



Identification of the educational scenario

1.1 Title of the scenario

RIGHT TO FEAR

“THE IMPORTANCE OF FEAR IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF EXPERIENCE”

1.2 Creator

Katiuscia Favilli (author), Francesco Fabbro, Maria Ranieri e Stefano Cuomo (revisor)

e-mail: katiuscia.favilli@gmail.com, francesco.fabbro@unifi.it, maria.ranieri.unifi.it, cuomo.stefano@gmail.com

School: University of Florence

1.3 Topics or courses involved

Literature, History, Law

1.4 Educational level

Secondary school: 11-14 years old

1.5 Learning outcomes of the scenario

Based on the Council of Europe Framework, at the end of the course/ scenario, students are expected to have acquired the skills that will enable them to:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
- Civic-mindedness
- Analytical and critical thinking skills

1.6 Time-duration

Class time: 6 hours (3 lessons)

Outdoor preparation: 3 hours

How many hours to be used in total: 9 hours



Development of the educational scenario

2.1 General description

1. Warm up

The following questions aim to open up reflections in students on the function of the emotion of fear in the emotional life of an individual.

Questions to introduce and explore the topic

What is fear?

Why does a human being feel fear?

Is the fear negative? (If yes, why? If not, why?)

When you have new experiences, do you ever get scared? Does being safe mean not being afraid? Is it safe not to be afraid?

When are you afraid what physical sensations do you feel?

An ancient Chinese proverb says "it is not brave who is not afraid, but who is afraid and manages to overcome it". What do these words mean for you?

2. Discussion

The facilitators share with the children the reading of the novel on Babau written by Dino Buzzati (worksheet 1)

3 Exploration of binary oppositions

Binary opposition 1:

It is important in the growth and development phase to feel protected and safe. Fear, however, is an emotion that is also unleashed in the face of new experiences and unknown points of view to which we are not used but from which we can sometimes also learn. Fear is what we feel when we leave our comfort zone. When is it right to be afraid in your daily life?

3a. Discussion

Facilitation of collective discussion through the use of questions. (Worksheet 2).

Division into small groups aimed at identifying fears that were necessary in moments of their own growth and fears that instead prevented them from doing something (Worksheet 2).

Collective sharing of fears and creation of a poster with shared fears (Worksheet 2).

3b. Theater

Pupils will be asked to dialogue with their fear, using the characters from the fairy tale (worksheet 3). We know that Babau can take multiple forms. One participant will take on the role of Babau, while another participant will take on the role of engineer Paudi. Sitting opposite each other, the participant in the role of Paudi will ask questions to Babau choosing from the questions identified during the work in small groups. The pupil who plays Babau will have to respond in the way he thinks best. The improvisation will close when the participant who plays Babau decides independently to ask the student who plays the engineer Paudi "Why are you afraid of me?"; after the reply the improvisation will be considered closed.

In addition to this specific staging, the teacher can choose if and when, along the entire learning path, to engage students with specific short-lasting theatrical games (Worksheet 4) to facilitate mutual knowledge and interpersonal relationships.

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3c Debriefing

Children who will face this path will need a collective moment of elaboration and sharing. Facilitators can guide the collective discussion by imagining the production of materials to leave in the classroom. (worksheet 5)

3d. Dialectical Discussion to explore

The facilitators lead the discussion to bring the participants' attention to the different points of view that are expressed, always underlining in positive terms the parts of the discussion that can lead to a synthesis. (worksheet 6)

3e. Personalization and action plan

Participants at the end of the activity are asked to reflect on the contents and rework them in a more personal and biographical way, as well as to speculate an action plan about the right to curiosity in their context (worksheet 7)

Conclusions

[2.2 Worksheets & Resources](#)

Worksheet 1 Extracts from the tale *Baubau* by Dino Buzzati, published in the book *Hard nights*

Worksheet 2: Structure of the discussion activity with materials to be produced and questions.

Worksheet 3: Context, materials and setting indications on theatrical improvisation.

Worksheet 4: Theatrical games

Worksheet 5: Questions for debriefing

Worksheet 6: Questions for dialectical discussion

Worksheet 7: materials for personal processing

WORKSHEET 1

The engineer Roberto Paudi, assistant manager of the COMPRA X and councilor for urban planning, was furious when one evening he surprised the nanny Ester who to appease a whim of little Franco, told him: "Look, if you won't be good, tonight the Babau will come ».

