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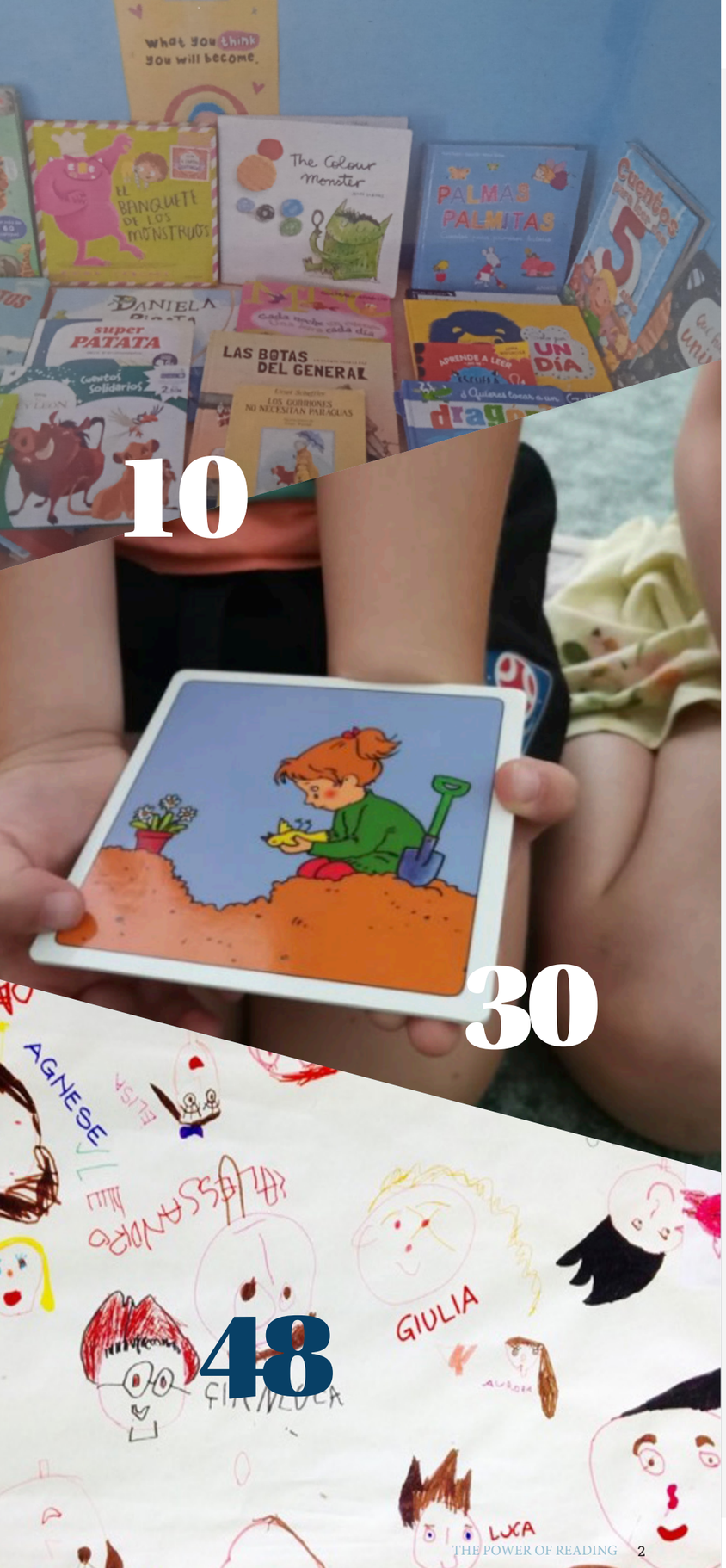
eTwinning

THE POWER OF READING

ERASMUS+ PROJECT
Key Action 2
Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices



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INDEX

3 Our Project

4 Spain: Centro Educativo Zola

5 Greece: 11th Pre-primary School of Chania

6 Croatia Kindergarten Jarun

7 Estonia: Kalli-kalli kindergarten

8 Iceland: Arnarsmári preschool

9 Italy: Istituto Comprensivo Anzio III

10 Centro Educativo Zola: Reading, Feelings and Emotions

20 11th Pre- Primary School of Chania: Storytelling and Narrative Abilities in early years

30 Kindergarten Jarun: Reading and Problem-Solving Skills

38 Kalli-kalli Kindergarten: Technology in the Reading Nest

44 Arnarsmári Preschool: Dialogic reading how to bring reading to life

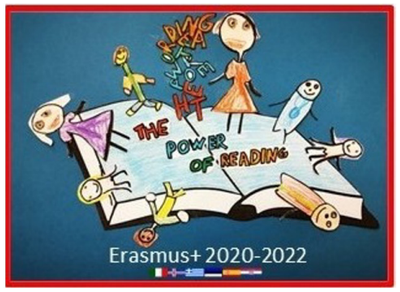
48 Istituto Comprensivo Anzio III: Books like passports to open horizons

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OUR PROJECT

Early Childhood Development: The Power of Reading



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As part of the ERASMUS+ Program, Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, a project entitled: "Early Childhood Development: The Power of Reading" was carried out in 6 partner countries - Spain, Iceland, Greece, Estonia, Croatia and Italy (from 1/12/2020 to 31/08/2023). All participating preschools the need to motivate preschool children to become interested in books and develop pre-reading skills, while the "power" of literature can influence and help their integral development.

The main goal of our project is to increase the use of literature in early childhood education as an element in the children´s integral development: reading competence, emotional intelligence, naturalistic intelligence, communicative skills, digital competence, problem-solving skills and social acceptance. By sharing our good practices in these different areas, we have explored innovative activities and methodologies to use with preschool children. We hope that "The Power of Reading" will help children to more easily obtain reading competence in their primary education, strengthen their emotional intelligence and improve their relationships with others.

The teachers and children participating in the project achieved tangible results and success in the use of activating methods to develop competency skills in literacy.

Over 67 teachers from kindergarten, pre-school and primary school have participated in the project as well as 21 institutions. The activities were targeted at 568 children and 847 parents indirectly involved in the project.

The project implementation period was a challenge for all partners due to the Covid 19 pandemic in Europe. In spite of some of our schools being closed for short periods, having to meet one another online, sickness of some partners making it impossible for them to come to meetings, we are happy to have overcome these obstacles and meet our goals, carrying out all the proposed mobilities to share our good practices in person.

Thanks to this project, we were able to share and successfully implement the contents of this publication. However, there is much more than what is contained between its covers – we have built long-lasting friendships, have beautiful memories of the times we have spent together getting to know the culture in the different parts Europe, and we have made plans to stay in touch for future cooperation. It has been a pleasure to work with the project team which has always shown enthusiasm and dedication. It has been a moving experience to see how both teachers and the children have benefitted from the new perspective towards literacy.

Elaborating this final product of our project has been an enriching experience as it has allowed us to reflect on what we have learned, the methodologies we use and the impact of how we use stories and books to help our child learn and grow. We hope that it will be a guide and resource bank for anyone who reads to a child. We would like to thank all the partners and teachers working in the project for their great work, for preparing the meetings and sharing their skills and knowledge. It has been a wonderful experience exploring the world of literacy with you!

"Early reading with children has a significant role in children's development, because it influences the whole development of the child (cognitive, language-communication, social, emotional)."

Lori De Hond and
María Ángeles Bouso

Colegios Zola Villafranca

SPAIN

Centro Educativo Zola

COORDINATOR

Zola Infant School is part of Zola School Villafranca, an educational institution in Villanueva de la Cañada, a town located 28 km from Madrid. This institution educates about 1000 children aged from 0-1 to 18. Our school is part of the Zola School Group which is comprised of two schools. We are a school whose aim is to form qualified students, future citizens, who are able to adapt to the changing global environment and think independently and critically, embracing opportunities to be the best they can be and help to create a better and more just world.

The Educational Model of Zola Villafranca is based on four pillars: Educational Innovation, Emotional Thinking, Internationalization, and Creativity, Art and Emotions. The profile of Zola students is focused on the integral developent of the student , and we accompany them in their efforts to become competent, reflective and critical, creative, emotional and committed.

Our Infant school has 9 units with a total of 180 students from 0 to 6 years old. In the first stage from 0 to 2 years old, the children are immersed in an atmosphere of affection and trust, surrounded by nature and spacious and welcoming spaces. Boys and girls advance in their relationships with their peers in an environment that encourages creativity, enriching experiences, and they are progressively introduced to the English language.

In the second cycle, which includes students of 3, 4 and 5 years of age, educational contents are organized in areas and by projects that promote the overall growth and development of each child, taking into account their differences and needs. Our bilingual education programme (in English) includes native language assistants who help to develop the children's communication skills and phonetic awareness. In addition, children begin instruction in German from the age of 3.

More than 20 teachers work in our Infant school, and they accompany the children in their development process, prioritizing play and sensory activities. We respect the rhythm of learning, ensuring that the classrooms are prepared spaces in which children can investigate and create. The rules are clear to everyone, and respect and empathy are essential in relationships between the students and between the family and the



school. Learning to read and love for books are main objectives in our educational project and are aspects that we work on every day, providing children with books and stories that they can freely use at any time. We also prepare reading spaces and include reading time with the teachers every day at all levels and ages. We also include emotional thinking activities in our daily activities. We believe that how we feel affects our learning, the decisions we make, how we treat others and our personal well-being. This is the reason why we help children, families and teachers recognize, understand, express and regulate their emotions.

We believe that interaction with new cultures is the way to become an open-minded, understanding and tolerant individual. Our school has participated in Erasmus+ projects since 2015.

GREECE

11th Pre-primary school of Chania

PARTNER

Pre-primary level education in Greece is compulsory and consists of Kindergarten, which constitutes pre-school education, and Primary School, which covers the first cycle of general education. Attendance at kindergarten (nipiagogio) lasts for two years from 4-6 years old and constitutes a preparatory stage which contributes to the smooth transition of the child to elementary school.

The aim of kindergarten is to support young children to develop physically, emotionally, mentally and socially within the framework of the broader goals and objectives of primary education, thereby creating, without exception, the foundations on which young children will build their educational path.

The 11th Nipiagogio of Chania offers a safe environment where children develop their skills and creativity whilst learning. It has two mixed classes of pre-schoolers and kindergarteners and is served by three Kindergarten teachers. The conditions and operating limits are based on the nature of a child's development and their ability to learn. The philosophy and manner of intervention are directly related to the needs and interests of the child. The premises and materials adhere to specific safety standards, creating



a safe environment which promotes discovery and learning. The courtyard is just as important as the interior space, since it contributes to the implementation of the program and the overall development of the child. Ample, secure and well-equipped, it is a field of learning and recreation. The 11th Nipiagogio of Chania therefore ensures the necessary conditions so that children feel safe, accepted, lovable and truly special. It provides every opportunity for them to improve their self-esteem and increase their knowledge and skills, shaping healthy attitudes. The objective of our mission is the self-esteem of the child, and our goal is to offer the children learning experiences which promote healthy physical, spiritual and mental development, freedom of existence and overall personality development.

Since 2012, the 11th Nipiagogio of Chania has participated in many European school partnerships Comenius and Erasmus+, aimed at fostering Citizenship in students through the development and good practice of the school unit which will shape conscious children responsible for themselves, conscious citizens for their homeland, and creative citizens for the world. It is an awarded kindergarten with national and European quality labels, eTwinning school label, STEM school, and an eSafety bronze label school. 11th Nipiagogio Chanion edits a school newspaper that is awarded too.

CROATIA

Kindergarten Jarun

PARTNER



The Kindergarten Jarun is a public institution founded by the City of Zagreb in 1978. Over the years, the capacity of the Kindergarten has increased in accordance with the needs, and now the Kindergarten operates in seven locations and is attended by 750 children in 39 educational groups.In addition to regular all-day groups where children stay for up to ten hours a day, the Kindergarten also has a specially organized preschool group for children at the age before starting obligatory elementary school that do not attend kindergarten. The Kindergarten employs 88 educators (with MA and BA in early and preschool education) working in care, upbringing and education of children aged 1-7. In addition to educators, important factors in the planning, implementation and organization of educational work are the members of the expert team consisting of two pedagogues, two psychologists, two speech therapists and two health managers.

In accordance with the Law on Preschool Education, educational work is planned on several levels, respecting the developmental needs of the child in all developmental areas. To ensure optimal conditions for growing up and learning, the Jarun kindergarten offers thematically enriched all-day programs for early learning of the German and English language for children over the age of three, sports program and a program according to the concept of Maria Montessori for children aged 1-3 and for children aged 3-7, all tailored to the stages of children's development. Children with special needs and one or more developmental difficulties (health, intellectual, motor, or language difficulties), and children who grow up in special family conditions (divorce, illness in the family, death of parents) are included in all educational groups and are provided with additional support from the kindergarten experts. Both expert associates and educators conduct parent meetings, consultations, education and workshops to take valuable input from parents and provide them with support. We can proudly say that the doors of Europe are open to educators and professional associates of Kindergarten Jarun because the Kindergarten is an active participant in the Erasmus+ program (since IPA IV, 2013) and great attention is focused on lifelong training in the field of early and preschool education, intercultural education and Europeanization system.

Our role in preschool education is to:

- provide individual support to children in their development and social interaction with peers;
- provide support and education to preschool teachers who work with children on a daily basis;
- encourage partnership and provide support to parents in order to improve development of children and help them reach their full potential;
- cooperate with other specialized institutions with children's well-being in mind;
- encourage sensibility to diversity in children, employees, parents and community, and create safe and pleasant environment in which all children can exercise rights to education and wellbeing.

ESTONIA

Kalli-kalli kindergarten

PARTNER

Kalli-kalli Kindergarten is a private kindergarten in Tallinn, Estonia. The kindergarten has six groups with places for 85 children. Our kindergarten has one childcare group, which has places for only five children and is looked after by one teacher. We have two international groups, one French-speaking with 12 children and one English-speaking with 17 children.

In addition, there are three Estonian-language groups with 17 children. The usual number of children in a group in Estonian kindergartens is 24, but we are pleased to have been able to open groups with fewer children. The 17 children are looked after by one teacher and two assistants. The mission of our kindergarten is to do our best to make the child want to come to kindergarten. We try to achieve this mainly through very friendly teachers who, alongside good communication skills, use modern knowledge of how children learn and how to create a supportive developmental environment for children. The well-being of the teachers is supported by a psychologist who works in the kindergarten one day a week. Her role is to meet with one of the group teams each day and advise them on how to work together, how to deal with situations involving children and how to deal with challenges with parents. The psychologist helps teachers to notice their patterns of behaviour and thinking, to explore their origins and to give them the opportunity and skills to change them. The psychologist leads two covision groups, one for teachers and one for assistants, so that people working in the same profession can share challenges specific to their work and advise each other. We believe it is important to create a developmental environment for children where their motivation is supported.

In supporting motivation, it is important that the child feels welcome in the kindergarten, which is why it is important that the relationship between the child and the teacher is friendly, and we also make sure that the children have a good relationship with one another.

The curriculum in Estonian kindergartens is guided by the National Curriculum, which sets out the skills and competences that should be acquired by the time a child reaches the age of 7 and leaves kindergarten. The national curriculum does not specify the methods and means by which the teacher will achieve these objectives. This gives Estonian teachers a



very high degree of autonomy in organising their work. Teachers at the Kalli-Kalli kindergarten use project-based learning, which signals to the child that his or her interests are important and, together, the knowledge acquired can be put to practical use in the project. We chose this learning methodology because mapping ideas for projects gives us the opportunity to map the children's interests and thereby connect the children to what they are learning.

We support the child's autonomy to have a say and to contribute to each project according to their level of development. It is important for us to create an environment where the child has an interest and wants to come back to Kalli-Kalli again and again.

