Co-funded by the European Union

ELPIS — Artistic expression, performance and social innovation: the role of the educator for the accessibility of the arts

Artistic expression, performance and social innovation: the role of the educator for the accessibility of the arts

LICEO GINNASIO DI STATO "FRANCESCO SCADUTO"

2022-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000086370

ELPIS – Artistic expression, performance and social

innovation: the role of the educator for the

accessibility of the arts

Work Package no. 5

(WP#5): LICEO SCADUTO (Italia)

In the school years 2022/23 and 2023/24, F. Scaduto State High School was involved as a partner in Elpis, a two-year Erasmus+ KA220 project. This project aims not only to produce experiential and theatrical practices but also to define an operational methodology for educators: actions based on research and digital resources that will enable teachers in our case and, more broadly, youth workers, third sector mediators, and researchers to design, customize, and formulate examples of non-formal learning through creative means, as well as to evaluate them. Among the partners of Elpis, besides F. Scaduto High School, are Idrisi Cultura e Sviluppo, The Rijeka Youth Theatre (Croatia), and Pionirski Dom (Slovenia). Each partner is responsible for developing a "work package," defining the content and work activities that will make up the project itself.

F. Scaduto High School has been assigned "work package" no. 5, which involves the creation and administration of monitoring tools aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of artistic activities for students and adults (teachers) and the organization of seminars and events for the dissemination and awareness of the project. The project will culminate on June 14th with the performance of a classical Greek text at the school's cavea, bringing together all the partners.

The reform process activated by the Ministry of Education in recent years has ensured greater autonomy and flexibility for schools, thus creating the conditions for training plans which meet the students' needs for their cultural and personal growth. The possibility of using flexible spaces has enabled us to pursuit alternative, and paradoxically innovative, learning pathways.

In this perspective, a highly educational tool such as theater has found its own dimension within our school. Research has shown that learning is more effective when it occurs "outside the perceived comfort zones." Therefore, theater has proven to be one of the most effective methods for experiential learning because it helps students to evolve and it stimulates their diction and articulation as further expressions of their opinions in society. Thus, school theater helps students become confident learners and acts as a catalyst to shape and strengthen their intellectual and emotional personalities.

We agree with the idea that education should have a dual purpose: to be productive and formative, including social knowledge and interpersonal skills, embracing creativity to gain freedom and psychological security (Carl Rogers, Freedom to Learn). The purpose of theater in school education is to help students overcome shyness and develop acting skills to facilitate their adaptation to social life and, subsequently, the working world.

As a result, the outcome of theater education in school is not only the acquisition of artistic skills or competencies by students but also, and above all, the use of theater as a transversal pedagogical tool able to profoundly impact the overall cognitive and emotional growth of the individual. Preparing effective monitoring tools proved necessary to measure the impact of the arts in the field of education. Among some of the tools used there were: interviews, class observation (to collect data on the experiences of both students and teachers participating in the theater workshop), and questionnaires to gather feedback from students and teachers on their perceptions of the impact of the arts in school.
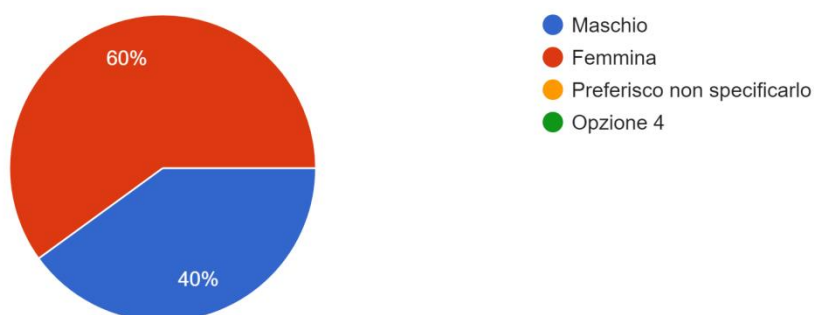
MONITORING, FEEDBACK

The first tool used was an initial questionnaire to understand the students' expectations regarding the theater workshop. Initially, there were 35 students in the theater workshop. The data and graphs developed, based on the responses obtained, are illustrated below.

The answers given to the question "What do you expect from this course?" are to be highlighted, as the majority of responses emphasized the pupils' expectation of improving their ability to work in a group and their educational growth. In response to the question "What, in particular, would you most like to do during the activities?" the majority of students expressed the need to form groups with new classmates and to creatively re-elaborate what they had learnt.

<u>Initial Questionnaire (in Italian)</u>:
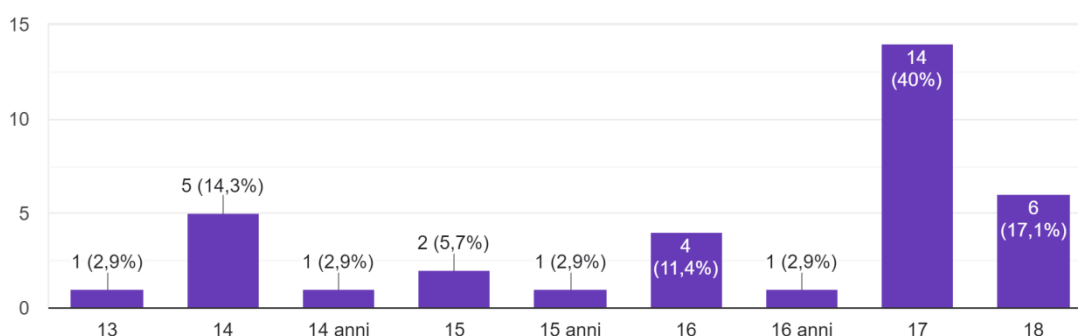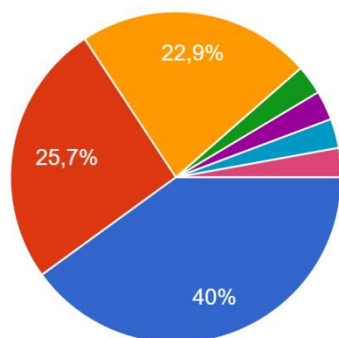
Il tuo genere
35 risposte

- ● Maschio
- ● Femmina
- ● Preferisco non specificarlo
- ● Opzione 4

60%

40%

La tua età
35 risposte

| Età	Valore
13	1 (2,9%)
14	5 (14,3%)
14 anni	1 (2,9%)
15	2 (5,7%)
15 anni	1 (2,9%)
16	4 (11,4%)
16 anni	1 (2,9%)
17	14 (40%)
18	6 (17,1%)

Chi ti ha informato su questo corso?
35 risposte

- I miei insegnanti
- I miei amici e i compagni di classe
- Il sito web della scuola
- famiglia
- La Mia Famiglia
- Io conoscevo per avervi partecipato gli anni precedenti
- Mio fratello

