

Values and culture - lesson plan

TITLE:	Values and culture: Change of the women's position in society on the example of Botticelli's Birth of the Venus and it's pop culture counterpart Harley Quinn
TIME NEEDED:	1 - 1,5 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED:	Projector or the pictures printed out
PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS:	Young people, 13-18 years of age

DESCRIPTION (STEP-BY-STEP):

1) Energizer

- Open the session with an energizer to raise the energy level of the group and set a good mood (see Energizers educational material at debatenotargue.eu).

2) Introduction

- Open discussion on what the position of women used to look like in the past and how it changed.
 - How is the life and status of women different today than in 15th century (when Sandro Botticelli lived), or 50 years ago (when your grandparents were your age)?
- Brainstorm ideas and write them all down.

3) Working with the pictures

- Show Botticelli's Birth of Venus to the participants. Let the participants brainstorm how they perceive this piece of art and what it reveals about the role of women in society back then.
- Show the poster, which serves as an advertisement for the film Harley Quinn, to the participants. Let them brainstorm about the women's representation in the poster.
- Note the observations made during both brainstorming sessions. Afterwards, compare the notes.
 - What are the main differences between the depiction of Venus and Harley Quinn?
 - How are these differences linked to the general perception of women in 15th century and nowadays?

4) Discussion

- In the final part of the lesson, the idea is to discuss how the media (in this case the two pictures) are shaped by the society's perceptions and how the society's perceptions are shaped by the media.

- Suggested questions:
 - Can both pictures be considered equal in terms of artistic value? Does the cultural background influence the artistic value?
 - What is the purpose of each picture? How does the purpose of the pictures influence the way they look and depict women?
 - What are some other way in which media influence our perception of different social groups?
 - What is your personal experience with media shaping your opinion concerning a social group? How did your impression change after you got acquainted with the members of said group in person?

5) Reflection

- In the rest of the session, give the participants space to reflect on the discussion. These are some of the questions you can ask?
 - How did you feel about the workshop?
 - What did you learn/what did you find surprising?
 - Was any question difficult to answer? Did you manage to discover the answer after all?

HANDOUT

