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CHAPTER 1

1. The state of the art in relation to inclusive teaching, non-formal learning, soft skills

1.1 The state of art in Italy

Since the prehistoric era, men have felt the need to represent their world and express their feelings through images and gestures; they have unknowingly felt the need to "make Art".

However, how can we define the concept of art?

“Art is all that human beings define as art”[1]

In this simple sentence, we find our answer. In this definition, we can find two different interpretations.

[1] Giulia d’ Andrea, “ Le forme d’arte”, see: https://italywebradio.it/cultura/le-forme-darte/

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“The first concerns the fact that art is nothing more than the vision, the sensation, the perception that individuals have of art.”[2]

"The second reading concerns the timelessness of the concept of art meaning that art is what is given period, historical, cultural and scientific context is defined as art by society itself."

For Plato, art is the realization of the copy of the idea of an object, which we have created as a society.

For Benedetto Croce, however, the work of art is like a "lyrical intuition" that happens in the mind.

Kant believes that what distinguishes art is a series of perceptible and formal properties identified by particular human mental faculties, such as taste and aesthetics, which generate pleasure.

There are various sectors of art, from visual art to the art of music; from the performing arts to those of new media, but always connected to the ability to convey emotions.

[2] *ibidem*

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[3]

"The beauty of art is in the eye of the beholder"

We can therefore define art as a universal language, capable of being able to speak to anyone.

The main art forms are traditionally seven and each of them is associated with a Muse.

• Painting

• Sculpture

•Architecture

•Literature

•Music

• Dance

•Cinema

Today we can also consider comics, photography and video art as forms of art.

[3]See: https://www.focus.it/cultura/arte/muse-artisti-arte-vita, Primavera, Sandro Botticelli (1480)

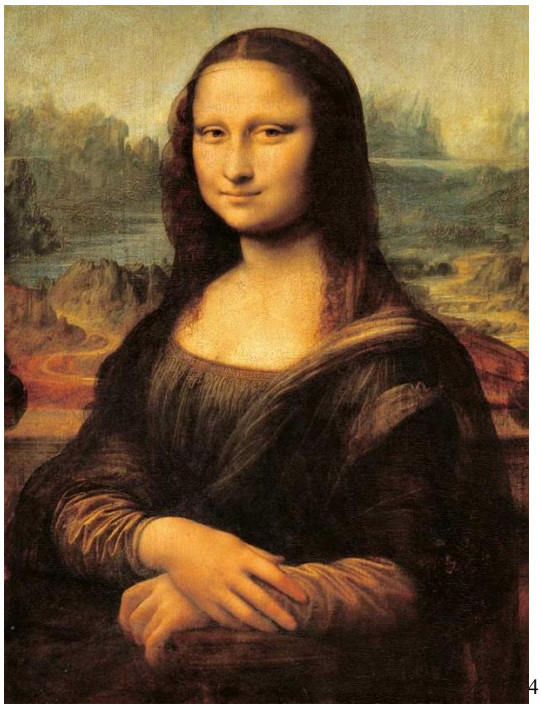
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1.2 Peinture

A jump into the past: Italian painting is characterized by a secular tradition of excellence, from the thirteenth century to today, from the middle Ages to the contemporary. It was taken as a model for foreign artists who spent whole years in Italy studying the great masters of the past.

Among the most important periods, we certainly find the Byzantine and Romanesque art, the Renaissance and Baroque art, and finally the neoclassical and romantic art.

Works of art are the pride of our country, so let's try to make a small review of the most famous paintings in the world.



[4]

"You can write pages and pages describing the smile of the Mona Lisa, but the smile itself as painted by Leonardo can never be translated into words"

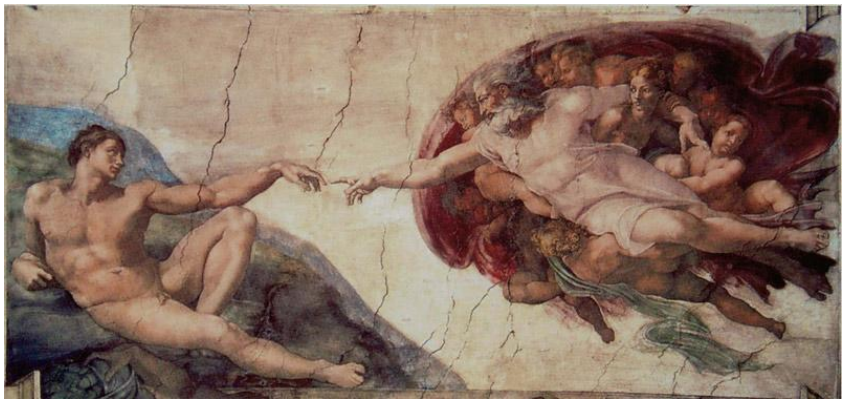
(Erich Fromm)

[4] See: https://www.italiansexcellence.it/le-dieci-opere-darte-italiane-piu-famose-al-mondo

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The genius of Leonardo with his Gioconda or Mona Lisa is one of the most famous works of art in the world. An oil on canvas that Leonardo took more than ten years to paint, from 1503 to 1514 and from 1945.

The curiosity of the painting lies in the fact that if the Mona Lisa's face is divided in half, two different expressions are obtained. On the left, a more mature and serious woman, on the right, a younger, smiling woman. The work is currently kept in the Musée du Louvre in Paris.



History, art and religion meet in the touch (just mentioned) of divine and human fingers. Ineffable beauty and timeless art. The Creation of Adam is a fresco (280x570 cm) by Michelangelo Buonarroti, datable to around 1511 and forming part of the decoration of the vault of the Sistine Chapel, in the Vatican Museums in Rome, commissioned by Pope Julius II.

This is the most famous and well-known episode of the Sistine Chapel and one of the best-known and most celebrated icons of universal art.[5]

[5] See: https://www.italiansexcellence.it/le-dieci-opere-darte-italiane-piu-famose-al-mondo

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A revolutionary, this Italian artist, who in the Renaissance, in the same years in which religious subjects were the masters, chose to imprint a pagan theme on canvas, a tribute to Greek and Roman mythology. Venus was born from the waters, beautiful and sensual, and became the symbol of Renaissance art, but also of the city of Florence, where the famous painting is kept.

The Uffizi Gallery has become the casket that holds one of the famous Italian paintings, the Birth of Venus.



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Beyond the canvas, a story, full of references to any field of Italian culture and art. Giorgio de Chirico does not paint, he imprints on canvas all the history of the contemporary world, with glimpses of the future and shadows of the past. A painting full of symbolism that is striking for its ability to say everything through immobile subjects. His mannequins live in a timeless parenthesis, an ordered and geometric space, apparently empty. In that absence of movement there are, however, all the questions about reality governed by the twisted laws of physics.[6]

"The works of Italian artists cross the generations, marveling every gaze that rests on the reliefs of the chisel, on the furrows of the brush.

A beauty that is difficult to describe, a wealth that is difficult to quantify. Italian art, a guarantee of beauty and eternity. Stopping time, immortalizing talent, sculpting and painting to live forever."[7]

1.2.1 Art and school in today's world

There are many projects that Italian schools take part in to promote art, such as the "BRING... art to school"[8] project.

The I.C. project "Pietro Vanni" of Viterbo was born from the intention of creating an artistic space in the environment in which our pupils live every day and to see them involved in the reproduction of some pictorial masterpieces on the doors of the school classrooms.[9]

"The project intends to promote the methodology of "learning by doing", or in this case "learning art and from art", through a practical and playful feedback that can involve our kids and at the

[7] See : https://www.italiansexcellence.it/le-dieci-opere-darte-italiane-piu-famose-al-mondo
[8] note that "bring" in Italian is translated "porta" that also means "door"
[9] Progetto dell' I.C. "Pietro Vanni",Italia see: https://www.icvanniviterbo.edu.it/progetto-porta-larte-a-scuola/

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same time fascinate them. Art is beauty and value, subjectivity and emotion… and educating in beauty means fostering knowledge of oneself and the world around them."[10]



Art is made here! is an active and participatory art project that brings primary and secondary school students closer to the historical and cultural heritage of the area in an engaging way, promoting its enhancement.

QUI SI FA ARTE! – TORINO, ITALIA

Developed in 2018 by the Fondazione per la Scuola and Sanoma Italia as part of Riconnessioni, the project started in 2021. Art is made here! involves the cultural institutions of the city of Turin in a process which, through the use of technology, allows young people to discover the value of artistic languages as a means of understanding the world and being protagonists in it.

The initiative aims to promote cultural experience in multidimensional learning contexts, aiming to achieve the following objectives:

[10] ibidem

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• promote knowledge and conscious use of Turin's historical and artistic heritage;

• offer young students concrete experiences of innovative teaching

• promote a project of civic education, digital and inclusive citizenship, activating key European competences (learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative, cultural awareness and expression) and important soft skills (in particular creativity, critical thinking, resolution).[11]

1.3 Sculpture

Sculpture has deep roots in Italy, but the Renaissance was certainly the most flourishing period in the history of art. Just look at Florence, the Renaissance city par excellence, Rome, the rest of Tuscany with their large fifteenth and sixteenth century churches, embellished by the work of great Italian sculptors.

The Renaissance, in fact, showed its most imposing side in architecture, but it was also able to give us memorable works in terms of sculpture, which have become fully recognized among the masterpieces of humanity.

The Italian tradition in this field, however, did not stop only in the 15th and 16th centuries, but continued up to the present day.

Donatello is considered the father of Renaissance sculpture. However, his most famous sculptures are probably the David, kept in the Bargello National Museum in Florence, and the statues and crucifix in the Basilica del Santo in Padova Vecchio.

Michelangelo Buonarroti sculptor, painter, architect among the greatest ever

Michelangelo, was not only one of the greatest and most famous Italian sculptors, but of the whole world.

[11] "Qui si fa arte!"UN PROGETTO PER LE SCUOLE DI ARTE ATTIVA E PARTECIPATIVA GRAZIE ALL'USO DELLA TECNOLOGIA see: https://www.fondazionescuola.it/iniziativa/qui-si-fa-arte/

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His first masterpiece was the Pietà, initially sculpted for the church of Santa Petronilla and now kept in San Pietro.

Gian Lorenzo Bernini, The great sculptor, multifaceted and multifaceted artist.

Bernini is considered the greatest protagonist of Baroque figurative culture.[12]

His works met with resounding success and dominated the European scene for more than a century after his death. From the Colonnade of St. Peter's Square to the Barcaccia of "Piazza di Spagna".[13]



[14]

In Italy, it is not only possible to admire the masterpieces of the greatest sculptors in history, you can also observe more contemporary works.

In the 1990s, the Swiss artist Daniel Spoerri began to install a sculpture park in Tuscany and the whole of Italy gained an unexpected little paradise.

[12] Ermanno Ferretti, "Cinque tra i più famosi scultori italiani di ogni epoca" see: https://www.cinquecosebelle.it/cinque-tra-i-piu-famosi-scultori-italiani-di-ogni-epoca/
[13] See: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rinascimento_fiorentino
[14]

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Our territory should promote the discovery of the Pollino park through contemporary art. With this goal, the ArtePollino association was born in 2008 and managed to involve some artists in the creation of grandiose works of art in nature.[15]

1.3.1 A jump into the present

"Sculpture school and research center, the innovative Italian project in the heart of Umbria"

An ancient sawmill from the early years of the last century, immersed in a quarry of over 7000 square meters above the Tescio valley in Assisi, bordering the Rocca Maggiore, is today an Italian research center on the use of materials and the study of stone, in particular marble, of which the sculptors Matteo Peducci and Mattia Savini carry on the very ancient all-Italian testimony, which has made the school of art a precious legacy in the world. The ancient structure, adapted to a laboratory, a research center on techniques and materials, also boasts a record; the first attempt to bring a real school of sculpture to our region. The project, which began in 2013, is now attracting the attention of the academic world and private and public clients (they are currently creating a work for the Church of San Rufino in Assisi) which is throwing new horizons on the instances of

[15] https://www.artepollino.it/

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art Contemporary; in particular, the center boasts a collaboration with the prestigious Normale University of Pisa.[16]



1.3.2 At sculpture school… in nature!

A wood sculpture project, entitled "The soul of Robinia", created in agreement with the Municipality of Castelnovo in Emilia-Romagna.