According to him, it was intolerable that in educating children, foolish superstitions were still used that could create in psyche painful complexes. He gave a sermon to the girl who left, crying, and he put his son to bed, which soon calmed down.

The same night the Babau, rising in midair as was his custom, showed up in the room where the engineer Paudi slept alone, giving him a few minutes of orgasm.

The Babau, as everybody knows, took different forms, depending on the country and local customs. In that city, from immemorial time it had the appearance of a gigantic animal of blackish color, whose shape was between the hippopotamus and the tapir. Horrible at first sight. But if you look at him with dispassionate eyes, you could see, for the benign fold of the mouth and the almost affectionate sparkle of the relatively tiny pupils, an expression far from evil.

It is understood that, in circumstances of a certain seriousness, he knew how to instill trepidation, and even fear. But he usually carried out his duties with discretion. Approaching the child's bed to be rebuked, he didn't even wake him up, limiting himself to penetrate his dreams where he left, yes, an imperishable trace. It is well known, in fact, that even the dreams of tiny infants have an unlimited capacity and they can also effortlessly welcome mammoth beasts like the Babau, which can carry out all the evolutions of the case in complete freedom.

Naturally, presenting himself to the engineer Paudi, the ancient creature did not have a face that was too good-natured, in fact, adopting the physiognomy, he means magnified, of Professor Gallurio, who for two months had been appointed extraordinary commissioner of COMPRA X, a company that was navigating in difficult waters. And this professor Gallurio, a very strict if not intractable man, was precisely the black beast of Paudi, whose eminent position in the firm could carry considerable risks in this commissioner regime.

The Paudi, awakened in a shroud of cold transpiration, had time to see the visitor who was spinning through the wall (the window would not have been enough for so much) showing him the monumental dome of his back. He looked at Paudi well, the next morning, from apologizing to poor Esther. The fact of having personally ascertained that the Babau really existed increased, together with his disdain, the firm determination to do everything possible to kill him.

In the following days, in a joking tone as is natural, he went exploring with his wife, friends and collaborators. And he was amazed to learn that the existence of the Babau was generally taken for granted, as a classic event of nature, such as rain, earthquake and rainbow. Only Dr. Gemonio, from the legal department, seemed to fall from the clouds: yes, as a child he had heard vaguely about this story, but then he was well convinced that it was a tall story, an hogwash.

Almost sensed his bitter aversion, the Babau since then began to meet the engineer with considerable assiduity, always with the unpleasant mask of Professor Gallurio, making faces at him, pulling him by the feet, shaking his bed, and one night he reached the point of crouch on his chest, which almost suffocated him.

It is therefore not surprising that Paudi, at the next meeting of the municipal council, spoke to a few colleagues: one could allow, in a metropolis that boasted to be in the vanguard, the perpetuation of a similar thing, worthy of the Middle Ages? Was it not necessary to finally provide resolute solutions?

They were at first fleeting pour-parler, of corridor, informal exchanges of views. In short, the prestige enjoyed by the engineer Paudi gave him the green light. It was not two months before the problem was brought to the municipal council. It goes without saying that, for the sake of ridicule, the agenda did not mention Babau but in paragraph 5 it only mentioned "A deplorable disturbing factor for the quiet night of the city".

Contrary to what Paudi expected, not only the subject was taken seriously by everyone but his thesis, which might have seemed obvious, met with lively opposition. Voices rose to defend a picturesque and inoffensive tradition that was lost in the mists of time, to underline the overall innocuity of the nocturnal monster, among other things completely silent, to detect the educational benefits of that presence. There were those who even spoke of an "attack on the cultural heritage of the city" if it had resorted to repressive measures; and the speaker had a save of applause.

On the other hand, the irresistible arguments prevailed at the end of which the so-called progress is too often made strong to dismantle the last rocks of the mystery. The Babau was accused of leaving an unhealthy imprint in childhood spirits, to arouse then nightmares contrary to the principles of correct pedagogy. Hygiene reasons were also put on the carpet: yes, it is true, the mastodon at night did not soil the city nor did it shed excrement of any kind, but who could guarantee that it was not the bearer of germs and viruses? Nor was anything positive known about his political beliefs: how could he exclude that his suggestions, apparently so elementary if not crude, hide subversive pitfalls?

