



<https://ddasproject.eu>

**Democratic Dialogue at school: An online game-based training tool on Democratic Dialogue for Teachers**  
**Training course for school teams, teachers and school leaders in Europe**

## Module 2 – Activity 3

### “A Mosque in Sleepyville”

**An activity/ scenario for students focusing on issues related with religious beliefs, intolerance, democratic dialogue and citizens participation**

<b>Short description</b>	This activity explores a dispute over the building of a new mosque in a traditionally Christian area through the simulation of a town council meeting.
<b>Facilitator &amp; target group</b>	Facilitator(s): One or two secondary school teachers Target Group: 15-30 students, aged 12+
<b>Indicative time</b>	2 – 2 ½ hours
<b>Objectives</b>	By participating in this activity, students will be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To experience real conflicts that can arise in meeting the needs of diverse communities</li> <li>● To explore the right to freedom of religion and belief</li> <li>● To develop skills of debate and analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sheets of paper for name-tags</li> <li>● Flip Chart Paper</li> <li>● A watch or clock</li> <li>● Small bell for the Mayor</li> </ul>
<b>Preparation for the teacher &amp; the students</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Photocopy the role-cards in the <a href="#">handout</a>, the description of the problem and the rules of debate (optional). The handout is also attached/translated on the last pages of this DD@S activity.</li> <li>2. Prepare name-tags for the different parties/groups that will be represented at the meeting.</li> <li>3. List the different roles on a flip chart so that everyone can see them.</li> </ol>



**Funded by  
the European Union**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. [Project Number: 2021-1-BE02-KA220-SCH-000032794]



<https://ddasproject.eu>

**Democratic Dialogue at school: An online game-based training tool on Democratic Dialogue for Teachers**  
**Training course for school teams, teachers and school leaders in Europe**

	<p>4. Make sure you have a space for the “Council Meeting” and separate spaces for the different groups, so that they can discuss their position beforehand or meet with others.</p>
<p><b>Methodology – steps for the teacher</b></p>	<p>1. Read out the description of the problem in the <a href="#">handout</a>. Explain that all participants are citizens of Sleepyville and all are troubled by the problem of whether a new mosque should be built on a piece of derelict council land.</p> <p>2. Show participants the list of different roles and ask everyone to select one for themselves. Hand out the role-cards and the description of the problem and indicate where people and groups can meet up beforehand, and where the “Council Meeting” will take place later on.</p> <p>3. Explain the <a href="#">rules of debate</a> that will be used during the meeting.</p> <p>4. Explain that there will be 30 minutes before the actual meeting so that people can meet other citizens, prepare what they want to say and decide how they want to vote! Tell them that the Town Council meeting will last 40 minutes, and that there may be very little time for actual speeches because of the number of people attending. For that reason, they should try to prepare just one or two points that they want to make.</p> <p>5. Use the preparation phase to set up the space for the “Council Meeting”. Ideally people should sit in a semi-circle or horseshoe shape, with the Mayor at the front, in a slightly elevated position. Parties or groups should be able to sit together, and you should place their name-tags on the tables in front.</p> <p>6. After 30 minutes, call the citizens for the meeting (or ask the Mayor to do so). He/she should remind people of the basic rules of debate and give a short speech to introduce the meeting.</p> <p>7. At the end of the meeting, after 40 minutes, the Mayor should call for a vote. When the votes have been counted and the result declared, you should announce the end of the activity, and invite people to bring their chairs into a circle for the debriefing.</p>
<p><b>Debriefing and evaluation</b></p>	<p>Start the feedback round by greeting everybody by their real names or using another technique allowing participants to give up the roles they had assumed during the simulation. This is important to do before starting the debriefing.</p>



**Funded by  
the European Union**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. [Project Number: 2021-1-BE02-KA220-SCH-000032794]



<https://ddasproject.eu>

**Democratic Dialogue at school: An online game-based training tool on Democratic Dialogue for Teachers**  
**Training course for school teams, teachers and school leaders in Europe**

	<p>Ask the participants what they feel about the process they have just been through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were you surprised by the result of the vote, and did it reflect the position of the person you were playing?</li> <li>• How much influence do you think you (in your role) had on the result?</li> <li>• Did interaction with other people or groups make you alter your approach or your attitude towards the problem?</li> <li>• How easy was it to identify with your role? Why or why not?</li> <li>• Do you think that this situation could arise in real life? Can you think of any similar cases?</li> <li>• How would you react if this case arose in your town/place of residence? Did the activity alter your attitude at all?</li> <li>• What do you understand by the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion?</li> </ul> <p>Do you know of any cases in history (or today) when this right has been denied?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you think that religious freedom is a fundamental human right?</li> <li>• To what extent do you think this right is observed in your community?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tips for the teacher</b></p>	<p>If possible, you should run this activity together with a co-facilitator in order to be able to answer questions and co-ordinate each step of the activity at the same time. The activity could benefit from having more time available, particularly during the actual meeting, in order that people have the chance to respond to comments made by others. You may also allocate the roles beforehand or allocate roles randomly in order to save time during the session. During the preparation phase, it may be useful to check that people are using the time to meet others or to plan what they are going to say during the meeting.</p> <p>When assigning the roles, note that the role of the mayor is a very demanding one, and that the person playing it will need to feel confident about facilitating the meeting and – if necessary – cutting people short in order to allow everyone to speak. You will need to go through the task with the participant playing the mayor before the actual simulation.</p> <p>It is highly desirable that after that, you try to leave facilitation entirely to the person playing the Mayor, both in order that he/she feels your trust and in order that other participants respect his/her decisions rather than looking to you. Of course, if difficulties arise, you may find it necessary to intervene in the course of</p>



**Funded by  
the European Union**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. [Project Number: 2021-1-BE02-KA220-SCH-000032794]



<https://ddasproject.eu>

**Democratic Dialogue at school: An online game-based training tool on Democratic Dialogue for Teachers**  
**Training course for school teams, teachers and school leaders in Europe**

	<p>the simulation. You should, however, try to do this without undermining the authority of the participant playing the Mayor.</p> <p>If the simulation gets out of control – for example, because people stray off the topic or new pieces of information are invented – or if the Council gets caught in a deadlock and cannot come to an agreement, point out that this can reflect a result in real life, and does not indicate that the activity has failed. You can use this in the debriefing at the end to discuss the difficulty of reaching agreement on issues such as these.</p> <p>During the debriefing, it is very important to try to avoid repeating the simulation. People need to try to detach themselves from the role they played in the activity in order to be able to reflect properly on what they have been through. You should help them to look back on the simulation with their normal “hats” on rather than in their assumed roles.</p>
<p><b>Follow-up suggestions (optional)</b></p>	<p>Discuss aspects of the freedom to religion and belief and tensions that have occurred in your country. Critical incidents (case stories) in the news can provide good starters, especially for discussion in small groups.</p>
<p><b>Reference/ source:</b></p>	<p>Adapted from:</p> <p>Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, Council of Europe, <a href="https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/a-mosque-in-sleepyville">https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/a-mosque-in-sleepyville</a></p> <p><i>Note: The educational material of Compass is available in multiple languages.</i></p>



**Funded by  
the European Union**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. [Project Number: 2021-1-BE02-KA220-SCH-000032794]