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School Case Studies



place
paths to learning

PLACE

Paths to Learning: Active Community Exploration

School Case Studies

“I realised that we have to save the planet to make these places last the way they are now. The project has helped us to love these places even more and keep them clean.”

– PLACE student

Introduction

These Case Studies are the gathering of experiences and learning from pupils, teachers and schools who have taken part in this exciting international PLACE project.

During the 2 years, teachers have found that coming together to share their ideas, progress and learning has been an extremely valuable experience. The partners from Czech Republic, Slovakia and Dorset and Cumbria in the UK have collated this wealth of practical and thoughtful work so that other teachers can learn from their experience and be encouraged and inspired to use PLACE approaches in their own schools.

These Case Studies celebrate how the PLACE methodology and activities can be put into practice for a range of ages and situations; pupils from age 6 - 16 have been involved, sometimes in small groups, a class or even a whole school. The partners have been impressed by the energy and commitment that teachers, pupils and their school communities have put into their PLACE work, and the learning they have gained.

To find out more about the whole range of PLACE approaches, methodology, aims and activities you should first go to the Teacher Learning Guide on the PLACE website <https://paths2learning.eu/>. This will enable you to understand in more detail what you read in the Case studies.

The PLACE Toolkit Padlet, also linked from <https://paths2learning.eu/>, provides even more practical suggestions of activities for exploring PLACE, as well as inspirational and accessible presentations and pictures that you can share with pupils and other teachers.

“I find myself going there more often than any other place. When I'm there and take a deep breath, my mind clears and I forget everything bad at that moment.”

- PLACE student

How to use this Handbook

The handbook has been organised under the 4 main PLACE methodologies - Questing, Therapeutic Gardening, Community Activism and Philosophy for Children. However, you will see that most schools used a combination of these approaches for the 5 phases of learning about their Place. Each case study describes these phases and then summarises the pupil and teacher learning from the experience.

EXPLORE	students explore their local place
MAKE CONNECTIONS	with place and community; students investigate more deeply about the issues, history, nature, people of their place
PLAN	students discuss and map out what they wish to do - how might they make a difference, who can help them?
ACT	students carry out their activities to assist their place and the community; they consider how they link to global issues and the Sustainable Development Goals
SHARE	students invite the community to an event to show what has been achieved and to inspire others

This Case Study shows how there are many ways to make a connection to Place - emotionally, physically, sensually and through understanding of cultural and historical dimensions. All of them contribute to our sense of belonging and wellbeing.

For more ways to explore Place on your doorstep go to the Teacher Learning Guide and Toolkit www.paths2learning.eu.

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1| My Chosen Place - an 'in depth' study

“When I was researching my chosen place, it was a very personal and emotional matter for me. It is closely related to my childhood, when as a little girl I used to go with my grandfather to water the blackberry bush by the fence. Everything is different now, because I go to water the blackberry bush myself. So if you can hear me, grandpa, I want to thank you for the good times.”

Grammar school and Secondary school Úpice, CZ

Introducing ourselves

Our City grammar school and Úpice secondary school is in the town of Úpice in the Giant Mountains with a population of 5,000. Children from the second grade of the gymnasium aged 12-13 participated in the project.



Overview of your work

The project aimed at deepening the conscious experience of pupils by focusing attention on a favourite place and exploring the various contexts associated with it. For our main themes, we focused on the experience of connecting with nature, independent research, conversations with family members of all generations, improving presentation skills and finally joint debates using P4C.

>>> Explore

Each pupil defined his or her favourite place, usually in nature, but there were exceptions such as workplaces, tunnels, sports grounds, corners where I feel good. In the next step, we thought together how we can approach our favourite place in different ways and get to know it more deeply, from multiple points of view, and create a more intense, more conscious relationship with it.

Several basic questions arose, which the children had to investigate in the next phase of the work, and then process the results of their research into a computer presentation. In these phases of the project, it was essential to consciously revisit the favourite place, discovering often unexpected connections.

The children then presented their favourite places to their classmates and debated them together. They tried to moderate the debate themselves.

Developing presentation and debate skills, critical thinking and the ability to listen to others was key.

>>> Plan

From the start, they were keen to start a joint project - they began with brainstorming and a controlled discussion, in which the children themselves created the form of the project and formulated the questions they would investigate.

In the next stage, they had to look for their place themselves, return to it, aim, think... And then formulate ideas for their presentation.

>>> Action

The children turned to their parents, grandparents, and asked about the past of the place, its former use, period photographs... During joint discussions, they inspired each other and helped each other with advice, observations, and feedback.

>>> Share

The finished presentations were shown to classmates. We would like to present them in the form of an exhibition in the city library later in the year.

Learning and reflection

As a teacher, it was enjoyable to watch the students learn to research independently, formulate and debate together, listen to each other and respect each other.