Robinia is a very common plant in our area, which grows rapidly and spontaneously. Even at the end of its life cycle, the plant is useful to man, because it produces good firewood. The stumps are then worked by the students, thanks to the help of expert sculptor craftsmen and thus become beautiful. The proceeds from the works created by Antonio "Alberico" are donated to charity to finance solidarity projects.

[16] Valentina Scarponi, " Scuola di scultura e centro di ricercar" see: www.perugiatoday.it/cronaca/scuola-di-scultura-centro-di-ricerca-assisi-affiliati-peducci-savini

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1.4 Architecture

Italian architecture developed homogeneous characters under the Roman Empire.

It was influenced by Greek architecture (as we can see in the temples of Agrigento, Selinunte and Paestum) and by the Etruscan one. Important examples are to be found in the thermal structures (Terme di Caracalla, Terme di Diocleziano and others), in the amphitheaters (Colosseo, Arena di Verona), in the theaters (Teatro di Marcello), in the basilicas (such as the basilica of Maxentius), in the temples (among which the Pantheon stands out) and in civil architecture (for example the Tiberius bridge in Rimini).

Among the architectural works that attract the attention of people from all over the world, we find the Colosseum, located in the center of the city of Rome, it is the largest Roman amphitheater in the world. It is the most important Roman amphitheater, as well as the most impressive monument of ancient Rome that has come down to us.[17]

[17] https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colosseo

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The Pantheon is a building from ancient Rome located in the Pigna district in the historic center, built as a temple dedicated to all past, present and future divinities.

1.4.1 From the Roman Empire to the present day… Contemporary architecture

Contemporary architecture is usually born in areas and places in cities where redevelopment is needed.

The focal point of contemporary buildings is certainly the presence of large windows and window panels in order to allow natural light to penetrate the interior as much as possible.

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Renzo Piano is certainly the most authoritative signature of contemporary architecture in Italy. In 1981 Renzo Piano founded the Renzo Piano Building Workshop, with offices in Genoa, Paris and New York. Among his most famous works we also mention the Auditorium Parco della Musica, in Rome and the MUSE, the new Science Museum in Trento.[18]




1.4.2 School and architecture

It is essential to open a focus on architecture and the world of schools. There was a competition in Italy for the design of innovative schools to be built with the resources of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (Pnrr). The reference is to the Plan for the construction of new schools to replace old buildings. The goal is to create innovative schools from an architectural and structural point of view, highly sustainable and with maximum energy efficiency[19]. Among the calls to design buildings with minimal environmental impact and the use of sustainable materials, the document takes into account both the most recent experiences, such as the forced recourse to DAD, which is reflected in the need to have advanced technologies available everywhere, and the chronic difficulties of our country in terms of school construction. For example, a focus is reserved for "the

[18] https://www.abitare.it/it/architettura/2013/07/26/il-muse-di-renzo-piano/
[19] https://www.professionearchitetto.it/news/notizie/29704/Concorso-scuole-innovative-ecco-dove-saranno-realizzati-i-nuovi-edifici

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basic unit" of each school structure: the classroom, to be rethought and transformed "from a rigid and stereotyped space to the fulcrum of a system capable of hosting different configurations and expanding to neighboring spaces". Furthermore, the designers are urged to prepare the architectural conditions to explore a road still little traveled by the Italian school, i.e. en plein air teaching. "The external environment is the place of choice for gaining experience not only linked to the natural context (contact with the earth, observation of weather phenomena, cultivation), but also as an extension of the internal environments", specifies point 5 , then listing a plurality of spaces (internal courtyards, terraces, patios, hanging gardens, loggias, verandas, pergolas, pavilions) for laboratory, community activities or meals.

1.4.3 A special school in Emilia Romagna



The Whale of Guastalla: the most beautiful kindergarten built after the earthquake in Emilia

The school, designed by the famous architect Mario Cucinella, was inaugurated in 2015 and was built following the earthquake that struck Emilia in 2012. It has been nicknamed the "Whale", due

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to the shape of its large arches which recall those of the belly of the cetacean protagonist of the Disney film "Pinocchio", but the children who frequent it enjoy a space that is the opposite of the dark belly of an animal[20]. The building is eco-sustainable, naturally compliant with anti-seismic standards, produces 45% of its electricity thanks to photovoltaic panels and saves 55% of water thanks to a rainwater reuse system.[21]

1.5 Literature

It is difficult to summarize in a few pages the vastness of Italian literature, which boasts illustrious writers from the 13th century to the present day. From poetry to novels, Italian literature has produced many works of priceless beauty.

Italian literature is related to national identity. The historical discourse on literature has been intertwined since its origins with the prospect of the birth of a community, which from a literary community has progressively become a national community.

In the 14th century Dante Alighieri wrote the famous lines and at the same time determining models for all Italian literature.

[20] https://www.eugeniofilograna.it/blog/in-italia-lasilo-nido-piu-bello-del-mondo-a-forma-di-balena/

[21] Matteo Rubboli, “La balena di Guastalla”, www.infosostenibile.it/notizia/l-asilo-balena-una-fiaba-che-diventa-realta

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The Divine Comedy is one of the few works that crosses all cultures, is translated, quoted, rewritten all over the world. [22]



Ludovico Ariosto and Torquato Tasso are the greatest exponents of Renaissance literature. Ariosto represents the one who guaranteed the literary recovery by writing a poem in a comic-hero key in which the society of Charlemagne is shown and criticized.

Italian Romanticism, in the 1800s, is characterized by a phenomenon of "patriotism" and "conciliation" of classical Greco-Roman culture. Mostly represented by Alessandro Manzoni and Giacomo Leopardi.

Manzoni (1785-1873) is considered, together with Dante Alighieri, the "father of the novel and of the Italian language".

Giovanni Pascoli and Gabriele D'Annunzio, in the wake of Giosuè Carducci's attempt, intend to restore the classical pattern of Italian poetry, founding the principles on Greco-Roman classicism.

Carducci was the first Italian to win the Nobel Prize for literature, in 1906.

22 *https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante_con_la_Divina_Commedia#/media/File:Dante_Domenico_di_Michelino_Duomo_Florence.jpg*

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In 1934 Luigi Pirandello won the Nobel Prize for literature "for his courage and ingenious re-presentation of dramatic and theatrical art"

Nobel Prize for literature in 1975, Eugenio Montale is popular among young authors.

The first moment of Montale's poetry represents the affirmation of the lyrical motif. With one of his most famous works Ossi di sepia Montale affirms the impossibility of giving an answer to existence. Grace Deledda (1926)

Grazia Deledda won the Nobel in 1926, "for her power as a writer, supported by a high ideal, which portrays life in plastic forms as it is on her secluded native island and who deals with problems of general human interest with depth and warmth". Dario Fo instead won it in 1997, since "following the tradition of medieval jesters, he mocks power by restoring dignity to the oppressed"

The school has changed dramatically in recent years: computers, Internet connections, interactive whiteboards, tablets are gradually becoming part of daily teaching, alongside traditional tools, modifying the physical space of the classroom itself.

Very often the hours of Italian, and of Literature in particular, are experienced by the students as tedious, boring; at the same time, however, these young people spend whole days listening to music, watching films in streaming, television series, reading works, writing on blogs and social networks, conversing and sharing thoughts on the Web.

Literature like any art, without pleasure and the recreational dimension, dies, in school as well as outside:

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The teacher's preliminary purpose is to arouse pleasure and fuel the motivation of his class to follow him into the most fascinating meanders of literature.[23]

1.5.1 "Cento Libri - Leggere leggeri" project

"Cento Libri - Leggere leggeri", this is the name of the project presented today to the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the "Piccoli Maestri" Association, with the aim of promoting initiatives to get young people interested in reading.

One hundred writers will make themselves available to secondary schools, participating in remote meetings in which texts selected from among the one hundred that the Association has identified for the initiative will be read and discussed.[24]

#IOLEGGOPERCHÉ IT'S A GREAT ASSOCIATION PROMOTING LIBRARIES

It is organized by the Italian Publishers Association, supported by the Ministry of Culture - Directorate General for Libraries and Copyright by the Center for Books and Reading, by the Sports Department of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, in collaboration with the Ministry of 'Instruction.

#ioleggoperché is the largest national initiative to promote reading. Thanks to the energy, commitment and passion of teachers, booksellers, students and publishers, and the public who have

[23] Pietro Gibellini, Gloria Morbiato, "Didattica della Letteratura: nuovi approcci e nuovi strumenti", 2013
[24] Presentato oggi al Ministero il progetto "Cento Libri - Leggere leggeri",see: www.miur.gov.it

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contributed to the success of #ioleggoperché, over one million books have been donated to schools so far, which today enrich the library heritage of school libraries throughout Italy.[25]

1.6 Music

Italian music has traditionally been one of the cultural markers of Italian national and ethnic identity and occupies an important position in society and politics. Italian musical innovation, in musical scale, harmony, notation and musical theatre, enabled the development of opera, in the late 16th century, and much of modern European classical music, such as the symphony, concerto and the sonata, spanning a broad spectrum of operas and classical instrumental music and popular music drawn from both local and imported sources.

Italian folk music is an important part of the country's musical heritage and includes a diverse range of regional styles, instruments and dances. Instrumental and vocal classical music is an iconic part of the Italian identity, ranging from experimental cultured music and international fusions to symphonic music and opera. Italy has a strong national identity expressed through its own distinctive culture, marked by a keen appreciation for beauty and emotion, and this is strongly evidenced in its music.

In Italy, the National Committee for the practical learning of music for all was established by Decree of the Minister of Education and is chaired by Prof. Luigi Berlinguer

The main objective of the Committee is that music is learned, experienced and welcomed by all students, starting from kindergarten, with learning methods that consider the global development of the person and the training of the citizen.

[25] See: https://www.ioleggoperche.it

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1.6.1 Music as universal and transversal knowledge

It is also committed to facilitating any form of connection and circulation of ideas, in the awareness that the main objective is the change of the educational system, which overcomes the prevalence of the cognitive dimension over the creative one and the fragmentation of the disciplines.[26]

The Committee takes on any awareness-raising initiative that pays back to music its primacy of universal and transversal knowledge.

Research and activity project for the dissemination of practical learning of music at school.

1.6.2 A great national project: music at school for all students

The "Musica è Scuola" project was born from the meeting between educational institutions and the MIUR - National Committee for the practical learning of music for all students and intends to enhance the transversal and complementary value of music at school, which interacts with the word, the body dimension, sensoriality, creativity, art, technology and innovation. The path aims to activate a medium-long term process that triggers cultural changes, with the ambition of becoming an exemplary model in Italy.[27]

4.3 Dance

The arts encompass, meet and create something new. A dancer learns to “go with the others” and be one of a kind at the same time. A dancer is educated in dance, but what if instead dance educates?[28]

[26] https://www.miur.gov.it/web/guest/cosa-facciamo
[27] See : https://www.musicaescuola.it/index.php/il-progetto
[28]See : https://www.edscuola.eu/wordpress/?p=157301

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INCLUSIVE DANCE IN ITALIAN SCHOOLS

Dance has an educational value regardless of the choreographic representations intended for the show and gives us a unique opportunity where we can do research; the learner will search for himself, the teacher will search for new methodological ways to represent, to express, to communicate.

