

Using art to promote critical thinking in the EFL classroom

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**Relatório da Prática de Ensino Supervisionada
do Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês
no 3º Ciclo do Ensino Básico e no Ensino Secundário**

Setembro 2024

Relatório da Prática de Ensino Supervisionada apresentado para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Ensino de Inglês no 3º Ciclo do Ensino Básico e no Ensino Secundário orientação científica de Professora Doutora Chrysi Rapanta e Professora Doutora Lili Cavalheiro

Acknowledgments

Throughout these two years, I had the opportunity to learn more about education and teaching. I gained insights into various strategies to become a better teacher and to help my students learn more effectively. This journey was made possible by the teachers who helped me and inspired me to improve with every class, making me aware that while every student is different, each one should feel they belong in my classroom.

Among those teachers, I would like to thank my Professors Lili Cavaleiro and Chrysi Rapanta for their support and guidance throughout these two years and in particular during the practicum. Their insights were crucial for the development of this report. I am also grateful to Professor Ana Matos for her academic rigor, kindness, and openness, and for teaching me to be more open-minded.

I also would like to express my gratitude to my cooperating teacher, Ana Dias, for her time, patience, and valuable advice. Her willingness to listen and help me further was invaluable. Additionally, I thank the other two English teachers at the school, Paula Barrocas and Maria João Dias, for their support, resourcefulness, and readiness to assist me. I am also thankful to João Gomes, the headmaster of the school, for always being available and for providing me the support I needed.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Débora for her incredible patience, support, laughter, and good mood, especially when I struggled to find the motivation to meet my goals and finish this master's degree.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my parents for their unconditional love, support, patience, and understanding. Their encouragement has always pushed me to move forward, and their words and warmth will always be with me.

Resumo

A investigação surge do interesse em como a arte pode promover o pensamento crítico na aprendizagem do Inglês como Língua Estrangeira. Este estudo foi desenvolvido numa escola privada em Lisboa, no ano letivo 2023/2024, no âmbito da Prática de Ensino Supervisionada, tendo visado observar a aprendizagem de alunos do 8º e 11º anos segundo uma abordagem pedagógica baseada no ensino através da arte. Esta abordagem focou-se essencialmente no uso de pinturas, fotografias, instalações e vídeos como forma de reforçar a interação entre alunos e melhorar as suas competências linguísticas.

A recolha de dados para o presente estudo baseou-se na observação em sala de aula, pré-testes no início do ano letivo e pós-testes no final, bem como questionários e entrevistas por grupo focal. Os principais resultados sugerem que uma abordagem pedagógica baseada no ensino através da arte promove a aprendizagem dos alunos, assim como o desenvolvimento do pensamento crítico, já que os envolve na discussão de temas complexos, promovendo a interação. Esta abordagem ajuda os alunos a estabelecer ligações entre conhecimentos já assimilados e novos conceitos, aprofundando assim a sua compreensão acerca de um tema de interesse.

Por fim, uma abordagem pedagógica baseada no ensino através da arte beneficia não só os alunos proficientes em inglês, mas também aqueles com maiores dificuldades na aprendizagem da língua, já que promove a interação entre alunos e desenvolve o pensamento crítico. Através desta abordagem, os alunos são desafiados a pensar criticamente, a discutir de forma ponderada e a articular ideias, reforçando assim as competências linguísticas. De um modo geral, uma abordagem pedagógica baseada no ensino através da arte fomenta um ambiente de aprendizagem mais dinâmico e envolvente, que apoia a aprendizagem da língua e o pensamento crítico.

Palavras-chave: Pensamento crítico, Inglês como língua estrangeira, Pedagogia baseada em arte

Abstract

This action research originated from the interest in exploring how art could promote critical thinking in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Conducted during the Supervised Teaching Practicum at a private school in Lisbon in the 2023/2024 school year, the study observed grade 8 and grade 11 student responses to an Art-Based Pedagogy (ABP) approach. This approach focused on artworks such as paintings, photography, art installations, and videos to enhance student interaction and improve language skills.

Data collection methods included class observations, a pre-intervention assessment task at the beginning of the school year, and a post-intervention assessment task, surveys, and focus group interviews at the end. Results suggest that an ABP approach supports students' learning and critical thinking skills by encouraging them to engage with complex issues through discussions and interactions centered around artworks. This approach helped students connect prior knowledge with new concepts, thereby deepening their understanding and learning.

Overall, the ABP approach benefits both proficient and less proficient students by fostering interaction and critical thinking skills. Students are challenged to think critically, discuss thoughtfully, and articulate ideas clearly, which significantly enhances their language skills. Ultimately, the ABP approach provides a dynamic and engaging learning environment that supports language learning and critical thinking skills.

Keywords: Critical thinking, EFL classroom, Art-based pedagogy

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABP – Art-Based Pedagogy

AR – Action research

CE – Council of Europe

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

DGE – Direção Geral de Educação

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

STP – Supervised Teaching Practicum

Introduction

In a highly globalized world where technology rapidly changes social interactions, the economy, and the environment, the *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development* (OECD) suggests that educators should be prepared to address these changes and provide students with the skills needed to succeed (OECD, 2018). According to *The Future of Education and Skills, Education 2030*, the social challenges we face are largely driven by population growth and how individuals are coping with migration flows, cultural diversity, and politics (OECD, 2018). These dynamics are further highlighted by *The Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027*, issued by the European Commission (2020), which notes that migration flows have been increasing, declaring that 34 million EU inhabitants were born outside the European Union and that around 10% of young individuals have at least one foreign-born parent.

When focusing on the country of this study, similar trends are observed in Portugal. As of 2022, there were 782,000 foreign residents living in Portugal, accounting for 7.5% of the total population. The *Relatório Estatístico Anual 2023 - Indicadores de Integração de Imigrantes* indicates that this represents an increase of 11.9% compared to 2021 (Oliveira, 2023). Given this reality, the classroom, and, in particular, the foreign language classroom (Byram, 2008), can serve as a starting point to avoid situations of segregation and to include, integrate, and represent the different cultural identities within a school community.

To embrace and understand these changes, education should work on the development of metacognitive skills such as critical thinking. The guidelines stated in the *Aprendizagens Essenciais* for the English language, provided by the *Direção Geral de Educação* (DGE, 2018) for grades eight and eleven which correspond to B1 and B2 levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2018), along with those in the *Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória* (Martins et al., 2017), clearly emphasize the importance of critical thinking inside the

classroom. These guidelines highlight how critical thinking can help students develop their communication and interaction skills while also enabling them to produce evidence-based responses.

In accordance with the DGE (2018) and OECD (2018), the *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture*, issued by the Council of Europe (2018b), also identifies critical thinking skills as a key competency for democratic culture. These skills encourage students to engage in dialogue by promoting the discussion of diverse opinions, which helps them understand and accept different perspectives, regardless of cultural or political differences. While participating in classroom discussions, students simultaneously practice their oral skills, as they need to articulate their thoughts clearly to express their opinions effectively (Pinza-Tapia et al., 2021).

The development of critical thinking is essential as it enables students to observe, analyze, and evaluate information, allowing them to make well-informed decisions based on thoughtful reflection. This shift places students at the center of the learning process, leading to a paradigm change, moving from a teacher-centered to a student-centered approach, as suggested by the OECD (2018) in *The Future of Education and Skills, Education 2030*. In this same line, DGE (2018) recommends that for grades eight and eleven, English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers may employ certain strategies to foster critical thinking inside their classroom, such as promoting debates to enhance argumentation skills, reading texts that portray different perspectives, examining the pros and cons of different events, and analyzing concepts and theories from different points of view.

Adding to the above, using art is another effective method to promote critical thinking skills and oral interaction. When teachers adopt an Art-Based Pedagogy (ABP) approach, students are further engaged in the learning processes, as they are required to develop their critical thinking skills (Hunter & Frawley, 2023). By analyzing artwork from different perspectives, students are not only asked to think critically about the piece but they are also motivated and engaged, playing an active part in their learning process. Eisner (2003) suggests that art motivates students by challenging them to explore deeper meanings and perceive the world in new ways. This exploration often creates a sense of

discomfort, which, when discussed in the classroom, fosters communication and promotes meaningful discussions.

With this research, I aim to explore how art-based discussions can raise students' awareness and critical understanding regarding several social issues (i.e., the environment, mental health, eating habits, consumerism, and the use of technology) highlighted in the *Aprendizagens Essenciais* (DGE, 2018) for grades eight and eleven. In particular, I look at whether discussions stimulated by an artwork can foster students' interaction, curiosity, and reflection, encouraging them to look at complex social issues from an analytical and informed perspective.

Given the focus of this study and considering the skills recommended by the OCDE (2018), as well as the guidelines provided by the *CEFR* (2020) and the *Aprendizagens Essenciais* (DGE, 2018), this report points out two research questions:

1. How can art-based discussions promote the development of critical thinking skills?
2. How can art-based discussions promote oral interaction while developing critical thinking skills?

To address these questions, the study was conducted during the 2023/2024 academic year at Colégio Valsassina, a private school in Lisbon. As for the participants, I selected two classes of grade eight students and two classes of grade eleven. Throughout the academic year, I observed lessons taught by the cooperating teachers and taught those same students – ten lessons to grade eight and ten lessons to grade 11. In terms of the activities and materials used throughout this study, I focused on the use of contemporary art, such as paintings, installations, sculptures, and photography, and used the artwork to stimulate critical thinking either in individual or group work. The decision to use contemporary art was based on it portraying the daily life of today's individuals by addressing issues felt by society (de Arriba et al., 2019).

Chapter 1. Theoretical framework

The first chapter of this study establishes the theoretical foundation for the research by focusing on two key themes: Critical Thinking and Art-Based Pedagogy (ABP). These themes are divided into two sections. The first section explores critical thinking and its role in language learning and its integration with art. The second section focuses on ABP, its use as a motivational strategy, and its effectiveness in language learning.

1.1. Critical thinking

Literature suggests critical thinking as a construct, viewed as a means to enhance cognitive processes by encouraging individuals to reflect on their thoughts (Paul & Elder, 2019; Pithers & Soden, 2000; Kuhn, 1999). Critical thinking is “good thinking”, as it involves a metacognitive process requiring reflection on what is read or listened to, to provide analytical opinions on a certain topic while evaluating different perspectives (Báez, 2004; Lampert, 2006).

Pithers and Soden (2000) recognize critical thinking as a competency that involves the careful analysis of a complex issue, where the individual identifies and analyses the different approaches related to the issue to clearly understand it. According to Murawski (2014), critical thinkers are perceived as individuals who are aware of problematic issues, and in the face of which, they start developing strategies to understand and overcome them. These strategies include being active and engaged listeners, seeking evidence to support arguments, and avoiding personal emotions and extreme points of view. In contrast, non-critical thinkers often base their opinions on quick judgments and stereotypes that fall within one-sided perspectives (Murawski, 2014; Rugiero, 2012). Halpern (2013) asserts that critical thinkers should serve the purpose of solving complex issues based on reason, inferences, and conscious reflections. To accomplish this, Halpern (2013) suggests that critical thinkers should gather several characteristics, such as: “understanding how cause is determined, recognizing and criticizing assumptions, analyzing means-goals

relationships, giving reasons to support a conclusion, assessing degrees of likelihood and uncertainty, incorporating isolated data into a wider framework, and using analogies to solve problems. (Halpern, 2013, p.2)". When considering the implementation of critical thinking inside the classroom, Halpern (2013a) suggests a set of strategies that teachers could use to support student learning and thinking. According to Halpern (2013), it is suggested that educators should be able to teach the skills essential to think critically, such as structuring clear arguments and analyzing or reflecting upon a certain problem. Furthermore, it should also be taught how to engage with a complex issue and how to solve it regardless of the challenges it might bring. Moreover, educators should teach students to organize their thinking and how to direct their cognitive and meta-cognitive skills to solve a problem despite their context and complexity. From another perspective, Pithers and Soden (2000) suggest that critical thinking should not be taught as separate content or as a different subject, but teachers should rather approach and enhance critical thinking while teaching their own subjects.

Another way to enhance students' ability to think critically about the topics learnt in and outside school is to challenge their knowledge by asking them to prove what they perceive as facts or to explain general truths by getting information and arguments to support those beliefs (Pithers & Soden, 2000). Pithers and Soden (2000) also claim that students should put aside the idea that the concept of "truth" should be carefully considered as it may change according to the context and that students should be intellectually independent and open to analyze each case and scenario differently.

The role of the teacher is crucial when integrating critical thinking within the classroom, as it is the teacher who guides students throughout their learning processes. On this note, Pithers and Soden (2000) propose that teachers are also responsible for inhibiting students' critical thinking when they do not promote class discussion and reflection, when they do not support the students to become independent thinkers, or when they are not confident in their academic growth. Overall, when teachers have a class with students who tend to be impulsive, close-minded, and overdependent and do not understand the importance of empathy and respect towards others, then they need to help students

understand the importance of “good thinking” and the effects of it in their future, before engaging them in critical discussions.

To conclude, the importance of critical thinking lies in the fact that it contributes to a judgment based on careful considerations, which will prevent extreme and impulsive reactions, thus enabling individuals to better assess and respond to challenging opinions, events, or approaches (Razaei et al., 2011).

1.2. Critical thinking and language learning

The use of critical thinking in the classroom has been recognized in the literature as a way to enhance students’ language proficiency, particularly regarding communication skills and spoken interaction (Liang & Fung, 2021). In an EFL classroom, critical thinking serves as a strategy to promote and develop language skills, as it fosters students’ motivation, self-efficacy, confidence, curiosity, and creativity (Cunningsworth, 1995; Li, 2016). Learning a foreign language solely through a linguistic approach focused on grammar and vocabulary can limit students’ understanding of the language’s social dimensions, which are essential to effective communication. Furthermore, by incorporating a holistic approach that includes both linguistic and social aspects, students will feel more confident when expressing themselves, being able to communicate and clearly articulate ideas (Ruano, 2021).

