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A model educational scenario for the on line educational platform e-lios: Holocaust in e-lios Platform Ένα πρότυπο εκπαιδευτικό σενάριο για την ηλεκτρονική εκπαιδευτική πλατφόρμα e-lios: Το Ολοκαύτωμα στην πλατφόρμα e-lios.

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## A model educational scenario for the on line educational platform e-lios: Holocaust in e-lios Plattform

Ένα πρότυπο εκπαιδευτικό σενάριο για την ηλεκτρονική εκπαιδευτική  
πλατφόρμα e-lios: Το Ολοκαύτωμα στην πλατφόρμα e-lios

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### Abstract

E-lios platform is a new educational platform that provides to teachers and educators the ability to create their own educational scenarios. Its innovation is that provides a structured framework where a teacher can follow guidance steps and built an educational scenario. These steps are presented as fields to be completed by the writer while at the end it appears as an integrated outcome in ready to teach form. Apart from this structured form, e-lios platform introduces two main innovative aspects. First, provides the field: “students life stories” where students can upload their own stories and secondly, within the same philosophy, e-lios platform introduces the “life skills” tab mainly for teachers, but also for adults wishing to share their life experiences. These two aspects of the e-lios platform are straightly introducing personal experiences into learning procedure, developing thus scenarios based on transformative learning. Within this framework we are proposing a scenario titled: “Teaching the Holocaust. Learning about Auschwitz through art”. This educational scenario is approaching a major historical event through individual experiences, expressed by art.

**Keywords:** *E-lios platform, educational scenario, Holocaust, Art, transformative learning*

### Περίληψη

Η πλατφόρμα E-lios είναι μια νέα εκπαιδευτική πλατφόρμα που παρέχει στους εκπαιδευτικούς και τους διδάσκοντες τη δυνατότητα να δημιουργήσουν τα δικά τους εκπαιδευτικά σενάρια. Η καινοτομία του είναι ότι παρέχει ένα δομημένο πλαίσιο όπου ένας εκπαιδευτικός μπορεί να ακολουθήσει κατάλληλα βήματα ενός οδηγού πλοήγησης και να δημιουργήσει ένα εκπαιδευτικό σενάριο. Αυτά τα βήματα παρουσιάζονται ως πεδία που πρέπει να συμπληρωθούν από τον συγγραφέα ενώ στο τέλος εμφανίζονται ως ένα ολοκληρωμένο αποτέλεσμα σε μορφή έτοιμου προς διδασκαλία. Εκτός από αυτή τη δομημένη μορφή, η πλατφόρμα e-lios εισάγει δύο κύριες καινοτόμες πτυχές. Πρώτον, παρέχει το πεδίο: «ιστορίες ζωής φοιτητών» όπου οι μαθητές μπορούν να ανεβάσουν τις δικές τους ιστορίες και δεύτερον, μέσα στην ίδια φιλοσοφία, η πλατφόρμα e-lios εισάγει την καρτέλα «δεξιότητες ζωής» κυρίως για δασκάλους αλλά και ενήλικες που επιθυμούν να μοιραστούν τις εμπειρίες της ζωής τους. Αυτές οι δύο πτυχές της πλατφόρμας e-lios εισάγουν ευθέως προσωπικές

εμπειρίες στη διαδικασία εκμάθησης, αναπτύσσοντας έτσι σενάρια βασισμένα στη μετασχηματιστική μάθηση. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό προτείνουμε ένα σενάριο με τίτλο: "Διδασκαλία του Ολοκαυτώματος. Μάθηση για το Άουσβιτς μέσω της τέχνης". Αυτό το εκπαιδευτικό σενάριο πλησιάζει σε ένα μεγάλο ιστορικό γεγονός μέσω μεμονωμένων εμπειριών, που εκφράζονται από την τέχνη.