The artistic expressions in particular the dance language are personal explorations on a "own way of being and of communicating" they want to touch the inner soul of man. These are movements towards a single road which then intersects with other roads: those of the spectators, of other artists, of people.[29]

Acting in an inclusive sense is the real challenge of this very complex social era. An all-round reflection on the educational-inclusive aspects of Dance is underway. By education it is good to understand, as Edda Ducci maintains, “that which is educable in us, that which, if developed, makes our humanity more beautiful, better and more just.” [30]For Ducci, education is a reality of a mysterious nature, which therefore cannot be the same for everyone, which needs a singular and intimate interpretation of man, of those who approach it, to understand and inhabit it.In inclusive dance, the perfect body is what each student sees reflected in the mirror: it is his own unrepeatable body and, through that, he knows how to marvel at the prodigious process of knowledge and representation brought into play by the methodological proposals.[31]

4.4 Cinema and Theatre

[29] See: https://pnrr.istruzione.it/competenze/riduzione-dei-divari-territoriali/
[30] Scaramuzzo G. Per un’ermeneutica dell’educativo. L’insegnamento scritto (e quello non scritto) di Edda Ducci. Roma, Anicia, 2021
[31] Costa O. A cura di Niccolini A. Parlando del metodo mimico. Lezioni inedite trascritte. Roma, Audino, 2022

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Theater education at school is resolved not only in the students' acquisition of artistic skills or competences, but also and above all in the use of theater as a transversal pedagogical tool, capable of profoundly affecting the growth of the person in his cognitive entirety and emotional.

In this context, the Ministry has launched a long and fruitful process of promotion, support and enhancement of theatrical practice in schools of all levels. The strategic indications for the educational use of theatrical activities for the 2016/2017 school year (MIUR guidelines) define the role of theater in schools and remove it from the field of extemporaneous experimentation. Thus, it becomes part of the educational offer of Italian schools of all levels and obtains full citizenship in the students' educational background.[32]

1.8.1 World Theater Day

World Theater Day is celebrated on March 27. Established in Paris in 1962 by the International Theater Institute, the largest theater organization in the world founded by UNESCO in 1948, the day is celebrated by ITI National Centers around the world.

In Italy, the ITI and the Miur collaborate to stimulate artistic creation among young people with courses dedicated to writing and inspired by peace between peoples. Every year on March 27, a single message resounds, entrusted to a personality of world culture to bear witness to the lively reflections on the theme of theater and the culture of peace.

CiPS is the NATIONAL CINEMA AND IMAGES FOR SCHOOL PLAN promoted by the Ministry of Culture and Education and Merit for organizational planning, innovation of administrative processes, communication and contracts. The initiatives of the Plan are aimed at

[32] "Teatro e didattica", See : www.miur.gov.it

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introducing the cinematographic and audiovisual language in schools of all levels, as an educational tool capable of facilitating learning and being used transversally in the curricular paths.

With the implementation of law 107 of 2015, image education has arrived on the school benches and cinema and audiovisuals have fully entered the educational offer plan of schools of all levels, no longer and not only in an instrumental way, but as specific disciplines able to counter iconic illiteracy, to contribute to the construction of a common audiovisual culture and to the formation of learning environments for skills that put students and their current needs at the center cultural and educational, to arrive at the formation of an aware public, foster critical understanding of the present and able to dialogue with the digital revolution underway.[33]

1.9 The importance of sport in schools

Sport and school have an important bond. To quote Juvenal's well-known sentence, Mens sana in corpore sano. After all, the ancients had already explored the relationship between body and mind and had given different interpretations. Aristotle, in Politics, maintained that soul and body are inseparable, applying to them the metaphysical concepts of form and substance.
In ancient Greece, the Athenian paidéia was education and had the function of shaping both the body and the mind, for this reason it also included gymnastics. However, it was not only aimed at children, but was a sort of permanent education, functional to the life of the citizen.
Sports practice had even more relevance in the education of Sparta, as the concept according to which education should include both the development of the mind and that of the body was central to the Greek mentality.

[33] *https://cinemaperlascuola.istruzione.it/il-progetto/*

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A recent study conducted by the University of Montreal and published in the Annals Journal of Health Promotion examined the school results of 2700 adolescents and crossed them, analyzing the benefits brought by sporting activity. It has emerged that those who regularly play sports outside of school get better grades, but also that they achieve greater concentration and better self-control.

Sports educate by learning social rules and discipline: especially team sports and martial arts, they help to provide the child and adolescent with an educational model which, once acquired, the child also uses in school and in the sociality in general.

Sporting activity helps to develop a sense of belonging and to avoid social unease: team sports in particular, but also individual sports within a sports club, help to make the subject feel like part of a group. If athletes are well directed by coaches and trainers, sport can have a deterrent effect even against episodes of bullying and social exclusion.

The activity increases the psychophysical well-being of the kids: in addition to being stimulating and enticing kids to move around having fun, it releases endorphins, the so-called good mood hormone, establishing a virtuous circle that will lead them to have an even greater desire to play sports.

Sport stimulates competitiveness and educates the concept of sportsmanship: constructive comparison with other athletes is an important stimulus to grow and improve in one's personal results.

If the boys are directed correctly they can learn healthy confrontation within the limits of sporting correctness and fair play.[34]

[34] See: https://www.sportiva-mens.it/benefici-sport-risultati-scolastici

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Sport di Classe is a project, promoted by the Ministry of Education, University and Research and by the Italian National Olympic Committee, which offers itself to the school world as a concrete and coordinated response to the need to spread physical education right from school primary school, so as to favor the educational and training processes of the younger generations.

The Student Championships, organized by MIUR in collaboration with CONI and with the National Sports Federations, with the Associated Sports Disciplines and with the Italian Paralympic Committee, bring competitive sports to lower and lower secondary schools: many disciplines are offered in school sports centres, as afternoon and optional activities dedicated to children.[35]

CHAPTER 2

2. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

[35] See: https://www.coni.it/it/progetti-nella-scuola.html

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2.1 Inclusion as a resource

Human nature pushes individuals to seek refuge and security within familiar relationships and contexts. However, education and life experiences enable to get to know the variety and richness of the diversities that today coexist in our country. School, after family, is the most important socialization agency. Hence, it must reflect changes in society guaranteeing accessibility to all students. Over the years, the scholar system development has made progress, following a long path towards inclusion and integration of people with disabilities and learning and/or linguistic difficulties. With the expression "inclusive education", one means the practice of providing access to education to all students, regardless of their physical, mental or social abilities. This approach to education strives to create an environment that is welcoming and supportive for all learners encouraging them to reach their fullest potential. Inclusion may ensure that every student has access to the same educational opportunities and resources. It also aims to create a school culture where differences are embraced and respected. The understanding of inclusion in education has transcended the assumption that inclusion is about students with special needs. The article *"Inclusion: Dimensions of inclusion in education"* (Qvortrup s.d.) argues that in order to handle inclusion as a phenomenon that concerns all children, we need an operational definition of inclusion differentiated according to three dimensions. The first dimension covers different levels of inclusion. The second dimension concerns different types of social communities in and out of school, from which a child may be included or excluded. The class is one example of social community, but equally important is the bilateral relationship with other children and teachers in any context. The third dimension concerns different degrees of being included in and/or excluded

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from the different communities. The point is that usually a child is not completely included or excluded, but he/she is partially included in or excluded from the different communities. [36]

The integration or inclusion of young children with disabilities into school and community is a topic of importance to the range of personnel working in early intervention/early childhood special education[37]. Inclusive education is an important concept that helps creating a sense of belonging and acceptance for people from all backgrounds. It promotes the idea of equal access to education, regardless of race, gender, religion or any other factor. Inclusive education seeks to provide an environment in which everyone has a chance to learn and develop his or her skills. It also encourages people to work together and foster respect for each other's differences. By creating an inclusive learning environment, students can benefit from different perspectives and gain valuable skills that will help them succeed in the future.

In conclusion, it is fundamental to adopt a positive and advantageous vision of diversity, as it is a gift in the teaching-learning process. The above-quoted adoption would represent a fundamental pivot in inclusive education. Scholar inclusion is a complex process that aims to guarantee everyone, even disabled students, the most achievable level of learning and participation. The inclusive proposal has the purpose of pointing the school the correct way through which it can manage differences and disabilities.

2.2 Normative excursus

[36] Ane Qvortrup & Lars Qvortrup (2018) Inclusion: Dimensions of inclusion in education, International Journal of Inclusive Education, 22:7, 803-817, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2017.1412506

[37] Bricker, D. (1995). The challenge of inclusion. *Journal of early intervention*, *19*(3), 179-194.

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The idea that quality school should place the diversified needs of all students at the center of its interests, respecting the principles of equal opportunities and active participation of all students, has been spreading since the 1990s, increasing, through documents and international studies, the search for an Inclusive Education. Inclusive Education is a theoretical model supported by important international organizations, primarily by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Salamanca Conference, organized by UNESCO in 1994, represents a key moment for the affirmation of a school model that attempts to identify the differences and specificities of each. The Salamanca Conference "*provided a platform to the principle of Education for All and to discuss the practice of ensuring that children and young people with special educational needs are included in all such initiatives and take their rightful place in a learning society. The Conference documents are informed by the principle of "inclusion", recognizing the need to work towards schools for all. The key messages that emanated from the Conference constitute a worldwide concensus and provide a forward-looking agenda on future directions for special needs"* (WORLD CONFERENCE ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION: ACCESS AND QUALITY Salamanca, Spain, June 1994). With the Charter of Luxembourg, two years later, the European Union recognized that school "for one and all" must offer quality teaching and offer equal opportunities to all students. Subsequently, in the 2009 Guidelines on Inclusive Education, UNESCO declares, "Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the education system's capacity to reach all students. *An 'inclusive' school system can only be created if ordinary schools become more inclusive. An 'inclusive' school system can only be created if mainstream schools become more inclusive. In other words, if they become better at educating all the children of the* (Cottini, Didattica speciale e inclusione scolastica 2018). *The Inclusive Education model is also proposed by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education is an independent,*

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autonomous and non-profit European organisation. Various studies and publications are owed to this agency, such as the "Guiding principles for promoting quality in inclusive education" and the "Five key messages for inclusive education".

In “Five key messages for inclusive education” article of 2014, inclusion is described as an evolving concept; it is achievable if the whole educational system and all the students cooperate. The five key messages are[38]:

1. As early as possible: the positive impact of early detection and intervention, as well as of pro-active measures.
2. Inclusive education benefits all: the positive educational and social impact of inclusive education.
3. Highly qualified professionals: the importance of having highly qualified professionals in general, and teachers in particular.
4. Support systems and funding mechanisms: the need for well-established support systems and related funding mechanisms.
5. Reliable data: the important role played by data, as well as benefits and limitations of its use. (Agency s.d.)

[38] “Key Principles – Supporting policy development and implementation for inclusive education” https://www.european-agency.org/

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In Italy, scholar integration and inclusion history, 40 years old, is tied to a normative aiming to the removal and elimination of every kind of discriminating form towards diversity and to the promotion of a school model able to welcome all students. Indeed, the dimension of inclusion represents a step towards this direction, the historical excursus of the evolution of the school model begins with a period of separate education in which the exclusive schooling of the disabled child was envisaged, characterized, until the end of the 1960s, by a mainly medical approach. Depending on the type and severity of the deficit, the pupils were sent to special school or differential classes. The limits of this choice, at the end of the 70s, led to a crisis of separate institutions and promoted the first experiences of inclusion of students with disabilities in ordinary schools starting from the law of March the 30th 1971 n.118 which recognized the right of education in the common classroom with the exclusion of subjects suffering from serious intellectual deficits or physical impairments such as to compromise learning in common situations. At the end of 1974, a commission of experts was set up to study the inclusion of children in difficult situations in the mainstream school which led to the birth of the Falcucci document (1975), followed by CM. August the 8th 1975, n.227, which reaffirmed the importance of adapting the school to the educational needs of each individual student to promote personal development. The law n. 517/1977 represented, from a legal point of view, a turning point for the Italian school because it sanctioned the abolition of differential classes and special schools. After 1977, a series of laws and circulars from the Ministry of Public Education attempted to fill some gaps and improve the integration process[39]. Afterwards, law 104/1992 for the assistance, integration and rights of people with disabilities enters into force. It focuses on aspects that had been neglected until then such as support for the family, school, work, health, leisure,

[39] Cottini, Lucio. *Didattica speciale e inclusione scolastica.* Carocci, 2017, 2018.

