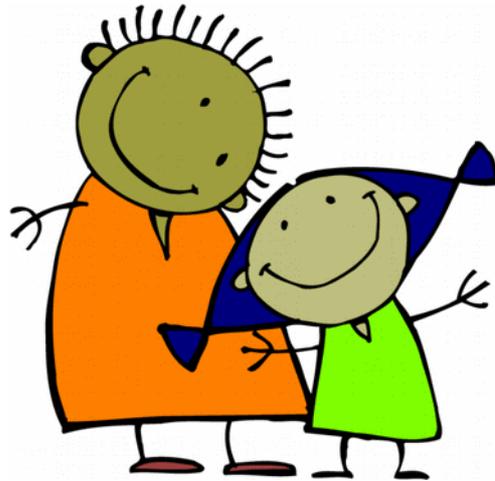




ATD
FOURTH WORLD
African Region



'A Guide to Organising Activities with Children'



'What's important is doing something meaningful, so that you know that, wherever you are, you have made a contribution to helping the world flourish.'

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Introduction

This 'Guide to Organising Activities with Children ' is a compilation of the things that we learnt at the training session for group leaders involved in Knowledge-Sharing activities with ATD Fourth World in Africa, held in Ouagadougou in June 2015: '**When no child is excluded, we build a better world**'. It's the fruit of our exchanges and of the contributions of every participant, and, with the help of everyone, we will be able to gradually add more to it over the coming years.

Through this guide, our goal is to provide orientation and additional ideas to all group leaders who want to help children with difficult lives to realise their potential.

Many thanks to all those who participated in this great work of knowledge-sharing!

Aboubacar, Abdoulaye, Ahmed, Aïssatou, Alassane, Alban, André, Annik, Awa, Edith, Elise, Enselme, Epiphanie, Evelyne, Fabienne, Florent, François, Françoise, Gisèle, Hamisi, Hippolyte, Jean, Jean-Pierre, Jérôme, Lamine, Linda, Modeste, Othniel, Ousseini, René, Sandrine, Sylvain, Victorine and Yacouba.

Our Ambitions for Activities

Through our ambitions we want to achieve our aims. Our ambitions are that the children, their parents and the community as a whole benefit from what we have to offer them. We hope that our presence and our activities support the efforts of all to build a better future for every child.

>Our Objectives for the Children:

- ◆ To build the children's self-esteem, so that they lose their shyness and are able to express themselves and to fulfil their potential: they have knowledge and abilities. To give them the opportunity to do things that they didn't think they were capable of and which their parents didn't think they were capable of.
- ◆ To bring together in the same activity children who aren't able to go to school and those who are, so that they can share their ideas. To teach children to live together.
- ◆ To help the children develop basic values, such as solidarity and friendship. For the children to become friends with those who have no friends.
- ◆ To value and make public what children have to say: *'There are always two group leaders. One asks questions which lead towards a certain subject and the other notes down what the children say. At the end, we ask the children to re-read their ideas so they can confirm whether or not we have written them down accurately. Sometimes a child will ask us to correct what we have written. There are also children who write down their ideas themselves.'*
- ◆ To give children access to new knowledge (without taking over the role of school): to help them discover the world, learn artistic techniques and make sure they all have the basics of an education... The children learn about their culture.
- ◆ To allow children to learn in a different environment, with a good atmosphere. School is an environment where some children don't feel comfortable. Our activities show children that they already know things, so that they can face school with confidence.
- ◆ The activities help supplement what children learn at home from their parents and motivate those children who haven't had the opportunity to go to school.
- ◆ To allow children to change their behaviour by highlighting the positive aspects brought out in the activities.

- ◆ To give children hope and let them know that they have a future in society. To give them advice so that they will succeed in life as the men and women of tomorrow.
- ◆ To ensure that the children are useful members of their community, today and in the future.

>Our Objectives for the Parents:

- ◆ To show families that they are the key players in their children's success.
- ◆ To reassure parents and make sure they know that their children are learning something good.
- ◆ To show parents what their children are capable of and their desire to learn, to give them the pride and the strength to go further in their encouragement of their children's education (for example, by enrolling them in school...).
- ◆ To create a level of trust through our presence in the neighbourhood, which enables parents to confide in us about some of their difficulties. If they have a problem connected to school, this enables us to mediate in parents' dealings with teachers.
- ◆ Gaining the trust of parents can also lead to them coming and sharing their own knowledge with the children. We need every family.
- ◆ Parents tell us that, thanks to our activities, their children respect and help them.

>Our Objectives for the Community:

- ◆ To break down negative prejudices about certain neighbourhoods or certain types of children.
- ◆ To encourage everyone to work together to achieve our goals, because *'if we act without the parents or the community we will fail'*.
- ◆ To enable the community to take into account children and their needs.
- ◆ To prepare for the future of the community: in 10 or 15 years the children we are with will be the adults of this community.
- ◆ By welcoming all children to our activities, we create understanding among neighbours and between districts where there are sometimes disputes.
- ◆ Through our activities we seek to create more cohesion, links between the rest of the neighbourhood and families that have been excluded through poverty. Our activities contribute to achieving this social cohesion, especially in new neighbourhoods where the people haven't got to know each other yet.
- ◆ Our ambition for children who live on the streets is that they are able to

re-connect with their extended family and be accepted by the community.

