EPONAQUEST LEVEL 3 GRADUATION ASSIGNMENT

Preparation Level 3 Workshop Content

The primary goal of the student workshops is to practice creating a structure and process that enables experiential learning with horses for workshop participants.

The task of the facilitators is to create a learning context within which participants can discover the insights and inspiration that the Eponaquest tools and exercises with horses have to offer. The aim is to ensure participants identify skills they can take home that enhance their well-being, success, and effectiveness in life.

The secondary goal of organizing these workshops is to allow Level 3 students to experience the challenges and opportunities of leadership and teambuilding within an authentic community.

The assignment is for students to jointly prepare an Eponaquest Introduction Workshop in small groups according to a more or less fixed agenda. Each student takes responsibility for a part of the presentation and facilitation. This is coordinated with each other in advance.

As part of this, it is important that students prepare a detailed content outline for the parts of the workshop presentation for which they are responsible. This preparation process is intended as a tool to build self-confidence and to increase competence and effectiveness in presenting.

Since the focus lies on the learning process of the workshop participants, thinking through and practicing the presented subject beforehand ensures increased personal understanding and the ability to act as a role model in dealing with challenges, in accordance with the Eponaquest philosophy. Because students practice this in advance, the focus on the day itself can shift to being present in the group process and supporting individual participants in gaining new insights from the experiential activities with horses.

Taking into account the way the material is presented—the language used, the sequence of thoughts, examples, possible use of images or diagrams, etc.—also contributes to the clarity of communication. Finally, the script notes can be used as a memory aid in case nervousness arises on the day itself. After practicing a few times, it is advisable to convert your text into bullet points so that the presentation can be told naturally rather than read aloud. A fully written out version of your presentation texts may be kept on hand as a backup if necessary.

An additional requirement is that a guideline or common thread for the sequence of all workshop activities (the entire agenda) be developed, in which the reasons behind the order of the activities are indicated (goal, benefits, and how the workshop activities are structured): for example, what each new experience has to offer, how each activity builds upon the previous one, and for what purpose.

This process must culminate in the creation of a Script with a common thread for the workshop that encompasses ALL individual texts and the connecting rationales between the activities.

Partial example of a common thread from a previous Eponaquest Level 3 workshop:

Intro/Orientation

- Starts the day with the intention of creating a safe and nurturing environment
- Introducing the workshop theme "Embodied Presence" and connects the consecutive activities to the theme

Introduction exercise (in this example, the Mandala)

- A creative experience for participants to get to know each other and focus on the day
- Mandala Question: What does Embodied Presence mean to you?
- Introduces the concept of non-verbal communication and creative reflection

Meet the Herd

- Provides a wonderful first introduction to the horses for the participants
- Offers an introduction to explaining relevant horse behavior that underlies Eponaquest/The Way of the Horse
- How does the horse's behavior align with the theme of the workshop?

Etc.

Additional tips for preparing scripts:

- It is important to make clear agreements with your group for each section regarding the maximum length of the presentations. Practice delivering your text using a timer (every mobile phone has one) and ensure your presentation stays within the agreed time. Sometimes, you will have to make quite difficult choices about what to cut from your presentation if your first draft is too long. This involves empathetically applying the "predator role" to your own work to make your communication of the essence sharper and clearer, which is a crucial skill for group presentations.
- In general, for presentations: start by thinking about what you want to convey. Look for examples that are relatable. Humor usually works well, so find a funny anecdote or quote that illustrates your presentation. Only start writing the text after creating the overview and gathering the ingredients.
- When writing the scripts, it is important that you clearly articulate the goal and the underlying philosophy for each section, instrument, or exercise, based on the Eponaquest mindset.
- Your supervisors have gone through this script writing process themselves and can help you if you get stuck.
- You can create a shared Google Drive or Dropbox folder to collect the preparation material.
- Compiling a Master Script for the entire workshop can be done in a Google Document or a Word file. Make agreements on how you will do this – whether one person will be responsible for it, or multiple people, and how you will handle the file.
- Josselien and Irene will review the scripts for accuracy and clarity of explanation. Should they make any factual corrections to ensure alignment with the Eponaquest philosophy, it is mandatory to adopt these. If they make optional suggestions to enhance the content or align it with the theme, you may decide for yourself whether to adopt them.