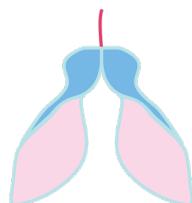
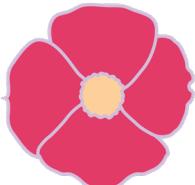


Creative Approach to Resilience and Bravery in Education





# CREATIVE APPROACH TO RESILIENCE AND BRAVERY IN EDUCATION



Co-funded by  
the European Union



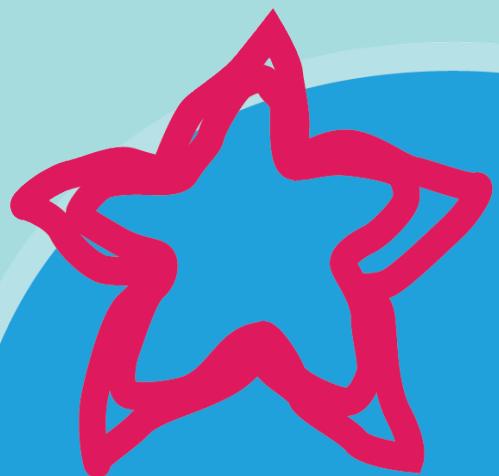
AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU  
University of Applied Sciences



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CARB CONTEXT .....	4
INTRODUCTION .....	6
CARB JOURNEY .....	14
CARB PROCESS .....	23
TEACHERS PERSPECTIVES .....	35
STUDENTS PERSPECTIVES .....	46
REFLECTIONS .....	52
NEXT STEPS .....	57
CARB TEAM .....	62
FINAL EXHIBITION .....	68
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	78





CARB CONTEXT

# CARB CONTEXT

## **A** Creative Approach to Resilience and Bravery in education

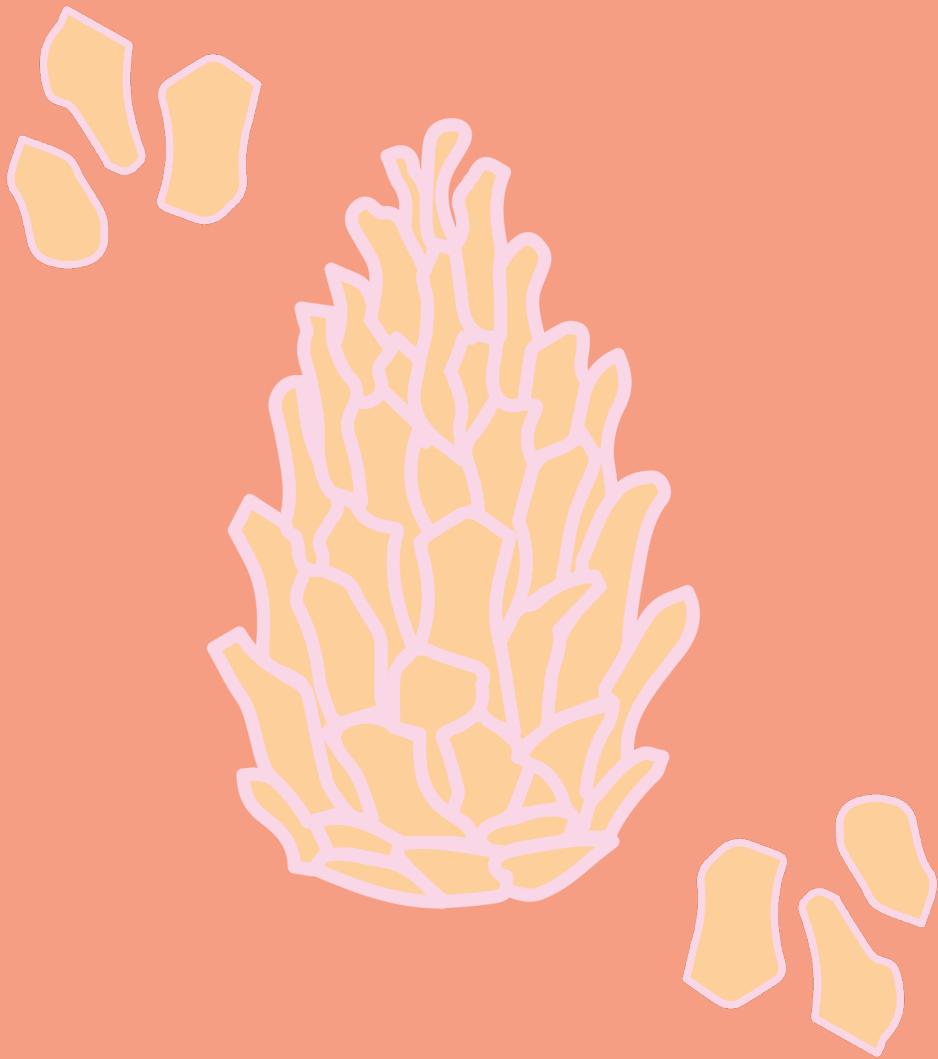
(CARB) responds to the growing challenges of today's schools such as polarisation, inequality, and mental health struggles that leave both students and teachers feeling isolated or overwhelmed. CARB's aim is not just to offer techniques but to plant seeds of resilience and dialogue that grow — transforming classrooms into vibrant communities where young people thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, prepared for the complexity of the future.

At its heart, CARB is about cultivating bravery and resilience. Bravery means stepping into meaningful, sometimes uncomfortable conversations; resilience is the capacity to stay grounded and compassionate in those moments. Together, they create “brave spaces” where all voices are welcomed,

differences are acknowledged, and no single perspective dominates.

The CARB tools are experiential, inviting participants to reflect, play, and create together. Circles, co-facilitation, outdoor activities, and art-based methods flatten hierarchies and nurture safety while also encouraging growth through constructive discomfort. Games, storytelling, and creative exercises become pathways into emotional expression, self-reflection, and shared understanding.

Facilitation in this approach is not about control but presence: deep listening, modelling vulnerability, and creating frameworks where students can take responsibility, express their truths, and encounter difference without fear of judgment. Teachers, too, are supported to recognize their own identities, limits, and strengths, so they can hold space for others with clarity and compassion.



# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION



Resilience and bravery in education are not abstract ideals, they are lived experiences shaped by creativity, collaboration, and connection. This chapter brings together diverse voices from across CARB offering personal reflections on how artistic and participatory methods have transformed classrooms, relationships, and learning environments.



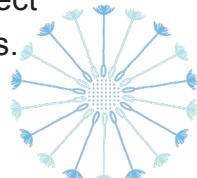
words and to engage with social issues through art.

Student voices also resonate powerfully in this chapter. Ulrich, a participant from Belgium, recounts how the Erasmus+ exchange deepened his sense of connection and creativity, while Reinhilde Pulinx, the project co-ordinator, offers a metaphor of the amplifier, each wire and circuit representing the unique contributions of students, teachers, and partners working in harmony.



From Finland, Minna Mannert of Plan International highlights the importance of experiential learning and empathy-building in global education. Gerry Robinson, leading in alternative provision in the UK, shares how CARB's tools help reconnect students with learning through dignity, creativity, and deep listening. One of our Belgian teachers, Tina De Bisschop, reflects on the courage sparked in her classroom, where students dared to speak, share, and grow in unexpected ways. Wayne Campbell explores photography as a form of visual activism, empowering young people to express emotions and perspectives beyond

Together, these contributions illustrate how CARB fosters transformative learning. They remind us that resilience is not taught, it is cultivated through shared experiences, artistic exploration, and the courage to engage with complexity. This chapter is a celebration of those voices, and of the creative pathways they have forged, pathways that continue to inspire, challenge, and connect across borders and generations.



# MINNA MANNERT



## GLOBAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME MANAGER PLAN INTERNATIONAL, FINLAND

*Plan International* works to ensure that the voices of young people are heard in society, and that the root causes of phenomena violating the rights of girls can be addressed. An essential part of our work involves encouraging various parties to promote sustainable development and learn about it, in accordance with sustainable development goal 4.7. It is important to remind people of how we are globally connected and to raise discussions about social norms that underpin discrimination and human rights violations. At *Plan*, we have long been working to change social norms and contemplated what methods lead to lasting change and promote respect for human rights. Experiential methods are key. According to studies, learning by doing produces outcomes that stay in memory longer.

A lifestyle or political decision-making that promotes sustainable development is not based solely on facts: transformative learning experiences require a more profound, personal approach. At its best, the school environment can offer such opportunities. One pathway is

teaching empathy skills.

Another is the ability to navigate change and use critical thinking. These skills are especially relevant in the mid-2020s as we approach the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

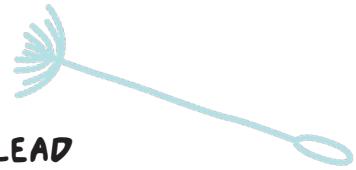


The methods of the CARB project implement transformative educational thinking. They provide tools to strengthen young people's self-awareness and to comment on societal phenomena. Young people might pick up a camera as a means to explore and interpret their world. Creative work helps deal with thoughts and emotions that words alone cannot express.

This summer, 2025, at the Oodi Library in Helsinki, an exhibition will showcase youth photography based on CARB's methods - voices of young people that matter.

# GERRY ROBINSON

EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER AND DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD  
HARINGEY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP, UNITED KINGDOM



At Haringey Learning Partnership, we are an alternative provision setting for young people who have been excluded from mainstream school. Every day, we work with students whose lives have been shaped by complexity, disconnection, and adversity – young people who have often been told that school isn't a place for them. Our job is to challenge that message. The CARB project has offered us a new and powerful set of tools to help do exactly that.

Four members of our staff team – a mix of teachers and teaching assistants – took part in the CARB training. What they brought back wasn't just a set of strategies, but a shift in mindset. CARB blends deep democracy with creative facilitation: listening properly, making space for voices we might not always hear, slowing down, paying attention to what's underneath the surface.



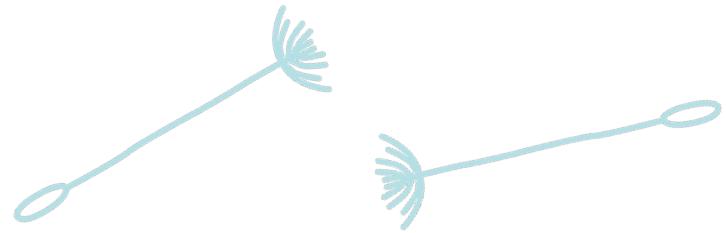
In alternative provision, we know that disconnection often comes before exclusion. Reconnection must come before learning. We've seen students engage with tools like photography, journalling, and collaborative storytelling in ways that go far beyond the traditional curriculum. For some, these have been the first moments they've truly felt able to express who they are. There's a dignity in that.

For staff, CARB has provided a reset. In a system that pushes pace, compliance and control, this work invites reflection, presence, and connection. It reminded us that relationship sits at the heart of learning, and that creativity is not a luxury – it's a necessity.

CARB has strengthened our belief that education, rooted in relationship and creativity, can be a powerful force for change.

# TINA DE BISSCHOP

SCHOOL TEACHER, BELGIUM



CARB in my classroom: growing in courage and resilience.

Last school year, I had the opportunity to participate in the CARB project with my class. With my background in Deep Democracy, I knew right away that these new methods would set something in motion, both for myself and for my students.

The exercises invited creativity, but above all courage: daring to speak, daring to experiment, daring to share what needed to be shared. I saw students who usually preferred to stay in the background take steps forward. Not always spectacular, but always genuine. Small breakthroughs that made a big difference in the classroom. Recognizing and sharing feelings and concerns brought a whole new group dynamic.

What touched me most personally was the way of working together. Co-facilitating with my colleague, stepping into this project side by side for our group, but also collaborating with

the students and sharing experiences together, it was incredibly powerful. For many it meant stepping out of their comfort zone, and that made it all the more valuable to use these methods to support my students.

The project made me realize that resilience is not only something I want to pass on to my students, but also something I practice every single day as a teacher. CARB brought us closer together and gave me a backpack full of inspiration to carry forward.



# WAYNE CAMPBELL

## AUTHOR OF A CELEBRATION OF DEMONSTRATION AND 0710 YEAR ONE. UNITED KINGDOM

Creativity, and particularly photography, can be a powerful tool for engaging young adults and allowing them to translate their sense of empathy. Photography provides a language beyond words, empowering them to express how they see and feel the world in ways that are personal, imaginative, and deeply revealing. When young people use photography as a medium, they often discover that it enables them to view subjects from different perspectives, while also giving them space to include their own thoughts, feelings, and aspirations. This non-linear approach goes beyond technical skill; it encourages them to bring lived experiences into the frame, sparking conversations about both the images and the emotions behind them.

Through transformative learning experiences, photography can unlock a creative pathway for young adults to connect with deeper emotions and develop empathy

for others. By reflecting on what they choose to capture and how they present it, they consider not only their own perspectives but also those of others. This fosters understanding of environments, relationships, and social issues, helping them engage with the world in a more thoughtful way.

For many young people who feel disconnected from education, creativity offers an alternative route to learning. Photography provides an open and inclusive canvas that encourages self-expression while also inviting critique and dialogue. Working and taking pictures in Palestine this year allowed me to tap into creative activism, providing greater insight into communities and people I was capturing. Each picture spoke a thousand words. This is the power of visual activism.

Photography is not just an art form but a transformative tool for growth and connection.



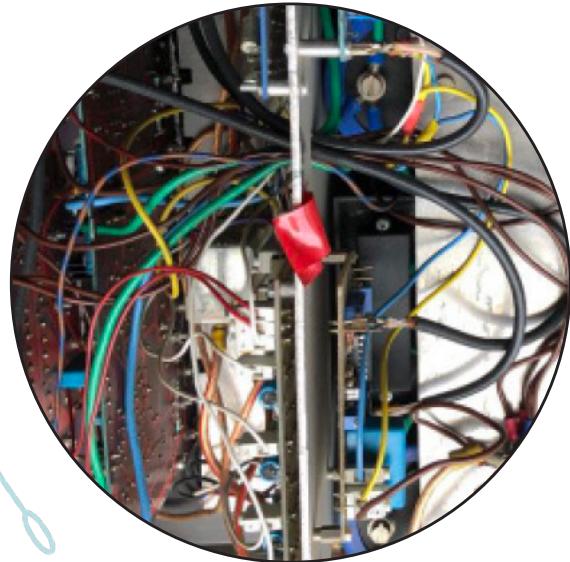
# REINHILDE PULINX

CARB PROJECT LEAD AND SENIOR RESEARCHER  
AT UCLL, BELGIUM

Resilience and bravery in education are not built in isolation – they emerge through collaboration, creativity, and shared purpose. The CARB project brings together teachers, students, and project partners from diverse countries and contexts to explore how artistic practices can strengthen resilience and bravery within schools, especially in times of uncertainty and change.

