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# The Learning Teacher magazine

THE LEARNING TEACHER NETWORK NO 2/2010

**SCHOOL  
LEAVING  
QUALIFICATION**

**COMPOSING AS  
A CLASSROOM  
ACTIVITY**

**MORE CREATIVE LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES**

**MARY AND JOHN  
TRAVEL EUROPE**



# Lifelong Learning



This edition of the Learning Teacher Magazine focuses on Lifelong Learning. Already in the early 60s we, as young future teachers, had to learn about the "Education Permanente" (in French at that time). Today the concept of lifelong learning is the core of the framework that guides education and training, not only in the EU but on a global scale.

According to the official European definition, 'Lifelong learning' means all general education, vocational education and training, non-formal education and informal learning undertaken throughout life, resulting in an improvement in knowledge,

skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective. It includes the provision of counselling and guidance services.

Education for lifelong learning supports learning opportunities from childhood to old age in every single life situation and everywhere in the world. This global perspective is an important part of the lifelong learning. Some have lost the importance of lifelong learning while others - and especially in other parts of the world - yearn for knowledge.

In many countries, life long learning is now provided for by the education system. Companies know that without training and schooling of their employees they will loose their competitive position. Sometimes the hunger for learning outweighs the opportunities that are available.. Lifelong learning means that the opportunities for lifelong learning must be distributed and made available. This is one of the tasks we have as teachers.

The European Commission has integrated its large programmes in education and training under the name of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP): "It enables individuals at all stages of their lives to pursue stimulating learning opportunities across Europe. It is an umbrella programme integrating various educational and training initiatives." The programme has four sectorial sub programmes: Comenius for schools, Erasmus for higher education, Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training, and finally there is Grundtvig for adult education.

These programmes are imperative for the development of an international dimension in education and training and offer new, wider perspectives and opportunities for cross-border cooperation to professionals. International projects are widening childrens' worlds and will therefore make education important for their future world and bring fun.

The articles in this edition all portray school practices that are ingredients in lifelong learning. When children enjoy their education, they will be open to future learning throughout their life-time.. Lifelong learning takes place on an on-going basis from our daily interactions with others and with the world around us.

**Gerard de Kruiif**  
Editor



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## Front page photos

Image credit: Jacques Roumimper; LEGO Education; Marianne Nilsson

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# Mobile phones and short stories

Our school project started out as an invitation from World Wide Words, which is an international festival celebrating the innovation, diversity and power of the written and spoken word in the 21st century. The festival presents an international programme of performances, reading workshops and research throughout the year, but culminates in the last week of August with five unique days of words, music, imagination, laughter, exploration, and - above all - fun.

The festival takes place in the buildings and grounds of the country estate Rønnebæksholm - : the former residence of the founder of the Folk High School Movement, the poet, writer and educationalist N.F.S. Grundtvig. The festival offers young people, in particular, the chance to challenge the way they think about words, giving them the opportunity to dive into a world of words, meeting international writers, performers and other artists in new settings!

Literature does not always appear in books.

Over time, authors used the techniques and the materials available to express themselves in language. Way back in time stories were told and not read. We know these texts as folktales and folk-songs. In Mesopotamia cuneiform appeared. The Egyptians used parchment. In the North we carved runes.

In 1450 Gutenberg invented the printing press and over the next centuries books as we know them were disseminated. In the 1980's the first personal computers were presented by IBM, and from that time electronic development has exploded. Nevertheless, we mostly read literature in printed books, despite the fact that literature nowadays is available through many different media.

An SMS short story is a story that is written and sent as text messages on mobile phones. SMS novel is a modern form of serial, written in short form. SMS story is a new form of literature, written in a medium that students know very well. This means that we explore a genre that makes use of other genre instruments, but mixes them in a new way.

I teach grade 6 in Danish, so my students are 12 years old. We signed up for the project and in return we had the pleasure in getting a visit from an author to work with us for 4 hours.

The author Merethe Pryds Helle came to our school and helped the students in the whole writing process.

She began with a short lecture on the history of written language. Thereafter



she and the students discussed ways of writing short stories, and especially stories fit for SMS-short-story. They also discussed how different SMS-language can be, depending on the sender.

Merethe Pryds Helle had in this early phase three demands:

1. The story must be realistic
2. The number of persons in the story had to be between 3-5
3. The story must have a beginning, a middle and an end

In groups the students wrote a short story. Every story was read aloud in the class for feedback from both the other students and Merethe Pryds Helle. The next part of the process was that the students had to transform their short story into SMS-language. The tricky part was to make the students understand that it is the SMS-dialogue between the persons, that tells the story. Therefore the plot has to appear indirectly and as hints in the SMS between both parties.

Here Merethe Pryds Helle had four demands:

1. 3-5 persons
2. A maximum of 20-25 SMS to tell the story
3. Using SMS-language depending on the sender
4. Using signs and abbreviations

The students worked hard, seriously concentrating, with a lot of motivation, and within the four hours every group had finished their assignment. The author was very pleased and so was I. This kind of teaching taught me as their teacher, that we have to think in new ways, and meet the students where they are. Mobile phones can be used in every

subject because their use will:

- Increase student motivation
- Create new educational opportunities
- Achieve active learning
- Teach students new skills
- Prepare students for critical media use
- Strengthen students' self-esteem
- Provide insight into students' everyday life
- Enter into a dialogue with students
- Expand cooperation among students
- Challenge deadlocked teacher / student roles

The mobile phone is an important part of young people's lives. They use it for fun and games and to follow each other's lives. Modern mobile phones have multiple features like camera, video recorder, Internet access, GPS, etc. all of which makes them useful as a supplement in the school learning process.

Students are no longer tied to the classroom, so we need to think of the development of didactic design for mobile phone use not only in Danish but in different subjects. Our experience tells us that it is a good idea to involve students as they make extensive use of their mobile phones.

They often have some good ideas and contributions to make from a learning perspective. Pupils have integrated the virtual contact in their life, therefore we need to educate students, so that they become critical media users and learn how to navigate in the various media platforms.

*So don't ban it - use it !*

*Charlotte Tüxen  
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# A case study in astronomy

## - A supportive response to the article in the Magazine 1/2010 entitled 'Against Fast Thinking'

The article 'Against Fast Thinking' by Maria Luísa Abreu found strong resonance in both of us as, increasingly, we become aware that time for reflection is not something that is planned into our teaching and learning methodologies.

