<u>Project Title</u>:
Art-based Methods Inspired by Philosophy and Literature for Youth Training
<u>Project Code</u>: 2022-3-DE04-KA210-YOU-000099806
<u>Project Acronym</u>: AMIPLYT
<u>Participating organisations</u>:
- THEATER SCHIESSBÜHNE e.V. (Germany)
- EN ARMONIA (Greece)
- ASSOCIATION-COMPAGNIE NOURA (France)

Project Result:
Digital Handbook and Case Study

Introduction

This handbook aims to provide youth trainers in art and humanities with alternative art-based methods which will help young people, including young people with fewer opportunities, to work with the feelings arising through the learning context.

More specifically, this handbook includes:
- a structured improvisation and experience-based movement methodology on how to reflect emotions and feelings inspired by philosophical and literary texts which raise social awareness and promote respect for inclusion and diversity,
- a case study based on this methodology (in two parts, one for each method).

Through this movement methodology, the meanings of the texts will be enhanced into a total experience, promoting the social and humanistic concepts of these texts and strengthening the ability of the young learners to conceptualise them.

The borderless language of this methodology comprises a learning method capable of being used in training for young people, including young people with fewer opportunities and learning barriers caused by linguistic and cultural inclusion difficulties.

Step (1) – Selection of the Literary Work

In the initial phase of choosing a literary work, the trainer, in collaboration with the participants, embarks on the important task of choosing a literary work that possesses profound philosophical, political, or social significance. The selection process involves

identifying texts that courageously delve into the theoretical underpinnings of critical societal issues. These issues may encompass themes such as populism, racism, feminism, discrimination, and human rights.

To ensure a meaningful exploration and selection of literary works, all users of this handbook are encouraged to immerse themselves in the important task of choosing a literary work that possesses profound philosophical, political, or social significance. This collective reading endeavour allows each individual to gain a comprehensive overview of the material. Importantly, participants have the flexibility to read the material in their preferred language, with diligent care taken to ensure the accuracy and quality of translations when such adaptations are required. This commitment to linguistic fidelity ensures that the essence of the work is faithfully preserved during the reading process.

The following list can accompany and structure the process:
- Diverse Perspectives: To promote inclusivity and broaden horizons, select literary works from various cultural backgrounds and genres. This diversity fosters a rich tapestry of ideas and interpretations.
- Thematic Relevance: Ensure that the selected literary work aligns with the overarching theme of the artistic project. It should serve as a thought-provoking catalyst for exploration.
- Accessibility: Consider the availability and accessibility of the chosen text.
- Critical Analysis: During the reading phase, engage critically with the text. This involves identifying key themes, characters, and passages that resonate with the chosen societal issue.
- Ethical Considerations: When dealing with works that explore sensitive or controversial topics, emphasize the importance of respectful and empathetic engagement.
- Final Selection: Once the reading has concluded, select the literary work that resonates most profoundly with your objectives. This final selection will serve as the foundation for subsequent artistic exploration.

Step (2) – Selection of keywords and core ideas

In this creative phase, participants embark on the crucial process of selecting the words and phrases from the chosen literary work that will later be translated into physical movements. This step of the methodology serves as a bridge between the text and the expressive physicality.

Option 1: Selecting and extracting the words from the literary work

Each participant selects and extracts the words and/or phrases from the text that are often repeated in the literature work and are connected to social and political context.
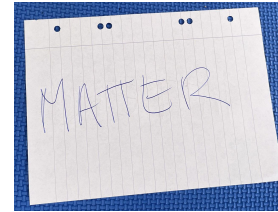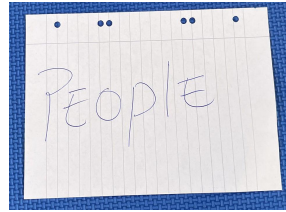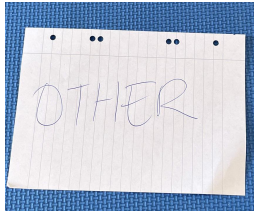

Option 2: Creating own phrases

In this option, the participants, after reading the literary work, write down their own words and phrases, as a result from the inspiration they received by reading the literature work. In this case, the participants have the chance to let themselves be inspired by the text they have read and actively create their own phrases, connected to the meaning of the text they read.

