

"Consume wisely". Educational proposal to work on values in Infant Education

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Abstract: Early Childhood Education teachers should be aware of the importance of values education in educational practice from an early age. With regard to their training, values education is usually configured as a subject, and in most cases optional, in initial training, and in many cases there is a significant lack of training in this aspect. The new educational law implemented in Spain, known as LOMLOE, places special emphasis on educating children in responsible consumption. In this sense, we propose in this article a didactic proposal to work on education in values, specifically education for consumption, at this educational stage. We believe that this proposal may be of great interest to both active teachers and future teachers.

Keywords: early childhood education, didactics, values, education, families, methodology.

I. INTRODUCTION

Values are the essence of education, because there is no education without values, since values are the foundation of personal and social life. Human life, as a human being, is impossible without values, one or the other. These are inescapable elements of our conduct as they give meaning to our personal, social and, therefore, educational life (López-García, 2011, p. 84).

Values education forms part of the central axis of early childhood education. However, it is not always worked in a systematised way as it is considered a cross-cutting area. In this paper we echo the words of Cerrillo (2003) when he argues that values are integrated and learnt from experiences: "it is often said that values are not known, but lived. It would be more correct to say that values are only known when they are lived. Therefore, knowledge of a value can only come about through experience" (p. 60).

The new education law in Spain, Organic Law 3/2020 of 29 December, which modifies Organic Law 2/2006 of 3 May on Education, known as LOMLOE, gives great importance to education for responsible consumption, naming it up to five times (Negrín & Marrero, 2021). Indeed, we live in times that lead us to engage in insatiable and irresponsible consumption following a clearly individualistic logic (Castillejo et al., 2011).

The aim of this article is to propose a session of activities aimed at early childhood education students to work on values education, more specifically education for responsible consumption. This is one of the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda, specifically Goal 12: responsible production and consumption.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A. Legislation: What novelties does the LOMLOE introduce in the Infant Education stage?

The current educational law in force in Spain is the well-known "LOMLOE" (Organic Law 3/2020, of 29 December, which modifies the Organic Law 2/2006, of 3 May on Education) which replaces the previous "LOMCE" (Organic Law 8/2013, of 9 December, for the improvement of the quality of education). The current legislative decree that regulates the Infant Education stage is Royal Decree 95/2022, of 1 February, which establishes the organisation and minimum teaching of Infant Education". At an autonomous level, in Andalusia, we have the Instruction 11/2022, of 23 June, which replaces the previous Decree 428/2008, of 29 July.

The new educational law has introduced a series of new features with respect to the previous one. Some of them are:

- With regard to the objectives, it emphasises the importance given to gender equality, empathy and the prevention of any type of violence.

- In relation to the organisation and pedagogical principles, it includes the educational nature of both cycles (from 0 to 3 and from 3 to 6 years).
- Greater importance is given to emotional management and the establishment of a secure attachment.
- The areas of the Infant Education curriculum are now: a. Growing up in harmony; b. Discovering, enjoying and exploring the world around them. Discovering, enjoying and exploring the environment; and c. Communicating and representing reality (see table 1):

TABLE I: ORGANISATION OF THE TEACHINGS (AREAS) IN THE INFANT EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN THE LOMCE (2013) AND IN THE LOMLOE (2020)

AREAS	
LOMCE 2013	LOMLOE 2020
Self-awareness and personal autonomy	Growing in harmony
Knowledge of the environment	Discovering, enjoying and exploring the environment
Languages: Communication and representation	Communicating and representing reality

Source: own elaboration based on LOMCE (2013) and LOMLOE (2020).

