

Title of the activity : Abigale

For who : 15+

Duration : 1h15-2h15

Number of players : 5-30

Place : anywhere but enough space for participants to work individually, in small groups of 4-5, and in plenary.

Characteristic :

-cheap

- transportable

Type of games : story telling

Educational interest :

-awareness about values, judgment, culture

Materials :

- Per participant one copy of the following story:

Goal : discuss / argumentation / confrontation about values : what who's the worst ? who's the best ?

Method :

All the participants should read or heard the story :

«Abigale loves Tom who lives on the other side of the river. A flood has destroyed all bridges across the river, and has left only one boat afloat. Abigale asks Sinbad, the owner of the boat, to bring her to the other side. Sinbad agrees, but insists that Abigale has to sleep with him in return.

Abigale does not know what to do and runs to her mother and asks her what she should do. Her mother tells Abigale that she does not want to interfere with Abigale's own business. In her desperation Abigale sleeps with Sinbad who, afterwards, brings her across the river. Abigale runs to Tom to happily embrace him and tell him everything that has happened. Tom pushes her away bluntly and Abigale runs away.

Not far from Tom's house, Abigale meets John, Tom's best friend. She tells everything that has happened to him as well. John hits Tom for what he has done to Abigale and walks away with her.

Step-by-step

Introduce the exercise to the participants as being one about finding out about different values. Ask everybody to read the story by him/herself and to rank the each character (Abigale, Tom, Sinbad, Abigale's mother, and John) according to their behaviour: Who acted worst? Who second worst? Etc. After most of the people have done their ranking, ask them to

get together in small groups (3 to 6), to discuss about how they perceive the behaviour of the characters. The task of the small groups is to come up with a common list – a list that everybody in the small group can agree on. Ask them to avoid using mathematical methods in order to establish the list, but rather to build that list on the basis of a shared understanding of what is good and what is bad.

After the small groups have come up with their lists, you can optionally repeat this phase by bringing two small groups together to form medium- size groups (if you do that, don't make the initial small groups larger than 4). Evaluate the exercise in plenary by first bringing together the results and by discussing the similarities and differences between them. Slowly move on to ask on which grounds people made their ranking. How could they decide what was good and what was bad behaviour?

Reflection and evaluation

One focus of the evaluation is the relevance values have for us to determine what we think is good and what is bad. After having established that insight, the next step is to look at how easy or difficult it is to negotiate about values when having to establish a common list. You can ask people how they managed to come up with a common list – which arguments worked to convince them, and why, and where there was a border of being able to understand and/or follow the other.

A possible follow up is to then look at where we learned what is good and what is bad – and what that tells us about what we have in common and what makes us different.

This method alive

Abigale has very often been used to prepare participants of an intercultural exchange for their experience. It is useful when introducing the otherwise abstract concept of values to people, since it very clearly puts participants in a situation where they have to apply values in order to make a ranking. A variation to the exercise is to play it as done here, and then to repeat it with a changed story, in which all the women become men, and vice-versa. Does the same ranking still apply? Why do things change?

More variations are possible: Include the age of the characters in the story and play around with it, make them all have the same gender, include ethnic or national background. And then look at how the changes in the story make a difference to your ranking and why that is.

In order to get the best results from the exercise, it is essential that you establish an open atmosphere in which every ranking of the story is okay and where you do not start “blaming” people for arguments you might consider strange or bad yourself.

Link or picture :



The image shows a collection of cards and a story card on a corkboard. The cards are arranged in a grid-like pattern. The story card is the largest and is positioned in the center. It features a small illustration of a boat and a person, and contains the following text:

Abigale

Abigale loves Tom who lives on the other side of the river. A flood has destroyed all bridges across the river, and has left only one boat afloat.

Abigale asks Sinbad, the owner of the boat, to bring her to the other side. Sinbad grees, but insists that Abigale has to sleep with him in return.

Abigale does not know what to do and runs to her mother and asks her what she should do. Her mother tells Abigale that she does not want to interfere with Abigale's own business.

In her desperation Abigale sleeps with Sinbad who, afterwards, brings her across the river.

Abigale runs to Tom to happily embrace him and tell him everything that has happened. Tom pushes her away bluntly and Abigale runs away.

Not far from Tom's house, Abigale meets John, Tom's best friend. She tells everything that has happened to him as well. John hits Tom for what he has done to Abigale and walks away with her.

The cards around the story card contain the following text:

- Abigale's Mother
- John
- Tom
- Abigale
- Abigale's Mother
- Abigale
- Abigale
- Abigale's Mother
- Abigale
- Sinbad
- Sinbad
- John
- John
- Tom
- Sinbad
- Sinbad

Source : <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1667917/tkit4.pdf/1e4f2f12-6448-4950-b0fd-5f4c94da38e2>