

The Learning Teacher magazine

THE LEARNING TEACHER NETWORK NO 1/2010

**THE
GLOBAL
JOURNEY**

**GAME
BASED
LEARNING**

**IN-
CLASS
SUPPORT**

ISSN 2000-2006

Education for All



We are very pleased to present the first edition of The Learning Teacher Magazine. The Magazine will become part of the expression of the network and will be published four times a year.

The Magazine is an educational publication aiming to support European and international school development by portraying good classroom practice and relevant scientific research.

The importance of the Magazine lies in its focus on classroom practices and results. The Magazine will challenge

teachers and school leaders to reflect on their own practice. Sometimes there will be a solution for a European, world wide school or classroom problem. Sometimes there will be a need to make contact with the author(s) to learn more. This can be done through e-mailing the author or the magazine directly.

Each edition will have a specific theme. This edition addresses "Education for all", which has a wide scope and which for each one may have a specific meaning.

"Education for all" (EFA) has an inclusive perspective: to see that education is equal, cares for all and manages learning, and provides for education and training for all. According to the UNESCO, the overall definition is:

"Inclusive education is based on the right of all learners to a quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches lives. Focusing particularly on vulnerable and marginalized groups, it seeks to develop the full potential of every individual. The ultimate goal of inclusive quality education is to end all forms of discrimination and foster social cohesion." This definition applies to both a classroom and to the world. (www.unesco.org/en/inclusive-education)

Furthermore, "Education for all" has a global perspective. The world is changing but the right to education is more fundamental than ever for building knowledge societies. Promoting equity in education is essential because over 75 million children do not have access to primary school, learning outcomes are poor in many countries and some 776 million adults lack basic literacy skills. Access, inclusion and quality are leading challenges.

Each of the six EFA's goals aims to provide quality education throughout life: strong foundations in early childhood, universal primary education, gender equality, life skills, literacy and quality learning at all stages, in both formal and non-formal approaches. (www.unesco.org/en/efa/mission/)

Also the United Nations Millennium Development Goals underline these goals. (www.un.org/millenniumgoals/education.shtml)

The contributors with articles in this edition all bring valuable aspects on the theme.

Sometimes it is difficult to get through. We have a mission!



Gerard de Kruiif
Editor

Content

AGAINST FAST THINKING • GAME BASED LEARNING • CHANGE IN THE HANDS OF CHILDREN • HUMAN BEHAVIOUR • SHORT NEWS • DEVELOPMENT AND PRACTICE OF INCLUSION • IN-CLASS SUPPORT • THE GLOBAL JOURNEY • GLOBAL LEARNING • GOOD COMMUNICATION BRINGS SUCCESS • EUROPEAN TRAINING COURSES • WELCOME TO BERLIN

The Learning Teacher magazine

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ISSN 2000-2006



Against fast thinking

In a world that runs fast, we are supposed not only to eat fast, fast-food, but also to think fast, fast-thinking.

Advertisers and politicians are there all the time to “help” us to avoid spending time, in order to convince us to do what they want us to do. So, most of the time, we don’t have enough time to select our own arguments and the arguments of others.

Most of us have learned to accept the facts that emerge from our daily experiences, taking them for granted. Many of us no longer wonder why things are the way they are and never had the experience of engaging in reflecting differently. The result is that many adults became examples of passive acceptance that children and young people take to be models for their own conduct. But, as they were not taught to think for themselves, the results, more and more frequently, are thoughtless behaviours. Besides that, most of our students stay in front of a computer for hours instead of spending time with their friends, in a face to face relationship. As teachers, it’s our responsibility to change this.

Thinking requires time and we need to do it here and now. As teachers, we need to promote better thinkers and this process takes time, and we must

not avoid spending this time. A short-term education is not the kind of education that our students need for the rest of their lives.

So, what can we do to prevent this kind of fast-thinking among our students, giving them the semblance of simply stones or vegetables?

As a teacher and as a teacher trainer, I’m a fan of a practice based

sequences of what they say and think. It’s not an immediate process but a process that requires time.

To accomplish a true and rational dialogue in class we must have a teacher who is really involved in the sharing of ideas, who acts as a facilitator, stimulating the students to reason about their own problems and interests. The best way to achieve

critical and creative minds instead of passive minds that are merely passive containers of useless information is to stimulate consistent discussion about what matters, starting with our daily experiences. From the moment that we start from what our students know or what they think they know, we can really make the difference. Maybe there are things they never thought about, that are important for the choices they have to make. Thinking in this way

helps them to develop on a personal level, and become capable of autonomous action, full of creativity and self-knowledge.

We have the empire of media to puzzle us, but we also have our intelligence to analyse all that information and try to distinguish what is worthy from what is mere propaganda.



