



Seniors In Arts

GUIDELINES



Erasmus+

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INTRODUCTION

Everybody has the right to continue learning throughout their lives, from cradle to grave. However, children, adolescents, adults and senior citizens have different needs, motivation and requirements for learning; while adults are motivated to continue learning mainly because they need to advance at work or to cope with changes and competitiveness, the motivations of senior citizens (over 65 or retired) are mainly personal: to keep up to date, to be integrated in an ever-changing society, to know more about the environment, or because they want to be active and creative while sharing time and spaces doing an activity they enjoy. Depending on their targets and objectives, each educational institution designs its educational interventions accordingly (competences, pedagogies, contents, materials, etc.). Our target is senior citizens, and our objective is to increase senior learners' quality of life (QoL).

Old age is an important and often long stage of life. From a demographic perspective, population aging is not only one of the major trends in society, but is also a global problem, especially in the social and economic spheres. Due to this fact, it is necessary to pay due attention to seniors, not only regarding health, but also in physical and mental terms. It is important to realize that people of post-productive age have the right to a socially valuable and active life, and many of them can focus on their interests, for which they have not had time before. Seniors not only acquire new knowledge and skills, but also meet people of similar ages and interests and expand their social contacts. Seniors' education should also reflect societal changes and help them navigate the ever-changing world.

In all people's experience after formal education and people who can't benefit from formal education can obtain as required by information and ability are related to informal education. Thus, public education is increase in importance within the education system. Public education which is performed with like "adult education", "informal education" and "public education" is expressed as a regular and organized educational effort on adults and people who are situated out-of school.

Besides being defined as a process that goes on from cradle to the grave, lifelong learning is a broad term including formal, non-formal and informal education. Individuals who have lifelong learning abilities are able to adapt to fast developing social life and world order more easily and effectively. According to informal adult education theory Knowles (2012), the need for learning and wisdom is an essential factor that promotes the motivation of adult learners. It's also important for the adult to have a self perception, to give his or her decisions and take action. In fact experience is another important reinforcement. In Community Education Centres, one of the non-formal lifelong educational institutions, lifelong learning skills of the participants are promoted through courses. Experience of the learners can also contribute to developing lifelong learning and this way of learning is important. Most participants of Community Education Centre

are women, so it needs to be determined that how these courses make changes in the lives of the women in terms of social integration, economic conditions and especially the improvements in lifelong learning skills.

The study review showed that the participation in artistic workshops is a way for a senior's physical as well as psychological health improvement. Older adults want to be valued, loved, accepted and respected (Buchalter, 2011) and that can happen through active participation in meaningful activities and routines for them.

Arts participation is not only known for its benefits to seniors' health, but it also paves the way for social well-being by building meaningful connections among individual seniors, their families, and communities (Thongnopnua, 2013). Seniors are developing a stronger sense of community through collaboration as a group, working together for example on arts workshops towards a final demonstration to the larger community (Moody & Phinney, 2012). Seniors' sharing of experiences in arts workshops encourages their motivation, free thinking and creativity and also promotes the exchange of the ways they perceive and interpret art and other things in their lives. In conclusion, arts participation as a group experience converts the experience of being old into healthier, productive, meaningful, and purposeful aging (Thongnopnua, 2013).

| RESOURCES

- Moody & Phinney (2012). A Community-Engaged Art Program for Older People: Fostering Social Inclusion. Accessed on 23 July 2021 from: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/canadian-journal-on-aging-la-revue-canadienne-du-vieillessement/article/abs/communityengaged-art-program-for-older-people-fostering-social-inclusion/A129531D624E853E65AF45DC4094F2D2>
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PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The implementation of expressive arts workshop with seniors, inspired and built according to the materials available in the Seniors in Arts Guideline, offers the opportunity to:

- Support educators in designing and implementing a training programme aiming at promoting social inclusion for seniors;
- provide opportunities for learning activities at local level for senior learners, as tolls to get connected and to exchange ideas;
- give seniors access to the virtual transnational cultural circle where they can have the opportunity to get in contact with peers all around Europe, can access to artistic products as opportunity for entertainment and learning, and can share their own artistic products as result of creative and expressive activities useful for staying active and sharing experiences, ideas and cultural heritage.

Who can implement Seniors in Arts programme?

It is an initiative build in a flexible and adaptable way for educators from Cultural and volunteering organizations, Structured or non-organised groups of seniors interested in culture and arts, NGOs, Municipalities and public bodies responsible for social inclusion of seniors and/or for cultural awareness, educational institutions (adult and non-formal education), Local communal networks and initiatives, among others.

How to proceed? The “Seniors in Arts Programme”, as result of mapping good practices to provide arts learning opportunities for seniors provides access to all training materials useful for trainers and experts, organized in a general introduction and 4 Modules referred to THEATRE, MUSIC, DANCE and CREATIVE WRITING. All material is accessible as free download on the project website.

The process

The process for the implementation of Seniors in Arts programme includes the following phases:



Selections and group mapping:

In this phase it is crucial to consider internal and external factors:

- External: aims of the local programme for the local community and its identified needs and definition of the proper target group;
- Internal: strengths and weaknesses of the organization that implements the program, human, material and intangible resources available, possible collaborations to be activated.

In selecting and mapping the group, it is important to collect some basic information needed to design a proper local programme, like:

- age
- living conditions (family members, loneliness, etc)
- physical limitations and/or health problems
- ICT basic skills
- Studies and work experiences
- cultural interests and hobbies
- availability for workshops implementation
- motivation to take part in the programme
- expectations in the programme.

The suggested number for a group is around 15-20 seniors. This data could change according to the specific status of the participants, the number of available trainers and tutors, the conditions related to the pandemic and places of the workshops.

Programme design

After the formation and analysis of the group (interests, previous experiences, needs, availability etc.), and considering the external and internal factors mentioned above, the trainer will focus on the definition of a specific programme.

A suggested structure foresees:

>> Duration: between 10 and 20 hours of implementation, structured in workshops of maximum 2 hours

>> Starting activity: provision of an initial questionnaire for the initial evaluation (in order to have data comparable for the final evaluation and the impacts assessment).

We suggest the questions in Annex A.

>> Training approach: non formal education strategy, starting with a Concrete (Practical) Experience (based on the expressive arts modules), to move after to Reflection (supporting seniors in consciously reflects back on that experience) and to Conceptualization where they will attempt to conceptualize the model of what they observed for future implementations.