22,9%
25,7%
40%

Come sono state le informazioni ricevute su questo corso?
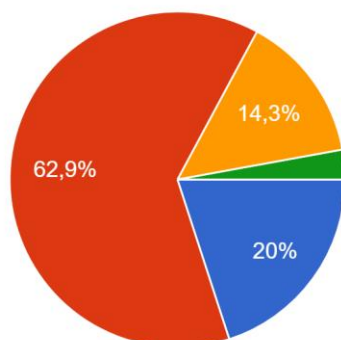35 risposte
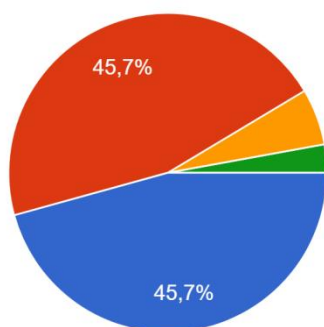
- Complete ed esaurienti
- Abbastanza chiare
- Generiche
- sintetiche e basilari ma opportune per una conoscenza iniziale

45,7%
45,7%

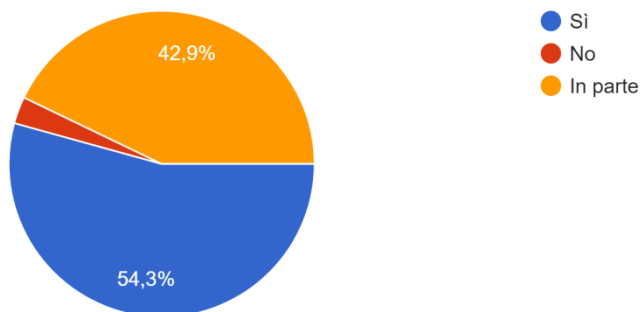## Come ti sembra in questa prima fase l'organizzazione degli spazi e degli strumenti?
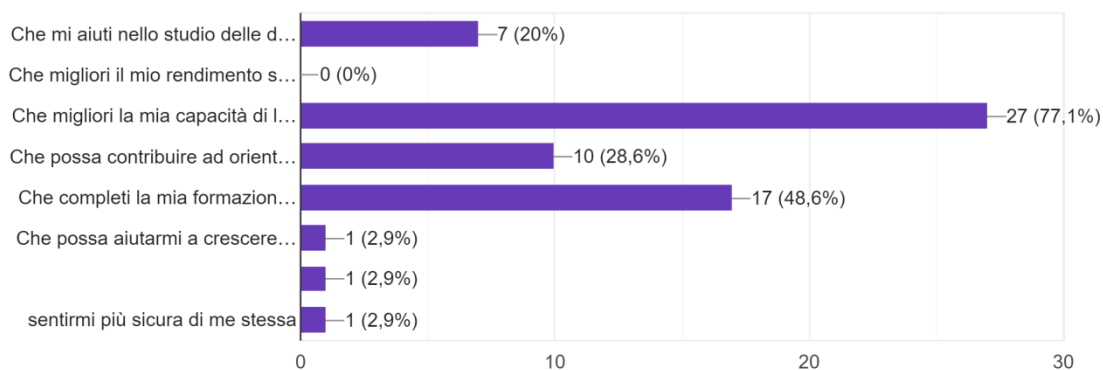35 risposte

- Ottimo
- Buono
- Sufficiente
- Insufficiente

62,9%
14,3%
20%

Ritieni che la scuola sia sufficientemente attrezzata (es. laboratori) per garantire uno svolgimento ottimale del corso?
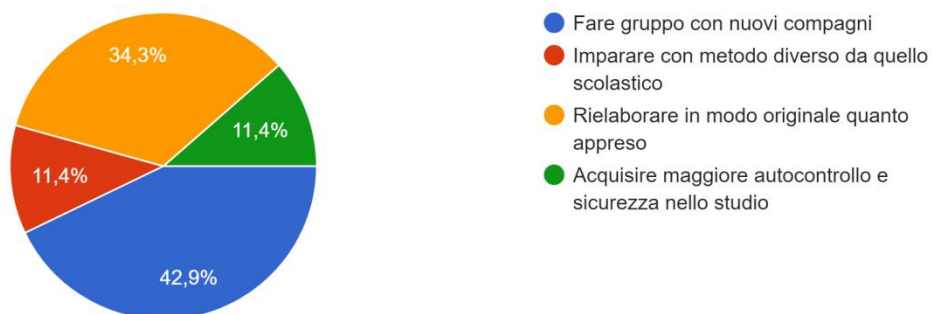
35 risposte

- 54,3% Sì
- No
- 42,9% In parte

Cosa ti aspetti da questo corso? (è possibile dare più di una risposta)

35 risposte

Risposta	Valore
Che mi aiuti nello studio delle d…	7 (20%)
Che migliori il mio rendimento s…	0 (0%)
Che migliori la mia capacità di l…	27 (77,1%)
Che possa contribuire ad orient…	10 (28,6%)
Che completi la mia formazion…	17 (48,6%)
Che possa aiutarmi a crescere…	1 (2,9%)
	1 (2,9%)
sentirmi più sicura di me stessa	1 (2,9%)

Cosa, in particolare, ti piacerebbe più fare durante le attività?

35 risposte

- 42,9% Fare gruppo con nuovi compagni
- 11,4% Imparare con metodo diverso da quello scolastico
- 34,3% Rielaborare in modo originale quanto appreso
- 11,4% Acquisire maggiore autocontrollo e sicurezza nello studio

Qual è il tuo grado di aspettativa in relazione ai risultati finali?
35 risposte

- Ho molte aspettative
- Ho un grado normale di aspettative
- Non ho molte aspettative

45,7%
48,6%
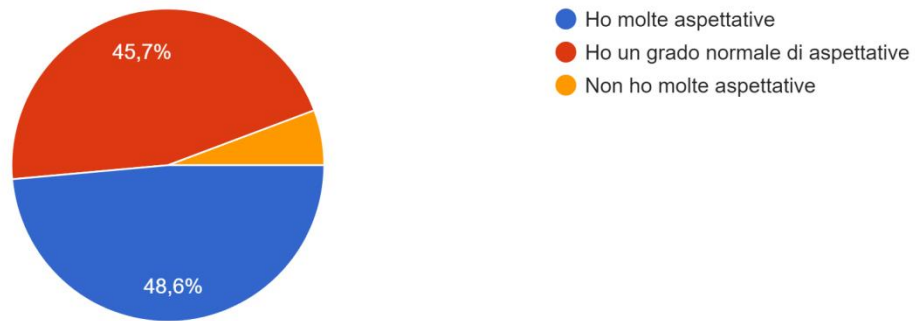
L'approccio dei docenti nella fase di accoglienza è stato:
35 risposte

- Formale
- Confidenziale
- Positivo
- Inadeguato

65,7%
11,4%
22,9%
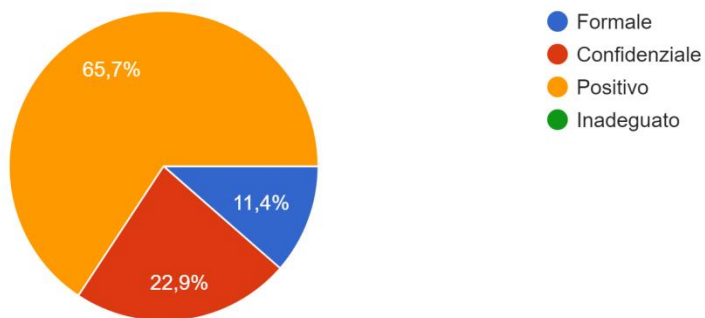
Come giudichi il grado di integrazione del gruppo di cui fai parte?
35 risposte

