Sen, Yasemın Rruga,

Elif Acar, Munevver Durmus

What is Experiential Learning and Why Is It Important?

Experiential learning is an engaged learning process whereby students "learn by doing" and by reflecting on the experience. Experiential learning activities can include, but are not limited to, hands-on laboratory experiments, internships, practicums, field exercises, study abroad, undergraduate research and studio performances.

Well-planned, supervised and assessed experiential learning programs can stimulate academic inquiry by promoting interdisciplinary learning, civic engagement, career development, cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional and intellectual skills.

How does it work? What do the students' gain?

D. A. Kolb's cycle of learning depicts the experiential learning process. This process includes the integration of:

- knowledge—the concepts, facts, and information acquired through formal learning and past experience;
- activity—the application of knowledge to a "real world" setting; and
- reflection—the analysis and synthesis of knowledge and activity to create new knowledge"

Experiential learning opportunities exist in a variety of course- and non-course-based forms and may include community service, service-learning, undergraduate research, study abroad/away, and culminating experiences such as internships, student teaching, and capstone projects, to name a few.

When students participate in experiential education opportunities, they gain:

- A better understanding of course material
- A broader view of the world and an appreciation of community
- Insight into their own skills, interests, passions, and values
- Opportunities to collaborate with diverse organizations and people
- Positive professional practices and skill sets
- The gratification of assisting in meeting community needs
- Self-confidence and leadership skills

What does experiential learning look like?

Experiential learning has the following elements:

- Experiences are carefully chosen for their learning potential (i.e. whether they provide opportunities for students to practice and deepen emergent skills, encounter novel and unpredictable situations that support new learning, or learn from natural consequences, mistakes, and successes).
- Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning, and is challenged to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results.
- Reflection on learning during and after one's experiences is an integral component of the learning process. This reflection leads to analysis, critical thinking, and synthesis (Schon, 1983; Boud, Cohen, & Walker, 1993).
- Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, and/or physically, which produces a perception that the learning task is authentic.
- Relationships are developed and nurtured: learner to self, learner to others, and learner to the world at large.

During experiential learning**,** the faciltiators role is to**:**

- Select suitable experiences that meet the criteria above.
- Pose problems, set boundaries, support learners, provide suitable resource, ensure physical and emotional safety, and facilitate the learning process.
- Recognize and encourage spontaneous opportunities for learning, engagement with challenging situations, experimentation (that does not jeopardize the wellbeing of others) and discovery of solutions.
- Help the learner notice the connections between one context and another, between theory and the experience and encouraging this examination repeatedly.

EXPERİENTİAL LEARNİNG PRACTİCES AT OUR SCHOOL, SYG KAIH HİGH SCHOOL

Our school includes courses in social sciences and mathematics, as well as science courses. The main reason for this is the course choices of the students. Therefore, our experiential learning activities have been focused on social science. Volunteer students, volunteers and teachers who are experts in the field were included in these activities. The experiential learning activities we carried out in our school as part of the "The Future We Choose" project:

1- Pros and Gain Grid,
2- 2- Field Trip Activities,
3- 3- Cross Age Peer Tutoring,
4- 4- Growing Conditions and
5- 5- Role Playing.

Detailed descriptions and images of these events are given below.

1-Pro and Con Grid

The Pro andCon Grid involves students developing a list of advantages and disadvantages about a suitable issue related to your lesson, helping them to see a topic from different angles and to develop skills in analysis and evaluation.

Activity

1-After students have finished an assign mentor lesson plan, identify a topic in the lesson that is **open-ended** – suitable for discussion and debate–teachers served as an appropriate subject fo rbuilding a list of advantages/disadvantages.

2-The teachers divided students into groups and specify how many pros and cons you would like each group to come up with and allowed ten minutes for students to discuss and write down the list of pros and cons

3-The teachers used the remainder of the activity's time to ask for each group to goover their list. They brought attention to pros and cons that are similar, andnote how manytimes they had appeared across different groups to emphasize their importance.

Benefits

By allowing students to takeup a position that might not have aligned with their original point of view – and by encouraging them to look at a topic from different angles – you are driving them to approach a lesson or assignment in a dynamic, original way.

This activity also touches on a few other properties of experiential learning, helping students to:

- **Become engaged** intellectually, emotionally, andsocially
- **Take initiative**, make decisions, and feel accountable for the results of thea ctivity
- **Synthesize observations and reflections** in a new way, opening up different interpretations of course material
- **Learn from the natural consequences** of group debate and discussion, opening a healthy platform for dialogue where students feel they are allowed to make mistakes.