“Thinking requires time”

on dialogue. As dialogue generates reflection I believe it is the best way to reach reasonable minds. The students need to have discussions under the supervision of someone trained to distinguish between thinking effectively and thinking confusedly. Step by step they will internalize the dialogue and the different points of view, understanding the con-

on dialogue. As dialogue generates reflection I believe it is the best way to reach reasonable

*Maria Luísa Abreu
Lisbon, Portugal*

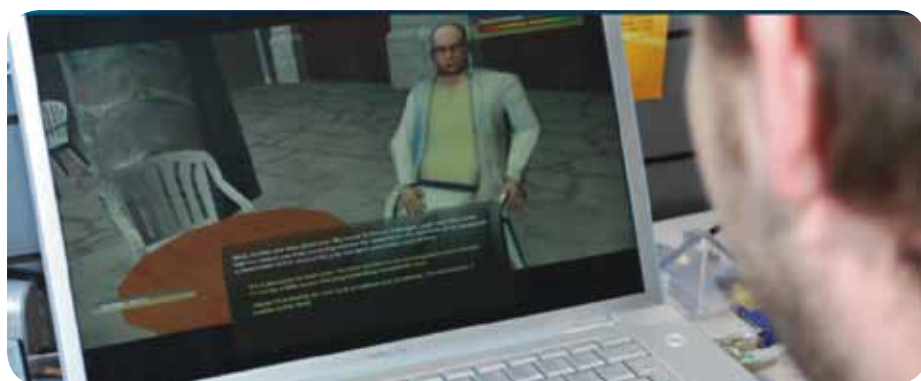
Game based learning

Abstract

The gaming industry is booming (viwta, 2009). Computer games already exist for more than forty years. Recent research (KHLim, 2009) shows that eighty percent of Flemish youth regularly play computer games.

Although computer games seem to have strong educational potentials, it is not clear how they can be integrated in classrooms. Teachers need good examples and guidelines to use games in their didactics.

Digital games in schools, a hand-



book for teachers (European Schoolnet, 2009) offers a good didactical model for teachers. The research group 'ED+ict' is now transforming this global didactical model into concrete games to help teachers to use these games in their daily teaching practice.

Two projects (PWO and School of Education KULeuven), financed by the Flemish government, are currently involved in this research and output.

Introduction

Games are motivating for all students. Games can be used in all kinds of education and for all kinds of learners. Games can be used for teaching specific content but also for attitudes or competences like e.g. problem solving skills, management skills, team-building.

Teachers can select games that will target these goals. There already are a lot of online games available. Teachers tend to think that only educational and/or serious games can be used, but in fact all games have in one way or another some learning outcomes.

Didactical strategy

To select a game it is recommended to look at the learning benefits of the games in relation to the formulated goals for a lesson or a series of lessons. The didactical strategy contains several phases (European schoolnet, 2009):

Organizing a play session:

- Technical considerations (user interface, loading the game, audio, ...)
- Contextual considerations (Age group, language, time)

- Pedagogical considerations (Learning curve, educational content, feedback, assessment, opportunities for cooperation, group work and creativity).

Conducting a play session:

- Promoting good, safe and healthy gaming habits
- Evaluating and strengthening learners knowledge through a debriefing session.
- General understanding of the game
- General understanding of the issues raised by the game
- Linking game concepts to real life.
- Factual information.

Using games in the school context needs well-organized debriefing sessions, in which the previous four items are clearly explained in a group discussion.

When this condition is fulfilled all games including violent games, like e.g. 'Palestine', can be used for educational purposes.

The research group 'ED+ict' is now

transforming these general didactical guidelines into very concrete documents for games, to be used in primary and secondary education.

The aim is to help teachers with the-to-the-point didactical materials to integrate games in education.

The documents will be published online (<http://www.gamesalsleermiddel.be>) in both Dutch and English.

Violence and addiction

Some people believe that games are addictive and stimulate violent behaviour. Through research and consulting psychologists it seems that having good discussions before and after the game-play session avoids these effects.

Online games are so widely available that even if games are not used in classes, it doesn't mean that our youth is not gaming. Internet and pc are available almost everywhere.

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3. European Schoolnet, Digital games in schools, a handbook for teachers, Brussels (BE), 2009

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Change in the hands of children

How does an under-trained, underpaid teacher in a developing country introduce a seemingly alien concept to a class of up to one hundred children? How does s/he involve those children in a manner that is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and in particular with the child's right to participate and express her/himself?

How does s/he avoid relying on the twin pillars of rote-style, chalk'n'talk lecturing and corporal punishment when faced with such numbers? These are just a few of the many tricky questions facing the 31 partner organizations in Europe and across the world that are implementing an innovative curriculum of social and financial education.

