



## Field class as a teaching/learning tool in Geography and History at a school in Tauá – CE, Brazil

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### ABSTRACT

The research aims to discuss the relevance of field classes as a methodological and didactic tool to support theoretical and practical knowledge of Geography and History, based on an analysis of the benefits provided by this type of class in the learning of students in an Elementary School. The study was carried out in June 2024 in the municipality of Tauá - Ceará. The class was held at the Serrote Quinamuiú with the presence of 77 students, of which 41.1% were from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade A and B and 51.9% were from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade A and B. The participation of males was 50.6% and females was 49.4 and three teachers. The curricular components Geography (38.9%) and History (45%) are the subjects that students had the most field classes at school. In the opinion of the respondents, what they liked most about the field class held at the Serrote Quinamuiú was the observation of the landscapes (34.6%) and because it was a different practice carried out outside the classroom (33.1%). It is concluded that the field class is a very useful methodological tool, which helps in the understanding of Geography and History and in the development of more interactive classes; it also arouses the interest of students in the search for the innovative and out of the monotony of the classroom, as well as it is essential for the teaching and learning process to exist in various sciences/disciplines that seek to transform students into thinking, critical and acting beings.

### RESUMO

A pesquisa tem como objetivo discutir a relevância das aulas de campo como ferramenta metodológica e didática para embasar conhecimentos teóricos e práticos da Geografia e da História, trazendo como base uma análise dos benefícios proporcionados por esse tipo de aula na aprendizagem dos alunos em uma Escola de Ensino Fundamental. O estudo foi realizado em junho de 2024 no município de Tauá – Ceará. A aula foi efetivada no serrote Quinamuiú com a presença de 77 alunos, dos quais 41,1% eram do 8º ano A e B e 51,9% eram do 9º ano A e B. A participação do gênero masculino foi de 50,6% e do gênero feminino foi de 49,4 e três professores. Os componentes curriculares Geografia (38,9%) e História (45%) são as disciplinas que os alunos mais tiveram aula de campo na escola. Na opinião dos pesquisados, o que eles mais gostaram na aula de campo realizada no serrote Quinamuiú foi a observação das paisagens (34,6%) e por ter sido uma prática diferente realizada fora da sala de aula (33,1%). Conclui-se que a aula de campo é uma ferramenta metodológica bastante útil, que auxilia na compreensão da Geografia e da História e no desenvolvimento de aulas mais interativas; desperta, também, o interesse dos alunos para a busca do inovador e fora da monotonia da sala de aula, assim como é imprescindível para que haja o processo de ensino e aprendizagem em diversas ciências/disciplinas que buscam transformar os alunos em seres pensantes, críticos e atuantes.

### ARTICLE INFORMATION

#### Histórico do Artigo:

Submetido: 09/23/2024

Aprovado: 11/13/2024

Publicação: 11/14/2024



#### Keywords:

active methodology,  
basic education,  
human sciences.

#### Palavras-Chave:

metodologia ativa,  
educação básica,  
ciências humanas.

## Introduction

The teaching and learning process is very abstruse, which involves the participation of teachers and students. In this way, in order for it to be effective, there must be harmony added to the interests and efforts coming from the entire body that forms the school space (Sousa *et al.*, 2024).

In contemporary education, there are many difficulties faced in the school environment, since many students are unmotivated to study. In this sense, it is up to educational institutions and educators to instigate the teaching and learning process through more attractive and didactic alternatives for students, so that they feel more welcomed and motivated in the school environment.

According to Sousa *et al.* (2024), the field class is an important didactic resource, facilitating learning, in view of the needs for the search for didactic strategies that promote the relationship between teachers and students, as work outside the classroom tends to help the construction of knowledge. Since the field class is configured as a resource for the student to understand the place and the world, thus articulating theory to practice, through the observation and analysis of the experienced and idealized space (Lima & Assis, 2005).