Kuhn (2019) suggests that critical thinking incorporates a social dimension into learning, as it involves engaging with other’s views, interpretations, and convictions, and when these are combined, they foster the development of speaking skills. As stated by Kuhn (1999):

critical thinking is a dialogical practice people commit to and thereby become disposed to exercise, more than an individual ability or skill. Critical thinking as dialogue is engaged initially interactively and then with practice in interiorized form. (Kuhn, 1999, p.148)

The social dimension and dialogical approach suggested by Kuhn (2019) emphasizes

how our beliefs and ideologies evolve through interaction and exchange of different perspectives. This social dimension brought by critical thinking plays a valuable role in fostering class discussion and interaction, as it facilitates and enables debating moments among students, who improve their speaking and interaction skills (Anderson et al., 2001).

When focusing particularly on oral interaction, speaking is considered the most challenging skill to master in a foreign language. This is because effective verbal communication requires a deep understanding of certain grammar structures, vocabulary usage, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension, and in most cases, students never experienced an authentic use of the language, which can be challenging when facing a situation where they need to make use of language structures while they think (Oradee, 2012). However, these skills are considered to be essential to proficiency in a foreign language, as they support verbal communication while conveying meaning since language and thought are intrinsically connected (Hayes & Davitt, 2008; Sanavari & Tarighat, 2014). Moreover, while practicing their speaking skills, students also practice their critical thinking skills, as from the moment they start discussing a certain topic, they analyze it, construct meaning, and find the best way to verbally articulate their ideas. Thus, while mixing critical thinking and speaking/interaction skills, students go beyond putting words together, they are required to build well-structured arguments, which they will use to convey an idea (Ramezani et al., 2016).

Ultimately, critical thinking can help students expand their knowledge of a language and streamline their communication while establishing meaningful connections. These connections are built not only through the words they learn, but also through the social aspects that are essential to a language.

1.3. Critical thinking through art

The use of artwork and the development of critical thinking skills in the classroom can complement each other effectively, as both strategies engage students by sparking curiosity and reflection (Lampert, 2006). According to Bishop (2004), incorporating artwork in the classroom can foster creativity and present both emotional and cognitive challenges,

as it has the potential to reshape viewer's beliefs, encouraging them to develop new perspectives. In accordance, Lampert (2006) believes that because art can be perceived through different views, it engages students in discussion, as it makes them share their ideas on the artwork. Consequently, critical thinking significantly enhances cognitive skills by challenging previously held beliefs while providing new evidence that can lead to different ideas, theories, or arguments (Dumitru, 2019; Eales-Reynolds et al., 2013)

Eisner (2002) suggests that art can teach students different approaches to learning in terms of learning expectations and results. This means that artwork opens up the space for different interpretations, and this is what facilitates different meanings to be constructed and subsequently shared. Furthermore, Eisner (2002) also notes that certain art concepts go beyond verbal explanations, and in those cases, critical thinking plays a key role in a deeper understanding of these ideas.

In terms of the advantages associated with the integration of art to promote critical thinking, Lukaka (2023) suggests that students who benefit from an art-based curriculum have a wider range of stimuli (from materials, colors, and forms), which will consequently foster the analytical skills and reflection leading them to establish connections between the different academic subjects, for instance, history, science or literature. Ultimately, integrating art and critical thinking in the classroom setting enriches the learning experiences by offering students a holistic perspective of the different school concepts.

1.4. Art-based pedagogy

Art, as a subjective field open to diverse interpretations based on individual backgrounds, serves as a powerful tool to foster discussions and cultivate communication and interaction skills within the classroom (Rieger et al., 2015). The use of art to support learning has been referred to in the literature as an art-based pedagogy approach, which is perceived as a strategy to use art to engage students in the learning processes while making them reflect and establish connections about what is being learned (Hunter & Frawley, 2023). As stated by Kieger et al. (2020), "ABP is a teaching approach in which students learn about another subject through responding to works of art, creating works of art, or

performing artistic works”(p.1). According to Hunter and Frawley (2023), ABP can be described as “a broad realm of creative, cognitive, and practical processes, including conceptualization, creating, performing, observing, using, integrating, and reflecting on art to understand other areas of knowledge and experience” (p. 14). In addition, Lee and Cawthon (2015) also perceive ABP as a strategy to make students aware of the content they are learning, not focusing solely on the final product, but rather on the process. As stated by the authors:

Arts-based pedagogies (ABP) describe arts-based teaching and learning strategies led by a facilitator to engage students in learning in both non-arts content (e.g., geometry, social/emotional skills, etc.) and arts content through a process rather than product-oriented experience. In other words, ABP focuses on how students learn and engage with the material rather than the final product or outcome. (Lee & Cawthon, 2015, p.2)

Considering the significance of ABP for students’ academic growth, Gullat (2008) believes that the integration of art within the classroom should not be perceived as extra material or as a complementary activity. Instead, arts should be regarded as a form of immersive learning in which students embrace what they are learning, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter (Gullat, 2008). As for the integration of arts inside the classroom, Bresler (1995) suggests four strategies/approaches that teachers can use, such as: (i) *the subservient approach* through which teachers use an art piece to spark interest towards a certain topic; (ii) *the co-equal cognitive integration approach*, through which teachers use art as means of teaching certain concepts, establishing a connection between art and what the students are learning from a theoretical perspective; (iii) *the affective approach*, through which students learn from a holistic approach, as the teacher provides an art piece and students need to construct meaning based on what the art piece provides; and (iv) *the social integration approach*, which is commonly used from kindergarten until 12th grade, and it has to do with a “hands-on” approach, through which

students put into practice what they learn, through an art form (Gullat, 2008). Thus, integrating art to enhance the learning processes not only fosters cognitive development but also brings an emotional dimension to the content, facilitating the learning process. As students engage with the artwork, they also develop emotions that draw them closer to the class content (Chemi, 2014).

Overall, an art-based approach aims to engage students in the learning processes by raising their curiosity and awareness towards topics they were not aware of, but also to support their learning by helping them understand theoretical concepts through different sensorial elements, such as visual, auditory or emotional (Gullat, 2008).

1.5. Art-based pedagogy as a motivational strategy for learning

The broad dimension of art facilitates its accessibility to a wide-ranging audience due to its rich diversity, encompassing different themes, styles, and materials used (Schneider & Rohmann, 2021). Art also allows individuals to express themselves either through their work or through someone else's work, thus facilitating emotional expression, collaboration, and creativity (Schneider & Rohmann, 2021). When considering the use of art in a classroom setting, literature suggests that students who are familiar with art show better academic outcomes when compared to students who lack artistic knowledge (Smithrim & Upitis, 2005). Furthermore, using art in a classroom setting seems to motivate students to learn, besides fostering their engagement, self-confidence, and self-efficacy (Winner et al., 2013). As stated by Winner et al. (2013):

Arts education is often said to be a means of developing critical and creative thinking. It has also been argued to develop skills that enhance performance in non-arts academic subjects (...) and to strengthen students' academic motivation, self-confidence, and ability to communicate and cooperate effectively. (Winner et al., 2013, p.251)

An art-based approach promotes students' creativity and adaptability to learn, as they are not solely focused on the result, but rather, they are engaged with the process of learning to achieve the goal, which can either be achieved individually or collaboratively (Appel, 2006). Another form of motivation brought by ABP, in which the teacher integrates artwork in the classroom setting, is also related to self-esteem. Students who struggle to understand abstract concepts can make use of art to have a better understanding (Appel, 2006). In other words, when students struggle to learn through a traditional approach (e.g., expository teaching and drills), arts can become a strategy to streamline and simplify learning, as they provide an open approach to learning fostered by creativity (Baker, 2013). Thus, when students realize that they can complete a task that was previously perceived as challenging, they are improving their self-esteem and, therefore, becoming more motivated to learn and succeed in the next challenge. Ultimately, art can be used as a strategy to not only make learning more flexible, but also more effective, as it prioritizes the process of learning over the final outcome.

1.6. Art-based pedagogy in language learning

Using an ABP approach to learn a foreign language is perceived as a helpful strategy to promote the students' language skills, as it will support creativity, reflection, and discussion, which will therefore encourage students to describe what they see and feel while interpreting art (Hunter and Frawley, 2023). Teaching through art enables the students to relate to the art piece, to share what they believe to be true, and to assimilate the opinions of others while creating new meanings. Furthermore, when exploring an art piece they enjoy, students will be more engaged in the learning process, as they are assimilating something because they like to learn it. As stated by Žemberová (2014):

integrating the arts and language learning in the classroom not only increases the students' understanding of art but also allows them the opportunity to look at, listen to, talk about, share and create art. It can also enhance and develop their foreign language vocabulary and language skills. (Žemberová, 2014, p.243)

Visual elements in teaching benefit students, as they draw their attention and interest and help them retain information associated with the visuals (Gower et al., 2005). Additionally, incorporating visual elements not only enables students to use language structures they already know, but also serves as a valuable tool when they struggle to convey an idea due to limited vocabulary. In such cases, the teacher can support them by introducing new language elements, which will expand their linguistic knowledge (Gower et al., 2005).

Considering the benefits of ABP in language learning, Ruiz (2010) suggests five teaching strategies to promote student learning and engage students in class discussion. In this sense, teachers could use: (i) *open-ended questions* to foster the students' curiosity about the topic to be discussed, (ii) *prior knowledge and personal experiences* to draw students' attention to the art piece and make them reflect on the message of the art piece, (iii) *stories* about the art piece, telling stories or ask students what story could the art piece tell the audience, (iv) *moments in history*, or provide a historical context to connect what the students know in terms of historical events or concepts, and how it can be related to the artwork, and (v) *paraphrasing*, which will make students retell what was discussed as a way to reinforce what was debated.

Ultimately, ABP can benefit the learning processes as it promotes students' motivation to learn by raising curiosity and awareness of the topics studied in class. When engaged in the learning processes, students will therefore be more prone to participate and use new or previous linguistic knowledge to explain an idea or to provide feedback.

Chapter 2. Methodology

Considering the benefits of art in developing critical thinking within a language classroom, as discussed in Chapter 1, I will now outline the methodology, which, combined with the theoretical framework, serves as the foundation for the development of this research.

2.2. Action research

Action research (AR) is a research method commonly used in education to reflect on teaching practices and approaches aiming to improve them (Burns, 2010). In this process, the teacher assumes the roles of both the educator and the researcher, allowing for a critical analysis of the class outcomes. However, being a teacher and a researcher at the same time could present some constraints in terms of time, expertise, support, competency, or self-esteem, as the teacher needs time to study, explore, and analyze. To address these challenges, Nunan (2006) suggests that teachers can become effective researchers if they receive adequate training, if supported by advisors, if allowed less teaching time, and if there are other teachers with whom they can collaborate to extend and expand their research.

As Nunan (2006) notes, the terms “action” and “research” in action research emphasize the connection between the teaching practice and the investigation. While teaching a lesson, teachers must consider the dos and don’ts of their practice to improve their teaching, which will thereafter improve students’ learning, motivation, and engagement. As noted by Efron and David (2013), AR differs from traditional research mostly because of its practical and well-rounded dimension. As proposed by the authors, it follows five principles, such as: (i) constructivist, as it aims to streamline teaching practices based on empirical evidence; (ii) situational, as it considers the context of the research in terms of the type of students a class has, and the particularities of these students; (iii) practical, as it enables the researcher to improve their practice immediately, from the moment they find any challenge and its solution; (iv) systematic, as it is held based on a

structured plan, considering the issues it aims to explore; and (v) cyclical, as from the moment that it solves an issue, it starts reflecting on the next one (Efron & David, 2013).

To put these ideas into practice, I applied the principles of AR during the Supervised Teaching Practicum (STP) to explore how can art-based discussions can foster the development of critical thinking skills and enhance oral interaction in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom.

2.3. Data collection

Collecting data following an action research methodology should focus on the aspects the researcher aims to understand change, considering the context available (McAteer, 2013). According to Efron and David (2013), the researcher can choose different data collection instruments to conduct their action research, such as: (i) *observation*, which could follow a qualitative or quantitative approach; (ii) *interviews*, which could be unstructured, *semistructured* or *structured*; or (iii) *surveys*, which, similar to interviews, could also be structured or unstructured.

In line with this theoretical approach, I chose to employ four distinct methods to gather data for my action research: (i) observation, as it allows the collection of authentic data, as it occurs in a natural context (Efron & David, 2013); (ii) focus group interviews, as they enable the researcher to obtain firsthand information about the perspectives and opinions of the interviewees (Bogdan and Bilken, 1994); (iii) pre/post-intervention assessment task, commonly used in educational research to improve education and promote change (Rogers & Revesz, 2019); and (iv) surveys, which consist of questions designed to provide quick answers from many participants regarding a specific topic of interest (Tuckman, 2000). Finally, upon completing the data collection, I proceeded with the triangulation process, which involved combining and analyzing all data sources together to ensure the results were accurate and reliable (Turner & Turner, 2009).

Chapter 3. Practicum

The following section outlines the steps and procedures taken during the practicum, aligned with the research objectives and based on the theoretical framework discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.

3.1. The school

Colégio Valsassina is a private school in Lisbon, founded as a primary school in 1898 by Susana Duarte. After marrying Frederico Valsassina, they expanded the school to include middle and secondary years. Today, Colégio Valsassina welcomes around 1400 students daily, from kindergarten to secondary levels, following the Portuguese national curriculum. To provide a beneficial learning environment, the school has two libraries with books on every subject, including a section for books written in English, Spanish, French, and German, highlighting the importance of these languages.

The school is committed to promoting English as a second language, with a focus on developing students' language skills from a young age. English is integrated into the curriculum from kindergarten through eleventh grade, aiming to prepare the students with the skills needed for the final English Exam. Besides Portuguese and Maths, English has the most contact time in the students' timetable, with classes held twice a week for 90 minutes each. For students who are struggling with the language, the school offers English tutoring classes once a week from grades 5 to 9. Additionally, the school has an agreement with the British Council, allowing students to have extra English classes with native teachers. This enriching experience provides students with a more authentic language learning environment.

