

## Media literacy methodology and material for parents (grandparents)

# Moral Dilemmas in the Contemporary World



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

**apricot**



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

This intellectual output has been conceived and developed by the Strategic Partnership in APRICOT project under the coordination and responsibility of *Šiuolaikinių didaktikų centras/ Modern Didactics Centre* (LT).

**Thanks to all partners for their precious contributions:**

ItF Institut Kassel e.V. – Frauencomputerschule (DE)  
Planeta Ciencias (ES)  
Apricot Training Management Ltd. (UK)

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**Month/ Year:** November 2021

## 4 Moral Dilemmas in the Contemporary World

### 4.1 Introduction into the theme

Every day, our children face many questions that need to be answered, situations that need to be addressed. This can be especially challenging when it comes to complex or confusing subjects or moral choices. Parents can help children find the right solutions. In this section we provide some examples of how to discuss moral dilemmas.

### 4.2 BSL tool 1: Fair personal, interpersonal & social decisions

#### Description

Parents / grandparents can take the opportunity to discuss more complex issues while/after watching a film (documentary, animation or play film). The choice of film depends on the child's age, hobbies and specific situation.

We provide guidelines on how to discuss the topic of making responsible choices with support of the short movie "**Schwarzfahrer**"/ "**Black rider**", by Pepe Danquart.

We also suggest watching a mini-short story from the cycle "All the Invisible Children", such well known films as "Babel", "Hotel Rwanda", "The Firm" and similar, that create a space for discussions about personal, interpersonal and social responsibility, fair decisions.

#### Age range

This film can be watched and discussed with children of different ages, starting from 12 years and on.

#### Learning objectives

To develop critical analysis skills - careful and attentive viewing, attention to details, etc.

To develop critical questioning skills - to raise open questions of varying complexity.

To develop critical interpretation skills –to interpret content/plot referring to the facts/evidence.

To develop synthesis skills – to make links between different content/plot parts; to interlink person/interpersonal and social responsibility.

To develop critical evaluation and reflection skills - to make independent and reasoned judgments.

### Preparation for the activity

- Before watching the film together, parents/grandparents should watch it by themselves first, and be prepared for raising and discussing critical questions;
- Complexity of questions will depend on age and individual readiness to understand and to interpret the plot;
- Parents/grandparents have to choose the best time for such activity. For example, to use it as complimentary material while preparing school projects, analyzing topics of ethnicity and globalization, anger and hatred, tolerance and intolerance, etc. Or to take opportunities as they arise to discuss the issue of personal responsibility in a social environment.
- The film duration is 10 minutes. Parents/grandparents may decide to watch the entire film at once or to watch it in separate parts by making stops for discussions. Choice depends on such factors as children's ability to focus attention, available time for discussions, etc. We present step-by step instructions for the second option below.

### Activity step-by step

In order to evoke interest in the film, it is advisable to start by guessing "*what will the film be about?*". Several keywords can be used, such as *Berlin, tramway, old lady*. Or another image from the film can be used as stimulus for the initial discussion.



danquart.de

- Allocate 3-5 minutes to share different scenarios about the possible film plot. Use your imagination!
- Before starting to watch the 1st part, ask children to be attentive and observe different acting characters - who are they; how do they look; what do they do?

Recommended stops and questions for discussions:

First part: 0:00-2:17

1<sup>st</sup> stop:

- What did you notice?
- What drew your attention? Why?
- What was strange or/and unusual? Why?
- What will happen next?

Second part: 2:18- 5:03

2<sup>nd</sup> stop:

- What drew your attention? Why?
- What do you think about the old lady?
- What do you think about the passengers?
- How do they behave? Why do they behave like....?
- What will happen next?

Third part: 5:04- 7:30

3<sup>rd</sup> stop:

- What happened in this part?
- What drew your attention? Why?
- What do you think about the young black man?
- Did you notice any change in the passengers' behaviour? What exactly?
- What do you think about the sound and music in this part? What does it mean?
- What will happen next?

