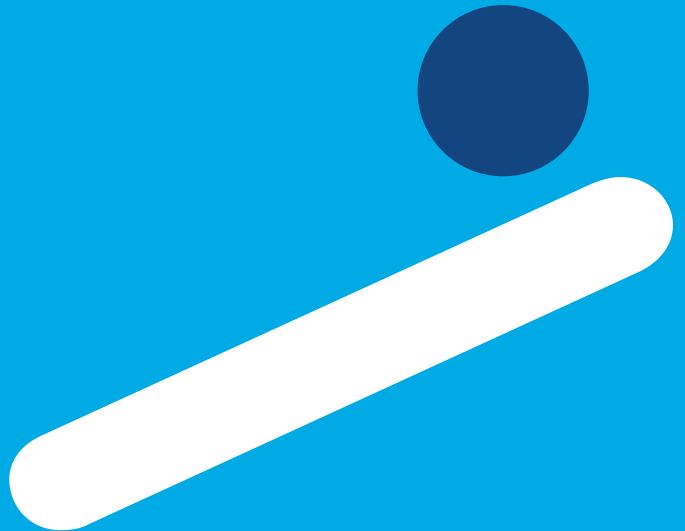


Pedagogical Vade mecum

# History and memory in international youth meetings



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The French "*Rue de la Mémoire*" association is a pedagogical laboratory dedicated to working with history and memory as vectors of active citizenship. At the intersection of formal and non-formal education, it offers projects and training courses that aim to foster intercultural and intergenerational ties through joint reflection on the past. It is particularly active in the area of Franco-German relations.

[www.ruedelamemoire.eu](http://www.ruedelamemoire.eu)

The German "*Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*" association (Action Reconciliation Service for Peace) was founded in 1958 to raise awareness about the contemporary consequences of National Socialism and its crimes, as well as to address current expressions of antisemitism, racism and the exclusion of minorities. Present in thirteen countries, ASF offers international voluntary services in the fields of social work, politics and history, as well as summer camps and training courses on the topics of history and memory.

[www.asf-ev.de](http://www.asf-ev.de)

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## PREFACE

Commemorations surrounding the Centenary of the First World War have shown how closely historical recollection and political activity are linked. This is especially true with regard to relations between France and Germany. Today, these two neighbours are on good terms and no longer have a problem with each other. The normality that reigns between them could start to feel routine if we forget just how entangled their national histories truly are. For more than a century, these histories were haunted by the tragic figure of the “arch-enemy”, which continually spurred new wars. Today we stand in stunned silence before the Douaumont Ossuary, near Verdun, the final resting place of more than 130 000 French and German soldiers who were killed in action and whose names are no longer known.

For years, this memory was bearable only because it was never discussed. Even the handshake between Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand, in 1984, in front of this very Ossuary, was silent. It was a silent promise that the two nations would never again go to war. At the time, however, we could not really speak of a shared memory. For the French, the First World War was a war during which they had to defend themselves against German aggression, sacrificing their youth to this end. For the Germans, on the other hand, in the catastrophic wake of the Second World War, the First World War was a war that no longer needed to be commemorated - in short, a distant war, particularly since it had not taken place in Germany.

A hundred years later, change nevertheless appears to be on the horizon and driving convergence. The First World War is now distant for young French people and a shift is occurring from national pathos towards personal interest in learning about the fate of close relatives and families during the war. Young Germans, for their part, are rediscovering this war as something that affects their own history - and therefore themselves, their family, their community and their friends. For me, the most important aspect of the Franco-German activities organized in the context of the Centenary of the First World War - and of those organized by FGYO in particular - is the natural, spontaneous and creative nature of such joint events. I will never forget the pleasant evening spent on the banks of the Rhine River near Colmar where, at the end of a very lively event, hundreds of paper balloons rose up into the sky like a chorus of messages for peace.

This is how we must continue to interact, aware of the weight of history without letting it stop us from understanding it as a shared history, one that unites us across generations and allows us to live together creatively, with open minds. We owe FGYO a great many thanks, not only for this exemplary handbook, but also for its work as an important initiator and coordinator guiding us towards a Europe remembered and experienced together.

Gerd Krumeich

*Professor Emeritus / Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf*

In this season of commemorative anniversaries - notably the Centenary of the First World War and remembrance of the end of the Second World War - there has been a wealth of opportunity for the past to resurface in current events. Regardless the national significance ascribed to such past events, it is obvious that it is no longer possible at the beginning of the 21st century to observe their memory on a solely national level: in an increasingly systematic manner, the framework for these commemorations has become international.

Within this process, Franco-German relations are of particular interest. Indeed, the past enmity between France and Germany actually underscores the quality of their rapprochement and thereby the positive heritage over the long term of a past frequently laden with conflict. This idea is nothing new: the 1962 meeting between Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle in Reims paved the way, and the handshake between Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand in Verdun in 1984 has remained an extremely powerful symbol of reconciliation and friendship; since then the gesture has been renewed many times over - by Gerhard Schröder and Jacques Chirac in Caen in 2004, by Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy in Paris in 2009, as well as by Joachim Gauck and François Hollande, first in Oradour-sur-Glane in 2013 and then at Hartmannswillerkopf in 2014.

Meanwhile, the silent meetings of the early days - whose symbolism was wholly bound up in the gestures expressed - have been enriched over the last ten years with speeches. And while such discourse is not without nuance in its appreciation of the past, it nevertheless bears witness to a momentous change in that it has laid the foundations for genuine dialogue. From a purely visceral refusal of war, we have moved on to messages which, while still based on personal sensitivities and experiences, now attempt to shed light on the past in order to draw from it shared lessons and even a shared course of action focused on peace and a united Europe. This goal-oriented approach, which relies on the use of symbols to highlight and support the pacification of Franco-German relations in particular and of European and international relations more generally, underscores the political importance of issues surrounding memory.

To find efficient symbols, we must nonetheless be aware of the possibilities and complexities inherent to situations - otherwise, we run the risk of founding reconciliation on poorly anchored, misappropriated symbols, or even of failing entirely due to misinterpretations and misunderstandings. The work of historians is fundamental to re-contextualizing and clarifying the events of the past; this now truer than ever following the diversification of approaches and the deepening of transnational practices that has occurred in recent years. By moving as much as possible away from a normative perspective, their work contributes to the refining of historical knowledge; it offers up keys to understanding by placing solid resources at the disposal of both citizens and political leaders; and it lays the foundation for the construction of a multi-perspective approach.



As an interface between two poles - memorial symbolism and historical knowledge - the work of the Franco-German Youth Office (FGYO) deserves our full attention. Its approach involves nothing less than ensuring that young people do not remain mere spectators to a symbolism that escapes them or even the passive vessels of acquired knowledge, but rather become true actors of a memory which is still forming and of a history that is ongoing. To this end, its youth exchanges aim to foster awareness about differences, give insight into important issues and promote respect, whereas its practical activities encourage youth to embrace their place in history, participate in the present and build the future. This handbook is a perfect partner for such great ambitions.

Elise Julien

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## Introduction

In order to best accompany Franco-German and tri-national youth meetings, as well as guarantee their quality and sustainability, FGYO contributes to the development of pedagogical tools and resources, and places them at the disposal of its partner organizations.

History plays an important role in meetings between young people from France, Germany and sometimes a third country, even when the chosen topic is not specifically historical. Whether or not they are aware of them, the representations that young participants have of their own origins and of other countries are influenced by both recent and more distant historical events.

It is often necessary to focus on history and memory. This can be done using various tools and methods, with a view to intercultural peace education and the reinforcement of a European conscience.

This vade mecum will point up some of the contexts in which the topics of history and memory can be addressed in youth meetings. Furthermore, it will provide methods that will encourage participants to acquire historical identity, using a multi-perspective approach that is focused on keeping openness and dialogue at the centre of the process.

We particularly wish to thank the authors, Ludovic Fresse of the "*Rue de la Mémoire*" association and Ines Grau of the "*Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*" association for this initiative, as well as the members of the working group

"How can we take a multi-perspective approach to history in youth meetings while meeting the goals of peace education and of a reinforced awareness of European citizenship?" for their involvement in the preparation of this document.



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Preamble

This handbook is intended for use by organizations in France, Germany and other partner countries who wish to organize international youth meetings that address the topics of history and memory, either as the focus of a single unit or the programme in its entirety. It offers methodological tools for team leaders to encourage participants to approach the past in a participative manner.

A distinction is often made between three types of learning, whose context and approach differ. Formal learning takes place in an academic setting e.g., in schools, universities or vocational training courses. Non-formal learning takes place in an extra-curricular setting, e.g., in youth organizations, popular education movements, clubs, associations, community centres, etc. Finally, informal education covers the oft unintentional learning that takes place in daily life, for example while reading a newspaper or during a conversation with friends.

The bi-national and tri-national meetings supported by the Franco-German Youth Office (FGYO) are places of both formal and non-formal learning - while also providing space for informal learning. Most of the methods presented in this document can also be used in the context of school exchanges. Practically speaking, whether they are academic or extra-curricular, FGYO meetings generally take place away from home, in a location that offers shared accommodation over a period ranging from a few days to a few weeks. School exchanges, on the other hand, generally take place in the hometown of one of the exchange partners for a period of about ten days and often involve staying with a host family.

While the format may differ, the pedagogical principles underlying the group work required in each situation are largely the same.

That said, when developing a suitable educational programme, it is important to take into account whether the participation of youth at a meeting is voluntary or compulsory, since the nature and extent of their motivation may vary from one situation to another. Moreover, the dynamic of an event will differ depending on whether the national groups existed beforehand (e.g., a class or club) or whether participants signed up individually and are meeting each other for the first time.

This guide provides methodological tools rather than documentary resources pertaining to a specific period in history. The choice of methods is crucial, as it will shape the way youth are able to seize on history and memory and place them at the centre of their own intercultural learning. Some historical knowledge is of course necessary for collective group work: it is not possible, for example, to discuss the First or Second World Wars without prior knowledge of their major milestones. An international youth meeting follows different guidelines and pursues different objectives than those of a history or geography lesson or of a sightseeing excursion, however—even when these are conducted in two or three languages. Following a programme during which participants go from expert conferences to battlefield visits while never being anything more than mere spectators would be just as futile as organizing a meeting about football where participants are never given



the opportunity to actually kick a ball around. While sports, like culture, involve disciplines that are learned, they also - and especially - need to be practised. The same holds true for history and memory.

## 1. GOALS

The main objective of this handbook is to show how history and memory can be instruments for peace education and citizenship education in a European context. The tools it provides as such aim to encourage the development of historical awareness and foster productive dialogue between participants from different countries.

### 1.1. Definition of terms

To begin, it is necessary to define the terms of the approach described above or, at the very least, to indicate how they will be used here in order to avoid any ambiguity.

**History** is the social science that aims to produce an objective account of the past by drawing on multiple sources. Its goal is the elaboration of sustainable knowledge based on rigorous methodological research.

**Memory** is the totality of all representations of the past which characterize an individual or a group by virtue of their socio-cultural perspective. It is subjective by nature and underpinned by affect and emotion which make it both diverse and changing.

