



PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS TRAINING

HOW TO APPROACH
INEQUALITIES THROUGH
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE FROM
AN INTERSECTIONAL
PERSPECTIVE

Zoom Out Project

The [Zoom Out project](#) proposes approaching children's literature from an intersectional perspective, with the aim of fostering students' critical thinking about inequalities.

The project's approach is based on an intersectional perspective, that is, it seeks to analyze how different axes of inequality (gender, origin, social class, functional diversity...) intertwine and impact our experiences.

In contrast to the idea of censoring and rewriting the classics, the project advocates working on inequalities through literature as a starting point for maintaining a meaningful conversation with students. Moreover, at the heart of the methodology is the co-creation of educational materials through dialogue between schools, social organizations, educational cooperatives, and universities.

Within the framework of Zoom Out, this **pre-service teachers' training model** has been developed.

Needs analysis

Pre-service teachers require a strong methodological foundation, as many are still developing their pedagogical knowledge and classroom confidence. They benefit from structured opportunities to practice interpretation, facilitation, and critical reflection within a supportive learning environment.

To strengthen their professional readiness, future teachers should be exposed to authentic examples of complex or sensitive classroom situations and provided with practical strategies for responding to them effectively. They also require guidance on how to approach intersectionality and social inequalities in developmentally appropriate ways when working with children.

This training model aims to support pre-service teachers in developing the confidence, competences, and critical awareness necessary to address diversity, inclusion, and inequalities through children's literature.



Objectives

The training seeks to:

- Explore how intersectionality shapes children's literature and children's experiences.
- Connect theoretical and academic knowledge with authentic classroom situations.
- Introduce the Zoom Out methodology and its interpretative approaches.
- Encourage future teachers to confidently use the Toolbox and related educational resources beyond curriculum requirements.
- Prepare participants to respond to children's questions, stereotypes, emotional reactions, and sensitivities related to race, gender, diversity, and social inequalities.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- Facilitate discussions on sensitive or complex social topics with greater confidence.
- Interpret children's literature using inclusive and critical perspectives.
- Understand the intersectional framework underpinning the Zoom Out project.
- Apply the Toolbox resources during teaching practice.
- Use practical strategies to manage children's questions, stereotypes, and group dynamics in inclusive ways.

Curriculum Development & Instructional Methods

Structure of the training

Session 1	Intersectionality and children's literature	60'
Session 2	Methodology, approaches and challenges	60'
Session 3	Toolbox in practice	60'



Curriculum Development & Instructional Methods

The training is designed as a three-hour programme with a flexible internal structure that can be adapted to specific contexts and time constraints. Each session should begin with a stimulus activity or reflective prompt to encourage participation and engagement.

Whenever possible, priority should be given to preserving the methodological and practical components of the training. If time adjustments are necessary, they should primarily affect introductory sections rather than the methodology or practice-based activities.



60' First Session: Intersectionality and Children's Literature**Key Questions for Discussion**

- What is intersectionality?
- Have you encountered examples of inequality in your community, school, or everyday life?
- Why is intersectionality relevant in children's literature?
- Can you identify examples of children's books that reinforce stereotypes?
- How can children's literature be used to discuss social issues?
- How can literature support the development of empathy and critical thinking?

Zoom Out as an Innovative Educational Approach

Presentation of the project and its main resources:

- *From the page to the social context. A guide to approaching inequalities through an intersectional lens, using children's literature*
- *Toolbox. Educational resources to approach inequalities through children's literature*
- *Promising Practices Collection on children's literature and inequality*
- Animations of the project and the digital annex with educational activities.
- Posters from the Awareness Raising Campaign.

60'	Second Session: Methodology, Approaches and Challenges Key Questions for Discussion What challenges may arise when discussing sensitive topics with children? Facilitation Classroom dynamics Emotional responses How can teachers create safe and inclusive spaces for these conversations? Classroom environment Trust Respect Openness Which identities or perspectives are often absent or underrepresented in children's literature? Representation Diversity Invisible or marginalised perspectives How can an intersectional approach transform the interpretation of a story? Critical thinking Multiple perspectives Alternative readings What strategies can teachers use to help children recognise stereotypes or biases in texts? Guided questioning Reflective dialogue Critical literacy tools
-----	--

60' How can discussions about identity, diversity, and fairness be adapted to different age groups?

Developmentally appropriate practice

Inclusive communication

What role do illustrations play in shaping children's perceptions of characters and social realities?

Visual literacy

Implicit messages and representation

How can teachers support children when stories challenge their existing assumptions or beliefs?