**Λέξεις-κλειδιά:** πλατφόρμα *e-lios*, εκπαιδευτικό σενάριο, Ολοκαύτωμα, Τέχνη, Μετασχηματίζουσα Μάθηση

### **Introduction**

Theory of Transformative Learning progresses gradually in recent years. According to the Kalaouzidis (2015), theoretical approach of Transformative Learning becomes even more attractive recently, while it describes in deep the reasons why adults are participating in learning processes on one hand and on the other hand, because it poses key elements in learning procedure, rational dialogue and critical thinking.

Professor Kokkos as President of the Scientific Union for Adult education, (a) taking under serious considerations the objectives of the theory of Transformative Learning, (b) based on the theoretical approaches of transformative education of Paulo Freire, Jack Mezirow and Robert Kegan and (c) aiming at the facilitation of this process, developed a demanding training methodology in the field of adult education, the so-called "Transformative Learning through sensory experience". This specific methodology relays on the systematic observation of works of art as a trigger for development of thoughtful dialogue and more specifically in the "treatment" of works of art about the teaching subject, utilizing as pounce on more in-depth issues envisaged for expressing feelings, develop imagination and critical thinking (Kokkos, 2011)

This approach is being adopted by most trainers in educational practice and already have made great steps towards this direction under the assistance of the Scientific Association for Adult Education, which organized on May 2010 a two-day Conference on the implementation of this method called "Transformative learning through sensory experience".

On the other hand, recently, educational platforms seem to become very useful for everyday teaching practice. Many teachers are choosing to use ICT during their lessons, either partly, either holistically. Teachers often choose one of the freely provided platforms and mainly are uploading their prior composed educational material. What we inspired many years ago was a utilitarian platform for everyday use. This platform will provide step by step guidelines to help an educator to compose its scenario and secondly to extract this material into a reader-friendly form. This guided sequence of steps helps teachers and educators to follow a structured learning model. Especially for our platform (the *e-lios* platform) we are proposing the inquiry based educational model. We encourage educators to set a major scientific question or a teaching goal. Then we ask students to present their own opinions based on knowledge or experience. Within this step students can introduce their life stories.

On the third step, we present to students extra educational material to trigger and provoke their curiosity. Under this framework we can present for instance our life skills. Especially, in the proposed scenario we are presenting art work from people being prisoned in Auschwitz. On the next step, we ask students to conduct their investigation based on the provided material and of course their preliminary knowledge and life stories. Finally, students are encouraged to present their findings

and defend their conclusions. These are the major steps of the inquiry based learning model, but we adjusted some steps properly so they can include information and data related to transformative learning.

The innovative aspects of our platform is mainly the incorporation of life stories and life skills into an educational scenario which is based on the inquiry model. The e-lios platform provides the framework within an educator can combine all these parameters. Also, we wish teachers to use the educational material of the platform and thus we made efforts towards simplifying the digital environment. Uploading both educational scenarios, material, and videos related to life skills an educator can easily pass from one task to another without changing a webpage. Furthermore, communication between these tasks is ensured. We are now developing the form for mobile devices so an educator will be soon able to perform its lesson from a tablet or a smartphone.