These two concepts are not equivalent: the universal vocation of history distinguishes it from memory, which is necessarily multifaceted. It would be wrong, however, to oppose them entirely. On the one hand, the narrative of history is also governed by choices that are shaped by political and social contexts. Because it is rooted in a



specific era and a given national narrative, it cannot possibly attain the objectivity to which it aspires - one need only compare French and German history textbooks to be convinced of this. Its quest for truth must therefore be accompanied by an acute awareness of the relative nature of all points of view. On the other hand, the narrative of memory can also provide a better understanding of the past insofar as it reflects an individual's or a community's point of view at a specific point in time. Its multiplicity is a gauge to measure the diversity that need to be acknowledged and recognized. In practice, history and memory are thus complementary, provided we are careful not to confuse the two.

**Peace education** aims to promote the prevention, management and, when necessary, the resolution of conflicts using non-violent methods. It is based less on the acquisition of knowledge than on the development of social skills such as mutual respect and listening. Though it often relies on the use of historical resources to help analyse past conflicts, its aim is first and foremost to confront representations within the context of an open dialogue. As such, it invites individuals to interact democratically within a group, thereby preparing them for the challenges of social life.

Peace education is a central tenet of international youth meetings in which communication can only be established by overcoming the obstacles of cultural difference. Within a Franco-German or tri-national context it is important to identify such differences beforehand and even to verbalize them. Respect for others cannot be based on a negation of diversity, but

rather flourishes from the ability to make understanding triumph over judgement.

**Citizenship education** aims to encourage the voluntary participation of individuals in public life, above and beyond the exercise of their political rights. This involvement can take various forms: joining an association, a union or a party, participating in local forums or committees, creating a newspaper or a website, etc. This form of citizenship, which can be described as "active citizenship", does not come naturally. It is not conditional to having a passport. Based on action and initiative, it is constructed day after day.

In order to acquire a citizenship dimension, involvement must be based on certain values and principles. For the purposes of this document, we will refer to those associated with civic-mindedness, i.e., respect for the rules of life in society, as well as the acceptance of ethnic, cultural and religious differences.

The notion of citizenship is historically linked to that of nationality. In countries like France and Germany that forged themselves as nations based on different political and philosophical principles, the term does not always describe the same reality, to the extent that the French word *citoyenneté* is often dismissed by some as untranslatable. It is therefore important in an international meeting to agree beforehand on a common definition of the word. Furthermore, citizenship is a notion that is continually evolving due to the emergence of new political frames of reference (such as the European Union) and new forms of social interaction (like the networks that make up the Internet).



Indeed, while still prominent, the national context is no longer the sole driver of citizenship.

## 1.2. The pedagogical role of history and memory

Next, it is necessary to specify how these different notions are connected.

Given the objectives of this handbook, the transmission of history and memory - as important as these may be - are not an ends but a means. They are introduced during international meetings or school exchanges first and foremost because they can foster a culture of peace and active citizenship among participants.

Consequently, whether they are used in a context of formal or non-formal education, the tools presented here are based on putting facts and representations into perspective, rather than on a transfer of knowledge to be validated by grades or certificates. They should help team leaders meet two major challenges:

- To encourage young people to **feel like they are a part of history** by connecting the past, the present and the future.

In France, Germany and most industrialized countries, the technological progress and economic changes that have taken place over the past few decades have resulted in a loss of temporal rooting. From "live" journalism to planned obsolescence, a cult of the present has permeated every sphere of life and occurred alongside an acceleration in social tempo which, though nothing new, has become too rapid to allow for a gradual adaptation of civic practices. The structural difficulty of projecting ourselves

in a long-term perspective could have dramatic consequences. For one, a lack of rootedness often produces anxiety, which, paradoxically, expresses itself through identity-based narrowmindedness: with no strong ties to the past, individuals construct their sense of self in opposition to what is foreign to them. Furthermore, the inability to question the past leads to an inability to embrace the future: without being able to analyse the causes and consequences of what has happened previously, individuals cannot truly anticipate what will happen in the future - which can lead to a form of irresponsibility.

- To promote **an attitude of openness and dialogue** among youth, notably in the context of conflicts that they will inevitably have to face at some point in their lives, whether these arise from differences or misunderstandings. While some conflicts are based on differences in personality, many others are linked to social, cultural and/or generational differences. We all tend to see our way of thinking and acting as "normal"—thus dismissing all other ways of thinking and acting as "abnormal". When Others break the rules to which I adhere, I immediately perceive them as an aggressor, without considering the fact that they might be adhering to other rules that are just as legitimate as mine. Conflicts are not shaped by the types of the differences involved, but rather by the normative nature of the points of view. That is why their peaceful resolution requires a certain degree of relativization. In the field of memory, for instance, community-based narratives are only at odds with each other when each party portrays itself as having the absolute truth. Dialogue





is possible when the different actors involved accept that there is a diversity of values and representations.

## 2. STRATEGIES

The goals outlined above may be met in multiple ways. In the context of this handbook, we will prioritize two main strategies for dealing with at times very diverse historical periods: interaction between the individual and group level on the one hand, and taking a multi-perspective approach on the other hand.

Both of these focus areas require team leaders to take cultural differences into account right from the preparatory phase. The educational systems in France, Germany and in other countries are indeed quite different; during meetings and exchanges, this may result in gaps in the respective expectations, fears and habits of participants from the different countries. With regard to school settings, we can note for example that the historical opposition between French centralism and German federalism has had an impact on the content of educational programmes. In France, education has been an instrument of republican integration<sup>1</sup> since the end of the 19th century and is managed at the national level. Consequently, it is carried out homogeneously throughout the country, from Alsace to Brittany and from Martinique to Réunion. By contrast, education in Germany falls under the auspices of the *Länder* (states), which means there is a greater diversity of narratives. Each school system bears the mark of its regional identity (and, between the East and the West, of the history of the 20th century); some states even acknowledge the notion of multiple perspectives, something that the centralist tradition and universalist ambitions of the French national education system rarely allow.

<sup>1</sup> "Republican integration": the republic (in French: "la République") is seen here as a unifying concept wherein all individuals are united into a single body of citizens.



Furthermore, while personal and family histories may be addressed in schools in both countries (for instance through an introduction to genealogy in primary school), they are nonetheless of marginal importance in the French school system. The reason for this, too, is historical: the role of the “public, secular, compulsory and tuition-free” school as it was founded in 1881-1882 was to liberate individuals from any community-based affiliations so that they could become full-fledged citizens. Anything pertaining to family, regional heritage or, in the case of migrants, country of origin is therefore often seen as a hindrance to integration and for this reason is intentionally ignored by teachers.

Such cultural differences should not be subject to value judgements, nor be used to feed stereotypical representations; instead, they should be openly addressed within the group in order for each team leader to become aware of pedagogical approaches that are different from those they are used to.

## 2.1. Interaction between the individual and collective levels

There are several advantages to drawing a connection between the individual and collective levels of history and memory:

- It encourages young people to develop an awareness of their own historicity by connecting their personal experience to facts or stories they previously only associated with books and museums. It is interesting to draw on their personal biography or that of their ancestors to give history a human face and help make it more tangible. This allows people to practically apply it instead of merely learning about it. We can draw an analogy here with language training: the best way to learn a foreign language is not by repeating lists of nouns and verbs, but rather through direct communication with native speakers. In the same sense, it is not through the reciting of endless names and dates that one truly embraces history; rather, this occurs when a person realizes that they are both its product and its producer.
- It initiates a learning process that takes into account the diversity of individual profiles. Top-down communication, such as during a lecture, is defined as the one-way transmission of a pre-existing message. In the context of citizenship education, this reflects an idea of societal living according to which all individuals must conform to a single model in order to live together successfully. In contrast, horizontal communication involves a dialogue that allows the personal and familial identities of participants to be put in perspective. It also makes it possible, when necessary, to address the topic



of migration, which is essential given the multicultural nature of society in France, Germany and other participating countries. In other words, horizontal communication reflects an idea of living in society that rejects uniformity while respecting and valuing the diversity of personal backgrounds.

- It gives young people an opportunity to better understand how history and memory function. Whether on an individual or collective level, they are transmitted via similar tools. Stories told by parents or grandparents, family chronicles and photo albums make it easier for participants to grasp the challenges that accompany an eyewitness account or archival research - by highlighting, for example, the differences between first-hand experience and an account that is relayed by another person.

There is necessarily an emotional dimension to working with individual memory and team leaders must be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of this. Emotion constitutes an opportunity when it reinforces the involvement of participants, but it can nevertheless become an obstacle when it prevents reflection or reduces discussion to a purely sentimental or compassionate exchange.

Such variations in scale may also be geographical in nature. It is easier for participants to embrace national and/or international history if they can find concrete examples of it in their local history, whether in their hometown or at the location of the meeting. A local person's story or a visit to a heritage site can foster a sense of proximity with

History with a capital H which will boost the curiosity of participants and their desire to engage.

## 2.2. The multi-perspective approach

The term "multi-perspectivism" is a translation from the German "*Multiperspektivität*" (though the principles underpinning it are also present in historiographical research in other countries). It designates an approach to history wherein knowledge of the facts must come with an awareness of the cultural perspectives governing their selection and processing. For example, the First World War is not discussed in the same manner in France as it is in Germany, in Algeria or in Turkey, nor does any country address it today the way it did in the 1920s. The concept of multi-perspectivism is mainly used in the field of history teaching a reminder that the selection and analysis of facts and sources are also objects of study in their own right. The subjectivity of the historical narrative must be taken into account if we are to consider the past in an autonomous and critical manner.

It should be noted that multi-perspectivism is not the same as cultural or historical relativism, which posit that objective truth is inaccessible and that all points of view are therefore equally legitimate. That sort of approach would be dangerous since it would allow us to challenge the very fact that an event actually took place on the grounds of there being multiple possible points of view—thereby playing straight into the hands of revisionists. It is obviously

important to prevent any drift in that direction by clearly stating that the goal of a youth meeting is not to determine what is true or false. Participants are not invited to write or rewrite history, but rather to develop skills that will allow them to experience their differences in a positive way. Debate must as such take place in a non-normative environment in which statements such as “I am right” or “You are wrong” have no place.

During an international meeting or a school exchange, multi-perspectivism may be take place on two levels: on an intercultural level (a confrontation between groups with different cultures) and on a multi-cultural level (a coexistence of multiple cultures within a single group or person).

- Regardless of its topic, every international meeting gives rise to intercultural learning, in the sense that the social behaviour of participants draws on different values and representations. Though this otherness may be quickly perceived through language or clothing, it only becomes beneficial when it is understood. That being said, history and memory are the cornerstone of every national culture. The different types of interaction that define society in a given country (e.g., the relationship to time, rules, hierarchy, etc.) can in part be explained by the influence of different political, religious and philosophical movements in each country over the centuries. This cultural context helps shape individual behaviour, especially within the context of school socialization. Furthermore, the sense of belonging to a nation is largely rooted in myths grounded in history, ranging from the Middle Ages

to the 20th century. A historical approach therefore makes it possible to distance oneself from a normative point of view (“I do not act like this because I am normal, but because I grew up in a society that is structured in a certain way”), thereby avoiding prejudice (“The other person is not acting this way because he or she is like this or like that, but because he or she grew up in a society that is structured in a certain way”). Within this context, it is also essential to bear in mind the coexistence of two German states between 1949 and 1990, since the differences between the social and political systems of East and West Germany had a long-lasting impact on their citizens’ cultural practices.

