

VOICES AROUND THE TEEN KITCHEN TABLE QUOTES

What are TEEN Kitchen Table Meetings?

This resource has been created using inspirational unscripted quotations that Teenagers spoke aloud during international TEEN Kitchen Table Meetings (though a few isolated quotes come from Adults in the audience too!).

The 'TEEN Kitchen Table' format was developed as part of 'TEEN Ambassadors Across Europe', a project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union that aims to establish best practice audience development strategies in order meaningfully engage with teenage audiences. The TEEN Kitchen Table Methodology is a reflection tool which is able to simultaneously engage Teenagers, Creative Professionals & Artists, and Teachers in a unique and innovative way that stimulates a dialogue about Theatre and Culture. The TEEN Kitchen Table events see Teenagers, Teachers, Programme Managers, and Creative Professionals & Artists coming together around a food-laden 'Kitchen Table' to debate. Indeed, during the project, diverse groups of Teenagers from across Europe moderated and lead discussions, related to Theatre, that they felt were particularly poignant. These TEEN Kitchen Table Meetings provided as opportunity for the Teenagers to share their thoughts and ideas on both national and international levels. For example, in one international session in *Kristiansand* (Norway), Teenagers discussed what it means for Teenage audiences to "Confront the Unknown" when they attend the theatre. You can find out more information about this methodology through our 'TEEN Kitchen Table Methodology Toolkit' which is available on the TEEN website.

N.B. An abbreviated version of this document (titled 'What Teenagers Want From Theatre') is available on the TEEN website.



Segni d'infanzia (Italy) | Cultuurcentrum Hasselt (Belgium)
Dialogue Community Performance (UK) | "la Caixa" Foundation (Spain)
Scenekunstbruk (Norway) | Teatercentrum (Denmark)

Krokusfestival 2019 (Belgium)

This TEEN Kitchen Table Meeting involved 8 Teenagers, 8 Creative Professionals, 2 Teachers, and 6 Project Team Members.

Watch the recording: [Krokus 2019 TEEN Kitchen Table Meeting](#)



- "In theatre you're just more open-minded to what you see"
- "Some theatres have this idea of being unique for the point of being unique, it become stale and boring, and you left with nothing to walk out on; it is pointless"
- "The organic energy when you go to theatre it's not the same"
- "The performing arts has its own language"
- "There has to be something between the artists on stage and the public not on stage, there has to be some spark between them, otherwise it's just looking, there has to be feeling while looking"
- "You can get further with a great content and narrative than just visual"
- "Theatre its challenging"
- "The topic and the name are something I look for when choosing to attend a show"
- "The thing with theatre is you can't see into the future like you can with Netflix or the movies"
- "Talking about it the show can help put things into place, it can help you have a more rational view about how you criticise it"
- "Theatre really shows the artists passion and soul that's what I look for is if I can feel if it is truly created with a vision and a soul"

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- "Some of the best theatre has the themes to both children and adult and to teens"
- "For us teens social media is the best, catchy thing that makes us go to the theatre because sometimes the shows are not well promoted, and I think social media is the way we can share the experience with our friends"
- "Theatre is something that's meant to leave an impression on you, you want to try and share that"
- "It gives you a new perspective"
- "A lot of my friends have a bad sense of theatre because of those experiences theatre in school"
- "We need a society where the society culture and performing arts"
- "There's so much passion in the performing arts that's just going to waste because our state, our society just looks down on it"
- "I think definitely promoting wise the internet has come to stay and social media has come to stay and of course it changes what's most relevant right now and social media to use but I think an Instagram account isn't a bad idea"
- "I think the best thing to send out the poster on Facebook and Instagram and then you can spread awareness"
- "If you go completely alone, you'll be alone in your head, there's definitely a different energy if you go alone or with people"
- "It's not necessary for there to be a gap between children's and adult's theatre – theatre performances should be for everyone."
- "Every time you watch a play, it's new. It's more organic and more alive than film."
- "There doesn't have to be text to communicate to an audience [...] but there needs to be some spark between the stage and the audience. Otherwise, it's not watching theatre, it's just looking"
- "I don't see a lot of theatre stuff on social media [...] often going to the theatre is not really seen as cool in school"



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ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2019 (Norway)

Watch the recording: [Part 1 of Teens Across Europe Table Talk](#) and [Part 2 of Teens Across Europe Table Talk](#).