- Ottimo
- Buono
- Sufficiente
- Insufficiente

51,4%
45,7%
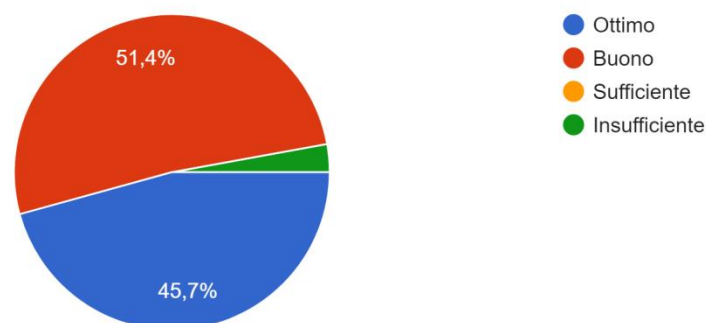
Quanto sei soddisfatto della tua vita attuale?
35 risposte

- Molto soddisfatto
- Abbastanza soddisfatto
- Non molto soddisfatto
- Per niente soddisfatto

45,7%
8,6%
42,9%
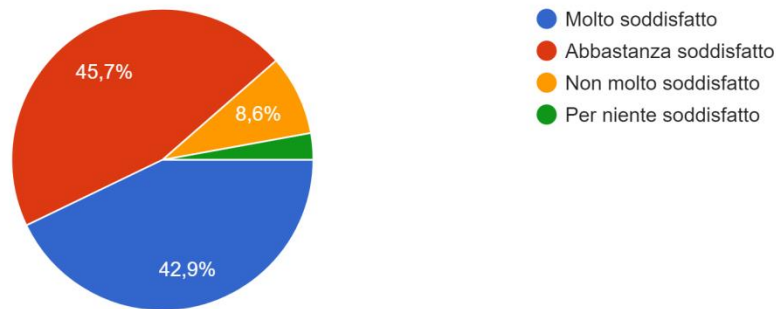
Over time, the theater workshop group experienced a natural reduction of six students.

Halfway through the course, a second questionnaire was administered. The working team considered a questionnaire composed of 19 questions, which provided a general overview of the study population regarding their relationship wi-th peers and teachers, school well-being, the use of certain tools and methodologies in curricular teaching, and personal opinions about movement, theatrical language, and emotions in the learning process.

The first four items of the questionnaire concern the students' personal relationship with teachers. The responses confirm the importance of a positive work environment.

Instead, questions 5 to 10 investigate the students' perceptions of the teachers' methods and their approach to teaching. Even in this case, the responses clearly indicate that students appreciate in particular when their needs are taken into consideration within the educational relationship, by receiving and expressing feedback regarding their learning process. Lastly, more than 50% disagree with the statement "the teachers speak in a foreign language," hindering them from feeling like European citizens.

Questions 11 to 15 address the learning climate and students' commitment to the learning process. It is evident that our school fosters a positive learning environment, but the majority agrees that significant effort is required to achieve good grades.

Questions 16 to 19 are all open-ended questions.

In question 16, students are asked to express their opinions on the use of certain materials during foreign language or Latin and Greek lessons.

Question 17 investigates the teaching model most frequently used by teachers. Almost 52% of the responses highlight that frontal lectures still constitute an important part of the teaching model used during lessons, furthermore confirmed by the teachers' answers given in their questionnaire.

The final element investigated through the questionnaire is the role of emotions in school. The emotional factor is found to be necessary and essential.
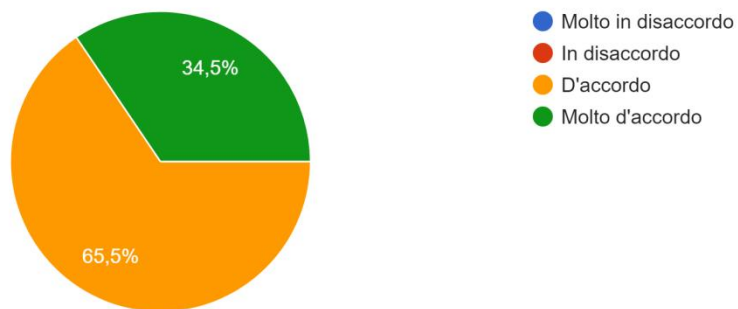
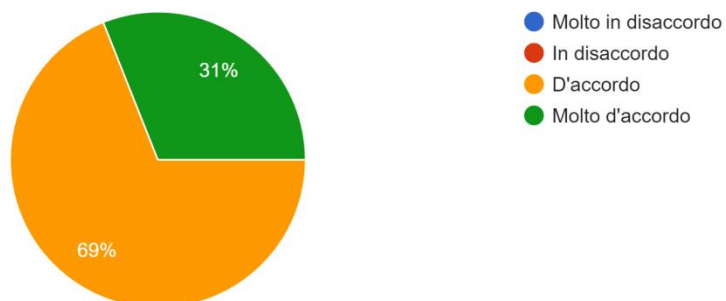I docenti si interessano al mio benessere.
29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

44,8%
51,7%
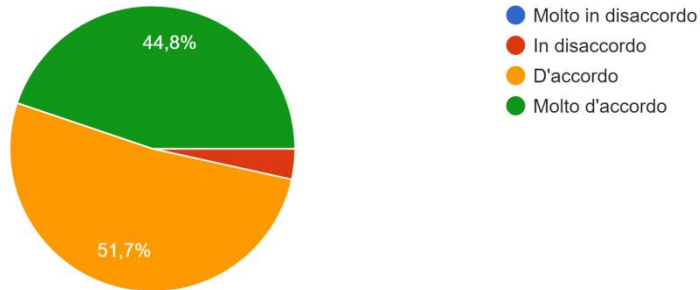
I docenti sono veramente interessati alle mie opinioni personali.
29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

34,5%
65,5%

I docenti mi trattano con giustizia.
29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

31%
69%

I docenti ci incoraggiano ad esprimere la nostra opinione.
29 risposte

- 🔵 Molto in disaccordo
- 🔴 In disaccordo
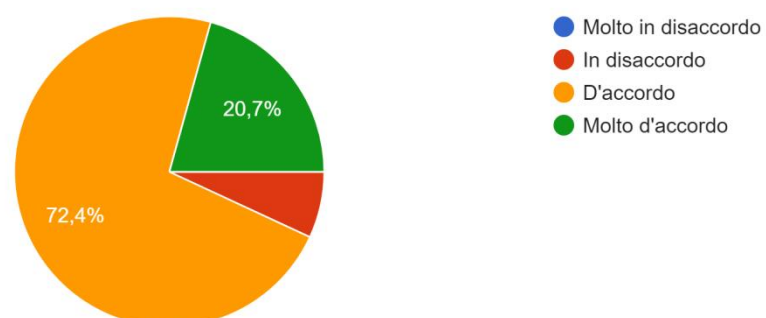- 🟠 D'accordo
- 🟢 Molto d'accordo

