

“TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY ART”

EVALUATION – CONCLUSIONS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRES

TEACHERS

- 1) All participant teachers' experience is generally positive, as the program on the whole allowed them to get acquainted with teaching approaches and activities they had not been familiar with up to that point. Thus, they managed to broaden the range of the activities carried out on a daily basis, integrating photography in different school subjects, engage young learners during classroom and outdoor teaching, promote collaborative work, meet learners' needs according to their interests and abilities. Teachers working on the project achieved at last to provide a more interesting, fun, anxiety-free learning context, in which learners are active participants and not passive recipients of knowledge.

More particularly, we can mention examples of good practice that took place during our project. For instance, B graders had the opportunity to create a short film through the STOP MOTION technique and work on the four seasons. They actually photographed still objects to make the heroes and the backdrop of the film and turned into little artists. In the English class B graders expressed their feelings in English by miming, singing and moving. They had fun and practiced their English, took photos of their classmates expressing feelings (sad, happy, tired, sleepy, angry, scared) and made their classroom feeling poster. Moreover, during a local history project pupils got acquainted through photos with historical monuments in their town and explored the changes through time. A graders took photos while dealing with numbers 1 – 5 and made number flashcards, while they were also photographed shaping letters with their bodies. As far as Art is concerned pupils created land art temporary artifacts and photographed them.

The above activities certainly constitute meaningful learning experiences that primarily spread enthusiasm in the classroom, created a threat-free environment and gave learners responsibility for their own work and learning.

- 2) Children were in general positively influenced by their experience with photography, both as a process and material presented to them to work on. First and foremost, they actively participated in all activities, went outdoors, thoroughly observed (an integral element of photography), expressed their feelings, artistically depicted their experience and understanding, collaborated, got excited, had fun and got sensitized on several topics. Furthermore, they got to know children experiencing a different school reality and culture, as well as through the contact with partners pupils managed to enhance their communicative competence in English as a foreign language.

- 3) Admittedly, all proposed activities were pleasantly received by the majority of pupils. They were motivated and engaged throughout all stages of our program, while their relationship as classmates was really improved; the sense of having fun during learning was commonly shared by the children, working towards a common goal.
- 4) Difficulties in implementing the proposed activities were rare, as all participants showed outstanding eagerness to get involved and achieve the project's objectives.
- 5) All in all, teachers' partnership and mobility resulted in mutual understanding of the educational systems of the participant countries to some extent, sharing common anxieties and future objectives. During the transnational meetings conducted participant teachers had the opportunity to be engaged in friendly chat, exchange their experiences with photography, share delightful moments of discovering new perspectives in teaching and life. Yet, there is still a need for further communication grounded on effective partnership.

PUPILS

The majority of pupils expressed their overall positive impression of the program. More specifically, they claimed that the particular project facilitated cooperation in class, as well as improved their relationships. Regarding their learning, they mostly remarked that the procedure of taking photos or observing them made them more careful when working on school subjects. Being observational is something repeated several times in their answers. As far as their FL skills are concerned, pupils were satisfied, while they think their ICT skills were also improved. It becomes easily evident from children's answers that all Erasmus activities brought them closer in a pleasant atmosphere of discovering new perspectives in learning. Sharing information about the participant countries created a sense of European citizenship, as they also had the opportunity to show them Greek customs, sights and food habits.

Students participating in the meeting in Bulgaria

Pupils who had the opportunity to join the meeting in Bulgaria mostly got to know the educational system of another country and developed their critical skills. Their communicative competence was also improved, as they needed to speak to peers throughout their visit using English as a foreign language.

PARENTS

All parents asked about the Erasmus experience through the questionnaire expressed their general positive attitude towards the project carried out in their children's school. What most parents presented as the most beneficial aspects of their children's participation in the program were their participating in group work and the fact that they were involved in differentiated activities for the needs of the project. Furthermore, they felt that their children developed their creativity, as well as got familiarised with other European people's habits and realities. According to parents, children practised their English as a foreign language, making them members of the larger community of European citizens. Finally, use of photography in the learning process is considered helpful to parents' mind and the school needs to continue getting involved in similar projects.