- ◆ Some teachers also benefit from the books used in our activities, particularly books about culture, about animals that the children don't know, about the world...

> We the organisers also gain from these activities:

- ◆ *'Through the activities we become dynamic. We gain in confidence and that makes us proud. It's because of the children that we can stand up and speak in front of a group. For example, in class we have the courage to stand up and say that we don't agree.'*
- ◆ *'We want to get a good education ourselves, so that we can pass on a good quality education to the children.'*
- ◆ *'We have gained a better understanding of the lives of the children and their families, especially of those who suffer the most.'*

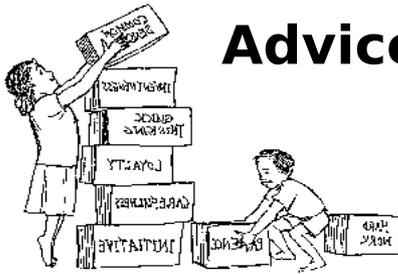


10 Stages for Starting Up a New Activity

The organisation of activities starts with good intentions, but our intentions might not be understood by the people who live in the neighbourhood or the parents of the children. Before launching a new activity in a new place, here are some stages that should be worked through:

1. We need to have reflected on our motivations. Why do we want to organise an activity in this particular neighbourhood?
2. We need to be able to introduce ourselves, our activities and ATD Fourth World.
3. We need to be able to explain what we want to do and why. In fact, the parents might be justifiably offended by us coming to support them in their efforts to educate their children without first asking their opinion! We can emphasise the complementary nature of different contributions to a child's education (from parents – from school – from our activities), or emphasise the community aspect of the activity.
4. We need to have or find parents who support us, people in the neighbourhood who will know how to explain to others what we are doing and who will know how to introduce us to their neighbours and defend us in cases of conflict.
5. We need to introduce ourselves to the neighbourhood authorities (the chief or leader, the mayor, the elders, the religious authorities...), explain our intentions to them and ask for their advice. These people can help us to choose the time and place of the activity, guide us towards people who will support us or introduce us to the local families most in difficulty. We will try to visit them and give them news of our activities from time to time.
6. Depending on the advice we have received and our knowledge of the neighbourhood, we need to choose the location of our activity well. This could be at someone's home, in order to be formally welcomed and to bring the rest of the community to this family, or it could be in a public place where we will be seen by everyone...
7. We also need to choose the day and time of our activities (depending on school hours, market days, the presence of the parents...), and the frequency: weekly, monthly... (think about our availability).

8. We need to take the time to be present in the area before organising activities, in order to make ourselves known.
9. We need to make a start! One day we have to take the plunge... and be regular and stick to our commitments.
10. After a certain amount of time, we need to take stock as a team, and with our 'resource' or 'go-to' people, so that the activities can eventually evolve (in terms of times, place, duration or frequency).



Advice for Organising Good Quality Activities

Make a Good Start: Scheduling

In order to succeed in organising good quality activities, it's important to hold scheduling meetings several times a year. These meetings enable you to choose a theme to work on over several sessions, or over a year, to schedule and prepare festivals, to set goals for the year, and then to evaluate these periods of activity. For example, you could plan three 'extraordinary' meetings: one at the beginning of the year to

'We have noticed that some children are alone...what should we do?' **Evelyne**

schedule activities, one in the middle of the year to see where you are and remind yourselves of your goals, and one at the end of the year to evaluate your activities.

The Cycle of Activities: Preparation, Organisation, Evaluation

Organising an activity is not always easy!

What's more, our aims for the children and the community are big! So in order to succeed the best we can, we should reflect on what we are going to do and prepare our activities well. Ideally, the organisers should meet to prepare the activity, to carry out the activity and to evaluate it. Depending on how much time we have, we can even prepare, carry out and evaluate the activity all on the same day. If we are short of time, we can always carry out the activity, evaluate it and then take advantage of our being together to prepare the next activity; every team organises itself in the way that best suits its particular situation!

'During the activities these children are rejected. I've never seen a family like it - they're the poorest family in the neighbourhood. How can I help them?' **Aissatou**

• Before the Activity: PREPARATION

Based on our evaluation of the previous sessions, we should ask ourselves what we are going to do for the next activity. Depending on what we want to work on (for example respect in the group), we can

'It's not for nothing that we choose a particular game or a particular story. For example, we make sure that the proposed activity will unite two children who are in conflict.' **René.**



choose a book, a song or some games which will allow us to talk about this issue with the children (see the Practical Information Sheets *Making Your Own Book* and *Cooperative Games*). If we are trying to understand the experiences of the children, we need to find how to phrase our questions to them or how to help them to express themselves (through drawing? Speaking in small groups?...).

'The children made fun of him to the point where he no longer went out. It took time - at least 3 - 4 months to persuade him, but he came.' **Lamine**

Whatever the content of the activity, it's important for **the leaders to organise themselves**, to assign roles, as in a football team where not all the players are centre-forward at the same time. Who's going to greet the children? Who's going to lead the singing? Who's going to tell the story/talk

about the book? Who's going to organise the game or crafts activity? (In this way, each member of the team can prepare him or herself in order to feel relaxed once they are with the children). Meanwhile, what are the others going to do? (Observe the children, note down what they say, greet those who arrive late, speak to the parents, go to fetch the children who haven't come, discreetly settle disputes among the children...) Of course the roles we choose will depend on our objectives. For example, if we want to create a place for Jo because he is especially excluded then one organiser will take on the role of being particularly attentive to him: Is he there? Do we need to go and fetch him? Are the other children treating him well? Do we need to sit beside him to protect him? Should we give him some kind of responsibility so that he feels valued?...

