Key Competencies for Secondary General Education (Grammar Schools)

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INTRODUCTION

What can you find in the handbook? A few words of introduction

A lot has been said and written about key competencies lately. In spite of this, in personal encounters with teachers we realise that to a large extent this topic is a big question mark for them. Are key competencies something new? How can I actually develop some of the competencies in my subject? How to include the competencies in the common teaching process without cutting down on knowledge? Is it at all possible to evaluate competencies? Answers to such questions are being sought by many teachers who take key competencies seriously.

This handbook does not seek to present a complex explanation of how to work with key competencies, as these are skills in which teachers need to be trained personally and over the long term. Nevertheless, we have attempted to provide basic inspiration for those teachers who are willing to consider key competencies in a little more depth. Such teachers usually begin by reflecting upon which competencies they have already developed in their subject and which other competencies they could go on to develop next. They start to think of how to link the competencies with the expected outcomes, and with the subject matter. This handbook can help them in several ways.[1]

In the handbook, each competency from FEP SGE is broken down in detail into its individual parts so that the teacher can have a better picture of what knowledge, skills and attitudes of the pupils can be seen behind the rather generally-phrased competency in FEP. For better illustration, some parts of the key competencies are provided with examples of activities helping to reveal or practice a particular competency with the pupils. Teachers can use this part of the handbook in their search for educational strategies or to consider the objectives of their subjects (see below).

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[1] The handbook is a follow-up to the publication "Key Competencies in Basic Education", published by VÚP (Research Institute of Education) in 2007.

Each key competency is supplemented with the ***model lessons***. They indicate ways to link subject matter with key competencies in lesson planning, and ways to evaluate individual parts of the competencies. The model lessons are of various characters, and include lessons spanning several school lessons, cycles of lessons spanning a period of several months, and even larger projects. In some of the model lessons the key competencies are developed through the subject matter of several fields of the FEP SGE, while in others the main objective is to develop the key competencies as such (e.g. lessons concerning the problem-solving competencies). The lessons deal with individual parts of key competencies from this handbook, with expected outcomes of the educational fields of the FEP SGE, and with cross-curricular subjects.

We sincerely hope teachers will find inspiration in our handbook. With this in mind, we will follow this brief introduction with a practising teacher's reflections upon working with key competencies in school.
The authors

KEY COMPETENCIES AS VIEWED BY A PRACTICING TEACHER

I. The Link between Basic School and Grammar School Key Competencies

The development of key competencies has become part of the Framework Education Programme for Elementary Education. The individual competencies of the FEP BE and the FEP SGE are more or less identical; they should differ mainly in the level reached by pupils at the end of basic education and at the end of secondary grammar school. Although these differing levels are suggested by the formulations in FEP, they are of quite a general character and do not enable every teacher to imagine the concrete ideas behind them.

It is possible that the level of key competencies is for many teachers a utopian idea – they work on the assumption that not even a university-educated adult person is able to "use logical, mathematical and empirical methods to solve problems" - a skill that a pupil should have mastered by the end of the 9th grade - or to "take an effective part in debates; defend his or her opinion and use appropriate arguments", "consider the possible advantages and disadvantages of different solutions to a problem, including the assessment of their risks and

consequences", or in mutual communication "interpret the messages being received and argue pertinently" or even "estimate the consequences of his/her conduct" - although these last three skills should already have been attained by a secondary grammar school student.

However, even with such teachers, we can agree on the fact that the above skills are not unnecessary for life. The publication Key Competencies in Basic Education published by VÚP (Research Institute of Education) in 2007 in Prague can be a useful tool for teachers. It itemises the possible levels of key competencies to be reached by pupils of the 5th and the 9th grades. It is the level of the 9th grade that the secondary grammar school teachers can proceed from –they are not starting from scratch, as their future pupils should have already undergone a form of key competencies development.[2] Secondary grammar school teachers can count on this fact while planning, and choose the levels of targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes so that learning continues from the expected levels acquired by the pupils at basic school.

As teachers we do not have to fear the "high aims" hiding behind key competencies, which can seem very unrealistic to us at first – our objective is to imagine behind them a concrete activity that we will put into effect in our subject, and that will contribute to (for example) developement of a suitable discussion. Such discussion does not necessarily have to relate to the worldview of our pupils or their attitudes to complicated questions. If we are, for example, chemistry teachers, we can discuss the means of verifying a certain hypothesis. On the other hand, teachers of civic education will choose very different topics for debate. We will not allow pupils to rely on mere speculation when expressing their opinions, and we will require them to provide empirical proofs. If we choose a suitable form of presentation, we teach them to communicate at the same time – in this case in the terminology of the subject.

II. How to Interlink Key Competencies with the Subjects of Instruction

Teachers find it easier to approach key competencies through their own subject of instruction. Each teacher has a notion of what his/her pupils should learn, i.e. what they should have mastered when the lesson ends. This is, strictly speaking, the objective of his/her lessons.

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[2] In the first two years a complicated situation will occur, as the 1st years of secondary grammar schools will be attended by pupils who have not yet been taught according to their own SEPs. Their level in the area of competencies can thus be very different.

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Very often, though, especially in our first few years of teaching, we do not define this objective: we merely "feel" it, and enforce it intuitively. As a result, our objective – if it is not aimed directly at the supervision of a specific activity – is not always measurable and timebound. This can lead to a situation when the pupils themselves do not understand the aim of some activities in the lesson. A history teacher, for example, wants the students to be able to assess the credibility of information in different historical sources (this skill corresponds with one of the basic skills of Learning Competency). **Nevertheless, without a timescale for the acquisition of the basics of this activity and the definition of a suitable activity that can be evaluated, the teacher can hardly expect any substantial progress.** He/she cannot but be disappointed that after three or four years of grammar school history education, the pupils still lag behind in this skill.

It is obvious that factual knowledge is important, but factual knowledge alone is not sufficient to equip pupils for later life. We can have several talented students in class who master the subject matter of our lessons perfectly well and manage to use it further in a creative way, but if we want to reach the widest possible group of pupils, we have to pass on the knowledge in such a way that enables the pupils to approach it actively in more varied ways. **A deeper study of key competencies leads to the conclusion that this is more concerned with changing the way educational content is presented than changing the educational content itself.**

Just as the teaching process of our subject is based on a certain system and structure, the educational objectives that we set also contain a particular structure. **It is worthwhile to create such a structure for teaching one's own subject – not only to set down the basic factual matter that we want the pupils to master, but also to make it clear for us what skills we want to teach them in our subject and what attitudes we would like to help them develop.**

In the case of history teaching, for example, the teacher can proceed from the below-stated methods of a historian's work (heuristics, criticism of sources, interpretation) and choose the educational objectives for history in the following way:

Heuristics: The pupil finds the necessary information. He/she works with the classification of libraries and archives on a basic level. He/she is able to appreciate historical documents

which he/she considers not only as a historical source but also the source of his/her personal development.

Criticism of Sources: The pupil approaches historical sources critically, searching primarily for the intention with which they were written. He/she approaches current media and technical information in the same manner. He/she always verifies his/her conclusions in several sources, no matter if they are conclusions about history or present times. He/she respects the work of others and never presents their ideas as his/her own (see work with bibliographic citation).

Interpretation: The pupil deduces the causes of historical events and is able to find their concrete effects. He/she finds historical parallels of contemporary events. He/she takes lessons from history. He/she values the history of his/her nation as well as other nations, and can recognise the influence of particular historical events on his/her life. He/she reports events as truthfully as possible, and doesn't interpret facts according to the effect he/she wants to achieve. He/she is capable of writing a short specialised text in the form of a seminar work with all its technical components (footnote apparatus, bibliographic references). He/she uses technical terminology skilfully during professional discussion; expresses himself/herself clearly, in spoken as well as written forms, in a cultivated manner.

If we compare our formulations with the key competencies in FEP or use the key competencies that are described in more detail in this handbook, we find many similarities. The skills that we noted can be gradually matched to individual key competencies, e.g.:

Learning Competency
The pupil:

- Finds necessary information
- Works on a basic level with the classification of libraries and archives.
- Approaches information sources critically, searches primarily for the intention with which they were written.
- Always verifies his/her conclusions in several sources, no matter if they are conclusions about history or the present.

- Writes a short specialised text in the form of seminar work with all its technical components (footnote apparatus, bibliographic citation).

Problem-Solving Competency

The pupil:
- Defines specifically what he/she does not understand and what he/she finds problematic.
- Finds historical parallels of contemporary events.

Communication Competency

The pupil:
- Defines what specifically he/she does not understand and what he/she finds problematic.
- Expresses himself/herself clearly, in spoken as well as written forms and in a cultivated manner.
- Uses technical terminology during a professional discussion.

Social and Personal Competency
The pupil:
- Respects the work of others and never presents their ideas as his/her own (see work with bibliographic citation).
- Informs of events as truthfully as he/she can, doesn't interpret facts according to the effect he/she wants to achieve.
- Accepts the consequences of his/her conduct, opinions, attitudes.
- Respects other cultures and opinions, understands their significance in context.

Civic Competency
The pupil:
- Finds historical parallels of contemporary events.
- Takes personal lessons from history.

- Values the history of his/her nation as well as other nations, indicates the particular influence of historical events on his/her life.
- Is able to appreciate historical documents, considers them as a source of his/her personal development.

If the teacher uses this handbook, he/she can add to the overview some other abilities and attitudes that he/she could develop in his/her subject. As well as all the developed items of key competencies, he/she can use the handbook for noting suggested ways of achieving them.

E.g.:

Civic Competency

Which parts of the key competency should the pupil master in my subject?)	How can I help develop this competency as a teacher?
The pupil prefers such activities and materials in his/her life that do not cause environmental or cultural harm.	The teachers lets the pupils deduce the effects of historical events, leading them to search for the historical roots of contemporary situations.
In communication with others, the pupil carefully considers what personal, cultural or religious values underlie their opinions or conduct.	The teacher produces model examples of certain historical conduct which can be understood/explained only in wider context; he/she leads the pupils towards understanding that context.
For information on social (political and economic) matters the pupil reaches for multiple sources (newspapers, the Internet, friends).	The teacher produces a picture of historical topics based on several sources, and lets the pupils deduce the causes of the emergence of different concepts.
Etc…	

This procedure can help the teacher in the search for **educational strategies** for his/her subject. They can be formulated, for example, after the generalisation of the methods noted in the right column. In our case it would be the following strategy: *The teacher presents the students with information of different kinds and from different sources, and lets them deduce*

the corresponding conclusions that the pupils subsequently put into context within the framework of their own experience.

Educational strategies common for a given subject of instruction are written down for every subject in SEP. These should be educational strategies that all teachers teaching this subject can agree upon. The specifics of the strategies and their potential extension is then left to the competency of each individual teacher.

III. How to Work with the Model Lessons

In the model lessons complementing the key competencies, the development of key competencies is realised either in different subjects of instruction through the expected outcomes of the given field, or independently, the main objective of the lesson being the development of generally-needed skills that are not necessarily connected with a specific subject of instruction. The lessons can show the teachers how to interlink the key competencies with the expected outcomes of their subject and what methodological processes can be used for their development.

In all lessons, it is possible to find instructions for the development of the subject skills, regardless of the topic. E.g. the lesson listed with the social and personal competency – portfolio management – is meant to help the pupils to assess their own progress realistically. In their portfolio, the pupils can file not only different versions of their essays but also drafts of solutions to mathematical exercises, history papers and discursive practices… The description is processed methodologically, contains points that every teacher planning any teaching activity should observe, and so I suggest starting with this description before reading the chapter. The Learning Competency chapter contains three different lessons. The objective of the first lesson is that the pupil deals with the acquired information ethically. The whole lesson can be used as it is – e.g. in Czech Language classes or in the Basics of Civics and Social Sciences. After a discussion with other teachers, this objective can also be realised in other subjects. All teachers of technical subjects can agree on common criteria for papers and seminar works – knowing that e.g. the pupils have studied the rules of bibliographic citation as part of their Czech Language classes.

All lessons and longer-terms projects put great emphasis on gradual mastering of the basic skills that help to achieve the key competencies. The problem-solving competency presents a long-term project that spans the entire curriculum. Its description contains a methodologically very apt schedule of objectives. We work on the assumption that if we choose a concrete long-term objective, we have to consider what basic skills and knowledge the pupils need to master and take them into account. The description of project planning and evaluation is also of help. The chapter on this competency contains illustrative lessons from different subjects that show the linking of knowledge and skill objectives – even this chapter shows teachers the necessary things to bear in mind when assigning an interesting and demanding task, so that it doesn't become unrealisable.

In the same way, all lessons can be used in other subjects than just those stated by the handbook. It is above all the technique, or the method to approach the competencies through different subjects, that the lessons offer to teacher.

In relation to this, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that it is not enough to include a particular activity developing the key competencies in our lessons only once; we have to **proceed systematically**. A year plan in the form of the following chart, for example, can be useful to those teachers used to careful planning of their work. [3]

The Civic Competency

Basic Skill	Studied Topic	Principal Activity	Date	Verification of the Objective
In dealing with others, the pupil considers or finds out what personal, cultural and religious values underlie their	The 1933 elections in Germany	Work with a scientific text and comparative chart. Written account of one's own opinion.	20.3. 2008	Collective check of the chart. Comparison of the written opinions with the scientific text.

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[3] Each teacher does not plan in the same detailed way. For better illustration, we use very detailed model examples.

opinions or actions.				
	The first post-war election in Czechoslovakia.	Division of roles according to the representatives of individual parts of society. Written account of one's own opinion.	15.4. 2008	Comparison of the written opinions with the scientific text.

IV. Evaluation of Key Competencies

For the effective integration of the key competencies development as part of the lesson plan, it is necessary to approach it like any other objective – i.e. determine the tools that help us recognize that the objective was achieved and that can be used to observe the development in time. It is also useful to set the deadline for achieving the objective. Here, we assume that for the development of the particular key competencies the teacher chooses certain methods. These methods are not to be applied all at once but gradually. Although the teacher develops key competencies through different topics, it is practical to choose several key activities for the given year that he/she will regularly work with and observe to what extent the pupils manage to master them.

The principal activity for the specific grade can be e.g. team role play (Social and Personal Competency), instrumental methods of work with text such as the I.N.S.E.R.T. method, comparative chart (Learning Competency), etc.

For the activity to be evaluated as objectively as possible, it is necessary to choose certain signs that will show that it has been mastered successfully – i.e. criteria for well-done work (points of view from which we examine the work) – as well as indicators helping the teacher and the pupil recognize that the pupil has mastered the work at the required level.

When forming the criteria it is possible to start from a more detailed description of the key competencies as stated in the individual lessons. The model criteria are provided for example by the learning competency lesson called Decorative Garden.

Even in this case the objective (naturally a meaningful objective) should be acceptable both for teachers and pupils – it is better to choose fewer activities to observe and be consistent in their fulfilment. We should add more activities only after a certain level is mastered.

Unfortunately, the practise of some schools that teach according to their own School Education Programmes has shown cases where the school wrote down detailed competencies for each subject as well as strategies to achieve them, but nobody ever thought of really using these methods in classes and even if they did, there were no ideas of how they were to be evaluated. The key competencies development itself then becomes in better cases a pack of different, more or less interesting activities and methods of active learning, but without any obvious objective to be followed in time, thus without any ultimate effect.

As mentioned above, it is better to focus on several concrete activities and observe them consistently. This means developing only a part of the key competencies, but with a verifiable objective, than try to cover everything without verifying our success.

V. How Do I Succeed in Developing Key Competencies? – a Teacher's Own Feedback

If the teacher introduces new methods in his/her teaching, it is of great help to evaluate not only the work of the pupils according to his/her own criteria, but also the set criteria and indicators of his/her own work. This naturally takes time but from a long-term perspective this investment pays off. The self-evaluation questions for teachers can be similar to those they ask their pupils in classes. For example: What specifically do my pupils learn through the chosen activity? How large a proportion of the pupils make progress? What are the easiest things for my pupils? What are the most difficult things? What could be the cause of these difficulties? …

The attitude of the coordinator of the School Education Programme can help the teachers to provide feedback in regular, e.g. biannual intervals through e.g. a common questionnaire with questions like:

Which key competencies have you been primarily developing in the last term? Through which activities? How did you verify the pupils' progress? How did the pupils get this feedback?

Year:

Subject:

Name of the Key Competency/Its Specified Formulation	Principal Activity	Means of Evaluation	Means of Feedback to Pupils

Although assessment of meeting the requirements belongs among the least popular activities, it is also possible to approach it from a different angle – as a useful tool of feedback, or in this case as a greater improvement and constantly growing professionalization of the teacher's work.

Irena Věříšová, secondary grammar school teacher

1. LEARNING COMPETENCY

The level of the key competency at the end of secondary grammar school education

The pupil:

Plans and organises his/her learning process and work activity himself/herself, using these as a means for self-fulfilment and personal development

1.1 Creates optimal conditions for his/her learning process and work activity.

The pupil organizes his/her environment and time schedule in the most effective way.

1.2 Sets his/her time and content priorities.

Where it is possible to do multiple activities at the same time, the pupil is able to judge which activities are important at a given moment and prioritise for themselves, even though the

prioritised activity may not be as enjoyable as some of the other possible activities. The pupil decides independently which activities are to be given priority *and which of them are to be put on hold.*

1.3 Creates his/her time plan and keeps it.

During work on a chemistry paper, the pupil plans the time to be spent on preparation, the study of related information, processing information, and research and its evaluation. He/she makes allowances for any extra time which may be necessary, e.g. in case the experiment needs to be repeated or if the chemistry lab is not available at the time he/she planned.

1.4 Uses his/her abilities to the maximum extent and independently surpasses his/her internal limitations.

The pupil consciously creates a sequence of steps to be taken in the following two months to finish the assigned project work, having regard to his/her onw preferences as to time management. He/she follows the steps of the time plan and proceeds to the final product gradually. He/she knows at what time of the day he/she can best concentrate and plans individual daily tasks accordingly.

1.5 Knowingly acquires knowledge and skills that he/she uses in further learning process and work activities.

Before the pupil starts learning, he/she thinks about what is necessary to know and what skills the learning will possibly involve. For example, he/she learns word processing skills, as he/she knows that it will save a lot time and effort in future learning processes and other work activities. In acquiring new knowledge, he/she considers its importance for the future.

1.6 Accepts responsibility for his/her learning process and work.

If the pupil finds out that he/she has to do an extra task as a punishment for an unfulfilled assignment, he/she himself/herself suggests such a punishment that allows him/her and his class-mates to learn or gain something useful. If the pupil feels that the teaching of a certain material is not effective or does not make good sense, he/she consults with his/her teacher and looks for a way to make better use of the time spent on learning at school and at home. He/she sets a deadline for handing in the work and meets it. When the pupil realises that he/she is not able to deal with the assigned work, he/she looks for help in due time or tries to negotiate a more acceptable form of the assignment.

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Effectively employs various learning strategies in order to acquire and process knowledge and information, seeks and develops effective methods in his/her learning, reflects on the process of his/her learning and thinking

1.7 Knowingly uses various learning methods and procedures and considers their use with respect to the objective of the learning process.

The pupil asks considered questions in order to get information and understand the topic.

The pupil repeatedly pays attention to a topic that he/she has not understood properly and tries out different procedures of learning it. During the lessons he/she not only takes notes (theorems, pieces of information, ideas), but also notes down what helped him/her to understand the difficult parts of the subject matter.

1.8 Independently familiarizes himself/herself with other methods of learning than those offered to him/her at school and tries them out.

The pupil tries to summarize the topics currently focussed upon, and realise what is the most important. In his/her attempt to understand the problem, he/she formulates questions and looks for the answers. For better mastering of the subject matter, he/she creates mnemonic devices, draws different types of illustrations etc. To understand problematic subject matter better, he/she consults with classmates or tries to explain the problem to others.

1.9 Recognizes what methods and procedures are the most effective ones.

The pupil recognizes when it is best to work in a group and when it is better to work independently. The pupil decides whether to note down the new information from the lesson with a mind map, a graph, chart, etc.

For example, where the pupil needs to find basic information about Peruvian Indians and their religion, after researching materials in the public library, he/she realises that the easily available Internet sources are sufficient.

Or, if the pupil needs to find information for his/her paper on Czech culture between the two World Wars, he/she realises that The Internet offers basic information which need to be complemented and developed with documents and materials from the library.

1.10 Assesses to what extent his/her abilities, knowledge and skills suffice for different assignments and what pieces of knowledge he/she lacks and needs to work on in order to deal with the assignments successfully.

The pupil decides independently what he/she actually needs to learn or find out in order to work on the assignment "History and Development of the Ignition Engine". The pupil needs to find out historical facts, understand the basic function of ignition engines and the related physical principles.

1.11 Recognizes his/her own progress and stagnation in learning.

The pupil realises that he/she is able to use previously- learnt knowledge and skills when acquiring new ones.

The pupil is able to say where particularly he/she made progress and identify the weaknesses that remain to be eliminated.

The pupil uses different ways to identify how much of the studied subject he/she has mastered. He/she for example makes different questions and tasks that help to verify how much of the studied subject he/she has understood and remembered.

1.12 Identifies his/her own mistakes, find their cause, corrects or operatively solves the situation in which the mistake arose, and learns from the mistakes for his/her further work.

The pupil missed an important link between two historical events while working on a paper that should explain a certain historical period. He/she doesn't realise it before he/she gives a presentation. He/she finds out in retrospect that he/she didn't work with the available sources consistently and didn't concentrate on the work very well. He/she remedies this error by asking classmates to produce the possible link between the mentioned historical events in groups, notes down their ideas, compares them with available sources and presents the results of the comparison in the next lesson.

Or: The presentation lasted 15 minutes longer; the pupil had to hurry in the end and didn't have enough time to say a number of important things. Having learnt from this experience, next time he/she will prepare the presentation better and make sure to cover all the substantial points within the time limit.

1.13 Changes his/her way of work if he/she sees that it is inefficient.

The pupil tries to master a certain mathematical topic. During this work he/she realises that his/her own approach to the assignments does not get him/her anywhere and that it is necessary to concentrate on learning the procedures presented by the textbook.

Approaches information sources critically, processes the information creatively and employs it in his/her study and practice

1.14 Assesses the usefulness and credibility of different information sources used for learning.

During preparation for seminar work, the pupil finds information from different sources and distinguishes the reliable sources from the less reliable or unreliable. Then, he/she chooses the most suitable and efficient sources and means of getting information. He/she states the reasons why certain Internet sources can be considered reliable and rebuts possible doubts about their reliability.

1.15 Sorts information and chooses relevant information for a given topic

While working on a presentation, the pupil assesses the acquired information, determines what he/she can use and estimates what parts of his/her presentation still lack sufficient information.

1.16 Looks for links between the acquired information, connects the information with his/her existing knowledge.

In two magazine articles the pupil looks up two complementing, contradicting or consistent pieces of information about the possible origin of space. He assesses them in relation to the information acquired previously, at school or from other sources, and forms a more complete idea about the given problem.

1.17 Arranges clearly the acquired information.

The pupil prepares clear, illustrative and logically arranged data for his/her presentation.

1.18 Uses acquired information for learning and work activities.

The pupil uses the knowledge acquired from watching a historical film as an illustration of a certain historical period. In laboratory work, he/she uses his/her knowledge about work with different chemicals.

1.19 Uses the acquired information for the defence or explanation of his/her attitudes and opinions.

Using statistics and scientific knowledge, the pupil argues for or against the spread of nuclear energy in the Czech Republic.

Evaluates his/her progress when achieving the objectives of his/her learning and work critically, accepts praise and advice as well as criticism from others, draws lessons from his/her successes as well as mistakes for future work.

1.20 Analyses the outcomes of his/her learning process and work activities, assesses them with regard to his/her qualifications and possibilities with respect to the chosen strategies.

After finishing his/her work, the pupil recalls an example when he/she successfully handled similar work and compares it with the current work, thus assessing its quality. He/she considers the possibility that he/she could have worked on the topic better as it is exceptionally interesting for him/her.

Realises that although he/she usually tends to finish his/her work quickly, using one or two sources, he/she has now managed to immerse himself/herself more deeply and use more sources.

1.21 Assesses and continuously modifies his/her learning and work procedures with regard to the instructions, criteria and expected outcomes.

The pupil realises that different types of knowledge and abilities acquired at school require different kinds of preparation, and recognizes those leading to success.

1.22 Gets feedback in terms of the efficiency of his/her learning process or work from his/her peers and adults.

The pupil verifies the quality of his/her work by questioning the main points, and reflects on the provided answers. When presenting a text in a foreign language, the pupil asks the audience about the clarity of his/her pronunciation, natural flow of speech and sufficient audibility. When he/she hands in a physics project, he/she asks the others questions that should have been clarified by his/her work and judges to what extent he/she helped the others to understand the questions.

The pupil thinks that his/her method of learning doesn't bring the expected results. He/she asks his/her classmates about their methods and talks to them about his/her problem.

1.23 Evaluates criticism, advice or praise, and uses it for the improvement of his/her learning process and working methods and procedures.

During the defence of his/her seminar work the pupil learns from his/her classmates that the structure is not clear. He/she realises that he/she didn't use an outline or other illustration of structure, and didn't differentiate important information and details. He/she uses this knowledge for his/her future work.

MODEL LESSON

"ETHICS AND INFORMATION"

Educational area: Language and Language Communication, Information Science and Information and Communication Technologies

Educational field: Czech Language or Information Science or any other subject involving a theoretical element

Cross-curricular subjects: Moral, Character and Social Education

Duration: 3 lessons (+ the interval in between for the pupils' homework)

The lesson helps the pupils realise all the possible cases and situations when copyright is violated, it teaches them to deal with information ethically and to quote information from different sources.

Objectives at the level of key competencies:

The lesson develops skills in the scope of more key competencies (communication, problem-solving, civic competencies). The explicit objectives, though, are from the area of learning competency. The basic components of the learning competency developed through the individual activities are:

The pupil:

- treats the acquired information ethically – does not "steal" ideas, makes correct quotation, paraphrases, etc.;
- consciously acquires knowledge and skills that he/she uses in further learning processes and work activities;
- analyses the outcomes of his/her learning process and work, judges it in relation to his/her qualifications and abilities and to the chosen strategies;
- receives feedback concerning the efficiency of his/her learning process and work from both his/her peers and adults.

Objectives at the level of expected outcomes:

Information Science and Information and Communication Technologies:

The pupil:

- utilises information and communication services in compliance with ethical, safety and legislative requirements.

Czech Language and Literature:

The pupil:

- uses information from specialised literature, the Internet, media and other sources creatively, and orders and evaluates it critically.

Objectives at the level of cross-curricular subject:

Moral, Character and Social Education:

The pupil:

- develops his/her learning skills.

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON

Assigning the task

The pupils' task is to write a seminar work for one of the subjects. They can choose the topic themselves or have it assigned by the teacher. The theoretical part is supervised by the teacher of the corresponding subject, in cooperation with the Czech Language or Information Science teacher who works with the pupils in the introductory block (regarding the ethical treatment of information).

A. The introductory block (90 min)

Lesson 1

Evocation

The teacher instructs his/her students to draw a chart (see below) on A4 paper and answer for themselves the following question in the first column: *"What do I know, or, what do I think I know about copyright and plagiarism/piracy?"* and in the second column: *"I want to know…".*

I know, I think I know…	I want to know…	I have learnt…

In pairs, the pupils share their notes from the first and the second column; the teacher then writes them on a flip chart paper where he/she has prepared the same chart in a larger scale.

Realising the significance of new information:

The teacher plays his/her students a video recording available on the Internet (an introduction + studio discussion) concerning copyright and plagiarism.

Source: Czech TV Live

Address: http://www.ct24.cz/vysilani/?id-159160

Name of the article and the video recording: Media and the World – Plagiarism (from 9.9. 2007)

Duration: 22 min

Watching the recording, the pupils note down new information in their charts and the answers to their questions in the third column of the chart.

Reflection

When the recording finishes, the pupils share their notes in pairs and discuss the new things they have learnt.

Each pupil writes his/her answer to the question: "For what reasons do people violate copyright?" in the form of a four minute free writing exercise.

The method of Free Writing

Free writing is a method with the following rules:

- **write everything that comes to your mind,**
- **don't stop – the pen always touches the paper,**
- **don't cross anything out, don't erase anything, don't rewrite anything,**
- **don't evaluate – only the form matters.**

Free writing is done by each student individually. It is also efficient when the teacher joins his/her pupils and writes his/her own free writing account.

Pupils then read their texts in pairs, and possiblysome of the texts can be read aloud to everyone. Neither the teacher nor the pupils should evaluate the texts they read or question the author's opinions.

In cases of confusion, the teacher can encourage the pupils to have a short discussion about this question. The discussion will most probably bring about the problem of quoting sources. The pupils may state that one of the reasons for breaching copyright is that people don't know and are not able to quote correctly where the information come from. The activities coming up in the next lesson will cover this problem.

Lesson 2

Evocation

Individual brainstorming: *"Write everything you know about how to quote information sources (from books, magazines, the Internet)"*. Each pupil writes his/her answers as well as questions about this topic. They then share their ideas in pairs and discuss them in class. The teacher puts the pupils´ questions down on a flip chart paper.

Realising the significance of new information:

Individual reading of the text with the I.N.S.E.R.T. method follows. The text can concern correct treatment of information, can contain instructions how to quote, etc. (see supplement)

The I.N.S.E.R.T. Method

Reading a text with the I.N.S.E.R.T. method – while reading, each pupil puts marks at the sides of the article according to the following guide:

√	Put a tick at the side of the text if anything you read corresponds to what you knew or you thought you knew.
-	Put a minus if any information that you read does not correspond to what you know or heard.
+	Put a plus where the information you read is new for you.
?	Put a question mark if you come across information that is not clear or seems confusing to you, or that you would like to find out more about.

When marking the passages of the text, it is not necessary for the pupils to mark every piece of information; the mark should reflect their attitude to a specific piece of information. The pupil can make one or two marks per paragraph, sometimes more, sometimes fewer.

After reading the text, pairs or threes sit together to discuss what proved to be correct, what the article disproved with respect to their original ideas, and what kind of information was new to them.

Reflection

The I.N.S.E.R.T. table - the pupils copy the table into their notes and put down in each of the boxes what they consider to be 2-3 of the most significant items of information from the text:

ˇ	+	-	?

B. Application

The pupils work in the library where they look up the necessary information in books, magazines and web pages for their seminar works, and try to write the bibliographic information correctly. They check the quotations in pairs and hand them in to the Czech Language teacher. He/she checks them and in the next lesson shows the pupils the most frequent mistakes and correct quotations; the pupils then correct them in pairs.

C. Evaluation of the activity (1 lesson)

Each pupil finishes these unfinished sentences given to him/her on a record sheet. Afterwards he/she shares it with a classmate. A discussion with the whole class follows, concerning the individual sentences.

Unfinished sentences for the lesson Ethics and Information:

- I used to violate copyright before, because …
- If people "steal" ideas from the others…
- Regarding ethical treatment of information, I havev learnt that …
- I need to know how to quote information from different types of sources because…
- I would also like to improve/work on …

D. Context

If the teacher decides to devote more time to the problem of copyright in order to create practical products serving as teaching materials for other pupils of the school, he/she can use some of the following ideas for activities:

- The pupils are assigned to look up the best-known contemporary examples of plagiarism and copyright violation in the context of the individual kinds of piracy (pirate CD copies, software piracy, music piracy, piracy of research data, etc.).

- The pupils bring into class written or visual accounts (newspaper or Internet articles, video recordings and the like) and discuss how society judges or punishes such types of piracy. Groups of students then present to the others what examples of piracy they found, and comment on them. Each group chooses one type of piracy and creates a poster documenting different types of piracy by text and pictures, and the response of society (including lawsuits and other legal recourses).
- At the end of the activity, the pupils may be assigned an essay task titled for example "Piracy and Plagiarism – a Moral Problem?" The essays can be exhibited along with the posters in school, read among classmates, at some school event, etc.

E. Other suggestions for possible related lessons – application of knowledge about plagiarism

In classes of Czech Language (Literature), biology or history, the pupils discuss a significant topic like Neruda's feuilletons, the ethics of genetic engineering or the cruel displacement of Germans from Czechoslovakia after World War II, in an independent "seminar" work. The topic will be elaborated upon with the use of secondary or possibly primary sources (from literary history as well as from Neruda's texts; from a specialised article written by genetic researchers as well as from newspaper articles about genetics; from period documents as well as history textbooks, monographs or journalism).

