DEMOCRATIC COMPETENCES THROUGH A CROSS-CURRICULAR APPROACH

Guidelines for Integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in Selected Subjects of National Curricula

2

Democratic Competences through a Cross-Curricular Approach

Authors:

**Institute for Improvement of Education,
Republic of Serbia**

Nataša Anđelković, Serbian Language and Literature

Katarina Barišić, Geography

Sanja Bulat, Physics

Miloš Cvetković, History

Suzana Deretić, Civic Education

Dejana Milijić Subić, Serbian Language and Literature

Snežana Milošević Ješić, the World Around Us/Science and Society Basics

Tatjana Mišoviš, Mathematics

Malina Popović, Chemistry

Violeta Vlajković Bojić, Foreign language

Bratislav Bulajić, Digital World/ Information Technology and Computing

Dragana Buvač Grušanović, Entrepreneurship

INSTITUTE FOR IMPROVEMENT
OF EDUCATION

Republic of Serbia
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

CONTENT

PHOTO: Shutterstock / fast-stock

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Ground Picture

PHOTO: Shutterstock / gonzagon

Foreword

T he Council of Europe's Education Department creates new standards and tools through its intergovernmental committee, the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU). Among its 46 member States, Serbia is a full and active member, contributing to all our programmes including citizenship education.

What is exciting to witness is when these standards are put into practice in our Member States, giving life to Council of Europe tools in education systems, schools and their communities, adapted to each context.

The present *Guidelines for Integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in Selected Subjects of National Curricula 2* is such an example. Based upon one of the Council of Europe's flagship initiatives, the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) which promotes a democratic and inclusive school culture, the new guidelines make the RFCDC a living and breathing instrument. The twenty competences of the RFCDC break down education for democratic citizenship and intercultural education into tangible parts centred around values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding. They include, for instance, critical thinking and empathy and provide a basis to reform policies, curricula, teacher training and materials.

The Ministers of Education at the Council of Europe's 26th Standing Conference of Education Ministers in September 2023 underlined the need to broaden the use of these competences throughout all curriculum areas and all levels of education. Schools simply cannot keep adding new courses and maintain the same structures. And one hour of citizenship education a week is not enough. Learning how to vote and how Government works is important, but fostering democratic competences will provide learners with the critical understanding they need in the future – and improve the quality of education.

This is exactly what this publication does – it promotes quality education through a democratic culture. As the manual clearly demonstrates, it can be done through any subject – from languages to mathematics. And importantly for educators, the concrete collection of examples of teaching practices do not require much time to introduce into classrooms.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Jacob Lund

These practices, including the complementary first collection, are featured in a Council of Europe publication, a *Review of the Implementation of the Reference Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture*. As highlighted in this report, Serbia is a leader in Europe in using the RFCDC as a basis in curriculum reform.

On a broader level, this work also contributes to the Council of Europe's *Education Strategy 2024-2030 Learners First* and in particular Pillar I, renewing the democratic and civic mission of education. It is therefore part of an ongoing European reform process to ensure that all learners will be able to fully exercise their rights as active citizens in European democratic societies.

Of course, this publication would not have been possible without the Serbian authorities. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Education and the Institute for Improvement of Education of the Republic of Serbia for an excellent partnership. The framework in which these guidelines were developed, "Quality Education for All", is a joint European Union/Council of Europe programme, and I would also like to express my gratitude the European Union Delegation in Serbia for their ongoing support.

We sincerely hope that these guidelines will make a difference in improving the quality of education through democratic competences in schools in Serbia. The Council of Europe's Education Department stands ready to promote this publication through our Education Policy Advisors Network (EPAN) and our new Knowledge Hub so that other countries can benefit from Serbia's initiatives to promote democracy and human rights in and through education.

Sarah Keating
Head, Division for Formal and Non-Formal Education
Education Department
Council of Europe

The objectives of education, as prescribed by the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System[1], reflect education for democratic values both indirectly across all objectives and directly through the specific goal, which is "developing competences for understanding and respecting children's rights, human rights, civil liberties and the ability to live in a democratically organised and just society".

At the policy level, the Ministry of Education has undertaken the following systemic activities to achieve these objectives:

- Since 2002, the subject *Civic education* has been part of the system, initially as an elective subject that changed its status to become a mandatory elective subject, with its content being improved over the past 20 years of implementation;

- Since 2013, amendments to the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System[2] have made **general and cross-curricular competences** mandatory. These competences are key for adequately preparing students for active participation in society and lifelong learning, including: digital competence, aesthetic competence, learning how to learn, communication, responsible environmental attitudes, responsible participation in a democratic society, entrepreneurship, handling data and information, problem-solving, collaboration and responsible personal health management. The curriculum is outcome-oriented, aiming to develop cross-curricular competences, such as *responsible participation in a democratic society*, with specific outcomes related to respecting human rights and freedoms.

- Within various subjects, outcomes focusing on gender equality, diversity and intercultural dialogue have been introduced. Respect for democratic procedures, responsible, humane and tolerant behaviour in society, sensitivity to social injustice, collaboration, and teamwork are outcomes linked to human rights and integrated into teaching and learning programmes.

- Since 2017, the *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (RFCDC) by the Council of Europe has been implemented as a project. From 2021, it has become a mandatory part of the education system and is incorporated into the *Education Strategy to 2030*, adopted on 3 June 2021. The Reference Framework of CDC is referenced in:

  > The Rulebook on conducting socially useful and humanitarian work in educational institutions[3].

---

1   Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia," Nos. 88/2017, 27/2018 – other law, 10/2019, 27/2018 – other law, 6/2020, 129/2021, and 92/2023) **https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_osnovama_sistema_obrazovanja_i_vaspitanja.html**

2   Same

3   Rulebook on conducting socially useful and humanitarian work in educational institutions ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 10/2024) **https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/pravilnik-obavljanju-drustveno-korisnog-odnosno-humanitarnog-rada.html**

> The culture of remembrance – a resource by the Ministry of Education and the Institute for the Improvement of Education[4].

> The Ministry's instructions for organising and implementing the educational process for the 2023/24 school year.

> Since 2022, the Ministry of Education has established a network of external advisers for democratic culture in schools and appointed 20 advisers.

In the past period, we have applied guidelines and examples for 11 teaching and learning programs on how competences for democratic culture can be developed through subject teaching, in accordance with the age and developmental characteristics of students: Serbian Language / Serbian Language and Literature, Mathematics, The World Around Us / Science and Society Basics, Foreign Language, History, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Psychology and Civic education. The guidelines clearly instructed teachers on how to use their subject content to achieve one of the 20 prescribed competences for democratic culture. These resources are available online on the Institute for the Improvement of Education and Ministry of Education websites[5]. Manuals were distributed to 1,860 schools across Serbia and can also be accessed on the Ministry's and Institute for the Improvement of Education's webpages. Presented here are the updated guidelines for introducing CDC into teaching through 477 prescribed descriptors. Unlike the previous edition, which included Psychology, this version now features Entrepreneurship and Information Technology and Computing. This updated version will be made available online to all schools and we expect it to facilitate the implementation of CDC and enhance the socio-emotional competences of our students.

Through this process, the state has assumed full ownership, becoming one of the few countries with a systemic approach to the RFCDC. This is because education must fulfil both a democratic and civic mission. Hence, the education system is actively implementing the Council of Europe's Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture into its curriculum, as one of the tools used to support, defend and promote fundamental values, human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Prof. dr Snežana Vuković
Assistant Minister
Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia

_____

4   **https://zuov.gov.rs/kultura-secanja/**

5   **https://zuov.gov.rs/preuzimanje/509/izdanja/566227/coe_kvalitetno-obrazovanje-zasve_ publikacija.pdf**

T he Institute for the Improvement of Education (Serbian: ZUOV), within its core activities in recent years, has continuously worked on advancing education in the field of democratic culture. Significant progress has been made, yet as we live in a time of rapid change, it is essential for this work to remain constant. Ethical principles and democratic values are becoming increasingly necessary. We must learn and repeatedly reinforce them, for despite enacted laws and humanitarian objectives aimed at strengthening humanism and its values, humanity continues to repeat old patterns. We are witnesses to new wars and innocent suffering. Many frameworks and foundations for humanity have been established, but the structures crumble.

The school's mission is to enable students to master research methods and procedures that foster critical thinking and lead to successful problem-solving. A necessary precondition for achieving these goals is to make them aware of and offer them values that are oriented towards humanity. By early adolescence, 80% of a person's character traits are formed. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure the necessary conditions for young people to acquire the knowledge, values and skills that will enable them to grow into responsible citizens ready to face all the challenges of contemporary, diverse and democratic societies. We live in a world overflowing with information, often inaccurate; the internet creates confusion, leading to a crisis in thinking and doubts about the reliability of the information it offers. Today, we know everything, but we verify very little. We need to question the accuracy of information, develop critical understanding and promote respect for human dignity and rights, multiculturalism, empathy and tolerance. We live in an era where the horizon of the future is already marked by the metaverse – a digital universe offering new realities and superior algorithms. One might say that humans are also a type of algorithm, albeit a complex one, but in the race against artificial intelligence, it seems humanity has little chance. Perhaps it is through learning virtues and values that we will retain an advantage over superior artificial intelligence.

> **Thus, teaching virtues today may be the most important task of all. An individual can easily access facts and knowledge, but the path to tolerance, empathy and love is more challenging. Love cannot be learned by definition, nor can it be felt through merely understanding its definitions.**

Dr Zlatko Grušanović
Director of the Institute for the Improvement of Education
of the Republic of Serbia

Expanding Learning towards Democratic Competences

E ducational practice is complex, dynamic and cannot be fully anticipated in detail. It unfolds through the interplay of relationships and various activities within the social and physical environment, in the unique context of a specific classroom, school and local community. Therefore, instead of the term *implementing the programme, the approach emphasises planning and conducting teaching and learning that address the specific needs of a given class.*

The programmes developed and proposed by the Institute for the Improvement of Education vary (teaching and learning programmes, training programmes, instructional activities, etc.), but they all share a single goal: the advancement of education.

The three pillars of quality education are: a) a qualified teacher; b) a high-quality programme; and c) effective textbooks. If we were to briefly describe a modern, competent teacher, it would be one who continually improves and utilises all applicable contemporary methodologies to enhance the connection between and integration of functional knowledge. The teacher who transmits ready-made knowledge is obsolete because robots can do the same; the role of the teacher is changing. Learning is not about accumulating facts but creating interconnected knowledge. A quality programme enables this by moving away from being a "static repository" of knowledge. Instead, it is an open framework guided by clear outcomes, focusing on practical and critical thinking rather than content reproduction. In the era of artificial intelligence, textbooks no longer need to be linear but rather diversified, enabling students to integrate classroom-acquired knowledge individually.

A teacher is no longer someone who knows everything but someone who teaches children how to learn, think and feel. Such a teacher improves the teaching system more than research-based knowledge alone. The teacher of the future must be a catalyst for change and adaptation, while the school's mission is to provide research methods and pose problem-solving tasks to students.

All teaching and learning programmes align with the general principles, objectives and outcomes prescribed by the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System (Serbian: ZOSOV). They are outcome- and standards-oriented, and their con-

tent (both mandatory and elective) serves to achieve the anticipated core, subject-specific and cross-curricular competences. However, programmes are only frameworks or "structures", guidelines for the teacher, who is the key figure not only in transferring knowledge, skills and attitudes but also in creating an atmosphere and a stimulating environment for students. Democratic competences permeate nearly all subjects. Democratic values are universal principles that students should learn in an integrated manner across all subjects. Democratic culture is a cross-curricular domain for every educational system and subject. If the goal is to prepare students for a future that remains uncertain, democratic values and the continual reinforcement of ethical principles will play a crucial role.
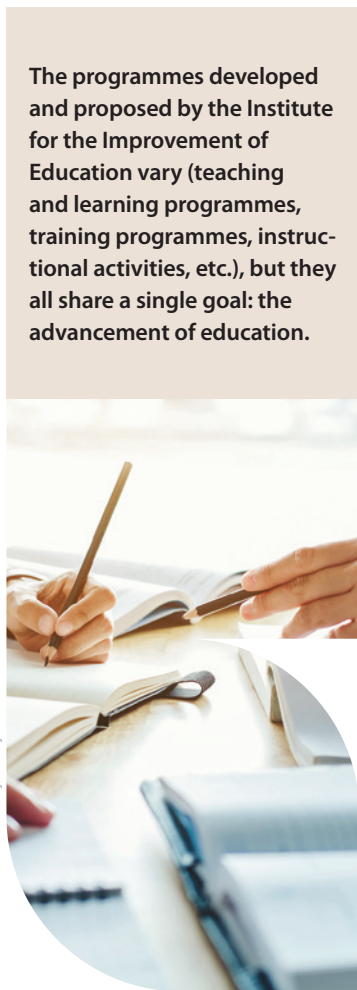
In many countries, current educational trends include teaching in clusters of subjects, erasing boundaries between disciplines or encouraging cross-curricular connections. This manual also guides teachers on how outcomes can be interconnected across lessons in various subjects. The guidelines are merely signposts; the rest is in your hands. A creative approach can be used to connect the outcomes we have developed for democratic competences in a cross-curricular manner, fostering creativity among children. The more diverse the connections, the more creativity we nurture. The future of teaching and learning programmes lies in an open approach where teachers select themes and relate them to appropriate knowledge and skills tailored to the age group, subject and programme.

The curriculum includes a range of principles, objectives and outcomes related to learning about democratic values. The Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System (ZOSOV) includes the following provisions:

General principles of education:

3) Respect for human rights and the rights of every child, student and adult, as well as the appreciation of human dignity; education in democratically organised and socially responsible institutions that foster openness, collaboration, tolerance, cultural and civilisational awareness, commitment to fundamental moral values such as justice, truth, solidarity, freedom, honesty and responsibility, while ensuring full respect for the rights of the child, student and adult.

Educational objectives:

1) Ensuring the well-being and holistic development of the child, student and adult;

2) Providing a stimulating and safe environment for the comprehensive development of the child, student and adult, promoting non-violent behaviour and establishing zero tolerance for violence;

4) Developing and practicing healthy lifestyles, awareness of the importance of personal health and safety, and the need to nurture and develop physical abilities;

7) Developing competences for coping and active participation in a changing contemporary society;

8) The full intellectual, emotional, social, moral and physical development of every child, student and adult in accordance with their age, developmental needs and interests;

10) Developing self-awareness, creativity, critical thinking, motivation for learning, teamwork skills, self-assessment, self-initiative and the ability to express opinions;

11) Equipping students to make informed decisions about their further education and occupation, personal development and future life;

12) Developing positive human values;

13) Cultivating feelings of solidarity, understanding and constructive collaboration with others, as well as fostering camaraderie and friendship;

14) Developing competences for understanding and respecting children's rights, human rights, civil liberties and the ability to live in a democratically organised and just society;

15) Promoting and respecting racial, national, cultural, linguistic, religious, gender and age equality, tolerance and the appreciation of diversity.

Educational outcomes:

11) Effectively and constructively participates in all forms of work and social life, respects human rights and freedoms, communicates assertively and non-violently, particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and resolves conflicts.

Key competences for lifelong learning:

▪ personal, social and learning competence; civic competence; cultural awareness and expression competence… [For more details, see: Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System, *Official Gazette of RS* Nos. 88/2017-3, 27/2018-3 (other law), 27/2018-22 (other law), 10/2019-5, 6/2020-20, 129/2021-9, 92/2023-332]

An open curriculum allows teachers to freely design their methods of knowledge transfer, adapting to the individual differences of their students and classrooms while guiding them through the entire network of subjects towards functional knowledge. It is crucial to discuss, repeat and advocate for the values we learn, reflecting on them to make them stronger and to establish them as fundamental values of the society we live in. Democratic competences offer extensive opportunities to integrate subject-specific content that leads students toward achieving learning outcomes. This approach not only enables the adoption of democratic competences, that is understanding universal societal values, but also supports achieving standards across nearly all subjects. Every topic can serve as a starting point for discussions with students, encouraging them to reflect and form independent conclusions, thus enhancing their ability to critically and actively engage with societal topics. This process helps shape competent future citizens. Such lessons are more engaging and simultaneously strengthen students' knowledge in specific subjects as well as the values and attitudes we should strive for.

> **The aim of education is not to "rush through" curriculum content, memorise the definitions of objectives or merely include competences and outcomes in lesson plans, but to ensure that students acquire a set of knowledge and skills that will prepare them for future life challenges.**

This manual, developed by advisers from the Institute for the Improvement of Education (ZUOV), continues to build on the design of creative lessons on this topic. However, it only serves as a pretext for classroom activities. The proposals are intended as initial support, offering approaches to integrate the content and outcomes of various subjects with democratic competences. Alongside examples, we have also provided outcomes derived from descriptors, enabling educators to connect and "branch out" lessons from a few minutes to an entire class. The outcomes related to democratic culture competences exist in the content and outcomes of almost all subjects. The methodological and didactic guidance for developing content and key concepts provides explicit directions for understanding one's own life and the society in which the student lives. It encourages the respectful discussion of differing viewpoints, responsibility for *health and safety*, the organisation of research-based approaches to topics and content, data collection and analysis, the adoption of mathematical knowledge and skills essential for developing logical and abstract thinking, value orientation, the acceptance of diversity, social competences (communication and collaboration) and more.

The emphasis is on acquiring and developing skills applicable to everyday life, linking universal human rights to general key competences. If universal values are not discussed in every class, they will not be fully adopted. Unlike the past, characterised by the accumulation of facts, today's approach focuses on linking subjects with functional outcomes as the only path to effectively preparing students for the future.

While in the past, knowledge could compensate for a lack of skills, today, the ability to find solutions is paramount, as knowledge is accessible to everyone. The goal is problem-based teaching, which transcends boundaries and "branches out" into an infinite number of combinations.

We hope you will continue to develop the initial ideas on your own. We have provided a possible direction and examples of how teaching and learning outcomes and descriptors of democratic culture can be linked and explored in various subjects. Your work with students in the classroom is our greatest treasure. Therefore, we invite you to send us your ideas and work, so we can create a portal-based repository that will strengthen students' democratic competences and continuously reinforce the educational role of schools. In the coming period, the Institute for the Improvement of Education and its partner institutions will develop additional support in the form of training, building and expanding the repository, applications and various tools that can stimulate creativity and continue to foster the cross-curricular integration of important contemporary topics, such as traffic safety, general safety, green transition, sustainable development, collective well-being and more.

Dr Zlatko Grušanović

Editorial Note

T he manual *Democratic competences through a cross-curricular approach* is the second collection of examples of teaching practices, developed as part of the project "Quality education for all" in Serbia. This project is implemented under the joint programme of the European Union and the Council of Europe, "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey", for the period 2023–2026. The project focuses on implementing the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), systematically integrating it into educational systems in a coherent and comprehensive manner.

The Reference Framework of CDC also defines methods for implementing teaching and learning, emphasising the use of various interactive forms of engagement through which students can enhance their competences. CDC competences can be developed through both curricular and extracurricular activities, across mandatory and elective subjects, and through cross-curricular approaches.

As a result of activities carried out in the previous phases of the programme – through the projects "Fostering a democratic culture in schools" (2016–2019) and "Quality education for all" (2019–2022) – the first collection of examples was published, showing how competences for democratic culture can be developed through subject-specific teaching aligned with the students' age and developmental characteristics.[6]

> **The Reference Framework model, developed by the Council of Europe, is based on the belief that preparing students for democratic citizenship is one of the main tasks of educational systems. It is grounded in normative principles underlying all educational policies and practices, starting from the idea that all children have an equal right to quality education in inclusive schools and that schools have a democratic mission.**

In the same spirit, this manual offers examples of activities that teachers can apply in their work or use as inspiration to design original examples of best practices. These examples aim to foster the development of all groups of competences (knowledge, values, attitudes and skills) at all levels of proficiency (basic, intermediate and advanced). Examples are provided for both cycles of primary education (Cycle 1: Grades 1–4; Cycle 2: Grades 5–8) and for secondary education (grammar schools and vocational secondary schools).

---

6   See: *Guidelines for the integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national curricula*, Council of Europe, 2022
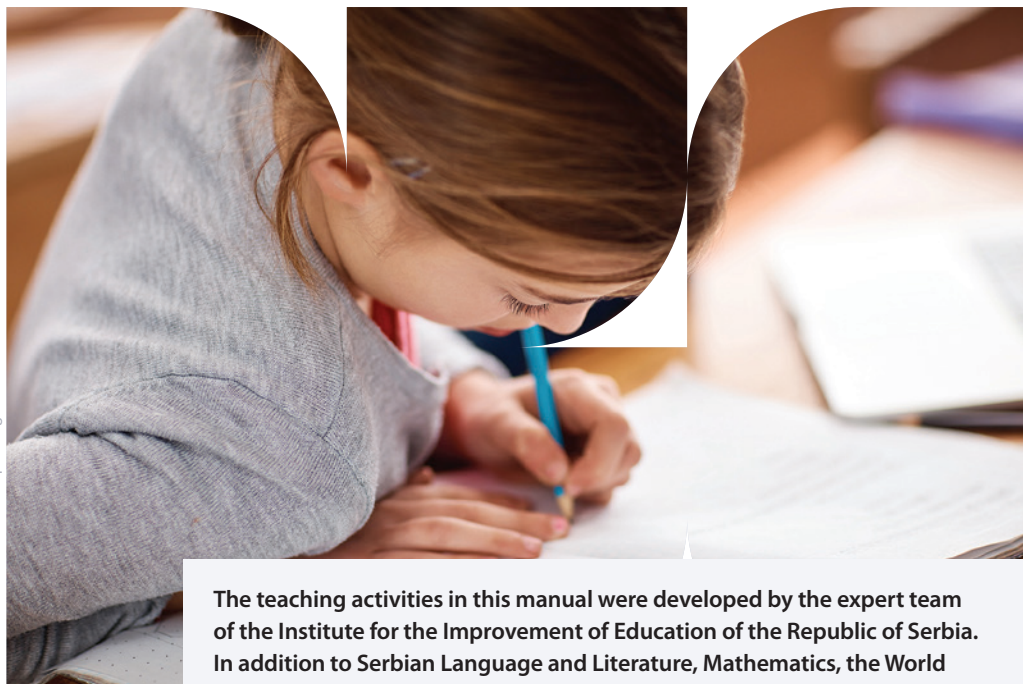
The teaching activities in this manual were developed by the expert team of the Institute for the Improvement of Education of the Republic of Serbia. In addition to Serbian Language and Literature, Mathematics, the World Around Us / Science and Society Basics, Foreign Language, History, Geography, Physics, Chemistry and Civic education, this manual has been expanded with examples of teaching practices for the subjects Entrepreneurship and Information Technology and Computing.

All examples of cross-curricular CDC development presented in this manual vividly demonstrate that competences can be continuously developed and refined through all subjects and across all segments of the educational system; that competences are not just content but also a way of learning and teaching.

The examples are designed to show teachers how, starting from the descriptors of democratic competences and expected learning outcomes, they can create teaching activities that achieve both the development of targeted competences and the adoption of subject-specific content.

The structure of the given examples reflects the idea of showing how desired teaching and learning outcomes, alongside the adoption of democratic culture competences, can be achieved by starting from the definitions or descriptions of the outcomes themselves: by planning what they wants to achieve through the processing of a particular teaching unit, the teachers select the outcomes from their subject's curricula, link them with the appropriate CDC competences based on their descriptors, and design classroom activities to achieve the selected outcomes.

Competences for democratic culture always occur in clusters, meaning that focusing on one competence inherently involves developing others – a fact regularly highlighted in the given examples. Additionally, as descriptors are formulated in the language of learning outcomes, the two are intertwined, so that in some teaching and learning programs, certain outcomes directly correspond to descriptions of competences for democratic culture.

The approaches from different angles and the diversity of the examples attests to the limitless possibilities of working on developing competences for democratic culture through curricula. Most examples can serve as a foundation for designing activities applicable to other subjects or for implementing integrative or project-based teaching. Examples of cross-curricular connections and the potential for CDC development in correlation with other subjects are also highlighted.

A unique added value of this manual is a table of adapted descriptors, formulated by the interdisciplinary expert team of the Institute for the Improvement of Education of the Republic of Serbia, based on the model of the Council of Europe's list of descriptors.

The detailed registry of competence descriptions (descriptors) was initially published in the *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture*. Volume 2 (Council of Europe, 2018). This was not intended to be an unchangeable, imposed ideal but rather a conceptual organisation of competences that users can adapt and modify for their purposes. The expert team of the Institute for the Improvement of Education took that "step further", thereby enhancing the project's value and vitality.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Studio Romantic

All descriptions of the selected competences in the examples of teaching activities are provided according to the adapted model of the Institute for the Improvement of Education. Additionally, key descriptions of competences are included as an annex to the manual, based on the Model of competences for democratic culture by the Council of Europe (Annex 1) and Key descriptions of competences according to the model of the Institute for the Improvement of Education (Annex 2).

Aligned with the objectives of the "Quality education for all" project in Serbia, this manual will significantly contribute to further enhancing quality education for all. It will promote democratic culture and inclusion while combating all forms of discrimination in formal education, following the standards and tools developed by the Council of Europe.

ABBREVIATIONS

A	Description of CDC at an advanced level of development
B	Description of CDC at a basic level of development
CDC	Competence(s) for Democratic Culture
CoE	Council of Europe
EU	European Union
FTA	Free teaching activities
I	Description of CDC at an intermediate level of development
NQF Serbia	National Qualifications Framework of Serbia (Comparison table of qualification levels and types of education)
RFCDC	Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture
RS	Republic of Serbia
WAU	The World Around Us
ZOSOV	Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System
ZUOV	Institute for the Improvement of Education

Serbian Language and Literature

Speak So I Can See Who You Are!

The four primary domains of competences for democratic culture: values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding are also included in the learning objectives of the subject Serbian Language and Literature and are foreseen in a large number of outcomes for the end of almost all grades. Most descriptions of these competences, categorised in the Reference Framework as basic (B), intermediate (I) and advanced (A) levels, are implicitly present in teachers' lesson preparations for many teaching units and programme content.

W ithin this segment of the manual, we aim to propose some of the ways in which it is possible to realize and more directly emphasize the idea of each described level of development for individual competences, so that the course of analyzing a literary work in class does not deviate in any way from the standard concept that touches on all other elements necessary for achieving the designated outcomes. The examples presented here serve as suggestions and starting points for your further creative approach when planning lessons aimed to engage students so that they develop competences for democratic culture at different levels.

Example 1.

As the definitions of competences grow more complex from the basic to the advanced level, the teaching methods become more demanding and the outcomes more significant. For instance, competence 3.8. from the Skills group can, according to the set outcomes, be fostered and developed at all levels of the teaching process.

Selected competence: **3.8. Conflict-resolution skills** from the Skills group.

I. Description of competence at the basic level:

B: 3.8.a)   *Shows respect in communication with all conflicting parties.*

B: 3.8.b)   *Identifies potential solutions to resolve conflicts.*

Activity example for developing competence 3.8. at the basic level: **literary analysis of the folk tale *The Bear, the Pig and the Fox***

The outcomes of the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of primary school that are achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise personification and understand its role in a literary work;
- differentiate between description, narration (in the first and third person), and dialogue in a literary work;
- retell the text from different roles/perspectives;
- identify the overall tone of the literary text (cheerful, sad, humorous);
- name the positive and negative traits of characters;
- briefly explain their impression and opinion while respecting differing viewpoints;
- distinguish between literary genres: humorous folk poems, fables, animal tales, short stories, children's novels and dramatic texts;
- determine the theme, the sequence of events, and the time and place of events in the text read.

The primary goal of this folk tale analysis is to help students understand and experience how the stylistic device of personification functions within the text and contributes to its meaning. Students identify human traits assigned to the animals and discuss these traits and the characters' actions. Using this story, the teacher can encourage students to pay particular attention to the initial situation: the circumstance in which the three protagonists, three animals, come together for a **common task**/project and realise they need to share responsibilities. The characters demonstrate an understanding of the **importance of reaching an agreement** by **dividing tasks equitably and participating equally to achieve their goal** – growing food through ploughing and sowing wheat. Students should observe how tasks are divided, how the agreement is reached, and express their opinions on whether this division was fair, how they would have negotiated, and whether they have experienced similar situations of collaboration and negotiation with their peers.

The teacher should present the breach of agreement as the central issue of the story. Students are encouraged to consider both the **ethical and legal aspects of this problem**. In the scenario where the fox, who is wronged (receiving nothing from the harvest that the bear and pig divide between themselves), decides to **file a lawsuit** by seeking out the "imperial official" to fairly distribute the wheat, students can understand how **contracts and rights function in a democratic society**. Filing a lawsuit, as chosen by the fox, should be recognised by students as a **tool of civil society for resolving conflicts and achieving fair outcomes**. The reference to the "imperial official" in the story evokes events from the distant past, where such a figure acted as a judge or arbiter in disputes. This serves as an example and confirmation of the ancient roots of the democratic principle of **peaceful conflict resolution**.