This phase of the methodology is pivotal in transforming the abstract concepts within the text into a tangible and expressive form. Each chosen word holds the potential to express social and political ideas through the medium of movement, promoting a deeper understanding of the text's themes.

In our case study, after reading the book "Me and white supremacy: combat racism, change the world and become a good ancestor" by Layla F. Saad, we wrote down the phrase "Other people matter".
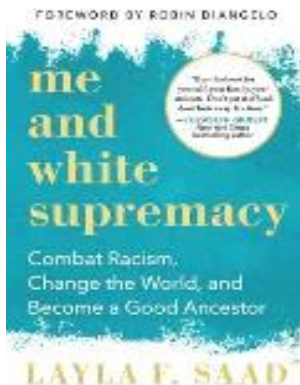
The book "Me and white supremacy: combat racism, change the world and become a good ancestor" by Layla F. Saad, is a workbook for people with white privilege, to educate themselves on the pervasive racist ideologies that they carry; and to dismantle these, and take action to make the world a better place.

Step (3) – Deciding collectively on the words for the artistic expression

In this step, participants are asked to collaboratively decide which final words from the selected ones will be utilised for subsequent artistic exploration. This process ensures that the chosen words collectively represent the thematic depth of the chosen literary work, facilitating a comprehensive artistic response.

A. Word Collection and Group Assessment

Individual Selection: Each participant makes an individual selection of the words that were mentioned in the previous step, writes them down to a piece of paper (each word on a different piece of paper) and places them in the centre of the room on the floor.

Identification of Common Words: words that are identified by multiple participants are signed out for further consideration, as they demonstrate a collective resonance within the group.

Remaining Words: Words that are unique to individual participants are kept in the central pool of options. This pool of options may offer diverse perspectives and interpretations in the next steps.

B. Categorization into Themes and Connotations

It is recommended to divide the words into categories and connotations.
For our case study of the book "Me and white supremacy", for example, we have chosen the following categories and connotations

(1: Positive ascription, 2: Negative ascription):

i. Gender:
- Subcategories: (A1) "Identity" (A2) "Discrimination"

ii. Race:
- Subcategories: (B1) "Culture", (B2) "Racism"

iii. Religion:
- Subcategories: (C1) "Faith", (C2) "Stereotypes"
  C. Final Word Selection:

Participants engage in group discussions and deliberate to collectively determine which words will advance to the subsequent phases of the methodology.
Suggested Maximum Words: It is recommended to limit the amount of the selected words, not exceeding 10 words, to ensure focused and meaningful artistic exploration.

This phase is pivotal in refining and narrowing down the selection of words that will serve as the foundation for the subsequent artistic vocabulary.

Step (4) – Creating the body vocabulary based on improvisation and experience-based movements

This step involves the dynamic process of discovering physical movements that authentically embody the essence of each selected word. This approach deepens the participants' understanding of the words, transforming them from abstract concepts into tangible experiences. By infusing movements with meaning, participants unlock a profound space for discussions centered on the social themes rooted in these words.

* A fundamental consideration during this phase is ensuring that the chosen movements are accessible to all participants, regardless of their professional dance backgrounds. Movements should be designed to accommodate participants with varying levels of dance experience.

METHOD 1 – Various movements for each word

- **Step 1:** The trainer writes down the words in different pieces of paper and places them on the floor. This step helps to visualize the words and to bring the spoken word into the physical level.

- **Step 2:** Each participant chooses one of the words and stands in front of the paper where the word is written. Then the participants chooses a body part where he or she connects this word with and finds a movement where the chosen body part is moving.

- **Step 3:** Once located the body part, each participant starts exploring the movement of this part of the body. By exploring the movement connected to that body part, each one can research different possibilities and eventually find one specific movement.

- **Step 4:** All participants apply the same method to the other words.

- **Step 5:** Each participant connects those movements and builds a short choreographic phrase. This result represents the embodied version of the original text, as an individual expression and interpretation.