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social integration of people with disabilities. Other subsequent regulatory provisions have enhanced the role of school for social inclusion and proposed actions for an ever increasing dialogue between all public/private realities in order to support the development and inclusion of disabled minors in training and educational pathways, such as for example the framework law n. 328/2000. Subsequently, the law 53/2003, underlined the importance of personalization, understood as the creation of different paths within the curriculum of the class, paths that must respond to specific training needs of the individual, putting the school program at the center the disciplines, but the pupil. The fundamental step towards inclusion can be found in Law 170/2010, which protects the right to learn of individuals with specific learning disabilities (DSA). It definitively establishes the right to personalization, obliging schools to adopt compensatory and dispensatory measures based on the specific characteristics of the pupil. With the Ministerial Directive of 27/12/2012 and the C.M. 6 March 2013 on the BES and subsequent circulars, the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) outlines and specifies the inclusive strategy in the Italian school in order to fully realize the right to learning for all pupils and students in difficult situations. With "The guidelines for the right to study of pupils and students with learning disabilities" attached to the implementing decree of law 170/2010, some operational paths are specified for developing inclusive teaching. In particular, we will talk about formalizing all the activities in a single document, the Personalized Educational Plan (PEP). In the SEN area, in addition to the sub-category of pupils with disabilities, two broad conditions of scholastic difficulties deriving from different causes are included: specific developmental disorders (SLD), language deficit, motor coordination, dyspraxia, non-verbal dysfunction, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, borderline intellectual functioning) and sociocultural and linguistic disadvantage. All this has led the school to draw up a specific annual plan for inclusiveness (PAI), to be included in the PTOF, which demonstrates the institution's

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commitment to guaranteeing inclusive education. The Legislative Decree of 7 August 2019, n. 96 represents the last stage of the path towards the realization[40] of scholastic inclusion. Its first draft dates back to 2017, then modified in 2019. With this decree, the government introduced important changes, consolidating the personalization of teaching. In particular, greater weight is given to the role of families, Territorial Inclusion Groups and operational working groups for inclusion are created. The core of the reform is certainly concentrated in the Individualized Educational Plans (PEI) fundamental tool for developing a specific educational plan for each disabled student[41]. Finally, the Interministerial Decree n.182 of 29 December 2020, aims to clarify the composition and action of the operational working groups for inclusion (GLO) and, in particular, to standardize at national level the methods for drafting the Individualized Educational Plans (IEP).

2.3 How to achieve inclusion

2.3.1 The choices to make

For what concerns the paths useful for promoting inclusion, it is necessary to underline how the inclusive perspective is pursued through the individualisation, personalization and diversification of teaching-learning processes. To achieve this goal, the school should renew and adapt the educational proposals to the specific needs of each student. According to the expert in Didactics and Special Pedagogy L. Cottini, three lines of work can be identified to promote a truly inclusive school. These three ways refer to the following factors:

– the organization of the context as a favorable, motivating and welcoming learning environment;

[40] Vedi "L'evoluzione dell'inclusione scolastica in Italia" https://asnor.it/it-schede-480-inclusione_scolastica_normativa
[41] *ibidem*

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– the use of a didactic approach that promotes inclusion during all normal training activities;

– the attention to be paid to the particular needs of some students, with reference to the field of disability, specific learning disabilities and other special educational needs[42].

Erickson has developed 7 key points to promote inclusion within the classroom [43]. The goal of inclusive education is to achieve the highest possible degree of learning and social participation by all pupils. The seven key points are:

1) THE RESOURCE OF CLASSMATES: classmates are essential for activating inclusive processes. It is therefore necessary to work on cooperation, collaboration and the atmosphere in the classroom. In fact, learning is connected to relationships, to the emotions one feels with others and to the stimuli in general that one receives in a social context.

2) ADAPTATION AS AN INCLUSIVE STRATEGY: in order to value individual differences, it is necessary to adapt one's teaching styles and teaching strategies to the cognitive styles and different abilities of the pupils.

3) LOGICAL-VISUAL STRATEGIES, MAPS, SCHEMES, AND VISUAL AIDS: to achieve better inclusion it is useful to give importance to logical-visual strategies (for example mind maps and concept maps).

4) COGNITIVE PROCESSES AND LEARNING STYLES: cognitive processes and functions such as memorization, attention, problem solving and planning, give the possibility to develop operational, psychological and behavioral skills that are of great importance for learning. Inclusive

[43] Giorgia, Perissinotto Cristina e Del Turco. «Educazione inclusiva: anche l'italia fa la sua parte.» Veneto

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teaching requires considering and valuing different cognitive styles within the same class, as well as different types of intelligence. Each of us is different and therefore necessarily learns differently than the other.

5) METACOGNITION AND STUDY METHOD: every teaching activity should develop in everyone the awareness of their own cognitive processes. The teacher must act in order to allow the development of self-regulation strategies.

6) EMOTIONS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES IN LEARNING: emotions are of great relevance for learning, participation and inclusion. First of all, high levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy must be developed in all pupils. Education in the recognition and management of one's emotions and one's affective sphere is fundamental.

7) EVALUATION, VERIFICATION AND FEEDBACK: for an inclusive teaching, evaluation must always be formative, that is, it leads to the improvement of learning and teaching processes. Then, it is necessary to personalize the forms of verification and make them motivating and educational (P. C. Giorgia s.d.).

Inclusion requires the coexistence of several factors aimed at favoring the achievement of this goal. The context, for example, not only understood as a physical environment, plays a fundamental role, in fact the creation of an adequate climate in the classroom is necessary for the pursuit of educational success for everyone. The classroom climate has an important impact on the quality of learning of all pupils[44]. In addition to the organization of the context, it is important to find teaching

[44] Cottini, Lucio. «La dimensione dell'inclusione scolastica richiede ancora una didattica speciale?»

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strategies that promote the active participation of each student, encouraging interactive relationships and mutual support. Among these strategies, a main role is played by collaborative teaching in which interactions between peers favor meaningful learning, even with students who have special educational needs. The main strategies that are based on these principles are peer tutoring[45] and cooperative learning[46]. Instead, cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which include all those teaching approaches aimed at teaching how one learns, are based on the enhancement of cognitive functions and on the student's awareness, for example: self-regulation, memorization strategies, reciprocal teaching , metacognitive teaching, the education of executive functions, the flipped classroom. The need to ensure a serene classroom context for the achievement of educational success underlines the importance of educating pupils to manage their emotions. In this regard, we mention Goleman's model of emotional intelligence from which an approach known in the international context as Social and Emotional Learning started. Related to this is also social and prosocial education which teaches pupils to help and understand the needs of others. An important role in promoting inclusive education is played by the new information and communication technologies (ICT), which can be advantageous in schools. Another methodological choice useful for undertaking an inclusive path could be co-teaching between a curriculum teacher and a support teacher to ensure a better education aimed at all students. The co-teaching practice was developed by Cook & Friend (1995) to offer support to students with disabilities in educational settings. Co-teaching is the practice in which two or more teachers, one curricular and one support co-planning,

[45] La traduzione letterale del termine indica il tutoraggio fra pari. Nel caso della scuola parliamo di peer tutoring ogni volta che studenti aiutano altri studenti. Prevede il coinvolgimento di allievi in funzione di tutor, per favorire l'apprendimento di altri compagni che fungono da tutees. Per un approfondimento del tema si veda: Cottini, Lucio. *Didattica speciale e inclusione scolastica.* Carocci, 2017, 2018.

[46] L'apprendimento cooperativo è una modalità di apprendimento che si basa sull'interazione all'interno di un gruppo di allievi che collaborano, al fine di raggiungere un obiettivo comune.

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co-instructing and co-assessing for a heterogeneous group of students within the same classroom, in the same school setting.

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teacher to ensure a better education aimed at all students. The co-teaching practice was developed by Cook & Friend (1995) to offer support to students with disabilities in educational settings. Co-teaching is the practice in which two or more teachers, one curricular and one support co-planning, co-instructing and co-assessing for a heterogeneous group of students within the same classroom, in the same school.[47]

2.3.2 An inclusive planning

The inclusive perspective can only be achieved if based on integrated planning processes. It may seem obvious but there are still many prejudices: on one hand, some support teachers claim to be the only ones in charge of teaching disabled children, on the other, curricular teachers do not have the qualifications and skills to work with a child, who shows didactic problems and delegates all the educational responsibility to the support teacher. One solution is to abandon the rigidity of the program and embrace the flexible philosophy of programming. Integrated programming benefits all students, not just those with challenges. The best choice requires adapting the objectives and therefore bringing individualized programming closer to that of the classroom. This does not exclude that activities designed for students with learning difficulties can be proposed to the whole class. In many situations it is not possible to find points of contact between curricular and individualized programming. In this case, pupils with disabilities can be offered activities that have some resemblance to that of their classmates. The work of approaching the objectives requires an action on the educational contents, which can be modified, reduced or translated to make them suitable for the needs of the student with a disability. The use of drawings and images is one of the most effective means of making activities easier and more understandable. Technological

[47] ELISABETTAGHEDIN•DEBORAAQUARIO•DIEGODIMAS. *Co-teaching: a practice to improve inclusive education* . 2016.

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innovations also play an important role in achieving this goal. Furthermore, the teacher may decide to modify the textbook, making it easier for his pupil or adapting it to his needs. Psychologist Dario Ianes describes three ways of simplifying textbooks, useful for students with cognitive and linguistic disabilities. These are: highlighting the text through frames that contain essential concepts and related images, useful for the acquisition of the main concepts; schematize and restructure the text through the use of simple language and the identification of keywords; reduce the text by preferring short sentences accompanied by images. The educational challenge, therefore, remains that of combining curricular teaching with the prospects of inclusion. UDL guidance [1] offers valuable support for achieving this goal, for promoting an open and flexible teaching organization, capable of considering the diversified characteristics of the students and of pursuing educational success for each and every one. The expression "educational success" means the outcome of a virtuous teaching-learning process. One can speak of educational success for a student if he/she has managed to fully exploit his/ her potential expressing the best of himself/herself. The concept of universal design for learning as a mean of focusing research, development, and educational practice on understanding diversity and applying technology to facilitate learning is spreading. [2] Universal Design for Learning (UDL) aims to create learning environments that are accessible to all students, regardless of their abilities. UDL emphasizes the importance of providing multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement in order to meet the needs of all learners. By using UDL principles, educators can create learning experiences that are more inclusive and equitable. This allows them to reach a larger audience and provide more meaningful learning experiences for all students. The UDL approach to instruction includes three principles: (a) multiple means of engagement, (b) multiple means of representation, and (c) multiple means of action and expression;

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UDL is designed to meet the unique needs of all learners through challenging instruction that is both flexible and varied .[3]

2.4. Teacher competences

The crucial element to renew and make education and training systems inclusive is the quality of teacher training, therefore it should be a priority for all national policies. To cope with the strong social changes that have affected the school both in terms of legislation, such as autonomy, and in terms of the role and value of the professional figure itself, it is legitimate to ask ourselves what are the priority skills that a teacher should possess. We start from the assumption that teaching represents a complex, dynamic, demanding and revolutionary process that cannot follow a single line of action but which is therefore subject to social, cultural and political influences that characterize a specific historical moment. The school model determines the skills that the teacher must possess in the knowledge society. In this regard, let's start from the scheme of Aldo Visalberghi in which, already in 1978, he outlined the fundamental sectors of teacher training: the psychological sector, which concerns the knowledge of the student in the cognitive and socio-emotional dimension; the methodological-didactic sector, which concerns the methods, means and tools of education; the sociological sector, relating to the relationship between society and school; the content sector which concerns the teaching disciplines and knowledge in general. That of the teacher is a job characterized by interconnected dimensions defined as knowledge (cultural and didactic skills), values (educational responsibilities) and by a reflexivity on one's own work (professional awareness). It is essential that all teachers are inclusive and not just specialists. The keyword is initial and in-service training for everyone on the topics of inclusive pedagogy and didactics.

