

# Art-based lesson on Leadership

Group lesson guide for  
Adult Educators



# Learning objectives and outcomes of this lesson:

OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
To identify core leadership competences in a creative way through and inspired by the observation and analysis of a piece of art/literature.	By implementing a "creative effort" aimed at identifying competences that leaders possess, learners will be able to capture own skills that can be used for leadership.
To train on developing critical thinking skills: identifying a problem, establishing goal, analysing the obstacles, evaluating solutions and acting.	Learners will be able to think more strategically when faced with obstacles.
To identify what behaviour and feelings are an example of bad leadership.	Learners will have a good understanding of bad leadership examples, which should allow them to change their behaviour where leadership skills are required.



# Methods used during the lesson:



Short intros to the topic and the artworks;



Observation;



Self-reflection and self-learning;



Guided discussions;

# Group Lesson Plan:

Duration: 5 hours

Necessary equipment and materials:

- A laptop and a projector;
- Handouts;
- Sheets of paper, pens, coloured pencils;
- Sticky notes;
- Icer breaking activity materials;

DIGITAL SUPPORT (optional)

- For the brainstorming guided discussion: Miro, Mural.
- For the involvement of the learners in the final evaluation phase: Kahoot



# Group lesson structure and materials

## Topic : Leadership

### Structure:

1. Ice-breaker
2. Introduction to leadership: can you learn the skills that leaders need?
3. Introduction to the selected piece of art and analysis of the related information materials
4. Guided discussion:
  - 4.1. Interpretation of the piece of art
  - 4.2. Analysis of the piece of art's elements
  - 4.3. The topic through the lens of the piece of art
5. Conclusions
6. Leadership skills recap

### Materials:

1. Group lesson guide
2. Database of pieces of art
3. Links to sources and additional information materials about the piece of art
4. Methodology on how to apply arts for education, creativity and innovativeness



# Timetable

N.	Activities	Dedicate time
1	Ice-breaking activities related to lead to the leadership topic	30 minutes
2	Introduction to the concept of leadership: what skills are needed, how do we acquire and use them?	60 minutes
3	Introduction to the selected piece of art and analysis of the related information materials.	45 minutes
4	Guided discussion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interpretation of the piece of art</li> <li>2. Analysis of the piece of art's elements</li> <li>3. The topic through the lens of the piece of art</li> </ol>	120 minutes
5	Conclusions	30 minutes
6	Leadership skills recap	15 minutes
	COMPLETE LESSON PLAN	5 hours



# Ice-breaker



People Bingo is a great getting-to-know-you game that can foster communication in a newly formed group.

Materials:

- Bingo cards

Instructions:

- Participants mingle among themselves trying to find someone who fits one of the boxes by introducing themselves and signing the box fitting the description (one person per box). The person completed the boxes shouts „BINGO!” The game ends when three participants complete their sheets.

Debrief:

Ask questions like:

- What was one suprising thing you found out about another participant?
- What has this game taught you about how much you know about another person?

# People Bingo



# *Introduction to the topic*



# Leadership

Leadership is a skill that helps setting a direction, build a vision, map out where you need to go in order to achieve your goals and be successful.

Leadership has different meanings to different people. So, even if you're not leading a team, you need leadership skills in order to be a good employee who contributes to your team.

During this group session we will explore the following skills that leaders possess:

- Integrity
- Inspiration of a shared vision
- Empathy
- Value and acknowledge people
- Passion and purpose
- Self-awareness
- Self-efficacy
- Prioritisation



"True leadership lies in guiding others to success--in ensuring that everyone is performing at their best, doing the work they are pledged to do and doing it well." --Bill Owens



# Brief introduction to the artwork and observation

## DESCRIPTION:

It commemorates General George Washington's crossing of the Delaware River with the Continental Army on the night of December 25–26, 1776, during the American Revolutionary War. That action was the first move in a surprise attack and victory against Hessian forces at the Battle of Trenton in New Jersey on the morning of December 26.