The image of the inside of a music amplifier – seemingly chaotic yet precisely constructed – captures the essence of our collaborative journey. Each wire, circuit, and component has a role to play, and only through their interaction does the amplifier produce beautiful sound. Likewise, in CARB, every teacher, student, and partner contributes a unique perspective and energy. Together, we create a learning environment where complexity becomes a source of strength and creativity becomes a tool for transformation.

Working across borders and disciplines, we have engaged with classrooms as spaces of

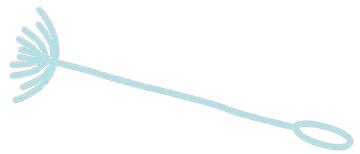


experimentation, dialogue, and co-creation. Teachers and students have developed artistic responses to the challenges they face, transforming uncertainty into expression, connection, and shared meaning. These creative processes have not only fostered resilience but also built bridges between schools, communities, and countries.

Let this image remind us: education, like music, thrives when every part is valued. Through collaboration, we amplify the voices of learners and teachers, crafting a shared melody of hope, adaptability, and transformation – one that resonates far beyond the classroom walls.

# ULRICH

STUDENT AT DVM HUMANIORA AALST, BELGIUM



The Erasmus+ project with the theme “Being Young in 2025” was a truly fascinating and educational experience for me. During the project, we took part in all kinds of activities about what it means to be young in 2025. I learned a lot—not only about the topic itself, but also about myself and others.

At first, I found it all a bit exciting and even a little intimidating, but soon it became really enjoyable. The bond with my classmates grew stronger, and I even got to know the quieter students better. It was nice to see that everyone had their own way of participating.

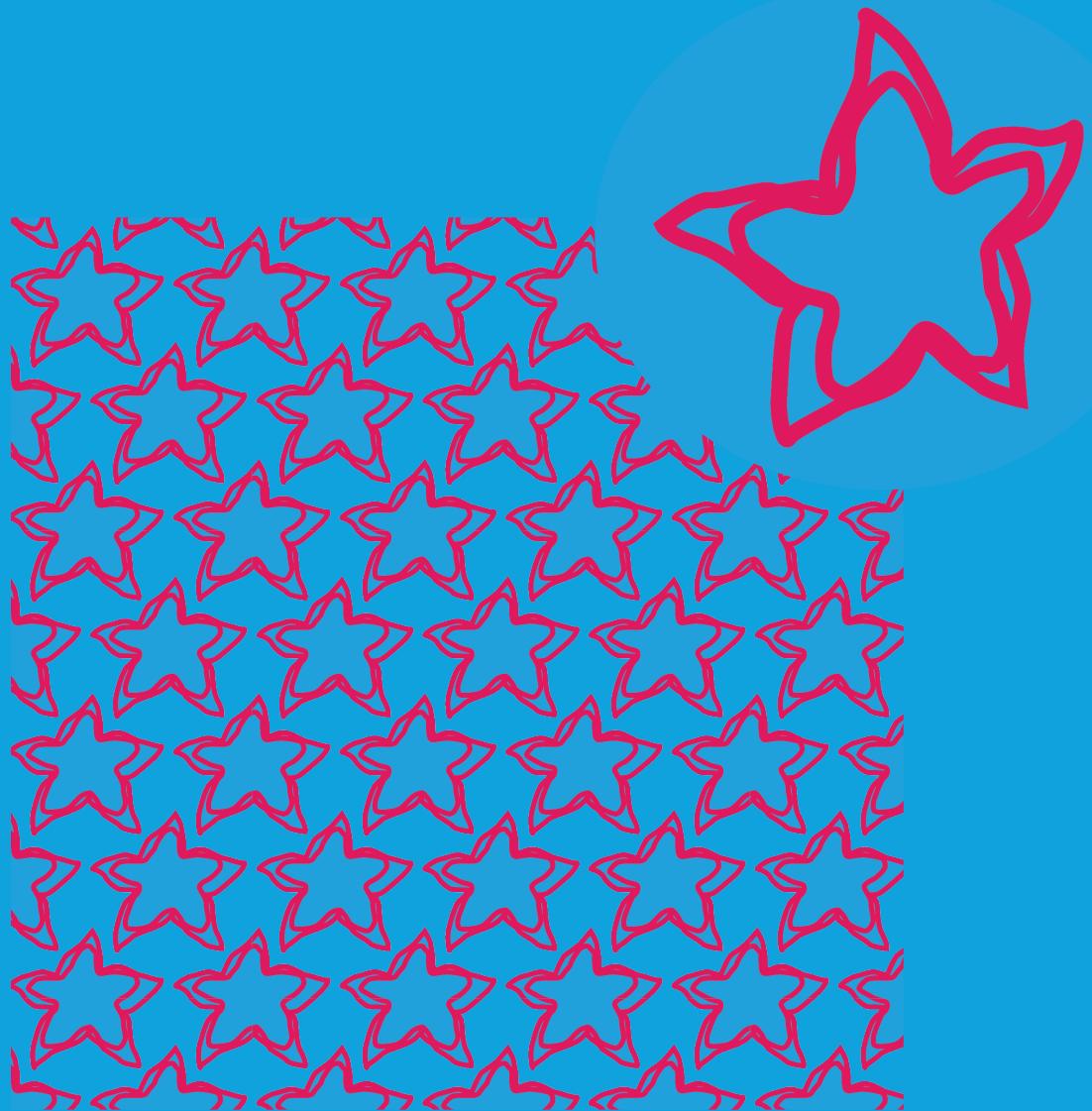
One of the activities that stuck with me most was when we went outside to take photos. For each picture, we had to choose an emotion or theme and explain what it meant to us. We could let our thoughts flow freely and later



share our photos and feelings with the rest of the class. It was beautiful to see how differently everyone thought and felt, and how much creativity came to the surface.

The exchange with the school in Koekelberg was one of the highlights. It was interesting to meet peers I didn't know and to discover new things together in a playful way. What I will especially take with me is the feeling of connection—the idea that young people in other countries were working on the same assignments. It truly was a fantastic Erasmus+ project.





CARB JOURNEY

# CARB JOURNEY

## INTRODUCTION

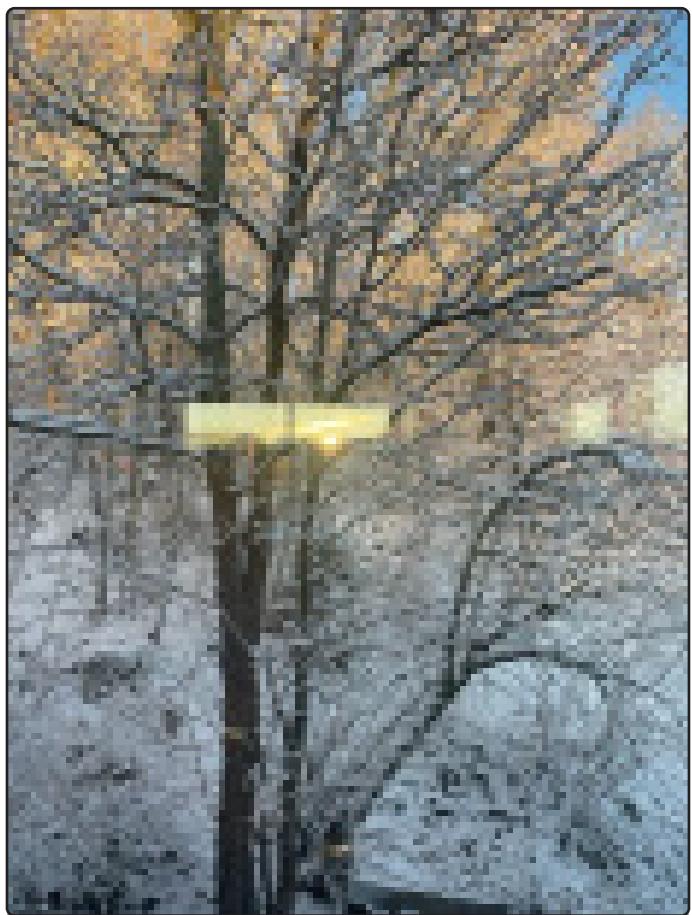
Creativity and connection are not luxuries - they are vital forms of survival. In a world marked by uncertainty, polarisation, and quiet exhaustion, our work begins with listening: to each other, to our environments, and to what is present but unspoken.

Through the CARB collaboration, we found a shared language with our partners across Europe — a way of using art, dialogue, and courage to navigate complexity together.

CARB became a living experiment in how creativity can be both a method and a mindset. For us, it offered space to deepen our practice: to ask how art can help people engage with conflict, not as something to avoid, but as something that can transform us.

At its core, CARB was about creating brave spaces - environments where young people and teachers alike could feel seen, valued, and capable of exploring their inner and outer worlds. We saw bravery not as the absence

of fear but as the willingness to stay with discomfort - to meet the moment with empathy and imagination.



Eeva-Kaisa Kinnunen, project partner, Laurea, Finland  
Light in the horizon

## AIMS

Our aim was to use creative practice to nurture resilience and relational courage — within individuals, classrooms, and communities.



Through art, storytelling, and deep listening, we sought to bridge the gap between emotion and expression, self and other, isolation and belonging.

The project built on years of experience working with schools, alternative education settings, and community organisations across Europe. We wanted to share what we had learned about creating connection: how to move from reactive spaces to reflective ones, how to transform silence into dialogue, and how to sustain care in systems that are often stretched thin.

Our partnership with UCLL in Belgium, Laurea in Finland, HUMMUS in Belgium, CESIE in Italy and deep:black in the UK, had a collective aim to integrate creative and democratic methods into education. Together, we explored what it means to be brave in the classroom not as performance, but as presence.

*Trupti Magecha, project partner, deep:black, United Kingdom*

*This is an image of my terrarium - it is a complete eco system within which different species of plants can co exist - all it needs is the correct environment and basic tending and it is able to thrive. For me, the conditions for impact matter and with once set up with the components that enable something to thrive impact follows.*

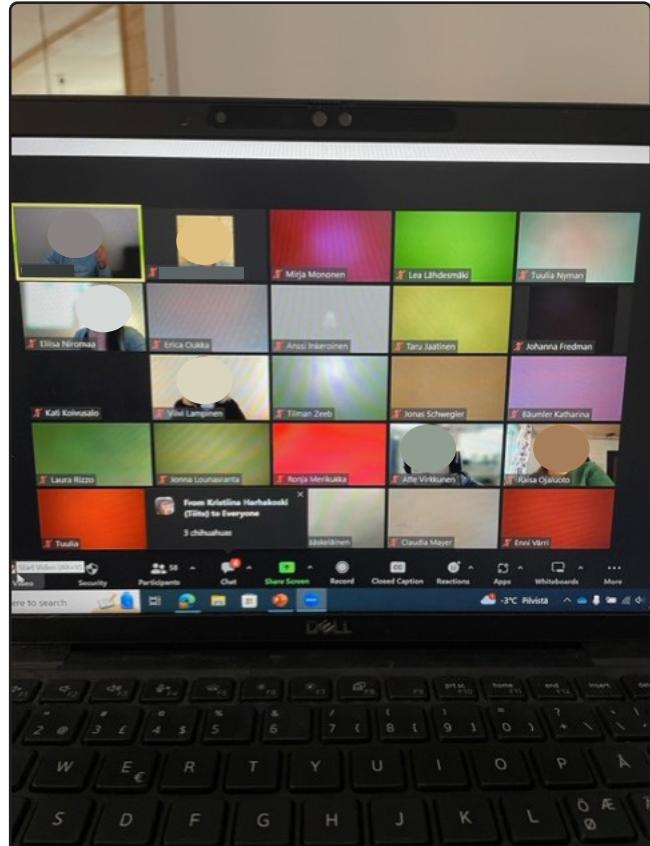
## PROCESS

Our process, like our practice, began with curiosity. Each partner brought a different rhythm, language, and educational culture, yet we all shared a commitment to dialogue and creativity as vehicles for change. For deep:black, this translated into three overlapping movements: **LISTENING, MAKING, and REFLECTING**.

Our partnership began with an 'inside out' approach by working with the tools ourselves in our own meetings, testing and evaluating our methodology and as partners leaning towards vulnerability before reaching into our school communities.

### 1. LISTENING

We began by creating spaces for teachers and facilitators to listen — to themselves, to one another, and to the students they serve. Through circle work, story-sharing, and embodied exercises, we explored the invisible layers beneath classroom dynamics: the emotions, fears, and identities that shape how we learn and relate.



*Eeva-Kaisa Kinnunen, project partner, Laurea, Finland  
Kaisa's community*

At Haringey Learning Partnership, an alternative provision in North London, this work took on particular significance. Teachers who often hold immense emotional complexity were given time to pause, breathe, and reconnect with why they teach. For many, it was a reminder that relationship is not secondary to learning — it is the foundation of it.

Listening also means acknowledging difference. In a multicultural, multilingual context, we used images, objects, and metaphors to create common ground. Photography became one of our most powerful tools — a way of seeing, feeling, and communicating across borders. Through photographs, participants could express what words alone might not convey.

## 2. MAKING

The next stage was creating opportunities for expression through art, storytelling, and play. We facilitated workshops using creative methods drawn from art therapy, drama, and Deep Democracy. Each exercise balanced structure and spontaneity, giving participants enough safety to take creative risks.

The four CARB tools - *Our Tribes*, *Navigate the Fire*, *Tell Me Your Story*, and *Predator and Prey* - became the heartbeat of this phase. We used them not as prescriptions but as invitations, adapting them to each group's emotional and cultural needs.

Through *Our Tribes*, students explored belonging; *Navigate the Fire* opened dialogue



Luciano Cortese, project partner, CESIE, Italy  
Making

around disagreement and difference; *Tell Me Your Story* used photography to express what is often left unsaid; and *Predator and Prey* turned movement into metaphor, inviting reflection on power and care.

Teachers and students discovered that creativity could hold tension. As a teacher reflected:

*"We are living with complexity. Young people are complex — and we are too. This work reminds me that both can coexist. We don't have to fix it — we just have to stay in it."*

### 3. REFLECTING

Reflection was woven into every stage. It was not an afterthought, but a practice — a form of artistry in itself. Our sessions always closed with stillness: naming feelings, noticing what had shifted, and honouring the stories that had emerged.

Reflection circles, journalling, and photographic responses helped participants document their own growth. Over time, these reflections built into a visual and emotional archive - a record of courage in small moments.

Teachers described how creative reflection allowed them to see their students differently - not as “difficult” or “disengaged,” but as young people navigating complexity with creativity. Students, in turn, reported feeling more connected - to their peers, their teachers, and to themselves.

Across Europe, these ripples of connection began to overlap: Finnish teachers finding quiet bravery in slowing down; Belgian educators deepening co-facilitation skills;

Italian partners exploring power through play; UK colleagues rekindling belonging through shared laughter. Reflection became our collective practice of resilience.