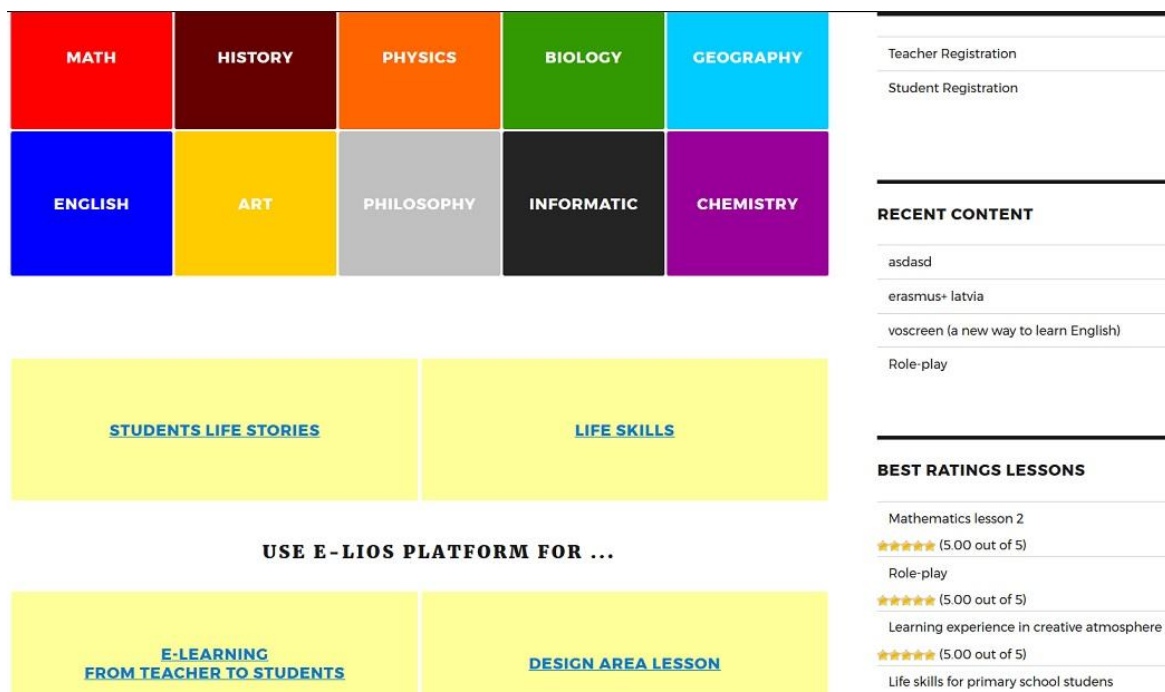
Finally, the selected scenario is really triggering and provocative while it combines a humanitarian disaster of a war with a sensory experience of the people survived from the concentration camps of the second World War. Students through a structured scenario are approaching these dark pages of History.

### The e-lios platform

The e-lios (e-learning interactive open school) platform is a platform inspired by teachers for teachers. The idea came out as a crucial need to invent a platform that is utilitarian in the way that teachers mean. Very easy to access, not time consuming (while one teaching hour is less than 45 minutes), is joining different educational tasks and mainly responses to contemporary demands. Teachers, from their experience knew that often digital means are time consuming (internet connection is slow) moreover if you should wait for many pages to open. Thus, proposing some changes and gathering many different educational means into one single webpage they faced one of the recorded problems. On the other hand, we need portable educational material, so we insisted on mobile devices thus our platform supports mobile knowledge. We must mention that the e-lios platform is funded by an ERASMUS+ KA2 project with 10 partners from all over Europe, under the supervision of University of Patras.

### Structure of e-lios platform

At the main page of the e-lios platform <http://www.thebackstage.eu/eli0s/> (beta version) we can see most of the utilities of the webpage (Figure 1). At the middle



upper part, we can access all supported topics (Math, History, Physics, Biology, Geography, English, Art, Philosophy, Informatic, Chemistry). Of course, we provide the ability to

**Figure 1:** The main page of the e-lios platform

add more topics and adjust to your preferences.

On the middle lower part, we can see the four major tasks: Students Life Stories, Life Skills, E-learning from teachers to students and mainly the Design area lesson which is the structured guide for composing an inquiry based scenario. Another innovative point is that we adjusted the steps of inquiry based learning model, which is mainly targeted to natural sciences teaching, to other forms of lesson e.g. art, philosophy etc. In this lower part, we can see the links to transformative learning “Student Life Stories” and “Life Skills”. Finally, on the right part we can register as a teacher or as a student, rate a lesson and view all recent uploaded material.