Pupils then research the Internet for websites and authors that offer information on the topic (a paper, a completed final exam question, an encyclopaedia entry etc.) and find and compare those texts that repeat content or are suspiciously similar. They try to judge which cases are those of direct copying (and whether it is unethical copying, or if the source is quoted). They identify "hidden copying", where identical content is merely retold in different sentences, and where conversely the text is a similar yet original elaboration.

Finally, pupils compare their original texts with those other texts which they have assessed, and show to what degree two original texts dealing with the same topic can differ and be similar.

Text for work with the I.N.S.E.R.T. method
How to quote correctly

(Chosen from articles published on the website: Charles University KSV – library, the centre for scientific information http://knihovna.czweb.org/favicon.ico.)

The recommended processing of bibliographic references is based on international norms:

- ČSN ISO 690.: contents, form and structure
- ČSN ISO 690-2. Information and documentation - Bibliographic quotation – Part 2: Electronic documents or their parts

These norms specify the elements to be stated in bibliographic citation of published monographs, serial publications, chapters, articles etc. in published documents. They determine and prescribe the order of the elements of citation and set the rules of transcription and formal layout of information acquired from a source publication.

Apart from this international norm, other rules, instructions and recommendations - known as citation styles - are used for bibliographic information.

General rules for citation of information resources:

- pay attention to the clarity of data in citations, keep the same rules and identical formal layout for all citations in the works cited list
- state complete data in citation (in this case, less does not mean more)
- always cite data from a primary document (i.e. with the book or another information resource in your hands)
- do not search for the missing information, leave it out (e.g. a missing ISBN, the complete given names of the author etc.)
- unless absolutely necessary, do not shorten the words included in the data about the cited publication

We can place the citations:

- at the end of the text (or individual chapters)
- in a footnote
- in the text directly
- partially in the text and partially in a footnote

The system of placing the citations must also be unified. If we don't state citations in the text directly, we use a reference that can have two forms:

- number referring to the footnote or the works cited list at the end of the text: in this case, the citations are arranged and numbered in the order in which we refer to them in the text;
- the surname of the author (authors) and the year of publication, with all data separated from the remaining text by brackets; in this case the citations are arranged alphabetically according to the name of the authors or in special cases chronologically.

If the same publication is cited more times succesively, instead of repeating the whole citation we can use the expression "ibid" and supply the relevant page.

Examples of citations

1. Citations of monograph publications:

Primary Author. *Title: subtitle.* Secondary Author. Edition. Place of issue. Name of editor, Year of issue. Book volume. Footnotes. Standard Number.

McQUAIL, Denis. *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace* [*Mass Communication Theory An Introduction*] . Czech foreword by Jan Jirák. 1st ed. Praha: Portál, 1999. 448 p. ISBN 80-7178-200-9.

Dějiny českých médií v datech: rozhlas, televize, mediální právo. [*History of Czech Media in Dates: Radio, Television, Media Law*] 1st ed. Praha: Karolinum, 2003. 461 p. ISBN 80-246-0632-1.

FRANKLIN, Bob; HAMER, Martin; HANNA, Mark et al. *Key Concepts in Journalism Studies*. 1st ed. London: SAGE, 2005. 362 p. ISBN 0-7619-4482-6.

2. Citation of serial publications:

***Title*. Author. Edition, Edition data. Place of issue. Name of editor, Year of issue. Series. Footnotes. Standard Number.**

Národní knihovna: knihovnická revue [*National Library: Librarian Revue*]. Ed. by Národní knihovna ČR, 1990-, year. 1, no. 1-. Praha : Národní knihovna ČR, 1990. ISSN 0862-7487.

3. Citation from articles from printed periodicals:

Primary Author. Title. Secondary author. *Name of the resource.* Edition. Page number in source document. Standard Number (obligatory).

GOCHENOUR, Phillip H. Distributed Communities and Nodal Subjects. *New Media & Society.* 2006, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 33-51. ISSN 1461-4448.

SVOBODA, Jiří. Co bylo, co bude? *Rudé právo.* [What Was and Will Be?].15. 5. 1969, year. 49, no. 112, p. 3.

4. Citation of an article in an anthology:

Author. Title. In [Editor, *Title.*] Edition. Publishing data, year of issue, page number in source document. Standard Number.

Komentář [OU1]: Page(s)

SEGETHOVÁ, Jana; VESELÝ, Arnot; KALOUS, Jaroslav. Česká republika na cestě ke společnosti vědění. [The Czech Republic on the Road to the Knowledge Society]. In KONČELÍK, Jakub; KÖPPLOVÁ, Barbara, PRÁZOVÁ, Irena (eds.). *Konsolidace vládnutí a podnikání v České republice a v Evroposké unii. II, Sociologie, prognostika a správa* [*Consolidation of Government and Business in the Czech republic and European Union. II, Sociology, Prognostics and Administartion*], Média. 1st ed. Praha: Matfyzpress, 2002, pp. 169-182. ISBN 80-86732-00-2.

5. Citation of article from electronic series:

DOMBROVSKÁ, Michaela. Koncepce rozvoje informační gramotnosti na vysokých školách a odborné semináře IVIG 2003 a ILME [The Concept of Development of Information Literacy at Universities and Specialised Seminars IVIG 2003 a ILME] . Ikaros [online]. 2003. no. 9 [cit. 2006-02-06].
Available at: <http://www.ikaros.cz/Clanek.asp?ID=200309002>. ISSN 1212-5075.

6. Citation from electronic series:

CONSERline : newsletter of the CONSER Program [online]. Washington (D.C.): Library of Congress, Serial Record Division, 1994- [cit. 2003-02-05]. Link also at: <lcweb.loc.gov/acq/conser/consrlin.html>. ISSN 1072-611X.

7. Citation of article from electronic conference:

LESTER, Dan. Re: Can printing from a website be limited? In Web4Lib Electronic Discussion: An electronic discussion for library-based World-Wide Web managers [online]. Berkeley: University of California Berkeley Library, Mon 14 Jun 1999 19:30:07 [cit. 2003-02-05].

Link also at: <sunsite.berkeley.edu/Web4Lib/archive/9906/0233.html>.

MODEL LESSON

"DECORATIVE GARDEN"

Educational area: Man and Nature

Educational field: Biology (Plant Biology), Geology

Cross-curricular subjects: Environmental Education, Media Education

Duration: 8 lessons

In the scope of the study of biology of plants, the pupils become acquainted with different kinds of herbs and tree species. During this lesson they realise what the work of a garden architect concerns, and what scope of knowledge is necessary to design a simple decorative garden.

Objectives at the level of key competencies:

The lesson develops skills in the scope of more key competencies (Social and Personal Competency, Communication Competency and Problem-Solving Competency), the explicit objectives, though, are from the area of learning competency. The basic components of the learning competency developed through the individual activities are:

The pupil:

- sets time and contents priorities;
- creates a time plan and follows it

- classifies information and chooses information relevant to the given topic
- looks for the connections between the acquired information; interlinks information with his/her existing knowledge;
- organizes the acquired information;
- employs the acquired information in his/her learning process and work activities;
- assesses and adjusts his/her learning process and working methods with respect to the instructions, criteria and expected outcomes;
- employs the acquired information in the defence of his/her attitudes and opinions;
- assesses criticism, advice or praise and uses it for the improvement of his/her learning methods and procedures.

Objectives at the level of expected outcomes:

Plant Biology:

The pupil:

- assesses the influence of living conditions on the structure and function of plant bodies;
- recognises and names (relying on various information sources if necessary) significant plant species and lists their ecological usability.

Geology:

The pupil:

- determines the basic properties of soil-profile samples and suggests the usability and methods of effective soil management in a given region.

Czech language and Literature- Literary Communication:

The pupil:

- uses information from specialised literature, the Internet, media and other sources creatively, and classifies and evaluates it critically.

Mathematics and Its Application – Geometry:

The pupil:

- makes use of drafts when solving planar or spatial problems.

Objectives at the level of cross-curricular subjects:

Environmental Education:

The pupil:

- becomes aware of the space in which he/she lives and the changes taking place there, feels responsibility for its further development, from environmental and other perspectives;
- interconnects the knowledge and skills from individual educational areas and utilises them when solving environmental issues.

Media Education:

- o develops an idea of teamwork, of the relations of cooperation as well as authority and subordination when creating a common work, and of his/her creative potential.

COURSE OF THE LESSON

Lesson 1

1. Introduction of the problem exercise to the pupils, with written instructions:

"Imagine that there is a waste ground neighbouring the school of the area of 400 m2 (the teacher assigns the shape of the ground, how and where the ground is situated; it can be an existing school ground). Your task is to design a decorative garden that can be used by both teachers and pupils as a pleasant sitting place,meeting place and place of recreation. The garden should include sitting space, and should look beautiful all year round. Your task is to create a design project of this garden. The final design should be in size A2 or larger."

2. Each pupil writes his/her answer to the question: *"What must be considered and researched before we can begin designing the layout of the decorative garden?"*

3. The pupils discuss their answers in groups of 4, comparing their answers.

4. The teacher leads discussion with the pupils and writes all their ideas on a flipchart paper.

5. The teacher familiarises the pupils with the set of criteria for the project (each pupil has his/her own copy). In groups of 4, the pupils' task is to consider: *"Which of our conditions (from the list on the flipchart) also appear in the criteria?"* It is possible to discuss with the pupils potential modifications of some of the criteria; if this is done, the pupils should always have the latest draft of the criteria while working on the assignment at home. They may feel the need to clarify why it is important to keep within certain parameters of the choice of plants and herbs stated by the set of criteria. They will try to find answers to these questions themselves in the course of the following phase of research, as this information is intentionally not provided by the teacher yet.

6. The teacher familiarises the pupils with the learning competency skills that represent the objectives of the decorative garden project. He/she hands out a self-evaluation sheet (see the end of the description of this lesson), goes over all abilities with them and finds out if the pupils understand the individual formulations. The pupils will file this sheet, including the updated criteria, in their portfolio of the Decorative Garden project. They will return to this in the course of their work, and assess what skills they have developed in a particular activity and to what extent.

7. The teacher instructs the pupils to each draw a first draft of their own decorative garden project at home.

The set of criteria for the decorative garden project:

Criteria/Indicators	Excellent Level	Acceptable Level	Unacceptable Level
Criteria No. 1 THE CHOICE AND PLANTING OF TREES AND PLANTS	• Most of the selected plants and trees: • are easy-care all year round (leaf	Some (4-5) of the selected plants and trees: require year-round care (leaf shedding, irrigation), none of the chosen species	Most of the selected plants and trees: require year-round care (leaf shedding, irrigation), poisonous species are present.

	shedding, irrigation) • are safe even for small children (no poisonous plants, plants with thorns) • are originally from our geographical area • have expected annual growth in proportion to ground area • are chosen with respect to the quality of local soil/earth (sandy, clay, pH, depth of ground water).	is poisonous. 1-2 chosen species of plants and trees are not originally from our geographical area. The expected annual growth of 1-2 chosen species of plants and trees is not in proportion to the ground area. 1-2 chosen species of plants and trees were not chosen with respect to the quality of local soil/earth (sandy, clay, pH, depth of ground water).	3 or more chosen species of plants and trees are not originally from our geographical area. The expected annual growth of 3 or more chosen species of plants and trees is not in proportion to the ground area. 3 or more chosen species of plants and trees were not chosen with respect to the quality of local soil/earth (sandy, clay, pH, depth of ground water).
Criteria No.2 PLACEMENT OF TREES AND	The garden plan contains the key surrounding	The garden plan contains the key surrounding	The garden plan doesn't contain the key surrounding

PLANTS	buildings so that the shaded areas are obvious from all cardinal points. The plants and trees in the garden are in an optimal place with respect to their growth needs (shady vs. sunny place, humid vs. dry place).	buildings and the cardinal points are shown, shady and sunny areas are not correctly shown. More than 1/3 plants and trees are not in an optimal place with respect to their growth needs (shady vs. sunny place, humid vs. dry place).	buildings and doesn't respect their influence on the location of shady and sunny places in the garden. More than ½ plants and trees are not in an optimal place with respect to their growth needs (shady vs. sunny place, humid vs. dry place).
Criteria No. 3 CONCEPT OF THE SITTING SPACE	The benches and seats: • for entire class (minimum 30) • can be moved • are made from a natural material • material requires once per year upkeep at most • are safe (stability, surfacing, temperature changes)	The benches and seats: • for entire class (minimum 30) • can be moved • are made from a nature-friendly material require upkeep twice a year • are safe (stability, surfacing, temperature changes)	The benches and seats: • not enough for entire class (less than 30) • cannot be moved • are not made from a nature-friendly material, require upkeep 3 or more times a year • are not safe (stability, surfacing,

			temperature changes)
Criteria No. 4 LEGEND TO THE PROJECT DRAFT	The project is supplemented with a detailed legend with complete factual data necessary for the creation of the decorative garden (with all items, cost calculations and place of purchase): - total number of plants and trees - necessities for planting (earth, fertilizers, tools) - number of seats (production price including surfacing etc.) The quality of proposed material is good.	The project is supplemented with a legend, but the data and information is incomplete or incorrect (several items are miscalculated, place of purchase not listed): - total number of plants and trees - necessities for planting (earth, fertilizers, tools) - number of seats (production price including surfacing etc.) The quality of proposed material is good.	The legend for the project is missing entirely – as well as all factual data necessary for the creation of the decorative garden (as stated in the Excellent Level column).

Lessons 2 and 3

1. In groups of four, the pupils each introduce their first drafts of the decorative garden project.

2. Each group then decides on an initial common vision of the garden, which they write down on an A3 paper. They constantly consult the set of criteria and assess the necessary information they still need to acquire in order to produce a project of the highest quality.

3. The pupils plan further work on the project with respect to the information they still need to find. They make a clear account of the tasks to be completed. They divide the tasks and determine the method and time schedule of their completion (the pupils will suggest who, how and when will they get the necessary information or plan a common meeting, appoint the person to draw the final draft etc.). During this task, the teacher goes around the individual groups and addresses their questions, providing the pupils with feedback on their ideas etc. The pupils file all materials created in these two lessons in their portfolios.

4. On the self-evaluation sheet in their portfolio, each pupil assesses what abilities he/she developed during the learning activities and fills in his/her observations in the respective column. He/she shares his/her observations with a classmate.

During the period before the other project lesson takes place (approx. 14 days), the pupils work individually or in groups on the planned tasks at home, in the library, at school etc.

Lessons 4 and 5

1. Within their groups, the pupils check their time schedule (the list of tasks) and assess what tasks/items of the project they have already fulfilled. Then they evaluate, classify and sort the information they found during the last 14 days.

2. In their groups, the pupils decide who will present the existing proposals to another group of classmates (the information they chose, things that still remain unclear).

3. The two groups mutually present their standing proposals of the project, and the presentation is followed by feedback written on a piece of A6 paper from each member of the listening group. It will contain:
   - praise for some of the ideas in the proposal
   - a question aimed at the proposal's drawbacks

4. Afterwards, the groups split and read the slips of paper with the praises and questions they got from each member of the listening group and try to find answers to the written questions.

5. Both groups then meet again and discuss the questions from the slips of paper.

6. The whole class discusses the unclear points, questions, doubts etc. concerning the realisation of the project.

7. The pupils work in their groups on the final draft of the garden (paper size A2 or larger) and its legend. They assess their work constantly, with respect to the set of criteria determined for the project draft of the decorative garden. If they don't finish their work during the lesson, they decide how to proceed (what and by whom will be done at home; they set the time for the next meeting etc.). The pupils file the materials created in these two lessons in their portfolios.

8. On the self-evaluation sheet in their portfolio, each pupil assesses what abilities he/she has been developing during the past learning activities and fills in his/her observations in the respective column. He/she shares his/her observations with a classmate. An exchange

between the whole class follows when pupils communicate to the others what abilities they have been developing in particular activities in the lessons, their successes and failures. The task for the individual groups until the next lesson is as follows (they get the instructions on a paper that they file in their portfolio): *"Prepare a way/strategy to present your project to your classmates. You should highlight the strong points of the project, the original solution and things of interest. The presentation should not last longer than 6 minutes; you can use didactic technology, PC etc."*

Lessons 6, 7 and 8

1. First, each group presents their proposals of the decorative garden to the others (each group has 6 minute maximum). The others make brief notes – things to praise, things that are unclear or difficult to understand.

2. When the presentations finish, each group assesses their own project according to the set of criteria.

3. Then, all group members sit together and the projects are sent around and each group:

a)   assesses the project of another group according to the criteria

b)   writes one acknowledgement (+) and one question (?) about the project

Both things are put down on a piece of paper, which each group receives and reads at the end of the round (when each group has assessed all the other projects). Subsequently, they compare their own assessment according to the set of criteria with the ones made by the other groups.

4. Each group chooses one acknowledgement (+) and reads it out loud to the others. Then they also read one question (?) and try to provide an answer – they defend their solution, provide other important facts etc.

5. Each pupil writes down several ideas about the place where the decorative garden projects could be exhibited (e.g. exhibition in the school building, invitation of the other pupils to an

afternoon debate panel, exhibition at the municipal office etc.). They share their ideas in the project groups. The teacher notes all ideas on a flipchart and, if there is time, they can choose one of the ideas for an exhibition and plan the concerning necessary activities and methods. The pupils file the materials created in these three lessons in their portfolios.

6. Each pupil returns to his/her self-evaluation sheet and assesses which skills he/she has worked on in the final part of the project. The teacher then encourages the pupils to choose one skill that they have managed to develop during the project and one that still needs to be worked on. The classmates share the chosen skills, including the notes from the self-evaluation sheet, in pairs. A whole class discussion follows.

Self-evaluation sheet for the Decorative Garden project:

Abilities	Describe when you were successful and to what extent and when you failed. Try to explain your success/failure.
1) In the course of my work, I determined priorities concerning time and contents.	
2) I made a time schedule and managed to keep it.	
3) I sorted new information and chose the relevant information for the particular topic/task.	
4) I looked for links between the acquired information and connected the information with my existing knowledge.	
5) I arranged the acquired information clearly.	
6) I used the acquired information for learning process and work activities.	
7) I continuously assessed and modified my learning process and work procedures with	

regard to the instructions, criteria and expected outcomes**.**	
8) I used the acquired information for the defence or explanation of my ideas and opinions.	
9) I assessed criticism advice and praise and used them for improvement of my learning and working methods and procedures**.**	
What else did you learn during your work on the project? What phase of the work did you find the most interesting? What did you find most difficult?	

MODEL LESSON

"Optical Fibres and Their Possibilities"

Educational area: Humans and Nature

Educational field: Physics

Duration: 90 min (two 45-minute lessons)

The lesson follows a situation when the pupils learnt about the wave aspects of light. The acquired knowledge should now be utilised during the process of learning new information and skills.

The objectives at the level of learning competency that this lesson aims at:

The pupil:

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- Knowingly uses various learning methods and procedures and considers their use with respect to the objectives of the learning process;
- Recognizes what methods and procedures are the most effective ones;
- Knowingly acquires knowledge and skills that he/she uses in further learning and work activities;
- Clearly organizes the acquired information;
- Analyzes the outcomes of his/her learning process and activities, assesses them with regard to their qualifications and possibilities with respect to the chosen strategies;
- Gets feedback in terms of the efficiency of his/her learning procedure or work from his/her peers and adults;

Objectives at the level of expected outcomes:

Physics

The Pupil:

- When dealing with the tasks and problems, he/she uses the principle of linear spreading of light within the homogeneous optical environment and the principle of light reflection.

LESSON PLAN

Evocation

Individual brainstorming - each pupil puts down as much information as they can about the topic: "*What do you know about optical fibres and where do we encounter them?*"
- it is important for the pupils to write as much as possible, regardless of whether they are correct, it can simply be guesses.

Sharing in pairs– the pupils read each other's notes, possibly, they add new information from their colleague. The teacher tells the pairs to write down all the questions they can think of concerning the topic.

Class brainstorming – the teacher lists the students´ information, guesses and assumptions about the topic on the flipchart or whiteboard, making sure the suggestions are written

down in an organized manner. Also, the teacher writes down all the uncertainties that the pupils have and questions that they think of and are interested in concerning the topic.

Realising the meaning of new information:
The teacher gives every pupil the description of each particular method through which one can understand new information in the text concerning optical fibres. Each pupil reads the description of all methods, then in pairs, checks and discusses with their classmate whether they understood the way each method is carried out. If there is any misunderstanding, the teacher explains or provides more specific information.

The outline of the methods offered for the study of texts dealing with optical fibres:

We teach and learn in pairs:
Two classmates read a text, one at a time, and they take turns in the role of the teacher after each paragraph, each of them having at their disposal a copy of the same text. After reading a paragraph, the one in the role of teacher always:

1. sums up what they have just read in the extract
2. thinks of a question that is related to the text and asks their partner to answer it
3. determines what part of the text will be read next

In this manner, the pair gradually reads the entire assigned text (Note: If one of the two is a weaker reader, the other can read some passages aloud).

We teach each other in groups:
The method is carried out in a four member group (or sometimes bigger). Each of the pupils has a copy of the same text and they take turns being the teacher. As soon as the pupils finish reading the text (usually silently), the one who is the "teacher" has to:

1. sum up what the content of the extract was
2. think of a question that is linked with the text and ask the others to answer it
3. clarify those passages in the text that might have been difficult to understand for some members of the group
4. anticipate what the following passage will be about
5. determine what part of the text will be read next

I.N.S.E.R.T.

While reading, each pupil puts marks in the margins of the text according to the following key :

√	Put a tick at the side of the text if anything from what you read corresponds to what you knew or you thought you knew.
−	Put a minus if any information that you read does not correspond to what you know or heard.
+	Put a plus where the information you read is new for you.
?	Put a question mark if you come across information that is not clear or seems confusing to you or that you would possibly like to find out more about.

When marking the passages of the text, it is not necessary for the pupils to mark every piece of information; the mark should reflect the thoughts on a specific piece of information. The pupil can make one or two marks per paragraph, sometimes more, sometimes less. After reading the text, pairs or threes sit together to discuss what proved to be correct, what the article disproved with respect to their original ideas and what information was new to them.

The teacher hands out the basic text about optical fibres (see attachment 1), which the pupils are going to study, and invites each of them to choose a method that seems the most suitable one for them to understand the information about optical fibres in a technical text. At the same time, every pupil writes on their self-evaluation sheet why they are choosing the particular method (see the self-evaluation sheet at the end of the lesson, the 1st line). Note: The teacher points out that if there is anybody who finishes studying the text earlier and would like to go into more detail within the topic, they can study the extra information under the double line.

The pupils arrange the workspace they need (a place for working alone, a place for working in a group, the tools – according to the chosen method) and they work on the text, learning by the chosen method. The teacher arranges with the pupils how much time they think they are

going to need to work with the text. If the estimates differ a lot (working in a group takes more time than working individually), the teacher gets the pupils to reach a compromise (the average of the suggested times). The pupils keep track of the time for studying the text, the teacher announces every 5 minutes how much time is left.

The teacher is in the role of an observer during the individual student work time, monitoring the work of the pupils by listening to them and/or providing advice or explanation.

When the arranged time limit for the work with the text is up, each pupil notes on the self-evaluation sheet what was good for them about the method that they chose and how it actually helped them to understand the text better (see the self-evaluation sheet at the end of the lesson line 2).

Reflection:

At the end of the arranged time limit, every pupil has the opportunity to make personal notes about what they learnt. Again, similar to providing the pupils with the methods for working with the text, the teacher presents a description of methods suitable for reflection on what the pupil has learnt and for recording the information about optical fibres. Each pupil reads the description of all methods and after this consults with a classmate as to whether they easily understand the way each of the methods is carried out. The teacher instructs the pupils to choose one of the methods and take notes.

The I.N.S.E.R.T. chart – the pupil copies the table into their notes and in each of the boxes puts down the 2-3 most significant items of information from the text, according to their point of view

√	A tick = something that I knew
−	A minus = something that does not correspond to what I know or heard.
+	A plus = the information I read is new for me.
?	A question mark = something that I don't understand and would possibly like to find out more about.

The Idea Map Method:

The idea map is a method that enables a student to structure and organize information about specific topic, e.g., in the framework of the A4 format. An idea map enables us to find parts of the topic, sort them (compare, decide what belongs to what, decide about the superiority and inferiority of the individual items of the topic), to identify the coherences and relationships among the components of the topic and name the individual categories found in the topic. The central idea of this idea map is OPTICAL FIBRES.

Obr.

The pairs and trios of pupils who chose the same method for reflection share their notes from the I.N.S.E.R.T. table or the idea map. Then they get back to the questions written on the flipchart at the very beginning of the lesson, and they discuss which questions they found answers for and which remain unanswered.

Every pupil writes down on a self-evaluation sheet why they have chosen the particular method they used to create the notes (see the self-evaluation sheet at the end of the lesson, 3rd line).

Then the whole class goes through the questions together with the teacher, and the pupils give their opinions on the following: *where we were in agreement with the article, what we have made clear and what remained unanswered, what kind of information needs to be added from other sources etc.* The unanswered questions can be looked up by the pupils at home with the use of various sources (the Internet, encyclopaedia).

The teacher assigns a task to the pupils as a so-called proof of learning. The instructions are: *"Write a short letter to your grandparents, in which you´ll explain the basic principles of optical fibre transmission, what it is used for and why this kind of technology is so effective. Your grandparents have no idea what optical fibres are; therefore, try to give a simple and clear explanation. You can write individually or in pairs. "*

The finished letters are then read in pairs or fours, and after each reading, they talk about the clarity of the letter and also they check if the information in the letter is technically correct. If

they are interested, some of the pupils can then read their letter aloud in front of the class, or in groups of four they can pick the best one, which will be shared.

Pupils write down on the self-evaluation sheet what they need to understand the topic better (see the self-evaluation sheet at the end of the lesson, 4th line).

The teacher offers the pupils the opportunity of an individual consultation in case any of them are not quite sure they understood some part of the information concerning the topic correctly.

The pupils place all the materials used or created in this lesson in their files.

Optical fibres lesson self-evaluation sheet:

1. Why did I choose the…………………method? In what way do I think it helps me understand the information in the text about optical fibres better than the other methods?	
2. What was convenient for me about the…………………………….method that I chose to study the text? How did it help me understand the text better?	
3. Why did I choose the…………………. method to create my notes?	
4. What other things would I need to understand the topic better?	

The Text about Optical Fibres

Introducing optical fibres and their possibilities

The record in data transmission by optical fibres:

With 16,000 employees in 16 countries, Bell Laboratories is a fruitful source of new technology. Since 1925, 28,000 patents have originated there and it has played the leading role in the process of inventing and improving key telecommunication technologies. The scientists from Bell Laboratories have been awarded six Nobel Prizes for physics, nine American Medals for science and six medals for technology.

The Lucent Technologies, with their seat in Murray Hill, N.J, U.S.A, designs and supplies companies and providers with systems, software, semiconductor components and services for next generation communication networks (broadband or mobile Internet infrastructure, communication software, communication semiconductors and optoelectronics and services providing technical designing of networks and consulting).

The scientists from Bell Laboratories, the division of research and development of the Lucent Technologies, doubled the long distance record of transmission in the upper band up to 4000 km (which is approx. the distance from Lisbon to Moscow) at the speed of 2.56 terabits (trillion bits) of information per second. The previous record was 1.6 terabits of information per second within the distance of 2000 km.

The new transmission (bit rate) record was achieved by means of a new 64-channel system using DWDM technology in which each of the channels carried information at the speed of 40 gigabits per second. (The transmission of a gigabit of information per second can be compared to a transmission of approximately 1000 books' content per second.) The DWDM method developed at Bell Laboratories enables the transmission of several information flows in one optical fibre.

How is this possible? What kind of technology enables such a fast transmission of huge amounts of data?

The answer is clear; it is thanks to the optical fibres. Optical fibre is miraculous because it is capable, due to its index of refraction, of transmitting a lot of information in the form of light. Today optical fibres are used in telephone systems, the Internet and also in medicine. In the past, to clear an obstructed vein, it had to be cut at the spot where the blood clots were situated. Now, the vein can be cut at any place, then the optical fibre is inserted and a laser is applied to the end of the fibre that is not inside the vein and the clot is cleared.

Optical fibres are produced in the following way: pure glass (in the form of thin rods with a diameter of 2.5 cm) is placed into a machine and at the temperature of 2000 °C is processed into a thinner diameter (approximately 1 cm). In this way, the lengthening of the middle of the optical fibre occurs. The fibre is stretched by being melted again. A molten glass droplet is cast in a machine that is about 10 m high. This drop stretches until it becomes a fibre. From about half a meter of processed rod, 2 km of optical fibre can be 'stretched'. However, this fibre is very fragile; therefore, the thin fibre is passed through a vessel containing liquid plastic. This fibre is now very strong, and even though it can be broken, it is difficult to snap.

So let us summarize: Optical fibre is very thin and transparent, is made from silicon or plastic and is used mostly in telecommunications for high-speed transmissions. It is a dielectric waveguide, where electromagnetic waves flow (mainly light) in the axis direction with the use of the absolute reflection principle at the interface of two environments with a different index of refraction. The inner part of the fibre is called the core, around the core there is a shell and the primary protection. In optical fibres used in data networks, the diameter of the core and the shell is given in micrometers and multi-mode fibres with a diameter of 50/125 µ or 62,5/125 µ (used in mainly in the U.S.) are used. In telecommunications nowadays, single mode fibres with a diameter of 9/125 µ are commonly used. From the point of view of signal transmission, optical fibres have the following advantages over metal conductors: broad-band, low falloff, resistance to electromagnetic interference, secure transmission (it is hard to lose the signal) and are made from silicon, which is available almost everywhere.

The Use of Optical Fibres in Illumination:

Application of systems based on optical fibres can be found in various areas of human life. From aesthetic effects like starry night, cosmic lighting designs to museum exhibit illumination, which it is suitable for due to the unique qualities of illumination control- no heat, no UV or IR radiation, small size and easy maintenance.

Cities use optical fibres to light streets and buildings. Theatres use them to illuminate stages in spectacular ways. We can observe the use of optical fibres in amusement parks, casinos, discos, cinemas, theatres and staircases. Optical fibres in advertisement are suitable for logos,

company signs and billboards. Some complex industrial manufacturing processes require special illumination solutions, e.g., big installations to illuminate particular instruments in a sterile environment. The light from optical conductors can be operated with a high level of accuracy that, in demanding conditions, cannot be equalled by conventional systems.

Optical Fibres:

The future in the area of long-distance, high-speed communication lies in optical transmissions through optical fibres or preferably cables. What is the principle of optical transmission, and what are the qualities of optical transmission systems?

Today the greatest potential for transmission lies in optical fibres and the transmissions they are able to provide. The actual extent of this potential is subject to scientific disputes – naysayers claim that we have no idea of the limits or possibilities of optical transmissions. One thing is certain: if today we are able to 'squeeze' a twisted pair to its maximum, in the case of optical fibres and optical transmissions, we are still at the beginning of our capabilities and the possibilities are indeed great.

Optical transmission systems:
In metallic links (i.e. coaxial cable and the twisted pair), the transmitted data were represented by a proper electric signal and its progress – for instance by the level of voltage or current, changes of amplitude, frequency or the phase of harmonic signal. When dealing with optical transmissions, it is obvious that the transmitted data will be represented by light or, more specifically, by light impulses.

In practice, we need the whole optical transmission system; in an appropriate generator, a light impulse is generated, the transmission component takes care of 'leading it' to its destination, where a sensitive photo detector recognizes the light impulse (and transforms it perhaps into an appropriate electric signal). The reason why today's optical technologies use an incredibly low percentage of optic's possibilities is mainly the fact that our present ability to transform electric signals into optical (in the light impulse generator) and its reverse transformation (in the detector) are limited. Far on the horizon, we might observe the first purely optical computing systems, which may not need to be delayed by the transformation

into electric signal and may therefore be significantly faster, yet, at present, this type of purely optical computer is still light years away.

The principle of optical transmission:

A light impulse can be generated, if we are not too demanding as far as its 'purity', by a simple LED diode, a photo diode or a photo transistor can serve as a photo detector. But what do we need to transfer the light beam from its generator to its final detector without the beam being dispersed somewhere along the way? It is necessary to use a suitable optical fibre free of deformities and capable of conducting the light beam with minimum loss.

Numerical aperture   A Part of the beam is reflected

And another part permeates into the other environment.

