

Erasmus Meeting at Escola Planco, Lleida, Catalonia:

Project: Creative Learning in Action

Present:

Catalonia: Marina Campos Turmo, Mireia Casado Meda, Conxita Rioboo

Portugal: Madalena Cordeiro, Fernanda Cachaço, Nuno Santos

Germany: Annette Gross, Britta Saerbeck, Rike Heller

Denmark: Betina T. Jensen, John Chandler

England: Emma Allison, Tracy Park, Tracey Hutchinson

Agenda:

● **Partner presentations** ● **Project blog** ● **Ongoing work**

Partner presentations

Day 1: 13/11/ 18

Catalonia: Flight

Aspects of the theme covered by different groups included 'Experiment with Flying', 'Discovering Kites', 'We are Flying', 'Natural versus Artificial Flight', 'Can you help me to Fly?' and 'Planco Airlines'. Many practical and experimental tasks were included. The children also sang songs in different languages and tried food from different countries. The speech therapy class explored stop and go, quiet and loud using mosquito noises. One aim was to create more whole school activities to participate in, which included hot air balloons and making and testing paper planes. These were very enjoyable.

Feedback from teachers was positive. They found working in this way very motivating. The timing of this theme at the end of the year was not so good because there was such a lot to do.

Germany (Heinrich-Boell Schule): Elements

Different Classes explored the elements of water, including measurements, experiments, floating and sinking, Creation and a trip to play on water slides: earth, including modelling with clay found in the garden, growing carrots in the garden and making carrot flutes, finding out about what plants need to grow; and fire, including exploring volcanoes and meeting fire fighters. One class spent a week exploring each element, experiencing their co-dependency.

Feedback from teachers was mostly positive. Issues included time pressures and stress caused by the time of year – there were many holidays and not much time to get together. Since our last meeting, clear progress had been made: teachers are now feeling more adventurous. Plans for the future are to motivate more staff, to hold meetings within work time and to include pupil:pupil presentations of project work, making Erasmus known to them.

Germany (Janusz-Korczak-Schule): Time

Primary School pupils had a whole week to choose from different offers. These were organised by a project team of teachers around the Stone Age, Middle Age and Inventions. Stone Age activities included making a landscape in a shoebox and making and using an axe. Middle Age activities included finding out about the life of a knight and enjoying a tasty meal of the era. Inventions included the wheel and flying objects of the past, present and future.

Secondary School pupils explored the 'Time' theme for two days in their own classes. One class explored Salvador Dali's work 'The Persistence of Memory' (1931). Another considered 'how does time feel?' using a shadow puppet theatre.

Feedback from teachers included the positive fact that pupils learned from each other through sharing the results of their work. Next time, they would like to integrate the theme into the normal school process.

Denmark: Challenge

Betina has replaced Henrik – she took up the challenge as much as her pupils! This was explored during one or two lessons per week. Her class considered the questions 'when do we have silence in class?' and 'when do we have a lot of noise in class?' They made mind maps together then came up with suggestions for how to improve the situation. Their ideas were put into practice. They included a star system, new seating arrangements and one boy who found being quiet and still difficult asked for headphones to help him concentrate. He chose to sit alone with his back to the group. One month later, these strategies are still working.

The class also worked on coming together as a group, by playing 3 games: '123', 'svuisu spoing boing' and '1234567'. Betina invited us to try the games, which were fun.

The class have a positive time out which they can ask for by placing a time out card on the table. They run around the outdoor space twice, then return more able to concentrate.

Karen has also posted work with her class on the blog.

Portugal: Time

Taking part were a group of children with special educational needs in the secondary school and a mainstream group plus two children with special needs in the primary school. They explored 'A Long Time Ago' – the history of Portugal's nautical discoveries. They used computers to research facts. Planning was shared across the curriculum areas. The project included cooking in the school kitchen using spices and colours to explore using the senses.

The project and activities were presented as a workshop at an organised dissemination of good practices for all schools at the end of the school year.

Feedback from teachers was positive. They were motivated by the interdisciplinary, integrated curriculum. They enjoyed regular meetings, exchanging ideas and planning together. They also liked involving students in collecting ideas and enquiry-based learning. The most difficult aspect was time management.

England: Weather

The English presentation was mostly about how teachers and support staff were 'hooked' into the theme of 'Weather', by being given boarding passes to visit different destinations then being sent on 'flights' by Captain Hugh. This was followed by the 'Big Plan', our whole school meeting to share ideas and resources. The English team gave out examples of ideas used during the theme. The presentation also included examples of children engaged in practical tasks linked to the weather of their country and whole school display.