### Designing a lesson

In order to design and upload a lesson we have first of all to register in the webpage or login if you have already registered. After registering, choose “Design Area Lesson” and you will have the choice of “create a new lesson”. If selected a new lesson design then you will be transferred into the structured guide lesson creator (Figure 2). In this main page, we must add the Title of the lesson or educational scenario. Then we have to choose the subject from a variety of different subjects as mentioned before. School level is also an option, while we can choose from primary to upper secondary education, thinking of expanding even to higher education (universities). Also, there is a possibility of uploading a representative image of our lesson and mention the duration of the lesson. Then, we should compose an introduction that is visible to students as it’s mentioned in this webpage. The introduction composer field provides all abilities of formatting a text, such as changing to bold or italics, aligning the text or adding photos and links to external files.

The screenshot shows the 'New Lesson' page in the e-lios platform. At the top left is the 'elios' logo and 'E-Learning Platform'. Navigation links include 'e-lios project idea', 'For Student', 'For Teacher', and 'For everybody'. A language dropdown menu is set to 'English'. The main form includes: a 'Title:' text input field; a 'Subject:' dropdown menu with 'Mathematics' selected; a 'School Level:' dropdown menu with 'primary school' selected; an 'Image:' field with a placeholder 'Αναζήτηση...' and the text 'Δεν επιλέχθηκε αρχείο.'; a 'Duration:' text input field; and an 'Introduction:' field with a rich text editor containing the text '[visible to students]'. The right sidebar features a 'LOGIN' section with the text 'Howdy, johnchiotelis | Logout' and a 'TEACHER MENU' section with links for 'Design Area Lessons', 'New Lesson', 'My Life Skills', and 'Edit Profile'.

**Figure 1:** Main page of the lesson design area

Following, we must identify the desired results, also visible from students and import the important ideas related to our scenario. These important ideas are of major importance to students because all teaching subjects are related to important intellectual achievements of human kind. Students must be aware of these major ideas that somehow contribute to international progress in the fields of Science, Art, Culture, Humanism etc. Teachers will have in these fields also the ability to format their texts (Figure 3):

Following these tasks teachers are calling to fill the “Questions – Overarching” task and the Misconceptions field which are only visible from teachers. In the same philosophy, the fields “Knowledge” and “Skills procedural” are also only visible from teachers, so educators can think of the theoretical basis and axes upon which the educational scenario is based. Next, we ask from the scenario creators to fill the “Tasks” field where an educator composes the core tasks that students are called to fulfil to gain knowledge. In order to assist students to their inquiry we provide them with the ability to upload videos in several different file forms and also upload or compose “External Resources” in the relevant field. Finally, we propose the “Final Assessment” task, where students are asked to answer to several questions detecting the depth of knowledge gained.

Of course, we are strongly concerned about the rate of collaboration between students and as we already mentioned, about transformative learning. In the “External Resources” field we can set links to the “Students Life Stories” and to the “Life Skills” tabs, within the same webpage-platform.

