july, 2025

MULTI Letter

FIMEM

International Federation of Modern
School Movements



THE CORRESPONDENCE

FREINET PEDAGOGY

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Communication Commission - FIMEM

This new newsletter, after a few years of suspension, accompanies the rebirth of commission 1 “communication”. We hope to see many other colleagues from FIMEM member movements from all horizons join us to bring their point of view and their collaboration. We are excited about the idea of integrating more FIMEM members to exchange and share their educational experiences, reflections and concerns.

We hope that this multiletter finds the interest of all our comrades and arouses their desire to contribute. Thus, for the next multiletters, we invite you to send your articles, news and/or reflections of your movement, of the commissions of which you are part, of your pedagogical practices, as a member of the network of delegates or of the CA.

We dedicate this issue to interschool correspondence, as a Freinet technique that brings people together, at a time when we must fight and educate by all possible means, towards peace.

Here we find diverse voices, from different parts of the world, comrads who, putting this technique into practice, emphasize borders as spaces where people, with their wounds and dreams, search in each other's hearts to understand each other. It is the threshold where resistance meets solidarity, where the desire for union defies barriers and builds bridges of respect and fraternity. In this line, the struggle for justice and peace intertwine, reminding us that, beyond borders, we are brothers and sisters in the search for a more humane world.

Feel free to send your contributions to:
multilettre@ridef-fimem.com

Cooperatively

Editorial team

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Juan Fernández Platero - Spain
Karim Kaboré - Burkina Faso
Juan Carlos “Pato” Lira - Mexico
Cheikh Makhfousse - Senegal
Gabriella Varaldi - Uruguay

Hello comrades

The FIMEM Board of Directors, in this first issue marking the reactivation of the multiletter, thanks you for your contributions.

We are especially grateful to Commission No. 1 "Communication", which took the initiative not only to relaunch it, but also to work hard to make it possible.

We want this newsletter to be a meeting place where we can present our experiences, our rights and responsibilities, our pedagogical ideas and our political positions related to the issues that challenge us.

We want to make known what we do, what we must express to others, the ideas we must share, so that communication, exchange, empathy and solidarity - in short, the characteristics of our beloved FIMEM - can take place.

There will be space for movements and commissions, as well as for our pedagogical practices.

Our voice and the voice of our children and adolescents, in one place, to reflect together.

We invite everyone to participate in Commission 1 to form a dynamic editorial team. We also invite you to contribute articles that bring us closer to pedagogical practices and reflections on today's world, building our pedagogy for the Modern School through its cooperative and emancipatory approaches.

Cooperatively

CA-FIMEM

TOWARDS A HISTORY OF THE FIMEM's MULTI-LETTER

Michel Mulat
ICEM - AdF
File management FIMEM
France

Language of communication

At first, the Freinet movement was French. Even though it began to include foreigners in 1924, they were all French speakers. From 1927 onwards, in order to open up to the East, the French, led by Bourguignon, introduced Esperanto, which, despite a militant group, gradually disappeared in the 1960s*, supplanted by anti-communist American imperialism, which imposed English as the international language. The ICEM, announced in 1946, was made official within the movement the following year. It was not defined as French, which allowed Freinet to write in the first issue of L'Éducateur in 1954 that an Institut Coopératif de l'École Moderne pour la pratique des Techniques Freinet (Cooperative Institute of Modern Education for the Practice of Freinet Techniques) had been established in Uruguay.

*One of the consequences of anti-Red McCarthyism, which emerged in the United States in 1950 and is now rising from the ashes today.



Dans ce numéro

C. FREINET : Encore les poèmes d'enfants.

M. PORQUET : Que leur joie demeure.

Livres et revues

R. LALLEMAND : L'éducation en URSS (interview de Jean Rogissart)

PÉDAGOGIE INTERNATIONALE

L'Imprimerie à l'Ecole en Allemagne. - Les places de jeux de Stockholm. - Le cinéma et la délinquance juvénile (Italie).

L'Éducateur N°13, 1956

Neither Freinet nor France are mentioned in the ICEM acronym. The institute therefore represents the international Freinet Movement, whose press organ is L'Éducateur. L'Éducateur, initially until the war 'Prolétarien', systematically published news from abroad, placing particular emphasis on international correspondence through appeals and reports. All articles concerning international affairs, including those written by foreigners, were published in L'Éducateur, and work related to correspondence between classes was published in Les Gerbes.

ECHANGES

...*Interscolaires nationaux.* — Gorce donne lecture du rapport de Faure. Les échanges ont fonctionné, cette année, à part de rares exceptions, à la satisfaction de tous.

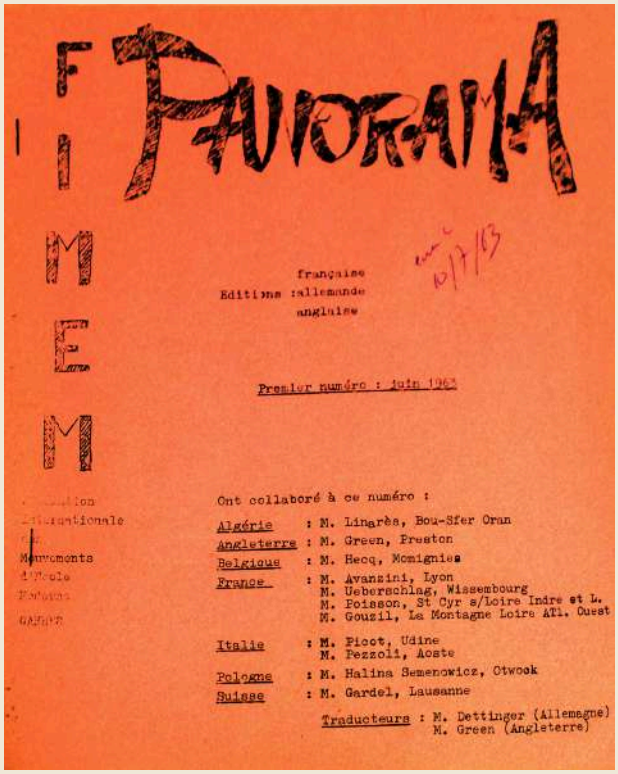
...*Interscolaires internationaux.* — Il est donné lecture du rapport de Bourguignon. Les échanges internationaux, d'un si grand intérêt, seront d'autant plus facile que l'étude de l'espéranto s'étendra et que maîtres et élèves espérantistes se feront de plus en plus nombreux.

