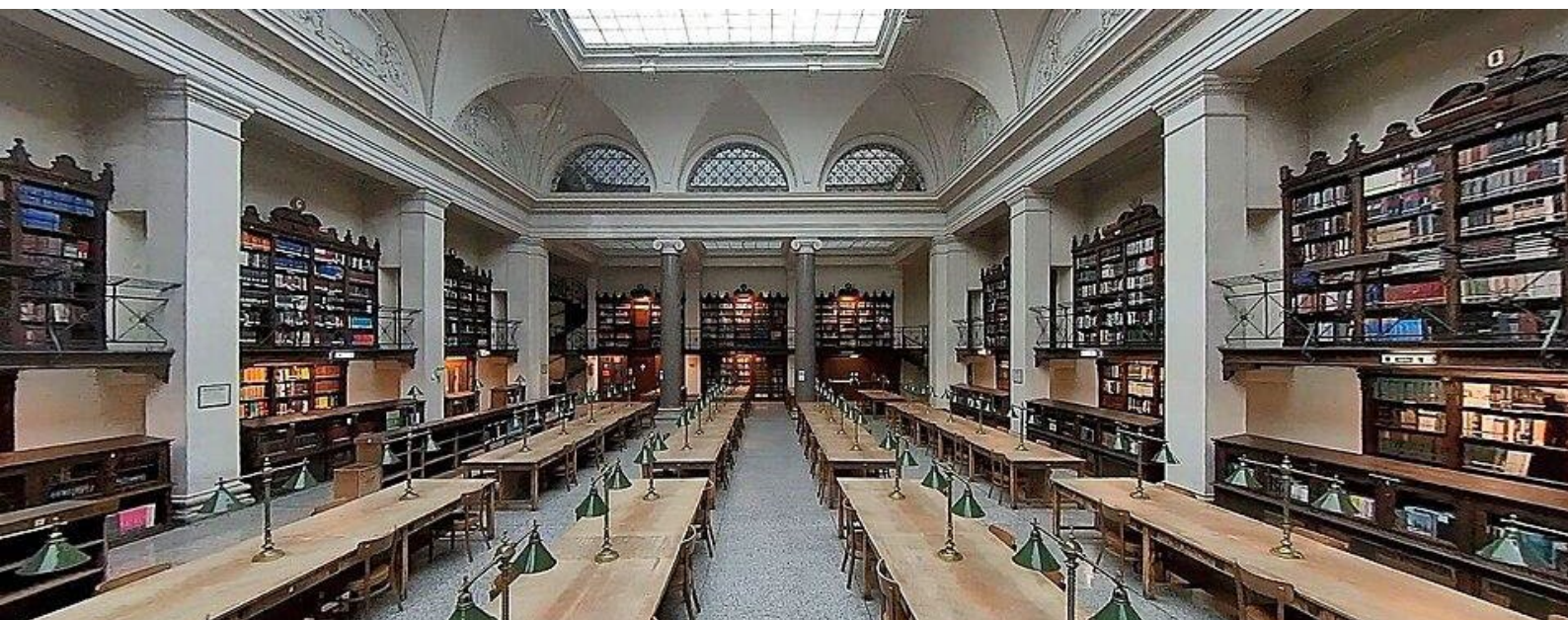




CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITIES, OPEN
SCHOOLING, AND THE FORMATION
OF LOCAL MEMORIAL LINKS FOR
EUROPEAN REMEMBRANCE

CU
REMEMBER

Deliverable D16.1

Remembrance Ambassadors

Guidelines (non-formal educational settings)



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1. Introduction

Building on the conceptual foundation of the [CU REMEMBER Framework for Remembrance Education](#), the following guidelines further develop its core principles for specific educational contexts and target groups.

Within the broader CU REMEMBER project, several sets of guidelines address different target groups and learning environments. For the present document, two are of particular relevance: **the Framework for Remembrance Education** and the **Guidelines for Remembrance Ambassadors**. The latter were developed by Verein GEDENKDIENTST as part of a training programme in Vienna (see WP15) and are to be published by the end of June 2026.

