

## Stay@School

### Second Workshop on Module 3 “Teaching methods”

Liège (Belgium), 6 February 2013

### Minutes

#### Participants

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#### Minutes

This workshop aimed to conclude the experiment of Module 3, dedicated to the “Teaching methods”.

Here are the topics that were successively addressed, in accordance with the workshop agenda.

#### Presentation of the participants

First the participants shortly introduced themselves. They all have different backgrounds (primary, secondary and higher education, school mediation services, youth aid services, training centres...).



## Experimentation of the Training Course

During the previous workshop, INFOREF introduced **Module 3: “Teaching methods”**.

The participants were invited to further discover it and confront it to their own experience trying to answer the following questions:

- 1) Does this module echo in your personal experience and how?
- 2) What could (or should) be added to it?

They were asked to think about those questions and give answers before the transnational meeting dedicated to Module 3.

They were also asked to intervene in the Forum about Module 3 and in the transnational meeting scheduled on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2013 insofar as possible.

During the second workshop, INFOREF summarized the discussions of the Belgian working group, the discussions of the Forum and also the transnational discussion (virtual meeting) about Module 3.

## Conclusions of the Belgian working group about Module 3

### 1. GENERAL COMMENTS

The working group is disappointed by this module, which they find too general and theoretical.

The working group emphasizes that in the fight against early school leaving, the teaching methods described are not always as positive as what the module implies.

**Those methods should be presented in a more refined and critical way.**

Each method should be the object of *“one module specifically dedicated to it”*!

In the end, the working group wonders how this module could be useful for teachers.

### 2. SPECIFIC COMMENTS

#### Chapters 1 and 2: Active learning – Cooperative learning

The notion of “active learning” is not “AOC” (controlled designation of origin).

It is not a built up concept, but a term that encompasses various schools of thought, different practices the common denominator of which is to make the pupil active and actor of his/her training.

In Belgium, some of those practices are considered as elitist and not suitable for everybody, including in the fight against early school leaving.

The issues related to “learning styles” or “multiple intelligences” do not win unanimous support in the scientific world. The questionnaires regarding learning styles are not advised by pedagogues. Indeed, cognitive styles are closely related and it is dangerous to “categorise” pupils according to their answers to such questionnaires. Putting pupils in a “box” and adapting teaching to that box is not verified by research.

We think approaches should be diversified and chances of learning for all multiplied.

Regarding “cooperative learning”, we recommend the following work:

« **L'apprentissage coopératif** »

*Théories, méthodes, activités*

Auteurs : *Abrami, Chambers, Poulsen, De Simone, Howden, D'Apollinia*

*Editions de la Chenelière - Education à la coopération*

[http://www.pirouette-editions.fr/boutique/produit\\_details.php?rubrique=42&produit=133](http://www.pirouette-editions.fr/boutique/produit_details.php?rubrique=42&produit=133)

### Chapters 3: Peer education

The opinions are divided.

Several members use this method and find it fruitful (e.g., a better pupil explains the subject to a weaker pupil and the teacher becomes a resource person).

Other members express reluctance regarding remediation activities carried out by peers. This method should be pondered and supervised.

In this regard we draw attention to the **tutorship programme** set up by the ULB (University of Brussels). It is a school support programme for pupils in situation of school failure.

This programme is implemented in one school out of four in Brussels. Every year, more than 1,500 pupils are supported by around 200 tutors (see description sheet in the “publications”):

- *The tutors are students of upper education. Closer regarding age and status, they are often perceived by the pupil as an “older brother” and work in collaboration with the teacher.*
- *Aims of the programme: supporting pupils regarding knowledge, skills and social skills; helping pupils to reconcile with school and regain self-confidence; informing and making transition to upper education easier.*

<http://www.schola-ulb.be/fichiers/scholadepliantv6.pdf>

Let us also draw attention to the device “**Ecole citoyenne**” (**peer mediation**) proposed by the MIEC (Civic Institutions and Schools Movement). In Belgium, around forty schools are part of the MIEC network and the movement is spreading.

It aims to implement in the school a participative system, in which young people and adults build together a civic project:

- *Writing the “law” (some basic rules to live together in mutual respect)*
- *Electing a “civic council” (with teachers/pupils parity) responsible for the application of the law and developing projects to improve “life together”.*

<http://www.miec.be/index.html>

### Chapter 4: Educational technologies

In our schools, minds are more and more open to new educational practices including digital tools, but there is still much to do...

The members of the working group emphasise the **interest of digital educational supports, including for:**

- quick access to audiovisual reference documents to free oneself from the constraints of paper;
- using the interactive whiteboard to work in optimal conditions regarding readability and tidiness;



- possibility to save documents in progress to gain time;
- communication with pupils through a digital workspace or simply by email to individualise educational relationships...

However, they express the following comments:

- **The difficulties that some pupils encounter in “traditional” education remain in digital education:**
  - Searching relevant information in a “paper” referential or on the internet remains complex;
  - The difficulty to concentrate before a blackboard or an interactive whiteboard remains;
  - Information processing and synthesis are still problematic;
  - Problems related to tidiness, layout, spelling or syntax are the same written by hand or typewritten...
- **To guarantee good quality work with digital educational tools, there are certain conditions:**
  - Adapted recent and maintained material (and therefore financial means).
  - Good knowledge and command of the necessary software.
  - Continuing, almost daily training, given the many novelties.
  - Willingness of the education team to work coherently ...