Since the story unfolds in a tragicomic direction – with the bear and pig, aware of their guilt and fearing punishment, harming themselves out of fear of a simple house cat they mistake for an "imperial enforcer" – students can, in addition to discussing the moral about just punishment derived from the humorous situation, also explore a possible alternative ending to the story. The teacher can initiate a discussion with students about an imagined scenario where the imperial official arrives to resolve the dispute. Students can create or improvise dialogues between the conflicting parties, envisioning a **fair resolution to the conflict**.

The folk tale **The Bear, the Pig and the Fox** belongs to the corpus of Serbian oral prose. It contains elements of fairy tales, fables and folk narratives. As in fables, the animals are personified here, but unlike fables, the story is more elaborate, and the characterisation of its protagonists is more complex. The action that takes place in the story implies older historical times, when ordinary people, people in the countryside, had difficulty finding food and basic necessities. The themes of minor deceptions, cunning and greed reflect the challenges faced by individuals during that era. The presence of an imperial official tasked with resolving disputes suggests a historical period when the Serbian people lived under Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian rule. The folk humour in this tale is central, providing a profoundly vitalistic principle that underscores resilience and human wit.

During the analysis of this folk tale, competence **2.3. Civic-mindedness** can also be developed. The initial situation in the story – three different animals coming together for a shared goal (securing food) – can be used by the teacher to encourage a discussion that prompts students to compare this scenario from the imaginary narrative past with contemporary life. Students might compare the gathering of three different animals to representatives of three distinct groups (social, generational, professional) in civil society working together on a project for the common good. This exercise helps students become aware of and adopt the principle on which civil society operates, expressed through the descriptions of the **Civic spirit** competence at the basic and intermediate levels:

B: 2.3.a) *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

I: 2.3.b) *Participates in collective actions aimed at improving community life.*

II. Description of competence at the intermediate level:

I: 3.8.c)   *Contributes to conflict resolution by pointing out possible solutions to the conflict.*

I: 3.8.d)   *Encourages parties in conflict to listen carefully to each other.*

Activity example for developing competence 3.8 at the intermediate level: **analysis of the novel *The Paul Street Boys* by Ferenc Molnár**

The novel *The Paul Street Boys* by Hungarian writer Ferenc Molnár (1878–1952) is one of the cult novels of children's literature. It is an adventure or escapade novel, or a novel about boys' gangs. It was written at the beginning of the 20th century and is set in Budapest. The story of the conflict between two boys' gangs symbolically reflects a real historical conflict - the Revolution of 1848.

The outcomes of the teaching and learning program for the sixth grade of primary school that are achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- analyse cause-and-effect relationships and evaluate the key ideas presented in the text;

- analyse the actions of characters in a literary work, using arguments from the text;

- recommend a literary work with a brief explanation.

The analysis of *The Paul Street Boys* takes place over several lessons and is structured to unlock its main themes – fight for freedom, justice and unity.

During a discussion about the novel, the teacher can guide students to explain and analyze **the organisational principles of the boys' gangs**. Based on the information in the novel that the boys elect their leader, or president, during an assembly, students should identify the **democratic principle that the boys their age adopted and applied for their group's functioning**. As the story unfolds and through the characterisation of the protagonist, Nemecsek, the issue of **prejudice** based on physical appearance emerges, illustrating how such biases can lead to flawed conclusions about people's true qualities. The designation of Nemecsek as weak and timid highlights a **weakness in the democratic decision-making process** (majority votes relegating Nemecsek to the rank of private rather than officer) when based on incomplete understanding.

During the analysis of this novel, the competence **2.5. Self-efficacy** from the Attitudes group can also be developed. Students develop this competence indirectly, by empathizing with and identifying with the characters of the novel they read and analyze. At the basic level, students can identify, in the characterisation of the main character and some supporting characters, the description of the competence that reads: B: 2.5.a) *Demonstrates readiness to solve problems, achieve good results and overcome difficult situations.* Through analysing the plot, students compare the reactions and decisions of specific characters, observing how they behave in new circumstances, overcome obstacles on their path to their goals, and whether they effectively resolve problems arising in unforeseen situations. This enables students to identify descriptions of the intermediate and advanced levels within the Self-Efficacy competence.

The teacher can focus part of the analysis on the themes of **fairness and respect**, as pathways to overcoming problems and **resolving conflicts**. The opposing side's ability to recognise Nemecsek's virtues before his own comrades do **demonstrates a democratic culture of respect for those with whom one is in conflict,** which is a critical step towards conflict resolution.

The central theme of this novel – the conflict between two boys' gangs – symbolically reflects a real historical conflict, the 1848 Revolution. In class, students discuss the concept of conflict itself. Why conflicts arise, how they can be avoided and whether the ability to approach people positively and refrain from premature judgment can contribute to conflict prevention. Students can compare the situations faced by the characters in the novel to their own experiences. The teacher encourages them to stage a situation where they belong to the groups of boys in *The Paul Street Boys*. The class can be divided into two groups, with a third group dramatising a part of the novel where a verbal conflict between the two gangs occurs. At this point, the students change the course of the novel by finding solutions through conversation and negotiation to avoid a "war" or physical conflict.

III. Description of competence at the advanced level:

A: 3.8.e)   *Contributes to resolving interpersonal conflicts by creating a positive emotional atmosphere.*

Activity example for developing competence 3.8 at the advanced level: **analysis of the epic folk poem** Banović Strahinja

The epic folk poem *Banović Strahinja* belongs to the corpus of Serbian folk poetry. It is written in decasyllabic verse, a meter commonly found in Serbian epic poetry, characterised by a regular rhythm with a caesura (pause) in the middle of each line. These formal characteristics are crucial for experiencing the narrative/action depicted in the poem. Banović Strahinja is a fictional character and the story is set in the early 14th century, before the Battle of Kosovo, after which Serbia fell under the Ottoman rule. The poem tells the story of how a foreign conqueror, a Turk, abducts the hero's wife and takes her as his own. The folk singer places the ethical and humanistic components of the protagonist's character at the forefront. The hero's readiness to act contrary to the unwritten norms of a patriarchal society and his humane treatment of his wife despite her betrayal represents a departure from the rigidity and brutality of old societal systems, elevating this poem to the status of a supreme artistic work.

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the first grade of grammar school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- interpret a literary work with an understanding of its genre characteristics and literary-historical context, using structural and stylistic elements of the work and secondary sources in the analysis;

- investigate and explain the creative role of myth in literature;

- support with examples the key features of folk literature (classification, variability, formulaic structure).

The analysis of the epic folk poem *Banović Strahinja* can extend beyond a basic interpretation that highlights themes of heroism, morality, and humanity, to explore the idea of human conflict. The conflict in the poem *Banović Strahinja* can branch out into several layers. The first layer of conflict is between Strahinja and the usurper Vlah Alija. This is resolved through courage, strength and heroism, satisfying the principle of justice. The second conflict that students, through teacher-led discussion, should identify is the **moral and emotional conflict** between Ban Strahinja and his unfaithful wife.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Gorodenkoff

The **complex conflict during the duel** is resolved by Ban Strahinja granting his wife the freedom to choose and exercise her free will, demonstrating a high level of respect for women. **Granting a woman the freedom to decide represents a step away from the traditional patriarchal cultural model to which the poem, as part of the heroic epic tradition, belongs.** The third conflict that students identify during the analysis of the poem is the conflict between Ban Strahinja and his in-laws – Old Jug Bogdan and the nine Jugović brothers. They refuse to help him in his time of need yet insist on punishing his unfaithful wife – their daughter and sister – after Strahinja heroically rescues her. This reveals their lack of moral integrity. Students, through analysing the poem, should conclude that Strahinja's actions towards both his in-laws and his wife, whom he forgives for her betrayal, elevate him to a high moral level. Through his actions, Banović Strahinja **demonstrated a high level of understanding for the other side,** thereby **resolving the interpersonal conflict in an emotionally positive manner**. **The principle of forgiveness** highlighted in the poem should be connected by students to the **democratic principle of understanding the other side's situation and creating a positive foundation for conflict resolution**.

During the study of this epic poem, Competence **4.2**: **Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication** can also be developed, focusing on its advanced-level description: A: 4.2.d) *Relates different verbal and nonverbal ways of communication used by people from different cultures to their cultural identity.*

In this regard, particular attention can be given to the hospitality ceremony when Banović Strahinja visits his in-laws. The students analyse the actions and established gestures of Old Jug Bogdan's daughters-in-law, considering what this nonverbal communication signifies and interpreting the meaning of the verse "and they spoke noble words". This should be compared with the reception Banović Strahinja receives when he visits his in-laws again after the conflict with Vlah Alija. Students can also compare the dialogue during the first visit, when Banović Strahinja seeks help from Jug Bogdan, with the dialogue that takes place after the battle, when he arrives with his unfaithful wife, Vidosava. Students should be encouraged to discuss the value systems of the two cultural models represented by Banović Strahinja and Vlah Alija, based on the dialogue preceding the battle, as well as the nonverbal communication during the fight itself.

Example 2.

Selected competence: **1.2. Respect for cultural diversity** from the Values group.

I. Description of competence at the basic level:

B: 1.2.a)   *Demonstrates tolerance towards different beliefs and considers it important to strive for mutual understanding and dialogue with groups that are "different".*

Activity example for developing competence 1.2 at the basic level: **analysis of the fairy tale The Ugly Duckling by Hans Christian Andersen**

Learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of primary school that is achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

▪   adopt positive human values based on the literary works read.

Recommendations for teachers:

Mandatory preparatory task

Students are tasked with finding illustrations of baby swans and ducklings and comparing them.

Guiding questions: How do these species differ? Which chick is more beautiful? Is it important to be beautiful? Is it important to have other qualities? Which qualities?

Another preparatory task for students could be a small exploratory reading of the fairy tale *The Ugly Duckling*: they should choose the moment that made them the saddest, the character they liked the least, and the part they liked the most, and try to explain their answers.

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

▪   identify acceptable and unacceptable actions of the characters;

▪   relate examples from the fairy tale to their own environment;

▪   apply the lessons from the fairy tale in everyday life;

▪   advocate the view that mutual differences should be understood from various perspectives.

▌ PHOTO: Shutterstock / AnnaAG

Procedure

Before analysing this fairy tale in class, students are shown illustrations of an adult duck and an adult swan. They compare them: What happened? Did we judge too quickly about who is more valuable based on first impressions? Why does this happen?

The answers are compared and a discussion follows.

The fairy tale is discussed through guided questions such as:

? Why does the Ugly Duckling endure injustices and how does it respond to them? How do we understand the actions of other characters? Why do they behave this way?

? Why does Mother Duck want to present her ducklings in the best light in the duck yard? Whose opinion matters most to her? Why?

Students are then given a few sentences to explain:

1. "What lovely little children you have, said the duck with the rag around her leg.

– All are beautiful except for this one, which turned out rather badly! I almost wish you could **remodel** it somehow."

Guiding questions for students:

? Why is it difficult to be different? How does society try to "remodel" someone who is different? Is society right in doing so? What does the ending of the fairy tale tell us?

2. "Can you lay eggs? – asked the hen.

– No, I cannot.

– Then keep your mouth shut!

The cat asked:

– Can you arch your back, purr or throw sparks?

– No, I cannot!

– Then you mustn't have your own opinion when smart people are talking!"

Guiding questions for students:

? According to the cat and the hen, how is intelligence defined? Why, according to their advice, is the Ugly Duckling not allowed to have its own opinion? Are they right? When should we have our own opinion? Do we always have to completely agree with society? If we disagree, how should we express our disagreement? Find the part in the text where the Ugly Duckling expresses its disagreement. How did the hen and the cat react? Why did they react that way?

3. "I'm telling you unpleasant things, but that's how real friends behave. Just make sure you lay an egg and learn to purr..."

Guiding questions for students:

? Do you think the cat is right? How do you recognise real friends? Can the Ugly Duckling lay an egg or learn to purr? Does this inability make it less important? What does the Ugly Duckling know that the hen and the cat cannot know? Does the Ugly Duckling judge them for that? What does the Ugly Duckling decide after this conversation?

At the end, students are tasked with reading the final part of Andersen's fairy tale and reflecting on the following sentences:

> It doesn't matter if one was hatched in a duck yard as long as one came out of a swan's egg."

> He was very happy, but not proud, because a kind heart never changes."

> I never dreamed of such happiness when I was just an Ugly Duckling."

? Was the young swan really an "Ugly Duckling"? Try to explain in your own words how this happened. Who was unfair?

? What has this fairy tale taught you?

? Can we understand and accept those who are different? In what ways can differences manifest? Is someone only different because we view them from our perspective?

? Discuss with your classmates how you differ, what similarities you share, and whether everyone needs to be "the same" to be accepted. What kind of world would it be if everyone were the same?

II. Description of competence at the intermediate level:

I: 1.2.b)   *Accepts and respects cultural differences.*

Activity example for developing competence 1.2 at the intermediate level: **analysis of the fairy tale** The Dandelion **by Grozdana Olujić**

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

▪ evaluate the actions of characters and present arguments to support their opinions.

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:
By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

▪ compare the fairy tales *The Ugly Duckling* and *The Dandelion*, identifying similarities and differences;

▪ apply the messages of the stories in their everyday environment;

▪ conclude that everyone should learn from one another, regardless of their differences.

Procedure

Introductory task

The task is assigned to carefully selected groups of students. The teacher will form diverse groups comprising students with different interests, behaviours or appearances. Each group receives a "secret" task unknown to the other groups.

Students are divided into four groups, each with a different task:

▪ The first group is to collaboratively create a poster depicting a dandelion in full bloom and a dandelion with silver petals.

▪ The second group is to collaboratively create a poster depicting a sunflower in full bloom and an (over)ripe sunflower.

▪ The third group is to collaboratively create a poster depicting both a dandelion and a sunflower, but no instructions are given on how the plants should appear.

▪ The fourth group is tasked with reading the fairy tale *The Dandelion*, gathering information about these plants, and creating their own poster.

Before reading the fairy tale, the first three groups will present their posters and briefly describe what is depicted on them.

Note: The suggested introductory exercise should only be conducted in classes that are already sensitised to accepting diversity. If the teacher observes division into groups, it is recommended to gradually build empathy, tolerance and respect for differences.

In this context, the fairy tale can serve as an excellent foundation, but it requires introductory motivation and discussion about what the world would look like if everyone were the same and thought in the same way. Would it be boring? A world that struggles to change and does not progress? The teacher carefully guides the discussion, encouraging students to share their perspectives.

The fourth group will then tell their story about each poster.

After the introductory exercise (carried out according to the teacher's assessment) or the introductory discussion, students are reminded that they have read a similar fairy tale, *The Ugly Duckling*, and are asked to recall its moral.

After reading *The Dandelion*, a discussion should begin to identify the differences between the two works.

Guiding questions for students:

The Ugly Duckling faces misunderstanding from its surroundings (it is mocked and pressured to change and conform).

? How does the little dandelion feel? Are there differences in the behaviour of the "adult sunflowers" and the "little sunflower"? How are the sunflowers in the field described? Why is the term "troop" used? Why is the "little sunflower" rebellious? Where does it fight its battle? Externally? Internally? Does it have doubts or is it shaken?

? The Ugly Duckling seeks advice from a world that does not understand it. From whom does the "little sunflower" seek advice?

? Why is it the wind that reveals the secret to it?

When interpreting the literary text, special attention should be paid to the sentences: "Let it not be afraid! Let it go!" Students should be encouraged to explain the episode with the moonbeam in their own words.

At the end of the lesson, the conversation should return to the transformation of the "little sunflower" into the "mature dandelion".

? How did the students draw/paint it?

? After reading the fairy tale, how do they now interpret the appearance of the overripe dandelion?

? Have they ever helped a dandelion rise to the sky?

Fairy tales are usually on the side of the protagonist. However, can the behaviour of the sunflowers still be justified? What is the difference between sunflowers and dandelions? Can they, despite everything, live and grow together?

Finally, students can be divided into two groups: sunflowers and dandelions. Each group should come up with reasons why it is good to be a sunflower or a dandelion. Then, the groups switch roles. The teacher encourages them to find new reasons.

III. Description of competence at the advanced level:

A: 1.2.c)   *Advocates for the importance of intercultural dialogue and the development of a culture of coexistence.*

Activity example for developing competence 1.2 at the advanced level: **analysis of the short story** The Cursed Courtyard **by Ivo Andrić**

The outcomes of the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of secondary school achieved by this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- interpret a literary text by situating it within the appropriate cultural, historical and theoretical context;

- pose a problem-related question about the literary work, express an opinion about it, and substantiate that opinion.

NOTE: The analysis of Andrić's *the Cursed Courtyard* can foster the development of multiple competences for democratic culture:

From the domain of **Values**, for example, **Respect for human dignity and human rights** can be developed (*Advocates the view that even those deprived of freedom have the right to respect for their dignity*).

Attitudes can be developed through **Openness to cultural diversity** (*Makes contact with other people to learn about their culture*); as well as **Respect** (*Respects people with different religious affiliation and different political opinion*), and **Tolerance for ambiguity** (*Accepts having his/her ideas and values questioned*).

Skills are developed while *Questioning the accuracy of information used*; *Observing nonverbal cues in communication in order to discover the meaning of other people's messages and intentions*; *Identifying different reactions of individuals from other cultures in the same/similar situations, based on previous knowledge*; *Recognising the emotions of others, even when they do not show them and when a willingness to react appropriately is demonstrated*; *Adjusting personal behaviour when interacting with members of other cultures*; *Encouraging parties in conflict to listen to one another carefully*.

Knowledge and critical understanding develop as they *Critically reflects on their emotions in different situations*; *Relate different verbal and nonverbal ways of communicating between people from different cultures to their cultural identity*; *Think critically about the causes of human rights violations, including the role of stereotypes and prejudices in the processes that lead to these violations*; *Realise that their worldview is only one of many...*

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

- identify and select the characteristics of literary characters, placing them in the appropriate context;

- express an opinion about the literary work and substantiate it.

Procedure

The lesson is a conversation practice: Yes, you're right! However ...

This exercise is designed to foster a clash of opinions while developing multiperspectivity. The motifs and characters of the story serve as a starting point for accepting diversity (strengthening the understanding of the culture of coexistence, practicing observation from a different perspective).

The conversation exercise is not intended to be a typical literary analysis, though, with proper preparation, it can highlight one of Andrić's key poetic features: a meticulous study of individuals who do not fit into societal or cultural norms.

Since the title of a literary work is crucial for any author as it encapsulates a condensed message/idea/image, the suggested introductory task involves dividing students into two groups: one group should find as many associations as possible (by similarity) for "cursed courtyard". The other group should find as many associations as possible with the opposite meaning.

The findings are jointly analysed, written on the board, a poster or displayed via a projector, and connected to excerpts from the story.

The challenge will be to "connect" opposing associations, requiring a deeper understanding of the literary work. For example, freedom may appear as an antonym to confinement, but such observations can also be "defended" (the characters' invented stories, books, the sounds of voices through the walls, the wind, etc.).

The initial two groups will then be divided into four, with each group selecting a representative who will (under the teacher's guidance) moderate further activities. The groups should be given time to prepare for the class in advance. During the session focusing on associations, groups will draw research tasks.

The representatives will draw papers for their groups, each containing the name of a character:

- 1. Fra Petar; 2. Latifaga; 3. Ćamil; 4. Haim.

Depending on the group's capacity, it is possible to introduce other characters: Džem or Zaim.

All groups should have an equal number of black and white covers for heads (caps, hats, scarves) prepared, except for the elected representative who will try to lead the dialogue with dignity.

Students with white hats are tasked with identifying positive traits of the selected characters, while students with black hats will point out flaws, misconceptions, poorly motivated actions, inconsistencies and "cracks" in character. For more complex characters, roles (hats) within the same group may be switched if the group agrees.

- **Clear presentation rules must be established: no interruptions, personal attacks or insults. Participants will use the phrase: "Yes, you're right, however..."**

While one group "cross-examines" viewpoints, the other groups observe (and, if needed, take notes) and then evaluate which hats were more "convincing". Since some groups may have a more challenging task, it is up to the teacher to balance the group composition to ensure fairness.

In the concluding part of the lesson, the most noble characters will be selected (typically Fra Petar and Ćamil), followed by a discussion on what connects them. One of the key answers is a love of books. As a final point, the question can be posed: do books necessarily humanise people?

With the teacher's guidance, students can discover Andrić's messages on their own.

Additionally, representatives of various nations (prisoners who are transient inmates: Greeks, Bulgarians, Albanians) can be listed and a discussion initiated on how, in difficult circumstances, people are fundamentally similar (neither differing in faith nor customs, yet finding common ground that transcends national boundaries).

MATHEMATICS

CDC in the world of mathematics

Mathematics is a mandatory subject in the education system in all 11th and 12th grades of pre-university education. By studying mathematics, students acquire mathematical concepts, knowledge and skills essential for developing logical and abstract thinking. Applying these skills enables students to solve various problems in everyday life and further education, critically analyse different approaches, and evaluate possible solutions.
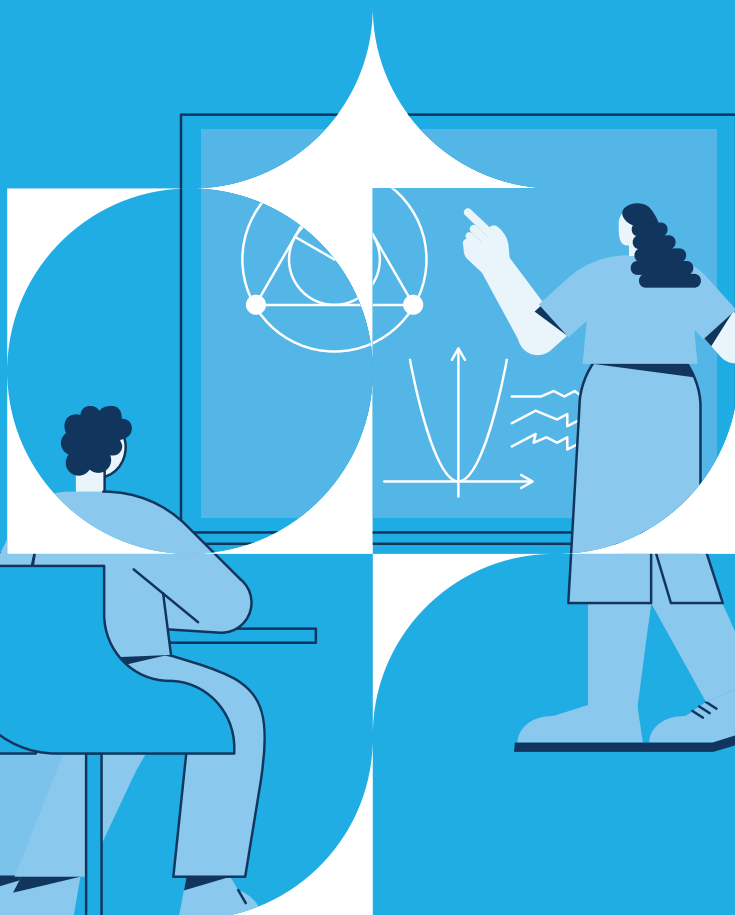
T he development of these abilities directly contributes to fostering competences for democratic culture. For example, developing abstract, critical and logical thinking is closely linked to skills in analytical and critical reasoning. The ability to communicate using mathematical language relates to linguistic and communication skills, as well as knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication. More on this connection can be found in the **Guidelines for the integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national curricula**.

Example 1.

Selected competence: 3.1. Autonomous learning skills from the Skills group.

Activity: **Exploring together**

Below are detailed examples of activities that link key competences for democratic culture, defined by their basic, intermediate and advanced level descriptors, with the outcomes of the teaching and learning programme in order to achieve both targeted outcomes through a single teaching process.

The activity Exploring together, chosen as an example to develop Competence 3.1 using the appropriate descriptors, can be organised at all educational levels and at all three levels of competence development. This is made possible by new curricula, which is oriented towards achieving outcomes, and has also brought changes in the way teaching and learning are planned and organized. In mathematics teaching, encouraging students to research and gather information is desirable, which is why it is often mentioned within the curriculum. For instance, the fifth-grade programme includes a didactic-methodological guideline stating: *This area is suitable for developing various other competences through tasks requiring students to conduct different types of research. Students should present their research results graphically to develop a sense of comparing fractions in different forms.* Another example is project tasks included in the seventh- and eighth-grade curricula, where students are expected to conduct surveys (topics chosen by the students), process and analyse the data obtained, and present the results.

It is designed so that processing, analysis and presentation will be done through group work. Since data processing is included in all primary school grades, project tasks involving research, data collection, data processing and analysis, and the presentation of research results can be implemented at all grade levels, provided the research topic and approach are adapted to the students' age. The chosen topic can also contribute to the development of competences for democratic culture.

Recommendations for teachers:

Since students encounter data presented in various formats starting from the first grade and engage in data collection and processing activities (e.g., sixth grade in primary school and fourth grade in secondary school), this activity does not require a detailed theoretical introduction. However, appropriate preparatory steps are necessary:

- introducing students to the task;
- dividing students into groups;
- assigning specific tasks to each group;
- discussing possible data collection methods and identifying the most suitable approach for this research;
- allocating roles within each group with the teacher's assistance.

Proposal for the second grade of primary school

Activity for developing competence 3.1. Autonomous learning skills at the basic level: Exploring together

Description of the selected competence:

B: 3.1.a)   *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

Examples of group tasks: the first group conducts research on the favourite animals of students in the class, while the second group investigates favourite sports, and so on.

Learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of primary school achieved by this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- present a small set of data in a table and a bar chart.

Proposal for the sixth grade of primary school

Activity for developing competence 3.1. Autonomous learning skills at the basic and advanced levels: Exploring together

Description of the selected competence:

B: 3.1.a)   *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

A: 3.1.c)   *Independently selects reliable sources of information, sets priorities and completes tasks.*

Examples of group tasks: the first group conducts research on the number of students belonging to national minorities who are educated in their mother tongue in primary schools, the second group conducts the same research on secondary school students, the third group on the number of students belonging to national minorities who have chosen the elective program Mother tongue with elements of national culture, and the like.

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the sixth grade of primary school achieved by this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- present data and the relationship between two variables in a coordinate system (bar, scatter and line charts);
- interpret data presented in tables and graphs.

Proposal for the fourth grade of secondary school

Activity for developing competence 3.1. Autonomous learning skills at the basic and advanced levels: Exploring together

Description of the competence:

B: 3.1.a) *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

A: 3.1.c) *Independently selects reliable sources of information, sets priorities and completes tasks.*

Examples of group tasks: the first group investigates the level of education of the population of Serbia by gender, the second group the employment rate of the population of Serbia by gender and so on.

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of secondary school achieved by this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- conduct small-scale statistical research, process the results, present them and interpret them;
- analyse and justify the process of solving a task;
- use mathematical language to systematically and accurately present ideas and solutions.

Procedure

For the **Exploring together** activity, students should be given a deadline, for example, seven days, to complete their tasks.

After the set deadline, in the introductory part of the lesson (three minutes), the teacher gives each group the task of presenting the results of their research in a table and on a bar chart (second grade of primary school), in the form of various diagrams or in a presentation (sixth grade of primary school and fourth grade of secondary school). In the final part of the lesson, you should discuss with the students that the research has shown.

- that there are certain differences among them, which represent richness and a good basis for their socialisation, and ask them the question *What would the world look like if we were all the same* (second grade of primary school);

- that one of the great values in our country is that all members of the eight national minorities have the opportunity to attend school in their mother tongue, and for the others to attend classes in their mother tongue (sixth grade of primary school);

- perform a comparative analysis of the data obtained, consider why there is a difference between the level of education, employment rate, etc., and what could be done to reduce these differences (fourth grade of secondary school).

- that the analysis of the data obtained has shown that there is a difference between the level of education, employment rate, etc. and what could be done to reduce these differences (fourth grade of secondary school).

The results of this research can also be used for cross-curricular integration, for example, with *The World Around Us* (second-grade of primary school) and *Civic Education* (all grades).

This type of activity, in addition to introducing students to research methods and working with data, also develops their collaborative relationships, communication skills, responsible behaviour, and encourages and supports students to understand and appreciate diversity. Because of all this, it, to a greater or lesser extent, contributes to the development of other competences for democratic culture (at different levels, depending on age). In this cluster of competencies, it is inevitable that the following will develop from the Skills group: 3.3. **Listening and observational skills** (B: 3.3.a *Listens carefully to different opinions;* B: 3.3.b *Attentively listens to others*; I: 3.3.c *Observes nonverbal cues in communication in order to try to discover the meaning of other people's messages and intentions*), as well as 3.7. **Collaboration skills** (B: 3.7.a *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks;* I: 3.7.b *Strives to establish consensus in order to achieve the group's common goals;* I: 3.7.c Shares all useful information with group members;* A: 3.7.d *Instils enthusiasm among group members to achieve common goals;* A: 3.7.e *Supports his/her colleagues despite their different points of view*). Values such as 1.2 **Respect for cultural diversity** will also develop. (B: 1.2.a *Displays tolerance toward different beliefs and believes in striving for mutual understanding and dialogue with groups perceived as "different"*; I: 1.2.b *Accepts and respects cultural differences;* A: 1.2.c *Advocates for the importance of intercultural dialogue and the development of a culture of coexistence*). From the Attitudes, for example, it could be 2.2. **Respect** (B: 2.2.a *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves;* I: 2.2.b *Respects others regardless of their cultural background or socio-economic status*), and from Knowledge and critical understanding – 4.2. **Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication** (B: 4.2.a *Understands the impact of tone of voice, eye contact and nonverbal communication;* I: 4.2.b *Understands that different forms and styles of communication are used in various situations;* I: 4.2.c *Critically examines the effects of different styles in communication;* A: 4.2.d *Relates different verbal and nonverbal ways of communication used by people from different cultures to their cultural identity.*

Example 2.