Thus, the field class is a tool of great value in the teaching of Geography and History, as it allows the teaching and learning process of students to become more effective. Since most of the time students are attracted to this type of class, because they get out of the routine and explore various environments. Therefore, the field class enriches the practical knowledge of the students.

According to Souza and Pereira (2007), the field class is any and all investigative and exploratory activities that take place outside the school environment. Therefore, it is an active methodology of great relevance for the teaching of Geography and History, as both are disciplines that complement each other and are intrinsically linked, since history always occurs in a place, and in these places where there is human presence, history always occurs, therefore, they are sciences that are in charge of explaining the phenomena resulting from the society/space relationship. In this sense, it is important to highlight the relevance of fieldwork in the classes of these curricular components, since both are sciences that have a wide range of interrelated themes, providing different forms of approaches in the field. Therefore, the guiding question arises: Are field classes in fact important pedagogical tools for the teaching and learning of Geography and History?

The present work aims to discuss the relevance of field classes as a methodological and didactic tool that provides the understanding of Geography and History, based on an analysis of the benefits that this type of class can provide in the learning of students and having as object of study two classes of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade of the Elementary School (E. E. F.) Maria do Livramento Barreto da Costa Leitão. It is important to highlight that these classes were held in the Serrote Quinamuiú, a historical and tourist spot, in the municipality of Tauá - CE.

Therefore, this activity enabled the students to relate theory with practice, and the theme is of sociocultural, historical, scientific and tourist relevance.

## **Methodology**

### ***Location, historical and geographical characterization of the municipality of Tauá - CE***

The municipality of Tauá is bordered to the north by Pedra Branca and Independência, to the south by Parambu and Arneiroz, to the east by Mombasa and Pedra Branca and to the west by Quiterianópolis and Parambu. It is dated that from 1995, the municipality became composed of 8 districts, of which the following stand out: The district of Tauá (Headquarters), Barra Nova, Carrapateiras, Inhamuns, Marrecas, Marruás, Santa Teresa and Trici (Ceará, 2009; IBGE, 2020; IPECE, 2016).

The occupation of Tauá dates back to around the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and became a municipality in 1802 (IPECE, 2016). According to Freitas (2009), the name Tauá appears in three distinct languages: Tupi, Portuguese and Arabic, the latter referring to a metropolis of the Arab world in Asia Minor, which has long since disappeared. Historians and researchers such as Girão (1947) identify several definitions in the Tupi language, the first meaning red clay, but without indication of color. The designation of geographical features and places was named by the indigenous people domesticated in the invasions through the hinterland of the Inhamuns. Thus, the aborigines juxtaposed the name of Tauá for the old village, an old settlement of the Jucás Indians (Feitosa, 2015).

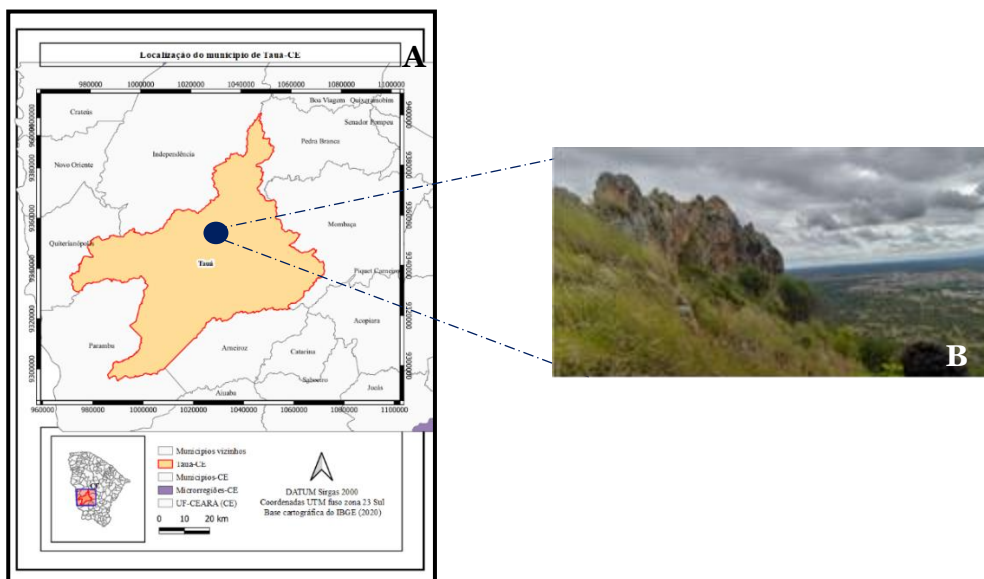
The municipality has great historical and cultural relevance, known nationally for its historical collection, in its museums and architectural works, emerging and rescuing the cultural heritage of the region (Araujo, 2022).

