

Theme 4

Middle school experience: testimonies

This document reports the reflections of teachers who participated in the 2018-2019 contest "From my window to the world" (quote by F. Pessoa) and the 2019-2020 "I remember" (quote by G. Perec). The testimonies are extracted from the log books handed in by participants.

Pedagogical Stakes	<p>"Three of the four values of our school (...), accredited by an International Council, are "Mutual respect and honesty", "Celebration of diversity", "Contribution to society". Working on the kamishibai is a way to put together a project based on these values. Plus, this year's topic has enabled us to lead a first workshop on literature and French and American culture."</p> <p>In middle school, taking part in a contest may correspond to several pedagogical stakes.</p> <p>Creating a kamishibai is a collective activity. Thus, it allows for the exploration of one's relation to others (find your place in a group, debating and accepting others' ideas...).</p> <p>It's also a way for the educational staff to reaffirm their educational values ("This kind of project is very important to our school. It allows us to concretely show what moves us, what is important, and to highlight the establishment's values in a tangible way").</p> <p>Moreover, this creation intertwines the programs of several disciplines (adventure stories, geographics, spoken languages, etc.)</p> <p>"I used the theme of the contest to address the part of the French curriculum entitled 'Adventure stories.' After reading an album by François PLACE, "La fille des batailles" ("The girl of the battles"), we wrote an adventure story."</p> <p>The playful dimension of the creative process also removes certain barriers for the learners and thus increases their motivation:</p> <p>"Students are motivated by the contest; they don't experience writing as work."</p>
--------------------	--



Among the strong points of the contest, the participants of the previous years noticed the valorization of the multilingual students in the school (those registered in FLS but also or in UPE2A) as well as the progressive - individual and collective - responsibility of the students invested in the realization of the kamishibai:

"Students took on responsibilities in groups or alone on their own initiative"


The participants also emphasized that the project had federated different groups within the school:

"For the collection of memories: FLE-FLS students (mixed groups of CSI and ASG students) and UPE2A students from CSI + ASG students from all levels). Two parents out of the three families of the students in the class played along. For the illustrations, all the ASG students (16)."



Finally, the contributions in terms of relationship to language (narrative patterns and structures) also appear salient:

"Students collected memories and words in various languages thanks to other students. They then sorted them by theme to identify what seemed interesting. From this sorting, images, ideas [emerged] that they worked on to bring out topic, narrative, logic."

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Consequences</p>	<p>"(There were) students who did not know each other (not part of the same classes) and were able to share their knowledge."</p> <p>Other consequences were also identified by the educational teams: the strengthening of social ties between the students involved and the internal and external valorization of the participants.</p> <p>"The three students in the class will give a storytelling reading with the butaï to the students in the classes that participated in the collection of memories and illustrations. During this meeting, the FLE, FLS and UPE2A students will read poems, some of which come from their culture. I plan to get in touch with the Maison de l'International, which is managed by the town hall, and with the association that lent us the butaï, in order to organize an exhibition or a storytelling event."</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Difficulties Encountered</p>	 <p>The difficulties encountered by the participants concern the time needed to carry out the various activities related to the kamishibaï and their inclusion, in a limited time, in a multidisciplinary and collegial approach.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Feedback</p>	<p>The collected feedback hints at the richness of working on plurilingualism in the frame of middle school:</p> <p>"Several parents came to read us stories in their native languages and taught us how to pronounce the words we used in the kamishibaï (English, Russian, Turkish). Two students of Syrian and Chinese origin read stories to the class themselves."</p> <p>Moreover, this feedback permitted us to realize the impact of this work on the memory process.</p>