Reflection on PLACE project overall:

How did the work on the project enable personal development, did it help us to experience Place more consciously? Did it connect us more with nature, the environment in which we live? With people around us, family, classmates, with ourselves? Here are some comments from the students:

"I became interested in how to take care of nature. I became interested in the history of the nearby area. I learned to do better in Powerpoint."

"What I learned about the site was that there are more species of plants growing there than I thought. I chose this place because I walk past it often and never really explored it properly. I thought it was ridiculous, but as I explored the place more and more it became very interesting. I felt a strange euphoria, some things interested me a lot, some things I wasn't interested in."

"The project is very interesting and ecological. And we got a grade for it."

"I chose this place because I like to play tennis and I spend a lot of time at this place and I feel good and comfortable there."

"...it's my grandmother's garden, she often tells me how it used to be, I'm there almost all the time, I like it there very much."

"What did the project give me? I found out what other people like and that they are a little different than I originally thought."

"I put a lot of care into the presentation, and the others also had beautifully crafted presentations."

"I examined the place in detail. It's a beautiful place. Unfortunately, I haven't been spending much time there lately."

"From the other presentations, I could imagine what it looks like in their place."

"It was interesting how different each other's presentations were."

"... There used to be a landfill, I chose it because I go there almost every day, it has a beautiful view, I can see all the way to our garden..."

"Recently, when I was re-examining my place, I found a hedgehog, he was either still hibernating or dead. I found it to be a much more beautiful place because there is straw under the tree and in that straw there are various animals that are hibernating or waking up. I also found out that my tree is really old and weak. I also found out that there are owls living in the tree."

"I was glad that I could go to that place more. It was very interesting to learn about its past. I started thinking more about how to look after it. This place is a very diverse forest - on the south side there are beeches, in other places there are more conifers, and in one place there are more stones. There used to be a castle there, so it is possible to find some of its remains. I also started to enjoy following the tracks. Both of animals and of a gamekeeper with a dog."

"I enjoyed doing the presentation because it forced me to look for new and interesting information."

"I would like my place to be quiet and peaceful. I'm glad that it's just my place and that there aren't others."





2| Questing Examples

Many schools used Questing activities to explore their local Place and find new ways of learning about familiar buildings and landscape that they see every day. Questing also gave the opportunity for schools to make links with their local communities and involve them in exploration too.

For more information about setting up a Quest go to Teacher Learning Guide and Toolkit www.paths2learning.eu.

Pavol Josef Šafárik Grammar School, Rožňava, SK

*“The Pope was here too! What a cool city!”
“It’s good to learn like this.”*

Introducing Ourselves

Our school is in ROŽŇAVA, Slovakia a town of approximately 20,000 people. We have 402 students of various age categories from 10 to 20 years old.

Introduction

Since Questing is such a universal form of education, I tried to create a format that would be suitable for both lower and higher grade students. Surprisingly, it worked the same in different years. That is why all the students of our school were gradually involved.

Questing is one approach to interpreting local heritage. It is intended for all people who like to explore nature and around villages and like to learn something new.

The text of the quest leads the players along a fixed route, offers them various clues, and their correct deciphering will eventually lead them to the treasure. The combination of fun and learning in Questing will bring joy to everyone, regardless of age.

Our procedure had several stages:

1. Site selection
2. Brainstorming tasks and questions
3. Planning tasks in the field (eg measuring distances, searching for reference points)
4. Compilation of instructions (clarity of instructions + riddles and puzzles)
5. Graphic solution of the questing list
6. Checking procedures and the Quest in practice

>>> Explore

I teach subjects related to culture and art. In my hometown, I know the meaning, location and history of most cultural and historical monuments. During



my teaching practice, I realised that students not only do not know the meaning of individual artefacts, but they do not even see or perceive them. I had to look at the place with different eyes and thus create a quest that would encourage students to perceive their surroundings from a different point of view.




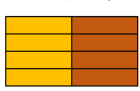




>>> Plan

The goal of the questing was to know the history and cultural monuments of the city - traces of the past. However, I encountered the following challenges, questions and problems during planning:

- the stations must be chosen so that the questing works, even if a single teacher goes out with the class to the square
- safe movement of students in the place designated for the questing (groups will run)
- create tasks so that no one has to be at the stations
- design the worksheet in such a way that it can be used (copyable) also on other occasions

>>> Action

- I designed tasks for students in such a way that they were attractive to them and needed a minimum of aids to complete them. All you needed was a smartphone and a pen/pencil.
- I adapted the tasks to the trends and needs of the current generation (“take a selfie”, “take a picture”).
- I also included a section that expands knowledge and skills.
- The tasks were intended to develop the following competences of pupils: to address people and communicate within their community, to orient themselves in space, to identify historical monuments and to know the meaning.
- The entire action was manageable during one teaching unit.
- The tasks of the quest were designed so that students move only in the pedestrian zone, not on the road.