>> Workshop structure: it is recommended that each training workshop, as part of the local programme, will include, at least:

- 1 energizer or ice-breaking activity to introduce learners into the workshop mood;
- 1 activity connected to the expressive arts, and/or arts in European cultural heritage
- 1 activity for final debriefing, reflection and evaluation of the workshop.

Due to the nature of the training activities, the personal conditions of participants and the pandemic issues, a trainer may choose to implement the training offline (face-to-face), online using the most accessible platforms (as Zoom, Meet, Skype or Teams), or blended (combining both online and offline means). The decision will be based on the availability of participants, as well as on the specific activities that will be organized.

>> The virtual transnational cultural circle: in Seniors in Arts Programme there is the provision of a transnational cultural circle in the form of a Facebook page where seniors and trainers can share experiences, products, etc. of artistic and cultural value. In the implementation stage the trainers can support seniors in joining this cultural circle, getting in contact with members from other countries, sharing their artistic products realized during the workshops, etc. In this way they will develop the sense of belonging to this virtual community and will stay active also after the implementation of the programme, as opportunity of intercultural connections and social inclusion in the online environment.

>> Conditions of use: The public use of any of the training materials developed under Seniors in Arts project by third parties (e.g. trainers, educators) is possible, provided that the third parties respect the following duties:

- a) Making a full reference to the materials' source (name of the project);
- b) Making full reference that Seniors in Arts project is funded under the Erasmus+ Programme;
- c) Making clear that usage of the materials is for non-commercial purposes and no profit is to be generated.

>> Evaluation: if monitoring activities are suggested as final activity in each workshop, it is important to plan a final evaluation activity referred to results and impacts provided by the local programme.

The evaluation should be completed by all participants who completed the programme. The evaluation and impacts assessment could be implemented through questionnaires/ interviews submitted to trainers and tutors. We suggest the questions in Annex B. The final evaluation can also have the provision of a final questionnaire for learners. We suggest the questions in Annex C.

It's important to consider the specificities of this target group in order to create inclusive artistic workshops that meet seniors' needs. Such as specificities can be accessibility problems on a physical level, communicational, and attitudinal barriers (Moody & Phinney, 2012). Here are some practical tips that facilitators can keep in mind while delivering artistic workshops in order to promote motivation and participation according to the specificities of the target group:

- **GENERAL ATTITUDE:** Don't face seniors like they are helpless. Yes they have specificities and maybe they need more time. Always acknowledge their efforts.
- **THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY:** Inform seniors families about the importance of art participation so that they can support the participation of the seniors in artistic workshops, but also to participate in them themselves.
- **SPACE:** Limit the obstacles that the space of the artistic workshop might have. It is important to prepare the space according to the needs of the target group.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Give some time in the beginning or during the workshop in order to calibrate with the seniors and listen to the way that they are communicating (verbally and nonverbally). When you build the communication then 'artistic' goals are easier to be achieved. And also seniors feel more confident to express themselves.
- **BALANCE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL & MODERN:** The content of the artistic workshops should involve forms of arts that are inline with their age. For example in a dance workshop traditional folk dances since seniors are usually very much connected to their culture. But, also forms of modern art in order to trigger their free thinking and connect with younger people. In this way you are working on attitudinal barriers.

Tips for trainers/facilitators

- Creating a safe learning environment – plan an ice-breaking activity, make sure that the environment is suitable for the workshops and that participants feel safe, confident and relaxed as a part of the group.
- Adapt the activities to the participants – get to know participants and their expectations, be clear on the guidelines for the activities.
- Encourage sharing and communicating within a group in a safe and supportive environment – make sure every participant has their space to share their ideas.
- Be flexible – not all participants will have the same pace of doing an activity.
- Be supportive and give encouraging feedback – for participants to feel safe to share their ideas.

ANNEX A INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How deep have affected pandemic your life (Please choose only one most suitable sentence)?
 - a. My life is worse because of many factors
 - b. My life is more or less the same as before
 - c. My life is better than before pandemic

2. How you would describe your social opportunities during pandemic (do the things together)
 - a. I think I have now more social opportunities to be with the others, because the technology is very helpful
 - b. I think the opportunities were before pandemic and nothing changed. We have only to know about using technology for communication and use it.
 - c. Pandemic has accelerated new opportunities of using computers.

3. How deep affected pandemic your bonds with other people
 - a. I lost many contacts
 - b. I don't feel any change
 - c. I realised that there is more chance to find new friends and colleagues

4. What is the reason to be a part of European Union in your opinion (please choose all suitable statements)
 - a. opportunities to know more about other countries
 - b. opportunities to know more about EU
 - c. because of the common European values
 - d. because I feel European
 - e. because of financial support
 - f. because other option (not to be a part of EU) is worse

5. Please express shortly your opinion what should be done for social engagement of older generations (please think about suitable specific offers of activity for seniors). Please define 2-3 offers:

6. Please express shortly your opinion what should be done for increasing common empathy to EU. Please define 2-3 suitable actions:

ANNEX B

Which issues participants were facing?

- Referring to Pandemic: _____
- Referring to Social opportunities: _____
- Referring to Social networking: _____

How do you rate their Sense of belonging to EU, referring to Knowledge of EU and its countries

- 1 = Not sufficient
- 2 = Sufficient
- 3 = Good
- 4 = Excellent

How do you rate EU values acceptance and identification in them?

- 1 = Not sufficient
- 2 = Sufficient
- 3 = Good
- 4 = Excellent

Thinking to opportunities for their social inclusion that the programme offered:

- Which strategies do you think more effective: _____
- Which Activities do you think more effective: _____
- Which tools do you think more effective: _____

How do you think should be possible to create opportunities to increase their Sense of belonging to EU?

- Which strategies
- Activities
- Tools
- Online?

By participating in the activities proposed by the programme, did you happen to participate in training activities to implement your skills?

Never ___ Less than 5 (times) ___ 5 times ___ More than 5 (times)___

If YES, how do you rate your experience?

Very good ___ Good ___ Enough ___ Just enough ___ Insufficient ___

By participating in the activities proposed by the programme, did you happen to participate in educational activities to implement the artistic skills of seniors?

Never ___ Less than 5 (times) ___ 5 times ___ More than 5 (times)___

If YES, how do you rate your experience?

Very good __ Good __ Enough __ Just enough __ Insufficient __

By participating in the activities proposed by the programme, did you happen to participate in educational activities to implement the Eu cultural awareness skills of seniors?

Never __ Less than 5 (times) __ 5 times __ More than 5 (times) __

If YES, how do you rate your experience?