Selected competence: 2.2. Respect from the Attitudes group.

Activity: **Different, yet similar**

The various properties of numbers, operations and geometric objects can be linked to competences for democratic culture through tasks in which students are asked to notice their common properties and the properties that distinguish them. The numbers, operations or geometric objects should be chosen so that they share at least one property. The main goal of these tasks should be for students to notice that among the given numbers, operations or geometric objects, there are no two with identical properties, but also that every two have at least one property in common. After solving these tasks, a parallel can be drawn with real life: we are all different, but we all share the same basic needs – to be loved, respected and valued. In this way, students develop competences for democratic culture that relate to respect and appreciation of diversity. This activity can be implemented in all grades, as the complexity of the task can be adjusted to the age group.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Rawpixel.com

Proposal for the first grade of primary school

Activity for developing competence 2.2. Respect at the basic level: Different, yet similar

Description of the selected competence:

B: 2.2.a) *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

Example task

The numbers, operations or geometric objects and their properties should be selected based on the age group of the students. For instance, in the first grade of primary school, students can be given the following table in which they should write the sign + or –, depending on whether the number has that property or not:

	The number is even.	The number is two-digit.	The number is less than 50.	The sum of the digits of the number is less than 19.
6				
52				
35				
99				
10				
27				

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Natalia Duryagina

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the first grade of primary school achieved by this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- distinguish between even and odd numbers, determine the largest and smallest number, predecessor and successor;
- read, write, compare and arrange numbers within the first hundred and represent them on a number line;
- add and subtract two single-digit numbers without writing the process.

Proposal for the sixth grade of primary school

Activity for developing competence 2.2. Respect at the basic and intermediate levels: Different, yet similar

Description of the selected competence:

B: 2.2.a)   *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

I: 2.2.b)   *Respects others regardless of their cultural background or socio-economic status.*

Example task

In the sixth grade, students can be given the following table to fill in with a "+" or "–" depending on whether the quadrilateral possesses the given property:

	The quad-rilateral has all four right angles.	The diagonals intersect at right angles.	The quad-rilateral has at least two equal sides.	A circle can be circum-scribed around the quadrilateral.	A circle can be inscribed within the quadrilateral.
Square					
Rectangle					
Rhombus					
Parallelogram					
Isosceles trapezoid					
Kite					

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the sixth grade of primary school achieved by this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

▪ classify triangles or quadrilaterals based on their properties.

Proposal for the second grade of secondary school

**Activity for developing competence
2.2. Respect at the basic and intermediate levels:
Different, yet similar**

Description of the selected competence:

B: 2.2.a)   *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

I: 2.2.b)   *Respects others regardless of their cultural background or socio-economic status.*

Example task

In the second grade of secondary school, students can be given the following table in which they should enter the sign + or –, depending on the property of the quadratic function:

	The roots of the function are distinct real numbers.	The function has no roots.	The domain of the function is the set of real numbers.	The graph intersects the y-axis at a point with a positive ordinate.	The set is A={x ∈ ℜ, x ≥ 2} a subset of the interval where the function is increasing.
$f(x) = x^2 - 3x + \dfrac{9}{4}$					
$f(x) = 2x^2 - 5x + 3$					
$f(x) = -x^2 + 3x - 6$					
$f(x) = -3x^2$					

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of secondary school achieved by this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

▪ sketch and interpret the graph of a quadratic function.

These activities do not require much time and can serve as a basis for a brief discussion about valuing and respecting diversity in real-life situations. In addition to the mentioned competence, other competences can also be developed at various levels, such as **2.6. Tolerance for ambiguity** (B: 2.6.a) *Approaches people with different perspectives positively and refrains from making premature judgments*.
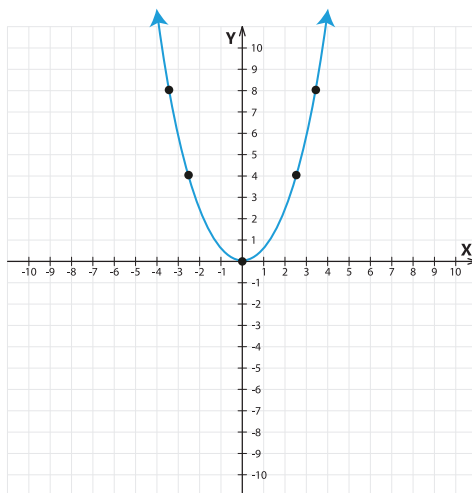
The World Around Us /
Science And Society Basics

First-Hand Experience

The connection between the teaching and learning programs World Around Us / Science and Society Basics and Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC) is evident in all program elements, from the objectives and learning outcomes of the subject to key terms, recommended content and guidelines for the didactic-methodological implementation of teaching and learning.

More details about the subject's nature, its connection to and contribution to developing competences for democratic culture, as well as examples of CDC development, can be found in the **Guidelines for the integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national curricula**.

Workshop as a method for developing CDC

The workshop, as a method of working, learning and creating through interaction and the exchange of knowledge, attitudes, values, beliefs, ideas and experiences, is highly beneficial because it can foster the development of competences for democratic culture in students.

The core characteristics of a workshop (face-to-face interaction, building and deepening relationships between students and between students and the teacher; personal activity and the engagement of students; active participation of all students; diversity in communication patterns; a supportive atmosphere maintained by the teacher; respect for diversity and the needs, emotions and functioning styles of each student; focus on a common topic; reliance on personal experiences) provide a stimulating environment for learning and developing CDC among students.

Through their own participation and engagement in working on common topics, students develop, construct and co-construct their knowledge, meanings and understanding of concepts, phenomena and processes of the subject of learning itself, while simultaneously developing competencies from the group of **Values**, **Attitudes**, **Skills** and **Knowledge and Critical Understanding** defined by the reference framework of competencies for democratic culture.

Workshop as a method promotes positive relationships, interaction and mutual respect among students:

- by emphasising and fostering friendship as a value among students;

- by encouraging and supporting students to understand and respect diversity (first among themselves, then generalising and transferring this understanding to broader and hypothetical situations);

- through the continuous practice and modelling of positive behaviour during workshop activities (waiting for one's turn, presenting content, listening to others, sharing knowledge and experiences, seeking permission, expressing gratitude, apologising, showing understanding...);

- by providing appropriate models for responding to and resolving potentially conflicting situations through the modelling of desirable social behaviour;
- by encouraging students to help each other and avoid undesirable behaviours such as belittling, labelling, tattling...

As such, the workshop itself serves as an encouraging model and environment for developing competences for democratic culture.

Workshop-based activities can develop all CDCs in teaching. The following are examples with selected CDCs, their descriptions at specific levels, and subject outcomes for a given topic or workshop.

Example 1.

Guided discussion on a "What if..." scenario

Method: Workshop.

Seating arrangement: In a circle or semicircle.

Materials: Vignette – a short scenario on a specific topic.

This type of activity can develop all CDCs. Furthermore, workshops of this type can be implemented at all grade levels. The topic of the workshop and the content of the "what if..." scenario depend on the goals, what is intended to be achieved, and which CDCs are being developed in students. It is implied that the framework of the activity aligns with the teaching and learning program and the age of the students.

Proposal for the first grade of primary school

Selected competence:

3.4. Empathy from the Skills group.

Description of the selected competence:

B: 3.4.a)   *Shows empathy toward people in distress.*

B: 3.4.b)   *Recognises situations in which people in their environment need help.*

I: 3.4.d)   *Considers situations from the perspective of others.*

A: 3.4.e)   *Expresses empathy, whether it involves feelings of joy or sadness, toward people with whom there is no direct contact.*

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Ground Picture

Activity for developing competence 3.4. Empathy at the basic, intermediate and advanced levels: "What If..." scenario – The Story of Pavle

Pavle is a first-grader. Today he came home happy from a recreational class. He found his family very upset and sad. It had been raining continuously for the past three days. The water had flooded the barn where their sheep were kept. His dog Rex, a sheep herder, disappeared in the field while bringing back sheep that had run away from the water. Pavle began to cry inconsolably. He was very scared for his dog. He ran into the field, furious.

This activity can achieve various **learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the first grade of primary school**. For example:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise and express joy, fear, sadness and anger while respecting themselves and others;
- describe, in their own words, an example of a dangerous situation from their immediate surroundings;
- follow adults' instructions in dangerous situations, such as floods, earthquakes and fires.

Procedure

The teacher, depending on the chosen workshop theme (natural disasters, animal care, dangerous situations, emotions, home and family, etc.), defines the outcomes and CDCs, and prepares questions for discussion. The outcomes should be operationalised to be concrete and achievable during the workshop.

The provided example story, a "what if..." scenario, is suitable for working on emotions, dangerous situations from the students' immediate surroundings, discussing floods as natural disasters, addressing sustainable development and the human role in environmental protection (all of which are part of the first-grade curriculum for **World Around Us**). This scenario opens up numerous topics and, as such, can be used multiple times across different grades with minimal adjustments (e.g., Pavle is in the second/third/ fourth grade). Students will develop these competencies at different levels and at different paces, and the most valuable thing is that during this way of working, each student has the opportunity to actively participate and engage in practicing them.

By working on this situation, the teacher can develop various CDCs in children through direct practice of the competencies during the workshop itself by the students. For example, the given competence **1.2.** from the group **Values** is developed in the part of direct practice of students' tolerance towards different beliefs and mutual understanding through dialogue with classmates who think differently. CDC **2.2.** from the **Attitudes** group is developed by practicing respect toward classmates during the workshop, allowing everyone space to express themselves and present their views freely. All CDCs from the Skills group can also be directly developed during the workshop. CDC **4.5.** from the group **Knowledge and Critical Understanding** is very important for developing students' responsible attitude towards their environment and for developing the students' understanding of the impact and responsibility of humans on the environment (for example, could humans have had a negative impact and how in causing the flood that happened to Pavle's family?). The "what if..." scenario is truly multi-layered and rich with various topics suitable for developing CDCs.

Examples of CDCs that can be developed as a cluster during this workshop:
From the Attitudes group:

2.2.	Respect
B: 2.2.a)	*Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

From the Skills group:

3.3.	Listening and observational skills
B: 3.3.a)	*Listens carefully to different opinions.*
B: 3.3.b)	*Attentively listens to others.*

3.6.	Language, communication and multilingual skills
B: 3.6.a)	*Clearly expresses his/her opinion on a topic.*
B: 3.6.b)	*Asks the speaker to repeat something if it was unclear.*
I: 3.6.c)	*Asks questions that show that he/she understands the point of view of his/her interlocutors.*

From the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group:

4.1.	Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
A: 4.1.c)	*Critically reflects on his/her emotions in different situations.*

4.5.	Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability
B: 4.5.a)	*Identifies the societal impact on nature, including factors such as population growth, resource consumption, etc., and considers risks associated with harmful impacts on the environment.*

Example 2.

Finding and acting out an alternative solution

Method: Workshop.

Seating arrangement: In a circle or semicircle.

Materials: Vignette – a short scenario on a specific topic.

This example of a "what if..." activity focused on finding and acting out an alternative solution can develop a broad cluster of competences for democratic culture.

Proposal for the fourth grade of primary school

Selected competences:

2.3.   Civic spirit from the Attitudes group.

Description of the selected competence:

B: 2.3.a)   *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

2.5.   Self-efficacy from the Attitudes group.

Description of the selected competence:

B: 2.5.a)   *Demonstrates readiness to solve problems, achieve good results and overcome difficult situations.*

I: 2.5.b)   *Adapts to new circumstances and overcomes obstacles on the way to a goal.*

A: 2.5.c)   *Effectively solves problems arising from unforeseen situations and overcomes life's challenges.*

Activity for developing competence 2.3. Civic spirit at the basic level and 2.5. Self-efficacy at the basic, intermediate and advanced levels: "What if..." Finding and acting out an alternative solution

Fourth-grade students were working on a Science and Society Basics project on the topic:

The teacher divided the students into five groups. Each group was assigned a part of the topic to research and present their findings within a week. Initially, the groups were tasked with deciding, in class, who would do what, setting a timeline and planning their implementation.

Iskra, Kaja, Vasilije, Nebojša and Boris were assigned to research:

In class, they agreed on individual tasks, deadlines and when and where to meet to complete their work. However, Vasilije, Nebojša and Kaja did not attend the planned meeting. Since it was the last day to complete the task, Iskra and Boris ended up doing all the work themselves.

This activity can achieve various **learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of primary school**. For example:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:
- cooperate with others in the group on joint activities;
- relate the outcomes of work to the effort invested.

Procedure:
- The teacher designs and defines the outcomes of the activity in relation to the workshop topic, the outcome(s) from the program and the selected CDC;
- Discussion and analysis of the given "what if..." scenario;
- Dividing the students into groups of five with the task of devising an alternative agreement on completing the project so that the workload does not fall on one or a few students;
- acting out the new solution;
- analysing of the proposed solutions (e.g., "Is it better and why?", "What is different now?").

The above-mentioned story, as a "what if..." scenario, is suitable for developing multiple CDCs in students. Depending on their intentions and goals, teachers select the CDCs they aim to develop. The list of CDCs that can be developed through this activity can be even broader, as teachers can modify the "what if..." situation and make it more specific in the direction in which he/she wants to lead the workshop. For instance, the very topic of the project that is mentioned in the "as if…" situation and which is left for the teacher to define independently, can open up many more possibilities for the teacher to develop some other CDCs.

Examples of CDCs that can be developed as a cluster during this workshop:
From the Values group:

1.3.	Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and rule of law

B: 1.3.a)   *Believes that schools should educate students about democracy and how to act as responsible citizens in a democratic society.*

From the Attitudes group:

2.2.	Respect

B: 2.2.a)   *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

2.4.	Accountability

B: 2.4.a)   *Takes responsibility for personal actions and apologizes if he/she hurts someone's feelings.*
I: 2.4.b)   *Respects deadlines and takes responsibility if he/she makes a mistake.*
A: 2.4.c)   *Fulfills obligations to others.*

2.6.	Tolerance of ambiguity

B: 2.6.a)   Approaches people with different perspectives positively and refrains from making premature judgments.
I: 2.6.b)   Functions well in uncertain situations and views them from multiple perspectives.
A: 2.6.c)   Resolves complex situations and is willing to question personal ideas and values.
A: 2.6.d)   Accepts *having his/her ideas and values questioned.*

From the Skills group:

3.3.	Listening and observational skills

B: 3.3.a)   *Listens carefully to different opinions.*
B: 3.3.b)   *Attentively listens to others.*

From the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group:

4.3.	Knowledge and critical understanding of politics, law and human rights

B: 4.3.a)   *Explains in their own words fundamental political concepts such as democracy, freedom, citizenship, rights and obligations.*
B: 4.3.b)   *Identifies reasons why every individual has an obligation to respect others' human rights.*

PHOTO: Shutterstock / ESB Professional

"What if…" scenarios are short situations designed around a specific topic. Teachers can write these scenarios, contextualising them to ensure they reflect students' current environments and challenges. These scenarios can address issues relevant to students, their peers or other groups of children, youth or adults. A unique quality of "what if…" scenarios is their ability to connect content from various subjects, making them an excellent platform for thematic-integrative teaching and learning. In addition, at the age of students when they are still practicing reading for the sake of learning, every situation in itself is material for connecting the Serbian Language and the World Around Us, that is, the Serbian Language and Science and Society Basics.

Foreign language

Bridges of Friendship

Competences for democratic culture in foreign language teaching are naturally an integral part of authentic communicative acts that support the acquisition of functional knowledge about the language system, culture and foreign language learning strategies, training in oral and written communication and the development of a positive attitude towards other languages and cultures, as well as towards one's own language and cultural heritage.

Previously, in the **Guidelines for the integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national curricula** (Council of Europe, 2022), within the chapter addressing foreign language teaching, some useful "tools" were provided, which demonstrated that, according to the nature and primary goal of learning the subject, CDCs should not be viewed in isolation but as part of authentic acts brought to life in the classroom through a communicative approach in foreign language teaching. In a similar spirit, albeit somewhat more operational, this text will offer a set of activities that teachers can apply in their work in an adaptable, open, dynamic and accessible manner. Their primary purpose is to serve as ideas for designing original examples of good practice that enable the prescribed grammatical and lexical structures to be learned naturally within situational contexts, in which subject knowledge is simultaneously conveyed and CDCs are developed. At the same time, the suggested ideas can be applied in the teaching of other subjects to the extent allowed by their educational nature.

Structurally, each illustrative activity proposal includes: domain, description and level of competence(s) it relates to, several representative outcomes, communicative function(s), thematic area(s) and an example for teaching practice.

Practically, the manifested examples are adaptable and suitable for all levels of education, with the degree of complexity increasing or decreasing depending on the age and linguistic abilities of the students.

Teachers of various foreign languages have previously tested the functionality and practical application of the proposed examples in their work with students, successfully developing CDCs without compromising the achievement of lesson objectives and expected learning outcomes.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / PeopleImages.com – Yuri A

Example for teaching practice 1.

Proposal for the fourth grade of primary school

Selected competences:

1.2. **Respect for cultural diversity,** from the Values group.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / FamVeld

Description of the selected competence:

B: 1.2.a)   *Demonstrates tolerance towards different beliefs and considers it important to strive for mutual understanding and dialogue with groups that are "different".*

I: 1.2.b)   *Accepts and respects cultural differences.*

2.1.   Openness to cultural diversity from the Attitudes group.

Description of the selected competence:

B: 2.1.a)   *Shows interest in learning about the values, traditions and worldviews of people from other cultures.*

I: 2.1.b)   *Displays curiosity and eagerness to directly learn about other cultures.*

Activity: **Connecting two shores, building a bridge**

Goal of the activity: Enhancing all forms of speaking activities, expanding vocabulary, enabling oral and written communication, and adopting grammatical rules naturally. Developing an interest in learning about the values, traditions and worldviews of members of other cultures; fostering tolerance and a positive attitude towards the individual and collective characteristics of speakers of other languages and members of other cultures, which may differ to a greater or lesser extent from one's own.

Communicative functions: Greeting; Introducing oneself and others; Providing basic information about oneself; Giving and requesting basic information about others; Congratulating holidays and other significant events.

Thematic areas:

- Customs and traditions, folklore, celebrations (birthdays, holidays)
- Verbal and nonverbal communication, conventions of behaviour and etiquette
- Food and gastronomic habits
- Travel
- Fashion and clothing
- Sports, entertainment and leisure
- Free time – entertainment, leisure, hobbies

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of primary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- request and provide simple statements to express belonging/non-belonging, possession/non-possession;

- understand simple statements expressing likes/dislikes and respond to them;

- seek opinions and express likes/dislikes using simple linguistic tools;

- exchange information related to a given communicative situation;

- describe actions and abilities using simple linguistic tools.

Materials for the activity: Poster paper, pencils/coloured pencils/markers; lists of key terms characteristic of one's own and foreign cultures (if possible – prepare different word lists for each group).

Description of the activity: Students are divided into groups (no more than five students per group). Each group receives appropriate materials for the activity. Clear instructions are given to the students. After working on the assignment and presentations by group representatives, a discussion is organized.

Preparation for the activity: Students are tasked with drawing a river with two shores. There should be enough space between the shores to build a bridge made of words. They are then given lists of keywords to arrange and write down on one or the other shore. The given terms represent the most important characteristics, recognisable features, geographical terms, etc., of the source and target cultures (their own and the foreign culture).

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Evgeny Atamanenko

Intercultural content that may be included in the exercise: Famous individuals from the fields of sports, acting, music, literature and national history; capitals and recognisable landmarks, buildings, customs, characteristic dishes or drinks, etc.

Recommendation for teachers: Be as creative as possible!

Procedure:

Students are tasked with finding pairs of words that are similar and selecting the closest word or phrase that is common to both concepts. The chosen word is written in the designated space, building a bridge connecting the two shores. Among the provided words, there are also those that cannot be connected according to the given criterion.

After completing the task, group representatives present their results and then the solutions are compared.

▪ PHOTO: Shutterstock / Evgeny Atamanenko

Guided discussion

After completing the task, a guided discussion follows to encourage students to reflect on the following questions:

- **?** What challenges did they face while building the bridges?
- **?** Was it difficult to find the pairs?
- **?** How did they come up with solutions?
- **?** What was the most challenging part?
- **?** Are there any "parts" on the shores that they couldn't match with a pair? Why?
- **?** How can a "lonely concept" still find its pair?

Students can ask each other questions, as each group faces its own type of challenges.

Example for teaching practice 2

Proposal for the seventh and eighth grades of primary school

Selected competence:

> **3.4.   Empathy** from the Skills group.

Description of the selected competence:

B: 3.4.a)   *Shows empathy toward people in distress.*

B: 3.4.b)   *Recognises situations in which people in their environment need help.*

I: 3.4.d)   *Considers situations from the perspective of others.*

A: 3.4.e)   *Expresses empathy, whether it involves feelings of joy or sadness, toward people with whom there is no direct contact.*

A: 3.4.f)   *Recognises the emotions of others, even when they do not show them, and demonstrates readiness to respond appropriately.*

Activity: **Iceberg**

Goal of the activity: Enhancing all forms of speaking activities, expanding vocabulary, enabling oral and written communication, and adopting grammatical rules naturally. Proposing solutions related to emotions and needs; orally and in writing expressing one's feelings and reacting to others', developing empathy and care for others.

Communicative functions: Describing of beings, objects, places, phenomena, actions, states and events; expressing wishes, interests, needs, sensations and feelings (proposing solutions related to emotions and needs; orally and in writing expressing one's feelings and reacting to others').

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the seventh grade of primary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- understand common expressions related to wishes, interests, needs, feelings and respond to them;
- express wishes, interests, needs, sensations and feelings using simpler linguistic tools;
- describe and compare living beings, objects, places, phenomena, actions, states and events using simpler linguistic tools.

Thematic areas:

- Emotions, love, partnerships and other interpersonal relationships
- Ethical principles; attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices, tolerance and empathy; care for others
- Verbal and nonverbal communication, conventions of behaviour and etiquette

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the eighth grade of primary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- exchange several connected pieces of information related to wishes, interests, sensations and feelings;
- express and justify wishes, interests, needs, sensations and feelings;
- exchange information related to the description of beings, objects, places, phenomena, actions, states and events.

Materials for the activity: Poster paper, writing tools, images of icebergs, a list of key terms needed for the individual task.

Procedure

Exercise 1

In the introductory activity, students are shown images of icebergs in the following order:

1. First, Image 1 is shown. *The iceberg's tip.*

2. Next, Image 2 is shown. *The underwater iceberg.*

3. Lastly, Image 3 is revealed. *The iceberg above and below the water surface.*

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Romolo Tavani

After each individual image is shown, students are asked questions.

After showing Image 1, students can be asked the following questions:

? What do you see in the picture? / What colours dominate? / What do you notice in the distance? / What emotions does this picture evoke in you? / What is the sky like (clear, cloudy...)? / Would you sail in these waters? / etc.

For Image 2, questions might be:

? What is shown in the picture? / What colours dominate? / Would you like to touch the shape you see? Why? / What do you feel while observing this image? / What else do you notice in the picture? / Would you swim in this water? / etc.

After revealing Image 3, discussion prompts may include:

? Are you surprised by the scene you see? / Did you expect that the first and second images are part of the same whole? / Could you have guessed that such a large iceberg lies beneath the tip? / Which part of the iceberg grabs your attention more? Why? / Does the tip of the iceberg indicate what lies beneath the water's surface? / How does the tip of the iceberg make you feel, compared to the part below the surface? Describe your feelings. / etc.

Exercise 2

Once students have discussed the images, they proceed to individual work, followed by a guided discussion.

Individual student work: After an organised discussion, students individually sketch an iceberg that they will divide and title each part in the foreign language they are learning: *Visible – Not visible* (as in Figure 4, where an example for English is given). The teacher has prepared a list of words written in their mother tongue that students should write in the foreign language they are learning, in the appropriate part of the iceberg, in relation to what they think **– what is and what is not visible to the naked eye**, for example: someone's hair colour, eye colour, age, clothing, speech, shoes, hairstyle, facial expression, feelings, sadness, displeasure, gestures, happiness, family situation, customs, traditions, beliefs, habits, fear, love, anger, rage, etc.

Image 4:
Iceberg sketch
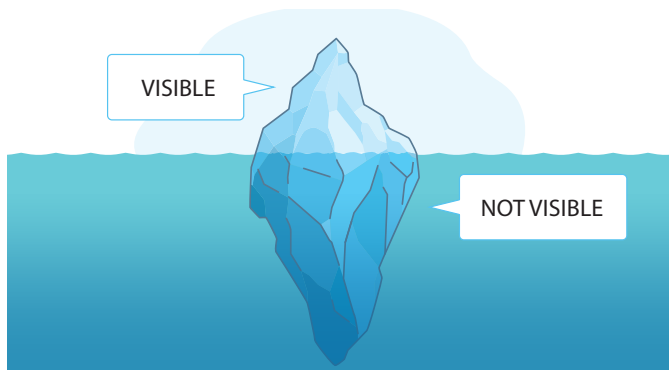
Drawing conclusions: When students complete the task, a guided discussion follows. Initial questions may include:

[?] Are there more terms written in the visible or invisible part of the iceberg?

[?] Why do you think that is?

[?] Which is easier to show: the visible or the invisible part of the iceberg?

[?] How can we recognise what is beneath the surface in others?

[?] Do we make enough effort to understand each other and recognise when someone needs help?

[?] Is it always easy to express what we feel? Why?

[?] What signals indicate that someone needs help?

[?] What can you do today to better understand others and ease someone else's bad feelings, like sadness, anxiety or helplessness?

[?] ...

Example for teaching practice 2:

Proposal for the third grade of primary school

Selected competence:

3.4.   Empathy from the Skills group.

Description of the selected competence:

B: 3.4.a)   *Shows empathy toward people in distress.*

A: 3.4.e)   *Expresses empathy, whether it involves feelings of joy or sadness, toward people with whom there is no direct contact.*

Activity: **Compose a friendship message**

Goal of the activity: Improving all types of verbal activities (with an emphasis on reading and writing). Written expression of one's feelings, developing empathy and understanding for others.

Communicative functions: Expressing needs and feelings; Communicating one's own and others' emotions and responding empathetically to them.

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the third grade of primary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- understand everyday expressions related to feelings and respond to them;
- express feelings using simple linguistic means.

Thematic areas:

- Emotions, love, partnerships and other interpersonal relationships
- Verbal and nonverbal communication, conventions of behaviour and etiquette

Materials for the activity: Newspaper articles from suitable children's magazines, paper and writing tools (glue, scissors).

Procedure:

Students are given newspaper articles from appropriate children's magazines in the foreign language they are learning (adapted to their age) to analyse carefully, especially focusing on the headlines. Wherever they notice a kind word, they circle it and write it down (or cut it out and paste it onto a piece of paper). From the selected words, they have to compose a friendship message.

Students analyse the newspaper article and extract words they can use to create a friendship message. After finding suitable words and composing the message, the messages are placed in a hat (or box). One by one, students draw messages and read them aloud to the person next to them. After the circle is completed, a discussion follows.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / BearFotos

The discussion can be stimulated by the following questions:

? How did you feel while searching for the right words of friendship?

? Was it difficult to compose the message?

? Describe your feelings while reading the message.

? Describe your feelings when receiving the message.

? Do we all need messages of friendship and understanding?

? Do friendship messages foster empathy for those around us?

? ...

Example for teaching practice 3

Proposal for the sixth grade of primary school

Selected competence:

3.6.   **Linguistic, communicative and multilingual skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the selected competence:

B: 3.6.a)   *Clearly expresses his/her opinion on a topic.*

Activity: **Agree or Disagree**

Goal of the activity: Enhancing all forms of speaking activities, expanding vocabulary, enabling oral and written communication, and adopting grammatical rules naturally. Expressing opinions, agreement/disagreement and providing justifications.

Thematic area:

- Verbal and nonverbal communication, conventions of behaviour and etiquette

Communicative function: Expressing opinions.

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the sixth grade of primary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- understand simpler expressions that request opinions and respond to them;
- express opinions, agreement/disagreement and provide brief justifications.

Materials for the activity: One copy of a questionnaire in the target language for each student (attached).

Description of the activity: Students are given questionnaires prepared by the teacher, which they need to fill out. The students' responses are expected to reflect their opinions on the given statements, rated on a scale of 1–5. After completing the questionnaire, students justify their answers and the provided justifications serve as a framework for developing a discussion.

