

A collection of colorful silhouettes of people's heads and hands, along with speech bubbles, arranged around a central white text box. The silhouettes are in various colors including pink, yellow, grey, orange, purple, and blue. Some are shown in profile, while others are shown from the back or side. A hand is also visible, reaching up towards the center. The background is a light green gradient.

Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters for younger learners



Language Policy Division



The **Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters** is a concrete response to the recommendations of the Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living together as equals in dignity" (<http://www.coe.int/dialogue>), Section 5.3 "Learning and teaching intercultural competences", paragraph 152:

"Complementary tools should be developed to encourage students to exercise independent critical faculties including to reflect critically on their own responses and attitudes to experiences of other cultures."

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For further acknowledgements, please see the *Introduction*.

The views expressed in the *Autobiography* and supporting documents are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Council of Europe.

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Autobiography
of Intercultural
Encounters
Autobiographie
de Rencontres
Interculturelles

www.coe.int/lang



Introductory exercise

which may be used to explain the idea
of an intercultural encounter to a child

The following exercise can be used to explain the notion of an intercultural encounter to a child before the Autobiography is used for the first time. However, this exercise does not have to be used if the teacher has alternative ways of explaining this notion to them, or if the child has completed the Autobiography on a previous occasion and already understands what is involved.

In addition, this introductory exercise could be used:

- In a session with the whole class before individual children are then interviewed;
- On its own as a self-contained activity, if the teacher judges that this would be useful.

The following text can be paraphrased rather than read verbatim:

How many people have you met and spoken to today? Were you meeting any of these people for the first time? If you haven't met anyone new today, you probably will tomorrow because, if you think about it, you are meeting new people all the time. These people may be adults, a new teacher, a friend of your parents, or someone serving you in a shop. Or they may be children like yourself, a new child in the class, someone you meet in a playground, or a friend you make on holiday.

When you meet new people you probably start to notice things about them straightaway: What do they look like? What do they sound like? Where do they come from? Do you like them or not? Are they people you can trust or are you afraid of them? Are they like you or different from you? Are they like anyone else you know? Are they easy to talk to? Would you like to get to know them better or not? These people will also start to notice things about you.

...



...

Here are some examples of people meeting for the first time.

Show the child the pictures which are provided with the younger learners' version of the Autobiography. If these pictures are either unclear or inappropriate for use in your own country or locale, please feel free to choose or create your own pictures instead that are more relevant to your own local context. Any text which is included in the pictures which are used should be translated into the language which is spoken by the child.

Choose one or two of these pictures and think about the following questions:

What do you think will be the first thing they notice about each other?

Do you think they will notice something different about each other or something the same?

Do you think they are happy to meet each other or not? Why do you think that?

Are they going to find each other easy to talk to? What might they talk about?

Do you think they will make friends or not? Why do you think that?

If this introductory exercise is being used to explain the notion of an intercultural encounter to a child before the Autobiography is used for the first time, finish the exercise with the following text:

Now it's your turn to remember a time when you met someone who was different from yourself in some way. Think carefully about the meeting, where you met, what happened, what you thought and what your feelings were.

OK, have you thought of a time when you met someone who was different from yourself?

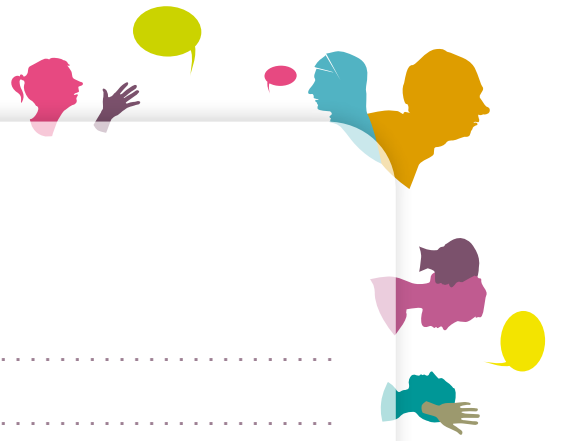


Opening text

to use if the introductory exercise explaining the idea of an intercultural encounter to the child is not used

Can you remember a time when you met someone who was different from yourself in some way? This could be someone from another country, or someone from another place in... [the child's country]. Or it could be someone who has a different religion from you, or someone who speaks a different language. Think carefully about the meeting, where you met and what happened.

