

MYCOMPASS



GO FOR GROWTH WITH KEY COMPETENCIES

Partners:



INNOVATIVE PRISON SYSTEMS



www.my-compass-project.eu | contact@cpip.ro



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1

WHY SHOULD
I READ THIS?

2

WHAT DO I NEED
TO KNOW?

3

DO I WANT TO BE
WITH OTHERS?

4

SHOULD WE DO
SOMETHING TOGETHER?

5

THAT MEANS
WE HAVE TO TALK?





EVERYONE IS TRYING TO GIVE YOU THE CORRECT ANSWER TO WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH YOUR LIFE.

WE WANT TO HELP YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS THAT WILL LEAD YOU TO YOUR OWN ANSWERS.



If you and your friends, guided by your teacher, go through this material and play the games I have thought out for you, then you will discover that all of us have some things in common that help us manage day to day. They are called "key competencies".

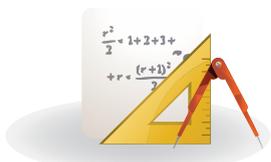


This complicated word actually means a number of things we know, feel, understand and we are willing to do, that help us feel good about our lives, be good at what we do and also make our world a bit better.

So what are those things that we all have in common and we all need to work on them to make our lives better?

For example is "communication". That means to talk to other people, right? Well...it is a bit more than just that.

Think about this: how can you talk without talking? I mean without using words? Or without using your voice? And what about talking to someone from another country? If you give a good thinking to these questions, you will understand that communication is a complicated word.



Another of these "competencies" is about using mathematics and sciences. Think it is complicated? Not at all: we all count days, we all add what expenses we have and we all try to understand how the world works around us.

These are just some short examples that I wanted to share with you. Your teacher has a full list of them, and if you are curious feel free to ask for more explanations and details in your class.



I have 3 favorite competencies that I want to share with you, and if you agree we will have quite some fun exploring. They are:

1

Being social and wanting to be with others



2

Doing something with other people and having initiative

3

Communicating with other people from other countries.



Hello there. Glad you join me in a little discovery adventure. I will be your friend as you go through this workbook, pointing out what is in it for you.

I want to tell you upfront that you have all the answers already in you. It is a matter of asking the right questions and discovering that you know quite a lot about life and what is going.



As they grow up, people think being smart is all about learning in schools. But we both know that that's much more than just that. It is also about what we have learned from the world around us, from what we have gone through.



But before we go have fun with my 3 favorite competencies, I have a challenge for you and your friends.

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The idea is that we are all different, even if we all use the same key competencies. We like different things to do, and even if we like to do the same thing, I bet I do them differently than you. So take a look at the picture bellow and circle what do you like to do from there:

LINGUISTIC



read



write



talk



listen

LOGICAL MATHEMATICAL



quantify



think critically

$A+B \rightarrow C$

reason



experiment

VISUAL SPATIAL



see



draw



vizualize



color



map

BODILY KINESTHETIC



build



act



touch



move



dance

MUSICAL



sing



rap



drum



play

INTERPERSONAL



share



teach



collaborate



interact

INTRAPERSONAL



connect to self



make authentic choices



reflection

NATURALIST



experience



connect to living things



care for



explore



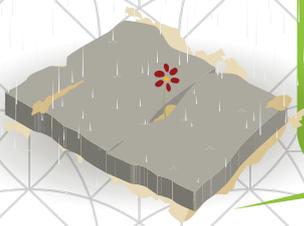
Now find a friend that circled the same stuff as you did. Also find another that circled nothing like you. What was easiest to find? Similar or different?

Do I want to be with others?

Before I talk to you about being with other and if I like that or not, I want to talk to you about an idea that is in my head for some time: our lives are not always perfect and we don't like all the time what happens to us. But we have to deal with this. And "dealing with this" is a special kind of competency, called resiliency.



Resiliency is the human capacity to bounce back from bad experiences, or thrive in spite of hard times and difficulties. Resiliency is something that everybody has, although some people may show it more clearly than others. Everyone has been through bad experiences and survived. Just like our bodies can recover from physical injuries, so can our minds recover from painful experiences.



What kinds of hardship are we talking about? It might be:

- Death of someone you love
- Being separated from family and friends
- Growing up in a poor or bad area
- Trauma - trauma is a shocking, frightening or overwhelming experience, such as being in a car accident, being involved in a violent crime, experiencing war, etc.
- Serious illness
- Growing up in a family in which there is a lot of fighting and conflict



There are many possible hardships in life. The question how do we overcome these hardships? I have worked with a lot of young people just like you, going through the same problems. Some turned all negative experience into a positive result. Others did not. The ones that manage to pass the bad experiences all had things in common.