TRAKYA
"EDİRNE'DEN DÜNYA'YA
KARDEŞLİK TOHUMLARI"


TRAKYA
"EDİRNE'DEN DÜNYA'YA
KARDEŞLİK TOHUMLARI"
EDİRNE



2-Field Trip Activities

Field trips are an effective platform for experiential learning activities because they let students bridge educational experiences to actual settings.

Be mindful that a field trip where students are simply talked to by a guide or teacher often doesn't qualify as true experiential learning.

A field trip that correctly activates experiential learning requires some preparation and interaction from the teacher.

Sample Activity

1. After completing a science unit on animal habitats, ensure that your students are familiar with what components of survival are necessary for different types of animals.

2. Visit a local zoo! Have your students apply their learnings by encouraging a collective commentary on each animal exhibit and how it displays important components of survival like habitat and animal adaptations.

Benefits

Instead of simply internalizing material in a textbook, this example shows how a field trip helps students:

- Apply what they've learned first hand
- Create new connections and reinforce the lessons they've learned by putting the mind to practice in a fun, engaging context





3-Cross-Age Peer Tutoring

Cross-agepeertutoring is an approach to peer learning where one student instructs another on material in which the first student is proficient and these condstudent is a novice.

Activity

1. The teacher decided which role your student will take: tutorortutee.
2. The teacher connected with the teacher of a class in a higher or lower grade who is open to the activity. In general, a range of two to three grades higher or lower will work well. He/She selected a student from each class and pair them together.
3. The teacher chose a topic or lesson plan for the students to discuss. While we were welcome topick any lesson for the activity, subjects that had been shown to be suitable for cross-age peer tutoring include: number sense and numeration, identification of sightwords, vocabulary, and general reading skills.
4. The teacher explained to both students that the activity is an open conversation, and questions from both participants are encouraged. He/She facilitated this by asking the students to come up with three things the tutee learned during the activity.
5. After the allotted time, He/She followed up with the students to discuss their questions and gain an idea of how the process went.

Benefits

Overall, peer learning activities can give students a range of advantages, including increased literacy scores, improved comfort and openness, and enhanced critical thinking skills.

Encouraging a student to devle into a given selection of educational content to explain it to a colleague can help both participants:

- Question each other’s views and reach their own consensus
- Develop skills in the planning and organization of learning activities
- Give and receive feedback to evaluate their own learning
- Put into practice the knowledge and skills they have been developing through more traditional teaching methods



4-Growing Conditions

A fun experiential learning activity to incorporate into science lessons deals with growing conditions. Have students plant seeds outside and inside the classroom. Have them observe the differences that happen between the two environments. Letting students take their plants home at the end of a unit is another fun bonus to this activity.







5-**Role Play**

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

Facilitate Success: Role plays give students opportunities to reflect on learning in a way that makes tacit knowledge much more explicit and engaging. What could be perceived as complex or ambiguous concepts can become much more real once a student assumes a role and is able to apply theory to actual practice.

Scaffolding/Coaching: Role-play is a unique technique instructors can use to gradually increase complexity in their courses by creating scenarios that align with course objectives, build time for students to reflect on learning and model certain processes, and have students overall build agency within their discipline or interests.

Assessments as learning*:* By taking on the role of another person, roleplays lead to more reflection and awareness of learning.



BELGIUM



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT OLVE (Edegem, Belgium) after and before the staff training in Portugal 2022

Thomas Onzia

An experiential learning school is an educational institution that places a strong emphasis on experiential learning as a core pedagogical approach. Experiential learning is a philosophy of education that emphasizes hands-on, active, and immersive learning experiences as opposed to traditional lecture-based or theoretical instruction.

After the staff training we experienced in Portugal we try to implement them in our existing project and future projects.

Experiential learning at school teaches us that students learn best when they actively engage in real-world experiences. This can include projects, field trips, internships, and other hands-on activities. At our school we organise a lot of those activities to encourage those experiences. E.g. In the 6the year we have a three days science programme in the Ardennes where we go with them and discover into nature.