Colégio Valsassina also celebrates different special dates throughout the year, such as the Week of Languages, the Week of Maths, and the Week of Arts, which are weeks that encompass different activities inside and outside the classroom. Throughout these weeks, the school strives to bring in literary authors, musicians, and parents to share their insights from their respective working fields so the students can get an idea of how the working

industry operates and how the content they learn is valuable within the working world. Thus, the school is concerned not only with academic results, but also with preparing students for the future by offering them these experiences, which will enrich their learning processes and experiences.

3.2. The classes

3.2.1. Grade 8

Grade 8 classes A and B, were scheduled to have two English classes per week, having each class 90 minutes. According to the decision by the English Department, grade 8 used the textbook and the workbook published by Porto Editora, *Engaging 8*. Apart from using the books from Porto Editora as supporting materials for classwork and homework, it was also decided by the English department that the students had to read a literary work in the second term to promote and develop their reading and comprehension skills. The book chosen by the department was the adapted version of *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, published by Oxford University Press, corresponding to Stage 3, which is the reading level advised for students of this age and linguistic proficiency.

Regarding assessment, the grading system for formal evaluation ranged between 0 to 100, and classes A and B were assigned one written test and one oral presentation per term. In addition to formal assignments such as written tests and presentations, students were assessed based on their commitment to work, engagement, autonomy, and behavior. As for the final grades, students were assessed at the end of each term with quantitative grades from 0 to 5 and in the middle of the term with qualitative grades, which ranged between *Tendência Regressiva* (regressing), *Mantém* (maintains) and *Tendência Progressiva* (progressing).

3.2.2. Class 8A

Class 8A had thirty students, twelve girls and eighteen boys. Since the students enrolled in the school had been taught English from the age of three, their level of English

corresponded, in most cases, to level B1. It is also important to stress that three students were not native Portuguese students, having Mandarin as their native language. These students were mostly quiet and shy and did not participate much, probably because they were uncomfortable expressing themselves in Portuguese or English. However, in general, students participated and were curious and engaged in class activities.

In terms of the language interaction between the teacher and the students, the students were comfortable asking questions to the teacher and were curious about watching videos and listening to songs. As for interaction among students, there were few moments for students to interact with each other and express their opinions. It is also relevant to mention that when the students could not express themselves in English, they would resort to Portuguese.

3.2.3. Class 8B

Class 8B had twenty-nine students, seventeen girls and twelve boys. Similarly to class A, class B students had been studying at the school since they were three years old, so their level of English in most cases corresponded to level B1. Some students did not want to expose themselves because they were shy and not confident about their language skills. In this class, most of the students were native Portuguese speakers, except one whose native language was Mandarin.

This group responded better to instructional classes in comparison with classes where the teacher asked them to share opinions or to reflect upon a topic. According to their response in classwork, the students seemed to prefer mechanical exercises like filling in the gaps, finding synonyms, or answering the questions from the text rather than exercises in which the teacher asked them to argue or share their perspectives. Thus, these students were not as engaged in moments intended for peer interaction.

3.2.4. Grade 11

Grade 11 classes A and B had two English lessons per week, each one 90 minutes long. According to the decision by the English Department, grade 11 used the textbook and the workbook published by Porto Editora, *#English11*; however, the 11th-grade teacher did not use the book often, as she preferred to teach from a project-based work perspective.

Grade 11 class was formed by students from different academic areas, from Economics to Arts, Sciences, and Humanities. The school chose to have mixed English classes at a secondary level, as English was a core subject for everyone at this level.

In terms of the grading system, students were assessed twice per term, except for the third term, because it was shorter than the other two. Firstly, students were assessed in the middle of the term, being assigned qualitative grades which ranged between *Tendência Regressiva* (regressing), *Mantém* (maintains), and *Tendência Progressiva* (progressing). Later, at the end of the term, students were assigned a quantitative grade from 0 to 20.

3.2.5. Class 11A

Class 11A had twenty-five students, eight girls and seventeen boys. This group of students was welcoming, as they were interested in the topics and the approach implemented. The majority wanted to take part in class discussions and were curious about the artwork and topics that were brought to their attention. This was also a heterogeneous group, as they came from different academic backgrounds. Consequently, they tended to interact mostly within their own smaller groups.

As for their level of English, these students were mostly on the same level, as their oral and written skills corresponded to a B1 level. Being comfortable with the language enabled students to participate more, be more engaged, and express themselves without linguistic constraints and fear of making mistakes. Despite this, some students were shy and did not want to participate in class discussions, but when asked to participate in an oral presentation, they showed a good command of the language.

3.2.6. Class 11B

Class B consisted of twenty-six students: eighteen girls and eight boys. The class included students from different academic backgrounds, such as Art, Humanities, Economics, and Science students. Teaching this diverse group was challenging, as they were often reluctant to participate in class discussions or share their comments and opinions on the topics presented. Considering what was observed, as well as the conversations with their English teacher, I came to realize that, on the one hand, they perceived the student teacher as someone who would not officially assess them, so they did not need to make an effort to participate or be engaged.

The students from this class were all native Portuguese, except for one who was Chinese; however, this student had been living in Portugal for most of her life, so the Portuguese language was not an issue. Some students from this class did not seem very confident in expressing themselves in English, which could also be one of the reasons they did not want to expose themselves to the rest of the class. In contrast, some students were linguistically proficient but did not seem to participate much. This last group of students was pointed out by their English teacher as students who were concerned about the opinion of the other group of students and did not want to put themselves in the spotlight.

3.3. Observation for learning

As part of the practicum, observing for learning is considered a valuable strategy to learn and reflect on and learn different teaching approaches (Burns, 2010). Therefore, I was granted permission to observe the classes of my cooperating teacher for classes 8A and B, as well as two grade 11 classes, A and B, taught by another English teacher.

Both teachers focused on following the guidelines set by the Ministry of Education, as the school aimed to prepare the students to succeed in the English exam. However, their teaching approaches differed, potentially due to the students' ages and needs or the teachers' preferences.

The classes taught by my cooperating teacher were usually supported by the

materials from the textbook and workbook, as well as additional worksheets she provided. Throughout her classes, she constantly aimed to develop the four language skills: listening, speaking, writing, and reading. To achieve this, she typically divided her classes into four parts: the first part promoted class discussion on the topic of interest, followed by reading comprehension, grammar explanation, exercises to consolidate grammar, and sometimes a writing exercise, either in pairs or individually. In terms of developing critical thinking, the first part, lasting five to ten minutes, included close-ended questions to introduce the topic and also open-ended questions to encourage deeper thinking (Pate, 2012; Fajari, 2021). During this part, the teacher would ask questions like: “Do you usually watch series?” or “What series do you usually watch?” Additionally, she also used videos and songs from the textbook to stimulate class discussion.

On the other hand, the grade 11 classes often began with a brief overview of the class structure and objectives for the day, followed by instruction on what students needed to accomplish. As for developing critical thinking, this teacher preferred to focus on writing essays as a strategy to promote critical thinking. In these essays, students had to present a topic and provide structured, cohesive, and clear arguments and counterarguments.

In both grades, the teachers were focused on meeting curriculum deadlines, which limited the time available for further critical thinking and class discussion. This limitation motivated me even more to help students develop these skills.

3.4. The teaching practice

In the following sections, I analyze one lesson from each grade level per class. This decision is based on the lessons that provided the most valuable insights into the use of critical thinking, class participation, discussion, and language use, as well as the impact of different materials within the ABP approach (art installations, paintings, photography, graffiti, and videos). This choice aligns with the guidelines stated in the *Aprendizagens Essenciais* (DGS, 2018) and *Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória* (Martins et al., 2017), which emphasize the importance of developing critical thinking and facilitating class discussion in the language classroom.

Among the four lessons, lesson 1 from class 8A, lesson 4 from class 8B, and lesson 1 from class 11B primarily focus on using an ABP approach to promote critical thinking. As for lesson 4 from class 11A, it required students to develop creativity and critical thinking in creating a pitch for an advertisement. Throughout these lessons, students' anonymity was ensured to protect their privacy.

These lessons have helped me understand which materials and teaching practices were most effective for student learning and how I could improve my teaching methods in the future.

3.4.1. Class 8A | Lesson 1

Lesson 1 aimed to introduce Didactic Unit 2, “Keeping Trendy”, which focused on clothing, fashion, and shopping vocabulary. This class was structured into two main parts: first, exploring an art installation to introduce the topic, promote interaction, and interpret meaning; second, engaging in group work to share ideas, receive feedback, and develop critical thinking.

To start, I presented Michelangelo Pistoletto’s 1967 artwork titled “Venus of the Rags”, as its visual elements relate to discarded clothes, consumption, waste, beauty, and contemporary fashion (see Appendix A for class 8A lesson plan and materials). By bringing this artwork to class, students were first required to describe the image and then interpret its meaning, connecting it to concepts such as identity, trends, the clothing industry, creativity, and social media. Initially, only a few students participated, offering words like “statue”, “clothes”, “naked”, “fashion” or “rags”. However, as some began sharing their thoughts, others joined in, sometimes expressing themselves in their native language. For instance, one student stated that her room had piles of clothes like the one in the image, while another reflected on how it reminded her of clothing shops and environmental concerns. As students interacted, I began introducing the concepts and wrote down words on the board that highlighted the pros and cons of fashion. This prompted students to connect what they observed – piles of clothes resembling waste – with issues like the environmental impact, social media, economic implications, and child labor.

Regarding the use of an ABP approach, this artwork encouraged student interaction because as they listened to each other's opinions, they were eager to share their own. According to Blumenfeld et al. (2012), students are assimilating new information and building connections between preexisting knowledge and new concepts by actively listening and considering their peers' insights. Thus, the ABP approach facilitated active learning by encouraging students to participate, offer constructive feedback, and provide counterarguments (Oros, 2007). Furthermore, it is also important to reflect on using the students' native language to interact and participate in class discussions. As suggested by Carson and Kashihara (2012), allowing students to express themselves in their native language will eventually motivate them to attempt to speak in a foreign language. Initially, less confident students may need to feel secure about what they are saying, which is facilitated by using their native language. As they gain confidence, they become more willing to express themselves in a foreign language.

For the second part of the class, I assigned students to work in pairs to reflect and write about two art installations by Suzie Blake and Minga Opazo, a graffiti piece by Banksy, and a photograph by Barbara Kruger (see Appendix A for class 8A lesson plan and materials), as these artworks depicted various representations of fashion, sustainability, trends, and waste. Their task was to relate these artworks to the concepts discussed earlier in class. During their presentations, students predominantly highlighted the disadvantages of fashion, portraying it as sinful, harmful, and addictive. This indicates that when students critically reflect on an issue, they activate prior knowledge and deepen their understanding by integrating new interpretations (Willingham, 2008). Moreover, integrating artwork into lessons enhances students' cognitive skills by visually illustrating abstract concepts such as sustainability and consumerism. For instance, pieces by artists like Suzie Blake and Minga Opazo can foster a deeper understanding of these topics (Lee & Ellis, 2017).

3.4.2. Class 8B | Lesson 4

Lesson 4 was part of Didactic Unit 3, "Tasty Lifestyles", and aimed to further explore and deepen understanding of vocabulary related to food and diets, particularly sustainable

healthy diets introduced in lesson three (see Appendix A for class 8B lesson plan and materials). While previous lessons predominantly used traditional art forms such as paintings and art installations, this class also integrated digital art through videos, as they provide detailed visual and auditory stimuli that can enhance understanding and support critical thinking (Du & Gao, 2010; Carmichael & Karpicke, 2018).

This lesson was divided into two parts. The first part aimed to activate prior knowledge about food and eating habits learned in previous lessons and relate it to a TEDed video titled “Which is better for you: “Real” meat or “fake” meat? - Carolyn Beans”. This video focused on different types of meat diets, aligning with the concepts I intended to teach, which included vegan, vegetarian, pescatarian, and carnivore diets, as well as plant-based and lab-grown meat diets. When comparing the use of digital art to traditional art, students were notably more engaged and responsive to the video, as a significant part of the class wanted to participate and share their opinions and experiences about it, either in English or Portuguese. This use of videos not only fosters engagement but also supports language learning and enhances language proficiency. It facilitates vocabulary acquisition through verbal and non-verbal information, helping students understand vocabulary in terms of meaning, form, and usage (Perez et al., 2013; Yawiloeng, 2020). Moreover, videos can serve as authentic language learning materials as they depict communication in real-life situations (Hoinbala, 2022).

In the second part of the class, students worked in groups to consolidate and present their understanding of the topics discussed in the first part of the class. They used their mobile phones to find artwork depicting suitable meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner based on the diets discussed earlier (Appendix A). This activity encouraged less participative students to engage with the content, as art’s visual elements facilitate broader understanding (Appel, 2006). Additionally, it promoted communication skills, as when the students were choosing the best artwork, they had to argue and debate, reflecting on different perspectives and demonstrating active thinking, which promotes constructive learning (Eisner, 2002).

3.4.3. Class 11A | Lesson 1

Lesson 1 was part of Didactic Unit 2, “Go Green”, and aimed to explore concepts related to climate change, particularly extreme weather events and ecosystems, as well as its social and economic consequences (see Appendix A for class 11A lesson plan and materials). To introduce these topics, students examined an artwork by the artist Zhc titled “Climate Crisis” from 2016. They engaged in a class discussion to interpret its meaning and express personal opinions about climate change. The artwork immediately caught the students’ attention, as they connected it to the current war between Israel and Palestine and the environmental and economic conditions in many Middle Eastern countries. This connection led to a discussion about the entities responsible for poverty and climate change and their accountability for these issues. According to Hunter and Frawley (2023), using an ABP approach enables students to make connections between the visual elements of artwork and theoretical knowledge, helping them build new connections and expand their understanding. Listening to their peers’ perspectives also challenges students to think through different viewpoints, fostering reflection and new meaning (Bishop, 2004).