They have supportive people around them. Social support means having friends and/or families around you who are close to you, care about your life and your feelings, and are there for you when you are having a hard time. But these supportive people didn't just pop out of the bottle like a genie. You have to look for them and asked for support. If you don't ask, no one knows you need it!



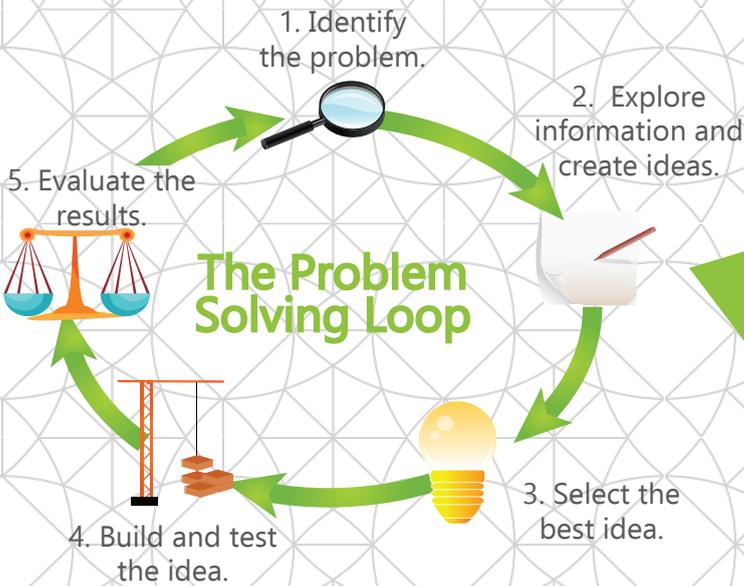
They think in a positive, optimistic way. That is to look at a glass and see that it is half full, instead of half empty. But this doesn't happen on its own, you have to want it.

What does your brain contain?

The picture of the head is divided into sections. In each section write or draw what you spend the most time thinking about.

Optimism is the ability to look at the brighter side of life and to maintain a positive attitude, even in the face of adversity. Next, using a different color pen or pencil, write positive thoughts to fill your brain.





They have good problem solving skills. This means that you always look for a solution and never give up scared by the problem. And once you find a good way to solve a problem, you try to use it with other occasions.

They are involved with their community in a meaningful way. It helps a lot if you are doing stuff together with your friends, but stuff that mean something and are good.



accept  respect



They have good social skills, like confidence and friendliness. This means the way you talk to other, if you are friendly, if you are a nice person to be around. And most important, you have to be the first to believe you are a nice person.

They have good emotional skills, like knowing how to control anger...and not throw things at people, right?





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They have good, realistic self-esteem. This is about knowing yourself, what you can and what you can't do, and also sharing this with the people around you.

By the way, who do you see yourself?

Self-regard is the ability to respect and accept oneself as you are. Place an X on the chart below to indicate on each line where you rate yourself. In which areas are you satisfied or dissatisfied? What could you do to improve the areas that need improvement?

Note: Balance is the key.

Total Slob

Room should be condemned

Neat Freak

Room is spotless...you could eat off the floor

Hot Head

Get angry about every little thing

Cool Operator

Takes a great deal to get me angry

Class Clown

I say things that usually makes other laugh

Quiet and Reserved

I rarely tell jokes

Total Jock

I love playing sports

Non-Athletic

I am not the least bit interested in sports

Pessimist

I see the glass half empty

Optimist

I see the glass half full

Leader

I have to be the boss

Follower

I never want to be in charge

Chatterbox

I love to talk

All Ears

I'd rather listen

My Lips are Sealed

I would never spread rumors

Gossiper

I love to tell "juicy" stories

Couch Potato

TV and some junk food for me

Health Fanatic

Exercise and healthy foods are a must

Are the beliefs that you have about yourself TRUE or FALSE? Do you see yourself as being a loser? Really stupid? Not fitting in with your group of friends? Even though your friends say you are NOT a loser—and tell you how smart you are—and what a wonderful friend you are? It is still hard for you to think that they are being honest and real with you. Our perception is our reality; therefore we must work at changing how we see ourselves.

Write three words that describe how you SEE yourself.