Fourth part: 7:31- 9:59

Last stop:

- What do you think about the resolution of the situation?
- Is it fair/not fair? For whom?
- How do you treat personal decisions not to interfere/to keep silent?
- On what factors is interpersonal conflict based?
- How do you treat the tram's small society? How could you name it?
- Who was black rider?
- Was the plot very far from/close to what you thought it might be?
- What would you ask the film director?

#### Further discussion

- What did you learn?
- What does this story mean to you?

#### Some doubts that may arise

*Are the discussions going to be too short or too superficial?* – They might be short and not very deep at the very beginning. Don't worry! Children (and you!) have to develop their experience of such discussions. It might also be a little bit chaotic – it is difficult to keep flow. Things will improve the more you practice the activities.

*Where to make stops and how many?* - The stops should not be too far apart or too close together. Each stop should be at a logical point – where something ends and/or something new is expected to begin.

*Are all the thoughts and ideas the children have acceptable?* – Yes, they are, even if not well expressed or justified. It is a good opportunity to learn how to express ideas and to support them with evidence

*What if the film is being watched by children of different ages?* - It is a good family learning opportunity! Smaller children will be learning from elders. Sometimes small children will

notice tiny, but important details, and raise unexpected questions. You are welcome to include senior family members in the discussion as well.

*Can all films be analyzed?* – Those who have good ideas, dynamics, are evoking and provoking discussions.

### Questions for reflection, self-assessment and conclusions

- What do you think your children learned?
- What did you learn?
- What was most difficult?
- What would you do differently next time?

### Recommendations on how to adapt to different age-groups

For primary school children (up to 10) – use short animation, children’s films; pose fewer questions, give more space for free talking;

For 15- 18 years – use open questions to discuss any film (possibly without planning stopping points), story, event.

We also suggest:

For 10-14 years - a mini story from the cycle "All the Invisible Children"

For 15- 18 years - well known films “Babel”, “Hotel Rwanda”, “The Firm” and similar ones, that create space for discussions about personal, interpersonal and social responsibility, fair decisions.

It is recommended to make references to personal experience in all cases.

### References

Links to the short movie “Black Rider”

Original language (German):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWnSv0MMTns>

With English subtitles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFQXcv1k9OM&t=30s>

With Spanish subtitles:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCuKG-jZDoY>

Lithuanian subtitles in written - in Annex 1

to use while watching movie with English subtitles:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFQXcv1k9OM&t=30s>

### 4.3 BSL tool 2: Society of Appearance/ Image

#### Introduction into the sub-theme

Our society is often said to be appearance or image based. Many people struggle in their attempts to satisfy certain physical or behavioural standards set by society. People are afraid to stand out from the crowd, seeking recognition. Children and teens are among the most vulnerable groups.

Parents/grandparents can help their children to understand the true meaning of the proverb “don’t judge a book by its cover”. They can use different positive examples, to show that a person’s appearance does not make them ‘better’ or ‘worse’ than anyone else.

In this section we provide an example of how to discuss the issue of image and appearance with younger school age children.

#### Society of appearance/image

##### Description

Parents / grandparents are encouraged to discuss this topic while reading stories together at any convenient time (not only at bedtime)

We provide guidelines on how to discuss the topic with support of the short story “Black sheep”, by Bruno Ferrero.

##### Age range

The story can be discussed with children ages 6-10. The age range may differ depending on children's maturity and readiness to discuss such issues.

##### Learning objectives

To develop critical analysis skills - careful and attentive reading, attention to details, etc.

