

«NOT IN MY BACKYARD»

FILM DETAILS

Title: «NOT IN MY BACKYARD» (Italia, 2022, 2')

Directed by: Elia Moutamid

Cast: Piernicola Di Pirro, Alessandro e Fallou,

Produced by: Coop. Ruah – Progetto Z.E.L.D.A.+

Plot: Two young teenagers, opting for a shortcut, decide to cross Nicola's yard. He scolds them and the first teenager, a Black boy, does not deign to look him in the eye and simply ignores him. While the second, a White boy, behaves differently: he blushes and apologises.



SHOCK

Nicola, a gentleman in his fifties, a financial consultant, lives on the outskirts of a neighbourhood with a high concentration of immigrants from different backgrounds and of long standing.

On an early spring evening, Roberto is in his house - ground floor overlooking a courtyard - preparing to go out to pick up his son from his piano class. His attention suddenly turns to a noise coming from the courtyard. Two young teenagers, taking a shortcut, have decided to cross Nicola's courtyard to the park nearby. Shocked by this intrusion, Nicola catapults himself into the courtyard and violently scolds the two teenagers, explaining that this is private property and that he does not want to see them pass by there again.

As Nicola speaks, the first teenager, a Black boy, does not deign to look him in the eye and simply ignores him. The second, a White boy, behaves differently: he blushes and apologises, explaining that he thought he was not bothering anyone, as other boys had also passed by recently.

Thinking back on the event, Nicholas has the impression that his message was well received by the White boy. But he is frustrated by the other teenager's condescending behaviour and is glad that he lives in the suburbs, which prevents him from frequently encountering these kinds of rude boys.

SENSITIVE ZONES

Rationality

SCENES' PHOTOS

ACTIVITY WITH THE GROUP

Analysis with critical incident grid

See sheet NOT IN MY BACKYARD



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DIDACTIC SHEET

«NOT IN MY BACKYARD»

TAGS (3 categorisations)

Is this activity focusing on one of the 3 steps of the method or tackling a transversal challenge facilitators may face?	Step of the method	YES	Decentering X	Discovery of the frames of references of the other X	Negotiation
	Challenge treated	NO			

SMALL DESCRIPTION

Please explain in a short paragraph (using grammatically correct full sentences) what your activity is about, why did you create it?

From the viewing of the short film NON NEL MIO CORTILE, stimulate the students' ability in analysis, language and focusing on key concepts.

This activity represents a possible development/training in the concept of culture shock, which can then be deepened through the critical incident method.

Quick info

TIME FRAME	GROUP SIZE	FACILITATION LEVEL	COMFORT ZONE	MATERIALS
30-45 min	3-18	Beginner	challenging	Video Sheet Flipchart papers Markers

Preparations needed

- This activity works better if the group already developed some trust and participants feel free to express their doubts, reveal their prejudices etc.
- Select the images you would like to use taking into account the context of your training (in terms of geography, cultures represented, theme of the training). Try to have a geographically equilibrated selection, also presenting images from your own cultural context.
- Even if this is not the focus of the activity, you should know the contexts of the images you are presenting
- You should think in advance about the values and norms that could come up concerning the specific images

INSTRUCTIONS STEP BY STEP

Please give step by step instructions of your activity, including debriefing. Be direct, address the reader as a facilitator directly: eg. ask your participants to stand in a circle...

Step 1.

Presentation and viewing of the short film.

Step 2.

In subgroups, analyse the behaviour of the teacher and the pupil protagonists of this short film, starting by identifying the appropriate answer - from among the options offered - to the question "How do you explain Amina's attitude?"

Step 3.

- a) Plenary sharing of subgroup reports
- b) Analysis of subgroup reports for similarities and differences.

Step 4.

Re-elaboration of the activity with 'targeted' contributions on explanation-intervention-prevention to be presented through slides.

Step 5.

Conclusions with a revival of MCE's intercultural approach and the critical incident method with analysis of personally experienced culture shocks.

Hints for the facilitator

Leave freedom of expression and interpretation, adding (not correcting) the elements that you consider useful to bring to the attention of the trainees.

RESSOURCES (WHO INVENTED THIS ACTIVITY OR WHO INSPIRED IT?)

If you invented it, please write the name of your colleague and institution as you'd like it to be referenced

If you used ideas /activities of others please put full reference as concretely as you can

Activity developed by RUAH team involved in ZELDA project (IO5) starting from: Faculté de l'éducation permanente Université de Montréal, « *Situations interculturelles au quotidien. Incidents critiques* », ADDIMMUM, 1998

FILM SHEET for teamwork

INTERCULTURAL SITUATIONS IN EVERYDAY LIFE:

Instructions for use. Even before reading/viewing the critical incident "Not in my backyard", it is important to know that it will be from the information included in the text/video that the reader/viewer will have to attempt to select the answer he/she considers most appropriate. Although several answers may seem plausible, there is, for each incident, an appropriate answer, due to the clues contained in the incident. This method forces the reader/viewer to overcome easy generalisations made from fixed descriptions of different cultural groups, in order to examine the particularities of each situation and the characteristics of each character, within a precise context. After reading/viewing the incident, one must stop at the question posed following the incident and attempt to give one's own answer without reading the answers suggested in the text; one can then compare one's answer with those suggested.

