

## 5. THE INTERVENTION PROGRAM FOR CLASSES WITHOUT REFUGEE CHILDREN (IMAGINED CONTACT METHOD)

### Notes on teaching methodology

Each workshop in the imagined contact intervention program consists of four steps:

1. Introduction and definition of the out-group (refugee children in each case)
2. Imagining
3. Individual reinforcement
4. Group reinforcement

We will briefly explain each of the steps and then provide some general guidelines for implementing the imagined contact method in the classroom.

#### 1. Introduction and definition of the out-group

To enable the children to successfully imagine contact with a refugee child, it is important to explain to them who refugee children are. Some, particularly younger children, may not know the meaning of the word refugee or may have their own definition that need not necessarily be correct. This is why the first workshop should start by providing a single definition to all students by giving a simple presentation.

The presentation is available in the supplementary materials accompanying this handbook (available at <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:131:669993>) and contains only the most basic information, ensuring understanding by all, even the youngest, children. The presentation does not mention cultural specificities of refugee groups, because this is not related to the aim of this intervention – the aim is to understand the notion of a refugee and especially of refugee children, to increase willingness and openness to initiate contact with refugee children in the future (wherever they may come from), to raise awareness about possible communication challenges (e.g., not speaking the language) and to come up with ways to overcome these challenges. Imagining should also be made easier

for children, because existing research shows that the success of the method hinges on the task not being too demanding. This is why the presentation contains photographs of different children, all of whom are actual refugee children.





The instructions in the introductory part should be given at a slow pace, checking with the students whether everything is clear, whether they have any additional questions, whether they are ready to start imagining, especially when the method is used for the first time. After the first workshop, the presentation is no longer necessary, and only a short reminder of who refugee children are is sufficient. The teacher may return to the presentation if s/he notices that the children have not understood the task.

## 2. Imagining

The second step of the imagined contact method includes imagining a pleasant and positive contact with a refugee child. To make imagining easier, the teacher should read the beginning of a scenario describing the first moments of an encounter, mentioning an appropriate context. After that the teacher should tell the students to imagine the encounter in more detail themselves, any way they like. Individual imagining is encouraged and gently directed by asking open questions at the end of the scenario.

The scenarios prepared within the project are based on the results of research into the effectiveness of the imagined contact method, as well as on suggestions from teachers and teaching associates who work with elementary school children on a daily basis. To make the scenarios realistic, they are different for younger children (in lower elementary grades) and older children (in higher elementary grades).

The children should also imagine meeting a different refugee child for each workshop and scenario. Such diversity when imagining has been correlated with a higher probability that the effect of the intervention will “spread” to refugee children in general, and not only to children who are very similar to the ones that the students have imagined. Here are the scenarios for each workshop:

<p><b>WORKSHOP 1:</b></p> 	<p>Children imagine an encounter with a refugee child <b>in their class</b>. This is <b>the basic scenario</b>, most frequently used in research. The scenario is easy to imagine regardless of the students' age, and is consistent with conducting the workshop in the school, which is why it is used in the first workshop.</p>
<p><b>WORKSHOP 2:</b></p> 	<p>This scenario for imagined contact includes <b>a detailed description of the context</b> or the environment where the encounter is taking place. Such an approach helps children imagine the encounter in more detail, which has been linked to higher efficacy, and is a way to build on the first workshop. To make the scenarios realistic for both younger and older children, there are two versions. Students in lower elementary grades should imagine an encounter in their favorite <b>park</b>, and students in higher grades in their <b>neighborhood</b>. Both environments are familiar to them, which makes imagining easier.</p>
<p><b>WORKSHOP 3:</b></p> 	<p>The scenario in the third workshop includes another aspect that has been shown as useful when applying this method – <b>working together</b> with an imagined refugee child. Collaboration, working together on a joint task, makes the imagined contact more intense, and can lead to stronger effects. Lower-grade children should imagine working together with the refugee child <b>helping a neighbor clear snow</b>, and higher-grade children should imagine <b>helping younger children</b> getting a ball off a tree.</p>
<p><b>WORKSHOP 4:</b></p> 	<p>The last workshop has been designed to highlight the connection with the imagined refugee child by emphasizing <b>belonging to the same group</b>. Lower-grade children should imagine that they are in a group together with a refugee child during <b>a competitive game at a children's birthday party</b>, and older children should imagine that they are in the same <b>sports team at a sports competition</b>. For the situation to be pleasant, it is important for their team to win.</p>

### 3. Individual reinforcement

After some time has been spent in imagining the scenario (any of the scenarios mentioned above), the effect of imagining should be individually reinforced. This allows students to imagine the encounter with the refugee child in more detail, and to remember it better. Before starting the activity, children should be told

how much time they will have, and close to the end they should be notified how much time is left to be able to finish their work on time.

Individual reinforcement can be done in different creative age-appropriate ways. With older children this is mostly writing compositions, which allows later analysis of their work to explore their imagining process in more detail, and with younger children other methods such as drawing, are frequently used. As the children are writing or drawing, the teacher can ask them questions to remind them what else they can write about/draw, and how they can imagine the encounter in more detail.

#### **4. Group reinforcement**

In addition to strengthening the effect of imagining the encounter through individual reinforcement, group reinforcement achieved through a conversation with the entire class may also be used. During the conversation, the children can volunteer to share what they have imagined with other students, they can read what they have written or can show and explain their drawings. The teacher plays a dual role – to check whether the child has understood the task correctly, and to incite additional imagining by asking more specific questions. These questions should allow the child to imagine his/her encounter with the refugee child in more detail. Although some workshops contain examples of such questions, teachers should think of additional questions on the basis of students' stories.

For this part of the workshop to work well, teachers should create a classroom atmosphere where children are comfortable to share their imagined scenarios with others. Children who may have imagined an unpleasant encounter or have not imagined an encounter with a refugee child should be gently corrected. Additional more specific guidelines for the group conversation can be found in the workshop lesson plans, and in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section at the end of this part of the handbook.