In the second moment of the class, students were introduced to environment-related concepts such as rising temperatures, melting ice and glaciers, sea level rise, extreme weather events, changes in precipitation patterns, ocean acidification, impact on ecosystems, threats to agriculture, health risks and social and economic consequences, to discuss it and share their thoughts on what each concept was (see Appendix A for class 11A lesson plan and materials). This discussion helped students relate the artwork by Zhc to concepts like extreme weather events and ecosystem impacts. It made them question and reflect on what they could do to prevent situations depicted in the artwork. Lukaka (2023) notes that an ABP approach enriches learning by providing students with a holistic approach to school content. Through art, students can connect different academic subjects, enhancing their learning. In this case, students linked content from history and science classes to structure their opinions on the concepts taught.

The third part of the class further demonstrates how an ABP approach promotes

cross-academic learning. When students needed to pick an artwork that portrays climate change or natural disasters and present it to the class, one of the groups based their presentation on a topic they had learned about in another subject. This group provided an in-depth explanation of an artwork related to the *Pacific Plastic Islands*, a topic previously discussed in a different subject. As Wilson et al. (2021) suggest, when students can establish connections between various subjects, they demonstrate critical thinking and engage in reflection.

3.4.4. Class 11B | Lesson 4

Lesson 4 was part of Didactic Unit 5, “Ads are out there”, and aimed to explain and explore how a pitch can be related and valuable for advertisement and how to design one following its structure and purpose (see Appendix A for class 11B lesson plan and materials). This lesson plan was designed based on the recommendations of the eleventh-grade English teacher, who suggested that this class preferred “hands-on materials”, where the teacher provides instructions for a task, and then the students work autonomously to complete it. This recommendation aligned with my observations of the students’ participation in previous classes, as they were reluctant to engage in class discussions. This reluctance could be because they were not used to tasks that involved critical thinking and artwork. According to Flores et al. (2012), when students lack opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills, they encounter difficulties when exploring or reflecting upon complex issues. This deficiency can impact their future jobs, where they may struggle to analyze diverse perspectives to reach a cohesive conclusion (Flores et al., 2012).

Following the eleventh-grade English teacher’s suggestions, I started the class by proving key concepts about a pitch, focusing on its use, structure, and relevance to advertisement (see Appendix A for class 11B lesson plan and materials). I then informed the students that their task would be to create a pitch for a challenging product to sell and persuade their peers to buy it. While explaining the assignment, students seemed attentive and asked questions regarding the guidelines, both during the explanations and the execution of the task. Although this task was not directly related to the exploration of

traditional or digital artwork, it aimed to promote creativity within the classroom. This focus on creativity aligns with an ABP approach, which engages students in the learning process (Appel, 2006). According to Bao (2018), creativity is crucial for learning acquisition, as it stimulates curiosity, promotes authentic learning, and enables students to share their opinions. Allowing students to be creative centers the learning processes on them, requiring them to build knowledge (McGrath, 2013).

Considering the guidelines in *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*, referring to lesson planning, particularly guidelines 11 (“I can take on board learners’ feedback and comments and incorporate this in future lessons”) and 12 (“I can involve learners in lesson planning”), I believe that by developing a lesson plan aligned with what the students were used to, and in line with what they expect from their English classes, this lesson was more successful than the previous ones (Newby, 2007).

3.5. Extracurricular activities

The Week of Languages is one of the busiest weeks of Valsassina’s academic year, celebrating language diversity, communication, and freedom of speech. Given the importance of this event for every language department, I suggested to my cooperating teacher the organization of a spelling contest for the students of the 2nd and 3rd cycles since, according to Williams (2008), such contests support students’ writing skills and their recognition of vowel and consonant sounds, both of which are essential for language proficiency.

After discussing the idea with the English department, they quickly accepted and welcomed my idea, offering their assistance. Considering their availability to help, I asked them to serve as members of the jury, as I would need teachers to assess the students’ spelling skills. Once I received approval from the English department, I presented the idea to the organizers of the week of languages. After doing so, they requested me to write down the purpose of the activity, the target students, the time, date, and location so that these details could be included on the event poster

With the logistical details addressed, I then approached the students from various classes (from the 2nd to 3rd cycle) to the different classes to find out who wanted to participate. After explaining the activity and its purpose to each class, many students expressed enthusiasm and volunteered to participate.

On the day of the contest, the students arrived, and I explained the rules and introduced them to the three jury members from the English department. The jury was seated at the table with the words for the contest and the criteria for assessing spelling. Students were picked randomly to compete against a peer from the same class. The student with the higher score advanced to the finals. Throughout the activity, the students appeared nervous but excited and paid close attention to their peers' performances. As they spelled the words, students took time to reflect on which letters matched the pronunciation. This suggests that students who are accustomed to reflection and critical thinking are more likely to succeed in using language proficiently (Anderson et al., 2001). After the contest, I thanked the participants and informed them that the jury would select the winners per grade - first, second, and third place - and that the winners would be announced through their Google classrooms. Each winner received a medal from their class coordinator during the Week of the Languages ceremony.

Chapter 4. Discussion of results

Chapter four presents key insights from the data collected through the focus group interviews, surveys, and pre/post-intervention assessment tasks. It also offers a conclusion summarizing the findings and includes recommendations for future research.

4.1. Focus group interviews

In this study, the focus group interviews were conducted at the end of the last lesson in each grade and were audio recorded. These semi-structured interviews consisted of four open-ended questions so the conversation between the students and me could flow naturally (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). To proceed with the interviews, I requested permission from the school's headmaster to conduct focus group interviews. After obtaining his approval, the school contacted the parents via email to request their consent. I selected five students from each grade 8 class and five from each grade 11 class to participate in the interviews. The selection of the students was based on the recommendation of the cooperating teacher, who indicated that these students were the most active participants in both curricular and extracurricular activities.

The interviews aimed to understand the students' opinions about classes that followed an ABP approach. The questions were asked in their native language, Portuguese, to ensure the students could express themselves freely without language constraints. The questions were as follows:

1. What is your opinion about the discussion of artwork in the classroom?
2. Do you feel more willing to participate in class discussions when they are based on artwork?
3. Do you believe that discussing artwork in the classroom encourages discussion among classmates?
4. Do you think that classroom discussion based on artwork allows reflection on topics

you were previously unaware of?

With these four questions, I aimed to explore the students' opinions on artwork and its potential benefits for enhancing class discussion and language skills. Additionally, I also aimed to explore if, after the practicum, students recognized that using artwork helped them more easily build connections between what they were seeing and the class content they were learning.

Based on the students' responses, it seems they agree that ABP enriches learning (See Appendix B for students' responses). This dynamic approach allows students to participate actively, share, and comment on each other's ideas, promoting student interaction through the development of critical thinking, as suggested by Lampert (2006). According to students, and in line with Baker (2013), the ABP approach encourages participation, especially among those who find English challenging, as they can more easily analyze artwork and understand its meaning. These elements not only help clarify some concepts but also support students with learning difficulties, as images are easier to understand than textbook materials. Students also stressed that art could help them think more deeply, noting that the more abstract the artwork is, the more it encourages debate and exchange of ideas. Moreover, students emphasized the need for complexity in the artwork and stressed the importance of the complexity of the artwork, as simple pieces do not challenge them to think or reflect, reducing their motivation to explore it.

Overall, students considered art important for exploring familiar and complex issues and helping them become aware of certain realities. They also emphasized that discussing less familiar artworks and the ideas behind them is even more beneficial (See Appendix B for students' responses). Ultimately, they considered the ABP approach to be more flexible than traditional expository methods, as it allows them to share opinions and offer different perspectives on the topic of interest (See Appendix B for students' responses).

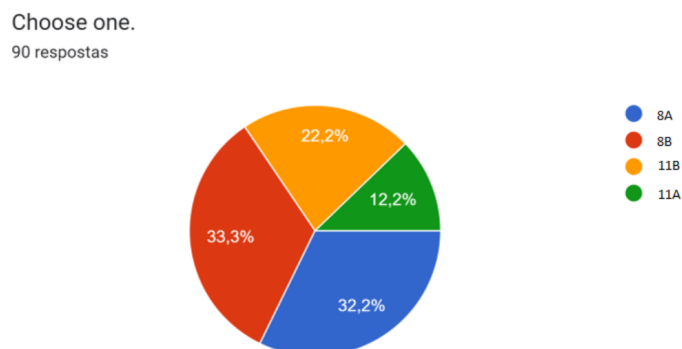
4.2. Survey

Considering the aim of the survey in this research, which was designed to complement the data provided from the pre/post-intervention assessment and focus group interviews, I chose to conduct a structured survey with a limited choice of answers. Structured surveys tend to require less time to complete and often have higher response rates compared to unstructured surveys, which require written answers (Efron & David, 2013).

The survey was conducted during the final class of grade 8 and was distributed to grade 11 students by their English teacher due to time constraints. It consisted of five questions focused on the implementation of art-based discussions in the classroom. Its purpose was to investigate students' engagement with artworks, how such engagement could foster class discussion and interaction, and the impact of an ABP approach. Students were expected to choose one of four Likert-type answers: never, sometimes, almost always, and always. In total, there were 90 responses to the survey: 29 from class 8A, 30 from class 8B, 20 from class 11B, and 11 from class 11A (Figure 1). Students who did not submit the form were either absent from that class or had trouble accessing the form.

Figure 1

Students' Responses to Survey



The questions included in the survey were as follows:

1. I like art.
2. When the teacher shows an art piece in class, I want to comment on it.
3. Do you feel more compelled to participate in class when there are art-based discussions?
4. When there are art-based discussions in class, do you feel like commenting on your friends' opinions?
5. Do you think that art-based discussions help students reflect on topics they were initially unaware of?

In grade 8, the survey was conducted during my last class. However, for both grades 11, I had to ask their English teacher to send them the survey link in one of their classes, as I did not have enough time during my own. For the four classes, the link was posted on Google Classroom, which was managed by their homeroom teacher, and the students accessed it through their phones.

The responses to SQ1 indicate that most of the students have at least some interest in art, with the majority selecting “sometimes” (thirteen students from both classes 8A and 8B, as well as six students from both classes 11A and 11B) and “almost always” (ten students from class 8A, nine students from class 8B, two from class 11A, and seven from class 11B). (Table 1).

Table 1

Students' Answers to SQ1

	8A	8B	11A	11B
Q1: I like art.				
Never:	3	1	0	0
Sometimes:	13	13	6	6
Almost Always:	10	9	2	7
Always:	3	7	3	7

The integration of art into the classroom could positively impact their learning and engagement since, according to Abbott (2017), incorporating students' interests into class activities can significantly boost their motivation to learn.

In questions 2 and 3 (Tables 2 and 3), which examine students' participation in an ABP approach, the survey responses show considerable variability. For SQ2, responses ranged from "never" (eight students from class 8A, ten from 8B, three from 11A, and three from 11B) to "always" (two from 8A, three from 8B, one from 11A and one from 11B). Similarly, for SQ3, responses ranged from "never" (ten students from class 8A, ten from 8B, five from 11A, and two from 11B) to "always" (zero from 8A, four from 8B, two from 11A and zero from 11B).

This inconsistency may be supported by the focus group interviews, where students mentioned that their motivation to participate is influenced by the selected artwork and its themes. These factors play a crucial role in engaging students in the learning process. Consequently, students who enjoyed the artwork presented in class might feel more compelled and motivated to participate, while those who found the artwork less challenging were less motivated.

Table 2

Students' Answers to SQ2

	8A	8B	11A	11B
Q2: When the teacher shows an art piece in class, I want to comment on it				
Never:	8	10	3	3
Sometimes:	16	15	4	11
Almost Always:	3	2	3	5
Always:	2	3	1	1

Table 3*Students' Answers to SQ3*

	8A	8B	11B	11A
Q3: Do you feel more compelled to participate in class when there are art-based discussions?				
Never:	10	10	5	2
Sometimes:	14	11	8	4
Almost Always:	5	4	5	5
Always:	0	4	2	0

Question 4 (Table 4) addresses student interaction by focusing on whether students feel inclined to comment on their peers' opinions during art-based discussions.

Table 4*Students' Answers to SQ4*

	8A	8B	11A	11B
Q4: When there are art-based discussions in class, do you feel like commenting on your friends' opinions?				
Never:	5	10	3	3
Sometimes:	10	14	4	12
Almost Always:	12	4	3	4
Always:	2	2	1	1

The responses indicate that a significant number of students selected the option "sometimes" (ten from class 8A, fourteen from class 8B, four from class 11A, and twelve from 11B), suggesting that art-based discussions can promote class discussions. This observation aligns with what was observed during class, where students occasionally responded to their peers, sometimes even using their native language to express their thoughts. This is evidence that an ABP approach can be an effective starting point to foster more dynamic and flexible classroom discussions (Rieger et al., 2015).

Regarding question 5 (Table 5), the results suggest that students consider art-based discussions as a valuable tool for fostering reflection, which is in line with the previously stated in their interviews, as they believe that art can lead to discussions and exchange of ideas and understanding of new concepts, and that can bring the discussion of issues that can be unfamiliar for some students, and make them reflect.

Table 5*Students' Answers to SQ5*

	8A	8B	11A	11B
Q5: Do you think that art-based discussions help students reflect about topics they were initially unaware of?				
Never:	5	4	0	1
Sometimes:	10	18	7	9
Almost Always:	12	4	2	5
Always:	2	4	2	5

Overall, students' responses indicate that the ABP approach positively impacts their learning, particularly in fostering reflection on new topics. However, the data also suggests that the extent of their participation and interaction during art-based discussions may be influenced by the artworks and themes presented. This indicates that to maximize student motivation, teachers should carefully plan their lessons based on students' needs and interests (Newby, 2007).

4.3. Pre/Post-intervention assessment task

In this study, I implemented a pre/post-intervention assessment task to examine the potential variations in students' answers from the first assessment to the second using identical exercises in both. The purpose of these tests was to explore how students expressed themselves before and after a series of classes designed to promote critical thinking through art-based discussions. To accomplish this, I developed a worksheet featuring two images and two corresponding exercises, prompting students to reflect upon and compare both images. These images were selected to align with the concepts they had studied in previous years and that they would revisit. As for the exercises, the first one required students to provide three words related to the images, and the second exercise required them to compare both images as a strategy to promote critical thinking.