NOT IN MY BACKYARD

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On an early spring evening, Roberto is in his house - ground floor overlooking a courtyard - preparing to go out to pick up his son from his piano class. His attention suddenly turns to a noise coming from the courtyard. Two young teenagers, taking a shortcut, have decided to cross Nicola's courtyard to the park nearby. Shocked by this intrusion, Nicola catapults himself into the courtyard and violently scolds the two teenagers, explaining that this is private property and that he does not want to see them pass by there again.

As Nicola speaks, the first teenager, a Black boy, does not deign to look him in the eye and simply ignores him. The second, a White boy, behaves differently: he blushes and apologises, explaining that he thought he was not bothering anyone, as other boys had also passed by recently.

Thinking back on the event, Nicholas has the impression that his message was well received by the White boy. But he is frustrated by the other teenager's condescending behaviour and is glad that he lives in the suburbs, which prevents him from frequently encountering these kinds of rude boys.

How to explain the behaviour of the Black boy?

From the information included in the text, try to give your own answer (without reading the answers suggested below); then you can compare yours with those suggested, trying to select the answer you think is most appropriate. Although several answers may seem plausible, there is one appropriate answer, due to the clues contained in the incident.

- A. It is a code of honour for local boys, members of street gangs, to challenge people by ignoring them.
- B. The young teenager Nero was paralysed by the tone of Nicola's voice. In his culture it is forbidden for an adult to scold boys.
- C. It is considered rude in the boy's culture to look an adult in the eye when the latter speaks to him.
- D. When the young teenager Nero overheard his friend talking to the landowner, he told himself that his friend had the situation under control and that there was no need to intervene further.

We can consider answer A as ethnocentric: Nicola would have manifested certain prejudices by associating the Black youth with gangs and delinquency. Answer B is plausible, although there is no ethnic group within which it is forbidden to scold young people, except if this exceeds a certain level that can be considered verbal violence. Answer C is the most appropriate: it may be disrespectful for young people in some cultures to look an adult in the eye when he/she speaks. Answer D is a first-level answer that might be acceptable as long as one does not analyse the incident too deeply.

The number of messages conveyed by the eyes is practically infinite, whether it is making eye contact, avoiding a glance, lowering one's eyes, sweeping one's gaze, staring insistently at someone, looking straight ahead or even closing one's eyes; not to mention the affective significance of the mother-child gaze during breastfeeding. We could translate the non-verbal information received from a person's eyes and judge them with different expressions and terms. Nevertheless, there are important cultural variables in the interpretation of eye language. In our culture, there is a tendency to value the gaze as a symbol of self-confidence, openness to the other, interest in the interlocutor, attentiveness and honesty; but the risks of error in interpreting the message and assessing the person are considerable when dealing with someone from another culture. It is important to note that the attitude of not looking a more authoritative person in the eye, when not explained, can be perceived as a lack of respect. It is one of the most often misunderstood behaviours in Western society, which disproportionately fuels prejudice towards certain communities.

Nicola is frustrated for two reasons: on the one hand because of the fact that these boys are passing on his property, and on the other hand because of young Nero's attitude. In the first case, it is normal to inform these boys of the private nature of that garden, although there is perhaps a more appropriate way of doing so. The second reason for his frustration stems instead from his inability to appropriately decode the Black boy's gaze; at the moment this seems to have no consequences, but it is easy to imagine the kind of relationship that could result from interpreting the gesture in the long run, particularly if the Black boy's family became Roberto's neighbours. The best way to react would have been to ask the boy what he understood. Roberto could then see that this teenager was just as well disposed towards him as the other.

Prevention

The issue of territory (and ownership of it) is an element that emerges strongly from this incident. Services and organisations working in multicultural contexts must become pro-active in this area and organise events and activities aimed at fostering harmonious relations between citizens of different ethnic origins residing in the same territory. In this sense, the above-mentioned activities should pay special attention to 'education' about the territory and its care, both by natives and immigrant citizens.

Let us try to work on ourselves.

- * What is our first memory of a glance, given or received, that particularly affected us? With whom do we associate it? What values do we associate with giving and receiving looks? What does this say about us? How do we use the gaze? With whom? In which situations? To draw attention, to 'electrocute', to seduce... And how is the gaze used in our culture? What does it convey on a social level?
- * What does our territory represent for us? How attached to it are we? From what do we realise it?



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