The study was carried out in June 2024 in the municipality of Tauá, located in the Inhamuns Region, in the state of Ceará - Brazil, at a distance of approximately 357 km from the capital Fortaleza. And obeying the following geographic coordinates: Latitude: 06° 00' 11" S, longitude: 40° 17' 34" W, altitude: 402.7 m. Its territorial unit is 4,010.618 km<sup>2</sup>, with 61,227 inhabitants, a hot semi-arid tropical climate, with rainfall from February to April, relief of "sertanejo" depressions and residual massifs, open shrubby caatinga vegetation and thorny deciduous forest, rainfall of 416.9 mm (average in 2019). With the HDI (Human Development) of 0.633, the MDI (Municipal Development Index) of 25.66 and its Demographic Density of 15.27 hab/km<sup>2</sup> (Ceará, 2009; IBGE, 2022).

According to Farias (2022), the Serrote Quinamuiú is composed of acidic rocks with a high content of silica (dioxide mineral), ivory white in color and intense hydraulic fracturing (a method that enables the extraction of liquid and gaseous fuels from the subsoil) of silicate composition (the rocks in the Serrote have portions with a reddish color).

**Figure 1.**

*A - Map of the municipality of Tauá/CE. B - UECE/CECITEC - TAUÁ.*



Source: A: Araujo, 2023. B: Authors.

### **Research typology**

This work makes a qualitative and quantitative approach to the data, obtained through a questionnaire and as a source the oral history, which is a methodology in which the subject's speeches are the source of research, thus, it was not necessary to submit it to an ethics committee (Matos & Senna, 2011). This study was carried out based on methodologies proposed by Araujo, 2023 with some adaptations.

According to Schneider *et al.* (2017) and Silva *et al.* (2017), a qualitative-quantitative approach research allows an analysis of legal processes in the face of qualitative methods of quantitative methods with structural analysis of the phenomena, since quali-quantitative research is supported by each other and constitutes some relevant parameters for the validation of scientific research: The reliability of the data and how to study individual elements and/or groups to formulate a hypothesis that can cover a population.

Before the completion of the class, the preparation (pre-field) was carried out, that is, a visit to the study area that was made a week before to investigate the trail, in order to notice possible obstacles to be faced (figure 02). According to Lima and Assis (2005) and Fernandes *et al.* (2022), the previous visit to the location to carry out the field class is essential in its organization, considering that it avoids frustration and escape from the objectives intended with the proposed activity.

**Figure 2.**

*Pre-field preparation: A visit to the study area one week before to find out the trails to be covered.*



*Source: Prepared by the authors.*

Then, the route, duration, trail, places to be visited and the theme addressed during classes were defined, highlighting the theme of the project entitled: “Knowing my Tauá”. For this, photographic records and student registration/call forms were used.