In addition:

- Annette said that 'Creativity in Action' was chosen as 'Project of the Month' in October, in Germany.
- Annette is pleased with the progress of the project and the blog.
- The minutes will be added to the blog. The blog is the only documentation of our work, therefore it is very important to present our work there.
- Please send all presentations to Annette.
- Some points about the blog:
 - Don't change the background colour
 - If you upload pictures and it says 'jpeg', you have forgotten a hook – 'media file'
 - Please scale any pictures or they take up too much space – Annette uploaded the instructions
 - The blog is going very well as a platform for sharing ideas

Day 2: 14/11/ 18

Betina offered an ice breaker: without speaking, we had to line up in order of age.

Then different partners presented about their current project work.

Catalonia: Challenge

The whole school is participating in different challenges: In preschool, children are learning to button and unbutton their own jackets. And to recognise first the members of their own class, then teachers, students and places around school. One class has been challenged to make 3 skills games with rules and structures. Conxi's class have become Pokemon Hunters – this came from their own interests so they are very motivated. They have been working as a team to find information online and translate it from English. Another group have created a dynamic panel with recycled materials to enhance communication (using egg cartons with pom-poms to spell out messages). Some students have the challenge to recognise different people in the education community by listening to their voice only. There will be an 'Escape Room' challenge, where there will be clues to solve problems in order to escape. To increase independence, students have been challenged to follow colour coded dots to their classrooms (blue for the younger, green for the older). This is working well.

Germany (Heinrich-Boll Schule): Time

Annette talked about progress made in engaging staff with the project. Before the first project meeting, she met with negativity around time and workload issues. She explained to staff how all areas of the curriculum could be covered in a theme. She quoted Einstein; 'If an idea doesn't sound absurd at first, there is no hope for it'.

Annette invited teachers to another meeting where she said 'let your ideas flow' and provided a mind map with open-ended headings to spark ideas. After about ten minutes, they said they liked it and started to come up with ideas and possibilities for working together. By the end of the meeting, each class team had an idea for a theme. Feedback was that they were motivated and inspired. Half of the classes in school are now involved. At an interim meeting in November, they said they were all working on the theme.

Annette's class are working on 'Leisure Time' (non-structured time) – making new choices and widening horizons. She has created boxes of different activities, introduced weekly. She began with four boxes about listening and reading. There is a painting box containing lots of things to use. The interests of pupils are beginning to diversify.

Britta's class are looking at clocks and reading the time, old ways of measuring time, the work of Salvador Dali and 'time for myself', including meditation.

Portugal: Weather

One class in the primary school and one in the secondary school are working on this theme. Madalena showed examples of planning for different seasons. The teachers of geography and natural sciences will help with planning and delivery of work. They will include research into seasonal clothes and food. For example, in Autumn they will explore clothes for different weather, eat chestnuts and make marmalade and soup. Parents will be involved with Autumnal artwork.

England: Flight

This theme is complete. The English team again presented information about how they hooked the whole staff into the theme, this time giving teams a secret mission in an envelope: they had a bin bag of resources linked to their aspect of 'Flight' and fifteen minutes to communicate this to the rest of the staff using the things in the bag (photos on the blog). The different aspects were 'Up and down', 'What do bees do?' 'What is a bird?' 'Can we be heroes?' and 'How can I defy gravity?' Everyone rose to the challenge and had a lot of fun making resources and costumes to communicate their aspect.

One difficulty was the time of year – there were lots of assessments to update and end-of-year administration and activities to fit in.

Emma showed examples of different speech and language games which she used during this theme with different groups of children. She gave copies to all the partner countries.

In addition:

- Annette reminded everyone that the focus is on the learning of teachers and other staff in schools and how it develops throughout the project. She stressed the importance of including any difficulties encountered and to look for future possibilities.
- Annette asked that the focus at the meeting in May should be on how we planned with the staff. This is needed for the final evaluation of the project. Annette would like different stories about how this is managed and what it looks like in each school.
- Annette reminded everyone to provide their evaluation forms for the blog if they had not already done so.
- Send PDF of presentations to Annette.

- The final report of the coordinating school is due at the end of November 2019. The final reports of partner schools are due at the end of October 2019. We will all view the form before September. Annette plans to write the final evaluation during October 2019.
- Everyone agreed that the blog is a great way to communicate. Annette is happy that people are making comments and asked that this continues, along with taking ideas from each other.
- Our colleagues from Denmark will send details of the next mobility soon.
- Betina said fly to Billund NOT Copenhagen.

Thanks

Huge thanks to our colleagues from Lleida for our memorable visit to your school and your country. We had fun being 'challenged' alongside your children to complete activities linked to our countries. We had informative and fun visits to 'L'Olivera' winery linked to a learning disabled community and to the workshop at the museum 'La Panera (si/no)'. You showed us great hospitality. We look forward to meeting again in Denmark to share our progress.