.....

Write three words that describe how you FEEL about yourself.

.....

Write three reasons why those beliefs about yourself are RIGHT or WRONG in your eyes.

.....

Now it is time to note your good qualities. Name three of your good qualities.

.....

Is this a long list of complicated things? Not at all, you will see that after our learning experience together, all this will seem natural and super easy to you.

Social skills

Social skills are the skills we have to get along with other people. Often we take our social skills for granted, without realising all the complicated skills we use when we interact with others. Some of these skills are very basic and simple, like saying hello and good-bye, or smiling and making eye contact when we see someone we know. Others are more complex, like the skills we use to negotiate in a situation of conflict with somebody. Some people learn social skills easily and quickly, whereas others find social interactions more challenging, and may need to work on developing their social skills consciously.

Social skills are important for resiliency for a number of reasons. People with good social skills are naturally more popular than their less socially adept peers, which means they have better supports to call on when experiencing difficulties in their lives. Also, well-liked people get more social reinforcement (messages from other people that they are worthwhile and okay), so they tend to have better self-esteem, which can also help them through tough times.

Developing social skills

Social skills are like any other kind of skill - they can be learned. How do you know if you need to improve your social skills? Ask yourself if you:

- Consider yourself a shy person.
- Wish that you had more friends but don't know how to go about making them.
- Often feel uncomfortable with other people.
- Find it hard to know what to say sometimes.
- Think of yourself as a 'loner'.
- Sometimes feel like there's nobody to turn to when you need support.

If any of these things are true, then you may benefit from working on your social skills.

Basic social skills

The following is a list of basic social skills. Can you identify any areas where you might be able to improve?

Basic interaction skills

These are the simple skills involved in conversing and interacting with others on an everyday basis. They include:

- Making frequent eye contact
- Smiling when greeting people and talking
- Showing "confident" body language: an open, direct stance, not fidgeting or twisting.
- Basic politeness: saying please and thank-you, saying hello and good-bye, etc.
- Showing interest in others, e.g., asking how their day was, how they thought they went on an exam, etc.

Making conversation

These are the skills you use when talking to other people. They include:

- Taking turns when talking
- Listening and showing interest in what the other person has to say
- "Small talk": being able to chat about unimportant things
- Nodding and smiling to indicate that you are following along
- Using humour
- Knowing when to disclose personal information and when not to

Building and maintaining friendships

There are many skills involved in making and sustaining friendships. For example:

- Approach skills: being able to go up and start talking to someone who you don't know or don't know well.
- Sharing decision making, i.e., not always insisting on having one's way but negotiating about what to do, where to go, etc.
- Showing appropriate affection and appreciation.
- Maintaining contact, i.e., not expecting the other person to "do all the work" of keeping up the friendship.
- Being supportive, i.e., showing concern when your friend is having a hard time.
- Allowing distance and closeness. People need time apart as well as together.
- Thoughtfulness: "thinking ahead" about what might be a nice thing to do for your friend.

Empathy

Empathy means being able to put yourself into someone else's shoes and recognising their feelings. It is not the same as sympathy or "feeling sorry for someone". Empathy is responding in an understanding and caring way to what others are feeling. Empathic skills include:

- Noticing other people's feelings.
- Expressing concern at others' distress.
- Being able to recognise what someone else might be feeling in a given situation.
- Showing sensitivity to others' feelings when communicating. For example, being tactful when making critical comments (when criticism is necessary and/or appropriate).

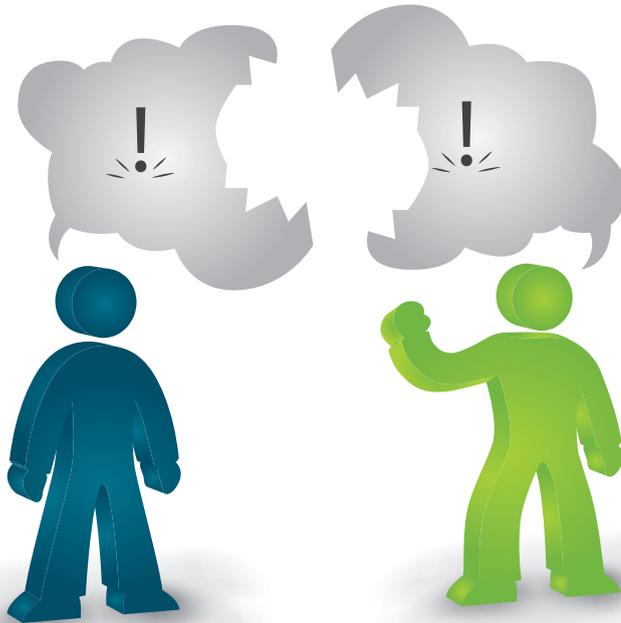
Dealing with conflict

Social interactions do not always run smoothly. Conflict resolution skills include:

- Assertiveness, or being able to say what you are feeling without being aggressive or getting personal.
- Negotiation skills: being able to discuss a conflict calmly and rationally and come to an agreement about a solution.