51,7%

48,3%

I docenti ci fanno esprimere la nostra opinione sul loro modo di fare lezione, sugli strumenti utilizzati e sugli argomenti trattati.
29 risposte

- 🔵 Molto in disaccordo
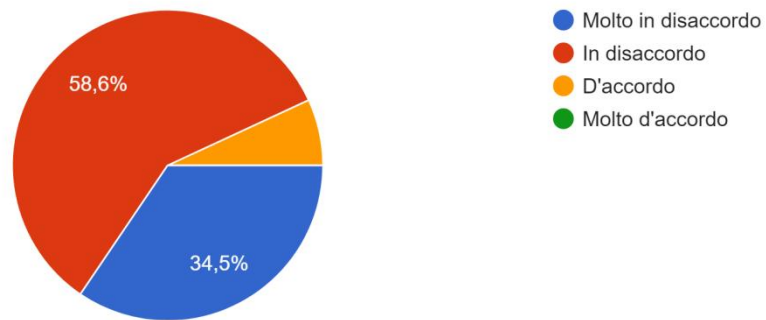- 🔴 In disaccordo
- 🟠 D'accordo
- 🟢 Molto d'accordo

31%

65,5%
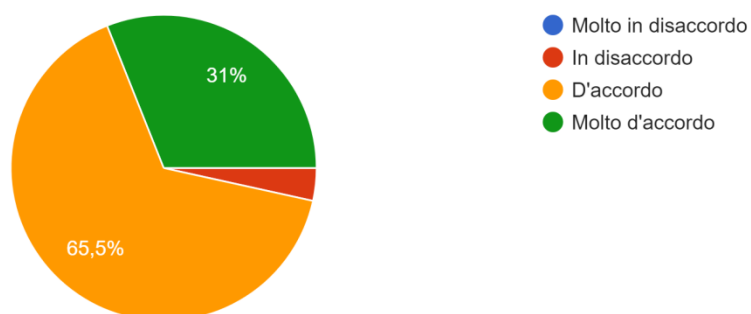
I docenti ci forniscono feedback e commenti sul loro modo di lavorare.
29 risposte

- 🔵 Molto in disaccordo
- 🔴 In disaccordo
- 🟠 D'accordo
- 🟢 Molto d'accordo

20,7%

72,4%

I docenti spiegano troppo velocemente e non riusciamo a seguirli
29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

58,6%
34,5%

I docenti ci dicono in anticipo in che modo verrà valutato il nostro lavoro.
29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

69%
10,3%
13,8%
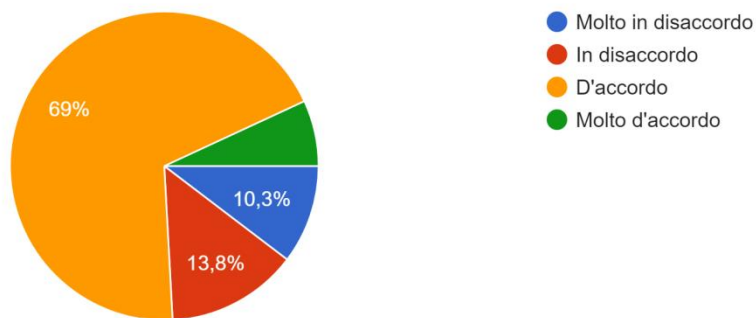
Gli insegnanti parlano in lingua straniera.
29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

31%
31%
37,9%
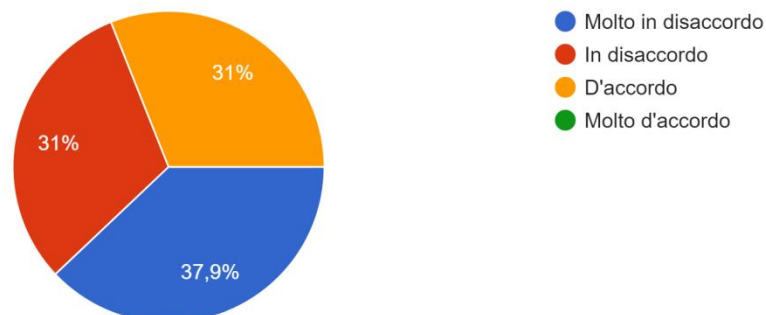
Noi studenti non ascoltiamo l'insegnante.
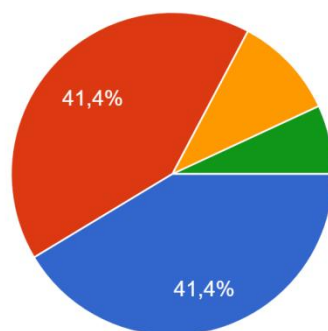
29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

58,6%

41,4%
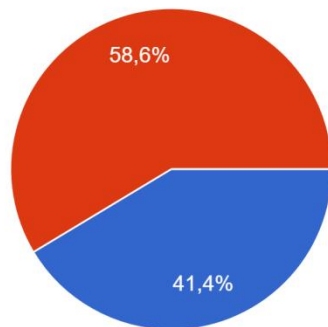
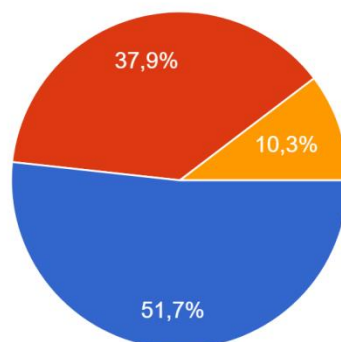## In classe c'è chiasso e agitazione.

29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

41,4%

41,4%

In classe non si può lavorare tranquillamente.

29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

37,9%

10,3%

51,7%

Per ricevere un buon voto dobbiamo impegnarci tanto.

29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

27,6%
51,7%
17,2%
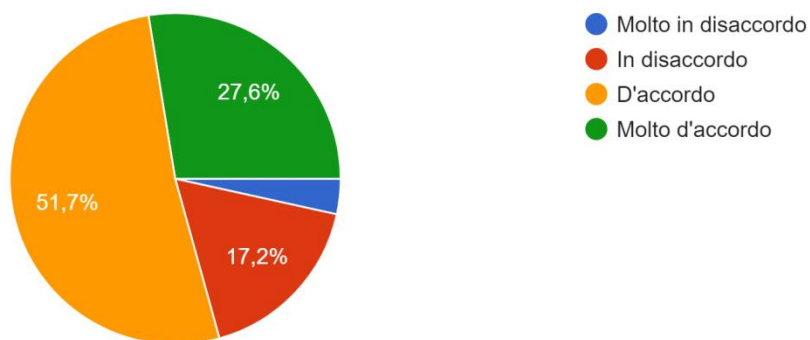
La maggior parte di noi studenti non ce la fa quasi mai a fare tutti i compiti per casa

