

Creating a Human Library: An International School of Paris Case Study



Table of Contents

Part 1: Context

Information about ISP	1
Catalyst for the creation of the Human Library	2
Relevance of this case study	
1. Authentic inquiry despite COVID restrictions	3
2. Close collaboration between pedagogical and administrative teams	3
3. Creation of the Human Library mirrors the inquiry cycle and is an example for students	4

Part 2: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	
1. Established research center structure within which to explore and launch innovative projects	5
2. Experienced researchers and innovators on the pedagogical team	6
3. Large and agile advancement team	7
Weaknesses	
1. Receptivity of community and scalability	8
2. Three-campus model	9
3. Specificity of search engine	9
Opportunities	
1. New module from website provider which made the Human Library technically possible	10
2. COVID-19	11
Threats	
1. GDPR	12
2. Child safeguarding	12

Part 3: Use Cases

Grade 5	13
Grade 9	13
Grade 10	13
Grade 1	13

Context

Information about ISP

The International School of Paris (ISP) is an independent, non profit organization on three separate campuses (primary, middle and high school) in Paris's 16th *arrondissement*. The school boasts 57 years of experience in international education. ISP first opened its doors in 1964 to a small group of students from 6 different countries. ISP now welcomes each year about 700 students of, on average, 65 different nationalities.

ISP has almost four decades of experience delivering the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum; ISP received accreditation to teach the IB Diploma Programme in 1982 and further accreditations followed shortly thereafter. Students from ages 3 to 18 (Nursery to Grade 12) attend ISP to study in the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) or to follow the IB Diploma Programme (DP), a two-year, rigorous university preparatory course.

In 2021, at the end of a five-year strategic plan entitled "*Moving from Experience to Influence*", the ISP community is evaluating the actions and projects within this plan aimed at promoting inquiry. The IB curriculum is the ideal framework for putting in place inquiry-based pedagogies and encouraging student agency. Additionally, as stated in the strategic plan, "*the natural counterpoint to an inquiry-based curriculum is a research-led organization.*" As such, all members of the learning community should look for opportunities to improve their own practice by making research-based

decisions or by modeling the inquiry cycle in their endeavors.

In order to showcase inquiry school-wide, ISP established its Center for Research and Professional Development. Sanctioned by the Board of Trustees and managed by the Director, this resource supports students at three critical junctures in their learning journeys: the PYP Exhibition, the MYP Personal Project and the DP Extended essay. The Research Center also supports teacher researchers, called Research Fellows, in the completion of their action research projects. Assil Charara and Marianne Freire, long-standing Research Fellows, created the Human Library as an action research project within the Center for Research and Professional Development.

Reflection Questions

1. How does your school's strategic plan support inquiry and / or innovation?
2. What role does inquiry play in your school's curriculum?

Context

Catalyst for the creation of the Human Library

The Library Volunteer Program acted as the catalyst for the creation of the ISP Human Library, as did Assil and Marianne's interactions with education consultant Cathryn Berger Kaye and her idea of recognizing and celebrating a community's assets.

Primary school library teacher Assil Charara (currently a Grade 1 teacher) established the volunteer program when she began working at ISP in 2013¹. Parent volunteers visited the library daily to help organize shelves, label books, suggest cultural and linguistic additions to the library collection or to read to students. Over time the volunteers became a family, sharing their struggles moving from country to country, parenting concerns, recipes or favorite spots in Paris. Repeatedly, volunteers, who were often trailing spouses, mentioned missing their professional lives. This made Assil wonder if it would interest them to share their professional expertise and life experiences in a meaningful way with ISP students.

Further discussions with research partner Marianne Freire led to the idea of cataloguing all the parents and staff willing to meet students and share their knowledge. ISP students and staff would then be able to browse the catalogue by subject area and contact a breathing book.

Breathing books could choose to offer any number of services to primary school students when creating their catalogue entry: help with a school or passion project, classroom visit for a lecture or workshop, invitation to visit their

place of work, additional resources for learning, individual lessons, etc. A breathing book's catalogue entry could also include languages spoken so that interactions could occur between students and adults who shared a common language.