The debate, to which journalists were not admitted given the delicacy of the theme, ended at two o'clock after midnight. The Paudi proposal was approved with a slender majority of five votes. As for its practical application, a special commission of experts was appointed, of which Paudi himself was president. In fact: proclaiming ostracism to the Babau was one thing, another being able to eliminate it. Clear that one could not rely on his civic discipline, especially as it was doubtful if he could understand the language. Nor was it conceivable to capture it and assign it to the municipal zoo: which cage would hold an animal, if it was animal, able to fly through walls? Even the poison was to be discarded: never was the Babau seen eating or drinking. The flamethrower then? A small napalm bomb? The risk for the citizens was excessive.

The solution, in short, was very problematic, if not impossible. And already Paudi felt himself losing the desired success, when a doubt arose: yes, the chemical composition and physical structure of the Babau were unknown but, as is the case with many creatures recorded in the registry of legends, he could not for case be much weaker and more vulnerable than supposed? Who knows, maybe a simple shot was enough, and justice was done.

The public security forces, after the municipal council resolution countersigned by the mayor, could only cooperate. A special patrol was set up, equipped with fast and radio-connected vehicles. The thing was simple. The only strange circumstance: a certain reluctance on the part of non-commissioned officers and agents to participate in the expedition; was it fear? Was the dark fear of violating a forbidden door? Or simply a nostalgic attachment to certain agitated childhood memories?

The meeting took place on a cold night of the full moon. The patrol, stationed in a dark corner of Piazza Cinquecento, sighted the tramp who was sailing placidly about thirty meters high, similar to a young airship. The agents, the pointed machine gun, advanced. Around, not a living soul. The brief crackling of the gunshots echoed, very far away.

It was a bizarre scene. Slowly the Babau turned on itself without a start and, paws in the air, it dropped until it settled on the snow, laying on his back, motionless forever. The moonlight was reflected on the enormous and tense belly, shiny as gutta-percha.

"Something I'd rather not review a second time" said the officer Onofrio Cottafavi. A patch of blood spread, incredibly, beneath the victim, black in the moonlight.

Garbage collectors were immediately called by telephone to clear the wreckage. They didn't arrive in time. In those few minutes the gigantic thing, like the punctured balloons do, shrunk visibly, was reduced to a poor larva, became a little black worm on the white of the snow, and finally even the little worm disappeared, dissolving into nothing. Only the sordid clarity of blood remained that the garbage collectors canceled before dawn.

« Something I'd rather not view a second time » the officer Onofrio Cottafavi said. A patch of blood spread, incredibly, beneath the victim, black in the moonlight.

It was said that in heaven, while the creature died, it would shine two moons rather than one. It was said that throughout the city night birds and dogs complained long. Word spread that many women, old and young, waking up from a dark call, came out of their homes, kneeling and praying around the

unhappy. This is not historically proven.

In fact, the moon went smoothly on its journey prescribed by astronomy, the hours passed regularly one by one, and all the children of the world continued to sleep placidly, without imagining that the funny friend-enemy had left for always.

He was much more delicate and tender than anyone thought. It was made of that impalpable substance that is commonly called fable or illusion: even if true. Gallop, run, gallop, survivor fantasy. Eager to exterminate you, the civilized world is pursuing you, never again it will give you peace.

Worksheet 2

Attention is paid to the reason why the respectable engineer Paudi decides to share the injunction to eliminate the Babau.

- Why did engineer Paudi decide that Babau's presence in the city is intolerable?
- On the contrary, why are many authoritative people in favor of his presence?
- Was Engineer Paudi afraid of Babau? If anyone thinks yes, why?
- Would you be afraid of Babau?
- What fears - circulating in society - does Babau correspond to?
- Do you know other fictional stories and characters that generate fear?
- Why does the human being create characters to be afraid of?

Suggestions for work settings:

- In this phase it is important to build a non-frontal setting. The optimum would be to place students in a circle, a spatiality that facilitates confrontation and discussion, and places boys and girls in a freer dimension.
- To have an active participation it is essential to clarify that this

activity does not fall within the usual evaluation process taking place at school.

- If the activity takes place with the co-presence of both teachers and assistant, it is desirable that one of the two leads the activity and the other chooses whether to observe or actively participate. Of course, this decision must be taken in advance, in the planning phase.
- It is very important, in conducting the activity, to leave as much space as possible to the responses and interventions of boys and girls, accepting any observation without any form of judgment.

Small group discussion supported by the facilitator

Pupils confront each other about the present and past objects that generate fear in them.

They imagine they can interrogate them: they will write on a billboard what these objects are (the darkness, a spider, the height ...) and the questions that wish to to fearful objects.