Preparation for the activity:

Students are told that a recent newspaper article discussed children's activities, and they are asked to share their opinions on the given suggestions. Each student receives a copy of the questionnaire. A scale of points is written on the board, and its meaning is explained to them (the meaning of numbers 1–5):

5 = I completely agree

4 = I mostly agree

3 = I partially agree

2 = I mostly disagree

1 = I completely disagree

Handout distributed to students:

1. Children should go to bed no later than midnight.	5	4	3	2	1
2. Children should have homework every day.	5	4	3	2	1
3. Children should do all school and homework assignments on a computer.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Children should engage in physical activities every day.	5	4	3	2	1
5. Children should spend time in nature at least once a week.	5	4	3	2	1
6. Children should help with household chores every day.	5	4	3	2	1

Procedure:

Students are tasked with individually circling the number that corresponds to their opinion for each statement. Once completed, they form pairs and are asked to share how much they agree with the statements and provide brief explanations for their answers. For example: *I completely disagree that children should have homework every*

day because they don't have time to play. Or: *I mostly agree that children should help with household chores because they don't have time to do it all the time. They have a lot to study...*

Framework for guided discussion:

Students are invited to share their answers with the class and explain their opinions. Their responses can be used to foster a discussion at the class level, for example, imagining and describing what an ideal day for a child should look like.

Example for teaching practice 4

Proposal for the first grade of secondary school – grammar schools

Selected competences:

1.1.   **Respect for human dignity and human rights from the Values group.**

Description of the selected competence:

B: 1.1.a)   *Respects human rights and the rights of the child.*

I: 1.1.b)   *Advocates the belief that all state institutions should respect, protect and enforce human rights and that no one should be subjected to torture and degrading treatment.*

4.3.   **Knowledge and critical understanding of politics, law and human rights from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.**

Description of the competence:

B: 4.3.b)   *Identifies reasons why every individual has an obligation to respect others' human rights.*

I: 4.3.c)   *Explains how and why human rights are significant in society.*

A: 4.3.f)   *Critically reflects on the evolving nature of human rights and the current state of human rights in different parts of the world.*

Activity: **Agree or Disagree**

Goal of the activity: Enhancing all forms of speaking activities, expanding vocabulary, enabling oral and written communication, and adopting grammatical rules naturally. Expressing opinions, agreement/disagreement and providing reasoning; developing critical thinking.

Communicative function: Seeking opinions and expressing agreement or disagreement.

Possible learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the first grade of secondary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- express their impressions and feelings and provide reasoning for opinions and stances on familiar topics;

- participate in short dialogues, exchange information and opinions with interlocutors.

Thematic area:

- Everyday life (time management, tasks, leisure activities)

- The world of work (perspectives and education systems)

- Consumer society

Materials for the activity: One copy of a questionnaire in the target language for each student (attached).

Description of the activity: Students are given questionnaires prepared by the teacher, which they need to fill out. The students' responses are expected to reflect their opinions on the given statements, rated on a scale of 1–5. After completing the questionnaire, students justify their answers and the provided justifications serve as a framework for developing a discussion.

Preparation for the activity:

Students are informed that a recent newspaper article addresses the topic of respecting human rights and children's rights, and they are asked to share their opinions on the given proposals. Each student receives a copy of the questionnaire. A scale of points is written on the board, and its meaning is explained to them (the meaning of numbers 1–5):

5 = I completely agree

4 = I mostly agree

3 = I partially agree

2 = I mostly disagree

1 = I completely disagree

The proposed questionnaire contains adapted statements from the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

1.	A child has the right to freedom of expression.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	No child should be subjected to inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Children should not be held accountable for their actions because they are children.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	Children should engage in physical activities every day.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	Children should spend time in nature at least once a week.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	Every child should receive education in the language of the community they live in, regardless of origin.	5	4	3	2	1

Procedure:

Students are tasked with individually circling the number that corresponds to their opinion for each statement. Once completed, pairs are formed with the task of discussing how much they agree with the given statements and providing brief reasoning for their answers. Their responses can be used to foster a discussion at the class level.

Example for teaching practice 5

Proposal for the fourth grade of secondary school

Selected competences:

3.2. **Analytical and critical thinking skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.2.a) *Observes new information based on previous knowledge and uses facts to justify his/her opinion.*

I: 3.2.b) *Questions the accuracy of the information he/she uses.*

I: 3.2.c) *Assesses potential risks arising from the use of various types of information.*

3.7. Collaboration skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.7.a)   *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks.*

Activity: **Event reconstruction – writing a news report**

Goal of the activity: Enhancing all forms of speaking activities, expanding vocabulary, enabling oral and written communication, and adopting grammatical rules naturally. Interpreting illustrations and identifying relevant details; developing critical and analytical thinking skills and media literacy.

Communicative functions: Identifying and naming people, objects, colours, numbers, etc. Describing and comparing people and objects. Drawing attention. Expressing agreement and disagreement.

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of secondary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- interpret and describe illustrations, highlighting relevant details;

- provide comprehensive descriptions or presentations on topics from their broader environment and fields of interest, using additional explanations;

- in interaction with the interlocutor, expresses and defends his/her ideas and opinions on current events with explanations, arguments and comments;

- presents, defends and represents his/her views;

- expresses agreement and/or disagreement with the interlocutor.

Materials for the activity: One set of prepared images (photographs) for each group. The context can be from any thematic area.

Thematic areas:

- Everyday life (time management, tasks, leisure activities)

- The world of work (perspectives and education systems)

- Interesting life stories and events

- The living world and environmental protection

- Scientific achievements, modern technologies and the digital world (spread, application, benefits and drawbacks)

- Media and communication

- Food and health (eating habits, typical dishes and drinks in various countries)

- Consumer society

- Sports and sporting events

- Serbia – my homeland

- Famous cities and landmarks, regions and countries where the target language is spoken

- Europe and the shared life of its peoples

Description of the activity: Students take on the role of young journalists writing for a magazine (which can be named) and are tasked with writing a news report about the event depicted in the images/photographs each group member receives. The teacher prepares these materials in advance. Each group receives the same set of images/photographs for analysis.

Preparation for the activity: Students are given questions they need to answer to ensure the news report is reliable (the teacher designs the set of questions). Groups are formed with four students each. Every student in the group receives one (different) image that the other group members cannot see.

A set of possible questions that each student in the group should answer in order for the news to be reliable, in relation to different aspects:

? Description: What do you see in the image? What are the key characteristics and details?

? Context: Where was the photo taken? When was it taken? Who is the author?

? Focus: Who or what is the dominant figure in the image? What is the emotional or symbolic connection between the subject (dominant figure) and the surroundings?

? Composition: How is the image organised?

? Colours and light: What colours dominate the image? How are light and shadow used? What impact do these elements have on the perception of the image?

? Message: What are the possible motives or themes the image explores, or the message it conveys (the author's intent)?

? Emotional response: What emotions or thoughts does the image evoke in you?

? Contextual analysis: How does the image fit into the broader context of the time, culture or society in which it was created?

? ...

Procedure:

Students are divided into groups, but in the first phase, they work **individually**, each analysing the picture they have been given and compiling notes based on the prepared questions. Other group members are not allowed to see the picture or the notes written by their peers. (Students are given five minutes for this activity.)

After the allotted time, the teacher collects the pictures from the students. The students then cross-reference their notes and transition to **group work**, collectively writing a news report as a team.

Once the activity is complete, group representatives read aloud the news report they prepared. Before presenting their reports, it is revealed to them that each group had the same set of pictures, which served as the basis for creating their news reports.

Group reports can be used to foster a discussion at the class level.

Guided discussion

The key framework for discussion is the question of personal interpretation; the question of how differently we represent some events depending on personal perception:

- **?** To what extent do personal experiences, knowledge or attitudes affect the understanding of an image?
- **?** Did a dominant element cause you to overlook other important details in the image?
- **?** Was it challenging to write a collaborative news report?
- **?** Why?
- **?** How does perspective influence the writing of a joint report?
- **?** ...

Question for reflection: What is the likelihood of two identical or similar reports being created?

Example for teaching practice 6

Proposal for the fourth grade of secondary school

Selected competences:

3.2. **Analytical and critical thinking skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.2.a) *Observes new information based on previous knowledge and uses facts to justify his/her opinion.*

3.3. **Listening and observational skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.3.a) *Listens carefully to different opinions.*

3.6. **Linguistic, communicative and multilingual skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.6.a) *Clearly expresses his/her opinion on a topic.*

3.7. **Collaboration skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.7.a) *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks.*

Activity: **Mosaic of perspectives**

Goal of the activity: Enhancing all types of speaking activities, expanding vocabulary, enabling oral and written communication, learning grammatical rules naturally; developing the ability to observe and interpret images and notice relevant details; distinguishing facts from interpretations, drawing conclusions based on arguments and fostering critical and analytical thinking.

Communicative functions: Identifying and naming people, objects, colours, numbers, etc.; Expressing confirmation and negation; Expressing likes and dislikes; Indicating spatial and temporal relationships; Describing and comparing people and objects; Expressing doubt and uncertainty.

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of secondary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- interpret and describe illustrations, tables, images and charts, highlighting relevant details;

- understand simpler explanations of opinions and viewpoints of interlocutors;

- defend and advocate their position while expressing agreement and/or disagreement with interlocutors;

- during and after presentations, understand questions related to the topic, respond to them and provide additional explanations;

- participate in dialogue and exchange opinions and information related to their environment and daily situations;

- explain the traditional characteristics of their culture to members of foreign cultures in a simple way;

- evaluate how personal and others' beliefs and values influence the way people and cultures are perceived and understood.

Thematic areas:

- Everyday life (time management, tasks, leisure activities)

- The world of work (perspectives and education systems)

- Interesting life stories and events

❚ PHOTO: Shutterstock / muratart

Materials for the activity: Prepared image (photograph) divided into four sections. The context can be from any thematic area, but it is essential that it depicts something unusual, characteristic of a different culture. The photograph may include architectural elements, plants, trees, children, adults, occupations, interactions between people/children, natural phenomena, food, drinks, etc. It is recommended to carefully select the image or photograph that students will analyse.

Description of the activity: Students are divided into four groups, with each group receiving one part of the four-part image (photograph) for detailed analysis. Each group member carefully observes the material the group has received and notes the details observed. They then compare individual findings and come to common conclusions that will be represented by the selected team member. After all groups have presented their findings, an organised discussion follows where students exchange opinions, compare results and evaluate the importance of each element in understanding the entire image.

Preparation for the activity: Students are informed that this activity has three steps.

Step 1: The most crucial phase. After forming groups and distributing the materials, students are given clear and precise instructions: **"Each of you should write down what you see in the image. Compare your individual observations and create a unified group statement in a few coherent sentences."** (**It is important not to start the instruction with: "Describe what you see." This type of instruction risks veering into interpretation; in this step, identification is key.**) The material must circulate so that each student in the group can observe and write down their findings. Students are expected to carefully examine what they see in the part of the image assigned to their group. Possible questions to think about when solving this task:

1)Who are the characters in the image? 2)Are they children, adults or individuals with different occupations? 3)What activities are taking place in the image? Are they playing, working, studying or conversing? 4)Pay attention to facial expressions or gestures and what they convey (anger, happiness, joy, sadness, etc.). 5) What is the environment like and what elements are present in the surroundings? 6)Are they in nature or an urban setting? 7)Identify objects, furniture, monuments, etc. 8) Which elements are unusual (clothing, footwear, objects, etc.)?

Step 2: Assign meaning to the elements of the image. (For example: If the image depicts people smiling while conversing and wearing traditional attire, the meaning of the elements could be: "These people seem to be enjoying their conversation...").

Step 3: Form opinions and draw conclusions. (For example: "This image shows people talking about something pleasant. They are dressed in traditional attire and belong to a different culture.")

Procedure:

While students observe and take notes, the teacher divides a flip chart (or board) into three columns: –Column 1: Observation; Column 2: Interpretation; Column 3: Forming opinions and drawing conclusions, but not naming them yet, just numbering them.

Once the activity is complete, group representatives present their collective observations and write them in the columns according to the following instructions:

- In Column 1, record all visible elements of the image you analysed.
- In Column 2, note the meaning of specific elements in the image.
- In Column 3, write your opinion about the image and the conclusions you drew.

After the students have recorded their observations in the appropriate columns, their work reveals the full image. This is the moment to disclose the column titles and explain that, based on their observations and interpretations, they formed conclusions about the image (photograph) even though they only analysed its sections. Students are then invited to examine the complete image and reflect on how the parts they analysed contribute to the whole picture. A discussion is initiated to explore to what extent and in what ways the various elements, their interpretations and the lack of information can influence the overall understanding of the context.

Guided discussion

Questions to organise the discussion:

? Compare the answers in Columns 1 and 2. Are they aligned? In which cases did discrepancies occur?

? Did any answers reveal stereotypes or prejudices in your interpretations? If so, how can we overcome them?

? How do individual elements and their interpretations influence the formation of opinions and conclusions? Explain your reasoning in a few coherent sentences.

? What factors influence interpretation? What roles do personal experiences and cultural context play?

? Do your individual observations correspond to the message of the image or photograph as a whole?

? Can you form opinions and draw conclusions without considering the whole?

? In what real-life situations can you apply what you learned during this activity? Provide an example that illustrates how these skills can be used in everyday life.

History

Democratic Culture as the Teacher of Life

The connection and contribution of the History curriculum to the development of competences for democratic culture have been analysed in the *Guidelines for the integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national curricula* (Council of Europe, 2022). The same publication provides three examples of activities aimed at developing competences for democratic culture (CDCs).
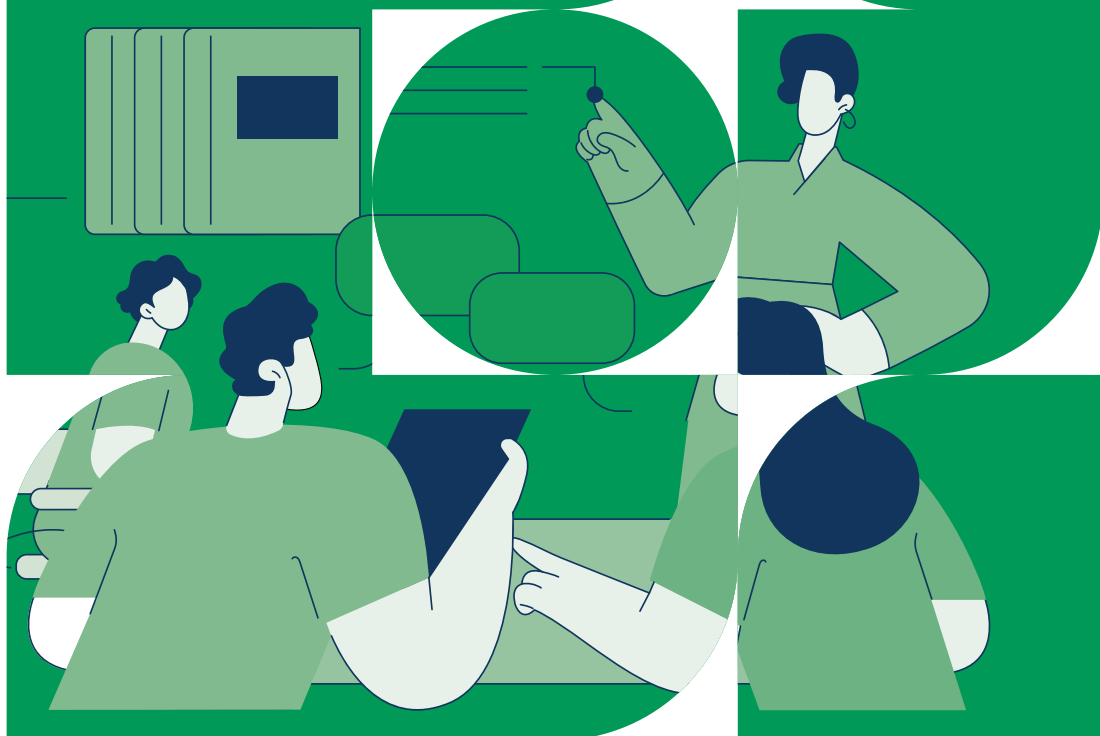
C onsidering the specific nature of the subject, competences for democratic culture can be developed in various ways, encompassing all groups (values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding) and levels of achievement (basic, intermediate and advanced). It is important to note that teachers already implement the concept of CDCs in their lessons, even if they do not explicitly highlight it. Teachers are best positioned to understand how the contents and outcomes of the curriculum can most effectively contribute to the achievement of CDCs in practice. In this regard, rather than detailed instructions, the text below offers various suggestions for activities and emphasises a clear connection between different levels of CDC achievement, curriculum outcomes and key content concepts. The proposed activities are merely ideas that teachers can further develop to suit the needs of their specific class and students, using a variety of resources available in schools and local communities.

Example 1

Proposal for the eighth grade of primary school and fourth year of grammar school

Selected competence:

1.1. Respect for human dignity and human rights from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.1.a)   *Respects human rights and the rights of the child.*

Examples of activities:

- **Debate on dictatorships and human rights**
- **Personal stories and the Holocaust**
- **Examining migration and xenophobia**

Key content concepts for the eighth grade of primary school: totalitarianism, dictatorships, anti-Semitism, militarism, ghettos, the Holocaust, genocide, feminism, chauvinism, xenophobia, repression, decolonisation, human rights, national minorities, discrimination, democracy, terrorism, globalisation, migration.

Possible learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the eighth grade of primary school achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise, through examples from modern history, the importance of respecting human rights.

Key content concepts for the fourth grade of grammar school: war crimes, genocide, the Holocaust, genocide against the Roma, genocide against Serbs in the NDH (Auschwitz, Jasenovac, Sajmište, ghettos...), civil wars, crises and international interventions, human and minority rights, emancipation movements.

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of grammar school achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise the consequences of various forms of emancipation and discrimination in society during the period of modern history;
- identify propaganda, stereotypes and ideological positions in historical sources and formulate opinions opposing manipulation;
- recognise the main characteristics of different ideologies in the period of modern history;
- identify the basic characteristics and prerequisites for the emergence of totalitarian ideologies and explain their consequences in historical and contemporary contexts.

Procedure

Thematically similar activities suggested for primary and secondary school are adapted to suit the age and cognitive abilities of the students.

Activity 1: **Debate on dictatorships and human rights**

Students are divided into two groups. One group is tasked with researching examples of dictatorships from the past (e.g., Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Mao Zedong, Francisco Franco, Pol Pot, Augusto Pinochet…), while the other group investigates human rights violations under those regimes.

Groups prepare brief presentations on their topics and deliver them to the class. After the presentations, a debate is organised about how human rights are often violated under dictatorships and how this is linked to suffering/genocide.

Activity 2: **Personal stories and the Holocaust**

This activity begins with the screening of a short film or documentary about the Holocaust that includes personal stories/testimonies of victims and witnesses.

Students are divided into pairs or groups and assigned to research the personal stories or testimonies of Holocaust survivors (suggested resources include written or recorded interviews with survivors or families of victims). Teachers direct students to websites where they can find relevant historical sources on the Holocaust, such as:

https://www.yadvashem.org/index.html;
https://www.ushmm.org/;
https://www.auschwitz.org/en/;
https://jevrejskadigitalnabiblioteka.rs/;
https://zuov.gov.rs/kultura-secanja/;
https://archivum.arhivvojvodine.org.rs/category/1/kultura-secanja/;
https://www.2.muzejgenocida.rs/.

Based on their research, each group is tasked with presenting on the topic of how anti-Semitism and other factors led to the Holocaust.

After the presentations, a discussion is held about the importance of the personal stories/testimonies of victims and witnesses for learning about the Holocaust and combating anti-Semitism. Students can also discuss potential steps to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

Activity 3: **Examining migration and xenophobia**

A discussion on migration and xenophobia begins by using historical sources of various origins. Students are divided into small groups and provided with pre-prepared materials about different cases of migration (e.g., Syrian refugees, migration from Africa to Europe, migration from Ukraine, etc.). The teacher encourages students to think critically by posing the following questions:

- **?** What are the main reasons people migrate from one place to another? (economic, political, social and environmental factors)

- **?** How can migration impact the country people leave? (e.g., loss of workforce, changes in demographic structure, economic effects)

- **?** How does migration affect the country or community to which people move? (cultural diversity, competition for jobs and resources, potential tensions between migrants and the local population)

- **?** What challenges do migrants face when they settle in a new country or community? (language barriers, cultural differences, legal challenges and prejudices)

- **?** How do media and public opinion influence the perception of migration? (how migrants are portrayed in the media and how this shapes societal attitudes toward them)

- **?** How do people feel when they are forced to leave their homes due to forced migration (e.g., war or natural disasters)? (emotions and experiences of migrants who have no choice but to leave their homes)

- **?** Do you think states should provide more support to migrants? If so, what kind of support? (education, employment, integration into society)

Based on these questions, each group presents the material they were given, followed by a discussion on the reasons behind migration and whether it has caused xenophobia. If so, how does xenophobia affect migrants' rights? Finally, each group presents their conclusions and solutions for combating xenophobia and promoting acceptance (inclusion).

PHOTO : Shutterstock / BearFotos

Example 2.

Proposal for the seventh grade of primary school and third grade of grammar school

Selected competence:

2.2.	Respect from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

A: 2.2.c)   *Respects people with different religious affiliation and different political opinion.*

Examples of activities:

- **Analysis of political systems**
- **Researching political platforms**
- **Interview with political opponents**

Key content concepts for the seventh grade of primary school: revolution, human rights, constitutionalism, liberalism, nationalism, socialism, imperialism, colonialism, racism.

Possible learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the seventh grade of primary school achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- compare, analyse and identify differences between their own attitudes and those of others.

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the third grade of grammar school achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- identify propaganda, stereotypes and ideological positions in historical sources and formulate opinions opposing manipulation;

- recognise and compare different perspectives on a historical event, personality or phenomenon based on historical source interpretations;

- identify specific social phenomena, processes, political ideas and attitudes of individuals and groups that emerged in modern times.

> **Key content concepts** for the third grade of Grammar School: Social strata and groups – bourgeoisie, peasantry, working class; First and Second Industrial Revolution; Ideas and ideologies – liberalism, nationalism, racism, socialism, communism; Civil and political rights, abolitionism, capitalism, the specificities of Serbian society and the economy.

Procedure

Thematically similar activities suggested for primary and secondary school are adapted to suit the age and cognitive abilities of the students.

Activity 1: **Analysis of political systems**

Students in groups are assigned to research the political systems of various countries that have faced imperialism, colonialism or racism. They analyse different aspects of these political systems, including how human rights, constitutional principles and ideological differences are treated.

After conducting their research, students compare the political systems and attitudes of these countries with those of their own country, analyse the differences and similarities and discuss their impact on society.

Activity 2: **Researching political platforms**

Students are tasked with researching the political platforms of several different political parties or ideologies (e.g., left-wing, right-wing, democratic and conservative parties). They are required to explore the positions of these parties or ideologies on various topics, such as the economy, foreign policy, healthcare, education, etc. They need to use diverse information sources, including official political platforms, statements from political leaders, expert analyses and research.

After completing their research, students analyse the positions of each political party or ideology on the topics investigated. It is recommended to use tables or graphical representations to clearly display the positions of different political entities on various topics. Afterward, students compare the positions of political parties or ideologies, identifying similarities and differences.

Students share their impressions through a class discussion, during which the teacher may pose questions that encourage critical thinking and analysis, such as: *How do different party positions affect society? How might approaches to solving specific problems differ?* At the end of the activity, students can write reflections and conclusions about political platforms and their impact on society.

Activity 3: **Interview with political opponents**

The teacher selects several political parties or ideologies relevant to the curriculum. The class organises interviews where students engage with representatives of different political parties or ideologies.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Kyryk Ivan

Students are divided into groups, with each group researching one political party or ideology. Each group also selects a representative who will participate in a simulated interview. A mediator is chosen and other students prepare and ask questions for the representatives of the political parties or ideologies. Questions should be well-thought-out and focused on key principles and political positions.

The representatives respond to questions in a manner that reflects the views and principles of the political party or ideology they represent. After the interviews, students analyse the responses and discuss the views and arguments they heard. The discussion should focus on the differences and similarities between political parties or ideologies, as well as their impact on society and politics. As a concluding step, students can write about their impressions of the interview, what they learned about political ideologies and whether their views have changed as a result of this activity.

Example 3

Proposal for the fifth grade of primary school and first grade of grammar school

Selected competence

3.2.	Analytical and critical thinking skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

I: 3.2.b)   *Questions the accuracy of the information he/she uses.*

Examples of activities:

- **Fake news**
- **Historical story**
- **Fact-checking**

Possible learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the fifth grade of primary school achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- collect and present data from various sources of information related to a specific historical topic.

Key content concepts for the fifth grade of primary school: historical sources, society, state, related sciences and auxiliary historical sciences, historical heritage.

Possible learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the first grade of grammar school achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- explain the basics of the historical scientific method in reconstructing the past and recognise the existence of different interpretations;
- identify the origin and assesses the cognitive value of various sources based on their external and content characteristics;
- recognise and articulate a position regarding prejudices, stereotypes, propaganda and other forms of manipulation of the past through concrete examples.

Key content concepts for the first grade of grammar school: reconstruction and interpretation of the past, use of history and manipulation of the past, democracy, institutions, historical heritage and historiography.

Procedure

Thematically similar activities suggested for primary and secondary school are adapted to suit the age and cognitive abilities of the students.

Activity 1: **Fake news**

Students are divided into groups and tasked with researching a specific topic and analysing various sources of information available to them. For example, the topic could be *How to recognise fake news?* Or *How important is it to verify information before trusting it?* Students investigate and analyse different sources of information, including news articles, websites, social media, etc., and consider their accuracy and influences. After conducting their research, students present their findings and evaluate the accuracy and background of the information they found. They can also explain how they determined whether the source of information was credible and how they distinguished factual information from opinions or interpretations.

Activity 2: **Historical story**

The teacher selects a specific historical topic relevant to the curriculum. He/she finds various sources of information on the topic, including historical texts, articles, photographs, and videos, and then prepares a fictional story or scenario that introduces students to an enigma related to that historical topic. The teacher presents a story about a historical event or figure but omits certain key details. Students are told they are historical detectives tasked with investigating various sources of information to uncover the truth about the event or figure.

Working in groups, students explore different sources of information. They use their analytical thinking skills to assess the accuracy and reliability of the information they find. After their research, students discuss what they have discovered from their sources. They analyse the information, compare different sources and consider their accuracy and reliability. They discuss how they used their skills to draw conclusions.

Finally, students attempt to compile all the information they gathered to solve the enigma or answer the question posed at the beginning of the activity. This encourages them to reassess the accuracy of the information they used and to critically evaluate their conclusions.

Activity 3: **Fact-checking**

The teacher organises a role-playing game in which students take on the role of "fact-checkers." Students are given a list of claims or news headlines to verify, with the goal of analysing the accuracy and reliability of the information. Divided into groups, students use various sources of information, such as online encyclopaedias, trusted

media portals and academic sources, to confirm or debunk each claim. While working on the tasks, they are encouraged to consider the credibility of the sources and the potential bias that certain sources might have.

After completing the activity, students participate in a group discussion about the fact-checking process and reflect on how they can apply these skills in everyday life, particularly when evaluating information encountered on social media and in the media. As an additional task, students may be asked to explain the fact-checking process in relation to a current topic or news item, where they would analyse different aspects of the topic, including various sources of information and the perspectives those sources present.

When presenting their findings, students are expected to explain in detail how they reached their conclusions and the methods they used in the fact-checking process. They should also explain how they assessed the credibility of the sources and identified potential biases in the presented information.

Example 4

Proposal for the sixth grade of primary school and second grade of grammar school

Selected competence

4.4.	Knowledge and critical understanding of culture and religion from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.

Description of the competence:

I: 4.4.c)   *Critically reflects on the idea that individual behaviours of people from certain cultures should not be attributed to the entire culture.*

I: 4.4.d)   *Critically reflects on the significance and potential misuse of religious symbols, rituals and language.*

Examples of activities:

- **Cultural map**

- **Project on the meaning of religious symbols and rituals**

- **Religion in the media**

Key content concepts for the sixth grade of primary school: feudalism, church, religion, humanism and the Renaissance, geographical discoveries, scientific discoveries and technical inventions, migrations, the permeation of civilizations, individual and collective identities.

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the sixth grade of primary school achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- differentiate the fundamental characteristics and identify the most significant consequences of the emergence and spread of various religious teachings in the medieval and early modern periods;

- illustrate the importance of the political, economic, scientific and cultural achievements of the medieval and early modern period in contemporary society through examples.

Key content concepts for the second grade of grammar school: religions and beliefs, Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Islam, Judaism, Protestantism, heresies, superstitions, customs, science, education, printing, diseases and treatment, endowments.

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of grammar school achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise the impact of ideas and scientific-technological discoveries on societal, cultural and educational changes and development;

- identify the most significant consequences of the emergence and spread of various religious teachings in historical and contemporary contexts;

- recognise the presence of political, economic, scientific and cultural achievements of the medieval and early modern period in contemporary society;

- illustrate the significance of the intermingling of different peoples, cultures and civilisations through examples.

Procedure

Thematically similar activities suggested for primary and secondary school are adapted to suit the age and cognitive abilities of the students.