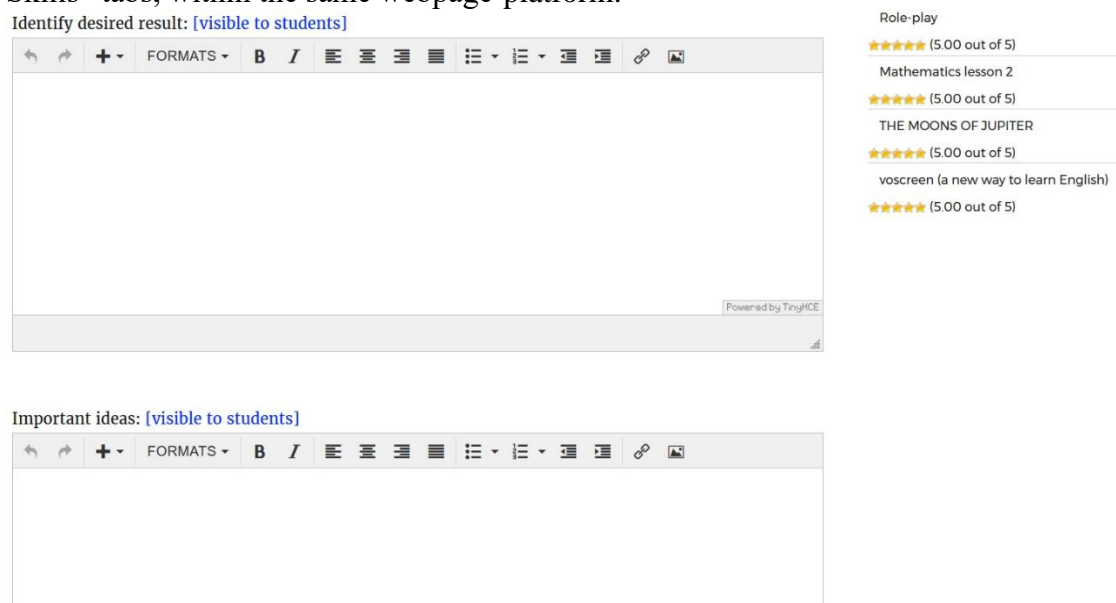


Figure 2: Lesson design area.

### **Teaching the Holocaust: Learning about Auschwitz through art. A scenario designed in the e-lios platform.**

We can now present an example of an educational scenario uploaded in the platform. Initially, we choose the title: Teaching the Holocaust: Learning about Auschwitz through art. We selected as subject: Art and duration 5 hours and target group: lower secondary education. For the rest steps of the scenario we have:

#### **Introduction**

This educational scenario aims to approach the Holocaust through art. You will collect many information and learn significant knowledge about this dark side of the

second World War by studying art. According to Edgar Degas: "Art is not what you see, but what you do for others to see." Thus, we will attempt to raise the "aesthetic" instinct of the attenders. "Aesthetic" is mainly raised by "feeling", the recruiting experience through the senses, while the aesthetic experience can stimulate the development of cognitive function and allow the mind to process new knowledge". At the same time, it facilitates the matching of feelings and impressions. "(Gardner, Eisner, Perkins κ.ά.). "Aesthetic experience" is defined as the systematic investigation of works of art contributing to the revelation of pre-existing knowledge, embracing emotions and critical reflection. The exploitation of works of art, whose content is related to the teaching subject, and their utilization as pounce on more in-depth issues envisaged aims such as the expression of feelings and development of imagination under critical thinking. Art contributes to the development of creativity and criticism expanding the imagination (Dewey, 1980), offers multiple possibilities for interpretation and cultivates multiple types of intelligence (Gardner, Harvard School of Education). Furthermore, it familiarizes with the unconventional way of thinking (Freire, Frankfurt School). According to these statements we strongly believe that silence and deep thought can decisively reveal war crimes, and deep thought can be raised by art study.

### **Identify desired result**

In this field, we mention the educational goals that we wish to achieve:

- To reach out to the students the topic of Holocaust, holistically, through art works.
- To understand the negative effects of war on people's lives.
- To become familiar in General with the theme of the Holocaust, and in particular with Auschwitz.
- To understand the living conditions of the Jews in the concentration camps of Auschwitz.
- To understand the feelings and thoughts of people who lived in concentration camps of Auschwitz.
- To understand how the prisoners tried to survive at this extermination camp.
- To understand how a man can create, fall in love and hope even in difficult situations.
- To understand that even after terrible events, begins a new life again.

### **Important ideas**

Peace and War, Humanity, Values of Life, Humanitarian Values, Acceptance of Difference, Nationalism, Fascism, Consequences of War.