The angle of incidence is bigger   the whole beam is reflected

Than the critical point (numerical aperture)   and conducted by the optical fibre

To understand the principle that light beams conduction by optical fibre is based on, it's enough for us to take a look at the elementary physics, particularly at those parts that deal with what occurs at the transition point between two environments with different optical characteristics (different 'optical density', actually, different refraction index). As one of the elementary physical rules says, "A light beam falling at the interface of two such environments is partly refracted and permeates from one environment into the other and partly it is reflected and returns back to the environment it comes from". The postscript to this rule then says that it is the angle at which the beam falls at the interface that plays a very important part. If it is relatively small (measured from the vertical at the interface) and does not go over a certain liminal figure, then a part of the beam actually penetrates into the other environment. If the angle of incidence is big enough (bigger than point referred to as numerical aperture),

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the whole beam is reflected back to its original environment and none of its parts penetrates into the other environment. And that is the principle of light signal conduction in optical fibres; both optical environments and also the angle at which the light beams enter the fibre must be well chosen so that there can be only full reflections along the whole length of the fibre.

Extra information text for those who are interested: **"Single mode and multi-mode optical fibres"**

Useful information in optical transmissions is represented by presence or absence of light. The light generator 'in the rhythm' of arriving data generates light impulses, the optical fibre transfers them to the photo detector, and the detector in a reverse mode from the presence or absence of light concludes what kind of data was originally sent. This is the basic general description of optical transmission. In practice, there are two possible variations, and these are single mode and multi-mode transmissions.

A single mode optical fibre

Generator   --------------------------------------- detector

A multi mode optical fibre

Generator   detector

As for multi-mode transmission, the light generator can be relatively simple and can generate light impulses made up of several light beams at the same time (technically referred to as modes). Each of these modes enters the optical fibre at a slightly different angle, is reflected at a different angle and as a result of this travels through the whole optical fibre from the generator to the detector along a distinct (in terms of length) trajectory from the other modes (beams) that were generated together within one light impulse. In other words, every light impulse has several components, each of them travelling along a different trajectory which

means that it reaches its destination at a slightly different time than the other components of the same impulse. However, the detector on the end side is unable to notice every single component at a time – it only evaluates the total value of 'light frequency' of each component. And, as these components are sort of 'scattered in time' (a phenomenon called dispersion occurs in them), the resulting effect is a distorted signal. This distortion, of course, must not exceed a certain maximum limit, beyond which the receiving side could possibly not deduce what was actually sent. All in all, multi-mode fibres only have a relatively small range since the dispersion increases with the length of the cable. Currently, the range is usually two kilometres. On the other hand, these multi-mode fibres are relatively cheap and can be used with rather simple and cheap generators and detectors.

The effort to increase the range of optical fibres is primarily hindered by the existence of more modes and by the negative influence of dispersion. The solution would be an arrangement where only one mode (one beam) would be transmitted, which would virtually eliminate the effect of dispersion.

A single-mode transmission can be reached basically in two ways: by lessening the difference of the optical qualities of two environments at the interface where the reflections occur or by reducing the diameter of the optical fibre's core. The core is made up of the middle 'vein' (a core representing one optical environment) and of a shell (representing the second optical environment). Today, the second method is mainly used. Due to reducing its core, the single-mode cable is able to conduct just one light mode (light beam). To generate this, we obviously need a more accurate and; therefore, more expensive generator, and of course, the same applies to the detector. Accordingly, the single mode fibre solutions are generally more expensive (the single mode optical fibre itself is more expensive); nevertheless, its range is broader (today usually several tens of kilometres).

Internet links that were the basis for the arrangement of this article:

• http://interval.cz/tiskove-zpravy/rekord-v-prenosu-dat-optickym-vlaknem/
• http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optick%C3%A9_vl%C3%A1kno
• http://www.earchiv.cz/a96/a645k150.php3
• http://www.eco-design.cz/voptikatutor.php?pStr=11

2. PROBLEM-SOLVING COMPETENCY

The level of the key competency at the end *of secondary grammar school education*
The pupil:

Recognises a problem, elucidates its nature, divides it into parts:

2.1 Identifies the participants of a problem situation and the problem constituents, as well as the variables and their mutual relations.

The pupil sets up a plan of activities that will take place at school in the afternoons. He/she is to identify which activities might be of interest to his/her colleagues – schoolmates, for instance, foreign language lessons, playing rock guitar or drums, chamber music choir, tai-chi or graphic arts. Subsequently, the pupil is to identify the teachers and find out their time constraints and the availability of classrooms in order to correlate them with the options of fellow pupils. In the case of unusual activities, the pupil is to estimate the costs involved (i.e. purchase of equipment, fees for professional instructors etc.).

2.2 Decides which of the variables/factors are important.

The pupil estimates the voter turnout in the parliamentary election for various voter groups. Which factors will determine the participation of particular voters in the election process? (the political situation, approach towards the election, personal situation, weather, election campaign…)

2.3 Identifies the cause of a phenomenon and its consequences and the relation between them.

The pupil identifies the relation between measurements in natural sciences (length of a metal wire and temperature, rate of growth of plants and soil pollution or light intensity, water density and its temperature etc.) or the causes and consequences of various historical events (i.e. the rise of fascism, rise of communism).

2.4 Identifies the similitude of a present problem with the previous problems and recognizes the differences and similarities between the problems.

The pupil identifies analogies in math and natural science tasks upon change of known and unknown variables in cases of changed conditions etc. In social sciences, the pupil identifies similarities and differences of a certain phenomenon in various time periods (for instance, the issue of gender equality in the Czech Lands at the beginning of 20th century and nowadays).

2.5 Identifies the information that is missing in order to define or solve the problem and supplies the details missing or else states the way to provide them.

The pupils compare the issue of gender equality at the beginning of the 20th century and nowadays. The issue is too broad and the pupils lack sufficient information. They realise, for instance, that they do not know to what extent Czech women have perceived the issue as a problem, what they saw as the source of discrimination in the past when compared with the present days, what their living conditions were 100 years ago, to what extent the perception of life in the city differed from that in the country, whether there are any differences between life in the city and in the country today etc. Once the questions are defined, the pupils search for various sources of information (running a survey among women of different age groups, contacting research institutions engaged in gender issues, addressing historians or the Czech Statistical Office, or reading period literature etc.).

2.6 Expresses schematically the structure of the problem or system concerned.

The pupil designs the algorithm of the complex calculation or the decision-making process and demonstrates it with the help of a development diagram.

The pupil further identifies the possible cause of a faulty bicycle pump, refrigerator, etc. He/she draws an operation scheme of the given gadget or he/she draws up a diagram leading to the identification of a possible cause of the defect. The picture demonstrating the operation of the given gadget is supposed to be clear and easily understood.

Forms hypotheses, proposes gradual steps, considers the application of various methods when solving problems or verifying a hypothesis:

2.7 Forms hypotheses based on accessible information.

The pupil evaluates the efficiency of selected detergents and states the influence of their individual components on the plant life in freshwater streams. Based on the information on the individual components of the detergents, he/she forms hypotheses about their impact. The pupil reads news in an astrological magazine with an account of miracles. He/she then proposes hypotheses how these marvels (for instance, crop circles) could have emerged without the interference of supernatural powers, i.e., he/she tries to find explanation through known phenomena.

2.8 Tells whether the hypotheses may be verified.

The pupil is given at his/her disposal advertisements for cosmetic products (for example, for a cream that lowers the appearance of wrinkles by 100%, shampoo that doubles hair growth, or detergent that improves the brightness of laundry by 50%). The pupil then recognises which of these assertions may be scientifically proven, or he/she designs experiments in order to verify these assertions.

2.9 Proposes methods in order to verify a hypothesis or to identify a fact.

The pupil designs an experiment in order to survey the effectiveness of selected detergents and states the influence of their individual components on the plant life in freshwater streams. The results of the experiment are then applied in order to verify the hypothesis that the increase in concentration of selected detergents influences the growth of algae.

2.10 Proposes indicators in order to evaluate the successfulness of the solution.

The pupil deals with the problems of the daily coexistence of classmates and schoolmates. He/she proposes indicators according to which it will be feasible to discern as quickly as possible, and later as well, whether the problem can be solved with success.

2.11 Considers the role of individual factors and persons when solving a problem.

The pupil considers the influence of individual factors on the process of problem solving and the possible interference of various persons involved in it.

2.12 Finds partners (or possibly, sets up a team) according to the assignment he/she is to solve.

The pupil proposes the team structures for various tasks. Which qualities should the team members have? What should their professions, specific knowledge and skills be?

Considers the possible advantages and disadvantages of the individual solution variants, including the assessment of their risks and consequences

2.13 Upon considering the relevant information, the pupil is able to make a decision and takes all responsibility for his/her decision.

In the case that the decision proves to be incorrect, the pupil seeks solutions, not excuses.

2.14 Explains the particular consequences of final solutions – the positive outcomes as well as undesirable impacts.

The pupil has an idea of steps to be taken in case of failure, selects one of the possible solutions and is able to say in advance what he/she will do in case the solution misses the target.

2.15 Proposes steps to be taken in order to alleviate or eliminate negative impacts of proposed solutions.

If the decision about the content of a school excursion is not agreeable to several classmates, the pupil looks for possible ways to oblige them within the context of the proposed outing.

Applies appropriate methods and prior knowledge and skills when solving problems; apart from analytical and critical thinking, the pupil also uses creative thinking while employing imagination and intuition:

2.16 Applies prior knowledge and skills when solving a problem.

The pupil discerns the knowledge and skills acquired during the school lessons that may help him/her when solving a problem. During the problem-solving process, the pupil applies mathematical knowledge and computing skills.

2.17 Applies logical and combinatorial thinking when solving a problem.

The pupil classifies various objects and events and deals with daily-life tasks focused on organisation (allocation of objects or persons in accordance with a particular key, looks for an ideal sequence of events etc.).

2.18 Decides which of the already known procedures may be applied when solving a problem.

The pupil identifies similar problems he/she has already dealt with and the procedures he/she applied in order to find a solution. The pupil then identifies the similarities and differences between these problems/solutions.

2.19 Starts the problem analysis on his/her own, does not wait for ready-made solutions and searches for his/her own solutions. Also considers the application of less usual solutions.

The pupil is not content with the answer: "This is the way to do it." He/she always searches for better and more effective procedures.

2.20 Proceeds systematically when solving a problem.

If a technical gadget does not work, first the pupil examines it closely, then looks into the instruction manual, chooses among the recommended procedures or consults those with more experience. Random trial-and error methods are left until last.

2.21 Records the progress and the results of empirical research.

The pupil replicates the complex experiment/working procedure on the basis of records of his/her classmates.

2.22 Develops new hypotheses when the prior ones proved to be wrong, while reconsidering the initial prerequisites.

The pupil returns to the original assignment in order to reassert that his/her original interpretation was correct. The pupil is able to look at the problem from different angles.

Critically interprets the acquired knowledge and findings and verifies them, finds arguments and evidence for his/her claims, formulates and defends well-founded conclusions:

2.23 Evaluates the experiment from the point of view of its purpose.

The pupil identifies those factors that might influence negatively the validity and reliability of the results.

2.24 Draws conclusions from the acquired knowledge, generalises the final solutions.

The pupil is able to assess the limitations of the data acquired and the extent of possible generalisations. For instance, when interpreting the results of a school survey, the pupil notes whether the respondents' profile well represents the composition profile of the school's pupils in general. Furthermore, he/she notes whether the responding group includes only older or younger pupils, top pupils rebels etc.

2.25 Assesses whether his/her final solution makes sense. Does not jump to conclusions.

The pupil assesses the statistical results of the task being aware of its meaningfulness, the cogency of arguments, reliability of proofs, personal bias etc.

2.26 Applies / proposes an application of the final solutions in particular situations.

The pupil deals with daily-life problems (typically organisational, planning, or decision-making tasks).

2.27 Justifies and stands up clearly for his/her solutions.

The pupil is able to address various audiences with his/her arguments.

Is open to using various methods when solving problems, considers a problem from various sides:

2.28 Changes his/her decision based on new information or changed conditions.

The pupil does not stubbornly persist with his/her original idea and is able to conform rationally.

2.29 Comes up with various suggestions for a given problem. He/she evaluates his/her own as well as those proposed by others in accordance with various criteria and makes a choice from these.

The pupil introduces various experiments in order to verify the hypothesis given, while judging their feasibility, reliability and financial and experimental demands.
He/she considers various methods to settle a conflict among his/her classmates.

2.30 Describes a problem from the point of view of its various participants or interest groups.

The pupil judges ecological issues and problems from the point of view of various interest groups.

MODEL LESSON

"WHAT BOTHERS US IN OUR SCHOOL"

Educational area: Man and Society
Duration: 5 months

The pupils are expected to identify the issues that bother their schoolmates the most and to try to propose a procedure that would eliminate these troubles. The educational objective of the activity is to teach the pupils the principles of active citizenship: to encourage them not to ignore the environment in which they live, but rather to have active influence on it. The project is realised by a team from a single class and the outcome of their work, which the pupils introduce to the faculty and other schoolmates, indeed may subsequently be put into effect within the school concerned.

The exercise is focused on development of the problem-solving competency.

Objectives at the level of the problem-solving competency:

The pupil:
- proposes methods to verify a hypothesis or to find out certain information;
- decides which variables/factors are significant;
- identifies the information that is missing in order to define or solve the problem and supplies the details missing or else states the way to provide them;
- identifies the participants and the constituents of the problem, variables and their mutual relations;
- considers the roles of individual agents and persons during the problem-solving process;
- proposes variant solutions of the given problem; evaluates his/her own as well as variants proposed by others in accordance with various criteria and makes a choice among these;
- explains particular consequences of final solutions – the positive outcomes as well as undesirable impacts;
- predicts future progress.

Other skills that are developed in the project though they do not belong among the target ones:

At the level of the communication competency:

The pupil:

- expresses himself/herself clearly, in spoken as well as written forms, comprehensibly and adequately to what, to whom and how, with what intent and in which situation he/she wants to communicate; the pupil is sensitive to the degree of experience and knowledge and to possible feelings of his/her partners in communication;

- understands messages of various types in various communication situations, correctly interprets the messages being received and argues pertinently; helps to achieve understanding in unclear or disputable communication situations.

At the level of the social and personal competency:

The pupil:

- actively cooperates when setting and attaining common objectives;

- contributes to creating and maintaining valuable interpersonal relations based on mutual respect, tolerance and empathy

At the level of the civic competency:

The pupil:

- considers connections between his/her rights, duties and responsibility, approaches the fulfilment of his/her duties responsibly and creatively, defends his/her rights as well as the rights of others, acts so as to prevent their suppression and helps create conditions for their fulfilment.

COURSE OF THE LESSON

1. Mapping of problems (1 lesson)

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The pupils familiarise themselves with the project – their task is to identify the problems with school life that bother their schoolmates (of all grades) the most. Within this project, the pupils focus on the development of problem-solving competencies – the teacher distributes among them self-evaluation sheets (see the attached worksheet) in order to determine the skills that will be developed within the project and the phases at which the pupils will monitor and evaluate their development.

The pupils are divided into groups. Each group will administer a survey in selected classes using their choice of technique (a questionnaire, personal interviews with individual pupils or groups etc.). The headmaster asks all pupils to cooperate and take the survey, and he asks all teachers to create suitable conditions for the activity.

During the lesson, the pupils prepare a questionnaire/set of questions for personal or group interviews. They will collect the information within a week or two.

2. Selection of problems (1 lesson)

The pupils introduce to the others those problems that they see as most important concerning pupil contentedness. Each group selects one problem in order to focus on in to find a solution. (These may involve, for instance, communication problems between pupils and teachers, organisation of breaks, availability of the computer room, gym, schoolyard, or the music room after classes, choice and organisation of sports stays, methods of oral and written exams, or the issue of being late for school.)

3. Search for further information (1 lesson)

The groups exchange as much information as possible concerning selected problems. Each group assesses the collected information, identifies the missing information and decides how it may be gathered by the next lesson. (Typically, the pupils finalise their survey by asking additional questions of other schoolmates, teachers, headmaster, or parents.)

During the lesson, the pupils prepare a plan for the survey finalisation. They finalise their survey by the next lesson.

4. Description of the problem and the plan to find solutions (1 lesson)

Based on all collected information, the pupils describe the problem in detail, appoint persons and groups whom the problem concerns and also persons and groups who might play a role in the problem solving. They plan the problem-solving process. For instance, some pupils are asked to discuss with pupils and teachers from other schools the way they deal with the problem, other pupils look for analogical problems and problem-solving methods at schools abroad, other pupils discuss the issue with school staff, parents, or experts.

5. Formulation of a solution (1 lesson)

Based on the collected information, the pupils propose a solution for the problem and define the roles of individual participants within the solution. In the event that there seems to be more than one best solution, they propose variant solutions. They consider concrete consequences and complications of proposed solutions.

6. Presentation and discussion (2 – 3 lessons)

A presentation and discussion takes place in the presence of all pupils of the school. The pupils introduce the problem and the proposed solution. They try to introduce all aspects of the problem and its solution, with its positive outcomes and impacts. The solution is discussed among all participants. The pupils may be asked to revise and amend the solution. If the solution is found generally acceptable, the teachers create conditions for its realisation. In order to make sure that the school community has the opportunity to thoroughly discuss the problems and the proposed solutions and to take a stand on them, we recommend that the presentation be realised through the model of active meetings (see below). The meetings can take place in the school cafeteria or gym (the pupils sit on mattresses).

The method of Active Meeting
Active Meeting according to Rima Martineniene and Eigil Kjærgaard
Active meetings are organised at school in order to allow all pupils (not only those who are members of the school parliament) to participate in the process of improving school functioning. At the meeting, all pupils meet, forming groups small enough so that every pupil is given the floor. Yet, at the same time, they all meet in a hall large enough so that they all

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work in the presence of the others and that they have room to present the outcomes of their work to all the others in the end.

The pupils meet in a large hall, gym etc. They are divided across the grades into groups of 12 pupils. Each group has a separate table or a circle of chairs for their meeting. Each group is assigned one teacher who plays the role of a secretary – does not influence the discussion but takes notes or helps to gently steer the discussion if necessary. The teacher should, for example, sensitively see to it that every pupil gets the floor within the assigned time. It is possible to appoint pupils to play the role of the moderator/secretary, but they have less chance to get involved in the discussion. It is not a mere discussion, rather the aim is to get maximum input from the pupils, or even more importantly, to make all pupils feel that they are involved in the decision-making processes of their school. At the end of the discussion, the secretary reads the notes, and the group may eventually come to a common conclusion, depending on the nature of the discussed problem.

In the original version of "active meeting" the pupils meet once every six weeks. Every meeting starts with a general summary of the proposals that have been implemented, followed by a statement of what has not been realised and why not. Then, each group tries to point out those issues that, according to the pupils, require attention and should change in some way. They scrutinise the problem, propose solutions, distinguishing between steps they may take themselves and those that they need partners for, or else suggesting what still needs to be looked into etc. They form a proposal in such a way so that it can be further worked on.

Eigil Kjærgaard, Rima Martineniene: Five Cheers for Democracy.
Czech translation *Pětkrát hurá demokracii. O demokracii v každodenní praxi školy,* Agentura STROM, Prague 1997.

7. Project evaluation (1 lesson)

In the lesson following the school presentation, the pupils evaluate the course of the entire project (how was the work, what were the greatest problems they had, how can they improve their procedures in the future).

8. Evaluation of the realisation/efficiency of the solution (1 lesson 3 months later)

The pupils assess the realisation of the solution. Has the solution been realised in the way they intended? Has the proposal resulted in the desired outcome? If not, what needs to be done differently?

The following aspects can be **assessed**: skills in collecting information/asking good questions, formulating a problem, specifying its constituents and participants, paying attention to the external conditions while solving a problem.

Text of the Self-evaluation sheet

Self-evaluation sheet

The self-evaluation sheet helps the pupils reflect on their work. Pupils use it at particular stages of a project, and it helps them look back at individual periods. The pupils answer several questions for themselves, and then they discuss their answers together with other members of the group.

1. The reflection takes place at the beginning of the 4th lesson just before the pupils launch the problem-solving process. At this stage, the pupils should have gathered all necessary information and should be ready to reflect on the preceding stage of information collecting. The pupils should reflect the achievement of partial objectives through answering the following questions:

Partial objective: Suggests methods to verify a hypothesis or to identify a fact.
- Did we use suitable methods to collect information from our schoolmates? If not, why?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

- Do other, more suitable methods that might be used occur to you now?

……………………………………………………………………………………

Partial objective: Decides which variables/factors are important.

• Did we pose right questions?

……………………………………………………………………………………

• Did we ask about important things? If not, why?

……………………………………………………………………………………

Partial objective: Identifies the information that is missing in order to define or solve the problem and supplies the details missing or else states the way to provide them.

• Did we address all that may serve as a suitable source of information?

……………………………………………………………………………………

• Is it possible that we forgot about some person or a piece of material? If not, why?

……………………………………………………………………………………

Assessment of the **survey** phase:

• What could I personally do better next time? What could be done better by the group?

……………………………………………………………………………………

2. The reflection takes place at the end of 5th lesson when the pupils look back at the problem-solving phase. The pupils should answer the following questions:

Partial objective: Identifies the problem participants and constituents, the variables and their mutual relations.

- Did we manage to describe the problem?

……………………………………………………………………………….

- Did we identify all factors that played some role in the problem? If not, why not?

……………………………………………………………………………….

Partial objective: Considers the role of individual agents and persons while searching for a solution.

- Did we pay sufficient attention to the context of the problem?

……………………………………………………………………………….

- Did we forget to consider certain circumstances that may influence the proposed solution? If so, why?

……………………………………………………………………………….

Partial objective: Proposes variant solutions for the given problem. Evaluates own variants as well as variants proposed by others in accordance with various criteria and makes a choice among these.

- Were we open enough while searching for the solution?

……………………………………………………………………………….

- Did we merely choose the first solution that we came up with without paying sufficient attention to other options? If so why?

……………………………………………………………………………….

Assessment of the phase of **searching for a solution**:

- What could I personally do better next time? What could be done better by the group?

…………………………………………………………………………………….

_____

3. The reflection takes place after the school presentation. The pupils assess to what extent they succeeded in presenting the problem and the proposed solution. The pupils should answer the following questions:

Partial objective: Explains the particular consequences of final solutions – the positive outcomes as well as undesirable impacts. Predicts future progress.

- Did we manage to formulate the core of the problem and its solution clearly and comprehensively?

…………………………………………………………………………………….

- Which of the arguments that we used were convincing, which were not, and why?

…………………………………………………………………………………….

Assessment of the **presentation** phase:

- What could I personally do better next time? What could be done better by the group?

…………………………………………………………………………………….

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MODEL LESSON

"SOLVING ECOLOGICAL PROBLEMS"

Educational area: Man and Nature
Cross-curricular subjects: Environmental Education
Duration: 2 lessons

The pupils are hypothetically led into a situation where their task is to provide an expert opinion in answering chosen questions concerning environmental issues. The pupils are asked to think of a procedure in order to collect factual information that would help them decide what recommendations they provide. They have to consider relevant factors for the given situations, subsequently try to get useful information about them, make certain simplifications, consider which calculations should be made, or what experiments should be done.

The educational aim of this activity is to teach the pupils to apply facts and not ideologies when making decisions (not only in the field of environmental issues), to try to consider the problems thoroughly and not to be only guided by superficial impressions.

The task is aimed at the development of problem-solving competency; nevertheless, it fortifies a number of skills and knowledge in natural science and also information-processing skills.

Objectives at the level of the problem-solving competency:

The pupil:
- identifies the participants in a problem situation and the problem constituents, as well as the variables and their mutual relations;
- decides which variables/factors are important;
- identifies the causes and the consequences and the relation between them;

- identifies the information that is missing in order to define or solve the problem and supplies the details missing or else states the way to provide them;

- forms hypotheses based on available information;

- considers the role of individual factors and persons when solving a problem;

- applies prior knowledge and skills when solving a problem;

- applies logical and combinatorial thinking when solving a problem;

- starts the problem analysis on his/her own, does not wait for ready-made solutions and searches for his/her own solutions; also considers the application of unique solutions;

- proceeds systematically when solving a problem;

- assesses whether his/her final solution makes sense; does not jump to conclusions;

- justifies and clearly supports his/her solutions.

Objectives at the level of the cross-curricular subject:

Environmental Education:

The pupil:

- realises that each individual can help protect the environment by having an ecologically responsible approach to common, everyday activities;

- considers various aspects of ecological problems, forms his/her own opinion on them and attitude towards them;

- interconnects the knowledge and skills from individual educational areas and utilises them when solving environmental issues.

Non-targeted skills that are developed:

At the level of educational area Man and Nature:

The pupil:

- examines a problem from natural science, seeks an answer to it and possibly also specifies or corrects the solution to this problem;

- predicts possible impact of practical human activities on the natural environment.

COURSE OF THE LESSON

The pupils are randomly divided into groups of three or four members. Each group has at their disposal a computer with Internet and phone access. The groups are asked to solve a difficult problem related to environmental issues (task examples will be given below). Their task is to consider which factors are important for the solving the problem, decide which information it is necessary to gather, and find useful information sources. It is important that they get as far as possible in their problem solving but it is not necessary that they bring the solution to conclusion. The pupils are given about 60 minutes for this activity. During the remaining 30 minutes, the individual groups report to the rest of the class about the way they view the problem, which factors they would consider the most during the problem-solving process, where they would search for the necessary information and what they perceive as most interesting in the entire problem-solving process.

Text for the environmental issues

Task examples

Your friend is getting ready for a trip to Israel. She refuses to take a plane because she is convinced that air transport causes great damage to the environment. Your task is to give her advice whether her flight from Prague to Israel has a greater impact on the environment than a journey by land transport or boat.

At this moment, pupils typically start searching for possible connections to Israel, search for the fuel consumption and emission levels for individual means of transport and they compare the figures. In the discussion, they deal with other factors as well, for instance, the length of the journey, comfort etc.

Your friend owns a flourishing firm producing non-alcoholic beverages. Due to ecological reasons, he considers replacing the PET plastic bottles with returnable glass bottles, but he cannot find information as to what extent using glass bottles actually helps save the environment. Your task is to judge which factors should be considered and to find information that might help you to give your friend advice.

At this moment, pupils typically start searching for the energy demands of PET and glass bottle production and the impact of the production on renewable resources. They also consider the lifespan of the bottles, their recyclability (including the burden for the environment) and energy demands for their transport with regards to their weight).

Your friends make their living by selling beverages as stallholders. They ponder whether they should sell the beverages in compostable cups or whether to use traditional paper or plastic cups. The crucial criterion for them is the impact on the environment. Your task is to judge which factors should be considered and to find information that might help you to give your friends advice.

The reasoning in this case is similar to that in the example above; also the attitude of the consumers and the ways to influence them could be given thought.

Note:

The problems above are very complex. The pupils must divide them into partial components, decide which factors will play the deciding role, make necessary simplifications and search for substantial information. Two lessons will give the pupils enough time to grasp the problem, but it is very unlikely that they will be able to reach a conclusion. If interested, motivated pupils/groups of pupils can continue their activity at home as voluntary homework. It is interesting to have several pupils/groups of pupils deal with the same task and compare their conclusions. Much interesting information related to the tasks above can be found on the Internet (mainly in English), including expert discussions concerning the issues. In any case, the secondary-school pupils may find these sources inspiring. If this activity proves to be

effective, the teacher can later ask the pupils to come up with their own problems of a similar kind and to try to solve them and present them to their classmates.

The following aspects can be **assessed**: the ability to specify which data are necessary for the calculations (analytical skills and understanding of natural processes are assessed), ability to collect these data in various information resources, ability to make relevant simplifications and to work with estimates.

3. COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY

The level of the key competency at the end of secondary grammar school education
The pupil:

With respect to the situation and participants in the communication effectively employs available means of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, including expressing information of various types symbolically and graphically:

3.1 According to the situation and to whom he/she communicates with and what he/she wants to achieve, the pupil selects a suitable means of communication (personal/distance contact, in writing/orally, IT technologies/other technologies etc.).

The pupil finds it more suitable to apologise to the teacher for failing to fulfil the task in person than to write an e-mail.

3.2 Chooses optimal language means with respect to the way he/she communicates (which methods of communication he/she applies).

In a formal request, the pupil uses formal language and formal structure; in case of international phone call he/she uses short, apt formulation prepared in advance; when

preparing a notice about a sale of textbooks to be posted on the information board at the school entrance, the pupil uses keynotes and structures the information board clearly.

Uses and understands specialised language as well as a variety of symbolic and graphic expressions:

3.3 Decides when and how to apply specialised language, is able to substitute specialised terminology with a suitable alternative expression or simile in a situation where others might misunderstand the specialised language or be discouraged by it.

3.4 Effectively combines various types of expression (continuous text/graph/chart, continuous text/symbolic expressions/schemes etc.), choosing the suitable combination according to whom he/she communicates with and what he/she wants to achieve.

The pupil knows that the time for his/her presentation is limited and that he/she must communicate a great deal of information in an impressive manner; therefore, he/she chooses presentation using short texts, which he/she complements with graphs and charts in order to attract the attention of the audience while communicating a great deal of information in a short time, in a well arranged way.

Employs modern information technologies effectively

3.5 According to the situation and to whom he/she communicates with and how, the pupil selects a suitable means of communication, is able to combine them effectively.

The pupil decides when to use some presentation software for his/her presentation and when to employ other means.

3.6 Distinguishes the assets and limits of information technologies that he/she uses for communication, is aware of the risks related to their use.

The pupil has control over his/her relationship to the Internet, for example, and is able not to be online all the time.

Expresses himself/herself clearly, in spoken as well as written forms, comprehensibly and adequately to what, to whom and how, with what intent and in which situation he/she wants to communicate; the pupil is sensitive to the degree of experience and knowledge and to possible feelings of his/her partners in communication:

3.7 Expresses himself/herself coherently in written form with coherent sentence and paragraph structure throughout the entire text.

3.8 Chooses optimal style and language means with respect to what impact upon the reader he/she wants to achieve.

The pupil distinguishes between the style of a formal request addressed to the headmaster and that of an informal e-mail to his/her class teacher.

3.9 Employs correct grammar and style, chooses optimal formal arrangement of the text with respect to the communication situation.

3.10 Does not focus only on the content of his/her utterance but anticipates the feelings that the text may produce in the addressee, tries avoid conflicting communication.

When the pupil is to criticise his/her partner, he/she ponders which words to use not to offend him/her but still to communicate what he/she intends in a clear and comprehensive manner.

3.11 Structures his/her utterance logically, employs suitable form and language means with respect to the situation, avoids flattery, does not digress from the topic, is not needlessly 'wordy'.

3.12 Works pointedly with his/her voice performance (tempo, volume, melody, rhythm, breaks) with respect to the situation.

3.13 Does not focus only on the content of his/her utterance but perceives the feelings produced in the partner by his/her utterance, reacts to these appropriately.

When the partner seems offended or reacts disapprovingly, the pupils goes back to his/her utterance and gives a detailed explanation; guesses possible reactions to certain negative information and warns his/her partner in advance by saying something like: "What I am saying does not refer to you."

3.14 Keeps eye contact, respects the personal zone of the partner during an interview, gives signals of understanding the feelings of his/her partner verbally and nonverbally (affirmation, nodding).

3.15 Conveys and explains comprehensibly his/her ideas, attitudes, arguments in discussions, does not mince matters.

3.16 Prepares his/her arguments well, assesses strong and weak arguments, prepares for objections and is able to adapt to the development of the discussion.

3.17 Argues against opinions, not against the persons who have them – does not ridicule nor derogate them; employs relevant arguments to disprove opinions of others.

3.18 Respects the theme and aim of the discussion, distinguishes details that stray from the topic, points out procedural faults in the discussion (deviation from the topic, misunderstandings…).

3.19 In discussions, employs the ideas of the others as points of departure for his/her own claims, following them.

3.20 Does not take personally different opinions (critique of his/her opinions), and he/she tries to respond objectively.

3.21 Compares and analyses opinions and views that differ from his/her own; does not refuse to reassess his/her opinions and attitudes when his/her partner persuades him/her; accepts that concordance is not necessarily the only result of a discussion.

3.22 Avoids sweeping judgements and prejudices.

3.23 Practically distinguishes discussion from polemics (effort to compare opinions x effort to persuade others about one's point of view), does not confuse them.