The pre-intervention assessment task was assigned in the first lesson I taught each class. Before assigning it, I explained the purpose of both tasks, as well as how the students

should complete them. When the pre-intervention assessment task was distributed, the students had not yet been introduced to the content covered in the activity (Appendix D).

4.3.1. Grade 8

The pre-intervention assessment task was assigned to students 20 minutes before the end of the first class. Most students completed the first exercise, which required them to write three words related to each image. Some students, unsure of what to write for the second exercise, left it incomplete (See appendix E, student MC1), while others provided an analysis of both images (Table 6).

Table 6

Grade 8 Students' Answers to the Pre-intervention Assessment Task

Student	Students' answers
FF	Image 1. The old lady is food shopping and bought lots of food. This image is a warning of the food waste. Image 2. The purpose of the way the junk food is put in a fancy position and place is that people buy it and consume it.
SS	In the first image we can see a lady shopping with lots of stuff to buy that probably will last longer than the second image.
JL	The images are about food, there is a lady in the supermarket with a cart full of products, she is really exaggerated and her cart looks super expensive, but, it looks healthier than the taco bell. The second picture looks healthy, cheaper and executive.

Note. The language reported here is the one used by the students and any errors have not been corrected

In the pre-intervention assessment task responses, most students primarily described the visual elements of each image rather than interpreting their message, just like student SS (Table 6). However, student FF and student JL demonstrated awareness of issues like overconsumption, food waste, and unhealthy eating habits, indicating some understanding of the images' themes (Table 6). There were also students, like MC1 (Appendix E), who did not know how to describe the images and left the exercise incomplete.

The post-intervention assessment task, which was assigned during the last 20 minutes of the sixth class, showed a noticeable improvement (Table 7). Most students completed both exercises, indicating they were more comfortable with the content and activities (Appendix G).

To analyze the post-intervention assessment task results, I selected the same students from the pre-intervention assessment task to examine changes in their responses based on what they had learned over the six classes and observed that there is evidence of vocabulary growth and enhanced critical thinking in their post-intervention assessment task answers (Table 7). I focused on these students because their responses were representative of the entire class, and most other responses provided similar comments, making it unnecessary to include additional samples.

Table 7

Grade 8 Students' Answers to the Post-intervention Assessment Task

Student	Students' answers
FF	Both images are social critics about food. In image 1 we can see a fat woman with a cigarret and a shopping car full of food. This is an alarm to the huge waste of good and to the food choices we make that can be really unhealthy. In image 2 we can see (what looks like) a commercial about tacos. This tacos look at the same time tasty and unhealthy. Like the first image, this is an alert to food waste and what fast food does to your healt.
SS	This to images represent the impact of food exaggerated and fast food. Nowadays, people continue to eat fast food that is bad for your heart and it makes you fat. Normally people that over eat get bullied in school and in the streets, so over eating its bad for your health and it can make you feel depressed about yourself.
JL	In my opinion, both of these images represente unhealthy eating habits, since they show processed fat food in excess. People usually buy this type of food in larger quantities because they are way cheaper than biological healthy food, which expands the problem.
MC1	In fact, both of this images refer to the exaggerated amount of food that people consume nowadays. This unhealthy habit can lead to many problems like depression that can have many impacts in own lifes.

Students used words and sentence structures from class discussions, as referred by students SS and MC1, as this student connected eating habits with mental health, both topics discussed during classes. Student FF and student JL demonstrate students' awareness

of unhealthy eating habits and the dangers of junk food, as well as reflective and critical answers by highlighting issues such as food choices, food waste, and unhealthy eating habits, frequently discussed in class. Additionally, student JL addressed a class discussion topic related to organic and processed food, with student JL referring to “biological healthy food”, which was a theme covered in class. Student MC1, who had previously left exercise two blank, showed progress by writing a brief reflection on both images, addressing issues like unhealthy diets and depression.

Overall, the pre-intervention assessment task revealed significant improvement in terms of language acquisition and critical thinking, as students made use of the content they had learned during classes and applied it in the post-intervention assessment task.

4.3.2. Grade 11

The pre-intervention assessment task was assigned in the last 20 minutes of the class, though most students finished early. Despite not having learned the topics addressed in the pre-intervention assessment task, the students were confident in their answers, showing no signs of struggle or hesitation. Their responses, as shown in Appendix F and Table 8, focused on the message based on the artwork’s intention, and the grammatical structure and vocabulary use were consistent with B2-level students, as they managed to write clear texts, provide examples, and express opinions based on previous knowledge (CEFR, 2020).

Table 8*Grade 11 Students' Answers to the Pre-intervention Assessment Task*

Student	Students' answers
ID	These two images are related to our need of having a practical and fast lifestyle, where we sometimes don't think about the consequences of our actions, either to the environment or to our health. In general, the images represent a mass-production and a lack of change from us humans, which are related to our inability of having a healthy and green lifestyle.
VC	In the first image we can assume many things. On the first hand, the lady might be used to get more things than she really needs. This, since her cart is full and she's only, even though we don't know for who the food is. On the other hand, the fact that she's using a cart can show that many people can't or have condition to do the groceries or other activities. In the second picture, we see a fast-food commercial or something for a restaurant, that is making their food look better for the advertisement, not always being what it seems. Also, despite the pleasure, we can't forget that the mass-produced and consumption foods aren't good for the environment.
MD	These two pictures represent the human's gluttony that have been more of a priority than our own habitat, planet earth. We shouldn't buy cheaper and easier things, that may taste better, but are both unhealthy for us and for the environment. So if we are already facing environment issues we shouldn't be focused on our pleasures but our future wellbeing, finding ways to save our planet and watch out for our health.
MM	The image number 1 represents the overconsuming groceries and unnecessary things that we buy every day. Everyday we buy excessive things that we don't need and don't use or even consume things that we don't need as well like candy. This demonstrates that the overconsuming can be bad for the environment too because of the plastic and the garbage that makes. The image number 2 represents a giant piece of junk food. That face the consumerism problems; which cause environmental problems, like the pollution of the packaging. That behaviour of ordering food isn't sustainable and healthy.

Table 8 presents four answers that exemplify the responses from students, most of which focus on themes like eating habits, addiction, overconsumption, environment, sustainability, and advertisement. The connection between both images, the vocabulary used, and the reflections stated by each student prompted me to ask their English teacher how they were already so aware of these topics. She explained they had been studying and discussing these topics since they were in grade 7. Additionally, the school emphasizes healthy eating habits and the environmental impact through various campaigns across different subjects.

The post-intervention assessment task assigned in the last 20 minutes of the final class showed significant improvement (Appendix H). Students established connections

between the images, focusing on the impact of consumerism, overeating, and food abuse while also exploring how advertisements influence purchasing decisions (Table 9).

Table 9

Grade 11 Students' Answers to the Post-intervention Assessment Task

Student	Students' answers
ID	These images represent our current reality, a society in a consumerism cycle, where materialism is something rare not to have. A society in which the economy is dependent on our shopping addiction and in the add industry, responsible for getting in our head, making us think we need something and then buying it. The images also represent our unhealthy eating habits based on processed food agencies called the "fast-food" chain.
VC	Both pictures remind me of how priorities and limits change and affect our lives more than we know. Somewone who would rather spend all their money on fast-food than spend consciously and define limits is much more likely have unhealthy habits. There is a difference between defining limits and still have "luxurious" things and just buy whatever you feel like, which is recisely the message we should be transmitting. Despite this, the change comes from each one of us and only when people realise how it truly affects them they will do something about it. People are choosing pleasure over the right thing to do.
MD	The image 1 represent the over consumption, not only present in luxurious products, but also in simple and basic shops like groceries. House wifes like the one in the first picture are very influenced by ads' manipulation and fashionable trends, which makes it enjoyable to spend money. The image 2 represents how publicity glorifies its products with the objective of making them look perfect and tasty, despite how they are made, and convince people to desire them and buy them.
MM	The image 1 reflects the over consumption that reflects nowadays excessive buying caused by ads and publicity. This causes consumerist people and causes temporary hapiness. The image 2 reflects on abuse of amount of food. This is caused by publicity, which promotes fast food and their consumism. This is bad for our health because fast food causes addiction.

Student ID highlights how "processed food agencies" and the "ad industry" shape our choices. Similarly, student MD discusses overconsumption and advertisement, stating, "influenced by ads' manipulation and fashionable trends", while student MM mentions "excessive buying caused by ads and publicity". Students VC also focuses on consumerism, noting that consumers often shop for pleasure rather than out of necessity: "choosing pleasure over the right thing to do (Table 9). These observations demonstrate the students' awareness regarding contemporary and social challenges and changes, which were

frequently discussed in the various subjects and English classes as stated in the *Aprendizagens Essenciais* for 11th grade (DGE, 2018).

Overall, students applied the content they learned during the classes to the post-intervention assessment task, demonstrating their understanding and ability to connect class discussions to their reflections.

4.4. Conclusion

Considering the practical component of this master's degree in teaching, I sought to understand, through action research, how implementing an art-based pedagogy approach could develop student's critical thinking through discussion and interaction. My research aimed to identify the best practices to enrich the students' learning process and enhance my teacher's performance. Thus, I present four key considerations that serve as the main aspects of this study.

Firstly, regarding critical thinking and language learning, I realized that students who were more proficient in English were the most active participants and interacted the most during the classes taught. While some students participated in their native language, the majority of those involved in class discussions were able to structure an argument or provide an opinion in English. In both grade 8 classes, students who were not comfortable speaking a foreign language but wanted to participate did so by using their mother tongue, indicating their desire to share their perspectives on the discussed topics. These discussions were valuable not only for linguistically proficient students who practiced their speaking skills but also for those who were less proficient, as they learned and memorized vocabulary while attempting to express their thoughts.

Secondly, critical thinking and spoken interaction are closely linked. Critical thinking, a meta-cognitive skill that requires thought and reflection, fosters discussion and debate when implemented in an educational setting, as observed during the practicum, where students who showed curiosity about the artwork and activities were eager to express their opinions. This exchange of opinions benefited these students and encouraged those who did not participate much. As they listened to their peers, they assimilated new knowledge

and felt triggered and compelled to contribute their own perspectives. Such interactions encourage students to listen, analyze, assess arguments, and decide whether they agree or want to introduce an alternative perspective into the debate. In the 11th grade, where students already had a good command of the English language, the interactions were mostly beneficial in terms of sharing factual knowledge and experiences rather than engaging in debates. I found this approach equally valuable, as it promoted mutual learning, not so much in terms of language acquisition or the evaluation of arguments, but empirical and factual information.

Thirdly, critical thinking can be developed and practiced through an ABP approach. The visual elements in each artwork stimulate students' curiosity and encourage them to draw connections between prior knowledge and what they are looking at. However, based on my teaching experience, I observed that eighth-grade students were more engaged with this approach compared to eleventh-graders, who preferred tasks similar to those they usually do with their English teacher rather than embracing new approaches. This difference could probably be related to the fact that younger students are easier to motivate and to engage in new methods (Lumsden, 1994). Additionally, students were more easily engaged when watching videos and commenting on them. This engagement is likely due to their familiarity with videos and films in their everyday lives, making it easier to interpret a video rather than a painting, photograph, or art installation. Some students also mentioned that they rarely visit museums and do not engage with traditional forms of art, such as paintings. Following Hunter and & Frawley (2023), watching videos allows students to use a familiar medium to better understand class concepts, which can be challenging to understand only through theory.

Lastly, an ABP approach can serve as a motivational strategy for learning. Although there were students who did not intervene in every class discussion, they appeared to be more curious and motivated to learn through this approach, as they made an effort to participate even if it was in their native language and were curious to know what the message behind the artwork was. This conclusion could also be supported by the feedback provided in the interviews, where grade 8 students valued a more flexible approach instead

of an approach that focuses on textbooks and drills. Grade 11, however, seemed to have enjoyed the class where I encouraged them to create a pitch and to reflect on advertisements, as it was something that some students wanted to pursue in the future. Additionally, during student interviews, they highlighted that an ABP was an effective strategy for encouraging reflection and deepening their understanding of class content, but it also depends on the kind of artwork: it has to be something that the students were not aware, and something that poses as challenging and controversial to discuss.

In conclusion, an ABP approach can be an effective strategy, particularly with younger students, when the topics spark their curiosity by being challenging or controversial. This approach can also significantly enhance students' language skills, as the desire to participate and articulate structured arguments motivates students to improve their vocabulary and communication skills. Even students with less developed language skills are frequently asked how to say certain words and expressions in English, thereby expanding their vocabulary.

4.5. Final considerations

This report aimed to find answers to the research questions, as well as strategies to improve teachers' practice and performance regarding the use of an ABP approach in an EFL classroom setting. As such, the development of the research, the observation, the practicum, and the data collected led me to reflect on suggestions for future research. Thus, this section aims to present a set of suggestions for future studies on the topic explored here.

Firstly, to compare the evolution of students' critical thinking, language proficiency, and interaction, it would be valuable to have a control group. The control group would follow the approach typically implemented by the school's teachers, which tends to focus more on reading comprehension and grammar practice. At the end of the practicum, a comparison between the experimental and the control group could be drawn based on observation, interviews, and surveys. This comparison would provide insights into the

effectiveness of the ABP approach compared to the one implemented at the school.

Secondly, considering the answers provided in the focus group interviews with both grade 8 and grade 11 students, it would be useful to conduct short individual interviews with all students from each class. The initial interviews revealed that students generally recognized the advantages and provided strategies for implementing an ABP approach in the classroom. However, the students selected for these interviews were proposed by the cooperating teacher and the 11th-grade teacher, as academically good students. Thus, to get a more comprehensive understanding and improve the results of this study, it would be beneficial to include perspectives from students who struggle academically or who did not participate much during the practicum. Their feedback could provide valuable insights on how I could improve as a teacher.

Thirdly, to obtain a more comprehensive conclusion on the effective use of the ABP approach, it would be useful to observe its implementation across all language subjects taught at the school, including French, Spanish, and German. If these teachers consistently apply the ABP approach in their subjects, using similar artwork and materials, I could get additional information on how this approach had an impact on students learning, particularly regarding critical thinking and language interaction. This data would enable me to refine my practices and become a better teacher.