Activity 1: **Cultural map**

Students are tasked with creating a "cultural map" that depicts the diversity of cultures in their local community or beyond. In groups, students identify various cultural groups, customs, religious symbols and languages used. They then create a poster that visually represents the different cultural groups they researched, including their customs, languages, religious symbols and other cultural elements. The poster can include photographs, symbols, drawings and brief descriptions illustrating cultural diversity in the community. These illustrations serve as a basis for critical thinking and a discussion about stereotypes and prejudices regarding certain cultural groups, initiated and facilitated by the teacher. After the discussion, students propose solutions and, where possible, develop a "school strategy" to address potential stereotypes and prejudices.

Activity 2: **Project on the meaning of religious symbols and rituals**

Students select a religious symbol or ritual and, divided into groups, analyse its meaning within the context of a given religious culture. They create a presentation using artificial intelligence tools. The presentation should be visually appealing and rich in content, including images, symbols and video materials illustrating the chosen religious symbol or ritual. Students present the historical and cultural significance of the symbol, how it is used in religious practices and its impact on the community. They then analyse how technology and artificial intelligence can contribute to understanding or lead to misinterpretations of these symbols. After presenting the results of their initial research, students are tasked with verifying the accuracy of their findings using relevant literature and investigating possible cases of misuse or misinterpretation of these symbols and rituals in recent history. The teacher determines the necessary time for this task (e.g., seven days). After completing the research, students present their results, followed by a discussion.

International cooperation: With the assistance of a foreign language teacher, students can explore how language plays a role in religious practice, including prayers, sacred texts and rituals. A debate can be organised on the significance of language for a religious community and how words and expressions can be interpreted and misused.

Activity 3: **Religion in the media**

Students, divided into groups, are tasked with assuming the role of independent journalists and writing a short article on the media portrayal of specific cultures, religious symbols or languages across various sources such as news outlets, films, advertisements and social media. The teacher assesses the time required for this research.

Their task is to identify and analyse potential stereotypes, prejudices or misuse in these portrayals and critically evaluate them. Students then compile their articles into a digital "school" magazine, which can be updated with new articles on topics covered later in the curriculum. In this way, students promote understanding and respect for different cultures through media and communication.

Geography

Across Parallels and Meridians Through Lands and Cultures

In the *Guidelines for the integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national curricula* (Council of Europe, 2022), The connection between competences for democratic culture and the Geography teaching and learning program was analyzed, as well as the program's contribution to developing competences.

T his publication also provided examples demonstrating that, consistent with the nature and aim of the subject, CDC should not be viewed in isolation but as an integral part of the topics studied in class.

In a similar spirit, but somewhat more operationally, this chapter offers activities that teachers can apply in an adaptable, open, straightforward and accessible manner. These are intended as ideas for creating original examples of best practices that facilitate faster, easier and more comprehensive learning while helping teachers develop all groups of competences (knowledge, values, attitudes and skills) at all levels (basic, intermediate and advanced).

Considering the nature of the subject and the Geography curriculum's process- and outcome-oriented approach, teachers have greater freedom in designing and structuring their lessons. Across all Geography curricula, it is recommended that teachers encourage students to research, collect and process data using their knowledge of mathematics and informatics. In the upper grades of the second cycle of primary school, achieving certain outcomes can be easier and more effective through project assignments involving collaboration, pair work and group activities. In this way, through the process of carrying out tasks, collaborating with other students, communicating with each other and encountering other and different opinions, students also develop competences for democratic culture. This confirms that teachers are already largely applying the concept of CDC in their classes.

The following text lists different levels of possible CDC achievements, curriculum outcomes and suggested activities that can serve as potential ideas for developing CDC in students.

Example 1

Proposal for the fifth grade of primary school

Selected competences:

1.1	Respect for human dignity and human rights from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.1.a)   *Respects human rights and the rights of the child.*

1.3.	Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.3.a)   *Believes that schools should educate students about democracy and how to act as responsible citizens in a democratic society.*

Activity: **Plastic waste and the environment**

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fifth grade of primary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- distinguish responsible from irresponsible behaviour regarding natural resources and the survival of life on planet Earth;
- provide examples of protecting Earth's living world.

Procedure

A discussion with fifth-grade students is initiated on the harmful impact of plastic waste on the environment. Examples of soil and water pollution are provided, along

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Gorodenkoff

with information on how plastic adversely affects human health (e.g., recent findings on the amount of microplastics ingested through bottled water consumption).

After the discussion, fifth-grade students fill out a prepared survey/questionnaire to express their opinions on the issue.

Students are given a copy of the questionnaire and the meaning of the numbers 1-5 is explained to them:

5 = I completely agree

4 = I mostly agree

3 = I partially agree

2 = I mostly disagree

1 = I completely disagree

Students are instructed to circle the number that corresponds to their opinion for each statement provided.

Example questionnaire:

1.	There is currently a significant problem with plastic disposal.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Plastic greatly endangers life on Earth.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Schools and media play an essential role in raising awareness about this issue.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	Every individual could contribute to solving this problem.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	My family disposes of plastic waste properly.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	My family is ready to further contribute to preserving the planet.	5	4	3	2	1

Once students complete the questionnaire, the teacher analyses the survey and initiates a discussion by inviting several students to share their opinions and how much they agree with the statements of their peers. Their answers initiate a class-level discussion. During the discussion, students present their views in an argumentative manner, explain their answers, and provide examples. Students propose potential solutions to local issues or preventive measures within their community. They also consider how their personal behaviour could positively influence habit changes in others and foster positive environmental attitudes. The teacher ensures that students listen attentively to each other and demonstrate mutual respect during the discussion.

Example 2.

Proposal for the sixth grade of primary school

Selected competences:

1.2.	**Respect for cultural diversity, from the Values group.**

Description of the competence:

B: 1.2.a)   *Demonstrates tolerance towards different beliefs and considers it import-ant to strive for mutual understanding and dialogue with groups that are "different".*

I: 1.2.b)   *Accepts and respects cultural differences.*

2.1.	Openness to cultural diversity from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.1.a)   *Shows interest in learning about the values, traditions and worldviews of people from other cultures.*

I: 2.1.b)   *Displays curiosity and eagerness to directly learn about other cultures.*

Activity: **Find the pair**

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the sixth grade of primary school that can be achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- analyse various characteristics of the world's population and develop an awareness of solidarity among members of different social, ethnic and cultural groups.

Procedure

In order to develop tolerance and openness towards diversity and difference in students, the teacher organizes a short activity at the beginning of the lesson. Students are divided into groups (no more than five students per group) and given the necessary materials (poster paper and pencils). Each group receives a list of selected keywords that may represent recognisable geographical features of their country, its population, culture and traditions, but also characteristics of another/studied country (its culture and traditions). Examples of selected keywords include famous individuals from science, sports, acting, music, literature and national history; capitals and iconic features (state symbols), buildings, customs, characteristic foods or drinks, etc. Certain terms that cannot be paired may also be included.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / jd8

The activity begins with students being tasked with finding pairs of terms that denote the same geographical object/phenomenon, based on similarity, or determining what both terms have in common (e.g., pairing Sofia and Madrid as capitals). Students write these terms in the designated space on the poster and form pairs. If any terms cannot be paired, students are instructed to list them in a separate column on the poster.

Clear instructions should be provided. After working on the task, presenting group findings and comparing solutions, a discussion is organised. During the discussion, the teacher may pose some of the following questions:

? What challenges did you face when pairing terms?

? Was it difficult to find the pairs?

? How did they come up with solutions?

? What was the most challenging part?

? Were there terms for which you could not find pairs? Why?

Example 3

Proposal for the seventh grade of primary school

Selected competences:

3.4.	Empathy from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

I: 3.4.d)   *Considers situations from the perspective of others.*

4.1.	Knowledge and critical understanding of the self from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.

Description of the competence:

B: 4.1.a)   *Describes how his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour.*

  4.1.b)   *Critically reflects on himself/herself from different perspectives and re-examines his/her attitudes and beliefs.*

4.3.	**Knowledge and critical understanding of politics, law and human rights from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.**

Description of the competence:

B: 4.3.b)   *Identifies reasons why every individual has an obligation to respect others' human rights.*

I: 4.3.c)   *Explains how and why human rights are significant in society.*

4.4.	**Knowledge and critical understanding of culture and religion from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.**

Description of the competence:

I: 4.4.c)   *Critically reflects on the idea that individual behaviours of people from certain cultures should not be attributed to the entire culture.*

PHOTO: Shutterstock / wavebreakmedia

Activities:

- **If I were in your shoes**
- **Social roles**

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the seventh grade of primary school that can be achieved through these activities:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- identify the causes and consequences of changes in population numbers, population density, natural increase, migrations and specific demographic structures across continents, regions and selected countries;

- explain the causes and consequences of global phenomena such as poverty, internal and external migrations, demographic explosion and overpopulation, diseases and epidemics, and political instability.

Procedure

If I were in your shoes

Geography classes also study the characteristics of the population within each region, including migration. Given current events in the world, it is advisable to talk to students about them, as well as the phenomena that accompany them.

Divide the students into groups of five and provide examples of migrants from various countries (e.g., refugees from Afghanistan, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan). Within each group, students will discuss the emergence of xenophobia, how local populations feel and behave towards migrants in reception centres, what the government could do to address this issue, and whether and how xenophobia has affected the realisation of basic human rights for migrants. After the group discussions, each group presents their conclusions through a representative and proposes solutions for combating xenophobia.

Towards the end of the lesson, ask students to put themselves in the shoes of a migrant and write down their dominant feelings. They should write this feeling on a piece of paper and stick it on the board. All students then read the written feelings aloud.

Social roles

While studying global phenomena, the teacher uses the opportunity to strengthen CDC among students. One activity contributing to this is role-playing. Students are divided into groups and assigned social roles through which they will watch a film projection. The entire class watches a film on the topic *Hunger in Africa*. The first group assumes the role of Somali residents. The second group represents healthcare workers. The third group consists of farmers. The fourth group views the film as ecologists. The fifth group assumes the role of children.

After watching the film, students immerse themselves in their roles as much as possible and, from the perspective of their assigned characters, analyse and present to the class what they identified as the causes of hunger in Africa. Each group then drafts a list of potential measures to address hunger in Africa from their assigned roles and writes them on a poster, which remains displayed in the classroom.

Example 4

Proposal for the eighth grade of primary school

Selected competences:

3.1.	Autonomous learning skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.1.a)   *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

I: 3.1.b)   *Integrates information from different fields and monitors one's own learning progress.*

3.2.	Analytical and critical thinking skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.2.a)   *Observes new information based on previous knowledge and uses facts to justify his/her opinion.*

I: 3.2.b)   *Questions the accuracy of the information he/she uses.*

3.4.   Empathy from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

I: 3.4.d)   *Considers situations from the perspective of others.*

3.7.   Collaboration skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.7.a)   *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks.*

I: 3.7.b)   *Strives to establish consensus in order to achieve the group's common goals.*

I: 3.7.c)   *Shares all useful information with group members.*

Activity: **Debate – Luxury Hotel or Thermal Spa**

Learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the eighth grade of primary school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- relate the distribution of economic activities to the quality of the environment in their country.

Procedure

While studying the economy of Serbia, a debate is organised with eighth-grade students on the topic *Luxury Hotel or Thermal Springs*. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher explains the rules of debating and introduces the topic. Water is discussed as a resource, particularly thermal mineral springs, and their sustainable use.

As an introduction to the debate, the teacher provides an example of a hotel built near thermal springs at Fruška Gora. After the construction of the pool system within the hotel complex, the capacity of the natural springs and the amount of healing water reaching the nearby spa significantly decreased.

Following the introductory discussion, the teacher forms two groups of nine students each (each group selects a captain) who will participate in the debate, while the rest of the class forms the audience. Students draw their roles/group affiliations from a "hat". Both groups research relevant sources with the help and guidance of the teacher (legal norms and regulations, available decisions of local state bodies, financial report, tourist organization's report on tourist visit, etc.) to prepare arguments for their opposing views on the impact of the hotel's construction on the capacity of the healing springs and the nearby spa. The first group argues a negative stance regarding the situation, and the second group argues a positive stance regarding the situation. The captain's role is to coordinate the group's research and consult the teacher on unclear questions. After completing the research, the teacher organises the debate, where members of both teams present their arguments. The audience of students votes to determine the winning team. The teacher emphasises and fosters a culture of dialogue during the debate, encouraging respect and constructive communication among students.

Example 5

Proposal for the second grade of grammar school

Selected competence:

4.5.	**Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.**

Description of the competence:

B: 4.5.a) *Identifies the societal impact on nature, including factors such as population growth, resource consumption, etc., and considers risks associated with harmful impacts on the environment.*

I: 4.5.b) *Identifies the effects of propaganda in the modern world and establishes protective mechanisms.*

A: 4.5.g) *Assesses how economic and financial processes influence societal functioning.*

Activity: **Hunger belt – cause or consequence**

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of grammar school achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- conduct a research project on a given topic;
- use statistical sources and ICT tools to analyse demographic disparities globally and in selected regions;

- examine demographic projections at the global and regional levels;
- relate regional problems with types of economic development using examples from around the world.

Procedure

Topics on global issues, such as hunger, poverty, epidemics, migration, xenophobia, wars, racism and others, can be addressed and developed through a more complex analysis of various data and information sources. These analyses are vital for understanding specific phenomena. One topic students could explore is the dynamics of hunger rates globally.

> To initiate discussion, the teacher could use the *World Hunger Map of 2020*. Students are encouraged to carefully analyse the map. The teacher directs them to relevant sources but also motivates them to independently search for reliable information on the topic. Students research the topic to answer the following questions:

? How is the phenomenon of hunger distributed globally, by continents, regions and countries?

? What influence do the physical-geographical characteristics of countries have on the spatial distribution of hunger?

? What are the ethnic, religious, political and economic structures of populations in countries affected by hunger?

? To what extent is hunger a cause of conflicts and population migration?

Based on their findings, the teacher facilitates a discussion. Following the discussion, for further analysis, the teacher may suggest students analyse a map showing political conflicts over the last twenty years.

Based on the overlap of these two maps, students can also discuss the prevalence of conflicts in the world and how much they overlap with the famine belt, what are the economic characteristics of the countries in conflict and what could be the cause of the conflict, as well a what are the population structures of the countries in conflict. The question if hunger is a cause or consequence of a larger problem, can be posed.

Students interested in the topic can be encouraged to research how current events in Europe and the world influence developments in the hunger belt.

Physics

Physics is the Law

In the previous publication, *Guidelines for the integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national curricula* (Council of Europe, 2022), it was emphasised that the connection between the physics curriculum and democratic competences, though not explicitly visible, is an indispensable part of programme implementation.

$$P_1 = p_0 \; Sin \; w_1 \, (t - x/V)$$

$$P_2 = p_0 \; Sin \; w_2 \, (t - x/V)$$

$$f(b) - f(a) = \int_a^b \frac{x + x^3}{ax^4 + \left[\dfrac{x + 2x^3}{3x - x^4}\right]}$$

$$E_y = \qquad - w_t\,)$$

$$g(x)$$

$$y = Si$$

$$V_1 \; (1 + \beta \, \Delta t$$

$$x \qquad \longleftarrow \quad x + h$$

$$y = cos$$
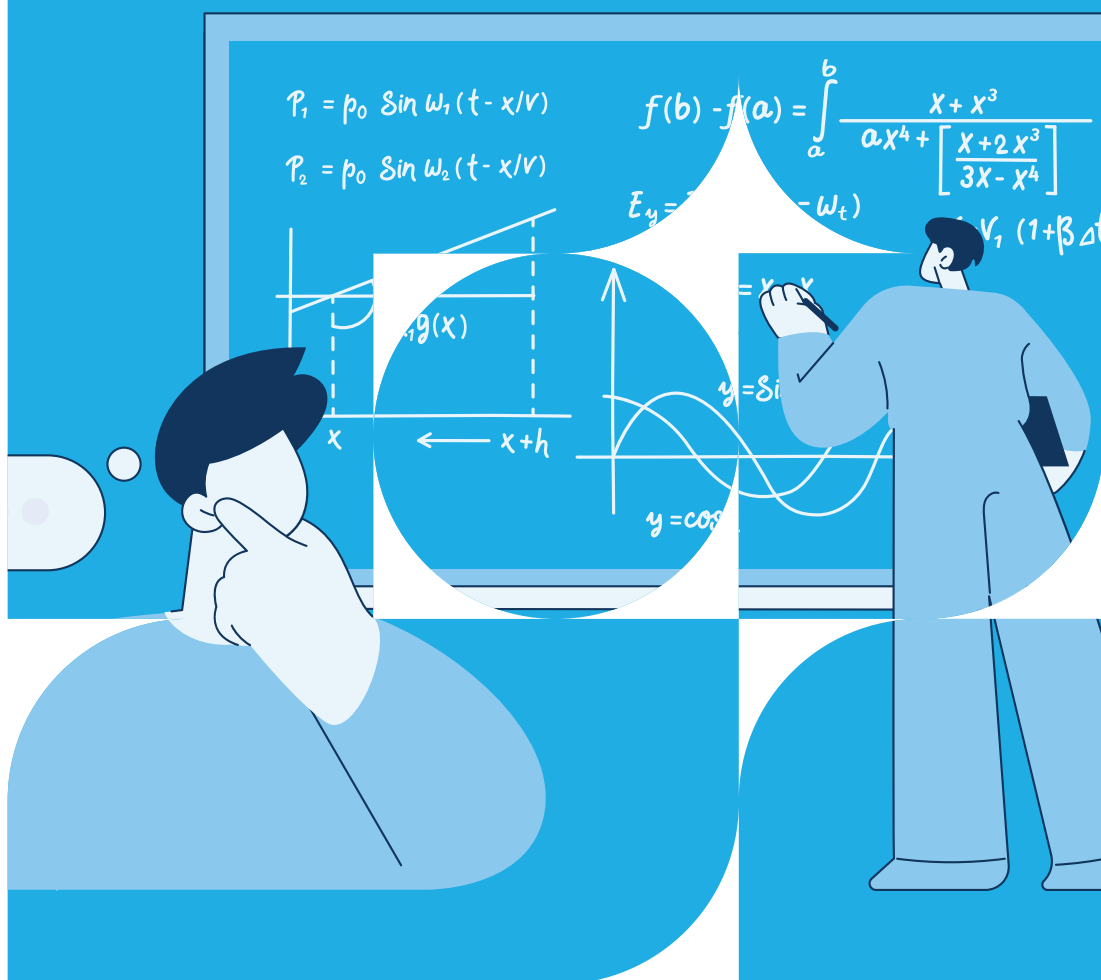
E very classroom practitioner, when implementing physics lessons, at least intuitively uses tools, techniques, and working methods that closely intertwine democratic competencies with the teaching process.

Connecting democratic competencies to the teaching and learning of physics in primary and secondary schools can be implemented through various approaches, and two possible ones are described in this chapter.

In this approach, an outcome from the physics teaching and learning program is first selected, and then an activity in class is proposed that would achieve that specific outcome. At the same time, the teacher maps as many descriptors as possible from the Manual, which will help him to successfully implement this approach during the lesson and thus achieve both outcomes – mastering subject content and fostering selected competences for democratic culture.

1. I demonstrate, I know better.

Teaching physics, which is defined as a natural science, has as one of its goals to develop the student's already existing curiosity about the world around them, its functioning, and understanding of natural phenomena. One essential method in teaching physics is the **demonstration experiment**, which vividly explains the principles governing certain phenomena and establishes a connection between theory and practice.

Learning outcomes in the physics curricula that relate to demonstrating various physical phenomena and processes exist in all grades and are as follows:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- demonstrate phenomena such as inertia, accelerated motion, motion of bodies under constant force, frictional forces and action-reaction forces through environmental examples;

- demonstrate and explain phenomena like shadows, the functioning of the eye and vision correction;

- demonstrate the mutual interaction of charged bodies and explaining what it depends on;

- demonstrate electrostatic phenomena, including field lines, equipotentiality, Faraday cage, the dependency of a plate capacitor's capacitance on the distance and surface area of its plates, and the type of dielectric.

Through achieving these outcomes, students not only develop cross-curricular competences but also enhance democratic competences, thus establishing a link between specific classroom activities and competences for democratic culture.

Teachers widely apply and value competencies in their practice, but there is a need to highlight these connections, thereby developing awareness of the implementation of democratic competencies in the everyday teaching process. **Verification of the achievement of competencies is carried out by analyzing the descriptors given for the listed competencies.**

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Halfpoint

During the initial physics lessons, the teacher conducts demonstration experiments. Over time, students also perform these experiments. Initially, demonstrations follow instructions, but as students gain skills and knowledge, they are encouraged to design their own demonstrations showcasing phenomena studied during lessons.

Demonstrating natural phenomena in a classroom setting is a major challenge, but not insurmountable with the cultivation of competencies.

Preparation for demonstrations begins from the first lesson, where the teacher performs an experiment and motivates students to conduct their own experiments in agreement with the teacher starting from the next lesson. An important factor is teaching students how to approach demonstrations performed by others, including formulating thought-provoking questions to clarify phenomena for themselves and assist their peers in understanding the demonstrations.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Halfpoint

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Halfpoint

To foster effective communication and successful functioning during lessons, the following competence should be developed:

2.2.   Respect from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.2.a)   *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

The teacher achieves this by emphasising, during the first demonstrations, the importance of active listening, reflecting on the questions being asked and appreciating even potentially incorrect answers from other students.

A **"rules of conduct" list** could be created and permanently displayed in the classroom to remind students of the importance of behaving in line with democratic competences.

In scenarios where a group of students independently prepares to conduct an experiment, the following competences must be respected:

2.4.   Responsibility from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

I: 2.4.b)   *Respects deadlines and takes responsibility if he/she makes a mistake.*

A: 2.4.c)   *Fulfills obligations to others.*

2.5. **Self-efficacy** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.5.a) *Demonstrates readiness to solve problems, achieve good results and over-come difficult situations.*

I: 2.5.b) *Adapts to new circumstances and overcomes obstacles on the way to a goal.*

The **selection of experiments** suitable for classroom implementation and aligned with the current or previously taught curriculum content involves applying the competence:

3.2. **Analytical and critical thinking skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.2.a) *Observes new information based on previous knowledge and uses facts to justify his/her opinion.*

I: 3.2.b) *Questions the accuracy of the information he/she uses.*

A: 3.2.d) *Applies clear and established criteria, principles or values to draw conclusions and form judgments.*

During the **demonstration of experiments through a rotational model** (with several workstations and demonstrator students, while others rotate through the stations), students develop mutual respect and acceptance of diversity, thereby strengthening the competence:

1.1 **Respect for human dignity and human rights** from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.1.a) *Respects human rights and the rights of the child.*

Through the described activity, students enhance the competence:

3.7. **Collaboration skills** from the Skills group.

B: 3.7.a) *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks.*

The demonstration method can take various forms: individual demonstration (one student presents to the rest of the class); pair work (first method: two students prepare and demonstrate the demonstration to the other students; second method: two students demonstrate to each other and discuss); group work.

Example for implementing rotational group work

In seventh grade, after introducing students to the **Second and Third Laws of Motion**, a reinforcement lesson can be conducted using the demonstration method.

Procedure

It is necessary to prepare four workstations on which the equipment for demonstrating the experiment will be placed.
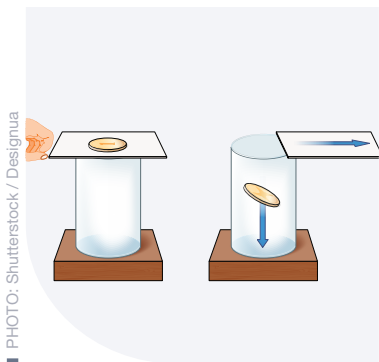
First workstation: Experiment with a glass and a coin

Second workstation: Experiment with a ball and an adjustable inclined plane

Third workstation: Experiment with a balloon and a toy car

Fourth workstation: Computer with internet access to the PhET simulation

https://phet.colorado.edu/sr/

Students, working in groups, rotate through all workstations, spending 10 minutes at each. Using the provided materials, they design an experiment to illustrate one of Newton's laws. At the fourth workstation, computer simulations allow students to explore dependencies between physical quantities by adjusting parameters, illustrating the Second Law of Motion.

Depending on the students' achievements and interests, several students can be selected to be in charge of each workstation to provide explanations about the implementation of the experiment, or they can implement the experiment and motivate the other students to participate in the discussion.

This method helps students grasp physics concepts more effectively, ensures long-term retention and equips them to build upon this knowledge and skills.

The rotational group work model can be adapted to achieve other aforementioned outcomes by changing the experiments to align with the relevant curriculum content.

2. Physics protects the planet

Another method of linking Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC) with the physics curriculum is to select a single competence and observe its potential implementation across various grade levels, vertically aligning its development from the basic level in primary school, through intermediate levels and reaching the advanced level in high school, following the same working methods in achieving similar outcomes.

Learning outcomes from the physics curriculum in both primary and secondary schools relevant to safety and environmental preservation include:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- apply preventive measures for protection against noise and excessive exposure to solar radiation;

- describe radioactivity, types of radiation, radioactive isotopes, understand their effects, applications and safety measures;

- understand the harmful impacts of electromagnetic radiation (e.g., sunlight, tanning beds, welding equipment, power lines, transformers, mobile phones) and methods of protection;

- handle devices, tools and materials safely for both oneself and the environment;

- comprehend the applications and dangers of natural and artificial radioactive radiation;

- adhere to safety measures for protection against radioactive radiation.

With an adequate approach to class work and well-designed activities, these outcomes can be achieved with the help of democratic competence 2.3. from the Attitudes group, both in primary school and grammar school classes.

2.3.	Civic spirit

Description of the competence:

B: 2.3.a)   *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

I: 2.3.b)   *Participates in collective actions aimed at improving community life.*

A: 2.3.c)   *Initiates actions to improve community life at the local, national or global levels.*

Example for implementing a lesson in primary school

In physics classes in the eighth grade, after studying the topics **Oscillatory and Wave Motion**, **Light Phenomena**, and **Electric Current**, one lesson can be implemented, which would comprise the content from all three topics, with a special emphasis on achieving outcomes related to safety measures for handling tools, electrical devices, or materials, and measures for protecting against noise and light pollution.

Procedure

The form of work is group, so depending on the number of students and working conditions, students are assigned to as many groups as is functional at that moment.

Each group is provided with written descriptions of different situations, photographs or short videos from everyday life. Students identify one or more pollutants (or incorrect handling of tools, devices or materials) depicted in the provided materials. After spotting a potential pollutant, students make suggestions to mitigate, if not prevent, the impact of the specific pollutant (or emphasize the proper handling of specific materials or devices, suggest protective measures, etc.).

Students then devise activities that could be undertaken by the school or local community (e.g., celebrating Earth Day, recycling campaigns, planting saplings, using light sources sparingly and dimming decorative lighting). After the groups have presented their conclusions and proposals, a selection of proposed activities is made and those that could be implemented are chosen depending on the school's capabilities and current calendar and weather conditions.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Monkey Business Images

Through this activity, students develop the competence at the basic and intermediate levels: – B: 2.3.a) *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.* – I: 2.3.b) *Participates in collective actions aimed at improving community life.*

Example for implementing a lesson in grammar school

In accordance with the grammar school curricula, students expand their knowledge of the topics **Oscillatory Motion** and **Wave Motion** and become familiar with other properties of light and new concepts such as electromagnetic waves and other types of radiation.

Procedure

Following the same principle as in primary school, during a lesson to master the material on a given topic, students are divided into groups. Each group is presented with a unique situation (image, video or text) highlighting a pollutant or hazardous

substance. Situations can be fictional or real-life scenarios. The students' task is to then design an activity that would first make other students, i.e. the local community, aware of the existence of the danger, and then motivate them to find solutions to preserve our environment. Given that the students are of an older age, they are encouraged to devise an activity or campaign that would involve the local community in detecting problems and finding methods for solving them. These activities can range from designing a marketing campaign, creating flyers, creating media support through content on social networks, to specifically organising the collection and purchase of cans or making solar panels from used cans.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Bohdan Malitskiy

In collaboration with other teachers, an **educational play** could be devised, showcasing a polluter and a potential solution through acting. The script for the play can be written by students or teachers and performed either within the school or at local community venues. Contact could be established with youth theatre groups, the Science Promotion Centre, the local Centre for Professional Development or organisers of events like the Science Festival or Researchers' Night, where the play could be presented.

During these activities, students would further reinforce previously developed attitudes at the basic and intermediate levels while enhancing the competence to an advanced level – A: 2.3.c) *Initiates actions to improve community life at the local, national or global levels.*

This approach helps students recognise the significance of their acquired knowledge and its practical value on the personal and global levels. It enhances their skills in analysing problems and initiating actions to solve them.

While implementing these activities, additional competences beyond the ones outlined would also be developed.

The previous examples demonstrate that linking planned outcomes from the physics curriculum with Competences for Democratic Culture can inspire the selection of **activities** that simultaneously fulfil curriculum objectives and develop CDC in teaching.

This connection can be illustrated with an example for primary schools and grammar schools, where the proposed activity develops an entire cluster of democratic competences while achieving one of the stated physics curriculum outcomes.

Example for primary school

Learning outcomes from the Physics curriculum:

By the end of the grade, students will be able to:

- apply preventive measures against noise and excessive solar radiation exposure;
- handle devices, tools and materials safely for both oneself and the environment;
- describe radioactivity, types of radiation, radioactive isotopes, understand their effects, applications and safety measures.