It also introduces a number of new curricular elements with respect to the previous law (see figure 1):

- Objectives (art. 3): student achievement at the end of the stage. Their achievement is linked to the acquisition of key competences.
- Key competences (Annex I): competences that enable students to face the challenges of the 21st century. Linguistic communication, multilingual, mathematics, science, technology, engineering, digital, personal, social, learning to learn, citizenship, entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression.
- Specific competences: these refer to the performances to be displayed in learning situations. They connect the basic knowledge with the assessment criteria.
- Assessment criteria: indicate the level of performance of competences and objectives.
- Basic knowledge: constitutes the former contents of an area. They are distinguished into knowledge (cognitive), skills (instrumental) and attitudes (attitudinal).
- Learning situations: these include activities that involve putting the key and specific competences into practice. These will be presented to students in the form of a challenge or problem and will have a connection with the students' everyday reality. They are intended to have an interdisciplinary and holistic approach.

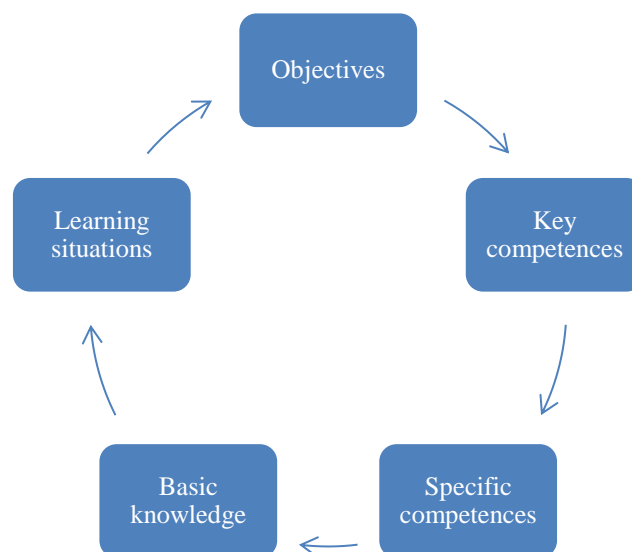


Figure 1. Curricular elements in the LOMLOE (2020) for the Infant Education stage. Source: own elaboration based on LOMLOE (2020).

B. Consumer education in the Early Childhood Education curriculum

In current educational legislation, reference is made to the fact that education in values in the early childhood education stage will be worked on in a cross-cutting manner in the three main areas of the curriculum.

In Royal Decree 95/2022, of 1 February, which establishes the organisation and minimum teaching of Pre-school Education, specifically in article 6 "pedagogical principles", it is explicitly included: "education for responsible and sustainable consumption and the promotion and education for health shall be included" (p. 5).

In the area "Growing up in Harmony", specifically in specific competence 3, the need to introduce children of this age group to a reflection on the responsible consumption of goods and resources is supported (Annex II, p. 16). Likewise, in the area "Discovery and Exploration of the Environment", also in specific competence 3, it is indicated that habits for sustainable development and responsible consumption will be incorporated throughout this stage (p. 23).

III. DIDACTIC PROPOSAL**A. Methodological guidelines**

Below we present a didactic proposal to work on education for responsible consumption with children in infant education, specifically in the second cycle (0 to 6 years). The activities proposed here can be organised methodologically through the Learning Stations technique, which originated in Roland Bauer (1997) with the STATIONENLERNEN. This is a very appropriate methodological resource for working in early childhood education, based on essential theoretical concepts such as Vigotsky's adamiaje and Bruner's discovery learning (Expósito, 2020).

In this session, all students work at the same time on different activities distributed in "stations" around the classroom. In this case, the set of stations make up a "closed" Learning Cycle, as all students must go through all of them in a compulsory way.

The work of the students is totally autonomous, with the teacher being a guide and support when necessary. It is recommended that at each station there should be a route and control sheet. The steps to be followed in each activity will be explained through simple instructions, as well as a double-entry table to record the students' passage through the stations (see table 2):

TABLE II: CHECK SHEET FOR ACTIVITIES

Student	Activity 1-Assambly	Activity 2-	Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5	Activity 6	Activity 7

Source: own elaboration

In terms of timing, teachers can choose how many sessions they want to allocate to work at each station, with at least two days a week being recommended.

At the end of each station, we can make use of the so-called "exit tickets" to evaluate the activity in a formative way. These will help teachers to receive feedback from their students. They can also be evaluated through an anecdotal diary.