The contents covered include the National Textbook Program (*Programa Nacional do Livro Didático - PNLD*) 2024/2027 of Geography and History, aiming to carry out the project “Knowing my Tauá” (Garcia *et al.*, 2022; Minorelli & Chiba, 2022a; Minorelli & Chiba, 2022b). As stated by Fernandes *et al.* (2022), this moment is a bridge between theory and practice and allows reflections and the approximation of the contents seen in the classroom with the contents experienced. The moment of the process of knowledge production cannot do without theory, under penalty of becoming empty of content, incapable of contributing to revealing the essence of geographical/historical phenomena (Alentejado & Rocha-Leão, 2017). The students were prepared with the presentation of the proposal for active methodology and the production of reports and conversation about the field class was requested as activities.

All the material used (lesson plans, folders with the script of the field class, pens and notebooks for notes) was carefully organized by the geography and history teachers.

The field class took place in the presence of three teachers (one of Geography, one of History and one of Portuguese) and a professional from the school's secretariat (administrative agent). On the occasion, there was also the participation of two historians from the region to explain the geographical and historical knowledge of the place throughout the route, which was essential for the success of the class with the 8<sup>th</sup> A/B and 9<sup>th</sup> A/B classes of the aforementioned school.

The departure for the field class took place exactly at 7:40 a.m. and the arrival was around 10:30 a.m., and for the choice of the route of the field class, diversification was used as a criterion, allowing an overview of the museums, the main architectures and historical monuments of the municipality, holding a discussion on the theme worked.

**Figure 3.**

*Image A - Arrival at the Serrote Quinamuiú. Image B - Trail traveled. Image C - Trail that precedes the top. Image D - Top of the Serrote. Image E - Cruzeiro do Serrote Quinamuiú.*



*Source: Prepared by the authors.*



A questionnaire (7 questions) was applied addressing the theoretical knowledge and the opinion of the students about the relevance and objectives of the field class to study Geography and History, making them reflect on theory and practice.

The data collected were organized and analyzed through an ANOVA, presented in the form of writing and graphs made in Excel 2019 for a better elucidation of the data obtained. The relative frequency (%) was calculated using the following formula:  $Fr = \left(\frac{Fi}{n}\right) \times 100$ , where (Fr) is the relative Frequency; (Fi) is the absolute Frequency and (n) represents the amount of data.



**Figure 4.**

*Semi-structured questionnaire.*


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 Department of Education  
 Maria do Livramento Barreto da Costa Leiteiro School  
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 Law of Creation of the Institution - 720/01
 

**SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE**

Teachers: Elivan Custodio Araujo, Antônio José de Aquino and Sabrina Pedrosa Lima

**Research on field class (Geography and History) carried out at Serrote Quinamuiú, Tauá - CE, 2024**

- Gender  
 Male       Female
- Grade  
 8<sup>th</sup> grade A       8<sup>th</sup> grade B       9<sup>th</sup> grade A       9<sup>th</sup> grade B
- What field class experience(s) have you had at Maria do Livramento Barreto da Costa Leiteiro Elementary School (E. E. F.)?  
 Sciences       Geography       History       Mathematics  
 Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- What did you like and/or learn most in the field class?  
 Observe nature, plants and animals  
 Observe the landscapes  
 Responses related to emotional aspects (fun, tranquility, joy)  
 Liked it for being a different class, outside of school  
 Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you think that field classes are important to better understand the contents that are "taught" in the classroom in the components of Geography and History?  
 Yes       No  
 Why?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- What did you think of the field class (Geography and History) held at Serrote Quinamuiú, Tauá - CE?  
 Good       Bad       Excellent
- Among the resources listed below, which one do you find most interesting to learn Geography and History?  
 Debates       Videos       Field class       Games  
 Computer science  
 Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

