

## CLASSROOM WORKSHOPS THEME: TOLERANCE

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# TEACHER'S MANUAL

In this document you will find all the information necessary to enable you to conduct the workshop. You will also find clear directives on when to use the training material, the sound bites and film clips included.

The workshop consists of five exercises that challenge the students to reflect upon the most common position of them all – the role of the bystander.

The workshop gives the students an opportunity to improve their knowledge of democracy. At the same time it deals with questions concerning freedom and rights, as well as each and everyone's social responsibilities. The workshop also raises ethical and moral predicaments that are linked to democratic rights and obligations.

Film clips and sound bites, analysis of historic photographs as well as value-based exercises are included in the exercises.

**Prior knowledge**

The students should know about:

- The Holocaust

**Teaching purpose**

- To deepen the knowledge of democracy, civil rights and obligations in society.
- To stimulate reflections on ethical and moral predicaments.
- To raise awareness of how passivity could legitimize historic and contemporary events.
- To develop an insight on each individual's responsibility and possibility to take action.

**Preparations**

- The students will need pencil and paper.



- Print out the forms from the training material (exercise 4)



- Prepare the pictures, film clips and sound bites as well as the questions and quotes from the visual presentations (exercise 2,3 and 5)

## EXERCISE 1

### The one who is standing by

The first exercise of this workshop will help the students to identify the bystander/spectator as the one watching, without intervening, in situations where one could identify a victim and a perpetrator.

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**1.** Gather the whole class in front of the blackboard.

Ask them the following question:

- What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word “bystander or spectator”?

Let the students use the blackboard to write whatever comes to their mind. No need for them to write full sentences, one word is enough.

(Very often students will choose words such as: soccer, tennis, theatre and audience. Words such as bullying and “someone who is just watching” are also common.)

**2.** Let the class discuss the various words on the blackboard.

Try and define the meaning of the word bystander that this particular exercise is focusing on, i.e. a person who is not intervening in a situation where one could identify a victim and a perpetrator.

**3.** Go through the definition of the various roles: victim, perpetrator and bystander. Ask the students if there is any role missing (normally characters such as hero or rescuer are suggested).

## EXERCISE 2

### Public humiliation

The exercise is based on pictures and the students will have to reflect on how the passive bystander could add to the vulnerability of the victim and legitimize the action of the perpetrator. The students will use a historic photograph depicting Austrian Jews who were forced to scrub a street by hand. This is a staged public humiliation in front of an audience of perpetrators and bystanders.



1. Show the photo and make an analysis of the picture together with the whole class.

No background material should be given to the students. This will allow them to do an unbiased analysis of the photograph.

Ask the following questions and discuss the answers one by one:

- What is happening in this picture?
- Who are the people? What do they look like? How are they dressed?
- What do they do?
- When and where was this photo taken?

2. Divide the class into groups of four or six. Each group must identify the various roles of the people in the picture.

Ask the following questions:

- Who are the victims? Who are the perpetrators? Who are the bystanders?

3. Let each group discuss internally. Let them also make a short presentation. Reveal the background information to the picture they have just analysed. (See fact box)

#### Facts about official humiliation

Official humiliation of the Jews was a strategic move by the Nazis in their norm shifting process of society. Progressively the view of Jews as lesser worth, was strengthened. The aim of the Nazis was to gain support and passive consent for their final objective: a Germany free of Jews. The photo shows how Nazis and ordinary citizens are watching while a group of Jews are forced to scrub the street by hand, Vienna 1938 (Copyright: USHMM)

Read more in "...Tell ye your children...", page 94.

## EXERCISE 3

### The courage to stand up and say no

This exercise is based on a true event in the life of Gitta Sereny, journalist and writer. It is a clear example of how one individual is distancing herself from the role of the passive bystander and chooses to intervene.

1. The students continue to work in their assigned groups. They should listen carefully to the story, take notes and thereafter make an analysis of what they have just heard.



2. Play the sound bite.



3. Show the questions on the content of the story, how the people could have felt and experienced the situation, how various ideologies could influence people's action and what motives make us intervene.

Let the students be guided by these questions when analysing the story.

4. Ask each group to do a presentation and discuss their conclusions all together.

#### Fact box Gitta Sereny

Gitta Sereny (13 March 1921 – 14 June 2012) was a famous journalist, writer and historian. She was born in Vienna, Austria, and when the Nazis took power she fled to England, via France, together with her family. Gitta Sereny is primarily known for her accounts of Germany under the Nazis as well as her interview-books with Albert Speer and Franz Stangl.

## EXERCISE 4

### **The bystander has a choice**

This exercise will make the student assess and reflect upon the various options of the bystander.

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**1.** Let the students work on an individual basis. Their assignment is to cut out pieces of paper, each one giving a reason why a person could choose to take action and leave the role of the bystander. The student must place the reasons in a specific order.

Ask the following question:

- What could be the reasons when someone decides to help the victim instead of being a bystander?

**2.** When the students have finished the task, put them in groups of two. Let them share each other's rankings and discuss the rationale behind their choices.

## EXERCISE 5

### The public baths

This exercise will make the student assess and reflect upon the various options of the bystander.

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**1.** Show the film clip picturing a man (the perpetrator) addressing, using racist language, a woman from a foreign country (the victim) while others are passively watching.

**2.** Indicate the four corners of the classroom and let each one of them represent an answer. When you ask the questions, the students must pick one corner and argue why. Ask the following questions:

- What would you have done in this situation at the public baths?
  - A. I would have told the man to stop
  - B. I would have comforted the woman
  - C. Nothing
  - D. Other choice
  
- Is it acceptable NOT to intervene in a situation like this?
  - A. Yes, it is always acceptable not to intervene.
  - B. No, it is never acceptable.
  - C. Yes, sometimes it is acceptable.
  - D. Other choice

Sum up what choices the students have made and provide them with the background material. (See fact box)



**3.** While ending the exercise, show the student a famous quote by Pastor Niemöller (1892–1984). The quote describes how the intellectual in Germany refrained from acting against the regime.

TEACHER'S MANUAL  
TOLERANCE 2  
BYSTANDERS – DOES IT MATTER?**Fact box – the bystander**

Research shows that the more bystanders watching a person being attacked, the less chance there is of anyone intervening. Vice versa, a lone bystander intervenes more often, faster and with greater determination. It has also been proven that many bystanders hamper each other's willingness to help. This is often called the "diffusion of responsibility" and stems from how we interpret the inaction of others; if no one is intervening, help is clearly not needed. Other reasons could be that no one feels personally responsible or that the bystanders are afraid of "making fools of themselves". Research also shows that our willingness to help increases if the person in need reminds us of ourselves in terms of clothing, ethnicity and attitude.



**Evaluation**

After each completed exercise and/or workshop, allow some time for wrap up and evaluation. As a teacher you decide, sometimes together with the class, how to evaluate and conclude each section. Some prefer group discussions, some take notes in a logbook and some do short evaluation exercises in smaller groups.