### LEARNING TOGETHER

Throughout CARB, what bound us was not uniformity but shared intent. Each partner brought something essential: HUMMUS with its Deep Democracy expertise; Laurea with its pedagogical innovation; CESIE with its cross-cultural energy; and UCLL with its commitment to inclusive learning.

For deep:black, it was a chance to integrate creative practice into a wider European dialogue. We learned that collaboration itself mirrors the classroom: full of difference, dialogue, and discovery.

As facilitators, we practised what we teach - holding space, embracing discomfort, and staying curious. We found that real bravery often looks quiet: showing up, listening deeply, admitting not knowing, and continuing anyway.





For teachers, they were offered training in their local contexts, responding to the challenges in their villages, towns and cities across Europe.

In Finland, teachers shared their worries for the children frightened by geopolitical tension. Teachers in the UK shared their experiences of working with trauma, and the impacts of cuts to education budgets on the poorest children. In Italy teachers shared diverse approaches to education working with models designed to stimulate collective thinking and collaboration. In Belgium teachers shared their joy at seeing the responses of students experimenting with the tools and the shifts they were able to observe in the days and weeks after.

## IMPACT AND CONTINUITY

Teachers were delighted to meet face to face and meet professionals across Europe, recognising similarities across differences, inspired by seeing the depth of commitment in their colleagues while celebrating it in themselves.

The impact of CARB was felt not in numbers but in moments — a teacher's exhale after a difficult week, a photograph that expressed what words could not, a shared silence that softened tension. These are the seeds of resilience the project continues to disperse.

Teachers trained through CARB now carry the methods into their classrooms, embedding empathy and co-creation into daily practice. And already we have created two more tools together:

- Tool 5: Hammock time (to explore collective support)
- Tool 6: Sun Shines On (to explore group energy)

CARB reaffirms that: creativity is not decorative, it is transformative. When people create together, they discover new language for their humanity.

This is demonstrated by the photography exhibitions held in spaces across Europe, welcoming audiences and sharing awareness beyond school communities in public spaces and creating conversation and engagement.

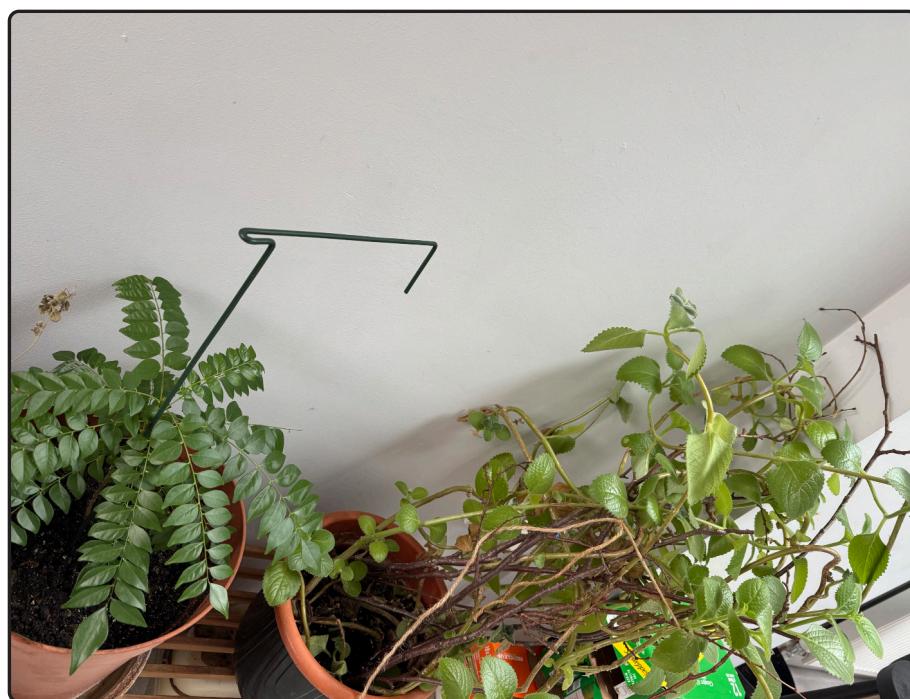
## LOOKING AHEAD

As we look forward, the lessons of CARB continue to guide us. The need for creative, compassionate education has never been greater. The global challenges that surround

us - division, anxiety, and uncertainty - demand responses that are both imaginative and grounded.

We remain committed to cultivating brave spaces: places where teachers, artists, and young people can meet across difference; where vulnerability is not weakness but wisdom; where creativity becomes a practice of resilience.

The tools live on adapted, translated, and transformed. They continue to be shared within schools and within professional networks.



In every photograph, every conversation, every moment of stillness, the same potential emerges: Connection is the artform.

And from connection, everything else grows.

*Kamal Magecha, project partner,  
deep:black, United Kingdom*

*Support in the right place.*



*Fanny Matheusen, project partner, HUMMUS, Belgium*

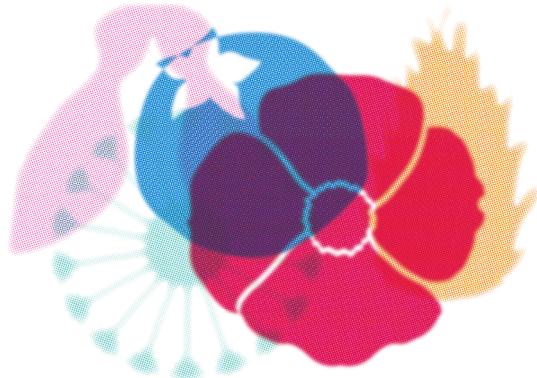


*Unknown, project partner, Laurea, Finland  
First school day- brave and resilient*

**CARB PROCESS**

# CARB PROCESS

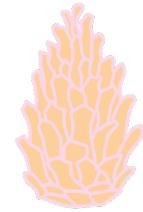
The four CARB tools were designed as “seeds” to nurture bravery and resilience in both teachers and young people. Their development emerged from deep reflection, cross-European collaboration, and creative experimentation. Drawing from arts-based methods, play, and the principles of Deep Democracy, the tools invite dialogue rather than dictate answers, making room for multiple truths.



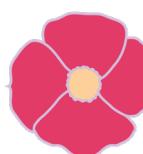
Both Deep Democracy and creative practice shaped our approach. Deep Democracy reminds us that beneath every conversation lies an “iceberg” of unspoken feelings and perspectives, while art helps surface those emotions in ways that feel intuitive and non-threatening. Through photography, storytelling, and embodied play, participants can explore conflict, empathy, and identity without fear of being “wrong.” In a world where words often divide, creativity reconnects; bridging language, culture, and experience.

The CARB tools, which can be found in more detail within the CARB manual, are not prescriptions but invitations. They are adaptable seeds that can grow differently across European contexts. Rooted in the EU’s spirit of collaboration and inclusion, they celebrate education as a collective act of courage: a place where teachers and students alike can co-create a more resilient, compassionate future.

Each of the four main tools reflects these shared values and focuses on challenges identified in classrooms across Europe:



1. *Our Tribes* explores belonging and inclusion, using circle work to build trust and recognise shared humanity.



2. *Navigate the Fire* engages students with polarisation, inviting tension, debating respectfully, and uncovering deeper needs.



3. *Tell Me Your Story* uses photography to explore multiple perspectives, encouraging students to “see” themselves and others anew.



4. *Predator and Prey* examines power and safety through experiential play, helping young people recognise power dynamics and cultivate “power within” through confidence, compassion, and self-worth.

Together, these tools embody a pedagogy of bravery, empathy, and connection. They encourage facilitators to move from safe to brave spaces, environments where vulnerability and difference are welcomed as part of learning.

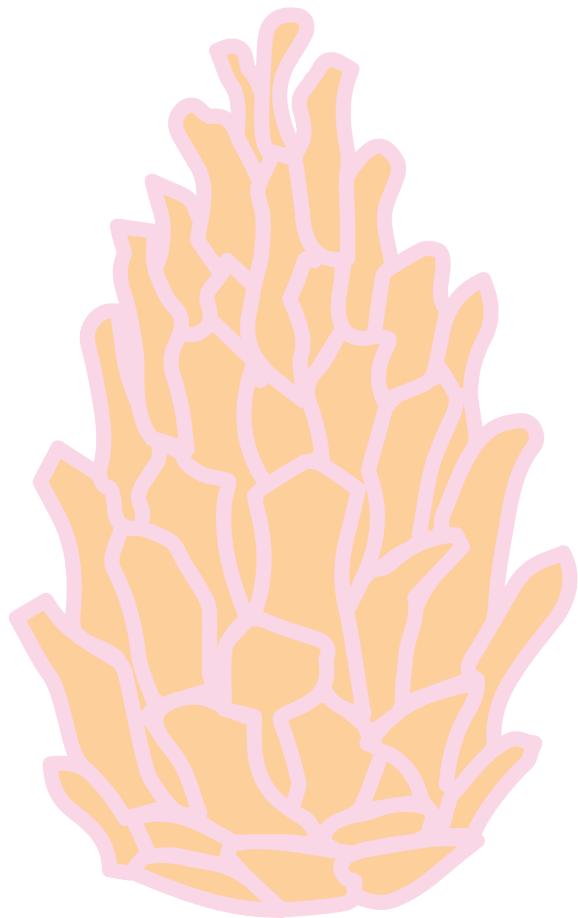
# TOOL 1: OUR TRIBES

## CONCEPT

*Our Tribes* is a structured group activity designed to foster a sense of belonging among students by facilitating meaningful conversations in a circle using a series of images curated to inspire conversations. The tool asks participants to chose an image to symbolise their perspectives and emphasizes student voice, deep reflection, and shared understanding, allowing students to explore who they are, how they connect to others, and how they experience their school community.

## CONTEXT

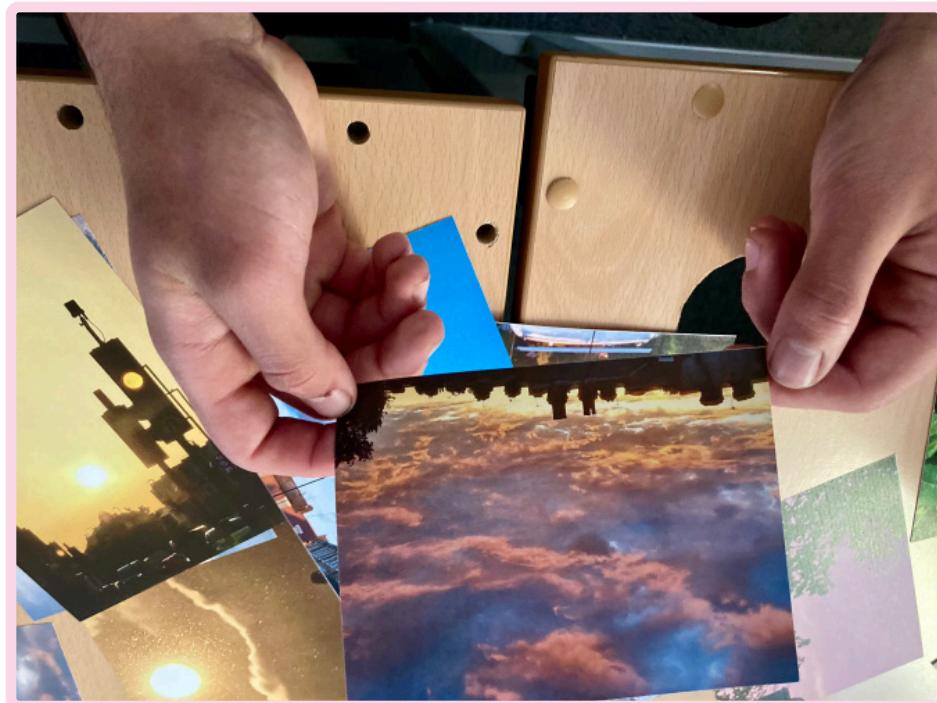
This tool is grounded in the concept of “Holding Space” (Plett, 2020), which involves creating a safe and supportive environment where participants can express themselves openly. It’s particularly useful in educational settings where there’s a need to enhance relationships, empathy, and emotional literacy.



# EXPLORING BELONGING

## WHY IT MATTERS

Creating intentional space for students to speak, listen and reflect not only builds individual confidence and emotional intelligence, but also cultivates a compassionate, trusting and connected classroom culture. This tool serves as a catalyst for growth, empathy, and shared humanity.



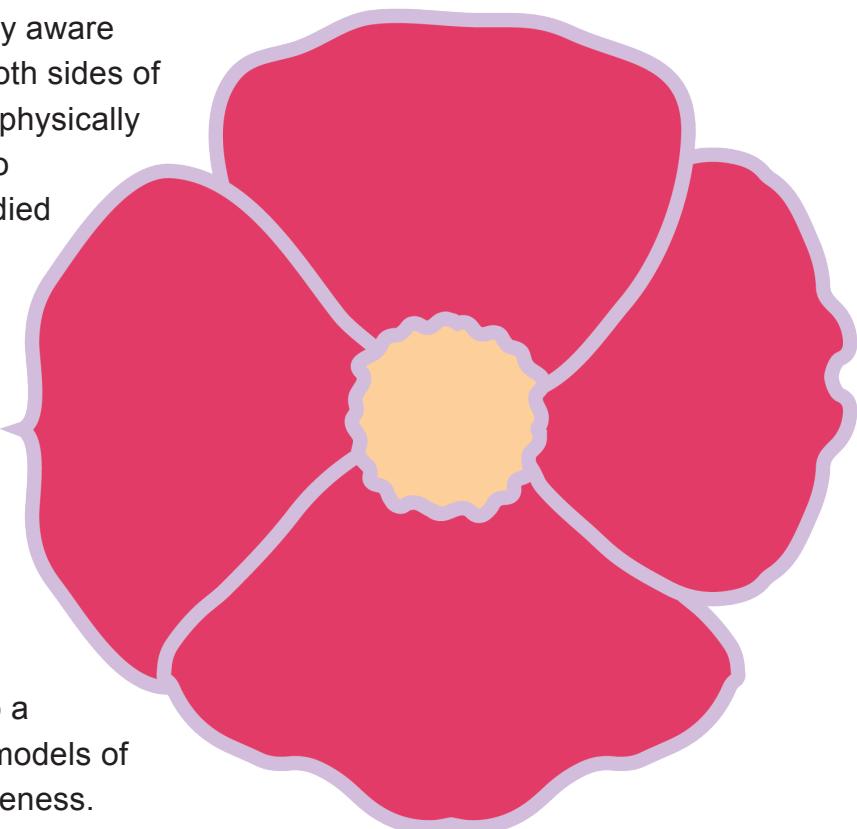
*Diego, Age 15, Haringey Learning Partnership, United Kingdom*

*I chose this picture because I like the sky colours (orange, yellow and pink). Looking at the picture, I feel relaxed. Using images has made it easier for me to explain [myself].*

# TOOL 2: NAVIGATING THE FIRE

## CONCEPT

*Navigate the Fire* is designed to address polarising or escalating classroom discussions in a safe, respectful, and emotionally aware way. It invites students to explore both sides of a polarity, not just intellectually, but physically and emotionally. This allows them to move beyond conflict into an embodied understanding with insight.