In fact how to reflect and what outcomes might stem from reflection are poorly understood and, in our experience, rarely taught in schools.

In Higher Education it is generally taken for granted that undergraduates and postgraduates will understand the value of reflection and be able to demonstrate, in tutorials and in their written work, that this is one of the central core skills that they have and use on a regular basis. In our experience, in the UK, this is by no means the norm.

Closely allied to reflective learning is the need to consider how best pupils' interests and lifestyles might be channelled into motivation to acquire new knowledge and skills and how to be a partner with their teachers in doing so.

*'Glasses were always half full and never half empty'*

For too many pupils, especially after the age of 10 years, schooling is something that has to be endured. Often there is not much fun to be had unless it is in efforts to defeat the system and not all subjects are seen to be of much, if any, value in the daily lives they lead. They go to school to be taught rather than going to find out, and they go reluctantly rather than enthusiastically.

With these thoughts in mind we considered why it might be that the commitment and eagerness so often found with pupils and their parents towards schooling up to the age of 10 years should so readily evaporate when they moved to learning in school after this age i.e. the age of transition to secondary schooling.

One factor that stood out was that, for the most part, the experience of school from 5 years of age to 10 years of age was with a small group of teachers who knew one another and taught 'subject knowledge' in a cross-curricular way being fully aware of what each other was doing. Additionally, pupils' work was frequently displayed and always with a full range of ability levels.

To use an illustrative phrase 'glasses were always half full and never half

empty' and enthusiasm (motivation) was in evidence. In addition the connectivity between 'subjects' was 'au naturel' and parents were included in with the learning process. Family and peer groups of the pupils were actively encouraged to be involved.

By contrast it appeared that the transition to secondary school was traumatic from the outset with established peer groups being separated, parents being dissuaded from being directly involved in their children's schooling on anything approaching a daily basis and a greater number of teachers each teaching their own subject area often without much knowledge of what was being taught by their colleagues to the same group of children.

Connectivity between subjects was lost.

All this at a time of huge natural physical and emotional change for the pupils as they begin to wrestle with the onset of puberty and start wondering (and often worrying) about their personal identity. Who am I? What is life about? How can I get to be liked and avoid rejection? Is there any point to anything?

It would be hard to come up with a background scenario less conducive to discrete subject teaching that had so little to do with the everyday personas and the wants and needs of the pupils.

### *Astronomy on a cross-curricular basis*

We wanted to address these issues and to do so in a way that would not tread on the toes of anyone and which would complement the notion of enabling pupils to develop their reflective thinking, help to establish the connectivity of subjects, and to assist with building on self motivation and commitment to learning of the pupils as well as their parents and teachers.

What we did with the full collaboration of two secondary schools was to introduce over a two year period a study of Astronomy on a cross-curricular basis.

### *Astonishing outcomes*

It was entirely voluntary for all who were involved and for the pupils it was with their parents consent. The outcomes were astonishing, testified to by all who were involved - parents, teachers, and pupils, and in addition by four main contributors to the project.

These were:

1. The Royal Observatory at Greenwich, which provided exhibition space for the work done by the pupils and on separate days (one day per school) welcomed parents and teachers and set in place a series of short complementary sessions with their own experts;

2. The Faulkes Telescope Project whose Director is at Cardiff University. He personally attended more than once at each school and ran highly motivational sessions;

3. The NASA funded International Space Camp in Turkey, whose Director awarded scholarships to all those pupils whose written applications as to why they should be granted a place with free instruction and use of all the facilities met the criteria for such an award. All those who applied from this small project were accepted and the member of staff who accompanied them was very complimentary about the experience;

4. The Staff and pupils at the Space Centre at Simon Langton School for Boys, Canterbury, Kent.

Not long after the conclusion of this exploratory project the authors initiated a twilight in-service training session on Astronomy in Schools at one of the participating schools, but open to other schools in the immediate area who might be interested.

The Royal Observatory Greenwich Public Astronomer, and the Director of the Faulkes Telescope Project, attended as well as many teachers. All wished to see this small pilot project developed and incorporated into their school programmes.

The learning curve and the experience, and our analysis of it, does permit us to consider that reflective learning was encouraged and evident, that motivation was high and that the pupils themselves began usefully to consider wide ranging issues of importance to them and in connection with their self image.

There will be other examples of different projects that speak to the issues raised in Maria's article. This is just one of them.

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# Do boys have to become girls?

## Equality between genders - a Comenius project

Gender equality is a topic with high priority around the world, in all levels of the society and is regulated in the curriculum for preschools and schools as well. Teachers have a responsibility to challenge children towards gender equality.

As a gender equality pedagogue and a pedagogue for development in preschool, it was our job to support the teachers in developing this topic.

We decided to go big! We applied for and were given funding for a three year Comenius project and we became partners with France, Spain and Slovenia. The interest in joining our project was huge!

The aim of the project was that teachers and children became aware of stereotypical gender patterns and achieved a new view of how to cope with them.

The aim was also to learn how boys and girls live in our different countries according to families, houses, work, sports, free time activities, schools and environment.

We also expected that the project would result in a better understanding of people in other countries and of their culture. We hoped to establish good relationships between our schools, cities and countries and that the children would feel that we are all members of a global society.

We decided at our first meeting that two dolls, a boy and a girl, should travel between our schools and countries. This way the subject could be more comprehensible for our young children. They stayed about two months in every country and experienced what the children were doing during that time. A diary was kept.

Within the gender perspective we decided a theme for every year. The first year we concentrated on "Me and my family". This was followed by "The environment around us" and "Outdoor activities". The last year was about "Literature and music".

To work with gender issues is all about knowledge. We started off with very different understandings of the topic but as the project developed we began more and more to see things through the same gender glasses.

The most valuable outcome of the project thus was that we as teachers changed our attitudes in the subject. This also had a bearing on colleagues and other people around us. One mother in Slovenia was very upset at the beginning of the project and asked the teachers if this meant that the school was going to make a girl out of her son!

That, of course, was not the case! We have been thinking in a compensatory way when it comes to boys and girls. That means that we will add to boys what they usually don't get to practise, like how to cooperate, to wait for their turn, to help others before themselves, to try activities that they are unfamiliar with etc.

For girls, it meant we encouraged them to make their own choices, to compete, to try new outdoor activities etc.