What follows are lesson plans for each workshop. Workshops for lower elementary school children are presented first (for grades 2 to 4), and are followed by workshops for higher elementary school grades (5 to 8).

## Workshop description – lower grades (grades 2 to 4)

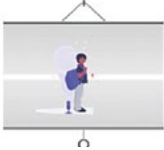
### Workshop 1: Basic scenario



**AIM:** To teach children the meaning of the term “refugee”. To develop positive attitudes towards refugee children by using the basic scenario of imagined contact.


**MATERIALS:**

- Power Point presentation (PPT) entitled “Djeca izbjeglice” (Refugee Children) – available for download from the repository of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:131:669993>
- sheets of paper, drawing supplies (pencils, crayons/felt pens)

**DURATION:** 1 period

METHOD	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (5 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Today we will do an imagining exercise. You will imagine that you met a child who is a refugee, and that you are having a good time with them. Later we will make drawings of this, so I will now give you sheets of paper – but do not write anything on them yet.”</i></p> <p>The teacher distributes the sheets of paper and then starts the “Refugee Children” PPT.</p> <p>While showing the first slide, the teacher says: <i>“First of all, do you know who refugees are?”</i></p> <p>Students answer the question.</p> <p>The teacher gives the entire class the following definition while showing the second slide: <i>“Refugees are people who had to leave their country because they were in danger there. They usually leave because there is war in their country and they are not safe there, and they look for protection in other, more secure countries, such as Croatia.”</i></p> <p>While showing the third slide, the teacher says: <i>“Refugee children who come to Croatia come from a different culture. This means that they speak a different language, they sometimes have different customs and habits, they went to schools that had different programs, and some may dress differently and may look different. When they arrive in Croatia, they usually do not speak Croatian, and they need some time to learn it well. That is why it is often difficult for them to talk to their friends and teachers.”</i></p>

<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (5 min)</p>	<p>While showing the fourth slide, and the last two slides (slides 5 and 6), the teachers says: <i>“Still, they like to play just like you, they like sports, pets, books, music, video games and so on. Refugee children are like you, but they are special at the same time, just like each one of you.”</i></p>
<p><b>IMAGINING</b> (3 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Now that we know who refugee children are, we will imagine for a while how it would be to meet one of them. I will first read the instructions, and then you will quietly imagine for a while after that. Get comfortable in your chairs and relax. If you like, you can close your eyes. If you do not want to close your eyes, that is okay too. It is important that you are comfortable and that you try to imagine as much detail as possible.”</i></p> <p>Children should be given a short time to get comfortable and to prepare. The teacher reads the scenario and pauses after each question at the end of the scenario.</p> <p><i>“Imagine that a refugee child comes to your class and that the teacher tells him or her to sit next to you. Your friends in your class are excited that you will all meet the refugee child and they encourage you to talk to him or her. At first s/he does not know what to tell you because s/he does not speak Croatian well, but you soon start to have a good time together. Soon, the bell rings, which means that the class is ending.</i></p> <p><i>What does the refugee child look like? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>How can you understand each other if he or she does not speak Croatian well? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>What can you do to become friends? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>Now please take a bit of time and quietly imagine this meeting.”</i></p> <p>After two minutes of imagining (starting from asking the first question), the teacher asks the students to open their eyes and start working on the following task.</p>
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> (25 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“You spent some time imagining that you met a refugee child. Now draw what the encounter looked like on the pieces of paper I gave you earlier. Try to draw the meeting in as much detail as possible, draw what the child you imagined looked like, what you did together... Next to or underneath the picture give a short description of what you did together, how you felt, and how you think the child felt. You can also say which language you used to talk to each other, whether you were able to understand each other well, and what else you would like to say to them. Later, if you like, you will be able to present your work to the class.”</i></p>

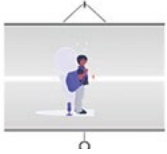

<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> (25 min)</p>	<p>Check whether the students have all the supplies they need. The teacher should ask the children who finish the task too quickly to think a bit more and add more detail to the drawings, and should encourage children who are slower. If the entire class finishes early, this phase can be shortened. The teacher should let the children know shortly before the end of the activity that they only have a bit more time left (e.g., five minutes).</p>
<p><b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT</b> (10 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher asks volunteers to say what they imagined. Retelling (and additional imagining) should be encouraged by asking questions such as:</p> <p><i>“Did you find out each other’s names? How did you do that? What was the child’s name?”</i></p> <p><i>“What made you think that this child was a refugee?”</i></p> <p><i>“Where were you sitting? Did you talk during class or during your break?”</i></p> <p><i>“How did you start the conversation?”</i></p> <p><i>“What were you doing?”</i></p> <p><i>“How did you talk? In which language? Did you understand each other?”</i></p> <p><i>“Did they tell you something about themselves? What did you tell them?”</i></p> <p><i>“Did any of your friends join you?”</i></p> <p><i>“Do you think you could become friends with this imagined child?”</i></p> <p>During the conversation, the child should be encouraged to imagine the meeting in more detail and to share it with others. The teachers can ask other questions about the situation. In this stage children should be corrected if they have, for instance, imagined an encounter with a child who is not a refugee, a negative encounter, etc. (see the FAQs for additional guidelines).</p> <p>The remaining time should be spent encouraging as many children as possible to share their imagined experience, but children should not be forced to share if they do not wish to do so. It is not essential for many children to tell their stories, but asking additional questions and talking to the child who is sharing should also encourage other children to imagine the situation in as much detail as possible and to reinforce the imagined scenario.</p>

