

Week 5 Report

What Other Groups Did & Group Dynamics

As we reached the end 5th week of the program, we are pleased to report that we saw a great improvement on free-flowing discussions and positive dynamics in the majority of groups, and that your students were able to have great meaningful interactions this week. Though there were more absent students this week because of Thanksgiving holidays in the US, most groups had good dynamics with the students who were in sessions because those who attended are showing a deeper understanding to familiarize with their differences and demonstrate their desire to engage with various perspectives. As many groups decided to take ownership of the discussion and push the dialogue forward, we could see a multiplicity of interesting activities and discussions that best show how the group is actively engaging at this point.

Most groups had the activity Dialogue revisited: Engaging with difference that initiated many interesting and free flowing discussions about critical issues such as cultural generalizations and stereotypes, Media's impact on people's lives and opinions, conflict and gender equality, values and social norms in different cultural backgrounds, maintaining difference as a core Human right and other related topics. It is clear that students showed a lot of confidence and comfort while sharing their opinions and experiences about various engaging topics, leading to richer and more meaningful dialogue. It also led most groups to taking action steps for critical awareness and thinking without much prompting from their facilitators.

Other groups discussed current issues, mainly environmental ones, and showed a great interest in brainstorming solutions for global warming and climate change as emerging issues nowadays. They went up to discussing strategy solutions and how society work could play an important role to engage with suggested solutions. At the same time, other groups preferred to do the Cultural Exploration activity where they also underlined their beliefs and values while understanding each other's cultures and perspectives.

Attendance & Technology Update

This week we had a decrease in the attendance level due to Thanksgiving holidays. Even though we maintained good dynamics during the sessions, there were some significant absences of participants in specific groups. We're hopeful that the students will attend their sessions next week to fully benefit from the experience at this point. We are also happy to report that we continue to address the technical issues that arose during sessions, and with less number of students experiencing any technical difficulties.

This Week

This week, students will discuss again Topics that their groups selected. As this has been the most effective way to invite students to engage with dialogue, this activity will encourage a thought-provoking conversation about the global and social challenges that students feel are most important, and will enable them to better understand one another's perspectives about this issue and the elements that led to the development of these perspectives. This will also further enable an honest, open group dynamic in which students can address differences and build understanding.