To develop critical questioning skills - to raise open questions of varying complexity

To develop critical interpretation skills –to interpret content/plot referring to the facts/evidence;

To develop synthesis skills – to make links between different content/plot parts; to interlink person/interpersonal and social responsibility

To develop critical evaluation and reflection skills - to make independent and reasoned judgments

### Preparation for the activity

- Before reading with children, parents/grandparents should read it themselves first and be prepared to raise and discuss critical questions;
- Complexity of questions will depend on age and individual readiness to understand and to interpret the plot;
- Parents/grandparents have to choose the best time for such activity. For example, after (or before) a school, neighborhood or community event
- Parents/grandparents may decide to read the entire story in one go or in separate parts by making stops for discussions. Choice depends on such factors as children's ability to focus attention, available time for discussions, etc. We present step-by step instructions for the second option below.

### Activity step-by step

In order to evoke interest in the story, it is advisable to start by guessing "what will the story be about?". Several keywords can be used, such as *black sheep, a journey, flocks*.

First question: *What do you think the story will be about?*

- Allocate some time to share different scenarios about the possible plot of the story. And raise interest, provoke intrigue!
- Start reading first part:

*Once there was a black sheep. All the other sheep in the flock were white. They were disgusted by the black sheep and treated the black sheep badly. Whenever they saw her, they would begin to bleat: Go away from us. You are a freak. A mistake. They were happy only when they saw the black sheep begin to cry.*

*Belinda, a fat white sheep, was especially mean to the black sheep. She was the leader of the flock. All the other sheep always followed her. They all did whatever she did.*

1<sup>st</sup> stop:

- How do you imagine the flock? Please describe.
- How would you describe Belinda as a leader?
- What does it mean to you to be a leader?
- What do you think will happen next?

Second part

The black sheep was sad. She wanted to be like the others. However, she could not change her colour. Sometimes she tried to run away and hide. But she always came back in the end because she did not know how to live on her own.

2<sup>nd</sup> stop:

- What does it mean to be like others?
- How much is a person free to be different, unique?
- What do you think will happen next?



Third part:

Belinda was strong and proud. She decided to set out on a journey to learn about life. She soon came across new pastures. Whenever she met a new flock she stood among them and said proudly: "I am the leader of my flock. Everyone listens to me. I am the one who decides what to do."

*One day Belinda met a much larger and unusual flock. All the sheep in this flock were black. At first she was surprised, and then she began to giggle. She was so sure that her white coat was superior that she swayed back and forth laughing at them. She approached them.*

3<sup>rd</sup> stop:

- What can you say about Belinda? What new things have you found out about her?
- What do you think will happen next?

Fourth part:

*However, the entire flock began to laugh at her derisively. Belinda did not even have the chance to react when one strong black sheep looked at her and said: "Has anyone ever seen anything funnier than this. We will tear that awful coat from you and then we will see what is underneath." The entire flock began to laugh. Belinda turned and ran as fast as she could. The black flock stood and laughed at her. She ran as far as another pasture where she saw another large flock.*

4<sup>th</sup> stop:

- How would you describe the flock Belinda has met? Compare your vision with the vision about the first flock. Are they different or similar? How?
- What do you think will happen next?

Fifth part

She had never seen a flock like this before: there were black sheep, white sheep, brown sheep, spotted sheep, all mixed together into one flock. Now that she had lost confidence, she stopped and wondered: "How will this flock treat me?"

5<sup>th</sup> stop:

- How will this new flock treat Belinda?
- What do you think will happen next?

Last part:

*A sheep noticed her and asked her sincerely: "Where did you come from?" "I came from the other side of the mountain," Belinda answered. A black sheep approached them and Belinda prepared herself to run. The black sheep said: "Don't be afraid. Stay here with us as long as you like? The grass is very green here. We will welcome you here." Belinda stayed with that flock for two days. Then she decided to return home. Before she said good-bye to the flock, she said: "You are the best flock in the world. You accept and respect sheep of all colours. In our flock there is only one black sheep."*

Last stop:

- You have read about three different flocks in the text. Please, compare these situations with real life.
- Have you ever been in such "different flocks" situations? What does it mean in real life?