## CONTEXT

This tool is used when classroom discussions become tense and divided. Instead of avoiding conflict or letting it escalate, this process transforms polarisation into a learning opportunity, supported by models of communication and emotional awareness.

# EXPLORING POLARISATION

## WHY IT MATTERS

*Navigate the Fire* equips students to face conflict constructively, learn about themselves and others, and recognise the complexity behind every polarised issue. It reinforces the belief that dialogue, structure, and emotional insight can transform divisiveness into growth.

Zoé De Veseleer, teacher, UCLL, Belgium

*Ik wacht tot de bel gaat. Straks geef ik een les over gender aan een klas met voornamelijk meisjes. Ik ben benieuwd naar het verloop, want de vorige keer dat ik een les gaf over het onderwerp, zijn er krasse uitspraken gemaakt door de leerlingen.*

*I'm waiting for the bell to ring. I'll be teaching a lesson on gender to a class of mostly girls soon. I'm curious about how it will go, because the last time I taught a lesson on the topic, some students made some outrageous remarks.*



# TOOL 3: TELL ME YOUR STORY

## CONCEPT

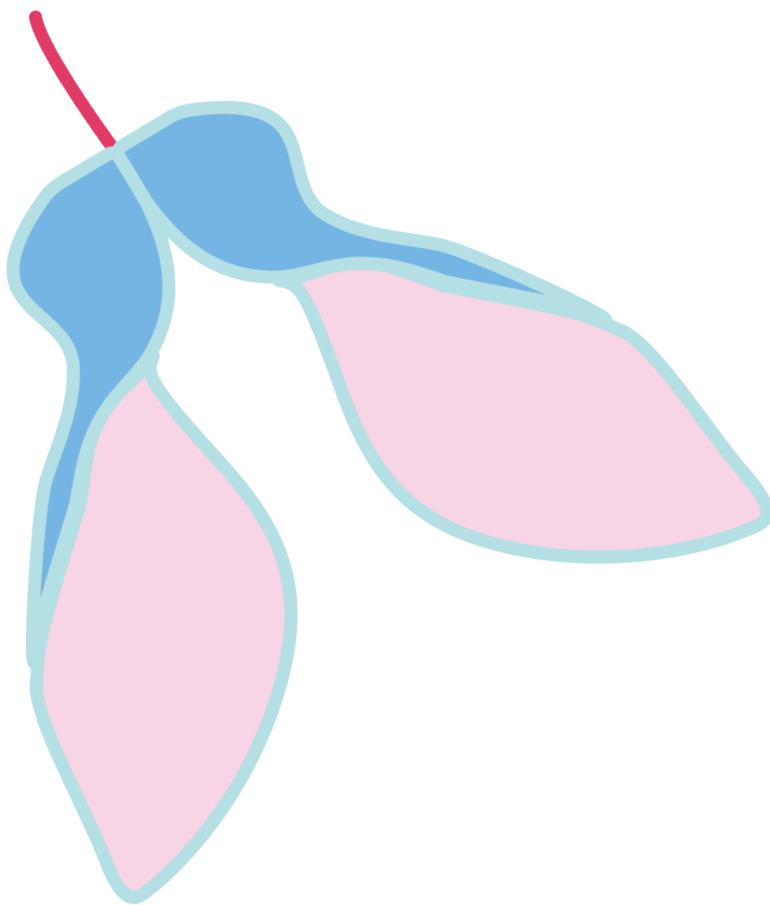
*Tell Me Your Story* is a visual storytelling tool that uses photography to help students explore perspectives, emotions, and complex social issues. It invites them to express how they feel about a topic through an image, and then engage in dialogue that encourages multi-perspectivity—seeing the same issue through different lenses.

## CONTEXT

This tool is ideal for addressing conflict or tension, exploring sensitive topics, starting deeper discussions on social or personal issues and/or introducing complex content with empathy and creative expression

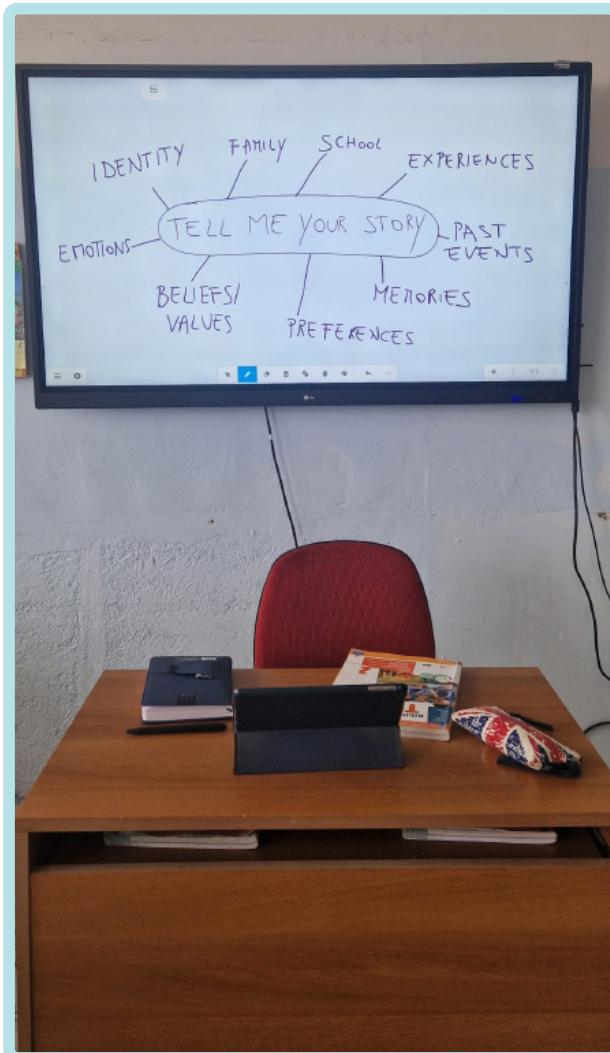
## WHY IT MATTERS

Images can express what words cannot. This tool gives students space to reflect, connect, and communicate through imagery—opening a path to richer conversations and deeper



understanding. In doing so, it helps students not only tell their own stories, but see others' stories with more openness and care.

# EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES



Maria Elisa Caronna, teacher, IC Cassarà Guida Partinico, Italy

Questa foto rappresenta tool 3 “Tell me your story”. L’uso di questo strumento ha avuto un impatto positivo sulle abilità linguistiche dei miei studenti. Penso che descrivere figure o fare foto sia un’attività importante da fare in classe. Incoraggia gli studenti ad osservare dettagli, ad essere creative, a sviluppare il loro pensiero critico ma anche a praticare ed espandere il loro vocabolario. Ho scattato questa foto in classe per mostrare come ho supportato i miei studenti usando un brainstorming con parole chiavi per stimolare la riflessione ed incoraggiarli a condividere le loro idee, pensieri e sentimenti.

This photo represents tool 3 “Tell me your story”. The use of this tool has had a positive impact on my students’ language skills. I think that describing pictures or taking photos is an important activity to do in class. It encourages students to observe details, to be creative, to develop their critical thinking but also to practice and expand their vocabulary. I took this picture in class to show how I supported my students using a brainstorming with key words to stimulate reflection and encourage them to share their ideas, thoughts and feelings.

# TOOL 4: PREDATOR AND PREY

## CONCEPT

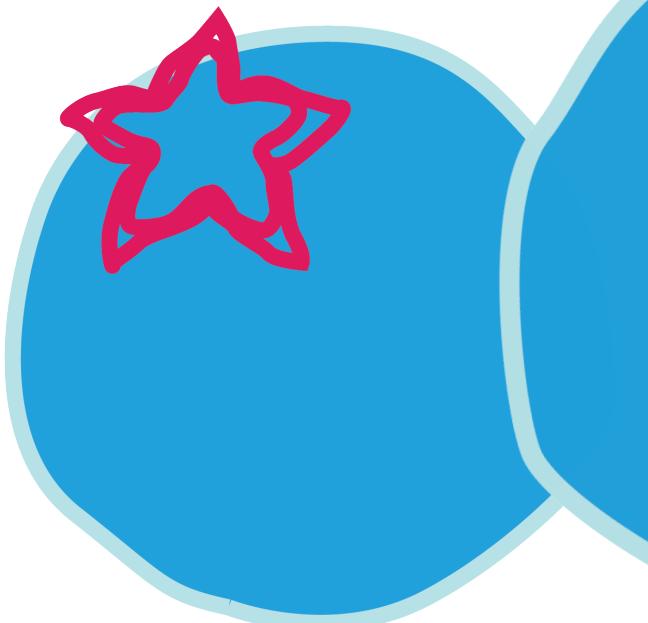
*Predator and Prey* is designed to help students feel, explore, and reflect on power dynamics in the world around them whether in school, relationships, or society. Through movement, metaphor, and deep discussion, it invites reflection on safety, vulnerability, and empowerment.

## WHY IT MATTERS

*Predator and Prey* is not just a game, it's a dynamic tool to explore power. It builds skills for agency, empathy, and safer relationships—within ourselves and with others. This tool turns movement into meaning—and invites students to reclaim power in ways that are authentic, collaborative, and grounded in compassion.

## CONTEXT

This tool is used to explore power and safety in real-life and social contexts. It encourages students to explore personal and collective responses to power through body and mind exploration.

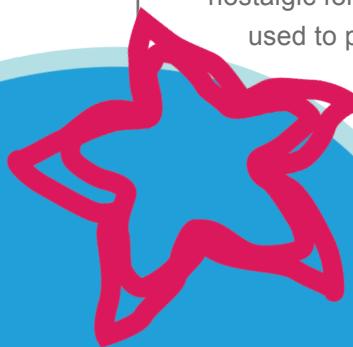


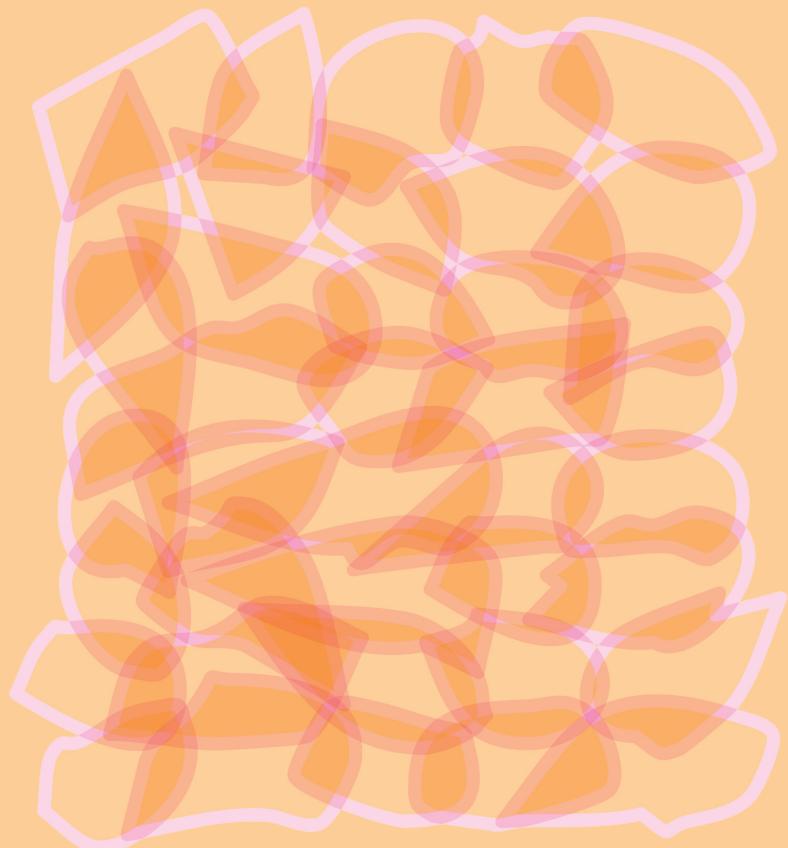
# EXPLORING POWER DYNAMICS

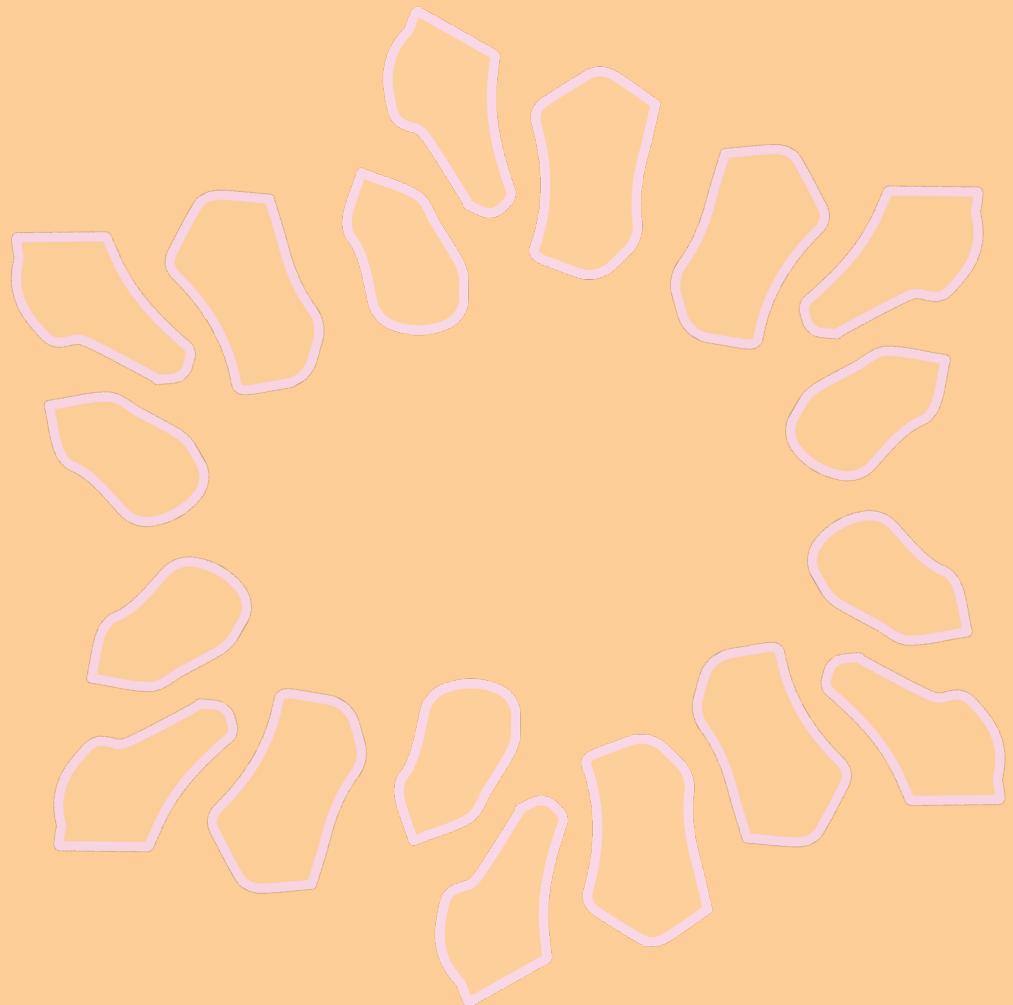
*Andrea, Age 16, DvM Humaniora  
Aalst, Belgium*

Het spelletje roofdier en prooi maakte mij nostalisch naar mijn kindertijd, toen ik speelde in de speeltuin.