Competences

1.1.   Respect for human dignity and human rights from the Values group

Description of the competence:

B: 1.1.a)   *Respects human rights and the rights of the child.*

2.3.   Civic spirit from the Attitudes group

Description of the competence:

B: 2.3.a)   *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

3.1.   Autonomous learning skills from the Skills group

Description of the competence:

B: 3.1.a)   *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

3.2.   Analytical and critical thinking skills from the Skills group

Description of the competence:

B: 3.2.a)   *Observes new information based on previous knowledge and uses facts to justify his/her opinion.*

4.1.   Knowledge and critical understanding of the self from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group

Description of the competence:

B: 4.1.a)   *Describes how his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour.*

Proposed activities through which the following learning outcomes from the curricula can be achieved and the following competences for democratic culture can be developed:

1. Following the topic Oscillatory and Wave Motion (or Atomic Physics), students identify potential pollution factors in their environment and propose preventive activities. These activities can be conducted in different forms of work: group work, pair work or individual work.
2. Group or individual research projects on the topic of Light Pollution.

Example for grammar school

Learning outcomes from the Physics curriculum:
By the end of the grade, students will be able to:

- understand the harmful effects of electromagnetic radiation (e.g., sunlight, tanning beds, welding, power lines, transformers and mobile phones) and protective measures;
- handle devices, tools and materials safely for both oneself and the environment;
- comprehend the applications and dangers of natural and artificial radioactive radiation;
- adhere to safety measures for protection against radioactive radiation.

Competences

1.1.   Respect for human dignity and human rights from the Values group

Description of the competence:
B: 1.1.a)   *Respects human rights and the rights of the child.*

2.3.   Civic spirit from the Attitudes group

Description of the competence:
B: 2.3.a)   *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

I: 2.3.b)   *Participates in collective actions aimed at improving community life.*

3.1.   Autonomous learning skills from the Skills group

Description of the competence:
A: 3.1.c)   *Independently selects reliable sources of information, sets priorities and completes tasks.*

3.2.   Analytical and critical thinking skills from the Skills group

Description of the competence:
I: 3.2.b)   *Questions the accuracy of the information he/she uses.*

4.1.   Knowledge and critical understanding of the self from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group

Description of the competence:
I: 4.1.b)   *Critically reflects on himself/herself from different perspectives and re-examines his/her attitudes and beliefs.*

Proposed activities through which the following learning outcomes from the curricula can be achieved and the following competences for democratic culture can be developed:

1. The activity is organised as group work. After the topic Electromagnetic Waves, students are tasked with identifying potential pollution factors in their environment and proposing activities to raise awareness in the local community about the importance of prevention.
2. Group or individual research projects on topics such as *Is a tanning bed the right choice*? or *Can ultrasound reduce cellulite*?

Conclusion: Both approaches presented are flexible, meaning they can be adjusted according to the teaching material, students' achievements and interests, allowing for modifications as needed.

Chemistry

Chemical Experiment – The Path To A Solution

The connection between the chemistry teaching and learning program and the competences for democratic culture is evident in the subject objective, outcomes, subject content, and the Instructions for the didactic and methodological implementation of the program, and this is also shown in *the Guidelines for the Integration of the Reference Framework with the Competences for Democratic Culture* (Council of Europe, 2022).

Below there are examples of teacher and student activities that can be implemented in chemistry classes, which demonstrate a direct connection between the descriptions of key competences for democratic culture (by levels) and the outcomes of the teaching and learning program.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Monkey Business Images

Example 1

Proposal for the second grade of natural sciences and mathematics high school

Activity: Discussion and debate on the topic of chemical production

The proposed activities enable the development of critical thinking, argumentation, teamwork, communication skills, public speaking and the development of competences for democratic culture. Debate implies respect for different opinions and openness to the ideas of all participants.

CDCs that can be developed by this activity:

4.5.	**Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.**

Description of the competence:

B: 4.5.a) *Identifies the societal impact on nature, including factors such as population growth, resource consumption, etc., and considers risks associated with harmful impacts on the environment.*

3.2.	**Analytical and critical thinking skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

A: 3.2.d)   *Applies clear and established criteria, principles or values to draw conclusions and form judgments.*

3.3.   **Listening and observational skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.3.a)   *Listens carefully to different opinions.*

3.6.   **Linguistic, communicative and multilingual skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.6.a)   *Clearly expresses his/her opinion on a topic.*

2.2.   **Respect** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.2.a)   *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

1.3.   **Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law** from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.3.a)   *Believes that schools should educate students about democracy and how to act as responsible citizens in a democratic society.*

B: 1.3.b)   *Believes that laws must be applied consistently, fairly and impartially.*

Learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of natural sciences grammar school that can be achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- analyse the relationship between chemical scientific principles and technological processes and, based on the knowledge of green chemistry principles, explain how chemistry and chemical production affect the individual, society and the environment.

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

- analyse and critically assess the use of various chemicals in industry and daily life and their impact on human health and the environment;
- interpret the advantages of cleaner production in the context of sustainability and environmental impact;
- re-examine different human needs in modern society from the standpoint of sustainable development.

Procedure

At the beginning of the lesson, all students are asked the question: *How is the development of chemical production an indicator of the level of development of society, taking into account the economic effect of production, and the impact of production on human health and the environment.* Students express their opinions and reasoned explanations. The teacher directs the discussion to the processes of producing food, medicines, and materials necessary for human survival, and points out that production processes produce necessary products, as well as substances that can be labeled as waste. Part of the conversation should focus on the development of new materials, green technologies and the use of modern laboratory instruments to assess the students' awareness of recent research and technological advancements and their applications.

The next activity organised by the teacher is a **debate**. Students form teams of five students and receive team names and questions from the teacher, which they need to answer/explain during the debate in accordance with the interests of the team they represent.

Team names and problem questions:

- **Team of researchers:** How much do we know about the properties of commercial products?
- **Team of consumers:** How much chemistry is there in hypermarkets?
- **Team of controllers:** What can be concluded from analysing the labels of favourite products?
- **Team of creators:** What chemical changes occur while we prepare food?
- **Team of managers:** Cheap or expensive product – does quality determine the price of a product?
- **Team of chemists**: What do laboratories test when analysing commercial products?

After the first team's presentation, the other participants declare themselves for or against. The teacher, who is the moderator in the further work, outlines the goals of

the debate, takes into account the presentation time of each team/participant, and creates an atmosphere for the discussion to be fair and productive. Depending on the duration of the debate, the students and the teacher determine the rules. Participants, or representatives of a certain team, must quickly respond to the ideas/questions/arguments of their opponents. The teacher ends the debate and gives a brief summary.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Alive Color Stock

PHOTO: Shutterstock / 13_Phunkod

Example 2.

Proposal for all the grades of natural sciences and mathematics high school

Activity: **Researching and selecting information**

Chemistry teaching in high school should equip students for the independent use of modern information technologies, information retrieval, and modern communication in chemistry. Regardless of the choice of technique, which is partly determined by the choice of the subject being searched, it is necessary to guide students towards collecting data from various sources. In addition to collecting data from literature and relevant websites, each topic can also be explored by examining the knowledge, attitudes and values represented by experts in a particular field.

The proposed activity can be done with students from the first to the fourth grade of high school.

CDCs that can be developed by this activity:

3.1.   **Autonomous learning skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.1.a)   *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

I: 3.1.b)   *Integrates information from different fields and monitors one's own learning progress.*

A: 3.1.c)   *Independently selects reliable sources of information, sets priorities and completes tasks.*

Learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for all the grades of natural sciences and mathematics high school that can be achieved by this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

▪ find and critically select the necessary chemical information from various sources.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Gorodenkoff

Procedure

The teacher forms three groups that receive different tasks, and the process of researching and selecting information, as well as the sources used, are directly related to the competences for democratic culture at different levels. Taking into account different sources of information and the levels of students' knowledge, the process of learning and developing competences for democratic culture requires adjusting activities and specific tasks to the needs of students and their age. Students choose the source or sources they will use. During the research and comparison of the obtained information, students will realise that some information is incorrect – for example, in stating the year, the name of the scientist, etc. Students will select reliable sources of information, set priorities, and create a report that will be presented by a group representative. The teacher formulates questions and gives each group one of them:

Group 1

❓ Question: In which year was fullerene discovered?

Students search for various sources of information and use different tools. The answer should contain specific information, who discovered it, when and some interesting information about the given concept. When presenting the results, it should be insisted that students state which sources they used and which source is relevant.

By solving this task, the CDC from the Skills group is developed: 3.1. Autonomous learning skills, at the basic level B: 3.1.a) *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses different tools to collect new information.*

Group 2

? Question: Why is barium sulphate used in medicine and not calcium sulphate?

The answer should contain concrete information about the application of these substances and how the properties of the mentioned substances affect their application. By observing various physical and chemical properties, students can draw conclusions about the uses of barium sulfate in medicine.

Based on previous knowledge and by researching different sources, students develop competence **3.1. Autonomous learning skills** to the intermediate level – I: 3.1.b) *Integrates information from different fields and monitors one's own learning progress.*

Group 3

? Question: Who discovered CRISPR-Cas9 "genetic scissors", a tool that can change the DNA of living cells, and how is this process explained?

Students are faced with a problem question that requires understanding concepts from chemistry, biology and genetics and already developed autonomous learning skills; further work would lead to developing competence **3.1. Autonomous learning skills** at the Advanced level – A: 3.1.c) *Independently selects reliable sources of information, sets priorities and completes tasks.*

Example 3

Proposal for the seventh grade of primary school

Activity: **Chemical experiment**

Within the topic Chemistry Laboratory, students observe the role of experiment in chemistry, adopt basic rules of conduct in a chemistry laboratory, precautionary measures when handling substances, laboratory utensils and equipment, measures to protect themselves and others, protection of the environment and workplace, and first aid measures in case of an injury at work. The knowledge and skills that students acquire in class are necessary in everyday life situations.

Students become familiar with basic laboratory work techniques (mixing, grinding and heating substances), as well as techniques: observation, measurement, recording and noticing regularities among collected data, formulating explanations, drawing conclusions.

CDCs that can be developed during this activity:

3.5. **Flexibility and adaptability** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

I: 3.5.b) *Adapts to new situations using new skills and applying one's own knowledge ina different way.*

3.6. **Linguistic, communicative and multilingual skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.6.a) *Clearly expresses his/her opinion on a topic.*

3.7. **Collaboration skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.7.a) *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks.*

I: 3.7.c) *Shares all useful information with group members.*

A: 3.7.d) *Instils enthusiasm among group members to achieve common goals.*

3.8. **Conflict-resolution skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.8.b) *Identifies potential solutions to resolve conflicts.*

I: 3.8.c) *Contributes to conflict resolution by pointing out possible solutions to the conflict.*

I: 3.8.d) *Encourages parties in conflict to listen carefully to each other.*

A: 3.8.e) *Contributes to resolving interpersonal conflicts by creating a positive emotional atmosphere.*

2.2. **Respect** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.2.a) *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

2.3. **Civic spirit** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.3.a)   *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

2.4.   Accountability from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.4.a)   *Takes responsibility for personal actions and apologizes if he/she hurts some-one's feelings.*

I: 2.4.b)   *Respects deadlines and takes responsibility if he/she makes a mistake.*

A: 2.4.c)   *Fulfills obligations to others.*

2.5.   Self-efficacy from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.5.a)   *Demonstrates readiness to solve problems, achieve good results and overcome difficult situations.*

I: 2.5.b)   *Adapts to new circumstances and overcomes obstacles on the way to a goal.*

4.5.   Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability from the Knowledge and Critical Under-standing group.

Description of the competence:

B: 4.5.a)   *Identifies the societal impact on nature, including factors such as population growth, resource consumption, etc., and considers risks associated with harm-ful impacts on the environment.*

1.1.   Respect for human dignity and human rights from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.1.a)   *Respects human rights and the rights of the child.*

I: 1.1.b)   *Advocates the belief that all state institutions should respect, protect and enforce human rights and that no one should be subjected to torture and degrading treatment.*

1.3.   Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.3.a)   *Believes that schools should educate students about democracy and how to act as responsible citizens in a democratic society.*

Learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the seventh grade of primary school that can be achieved through this activity:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- properly handle laboratory utensils, tools and substances, and demonstrate a responsible attitude towards health and the environment.

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:
By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

- distinguish tools and utensils based on the type of material they are made of;
- describe the purpose of the tools and utensils and demonstrate proper handling;
- list the rules of conduct and precautionary measures during laboratory work;
- discuss the use of chemicals in everyday life and their impact on human health and the environment.

Procedure

At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher plans a **discussion** and shows a **video** about the rules of conduct and working methods in a chemical laboratory. Since the laboratory contains flammable and corrosive substances, fragile glassware and equipment, all of these can cause serious injuries if the rules are not followed. These dangers can be avoided if the appropriate safety measures and precautions are known and applied, and experiment warnings are followed. Accountability for laboratory safety is individual, and it is the obligation of every experimenter to conduct experiments in the safest way possible, without endangering themselves or others.

The teacher organizes a **discussion** about the importance of chemical industry products (which are familiar to students and age-appropriate) but also about the harmful effects of substances on the environment and the health of animals and humans. This interactive activity promotes common interests, builds mutual trust, fosters open and honest communication, and encourages solidarity and teamwork. Accountability during various stages of work can be achieved in different ways. The teacher can assign roles to students (e.g., producers of medicines, fertilisers, plastic packaging, detergents; environmental inspectors; doctors; chemists, etc.) and observe how they perform in these roles.

Most **laboratory exercises** are performed in groups or pairs, while students rarely conduct laboratory exercises independently. The teacher forms groups based on pre-set rules to include students with varying interests in chemistry, although sometimes students are allowed to form their own groups. Experience shows that success in practical work depends on several factors, including prior knowledge, skills in handling laboratory glassware, tools and substances, as well as collaboration and conflict-resolution skills.

The teacher **proposes scenarios** (e.g., environmental disaster, food poisoning, fire, etc.) and asks students to think about how to respond or what actions should be taken. The questions formulated should encourage students to assess problems from multiple perspectives, predict the consequences of conflict resolutions, and devise alternative solutions. Well-formulated questions stimulate critical thinking among students. For instance: 1. Why is the excessive and uncontrolled use of chemicals a problem for human health and environmental conservation? 2. When is the best time to take action to ban substances that harm human health and the environment? Why do you think so? Provide evidence.

At the end, students discuss how handling skills or adherence to work procedures can be applied in similar everyday situations.

Civic Education

Human Rights And Children's Rights

The *Guidelines for the integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national curricula* (Council of Europe, 2022) emphasise that the connection between Civic education and competences for democratic culture is evident from the program description and its educational goals.

T he focus is on developing skills applicable in everyday life within a democratic community, as well as fostering democratic attitudes and values. By achieving the goal and outcomes of Civic Education, as well as by the very method of implementing the program, i.e., active, problem-based, project-based, research-based teaching, mutual interaction and relationships in class, experiential learning and one's own choices in the process and method of work, **all** CDCs are continuously developed.

The Civic Education program is spiral in nature, areas are developed, that is, expanded and deepened through various key content concepts, ensuring interconnection (both horizontal and vertical).

With the above in mind, the following are examples of how individual CDCs are developed to a certain level by achieving selected outcomes of the Civic Education curriculum in different grades. It is noticeable that competences of intermediate and even advanced levels can already be developed in the first grade of primary school to an extent and in a manner appropriate to age.

Since there is a visible connection between the outcomes and content of this program with the teaching and learning programs of other subjects or free teaching activities, the examples that follow also indicate the cross-curricular connection with individual programs (only as an example, because there are more of them), in order to make it clear that there is a possibility of planning and organising thematic or project-based teaching. Planning and connecting can also be based on cross-curricular competences most developed through the given activities, and which are listed at the end of each example.

1. Examples of competences from the Values group

1.1.   Respect for human dignity and human rights

Description of the competence:

B: 1.1.a)   *Respects human rights and the rights of the child.*

I: 1.1.b)   *Advocates the belief that all state institutions should respect, protect and enforce human rights and that no one should be subjected to torture and degrading treatment.*

Selected outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the first grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise examples of respect for and violations of children's rights in their environment, stories and films;
- seek help in situations where their own or others' rights are violated.

Selected outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise situations where their own or others' rights are violated and show a willingness to seek help.

Already in the first grade of primary school, dealing with content such as: *Children's rights, Violations and protection of rights, Recognising violations of children's rights, Who to contact in cases of children's rights violations,* and achieving the intended outcomes, the aforementioned intermediate-level CDC can be developed. When students recognise examples of respect for and violations of children's rights and know how to seek help, they are effectively learning that state institutions or responsible authorities protect human rights and that these rights should not be infringed upon. Of course, students of that age are not familiar with the term state institution or competent authority, but a school, as an example of a state institution, or e.g., a teacher, director, as someone who is responsible for them, is, so that when working with them, concepts and examples that they can understand are used.

Proposed activity through which the selected outcomes can be achieved:

Don't fight!

Procedure

At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher shows a short animated film about the rules of conduct as an incentive

🔗   **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y21Flfe4Ays.**

After the film, the teacher asks:

? Where in the classroom are our rules of conduct displayed?

Once students point to the location, the teacher follows up with questions:

? Why do school rules exist?

? What do they regulate?

? Which children's rights are regulated by these rules? (since they have already discussed children's rights in previous lessons).

The teacher proceeds with statements and questions to direct the discussion:

? We mentioned the rule: *Don't fight!* Why is that important?

? Is it acceptable for a classmate to hit anyone in the classroom?

? Which children's rights are protected by this rule?

To emphasise the connection with the consequences of such behaviour, additional questions are posed:

? What happens if a friend hits another friend?

? How would you feel in that situation?

? How would the other person feel?

? Would there be any punishment or consequences for such behaviour?

? Why?

Through this line of questioning, students are guided to conclude that without rules, fulfilling duties and responsibilities, and respecting the rights of others, no one in school could fully exercise their rights.

Students are divided into groups of four to five, tasked with role-playing situations in which some form of violence occurs in the school. Prepared slips of paper with written situations are drawn by a representative of the group and relate to: insult, humiliation, hitting, tripping, pushing, mocking, etc. Their task is to present what each of them does in that situation from the role they are in. The roles are assigned by having everyone in the group say one number in turn, and then the teacher emphasises that number 1 plays the "bully" (without using this vocabulary, but e.g., a student who hurts another), number 2 the "victim" (i.e., the one who is hurt), number 3 the teacher and numbers 4-5 the other students who witness what happened.

After the role-play, the teacher asks the students why each of them did what they did in the role they were in, then why they turned to the teacher (if they didn't, ask them why they

didn't), and who else at school they can turn to in such and similar situations, as well as why it is important. The teacher guides students to conclude that no one should feel threatened or be treated in a degrading manner, and that when such situations occur, they should know how to seek help to protect themselves and others, as well as their own and others' rights.

Example of cross-curricular connection: with the subject The World Around Us (WAU) in the first and second grades of primary school (connection by content: Rights and obligations of group members, Rules of conduct for individuals and groups; and the connection by learning outcomes: behaves in a way that respects the differences of his peers and other people; adheres to the agreed rules of conduct at school and accepts the consequences if they break them).

This competence is further developed and can reach an advanced level in the seventh grade as students expand their knowledge of rights, with a focus on their characteristics (innateness, universality, inalienability and indivisibility) and their connection to the common good in order to ensure the rights of the individual, as well as the well-being of the community.

> **Cross-curricular competencies** that are most developed by these activities and enable cross-curricular connections: **most responsible participation in a democratic society, communication and problem-solving**.

1.1. Respect for human dignity and human rights at the advanced level:

A: 1.1.c) *Advocates that laws should be aligned with international human rights and children's rights norms.*

Selected learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the seventh grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- list the steps from proposing to adopting a law.

Selected learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the third grade of grammar school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- critically examine mechanisms for monitoring respect for human rights and sanctioning violations.

Proposed activity through which the selected learning outcomes can be achieved:

Rights and freedoms of citizens

In the seventh grade of primary school, students deal with content such as: *National Assembly – purpose and powers*, *Procedures in the work of the National Assembly, Assembly debates, Proposing and passing laws...* Students should only acquire basic knowledge of these con-

cepts about function and competence, organisation, parliamentary debate and proce-
dures, steps from proposing a law to its adoption and publication, thus ensuring the con-
tinuation of introducing students to the functioning of a democratic society. In classes,
the entire course of activities from proposing to adopting a law can be simulated.

At their age, it is interesting for students to discuss the relationship between law and
justice because they are more sensitive to injustice. As a stimulus for a lesson that
would achieve the stated learning outcome and the CDC, which would follow an intro-
duction to the different types of government (legislative, executive and judicial) and
their competencies, an example from the history of Belgium, during the reign of King
Leopold, can serve:

> King Leopold II was best known as the founder and sole owner of the Congo
> Free State."This state encompassed the area of the present-day Democratic
> Republic of the Congo. At that time, in the 19th century, mass murders and
> genocide were carried out against the local population. The exploitation of
> rubber, ivory, diamonds and other natural resources in the Congo was based
> on forced labour of the population, resulting in the deaths of about ten
> million Congolese."

Procedure

The teacher shows a photograph depicting Belgian colonial troops under King
Leopold II preparing to hang a seven-year-old boy in Congo. The teacher ex-
plains that the boy was hanged because his father could not meet the wheat
production quota imposed by the occupiers. A discussion is then encouraged
about students' feelings and thoughts regarding the incident, focusing on the
concept of justice. The discussion can be guided by the following questions:

? Could something similar happen in Belgium today? Could it happen in our
country? Why is that important?

? Which basic human rights and children's rights would be violated if such ac-
tions were permitted?

? What do you think is the responsibility of the National Assembly in proposing
and passing laws? Why is this important?

Students are encouraged to empathise with the boy from the example and to advocate the view that laws must align with international agreements, such as the Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, or other international human rights standards. The teacher concludes by emphasising, or reiterating if students themselves reach the conclusion, that the ultimate purpose of the separation and limitation of powers is to guarantee and protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens.

Achieving competence **1.1. Respect for human dignity and human rights** at an advanced level is evident **in the third grade of grammar school** when students critically examine mechanisms for monitoring compliance with human rights and sanctioning violations through topics such as: *The Development of human rights and International mechanisms for monitoring compliance with and sanctioning human rights violations.*

When students understand the necessity of limiting and controlling power, they are more likely to expect protection in cases of authority overreach and infringement of their rights. This fosters the development of other competences, such as:

1.3.	**Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law** from the

Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.3.b) *Believes that laws must be applied consistently, fairly and impartially.*

I: 1.3.c) *Advocates the opinion that all state bodies and public officials should consistently respect the laws and uphold democratic principles by their example.*

A: 1.3.h) *Advocates for the existence of legal protection measures against actions by authorities in cases of violations of civil rights.*

2.2.	**Respect** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

I: 2.2.b) *Respects others regardless of their cultural background or socio-economic status.*

3.4.	**Empathy** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.4.a) *Shows empathy toward people in distress.*

B: 3.4.b) *Recognises situations in which people in their environment need help.*

A: 3.4.e) *Expresses empathy, whether it involves feelings of joy or sadness, toward people with whom there is no direct contact.*

4.3.   Knowledge and critical understanding of politics, law and human rights from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.

Description of the competence:

B: 4.3.a) *Explains in their own words fundamental political concepts such as democracy, freedom, citizenship, rights and obligations.*

B: 4.3.b) *Identifies reasons why every individual has an obligation to respect others' human rights.*

A: 4.3.f) *Critically reflects on the evolving nature of human rights and the current state of human rights in different parts of the world.*

2. Examples of competences from the Attitudes group

2.3. Civic spirit

Description of competences:

B: 2.3.a) *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

I: 2.3.b) *Participates in collective actions aimed at improving community life.*

A: 2.3.c) *Initiates actions to improve community life at the local, national or global levels.*

Selected learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the third grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

▪ participate, together with other students, in identifying individuals who need help, in creating a plan, implementing the action, promoting it and evaluating its success.

Similar outcomes exist for other grades, so the proposed activities can be adapted to different age groups.

In the third grade of primary school, the Civic education curriculum includes the following topics: *Volunteering, Voluntary engagement of individuals and groups to help people, animals and plants, Motivations of volunteers – belief in the power of mutual assistance,*

philanthropy and humanity, and Volunteer activities of students in the local community. Through learning and addressing these topics, the listed outcome is achieved, and the **Civic spirit** competence (at the intermediate level) is developed. Depending on how the learning process is managed, this CDC can also be developed to an advanced level.

Proposed activity through which the selected outcome can be achieved:

Let's act together!

Procedure

The teacher encourages students to think by asking:

- What could you do to make the school a better and more enjoyable place? The most common responses and examples of actions suggested and later organised with the teacher include: cleaning the yard and classrooms, planting greenery, decorating walls, organising birthday parties or football matches.

From the proposed responses, the teacher asks the students to choose one, such as cleaning the schoolyard, and then guides the discussion with questions:

- Why is there trash (bags, cans, etc.) in the yard outside the bins after a break? Expected answers most often include: because students are careless and throw garbage wherever they want; because there are not enough bins nearby.

- If there are not enough bins, what can we do? Expected answers most often include: asking the principal to buy more of them; asking parents to donate them to the school.

- If the principal/school lacks the funds for new bins, and we cannot demand this from parents, who else can we approach? This can also become a research task for groups: one group could research independently online, while another could gather information through discussions with the principal, secretary, librarian or subject teachers.

Once students find out that the city's Parks and Greenery Department provides trash bins, they create an action plan in groups under the teacher's guidance. They first calculate how many bins are needed for the entire yard based on its size and the number of students. After determining the required number of bins, they create group posters of a tidy schoolyard. They then prepare a poster exhibition, inviting guests such as the principal, staff, members of the school's journalism section, and others, with one student assigned to photograph the event. Subsequently, as a whole class, they draft a letter to the school principal requesting permission to contact the Parks and Greenery Department with a request for donated bins. Once the principal's approval is obtained,

the students send a request letter and photos from the exhibition to the department. Upon receiving a positive response, the entire project is documented in the school magazine and on the school website.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Tenstudio

The aforementioned activities can also develop other competencies, e.g.:

2.5.   **Self-efficacy** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.5.a) *Demonstrates readiness to solve problems, achieve good results and overcome difficult situations.*

I: 2.5.b) *Adapts to new circumstances and overcomes obstacles on the way to a goal.*

A: 2.5.c) *Effectively solves problems arising from unforeseen situations and overcomes life's challenges.*

3.1.   **Autonomous learning skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.1.a) *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

3.7.   **Collaboration skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.7.a) *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks.*

Example of cross-curricular connection: with the subject Science and Society Basics in the third grade of primary school (connection by content: Living communities in my area and man's relationship to them; and the connection by learning outcomes: illustrates with examples the responsible and irresponsible relationship of man to the environment).

Cross-curricular competencies that are most developed by these activities and enable cross-curricular connections: the most responsible attitude towards the environment; entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial competence, communication, cooperation, problem-solving, working with data...

3. Examples of competences from the Skills group

3.8. Conflict-resolution skills

Description of the competence:

B: 3.8.a) *Shows respect in communication with all conflicting parties.*

B: 3.8.b) *Identifies potential solutions to resolve conflicts.*

I: 3.8.c) *Contributes to conflict resolution by pointing out possible solutions to the conflict.*

A: 3.8.e) *Contributes to resolving interpersonal conflicts by creating a positive emotional atmosphere.*

Selected learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- distinguish non-violent communication from violent communication among group members using examples from everyday life, literary works and movies;
- listen to the speaker without interruptions and with respect;
- make and accept suggestions considering the interests of all parties in the conflict;
- behave in accordance with the Student Safety Rulebook;
- cooperate and take on different roles based on group agreements;
- express opinions, justify ideas and make suggestions to improve student safety in school;
- distinguish behaviours of individuals that contribute to or hinder the functioning and progress of the group;
- establish, build and maintain successful relationships with group members;
- express their feelings and needs in a way that does not harm others;
- recognise and respect the feelings and needs of others;

- accept and explain using examples from life that every child has the same rights regardless of differences.

Selected learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fifth grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- analyse a conflict from different perspectives (recognise the needs of conflict participants) and find constructive solutions acceptable to all conflict parties;
- argue the advantages of a constructive approach to conflict resolution.

Selected learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the sixth grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- demonstrate active listening skills during discussions, present their arguments and communicate in a non-threatening manner.

Selected learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of grammar school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- demonstrate active listening skills during discussions, present arguments, communicate constructively and collaborate in a team while respecting differences in opinions and interests.