Building and maintaining friendships

We all face conflict at some time in our lives. But it doesn't always have to be negative. It doesn't have to end up as a war! In fact, if you learn skills to deal with conflict, there can be some really positive and satisfying outcomes.



What is conflict?

Conflict is when people disagree on an issue, or can't get along well. This is just a part of life. It's natural for people to disagree at times, because we all have different interests, values, goals and needs. Sometimes we don't understand other people and what they really mean, or they don't understand us.

- Conflict happens in personal relationships, with family, parents, caregivers, friends, partners, teachers and work mates.
- Conflict also happens in the wider society, among groups with different interests and values, different religions, races, countries, political parties and even sporting teams. You can probably think of many other examples.
- Conflict can also happen within yourself when you learn something new that is different to what you always believed. The conflict inside yourself can make you want to hang on tightly to your old beliefs or it can lead you to change your beliefs.

Conflict can result in changes, often for the better.

Consequences of conflict

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Consequences of conflict

- Conflict can get dangerous when people get aggressive and violent.
- Conflict can bring about increased learning and greater understanding of each other's viewpoints when dealt with wisely.
- Some people avoid conflict, which means they don't get any say in what's happening.

Some of the negative outcomes of ignoring conflict or managing conflict badly can be:

- having a lot of anger that you don't express
- problems not improving
- confusion
- conflict getting worse
- separation or family breakdown
- feeling resentful
- stress, tension and illness
- aggression and violence
- poor relationships.

Some of the positive outcomes of dealing with conflict successfully can be:

- a sense of achievement
- happiness
- stronger relationships and team work
- learning more about others and yourself
- relaxation
- good health
- changes
- feeling positive.

It all depends on how it's handled. You probably already have some very good skills in dealing with conflict. We can all learn more skills to deal with conflict that will bring more positive outcomes.

Ways to deal with conflict

It's wise to deal with conflict if the issue is important and causing problems. Sometimes, if it is a minor issue, you could just let it go, but if you are feeling unhappy, see if you can work it out.

The most effective way to deal with conflict is to negotiate with the other person involved. Getting angry or aggressive often makes the situation much worse. Much conflict can be resolved if you use a positive and respectful approach - but sometimes this can be very difficult, especially if you or the other person are used to getting what you want by becoming angry, or used to just giving in.

One of the most effective ideas is the win-win approach.

- This approach is about both people being satisfied with the outcome.
- It's about finding out what you both want and where there are areas that you can both agree on, then working towards them.
- It's about working together as partners trying to solve a problem, not as opponents trying to win against each other.
- It's about working together on a basis of mutual respect to find a satisfying solution.

Raise the topic with respect!

Bring the conflict out into the open. Do this together in a calm way when both of you have the time and energy to sit down and talk peacefully.

- Say what the conflict is from your view and ask for the other's view.
- Ask the other person if he would like to work out a solution with you.
- At this time it's also OK to tell him how you feel - it's only natural that conflict will bring out different emotions, like sadness or anger.
- Say how you are feeling rather than taking it out on the other person. But be careful here - if you tell the other person your feelings in a way that is blaming them, you may get him angry and lose the opportunity to discuss the issues.
- The main things to focus on at this time are what the problem is and what the issues are.

It is very important to treat the other person with respect while you're discussing this. At this point, you don't have to go on to work it all out - you have stated that there is a problem.

- You could then decide together whether to make a time to work on it together, or to work on it now.
- You may like to print this topic out and use it together to try and resolve the conflict.

Understand each other

Both of you should have an uninterrupted time to explain how you see the conflict. Practise 'active listening' - this means that you

- Look at the person while he/she is talking.
- Show respect by allowing the person to talk without interrupting.
- Stay and look calm.
- Talk in a quiet voice.
- Make 'listening noises' eg "I see, oh yes, uh huh., "
- Make sure you have understood what is being said by repeating or saying in your own words what she has said. Eg "So, you believe that I deliberately forgot to do something we'd agreed on."