## Workshop 2: Detailed scenario



**AIM:** To develop positive attitudes towards refugee children by using imagined contact with a detailed scenario.

**MATERIALS:** sheets of paper, drawing supplies (pencils, crayons/felt pens)

**DURATION:** 1 period

METHOD	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (2 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Today you will imagine once again that you have met a refugee child, but today you will imagine a different child. Before we begin, let me remind you that refugee children are children who left their country because there was war there, or because they were exposed to injustice or danger in some other way. They are no longer safe in their own country, so they come to other, safer countries, including Croatia. They do not speak Croatian very well at the beginning, and it is difficult for them to understand friends and teachers. Later we will describe the encounter. I will now give you sheets of paper – but do not write anything on them yet.”</i></p> <p>The teacher distributes the sheets of paper.</p>
<p><b>IMAGINING</b> (3 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“I will first read the instructions, and then you will quietly imagine for a while after that. Get comfortable in your chairs and relax. If you like, you can close your eyes. If you do not want to close your eyes, that is okay too. It is important that you are comfortable and that you try to imagine as much detail as possible.”</i></p> <p>Children should be given a short time to get comfortable and to prepare. The teacher reads the scenario and pauses after each question at the end of the scenario.</p> <p><i>“Imagine you are in your favorite park. It is spring, and the weather is nice and sunny. You can hear birds singing and you can smell spring flowers. Your friends are not there today and you are playing alone. Then you notice another child your age in the park. You remember that your friends told you it was a refugee who moved to a nearby street, and who does not speak Croatian well. At the beginning, you do not know how to approach them, but you start playing and having fun together soon.</i></p>



<p><b>IMAGINING</b> <b>(3 min)</b></p>	<p><i>What does the refugee child look like? [pause]</i> <i>How can you understand each other if he or she does not speak Croatian well? [pause]</i> <i>What are you doing together in the park? [pause]</i> <i>What can you do to become friends? [pause]</i> <i>Now please take a bit of time and quietly continue imagining this encounter."</i></p> <p>After two minutes of imagining (starting from asking the first question), the teacher asks the students to open their eyes and start working on the following task.</p>
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(25 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>"You spent some time imagining that you met a refugee child. Now draw what the encounter looked like on the pieces of paper I gave you earlier. Try to draw as much detail as possible, draw what the child you imagined looked like, what you did together... Next to or underneath the picture, give a short description of what you did together, how you felt, and how you think the other child felt. You can also say which language you used to talk to each other, whether you were able to understand each other well, and what else you would like to say to them. Later, if you like, you will be able to present your work to the class."</i></p> <p>Check whether the students have all the supplies they need. The teacher should ask the children who finish the task too quickly to think a bit more and add more detail to the drawings, and should encourage children who are slower. If the entire class finishes early, this phase can be shortened. The teacher should let the children know shortly before the end of the activity that they only have a bit more time left (e.g., five minutes).</p>
<p><b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(10 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher asks volunteers to share what they imagined. Retelling (and additional imagining) should be encouraged by asking questions such as:</p> <p><i>"Did you find out each other's names? How did you do that? What was the child's name?"</i> <i>"What made you think that this child was a refugee?"</i> <i>"How did you start the conversation?"</i> <i>"What were you doing?"</i> <i>"How did you talk? In which language? Did you understand each other?"</i></p>

**GROUP  
REINFORCEMENT  
(10 min)**



*“Did they tell you something about themselves? What did you tell them?”*

*“Did any of your friends later join you?”*

*“Do you think you could become friends with this imagined child?”*

During the conversation the child should be encouraged to imagine the encounter in more detail and to share it with others. The teachers can ask other questions about the situation. In this stage, children should be corrected if they have, for instance, imagined an encounter with a child who is not a refugee, a negative encounter, etc. (see the FAQs for additional guidelines).

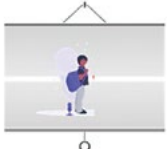

The remaining time should be spent encouraging as many children as possible to share their imagined experience, but children should not be forced to share if they do not wish to do so. It is not essential for many children to tell their stories, but asking additional questions and talking to the child who is sharing should also encourage other children to imagine the situation in as much detail as possible and to reinforce the imagined scenario.




## Workshop 3: Cooperative scenario

**AIM:** To develop more positive attitudes towards refugee children by implementing imagined contact which includes collaborating with a member of the out-group.

**MATERIALS:** sheets of paper, drawing supplies (pencils, crayons/felt pens)

**DURATION:** 1 period

METHOD	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (2 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Today we will imagine an encounter with a refugee child once again, but you will imagine a child that you have not yet imagined. You will imagine that you have encountered a child who left their own country because there was war there, or because they were exposed to injustice or danger in some other way. This child is safe here in Croatia, but they do not speak Croatian very well at first, which is why it is difficult for them to understand friends and teachers. I will now give you pieces of paper which you will later use to describe the encounter.”</i></p> <p>The teacher distributes the pieces of paper.</p>
<p><b>IMAGINING</b> (3 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“I will first read the instructions, and then you will quietly imagine for a while after that. Get comfortable in your chairs and relax. If you like, you can close your eyes. If you do not want to close your eyes, that is okay too. It is important that you are comfortable and that you try to imagine as much detail as possible.”</i></p> <p>Children should be given a short time to get comfortable and to prepare. The teacher reads the scenario and pauses after each question at the end of the scenario.</p> <p><i>Imagine that it is winter and that a lot of snow fell overnight. You are happy because you will go out and make a snowman! An older neighbor in your street comes out to clear snow, and a child your age joins him and starts helping him. You recognize that it is a refugee whose family has recently moved to your street. You also decide to help your neighbor. Although the refugee child does not speak Croatian very well, the two of you are having a good time clearing the snow together.</i></p>