L'Éducateur N°15, 1956, Congrès de Bordeaux

First multi-letters

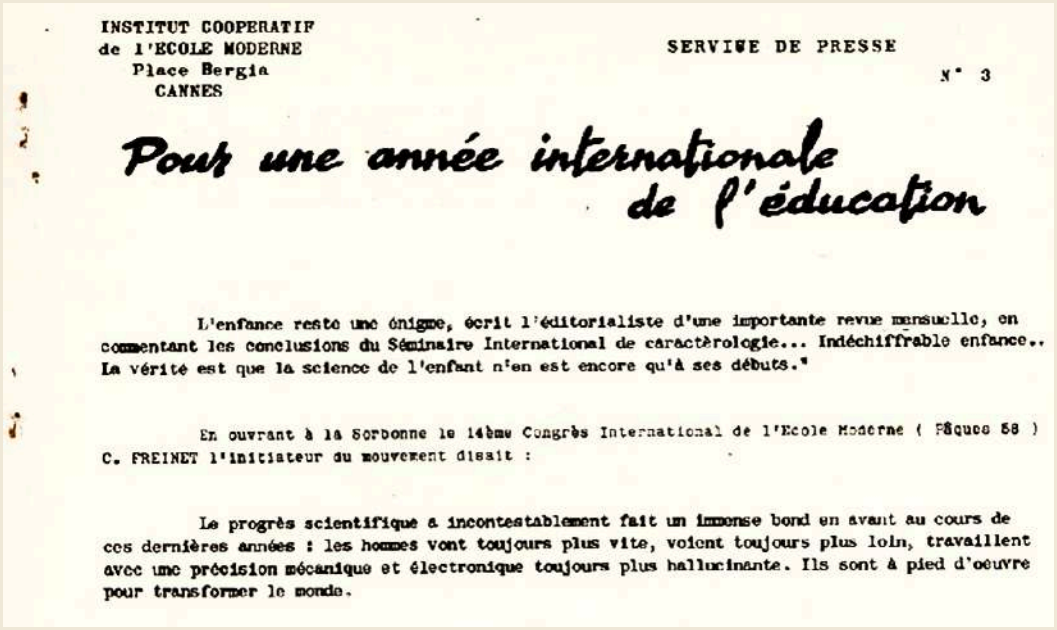
It is always difficult to determine origins. Indeed, from the very beginning of the movement he created, Freinet used carbon paper to write shared letters (bulletins) on his typewriter. The first quasi-official multi-letter could be the first circular sent to the pioneers of the movement in 1926. With the exception of Ripert in Oran, which was then part of French Algeria, the first foreigners to receive it were Ferrière (Switzerland) and Van Meer (Belgium). In circular number 2, Freinet emphasises the fact that postal deliveries abroad are too expensive. This was an argument that limited exchanges, which we will often encounter. The third bulletin added a new Swiss contributor. However, due to material conditions, these bulletins were one-way, written solely by Freinet.

In the July 1931 issue of La Gerbe, we find a long illustrated article in French from a school in Munich.



At the Nantes congress in 1957, the importance of international correspondence was once again emphasised, but it was somewhat forgotten. Working groups were also set up, and newspapers and a quarterly internal newsletter, known as the 'Multilettre', were published. It was to publish information on internal debates within the movements and reports on experiences. There were few authors, and they often used foreign journals that were sent to Freinet. But it was not until 1968 that the first real FIMEM meeting was organised. Previously, we only had French ICEM international congresses with reports in the internal bulletins of the invited countries. I find it difficult to find a rule or consistency.

In our digital archives, we find a large number of multiletters, taken care of by a country (Belgium, Italy, Austria, etc.), often on the occasion of a RIDEF, to prepare for it or to report on it. This means that a truly international journal, taken care of by a specialised commission, as Freinet had wished, did not really exist, except sporadically. Newspapers produced during a long RIDEF workshop sometimes take the title Multilettres. In 2003 and 2004, the 'Dans les revues' were set up, taking the form of an InfoNews to present the main titles of articles published in each movement. The last multi-letters were probably Senegalese (2006) and Mexican (2008), if we consider RIDEF reports as such.



INSTITUT COOPERATIF
de l'ECOLE MODERNE
Place Bergia
CANNES

SERVICE DE PRESSE
N° 3

Pour une année internationale de l'éducation

L'enfance reste une énigme, écrit l'éditorialiste d'une importante revue mensuelle, en commentant les conclusions du Séminaire International de caractèrologie... Indéchiffrable enfance.. La vérité est que la science de l'enfant n'en est encore qu'à ses débuts."

En ouvrant à la Sorbonne le 14ème Congrès International de l'Ecole Moderne (Pâques 58) C. FREINET l'initiateur du mouvement disait :

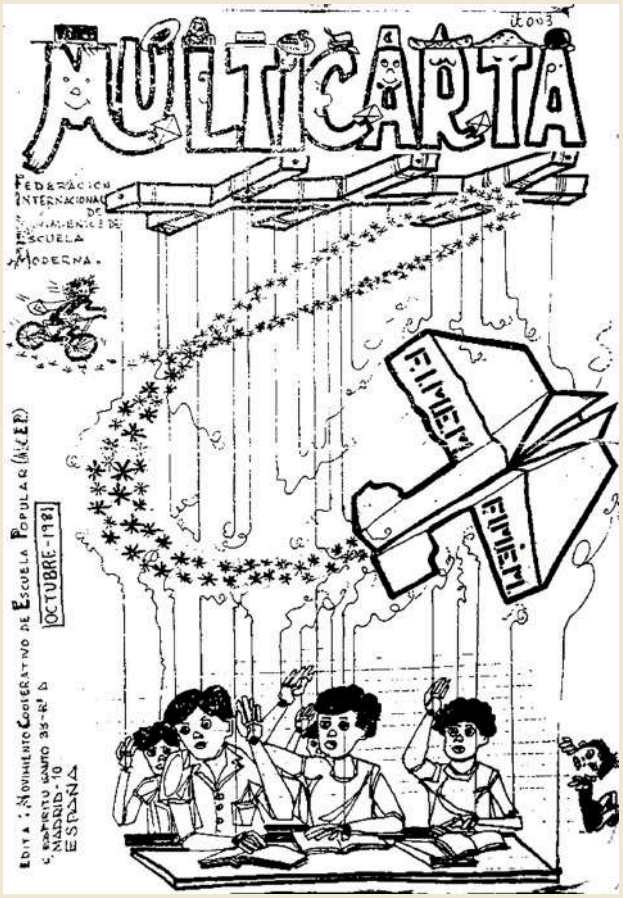
Le progrès scientifique a incontestablement fait un immense bond en avant au cours de ces dernières années : les hommes vont toujours plus vite, voient toujours plus loin, travaillent avec une précision mécanique et électronique toujours plus hallucinante. Ils sont à pied d'oeuvre pour transformer le monde.