- This first approach is useful in that it compels participants to question certain elements which until now may have seemed “obvious” to them. It does present the risk, however, of reinforcing stereotypes by opposing national groups as though they were homogeneous blocs. There is no such thing as a “typical French person”, for instance, just as there is no such thing as a “typical German”. Each participant has a **multicultural** identity which is determined not only by their affiliation with a nation, but also by their affiliation with a region, a social class, a rural or an urban setting, etc. We often speak of multiculturalism in the case of young people with an immigrant background who must come to terms with a multifaceted cultural and linguistic heritage (that of their country or countries of origin as well as of their family’s country of immigration). But this notion can also be extended to any individual who, being raised by two parents and/or attending school, must juggle multiple



affiliations and therefore be able to oscillate between different systems of representation. Respect for others and taking diversity into account are as such necessary not only in interaction between national groups, but also within each of these groups - questioning national differences indeed also allows for a better understanding of individual differences.

Tri-national meetings have the advantage of promoting a stronger multi-perspective approach as described above while avoiding the pitfalls of a confrontation between "us" versus "them". The presence of a third country enhances discussions by providing an additional frame of reference and may occasionally help to diffuse conflicts, with the triangulation producing a certain form of mediation. Tri-national meetings do, however, present a disadvantage in that only a limited number of historical topics can be addressed if each country is to be involved as equally as possible; otherwise, there is a risk that a dominant "couple" may emerge instead.

### 2.3. Choosing a time period

The time period chosen to be addressed during a bi- or tri-national event is often dictated by the commemorative calendar. This phenomenon is interesting insofar as the period in question becomes a sort of current event through news reports, exhibitions and publications; its arbitrary nature may be legitimately questioned, however, as the anniversaries which punctuate the political calendar impose an agenda that does not take into account participants' individual profiles. There may be some contradiction between a

pedagogical approach centred on the abilities, needs and interests of youth on the one hand and a commemorative approach with an indiscriminate choice of topics on the other. Such contradiction may only be overcome by drawing connections in a meaningful manner between the period of history in question and the personal experiences of participants.

The goal of this handbook is not to review the different time periods which might be brought up during a Franco-German meeting, with or without the presence of a third country. We do, however, consider it useful to keep the following in mind:

- A meeting can only be truly intercultural if the history that is referred to involves both (or all three) of the participating countries. For example, while the First Indochina War and the Algerian War are central to French history, they are not central from a German perspective. We would therefore consider it advisable to address such topics in the context of a discussion of both countries' colonial histories and their consequences on North-South relations. During a tri-national meeting, a comparative approach to contemporary phenomena (such as Franco-German and German-Polish reconciliation in the second half of the 20th century) could be extremely enriching. Furthermore, the Balkan Peninsula is particularly interesting due to the temporal proximity of the conflicts there in the 1990s. With this in mind, FGYO has backed many projects involving not only France and Germany, but also countries in South Eastern Europe.



- Some of the methods presented here are based on the linking of collective history with the personal and/or family history of participants; they are as such particularly suited to a discussion on contemporary history, beginning with the First World War. It may of course be interesting to discuss events that took place in a more distant era, if only because of their consequences on the 20th and 21st centuries. However, a meeting focused on the Middle Ages or the Renaissance would imply a scholastic, museum-like approach to history that we find is insufficient in the context of meeting the goals of peace and citizenship education.

- The notion of citizenship implies responsibility. In order to avoid misunderstanding, however, it is worth noting that the term is not synonymous with "debt" in this context. It means that each of us is individually responsible for our own actions, as well as being collectively responsible for the functioning of the society to which we belong. In other words, the "duty of memory" for which we are collectively responsible applies to every citizen, regardless of origin, since past phenomena were built on socio-political structures which still exist in part today. During a bi- or tri-national meeting, each group must not only analyse its country's history; it must also reflect on how it views the history of the partner country or countries, in order to measure the impact that certain representations can have on an intercultural meeting.

- Finally, history must not be reduced to a series of tragedies or to a list of victims. On a collective scale, history

consists of events that are extremely diverse in nature: the post-World War II baby boom, the Cold War, the Space Race, the protests of 1968, the fall of the Berlin Wall, etc. It also includes the social changes that occurred in France, Germany and other countries over a period of several decades (e.g., migratory flows, rural flight, ecological and socio-economic crises, etc.). While such events are less spectacular than, for instance, military conflicts, they have nevertheless had a profound impact on the landscape and social structures in both countries. On an individual or family level, history and memory follow a chronology of their own and though they may often be tied to collective phenomena, they are also punctuated by events that take place in times of peace (births, deaths, marriages, exile, etc.). In short, it is preferable not to rank periods of time as though some were more "historic" than others - indeed, it would certainly be difficult to determine the instruments with which to measure their degree of historicity. If we want to initiate an open debate in which each person can find their place according to their origins and experiences, it is important that no facet of the past be overlooked, no matter how ordinary it might appear.



### 3. CONDITIONS

The strategies presented in the previous chapter can be applied at youth meetings via the pedagogical methods described in detail in the next chapter in the form of activity cards. To ensure success, several details should be taken into consideration.

#### 3.1. Meeting place

On a local level, history and memory will be addressed differently if participants meet in the town or village of one of the groups, as opposed to at a different location, even if the venue is still located in one of the groups' home countries. In the first context, the "native" participants will be responsible for helping the "non-native" participants discover their territory. In this case, it is necessary to harness their expertise, while making sure there is a relationship of reciprocity between the groups (so as to avoid creating a teacher/student dynamic). In the second context, each participant will be invited to discover a place that is likely new and unknown. This is particularly important when it comes to certain activities for which prior knowledge about a location could constitute an advantage.

It is interesting to have a historical and/or heritage site nearby in that these offer direct access to local heritage, thus helping to materialize the past. Visiting a former battlefield or concentration camp invites participants to immerse themselves in the past by following in the footsteps of the actors of History. However, such visits must be carefully prepared and evaluated with the participants in order to avoid them being

reduced to either a pilgrimage - during which emotion suppresses all reflection - or to a stroll whose programme is merely dictated by the standards of mass tourism.

#### 3.2. Age of participants

As stated in its mandate, FGYO supports meetings and exchanges between young people aged 30 and under. In this handbook, we sometimes distinguish between groups of children and groups of teenagers or young adults - even if this is at times a bit arbitrary.

Educational activities aimed at children under twelve should take into consideration the specific nature of this audience. A child is not a miniature adult, but a developing individual with its own sense of logic and reasoning. While awareness-raising about history and memory may begin at any age, it needs to be adapted to the maturity of the children, both in the topics and methods chosen. During a meeting on a specific war or genocide, it is obvious that the issue of death must be approached in a manner that respects the abilities and limits of the participants, notably to avoid processes of identification which could potentially be traumatic. Furthermore, some of the activities presented in this guide may be more difficult to carry out with groups of younger children due to their lack of objectivity regarding their own history.

While peace and citizenship education may begin very early, they become particularly interesting when working with teenagers and young adults.



On the one hand, this is a time in life when most individuals have limited family and professional constraints; it is therefore favourable to civic involvement (volunteer work, etc.). On the other hand, it corresponds to a phase of personal development during which such individuals tend to find their place in society, choose a course of study or profession and, ideally, develop their political awareness.

### 3.3. Group size

To be successful, interactive methods must take into account individual points of view. It is therefore essential to limit the size of each group. The ideal ratio of participants to team leaders is between five and ten to one. Beyond this threshold, the team leader becomes more of a speaker and only a minority within the group is actually able to interact. Moreover, a large group makes it much more difficult to foster a group dynamic upon which intercultural learning can be based. When an event brings together 50 or 100 people, the group should be divided up based on the number of team leaders so as to work in small groups as much as possible.

### 3.4. Socio-cultural profile

The socio-cultural profile and level of education of each group also need to be taken into consideration. National groups do not necessarily need to be homogeneous, as heterogeneity can encourage social diversity. However, it is preferable then that there be social diversity within each group in order to avoid placing the

focus of intercultural learning solely on socio-cultural differences (language level, dress codes, etc.).

Meetings addressing the topics of history and memory must not take an elitist approach, despite the complexity of these topics. It is true that participants with greater cultural capital and a higher capacity for abstract thinking may approach certain topics in greater depth. Nevertheless, all young people should be able to engage with historical questions. Most of the methods presented in this document are suitable for all target audiences since they encourage participants to express themselves without fear of judgement rather than assessing their ability to understand a code or convey information. In some cases, this approach serves the additional purpose of sparking the interest of young people who might have adopted a more disengaged attitude in a traditional educational setting.

Below you will find a series of methodological tools to help you put these pedagogical principles into practice. It goes without saying that these have been shaped by the age, origin and experiences of the authors of this guide, and that they merely constitute a contribution to a debate that is destined to continue long after the publication of this handbook.

Enjoy!







# Activity cards

## 1. Introduction

These cards present pedagogical activities that can either be implemented on their own, as part of a one or two-hour-long unit, or combined together over the course of a multi-day programme. Each card describes the goals of the activity, its duration, the materials needed and step-by-step instructions, as well as variants and ideas for going further with the activity in some cases.

The methods described below aim to raise participants' awareness about the challenges of history and memory, as well as to help them understand the processes through which these notions are transmitted. For this reason, we have organized them into five **categories** based on five types of vectors or channels.

The following pointers are meant to facilitate implementation of the pedagogical programme in general, regardless the activities chosen by the team.



**Places:** activities that can be used to examine the place of history and memory in the public sphere, prior to visiting a historical site and/or analysing a monument or commemorative plaque.



**Eyewitness accounts:** activities designed to help participants prepare for an interview or a meeting with an eyewitness of an event by having them experience different situations (interviewer/interviewee). These activities can also be used to demonstrate the evocative force of individual memory, as well as its fragility.



**Written activities:** activities designed to accompany the reading of certain texts (letters, journals, memoirs, etc.) in which factual and emotional elements interact with each other depending on the type of communication and the author's spatial and temporal relationship with an event.



**Archives:** activities designed to help introduce the study of visual and/or recorded documents (photographs, editorial cartoons, propaganda posters, radio programmes, newsreels, etc.) by offering a sensory approach to the past, as well as tools for critical analysis.



**Objects:** activities designed to prepare a visit to a museum by reflecting on the notion of objects and their symbolic value - the "second soul" that turns an object that is no longer operational into a relict rather than something disposable.



## 2. Role of the team leaders

The role of the team leaders is not to act as teachers but rather as guides. They must position themselves as chaperones whose main role is to be the guarantors of quality group work. They do not necessarily need to be experts in the field of history, although some knowledge would be useful to make the best of external resources (visits, eyewitness accounts, readings, etc.). Their main role is not to transmit factual information, but rather to prompt participants to think independently and exchange with one another in accordance with the rules of communication defined beforehand (see below).

It is up to the team leaders to decide whether or not to take part in the activities proposed to the group. Getting involved will allow them to bring practical examples to the different exercises. It will also help illustrate that the point of view of team leaders, like that of participants, is influenced by their personal experience and the national narratives of their country of origin. Conversely, it means that they are not able to observe the interactions within the group from the outside.

With team leaders from each of the participating countries, they will in any case find themselves confronted with the same intercultural learning processes as those at work in the group of participants. Indeed, interaction with colleagues who work differently may prompt some team leaders to question the content and methods with which they are familiar. This mutual process of adaptation means that preparatory teamwork before the

meeting or exchange is indispensable.

Team leaders should also have a good command of the language and culture of both or all three participating countries, since they often need to act as group interpreters and/or mediators at bi- or tri-national meetings. This is not necessarily required when external interpreters are present. The team must also be sure to select methods that are suited to the language level of the participants: if it is low, it may be necessary in certain cases to provide consecutive interpretation and, consequently, to establish the number of small groups based on the number of available group interpreters.