3.24 Governs his/her own emotions, protests against aggressive conduct of others.

3.25 Pays attention to nonverbal signals of others, interprets them and reacts appropriately; suppresses his/her own nonverbal signals that are inappropriate in the given moment.

3.26 Steers (moderates) discussion.

3.27 Refers to himself/herself as "I", not "one" or "we" unless it is a team discussion.

Openly admits that he/she is responsible for a mistake.

Presents his/her work as well as himself/herself in a suitable way before a familiar as well as unfamiliar audience

3.28 Presents his/her or team's work by choosing the optimal form (which he/she suggests or asks someone experienced for advice) with respect to the assignment or to what impact he/she wants to achieve.

3.29 Is able to pointedly employ some rhetorical means in order to attract the audience.

3.30 Expresses himself/herself coherently even if he/she could not prepare his/her performance, reacts eagerly.

3.31 Is able to apply the techniques of handling stage fright that help him/her.

Understands messages of various types in various communication situations, correctly interprets the messages being received and argues pertinently; helps achieve understanding in unclear or disputable communication situations:

3.32 Interprets correctly various types of communication situations (with respect to who communicates, with what objectives, in what context…) and communicates and acts accordingly.

The pupil understands when it is suitable and possible to argue against a communication and when it is not, when it is suitable to express objections, when it is suitable to correct the

assertions of the other party etc.; revises too specialised expressions in the text that the group composed together in case the expressions are not suitable with respect to the text's purpose etc.

3.33 Identifies the intentions of the speaking partner, reacts in such a way that the communications run assertively, expresses suitable objections when the communication is manipulative.

During group work when a classmate attempts to hand over all the work, saying that he/she already knows how to do it and is good at it, the pupil objects assertively and insists that the classmate is involved and works.

3.34 Reveals incomplete information, distorted information and misinformation.

3.35 In a text, utterance or in another type of record, the pupil identifies the core ideas, highlights the key spots, paraphrases the substance of the communication, supplies his/her opinion on it comprehensibly.

3.36 Distinguishes relevant arguments from false ones; in a suitable manner warns of the fact that the other speaker offers inaccurate or even demagogical arguments if it is the case.

3.37 Distinguishes the relevant part of communication (what the other party wants to communicate to him/her) from the motivations of the other speaker, which influence the ways he/she is expressing them.

A classmate is angry because his team lost in the team competition and swears at his teammates; the pupil is able to tell him that he understands what has made him angry and disappointed without falling into dispute with him.

MODEL LESSON

"CZECH DREAM"

Educational area: Language and Language Communication

Educational field: Czech Language and Literature

Cross-curricular subjects: Multicultural Education, Environmental Education, Education towards Thinking in European and Global Contexts

Duration: altogether 6 lessons divided into 3 (or 2) blocks

The aim of the activity is to teach the pupils to reason, identify pseudo-arguments and react to them. At the same time, the activity may help to form the pupils' attitudes towards environmental protection, to ponder over various aspects of problems related to consumerism and to create one's own opinion on the issue.

Objectives at the level of the communication competency:

The pupil:

- conveys and explains comprehensibly his/her ideas, attitudes, arguments, does not mince matters;
- distinguishes relevant arguments from false ones; in a suitable manner warns of the fact that the other speaker offers inaccurate or even demagogical arguments.

Objectives at the level of the social and personal competency:

The pupil:

- gets involved in the group work, as a member of the group, he/she takes part in setting real objectives, strategies and the action plan in order to achieve them;

- during the phase of task fulfilment, he/she gets involved in the team work according to his/her role and general need, is responsible for his/her share in order to fulfil the task;

- if necessary, stops the group work, asking for a summary of steps fulfilled so far and for a possible correction of the further plan in order to fulfil the task; proposes alternative procedures;

- communicates with others, asking for and giving advice, shares his/her ideas with his/her colleagues;

- considers the proposals of his/her colleagues objectively, without regard to the person – author of the proposal;

- does not compete with other team members; appreciates good performance of other team-mates; is happy about common success.

Objectives at the level of the civic competency:

The pupil:
- in his/her life gives preference to activities and material sources that do not cause or increase environmental and cultural damage. Sets a good example for others that it is necessary to think in a long-term perspective.

Other non-targeted skills that are developed through the project:

At the level of the problem-solving competency:
The pupil:
- identifies the information that is missing in order to define or solve the problem, and supplies the details missing or else states the way to provide them.

At the level of the civic competency:
The pupil:

- judges the development of society (historical as well as present development, cultural, technical, and political) in terms of life sustainability and democratic conditions;

- analyses the opinions of others before taking a stand or producing a critique. Only after finding compelling arguments, does the pupil strive to change the opinion or actions of others or himself/herself.

Objectives at the level of the cross-curricular subject:

Media Education:

The pupil:

- searches for "unresolved" places in the text (withheld questions, verbal and visual manipulation etc.);

- makes decisions freely on the basis of critical evaluation of provided information, namely at a civic level as opposed to as a consumer;

- understands the substance and the expressions of contemporary trends in world development, namely the processes of integration and globalisation, and sees how these trends show up in everyday life (including media advertisements as well as in long-term development of society).

Environmental Education:

The pupil:

- understands the great interconnectedness between among ecological, economical and social factors and is able to choose optimal solutions in real situations;

- perceives various aspects of ecological problems, forms his/her opinions and attitude towards them.

Education towards Thinking in European and Global Contexts:

The pupil:

- sees the impact and consequences of the processes of globalisation and development, distinguishes among them positive elements and phenomena from negative ones, learns to find compromises.

Block 1 (2 lessons)

For motivation material, the teacher uses, for instance, a short illustrative video related to the given problem (documentary Czech Dream etc.). It is possible to leave this out if no such material is available.

The teacher briefly explains to the pupils what the project is about. He/she outlines the content of the project and points out those skills that they focus on during the project in terms of their development. He/she then passes out the worksheets and opens a discussion in order to clarify in what ways and at which moments the individual skills listed in the worksheet are to be assessed.

a) The pupils work individually, filling in a T-graph listing the benefits and risks of hypermarkets.

Benefits	Risks

b) The pupils divide into 4 groups to work with their T-graph using a method called Four Corners (individual flipcharts have the following categories):

1.   Hypermarkets – benefits to people?
2.   Hypermarkets – risks to people?
3.   Hypermarkets – benefits to society?
4.   Hypermarkets – risks to society?

Four Corners Method

The **Four Corners** method: the teacher posts on the wall four flipcharts with question headlines, he/she places them in the corners of the room (it is possible to use the corridor as well). The pupils are divided into 4 groups, in which they discuss a particular question in front of one of the flipcharts and then they use it to write down the answers. The individual

groups follow the instructions of the teacher, moving clockwise to the next flipchart, reading the answers that the previous group has put down, discussing them, ticking those that they agree with, putting a question mark by those that they do not understand and a cross next to the answers they do not agree with. They supply their own answers. The process repeats until the groups reach the last flipchart In the end, the groups return to the flipchart where they started, read the additional information and try to explain to other groups those answers marked with a question mark.

c) The groups list relevant questions of interest on the topic concerned – each one in block letters on a separate strip of paper (half A4 format). The teacher then sticks the question on one flipchart (trying to assemble them in groups of similar questions, grouping them into categories if possible).

d) Together with the pupils, the teacher tries to use these questions or their categories to generate problem fields that the individual groups will further deal with. If there is a field entirely missing and the teacher considers it substantial, he/she steers the pupils to discover it by asking relevant questions.

Examples of possible fields:

- *influence of hypermarkets on consumer behaviour – not only the existence of hypermarkets as such but also the presence of advertising strategies used that are connected with hypermarkets (and supermarkets)*
- *influence of hypermarkets on the environment*
- *influence of hypermarkets on life in a village, town (for instance, the outflow of customers from small shops, their disappearance etc., in terms of social values, for example, greater anonymity in the community of people etc.)*
- *influence of hypermarkets on the economy (of the town, state etc.)*

e) The groups of pupils (the original ones or the pupils can be redistributed, depending on the number of pupils and number of fields to be discussed) divide among themselves the individual fields. The pupils in each group agree on their strategy: which sources they will get the information from and how, how they will complete the collected information etc. The

outcome of this activity should be a collection of information (articles, research results, survey data they gather separately etc.) that will not be too structured at this point.

f) Each individual pupil then assesses on his/her assessment worksheet the part that is related to the group work after the first block, adding suggestions of what he/she could do to improve the cooperation within the group – the pupils then share their assessments within their group.

Block 2 (3 lessons)

a) Envoys – the groups inform each other about their results (they present the collected materials, commenting on them). Members of the remaining groups may provide some additional information (even though they have concentrated on a different field, it is very likely that they have come across details that concern the fields of other groups). For instance, they may offer their own opinion on the given issue, or they may have found a text that would help the other group, they can take down notes, copy something etc.

Envoys Method

The **Envoys** method: each group appoints envoy No. 1, 2, 3… (according to the total number of groups minus one). Envoys No. 1 are sent to the next group in the clockwise direction (black arrows in the diagram) and present all information collected during the group work. The members of the host group listen carefully, and when the envoy ends his/her presentation, they ask additional questions and supply further information related to this issue they have found in their resources. When envoys No.1 return to their groups, they inform their colleagues what new information they have collected from the group they were sent to. Subsequently, envoys No. 2 visit the groups that are placed crosswise (red arrows), envoys No. 3 visit the groups in the counter-clockwise direction (blue arrows), doing the same as envoys No. 1.

obr.

b) The groups summarise all available sources and focus on the quality of arguments applied in them – trying to distinguish reliable sources and information from those less reliable ones, giving reasons why they are reliable and why they are not.

c) The groups present their findings – how they recognise good information or arguments from bad, what determines it. The teacher puts down their comments on the flipcharts (best as a T-graph, i.e. into two columns – good argument x bad argument). The entire class then participates in a discussion on the collected information; the teacher may correct their opinions.

d) The groups return to their fields – their task is to go through the collected information again, choosing only that which is relevant. These arguments are then used by the group to prepare a flip presentation on the problem field the group has been working with – a list of positive and negative details, pros and cons. The spokespersons for each group then read the list, the flips are posted in accessible places and lists of source materials the groups used are added. Individual presentations can be followed by a discussion.

e) Each individual applies the brainstorming method (see the chapter Ethics and Information, p. 22) to answer the question: "When thinking about what I or my family could change in our shopping habits, what are the things that occur to me?". The teacher also uses the allotted time for brainstorming. The pupils read the results of their activity in pairs; if desired, they can read them out loud.

f) Creating posters "Shop of the Future" – the groups describe and at the same time use an artistic method to express what they think the ideal way of selling and buying goods should be like in the future. The pupils should synthesise information from all groups (they will have at their disposal all final flips and materials).

g) Gallery – presentation of posters of all groups.

Block 3 – Project Evaluation (1 lesson)

Evaluation sheet for a pupil – Project "Czech Dream"

1 – strongly agree

2 – slightly agree

3 – slightly disagree

4 – strongly disagree

	After block 1 of the project		At the end of the project	
Work in group	Evaluation scale	What I will do to improve the cooperation in our group in the next part of the project:	Evaluation scale	Why do I think this:
I took active part in the group work.	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
I was assigned a role in the team; I fulfilled my role with responsibility.	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
I took active part in the planning of the work progress of the group.	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
I listened to the ideas and opinions of other members.	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
I work as a team member, not a	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	

soloist.				

Activity	Evaluation scale	Why do I think this:
Argumentation, discussion, information		
During the project, I had a chance to learn to say what an argument is and what is not.	1 2 3 4	
I distinguished relevant arguments from false arguments.	1 2 3 4	
I am able to point out in a suitable manner when the other speaker offers inaccurate or even demagogical arguments.	1 2 3 4	
I followed the rules of the discussion.	1 2 3 4	
I am able to identify which information is missing for me to judge the arguments.	1 2 3 4	
I am able to find the missing information or I know where to find them.	1 2 3 4	
I enjoyed the project and the work.		If not, give reasons why:
Thanks to the project I acquired new skills or I deepened my previous skills.		If so, list the skills:

Project assessment:

From the project, I appreciate ……………………………………………………………………

During the project, I had greatest problems with…………………………………………..

I suggest the following improvements for the next time…………………………………….

MODEL LESSON

"COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICTS"

Educational area: Man and Society
Educational field: Basics of Civics and Social Sciences
Cross-curricular subjects: Morals, Character and Social Education
Duration: 5 lessons (best presented in one school day)

During this lesson, pupils should realise how they are influenced by critique, how they react to it and learn that critique can be both expressed and accepted in such a way that the communication is constructive and the participants come to an agreement.

Objectives at the level of the communication competency:

The pupil:

- argues against opinions, not against the persons who have them – does not ridicule or derogate them, employs relevant arguments to disprove opinions of others;
- does not take critiques and differences of opinion personally, and he/she tries to act objectively;
- governs his/her own emotions, protests against the aggressive conduct of others.

Objectives at the level of expected outcome:

Basics of Civics and Social Sciences:

The pupil:

- employs socially appropriate methods of communication in formal and informal relationships and constructively resolves possible disagreements and conflicts with other people.

Objectives at the level of the cross-curricular subject:

Morals, Character and Social Education:

The pupil:

- heads towards self-understanding, forms a balanced self-image: (…) knows the way the others perceive him/her, is able to accept praise and criticism, success and failure in a positive manner and is able to learn from his/her experiences;

- has acquired specific skills (self-regulative and communication) for dealing with various social situations (complex communication situations; competition; cooperation; help etc.).

COURSE OF THE LESSON

Lesson 1

1. The pupils first individually list their observations on two questions:

a) Can you recall a moment when someone communicated to you his/her critical observation or disagreed with you in such a way that you felt offended or angry and you perceived it as unjust?

b) *And conversely, can you recall a moment when someone communicated to you his/her critical observation or disagreed with you in a way that made you feel unpleasant, yet you did not have the feeling that your opponent wanted to put you down or treat you unjustly?*

2. The pupils share their experiences in pairs.

They exchange the feelings and reactions aroused in them by the critique, note their observations down. At the same time, their task is to agree which type of critique they consider the worst and which type they perceive as most unpleasant.

3. The pairs communicate their observations to the rest of the class; the teacher notes them on a flipchart.

4. The pupils each read the following dialogue to themselves. (see Text 1)

5. After that, they divide into groups of three and together answer the following questions, writing the answers down:

- What problem did the participants communicate about?

- Whose problem was it?

- Why did they not succeed in resolving the problem effectively?

- Which strategies should they use to come to a solution?

Text 1

Mr. Šebek and Mr. Kratina had the same job for the same wage. Mr. Šebek had constant troubles filling in complex time sheets and often made errors on them. Moreover, it took him a long time and Mr. Kratina often had to wait for him. Unfortunately, the issue had a negative impact on both workers – it was reflected in their earnings. The situation repeated itself every month. Mr. Kratina sometimes completed the time sheets for Mr. Šebek. He did it so often it turned into a regular routine.

Needless to say, after some time, Mr. Kratina started to become annoyed by the fact that during the time when he was doing the paperwork for Mr. Šebek, his colleague was chatting

with his female co-workers, smoking, and enjoying himself. At some point, he couldn't bear it any longer and burst out:

Kratina: "I've had enough now! I make an ass of myself here, filling in your stupid papers, and you are having good time – a coffee with Eva, smoking with Marta…"

Šebek: "Wait, you're kidding, I thought you like doing it, that you enjoy doing paperwork."

Kratina: "Do you mean that? Am I supposed to enjoy doing work for someone else while he's hanging around? I have lost so much time doing it! But what was I supposed to do, with you being so terrible, making mistakes all the time and the boss returning the papers so that I looked like an idiot as well!"

Šebek: "There must be some kind of misunderstanding. I thought that this was the deal, that you are better at paperwork and faster and that certainly you want to keep good track of everything, to be certain that the papers are correct, and so you do it."

Kratina: "So there was a deal you say! And how come I know nothing about it! And according to the deal, what is your part then? Chatting with girls, that's not on our job sheet, is it?"

Šebek: "Wait, that's a little too much. I do things, don't I? Ok, now I get what the problem is! You're jealous that it's me that the girls like and not you, am I right? That they like my jokes and not yours. But you've always been a stuffed shirt, that's no news."

Kratina: "That's just like you! Attack is the best form of defence, isn't it? But you've always used me. I had to tolerate so much from you! Mess all over, your papers on my desk. And all the lost keys I had to replace! And that time when you overslept and missed the meeting, I had to take over the entire presentation! And I had no time to get ready! I've been such a fool to let you walk all over me. But that's over, you understand? That's all done! I'm going now to tell the boss so he finally sees who is the one working here!"

Lesson 2

6. *The pupils, in groups, get the following table (enlarged and cut into individual fields):*

Approach	Your objective	Your attitude	Reasoning	Probable result
Confrontation	Get one's way.	"I know what's the best and what's correct. Don't you dare to question it!"	It is better to step on someone's toes than to give up one's own objectives.	You have the feeling of victory and satisfaction, but the other party feels offended and humiliated.
Cooperation	To solve the problem together.	"This is my stance, what is yours?" "I am willing to search for optimal solution with you." "What do the facts say?"	The opinions of both sides are equally important (but are not necessarily equally valid). It is important to place equal stress both on the quality of the solution and on a just procedure.	Most probably the problem will be solved with satisfaction.
Avoidance	To have nothing to do with it.	"I am neutral." "I have to think it over." "That is none of my business." "The others should be concerned."	Saying no is wrong and undesirable on its own because it induces tension.	Most often the problems are not solved, which causes long-lasting frustration.

Withdrawal	Anything but to offend or annoy anyone.	"I am not actually important here."	Maintaining harmonic relationships is the most important thing.	The other party will most likely start to take advantage of you.
Compromise	To find speedy solution everyone can live with.	"Let's get it over so that we can return to work as soon as possible."	Prolonged conflicts turn people from work and pointlessly spoil the atmosphere.	Next time, the participants will search for opportunistic, acceptable and purpose-built solutions instead of effective and lasting solutions.

Source:

Čakrt, M. Konflikty v řízení a řízení konfliktů (orig. Conflicts in Management and Management of Conflicts).

The teacher has prepared a blank table on the flipchart with described approaches (left-hand column) and categories in which the individual approaches are compared (top line), for the pupils to see how the slips should be sorted and what table should they create.

7. *The groups get the following text –they read it and according to it "check" the correctness of their table.*

Text 2

Types of conflict management and their consequences

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*People usually regard conflicts as a **CONFRONTATION**, i.e., a situation that needs to involve winners and losers, where the result is a so-called "zero sum" – one party gains just as much as the other loses. Accordingly, they approach the conflict with the position: "It will be as we say, not as you would like it to be." Realistically, it is an authoritative approach in which people take advantage of their status, power, authority, ownership or personality in order to push their intentions through.*

*This type of conduct, sometimes also called **victory/loss (V/L)**, is often deeply rooted in us, almost from birth, because the influences that we are confronted with affect us in these ways:*
1. family upbringing – very often we are compared to other children ("Pepík was only four when he learned to tie his shoes! You start school after the holiday and don't know how to do it yet. How the children laugh at you!"), which reinforces in ourselves notions like: "If I do better than my brother, our parents will love me more."
2. peers – our peers often accept only those who conform to their expectations and norms.
3. school – the value of an individual is set through a comparison with someone else: "Pavel is one of the three best pupils in the class!" The grade evaluation is nothing else but a comparison as well, which does not inform us whether one fully uses his/her capacity and is just at the limit of his/her abilities while others still has reserves in his/her abilities.
4. sport – "to win" means "to beat", which is all right at the stadium; yet life is not a football match or pole vaulting.
5. justice – in case we get into trouble, we think about whom to accuse, whom to enter lawsuit with, at whose expense "to win".

There are situations in which the competition (V/L) aimed at supporting the spirit of enterprise may be useful, yet it is not useful in moments when we need people to cooperate in order to acquire the best result. The advantage of V/L is often short-lived because even if I seemingly win over you, it will affect your feelings, your relationship and attitude towards me. For instance, if I were a supplier for your company and won over you in terms of a certain contract, I gain immediate benefit. But will you come back to me as a customer? My short-term "victory" will turn into "loss" in the long run unless I get other commissions from you.

Some work conflicts cannot be resolved in another way except where one is the winner and the other the defeated one – for example, when the conflict concerns an issue that cannot be divided (promotion at work), when a speedy and resolute action is necessary or when we are

certain that our solution is based on some indisputable facts. Even in everyday life, there are situations when the V/L thinking and acting is appropriate – for example, when people cannot trust one another. Nevertheless, one does not have to compete with one's wife or husband, one's children or colleagues at work.

*Victory/loss is not the only confrontation method in the process of resolving conflicts and the result does not always have to be winner – loser. Sometimes there is no winner and all are losers. In the situation **loss/loss**, the result does not satisfy any of the parties. Such a situation occurs when two obstinate and egocentric people enter into play. They concentrate on their enemy so much that they are able to do harm to the enemy even at the cost of their own failure, in accord with the saying: "If there is no winner, the loss is not so bad."*

*With respect to the fact that the majority of conflicts in the workplace appear to be a V/L at first, some managers subconsciously have a negative approach towards conflicts as such – they are afraid they would have to admit that one party is right and at the same time deal with the frustrations of the other party; they are not ready to deal with difficult interpersonal conflict situations. Such managers use the method of **AVOIDANCE** because they think that a conflict generally does harm or that the relationships are not strong enough to bear the burden of the conflict. The issues are not resolved, problems are avoided and if someone appears in a conflict situation, he/she is blamed for endangering the existing harmony.*

It is possible to employ this approach momentarily in situations when it is necessary to let the passions cool off and gain distance or additional information, when the problem concerned is marginal or a mere distraction, or if we know that there are others to resolve it in a better way.

***WITHDRAWAL** or **loss/victory** is a way of thinking and acting in the sense that: "If I lose, you win.", but often also: "Do whatever you like with me, I can tolerate everything." The cause of this approach may be the fact that we lack courage to openly show our feelings or beliefs and we too easily let the others to threaten us with the power of their personality, or that we are too indulgent and yield to the others, that we are willing to make sacrifices for the sake of peace – we try to oblige them at the cost of our own self-denial and we look for our power in popularity or in appreciation.*

Long-term outcomes of this approach are the abuse of the person that tends to withdraw too often, low self-respect and psychosomatic diseases as a result of suppressing negative emotions.

To resolve a conflict through a withdrawal is appropriate in situations when it is obvious that we are wrong, when we want the junior workers to learn a lesson from their own mistakes and to suffer the consequences, or else when we are afraid that a victory would do harm to far more precious values (friendship, good relations, cooperation, organisation stability etc.).

When both parties give up part of their interests for the sake of an agreement, we speak of a **COMPROMISE**. *There are no clear winners or losers, one concession is balanced with another, and something is sacrificed in order to achieve a common objective. However advantageous the approach might seem for both sides (and managers often find it very attractive), it brings about searching for purpose-built solutions, resulting in often short-lived agreements of the "hotchpotch" type. Moreover, if such an approach is employed in the long run, it leads to the emergence of parties playing games in the organisation with the aim of decreasing the concessions and increase the advantages, for their own benefit.*

This approach is applicable in situations when we need to find an acceptable solution under time pressure or if the opponents' powers are more or less comparable and at the same time they want to reach contradictory objectives.

If we want to find an integrative solution where the interests of both parties are too important and sensitive to cut them down through a compromise, then it is desirable to employ **COOPERATION**, *or* **victory/victory** *approach. The parties involved usually openly discuss the differences between their views, analyse the causes of the conflict, search for common interests and consider variant solutions. As a result, both parties are content with the decision; they have gained what they wanted without the other inevitably losing something; they both feel equally committed to the agreed procedure. It means that the success of one party is not achieved at the expense of the others or through exclusion of their success entirely. It is a belief in the existence of a third alternative which is not merely a compromise.*

Situations may occur where in spite of all effort we cannot find a solution acceptable to both parties. Then the agreement is not to agree at all – **no agreement**. *We may honestly say: "I*

want to win and I want you to win as well. Yet I do not want to push my interests through in such a way that your satisfaction is ruled out, because that would later influence our relationship in a negative way. At the same time, I do not think that you would feel satisfied if your interests were enforced while pressing me to withdraw. Let's then pursue the V/V agreement, but in case we are not successful, then let's agree that there will be no agreement at all. Perhaps we will find a way to agree next time."

Reference sources:

Covey, Stephen R. Sedm návyků vůdčích osobností (orig. Seven Habits of Highly Effective People). *Prague, Pragma, 1997.*

Belz, H., Siegrist, M. Klíčové competence a jejich rozvíjení (orig. Key Competences and Their Development). *Prague, Portál, 2001.*

Čakrt, M. Konflikty v řízení a řízení konfliktů (orig. Conflicts in Management and Management of Conflicts). *Prague, Management Press, 2000.*

Lesson 3

8. The groups now return to the dialogue of Mr. Šebek and Mr. Kratina. They analyse the approach they applied in their conflict (see the chart). Together they develop advice for both participants – what should they do in a different way, what should they pay attention to etc.

Examples of advice:

- Mr. Kratina should have communicated his complaint without emotions; he should not have attacked Mr. Šebek right away and blame him for all his frailties; he should not have end up enumerating all of Mr. Šebek's past misdemeanours etc.

- Mr. Šebek should have tried to get a better grasp of his colleague's complaints, for instance by expressing his understanding for his colleague's feelings. After that, he could have asked what particularly bothered him. He should have tried not to drift into a counter-attack and not to use the same weapons as Mr. Kratina did etc.

Lesson 4

9. *The pupils work with the text – "Communication in a Conflict Situation" through the method of three-phase dialogue:*

Three-Phase Dialogue Method
Three-Phase Dialogue: *Each pupil is given one part of the text. The pupils read their parts carefully, and prepare a presentation for other pupils. After that, each pupil is gradually given space for presentation within time assigned: the first pupil gives the presentation, the second pupil listens and asks questions leading to a deeper understanding of the presentation, and the third pupil only listens. Then, the third pupil is given time to sum up what has been said. After that, the pupils exchange their roles; the process takes place three times so that everyone gets acquainted with all three parts of the text.*

Text 3

Communication in a Conflict Situation 1/3

Role of the proposer – **what can you do to successfully solve a conflict if you are the one who proposes the solution? (You do not have to have been the initiator of the conflict.) Can you try to decrease the defensive reactions of the other party? How?**

1. Realise whose problem it is – *it is always the party, whose rights or needs are not satisfied. For example, if a junior worker was late in submitting the materials and we could not get ready for a meeting, it is our problem. If we open the discussion with an appeal towards the opponent for cooperation in order to solve our problem, we substantially decrease the opponent's defensive tendency.*

2. Describe the problem in terms of conduct, consequences and feelings connected with it. *It is useful to use the method X, Y, Z:*
"I have a problem. If you (do) X, then (the consequence is) Y, and I then (feel) Z."

X – conduct or behaviour that is the cause of your problem – describe what can be objectively observed, avoid any kind of judgement.

Y – consequences caused by the behaviour.

Z – feelings that are aroused in you by the problem; the opinion that feelings have no place in the issues of management and work is not correct - if you have no emotions, then they have you!

Example: "I have a problem that I would like to discuss with you *(suggesting that it is our problem).* You have not turned in the materials on time *(X = conduct)* and I had no chance to get ready for the meeting in the way I am used to *(Y = consequences).* The situation was very uncomfortable for me *(Z = feelings).*"

Of course the model described can be altered according to the circumstances.

Example: "I do mind *(Z = feelings)* that, when I come with a new idea, you immediately start searching for reasons that prevent it from being realised *(X – conduct).* I feel entirely discouraged from continuing my efforts *(Y = consequences).*"

3. Avoid expressing negative assessments. Talk about things that are happening to you; do not reproach the other party for doing unpleasant things to you or for being the way he/she is. Saying things like "You never say what you really think.", or "It is because you always spill the beans.", "You are a swindler," lead the other party either to become defensive, or to launch an attack. This is no route to cooperation. If you present your problem, do not blame anyone; do not make judgements about someone's motives or character. You can help yourself by consistent use of the so called "I-statements", i.e. by speaking about yourself and your feelings.

4. Refrain from suggesting solutions unless you are certain that you can come to an agreement regarding the core of the problem. If you do not share the same opinion on what is the core of the problem or where the substance of its causes lies, you are hardly likely to reach a common solution.

Communication in a Conflict Situation 2/3

Role of the proposer – **what can you do for a successful solution of a conflict if you are the one who proposes the solution? (You do not have to be the sole initiator of the conflict.) Try to contribute to a mutual understanding. How?**

1. Remember that even though the other party does not have to share your opinion, you have the right to be heard and understood. *In communication, we cannot avoid inaccuracies in perception because we each see the problem of the other party through our own "glasses". In order to help the other party understand our intentions, we can explain the situation in a neutral, factual manner (see the X, Y, Z model). If in spite of our efforts the other side does not understand or does not want to take our problem into account, we can only repeat it (in the same words, or re-formulating what we have said, or supplying additional examples). Be careful not to start blaming the other party or bringing new themes in the dispute when re-formulating your statements or supplying new details.*

2. Keep in mind that once you request something, you have to be willing to grant the same for the other party as well.
Avoid a long initial explanation, because you risk deviating from the relevant issues, and the other party may recede into defensive mode. Instead, grant the opponent a space to ask questions and to verify that they have understood your communication correctly.

3. If the problem is very complex, present it step by step. *In the beginning, concentrate on a single, rather simple, problem, and only when you feel you have grasped the view of your opponent, their interests and preferences, continue on to the more delicate issues.*

4. Employ something that connects you and your opponent as a basis for future agreement.
If you belong to the same organisation, you will certainly find something that you both feel strongly about – for example, playing fair with the junior workers, fulfilling given promises, keeping to the budget, keeping up with the deadlines, etc. These common issues can represent a basis for your requirements, which gain legitimacy in this way. You can for example point out at the positive influence of the change in conduct of the opponent on the achievement of the common objective.

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Communication in a Conflict Situation 3/3

Role of the opponent – **what can you do for a successful solution of a conflict if someone complains about your conduct even though you do not perceive it to be wrong, and thus do not feel such a strong need to initiate a solution to the conflict?**

1. Show your genuine interest and effort. Even if you do not agree with the opinion of the other side, you should react sensitively, and express your understanding of the opponent's perception of and feelings evoked by the problem (empathy). If the opponent attacks you and it is clear that their main intention is to do harm or to get revenge rather than to solve the problem, you can manoeuvre them by setting a rule; for instance, that you are willing to discuss the particular problem but that you will not tolerate personal attacks.

2. Try to collect sufficient information. If the problem is presented in too general a way, or if the opponent begins to present sweeping conclusions about your motives or character, ask them to provide particular examples or details of actions, based on which they came to their conclusions. For example, "Can you provide a specific example of my behaviour that offended you?" "How did it influence your work?"

3. Before you go on, summarise the main points that the opponent lists, and verify in this manner that you understand correctly what they want to communicate to you.

4. Search for and find details that you can honestly agree with. It is always possible to accept many of the opponent's opinions without threatening your interests. Your agreement may concern the **factual level** *(*"I agree that I have spent all the money but not in order to enrich myself."*), or the* **principle** *(*"I also do agree that in the period reserved for the public, all workers should be at their workplaces."*) If you cannot find anything of that kind, try to* **agree with the way your opponent perceives the situation** *(*"I understand why you think of him in that way. I also know people who behaved similarly in order to avoid responsibility." – *we do not automatically agree that the person concerned tried to avoid responsibility, but we*

*say that such behaviour may be explained in that way). It is also possible to **agree with the feelings** that the other person feels:* "It is understandable that this made you angry."

With a timely and well considered agreement, you can take the wind out of your opponent's sails – *it is probable that apart from the things they have already said, they have a whole collection of accusations at their disposal, further recollections, facts, and arguments that they will try to employ in order to attack you, and the entire problem will thus become even more clouded.*

5. Ask the other party to offer their proposal and hear out their suggestions.
By doing so, you express your interest in the opinions of your opponent and your positive approach to a real solution of the problem. If you merely hear the other party out and promise remedy, they will start to wonder whether you meant it seriously, whether you wish for a change at all etc. In case of serious problems, finish your meeting by writing down the details you have agreed upon, what will be done, by whom and when, and how the action will be monitored.