#### Further discussion

- What did Belinda learn about life on the journey? Would Belinda have learnt it without the journey?
- What did you learn?
- What does this story mean to you?

#### Some doubts that may arise

*How will it go? Will it be interesting to children?* – It might be chaotic at the very beginning. Don't worry! Children (and you!) need to gain experience of such discussions. Things will improve the more you practice these activities.

*Where to make stops and how many?* - The stops should not be too far apart or too close together. All stops should be logical – something is ending and/or something new is expected to begin. If stops make no sense for you (or you don't feel comfortable doing it) read the entire story.

*What if the story is read to children of different ages?* - It is a good family learning opportunity! They will learn from each other. You are welcome to include senior family members in the discussion as well.

*Can all stories be analyzed in the same or similar manner?* – Those stories that have useful ideas, dynamics, are evoking and provoking discussions.

#### Questions for reflection, self-assessment and conclusions

- What do you think your children have learned?
- What did you learn?
- What was most difficult?
- What would you do differently next time?

#### Recommendations on how to adapt to different age-groups

For smaller children (kindergarten, pre-primary) – use fairy tales, pose fewer questions, give more space for free talking. If telling the “Black sheep” story, ask children to draw a picture of the characters, especially the colourful flock.

For 10-14 years – choose films or/and real-life events to discuss while posing open questions.

It is recommended to make references to personal experience in all cases.

## References

Bruno Ferrero (2009). 365 trumpi pasakojimai sielai. Vilnius. Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai.  
 “Black sheep” translated from Lithuanian into English by Laima Vincė-Sruoginis  
 Bruno Ferrero. “365 short stories for the soul”

## 4.4 BSL tool 3: Role model promoted by the digital culture

### Introduction into the subtheme

We are all influenced by the digital culture that we are a part of. From early childhood, children observe people (including parents) engaged in different activities using digital devices. Adults, therefore, become digital role models for our children. If digital media takes up most of our time, it distances us from our children and harms our relationships. Children will also start to imitate adults’ behaviour. Children may distance themselves not only from their own parents, but also from their peers.

As a part of the wider culture, digital culture can be nurtured in a meaningful way in family life. Digital content and communication can be used to bring together different generations, rather than divide them. It can provide great material for discussions about both positive and negative things that impact on our own thoughts, decisions and behaviours. Parents (grandparents) can discuss different hot topics – stereotyping, bullying, commercialization, manipulation, etc. In this section we provide an example on how to talk about the benefits and harm of advertisements.

### The benefits and Harm of Advertisements

#### Description

Advertisements are everywhere and demand the attention of even the youngest of children. They can shape children’s opinions, habits and choices. Here’s an example to illustrate how to discuss the meaning of an advertisement and what it does effect.

#### Age range

From kindergarten to upper secondary school.

#### Learning objectives

To develop critical analysis skills - careful and attentive observation, attention to detail etc.  
 To develop critical questioning skills - to raise open questions.  
 To develop critical interpretation skills –to interpret content/plot referring to the facts/evidence.  
 To develop critical reflection – to evaluate one’s habits, way of thinking, approaches.

### Preparation for the activity

- Before discussion with children, parents/grandparents have to choose an ad and be prepared to raise questions and start discussions.
- Choice of ad and way of discussing will depend on age and situation/context.
- Parents/grandparents have to choose the best time for such activity. For example, after watching a film/movie; before going to buy something; waiting for public transportation and looking at outdoor ads/billboards.

### Activity step-by step

**Step 1.** Think, remember the ads you like or dislike. Ask for examples and justify your assessment. Possible questions for parents/ grandparents:

- What kind of advertising do you like the most / don't like it and why?
- What makes advertising special and eye-catching?
- Why do you think so, on what basis do you say so?

Discuss and evaluate specific ads selected by children in more detail.

- Are they really persuasive, what message do they convey, what values do they demonstrate? Do they display stereotypical approaches? If so, what stereotypes are there?