Finally, when working with groups of minors, please remember that all excursions require the mandatory presence of an adult chaperone.

## 3. The rules of communication

At the beginning of any meeting, we recommend inviting participants to work together to define a set of rules that will govern their discussions. This might include, for example, not passing judgement on the individual or family history of other participants; not making normative statements presenting one's subjective view as an objective truth; not forcing someone to speak if they would rather remain silent (silence, like speech, is also a right); or not intervening in the discussion before the previous person's remarks have been fully translated. Introducing a confidentiality clause specifying that whatever is said during the group activities will remain in the



group may further contribute to fostering a climate of trust. Such rules will be accepted all the more easily if they are established in a collaborative manner.

Certain activities for small groups of two or three can only be implemented as described in the cards below if the participants speak the language of the partner country or countries, or if they have at least some knowledge of a common language. When this is not the case, the team must encourage them to develop strategies for non-verbal communication (miming, drawing, etc.); such groups may need more time for some activities.

#### 4. Evaluation

Whether it concerns a single unit or the meeting as a whole, the evaluation must give participants the opportunity to express their experience during the learning process and/or their position within the group, while avoiding value judgements as much as possible. The goal of the evaluation is not to award points for one's own contributions or to one's team, but rather to reflect on both the positive and negative aspects of the relationships between individuals and between the groups.

Talk of evaluation also raises the question of potential validation. Even if the meeting takes place in a formal educational context, grades should be avoided. As the acquisition of skills takes precedence here over the acquisition of knowledge, it is also important to avoid any type of test or normative examination: it would be

pointless to award participants with a "diploma of peace" or "certificate of citizenship". However, it is possible to offer them self-evaluation tools with which they can analyse their experience and observe what they have learned, for example by compiling a portfolio.





Places

## Cartography of memory

### Goal:

To help participants get to know each other through shared biographical experiences.

### Duration:

40 minutes.

### Materials:

Map of Europe/the world, A4 sheets of paper, pens, pencils, push pins, string or yarn, display area (wall or board).

### Instructions

> Step one (10 minutes):

team leaders ask participants to choose three separate locations that hold an important place in their personal memory (a school, childhood home, holiday destination, etc.). Participants are then asked to represent these places visually on three sheets of paper using drawings or maps.

> Step two (15 minutes):

participants form international groups of two or three and present their places of memory to each other, explaining why they chose them and which period of their lives they associate them with. They must also state when they last visited these places. Should the language level of participants be insufficient for this exchange, the presentation will take place within the larger group using consecutive interpretation.

> Step three (15 minutes):

one by one, participants locate these places of memory on a map of Europe or the world, using a coloured push pin to mark their location and running a piece of string or yarn from the push pin to the drawings they will have hung around the map. In this manner, personal memories overlap on a single map, sometimes making it possible to identify points where the life stories of participants converge (for example, one participant's place of birth is revealed to be another participant's holiday destination).

### Note:

This geographical approach to personal memory is particularly interesting if the participants have spent time abroad (holidays, school exchange, international volunteering, etc.) and locate some of their places of memory beyond their national borders, making it possible to dissociate the concepts of memory and origin. Furthermore, the presence of participants with an experience of migration makes it possible to place emphasis on the diversity of personal backgrounds.



## Site exploration

### Goal:

To discover the historical dimension of a site through independent exploration.

### Duration:

2 to 3 hours.

### Materials:

Photo, audio and/or video equipment (if possible), notebooks, pens, pencils, markers, A1 sheets of paper.

### Instructions:

> Step one (90 to 120 minutes): participants divide into small bi- or tri-national groups of 4 to 6 people; each group receives a map of an area to explore. This may be a heritage site (battlefield, internment or concentration camp, etc.) or simply a neighbourhood in the town where the meeting or exchange is taking place. Participants are instructed to explore this area at their own pace, using their notebooks to write down or draw their impressions of the marks left by history (an old house, a ruined building, a monument, etc.). If possible, photo, sound or video equipment should be available. It is also important, however, that all of the senses be engaged. Following this walkabout, the groups must put together a presentation on their exploration, expressing the individual point of view of each participant as best they can.

> Step two (30 to 60 minutes): each small group gives a ten-minute presentation to the rest of the group using select written, sound or video documents from their walkabout. The choice of documents as well as the role given to them in the presentation offers

insight into what a shared point of view of a period of time or geographical space might look like.

### Note:

It is important that the presentation, as well as the discussions preceding it, reflect the subjective points of view of the participants. It is therefore advisable to limit or even forbid the use of travel guides and informational websites, which offer a standardized interpretation of the site. Should historical contextualization be necessary, it is preferable to provide this beforehand, or at the very least to not focus the attention of participants on three or four "landmarks" at the expense of other surrounding elements.

### Going further:

It is possible to prolong this activity with a writing exercise and document creation, i.e., the production of travel diaries or alternative travel guides which may then be shown to the public (via a blog, an exhibition, etc.).





## Treasure hunt

### Goal:

To approach the history of a site in a playful manner by observing the marks it has left on the public sphere.

### Duration:

2 to 3 hours.

### Materials:

To be determined based on the choice of clues and chosen treasure.

### Instructions:

> Preparation: as a first step, team leaders explore the neighbourhood or village where the meeting will take place in order to identify elements pertaining to local history or the local impact of national or international history: a war memorial, an info-panel, names of streets or squares, old buildings, etc. Drawing on their findings, they then choose the story that will form the basis of the treasure hunt and determine the treasure itself. Finally, they decide on the roadmap to be given to participants.

> Participants divide into small bi- or tri-national groups of 2 to 10 people. Each group receives a document that will serve as a starting point for the treasure hunt. There are two possible options here: a "scavenger hunt", wherein each clue leads to another clue in a predetermined order until one group reaches the final goal (in this case, the starting point and route do not necessarily have to be the same for each group); or a classic "treasure hunt", wherein clues may be discovered in any order, the main objective being to obtain all of them to reach the final goal (pieces of a map

or a photograph, words from a sentence, etc.).

The first small group to find the treasure is the winner.

It is advisable to choose clues or puzzles that are suited to the age and language levels of the participants.

### Note:

We recommend that team leaders make use of local resources (tourist offices, heritage societies, etc.) when preparing the treasure hunt. It is also possible to enlist local contact people to play the role of guides on certain steps along the route.



## Living monuments

### Goal:

To initiate reflection on the architecture of commemorative monuments.

### Duration:

1 hour.

### Materials:

Computer, video projector  
(for the slide-show).

### Instructions:

> Step one (15 minutes):

participants are shown a slide-show of different commemorative monuments dedicated to a given event that is relevant to the history of the participating countries. They are then invited to share their impressions and analyses with the help of the following questions: what message or ideas are expressed by each monument? What are the attitudes of the characters present? What symbols were used by the architect (objects, animals, mythological creatures, geometrical figures, etc.)? Why? This overview should allow participants to gain more insight into the stylistic diversity of the monuments and to understand the national narrative and/or political choices underpinning their construction: the narrative transmitted by a First World War memorial, for example, will not be the same if the monument represents a heroic soldier or a grieving widow.



> Step two (20 minutes): participants form small bi- or tri-national teams of 4 to 6 people. Each team is then asked to design its own monument pertaining to the same period in history. The first phase of this joint effort will involve identifying the message(s) the small group wishes to convey - and consequently, a contemporary perspective on the historical event in question. The second phase will consist of composing an immobile figure or statue that creatively expresses the message(s). While participants may include an object or inscription in their project, the main "building block" will be their own bodies.

> Step three (25 minutes): each small group presents its monument to the others, at first without providing any commentary. The spectators, i.e., the members of the other small groups - are invited to provide their own interpretation, which is then compared with the intentions of the architects.

#### Note:

This activity shows that every monument is tributary to an ideology (pacifism or warmongering, nationalism or universalism, etc.), but also that collective memory is changing in nature. Indeed, an event will not be represented in the same manner 10, 50 or 100 years after the fact, due to the evolution of society on the one hand and a growing distance in time on the other hand.

#### Variation:

Participants may also be invited to present their project in the form of a drawing or scale model. This option does not require the same degree of physical involvement; it does, however, allow participants to address the question of colours and materials and to use abstract shapes more in line with contemporary architecture, which tends to forsake figuration.



## Temporary signs

### Goal:

To reflect on the format of a commemorative sign or plaque as a means of incarnating what is absent.

### Duration:

1 ½ hour.

### Materials:

Photographs, wood, cardboard, markers, etc.

### Instructions:

> Step one (20 minutes):

participants are given photographs of signs or works of art dedicated to the memory of an event or a site that has disappeared. Some notable examples of this might be signs from the destroyed village of Fleury-devant-Douaumont,<sup>1</sup> German artist Gunter Demmig's *Stolpersteine*,<sup>2</sup> or the *Missing House* installation by French artist Christian Boltanski.<sup>3</sup> Participants then share within small bi- or tri-national groups of 6 to 8 people, using the following questions as starting points: what do we feel as spectators? Does our perception vary from one national group to the next? What might these signs or works of art teach us about history? What is their place in the public sphere today?

> Step two (40 minutes):

participants explore the history of the area where the meeting or exchange is taking place and attempt to identify what is absent today: a person who has passed away, a closed business, a building that has been destroyed, etc. The conditions of this exploration depend on the availability of resources on-site. The team might for instance organize a meeting with an elderly person from the community, a visit during which the present-day setting is compared to what is depicted on an old postcard, etc.



> Step three (30 minutes): following the meeting or visit, participants gather again in small groups and select an element whose memory they wish to take responsibility for. They then develop a temporary installation designed to make this memory visible in the public sphere. This could be a simple plaque made of cardboard or wood - the text must in this case be written in the language of each participating country -, but it could also take more original forms related to the activity of the person or place.

#### Note:

This activity can address either "official history", e.g., the conflicts of the 20th century - or "ordinary history", e.g., anonymous individuals or a process of socio-economic transformation that has taken place over the last few decades. It may be interesting, for example, to conduct this activity in a rural area affected by desertification, where various former sites of social life (cafés, post offices, schools, etc.) have gradually disappeared.

#### Going further:

The purpose of a sign is to add an element to the existing surroundings, even if it is merely to indicate the disappearance of another element. It is also interesting to imagine how one might stage absence, like some contemporary artists have done (a hollow tower, an empty library, etc.).

- 1 *A village in France's Meuse department, destroyed in 1916 during the Battle of Verdun. Today, in the forest that has grown over the site, paths serve as reminders of former streets, while signs indicate the former location and function of destroyed buildings.*
- 2 *Cobblestone covered with a brass plate marking the last residence of victims of Nazism.*
- 3 *This work of art, which has been in Berlin since 1990, consists of a series of signs on a wall indicating the names of the former occupants of the building next door, bombed in 1945.*



## Visiting a cemetery

### Goal:

Offering a sensory and individualized approach to a civilian or military cemetery.

### Duration:

1 to 2 hours.

### Materials:

A4 sheets of paper, pens. Internet access may be necessary.