The predator and prey game made me nostalgic for my childhood, when I used to play in the playground.







TEACHERS PERSPECTIVES

# TEACHERS PERSPECTIVE

The CARB project has been, at its heart, a journey into the inner worlds of teachers: their hopes, struggles, vulnerabilities, and the immense care they hold for the young people they work with every day. Across Belgium, the UK, Italy, and Finland, what we encountered was not abstract professional reflections, but deeply human stories of teachers balancing responsibility with a desire to nurture creativity, empathy, and resilience in their students.

Collaborating with teachers in each country was a reminder that education is never neutral. It is shaped by geography, culture, and politics, and it lives inside classrooms of children carrying the challenges of their time: loneliness, climate anxiety, inequality, identity struggles, and trauma. Teachers do not stand apart from these realities - they live them too. Yet what came through most clearly was their openness to new methods, to difficult emotions, and to the possibility that education can be both healing and transformative.

In Belgium, teachers approached the project with raw curiosity and vulnerability, reflecting on identity, protection, and preparation for an unpredictable world. In the UK, the tone was heavier, shaped by loss, trauma, and exhaustion, yet the training offered a pause

to reconnect with the heart of teaching. Italian teachers brought colour and passion, using creative tools to surface emotions, model vulnerability, and bridge divides between schools as a form of quiet activism. Finnish teachers arrived with sensitivity and curiosity, viewing creativity as essential to exploring empathy, identity, and voice, especially amid the uncertainties of their geographic and political contexts.

Together, these perspectives form a tapestry of teaching today: demanding, exhausting, yet full of possibility and potential. Woven through them is the value of EU collaboration; a recognition that the challenges teachers face cannot be solved alone, but through solidarity, resilience, and the belief that education, rooted in creativity and empathy, can be a powerful force for change.

In this chapter, we hear from teachers in Belgium, the UK, Italy, and Finland each bringing their own context, challenges, and hopes to the CARB project, yet together shaping a shared European story of education.



# TEACHERS FROM BELGIUM

## CONTEXT

Belgian teachers bring curiosity, excitement, and vulnerability to the training, eager to learn new tools, explore emotions, and welcome all perspectives. Nature imagery - waves, storms, and light - frames their reflections, as they seek to create brave classrooms where students can express themselves visually and emotionally. They see themselves as mentors, listeners, and space-holders, valuing collaboration and learning from peers to feel *not alone*.

“Giving them light, and become great leaders – because I didn’t experience it myself.”

“Do we need to protect them (students) or prepare them for the outside world?”

“Tools are nice but the interaction with the peers is what we need more often.”

## CHALLENGES

Challenges include questions of identity (“Am I just a teacher?”), self-doubt, and balancing protection with preparation. Teachers feel the weight of students’ struggles - loneliness, anger, vulnerable home lives - and sometimes feel anxious, powerless, or overwhelmed. Tools like *Navigate the Fire* highlight the importance of self-compassion and accepting that not every goal can be reached yet.

“Am I good enough?”

“We tend to get stuck, stuck in our identity or not feel seen for who they really are.”

## DREAMS

Teachers hope the project will inspire students to dream, face challenges, and see multiple perspectives. Creative methods - visual libraries, photography, and discussions - help develop empathy, express emotion, explore identity, and strengthen supportive teacher networks across Europe.

“Be kind to  
yourself.”

“I hope they  
(students) find  
hope in their life,  
no matter what  
happens.”

“Stand strong and  
tall: own voices where  
there are lots of rules,  
more freedom, keep on  
dreaming.”



Bloss Jacobus, teacher, TA Lokeren, Belgium

“Scepticisme overviel me bij het project, want hoe kan je nu zo'n heterogene en soms niet samenhangende groep zover krijgen actief te participeren? Ik realiseerde me dat deze diversiteit, net zoals bij gekleurde balpennen, geen afbreuk hoeft te doen aan het eindproduct. Ieder bracht zijn/haar eigen flair en kleur mee naar de opdracht.”

“I was overcome with scepticism about the project, wondering how to get such a diverse and sometimes disjointed group to actively participate. I realised that this diversity, just like coloured pens, didn't have to detract from the final product. Everyone brought their own flair and colour to the assignment.”

# TEACHERS FROM THE UK

## CONTEXT

The UK group included teachers, pastoral leaders, and teaching assistants from mainstream, alternative, and Special Education Needs contexts. Despite fatigue and stretch, they brought curiosity, openness, and a desire for tools to support students. Complexity was a key theme that teachers and young people navigate together. Training offered space to pause, share, and recognise “I am not alone.” *Tools like Our Tribe, Tell Me Your Story, Navigate the Fire, and Predator and Prey* helped explore identity, power dynamics, safe spaces, and emotions through images, debate, and movement.

“I hold hope for them until they can do it for themselves.”

“I’m feeling quite delicate; holding a lot of stuff.”

“Sometimes I switch roles in the day or even hold them at the same time and that is overwhelming.”

“I sometimes need to remember that I am a predator in the power dynamic.”

“There is little support in the education system for teachers.”

“We come from different backgrounds and today I saw we share the same challenges — I am not on my own.”

## CHALLENGES

Teachers spoke about trauma, loss, and systemic pressures, often feeling stretched while holding students’ struggles. They reflected on boundaries, vulnerability, and modelling healthy emotional expression.

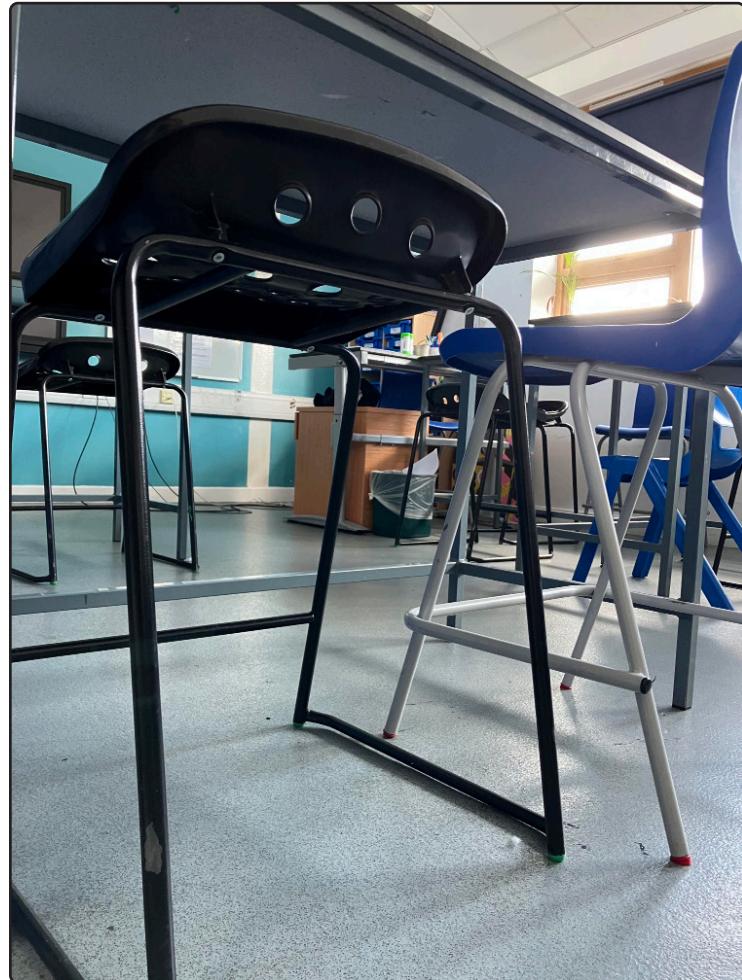
## DREAMS

Teachers hoped the tools would strengthen emotional literacy, create safe spaces, support student voices, and foster staff connection. They embraced making small daily impact, using creative methods, and empowering both students and themselves, planting seeds for lasting change.

“We are living with complexity. Young people are complex and we are also complex people.”

“We have to hold ourselves. Because we can’t take care of them (students) unless we take care of ourselves.”

“Offer little things, offer time, play.”



Mia Keating, teacher, Haringey Learning Partnership, United Kingdom

“Photo taken in my classroom after a fairly successful session with my small form, 4 boys and 1 girl. I used emotion prompt cards to carry out a check in. I still prefer using the simpler emotion cards because they struggle with the abstract a bit more. Being more familiar with the format, I did get some longer and more detailed responses.”

# TEACHERS FROM ITALY

## CONTEXT

Italian teachers came from diverse schools - innovative middle schools, vocational schools, and outdoor forest schools. Despite differences, they shared concerns for young people facing climate change, conflict, and inequality.

“We are parts of a jigsaw puzzle – each one of us represents a piece that is needed.”

“I am not a predator.”

## CHALLENGES

Teachers reflected on systemic inertia, language barriers, and uncertainties from global crises. Tools like *Predator and Prey* raised discomfort about power dynamics but also offered insights into safety, resilience, and inequality.

“It's important for teachers to model vulnerability and for this to be seen by children”

“You never finish learning.”

## DREAMS

Teachers hoped to use creative methods to help students express emotions, explore identity, and develop empathy. They aimed to model vulnerability, bridge divides between schools, enrich subject teaching, and create inclusive, brave spaces where young people feel seen, supported, and empowered.

“We are touched by what happens in the world: war, climate change, conflicts ... it is only through togetherness that we will overcome.”

“Through a game you can see the fear of the other – and you do not have to feel alone.”

“The tools make us open to listen to different perspectives.”



Silvia Valvo, teacher, IPSSEOA Pietro Piazza, Italy

“Ho scelto questa foto perché ricorda tutto quello che ogni partecipante si lasciava dietro o si portava con sé da questo progetto.”

“I chose this photo because it recalls everything that each participant left behind or took with them from this project.”

# TEACHERS FROM FINLAND

## CONTEXT

Finnish teachers work in a rapidly changing world where traditional roles are evolving. They prioritised equality, empathy, and safe spaces, carrying a deep moral responsibility for students' well-being. Reflective, sensitive, and highly trained, they approached creative facilitation as integral methods. They valued slowing down, personal sharing, and intimate spaces to address complex topics with honesty.

## CHALLENGES

Teachers felt overwhelmed by growing demands, balancing work and home responsibilities while navigating conflict, power dynamics, and difficult subjects. Language barriers and societal challenges such as trauma, disconnection, environmental worries added stress. They were mindful of "othering" and ethical risks in creative methods.

## DREAMS

Teachers were excited to gain new tools to support unheard voices, build resilience, and foster expression. They aimed to create brave spaces, open borders in teaching, collaborate across countries, and refresh their practice to inspire growth, empathy, and creativity in students.

"I'm torn in all directions - I carry a lot alone - it would be great to multiply myself."

“English is taking over Finnish: will our language survive

“We as teachers need to be the light for the future generations.”

“I am scared of conflict”

“Teacher is no longer just a teacher.”



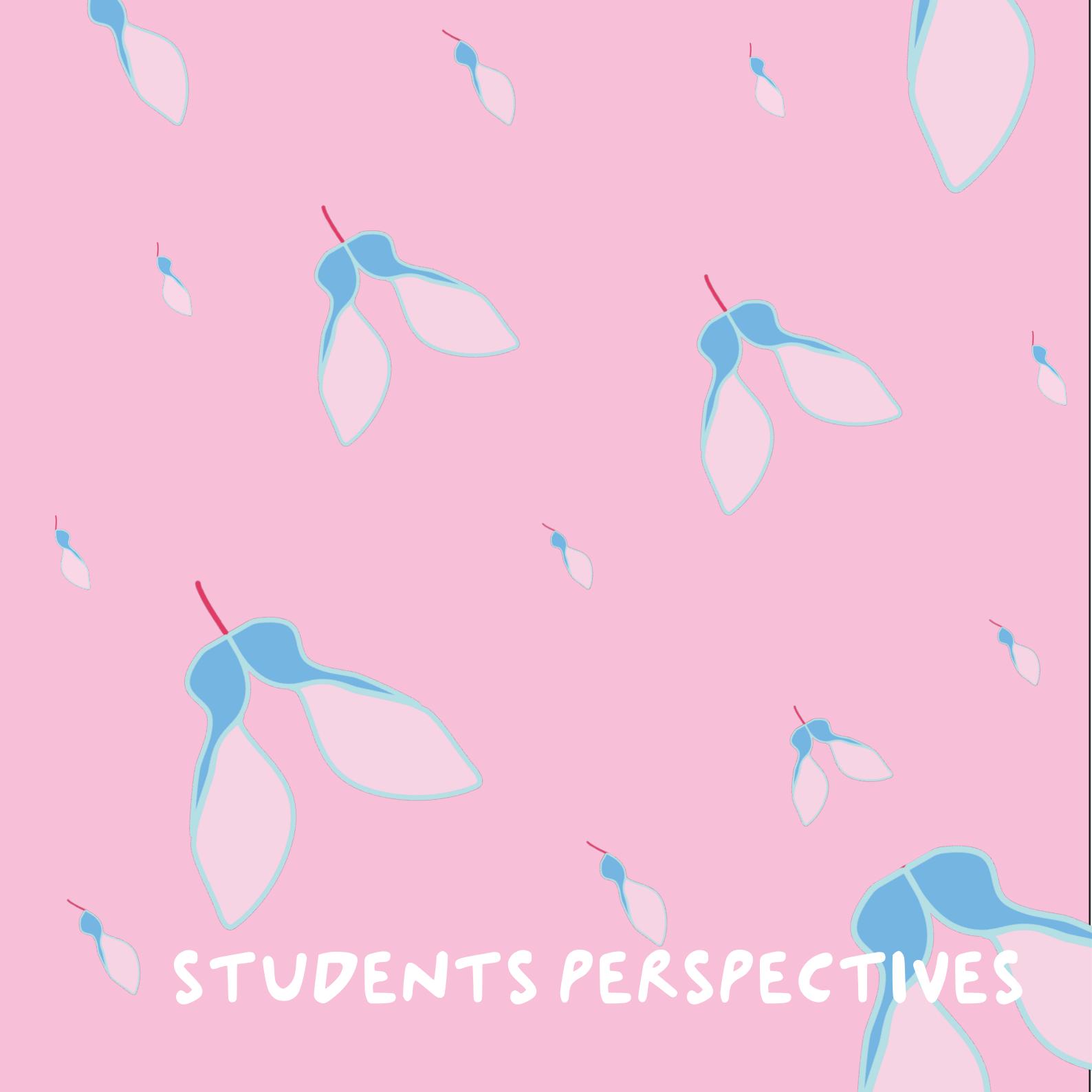
“Tools can help give voices to those that are unheard.”