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In 2018, the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (the Agency) began its Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion (TPL4I) project, exploring professional learning for inclusive education. The Profile of Inclusive Teachers is one of the main results of the project "Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion". In this documents is identified four core values relating to teaching and learning as the basis for the work of all teachers in inclusive education. These core values are associated with eight areas of competence, each made up of three elements: suggested attitudes, knowledge and skills. A certain attitude or belief demands certain knowledge or a level of understanding and skills to implement this knowledge in practice. The Profile was developed around this framework of core values and areas of competence: Valuing Learner Diversity – learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education [4]

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Conceptions of inclusive education;

- The teacher's view of learner difference.

Supporting All Learners – teachers have high expectations for all learners'

achievements.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Promoting the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all

learners;

- Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes.

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Working With Others – collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers.

The areas of competence within this core value relate to:

- Working with parents and families;

- Working with a range of other educational professionals (Education 2022).

Unfortunately, the idea that only knowledge of the discipline is enough for the teacher to teach remains in the common mentality. An adequate training curriculum of the teacher profile on the teaching procedures and methodologies that characterize the teaching of each subject would be needed. To encourage constructive, reflective and critical learning aimed at developing divergent thinking, it is necessary to ensure that the student reflects, discusses and experiments in the first person, playing an active role in the teaching-learning process. It is necessary to move to a teaching in which the teacher acts as a facilitator and support, presents problems, creates challenges, encouraging students to develop their own ideas. All this can be facilitated by methodological choices appropriate to the learning needs of each student. These skills are followed by those for inclusion and integration that every teacher of every order and level should possess. The core of the problem does not lie in the difficulty or disturbance of the student but is determined by the obstacles to learning and participation in situations that he faces in his learning path. To guarantee the same training opportunities, it is necessary to refine the didactic, relational, social and communicative skills by proposing, for example, didactic individualization courses, collaborations with institutions and bodies, use of linguistic support devices.

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2.5The inclusive evaluation

The Legislative Decree n. 66 of 13 April 2017, "Regulations for the promotion of school inclusion of students with disabilities", underlines the issue of evaluating the inclusive quality of schools: knowledge and skills, both on a theoretical and methodological level, therefore become indispensable, useful for detecting, monitoring and understanding the inclusiveness of educational processes and identifying the means to remove obstacles to the participation and learning of all learners. Already in the Ministerial Circular n. 8 of 6 March 2013 (Ministerial Directive of 27 December 2012 "Intervention tools for pupils with special educational needs and territorial organization for school inclusion". Operational guidelines) there is a reference to strategic actions useful for achieving full inclusion. Among these are the detection, monitoring and evaluation of the degree of inclusiveness of the school. In the last twenty years, various tools aimed at analyzing and evaluating the inclusion of school contexts have spread in Italy and the Index for inclusion has been very successful, especially after the translation into Italian of the third edition presented in October 2014. The Index is a practical document is a text by Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow, first published in the UK in 2000, which shows what inclusion can mean for all aspects of settings. It provides a supportive process of self-review and development, which builds on the knowledge and views of practitioners, children and young people and parents/carers, other members of the surrounding communities as well as those who manage or advise those working in the setting. The Index fosters the development of play, learning, and participation by encouraging the best use of available

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resources, minimising barriers in the setting itself and building a culture of collaboration. [48] (GHEDIN s.d.)

The Index has four main elements:

1. Key concepts → to support thinking and discussion about inclusive development.
2. Planning framework: dimensions and sections → to structure the approach to review and development.
3. Review materials: indicators and questions →to enable a detailed review of all aspects of a setting and help to identify and implement priorities for change
4. An inclusive process → to ensure that the processes of review, planning and implementing change are themselves inclusive. (GHEDIN s.d.)

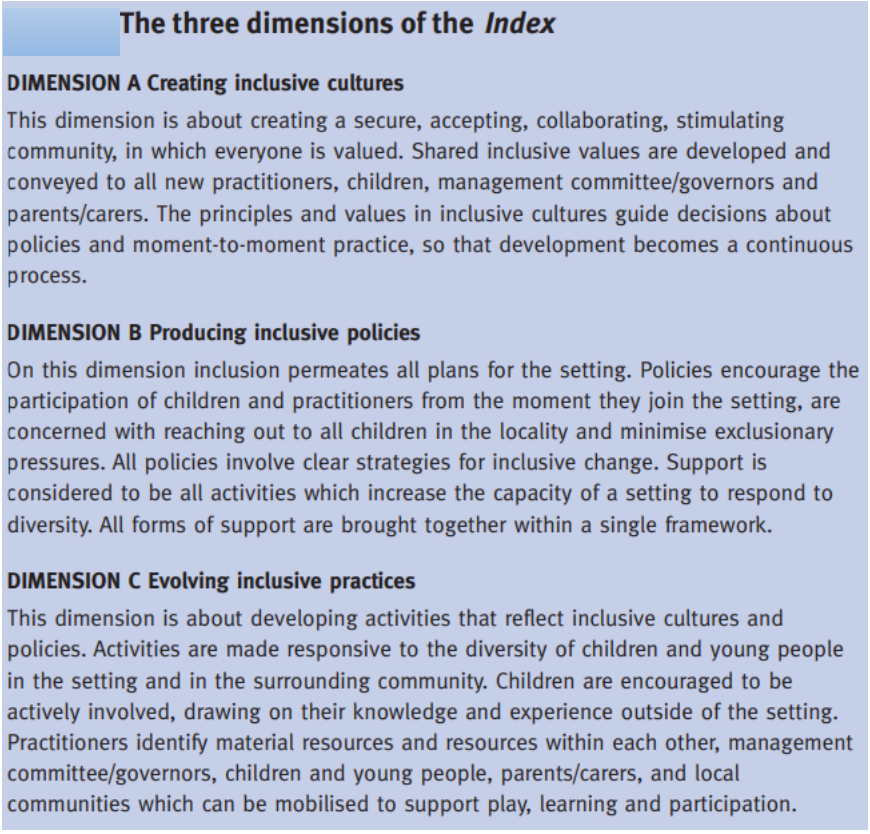
In using the Index materials, the possibilities for improving the setting are explored along three interconnected dimensions: creating inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies and evolving inclusive practices. Experience with the Index indicates that these dimensions are seen, very widely, as important ways to structure development. [49] They are described in this figure (**Picture 1.1**)

[48] GHEDIN, MARINA SANTI • ELISABETTA. «Evaluating the commitment toward inclusion: a multidimensional Repertoire.»

[49] T Booth, M Ainscow. *Index for inclusion developing play, learning and participation in early years and childcare.* 2011

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1.1: The three dimensions of index for inclusion



The three dimensions of the *Index*

DIMENSION A Creating inclusive cultures

This dimension is about creating a secure, accepting, collaborating, stimulating community, in which everyone is valued. Shared inclusive values are developed and conveyed to all new practitioners, children, management committee/governors and parents/carers. The principles and values in inclusive cultures guide decisions about policies and moment-to-moment practice, so that development becomes a continuous process.

DIMENSION B Producing inclusive policies

On this dimension inclusion permeates all plans for the setting. Policies encourage the participation of children and practitioners from the moment they join the setting, are concerned with reaching out to all children in the locality and minimise exclusionary pressures. All policies involve clear strategies for inclusive change. Support is considered to be all activities which increase the capacity of a setting to respond to diversity. All forms of support are brought together within a single framework.

DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive practices

This dimension is about developing activities that reflect inclusive cultures and policies. Activities are made responsive to the diversity of children and young people in the setting and in the surrounding community. Children are encouraged to be actively involved, drawing on their knowledge and experience outside of the setting. Practitioners identify material resources and resources within each other, management committee/governors, children and young people, parents/carers, and local communities which can be mobilised to support play, learning and participation.

According to Booth & Ainscow, inclusive school development can have different starting points; the initial push can be given by an individual or a group, people inside or outside the school, a manager, a student, a parent. «The important thing is to start the journey, as this is already an effective step (T Booth 2011).

CHAPTER 3

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3. Traditional and innovative methods of investigating the needs of young people, the use of arts and sport to develop and implement soft skills

3.1 The arts and soft skills

The development of soft skills amongst young people is paramount to their success in life. Traditional methods of investigating the needs of the youngest have been used for many years, however, more innovative approaches are now being developed to ensure that the needs of all youngsters are met. One such approach is the employment of arts and sport to develop and implement soft skills. Through this approach, young people can gain confidence, develop better communication skills, and become more socially aware. This method has been proven to be effective in helping them to reach their full potential and become successful citizens in society.

3.2 Non-formal learning

Teachings that move away from the traditional academic method favor the learner's attention, stimulate and give space to the need for active participation and expression of one's opinions. Bringing the educational setting and methods closer to the experiential ones of daily life contributes to the personal development of students, their social inclusion and introduces the habit of active citizenship. The teacher, through the use of inclusive and innovative teaching strategies, has the opportunity to innovate his/her own role and transform himself/herself from a "feared holder of power" into a facilitator of a discovery process that sees the students as protagonists.

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The school cannot ignore the importance of knowledge acquired in extracurricular environments (both real and virtual) and must consider the importance of direct comparison between peers. Traditional academic lessons today have the obligation to interact with other "new" forms of education, for a global formation of the person. Informal teaching, in continuous evolution, offers itself as a valid access key to the complexity of today's world. Today's students need to learn in different ways than those of years ago and a fusion of the different types of learning - teaching is the only answer to this need. As indicated by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission, non-formal learning usually takes place outside the formal education curriculum and is aimed at fostering the personal and social development of the participants. Informal learning takes place during daily activities and consists of learning by doing. It allows children to spontaneously increase their maturity and improve their knowledge. Informal teaching adopts participatory and learner-centered methods.

The Law n. 92/2012 on the reform of the labor market has provided for the first time a formal definition of the concept of lifelong learning: "lifelong learning means any activity undertaken by people in a formal, non-formal and informal way, in the various stages of life, in order to enhance knowledge, skills and competences, from a personal, civic, social and employment perspective".

According to the definitions at European level (Eurydice)[50], " formal learning means that which takes place in the education and training system and in universities and institutions of higher artistic, musical and dance training, and which ends with the achievement of a qualification of study or a professional qualification or diploma, also obtained in apprenticeship, or a recognized certification." ("Italia:Validazione dell'apprendimento non formale e informale", n.d.). Increasing

[50] n.d. Commissione europea, sito web ufficiale. Accessed February 21, 2023. Vedi: https://commission.europa.eu/index_it.

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importance is given to non-formal learning in European and national policies. Several current trends tell us that the evolution of the world has become more difficult to predict and that we need to be ready to respond flexibly to critical issues and innovations. These elements make the world situation uncertain, volatile and this requires new skills that have the ability to find new solutions, to adopt new perspectives and visions[51]. Therefore, in order to be able to cope with this situation, it is essential to focus on continuous learning. "This does not mean that formal learning is not needed, but that it is necessary to combine it with non-formal learning." (Bonaita 2021). The ways in which we learn new things are also increasingly connected to contexts that do not provide awards or certifications. Non-formal and informal learning is related to work, family and free time. Although still considered subordinate to formal education and training, this area has begun to acquire importance and visibility with the birth of the concept of lifelong learning and with the launch of European policy actions.

"There are many reasons why it is worth emphasizing the importance of these educational experiences. Between these: they can cover various aspects that are lacking in regulated institutions, alongside formal learning; they are voluntary learning and their goal is often the learning itself rather than obtaining a qualification; they are flexible and allow for more personalized and focused learning." (Bonaita 2021)

3.3 Sport and dance as an educational resource

To deal with the social emergency of a sedentary lifestyle and early abandonment of sports practice, a new model of dialogue and continuity between the family, school and the world of sport must be

[51] Bonaita, Laura. 2021. "L'apprendimento non formale." Diario della Formazione. https://www.diariodellaformazione.it/editoriali/apprendimento-non-formale-formazione/.

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outlined. There are three essential ingredients for the change: training of teachers, support for school teachers from motor science graduates and a new way of involving and motivating children in sporty activities[52].

An innovative educational path must therefore enhance and strengthen physical education, starting from kindergarten and intervening in all domains of the person, to contribute to the development of man and citizen. Movement game is a game that involves body movements. It promotes the acquisition and consolidation of basic motor skills.