<p><b>IMAGINING</b> <b>(3 min)</b></p> 	<p><i>What does the refugee child look like? [pause]</i>  <i>How can you talk to each other if the child does not speak Croatian well? [pause]</i>  <i>How can you have fun while you are helping? [pause]</i>  <i>What can you do together as you are finishing clearing the snow? [pause]</i>  <i>What can you do to become friends? [pause]</i>  <i>Now remain seated for a while and imagine this meeting."</i>                  After two minutes of imagining (starting from asking the first question), the teacher asks the students to open their eyes and start working on the following task.</p>
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(25 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>"You spent some time imagining that you helped your neighbor together with a child who is a refugee. Now draw what the encounter looked like on the pieces of paper I gave you earlier. Try to draw as much detail as possible, draw what the child you imagined looked like, and what you did together after clearing the snow. Next to or underneath the picture, give a short description of what you did together, how you felt, and how you think the child felt. You can also say which language you used to talk to each other, whether you were able to understand each other well, and what else you would like to say to them. Later, if you like, you will be able to present your work to the class."</i>                  Check whether the students have all the supplies they need. The teacher should ask the children who finish the task too quickly to think a bit more and add more detail to the drawings, and should encourage children who are slower. If the entire class finishes early, this phase can be shortened. The teacher should let the children know shortly before the end of the activity that they only have a bit more time left (e.g., five minutes).</p>
<p><b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(10 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher asks for volunteers who want to share what they imagined. Retelling (and additional imagining) should be encouraged by asking questions such as:  <i>"Did you find out each other's names? How did you do that? What was the child's name?"</i>  <i>"What made you think that this child was a refugee?"</i>  <i>"How did you help your neighbor? Was it difficult? What did you do as you were helping your neighbor?"</i>  <i>"Did you do anything after that?"</i>  <i>"How did you start the conversation? In which language? Did you understand each other?"</i>  <i>"Did they tell you something about themselves? What did you tell them about yourself? What else would you like to find out about the refugee child?"</i>  <i>"Do you think you could become friends with this imagined child?"</i></p>

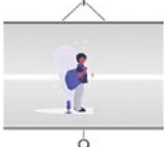

<b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT (10 min)</b>	<p>The aim of the conversation is for the children to imagine the encounter in as much detail as possible and to share it with the others. The teachers can ask other questions about the situation. In this stage, children should be corrected if they have, for instance, imagined an encounter with a child who is not a refugee, a negative encounter, etc. (see the FAQs for additional guidelines).</p> <p>The remaining time should be spent encouraging as many children as possible to share their imagined experience, but children should not be forced to share if they do not wish to do so. It is not essential for many children to tell their stories, but asking additional questions and talking to the child who is sharing should also encourage other children to imagine the situation in as much detail as possible and to reinforce the imagined scenario.</p>
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## Workshop 4: Shared group scenario

**AIM:** Developing more positive attitudes among children towards refugee children by implementing imagined contact which includes elements of a shared group identity.

**MATERIALS:** sheets of paper, drawing supplies (pencils, crayons/felt pens)

**DURATION:** 1 period

METHOD	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (2 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Today we will imagine an encounter with a refugee child once again, but you will again imagine a child that you have not yet imagined! Let me remind you that refugee children are those children who left their country because there was war there, or because they were exposed to injustice or danger in some other way. They are no longer safe in their own country, so they come to other, safer countries, including Croatia. They do not speak Croatian very well at the beginning, and it is difficult for them to understand friends and teachers. Later we will make drawings of this. I will now give you sheets of paper – but do not write anything on them yet.”</i></p> <p>The teacher distributes the pieces of paper.</p>
<p><b>IMAGINING</b> (3 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“I will first read the instructions, and then you will quietly imagine for a while after that. Get comfortable in your chairs and relax. If you like, you can close your eyes. If you do not want to close your eyes, that is okay too. It is important that you are comfortable and that you try to imagine as much detail as possible.”</i></p> <p>Children should be given a short time to get comfortable and to prepare. The teacher reads the scenario and pauses after each question at the end of the scenario.</p> <p><i>“Imagine that you are at a playroom for a birthday party of a friend. The room is full of balloons and toys. You notice a child you do not know, who you heard was a refugee. Soon it is time for a game, and the playroom teacher divides you into groups where you are supposed to find as many balloons of the same color as possible. You are in the group with the refugee child. At first you are not certain how it will all go because the child does not speak Croatian very well, but you soon start to look for balloons together and help each other, and you are having a great time! At the end of the game, your group has won!</i></p>

<p><b>IMAGINING</b> <b>(3 min)</b></p>	<p><i>What does the refugee child look like? [pause]</i>  <i>How can you understand each other if he or she does not speak Croatian well? [pause]</i>  <i>What are you doing together, how are you having fun? [pause]</i>  <i>How will you celebrate your victory? [pause]</i>  <i>What can you do to become friends? [pause]</i>  <i>Now remain seated for a while and imagine this meeting.</i>"                  After two minutes of imagining (starting from asking the first question), the teacher asks the students to open their eyes and start working on the following task.</p>
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(25 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>"You spent some time imagining that you met a refugee child. Now draw what the encounter looked like on the pieces of paper I gave you earlier. Try to draw as much detail as possible, draw what the child you imagined looked like, what you did together... Next to the picture you can give a short description of what you did together, how you felt, and how you think the child felt. You can also say which language you used to talk to each other, and whether you were able to understand each other well. Later, if you like, you will be able to present your work to the class."</i></p> <p>Check whether the students have all the supplies they need. The teacher should ask the children who finish the task too quickly to think a bit more and add more detail to the drawings, and should encourage children who are slower. If the entire class finishes early, this phase can be shortened. The teacher should let the children know shortly before the end of the activity that they only have a bit more time left (e.g., five minutes).</p>
<p><b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(10 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher asks volunteers who want to share what they imagined. Retelling (and additional imagining) should be encouraged by asking questions such as:</p> <p><i>"Did you find out each other's names? How did you do that? What was the child's name?"</i>  <i>"What made you think that this child was a refugee?"</i>  <i>"How did you start the conversation?"</i>  <i>"What were you doing as you were competing?"</i>  <i>"How did you celebrate your victory? What did you do afterwards?"</i>  <i>"How did you talk? In which language? Did you understand each other?"</i>  <i>"Did they tell you something about themselves? What did you tell them?"</i>  <i>"Were any other children in the group with you?"</i>  <i>"Do you think you could become friends with this imagined child?"</i></p>

**GROUP  
REINFORCEMENT  
(10 min)**



During the conversation the child should be encouraged to imagine the meeting in more detail and to share it with others. The teachers can ask other questions about the situation. In this stage, children should be corrected if they have, for instance, imagined an encounter with a child who is not a refugee, a negative encounter, etc. (see the FAQs for additional guidelines).