The curriculum is the collective work of Aflatoun, a global movement reaching over 500,000 children aged 6 - 14. Five central themes encourage children to greater self-knowledge and self confidence, introduce them to the concept of rights and responsibilities, give them experience of saving money and budgeting, and motivate them to design and deliver their own social justice advocacy initiatives and schools-based micro-enterprises.

Aflatoun believes that its educational strategy will help break the cycle of poverty for current and future generations. It focuses on introducing

children to the concept of rights and helping them develop the financial muscle to secure those entitlements in a meaningful way. Why introduce children to financial literacy without first ensuring the child can develop her own foundation of ethics?

As the Aflatoun movement grows it is increasingly attracting major league stakeholders. A global partnership with UNICEF has evolved. The educational materials are being integrated into the national curriculum in Egypt and Brazil. But whilst pulling these levers at the macro level is a thrilling development, ultimately whether the movement will succeed or fail at the micro-level lies in the hands of the teacher.

This is why Aflatoun stresses the importance of training for teachers. Training for the partners includes an orientation to Aflatoun, as well as a 10 day workshop whereby trainers and teachers are given a first-hand look into the Aflatoun programme, curriculum and teaching methodology.

Aflatoun's new training strategy includes the creation of a pool of Regional Master Trainers. These trainers are from our partner organizations, and their role will be to train other trainers and teachers in neighboring countries.

Sometimes it is the teachers themselves who are the biggest advoca-

tors of the programme. A leading example can be found in the UK, one of the three European countries where Aflatoun currently exists. There, teachers played an active role in the programme's implementation from the start: becoming directly involved in the development of the concept as well as in the contextualization of the materials. The teachers themselves have often expressed their joy at teaching the programme, and the change they witness in the children. As one teacher in the Philippines says, "The value of the Aflatoun program is that children dream, and believe they can achieve it".

If you consider introducing Aflatoun in your own class or school curriculum, please contact us: www.aflatoun.org!

Address of Aflatoun: Sarphatistraat 7, P.O. Box 15991, 1001 NL, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Email address Aflatoun: ana@aflatoun.org

*Ana Rodrigues
European Programme Manager for
Aflatoun - Child social and financial
Education.*

Ana Rodrigues is a teacher and she holds a Master's degree in Children and Youth Development Studies from the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) The Hague, The Netherlands. Before coming to the Netherlands she has worked in rural Costa Rica while being closely related to the UN University for Peace.



Human behaviour: learning from history

We believe that students and teachers are moral philosophers who are able and willing to think about tough moral and ethical dilemmas in surprisingly sophisticated ways.

SICCHRE's materials and approach help students with a wide range of abilities and learning styles understand that their choices and actions matter, and that young people can, and should, be agents of change.

We provide teachers with the tools they need to educate students so that they can act on their knowledge.

Students from both countries Germany and Belarus uncovered their own research about WW2 and Holocaust issues. They found witnesses and survivors from the Minsk Ghetto and the concentration camps, interviewed them and recorded a video film for the future generation.

The idea for the project originated

in Smorgon, Belarus. Mr.V.Kalinin, head of SICCHRE attended the HRE training programme at Ghent University and there he met colleagues from Germany. He invited them to work together on the topic of the Holocaust and human behavior.

Our objective is to engage students and teachers of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and anti-Semitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry.

By studying the historical development and lessons of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide, students make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives.

The project's aims are to raise awareness in the field of Holocaust and Human Rights, to develop democratic values among teachers and youth

leaders from local schools in Smorgon and Frankfurt am Main, to spread information about EU-CE way of teaching the Holocaust and HR by using ICT, and to connect local schools with schools in EU countries.

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Short News

New Report on Dyslexia

New research in The Netherlands says dyslexia is a result of deficient operating brains controlling speech.

Psycholinguist Gaetano Florin is trying to prove that dyslexia is the result of deficient operating brain parts relating to speech.

Children with dyslexia have a different interpretation of speech. Earlier research, also in the "Babylab" of the University of Utrecht, showed the same results. The origin of the problems is a deficit in the working memory.

There is nothing wrong with the working of the long term memory, but new information is not properly stored. Tests were constructed on nonsense words, which were sounding Dutch. These words were made longer and longer. Children with dyslexia could not repeat these words while children without dyslexia were able to repeat them.

Another test was on math. Dyslexic children with a restricted working memory are only able to repeat some 5 slowly growing numeric ranges. Children who don't have dyslexia reach up to seven or nine ranges as an average.

Conclusion: diagnosis on dyslexia has to take place as early as possible (before school age) in order to have different brain parts stimulated to take over.