### Instructions:

> Step one (30 to 60 minutes):

participants divide into small bi- or tri-national groups of 2-3 to 8-9 people. Each group draws a name from a list compiled beforehand by the team leaders that contains the names of people buried in a nearby cemetery. These may be well-known historical figures (for example, Stéphane Hessel<sup>1</sup> in the Montparnasse Cemetery in Paris or Anna Seghers<sup>2</sup> in the Dorotheenstadt cemetery in Berlin) or, conversely, anonymous individuals (a local resident, a soldier killed in a war, etc.). In any case, it is important that participants are able to obtain information on the biographies of these individuals, whether via the Internet, municipal or regional archives, or through accessing private documents that were either preserved by family members or donated to a museum. These different documents should allow each group to write up a concise presentation of the person they have been assigned.

> Step two (30 to 60 minutes):

participants then visit the cemetery or necropolis in question. Using a registry (if one exists), each small group locates the tomb of the person whose biography it has studied and presents the results of its research to the other small groups at the tomb's location. This may be followed by a discussion about the tomb's architecture (a simple cross in a cemetery's military section, a richly decorated mausoleum, the possible presence of an epitaph, etc.) and how it relates to the life of the person buried there. This activity makes history more tangible and concrete through the observation of an individual's destiny;



it also provides an opportunity to reflect on the importance of a grave site for the construction and preservation of memory: indeed, the act of reading a text about a person does not have the same effect as that of physically visiting the person's grave.

#### Note:

It is not always easy to make educational use of a cemetery visit, whether civilian or military, on the one hand because such places may remind participants of their own grief and, on the other hand, because their solemn nature invites contemplative silence rather than discussion. It is nevertheless important to visit such sites, as death and the representation of death are at the centre of any memorial narrative.

#### Going further:

Should participants display a sufficient level of maturity, it is possible to have them work on the biographies of people who do not have a tombstone, i.e., whose bodies could not be identified (unknown soldiers, people assassinated in extermination camps, victims of a plane crash at sea, etc.) This raises the question of the difficulty of the grieving process, as well as of the social role of collective monuments or memorials (ossuaries, commemorative steles, etc.).

*1 Stéphane Hessel (1917-2013): a Resistance fighter, diplomat and activist born in Germany who obtained French citizenship in 1937. Author of the Time for Outrage: Indignez-vous ! manifesto (2010).*

*2 Anna Seghers (1900-1983): a German author whose real name was Netty Radvanyi, née Reiling. A Jewish communist, she emigrated to France in 1933 to escape Nazi Germany, before arriving in Mexico in 1941. After the war, she settled in the GDR. She is the author of The Seventh Cross (1942) and Transit Visa (1944), among other novels.*





Eyewitness  
accounts



## A history of first names

### Goal:

Icebreaker.

### Duration:

20 minutes.

### Instructions:

> Step one (15 minutes): participants divide into small bi- or tri-national groups of up to 6 people. Within each small group, each participant presents the history of his or her first name. This might be its etymology, its region or country of origin or its frequency at a given time; it might also be the reasons why his or her parents chose it (for example, in honour of a famous person or in reference to a fictional character). If a participant is not in possession of such information, one may encourage them to tell the story of their own relationship with their first name: do they have a nickname? Do they identify with their name? Do they know other people with the same name?

> Step two (5 minutes): to apply the knowledge they have just acquired and share it with the rest of the group, participants gather in a large circle. One randomly selected person stands in the centre and introduces the other members of his or her small group by their first names, then designates another participant from a different small group to do the same, until everyone has heard the first name of each participant at least once.

### Note:

This icebreaker must take place on the very first day of the meeting or exchange in order for participants to learn each other's first names. While there are many methods used at FGYO-sponsored events to reach this goal, this activity has the advantage of linking first names with participants' personal and family history: at the end of this activity, Pierre, Magdalena or Selim will have shared more about themselves than just their first names.



## Molecules

### Goal:

Helping participants form micro-networks on the basis of criteria other than their national group.

### Duration:

20 to 40 minutes.

### Instructions:

> Step one: all participants gather in a circle. A group leader makes a statement (for example: "I was born in the spring"); on his or her signal, all those to whom the statement applies converge towards the centre like the particles of a molecule, and may also join hands.

> Step two: participants in the molecule take turns explaining to the whole group why the statement applies to them (for example: "I was born on the 25th of May") before returning to their place in the circle.

Team leaders then ask other questions following the same principle - no fewer than four in order to demonstrate that molecules, like groups, vary in shape within the context of a social network and no more than ten to avoid lassitude. The aim of these questions is to move away from a confrontation between the participating countries by incorporating other elements that unite participants from each country and also help them to identify things they have in common, which may then nourish more informal discussions later.

The criteria used to build the molecule can be drawn from virtually any field. Here are a few example statements related to history and memory:

- "I know the first names of at least two of my great-grandparents"
- "One of my parents/grandparents was born in a different country from where I was born"
- "I've stayed in a foreign country for more than a month"
- "I consider myself a European citizen"
- "I've been a victim of discrimination before"
- "I was not born in a democratic country"
- "A friend or relative of mine has experienced war before"
- "I've held a weapon in my hands before"

It is better in this context to avoid trivia questions such as "I know when the Battle of Stalingrad took place", as the goal of the exercise is to reflect on identities, not to evaluate knowledge.

### Note:

Statements that do not apply to any member of the group are not necessarily uninteresting. When the group is about to discuss the history of a war or dictatorship, it may be useful to make the group aware that none of the participants have had this type of experience themselves.



## Timelines

### Goal:

Inviting “ordinary history” into “official History” and examining the notion of historical events using contemporary examples.

### Duration:

50 minutes.

### Materials:

A4 and A1 sheets of paper, pencils, pens, tape.

### Instructions:

> Step one (10 minutes): participants are invited to create a personal timeline of their life (beginning at birth and ending with the date of the meeting or exchange). This timeline must contain 3 to 5 events they consider to be significant, depicted in the form of small drawings: the first day of secondary school, joining an after-school activity, a trip, a move, etc. It is important to specify that this document will be discussed in groups to avoid participants including private or painful details they would prefer not to share with the group (divorce, death, etc.).

> Step two (15 minutes): participants divide into small bi- or tri-national groups of up to 6 people and take turns presenting their personal timeline to their small group, explaining both their choice of events and their choice of corresponding drawings. The different timelines are then lined up on a large sheet of paper in order to identify any similarities.

> Step three (15 minutes): in each small group, above the individual timelines, participants draw a collective timeline covering the same time period (from the oldest participant’s date of birth to the date of the meeting). This new timeline must contain 3 to 5 historical events in the form of small drawings, i.e., events that are important in the history of their country and/or the world and which have taken place in their lifetimes. This exercise underscores the differences in perspective that may exist between France, Germany and other countries, but also those found between people from the same country; some may, for example, consider the election of a president to be historical, while others may choose a football match or the death of a rock star. It is important to limit the number of events in order to compel participants to rank them by importance.

> Step four (10 minutes): all participants gather in a large group; one by one, a designated person from each group presents his or her group’s timeline. A comparison of these timelines may then form the basis of a more in-depth discussion on the process of historical selection that has not yet occurred given the lack of historical distance.

### Note:

This activity is aimed first and foremost at teenagers or young adults aged 16 and over.



## Narrative interviews

### Goal:

To learn a technique suitable for interviewing contemporary witnesses.

### Duration:

2 hours.

### Materials:

A4 sheets of paper, pens.

### Instructions:

> Step one (30 minutes):

team leaders introduce the narrative interview technique.<sup>1</sup> This technique allows the interviewer to collect a story by letting the interviewee speak as freely as possible, thus avoiding the imposition of a topic and rhythm through a series of highly guided questions. The goal is to encourage the witness to say what he or she has to say, instead of consciously or unconsciously directing the person to say what we expect to hear. Narrative interviews draw on the following principles (here we will refer to the interviewer as A and the interviewee as B):

- A introduces the discussion using a phrase such as "Can you tell me about..." or "What does ... mean to you?", which makes their expectations clear (they are not seeking to obtain general information but rather memories or personal representations) while allowing their partner to decide on their own what they think is important.
- A lets B speak, respecting their pauses and associations of ideas, even if these appear nonsensical: the flow and expression of their train of thought must not be constrained by a pre-established set of questions.n.

- A practices active listening. While A seldom intervenes, they continually interact with B through facial expressions, gestures and looks, all of which indicate attention and understanding and therefore invite B to continue speaking.
- If B loses their train of thought or their story is incomplete, A may reinitiate the interview using phrases such as "You were telling me about ..." or "Could we go back to what happened between event X and event Y?" They must, however, refrain from asking closed questions such as "Did you witness event Z?"

> Step two (45 minutes):

participants form bi- or tri-national groups of three people and move to a location where they will not be disturbed. Over the course of 10-minute units, the first participant interviews the second participant about a particular segment of his or her personal history (for example, what they were doing one, five or ten years ago), respecting the principles of the narrative interview, while the third participant observes their interaction. The three participants then discuss their respective experience of the interview for a maximum of 5 minutes. In the next unit, the roles change: the second participant interviews the third participant, while the first participant observes. By the end of this step, each participant must have been the interviewer, the interviewee and the observer.

> Step three (45 minutes):

participants all gather in a large group and take turns speaking about the interview they conducted. The point



here is not to describe the content of the interview in detail, as some elements may be of personal in nature, but rather to share with the other participants their experience of the interview process and the methods used. It is important to address the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee, and notably the aspects that were positive, negative, surprising, etc.

### Note:

Testing a technique such as the narrative interview in pairs enables participants to better grasp the challenges inherent to eyewitness accounts from different perspectives as the interviewer and as the interviewee. They will then be better able to put themselves in the place of their counterpart. This activity will further lead them to reflect on the status of witnesses. Witnesses are not in competition with historians, from whom we often expect the absolute truth, nor are they simple sources of information to be unabashedly exploited through a pointed and prioritized series of questions. Their contribution to the transmission of history and memory is of a different nature: their stories ground the past in a concrete and tangible reality. However, witnesses only express a subjective point of view, a personal representation that cannot and must not be evaluated based on scientific criteria.

*1 The narrative interview technique was developed by German sociologist Fritz Schütze. The principles described here are a simplification of the process applied in scientific settings.*



## Family trees

### Goal:

To situate oneself in the long term by exploring one's family history and reflecting on its transmission from one generation to the next.

### Duration:

30 minutes.

### Materials:

A4 sheets of paper, pencils, pens.

### Instructions:

> Step one: several weeks before the meeting or exchange, participants are asked to gather information from family members pertaining to the lives of their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents when they were their age (e.g., at the age of 18 if the participant is 18 at the time of the meeting).

When giving these instructions, team leaders should be careful to include a broad definition of family: for example, the group one has grown up with and to whom one feels one belongs. Indeed, while the traditional family model, comprised of a father, mother and their child(ren), has never been the sole model, it is less prevalent today than ever before. It is therefore essential that participants with other family situations (single-parent families, same-sex parents, step-families, foster families, foster homes, orphanages, etc.) be able to take part in the exercise without difficulty.

> Step two (30 minutes): during the meeting or exchange, participants are invited to draw a family tree (whose shape corresponds to their family situation) and indicate on each branch, using drawings or keywords, the information obtained in step one. This way, they will not only present the identity of their ancestors, but also and especially their situations when they were young. The family trees are then hung on the walls around the room; their authors may provide further commentary if they so desire.



As with all methods that deal with personal and family history, a participant may occasionally refuse to contribute their family tree on the grounds that the information required is too personal. This refusal should be accepted without requiring any justification on the participant's part; it might also be useful to specify at the beginning that the activity is not compulsory.