The Framework for Remembrance Education provides a shared conceptual foundation and outlines the guiding principles of CU REMEMBER. The Guidelines for Remembrance Ambassadors are aimed at young people aged 14 to 19 trained as peer guides, supporting participatory and reflective approaches to remembrance. The Guidelines and Checklist for Non-Formal Educational Settings address educators, facilitators and practitioners working with children aged 6 to 12, offering inclusive, age-appropriate approaches for non-formal learning environments.

While the framework provides a shared theoretical understanding, the guidelines translate these principles into practice-oriented approaches. Together, they support educators and facilitators in designing impactful, inclusive and transferable educational formats across European contexts, with a focus on hands-on and participatory learning.

Although the documents address different target groups and settings, they are grounded in a shared understanding of remembrance as participatory, reflective and future-oriented. This ensures coherence across the project while allowing flexibility for specific educational needs. In this sense, all guidelines developed within CU REMEMBER should be understood as practical extensions of the framework, translating its principles into actionable methods and tools.

2. Key principles of Engagement

These key principles guide the design and facilitation of non-formal educational activities. They translate the CU REMEMBER approach into practice-oriented orientations for inclusive and participatory learning environments. They are intended to provide practical orientation while allowing flexibility for adaptation to different target groups and contexts.

2.1. Age differences within the age group of 6-12 year olds

Even though working with a broader age range can have advantages (e.g. entrusting older children with supporting younger ones through a buddy system), based on our practical experience in WP16, we would advise against this in the context of Remembrance Education.

The reasons are significant differences in knowledge and developmental stage, which can become problematic especially when discussing sensitive topics. Issues such as antisemitism, queerphobia, racism and sexism tend to arise in conversations with older kids. It is important for facilitators to address these topics openly and avoid turning them into taboos. For younger children, this may be the first time they encounter these topics, which can lead to cognitive and emotional overwhelm. In the context of Remembrance Education, such overwhelm cannot always be addressed adequately on an individual level, as it often requires one-on-one conversations. (For more on the issue of (re-)traumatization experiences, see 4. Key Challenges)

In the context of Remembrance Education, a general distinction should therefore be made between children (approximately ages 6–10) and young adolescents (approximately ages 11–12)

- For ages 6–10, Remembrance Education should provide an initial introduction to the themes of memory and history through methods that appeal to creativity and imagination. Working with objects and biographies and visiting historical sites is already possible at this stage. However, more complex topics such as antisemitism or National Socialism are significantly harder for this group to grasp both emotionally and cognitively.
- For ages 11–12, Remembrance Education should place a greater emphasis on objects and biographies. Children in this age group generally have more historical prior knowledge due to their more advanced stage of schooling, which facilitates engagement with historical periods and contexts. Compared to the younger group, they find it easier to work with historical facts, and they tend to be less interested in formats that primarily evoke adventure and fantasy.

To prevent under-challenging the young adolescents and overwhelming the younger children and to avoid constantly having to balance or compromise between their different needs and interests we recommend offering distinct, separate educational formats for each age group

2.2. Checklist: Child-Appropriate Communication

Child-appropriate communication is essential for creating accessible and engaging learning environments that support understanding and active participation. Effective communication with children is based on the following principles:

- Use **everyday language** and relates to real-life situations (e.g. through examples)
- Avoid technical jargon and ensure that all necessary **terminology is accessible** to children
 - Tip: Explain unfamiliar terms immediately or support them with examples or written clarification.
- Rely on **short and concise sentences**
- Use a **slower speaking pace** and include pauses
- Use **verbs** instead of nouns and **favors active, action-oriented language** over modal verb constructions
- Replace passive or negative formulations with **active, constructive language, like**
 - “We remember and learn from the past” instead of “The past should not be forgotten”

Address children directly, asks questions and encourages critical thinking.

