

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# HEDA project

An innovative method to approach social and civic education in secondary education through theatre, theatre techniques and generally through art.





**Nikolas Kamtsis**

Theater director & writer

Education researcher in Creative learning methods

## **HEDA project**

**An innovative method to approach social and civic education in secondary education through theatre, theatre techniques and generally through art**



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

## Table of Contents

---

- ➔ Introduction **4**
- ➔ Definitions **5**
- ➔ Prologue **7**
- ➔ What we are talking about **8**
- ➔ Teaching citizenship education in Europe **9**
- ➔ Theatre: Just a means of entertainment? **10**
- ➔ The creators **11**
- ➔ What we will work with? What do we have in our hands **13**
- ➔ HEDA project & Citizenship-Human rights education **13**
- ➔ Nothing is ready, nothing is offered to us. Emotion, experience. **15**
- ➔ The work of art as educational material **16**
- ➔ A sensitive point. The teacher, bearer of an ideology, a philosophy, an attitude of life. **17**
- ➔ The educator and the global social environment **19**
- ➔ HEDA-Human Rights-Conclusions **20**
- ➔ **The HEDA Method. Step by step 22-30**
- ➔ Evaluation **31**
- ➔ Example of application of the HEDA method, a Case Study  
The refugee, the foreigner, the immigrant: Friend or foe?  
Steps 1-10 **31-35**
- ➔ THE QUOTATION from Euripides' tragedy MEDEA **35**
- ➔ After the lesson-Outside the classroom. Interventions in the social domain **39**
- ➔ Life in the eloquent immobility of painting **40**
- ➔ Example of the application of the HEDA method based on a visual event (Steps 1-10) **41-45**
- ➔ Conclusion **46**
- ➔ Bibliography **46**

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

**HEDA project** attempts to develop a comprehensive methodology for teaching social and political education, (Citizenship) in Secondary Education through Art (Theatre-theatrical Techniques, Cinema, Painting, etc.).

**HEDA project** intends to cultivate and develop the abilities and sensitivity of young people in relation to their social behaviours, their social relationships, their social and political rights, as members of an organized, democratic, contemporary and modern society based on humanitarian values.

The HEDA project is well aware that the proposals it makes largely require another type of school and education, based on other structures, and with other qualitative and technical characteristics.

The people who have worked on it are under no illusion that the modern school must abandon its passive character of the type: the teacher knows and teaches, and the pupils passively listen, learn, memorise and evaluate. We know as well that a learning process such as the one we propose cannot be done in the 45 minutes of teaching time that is normally the norm in modern schools. A learning process based on the activation of students and their functions (inquiry, imagination, sensitivity, critical thinking and dealing with complex situations) needs more time and "comfort" to work and bear fruit.

**However:** in a Europe that faces serious challenges at the level of democratic values, Heda Project wanting to contribute decisively to what is briefly called Citizenship Education, cultivates and encourages the students':

- ❖ Knowledge and active involvement in structures and institutions
- ❖ Knowledge of their political duties and obligations
- ❖ Critical thinking
- ❖ Creative intervention in social issues
- ❖ Knowledge and cultivation on issues of democracy
- ❖ Social responsibility as members of democratic societies and states

The famous **Civil Society**<sup>1</sup> requires a greater and deeper change of structures, powers and functions, if it does not want to remain in mere, hollow and unimplemented declarations and become a practice and experience in the everyday life of European citizens.

---

<sup>1</sup>Civil society can be understood as the "third sector" of society, distinct from government and business, and including the family and the private sphere.[1] By other authors, civil society is used in the sense of 1) the aggregate of non-governmental organizations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens or 2) individuals and organizations in a society which are independent of the government. (Wikipedia)

---

## Definitions

---

**Citizenship:** (According to Merriam-Webster dictionary)

- ✳ Social and political rights.
- ✳ Membership in a community
- ✳ The participation and the membership in a social and political community.
- ✳ Citizenship is gained by meeting the legal requirements of a national, state, or region/local government. A nation grants certain rights and privileges to its citizens. In return, citizens are expected to obey their country's laws and rules of common living and defend it against its enemies.
- ✳ Citizenship is generally used as a synonym for nationality. Where citizenship is used in a meaning that is different from nationality it refers to the legal rights and duties of individuals attached to nationality under domestic law.

**Citizenship education** ( from <https://study.com/>) is education that provides the background knowledge necessary to create an ongoing stream of new citizens participating and engaging with the creation of a civilized society. For some students entering into a different society, citizenship education is much more rigorous than the education provided to native residents.

For example, immigrants who hope to become legal citizens must learn a lot about the policies, history, and governmental structure of the country they hope to live in. Students who are already citizens often know very little about their own country compared to those who hope to move there.

**Human Rights :** ( According to the UN definition)

Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are **inherent** to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. They range from the most fundamental - the right to life - to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty.

**Work of art :** ( According to Merriam-Webster dictionary)

A work of art is an object produced by an individual through the application of a set of ideas, concepts and techniques for aesthetic, artistic and entertainment purposes. These objects may be tangible or intangible, such as pictorial works, architectural works, plays, literary-theatrical works or musical works.

Below we use the term to define the object (literary, theatrical, pictorial) that will be the tool for approaching political and social rights through art. In our methodology we understand "work of art" not only as a complete work (the whole play or film) but also as an isolated scene, a shot or a detail of a painting that serves the purpose of the lesson that the teacher wants to develop in the classroom.

**Forum theater :** In this process, actors or audience members could stop a performance, often a short scene in which a character is oppressed in some

way (for example, a usually chauvinistic man abusing a woman or a factory owner abusing an employee). In primary forms of "simultaneous dramaturgy," the audience can suggest any solution, making suggestions to actors improvising changes in the scene. This was an attempt to undo the traditional audience/actor compartment and bring audience members into the performance to have a say in the dramatic action they were watching.

**Newspaper theater** A system of techniques designed to give the audience a way to turn daily news articles or any non-dramatic pieces into the theatrical stage.

**Documentary theatre** is theatre that uses pre-existing documentary material (such as newspapers, government reports, interviews, journals, and correspondences) as source material for stories about real events and people, frequently without altering the text in performance. The genre typically includes or is referred to as verbatim theatre, investigative theatre, theatre of fact, theatre of witness, autobiographical theatre

**Legislative theater**"Legislative Theatre" gives its constituents the opportunity to express their views. The aim is to open a dialogue between citizens and institutional entities, so that there is communication between citizens and the political legislature. SPECT-actors can take the floor and express their views, make new proposals, identify shortcomings and gaps in legislation and demand that new laws be created.

**Brecht Theatre** Bertolt Brecht's theatre based on the detachment of the spectator from the events. Taking a distance and avoiding the viewer's identification with the characters and roles allows the viewer to think and become aware of the situations that are being presented.



---

## PROLOGUE

---

**Citizenship and Human Rights Education** is a multilevel process that aims to teach us to live together and respect each other's particularities.

**To live together** is a widely used expression. But what does it really mean to live with others? (In the same country, city, and the same apartment building). What are the rules and laws of this cohabitation?

If we dare to give an answer- knowing that we leave a lot of things left out of the definition- a honest attempt would be:

- ✿ To respect the laws that applies to everyone and if one disagrees to have the right to protest respecting all of the above rules.
- ✿ To recognize the fact that- even though we are associated with common problems, even though we are experiencing the same -more or less -situations, everyone has their own personality, which is respected by everyone else, regardless if one approves or rejects it.
- ✿ To avoid violence of all kinds of our neighbour, whoever they might be
- ✿ To work together and create with others
- ✿ To be a creative, social being with an understanding of each other's preferences, particularities and orientations.
- ✿ To help each other in his need
- ✿ To recognize and perform our obligations and duties to the same extent that our rights exist. And so many more...

The declarations, principles and practices applied within this framework of what we call "citizenship and human rights" include the notion of democracy and justice that is equal for all, as defined by the constitutions and laws of states, mutual respect between people, non-oppression of man by man, non-violence, respect for the dignity of others and much more.

In practice, very few of these are valid and respected while phenomena of human rights abuses fill newspapers, news reports and social media of all kinds.

Human rights are brutally violated not only by citizens but also by the states themselves with all kinds of powers (judicial, legislative, repressive, etc.). The right, for example, to define one's own body and life is violated by laws that determine how one should dress, whether a woman should give birth or have an abortion, etc.

And there are also phenomena that are against human rights, and which are beyond the jurisdiction of both individuals and organised states. The recent Covid-19 pandemic has violated many of the rights of people which were taken for granted just before.



Many of the political and human rights are contradictory. For example, people have the right to protest and assert and to organize demonstrations. Is it their right (?) And by rightly practicing it, they are closing roads and blocking off traffic; while at the same time, some other people have the right to go to work. Some are practicing their right while in the same time they prevent the rights of others.

We mention all of the above to say that **Heda Project** is dealing with a particularly thorny problem and in no way aspires to solve it. We also declare the great necessity that exists so that citizens and specifically future citizens- children and adolescents to:

- ✿ Acquire a quality social education.
- ✿ Develop an advanced reflection within the context of formal education.
- ✿ Be armed with a social consciousness, governed by the principles of democracy & respect for the political/social rights of the other, of any color, religion, economic surface, sexual orientation and belief.
- ✿ Acquire in an experiential way, sober and civilized critical thinking, empathy and the ability to deepen beyond the surface of social phenomena using a complex approach.