Reflection: Reflection is a crucial component of experiential learning. Students are encouraged to reflect on their experiences, identify what they learned, and how they can apply that knowledge in different contexts. Peer group evaluation is a standard way for our students to evaluate the teacher and themselves. Students are encouraged to be active participants in their learning rather than passive recipients of information. They may collaborate with peers, solve real problems, and make decisions in authentic situations. Also a lot of extra scholar project gives them the change to make those decisions. Through project-based learning, a common method in experiential learning schools students work on long-term projects that require research,

problem-solving, and creativity. Also the individualized learning comes in those projects. Experiential learning schools often tailor learning experiences to the individual needs and interests of students, allowing them to pursue their passions and strengths.

We have and will have a lot of projects working on these methods. Students are working on themselves on a dance project with a live band. At the end of the year they organise their own prom. Music festivals, theatre projects and workgroups around themes like the environment, lgbtq, …. are common at our school.

Experiential learning often involves partnerships with the local community, businesses, or organizations. This fosters a sense of civic engagement and social responsibility. If you live so close to a big city as Antwerp it is obvious that we go there to connect with the real world. The real-World relevance creates experiential learning and is designed to connect classroom learning to real-world applications. It helps students see the practical relevance of what they are learning.

In addition to academic knowledge, experiential learning schools emphasize the development of practical skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork. During classes or debating groups those skills are worked out. Our schools aim to install a love of learning and a mindset of continuous learning, preparing students for a rapidly changing world. The goal is to create engaging and meaningful educational experiences that better prepare students for future success.

Our school is also involved in international projects and can offer students a dynamic and immersive educational experience. Our school has a lot of educational trips and exchanges abroad. In the 4th year a three day cultural visit to London is in the curriculum. Same for the 5th year, but in Paris. In the last year the students can go on a 10 day travel to Italy where they can experience the old Roman empire and the modern Italy. Of course we are already involved in official and unofficial exchanges with other schools. Especially the just finished 2020- I-RO01-KA229-080161 programme (with Belgium, Romania,

The Czech Republic, Turkey, Estonia and Portugal) made a lot of our students and teachers better experiential persons.

Benefits we implemented here:

International projects expose students to diverse cultures, fostering cultural understanding and empathy. This firsthand experience can help break down stereotypes and promote tolerance. Great to see our students connect with countries from whole Europe.

Students gain a broader, more global perspective on the issues they're studying. They see how concepts in subjects like science, history, or social studies have real-world implications in different parts of the world. This provides a deep cultural immersion experience and fosters long-lasting international friendships.

Engaging in international projects can improve language skills, as students may need to communicate with peers in different languages. This can be especially valuable in language acquisition programs. Their English improved a lot.

Experiential learning often involves solving real-world problems. When students work on international projects, they learn to tackle complex, global challenges collaboratively. Other countries, other customs and habits. Very interesting to see them evolve here.

International projects can cut across various disciplines, encouraging students to apply knowledge from multiple subjects to solve complex, real-world issues. Other languages but also more travelling, visiting other places, IT makes the homo universali. Also virtual exchange programs made the students collaborate with peers from other countries through video conferencing, email, and online platforms.

This project encourages students to participate in collaborative research projects with international partners. These projects can focus on various subjects, from environmental science to social issues. They are done in collaboration with the community service by engaging in international service projects. Students can contribute to community development initiatives in other countries while learning about the local culture and challenges. The visit to our major and the European

Parliament was definitely a game changer. Integrate global issues into the curriculum and create awareness campaigns. These initiatives can raise students' consciousness about international challenges, such as climate change, poverty, or human rights

Also the parents and Community benefit from this experience. Parents and the local community (e.g. our major) were involved in international projects. They can provide support, resources, and even host international students, enhancing the overall experience.

Incorporating experiential learning with international projects requires careful planning, coordination, and support from educators, administrators, and parents. When executed effectively, these initiatives can significantly enrich teachers' and students' education, fostering global awareness, cultural competence, and a sense of responsibility toward the world at large

But also outside the Erasmus+ programme our students and personnel have the chance to develop themselves outside Belgium.

We encourage students to participate in national international academic competitions, such as science Olympiads, math competitions, or language contests. These events often involve collaboration with peers from other countries.

Teachers Online International Courses. Partner with schools or organizations that offer online courses with an international focus. This allows teachers to engage in cross-cultural learning from the comfort of their own classrooms.

As a conclusion you can say when our students participate in experiential education opportunities, they gain:

- Positive practices and skill sets
- Insight into their own skills, values, passions, and interests
- Self-confidence and leadership skill
- A better understanding of lessons
- A broader view an appreciation of the world
- Opportunities to collaborate with diverse organizations and people