ARTWORK: Art

TITLE: Washington crossing the Delaware

ARTISST: Emanuel Leutze 1851



# Guided discussion



# Interpretation

## ***How to interpret artworks***

You should ask learners to describe what they see / feel / understand from the selected piece of art.

The focus of the discussion is on sharing personal views, feelings and thoughts of participants about the piece of art. The purpose is to encourage participants to share their opinion by pointing out that there are no wrong answers.

### *Possible questions:*

- a. What do you think this artwork is about?
- b. What do you think the artist wants to communicate through this piece of artwork?
- c. What do you think are the main aspects of this piece or art?
- d. What challenges do you think the artist faced in the realization of the piece of art/literature?
- e. How does this work of art relate to an aspect of your own life?
- f. Compare this work of art to other images/objects that you have seen, either in a museum or in your everyday life. How are they similar? How are they different?



# Analysis

You should guide the analysis of the work in terms of elements that compose and/or are represented in it. You will then guide the discussion to allow the learners to elaborate their description about leadership under discussion through the analysed elements.

*Possible questions for Guided discussion on the observed/introduced works:*

1. How do you think this artwork relates to a leadership aspect?
2. What, in your opinion, do the colours, composition, mood, the story of this piece of art mean?
3. Can you compare this artwork to every day life? Is there any similarities / differences?
4. How, in your opinion, is leadership portrayed in this picture?



# Support tools

*Optionally you could research and provide the learners with the support analysis tools chosen according to the topic and the piece of art under observation. Those will be combined with the additional information materials about the pieces of art in the database.*

## **ART TOOLS**

### ***How to analyze a piece of art?***

*Primarily*

- Self-reflection through a piece of art
- Color and shapes symbolism related according to the context (in art)

*Secondarily*

- Historical and environmental context
- Art piece and/or artist history

### ***BUSINESS TOPICS ANALYSIS TOOLS (theoretical framework)***

#### **How to analyze the topic?**

- Key points of business and marketing strategy
- Entrepreneurial skill processes and practical examples.



# Leadership through the lens of the piece of art

PAINTING: Washington crossing the Delaware by Emanuel Leutze

*Opening question:* How, in your opinion, is leadership portrayed in this picture?