Very good __ Good __ Enough __ Just enough __ Insufficient __

By participating in the activities proposed by the programme, did you happen to participate in educational activities to implement the social inclusion of seniors?

Never __ Less than 5 (times) __ 5 times __ More than 5 (times) __

If YES, how do you rate your experience?

Very good __ Good __ Enough __ Just enough __ Insufficient __

What do you think you will bring from this project and will use in your personal/professional life?

ANNEX C

How would you characterize the overall training activity?

Excellent __ Good __ Average __ Bad __ Very Bad __

Please justify your above choice.

To what extent you agree or disagree with the below statements?

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Slightly disagree
4. Slightly agree
5. Agree
6. Strongly agree

- I received adequate information in advance (agenda, preparation activities, etc.) __
- The objectives of the training were clear to me __
- The group interaction (between participants) was adequate __
- The structure of the training was clear __
- I was given the opportunity to share my ideas and opinions __
- I received help when I needed it __
- I feel like I learnt something useful from this training __
- I would recommend this training to others __

Which part of this training did you enjoy the most?

Which part of this training did you enjoy the least?

Do you have any comments or suggestions to improve this training activity?

A photograph of a theatre stage. The background is filled with heavy, dark curtains. In the foreground, the silhouettes of several audience members are visible, looking towards the stage. A horizontal pink band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the word 'THEATRE' in white, uppercase letters.

THEATRE

LITERATURE REVIEW

After the finishing of professional life, seniors usually have a lot of free time. Retired persons, who have to face many financial and medical problems are experienced negative aging. That kind of older citizens is not interested in education, because their basic needs (according to Maslow hierarchy of needs) are not fulfilled and they have to fight to survive in everyday reality.

Seniors, who have a stable financial situation and don't have to face any kind of serious health problems, are looking for rising the quality of their life. Some of them are trying to spend the rest of their lives in an easy, pleasant way, meanwhile, the others are taking the chance to stay better through education.

Educational and artistic activities are a good proposal for seniors, who would like to learn from their life experiences. For seniors, it is especially easy, because the process of evoking, rethinking and re-evaluation of memories is strictly connected to normal psychological human development in later life.

Theatre workshops can be used as a kind of tool for work with memories and biographical learning. The theatre could be also a way of expressing emotions and thoughts. Expression, work with symbols and creative thinking have a lot in common (practically all the factors are in deep relation to each other).

Learning theatre means working with common symbols, values, social dimensions of human activity, personal meanings. Evoking memories, adding values and meanings to the ordinary life and everyday experience allow seniors to learn biographically and understand better their personal perspective informal.

During theatre workshops, seniors are able to evoke specific personal experiences. They enrich their already very rich personal-psychological knowledge, seeking symbols, confronting them with other perspectives and personal views of other actors. Working with the structure, plot and motives of a play could be a reason for the further enrichment of sensibility, criticism and awareness. Senior actors usually use their personal experience as a leitmotif for expression and scenic communication. Such kind of new experience is a kind of base for a redefinition of the meaning of life.

Finally, they get katharsis and deep understanding. And learning from their own life experience.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE:

The value of emotions, positive and negative ageing/ concept of senior's wellbeing, biographical learning, Grotowski's theory of theatre, theatre materials, structure of an average play, role of theater in positive aging.

SKILLS:

Expressing emotions, symbolic thinking, creative thinking, reading theatre, biographical learning skills, recognising aspects of positive ageing, understanding theatre syncretism, building/ reading a concept of a play, encouraging seniors for theater activities.

ATTITUDES:

positive attitudes to expressing feelings in public, thinking about theatre as a kind of symbolic tool for thinking, critical thinking, positive attitude for ageing and seniors, thinking about theatre as a syncretic play, positive attitude to theatre, positive attitudes to active aging, expression and creativity



PROPOSED ACTIVITY #1

TITLE: Energizer

TIME: 5 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Dealing with emotions and relation

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: ---

INSTRUCTIONS: Participants have to express or guess emotions or situations. Version with emotions is for beginners, version with situations is for advanced/ more conscious participants. We divide people into 2/3 or 4 groups and leave 1 min for preparing. Each group should prepare an expression of one situation/ or one emotion. The other should guess what's going on.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: If everyone is happy it means that it was ok.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Performers should be instructed that the most important is expression. The story/ situation of expression of emotions should be very clear- as much as possible. If the groups are not able to guess more than 60 seconds it means that it was too complicated. It is suggested to pick up very simple emotions and situations. The situations could also express colours (for very advanced participants).

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #2

TITLE: Theatre for seniors- what's the purpose?

TIME: 30 minutes (a10+b15+c5)

OBJECTIVES: Discussion- What is the purpose of the theatre? What would the people find in the theatre? What kind of value could have a theatre for seniors?

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Flipchart, paper and markers

INSTRUCTIONS: Participants will be divided into groups and should a. prepare answers for questions b. Present in public results of the discussion in groups. The instructor should summarize the effects (c).

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: ---

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: The instructor should mention the role of the theatre in building community, bonds and reflection (theory of Jerzy Grotowski).

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #3

TITLE: Structured experience (biographical game of Duccio Dimetttrio)

TIME: 60 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Evoking memories

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Board/ dice

INSTRUCTIONS: All participants will be engaged in one common game. Every person one by one will throw a dice and find a topic on the board to discuss. She/he will be asked to describe briefly a significant memory related to the topic and say why it has been important for him/her.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: ---

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: The instructor should mention the role of the memories, ask additional questions, ask other people to comment or add their perspective.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #4

TITLE: Psychology of ageing

TIME: 30 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Discussion in groups/ discussion in public about positive and negative ageing

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Flipchart, paper and markers

INSTRUCTIONS: Participants divided into 3 groups discuss positive and negative aspects of ageing and seniors' needs. After discussion in groups, they should present the public results. The instructor should summarise the effects, comparing needs, advantages and disadvantages and finding the links between topics.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: ---

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: The instructor should mention in conclusion the need for development and fun.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #5

TITLE: Acting and building a play

TIME: 30 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Using different theatre materials

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Internet access, smartphones

INSTRUCTIONS: Participants should be divided into groups. Every group prepares a play, which uses only one kind of material: a. music, b. Movement of actors c. Sounds (without music) d. Scenography and props.

Groups should think about the story.

What will really say the story?

What is the deeper meaning the story?

How it is related with the specific material used.

How could be the final presentation made better with other materials?

How important is the used material for the theater expression?