Ajout à l'Éducateur de novembre 1958

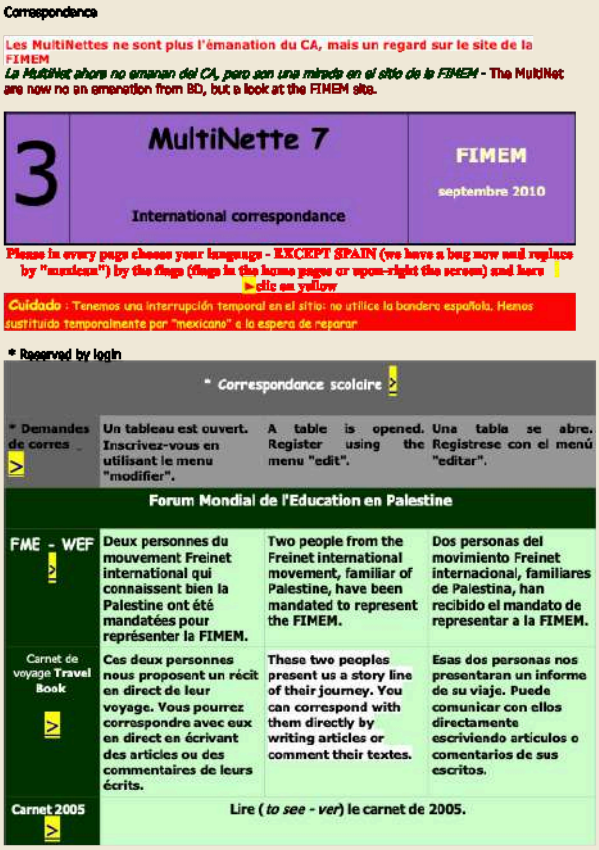
A new system in October 2007

The publication of multi-letters in magazine format is no longer feasible because they are expensive and because an increasing number of countries are finding their postal distribution systems less and less reliable. FIMEM has set up a website, which we hoped would be used. We have transformed the Multilettre into a newsletter, sent by email to all movements. It is reduced to a double-sided A4 sheet sent in .pdf format. It presents in a few words the new information that has appeared on the website with a link directly to the relevant pages. It is published in three languages. Eight issues will be published.

The multiNette will cease publication in 2010. It was supplemented by letters from FIMEM presidents summarising the main information from the Federation's movements concerning solidarity and educational difficulties in relation to government decrees. The INFORs were the minutes of each board meeting sent to all movements. The proliferation of media meant that the movements received about one piece of information per month concerning the life of the Federation. The main difficulty encountered was that all the information work had to be carried out by a very small number of board members.



Even today, very few people write on the website, despite the simplifications, whereas we had hoped that this tool, set up in a cooperative form between 2002 and 2012, would have enabled genuine communication within FIMEM. With the site closed, we have lost all its memory. Messaging services and 'anti-social' networks take up all our time without allowing for any real reflection. They give the illusion of communication when the interlocutor is nothing more than an insensitive machine. To reflect, we need a shared space, not a barrage of messages flying in all directions, freezing the moment.



Correspondance

Les MultiNettes ne sont plus l'émanation du CA, mais un regard sur le site de la FIMEM

La MultiNet ahora no emanan del CA, pero son una mirada en el sitio de la FIMEM - The MultiNet are now no an emenation from BD, but a look at the FIMEM site.

3 | MultiNette 7 | FIMEM septembre 2010

International correspondance

Please in every page choose your language - EXCEPT SPAIN (we have a bug now and replace by "mexicain") by the flags (flags in the home pages or upon-right the screen) and here ▶clic en yellow

Cuidado : Tenemos una interrupción temporal en el sitio: no utilice la bandera española. Hemos sustituido temporalmente por "mexicano" a la espera de reparar

* Reserved by login

* Correspondance scolaire >			
* Demandes de corres >	Un tableau est ouvert. Inscrivez-vous en utilisant le menu "modifier".	A table is opened. Register using the menu "edit".	Una tabla se abre. Registrese con el menú "editar".
Forum Mondial de l'Education en Palestine			
FME - WEF >	Deux personnes du mouvement Freinet international qui connaissent bien la Palestine ont été mandatées pour représenter la FIMEM.	Two people from the Freinet international movement, familiar of Palestine, have been mandated to represent the FIMEM.	Dos personas del movimiento Freinet internacional, familiares de Palestina, han recibido el mandato de representar a la FIMEM.
Carnet de voyage Travel Book >	Ces deux personnes nous proposent un récit en direct de leur voyage. Vous pourrez correspondre avec eux en direct en écrivant des articles ou des commentaires de leurs écrits.	These two peoples present us a story line of their journey. You can correspond with them directly by writing articles or comment their textes.	Esas dos personas nos presentaran un informe de su viaje. Puede comunicar con ellos directamente escriviendo articulos o comentarios de sus escritos.
Carnet 2005 >	Lire (*to see - ver*) le carnet de 2005.		

MultiNette N°7, Septembre 2010

We need a space where we can consult archived writings, including those from the previous day. Any committee that relies solely on individual archives on personal computers will be condemned to remain in the fleeting, the instantaneous and therefore the chatter without a shared memory. If we had used the website, we would not now be asking for the minutes of previous general meetings or the history of the Multilettres. This lack of memory is responsible for the permanent discontinuity within our federation. Not to mention the time we waste searching, believing we are saving time.

Those who hold this memory today are elderly. Who will we ask after they are gone?

March 23, 2025

SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE, A LIFE TECHNIQUE

Giancarlo Cavinnato
MCE
Italy



On October 15, 2018, the French post office issued a stamp commemorating Célestin and Élise Freinet.
A popular pedagogy.

«Boys, we're not alone any more», exclaimed Freinet in Jean Paul Le Chanois's film 'L'école buissonnière' (1949) by opening a parcel from a Breton village in his classroom in a village in the Alpes-Maritimes region of Provence, containing biscuits, shells, letters and the newspaper 'Le menhir'. It was in the 1920s.

Correspondence between classes and schools is a window on life: it takes into account children's family, cultural and social lives, and their experiences. It broadens their world, stimulates expression, awakens sensitivity and curiosity; it develops imagination, creativity, critical thinking, a sense of aesthetics, the pleasure of experiencing constant commitment, learning to accept the limits necessary for developing group projects: listening, discussing, choosing, deciding together, taking responsibility.

Correspondence involves entering into relationships with others to leave traces of oneself, to gain a better understanding of the world, to connect with others and to communicate. It's a modern school technique that prepares today's children to participate in tomorrow's world, by experimenting with expression, communication and cooperation.

Correspondence, a technique for living, as defined by Freinet, underpins the political and philosophical choices made by teachers in favour of children's rights, secular education, international cooperation and the values of justice, freedom, fraternity and peace in the world.

Writing is used as a tool for communicating not only 'in presence', but also with those who are far away.

We learn to write by experiencing writing not as a technical exercise, but as a practice that enables us to make contact with others beyond the boundaries of space and time.

Of course, nowadays, correspondence can be carried out using many other refined and rapid technologies: but how can we replace the exciting experience of learning to read together, by trying to decipher wall newspapers and increasingly complex collective letters hanging on the walls? And writing together, by dictating to 'those who already know' to communicate adventures, experiences and projects to pen pals?

We learn to read by reading real texts. And we learn to write by using writing to communicate immediately.

The need for correct, coherent writing does not become a search for adaptation to a model, but a search for ever greater efficiency in the construction of communication.
« Nous évitons d'écrire pour écrire »,

Freinet says: Every text must have an addressee and a purpose.