In this way, every member of the organising team can prepare him- or herself according to his or her role. For example, the person who is going to read the story can take the book and read it several times to him- or herself, or read it out to his or her brothers and sisters, in order to feel more relaxed when it comes to doing it during the activity itself.

Depending on the nature of the activity, **we also need to prepare the materials:** do we need mats? pencils? paper? a book? the Tapori newsletter? a ball? a scarf? It's always a great pity when we plan a certain game and then forget the materials we need to play it!

We will try to make all these times of preparation enjoyable moments where we enter into the pleasure that we receive from being with the children and remind ourselves of our broader aims and ambitions.



• **During the Activity: ORGANISATION**

The activity itself can often prove both joyful and trying. We have the pleasure of being with the children and of putting into practice what we have

planned, but at the same time it can often be difficult for an activity to succeed. So we can give ourselves some advice:

- **Be coherent.** This is without a doubt the most important thing to remember! For example, we can't build a community where nobody is excluded if we ourselves exclude certain children from the activity! We can't build a community where everyone feels good, if we humiliate a child during an activity.
- **Respect and help each other within the team of organisers.** We must be careful not to humiliate another member of our team of organisers, for example by saying to the person reading the story: *'Leave it! You don't know how to read. I can do it better than you.'* Instead we should try to be each other's 'guardian angel'. While one person reads the story, the others listen with the children and discreetly intervene with those who are disruptive. While one person leads a song, the others sing with the children to motivate them. While one person organises a crafts activity, the others sit down with the children to give them advice, or help prepare the materials needed. In this way, the person organising the activity is relaxed and the children will get the most possible out of it. The activity is also a time of training for the organisers, an opportunity to grow and to take responsibilities within the community! Therefore, within the team of organisers, we try to share our knowledge and help one another to grow.
- **Try your hardest to read the story well:** if you read too quietly the children will find it difficult to follow you. You mustn't forget that you are reading for others and not for yourself! While you read, your gestures and tone of voice are important, because they hold the children's attention. And those children who are having difficulty understanding the words can be helped by gestures, or by changes in tone, which help them deduce the meaning of a sentence.
- **Observe the children.** An activity can prove an invaluable time for increasing your understanding of the children. By observing them, you can see which children are leaders (these children can help you integrate another child in the group), which children are excluded from the group (and see how they can be integrated), which children are comfortable using a pencil (and so could help others), which ones don't know how to hold a pencil (perhaps they don't go to school), which ones speak up, which ones are too shy to speak up, who helps whom...

'Through the activities we become dynamic. We gain in confidence. That makes us proud.'

'You have to listen to the children; sometimes they have experiences that they can't even talk about in their families.'

Awa

- **Give every child the chance to speak.** For some children the activity is the only occasion when they are asked their opinion and where they can feel acknowledged, interesting and listened to. It's by listening to



others that we are able to create a true exchange with them. We should allow each child to interrupt us and should respond to what he or she says...

So we should try to give each child the chance to speak, especially those who we have identified as the shyest, the least at ease, the most excluded. However, we also need to be careful to ensure that these invitations to speak do not create an opportunity for other children to make fun of the child asked to speak.

Some children can't manage to express what they are feeling in words. In these cases we can ask them to express themselves in a drawing, but we must then make sure that these drawings are given their due value and attention, that they are not neglected! (cf Practical Information Sheet *Valuing and Displaying Children's Drawings*)

- **Take notes of what the children say.** During or after the activity, we can note down what the children say and keep their drawings, which will enable us to present something to the parents, to reflect and help others to reflect on what the children are experiencing, what they know and what they hope for...

'There are always two of us with the children. One asks them questions which lead into a certain subject and the other, alongside the first, tries to faithfully record in writing the children's ideas.' **René**

'Often the child who is being disruptive has a good reason for his or her behaviour.'

- **Try to understand disruptive children.**

As we don't want to exclude anyone, what do we do with disruptive children? First of all we need to observe them and try to understand why they are being disruptive. Perhaps these children are being pushed

around by the others outside the activity? Perhaps they are finding it difficult to fit in? (Are they the same age as the others? Are they having problems doing the task proposed?) Perhaps the others are picking on them or making fun of them without our knowledge? Once we have understood what the problem is, we can try to find an immediate solution (sit down with these children, give them a special task or responsibility, do something just with them on their own...).

'Whenever that child was there, there was crying and shouting around him, so we gave him a job. It would be his responsibility to gather the children together and we were to encourage him in this task. From that day he has stopped hitting the others.' **François**

- **Give children responsibilities.** By giving children responsibilities, we enable them to fit in and find their place in the group, to feel useful, to begin to enjoy being helpful... All of these things are useful in the construction of a close-knit community.

- During an activity it's sometimes difficult **not to lose sight of our objectives**, and the organisers can help each other not to forget! However, nobody can do everything perfectly, and we need to accept that not everything will

always turn out how we had hoped it to be... whilst still giving of our best!