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Public presentation

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Logic and cohesion between story and used material should be evaluated.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #6

TITLE: Building a story

TIME: 45 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Building a short-short story

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Chair + table

INSTRUCTIONS: Members divided into groups prepare a story, which is: clear, logic, 3stage, symbolic, important

Participants should think about story, which could be easily shown as a theater presentation.

The story should be easy- it means not very complicated, with very clear content, logic- it means that nobody will be able to have any doubts about necessity of any part of the story.

3stage- means that

1. the the plot should be natural, simple, talking abot only one main topic,
2. psychologiaccally realistic (reaction must be after the action, almost everything should have a kind of reason or "history"
3. the story should tell something important, what could change peoples thinking, views or attitudes

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: ---

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Instructors have to explain what really "clear, logic, 3stage, symbolic, important" mean for a play.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #7

TITLE: Theater for seniors

TIME: 30 minutes

OBJECTIVES: How to encourage seniors to acting

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: ---

INSTRUCTIONS: Common discussion

The topics for discussion:

- Which needs of seniors could be fulfilled by theater workshop,
- How to teach theater older non-professional actors,
- How can we encourage seniors for thinking about life as a kind of theater presentation
- What kind of connection we can find between social roles and acting
- Links between critical thinking, biography and theater

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: ---

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Facilitators should try to order conclusions and categories.

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MUSIC

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is no denying the power of music. Across cultural and societal lines, music has been proven to bring people together. A recent study from the Tokyo University of Arts went so far as to claim this was why music was first developed: to create communities and societies. As we age, music plays an important role in our quality of life.

Music, according to Iwasaki, Coyle, and Shank (2010) is one of several culturally meaningful and creative leisure activities that are 'spiritually refreshing', promoting self-expression, positive health and well-being.

Some of the many benefits music can have on older adults are:

Memory Enhancement

Throughout life, music often finds itself tied to unique memories. A study published in the Oxford University Journal, Cerebral Cortex, found that memory can be improved by listening to music. Music can force automatic recall, bringing what may have been considered a previously lost memory back to the surface, while also exercising a person's day-to-day short-term memory. For seniors with dementia, this is a hugely powerful tool.

Improvements in Overall Health

While music is proven to help with memory, active participation in music has shown to have many other health benefits for seniors (Bruhn, 2002), including:

- Pain and stress relief, which can lead to a reduced need for medicine and an overall healthier life.
- Stroke recovery, where listening to music helps increase verbal memory while also reducing the risk of recovery slowing depression.
- Blood pressure and heart health improvement as a result of listening to classical music.
- Boosting immune system health, affording seniors the ability to better ward off diseases.

Greater Happiness

Engaging with a community via music has immense benefits on people of all ages, but especially so with older adults. Living an active lifestyle is key to slowing the effects of aging, and participation in music helps shape this lifestyle.

The National Institute on Aging recommends seniors learn something new, including playing an instrument, to achieve a more active lifestyle. The institute makes note of how aging can sometimes lead to isolation, which in turn raises the risks of seniors falling into depression. Playing an instrument and learning from others, however, can encourage group socialization, which dramatically reduces these risks.

According to Music Education Research International, “Through music participation, senior citizens are able to (a) increase self-understanding, (b) achieve success as learners, (c) participate in experiences that are rewarding and interesting, and (d) express themselves creatively. These elements have been shown to enhance the quality of life of older adults.”

Laukka (2007) surveyed 500 Swedish people aged 65 to 75 about their everyday music listening habits and motives for listening. The survey also included personality and well-being measures. Listening to music was found to form part of many everyday activities, represented a frequent source of positive emotions and was positively related to psychological well-being. The results suggested that participants experienced significantly enhanced positive well-being when they used music for mood regulation, to nurture identity and agency and for enjoyment.

Research also shows that social networks support prolonged personal engagement in both optional and obligatory domains and also may have the potential to impact upon physiological and psychological health (e.g. Smith & Christakis, 2008), decrease the risk of dementia (Cacioppo & Berntson, 2002) and increase happiness amongst the individual members (Fowler & Christakis, 2009).

Social networks that focus on participation in creative, active and social leisure activities such as music have been found to contribute to recovery from depression and maintenance of personal well-being (Fullagar, 2008). There is some evidence, too, of the social and emotional value for senior citizens who participate in intergenerational group music activities (Bowers, 1998) and community music education programmes (Kalthoft, 1990).

The therapeutic power of music

The power of listening to music for therapeutic purposes has been investigated. Hanser and Thompson (1994) used an experimental design to test whether listening to music could alleviate depression amongst older people. Thirty adults aged 61 to 86 who had been diagnosed with depression but were otherwise in fairly good health were randomly assigned to one of three groups. Two experimental groups were (a) taught music listening stress reduction techniques during home visits, and (b) supported over the telephone in learning these techniques, which included gentle movement to music, relaxation and facial massage to music and guided imagery. The control group received no intervention. The music was chosen by participants and included rhythmic pieces to enhance energy as well as slow repetitive pieces deemed to be appropriate for deep relaxation. After eight weeks significant improvements in depression, distress, self-esteem and mood were found amongst both experimental groups, as compared with control group. These improvements appeared to be persistent, being in evidence nine months after the original intervention.

Some research has demonstrated the benefits that may be derived from musical therapeutic interventions with older people suffering from, for example, dementia. Here, participation in musical activities—even in the late stages of the disease—has been

reported to be an alternative to pharmacological treatments (Prickett, 2000). Singing, instrumental playing and movement to music have reportedly been associated with physical, social, emotional and cognitive improvements. For example, short-term increases in positive mood, sociability and self-confidence have been reported (Lesta & Petocz, 2006) and music has been reported to support walking patterns amongst dementia sufferers (Clair & O'Konski, 2006).

There has been considerable interest in the power of music to protect against cognitive decline. Tesky, Thiel, Banzer and Pantel (2011) report on an intervention programme involving 208 German participants with a median age of 71. The programme comprised of education about dementia and support as well as daily engagement with a range of activities that included reading, playing games and playing music. None of the participants had any history of cognitive decline. Positive effects on cognitive function and attitude toward ageing were found like enhanced speed of information processing and improvement in subjective memory decline.

Finally, Hilliard (2004) investigated the value of music in end of life hospice care for nursing home residents. An ex post facto design was adopted, comparing: one group of 40 older people (with a mean age of 74) who, as part of their end of life care, had received regular visits from a music therapist, with; a second group who had not. Music therapy, in the form of singing with instrumental accompaniment, instrument playing and rhythmic and vocal improvisation, was found to have made a significant contribution in meeting emotional, spiritual, social and physiological needs of the older people.



EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE:

The participants should gain knowledge of national cultural heritage, national musicians and singers and learn about their importance for the culture. To understand how music can be useful to develop social experiences. To understand how music can be important in our individual story, our identity.

SKILLS:

Improved musical memories; self-reflection; self-awareness; social bonding.

ATTITUDES:

Openness to music, awareness of how music can bring people together.



PROPOSED ACTIVITY #1

TITLE: Feel the Rhythm

TIME: 7 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Icebreaker to engage participants in the music mood, while letting themselves go with the music rhythm.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Speakers, Music File (attached) and a large space where participants can move around.

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to walk around the room dancing and moving with the music rhythm.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: ---

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Facilitators can create their own music file. End the activity with a music rhythm according to the level of energy that you want to set in the group: End with energetic music if you want to keep the group with a high level of energy, or end with calm music if you want the group with a calm pace.

If pertinent you can also approach and discuss with participants what is the impact of music in a person's body (breathing, humor, etc).

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #2

TITLE: Favourite song

TIME: 45 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Getting to know each other through music, creating bonds.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Paper, pen, computer with internet connection to search for songs, speakers.

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to choose their favourite song and write it in a paper, together with their name and without telling anyone which music they chose. Collect all the papers. Randomly play each song at a time and ask participants to guess who chose that song.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Was it easy to identify who chose the song? Were you surprised with some of the choices?

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: This activity can be connected with the following activity. In case you implement both, this should be the first one. The time of the activity may vary according to the number of participants.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #3

TITLE: Music of my Life

TIME: 45 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Understand the importance of music and to give an opportunity for seniors to share their story and create strong bonds with each other, fighting loneliness and increasing self-esteem.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Paper and pen

INSTRUCTIONS: Challenge the seniors to individually choose a song which has a special meaning in any moment of their lives or that represents their life, and to write on a paper. Ask them to share in the group the song selected, the story connected to the song and why they chose it.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: What is easy to choose a song? Do you think music is connected to your memories? How did you feel? Does it happen when you hear particular songs to remember about specific moments of your life?

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: You can collect the songs selected by seniors and create the group song collection. The time of the activity may vary according to the number of participants.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #4

TITLE: Our Musical Heritage

TIME: 4 hours

OBJECTIVES: Prepare a presentation about your country's musical heritage to present to other countries participants during the international mobility.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Free

INSTRUCTIONS: As the results of this activity depend totally on each country's musical heritage and the group of participants, the implementation of the activity is totally flexible. We propose some ideas, but you don't need to focus in this ones and you can choose another that it makes sense for your country/population:

Topics:

- Your country traditional music instruments
- Your country most iconic singers/musicians
- Your country songs that are connected to historical moments

Methodologies:

- Performance of group members, if possible
- Video presentation
- Music file, speakers and written lyrics so that all international participants try to sing with you

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Reflect on the importance that musical heritage has in your country. How is it linked to the characteristics of the people of your country. How it is linked with the history of your country.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Let participants make proposals and have creative ideas on how to make the presentation, your role is to guide the discussion and find with them the best possible way to do it. If necessary involve other elements/volunteers to support in the process (e.g. internet search, etc).

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #5

TITLE: Musical Journey

TIME: 60 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Explore musical heritage through funny games

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Music files, speakers, bags, papers with names of songs, papers with incomplete sentences from song lyrics, board to score the points.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide the group in teams of 3/4 persons
2. Each group must select a name and a motto (to scream)
3. The facilitator makes a question or launches a challenge for 1 group at each time
4. When the group gives the right answer wins 3 points
5. The objective is to have the higher number of points

The questions/challenges have the following categories:

1. Guess the singer (play a song and let the group guess the singer);
2. Guess the name of the song (play a song and let the group guess the name of the song);
3. La La La (1 member of the group volunteers and takes the name of a song from a bag, then he/she needs to La La La that song. the other members of the group need to guess which song it is, they have 1 minute);
4. Guess the Lyrics (1 member of the group takes a paper from a bag with an incomplete sentence from a song lyrics, the group needs to complete it).

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: The facilitator must discuss what participants bring to the discussion. Some general questions may be "What did you feel during the activity?", "Did you enjoy?", "How was your relationship with your team?", "Would you like to do anything different next time you play this?"

Depending on what the group replies, it may be needed to reflect and discuss about frustration, competition, etc.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: All groups must have the same number of chances to reply to questions of the categories, but it's up to the facilitator to decide the dynamic of the game:

E.G.1 - Category A - Group1; Category A - Group2; Category B - Group1; Category B - Group2, etc.

E.G.2 - Category A - Group1; Category C - Group2; Category B - Group1; Category D - Group2; Category A - Group2; Category C - Group1; Category B - Group2; Category D - Group1, etc.

You can also go further, and present the activity as if it was a tv contest, where the facilitator has the role of entertainer.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #6

TITLE: Guess the Year

TIME: 20 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Take participants through a musical memorial journey

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Music files, speakers

INSTRUCTIONS: Choose well known songs and singers and play them. The participants must guess from what year the song is.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Did the activity bring you forgotten memories? Was it a good feeling?

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: ---

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #7

TITLE: Our sound

TIME: 20 minutes

OBJECTIVES: Reflect about the experience of the Music Workshop, and how music can bring people together.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Print images of individual instruments.

INSTRUCTIONS: Place the images randomly in a table/floor and ask participants individually to choose one instrument that somehow can be connected to them or their feelings during this workshop. Explain to them that the connection can be whatever they want, maybe they have played it, maybe they like the sound, maybe they like the shape, maybe because it's a discrete sound, maybe because it's extravagant, or even just because they like it, etc.

Make a round so participants can say in just 2 or 3 words why they chose that instrument. Finalise saying that each musical instrument is like each individual person, it has particular characteristics and differences from others. Each of them is beautiful as an individual instrument, just like every person, but when we can bring them together the magic happens... the same happens with a group of persons, the similarities and differences between each other, the diversity enriches our experiences. Thank the group for their enrollment in the musical workshop and end with the sound of a symphony/orchestra/band.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: ---

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: ---

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DANCE

LITERATURE REVIEW

European Cultural Heritage is an important resource for economic growth, employment and social cohesion, offering the potential to revitalise urban and rural areas (European Commission, 2019). Cultural heritage doesn't only include monuments and collections of objects, but also traditions and living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed to our descendants. According to UNESCO, dance and especially folk dances represent part of European Cultural Heritage and their preservation for the next generations is of major importance. Dance as an intangible cultural heritage is a wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted through it from one generation to the next.

