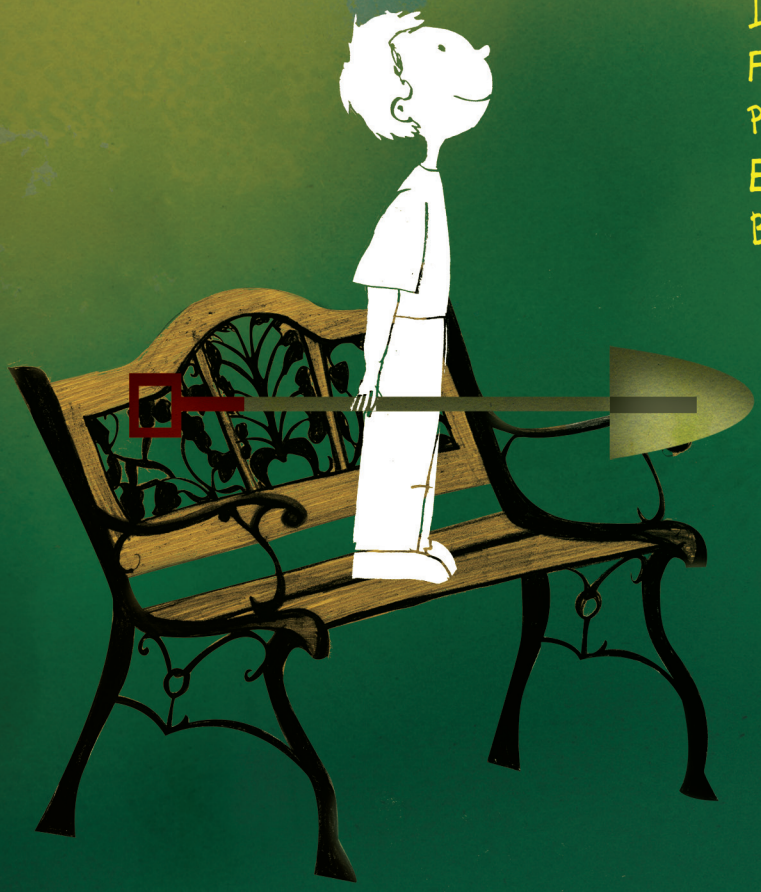
HOPE BUILDERS

A FILM BY **FERNAND DANSEREAU**

IF WE WERE TO TELL YOU THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD IS BEING PLAYED OUT IN A SMALL-TOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, WOULD YOU BELIEVE US?



TEACHER'S GUIDE

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HOPE BUILDERS

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES

To gain familiarity with the action research learning model through role play, while encouraging an empathetic understanding of the needs and points of view of various resource people regarding an issue that affects the students' environment.

To teach students to analyze a problem and consider all the steps required to solve it.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Students in grades 3 and up.

The activities in this guide were designed for students in grades 3 to 8. However, the suggested discussions can be modified or restructured to suit any age group.

SKILLS DEVELOPED

- Research action
- Problem analysis
- Communication
- Critical thinking
- Strategy
- Motivation and school performance

THE FILM

Hope Builders (89 min 34s)

SUMMARY OF TEACHING GUIDE

This Teacher's guide challenges students to examine a problem that affects their environment using creative role play. It aims to initiate a process for solving problems in order to develop critical thinking and other skills needed to transform one's reality through community action.

In-class discussion of the film, along with the production and performance of a sketch, will enable students to develop their knowledge, motivation and entrepreneurial spirit through a group project.

WARM-UP ACTIVITY (BEFORE VIEWING THE FILM)

Step 1: Write the title Hope Builders on the blackboard. Ask your students to explain what this title means to them. What do they think of when they associate it with the word "environment"? Ask your students to choose five key words or expressions that they associate with the environment and to write them on a sheet of paper. Now, write their answers on the blackboard. Ask the students if they can group the key words into categories (nature, environment, problem, energy, living environment, global).

Step 2: Ask your students to form small groups and to choose a problem affecting their environment that they would like to explore more deeply. Ask them to analyze the problem based on the notes on the blackboard and using the following questions as a guide: "How can you show this problem exists?" and "What are the causes?" Ask them to describe the problem by answering the five questions in the Problem Analysis Table (see *Appendix A*).

Step 3: Next, ask each group to name a spokesperson to summarize their answers.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Step 1 — Watch the first half of the film and discuss

Invite your students to learn about the project completed by Mr. Dominique's class in the film. We suggest you pause at the 49-minute mark to launch a discussion (specifically, at 48 min 50 sec, when Nicolas expresses his discouragement).

