

EXTREME DIALOGUE.ORG

EXTREME DIALOGUE PILOT: THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE CHARTER ACADEMY

This pilot project was implemented at [The Foundations for the Future Charter Academy](#) in Calgary, Canada in 2016. The session facilitator was a social studies teacher, who went through the story of [Daniel Gallant](#) with 137 pupils (three classes) over the course of a term. The age range of those taught was between 13-17 years old (grades 9-12). Prior to the sessions, the teacher attended a half day training session in June 2015.

METHODOLOGY

The findings of the evaluation were intended to identify programme strengths, weaknesses, challenges and best practices to guide future implementation and expansion of Extreme Dialogue. A mixed methods approach was used whereby quantitative and qualitative data together provided measures of project impact, as well as essential information regarding the conditions that either contributed or detracted from the success of Extreme Dialogue in the classroom.

The impact of the project upon the pupils was evaluated using two types of feedback forms, filled in before and after the first and last sessions respectively. The experience of practitioners using the Extreme Dialogue resources was assessed through an hour-long phone interview.

THE STUDENT & TEACHER EXPERIENCE

Overall the qualitative data collected from students and the feedback received from the teacher showed that the Extreme Dialogue resources were well received and considered a valuable addition to the existing curriculum. A selection of testimonials are provided below:

THE STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE

'This story showed me that hatred for certain people is not the only reason that people join extremist groups. To me this means a new outlook and new information on a topic I didn't know much about'

'It helps show how contradicting opinions can become extreme to the point of violence, and how important it is to be accepting and open-minded'

'This story shows me that when I am doing something that hurts others, I should stop and think about what I am doing. Then I should take responsibility and stop doing what I am doing'

THE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE

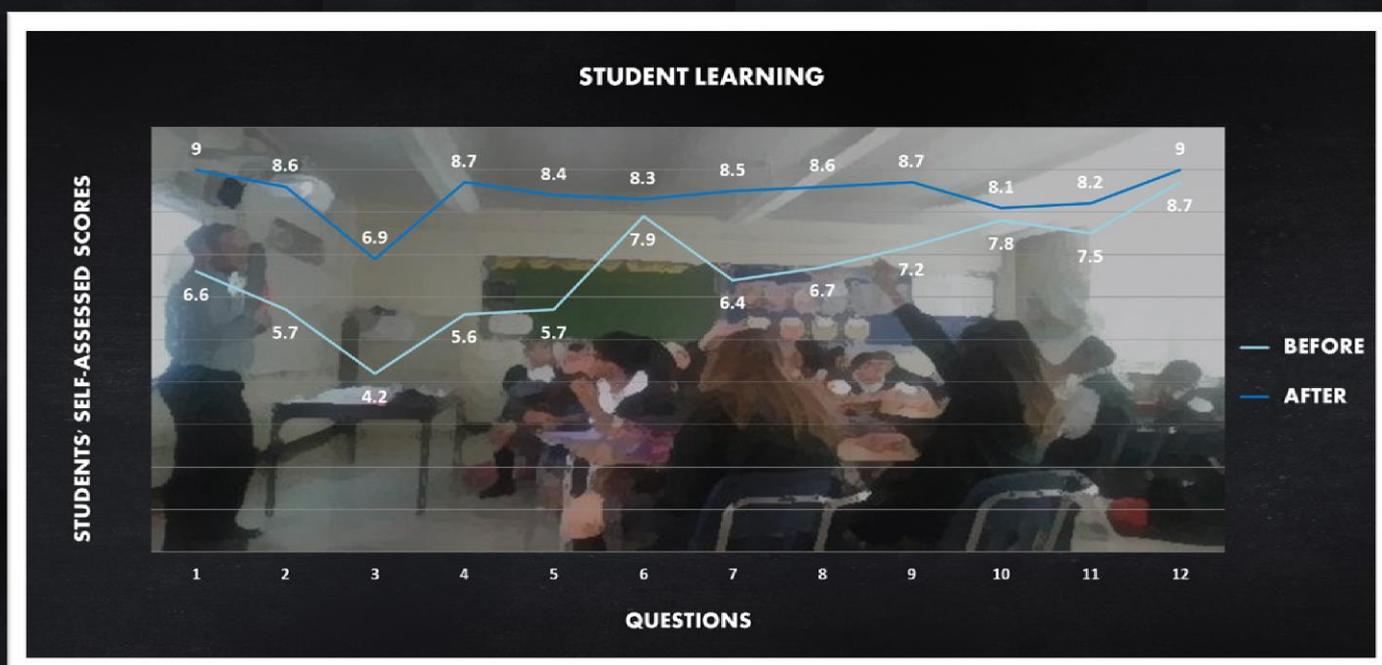
'It plugs in nicely with our curriculum and it's a great resource for teachers'

'We'd be naive to think they're not exposed to this stuff, it's our job to have that conversation'

'I had one student come up to me after, and she said "thank you, this is really eye-opening"'

STUDENT LEARNING & PROJECT GOALS

There is strong evidence that the pupils benefited from their participation in Extreme Dialogue. On completing the sessions, their understanding of Extreme Dialogue's objectives increased from 2.7 to 8.5 out of 10. Moreover, the evaluation indicated positive overall pupil development in line with the following project goals, which can be seen on the graph and table below:



QUESTIONS	BEFORE	AFTER
<i>Increasing knowledge and understanding of violent extremism and its roots</i>		
1 The pupils' understanding of what violent extremism is	6.6	9
2 The pupils' understanding of how extreme ideologies use black and white thinking	5.7	8.6
<i>Evaluating why individuals become motivated to join extreme groups and commit violence</i>		
3 The pupils' awareness of what radicalisation is	4.2	6.9
4 The pupils' understanding of the reasons as to why some people join extremist groups	5.6	8.7
5 The pupils' understanding of some of the tactics that extremist recruiters use	5.7	8.4
<i>Increasing contact with individuals and their stories, building empathy and association</i>		
6 The pupils' attempts to try and understand how other people feel and think	7.9	8.3
<i>Analysing the consequences and effects of violent extremism</i>		
7 The pupils' understanding of the ripple effects that extremists can have on other people	6.4	8.5
8 The pupils' understanding of why people leave violent extremist groups	6.7	8.6
<i>Challenging myths and misconceptions held around individuals and groups</i>		
9 The pupils' understanding of how people from any background can be drawn into violent extremism	7.2	8.7
<i>Considering how young people can be involved in influencing and affecting change</i>		
10 The pupils' beliefs that they are capable of creating positive change	7.8	8.1
<i>Developing the skills to think critically</i>		
11 The pupils' feeling that their ability to be critical towards information and influences	7.5	8.2
12 The pupils' understanding of the impact that the media can have on public opinion	8.7	9

For more information about the Extreme Dialogue project please visit www.extremedialogue.org or contact us via info@extremedialogue.org.