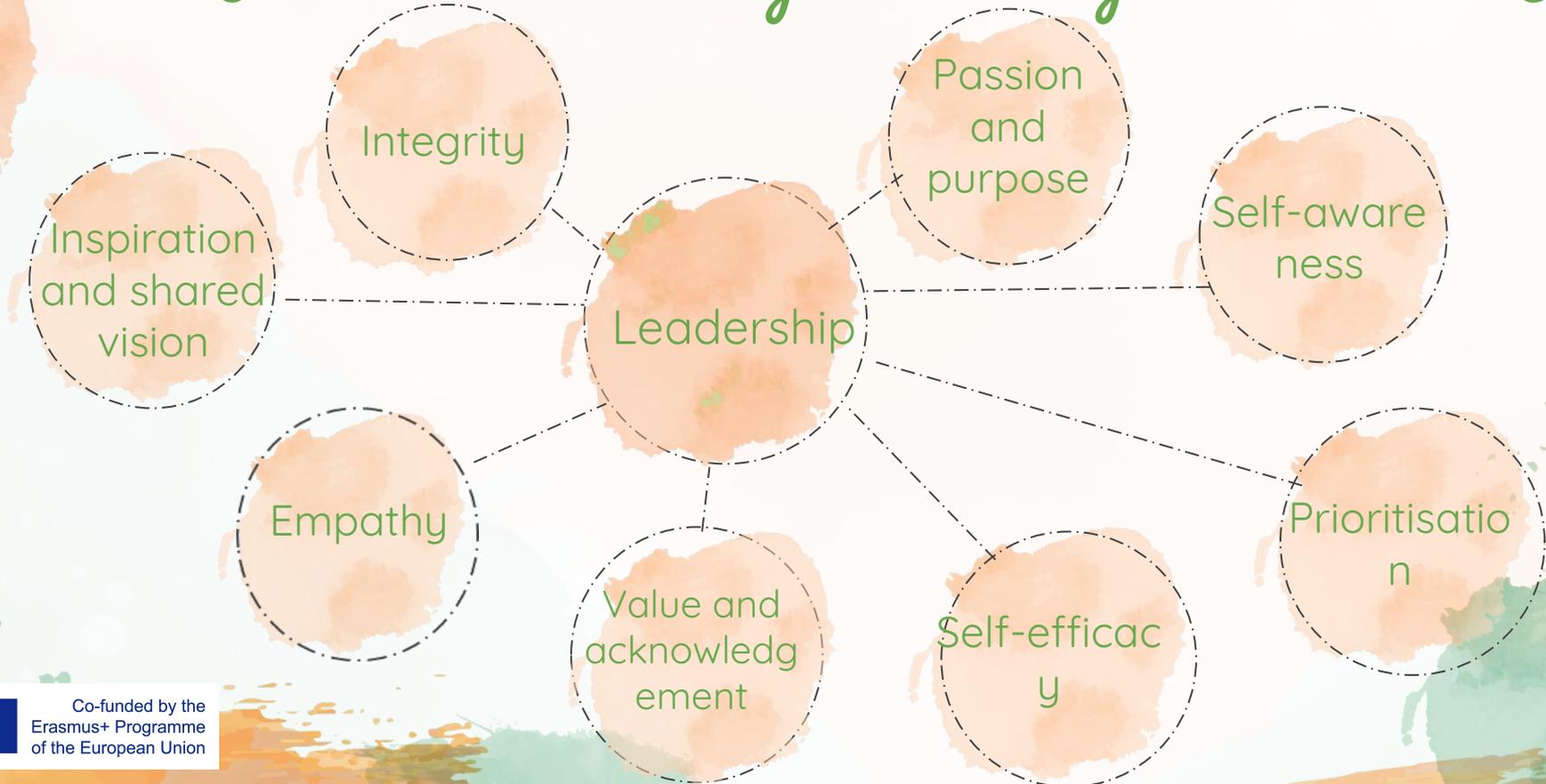
To guide this discussion you could use the support of one or more of the following activities:

- Q&A sessions – about the topic and about the pieces of art
- Mind maps on the topic of the activity
- Questions cards about the pieces of art
- Quizzes on the topic of the activity and on the pieces of art
- Practical exercise to draw/write their own version of artwork on the topic of the activity.