“This leaves teachers hungry for more.”

“You are enough as you are.”

Roselyn Flores, teacher, Omnia, Finland

*When I look at this picture, the feeling of comfort and peace is what I feel. That feeling of being in your comfort zone. In this picture the trees and the sky are my comfort zone, they are the things familiar to me. In life we always focus on what's in front of us, on what is comfortable for us, like the tree in the centre of the picture. BUT we also have to be vigilant on the things around us, like the passing train on the back of the trees; it can be unnoticeable and fast to pass by. For me it represents opportunities. If we stay focused on our comfort zone, we won't notice the opportunities that pass us by; then it becomes missed opportunities, and we remain stagnant in life. But if we are just brave enough to step out of our comfort zone, we will notice all the opportunities that come our way and who knows where it would bring us; one thing is for sure like the trains that goes by, it will bring us to our rightful destination and it will bring us growth.*

The background of the image is a light pink color. It is decorated with numerous stylized leaves falling downwards. These leaves are primarily light blue with a thin cyan outline. Some leaves have a small red stem at the top. The arrangement of leaves is scattered across the frame, with larger clusters on the left and right sides.

STUDENTS PERSPECTIVES

# STUDENTS PERSPECTIVES

The CARB project not only illuminates the world of teachers but also opens a window into the lived experiences, creativity, and resilience of students. Across Belgium, the UK, Italy, and Finland, young people navigate the turbulence of adolescence, academic pressure, social challenges, and the uncertainties of a changing world. What emerged were not problems to solve but human stories of young people seeking to be seen, heard and understood.

Their perspectives reveal classrooms as spaces of negotiation, curiosity, and self-expression. Despite external pressures from family and society, students show adaptability, imagination, and openness to creative approaches. Through art, play, and dialogue, they explore who they are and how they belong.

In this chapter, quotes from students across all four countries are interwoven and placed alongside images. This mix highlights both universality and difference, revealing shared emotions that transcend borders while honouring local nuance and landscapes. Readers are invited to guess which country each voice belongs to, discovering that curiosity, doubt, and courage speak a common language.

Together, these voices form a collective portrait of Europe's youth of imagination, resilience, bravery and hope.



*Anonymous student, Unescoschool Koekelberg, Belgium*

*Hier kan iedereen samenkommen, het maakt niet uit of je in het 6de of het 1ste jaar zit.*

*Everyone can come together here, it doesn't matter whether you're in 6th or 1st year.*

*"This experience was a source of growth for me, because trust is the "glue" of friendship."*

*[Taking photographs] feels calm, magical, and mysterious, like a quiet winter night in nature."*

*"Without perspective, I feel a lot of loneliness"*

*"An image can be a reflection of feelings associated with anger, a feeling of heat that he experiences in the body when he is angry."*

“In [my country], we are allowed to express ourselves as freely as we want. We have the right to it.”

“Using images made it easy for me to explain myself.”

“I always feel a sense of excitement before going on a fairground, and I felt the same during the [CARB] game today.”

“The feeling that dominated the [CARB] game was gratitude, represented by fire. I’m grateful for this project, for the words and emotions that can be shared in this group. I feel lucky to be part of this with you all.”

“An image can give a feeling of peace and nature’s beauty, but also loneliness and isolation. It can show the quiet and stillness of [my] culture, which can feel both relaxing and empty at the same time.”



Michael, Age 16,  
Haringey Learning Partnership,  
United Kingdom

*I chose this picture because it reminds me of the morning when the sun comes up. I feel happy when I can see the sun. I found it hard to explain myself, the pictures help.*

“The sun is shining for us & put us in the spotlight - Not being afraid to take chances, not hiding ourselves.”

“I am very connected to the topic we have discussed today, that is, fears and hopes.”

“I tried to depict my emotional limitations that prevent me from using my full talent.

I feel like my own point of view of the world is sometimes limited.”

Rebecca, Age 14, IC Cassarà Guida Partinico, Italy

*[This image] is connected to a dear friend of mine who was by my side for many years, but then turned out to be a different person from the one I thought I knew. This is a gift she gave me when I turned 12 years old... I never expected to become her prey and for her to be my predator. In short, this experience was a source of growth for me, because trust is the “glue” of friendship.*

*È collegata ad una mia cara amica che è stata al mio fianco per tanti anni, ma poi si è trasformata in una persona diversa da quella che pensavo di avere conosciuto. Questo è un suo regalo quando ho compiuto 12 anni... Mai mi sarei aspettata di diventare la sua preda e lei il mio predatore. In breve, questa esperienza è stata una fonte di crescita perché la fiducia è la “colla” dell’amicizia.*



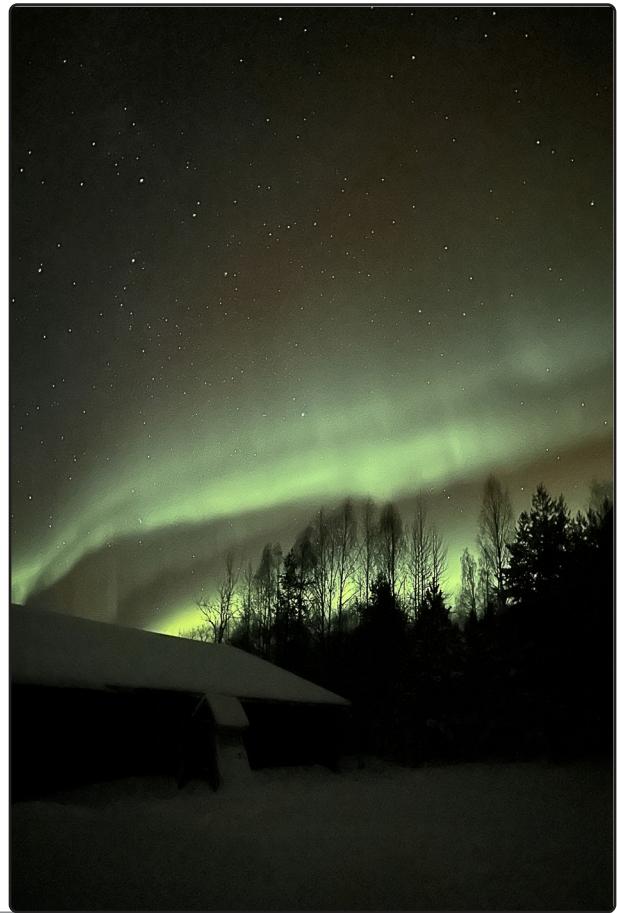
“During the [CARB] game, I experienced all sorts of emotions that left me with empty and mixed feelings.”

“I want to show that I can open up. I feel good and can be open, saying what I want without shame. I felt the same way during the game.”

“Images can show how stress impacts the body.”

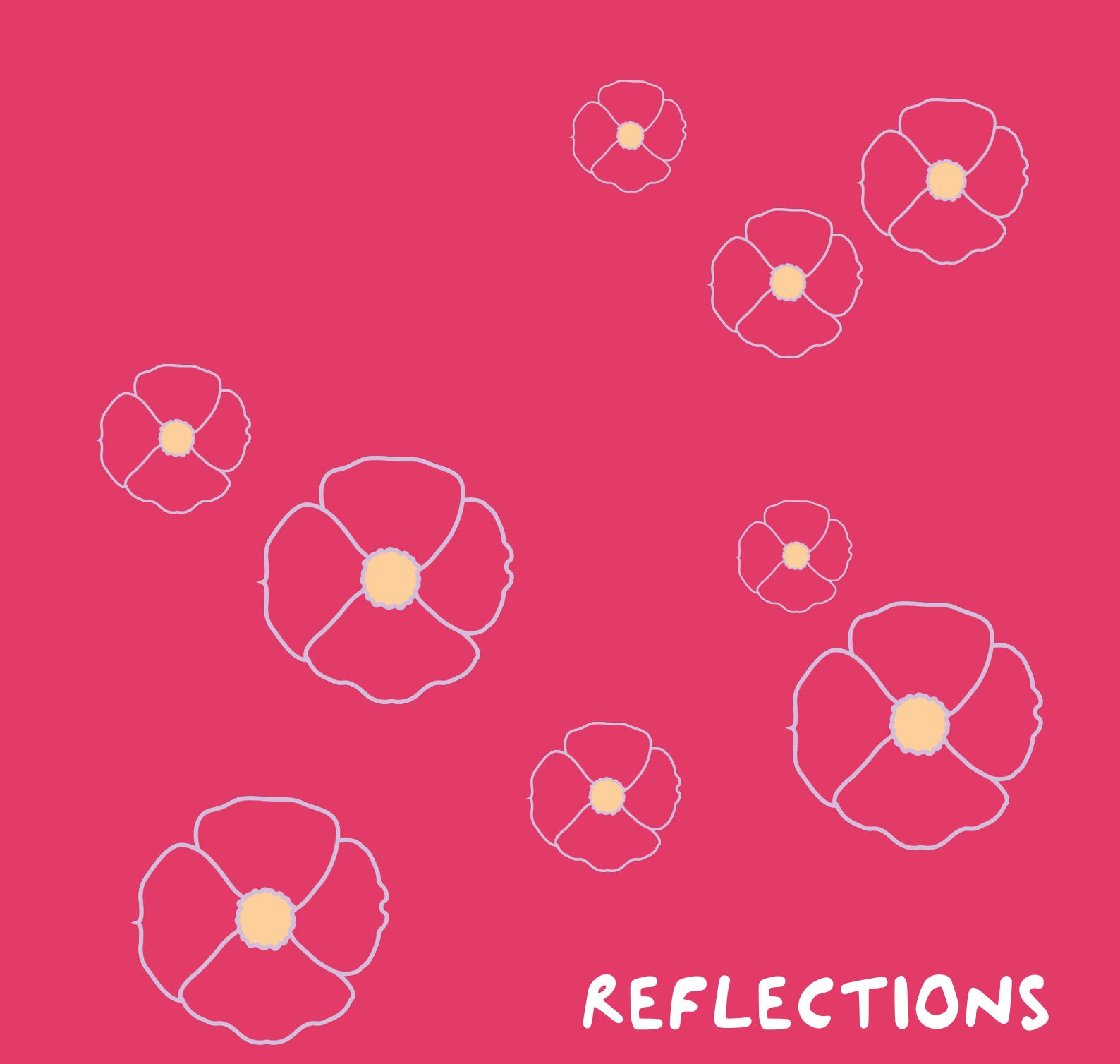
“I am an introverted, closed-off person and do not dare to say much or show my emotions.”

“An image can reflect the grey and depressive side of [my country] - a part I truly dislike. It's cold, colourless, and overwhelmingly bleak. It drains motivation and leaves behind a lingering sense of sadness.”



*Daniel, Age 17, Somero lukio Upper Secondary School, Finland*

*The photo shows the northern lights glowing in the night sky above snowy trees and a barn. The green light shines beautifully against the stars. It feels calm, magical, and mysterious, like a quiet winter night in nature.*



REFLECTIONS

# REFLECTIONS

## THE POWER OF LOVE

Perhaps, education is a form of love. Not romantic love, but the kind of love rooted in genuine care for the person in front of you. Yet in teacher education programs, this is not a subject of study. In staff rooms, it is rarely mentioned. But in our CARB teachers groups, it was all about the power of love.

A powerful insight emerged: only unconditional love—especially when working with students facing multiple vulnerabilities—could truly bring them ‘back to school’. It was this ‘love’ that allowed students to reconnect with the idea of school as a community, and with the possibilities of learning itself. The CARB tools supported this process, but it was the teachers’ attitudes and awareness that amplified the impact.

Love, we observed, was not only between teacher and student. It flowed between students, between teachers, and even between teachers and the broader practice of education.

This project transformed not only the students, but the teachers as well.

Students rediscovered meaningful learning, and teachers, too, found new meaning in their work. Some, who had been close to despair when we began, expressed joy in teaching once more.

This was the true power again: it reconnected, revitalised, and reminded us why education matters. When we gathered in Palermo (May 2025) with all our CARB teachers, the words most frequently repeated were passion, empathy, confidence, and joy.



Silvia Valvo,  
teacher, IPSSEOA  
Pietro Piazza  
Italia, Italy

*Questa foto  
rappresenta ciò  
che voglio fare in  
futuro, racchiude  
la mia felicità.*

*This photo  
represents what I  
want to do in the  
future, it contains  
my happiness.*

## TRANSFORMATION TAKES PLACE IN LIMINAL SPACE

Transformation is not always the same as change. Change can be a clear, goal-oriented process, often carefully planned. Transformation, however, might look different. In uncertain times, the direction and destination may be unclear or obscure. In education, when working with students facing multiple challenges, their learning paths are rarely straightforward.

Reforms follow one another rapidly, rarely achieving their intended goals. Teachers can burn out and students often drop out at alarming rates, even in higher education. What is happening?

Perhaps we are neglecting the *liminal* space inherent in learning. Guiding people through transformation. We've learned that we need to pause.

We experienced this first-hand in the CARB project. Our project proposal evolved through two iterations, our insights deepened, and even our partnerships shifted, bringing in new strengths. Within our team, we navigated highs and lows, differences and tensions, often needing to pause and listen to what the project itself required. Our photographic check-ins helped us reconnect and reflect.

Each nation's schools and teachers went through their own transformation visible in



*Nyota Mweze, project partner, HUMMUS, Belgium*

*Not feeling totally ripe to use all the tools, navigate through fire and predator and prey, and how to use them yet.*

our exhibitions. They reveal change within students, classrooms, teachers, and whole schools.

True transformation requires holding space and creating a supportive environment where authentic learning can emerge. Perhaps this is where our true value lies: holding space for teachers and students to learn, speak up, and co-create a more inclusive, welcoming school community.

## A MORE DEMOCRATIC APPROACH

From our very first sessions, it became clear to us as trainers that bravery and resilience had to be explored *within* teachers themselves before they could nurture these qualities in their students. We acknowledged that school is not always a safe space. While we can set group agreements, we must often work in what we call *brave spaces* - places that involve real risks: trauma, re-traumatisation, intimidation, even violence. To navigate these spaces, teachers need to find bravery and resilience within themselves.

A major challenge that surfaced in our discussions was that many schools remain deeply hierarchical and, at times, psychologically unsafe for children and staff. In contrast, the CARB tools are grounded in democracy—listening to all voices and creating an environment where everyone feels welcome as their whole self. This tension felt important for us to acknowledge within the work.