- **And if we have to cancel the activity**, for example because it's raining, we can still go to the neighbourhood and explain to the children and parents why it has been cancelled. In these cases, we can replace the activity with visits to the children's families or to the authorities.



• **After the Activity:** **EVALUATION**

After the activity we are often tired... but it isn't over! It's important to take the time to sit down together and share our experiences of the activity.

'Within the team of organisers we have to create moments for reflection. Rome wasn't built in a day.' **Jean-Pierre**

- We could simply **respond, each one in turn, to some questions:** Did the activity go well? What was the atmosphere among the children like? Did any parents come? Was the activity appropriate to the children who came? Who came and who didn't

come (you could make a habit of listing all those present)? Were the 'key' children there? If not, do we know why?

- It's important to **take notes** of what is said in these feedback sessions, in order to keep track of what we are doing and to be able to observe our own evolution, as well as that of the children, and of the involvement of the parents...

'If one day a child is left out during an activity, it's in the preparation of our next activity that we need to ask ourselves what we can do to ensure that this child fits in and finds his or her place. The preparation is even more important than the activity itself.' **Fabienne**

- In this way we can draw up **guidelines for ourselves** to help us organise future activities better, based on our observations of previous ones:

Should we work on certain themes? Be attentive to certain children? Find a solution to the behaviour of certain children?

- We could choose to write to Tapori International to ask for advice or send them the words or the artistic creations of the children.

All this time we take after an activity already serves as preparation for the following activities, and so things come full circle!

Beyond the Activity

We have seen that our ambitions don't stop with the organisation of activities for the children, but remain above all the building of a community where no one is left out, the integration of one family... So our

'They confide in me!¹⁵
Me, who believes
that I have nothing!'
Ousseini

role as organizers does not stop at the end of an activity. Whether we live in the neighbourhood or not, our goal is then to:

- **Set an example**, as much to the adults as to the children, of how everyone can be given a place, everyone can be valued, of solidarity...
- **Don't disappoint the children**, for whom we can become someone they can trust, who they could need to come and find at any moment.

'We try to win the parents' trust.'
Aboubacar

- **Communicate with the parents.** Through our activities with the children we assume a role in their education, and it is normal for us to take the time to tell the parents about what we are doing, our objectives, our difficulties and our progress, because these are their children! By

going to meet them (which entails knowing where they live and at what time we can find them, as well as getting to know them), we can become allies in the education of their children and in the

'If we act without the support of the parents and the community, then we are going to fail at some point.'
Ousseini

'We don't just want a moment of joy for a poor, dirty child. What we want is for that child's family to assume its place in the community. And that takes a long time. And the solution is not simply to give the child a bit of soap.'
Jean-Pierre

transformation of the community.

- It can be useful **from time to time to meet the neighbourhood authorities, as well as the children's**

teachers.

- The building of a fairer society, the education of children and the acceptance into society of a very poor family are all tasks that take time! Therefore we need to arm ourselves with patience and perseverance!





Practical Information Sheets: 'Ideas for Activities'

Shadow Theatre

Shadow theatre is known to have originated in Asia, and especially in China. That's why it is also called 'Chinese Shadow Play' or 'Chinese Shadow Puppetry'.

Materials

A piece of thin white cloth or a big sheet of white paper
Cardboard
Scissors, a box cutter or razor blades
Wooden sticks
String
Pencils
Sellotape

Find a Story

You will need to think of a fairly simple story which doesn't involve too many characters. You can choose a well-known story or tale or make up your own story.

How to Build the Stage

You can use a thin white or light-coloured piece of fabric, but a big piece of paper will also do the job. It needs to be stretched taut and should be placed a little way up, above a lower area (a low wall, a plank...) behind which the puppeteers can hide. You could also build a miniature theatre from a big cardboard box.

You will also need a source of light. If it's night-time or you are in a dark room, you can use a powerful lamp, which you place behind yourselves. If it's daytime, you will need to be in a well-lit place with your backs to the sun.

How to Build the Silhouettes

Draw the silhouette of a character or a piece of scenery on the cardboard. It's not worth going into too much detail, but it's good to choose a distinguishing feature (such as an eye or the mouth) which will show up well and help the audience to recognise the character.

As it involves instruments for cutting, this stage of the activity is not advised for very small children or for too big a group of children. The older ones could do it, or the organisers could themselves prepare a story in advance to show the children.

If a mistake is made while cutting, we can always fix it with transparent sellotape. If we have time, we can make certain parts of a character mobile, for example an arm. We just need to sew the mobile part to the rest (but not too tightly).

To move the puppet you fix a stick to it (or several if it's a big silhouette). Sticks can also be used to make a silhouette more rigid if it is too fragile.

Learning to Work the Shadow Puppets

The characters could speak, but it's often practical to use a narrator. In contrast to other types of puppet, which can move a lot and speak to the audience, Chinese shadow puppets can't make rapid movements and need to remain clearly positioned in front of the backcloth. This requires the puppeteers to maintain their concentration.

During rehearsals it's a good idea to check the effect you are creating by watching from the audience's position from time to time.