ICELAND

Arnarsmári preschool

PARTNER

Arnarsmári preschool was opened on January 7, 1998. There are 84 children between the ages of one and six. The preschool principal is Bryndís Baldvinsdóttir.
Initiative, friendship, and joy are the motto of the school. In connection with the school's motto, emphasis is placed on the practice of virtues, and we work with themes which is part of the annual plan. In Arnarsmári, we work according to the methods of Real restitution, which is a humanitarian strategy that aims to encourage children's self-discipline and train them to learn from their mistakes by talking about their feelings and realizing their needs. It is important that everyone knows their role and feels that they are important.

The working method is also intended to support the teachers in formulating a clear policy regarding communication and disciplinary issues. In Arnarsmára preschool, the children's respect for nature is promoted.
The aim of outdoor education is that the children gain a wider horizon, their endurance and stamina increase, and they gain a greater understanding of our culture. Each group in Arnarsmári has a specific place in nature where it chooses a tree and visits regularly to observe seasonal changes. Arnarsmári preschool supports one specific child in SOS Children's Village.



The Icelandic Team
(one person missing)

The children learn about children in other countries, how they live in different situations and how the situations are comparable.
The children learn about other countries and other cultures and learn how important it is to respect others even if the way of life and conditions are different from what they know in their environment.
Arnarsmári is a health promoting preschool and is supported by the Directorate of Health. The main goal is to create an environment and conditions that promote a healthy way of life, good health, and well-being for everyone. Arnarsmári preschool is one of five preschools in the world that is a UNICEF School of Rights.
As UNICEF's School of Rights, we work according to the values and policies of the Children's Convention. Friendship is a preventive product from Barnaheill, /Fri for mobberi, which is intended to prevent bullying from developing in children's groups in preschools and primary schools. The content is intended to promote a safe, positive, and healthy life for children by building positive communication, caring and friendship. Lubbi is a big part of the children's education in Arnarsmári regarding literacy.

Each week, a new letter/speech sound is introduced to all children. They learn how each letter/speech sound is represented, and then they find words that contain the speech sound that is discussed each time. A story containing the speech sounds of the week is read and songs are sung. Arnarsmári preschool has participated in several projects organized by the European Union.

ITALY

I. C. Anzio III

PARTNER

Istituto Comprensivo Anzio III is situated in Lavinio Lido di Enea, a little suburb of Anzio, a touristic and residential town of about 56,000 inhabitants situated on the Tyrrhenian coast of Lazio 50 km far from Rome.

Our school has three different complexes and welcomes students of the kindergarten, primary and lower secondary schools.Thinking about the centrality of the person as a citizen and human being, in our school we want to develop and strengthen the following educational aims:

1. Development and appreciation of all languages, especially Italian as well as English, also through the use of the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL);
2. Strengthening of mathematical, logical and scientific skills;
3. Development of an active and democratic citizenship through an intercultural and peace education, respect for differences and dialogue among cultures, the teaching of values like the assumption of responsibility as well as solidarity and care for the common good and the awareness of rights and duties;
4. Development of a responsible behaviour inspired by knowledge and respect for legality, environmental sustainability, landscape heritage and cultural activities;
5. To highlight the importance of physical education based on a healthy lifestyle and diet, sport and protection of the right to study for students taking part in competitive sports activities;
6. Focus on workshops: at school there is a special space called "Creative atelier"where with multimedia tools students can design and create objects, moving from real to virtual and back from virtual to real or approach computational thinking and educational robotics;
7. Development of digital skills, related to computational thinking, educational robotics, critical and aware use of social networks and media as well as the world of work;
8. Enanchment of individualised study plans for special need students;
9. Vision of the school as an active community, open to the activities and families of the local area;
10. Teaching of Italian as a second language for foreign students, through courses and workshops organized also in partnership with local authorities, the help of communities of origin and cultural mediators.



In our school there is a cooperation among the teachers of the three school orders for the construction of a vertical curriculum and the innovation of teaching methods through the use of technology and the constant training of school staff.
Our educational project wants to be first of all inclusive for everyone.
Our School is part of the network of schools adhering to the UNESCO project, has received the title of eTwinning School and since 2013 has been part of European projects (Comenius, Erasmus and eTwinning). Our School participates in the initiatives and events of the Safer Internet Center - "Generations Connected" developed an eSafety policy as a tool for prevention and management of related problems for the entire community School. Our school, for many years, has activated projects which support the pleasure of reading in students, promoting the culture ofthe book as one of the fundamental tools to orientate itself in today's "knowledge society".



SPAIN

Centro Educativo Zola

READING, FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

LORI DE HOND
MARÍA ÁNGELES BOUSO

Our feelings and emotions play an important role in the learning process at any age, but they are especially important in early childhood learning. At this stage, children are beginning to learn to recognise and manage their emotions both at home and in school. As parents and teachers we can help children identify and express their feelings and provide them with tools to cope with them. This will promote their emotional well-being, providing a positive environment to listen to stories and learn to read.
Similarly, we can use stories to help children develop their emotional intelligence. But, what exactly do we mean by emotional intelligence? The theory of emotional intelligence was developed by researchers John Mayer and Peter Salovey in 1990. Daniel Goleman further developed this concept and it became popular among the general public after the publication of his book, "Emotional Intelligence" (Daniel Goleman, 1995).
Goleman pointed out 5 aspects of Emotional Intelligence:

1. Self-awareness - Identifying one's own emotions
2. Self-regulation - Managing one's emotions and expressing them in an appropriate way
3. Internal motivation - Motivating oneself to achieve objectives
4. Empathy - Recognising other people's emotions

Social skill - Establishing interpersonal relationships, social competence and skills to interact appropriately with others.
To help children identify their emotions, we can start the school day with an emotion or mood meter. Many different approaches can be used, such as a poster with images of children´s faces expressing different emotions and each child indicates which image represents how s/he feels. This also helps us to better understand and relate to the children, creating a positive, supportive learning environment at the beginning of the day. It is also important to give children an opportunity to share their feelings.

When a child shares what s/he is feeling to the rest of the group, it not only helps the child to express his feelings verbally, but it also gives the other children an opportunity to listen to the feelings of others. This helps them to realise that we all experience feelings like sadness, fear, happiness, etc. and often gives them the confidence to share their own feelings. This, in turn, helps to develop their social skills, establishing interpersonal relationships with the other children and the teacher.

Managing emotions like frustration and anger may be challenging, but self-regulation can be taught and learnt. After learning to identify and verbalize their feelings, children should then be guided to associate the feeling with a physical sensation or response. When a child feels anger, maybe his/her face turns red or s/he clenches his/her fists or begins to kick something. This helps them to understand the difference between an emotion and behaviour. We should demonstrate that we understand how the child feels. The feelings of the child are very real and s/he needs to know that it is ok and that we understand. What is really important is how s/he can cope with the emotion. Children can be taught different strategies like breathing techniques or physical activities like yoga. Special areas in the classroom like "calm corners" can also provide children with a safe spot to reflect and lower their level of tension.
We can also offer training in conflict solution to give them steps that can be followed to solve problems once s/he has identified what the problem is.
With regard to motivation, children who are motivated and engaged in their learning tend to learn more effectively, and their positive emotions can help to create a more positive learning environment

For example, a child who is excited about learning to read may be more motivated to pay attention and participate during reading lessons.

On the other hand, a child who is anxious or stressed may have more difficulty learning, especially if s/he becomes too focused on his/her negative emotions. In addition to motivation and engagement, emotions can also affect how a child processes and remembers information. For example, children who experience positive emotions while reading may be more likely to retain what they have learned and be able to recall it later.
Similarly, negative emotions, such as frustration or boredom, can hinder a child's ability to learn and remember new information.With regard to social skills, school is one of the first and most important socializations outside of the family context. This in itself, creates many emotions in children as well as an opportunity to help children deal with these feelings and learn how to relate to others.

USING STORIES TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Stories can be a powerful tool for helping children understand and cope with their feelings and emotions. Through stories, children can learn about different emotions and how they are expressed, as well as how to identify and label their own emotions.

This can be especially useful for children who have difficulty understanding or expressing their emotions.
Families play a significant role in their children's literacy and socio-emotional development when their children are very young.

According to Baker (2013), mothers and fathers, who involved their children in reading activities at 24 months and provided them with more books, had children with greater socio-emotional development.
Family routines also have a positive impact on the socio-emotional skills of preschoolers.



Stories can be a powerful tool for helping children understand and cope with their feelings and emotions. Through stories, children can learn about different emotions and how they are expressed, as well as how to identify and label their own emotions.

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Children who have routines at home – bedtime routine, reading routine, telling stories, singing songs, dinner as a family and dinner at a regular time – have greater gains in socio-emotional skills compared to children exposed to fewer routines (Ferretti & Bub. (2017).
In our busy society where both parents often work, following these routines can be a challenge, but considering the positive effects they have, efforts should be made to carry them out.

Reading in preschool also has a significant impact on children's emotional development. In fact, reading daily for as little as 5 minutes can be beneficial. In a study carried out by Betawi (2015) on socio-emotional development in toddlers between 24 and 36 months, he found that daily reading in kindergartens had a significant impact on young children´s socio-emotional development.

By listening to stories, children open their eyes and ears and are transported to the wonderful world of stories. Almost without realising it, they are beginning to learn to focus their attention.

Furthermore, reading to children in a group sitting all together can help them feel part of their class and help them integrate in their school. One way to use stories to help children understand their feelings is to read books that feature characters who are experiencing a range of emotions.

This strategy includes simple dialogues with the children and active participation. You can include movements and gestures and modulate your voice for the different characters.

As you read, you can discuss the characters' emotions and why they are feeling that way and help children to identify how they feel in similar situations. You can also encourage children to talk about their own emotions and how they might express them in different ways. Another way to use stories to help children understand their emotions is to create your own stories together. This can be a fun and interactive way for children to explore their feelings and practice expressing them in a safe and supportive environment. You can use dolls, puppets, picture cards or other props to act out different emotions and scenarios, or you can simply use your imagination to create stories together.

There are many children's books on emotions in many different languages, but it is important to use some criteria when choosing books. According to Begoña Ibarrola (2016), the following aspects should be kept in mind:

- different emotions should be clear and appropriate for the situation (For example, few books explain different ways of feeling guilt or shame). The readers should be able to easily identify with the characters and feel what they feel.
- The story should show equality in the emotional expression of boys and girls.
- The story should defend freedom of expression as opposed to repression.
- The illustrations should clearly show the expressions of the characters through the movement of their mouth, eyes and eyebrows.
- the illustrations should be coherent with the text and the emotions that the characters are feeling.
- the story should allow the reader to look in his/her heart and broaden his/her emotional world through the emotional world of the characters.

Overall, using stories to help children understand and cope with their emotions can be a valuable part of their emotional development and can help to build their emotional intelligence.

LESSON PLAN

IN MY HEART

Author: Maider Alonso



Area: personal development

Objectives: identify basic emotions, help children identify basic emotions in themselves, develop self-awareness, accept one´s emotions (all emotions are valid.), comprehend, control and manage emotion

Methodology: during the assembly with all the children sitting in a circle, the teacher reads the book, "In My Heart" by Jo Witek. In this story, a girl talks about her emotions in a clear and fun way. After telling the story, the children reflect on their emotions and how they react to them.The class makes a quiet corner in the classroom where the children can go when they feel angry or lose control. We remind them that they can go to the quiet corner to calm down and then they can return to the group to talk about it and look for solutions. Children can go to the quiet corner freely when they consider that it will help them to deal with the emotion that they feel trapped in.

Age: 3, 4 and 5-year-olds

Duration: throughout the school year

Materials: the story "In My Heart" by Jo Witek, Quiet Corner (rug, cushions, trunk, anti-stress balls, notebooks with mazes and mandalas, colored pencils, feathers, stuffed animals, cards with faces showing different emotions, sand timer, stories that deal with emotions, a box to keep our worries, etc.)

Description of the activity: the teacher introduces the different emotions by reading the story, "In My Heart" by Jo Witek to the children sitting in a circle. After reading the story, the teacher leads a discussion on their emotions and how they feel in each moment. Each child has the opportunity to talk about his/her "heart", and all the children reflect on their emotions and how they react when they are experiencing them.
Then, they talk about the benefits of creating a quiet corner where they can go when they feel angry, sad, worried, nervious... or simply when they want to be alone y calm for a moment. It is important to point out that going to this corner is not a punishment, but a tool that they can choose to use. The first few times they will need the help of the teacher, but little by little they will go on their own.



When the teacher accompanies them, it is a good opportunity to validate their emotions, and help them to identify the emotions they are feeling and to recognise the signals that their bodies send them.

They can observe their physical sensations and their thoughts, and we can help them to see that we can learn something from all of our emotions. It is also important to explain how to use the different elements in the quiet corner and even practice together.

Although the children will not use all of the materials in the quiet corner, it is good to have a variety so that they can choose what they think will help them the most.

LESSON PLAN

MY FAVOURITE BOOK

Author: Noelia Carrión

Area: reading skills

Objectives: encourage the enjoyment of books and the development of a positive attitude towards reading, transmit the importance of books and reading to expand one's knowledge, value the pleasure and entertainment that books provide, encourage decision-making, make students aware that there are a variety of different types of books, teach students the importance of taking care of books, both their own and those of others, increase their self-confidence and self-esteem, making them the protagonists of their learning, express what makes a book their favourite and recognise the feelings that led them to make that decision, understand what others feel when they say which book is their favourite and develop empathy, pay attention, be respectful and listen when others express themselves in class, expand vocabulary by listening to others reading and talking about their favourite stories, acquire spatial-temporal notions to understand the sequence in which each story develops, develop their imagination by making them think of a different ending to the story told.

Methodology: some activities are carried out individually such as drawing a picture of their favourite story, expressing why it is their favourite story, telling the story in their own words, drawing and sequencing the story they have heard, finding a different ending to the story they have heard and drawing a picture of their favourite story.
The reading of each of the stories is done as a large group.

Age: we carry out this activity in our infant school with students that are 5-6 years old, however, this activity can easily be adapted for students that are 3-5 years old.





Duration: the activity can be carried out during one term, two terms, or the whole school year. If it is decided to be carried out during the whole school year, as in our case, each student will bring a different story each term. At the end of each term, the story they have brought will be returned.

Materials: stories provided by the students, will be placed in the library area of the classroom, paper, pens, crayons, camera, printer, a document detailing the names of the students and the name of the story they have brought to school.

Description of the activity: prior to the activity being carried out, a communication is sent to the parents explaining the name of the project, why the project is important, and suggestions as to which book to bring to school. The activity will be explained to the students and once they have brought the stories to school, we will proceed as follows:

When they bring their favourite story

- They should place their story on the bookshelf in the classroom library.
- They will be given instructions on how to place it correctly.
- They will be explained the importance of taking care of their story and those of others.
- The story that each student brings to school will be noted.

When we have all the stories, each student will do an individual activity in which they each draw a picture of their favourite story. The drawings will be exhibited in class.

Choosing the story to be read and the steps to follow

- To establish order, the order of the class list will be followed.
- Each student will go to the bookshelf in the classroom library and give their book to the teacher.
- Each student will say what the title of their story is and why it is their favourite story.
- Each student will tell the story in their own words.

LESSON PLAN

INTRODUCTION TO READING IN ENGLISH PHONICS, FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

Authors: Linda Wickenden and Debbie Cullen

Area: literacy

Objectives: give children confidence and emotional wellbeing during the progression of reading in a second language. Goals: feeling confident making letter sounds and words in a second language, awareness of our own emotions, our classmates' emotions and those of the characters in stories, awareness and recognition of ambient sounds, phoneme recognition, action and reproduction of sound, blending, ability to read simple words and sentences.