Do all this in a positive way - no attacking or accusing.

- Be open about what you might have done to make it worse.
- Be honest with yourself and the other person about this.

By now you should each have a good picture of what is troubling the other person.

Define the problem

- So what exactly is the problem?
- Can you both define the problem together?
- To make it easier to define, try and write it down in one sentence that explains the problem.

What do you both want?

- Next, think about what it is you both want. How would you both like things to be?
- Start to answer this together by working out the areas that you can both agree on.
- Then work out together what your goals are.
- Once you've worked out together how you'd like things to be, write down the goals that you both have - this means what you would like to happen.

Brainstorming solutions

Now that you really understand each other, have worked out what the problem is and have worked out some goals, you can start to think about ways to get there.

- Think of all the possible ideas you can come up with together that will move you towards your goals - it doesn't matter how wild the ideas are at this stage.
- Write them as you go.
- When you finish brainstorming ideas, look at all the ideas you came up with. How can you make each idea work? What might be the outcomes of each idea?
- Decide which are the best ideas.

Putting it into practice

Make an agreement about which idea you'll work on together.

- Work out all the details together clearly, eg. "on such and such day I will do x".
- You can even write it out so you both know you are clear and are agreeing on exactly the same thing.
- A written agreement means it's still clear later when one of you may have forgotten some details. If something comes up that means you can't keep up your part of the agreement, go back and work it out again.
- If the plan looks like it's not going to work after a fair time, then go back to the list you brainstormed. Try another idea.

This may seem like a lot of hard work, but it gets easier each time you practice. And remember, resolving conflict is worthwhile.

Skills needed. To work out conflicts, your skills are needed. In particular:

- being respectful
- being understanding
- being assertive.

Assertiveness is a skill of its own. What does assertive mean? It's a kind of attitude halfway between being aggressive and being passive.

- Being aggressive means you force your view on someone else.
- Being passive means you don't do anything, just let things happen to you.

There may be times when it's OK to be passive or aggressive, but as we have already seen, they're not at all useful when there is a conflict. What you need then is to be assertive. When you're being assertive, you state your view, and do it in a calm and non-blaming manner.

Should we do something together?

We have talked a lot about what it is to be with other people. And you have done a lot of thinking. Here is something more to think about:

Imagine that you would be in the position to start your own business. How does this sound for you? Have you ever thought about it? Complicated? Well, I have a challenge for you to think about and exercise with me.

Think of a great idea. Most businesses start with one compelling idea — whether it's a service people need, a product that would make life easier or something that combines both. Remember that ideas don't matter; it's what you do with them that count!

So, put down the coolest idea of a business you would do:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Now think why you would want to do it. Can you put down 3 reasons?

1.

2.

3.

Would you do it alone or with friends? Do you need them or you want them because you enjoy others?

.....