29 risposte

- Molto in disaccordo
- In disaccordo
- D'accordo
- Molto d'accordo

37,9%
55,2%
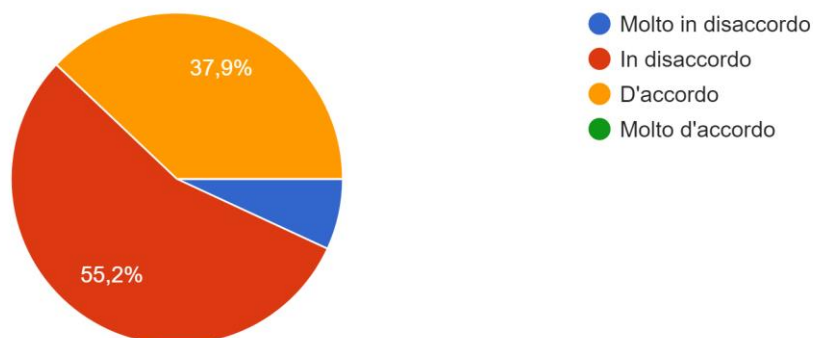
A lezione di lingue straniere o delle discipline di indirizzo quali di questi materiali utilizzate

29 risposte

Libri di testo	22 (75,9%)
Libri di narrativa	6 (20,7%)
Computer	8 (27,6%)
Dispense, video	9 (31%)
Giochi didattici	6 (20,7%)
	2 (6,9%)
copioni e materiali scenografici	1 (3,4%)
Copioni	1 (3,4%)
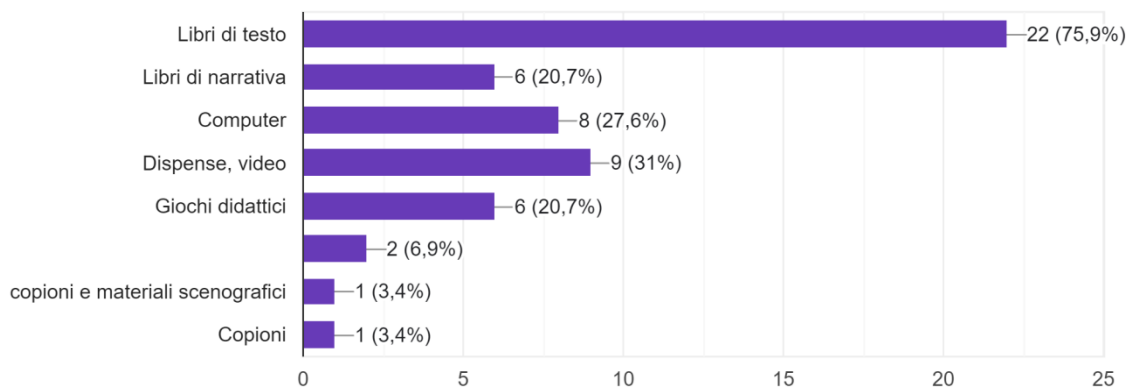
Qual è la metodologia didattica che utilizzate più spesso

29 risposte

- Lezione frontale
- Lavoro di gruppo
- Attività di laboratorio
- Didattica per progetti

51,7%
24,1%
20,7%
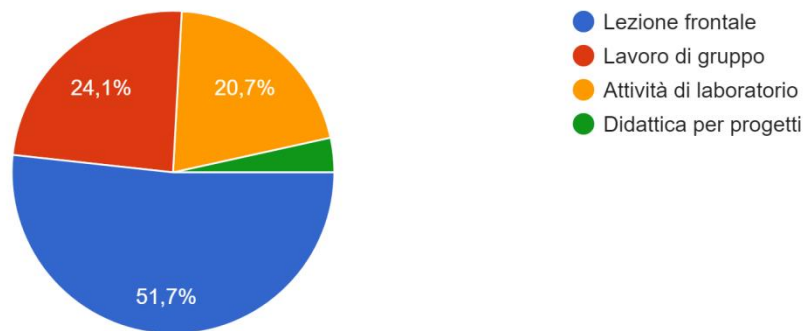
A scuola hai mai utilizzato il corpo e il movimento durante una lezione che non fosse educazione fisica?

29 risposte
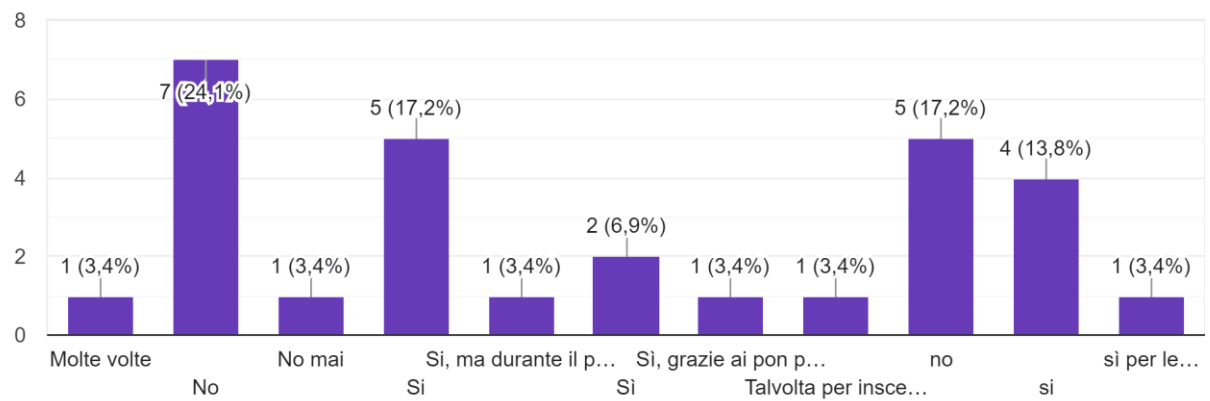
1 (3,4%)	7 (24,1%)	1 (3,4%)	5 (17,2%)	1 (3,4%)	2 (6,9%)	1 (3,4%)	1 (3,4%)	5 (17,2%)	4 (13,8%)	1 (3,4%)

Molte volte | No | No mai | Si | Si, ma durante il p... | Sì | Sì, grazie ai pon p... | Talvolta per insce... | no | si | sì per le...

Ritieni che le emozioni siano un fattore che influisce nel processo di apprendimento

29 risposte
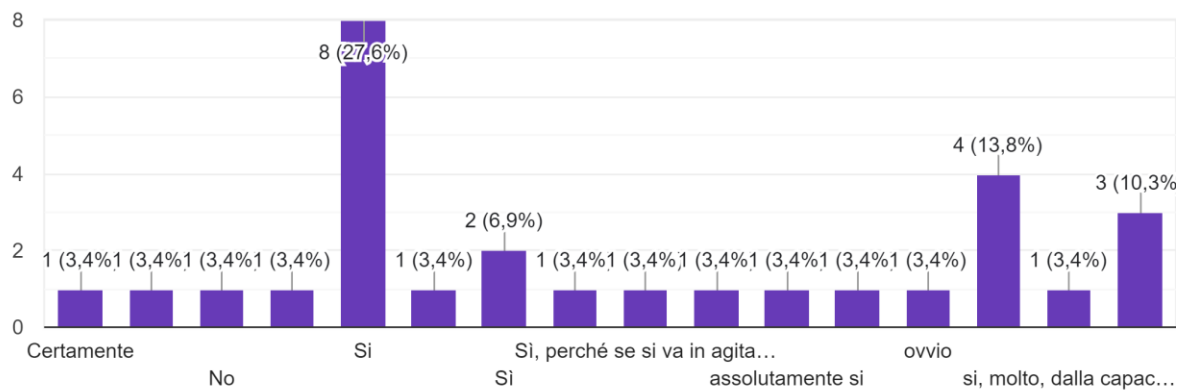
Ritieni che le emozioni siano un fattore che influisce nel processo di apprendimento

29 risposte

Prima della scuola secondaria di secondo grado avevi già frequentato un corso di teatro a scuola? In quale ordine di scuola.