The remaining time is spent encouraging as many children as possible to share their imagined experience, but no children are made to share if they do not wish to do so. It is not essential for many children to tell their stories, but asking additional questions and talking to the child who is sharing should also encourage other children to imagine the situation in as much detail as possible and to reinforce the imagined scenario.

The teachers who conducted the workshops did not suggest changes to individual workshops, but to the program as a whole, which is why the suggestions appear here. Changes recommended on the basis of feedback after intervention workshops with younger children:

- It should be made clear at the outset that there will be several workshops with a similar topic, where similar activities will be done.
- Sometimes it is necessary to extend the time that children have for individual and group reinforcement. Drawing contact in the individual reinforcement phase can last longer than expected with younger children, but they enjoy this very much.



## Workshop description – higher grades (5 to 8)

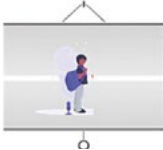
### Workshop 1: Basic scenario



**AIM:** To teach children the meaning of the term “refugee”. To develop positive attitudes towards refugee children by using the basic scenario of imagined contact.


**MATERIALS:**

- Power Point presentation (PPT) entitled “Djeca izbjeglice” (Refugee children) – available for download from the repository of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:131:669993>
- Pieces of paper, pencils

**DURATION:** 1 period

METHOD	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (5 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Today we will do an imagining exercise. You will imagine that you met a peer who is a refugee, and that you are spending time with them. Later we will write about this. I will now give you sheets of paper – but do not write anything on them yet.”</i></p> <p>The teacher distributes the sheets of paper and then starts the “Refugee children” PPT.</p> <p>While showing the first slide, the teacher says: <i>“First of all, do you know who refugees are?”</i></p> <p>Students answer the question.</p> <p>The teacher gives the entire class the following definition while showing the second slide: <i>“Refugees are people who had to leave their country because they were in danger there. They usually leave their country because there is war there and they are not safe, and they look for protection in other, more secure countries, such as Croatia.”</i></p> <p>While showing the third slide, the teacher says: <i>“Refugee children who come to Croatia come from a different culture. This means that they speak a different language, sometimes have different customs, that they went to schools that had different programs, and some may dress differently and may look different. When they arrive in Croatia, they usually do not speak Croatian, and they need some time to learn it well. That is why it is often difficult for them to talk to their friends and teachers.”</i></p>

<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (5 min)</p>	<p>While showing the fourth slide, and the last two slides (slides 5 and 6), the teachers says: <i>Regardless of the differences, refugee children have similar interests like you, they like sports, play video games, watch movies, TV shows, use social media and YouTube... Refugee children are like you, but they are special at the same time, just like each one of you.</i></p>
<p><b>IMAGINING</b> (3 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Now that we know who refugees are, we will imagine for a while how it would be to meet one of them. I will first read the instructions, and then you will quietly imagine for a while after that. Get comfortable in your chairs and relax. If you like, you can close your eyes. If you do not want to close your eyes, that is okay too. It is important that you are comfortable and that you try to imagine as much detail as possible.”</i></p> <p>Children should be given a short time to get comfortable and to prepare. The teacher reads the scenario and pauses after each question at the end of the scenario.</p> <p><i>“Imagine that a refugee your age comes to your class and that your teacher tells them to sit next to you. Your friends in your class are excited that you will all meet him/her and they encourage you to talk to the refugee. At first s/he does not know what to tell you because s/he does not speak Croatian well, but you soon start to have a good time together. Soon, the bell rings, which means that the class is ending.</i></p> <p><i>What does the refugee child look like? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>How can you understand each other if he or she does not speak Croatian well? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>What can you do during the break to have fun? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>What can you do to become friends? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>Now please take a bit of time and quietly imagine this encounter.”</i></p> <p>After two minutes of imagining (starting from asking the first question), the teacher asks the students to open their eyes and start working on the following task.</p>
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> (22 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“You spent some time imagining that you met a refugee child your age. Now write a composition on the pieces of paper that I gave you describing what this imagined meeting looked like. Try to give as much detail as possible, write down what your new friend looked like, what you did together, how you felt as you were hanging out together, how you think he or she felt. You can also say which language you used to talk to each other, whether you were able to understand each other well, and what else you would like to say to them. Later, if you like, you will be able to present your description to the class.”</i></p>

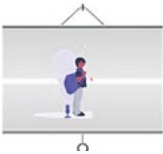

<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> (22 min)</p>	<p>Check whether the students have all the supplies they need. The teacher should ask the children who complete the task too quickly to think a bit more and add more details to the composition, and should encourage children who are slower. If the entire class finishes early, this phase can be shortened. The teacher should let the children know shortly before the end of the activity that they only have a bit more time left (e.g., five minutes).</p>
<p><b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT</b> (10 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher asks volunteers to share what they imagined. Retelling (and additional imagining) should be encouraged by asking questions such as:</p> <p><i>“Did you find out each other’s names? How did you do that? What was your imagined peer’s name?”</i></p> <p><i>“What made you think s/he was a refugee?”</i></p> <p><i>“Where were you sitting? Did you talk during class or during your break?”</i></p> <p><i>“How did you start the conversation? Which language did you speak? Did you understand each other?”</i></p> <p><i>“What did you do together?”</i></p> <p><i>“Did they tell you something about themselves? What did you tell them about yourself? What else would you like to find out about them?”</i></p> <p><i>“Did any of your friends join you?”</i></p> <p><i>“Do you think you could become friends with this imagined peer?” Why? What would have to happen for you to become friends?”</i></p> <p>The aim of the conversation is for the children to imagine the encounter in as much detail as possible and to share it with the others. The teachers can ask other questions about the situation. In this stage children should be corrected if they have, for instance, imagined an encounter with a child who is not a refugee, a negative encounter, etc. (see the FAQs for additional guidelines).</p> <p>The remaining time should be spent encouraging as many students as possible to share their imagined experience, but no students should be forced to share if they do not wish to do so. It is not essential for many children to tell their stories, but asking questions and talking to the child who is sharing should also encourage others to imagine the situation in as much detail as possible and to reinforce the imagined scenario.</p>