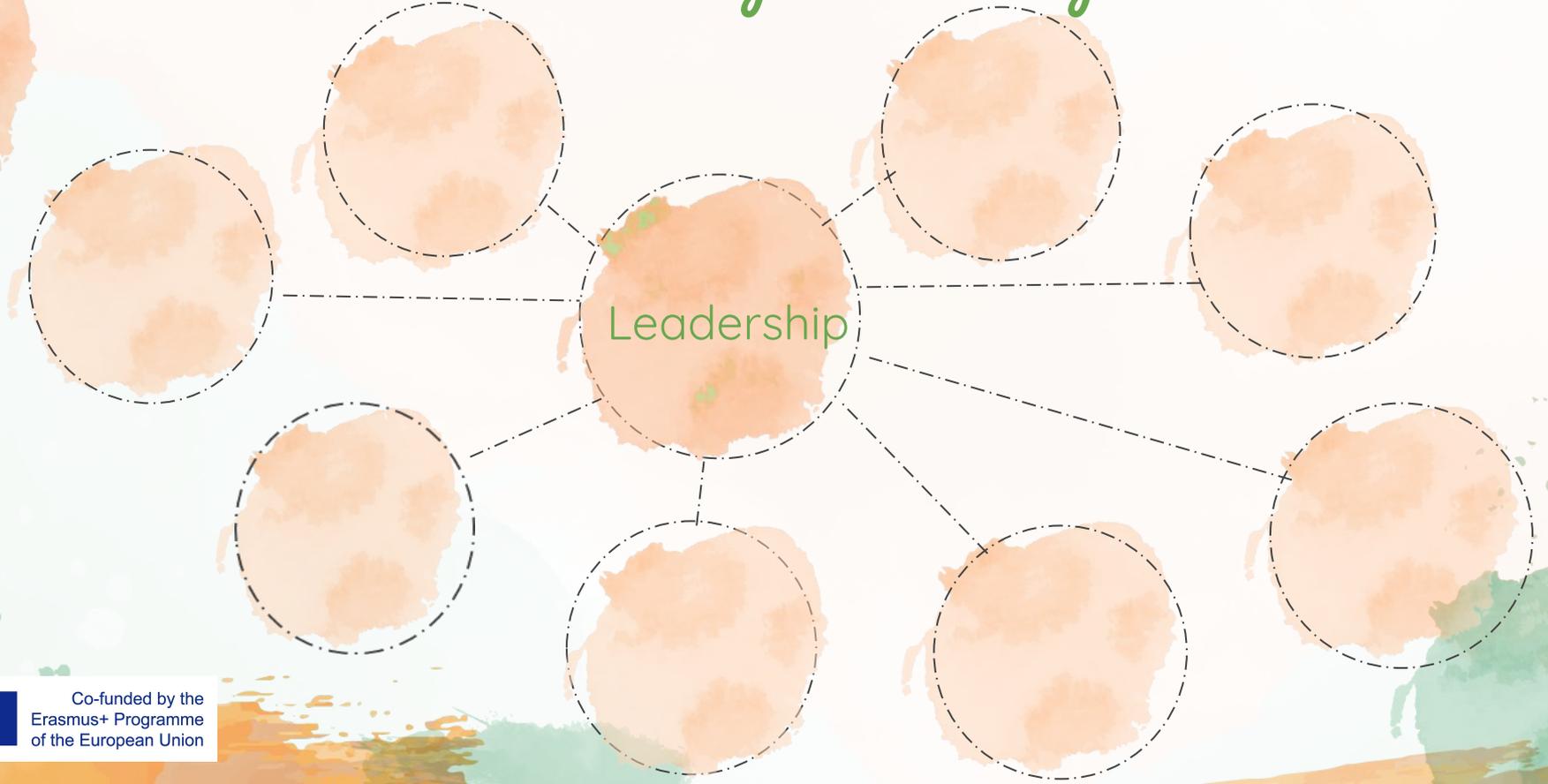
You should collect answers from the learners and listen to their different analysis and elaborations.



# Mindmap example (Artwork: Washington crossing the Delaware)



# Mindmap (Artwork: Washington crossing the Delaware)



# Brief introduction to the artwork and observation

ARTWORK: Art

TITLE: From the series Carmine, 2009

ARTIST: Adomas Danusevičius

DESCRIPTION:

In the painting we see a group of men lined up and a commanding officer who is pointing with his finger at one of the men.



# Interpretation

## *How to interpret artworks*

You should ask learners to describe what they see / feel / understand from the selected piece of art.

The focus of the discussion is on sharing personal views, feelings and thoughts of participants about the piece of art. The purpose is to encourage participants to share their opinion by pointing out that there are no wrong answers.

### *Possible questions:*

- a. What do you think this artwork is about?
- b. What do you think the artist wants to communicate through this piece of artwork?
- c. What do you think are the main aspects of this piece or art?
- d. What challenges do you think the artist faced in the realization of the piece of art/literature?



# Analysis

You should guide the analysis of the work in terms of elements that compose and/or are represented in it. You will then guide the discussion to allow the learners to elaborate their description about leadership under discussion through the analysed elements.

