



**Methodology book**

<b>Habit –</b>	<b>PROBLEM-SOLVING</b>
<b>Activity/Game</b>	<b>One problem, lots of solutions!</b>
<b>Age /year of school</b>	<b>Primary school students: 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students</b>
<b>Duration</b>	<b>50 minutes</b>
<b>Resources and materials</b>	<b>Handouts, sellotape, puppets (optional)</b>
<b>Specific description</b>  lesson plan step by step	<p><b>1. Setting the rules of the activity (T-Ss, 2 min)</b>          Since the topic of the lesson might be felt as threatening and sensitive for the students, it is important to set the rules of the activity: <i>We only talk about ourselves using messages that are centered on ourselves: I feel, I believe....</i>  <i>We listen respectfully to our classmates opinions and we try to imagine what would happen if we were in their situation to understand even better their perspective. We take turns to talk, We give all the participants the opportunity to express themselves. We talk about situations, not about people. I will be constantly asking myself: “What am I learning right now?”</i> We encourage students to set the rules of the activity.</p> <p><b>2. Catching and directing students’ attention (T-Ss activity, minutes, icebreaker)</b> The teacher suggests a game: “The fewest number of feet on the floor”.          The class is divided into three groups having the same number of students. Each group has to find a way through which its members manage to lift their feet so that they have the fewest number of feet on the floor. The team that has the fewest number of feet on the floor wins.</p>

**3. Announcing the topic and the objectives of the activity** (T-Ss, exposition, 3 min)

T starts a discussion about problems that have come out of this game: Have you identified the previous challenge as being a problem? What is the evidence that tells you there is a problem? During the activity, entitled “One problem, lots of solutions!” we will learn how to identify a problem that we face at home or at school, to analyse it from different perspectives, to reach the best solution.

**4. Identifying problems** (individual work, 10 min)

Starting from the general definition of the problem as *a situation that we have to work out or something that has to be changed, a discrepancy/ a mismatch between what we want and what it is in reality*, each student is invited to fill in individually, on Handout 1, the problem they have been facing during the last week and to which they want to find a solution.

T offers Ss a few examples:

- You want to play ball with a classmate during the break and he tells you he does not want to play with you because he doesn't know you very well.
- Anna is sad because she spends too much time alone. She would like to make friends, but she doesn't know what to do.
- Victor is shorter than the other kids in his class. His classmates make fun of him every time they meet him and say: “The dwarf has come to school!”. He would like to be greeted in a friendly, respectful way.

The problem can be identified when a conflict appears between two or more people that show attitudes, and different desires towards the same thing. Sometimes the problem appears as unwanted behavior, such as: physical aggression (hits, pushing, pinches, fight, throwing and destroying personal objects, immobilization, inappropriate touches etc.), comments and bad language/ jokes referring one's physical appearance (teasing), gossiping, yelling, reproaches, nagging, insults, abusive language, spreading rumors, lies, nick-names, intimidation, threatening, raised tone, refusal of help, group rejection, mocking the helpless and clumsy ones etc. We notice that what is problem behavior for some (for the victim child), could not be a problem for others (the aggressor)! Therefore, what matters is the perspective we look at a problem-situation. Also, we have to emphasize the idea that the *problem does not lie in the person, but in the disrespectful and unfriendly behavior of that person.*

**5. Facing the problems and their working out** (group activity, 25 min.)

Stick some sellotape on the floors that to divide the room into two areas. The students make two groups, by counting, in turn from one forwards. The even numbers will make one team and the odd numbers a different team. The clouds on which the

students have written their problems are turned into paper balls. Each team will throw their problems back and forth into the other team's court. After a minute T says "Stop!", the students stop and each team counts the problems in each court. The students stop and count the problems in the court. The winning team is the one that has the fewest problem-clouds. They will be the first to choose a problem that they will subsequently work out collaboratively.

T presents the ABCDE problem-solving technique to the students (Annex 2):

A- **Analyse the problem** (What is the problem? What do I have to change? How/when does it appear? Who is involved/affected?)

B- **Brainstorm possible solutions of the problem** (we note down possible solutions in a creative and optimistic way, starting from the belief that each problem has got at least a solution, if not several!)

C- **Consequences of putting the solutions into practice** (What are the consequences, the results, the positive/negative or short-term/long-term effects of putting these solutions into practice?)

D- **Decide upon a solution** (I chose the best solution, taking into account the consequences that I have previously identified or the resources at hand, the obstacles, the impediments etc.)

E- **Evaluate the efficiency of the chosen solution** (How do I feel? What has changed? What have I learned?)

The students from both teams present to the class the way in which they worked out the chosen problem, using the ABCDE technique. They can use puppets to illustrate, through role play, the problem and the solutions.

6. **Closing the activity** (frontal activity, 5 minutes): the students offer feedback on what they have learned, and how they felt during the activity.