These outcomes and the development of **Conflict resolution skills** to an advanced level are achieved through teaching the prescribed content, such as, for example, in the second grade of primary school: *School community values – equality, responsibility, solidarity, care for others, tolerance, fairness, honesty; Conflicts – Causes and what to do about them; Viewing conflict from another's perspective; Mediation in conflict; Constructive conflict resolution;* or, for the fifth grade: *Conflicts and methods of resolving them; Advantages of constructive conflict resolution.*

In each of the mentioned grades, students are expected to distinguish between constructive and non-constructive communication and relate conflict emergence and resolution to the way communication is conducted. Activities to develop communication skills provide great opportunities and students usually participate in them with enthusiasm.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Tenstudio

Proposed activity through which the selected outcomes can be achieved:

Constructive conflict resolution

Procedure

One of the numerous publicly available clips, short films or presentations can serve as a stimulus for the initial conversation. For younger students and possibly even high school students, the animated film "Bridge", depicting a conflict between large animals trying to cross a bridge from opposite sides and the solution proposed by smaller animals through cooperative behaviour, is suitable. The film is available at the link:

> **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1900TBJ7q8&index=13&list =PLcp-zjbR-kZ7a5WU63KCheDY8234SUPgr&t=0s.**

The following incentives can also be used:

- a music video from the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia titled "Бирај речи хејт спречи" ("Choose words to prevent hate") available at the following link:
- **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHW23wa7Sgc**
- a short presentation on tolerance and conflict resolution:
- **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxgP-AxEnlI**
- a short film about conflict and its resolution to mutual satisfaction:
- **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XM9GSIg9eSw**
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioxMjTfFlj0
- a short film on active listening and conflict mediation:
- **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRk0JLjILDI**.

After watching the film, group work is organised where each group is tasked with enacting a conflict situation. After acting out the conflict, discussions are held with each group in front of the class about the causes of the conflict in each situation, who the participants were, how they behaved, how the conflict was resolved, how the participants and observers felt during the conflict, what needs, goals or intentions were thwarted, and what happened after the conflict. Then, after the groups have agreed on a solution, they present and enact how the conflict could be resolved constructively and what steps could be taken to prevent conflicts. The teacher then asks students to recall examples from their experience where they or their classmates communicated constructively and non-violently, helped resolve a conflict, and similar instances. All activities should aim to enhance students' skills in active

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Tenstudio

listening, choosing words carefully in communication, showing respect for others, influencing others through example and behaviour, and thereby contributing to creating a positive emotional atmosphere in the classroom.

In addition to conflict resolution skills, these activities can develop other competencies such as:

2.5. **Self-efficacy** from the Attitudes group (all levels).

3.7. **Collaboration skills** from the Skills group at the basic level.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.7.a) *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks.*

3.3. **Listening and observational skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.3.a) *Listens carefully to different opinions.*

B: 3.3.b) *Attentively listens to others.*

3.4. **Empathy** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.4.a) *Shows empathy toward people in distress.*

B: 3.4.b) *Recognises situations in which people in their environment need help.*

I: 3.4.c) *Considers the feelings of others when making decisions.*

I: 3.4.d) *Considers situations from the perspective of others.*

3.5. **Flexibility and adaptability** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

I: 3.5.b) *Adapts to new situations using new skills and applying one's own knowledge in a different way.*

Example of cross-curricular connection: with the subject The World Around Us (WAU) in the second grade of primary school (connection by content: Rights and responsibilities of group members, Rules of conduct for individuals and groups; and connection by learning outcomes: behaves in a way that respects the diversity of peers and others); with free teaching activities (FTA) – Life Skills in the fifth and sixth grades (connection

by content: socio-emotional skills – cooperation, communication, assertiveness, conflict resolution, recognition of one's own and others' emotions, stress management; and con-

nection by learning outcomes: critically thinks and makes decisions considering the context of the situation, assesses consequences and the best interest for oneself, others and the environment, clearly expresses thoughts and feelings, listens attentively to the interlocutor, communicates constructively with others, cooperates with group members, and resists group pressure assertively).

> **Cross-curricular competencies** that are most developed by these activities and enable cross-curricular connections: **communication** the most, **responsible participation in a democratic society, cooperation and problem-solving**.

4. Example of competencies from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group

4.5. Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability

Description of the competence:

I: 4.5.b)   *Identifies the effects of propaganda in the modern world and establishes protective mechanisms.*

A: 4.5.g)   *Assesses how economic and financial processes influence societal functioning.*

Selected learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise messages in the media that encourage excessive consumption, particularly among children and youth.

Selected learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the eighth grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- recognise mechanisms of media manipulation and the influence of media on their own opinions and actions; find and use information from various sources, critically examine and evaluate it.

Selected learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of grammar school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- link media freedom with the development of democracy, recognise examples of hate speech in the media, critically consider the issue of censorship and sensation-

alism in the media, the boundaries between the right to information and the right to privacy, list principles of journalistic ethics, critically evaluate commercial programmes in the media;

- recognise examples of information manipulation in the media.

Proposed activity through which the selected outcomes can be achieved:

Media awareness

- By engaging with content such as: *Media messages promoting consumption, children in advertisements*, etc., fourth-grade primary school students already begin to recognise messages in the media that encourage excessive consumption, particularly among children and youth, and identify the effects of propaganda in the modern world. Later, in the eighth grade, while working on topics such as: *Media as sources of information and misinformation, manipulation through media (delaying information, diverting attention, evoking emotions, creating guilt, fostering incivility...*), and achieving the stated outcomes, they not only identify the effects of propaganda in the modern world but also find mechanisms of protection using information from various sources. This competency is further developed in the second grade of high school when dealing with: *Sensationalism in the media. Commercial media programmes*, and achieving the aforementioned outcomes, potentially reaching an advanced level of CDC development as they evaluate how economic-propaganda programmes and related financial processes influence the functioning of society.

Procedure

To develop students' critical thinking, it is effective to ask them questions in an atmosphere where they can freely respond without qualifications and require them to defend or oppose something (for and against technique). The teacher can ask students questions such as:

? Why do you think that?

? What led you to that conclusion?

? Can you explain that? Give an example.

? What would happen if...?

? How can that be proven?

? Who claims that and on what basis?

? What is the goal of that?

? How does it look from another person's perspective?

? What influence can media have on us?

These questions are sufficient for analysing the information available in the media and on social networks, which can show students how much inaccuracy, arbitrariness, interest and manipulation of data we are exposed to.

- With older students, group work can be organised where each group is given a research task: to find an example of a media message exerting a specific type of influence previously identified (the teacher can supplement as needed): cognitive influence, influence on attitudes, emotional influence, physiological influence, behavioural influence. Discussions can then follow about how media influence occurs (positively or negatively) and the potential consequences for individuals and communities.

In this way, other CDC can also be developed, such as:

4.1.	**Knowledge and critical understanding of the self from the** Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.

Description of the competence:

B: 4.1.a) *Describes how his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour.*

I: 4.1.b) *Critically reflects on himself/herself from different perspectives and re-examines his/her attitudes and beliefs.*

A: 4.1.c) *Critically reflects on his/her emotions in different situations.*

A: 4.1.d) *Critically evaluates their biases and preconceived opinions.*

3.6.   Linguistic, communicative and multilingual skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.6.a)   *Clearly expresses his/her opinion on a topic.*

3.3.   Listening and observational skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.3.a)   *Listens carefully to different opinions.*

B: 3.3.b)   *Attentively listens to others.*

I: 3.3.c)   *Observes nonverbal cues in communication in order to try to discover the meaning of other people's messages and intentions.*

3.2.   Analytical and critical thinking skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.2.a)   *Observes new information based on previous knowledge and uses facts to justify his/her opinion.*

I: 3.2.b)   *Questions the accuracy of the information he/she uses.*

I: 3.2.c)   *Assesses potential risks arising from the use of various types of information.*

A: 3.2.d)   *Applies clear and established criteria, principles or values to draw conclusions and form judgments.*

Example of cross-curricular connection: with the subject History in the eighth grade of primary school (connection by outcomes: critically relates to information from the media using historical knowledge and skills); and with the subject Psychology in the second grade of grammar school (connection by content: Use and misuse of psychology; connection by outcomes: distinguishes scientific from lay approaches to psychological issues and critically evaluates texts and pseudo-tests in the media).

Cross-curricular competencies that are most developed by these activities and enable cross-curricular connections: mostly working with data, problem-solving, communication, responsible participation in a democratic society, cooperation.

Entrepreneurship
Start Your Own Business

Entrepreneurship is studied as a compulsory subject across all educational profiles in vocational education, whether at the third or fourth level of education. The subject's programme is the same for all profiles at a given level that were offered after June 2023. Differences in earlier available programmes are minimal, so the recommendations provided can be equally applied to all educational profiles.

The examples of outcomes selected and presented below pertain to the subject Entrepreneurship taught in the fourth year of secondary vocational schools. The themes covered in both programmes are the same, the recommended content is very similar, while the outcomes are adjusted to the level of education so that these examples can be used within the subject Entrepreneurship, for both level 3 and level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework.

The connection between the Entrepreneurship curriculum and competencies for democratic culture is evident in the learning objectives, which include:

- introducing students to the concept, significance and types of entrepreneurship, starting a business and the startup eco-system;

- developing business and entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, values and attitudes;

- fostering communication skills with the environment and teamwork skills;

- encouraging the use of diverse knowledge sources, critical thinking and self-assessment;

- enabling the formulation and evaluation of business ideas and the creation of a simple business plan for a small company;

- developing personal and professional attitudes and interests for further professional development.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / LightField Studios

The method of programme implementation, i.e., active, problem-based, project-based and research-based teaching, mutual interaction and relationships in the classroom, experiential learning and personal choices in the process and method of work, contributes to the continuous development of all competencies for democratic culture (CDC). The didactic-methodical implementation guidelines highlight that the *topics covered in this subject contribute to the development of democratic competencies, and it is important to further encourage their development using various methods. Additional materials such as publications from the Council of Europe, like the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture [CoE 2018], can be used to help students develop these competencies to participate in a culture of democracy.*

Looking at the subject's overall curriculum, it can be concluded that each outcome, either directly or indirectly, contributes to the development of CDC. The teacher can encourage the development of CDC through various teaching methods, stimulating examples that introduce students to the topic, or instructions that are given at the beginning of the project.

In addition to secondary vocational schools, where it is a compulsory subject, Entrepreneurship is offered as an optional activity in the seventh and eighth grades of primary school. Additionally, the topic of entrepreneurship is included within the elective curriculum of the Economics and Business subject in grammar schools. In the aforementioned programmes, certain outcomes directly correspond to the descriptions of competencies for democratic culture.

The following text provides examples of linking CDC descriptors with outcomes from the **Entrepreneurship curriculum for the fourth year of secondary vocational schools**, along with activity proposals that achieve both the learning outcomes and the development of competencies for democratic culture.

Example 1

Activity: **The road to investments**

As part of the Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship topic, students learn about the concept of entrepreneurship and the opportunities for starting a business. The recommendation provided in the subject's programme related to the teaching and learning outcomes is for students to independently study startup business development programmes in their local community.

CDCs that can be developed during this activity:

1.3.	**Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law** from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.3.b)   *Believes that laws must be applied consistently, fairly and impartially.*

I: 1.3.c)   *Advocates the opinion that all state bodies and public officials should consistently respect the laws and uphold democratic principles by their example.*

A: 1.3.f)   *Advocates for the availability of information of public importance.*

A: 1.3.g)   *Advocates the view that all those entrusted with legal powers should be subject to legal and constitutional control.*

2.3.	**Civic spirit** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.3.a)   *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

3.1.	**Autonomous learning skills**, from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.1.a)   *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

I: 3.1.b)   *Integrates information from different fields and monitors one's own learning progress.*

A: 3.1.c)   *Independently selects reliable sources of information, sets priorities and completes tasks.*

3.7.   Collaboration skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.7.a)   *Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks.*

I: 3.7.b)   *Strives to establish consensus in order to achieve the group's common goals.*

I: 3.7.c)   *Shares all useful information with group members.*

4.5.   Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.

Description of the competence:

A: 4.5.g)   *Assesses how economic and financial processes influence societal functioning.*

Learning outcomes from the Entrepreneurship curriculum for the fourth grade of secondary vocational schools:

By the end of the topic, the student will be able to:

- explore programmes designed for startup businesses in Serbia;
- identify possible ways of funding a business idea.

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

- explain the legal framework for entrepreneurship and startup business development in Serbia;
- provide an overview of legislation supporting entrepreneurship development;
- describe institutions and infrastructure supporting entrepreneurship and startup businesses;
- list programmes supporting entrepreneurship;
- explain the conditions for obtaining incentives;
- compare the conditions for obtaining incentives with legislation;
- differentiate between forms of non-financial and financial support;
- verify the availability of public information;
- state the effects of incentives on societal development as a whole.

Procedure

Students are assigned to conduct research on the topic of legal regulations in the function of entrepreneurship development in Serbia, institutions and infrastructure to support entrepreneurship, as well as possible ways of financing innovative activities.

To introduce the research, the teacher mentions some examples of fund allocation, such as public calls for grants within entrepreneurship promotion programmes, and directs students to specific laws:

- Law on Alternative Investment Funds;
- Law on State Aid Control;
- Law on Social Entrepreneurship.

Students, divided into four groups, explore the recommended content. One group investigates institutions and incentive programmes at the local level, while another group focuses on incentives at the national level. Students are instructed to find all necessary information online. If possible, a visit to an institution supporting entrepreneurship incentives is organised, or an email with specific questions about entrepreneurship incentive programmes is sent. The third and fourth groups are tasked with reviewing laws governing this area. This approach helps students develop *autonomous learning skills and collaboration skills*, as well as fostering an *attitude of civic spirit*.

After completing their research, students present their findings. One example of fund allocation is selected and compared with the legislation governing it. For the selected example, students check whether all information about the conditions of the call and the publication of results was accessible. Through discussion, they identify the importance of such information. The emphasis here is also on developing collaboration skills, as students have to exchange information and draw conclusions based on the findings of different groups. *By examining compliance with laws and the accessibility of public information, students develop competencies related to values – respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law.*

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Studio Romantic

During the final lesson, through discussion, students outline the effects of entrepreneurship incentives on societal development. This encourages the development of *knowledge and critical understanding of the economy*.

This activity can focus on a specific type of entrepreneurship, such as social, female or digital entrepreneurship, thereby highlighting the development of additional competencies for democratic culture not showcased in this example.

Example 2

Activity: **Social entrepreneurship**

CDCs that can be developed by this activity:

1.1.   Respect for human dignity and human rights from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

I: 1.1.b)   *Advocates the belief that all state institutions should respect, protect and enforce human rights and that no one should be subjected to torture and degrading treatment.*

3.4.   Empathy from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.4.b)   *Recognises situations in which people in their environment need help.*

I: 3.4.d)   *Considers situations from the perspective of others.*

4.5.   Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.

Description of the competence:

A: 4.5.g)   *Assesses how economic and financial processes influence societal functioning.*

Learning outcome from the Entrepreneurship curriculum for the fourth grade of secondary vocational schools:

By the end of the topic, the student will be able to:

▪ explain the importance of social entrepreneurship.

Procedure

Students are tasked with designing and developing a social entrepreneurship plan. As a stimulus and introduction to the activity, the teacher provides an example of social entrepreneurship. This could be the non-profit organisation "Lice ulice" dedicated to supporting those who have the hardest time finding work and who live on the margins of our society, or some other examples from the local community that is close to students. The teacher can use resources such as the "Catalogue of Social Entrepreneurship Products," available on the official website of the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, as a source of examples. Based on the example, students discuss the following questions:

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

▪ list examples of social enterprises;

▪ advocate the position that everyone has the right to work;

▪ recognise situations where people in their environment need help;

▪ outline the positive effects of this type of business on society as a whole;

▪ express a positive attitude towards ethical business practices.

[?] What is a social enterprise?

[?] Why are social enterprises important?

[?] What are the specificities of social entrepreneurship?

Students are instructed to research examples of social enterprises in their surroundings in pairs. After their research, each pair presents their chosen example and explains its significance. At the end of the activity, a discussion guides students to:

▪ identify situations where people in their surroundings need help;

▪ define a social problem they would like to solve;

▪ outline the positive effects they aim to achieve in the community by establishing a social enterprise.

Example 3

Activity: **Activate ideas**

At the start of the topic Business Plan, students need to choose a business idea upon which they will base their business plan. The business idea should be innovative, requiring students to be equipped and encouraged to activate their ideas.

CDCs that can be developed during this activity:

2.6.   **Tolerance of ambiguity** from the Attitudes group.
Description of the competence:
A: 2.6.d) *Accepts having his/her ideas and values questioned.*

3.3.   **Listening and observational skills** from the Skills group.
Description of the competence:
B: 3.3.a) *Listens carefully to different opinions.*

Learning outcome from the Entrepreneurship curriculum for the fourth grade of secondary vocational schools:

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

- explore techniques for selecting a business idea;
- exchange ideas with the group and justify their opinions;
- choose the best business idea together with the rest of the team;

By the end of the topic, the student will be able to:

- apply creative techniques in selecting a business idea.

Procedure

The teacher introduces students to techniques for selecting a business idea and provides an example of an unusual business idea. Examples of business ideas are widely available in entrepreneurship literature and online, and the teacher may also show a clip from a film about successful startups or entrepreneurs to give students insight into the world of entrepreneurship and methods for generating business ideas.

Students are then tasked with finding examples on their own and linking them to techniques for idea selection. Afterward, students are divided into four groups and given the task of selecting a business idea within their team by applying different techniques.

This idea will be developed within the project required by the subject's curriculum – creating a business plan. Among the best ways to generate an innovative business idea is to identify problems that need solving and work on topics students are interested in, allowing them to form teams independently.

When selecting a business idea, the "brainstorming" technique and guided discussion are used to help students creatively develop business ideas and select the most suitable one (which is also suggested within the recommendations for implementing the program). Students are encouraged to search for business ideas within their field of work, but this is not mandatory if they wish to explore other areas. Emphasis is placed on identifying business ideas within a digital business environment, which involves the use and application of information and communication technologies in nearly all areas of human life, work and activity.

Example 4

Activity: **Data under scrutiny**

Recommendations for implementing topics within the Entrepreneurship curriculum suggest that teachers encourage students to use as many different sources of information as possible and to have a critical attitude towards them. The goal is to empower students to rely on their abilities in finding and processing data and assessing its accuracy. In the abundance of data available to students, it is crucial to enable them to select and evaluate which sources can be considered reliable and relevant and which data should be approached with caution and verified.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / UnderhilStudio

CDCs that can be developed during this activity:

3.1.	**Autonomous learning skills**, from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.1.a)   *Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information.*

I: 3.1.b)   *Integrates information from different fields and monitors one's own learning progress.*

A: 3.1.c)   *Independently selects reliable sources of information, sets priorities and completes tasks.*

3.2.   Analytical and critical thinking skills from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

B: 3.2.a)   *Observes new information based on previous knowledge and uses facts to justify his/her opinion.*

I: 3.2.b)   *Questions the accuracy of the information he/she uses.*

I: 3.2.c)   *Assesses potential risks arising from the use of various types of information.*

A: 3.2.d)   *Applies clear and established criteria, principles or values to draw conclusions and form judgments.*

4.5.   Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability from the Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.

Description of the competence:

I: 4.5.b)   *Identifies the effects of propaganda in the modern world and establishes protective mechanisms.*

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

- collect data about potential competitors and customers;
- assess the reliability of collected information;
- determine the relevance of collected information for conducting SWOT and PEST analyses;
- process information relevant to research using ICT and other resources.

Learning outcome from the Entrepreneurship curriculum for the fourth grade of secondary vocational schools:

By the end of the topic, the student will be able to:

- analyse previously gathered market information about competitors and customers for the chosen business idea.

Procedure

The introduction to the activity is a discussion about the reliability of information available on the internet. To raise awareness about the importance of choosing trustworthy sources, students are introduced to the European Union Code of Practice on Disinformation (a document available on the official website of the European Commission).

The program envisages that the topic of Business Plan will be implemented throughout the semester and will include numerous activities from selecting an idea to developing a business plan. At the beginning of this topic, students are divided into groups, each centred around a single business idea, and they remain in these groups until the end.

Groups of students gathered around a single business idea conduct market research under the guidance of their teacher. Each group designs the characteristics of its product or service, striving for originality, innovation and creativity. To meet these goals, students gather information on similar products or services available on the market and engage with their surroundings to assess the potential for business success.

Students are guided through this process with an emphasis on using reliable sources of information and critically evaluating the data collected. Teachers present notable examples where companies faced serious lawsuits for disseminating false information about their products or competitors (e.g., advertised shoes as products that will help with weight loss and improve muscle tone or a refreshing drink that "increases energy" and improves performance, which was not supported by scientific evidence). The teacher encourages discussion on how this misinformation affected consumer behaviour, the company itself, and its competitors. Students then pair up to find new examples. After selecting a specific example, students are asked to check the information in various sources before presenting it to the rest of the class.

These activities emphasise developing **Analytical and critical thinking skills** by encouraging students to *question the accuracy of the information they use and evaluate potential risks associated with using different data sources*.

Example 5

Activity: **Developing a business plan**

During the implementation of the Business Plan topic, it is necessary for students to create a simple business plan that follows their business idea, devise various forms of promoting and selling their product, and interact with the business sector and potential customers. For a specific student idea, simplified examples of balance sheets, profit and loss accounts, and financial results are created. The outcome of this research and project activity is a completed business plan for the chosen business idea.

CDCs that can be developed during this activity:

2.3.   **Civic spirit** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.3.a)   *Cooperates with others on goals of common interest.*

2.4. Responsibility from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

I: 2.4.b)   *Respects deadlines and takes responsibility if he/she makes a mistake.*

A: 2.4.c)   *Fulfills obligations to others.*

Possible learning outcomes for the lesson:

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

- gather the necessary information for creating business plan elements;
- develop specific business plan elements;
- collaborate in a team, respecting differences in opinions and interests;
- evaluate their contributions and the contributions of other group members.

Learning outcome from the Entrepreneurship curriculum for the fourth grade of secondary vocational schools:

By the end of the topic, the student will be able to:

- participate in creating a simple business plan for a defined business idea.

Procedure

The activity of creating a business plan implies that students gathered around the same business idea have collected the necessary information about potential competitors, customers and consumers, and based on that, they approach the creation of the elements of the business plan. One of the main factors for project success is teamwork and the contributions of all team members.

Before starting work on the project, the teacher discusses the team approach, its characteristics and differences from group work. Students should come to the conclusion that teamwork is characterised by a clear division of roles and responsibilities, that the activities of team members are interdependent and coordinated, and that success depends on everyone. Activities within the team are distributed so that each student contributes to developing a specific business plan element. Once students have completed the development of a business plan, they can present their business idea to their peers, if opportunities allow, or enter it into business plan competitions held annually by various relevant institutions and organisations. Such a presentation of business ideas is suggested by the course program itself.

Many competencies are developed through this type of project assignment, but the dominant ones are those whose outcomes are that the *student collaborates with other people on goals of common interest, respects deadlines and takes responsibility if he/she makes a mistake*, and *fulfills obligations to others*.

All of the examples provided can also be used for the Entrepreneurship subject programs for both three-year and four-year vocational education profiles. Some outcomes in the subject program itself, for Level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework are given at a lower level, but but correspond to the above descriptions of the CDC. Teachers should adapt the presented examples and activities to the achievement level of their students. Furthermore, these examples are suitable for achieving the outcomes of the elective teaching and learning program of the subjects Economics and Business in grammar schools within the topic of entrepreneurship.

Information technology and computing

A Responsible Digital Citizen

Information Technology and Computing education spans all three educational cycles: in the first cycle through the subject Digital World, in the second cycle through Informatics and Computing, and in the third cycle through Computing and Informatics.

T hese subjects provide students with the key skills necessary to successfully navigate an increasingly digital world; they are designed to develop digital literacy, promote the safe use of technology, and prepare students for future challenges in a rapidly changing world.

The subject Digital World focuses on developing basic digital competencies from the first to the fourth grade of primary school. Students learn about basic digital devices, their uses in everyday life, and the basics of using these devices safely. By the fourth grade, students actively participate in projects requiring skills in text processing, creating multimedia content and ethical online behaviour, laying the foundation for developing algorithmic thinking and working with data.

From the fifth grade, the subject Informatics and Computing deepens the knowledge gained through Digital World. Students are introduced to more complex concepts, such as managing digital information, creating and editing digital images and text documents, and the basics of programming. The skills acquired through this subject enable students to develop their own programs, manage data effectively and use digital tools to solve real-world problems.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Gorodenkoff

In secondary schools, Computing and Informatics offers a deeper insight into computing, covering advanced programming techniques, software development, database management and exploring artificial intelligence. Students learn about the importance of privacy, online safety and the ethical use of digital resources, acquiring competencies crucial for personal and professional development in the 21st century.

These subjects play a key role in educating students for active participation in a democratic society. Competencies developed in these areas enable students to critically analyse information, understand the impact of technology on society and actively engage in democratic processes through information technology. This includes the ability to use digital tools to share ideas, participate in digital debates, and raise awareness of social issues – essential aspects of fostering a democratic culture in the modern world. Through informatics and computing, students can develop skills to become informed, engaged and responsible digital citizens.

Below is an example of an activity that makes the connection between key descriptions of competences for democratic culture and the outcomes of teaching and learning programs across different education cycles.

Activity: **Role-playing**

Competencies that can be developed through this activity:

1.3.   **Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law** from the Values group.

Description of the competence:

B: 1.3.a)   *Believes that schools should educate students about democracy and how to act as responsible citizens in a democratic society.*

2.2.   **Respect** from the Attitudes group.

Description of the competence:

B: 2.2.a)   *Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves.*

3.2.   **Analytical and critical thinking skills** from the Skills group.

Description of the competence:

I: 3.2.c)   *Assesses potential risks arising from the use of various types of information.*

4.1.   **Knowledge and critical understanding of the self from the** Knowledge and Critical Understanding group.

Description of the competence:

A: 4.1.c)   *Critically reflects on his/her emotions in different situations.*

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the second grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- explain the benefits and risks arising from communication via digital devices;

- differentiate unacceptable from acceptable behaviour during online communication;

- respond appropriately when exposed to inappropriate digital content, unknown or malicious individuals, or individuals communicating in an unacceptable manner.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Gorodenkoff

Learning outcomes from the teaching and learning program for the seventh grade of primary school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- conduct electronic communication in a safe, ethically responsible and secure manner, taking privacy into account;

- recognise inappropriate content, unwanted contacts and protect themselves appropriately.

Learning outcome from the teaching and learning program for the fourth grade of grammar school:

By the end of the grade, the student will be able to:

- identify current areas of computing and the problems they address.

IMPLEMENTATION

Proposal for the second grade of primary school

Activity: **Internet game room**

PHOTO: Shutterstock / Andrii Yalanskyi

Teacher's activities

Introduction: The importance of the internet and digital devices is explained to students, with an emphasis on how the internet is used for learning and communication.

Preparation: The classroom is organized into an "internet game room" where each table represents different online situations such as receiving inappropriate messages from unknown persons or unauthorised downloads of games or programs.

Game facilitation: The teacher introduces a scenario where students play the roles of an internet user, a parent, and a police officer.

Discussion facilitation: The teacher initiates a conversation about the students' experience and what they have learned.

Suggested questions for the proposed situations:

- **?** Why do you think it's unsafe to reply to strangers online?
- **?** How can you verify who sent you the message?
- **?** Who should you contact if you receive a suspicious message?
- **?** Why can programs or games be dangerous if not downloaded from official websites?
- **?** What steps would you take to ensure something is safe to download?

Student activities

Role-playing: Each student receives a role card (internet user, parent, police officer).

Interaction: Students interact with one another in their roles, dealing with fictional scenarios (e.g., receiving inappropriate messages or being contacted by a stranger).

Response: Students respond to situations in accordance with their roles and prior instructions.

Internet user: Does not reply to the message, blocks the sender and informs parents or a teacher. Does not download games before asking parents or a teacher if they are safe.

Parent: Calmly talks to the child about the message, explains the importance of not responding, and takes steps to ensure no further messages are received (blocking, reporting). Checks the source of the game/application and explains to the child how to identify legitimate and safe applications.

Police officer: Explains to the child and parents what to do if such situations recur, provides advice on reporting and protecting personal data online. Warns about the risks of viruses or data theft when downloading from untrustworthy sites and offers tips to avoid such risks.

Discussion: Students discuss what they have learned, how they felt in different situations, and how they should respond in the future.

Sample questions for discussion:

[?] How can we ensure we are safe online and help others feel safe?

[?] What did you learn today about various internet risks, and how will you apply this knowledge in your daily internet use?

Proposal for the seventh grade of primary school

Activity: **Online communication**

Teacher's activities

Introduction: Explains to students the importance of ethics and safety in online communication.

Preparation: Prepares online communication scenarios where students need to identify and respond to inappropriate situations.

PHOTO: Shutterstock / BearFotos

Game facilitation: Guides the discussion and ensure every student has the opportunity to express themselves.

Student activities

Role-playing: Students rotate through roles as sender and receiver of electronic messages.

Identification: They recognise inappropriate content or behaviour in communication.

Reaction: They practice appropriate responses, such as blocking unwanted contacts and reporting inappropriate content.

Discussion: Students discuss what they have learned, how they felt in different situations, and how they should respond in the future.

Proposal for the fourth grade of grammar school

Activity: **Ethical dilemmas and modern technology**

Teacher's activities

Introduction: Explains to students various fields of computer science and their societal impacts.

Preparation: Divides students into teams to work on projects over a set period within specific technological domains.