Methodology: whole group, smaller groups, pairs, individual

Age: infants (3,4,5 years)

Duration: 5 x 40-minute sessions over 2 weeks

Materials: online resources, worksheets, books, Yoyo Phonics methodology (edelvives.com), flashcards, games, toys

Description of the activity

Introduction - the first phase in 3 years, over several weeks is to listen to ambient sounds to teach the children sound awareness including sounds related



to emotions (crying - sad, laughing - happy). This is an important skill as this will help them distinguish between the phonemes in words. It also helps them improve their listening skills and attention. We use teacher-prepared and online resources, and the synthetic phonics methodology (Yoyo phonics which was especially designed to teach English phonics to Spanish speakers). We introduce the new letter sound by watching the Yoyo phonics story for that letter. We reproduce the sound and learn the action associated with the sound using their jingle. At the end of 4 years the children can read CVC words progressing to sentences in 5 years. We repeat many of the activities until the children show confidence in recognising and making the sounds and are confident enough to lead the activities. We have created our own phonics books for 3 and 4-year-olds where they make the letter using different materials. We created a phonics book for the 5-year-olds where they read the sentence and draw the corresponding picture. We create a positive learning environment in the classroom by using visual aids and sitting together on the mat to share activities. The walls are decorated with bright phonics posters and displays to create a happy atmosphere. There are books in a reading corner to stimulate the children's interest in reading when we finish the activities.

Method - we start each class with mindfulness and breathing exercises to ensure that our students are feeling calm, relaxed, ready and encouraged to engage in class activities. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEuFi9PxKuo

3 Years: Learning the S sound.
Using the Yoyo phonics Storybook 1, listen to the story for the S sound, pointing out all the words that use the S sound. Play the jingle https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EC5kOVb6hyg whilst recreating the action for the letter S sound (create the s on your arm). As each phoneme is connected to action, sound and emotion, these attributes are essential in activating the brain to perceive, remember and reproduce each phoneme that the children learn.

1. Make a big S to display in the classroom with the children helping to color it in. Make the S in glue in their phonics book and the children can cover it using sand or stones.
2. Using magnetic lowercase letters, the children take it in turns to find the letter S amongst the other letters on a magnetic board.
3. The teacher makes the letter S in chalk or stickers on the floor and the children walk along the letter S making the sound and action.
4. Using a toy snake or playdough, the children make it into the letter S, repeating the sound and action. The experience of manipulating playdough not only teaches fine motor skills but is also a great sensory medium and very relaxing.
5. During the circle time, identify children with the letter S in their name. The children then identify which is their letter and proudly shout out that their name has the S sound or starts with the letter S.
6. The teacher says simple words and the children clap when the word starts with the letter S, such as sad, sun, six.
7. In pairs, children take it in turns to make the letter S in the sand trays using their fingers or pencils
8. Using online resources, we watch the videos for the letter S. We use Bounce Patrol https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSVzk2pqWB4 and encourage the children to make the action and say the sound with the song. The children like to guess the object in the Super Simple Songs turn and learn for the letter https://www.

youtube.com/watch?v=3Gb20Cc_4-A . We use www.Starfall.com and have the children take it in turns to search for the letter s then click on the ítems. https://www.starfall.com/h/abcs/letter-s/?mg=m

9. We have letter boxes that contain objects that start with the letter such as a toy sun, spider, snake and strawberry. Using the S box, take out the items and show them to the children. Do a slow reveal so that the children have to guess what the object is.

4 Years: Learning the L sound- we repeat many of the activities from the 3 year class adapting them to the increased level of ability and knowledge of the 4 year class.

1. Using the Yoyo phonics Storybook 3, we learn the l sound, action and jingle, pointing out the different emotions of the character. The children repeat the jingle and action. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oz2PI_pBlvs&t=2s They have activities that encourage the children's listening skills in their methodology where the children have to listen for the l sound and thumbs up if they can hear the sound. Then we take it in turns for the children to come and point out the object on the screen.
2. The teacher shouts out a letter and the children must run and touch the letter that is either drawn in chalk around the classroom or letter cards stuck on the walls. To show their confidence, have the children take it in turns to choose and shout out the letter sound. If the class is big, they can do this in small groups, taking it in turns.
3. In teams, the children have to run and find the letters on different tables as the teacher shouts out the sound and race to bring them back to the group.
4. Using www.phonicsplay.co.uk Super Smoothie game, the children have to identify words with the same starting sound to make a smoothie.Following on from this, the children have a laminated card with a picture and 3 letters and they have to circle or mark with playdough the initial letter sound for the picture
5. Using Phonics flashcards, give each child a letter and they have to find the picture and word that starts with their letter.
6. Watch the Kids vs Phonics video for the l sound (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACp7flXaKkU&t=2s). Pause the video to allow the children to read the simple words. Ask them how the characters are feeling and why. Ask them what they think will happen next. Discuss what happened and play the video again without stopping.
7. We make our own letter l in the phonics book using different creative materials. The children have to search for the letter in the phonics book and then choose the materials that they want to create the letter with.

5 Years: Learning the digraph oa- we repeat many of the activities from the 4 year class adapting them to the increased level of ability and knowledge of the 5 year class.



1. Using the Yoyo phonics Storybook 3, we learn the /oa/ sound, action and jingle, pointing out the different words that sound with /oa/ such as soap, foam, float, boat. The children repeat the jingle and action. We repeat the digraph concept, 2 letters with 1 sound. We do the activities related to this story in the book
2. We turn learning into an enjoyable experience where each student is the protagonist of his own learning experience. When we learn /oa/ we put soap into a container, then on their hands and make foam, also learning the concept of clean/dirty. We put a boat into the water and see that it can float. We then experiment with other objects that they choose from the classroom to see if they float or sink.
3. We play the silly school education song for oa https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n06M3ARabJ0. The children have to make the oa sound and action during the video and to jump and clap.
4. Our students love having their own phonics book. In their First Phonics reader they have to read the sentence and draw the corresponding picture. They have to look in the book for the sentence. For example, the /oa/ sound, the sentence is " The goat runs up the hill"; for the /a/ sound the sentence is "My cat sleeps on a red mat". The vocabulary used in the book is very familiar to them. They have a great sense of pride and achievement when they finally take their book home.
5. The children continue reading and practicing CVC words. We use The Reading machine as a fun way for them to learn https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2hazzQ5bSs and First Step Reading https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbS7KfgZ30s. We also use worksheets that have 5 words and pictures on them and the children have to match the word to the picture.
6. They begin to form words using letter blocks.
7. We do an activity where the children have to make a jigsaw puzzle that has a picture and they find the letters that make the word. This is a hands on, visual way to sequence the letters and join the sounds together to make the same word.

Storytime - An important part of our classes with the 3, 4 and 5-year-olds is storytime , where we read a story to the class. We ask the students what is happening in the story and what they think will happen next. We ask them how we think the characters are feeling and how the story makes them feel. When we read the stories we try to bring the characters to life so that they are easier for the children to relate to. We also use books that have large print and level appropriate so that some of our 4 and 5-year-olds are able to read some of the words and sentences to the rest of the class.

LESSON PLAN

READING BUDDIES

Author: Noelia Carrión

Area: reading skills

Objectives: encourage contact and enjoyment of books and a love of reading, transmit the message that reading books is a form of pleasure and entertainment, explain that there are a variety of different types of books, explain to the students how to take care of books, both their own and those of others, enable our students to share special moments with their reading buddies, increase each student's self-esteem and develop empathy, develop listening and communication skills, expand vocabulary through reading stories.

Methodology: the pairs will consist of one student from the 6th grade of primary and one student from our infant school. Sometimes there are fewer primary students than infant students, so some primary school students will need to help read with two students from the infant school instead of one.

Age: we carry out this activity in our infant school with students that are 5-6 years old.

Duration: the reading buddies activity takes place during the second and third terms. It takes place once a week and lasts half an hour.

Materials: the storybooks used are picked from each student's book collection and storybooks from our school library. All the storybooks used in the activity will be placed and displayed in the classroom's library area.

Description of the activity: before we start the activity, the 6th-grade tutors will ask their students if they are interested in participating in our reading buddies activity. Their parents will be contacted and informed about the project and what it consists of. As the reading activity takes place during the 6th-grade students' break time, parental consent is needed from each parent before their child can participate in the project. Once we have confirmed that we have sufficient 6th-grade students willing to participate in the project, we can inform the parents of the participating students from the infant school. The infant school students also need their parents' consent to participate in the project. The next step is to assign a 6th-grade student to an infant school student. If there are fewer primary school students participating than infant school students, it may be necessary to put two infant school students with a 6th-grade student instead of one.





We hold a meeting to explain to the 6th-grade students what is involved in helping an infant school student to read. They also will be able to ask the infant schoolteachers if they have any queries. Here are some of the activities that we do in these sessions:

- The 6th-grade student reads the story and asks the infant school students if they have any questions about the story.
- They read a sentence and have the younger student read the next one.
- They help the infant school student sound out the letters.
- They ask the infant school student what they think will happen in the story by looking at the pictures.

In the first session, the students introduce themselves and spend a short time getting to know each other. Each pair or trio can sit wherever they feel most comfortable in the classroom.

The infant school student takes their book from the class library display and are ready to begin the activity. When the infant school student has finished reading his story, they can take the book home and bring another one for the next session.

At the end of the school year, the reading buddies will participate in the 5-year-olds' graduation ceremony. The 5-year-olds enter the auditorium holding the hand of their reading buddy. It is a special moment for all the students involved.

The older students are encouraged to write a speech about their involvement in the project and read it at the graduation ceremony. At the end of the graduation ceremony, the older students accompany their younger reading buddies in the celebration.

LESSON PLAN

TALENT FAIRS

Author: Maider Alonso

Area: personal development

Objecteves: work self-knowledge, know the things they like about themselves, discover what makes them different from others, neither better nor worse, reflect on their identity, virtues and abilities, discover their talent, creatively capture that talent in the staff assigned for it, enjoy seeing their talents and those of the other colleagues exposed.

Methodology: the teacher will read the story "The great book of super powers" by Susanna Isern. Individually, they should reflect on what their strengths are, what they stand out for and decide what their talent is to be able to draw it and translate it into the template. Then these drawings will be exhibited in the early childhood education building so that families, teachers, and the rest of the children in the stage can observe them and see what are the different talents of children in kindergarten.

Age: 3, 4 and 5 years old

Duration: the activity will be carried out in 3 sessions. A first session in which the teacher will tell the story and the children will reflect on what their talents are. A second, in which the children must draw their talent on the template and a third session, in which children and families will move freely around the fair to see the exhibition of drawings with the talents of their peers and their own.

Materials: the story "The great book of super powers", template My talent is, pencil and paints.

Description of the activity: we all have a talent that makes us unique and special. Some are good at math and others at cooking. Some are adventurous and others prefer to read. Discover what makes you different from others, neither better nor worse. What is your talent? The activity consists of telling the story "The great book of super powers" during the assembly, in which stories are told about the talents of different children, which will invite them to reflect on their identity, virtues and abilities.
Next, each child will investigate to see what or what their talents are and they will have to creatively make a drawing about it that captures said quality of the child. Afterwards, all these reproductions will be exhibited in the children's building, creating our Talent Fair and families, teachers and other children of the stage will be invited so that they can see all the talents of the children of our early childhood education stage.

LESSON PLAN

YOGA THROUGH STORIES



Author: Susana Ventura

Area: mindfulness and relaxation

Objectives: help children to relax, exercise their body, reduce stress and anxiety after an active activity, boost self-steem and confidence, develop focus and attention, train balance and hand-eye coordination

Age: 2-year-olds

Duration: 10 minutes

Materials: flashcards, puppets, audiovisual contents

Description of the activity: we sit down in a circle and we start our greeting to connect with ourselves. We cross our legs, and we place our hands in front of of our chest and we say "Sat Nan". Then we breathe deeply twice and the teacher tells the story of the butterfly using flashcards and the puppets . As the teacher is telling the story, the children pretend to be the butterflies of the story following the instructions of the yoga postures.

The butterfly story: this is the story of some butterfly friends that went for a fly. They were flying (1.butterfly posture and movement) when suddenly they discovered some beautiful yellow flowers. They were so happy that they fluttered their winds around (2. sufi circles). When they looked up the sky, they saw the sun and they greeted each other (3. greeting hand movement). Then they saw some clouds which refreshed them with some rain (4. rain hand movement). To protect themselves from the rain, the butterflies covered themselves with their wings (5. baby posture), and the clouds called the wind to dry them (6. breathe and blow). Later, they came across another great friend " the rainbow" that brightened up everything with their stunning colours and greeted them (7. Rainbow greeting). They were so happy and greatful for all the friends and things thay had seen that they thanked the sun for the warm rays (3), the rain for the fresh water,(4) the wind for drying their wings (6), and the rainbow for cheering up everything with its bright colours (7). At the end of the day, the butterflies were so tired that they lied down to rest (8. lie down). When the story ends, the teacher plays some relaxing music and the children close their eyes, place their hands on their stomachs and breathe in and out deeply pretending to blow a balloon so that they can notice their breath and relax.

Resources bibliography: https://es-la.facebook.com/somosyogic/
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MI1S5rM0ou0

LESSON PLAN

WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD!

Author: Paula Pontón

Area: reading skills and personal development

Objectives: create interest in reading through music, develop concentration, stimulate the imagination, develop auditory sense, respect others, promote emotional development

Methodology: individually and whole group

Age: from 1 to 5 years old. (Depending on the age, it will be done in a different way.)

Duration: one session

Materials: story book 'What a wonderful world' with CD by Bob Thiele and George David Weiss, illustrated by Tim Hopgood, music: "What a wonderful world" as sung by Louis Armstrong, long paper, paints, paper spots

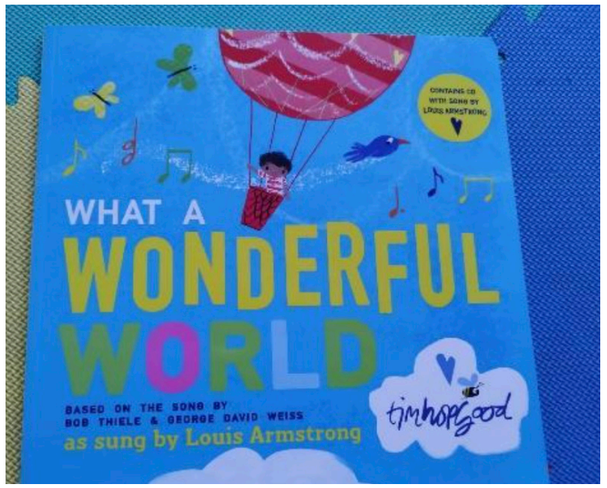
Description of the activity

- Phase 1 – Listening to the story and observing the illustrations. The children observe the illustrations while they listen to the song. In this phase we don't use words. You can play the music or sing
- Phase 2 - Talking about the story - After listening, the children talk about the story in a large group: animals, colours, what happens in the story, characters, the song... Teacher involvement will depending on the age of the children. You can show the story again.
- Phase 3 - Be creative! - Then, put a long piece of paper on the floor and give them the opportunity to draw what they are feeling when listening to the song. Then, you can ask them how they felt when listening to the song and talk about that. They can use material freely. You can also use stickers, etc.











GREECE

11th Pre- Primary School of Chania

STORYTELLING AND NARRATIVE ABILITIES IN EARLY YEARS

MARIA SKORDYLI

Storytelling has been an important teaching resource with a strong presence in all societies since the evolution of human language and has a highly effective role in the education of young children (Phillips, 2000; Rahiem, 2021).
Children enjoy reading, writing and listening to stories, and from the stories, they are able to understand more about society and life in general (Rahiem, 2021).
Exposure to stories starts very early in a child's life through a child's activities, such as reading books, watching movies and sharing everyday experiences with family or other familiar people (Hegsted, 2013; Lynch et al, 2008; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018). Narrative discourse begins to develop around 3-4 years of age (Stadler & Ward, 2005; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018), but not in the same way across children, as a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors play a role in this development (Lever & Senechal, 2011; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018).