This strengthened the teachers' sense of bravery, inviting them to voice their perspectives openly and respectfully. It also deepened their resilience—helping them stand



*Catherine Jonhson, teacher, Haringey Learning Partnership, United Kingdom*

*This was above [a] hotel room. The symbolism in Buddhism of spiritual enlightenment & rebirth. The lotus & ability to emerge from the mud and bloom also represents the potential for renewal, healing, and transformation.*

firm when guiding students from *safe* to *brave* spaces. Many teachers loved the debate tool and began using it not only with their students, but also with colleagues and even with the school board.

## REPETITION IS THE RECIPE

Six months after teachers had been using the CARB tools intensively in their classrooms, we asked them to reflect on their experiences. They reported several challenges - all of which can be understood under the broader theme of *resistance*:

- Students felt pressured to give socially desirable answers.
- Students struggled to speak from the “I.”
- Students were reluctant to open up or participate.
- Some refused to speak and others said inappropriate things.
- Vulnerability was difficult for students to show.

Interestingly, while the source of this resistance lies in the tools, to counter this resistance is to use the tools. What we discovered is that teachers who worked with and not against the resistance - respecting students' responses - saw resistance decrease over time. More than that, these groups of students often moved from resistance to resilience. With repeated use, resistance waned and resilience grew. Strikingly, students reported seeing their

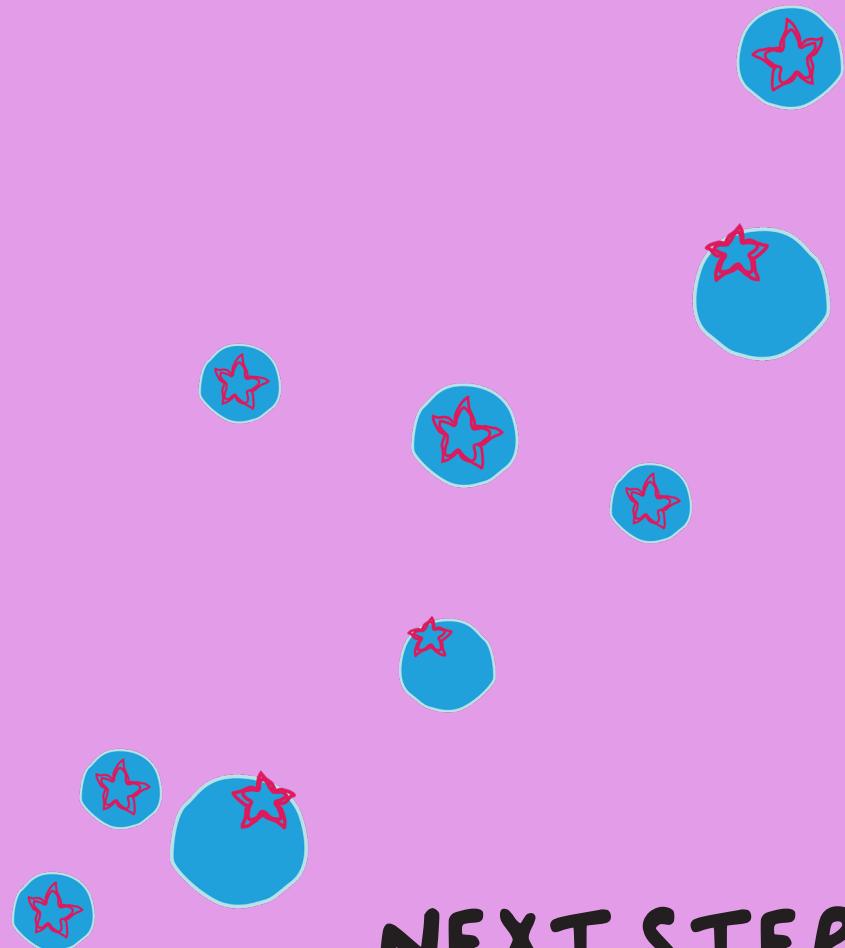
teachers in a new light - more human, more vulnerable, and less “all-knowing.” Both students and teachers were encouraged to step out of their comfort zones and stretch their boundaries. These moments of mutual vulnerability created the space for real transformation. The outcome? Stronger bonds between students and teachers.

The advice teachers shared with each other was simple but powerful: *be kind to yourself and try again.*

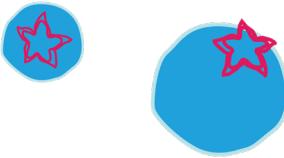


Heini Kelosaari, teacher, Somero Upper Secondary School, Finland

*The project has given colour to life and faith that each of us can flourish and find colours and shades for ourselves.*



# NEXT STEPS



## IMPACT OF THE CARB TOOLS IN OUR PARTNER SCHOOLS

During this project we have brought Deep Democracy to another level. We combined Deep Democracy methodology with creativity and constructed an alternative way of working with challenges between people in education.

The project invites teachers to embed the CARB tools into their regular classroom routines across subjects.

This ensures that the tools become part of everyday pedagogy rather than isolated activities. The practices encourage a steady and stable change of student behaviour as they become familiar with a new way of approaching disagreements and challenges.

The creativity alongside deep democracy methodology allows teachers and schools to work on the challenges in a constructive yet personal and playful way. The creativity makes the process deeper and on the other hand



Lea Meisel, project partner, deep:black, United Kingdom

*This is an image of the mountain that overlooks the village my mum lives in. Impact to me, is giving people the courage to go into the unseen/unknown. It can feel a little scary and overwhelming because you don't know how far to the top but impact can change the feeling of anxiety into courage, excitement and curiosity.*

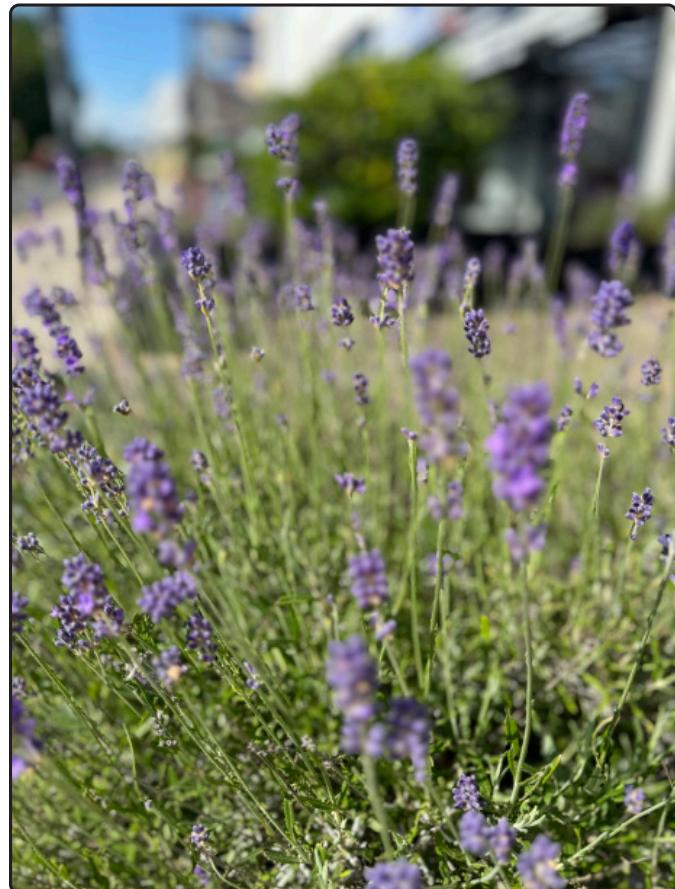
it allows new ways of participation and self expression.

All materials, including the CARB toolkit, instructional videos, and a comprehensive manual, are freely available online via the CARB website. This allows teachers, schools, and educational organisations to continue using and adapting the tools independently after the project ends. Teachers trained during the project act as multipliers, sharing their knowledge with colleagues and supporting implementation in their own schools and networks. We have already seen this taking place in many of the project schools and beyond. There is enthusiasm around the tools everywhere where they are being disseminated. The word is spreading!

The project includes creative elements such as photography and storytelling, which are designed to be replicable and adaptable. These elements can be used in many types of future workshops, well-being programs, and inclusive education initiatives. Students enjoy creative exercises, and it is also an effective way to facilitate lessons and broaden perspectives.

Project partner schools have already begun working on the future and they are rapidly creating ways to collaborate between schools

in different countries. They have applied the approaches to various subjects, trained new teachers in deep democracy approaches, and are developing greater confidence in working creatively. We are expecting new projects to emerge from the relationships that have developed.



*Trupti Magecha, project partner, deep:black,  
United Kingdom*

## HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

The CARB approach fosters resilience, bravery, and democratic dialogue in education. By equipping teachers with these tools, the project aspires to create a lasting cultural shift in how schools address social inequality, polarisation, and mental health. If the short-term result is that project partner schools use the methods in their daily practices then we could anticipate that the methods will be spread through the work force at each school and students adapt new ways of approaching challenges by becoming familiarised with the deep democracy approaches and creativity on

a regular basis. If something becomes familiar it has a greater potential for change.

## CARB BEYOND EDUCATION

Trained teachers have a key role in training others and spreading the tools. As some partner schools also had school management involved with the project there is a great chance that they will also apply the tools to challenges emerging with staff. Or if they simply want to improve workplace atmosphere

on a preventive basis they may make use of the tools. Participation and listening are the central elements of deep democracy and creativity. These are also at the centre of attention when talking about well-being at work or in any micro society. Thus employers can benefit from the trained teachers as they are able to facilitate such workplace well-being sessions.

*Trupti Magecha, project partner,  
deep:black, United Kingdom*



One of the outputs of our project were articles and social media posts. We have reached our goals and beyond. This has given the project and the tools larger scope for dissemination. The project has been a point of interest to many professionals, and they have been eager to hear and learn more. This could give us the opportunity to expand our target group and train on a larger scale during new projects. In addition, some magazines have written articles which have given other audiences information on the approach. These magazines have also brought the project and the tools closer to people, not just the professionals within the scope of the participant organisations and networks.

During the project we also had an associate partnership with Plan International. The Plan International global school program was especially involved. They educate students all over the world using various methods to spread the message of democracy and human rights. Our project offered a unique way of approaching important subjects with children



*Eeva-Kaisa Kinnunen, project partner, Laurea, Finland  
Flowing Forest*

and youth. They will continue working with the methods in the future and impact more professionals and communities.





# THE CARB TEAM

# UCLL



UCLL University of Applied Sciences offers 20 associate degrees, 22 bachelor's, and 9 advanced bachelor's programs across 8 campuses in Limburg and Flemish Brabant, Belgium. With 16,000 students and 1,750 employees, UCLL is a major higher education institution in Flanders. It specialises in teacher education, management, technology, health, and social studies, combining education with practice-oriented research. UCLL's Research & Expertise community includes 8 centres of expertise with over 400 researchers working on 340 projects. These centres engage in innovative research and services locally and internationally in sectors such as health, education, business, sustainability, and technology. One key centre, Inclusive Society, aims to foster an inclusive society characterised by equality, participation, collaboration, and impact. It focuses on research areas like inclusive learning, participation, accessibility, and equality, translating findings into practical tools for schools, companies, organisations, and policymakers.



# HUMMUS



# Hummus

Meerstemmigheid mogelijk maken

HUMMUS is a training and expertise centre founded by Fanny Matheusen, a pioneer of the Lewis Deep Democracy Method in Belgium. The core team includes Fanny, three co-workers, and 10-15 freelance facilitators, all trained by Fanny and bringing additional expertise in areas like inter-cultural competence, trauma work, life coaching, and more. HUMMUS focuses on co-creative processes for inclusive decision-making, conflict resolution, and dynamic dialogues. They offer tailored training, coaching, and supervision for diverse clients, including small family businesses, large companies, non-profits, professionals, and volunteers. HUMMUS is committed to justice for all, encouraging open dialogue and active listening to ensure all voices are heard.

# LAUREA



**AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU**

*University of Applied Sciences*

Laurea University of Applied Sciences, located in the Helsinki metropolitan area, educates future professionals in Security Management, Business Management, Health & Nursing, ICT, Service Innovation & Design, and Tourism & Hospitality Management. With six campuses, 8,000 students (1,200 in master's programs), 600 employees, and 30,000 alumni, Laurea aims to be an international leader in working life competence by 2030. Its strategic research areas include Coherent Security, Service Business, Circular Economy, and Sustainable Social and Health Care. Laurea engages in over 120 national and international projects annually, producing 300 publications and supporting 30 start-ups. The university employs a multidisciplinary, user-driven approach, particularly through living labs and its award-winning Learning by Developing (LbD) model. This model integrates students into real-life projects with businesses, fostering practical skills and work-life competence. Laurea has recently adapted the LbD model to digital formats, including virtual simulations and serious games.



# DEEP:BLACK



deep:black is an award-winning social enterprise offering creative workshops and training on provocative issues like conflict, immigration, mental health, and identity. Established in 2008 by two experienced mediators, the organisation specialises in using the arts to foster dialogue and connection. In 2015, deep:black won the HSJ Award for Innovation in Mental Health for its collaborative work with a local mental health trust and school. The organisation focuses on supporting young people's mental health in schools and is a partner in the NHS England's Trailblazer initiative. deep:black also trains professionals in incorporating creativity into their practice. Their projects include a film on young people with special education needs, an online photography project funded by the Arts Council England, and have published material on their unique and innovative approach. Despite its small size, deep:black has a significant impact through a core team of qualified practitioners and professional artists, evaluated by Dr. Nick Barnes.

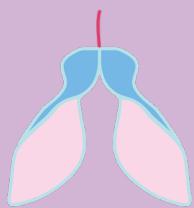
# CESIE



c e s i e  
the world is only one creature

CESIE is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation based in Palermo, Italy, established in 2001. Dedicated to cultural, social, educational, and economic development at local, national, European, and international levels, CESIE promotes growth through active participation and diversity. Inspired by Danilo Dolci's work, CESIE combines research and action using innovative learning approaches. The organisation operates through six thematic units: Adult Education, School Education, Migration, Youth, Higher Education and Research, and Rights and Justice. CESIE collaborates with over 3,000 partners, including civil society organisations, schools, universities, and public authorities worldwide. Its international staff of over 70 people brings diverse qualifications and skills, united by shared ideals guiding their activities.





FINAL EXHIBITION

# FINAL EXHIBITION

**C**ARB (Creative Approach to Resilience and Bravery in Education) is an international project uniting educators from Belgium, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Finland to explore complex issues such as social inequality, mental health, and polarisation in the classroom. Through training in creative facilitation and Deep Democracy, teachers learned to co-create brave spaces, places where every voice can be seen, heard, and valued, while documenting their process along the way.

The images featured in this chapter have been exhibited in the final CARB exhibition in Belgium and are made by teachers, students, and project partners who captured their journey of bravery, empathy, and renewal. Each national context offered its own cultural cadence, yet all reflected a common belief in the transformative power of creativity and human connection. These images remind us that education is never neutral: it unfolds within cultural and political landscapes, inside classrooms alive with emotion, identity, and change.