This is the field in which the **HEDA project** will move by combining and exploiting the experience, knowledge and methods of all the partners that work together.

The HEDA project will also attempt a radical, experiential and multifaceted approach through theatre and art, avoiding the sterile admonitions of standard civic education courses that are destined to be forgotten in a very short time.

---

## **What are we talking about?**

---

**Human rights** are political, social and moral principles that define specific human behaviours on the basis of which we live with other people. They are legal rights enshrined in both national and international law. Human rights are the fundamental rights that every individual is entitled to enjoy from birth to death simply by virtue of being human and participating in common life within the framework of organised societies, advanced civilisations with laws, constitutions and rules of conduct. We could divide them into two broad categories:

- ✿ Civil and political rights
- ✿ Social Cultural Rights

### **As civil rights we mean:**

- ✿ The right to life
- ✿ The right to freedom
- ✿ The right to freedom of thought and expression
- ✿ The right to be equal before the law

### **As social and cultural rights we mean:**

- ✿ The right to work
- ✿ The right to health
- ✿ The right to nutrition
- ✿ The right to residence
- ✿ The right to medical care
- ✿ The right to education
- ✿ The right to participate in culture.

Human rights (political and social) are applicable and valid everywhere in the free and civilised world and are valid for everyone. Public orders, living together in societies of people are based on them. And this makes it necessary to talk again and again about human rights because they are violated in many ways and forms and thus are still treated with scepticism - even today (or, to be honest, ESPECIALLY today) - because underneath them there are different opinions, doctrines and attitudes about their content, nature and philosophy. Furthermore, today's life and everyday life is so complex that new elements are constantly emerging. Indeed, the question of what constitutes a 'right' is in itself controversial and is the subject of ongoing philosophical (and not only) debate.

This makes even more urgent the need for outreach, discussion and teaching at school (which in the present circumstances is the only place where such actions can be implemented) and among adolescents who will soon go out into society to live, work and create and therefore face such challenges.

---

## **Teaching citizenship education in Europe**

---

In Europe<sup>2</sup>, the subject is generally taught as a separate compulsory subject in both primary and secondary education in Estonia, Spain, France, Portugal, Romania and Spain. In France and Portugal it is taught from the age of 6. In other countries it is part of the compulsory curriculum in the early years of secondary education.

In Greece, Social and Civic Education as a subject is taught in the third year of secondary school.

The aims of the course are the following:

- 1.** To make contemporary social and political realities known to students (future active and informed citizens).
- 2.** To acquaint students with the way society is organized, the institutions and of course the phenomena, the anchors and the problems arising from this social and state formation at national, European and global level.
- 3.** To acquire knowledge and experience in relation to society and the way it functions

---

<sup>2</sup>Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA P9 Eurydice)

4. To acquire social skills, and abilities to deal with social problems.
5. To develop critical thinking in order to be able to participate in the near future in the contemporary social and political reality.

### THE OFFICIAL CURRICULUM

In almost all European countries the curriculum in official school textbooks & aids is structured in chapters/modules and aims at the gradual awareness of the young citizen and his/her experience of the national, European and Global reality.

With this structure, it could be said that in European educational institutions the thematic units through which the course/lesson is taught, are generally the following:

- ☀ The individual and society
- ☀ The individual and the state
- ☀ The individual and the European Union
- ☀ The individual and the international community

---

### Theatre: Just a means of entertainment?

---

Is theatre just a way of having fun, of having a good time?

What the great writers do with their plays that have traveled through time is only... for the pleasure of people at times of respite, holidays and abstinence from the daily necessary social life and work?

Is the artist and creator only an entertainer?

**We do not think so.**

**The theatre and the arts (and therefore the artists as well) in general, are a major communication medium, a "vehicle of the transfer of meanings, a vehicle to speak about ideology, philosophy, attitudes and behavior". In this sense, it can shape opinions and form consciences according to the above mentioned.**

Theatre is an anthropocentric medium of expression and as such it contains and transmits many messages, meanings etc. that summon not only one's mind and logic but also the emotion. In this dual way, its influence on the individual is much stronger than the descriptions, admonitions and dictates of human society.

**Yes, war is a bad thing.** This phrase is self-evident. Everyone says so and understands it in every way conveyed and everyone embraces it (regardless of whether they don't follow it). But when one stands in front of Pablo Picasso's Guernica, one not only understands what a bad thing war is, but also **feels** the horror of war in all its glory and does not want to be a participant in such destruction and atrocity.

**Everyone has the right to life.** He who takes someone's life is condemned and imprisoned. All the more when the victims are children (we are referring to the frequent murders of children in the United States disturbed gun owners who are often minors). Conviction satisfies public sentiment, but a spontaneous, poetic text written by the mother of a lost child stimulates our emotions with the pain she expresses, which settles forever in the home and in the family that mourns for her every child.

---

## **The Creators**

---

All those involved with the arts and especially with theatre... explore process and shape human values, and consequently consciences. The philosophical works of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer and of all the other great philosophers speak of and define these human values. They seek to shape the consciences of those who read them and are taught.

But so do the texts of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides and of all the other classic writers. The same goes for the music of Wagner or Shostakovich. If Guernica expresses ideas and creates emotions in anyone who sees it (the cruelty of war with colours, shapes and visual set-ups). The same goes for: Aeschylus with "The Persians", Euripides with "Trojan women" with the characters, conflicts and relationships on stage through the actors, Wagner and Shostakovich with sounds, musical notes (music, singing). The dialogues and conflict between Eteocles and Polynices (the two brothers who claim the throne of Thebes), talk about justice, the motherland, human laws, morality, power, etc.

Wagner does the same in the Valkyries, for example. The role of the Valkyrie is inspired by the figure of liberty in the French Revolution, something Delacroix did in paintings with colours. Siegfried (from Wagner's Ring of Nibelungen) is Nietzsche's personification of the super-human. "*For by himself the free man must create himself.*"). Here the means of expression change and the ideas, to those who are seeing the opera, are conveyed through the music and the libretto.

So does the actor in the theatre who plays the characters, the director who organizes the whole performance, the stage designer who creates the stage environment and all the other creators. All these contributors have been sensitized and moved by the stimuli they received from the environment (social & environmental-natural space, etc.) and which find expression through the meanings of the play (theatrical play) and the values it conveys.

They then create other works (performances, paintings, writings, etc.) that contain this sensitivity and emotion and transmit it through their work to a multitude of other people (audience, viewers), disparate from each other, who came to see them. In this way they stimulate the sensitivity and emotion

of different people (spectators), who are more or less "innocent" and (supposedly) unaware of these values. Through an emotionally charged lyrical material (text, setting, costume, movement, voice, emotion), these people have received this message and then a dialogue is created inside themselves, with questions and answers, disagreements and agreements, arguments and counter-arguments, thus forming their own opinion, consciousness, conviction and their own "beliefs".

This operation and sequence of communication-artistic events is exploited by the HEDA project. Its aim is to communicate and share with high school students, in a simple way, basic and comprehensible humanitarian values (democracy, culture, respect for others, etc.) and to teach the political and social rights and obligations that we all have living in organized societies. Using experiential techniques such as theatre, leads students to experience emotions and thus to use their feelings and emotions to establish within themselves human rights and respect for themselves and others.

**HEDA** deals with and explores a vast range of material. It attempts to organize it and to compile a step-by-step method of approaching human rights through theatrical and/or more general artistic techniques. These techniques will be the methodology/tool in the hands of educators that will make his work more interesting and much more effective and influential for the students. This method uses and recruits not only definitions, principles and self-evident advices, but also the emotion, emotion and the sense of emotional awareness of the students, the future responsible citizens. As challenges to human rights and democracy have multiplied around the world, as humanitarian values are challenged by people, groups of people and entire states, social studies from an early age is a necessity.



---

## **What we will work with? What do we have in our hands?**

---

What are the tools we need and how we can face and overcome such a diverse, complex and chaotic challenge?

The answer is almost instant and direct: **Everything the Arts and especially theater and the performing arts, have to offer.**

**In the theatre we are dealing with and facing people,** with their human relationships, conflicts of ideas, emotions, aspirations and interests. These exist on stage through the text, and come alive with the body, voice, energy of actors and the animation of all their emotional world (imagination, sensitivity, memories, etc.). In addition, and to make all this even more intense, vivid and important, the theatre offers a range of other means that the actor can use (costumes, puppets, puppets, masks, etc.). Painting and music have their own expressive means but in a more static form. Where in a painting we see the cruelty of war expressed in red and a torn flag (signifying blood in defending of one's country) in theatre we also have dialogue, music, song, movement, emotion etc.

(There is a specific appendix at the end of the HEDA method, about how painting can be a start in point in the lesson p. 30-**Life in the eloquent stillness of painting**)

From the very beginning we state that in no way does the HEDA project intend to turn the classroom into a theatre stage. It simply proposes to teachers of secondary education a new tool that uses centuries of theatrical expertise and techniques to support education on human rights and humanitarian values as described above.

---

## **HEDA project &Citizenship-Human rights education**

---

The **HEDA** project proposes first of all the creation of a friendly and creative learning environment in which the discussion/lesson/"fermentation" for human rights will become interesting and participatory. The students will be able to actively participate and will be given the opportunity and the stimuli to present their own experiences and opinions on the specific subject that is examined each time. From a film all are sources of infinite stimuli that can certainly encourage the interest and discussion and participation of students. First of all, the contact with a piece of art itself, opens new horizons, enriches the emotional world of students, cultivates and feeds on their imagination and sensitivity.