The development of a child's narrative skills is crucial. They are part of language development (Lever & Senechal, 2011; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018).
Through a multitude of studies they appear to be closely linked to children's later academic achievement and, in particular, with literacy and reading skills, fluency and comprehension (Brown et al, 2014; Reese et al, 2010; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018).
They also form a bridge between spoken and written language (Hegsted, 2013; Riley & Burrell, 2007; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018), contribute to cognitive and emotional development (Riley & Burrell, 2007; Stadler & Ward, 2005; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018) and foster the development of positive relationships and effective communication with peers (Spencer & Slocum, 2010; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018).
Narrative skills are a child's ability to tell stories, real or imagined, with events that are causally linked (Spencer & Slocum, 2010; Sifaki & Spantidakis, 2018).
A story is defined as the telling of an event or chain of events in a logical sequence (Brown et al., 2014).

STORYTELLING IN THE KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM

Kindergarten seeks children's narration of their personal experiences and familiarization with various narrative text genres in order to cultivate their narrative skills (ΔΕΠΠΣ, 2003).
Furthermore, the objectives of the ΔΕΠΠΣ through narrative activities are to enable children to narrate events by following the sequential, to use words that indicate the chronological order of events, to create narratives spontaneously or after, to create narratives on their own or with encouragement, and to be able to link narratives to personal experiences (Marinaki, 2019).
The concept of narrative is presented in Kindergarten Curriculum in the 'oral communication' unit, highlighting its dual character, sharing characteristics of both the oral and written language, and suggests that the most important the 'writing and written expression' unit, with more extensive reference to the 'writing and written expression' unit and more specific reference to the already existing objective of 'involving children in the development of the creation of their own texts by dictation to the teacher' (Hovarda,2014; ΔΕΠΠΣ, 2003). Furthermore, it notes that the 'reading' section emphasizes the importance of children's understanding of the stories told by the teacher, but questions whether the term 'narrative' includes the narrative texts, as it is not discussed further.
But also in the Kindergarten Teacher's Guide (2007), narrative activities are referred to in the section on oral language and relate to the composition narratives with personal experiences, producing stories based on pictures and completing stories initiated by the teacher (Marinaki, 2019).

STORY BOOK READING PRACTICES: PROMOTING KINDERGARTENERS' COMPREHENSION SKILLS AND NARRATIVE ABILITIES

Text comprehension is a complex mental process which requires that the reader or the listener apply several skills to elaborate and integrate the new information in their current knowledge base (Pardo, 2004; Chlapana, 2021).

Essential comprehension skills

- Activating prior knowledge
- Predicting
- Self-monitoring
- Inference making
- Summarization
- Visualization
- Vocabulary
- Generating and answering questions
- Story structure knowledge

Narrative skills

- Narrative abilities form the foundation of reading comprehension.
- Narrative skills that are important for preschoolers include:
  - retelling stories,
  - telling personal stories,
  - asking and answering questions about stories (Spencer et al.,2014; Chlapana, 2021).

The **first level** of narrative abilities addresses the overall structure of the produced narrative text, known as Story Grammar:

- Setting (time, place, characters)
- Theme
- Plot
- Resolution

The **second level** concerns the productivity and complexity of the language used in the produced narrative text (Spencer et al., 2014; Chlapana, 2021). One of the ways in which comprehension skills and narrative abilities improve in kindergarten is the practices used in story read-alouds (Mantzicopoulos & Patrick, 2011). Research data have shown that dialogic reading and the performance -oriented approach are two of the most frequently used reading practices in preschool educational settings (Dickinson & Smith 1994; Reece & Cox, 1999; Tafa & Chlapana, 2007).
The performance oriented style is a highly demanding reading style, in which teachers read the story uninterrupted and confine discussion to before and after the story reading (Dickinson & Smith 1994; Chlapana, 2021).

Dialogic Reading

Dialogic reading is a reading practice which motivates the teacher and the children to cooperatively construct meaning from text (Whitehurst et al., 1988).

DESIGNING DAILY LITERACY INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS WITH THE AIM OF TEXT COMPREHENSION AND NARRATIVE ABILITIES

Repeated readings

- Reread stories that children really like.
- Set clear comprehension goals for each reading and apply the appropriate practices and techniques.

Materials

- Narrative texts describing well-structured stories
- Story structure elements: Setting, Characters, Theme, Plot, Resolution, End
- Pictures and puppets to symbolize the targeted comprehension skills.

In the **1st reading** out goal is by applying direct instruction techniques to help children develop targeted comprehension strategies. At the beginning of the first daily program we can:

a. conduct a playful introductory activity with children to help them discover story characters and elements of the story plot. e.g. Children in small groups can make jigsaws to synthesize pictures displayed a full moon, a mole, a rabbit, a hedgehog and a squirrel, which were the main characters of the story.

b. use the discovered elements to ask questions which encourage children to predict the story theme and activate their prior knowledge about significant aspects of the story plot. e.g.
What do you think is happening in a story which's main characters are a mole, a rabbit, a hedgehog and a squirrel?
e.g. Where do moles, rabbits, hedgehogs and squirrels live and when do they search for food?
While reading we apply direct instruction techniques aimed at comprehension strategy instruction (Chlapana, 2021).
Direct questions techniques are based on the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983):

- Step 1: Introduction to the targeted comprehension skill by using the "think aloud" strategy.
- Step 2: Modeling the targeted comprehension skill
- Step 3: Collaborative use of the targeted comprehension skill
- Step 4: Guided practice of the targeted comprehension skill

The **2nd reading**: the goal is story structure knowledge and cooperative retelling.
We read the story by applying a performance-oriented approach in order to enhance kindergarteners' story comprehension:

- Before reading, we can present the story and encourage children to describe the front cover and recall the theme of the story.
- During reading, we interrupt story reading in selected parts of the text in order to ask questions and explain briefly the meaning of unknown words.
- After reading, we conduct a guided discussion with children to help them retell the story by recalling story structure elements (time, place, characters, theme, plot, resolution) in the proper sequential order (Tafa & Chlapana, 2007).

The **3rd reading**: the goal is to deepen story comprehension, enhance vocabulary knowledge and help children in asking and answering questions about the text.

For the 3nd reading we can apply a dialogic reading approach (Chlapana, 2021).

Dialogic reading main techniques (Whitehurst et al., 1988)

- "Peer" technique: Prompt – Evaluate- Expand - Repeat
- "CROWD" technique: Completion – Recall – Opened ended -Distancing questions

Vocabulary explanation main techniques embedded during dialogic reading:

- Word definition
- Pointing and labeling questions
- Open-ended questions
- Examples and non-examples on the use of the target words
- Dramatization

Post reading activities to enhance comprehension

At the final stage of a daily program post-reading activities were conducted with children, such as:

- art activities,
- math activities,
- natural science activities,
- music activities.

Practices for enhancing further children's narrative abilities in relation to the creation of new stories.

Personal storytelling - The box of our favorite toys, pictures, or objects.
Fictional storytelling

- Story grammar cube
- Icons and pictures describing anew story
- Round-robin game [Story that is created in group settings. One person provides the beginning of the story and the rest of the group members add successively new information, until the story is complete (Weller, 2016)].

Implications

Teachers should:

- Involve children in cognitively challenging discussions which help children process text structure elements and enhance their language skills.
- Explicitly present each comprehension skill by the use of appropriate playful activities.
- Use each time the appropriate verbal and non verbal scaffolding means. (Chlapana, 2021)

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CANVAS STORIES

Author: Maria Skordyli



Area: language oral and written communication, Arts

Objectives: to be aware of the narrative structure of the stories, to focus on contributing to the development of the story, to develop to a greater extent the skills of oral and written expression and reading, respecting other's opinion, to enahnce the active participation in the learning process in classroom, to develope the pupils' vocabulary.

Methodology: individual, by pairs, by groups

Age: 5 to 6 year-olds

Duration: one didactic hour

Materials: flashcards, projector, A4 paper sheets

Description of the activity: flashcards are designed on the basis of Propp's story analysis.
They give the opportunity to children to invent their hero's actions and functions, either based on their own previous reading experiences (Page & Stewart, 1985) or on the pictures provided.
Young children use the flashcards by placing them sequentially or selectively, creating their own stories.
The flashcards are divided into seven categories in order children be aware of the narrative structure.

- The red cards are heros.
- The orange cards are the hero's birthplace or the place that hero lives.
- The yellow cards give more details about the character and assist the imgination of what may happen to him/her. It is the purpose of his/her life or something he/she wants and must find or a goal that must accomplish which will provide him/herself, his/her beloved ones and even his/her country happiness.
- The green cards hide the ''villain'' of the story. His/her motives, evil plans.
- The light blue cards are the powerful ally who will help the hero to overcome the obstacles.
- The blue cards are the gift from the ally to the hero. The magic object that will be the key to be fount the solution.
- The purple cards give the happy end to the story.

Spread the cards in front of the pupils and begin the story. It is suggested to begin by the favorite ''Once upon a time...''.
Choose one card from each color and let your imagination to guide you. Through collaboration, sequence the flashcards, in a causative or chronological order. Begin the narration.
Finish the story with the phrase ''and they lived happily ever after...''.

The Canvas Storie is an educational flashcards set of Kitrino Patino Publications and their methodology is created by Manos Krokos-author-art director and Liana Denezaki- author-illustrator. Scientific documentation by Zoe Krokou, PhD educator.

Resources bibliography

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LESSON PLAN

JUNIOR AUTHORS

Author: Maria Skordyli

Area: language oral and written communication

Objectives: to be aware of the narrative structure of the stories, to promote learning through experience (experiential learning), to cultivate the free expression of students in oral communication, to strengthen the spirit of cooperation and the motivation to learn, to develop a critical spirit in students and a democratic climate in the classroom, to help children develop targeted comprehension strategies by applying direct instruction techniques, to develop to a greater extent the skills of oral and written expression and reading, employing alternative ways of learning that are more related to the experiences and interests of students

Methodology: individual, by pairs

Age: 5 to 6 year-olds

Duration: two didactic hours

Materials: pen, pencil, colored pens, A4 paper sheet

Description of the activity: discuss the idea of "Little Books" with your group.
They choose the topics, in small groups of 2 pupils.
They write the texts and create the illustrations in collaboration.
Texts are typed into the computer and drawings are scanned with the support of the teacher who has the role of a secretary.

The "Little Books" are printed (one A4 sheet is enough for each booklet) by folding 3 times and cut with scissors
One group reads their "Little Book" to the other in class. Comments and discussion follow.

By mail, exchange the "Little Books" with another school.

You all share copies of the Little Books and submit them for publication, here on "Your Little Book".

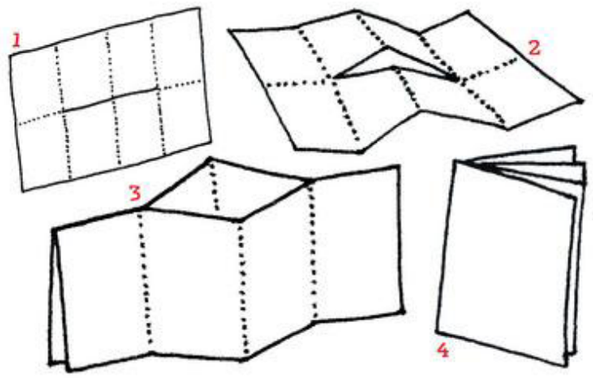
Finally, you can organize an exhibition of the books, both in the classroom and in the school library.

The creation of the stories gives an opportunity to talk about the narrative structure of the stories:

- the story map (beginning-middle-end)
- where (setting), when (time), who (characters), what (problem) how (solution, end) (Lahlou, 2013)







Resources bibliography

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Template of little book http://petitslivres.free.fr/techniques/petitlivreXP.pub

LESSON PLAN

GUESS...

Author: This activity is designed by the professor ms Elissavet Chlapana and presented in a workshop during the Greek LTT meeting

Area: reading skills

Objectives: to develop prediction skills to elaborate and integrate the new information in their current knowledge base, to apply narrative skills by asking and answering questions about the story, to develop targeted comprehension strategies.

Methodology: individual, by pairs, the whole group

Age: 5 to 6 year-olds

Duration: one hour

Materials: book Bringing down the moon, flashcards with heroes of the story or dolls as heroes



Description of the activity

Step 1: Introduction to the targeted comprehension skill
Showing the front cover illustrated picture and the title the teacher asks to make predictions of the story.
Explanation of what prediction is... (guess what will happen in the story. Predicting helps me understand better the actions of the story characters)

Step 2: Modeling
Children work in pairs in making some predictions and we share some of them.
Read the text to discuss the confirmation of the predictions.

Step 3: Collaborative use
Present gradually pictures or objects, whenever that is possible, to encourage children, working in pairs, to make individually their own predictions, discuss and compare them.
Continue reading encouraging children to notice which of theirs predictions were confirmed or not.

Step 4: Guided practice
Continue reading the text. Stop on selected parts of the text asking children to imagine what will happen next in the story.
Children can draw their predictions on sticky notes individually.
Continue reading and each child can note whether her/his prediction is confirmed (Chlapana, 2021).

Resources bibliography

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LESSON PLAN

ROBOT AUTHORS

Author: Maria Skordyli



Area: reading skills, coding

Objectives: to recognize vocabulary (functional vocabulary, vocabulary with high frequency of use words, terminology of cognitive objects) encountered in spoken texts and in various communicative contexts, to make descriptions in logical order and consistency, to retell texts, το adopt the rules/principles that govern language as a structure and system of communication, to develop to a greater extent the skills of oral and written expression and reading, employing alternative ways of learning that are more related to the experiences and interests of students, to promote students' computational thinking skills, to solve problems with software of special categories and becoming familiar by coding in programmable means, to recognize basic structures of programming (sequence, repetition, selection), to improve students' attention and motivation.

Methodology: individual, by pairs

Age: 5 to 6 year-olds

Duration: one hour

Materials: robot, flashcards of the story plot, a transparent grid

Description of the activity: robots are engaging, motivating, encouraging imagination and innovation, and may improve literacy and creativity, especially for children (Chen & all,2011).

Activities of storytelling and drama have taken a new dimension with the incorporation of educational robots. Using robots to represent the story in a storytelling and drama activity provides students with a multi-sensory experience and an enjoyable learning environment

(Bravo, 2021). Educational robotics are a valuable tool in education.

The benefits of storytelling and drama could increase with the inclusion of robots in the presentation of the story (Bravo, 2021).

The teacher designs learning activities and the pupils program robots to be storytellers or actors for the representation of stories.

By the use of flashcards, the robots follow the sequence of the story, firstly designing the route by the arrows, creating the algorithm on the grid. Next the program the robot which act the specific steps and sequence.

