

AISHA SAID'S

methods for intercultural learning



Aisha Said came to Käkäläjärvi as a tiny fawn 16 years ago. As a girl who was different in a small village, Aisha knows what it feels like to be different but grow to become similar. Aisha is right when she says that **rather than underlining the differences, intercultural learning is about looking for similarities**. When you dig deeper you notice that we are all similar, regardless of our hoof sizes or the shape of our antlers.

How would you compare the ways you live, spend your time and think with young people who come from different countries?

Scary greetings

In the warm-up exercise, one half of the group are given slips of paper with a manner of greeting written on them. Shaking hands, kissing on the cheek, hugging, rubbing noses, a small bow, placing your hand on your heart after shaking hands, showing your tongue... the people with the slips then go around and greet the others as instructed. Confusion follows when somebody comes right into your face to rub noses and you cannot talk! If you wish to stir up the confusion further, a slip can be given to everyone. The participants can then meet and greet different group members several times. **When discussing the experiences**, it is a good idea to understand that what is strange to you may be completely commonplace to somebody else. Your very ordinary customs may also be quite strange to others! Think about where these customs come from.



Identity flower

All participants cut out a round piece of paper for the middle of the flower and six petals. In the middle, they can write their names and the country they come from. On the petals, everyone writes their answers to different questions, for example:

- 1) What is my favourite thing to do?
- 2) What do I want to achieve in my life?
- 3) What would I like to change in the world?
- 4) What can I not tolerate?
- 5) What am I worried about in the world?
- 6) What makes me happy?

The participants can then compare the flowers within country groups and international groups. Similar thoughts indicate similarity, different ones diversity. Can you pinpoint your group's common culture?



The day of a European, similarities and differences

Before the exchange, the young people make up pantomimes that describe daily events: the time they wake up at, what they eat for breakfast, what activities they do in PE, what they do at the youth centre or with their families, what is a typical hobby and what they do on Friday nights. A large clock is laid out on the gym floor using masking tape, and the groups perform their versions of the pantomime at the hour of the clock during which this activity usually takes place in their home country. Would you say that dinnertime is the same in Finland and Spain? The pantomimes also make great video clips that the participants can share on social media, hoping for likes.