This exhibition weaves together perspectives from all four countries to celebrate education as a dynamic ecosystem of resilience and bravery - a collective tribute to Europe's teachers and young people who continue to believe that learning can change the world.

We hope that these images offer inspiration and celebrate the incredible work all by CARB project partners, teachers and students. We are grateful to those who have shared their stories so generously.

# BELGIUM



*Nassim, Age 16, TA Lokeren, Belgium*

Mijn foto toont aan dat ik alles observeer en op alles let. Dat is helaas niet altijd goed. Meestal gooi ik er ook nog wat commentaar uit, en dat is dus iets wat ik wil vermijden.

My photo shows that I observe everything and pay attention to everything. Unfortunately, that's not always a good thing. I usually add a comment as well, and that's something I want to avoid.



*Lisa, Age 16, DvM Humaniora Aalst, Belgium*

Bij knuffels heb je altijd een gevoel dat ze luisteren. Ook geven ze je altijd een warm gevoel en zijn ze er altijd voor jou.

With cuddly bears, there is always a feeling that they are listening to you. They also always give you a warm feeling and are always there for you.

*Cindie Botteman, teacher, K.A.Koekelberg, Belgium*

All it takes is a gentle breeze for the wheel to start spinning, creating vibrant, colourful effects that draw us in. Similarly, just a bit of effort on my part, fuelled by the tools provided, allowed my students to express themselves freely—whether through writing, speaking, or photography—enabling them to shine and grow in countless ways.

Thanks to this, I feel I've been able to connect with my pupils on a deeper, more meaningful level.

This picture also captures the moments when there's no wind, and it stands still. Even when stationary, it remains beautiful to behold, serving a purpose even if it's not moving. Similarly, there are times when pupils have nothing to share. At first, I found this frustrating, but after reflecting, I realized that by simply listening, by being present, they were still engaging and learning in their own way. This experience reminded me of a lesson I've come to appreciate: even if I don't perceive something as a success, it might be

experienced differently by my pupils.

Be kind to yourself.



*Fanny Matheusen, project partner,  
HUMMUS, Belgium*

Growing connection on a canvas of challenges.

Groeiente verbinding op een canvas van  
uitdagingen.



# UNITED KINGDOM



*Yvonne Brown, teacher, Greig City Academy, United Kingdom*

This photograph was taken at the Isabella Plantation in Richmond Park. The azaleas are only in bloom for a few weeks each year. They represent fragile beauty. The reflection in the lake introduces a layer of stillness or introspection. The reflection is not a real flower, but a quiet echo of it - suggesting a haunting persistence of past emotions.

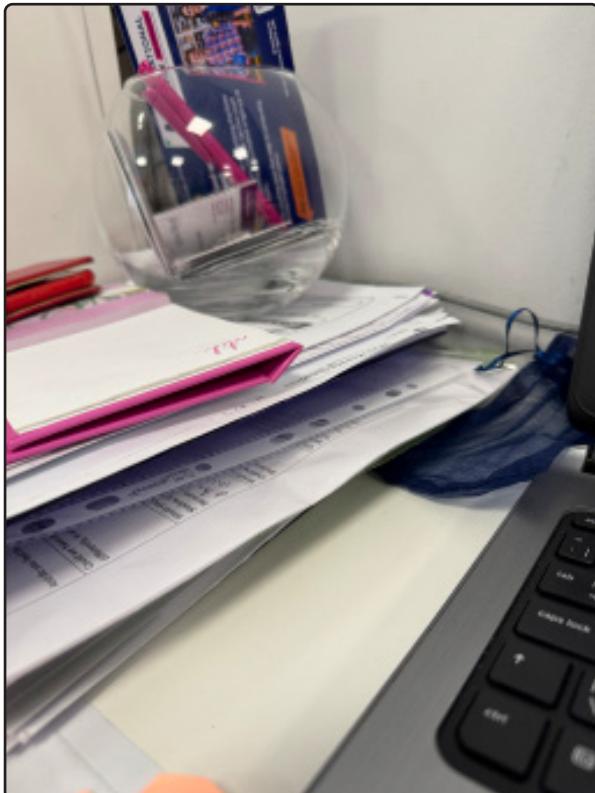
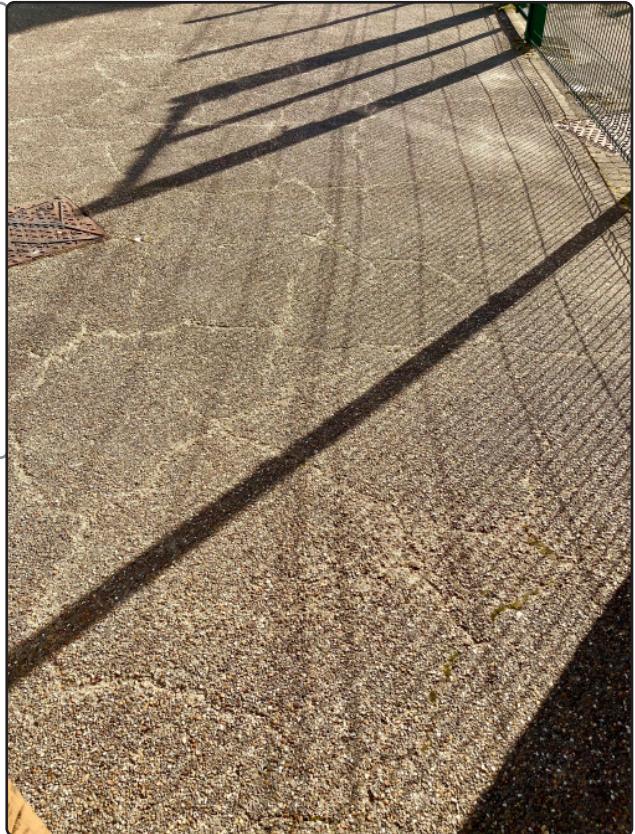
*Nicola, Age 15, Haringey Learning Partnership, United Kingdom*

I like the moon; it makes me feel calm and relaxed.  
I feel a bit tired, I didn't sleep too good. The moon  
lifted my mood.



*Catherine Johnson, teacher, Haringey Learning Partnership, United Kingdom*

Rear entrance of Commerce House at [Haringey Learning Partnership] HLP. The surface of connective concrete combines with shadows striking a pose. The relation integrates with the contrast of light, grey & dark, like a day at HLP.



*Kamal Magecha, project partner, deep:black, United Kingdom*

A lot of different things - sometimes messy, sometimes clear and with a container to hold it all together.

# ITALY



*Arianna, Age 13, IC Cassarà Guida Partinico, Italy*

Questo è il mio cane Diana. Lei è il predatore e io sono la sua preda. Ogni volta che mi vede, salta e mi graffia.

This is my dog Diana. She is the predator and I am the prey. When we see each other, she jumps and scratches me.



*Dora Macaluso, teacher, I.C.Cassara' Guida, Italy*

Sono grata per questi due giorni in cui ho sentito

nascere la speranza in un futuro migliore. Persone, culture e scuole diverse si sono incontrate con lo stesso obiettivo e la stessa visione: contribuire a costruire un'Europa pacifica e inclusiva! Un'esperienza meravigliosa il 9 maggio, Giornata dell'Europa!

I'm grateful for these two days in which I have felt hope for a better future. Different people, cultures and schools have met with the same aim and vision: to contribute to build a peaceful and inclusive Europe!

Wonderful experience on the 9th May, the European Day!

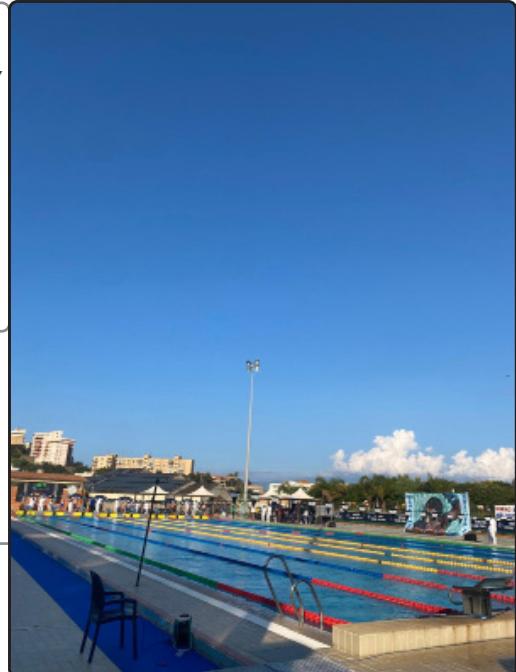
*Silvia Valvo, teacher, Istituto Professionale  
"Pietro Piazza", Italy*

Dove l'ansia scompare e il cuore si riposa

Where anxiety disappears and  
the heart rests



*Maria Elisa Caronna,  
teacher, IC Cassarà Guida  
Partinico, Italy*



Questa immagine rappresenta l'attività “preda e predatore” sperimentata nell’ultima classe della scuola media. L’ho scattata nel mio giardino per comunicare il feedback ricevuto. E’ un sorprendente fiore di mandorlo che annuncia l’arrivo della primavera. Il risveglio della natura mi ricorda una delle mie studentesse coinvolta nell’attività nonostante la timidezza, la paura di essere giudicata e la difficoltà di parlare inglese.

Ho provato diverse emozioni in questa foto: sorpresa, gioia, fiducia e speranza. Questo tool ha mostrato come l’uso della fotografia sia capace di motivare e coinvolgere persone aiutandole ad esprimere le loro emozioni e i loro pensieri senza barriera linguistica.

This image represents the “Predator and Prey” tool in the last class of middle school. I took it in my garden to communicate the feedback received. It is an amazing almond tree flower that is announcing the arrival of springtime. The awakening of nature reminds me of one of my students who got involved in the activity in spite of her shyness, the fear of being judged and the difficulty to speak English.

I experienced different feelings in this photo: surprise, joy, trust, and hope. This tool has shown how the use of photography is able to motivate and involve people helping them to express their emotions and their thoughts without the language barrier.

# FINLAND



*Helmi, Age 18, Someron lukio upper secondary school, Finland*

En tykkää: Tämä kuva esittää Suomen talvea, kun on lunta. En tykkää Suomen talvista, koska ne eivät yleensä ole lumisia toisinkuin tässä kuvassa. Sen sijaan on vain märkää loskaa tai ei lunta lainkaan.

Dislike: This picture presents Finland's winter, when there is snow. I don't like Finnish winters because they aren't usually snowy unlike in this picture. Instead, there is only wet slush or there is no snow at all.



*Sebastien, Age 18, Somero lukio Upper Secondary School, Finland*

Suomen maisema kesäyönä.

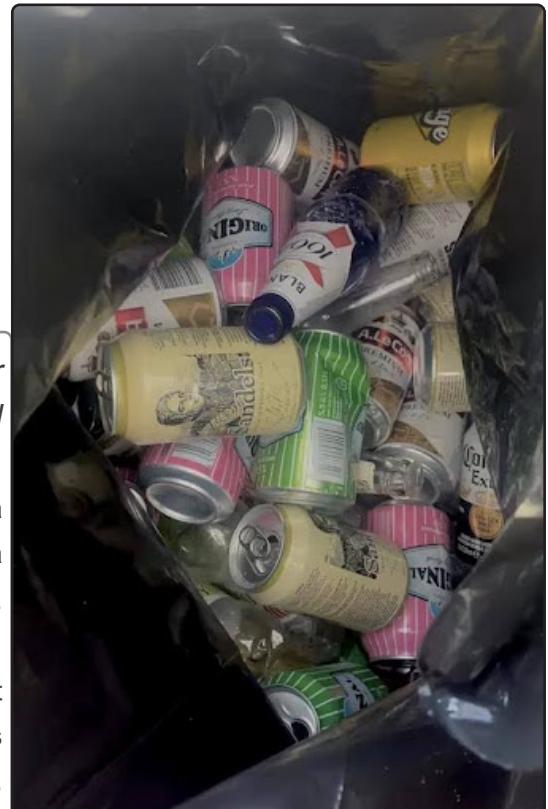
Finnish landscape on a summer night.



*Lumi, Age 17, Someron lukio upper secondary school  
Finland*

Suomen jäinen maa. Jää on liukasta ja aiheuttaa vaarallisia tilanteita.

The icy ground of Finland. Ice is slippery and causes dangerous situations.



*Linnea Sariola, teacher, Someron lukio upper secondary school, Finland*

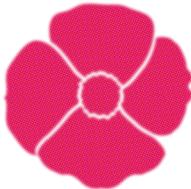
Alkoholikulttuuri Suomessa on asia, josta en pidä. En tiedä mitään surullisempaa näkyä maisemassa, kuin tyhjät kaljatölkit ja humalaiset ihmiset.

The alcohol culture in Finland is something I don't like. I don't know of any sadder sight in the landscape than empty beer cans and drunk people.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO:

Our Partner Schools and Participants



In Flanders (Belgium):

The students and teachers of DvM Humaniora, and GO! Technisch Atheneum Lokeren.

Special thanks to our Flemish partner school, GO! Atheneum Unescoschool Koekelberg.



In the United Kingdom:

The students and teachers of Haringey 6th Form College, Greig City Academy, and Hornsey School for Girls.

Special thanks to our UK partner school, Haringey Learning Partnership.

In Italy:

The students and teachers of Istituto Comprensivo Statale Cassarà - Guida, plesso Dolci - Mirto, and La Piccola Casa nel Bosco.

Special thanks to our Italian partner school, Istituto Professionale Pietro Piazza.



In Finland:

The students and teachers of Stadin AO, Helsinki Vocational College, and OMNIA, Vocational College Espoo.

Special thanks to our Finnish partner school, Someron Lukio.





We are also grateful to all the exhibition and filming sites across Belgium, the UK, Italy, and Finland for their support and hospitality.

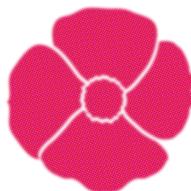
### Theoretical and Creative Contributions



We extend our sincere appreciation to the authors and thinkers whose work informed the theoretical framework of the CARB Project.

Within the field of Creativity, Art and Photography, we are grateful for the contributions of:

- Judy Weiser, author of *Phototherapy Techniques: Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*
- Ruth Davey, founder of *Look Again*
- Neil Gibson, author of *Therapeutic Photography: Enhancing Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy and Resilience*
- Photovoice, a non-profit promoting ethical photography for social change
- Dr. Nick Barnes, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Honorary Associate Professor and University College London (UCL)
- Wayne Campbell, author of *A Celebration of Demonstration* and *0710 Year One*



Within the field of Deep Democracy, we are grateful for the contributions of:

- Myrna Lewis, founder of *Lewis Deep Democracy*
- Arnold Mindell, author, therapist, and teacher in transpersonal psychology.

Finally, we offer special thanks to Calverts Cooperative and Arthur Stitt for their expertise and support in publishing and printing this book.



Creative Approach to  
Resilience and Bravery  
in Education