It's all about adding more options, not taking something away from boys and girls! We wanted them to make their own choices of their own free will, not what was expected of them due to their sex.

In order to make a free choice, you must have been given the possibility to try it all!

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The two travelling dolls Johan and Maria (John and Mary)



## Short News

### Spread the sign: A web tool for the deaf

Sign language is an absolutely necessary tool for communication between deaf or hard of hearing people. However, against the common belief, sign language is not a universal language and it has been difficult for deaf students to go abroad and study.

The web based Sign language dictionary developed with the support of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme for the first time gives a visual support to persons concerned on how to express specific terms in other sign languages.

The Swedish teacher Thomas Lydell-Olsen was confronted with this problem when organising Leonardo mobility projects with his deaf pupils. This experience inspired him to create a visual dictionary for sign language. This dictionary is web-based and allows one to watch the sign language for specific words in small films. 11 languages are currently available: English, Swedish, French, German, Spanish, Finnish, Czech Lithuanian, Portuguese, Turkish, and Russian.

With the help of this web translation tool, sign language is accessible to everyone across Europe and the world.

The Spread the sign project started as a pilot project in Leonardo da Vinci 2005 and is currently continued under the Lifelong Learning programme to extend the scope and transfer the results to other countries.

Between October 2008 and October 2010 the project uploads words from most vocational fields into the dictionary and enlarges its size. New for these years is that they they include sound as well as more 3D animations to the words. They also extend the languages in the dictionary beyond the EU, for example Japanese.

This pedagogic self-learning tool is free to use. It is primarily intended to improve the vocational pupil's language skills when going abroad for work practice. But it also includes many words of daily language and will continue to be enlarged both in terms of word entries and other languages.

Links:  
[www.spreadthesign.com/country/gb/](http://www.spreadthesign.com/country/gb/)  
<http://about.spreadthesign.com/gb/to/about/>

### Learning Study

Learning study brings together a group of teachers who agree to investigate a lesson in great detail. At first, they jointly plan the lesson, then observe it being taught in the classroom, which is followed by discussion, leading to modification of the lesson where necessary. The lesson is taught again by another teacher in the group.

Learning Study is an approach to examining practice that originated as Lesson study in Japan where teachers teaching the same grade level planned a double lesson together, evaluated the outcomes of teaching as it took place in different classes, worked on and improved the subsequent lessons.

The lesson study concept was further taken on by the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd). By including the 'variation theory', lesson study as it takes place at HKIEd focuses on enhancing learner outcomes and catering to learner differences and it is thus termed learning study.

A Learning Study draws its inspiration from systematic and intensive investigation by teachers into particular lessons - the "research lessons". A number of American and European educators have seen great promise in lesson study which focuses on improving teaching and learning and enhancing the professional development of teachers.

The central belief underlying learning study is that all learners will be able to understand the teaching through the teacher varying and using appropriate teaching strategies.

A Learning Study differs from a lesson study in that it is theoretically grounded. Teachers are provided the opportunities and encouraged to adopt an inquiry stance when participating in the Learning Study. Thus learning more about Learning Study may also help inform researchers what kind of professional development efforts can best engage teachers to examine their own practice and subsequently improve teaching and learning.

Learning Study can be regarded as a platform to develop a professional learning community in schools. Furthermore, one of the key benefits of Learning Study is that

### Knowledge System for Lifelong Learning

Are you interested in easy access to information about European policy development in education and training?

The website 'The knowledge System for Lifelong Learning' offers relevant, up-to-date, easily accessible and comparable information on national policy initiatives and practices in prioritised areas in the field of Education and Training for the development of lifelong learning.

The system is a support mechanism for both the Education and Training 2010 work programme and its successor, the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training.

It mainly builds on the work of Peer Learning Clusters and other working groups.

Using it will allow you to easily access and/or identify examples of policies and practices and to review past events within the peer learning clusters and other working groups.

The site provides information on

- The strategic framework for EU cooperation in education and training
- Peer learning clusters, other groups and fora

- Peer learning activities
- Compendia of good practice
- National information from 33 European countries, such as a) National summary sheets on education systems in Europe and ongoing reforms (Eurydice) and b) National Strategy Documents on Lifelong Learning.

Website link: [www.kslll.net/Default.cfm](http://www.kslll.net/Default.cfm)

the knowledge produced becomes public, first within the schools in which the Learning Study is conducted and then widely across schools as part of the dissemination process.

Learning Study can be regarded as a powerful tool for teacher development.

As a footnote, currently a growing number of schools in Sweden introduce Learning study as a method to increase the students' interest and results in mathematics.

# 'Questioning the answer': Critical and creative thinking in the classroom

About 15 years ago I began encouraging children to participate in weekly discussions and to exercise their considerable capacity for critical and creative thinking.

I quickly realised that I could not corral critical thinking into a weekly slot. It spilled over into ordinary classroom discourse. Children regularly agreed with me and disagreed with me, and with each other, and even with their own thinking - 'actually I disagree with what I said earlier because ...' I was intrigued by the process and began to study it.

Over the years I have presented my work publicly. Whenever I spoke about children disagreeing with me, teachers looked horrified. Surely chaos must reign in such a classroom! On the contrary, I have found that respect, courtesy and care flourish when children are encouraged to be critical and creative thinkers from kindergarten onwards.

It has been my experience that the classroom can become a democratic locus where children engage in metacognitive and reflexive learning through dialogue. Teachers who hold critical discussions in their classes agree (Roche 2007, Appendices B, D.)

What does *critical thinking* look like in school? Like this?



*"I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!"*

Or like this?



Mary, Jane and Clodagh

Here is an example of some creative thinking about 'The Princess and the Pea':

- E: D'you know what I was wondering? **How come it was the queen who was picking out the princess?** Why didn't the Prince do it?
- A: I think I know the answer - maybe the Queen knew that the Prince and the King would sort of only be kind of looking at her ... emm...beauty... and all that .. cos like she's already in the job and all, so like, she knew that you need lots of other stuff to be a queen... (4th class Feb 2006)



An excerpt from a discussion with 5-6 year olds on 'Rainbows'.

