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UNESCO Chair
on Visual Anticipation
and Futures Literacy
towards Visual Literacy



TROJAN WOMEN RE-IMAGINED

ACTIVITY 4: REASON VS. EMOTION

Text Reference

Throughout the film arguments on 'facts' – i.e. perceptions of 'reality' – coexist with intense emotions of loss and grief.

Objective

The objective of this activity is to support learners critically explore the tension and interplay between arguments based on perceived facts and emotional reasoning in shaping perspectives and decision-making.

Preparation

Learners bring a recent example from a news story, a documentary, an advertisement, a debate, or media post they encountered that uses both information and emotional appeal.

Instructions

Divide the group into pairs or small groups. Each group analyzes their chosen, or provided by the instructor, material. They identify facts (statements or elements supported by objective data) and emotions in words, imagery, or tone meant to evoke feelings.

Organize a debate where one side defends arguments based solely on facts, while the other argues the same case, focusing only on emotional appeals.

Take this opportunity to introduce the concept of cognitive dissonance (when facts and emotions conflict) and of its' implications.

Indicative Discussion Question

-  How are the facts and emotions intertwined?
-  Which is more persuasive and why?
-  What biases and assumptions are embedded in either the facts or emotions presented?



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- ✚ During the debate, did either approach feel incomplete? If so, how?
- ✚ How does society value reason over emotion or vice versa?
- ✚ How do media and public narratives exploit emotion to sway opinions?
- ✚ How does the interplay between reason and emotions generate different ‘realities’ in the now and opportunities for the future?

Outcome

Ask learners to think and write about a personal decision they have made based on reason and another choice, driven by intuition or emotion.

Recommended Application of Visual Literacy tools

This activity is mostly compatible with the “Babel”, the “Identity Triangle”, the “Wall”, the “Sensing instead of Making Sense”, the “Alternative Futures”, and the “Five Mirrors” visual literacy tools.

NOTE: The Visual Literacy tools list is accessible at <https://vickykaraiskou.com/> Check the “Visual Literacy” tab and go at the “Tools” page.