- **Step 6:** The group gathers in a circle. One after the other, they share the short movement sequence without interruptions and let all the suggested movements travel though the circle, so everyone has the chance to share his/her suggested movement. A longer choreographic sequence is created.

- **Step 7:** The group repeats the choreographic sequence until all participants have learned it.

- **Step 8:** In this step, the focus is on the connection of the group and own interpretations of the movement according to the participants' personal experiences. The participants are welcomed to move in the space, leaving room for development and transformation of the movements and allowing connection and communication with each other. The trainer leaves space and time for this step and eventually facilitates an end of the experimental group sequence.

- **Step 9:** Check-out round: The trainer invites the participants to express how they feel and what did the feel during the exercise (example: the power of communication, the power of own interpretations of the movement). The trainer mediates a productive discussion in the group where everyone has the chance to express how the movements for them are connected with their personal experiences and their perception of the society.

CASE STUDY – Part 1 (Method 1)

* Video 1: https://youtu.be/iYo0GVH2wfg
Case study with the sentence: "Other people matter"

METHOD 2 – One movement for each word

- **Step 1:** The trainer invites the participants to individually engage in structured improvisational exercises that involve embodying the selected words through movement.

- **Step 2:** The group is encouraged to actively participate in brainstorming and exchange of ideas with the whole group. This exchange of ideas initiates a collective exploration of potential artistic expressions. This collaborative effort sparks creativity and diverse perspectives within the group.

- **Step 3:** Creating the body vocabulary for each word. Through engaging discussions and collaborative try-outs, the group works together to refine and synthesize the proposed movements. This collaborative refinement process leads to the creation of a shared vocabulary of movements. In this step, each word is connected with one specific movement.

- **Step 4:** Participants gather in a circle, creating a sense of unity and connection among the group members. The group collectively repeats the movements associated with each word. This synchronized practice allows participants to internalize and synchronize their interpretations of the words.

- **Step 5:** Variations on each movement. The group embarks on a second round of movement repetitions. This time, the focus shifts to exploring variations in movement dynamics. The participants are given the opportunity to explore the variations of each movement, experimenting on the size of the movement (small or big) and the intensity (high or low). For example, if the participants want to emphasize the meaning of the chosen word, the movement becomes bigger and more intense.

- **Step 6:** Creating new phrased with the chosen words. The group is invited to create phrases from the chosen words. They write down on a piece of paper the phrase they have created and make the equivalent movement. This way, small choreographic sequences are created that correspond to the chosen phrases.

- **Step 7:** Presentation of each phrase. Each participant is invited to show his/her choreographic sequence. The group has the chance to guess the phrase just from the movement.

- **Step 8:** Reflection. After the presentation of each phrase, the trainer welcomes the whole group for a discussion about the meaning of each phrase and what impact does this phrase have on the group.

Video 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=II7Ofl9qXns
Case study with the words:
think, unequality, rights, no, freedom, heart, other, people, matter, fear

Step (5) – Reflecting and Interpreting Personal Sentences

This phase of the methodology encourages participants to delve into the profound meaning behind the movements and sentences they have created, fostering a deeper understanding of their individual connections to the chosen words and themes. It creates a space for participants to share their unique insights, connect with the chosen words on a profound level, and foster a rich tapestry of interpretations that enriches the overall exploration of the literary work's social and humanistic concepts.

Open Discussion: To facilitate a meaningful exchange, suggested questions are posed to the participant, including:
- "Does this word/sentence carry a positive or negative meaning for you?"
- "What motivated you to select this particular movement?"
- "Why is this word/sentence significant to you?"
- "Is there a personal life experience, or experiences of others, that connect to this sentence?"

<u>Personal Interpretation</u>: The participant is encouraged to provide their personal interpretation, offering insights into their emotional connection, motivations, and the resonance of the sentence within their own life journey.

<u>Collective Reflection</u>: Following the participant's reflection, the entire group is invited to share their own thoughts and perspectives on the same sentence. This communal exploration allows for a broad spectrum of experiences and interpretations to emerge.

<u>Life Experiences</u>: Participants are encouraged to draw upon their own life experiences, both shared and individual, to illuminate the meaning and significance of the sentence. This open dialogue promotes a deeper understanding of the themes explored in the chosen literary work.