*Volkscrant February 27 2010
(Dutch national newspaper)*

Education and Training 2020

On 12 May the Council of the European Union adopted a new strategic framework for co-operation between EU Member States to reform their education and training systems ('ET 2020').

The conclusions identify both immediate priorities for 2009-11 and long-term challenges for the decade ahead.

The tools used to meet them include new education and training benchmarks for monitoring progress across Europe.

The new strategic vision and framework 'ET 2020' addresses four strategic objectives:

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- Promoting equality, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/news1383_en.htm



The European Year 2010



The European Commission has designated 2010 as the "European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion".

The 2010 European Year aims to reach EU citizens and all public, social and economic stakeholders.

Inspired by its founding principle of solidarity, the European Union has joined forces with its Member States to make 2010 the European Year For Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

The key objectives are to raise public awareness about these issues and renew the political commitment of the EU and its Member States to combat poverty and social exclusion.

The guiding principle of the 2010 Year is to give voice to the concerns of people who have to live with poverty and social exclusion, and to inspire every European citizen and other stakeholders to engage with these important issues.

This Year also aims to challenge stereotypes and collective perceptions of poverty.

By harnessing the EU's principles of solidarity and partnership, 2010 represents a clarion call to tackle the causes of poverty head-on in a bid to ensure everyone can play a full and active role in society.

www.2010againstpoverty.eu/

Earth Hour 2010

Earth Hour 2010 is a global call to action to every individual, every business and every community. A call to stand up and demonstrate support to action against the climate change by turning the lights off for one hour, Earth Hour, 8.30pm, Saturday 27th March 2010.

www.earthhour.org/Homepage.aspx

Development and practice of inclusion teams

This article will present information about the Inclusion Team model. It is a model designed to meet the needs of educational communities. The model focuses on the systematic implementation of practice based on theory and research. It is based on the belief system that inclusion is an effective educational process for special needs students if it is implemented with the appropriate training of educational staff.

As the concept of inclusion became predominant in educational practice, it was found that most staff members were not trained in the multiple components of inclusion. As a response to this potential training crisis, the notion of the special "Inclusion Team" was developed. This model uses a "Trainer of Trainer" model.

In this model, specific training is provided to a small group of professionals who would be trained as the trainers who then would train other staff.

There are three major components imbedded in the philosophy of the inclusion team model.

These are identified as: 1) the team concept, 2) the consultation model and 3) the development of pedagogical skills.

All three of these components need to be understood for the model to be systematically applied. Each of the three components has specific training programs that are extensive and too detailed to describe here.

Once the above components are established, the successful implementation of the Inclusion Team Training must focus on the criteria for the selection of team members at each of the levels, establish the rules for the successful operation of the Inclusion Teams, describe the specific work of the Inclusion Team Model and the plan for the Inclusion Team Model.



The model is designed to have ongoing meetings between the Inclusion Team and the School Team.

The Inclusion Team members consult with the school team in developing a plan for providing services to the special needs student. The team members have specific roles and responsibilities to contribute to the team functioning.

The basic concept of the Inclusion Team was that special teams would be selected and trained regarding inclusion practices. The "trainer of trainer" model would be used in the development of a three tier process:

- * First Tier- the Trainers
- * Second Tier- the Inclusion Team
- * Third Tier- the School Team

The first tier educational staff development trainers would be selected from university faculties and educational consultants. The first tier would train the second tier.

The second tier Inclusion Team trainers would be a group of

educators with various backgrounds - regular education teachers, special education teachers, psychologists, behavior specialists, speech/language specialists, and other staff. The second tier would train the third tier- the school teams.

The third tier team would use their newly developed inclusive practices to provide effective inclusive education for special needs students in the schools.

It is the ongoing performance of the Inclusion Teams and School Teams that contributes to the success of this model. The teams must continue to learn, grow, expand and provide multiple inclusion opportunities for students with special needs.

"A Legacy for Inclusion, The Inclusion Team Model (ITM)", 5th International Conference on Intercultural Dialogue and Education For All, The Learning Teacher Network, Vienna, Austria, September 25, 2008.

*Ann Morrison Clement, Ph.D.,
Colorado, USA. and
Milena Kosak Babuder, MSc,
University of Ljubljana,
Faculty of Education, Slovenia*

"Inclusion is an effective educational process for special needs students"

Improving quality

Quote from EU policies:

"The quality of teaching has a direct effect upon learners' level of attainment and upon the quality of their learning experience. The knowledge, skills, attitudes and competences of each of Europe's six million teachers are of great importance.