### **Questions – Overarching** (visible only to teachers)

The learning process that uses as a means of critical thinking and rational dialogue and seeks the revision of old and established perceptions and assumptions in order to achieve more inclusive, open and better reasoned understanding of human experience. The concept of critical reflection includes: Premium and systematic way of thinking, Challenging assumptions that someone has committed under the influence of socialization and considers them to be given, but often not in harmony with the authentic needs of the individual. Proposed training techniques-methods: Organized discussion. Group working, Art editing (use of art). Analysis of art works according to the model of Perkins.

**Misconceptions** (visible only to teachers)

Historical misconceptions about the second world war enemies, ideological misconceptions, lack of historical knowledge, recallists of totalitarian regimes. Art is only for artists, art is not connected to everyday and art works are not inspired by social and historical conditions.

**Knowledge** (visible only to teachers)

- Holocaust: the systematic persecution and extermination of the Jews of Europe by Nazi Germany and its collaborators, is the most extreme example of antisemitism.
- Anti-Semitism: refers to bias or hatred against Jews.
- Racism: Is the notion that people are not equal but segregated into junior and senior by criteria such as skin color, nationality and religion.
- Auschwitz: concentration camps
- Humanity: is courtesy of conduct that stems from feelings of solidarity and compassion towards fellow man
- Intolerance: no one hates anyone who does not have the same ideas with him.

**Skills procedural** (visible only to teachers)

Team-group working, collaborative skills, dialog skills, willingness to learn, ability to search, find, discuss, support opinion and present. Creativeness, imagination, basic skills in art works understanding. Emotional expressions, positive thinking and feeling. Ready to reconsider our opinions.

**Tasks** (visible to students)

First stage: determining the need for critical investigation on the subject. Detection of ideas of students about life at Auschwitz. (What was Auschwitz, what happened in Auschwitz, human Inhumanity to man, human responsibility, Creativity, inspiration)

Second stage: (duration 40 min) Expression of the views of students. What are you thinking when you hear the words "Holocaust, Antisemitism, Racism, Auschwitz, humanity, Intolerance?"

Third stage: the media and the critical questions that will be accessed. After discussion, the teacher and students agree on the media which will reach. Identify the critical questions, which will be discussed by the media. Of course, we must mention that no special art expertise is necessary for the teacher.

The proposed media are:

- What is the reality that prevailed at Auschwitz from the part of Jews detainees?
- What is the reality that prevailed at Auschwitz from the part of Jews who managed to escape arrest;
- What are the creative ways of expression for people who have experienced pain and anxiety conditions;

And the proposed questions are:

- Up to what point can reach the human brutality? (inhumane acts)
- Why our life is always full of contradictions?
- Can man create even in harsh conditions and pain and anguish?

Fourth stage: (10 minutes). Various artworks are selected as triggers of processing queries (each artwork can be associated with one or more critical questions) We can use any kind of artwork: Architecture, Sculpture, Visual Arts (painting, drawing),

Literature, Poetry, Music, Theater, Opera, Dance, Cinematography, Photography, Comics.

Proposed artworks (This media are proposed to be uploaded at “Video” or “External Resources” field).

1. The Ballad Of Mauthausen, Song Of Songs Lyrics: Iakovos Kambanelis, Music: Mikis Theodorakis <https://youtu.be/K9oXXboppqk>
2. Ella Liebermann-Shiber (1927-1998). Kaffeeholen!!! (Bring coffee!!!), Pencil on paper, 28 x 22cm
3. Halina Olomucki (1919-..). Portraits of Women Warsaw, Pencil on paper, 20.3 x 13.4 cm.

Fifth stage: Art treatment referred to paintings (duration 90 minutes)

- 1st phase: Time for observation.
- 2nd phase: Broad and adventurous observation.
- 3rd phase: Detailed and in-depth observation.
- 4th phase: Review process.

5a Stage: Four phases of the D.Perkins technique.

