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Project website:

WWW.KRAJINAZASKOLOU.CZ

Would you like to join?

- So far the project has been joined by several hundreds of schools and organizations in the Czech Republic, as well as in other European countries including the United Kingdom, Germany, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania and Latvia.
- The project's website and other materials are now available in English, and more language versions are being prepared.
- We will be happy if our project inspires your work. If you want to cooperate with us and help us develop the project further, we will be even happier.

Partner of the project:

Ministry of the Environment
of the Czech Republic

Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme

BEYOND THE SCHOOL PROJECT

How to learn
what HOME actually means

KRAJINA
ZA ŠKOLOU

BENEFITS

Knowledge

- Local history
- Geography
- Language
- ICT

Project-based education

Many teachers say: "We don't have time for such projects, we have to teach." But project teaching is also teaching, often better than the traditional approach. Projects bring new perspectives to teaching and learning: they encourage cooperation between subjects and long-term cooperation between students working on a common project, they provide the experience of having successfully finished one's work… This is something a traditional course cannot offer.

PROJECT ORGANIZATION

Where?

- Most often, the project is carried out in schools. Ideally, it becomes part of history, geography, language (text writing) and ICT (preparing photographs for a website or an exhibition, website creation) classes. Most often, however, schools realize it as an extra-curricular activity, e.g. as a special seminar
- The project can also be implemented by youth clubs
- Older people can take it up as well. The option of projects organized with seniors still needs to be explored…

Skills

- Teamwork
- Perseverance
- Text writing
- Communication within the family, across generations
- Explaining one's view of events through storytelling

Home

- This is a very open project, opening schools to the local community. A school is not only a building with classrooms; it is also an integral part of the local community.
- Through an authentic experience of exploring their environment students build a relationship towards it. It is not about nationalism or patriotism, but about being naturally and more deeply involved in local life.

What age?

- 10 years and older
- The project can be carried out with different age groups – of course, at different levels. For ten-year-olds it is a game with pictures, with older children personal interpretation plays a more significant role.

How long?

- It is a long-term project, usually taking about a year. It can be organized during a "project week", but longer time provides for more interesting results.

How much does it cost?

- It depends. The method is simple and can be applied at almost zero cost. It is, however, always beneficial for a project to receive some support – such as an eLearning course or some web tools. Projects also benefit from having a clearly defined goal, such as an exhibition, a book, a calendar. It is nice when more schools come together (e.g. across borders or in different regions) and find an opportunity to meet.

HOW TO DO IT?

Basically, the method is really easy.

1. Collect old photographs – ideally in the children's families, from collectors, old people or a local heritage committee, because in this way children will also learn some stories connected with the pictures. Museums, archives and books should only be consulted as a second option.

   The themes can vary considerably – from changes in a school to the changes in transport to social changes. First of all, it is not necessary to compare a very old photograph with a recent one – even a picture made two years ago can provide some interesting comparisons. Second, it is not even necessary to compare the same places; the important thing is to have a clear idea of what is being compared (a local festivity, lifestyle, etc.)

2. Look for places where the old photographs were taken or look for the same situations. This is the most adventurous part of the project which gives students the opportunity to see their towns and regions with new eyes. Such experience encourages curiosity and a desire to learn more about the region.

- Often schools raise funds at the beginning to launch the project, and then continue work with maintenance costs.
- Funds are raised from the public sector, such as the State, local administration, foundations, the EU etc., as well as from sponsors.

3. Confronting two pictures is not enough. The most important part is creating commentaries for them. This is not only about experiencing the countryside, but also about turning a change into a story: What has changed? Why? Is it good? What to do about it? It is difficult to tell the story in such a way that everybody understands. But this is the goal – to create a new, living history that makes life more intense and interesting.

4. There can be a wide range of outcomes. Everything depends on the possibilities. With a school or youth project, however, it is good to have a specific goal, such as an exhibition, a brochure, a book and, of course, a website. A multimedia website featuring videos, sound and images fading into one another is available in English at www.krajinazaskolou.cz

   The enclosed memory game, based on the work of basic and secondary school students in the Czech Republic, is another example of project outcome. It is also an illustration of the diversity of themes you can cover in the Beyond the School project.