Correspondence is a collective undertaking involving the whole class.

Then, little by little, pairs of correspondents are formed, small research groups are formed and the results are exchanged.

The school that offers the experience of correspondence along the way offers an additional opportunity in terms of building a plural identity, relationships, building a context in which people are objects of interest and attention and feel valued, sought after and recognised. Moving from 'Me' to 'us'.

Correspondence is a collective task that involves a class, sometimes a whole school, sometimes even the whole region. From the outset, everyone participates, decisions are taken together, and the 'we' that emerges in the communication, in reference to 'our' school, 'our' activities, 'our' country, suggests that many different points of view are trying to recompose themselves into a single point of view.

The adventure becomes more stimulating if letters from classes in different countries are exchanged.



Exhibition of the correspondence between classes of Pays de la Loire (France) and classes of Emilia Romagna (Italy) 2014 Ridef de Reggio Emilia

But communicating with a class from the same country also allows us to discover the varieties of language, food, festivals, traditions, environments and cultures through which the richness of each country can be observed.

To mark the release of the stamp in tribute to Célestin and Élise Freinet, the Association 'Amis de Freinet' suggested exchanging letters by decorating the envelopes using the 'mail art' technique.

A teacher from the Freinet group in the Venice MCE, Cristiano Paganin, has since organised letter exchange groups with envelopes in the drawings and colours of each child, organising exhibitions of envelopes and letters and extending this network to many countries, as far afield as Latin America (Uruguay, Brazil, Mexico).

This project was exhibited at the RIDEF 2023 educational fair. Oaxaca, Mexico.





2018/2019 envelope exhibition in Venice



The corresondence arrives in Uruguay. Exhibition.

For contacts
Giancarlo Cavinato gccavinato@gmail.com
(correspondence between classes in Italy and other countries)
Cristiano Paganin maestrocristiano@libero.it
(correspondence networks between classes and schools through mail art)

SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE AT PAIDÓS:

An experience beyond our borders

Isolda Zapiáin Garduño
MEPA
México

Children's communication has its own codes and goes beyond a specific space, culture or language. The work we have done at Paidós with school correspondence shows that children from different regions, countries and languages generally have the same concerns and wish to share and ask similar questions according to their needs, interests and ages.

Corresponding with children from other countries, Spanish speakers or speakers of other languages, has led us to discover and generate new communication strategies between children and teachers.

Curiosity and motivation are naturally generated when receiving a letter from someone you don't know, but, in a particular way, receiving letters from abroad exacerbates these emotions in the face of the truly unknown. Knowing where the letters come from, what language they speak, or discovering an intermediate language between the correspondents and us, has been exciting.

Our guide in letter writing has been primarily the questions that arise in our students; attempts to understand the cultural practices of their correspondents. This is evident in the questions they ask. These questions have guided geographical and ethnographic research to understand more clearly how they live, on which continent, in which region and in which climate. Music and images have also led to a better understanding of other cultures, allowing children to ask better and more interesting questions to their senders.

There are individual letters where everyone builds a bond with their new friend. They can be read in the group if the recipient agrees and, if he or she agrees, his or her response can become part of the groups' life book. The collective letters are read, analysed and answered as a group, in a collective correction work. The texts have a strong affective charge. Many of them contain profound comments from children's lives.

Correspondence shows children's intimacy and expectations

Hi Walter: My teachers are very patient with me because I am hyperactive. I don't have a father because he died when I was 5 years old.

Friend Miguel: Do you have a girlfriend? I don't know if I have one or not. Do you like someone in the classroom? I do.

Friend Johanna, I am Aischa. With this letter I hope that we will have a great friendship. I say goodbye waiting for your letter and if you come to Mexico I invite you to my house.

The language difference raised the question of how to communicate with non-Spanish speakers. For this we found in English a means of direct use as a social practice for such communication. English then became a living language that allowed us to communicate with our Bulgarian correspondents.

With correspondence in English, we work longer than in Spanish because it involves translating the letters that come to us, writing the replies, translating them and rewriting them when necessary. The individual letters are always accompanied by a collective text, which brings back a lot of things that the children cannot write in English in their personal letters.

Questions from school correspondence.

- From Germany! Wow!
- Where is Bulgaria? How can we communicate with them if we don't know Bulgarian? Is that how they write? And what does it say there? (In front of a text in Cyrillic)
- And how will we carry the letters?
If they speak German, who is going to read our letters to them?
- Chile is far away, what language do they speak? Chilean? (Pre-school question)
- What do they play in Chile?
- Do they celebrate the Day of the Dead?
- I'm also in 4th grade and I'm also 10 years old. Do you have siblings?
- Does snow fall in your country?
- Does Father Christmas exist there?
-Do they play football like here?
- Do you have beaches?
- Why do you write in cursive?
- My favourite food is enchiladas and hamburgers. What is your favourite food?

School correspondence, another important Freinet legacy, has opened many windows to the unknown, to the new, to compare and admire the differences, to share what we like and are passionate about, to show our images and be enchanted by new ones.

It is a space for spontaneous research and production of ideas, emotions and encounters.

THE CORRESPONDENCE THAT ARRIVED WITH THE MOUVEMENT

Thaís Tkatchuk Ferreira
Brasil

I cannot share any experience of interschool correspondence without first telling you how correspondence came about for me. In my years as a teacher in a Freinet school, I did not attach much importance to the practice of correspondence. Importance is perhaps not the best word, perhaps 'priority' is more appropriate. In fact, I had never prioritised correspondence in my class. That was until February 2023. It was from then on that I began to see correspondence in a different light and to give it real importance and priority.

Before 2023, I participated in my first Freinet Movement meeting. It was July 2021 and REPEF was holding a REMFA meeting, which was virtual due to the Covid-19 pandemic. At that time, I was not really involved in the Movement, but as I was a teacher at Escola Curumim, the institution that hosted the meeting, I was able to participate in the process of organising and offering workshops.

I fell in love with the experience of exchanging with other teachers who practised Freinet Pedagogy and this led me to participate in the REMFA Meeting in Uruguay in February 2023. This was the first big event in my history with correspondence. Those were days of productive and vibrant life. A great bond was formed between all participants. We could feel the love and cooperation in the air and it made me realise that participating in the movement is a very safe way to better understand the working tools developed by the educator Célèstin Freinet. Participating in these meetings brought to light the essence of his pedagogy, which is built through sharing, meeting with others, with others, in others and in oneself.

I returned to school re-evaluating my practice and organisation of work with my 5th grade class, the Universal Element Class. I brought objects, photos, videos and many experiences from Uruguay to share with the children. This sharing generated a lot of curiosity in the class and ended up resulting in numerous projects that were developed throughout the year. This year I really felt immersed in the Freinet 'spirit'.

The history of correspondence in the Elements of Nature class began with the arrival of letters from Mexico. Also at the REMFA meeting I met Isolda, a 5th grade Spanish teacher at the Paidós School in Mexico. As soon as I arrived in Brazil, we received the first letters from Mexico.