Dance forms are important in European Cultural Heritage because an understanding of the dances of different communities helps with intercultural dialogue, and encourages mutual respect for other ways of life.

For seniors dance is a pleasant physical experience and at the same time provides important opportunities as well as has a potential impact on active ageing. For most of the seniors dance events used to be their main activity for socialization where they could meet other people. Participation in dance activities covers all aspects that were and are important at all ages, such as: music, traditional costumes, social conventions, sexual codes, etc. (Cooper & Thomas, 2002). Dance as an opportunity for social interaction allows seniors to externalize some of their inner thoughts and feelings and then to express them through movement. Memorization of a routine and its execution with the body increases the self-esteem of the elderly (Birkel, 1998). According to researchers the contribution of dance is defined as the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not simply the absence of illness or disability. When the seniors begin to deal with the body they already feel many years younger and the improvement of seniors' physical condition becomes a way of life.

Here are some physical and mental benefits for seniors when they are actively being involved in dance activities and routines:

- Reduction of osteoporosis risk
- Improvement of cardiorespiratory functions and traffic blood
- Improvement of joint flexibility (Leisure & Cultural Services Department, 2005).
- Improvement of balance, muscle strength, timing, the muscle control and body posture
- Improvement of the ability to relax and concentrate (Birkel, 1998).
- Supports the release of emotions and the strength of relations
- Improvement of morale and reduction of the feeling of loneliness
- Enhancement of cognitive skills, motivation and memory (Medicomm Incorporation, 2004).

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE:

To identify their own strengths and increase self-confidence. To learn how to interact in multicultural groups and work as a team. To set their own learning goals and evaluate them. To learn how to use dance forms in order to express emotions. To learn how to communicate (verbally and non-verbally).

SKILLS:

To develop intercultural communication skills. To develop personal skills through interaction with others. To develop interpersonal skills. To increase critical thinking and decision making skills. To develop cooperation skills. To develop cultural, designing and creativity skills. To develop verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

ATTITUDES:

To be open in cultural diversity and intercultural communication. To take actions for their lives. To accept peer diversity. To be able to apply what they learn in everyday life. To adopt an open attitude on experimenting new things. To be open and curious. To use their own culture to create performances. To be able to observe their social frame and adapt their communication accordingly.



PROPOSED ACTIVITY #1

TITLE: Breathe in Breathe out

TIME: 15-20 minutes

OBJECTIVES: For participants: To energize their bodies through breathing. To communicate with each other nonverbally through eye-contact. To realise that people's first movement is breathing, so people are constantly moving.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Space: Prepare a circle setting for the group. You can use small carpets, pillows, or chairs. Participants can also stand while participating in the activity. Adjust the circle setting according to the needs of the participants. Adjust the distance between participants so that they have space to move around themselves but also can establish eye-contact with the group. Atmosphere: Choose a welcoming background music while participants enter the room and find their position in the circle setting.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. You close the music. You are welcoming participants and briefly refer to what is going to happen (objectives).
2. You are starting giving a demo on smooth breaths and then participants are repeating to their own tempo. Then all together you are starting to synchronize your breathing by establishing eye-contact.
3. A participant (A) is establishing eye-contact with another participant (B). Then (A) is breathing one time while establishing eye-contact with (B). (B) is establishing eye-contact with another participant (C). Then (B) is breathing one time while establishing eye-contact with (C). You are repeating this process until all participants are done. Participants are choosing randomly or/and on a circle sequence who is going to continue the process.
4. Take one breath all together in order to close the process.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Choose a different spot in the room in order to start reflection. Reflection is happening in an open sharing circle or in couples. Here are two questions that you can ask: How was it for you following other participants' breathing? How did you feel while establishing eye-contact with another participant? Do you have any other feelings or thoughts that are important to share?

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Make sure that participants are all facing the same level. For example if a participant needs a chair (medium level) then all participants should be on a medium level, while participating. While you are facilitating the breathing part, it is smart to exaggerate your breath in order to give emphasis and motivate participants. Refer to participants that eye-contact lasts at least 3 seconds. In this way the intention is clear "now I am communicating with you". Give the instructions one by one and always make a demo when it is needed.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #2

TITLE: I follow you, follow me

TIME: 15-20 minutes

OBJECTIVES: For participants: To listen and observe how they are communicating through simple movements. To connect with their bodies while they are watching another body reflecting their movements.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Ask participants up front what kind of music they would like to dance and listen to. Make sure that there aren't any obstacles around the space. You need an empty space so participants can move freely around.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. You are asking participants to find a partner in the room and create a couple. They need to decide who is partner (A) and who is partner (B). Partners are finding a spot in the room where they can move freely, facing each other.
2. While music is playing partner (A) is leading with movements and partner (B) is following. Partner (B) is mirroring the movements of partner (A).
3. When the music stops, partners are shifting roles. Partner (A) is mirroring the movements of partner (B).
4. Encourage participants to try out different levels (low, medium, upper) and distances (how far or how close they can move from each other).

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Reflection is happening in couples. Participants are sharing in couples how it was for them while being in the position of the leader and how it was while being in the position of the follower.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Make a demo of what is mirroring through movements, in this way it is clear to participants what they can do and feel more safe on experimenting through movements. Refer to participants that it is better to keep a slow tempo so their partner can follow them. Before the couple starts to move, it is a good option to establish eye-contact for 3 seconds (minimum) in order to calibrate. Participants can dance barefoot, with socks or shoes (better without). Always ask them or challenge them to dance barefoot!

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #3

TITLE: Fly me to the Moon

TIME: 15-20 minutes

OBJECTIVES: For participants: To explore movement through object manipulation. To develop creativity, openness and trust. To have fun!

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Soft material scarfs or pieces of fabric (long enough so participants can move while holding them in couples). Choose songs with different tempos. For example blues for slow tempo, and swing for fast tempo. Colourful markers and papers.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Individually participants moving in the space holding a scarf and exploring different kinds of movements.
2. You are asking participants to find a partner in the room and create a couple. Couples are finding a spot in the room where they can move freely, while holding a scarf.
3. When the music starts participants are moving freely in the space and explore together different kinds of movements while cooperating in order to manipulate the scarf.
4. Start with slow tempo music and move to a faster one. Different tempos bring different energy.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Participants in couples are drawing how they experience this activity. Then they can share these experiences in an open sharing setting. Questions that you can make: What have you learned from each other? What kind of movements have you explored?