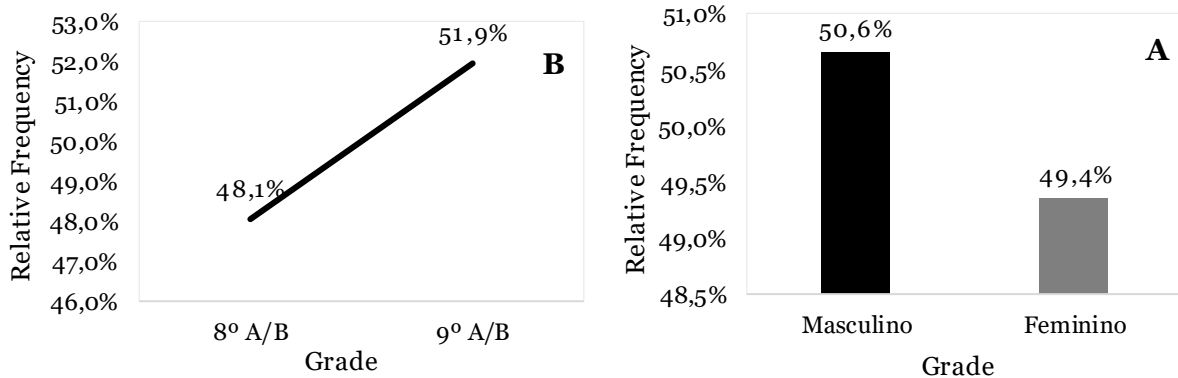
Source: Prepared by the authors.

**Results and Discussion**

The field class was attended by 77 students, of whom 41.1% were from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade A and B and 51.9% were from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade A and B (Figure 5 A). The participation of males was 50.6%, and females was 49.4% (Figure 5 B).

**Figure 5.**

*A - Grade of respondents. B - Gender.*



Source: Prepared by the authors.

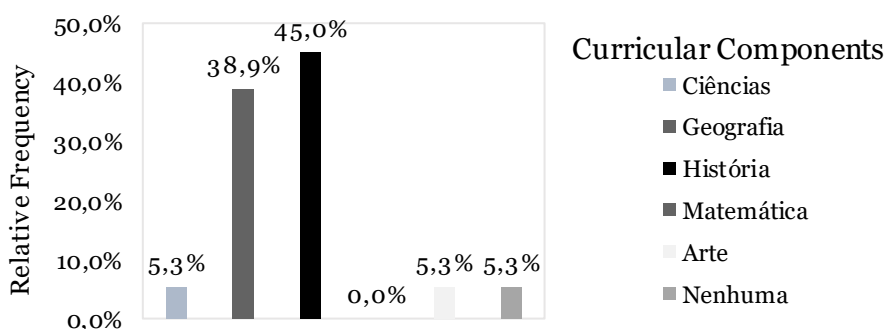
Figure 6 shows the curricular components Geography (38.9%) and History (45%) as being the subjects in which students had the most field classes at school. According to Compiani (1993), the field class in these components is an excellent teaching tool, since the “teaching environment” can help in the students learning, since it provides direct contact with the concrete objects and phenomena that are being studied in the classroom. Towards Menezes and Chiapetti (2015), the practice of teaching Geography gives opportunities for the student to understand the transformations of the geographical space.

In this sense, it is possible to reaffirm the relevance of the teaching of Geography for the construction of subjects who adopt the social dimension of their participation in the assimilation of space, from the absorption of geographical concepts and their experiences. Almeida (2013) adds that the History teacher must always warn what society insists on forgetting, because history makes us reflect on the past and the future in the present. Therefore, it plays an inseparable role in society from the past and future, since the study of history is an adequate starting point when one wishes to reconstitute it to better understand reality from the present.

In the case of the teaching of Geography and History, it is essential that the student appropriates historical information, situating himself in the time and space of geographical issues and their transformations, because, from these events, the teacher is able to enable conditions to make the citizen integrated into the environment in which he lives as an active critical individual, reflective and participatory (Pabis, 2012; Vaz, 2019).

**Figure 6.**

*What field class experience(s) have you had at school Maria do Livramento da Costa Leitão?*



Source: Prepared by the authors.