- AT: I have a question. I want to know can you touch a rainbow.
- F: You can't touch it because it's up in the sky
- H: I think it's not real
- Sh: It **is** real! You can **see** it!
- Eo: No it's not real because you couldn't touch it ...But it is real because you see it
- Me: ***I'm interested in that word 'real' ... what do you mean when you say that something is real?***
- Eo: I have a question about real too: I have a Jedi Knight at home - Obi Wan Kenobi - and its real. But actually there's no such thing as a *real* Jedi Knight - they don't exist - so how come there's a toy of them? ....
- E (aged 6): ...I am going home today with just so many questions in my head! Millions!
- Me: ***Great! Perhaps that's what learning is all about - asking lots of questions.***
- A (aged 6): 'And ... if you go home with a question and you get an answer to it, you could always question the answer. (Roche 2007 Appendix C5 p13)

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*Dr Mary Roche worked for many years as a primary teacher in Ireland. She lectured in Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick and in University College Cork. Currently a freelance education consultant, she provides Professional Development to teachers on Understanding Literary Theory through Picture Books, and assists school planning for Critical Thinking through Classroom Dialogue, and Oral Language Development.*

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## Welcome to the Berlin Conference

The registration period for the Learning Teacher Network's 7th international conference has started. We hope to see you at this high quality event, where four internationally recognized keynote speakers and more than 70 presenters from 19 countries will contribute to the content of the programme.

Read more and register on [www.learningteacher.eu/berlin-conference](http://www.learningteacher.eu/berlin-conference)



# Opportunities for more creative learning experiences

## LEGO Education on bringing creativity and innovation to classrooms

While parents and teachers may have many reasons to be concerned about the amount of time their children spend looking at screens these days, they may also be overlooking many reasons to be happy.

The LEGO Group's Learning Institute has recently carried out a number of studies around children's creativity, including creativity in the digital age. These have highlighted positive ways in which children progress and learn - even when they are wired up to the various digital devices and applications available to them.

What is also interesting is that positive characteristics of digitally based learning behaviour are similar to behaviours manifested when children use LEGO® bricks. In fact the LEGO Group has even gone so far as to coin a phrase to capture this: Systematic Creativity<sup>1</sup>.

Systematic Creativity describes what happens when you simultaneously use

your powers of logic and reasoning alongside playfulness and imagination.

*'What happens if I change the wheel sizes?'*

Here's how it works with LEGO® bricks:

You build a model following a set of instructions. For educational purposes your model ideally has a function; for example it transports objects or generates wind power, or it could be a programmable robot that automates a variety of functions. In the process of building the model you begin to understand how it works. You use skills of logic and reasoning.

So far so good, but now we need a touch of playfulness and imagination. This is the part where the student says: "Aha; I see ... so if the gears are combined in this way the speed increases... but what happens if ...?"

"What happens if I add another gear, or change the wheel sizes, or add more weight?"

Interestingly this part seems to become the more learning valuable part of the



<sup>1</sup> *Defining systematic creativity: explaining the nature of creativity and how the LEGO System of Play relates to it, LEGO® Learning Institute, Edith Ackermann; David Gauntlett; & Cecilia Weckstrom, 2008.*

process. At the point where the playfulness and imagination kicks in the learner typically begins to take charge of the learning - mainly because he is significantly more motivated to find out more. It is here that he often identifies his own extended challenge and becomes engrossed in seeking out his own solution.

It's not that the process even has to start with the logic and reasoning. It could also start with playfulness and imagination.... For example build spontaneously with a random, abstract or undeveloped idea in your head and keep going until it does what you want it to do or becomes what you want it to become.

#### *Explore, combine and transform ideas*

Many of the digital applications available to young people today offer these kinds of learning experiences. You find out what something can do by piecing it together and then you do something with it that makes it uniquely yours; a website, a blog, a survey, an animation, a music video ... and so on.

But isn't it typically at the point of doing something that makes it uniquely yours ... that the teacher asks the students to pack up and put their things away? Do we not typically shortcut the learning process and deny students the opportunity to learn through Systematic Creativity? And isn't this the case at all ages, but especially when they get into High School?

For teachers to facilitate Systematic Creativity in the classroom, the right tools (and of course educationally relevant challenges) must be placed in the hands of the students, allowing them the freedom to explore, combine and transform things. To explore, combine and transform ideas into something valuable is the definition of creativity and innovation.



Our future depends on this. Many teachers are worried about how to cope with this digital era. They seem to believe that they must become expert users of tools before they can teach students to use them; but with creative learning tools that offer endless opportunities to develop solutions, it is not necessary or possible to become the expert. In fact teachers may risk narrowing instead of expanding learning opportunities.

*Jinny Christiansen  
LEGO Education*

[www.lego.com/education](http://www.lego.com/education)

### LEGO Digital Designer

LEGO Digital Designer is a free software program that lets you create and build with LEGO bricks on your computer.

Download from <http://idd.lego.com/>





# A school leaving qualification - thanks to E

At VHS Essen young adults are getting a 2nd chance to study for their s

Admittedly, you need perseverance and creativity to receive funding for 2nd chance education. However, the European Social Fund opens up new routes which we at VHS Essen are eager to take.

Currently we are offering the possibility to redo school leaving qualifications to 350 young adults from all over the world within our programme for job-oriented further education. Participants are young adults who, for various reasons, have not been able to achieve this within the mainstream secondary school system. In our 2-year course they are given a chance to hit the floor running to gain a qualified school leaving certificate - many with remarkable success.

Our 2nd chance courses are much sought after, not only because our college building is well-equipped and bright but mainly because we aim to offer participants more than just chalk and talk teaching.

We put a high emphasis on developing various competences and most importantly their self-confidence. We want them to be fit for the labour market once they leave our college.

In a joint paper, the "Common European Framework for Lifelong Learning", the EU has identified eight key competences for lifelong learning which every employable adult within the European economic regi-

on should bring with them. These should ultimately secure personal development, social integration and citizenship and employment. We in Essen, too, are implementing the job-oriented elements of the European Framework in our 2nd chance courses.

Our courses are therefore integrated into the European employment programme which is aimed at supporting the Lisbon-Strategy for growth and employment. This Europe-wide offensive for education aims to support specifically those who are in danger of unemployment and social exclusion. In the following we show how we put these ideas into practice.

### *JOB-LINK*

#### *work placements and vocational preparation*

In the run of their 2-year course participants undergo at least one work placement. The application for this is prepared and reflected in our job-oriented lessons.

The school leaving certificate is entered as one element on the Competence Passport of the participant. The Elements on this portfolio show the skills which every student should have acquired during the course.

