



European Schools
Office of the Secretary-General of the Board of Governors
Pedagogical Unit

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Programme for the Non-Confessional Ethics Course

Approved by the Board of Governors on 27 and 28 January 1998 in Brussels

Will enter into application in September 1998 for a two-year experimental period

I. OBJECTIVES

The aim of the non-denominational ethics course is to provide a moral education based on free thought which is not subject to any particular philosophical reference.

This course is therefore open to all pupils, with the objective of teaching them through open discussion

- to search for coherent and lucid answers with rigorous respect for facts and rational ideas
- to take a personal, responsible stance leading them to be self-sufficient and receptive
- to develop a genuine moral code based on tolerance which includes being able to challenge oneself.

This course should be taught by a teacher who undertakes to respect the spirit and objectives of non-denominational ethics as defined in this programme.

II. COURSE CONTENT

	OTHERS SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	MYSELF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
Observation Cycle	GETTING TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND ONE'S ENVIRONMENT	GETTING TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND ONESELF AND LEARNING HOW TO SURPASS ONESELF
1st year	Others and oneself	Change
	The family Schoolmates and friends The group, the set Animals	Moving up from the primary school to the secondary school Recognizing and accepting changes
2nd year	Authority	Health and happiness
	The different forms of authority (parents, teachers, police, etc.) and their justification The different forms of obedience (out of fear, self-interest, conviction, respect, etc.) The limits of obedience	Mens sana in corpore sano; physical education classes; sport as competition; fair play; team spirit; choosing one's leisure-time activities; eating properly; combating environmental pollution; saying no to tobacco, alcohol, drugs
3rd year	Right and duties	From child to teenager
	What is meant by "It is my right to...", "It is my duty to...."? My rights and duties in my family, at school, outside school Children's rights in the world Human rights	Independence and responsibility The generation gap Girl/boy, male/female stereotypes Feelings, emotions, love Sexuality

	OTHERS SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	MYSELF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
Preorientation Cycle	HOW TO BE A PART OF SOCIETY	DEVELOPING ONE'S OWN PERSONALITY
4th year	The right to be different	Rationalism and criticism
	Differences of culture; different religions; different economic systems; different political systems; toleration and its limits	Reason and the irrational Dogmatism and the search for truth Faith, agnosticism, atheism Sects Laicity Freedom of thought
5th year	Communication and exclusion	Liberty and responsibility
	The conquest of autonomy (wising up a situation, judging it, mating decisions) Consumer education Responsible parenthood: procreation, contraception, abortion Responsible attitude towards oneself and ones body: transplants and donation of organs, euthanasia, suicide, sexuality Responsibility and blame	Forms of communication, for example: - speech: truth and lies - media: information or manipulation; publicity, propaganda - modern methods of communication: getting nearer or further away - communication of conscience: sympathy Absence of communication, for example: - conflict, antipathy, violence, hatred - stereotypes, prejudice - racism, xenophobia, antisemitism Forms of exclusion, for example: ⇒ economic ⇒ social ⇒ cultural

	OTHERS SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	MYSELF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
Orientation Cycle	DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP	ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND PERSONAL PROJECTS
6th year	Democracy and citizenship	Science, technology and ethics
	Moral principles of democracy National, European and world citizenship Exclusions from citizenship Law and justice Involvement, solidarity, equitable justice	Genetic engineering Methods of assisted medical procreation How to reconcile respect for human beings with scientific and technological progress?
7th year	Threats to democracy	Values for my present and future life
	Lack of interest and involvement Weakness of public institutions The threat of totalitarianism Fanaticism Integrism Extremism Terrorism...	

The teacher will take into account current affairs and pupils' concerns.

III. PRINCIPLES OF METHOD

While having the advantage of the widest freedom of choice of teaching methods (using texts, the press, video documentaries, pupil presentations, team work, role play, debates, excursions, exhibitions, clarification of values etc.) the teacher will above all favour the role of discussion in his lessons. He/she will develop active and tolerant listening strategies and respect for everyone's right to contribute to or lead discussion. He/she will develop the search for consensus of opinion or at least the desire to encourage the positive evolution of debate, in the spirit of pedagogical humanism.

IV. EVALUATION

Ethics courses should award:

- an A grade in classes 1 to 3.
- an A grade and a B grade in classes 4 to 7.

The B grade is based on facts learnt and quality of argument.

The A grade takes into account the student's participation in class.

BACCALAUREATE

The examinations will normally cover the year 7 syllabus, but will also test knowledge gained in previous years, especially year 6.