B. Proposed activities**Activity 1. Assembly: what would happen if no one took the rubbish away?**

Learning situations, according to the new education law, must start with a question or challenge that creates interest in the activity. In this case, we will start with the following question: what would happen if nobody took the rubbish away?

The teacher will then read and interpret the story "Garbage and more rubbish" by Lucía Serrano to the whole class. Through this story, we help students to reflect on the need to reduce our consumption, reuse and recycle. We recommend that this activity is carried out in assembly.

A reading guide is available at the following link: https://recursos.grupoanaya.es/catalogos/proyectos_lectura/IJ00725001_9999964719.pdf.

Activity 2: Ultra-processed foods

In schools, children are often asked to bring a different breakfast each day of the week. An example is: Monday-dairy products; Tuesday-snack; Wednesday-fruit; Thursday-snack; Friday-crackers. This train does not imply that students bring healthy food to school and, even less, that they do not bring the typical biscuits with the latest cartoon (e.g. the Canine Patrol).

In this station, students will analyse the ingredients, taking into account their age and level, of some ultra-processed biscuits. They will then make a healthy breakfast recipe with less than three ingredients that they can take home. Example: healthy fruit bowl or oatmeal biscuits.

Activity 3: We donate what we no longer us

At this station, students are asked to bring toys that they no longer use and donate them to an association for refugee children. We will also make a list of the reasons for making this donation and how this action makes us feel. It is a good way to teach the children that it is not necessary to donate only on specific days or festivities such as Christmas or the Three Wise Men. We will make a poster of the initiative and we will go to all the classes to encourage the rest of the students to take part in it. It is important to reflect with the students: how many things do we have that we don't use, could we make children happy who have nothing?

Activity 4: We stopped drinking from plastic bottles

The following video will be shown: <https://www.rtve.es/play/videos/el-escarabajo-verde/escarabajo-verde-sopa-plastico-1-parte/1873548/>. In the centre of the table, the teacher will place a plastic bottle that has been reused and exposed to the sun.

We will discuss the ideas conveyed in the video and reflect on the actions we can take to reduce plastic consumption: avoid buying plastic bags in supermarkets, use aluminium bottles, wrap breakfast in aluminium foil, avoid plastic containers for drinking and heating food, avoid over-packaged products, etc.

Finally, a video will be shown on the plastic particles that are released from water bottles when they are reused.

Activity 5: Do it yourself

With this activity we will learn how to give a new use to clothes that we no longer use. To do this, families will be asked to bring a cotton t-shirt that they no longer use and we will make our own "tie-diy" t-shirt. We will only need dyes or coloured dyes, water, bowls and rubber bands to hold the t-shirt.

Activity 6: Chair game

The aim of this activity is for the children to experience for themselves that we don't need a huge amount of toys to have fun. It is a classic, simple and fun game that they love. At the end of the game, there will be a reflection on consumerism and fun.

Activity 7: Reflecting on our latest purchases

Consuming responsibly also means consuming less, choosing those things that we only need. Each child will be asked to tell his or her classmates about the last object, toy, etc. that he or she bought. Afterwards, we will invite reflection with a series of questions: do I really need it, what am I going to use it for, could I have borrowed it or bought it second-hand, do I have any more, etc.

IV. CONCLUSION

We live in a world that seems to lead both children and adults to be insatiable consumers. With this work, we wanted to offer a proposal of activities to work on education in responsible consumption in the infant education stage from 3 to 6 years of age. We believe that these activities can be useful both for active teachers and for future teachers who are in their initial training period.

The new education law in Spain asks teachers to work with pupils on the basis of learning situations, framed in challenges or problems to which pupils must respond. The didactic proposal presented here can be carried out in any order, but we recommend starting with activity 1, which poses the question: What would happen if nobody took the rubbish away? In this

way, we awaken students' curiosity about the topic and bring it closer to their daily lives. The same approach can be used in primary school, adapting the activities to this age group.

Finally, we believe it is advisable to encourage teachers who teach future early childhood education teachers to promote the development of play activities that allow pupils to internalise values through experiential situations.

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