These are:

- special areas of expertise
- self-management, project manage-

- ment, entrepreneurial competences
- presentation and creativity
- team competence, networking and cooperation
- international, intercultural competence and citizenship
- ICT-skills and
- integration on the job market

The students acquire these further competences also through a specially developed system of independently completed projects.

#### *Training in personal and team competences*

In the first semester of their course participants follow a special curriculum which focuses on personal competence and team-orientation in the learner group and creates the basis for successful work in the following semesters. Various media are employed to achieve the extremely important aim of strengthening the learners' personal competences.

Photography, in particular plays a major role in our projects for self-awareness and confidence. Our application training also comprises image consulting and the development of a personal performance. This shows participants the possibilities for a self-controlled and active shaping of their lives.

### *eLearning with moodle*

Cooperative Learning is supported through group work in our virtual learning environment moodle. Moodle enables us to support our students on a far more individual level than previously possible. Right from the start of their course all students, teachers and the subject area manager as well as admin staff are networked via moodle. Lesson material and student achievement is stored in moodle which gives access to these data to all authorised staff and/or students.

### *A European perspective*

The 2nd Chance department is linked with other 2nd chance education providers through a Europe-wide network. We use this cooperation to support the skills training in our courses.

Our learners are integrated into the preparation of international meetings. Excursions to our Dutch partners time and again lead to Aha-experiences with our teachers. Remarkable also is the huge interest and commitment of the participants, who discuss good teaching practice and project work with the international part-

ners and compare the different approaches in the respective countries.

To add a European perspective to the development of citizenship competence (composed ,but not exclusively of the eight key competences of the Common European Framework) is one of our main goals. For years VHS Essen has participated in Grundtvig projects focusing on education for socially disadvantaged people on a European scale.

### *The arts as a medium for teaching key competences*

The strengthening of cultural awareness and artistic expression is also achieved through the provision of a drama group at VHS Essen. Especially for migrants this is a new way of using German. Just as enthusiastic were the participants of a creative writing workshop led by a crime novelist. The results of the art and drama projects are presented to the public twice a year.

### *Resumé*

For the large number of adults who despite their already acquired skills and competences are faced with unemployment

and social exclusion our courses provide an excellent chance to succeed in life. We as initiators are therefore grateful for the opportunity to offer education which is co-financed through the European Social Fund.

### *Internet Links:*

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=auZhwECKId4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auZhwECKId4)

*Heike Hurlin and Stephan Rinke,  
VHS Essen, Germany  
e-mail Heike.Hurlin@vhs.essen.de*



# urope!

## school leaving qualifications - co-financed by the European Social Fund



# New EU policy handbook on teacher training



In April 2010 the European Commission published a handbook for policy-makers who wish to provide better support to new teachers during their first years in the profession. Teacher education experts from EU countries have worked with the Commission to produce this practical guide which leads policy-makers step-by-step towards implementing induction programmes for beginning teachers.

Currently, in over half of all EU countries, new teachers are left to face the reality 'shock' of school and classroom alone and unsupported. For some, this is such a stressful time that they leave the profes-

sion.

By providing systematic professional and personal support, national authorities can help newly qualified teachers to gain in confidence and hone their teaching skills. This helps not only to get their careers off to a good start, but also to retain them in the profession, and thereby to improve the quality of teaching.

For the new handbook experts reviewed the latest research evidence and compared policies in several EU countries. It does not propose a single model, but highlights those basic conditions that need to be met to ensure the success of induction

programmes.

Case studies are used to illustrate the key aspects of induction programmes.

Link: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/news2252\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/news2252_en.htm) from where the handbook can be downloaded.

Read more about the EU and teacher education:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/doc832\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/doc832_en.htm)

## Welcome as network member

### A platform for educational progress

The Learning Teacher Network is an international, 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](http://www.learningteacher.eu)

### Membership

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

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 September. Articles may be submitted no later than August 15th 2010.*

# Towards composing as a classroom activity



"Are we going to a music class?" asked Kiran when I was about to enter the grade 1 and 2 (4-5 year olds) classroom. During a 30-minute music lesson that all students, grade 1-8, get every week, they sing enthusiastically, they play musical instruments, listen to music, practice music & movement, and learn to use music notation. There are lots of things to do and there is a lot to learn! But everyone seems to enjoy it as "music is one big feast".

However the question arises as to how to define an attractive and meaningful music activity? In the Dutch situation music education mostly focuses on performing music that has been written by other people. Children sing songs written by songwriters and play music composed by composers or music educators. This is in contrast to subjects such as drama and visual arts in which the process of creating things is a central issue.

As I have said, students like the current situation and teachers feel comfortable with it. The question is whether we are able to make a paradigm shift or not to see children as potential composers who can create/ compose new kinds of music instead of performers of music written by others. This new way may enable students to become even more involved in music education than they are at the moment.



I want to show you one example from the elementary school I worked at. This example, focusing on Grade 7-8 students (11-12 year olds), will show you a process towards composing in a classroom situation. You can read how the teacher, Mr. Olof, introduces a music activity with

instruments to his students. He will not only get his students involved in the performance, but will also let them make their own compositions and guides them through the process of composing music.

"Olof was working on the theme 'The Magic Academy' with his students, the theme of the children's book week. By asking half the class to continually repeat the first two bars of the 'Magic Samba' and letting the other half of the class rap the complete text, something very interesting developed.

Because Olof distributed many different drums and other percussion instruments several variations and improvisations could be played.

After the 'Magic Samba' introduction he showed his students some movie soundtracks and asked them to describe the moods of the music by making up their own short stories.

Next, he asked his students to compose their own soundtracks. He divided the students into groups of six. Each group was given 3 musical instruments, so 3 children in each group played instruments that had been provided while the others improvised by using their voices or body parts to make sounds they liked.

Mr. Olof walked around in the classroom to guide his students with their assignment by asking questions such as: How do you think you can improve your soundtrack? Are you able to write down the rhythms using dots and stripes so other students can play it? How could you make your piece sound more exciting? ....and so on.

At the end of the session all groups performed their pieces. The children were obviously thrilled, as they could not stop discussing how they could perform better than other groups."

A very important aspect in the process of composing music with children is the

way we as teachers guide and accompany students in their working process. It is important to develop good starting activities to create a common basis from which the students will be able to start composing, such as developing the skills needed to compose music, and knowing how to give impulses to the composition process, so children will be able to broaden and deepen their knowledge, skills and attitudes.

