

# **Multi-Subject Teaching – Future Of Literature In School**

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- The objective of the presentation – new literature teaching methodologies.
- Presentation is based on humanistic education theory.
- Humanities here are understood as disciplines which can actualize humanistic education in era of technocratic neoliberal ideology.
- Multi-subject lessons based on literary works can help “humanize education” and improve skills of critical thinking.
- Two lessons will be presented.

# 1.1. Humanization vs technologization and marketization

- “The horizon of man’s life becomes extraordinarily restricted in respect of the past and the future; he loses his cultural heritage and his quest for the final goal; he lives in the present alone. But this present becomes increasingly empty” (Karl Jaspers).

- “We got accustomed to regarding a human being merely as a statistical unit. It does not come as a shock to us to view human individuals as a workforce.” (Leonidas Donskis)
- Free individual who is creative, inventive and able to think critically is irrelevant or even dangerous because can rebel against dehumanising ideology and refuse to be an abstract function of economical manipulation. (Dave Hill)

- Neoliberal ideology sees education only as mechanism to make profit or accelerate economy and constructs understanding that education system should be centred on more productive economy.
- The core of humanistic educational theory is to **humanize educational system.**
- This can be reached by emphasizing that student is not only a statistic number or workforce, but unique unity of thought, feelings and emotions.

## 1.2. Humanities: to be or not to be?

- As Western societies turned to technocracy Arts and Humanities had been devalued. Neoliberal ideology sees these subjects as irrelevant.
- But humanities analyse how meanings and identities are created.

- Crossing boundaries of disciplines and joining aspects of different subjects leads to understanding culture as complex unity and oneself as a unique unity.

## 2.1. To understand past is to understand oneself

- First multi-subject lesson “War in art and history” was held in War museum.
- The lesson aimed to show importance of historic memory: no individuality can exist without memory (not only personal, but “collective” as well).
- Integration of literature, history, music and art was fundamental to understand propaganda techniques of war.



- Students analysed how German imperial ideology created image of great nation and prepared society for war by manipulating historical narratives.
- By analysing novels of Erick Maria Remarque students could get full image of process how romanticism of war turns into devastating experiences

## **2.1. Multi-subject teaching and critical thinking**

- Second lesson “Sports as historical and cultural phenomena” was held in stadium of athletics.
- The aim of the lesson was to show students that school disciplines altogether help to understand human as integral being of flesh, spirit and cultural habits.

- Book 23 (“Funeral Games for Patroclus”) of Homer’s epic poem “Iliad” was chosen as background for the lesson.
- Students were engage in similar sport activities as written in the poem and involved into discussion about various social aspects.

- Problem of competition was discussed.
- Also manipulations of “Greek-hero-like” image (athletic, successful, strong, fearless) of male in mass media were reflected.

- During such multiple activities and reflective practices students improve academic knowledge and get opportunity to understand that such phenomena as sports can ignite critical thinking and give holistic view of culture and oneself.

# Conclusions

- Literature as discipline is strongly connected with other subjects and opens wide opportunities for multi-subject lessons.
- Lessons unifying fragments of various subjects broadens horizon of understanding and improves critical thinking which is mandatory to secure individuality of human being from technocratic neoliberal ideology.

- Such lessons also reveal Humanities as disciplines explaining meanings of human experience and cultures.