Reference sources:
Covey, Stephen R. Sedm návyků vůdčích osobností (orig. Seven Habits of Highly Effective People). *Prague, Pragma, 1997.*
Čakrt, M. Konflikty v řízení a řízení konfliktů (orig. Conflicts in Management and Management of Conflicts). *Prague, Management Press, 2000.*

Lesson 5

10. *Return to the text from the previous lesson – each pupil goes through the text alone and marks (for instance with colours) those skills he/she has already managed in communication and those he/she still needs to learn. The pupils then share their notes in pairs and discuss them.*

11. The groups then go back to the dialogue and try to remake it entirely – rewriting the dialogue according to advice provided by the text with the aim of making the participants come to a mutual agreement. The groups perform the dialogues aloud in the form of short sketches. After each performance, the remaining groups write on a slip of paper their appraisal (what they liked about the sketch, what they would like to point out), or perhaps suggestions for improvement. They give it over to the group.

4. SOCIAL AND PERSONAL COMPETENCY

The level of the key competency at the end of secondary grammar school education
The pupil:

Realistically evaluates his/her physical and spiritual possibilities; he/she is capable of introspection

4.1 Evaluates successes at work as well as in everyday life, identifies what he/she is good at and where he/she must compensate for his/her failings.

The pupil has developed a portfolio that he/she regularly uses for self-reflection based on particular proofs.

4.2 Evaluates his/her short-term and long-term, work or conduct based on particular evidence that he/she finds in his/her work or in his/her conduct.

The pupil does not only say in general that he/she succeeded at work. He/she particularly names or demonstrates what he/she has and has not succeeded in, , and offers arguments as to why he/she thinks so.

4.3 Identifies the causes of success and failure in work or conduct.

When evaluating, the pupil does not only state whether the work was successful or not – through a comparison with the initial criteria, for instance – but he/she also describes the steps that have led to success/failure, and identifies what particularly in his/her approach to work and within the task itself contributed (or did not contribute) to success. He/she differentiates between external and internal causes of success/failure; for instance, he/she does not merely blame unfavourable external circumstances for failure.

4.4 When planning a particular objective and a way to achieve it, he/she consciously builds upon his/her strengths and compensates effectively for his/her weaknesses.

The pupil is expected to design his/her seminar paper. He/she does not only decide on the topic, but also on the objective that he/she is supposed to fulfil in the paper, and respectively on what skills, reflecting the objective, will be necessary for writing the paper. The pupil compares the requirements with his/her strengths and weaknesses; plans methods which will compensate for weaknesses, and decides on the basis of this reflection. For instance, if he/she is an introvert person, he/she makes a plan for a rehearsal in addressing people in the street for a field sociological research.

A pupil wants to show off before his classmates with extra knowledge. He focuses on a field where his improvement is possible because he is interested in the topic. He will not try to equal the best maths pupil in class if he himself is not good at maths.

4.5 Judges and moderates his/her plans with respect to external and internal conditions that may influence achievement of the objective.

When planning a seminar paper involving field research, the pupil estimates what factors might influence his/her objective. He/she prepares alternative solutions for vulnerable points in the plan; for instance, if he/she is unable to collect the necessary data through direct contact with people on the street because he/she lets them to brush him/her off too easily, he/she will begin planning an alternative method of inquiry.

4.6 Anticipates internal obstacles and his/her own abilities to eliminate or moderate them.

The pupil assumes that he/she will enjoy the fieldwork part of a research and that the second part, sitting at a desk and calculating statistical averages then transferring them carefully into charts, will not be so pleasing. The pupil can remove this internal obstacle by carefully considering in advance how to arrange that a part of work is already taken care of during the fieldwork (for example, by structuring the method of collecting data). Or he/she may put up with this obstacle by accepting the fact that these things are part of a far more interesting task, which is in fact worth the effort.

4.7 Asks concrete questions in order to hear the opinion of others concerning his/her plan and the likelihood of realising it, with a view to gaining help or advice.

During a consultation with the teacher or a classmate, the pupil does not only ask: "Well, what you think about my idea?" but asks questions that help him/her to get a more detailed understanding of the opinions of others. "Do you think I am able to fulfil the task in the allotted time?" or "What do you think are the strongest and weakest points in my plan?" or "What should I change in my plan in order to make it more realistic with respect to my abilities? What do you think will be the most challenging part?"

4.8 Considers the comments of others thoroughly but does not neglect the final responsibility for his/her decisions.

If the pupil does not ultimately achieve the set objective, he/she does not excuse himself/herself by saying that he/she followed the advice of others or that "they" have been the cause of the failure. The pupil does not complain that the task was too challenging.

4.9 Continuously tests his/her abilities in new situations.

From time to time the pupil recapitulates, with the help of his/her portfolio for instance, which experiences he/she has already gained and what he/she has not tried so far. The pupil searches for opportunities that would give him/her a chance to try new tasks and new roles.

4.10 Selects tasks that allow him/her to develop his/her weaker skills and abilities.

The pupil is aware that his/her strengths include oral argumentation and participation in debates, which include a great deal of improvisation. He/she is nevertheless weak in structured record-taking from discussions. The pupil searches for opportunities in his/her team to take the role of a record-keeper to practise his/her skills in an authentic situation.

Sets his/her objectives and priorities with respect to his/her personal abilities, interests and living conditions

4.11 Pointedly searches for opportunities to employ his/her abilities in teamwork as well as individually.

A pupil skilled in organisation organises class events, or a pupil skilled in arts looks after classroom décor.

4.12 Sets long-term objectives with respect to his/her preconditions, interests, value orientation.

The pupil considers his/her future profession in the context of his/her existing successes; yet he/she does not avoid experimentation – he/she tests other areas of interest or explores whether he/she has other, thus far hidden talents or tendencies.

4.13 Plans his/her activities in order to manage both his/her interests and commitments.

The pupil sets his/her work and pastime priorities with respect to the actual situation and conditions.

4.14 Selects the form of work in order to achieve the objectives on the basis of his/her personal preferences, needs, and the demands of the work itself.

In a particular task, the pupil alone chooses between individual work or teamwork, and justifies his/her decision by his/her abilities or interests or conditions.

Evaluates the consequences of his/her conduct and behaviour in various situations and adjusts his/her conduct and behaviour accordingly

4.15 Before launching the activity, describes which persons and things may be influenced by his/her conduct, and how.

The pupil wants to push through an idea that the entire class sponsor a child in a distant country, and that the cost be covered from pupils' part-time jobs. He/she nevertheless considers the position of a classmate who has a part-time job already and uses the earnings to help his/her single mother to cover the costs of living.

4.16 Collects and evaluates information according to which he/she adjusts his/her activities.

The pupil would like to support some non-governmental organisation focused on ecology or abandoned children. Before deciding whom to support and how, he/she collects more information about the organisation beyond the information leaflet he/she has at his/her disposal.

4.17 According to need, takes steps that moderate the negative impacts of his/her conduct to an acceptable level; or gives up the activity concerned.

The pupil used to go to school by car, but being an ecological activist, he/she started using public transport.

4.18 If his/her conduct brought about unexpected consequences, he/she reflects it and draws conclusions for next time.

When collecting plants for a herbarium, the pupil picked protected plants by mistake. He/she does not make light the situation but learns that before any activity, he/she must consider in detail all possible risks that are related to the activity.

Adjusts to changing life and professional conditions, and influences them actively and creatively according to his/her abilities and opportunities

4.19 Pays attention to relationships in a new group he/she joins, and considers appropriate and inappropriate ways of conduct within the group.

The pupil is to become part of a workgroup that involves his/her schoolmates of various ages whom he/she does not know very well. The pupil uses appropriate means in order to find his/her place within the group.

4.20 Selects workgroups involving various members or else individual work according to the character of a given task.

The pupil likes to cooperate particularly with one of his/her classmates. He/she nevertheless establishes partnership with someone else.

4.21 Broadens the scale of tasks that he/she takes responsibility for in his/her life; searches for tasks in his/her environment to which he/she can contribute, proposes the particular way how he/she can contribute, and puts his/her plan into effect.

The pupil pays attention to the school environment and its surroundings. If there are things that he/she does not like, he/she proposes what could be done for improvement, and what role he/she could fulfil in the task.
The pupil voluntarily takes care of some tasks related to the functioning of his/her home.

4.22 Does not regard a problem as an obstacle but rather an opportunity.

The pupil does not merely enumerate what obstacles make it difficult to improve the school magazine, but rather looks for his/her own ways to contribute to its improvement.
A new teacher has requirements that the pupils are not used to. The pupil does not merely resist by saying that such things have never been required at their school.

Actively cooperates when setting and attaining common objectives

4.23 Gets involved in group work, participates as a group member in setting practicable objectives, strategies, and action plans in order to attain them.

4.24 When fulfilling a task, participates in teamwork with respect to his/her role and according to need, undertakes his/her part of task fulfilment diligently.

4.25 Works according to fixed and internalised rules, refers to them if necessary.

4.26 According to circumstances finds his/her role in the team by his/herself, or accepts the role that is assigned to him/her; in either case fulfils the task diligently.

4.27 Pauses teamwork if necessary, to ask for a recapitulation of work done so far or for possible adjustment of future plans in order to achieve the objective; proposes alternative procedures.

4.28 Perseveres to the end; also completes administrative, formal, and clean-up activities that are connected with the work.

4.29 Asks others for advice and gives advice to others, shares his/her ideas with colleagues.

4.30 Considers proposals of his/her colleagues objectively without personal regard to the author of the proposal.

4.31 Does not compete with other team members; appreciates good performance of his/her colleagues, celebrates common success.

4.32 Gives unoffending feedback to colleagues from the team, which leads to the improvement of the work of the entire team.

Contributes to creating and maintaining valuable interpersonal relations based on mutual respect, tolerance and empathy

4.33 Conducts himself/herself well, is attentive to others and is considerate of others in his/her conduct; provides help according to need.

4.34 Expresses his/her opinion in a non-aggressive manner, gives objective reasons for his/her requirements or views, and proposes and accepts compromises.

4.35 Reflects upon his/her prejudices in contact with other people.

4.36 Approaches others with respect, does not act with arrogance towards the weaker, does not cringe before authority.

Exhibits a responsible relation to his/her own health and to the health of others

4.37 Foresees the ways his/her activities may threaten his/her health or the health of others, tries hard to avoid such hazard.

4.38 Critically judges opportunities to improve his/her appearance, weight etc.

The pupil follows the principles of natural healthy nutrition, does not overuse artificial vitamins.

Decides on the basis of his/her own judgement, resists social and media pressure

4.39 Takes his/her time when making a decision; if necessary, asks for adequate time needed.

4.40 Decides on his/her own (does not wait for the decision of others).

4.41 Is able to insist on his/her decision and stand up for it even in situations when he/she is its sole supporter.

The pupil gives his/her own reasons for decisions; or else established what limits may exist upon the validity of the decision, such as lack of information or the specialist demands of the activity itself; or possibly describes the conditions he/she needs in order to decide in a different manner.

4.42 According to possibilities further examines and checks his/her decision.

4.43 If he/she finds it necessary, changes his/her decision and clarifies the change.

4.44 Suffers the consequences of a wrong decision (does not plead circumstances); analyses the causes of the wrong decision and learns the lesson.

4.45 Is alert and sceptical towards mob mood swings.

MODEL LESSON

"STEP-BY-STEP DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL AND PERSONAL SKILLS OF PUPILS WHEN ASSESSING THEIR OWN WORK WITH THE HELP OF PORTFOLIO"

Educational area: Language and Language Communication
Educational field: Czech Language and Literature
Cross-curricular subjects: Environmental Education
Duration: variable (several weeks to months)

*The following text describes one of the possible ways to develop those elements of the social and personal competency that are related to the skills of objective reflection of the quality of one's own work, of exploring one's personal strengths and needs, and of planning and trying out new tasks. As an example, we have chosen **work with portfolio**, which represents an applicable tool for development and monitoring of the above-mentioned skills. The method of*

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work with portfolio and its significance can only be seen from a long-term point of view; therefore, this example differs from examples in other chapters in the way it is processed.

The educational area for our monitoring of work with portfolio is Language and Language Communication in Czech. At the end of the text, we provide an example of a partial lesson during which the materials to be inserted in the portfolio will be produced, and it describes the development of the field skill of argumentation in connection with the cross-curricular subject Environmental Education. The scope of this handbook does not allow us to follow the work with portfolio in greater detail and to provide more such examples, but we hope that nevertheless the text will be comprehensible and helpful for the reader.

*During this model lesson, the pupils will **develop two important skills at the same time:***
1. The pupils will concentrate on the development of the field skill of argumentation (area: Language and Language Communication). The teacher prepares a number of situations for the pupils in order to practice their argumentation skills.
2. The pupils will, repeatedly and regularly, have an opportunity to think about and assess their performance; they will develop their (meta-cognitive) self-evaluation skills. Under the teacher's guidance, the pupils will monitor their progress in adopting argumentation skills with the help of the portfolio, which will further assist them in the development of their ability to assess their work, as described below.

*The evaluation will be of **continuous and formative** character, which means that the aim of the evaluation will be to **find all the positive outcomes** of a pupil's work, to **describe them and thus reinforce them;** and further, to **modify** existing weaknesses of his/her performance by considering what could be **changed next time**.*
The evaluation is not based on classifying a pupil's performance.

*An important element of monitoring the gradual personal growth of any skill is the work with **partial objectives**, which represent all the important components or phases of the development of the monitored skill. The phases of identification, specification, and formulation of objectives are moments in lesson planning which must never be neglected by the teacher. This is why these phases comprise a greater part of our example. We seek to outline in what depth and detail it is necessary to consider the objectives so that the teacher can sufficiently and effectively steer the learning process of his/her pupils by planning **relevant educational***

opportunities for *appropriate objectives*, by subsequent *monitoring* of the pupils' work, and by *providing informative* and *corrective feedback*.

Objectives at the level of social and personal competency:

The pupil:
- *evaluates successes at work as well as in everyday life, identifies what he/she is good at and where he/she must compensate for his/her failings;*
- *evaluates his/her short-time and long-time work or conduct based on particular evidence that he/she finds in his/her work or conduct;*
- *identifies the causes of success and failure at work or in conduct;*
- *asks concrete questions in order to hear the opinion of others concerning his/her plan and the possibilities of realising it, in order to gain help;*
- *considers the comments of others thoroughly but does not evade final responsibility for his/her decisions;*
- *continuously tests his/her abilities in new situations;*
- *before launching the activity, describes which persons and environments may be influenced by his/her conduct, and how;*
- *collects and evaluates information according to which he/she adjusts his/her activities;*
- *considers proposals of his/her colleagues objectively without personal regards to the author of the proposal;*
- *gives feedback to colleagues from the team without causing offence, which leads to the improvement of work of the entire team;*
- *expresses his/her opinion in a non-aggressive manner, gives objective reasons for his/her requirements or views, proposes and accepts compromises.*

Objectives at the level of expected outcomes:

Language and language communication:

The pupil:
- *has mastered the principles of standard pronunciation in oral expression and uses the phonetic means of the language (modulation of the volume, pitch and pace of voice; placement of stress and pauses, proper phrasing) suitably so as to be able to communicate effectively;*
- *employs non-verbal means of expression properly;*

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- *selects appropriate means of expression according to their function and their communicative intent, the given situation, context, and partner or audience;*
- *applies his/her knowledge of morphology as well as the principles of Czech word formation and syntax;*
- *employs his/her knowledge of clause elements and of the relations between them, of functional sentence perspective and communicative sentence types in order to express an idea properly, communicate effectively, structure utterances logically and distinguish between communicative intentions;*
- *properly employs the stylistic stratification of Czech means of expression both in written and oral expression;*
- *utilises the basic principles of rhetoric when creating his/her own spoken or written communication;*
- *selects adequate communication strategies, takes his/her partner and audience into account; recognises manipulative communication and is able to thwart it;*
- *assesses and interprets the communicative effects of a text and supports his/her statements with arguments on the basis of an analysis of the text in all its aspects;*
- *expresses the meaning of a text, explains reasons for various interpretations of one text and the consequences thereof, compares and evaluates them, and detects possible misinterpretations of the text;*
- *distinguishes between texts which fall into the areas of so-called serious literature, mainstream, and pulp, and justifies his/her opinion with arguments;*
- *interprets dramatic, cinematic, and television treatments of literary works on his/her own;*
- *uses information from specialist literature, internet, media and other sources creatively, and classifies and evaluates it critically;*
- *uses the acquired abilities and skills creatively in productive activities which develop his/her own individual style.*

Objectives at the level of the cross-curricular subject:

Environmental Education (topic: whales):

The pupil:

- realises the specific position of Man in the system of nature and human responsibility for further development on the planet;
- expresses humility and respect with regard to the valuable things which Man cannot create, appreciates the value of nature, realises and is able to evaluate various stances to Man's place in nature and Man's conduct towards it;

- understands that for survival reasons Man needs to use natural resources for his/her benefit but always in a manner which will not irreversibly harm the environment;

- realises that each individual can help protect the environment by having an ecologically responsible approach to common, everyday activities;

- becomes aware of the space in which he/she lives and the changes taking place there, and feels responsibility for its further development from environmental and other perspectives.

Thematic Areas of the Cross-Curricular Subject

- in what ways Man has affected the environment since the beginning of human existence and what their character is when compared in terms of sustainability;

- in what ways other organisms are important for Man, what causes the origin and extinction of various plant and animal species and what are the means for their protection;

- what the causes and effects of global ecological problems are and what stances interest groups take on the issue;

- what means and opportunities (e.g. legislative, voluntary/civic, institutional, technological etc.) of solving global ecological problems exist, and how an individual can participate in solving these problems.

COURSE OF THE WORK WITH PORTFOLIO WHEN ATTAINING OBJECTIVES AT THE LEVEL OF COMPETENCIES

The example describes the process of attaining objectives at two levels – at the level of the field and at the level of the key competency. The pupils work simultaneously to attain both types of objectives. From the point of view of developing the key social and personal competency, the field objectives may seem to represent mere interchangeable material, which is only provided for the pupils to learn the really important issue, which is to think about the quality of their work and evaluate it. In reality, it is not so. **Field skills are of the same importance for the pupils as the objectives in the areas of competencies.**

1. Setting partial field objectives

*The teacher wants to teach the pupils to follow and evaluate their own work in the course of a longer period, which is an objective within the social and personal competency as described above in greater detail. In order to be able to practice their skill, he/she needs to have the pupils do a **complex activity**, during which the pupils' abilities will develop for a longer period of time. At the same time, it must be such a complex activity so that it is possible to **describe and follow its partial components** (see: partial skills, above). The teacher utilises the outcomes from the educational area Language and Language Communication, field Czech Language and Literature (particular outcomes according to the FEP SGE are listed above). In the sphere of field objectives, the teacher may wish to focus in greater detail on the **argumentation skills**, because he/she perceives it as a key skill for his/her pupils. Therefore, the teacher lists the objectives to attain the argumentation skills that can be pursued during secondary education in a more detailed manner than the FEP SGE or this handbook (in the section focused on communication competencies) have done.*

Objectives which can be pursued through the practice of argumentation during secondary education

1. The pupil adopts a knowledgeable, considered and structured personal attitude towards a phenomenon, problem or opinion. He/she reaches a decision and acts upon it.

(This objective does not particularly speak of argumentation, but it is an important skill that is produced by the argumentation practice - and this skill is employed in general life, not only in situations when a certain attitude is discussed and justified.)

2. The pupil expresses his/her attitude comprehensibly, both in oral and written form.

3. The pupil formulates both in oral and written form knowledgeable and consistent arguments that also take into account possible opposite views.

4. The pupil promotes his/her argument, not his/her own person. The pupil is able to change his/her attitude in cases where the arguments for change are strong enough for him/her.

The teacher perceives these objectives (1 – 4) to be still too complex with respect to the fact that he/she wants to teach the pupils to observe their conduct and evaluate it with regards to the set objectives. The teacher thus maps them out in a far greater detail.

Although it may seem that further analysis of the objectives is rather a superfluous play with words, the teacher has his/her reasons for this work:

- *thanks to the detailed analysis, the teacher will find it easier to realise what the pupils need to learn, and to plan partial objectives, their progress, and the particular activities in order to attain the objectives;*
- *the pupils as well as the teacher himself/herself will be able to better follow the gradual mastery of individual skills; the teacher can, thanks to the detailed analysis, prepare a better plan not only for the entire class but for individual pupils as well;*
- *the pupils alone can better follow and plan their progress;*
- *when specifying the objectives, the teacher and the pupils develop a common language for argumentation, teaching/learning, reflection, feedback and evaluation.*

Detailed elaboration of partial objectives

1. The pupil adopts an articulate and consistent attitude and formulates it clearly
1.1 The pupil is able to defer his/her adoption of an attitude towards an issue until later when he/she has more relevant information at hand. If possible, the pupil asks for sufficient time to gather and consider the information.
1.2 The pupil is able to decide and adopt an attitude even though more information is yet to be gathered.
1.3 When adopting an attitude, the pupil knows whether and what information he/she may still need.

2. The pupil formulates knowledgeable reasons or evidence for his/her attitude towards an issue – gives arguments
2.1 Arguments formulated by the pupil aim towards a direct support of his/her attitude.
2.2 Arguments are clear, brief, and are not repetitive.
2.3 Arguments are supported by evidence (factual, based on experience, scientific).

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3. The pupil takes into account counter-arguments, considers them

3.1 The pupil takes into account the nature of a possible addressee, various aspects of the problem, and the situation as such.

4. The pupil does not succumb to desire to win over the opponent but monitors the clarity of his/her own attitude and seeks the best solution

4.1 During the discussion, the pupil continuously monitors his/her attitude and its firmness, tests it with arguments and counter-arguments.

4.2 During the discussion, the pupil changes his/her attitude if counter-arguments are strong and convincing.

4.3 The pupil is able to explain comprehensively and directly the change in his/her attitude, with clear reasons.

4.4 The pupil paraphrases the attitude and arguments of the opponent in order to verify that he/she has understood correctly.

4.5 The pupil leaves a dilemma open where he/she finds the argument and counter-argument to be of equal weight, or if he/she knows that he/she does not have yet enough information.

5. The pupil manages the time during which he/she wants to reach an attitude or to justify it

5.1 The argumentation is intelligent and concise but not rash.

5.2 The pupil does not repeat arguments which have already been accepted or rebutted.

*The teacher employs the objectives thus described both during the work on developing a field skill and during the development of pupils' ability to evaluate their work. **Thanks to the detailed description, the pupils can monitor, describe and adjust their development more easily** (fulfilling objectives at the level of key competencies). The work with the portfolio represents a helpful tool, serving as a means of collecting, monitoring, and evaluating evidence showing the existence of the process of learning in pupils and the quality of the learning itself.*

2. Work with the portfolio – work on objective attainment at the level of competencies

The teacher is aware of the fact that the process of evaluation during the development of argumentation skills should primarily be formative. That means that during the process of learning, the evaluation should provide the pupil with information necessary for him/her to immediately adjust and improve his/her learning and performance in the given skill. Grades are not really helpful for this purpose; rather descriptive and corrective feedback based on concrete evidence of the pupil's progress in learning is more suitable. The portfolio is an auxiliary tool to monitor the course of the pupil's learning and his/her development in handling the skill concerned.

Also, the portfolio helps not only the teacher but the pupil himself/herself to monitor his/her own work. The assumption is that the pupil is aware of the objectives he/she is to attain, and thus knows the level of quality of work he/she is expected to perform. The pupil thus learns to look for and find within his/her own work compiled in the portfolio during the given period evidence to confirm that the expected quality has been achieved, and to what extent. The pupil learns to follow step by step his/her progress and to draw conclusions for further learning.

2.1 Creating the working portfolio
*A portfolio is a tool that serves to document and monitor a pupil's activity and evaluate his/her progress with respect to the objectives set in advance. The portfolio can take various forms. First, the teacher and the pupils will utilise the so-called **working portfolio**. The pupils will collect in it all evidence about their work related to the argumentation objectives. Before starting the portfolio activities, the teacher will explain the pupils how to work with the portfolio, what type of items are to be inserted in the portfolio and what are the benefits of the portfolio as such.*

2.2 What the working portfolio will include
*The portfolio will include a sheet listing the **description of argumentation objectives** (see above) formulated in a manner comprehensible for the pupils. The objectives will be inserted after the teacher has gone through them with the pupils, making sure that they understand adequately. The pupils do not have to understand those objectives whose content they do not as yet know, and which are to be a future object of study. The pupils are also informed about the length of the period which the objectives relate to, i.e. when they are expected to attain the objectives.*

*The portfolio will include the pupils' **materials on argumentation**, which they will receive from the teacher in the course of their work or which they will create on their own (for instance, mini-lectures clarifying what an argument or a good argument is; mini-lectures on the structure of an argumentation essay; mini-lectures on the appropriateness of using specific techniques during argumentation; mini-lectures on argumentative finesse etc.). Moreover, the portfolio will include all **products of the pupils** which have emerged during the given period and are related to the argumentation objectives. It is up to each individual pupil which particular evidence he/she decides to store, but the pupils should know that it is better to compile more materials, with a view to organising them later.*

*The portfolio will also include evidence proving how **the pupil thinks about the development of his/her own skill** in argumentation and how **he/she processes the feedback from others:***

- *small slips of paper containing quick identification of good and not so good components of the pupil's performance (so-called "tags" – "stickers" – slips, on which the pupil briefly notes what was successful about the work inserted in the portfolio and what should be done differently in the future);*
- *completed self-evaluative or reflective sheets – mainly notes on success/failure in oral argumentation, which do not have direct evidence available for inclusion in the portfolio;*
- *free writings, for the pupil to comment on his/her own progress;*
- *messages from the teacher; for instance "stickers" that the teacher, just like the pupil, sticks on those places in the portfolio that he/she wants to comment with praise or a corrective question; a notice with the teacher's comments concerning a particular performance of the pupil in oral argumentation (for instance, a simple piece of praise or a question);*
- *the same from classmates (peer feedback) – particularly on performance in oral argumentation, but also on written items.*

*The pupils must **learn** to look for and mark evidence about the fulfilment of the learning objectives. The teacher cannot expect that he/she can simply assign such a task in the work with the portfolio and the pupils will complete it. For instance, the teacher picks the form of a **mini-lecture** – a short frontal presentation with an example – during which he/she presents to the pupils how he/she looks for and finds in a given document particular objectives that have been attained by the author. The teacher may, for instance, present **authentic material** from a discussion, analyse the presented arguments and show how he/she notes down on a sticker a brief commentary on a well-formulated argument or an argument which for some reason has failed.*

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When the pupils label the particular items in their portfolios, the teacher should check them and provide the pupils with feedback in order to comment on whether they have done well in their activity. The feedback may be both written (another sticker with the teacher's commentary) or oral, according to available time and energy.

It is not necessary that the teacher provides feedback to all pupils on all activities*, which would be beyond his/her strength. The teacher establishes a system which will help him/her to distribute attention evenly among all pupils in the given time. For instance, he/she sets up a monthly schedule within which he/she distributes the pupils in such a way so that he/she can focus on three or four of them in one lesson, take brief notes based on his/her observations in order to provide concrete feedback to the pupils concerned. The teacher may decide on different procedures as well, e.g. working in a circle where pupils volunteer to present a quotation from their work and an accompanying commentary, with the teacher formulating further commentary. When considering a pupil's presentation, the teacher can ask classmates to provide the feedback. This procedure however requires the absolutely voluntary approach of the presenters (the pupils must not be forced to give the presentation), the existence of a feeling of mutual trust among the pupils, and a tactful attitude on the part of the teacher.*

- *The portfolio will contain a more detailed specification of the partial objectives that the particular pupil is to focus on in his/her future work. In other words, the pupil will realise and note down what he/she should be careful about and what he/she should improve in his/her work in the future.*

2.3 Shift of the working portfolio into a documentary portfolio

The teacher will practice the argumentation skills with the pupils in the course of the entire year though not in all lessons of the course. He/she will employ applicable topics from the issues of language, literature, as well as the lives of the pupils, the locality, region, state, and the whole world. On a regular basis, the teacher reserves time for the pupils to assess their development in the previous period on the basis of materials collected in the portfolio. This activity will have two different stages and two forms:

I. The pupils go through their working portfolio

The pupils will search for evidence to confirm that they have (or have not) fulfilled one of the set objectives. They will mark each such item in the portfolio with a sticker and brief notes. One of such markers pasted on the sheet containing materials from the discussion web might say, for instance, "I formulated my arguments objectively" *(objective 1.1) with a 'plus' sign next to it, or , a great question mark with the commentary:* "I was not able to decide and adopt an attitude, I lacked information" *(objective 2.1) or* "I offered arguments that were not particular; in general, to be improved" *(objectives 2.1, 2.3).*

Discussion of portfolio

Once considered and marked, the pupils may share their portfolios, explain to each other why they see some items as successful, what the failures are. Moreover, they can consult their findings with the teacher. Of course, the pupils may, on the basis of feedback from their classmates or the teacher, adjust their perception of certain items and their quality.

II.Organising the portfolio into a documentary portfolio

*After a longer period of time – not too long but not too short either, two to three months are optimal for grammar-school pupils – the pupils can **summarise** their present strengths in the monitored skill, as well as their further needs. They can point out the objectives they are certain they have attained, i.e. the skills they have mastered already, using the portfolio as evidence. Further on, they can point out the objectives they have mastered only partially or not at all, while trying to formulate to which extent they have managed to attain these objectives. At the same time, they can try to detect how they came to reach that particular point in fulfilment of objectives. They select from all their materials in the working portfolio those which they consider significant in the process of gradual development of particular skills.*

It might be for example:

Item 1 – evidence on the starting state, dated 25th September
A record from the discussion web focused on the text of the Boer fable "Two suitors". The pupil was able to find arguments for only one attitude. The pupil attached a sticker saying: "I maintained one single position so firmly – in particular, that the chief should have kept his promise – that I could not find out how the counter-stance could be justified."

Item 2 – evidence on improvement, dated 10th October

The portfolio includes a copy of discussed texts – short press releases from Greenpeace and memoranda concerning the hunting of whales – and a record sheet of the pupil with the formulation of their own opinion on the issue which the text raised and which the pupils discussed. A note from the teacher says: "I have noticed in your record sheet that even though you seemed to prefer joining side X right away, you listened attentively in your group to the arguments supporting stance Y, and you asked good questions in order to clarify it." *The pupil's commentary says:* "I felt it was clear that no-one would want to support the hunting of whales, and that arguments supporting it were impossible to find. But it was interesting to listen to Petr and Katka who managed to find some arguments for the hunting of whales at last. Even though I did not agree with them."

Item 3 – further evidence on improvement, dated 20th October

The portfolio includes a copy of a newspaper article concerning migration of people from the poor parts of the world to the richer ones; a feuilleton by Ludvík Vaculík entitled "We are too many"; and also an activity record for "academic controversy" and a self-evaluative sheet with an evaluation record taken immediately after the end of the activity. The self-evaluative sheet says: "I managed to justify both attitudes one after another, just as the rules say. Even though the attitude – yes –the migration of people from the poor parts of the world to the richer ones should be stopped – was really hardly acceptable: my mind was rising against it."

Item 4 – evidence recording the present state, dated 30th October

The portfolio includes a record sheet from the web discussion on the text "Ivan and sealskin". The pupil's commentary says: "Even though I was decided from the beginning that Ivan should not have taken the sealskin, I managed to find the required three arguments for the opposite attitude and give reasons why it was good that Ivan took the skin. But it is possible that if I was not so firm in my attitude, I could have come up with even better arguments that my classmates later suggested."

*When the pupil picks evidence of his/her progress in the way suggested above (it is good to pick some 3 – 5 items), he/she sits down and **describes the journey** that he/she has undertaken from their state at the beginning to their present state. He/she will think about the factors which helped to achieve his/her progress, and consider what to do next.*

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An example of a record in the portfolio:

"At the beginning of the training in argumentation, I had difficulty in not becoming overwhelmed by my own attitude. I felt uncomfortable when I was to consider how to justify an attitude that was not my own. I rather wanted to find as many arguments as possible to support my own attitude, so that I could push it through at a later stage. I did not realise, however, that once I understood the stance of the opponents, it would be easier for me to present my own argumentation. But perhaps even more importantly for me, I found out that if I imagine what the others may think, it does not appear all that bad to me after that. Even though I am able to come up with some counter-arguments, I should still focus more on another thing: not to make rash decisions about which side I want to join – then I find it more difficult to come up with counter-arguments as such – and they are not so firm either. This is something I need to work at in the future."

It is useful if the pupil writes the self-reflection on a coloured paper. First, the portfolio turns to be more cheerful, and second, it is then clearer where the summarising self-reflection can be found. Of course, any such self-reflection sheet must be dated.