2.3. Attentiveness to Gender Questions and Asymmetries within the Educators’ Team

Having a mixed-gender team can offer various advantages, such as providing young participants with diverse role models or someone they may feel more comfortable approaching, especially when discussing sensitive topics.

At the same time, it is recognized that in many settings, female educators may be valued less by children – particularly when working alongside male colleagues. While this reflects broader patriarchal structures, it is essential to actively counter such dynamics in educational environments from an early age. To address this, educators should reflect on their role model function and the dynamics within their team. Collaboration should be grounded in mutual respect. Internalized patriarchal behaviors must be continuously reflected upon and openly discussed. Educators should actively support one another, demonstrate solidarity, and challenge gendered assumptions.

The perceptions and behavior patterns of young adolescents, in particular, are already strongly shaped by binary gender norms. This can also influence how they respond to learning content. Already at this young age, queer history, which points to alternatives to the binary gender system, can provoke emotional pushback and even discriminatory remarks. Nevertheless, it is important that facilitators do not overlook the life stories of queer individuals.

2.4. Museum Visits

Museum visits can be a valuable component of educational work. They provide a new environment, a sense of exploration, access to original sources and opportunities for multisensory learning. When planning visits, educators should carefully assess the suitability of the institution for their program and participants.

Education is a core mission of museums (see the Bundesmuseengesetz in Austria) and learning can take many forms—not only quiet observation. Respectful interaction with other visitors and exhibits is essential, but non-negotiable rules (e.g. not touching original objects unless permitted) should be clearly communicated, while still encouraging exploration and engagement.

For some children, visits through schools or non-formal education programs may be their only opportunity to access such spaces. Museums can function as hegemonic spaces, where obedience is often expected through explicit or implicit rules – such as remaining quiet. Children from families who regularly visit museums may already be familiar with these norms, while others may not, and may be unfairly reprimanded for not adhering to them. If museums are experienced as strict or exclusionary, this can discourage future engagement. While many museums are actively working to become more inclusive, educators are encouraged to advocate for children within these environments

It is also important to consider whether the content of exhibitions is appropriate for children. Topics such as violence or death may be overwhelming and spaces explicitly dealing with genocide or mass violence should generally be avoided for younger audiences. Conversely, some museums are specifically designed for children and offer interactive, sensory-based learning experiences involving touch, smell, and play.

2.5. Coordination Between Educational Staff

When there is a division between pedagogical staff and educators, roles, responsibilities and educational intentions should be clearly defined. Ensuring alignment on key topics, approaches and rules helps prevent contradictory messages and supports consistent educational values.

A shared briefing on content and language use is essential. For example, the handling of discriminatory or othering language should be consistent among educators to avoid confusion and ensure a respectful learning environment.

2.6. Checklist: Guidance for educators

- **“HANDS ON!”** – Encourage active participation
- **“MINDS ON!”** – Stimulate critical thinking
- Create a **welcoming and motivating** atmosphere
- Foster an **inquiry-based mindset**: ask questions and encourage participants to formulate their own
- Adapt to the **target group’s knowledge level** and activate prior knowledge through questions
- Encourage participants to **actively use and share their own experiences and skills** (self-empowerment)
- Ensure **variety** by using different didactical methods
- Maintain engagement through a **clear dramaturgical structure**
- Remain **calm, patient and composed**
- Establish **real-life relevance** and connect to participants’ everyday experiences
- Promote **social inclusion** (e.g. actively include shy participants, younger children, participants with limited language proficiency, or disabilities)

- Ensure **flexibility** in timing and facilitation
- Provide **low-threshold access** (minimize barriers to participation)
- Use **simple and clear** language
- Consider **safety aspects**, especially during excursions, guided tours and visits to sites of remembrance
- Communicate and deepen (scientific and/or historical) content following the principle: “**Show, don’t tell!**”
- Embark on a **shared journey of discovery** and foster team spirit
- Show your own enthusiasm for the topic — **it is contagious!**
- Be fully present and aware of your influence as a **role model**