29 risposte

Finally, a questionnaire was administered to the teachers across the school: 70 teachers participated. The teachers were free to complete the questionnaire in order to highlight any potential resistance and interests regarding the Elpis project proposal.

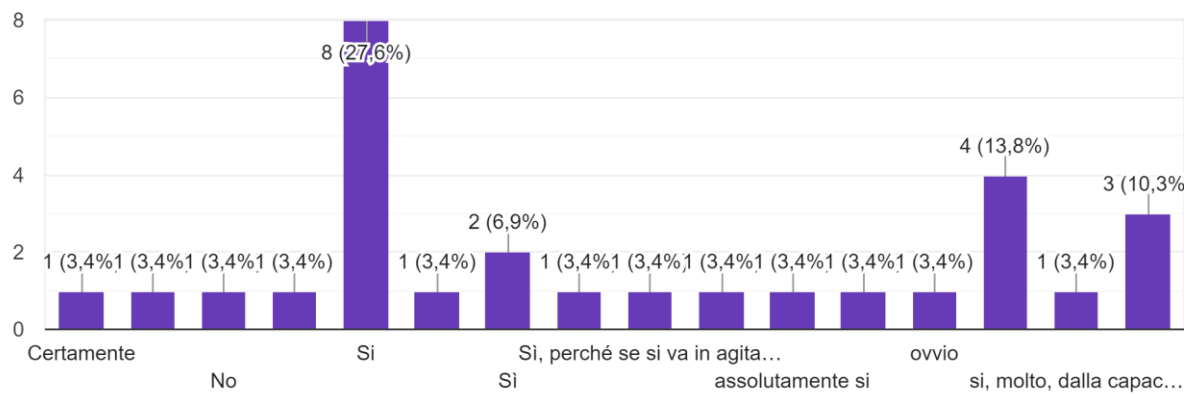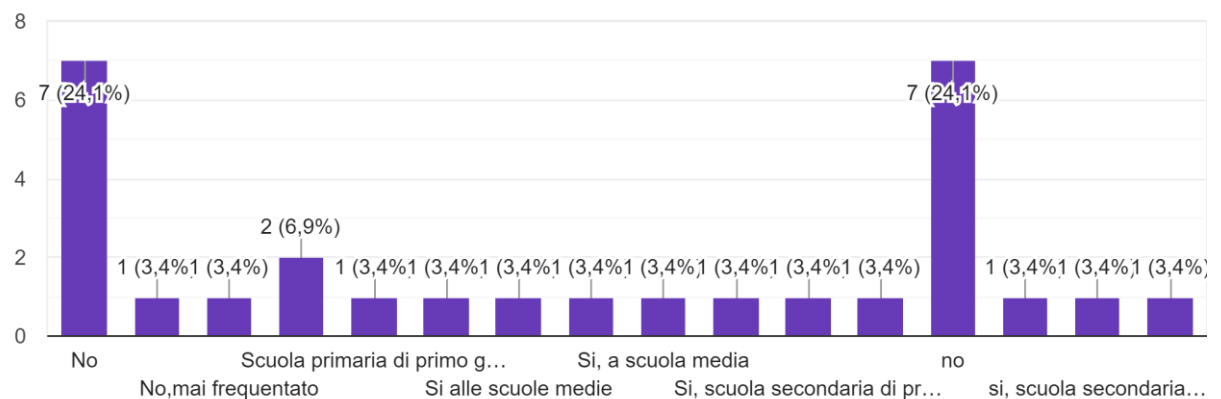The first two questions of the questionnaire concerned the subject taught and the years of service.

The individual interviews conducted and the questionnaire responses showed a major difficulty in filling out the questionnaire due to the end of the school year deadlines, and the perception of the limited effectiveness of theater or other creative means in teaching, with a belief that traditional methodologies are more effective. This is further reflected in the response to the statement, "Which teaching methodology do you use most frequently?" Approximately 43% stated that they predominantly use frontal lectures.
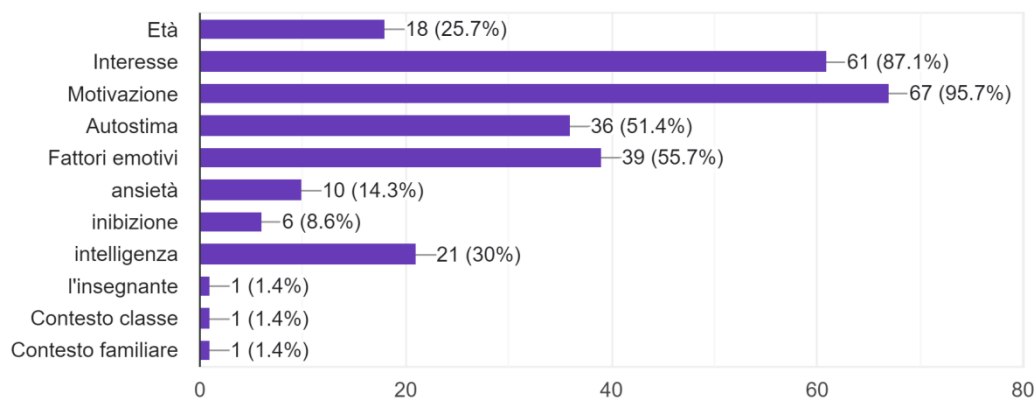
Another factor is the lack of knowledge or training when it comes to this methodology. Teachers might not be familiar with using theater or other creative forms in teaching and therefore feel insecure about filling in a questionnaire on a topic they are not experts in. Lastly, some teachers might be reluctant to adopt new methodologies or abandon established practices, especially if they fear they won't be able to master the new techniques.

Addressing these resistances requires a holistic approach that includes teacher training and support, creating safe spaces to experiment with new methodologies, providing adequate resources, and promoting a school culture that cherishes innovation and diversity in teaching practices.

Questionario Docenti Progetto "Elpis"

Quali sono secondo lei i fattori che interagiscono nel processo di apprendimento
70 responses

Fattore	Risposte
Età	18 (25.7%)
Interesse	61 (87.1%)
Motivazione	67 (95.7%)
Autostima	36 (51.4%)
Fattori emotivi	39 (55.7%)
ansietà	10 (14.3%)
inibizione	6 (8.6%)
intelligenza	21 (30%)
l'insegnante	1 (1.4%)
Contesto classe	1 (1.4%)
Contesto familiare	1 (1.4%)

Secondo Lei, quale abilità è più importante sviluppare nell'apprendimento nelle discipline?