 	
Námestie baníkov BBV	
Ktoré je 35. písmeno v texte na pamätnej tabuli na budove Pamiatkového úradu?	
Koľko kvetov sa nachádza na dekorácii napájadla na Námestí Baníkov?	Čas na veži / Presný čas 
Hodiny umiestnené na Rožňavskej veži sa od začiatku svojej existencie považovali za najpresnejšie hodiny v Uhorsku. Pôvodné hodiny sa nezachovali, ale vo veži vo výklenku sa zachoval ďalší, dnes už nefunkčný hodinový stroj z roku 1858. Dnes je už len technickou pamiatkou. Zisti aký je rozdiel presnosti času na ručičkových hodinách Strážnej veže.	Na pravej strane je Na ľavej strane je
Majš – svätec, ktorému Ježiš odovzdal 10 božích prikázani. Na hlave má namiesto glorioly ľuče, ktoré vyzerajú ako rohy. Ježiš - na hlave má trňovú korunu, nariasené rúcho a zvykne sa zobrazovať ako dobrý pastier. Sv. Peter – v rukách stále drží kľúče od nebeskej brány. Dávid – kráľ, spravodlivý panovník, bojovník, poet, hudobník.	
Nad vchodom do kostola sa nachádzajú dve sochy. Z uvedených možností rozhodni koho zobrazujú.	
Postav sa medzi cukráreň, ktorá nesie meno rozprávkovej postavčky a šachovnicu (#červený domček). Prejdi 16 krokov smerom k orlovi. Koľko hviezd má okolo hlavy (na glorirole) svätec.	
Urob podobnú snímku, ako vidíš na historickej fotografii. Nájdi Biskupský úrad a na základe pozorovania fasády nájdi nasledovné informácie:	
Ktorá významná osobnosť navštívila toto miesto a v ktorý deň? Napíš názov spolku, ktorý rozvíjal kultúrno vzdelávaciu činnosť v tomto meste. Koľko rokov uplynulo od založenia spomínaného spolku?	
Koho busta sa nachádza pred Strážnou vežou? Urob selfie s touto dámu.	
Vieš uviesť meno majiteľa zmrzlínarne pod Strážnou vežou?	
Nájdi na námestí objekt, ktorého tvar je zhodný s jeho tvarom a pomenuj ho.	

>>> Share

The tourist information centre in Rožňava has shown interest in this Questing. I will provide them with worksheets and we are preparing versions in foreign languages.

Learning and reflection

This thematically focused questing is an excellent form of developing students' practical skills. I assumed that the tasks would be less demanding in higher grades. But it was confirmed that the concept of the questing list is so universal that it contains challenges for all age categories.

The students were active and enthusiastic during the implementation.

*"I never noticed that statue."
"I had to use navigation to find the Monuments Office."*

Reflection on PLACE project overall:

The themes of the PLACE project require completely new ways of thinking, new forms of approaches to the issue. Pupils and students, however, are not used to perceiving diverse stimuli in this way. Assignments often require enormous patience and determination on the part of the facilitator.

This is precisely where I see the meaning of the whole project, because in a purely exact knowledge of the world (education is largely focused in this way) they lose intrapersonal development.



Elementary school and Kindergarten Horní Maršov, CZ

Introducing Ourselves

Our Elementary School and Kindergarten is located in the Giant Mountains, in the small village of Horní Maršov in the Czech Republic (approx. 900 inhabitants). 93 pupils attend the school, 35 children go to kindergarten. 14 pupils took part in the PLACE project, aged 14-16 years.



Overview of your work

Our goal was for the students to look around the village and to evaluate from their point of view what the village (or children and youth) needs.

We started the project with introductory activities, then we used the activity from PLACE and mapped our village (favourite place, unpopular place, etc.).

During the discussion, we chose a topic to work on - creating a quest. Then followed the selection of the place, its inspection and the creation of the quest itself. We chose questing as the main topic to work on - the creation of quests in the school grounds for younger classmates. In the future, we would like to build a place where students can spend their free time.

>>> Explore

While mapping our village, pupils worked in groups in the form of SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). They then wrote what they miss in our village, what they would like. At the end, we discussed in a circle what is possible, what is not possible and why. The problem for them was the question of what they themselves could do about it. We also informed the mayor of the village about the conclusions.

>>> Plan

After completing the seminar on questing, we formed groups of three.

First, there was mapping and a tour of the place where the quests were to take place (the school grounds and the immediate surroundings), then the students divided their work into groups (map, text).

Further work consisted of converting the text and images into digital form and updating the created stories.

At the beginning they didn't trust each other too much, they found it difficult, but then most of them managed it without difficulty. The important thing is to let them work and build faith in their own abilities.



>>> Action

Several times during the afternoon classes, we walked around our school and the immediate surroundings, looking for suitable places for the quest station. After that, the students in the group divided the work, one drew a sketch of the map, the other two created the text. Then, together at school, they rewrote their texts into Word and converted their map into digital form using the MS Paint graphics program. At the end, they had (according to their words) the most difficult job, and that was to try to revise the entire text. I helped them with the proofreading of the text, as well as with inserting the project into the padlet.