The demands placed upon teachers are evolving and increasing; the roles they are expected to play are changing significantly. It is important that systems for the education and training of teachers are able to ensure that all teachers are able to develop the knowledge and skills they require, and have access to the support they need, at every stage of their career.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/doc832_en.htm



In-class support: an alternative for pupils with special needs

The following article provides two accounts from class teachers in a primary school, in Cork, in Ireland, where teachers have developed collaborative practices in an effort to raise the literacy and numeracy achievements of the children in their school. The accounts detail the positive impact this collaborative way of working has had on both teachers and pupils.

For the past five years we have used in-class intervention in our Junior Infant classes. We incorporated class teachers, support teachers, parents and special needs assistants within this framework. It has proved to be a rewarding and beneficial experience for all involved.

The most important aspect of this intervention programme is the inclusion of all children. The individual needs of the child have been met within this classroom setting. We have found that when groups are ability based, each child is challenged to achieve within his capabilities. The steady pace and variety of work-station teaching maintains the young child's interest and makes learning enjoyable for them. The adult/child ratio is reduced in comparison to whole class teaching, ensuring greater attention to each child's learning needs.

From a professional point of view, in-class support enhances collaboration within the teaching community of the school. Teachers become adept at collaboratively monitoring, assessing

and targeting the progress of each child. The school becomes a place where on-site professional development is consistently taking place.

Overall, in-class support programmes have been very successful in raising the literacy and numeracy achievements of the children in our classes.

*Sarah Coughlan and Anita Kelly
Primary teachers, Cork, Ireland*

I have been teaching sixth class this year, my first time as class room teacher for a number of years. This has been my first experience as classroom teacher involved in well organised in-class support programmes.

The in-class support is organised with the Special Educational Needs teacher at the start of each term and is modified when necessary as the year progresses.

Our Literacy in-class support programme involves the SEN teacher working in the classroom with me for Peer-Tutoring in Reading twice weekly, and once weekly for our Literacy Work-stations programme, which involves extra support from two other support teachers.

I have found that the advantages of this type of support are many:

- A well-organised, target-based scheme of work clearly defined in collaboration with SEN teacher;

- An agreed assessment of the outcomes informing the approach to further support programmes

- A sharing of responsibility in class management;

- An opportunity for instant feedback from a colleague;

- A strong sense of comradeship develops which supports the otherwise isolated class teacher;

- A sense of fun and enjoyment prevails as there is opportunity for social interaction amongst teachers and pupils;

- A less stressful exercise in teaching than whole class teaching due to shared responsibility;

- An awareness that, in the midst of the general chatter in the room, real work is taking place and progress achieved;

- Closer contact with pupils in the class through the group dynamics, giving the class teacher new information about individual pupils.

*Leo Conway
Primary Teacher, Cork, Ireland*

Scoil na Croise Naofa, Cork, Ireland provides an example of a developing professional learning community, where teachers sharing good practice, develop professionally while simultaneously ensuring that the teaching the children receive makes a significant difference to the quality of their lives.

Jacinta McCarthy, Cork, Ireland.



A workshop in Entebbe paving the way for enhanced cooperation and cultural understanding - a benefit to all.

The Global Journey: for mutual benefits

One of the Global School's most advanced programs, the Global Journey, brings Swedish educators to developing countries to learn and gain experience from cultural immersion and poverty related issues. The 25-day learning process is indeed very elaborate and one of the more advanced continuing learning programmes on offer in Sweden. The positive results on school development in the 300 plus participating Swedish schools have been proven beyond doubt by various evaluations and reports.

The programme is, however, biased towards the Swedish learners, mainly through budgetary and regulatory means. Still a question arises, can the local schools and organisations in the host countries also benefit from the Global Journey? The answer is clearly, yes they can!

The Uganda example

Uganda, as an example, had some 30 Swedish schools visiting during 2005-2009 in five Global Journey programmes. The schools and its 116 individual participants initiated, directly or indi-

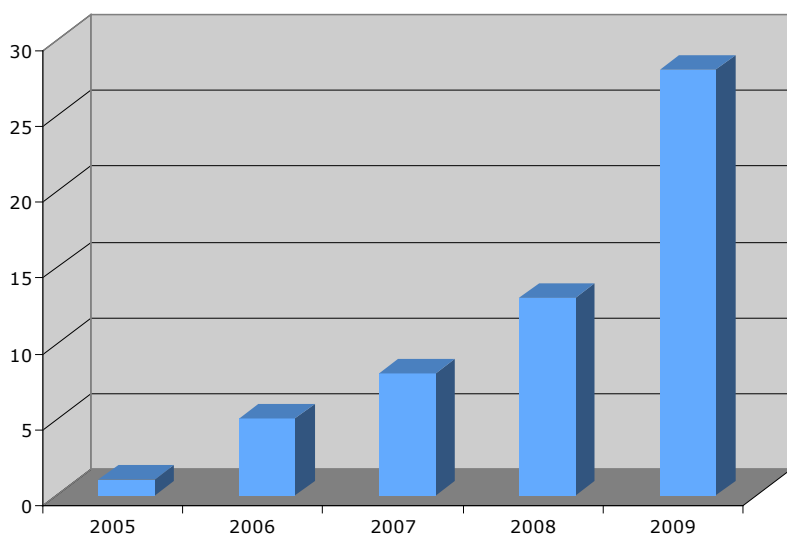
rectly, some 56 identified projects, ranging from small projects to more complex ones. It included visits, donations, supporting orphans and conferences. During the same period some 64 Ugandans also visited Sweden and the EU, mostly organised through the Swedish schools and financed through the International Programme Office.