Making your Own Book

During our activities we often use books as a springboard for a discussion with the children - to provoke reactions and reflections from them. But books are expensive and we can't always have access to all the books we would like. Sometimes we would like to use a book to talk about a subject but don't have the appropriate book... **So why not make one?**

Materials:

Sheets of paper
A pen
A pencil and a rubber
A ruler
Felt-tipped pens or coloured pencils
A stapler
Glue
Possibly cardboard
Some books for inspiration

Making a Book in 10 Stages

1. Clearly identify the subject that you want to work on with the children (for example, the importance of not telling lies, of arriving on time, of not leaving anyone out, of helping each other, of thinking before acting, of not spreading rumours, of not straying from the site of the activity...).
2. Think up or remember a story or an anecdote of something that really happened connected with the subject.
3. Have a discussion to see if one of the proposed stories could help the children reflect on the subject. If needs be, modify the chosen story so that the children understand it well and identify with it from their own context and everyday experience.
4. Create the storyline: identify the different stages of the story you want to tell. Each stage could correspond to a page of the book and so to a picture too.
5. Ask yourselves if you will be able to illustrate every stage of the story. Will there be too many pages? If you aren't able to illustrate one of the stages, can it be linked to the previous or following page? Work out more or less what will be on each page ('on page 3 there will be will *this* sentence and a picture illustrating *such and such...*').
6. Polish off the story: are the sentences easy for the children to read and understand?
7. Next choose how to illustrate the text: Who will do the drawings? Will you put the text and drawings on the same page or on opposite pages? How big will the drawings be?
8. Make a rough version of the book, numbering the pages so you don't get lost, and not forgetting the cover.
9. Finally make the definitive copy of the book: write the text as legibly as possible in the chosen places and do the drawings in the spaces allotted to them.



Practical Information Sheets: 'Ideas for Activities'

10. When everything is ready, staple all the pages of the book together.

And, above all, before using your book in an activity, read it and re-read it in order to be confident and relaxed!



Practical Information Sheets: 'Ideas for Activities'

Advice on the Format of the Book:

You can choose the size of your book: Small enough to fit in your pocket and to show to 2 children at a time? Very big so that you can show it to a child, but in that case how will you carry it around without ruining it? Normal size? The simplest solution is just to decide if you are going to fold the sheets of paper you are using in two, or if you are going to use them vertically or horizontally... Any of this is possible! Have some books (books that the children like!) around you when you are thinking about this, as in inspiration: their format, the layout of the text, their length, the number of pages... Think about the cover and how stiff you would like it to be: You can make it from cardboard and stick blank paper on it. You could even make the whole book out of cardboard covered with paper if you want the children to be able to handle the book.

Advice on the Text:

Make your sentences short and simple, with words that the children will understand.

Think about what language you want to tell the story in. You could choose a common language or write the text in several languages on the same page.

Before producing the final version of the book, you could ask someone who is good at spelling to read through the text. You will be prouder to present the book to everyone if it does not have any errors!

To make reading the book easier, always position the text in the same place (for example, the text on the left-hand page and the illustrations on the right, or the text below and the illustrations in the middle...) And if you are writing in several languages, always position the text in each language in the same place. You could also choose to write each language in a different colour.

Write legibly and in fairly big letters, so that you will be able to read the text out to the children. Use a ruler and a pencil to draw lines to help you write straight. When the ink is dry, rub out these lines.

Advice on the Illustrations:

Make your illustrations simple, without too many details, so that the children will see the most important elements, for example the characters. Make your drawings of the characters big. Do a draft drawing before producing the final copy: Is your picture visible 3 metres away? If not, is it too small? Have you used enough colours? Are your strokes too fine?

In order for the children to understand the story well, draw the characters the same from beginning to end, for example with the same hairstyle and the same clothes. If you have to draw two children and you're not confident about making them look different, dress them in 2 different colours - that will be enough for the children to understand who is who...

If you feel confident, you can add more details to your drawing so that the settings look like places that the children know - houses, trees, cars, chickens... But don't overdo this - the children need to see the characters above all else.



Valuing and Displaying the Children's Drawings

During our activities we often ask the children to do a drawing after reading a story or discussing a subject. Drawings are very important for children because they enable them to express themselves in a different way, not just in words. This activity also gives them the opportunity to use coloured pencils and paper... something which that often don't have the chance to do at home or at school.

But what should we do with these drawings at the end of the activity?

Here is a suggestion for valuing and displaying these drawings by making a book or a fresco which could be shown to the parents or sent to Tapori, making all the children who have taken part proud!

Materials

Watercolours (gouache)
Sponges (cut into pieces)
Sheets of white paper
Glue
Scissors
Felt-tip pens
Coloured crayons

Choosing a Subject

First of all, it's a good idea to **choose what subject** the book or fresco we are going to make will be about. If, for example, we have read a story about friendship, we could ask the children to draw their best friend, or to represent what friendship means to them or to make up a story on this subject. It's a good idea to write the name, and possibly the age, of each child on the back of their drawings. It's also a good time to note down all their reflections on the subject.

Once we have collected up **the children's drawings and words on the subject**, we have everything we need to start our book or our fresco!

Size and Colour of the Background

Next we need to decide on the **format of the book or the fresco**: How big should it be (big, small, medium-sized)? How many pages should it have? We can either cut what we have down to size if we want to make smaller pages, or stick several of the children's drawings and words on the same page if we want to produce something bigger.

Once we have the right number of sheets and size of paper, we can make a **coloured background**. In other words we paint each sheet of paper on both sides.