But the content of a work of art - and this is what interests us most - gives grounds for discussions on these human rights. We mention a few examples,

which we will then develop in detail within the context of formulating a methodology practically applicable to the teaching of human rights in Secondary Education.

✿ Does a person have the right to take the law into his/her own hands and attribute justice by bypassing the laws of the state and statutory law? Does a person have the right to take the law into their own hands and to attribute justice by bypassing the laws of the state and the established law?

✿ Is it legal for a person under overwhelming emotional pressure to decide and carry out sentences for other people, without the other people knowing, preparing, or having the right to defend themselves, etc.?

**It is easy to answer the question: No.**

But the cases of self-justice are many and varied. Under the overwhelming pressure of feelings of envy, jealousy, abandonment, revenge and retaliation for any reason, etc. a person takes a gun and kills, a poison and poisons, an acid and disfigures another person, who is unaware of the threat and danger next to him/her.

Such an event from the daily crime report can give the teacher an opportunity to teach a lesson in the classroom. Of course, this lesson will be conducted within the limits of the obvious: Is it legal for someone to take such an action? NO. The teacher develops an apparent argument and the students passively listen and in the end agree with him/her. But how much more enriching and productive such teaching becomes when the occasion and context is given through art and then specializes to the actual conditions of the current social situation and condition.

**Here is an example:**

Topic: Does a person who has been involved in an offence (committed a crime in some way) has the right to be prosecuted according to formal institutionalized law (laws and statutes, criminal law, etc.) and to have a fair trial and sentence?

In Euripides' Tragedy of ECUBA, Polymistor (king of Thrace and ally of the Trojans during the Trojan War) has received a valuable treasure from Priamos to accept him in his kingdom and protect the youngest son of Priamos and Ecuba from the Greeks who have occupied Troy. Instead, Polimistor killed the child to keep the treasure. On the way to Greece, Ecuba (slave of Greeks) and the other Trojan women when they heard about the loss of the child, called Polimistor, trapped him and blinded him as a punishment.

When Agamemnon leader of Greeks (the winners) arrived, both Ekavi and the he blind Polimestor developed their arguments. The scene from Euripides' tragedy with all the arguments and Ekavi's plan gives many reasons to discuss class and to reflect on the issue of self -justice and the right to a fair

trial. This can be done through simple reading, (or by viewing the play) or even better by involving all students in various ways in an experiential/theatrical activity in many ways and on many levels. The organizer, coordinator, facilitator and director of the whole process will of course be the teacher who has prepared the whole activity and guides it from the beginning to the end.

**The HEDA project describes and proposes an integrated method of exploitation of works of art -mainly theatrical and visual arts but also cinema, literature (short stories, fairy tales, etc.) - in an analytical way so that the teacher not only follows the case studies proposed by HEDA but also develops new case studies of his/her own and, more importantly, develops his/her own method of approaching human rights and social phenomena in general (emigration & immigration, refugees, racism, diversity, violence in all its forms, integration and social inclusion, etc.).**

**The ultimate goal is: To change the educator's way of teaching and dealing with the subject (and therefore the relationships and dynamics in the classroom) and to adopt more experiential methods (using art) that mobilize students in all their functions, mental, emotional, empirical, etc.**

---

### **Nothing is ready, nothing is offered to us. Emotion, experience.**

---

Works of art (in all forms and at all stages of the development of human civilization) originated from the sentiments of one (or more) people who were under the emotional strain of an event. Love inspires, war inspires, pain inspires, hardship and adversity inspire, problems inspire. People in difficult situations are inspired and create. Rarely, if at all, do they create under conditions of happiness and bliss. Under such circumstances they are content to enjoy their happiness. On the contrary, in situations of pain, pressure and unhappiness, under the pressure of intense emotions and emotional load, they write, paint, sing to ease their pain, relieve themselves of their emotional burden and redeem themselves. Aristotelian redemption (Aristotle's "poetics") is such and describes this deep need of the individual. The artist wants to share it with other people this need to express one's suffering, to communicate with others and to find "companions". In this way the artist is redeemed (always in the Aristotelian sense) and his/her pain or passion is eased and is overcome. The result of this need is the piece of art.

The expression of the artist and its result (artwork) is not a one-way function but follows a two-way and complex path. That is, the work of art not only needs someone to emit/send it, it also needs someone to receive it. And therefore it needs the sensitive eye of both the **emitter/sender and the receptor**.

**This is the angle the HEDA methodology uses as a basis to build its method of approach.**



---

## The work of art as educational material

---

The Works of Art were not made to be used exclusively for educational or other purposes, although the Greek word “entertainment” means **Education (training) of the soul**, they do so in a special way. In the educational process Works-of-Art need the special view and perspective of the teacher who will “read” them in such a way that they become educational, teaching material. The scene of Polimistor's punishment in Euripides' tragedy ECUBA mentioned above, was not written to be taught in schools but to be presented in a theatre (note that the ancients also called teaching -not by chance- the presentation of tragedies and comedies in ancient theatres). Social phenomena troubled the citizens of the 5th century BC. The scene from Euripides' Ecuba already mentioned can be used by a teacher to address:

- ✿ the phenomenon of self-justification and whether one has the right to do so.
- ✿ the right of equity to justice and to prove that everyone is entitled to a fair trial.

In order for a teacher to do so in the context of the social and political education course, he must emphasize the points that favor this idea and bypass others, which are not particularly important for the purpose of his lesson. The right of equality before justice and to demonstrate that everyone has the right to a fair trial.

To do this, in the context of Social and Civic Education course, a teacher must **underline the points/aspects that favor** this idea and bypass others that are not particularly important for the purpose of the course. In this sense, it is legitimate and necessary for the teacher to make small adjustments to the individual elements of the work (isolating a scene from others, intervening in the dialogue, or, if it is a work of art, drawing the class's attention to one detail of a painting by skipping over others, or, if it is a film, isolating a scene, doing a stop care or slow-motion at one point).

However, prior to this it is necessary to specify and have knowledge of the subject matter of the class itself.



---

## **A sensitive point. The teacher, bearer of an ideology, a philosophy, an attitude of life.**

---

The course, like any course, requires preparation in order for the topic to be clear and comprehensible to students and for it to deliver the desired results and lead to valid and also clear conclusions. All the more so, since in our case we are dealing with human rights, a topic that is complex, ambiguous, quite complex and entangled in laws, decrees, declarations, claims that challenge each other, etc..

The role of the teacher in the case of Social and Civic Education & Human Rights class or whatever it is called, is more important and complex compared to teaching other subjects. In this course not only the knowledge and teaching experience of the teacher plays an important role, but also his/her personal beliefs and his/her philosophical, ideological, political, ethical and aesthetic beliefs. And this must be stressed out. We will do so with an example that takes as its starting point events that are happening at time of writing these lines and that are well known all around the world.

The US Supreme Court has overturned the constitutional right of women to decide for themselves and their bodies in the event of an unwanted pregnancy and to have an abortion. This right had been established since 1973 and in June 2022 it was overturned allowing each state to decide what will apply in each state. The Democratic Congressmen, including President Biden, spoke of a backsliding of 150 years and shame, while the Republicans were triumphant. Women appeared divided with the majority protesting against the decision. **So how is a teacher in a US school going to teach his lesson in such a divided and ambiguous situation?** What will his/her class and students argue and what conclusions will be drawn?

So it is clear here that the political and moral beliefs, the ideological position of the teacher will influence his/her lesson and will play a crucial role in what will be discussed in the classroom and in which direction the reflection with the students will be directed. And this is a sensitive issue in teaching the course in the traditional or the innovative teaching format proposed by **HEDA**.

Another sensitive point is the character of the teacher and how he or she will react to possible challenges:

- ✿ Will he/she dare to talk openly in the classroom about such sensitive issues? (Abortion, sexual freedom, gun ownership, democratic rights, etc.)
- ✿ Will he/she not be afraid in the face of the risk of a complaint from parents of students who disagree with the lesson and the way it is conducted?
- ✿ Will he/she be willing to jeopardize his/her position and career that will due to possible complaints from parents or other teachers or then government

supervisors?

✿ Will he/she not fear threats of punishment from anyone disagreeing?(always in relation to the lesson).



---

## The educator and the global social environment

---

Human rights is a broad field of research. All the more so because pompous political declarations and official documents are limited to wishful thinking and measures that are often inconsistent with human nature and practices. Thus significant parts of what we call "human rights" are not applied or explored. To this, the different traditions, religions, prejudices, laws, attitudes and ideologies on the basis of which human societies operate, must be added. Indeed, something that is obvious and self-evident (and therefore a fundamental right) in the Western world is not at all self-evident in the Muslim/Arab world. All the more so that a right can be valid and established for a large part of the world, while the exact opposite is established for the rest of the world.

**The teacher must therefore know and take seriously into consideration** (apart from the subject matter that needs to be taught) **the general social environment, its implications in various areas of social life, as well as who his/her students along with the social and cultural composition of his/her class.**

Indeed, this last point is by no means self-evident in the conditions of widespread immigration all over the world. Multicultural and multilingual classes are a common phenomenon in Europe (and elsewhere) and therefore the teacher's job becomes more complex and multifactorial.