Opportunities

These initiated projects create opportunities and open doors on the local scene, and are important interactive tools promoting preparation for the re-orientation towards education for sustainable development (ESD). But real changes however, need more coordinated efforts. In Uganda the Entebbe Municipal Council, our main partner, through the Mayors and the District Education offices has accepted the vision and committed itself to support its community and the 52 schools towards (ESD).

In that regard, one of the important tools for change has been the project on ESD for head-teachers 2008-09. It was a co-operation between the Swedish Principals Association and the local equivalent, EMPSHA.

The 1.5 year long programme saw 22 local and 11 Swedish head-teachers participating in qualified



Projects benefiting Uganda have increased over time.



From the left to the right: The Entebbe District Education officer Deogratias Ssekyole, the Dean of Kibuli Primary Teachers College Mr Kanya, Professor Charles Hopkins and Mr Christer Torstensson

course-work as well as visiting each other's schools in the respective countries. A Ugandan head-teacher and Council representatives made an appreciated presentation of the project at the Learning Teachers Network conference in Ljubljana 2009.

From Ljubljana to Entebbe

The Ljubljana conference initiated another important possibility for Uganda as it was here that the Ugandan delegation met with the UN University Chair in ESD, Professor Charles Hopkins. This meeting largely as a result of the Global Journey efforts resulted in an official visit to the Entebbe Municipal Council. The Professor's mission to Entebbe in February 2010 was to find out if there was interest in establishing a Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development in the Entebbe region.

While in Entebbe the Professor teamed up with the District Education Officer and met with various organisations including several faculties of education, non-government organisations and the Central Curriculum Development Unit. He visited schools, spoke with staffs and delivered a well-attended lecture for local educators.

Professor Hopkins was well received wherever he went and as the

platform for the Regional Centre of Expertise is slowly forming, the process is likely to have an immense and long-lasting effect on the community in Entebbe.

So the answer to the question of growth and benefit flowing in both directions is indeed yes and the potential for even more growth is increasing.

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Education for sustainable development (ESD)

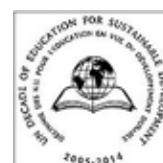
Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) comprises the social, ecological and economical dimensions, which are interlinked.

ESD supports five fundamental types of learning to provide quality education and foster sustainable human development:

- Learning to know;
- Learning to be;
- Learning to live together;
- Learning to do;
- Learning to transform oneself and society

The United Nations has proclaimed the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), which promotes ESD and calls for education and training to make these issues a priority.

<http://cms01.unesco.org/en/esd/>



Global learning within the global classroom

In the mid 1990s, intensive fax and telephone contacts between a minor Scandinavian railway junction and a windy rock in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean with a common quest for international cooperation and Global Learning, led to a long partnership and a growing network. Thus, the Global Classroom partnership of school was founded.

Since the academic year of 1996/97, teenagers from the Shetland Islands, Sweden, Germany, the Czech Republic, South Africa and Japan have been preparing presentations and topics within fields that engage young people and then meeting for a conference at the end of the school year in one of the partner schools for discussions, workshops and presentations. As an example, the topics for the first Global Classroom Conference in Lerwick 1997 were Education, Environment, Employment and Social/Personal Issues. We have found it useful to work on topics as all students have an opportunity to contribute with input and ideas regardless of academic strength and level of English. Over the years, new schools have entered the partnership and now New Zealand, Australia and the USA are also represented. The 2010 conference is due to take place at Ridgewood, New Jersey.

The partnership has quite interesting branches. There is for instance an extended exchange programme offering possibilities of going as an exchange student to any of the partner schools on a voluntary basis without having to pay huge fees to an exchange agency. This project is called 'The Learning School'. (I think this is what is meant)

The Learning School project is supervised by Professor Emeritus John MacBeath of the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge and probably world unique in one aspect: The researchers are themselves students or recent graduates from the Global Classroom Partnership schools with young university graduates (in many cases also former students of the participating schools) as team leaders. The ultimate goal of the Learning School is to find or help create a self-evaluating school and a "learning to learn" environment.