These are all things that have to be learned by classroom and specialized music teachers. By playing with the students, giving them ideas, orienting on the possibilities of improving their compositions, one will certainly help the students to improve their musical abilities.

We have a need for knowledge on the process of classroom composing and possibly a teaching methodology on this subject. This might help to make the necessary paradigm shift and make composition a regular classroom activity like reading and writing.

**"Music can even be an enormous stimulus for academic success"**

To compose music is not only exciting for children, it also challenges children to express themselves and use their intellectual talents.

Music education offers lots

of opportunities to develop and stimulate children. Every theme or subject in school offers many opportunities for children to sing, play, move, listen to, and even compose music. Music can even be an enormous stimulus for academic success. The only thing we as educators have to do is to offer children possibilities to be able to act as musical and creative beings.

*Michel Hogenes is a lecturer of music education at the teacher education department of The Hague University. He also lectures at Codarts, Conservatory Rotterdam and is president of Gehrels Music Education.*

# A school partnership - a tool for change

When our school - Grupul Scolar Iuliu Maniu from Arad, Romania - was - for the first time - involved in an European Comenius school partnership we saw an opportunity for self-development for both students and teachers.

As teachers, we were invited to reflect critically on our organisational school arrangements and on our teaching practices. We hoped that our partnership would make our knowledge and experience available to other schools and would insert individual findings into a professional discussion.

processes which are supported by colleagues from other countries allow and encourage: the negotiation of binding rules, the assignment of responsibilities to pupils, support of team work and social continuity, as well as individual and joint reflection on the quality of teaching, learning and life in school.

## *General information about the project:*

Our European Comenius school partnership, which started in October 2008, involves the cooperation of six schools from

This will lead to better contacts both in private aspects and economic aspects and will have positive consequences in the economic cooperation of countries whose schools are involved in the project.

The mobility measures will lead to an enhancement of tourism and intercultural exchange. It will motivate students and teachers to learn foreign languages and establish long-lasting friendships over borders and bring diverse parts of Europe closer together.

## *The aims of the project*

1. Investigating the cooperation between the individual countries with respect to economic as well as cultural aspects. Regional companies that have dealings with a region in one of the countries' partner schools shall be contacted and consulted concerning the way business is conducted there, the advantages and disadvantages will be investigated and different strategies discussed.

2. The project will be integrated into the national curriculum and dealt with in the following subjects:

A. History: Common aspects of history are dealt with concerning the regions of central and Eastern Europe, dating back to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, looking at historical ways of transport, routes, and consequences for the contemporary situation

B. Geography: We look at the locations of our partner schools and locations of companies there. We investigate ways of getting there and ways of transporting goods into these regions. We learn to assess the quality of roads and railroads, and the possible length of time it takes to transport the goods to these places.

C. English: In addition to the usual vocabulary and phrases concerning business communication, we exchange emails with students from partner schools concerning information on for example, - What Austrian companies are active in your town? What consequence does that have for the economy? What language is needed for communication with foreign entrepreneurs? and similar things.

D. Training firm: Parallel to investigating the real economy, we cooperate between fictitious firms at those schools that have one, in preparation for real trade.

E. Marketing: We compare opportunities concerning marketing in different countries. Which products are wanted in which region? How does the range of products have to differ to cater for the regional market? How does product distribution



We realised that our work had to focus on:

- a clearly-stated interest in improving teaching practice
- a school community mandate for action over at least two years
- an intelligent project which would lead to an achievable result
- a school-relevant topic that would touch on the interests of pupils and teachers
- providing an in-depth view into the school life for the project partners

For project planning this means that school development must tie in with existing conceptions of teaching, school life, and the relationship of the school with its environment.

Dealing with the topic then becomes appealing and worthwhile from the interior perspective of a school, as it not only implies new, additional tasks, but also promises results in actual solutions to current problems.

There is evidence in COMENIUS school partnerships, that school development

six different countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia) on the topic of economic cooperation between Central and Eastern European countries and Austria.

The 'Central and Eastern European Economy' (CEEconomy) project also investigates the cultural differences and similarities based on geographical and historical reasons.

The project activities necessitate cross-border communication between the students of the partner institutions, which in turn highlights the important element of intercultural dialogue that will result in overcoming prejudices.

With strong associated partners like local councils, the Chambers of Commerce and Labour, and the VÖEST-Alpine, it is guaranteed that the results of the project will have consequences not only for schools, but also other fields beyond education.

The project will lead to a better understanding of the culture and economy of other European countries and will link people from different European areas.



work in other regions? Which means of marketing are especially effective in which country?

F. International Cultural and economic areas Investigation into companies doing business in target countries.

*The mobility/activities description*  
2008/10/

Each school devised a quiz with 20 questions about its own country and carried out an essay competition about the topic "Who we are" focusing on national identity and customs. A control team was installed at all schools to supervise and evaluate the progress of the project.

2008/11  
Results were evaluated and commented on. The best essays were presented on the Community Space and on the website.

A website for the project was created and a community space was installed.

2008/12  
Geographical aspects were dealt with; Where are schools of partner countries located?

Historical aspects were investigated. What has linked our countries in the past, what has divided them?

2009/1  
Which companies from partner school countries are active in our region? Is there migration due to job opportunities?

Results were published on the website and Community Space.

2009/2  
Which structure does our economy

have, who are the most important trading partners, and what connections exist between countries of partner schools?

2009/3  
We investigated means of transport and goods movement between countries.

2009/5  
What demographic and migratory development takes place in our countries and what consequences does that have for the economy?

2009/6  
Marketing: what measures are especially successful, how are special measures applied in which country?

2009/11  
The students worked on a brochure entitled "Help for the entrepreneur who wants to trade in the CEE countries"

2010/1  
Presentation by an external expert on economy, and report on the outcome of the presentation and the discussion.

Not only do projects dealing with Sustainable Development deal with behaviours, they also look at a vision of the world. Reflections on sustainability issues will automatically challenge the assumptions of everyday life in classrooms as well as that of the school culture in which we are often unconsciously immersed.

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## About Comenius

*'We are all citizens of one world.'*

The Comenius Programme is named after Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670), often considered the father of modern education.

Comenius is aimed at schools, colleges and local authorities across Europe.