ISP's focus on inquiry quickly led Assil and Marianne to see the value in introducing the Human Library first to grade 5 students working on their PYP Exhibition during the 2018-19 academic year. The Grade 5 Exhibition is the presentation of a piece of research that demonstrates social action and student agency. Preparation for the Exhibition takes place during an entire semester and, at ISP, culminates in a community celebration of students' efforts and passions. Assil and Marianne identified an opportunity for grade 5 students to hone their research skills by interviewing, surveying or observing breathing books. The authentic and up-to-the-minute information collected from breathing books would make for compelling student presentations that would not be carbon copies of commonly searched websites.

Reflection Questions

1. How might your school's learning community wish to contribute to student learning?
2. How might a Human Library act as a catalyst for inquiry in your learning community?
3. Which existing projects lend themselves to the use of a Human Library?

¹ This program is currently on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions.

4. How do we co-construct knowledge as a learning community? And how do we ensure all learners have access to this knowledge?

5. How might we strengthen the link between home and school?

Context

Relevance of this case study

1. Authentic inquiry despite COVID-19 restrictions

As of this writing, the Human Library is almost three years old. Grade 5 continues to use the Human Library for Exhibition. In year two, academic year 2019-20, grade 10 students learned to use the Human Library for Personal Project, a formally assessed research project that measures students' abilities in self-management, communication, critical thinking and collaboration. In year three, academic year 2020-21, grade 5 and grade 10 students continue to use the Human Library for their substantial research projects and grade 9 students use it to find internships for their Work Experience Week.

Between March and June 2020, students living in France were subject to confinement and asynchronous distance learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students in France began the 2020-21 academic year in school, but distance learning remains frequent as families manage COVID-19 infections and mandatory periods of isolation. The ISP Human Library is an important resource that allows students and teachers access to authentic human expertise

and experiences despite social distancing and the sustained closure of all Parisian centers of culture and entertainment. Additional examples of the Human Library's ability to generate authentic encounters between adults and children follow in Part 3 of this study.

2. Close collaboration between pedagogical and administrative teams

The Human Library project is an example of collaboration between pedagogical experts and school administrative professionals. The Human Library began as a Google Sheet at the primary school then rapidly became a defining feature of the ISP community, and an important element of Research the ISP Way¹ thanks to support from the ISP Communications team.

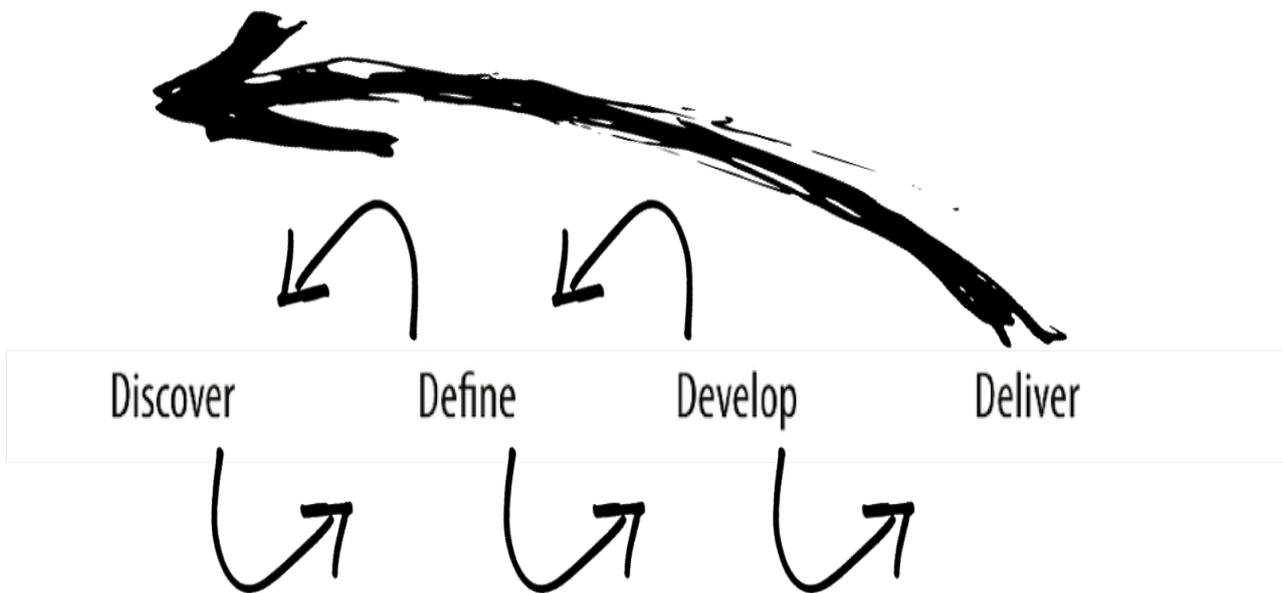
Two shared objectives, one pedagogical and the other institutional, structured the work between the Human Library creators and the Communications Team:

- Pedagogical: How might the Human Library act as a catalyst for student inquiry?
- Institutional: How might ISP encourage its community members to create a Human Library catalogue entry?

1 Research the ISP Way is the 2020-21 vision statement for the work of the ISP Center for Research and Professional Development.

3. Creation of the Human Library mirrors the inquiry cycle and is an example for students

The creation and propagation of the Human Library cannot be described as a journey without setbacks. The Human Library's path to existence more closely resembles the inquiry cycle of any research project, as pictured below, rather than a straight line to an objective.



The discovery of a need (in this case, parents' need to share their skills and students' need for authentic learning experiences) slowly became the Human Library through a process of further defining community needs in terms of inquiry, developing the Human Library platform, launching the platform, developing an adjacent research project, receiving community feedback and continuously readjusting the platform based on this feedback and research data. As of this writing Assil, Marianne and the ISP Communications team are still discovering new needs, redefining Human Library use cases and redeveloping the platform for a better user experience.

Assil and Marianne, as well as the ISP Communications Team, consistently discuss this iterative process whenever telling the story of the creation of the Human Library. Assil and Marianne also remind students that they should not expect their own endeavors to succeed after one try. They then model research skills and resilience so that students have concrete examples of overcoming the obstacles they may face in their own learning journeys.

Reflection Questions

1. What authentic learning are students missing as a result of the pandemic?
2. What has your school implemented to ensure authentic learning experiences during the pandemic?
3. What iterative projects are in progress at your school?
4. How do you model overcoming learning adversity to students at your school?
5. How was the inquiry cycle used to create the human library?

SWOT

Strengths

1. Established research center within which to explore and launch innovative projects

Part 1 of this case study, *Context*, explained that pedagogical innovation at ISP occurs with support from the ISP Center for Research and Professional Development.

In 2014 the Research Center chose and championed its first cohort of teacher action researchers; each subsequent year saw a cohort of 10-15 researchers successfully complete action research projects with the help of external consultants and school senior leadership.

In 2018 the Research Center underwent a restructuring; a network of dedicated human resources employed by ISP replaced external consultants. Today this network is the Research Center; its members lead all Research Center activities.

A Teacher Research Center Curator, an Admin Research Center Curator and multiple Student Research Center Curators make up the Research Center Network. Mentors are also an important part of the support network, but are not always employees of ISP. To receive support, projects must be linked to the current ISP strategic plan; once this link is established, project leaders benefit from almost unlimited aid from the Research Center Curators.

- Role of Teacher Research Center Curator: Primary support person for Teacher Research Fellows; responsible for celebrating and making visible all pedagogical research and innovation taking place at ISP.
- Role of Admin Research Center Curator: Secondary support person for all sponsored Research Center projects; primary liaison with external researchers and other research-led organizations.
- Role of Student Research Curators: Primary support persons for student-led research projects¹; organizers of the annual student-led learning conference; secondary support persons for all other school research projects.
- Mentors: Experts who provide occasional support (either subject-specific or methodological expertise).

1 Student research projects do not have to be linked to ISP's strategic goals.

It is important to note that the current Admin Research Center Curator also holds the role of Communications and Engagement Coordinator at ISP. The Research Center network thus has immediate access to communications tools such as website design, social media, blogs, podcasts and mass mailing. This bridge between research and communications activities facilitates the celebration of innovation, research projects and their outcomes.

