***REPORT OF THE DISSEMINATION OF THE 1ST TRAINING SESSION AT “MANOLIS ANDRONIKOS”***

On Friday 2nd February 2018 and on Wednesday 14 February 2018, during the last two periods of the curriculum, took place the dissemination at our school of the 1st intercultural training of Thessaloniki’s meeting. The diffusion of the results of intercultural training was accomplished through a presentation and experiential activity, involving two groups of pupils from the school, 10th and 11th graders, totaling about forty pupils.

The experiential activity is called "Footlanders vs. Handlanders" and, within this, two, supposedly, completely different – regarding their culture- schools meet to organize a party and create a poster for it. Therefore, despite their differences, one group should communicate and understand the culture and habits of the other, in order to achieve the common goal. A third group, the observers, records the attitudes and reactions of the other two. To understand what we mean when we say differences between the two teams, it is enough to give them some characteristics. For example, footlanders like straight lines in dark colors and when they meet someone, they touch their feet, while handlanders like bright colors and curves, and when they meet someone they look at his hands.

According to the majority of the Observers, a separate team that was meant to observe what the Footlanders and the Handlanders were doing, the atmosphere was pleasant, but quite awkward. Communication problems among the Handlanders and Footlanders came up, something that emanated from the limited knowledge of the one culture about the characteristics of the other. Nonetheless, in spite of not observing any incidents of individual marginalization, the two teams faced communication problems, which made them not like the final poster result very much. Most Observers mentioned that the teams indirectly compromised and despite the arguments, the poster they created contained characteristics of both civilizations. There were both positive and negative moments. Thus, it was not clear whether the meeting evolved positively. It is worth noting that prior to the experiential activity a presentation took place on the basis of the issues discussed during this 4-day training. After the experiential activity, a discussion was held among the students about their impressions of the game. As organizers, we listened carefully their observations and we tried to improve our meeting with 11th graders a few weeks after.

Taking all these facts into consideration, we can reach the conclusion that the vast majority of the students trully enjoyed the activity. As organizers, we also believe that they got involved in contemlating about the issues that were deing discussed, for example the differences between the cultures.

The same activity was held with 22 students of the 11th Grade and was completed in the timeframe of 90 minutes 12 days later.

According to the notes of the Observers, during the commencement of the activity, and, to be more precise, during the meeting of the two teams, an atmosphere of awkwardness, confusion and non-efficient communication prevailed. Nonetheless, after a while, communication was restored and started to be effective and fruitful. Also, the students started to get used to the procedure and started getting along with each other. As it comes to the creation of the posters both teams took part equally. Naturally, there were arguments and conflicts. However, finally the students managed to work together for the creation of a poster which clearly shows that both teams worked equally. It’s worth mentioning that there were some discrepancies in between the instructions that were given to the students of the 10th Grade and the ones of the 11th Grade. More specifically, the 11th Graders that were in the team of the Footlanders, had the extra instruction to use their feet for greeting.

During the activity the participants were positive towards it, but when the conversation began, they had a reactive behavior, for the result itself, because they doubted the aim and scope of the activity.

Comparing the observations of the two groups, we can reach the conclusion that most pupils enjoyed the activity and were very active during it. Although it could have worked better, we think that we did well, taking into consideration the difficulty of the activity.

**The results of the biomatic activity.**

After the activity took place at school some of the students, who had been a part of it, answered the following questionnaire:

1. Which is the aim of biomatic activity?
2. Which team did you take part in? (footlanders, handlanders, observers)
3. Which were your feelings:
4. During the experience based activity
5. When you saw the results
6. During the discussion that followed (mention on feeling for each)
7. After biomatic activity and the discussion did you realize that there was something that you would like to change in your attitude?

Taking into consideration their responses we came to these conclusions:

* Fist of all, they all agreed, the main aim of this activity was to make them understand what a culture is and that they should respect everyone’s culture even though it is different from theirs. The students said that the activity helped them to understand and appreciate differences cultures and personalities.
* Secondly, by asking them how the felt during the session, we perceived that the feelings that were created during the activity were mostly positive since they thought it was fun and interesting.
* When they saw the result however, the feelings were mixed. About half of them found it satisfying and reasonable but the other half felt disappointed because they could have cooperated more effectively.
* After the discussion, they realized that they should be more open-minded when it comes to respecting other’s habits. More specifically, during the activity they noted that despite the fact that they were pleased and interested by the result as it pictured the variety of cultures and civilizations, they could have cooperated in a better way.
* After the activity, students realized that they should be more tolerant and open-minded to new ideas to people with different culture or minorities and not to remain stuck to their own perspective.

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