3. Work at attaining field objectives

The teacher is aware that in the course of the development of a field skill that it is not possible to merely distribute tasks among to pupils and leave them to deal with the tasks on their own. He/she knows that it is necessary to teach the pupils necessary new skills as well as preparing the basis for learning. The teacher estimates the level of the pupils' argumentation abilities. He/she has prepared a general methodical procedure which can help him/her to better plan appropriate occasions for the development of this particular skill, and to adopt the role of a teacher who teaches actively, and is not a mere observer of the pupils' work.

The pupils collect evidence of their learning for their portfolios, emerging in the course of the argumentation practice, and they comment upon it in the manner described in part 2.

3.1 Preparatory phase
The teacher works with the pupils through various preparatory methods, for instance:

- *Cube (one thing/theme seen from various points of view)*
- *T-graph (comparing positive and negative aspects of a phenomenon, theme, problem)*
- *Venn diagram (searching for agreements and differences among two or more phenomena) and a comparison chart (searching for and naming the distinctive features and comparing several items with respect to these features)*
- *The 'final say' (ability to persevere with one's own view; ability to close a discussion although one may feel like adding something)*
- *I.N.S.E.R.T. (critical assessment of textual information)*
- *Breakpoint (group sorting of statements according to meaning)*
- *and others ...*

3.1 Argumentation phase, with full support of the teacher (scaffolding)

- *The teacher selects one of the dilemmas that he/she wants the pupils to consider within the educational programme. The teacher prepares the resources, formulates (yes-or-no) questions.*
- *In the course of the lessons, the teacher works with the resources, leading the pupils by various means to the most thorough survey of the resources (for instance, in the case of a text, by posing questions that go "beyond" the literary sense of the text, by guided reading, reading and predicting, discussing the author, searching for key and supporting information, searching for contradictions in the text, working with yes-or-no questions etc.).*
- *After working with resources, the teacher asks the pupils a yes-or-no question. It may be prepared in advance and the teacher may guide the pupils towards it, or the teacher may formulate it authentically on the spot, based on his/her seeing what the pupils have been interested in the most and what is worth further investigation with the help of argumentation.*
- *The teacher makes it clear to the pupils what an argument is and how to identify a good argument. He/she gives several model arguments for the given question, or leaves the pupils to do so on their own.*
- *The teacher teaches the pupils to gather arguments and enrich their variety, for instance with the help of the method discussion web.*
- *When the pupils gather the arguments on their own, the teacher may offer a list of arguments he/she has put together in advance. The pupils can use this to expand their list of arguments. The list should be prepared in such a way so as to include items that the teacher expects the pupils to suggest, as well as items that the pupils might not come up with.*
- *The teacher steers the pupils towards evaluating the gathered arguments and selecting the most substantial ones according to their consideration.*

- *The teacher steers the pupils towards taking their own attitude towards the question, and supporting their attitude with convincing arguments from their list.*
- *The teacher organises the method of debate. He/she explains its rules to the pupils and manages the method himself/herself.*

Writing: *After the debate, the pupils should write a brief argumentative essay in the form of an extended synopsis (they express their own attitude, list strong and legitimate arguments, list strong counter-arguments, which they rebut, and write a conclusion).*

3.3 Phase of argumentation with partial support (practice with support)

The teacher manages the process of argumentation, but at each step hands increasing responsibility over to the pupils. More capable pupils provide support to the less competent ones.

- *The teacher together with the pupils makes a class list of interesting dilemmas suitable for discussion. (When the pupils in outside life or in their reading come to a problem where various views need to be considered, they may, after consulting their classmates and the teacher, add it to the class list of dilemmas.) The pupils with the assistance of the teacher choose from the list what they want to discuss.*
- *The teacher draws the attention of the pupils towards the resources, some of which he/she has provided, but emphasising that it is also up to the pupils to gather and study their own resources.*
- *The teacher works with the pupils when formulating the final form of the question.*
- *Based on the teacher's guidance, and later without it, the pupils note on their own what quality their arguments should have.*
- *Based on the teacher's guidance, and later without it, the pupils suggest how to gather as many arguments as possible, and then they do so.*
- *The teacher may have prepared a list of complementary arguments but he/she should apply them only if the pupils have forgotten some highly important arguments. It is even better to have the pupils work with their arguments only, and to reveal the "teacher's" arguments only after the debate is over, to analyse reflectively with the pupils to what extent they missed the arguments and what should be changed next time.*
- *The teacher reminds the pupils (and later he/she does not) that they have to consider the arguments they have gathered, and decide which ones they perceive as strong.*
- *The pupils adopt an attitude and support it with arguments.*
- *Two versions of shifting the responsibility over to the pupils:*
  - *one of the pupils moderates the final debate (the pupils should take turns)*

      o   *the teacher teaches the pupils to apply the method of academic controversy, during which they debate in groups of four persons*

Writing: *The teacher asks a question related to the given theme, which forces the pupils to consider it from a new angle.*

3.4 Phase of individual argumentation

The pupils look for potentially dilemmatic themes in their life. They form their own reservoir of dilemmas they would like to discuss.

We teach them to look for:
a) general human dilemmas
b) dilemmas concerning school or local problems (engagement)
c) dilemmas within their future occupations

- *Argumentation in discussion with others*
  The pupils pick a dilemma for common discussion. They prepare for it individually, and organise the debate. For instance, a tradition of a "scholarly academic squabble" that takes place at the end of the third year of school. We encourage them towards tackling problems in public discussions which they see as authentic and up-to-date, and which concern the life of the school or its locality.
- *Written argumentation*
  The pupils pursue themes of their own in the form of a full argumentative essay.

4. Illustrative model lesson

Whales, Jonah and the responsibility for the course of the world
In this example, we mention various activities and several lessons whose outcomes the pupils could include in their portfolios. The scope of this handbook does not allow us to describe in

detail all activities and lessons that have been used in order to develop the argumentation skills, so we have selected one lesson as an example.

The following lesson has been used in a course with elementary-school teachers and grammar-school teachers, and with grammar-school pupils.

4.1 Objectives of the lesson

We have selected various texts about the hunting of whales and their protection, with an excerpt from the Bible and from Melville's Moby Dick. *We have decided to let the pupils explore not only the level of responsibility of the terrestrial citizen of Central Europe for the fate of the largest mammals, but our own personal responsibility for the state of the world as such.*

4.1.1 Great thoughts, which we wanted to explore with the pupils, could be formulated as follows:

1. Life on Earth is a system that does not reflect the boundaries created by Man, and a change in one of its components brings along unexpected changes in other components or aspects of the system.

2. Man is gifted with reason, which binds him to act with consideration and responsibility in every situation he can influence.

4.1.2 Fundamental questions, which we wanted to explore together with the pupils, were:

1. To what extent is Man, as a thinking and technologically advanced creature, responsible even for those components of the natural system which he does not directly influence by his own life?

2. Is a citizen of Central Europe supposed to get involved in the protection of a creature he/she will never meet in his/her life?

3. Could the protection of whales become a substitutional problem, which frees us from the responsibility of dealing with more concrete problems which are closer to us, and in which it would be necessary to make more effort than merely signing the bottom of a petition?¨

4.1.3 Lasting understanding – what the pupils should retain from the lesson after they have forgotten the details:

- *the pupils consider whom their particular activities may influence and how;*

- *the pupils look for relationships between texts from various periods and of various genres; they compare information thus gathered, interconnect the collected information with their thoughts, and use information in order to form their own attitude and to justify it;*
- *the pupils formulate their attitude and the arguments to support it; they also formulate strong counter-arguments.*

4.2 Learning evidence

The pupils write a text, in which they consider the following question. In their text, they employ the claims and the arguments elaborated in the course of the lesson.

"What do you feel personally responsible for in your life, and are you willing to get involved in these issues in any way? Do you feel responsible for activities as distant from our everyday life as the hunting of whales? Why/why not?"

4.3 Key activities *that have led towards understanding great thoughts and towards exploring fundamental questions, and their sequence during the lesson.*

4.3.1 Evocation

First, each pupil considered the question:

"How did you feel when you were asked to help regarding an issue which you felt did not concern you too much?"

We have further clarified the question as follows: Has it ever happened to you that you found yourself in a situation where action, intervention or assistance was required, but you said to yourself "Why should *I* do something?" What did you do? How did you feel about it?

The pupils thought over the question first independently, taking notes. Then a discussion took place in pairs, followed by a discussion in groups of four pupils. Most often, the pupils remembered being witness of some disorderly conduct or vandalism and pondering what they were to do. Why should they reprove young football fans destroying bus seats – and why should they not? What risks are invoked by our activity when compared with pretending it is none of our business? And vice versa…

Then the pupils organised in the identical groups of four were given a story excerpted from the Bible:

Text for the model lesson
Jonah and the Whale

Jonah set about his everyday work as usual when the Lord came up to him and spoke:
"Jonah, I want you to set out for the city of Niniveh. The people there are very wicked, and you will announce them that the city and all that is in it will be destroyed."
"Why have you chosen me, my Lord?" asked Jonah with numbed expression. Why should I, simple Israelite Jew, go and preach about God to people whom I do not know, who live far away from here and are no Jews at all, and do not believe in you? And apart from that, you are kind and merciful; you would never flatten an entire city."

The pupils were told to discuss the excerpt and to give Jonah advice what to do and why. At last, every group presented to others what their advice was and what reasons they had for giving it.

4.3.2 Realising the meaning of information

During the following stage of the process, each member of a group chose one of four texts:
a) excerpt from Melville's Moby Dick*, chapter LXV: The Whale as a Dish*
b) press release from 17th June 2005 from www.greenpeace.cz: Česká republika má poprvé možnost chránit velryby (Czech Republic has an opportunity to protect the whales for the first time)
c) modified text from the magazine Koktejl from April 2004: David Černý – Velrybáři z Lamalery zpracovávají velryby (Whale hunters of Lamalera processing whales)
d) modified text from the magazine Koktejl from April 2004: David Černý – Velrybáři z Lamalery s bambusem na obry (Whale hunters of Lamalera with bamboo against the giants)
(The texts are available for download on www.kritickemysleni.cz.)

The pupils formed different groups, each group having a different text. The pupils were asked to read their text, discuss it and look for and note down arguments for and against the hunting of whales.

When the pupils were done with the task, they returned to their original groups. Every pupil had read and discussed a different text; first, therefore, they informed one another within the group about what they had read and what attitudes towards whale hunting they had adopted.

In the next step, the pupils were asked to consider the following question:
"Do we, the citizens of the Czech Republic, have the right to interfere in the question whether whales can or cannot be hunted?"

The pupils were given a chart for the discussion, with a question to be answered. The pupils' task was to individually fill in their arguments for and arguments against the engagement of Czech citizens in the issue of whale protection. Every pupil listed as many arguments for both stances as possible, without taking into account his/her real belief. Later, the pupils discussed, gradually re-coupling in several pairs, their arguments, adding persuasive arguments from their partners.

At the end, the pupils returned to their original groups of four and agreed which couple would defend the attitude FOR our involvement in the issue of whale protection, and which couple would justify the position AGAINST our involvement in the issue. Apart from their arguments, they had at their disposal another set from the teacher, which they could (but did not have to) use. After ten minutes, the pairs swapped their attitudes – those who had first argued FOR, adopted the position AGAINST, and those who had reasoned AGAINST, took the position FOR.

Discussion web

Do we, the citizens of the Czech Republic, have the right to interfere in the question whether whales can be hunted?	
YES	*NO*

Arguments for and against that the pupils could (but did not have to) use:

NO

1. The Czech Republic does not have a direct interest in whale protection, and has become member of the IWC just because of the promise of economic advantage.

2. No-one should interfere in issues they cannot understand – and we Czechs cannot understand why the Japanese or Norwegians need to hunt whales.

3. A strict prohibition of the hunt would result in some nations losing a source of their livelihood and a part of their culture. That is why the issue should not be decided by those whom it does not concern.

4. The estimated numbers of whales differ substantially; it is not certain whether their numbers really decrease. Only those species should be protected where the decrease is proven. Other classes of whales can be economically exploited.

5. Greenpeace is well-known for their extremist views, and the state and government should not cooperate with them.

6. Whale meat is a cheap feed for pets and the oil represents ecological fuel for lights.

7. It is easy to support in words the protection of whales – and so to make alibi for our inactivity in problems we have at home – at school, in Prague, in the Czech Republic.

YES

1. Every one of us should do everything that is possible in order to preserve the diversity of nature.

2. Nature does not belong to anyone, and so I do not care whether the person who protects it comes from a country that has a sea or has not.

3. The Japanese, Norwegians, Koreans, or Icelandic people cannot abuse the common richness of the world; this is why we Czech people can enter discussion about the regulation or abolition of hunting.

4. It is important to form a counterweight in the IWC to those countries which take the side of the countries that endanger the whales in exchange for bribes.

5. Industrial as opposed to indigenous hunting of whales, shifts the balance of nature, and should be stopped.

6. Whales are the only creatures that are exploited by Man in great numbers but are not farmed (we do not breed or keep whales). We take more than we give.

7. Our membership in the IWC stands for our moral attitude, through which the Czech Republic strengthens the country's international prestige.

4.3.3 Reflection

After the debate in pairs (through the so-called "academic controversy"), each pupil answered the following questions individually:

"What do you feel personally responsible for in your life and are you willing to get involved in the issue in some way? Do you feel responsible for activities as distant from our everyday life as the hunting of whales is? Why do you feel so? Why not?"

The pupils answered by free writing. Those who wanted could read their writing out loud in the end.

4.4 What materials from this lesson can the pupils insert in their portfolios and how will they work with it?

The pupils can insert in their portfolios all materials that they have received during the lesson or have created or discovered on their own. The texts will help them later to remember the contents of the lesson.

The pupils will assess their work with the help of those materials that represent the pupils' individual thinking. They can concentrate on the quality of arguments they noted down in the discussion web, on the way they referred to the presented resources (texts) during the argumentation; they can also comment upon the final free writing. When assessing their work, they should monitor which of the agreed objectives they have already fulfilled and to what extent, and should provide evidence for their assertion about fulfilled objectives by giving examples of their own work.

Text for reflection
Example of the free writing of one of the pupils

"Personally, I would need quite a lot of time for this complex question. I think that is definitely is correct to intervene where something wrong takes place. But there are more problems about it. On the one hand, we must recognize that it is wrong, which is not always easy, especially when we are not from a culture like the natives that hunt the whales. We can feel sorry for the whales and their possible extinction - not only sorry, but aware that biodiversity is decreasing, although indigenous hunters are not responsible for that. On the other hand, if the natives performed the hunts in the traditional ways, they would not threaten the whales because for example Japanese hunting today has nothing to do with tradition. One could compare it with mushrooming or picking blueberries. Blueberries must not be gathered

mechanically - only hand picking is allowed. So if I saw someone harvesting blueberries mechanically, I should tell them to stop. But that is another problem that I had in mind at the beginning – even though I see someone is doing something wrong, it is not so easy to stand against it. For example if it is an older woman who starts shouting back at me not to be cheeky to her, I do not have to be afraid of her, it is only an unpleasant thing; but standing up to a group of football hooligans for instance can be even dangerous. It is also quite difficult when there are more people around to decide that I will be the one who says something because all the others start looking at you at once, and it is embarrassing if the admonished person laughs at you. But that's it, not to be afraid that someone will scream at you or that they will beat you or laugh at you. It is easier to sign something but that will get us nowhere, or maybe yes but still there must have been someone who wrote the text of the petition, so that person put their head above the parapet. Now, I don't feel like doing heroic things but I'm glad I could think it over, and I will definitely remember when I'm in such a situation although I don't know yet what I will do."

Personal assessment of the pupil:
"When I wrote the text, I was not decided which was the correct answer for me, and I think I managed to express and explain why it is so complicated for me. (objective 1.1)
In the text, I used information we had discussed in class during the lesson on the hunting of whales, and particularly I think that I found a good example with the blueberries.. But I think that I did not explain too much why I believe that the natives are not responsible for the decrease in the number of whales once I mentioned it. I also think that I managed to list really good arguments to explain why it is difficult for me to stand up against something wrong or bad even though I know one should do it. Unfortunately, I did not give any arguments saying why one should get involved; I only said it was correct to do so. It seemed so clear to me why it was correct but I guess it would be better to give more reasons."

5. CIVIC COMPETENCY

The level of the key competency at the end of secondary-school education
The pupil:

Considers relations between his/her personal interests, the interests of a wider group to which he/she belongs, and the public interest, in a knowledgeable way; decides and acts in a balanced manner

5.1 Compares issues that satisfy his/her personal interests with the contributions and consequences for the entire group or the society as such. When making a decision which interests are to be preferred, the pupil employs coherent arguments.

5.2 Compares his/her notion of his/her own life with probable estimates of development of the entire society; considers what he/she may influence and what he/she has to adapt to. Searches for places and challenges where he/she can come in useful to his/her own interests as well as to the general benefit of society.

When considering his/her future occupation and life, the pupil considers whether he/she wants to choose a job that will do service to him/her or his/her family in the first place, or a job among auxiliary professions, performing a public service to the republic, to science, or to art. The pupil considers whether he/she can get involved in social matters both in person as well as in his/her occupation or public service – e.g. play in a band, take an active role in protecting the environment against traffic, or to support groups of people suffering from discrimination, etc.

5.3 Considers his/her position within society and his/her own life as an informed, educated citizen who has a better chance and a greater responsibility to influence the public good than people with lower levels of education usually have.

Hypothesises on the development of society and civilisation in terms of sustainability, makes decisions and acts in such a way as not to endanger or damage nature, environment or culture

5.4 In his/her life, gives preference to such activities and material background that do not cause or increase environmental and cultural harm. He/she sets other people a good example regarding the necessity of thinking with a long-term perspective.

When deciding what means of transport he/she will use, which kind of recreation he/she wants to pursue, which goods he/she buys, the pupil takes into consideration the impacts of his/her decisions on the environment, and whether it is possible to act in this way as part of a mass movement.

5.5 Assesses the development of society (historically as well as in the present day, culturally, technically, and politically) in terms of sustainability and democratic conditions.

When discussing the lifestyles of the present day and the past, global tendencies of the development of civilisation, development of science, etc, the pupil takes into consideration the extent to which various activities are dependent on renewable or non-renewable resources, whether these activities only take place at the cost of a long-term debt towards nature and our children, and the extent to which the positive outcomes of these activities are defensible with regards to those people to whom they bring no direct benefit, etc.

Respects the diversity of values, opinions, attitudes and abilities of other people

5.6 When dealing with others, considers or tries to find out which personal, cultural and religious values form the basis of their opinion or conduct.

In order to understand a classmate's attitude towards euthanasia, the pupil hears out the reasons that the classmate gives and also considers all his/her knowledge about both contemporary and historical attitudes towards death and about European or other of values. He/she compares the classmate's opinion with that of his/her own and with general trends in the development of society and science.

5.7 Analyses the opinion of the other before taking up a stance of his/her own, or before he/she starts to criticise. Only when he/she finds cogent arguments, the pupil strives to achieve change in the opinion or conduct of both him/herself and of others.

5.8 Reveals prejudices in his/her own thoughts and in the thoughts of others, and resists their influence on his/her opinions and acts.

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The pupil notices the often repeated stereotypes in his/her conduct as well as in others (for instance, "a woman driving a car!", "men are interested only in one thing") and is able to demur at them. He/she looks for an explanation for the radical slogans of neo-fascist skinheads in relation to given social problems (e.g. unresolved social problems among Roma (gypsies), narrow conception of lifestyle in white people) as well as to the personal nature and experience of an individual (insufficient training in thinking about respect towards differences) or to the tradition of mass irrational movements (discrimination against other people with different values resulting from an age-old need for tribal unity, or from an individual need for unity with a social group and its norms).

Carefully considers connections between his/her rights, duties and responsibility; approaches the fulfilment of his/her duties responsibly and creatively, defends his/her rights as well as the rights of others, acts so as to prevent their suppression and helps create conditions for their fulfilment

5.9 Recognises the possibilities, challenges, and duties – both pleasant and unpleasant – that his/her role in family, at school and in society brings about; does not avoid the responsibilities related to them.

The pupil proposes, prepares and organises a cultural and social event for foreign exchange pupils; possibly he/she spends time with them after school. He/she takes responsibility for the programme selection and for the organisation of the group. When something goes wrong, he/she tries to compensate for the problem, and does not blame others for the failure.

5.10 Presents his/her reflections and arguments in a comprehensive manner even to those who are uninformed.

5.11 Recognises when the explanation of rules and laws is directed towards their real substance, and when the explanation is narrow and literal.

The pupil reflects the cases of "firm laws" and bureaucratic treatment of citizens trying to adopt a child, and inclines towards a conciliatory and helpful solution which prefers the needs of the child to the feasibility or cheapness of administrative procedures.

5.12 When assessing wrongdoings which have happened to him/her or which have violated common principles, he/she notices and takes into account also the personal reasons or feelings of the wrongdoer while monitoring whether the wrongdoings have caused some fundamental harm or whether one should be benevolent to the wrongdoer.

5.13 Does not distort his/her own understanding and interpretation of rules, laws, customs, or norms to serve his/her own personal interests.

When settling a dispute about the loud volume of an evening music programme, the pupil identifies his/her own interests and preferences, identifies them openly, and assesses their relevance or irrelevance in terms of an intention that can be identified within the applicable regulations.

5.14 Anticipates what limitations to his/her personal freedom or safety might be brought about when the freedom and safety of others is being limited.

The pupil compares situations and reasons that influence Palestinian terrorists to direct their attacks at innocent people with the situation of groups of people who cannot claim all their rights in our country (immigrants, Roma, women, men, children, homeless people). The pupil analyses the purpose, functioning, and consequences of the installation of cameras in public spaces, and assesses the situation with respect to his/her own needs and rights.

5.15 Considers the procedures in place to secure the protection of his/her own rights and freedoms and those of others, including personal / individual procedures as well as the common ones (voting, petitions, lawsuits etc).

When making decisions about common issues in class, the pupil takes notice of those moments when the situation openly favours one side, and suggests more just procedures.

When considering the protection of an interest that is shared by a minority of the class, the pupil prefers conciliatory solutions as opposed to mere voting out. The pupil does not enforce those majority solutions which negatively influence relations with a minority.

5.16 Searches for and proposes solutions for conflicts between majority groups and ethnic or opinion-based minorities in such ways that do not require any exercise of power, violence, restrictions or discrimination.

The pupil assesses how difficult, time-consuming and expensive the conciliatory solutions of conflicts are (e.g. in the mixed community of Roma and white people in Ostrava) when compared to the long-term consequences and the high price paid later where the procedures employed are based on power, violence (e.g. Roma forced out from the town of Zlín into surrounding villages).

Expands his/her knowledge and understanding of cultural and spiritual values, helps create and defends them

5.17 Compares the values in culture and in public life that he/she recognises himself/herself to those recognised by preceding generations (traditional values) as well as to new values emerging.

During a discussion that criticises contemporary architecture, the pupil lists examples from the past of people's opposition towards the "modernist style" of many architectural monuments (e.g. the Municipal House in Prague). He/she finds parallels with to contemporary innovations within one art form where their unusial nature is tolerated or appreciated (e.g. animated shots in music videos break with existing film traditions in the same way as architectural proposals for some public buildings do relative to the existing panorama of the city).

5.18 Judges events, activities, opinions, and personalities with reference to generally approved and shared values. Cultivates his/her notion about shared values continuously in discussions with others, by reading up-to-date as well as foundational texts, and by individual expression of his/her views and thoughts in writing.

The pupil comes up with reasonable objections and supporting arguments respecting common values when confronted with radical proposals, solutions, or procedures. The pupil gives examples from his/her reading or from history.

The pupil assesses the conduct and reputation of public persons in terms of their respect towards the norms of decency, fairness, and responsibility, and by monitoring what they create. He/she distinguishes good reputation from mere personal charisma based on appearance and behaviour; he/she realises the difference between actions and popular declarations.

5.19 Demonstrates an informed approach when considering what one is entitled to and what one is not, with regards to possible wider consequences in the society. He/she does not regard their own perception of individual rights and freedoms as definitive, but rather seeks to understand how rights and freedoms are related to one another, and seeks to learn more.

In an informed manner and with attention to the sources; the pupil compares local rights and injustices of the present times (for instance, those of a homeless person) with rights and injustices that took place in the past (for instance, the position of the poor in towns in the middle ages) or those occurring abroad (for instance, the position of emigrants and fugitives).

5.20 Evaluates his/her activities and efforts to make sure they are justifiable in the light of commonly respected values.

The pupil is able to explain how his/her free-time or after-school activities reflect local conditions, how they follow tradition, or how they contribute to the municipality and country.

5.21 Where the pupil thinks that certain values should be defended, he/she negotiates and realises together with others appropriate steps to protect them.

Acts knowledgeably and responsibly in crisis situations and in situations when life and health are in danger, offers help to others

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5.22 Analyses situations and estimates whether help is needed and whether it is appropriate. Provides stability in chaotic situations thanks to his/her detachment.

When witnessing a situation of aggression between strangers at a public place (on a train, at the station), the pupil does not hesitate to intervene at least orally in order to help the weak in cases where he/she finds the attack to be meant seriously and where he/she feels able to deal with the opponents alone; otherwise he/she calls the Police.

5.23 Organises cooperation when providing help.

In crisis situations, the pupil makes sure there are passages available for the rescuers and medical workers; attends to a person that is in shock or has had a fit.

5.24 Warns clearly and effectively in case of imminent danger; chooses life-saving procedures with respect to others.

Reviews the events and development of public life, monitors what happens at his/her place of residence and its surroundings, takes and defends informed stances and acts for the common good as he/she thinks best

5.25 Does not perceive political and public events as being useless or desperate; rather, he/she looks for their reasonable core or for an alternative.

5.26 When considering information about politics, he/she always takes into account possible media or personal biases, and utilises his/her communicative competency in order to distinguish the facts from expressions of group or personal interests.

In order to find information about social (or political or economic) issues, the pupil refers to a wide range of resources (newspapers, Internet, friends); he/she does not rely on a single source of information.

5.27 Does not miss the chance to influence work of the elected representatives, looks for effective procedures.

The pupil monitors the status of his/her school in the municipality and contacts on his own or with a group of classmates the members of the local authority about problems that the local authority should deal with.

MODEL LESSON

"THE FOX AND THE GRID"

Educational area: Man and Society
Educational field: Basics of Civics and Social Sciences
Cross-curricular subjects: Environmental Education
Duration: 2 lessons

In the second year of the four-year grammar school (in the sixth year of the eight-year grammar school), the pupils survey and judge the reasons for the acts of the members of the Parliament during the process of passing laws. The pupils consider the responsibility of the lawmakers in respect to the suffering of hunted animals and the wishes of hunters. For reference, they use newspaper accounts of varying credibility, resources from the web, and as their own judgement. They try to find and consider their options, and the ways in which they can influence the lawmaking process in Parliament.

Core questions in the lesson:
- Should people limit their freedoms because of animals that do not perceive these freedoms?
- Can we rely on the responsibility of our representatives?
- Which ways are best to express the will of citizens – is voting effective?

Stimulating ideas that are at the roots of the current deliberations and discussions:

- Suffering must not be invoked for mere amusement and must be controlled even in cases when it serves to help man in need (development of medicinal drugs, medical experiments).
- Without quick and intensive feedback, people with power can easily forfeit their regards for the will of the voters and be governed by their own interests.
- Citizens are obliged to look for and utilise effective methods in order to control the actions of their elected representatives.

Objectives at the level of the civic competency:

The pupil:

- considers relations between his/her personal interests, the interests of a wider group to which he/she belongs and public interests in a knowledgeable way, decides and acts in a balanced manner;
- hypothesises on the development of society and civilisation in terms of life sustainability; (the lesson further aims at making the pupil decide and act in ways that do not endanger or harm the environment or culture);
- reviews the events and development of public life, monitors what happens at his/her place of residence and its surroundings, takes and defends informed stances;
- does not see political and public events as being useless or desperate; rather, looks for their reasonable core or for an alternative (the lesson further develops in the pupils the ability to assess information on politics with regards to possible media or personal biases, and to utilise his/her communication competency in order to distinguish the facts from expressions of group or personal interests).

Objectives at the level of expected outcomes:

Basics of Civics and Social Sciences:

The pupil:

- lists examples of corruption, analyses its causes and thinks through possible consequences;
- clarifies the role of social control in a group and in larger social units.

Objectives at the level of the cross-curricular subject:

Environmental Education:
The pupil:

• expresses humility and respect with regard to valuable things which Man cannot create, appreciates the value of nature, realises and is able to evaluate various stances to Man's place in nature and Man's conduct towards it.

Texts and materials:

The pupils are given:

• an adjusted lecture on stupidity, excerpted from the book Život s deprivanty II – Základy stupidologie (Life with the Deprived II – The Basics of Stupidology), pp. 71 and 73 by J. Drtilová and Fr. Koukolík (Galén, Prague, 2002)

• a media text about an amendment to the law, the text being obviously directed against the Green Party (taken from Literární noviny)

• a media text, factual and informative, about negotiations in the Chamber of Deputies (from www.aktualne.cz)

The pupils alone search for information about the voting performed by the elected deputies on the website of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Czech Republic.

Evidence that learning took place:

The pupil explains in a clear manner his/her suggestions as to how, in the course of lawmaking, to make politicians adopt knowledgeable responsibility towards nature and towards voters, and he/she plans his/her own measures to be taken with respect to politicans.

Overview of activities:

Lesson 1

• Experience with group decision-making

• Reading the definition of stupidity

• Comparing experience with the definition

• "Trunks and roots" about training in hunting, about the freedom of the hunter and the impartiality of the politican, including presentation

- Homework – exploring the local representatives

Lesson 2

- Names of local representatives
- Critical reading of news about parliamentary negotiations
- Suggestions of steps leading towards enforcing the will of the voters, including presentation

COURSE OF THE LESSON

Lesson 1

Evocation 1

*The pupils divide into groups A and B, so that classmates at the same desks do not share the same text if possible. The pupils have six minutes to individually think over and note down from their experience one **example of a situation or a problem** (with reference to A or B, accordingly) when:*
A. it is good that a group of people (a circle of friends, Scout club, working or sports team, villagers etc.) prefer rational, logic consideration as opposed to shared feelings and solidarity in the group.
Example: Winemakers in a village in South Moravia, which wants to get rid of its reputation as a place of simpletons and inept merchants, agree one by one that they should stop hustling second-rate wines to people from Prague passing by in their cars.
B. it is good that due to shared feelings and strengthening the solidarity, a group of people deso not accept a solution based merely on rational, logical considerations.
Example: A cross-country team spend the last moments before the start of the race by loudly singing their team song, in order to strengthen their preparedness to help one another in the difficulties ahead, instead of listening to the latest (and disturbing) weather forecast, including information about the change of snow quality at kilometre 13.

Working in pairs (A+B) for three minutes, the pupils exchange their suggestions, comment on them, and provide explanations.

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Realising the importance of information 1:

The pupils read Text 1 in pairs, and make sure they have understood correctly (10 minutes).

Text 1

Definition of stupidity

Stupidity is not an invective, nor a lack of IQ or of information. It is not a fault (e.g. the wrong interpretation of given information). Stupidity is a common way of thinking through which one copes with one's own **inability to react adequately** to information about the surrounding circumstances (for instance, about the fact that those who do snowboarding outside the permitted routes destroy nature and will not be able to call for help in case of injury). The reasons for their inability to react adequately include **emotions** (they do not want to feel like cowards; instead, they want to "show off") as well as the **advantages** they feel among the people surrounding them (an admired sportsman is favoured by women, and many companies try to win him over into paid advertising).

A person of stupid behaviour has stopped learning altogether: he/she is no longer able to get feedback from their surroundings (in fact, he/she avoids it) and is not able to distinguish harmful information from the information that usually provides protection. Such a person is not able to adjust his/her behaviour according to the changes that take place around him/her. Such people hardly see beyond their own nose – in fact, they will not see any further.

Stupidity and team solidarity

A group of people (family, team, municipality, or nation) survive and in fact they flourish, when observed from a long-term perspective, if they manage to balance the logic, rational, objective processing of information on one side and team solidarity and cooperation on the other side. Stupidity distorts any such balance. It is just as stupid when rationality disturbs solidarity as when solidarity is allowed to disturb rational reasoning.

For instance, some people destroy their family relationships because they cannot deal with the real and factual shortcomings of their partner (e.g. a husband blames his wife for her failure to get a large share of the inheritance left by her parents); other people, due to their feeling of love or their fear for their family, allow their brutal partners to blackmail, rob, or torment them as well as their children.