Resources bibliography

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CROATIA

Kindergarten Jarun

READING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

NEDA VAC BURIĆ
MA IN PSYCHOLOGY, EXPERT ASSOCIATES

Problem-solving, as defined by the American Psychological Association, is the process by which individuals attempt to overcome difficulties, achieve plans that move them from a starting situation to a desired goal, or reach conclusions through the use of higher mental functions, such as reasoning and creative thinking.
How can reading then develop problem-solving skills?
Literature has been used to help people deal with their psychological, social and emotional problems for centuries and in 1916, the American psychiatrist S. Crothers combined the Greek words „biblion – book“ and „therapia – healing“ into the term bibliotherapy to define a ‘process in which specific literature, both fiction and non-fiction, was prescribed as medicine for a variety of ailments.’ While today books are not “prescribed as medicine” in a literal sense, they can be used with the intent of helping the reader process the emotional burden of any kind – no matter the reader’s age.
The term ‘bibliotherapy’ connotates treatment and healing - a process usually reserved for licensed medical professionals.
Thus, teachers and educators are often reluctant to engage in guiding bibliotherapy as they are not medical professionals, and their field of work is education and not the treatment of patients.
However, by sharing a story and being there for the child, listening to the child, and giving the child the feeling of being seen, all non-medical professionals working with children can provide a nurturing and safe environment that has healing potential.
Having this in mind, the Croatian preschool educational system benefits from having, in addition to preschool educators, employed expert associates including pedagogues and psychologists.

Those expert associates collaborate with educators to define the educational work with children – in regard to the children’s regular development, some specific developmental characteristics or personal needs of the children coming from their personality or family situation. Expert associates enrich the work of preschool educators with their specific knowledge and support and encourage them to try out new methodologies, themes or activities with children.
Choosing appropriate books and correlated activities is where expert associates cooperate with preschool educators to help children deal with typical developmental crises, as well as with difficult life situations.
The aim of this article is to encourage other preschool educators to use stories with different, sometimes difficult, topics in their work with children.
According to Dughi and Cotrau, bibliotherapy:

- provides information about problems – children identify their problems and validate their feelings regarding them
- support in order to assess the core essence of problems – adults provoke children to talk about themselves, communicate feelings, thoughts and aspirations
- discusses new values and attitudes
- determines children to empathize with others and realize that others face the same/similar issues they have and they become more exteriorized
- offers a palette of possible solutions for the problems the child may struggle with – children can search for similar constructive solutions to resolve their own problems.

PROBLEM-SOLVING PICTURE BOOKS OR THERAPEUTIC CHILDREN’S BOOKS

In the Croatian language, there are two terms that describe therapeutic books intended for children: problem-solving picture books and therapeutic children’s books.
Generally speaking, both help children deal with problems, but the main difference is in the way the problems encountered by characters, which can be humans, animals or objects, are represented.
In problem-solving picture books the problems (themes) are depicted in a realistic way and can be related to feelings (e.g. expression of anger in a healthy way), personality traits (e.g. shyness), health (e.g. tooth brushing or having celiac disease), behaviour (e.g. getting lost, stealing), and various relationships (e.g. birth of a sibling, making new friends).
Those books use no stereotypes and are not making life artificially beautiful but talk realistically about life and/or situations that can be uncomfortable, unusual or taboo themes. On the other hand, therapeutic children’s books deal with various problems in children’s lives by using metaphors.
The difference in dealing with a topic in a realistic or metaphorical way is the main difference between those terms for therapeutic books.
The topic “bed wetting” can be addressed through a realistic story (e.g. girl who wets her pants by French author N. Delveux), as well as through a metaphorical story (e.g. “Cloudy”, by the Croatian author M. Lacovich, about a cloud that can not control where it lets its rain come out – until finally, it learns to control the rain and just lets it come out over gardens or lakes).

In English literature, the terms „Therapeutic children’s books” and “Healing stories“ are used interchangeably and they cover realistic as well as metaphorical stories about certain problems.

ARE THERE TOO DIFFICULT TOPICS IN CHILDREN’S BOOKS?

Concerning the topic of a problem, the majority without hesitation would suggest and encourage reading about simple problems - like getting a sibling or spending the first day in kindergarten.
Conversely, reading about complicated topics with profound long-term repercussions such as divorce, death, mental illness of parents, special needs of children or adoption is rarely advocated by adults as even they struggle with these topics.

However, the truth is that those topics are usually more difficult for adults than children, because adults have a better understanding of the possible consequences of those situations and have need to comfort children when sad, which sometimes is almost impossible.
For example, when addressing the problem of losing someone dear, adults can experience helplessness and/or powerlessness, as they are not able to restitute their loss, and thus many are prone to avoid such topics.
Children will encounter difficult situations sooner or later in life, and it is important to understand that addressing a certain topic can not worry the child more than being left alone with their concerns or unprepared.
As the British psychologist M. Sunderland says – “When a child’s too painful or too difficult feelings are left untalked about, they leak out in emotional problems, body

symptoms, destructive behaviour. Children do not have the inner resources to fully process, i.e. fully feel and think about, their troubled feelings.
However, children can do this with the help of an empathic adult who will listen and understand their perspective.

When a child is helped to think about his troubled feelings through stories, this can prevent emotional and behavioural problems"
No matter how complex, therapeutic books make coping with problems easier by providing an indirect way to experience them.
In a sense, the characters represent a proxy and children are not confronted directly with their problem, their privacy is not violated, and they are not exposed. Thus, therapeutic books offer a way of seeing someone else experience similar problems without inducing revolt and provide comfort, render the feeling of isolation and help children learn new problem-solving skills.

Good therapeutic books are not moralizing or guilt-inducing for "inappropriate" behaviour and they are not intended to heal "bad" behaviour by making it "good", but to help the process of bringing an out-of-balance behaviour or situation back towards wholeness and balance and help children develop mature coping mechanisms. However, it is important to understand that this personal development is a lengthy process that demands patience and can be facilitated with the use of other tools such as playing or drawing.

In Croatia, expert associates most often recommend books by M. Sunderland, G. Ortner, M. Lacovich and S. Perrow. Some of these authors also wrote books that serve as guidelines for writing therapeutic stories.
For instance, S Perrow gives a threepart framework in which units are not necessarily separated, but somewhat intertwined:

1. Metaphor – vital ingredient crucial for building a connection with the reader, able to play negative (obstacles, temptations, imbalancing forces) and positive (??) roles
2. Journey – formative part of the story that builds "tension" and resolution using metaphors
3. Resolution – the restoration of harmony that must be positive, not guilt-inducing.

Finally, based on the available literature and the practical experience of educators and expert associates, we can conclude that the picture book is a valuable medium that can be used in working with children when children find themselves in unfavourable circumstances that hinder their socio-emotional development.

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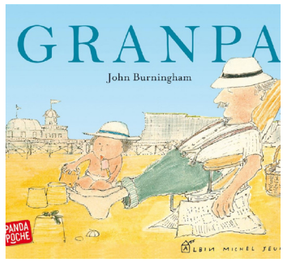
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LESSON PLAN

HOW TO BRING THE CONCEPT OF DEATH AND GRIEF CLOSER TO CHILDREN BY USING PICTURE BOOKS

Authors: Ana Marija Švec, preschool educator, Mia Belegić, preschool educator, MA in EPE



Area: how to bring the concept of death and grief closer to children by using picture books and how to allow them to express their feelings and evoke memories by drawing after reading the story. Personal development, reading skills, art

Objectives: with the help of picture books bring the concept of death and grief closer to children and help them to express their emotions more easily. Learning about emotions – main focus on the emotion of sadness, as a part of emotion regulation, helping children to express their emotions and share their experiences, encouraging children to share their grief with others, adults or children, the development of empathy in children, encouraging children to express emotions with the help of drawings, exploring picture books of a different, new to children, theme.

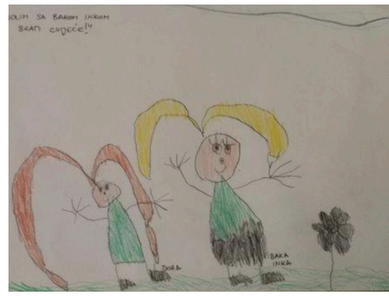
Methodology: working in a group, working individually

Age: from age 4 – the age at which children begin to understand what death is, which allows concrete work on the topic

Duration: the anticipated duration of the activity is certainly several days through which a picture book can be worked in phases, concretely talk about emotions, grieving, about the meaning of death, and ultimately allow children to express themselves with drawing

Materials: picture book "Granpa", papers, pencils, crayons

Description of the activity: exploring and reading the picture book "Granpa". After the children are presented with the picture book, and after exploring it individualy or in smaller groups, children should be able to recognize the main characters of the story, their joint activities, and assume the end of the story. After reading the story and talking about it, the children suggest their own endings of the story, until the actual ending of the story is ultimately revealed. This will open up a conversation about death, about what death means, whether children have ever heard of this expression, whether they have been in close contact with someone who has passed away. Although it is assumed that children will find it difficult to express their fellings and share experiences on such a topic, you sholud make your own suggestions and share your experiences to help children express themselves. Talking about a picture book also leads to reflecting on the emotion of sadness. Why does it arise? What does it look like when someone is sad? What situations lead to feelings of sadness? Children should think of all those situations in which they were sad, when someone hurt or saddened them with their behavior or when they made someone sad, and share and discuss it with other children. Expressing themselves by drawing – One day with my grandparents. After the first reading of the picture book and talking about it and its topic, children are now closer to the concept of death and grieving, and it is important to read the picture book once again the next day. Children will now be able to think about what they heard in a different way, and give different solutions and different answers to previously asked questions. Children will also have the opportunity to talk about it at home with their parents, grandparents and ask them everything they are interested in. In this way we enable children to deepen their knowledge from various sources and create their own experience of death and grief. The picture book will also help children to recall their memories which they have with their grandparents and express them with the help of drawing. You should give children papers, pencils and crayons, and asked them to close their eyes and imagine their favorite day they spent with their grandparents. After drawing the picture, each child will have the opportunity to share with other children the activities what they like to do or they used to do with their grandparents. If one of the children grandparents has passed away, this is their possibility to share the beautiful moments they have spent with their grandaprents, together with other children and adults. Although they have never talked about it before, it is with the help of drawings that children will free themselves and allow all their emotions to come out and make them feel better. We can make an exhibition out of the children art works, and allow them to show their drawings to their parents and grandparents, to let them know how important they are and how they like to spend their time with them. Also drawings can encourage adults to talk more openly with children about such a difficult topic like - death of some dear.



HOW TO BRING EMOTIONS CLOSER TO CHILDREN

Authors: Ana Marija Švec, preschool educator, Mia Belegić, preschool educator, MA in EPE

Area: how to bring emotions closer to children, with an emphasis on sadness and how with the help of "stones of love" help a person who is sad or grieving. Personal development, social science.

Objectives: expand children's knowledge of emotions, encourage the development of children's empathy and help children think about possible ways to help other people. Identifying and naming emotions, verbal and nonverbal expression of one's own feelings, developing self-awareness of feelings and managing them, helping chlidren understand one's own and others' feelings, encourage mutual assistance within the group

Methodology: working with whole group, working in pairs

Age: from age 3

Duration: working on activities through 2 weeks

Materials: "box full of feelings", face masks, situational cards, paper, pencils, water colours, rocks, felt tip pen, acrylic paint, brushes

Description of the activity:
Using the "Box full of feelings" - with the help of a box full of feelings, children can play with masks of different emotions and play with situational cards wich shows 4 basic emotions. This will help them to easier understand the situations in which some of these emotions are present. First, children are offered masks that show 4 basic emotions – happiness, sadness, anger and fear. Children have the opportunity to handle masks and get into the role of emotion that is currently on their face. For each mask, children should express their feelings and tell other children at what moments in their lives they felt happy, sad, angry or scared. Children should be given the opportunity to try on the mask they want. After the conversation, children can also be suggested to act with masks and create their own story – a play in which emotions play a major role. With the help of situational cards, children have the opportunity to see and experience how in which life situations a person feels. Here, the main focus is placed on the emotion of sadness, as part of the topic of grieving and talking about death. Children should draw one card from a set of cards, and by studying it, they try to figure out exactly what is happening in the photo, come up with a story for the photo, and try to determine why the card shows the emotion of sadness.Children propose several possible solutions, and each solution



is discussed and thought out jointly. After agreeing on the actual story which is shown on the card, the children are given the task of trying to figure out how it is possible to help this person, and how to put a smile back on their face.

Making of "Stones of love" - as everyone needs help when they feel sad and lost, when they have lost someone close to them, the activity of making the "Stones of Love" for children is a very simple and attractive activity . In order to start making the stones, it is first necessary to talk with children about possible solutions to help someone who is sad. From the offered answers you should choose those that are most appropriate and that can be achieved within the group. For example – hug a friend, choose someone who will play with you, choose someone who will draw something for you, who will give you a kiss, who will bring you flowers. If it is possible to get stones neer to the kindergarten, take some time, go for a walk and choose stones that will be used to draw on them. Choose motives that will be able to show the choosen solutions, and share tasks for children to first draw the outlines of motives on stones with pencils. If children are not able to draw it independently, take over this task and help children to paint what you have drawn. After drawing it with a pencil, children use a felt-tip pen to bold the lines of the motives, and then paint stones with acrylic paint. When all the stones are finished, we put them all together in a bag from which they will be pulled out. Now every time we notice, or when one of the children notices that someone is sad or when one of the children just comes and says how he is feeling sad, we will give him a bag of "Stones of love".
Before children draw stones, we will instruct the chiled who is drawing to first choose the child with whom he wants to do the activity, and then to randomly choose one of the stones from the bag. After the activity is done, the person who was sad should feel a lot better, and the child who did the activity to help the other person will feel more fulfilled and satisfied

INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND KINDERGARTEN EMPLOYEES IN THE ACTIVITIES OF GOING TO THE LIBRARY

Authors: Valerija Landsky, preschool educator, Martina Najedek , preschool educator, Kristina Martinko Rutić, MA in Pedagogy- expert associate, Snježana Vusić-Kodvanj, MA in ER



Area: involvement of parents and kindergarten employees in the activities of going to the library and choosing picture books for children, and their stay in the group as guest readers. Social skills, reading skills, personal developmet

Objectives: show children the importance of using picture books and other typs of books to study the world around them and to emphasize that adults also read and thus set a good example for children and their future. Encouraging cooperation between children and adults when going to the library and choosing picture book, creating reading habits, creating habits of reading together, developing the cognitive world of the child, enrichment of vocabulary and development of speech skills

Methodology: working in a group, working in pair, working individualy

Age: from age 3 to age 7

Duration: several weeks of cooperation, going to librarie, and guest appearances in the group

Materials: hammer paper, photos of proposed picture books, bookmark for picture books, list of picture books and books to borrow, picture books and prepared space for guest readers

Description of the activity
Selecting suggested picture books and going to the library - it is important to encourage children and parents to go to the library, and to read both at home and in kindergarten. We can achieve this with the help of posters with suggested picture books suitable for their age, which parents and children can borrow and read, or bring to kindergarten so that everyone can read it together.
On a large hammer paper, we arrange photos of the proposed picture books, and put the poster in a space where children and parents can explore together and choose which picture book they want to read or discuss if they may have already read it.
By going to the library, children acquire the habit of borrowing books and also taking care of them.

Also adults at the same time have the opportunity to borrow a book for themselves, and thus show children how they also like to read. After borrowing a picture book, children have the opportunity to bring a picture book to kindergarten or read it independently at home.

Guest reader in a group - as a guest reader in the group, there is a possibility of choosing one of the employees in the kindergarten, but not an educator.
But also in agreement with parents you can arrange for one or more parents to bring a book that they have borrowed together with their children in the library, and to read it and present it together to other children.

Children are presented with a secret reader who will stay in the group that day, and who will read and discuss the picture book with them.
To help a guest reader, it is important to prepare some questions through which children could be discussed the topic of the book, about the lesson of the story and about what they liked or didnt like about picture book.



This activity allows children to see that not only children and educators read picture books, but how everyone else reads, regardless of the work they do.

Children will find it very interesting to notice that the cook, maid, janitor, pedagogue, principal, people who normally work on different functions and who are normally interacting with children every day, now stay in a group reading them a picture book and talking to them about the world of picture books and stories.

