RESEARCH METHOD:
23. THE JOURNALIST

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We all have a tendency to feel that we know the world and what is true or not, but we may have different opinions and preconceptions that prevent us from really understanding what is going on. This method focusses on getting out of the classroom and talking with people, asking questions or doing longer interviews to gain knowledge, insights and inspiration and get past one's own views

Materials needed: A notebook and a pen, a smart phone with camera and a recorder or recording and photo equipment.

Time required: Some time to prepare, maybe as homework and 30–45 minutes to conduct the interviews.

How?

1) Start of by discussing what you want to learn from the interview and what you are going to do: a) Who do you want to talk to? How many people? Do you want to do a group interview or an interview with two different interviewees: a child and an adult, a woman and a man, old and young? b) Where do you want to conduct the interview, in the street? In the interviewee's home? During a lunch break? This is important for how formal or unformal the interview will be. c) How much time do you have? Will you do a quick "Vox pop" or a lengthy interview? d) Do you want the interviewee to do something during the interview: make a collage or a drawing, walk you through their workspace, show you how something works, or solve a small assignment? e) Are the questions you want to ask factual and quantitative: How, when, where? Or "softer" and more qualitative: Why?

2) Rehearse the interview to see if the questions make sense and prepare notes on paper.

3) While interviewing, note down keywords on a note pad, record the interview on a cell phone, but be sure to ask for permission to do so.

4) Keep an open and non-judgemental mind while interviewing!

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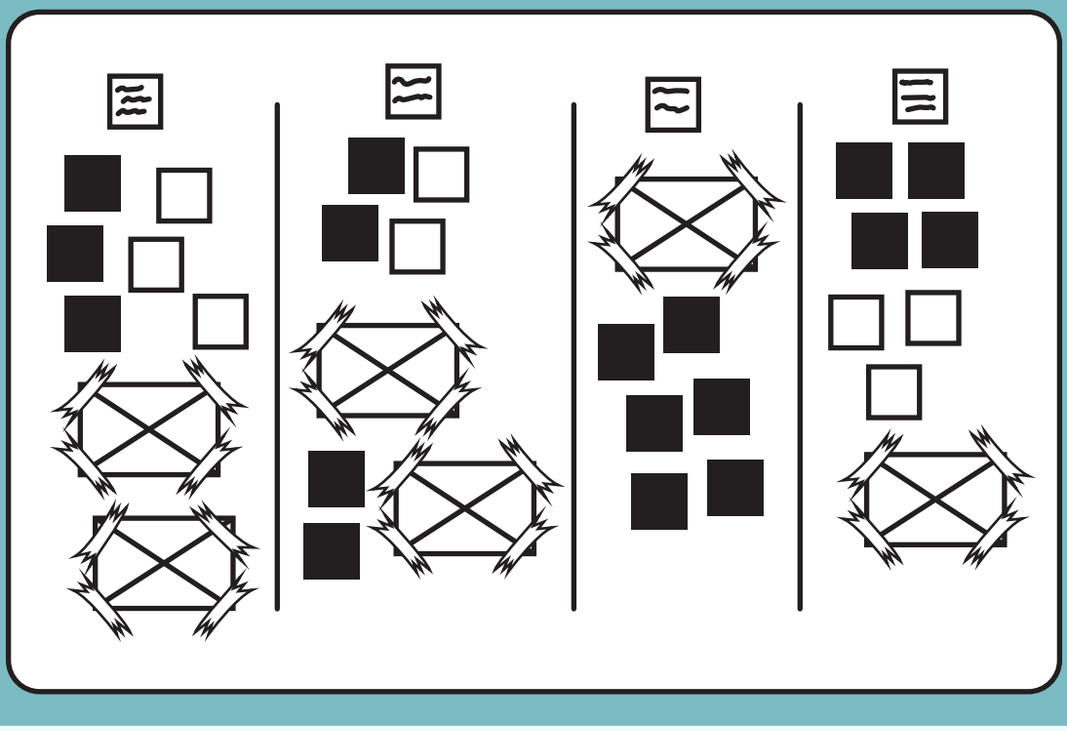
ANALYSIS METHOD:
25. CLUSTERING



25. CLUSTERING

This method is a way of discovering what categories emerge from the research collected. You sort and place the collected information and research on a shared board, using closeness or distance to map out and clarify relationships and differences between research data in a visual and tangible way. This makes it easier to understand a subject and create new knowledge or develop ideas in project work.

Materials needed: Either a large sheet of paper or cardboard, printed photos and paper or a digital online shared board e.g. padlet, where you can upload and move photos and notes around.

Time required: 30–45 minutes.

How?

1) Find a space on a wall or on a desk and put up the information gathered in the form of notes on post-it notes, small photos or drawings, pieces of text, etc.

2) You can do Clustering in different ways:
– Cluster the bits of information by placing information/pictures close to similar material and then find titles or headers that emerge for the different clusters and find relationships between them.
– Choose some predefined categories like: “location, time and size”, or “facts, opinions, ideas and challenges” or: hierarchies like “often, seldom, low and high” and categorise the information accordingly.

What’s next: You could use the Analytical Diagrams (method no. 30).

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IDEATION METHOD:
36. BRAINSTORM

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This is a classic ideation method that can help you develop multiple ideas with other people quickly. The important thing here is to avoid criticism and keep an open mind towards all ideas and suggestions. It is important to have a responsible person as a facilitator to keep the energy and motivation high and to respect the time limit. A fun twist to the exercise is to do an "inverse brainstorm" where ideas for creating really bad solutions or to enhance problems are ideated. This creates lots of fun and laughter and often reveals relevant aspects of an issue. It is also a good warming up exercise!

Materials needed: Pens and paper post-it notes or a shared online digital board e.g. padlet.

Time required: 30 minutes.

How?

1) Appoint a person responsible for keeping time and for collecting/posting all the ideas on a blackboard or piece of paper.

2) Write the challenge down in a place for everyone to see.

3) Respect these rules and explain them to all participants: everybody must speak up, keep ideas coming, the more unusual the better, the more the better. Be playful and encourage one another, and do not criticise each other's ideas. Build on the ideas and listen to one another.

4) Decide on a time frame, 30 minutes max. Then start!

5) Everybody states their ideas, and the facilitator writes them on a shared piece of paper or puts them on post-it notes or on an online digital board for all to see.

6) If the rules are not respected, take a break and get back on track.

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CREATION METHOD:
40. PROTOTYPING

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Prototyping is used to build a three-dimensional model of an idea to either develop the idea further by testing the shape, the idea, details or functionality or to show others what an idea or solution would look like and how it would work. Prototyping is crucial for idea development. You do not need to use expensive materials or a lot of time. You can use paper, cardboard, LEGO bricks or bits and pieces of waste or scrapped materials. Building, moulding and gluing also gives those pupils who are not talented in writing and abstract thinking the opportunity to shine in class.

Materials needed: Clay, cloth, paper, cardboard, milk cartons, drinking straws and all kinds of waste products and materials you can find, glue or glue guns. Go wild and use anything that can be glued together.

Time required: 45 minutes to one day.

How?

1) Collect an assortment of materials for model and prototype building. Different materials and waste products can often be used in the most surprising way.

2) Before making a more complicated prototype/model, make a scale drawing of the object.

3) Remember to do prototyping early in the project, as it can be really simple and cheap but still very useful.

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