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HOMO'POLY

WORKSHOP

Theme:	Game of Life
School:	Secondary
Age group:	16-18
Duration:	90 minutes
Participants:	groups of 3-5 persons
Class setting (tables and chairs):	tables arranged in a way that groups can work separately
Relevant background information :	There should be at least one girl in each group.
Teaching strategy:	Changing perspective; understanding that on the one hand, there are everyday life situations that are problematic for homosexual persons and that there are situations that are problematic for everyone, no matter if gay or straight.

[Typ hier]

HOMO'POLY

1. Conditions:

We recommend the game as an introduction to a lesson on the subject of homosexuality and gender. In the following lessons groups of students could continue to work on individual topics (for example coming out, marriage, adoption, sexual orientation, legal prosecution). During the whole series of lessons, the teacher can refer to sample situations from Game of Life to discuss certain aspects of the subject in detail.

Furthermore, the game leads to a change of perspective as the students see through the eyes of a homosexual boy / young adult. This creates empathy, and the students are sensitized to the topic, they also develop awareness for the problems and challenges homosexuals are confronted with in their daily life.

Game of Life can also be used at a closure of a series of lessons (that possibly started off with a more theoretical focus on the subject) in order to draw the students' attention to the real time problems and daily life challenges of homosexuals.

2. Content/theme:

Game of Life is an interactive board game, in which the players students go through different successive stages of a homosexual's life (childhood and early adolescence, late adolescence, and early adulthood). The players are confronted with situations concerning school, friendship, coming out, parents' reactions, partnership/love, interaction with strangers, creating a family, etc. For the different situations there are action cards that describe the respective situations and give options. As a group the students have to discuss and choose one of the options. This way they win or lose "Game of Life"-Points. The overall aim is to make students reflect on typical situations in the life of a young homosexual, change perspective, develop an understanding for difficulties, and also detect problems and situations that heterosexual and homosexual people have in common.

There's only one character. A group of students play together to guide this character through the different stages. The game is not meant as a competition, but as a concrete basis for discussion about subtopics, situations, dilemmas, etc.

3. Organisation of the lesson

Duration	Goal	Teacher's activity	Students' activity	Educational situation: content, working methods, media	Objectives / Competence- development Assessment
10 min	Warming up, getting closer to the actual game	Question to the class: "Ben has just told his parents about his new relationship. They are really confused and have to digest what they just heard. Why?" The valuation of the students' answers can be done by asking „If you were Ben, which of the situations would you find the most uncomfortable?"	The students quickly give answers to the questions. No further comments are meant to be made. They may suggest that Ben might be gay. If not, teacher can give a hint.	Poster with introductory question/situation, or: situation written on blackboard open class discussion, brainstorming	Collecting different assumptions, focus on situations that can be very uncomfortable for many people, and try to look at it from a different perspective; approaching the fact that homosexuality is perceived as a difficult situation. Getting closer to the change of perspective that has to be performed by the students in the course of the game.

HOMO'POLY

<p>5 min</p>	<p>Understanding the game</p>	<p>Making the students read the game instructions in their groups. Then going through the instructions together to make sure everything is understood.</p>	<p>Students read the instructions in groups (3-5 students). Afterwards they may ask questions in order to understand the rules of the game.</p>	<p>Instructions and remarks (respective worksheet); digital version of the worksheet; Work in groups, then discussion in class.</p>	<p>The students are to understand the complexity of the game. Assessment is done in class by talking about possible questions concerning the rules and procedures.</p>
<p>45 min</p>	<p>Playing the game: Adopting the perspective of a young homosexual, discussion situations and problems</p>	<p>Teacher is passive. If students have questions, they can be answered, but the students should play on their own.</p>	<p>In groups of 3-5 students, they play the game as described in the instructions.</p>	<p>Groups face difficult situations and evaluate different situations. Board game, instruction, action cards, token (e.g. a coin)</p>	<p>The players are confronted with situations concerning school, friendships, coming out, parents' reactions, partnership/love, interactions with strangers, creating a family, etc. For the different situations, there are action cards that describe the respective situations and give options. As a group the students have to discuss and decide for one of the options.</p>

HOMO'POLY

<p>25 min</p>	<p>Evaluation of the game, part 1</p>	<p>The number of points won by the groups are written on the board. "Are 70 happiness points better than 60? What does the final number of points actually tell us? Can life be measured in points?" Option A: Open discussion. Option B: Question: "What are the three important things I learned playing the game?"</p>	<p>Students give their own opinion on the game, the points, possible (subjective) contradictions, Option A: Students share their ideas in an open discussion, write and categorize their ideas on the board. Option B: Students get three pieces of paper to write down their ideas, answering the question raised by teacher.</p>	<p>Discussion / brainstorming about important outcomes of the game. Class discussion (no group discussion). Blackboard / whiteboard / digital whiteboard / poster to collect the ideas and develop the panel picture. Pieces of paper for Option B</p>	<p>A panel picture is intended that shows the important outcome:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay attention to your own needs. However, doing this can cause conflicts between one's own needs and other people's expectations. A "healthy egoism" is necessary. 2. Homosexuals and heterosexuals have a lot in common. Every individual has experienced the one or the other situation in a similar or comparable way. The students recognize that there are fewer differences than they might have expected. This leads to a better understanding for each other's situation and problems. 3. Change perspectives! The students develop a sensitization for difficult situations of homosexual persons, which heterosexuals don't know about or aren't confronted with. (Attention: Try to avoid contradictions to outcome 2.)
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HOMO'POLY

5 min	Evaluation of the game, part 2	Draw the attention on possible sub-topics. Examples: "Why can't they go to Africa for a safari?" "Are they allowed to get married at all?" "How can homosexuals actually have children?"	Students give their opinion on special interests in topics emerged from the lesson or the game.	Classroom discussion, possible forming of groups for work on different topics in following lessons. (Blackboard/Whiteboard or PPT for division of subtopics)	Focus on sub-topics for further lessons. Ideas / wishes are taken as a guideline for work on the overall topic during the following lessons.
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HOMO'POLY

4. This material belongs to gender and homosexuality.

5. (optional) Variations, special characteristics:

The game is meant to be the basis for further discussions (e.g. number of points) within the groups as well as in class right after playing it. It serves as an illustration concerning numerous sub-topics that can later on be dealt with in detail. So, the game is a good start for a longer series of lessons on the topic of homosexuality and gender.

The exemplified situations are fictitious descriptions, which are not to be generalized and which are not necessarily transferrable to any other person's life. They are partly exaggerated on purpose in order to point out the conflict better.

6. Annex:

- Board
- Instructions and remarks
- Action Cards
- "Game-of-life" points
- Token