It can also be interesting that people who are guests in the group choose one of their favorite stories from childhood, and thus share a small part of themselves with children.
Immersing yourself in the story, adding various voices when reading, showing the story with the help of gestures, will contribute to the children's experience of the story, and also free adults from the fear of reading in front of children.

LESSON PLAN

A PICTURE BOOK ABOUT EMOTIONS

Authors: Valerija Landsky, preschool educator, Martina Najdek , preschool educator, Kristina Martinko Rutić, MA in Pedagogy-expert associate, Snježana Vusić-Kodvanjl, MA in ER, principal

Area: reading skills, personal development

Objectives: development of concious regarding emotions,develop the ability to recognize and name basic emotions, developing positive picture of yourself, to become aware of the importance of expressing one's emotions, encourage children to share their emotions with others, develop empathy and compassion among children, self-regulation of emotions, help the child become aware of the problem that angers him, help the child to be aware off what he is actually fearing, help the child to change the attitude towards fear, understand how others feel based on the observation of their non-verbal behaviour, encouraging children to express their emotions through art, vocabulary enrichment, development of fine motor skills, development of early literacy

Methodology: individual, part of group, the whole group

Age: 5-7 years old

Duration: the activity in the group can be conducted through one month.

Materials: photos of emotions, collage paper, scissors, glue, ribbon, cardboard, felt-tip pens, photos of people, mirror, canvas bag, music.

Description of the activity: talk with children about four main emotions- happiness, fear, sadness and anger. What makes them happy, and what makes them sad? What are they afraid of, and with whom can they speak openly about their fears? Who encourages them? What is the main reason for their anger and how do the express it? Explain to children why it is important to talk about problems and that there is always a solution to a problem. Discuss acceptable ways of expressing anger. Prepare cards with pictures of people in different everyday situations and show them to children.
Encourage them to describe the facial expressions of people from pictures. What do they see in the pictures? What emotions do they recognize? Create with each child a small window with a name in which they can insert a card of the emotion they feel at some point every day. Explain to the children that sometimes when we get angry and wish to rashly and inappropriately respond, we can take the card and draw the emotions that we feel instead of saying some words that we will later regret.
Invite the children to stay in a circle. Tell them they are going to play a game called "act a feeling," by playing music that you will turn down at some point. After you silence her, you will say the name of the feeling, and they should act it out. Agree in advance with the children how they will act out a certain feeling (e.g. happiness - jump in the air; sadness - bend down and pretend to cry; fear - turn around and make "scary" sounds; anger - wave their hands as if they are pushing someone away from yourself). Encourage children to look at their reflection in the mirror and pay attention to the details on their faces.
Offer art materials from which children will create their own character with strong expressions of emotions in the situations we discussed. Expose the works and observe it together with the children. What emotions are repeated mostly?
Talk about art works. Agree that you will connect the children's works into a picture book and thus create a picture book about emotions.Offer the materials to children to create a cover sheet of a picture book. Allow children to take a picture book home, determine the rules for borrowing and returning. Make a canvas bag with the children in which the children will carry the picture book at home. Discuss taking care of books. Children's activities will foster cooperation and understanding between children, patience and respect. By studying photographs of different emotions, artist expression, dramatization, children will have the opportunity to express and process their own experiences of certain emotions.









LESSON PLAN

LETTER SENDING

Authors: Valerija Landsky, preschool educator; Martina Najdek , preschool educator; Stanka Mrkoci, preschool educator, Kristina Martinko Rutić, MA in Pedagogy-expert associates

Area: eeading skills, personal developmen

Objectives: introducing children with traditional form of written communication - by letter, encourage children to consider what all the letter should contain, introduce children to the rules of decent communication, develop children's early literacy skills (writing and reading letters) when writing a letter, cultivate the awareness and respect of people, connecting with children who live in distant parts of our country; getting to know their traditions and cultural heritage, development and promotion of positive values, raising awareness of the importance and respect of differences between people, developing the child's awareness of the importance and uniqueness of a certain profession, developing the ability to identify relations and links between people, by visiting the post office in the settlement, bringing the entire process of sending a letter closer to children; learn how letters are packed and sent and how mail gets from the sender to the recipient, when walking to the post office, encourage children to know about safety in traffic and the importance of caring for themselves and others, encourage children to use new knowledge in their daily lives

Methodology: individual, part of group, the whole group

Age: 6-7 years old

Duration: the activity in the group can be conducted through a month

Materials: paper, pencils, scissors, glue, felt-tip pens, envelope, letters, postcards, stamps, mail bag, postman´s cap, congratulation cards, map

Description of the activity: introducing children with traditional and forgotten form of written communication - by letter. Show children examples of letters, postcards and stampsand explain the concept of correspondence in writing.
Point out that in the past there were no cell phones and computers and that the letter was the only way of communication between people who lived in remote areas. Compare the ways of communication today and in the past.
Contact the kindergartens or schools with whom we can connect and arrange inter-group cooperation in the form of correspondence by letter. With the children, find the city to which we are sending the letter on



the map and observe the distance between the cities. Figure out the contents of a letter to introduce our group, kindergarten and town. Explore the sights of our end we will write about in the letter. Talk about the rules of decent communication.
Write a letter and store it in an envelope on which the child will read the address of the receiver and the pointer. Encourage children to learn their home address and point out why this is important and beneficial. Arrange a visit to the post office in the settlement and take the letter along with the children. When walking to the post office with children, observe the settlement and pay attention to children on the street signs and prominent buildings.Encourage children's curiosity about the postman profession. In the post office, introduce children to the specifics of that profession and the post office.

When returning to kindergarten, the children can express their experiences in art. In order for children to confirm their acquired knowledge, after visiting the post office, a post office can be set up in the living room. It should display the materials that the children encountered in the post office during their visit - postman's hat, bag, packages, papers, letters, envelopes, stamps, postcards and greeting cards.
Offer materials from which children will make their stamps on their own and write greeting cards. Encourage the symbolic game and play of roles among children. Appoint postmen among the children who will check our kindergarten mailbox every day in anticipation of a reply to our letter. Encourage children to write a letter to a friend or grandparents at home and take him to the post office with his parents and send him.



ESTONIA

Kalli-kalli Kindergarten

TECHNOLOGY IN THE READING NEST

CAROL TARRE
TERJE TENSO

Young people need to be given the opportunity to acquire different skills so that they can become self-reliant, active members of society and ready to compete for different jobs.
Literacy is considered one of the basic skills, which is also the basis for further learning and communication. Literacy encompasses a range of aspects, and nowadays it also implies some digital competence.
The development of literacy starts at an early age, so it is important to provide young children with various activities, environments and tools to ensure exposure to written texts in different forms and functions (European Commission 2019, RÕK 2008, Liinev et.al., 2021). We need literacy to express our opinions, to learn, to communicate, to get information and to pass it on. It is essential to know how to read and write in order to get on in life.

People who read voluntarily understand texts better than people who do not read in their spare time. For young children, reading fiction and providing opportunities for exposure to different texts has great value in developing children's attention, perception, thinking, imagination and creativity. It is also a good way of expanding vocabulary and expression (Mallene and Vaikmäe, 2010, Liinev et.al., 2021).
It is well known that a child's reading activity contributes to the development of literacy skills, so it is important to stimulate children's interest in reading. Different approaches and methods are recommended to support reading motivation. Reading opportunities should be offered in many different ways, and the teacher should act as a role model for children as well as provide cooperation between pupils (Sooda, Puksand & Lupova, 2015) (Viin, 2019).

In the Kalli-Kalli kindergarten and many other kindergartens in Estonia, the Reading Nest method is used as a way to awaken children's interest towards books and reading.
The Reading Nest is a space in a room, designed and furnished for purposeful reading activities, where children in small groups, pairs and individuals can safely and comfortably explore books, play reading games, make books and practise writing.
The Reading Nest is recommended to be designed together with the children. It should be separated from the rest of the room and located in a quieter part of the room. There should be soft furniture or mattresses to make the child comfortable.
Books and games should be displayed in a way that the child can see and freely access them. (Liinev, et.al., 2021)
Just as the ability to read and comprehension skills are considered essential skills, the targeted use of ICT tools and digital literacy are now essential to cope in a digital society (Education 2021-2035).
Estonian kindergartens are mostly using integrated learning, which is why Reading Nests are starting to get equipped more and more with different digital tools (e.g. audiobooks, robots, audio recorders, and digital pens) to give children different opportunities to develop literacy skills in a digitalised society.

However, books are seen as competing with ICT tools and have diminished fiction reading. For children, the world of computers and films is visually more engaging. Listening to fiction, however, requires concentration, which can be a major strain for today's children, who have a short attention span. The ability to visualize things is very important for a good reader. However, this may not be sufficient in the ever-evolving world of multimedia, where visuals play a primary role in communication (Klandorf, 2008; Kärtner, 2000; McTigue, 2010) (Viin, 2019).
There is also competition between traditional books and e-books. But e-books should not be feared, as e-books are a valuable complement to the traditional classroom, and interactive and animated e-books can be quite effective in helping to acquire new vocabulary (Smeets and Bus, 2013).
Children are capable of playing complex computer games for hours, which is why digital learning games are gaining popularity in the modern digitalized society. Digital learning games combine learning objectives or educational content with playful activities (Sillaots, 2015). While educational games are deliberately designed to have teaching or educational content, in fact, simple commercial games can also be very developmental.

Playing is an integral part of a child's development, through which they learn to communicate, and express emotions and desires (Roopnarine et al., 2010). In the same way, as play keeps children engaged, digital learning games have the potential to keep children engaged and support their learning as well as increase children's motivation to learn, independence and self-esteem (Papanastasiou et al., 2017).

However, the Reading Nest project leaders (Liinev et.al., 2021) recommend that teachers should choose digital tools without screens for the Reading Nest, but note that the targeted use of a computer or tablet is still welcome.
It should be borne in mind here that the aim is not to use ICT tools just to learn how to use them or just to make things more cool and fun. Instead, it should add value to the learning process.

Teachers have an important role to play in finding the right balance between traditional and innovative solutions. Digital tools offer useful and exciting solutions to enrich and motivate the learning process for both students and teachers.
In addition, digital learning environments allow teachers to personalize learning and support learners' courage to be creative and innovative (Viin, 2019).
Finding innovative solutions, allowing children to make choices and initiating activities supports children's autonomous motivation (Reeve, 2006).

Our well-being and motivation are linked to the satisfaction of three basic needs: competence, relatedness and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). A teacher who supports students' autonomy by taking into account their preferences, needs and interests increases students' engagement in learning (Jang et al., 2010), which is also a factor in autonomous motivation (Reeve, 2006).

Teachers who use a Reading Nest in their classrooms have also noted that children's engagement in reading activities has been highest when the teacher does not constantly lead the activities but supports children's initiative and choices, and allows children to be the initiators and implementers of ideas (Liinev, et.al. 2021). As a limitation, brain scientist J. Aru (2021) points out that smart devices are addictive, and therefore he recommends that children use them as late and as little as possible.

He points out that the use of smart devices also discourages children from using robotic tools.
Therefore, using educational robots instead of smart devices with screens might be a better choice.
Among many other skills, a teacher's role is to support children's interest in reading and developing their literacy skills.
At the same time, a child's intrinsic motivation should be supported by providing the child with a range of options.
To this end, it is important to introduce children to a variety of reading activities and games.

If the teacher uses a smart device, such as a tablet, as one of the enrichment elements, it is important to ensure that the balance between the smart device and other activities is maintained and that the child's motivation to engage in activities and play with other toys and learning tools is not compromised.

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LESSON PLAN

THE REMOTE CONCEPTION OF A BOOK IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASS

Author: Maud Bertevas



Area: the remote conception of a book in a foreign language class as a means to increase the motivation of the children and improve their language skills

Description of the activity: the subject of this project is the creation of a French book made remotely in collaboration with children and their families during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in Estonia (March 2020). The story chosen was "Roule Galette". A story loved by the children about a proud pie, which had previously been studied in class weeks before Estonia's quarantine time. Our French class was composed of ten children from age three to five. Each child was given a specific list of tasks that needed to be achieved at home in order for the book to be created. They were invited to create of a costume of their character, make a picture relating the scene in which their character would be involved in and make a drawing that could be used as a background picture for their scene in the book. Indeed, the idea was later to make a photomontage of the children's work and build up the book, scene by scene.
On an immediate level, the objectives of this project were to keep the children in contact with their kindergarten and learning process by creating something fun with their parents at home. Arts and fine motor skills were at use in that first part of the project.

On a long-term scale, the aim was to be eventually able to read this final product at school and at home. Indeed, the children could already use this book in order to practice letters (capital and lower case letters) and start recognizing high frequency words.
Those words were deliberately written in capital letters (back then more recognizable for the children) so they could try to spell and read them. Furthermore, this project was also a means for us teachers to increase the interest of the children in the writing world and mostly reading by involving them in the creation a book in which they could see their friends and themselves.
By creating such an enthusiasm, another main goal



was to develop the children's oral skills thanks to conversations, depictions, re-explanations of various topics in, or implied, in the book. This project was quickly made in regards of the children's participation. The longer part was putting all the productions together and creating the book.
It took approximately 70 hours to finalize it. It lasted from April 2020, when the project was introduced to parents, to June 2020, when we finally received the copies of our book. Each family ordered for themselves and close relatives several copies of the book. Many softwares and apps were used for this project such as Photoshop® (for the photomontages), BookWright® (for the edition of the book), Blurb® (for the order and printing) and other drawing applications on i-Pads. This project could be done at any age and could vary depending on the skills of the children.

A project in which children would also participate in inventing the story and as well writing by themselves the sentences in the book, would be a great option to introduce to children and create another feeling of proud achievement.
Indeed, the children of the French class were, and still are, very excited about this book and the each have a copy at home that they would read and present to their family. It was a very successful project that pleased both children and parents. It is also a long-lasting souvenir from the children's time in kindergarten.



LESSON PLAN

CONSOLIDATION OF LETTERS AND READING WITH BEEBOTS

Author: Helen Reilson

Area: reading skills, maths/technology, motoricity, personal development

Objectives: to improve reading skills using the help of Beebots

Methodology: first part of the activity is individual,and the second part is in pairs

Age: 6-7 years

Duration: first part about 20 minutes, second part about 20-30 minutes

Materials: Beebot, Beebot mat, papers with different letters in side the mat, pencils and papers

Description of the activity
First part (Entering the code to get to the letter): teacher will introduce the Beebot - what it will do, how to turn on and off and how to programme it. Then explain and present the task. On the floor is a mat where inside are different letters. Teacher will say a letter to where the



kid needs to guide the Beebot from the starting point. Kid needs to figure out what path to use and how to get there (using left, right, straight and back arrows).
Second part (Cracking the code to find out the word): teacher will make an example and show how to crack the code and find out what word is written on the paper. First she will make up a word from the letters on the mat and write down the arrow code on the paper. Each arrow code (letter) will start from the new line. Entering the code from each line the Beebot will move from letter to letter. When the Beebot stops, the letter needs to be written down. In the end kids will find out what word comes from the code. Then kids can think of the word from the letters on their own. They need to figure out how to get each letter and write down the code on the paper. They can check if the exercise is correct and hand the paper to a friend. Then a friend needs to crack the code themselves and write down the word.
TIP: It is suggested to do the first and second part of the activity during different days.
After the first part kids will get used to programming the Beebot and entering and visualizing the code in the head becomes more clearer. Then they probably need some time to rest their head. If they are interested in writing down the code themselves during the same day then both parts of the activity can be done the same day.