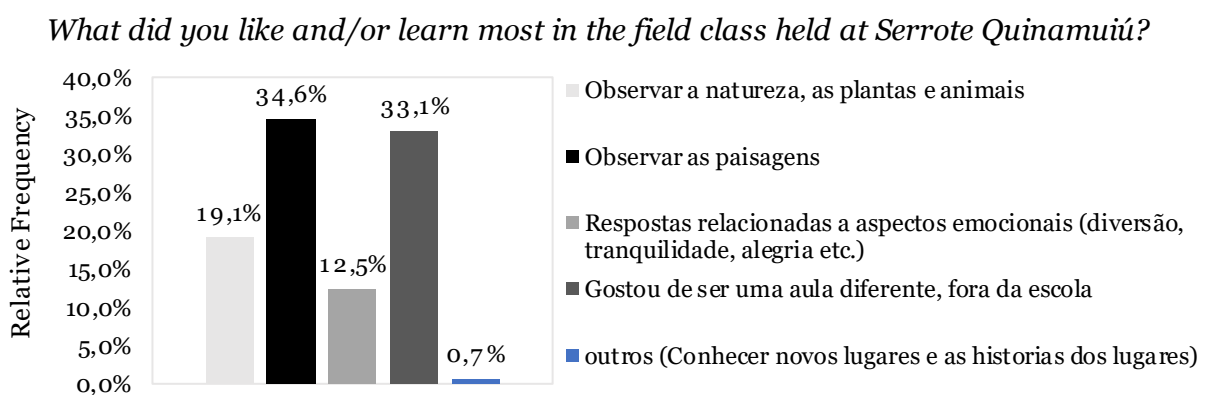
According to Figueredo and Silva (2009), and Silva *et al.* (2010), Geography is the science that has as its object the descriptive study of the earth's surface, its physical accidents, climates, soils and vegetation and the relationships between the natural environment and



groups. These practical experiences do not discard or replace the work done in the classroom, but add and strengthen previous knowledge on certain subjects. Therefore, they are indispensable tools allowing us to demonstrate that learning is something dynamic, since such experiences and reflections influence society as a whole. And from this point on, students can recognize themselves as members of this constructive movement of citizenship and challenge themselves in all educational aspects.

Based on the data and reports, what the students liked most about the field class held in Serrote Quinamuiú (figure 7) was the observation of the landscapes (34.6%) and because it was a different practice carried out outside the classroom (33.1%).

**Figure 7.**



Source: Prepared by the authors.

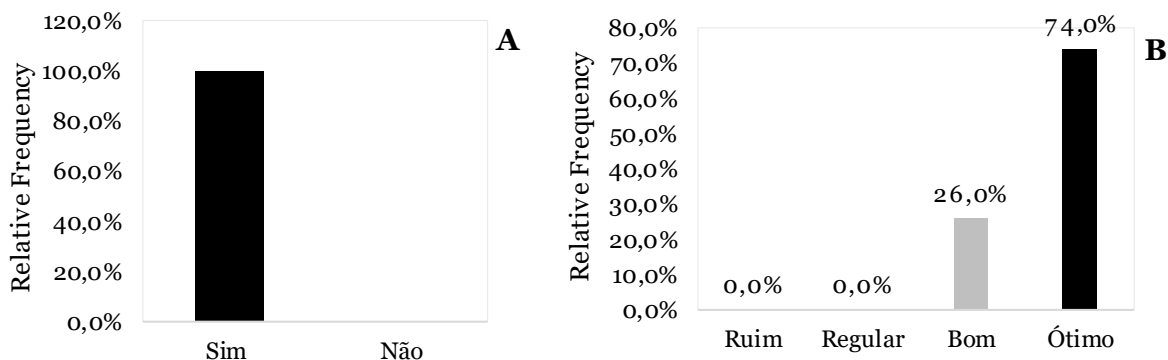
When asked about the importance of field classes for a better understanding of the contents of Geography and History, 100% of the students answered affirmatively that this tool is very important for learning and assimilation of contents (figure 8 A). Sousa *et al.* (2024), state that fieldwork is very useful in understanding the human sciences, as well as for the teaching-learning process involving various sciences/disciplines that seek to transform students into thinking, critical and active beings in society.