- ✿ Where to stand and direct the conversation?
- ✿ What to do exactly with the students?
- ✿ What structure and choices will he or she make in his or her lesson?
- ✿ What questions will he/she introduce that will become points of discussion in the classroom?



---

## HEDA-Human Rights - Conclusions

---

**Human rights** in modern societies are under attack from all directions. It seems a paradox for our culture, which in many aspects has made enormous progress, to regress on human rights that are generally taken for granted.

**Students**, young people in general, have some of the greatest opportunities to become conscious, active citizens of the world through advanced, well-developed and powerful human rights education opportunities. Young people should feel that the knowledge/education they receive from modern schools considers human rights of major importance and that both teachers and their peers (future citizens) promote equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation

**For the modern educator**, creating and supporting a human rights-friendly learning environment, i.e. an environment where human rights are learned, taught, practiced, respected, protected on a daily basis, is of critical importance and a major task. A teacher who teaches the subject of Social and Civic Education in a conscious and responsible manner should treat the subject **as an interesting field of learning** that not only formally teaches the subject matter but also cultivates in his or her students' attitudes, skills and abilities that consciously promote respect and defend human rights.

**HEDA** proposes and encourages an engaging educational process using experiential participatory methods, theatrical techniques, role-playing, research, reflection, discussions, and art-based games. It enables the teacher to become a creator as well, to create an **interesting** environment in class, to talk about: art, great personalities (intellectuals, artists, creators), great works of art, to approach psychologically, morally and sociologically the modern citizen. In this sense not only educates the students, but in addition to that:

- ✿ Cultivates their imagination & their sensitivity
- ✿ Broadens their horizons
- ✿ Enriches their personal criticism of man and the world
- ✿ Gives opportunities to exploit their own experiences and perspectives and to develop their own documented conclusions and choices.

**Human rights represent a broad system of values to which everyone has equal rights and obligations. Students (future citizens) should reflect and acquire the skills to study examples through art to confront contemporary dilemmas and develop a sensitivity to the call of humanity even in the most extreme circumstances. This approach is human-centered and recognizes that:**

- ✿ **The person is the medium and the purpose**
- ✿ **People are both the tool and the result**
- ✿ **Each and every one of us, can make a difference for a more fair society, where people can live, support solidarity and have respect for each other's rights.**



---

# The HEDA Method. Step-by-step

---

## Phase 1 – BEFORE THE LESSON - PREPARATION

---

### Step 1

---

#### **Specification & good knowledge of the subject he/she wants to teach.**

---

Human rights are rarely simple and one-dimensional. In most cases, they carry with them particularities, exceptions and asterisks. In the texts written about each of them hidden details are found. Details that differentiate one case from another, thus these details need to be taken into account. So, the **teachers beyond the official educational materials (text books, sources, etc.) must do relevant research to gain a satisfactory knowledge of the subject (the special subject one discusses/teaches within the class) and its parameters.**

- ✿ What does the official teaching material include?
- ✿ What is happening in the Western world and what in the east?
- ✿ Are there different characteristics between various social classes?
- ✿ What is happening in our country?
- ✿ What is the situation in our area?
- ✿ What differences and distances there are (if any) between everyday customs and official institutional laws.

These features are presented in various forms and intensity from country to country. In North European countries, having a teacher talk about women's rights in his or her school is very different from a school in the European South where immigration is more intense and overwhelmingly more prevalent. And we know very well that a woman's position is quite different in the Oriental tradition compared to the Western world or (not to target Eastern culture). A woman's position is different in Stockholm and a woman's position is different in the European South. The right to bear arms in Greece is clear and unambiguous. However, in areas of Crete customs and traditions apply and ultimately things prevail (with the tolerance of the state authorities) that are not allowed in other cases and areas.

---

### Step 2

---

#### **The contribution of Art. Research and selection of a work of art**

---

As we take a distance from the form of classical traditional education (where educators teach and students accept pathetically their sayings) which, in the

case of Social and Civic Education and rights, ultimately functions as admonition (what we should do, what is good and good to do and how to behave so that our behaviour is lawful), the connection between the subject matter and art must be direct & immediate.

Thus, teachers need to find and select a piece/work of art that gives them the ability to teach the lesson, as effectively as possible for the sake of students, and to lead them to the desired (and conscious) outcome. By a work of **art**, we mean an artistic product of any form and kind. It can be a scene (a dialogue, a monologue, a particular scene from a play), a scene from a film, a painting, etc.

For this task teachers can look for:

- ☀ In theatrical texts, (International or national, classical or modern),
- ☀ In classical or contemporary literature,
- ☀ In popular/folk tradition (written or oral, fairy tales, myths, legends),
- ☀ In cinema, painting, etc.

Within the limited time margins of a lesson, we are not allowed to explore in depth the whole project as it would require many lessons. So, when we talk about a play we mean **a piece/part that serves the purpose of the lesson**.

The play that will be used as a starting point and trigger for the lesson **does not have to be an existing work of art**. It is not necessary for the teacher to search for it among the infinite works of art of the world's artistic oeuvres produced over the years. It can be taken from:

- ☀ The daily newspapers,
- ☀ The news sites and choose from recent events

(Here the teacher uses many features of Documentary and Newspaper theatre by making a simple news story from the newspaper clippings into a theatrical action).

- ☀ (Or even better) To invent and create it himself/herself so that it is original and completely adapted to the needs of the course.

In this last case we are not looking for literary/theatrical virtues or artistic value. The functionality of the project in the lesson is enough.

Any text invented and created by the teacher is quite satisfactory if it gives those stimuli that activate the students, to follow it, to play it, to reflect, to comment, to discuss it and eventually make their conclusions.



### Step 3

---

#### Editing and shaping of the work/scene/extract

---

As already mentioned, works of art (in whatever form) were not created to be educational tools. Their purpose and role are to psyche. Nevertheless, they "teach" (it is no coincidence that the ancient Greeks considered teaching the presentation of ancient drama works in ancient theatres). They have many important messages to convey. Social messages that contain the quintessence of human values. These messages must be highlight and promoted by the teacher who wants to follow and use the **HEDA** methodology. Therefore, the teacher should interfere & intervene on the selected project and adapt it to achieve their goal. And adapt it to achieve its goal. Such a process is absolutely legitimate as we have accepted to put art into the learning process.

**In this way the art "accepts" that here, education and knowledge play the main role instead of entertainment.** The teacher, therefore, having chosen the art work (theatre, film, short story, fairy tale, myth, etc.) can and should shape it to a certain extent, so that he or she can then work with the students experientially, on a specific subject matter. This subject matter, in our case, is a political, social right as defined by the textbook. Through a simple and clear path that the teacher will follow, the artwork will be offered for an experiential process during the lesson.

In the case of a scene from a play the teacher can:

- ✿ Translate/adapt the text accordingly
- ✿ Underline and emphasize on the points that serve the lesson and its aims
- ✿ Bypass any parts, insignificant for the purposes of the lesson.

Then this excerpt will be given to the students and practiced /"**experienced**", as the students will be invited to represent and then discuss it, comment on its individual points. The text that the teacher will shape should enable as many students as possible to participate. **The class should act as a team.** In the case of art work (painting, see p. 30) it focuses on the detail of the table that also serves its lesson. This detail is artistic and of course static as it is a table. But it can evolve into "playing" (presentation) if the teacher, (even better) the students themselves want to "put" words, write a dialogue between the entities presented in the table, and then present/experience it.

### Step 4

---

#### Highlighting and defining the discussion points

---

The selected work of art (extract) presents persons, relationships between persons, dramatic conflicts, through the dialogues that develop.

The main characters:

- Are symbolic, **meaningful and living important moments** which are presented to us (the writers omit the insignificant moments of the everyday life of the persons: we will never see a person coughing because he is congested. We will see him cough because he has tuberculosis).

- **Have important things to talk about** and important questions to answer.

- **Present and make important arguments** to support their position.

- **Draw important conclusions** that, in the case of the classics, are not only about the characters but about all of us. The teacher who has chosen a scene from, for example, a classical play, who has then **intervened** by making some changes, must also point out these questions and then the positions of the characters, their arguments and formulate questions clearly:

- Questions that clarify the statements/positions FORUM theatre\*.

- Questions that provoke dialogue, answers and formulation.

- Questions that provoke and stimulate debate and, provoke response and stimulate opinion/opinions/viewpoints on the part of the students.

- These questions will be the topics that the teacher as a facilitator /mediator will mostly focus in his/her lesson to provoke discussion & debate in order to reach to conclusions.

- These conclusions are dynamic and not static. That is, they encourage the behaviors of similar (on the part of the students) by shaping their social attitude and relationships in their later lives.

*\* The main characteristic of **FORUM theatre** is the interpolation of dialogues between the audience and the actors. Interventions that start with questions and provoke answers and discussions, interrupting the action at the appropriate points.*



## Step 5

### **Specification of the subject matter in and with the students**

---

The first thing that the teacher must do in the classroom with the students is to specify and define the subject matter that the class will be dealing with (which social or political right will be examined). (We will do this very quickly here with the example motioned previously from Euripides tragedy ECUBA and in the scene of Hecuba-Polymestor-Chorus. In the case study below we do this in great detail).