Iso had photographed the letters and emailed them to me as one document. They were unaddressed, so I printed them all out and handed them out randomly to the children. My class was bigger than Iso's class, so a few pairs were formed to answer the letters. That moment of handing out the letters stayed in my memory. It was a unique moment for the class and also for me. The children were very excited and curious. They walked around the room with the cards in their hands, showing them to each other. It was an event! The letters were obviously written in Spanish, so in addition to 'deciphering' the letters from the Mexican correspondents, the children also embarked on the challenge of translation.

They answered the letters and I, at the time, was busy correcting the writing with the children.

Letters answered and corrected, almost all with illustrations as well. I scanned the letters, put them all together in one document and at this point, the letters already had their addressees. I sent. Every day someone asked me if the reply had arrived yet.

The correspondence revealed its social potential and the motivation for reading and writing it was generating. Life was in the classroom and learning took place through the senses. The class continued to communicate with Mexico throughout the year and a total of 5 letters were received and sent.

Looking mainly at the letters that came in, I began to realise the importance of focusing on the children's free expression and authorship. Because the learning came from understanding the social function of writing, the moment they started to write for a real interlocutor. It was then that I realised that I didn't need to correct the letters. The children would do it organically, from the experience and exchange of writing and reading, from the need to be understood, especially in other languages.

I began to value and see the exchange of letters as a powerful tool for developing countless skills in children.

Writing with meaning is the main thing, but the exercise of free text loaded with feelings and accounts of experiences, customs and tastes, can transform children's relationship with work. Correspondence helps us to go beyond our school 'bubble':

> 'Writing only makes sense if we are forced to use it to communicate our thoughts beyond the reach of our voice, beyond the barriers of our school. (FREINET, 2001, p. 38)

It was not enough to have this experience of exchanging individual letters with the children in Mexico, there was a desire on the part of the children to correspond with Uruguay. As soon as I returned from REMFA Uruguay, as I mentioned, I showed them many things from the trip and, from that, many interests arose. The children then decided to do a survey and write a collective letter to send to a school in Uruguay, whose teacher Gabi I also met at the REMFA meeting. They wrote a collective text on the blackboard and then copied it on paper to send. Each child drew a picture, we made an album with everything and sent the letter via post to Uruguay. Months went by and Gabi and I always talked to each other to find out the status of the mailing. I don't remember how it happened, but we discovered that the letter was 'stuck' in 'customs', maybe because of its weight. Gabi had to go there to 'rescue' that envelope, which finally reached the hands of his group in Uruguay.

More months passed and the children's anxiety hung in the air. 'Did they receive our letter?', "Has the reply arrived yet?", "When will they reply?". This process of waiting for a response was a learning moment for both me and the children. The expectation was great and I felt some fear that the delay would discourage them from this process of actually corresponding physically, via snail mail. But that expectation was there, alive, waiting.

It was only in August that we received the answer. And it did not come in a conventional way. Glaucia, director of our Curumim School and then a member of FIMEM's Board of Directors, attended a Freinet Pedagogy meeting in France and met teacher Gabi, also a member of the same board, who, fearing that her correspondence would be 'confiscated' again by customs, sent us the reply to that correspondence through Glaucia. The reply arrived from Uruguay and travelled to France before arriving in Brazil. As soon as I received it I addressed it to the children. It was late and the day was rainy. The mail did not arrive in an envelope like the one we had sent. This was another Event! We received a small blue cloth backpack with the words 'Uruguay' written on it. Inside were papers with letters, rings, alfajores, sweets, bookmarks, paper clips, coins, among other items. If the expectation before receiving the answer was great, imagine the euphoria when they saw everything they were receiving.

I couldn't open all of that in the children's place. That moment belonged to them. So I asked how we could do it. They decided to choose two people to open it and show it to everyone together, before each of them could look at it in detail. That day, I saw my students very happy and excited about what could come out of that blue bag. They did their best to remain calm and appreciate this gift, and suddenly, silence filled the room. Those who tried to get in front to get a better look or tried to hold the hands of those in charge were warned by their classmates. Cooperation, affection, and respect took over the Elements of Nature Group during that experience.

At that moment, another universe opened up to me. Correspondence wasn't just an exchange of letters and drawings.

It could go much further. And the children realized this along with me. In that moment, many windows opened up for us. We could share much more about our lives, culture, and customs, beyond the words written in those letters. A few weeks ago, a REPEF colleague shared a quote from Freinet, which instantly reminded me of this moment and the reflection I made with this class:

> Every month we prepare a package for our correspondents: each student brings a small package for their personal correspondent, with their name and address. This is what they send: newspapers, postcards, toys, photographs, a pocketknife, and sometimes even valuable gifts. In addition to these personal gifts, our shipment must include a shared portion: chestnuts, walnuts, marbles, almonds, oranges, and apples—enough for everyone. The package is sent with solemnity, and the sending must be carried out by the students, who will follow its route and anxiously await the reactions." (FREINET, 1974, p. 125)



How had I not discovered this before? How had I not thought of this before? I learned more about correspondence by practicing correspondence with this class, and in practice, I noticed how much this stimulated the exchange of experiences and socialization with other children and cultures. Life was present in the production of free texts in the letters, and the function of reading and writing made sense and facilitated the children's practice of reflection and reflection on writing so they could truly communicate what they wanted. And more than that, the exchange of knowledge, sharing experiences, insights, expressing themselves freely, authentically, lovingly, and with pleasure, was what moved me most. By reading and observing the characteristics and information shared by children from elsewhere, they began to feel the need to know more about themselves, what they liked, what they did and experienced, in addition to wanting to share discoveries about what they studied, and also to investigate the environment in which they lived, comparing their realities with those of other children.

This experience captured many principles of Freinet Pedagogy, as by experimenting with inter-school correspondence, they broadened their worldview and knowledge production, shaped by the free expression and social meaning of their work, rather than by directed, formal, context-free writing. All of this makes me wonder: "What would this year have been like if I hadn't participated in these Freinet Movement meetings?"

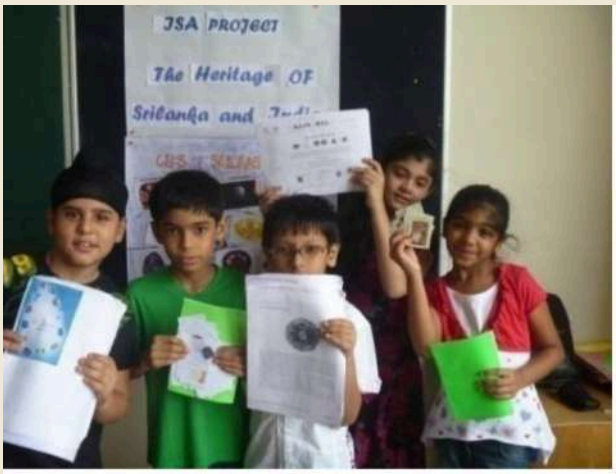
BORDERLESS BOUNDARIES BETWEEN NATIONS VIA CORRESPONDENCE

Pooja Pradhan
India

I started my international collaborative projects journey in the year 2012 when exchange learning was just a word for me.