The students experience of experiencing a field class was considered very important, considering that most consider the field class to be excellent (74.0%) (Figure 8 B). According to Scortegagna and Negrão (2005), fieldwork presents infinite possibilities for research and investigation, being of great value to the sciences in general. Therefore, this moment involves thinking, reading reality, understanding processes, identifying problems and generating solutions, which require articulation between doing and knowing (Cunha *et al.*, 2008).

**Figure 8.**

*A - Do you think that field classes are important to better understand the contents taught in the classroom in the components of Geography and History?*

*B - What did you think of the field class (Geography and History) held at the Serrote Quinamuiú, Tauá - CE?*



Source: Prepared by the authors.

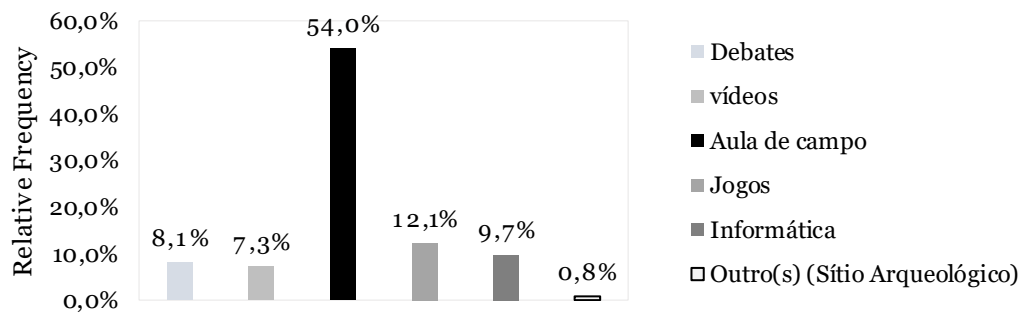
Figure 9 shows the students opinion about which resources they consider most interesting to better understand geography and history. The respondents pointed out the field class (54%) as being the best pedagogical resource. Debates (8.1%), videos (7.3%), games (12.1%), computer science (12.1%), and others, such as archaeological sites (0.8%) were also mentioned in the survey.

The data obtained corroborate the results found in a study carried out by Sousa *et al.*, (2024) in which field classes appear with 58%, debates with 28%, and videos, games and computer science with 14%. In this way, students are able to better assimilate the content with the day-to-day experience through field classes, since the practice makes it possible to know the reality of the problem studied, and thus strengthen previous knowledge and awaken new perspectives about the contents covered in the textbooks.

According to Scortegagna and Negrão (2005), and Cunha *et al.* (2008), fieldwork is essential, since the practices present infinite possibilities for research and investigation, being, therefore, an important methodological tool to understand historical/geographical processes, identifying problems and thus generating solutions through cognitive competencies that imply the development and articulation between doing and knowing.

**Figure 9.**

*Among the aspects listed below, which one do you consider most interesting to learn Geography and History?*



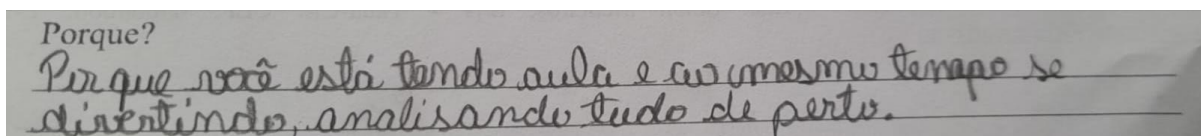
Source: Prepared by the authors.