There is a very simple technique for doing this, which we can use with the children: you take some different coloured watercolours (gouache), mix them with a little water, soak the sponge pieces in it and paint! You can either make straight lines, use the sponge to stamp or work in all directions. You can choose one single colour or mix several together - whatever you prefer!



Practical Information Sheets: 'Ideas for Activities'

Next you leave the sheets of paper to dry, and when they are dry you paint the other side.

If we want to make a book then we make a pile of the painted sheets and fold them down the middle. Then we can sew or staple them together or tie them together with a ribbon.

Displaying the Drawings

After that, we **cut out the children's drawings**: Often a child will have done a small drawing in the middle or the corner of the sheet of paper, so we will carefully cut around it in order to keep just the subject of the drawing.

Now it's time for **the final product**: we will go over the outline of the drawing in black felt tip to make it stand out. Remember – the aim is not to improve the drawing – we should be faithful to exactly what the child has drawn, even if the person has a strange head or the house is wonky! If there is no colour, we could perhaps colour the drawing in very lightly using coloured pencils (felt-tip is too thick so it creates a danger that you will no longer be able to see anything of the original drawing).

Making the Book or the Fresco

Once you have all the drawings, **place them** on the painted papers, **without gluing them**. Try to find the most attractive arrangement possible to express what the children wanted to say through their drawings. Think about the text you are going to add around the drawings and about the details that you can add. When you are sure that you don't want to make any more changes you can stick all the pictures onto the coloured paper.

Then you can **add little details**, whether drawn by yourselves or cut out of magazines... For example, a sun or a tree if you want to create a landscape...

And finally, **you write the text around the drawings**. This could take the form of a text created with the children (for example, a story written together) or their words as quotations, giving the first name of the child (for example 'Without friends you can't be happy.' Simon, 8).

Finishing Touches

To finish off, you can make a beautiful cover for your book, or frame the fresco. It's a good idea to add the names of all the participants – children and adults. And to include the country, the city, the neighbourhood and the group where the book or the fresco was created and also the date, in order to remember all these good moments!



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Cooperative Games

At school or at work competition plays a major role in our lives. So what happens to those who are not high performers, those who don't win? In contrast to the elitism of our societies, in our activities we want to develop a spirit of cooperation and working together.

The sharing and coming together of social and practical skills enables each of us to have a place in society and all of us to be enriched: 'There is nobody without skills or knowledge', and even, 'Let those who believe themselves without knowledge or skills teach those who think they know something' - mottos of the 'Courtyard of a Hundred Trades' in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

At the training session in Ouagadougou we tried out 9 cooperative games which didn't require any special materials. Each participant received a handout on these games, which are for groups of children aged 6 to 10, 11 to 13 or 13 to 16 and aim to develop their awareness of others, physical contact with others, verbal or non-verbal expression, self-confidence and trust in others, and to help them discover their own limits and those of others and develop solidarity within the group.

These games are taken from the book '**Jeux coopératifs pour bâtir la paix**' by Mildred Masheder, Université de Paix, éditions Chronique Sociale. (In English see her books '**Let's Play Together: Over 300 Co-Operative Games for Children and Adults**' (Green Print, 1989) and '**Let's Co-operate: Activities and Ideas for Parents and Teachers of Young Children for Peaceful Conflict Solving**' (Green Print, 1997).)

You can also discover new cooperative games on certain websites, such as: www.grainesdepaix.org (in English: http://www.graines-de-paix.org/en/graines_de_paix_bienvenue)



Read/Share a Tabori Mini-Book with the Children

This sheet could also apply to 'The Tabori Newsletter'. The procedure is similar but involves adaptation according to the content, which often varies.

A Tabori mini-book is an educational document designed for activities with children. It generally tells the story of a child in a difficult situation. Subsequently it (often) shows the efforts and gestures of friendship, solidarity, peace and encouragement made to ensure that all children have the same rights and the same opportunities. The main purpose is to encourage reflection and act as a springboard for activities on different subjects, such as those mentioned above. A mini-book can even be the subject of a Tabori campaign or a Tabori newsletter... After reading it, the children might decide to write to each other through their groups, or to write to the child in the story. Therefore it is important to make any adaptations necessary to facilitate their understanding.

How? The procedure can vary depending on the cultural realities of the country concerned, such as the language, but, in general, three stages are necessary:

1. Preparation

Some days before the activity (and the night before, or the morning before if it is taking place in the afternoon) it is essential for the organiser to prepare (reading and re-reading) the story in order to understand it. This enables us to:

- choose the book we are going to share with the children.
- work out in advance the adaptations we need to make depending on the language we will use. The language that the book is written in may be different from the language we will use in our exchange with the children.
- decide on a subject specific to the content which could be relevant to a situation in the environment or society on which our reflection with the children will be focused. This shouldn't take us too far away from the heart of the story.
- decide how we are going to use the book: perhaps telling the story in the local language while showing each page to the children, or reading each page and then translating it into the local language, or preparing a child who knows the story well to tell it to the others, showing them the pages as with a story learned with his/her parents or at school... You can imagine other ways too. The most important thing is to bear in mind that the active participation of the children is fundamental to their understanding.
- prepare in advance as a team how you are going to maintain order during the session.