*Possible questions for Guided discussion on the observed/introduced works:*

1. How do you think this artwork relates to a leadership aspect?
2. What makes “a good” and “a bad” leader?
3. What qualities a good leader should possess?
4. What, in your opinion, do the colours, composition, mood, the story of this piece of art mean?
5. How does poor management look like?
3. Can you compare this artwork to every day life? Is there any similarities / differences?
4. How, in your opinion, is leadership portrayed in this picture?



# Support tools

*Optionally you could research and provide the learners with the support analysis tools chosen according to the topic and the piece of art under observation. Those will be combined with the additional information materials about the pieces of art in the database.*

## **ART TOOLS**

### ***How to analyze a piece of art?***

*Primarily*

- Self-reflection through a piece of art
- Color and shapes symbolism related according to the context (in art)

*Secondarily*

- Historical and environmental context
- Art piece and/or artist history

### ***BUSINESS TOPICS ANALYSIS TOOLS (theoretical framework)***

#### **How to analyze the topic?**

- Key points of business and marketing strategy
- Entrepreneurial skill processes and practical examples.



# Leadership through the lens of the piece of art

PAINTING: From the series Carmine by Adomas Danusevičius

*Opening question:* How, in your opinion, is leadership portrayed in this picture?

To guide this discussion you could use the support of one or more of the following activities:

- Q&A sessions – about the topic and about the pieces of art
- Mind maps on the topic of the activity
- Questions cards about the pieces of art
- Quizzes on the topic of the activity and on the pieces of art
- Practical exercise to draw/write their own version of artwork on the topic of the activity.

You should collect answers from the learners and listen to their different analysis and elaborations.



# Leadership quiz (Artwork: From the series *Carmine*)



Good leadership skills

vs



Bad leadership skills



# Conclusion



# Artwork: Washington crossing the Delaware

At the end of the activity you should start guiding the group into their interpretation of the artwork, explaining how they see the topic through the lenses of the art under observation.

Why did we chose this piece of art? (This interpretation is optional to use, and can be substituted by the educator's interpretation).

In December 1776 during the Revolutionary War, the Continental Army was demoralized and on the run. Christmas night, while camped along the Delaware River, Washington realized that their only chance to win – or even to survive – was to attack the British at Trenton. The win has helped boost up the army's morale, something that leaders need to do. This piece of art clearly shows good leadership and the behaviour of a good leader while teaching us valuable leadership lessons that we have discussed.



# Artwork: From the series Carmine

At the end of the activity you should start guiding the group into their interpretation of the artwork, explaining how they see the topic through the lenses of the art under observation.

Why did we chose this piece of art? (This interpretation is optional to use, and can be substituted by the educator's interpretation).

The artist is interested in a social and cultural entity, the meanings attributed to men in society and culture. The painting depict spheres of activity traditionally considered to be masculine (in this example the army) and the interrelationships between men.

A. Danusevičius analyzes and criticizes the usual norms of taboos and discipline in a society. Thus, confrontational ambitions and personal stories coexist in the composition, and the tendency to provoke and ironize the situations.

Interpreting this painting from the leadership point of view we can see differences of “a good” and “a bad” leader. We can see the change of leaders over the past centuries and can identify the differences. We are aware of how important the harmony in a team is when trying to achieve common goals, and that leader is also a part of a team.



# Leadership skills recap

Leadership skills are required to organize the reaching of a common goal. Regardless of the position a person has, having leadership skills enables a person to motivate others, completing tasks, contribute to a team. As discussed in this session, leadership skill is not just one skill, but a combination of several others.

Some people are born leaders, while others can train themselves to be one. As discussed today, it is imperative to recognize the good and bad traits, and the improve the skills and abilities required to become a good leader.



# References

<http://www.adomasdanusevicius.eu/aboutme.html>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/from-the-series-carmin-adomas-danusevi%C4%8Dius/pgGnv6s8P3pKKA>

<https://www.businessballs.com/leadership/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/paycom/2017/02/24/leadership-lessons-from-crossing-the-delaware/?sh=774e4339cc1f>

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/11417>

<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/leadership-skills.html>

# Thanks!

Do you have any questions?

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