These of games are particularly suitable for developing both physical efficiency and motor coordination since, through the playful aspect, they generate an alternation between balance and imbalance, i.e. they allow the child to consolidate the movement models functional to his activities and to acquire new skills. Cognitive and motor development, closely connected to each other, is particularly activated through movement games that tradition has handed down to us over time. They represent a way of organizing social relationships, living and understanding life. Playing different roles and exchanging them encourages the development of the essential social skills to obtain a good result. We are in the area of soft skills, as with movement games we acquire interpersonal life skills such as the ability to achieve one's goals, and interpersonal life skills, such as the ability to be empathetic and communicate effectively.

The game has a profound educational function, because it touches and invests the depths of human experience, guarantees lasting learning and ensures the opportunity to "learn while having fun". Motor activity must be individualized and adapted to the differences of individual students. Above

[52] Marchetti, Rosalba, Caterina Pesce, Anna Motta, and Mario Bellucci, eds. 2015. *Joy of moving. Movimenti & immaginazione. Giocare con la variabilità per promuovere lo sviluppo motorio, cognitivo e del cittadino. Con aggiornamento online*. N.p.: Calzetti Mariucci.

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all, it has an educational value and not just a recovery one, it must be considered as a tool to educate autonomy, to enhance skills and increase self-esteem, it also represents a means of inclusion, so it must provide equal opportunities. That's why it's important to create an inclusive climate and involve all members of the group; customize interventions, adapt them to the child's disability by enhancing and making the most of the skills they possess, so that they can compensate for the deficient ones without compromising anything; avoid replacing the disabled in what they should try to do independently and make the most of their potential; work by levels, i.e. alternating phases of work with the whole group with moments dedicated to the subgroups, giving each one different but complementary tasks, for example while the able-bodied children are engaged in team play, give the group of disabled children a task that prepare, with the help of fellow tutors, for a subsequent inclusion in the collective game; make maximum use of peer education, the disabled child must be helped to deal with motor tasks by an able-bodied child or by another child with a lower degree of disability; monitor the effects of the educational intervention; develop educational methods that stimulate life skills, such as the personal and creative search for solutions to motor problems based on positive thinking[53].

“Practicing dance at school could become a key element to help preserve both the physical and the mental health of the students, as it simultaneously intervenes on a physical, emotional, social and cognitive level. The knowledge and the practice of this art represent a chance to grow for children, since it would allow them to become familiar with their own bodies, to use motion as means of communication, to rediscover their creative potential and to be able to recognize both their strengths and weakness.Thereby, learning to dance should not be merely compared to the correct execution of

[53] Mental attitude that generates positive expectations and facilitates the pursuit of goals

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a step sequence or the comprehension of particular dancing techniques, but it should be recognized as precious learning instrument for the personal development of children" (Sanchi 2022).

The body is the primary tool for getting in touch with the world, it collects personal experiences, thoughts, emotions and the story of each one. From birth "the child discovers the world through the senses and it is the movement [...] that allows him to develop at every stage, enriching the cognitive, affective and social areas". (Amor del Rosario Lalama Franco and Miriam Maritza Calle Cobos 2019). The purpose of the dance education is to gradually accompany the child to get to know himself/herself, through the discovery of his/her own body structure (have perception, knowledge and then consciousness) and pay attention to concepts such as space, weight, the contact, the visual field and the energy, to then execute more complex movements. Dancing creatively adopts "the educational principles of psychomotor education and basic physical education, placing particular emphasis on its own aspects and specific to the dance" (Moreno, María Jesús Cuéllar. 2017,). It has been proven that a program of creative dance inserted in a school context involves the development of basic motor skills and effective movement strategies to organize the body to create a well-balanced whole. Dance positively influences the construction of a harmonious personality that knows how to grasp the messages of others and freely express their own. Incorporating dance into the elementary school curriculum would be central to the learning and education of all children.[54]

3.4 The inclusive value of music and theater

[54] Amor del Rosario Lalama Franco, and Miriam Maritza Calle Cobos. 2019. "Psicomotricidad: construyendo aprendizajes a través del movimiento." *SATHIRI* 14(2) (12): 210-217.

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The use of different codes and languages makes it possible to plan personalized/individualized interventions that respond to specific training needs. Above all through research, experimentation and the use of non-verbal languages, students discover their own potential and develop communication skills and emotional intelligence. Theatre education becomes an approach that draws out what already exists, and makes people express his or her culture, historical and personal memory, their wealth of experiences, their own emotional and physical experience. For this, there is a strong relationship between theater and disability in the school, in fact the theater allows the disabled to actively access the expressive universe. Theatrical work is complex, therefore it requires workshops which constitute precious spaces of involvement for each individual student. In fact, the show is not made up only of actors, but includes sets (images, papier-mâché elements, panels, etc.), choreography, costumes, sound effects, etc., all important elements for the inclusion of all students. The theater allows children to express themselves in different ways and to overcome their difficulties. In this way the child with disabilities can overcome learning obstacles. The student who communicates through drawing, painting, sculpture, gestures, manages to overcome a situation of isolation and establish a relationship with others and things.

The creation of the scenography is one of the most constructive, creative and gratifying moments for the disabled child. In this way the child makes more coordinated movements important for the development of fine motor and reinforcing writing skills. Even the music that accompanies every theatrical event is important in education because it stimulates coordination, educates self-discipline, educates precision of gesture and balance. Rhythmic activities allow you to achieve important goals related to the development of motor, cognitive and relational affective skills. It's not just music as it is related to movement, to dance: music is pre-intellectual, physical, primordial, innate. Another important aspect of the theatrical course concerns the memorization of rhythmic

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sequences, songs, steps, movements, parts to be played, all activities that manage to constantly engage even the child with severe cognitive or behavioral disorders. It teaches us that when there is a child with a severe form of disability, we must not give up, the school has the task of promoting inclusion, proposing learning in all possible ways. The teacher, mediator, must therefore look for all the mediation tools and strategies capable of promoting learning.

Elisabetta Totaro (2013) proposes a laboratory course aimed at 6-8 year old children in which the use of multiple expressive languages is encouraged. The file rouge of the activity is a fairy tale of your choice, starting from which various topics will be addressed in the various school disciplines. The work is divided into several phases[55]:

1. Stimulus (fairy tale) and work on the text: listening and reading of the fairy tale, essential to dramatize the story afterwards. The art of storytelling is an extraordinary moment in the educational relationship, it captures attention, develops emotions and makes them happy.
2. Group discussion to define the scenography and music. The group discussion methodology is important for the development of speaking and listening. To bring out new ideas and opinions it is useful to propose brainstorming, in which the pupils are free to express their thoughts, without judgments from their classmates and the teacher.
3. Identification of tutor pupils, for support and help to classmates with Special Educational Needs.
4. Choice/assignment of roles and parts to play.

[55] Todaro, Elisabetta. 2013. "Il teatro a scuola anche per l'inclusione." *Difficoltà di apprendimento e didattica inclusiva* 1, n.1 (ottobre): 113-128

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5. preparatory activities for the theatrical performance: observation of one's own and others' behaviors to analyze gestures and attitudes; mime game, initially led by the teacher; tabs and rhythm work.
6. Specific activities (translation from verbal to non-verbal language): graph-pictorial production, mime and sonorization of the fairy tale.
7. Choice of costumes.
8. Organization of stage space.
9. Presentation of the theatrical performance to the public.

Inclusive music education can be considered as the set of approaches to training that uses the sound-music channel to promote school inclusion and the social of each pupil. The musical path must aim at the balanced development of all pupils, both those with special educational needs and those with adequate or excellent performance. In relation to the musical parameters and the organization of the sound events, the pupils can manifest a series of single or associated difficulties, which require attention from the Scholastic Institution and from all those who are involved in the Life Project of each. In addition to the primary aspects connected to a condition of disability or an evolutionary disorder, the design must also be able to take into account the associated difficulties. Students have different needs related to the educational needs of students, therefore an effective planning is necessary that integrates different approaches and proposes the use of compensatory tools and dispensatory measures of music, including ("Strumenti operativi per una didattica musicale inclusiva" 2018)[56]:

[56] "Strumenti operativi per una didattica musicale inclusiva def." 2018. Ufficio Scolastico Territoriale di Milano.

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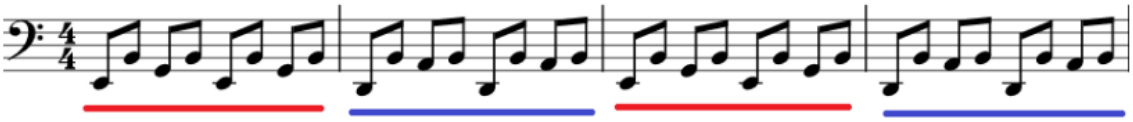
- printed scores (in order to avoid transcription);

- electronic music stands for digital scores;

- simplification of the score and concealment of non-essential elements (e.g. dynamic signs)

- use of colors to facilitate the identification of melodic, harmonic,

rhythmic, of repeated parts/fragments of the same repertoires and accompaniments (**Tav.2**);



Tav. 2 : "Strumenti operativi per una didattica musicale inclusiva"

-colored notes or indication of sounds with colored dashes under the stave, the same for homophone sounds (**Tav. 3**);



Tav. 3

- use of courtesy accidentals;

- separate rhythmic reading from note name reading;

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- use of warning signs to recall complex vocal/instrumental passages or remember accidentals;

- highlighting of ascending/descending trends;

- use of schemes for the ascending/descending succession of sounds, for keys, chords and modulations;

- creation of concept/mind maps, multimedia presentations and watching videos for the study of theoretical topics, sometimes resorting to the use of speech synthesis/reading software by third parties to facilitate understanding;

- use of recordings of the pieces to be performed and/or analyzed;

- digital books;

- musical braille;

- various apps for pc/tablet;

- interactive keyboards;

- programs for creating mind and/or concept maps;

- video notation and music editing software.

Music planning can help organize the right conditions for the enhancement, expression and encounter between the different musical identities of the students present in the school. The teacher must consider both the musical identity (taste, habits) in all its components and the belonging to a collective culture, but also and above all to how it is individually experienced and interpreted.

3.5 Inclusive teaching: comics and art

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Starting from the assumption that an inclusive school is a school capable of considering the differences of the individuals who are part of it: gender, ability, type of intelligence, ethnicity, culture, language, development, physical condition . A school that knows how to transform them into potential, richness, a variety of possibilities, to offer everyone the same opportunity to participate with their own, personal, contribution. Faced with the many difficulties that each student encounters in his training, it is necessary to take alternative paths. In this regard, we can start by emphasizing how much art can truly be an inclusive experience, we can all enjoy its beauty and its ability to arouse emotions (De Robertis 2017). In art, diversity is transformed into an opportunity for sharing and mutual knowledge. This is demonstrated by the Perception Psychology Laboratory of the Sinapsi Foundation[57]. This is an initiative proposed for blind children in order to find a way for blind children to produce works of art by soliciting the use of the substitute senses. The ultimate goal was to produce an art that aroused emotions without necessarily having to pass through the eyes, becoming a shared experience for normal and visually impaired people, capable of fostering a dialogue between two worlds that often struggle to understand each other[58]. It was a journey between psychology and art during which the teachers involved prepared wooden frames to outline the contours within which the children could model the clay, the frame in which to collect the emotions that emerged was also proposed. Activities were planned in which the children used clay and created real works of art. This is just one of the initiatives that can be promoted to encourage the inclusion of everyone in the classroom context, making use of art. The education at arts is present in the school curriculum from kindergarten to secondary school first degree, but sometimes

[57] Fondazione Sinapsi was born in 2006 from the thirty-year experience of the two foundations "Camminiamo Insieme" and "Percorso Verde", established respectively in 1982 and 1997 as a tangible sign of commitment for the populations of Campania and Basilicata, hit by the 1980 earthquake.
[58] De Robertis, Francesca. 2017. “Arte attraverso i sensi per educare alle emozioni e all’inclusione.”