OK, have you thought of a time when you met someone who was different from yourself?



What else? (your notes)

A large area for writing notes, consisting of 25 horizontal dotted lines.



Display text card:

The meeting

...

Description of the encounter

I'm really interested in hearing all about what happened when you met this person / these people. Tell me everything that happened.

If the child only gives a short answer or gets stuck, encourage her/him by using one or more of the following prompts:

What else can you tell me?

Tell me a little bit more.

And then what happened?

Location of the encounter

Where did this happen?

What were you doing there?



Display text card:

The other person

...

Description of the other person

[THEORY - acknowledgement of identities,
having knowledge about others]

Can you tell me more about... [the other person/people]?
Who were they?

What was the first thing you noticed about them?

What else did you notice about them?

Can you tell me anything else about them?

What was her name? / What was his name? / What were their names?

What did they look like?

[THEORY - possible identity marker]

What clothes were they wearing?

[THEORY - possible identity marker]

Were they wearing anything else like jewellery?

[THEORY - possible identity marker]

If yes: **What sort of things?**

Have you seen other people like her / him / them before?

If yes: **Where?**

If yes: **In what ways were they like her / him / them?**



Display text card:

Talking to each other

...

Communicative aspects of the encounter

[THEORY - communicative awareness, knowledge]

How did they talk to you?

Was it easy for you to understand them?

If yes: **How come?**

If no: **Why not?**

How did you talk to them?

Was it easy for them to understand you?

If yes: **How come?**

If no: **Why not?**

Did you have to change the way you usually talk?

[THEORY - behavioural flexibility]

If yes: **How did you change the way you talk?**

Did you find any other way, like signing to them with your hands, to help them understand you?

If yes: **What did you do?**

Did they do any signing to you with their hands, to help you understand them?

If yes: **What did they do?**

Display text card:
Talking to each other

What else? (your notes)

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



Display text card:

Your feelings

...

The child's own reactions

[THEORY – respect for otherness]

What did you think when all this happened?

Prompt if necessary: ***Did you find it strange, or interesting, or what?***

Why? / What makes you say that?

How did you feel at the time?

Prompt if necessary: ***Did you enjoy it, or feel at all upset, or what?***

Why? / What makes you say that?

How did you feel about... [the other person/people]?

Prompt if necessary: ***Did you like them, or not like them, or what?***

Why? / What makes you say that?

Would you like to see... [the other person/people] again?

If yes: ***Why would you like to see them again?***

If no: ***Why wouldn't you like to see them again?***

Display text card:
Your feelings

What else? (your notes)

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



Display text card:

The other person's feelings

...

The child's perceptions of the other person's reactions

[THEORY – respect for otherness, empathy]

How do you think... [the other person/people] **felt at the time?**

Prompt if necessary: **Do you think she / he / they felt happy, or at all upset, or what?**

Why? / What makes you say that?

What do you think they were thinking when all this happened?

Prompt if necessary: **Do you think they found it strange, or interesting, or what?**

Why? / What makes you say that?

What do you think they felt about you?

Prompt if necessary: **Do you think they liked you, or didn't like you, or what?**

Why? / What makes you say that?

Do you think they would ever like to see you again?

Why? / Why not?



Display text card:

Same and different

...

Comparing perspectives of self and other

[THEORY – respect for otherness, empathy, interpreting
and relating, tolerance of ambiguity]

[Omit question if answer is obvious from preceding questions]

Do you think that you and... [the other person/people] **felt the same way when you met?**

Why? / What makes you say that?

[Omit question if answer is obvious from preceding questions]

Do you think that you and... [the other person/people] **felt differently about anything when you met?**

Why? / What makes you say that?

Do you think there is anything that you could learn from them?

If yes: **What sort of things?**

Prompt if necessary: **What about the way they speak, the way they dress, or something else about themselves?**

Do you think there is anything that they could learn from you?

If yes: **What sort of things?**

Prompt if necessary: **What about the way you speak, the things you do, or something else about yourself?**

Display text card:
Same and different

What else? (your notes)

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.