Below, a diagram of the ISP Center for Research and Professional Development network:



2. Experienced researchers and innovators on the pedagogical team

The Human Library project leaders, Assil Charara and Marianne Freire are experienced action researchers. They were members of the first Research Center cohort of action researchers in 2014 and members of each subsequent cohort, meaning they benefited from the advice of external consultants as well as from the support of the more bespoke network interventions that began to characterize the Research Center as of 2018. Their projects, although distinct, resembled each other in their focus on community. Many of their projects aimed to study student agency in community service and thus incorporated sources of information external to the daily school environment, yet still intrinsically linked to the core ISP community and values.

Other than their strong working relationship and their experience as action researchers, Assil and Marianne represent another unique strength. As a library teacher and English as an additional language teacher, respectively, they both engage with primary school students of all ages. They also engage with educators from all primary school grade levels. With this bird's eye view of the primary school, they are in a unique position that allows them to identify the needs of different aged and ability learners. As a result, in the early stages of the development of the Human Library, they were able to quickly imagine a platform and use cases that would respond to the needs of many different learners and educators.

3. Large and agile advancement team

At the end of 2018 ISP created an Advancement Department, combining its admissions, marketing, fundraising, alumni and communications personnel under single management. The department hired one additional full-time employee, bringing the headcount to 6 full-time employees (including the department director).

Most schools do not boast an Advancement Department with as large of a headcount, nor with competencies in as many domains. Additionally, members of the team, including the Communications and Engagement Coordinator, seek out transversale projects and privilege collaboration. The Advancement Director consistently makes collaborative projects, like the Human Library, a priority, recognizing that if her team fully understands the work of those in other departments they will be able to better promote the school and its programs.

Lastly, she also recognizes that her team's competencies are valuable to students and looks for opportunities for her team to help students, especially with their communication skills.

Examples of these projects include action research in sustainable development, a webinar series, new family onboarding (in-person and digital), extended curriculum activities, community service, work experience week, career day and improvements to school technology systems.

Reflection Questions

1. Who or which structures support pedagogical innovation at your school?
2. How might you adapt this network and / or the idea of the Research Center to fit the particular context of your school and meet the needs of your organization's stakeholders?
3. How do we ensure a continuum of research skills across programmes?
4. What personal experience do you have that might directly contribute to your project's success?
5. How might your project benefit from a partnership - either a co-collaborator or even a more distant project sponsor?
6. As your project progresses, how are you avoiding siloed work, encouraging multiple perspectives and collecting feedback?

7. How does your school take stock of all of the talents and expertise in its community? Are administrative staff included?

8. Which whole school projects, involving administrative and teaching staff, are currently in progress at your school?

SWOT

Weaknesses

1. Receptivity of community and scalability

Organizational culture plays an important role in determining whether or not an initiative will take hold or be pushed aside. With a new head of school, a revised strategic plan including over 150 concurrent projects, the Paris transport strikes and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, receptivity to innovation was low during the second year of the Human Library project, when most of the work to promote it began.

Staff worried first and foremost about being able to get to school during the strikes, then their health and safety on public transportation due to COVID-19; school leaders focused on keeping the school open and ensuring staff and student wellbeing during distance learning, all while trying to encourage progress on the projects outlined in the strategic plan. Promoting the Human Library was not a priority, despite its demonstrated ability to create authentic learning experiences during distance learning.

Parents worried about whether or not school would remain open, then about juggling the consequences of the pandemic, professional obligations and maintaining their children's interest in their studies while learning from home; joining the Human Library as a breathing book was not a priority.

The size of the ISP community varies from year to year, but on average there are about 180 staff and 1,400 parents who can become breathing books in the Human Library. Currently, the Human Library catalogue contains 120 breathing books.