2.7. Four-Phase Model of the Facilitation Process

There is no universal formula for facilitation – especially in non-formal settings, where flexibility and improvisation are key. However, the following four-phase model provides a useful structure:

Phase 1: Introduction and Preparation

At the beginning, educators get to know the target group and **activate or assess their prior knowledge**. In this phase, it is particularly important to **spark interest** and make children curious about the topic. One possible starting point can be the **guiding question**, which is introduced and explored together with the children. They are invited to **share their own assumptions** and initial interpretations. In addition, targeted open-ended questioning techniques can further stimulate curiosity and engagement with the topic.

Phase 2: Exploration and Active Discovery

In this phase, it is particularly important to **foster active participation** among the target group. Therefore, educators primarily ask questions that encourage **active exploration** of historical and remembrance topics. Encouraging participation through observation is also essential. It is recommended to use **interactive methods** that ideally **address multiple senses** and different learning styles (e.g. combining historical photographs, personal stories and tactile materials like replicas or objects). **Relevant terminology** is introduced in context to support understanding during the learning process

Phase 3: Reflection and Knowledge Consolidation

In this phase, educators and children come together to **summarise the findings** so that the children can **organize, analyze and consolidate their knowledge**. Children may already draw initial conclusions and discuss possible answers to the guiding question. It is recommended to **provide space for open questions** in case anything remains unclear – this also provides a smooth transition to Phase 4.

Phase 4: Explanation and Deepening of Understanding

This phase aims to deepen understanding by **providing additional information** and context. By now, children have gained enough experience to better understand the topic and to **contextualize relevant terminology**. Tip: Refer back to the children's initial key question and assumption!

In the final step, **new ideas and questions may emerge**, inspiring new questions and further exploration.

2.8. Which questioning techniques are effective/encouraging?

Encouraging questions:

Encouraging questions are characterized by the fact that participants can answer them based on prior knowledge or immediate experience.

Less encouraging questions:

- Create the impression that there is one ONE correct answer, like
 - assessment-oriented questioning (e.g. typical “why?” or “how?” questions used in assessment context)
- Already imply or suggest the expected answer
- Do not connect to the everyday life of the target group
- Are filled with jargon or unfamiliar terminology

Different questioning techniques are more suitable depending on the phase of the learning process:

Questions	Examples	Phase
Activate prior knowledge	“Have you ever...?” “Do you have experience with...?”	1
Create personal relevance	Phase 1: “What might this topic mean for you or your everyday life?” Phase 3: “Why could this topic be relevant for you or for society today?”	1/3
Connect everyday life	Phase 1: “Does this remind you of something from your everyday life?” Phase 3: “How is this connected to your everyday life or familiar situations?”	1/3
Draw attention	“What have you noticed so far?” “Did you notice anything specific?”	2
Encourage observation	“What can you observe?” “What do you notice through your senses (seeing, hearing, feeling)?”	2

Encourage exploratory engagement	“What might change if you look at it from a different perspective?”	2
Encourage comparison and differentiation	“What is similar or different here?” “What stands out to you the most?”	2
Encourage developing ideas and solutions	“Can you think of a way to respond to this?”	2
Stimulate reflection and discussion	“What are your thoughts on this?” “How did you come to that conclusion?”	3
Support identifying key takeaways	“What do you think we can learn from this?”	3
Encourage multiple perspectives and interpretations	“What different reasons or explanations can you think of?”	4

Responding to participants’ questions:

Responding to participants’ questions is a central part of the learning process. Rather than simply providing answers, educators can use questions as an opportunity to encourage reflection, curiosity and joint exploration. The way questions are addressed can shape how participants engage with the topic and with learning more broadly.

- Respond with a counter-question: “What makes you think that?”
- Encourage joint inquiry: “Let’s try to find an answer together?”
- Do not dismiss questions you cannot answer immediately: Acknowledge the question and show that not knowing is part of the learning process, emphasizing that learning is about exploring “why” and “how” rather than having all the answers.