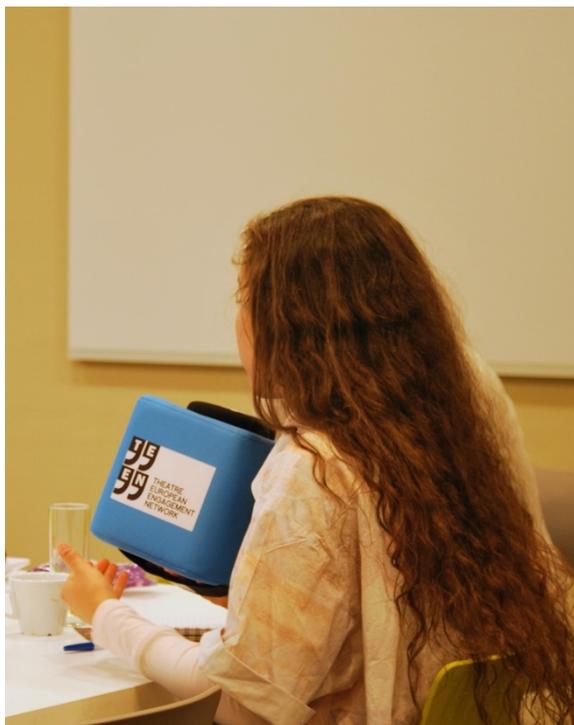
- "We want youth around the world to have an interest and participate in the theatre, we need to give them these small little tools to make that world a little bit less scary"
- "The main purposes of our life is to discover new things"
- "It's always interesting for young people to get to know the actors after the performance"
- "Post shows discussions are nice because you get to ask specific questions what you saw, what you liked what you didn't understand"
- "We need to preserve the unknown"
- "It's all about emotions and how to communicate emotions to the audience"
- "A lot of teenagers who don't go to theatre don't go because they think they have to understand everything"
- "We want people to think theatre is something I can do"
- "When we talk about how to get more teens to go the theatre, I think most people think movies are a better version of the theatre and its cheaper and easier, but movies and theatre are not the same thing, you go out with completely different things, with theatre you get the feeling, and the feeling stays with you"
- "Feeling it together with the actors and that's really cool and complete different to the movies"
- "Art can give so much to your personality or to your character which science can't do"

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- "Normalising theatre through education and for them to realise that] not everyone has to do theatre all the time"
- "Part of making theatre cool among has to be high quality... sometimes the theatre we see at school is not very good"
- "It's the teacher's job or the grown-up's job to give the children tools to work with theatre"
- "Kids they're full humans, they not soon-to-be-adults, they're fully kids and we don't have to push them to be great adult because they're great as they are, they can make their own stuff that other kids will like...no one knows what kids will like but kids, as well as youth theatre the teens have to do it or be a part of the process"
- "It's so good when teachers acknowledge what is happening [in theatre/ in show] and talk about it with their students"
- "Teachers should be better at inviting youth to help make a group programme that the youth are going to watch"



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Showbox 2019 (Norway)

Watch the recording here: [Oslo 2019 TEEN Kitchen Table](#)



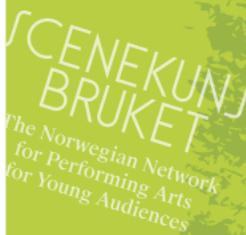
- "What is the goal of the performing arts, is it learn something or to feel something?"
- "How abstract can a performance be before it becomes too challenging?"
- "We need to have – somehow – a small connections [with the actors] and then it's easier to understand"
- "A feeling we don't really like is feeling stupid and we were talking about different stuff that can make us feel stupid and [...] how can we avoid that when people walk out of theatre?"
- "It's quite a normal thing for young people that education, for things to have an educational value, you buy books, you listen to music, you watch movies, when your children it all has to have some educational value at least that's the normal thing, but art has so much potential to wake feelings and different emotions and things in you than that other things [subjects]"
- "Learning through art is a different way to learning when you sit on the school bench [...] it has an education value and an emotional value"
- "When programming for young people I think we need to focus on young people as young people and not as stupid people, don't focus on our lack of ability to understand because that is not the problem, we've just not have had the opportunities to experience as many things as have adults because we haven't lived for that many years, but that doesn't mean we don't have the tool to analysis, to feel, to

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understand, and to learn these values, these values are developed at quite a young age”

- “I think it’s cool when we’re presented to it [theatre] instead of choosing to go to it because maybe we see something that we didn’t think we needed to see but actually we got a lot out of it [...] I think it’s very important to experience things especially at a young age”



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Bobri Festival of Culture and Art Education 2019 (Slovenia)

Watch the recording: [TKT Slovenia 2019](#)



These interview extracts from the same Festival help convey the Teenagers' opinions about the Teen Kitchen Table Meetings and the TEEN Project.

Danish Teenager What do you hope to achieve with this discussion?

Slovenian Teenager 0 Well, to show other people what we teenagers think about theatre and contemporary art.

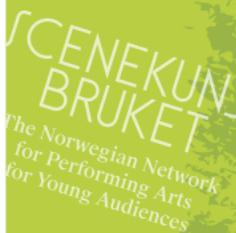
Danish Teenager And you are about to make a Kitchen Table Discussion. Are you excited?