>>> Share

We will present the project to parents and the public in November 2023 on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the opening of the new school building. We anticipate that the quests will be available to 1st grade students and children from our kindergarten.

Learning and reflection

As a teacher, it is clear to me that it is necessary to build self-confidence in children. At the beginning of each project everything seems difficult to them, but then it turns out that they can usually handle it with ease. From the teacher's point of view, it is very important to distinguish when children need to be helped and when, on the contrary, to lead them to independence.

The class was reminded of the importance of cooperation, that not everyone needs to know everything and that a good result can be achieved by working together. Perhaps this project will be the beginning of greater cooperation between our pupils and the local government.

Impact

I think our goal has been achieved. After an agreement with the founder, we will continue to build a place that children could use in their free time.

We already have a space where our first-graders together with our ninth-graders will plant a tree in the spring. We decided on a linden. We would like to make this event a tradition (I got the inspiration at the PLACE project training in Košice, Slovakia). In this place, I would like to place a seating area made of wooden pallets (everything would take place under the direction of the pupils as part of work activities). We hope it will be successful.

Reflection on PLACE project overall:

We will definitely continue to work with the PLACE methodology, but we will also use other inspiration that I got during the joint meetings. I would also like to try Philosophy for Children with the other classes, or other activities from Place Based Learning.

3 | Therapeutic Gardening Examples

Therapeutic Gardening is an approach that involves pupils creatively, practically and emotionally - it was very popular in the PLACE project. Schools particularly recognised its value for helping wellbeing and for involving their local community - becoming a more resilient community.

More inspiration about the approach can be found in the Teacher Learning Guide and Toolkit www.paths2learning.eu.



Fellview Primary School, Cumbria, UK

“I have enjoyed working as a team and I have enjoyed making bird boxes and designing and drawing what the garden will be like...because it’s real and everyone takes it seriously and the garden is going to be special. It is designed to be a place where everyone can have their own time when they’re not in lessons.”
(8 year old student)

Introducing Ourselves

Fellview Primary School is a small, rural school in the village of Caldbeck where we teach children with a wide variety of backgrounds and needs. We are proud to be at the heart of a unique community in the beautiful Northern Fells of the Lake District.



>>> Explore

Place project, for us, represented all the wonderful outdoor learning opportunities being pulled back to the heart of the curriculum post covid lockdowns. It represented a chance to create links for the children with their landscape, their local community and even their global community.

>>> Plan

Our Place project has been run mainly in ‘family groups’ as a whole school, meaning lots of chance for collaboration, exploration of the school grounds and research. As an entirely child-led project, it has been one of constant evolution. Adults involved in the work have been constantly impressed with the children’s wonderfully imaginative ideas. The groups were keen to create their own gardens within the school grounds which, after much discussion, were amalgamated into three distinct designs:

Site 1: The Yard Garden

The intention is to create elements of a sensory garden, as well as other elements, that can all function in a non-green area with limited sunlight. Though the designs are ongoing and evolving, below are some of the elements discussed so far, including sensory paths, rain gardens (to utilise rainwater from the guttering) and water features.

Site 2: Charlie-Tree Garden

Group 2 designed a special, enclosed space around 'Charlie Tree' which will be created in the summer term 2023 with the children using drystone walling techniques, in keeping with the local environment. KS1 children have already created a set of fairy doors for this project.

Site 3: The Maze Garden

The maze garden will be planted in spring 2023 as we are using willow for the maze's construction, complete with hidden entrances and exits and a treasure/quest box in the centre.

"We made spider webs out of string and sticks. We started in the forest and it was fun, we got sticks and a piece of string. We started in the middle and tied it around and around. It was really fun in the forest." (6 year old student.)

>>> Action

The Yard Garden is already underway, with the maze garden being planted in the spring and Charlie Tree garden being constructed in the summer. KS1 children have been busily exploring our school grounds and forest area, making spider webs is just one example of their nature-themed work. Their fairy doors are looking incredible, ready to be added to the Charlie Tree garden later in the year.

Through PLACE, we have become real eco warriors too! We have made a link with an Eco-Team in the Czech Republic who inspired our Eco-Team to restart recycling in the school and also install swift boxes to help protect these endangered birds. Through these simple projects, we have already made meaningful links with members of our Cumbrian community, such as Penrith Swifts Group, the local council, cleaning staff and Men in Sheds. The photo shows a student with a 'recycling monster', itself made out of recycled cardboard.

*"It feels amazing that we're helping the swifts!"
(6 year old student.)*



>>> Share

The Eco-Team shares their work on our website and will aim to inspire others by submitting a story to the local newspaper. Our swift project will be shared with the local community at a pop-up museum and gallery at the end of spring term 2023, including members of the swift group giving more swift boxes to parents who have a suitable site to install them. The gardens will be formally opened in the summer term to parents and the local community.