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not developed sufficiently because it does not come recognized the role of privileged mediator to promote inclusive approaches, address and mediate multicultural perspectives, offer effective tools for integration in formal, informal and non-formal contexts. Art and creativity are effective tools for the development of communication and physical-cognitive-emotional skills of each individual, as Vygotsky argued. Music, visual arts, theater, dance are expressive languages that involve all the senses and strengthen the cognitive, social and emotional skills of each individual, especially in children[59]. To achieve this goal, the school must give importance to artistic subjects. In Maria Montessori's studies, art and creativity play a key role in childhood evolution despite both seem be of little interest to the institutions. John Dewey states that art is the most useful medium for developing observation skills, mnemonics and imagination finally facilitates problem solving. Children usually use the arts to express their vision of the world and to communicate their emotions and feelings. If artistic expression is eliminated from children's life it is denied the possibility of discovering and expressing a talent, but also the ability to use new languages that they simplify multicultural dialogue, favoring inclusive approaches. We mention the Italian Mus-e project, which belongs to the international Musique Europe project created in 1993 by the violinist Yehudi Menuhin, who was inspired by the educational concepts of the pedagogist Hungarian Zoltan Kodály. This project aims to promote integration and valorisation of diversity among children. The project in Italy is dedicated to children, and contrasts in schools, through artistic laboratory, marginalization and social biases. Mus-e is especially aimed at the schools of the cities and neighborhoods where there exists a high socio-economic-cultural disadvantage and the presence of many immigrant children. This project proposes to perform several functions. First of all, the

[59] Coppi, Antonella. «Arte e Oltre: percorsi educativi multidisciplinari e interculturali per l'inclusione a scuola.» 2018.

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purpose of arts education is to help individuals to build and live a meaningful life, for themselves and for others. During artistic expression activities, artists and children share a creative and democratic experience. Singing, dancing, miming, theater helps the child to establish a relationship with reality, often known but sometimes incomprehensible. The activities that are proposed underline the importance of sound. Through sounds the child establishes his/her first contact with the world. When the children dance and sing together, they improve understanding and perception. The project has spread in several countries: initially in France, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Hungary, Estonia and, later, in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Luxembourg, Ireland, Holland, Finland, Poland, Bosnia, Lithuania, Israel and Brazil.

According to some teachers and educators, comics help students improve reading and writing skills, understand complex concepts more easily and get closer to (or even passionate about) reading. They can above all be a tool for inclusion in the school. First, not all comics are shaped like the traditional drawn strips we often find in newspapers and magazines. There are also more complex comics, such as the so-called graphic novels, a narrative genre in which the story does not proceed serially, but is self-contained, as in the structure of novels. In fact, “comic novels' ' contain all the elements of the books that are traditionally assigned for reading at school: a beginning, the development of the story, an epilogue, the development of the characters, the conflict, and many other typical features. For this reason, many teachers consider them a valid tool to use in teaching, as an alternative to the usual readings.

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In education they have advantages in the learning process of students. For example, they can help students who struggle with very long text paragraphs, and can help write within a limited space[60].

“Comics can support not only the exercise of language skills, but also reflection and the development of critical thinking. In the history of their genre, in fact, there are many comics that have dealt with social issues such as inclusion, civil rights, gender diversity”. (“Fumetti nella didattica: quali benefici per l’apprendimento?” 2016).

Teachers can show students that comic characters are not just superheroes but relatable characters. In this way they can reflect on some important themes treated within the comics (the role of women, the struggle for social equality, politics. A methodology that does not replace traditional textbooks, but which can help teachers to involve students more with their students, using a language that is more accessible and closer to them. Finally, there is a collection of educational digital resources – tested by teachers – to create comic strips with students. An opportunity to go beyond reading, experimenting with new expressive methods and giving vent to creativity.

As already mentioned previously, in the educational field, to promote inclusion it is useful to propose the reading of some books or even comics that can make students aware of some inclusive issues. In this regard we could mention the comic book "The Adventures of SMAgliante Ada", a text dedicated to all elementary schools who want to join the educational project "La Smagliante Ada", created by the Sma Families Association[61], by the NeMO Clinical Centers[62] specialized in treatment of neuromuscular diseases, with Roche Italia. This project underlines the value of

[60] “Fumetti nella didattica: quali benefici per l’apprendimento?” 2016. bSmart Blog.
[61] https://www.famigliesma.org/
[62] https://www.centrocliniconemo.it/

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disability as a resource, of inclusion as an opportunity, of the value of scientific knowledge to understand others and above all to put oneself in their shoes. In the comic, motor disability is treated starting from the story of Ada, a dog suffering from Spinal Muscular Atrophy (Sma), a rare genetic disease, who lives her adventures on a fiery red electric wheelchair[63]. "The Adventures of dazzling Ada" (note that the italian version of the title is a word-play) with the language of comics educates in a simple and creative way, telling in five stories the daily life of play, school, sport, friends and family: the theme of social and school inclusion of children with motor disabilities is the background to the narration of the adventures of Ada and her travel companions. The cartoon ends with the educational tables, to accompany children in their discovery of the world of genetics and the neuromuscular system through interactive games and exercises: drawings, images and dialogues with the characters introduce the little ones to a neuromuscular and genetic pathology such as Sma.

“The project was carried out by a multidisciplinary team made up of educators, psychologists and counselors from the Sma Families Association, with the contents and scientific supervision of the specialists of the NeMO Clinical Centers network. An exceptional working group made up of professional cartoonists - screenwriters and illustrators specialized in children's stories - Danilo Deninotti, Giuliano Cangiano, Roberto Gagnor, Giorgio Salati, Gianfranco Florio, Mattia Surroz, Luca Usai and Emanuele Virzì, who after having known close to the realities of the SMA Families Association and the NeMO Clinical Centers played with the imagination to give life to the adventures of Ada and her companions, thus telling the little ones that each of us is different from

[63] Alecci, Emanuele. 2020. “"Le avventure della SMAgliante Ada", il fumetto che promuove l'inclusione.” Vita.it. https://www.vita.it/it/article/2020/09/10/le-avventure-della-smagliante-ada-il-fumetto-che-promuove-linclusione/156592/.

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the others and that it is precisely in this diversity that the secret is kept to be able to realize oneself." (Alecci 2020)

3.6 Teaching strategies

One of the most important challenges for today's teachers is that of inclusive teaching, which should adapt to all pupils in a personalized way. Teachers should have clear objectives and recipients of inclusive teaching to create a school climate that allows all students to feel accepted, understood and valued.

The main objectives of inclusive education are:

- enhance different learning styles, exploiting students' strengths
- encourage the participation of the whole class, compared to traditional frontal lessons
- develop students' self-esteem and confidence in their abilities
- facilitate learning, making it interactive and engaging
- keep each student motivated
- create opportunities for dialogue and collaboration[64]

Therefore, the beneficiaries of inclusive education are all students, with particular attention to those with special educational needs. However, inclusive learning strategies for BES, such as cooperative learning or the use of educational technologies, can also benefit other learners. In this section we will deal with the strategies that the Italian school is already implementing in the classrooms, through the possibility of greater comparison also guaranteed by technological innovations in

[64] Quali sono le strategie didattiche, Nadia Plamadeala, 2021 https://wauniversity.it/strategie-didattiche-inclusive/

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support of teaching. Let's deepen the knowledge of some techniques and strategies useful for guaranteeing conscious and responsible learning as well as harmonious development of the pupils:

Cooperative learning is an educational approach that involves students working together in small groups to achieve a common goal. It is based on the idea that by working together, students can learn more effectively than they would if they were working alone. The benefits of cooperative learning include improved academic performance, increased motivation, and enhanced social skills. Additionally, it encourages problem-solving and critical thinking skills which can be beneficial in the workplace. Cooperative learning also helps to foster a sense of community within the classroom as students are encouraged to work together towards a shared goal. This can help build strong relationships between classmates and create a positive environment for learning.

Tutoring is an important part of inclusive education. It allows students to receive the individualized attention they need to understand concepts and succeed in their academic pursuits. Tutoring also provides a safe and supportive learning environment that encourages students to take risks and explore new ideas.

Tutoring can be beneficial for all types of learners, from those who need extra help to those who are already excelling in their studies. Tutors can provide valuable guidance on topics such as study skills, test preparation, goal setting, and more. By providing personalized support, tutors can help students build confidence and develop the skills necessary for success in the classroom and beyond.

Problem solving is an essential skill in today's world. It is a process of identifying and resolving issues or problems. It involves the use of analytical skills, creative thinking, and critical thinking to find solutions to complex problems. Problem solving requires an individual to be able to think outside the box and come up with innovative solutions. Problem solving can be used in a variety of

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situations, ranging from personal matters to professional ones. By developing problem-solving skills, individuals can become more effective in their work and personal lives.

Inclusive education is an important part of ensuring that all students receive the best possible education. This case study will explore the methodology used to promote inclusive education in a school setting. It will look at how different strategies can be implemented to create an environment where all students are respected and valued for their unique perspectives, backgrounds, and abilities. It will also examine how these strategies might be adapted or modified to fit different contexts and settings. Finally, it will discuss the challenges associated with implementing inclusive education practices and how they can be addressed.

Inclusive education is an important aspect of laboratory teaching. It is essential that all students, regardless of their background, have access to the same educational resources and opportunities. This is why it is important for laboratory teaching to be inclusive and provide a learning environment that caters to the needs of all students.

In order to ensure that laboratory teaching remains inclusive, educators must take into consideration the various backgrounds and experiences of their students. They must also strive to create an atmosphere where everyone feels welcome and respected. Additionally, educators should strive to tailor their lesson plans in such a way that all students can benefit from them regardless of their level of understanding or skill set. They can ensure that laboratory teaching remains inclusive while also providing students with the necessary skills they need for success in the future.

Flipped classrooms are gaining in popularity as an inclusive education model. This model provides a more equitable learning experience by allowing students to learn at their own pace, while providing teachers with the opportunity to give individualized attention and instruction. Flipped

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classrooms also provide more opportunities for collaboration and engagement among students, creating an environment that encourages the exchange of ideas and perspectives. By flipping the traditional classroom structure, teachers can create an environment where all students have access to resources, regardless of their background or ability level.

Debates have long been an integral part of education, both at the high school and university level. Through debates, students learn to think critically and hone their argumentative skills. It also helps them to understand different perspectives on a particular issue.

The methodology of debates is often overlooked when it comes to teaching debating skills. However, it is essential for a successful debate as it provides structure and guidance on how to present arguments in the best possible way. This article will explore the various methods of debating that are used in educational institutions today and how they can be used to help students become better debaters.

Role playing is an effective methodology for teaching and learning. It has been used in education for centuries, and it remains one of the most powerful tools to help students learn and develop their skills. Role playing can be used to teach a variety of topics, from history to mathematics. It allows students to explore different perspectives, practice problem-solving techniques, and gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Through role playing, students can also develop communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and social-emotional competencies that are essential for success in today's world.

Authentic task: Inclusive teaching strategy aimed at solving a similar problem-situation in real life, which offers the opportunity to examine problems from different theoretical and practical

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perspectives, preparing pupils for social interactions outside the school, and which in addition offers the opportunity to collaborate by reflecting on one's own behavior.

Metacognitive teaching: metacognitive teaching is an approach to teaching that emphasizes the development of students' metacognitive skills, such as monitoring their own understanding and learning processes. It encourages students to become more aware of their own thinking and learning strategies, which can lead to improved performance in the classroom and beyond. Metacognitive teaching strategies can help teachers create an environment that encourages self-reflection, promotes deeper understanding of concepts and ideas, and helps students take ownership of their learning. By helping students develop metacognitive skills, teachers can ensure that they are better equipped to learn independently and succeed in their studies.

Use of technology: technology has become an integral part of the school experience for students. It helps them to stay connected, collaborate better, and access learning materials more easily. Schools are increasingly relying on devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartphones to provide students with the tools they need to succeed in their studies. With these devices, students can access online resources, communicate with their peers and teachers, and even complete assignments remotely. As a result, technology is playing an increasingly important role in the way schools operate and how students learn.