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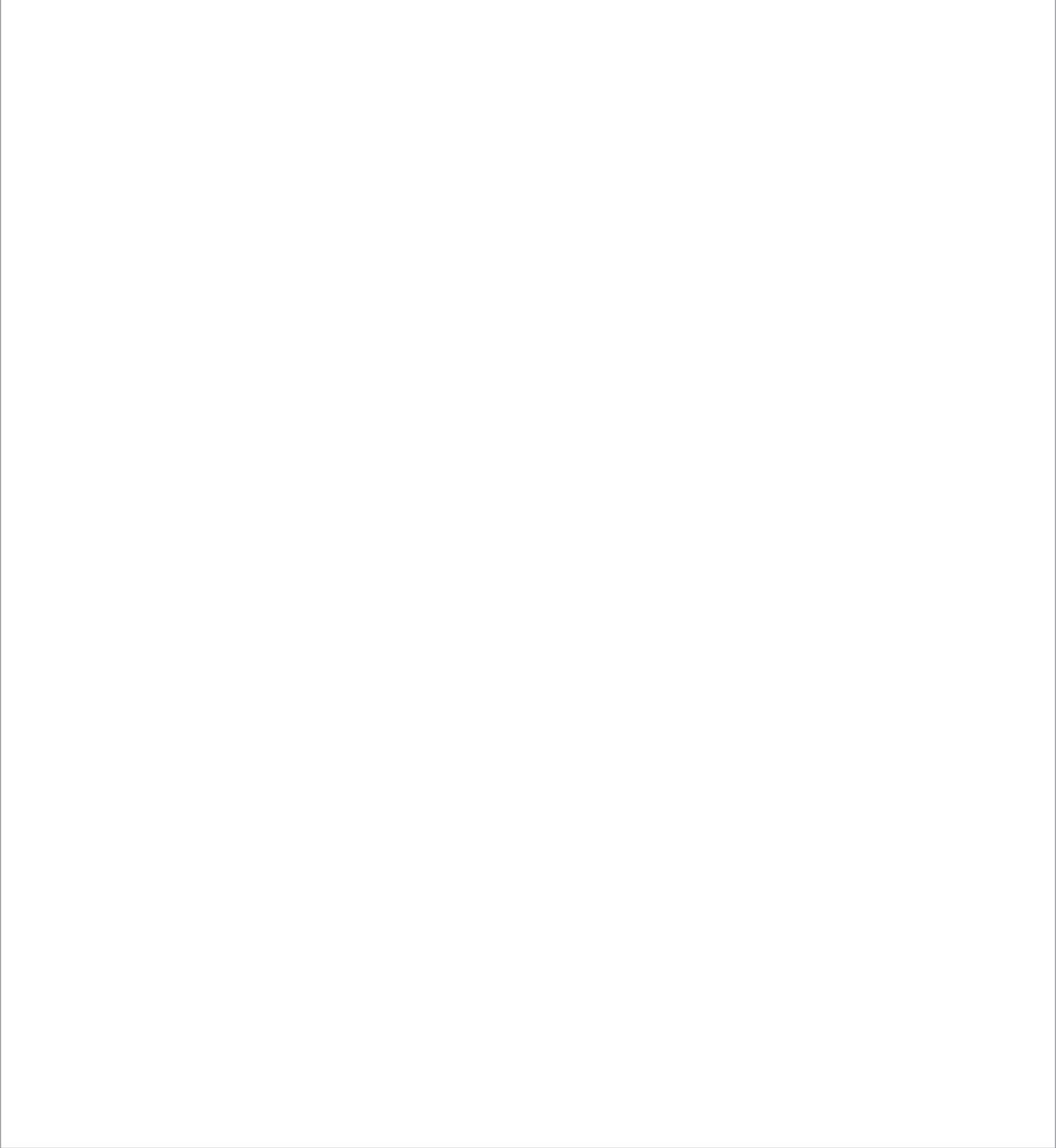
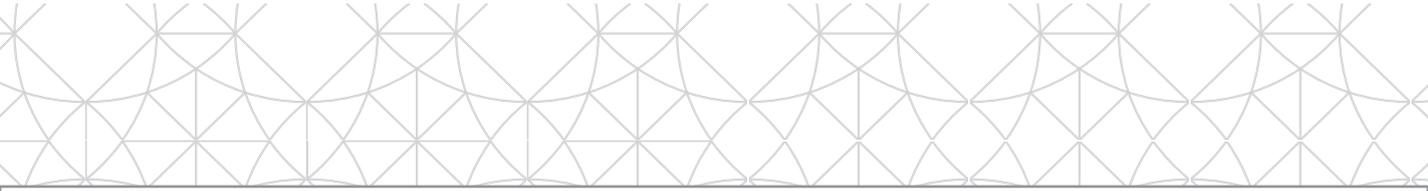
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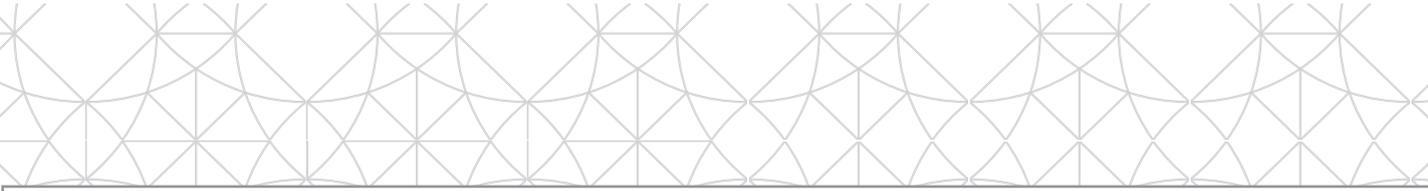
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OK, so you have the idea, you know why you want to do it and with whom. What do you think are the next steps? Are you curious about this topic?

If yes, I have planned together with your teacher some games for you and your friends to play.







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