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Workshop „Using Frames – Examples and Exercises“

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Documentation

On the RWL conference in Slunakov in January 2013, Tom Deacon and other members of working group 4 presented the project 'The Common Cause', which was launched by British NGOs and is dealing with values and frames (see www.valuesandframes.org).

In Planica, the last day of the conference focused on these aspects. It was started with a keynote speech of Ralph Underhill ('Common Cause for Nature – The Case for Working with Values and Frames') via video from London. Among many other workshops that followed, Tom Deacon picked up the topic with his workshop 'Working on Values According to the Common Cause Approach'. The series ended with the workshop 'Using Frames - Examples and Exercises'. Building up on each other, about 25 people attended each of the two workshops.

The aim of our workshop has been to explain the characteristics of frames, and to connect them to other elements of the RWL project, as there are

1. criteria;
2. values;
3. competences;
4. areas of learning;
5. scientific concepts.

The workshop has been divided into three parts:

1. introduction;
2. work within three groups;
3. presentation of working results.

The introduction has been done by a multimedia presentation, supplemented by two posters, one showing the circumplex and one a table of intrinsic values (see pdf-document of workshop-ppt). After that, examples from four areas of learning according to the frame 'Achieving balance' have been presented. As an appropriate scientific concept, 'self-regulation' (negative feedback) had been selected. An article on this had already been published in RWL newsletter (www.rwlnetwork.org/news/balance-%E2%80%93-an-example-for-using-frames-in-real-world-learning.aspx).

Regarding the individual areas of learning, the following examples have been presented:

- Own body: Inhaling and exhaling, using balloons to show what happens, if more and more air is accumulated.
- Living nature: Based on decaying leaves and twigs, it has been explained why trees do not grow to the sky.
- Artificial world: It has been pointed out, how the lid of a pot is raised by steam pressure, when the water starts to boil – and what would happen if the pressure could not escape.

- Social environment: The imbalance in the distribution of material wealth has been demonstrated by using the production and acquisition of a T-shirt as an example.

At the end, a large poster has been shown as an example for how the frame 'Achieving balance' had been developed by the German RWL team. Three empty posters have been handed out to be completed by three working groups in terms of the three frames:

1. Interconnecting;
2. Linking Beginning and End;
3. Cooperating.

Additionally, each working group received a list of criteria and four competency lists to examine the extent to which the four activities suggested by each group (one activity per area of learning) fit to selected competences.

Given the time that has been available, it has been mainly important that working groups make themselves familiar with all attributes of the RWL project and reflect on specific examples of learning experiences.

The results of the small groups have been finally collected:

	Example	Working Group 1	Working Group 2	Working Group 3
Science Concept	Self-Regulation	Networks	Cycles	Symbiosis
Frame	Achieving Balance	Interconnecting	Linking Beginning and End	Cooperating
Intrinsic Values	Unity with Nature Inner Harmony Social Justice	Unity with Nature Creativity	Unity with Nature Inner Harmony Social Justice True Friendship	Unity with Nature Protecting the Environment Equality Broadminded A World at Peace Inner Harmony Wisdom Social Justice True Friendship responsible

Own Body	inhaling and the necessity of exhaling	Opposite muscles working in pairs	- Renewing cells - blood and oxygen cycle - daily routines	- Cleaning in the liver (filtering blood) - Bacteria cooperating in the guts - Eyes/ears - Pain receptors/muscles
Living Nature	leaves/twigs that decay to soil, limited growth of trees	Connection inspection (Earth Education)	- Seasons - Climate: glaciers,... → long term/short term	- Lichen - Corcodiles/birds - Ants/fungi - Wolves/ravens
Artificial World	valves and regulators in a heating system	Making soil by yourself	- Rocks, water, air → materials - not: energy itself	- Carbon cycle? Computers → feedback systems - Artificial intelligence
Social Environment	social imbalance in producing and using T-shirts	Firemaking (from a wilderness awareness perspective)	- cradle to cradle - aging society → how to readjust the cycle?	- Blind people and their dogs - Tax paying - Community action - Reciprocity

To give an example of the group working process:

One of the groups searched for practical examples (pedagogical approaches) using the frame „connections“ which shall support the development of intrinsic values like creativity and unity with nature. Three examples were found in the learning areas of

- „ourselves“: Students explore how their muscles work together when doing certain exercises (e.g. lifting your arm: the upper muscle parts works, the under one relaxes)
- „living nature“: Connection Inspection, an Earth Education activity showing the connections between animals, plants, bacteria, natural resources etc. and what happens, if one disappears
- „inanimate nature“: Making soil with a group using different elements e.g. ice, sand, grass, leaves, biological waste

The group also discussed that the practical approaches could be more holistic and still enhance the intrinsic values and learning about a science concept. Separating the approaches into learning areas can be helpful to cluster, but can also limit. As an example, making fire without matches from a perspective of Wilderness Awareness was discussed: students can learn many different things whilst making fire, e.g. knowledge about plants and trees, learn about the fire as a symbol of energy and life which is in all things (e.g. in wood or flintstone) and the connection between natural resources like wood and our own body temperature. Altogether, this can develop creativity using different techniques to get to reach the goal of making a fire and support the feeling of unity with nature.