## Workshop 2: Detailed scenario

**AIM:** To develop positive attitudes towards refugee children by using imagined contact with a detailed scenario.

**MATERIALS:** pieces of paper, pencils

**DURATION:** 1 period

METHOD	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (2 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Today we will imagine once again that you have met a refugee child your age, but today you will imagine someone different. Before we begin, let me remind you that refugee children are those children who left their country where their lives were in danger because of war or because they were exposed to injustice or danger in some other way. They are no longer safe in their own country and they come to other, safer countries, including Croatia. They do not speak Croatian very well at first and it is difficult for them to understand their friends and teachers. Later you will write a composition to describe this encounter. I will now give you sheets of paper – but do not write anything on them yet.”</i></p> <p>The teacher distributes the sheets of paper.</p>
<p><b>IMAGINING</b> (3 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“I will first read the instructions, and then you will quietly imagine for a while. Get comfortable in your chairs and relax. If you like, you can close your eyes. If you do not want to close your eyes, that is okay too. It is important that you are comfortable and that you try to imagine as much detail as possible.”</i></p> <p>Children should be given a short time to get comfortable and to prepare. The teacher reads the scenario and pauses after each question at the end of the scenario.</p> <p><i>“Imagine you are walking around your neighborhood. It is spring, and the weather is nice and sunny. You see neighbors passing by and cars in the street. As you come closer to your house, you notice a child your age in the street. You do not know him or her, but you have heard that he or she is a refugee who does not speak Croatian very well. You are walking towards each other, and you decide to stop and say hello. Although you are not sure what to say to each other at first, soon you start to hang out and have fun.</i></p> <p><i>What does the refugee look like? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>How can you understand each other if he or she does not speak Croatian well? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>What are you doing together, how would you have fun? [pause]</i></p> <p><i>What can you do to become friends? [pause]</i></p>

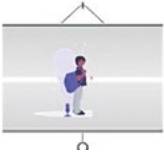

<p><b>IMAGINING</b> <b>(3 min)</b></p>	<p><i>Now please take some time and quietly continue imagining this encounter.”</i></p> <p>After two minutes of imagining (starting from asking the first question), the teacher asks the students to open their eyes and start working on the following task.</p>
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(25 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“You spent some time imagining that you met a refugee child your age. Now write a composition on the pieces of paper that I gave you describing what this imagined encounter looked like. Try to give as much detail as possible, write down what your new friend looked like, what you did together, how you felt as you were hanging out together, how you think he or she felt. You can also say which language you used to talk to each other, and whether you were able to understand each other well. Later, if you like, you will be able to read your composition to the class.”</i></p> <p>Check whether the students have all the supplies they need. The teacher should ask the children who complete the task too quickly to think a bit more and add more details to the composition, and should encourage children who are slower. If the entire class finishes early, this phase can be shortened. The teacher should let the children know shortly before the end of the activity that they only have a bit more time left (e.g., five minutes).</p>
<p><b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(10 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher asks volunteers to say what they imagined. Retelling (and additional imagining) should be encouraged by asking questions such as:</p> <p><i>“Did you find out each other’s names? How did you do that? What was your imagined peer’s name?”</i></p> <p><i>“What made you think that s/he was a refugee?”</i></p> <p><i>“How did you start the conversation?”</i></p> <p><i>“What were you doing?” How did you start hanging out? Where all did you go together?”</i></p> <p><i>“Which language did you speak? Did you understand each other? Did you use anything to help you talk?”</i></p> <p><i>“Did they tell you something about themselves? What did you tell them?”</i></p> <p><i>“Do you think you could become friends with this imagined peer?” Why? What would have to happen for you to become friends?”</i></p> <p>During the conversation the child should be encouraged to imagine the encounter in more detail and to share it with others. Teachers can ask other questions about the situation. In this stage students should be corrected if they have, for instance, imagined an encounter with a child who is not a refugee, a negative encounter, etc. (see the FAQs for additional guidelines).</p> <p>The remaining time should be spent encouraging as many students as possible to share their imagined experience, but no students should be forced to share if they do not wish to do so. It is not essential for many children to tell their stories, but asking additional questions and talking to the child who is sharing should also encourage other children to imagine the situation in as much detail as possible and to reinforce the imagined scenario.</p>



## Workshop 3: Cooperative scenario

**AIM:** To develop more positive attitudes towards refugee children by implementing imagined contact which includes collaborating with a member of the out-group.

**MATERIALS:** pieces of paper, pencils, crayons (if desired)

**DURATION:** 1 period

METHOD	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (2 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“Today we will imagine an encounter with a refugee child once again, but you will imagine a child that you have not imagined yet. You will imagine that you have encountered a student your age who left their country because of war or because they were exposed to injustice or danger in some other way. They are safe here in Croatia, but they do not speak Croatian very well, so it is difficult for them to communicate with their friends and teachers. Later we will describe the meeting. I will now give you sheets of papers – but do not write anything on them yet.”</i></p> <p>The teacher distributes the sheets of paper.</p>
<p><b>IMAGINING</b> (3 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“I will first read the instructions, and then you will quietly imagine for a while. Get comfortable in your chairs and relax. If you like, you can close your eyes. If you do not want to close your eyes, that is okay too. It is important that you are comfortable and that you try to imagine as much detail as possible.”</i></p> <p>Children should be given a short time to get comfortable and to prepare. The teacher reads the scenario and pauses after each question at the end of the scenario.</p> <p><i>“Imagine that you are returning from school and you are walking towards your house. You see a child your age in front of you walking in the same direction. When you look at them more closely, you realize this student is a refugee who came to your school and attends another class in your school. Soon, several younger children run towards you and ask for your help to get down a ball that got stuck in a tree. Although you do not know each other, and although the refugee student does not speak Croatian very well, the two of you decide to help the children together.</i></p>