3. Methodological Diversity

Methodological diversity supports inclusive and engaging learning by addressing different needs and approaches to learning.

3.1. Address multiple senses

Engaging multiple senses can enhance learning experiences and make content more accessible and memorable.

- **Seeing:** Use a variety of visual materials such as historical photographs, documents, maps or images of everyday life
 - comparing photos from different time periods or analyzing visual sources
- **Hearing:** Include audio elements such as interviews, sound recordings, or spoken testimonies
 - listening to excerpts from oral histories or survivor testimonies
- **Touching:** Provide hands-on objects that participants can explore directly
 - handling replicas or everyday objects from the past

To further enhance engagement, sensory approaches can be combined with interactive elements that invite active participation and reflection. These formats help reinforce learning by encouraging participants to apply, discuss, and revisit what they have experienced.

- Quizzes
- Guessing exercises
- Interactive formats

3.2. Engage Children as Active Participant

- Explain complex ideas using simple, relatable metaphors and examples
- Use illustrative and participatory methods such as role plays, storytelling, or hands-on activities to make abstract concepts more tangible
- Actively involve children in activities by giving them small roles or responsibilities
- Encourage children to contribute their own ideas, questions and interpretations
- Create opportunities for children to take initiative and shape parts of the activity
- Acknowledge and value children's contributions to strengthen their confidence and engagement

3.3. Enabling Participation and Co-Creation

Enabling participation and co-creation goes beyond active involvement in individual activities. It emphasizes the role of participants as contributors whose perspectives and ideas shape the learning process and the project itself.

- In the context of citizen science and other co-creative approaches in remembrance education, participants become active contributors and co-creators of knowledge
- Their perspectives, questions and ideas are actively included and enrich the learning process
- Create spaces where participants can share input, feedback and interpretations
- Encourage participants to influence the direction or focus of activities where possible
- Participation can be supported through methods such as:
 - Question boxes
 - Feedback posters
 - Open discussion formats

3.4. Creative, imaginative engagement for children (ages 6–9)

As noted above, for Remembrance Education with younger learners, didactic methods are most effective when they focus less on historical facts and more on introducing the concepts of memory and history through creative and imaginative learning formats.

Framing the educational program as a journey back in time is engaging and appeals to their sense of adventure.

This works well with the “guided daydream” or “imaginative journey” method. At the beginning of the program, guided by the facilitators’ narration, the children embark on a journey through time; at the end, they “return” to the present. It is important not to force participation, but to let children decide for themselves how deeply they want to engage. Music and comfortable seating can help create the

conditions for a self-directed, imaginative encounter with the past. In a shared conversation after the journey, children's ideas can be contextualized and complemented with historical facts.

The time capsule method is also suitable for this age group (see 3.6 for details).

3.5. Biographical and Object-Oriented Learning for Young Adolescents (10–12)

The topics addressed in remembrance education are often broad and complex. Approaching them through biographies and concrete (historical) objects can therefore be a particularly effective method. This approach makes history and related themes more tangible and accessible for younger participants, without oversimplifying them. It enables engagement with ambiguity and contingency, while at the same time fostering empathy by focusing on individual experiences or objects.

By centering personal stories rather than abstract groups, it challenges perceptions of groups as homogeneous and instead highlights individuality and diversity. In doing so, it can also provide an entry point into intersectional perspectives and the interconnectedness of different forms of discrimination and lived experiences.

Working with objects can prompt a wide range of questions, including those related to materiality, aesthetics, and everyday use. They also allow for reflection on their genealogy and provenance, offering insights into historical contexts, power relations, and cultural meanings. In this way, objects can be approached similarly to biographies, as carriers of stories that help to make historical realities more accessible and open to interpretation.