### **Reflection on the importance of field classes from the students point of view**

The students experience in experiencing the field class was pleasurable based on their reports, as they considered the activity differentiated and fun (Figure 10). Cavalcanti (2010) highlights that the teaching of human sciences contributes to the construction of citizenship. It also addresses that the teaching of Geography contributes to the practice of construction and reconstruction of knowledge, skills and values, expands the ability of young people and children to understand the world in which they live and work. And thus understand school as an open, organized and living space of cultures.

**Figure 10.**

*Opinion of student "A" about the importance of the field class (Serrote Quinamuiú).*

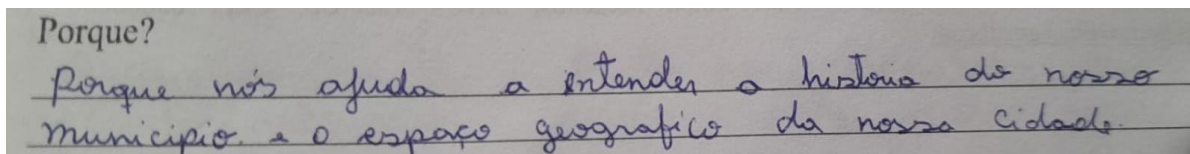


Source: Prepared by the authors.

The practice of teaching through the field class offers opportunities for the student to understand the transformations of the geographical space and understand the history of the municipality (figure 11). Menezes and Chiapetti (2015) emphasize that the teaching of Geography and History is indispensable for the formation of subjects who recognize the social dimension of their participation in history and in the appropriation of geographic space. These field practices provide infinite possibilities for research and investigation in teaching and learning, as it articulates between doing and knowing (Cunha *et al.*, 2008).

**Figure 11.**

*Opinion of student “B” about the importance of the field class (Serrote Quinamuiú).*

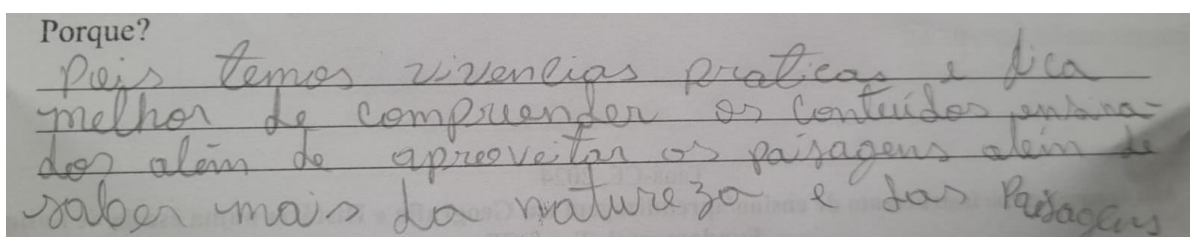


*Source: Prepared by the authors.*

According to Cordeiro and Oliveira, (2011) field classes enable the student to develop various skills such as the observation of landscapes, establishes in a practical way the stimulus to research, as well as allows the student to bring the content closer to the knowledge worked in the classroom. This evidences the opinion of one of the respondents (figure 12).

**Figure 12.**

*Opinion of student “C” about the importance of the field class (Serrote Quinamuiú).*



*Source: Prepared by the authors.*

## **Final Considerations**

Based on the research, it can be stated that there is a search for alternatives capable of circumventing the difficulties faced by basic education teachers in the construction of geographical and historical knowledge. In this context, the educator needs to adopt strategies that promote teaching-learning in an attractive and pleasurable way for students, having the field class as an important methodological tool as an ally of theoretical knowledge. In this way, the implementation of field classes in the teaching of Geography and History contributes significantly and stimulates the students sense-critical aptitude, being relevant because they are concepts that make up the school daily life and the sociocultural context in which they are inserted. Therefore, it is concluded that the field class is a very useful methodological tool that helps in the understanding of the human sciences and other areas of knowledge, providing more interactive classes, arousing the interest of students for the new, and transforming them into thinking, critical and active beings in society.

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