Examples:
- Machine learning (facial recognition, speech recognition, virtual assistants).
- Internet of Things (IoT): (e.g., pacemakers connected to hospital systems for patient monitoring, security cameras linked to safety centres).
- Artificial Intelligence: (automation of tasks, data analysis, decision-making, problem-solving in various fields).
- Robotics: (automation of complex or hazardous tasks).

Discussion facilitation: Teacher encourages debates on ethical dilemmas and the societal implications of technology.

Student activities

Analysis: After project development, teams discuss how their projects could impact society, fostering awareness of social responsibility.

Presentation: Students present their projects to the class, explaining how their solutions could contribute to a better and more responsible society.

Discussion: Students reflect and discuss about the societal impact of their technological solutions, focusing on critical thinking and ethical considerations.

Each of these examples involves interactivity and student engagement, with the teacher guiding them through the process, ensuring that learning takes place in a safe and supportive environment.

Implementation of the curriculum through Competencies for Democratic Culture (CDCs)

Through the teaching and learning programs in the section *Instructions for the Didactic and Methodological Implementation of the Program*, there is already a clear connection between the subjects and the competencies for democratic culture. Below are highlighted parts of the teaching and learning program where the connection with the CDC is clearly visible:

Teachers encourage students to share their experiences with communication through digital devices and without them, posing questions like: How do people communicate? How do digital devices improve speed and ease of communication? How do we communicate with physically distant individuals or those living in different parts of the world? Is it possible to communicate using every digital device? What prerequisites are needed for communication via digital devices? Which digital devices are "smart" and can we even discuss intelligence in this context?

> 4.2 Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication

Digital devices and the internet provide access to significant cultural and scientific achievements without leaving the classroom. Their use increases the accessibility of world cultural heritage. Nations produce numerous digital products to promote their own culture and showcase their achievements. Should we also think about and work on this, and what knowledge do we need to have to achieve the same, are the final questions for students.

> 1.2. Respect for cultural diversity

> 2.1. Openness to cultural diversity

> 4.4. Knowledge and critical understanding of culture and religion

Point out the fact that not all people who use the internet are well-intentioned. There are people who can endanger the property and even the lives of other internet users. In this regard, selected videos should be shown that adequately treat some of the most common occurrences from the spectrum of events that arise from the disclosure of personal data (name and surname, residential address, telephone number, photo, online identity). Theft: **http://bit.ly/Opljackani** False identity: **http://bit.ly/LazniIdentitet**.

It is extremely important for students to understand what data is considered personal data, as well as the ways in which people most often make it available on the internet.

1.3. Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and rule of law

2.2. Respect

Testing algorithm validity, correcting errors and designing and testing improved solutions are invaluable learning opportunities. (Only students that are aware of the winding path to success have a strong chance of achieving it.) Teachers should frequently place students in situations requiring them to evaluate pre-designed algorithms (instructions) for solving specific tasks, repeatedly identify and correct errors until they reach not only the best but also the most efficient solution.

2.5. Self-efficacy

Activities to achieve the outcome – the student will be able to "create simple graphic digital material intended for a familiar audience" – include choosing one of the topics and creating graphic digital material (static or moving images) intended for younger peers. This is an ideal opportunity to highlight to students that the knowledge and skills they have acquired in previous lessons can already be applied. The teacher organises a "visit" to first-grade students where the created materials are presented.

The satisfaction derived from applying one's knowledge and skills to assist others in their environment is a feeling the teacher should nurture in the students.

2.3. Civic spirit

3.4. Empathy

It is essential to discuss inappropriate communication (hate speech, insults, belittlement) and risky communication (contact with strangers) with students in a way that does not discourage internet use but emphasises the need for responsibility while using it.

1.1. Respect for human dignity and human rights

2.2. Respect

A crucial topic for modern society is the preservation of a healthy environment. As part of the activities to achieve the outcome, "The student will be able to propose environmentally safe methods for disposing of electronic waste", students should create static or animated images that raise awareness about the dangers of irresponsible electronic waste disposal and promote responsible behaviour towards the planet.

2.4. Accountability

4.5. Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability

The next important topic is the search results themselves. Search engine results should never be taken at face value. Teachers should emphasise the importance of approaching online content critically. They should explain that critical thinking is not the same as criticism, but that it involves approaching information by questioning its accuracy, origin, etc. The teacher should also point out that search results marked with the "Paid Advertisement" label are not necessarily reliable in terms of accuracy or quality of content. The reason for the need to critically approach information available on the internet is the openness of this world wide web – anyone can post whatever they want on it. While this openness carries risks, it also offers unparalleled advantages, such as knowledge sharing, access to information and showcasing innovations etc.

3.1. Autonomous learning skills
3.2. Analytical and critical thinking skills

4.5. Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability

Through discussion, teachers should highlight the defining characteristic of aggressive behaviour: the intent to harm, humiliate, anger or sadden another person.

Before sharing or posting anything online about oneself or others, students should pause and reflect on what they are posting, why they are doing so, who will see it (peers, parents, teachers), what others might think of them, whether their actions might hurt someone, and how the affected individuals might feel.

3.4. Empathy

4.1. Knowledge and critical understanding of oneself

Teachers should encourage writing messages in line with grammar rules and language norms, regardless of the communication platform. Because a person who is literate will never allow to act illiterate in written communication.

3.6. Language, communication and multilingual skills

The teacher should present an algorithm or program suitable for the students' age that includes repetition (e.g., a cat changes colour, a dashed line is drawn, a heart pulses). Students are then asked: "If we arrange the blocks this way, what result would their execution produce?" Students should justify their answers and debate their accuracy. The teacher can then present another age-appropriate algorithm or program that contains repetition, but also a mistake. After explaining the program's purpose, the teacher asks: "Do blocks arranged this way achieve the described solution? Can the program be fixed?" Students should propose solutions and, if necessary, debate them.

2.5. Self-efficacy
2.6. Tolerance of ambiguity

Using a pre-prepared set of web pages, the development of students' critical thinking should be encouraged through a discussion on the evaluation of information found on the Internet (the intended audience of the site, the author, accuracy/precision, objectivity, topicality and Internet address).

3.1. Autonomous learning skills
3.2. Analytical and critical thinking skills

It should be emphasised that through learning programming and algorithms, strategies for solving life's problems are developed; every task we set for ourselves in everyday life is solved step by step, i.e., algorithmically.

2.5. Self-efficacy

Teachers should acquaint students with children's rights as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, clarifying that these apply to the digital environment as well. Instead of questioning whether children's rights apply in the digital world, experts are asking: how can the full respect of children's rights in the digital world be ensured? Considering that the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most significant international document for protecting children's rights, teachers should especially highlight articles 2, 16, 17, 19, 34 and 35, placing them in the context of risks and violations of children's rights online (exposure to digital violence; hate speech, stereotypes, prejudice; exposure to inappropriate content; the misuse of personal data and identity).

1.1. Respect for human dignity and human rights

The teacher introduces students to methods of collecting and processing data. He points out to them the connection between civil rights and data processing, as well as that the Republic of Serbia has the institution of the Commissioner for information of public importance and personal data protection. It introduces the concept of open data and explains how to find, access and download it, emphasising that when using this data, the source from which it was downloaded should be cited.

1.3. Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and rule of law

4.3. Knowledge and critical understanding of politics, law and human rights

In the teaching and learning programs of subjects in the field of information technology and computing, there are a large number of project tasks that require students to perform numerous activities, including: independent information finding; problem-solving ability; independent learning; group work, cooperation; critical attitude towards one's own and others' work; decision-making; argumentation; adopting different, new ways of working; planning; meeting deadlines and taking responsibility.

Teachers have the freedom to choose the topics of project assignments and in this way various key descriptions of competences for democratic culture can be achieved. **Suggested themes and potential activities** are included in the curricula. Some of them are:

- responsible water usage and waste disposal in households; – developing rules of conduct (on topics: in the gym, in the office…, for safer work on the Internet, for creating a secure password, protecting computers from malicious programs, protecting health…);

- a tourist guide through a local area;

- designing a survey about digital violence;

- how could we redesign the classroom to improve learning conditions? (developing a program that calculates, for example, the cost of painting with different types of materials or the cost of different school furniture…);

- how to produce a healthy snack for a defined budget? (creating a program that calculates, for example, the total cost of establishing a greenhouse with different plant crops);

- because we are responsible: Research on the attitudes of peers when it comes to the quality of life in the local environment (online questionnaire on environmental, cultural and educational needs), analysis of the results and selection of problems that peers most often mention; Collaborative work on developing a proposal for a solution to the selected problem, defining an action plan; Presentation of the action plan at the school level (multimedia presentation, poster and logo created) and selection of people (students and teachers) who will be responsible for its implementation; Presentation of the action plan at the local community level (communication via email with the local government unit, cultural centre, etc.); Implementation of the action;

Through education in the field of information science and computing, students acquire key skills necessary for critically analysing information, understanding the impact of technology on society, and active participation in democratic processes. Informatics education equips students to use digital tools for spreading ideas, participating in digital debates and raising awareness about societal issues. This connection fosters competencies for democratic culture, enabling students to become informed, engaged and responsible digital citizens.

- bicycle with signalling (Researching the concept of "traffic safety" in the context of visual signalling, programming a physical device to simulate the operation of turn signals and other visual features of a bicycle);

- interactive album (creation of a program in the form of an album with: works by a famous artist, architecture of an era, the seven wonders of the ancient world… which enlarge after clicking, remain enlarged for a while and then reduce to their initial dimensions);

- popular films and music (students find open data about films or music on the Internet, analyse that data and draw interesting conclusions).

Council of Europe's model of competences for democratic culture

at the Basic, Intermediate and Advanced Levels of Development with Key Descriptor Registry[7]

VALUES

1. Valuing human dignity and human rights

1	Argues that human rights should always be protected and respected	Basic
2	Argues that specific rights of children should be respected and protected by society	
3	Defends the view that no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	Intermediate
4	Argues that all public institutions should respect, protect and implement human rights	
5	Defends the view that when people are imprisoned, although they are subject to restrictions, this does not mean that they are less deserving of respect and dignity than anyone else	Advanced
6	Expresses the view that all laws should be consistent with international human rights norms and standards	

2. Valuing cultural diversity

7	Promotes the view that we should be tolerant of the different beliefs that are held by others in society	Basic
8	Promotes the view that one should always strive for mutual understanding and meaningful dialogue between people and groups who are perceived to be "different" from one another	
9	Expresses the view that the cultural diversity within a society should be positively valued and appreciated	Intermediate

---

7   The register is taken in its entirety from the publication Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, Volume 2, Council of Europe, 2018.

10	Argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to help us recognise our different identities and cultural affiliations	Advanced
11	Argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to develop respect and a culture of "living together"	

3. Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

12	Argues that schools should teach students about democracy and how to act as a democratic citizen	Basic
13	Expresses the view that all citizens should be treated equally and impartially under the law	
14	Argues that laws should always be fairly applied and enforced	
15	Argues that democratic elections should always be conducted freely and fairly, according to international standards and national legislation, and without any fraud	Intermediate
16	Expresses the view that, whenever a public official exercises power, he or she should not misuse that power and cross the boundaries of their legal authority	
17	Expresses support for the view that courts of law should be accessible to everyone so that people are not denied the opportunity to take a case to court because it is too expensive, troublesome or complicated to do so	
18	Expresses support for the view that those to whom legislative power is entrusted should be subject to the law and to appropriate constitutional oversight	Advanced
19	Expresses the view that information on public policies and their implementation Advanced should be made available to the public	
20	Argues that there should be effective remedies against the actions of public authorities which infringe civil rights	

ATTITUDES

4. Openness to cultural otherness

21	Shows interest in learning about people's beliefs, values, traditions and world views	Basic
22	Expresses interest in travelling to other countries	
23	Expresses curiosity about other beliefs and interpretations and other cultural orientations and affiliations	Intermediate
24	Expresses an appreciation of the opportunity to have experiences of other cultures	

25	Seeks and welcomes opportunities for encountering people with different values, customs and behaviours	Advanced
26	Seeks contact with other people in order to learn about their culture	

5. Respect

27	Gives space to others to express themselves	Basic
28	Expresses respect for other people as equal human beings	
29	Treats all people with respect regardless of their cultural background	Intermediate
30	Expresses respect towards people who are of a different socio-economic status from himself/herself	
31	Expresses respect for religious differences	Advanced
32	Expresses respect for people who hold different political opinions from himself/herself	

6. Civic-mindedness

33	Expresses a willingness to co-operate and work with others	Basic
34	Collaborates with other people for common interest causes	
35	Expresses commitment to not being a bystander when the dignity and rights of others are violated	Intermediate
36	Discusses what can be done to help make the community a better place	
37	Exercises the obligations and responsibilities of active citizenship at either the local, national or global level	Advanced
38	Takes action to stay informed about civic issues	

7. Responsibility

39	Shows that he/she accepts responsibility for his/her actions	Basic
40	If he/she hurts someone's feelings, he/she apologises	
41	Submits required work on time	Intermediate
42	Shows that he/she takes responsibility for own mistakes	
43	Consistently meets commitments to others	Advanced

8. Self-efficacy

44	Expresses a belief in his/her own ability to understand issues	Basic
45	Expresses the belief that he/she can carry out activities that he/she has planned	
46	Expresses a belief in his/her own ability to navigate obstacles when pursuing a goal	Intermediate
47	If he/she wants to change, he/she expresses confidence that he/she can do it	
48	Shows that he/she feels secure in his/her abilities to meet life's challenges	Advanced
49	Shows confidence that he/she knows how to handle unforeseen situations due to his/her resourcefulness	

9. Tolerance of ambiguity

50	Engages well with other people who have a variety of different points of view	Basic
51	Shows that he/she can suspend judgments about other people temporarily	
52	Is comfortable in unfamiliar situations	Intermediate
53	Deals with uncertainty in a positive and constructive manner	
54	Works well in unpredictable circumstances	
55	Expresses a desire to have his/her own ideas and values challenged	Advanced
56	Enjoys the challenge of tackling ambiguous problems	
57	Expresses enjoyment of tackling situations that are complicated	

SKILLS

10. Autonomous learning skills

58	Shows ability to identify resources for learning (e.g., people, books, internet)	Basic
59	Seeks clarification of new information from other people when needed	
60	Can learn about new topics with minimal supervision	Intermediate
61	Can assess the quality of his/her own work	
62	Can select the most reliable sources of information or advice from the range available	Advanced
63	Shows ability to monitor, define, prioritise and complete tasks without direct oversight	

11. Analytical and critical thinking skills

64	Can identify similarities and differences between new information and what is already known	Basic
65	Uses evidence to support his/her opinions	
66	Can assess the risks associated with different options	Intermediate
67	Shows that he/she thinks about whether the information he/she uses is correct	
68	Can identify any discrepancies or inconsistencies or divergences in materials being analysed	Advanced
69	Can use explicit and specifiable criteria, principles or values to make judgments	

12. Skills of listening and observing

70	Listens carefully to differing opinions	Basic
71	Listens attentively to other people	
72	Watches speakers' gestures and general body language to help himself/herself to figure out the meaning of what they are saying	Intermediate
73	Can listen effectively in order to decipher another person's meanings and intentions	
74	Pays attention to what other people imply but do not say	Advanced
75	Notices how people with other cultural affiliations react in different ways to the same situation	

13. Empathy

76	Can recognise when a companion needs his/her help	Basic
77	Expresses sympathy for the bad things that he/she has seen happen to other people	
78	Tries to understand his/her friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective	Intermediate
79	Takes other people's feelings into account when making decisions	
80	Expresses the view that, when he/she thinks about people in other countries, he/she shares their joys and sorrows	Advanced
81	Accurately identifies the feelings of others, even when they do not want to show them	

14. Flexibility and adaptability

82	Modifies his/her opinions if he/she is shown through rational argument that this is required	Basic
83	Can change the decisions that he/she has made if the consequences of those decisions show that this is required	
84	Adapts to new situations by using a new skill	Intermediate
85	Adapts to new situations by applying knowledge in a different way	
86	Adopts the sociocultural conventions of other cultural target groups when interacting with members of those groups	Advanced
87	Can modify his/her own behaviour to make it appropriate to other cultures	

15. Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills

88	Can express his/her thoughts on a problem	Basic
89	Asks speakers to repeat what they have said if it wasn't clear to him/her	
90	Asks questions that show his/her understanding of other people's positions	Intermediate
91	Can adopt different ways of expressing politeness in another language	
92	Can mediate linguistically in intercultural exchanges by translating, interpreting or explaining	Advanced
93	Can avoid successfully intercultural misunderstandings	

16. Co-operation skills

94	Builds positive relationships with other people in a group	Basic
95	When working as a member of a group, does his/her share of the group's work	
96	Works to build consensus to achieve group goals	Intermediate
97	When working as a member of a group, keeps others informed about any relevant or useful information	
98	Generates enthusiasm among group members for accomplishing shared goals	Advanced
99	When working with others, supports other people despite differences in points of view	

17. Conflict-resolution skills

100	Can communicate with conflicting parties in a respectful manner	Basic
101	Can identify options for resolving conflicts	
102	Can assist others to resolve conflicts by enhancing their understanding of the available options	Intermediate
103	Can encourage the parties involved in conflicts to actively listen to each other and share their issues and concerns	
104	Regularly initiates communication to help solve interpersonal conflicts	Advanced
105	Can deal effectively with other people's emotional stress, anxiety and insecurity in situations involving conflict	

KNOWLEDGE AND CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING

18. Knowledge and critical understanding of the self

106	Can describe his/her own motivations	Basic
107	Can describe the ways in which his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour	
108	Can reflect critically on his/her own values and beliefs	Intermediate
109	Can reflect critically on himself/herself from a number of different perspectives	
110	Can reflect critically on his/her own prejudices and stereotypes and what lies behind them	Advanced
111	Can reflect critically on his/her own emotions and feelings in a wide range of situations	

19. Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication

112	Can explain how tone of voice, eye contact and body language can aid communication	Basic
113	Can describe the social impact and effects on others of different communication styles	Intermediate
114	Can explain how social relationships are sometimes encoded in the linguistic forms that are used in conversations (e.g. in greetings, forms of address, use of expletives)	

115	Can explain why people of other cultural affiliations may follow different verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions which are meaningful from their perspective	Advanced
116	Can reflect critically on the different communicative conventions that are employed in at least one other social group or culture	

20. Knowledge and critical understanding of the world (including politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, the environment and sustainability

117	Can explain the meaning of basic political concepts, including democracy, freedom, citizenship, rights and responsibilities	Basic
118	Can explain why everybody has a responsibility to respect the human rights of others	
119	Can describe basic cultural practices (e.g. eating habits, greeting practices, ways of addressing people, politeness) in one other culture	
120	Can reflect critically on how his/her own world view is just one of many world views	
121	Can assess society's impact on the natural world, for example, in terms of population growth, population development, resource consumption	
122	Can reflect critically on the risks associated with environmental damage	
123	Can explain the universal, inalienable and indivisible nature of human rights	Intermediate
124	Can reflect critically on the relationship between human rights, democracy, peace and security in a globalised world	
125	Can reflect critically on the root causes of human rights violations, including the role of stereotypes and prejudice in processes that lead to human rights abuses	
126	Can explain the dangers of generalising from individual behaviours to an entire culture	
127	Can reflect critically on religious symbols, religious rituals and the religious uses of language	
128	Can describe the effects that propaganda has in the contemporary world	
129	Can explain how people can guard and protect themselves against propaganda	

130	Can describe the diverse ways in which citizens can influence policy	Advanced
131	Can reflect critically on the evolving nature of the human rights framework and the ongoing development of human rights in different regions of the world	
132	Can explain why there are no cultural groups that have fixed inherent characteristics	
133	Can explain why all religious groups are constantly evolving and changing	
134	Can reflect critically on how histories are often presented and taught from an ethnocentric point of view	
135	Can explain national economies and how economic and financial processes affect the functioning of society	

KEY COMPETENCE DESCRIPTIONS

on the basic, intermediate and advanced levels of development

Model of the Institute for the Improvement of Education

1. VALUES

1.1. Respect for human dignity and human rights

1.1.a)	Respects human rights and the rights of the child	Basic
1.1.b)	Advocates the belief that all state institutions should respect, protect and enforce human rights and that no one should be subjected to torture and degrading treatment	Intermediate
1.1.c)	Advocates that laws should be aligned with international human rights and children's rights norms	Advanced
1.1.d)	Advocates the belief that even individuals deprived of freedom have the right to human dignity	

1.2. Respect for cultural diversity

1.2.a)	Demonstrates tolerance towards different beliefs and considers it important to strive for mutual understanding and dialogue with groups that are "different"	Basic
1.2.b)	Accepts and respects cultural differences	Intermediate
1.2.c)	Advocates the need for intercultural dialogue and the development of a culture of coexistence	Advanced

1.3. Respect for democracy, justice, fairness, equality and rule of law

1.3.a)	Believes that schools should educate students about democracy and how to act as responsible citizens in a democratic society	Basic
1.3.b)	Believes that laws must be applied consistently, fairly and impartially	
1.3.c)	Advocates the opinion that all state bodies and public officials should consistently respect the laws and uphold democratic principles by their example	Intermediate
1.3.d)	Believes democratic elections should always be conducted freely and fairly, in accordance with national laws and international standards	
1.3.e)	Believes that courts should be accessible to everyone, regardless of financial status or other limitations	
1.3.f)	Advocates for the availability of information of public importance	Advanced
1.3.g)	Advocates the view that all those entrusted with legal powers should be subject to legal and constitutional control	
1.3.h)	Advocates for the existence of legal protection measures against actions by authorities in cases of violations of civil rights	

2. ATTITUDES

2.1. Openness to cultural diversity

2.1.a)	Shows interest in learning about the values, traditions and worldviews of people from other cultures	Basic
2.1.b)	Displays curiosity and eagerness to directly learn about other cultures	Intermediate
2.1.c)	Makes contact with other people to learn about their culture	Advanced

2.2. Respect

2.2.a)	Treats others with respect giving them an opportunity to express themselves	Basic
2.2.b)	Respects others regardless of their cultural background or socio-economic status	Intermediate
2.2.c)	Respects people with different religious affiliation and different political opinion	Advanced

2.3. Civic spirit

2.3.a)	Cooperates with others on goals of common interest	Basic
2.3.b)	Participates in collective actions aimed at improving community life	Intermediate
2.3.c)	Initiates actions to improve community life at the local, national or global levels	Advanced

2.4. Responsibility

2.4.a)	Takes responsibility for personal actions and apologizes if he/she hurts someone's feelings	Basic
2.4.b)	Respects deadlines and takes responsibility if he/she makes a mistake	Intermediate
2.4.c)	Fulfills obligations to others	Advanced

2.5. Self-efficacy

2.5.a)	Demonstrates readiness to solve problems, achieve good results and overcome difficult situations	Basic

2.5.b)	Adapts to new circumstances and overcomes obstacles on the way to a goal	Intermediate
2.5.c)	Effectively solves problems arising from unforeseen situations and overcomes life's challenges	Advanced

2.6. Tolerance of ambiguity

2.6.a)	Approaches people with different perspectives positively and refrains from making premature judgments	Basic
2.6.b)	Functions well in uncertain situations and views them from multiple perspectives	Intermediate
2.6.c)	Resolves complex situations and is willing to question personal ideas and values	Advanced
2.6.d)	Accepts having his/her ideas and values questioned	

3. SKILLS

3.1. Autonomous learning skills

3.1.a)	Identifies relevant sources of information and uses various tools to collect new information	Basic
3.1.b)	Integrates information from different fields and monitors one's own learning progress	Intermediate
3.1.c)	Independently selects reliable sources of information, sets priorities and completes tasks	Advanced

3.2. Analytical and critical thinking skills

3.2.a)	Observes new information based on previous knowledge and uses facts to justify his/her opinion	Basic

3.2.b)	Questions the accuracy of the information he/she uses	Intermediate
3.2.c)	Assesses potential risks arising from the use of various types of information	
3.2.d)	Applies clear and established criteria, principles or values to draw conclusions and form judgments	Напредни

3.3. Listening and observational skills

3.3.a)	Listens carefully to different opinions	Basic
3.3.b)	Attentively listens to others	
3.3.c)	Observes nonverbal cues in communication in order to try to discover the meaning of other people's messages and intentions	Intermediate
3.3.c)	Identifies different reactions of individuals from other cultures in the same/similar situations, based on prior knowledge	Advanced

3.4. Empathy

| 3.4.a) | Shows empathy toward people in distress | Basic |
| 3.4.b) | Recognises situations in which people in their environment need help | |

3.4.c)	Considers the feelings of others when making decisions	Intermediate
3.4.d)	Considers situations from the perspective of others	
3.4.e)	Expresses empathy, whether it involves feelings of joy or sadness, toward people with whom there is no direct contact	Advanced
3.4.f)	Recognises the emotions of others, even when they do not show them, and demonstrates readiness to respond appropriately	

3.5. Flexibility and adaptability

3.5.a)	Changes opinions and actions if he/she is shown with arguments that this is necessary	Basic
3.5.b)	Adapts to new situations using new skills and applying one's own knowledge in a different way	Intermediate
3.5.c)	Adapts own behavior when interacting with members of other cultures	Advanced

3.6. Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills

3.6.a)	Clearly expresses his/her opinion on a topic	Basic
3.6.b)	Asks the speaker to repeat something if it was unclear	

3.6.c)	Asks questions that show that he/she understands the point of view of his/her interlocutors	Intermediate
3.6.d)	Uses various forms of politeness/decency when expressing oneself in another language	
3.6.e)	Acts as a language mediator in intercultural communication	Advanced
3.6.f)	Avoids intercultural misunderstandings in communication	

3.7. Co-operation skills

3.7.a)	Builds positive relationships within a group and responsibly completes assigned tasks	Basic
3.7.b)	Strives to establish consensus in order to achieve the group's common goals	Intermediate
3.7.c)	Shares all useful information with group members	
3.7.d)	Instils enthusiasm among group members to achieve common goals	Advanced
3.7.e)	Supports his/her colleagues despite their different points of view	

3.8. Conflict-resolution skills

| 3.8.a) | Shows respect in communication with all conflicting parties | Basic |
| 3.8.b) | Identifies potential solutions to resolve conflicts | |

3.8.c)	Contributes to conflict resolution by pointing out possible solutions to the conflict	Intermediate
3.8.d)	Encourages parties in conflict to listen carefully to each other	
3.8.e)	Contributes to resolving interpersonal conflicts by creating a positive emotional atmosphere	Advanced

4. KNOWLEDGE AND CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING

4.1. Knowledge and critical understanding of the self

4.1.a)	Describes how his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour	Basic
4.1.b)	Critically reflects on himself/herself from different perspectives and re-examines his/her attitudes and beliefs	Intermediate
4.1.c)	Critically reflects on his/her emotions in different situations	Advanced
4.1.d)	Critically evaluates their biases and preconceived opinions	

4.2. Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication

4.2.a)	Understands the impact of tone of voice, eye contact and nonverbal communication	Basic

4.2.b)	Understands that different forms and styles of communication are used in different situations	Intermediate
4.2.c)	Critically examines the effects of different styles in communication	
4.2.d)	Connects different verbal and nonverbal ways of communicating between people from different cultures with their cultural identity	Advanced

4.3. Knowledge and critical understanding of politics, law and human rights

| 4.3.a)	Explains in their own words fundamental political concepts such as democracy, freedom, citizenship, rights and obligations	Basic
4.3.b)	Identifies reasons why every individual has an obligation to respect others' human rights	
4.3.c)	Explains how and why human rights are significant in society	Intermediate
4.3.d)	Critically reflects on the causes of human rights violations, including the role of stereotypes and prejudices in the processes that lead to these violations	
4.3.e)	Analyses the different ways in which citizens can influence politics	Advanced
4.3.f)	Critically reflects on the evolving nature of human rights and the current state of human rights in different parts of the world	

4.4. Knowledge and critical understanding of culture and religion

4.4.a)	Identifies basic cultural practices (e.g., eating habits, greetings, addressing people, rules of politeness) in another culture	Basic
4.4.b)	Understands that his/her worldview is just one of many	

4.4.c)	Critically reflects on the idea that individual behaviours of people from certain cultures should not be attributed to the entire culture	Intermediate
4.4.d)	Critically reflects on the significance and potential misuse of religious symbols, rituals and language	
4.4.e)	Analyses the causes of development and change in cultural and religious groups and their characteristics	Advanced
4.4.f)	Realises that there are some religious groups that, through various forms of manipulation, can endanger the mental and physical health of their followers, as well as deny them basic human rights and freedoms	

4.5. Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economy, environment and sustainability

4.5.a)	Identifies the impact of society on nature, including factors such as population growth and development, resource consumption, etc. and reflects on the risks associated with harmful impacts on the environment	Basic
4.5.b)	Identifies the effects of propaganda in the modern world and establishes protective mechanisms	Intermediate
4.5.c)	Critically reflects on the processes of ethnocentric representation of history and historical revisionism in the service of current ideologies	Advanced
4.5.d)	Assesses the way in which economic and financial processes affect the functioning of society	

ENG

The Member States of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whist maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and people beyond its borders.

www.europa.eu

The Council of Europe is the continent's largest human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

www.coe.int

Co-funded
by the European Union

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

EUROPEAN UNION

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Co-funded and implemented
by the Council of Europe