Comenius is part of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme. Comenius provides opportunities for schools and colleges to introduce or strengthen the European dimension in their curriculum. The new Comenius Regio partnerships allow local authorities to participate directly.

Comenius has two main objectives:

- to develop knowledge and understanding among young people and education staff of the diversity of European cultures and languages, and the value of this diversity
- to help young people to acquire basic life skills and competences for their personal development, for future employment and for active European citizenship.

The different strands of Comenius are intended to complement each other, and it is perfectly possible to participate in more than one area of activity at the same time.

# Stimulation of speech and language development at a pre-school age

It has been proved that the lack of full development of speech results in difficulties in reading and writing at school and has a lot of additional negative consequences which cause the process of learning to be hard and unpleasant.

What can we do to prevent these kind of difficulties, that will help the child to succeed in school?

In this article I would like to share my experience in helping the preschoolers overcome their speech problems by guiding their parents in how to stimulate the proper development of speech and conse-



quently help their child succeed in school.

Special attention was paid to prevention work so I was involved in early screening for speech and language disorders in children aged between 3 and 5, and an early intervention EU project called "Logopedicus".

## Early logopedical diagnosis

Logopedical screening tests examined the following aspects of speech: sentence understanding, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation.

As for vocabulary it was important to check how the child copes with making subordinate and main words as well as concept defining.

## Individual stimulation and therapy

Once a week individual logopedical stimulation and therapy were held. All children needed language stimulation, some of them on a large scale. Many preschoolers demanded emotional support, and in some cases laryngological and psychological consultancy was required.

Pawel (5) was one of 11 preschoolers belonging to the Educational centre. He was a child with insufficient phonological awareness which means that without proper help he would have reading and writing problems in school. There were a lot of omissions and distortions in his oral expressions.

During individual exercises he was practicing everything that was important to achieve the school-readiness, such as drawing and painting which could spark Pawel's imagination and help him to express himself, as well as developing the hand-eye coordination, an ability he needed in order to write properly.

## Group stimulation

Once a month the group activities led by a speech therapist were taking place with the help of a teacher and a trainee. Parents were observing this group stimulation and very often they joined the plays and games. Through playing games children developed their language (expressing their needs and reacting to particular social contacts). It was easier to recognize and assess the communication skills of the child. Music and dancing helped build a set of skills such as discrimination of sound, association of sound with its source, identification of what instrument makes which sound, coordination and balance, social skills, and vocabulary. Songs and poems helped the child learn to pay attention to sounds in words, an important skill in the prevention of reading problems later on.



Songs and dancing helped with rhythm and whole body movement. Articulation and respiratory exercises were a basis for good pronunciation; letter and early word recognition by e.g finding their initial letter of their own names, singing the alphabet song, looking for rhyming words were extremely important for preventing dyslexia.

## Cooperation with parents

Ten logopedical subjects were introduced to parents: speech and language development, phonological awareness, reading

books and its significance, language efficiency, school-readiness. Individual stimulation always took place with the presence of the child's parent or carer. One day a



week was called "home logopedist" and parents were obliged to practise with their child.

## Teacher's contribution and society's commitment

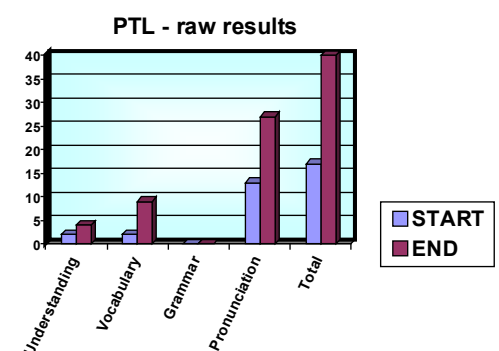
The teacher implemented logopedical plays and games during everyday activities, discussed the progress of each child and was responsible for constant flow of information between the logopedist, the teacher and the parent.

The community of Tumlin and the authority were interested in the Preschool Centre and did their best to support both parents and teachers.

## Conclusion

All children became emotionally and socially more mature and self-confident, richer in general knowledge and experience, and improved their pronunciation. They would not have achieved their final level without early intervention. For these children, school readiness does not happen automatically.

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# The jolly way to learn reading and writing

Of course every language has its own specifics, but the majority has individual sounds and symbols which need to be mastered before blending them together to read and understand meaning. When learning English according to the synthetic phonics approach, children are taught how the English alphabetic code works before they learn how to read books and write sentences.

Synthetic phonics programmes begin with single letters and the sounds that the letters represent. Then the children are taught to look at the word and blend the sounds together. This blending (synthesising) is an essential skill for reading words that are unknown to the child. As soon as words have been blended and read more than once, they can be recognized immediately.

Although we all know that the alphabet has 26 letter symbols, the English language actually consists of 42 sounds. Synthetic phonics also teaches those sounds that are made by digraphs, such as [ai], [ee] and [oa]. This in particular is a learning challenge for many, as two letters form one sound, for example *snail*, *bee*, *goat* and *tea*.

Even though synthetic phonics is of-

ten considered boring, it becomes fun for kids when offered in a creative and interactive way. The teaching programme *Jolly Phonics* teaches the letter sounds in an enjoyable, multi-sensory and creative way, and enables children in early primary classroom to use the phonics to read and write words.

The Jolly Phonics method can be used to teach children reading and writing, whether they are kinaesthetic, visual or auditory learners. For the introduction of each sound, a storyline, picture and action are presented.

With repetition and the variety of activities offered the children are learning valuable skills in a playful way. Children naturally love to learn and they are always asking what the next letter and action will be. The programme is exciting for children, parents and teachers, as the child's reading skills improve rapidly.

Besides blending and decoding words according to the regular sounds that have been taught, the English language has a great amount of exceptions to the rules. Words like *here*, *mother*, *two* and *should*, can't be blended while using the 42 sounds that are learned, there is a list of 'Tricky Words'. With a spelling list and a va-

riety of activities children learn to read and write the tricky words as well.

In many cases, parents don't know how to support their child in the reading process. Jolly Phonics offers several suggestions and tools to get parents more involved.

Increasingly, children in non-speaking countries are learning English, whether it's the main language at their (international) school or not. Jolly Phonics is used in EAL (English as an Additional Language) classrooms all over the world. Although the story lines and some activities are definitely aimed at the younger children, older children who have been taught a different language and alphabet can also benefit from the many worksheets and digraph activities and learn some vocabulary in the process.

