

Activity title: Role-Play as an Educational Method for Teaching on Sustainable Agriculture & Environmental Protection



Personal skills

- ☒ Creativity
- ☒ Communication
- ☒ Collaboration
- ☒ Critical thinking

Educational skills

- ☒ Entrepreneur
- ☒ Economic
- ☒ Digital
- ☒ Sustainability

Activity summary	Intended learning outcome
A realistic social problem from the field of Sustainable Agriculture and Environmental Protection has to be exposed to a group of students. Each student in the play is assigned a role. In the first part of the play, students, according to their roles, are getting involved in the conflict and everybody should try to hold their position. During the second part of the play, students should compromise and find a consensus for the given problem.	<p>-Overall goal is developing soft skills of social interactions</p> <p>-This includes the following communicational skills: expressing someone's attitude, negotiating, tolerance, compromising and finally a way of reaching a consensus.</p>

Time:	Setup and Materials:	Organizational mode:	Curriculum/level
30 min. - 1 h	Cards with written names of the roles. Optional: some pieces of clothing items suiting to a specific role and digital tools for supporting the play.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Short activity <input type="checkbox"/> Long activity <input type="checkbox"/> Course outline <input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Pair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class	Flexible and can be adapted to suit from kindergarten to university level.

Personal skills:

Creativity	Communication	Collaboration	Critical thinking
To imagine being in someone else's shoes and finding innovative solutions for an existing problem.	The focus is on communication skills, e.g. expressing attitude, patience for listening to others, compromising, etc.	Collaboration in the moments when choosing the most suitable solution for the given problem.	This is the crucial component, either in comprehending its role or judging the solution for the problem.



Educational skills:

Entrepreneur	Economic	Digital	Sustainability
Challenges posed by problems related to the environment and modern agriculture require a certain level of entrepreneurship skills to find the best fitting model simultaneously for the environment and society.	Each problem in the environment is related to economic issues, while agriculture is substantially linked to it. Therefore, taking into consideration the economic aspect is unavoidable.	Relying on digital skills to find information during the preparatory phase, or using digital skills to support its attitude, etc.	Finding innovative, long-lasting and sustainable solutions should be imperative during this exercise. Therefore, this is the most challenging task during the play.

Activity Plan	
Time	Steps
5-30 min.	Preparation phase: 0. Students search themselves about the problem (optional)
5 min.	1. Assigning roles to the students
5 min.	2. Moderator exposes the problem to the audithorium.
5-10 min.	3. Each student/role presents itself – its attitude towards the problem with convincing arguments.
10 min.	4. The first round of the play – roles get into the conflict.
10 min.	5. Second round of the conflict...etc.*
10 min.	6. Last round where all roles are reaching compromise.

*There can more rounds depending on the enthusiasm of the participants.

Tips & Tricks
<p>It would be more dramatic and intricate if the moderator suggested some behavior or attitude to the students' roles individually and confidentially.</p> <p>During the 2. round moderator should encourage students to get into conflict. All the time moderator should control the situation by giving equal opportunity to each student/role to express their attitude. Besides, it has to stimulate and maintain an atmosphere of mutual understanding no matter the arguments are conflicting, allowing the students to speak one at a time.</p> <p>Finally, the moderator instructs the students to reach a compromise and to find a solution which would be acceptable for all roles.</p> <p>The role of the moderator is crucial to finding the right moment and instructing the players to start working on consensus.</p>

Sustainability development goals

Although the exercise (teaching method) is focused on agriculture and environmental issues, it could also tackle many social issues. Therefore, it includes most of the SDGs: Quality education (**SDG 4**), Gender equality (**SDG 5**), Clean water and sanitation (**SDG 6**), Decent work and economic growth (**SDG 8**), Reduced inequalities (**SDG 10**), Sustainable cities and communities (**SDG 11**), Responsible consumption and production (**SDG 12**), Climate action (**SDG 13**), Life below water (**SDG 14**), Life on land (**SDG 15**), Peace, justice, and strong institutions (**SDG 16**), Partnerships for the goals (**SDG 17**).

Digital Resources

Before starting a play the students can be given a task to do the preparation phase. During preparation, students can be instructed to search the internet to get informed about the problem, its location, the physical surroundings, and the social background.

During the play, digital resources can help to support it, e.g. by projecting a picture of the scenery, playing some sounds or music, or some other effects which might contribute to the dynamics of the play. In addition, digital resources could be used for presenting some evidence (e.g. pictures, sounds, short films, or even some data).

An example: During the Summer school (SS) Ecosystem Services within an Agricultural Area, (held in the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia, June 2021), a role-play was held. Twenty-five international students participated in it and learned how to solve problems related to a protected wetland area.

Overall impression: Through this simple role-play, the students have easily learned and felt how to try to mitigate problems through dialogue. Apart from being educational, the game was amusing and showed potential for improving students' imagination and acting skills.



Funded by
the European Union