Fourthly, the integration of technology could further enhance the ABP approach. If every student had a computer or tablet, they could create their artwork and share it with their class or share it with other classes following the same approach through a digital portfolio. This would promote more collaboration, communication, and interaction between students from different classrooms, which could also strengthen the motivation to learn through an ABP approach. Considering students' interest in watching videos, they could create videos to reflect on complex issues and stream them online for other schools to access. Additionally, teachers could use forums to discuss topics of interest regarding artwork, which could be assigned as tasks for autonomous work in the classroom or as homework.

Overall, this Master's program, particularly the STP, has shown me that every

student and every class is unique, whether due to their academic or social skills. As educators, we must be prepared to embrace this diversity and apply various teaching strategies to support each student's learning. By incorporating authentic materials, such as paintings, sculptures, or photographs, in line with an ABP approach, teachers can create more meaningful learning experiences. Instead of using the teachers' and the workbook, students will not just learn grammar; they will also effectively learn a language in an open context, which will help them develop their curiosity, creativity, as well as their cognitive and emotional skills. Ultimately, whenever teachers become aware of student diversity and take the time to reflect on their teaching practices, they improve as educators. This, in turn, will help more students achieve effective learning, making more of their learning experiences.

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Appendices





Appendix A – Lesson Plans

Class 8A

Lesson 1.

Unit 2 - Keeping trendy	
Grade	8
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and approach to the topic to be discussed throughout the class; • To identify the topic; • To interpret meaning; • To express a personal opinion related to the topic; • To collaborate with peers; • To share ideas and receive feedback; • To promote critical thinking; • To structure their ideas and communicate them; • To promote their creative skills; • To promote interaction skills;
Class procedures	
Triggering (15')	<p>The teacher screens an art piece and asks students what is the image about. The teacher asks the students to focus on the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sculpture; - Colours; - Idea behind the art piece; - Issues related to the art piece;

	
Whole class activity (20')	<p>Image 1. Michelangelo Pistoletto, <i>Venus of the Rags</i>, 1967</p> <p>The teacher then explains that the topic to be discussed in the following classes will be based on Fashion and proceeds to explore the image while providing a few concepts and the respective explanation. The explanation of the topics is always given by providing visual elements from the art piece, and preceded by a question to the students.</p> <p>Eg: Do you know the meaning of “Fashion”? How is it related to the image?</p> <p>The concepts to be discussed are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expression of identity • Trends • Clothing Industry • Innovation and creativity • Social Media and Fashion <p>The teacher then proceeds to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of fashion. Before explaining each concept, the teacher asks the students opinions about the meaning of each one.</p> <p>Eg: How is “job creation” related to fashion? Can you think about more advantages?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety • Accessibility • Job Creation • Innovation • Creativity • Environmental Impact • Labor Exploitation • Low Quality • Short Lifespan

<p>Activity in small groups (20')</p>	<p>The teacher screens four art pieces on the board and ask the students to reflect and take notes about the images. In order to do so, the teacher asks the students to work in pairs and do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give a title to each artpiece; - 3 words to describe each image; - Colours, the visual elements, and the message of images; - Are these images related to fashion? Why? Why not? - Can you personally relate to each image? <div data-bbox="443 438 963 786">  </div> <p>Image 2. Suzie Blake, <i>Blood Mountain</i>, 2019</p> <div data-bbox="974 450 1646 786">  </div> <p>Image 3. Banksy, <i>Sale Ends Today</i>, 2006</p> <div data-bbox="443 842 992 1201">  </div> <p>Image 4. Minga Opazo, <i>Out of Sight II</i>, 2024</p> <div data-bbox="1075 842 1451 1201">  </div> <p>Image 5. Barbara Kruger, <i>I shop therefore I am</i>, 1990</p> <p>Whole class activity (25')</p> <p>The teacher then asks each pair to pick one image and to comment it according to the notes taken during the pair discussion. The teacher asks other groups to comment the opinion of their peers in order to create a class discussion. While the students share their perspectives, the teacher writes key points provided by each pair.</p>
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Post-activity (10')	The teacher then wraps up the class by adding final comments to the topic regarding the advantages and disadvantages of fashion. The teacher summarizes what was said throughout the class highlighting the key issues.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer; • Projector; • White Board; • Notebook;


Class 8B

Lesson 4.

Unit 3 - Tasty lifestyles	
Grade	8
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and approach to the topic to be discussed throughout the class; • To identify the topic; • To interpret meaning; • To express a personal opinion related to the topic; • To collaborate with peers; • To share ideas and receive feedback; • To promote critical thinking; • To structure their ideas and communicate them; • To promote their creative skills; • To promote interaction skills;
Class procedures	
Pre-activity (15')	<p>The teacher asks the students to briefly summarize the topics discussed during the last class. In order to do so, the teacher asks the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you remember what we talked about last class? • What did we do? • Do you remember the images chosen by other students? <p>The teacher writes key issues stated by students on the board.</p>

Whole class activity (20')	<p>The teacher tells the students they are going to watch a video (https://ed.ted.com/lessons/which-is-better-for-you-real-meat-or-fake-meat-carolyn-beans/think?lesson_collection=you-are-what-you-eat) and asks them to focus and write down a few notes about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write three words related to the video; • Did you like the video? Why? • What was the video about? • What is plant based meat? • Would you try “fake” meat? <p>After watching the video, the teacher asks the students to write on the board key issues stated in the video. The teacher then asks two questions to promote class discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think that the information on this video is relevant nowadays? Why? • Do you think you would be able to save many animals by eating plant based meat?
Post-watching activity (15')	<p>The teacher wraps up the class discussion and shares key considerations about “How plant-based meats are made?” and “Lab-grown meat”.</p>
Activity in small groups (35')	<p>Based on what they know about food, diets and eating habits, the teacher asks the students to work in groups of four and use their mobile phones to find an online painting, photograph, sculpture, video or cartoon displaying a suitable meal for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The students should follow the following structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is the meal portrayed suitable for breakfast, lunch and dinner? Focus on ingredients, balanced diets and food abuse. • You can also focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegan diet; • Vegetarian diet; • Pescatarian diet; • Carnivore diet; <p>The students then present their art pieces to their peers and discuss their choices.</p>
Post-activity (5')	<p>The teacher then wraps up the class by adding final comments to the topic. The teacher summarizes what was said throughout the class highlighting the key issues.</p>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer; • Projector; • White Board; • Notebook;

Class 11 A
Lesson 1.

Unit 2 – Go Green	
Grade	11
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and approach to the topic to be discussed throughout the class; • To identify the topic; • To interpret meaning; • To express a personal opinion related to the topic; • To collaborate with peers; • To share ideas and receive feedback; • To promote critical thinking; • To structure their ideas and communicate them; • To promote their creative skills; • To promote interaction skills;
Class procedures	
Triggering (15')	<p>The teacher screens an art piece (image 1) and asks students what is the image about. The teacher asks the students to focus on the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colours; - Idea behind the art piece; - Issues related to the art piece;  <p>Image 1. Zhc, <i>Climate Crisis</i>, 2016</p>



<p>Whole class activity (20')</p>	<p>The teacher then explains that the topic to be discussed in the following classes will be based on Climate Change and proceeds to explore the image while providing a few concepts and the respective explanation. The explanation of the topics is always given by providing visual elements from the art piece, and preceded by a question to the students.</p> <p>Eg: What do you know about the rising of sea levels? Is it related to the climate change?</p> <p>The concepts to be discussed are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising Temperatures • Melting Ice and Glaciers • Sea Level Rise • Extreme Weather Events • Changes in Precipitation Patterns • Ocean Acidification • Impact on Ecosystems • Threats to Agriculture • Health Risks • Social and Economic Consequences
<p>Whole class activity (25')</p>	<p>The teacher screens four art pieces (Images 2,3, 4 and 5) on the board and ask the students to reflect and take notes about the images. In order to do so, the teacher asks the students to work in pairs and to focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colours; - Ideas behind the art piece; - Issues related to the art piece; - Materials used; - Setting; - Is it related to climate change? <p>The teacher then asks the students to comment the images according to the notes taken. The teacher asks other groups to comment the opinion of their peers in order to create a class discussion. While the students share their perspectives, the teacher writes key points provided on the board.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-end;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Image 2. Mendieta, <i>Imagen de Yagul</i>, 1973</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Image 3. Olafur Eliasson and Minik Rosing, <i>Ice Watch</i>, 2014</p> </div> </div>



Image 4. Agnes Denes, *Wheatfield—A Confrontation*, 1982

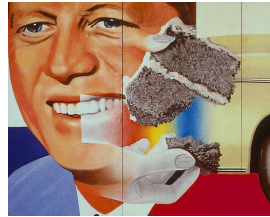


Image 5. James Rosenquist, *President Elect*, 1960

Activity in small groups (25')	<p>The teacher asks the students to work in groups of four and provides the following guidelines:</p> <p>Pick an art piece that portrays climate change or natural disasters. Present the piece to the class. You should mention the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did you choose it? • Describe it; • The aims of the piece; • Could it be used to warn against climate change and natural disasters? How? <p>After the presentation, other groups are requested to comment the presentation in order to promote class discussion.</p>
Post-activity (5')	<p>The teacher then wraps up the class by adding final comments to the topic regarding the impact of climate change around the world. The teacher summarizes what was said throughout the class highlighting the key issues.</p>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer; • Projector; • White Board; • Notebook;

Class 11 B
Lesson 4.

Unit 5 – Ads are out there!	
Grade	11
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and approach to the topic to be discussed throughout the class; • To identify the topic; • To interpret meaning; • To express a personal opinion related to the topic; • To collaborate with peers; • To share ideas and receive feedback; • To promote critical thinking; • To structure their ideas and communicate them; • To promote their creative skills; • To promote interaction skills;
Class procedures	
Whole class activity (20')	<p>The teacher explains the concept of a pitch and outlines its structure. To do that, she displays a PowerPoint presentation with a few key points and then proceeds to explain them in detail. The key points are the following:</p> <p>What is a pitch?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concise; • Persuasive; • Purposeful; • Informative; • Compelling. <p>Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set your purpose; • Present reasons and arguments; • Present contrasting ideas; • Provide alternative solutions; • Wrap up <p>The teacher then asks the students if they add any questions and if someone would like to summarize what was said.</p>

Activity in small groups (30')	<p>In pairs, the teacher asks the students to brainstorm a challenging product to sell and develop a pitch to persuade their peers to buy it. The product should be simple or unusual (old car, ugly sweater, second hand socks, unproven investment opportunities).</p> <p>The students need to focus on the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Story of the product; - Material; - Purpose; - Advantage of having it; - Price (has to be expensive);
Whole class activity (30')	<p>Each pair should present their pitch, while the rest of the class should take notes to comment it in the end. The comments should be based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity; • Structure; • Persuasiveness; • Creativity; • Engagement; • Delivery; • Relevance. • Would I buy it? Yay/Nay
Post-activity (10')	<p>The teacher then wraps up the class by adding final comments to the topic. The teacher summarizes what was said throughout the class highlighting the key issues.</p>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer; • Projector; • White Board; • Notebook;

Appendix B – Lesson's support materials

Class 8A | Lesson 1



Michelangelo
Pistoletto,
*Venus of the
Rags*, 1967



- "A popular way of dressing during a particular time or among a particular group of people"

- Identity
- Trends
- Clothing industry
- Creativity
- Social Media and fashion



• **ADVANTAGES**

- Variety
- Accessibility
- Job Creation
- Innovation
- Creativity

What else?

- Environmental Impact
- Labor Exploitation
- Low Quality
- Short Lifespan

What else?





YOUR
TURN:



1. Take a look at each one of the images.



2. How would you name this image?



3. Choose 3 words to describe each image and explain why;



4. Reflect on the colours, the visual elements, and the message of images;

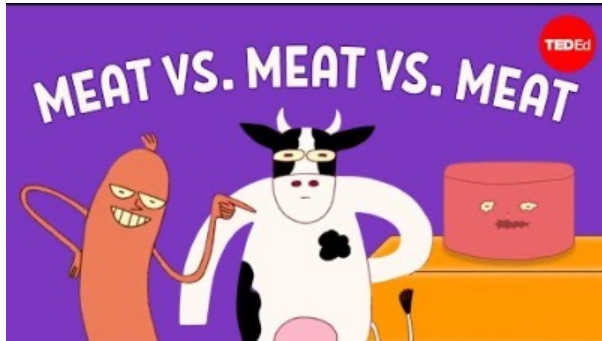


5. Are these images related to fashion? Why? Why not?



6. Can you personally relate to each image?

Class 8A | Lesson 4



What is this video about?

- https://ed.ted.com/lessons/which-is-better-for-you-real-meat-or-fake-meat-carolyn-beans/think?lesson_collection=you-are-what-you-eat

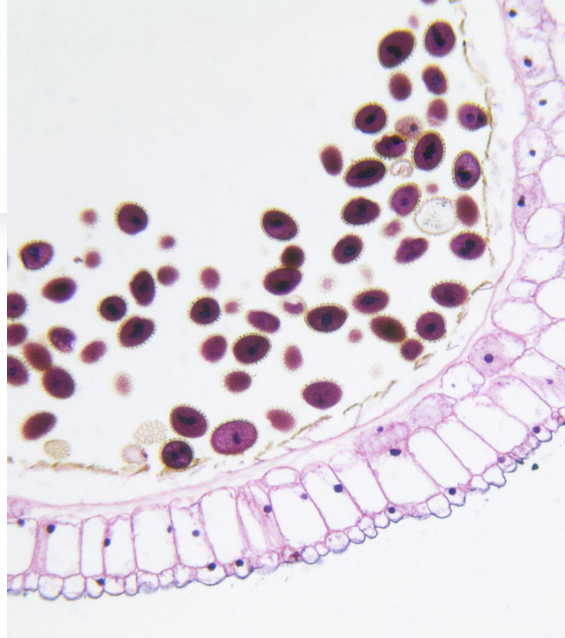


- *How plant-based meats are made?*

“Basically, plant-based meats are crafted using a combination of plant ingredients that mimic the taste, texture, and even nutritional profile of meats from animals. The process starts with selecting protein-rich plants like soy, peas, or lentils. These plants contain essential building blocks called amino acids, which are the foundations of protein. Plant proteins are extracted and processed to create a meat-like texture, sometimes using heating, cooling, and pressure techniques. This helps align the proteins in a way that resembles the fibrous structure of real meat.”