<p><b>IMAGINING</b> <b>(3 min)</b></p>	<p><i>What does the refugee student look like? [pause]</i>  <i>How can you understand each other if he or she does not speak Croatian well? [pause]</i>  <i>How will you talk to each other to decide what to do? [pause]</i>  <i>How will you help the children get the ball off the tree? [pause]</i>  <i>How will you have fun as you are helping them? [pause]</i>  <i>What can you do to become friends? [pause]</i>  <i>Now please take some time and quietly continue imagining this encounter.”</i>                  After two minutes of imagining (starting from asking the first question), the teacher asks the students to open their eyes and start working on the following task.</p>
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(25 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“You spent some time imagining that you met a refugee student your age and that you helped others together. Now draw a comic on the pieces of paper that I gave you, describing what this imagined meeting looked like. Try to draw what the student you imagined looked like, what you did together, how you helped the younger children, what happened after you helped them. Use a thinking bubble (🧠) to write down what you were thinking or how you felt at the time, and use a speech bubble (🗨️) to write what you said to each other. You can also think about which language you used to talk to each other, and whether you were able to understand each other well. Later, if you like, you will be able to present your work to the class.”</i></p> <p>Check that all the children have all the necessary supplies, and <b>draw the two types of bubbles on the board</b>. The teacher should ask the children who finish the task too quickly to think a bit more and add more detail, and should encourage children who are slower. If the entire class finishes early, this phase can be shortened. The teacher should let the children know shortly before the end of the activity that they only have a bit more time left (e.g., five minutes).</p>
<p><b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(10 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher asks for volunteers to tell the class what they have imagined (this can also be done by using the comic). Students should be encouraged by asking questions such as:</p> <p><i>“Did you find out each other’s names? How did you do that? What was your imagined peer’s name?”</i>  <i>“What made you think that s/he was a refugee?”</i>  <i>“How did you start the conversation?”</i>  <i>“What were you doing?” How did you help the children get the ball off the tree? What did you do afterwards?”</i></p>

**GROUP  
REINFORCEMENT  
(10 min)**



*“Which language did you speak? Did you understand each other? Did you use anything to help you talk?”*

*“Did they tell you something about themselves? What did you tell them?”*

*“Do you think you could become friends with this imagined peer?” Why? What would have to happen for you to become friends?”*

During the conversation the child should be encouraged to imagine the encounter in more detail and to share it with others. The teachers can ask other questions about the situation. In this stage, students should be corrected if they have, for instance, imagined an encounter with a child who is not a refugee, a negative encounter, etc. (see the FAQs for additional guidelines).

The remaining time should be spent encouraging as many students as possible to share their imagined experience, but no students should be forced to share if they do not wish to do so. It is not essential for many children to tell their stories, but asking additional questions and talking to the child who is sharing should also encourage other children to imagine the situation in as much detail as possible and to reinforce the imagined scenario.








## Workshop 4: Shared group scenario

**AIM:** To develop more positive attitudes towards refugee children by implementing imagined contact which includes elements of a shared group identity.

**MATERIALS:** pieces of paper, pencils

**DURATION:** 1 period

METHOD	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE OUT-GROUP</b> (1 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>Like last time, today you will be imagining an encounter with a refugee student your age. Once again, please imagine a person that you have not imagined earlier. You will imagine that you have encountered a student your age who left their own country because of war or because they were exposed to injustice or danger in some other way. They are safe here in Croatia, but they do not speak Croatian very well, so it is difficult for them to communicate with their friends and teachers. I will now give you pieces of paper which you will later use to write a composition.</i></p> <p>The teacher distributes the pieces of paper.</p>
<p><b>IMAGINING</b> (3 min)</p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“I will first read the instructions, and then you will quietly imagine for a while after that. Get comfortable in your chairs and relax. If you like, you can close your eyes. If you do not want to close your eyes, that is okay too. It is important that you are comfortable and that you try to imagine as much detail as possible.”</i></p> <p>Children should be given a short time to get comfortable and to prepare. The teacher reads the scenario and pauses after each question at the end of the scenario.</p> <p><i>“Imagine you are in the school playground. It is summer, and the playground is full of children your age. There is a child your age whom you do not know, but you have heard that he or she is a refugee and that he or she does not speak Croatian very well. You are all bored and you do not know what to do. Suddenly, someone suggests that you organize a sports competition. You are in the team together with the refugee child. You introduce yourselves to each other and you start working together to be as good as possible in the game. You are helping each other and having a great time. At the end of the competition, your team has won!</i></p>