Display text card:

Thinking a bit more

...

Reflecting on the experience of the meeting as a whole

[THEORY - critical cultural awareness]

If you had to tell a friend about your meeting with... [the other person/people], what would you say?

What do you think you have learnt or discovered from meeting... [the other person/people]?

[THEORY - awareness of knowledge discovery]

Would you like to meet them again and spend some time together?

If yes: What sort of things do you think you would do together?

[THEORY - action orientation]

If you met them again, is there anything that you would like to tell them about yourself?

[THEORY - action orientation]

If you met them again, would you do anything different from last time?

[THEORY - behavioural flexibility, action orientation]

If yes: What sort of things would you do differently?

If no: Why wouldn't you do anything differently?

...

Display text card:
Thinking a bit more

...

If you met them again, is there anything you would like to ask them?

[THEORY - knowledge discovery, action orientation]

If yes: **What sort of things would you like to ask them?**

If you wanted to find out more about them in the meantime, what would you do?

[THEORY - knowledge discovery, action orientation]

If they say they would ask someone for information: **Who would you ask? What sort of questions would you ask?**

Do you think meeting... [the other person / people] has changed you in any way?

If yes: **How has it changed you?**

If no: **Are you sure?**

Do you think meeting... [the other person / people] has made you do anything which you wouldn't have done if you hadn't met them?

[THEORY - action orientation]

If yes: **What did it make you do?**

If no: **Are you sure?**

Do you think you will do anything as a result of you and me having this talk?

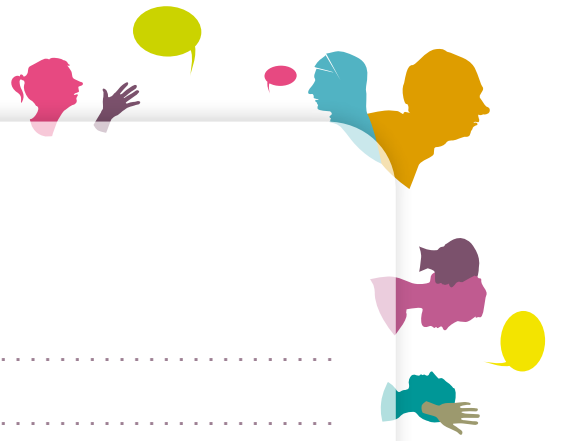
[THEORY - action orientation]

Display text card:
Thinking a bit more

What else? (your notes)