What is lab-grown meat?

"Also known as cultured meat or cell-based meat, is created through an innovative process that begins with a small sample of animal cells, usually obtained through a biopsy from a living animal. These cells are then cultivated in a controlled environment, multiplying and developing into muscle tissue. To encourage growth, the cells are provided with a nutrient-rich culture medium that contains vitamins, minerals, and other essential components. This simulated environment mimics the conditions within an animal's body, enabling the cells to organize and form muscle fibers, which are the building blocks of meat. As the cells continue to grow and differentiate, they naturally create the texture and composition of traditional meat. The result is genuine meat that does not require the extensive resources and ethical concerns associated with traditional animal farming. While the technology is still evolving, lab-grown meat holds promise for a more sustainable and animal-friendly future of food production."



Your turn!

- Find an online painting, photograph, sculpture, video or cartoon displaying a suitable meal for breakfast, lunch and dinner;
- Why is the meal portrayed suitable for breakfast, lunch and dinner? Focus on ingredients, balanced diets and food abuse.
- You can also focus on:
 - Vegan diet;
 - Vegetarian diet;
 - Pescatarian diet;
 - Carnivore diet;

Class 11 A | Lesson 1



Zhc, *Climate Crisis*, 2016

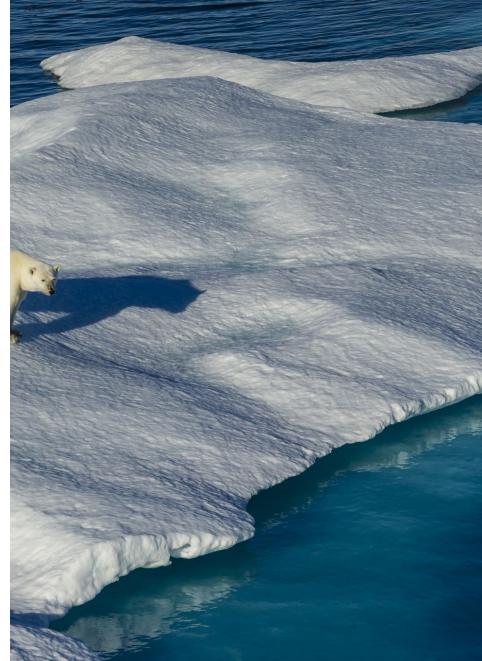
Climate Change

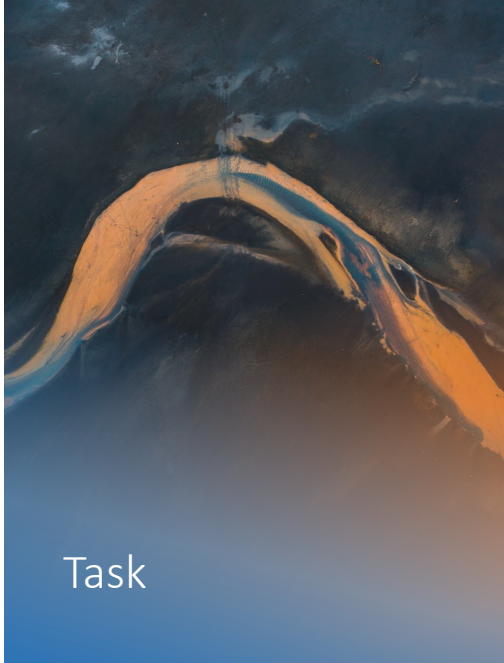
- Climate change refers to long-term changes in the average weather patterns that have come to define Earth's climate. It involves alterations in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other climate indicators over an extended period, typically decades to millions of years. The term is often used to describe the current trend of global warming and its associated impacts.



Effects

1. **Rising Temperatures:** Global warming leads to an increase in average temperatures worldwide. This can result in more frequent and intense heatwaves, affecting ecosystems, agriculture, and human health.
2. **Melting Ice and Glaciers:** Higher temperatures contribute to the melting of glaciers and ice caps in polar and mountainous regions. This contributes to rising sea levels and poses a threat to coastal areas.
3. **Sea Level Rise:** Melting ice, along with the thermal expansion of seawater, leads to rising sea levels. This poses a significant risk to low-lying coastal areas, causing increased flooding and erosion.
4. **Extreme Weather Events:** Climate change is associated with an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, droughts, floods, wildfires, and storms. These events can result in significant damage to infrastructure, agriculture, and ecosystems.
5. **Changes in Precipitation Patterns:** Climate change can alter precipitation patterns, leading to more intense rainfall in some regions and prolonged droughts in others. This can impact water availability, agriculture, and ecosystems.
6. **Ocean Acidification:** Increased absorption of carbon dioxide by the oceans leads to a decrease in pH, resulting in ocean acidification. This can harm marine life, particularly organisms with calcium carbonate shells, such as corals and some shellfish.
7. **Impact on Ecosystems:** Changes in temperature, precipitation, and weather patterns can disrupt ecosystems. This includes shifts in the distribution and behavior of plant and animal species, as well as threats to biodiversity.
8. **Threats to Agriculture:** Changes in temperature and precipitation can affect crop yields and the suitability of certain regions for agriculture. Pests and diseases may also proliferate under new climatic conditions, posing challenges to food security.
9. **Health Risks:** Climate change can have direct and indirect impacts on human health. Heat-related illnesses may become more common, and the spread of diseases carried by vectors (such as mosquitoes) may change with shifting climate patterns.
10. **Social and Economic Consequences:** Climate change can exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities. Vulnerable communities may be disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, facing challenges such as displacement, resource shortages, and increased risks of conflict.





- Pick an art piece that portrays climate change or natural disasters. Present the piece to the class. You should mention the following:

- Why did you choose it?
- Describe it;
- The aims of the piece;
- Could it be used to warn against climate change and natural disasters? How?

What is a pitch?

Concise;

Persuasive;

Purposeful;

Informative;

Compelling.

Structure:

- Set your purpose;
- Present reasons and arguments;
- Present contrasting ideas;
- Provide alternative solutions;
- Wrap up





It's your turn now!

Your pitch should be concise and persuasive.

- You need to sell a product. Don't forget to mention the following:
 - Story of the product;
 - Material;
 - Purpose;
 - Advantage of having it;
 - Price (has to be expensive);

+

o

How should
I put this...

- Clarity;
- Structure;
- Persuasiveness;
- Creativity;
- Engagement;
- Delivery;
- Relevance.

Would I buy it? Yay/Nay

•



Appendix C – Interviews

Class 8A

Q1: “What is your opinion about the discussion of artwork in a classroom setting?”

(SS): *Eu gostei. Não participei muito, porque sou mais de ouvir do que de falar, mas acho que foi giro, aprendemos várias coisas, como também ouvimos várias pessoas, também percebemos outras maneiras de pensar e perceber as imagens. (CG): Eu achei bastante estimulante, como o SS disse, depreende-se que as pessoas através de uma obra de arte conseguem retirar diferentes pensamentos e opiniões, e acho que era uma forma nova, esta forma de por os alunos a pensar e a refletir sobre alguns temas e isso é bastante interessante. (PN): Acho que é bom ter essas formas de arte em vez de ser só interpretar textos e imagens sem ser arte, e acho que é muito importante ter arte, porque mostra que há pessoas que pensam através da arte e que mostram ao mundo uma forma diferente de pensar, sem ser textos. (JS): Eu acho que é muito importante discutir os temas que a professora trouxe e a partir da arte, é um bocadinho mais fácil entendermos. (PN): E tirar-mos as nossas próprias conclusões. (CG): E até porque nem em todas as disciplinas há a possibilidade de fazer isso, como Matemática. (JS): também estamos a fazer uma coisa parecida a Português, e corre bem. (CG): Por acaso gostei muito do trabalho do cartoon.*

Q2: “Do you feel more compelled to participate in class discussion when they are based on artwork?”

(CG): *Sim. (PN): Acho que sim. (JS): Eu não participo muito em aula, mas acho que sim, participaria melhor a falar sobre esses temas, do que só a interpretar um texto.*

Q3: “Do you think the discussion of artwork promotes peer interaction?”

(JS): *Sim, acho que sim, porque como os nossos pensamentos são todos diferentes, acho que sim. (CG): Acho que desde que haja um comportamento correto em sala de aula, da parte de todos os alunos, acho que se pode criar uma discussão de ideias, através de um brainstorming gigante, porque todos têm ideias diferentes, e todas essas ideias podem levar a uma só. Pode ser uma conclusão fantástica, como pode ser uma não muito boa, mas não deixa de ser um trabalho de equipa que implica o raciocínio de todos, que é isso que vai levar a uma conclusão. (SS): Eu ia dar o exemplo de um trabalho que fizemos em inglês no 1º período, que era dar a nossa opinião num debate e acho que foi muito bom, havia muitas pessoas que não costumavam falar muito e falaram mais, e que não só diziam o que estava escrito, mas também falavam por si próprios.*

Q4: Do you think that the use of art to promote classroom discussion fosters reflection about issues you were previously

unaware of?

(PN): Eu acho que sim, porque por exemplo, nos distúrbios alimentares, normalmente não falo muito disso com a minha família e quando vi isso na obra de arte e com esse trabalho, achei importante falar sobre isso, porque é uma coisa real de se falar e combater. (CG): Pois, não é nenhum taboo, é para ser abordado. (SS): Eu acho que aprendi muito, porque em família não se fala muito sobre estes assuntos, e óbvio que me apercebi muito mais sobre o que estava a acontecer no mundo atual, com as obras de arte e vídeos que mostrou, como aquele sobre não comer animais. O vídeo estava muito bem feito e fez-me pensar sobre isso. (JS): Acho que todos estes temas, quer dizer o tema da tecnologia e o tema que o SS acabou de referir, eu falo muito disso com a minha família, mas o tema dos distúrbios alimentares, eu não falo. Nunca tinha pensado nele como pensámos em aula, e acho que foi muito interessante estarmos a explorar uma coisa que é tão importante saber e ter cuidado.

Class 8B

Q1: "What is your opinion about the discussion of artwork in a classroom setting?"

(Y): Eu acho que é importante, toda a gente tem opiniões diferente sobre o mesmo quadro. Gosto de ouvir a opinião dos outros e discutir. (FV): Havia algumas obras que me interessavam e outras que me interessavam menos, e por isso cada pessoa tem o seu gosto, mas é bom termos essas obras a falar sobre arte. (FS): É um bocadinho dos dois, eu acho que é importante refletir sobre a moralidade de cada imagem e sobre o impacto que pode ter nas nossas vidas. (MB): Pronto, é a mesma coisa, e acho que as pessoas começam a ter mais problemas na nossa idade, mas num patamar psicológico (...), e faz bem abordar questões mesmo num patamar da arte porque as pessoas da nossa idade começam a ter mais problemas.

Q2: "Do you feel more compelled to participate in class discussion when they are based on artwork?"

(FV): Depende... (MB): Sim, e tecnologia sim, porque isso cria muita discussão. (FV): Pra mim depende da arte que for. Há coisas que me interessam assim mesmo. (Y): Há quadros que passam a mensagem mais diretamente do que outros. (FV): sim, e há uns que são mais brutos. Eu gosto de pensar mais sobre a arte, sobre o quadro. (MB): eu gosto quando a questão é menos direta, porque quando é muito direta, muitos temos a mesma opinião, e quando é mais geral cria mais opiniões. (E): Gostam de ouvir as opiniões dos outros? (Students): Sim.

Q3: "Do you think the discussion of artwork promotes peer interaction?"

(MB): Sim. (FS): Sim, acho que sim. (E): Mais do que exercícios em que estejam a ler um texto...? (FV/MB/FS): sim, é mais dinâmico e mais divertido. (MB): há mais pessoas a falar de diversas maneiras, e as perguntas que são mais no geral, há muitas pessoas a interagir ao mesmo tempo. Cada um fala há sua maneira. Quando estamos a corrigir um exercício, cada um fala e depois não sabemos como os outros poderiam ter feito, porque poderiam fazer de outras maneiras, mas que poderia estar certo. (FV): E assim a aula é mais interativa e assim aprendemos melhor para alguns. Para alguns ler em inglês que têm notas assim complicadas, pode ser chato para eles, e secalhar aulas interativas, secalhar aprendem melhor.

Q4: Do you think that the use of art to promote classroom discussion fosters reflection about issues you were previously unaware of?

(Students): Sim, bem eu acho que cada pessoa depende. (FS): Por exemplo sobre a alimentação, todos temos conhecimento do assunto, e a mim não me trouxe tanto interesse, mas na tecnologia, como tenho mais interesse, e tenho mais experiência em certas áreas, está melhor (FV): É igual . (MB): exato. (Y): É importante ter quadros de obras de temas diferentes, para pessoas que interessam uma determinada área e outros talvez menos, e assim vai variando. (MB): mesmo que for um tema conhecido, é sempre importante e bom estar a falar do tema na mesma. Acho que se é conhecido ou não, não interessa muito, acho que é mais importante falar do tema e dar a conhecê-lo. É importante saber as diferentes opiniões em relação ao tema. (FS): E em relação às obras, depende da pessoa e dos gosto. (MB) Exato.

Class 11B

Q1: "What is your opinion about the discussion of artwork in a classroom setting?"