Plenary sharing of group work

Sharing of objects and questions identified by small groups and plenary discussion oriented by the following questions:

- Did you quickly find something to ask the object of your fear or did it take a long time?
- When you imagine giving voice to the object of your fear, does fear increase or decrease?

Worksheet 3

1. change of seat with empty chair
2. physical improvisation in the center of the circle "I am, I feel"
3. same game themed on the theme of the scenario using materials collected in small groups

The space must be well delineated with a clear separation between the place dedicated to the stage action and the place that will be destined for the public, for example by drawing a line that separates actors and

audience with chalk (or colored adhesive tape). We are looking for symbolic objects that represent the character (men's hat for the engineer Paudi and a black cloth for the Babau)

Given the delicacy of the topic, it is not necessary for all pupils to try their hand at improvisation. There will be room for the willingness of those who feel the desire to get involved. It will however require a lot of attention to those who will watch the staging.

Worksheet 4

Along the learning path, facilitators, at their discretion, can propose one or more of the following theatrical games:

1. Introductory game of knowledge among the participants

Circle of chairs with participants seated. Just an empty chair. Whoever has the free chair on their right starts the game: moving on it will say "I'm sitting". The partner who is in the empty chair on the right again will move saying "on the grass", the next one will say "With my friend" and the last one, moving, will have to say the name of one of the participants who are in the circle who will rush to the empty chair. Now a new participant will have the empty chair on the right and will restart the game with a fast pace.

2. Game of knowledge and improvisation

In circle. The first participant takes a static position at will. The classmate on his right asks, "what are you doing?". The first responds, in total freedom, to an action without any connection with the position taken. Given the answer, the first melts from the position, while the second takes on the pose of the action indicated by the first. The next participant will formulate the same question and position himself according to the indications. And so on.

Variant: in addition to the question "what are you doing?" It is interesting to add "what are you feeling?", so that you can also take an emotional expression to the static action.

3. Improvisation game

Given a clear delimitation of the stage space, the game begins with a volunteer who enters the stage and takes a static pose by declaring out loud who or what he is and what he is doing. The other participants are added to the first one, who always insert themselves in the "picture" with a fixed pose by declaring who / what they are, what they are doing and in the second phase also what they are feeling. Obviously anyone who takes part will have to bond with what others are already doing. This exercise can be carried out freely or themed on various generic and specific topics. The children will be asked to prepare a poster with the answers that most impressed them and that seem to them to be more correct. They will be asked to summarize the experience with a word. The words will be written on another billboard. It is important that the materials remain in the classroom. To reflect on the activity, the questions and the highlighted words will be followed.

Worksheet 5

After the various performances, the group is asked to reflect on what happened during the theatrical game with the support of these questions:

- Was it easy to answer questions like I was Babau?
- For those who watched, would you have given other answers? (If yes, why? And which ones?)
- In the role of the engineer, were you satisfied with the answers?
- For those who watched, how would you describe the relationship between the two characters on stage?

Worksheet 6

We suggest some questions:

- Is fear an emotion you would like not to experience?
- Is it necessary to be afraid in a person's growth?
- Why are we afraid?
- Have you ever voluntarily put yourself in a situation to feel fear?
- Why do we seek fear?
- If you could, would you eliminate the fear, how did engineer Paudi eliminate Babau?

Worksheet 7

At the end of the activity, participants will be asked to write in their notebook an experience associated with fear but which they remember positively. Finally, the students are divided into couples and each couple hypothesizes in writing their own action plan with respect to the exercise of their own and others' right to fear in their context (e.g. class, school, peer groups, etc.) . In particular they decide what could be done and who could do it.



2.3 Infrastructure & Materials needed

Cardboard, paper, markers. A space collected, but free from the desks or with the possibility of being freed, a sound system for listening to audio materials, the possibility of using the internet connection.

2.4 Versions-adaptations

2.5 Challenges

Fear is a delicate emotion, especially in pre-adolescence. There is a tendency to deny its existence. More stimulus may be needed from part of the facilitator with respect to declaring it in small group work. The question that should trigger the dialectical discussion can be complex. A more present facilitation intervention may be needed to open the right reflection. The dramatization of fears may find resistance due to the characteristics of the reference age, shyness and / or opposition may appear. It is important to maintain a playful and voluntary dimension in the moment of "staging".

2.6. Further reading



Evaluation of the educational scenario

Each student chooses a word which according to him / her summarizes the meaning of

the lessons. Then each in turn communicates and motivates the chosen word to classmates.