Looking towards the future, we are faced with one major issue common to us all: the lack of money and the constant budget restrictions for schools all over the globe. And since ours is a global network, applying for money from different agencies is a very tricky endeavour indeed. Most programmes funded by the European Union are closed, for instance.

Therefore, we aim to form a foundation so that we can sustain and extend the global network of schools and ensure a more diverse financial funding situation and involve local trade and business in the respective communities. Also in the pipeline are plans to enable students to follow courses and take the exams of other countries. Many challenges ahead, thus, but a very nice recognition of the work of the network came in June when our Scottish partner, Stewart L Hay of Anderson High School in Lerwick was honoured with an MBE by H M Queen Elizabeth II. This certainly inspires the partners to continue working with truly global learning.

*Nils-Olov Hagman and Leif Thorsson
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Homepages:

<http://global-classroom.org> www.bobergsgymnasiet.se

Findings:

MacBeath, J; Sugimine, H.; with; Sutherland, G.; Nishimura, M. (2002)
Self-Evaluation in the Global Classroom, London, RoutledgeFalmer



Conference on Early Childhood Education

The 26th World Congress for Early Childhood Education will be held in Gothenburg, Sweden on August 11-13, 2010.

The theme of the congress is "Children - citizens in a challenged world". Organiser of the World Congress is OMEP, the World Organization for Early Childhood Education.

The congress comprises three strands: Education for Sustainable Development; Gender equality and equal rights; and Different childhoods.

The foundation for the event rests on UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The MDGs aim, among other things, to give all children the right to be in school by 2015, to improve women's situation and to ensure gender equity.

Organiser of the World Congress is OMEP, the World Organization for Early Childhood Education. OMEP is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organisation concerned with all aspects of early childhood education and care (ECEC).

The organization is currently established in over 60 countries and is represented at meetings of UNESCO, UNICEF, and other international organisations with similar aims.

www.omep.2010.org

Good communication brings success

We all have a big responsibility; to help children develop their natural talents - from the very beginning of their lives - to teach them how to think, to help them develop curiosity, to encourage them to search for new things.

The above mentioned is our guidance on the path to the goal. We want every single child to have an opportunity to attend a school that provides quality and useful knowledge, a school that educates for life, a school where both the pupils and teachers would feel safe and accepted.

Testing and assessment of knowledge are two of the most important and influential processes in school. We were primarily interested in the organisation of testing and assessment, in what could be improved, how to introduce new ways of testing and assessment, and how to inform parents about the pupil's results. This is one of important factors when forming their attitude towards school.

Following the results we introduced an action of improvements at our school and we planned them carefully in the school annual plan of work. We took part in an education programme and a working team of 11 teachers have now been taking part in a development - applicative project "The development of didactics in the field of knowledge assessment".

This project is led by the National Education Institute Slovenia, and its aim is to make the switch from the behavioristic assessment methods to the so-called formative tracking of the learning progress of individual pupils. The working team has established reciprocal learning relationships (cooperative environment, effective communication, connectedness, searching new ways, exchanging good practice...).

The questionnaire has revealed that more than half of the mothers (57,1%) help their children with school work at home, but only 4,8% of the fathers do that.

Therefore the idea of the teachers to review their homework policies se-

ems very interesting (how much homework, the type of homework, the purpose and point of school work at home).

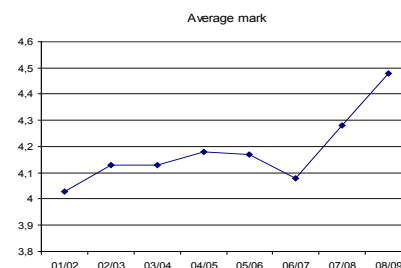
We strongly believe it is of utmost importance to introduce parents at the very beginning of schooling to their responsibility in relation to their child's homework and learning. They should control the school work of their children rather than study together with them.

It was very interesting to find out that 38,1% of the parents believe that their children study in order to get good marks and 61,9 % of them believe that they study to gain knowledge. The pupils' opinion differs from that of parents'. Most of the pupils believe they study just to get good marks.

The research and the team work have brought into our school a new thinking on the importance of testing and assessment and on introducing new ways of testing and assessment, and above all a wish to take part in an education programme. We have already noticed the results. The analysis of overall achievement has shown that the overall average mark has risen notably ever since our project started.

We have calculated an overall average mark of the past school years (from 2001 - 2009) and we have found out that it rose in the school

year 2007/2008. We believe the reason for a higher average mark is due to the fact that we had introduced different methods and approaches in class as well as different methods of testing and assessment of knowledge.