<p><b>IMAGINING</b> <b>(3 min)</b></p> 	<p><i>What does the refugee child look like? [pause]</i>  <i>How can you talk to each other if the child does not speak Croatian well? [pause]</i>  <i>What are you doing together, how are you having fun? [pause]</i>  <i>How will you celebrate your victory? [pause]</i>  <i>What can you do to become friends? [pause]</i>  <i>Now remain seated for a while and imagine this encounter.”</i></p> <p>After two minutes of imagining (starting from asking the first question), the teacher asks the students to open their eyes and start working on the following task.</p>
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(25 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher says: <i>“You spent some time imagining that you met a refugee child your age. Now write a composition on the pieces of paper that I gave you, describing what this imagined encounter looked like. Try to describe what the student looked like, and what you did together. Mention how you felt and how you think he or she felt, which language you used to talk to each other and whether you were able to understand each other well. Think about how you felt when your team won, how you celebrated your victory and what else you would like to say to them. Later, if you like, you will be able to present your work to the class.”</i></p> <p>Check whether the students have all the supplies they need. The teacher should ask the children who finish the task too quickly to think a bit more and add more detail, and should encourage children who are slower. If the entire class finishes early, this phase can be shortened. The teacher should let the children know shortly before the end of the activity that they only have a bit more time left (e.g., five minutes).</p>
<p><b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT</b> <b>(10 min)</b></p> 	<p>The teacher asks volunteers to say what they imagined. Retelling (and additional imagining) should be encouraged by asking questions such as:</p> <p><i>“Did you find out each other’s names? How did you do that? What was your imagined peer’s name?”</i></p> <p><i>“What made you think that s/he was a refugee?”</i></p> <p><i>Which sport did you compete in?”</i></p> <p><i>“How did you start the conversation? In which language? Did you understand each other?”</i></p> <p><i>“What were you doing as you were competing?”</i></p> <p><i>“How did you celebrate your victory? What did you do afterwards?”</i></p> <p><i>“Did they tell you something about themselves? What did you tell them about yourself? What else would you like to find out about him/her?”</i></p> <p><i>“Do you think you could become friends with this imagined peer?” Why? What would have to happen for you to become friends?”</i></p>

<b>GROUP REINFORCEMENT (10 min)</b>	<p>The aim of the conversation is for the children to imagine the encounter in as much detail as possible and to share it with the others. The teachers can ask other questions about the situation. In this stage, students should be corrected if they have, for instance, imagined an encounter with a child who is not a refugee, a negative encounter, etc. (see the FAQs for additional guidelines).</p> <p>The remaining time should be spent encouraging as many students as possible to share their imagined experience, but no students should be forced to share if they do not wish to do so. It is not essential for many children to tell their stories, but asking additional questions and talking to the child who is sharing should also encourage other children to imagine the situation in as much detail as possible and to reinforce the imagined scenario.</p>
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Changes recommended on the basis of feedback after intervention workshops with older children:

- Teachers feel that repeating similar activities can be tiresome for older children. Therefore, it may be better to let each student select what they want to do in the individual reinforcement phase (i.e., a comic, a composition, a drawing).
- You should also be prepared for some children possibly having strong negative attitudes and prejudices towards refugees.

## Frequently asked questions

What follows are some situations that can arise in the classroom when using the imagined contact method, followed by guidelines on how to respond in these situations. Still, teachers and teaching associates know their classes best – an appropriate response should therefore be selected taking into consideration these guidelines as well as the classroom climate. When doing all these activities, a child's right to decide whether to take part in the activity should be respected, and the spread of any prejudices or misinformation should be stopped to ensure the best possible implementation of the activity.

### What if the child refuses to do the imagining activity?

Research shows that forcing children to participate can have negative effects, leading to negative attitudes towards refugee children. The option to refuse participation should not be mentioned in advance, but if a child says they do not want to take part, that is okay. It is important to ensure that the child does not interfere with the other children who are taking part. The teacher may try to motivate the child to participate if s/he thinks that motivation is the issue.

### What if you notice that a child has not taken the task seriously?

If this happens, drawing on children's experience may be useful – for instance, by mentioning that a refugee child could come to their class, and that the activity may be useful to them. The atmosphere should not be made negative, but the instructions should be repeated to the entire class, thus encouraging the child to come down.

### What if nobody wants to share what they have imagined?

As stated in the program, the fact that volunteers will be asked to share their work with the class should be mentioned before the activity, which should prepare children for sharing. If nobody volunteers, the teacher may try to repeat the scenario and ask the class one of the questions asked in the imagining phase. Finally, the teacher may give his or her own example (*"For instance, I would imagine that we..."*) but without giving too much detail, so that the children do not merely repeat the same answer.

### **What if the child imagines negative contact?**

In case a child imagines contact which is not positive or pleasant (an argument or lack of any contact with the imagined refugee child), the teacher can say something like: *“It seems that you imagined an encounter that did not go so well, and we said at the beginning that we would imagine a positive experience. Can you try to imagine how this sort of situation might end well after all?”* If such an approach does not help, another child who has imagined positive contact may be asked to speak (as inspiration), returning to the child who imagined a negative experience afterwards and checking whether they could now imagine how contact could have gone well. If this does not help the child imagine and verbalize positive contact, another child or the teacher may help him or her come up with what a “happy ending” might look like.

### **What if prejudices about refugees appear?**

It is of paramount importance to stop any prejudices and repeat that refugees are simply children like themselves, children their age who had to leave their country because it was too dangerous to live there. Classroom rules (if there are any) should be mentioned; such rules normally include listening to each other, not disturbing others if they are doing their task, using polite language, and not insulting others.

### **What if a child does not imagine an encounter with a refugee?**

If a child starts to, for instance, talk about an event involving a friend from his/her class rather than an encounter with a refugee, s/he should be reminded of the task: *“Our task today was to imagine an encounter with a refugee child, and it seems that you have imagined a child who is not a refugee. Can you now imagine meeting a refugee child? What could you do together? Would this imagined meeting be different than the one you imagined first? How so?”* To remind the child and help him/her, you can use the introductory workshop presentation about refugee children.

### **What if the child imagines a situation that is “too easy” (for instance, that there is no language barrier)?**

As before, the child should be reminded of the task: you could ask the child what would happen if the imagined child did not speak Croatian, how they

could still communicate together without having to use language... For instance: *“What a good story! But remember, we mentioned earlier that not many refugee children speak Croatian very well. Can you imagine what you could do together if that child did not speak Croatian very well? Could you still understand each other? Could you have fun? How?”*

If the entire class seems to be ignoring poor knowledge of Croatian, the teacher can ask about other situations where they met some children who do not speak Croatian (e.g., tourists on vacation) and check if someone has any experience that they could share as inspiration with the rest of the class. For instance, the teacher may have the students break into groups by the month when they were born, but without saying anything, in complete silence, to demonstrate how challenging it may sometimes be to overcome the language barrier. Because of time limitations and duration of other parts of the activity, this task could be done during another period, as appropriate or feasible.