LESSON PLAN

STORYTELLING WITH OZOBOTS

Author: Terje Tenso

Area: reading skills, maths/technology, motoricity, personal development

Objectives: learn how to program the ozobot, students will be able to describe character, setting, and major events in a story, cooperation

Methodology: small groups

Age: 5-7 years old

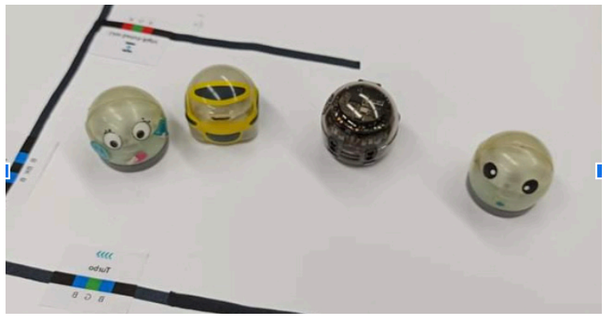
Duration: first part about 20-30 minutes, second part about 30-4 minutes

Materials: ozobots, ozobot color code reference sheet, markers, A4 papers, A3 or bigger paper, colored pencils

Description of the activity
First part of the activity: print out ozobot color codes reference sheet. https://files.ozobot.com/stem-education/ozobot-color-codes.pdf. Introduce the codes to the kids. Depending on how many ozobots are



available, divide the children into small groups (3-4 kids with one ozobot). Hand out ozobots, observe it all together (how to turn it on, how to calibrate, how it moves etc). Then hand out A4 sheets and markers. Kids will work in small groups to use and code ozobots and practice coding with ozobots. Let kids to draw different color-coded lines and observe what is happening.
Explain to the kids that lines should not be too wide nor too narrow.



Second part of the activity: in small groups kids plan characters, setting and major event of the story. If kids do not get any ideas for the stories, they can use well know story or get ideas by using story cubes or flashcards. You may want to give a fixed story structure for the kids.
For example: once there was a...(character name and one adjective about the character). He/she lived in a... (setting). One day...(something happened/major event). After discussion kids will draw characters and pictures that would represent the story setting and major event(s). Teacher should make sure that each child will have a responsibility.
Help kids to decide who draws a character, who pictures that will represent the setting etc. If kids are done with their story idea and drawings, they need to plan which Ozobot commands should be used to represent their character, setting and major events.
For example, stormy day can be represented by ozobot "tornado "move.

Once the commands are chosen, kids will be asked to draw their color code tracks for ozobot. Kids will test out their track and practice storytelling. Each child should be able to tell at least one sentence. Kids can represent their stories to each other.



LESSON PLAN

PHONICS RECOGNITION WHILE MAKING AN ANIMATION.

Author: Karit Mattis

Area: reading skills, motricity, technology

Objectives: using the STOP MOTION mobile app, developing cooperation skills in the creation of an animation, learning national symbols and characteristics, the child counts on a companion while waiting for their turn, recognizing the phonics at the beginning of a word, letter recognition.

Age: 5-7 years old

Duration: 30 - 45 minutes

Materials: pictures of national symbols, picture of well-known story character, base paper, mobile phone or tablet, letters, printed words.

Description of the activity: this is activity is a part of a larger project. The children previously read the book "Sipsik"/"Raggie". It's a story about a little rag doll who gets into different adventures. In this activity kids take Raggie to explore Estonian national symbols and moreover they also introduced different phonics to the Raggie. The teacher prepares pictures of national characteristics (4-5 of each), and prints out a picture of Raggie. Download the app STOP MOTION. Choose a location with good light. Think about a safe place to place the phone or tablet (the phone/tablet must be stationary during the whole process). Prepare the base paper (this can be done together with kids, e.g., let kids paint the suitable setting). One by one kids will come place one national symbol on the base paper and make a photo (the teacher can ask what phonic sound the symbol in the picture starts with). It is important to make sure that a photo is taken of each image placed. When all the symbols are placed, the teacher shows the children labels with the names of the symbols. Children can try to read or guess by the first letter what is written on the label and what kind of symbol it should be placed next to. With teacher help kids also tried to spell a word Eesti (Estonia). If everything is placed on the base paper and it is sure that every image is captured, then teacher will help kids to finalize the animation in STOP MOTION.
The app helps you create a series of images that will become an animation. Select the speed of the moving picture, add suitable music (see settings),download the animation into a safe environment. See the short animation here:



ICELAND

Arnarsmári Preschool

DIALOGIC READING HOW TO BRING READING TO LIFE

HILDUR KRISTIN
HELGADOTTIR

When we think about vocabulary, it is the numbers of words available to each individual. If we talk about active vocabulary, it contains the words that we can use without thinking. Inactive vocabulary are words that are not commonly used in everyday speech. Vocabulary grows with each passing year and during the preschool years, children often make a huge leap (Byrnes and Wasik, 2009). To learn words, children need to hear the words repeatedly, find the words interesting, have a conversation about the words and discuss the meaning of the words. The language environment plays a huge role in vocabulary learning. To enlarge the vocabulary with children, we need to put words in our actions, listen, talk, use varied vocabulary, explain the meaning of words, read to the children and talk about what we read (Harris, Golinkoff and Hirsh-Pasek (2011). Emergent literacy takes place before children formally start reading. They are acquiring literacy and vocabulary knowledge by getting to know the written language all around them. It requires the company of children and adults to create a constructive language environment where there is both reading and speaking (Halldóra Haraldsdóttir, e.d.).

It is very important to read to children because their reasoning and imagination increases and vocabulary in books is richer than in spoken language. Books add new words to the vocabulary. It trains storytelling, teaches how stories are structured and show how letters change into words that form a sentence that ends in a story/narrative. Reading and having a conversation about the context increase vocabulary and improve children's storytelling skills (Grover J. Whitehurst). When adults use the dialogic reading method with children, they need to follow a few steps. First, they must introduce the book that they have chosen to read by looking at the cover, talking about the content and naming the author. When reading with younger children (2–3-year-olds), at first it is enough to talk about what is happening, where the story takes place and the characters in the book. It is important to follow and repeat what the children are saying. The adult needs to assist the children, give them compliments and encourage them when they try to talk. After a few weeks, the adult can add open questions, lengthen the sentences, and review the book. The most important thing is that everybody is enjoying the reading. When reading with older children (4-5-year-olds), the adult can ask the children to end sentences for them, ask a lot of open questions, ask a child to be a storyteller, review the book, talk about what the children remember from the story and try to connect the story to what the children have experienced.

There was a teacher in Arnarsmari preschool who was studying for master's degree who made a study on 24 children 3-4-year-olds. The goal of the study was to investigate if Dialogic reading could improve vocabulary and language comprehension of young children. The purpose was to encourage good reading habits among parents with Dialogic reading with a 6-week reading campaign. The teacher had selected books that were good to use with dialogic reading. The parents answered a questionnaire about their reading habits before and after, and the children took a comprehension test before and after. The questionnaire showed that their reading habits changed during the intervention. Their experience of using Dialogic reading with their children was a positive one, and many of the parents planned on using Dialogic reading in the future. The result showed a significant measurable increase in their word understanding.

READING IN NATURE/OUTDOOR TEACHING

Outdoor teaching and outdoor learning are a fun way to enrich the work in the preschool, and there seems to have been a growing interest in it in Iceland in recent years. This is a development for the good, as it is generally believed that the environment and nature have influenced children.
The term outdoor education or outdoor learning can be defined in various ways. According to the Norwegian teacher Arne Nikolaisen Jordet, it is called outdoor education when part of the teaching is regularly moved outside to the local environment of the school. It gives children more opportunities to use all their senses and increase their connection with their immediate environment and nature.
Outdoor education offers new possibilities or opportunities in professional work outside the traditional workplace.
It often provides a different kind of opportunity for spontaneous play, is more tangible in the sense that everyone knows that defined topics provide new experiences and encourage children's curiosity, imagination, and sociability.
Outdoor learning provides opportunities for more diverse teaching and learning methods than internal work, and it provides the opportunity to integrate subjects. The children go out with certain subjects and solve them using different methods that they find themselves or get instructions on from the teacher. Outdoor education is about the children learning about reality, society, nature, and the local environment (Jordet 1998:24).
In Arnarsmári preschool, part of the teaching takes place outside, both inside and outside the school grounds.
Opportunities are sought for all kinds of research and observations in areas that many people rarely think of using in their daily schoolwork. Society has also changed a lot in recent years and decades in Iceland. You can ask what experiences children have, e.g., of untouched nature today. Most people who are older remember what it was like to play outside in untouched nature, where their imaginations could enjoy themselves. There were less planned areas compared to what is now, less traffic and many parents took more time to enjoy nature with their children. Today, many children experience nature through the car window on trips with the family, from books, television, and computers, but less through tangible experiences. That is why it has increasingly become the part of schools to give children the opportunity to experience the outdoors, as they spend a large part of the day there. (Madsen 1998:15).

In Arnarsmári preschool, we work according to John Dewey's philosophy, but it focuses on activating the child's need for activity and that the child learns through his/her own experience, interest, and activity. He also thought it was important that there were good connections between the school and the community. Dewey insisted that the environment shapes the child's experience (Dewey 1996:19) and that thinking is a tool for action (Myhre 2001:172). The ideologies of Friedrich Fröbel and Lev S. Vygotsky are also considered. Fröbel placed great emphasis on field trips with the children into nature, where they made systematic observations and collected data (Guðrún Friðgeirsdóttir and Margrét Jónsdóttir 2005:30-32). Vygotsky,

on the other hand, emphasized that the individual develops knowledge and development through social interactions between people and culture (Kristín Norðdahl 2001:33). In the preschool work, the concepts of play, work and learning are interwoven in various ways. By using these concepts as a guide, teachers encourage the children to manage to feel their way forward towards more knowledge and skills. There are many things to consider before going on a field trip. The trip must be well planned and clear goals set for what to do, how to do something, when and for what. You have to think about the mode of transport and answer questions such as whether to go on foot or by bus, how long the trip will take, whether you need a permit for something and if you should bring lunch. You must pay attention to the weather forecast for the day and make sure that the children have appropriate clothing, because in Iceland the weather can change without notice. It is important to inform parents in advance about the trips and specify where they will be going and how long the trip is expected to last. Before going on a field trip, the teacher and children come together, and the teacher goes over the topic.
A weatherman is chosen, and his role is to tell the others in the children's group how best to dress before going out. The rules on trips are always that the teacher goes first, the children follow. Then there is always a teacher at the back and then in the middle of the group. The children must always follow the group. Each group comes with a backpack that contains a first aid kit, a phone, the children's addresses, and the parents' phone numbers. There is also material for project work in the bag. For example, books, a magnifying glass, a tape measure and other necessary items. When the children go on trips outside the school grounds, they always wear vests that are well marked. First and last, it is important that everyone has a great time.

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LESSON PLAN

JUST A TRIP

Area: reading in Nature

Objectives: what can you read in your environment, what has the nature to offer and how can the children discover many different things in the nature? To have fun and improve cooperation, friendship, and social skills. If we would take the same trip tomorrow, will it be the same, will you discover new things? How can you relate the learning from the trip to the curriculum?

Methodology: small groups, 5 – 10 children.

Age: 3-5 years

Duration: two trips, 40 minutes each.

Materials: open minded children and teachers who are very observative, camera, recorder, paper and pencil, tape measure and magnifying glass.

Description of the activity: small group of children go for a trip with their teachers with no planned destination. The teachers observe the children during the trip, listening to what they are talking about and doing. Also, the teachers observe their motions and experience, taking pictures of what makes them enthusiastic. E.g., a child picks up a branch. The teacher then asks all kinds of questions regarding the branch; where do you think the branch came from, have you seen something like this before, what do you think we can use it for, what are you going to do with it? Always use open questions, what, how, where etc.
The sun is shining, and a child maybe discovers its shadow.
The teacher asks how is this possible, why is it bigger than you even though it is your shadow? We must keep in mind that we don't want to have any given outcome. After the trip the teacher asks the children how the trip was. Did you learn something new? The second trip is maybe a week later. Then the teacher can compare the two trips to see if the children discover something new.



LESSON PLAN

LUBBI THE DOG

Area: reading skills, cooperation with the parents

Objectives: the children with either mother or father at home

Age: children of all ages in preschool.

Duration: 30 - 45 minutes

Materials: books that the children have at home or a book from a library. The children and their parents choose together what books they are going to read together



Description of the activity: Lubbi the dog (stuffed animal/dog) likes to be read to. He also likes bones to chew on. The children get bones from the teacher to take home. There are two lines on the bones, one line is for the parent to write down what book was read, and the other line is for the name of the child who was read to.
The children bring their bones with the information to school and the teacher puts the bones on a wall in the classroom.
Then after a few days, weeks, or months, the children in the classroom count together how many bones are up on the wall. Maybe the teacher can count how many pages was read.

LESSON PLAN

DIALOGIC READING

Area: reading skills

Objectives: to get children to get more involved in reading books, to improve vocabulary and language comprehension of young children and of course to have fun.

Methodology: divide children into groups of 4 – 6 individuals.

Age: Children of all ages can take part in Dialogic Reading.



Duration: is recommended about 10 – 15 minutes.

Materials: the books must have good and clear pictures and be age appropriate.

Description of the activity: the teacher reads to the children once a day, three times a week.
The teacher discusses the book cover and the content of the book with the group and every child in the group gets an opportunity to talk and answer questions. The teacher must keep in mind to ask open questions like what happened, where do the story take place and what they think will happen next?

LESSON PLAN

MAKING A STORY

Area: reading skills

Objectives: to make a story bag with the children, to have fun, to improve cooperation between the children and to increase friendship and storytelling skills.



Methodology: to divide the children into groups of 4 - 5 individuals.

Age: children 3 – 6 years old

Duration: is recommended about 15 – 20 minutes

Materials: all sorts of little things that you can use to make a story, for example little dolls, animals, cloths etc. A bag that the materials of the story fit into.

Description of the activity: the group sits down with the teacher who introduces the task to the children, that they are going to make a story bag together. Then the teacher shows the children all the little things that they can use to make the story. They talk about what kind of story they would like to make, what kind of characters should be in the story and what kind of adventures they will have. Each child chooses one item to be in the story bag and decides what its role is in the story. The teacher writes down on a paper what the children say. Then the teacher reads the story to the children and uses the items that the children chose along with the reading. Then each child tells the story to the other children in the group in its own way.



ITALY

I. C. Anzio III

BOOKS LIKE PASSPORTS TO OPEN HORIZONS

DANIELA BARTOLOMEI
FEDERICA LELI

An Inclusive School is "...much more than a school that creates good integration of pupils with special educational needs. A school truly inclusive is a school that recognizes and values fully all differences and infinity variety of diversity human..." (Ianes D., Canevaro A., a cura di, 2015, Buone prassi di integrazione e inclusione scolastica. 20 realizzazioni efficaci, Trento Erickson). Good practices for inclusion are not good actions, they are not the best actions, but they are an organization that takes into account the plurality of subjects, their diversity:

- disability and genius
- thinking and learning
- gender and sexual orientation
- culture, language, family characteristics and economic
- age

For our school, inclusiveness is a "Special Normality" because:

1. It is a very big school that welcomes students aged 3 to 14;
2. It is located in a peripheral area characterized by a high migratory flow;
3. It pays particular attention to the activation of inclusive courses for pupils with special educational needs

School has to be an encouraging place where everyone can grow and improve.
For this reason in our school we can learn important values like interculture, legality, peace, respect for differences and environmental sustainability.

Our educational project wants to be first of all INCLUSIVE for everyone and our school has always paid particular attention and commitment to the inclusion of all pupils through the organization of learning environments capable of responding to educational and didactic needs functional to different needs, making each pupil the protagonist of learning whatever are its capabilities, its potential and difficulties.
In our school there are pupils with disabilities supported by special needs teachers, in addition, there are children with specific developmental disabilities who are not supported by a special needs teacher, but for whom teachers use specific teaching strategies.