Slovenian Teenager 1 Very. I think it's a really interesting and awesome that you guys are doing this. And I feel like the kid's opinion is not told enough. And I really like it. So, yeah, very excited.

Slovenian Teenager 2 Yes. It's very exciting. I think it's very interesting because I've never been part of something where young adults would sort of be, not exactly superior, but I guess this feeling really helps you, to make you feel that what you have to say is important. And it also helps, well, we just say what we actually mean, and I guess this will really help the adults because they'll actually hear what we think and not something we're pretending to think.

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Danish Teenager We are about to make a discussion about what your opinion is about art that is contemporary. And there's going to be like a million people here listening to you. How do you feel about that?

Slovenian Teenager 3 I'm kind of nervous. I can feel the adrenaline going through my body right now. And yeah, I think it's very exciting.

Danish Teenager Is it good to be outside your comfort zone?

Slovenian Teenager Yes. Because this makes you a better person and more tough.

Danish Teenager So you have bought flowers and drinks and candy for this discussion. Why is this important to make a discussion?

Slovenian Teenager 4 I feel like that's important because you feel more relaxed. You like eating. Kind of like when you're eating dinner with your family. And then you just, it's more your kind of like you're already used to it and just relax talk to people and it's more natural.

Danish Teenager But are you nervous that someone at the table will not agree with you and they will disagree with you?

Slovenian Teenager 4 No. I don't know. I feel like we all have different opinions and it's kind of fun to compare them.

Danish Teenager And you have been the moderator during this TEEN Table Meeting?

Slovenian Teenager 5 I was.

Danish Teenager How did it feel to be part of this?

Slovenian Teenager 5 I feel blessed that I was able to give my opinion to older people to tell my experience with contemporary art. And I really enjoyed it.

Danish Teenager You have been part of this TEEN Table Discussion. What was one of the most important things you discussed according to you?



Slovenian Teenager 6 Well, to me it was it was the things that I've never really even thought about and discussed before. So, for example, what is contemporary? I never really thought about it. I went to see some contemporary shows, but I never really thought about them. And I never really realised that it's about receiving the message because many times I was a bit confused and maybe even a bit angry. And then because I didn't really understand what was going on, and now I think I fully understand that it's mostly about how I perceive it and mostly about receiving some sort of message and interpreting it so in my own way. So, yeah, I think that was really important.

Danish Teenager You have now done this Teen Kitchen Table Discussion. What do you think about it?

Slovenian Teenager 7 I think it was very good. I think the public enjoyed it. And I am happy to express my opinions. And I am very honoured that I was invited in here in the first place.

Danish Teenager What do you think about this way of discussing theatre?

Slovenian Teenager 7 It was really good because I never gave it a good thought about the theatre in general because I think we just watch a show and then home and then just finish that story. But we really discussed it for, discusses it for so, so long then that we really, we should do that more often in our lives.

Danish Teenager So what do you think of this way of discussing theatre? You can translate if you want to.

Slovenian Teenager 8 Very good, I don't know.

Slovenian Teenager 9 It was interesting.

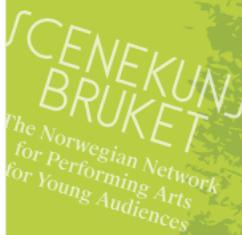
Slovenian Teenager 8 Yes

Danish Teenager Why?

Slovenian Teenager 9 Because you heard a lot of other opinions and yeah you figure out what were inside their heads.

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Danish Teenager So you've just done a Kitchen Table Discussion. What is your opinion and thoughts about that?

Slovenian Teenager 10 It is very good. Even though I kind of didn't know what to talk about anymore as I didn't want to exactly repeat myself and when we were practicing before, so I had to think a little bit more. And I was kind of nervous because there was a camera. But other than that, it was very nice.



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SEgni New Generations Festival 2019 (Italy)

Watch the recording: [Segni 2019 TEEN Kitchen Table Meeting 1](#) and [Segni 2019 TEEN Kitchen Table Meeting 2](#)



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Krokusfestival 2020 (Belgium)

This Kitchen Table Meeting discussed various themes, including the importance of relatability.