(DS): Eu acho que é uma discussão ótima, porque como é mais abstrato, dá mais para nós falarmos abertamente e haverá mais temas e tópicos que cada pessoa fala, e então não será por exemplo: matemática é boa? sim ou não? Isso é mais específico. A arte é mais abstrata, por isso a discussão abrange muitos tópicos, e é melhor, por assim dizer. (TA): Sim, normalmente também não fazemos isso nas aulas, porque temos umas aulas que é tipo aprender, e depois em vez de estarmos, tipo a discutir, é mais, lemos o manual e temos de estar a reter a informação toda, e eu acho que com obras de arte, como cada um tem a sua perspetiva, e como são coisas mais relativas e nós podemos tipo, discutir, eu acho que é muito melhor, e acho que é bom discutir obras de arte, porque para cada um tem significados diferentes e pode aplicar-se ao dia a dia de cada um. (AA): Sim, eu também concordo. Acho que como a maioria das nossas aulas são muito baseadas no manual ou em exercícios, acho que termos a oportunidade termos este tipo de aulas diferentes e que nos permite ter uma opinião critica, também nos ajuda muito para o nosso desempenho também em outras disciplinas. Ao mesmo tempo que é utilizada

a arte, também permite as pessoas verem as coisas de uma forma diferente e permite dar uma maior valorização à arte, que é uma coisa que no nosso país não é suficiente, de todo. (VC): Sim, concordo.

Q2: “Do you feel more compelled to participate in class discussion when they are based on artwork?”

(V): Eu gostei muito mais destas aulas, do que de estar a analisar as obras, porque parece que fico mais à vontade, porque não há uma resposta certa, e não estou: “será que é isto? É melhor não dizer”. É mais subjetivo, e eu gosto também de pensar sobre arte. (TA): Eu concordo, sim. (DS): Exato, eu acho que a V tem toda a razão, porque nas perguntas de gramática, só há um certo ou um errado, e se errarmos, há aquele: “ah, errei, ok”, e na arte, é tudo mais abstrato, portanto não há nenhuma opinião certa ou errada. A arte dá mais espaço para expressarmos as nossas opiniões, e quem é que nós somos, como artistas. (AA): Eu queria só acrescentar uma coisa, eu também acho, porque pelo menos para mim, e para nós os quatro é mais fácil participar neste tipo de aulas, porque são perguntas muito subjetivas, mas sinto que secalhar outras pessoas, sentem-se mais à vontade a responder às perguntas mais objetivas, porque é aquilo a que elas estão habituadas, mas eu não acho que devia ser assim. (TA): Sim, acho que depende das pessoas, se foram mais extrovertidas e gostarem mais de falar, acho que gostam mais deste tipo de aulas, mas se forem pessoas mais introvertidas, e que não gostem tanto de debater, e de estar à vontade com outras pessoas, e de falar o que pensam, acho que gostam mais das aulas que são mais estruturadas.

Q3: “Do you think the discussion of artwork promotes peer interaction?”

(TA): Eu acho que estas aulas promovem mais a discussão, mas também depende das obras de arte, por exemplo, obras de arte que toda a gente concorde o que lá está, que não são tão abstratas, eu acho que não promove tanto a discussão, mas se forem obras de arte mais abstratas e que tenhamos opiniões diferentes, eu acho que promove mais a discussão, mas obviamente que estas aulas promovem muito mais a discussão do que e as aulas em que só analisamos os textos do livro. (AA) Sim, eu acho que tudo o que é manual, é demasiado objetivo, e não há muito espaço para discussão. Portanto, acho que estas aulas são perfeitas para fazer uma coisas que ao longo da escola, não temos muita oportunidade para fazer, que é dizer aquilo que nós acreditamos, e também é como o T disse, depende do tema abordado, depende das interpretações de cada um, portanto, há mais espaço.

Q4: Do you think that the use of art to promote classroom discussion fosters reflection about issues you were previously unaware of?

(DS): Acho que quando estamos a discutir, por exemplo, quando ouvimos coisas que outras pessoas dizem, estamos a

absorver dados para depois podermos refutar, e acho que conseguimos perceber bem o que a pessoa está a dizer, então aprendemos coisas novas, e muita gente acha que aprender pelos livros é mais complicado, e às vezes pelas discussões conseguimos perceber realmente o que se está a passar e o tema que estamos a abordar. (TA): Aquela questão do consumismo que a professora trouxe para a aula, tinha a ideia que havia muito consumismo, mas não que estava tão presente nas nossas vidas. Essas obras de arte, que às vezes nos alertam para coisas que sabemos que existem, mas que não existem assim tanto, e que afetam tanto a nossa vida, eu acho que é importante, porque às vezes nós achamos que não afeta tanto a nossa vida (...) mas percebemos que afinal afeta-nos a todos, e acho que é importante saber sobre esses temas, que à vezes sabemos um pouco, mas queremos saber mais. (AA) O tema do consumismo e o tema do ambiente, e como eles acabam por se afetar um ao outro, acho que nos permite perceber que secalhar não somos tão inocentes neste problemas que nós vivemos, e acabamos por nos por nessa posição de que: “o que é que devemos mudar”. (V): Acho que mesmo que muitas pessoas que não saibam sobre esses temas, ou que tenham uma noção básica, essas aulas são mesmo para isso. (DS): Também acho que nós não sabemos, e só quando vemos as obras de arte é que realmente conseguimos perceber o que se está a passar, e o que podemos fazer. (AA): Acho que estas aulas acabam por nos forçar a pensar em coisas que no nosso dia a dia não pensamos.

Class 11A

Q1: “What is your opinion about the discussion of artwork in a classroom setting?”

(JM): Eu acho que depende das obras de arte. Por exemplo, a professora mostrou várias obras do Banský, e eu acho que essas já são demasiado vistas, já conhecia todas e já sabia mais ou menos o significado de todas, e não foi tão interessante. Mas acho que as obras de arte em geral, que é um tema que gosto, podem fazer sentido neste tipo de aprendizagem, acho que é uma boa abordagem. (RA) Sim, para pessoas que não conhecem tanto obras de arte, acho que é enriquecedor. (AS) E não deixa de ser alguma coisa diferente, não é necessariamente estarmos a olhar para um texto, ou uma coisa assim, é algo diferente, não é estar ali 90 minutos a ler textos.

Q2: “Do you feel more compelled to participate in class discussion when they are based on artwork?”

(AS/LH) É igual. (RA): Depende do tema, mas acho que me sinto mais à vontade. Porque é um tema que até me interessa mais. (JM): Sim, e acho que usar três palavras para descrever e estar a fazer com o parceiro do lado e ... sim, a parte de escrever escrever e de interpretar, principalmente de interpretar, não é só ler um texto, é mesmo interpretar uma obra de arte, eu acho que isso dá mais vontade de participar. Acho que sim, mas depende de pessoa para pessoa.

Q3: “Do you think the discussion of artwork promotes peer interaction?”

(AS): Sim, eu acho que sim, porque não é assim tão... as respostas para as coisas não são assim tão diretas, cada um interpreta as coisas como quer, e com um texto já mais direto, é aquilo que está ali. (LH): Sim, a interpretação de texto é tipo “concordas? Sim. Seguinte”, e passa muito rápido. Quando estamos a falar de obras de arte é mais subjetivo, dá-nos mais espaço para discutir. (AS) Sim, não há certo ou errado nessa discussão.

Q4: Do you think that the use of art to promote classroom discussion fosters reflection about issues you were previously unaware of?

(AS): Eu acho que os temos, até já tínhamos falado bastante cá na escola. (JM): Não acho que tenham sido as obras de arte a apresentar novos conteúdos, eu acho que são um bom método para desenvolver esse tipo de conteúdos, mas não apresentaram nenhuma ideia nova.

Appendix D – Pre/post-intervention assessment task

Name: _____ Class: _____



Image 1. *Supermarket Lady*, Duane Hanson, 1969



Image 2. *Contemporary Pieces*, Rebecca Rütten, 2013

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2

1.3. Explore what these two images represent.

Appendix E – Pre-intervention assessment task (Students' answers) | Grade 8

Student FF

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
abuse of food	fast food
color poll	stomach ache
food shopping	cheese

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit 3.

image 1	image 2
The old lady is in food shopping and bought lots of food. This image is a warning of the food waste.	The purpose of the way the junk food is put in a fancy position and place is that people feel tempted to buy it and consume it.

Student SS

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
shopping	fast food
lady	unhealthy
	expensive

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

In the first image we can see a lady shopping with lots of stuff to buy that probably will long more than the ~~second~~ second image.

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
expensive	Unhealthy
exaggerated	cheap
	excessive

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit 3.

These images are about food, there is a lady in the supermarket with a cart full of products, she is really exaggerated and her cart looks super expensive, but, it looks ~~healthier~~ healthier than the taco bell. The second picture looks unhealthy, cheaper and excessive.

Students MC1

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
food proportion stepping	food unhealthy side 10/10

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

[illegible]

Appendix F – Pre-intervention assessment task (Students' answers) | Grade 11

Student ID

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
Health Risks	Mass - production
Large Companies	Fast-food
Waste of products	Food waste

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

These two images are related to our need of having a practical and fast lifestyle, where we sometimes don't think about our the consequences of our actions, either to the environment or to our health.

In general, the images represent a mass-production and a lack of change from us humans, which are related to our inability of having a healthy and green lifestyle.

Student VC

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
essentials	fast-food
Physical difficulties	appearance
Looks	pleasure

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

In the first image we can see someone many things. On the first hand, the lady ~~has~~ might be used to get more things than she really needs, this, since her cart is full and she's only, even thought we don't know for who the food is. On the other hand, the fact that she's using a cart can show that many people can't or have condition to do the processes or other activities.

In the second picture, we see a fast-food commercial or something for a restaurant, that is making their food look better for the advertisement, not always being what it seems. Also, despite the pleasure, we can't forget that these mass-produced and consumption foods aren't good for the environment.

Student MD

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
overweight	easy
shopping	calories
gluttony	delicious

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit 3.

These two pictures represent the human's gluttony that has been
more of a priority than ~~our~~ ^{our own} habitat, Planet Earth. ~~buying things~~ ^{We shouldn't buy}
cheaper and easier things, that may taste better, but are both un-
healthy for us and for the environment. So if we are already facing
environmental issues we ~~if~~ shouldn't be focused on our pleasures but our
future wellbeing, finding ways to save ~~the~~ our planet and ~~environment~~.
Watch out for our health.

Student MM

image 1	image 2
overconsuming	junk food
excessive	unhealthy
unnecessary	consumerism
1.3 the image number 1 represents the overconsuming groceries and unnecessary things that we buy ^{buy} every day. Every day, we buy excessive things that we don't need and don't use or even consume things that we don't need as well like candy. This demonstrates that the overconsuming can be bad for the environment too because of the plastic and the garbage that makes.	
the image number 2 represents a giant piece of junk food. That face the consumerism problems ; which cause environmental problems, like the pollution of the packagings. That behaviour of ordering food isn't sustainable and healthy.	

Appendix G – Post-intervention assessment task (Students' answers) | Grade 8

Student FF

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
unhealthy	fast food
abuse	unhealthy
waste	exaggerated

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

Both this images are social critics about food.
In image 1 we can see a fat woman (with a cigarette) and a shopping car full of food. This is a alarm to the huge waste of food and to the food choices we make that can be really unhealthy.
In image 2 we can see (what looks like) a commercial about tacos. This tacos look at the same time tasty and unhealthy. Like the 1st image, this is a alert to food waste and what fast food does to your health.

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
exaggerated	fast food
supermarket	unhealthy
overeating	fat

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

This 2 images represent the impact of food exaggerated and fast food. Nowadays, people continue to eat fast food that is bad for your heart and it makes you fat. Normally people that over eat get bullied in school or in the streets, so over eating is bad for your health and it can make you feel depressed about yourself.

Student JL

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
Excessive	Unhealthy
Expensive	Fat
Unhealthy	Excessive

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

In my opinion, both of these images ~~represent~~ represent unhealthy eating habits, since they show ~~a lot of~~ processed, fat food in excess. People usually buy this type of food in large quantities because they are way cheaper than biological healthy food, ~~and~~ which expands the problem.

Student MC1

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
exaggerated amount of food	unhealthy food
dependence	fast food
lump of the amount of food	exaggerated amount of food

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit 3.

In fact, both of the images refer to the exaggerated amount of food that people consume nowadays. This unhealthy habit can lead to many problems like obesity that can have many impacts in our lives.

Appendix H – Post-intervention assessment task (Students' answers) | Grade 11

Student ID

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
consumerism	food addiction
materialism	processed food
shopping addiction	over-consumption

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

These images represent our current reality, a society in a consumerism cycle, where materialism is something rare not to have. A society in which the economy is dependent on our shopping addiction and in the ad industry, responsible for getting in our head, making us think we need something and then buying it.

The images also represent our ~~is~~ unhealthy eating habits, based on processed food agencies called "fast-food" chain.
the

Student VC

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
priorities	fast-food
luxury	health
limits	convenience

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

Both pictures remind me of how priorities and limits change and affect your ~~life~~ lives more than we know. Someone who would rather spend all their money on fast-food than spend consciously and define limits is much more likely to ~~not succeed or~~ have unhealthy habits. There is a difference ^{between} ~~from~~ defining limits and still have "luxurious" things and just buy whatever you feel like, ~~the~~ which is precisely what the message we should be transmitting. Despite this, the change comes from each one of us and only when people realise how it truly affects them they will do something about it. People are choosing pleasure over the right thing to do.

Student MD

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
over consumption	fast food
groceries	easy
house wife	take

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

The image 1 represents the over consumption, not only present in luxurious products, but also in simple and basic shops like groceries. House wives like the one in the first picture are very influenced by ads' manipulation and fashionable trends, which makes it enjoyable to spend money.

The image 2 represents how publicity glorifies its products with the objective of making them look perfect and tasty, despite how they are made, and convince people to ~~be~~ desire them and buy them.

Student MM

1.2. Pick 3 words to describe each image.

Image 1	Image 2
overconsumption	fast food
groceries	easy
consumerism	abusive

1.3. Explore what these two images represent. Base your answer on the vocabulary discussed in Unit3.

The image 1 reflects the over consumption that reflects nowadays excessive buying caused by ads and publicity. This caused consumerist people and caused temporary happiness.

The image 2 reflects an abuse of amount of food. This is caused by publicity, which promotes fast food and their consumerism. This is bad for our health because fast food ^{causes} permanent addiction.