

Transcript Using the Docutube method in Home Education: Interview with Judith Antell and Katelin Teller



Stefanie.Sinclair

So Judith, what attracted you to using the Docutube method in your group of home educating families? Can you tell us a little bit more about that, please?



Judith

Yes, absolutely. So I think for us, the Docutube method felt very natural for home educators. Obviously, there's many, many different ways to home educate. But for us, we tend to be quite child-led. We tend to use quite discussion-based learning. And these were things that were just already there in the Docutube method. So it felt like a very natural fit, as if it had kind of been designed for us. And I remember we had lovely conversations, the three of us, when we were planning the work job, and I was sort of saying, as you often do if you're a home educating parent, sort of slightly defending slash justifying. Well, we do things, you know, the group might have a discussion about it rather than sort of presenting, you know, this is what we think you should learn. You know, is that okay? And you were sort of responding, yeah, that's fantastic. That's exactly what we've been trying to encourage. So for us, it was really brilliant.



Stefanie.Sinclair

Thank you, Judith. Katelin, can you say a little bit more about how the Docutube method was adapted to home educating contexts?



Katelin.Teller

Well, I think it's a pretty flexible method anyway, in terms of you can adapt it to each context when choosing your resources, for example, or the subjects that you might hone in on or themes. But most markedly, I think in home education, required us, I think, to be a bit more flexible and to have a bit more of a relaxed structure. That meant taking breaks when needed, for example, and as you mentioned, allowing, really allowing plenty of time for discussion and for the young people to sort of express themselves and to explore ideas. And

I have to say that the young people that we worked with in Judith's group were great. They were very creative thinkers and they were very open to exploring new ideas in ways which was a little bit unexpected for me. So that was great. In terms of the resources that we provided and that we used for most of the discussions around religious toleration and peace, I think they worked well. But in the context of home education with hindsight, as it is a more student led practice, maybe thinking about involving young people earlier on in the planning stages so that they can help identify some of the resources that could maybe be used.

Unlike in a classroom, what was very different here was that it was a group of mixed aged young people. So the activities had to suit both the younger and the older children. We did have a few hands-on resources. We were using Play-Doh, which was great, which helped all of the young people focus and sort of self-regulate in some ways. And that was particularly important for the younger children. So hands-on resources are key in that context, I think, where you have mixed age groups. I suppose my presenting style was also more informal. It was probably a bit more freer flowing, and we did have to make more space for not interruptions, but for people coming in, people moving around, children moving around, coming and going, and also at points feeling overwhelmed because they're sensitive subjects, which they handled with lots of grace and as I said, openness. But sometimes there were issues that they needed to talk about. And in this particular context, it was important to understand neurodivergent needs in this kind of conversation and the flow of conversation. So that was essential, but it also added to it hugely because of the levels of sensitivity and thoughtfulness that went into the way that the children were answering and discussing things was great.

Just a final two points. One was about making room for parent participation because their involvement was really central to the workshops. They were making contributions through discussions. They were sharing their experiences of tolerance and intolerance, and also importantly, they were supporting their filming and technical tasks. And also with the younger children at some points, working separately with the younger children so we could focus on the older ones. So this is, that's an opportunity you just don't have in the classroom to be working so closely with the parents. And in this context, where you're talking about experiences of toleration and intolerance, excuse me, it's particularly interesting to hear the parents' views. And then I suppose my final thought was in terms of the filming. And I think, Judith, we learned that the children possibly needed a bit more preparation time for

interviewing. And again, it was about this specific group. But maybe a bit more thought put into discussing active listening, for example, when you're interviewing other people and hearing their responses, and also in terms of preparing the questions for the interviews. But I have to say, they were so relaxed, going out and about and filming their materials and interacting with other people and other people were also really interested in home education and they, so there were a lot of questions that were going back and forth. So overall, it was a great experience, but it was adapted for that particular context.



Stefanie.Sinclair

Thank you, Katelin. Judith, what's your sense of what the children in your group particularly enjoyed about the process of making a Docutube?



Judith

I think they absolutely loved actually the interviewing. And I think, yeah, I absolutely agree with what Katelin was saying. I think if they'd almost had a second round of interviews, where they could have reflected on the interviews they did the first time, and then thought more about what more would you have wanted to ask? because they had such beautiful personal connections with the people that they interviewed. And I think that was really special when you're thinking about.



