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Origami Theater

Origami Theater is a nonformal education method that combines the oriental art of folding paper, origami – with the animation theater. Interference of these two educational arts within the territory of education blends the respect for rules, specific to martial arts brought by origami, with the dynamics that any form of theater stimulates emotional intelligence.

It is a nonformal method which enables participants of all ages to become more patient, to focus better, gain more self-confidence, and become more fluent and more responsible in communicating their emotions and ideas. Through the Origami Theater method is learned how to fold a square of paper in order to obtain various forms, how to develop stories using figurines folded, is developed patience and attention to detail and above all is learned how to creatively and metaphorically communicate simple or complex emotions and ideas.

This method can be adapted to groups of any age and can be applied anywhere in the world. It has an educational function, but also a therapeutic one (among others, may develop clinical animation activities for children and can be used in recovery programs for drug addicts) and aesthetics one (you can make movies, theater shows, exhibitions).

Stages of the method

This method has three stages: origami story, origami game and Origami Theater. Each stage can be implemented separately but together creates a learning process where participants develop their creativity, tolerance, memory, attention.

The story:

Each step of folding becomes part of a story so folding an object is no longer just an abstract and rigid action and it becomes an adventure with wizards, fairies and animals. Thus, participants easily remember watching the narrative folding steps, develop their creativity, learn to communicate a message using origami and develop improvisation skills.

Implementation:

The facilitator demonstrates the steps of folding by telling a story and helping the participants to fold correctly or explaining certain steps that are more difficult. Once the object is completed, participants are divided into small groups and each group is given the task of designing their own origami story in a given time.

At the end, groups return and present their stories in plenary. Others can vote for their favorite story by giving constructive feedback, and further it can be discussed the creative process, the role of each team member, the message we send through the story.

The activity may take 30 to 60 min, the number of participants could be from 10 to 12 (but it can be arranged also for small groups - min 5 or bigger groups – up to 20).



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The game:

Participants fold an origami object (often using a story), and then the story can evolve to characters by using the folded origami for playing and learning. Examples of origami games: the race of jumping frogs, competition of paper airplanes.

Implementation:

The facilitator prepares the game and the resources needed before starting the work. S/he should take into account the age of the participants and their abilities.

S/he demonstrates the folding steps by telling a story and helps the participants to fold correctly or explain certain steps that are more difficult.

Participants are invited to use the objects created in the game and the rules are explained. Most often the game is part of the story, thus giving participants the opportunity to rewrite the end. One can discuss at the end (depending on the age of the participants) what they have learned from this experience, emotions felt. In the case of adults, they can be challenged to create a new game from the same origami object.

The activity may take 30 to 60 min, the number of participants could be from 10 to 12 (but it can be arranged also for small groups - min 5 or bigger groups – up to 20)

The theater:

This phase consists in scenarios and animated theatre plays using the folded object like a doll or a puppet. Participants are divided into working groups, each group with the task to create a short story from the folded object, and then each group shows in front of the other their respective stories/animations. Thus participants experiment with this method both from the actor side and from the public side, learning how to manage their emotions constructively, to work in teams and collaborate with others but also to create their own value system based on which they can appreciate others and their work.

Implementation:

The facilitator demonstrates the steps of folding by telling a story and helping the participants to fold correctly or explaining certain steps that are more difficult. Once the object completed, participants are divided into small groups, each group given the job of designing their own origami script by using as characters the origami objects. At the end the groups return and present their theater plays in plenary.

Others can vote their favorite story by giving constructive feedback, and further it can be discussed the creative process, the role of each team member, the message we send through the plays.

The activity may take 30-60 min, the number of participants could be 10 to 12 (but it can be arranged also for small groups - min 5 or bigger groups – up to 20)

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