Unrealistic expectations for full participation existed at the beginning of the Human Library project, for many reasons:

- Project rationale was strongly tied to community values: Creating authentic learning experiences for students and encouraging their inquiry are priorities for all.
- Ease of joining: limited barriers to joining, other than the completion of a short Google form (14 questions).
- Low level of implication: breathing books ran little risk of being repeatedly contacted by students, as contact depended on students' interests and the requirements of their school assignments.

Additionally, family turnover is high at ISP (compared to at a public school or state-sponsored private school). Most families stay, on average, 2-3 years in the ISP community before moving on to different postings in different countries. Only about one-third of ISP families are local or stationed in Paris for the long-term.

This turnover may discourage certain adults from becoming breathing books, as they know that their participation in the Human Library will be short-lived and perhaps not the meaningful contribution they hope to make to the community. It's crucial to monitor this turnover so that breathing books are actually available; monitoring 500 or 800 or 1,000 breathing books would prove difficult for Assil, Marianne and the Communications Team, so full scalability should actually be avoided.

Promotion of the Human Library continues, in an effort to include a larger range of breathing books:

- New families receive a request to join the Human Library through the Admissions Team.
- Staff have time to complete the Human Library form during the first whole-school professional development day of the school year.
- Staff receive an email video reminder during the first months of the school year.
- Parents receive an email reminder about joining the Human Library on Giving Tuesday¹, the first Tuesday in December.
- The Human Library is a key element of the DIRection² (www.thedirectionproject.com) research toolkit.
- Additional periodic reminders to stakeholders about joining the Human Library are scheduled throughout the school year.

1 Giving Tuesday is a worldwide initiative to “do good” together on one day of the year.

2 The DIRection research toolkit was developed in 2020 by the Center for Research and Professional Development. It's an online platform that unites all ISP research tools in one location.

2. Three campus model

The ISP primary, middle and high schools are in three distinct buildings, all in the 16th *arrondissement* of Paris. Each campus is an 8-15 minute walk from the others, but even this short distance creates barriers to effective collaboration.

At the primary school, where Assil and Marianne work and know their colleagues, informal communication about the Human Library happens often. For example, a quick chat about the benefits of contacting a parent through the Human Library to speak about global warming during a Zoom session can happen in the staff room, in a collaborative planning session or even in passing in the hallway.

These informal conversations do not happen between Assil, Marianne and their colleagues at the middle and high schools. The Human Library is less present in the minds of secondary school staff who therefore need frequent formal reminders about the Human Library and its utilization.

Assil and Marianne's collaboration with the Communications Team also requires formal scheduling. Quick check-ins or working lunches are not possible since the communications office is located on the middle school campus.

3. Specificity of search engine

An unexpected project weakness became evident only through the use of the Human Library, once IT and technical decisions were irreversible.

Moving the Human Library from a Google Sheet to an online platform was a necessity, not only for ease of use but also for aesthetics: a professional online tool with image, video and search capacities would only improve the user experience and, as a result, the number of users. As FinalSite clients, the team made the choice to build the Human Library platform within the ISP website (powered by FinalSite). The platform was not purpose-built from scratch, but rather built using the modules available within the FinalSite / International School of Paris contract.

Working with the existing FinalSite modules meant that the resulting platform did not have a bespoke database. Consequently, the catalogue can be difficult to search; the user must type *exactly* at least one of the descriptors assigned to a catalogue entry in order for the search to produce a matching entry. For example, a student may be interested in climate change but types “environmental problems” into the Human Library search bar. Unfortunately, typing “climate change” is the only term that will result in the appearance of any catalogue entries; this is the only term that has been assigned to experts in this domain. Collaborating with an independent website designer to create the Human Library platform would have allowed for the creation of a robust database including exact and subsidiary terms.

Reflection Questions

1. What are your success expectations for your project and how might you need to adjust these for external factors?

2. How might senior leadership support your project and have you discussed your expectations for support with the leadership team?

3. How important is informal communication in project progression and visibility?

4. Which elements would you need to include in a formal project communication plan in order to ensure the progression and visibility of your project?