Obtain your students' initial impressions, using the following questions as inspiration:

- Why do you think some students are having doubts at this stage of the action research? What could they do to get their confidence back?
- Can you describe some of the action research steps for which the students of La Farandole do seem confident?
- Up until now, which stage of the action research has impressed you the most?
- Name two specific characteristics of the problem (environmental, social, economic, historical, political, etc.) highlighted in the first half of the film.
- Write down two questions you have after watching the first half of the film.

Step 2 — Watch the second half of the film and discuss

Briefly review the first half of the film, and then show the second half in class.

Obtain your students' initial impressions, asking them the following questions:

- Which students in the film do you identify with?
- If you were taking part in this action research, what would you bring to the group?
- What image in the film struck you? Why?
- Indicate a position taken in the film that you agree with and another with which you disagree. Explain why.
- Can you name the different resource people in the film and say what they bring to the project (for example, the member of the National Assembly, the mayor, the policeman and the hardware store owner)?

Step 3 — Ask the students to return to their small groups to answer the following questions:

- How do you feel about the problem you identified in the warm-up activity, now that you've seen the whole film?
- Can you identify new aspects of the problem (economic, social, environmental, etc.) that you didn't spot during the first brainstorming session?
- Which resource people in your community could play a role in solving the problem you're concerned about? What would their specialty be, and how would speaking with each person help your analysis move forward?
- Do you think your project is possible?

Now, ask each spokesperson to summarize their group's answers for the class.

Step 4 — Research

Set aside time in class so the groups can gather information and analyze the problem they have selected. This work can also be done at home.

Ask them to summarize this research using the Problem Analysis Table (see *Appendix A*).

Step 5 — Sketch preparation

Ask each group to find a realistic solution to the problem that interests them, and then write a sketch to present it.

Each member of the group can play the role of a resource person who has to contribute something to help solve the problem (through their know-how, knowledge, authority, etc.). Encourage students to choose a number of simple props to enhance their staging, and to be daring and creative.

This performance offers an excellent opportunity for peer evaluation. If you wish, hand out copies of the list of Evaluation Criteria (see *Appendix B*) to the students before they begin preparing their sketch.

Step 6 — Performance

Each group performs their brief sketch before the class.

REINVESTMENT

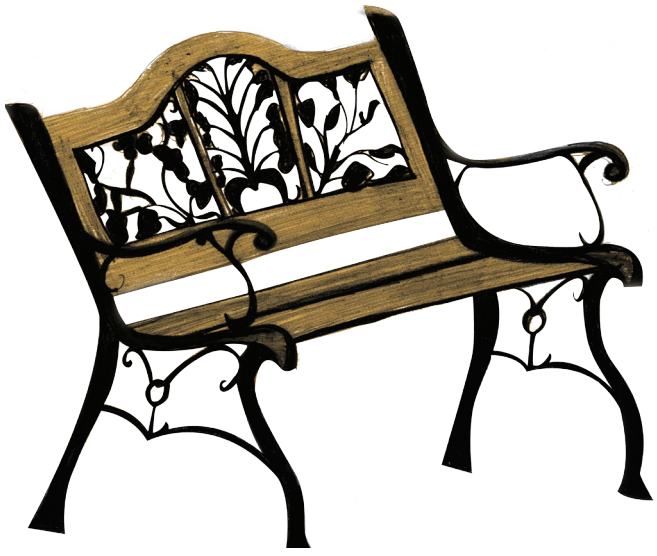
As a homework assignment or in class, ask students to write a text of a length commensurate with their grade level. The following questions may help guide them in their writing:

- After watching the film and seeing all the sketches, which problem-solving measure do you like best? Why?
- What have you realized about your power to act and influence?
- What new things do you think you have learned?
- Which person in the film or character in the sketches did you identify with most? Why?
- Considering your solution, what do you think would happen in ten days? In ten months? Ten years?

REFLECTIVE SHARING PROCESS

Following this activity, students will be able to see the importance of analyzing a problem in depth. They will become aware of their power to take action and their responsibility in relation to certain fundamental characteristics surrounding a problem.

For more information about the action research educational model for Community Problem Solving, visit <recherche-action.com> (French only) or <claudepoudrier.com>



APPENDIX A: PROBLEM ANALYSIS TABLE

What?	Describe the problem taking into account its various parts (economic, social, environmental, etc.).
Who?	Who is affected by the problem? Which resource people could you talk to?
Where?	Where does this problem exist?
When?	Locate the problem in time: How long has it being going on? What is the state of the problem now, and what will things be like tomorrow if nothing changes?
Why?	What are the effects of this problem? Why should we solve it? What are the causes, and what would our lives be like without this problem?

APPENDIX B: EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Was the problem shown clearly?
- Was the research complete and relevant?
- Were the resource people chosen well? Was the contribution of each appropriate?
- Were different aspects of the problem considered (social, political, environmental, etc.)?
- Did the group show motivation and creativity?