**Step 2.** Let's analyze a specific advertisement, its purpose, nature, aesthetic and ethical aspects based on specific episodes, details. Possible parents' questions:

- What does an ad want you to know? What is it for? What details are important, beautiful, interesting?
- How to make sure the information in it is correct? How does / does it help to understand, decide, choose?
- Do they use stereotypical thinking, persuade or mislead?

Finally, consider what the children think would be the best (or perhaps worst) advertisement. For example, encouraging nature conservation, sorting rubbish, reading, studying, being careful on the road, consuming healthy products, behaving safely online, choosing quality goods, services, and so on.

Ask the children to justify their choice and list the features of the best / worst advertising.

**Step 3.** Encourage children to imagine and name, in their opinion, the best / worst advertisement by presenting specific features of good and / or bad advertising. Possible parents' questions:

- What do you think is the best advertisement? What does it need to be and what should it not be? Why?
- What would be the worst ad? Why? How do we recognize good or bad advertising?

With this task, we want to say that it is suitable for teaching children to look more closely at the mass product of public opinion formation, to analyze and evaluate advertising in various aspects, and to rely on specific examples.

A closer look will help reflection on children's pre-formed attitudes and opinions. Evaluate advertisements not only in isolation but also in terms of the wider society. It is possible to discuss with older children how similar and different commercial and social advertisements are.

### Some doubts that may arise

- *Is it a good example to discuss?* – a good example is one that interests children, draws their attention;
- *Is it a good time to discuss?* – you can use any opportunities that arise when with your children to discuss an advertisement or/and you have to make choices based on an advertisement;
- *Are we competent enough to discuss?* - what matters is not professional competence but the discussion itself.

### Questions for reflection, self-assessment and conclusions

- What do you think your children have learned?
- What did you learn?
- What was most difficult?
- What would you do differently next time?

### Recommendations on how to adapt to different age-groups

It should be kept in mind that the types of advertisements used will vary according to each child - their age, experience, hobbies, tastes, has his/her own concept of "good" or "bad" advertisements.

It is recommended to refer to personal experience – share how advertising has impacted your own thoughts and behaviour in any time of your life.

### References

Bakonis, E., Indrašienė, V., Penkauskaitė, U., Penkauskienė, D., Rakovas, T. (2014). Rekomendacijos tėvams apie vaikų ir jaunimo kritinio mąstymo ugdymą [*Recommendations for parents on developing critical thinking in children and young people*]. Vilnius, Šiuolaikinių didaktikų centras. ISBN 978-609-95515-3-1.

## Annex 1. Black Rider, by Pepe Danquart

Lithuanian translation of subtitles

Time	Text English	Text Lithuanian
0:44	Black Rider	
0:47	By Pepe Danquart	rež. Pepe Danquart filmas
2:16	Is that seat taken?	Ar čia laisva?
2:58	You lout...	Ei, drimba...
2:59	why don't you sit somewhere else?	kodėl neatsisėdi kur nors kitur?
3:02	There are enough empty seats here.	Čia pilna laisvų vietų.
3:06	One can't even ride the tram anymore	Negali žmogus jau ir tramvajumi pavažiuoti,
3:08	without getting pestered!	kad kas nesuerzintų!
3:12	If you live off our taxes	Jei gyvenate iš mūsų mokesčių,
3:14	you should at least behave properly.	galėtumėte bent jau tinkamai elgtis.
3:22	It's not as if it were so difficult to adapt to our customs!	Nėra gi taip jau sunku prisitaikyti prie mūsų tradicijų/ tvarkos!
3:38	Why do you all come here anyway?	Kodėl jūs iš viso čia atvykstate?
3:41	Did anyone invite you?	Ar jus kas nors kvietė?
3:45	We've managed by ourselves.	Mes susitvarkome ir patys.
3:48	We don't need all these savages living off us!	Mums nereikia visų šių laukinių, gyvenančių mūsų sąskaita!
3:55	We've got enough unemployed of our own...	Mes turime užtektinai savo bedarbių...
4:00	And then they all work illegally.	Paskui jie visi dar ir nelegaliai dirba.
4:04	It's impossible	Ir neįmanoma
4:05	to control them	jų kontroliuoti,
4:06	since they all look the same!	jie visi atrodo vienodai!
4:11	We should at least make them change their names	Mes turėtume bent jau priversti juos pasikeisti vardus
4:14	before they arrive here.	prieš čia atvykstant.

