



Arts and IT combine to help deprived pupils

Belgium

Project name:
Arts and IT

Teachers:
Hilde Marien and Koen Tubeeckx

School:
Sint Maria Basisschool, Antwerp

Learning areas:
Arts and language

Objectives:
Implementation of ICT and creating possibilities for children who have limited or no support from the wider community

Outcomes:
New knowledge allows deprived children from this area to compete with others, and it guarantees that they will have more chances

“Their new knowledge of the world makes that they can compete with others, and it guarantees that they have more chances.”

— Koen Tubeeckx, Sint Maria Basisschool

This project unlocks arts to deprived pupils and children without homes, who in their environment never got the chance to make quality contact with arts and culture. The facilitator for this goal is multimedia, and the appropriate integration of Tablet PCs, Internet and multimedia encyclopedic editions opened a whole new world of art and culture to them. The method of Web quest learning is integrated, helping pupils to expand their views and knowledge.



Situation

The surrounding of the Sint Maria Basisschool, located in northern Antwerp, includes 155 nationalities, while the native inhabitants of this area mainly belong to a lower social profile, often are unemployed, and include a lot of older people with many social problems. The Belgian

government provided the school with five extra teachers to deal with the challenges of differences in language, culture and knowledge between the pupils of all ages. A well motivated team needed to be creative and innovative in engaging these students into the curriculum, so they decided to use arts and ICT as tools for bringing knowledge to these children.

Objectives

Current ICT tools were primarily used to bring pupils in contact with a wider range of art, offering them a specific window to the world. In this multi-ethnic school the idea was to provide the children with a modern, well-considered

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and solid education. One of the main aims was language improvement, since many of the pupils don't speak the local language. During an entire school year the pupils learned two hours a week about this project, integrated in different courses.

To achieve this school invested in an IT lab, with a combination of notebooks and Tablet PC's. The headmaster of the school coordinated the implementation of the general school vision on education in this project, while the project coordinator supervised the pedagogical and technical implementation. The Flemish Ministry of education provided eight different objectives for the use ICT in education - each of them were used in this project.

Outcomes

Students used online and offline libraries to meet various artists and their work, gaining knowledge about different styles of painting, writers etc. They were also introducing the artists and their work to the other pupils by using Microsoft Office PowerPoint, Tablet PC's and digital whiteboards. They had to introduce their opinion about the artist and his work, and motivate others to gain their own vision of arts. The final outcome was an exhibition, to which they invited parents and pupils from other classes, and they created a flyer as a guided tour through the exhibition.

“When a child can comprehend what it is learning, then the aim is already achieved for more than 50%. Understanding of the aim, the questioning, the method to achieve the aim, and comprehension of IT on their level, is a guaranty of success. Working with deprived children makes that we always have to search how we can bring the children of a higher level” says Koen Tubeecx, director of Sint Maria Basisschool.

The teachers were in constant search how to cope with the differences of level between the children, in language and knowledge, looking for ways to catch the attention of our children. “Our children have a different language, culture and religion, but we want them to have the same opportunities then other children” said one of the teachers involved in this project. About 50% of 6th grade children went to an A-level on their further studies, while the others went to a technical school or learned for a practical job – all this demanded a clear view on their possibilities, which they gained through this project, among other things.

“Parents of these children never go to a museum, so art and artists are unknown for these pupils. The developing of their taste of art started here, and their reaction was overwhelming. And last, but not least, they got a chance to exhibit their work, so you can see at their own work whether they comprehended the objectives”, proudly states Koen Tubeecx.