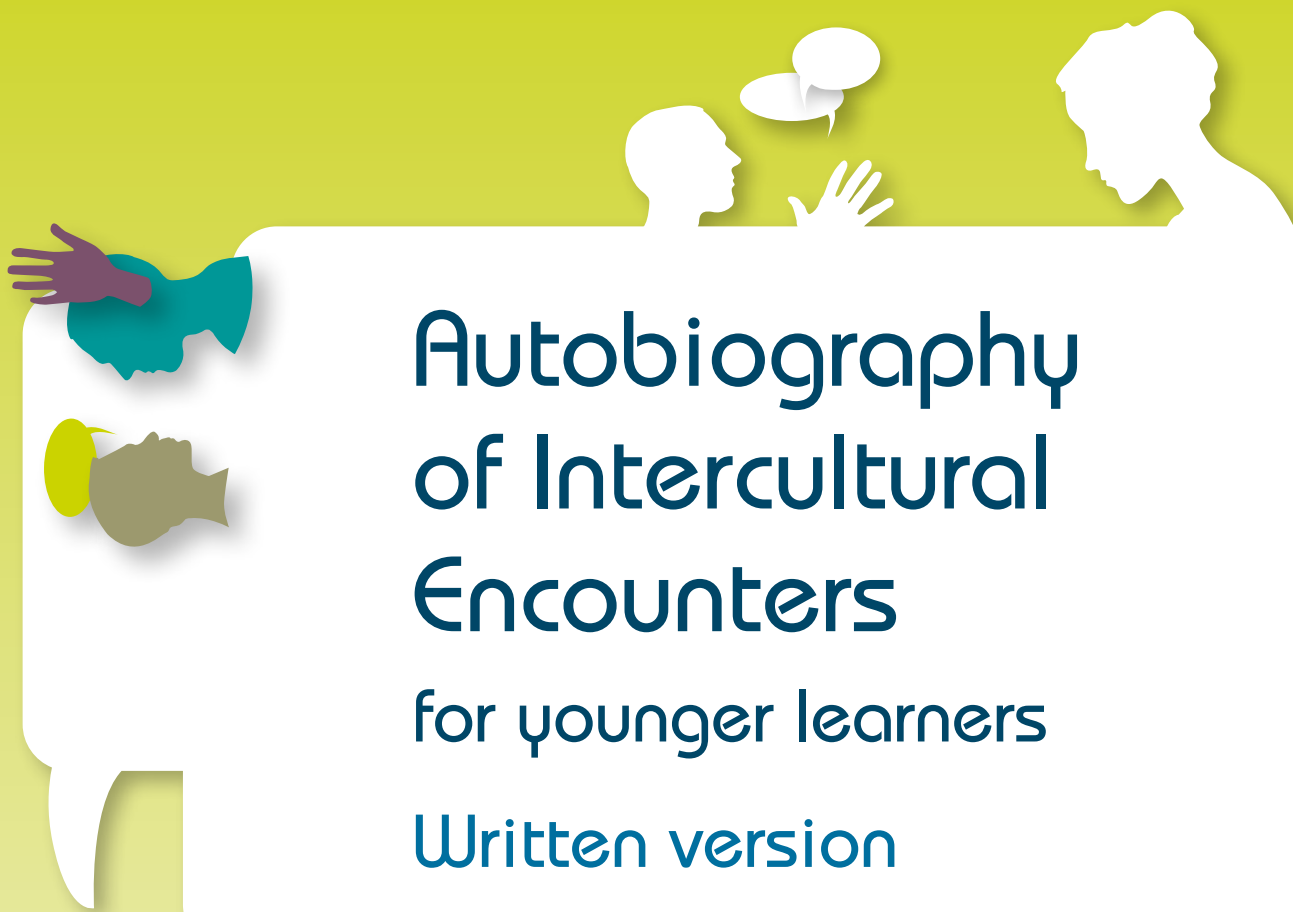
A large white rectangular area with rounded corners, containing 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.





What else? (your notes)

A large white rectangular area with rounded corners, containing 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

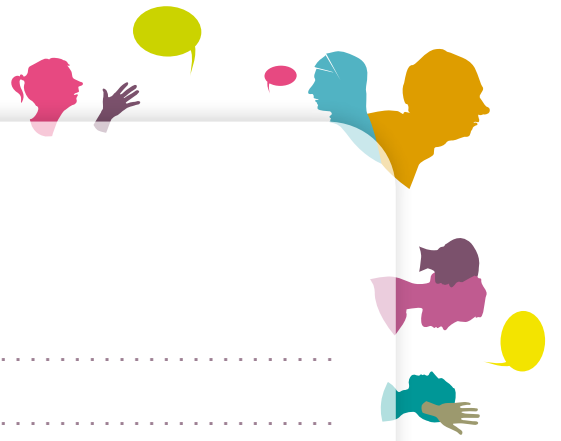


Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters

for younger learners

Written version

Some older children may wish or prefer to write about their intercultural experience. In this case the following list of questions may be used. It is important to remind the children that they do not have to answer every question.



What else? (your notes)

A large white rectangular area with rounded corners, containing 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

Name
Encounter title and/or number



Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters
for younger learners • Written version

1

Written
version

Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters

for younger learners

Name:

.....

Title:

Encounter with

What can you remember about the place where you met this person and what happened when you met?

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Name
Encounter title and/or number



Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters
for younger learners • Written version

2

Written
version

Write down everything you can remember about the person you met, what they looked like and what they were wearing.

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Was it easy for you and the other person to understand each other? How did you communicate with each other?

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How did you feel about meeting this other person at the time?

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Name
Encounter title and/or number



Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters
for younger learners • Written version

4

Written
version

What do you think you learnt or discovered from the meeting?

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If you met the person again is there anything more you would like to ask them or anything else you would tell them about yourself?

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Written
version

What else?

A large writing area with horizontal dotted lines for text entry.