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: In case participants are stuck in one movement and repeating themselves you can approach them gently and propose a different movement with a question. You can ask: What about changing the level that you are moving (low, medium, upper level)? What if both of you are spinning around simultaneously? What about trying out playing with the distances between you?

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #4

TITLE: Creators

TIME: 30-40 minutes

OBJECTIVES: For participants: For participants: To cooperate in small groups for a common goal. To put in practice the movements that they have learned. To take initiatives and develop creative thinking. To have a first experience on stage.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Decorate a part of the space so it looks like a performance stage. You can use some piece of fabric on the wall. Lights, pillows, rope or any other materials to define the space and looks like a stage.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Participants are in small groups. Make combinations according to the number of participants that you have and let them choose their group.
2. Their mission is to create a short choreography using the elements that they have explored so far (levels, distances, mirroring and object manipulation).
3. Participants are presenting their choreographies to each other.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: When a presentation of participants choreography is over, participants are sharing one tip and one compliment for the performers.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: While participants are working in groups, go and check how they are doing and what they need. Give them a maximum of 10 minutes in order to prepare the choreography. In this way there is no time for judgment or repetition. After a presentation, encourage participants to clap for the performers.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #5

TITLE: Folk dances, practice time

TIME: 30-40 minutes

OBJECTIVES: For participants: To enhance the cultural interest and participation. To cooperate in groups for a common goal.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Some pieces of fabric in case participants will need it.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Participants are working in 2 groups. Participants are the facilitators now. They decide who is taking the lead to teach the group a folk dance. Can be that they are sharing the role of facilitator with someone else from the group.
2. Participants have 20 mins in order to practice the folk dance. They can use a mobile phone in order to practice the folk dance with music.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Participants are going back to their groups, where they discuss how it was for them cooperating in the group and if they want to change anything.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Keep the role of the observer here and don't interfere much. Leave space for the participants in order to express themselves.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #6

TITLE: Folk dances, performance time

TIME: 30 minutes

OBJECTIVES: For participants: To enhance the cultural interest and participation. To gain confidence, feel loved, seen and heard.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Participants are preparing the room and stage in their own way.

INSTRUCTIONS: Each group is performing to the other group the folk dance.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Participants are sharing their experiences dancing folk dances. How were their first experiences with folk dances, where was it, who was participating, what kind of clothes they were wearing etc. What kind of feelings folk dances are creating to them.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: You can facilitate a small warm up here for participants, before the final performances. It is important to involve families, friends of participants to dance with them or/and to observe and applaud them.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #7

TITLE: Closing

TIME: 15-20 minutes

OBJECTIVES: To reflect on what they are learning. To digest feelings and thoughts.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Small mattresses or carpets on the floor. Low lights.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Participants are laying down with closed eyes. There is soft music playing in the background.
2. You are encouraging participants to focus on their breath and relax.
3. You are naming parts of the body starting from the feet and closing with the head in order to bring the focus to those parts and support participants to relax. For example: *Bring your focus to your feet and allow them to relax, feel that your body is heavy, trust your body to the ground.*
4. You are going to count up to 3 and invite participants to open their eyes.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Participants are reflecting on couples. Here are some questions that can support participants to close an experience and bring focus on what they are learning: What happened? How do I think and feel about it? What was significant to me and why? What am I learning? How can I use my learning to my personal life?

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: During this activity have a gentle voice and focus on creating an atmosphere where participants have space to share feelings and thoughts. In case that a participant doesn't feel comfortable laying down, give him/her the option to participate while sitting on a chair.

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CREATIVE WRITING

LITERATURE REVIEW

"If one turns the attention towards specific creative pursuits, poetry was found to offer many benefits such as provoking insight, promoting life reviews, and encouraging the resolution of unresolved conflict." Not only poetry as a form of creative writing but also other types such as writing journals have proven to have positive effects on senior citizens.

The definition itself says that creative writing is: "A form of writing that expresses writer's feelings, emotions, experiences, ideas, or thoughts obtained at a conscious or subconscious level. It is more driven by the writer's need to "express", and is generally articulated in the most unique, inventive, and poetic way. Creative writing is considered to be any writing, fiction, poetry, or non-fiction, that goes outside the bounds of normal professional, journalistic, academic, and technical forms of literature".

Creative writing is that particular form of writing which goes beyond technical-professional writing and which involves all the dynamics of thought. Creative writing, in particular fiction, includes the writing of novels, short stories and fairy tales and has no practical use. Artistic writing is above all a dimension of being, it is an expression of the self: the writer, when he invents stories, characters and creates worlds, always puts a part of his inner world. And why not, the creative writer also often writes to search within himself, to fill existential gaps.

Writing can bring out the most hidden part of us, the unconscious, one might say. It happens that the unconscious spontaneously emerges when we get caught up in writing. When we write a poem, abandoning ourselves to sensations, we realize it more easily: emotions give life to "images" that surprise us first, even though we have them inside. These poetic images are symbols, or the synthesis of a range of abstract sensations and emotions that find expression in the concreteness of words. This process is also realized in creative writing, or in the narration of our emotions inserted in a story in the third person, in which the author narrates himself (because every author, whatever story he narrates, always narrates himself) by narrating himself in the form of alter egos and others. Anyone can do it; it is an exercise of digging into themselves.

The survey conducted on the value of writing for senior citizens revealed that writing was a form to connect with others, to learn, to empathize with different circumstances and feelings. It is a form of self-discovery.

The same research discovered that the key themes in writing were:

- Identity
- Olden days
- Progress
- Humour
- Nature
- Religion
- The love of family

Motivating factors to participate in the writing challenge were:

- Social benefits
- Opportunity to tell a personal story
- Sense of community
- Suggestions on how to become more aware of their own lives, thoughts and identities
- Opportunity to improve as writers and read others' work

The purpose of creative writing is to express emotions, experiences and thoughts. It is a great learning tool and it enhances imagination. Likewise, it is important for personal growth, to improve self-esteem and self-confidence.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE:

The participants should gain knowledge of national cultural heritage, national writers and poets and learn about their importance for the culture.

SKILLS and ATTITUDES:

The participants should acquire creative writing skills, communication and teamwork skills.