5. How important is high-performance, professional IT to your project?

6. What sacrifices might you need to make in order to ensure the highest quality IT?

SWOT Opportunities

1. New module from website provider which made the Human Library possible

At the same time period that Assil, Marianne and the Communications Team were discussing how to present a digital Human Library to the ISP community, FinalSite launched its Posts module. Posts is available to customers who wish to write, organize and publish blogs. The Posts module’s structure allows for the creation of multiple blogs at a time, each containing several blog entries that can be displayed or hidden, tagged for search and pulled to one or multiple web pages simultaneously.

For the Communications Team, using Posts to create the Human Library platform represented a perfect opportunity to learn the module and upskill. After some training sessions, the Communications Team was able to act as consultants to Assil and Marianne, suggesting how the use of the Posts module could manage breathing books the same way a traditional library catalogue manages regular books: ease of maintaining catalogue accuracy, not allowing a breathing book to be used at the same time by too many people or providing enticing descriptions and images to help users choose their breathing books.

The alternatives to the Posts module might have included a Google Sheet (too difficult to use for primary school students), the Destiny library catalogue tool (inability to control the aesthetics of the user interface) or a web page (user required to scroll through all entries to find the right one).

The Posts module through FinalSite proved a suitable means to launch the Human Library; it may not, in the long-term, be the best tool for encouraging increased use due to the limited functionality of the search engine and to limited flexibility in design and development possibilities.

2. COVID-19

ISP's Paris as a Classroom (PAAC) program more or less ended as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, which closed all indoor cultural sites in the city. PAAC ensured that students at all grade levels in all types of classes experienced the benefits of living in Paris through school-sponsored field trips to museums, monuments, parks, expos, unique businesses and organizations, markets, etc.

Contacting breathing books in the Human Library and inviting them into classrooms via Zoom to share their expertise could replace some of the PAAC experiences, making COVID-19 an opportunity to expand the use of the Human Library. An example of this is the 2019-20 grade 9 class, currently in grade 10. This cohort missed their Work Experience Week (internship week) in April 2020 due to COVID-19. One entrepreneurial grade 10 student used the Human Library in November 2020 to plan a series of webinars introducing students to different careers. Rather than only one grade being able to participate, the entire community could join the webinars and benefit from the expertise of ISP parents with unique and fascinating professional responsibilities.

Assil and Marianne are working to publicize the Human Library as a PAAC replacement, but it is not yet fully recognized as such among all staff.

Reflection Questions

1. What existing school technologies might be creatively repurposed in order to meet the needs of your project?
2. Who can best help with identifying IT options for your project? Is it only the experts in your school's IT department?
3. How might COVID-19 be an opportunity to expand the visibility of your project?
4. What moments seem like challenges but are actually opportunities?
5. How are you promoting your ability to transform challenges into opportunities?

6. How does the human library create and maintain human connections during confinement?

SWOT

Threats

1. GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requires organizations to receive consent for the use of any individual's personal data. The Human Library, as it contains the personal data of each and every breathing book (first names, last names, phone numbers, email addresses, languages spoken, professions, etc.), must also comply with GDPR.

Breathing books give consent to the distribution of their personal information to students and ISP staff members by responding "yes" to a question about the use of their personal data in the Google Form they complete in order to join the Human Library.

Human Library access is restricted to ISP students and staff; other members of the ISP community (parents) do not have the passkey to the Human Library catalogue. The catalogue would be more secure if each user had a personalized password, and the lack of creating this additional level of security through FinalSite continues to pose a threat to the project.

2. Child safeguarding

All ISP employees must submit background

checks in compliance with international school child safeguarding best practices. Parents, however, do not submit background checks in order to become a breathing book in the Human Library. This means that interactions between adults and breathing books must be monitored, particularly for primary school students.

A first contact between a student and a breathing book occurs via email. The breathing book's email address appears as a hyperlink in the catalogue and this hyperlink sends an email to both the breathing book and the human.library@isparis.net shared mailbox. Assil, Marianne, the ISP Research Curators and the IT Director all monitor this shared mailbox. Students learn to copy the human.library@isparis.net email address (or use "reply all") each time they exchange with their chosen breathing book.