Learning and reflection

The Place project is constantly evolving, with nature at its core. As a teacher, it has been wonderful to be part of a truly child-led process; students come alive when they know they are doing something 'real' and not just academic. The eco part of the project has really humbled me as a practitioner; the KS1 children, for example, had never seen what landfill looked like and were utterly shocked. That, in itself, is a wonderful outcome. The cross-curricular links are noteworthy as well. I've never seen a more engaged group of children learn about geography as they plotted the swifts' migration route on a world map.

Impact - the difference PLACE project has made

The grand openings of the gardens will be acknowledgement that this part of the project has been successful but outcomes such as recycling and installing bird boxes for endangered birds are evidence that we have continuing projects that have grown from Place.

Reflection on PLACE project overall:

The following have been particularly valuable:
Children's well-being and creativity

- Nature connection.
- Therapeutic spaces
- Active community citizenship
- Philosophy for Children
- International connections
- Sustainable Development Goals

We continue to evolve as a school community, and this connection with our local environment will improve even further alongside our Place project. We have always had a connection to our natural landscape and feel that Place has made that connection stronger and more central to what we do.



Schulzovy sady Elementary School, CZ

*"I like to play in the park the most. I collect chestnuts there."
"I don't like how someone throws trash around the school."*

Introducing Ourselves

Our school is located in the centre of a small town with approximately 16 thousand inhabitants. Over 800 pupils study here in two buildings. Both buildings are over a hundred years old. We have school gardens and a large park near the school. One class participated in the project - 18 pupils aged 7 to 8 years. Our main themes for the PLACE project were wellbeing, connecting with the local community and learning outdoors.



>>> Explore

The pupils and I went on walks around the school and some lessons were taught in an outdoor classroom. We observed and discovered interesting and neglected places in the vicinity. During the group discussion and subsequent discussion in the community circle, we shared our impressions together. We drew a happy student and thought about which place in the school or its surroundings would make him feel best.

During further outings to the park, we took photos of selected places, these photos later became a starting point for the Quest, which I prepared for the students.



Here are some of the pupils' comments:

"I can run there and go to the playground."

"I like it best in the park, we can go to the gym there and play with friends."

"There is nothing to do in the garden by the dining room."

"Mom has nowhere to sit in the dining room while she waits for me."

"I like the apple tree there. I enjoyed picking apples."

"We could grow pumpkins or radishes there."

>>> Plan

The pupils of the first grade were interested in picking apples in the school garden near the cafeteria. They noticed neglected, unused flower beds here. They inspected the hut containing garden tools.

At school, they then discussed how to process the apples. By voting, they chose to bake strudel together in the school kitchen. Part of the harvest and baked strudels were distributed to classmates in selected classes.

When meeting with the representative in the classroom, they learned that it was important to improve the garden by the school canteen. They agreed to create proposals for how the new garden could look.

>>> Action

Pupils drew their designs using photos of the school garden and shared their ideas with each other. In addition to preserving the apple tree, they requested a gazebo and benches accessible to the public, flower beds for students, and a herb corner. I gave the proposals to the director for the class. I was invited to a discussion about the overall shape of the garden with the landscape architect, school management and city representatives. However, we have suspended the project for the time being due to the repair of the adjacent school canteen. There is currently a construction site in the garden. We will continue the implementation with the pupils in the autumn of 2023 at the earliest. We also expect the participation of parents.

In the meantime, the pupils and I got involved in the creation of the Quest. In the park, the pupils selected interesting places. For those, I created a Quest for them, during which the students got to know not only the attractions of the park, but also its history and discovered connections with our school. The students tried out the game, modified it and handed it over to their older classmates for further testing. As a reward, they agreed on a bookmark, and agreed to pick it up at the Slavoj city library, where they regularly go.

Learning and reflection

From a teacher's point of view, the topic of locally embedded learning as an important part of teaching at school.

At the beginning of the project, I was worried about how the younger students would cope with the different tasks. However, it was enough to listen and observe them more while outside. They were happy to participate in work activities and games that required movement.

At the beginning of the project, when I was asked whether children could change the world, in most cases the answer was no. Now, after submitting proposals for changing the garden, they perceive that they are becoming part of a work team together with adults and look forward to further cooperation. During the discussions at the beginning of the first class, it often happened that the students repeated someone else's opinion, some did not want to speak. Now they can listen in a circle and they express their opinion without fear.

The biggest challenge in the form of project implementation is still ahead of us. So far, thanks to the director, we have managed to establish cooperation with the representatives of the city, with whom I had the opportunity to discuss our proposals for the modification of the school garden according to the pupils' plans. Creating a Quest in the park was not at all easy for us. In a short time, new ponds were built here, some elements that we had included in the game were moved. I had to change the map, the accompanying texts and the secret several times.



Mateja Lechkého Elementary School, Košice, Slovakia

Introducing Ourselves

Matej Lechký Elementary School, is an urban school in Kosice, Slovakia, with 500 students and integrated students with physical disabilities. The whole school was involved in the project, i.e. pupils aged 6-15 years.