We have also noticed the difference in motivation for work. The pupils love coming to school.

The key to improvement therefore lies in good communication and in changing the work practices of teachers; i.e. using modern teaching methods in class or when learning or testing and assessing, as well as in having a professional approach to new challenges.

*Sonja Šega, teacher
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Osnovna šola Vižmarje Brod
Ljubljana, Slovenia*



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Why not become a member?

A platform for educational progress

The Learning Teacher Network is a European, educational and non-profit network and association.

As an international platform the network unites professionals in education in the ambition of sharing and creating front-line teaching and learning in order to develop education and training.

Trust, respect and fun

One main characteristic of the network is the welcoming and excellent atmosphere when people communicate and meet. The guiding words that illustrate the network are "trust, respect and fun".

All professionals in education and training are welcome

The network embraces practitioners in school, trainers, researchers and other educational experts within the whole range of education from pre-school to universities. The good atmosphere and the composition make the network unique. Membership is open to anyone who supports the objectives of the network.



Mission

The Learning Teacher Network embraces

- * Education for all
- * Education for lifelong learning
- * Education for sustainable development (ESD)

www.learningteacher.eu



Membership

You and/or your institution are warmly welcome to become a member of the Learning Teacher Network.

The membership fee for institutional membership is 50 euro per calendar

year and for individual membership 25 euro per calendar year.

Application for membership can be made on-line on the network website or by filling in and returning to us the registration form.

*The next edition of The Learning Teacher Magazine will be published in June.
Articles may be submitted no later than May 15th 2010.*

Welcome to European training courses

Inspiring Leadership

Ljubljana, Slovenia 21-25 September 2010



Course number: SE-2010-115-001

Course information:

[www.learningteacher.eu/
inspiring-leadership](http://www.learningteacher.eu/inspiring-leadership)

EU course database information:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/
trainingdatabase/index.cfm?fuseaction=DisplayCourse&cid=22031](http://ec.europa.eu/education/trainingdatabase/index.cfm?fuseaction=DisplayCourse&cid=22031)

The network invites head teachers and teacher trainers to the European Comenius/Grundtvig Training Course "Inspiring Leadership".

The 5-day course will take place at the four star City Hotel in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The hotel/course venue is located in the very centre of the Slovenian capital.

Course leader team: An international course leader team from England UK

and Sweden.

The course programme includes the following modules:

- Concepts and research in Leadership and Management;
- Examination of school leadership issues;
- Current developments in EU countries;
- Comparative leadership and management;
- Evolving leader identities;
- The role of critical incidents in transformational learning;
- The role of the school lead-

er and the management of change; • Developing research skills:

- What can you learn from researching your school?;
- Study Visit to School;
- Managing change; and
- Disseminating and publishing your school's research.

Full information is provided in the Data Base Course Information and in the course leaflet, which can be downloaded from the network website.

Course number: SE-2010-125-001

Course information:

[www.learningteacher.eu/
creativity-and-learning](http://www.learningteacher.eu/creativity-and-learning)

EU course database information:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/
trainingdatabase/index.cfm?fuseaction=DisplayCourse&cid=23097](http://ec.europa.eu/education/trainingdatabase/index.cfm?fuseaction=DisplayCourse&cid=23097)

The network invites teachers, teacher trainers and head teachers to the European Comenius/Grundtvig Training Course "Creativity and Learning".

The 5-day course will take place at the five star Galini Wellness Spa & Resort in Kamena Vourla, Greece. The hotel/course venue is located at the Mediterranean Sea outside Lamia, north of Athens. Bus transfer from and to Athens Airport is included in the course fee.

Course leader team: An international course leader team from the Netherlands, Germany, Greece and Sweden.

The course programme includes modules such as • Personal Creativity

Biography; • The Concepts of Creativity; • How to Discover Own Talents; • A Geomythological Excursion and Experience; • Multiple Intelligences; • How to Organise Creative Learning Environments; • The Sea - the Source of Life (Labs constructions, experiments and workshops from a full scale concept); • How to develop creativity back home; and • Solution Seekers and Creative Toys.

Full information is provided in the Data Base Course Information and in

the course leaflet, which can be downloaded from the website.

Creativity and Learning

Kamena Vourla, Greece 5-9 October 2010



Apply for an EU grant to attend!

These courses are EU training courses. Participation may be funded by a European grant through an application to the National EU LLP Agency.

The deadline for application for an EU grant is April 30th, 2010.

WELCOME TO THE 7th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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27-29 January 2011

*Leadership
for an Inclusive and Sustainable World*

Call for papers and presentations:
We ask for proposals
before April 9th 2010

Conference information on
www.learningteacher.eu/berlin-conference