The real feel of it came when I partnered with almost 8 countries and started different projects from the school curriculum with the overseas students. A waow learning was visible in the students of both the countries where they exchanged learning through video conferencing, letter writing via e-mails.

It not only raised the learning bar of the students but also the facilitators who were so organised, resourceful and tech savvy when the overseas teachers planned together. The whole team of mentors across all the 8 collaborative projects were so enthusiastic to see their friends online face to face and share their learning via presentation, role plays , music, art work, PPTs etc.





They shared the hardcopy via parcels exchanging the national symbols, sweets , stationery items etc.



This correspondence is a part of our school and every year minimum 7 collaborative projects are taken with the students with different countries which benefits the students of the different countries under study to develop respect for each other , their country at the same so much lifelong learning.

The 8 projects included

- The Heritage of India and SriLanka Correspondence with Wayamba Jayasankha College , SriLanka
- Olympics and Paralympics (India and UK) Correspondence with Tonge Moor
- Culture Of India, China and Bangladesh



INTER-SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE FOR MY PERSPECTIVE

Tadayoshi Sakai
Japón

I experienced inter-school correspondence for about six months, from September 2020 to March 2021. It began when I received an inquiry by email from Uruguay. At the time, I was not a homeroom teacher but a science specialist, so I suggested the idea to the sixth-grade teachers. They agreed willingly, perhaps because the idea of communicating with a country as unfamiliar as Uruguay in South America was novel, and also because many of the teachers in that grade were young and open to new challenges. Another contributing factor was that English was the subject of our in-school research, and there was a shared understanding that English learning should not end with pattern practice, but be used in meaningful contexts.

The sixth-grade students were ones I taught social studies to. When they said, “Teacher, I heard we’re going to start communicating with people in Uruguay,” I could sense their excitement about interacting with children from another country.

As far as I recall, the first letters we received from Uruguay were self-introductions. Students took the letters and asked their homeroom or English teachers, “What does this say?” Some students noted that the English letters were long despite English not being the writers' native language, just like theirs, while others showed interest in the Spanish that was included. As a reply, our students wrote letters introducing themselves. They thought carefully about how to present themselves, writing about their hobbies, favorite foods, and sports. When it came to idols or anime, they wondered, “Will they understand this?” and engaged their imaginations to think about how Japanese cultural elements might be perceived.

After sending the letters, the students were eagerly awaiting a reply. When I teach social studies, they would ask, “Has the reply arrived yet?” I would say things like, “Not yet—it was just sent,” or “Maybe it’s arriving around now.”

The second set of letters from Uruguay introduced their food, popular sports, festivals, tourist spots, and conveyed the charm of their country. Coincidentally, at the time we were studying the English unit "Where do you want to go?" so, at the end of the unit, the students researched Japanese prefectures they wanted to visit.

They presented their findings using "can do" expressions and printed their presentation materials to send to Uruguay. They aimed to showcase the appeal of Japan beyond major cities like Tokyo, utilizing integrated studies time for this project. Additionally, they wrote a heartfelt class letter, which we also sent.

Here is the content of that letter from students:



Hello. How are you? We are doing well. Thank you for your lovely letter.
We are also 11 or 12 years old and will attend junior high school for three years starting next year.
COVID-19 is still spreading in Japan, but we are currently able to attend school five days a week. We are enjoying our time together in class. To avoid getting infected, we wash our hands and disinfect daily.
It is autumn here now. In Japan, we call it the “season of appetite,” because there is a lot of delicious food.
Are there any special seasonal foods in Uruguay? Have you ever tried Japanese food? Our recommendation is fresh sushi. Also, green tea and matcha are famous in Japan. We’ve attached some photos.
Japan has hot springs, which are perfect for this time of year. If you ever come to Japan, please try them.
In Japanese winter, you can hear people outside calling out “Ishiyakiimo~” (stone-roasted sweet potatoes), selling them from trucks.What kinds of autumn and winter traditions are there in Uruguay?
On New Year's Eve in Japan, we watch various TV programs and eat soba noodles. On New Year’s Day, we eat osechi (traditional New Year food) and fly kites. We’ve attached photos.What do people in Uruguay do for New Year’s?
Among Japanese youth, bubble tea and idol groups are popular. What is trending among young people in Uruguay?
Also, Japan experiences tsunamis. When earthquakes and other disasters happen, tsunamis can occur, which is scary.
We look forward to meeting you someday. Please come visit Japan.
Please take care and stay healthy.

Reflection on the Experience

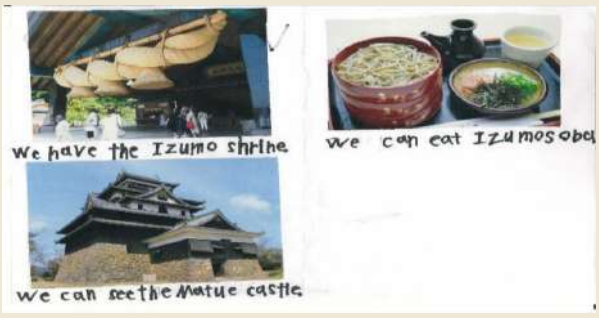
The value of inter-school correspondence lies in how an extraordinary world suddenly enters the students' everyday lives. It makes them realize that the school, which often feels like a closed space, can actually connect to the broader outside world.

Inter-school exchanges between members of FIMEM are especially reassuring compared to other experiences I've had, because there is a sense of familiarity and trust that comes from shared values.

However, one challenge is that the school year systems differ between countries due to their educational calendars, leading to long breaks during which communication is difficult.

With only two exchanges, students may come to see Uruguay as a familiar country, but not yet as a place where they have personal connections—such as a specific friend named X.

Six months was too short a time to develop that level of connection.



Still, with advancements in digital communication, real-time exchanges are becoming more feasible. This could lead to networks that go beyond just two schools and allow us to address global contemporary issues across regions and nations.

Although the correspondence with Uruguay has ended, since this was my first attempt at inter-school communication, it became a valuable experience that helped me realize its significance and the possibilities for future expansion.



MY EXPERIENCE OF WORKING WITH SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE

Gisèle Thérèse EFOUBA,
President of CA
CAMEM

As a member of the Association des Enseignants Camerounais pour l'école Moderne (AECEMO), I wanted to experiment with school correspondence, which is a powerful tool for learning, free expression and communication. It enables a link to be established between pupils, classes and teachers for a variety of exchanges and facilitates cooperation.

During my many travels, I expressed the wish to work on school correspondence with a primary school in Senegal, which was approved by Mr Papa Meissa, President of the Association Sénégalaise (ASEM) and put me in touch with Mr Oumar Seck of the Ecole Célestin Freinet in Dagana, Senegal.