E.g.:

**Teacher: "Today we will be dealing with an issue of social justice."** It is often the case that people take the law into their own hands, ignore laws and institutions and award justice on their own, punishing other people who, in their opinion, have wronged them in one way or another. Is this right?

- ✿ Questions arising for discussion:
- ✿ Is the concept of justice (and injustice) precisely defined in today's modern democracies?
- ✿ Is any justice awarded whenever it is requested by a citizen?
- ✿ Does everyone, individually, have the right to administer justice and punish according to his or her principles, beliefs and interests, or should one address to the official authorities & institutions? (With laws and formulated rights and obligations)
- ✿ Does a citizen have the right to appear in a court of law for an issue/problem he/she is facing in his/her relationship with another person or entity? (We say entity because it may involve a dispute with the state or a public authority).
- ✿ Should it be dealt fairly by the court?
- ✿ Is everyone equal before the judicial power and judged in the same way?

## Step 6

---

### **Let's not say it with words - Let's play it**

---

The teacher distributes to the students the theatrical text/scene that he/she has chosen and prepared in advance for the lesson. In a few words makes an introduction and describes:

**What it is about?** Is it an extract/scene from a play or a film or a painting, etc.

**What extract or scene has he/she chosen and where it is taken from?**

At what moment in the overall structure of the performance do we find ourselves?

**What are the story's plot, the myth, the characters, the relationships and conflicts?** So that students understand and place the passage in a fictional context/fiction frame.

A first reading of the extract is then given.

## Step 7

---

### The first reading of the text

---

**The teacher reads that passage/excerpt.** In this way, the first impressions of students have come from a good reading of the teacher who, having worked through the text, knows where to "cut", where to take breaths and where to punctuation signs. For the reading it is good to have a few first elements of accentuation (voice, emotion, showing where to ask, where to admire, where to blame, where to justify, etc.) while reading the character roles.

When finished the teacher gives:

**Other information in reference to the author and the time frame, the conditions under which it was written, and anything else that will be useful for the lesson.**

By making a short "escape" from the social rights context, the teacher Touches on issues of art, writing form, the content, etc.

**First approach-discussion with students:**

**1. What is the meaning of the play (scene/excerpt)?**

**2. Who are the characters? Discussion and description of the characters.** With the help of the teacher, the discussion of the characters will result in the students understanding their particular characteristics, their hidden intentions and thus leading to the next stage (step 8) in a similar reading (basic interpretive performance).

## Step 8

---

### The students in action – the teacher as “director”

---

The teacher assigns the roles and the students then read their lines. As we pointed out in **step 3**, the teacher has made sure that the text gives the opportunity to as many students as possible to participate. In this way the interest is sustained by everyone and the class works as a group. It is only

natural that the first reading by the students will not be satisfactory. This is why the teacher makes the necessary corrections and adaptation and the reading is repeated up to the point that will make the result clear and unambiguous for the discussion that will follow the questions and issues that will be raised, and the conclusions that will be drawn.

**And what if the starting point for the lesson** is not a known or invented theatrical script, written by the teacher?

What if it is a visual stimulus from a painting? (This case is sufficiently described on p. 42 ). However, we can say that the lack of text and the presence of a static image is not an obstacle. On the contrary! It gives other possibilities for both the teacher and the class as a whole to expand into other fields and enrich both their knowledge and experience. However, we say that the lack of text and the presence of static image are not an obstacle. On the contrary! It gives other opportunities to both the teacher and the students to expand into other fields and enrich both their knowledge and their experience. A painting is a static event and what is at stake according to the method proposed by HEDA is the action. Activity in a painting may not exist at the first level but it is implied, it is in the subconscious of the painting. In this case, we try to pass from a static visual snapshot to the action and evolve our lesson according to the previous and next steps proposed by HEDA.

So how do we go from a static image in the action? (Meaning reason, movement, relationships and dramatic conflicts).

The teacher at first chooses an **anthropocentric painting**. An image that implies exactly the relationships through the, attitudes and expressions of the persons it portrays. This enables the classroom to analyze the expressions and emotions of the faces and then complement the illustrated attitude of the people with movement.

It should not be surprising that the teacher in both cases functions to a certain extent as a director/organizer with the ultimate goal of approaching the subject matter in question. This is both inevitable and desirable. The only difference is that as a "director", he does not pay attention to the aesthetic result (good acting and performance of actors) but to the pedagogical/educational result. The point is not for the students to play the roles well, but to deliver the text in such a way that the questions are asked and the discussion progresses to raise the awareness of the students as young citizens. **In this sense, the teacher encourages the students to repeat the reading/playing of the text a few times so that the characteristics of the characters and their relationships are clearly shown as mentioned in step 7 (points 1, 2).**

**When the result reaches a satisfactory point....**

## Step 9

---

### **Students in action - the teacher leads the discussion**

---

So when the delivery of the text/performance reaches a satisfactory point (and this will be done with the teacher's encouragement and after 4-5 attempts of "playing" the passage), the teacher, acting as a mediator, interrupts at the selected points and starts the discussion by gradually raising the issues that he/she has identified in the **step 4 (FORUM theatre feature)**. This is done alongside the action. At the selected points the teacher stops the action and encourages comments and discussion:

- ✿ What is exactly going on?
- ✿ What relationships are being unraveled?
- ✿ What characteristics do the characters present?
- ✿ How do the characters appear?
- ✿ What is at stake between the characters? (in discussion, justification, etc.)
- ✿ What are the characters claiming and how do they claim it (who may be opposing parties or mere interlocutors)?
- ✿ What are their arguments and how do they express them?
- ✿ Where is the right and just?

The questions and issues to be discussed will vary and differ from lesson to lesson and will depend on the particular topic/subject selected in the social & civic education course from the text/excerpt/art work chosen and many other factors defined by the teacher.

## Step 10

---

### **Students in action-Support and Arguments teams-Debate**

---

The class group is divided by the teacher into groups. Each one of them takes on a specific role. If different, opposing, conflicting positions/views/aspirations have emerged from the theatrical presentation, they can be used as a basis for the argumentation. Following each group undertakes to support and consolidate these views by supporting them as best as possible (microcosm). It is necessary for the teams to do a quick and small research regarding the sources (Google and classical written sources) in order to obtain and strengthen the arguments that will enable them to support their point of view and to provide a solid basis for their arguments.(Feature of Documentary theater). They thereby divide up the fields of research, and then research to finally gather their data and information. These elements should be processed in order to finally become arguments capable of countering the opposing point of view in the debate that will take place immediately afterwards. One or more debates are thus organized

with both (or most) sides supporting their point of view with arguments beyond what is present, apparent or implied in the text and in the theatrical action. Thus, one or more debates are organized with both (or more) sides to support their view with arguments beyond what is present, apparent or implied in the text and in the theatrical action. The natural, logical sequencing from **step 5** (where the teacher gave the material/script to the class) to step 10 makes the students gain an opinion on the particular issue being debated and furthermore make suggestions on:

- ✿ Which is right and fair?
- ✿ Who is right and more unfair?
- ✿ What would be the ideal thing to do in a modern civilized society?
- ✿ What relationships guarantee a good happy coexistence in a civilized society?

The class could even make "new laws" that could exist in a favored ideal society. Not to be implemented, but to complete a process of opinion formation and debate among the students. **Here the lesson has features of a type of theatre - not very well known- called Legislative theatre.**



## EVALUATION

---

In a final stage, the teacher and the students spend some time evaluating the lesson and the process. This gives the opportunity to evaluate the process of the lesson as a whole and in its different steps in terms of:

- ✿ The topic.
- ✿ Its approach.
- ✿ The choice of the text/extract and whether it served its purpose.
- ✿ The purpose of the lesson.
- ✿ The way it was implemented.
- ✿ The final conclusions and results. etc.

These effects on the students cannot be measured only at that particular moment but over a longer period of time. Since the course had as its ultimate goal the shaping of consciences and attitudes based on democratic ideals and values, these results will be seen later on and in the course of life. So, they are not only measured by what is said in a discussion after the lesson, but the evaluation also includes the student's feelings and their emotional world during and after (long after, perhaps) the lesson. This more complex assessment will make the lesson better in future classes and the students and the teacher more competent in their roles.

### **Example of application of the HEDA method a Case study**

The case study that we analyze was taken from the Greek textbook that is used in the Greek secondary education-Grade 3.

Part A Section 1 THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE SOCIETY -Chapter 2-Social groups, Discrimination and characteristics of social groups (on cultural and social differences between societies in different cultures), prejudice and discrimination of groups.

### **The refugee, the foreigner, the immigrant: Friend or foe?**

---

In the example we present, we will follow the steps of the methodology proposed by the HEDA project in order to make easier to understand: the method, the original approach and the importance of its adoption and its application by teachers in class. We use as an example the topic of immigration-refugee crisis. We use the same topic in the following case study, which has as its starting point a painting (a visual prompt) as a starting motivation point.



## **STEP 1 -Immigration-The refugee crises (the immigrant the foreigner)**

---

The teacher is going to deal/discuss/teach the topic of immigration/refugee crisis in class.

### **CITIZEN'S BEHAVIOUR APPROACH**

#### **General definition-1st phase of the approach (preparation before the lesson)**

Topics of **diversity, racism and fascist behaviors** have emerged in recent years with the rise of the immigration and refugee crisis more or less all over Europe. The European citizen has felt that some things taken for granted and acquired for decades are in danger of being lost. The crisis roughly appeared in two phases:

- a.** with the fall of the regimes of existing socialism and
- b.** with the current situation and the wars in the Middle East (Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan) and Africa.