1st artwork Kaffeeholen!!! (Bring coffee!!!), Ella Liebermann-Shiber (1927-1998) (Pencil on paper, 28 x 22cm)

2nd artwork

Portraits of Women Warsaw, Halina Olomucki (1919-..) (Pencil on paper, 20.3 x 13.4 cm.)

At this point we describe the artworks just like seeing them.

1st phase: giving time for observation

At this stage we ask students to observe the images and to respond spontaneously and express their first impressions of the art works without even try to interpret them.

- Let your eyes to delve into works. What do you see?
- What's the matter?
- What triggers your curiosity?
- What makes you wonder?
- What happens to the images?
- Is a person or an event?
- What they have in the works of art? What is missing from these?

2nd phase: Broad and adventurous observation

At this stage, we ask students to observe more closely the tables.

- What might be happening here?
- What makes you impression? Describe the colors, space, etc.
- What feelings causing you this artwork?
- Where is the main element of the picture located?
- How much space from the paper/canvas is not included?
- How are the pencil or brush strokes? Are they nervous?

3rd phase: Detailed and in-depth observation

At this stage, we are trying to track down the central message of the table.

- What else do you see in the artwork that impresses you?
- Can you find possible answers to questions based on the information you have so far?
- What can be the message of the project?
- What do you think was the artist's motivation for creating art?
- Was he/she prominent witness?
- The "creation" was a mean to escape from reality?

- He wanted to express his feelings?
- Does the process of creating art served as a way of remedying the situation or an act of disobedience?

4th phase: process Overview

At this stage, we ask students to reflect on, in all the comments and findings setted out in the previous stage. We ask them to try to associate the interpretations and conclusions related to the artwork with the critical questions which had been raised at an earlier stage of the method.

Stage 5b: correlation of ideas that emerged on the stage 5α with the critical questions  
Students collecting their findings and coming up with conclusions related to artworks, understand the pain and the devastating side effects of wars.

Questions: (a) What are you seeing? (b) What happens to the images? (c) what is the subject? (d) Is a person or an event? (e) What is missing from these paintings? Where is the main element of the picture? Where is Located? How much space from the paper/canvas is not included? Are they socked and confused?

Art treatment referred to music: Song of Solomon: Students are asked to listen carefully to the song. Then they are prompted to locate the post of lyricist and especially where is evident the meaning of love, of pain but also of humanity. To relate all the features of the song to the critical questions and to express their concerns and thoughts caused.

Sixth Stage: (duration 45 minutes) Reassessment of initial assumptions and their enrichment Critic Self-reflection. Students write the same small task that prepared in the 2nd Stage. (If they had worked in groups on the 2nd Stage, now we need to work on the same teams). Synthesis and drawn conclusions.

#### **Final Assessment** (visible to students)

Does this educational scenario assist the enrichment of your knowledge about Holocaust? In which way? Maybe it can give you a deeper, more personal, more intimate aspect of the Holocaust; Is it private or intimate? Does it elevate your humanitarian sensitivity on a higher level? Approaching the Holocaust through art we manage: to enrich the students ' knowledge, to make students consider into a broader field and thematically concern to society and particularly the young people.

#### **Conclusions**

Approaching the Holocaust through art we manage to enrich the students' knowledge, to make them consider into a broader field and raise concern to society matters particularly from young people. Transformative Learning has as central element the critical thinking and rational discourse. The aim of this process is the realization of distorted and problematic assumptions and reform them into clear structures, open to change. Especially, Mezirow, J. (2009:132) states that: "The two main components of Transformative learning is firstly the critic contemplation or meditation, this critic-up in beliefs-the critical assessment of sources, nature and consequences of mental habits-and secondly, voluntary and full participation in a dialectic dialogue in order to anchor the best possible opinion». The concepts contemplation and critic rational dialogue are interactive and cooperating components of Transformative Learning process. Somehow the one process contains the other (Lintzeris, 2007). Critical reflection within the framework of the dialogue is the main instrument for the achievement of human communication. This is exactly what we also concluded from our project.

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