The use of different educational strategies facilitates the teaching-learning process and guarantees respect for the needs of each student.

CHAPTER 4

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4. Soft Skills, 9 Arts and Sport

4.1 Soft Skills in education

"The world of work has undergone a significant evolution[65]" (Marques 2014). Today's employees, especially in the United States and Western Europe, are "knowledge workers"[66] (Marques 2014). This means that they are expected to adopt more intellectual and innovative approaches than the manufacturing generation. Given the current situation and the staggering level of unemployment, we must rethink what schools can do to better prepare students for their future jobs. One of the main solutions Italian scholar system should adopt is developing what have been variously termed soft skills, 21st century skills or non-cognitive skills. These abilities are useful in a wide range of jobs. Success in life depends on personality traits that are not well captured by measures of cognition. Conscientiousness, perseverance, sociability, and curiosity matter. Soft skills play an important part for the success of an organization. Organizations, particularly those dealing with customers face-to-face, are generally more prosperous if they train their employees to use these abilities. They are "a combination of interpersonal and social skills"[67] (Dixon, et al. 2010). There is a great amount of soft skills such as teamwork, communication, leadership, initiative, self-awareness, self-regulation, stress and time management and problem solving. Most of them are interpersonal skills and these imply the ability to lead, motivate and delegate in a working context.

[65] Marques, Joan. Leadership and Mindful Behavior: Action, Wakefulness, and Business. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
[66] Marques, Joan. Leadership and Mindful Behavior: Action, Wakefulness, and Business. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
[67] Dixon, Jami, Cody Belnap, Chad Albrecht, e Konrad Lee. «The Importance of Soft Skills.» Corporate Finance Review, 2010: 35-38.

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Soft skills cannot be taught such as hard skills. Hard skills are quantifiable skills gained through training, school. Hard skills require the acquisition of knowledge, and they are primarily cognitive in nature. Examples are language, technological or any other kind of knowledge testified by degrees, certificates or apprenticeships. Even if soft skills cannot be learned since naturally developed, school can provide an educational environment in which students have the possibility to develop the above-mentioned abilities. Lewin[68] believes that behaviour is the result of interaction between a person (P) and his/her environment (E):

$$\text{Behaviour} = f(P, E)$$

"Soft skills are basically developed behaviours" (Levasseur 2013); hence, we can suggest that:

$$\text{Soft skills} = f(P, E)$$

This model implies that having a strong desire to acquire a skill is necessary but not sufficient. It is essential the presence of favourable environmental factors. Bronfenbrenner[69] differentiates the environment in terms of its superstructures. He imagines it like a Russian doll set. Basically, "the inner-most level (i.e., the *microsystem*) contains the individual and the people in the immediate surrounding (e.g., home and parents for a child); the next level (i.e., the *mesosystem*) consists of those systems (and the people in them) with whom the individual has frequent and important interactions (e.g., the school and the teachers for a child); and a third level (i.e., the *exosystem*) includes people and events that influence the individual, but are not in turn influenced by the

[68] Lewin, K. *Field Theory in Social Science*. New York: Harper and Row, 1951.
[69] Bronfenbrenner, U. *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979.

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individual (e.g., the workplace of the parents, in the case of a child); and the final level (i.e., the *macrosystem*) is the culture of broader society that surrounds the individual, but does not directly influence the individual on a regular basis" (Levasseur 2013). "Schools, as places of learning, introduce children to humanity's intellectual traditions that take them beyond their personal experiences". School represents one of the main learning environments in which kids are embedded: we can either facilitate or hinder their skill development. The teachers-students relationship supports the development of social and emotional skills. Some evidence suggest that the quality of this relationship is instrumental to shaping children's schooling experience. Teachers are educators and they have the duty to educate and prepare kids for their future occupation. Many recognise the importance of soft skills education beyond academic knowledge. Hence, it is necessary to reconsider the educational priorities in our national scholar system enhancing the promotion of all those skills, abilities, mastery and talents that students have.

One way of developing soft skills in the educational context is through artistic expression. We identified nine main arts: poetry, comic, music, theatre, paining, dance, cinema[70], architecture and sculpture. Art teaching is pivotal to let children express themselves and develop imagination, empathy and curiosity. Literature (poetry and comic[71]), for instance, enables the students to improve their critical thinking and self-awareness. Art in general helps them learning how to communicate a message or an emotion to an audience: this is essential in interpersonal relationships. This ability can be acquired through cinema, painting, sculpture or theatre. Theatre performances, in addition, enable to gain self-esteem and confidence. Speaking in front of a public can teach how to overcome

[70] Meaning film-making
[71] We include comic as it is a mixture between drawing and literature

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shyness and maintain self-control. Music teaching increases self-discipline and self-regulation such as architecture, whose other great values are patience and preciseness.

Arts may also lead to increased academic performance. There are articles[72], which manage to reconsider the association between childhood arts participation and cognitive and developmental outcomes. The results cannot provide scientific support for the causal associations between arts participation and cognitive outcomes. Even though, they show that arts education increases positively arts engagement during young adulthood. This may be a relevant factor in one's intellectual and cultural development.

Other articles[73] achieve to show the relationship between arts and soft skills acquisition such as dance training and conceptual problem solving. "Since some of the skills needed in conceptual problem solving are the same ones developed and trained through dancing, when we train dance, we also train some of the relevant skills for conceptual problem solving and critical thinking[74]" (Kronsted e Gallagher 2021). The researchers found out that "dance can improve critical thinking skills across four measures: empathy, affordance exploration, attention change, and habit breaking. Empathy is an important component in critical thinking, and dancing helps improve the dancer's perspective-changing capabilities. Improvisational dance teaches the dancer to shift her attention toward new and less immediately salient affordances in the environment and teaches a mode of

[72] Jenkins, E. Michael Foster and Jade V. Marcus. "Does Participation in Music and Performing Arts Influence Child Development?" American Educational Research Journal , 2017.
[73] Kronsted, Christian, and Shaun Gallagher. "Dances and Affordances: The Relationship between Dance Training and Conceptual Problem-Solving ." *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 2021.

[74] Kronsted, Christian, and Shaun Gallagher. "Dances and Affordances: The Relationship between Dance Training and Conceptual Problem-Solving ." *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 2021.

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affordance exploration that can be carried over into the realm of conceptual problem solving. Finally, dance training makes the student aware of his own movement habits and cognitive habits while emphasizing ways to break those habits. This is key since habit breaking is an important skill for solving complex conceptual problems[75]" (Kronsted e Gallagher 2021).

Therefore, one could state that arts teaching expands the children's cognitive capacities and horizons enabling them to find resolutions (problem-solving qualities) in non-conventional and original ways. Abilities improvable through artistic experience are problem-solving, critical-thinking, communication, empathy, self-awareness and self-confidence. We have not yet discussed originality skills. Creativity development is fundamental as well. "Critical and creative thinking skills are essential for students who plan to work and excel in the 21st century workforce" (Combs, Cennamo e Newbill 2009). This is the first sentence of an article, whose authors aim to the definition of critical and creative thinking in a way that would be useful for classroom teachers. Based on their findings, they developed a model of critical and creative thinking that is accompanied by a table of skills, objectives, and references. What motivates them is the conviction that "future work will involve developing instructional materials and training teachers in critical and creative thinking skills for use in their classrooms[76]" (Combs, Cennamo e Newbill 2009). They sustain that it is pivotal for students to come up with their own ideas. The students have to become independent thinkers. They quote Sternberg and Spear-Swerling[77], who concluded that while the

[75] Kronsted, Christian, and Shaun Gallagher. "Dances and Affordances: The Relationship between Dance Training and Conceptual Problem-Solving ." *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 2021.
[76] Combs, Liesl Baum, Katherine S. Cennamo, and Phyllis Leary Newbill. "Developing Critical and Creative Thinkers: Toward a Conceptual Model of Creative and Critical Thinking Processes." Educational Technology, 2009: 3-14.
[77] Sternberg, R. J., and L. Spear-Swerling. Teaching for thinkers. Washington DC: American Psychological Education, 1996.

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students were “excellent at remembering and analyzing other people's ideas, [they were] not very good at coming up with ideas of their own” (Sternberg e Spear-Swerling 1996). The authors explain that:

“Thinkers move through a convergent process of evaluating ideas and selecting a structured plan or solution based on the multitude of previously generated ideas. As they engage in reflective judgment, thinkers not only evaluate and select ideas from those generated through personal knowledge and experience, but also in the consideration of ideas gained through analysis and evaluation of other thinkers’ ideas and resources. By combining such ideas, thinkers will determine the best and most feasible plan to pursue[78]”

(Combs, Cennamo e Newbill 2009)

In the above-mentioned passage, the authors sustain that people usually adopt other thinkers’ mental schemes, thoughts: they do not produce original production of ideas. This is a common process and it also brings some advantages. Nonetheless, it is important to provide the children an environment where they can blossom and elaborate their own ideas. In conclusion, they also point out that the primary skills involved are analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; teachers should work on improving these abilities in order to transform students in original thinkers.

Scholars have extolled the beneficial effects of sport participation for teaching life lessons, increasing self-esteem, and building interpersonal and leadership competences. Athletic disciplines can be resourceful: one can acquire soft skills through sporty abilities. For instance, to be part of a

[78] Combs, Liesl Baum, Katherine S. Cennamo, and Phyllis Leary Newbill. “Developing Critical and Creative Thinkers: Toward a Conceptual Model of Creative and Critical Thinking Processes.” Educational Technology, 2009: 3-14.

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team can help the development of multiple skills. Being in a team can be fundamental to learn how to cooperate and communicate. Sport can create positive relationships between community members by encouraging dialogue and collaboration. Students can also develop resilience, gain self-confidence and learn how to manage emotions: no matter if they lose or win, they should be able to manage and control their reactions. One of the values we need to work on, indeed, is the acceptance of the results. Physical education, in addition, teaches disciplines since every athlete must follow rules and be very constant in training. The athlete should also follow a healthy diet and practise with regularity. The rules also concern the integrity and morality behind the game: fair play rules are essential. Hence, the student learns how to be competitive in a positive way. Competition has its own advantages: it provides motivation, for instance. We live in a very competitive world: it is important to be aware of one's abilities, to maintain motivation and to feel secure enough to lose and get back up. In conclusion, students can acquire a great amount of soft skills through sport teaching such as teamwork, communication, leadership, initiative, self-awareness, self-regulation, competitiveness and fair play.

4.2 Sport

In addition, sporty education may play a pivotal and decisive role in the inclusion of disabled children. Sport has positive effects on the growth of everyone: it represents a mean of enhancement and expression and it must aim at the active participation of all students. Factual inclusion of students with disabilities is still insufficient in many European countries' scholar systems. The problematic aspects that often arise are mostly tied to the inadequate training of teachers, who are not aware of inclusive practices. Physical education courses offer the students the opportunity to express and communicate through corporality. It is necessary to let every student

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participate and develop sporty competences. Sport inclusion, also, may help the youngest develop soft skills: they can gain greater social awareness. Other advantages concern the improvements in aggregation, integration and socialization.

In conclusion, school is one of the main learning environments for a child. It is necessary to reconsider the educational priorities in our national scholar system since the work world has changed: there are new necessities and managers look out for very skilled employees. They have to be academically prepared but they also need to possess certain useful skills. These soft skills cannot be taught or learned such as hard skills but they can be developed and improved. The scholar system has the duty to convert and change. School should provide the students the possibility to increase the abilities they already possess. Resourceful tools are arts and sport teaching. We have discussed that art lets children improve a great number of capacities such as communication, empathy, critical thinking, self-awareness and self-confidence overcoming students' shyness. Sport can increase other abilities such as teamwork, communication, leadership, initiative, self-awareness, self-regulation, competitiveness and fair play. In addition, we have discussed the acquisition of soft skills in relation to inclusivity in sport teaching. Children can learn a new way of communication, acquire new points of view, and intensify their moral integrity improving aggregation, socialization and aggregation. Hence, through this research paper we have enhanced a reflection on the combination of creativity and competence and the major benefit that arts and sports can provide.

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