Students no longer meet with their breathing books due to COVID-19 restrictions but measures existed to ensure these interactions could also take place in accordance with the ISP Child Safeguarding Policy. For example, meetings could happen during school hours, either in the classroom or during Research Cafés (designated times during the school day for students and adults to exchange about their research projects). Research Cafés are supervised by multiple staff members and multiple students are present in a shared space.

The ISP Vice Principals of Wellbeing provided precious help regarding safeguarding in the early stages of the creation of the Human Library.

Use Cases

1. Grade 5

The first users of the Human Library were grade 5 students preparing their PYP Exhibition (see Part 1, Context for an explanation of the PYP Exhibition). Assil and Marianne collected data from the first cohort of grade 5 students and from the first breathing books consulted. They used this data to draw conclusions on the Human Library's role as a catalyst for inquiry; this work was a part of their action research project.

Grade 5 students continue to use the Human Library with the help of their homeroom teachers. In addition, they attend special Research Cafés dedicated to learning techniques for writing surveys and interviewing their breathing books.

It's important to note here that using the Human Library as a part of the PYP Exhibition has helped build bridges between ISP's three campuses. Grade 5 students choose a mentor for their Exhibition, and thanks to the Human Library they can choose an ISP staff member. Before the Human Library, grade 5 students did not know which expertise existed among secondary school staff members. Now they can contact secondary school staff members, whose interests match their own, and ask that this person become their project mentor. Secondary school staff members, whose schedules are sometimes more flexible, can go to the primary school to meet their mentees or meet with them on Zoom.

2. Grade 10

Grade 10 students were the next cohort to use the Human Library. They consulted the Human Library while preparing their Personal Projects (see Part 1, *Context* for an explanation of the Personal Project). Grade 10 students learned to use the Human Library during their advisory lessons or during homeroom; Research Center Curators attended these class times to demonstrate the use of the Human Library and to distribute the catalogue passkey. Students received additional guidance on using the Human Library during dedicated Research Cafés, designed to give them time to work on their Personal Projects and to receive help from their peers or from Research Curators.

3. Grade 9

Grade 9 students began using the Human Library in the 2020-21 school year to find internships for their Work Experience Week in April 2021. They learned to use the Human Library through a group Zoom during their advisory period. They receive frequent reminders to consult the Human Library from the Work Experience Coordinator.

4. Grade 1

Assil is using the Human Library with her grade 1 homeroom this year, thus far within the PYP unit of inquiry "how we express ourselves". By allowing students to lead discussions on how they would like to express themselves, Assil was able to uncover their passions and those of their parents.

One group of musical students, who call themselves the Cool Kids, decided to learn about the process necessary to produce a quality musical performance. The father of one of the Cool Kids is a DJ and creates his own music using beatbox, so he offered to create a song for the young performers. The students are currently putting the finishing touches on their performance and receive guidance in this from one of the Human Library's newest breathing books.

Assil also organizes "interest time" in her classroom, a moment for students to explore their identified interests and passions. A number of students used this time to speak about their interest in folding paper. Remembering these discussions during a library visit, Assil encouraged these students to find books on paper folding. They discovered books on making paper airplanes and on origami. The day after the library visit, a Japanese student brought an origami crane to class as a gift and explained that her mother had made it. From these experiences, Assil organized a Zoom session with another breathing book - the adult origami expert. The expert observed and course-corrected her daughter via Zoom as she showed her classmates how to make origami figures.

Lastly, Marianne consulted the Human Library for ISP's annual Languages Week. Normally, parents come to the school and into the classroom to teach mini-lessons in their own mother tongue. Languages Week took place via Zoom in the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Teachers allowed students to lead the mini-lessons as their parents, present on Zoom, added their points of view and assisted when necessary. Languages Week became student-led thanks to COVID-19 and the Human Library.

Reflection Questions

1. How might you use the Human Library to encourage student-led activities in your classroom?
2. How might you make sure student interests receive adequate attention during the school day? During a unit of study? During an entire school year?
3. Which class times could be used to promote your project among students? Which teachers would you need to work with in order to identify these times and organize face-time with students?



Grade 1 origami and the Cool Kids



**Published by the International School of Paris
Center for Research and Professional Development,
January 2021
Prepared by S. Corso**