2. The Activity Itself

- It's essential to show the children the first page and ask them what they see: then give each of them time to express him or herself. If a child knows how to read or has read the title, it's a good idea for the others to repeat it after him or her. It's as though the announcement of the subject to be discussed is coming from this child.
- The reading begins straight away, using the method chosen during the preparation of the activity. This can vary depending on how the organiser sees things evolving. He or she needs to be flexible and open to change.



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- After you have read several pages, review: ask a child to recap on the story so far. If he or she has forgotten something, ask another child to add information. Solidarity within the group is built up as the children complement one another.
- It may be that none of the children want to recap on the story. Don't force them to speak. In this case, ask three or four comprehension questions on the part you have read.
- Proceed like this until the end.
- After the last recap by the children, ask some comprehension questions.

3. Application

In this part of the activity, the organiser asks questions to open up a debate with the children. The most common questions are:

- What did you find unfair or unjust in the story?
- What did you like in the story?
- What or who does the story make you think about? (In order to discover if the story makes the children think about a similar situation that they have seen or experienced.)

Generally every Taporí mini-book includes some questions at the end of the story. You can use these if you feel they are appropriate.

- Ask a child to explain in more detail what was important to him or her in the story - what was close to his or her heart.
- Encourage everyone to speak: don't just pay attention to the brave ones who are used to speaking. Encourage those who aren't often brave enough to speak.
- Take accurate notes of what the children say during the activity. The testimony of one of them could be the subject of another story to be developed.
- After you have noted down the words of a child, read them back to him or her and ask them if that is exactly what he or she meant to say.
- The children who know how to write can write something there and then or at home. They can bring what they have written to the next meeting or the organiser can go round to collect it from them at home. This can sometimes be a way of involving the family in activities.

4. Don't Forget...

- As far as possible there should be a minimum of two activity leaders present: one reads the story and the other maintains order (in other words, deals with those who are restless or distracted or who disturb the others).
- When the children seem de-motivated or tired, break up the activity with games or short songs.
- Make sure that no child is left out by the others.
- Give equal importance to all the children. Those who think that nobody is interested in them could disappear and never come back.
- Don't take up too much of the children's time, especially when their parents need them at home. Otherwise the family might not let them take part in your activities again.



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- Ask a child's permission before writing down what he or she says.
- Share the children's reflections and drawings with Taporí International headquarters or find other ways of valuing and displaying them (*cf Practical Information Sheet 'Valuing and Displaying the Children's Drawings'*).
- After the activity, hold a debriefing session with the team of organizers to evaluate it and decide on a follow-up activity: Drawing? A crafts activity? Writing a story?
- Always remind the adults in the children's families not to do everything for them, but simply to accompany them in their activities.



The Children, Young People and Parents Tell a Story Based on the Illustrations in a Book

This is a technique that enables us to get together and create a good environment within the group, to achieve a good understanding of the story told together, to encourage the participation of those children who can't read and to open up a dialogue on our understanding of a story and the moral to be taken from it.

- Choose the book to be used well, with respect to your audience and the subject you would like to deal with.
- Guide the children according to what they can understand of the book. (You don't necessarily have to stick to the story exactly).
- Show the drawings and illustrations page by page slowly.
- With every page, ask each participant what he or she sees and what he or she understands of the story.
- With the first page, first of all ask those who are more comfortable and used to speaking, so that those who are shyer will understand what is expected of them.
- It's important to take time over the first page, so that everyone understands.
- After the second page, first ask the shy participants and those who didn't reply the first time, so that each participant can move towards the same level of comprehension. This gives them the chance to catch up with the others, as the first page has introduced them to the book and the activity.
- Never tell a child that he or she has misunderstood something, but find a way to make a link to the correct answer. Otherwise the child could be discouraged.
- Create an atmosphere in which the participants help each other to gain a good understanding of the story.
- At the end of the presentation, ask 2 or 3 children to re-tell the story using the book.

Finally give each participant the opportunity to speak, so that he or she can say what they take away from the story, what moral or question it leaves us with. Make sure that this moment is one of true dialogue among the participants. The group leader should also take part in this dialogue.



Making Cloth Jewellery

In this craft activity you can make very attractive jewellery from pieces of cloth. It requires patience and precision, so it is something to do with older children or teenagers.

Materials:

Pieces of cloth salvaged from the tailor
A fairly thick needle
Cotton/sewing thread
Nylon thread (fishing line)
Clips/catches for earrings
Small beads
Cotton wool

- To make a necklace or earrings you need to take the pieces of cloth and cut them into circles of 6 or 7 centimetres in diameter, depending on the size of the ball that you want to make.
- Fold down the edges of your cloth circle
- Take a needle and some thread and tack all around the circle
- Fill with a little cotton wool and pull the thread closed. You have to close the gap tightly so that the cotton wool doesn't come out.

For the Necklace

- Once you've made all the balls, take a big needle and make a hole through the centre of each of them.
- Take the fishing line and thread the necklace according to your chosen design.
- Between each ball, thread 10 or 15 small beads.
- If the necklace is short, add a hook and eye to do it up at your neck.
- If the necklace is long, simply join the ends of the thread because you will be able to fit it over your head. Take a lighter and burn the place where the thread was cut so that it does not come undone.

For the Earrings

- Take two balls.
- Make a hole in each ball.
- Take some nylon thread or fishing line.
- Thread the ball onto it, followed by 15 small beads then the earring clip or catch.

Games



I Have the Ball (Modeste, Central Africa)

The children get into a circle, with the group leader in the centre.