The goals of the project were:

- To activate students as future active citizens who are interested in the environment in which they live.
- Remodel and enhance some of the school grounds, creating a garden with therapeutic and climatic elements.
- Create a questing activity for pupils, parents and the local community.

>>> Explore

At the beginning of the project, we investigated the overall potential of the campus and the school's surroundings. We found out that there were green areas, tall trees and ample space for completing a therapeutic and climatic garden. When creating a sketch of the current and expected state of the garden, the students assessed that we have enough greenery and began to think more about its therapeutic function. By gradually building the garden, the students developed a relationship with the garden, and the culmination of their work and efforts will be an activity - questing for students, teachers, parents and the local community in the form of the event: "Day in the school garden".

>>> Planning

When planning the activities, the most important thing was to motivate the students to actively build the garden. We were able to do this by allowing the students to choose elements and activities that were later implemented and will be implemented in the garden.

>>> Action

The most successful event within the project was the joint planting of trees by ninth-graders and first-graders. It was a simple activity in which the ninth graders together with the first graders planted trees that will be cared for by

new generations of our school's students during their studies at school. However, their task did not end there, even after the trees were planted, the teachers went together with the first-year students to water and check these trees. The biggest advantage of this activity is its simplicity and ease of preparation.

>>> Share

With projects, it is very important to promote activities and inform the public about how the school “lives”, that's why we regularly publish all activities on the school website and school Facebook. The quest ‘Day in a School Garden’ will be a wonderful way to share what we have achieved.

Learning - *What did the work on the PLACE project bring us?*

For the teachers it was cooperation and togetherness.

For the pupils it was fun, a different view of the Place (PLACE) and the ability to make decisions.

For the school it was making more beautiful grounds and a closer connection between teachers and pupils with parents and the local community.



F. J. Fuga Elementary School with Kindergarten, Vinné, SK

Introducing Ourselves

František Jozef Fuga Elementary School with Kindergarten, is in Vinné, Slovak Republic. It is a rural school with 202 elementary school students and 58 children in kindergarten. The entire elementary school was involved in the project, but most of the activities were carried out with 1st, 2nd, 5th and 6th grade students.

The project at our school was focused on building a therapeutic garden and working with Philosophy for Children and critical thinking.

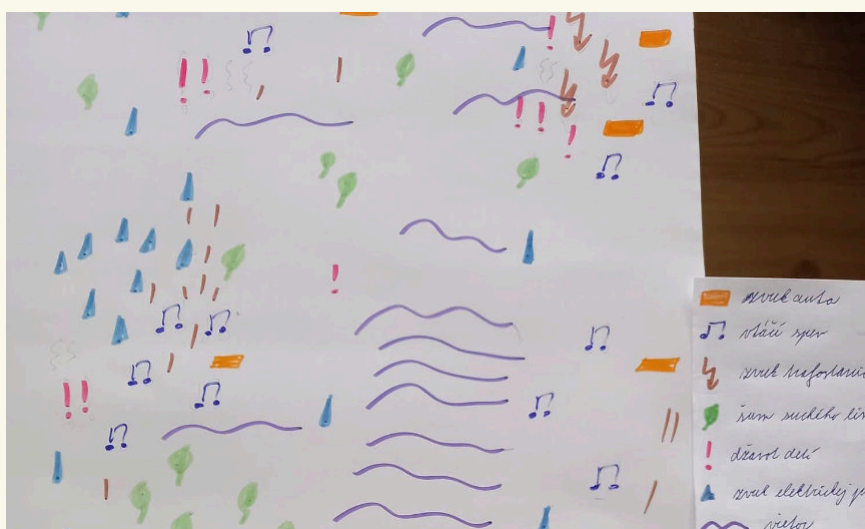


>>> Explore

- 1. Choice of Place by pupils.** Students of 4 classes had one week to design an interesting place around the school that they would like to enliven and make more attractive. They decided on the school garden.
- 2. Exploring the Place with our senses.** We made a sound map of the Place, took macro-pictures, smelled plants and other materials, tasted the fruits of the garden, and felt different structures of materials in the garden.

>>> Plan

- 3. Plan of the therapeutic garden** - students were introduced to the concept of a therapeutic garden so they know what elements it should have, what it should focus on, etc.
- 4. Consulting with management and experts** e.g. winemaker, beekeeper, ornithologist, local government representatives, grandparents - fruit growers.



>>> Action

5. Implementation of works. Digging the land for growing plants (the municipality helped), planting a vineyard, berry and strawberry fields, a butterfly and bee bed, a tactile walkway, an insect hotel, repairing a compost site, pruning and treating fruit trees, placing shelters for bugs, painting and installing birdhouses, winter feeding of chicks, preparatory work for the fireplace.

6. Teaching in the garden.

7. During the entire process, **P4C activities were implemented**, evaluated very positively by the children - their opinion counts, free expression, discussion in small groups,... the disadvantage was time - one lesson was not enough for us.

Plans for the future.