4:16	How else are we supposed to...	Kaip kitaip turėtume
4:18	tell them apart!	juos atskirti!
4:25	What's more,	O be viso to,
4:26	You smell awful.	jūs dar ir dvokiate.
4:28	But of course,	Bet žinoma,
4:30	there is no law against that...	to nereguliuoja joks įstatymas...
5:31	As if the Italians and Turks weren't enough!	Lyg italų ir turkų būtų negana!
5:35	Now half of Africa is coming too!	Dar ir pusė Afrikos atvyksta!
5:44	In the past	Anksčiau
5:45	we wouldn't have allowed them all in.	nebūtume jų visų įsileidę.
5:49	My Hans always said, if you let one in	Mano Hansas visada sakydavo – įsileisi vieną
5:53	They'll all come	visi sulėks,
5:54	the whole tribe of them...	visa jų padermė...
5:59	They breed like rabbits over there, all mixed up together...	Jie dauginasi kaip triušiai, visi susimaišę tarpusavyje...
6:22	It's no wonder they've all got AIDS!	Nenuostabu, kad jie visi serga AIDS!
6:25	We'll never get rid of them.	Mes niekada jų neatsikratysime.
6:28	If it carries on like this	Jei toliau taip tęsis,
6:30	there'll soon be nothing but Turks, Polish and niggers here.	greitai čia neliks nieko, išskyrus turkus, lenkus ir negrus.
6:36	We won't be able to tell what country we're living in.	Patys nebegalėsime pasakyti, kurioje šalyje gyvename.
7:36	Good morning. Tickets please!	Laba diena. Paruoškite jūsų bilietus!
7:42	Just my luck! What a lousy day!	„Pasisekė“! Na ir nevykusi diena!
7:58	I'm scared to go out	Aš bijau šiais laikais
8:00	when it's dark these days.	ir į lauką išeiti sutemus.
8:02	The things you see in the paper!	Užtenka jau vien to, ką laikraščiai rašo!
8:06	At any rate, we bought a dog	Mes net šunį nusipirkome,

8:08	when those Turks moved into the apartment below us.	kai tie turkai atsikraustė į butą apačioje.
8:12	You can't be too careful!	Atsargumo niekada nebus per daug!
8:14	Welfare cases!	Galimybių jie ieško!
8:16	What a joke! It's just that they don't want to work!	Vienas juokas! Jie tiesiog tingi dirbti!
8:24	Mum, look!	Mama, pažiūrėk!
8:36	May I see your tickets please?	Ar galėčiau pamatyti jūsų bilietus?
8:41	This nigger just ate it!	Šitas negras jį ką tik suvalgė!
8:52	I've never heard such a stupid excuse!	Tokio kvailo pasiteisinimo dar niekada negirdėjau!
8:56	If you haven't got a ticket would you please	Jei neturite bilieto, prašau,
8:58	come along with me?	eikite su manim.
9:10	They eat our tickets, I tell you.	Jis suvalgė mano bilietą, sakau jums.
9:14	I had it just now.	Aš tik ką jį turėjau.
9:16	I assure you, I've never fare-dodged in my life.	Patikėkite, aš niekada gyvenime nesu važiavusi be bilieto.
9:10	Everybody saw what happened...	Visi matė, kas atsitiko...
9:23	I can't understand it...	Nesuprantu...
9:25	They all saw it...	Jie visi tai matė...