PROPOSED ACTIVITY #1

TITLE: Introduction to creative writing for seniors

TIME: 1 hour

OBJECTIVES: Introduce participants to the topic of creative writing and cultural heritage. This activity should also introduce participants to each other and make them comfortable and relaxed as a part of the group. They should share, to the extent they feel comfortable, some basic information about themselves and their expectations about the creative writing activity.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Prepare different images (it could be related to the cultural heritage) from magazines or from web sources.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Invite the participants to present themselves briefly.
2. After the presentations, invite them to choose an image that trainers prepared for them and give them some time to make a complete story following and explaining the image.
3. They can develop a personal or fictional story around the image and share it with the others. They should tell the full story, what happened, who was involved, when and where.
4. Each participant should take their turn and have around 5 minutes to explain the story. Others can have a few minutes more to ask questions about the story told and engage actively in each other's stories.
5. Present the participants with a task for the next activity. They should think about one or more authors that for them represents the Italian literature as a part of the cultural heritage.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: At the end of the activity the participants can share their feelings about the activity, whether they liked it etc. Also, they can express their expectations on creative writing workshop and set their personal goal which they would like to achieve at the end of the it.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Encourage sharing and communicating within a group in a safe and supportive environment and give encouraging feedback.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #2

TITLE: Expressive arts in European cultural heritage

TIME: 2-3 hours

OBJECTIVES: The group will prepare a presentation of "the best of" in their own country (in a form of a video), as opportunity to enhance the cultural interest and participation of the learners and to increase the European intercultural identity.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Books of traditional Italian literature, equipment to film a video (camera, phone etc.)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Present the participants with books of traditional Italian literature. If possible, the activity could take part in a library where they could choose the books on the spot.
2. Take a few minutes to let the participants choose the most interesting work of an Italian writer.
3. The participants should prepare themselves, learn briefly about the writer they chose and try to present them in a video format. They will act as the writers themselves and tell their story.
4. All participants' videos will be put together in one video presentation of the Italian cultural heritage.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Participants can share what they learned when making the video, did they encounter some difficulties, how they felt about it.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Facilitators should make it easier for the participants to make the video. They should be a constant support and a point of referment for any question. Facilitator should be flexible and supportive to each participant.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #3

TITLE: Reinvent a fairy tale

TIME: 2 hours

OBJECTIVES: Help participants develop creative writing skills through a remake of a traditional fairy tale.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Prepare different national or international fairy tales that participants can choose from. Prepare pens and paper.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. At the beginning of the activity invite the participants to select one fairy tale of their choice.
2. Ask the participants to try to rewrite the story putting it in the current circumstances.
3. After they finished, invite the participants to share to each other what they wrote.
4. Or, if more than one participant chooses the same story after writing their own story, they can be grouped and write a fairy tale divided in groups.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Each participant can share what they liked about the activity, how they felt writing the content, what have they learned in the process.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Facilitators should make sure that they are flexible with the pace of each participant. They could encourage the participants and give positive feedback. They can make an example at the beginning of the activity to help participants develop their own stories.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #4

TITLE: Creating poetry

TIME: 1-2 hours

OBJECTIVES: The objective is to get to know the national poetry and to improve participants' abilities to express themselves.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Poems from national poets. Pens and paper.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In the opening of the exercise invite the participants to find and choose a poem from some national poet they like.
2. Then, participants are invited to prepare a story about the poem. They will explain the feelings in the poem, the origin, the significance of it, the circumstances in which it was written etc.
3. When stories are completed invite the participants to share their texts.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: Invite participants to share if there were some obstacles that enhanced or blocked their creativity. You might ask the participants what the significance of writing poetry today is.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Encourage participants to use their imagination. Remind them of a safe space they are in. Make them comfortable to share and express themselves.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #5

TITLE: Songs as part of a national cultural heritage

TIME: 2 hours

OBJECTIVES: To improve participants' abilities to express themselves by creating a story for the song of their choice.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Printed song lyrics chosen by participants. Pens and paper.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Invite the participants to choose one song that had an impact on their lives and that represents for them the Italian musical heritage.
2. Invite them to develop and write a story about the selected song (what is the meaning and background of the song).
3. Then the participants will be divided in groups, and they will make a common story for one song of their choice.
4. At the end, encourage the participants to share their stories with each other.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: At the end of the activity encourage the participants to evaluate and share what they learned, which difficulties they had working in a group, what they liked about it.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Facilitators should be flexible and supportive. They should encourage participants to express themselves creatively and guide them in the process.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #6

TITLE: A letter to ...(a famous national writer)

TIME: 2 hours

OBJECTIVES: To encourage participants to express themselves, their experiences and feelings during the pandemic by writing a letter to a famous national writer.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Pens and paper. Some letters of famous national writers as an example for this task.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Invite the participants to write a letter to a famous national writer describing how they felt during the pandemic.
2. Start the activity by inviting them to take each letter of the word pandemic and write a word that they associate to pandemic.
3. Then, using the words they wrote, invite the participants to write first individually, then in groups a letter to a national writer of their choice explaining the meaning of pandemic, what they lived through, their thoughts during that time, feelings they had, things they did etc.
4. At the end, encourage the groups to read the letters to each other.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: The participants will share how they felt writing these letters, sharing their feelings with others, did they learn something, did they feel better putting all the experiences and emotions on paper.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Facilitators should be encouraging and understanding of the participants. They should encourage them to share and to appreciate each other's stories. They should be careful and respectful of their feelings.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY #7

TITLE: The Caviardage Method

TIME: 1 hour

OBJECTIVES: To encourage the creative expression of the participants.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION: Pages from old books, magazines, newspapers...

INSTRUCTIONS:

The Caviardage Method is a poetic writing method that helps to write poems and thoughts not starting from a blank page but from already written texts: pages torn from waste books, articles of newspapers and magazines, but also texts in digital format. Thanks to the interaction with various expressive artistic techniques (such as collage, painting, watercolour, etc.) visual poems are created: small masterpieces that through words, signs and colours give voice to emotions that are difficult to express in everyday life.

Regarding "creative writing", caviardage deserves particular attention, an artistic technique, simple and immediate, which will allow the elderly not only to keep active their attention and the ability to logically connect but also to identify the "hidden poem" on the page of a book.

1. Invite the participants to choose one or more pages presented to them.
2. Invite them to read the texts, try to individualise words and create poem from words they find in those texts (to "find" a hidden poem).

Example: <https://laboratorioliberatorio.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/immagine86.jpg?w=768&h=932>

3. Invite them to do this activity by reflecting and using what they learned in previous activities.

DEBRIEFING/REFLECTION/EVALUATION: The participants can share what they liked about the creative writing process, how they approached it, was it difficult or easy, how did they feel. You might ask the participants how they feel about creative writing, what does it mean for them.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Encourage the participants to share their thoughts.

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