#### Note:

Through the use of concrete examples, this activity allows the group to study the notion of transmitted history and to distinguish it from that of experienced history. An individual's heritage cannot be simply reduced to his or her own experiences. It also includes the history of previous generations, as is painfully demonstrated by trauma linked to historical events (e.g., exile, social decline, deportation, etc.) which may be indirectly suffered by the children and grandchildren of their victims. The family dimension of this experience raises the question of the role of descendants once witnesses have passed away: are the stories told by a member of the second or third generation of any particular value when it comes to the transmission of memory?



## Yearbooks

### Goal:

To introduce historical knowledge in a playful manner and identify differences in perspective between the participating countries.

### Duration:

40 minutes.

### Materials:

A5 sheets of paper, pens.

### Instructions:

> Step one (20 minutes):

participants gather in national groups in different rooms. Each group receives five pieces of paper, each with a year written on it (for example: "1963"). The five chosen years are the same for each group. Each group then has twenty minutes to associate three events with each year (for example: "signing of the Elysée Treaty",<sup>1</sup> "Kennedy assassination",<sup>2</sup> and "birth of [a participant's aunt]"). Personal or family events are acceptable, as long as they actually occurred. Internet use is not allowed in order for the choice of events to reflect participants' actual knowledge of history.

> Step two (20 minutes):

The different national groups all gather in one room and take turns stating the events they associated with each date. A comparison of their choices will either show the difference in perspectives between their respective societies or, on the contrary, a harmonization or standardization of historical knowledge if the same events are chosen.

### Note:

It is possible to select years prior to 1900. However, the older the date, the harder it will be for participants to identify three related events.

### Variation:

This activity requires a fairly extensive knowledge of history on the part of participants. A simpler version consists of replacing years with decades: "the 1930s", "the 1990s", etc.

<sup>1</sup> Cooperation treaty signed on 22 January 1963 by French President Charles de Gaulle and German Chancellor

Konrad Adenauer. It sealed the reconciliation between France and Germany and also laid the foundations of the FGYO.

<sup>2</sup> John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1917-1963): US president, assassinated in Dallas, Texas, on 22 November 1963.









Written  
activities

## The ABCs of history

### Goal:

To reinforce the group dynamic while introducing elements of history and language learning.

### Duration:

25 minutes.

### Materials:

Flipchart, A1 sheets of paper, markers.

### Instructions:

> Step one (5 minutes): participants form bi- or tri-national teams of up to 8 people and line up an equal distance from flipcharts or a whiteboard upon which the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet have been written.

> Step two (10 minutes): a team leader signals the start of the relay race and participants must complete the alphabet as quickly as possible using words related to the time period addressed during the meeting or exchange. For example, if the topic is the protest movements of 1968, the words might include: **A**utogestion<sup>1</sup>, **B**ewegung<sup>2</sup>, **C**ohn-Bendit<sup>3</sup>, **D**utschke<sup>4</sup>, **P**rague Spring<sup>5</sup>, etc. Each participant runs to the board, writes down a word in one of the languages used by the group in front of the letter of his or her choice (it is not mandatory to write the words in alphabetical order), then runs back to his or her group and passes the marker to the next person, and so forth. Proper nouns may be used. The game ends when one group completes the alphabet.

> Step three (10 minutes): in order to be declared the winner, the first group to complete the alphabet must justify each word choice, explaining for example, how the word Yugoslavia is linked to the 1968 protests (which, in this case, is possible since student protests took place in Belgrade in June of that year). This step is also an opportunity to translate a certain number of words from the other language(s), thereby enriching participants' vocabulary with regard to the topic discussed.

### Note:

This playful activity combines physical and mental exercise and is therefore ideally suited for introducing early-morning activities or following-up after a lunch break, since these are moments of the day when it is often necessary to focus participants' attention.

*1 In French: self-management.*

*2 In German: movement.*

*3 Daniel Cohn-Bendit (1945-): a German activist and politician who was one of the leaders of the student movement in France in 1968. He was elected Member of the European Parliament in Germany (1994 and 2004) and in France (1999 and 2009).*

*4 Rudi Dutschke (1940-1979): a German activist and politician, one of the leaders of the student movement in Germany in 1968. He died in 1979 from neurological problems following an assassination attempt on 11 April 1968.*

*5 Prague Spring: refers to a series of political reforms which took place in Czechoslovakia between January and August 1968.*



## Instant messaging

### Goal:

To analyse the types of communication and information fostered by new technologies.

### Duration:

1 ½ hour.

### Materials:

Smartphones or mobile phones, A4 sheets of paper, pens, computer and printer (if necessary).

### Instructions:

> Step one (1 hour):

participants form two, four or six small groups which will then be paired up in order to carry out parallel activities: visiting an exhibition, a stroll through a neighbourhood, etc. During these activities, each small group must inform their partner group “in real time” about what they are currently seeing or doing, using a smartphone or mobile device (via instant or text messaging). Each small group will therefore have a double experience: the one they are having themselves and the one that is being reported to them in real time by the partner group. The content and language of the messages can be freely chosen by the participants, but their frequency (one every ten minutes) and their length (160 characters) are fixed.

> Step two (30 minutes):

the small groups reunite and compose a joint report on the activities carried out during step one, each of them recounting the experience of their partner group based on the messages they received. These may be read aloud or printed on paper, but it is important that the exchange be presented in chronological order. At the end of the activity, each small group must state whether their partner group’s story accurately described their experience.

### Note:

While written documents such as letters, diaries and memoirs constitute important sources of information for historians as well as for teachers, it is obvious that children and teenagers make less and less



use of such formats today. The Internet and mobile phones have changed the face of written communication by reducing both the speed of transmission and the lifespan of the message. The youth of the 21st century are accustomed to having virtually no delay between the emission and reception of text messages, as well as to such messages being grounded in an ever shorter present and “expiring” rapidly, losing their relevance and, as such, their value.

This activity aims to have participants reflect on their own practices of written communication and on what makes them different from the older practices they may be confronted with when studying history (letters from soldiers during the First World War, diaries kept by Jews during the Holocaust, etc.). Following the activity, it may also be interesting to extend the discussion by addressing the ephemeral nature of certain text messages: what will remain of our texts and e-mails in 20, 50 or 100 years?

#### Variant:

It is also possible to work in pairs instead of in small groups. In this case, the exchange takes place between two participants, thereby isolating them from the rest of their small group - which is, after all, a corollary of newer modes of communication in which individuals are both present and elsewhere at the same time. In this version of the activity, step two will be limited to the presentation of a handful of examples.



## Diary

### Goal:

To make participants aware of the challenges of autobiographical writing.

### Duration:

40 minutes.

### Materials:

A4 sheets of paper, pens.

### Instructions:

#### > Step one (15 minutes):

participants are invited to write individually about their experience over the past 24 hours, as they would in a diary. They are informed that the text will later be worked on in a group setting, so as to choose the elements of their story accordingly. It is important to set a time limit (e.g., 10 minutes) or a length limit (e.g., one A4 sheet of paper) in order to limit the amount of information present in each text.

#### > Step two (10 minutes):

participants form small bi- or tri-national groups of 4 to 6 people and take turns reading their story aloud. If their language level is not sufficient to grasp all aspects of a text written in the language of the partner country or countries (i.e., meaning, register, style, etc.), the presence of an group interpreter may be necessary.

#### > Step three (15 minutes): after reading the different stories aloud, a debate will take place around the following questions:

- Do the chosen elements of information and their chosen order of importance vary from one text to the next?
- How much of each text is description-based (places, people, schedule, etc.) and how much of it is commentary (feelings, emotions, judgements, etc.)?
- Would a combination of several subjective stories provide objective knowledge of the events described?



### Note:

This activity may be used to introduce the study of a diary which is of historical importance, for example that of Anne Frank<sup>1</sup> from Germany or H el ene Berr<sup>2</sup> from France. In this case, it may be interesting to point up the array of perspectives, for example by comparing the writings of a victim with those of an oppressor or, in another context, those of soldiers from opposing armies, in order for participants to understand that regardless its form, a text expresses a point of view and therefore a historian must always cross-check it with other sources.

### Variant:

It is possible to adapt this activity for use with digital formats such as blogs or social media pages. In this case, it is necessary to reflect on the fact that the texts are destined to be more or less widely disseminated, whereas a diary is generally confidential in nature. The Internet further provides a form of interactivity through which different points of view may enter directly into dialogue with each other in the form of comments.

*1 Anne Frank (1929-1945): a young Jewish girl who was deported from the Netherlands and died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.*

*Her Diary of A Young Girl was published in 1947.*

*2 H el ene Berr (1921-1945): a young Jewish girl who was deported from France and also died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.*

*Her Diary, covering the period of 1942-1944, was published in 2008.*



## Letter to myself

### Goal:

To experiment with a tool of self-reflection while addressing personal point of view and its evolution over time.

### Duration:

50 minutes.

### Materials:

A4 sheets of paper, pens, envelopes.

### Instructions:

> Step one (15 minutes):

participants are invited to individually write a letter from the person they were a year ago to the person they are today. For example: it is June. Where was I and what was I doing in June of last year? What were my hopes and/or fears at the time? What message would I have had for the person I'd be a year later? Because it is written on a given date, a letter reflects both the state of mind and the level of information of the author at a specific moment. This exercise prompts participants to put themselves in their own shoes by travelling back in time and, consequently, to review what took place over the course of the past year (personal life, education, political, cultural or sports events, etc.).





> Step two (15 minutes): following the first step, participants are invited to each write a second letter, this time addressed to the person they will be a year from now. At the end of the activity, they place this letter in an envelope and are instructed to only open it in a year's time.

It is important that the content of these letters remain confidential. Team leaders should therefore clarify at the very beginning that they will not be read aloud to the rest of the group. It can however be interesting to follow-up each step in the activity with a short group discussion on the process of writing - not so much about the information contained in the letters, but rather on the advantages of looking backwards or forward in time and the difficulties sometimes encountered when doing so.

Note:

This is more of an individual activity than a group one and it is interesting first and foremost in the context of a long-term programme: international volunteering, working in a partner country, long-term exchange or internship, etc. When the programme involves staying abroad, the assessment or predictions made while writing the "letter to oneself" will naturally include cultural and/or linguistic discoveries. It is also possible to shorten the period in question to six or even three months - for instance in the context of meetings that are staggered over several phases in two countries or more.



## First memories

### Goal:

To make participants aware that long-term memory is fragile and that every memory is a reconstruction.

### Duration:

20 minutes.

### Materials:

A4 sheets of paper, pens.

### Instructions:

> Step one (5 minutes):

team leaders invite participants to individually write down a description of their first memory, i.e., that which they consider to be their earliest memory. These usually occur around the age of 2, 3 or 4. This description should be as detailed as possible.

> Step two (15 minutes):

several participants are invited to read their story aloud on a voluntary basis. A discussion is then initiated within the group using these concrete examples as a starting point. The team may moderate the discussion by asking the following questions:

- Is this memory a snapshot of a specific event or rather the recollection of an everyday situation?
- Can you give your memory a date? If so, what clues helped you identify it? If not, how can you be sure it is your first memory?
- Are you still close to the people and places that appear in this memory or do they belong in the past?
- Do you have any traces of the event you're describing (photo, newspaper, etc.) or have you discussed it since with your parents or friends?
- Are you entirely sure this is a memory you've experienced or is it possible you might have reconstructed it using elements that took place later?