As described above, our school welcomes pupils from different countries and our staff are committed to promoting the best opportunities for them.
On the one hand, non-teaching staff help families by providing them with all the necessary information about the school and its educational offer.
On the other hand, teachers are dedicated to promoting children's well-being and social inclusion by adapting educational strategies and tools to meet the needs of each student. Scholastic inclusion is implemented through the definition and sharing of individualised/personalised programmes, which contain the teaching and assessment methods, the tools, the strategies for creating effective learning environments that take into account the relational dimension, of communication, interaction, socialization, orientation and autonomy.

Our school prepares the Annual Inclusion Plan, which represents the main programmatic-implementation document of the school in the field of inclusion, which, through the identification of facilitators in the context of reference, the overcoming of barriers, the coordinated use of resources, designs and plans quality improvement interventions.
The educational project provides for the structuring of paths aimed at preparing a positive relational climate, which passes through the commitment, professional skills, competences, relational and empathetic skills of all the operators involved in the inclusion process.
For inclusive purposes, the following are also prepared:

- screening and laboratory teaching activities for pupils with Special Educational Needs or Specific Learning Disorders;
- actions aimed at the inclusion in the school and in the local area of students with a different culture through collaboration between: teachers, the culture assessment commission and, subject to availability, linguistic-cultural mediators;
- actions aimed at overcoming the gender stereotype.

The growing presence of children from other cultures, even of the second generation, and unfortunately the scarcity of places of social aggregation, pushes our school to carry out numerous initiatives aimed at welcoming, intercultural exchange, valorising and respecting diversity and encounter between children and families.
In this context, the multicultural school is a privileged place for meeting and aggregation, information and training, respect for tradition and openness to the future and to the new that awaits us.



WE USE BOOKS AS PASSPORTS TO OPEN HORIZONS AND TO DISCOVER THE WORLD

In our school we use books as tools to convey particularly sensitive topics such as issues related to gender differences, the issue of immigration, war, disability...
Moments of shared reading, games and activities, the characters of the stories offer extraordinary opportunities to express emotions, get closer to understanding different points of view, confront each other and dialogue.

Books are a precious tool because they allow girls and boys to discover the world and are mediators of participation and sharing. In illustrated books for children, the narration develops through images and the story proceeds exclusively through drawing. In this way, girls and boys grow up, recognize each other and find themselves with their own daily life which is, therefore, capable of overcoming language barriers and promoting encounters and exchanges between different cultures.
These books have a high potential

as the narrative thread unfolds through the images resulting in a universal visual language that can be understood worldwide, without cultural borders or limitations.

The narratives through images intercept the reader on a sensory level, stimulating him visually and in the interpretative process, which follows paths conditioned by individual experiences.
In fact, the figures, even if immediately readable, lead to reflection and the formation of identity paths.
This precious opportunity also creates new perspectives and ways of perceiving what is other than self and what is real, replacing a single picture of the world.

BOOKS LIKE SEEDS THAT PRODUCE SPROUTS

Shared reading therefore becomes an opportunity for young readers to meet each other and, more generally, diversity.
From this point of view, the illustrated book and the silent book (illustrated books without words) in particular are configured as special types of book capable of promoting cognitive and inclusive paths not only with respect to themes and contents, but also by virtue of their conception iconographic and textually accessible to a wide audience of readers.

Furthermore, to promote the success of all pupils with special educational needs (autism, non-native speakers, pupils with language difficulties...) we often use sensory books created by the pupils themselves.

These books promote the ability to: explore the world through the senses; emotional sharing and experiences; construction language; increased motivation and interest.
Our school has long been following projects such as Nati per leggere or associations such as Ibby International, which act as mentors of inclusive reading and promoters of a cultural heritage universally.

Nati per leggere is a program of the Center for Child Health based in Trieste. Developed, it adheres to the Pediatrician Cultural Association, the Italian Libraries Association and the Center for Child Health, in collaboration with the Community and the Region, the program is present in all Italian regions.
The goal is that I offer the family with children aged 6 and over free of charge a reading activity that is an important experience for the cognitive development and for the migration of children's children.

IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) is an association founded in 1953 which collaborates with 70 countries. It promotes the international life of youth leadership by encouraging the publication and distribution of quality books, with a focus on diversity and inclusion.

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LESSON PLAN

"TRAVELING TO ..."

Authors: Daniela Bartolomei, Federica Leli, Caterina Caridi, Angela Bordo, Angela Cavaliere, Stefania Esposito, Angela Coppini, Martina Caprio, Margherita Castaldi

Area: tolerance and integration

Objectives: develop awareness of diversity as a source of enrichment and resource, promote education to respect, dialogue, solidarity, cooperation, friendship and equality towards all people and all cultures, promote the development of the person respecting their individuality, promoting the development of social skills that allow interaction with each other

Methodology: through the narrative technique of Kamishibaï will be presented 4 stories that address different themes (friendship, equality, diversity, collaboration) and will be organized a series of educational activities.

The teacher presents the children with the box containing the material necessary to carry out the activity and creates suspense in relation to its content. Extract from the box the boat of cloth and the carpet of the sea and invite the children to face with her a journey to new countries...
Simulating the navigation, he arrives with the boat on one of the islands, then he extracts the suitcase of the Kamishibaï from the box and, opening it, invites the children to listen to the first story...

Age: 3-4-5 years old

Duration: the project is structured in a week of activities dedicated to education to respect, tolerance, acceptance and enhancement of diversity.
Each story Is generally proposed in one/two lessons, each lasting about 1,5/2 hours.

Materials: Kamishibaï theater box, Tables of the 4 stories (previously realized by the children together with the teachers) inspired by the texts, user-friendly material (paper, cardboard, colors ...).

Description of the activity
The Island of Fruit (activity inspired by the text Diversi amici diversi by A. Libertini, Fatatrac, 1992 and the didactic guide I custodi della Terra by K. Ortolani, E. Ruffoni e S. Conti di Edizioni Arcolableno, 2018)
After having verified the comprehension of the story through a series of stimulus questions, the teacher invites the children to reflect on some aspects that unite all the fruits (eg they have the peel, they have seeds, they are born from plants or trees ...) and on the characteristics that distinguish them (shape, taste,

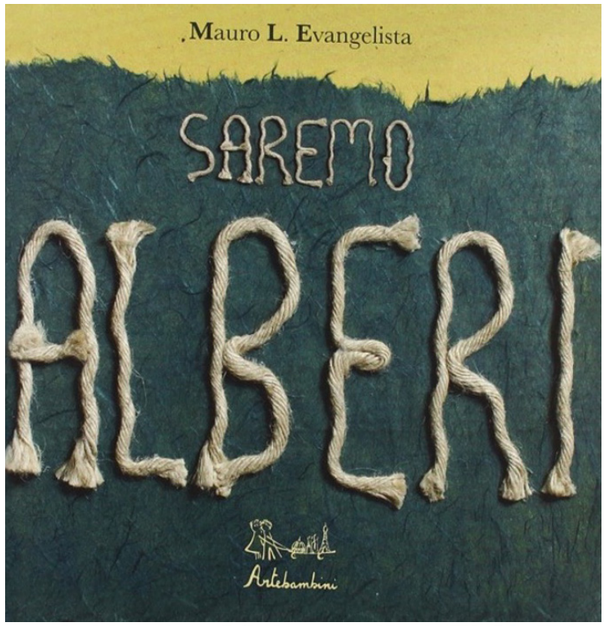


color...).
Subsequently he stimulates children to reflect on the fact that even though they have similar characteristics (two eyes, two legs ...) present traits (physical, character...) that make them unique and different from others, promoting a conversation on the theme of diversity and the possibility to be comfortable with others while retaining their characteristics.
To better understand the concept of equality and diversity, the teacher then proposes a simple motor game in the gym or in the classroom: on the notes of cheerful music, he invites the children to move freely and when the music stops he gives them a command: ex. Only blue-eyed children come to the center of the gym, or only males, or only those who know English, or all those who have two legs...
Afterwards the boat trip continues landing on the island of trees ...

The Island of Trees (activity inspired by the text Saremo Alberi by Mauro L. Evangelista, Artebambini, 2010)
After having verified the comprehension of the story through a series of stimulus questions, the teacher proposes to the children some small psychomotor exercises.
He asks them to lie down on the floor to represent a tree through his body...
Then he gives the students a card, some glue and a piece of string, asking them to create their own personal tree according to their own imagination, but also according to their own characteristics.
All the trees created will form a large, rich and varied forest together. Afterwards the boat journey continues landing on the island of lines and points ...

The Island of lines and points (activity inspired by the text La linea e il punto by V. Cauchy, L. Simon, G. Ferrero, White Star, 2014)
After having verified the comprehension of the story through a series of stimulus questions, the teacher divides the children into pairs or small groups and proposes them to make collaborative drawings using lines and dots made with black and white cards or digitopaintings.
Finally the boat trip ends with the landing on the island of animals...

The Island of Animals (activity inspired by the text La cosa più importante by A. Abbatiello, Fatatrac, 2017)
After having verified the understanding of the story through a series of stimulating questions, in circle-time, each child stimulated by the teacher tells the others some aspects of himself that he wants to share: I have brown hair, eyes..., later invites the children to express through an adjective a quality for each companion (positive aspects).
In a second moment the teacher invites the children to get in pairs to be able to realizethe portrait of the companions.







LESSON PLAN

"GENDER EQUALITY"

Authors: Daniela Bartolomei, Federica Leli, Caterina Caridi, Angela Bordo, Vita Bentivegna

Area: overcoming the gender stereotype

Objectives: to promote, from kindergarten level, activities contrasting gender discrimination/violence through educational actions aimed at changing socio-cultural behaviors, intervening in the elimination of prejudices, habits, customs and any other practice based on stereotypical models about women and men's social roles.

Methodology: the activities are focused to reflect on different aspects and contexts of our society: equality at work, at home, at school, in sports, equal rights... to learn that there is no difference between men and women, boys and girls and to work together to create a more equal society.

Age: 3-4-5 years old

Materials: user-friendly material (paper, cardboard, colors ...) and books: Tito Lupotti by Marie-Odile Judes, Martine Bourre EDT-Giralangolo, Betta e la magia che non fa differenze by Mario Gardini e Silvia Angelini, Edizioni del Baldo 2021, Il Pianeta Stravagante by Gwen Keraval EDT-Giralangolo, Ci sono bambini e bambine! Cristina Petit, Valentina edizioni

Duration: the project is structured in a week of activities

Materials: User-friendly material (paper, cardboard, colors...) and books: Tito Lupotti by Marie-Odile Judes, Martine Bourre EDT-Giralangolo 2014, Betta e la magia che non fa differenze by Mario Gardini e Silvia Angelini, Edizioni del Baldo 2021, Il Pianeta Stravagante, Ci sono bambini e bambine! Cristina Petit, Valentina edizioni

Description of the activity
This is me: the children present themselves with a drawing and describe themselves using adjectives

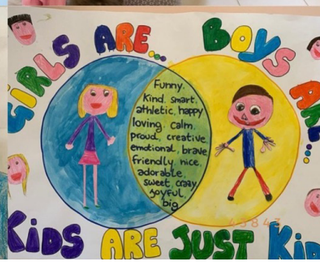
Let's cook together!: boys and girls cook a traditional recipe

What I would like to do when I get older: children express wishes and expectations regarding their future. After reading books, watching videos, brainstorming, guided conversations and games related to the topic, we came to the conclusion that everyone is free to choose what to do, and that there are no jobs reserved to males or females.





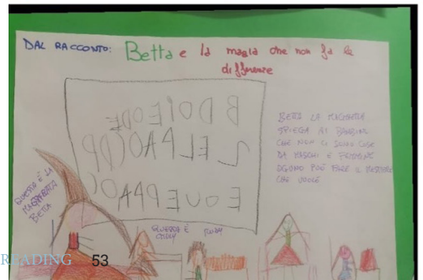














LESSON PLAN

A NEW FRIEND IN OUR DOORSTEPS-THE REFUGEE

Authors: Daniela Bartolomei, Federica Leli, Caterina Caridi, Angela Bordo

Area: friendship as forms of expression of social solidarity

Objectives: promote knowledge of the migrant's identity, make people understand that we are all potential refugees or immigrants, develop supportive and responsible attitudes, value diversity and understand that everyone has equal rights, strengthen the value of hospitality and friendship as forms of expression of solidarity.

Methodology: the didactic proposals promoted and enhanced integration between the different cognitive, emotional and cultural experiences of the children and were articulated in the different fields of experience

Age: 3-4-5 years old

Duration: The project is structured in a week of activities

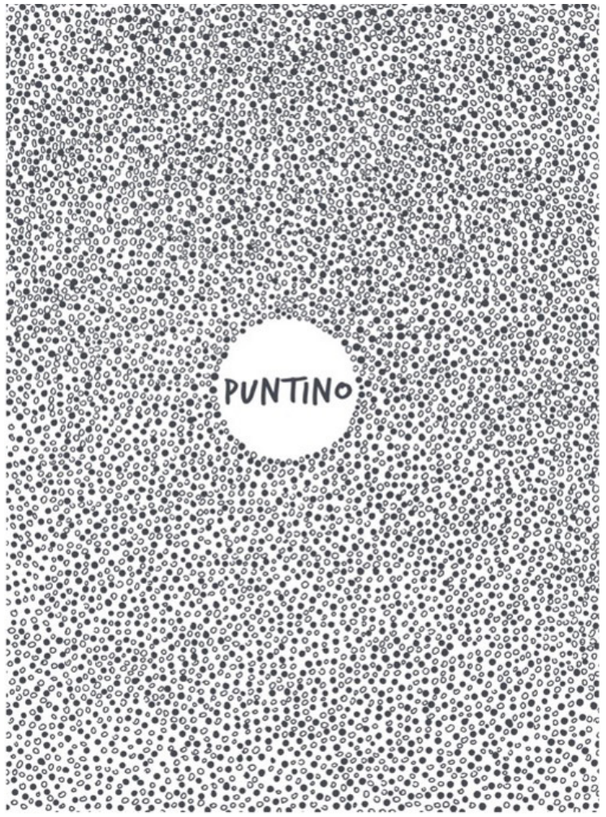
Materials: user-friendly material (paper, cardboard, colors...) and books: Puntino by Giancarlo Macrì, Carolina Zanotti, Editore Nuinui; Orizzonti by Paola Formica, Carthusia Edizioni

Description of the activity: outlining with the children some of the characteristics defining the condition of refugees, we discovered the importance of solidarity through meetings with voluntary associations and with some children hosted in the reception centers of the area.
The path led to the creation of various products - also collaborative ones- which were shared on the eTwinning platform.

The dynamism and variety of activities have made possible addressing the issue of refugees even with children, despite its delicacy and complexity.

The silent books (illustrated books without words) on the subject were valuable tools to allow children to get closer to the concept of refugee, increase their imagination and their observation skills







LESSON PLAN

EXPLORING THE WORLD THROUGH HANDMADE BOOKS

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Area: explore the world through the senses

Objectives: stimulate imagination, fine motor skills, and they are very, develop cognitive skills. emotional sharing and experiences, language improvement, increasing motivation and interest

Methodology: to promote the success of all pupils with special educational needs (autism, non-native speakers, pupils with language difficulties...) we have used sensory books created by the children themselves with the help of the teachers.

Age: 3-4-5 years old

Duration: The project is structured in a week of activities

Materials: natural material and user-friendly material (paper, cardboard, colors, glue...)

Description of the activity: children visited Tor Caldara Nature Reserve exploring the environment and collecting nature elements (grass, ground, small stone and breanches) to create a sensory book.
After that, the teacher "reads" the book to the children stimulating their impressions about the experience.





THE POWER OF READING

ERASMUS+ PROJECT
Key Action 2
Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices

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ISBN 978-84-09-52993-3



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