

## Forum Theatre

Forum theatre has the objective of using drama as an effective tool to understand and look for alternatives to social and interpersonal problems as it can be read in the *Manual for human rights education with young people*, Compass<sup>1</sup>:

*Forum theatre is an interactive form of theatre that encourages audience interaction and explores different options for how to deal with a problem or issue. Forum Theatre (also known as Boal's Theatre, "Theatre of the Oppressed" or "Theatre for Development") was created in the early 1970s by Augusto Boal, who wanted to empower his audiences.*

*Forum theatre is a form of role play. The audience watches a short play in which a central character encounters an oppression or obstacle which he or she is unable to overcome; the subject-matter is presented in a way that it relates to the lives of the audience. When the play has been performed it is repeated and members of the audience can take to the stage and suggest alternative options for how the protagonist could have acted. The actors explore the results of these choices with the audience, creating a kind of theatrical debate in which experiences and ideas are rehearsed and shared, generating both solidarity and a sense of empowerment.*

*Forum theatre is a very useful tool for delivering HRE, for example, when exploring ways of solving problems or resolving conflicts. It allows people to take the stage and explore different possibilities. In this way, the event can be used to rehearse for an imminent event, or to uncover and analyse alternatives in any situation, past, pre- sent or future.*

The aim of the Theatre of the Oppressed is that participants reflect about power relations, by means of exploring and representing stories in which there are an oppressor and an oppressed character. The spectators become active by taking part in the play determining how the facts are developed. This theatre technique should be understood as a rehearsal for real life situations, and not as an end itself<sup>2</sup>.

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1 Patricia Brander et al. Compass. Manual for human rights education with young people. 2012 edition Council of Europe ([www.coe.int/compass](http://www.coe.int/compass))

2 Tânia Baraúna Teixeira. Tomás Motos Teruel. De Freire a Boal. Pedagogía del Oprimido. Teatro del Oprimido. 2009, Ñaque Editora