**Note:**

Discussing one's earliest memories helps to address the notion of long-term memory with young people who, by definition, do not yet have a lot of distant past to explore. This activity may be used to introduce readings of memoirs or more generally of written accounts produced several years after the events they describe. Such documents evoke the past through the filter of the present: that which is emphasized is what seemed important to the author at the time of writing (depending on his or her current situation, but also on his or her readership).

Moreover, when it comes to childhood memories, the fragility of memory may become apparent through confusion, distortion or even the fabrication of false memories. All of these are nevertheless interesting in a bi- or tri-national context as they are grounded in a culturally determined framework: for instance, a memory referring to *école maternelle*<sup>1</sup> in France, *Kindergarten*<sup>2</sup> in Germany or other forms of preschool in other countries will require an explanation of these terms to participants from the partner countries.

*1 In France children aged 3 to 6 attend the école maternelle, a public preschool.*

*2 In Germany young children attend the Kindergarten, a public or private facility for child care and education.*



## Guestbook

### Goal:

To collectively evaluate the meeting, exchange or a unit thereof while placing emphasis on the sustainability of experiences.

### Duration:

20 minutes.

### Materials:

Paper tablecloth, pens, markers.

### Instructions:

> Step one (15 minutes):

on the last day of the meeting or exchange (or at the end of a unit), participants are invited to write down what they will take away from the experience. To do so, a large table covered in a paper tablecloth is placed at their disposal: for 15 minutes, they are free to write down the details that seem most "memorable" to them, whether these are positive or negative, in the language of their choice. This reflection may be about a person they've met, something they've learned, an atmosphere, etc. Participants have the possibility of starting new topics or responding to what others have written before them, like a silent conversation.

Two options are possible for this group "guestbook": either a large table, where the group will decide for itself the aspects it wants to discuss or a series of small tables corresponding to questions or topics suggested by the team leaders - for example, the accommodation facilities, interaction with the team leaders, etc. It is also possible to dedicate one table to each day of the programme so that

participants can identify what they've learned over a certain period of time.

> Step two (5 minutes):

participants who wish to do so may comment on their own contribution or ask questions about an element they did not understand. This step must however remain brief in order to avoid launching the group into an oral evaluation that would simply repeat the written assessment.

### Note:

Beginning the activity with the question "What will you take away from this experience?" will help to initiate a qualitative assessment during which participants will reflect on the experience they have gained, instead of judging the proposed programme from the standpoint of a consumer - an approach that is all too often encouraged by questionnaires that resemble customer satisfaction surveys.







Archives

## Children's portraits

### Goal:

Icebreaker.

### Duration:

10 minutes.

### Materials:

Photographs, paper, plastic photo sleeves, non-transparent containers, tape

### Instructions:

#### > Step one:

prior to the meeting or exchange, team leaders ask participants to bring a photograph of themselves from early childhood (ideally between the ages of 2 and 6) or, better yet, to send them a digital copy of a photo. Each photograph is collected by the team leaders upon arrival and placed in a small transparent photo sleeve, making sure that no name is visible on the back.

#### > Step two (3 minutes):

all photographs are placed in non-transparent containers - one for each national group. Each participant then draws one photo from a partner country's container.

#### > Step three (7 minutes):

participants gather and are instructed to identify the person whose photograph they have drawn, without any help from the person in question. This phase must take place in silence until each portrait finds its true owner, who then identifies him or herself (should this prove too difficult, participants may be allowed to speak after the first 5 minutes). The "seeking" participant then places the photograph on a wall above the

corresponding first name. If participants agree, the photographs may remain in place during the entire meeting or exchange.

### Variant:

It is possible to play the same game using recent photographs of a body part (for example, the right hand) which must then be reunited with their owner. Children's portraits nevertheless present the advantage of showing how the physical appearance of a person changes over time, thereby reminding participants of their own temporality.



## Propaganda images

### Goal:

To show how an image can offer a partial or biased vision of reality in order to influence the opinion of the person observing it.

### Duration:

1 hour.

### Materials:

Drawings, photographs, A5 sheets of paper, pens.

### Instructions:

> Step one (20 minutes):

participants divide into bi- or tri-national groups and receive a series of images (posters, illustrations, editorial cartoons, etc.) published for propaganda purposes during the addressed time period. It is important that these images reflect different, even contradictory points of view in order for participants to be able to compare the perspectives of opposing sides - France and Germany in 1914-1918, the French Resistance and Collaboration in 1940-1944, the SED<sup>1</sup> and opposition in East Germany in 1949-1989, etc. Within each small group, participants are invited to analyse the images together by answering the following questions:

- What situation is represented by this image and, when appropriate, its accompanying text (speech bubble, caption, etc.)?
- How are the characters and/or objects presented? Our perception is influenced by denotation (the literal meaning of signs), but it is also influenced by connotation (the implicit, culturally-shaped meaning that is compounded with the literal meaning), which is all the more at risk of being used for manipulative purposes since our perception of connotation is only partially conscious.
- What types of writing, colours and angles are used and how do these choices shape our perception of the message?

> Step two (20 minutes):

Team leaders then provide participants with a series of captions indicating the date of publication as well as the author and editor of each image. It is then up to





them to match each image with its caption, asking themselves the following questions:

- Who is speaking? It is important to know who the author is, but it is also important to know who commissioned it (a political party, union, newspaper, etc.) and the political opinions that it subsequently promotes.
- What is said / what is omitted? While propaganda is often based on caricature and/or lies, the voluntary omission of true facts is another frequently employed technique.

> Step three (20 minutes):  
each small group takes turns presenting the results of their work to the larger group, justifying their choices, explaining the ideological dimension of each image and stating whether they believe this type of representation can still be found in public opinion today (for example, the influence of colonialism in our view of North-South relations).

### Note:

Today, each young person has access on a daily basis to multiple sources of information - the Internet, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, etc. Our intellectual independence is as such no longer determined by our access to knowledge but rather by our ability to critically analyse information. More than ever, it is necessary to train nascent citizens to identify and decode the underlying political opinions contained in images or text.

In an international context, the comparison of propaganda images further helps introduce thinking about how images of the self and "other" are portrayed in different countries (xenophobia, etc.) as well as within each society (hostility towards ethnic, religious or sexual minorities, etc.).

<sup>1</sup> SED: Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party of Germany). Founded in 1946 in the Soviet Occupation Zone, it was the ruling party in East Germany until 1989.



## Political songs

### Goal:

To study the insight that songs can provide into history and memory.

### Duration

45 minutes.

### Materials:

CDs or audio files, stereo system, A4 sheets of paper, scissors.

### Instructions:

> Step one (10 minutes):

prior to the activity, the group leaders will have selected a series of songs from the participating countries that refer to a given historical period, then divided the lyrics of each song into four to six parts (verses and chorus). At the beginning of the activity, each participant receives one of these parts on a piece of paper and is instructed to locate the owners of the other parts of the song within the group. Each text will have been divided up among members of different national groups; the text fragments given to participants may therefore not be in their mother tongue. Consequently, it will be necessary for them to work together.

> Step two (20 minutes):

participants form small groups of 4 to 6 people according to the song fragments they've been given. Each small group will attempt to put the text back together in order and to translate it into the language(s) of the partner country or countries, or at the very least to explain the content of the song to those who do not understand the language. These songs may express extremely diverging points of view - as different, for example, as (in the

context of the First World War) "Verdun! On ne passe pas"<sup>1</sup> and "La Chanson de Craonne".<sup>2</sup> At the end of this step, the team leaders will play recordings of the songs using a stereo system.

> Step three (15 minutes):

participants, who now know the lyrics and melody of "their" song, work together to analyse the point of view it expresses: what is its message? What perspective does it represent? Was it written at the same time as the events it describes or was it written several years or even decades later?

### Going further:

Wenn der Text einiger Lieder die Teilnehmenden anspricht, ist es möglich, ihnen, zum Beispiel am Abend, Zeit zu lassen, sie zu lernen und mit der Gruppe zu singen.

<sup>1</sup> Patriotic French song written in 1916: "The sun is shining, everywhere the cannons thunder / Young heroes, the time of the great battle is here", etc.

<sup>2</sup> Protest song sung by French soldiers beginning in 1915 and forbidden by military leadership due to its anti-militaristic lyrics: "'Cause we've all been sentenced to die / We are the ones they're sacrificing", etc.



## Futurology

### Goal:

To remind participants that the present is the future of the past (as well as the past of the future).

### Duration

45 minutes.

### Materials:

Archive documents.

### Instructions:

> Step one (15 minutes): participants form small bi- or tri-national groups of 4 to 6 people. The team leaders give each small group an archive document from the 20th century which predicts what the 21st century will look like (a different document for each group): e.g., a futuristic postcard from the 1900s, socio-economic prospective research from the 1960s, an excerpt from a political speech, or a science-fiction story.

Participants are then invited to analyse their document by asking themselves the following questions:

- What are the ideas underpinning this vision of the future (for example, faith that technology will liberate humankind from work or rather a critique of the alienation perceived in modernity)? Does the author's country of origin (France, Germany or another country) influence his or her perspective?
- Does this representation of reality correspond with the reality of the present? How was this anticipation correct or incorrect?

> Step two (30 minutes):

each small group prepares a 5-to-10-minute-long skit showing what our present would be like if the predictions of the analysed document had been correct. The plot of this theatrical improvisation is left entirely up to the participants: a scene from daily life, a meeting between heads of state, a fake television news broadcast, etc. It could nevertheless be interesting to address things such as the topic of youth meetings, Franco-German relations and/or the construction of Europe, for example. Once the skits are ready, they are acted out and, if necessary, explained to the rest of the group.

### Note:

This activity helps show that visions of the future, like those of the past, are influenced by political and cultural contexts. The presence of bias in predictions is particularly obvious when the object of prediction is the present.



## The archives of tomorrow

### Goal

To raise awareness about the changing nature of media discourse over time and reflect on the historical nature of current events.

### Duration:

1 hour.

### Materials:

Copies of newspapers, A4 sheets of paper, pencils.

### Instructions:

> Step one (20 minutes):

the group divides into pairs or groups of three and participants receive photocopies or facsimiles of newspapers published in France, Germany or the third or fourth countries during a given period in history. The headlines and articles may refer to international news, but they may also describe national events (sports, culture, domestic policy) or even local events (local news reports, birth announcements or obituaries). Participants present the newspapers published in their native language to the others, then work together to think about news that may be of interest today.

> Step two (30 minutes):

each pair or group of three is then given copies of newspapers published the day before (or in the last few days) in the participating countries and is instructed to analyse them by asking the following questions:

- Is the news covered differently now from how it was in the past (presentation, terminology, iconography, etc.)? Is it covered differently in each participating country? For what reasons?
- What information published in yesterday's newspaper might be interesting from a historical or memorial perspective in 20, 50 or 100 years (depending on the amount of time spanning between the present and the period of history addressed during the meeting or exchange)? What will be remembered? Based on what criteria is an event qualified as "memorable"? Here as well, the history or memory



addressed may be international, national or local.

> Step three (10 minutes):  
each pair or group of three presents an example of a current event that is potentially of historical importance, explaining their choice to the group.

#### Note:

This activity, like others in this handbook, approaches the present as history in the making and as a memory in the process of construction, playing on our lack of distance with regard to current events: participants are asked to rank events, which requires interpretation and even imagination (how do we know, for instance, whether the child mentioned in a birth announcement might have an extraordinary destiny?). This being said, the playful nature of this exercise is first and foremost an invitation to look at history in a new light.

