

# Reseña

---

Time 4 Tea: Resources Pack for Developing Non-Formal Education Activities.

De: Escamilla, Alonso (Editor). BB&R. Salamanca, 2021.

Enlace: <https://bit.ly/3HUudLo>

Por: Paula Gonzalo Moreno<sup>1</sup>

Young people have always been one of the cornerstones of social action, both at the local and global levels, yet in most cases, they are not given the spaces to speak their minds and participate. Furthermore, even if they do express their opinions, their message may not reach the target audience. Thus, young people can not start a change in issues that matter to them.

Initiatives like Time For Tea offer young people a starting point towards their empowerment, because it provides a safe space where children, teenagers, and young adults can freely discuss topics that are actually important in their environments, and communicate their ideas to those that have the tools to make a tangible change. Every voice matters, therefore, Time For Tea promotes diversity in every possible aspect, such as nationality, gender, or personal background. In order for teachers and youth workers to fulfil these goals and successfully carry out a Time For Tea Project, Regionalne Centrum Wolontariatu, Momentum World CIC, Associazione di Promozione Sociale Joint, and BB&R, have developed a comprehensive handbook, divided into seven parts that create a comprehensive framework for the activities development.

The first part, which comprises chapters one and two, is devoted to a general explanation of the process of preparation of the handbook. This included a qualitative and quantitative analysis in regards to non-formal education and Time For Tea, together with an introduction to these two concepts, and the target groups for the activities. The second half of this section explains that the text can be either read together or separately, which allows a more individual approach that can comply with different necessities. There is also a brief index of the four modules that offers an abridged overview of the handbooks' contents.

Chapter three thoroughly describes all the practical steps to carry out a Time For Tea activity. The authors start by pointing out the elements required to Prepare the project, such as the group, the room, and the local stakeholders, which are vital in supporting the youth, emotionally and materially, by providing assets. The "Create" subsection is itself divided into, on one hand, the facilitation of sessions for children and, on the other hand, for youngsters. This contributes to developing strategies that fitly adapt to the capabilities and concerns of each age cohort. According to the text, activities that target children encompass handcrafts and games, with a focus on no adult control and fun, while youngsters' exercises aim to

---

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22529/sp.2022.58.06>

<sup>1</sup> She is a student of the Degree in Global Studies at the University of Salamanca. E-mail address: [gonzalomoreno.paula@usal.es](mailto:gonzalomoreno.paula@usal.es)

develop experimental learning, that is, learning by doing, and their sense of responsibility. For example, the handbook suggests practicing the so-called Theater of the oppressed, which consists of using corporal expression to promote critical thinking, social action, and transformation; or other creative workshops such as filmmaking activities that will then come in handy to share the whole Time for Tea process. The last part of the Step-by-step chapter refers to the stage in which young people communicate their projects and ideas to decision-makers, and to how to make the best out of the meeting, to ensure that the message reaches the audience.

In chapter four, in order to help prepare the activities and monitor their success, the handbook incorporates several checklists. These are organized following the step-by-step structure (Prepare, Create, Communicate). Having a visual way to control each milestone during the process will make the role of the facilitators, teachers, and youth workers much clearer and easier to follow. Even though there are fundamental elements that should not be disregarded, these are certainly not closed lists, meaning that they are just a guide for the project development. Thus, they can be modified freely according to the needs of each activity and group of people.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, social interactions have been restrained worldwide. Nevertheless, non-formal education has still taken place, adapting to the new circumstances. Time for Tea has taken this into account when developing the handbook. Chapters three and four also include instructions to carry out all the activities in a virtual manner. The former explains step-by-step how to execute the work, with tips to ensure the proper functioning of the sessions. These pieces of advice are then part of the check-lists of chapter four. It is key to constantly keep track of the correct performance of the virtual variation because, even though platforms such as Zoom or Google Meet allow very diverse virtual gatherings of people from all around the world or make it possible to develop both soft and hard skills, the virtual model is a double-edged sword that entails two main problems: first of all, it is challenging to have everybody on the same page regarding technical functioning and active participation, and secondly, it leaves out those people that do not have the resources to access this option. I believe that it is crucial to constantly remark on the latter, as it can be overlooked in some scenarios, which would impair the search for the openness of the project.

At first, Time for Tea might seem like an abstract idea for many educators. That is why the practical case study presented in chapter five shows that Time for Tea can be a feasible and effective activity to give voice to young people. In this chapter, we can look through a Momentum World publication that illustrates the initiatives of three youngsters from Netherthorpe school in Derbyshire, UK who got the opportunity to present their Time for Tea projects to two of their local MPs, and to former Minister Nicky Morgan. This can be an inspiring example to boost youth's motivation to start their own project.

Time for Tea can also work as a framework to approach young people to complex institutions, so chapter six is dedicated to examining several international initiatives and platforms that provide guidelines on what goals to achieve and how. The main focus lies on networks created by the European Union such as Erasmus+ or the European Youth Portal to inform young people about opportunities in the European realm to promote participation; and also on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda. The latter is highly intertwined with Time for Tea due to their broad span of action. A Time for Tea activity can tackle any of the 17 SDGs or even multiple at the same time. This chapter is crucial to learn what ways exist to take youth work to a more institutionalized level.

Finally, in the last section, the authors mention different options that can be used to share youth's experiences with Time for Tea. The impact of the projects is directly related to the number of people that knows about them, thus, linking this with the virtual model, the handbook mentions how social media can become a crucial element to spread messages through audiovisual content effectively and efficiently.

In short, this text is fundamental for the correct execution of a Time for Tea project, hence for the development of youth work and non-formal education. It gathers key points that can serve as methodological guidelines, yet leaving space for facilitators to adapt the activities to each specific group and age cohort. The flexibility of the activity framework provided in this text allows teachers and youth workers to help young people express their ideas and empower themselves. All in all, this handbook represents Time for Tea's aim to foment creativity in a very accessible way to enhance diversity and youth social participation.