The pen-pal project was then presented to the teacher, Marianne Yvette Essinga Olinga, and her CE2 pupils at the Ecole Primaire Publique d'Application Groupe II (EEPA II) in Nanga-Eboko, Cameroon. They adopted it and were very moved to learn that they were going to hear from pupils in another country.

The actual work began with a letter we sent to the Senegalese pupils, in which we presented our school, our locality and ourselves. The frequency of communication depended on the reception of the letters and the subjects were varied; at the end of each letter the pupils asked a series of questions.

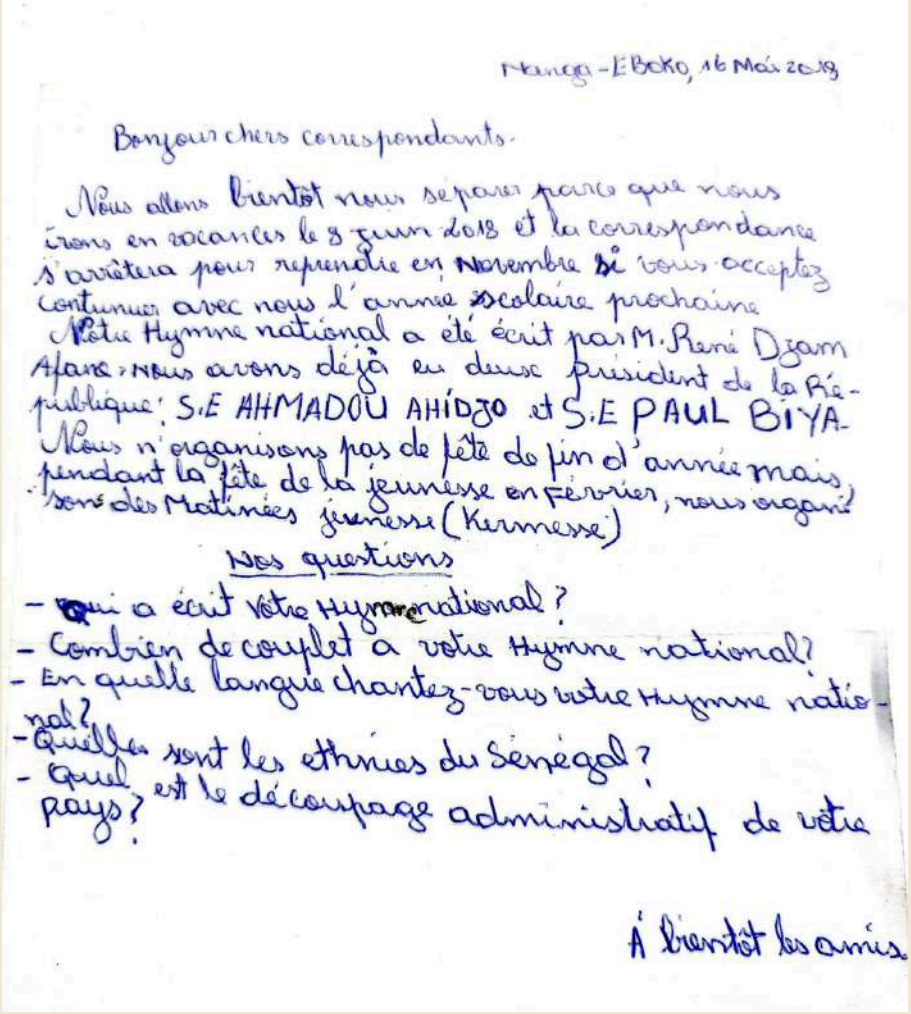
In order to write the letters, the groups were formed, each of them taking down the ideas that would be included in the final collective letter. At the end, the leader of each group read out their ideas, which were then noted on the board and, together, the final letter was written, correcting any mistakes at the same time, which enabled us to revise various grammar rules, then typed (slowly) by the pupils. As the school didn't have an email address at the beginning, the letters were sent to me and I had the pupils read them in class.

The arrival of each letter was a moment of joy in the classroom. We maintained this correspondence from 2017 to 2018. As a result of this exercise, the pupils discovered a lot about their Senegalese peers.

It was a great experience for myself, the pupils and the teacher. The pupils were given recommendations on how to write letters and learned about the importance of correspondence and the advantages it offers.

As I was no longer in the locality the following year, the correspondence stopped. But I'm determined to resume this wonderful activity next school year, as I've already found a school in my town that's well equipped and would like to lend itself to this exercise.

These were my first steps in school correspondence.



Mbanga-Ebobo, 16 Mai 2018

Bonjour chers correspondants.

Nous allons bientôt nous séparer parce que nous irons en vacances le 9 juin 2018 et la correspondance s'arrêtera pour reprendre en Novembre Si vous acceptez continuer avec nous l'année scolaire prochaine

Notre Hymne national a été écrit par M. René Djam Afana ; nous avons déjà eu deux Présidents de la République : S.E AHMADOU AHIDJO et S.E PAUL BIYA.

Nous n'organisons pas de fête de fin d'année mais pendant la fête de la jeunesse en février, nous organisons des Matinées jeunesse (Kermesse)

Nos questions

- Qui a écrit votre Hymne national ?
- Combien de couplet a votre Hymne national ?
- En quelle langue chantez-vous votre Hymne national ?
- Quelles sont les ethnies du Sénégal ?
- Quel est le découpage administratif de votre pays ?

A bientôt les amis

EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS IN THE POLITICAL PROJECT OF THE RIGHT

The italian example

Anna D'Auria
MCE- Italy

Education and schools are privileged spaces in the struggle to impose a certain common sense on society.

Antonio Gramsci analysed the way in which politics aims to consolidate the balance of power by ensuring the intellectual and moral direction of the country. This process involves training the 'school people' (teachers, headteachers, pupils and parents) in a vision of the world, of men and women, of society, that conforms to the dominant ideology.

From this perspective, the intense activism of the right-wing government in Italy in the area of school policies is part of an attempt to build an ethical-political-cultural hegemony over the education system.

This is not a new phenomenon: history offers significant precedents, starting with the two decades of Fascism, which were among the most interventionist periods in terms of school reform since Italian unification.

This historical precedent sheds light on the many regressive and violent legislative interventions made by the right-wing Italian government since October 2022, at the start of the 19th parliamentary term. These reforms have surgically altered the already extremely fragile structure of Italy's democratically inspired school system.

The meritocratic and selective school

Barely three years after the introduction of an assessment reform in primary education, which replaced the synthetic numerical mark (based solely on results) with a formative assessment centred on the learning process, the Ministry of Education has made a U-turn by reinstating a standardised and selective assessment of pupils. In a country where around 17% of school drop-outs come from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, this approach automatically reinforces educational inequalities. The backdrop is the ideology of merit, which postulates formal equality of access to education, as to the market and property, while ignoring the profound disparities that exist from the outset.