#### Variant:

During step two, it is possible to replace copies of yesterday's newspapers with their digital counterparts on the Internet. This allows the group to address certain elements that are specific to new technology, such as the "live" or "latest news" sections of a website, where one piece of information succeeds the next within minutes - which makes it possible to question the very notion of "current events".



## Photographic mosaic

### Goal:

Die Analyse von Archivdokumenten fördern, indem Geschichtskenntnisse aktiviert werden.

### Duration:

Approximately 30 minutes.

### Materials:

Envelopes, photographs.

### Instructions:

> Step one (approximately 15 minutes): participants form small bi- or tri-national groups of 4 to 6 people who then sit at tables spread out around the room. Each small group receives an envelope containing 10 to 15 photographs from newspapers or websites and is instructed to arrange them in chronological order. The photographs are the same for each group. The effort required for participants to date them should be based on their age and level of education; in any case, it should be possible to date the images by the presence of one or more clues - a famous person, a political symbol, a recently invented object, etc. It is important that the clues contained in the photographs refer to the history of each participating country in equal measure, in order to foster true cooperation.

> Step two (15 minutes): the first group to assemble the photographs in the correct order is invited to explain their choices to the other the participants - this should compel them to base their decisions on an analysis of the clues instead of arranging the photographs at random.

### Variante:

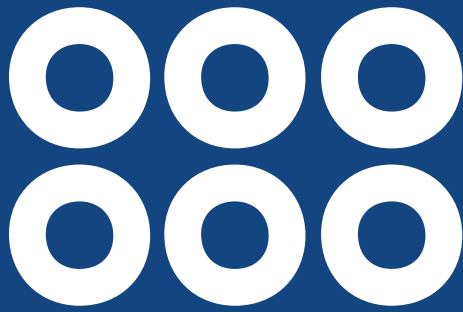
The same exercise may be conducted with video excerpts (from recent films, televised news broadcasts, home movies, etc.) instead of photographs. This variant will require additional equipment, however, as each group will need to be able to watch and re-watch the different sequences at their own pace, based on their needs.

### Going further:

If the photographs were originally accompanied by captions or illustrated a newspaper article, the team leaders may read these texts aloud in order to complete the participants' contributions and re-contextualize the images.







Objects



## Packing my suitcase

### Goal:

To help participants understand the link between symbolic value and the significance of personal objects.

### Duration:

40 minutes.

### Materials:

A4 and A1 sheets of paper, pencils, pens, markers, scissors, glue.

### Instructions:

> Step one (10 minutes):

participants are invited to join a role-playing game with the following scenario: due to an economic and/or political crisis, each of them must leave their country of origin for an indefinite period of time. They may each bring 10 objects with them in exile; they must draw these objects on an A4 sheet of paper which bears the drawing of a suitcase. It is specified that they will have a source of income in their host country. The objects should therefore be chosen for their symbolic value rather than for their monetary value.

> Step two (15 minutes):

participants divide into small bi- or tri-national groups of up to 6 people and take turns presenting the contents of their suitcase, specifying the reason(s) behind the choice of each object. In this context, the suitcase serves as a "treasure box" or a small personal museum.

> Step three (15 minutes):

participants are informed that the vehicle intended for their transportation is too small to carry all of the suitcases.

They must therefore cut out the objects in their suitcases using a pair of scissors. Each small group must then glue these objects onto an A1 sheet of paper which bears the drawing of a trunk, taking care to not glue the objects on top of each other. As the trunk will be too small to hold the contents of all the suitcases, participants will have to decide together either the amount of space in the trunk or the number of objects allotted to each person.

### Note:

This exercise may serve several purposes: examining the relationship that human beings have with objects (step one), helping participants get to know each other better (step two) and experiencing a collective process wherein individual interests must be harmonized in a democratic fashion (step three).



## Lost and found

### Goal:

To reinforce the group dynamic and give participants the opportunity to expand their vocabulary while reflecting on objects and their value.

### Duration:

45 minutes.

### Materials:

A4 sheets of paper, pencils, pens, markers.

### Instructions:

> Step one (10 minutes):

the group divides into two sub-groups within which the different nationalities are represented. Within each sub-group, participants write down a list of 12 objects they have lost before: glasses, keys, an umbrella, a toy, etc. Each object must be represented by a drawing.

> Step two (15 minutes):

one after another, the two sub-groups go to an open space, for example a garden or park, which the team leaders will have divided into two zones beforehand. Each sub-group hides the drawings from the first session in the surroundings assigned to it: on a bench, under a kiosk, in a phone booth, etc.

> Step three (15 minutes):

each sub-group explores the zone where the other sub-group has hidden its drawings and attempts to find as many of them as possible in the 15 minutes allotted by the team leaders. Whenever a participant has located an object, he or she must write its name down on the back of the drawing in the language of each participating country.

> Step four (5 minutes): the sub-group that has found and named the most objects is declared the winner. At the end of the game, the found objects are symbolically returned by their "inventors" (this being the official name for a person who finds an object) to their rightful owners, who then explain in which real-life circumstances they lost the object and what the loss meant to them.

### Note:

The topic of lost objects is related to the value we assign to things. This value may be practical (a set of keys), economic (a gold watch) or symbolic (a teddy bear), in which case the object is first and foremost charged with emotional value for its owner. Its value does not derive from what it is, but from how we perceive it and from the missing person or place with which we associate it.



## Word association

### Goal:

To examine the ideas and representations that participants associate with specific objects.

### Duration:

20 minutes to an hour.

### Materials:

Objects, photographs, A1 sheets of paper, pens.

### Instructions:

> Step one (5 to 15 minutes):

participants divide into an even number of bi- or tri-national groups of 4 to 8 people. Team leaders hand out an object or photo of an object to each small group and ask that participants write down keywords they associate with the object on a large sheet of paper. Each object must be relevant to the period of history being addressed during the meeting or exchange. For example, in the context of a Franco-German meeting, a radio set from the 1940s may bring to mind *Radio Paris*<sup>1</sup> or *Radio Londres*,<sup>2</sup> Joseph Goebbels,<sup>3</sup> etc. The exercise can be repeated using a second object, followed by a third.

> Step two (15 to 45 minutes):

the small groups pair up with each other. Small group A observes small group B's first chain of associations (objects and corresponding keywords) and asks them about the choices behind the different associations. Small group B then observes small group A's first chain of associations, and so forth.

### Note:

The example of the radio set requires prior historical knowledge, but this activity may be conducted with participants of any age and any level of education. The photograph of a gun, for instance, will form a sufficient basis for examining the different perspectives on war represented within the group. This exercise is valuable in that it helps to identify underlying representations - which can then be discussed - rather than assuming that participants without formal historical training will not have an opinion on the subject.

<sup>1</sup> *Radio station used in France by the National Socialist propaganda service from 1940 to 1944.*

<sup>2</sup> *Name given to the French-language BBC programmes produced by the "France Libre" organization and the British government between 1940 and 1944.*

<sup>3</sup> *Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945): Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda under the Third Reich, from 1933 to 1945.*



## Pantomime

### Goal:

To identify representations of the partner country or countries using “typical” objects and to foster intercultural learning through the comparison of different points of view.

### Duration:

40 minutes.

### Instructions:

> Step one (20 minutes):

participants gather in national groups and are instructed to choose three specific objects from their country’s culture, as well as three specific objects from the culture of the partner country or countries. These may be objects related to history, such as for example the guillotine in France or the spiked helmet in Germany, or objects from everyday life, like an Opinel knife<sup>1</sup> or an Eierstecher (egg piercer).<sup>2</sup>

Each object will then be presented in the form of a pantomime.

> Step two (20 minutes):

the national groups gather together and present their pantomimes to each other, allowing the partner groups to guess the object in question, their only clue being the object’s country of origin. It may be interesting at this point—for example in the case of a Franco-German meeting - to compare the “typically German” objects chosen by the French group with those chosen by the German group, and vice versa.

### Note:

During this activity, team leaders need not intervene to evaluate the relevance of participants’ choices. In this context, errors of judgement (e.g., a supposedly German object which the German participants have never heard of or a supposedly French object that is used on a daily basis by the Germans, etc.) are just as instructive as correct suggestions, as they allow the group to question representations that are sometimes more fantasy than reality.

*1 A popular brand of pocket knife in France.*

*2 A kitchen utensil used to pierce a hole in an egg to prevent it from cracking in boiling water.*



## Anachronisms

### Goal:

To discuss the history of science and technology in a playful manner.

### Duration:

30 minutes.

### Instructions:

> Step one:

the team leaders suggest a year linked to the period in history that is being addressed during the meeting or exchange (for example 1989, if the topic is the Berlin Wall), then ask participants the following question: "If you needed to replicate a scene from this year for the purposes of a film, what objects would you need to hide, and what would you need to obtain?"

> Step two (15 minutes):

participants write down a list of objects in use at the time that have since become obsolete (in the case of 1989: audio cassettes, VHS recorders, etc.). To this end, they may use magazines or the Internet for reference, comparing the situation at the time in the different participating countries.

> Step three (15 minutes):

participants search their surroundings, bags and pockets, naming every object they find that had not yet been invented or was at least not on the market in the year in question (in the case of 1989: smartphones, tablets, e-tickets, DVD players, etc.). The objects are then collected and removed from the room.

### Note:

This activity helps make participants aware of the technological innovations that have taken place between the period of history addressed in the meeting and the present, as well as the impact that these innovations have had on our ways of living.

### Going further:

It may be interesting to prolong this activity with an exercise in science fiction, for example on the topic of the depletion of natural resources and the necessary transition to a "post-oil" era: "Which objects would disappear from our surroundings if we no longer had access to petrol in the short- or long term?" This would affect all objects made using nylon, polyester, plastic, etc.



## The life and death of objects

### Goal:

To initiate reflection on the permanence of objects and their evolution over time.

### Duration:

50 minutes.

### Materials:

Photographs, envelopes.

### Instructions:

> Step one (15 minutes):

participants form international pairs or groups of three. Each small group receives an envelope containing 10 photographs of objects from the past or present (cut out from magazines or catalogues) and is instructed to arrange them in chronological order according to their year of production. The results are then shared with the larger group and corrected when necessary.

> Step two (15 minutes):

within the pairs or groups of three formed during step one, participants must then arrange these same objects according to their average life span, i.e., the length of time between their date of purchase and their date of resale or disposal. For example, a typewriter purchased in the 1960s and properly taken care of may be fully operational for twenty years, while a computer bought after 2010 has an average life span of three to six years. A more extreme example would be disposable tissues or disposable razors.

> Step three (20 minutes): participants share their suggestions with the larger group and are invited to analyse them by answering the following questions:

- What factors might contribute to the decision to get rid of an object (an improved version of the product arriving on the market, malfunction due to structural fragility, the unavailability of spare parts or accessories, outdated appearance, etc.)?
- What might the second life of an object look like when it no longer works (recycling, waste conversion, preservation as a souvenir or as part of a museum



collection, etc.)?

- Can we observe any differences between consumer practices in each participating country?

Note:

This activity helps address our relationship to objects over time and especially the phenomenon of planned obsolescence which currently encourages a rapid renewal of consumer goods, for example through a reduction of the average lifespan of products like washing machines or television sets over the past several decades.

The question of the second life of objects is directly tied to that of the construction of memory: what type of value (aesthetic, sentimental, etc.) might replace the functional value of something once it no longer serves its initial purpose?



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