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Even within larger or more formal groups, objective, logic, or rational information may disturb or annihilate group cooperation or solidarity (e.g. the possibility of promotion within the company and scrambling for higher personal profit will ruin the feeling of concord and mutual respect within the work team). Too much stress placed on cooperation and solidarity, on the other hand, may be fatal for the objective, logical, and rational processing of information (e.g. the headmaster does not give bonuses for quality work so that some of the teachers do not feel humiliated, which leads to a general decline in the school results as well as in its prestige).

(adopted from the book Život s deprivanty II – Základy stupidologie (Life with the Deprived II – The Basics of Stupidology), pp. 71 and 73 by J. Drtilová and Fr. Koukolík (Galén, Prague, 2002)

Voluntary exercise:
The pupils may check their understanding of Text 1 in pairs by selecting those statements from the following ones which are true in reference to the text above (6 minutes):
1. Stupidity is clearly personal, and it depends on the IQ of the individual. YES – NO
2. Stupidity can be defined as a type of behaviour when one is governed by emotions and does not think. YES – NO
3. Groups of people behave stupidly when they destroy their mutual relationships in order to get material profit. YES – NO
4. Changes in one's surroundings force one to learn, but stupid conduct prevents one from doing so. YES – NO

The pupils continue to work in pairs. Their task is to decide whether in the personal examples they came up with at the very beginning, the groups may "survive" when the balance between reason and solidarity is disturbed for a longer period of time. (4 minutes)

Evocation 2

We introduce the pupils into the situation by reading the initial paragraph and drawing on the board a schema of hunting dog training:

Text 2

THE "CONTACT EARTH HUNT"

hunting dog   *fox*

"On Friday, 7th December 2007, something extraordinary took place in the Chamber of Deputies. The deputies, who were supposed to be occupying themselves with a legal amendment (in third reading) tightening up the law against animal torture, decided that they would allow the so-called "contact earth hunt", which had been banned by the preceding version precisely for its being torturous towards the animals. During the contact earth hunt, the fox whom the earth dog hunts in an artificial hole is not segregated from the dog by a grid, but on the contrary, the dog and the fox sink their teeth into one another in the end. The hunter then pulls them out, separates them by plunging them in water, and after that the fox goes back to sit in the hole and wait for the teeth of another trained dog etc. On 11th January 2008, nevertheless, the Senate turned the decision of the Chamber of Deputies down. The regulation returned to the Chamber to go through the vote once again."

The pupils are divided into three groups. Their task is to employ the "Trunks and roots" method to find as many replies to the following questions as possible from all persons present. They have 12 minutes for their activity.

1.What good reasons can you think of that justify the existence of a law protecting foxes or dogs from suffering during hunting training? What good reasons would justify training without any such regulation?

2. Should one as a private person care about the ways one's neighbour treats animals in training and during hunts? Or should one respect his/her needs and hunting habits? Why?

3. What things do you think influenced the deputies in the Czech Parliament to pass one law here and to dismiss another?

Trunks and Roots Method

One member in each group takes the role of the "trunk" – he/she takes notes or formulates information gathered by the "roots" – other members of the group, just like the roots of a tree supply the trunk with nutrients. Each root collects the information in the following manner: he/she remembers the question allotted to his/her trunk and asks as many people in the class, particularly the members of other groups, during the time assigned. He/she brings every response back to the trunk to note it down while answering questions that roots of other trunks ask on his/her way back.

During the following 5 minutes, the groups utilise their findings collected by the trunks in order to formulate one or two serious assertions they will then briefly – within 2 minutes at the maximum – present in front of the entire class. Each group uses their own strip of paper to note down their assertions. After the presentation, the paper strips are posted, and each group offer counter-arguments.
(For example: "People should not meddle in the activities of others; this is for the Police to do.")

The presenting group prepares arguments for and against their assertions, and presents them in the following way:

"We support our assertion by the following arguments …………………………………. Nevertheless, you may argue that
…………………………………………………………………….."
(3 x 2 minutes)

The pupils are assigned homework for the next lesson: to use available resources (the office of the local authority, internet, phone) in order to identify the names of deputies and senators that represent the place of their residence, and to note down their addresses and contact numbers.

Lesson 2

The pupils write the names of their representatives in the Chamber of Deputies and in the Senate, which they collected as their homework.

Realising the importance of information 2:

- The class is divided into three groups of more or less the same size. Each group is allotted copies of the prepared texts – A, B or C. First group reads text A carefully, second group reads text B, third group text C. (Texts concern the negotiations about the amendment of the law on animal protection and the issue of the fox hunt.) – 10 minutes

- Each group than has another 8 minutes to formulate a very brief summary of their text. They are to point out and clearly distinguish the following three viewpoints in their records:

  a) we analyse the contents of the text: which types of participants according to the text became involved in the negotiations, and which attitudes they advocated;

  b) we clarify our own attitude towards fox torture and we consider what may have influenced the deputies in their decisions about the amendment to the law;

  c) we follow the attitude of the author: whether his illustration of the issue in the text is objective or whether it expresses some intention of the author, and which particular parts of the text make us reach this conclusion.

Text 3

A dog in training can sink its teeth into a fox once again

Pavel Baroch

Prague – Next time the hunters train their dogs in earth hunting, the dachshunds will be able to bite into living bait – a fox. The deputies have made it possible to return to the original way of training hunting dogs which had been outlawed years ago because of animal protection. The animals had to be divided by a security grid. Nevertheless, according to the approved amendment of the law on animal protection, this grid will no longer be obligatory. "The dog can sink its teeth in the fox once again," the deputy Přemysl Rabas confirmed to the server Aktuálně.cz. He was one of the deputies who tried to avert the approval of the proposed amendment. Unfortunately, their group was not large enough. "Also the Minister of

Agriculture expressed his opposition because this goes against the European norms," Rabas added. He further said that the original proposal did not include the so-called "contact earth hunt" at all. The amendment proposal came from the agricultural committee. Rabas sees it as absurd that the law on animal protection should allow such violent controlled contact between a dog and a fox. In his view, it is simply animal torture.

In practice, the fox with the biting dog will be pulled out of the artificial hole and plunged into a tank with water in order to separate the animals. The fox can thus be reused for further training.

One of the deputies who supported the "contact earth hunt" amendment was Pavel Kováčik. "Yes, I supported the amendment. I am convinced it is necessary," Kováčik confirmed.

He then further explained that such training is inevitable in order to prepare the dog for real foxholes in the woods. "It is necessary to make sure the dog has an equal chance in the hole," Kováčik said to Aktuálně.cz.

He rejected the objection that the approved amendment runs against the European norms. "No-one has come up with any such norm so far," Kováčik said. According to him, contact earth hunt is legal also in other member states of the EU. "I know about Slovakia for example," Kováčik added.

Text 4

Deputies and hunters are somewhat close

Marek Švehla, Respekt 4 / 2008, 20.1.2008

Last week, the Senate vetoed the decision of the Chamber of Deputies to legitimise once again in the Czech lands the training of hunting dogs with live foxes. It is a very cruel training: the dog follows the fox in an artificial hole in order to sink its teeth into the fox. The hunter then takes them both out, separates the fox from the dog (by plunging them into water), and the fox goes back into the hole where another dog takes a bite. And on, and on, and on again. The Chamber of Deputies will now take a second vote about the amendment. Deputy Přemysl Rabas (Green Party) belongs to the group of opponents who are against softening the laws on animal protection.

What is the probability that the Chamber overrules the veto of the Senate?

I firmly believe in the power of common sense. A civilised nation should not adopt uncivilised manners. The "contact earth hunt" moreover goes against European norms, which is why it cannot stay within the law.

(...)

Where, then, is the boundary between what is and what is not acceptable? In the use of animals for meat?

I do not like closing ferrets, racoons, foxes or other beasts of pray in cages. It is difficult to say where the outlines of the boundary are: whether we can say yes for a rabbit, but no for chinchillas, nutrias or foxes.

So where is the boundary?

I have set a boundary for myself, always considering whether we necessarily need a specific animal product. We have to eat something and I cannot imagine that we will all eat soy products instead of meat. But we do not have to wear the fur of animals that were killed only for the fur itself.

(...)

How is it possible that the trend to strengthen animal protection which emerged after the revolution is now turning back?

To give you an answer would require a deeper analysis. In the 1990s, the lawmakers included many intellectual people, dissidents, people who had other values than mere consumerism. Today the society has shifted towards consumerism.

Who is the greatest lobbyist against animal protection?

There are many lobbyists involved, each following their own interests. The hunting lobby is very strong; the fishing lobby is also quite active. And if we consider farms, their economic interests are so evident that I hardly believe in any radical change at all. But in a case where torture takes place simply for the sake of tradition, changes can occur.

How many deputies are involved in hunting and fishing lobbies?

Many deputies take part in hunts and many deputies go fishing. But I cannot give exact numbers.

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How is it possible that the Chamber approved something as blatantly cruel as the training of dogs with live foxes?

I cannot tell; the law was discussed for more than half a year, two seminars were organised on the issue; it involved a great deal of persuasion from non-governmental organisations. But there are certainly more deputies who are hunters or fishermen themselves, or have hunters or fishermen around them, than those who are in contact with non-governmental organisations protecting the interests of animals.

Text 5

a) Jakub Patočka: A recyclable fox.

No, it is not about the minister (allusion to the Czech Minister of Education, Ondřej Liška, "liška" being the Czech word for the "fox") this time, although no doubt one could say something similar about him as well. It is about an animal: the fox, vulpes vulpes. Unfortunately, the simple animal has proven perhaps in the most brutal way how inept and useless within the Parliament the Green Party is.

On Friday, 7th December 2007, the Chamber of Deputies approved the return to the barbarian, uncivilised method of training hunting dogs during which foxes are tortured. "In practice, the fox with the biting dog will be pulled out of the artificial hole and plunged into a tank with water in order to separate the animals. The fox can thus be reused for further training," as Pavel Baroch described the meaning of the approved amendment in the daily Aktuálně.cz.

If the present-day Green Party is not able to arrange that their coalition partners oblige their somewhat underdeveloped deputies when voting on such a fundamental detail, then their presence in the Chamber is absolutely useless. But perhaps Liška will find a way to explain it to the foxes at last.

(This text was published in Literární noviny 2007-50 on page 2.)

b) Reading the records on the voting

On the websites of the Chamber of Deputies (the proposal was approved on 7th December 2007) and the Senate of the Czech Republic (the proposal was turned down on 11th January 2008)

- *http://www.psp.cz/sqw/hlasy.sqw?G=46422&o=5*
- *http://www.senat.cz/xqw/xervlet/pssenat/hlasy?G=8427&O=6*

we can see how the individual deputies and senators voted.

Within the Green Party, there were no votes for biting into foxes, nor any abstentions; all were against (M. Bursík not present). There are no Greens in the Senate.
The majority of Social Democrats supported the proposal allowing dogs to bite captive foxes, with only a few deputies abstaining (Lubomír Zaorálek, Petr Zgarba); several deputies were not present (out of whom some apologised). Three senators were against.
Also among the Civic Democrats, the majority voted for biting, with only a few abstentions (Jozef Kochan, Miroslav Krajíček, Radim Fiala, Pavel Suchánek, David Šeich) and many absences (some apologised). Eight senators were against the proposal..
All Communists voted for biting into foxes, three were absent. The Communists did not make it into the Senate.
Among the members of the People's Party/Christian Democrats, one deputy was against (Pavel Severa), one abstained (Libor Ambrozek), other members supported the proposal or were absent (some of them also apologised). Among the senators, the majority was for biting; four abstained, none was against.
Among the independent deputies, one was for the proposal, and one apologised for being absent. None of the non-attached senators was against the proposal.
Three senators of the Caucus of Open Democracy were against the proposal.
Two senators of the Caucus SNK were against the proposal.

Reflection
At last, each pupil individually finishes the following text in his/her own words. The pupils are given 10 minutes for the activity.

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Text to be completed

When the majority of deputies in the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic refuses to take into account the opinions of citizens, petitions, and scandals in media, and when they are protected by parliamentary privilege even when in court, we as voters and citizens could do something to force them decide with responsibility so that they no longer succumb to political trading or narrow interest groups. I suggest that we ………….
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……….

The pupils then share their texts in pairs. Volunteers may read their proposals out loud to others or post them on the board.

The pupils return to the three original groups and choose which of the proposed steps to take now as class, and which steps each of them will take individually in order to increase responsibility in their representatives. They note down their action plan on a flipchart and monitor its fulfilment in the course of the following weeks.

Additional resources for possible alteration of the lesson:

Text 6

http://www.novinky.cz/clanek/128437-poslanci-meli-zprisnit-ochranu-zvirat-umoznili-vsak-dalsi-tyrani.html

7.12.2007 12:38 – 7.12.2007 12:45 Updated – PRAGUE

On Friday, 7th December 2007, something extraordinary took place in the Chamber of Deputies. The deputies, who were supposed to occupy themselves with a legal amendment (in

third reading) tightening up the law against animal torture, decided that they would legalise the so-called "contact earth hunt", which had been banned by the preceding version precisely for its being torturous towards animals.

According to the Green Party, the law should be revoked right away.

Opinion poll

Should hunting dogs during the training be divided from the fox by a grid?

Yes - they must not come into contact – 7,5%

No - the dog will not hurt the fox even without the grid – 17,3%

Using other animals in the training of hunting animals is unacceptable– 75,1%

Altogether 1038 readers participated in the opinion poll.

According to the approved amendment, hunting dogs may now come into direct contact with hunted animals during training. So far, the fox has been divided from the dog in the training hole by a grid, but on Friday, the deputies supported a bill that does away with the grid entirely.

"I suggest that the regulation is called the law for animal torture," Green Party deputy Přemysl Rabas told the server novinky.cz, further adding that more than half of the deputies voted for the amendment. "Most probably, they will have a hunter in the family," the deputy commented with sarcasm.

"The dog is pulled out from the hole, with its teeth in the fox. They are plunged in a barrel with water to let go. The fox is then reused for further training," Rabas described the procedure. "If this is not animal torture, then the law can be revoked right away," he commented, adding that in his view the regulation is against the European norm, which forbids to set one animal on another.

Zgarba: The protection of foxes is sufficient

According to the Social Democratic deputy and former Minister of Agriculture Petr Zgarba, the amendment is still a beneficial measure for animals. "In any case, the approved law represents a move in animal protection. It establishes a number of improvements. For example, when closing a flat, the executors and the Police are obliged to check whether there are any animals and whether the animals are treated in the way they should be," he said to the Czech News Agency. Zgarba supports the contact earth hunt. He thinks that the protection

of predators including foxes is sufficient. "Today, predators in nature are sometimes protected more than game, feathered game, or small animals, which should be protected in the first place," he said. Nevertheless, according to the electronic record, Zgarba was one of those who abstained from the final vote.

Parson Russell Terrier belongs among earth dogs

In the Czech lands we practise non-contact hunts. In other words, the dog does not come into direct contact with the fox. Both during the training and in the test, the animals are divided by a grid. It is nevertheless disputable whether this decision is far-sighted. On one hand there is the protection of animals against torture, while on the other hand, an unskilled dog at work in the holes in the forest.

If you decide to undertake earth hunts with your hound, it is good to begin with testing how your dog reacts to a fox and whether the dog is prepared to run into the hole at all. Training in earth hunts exist precisely for this purpose. Regional Hunting Associations provide dates of training and the addresses of artificial holes. These addresses are available on the website of the Czech and Moravian Hunting Union.

During the training, an experienced earth-hunt master tells you whether your dog is prepared for the tests or not. In general, earth dogs do well in earth hunts and have no problems with the holes. They may be characterised as 'expellers' not 'chokers'. An expeller drives the fox out of the hole by barking and urging while a choker kills it and pulls it out dead. This quality is not typical in earth dogs.

Text 7

http://www.radio.cz/cz/clanek/98511

Hunters will probably train dogs in direct contact with foxes

[10-12-2007] Author: Zdeněk Vališ

(…) Přemysl Rabas of the Green Party. He and his colleagues nevertheless voted in the Chamber of Deputies against the entire amendment at last. It does bring some particular improvements yet in general, it turns in the other direction. The greatest outrage was provoked by accepting the proposal of the deputy Jaroslav Klein (Civic Democrats) to allow training of hunting dogs with live foxes, without a grid to prevent direct contact. The existing law against animal torture forbids this. The deputies previously tried to change the law in 1997. The bill was then vetoed by then President Václav Havel and the entire dispute ended up in at the Constitutional Court. This time, the bill was passed with support from across the entire political spectrum. Přemysl Rabas, a veterinary by profession, regards it as outrageous.

"The European Union has done away with any such practice a long time ago. Our laws prohibited it as well. To permit it again would be a step backwards. It is not the conduct of a civilised country to train animals with other animals. This is just like in the middle ages."
Ladislav Skopal is of a different view. "If we want to train a dog in the same way wild beasts train themselves in their natural environment where a mother trains its young, we cannot train it with the dummies but with live animals. Thus, even hunters must do the same if they do not wish to lose their hounds."

Skopal, just like other deputies, also argues that the fox breeds excessively in our country and if we do not have trained dogs, it will get even worse.

"This will result in the disappearance of small game, which has already occurred in some regions." *Rabas generally agrees with this argument, but in his view, it is nevertheless not acceptable to deal with the present situation through animal torture.*

"Limiting the numbers of predators is an entirely different question. I know dozens of hunters who have shot a great number of foxes without any assistance of dogs. But the argument here goes that the only chance to manage the numbers of foxes is to have a well-trained earth dog. This is not true."

Hunting with the assistance of hounds is a long tradition in our country, says the deputy Jaroslav Klein, author of the successful bill. The amendment now goes to the Senate. It is quite probable that the new law will be approved without problems.

Text 8

http://www.silvarium.cz/content/view/10519/68/

During the training in earth hunting, hounds should take a nice "bite", sinking their teeth into the fox. At least, this is the view of the majority of deputies who voted for this amendment at the end of last year. Senators, nevertheless, regard this hunting practice as animal torture. Therefore they sent the bill back over to the Chamber of Deputies yesterday. The lawmakers, among whom many practise hunting actively, argue over the form of the training: today, if a dog sets out into the hole, it does not come into direct contact with the fox at all. The animals are divided by a firm grid.

Foxes must help one another

This is how it should remain – at least according to the senators. And thus they did not pass the government bill about animal protection against torture, which permits such earth hunts. So the deputies will have to take another vote. "The change is not acceptable for me not only because we foxes must help one another," the vice-chairman of the Senate Jiří Liška (Civic Democrats) says. Ondřej Liška, deputy for the Green Party, most probably was of the same opinion because he did not – just as his colleagues did not – support the bill in the Chamber of Deputies last year. "If we permit earth hunts, it goes against the very substance of animal protection. And fishing with live baits, often practised by the fishermen, is even more bloodthirsty. A fish is definitely not comfortable if a hook travels under its spine and it has another half an hour of twitching ahead before being eaten by a predator at last," Přemysl Rabas (Greens) argued during the talks.

Among the Christian Democrats, it was only Pavel Severa who joined the Green Party.

"As a little kid at the summer camps I saw hunters training their dogs, and they were able to do it in a far more sensitive way," he thinks.

However, the bill was approved by Social Democrats, Communists and Civic Democrats. The bill was presented by Minister of Agriculture Petr Gandalovič. The issue of earth hunting without grids only got into the bill as an amendatory proposals. Gandalovič did not agree with it. "Training a dog using another animal is a traditional activity but at the moment it disagrees with the European Convention for Animal Protection," Gandalovič says. Nevertheless, he eventually supported the bill.

It is just like military training

The supporters of contact earth hunts can see no problem. In their view, foxes are not tortured. "The dog should have the same advantages as the beast. If it has not been trained for possible danger during the hunts, it can die. At the end of the hole, a badger will bite its head off," Jaroslav Kostečka from the Czech Hunting Union says.
The deputy Pavel Hrnčíř (Civic Democrat) shares the same opinion. "It is just like a military training. Otherwise, we would have to ban earth hunting as such."

Text 9

http://www.loveckesrdce.estranky.cz/clanky/bad-bandit/opravdu-projevujici-bordici-zajem-o-zver-az-od-dvou-let

28.08.2007
(…) We are planning to take Hessi to earth hunting (in her case, it will be no beginner earth hunt), so we took Bad for the training. Hessi, who is experienced in earth hunting, did not like the smell of the hole, with smells of X other dogs and perhaps a bit of fox scent somewhere in the depths, but once she found out there was a fox at the end, she did really well. Then I tried Bad who only saw young foxes in May, and he surprised me by his hot temper and strong urges. He did the hole in 12 seconds, trying to get to the fox over and under the grid. After taking him out from the third barrel he jumped out of my grip, ran to the opening and in a second he was there at the fox again. I don't have to worry that he would not start fighting with the fox because when he was just about 9 months old, he made easy meat of a stray tom-cat that would have probably caused more trouble if it was not him fighting but either one of his parents.

MODEL LESSON

"CULTURE ON AN ISLAND OR CULTURAL RELATIVISM VS. ETHNOCENTRISM"

Educational area:	Man and Society
Educational field:	Basics of Civics and Social Sciences
Cross-curricular subjects:	Multicultural Education, Education towards Thinking in European and Global Contexts
Duration:	3 lessons (10 activities, including homework)

During the upper stage of grammar schools, the pupils reflect their own view of so-called primitive cultures and of the cultural attitudes of our civilisation. When surveying intercultural clashes, the pupils learn about opposing attitudes towards cultures and realise why they are inclined to one view or another.

It is helpful if the pupils are generally acquainted with some characteristic traits of distant ethnic groups and different cultures (Asian, African) for instance from popular educational books or TV programmes. The class will work in a cooperative way; with respect to the challenging character of the theme of the lesson, it is useful if the pupils have experience with cooperation in groups.

*The teacher will already have formulated the **fundamental idea** behind the lesson during preparation of the education towards citizenship and multiculturalism. The teacher does not communicate this idea to the pupils directly, but he/she structures the lessons and selects the subject matter in such a way that the pupil gets to the idea, formulates it and understands it on his/her own:*

The more we get to know foreign cultures and ethnic groups, the more we understand that we have no right to judge them or to interfere. Each culture and group understands in a different manner what is good and what is bad because they all developed in different natural environments and in different social conditions, and because their histories are different.

Core questions that the pupils occupy themselves with even without education programmes, and to which they try to find answers during the lessons:

- Do we, Euro-Americans, represent a higher stage of the human development than other cultures?
- Is our way of life certainly better than the life of isolated native cultures in the "wilderness"?
- Can we leave "wild tribes" or non-adapted ethnic groups to their fate or are we to "save" them with the help of our comfortable civilisation?
- Is it possible that some present-day problems in the lives and relations of different ethnic groups cannot be resolved?

Objectives at the level of the civic competency:

The pupil:

- is attentive towards cultural and spiritual values, helps create and defends them;
- considers his/her position within society and his/her own life as the position of an informed, educated citizen who has a better chance and a more responsible role to influence the public good than people with lower education usually have;
- when dealing with others, considers or tries to find out which personal, cultural and religious values form the basis of their opinions or conduct;
- recognises prejudices in his/her own thoughts and in the thoughts of others, and resists their influence on his/her opinions and acts;
- defends his/her rights as well as the rights of others, acts so as to prevent their suppression and helps create conditions for their fulfilment.

Objectives at the level of expected outcomes:

The pupil:

- respects cultural diversity and differences in the behaviour of members of different social groups, and can explain with reference to specific examples the harmful consequences of prejudice;
- assesses the manifestations of globalisation, provides examples of current global problems, analyses their causes and speculates on their possible consequences.

Objectives at the level of the cross-curricular subject:

Multicultural Education:

The pupil:

- is able to define some of the basic terms of multicultural terminology;
- names in his/her own words the basic characteristics of cultural relativism and ethnocentrism, and identifies features of such approaches in various assertions;
- realises which of his/her attitudes and views conform to ethnocentric and culturally relativistic perspectives.

  The lesson also develops the ability to assess the conduct of others with respect to maintaining common cultural and spiritual values, and if necessary, to consider, discuss with others, and realise appropriate measures aiming towards their protection. The lesson further develops the understanding that Earth's population consists of many racial, ethnic, and religious groups, and that all these groups have a right to exist.

Education towards Thinking in European and Global Contexts:

The pupil:

- sees the impact and consequences of the processes of globalisation and development, distinguishes between positive and negative elements and phenomena within them, learns to find compromises;
- cooperates with others actively and effectively, identifies the situations and environments from which their attitudes stem when learning and evaluating their opinions;
- evaluates critically and utilises experience from other cultural environments;
- understands historical continuity in European as well as in global contexts with respect to the development of his/her own nation and state;
- perceives and evaluates both local and regional phenomena and problems in broader European and global contexts.

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Activities in this lesson are also noticeably related to the development of communication and social and personal competencies…

Evidence that the learning took place:

The pupil in his/her own words defines the attitudes of cultural relativism and ethnocentrism. He/she identifies attributes which embody these attitudes and justifies his/her conclusions, while employing his/her knowledge on ethnic groups and races.

The pupil expresses independently in writing his/her opinion concerning the assertion that interferences in foreign cultures will most probably result in their serious damage or in a conflict.

Methods employed in the lesson:

I.N.S.E.R.T., presentations, opinion range, moderated discussion, worksheets, possible eight-minute writing activity

COURSE OF THE LESSON

Individual steps + task assignment

(Assignments and activities of the pupils can be traced in the worksheets below.)

Lesson 1

Instructions for group work:

"We will work together over three lessons, alternating work in groups of two types: first, in three larger groups into which you will be divided based on the assignment about the crisis on an island in Indonesia, and second, in groups of three which you will form later, incorporating

members of each of the large groups. The larger groups do not share their assignments with each other at first, andduring the lessons will work with three different sets of worksheets."

Activity 1 (within Lesson 1) – a crisis on an isolated island (Worksheet 1)

The pupils are divided into three groups by giving to each pupil one of three written descriptions of a crisis situation on an island. Each "insular" group is then asked to devise possible solutions for their situation and to negotiate agreement among the members of the group. The groups do not know the assignments of other groups. They use Worksheet 1 to fulfil the tasks.

General instructions for all groups:

- Discuss the situation the description of which you have been given in order to fully understand it. Suggest and note down the most suitable solution, and list the reasons why the chosen solution is better than the other options. Take into account the fates of those participants who would get a bad deal from this solution. You have 10 minutes for your work.

- Prepare to present your solution: either in writing, or through a drawing, or else in the shape of singing or dancing (with respect to the nature of the situation your group has been allotted). The presentation must include brief information for the audience about who you are and what situation you are dealing with (reading out the assignment itself is not acceptable). You have 10 minutes to get ready.

- After the first two steps of work with the assignment, each of you will write down on your sheet a commentary on discrepancies, doubts and different concepts which appeared during your search for various solutions. You will need your notes later when working outside this group. You will have 3 minutes to take notes.

Instructions for individual "insular" groups:

Group of natives:

You are leaders of a tribe living on a distant Indonesian island. For decades, you have succeeded in keeping out the tourist industry and Western civilisation, and in keeping your traditional cultural and agricultural customs alive. However, due to a long-lasting dry period

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and climatic changes, your fields have stopped producing enough plants for your survival. What will you do, and why?

Group of humanitarian workers:
You are the management of a non-profit humanitarian organisation operating in south-east Asia, and you are to decide what can be done for an isolated, very traditional ethnic group living on one of an isolated Indonesian island, which has so far managed to turn away the pressure of foreign civilisations, but is now suffering from crop failure and hunger. Suggest a solution, and list reasons for your decision.

Group of ghosts of the ancestors
You are the ghosts of the dead ancestors of a very conservative and isolated tribe living on an Indonesian island. Through a magic ritual, you were addressed by the (living) tribal chief who has asked for advice and help in the difficult situation of the tribe: the fields have stopped producing crops, palm nuts are falling dead from the trees, and water is disappearing from the streams. In your answer to the chief, give references to the way of life you were living before you died.

At the end of the activity, each group gives their presentation in the allotted 4 minutes of time, introducing the suggestion they have agreed upon. All pupils reflect upon the presented proposals with the help of Worksheet 1.

Worksheet 1

Each pupil takes down common and individual notes in his/her worksheet, which he inserts into his/her portfolio in the end.
1. In the group where all members share the same assignment:
Discuss the assigned situation, suggest and note down possible solutions, including the reasons why your preferred solution is better than the other options. Take into account the fates of those participants of the problem who would get a bad deal from your solution. You have 10 minutes for your work.

Solution ………………………………………………………………………………

Why is it a suitable solution: ……………………………………………………………
Why is it better than the other options: ……………………………………………………
In what ways does your solution not serve some of the participants?

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2. In the group where all members share the same assignment:

Prepare to present your solution either in writing, or through a drawing, or else in the form of singing or dancing (with respect to the nature of the group). The presentation must include brief information about who you are and what situation you are dealing with (reading out the assignment is not acceptable).

(You have 10 minutes to get ready. You will have 4 minutes for the presentation itself.)

You can use the reverse side of the worksheet for notes about the presentation.

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3. At the end of the activity, each pupil works individually:

Which discrepancies, doubts or differing concepts appeared during your group's search for solutions?

(You have 3 minutes to take notes.)

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Activity 2 (within Lesson 1) – formulating main dilemmas that have emerged during the presentations

Mini-lecture presented to the entire class (within 3 minutes):

What is a dilemma? A question or problem which generates opposing stances

Example to help understanding of the term "*dilemma*":

During discussions about the rights of men and women, it is usually important to remember the dilemma that "only a woman only can give birth to and breastfeed a child, but by doing so she loses for a time the ability to pursue her career". Thus the dilemma for women and their husbands is, in brief: "To give birth and breastfeed, or to pursue one's career?"

Pupils work individually with Worksheet 2:

Every pupil thinks about the presentations. He/she has 7 minutes to formulate and write down for each of the presented situations (including his/her "own") a dilemma *or a thorny question that in his/her view lies at the basis of the decision-making process in the situation given. He/she lists the dilemmas in Worksheet 2. If the pupil needs more time, he/she finishes the task at home. He/she brings Worksheet 1 into the next lesson as well.*

Worksheet 2 – DO NOT FORGET TO BRING THIS WORKSHEET INTO THE SECOND AND THIRD LESSONS!

Working with dilemmas, as assigned in the first lesson

Each pupil works individually:

1. Think about the presentations and what you have heard. Which dilemmas or thorny questions lie at the basis of the decision-making process in each of the groups?

(You have 7 minutes for this activity. You can finish your work at home.)

Basic dilemmas of the group of natives: ………………………………………………

Basic dilemmas of the humanitarian group: ……………………………………………

Basic dilemmas of the group of ghosts of the ancestors: …………………………….

Working in groups of three during the second lesson

Working in groups of three pupils across the original three groups from the first lesson:

*1. Share your lists of dilemmas with your colleagues (from this worksheet), and together, go over your notes from the previous lesson, choose and note down one **dilemma** for **your group** that all three groups have found to be a dilemma:*

Dilemma: ……………………………………………………………………………

+ what should those trying to solve the dilemma be aware of or try to find out about?

+ which notions or customs of white Europeans might cause problems when trying to solve the dilemma on the island?

If you have spare time, write down another dilemma as well ………………………….

+ what should those trying to solve the dilemma be aware of or try to find out about?

+ which notions or customs of white Europeans might cause problems when trying to solve the dilemma on the island?

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Activity 3 (within Lesson 2) – what to find out and what to avoid

Working in groups of three pupils, including members of all three of the original groups from the first lesson:

In the groups of three, each consisting of one native person, one humanitarian worker, and one ghost of the ancestors from the previous lesson, the pupils discuss which dilemmas and questions they identified last time and wrote down in Worksheet 2. Then each group decides on a solution to one dilemma (or two, depending on time available), which they have found for one of the situations, and in the context of the selected dilemma, they consider and note down the following:

- what additional information or experience should those who are trying to solve the situation know well or find out about;
- which notions or customs of white Europeans might cause problems with respect to solving the situation on the island.

The pupils work for 8 minutes and they take notes in Worksheet 2.

Activity 4 (within Lesson 2) – notions and principles of an intercultural world

Working in the original "insular" groups as in the first lesson, with texts:

The pupils apply the I.N.S.E.R.T. method to read the given texts. Each pupil in the group receives his/her own copy of the relevant text:

- the group of natives receive a text on the conception of cultural relativism;
- the group of humanitarian workers receive a text about the concept of ethnocentrism;
- the group of ghosts of the ancestors receive a text about missionaries on Papua-New Guinea.