3.6. Support Further Engagement with the topics of History and Remembrance

Provide participants with opportunities to revisit and further engage with the topic beyond the activity. This can include materials such as:

- Printed handouts or summaries
- Instructions for follow-up activities
- Reading recommendations or additional resources
- Suggestions for related events or places to visit

Experience has shown that the 'time capsule' method is well suited to further engagement with the topic among both 6–9-year-olds and 10–12-year-olds. Creating time capsules in which children and young adolescents assemble family photos, their own drawings, letters and objects to craft personal mementos for future generations. They begin putting the time capsules together in the educational program and then add them at home with family photos and objects that represent their lives and childhood. They can then show the time capsules to their parents, siblings and friends. The aim is to empower children as active agents of history and to introduce them to the concept of memory through a very personal example.

4. Key Challenges and Considerations for enhancing Futures Literacy

When designing and implementing educational activities, several challenges and ethical considerations should be kept in mind. These aspects help ensure that approaches remain balanced, age-appropriate, and responsible.

- Risk of oversimplification, which may reduce complex topics to overly simplistic narratives
- Risk of cognitive overload, where content becomes too complex or overwhelming for children
- Lack of structure or sufficient facilitation support during activities
- Market-driven influences and value-related concerns that may influence educational integrity
- Ethical responsibility, including considerations of safety, sensitivity and age-appropriateness

4.1. Discriminatory Ideologies Among Young Children

While children are often perceived as innocent and detached from discriminatory ideologies, experiences show that discriminatory language and attitudes can emerge from an early age. Queerphobic or homophobic language, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination may already be present within these age groups. The intent behind such statements (e.g. “just joking”) does not diminish their impact. It is therefore crucial to address them seriously.

At the same time, children and teenagers are not fixed in their beliefs. They are often actively exploring and testing perspectives as they develop their understanding of the world. We cannot fully know the influences of their upbringing or environment. This makes it especially important to offer alternative perspectives and to encourage critical reflection on discriminatory ideas. Importantly, individual statements should not be treated as defining characteristics of a child. For example, a child who makes an antisemitic remark should not be labeled as an antisemitic person. Possible responses can be:

Asking clarifying questions:

- “Did I understand you correctly that you...?”
- “What do you mean by that?”

Naming discrimination:

- “That statement is antisemitic / racist / sexist.”

Pointing out consequences:

- “Statements like that can hurt or unsettle others.”

While it is important to create space for children to engage with and question ideas, educators must remain aware of the impact on others in the group. Other children may be directly affected or may adopt discriminatory views themselves.

The first priority must always be the protection of those affected by discrimination. This includes preventing (re-)traumatization, experiences of exclusion, and othering within the group. It is important

to remember that not all aspects of a child's identity are visible. Therefore, educators should assume that someone in the group may be affected—even if this is not immediately apparent.

In situations of discrimination:

- Show solidarity with affected children
- Set clear boundaries
- Intervene immediately

A clear and supportive response might be:

“What you just said is not true and can be hurtful to others. I will not accept that kind of language in this group.”

This both protects individuals and establishes clear norms for the group.

Following a discriminatory incident, it is important to check in with affected children. This can include:

- Asking how they are feeling
- Offering support and reassurance
- Providing space for them to express themselves
- Actively empowering them

4.2. Imaging the Future

These guidelines are intended as a flexible and evolving framework to support educators, facilitators, and practitioners in creating meaningful and inclusive learning experiences within the CU REMEMBER project. While grounded in established principles of remembrance education, they are not meant to be prescriptive, but to inspire adaptation and context-sensitive application across diverse settings and audiences.

At their core, the guidelines aim not only to support learning about the past, but also to foster reflection on the present and imagination of possible futures. In this sense, they align with the concept of Futures Literacy, encouraging participants to understand how interpretations of history shape expectations of the future, and how engaging with memory can open up new ways of thinking, acting, and imagining what is yet to come.

By connecting remembrance education with future-oriented thinking, CU REMEMBER seeks to empower children, young people, and educators to become active contributors to more reflective, inclusive, and democratic societies.