Dry wall, wild corner, herbal spiral, fireplace, hanging nets and rope park between trees, quest. We also have an old, non-functioning and largely devastated greenhouse on the property; we would like to convert it into an outdoor classroom, or a gazebo with teaching aids, collections of nature plants, etc.

The work was carried out gradually and we got advice from the grandfathers of our pupils. The plan was kept.

Top tips for successful planning:

1. get advice from more experienced people
2. do not be discouraged by the dislike of others
3. clearly explain to the students the meaning and goal of the project - the children participated very willingly
4. pay strong attention to safety during big events
5. plan your work very well and think through their implementation.



Achievements and Challenges

Bonding the collective of children and getting them excited about working outside in the garden. The students were indeed ahead of themselves in the activities and wanted to work more and more. Now they see the fruit and enjoy it properly. It is different to work in technology classes - when they “have to”, than when we all go as a group and work together with joy and enthusiasm. Peer education has proven itself very well here.

More Top Tips

P4C activities - we recommend this for students from year 5 and up - they took it very seriously and spent a lot of class time outside. Here, it is better for the students - although more precise preparation by the teacher is needed, as not every girl comes to school appropriately dressed, when classes are held outside.

Impact

We used the project to give value to Place in our school garden, which until recently was not used at all for school activities. We leave therapeutic elements here and also support the relationship with the Place - its history (preserving beekeeping and viticulture) and a sensitive approach to its transformation. We managed to achieve our goals.

The impact of the project on the school is great - together we transformed it into a therapeutic garden, students spend much more time here not only during classes. The importance of the project was also appreciated by the grandparents and the local government, because we renewed the cooperation. We try to help the species diversity of plants and animals on our property - an insect hotel, shelters for insects, a butterfly and herb garden, care for old fruit tree varieties... The PLACE project methodology will continue to be used - we will continue activities to develop the potential of our Place and develop the personal potential of pupils through P4C.



Wigton Infant School, Cumbria, UK

"I want bendy paths because straight ones are boring."



Introducing Ourselves

Wigton Nursery and Infant School, Cumbria UK has 216 pupils who come from the market town and the local rural area. There has been a strong emphasis on using the outdoors for learning in the school and we explore our local Place through Forest School activities. The link between nature connection and wellbeing is recognised and we have supportive parents.

The children involved were 30 children aged 7 years old. They felt proud to be part of the project and to be given such a responsibility as the oldest pupils in the school! They spent 1-2 hours a week working on the project.

>>> Exploring Place

The class particularly enjoyed the 'Happy' and 'Sad' place activity. The oak tree and wildlife area for insects and the bee garden were areas they felt happiest in. They did not like metal gates, broken fences and litter and they were able to talk about why they had different feelings.

Choosing our project

I shared the beautiful pictures with my class of 'therapeutic gardening' from SOSNA Ecocentre, Slovakia and the pupils wondered if they could create such a garden. I approached the local council to see if there would be space in Phoenix Park, the open community park which adjoins the school, and an agreement was made.

>>> Plan

After a visit to the site, pupils drew their own plans and then presented them to the class giving reasons for their choices. Due to the pupils' young age, we worked as a whole class to adapt plans and make them more realistic. This was useful learning for them about compromise and resilience when not all their ideas could be accepted. We had contact with the local elderly care home and

the pupils realised that paths needed to be smooth for older people to access. News about the project spread on the online platform for parents and by ‘word of mouth’ and volunteer help was soon offered.

An expert gardener, Pat (86 years old!) from Wigton Wildlife Group talked to the class about plants for pollinators and helped provide plants and advice. Another community member knitted a ‘Jim the Gardener’ doll which children loved.



>>> Action

The ground needed clearing - 12 shovels and 30 children demanded teamwork and taking turns! This was a new experience to one child who thought ‘soil was brown sand’. Pupils researched which flowers attract bees; a parent helped with growing plants from seed and then pupils planted them out.

>>> Share

Pupils took their family and friends to see their work on their way home from school. They also took turns to take ‘Jim the Gardener’ home and talk about his adventures in the new garden. It was a great ‘transition topic’ for pupils who told the teacher in their new school about it when they moved after the summer.

Pupil learning highlights

- intergenerational learning - young and old people learning from each other
- connection to community and feeling valued in their community
- feeling proud to plan and make a difference to their Place - 'they had responsibility and a job'
- connecting with nature and learning skills of gardening and caring for plants;
- teamwork - taking turns, listening to ideas, sharing tools

Teacher learning - 'The PLACE project gave me the justification to try different approaches to teaching, having deeper discussions with children and learning in new ways in the outdoors.'

'The PLACE Learning Guide gave plenty of teaching resources to explore and ways to extend children's thinking. In meeting with teachers from other countries, I understood different outlooks and 'learning and teaching cultures' which widened my experience.'

Top tips for other schools

- *Plan ahead* - involve parents and see what skills and materials they might come up with.
- *Spread the word* - it is a great project for building community links, particularly for a teacher who lives outside the area
- *'Think small'* - improve one small area first and go for quality not quantity; a garden is a long term project for a school.