Reflection

Emotional support

Open-ended dialogue

Zoom Out as an Innovative Educational Approach

This session introduces the Zoom Out methodology as a practical response to the challenges teachers may encounter when addressing sensitive or complex social issues in the classroom.

Particular attention should be given to:

- The pedagogical principles underpinning the methodology
- Key teaching and facilitation strategies
- The Toolbox as a practical entry point for implementation
- Feedback and experiences shared by teachers and educators who tested the resources
- Practice-based knowledge and evidence emerging from classroom implementation

The aim is not to provide prescriptive teaching solutions, but rather to inspire, support, and empower future teachers to engage critically and confidently with inclusive educational practices.

60' Third Session: Toolbox in Practice

The main objective of the third session is to actively engage participants with one of the Toolbox resources.

Recommendations for implementation:

Select a resource that includes collaborative or group-based activities so participants can explore the methodology in depth.

If participants are expected to test materials themselves in a teaching role, provide the resources before the training to allow adequate preparation.

Alternatively, consider organising an additional one-hour follow-up session where participants can test and reflect on the materials.

Where follow-up sessions are not feasible, participants may be invited to complete a short reflective or creative assignment, such as:

- Reviewing and analysing a Toolbox resource
- Designing complementary classroom activities
- Adapting materials for different age groups or educational contexts

Assignments should remain practical, engaging, and collaborative whenever possible.

The role of the teacher

Within the Zoom Out approach, the teacher is not positioned as the sole authority or “judge” of interpretation. Instead, the teacher acts as:

- A facilitator of dialogue
- A guide and mediator
- A reflective questioner
- A creator of safe and respectful learning environments
- An enabler of multiple perspectives and interpretations.

Challenges and Responses

Challenge	Possible Response
Fear of saying the wrong thing	Use guiding questions and reflective discussion techniques
Uncertainty when addressing sensitive topics	Follow the methodological framework step by step
Limited classroom time	Focus on core activities and divide resources across multiple sessions
Diverse reading or participation levels	Use mixed-format activities such as drawing, discussion, role-play, or collaborative work

Resources

- *From the page to the social context. A guide to approaching inequalities through an intersectional lens, using children's literature* <https://www.zoomoutproject.eu/handbook/>
- *Toolbox. Educational resources to approach inequalities through children's literature* <https://www.zoomoutproject.eu/toolbox/>
- Animation "What is a book for?" https://youtu.be/Jx_somgWNt4?si=D5SFMEnsT5qRdHM2
- Animation "You can do it... or not" <https://youtu.be/pfUHPy5BsFI?si=xm1Mtf6v0gg2lGeT>
- Animation "Children's literature & inequalities" <https://youtu.be/vt631FbDt60?si=OpcY3flfKyACaFhx>
- Illustrated book (available in [Catalan](#), [Euskera](#), Polish & [Spanish](#)).
- Activities to complement animations and illustrated book <https://www.zoomoutproject.eu/animation/>
- *Promising Practices Collection on children's literature and inequality* <https://www.zoomoutproject.eu/promising-practices/>
- Posters to raise awareness on inequalities in school <https://www.zoomoutproject.eu/campaign/>
- Song "Let the Books Be Earthquakes" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vBtmXUc4f8&list=PL7V3pxljKAJfFV22mouioSnzWTrBMjA1b&index=4>



Assessment & Evaluation

It is important to measure the effectiveness of the training in achieving the learning objectives and making any necessary adjustments for improvement.

Please find below a proposal to be adapted to each context:

Rate each statement from 1 to 5

1 = Strongly disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly agree

- **Clarity of content:** The materials and explanations were clear and easy to understand.
- **Practical relevance:** The training content is useful and applicable to my teaching practice.
- **Interest:** I am interested in incorporating intersectionality in my teaching practice.
- **Participation opportunities:** I had enough chances to engage and share experiences.
- **Learning:** My understanding of the concept of intersectionality has increased.
- **Organization:** The structure and management of the training were effective.
- **Timing:** The duration of the sessions was appropriate.
- **Expectations:** The training met my needs and expectations.
- **Overall satisfaction:** I am satisfied with the training overall.

Open questions:

- What did you like most about this training?
- What did you like least about this training?
- Which topics or areas would you like to explore further in relation to today's training content?
- Do you have any additional comments or suggestions on how we can improve the training?



zoom out

intersectionality
and children's books



This project has been funded with support from
the European Commission.

This publication [communication] reflects the
views only of the author, and the Commission
cannot be held responsible for any use which may
be made of the information contained therein.