Leader: I have the ball. (*pretend to be holding a ball in your hands*)

Children: I have the ball.

Leader: I hold it like this. (*put the imaginary ball on a part of your body, pretending to balance it there*)

Children: I hold it like this.

Leader: And I move it around. (*move the part of the body with the imaginary ball, as though you are juggling with it*)

Children: And I move it around!

Continue the game with different parts of

the body.

15-15 (François, Burkina-Faso)

Get the children into a circle and start clapping your hands to chant:

15, 15, Daddy gives me 15, Mummy gives me 15,

Is it really 15? Let's count and see:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

Each child claps the next child's hand in turn, while counting from 1 to 15 - one number for each child.

When you get to 15, the child whose turn it is should withdraw his or her hand. If the other child manages to touch his or her hand, then he is out. If he or she manages to take his or her hand away in time, then the other child is out. If you have fewer than 15 children, keep going round the circle until you get to 15.

Small Change, Small Change (Awa and Bénié, Ivory Coast)

Get the children into a circle and start clapping your hands to chant:

Leader: Small change, small change

Children: Small change, small change

Leader: 100 Francs in change

Children: 100 Francs in change

Leader: 2000 Francs in change

Children: 2000 Francs in change

Leader: 10 Francs in change

Children: 10 Francs in change

Leader: 5 Francs in change

Children:

The children must repeat the different amounts of change after the leader, but in cases where the amount cannot be further broken down in to

change (5, 4, 3, 2 or 1 Franc(s)), they should remain silent. If anyone makes a mistake they are out.

Do you know Mister Bendy? (Jean, DRC)

The children get into a circle, with the group leader in the centre.

Leader: Do you know Mister Bendy?

Children: Do you know Mister Bendy?

Leader: His hand is like this. (*bend your hand*)

Children: His hand is like this.

Leader: Do you know Mister Bendy?

Children: Do you know Mister Bendy?

Leader: His hand is like this and his arm is like this. (*bend your hand and arm*)

Children: His hand is like this and his arm is like this.

Continue in the same way, nodding your head and bending your knees, feet, back etc.... until, finally:

Leader: And then he walks like this! (*walk keeping all the parts of the body in their bent position*)

Children: And then he walks like this!

Thumbs Forward (François, Burkina Faso)

The children get into a circle, with the group leader in the centre.

Leader: Thumbs forward! (*stick your thumbs out in front of you*)

Children: Thumbs forward!

Leader: And chick and chack, and chick and chack, and chick and chack and han! (*hop up and down with your thumbs still out in front of you*)

Children: And chick and chack, and chick and chack, and chick and chack and han!

Leader: Thumbs forward!

Children: Thumbs forward!

Leader: Arms folded!

Children: Arms folded!

Leader: And chick and chack, and chick and chack, and chick and chack and han!

Children: And chick and chack, and chick and chack, and chick and chack and han!

Continue like this, but keep adding new positions: heads back, bottoms up, knees bended, feet in, hair on your tongue...

Little Ducklings (Enselme, Ivory Coast & DRC)

The children get into a circle, with the group leader in the centre.

Leader: Little ducklings are you ready?

Children: Yes, yes, we're ready!

Leader: Bills out! (*stick your lips out*)

Children: Bills out!

Leader: Feet in! (*put one leg back*)

Children: Feet in!

Leader: Shake your bottom!

Children: Shake your bottom!

Songs



We'll go to the ends of the earth

(Gisèle, Central Africa)

We'll go to the ends of the earth
And the library will never fail (twice)

The library, yes, yes, yes
The library, yes, yes, yes
The library will never fail (twice)

We'll go to the ends of the earth
And the Taporis will never fail ...

Give Me Your Hand (Elise and Jérôme, Burkina Faso)

Give me your hand
Take my hand in yours
Together, hand in hand
Give me your hand
Take my hand in yours
Together, hand in hand
We'll build a world of friendship
We'll build a Taporis world

Introducing ATD Fourth World and Tapori



The movement ATD Fourth World 'All Together in Dignity to Overcome Poverty' goes beyond aid. Our aim is to destroy poverty.

We develop grass-roots projects alongside those living in poverty. We work to raise awareness among citizens and to achieve political changes. We promote dialogue and cooperation among different social agents.

In all our activities, two important principles are applied:

- * To think and act together with those living in great poverty at all levels of society, enabling us to establish the conditions of true participation.
- * Not to exclude anyone.

ATD Fourth World is a one of the international NGOs advising the UN, UNICEF, UNESCO and the Council of Europe...

In Africa, the ATD Fourth World movement is present in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal and Tanzania.

Contact us at:

ATD Fourth World
African Region

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AND FOR THE CHILDREN...

Born out of the ATD Fourth World movement, Tapori is a network of friendship among children of different backgrounds and from different countries.

Children worldwide dream of a world where poverty no longer exists, where each of us can live in peace and friendship. They don't want to wait until they are grown up to take action. Tapori unites them in their dreams and supports them in their desire to fight poverty and exclusion.

Through the Tapori newsletter, children aged 7 to 15 from all over the world are put in contact with each other. They can write to Tapori to give accounts of their experiences and of what they do every day in order to ensure that no one is excluded in their school, their

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neighbourhood or beyond.

The Taponi movement is multi-cultural, multi-confessional and apolitical.

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