It is a narrative that serves to justify inequalities. As Don Lorenzo Milani points out, such a conception amounts to making equal shares between unequals, thus perpetuating structural injustice under the guise of equality of opportunity.

Early guidance and the subordination of schools to the logic of the market

The Italian government has reformed the school guidance system with the sole aim of subordinating schools to the imperatives of the labour market.

Under the aegis of the Minister for Education and Merit, schools are being asked to respond to the immediate needs of the economy, to the detriment of their formative and critical mission. For example, from the age of 13, pupils are encouraged to choose their course of secondary education on the basis of the career opportunities available, rather than on the basis of their aspirations, potential or personal development. This utilitarian orientation of schools is embodied in a number of emblematic measures: the introduction of 30 compulsory hours of school guidance, supervised by a tutor and a digital platform; the creation of the 'Made in Italy high school', providing for entry into the world of business as part of the school training project; and experimentation with shortening the vocational education route, reduced from five to four years.

All these measures reflect a desire to restructure schools in line with the social division of labour. This logic of social sorting by the school, implemented from the earliest age, breaks radically with the project of a republican school. The early orientation of subjects and the reduction in schooling time emphasise the social reproduction function of schools in a system where longer, more qualified courses are envisaged to train the ruling classes, and shorter courses to produce labour.

This logic of social sorting contradicts the ideal of an educational space where every pupil, regardless of social origin, can access an emancipating education that promotes democratic values and is geared towards acquiring the skills needed to exercise full citizenship.

School authoritarianism and the logic of zero tolerance

Under the guise of restoring the authority of the teacher and reaffirming the centrality of the school institution, the Italian government has undertaken a far-reaching reform of the assessment of pupil behaviour, in a resolutely repressive spirit. This reform has resulted in tougher sanctions, more bureaucratic disciplinary procedures and the establishment of a direct link between behaviour and academic results: for example, a pupil who achieves excellent academic results can still be deferred if he or she is undisciplined.

This new approach marks the transition from an educational disciplinary paradigm, based on teachers' contextual assessment of situations, to a normative model based on procedural legality and the principle of zero tolerance. The aim is no longer education for coexistence and citizenship, but the establishment of a climate of control: punish to conform. This reform neglects the fundamental role of schools in developing social skills, cooperation, solidarity and mutual respect, and in seeking the collective good.

Nationalism and the drift towards identity

The Ministry of Education has recently modified the guidelines for civic education and undertaken a revision of the national curricula. These changes are part of an explicit political desire to restrict the pedagogical freedom and institutional autonomy of schools, by prescribing both teaching methods and curricular content to make schools an instrument for transmitting a fixed Italian identity, centred on the glorification of national history and the primacy of the West in world history.

This vision goes hand in hand with an individualistic conception of citizenship, valuing a self-starter capable of protecting and increasing his or her personal assets.

While today's urgent need for education requires active learning about cooperation, solidarity and mutual recognition between individuals, peoples and cultures, the current dominant ideology imposes an assimilationist logic based on identity-based withdrawal, ethno-cultural nationalism and the slogan 'Italians first'.

The teachers involved in Popular Pedagogy in Italy are actively resisting this ideological instrumentalisation of schools. Their fight is based on a dual commitment: on the one hand, to firmly challenge right-wing policies that seek to restrict the critical, inclusive and democratic aims of the school institution; on the other hand, to keep alive, in today's conditions, the cooperative and emancipatory teaching practices stemming from the tradition of Popular Pedagogy and aimed at developing critical thinking and collective emancipation.

In a context where schools are in danger of being reduced to tools for ideological indoctrination, the political action of teachers in society and democratic teaching practices are our essential levers in a cultural counter-offensive to prevent the authoritarian, identity-based model promoted by the current majority from imposing itself as the dominant educational paradigm. It engages in a counter-hegemonic struggle to defend democratic schools against any resurgence, however subtle, of an authoritarian or even neo-fascist logic.

DECLARATION
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF FIMEM

RIDEF - Oaxaca, 2024

Peace for Palestine

The movements grouped in FIMEM express our indignation and great concern for the violation of the fundamental right to life and other human rights of children, adolescents and their families in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank by the Israeli government.

We call for peace and justice!

We call on humanitarian organizations, civil society and international political bodies to become facilitators of dialogue and mediation to bring a peaceful end to the conflict.

RIDEF Oaxaca, August 2024.





THE VOICE OF CHILDREN

CDMX - PAIDÓS

02/06/25

Hello, my name is Emilia and I am from Mexico. I am 12 years old. I want to tell you that it is very ugly, terrible and inhuman what is happening in Palestine and it is not worth it.

I cross my fingers and ask the universe that the war ends now!

It is very sad what is happening in Palestine, but I want to tell you that you are not alone and that I support you. I know I can't do much, but I hope you'll be a little happy that a girl on the other side of the world supports you.

Long live Palestine! Free Palestine!



Paidós School, Mexico City.

LIST OF COMMISSIONS

FOR A COOPERATIVE WORK

Nº 1 - Communications

Nº 2 - Website

Nº 3 - Translations

Nº 4 - Finances

Nº 5 - Update of the Charter of the Modern School

Nº 6 - Permanent support to the organization of the RIDEFs

Nº 7 - External relations

Nº 8 - Visas and solidarity

Nº 9 - Rights of children and adolescents

Nº 10 - Latin American emancipatory pedagogies - study group

Nº 11 - Education policies

Nº 12 - Gender rights and equality

Nº 13 - Environmental protection

Nº 14 - Education for peace

Nº 15 - Convergences



PARTICIPATE!

SEND AN E MAIL TO:
cafimem@gmail.com

NOTICES
NEXT RIDEF

Gniewino



RIDEF 2026

VENUE: Gniewino, Poland

- Pre-RIDEF: July 28 - 30, 2026
- RIDEF: July 31 - August 9, 2026
- Post-RIDEF: August 10 - 12, 2026

Theme: “Freedom, Solidarity, Democracy”

Look for updates on:

https://ridef-fimem.com/

NOTICES

Commission 1 is pleased to inform you that it officially has two coordinators: Gwenaëlle and Ixchel, both enthusiastic and eager to work with the other members of the commission: Léonard, Remi, Michel, Ana, Karim and Gabi (CA-FIMEM representatives), so that this commission has a positive impact on our cooperative work as FIMEM.

From time to time, we have used the Deepl tool to share articles written in multiple languages. It is therefore possible that sometimes the result can be perfected. We hope that authors and readers will forgive us! We also hope that your linguistic skills will soon reinforce the valiant translation team!
Many thanks to Isolda, Pilar and Marie-Bertille!!

What's more, we'd like to invite you to help us prepare the next Multilettre (to be published in November!!) by submitting articles sharing activities and pedagogical practices carried out, and proposing reflections underway in your movements, local groups, working committees and other research sectors!

Next Multilettre theme

PEACE EDUCATION IN TIMES OF WAR

We look forward to your many contributions in September 2025!
Send everything to the address multilettre@ridef-fimem.com