Your task is to carefully read the text you have been given and, with the help of the **I.N.S.E.R.T.** method, to mark in the margins various types of information encountered **during your reading already**, using the symbols below. You have 12 minutes for this work.

√ information you think you knew before

- information that is in direct contrast to what you knew

+ information that is entirely new to you

? information you do not understand or you would like to know more about

Activity 5 (within Lesson 2) – summary and presentation of the text

Working in the original "insular" groups as in the first lesson, with Worksheet 3:
After reading the text, the pupils of each group working together compile and write down in Worksheet 3 a brief summary of the text. In particular, the pupils identify the answers that the text provides to the core question or dilemma as formulated in the earlier Activity 2, and how it does so. The pupils note down which issues or questions remain unanswered.

The group then presents their summary before the other groups, answering the others' questions and noting their answers to the group's own unanswered questions. The pupils are given 12 minutes for the first part of the activity. Each group is given 4 minutes for their presentation, including the questions.

Activity 6 – homework: "What are the ways of thinking of an ethnocentric person and of a cultural relativist?"

Each pupil works individually:
The pupil tries to formulate and note down in Worksheet 3 at least two assertions about something particular within the situation on the Indonesian island, in such a way so that one assertion is markedly ethnocentric and the other is culturally relativistic.

Worksheet 3

Working in the original "insular" groups as in the previous lesson:
*1. **Summary** of the text you have read, in 50 words (use the reverse side of the worksheet if necessary):*

Working in the original "insular" groups as in the previous lesson:

*2. Which pieces of **information** gathered in the text help to find solutions for the dilemmas or questions you noted down during Activity 2 in Worksheet 2? Are there any new **questions** which have emerged?*

Question/dilemma: ……………………………………………………………………..
How does the text answer this question/dilemma? …………………………………………….
Questions still unanswered: …………………………………………………………………

Question/dilemma: ……………………………………………………………………..
How does the text answer this question/dilemma? …………………………………………….
Questions still unanswered: …………………………………………………………………

Question/dilemma: ……………………………………………………………………..
How does the text answer this question/dilemma? …………………………………………….
Questions still unanswered: …………………………………………………………………

Each pupil works individually:

*3. For the next lesson, formulate and note down **two assertions about a particular issue** that, in your view, could take place or be relevant to the situation on the Indonesian island. Try to direct the assertions in such a way so that one assertion is markedly ethnocentric and the other is culturally relativistic.*

Ethnocentric assertion:

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Culturally relativistic assertion:

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Lesson 3

Activity 7 (within Lesson 3) – "Different countries have different customs"

Working in groups of three pupils across the "insular" groups:
The pupils share their typically tense assertions noted in Worksheet 3 at the end of the preceding lesson. They have 5 minutes to inform one another about which of the assertions are unacceptable and which are tolerable or appropriate.
*(*Additional task: *The pupils in the group may try to re-formulate one of the ethnocentric and one of culturally relativistic assertions in a less striking manner, so that their relation to ethnocentrism or cultural relativism be somewhat disguised and harder to detect.)*

Activity 8 (within Lesson 3)

No groups:
*The pupils are asked to move from their places and a borderline is marked in the classroom in order to express attitudes on the **opinion scale**: agree – disagree. The line itself represents an axis: one of its ends stands for absolute agreement with the presented assertion, the other stands for absolute disagreement. The centre is a neutral place.*

The teacher gradually reveals and reads out 5 assertions compiled in the flip paper (poster) so that everyone can see them. The pupils are to situate themselves on the opinion scale according to how strongly they agree or disagree with the given assertion; none of them can occupy a spot outside the scale. The teacher will ask some of them for the main reason that made them choose their particular position on the scale. Then he/she asks a pupil from the opposite pole to provide a persuasive reason for his/her position, which could serve as a counterweight for the argument given by the other party. The teacher writes the pairs of

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arguments on the blackboard. The pupils may let the others persuade them by their
arguments, and change their position on the scale; nevertheless, those who move are asked to
justify their shift. The activity takes some 25 minutes.
(The assertions adopted from: Příručka globálního rozvojového vzdělávání – Společný svět /
A Handbook of Global Development Education – Common World, Člověk v tísni / People in
Need, 2004).

1. Is it correct that France has forbidden Muslim girls to wear scarves to school?
2. Modern European medicine represents the peak of human knowledge up to now.
3. Eating human flesh does not necessarily have to be immoral.
4. Rituals during which animals are sacrificed are inadmissible.
5. Obesity can be the ideal of beauty.

Activity 9 (within Lesson 3) – definition and classification

Working in groups of three pupils across the "insular" groups:
Finally, the groups define in their own words the attitudes of cultural relativism and
ethnocentrism. Then they add to the definitions the numbers of the assertions that match or
are somewhat related to either definition. The pupils also provide reasons why they think so.
The pupils are allotted 10 minutes for this activity.

Activity 10 – "eight-minute treatise on the consequences"

Each pupil works on his/her own:
Write how you come to terms with the following assertion:

"The critical situation of the native Indonesian tribe described in the preceding lessons will
surely result in serious damage caused to the ethnic culture or in a conflict of some kind."

Write on your own, appropriately, and in such manner as to formulate your key statement within 8 minutes. We will share the texts together – volunteers may read theirs out loud before the class; and we shall use all the collected statements as material for a class anthology or a website, or render the outcomes of our work to the organisation People in Need and their website as part of the "Variants" project. Your writing should not exceed 1 page of legible handwriting.

(Thanks to Naďa Kratochvílová for providing material for the lesson.)

Text 4

CULTURAL RELATIVISM

The supporters of cultural relativism presuppose that individual cultures are unique and unrepeatable. With respect to this notion, we can only judge the beliefs, actions, and behaviour of people in a certain culture according to the traditions, values, ideas, or norms of that same culture, and not according to our own customs and viewpoints. It is evident that many elements of culture which are fully acceptable locally, i.e. correspond to the values and customs of the local culture (for instance, cannibalism, infanticides, or gynophagia) certainly do not comply with the norms and customs of other cultures (for instance, "where I come from", i.e. in European context). The opposite attitude – that is, judging a different culture in terms of our own culture – is called ethnocentrism.

Cultural relativism defines itself against both ethnocentrism and evolutionism. Evolutionism is based on the notion that the history of people is unilinear (i.e. that there is only one single history of people around the world, with identical development stages at any given place around the globe). In this respect, evolutionism regards cultures that differ from our Euro-American culture as mere underdeveloped evolutionary stages which are heading towards the same direction as we are, yet are presently somewhat retarded. Cultural relativism, by contrast, employs a pluralist conception of history: it is based on the idea that individual cultures can develop in any possible direction, thus adopting shapes that cannot be objectively compared. Parallel cultural elements between different cultures (for instance the fact that women take care of children while men go hunting – or to work) do not necessarily

prove that these cultures are of the same origin or that they had been related before. Despite their mutual similarlties, both cultural phenomena might have emerged independently from one another. It simply happened that people in two different cultures developed similar ways of conduct, without any mutual influence existing between these cultures. Evolutionism, again by contrast, allows us to assess all cultures through our accustomed Euro-American standards because the evolutionists see our Euro-American culture as the highest development stage of a general culture of the humankind, to which all other cultures aspire.

The pluralist concept of history, which emerged as late as during the 20th century, asserts that it is not possible to objectively identify global stages of cultural development applicable to all humankind. Cultural relativism provides a perspective within which it is possible to view other cultures with due reverence, respect, and tolerance (in this sense being oppositional to all forms of nationalism, racism, fascism etc.). It is necessary to say, however, that as opposed to ethnocentrism, which is inherent in all human cultures and manifests itself quite often, cultural relativism has so far been rather a programme or an idea than a description of the way people think or of the way they treat other cultures.

Based on materials from www.varianty.cz

Text 5

ETHNOCENTRISM

Ethnocentrism is the tendency of members of an ethnic group to place their group above others and to assess the members of other groups through the values and ideas inherent to their own group. Ethnic groups often tend to speak about themselves using the attributes like "good", "clever", "skilled", "peaceful", "brave", "good-looking" while referring to the other groups with words like "stupid", "ugly", or "cold". Consider well-known assertions like "Czech girls are pretty", "Czechs with their golden hands" or "Slavs are hospitable". These assertions certainly cannot be regarded as universally valid.

When assessing different cultures, their customs, traditions, and values through the point of view of ethnocentrism, we perceive our culture with its values, norms, and customs to be the only one that is correct, true, and should be applied universally. Such a perspective, however, is particularly intolerant towards the representatives of other cultures because these are assessed with the help of criteria that are not inherent in them and most often, that are by no means convenient for them. (In many countries, it is quite convenient, i.e. normal, to eat dog or cat meat. We regard cats and dogs as our friends and pets, and it is not common to eat their meat.) Moreover, such a perspective of other cultures is value-biased (eating dogs is a bad deed in our country, an uncivilised sign of cruelty), therefore, we do not only perceive the conduct of members of other cultures as something different, we perceive it as something inferior. Thus the entire foreign culture is assessed as being inferior to our own culture. This tendency to denounce others is inherent in all cultures; it is universal.

At the same time, ethnocentrism is a mechanism which supports the integrity of a group or culture (we know who we are: we who dress, speak and have fun in a similar way, share views on what is appropriate and what is inappropriate when sitting at the table, in marriage, at work, with children etc; we share beliefs as to what is good or bad). Ethnocentrism also helps the individual to identify with the values and norms of the group to which he/she belongs (to know where he/she belongs, where he/she wants to be), and facilitates the process of enculturation (adopting the standards, values, and traditions of one's own culture – so that one accepts them and identifies with them). On the other hand, ethnocentrism makes it much more difficult to maintain contact with members of other cultures, towards whom it is intolerant and often even aggressive (in this sense, ethnocentrism is fundamental part of all forms of nationalism or racism).

Ethnocentric attitudes in North-Atlantic civilisation are further fortified by the notion that developments of all ethnic groups follow one another in the same line. Various cultures are regarded as if they were runners on the same evolution track. The North-Atlantic culture is perceived as the peak, as a stage of quality, which all the other cultures must logically reach one day, though at different times. Such perception legitimises the influence imposed on the so-called underdeveloped cultures in order to make them run to the same stage we as the North-Atlantic civilisation have reached because we regard it as the highest development stage in terms of culture.

Text 6

MISSIONARIES IN NEW GUINEA

Christians, and namely missionaries, are often reproached for having destroyed cultures of native inhabitants, for having intervened in the natural way of life of those who had, during the centuries of their unique development, learned to live in harmony with nature in a far better way than the people in our civilisation. But what was the past life of people in distant cultures truly like?

Who comes to realise today that it were precisely missionaries who as first "travellers" set out for distant, unknown and inhospitable regions full of perils, wild beasts, and manifold tropical diseases? It was only thanks to missionaries that the natives stopped killing one another systematically. Who among modern-day travellers admits that without the long-lasting activity of missionaries, they would hardly find a guide to take them around, much less to understand them at all? Today, guiding services provided by the natives are a significant source of livelihoodin societies where money had never existed until relatively recently.

Without missionaries, the natives in jungles would still die of poisonous snake-bites; men would die because of terrible infections brought about by injuries from hunts, work or battle. The most frequent cause of death of the natives in the past as well as today has been the incessant tribal hatred and blood feuding. The fighters in New Guinea attacked an enemy village, and burned it down while killing everything that passed through their hands – men, women, children, pigs, or dogs. Dead bodies of their enemies were cut into quarters to be carried easily on the way back. Back at home, the fighters would bake them and serve them to their tribe to celebrate the victory. Thus they lived and died for centuries.

Towards the end of the 1960s, the Australians arrived into the country, violently suppressing tribal warfare. Through their interpreters, they announced that wars and killing would no

longer be tolerated. No-one would be allowed to take bones from dead bodies, nor to eat their meat. From then on, dead bodies had to be buried within two days of death. Every person violated these new rules would be put in jail, far from their closest family and relatives.

Yet the memories of cannibalism as well as criminal expeditions stay alive in the minds of the older generation in particular. And enchantments and magic exist at every step. It is hard to root out vengeance if it is a way of life. In reality, almost all deaths (save from evident murders) are attributed to black arts – if a person falls ill and gets better again, it was only illness, but if a person dies, everyone knows it was sorcery.

Even religious people are not fully certain about sorcery. They have lived under its influence for far too long. They have seen many people die strange deaths. They know there is some kind of external power around. Whether that power has or has not been the cause of the death remains a question they are unable to answer. Yet they have hope left. They realise that whatever might be the cause of death, heaven awaits them. It is up to God what way He decides to use to get them there. This knowledge represents for them a kind of consolation they have never had before.

(Adopted from *http://www.hcjb.cz/Zapas_o_dusi/76/zodc7613.phtml, from the book Hledání pramene / In Search of the Source* by Neil Anderson and Hyatt Moore)

6. ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCY

The level of the key competency at the end of secondary grammar school education
The pupil:

Decides purposefully, responsibly and with respect to his/her needs, personal disposition and abilities on his/her further education and future professional specialisation

6.1 Names the abilities, knowledge and skills that are at his/her disposal.

6.2 Detects what substantial abilities, knowledge and skills form the prerequisites for mastering certain professions and compares these facts with his/her own assumptions.

6.3 While deciding on his/her future profession, the pupil considers his/her work in a long-term context (considers the future possibilities of the profession, different factors that will influence his/her work or the way he/she will realise his/her potential).

6.4 Takes into consideration the possibility of being an employee as well as becoming an entrepreneur and compares it with his/her idea of himself/herself and his/her preferences in life.

Develops his/her personal as well as professional potential, recognises opportunities and makes use of them for his/her development in personal and professional life

6.5 Identifies opportunities for his/her further personal development and vocation.

6.6 Recognizes weaknesses which could prevent him/her from successfully mastering a further educational or professional career that he/she plans, and tries to work on them further.

6.7 Reflects upon his/her experience with activities that resemble his/her preferred future profession, and assesses to what extent it suits him/her and vice versa.

6.8 Surveys the demands and contributions of the profession to the person involved in it.

Applies a proactive approach, his/her own initiative and creativity; embraces and supports innovation

6.9 Realises in what spheres of his/her life he/she prefers transformations, where he/she tolerates them and when they become inconvenient.

6.10 Accepts responsibility for his/her actions, doesn't avoid such tasks or activities as are connected with accepting responsibility.

6.11 Tries to estimate a situation in time and react in time; doesn't let himself/herself become a mere victim of circumstances but tries to influence the reality that surrounds him/her.

6.12 Comes up with his/her ideas own, doesn't merely wait for the suggestions of the others.

6.13 Is able to accept change, copes with changes of conditions that he/she was used to and does not succumb to inefficient routine.

6.14 If necessary, he/she can bear a certain amount of uncertainty in situations that require it, but on the other hand, he/she tries to take the initiative and eliminate the uncertainty.

Acquires and critically assesses information on educational and work opportunities, utilises available sources and information when planning and implementing his/her activities

6.15 To have an idea of his/her preferred profession, he/she assembles concrete information from job offers and official sources as well as from the experience of other people working in the given field.

6.16 Formulates what aspects of his/her future profession he/she finds most interesting.

6.17 Assesses his/her relationship towards the products, processes and conditions of work in the given field.

Endeavours to attain set objectives, continuously revises and critically evaluates the attained results, adjusts his/her further activity with respect to the set objective; completes activities which he/she has begun, motivates himself/herself to achieve success

6.18 Sets such objectives as are adequately demanding and attainable in terms of time as well as his/her possibilities.

6.19 Assesses different objectives from the point of view of to the extent to which they require the overcoming of obstacles, and self-assertiveness; to what extent they are realistic and profitable; and their relationship to other objectives in the given area.

6.20 If the situation requires it, he/she identifies with objectives set by someone else.

6.21 To achieve the objective, he/she can find different ways and decide on one of them; he/she can reassess his/her procedure in the course of completing the task and choose a different one.

6.22 He/she can develop the idea of another person and achieve the objectives as a team member.

6.23 Doesn't always satisfy himself/herself with a strictly assigned task but searches for a better or more effective solution.

6.24 Is able to find motivation to work and solve problems, and to find his/her inner motivation.

6.25 Is able to organize his/her work and problem-solving in order to reach the objective without spending an excessive amount of time and energy.

6.26 According to the nature of the task and his/her abilities, the pupil assesses whether he/she is able to do the work himself/herself or whether it is necessary to cooperate with others.

Judges and critically evaluates the risks related to making decisions in real-life situations and is ready to bear these risks if necessary

6.27 Is able to assess the situation and anticipate the possible risks.

6.28 Compares different risk factors with his/her own dispositions and abilities and his/her willingness to bear the risk.

Understands the essence and principles of entrepreneurship, weighs its possible risks, seeks and critically evaluates the opportunities for implementing a business plan taking his/her disposition, the reality of the market environment and other factors into account

6.29 Realises where he/she can apply an entrepreneurial way of thinking (at home, at work, in wider community).

6.30 Takes into consideration both the traditional concept of enterprise as profit-making, and the forms of enterprise that lead to general benefit, as well as deeper issues e.g. the sustainability of life.

6.31 Is able to think in terms of a project (plan, define priorities, identify problems to be solved, identify objectives and procedures to achieve them, assess their achievement).

MODEL LESSON
"FREEDOM OF CHOICE AND PROACTIVITY"

Educational area: Man and Society
Educational field: Basics of Civics and Social Sciences
Cross-curricular subjects: Moral, Character and Social Education
Duration: 180 min (4 lessons)

This lesson teaches the pupils to realise what influences their decisions and the differences between reactive (passive attitude) and proactive (active attitude) behaviour.
At the same time, it tries to form the pupils´ attitudes and lead them to the experience that the proactive approach is usually more efficient and successful in life.

Objectives at the level of entrepreneurial competency:
    The pupil:

- accepts responsibility for his/her actions, does not avoid such tasks or activities which are connected with accepting responsibility;
- tries to estimate a situation in time and react in time, doesn't let himself/herself become a mere victim of circumstances but tries to influence the reality that surrounds him/her.

Objectives at the level of expected outcomes:

Basics of Civics and Social Sciences:

The pupil:

- explicates how people perceive, experience and learn about reality, themselves and other people, and what can influence this perception and learning;
- explains why and how people differ in the manifestations of their behaviour; lists examples of factors affecting human experience, behaviour and activity.

Objectives at the level of the cross-curricular subject:

Moral, Character and Social Education:

The pupil:

- realises that various life situations frequently have more than one solution
- develops self-confidence and responsibility and utilises his/her abilities; set his/her own objectives and plans his/her personal development based on these.

COURSE OF THE LESSON

Lesson 1 and 2

The teacher hands out A4 sheets with the words I MUST printed 7 times in the left column and the words I WANT printed 7 times in the right column. Each pupil writes activities that he/she performs in his/her life. They can be physical activities, mental activities etc. Under "I MUST", he/she puts such activities that he/she doesn't necessarily perform of his/her own free will; under each "I WANT", he/she puts the activities that he/she performs because he/she wants to.

At the bottom part of the paper the words I COULD…IF… are printed. Each pupil puts down several activities that he/she doesn't perform but would like to. To each activity he/she also gives a reason why he/she doesn't perform this activity yet.

I could……………………………………if……………………………………..
I could……………………………………if……………………………………..
I could……………………………………if……………………………………..

At this point the pupil reviews the reasons he/she gave, classifies them as internal reasons (coming from him/her) or external reasons (given by circumstances that he/she cannot influence).

The Last Word Is Mine Method

The Last Word Is Mine is another way of working with text and simultaneously leads the pupils through speculations and reflections after reading a text. It sets the scene for the class discussion, be it a narrative (artistic) text or an informative, educational one.

The individual steps of this method:

1. The teacher asks his/her pupils to choose one or two passages while reading the text that they consider especially interesting or worth of commenting on.

2. The pupils write the chosen passage on a card or a small blank sheet of paper and also note down the number of page, paragraph and line.

3. On the other side of the card, the pupils write notes about the quote. They can express disagreement with what the quote says, elaborate upon it further, or simply work with it as they like. (They can also prepare this part at home.) They write their note as a coherent text, not as mere points.

4. The teacher then challenges one of the pupils to read his/her note. The pupil announces to the class from what page (paragraph etc.) the note comes from. It is very useful for the whole class to follow the particular piece of text on paper as well. Similar to reading a double-entry diary, even in this method it is good to proceed through the text chronologically, from the first paragraph onwards.

5. When the pupil reads the chosen quote, the teacher challenges the others to try to guess why their classmate chose this particular excerpt and try to find the most probable reason. They explain their opinions. It is crucial not to let the discussion digress from the topic or

allow mocking or insignificant remarks. It goes well if we set the rules of the "last word" in the beginning:

> a) When I comment on why my classmate chose the particular quote, I speak directly to him and look into his eyes ("Paul, I think you chose this quote because…").
>
> b) I don't mock anybody's choice with my comments.
>
> c) I don't say what I think of the quote but look for the reasons for which my classmate has chosen it.
>
> d) The person who read his/her quote himself chooses the classmates that raise their hands to speak (sometimes it is the teacher who chooses the pupils, if they are not yet used to this method).

6. The discussion is concluded when the teacher asks the pupil who chose the quote to read the notes (commentary) he/she prepared. This is the definite end of the discussion. The last word belongs to the one who chose the quote.

7. At this point the teacher can choose another volunteer to read the excerpt he/she chose for his commentary and the whole process is repeated.

Text 1

What exactly is Freedom of Choice?

We may sometimes wonder where our self-image comes from. Apart from the fact that we form it on the basis of other people's opinions that hold up a kind of social mirror to us, it is also doubtlessly influenced by the current social paradigm that says that we are to a large extent determined by our own conditionality and by external conditions. There are three known theories of conditionality that are generally used, independent or combined, to explain a person's character:

- *Genetic Conditionality* explains everything by the transmission of the DNA from generation to generation.
- *Developmentally –Psychogenic* conditionality is based on childhood experience and education, which can influence our personal tendencies and the structure of our character.

- *Conditionality - by Environment* makes somebody or something from our environment responsible for our situation (our boss, wife, economic situation, politics).

All these theories come from the theory of stimulus and response – we are conditioned to react in a certain way to certain stimuli just as Pavlov's dogs were. Let us consider to what degree they can be viewed as "absolute determinants" on the basis of the catalytic story of Viktor Frankl.:

Frankl was a determinist educated in the tradition of Freudian psychology, which claims that everything that happens to us in childhood forms our character and personality and in fact our whole life. The limits and parameters of our life are given and there is practically nothing we can do about it. Frankl was a psychiatrist and a Jew as well as Freud. He was imprisoned in a concentration camp in Nazi Germany, where he experienced things so hideous that they contradict the human sense of decency and dignity.

His parents, brother and wife all died in concentration camps or were sent to gas chambers directly. All his family with the exception of his sister died. He himself experienced manifold tortures, countless humiliations and could never know what would happen in the next moment – if his way would lead to the gas chamber, or if he would clean away the bodies or the ashes of the dead with the rest of the "saved".

One day, naked and alone in his cell, he started to realise what he later called "the last freedom of a human" – the freedom that nobody, not even the most perverted Nazi jailers could take away from him. They could control his surroundings, they could do to his body whatever they wanted, but Viktor Frankl was a being conscious of himself that could watch his own suffering as a spectator. His basic identity was untouched. He could decide internally how it would influence him. Between the things that were happening, or the stimulation and his response, was his freedom of choice or the power to choose this response. Among these experiences he started to picture himself e.g. in a situation where he was giving a lecture to his pupils after the release from the concentration camp. In his mind he was giving a lecture on what he had learnt while he was tortured.

With the help of such exercises (mental, emotional and moral) for which he only used his memory and imagination, he was exercising his own little freedom that grew gradually until it became larger than that of his jailers. They had more freedom, more possibilities of external choice; but he had more inner freedom, more inner strength to exercise his choice. He became an exceedingly rich inspiration in his surroundings, for the other prisoners as well as for some of his jailers. He helped the others to find sense in their suffering, and their dignity in the midst of their existence as prisons.

In conditions of immense humiliation, Frankl used the human capacity of self-awareness to discover the basic principle of human nature, i.e. that **between stimulus and the response lies the freedom of choice based on four abilities:**

- On *self-awareness*, i.e. the ability to think about one's own thinking process, the ability to stand apart and examine one's feelings, moods and even the way we see ourselves – our own paradigm. It is the first step towards our understanding of how others see themselves and their own world.
- On *imagination*, i.e. the ability to create in our minds situations that are independent of immediate reality.
- On *conscience*, i.e. the deep, inner awareness of the rightness or wrongness of the principles that guide our behaviour; and the sense for of degree of the harmony of our thoughts and deeds with these principles.
- On *the independent will*, i.e. the ability to act on the basis of our own self-awareness, being liberated from other influences.

The paradigm of conditionality is primarily derived from the study of animals (rats, monkeys, pigeons and dogs) and neurotic and psychotic people. Our exceptional human abilities raise us above the animal world. The extent to which we exercise and develop these abilities gives us the strength to fulfil our exceptional human potential. **Between the stimulus and the response lies our greatest strength – the freedom of choice.**

Frankl was an example of the fact that **the basic and primary habit of a person in an arbitrary surrounding is the habit of proactivity**. That means more than to merely seize the initiative. It means that as human beings we are responsible for our lives. Our behaviour is the

function of our decisions, not the conditions we find ourselves in. Responsibility means the ability to choose our response. The human being is naturally proactive. If a person's life is a function of conditionality and conditions it is so only because he/she consciously or due to negligence has allowed themselves to be governed by them.

Reactive people

- are often influenced by the physical environment (bad weather negatively influences their attitudes and efficiency),
- are often influenced by their social environment – they base their emotional life on the behaviour of others and allow themselves to be ruled by their weaknesses,
- are ruled by their feelings, circumstances, conditions or environment.

Proactive people

- take their weather with them; are guided by values; if it is their value to do their work well, they do it independently of the weather,
- don't blame anything on circumstances, conditions or the conditionality of their behaviour; it is the result of their own conscious choice based on premeditated and internally anchored values, not a product of the conditions stemming from their feelings.

We may feel that **what is happening to us doesn't hurt us as much as our response to what is happening to us**. Things or circumstances can hurt us physically or economically. But our character, our basic identity doesn't have to be hurt at all. Our most difficult experiences (terminal disease, serious physical handicap) become a crucible strengthening our character and developing our internal strength and freedom, which enables us to cope with difficult situations in future and encourages other people to follow us.

The basis of our nature is to act, not to be manipulated. Seizing the initiative, though, doesn't mean being ambitious, unpleasant or aggressive. It means assuming responsibility for things happening. The people who want a better job or better working position can display more initiative – they can study the specific problems of the particular organization and formulate effective recommendations. Only some people, though, are

able to take the necessary actions, seize the initiative and realise it. Others rather wait for something to happen or for somebody to take care of them.

It is above all useful to **listen to your own language**, which is a very real indicator of the extent to which we consider ourselves proactive. The language of reactive people liberates them from responsibility and its serious problem is that it becomes an absolute prophecy. People reassure themselves about the paradigm by their behaviour is conditioned and invent justifications of this faith. They have a strong feeling that they are victims, not masters of their own life. They blame their situation on external forces – on people, circumstances and sometimes even on stars.

Reactive language	Interpretation	Proactive Language
"I can't do it." "I simply haven't got time."	"I am guided by some external power." "I am limited by time."	"Let's see what possibilities we have."
"I have to do it."	"The circumstances or other people force me to do the things I do. I cannot freely choose my actions."	"I will choose an adequate response."
"If only my boss was a little bit more approachable."	"The behaviour of somebody else limits my efficiency."	"I want to look at my own motives."

Homework for next time: Observe the language of people in your surroundings. How often do you hear or use reactive phrases like "if only…", "I can't…", "I am forced to…" Note some of them down.

Lesson 3 – 4

Each of us is surrounded by a large number of people, things, situations… our family, health, problems at work, the state, debts, terrorism etc. Choose such things that you a have a concrete mental or emotional relationship to and write each of them on a separate slip of paper. Look at what your classmates are writing, be inspired. Draw a large circle on a sheet of paper and place all the slips inside. Your **circle of interests** has been created.

Now sort the slips of paper into two groups:

- those that we can influence – make a smaller circle in the middle of the large circle and place them inside – you have set the **sphere of activity**;
- those you cannot influence remained outside the sphere of activity but still remain in your **circle of interests**.

Discuss in pairs with your classmate what lies within your circle of interest and within the sphere of activity. Together, try to find answer to the question: *"What do the different schemes of circles of interests and spheres of activity look like for a reactive and a proactive person respectively? Where do they focus their effort and energy?"*

Text 2
The circle of interests and the sphere of activity

Proactive people concentrate their efforts on the sphere of activity. They deal with things they can do something about. The nature of their energy is positive and thus expands their sphere of activity. Reactive people on the other hand concentrate their efforts on the circle of interest. They concentrate on the weaknesses of the others, the problems of their surroundings and the circumstances they cannot change. The outcomes of this orientation are attitudes that blame other people, reactive language and a growing feeling of one's own sacrifice. If we move within the circle of interests we provide the things from within with the power to influence us. We don't take the proactive initiative necessary to reach positive changes. There can be situations when thanks to the position, health, role or relationships the sphere of activity of a person exceeds the circle of his/her interests. This is a voluntary emotional short-sightedness – another reactive egoistic life-style focused on the circle of interests.

Although proactive people can put emphasis on using their influence, their circle of interest is at least of the same size as the sphere of activity, because they realise their responsibility for the efficient use of their influence.

The problems that we solve in our lives can apply to the sphere of:
- *direct influence* (problems concerning our own behaviour and habits),

- *indirect influence* (problems concerning the behaviour of other people); we solve them by changing the methods of exercising of our influence (ranging from logical argumentation, persuasion, confrontation to empathy),
- *no influence* (problems we cannot do anything about – e.g. our past; it is good to come into terms with them and learn to live with them although we don't like them; we can change the way of seeing these problems; thus we at least don't give them the possibility of influencing us.

The proactive approach emphasizes the solution of all three kinds of problems that apply to our current sphere of activity.

The external circle of interests is full of *ifs***:** *"If I didn't have such a dictator of a boss...", "If I had a university degree..."*

The sphere of activity is on the other hand full of *I can* **–** *I can* be more patient and ingenious, *I can* be sensible, *I can* be more creative, i.e. *I can* become different and thus cause a positive change of what is outside of me. This is concentration on character; this is a **proactive change "from the inside out".**

It is however much easier to blame other people, conditionality or conditions for our stagnating position. Nevertheless, we are responsible for the management of our own life and we can influence our environment by working on our own existence, or on what we are (or what is in our sphere of activity).

What can I gain by complaining If I have a problem with somebody at work (e.g. a colleague), what do I gain by incessant complaints about his faults? If I say that I'm not responsible for them, I make myself a powerless victim and limit my power to influence him and my critical approach will only boost his weaknesses. My ability to influence a situation positively becomes weaker until it dies. If I really want to improve the situation, I can work on the only thing within my power – myself. I can stop trying to make the colleague conform to my expectations and start to deal with my own flaws. I can try to become a better listener, more willing to cooperate. My colleague will then perhaps feel the power of the proactive approach and start to react in the same way.

It is however necessary to realise that **we can freely choose our actions, but we cannot freely choose the consequences of these actions.** The consequences are ruled by natural laws and belong to the outside circle of interests. The problem is that life in harmony with these principles brings positive consequences whereas their breach leads to negative consequences. The wrong choices represent mistakes. These past mistakes also belong to the circle of external interest – they cannot be undone or taken back, neither can their consequences be changed. The proactive approach to a mistake is to admit it immediately, retrieve it and draw a lesson from it. If we don't do this, it will usually lead us to the path of self-delusion, excusing ourselves, which is accompanied by rationalizing (of the lie) to ourselves as well as others. This second mistake then strengthens the first one and causes much deeper wounds – the mistakes then have power over the coming moment.

Task: Look back at your sphere of activity and circle of interests. Are there any items in the circle of interests that you can move to the sphere of activity? If so, on what conditions? Discuss in pairs.

Task (individual):

1. Choose something that troubles you in your life. Describe this problem.

2. Consider if it is a problem of direct or indirect influence, or if it is something you can't influence at all.

3. Identify the first step that you can take within the sphere of your activity. What will it look like? What will you do? When?

Share in pairs, then with the whole class (in case of interest).