In Europe, citizens without any prior background of racist characteristics in their behavior, under the spectrum of fear, are very suspicious of the "foreigners" who arrived in the cities, in the neighborhoods and outside their homes and not only distanced themselves but acquired racist attitudes, attitudes of hatred belonging to fascist mentalities and ideologies.

In the countries of the south the problem was and is huge with the masses of desperate refugees entering Greece and Italy illegally from Turkey and North Africa. In Central and Northern Europe, the phenomenon appears to milder and the problems are smaller.

#### **2nd phase of the approach**

##### **The teacher approaches (prepares) the topic in detail**

- What is included in the official teaching material?
- What happens in the Western world and what happens in the Eastern world with the different religious prejudices, different attitudes, cultural and moral traditions?
- Are there different characteristics between the social classes?
- What happens in the teacher's country?
- What is happening in his/her region? (in the classroom, students and parents attitudes, etc.).

## **STEP 2- Finding the artwork** (theatre, painting, scene from a video, etc)

---

In a course of social and civic education (Citizenship education) according to the methodology proposed by the **HEDA** project:

1. It could be possible to use (among many others) the case of MEDEA (from Euripides' tragedy MEDEA) who, being a "foreigner" herself as she is of royal descent from Colchis, comes to Greece driven by her love for Jason. After years and after having 2 children, Jason drives her away and she finds herself a fugitive and homeless for the second time.

2. The teacher could take the introduction and prologue from a painting. Following a discussion and after the students express themselves, the teacher could then move on to the extract from the play text. In the case of MEDEA there are too many paintings portraying the tragic heroine. (see the well-known painting of Frederick Sandys).

## **STEP 3 Design of the artistic material**

---

**The teacher chooses (in our example)** a passage from the scene where Aegeus, king of Athens, appears and talks to MEDEA and promises her a home after Creon and Jason drive her away from Corinth. In the passage we use as a model and example of our methodology, cuts and changes have been made as indicated in step 3. Also, lines were given to the chorus to ensure participation by more students in the class. Actions of adaptation that the teacher teaching the lesson mentioned above can also take that are perfectly legal and legitimate.

**The points of discussion are many and depend on: the lesson and in what topics the teacher wants to focus, where the teacher gives more emphasis, etc.**

## **STEP 4-Points of interest & discussion in class (step 5)**

---

The teacher asks specific questions and provides the students with discussion points as he/she will raise them in the classroom in order to gather opinions and views from the students and discuss them in the context of the lesson.

The points of interest and discussion are listed in the second column of the text. These points, without them being at random, can be different, more or less depending on the lesson and the format the teacher wants to give. It is obvious that on such an intense and sensitive subject, the lesson taught by a

teacher in a Central or Northern European country will be different from a lesson taught in a school in the European South.

## STEP 5 - In class

---

The Teacher gives an introduction to the topic that will be discussed in class:

What should be our attitude towards people, desperate people who are forced by: various political circumstances, war and turmoil to leave their homeland and their homes and come to our country, claiming a new life away from life threatening situations.

- ✿ Do they have rights?
- ✿ If so, what are they?
- ✿ What do official records, treaties state and what is our personal attitude and behavior towards them?

## STEP 6– Artistic activity

---

**The teacher distributes to the students the selected passage (from MEDEA in our example)**

- ✿ Makes an introduction and describes in a few words what it is about
- ✿ Which passage-scene he/she has chosen and where it is taken from
- ✿ What is the plot of the play, the myth, the characters, the relationships and the conflicts.

So that the students can understand and place the passage in a fictional context and relate it to the topic chosen which include **Immigration, Refugee, crisis, the attitude of the immigrant and the treatment of the stranger.**

## STEP 7–Scene, let's play (1st approach to the text, analysis)

---

It then enters a theatrical process (role-playing).

There is a first reading of the passage, first by the teacher (for the reasons mentioned earlier) and then a first discussion on the play, the action, the plot, the characters and what they are trying to achieve, what the poet wants to tell us and the meanings that come out of the action, their relationships and conflicts. How does the poet in a symbolic way and using myths from mythology, adapting them as he sees fit, wants to address issues of his time. The teacher does the same for the purposes of the lesson.

## STEP 8– “Rehearsal” procedure

Then the teacher distributes the roles. The distribution of the roles is done from a pedagogical rather than a theatrical point of view<sup>1</sup> and as a "director" the teacher makes some remarks, corrections for the better understanding of the meanings in relation to the lesson and not for better aesthetically wise performances or interpretations on the part of the students. The passage is therefore short (4 minutes reading). Words have also been added to the chorus to actively engage as many students as possible to ensure the class as a whole (15 students) is engaged in the class activities.<sup>2</sup>

**1.** The teacher can assign the roles according to the criteria resulting from the composition of the class. For example, he/she may give a role to a student with an introverted behavior to help him /her socialize and communicate with others, to a student that has expressed himself/herself against immigrants and refugees, rather than to someone who will play the role better.

**2.** Alternative-experiential teaching methods have implications beyond the understanding of the lesson and the subject matter in question. Through the arts, students are introduced to artistic issues, practice and discover their aptitudes, socialize and work cooperatively as a group.

## THE QUOTATION from Euripides' tragedy Medea

(We list in the first column the dialogue and in the second column the comments on the issues to be discussed. The numbering indicates the points where the teacher will interrupt and discuss ( a feature of the FORUM theater)

<b>AEGEAS</b>	1⇨ Greetings, Medea. It's good to see you.
<b>MEDEA</b>	1⇨ Greetings to you too, Aegeas. How did you come to our land? Where do you come from?
<b>AEGEAS</b>	I come from the sacred oracle temple of Delphi.
<b>MEDEA</b>	Why did you go to the navel of earth?
<b>AEGEAS</b>	I wanted to know how I too could have children and offspring.
<b>MEDEA</b>	For the gods' sake, have you spent your life so far without children?
<b>CHORUS</b>	Fate and the gods determine the fate of mortals.
<b>AEGEAS</b>	Indeed. So ordained by fate and the gods. But why did they look and thy countenance reign? What makes you so unhappy?
<b>MEDEA</b>	I am wronged by Kreon 1⇨ the king, and my husband Jason agrees, while I have never wronged him.
<b>AEGEAS</b>	Doing what? Speak out.
<b>MEDEA</b>	He is driving me into exile, forcing me out, away from Corinth. 2⇨ 2a⇨
<b>CHORUS</b>	There is no worse harm for the citizen.

### POSSIBLE DISCUSSION TOPICS

**1⇨** The theatrical text/excerpt inevitably functions symbolically almost always. The persons and situations are random and meaningful. So the teacher must point out their interpretations and meanings.

**Medea** = a refugee

**A Aegeas** = an official representative of the host country

**Kreon & Iason** = it is the state/government that forces the immigrant/refugee to leave the country and his/her home.

**Oaths** = are the written laws and institutions that uphold justice and guarantee the observance of agreements

### QUESTIONS-DISCUSSION TOPICS

**2⇨** What are the reasons that people massively leave their country?

A. Immigration

B. Refugee shelter

What's the difference between the 2?

2α⇨? Who is a refugee, who is an

**CHORUS** From home, from ones country to be exiled.  
**AEGEAS** Oh, great bad found the poor unfortunate.  
**AEGEAS** No grater one exists.  
**MEDEA** Take pity on me in my misfortune. Don't let me be exiled without a friend.  
 Accept me as a suppliant in your home , your native land. If you will take me in, may the gods then answer your desire to have children. May you die a happy man.<sup>3⇨</sup> You don't know what a lucky one you are to find me here. I'll end your childlessness. I know the sorts of medicines to use, and I can help you have many children.

**AEGEAS** Lady, I'd like to grant this favor to you, for many reasons. First, there's the gods, <sup>4⇨</sup>  
 Then, for the children you say I'll produce.

**CHORUS** **It is only fair that when you benefit someone, you are benefited.**

**AEGEAS** Here's what I'll do. If you get to my country, I'll strive to treat you as a foreign guest—that's the proper thing for me to do.

But, Medea, I'll give you fair warning: I won't plot to get you out of Corinth. If you can reach my household on your own, you may stay there in safety. Rest assured—I won't surrender you to anyone.

But you must make your own escape from here.

**CHORUS** **But why have you made such a decision?**

**CHORUS** Really, I do not understand what you are saying.

**CHORUS** What will you gain from this?

**CHORUS** **Explain yourself clearly!**

**AEGEAS** I don't want my friends finding fault with me and blaming me that I took you.

**CHORUS** **Now I understand what exactly your words mean.**

**MEDEA** That's fine with me. If you could promise this, you'll have done me all the good you can. <sup>5⇨</sup>

**AEGEAS** I swear and by the gods I promise that you will find refuge in my house and I will protect you. Don't you trust me?

**MEDEA** I do trust you. But the house of Pelias dislikes me, and so does Kreon's, too. If you bind yourself to a promise now, you'll not hand me over when they come, seeking to remove me from your country.