70 responses

- ● Comprensione orale (ascolto)
- ● Comprensione scritta (lettura)
- ● Produzione scritta
- ● Interazione orale
- ● Tutte
- ● Tutte importanti
- ● Tutte le abilità inerenti il tipo di disciplina
- ● Tutte le quattro abilità sono imprescindibili

47.1%
24.3%
20%
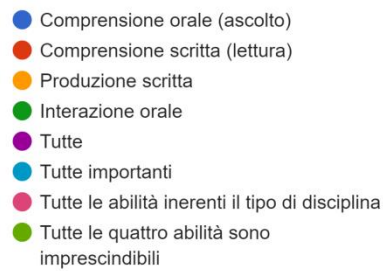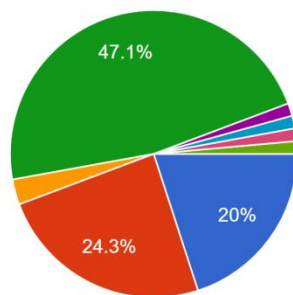
Attraverso quali mezzi sviluppa le attività di ascolto e parlato?

70 responses

Conversazione	59 (84.3%)
CD allegato al libro di testo	6 (8.6%)
Ascolto dialoghi/storie	38 (54.3%)
Relazioni /esposizioni alla classe	50 (71.4%)
Drammatizzazione	16 (22.9%)
Debate	1 (1.4%)
Spiegazioni tramite lezione part…	1 (1.4%)
giochi	1 (1.4%)
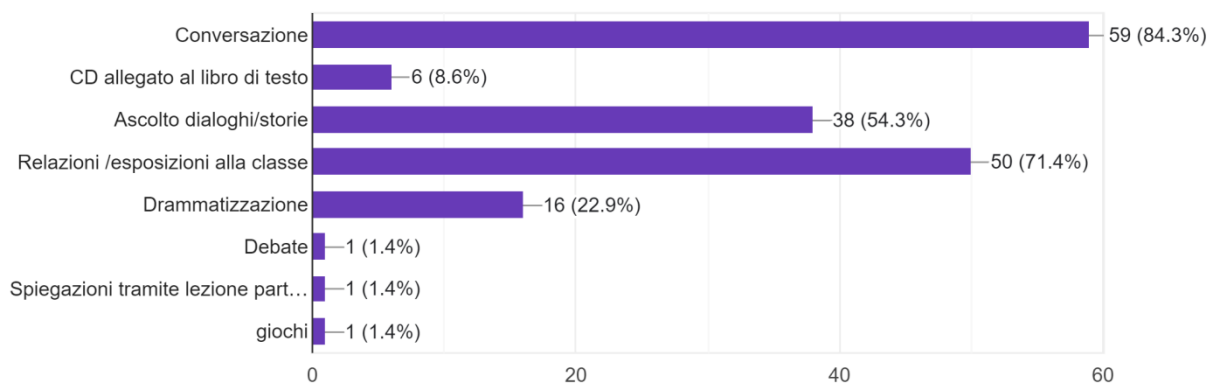
Nella pratica didattica quali di questi materiali utilizza

70 responses

Libro di testo	56 (80%)
Libri di narrativa	19 (27.1%)
Riviste specializzate	12 (17.1%)
Computer	41 (58.6%)
Materiale video, immagini o foto	60 (85.7%)
Giochi	34 (48.6%)
Canzoni	25 (35.7%)
Lim	1 (1.4%)
Schede strutturate	1 (1.4%)
Appunti	1 (1.4%)
Schede	1 (1.4%)
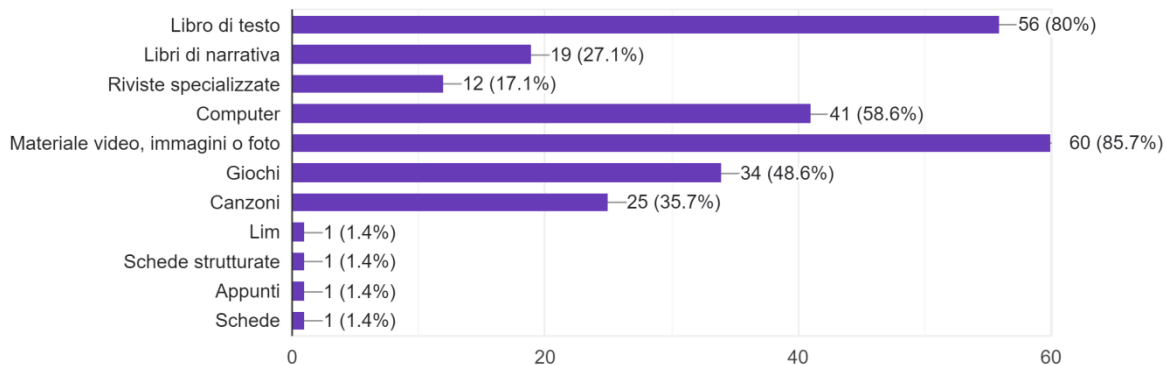
Qual è la metodologia didattica che utilizza maggiormente

70 responses

- ● e-learning
- ● laboratorio
- ● cooperative learning
- ● didattica per progetti
- ● lavoro di gruppo
- ● lezione frontale
- ● Circle time
- ● Utilizzo di mediatori iconici e ludici; did…

▲ 1/2 ▼

42.9%
12.9%
11.4%
20%

Come reputa il grado di motivazione dei suoi studenti rispetto alla sua disciplina

70 responses

- ● Scarso
- ● Sufficiente
- ● Discreto
- ● Elevato

21.4%
67.1%
11.4%
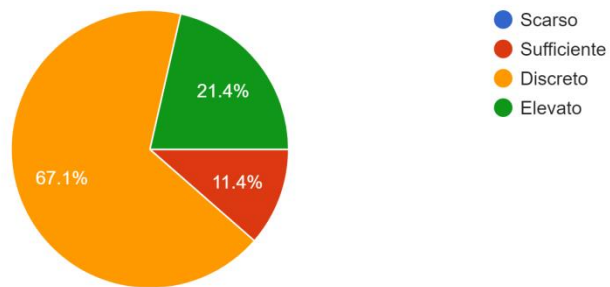
ha mai utilizzato le metodologie teatrali nella prassi didattica

70 responses

- ● Sì
- ● No

54.3%
45.7%
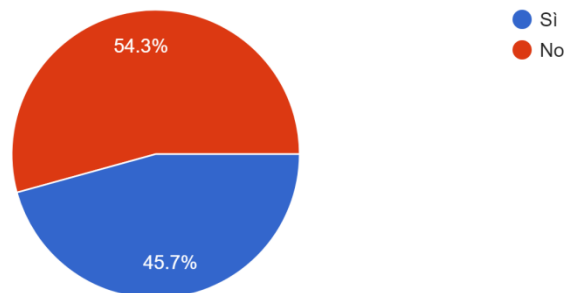
In quali occasioni ha utilizzato le metodologie teatrali nella prassi didattica

48 responses

- Attività extracurriculari
- lezione
- saggio-spettacolo
- Mai
- Non ho mai utilizzato
- Tutte
- Non utilizzate
- in nessun caso