Judith

You know, sort of breaking down prejudice.

I think to have these really personal connections.

with people from lots of different faiths, lots of different backgrounds. I think it's something they're very used to doing, you know, amongst their friends and their friends' families. But to put it through this lens of actually

Questioning, what's it like for you thinking about?

this topic or this issue and the connection through those issues I think was really special for them.



Stefanie.Sinclair

Thank you, and maybe it might be useful to say a little bit more about how the how

the how you approach the Docutube workshop in your particular case. So, you took them out for a field visit in London, didn't you?

Judith

We did. We took them to Brick Lane because there's a building in Brick Lane that was first built as a Huguenot church. Katelin found this for us. I don't know if you want to introduce it, Katelin, but I'll just say briefly, a building that had first been built as a Huguenot church, and then become a Jewish synagogue, and it's currently now a Brick Lane Mosque. And so they were able to encounter three different cultures, three different religions all in the same building and I think that was quite sort of eye-opening for them.

So we spent the day on Brick Lane. They tried lots of different food from lots of different cultures. And I think that was also a really beautiful human way into thinking about really difficult topics that I think when they encounter them in the news, obviously feels sometimes very difficult, very polarized and very painful.

And then actually to literally sort of break bread with people and share, you know, the food at this end of the street and the food at that end of the street and food in different places, talk to shop owners about their business and their food and where they come from and how they experience living here. I think was really interesting. So we spent the day we visited what's now the Brick Lane Mosque and they went to the bagel shop, to a lovely place that had amazing samosas and bhajis. They spent lots of time drinking chai and eating really amazing cakes.

So it was a very, I think it was a really lovely way of experiencing how people live in different cultures, as well as what we might think or project or hear in the news. And again, something they're very used to doing within their own families and their friends' families. But I think to take that step back and film it, allows that extra level of reflection and drawing connections between why people maybe have certain views about things and how that. can influence how they live in their daily lives, I think was really nice for them.

Stefanie.Sinclair

Yeah, that's lovely. And I think this was a really interesting approach. It might be helpful for listeners to explain the structure of our workshops a little bit more. So we've got 4 phases: Engage, Plan, Create and Reflect. In the Plan phase, sorry, in the Engage phase, they engage with resources and our

RETOPEA website, short texts and images or films that spark sort of discussion around religious diversity in the past and present. Then they go out and plan a film that they make themselves inspired by these discussions. In this case, the fact that That doesn't have to be a field visit, but I think that's a really lovely example of how the filmmaking process was sort of integrated into a field visit as well. So the group went out for the whilst the kids were filming while you were doing your visit at Brick Lane. And usually we split up the groups into three, two small groups of three or four children to do the filming. But in your instance, the whole group filmed. So everybody filmed their bits. And in the end, the film was edited together, jointly decided by the kids of what went in and what didn't. And the whole group produced a slightly longer film than we would usually do for Docutubes. Then at the end, when the film was finished, it's shown to the whole group and the group reflects on the process of what they've learned. Maybe that helps as a little bit of context. So, it's a really adaptable process and I think I'm quite aware that home education looks very different for many different people. Sometimes there might be parents, like, you who work in groups and can do this as a joint activity. There are lots of different flexible options in terms of thinking about the maybe having the discussions together, but then going off for smaller groups to make their own film and then sharing them with others. Or for home educating parents who are not working with other parents to do that for themselves. So it's a really flexible approach, isn't it, that can be adapted to lots of different contexts. And I hope that that really comes across and it's really lovely to see the kids engaging in this. We should perhaps also say that Judith has been working with us to produce resources for home educators to make it easier to adapt the methods. We do have an online course that explains how people, how educators in various contexts can use this method for themselves and how to draw on the different resources, free resources that we offer. We also have got a set of resources that specifically explains how these methods can be used in the home education context. And again, I think we're not prescribing anything. We really hope that this inspires people to adopt some of these methods and that they feel supported by this. And we'd love to hear back from people who are using those. So thank you very much, Judith and Katelin, for sharing your experiences. Yeah, thank you.



Katelin.Teller

Thanks, Stefanie. Thank you, Judith.



Judith

Thank you.

Thank you, Katelin.