**CHORUS** **The oath is respected.**

**CHORUS** **The gods protect it and the mortals respect it.**

**MEDEA** If you use words, and don't swear by the gods, you may become their friend and then comply with their political demands <sup>6⇨</sup>

**CHORUS** **Words are like birds, they fly and flee in an instant.**

**CHORUS** The interests and policies can change.

**MEDEA** You may comply with their political

**immigrant?**

**What's their difference?**

(1951 Geneva Convention and relevant international organizations - see <https://rm.coe.int/-2-/168075b8b2>)

<sup>3⇨</sup>The refugee or the immigrant is a fugitive, a contemporary suppliant.

**QUESTIONS-DISCUSSIONTOPICS**

What are his/her needs?

What does he/she want?

What does he/she hope for?

Coming to a foreign country, he/she hopes and asks for asylum, for: a better life, shelter, food, & education for his children.

<sup>4⇨</sup>Aegeas calls upon the gods.

**QUESTIONS-DISCUSSIONTOPICS**

**Is religion the reason why someone becomes a refugee?**

**Does religion protect you in your country of origin?**

Does it protect you in the host country?

What differences and conflicts arise from different religions when traditions and cultures come together?

<sup>5⇨</sup>MEDEA, the foreigner wants guarantees for the quality of his/her life.

**QUESTIONS-DISCUSSIONTOPICS**

Will it be safe in the host country?

Will he or she be protected by the laws as all citizens are?

Will he/she have the same rights?

Is it right that he/she should have the same rights and be respected as a human being, or will he be a second-class citizen?

<sup>6⇨</sup>QUESTIONS-DISCUSSIONTOPICS

MEDEA talks about politics. And

demands. I have no power, whereas they do.

**AEGEAS** What you've just said is very shrewd. All right, if it's what you want, I'm not unwilling to do what you require. Your proposal gives me some security. I can show those hostile to you I've a good excuse. And it makes your position more secure. Tell me the gods that I should swear by.

politics/policies change as politicians change. Aegeus as an individual (like any representative of power) may have the best intentions, but as a head of state, as a politician, he is subject to pressures and operates under the rule of other circumstances and conditions. So are promises, agreements and treaties respected or revised at the slightest change of situations, political interests, and political forces?

**MEDEA** Swear by the plain of Earth, by Helios, my father's father, by the family of gods, by all of them collectively<sup>7</sup>

MEDEA, the refugee, does not want to be the center & focal point of every political game, she does not want to be exploited and at her expense to be the subject of negotiations and political bargaining. (See the refugee crisis and Erdogan).

**AEGEAS** Tell me what I must swear to do and not to do.

<sup>7</sup>MEDEA calls upon values, laws and traditions that are respected by all, apart from political beliefs that change.

**MEDEA** Never to cast me out from your own country because I'm a foreigner, with no country and no religion.<sup>8</sup> And if some enemy of mine asks you if he can take me off, you'll not agree, not while you're still alive.

<sup>8</sup>The issue of racism and diversity.

#### QUESTIONS-DISCUSSIONTOPICS

There are indeed many religions, cultures and colors in people. There are differences in gender, sexual orientation, economic status, education and much more.

Should our behaviour and attitude towards the other person change according to their colour, according to their gender, according to their sexual orientation, whether they are rich or poor, whether their clothing preferences are in line with ours?

**AEGEAS** <sup>9</sup>To that I swear. By the Earth, by Helios' sacred light, by all the gods, I'll do what I've just heard.

<sup>9</sup>MEDEA asks for protection and asylum.

#### QUESTIONS-DISCUSSIONTOPICS

Do we have a duty to provide protection, asylum to the oppressed, to the refugee who comes to our country?

Beyond the laws, what do our humanitarian values and our culture dictate?

**MEDEA** That's good. And if you betray this promise, what happens to you then?<sup>10</sup>

**AEGEAS** May I then suffer the punishment that falls on profane men.

#### <sup>10</sup>QUESTIONS-DISCUSSIONTOPICS

Is there a punishment for anyone who violates oaths and breaks promises? Is there a punishment for anyone who breaks oaths and promises to the stranger?

Should there be or should there not? Are we equal in the face of the law?

**MEDEA** All is well. Now, go your way in peace. I'll come to your city as quickly as I can, once I've completed what I mean to do, and my plans here have been successful.

## STEP 9

---

The teacher lets the children read and become familiar with the text and the dialogue. After this has been done a few times and the elementary observations have been made so that the meanings come out (intonations, breaths, possible pauses, questions, answers) and the characters are having a normal flow conversation, the teacher, acting as a mediator, starts the conversation.

He interrupts and asks the questions (right column in the text) as indicated during preparation (STEP 4). This is done in parallel with the action. That is, at the selected points the teacher stops the action and invites comments and discussion by asking questions first in relation to the passage (Medea, Aegeus, Chorus, what they say, what they argue about, are they right, do they evoke feelings of sympathy, antipathy, etc.) Also makes the implications for present-day life and reality. It is important for students to express their opinions and views and the discussion that results from this.

## STEP 10

---

From the theatrical activity (passage from MEDEA in our case) different, opposite, perhaps conflicting positions/views/aspirations have emerged from the students:

### 1. IN RELATION TO THE ACT AND THE CHARACTERS

- a. Is MEDEA right in wanting to leave or should she stay and stand her ground since because of the marriage and the family she has created with Jason this is also her country?
- b. Is Aegeas doing the right thing by accepting her in his own country or should he not jeopardize the political friendship between the two states of Athens and Corinth?

### 2. IMPLICATIONS - IN RELATION TO THE CURRENT REALITY

- c. There are issues of political dictates on one hand and humanism and human cultural values on the other hand. Which of the two prevails and why?
- d. Should humanitarian values prevail over political purposes or vice versa?
- e. What is the role of the state and what is the role of citizens? If the state has a policy hostile to immigrants through laws and decrees, should citizens as human beings follow them or show their humanitarianism & solidarity, and provide assistance to immigrants/refugees against the dictates of the state?

### **DIVISION INTO GROUPS SUPPORTING DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEWS**

In this phase of the lesson, the teacher divides the students into support groups with clear objectives: **each group should build an argument, defending its point of view.**

Each group is then charged with supporting and consolidating its views by collecting/compiling arguments (supported by relevant research on the internet or elsewhere, within the course or as an activity beyond the course, interviewing experts, etc.) and defending its point of view as best as possible. The conflict (of arguments) should be strong and interesting and in the end the **correct** viewpoint should prevail in the consciousness of the (micro) society of the class.<sup>3</sup>

**Debates** are thus organized with the different sides supporting their point of view with arguments beyond what is present, apparent or implied in the text and in the theatrical action.

3. By "correct" we mean that the aim is to promote views based on civilized, humanitarian, democratic principles ideals and values.

## **After the lesson - Outside the classroom. Interventions in the social domain**

---

The task and reflection can be continued after the main lesson, by having the teacher give the students projects that can be a desk research or interviews with people who are considered experts in the subject matter under consideration.

In the case of the refugee and the attitude towards him/her, the respect and protection, the class could be divided into:

### **1. Laws, institutions and agreements/conventions research group**

E.g.

- A. the Geneva Convention and what does it include and what does it define?
- B. What rights does the UNHCR give to the refugees?
- C. What are the obligations of the host country, etc.

### **2. Country Services Research Group**

- A. What is in force in the country at national, local, regional level
- B. Which other authorities/organizations etc. have jurisdiction over refugees (NGOs, International Organization for Migration (IOM), European Council for Refugees, Red Cross, Council of Europe, etc.).

### **3. Interview team**

Interviews with immigrants or refugees

Interviews with regular citizens who have experienced immigration

Report and presentation of the results in the classroom or in the school as a whole.

### **4 Team for the dissemination of the results of the course - impact.**

The students within the framework of the lesson and after having a relatively



comprehensive knowledge and opinion on the subject ( immigration, suicide, femicide) can take the initiative and produce secondary project & activities, such as publications in the school newspaper or in national or European school networks (European platforms for schools , e twinning), podcasts, video broadcasts, dramatized videos using a common video camera, a photo exhibition using simple cameras or mobile phones, and many other things that will emerge from the imagination and creativity of the students and the teacher.



## **LIFE in the ELOQUENT IMMOBILITY OF PAINTING**

---

### **Starting from an visual arts event to reach a creative lesson in teaching human rights and civic education.**

Starting a lesson on citizenship education or human rights in general from virtual art forms such as painting or sculpture and not from performing arts (theatre, cinema, and video) may entail some additional difficulties that make the project much more interesting.

But we would like to say from the beginning that the lack of text and the presence of static images is in no way an obstacle. On the contrary! It provides other opportunities for both the teacher and the class as a whole to expand into other fields and enrich both their knowledge and experience.

**The passage from the virtual to the figurative is nothing more than the passage from stillness/immobility to movement and from static to dynamic.**

**Once this transition has been made, we follow the steps already described earlier.**

As a painting portrays something (people more so since our subject is human rights and citizenship education) it does not give the teacher ready-made material in the way that theatre does, where the author gives us the dialogues and therefore the relationships and feelings of the characters, the movement with some of his/her comments and a lot of other information that is obvious or hidden under the text. But this means a greater mobilization of the emotional world of those involved (students and teachers), of their imagination, of their sensitivity, their awareness and their creativity. Students have to feel, to become sensitive and to imagine what the static figures on the painting (which in the case of theatre are more or less given) say or feel and to create or invent relationships, feelings and dialogues, movements, behaviors, etc.