12.5%
54.2%
16.7%
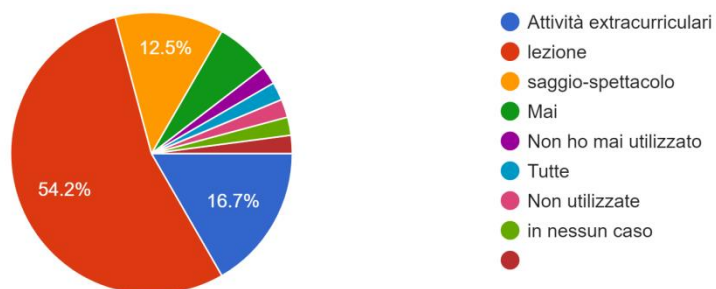
In qualità di insegnante, quale ruolo, assegna all'utilizzo del teatro in classe

70 responses

- Motivare all'apprendimento
- favorire l'espressività degli studenti
- Veicolare specifici contenuti
- facilitare la comprensione del testo
- esercitare la pronuncia
- favorire la socializzazione
- Tutte le voci sono valide

41.4%
14.3%
30%
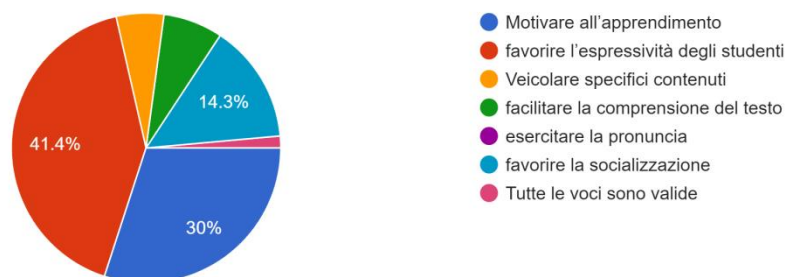
Ritiene importante per la formazione del docente la partecipazione a laboratori integrali
(mente-corpo) di crescita personale
67 responses

- Sì
- No

10.4%
89.6%
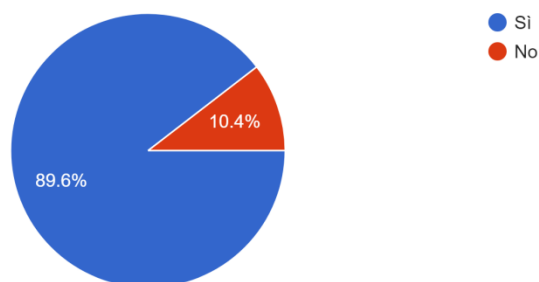
DISSEMINATION

Another important aspect faced by Francesco Scaduto High School was the organization of dissemination events aimed at raising public awareness and influencing policymakers about the importance of the arts in education. In order to achieve this, seminars and workshops were planned, bringing together experts, educators, students, and teachers to directly experience the impact of the arts through photography workshops, mural art, theater, music, and dance.

"HAVING FUN WITH PHILOSOPHY"

The first seminar for students spotlighted the author and performer Sofia Muscato. For years, she has been involved in "fun philosophy," a project through which she presents readings of Platonic dialogues rendered in rhyme, in Sicilian, and with an ironic twist. Specifically, she stages Platonic dialogues reinterpreted in a modern, humorous style with easily understandable slang, even for those who have never studied philosophy. In this activity, the theatrical reading of Plato's Phaedrus, transposed into an ironic register, in rhyme, and in the Sicilian dialect, sparked a debate on the disciplinary themes present in the dialogue and on the education of emotions contained in the text.

The goals of the meeting included an analytical understanding of the contents of a Platonic dialogue and direct engagement with the text, comprehension of the relevance of the dialogue's themes, the refinement of argumentative skills and guided dialectical confrontation on the complexity of emotions, the nature of love, and the recognition of various forms of dysfunctional relationships. Finally, the recognition of the value of creative writing was emphasized.

The second seminar on screenwriting, hosted at school, was also for students. The special guest was screenwriter Paolo Pintacuda. He explained the value of storytelling through images and words. The meeting focused on the path from the initial idea of creating a film to the moment it is on camera. The most significant goals were understanding what a film subject is and how to go from the plot to the screenplay. It also covered the division into macro scenes, the sequential narrative order, and the three-act structure.

Meeting with the Artists of "Prospettiva Ballarò"

In the third seminar, students were offered to meet local artists who developed a project that involved creating murals in a well-known neighborhood of Palermo, Ballarò. The art of murals goes far beyond simple wall decoration: it represents a powerful tool for communication, community empowerment, and artistic expression, contributing to shaping the urban environment and promoting social dialogue.

Dance, Rhythm, and Sounds as Expression of the Self

The final seminar-workshop was aimed at a group of teachers. The workshop was led by an expert in dance and percussive techniques who conducts research on the relationship between music, dance, and the sacred feminine. Dancing, we explore countries geographically and the history of societies; by traveling, we discover the origins of the formation of communities and human relationship dynamics. Through the rhythm and movement of bodies in space, participants exercise their ability to listen to themselves, to others, and to the group through music and dance. Additionally, dance and rhythm help develop proprioceptive skills and familiarize participants with the traditions from which these dances originated.

Dance, percussion, voice and relationships are inextricably linked elements of the choreutic world of Southern Italy (ancient Magna Graecia) and Sicily: this is the so-called Tarantella area, a 'circle dance' descended from the circles of Muses and Bacchantes.

Final Event

Our work package will conclude with events taking place from June 10th to 15th, culminating in the final performance titled "Elpis," which will be held in the amphitheater of the Liceo, in collaboration with Idrisi Cultura e Sviluppo ETS.

The theatrical performance offers a reinterpretation of Euripides' text, incorporating elements and outcomes from the workshops organized by Idrisi Cultura e Sviluppo ETS as part of the second WP of our project. The production aims to offer a reflection on the theme of war and the catastrophic effects it has on the populations involved, not only on the defeated but also on the victors.

Policy Recommendations and Best Practices

Using art as a cross-disciplinary teaching method can become a factor that facilitates educational success by fostering motivation and engagement. This refers to an approach that uses art as a tool that can effectively be part of "active" teaching methods. There is now considerable evidence of the positive impact of art in education. We can distinguish at least two different aspects: Education to the Arts and Education through the Arts. Education to the Arts can be described as the presentation of each form of art - dance, visual arts, music, theater - encouraging learning related to their skills and ways of thinking.

Education to the Arts impacts attitudes towards school and learning, strengthens cultural identity, and enhances personal satisfaction and well-being (Bamford, 2006).

Among the best practices, it is fundamental to provide learning experiences that meet the needs of young people, making school education more practice-oriented. Integrating non-formal education methodologies into teachers' weekly planning allows lessons to fit the various student learning styles and rhythms, respecting the specific characteristics of each individual.

Promoting and supporting partnership networks among all the stakeholders involved in school education and the working world is crucial. Another best practice is enhancing teacher training, which should be reorganized including pedagogical-methodological subjects based on non-formal education.

Furthermore, it is necessary to coordinate an effective youth education policy through means of dissemination to promote a culture of personal and professional growth, encouraging lifelong learning.

Last but not least, carrying out research to create new, more complete, and better ways to develop educational and professional guidance is essential.