For more information:

[www.jollylearning.co.uk](http://www.jollylearning.co.uk)

Jolly Phonics online training course:

[www.jollyphonics.cpdcollege.com](http://www.jollyphonics.cpdcollege.com)

Dorine Schreiner

EAL Teacher

iCAN British International School

Phnom Penh, Cambodia



# Creativity as a key issue for ESD

Retrospective to the 6th Annual Conference of the Learning Teacher Network in Ljubljana: "Creative Learning for a Sustainable World" we progressed further with the question of where the link between creativity and ESD is to be found and how it could be concretized for education. Here, we would therefore like to record some considerations on this issue for the second time.

## *What is creativity?*

What we have learned from Ljubljana LTN-Conference is that creativity is one of the elusive descriptions of a human phenomenon which, from a humanistic and holistic point of view, means much more than just "productive thinking".

We liked a somewhat older but quite appropriate definition in a book about creative teachers and creative pupils written by the German teacher Gottfried Heinelt in 1974. His definition describes in a very comprehensive manner what is implied by creativity: "We understand creativity as being abilities, powers and talents that we try to grasp with more complex or partly less exact terms such as intuition, imagination, inspiration, ingenuity, inventiveness, originality or (in a more academic formulation) as productive thinking, problem-solving and creative fantasy".

Is this not true? Especially in education we think it's so important to refer to a democratic form of defining creativity. It starts with the assumption that all individuals are able to act and think in a creative manner in all of the different spheres of life and in accordance with their respective individual personality.

Nowadays, creativity is a kind of modern term applied to many different spheres of life (art/culture, economics, science, education and training etc.). Also for this reason, it is not very easy to define it in an exact and unambiguous manner.

## *How are creativity and education for sustainable development linked?*

The simple fact that the European Union promotes creativity and innovation, for both social and economical reasons, shows that creativity is more and more recognized as a valuable human resource (see <http://www.create2009.europa.eu/> [2010-04-22]).

In his speech at the LTN Conference in 2009, Charles Hopkins, the UNESCO chair from Canada, defined creativity as an important tool in the search for a more sustainable future, which he sees as being directly connected with innovative and creative human problem solving.

From an educational perspective, it is

possible to say that a society cannot be more creative than its own members. The gifts and talents of the individual children and later adults have to be recognized and valued in such a way that children start to believe deeply in their own capacities and feel that they are able to use their gifts and talents to make creative contributions in the classroom and also in society.

But what can educators do to make it happen?

In Waldorf Pedagogy there is a focus on three main values towards which teachers, educators and parents can orient themselves and align their educational methods in order to enable pupils to become genuinely individual and engaged personalities in society.

These three main values are:

1. To make children feel that the world is a safe place (Confidence)
2. To show children that the world is a beautiful place (Motivation)
3. To make children understand that the world is a true place (Sense)

As educators we know, that good (self) confidence, high learning motivation and a sense of engagement are the basis for good, individual learners. What we have to think about more and more, is whether our teaching and interaction influences the

self beliefs of the children in a more supportive or a more repressive way.

So the link between creativity and education for a sustainable development might be this alignment on main values which supports the development of free thinking and engagement and individual personality profiles.

#### *Can creativity be taught?*

It is possible to foster creativity. Recommendations for creative teaching and learning that should be taken into account in everyday classroom work are important aspects in this context.

In 1999 the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (UK) formulated many proposals on the framework of creative teaching, focusing on diverse aspects such as curriculum design, performance assessment and teacher training (see <http://www.cypni.org.uk/downloads/alloutfutures.pdf> [2010-03-31]). The concept of 'Creative Teaching' includes creating imaginative ways for interesting and effective learning. The other concept of 'Teaching for creativity' helps to develop the personal and creative potential of students. This includes the so-called 'creative teaching'.

#### *What kind of creative teaching methods and environments can be helpful?*

Open and flexible teaching and working methods especially stimulate creative processes. These mainly include open, action-oriented teaching, project work, weekly schedules and independent work and learning in class.

Discovery learning, project-oriented teaching and action-oriented learning allow explorative, self-directed or self-initiated

learning and encourage networked learning.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that openness is not a "miracle cure" to promote creative processes. An openness of the teaching situation requires a balanced, educational, intentional and justified use of assignments and will usually be determined by teacher centered phases.

#### *Conclusion*

The design of the external environment is also important for the creativity of teaching and the school climate. These are essential and crucial factors that influence whether the learning environment is perceived as pleasant and supportive. A pleasant learning climate emerges, for example, if enough space is available for

each pupil and many stimuli are provided in the surrounding area.

Last but not least, open and flexible forms of teaching and a pupil friendly attitude support students in their individual ideas and develop and deepen their personal interests. In this way, divergent thinking and changing perspectives are promoted, which in turn is an important base for the creative process.

*Gerhild Bachmann, University of Graz, Department of Educational Sciences, Austria*

*Susanne Müller-Using, University of Osnabrück, Germany, Member of the Botin Foundation Platform for Innovation in Education.*



## International anniversaries

**International observance** (also known as international dedication or international anniversary) denotes a period of time to observe some issue of international interest or concern.

This is used to commemorate, promote and mobilize for action. Many of these periods have been established by the United Nations General Assembly, Economic and Social Council or by UNESCO.

In this case, the lead agency for a particular international observance uses the symbolism of the United Nations (UN) or UNESCO, a specially designed logo for the year, and their infrastructure to coordinate events worldwide.

It also presents a written report about the event. This summarizes the activities that took place around the world under the auspices of the international observance,

and makes recommendations for the future.

Below highlighting some days that might of particular interest to education and training, these dedications have been denoted as international observances by the United Nations or by other organizations that declare international observances, although these are not as widely recognized.

June 5 - World Environment Day, recognized by the UN

June 12 - World Day Against Child Labour

June 20 - World Refugee Day, recognized by the UN

June 21 - World Music Day

June 23 - United Nations Public Service Day, recognized by the UN

July 8 - Writers' Day



August 12 - International Youth Day, recognized by the UN

August 19 - World Humanitarian Day

September 8 - International Literacy Day, recognized by the UN

September 15 - International Day of Democracy, recognized by the UN

September 21 - International Day of Peace, recognized by the UN

September 26 - European Day of Languages

Source: Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_observance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_observance)

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