When paintings (or sculptures) are the starting point of the lesson, the process of the lesson should move from the stillness/immobility and static nature (of the painting or sculpture) to the dynamics and movement of the performing arts (cinema, video and especially theatre).

We consider this necessary for there to be dynamic relationships and development. Both in the performance and in the lesson in order to draw conclusions at the end about our social attitudes.

The visual art (painting or sculpture) wants to say something but does not say it out loud live, and dynamically like in theatre. So the teachers could move from this visual situation to a dynamic one: from image to action.

In this case, the steps suggested above are again followed, but with some changes and adaptations imposed by the fact that our starting point is now a painting by an artist of another time and place.

So we will therefore point out these adaptations and the teacher will make the synthesis of the 10 steps we describe in the HEDA method with the following points.

### **Example of the application of the HEDA method based on a visual event a Case study**

---

The teacher who has defined his/her subject/topic as we have analyzed above in the case study with the example of Euripides' MEDEA (**STEP 1**) selects in advance a painting that expresses the topic he/she wants to address in each lesson. This painting should be anthropocentric (representing people). With the theme of a painting about people the painting will include a dramatization. This is mostly the case (with the exception of paintings of vanity, beauty, beauty and lust). So in the figures/characters represented in the painting, there are attitudes, expressions, looks that can be made into movement and action.

**(STEP 2).**A painting, like the presentation of a theatre scene, transmits many different meanings. The teacher points out those visual patterns and details of the painting that he/she wants to emphasize in his/her lesson and to discuss with the students, bypassing others that are not of interest to the lesson.  
**(STEPS 3 and 4).**

The teacher announces the subject matter that the class will be concerned with, which social or political right will be addressed. **(STEP 5)**

#### **Supposing that the topic is again IMMIGRATION-REGUGEE CRISIS:**

The teacher sets out the questions that arise for discussion.

- ✿ What makes people to leave their homes and their country?
- ✿ What makes people decide to immigrate to another place, unknown and more or less quite unwelcoming?
- ✿ What strong emotions do they have in order to take such a decision?  
(Desperation from economic poverty, fear of all kinds of persecution, war, desire for a better life for themselves and their children)?

**He/she presents the painting(s) to the class:**

**In the case study we selected a painting by Edvard Petersen, a Danish artist from the 19th century-"The Immigrants of Larsen Plads".**



EDVARDPETERSEN (1841-1911) -[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edvard\\_Petersen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edvard_Petersen), (1890)

The teacher:

- ✿ Gives information about the painting, its creator, where it came from, where and when the artist created it and what was his/her inspiration.
- ✿ He does not waste the opportunity to make the lesson as interactive as possible providing the students with the opportunity to observe, to pay attention to the details that we are interested in, so that to express themselves through discussion and questions: what does the painting want to express, what are the emotions?
- ✿ Encourages the students to bring the painting to life and describe the expressions, relationships, thoughts and feelings of the persons depicted.
- ✿ At this stage emphasis is given to the description and findings in order to create the emotional background so that to go to the next stage on to the dynamics of movement, giving life to the painting and the action that and the action it implies. **(STEP 6)**

Body positions, relationships that are created and that the painter implies. What troubles the persons? What emotions they are possessed by? How do they express their concerns and feelings?

### **IN STANDING and IMMOBILITY (tableaux vivants)**

After this phase is completed, the teacher encourages and guides the students to "create/represent/give life to the painting". So, the students spread

throughout the class and in groups of two or three or more improvise and create a "tableau vivant" in class, initially in a static form.

### **MOVEMENT and DYNAMICS**

The teacher then asks and encourages the students to move by asking them what might be the movement that preceded the pose already made (which we saw and commented on the board) and what will be the next movement.

Let's take for example, from the painting, the two people on the right who are talking. The gentleman in the black coat and the gentleman in the brown coat whose back is turned towards us. And behind them there is a woman leaning against the wall looking at them seems to be interested in the conversation they are having. A little to the right there are two other women, one of whom seems to be crying and is wiping her eyes with a handkerchief.

Question:

What happened just **before** the two men spoke? Where did the gentleman in black come from and where did the gentleman in the brown coat and the other figures come from? What are the intentions and therefore the feelings of one towards the other? What happens next, when the two men's conversation is over. Here there are a huge number of options as long as the student's imagination and creativity are active. What does one man's behavior suggest and what does the other man's behavior suggest. What might be the gentleman in the black coat and what might be the gentleman in the brown coat and the women? **(STEP 7)**. The continuation and completion of the action is to add the word. **(STEP 8)**.

What is the conversation of the two men about?

Assuming one is an immigrant who has just arrived with his whole family at the port, with the ship in the background, and the other (in the black coat and clack hat) is an agent/immigrant smuggler who wants to exploit them by finding them jobs for a small salary, keeping their legal documents (ID cards, passports, letters) to live in shabby accommodation All are working for some landowner or factory owner from the first period of the industrial revolution?

WHAT would be the response of the immigrants? What are they saying?

What would be their dialogue?

What does the agent/immigrant smuggler want?

What does the immigrant answer?

What does the woman watching think and say?

Why is the woman behind them crying?

**Based on the emotional background created in the previous steps, the students are encouraged to name the persons and then feel and express their emotions. In addition to that, to talk to each other by playing the "roles" and bringing to life the paintings figures that was previously static. The dialogue is rudimentary in principle.**

In the next STEP **(STEP 9)**, the teacher gives the children time to write down the dialogues they came up with in the lesson and during the previous steps.

The lesson, with the completion and organization of the dialogue, has reached an advanced stage and can be presented by the students to the class. It is of little importance how the dialogue is presented ("by heart" or reading from their notes). **What we are most interested in here is for the text to have a social content and to give impulses and opportunities for discussion and comments, expression of opinion by the students on the working & living conditions, social rights (insurance, education, right to work and rest, nutrition, etc.).**

The same process is followed with the other groups that prepared and brought to life other, different scenes of the painting.

Since the topic is common and the starting point was the same painting, it follows that the groups create related activities of tableau vivants & dialogues. Thus the teacher can proceed to a synthesis of all these having **enriched the material for discussion in the next and last step of the lesson.**

Then, moving on to the last STEP **(STEP 10)**, support groups are set up to support both parties.

- ✿ There is a negotiation between the two parties.
- ✿ What does the Agent/Manager want and what does the migrant want?
- ✿ What should be done?
- ✿ Are the immigrants/refugees cheaper labor hands and therefore an easy target for employers to exploit?
- ✿ Should immigrants enjoy the same privileges as native citizens of the host country?
- ✿ Is there fear that the migrants will take over the jobs of the natives (raising racism & diversity issues)?
- ✿ At what level can the neighboring of the two populations be beneficial to both?
- ✿ Can one another benefit from tradition, experience and everyday life habits of the other? (poetry and literature, clothing habits, cuisine and much more).
- ✿ How is the education of children shaped?
- ✿ Is it good to integrate the children of immigrants into the formal institutionalized education of the host country or not?

The chapter that was sufficiently discussed earlier is entitled: **After the lesson- Outside the classroom**. Interventions in the social setting can also occur in the case of a lesson that begins with a visual event (p. 29)

Therefore, we chose the same topic ( Immigration) to analyze and develop it as a case study, starting with the theatrical activity and starting with a painting. Thus, the differences and similarities in the development of a lesson based on the HEDA method become apparent and therefore the teacher will be able to form a complete picture of both the method as a whole and the two paths we suggest.

As different as the two ways may seem because they are based on different type's arts and have different starting points, they are nevertheless similar and homogeneous.



---

## CONCLUSION

---

The **HEDA project** and the method it proposes is based on and gives more emphasis to theatre and theatrical techniques. It uses elements found in various theatre styles (Theatre forum, Theatre of the Oppressed, Newspaper Theatre, Documentary Theatre, Legislative Theatre).

All these types of theatre exist integrated into the method we analyze and propose above which uses elements of them. This is done intentionally because our goal is the lesson, its functionality and its effectiveness on the students, how much it will reflect on them, how much it will influence them and how much it will shape their consciousness to become creative and civilized citizens away from violence, racism and other such characteristics that brutally hurt the social structure and its cohesion. After all, all the above-mentioned types of theatre, which in our method have no distinct boundaries, are based on dialogue, discussion, the expression and exchange of opinions. The preference and the importance that we give to theatre over other arts is because theatre requires energy and action and this is the purpose and the innovation of the method forte teaching social and civic education: **To escape from passive and indifferent teaching and to make the course subject and topic lesson (social rights and obligations, social behavior) easy and pleasant to follow, to mobilize not only the mind and logic but also the emotions, imagination and sensitivity of students on these subjects, broadening their horizons, engaging as many of their senses as possible, raising their social antennas and thus shaping them into active, responsible citizens sensitive to the common social issues arising from our complex, demanding and perhaps dangerous times.**

### Bibliography

- Boal , A. (1979). Theatre of the oppressed. London: Pluto Press.  
Freire , P. (1972). Pedagogy of the oppressed. England: Penguin Books.  
Gardner, H. (1983). Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences. NY: Basic Books.  
Slade, P. (1967). Child drama. England: University of London Press Ltd.  
Somers, J. (1994). Drama in the curriculum. London: Cassell Educational Limited.





ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΣΤΟΥΔΙΟΝ ΛΑΙΚΟΥ ΘΕΑΤΡΟΥ

[Theatrestudies.gr](http://Theatrestudies.gr)