For the full recording please follow this link: [Krokus 2020 TEEN Kitchen Table Meeting](#)



- "I personally think the best plays are the ones that combine original ideas together with a nice story, something touching and emotional"
- "The plays story can make you think but I don't want something extremely cryptic"
- "I like the combination of good visuals just because it's fun to look at and when together with original ideas it can really contribute to a good play"
- "If you watch a play it has to wake up some feelings"
- "I also think it's nice when a play is relatable for people of our age [Teenagers], we can recognise ourselves in the play"
- "Not feeling like the play has been created for Teenagers and some part of the story has been covered because you don't want to make Teenagers feel uncomfortable or something like that, I really like when the play is completely honest and real"
- "I think Teenagers often get underestimated"
- "It's important when a play challenges you or gives you another perspective of things and it can help you look at things in a different way and you can learn something from it"

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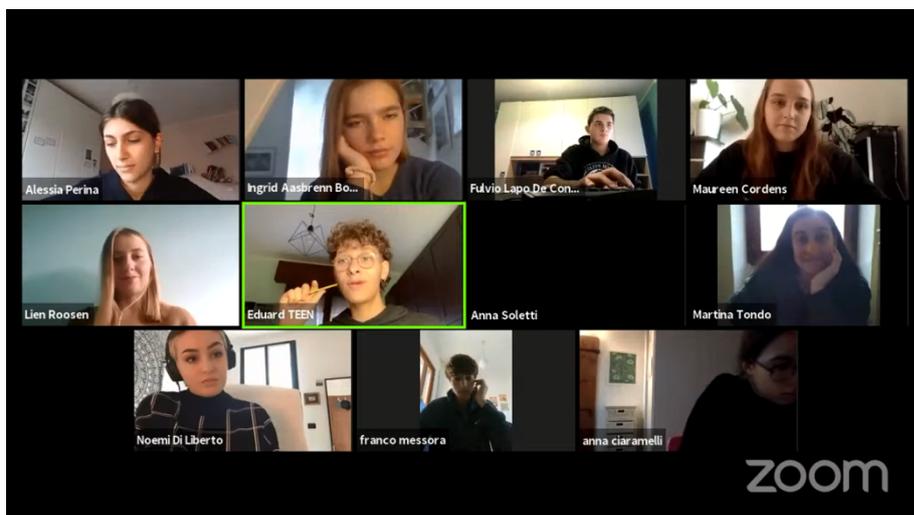


- "I feel the relatability can also be lost if you don't know anything about the performance beforehand or if the language acts as a barrier"
- "Plays don't need to be relatable in the sense that we have to experience the same things that the actors are experiencing but like you can also relate to the feeling"
- "For me relatability is sometimes the core in a play but sometimes it does not need to be, so for example about relating to stuff and to have to experience it yourself, you don't need to experience it by yourself, old plays like Shakespeare you can still relate to them today"
- "Grown-ups acting like Teenagers on stage, I find it extremely hard to relate to the feelings of an actor on stage who is pretending to be my age"
- "I think to relate means to find a piece of yourself in someone else or in the dance or in what they say"
- "It's about educating yourself on what you're going to see"
- "I think dance is a really important language that we need to practise to learn how to read it"
- "When you start going to the theatre, they don't understand anything and then they learn how to relate and how to understand what is happening better"
- "I don't expect to understand everything, but I will also expect some sort of communication"
- "When we prepare students and kids to go to see theatre it's important that they know that they're, you're not supposed to love everything, you're supposed to understand everything, and if you didn't like the play that's fine, we have to celebrate a start talking about the individual taste of every person that sees theatre [...] and that will help them develop a language, a critical language for theatre"
- "If the students aren't given the opportunity to explore their own creativity and their critical sense without thinking about career in school then make a platform for this in the theatre"
- "I feel like sometimes when we watch theatre in school, we have to talk about it, but it becomes over analytic, and you have to put it like in this box [...] and it's kind of kills the experience"
- "It's weird that we're so hung up that Teenagers need to learn something, isn't it enough for them to feel something?"



SEgni New Generations Festival 2020 (Virtual – Italy)

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the TEEN Kitchen Table methodology was developed to enable online delivery. As always, a Teenager acted as the moderator. The adults were asked to turn off their cameras apart from when they wanted to ask a question, this ensured the focus was on the Teenagers. This Kitchen Table Meeting was themed around identity & linked to art & performance. Here is the recording of a virtual Kitchen Table Meeting, which was streamed on YouTube: www.segninonda.org for the whole on demand programme (clicking on "Explore").



- "Performance arts can be a really powerful tool in that way of identity expression"
- "You can watch and maybe feel represented...that be really life changing; I realised something, I grew "
- "I think the way theatre can transform ideas on a stage makes it easier for everyone to understand about identities"
- "A form of art that makes it easier to reflect on each person's identity"
- "Identity is man-made, to define ourselves but sometimes I think it is important to challenge ourselves on our identity...theatre and performance arts is a way to challenge the idea of my own identity"
- "Performance art is societies identity in a sense"
- "Your personality is also part of your identities so I think experiences in life can change your personality a bit"
- "Important of representation of teenagers on stage not being childish"
- "Teenagers should be involved in the processes of making theatre for their ages"