4 | Active Citizenship Examples

Young people becoming Active Citizens within their community was important for every school taking part in the PLACE project. Depending on the pupil age and their opportunities, teachers were encouraged to allow pupils to plan activities and make decisions for themselves so that they could build the skills needed to become 'agents of change'.

More information about the approach can be found in the Teacher Learning Guide and Toolkit www.paths2learning.eu.



- Judging what is right
- Understanding what is fair
- Standing up for those that need help
- Trying to listen to both sides
- Informed and wise decisions
- Caring enough to take action
- Equal opportunities



Pavol Josef Šafárik Grammar School, SK

Introducing Ourselves

PAVOL JOSEF ŠAFÁRIK Grammar School is in ROŽŇAVA, Slovakia, a town of approximately 20,000 people. We have 402 students of various age categories from 10 to 20 years old. We are based in a beautiful historic building that commands respect but requires a lot of renovations.

The pupils attending the KREÁTOR art club between the ages of 12 and 19 participated in this activity.



Overview of our work

Our school building offers little space for relaxation. A frequently visited place is the school cafeteria, where everyone is waiting for instant refreshment in the form of food and pleasant meetings. The students decided that this cafeteria needed their intervention. They suggested working on making the pale and empty space look cosy. They prepared several graphic designs of how the change could look and got to work. Painting walls and assembling the tables took a month and a half.

Main themes

The basic theme was the local activism of students who wanted to change the space they use into an attractive one, give it a new design and a new feel.

>>> Explore and Plan

We started from our space and wanted to see if we could make a difference through visual arts. Large-scale painting is not an easy thing. We were responsible for everyone who visits this space. Since the students already voted to change the interior of the cafeteria, we had to take care. Will everyone like it? Both younger and older people?

>>> Action

A big challenge for us was cooperation and decision-making. What colours and how many would we need? We found out that we needed many other essential aids besides paints. We needed the help of an artist! How could we put a well-drawn picture on a tablet onto the wall? With joint efforts and the help of experts, we managed it.

The school cafeteria was a place where students went very often, but no one liked it. They made it interesting only in their imaginations. These eventually materialised in space.

Under the influence of mass culture, we are used to instant solutions; as if an idea is enough and the result will materialise in that moment.

We learned:

- that it's not that simple - instant solution doesn't work,
- patience,
- that it is important to plan and think divergently,
- tolerate each other and find beauty in other people's aesthetics,
- that “it's enough for us even this way”, is not enough for us,
- that we can be demanding of ourselves and it pays off,
- that we need each other, everyone is a pro at something,
- that we know how to work together.

Reflection on PLACE project overall:

The themes of the PLACE project require completely new ways of thinking, new forms of approaches to the issue. Assignments often require enormous patience and determination on the part of the facilitator. This is precisely where we see the meaning of the whole project, because in a purely exact knowledge of the world (education is largely focused in this way) they lose intrapersonal development.

Thanks to the PLACE project, we implemented activities in the following thematic areas:

- Community connection
- Place-based learning
- Questing
- Therapeutic spaces
- Active citizenship of the community
- Philosophy for children
- International connections
- Sustainable development



Allenbourn Middle School, Dorset, UK

Introducing Ourselves

Allenbourn Middle School is in the centre of the market town of Wimborne Minster, Dorset, UK and has 600 students. A group of students that make up the school's Eco team, aged 9 - 14 years old, took part in the project.

We wanted the PLACE project to link with the environmental work that we were undertaking in school. So the main themes we focused on were nature and community connection.



>>> Explore

We undertook a study of the school's internal and external environment and identified places that made the students feel good and places that made them feel sad. We also used the wellbeing survey to identify what the students felt was important to them.

>>> Plan

Students used the study of the school's environment to identify what they felt made a place good to be in and created a list. They then planned to implement these things into more of the places to improve the feeling around school. For example, in the external areas, students identified that litter made them feel unhappy in places. They felt that the wildlife area was an important place but it needed to be cared for.

>>> Action

Students identified that classrooms having plants made them more cheerful, so we used cuttings from plants currently in school, potted them up and then shared them around to different classrooms in school. Classrooms that had recycling facilities were seen as a positive as well, so students organised for each room to have one clearly labelled.

Litter picks were done in the areas around the school building and we organised a litter pick within the local area to help extend the impact.

>>> Share

The litter pick was shared in the school newsletter and with the wider community so that parents were made aware that work was being undertaken to help to improve the local community.

Reflection and Top tips

It is very difficult to pick just a couple of things to change as the students usually have big ambitions. I think that starting small and making sure that the action is carried out everywhere possible is the best tip. It is also important to ask for help to achieve things. The most challenging thing was the lack of students' independence. They rely on a lot of adult ideas and planning, because they struggle with how to plan an action and implement it themselves.

Impact

We identified changes that we would like to make and why we would like to make them. I would like to get more involvement within the community in the future and we have already been involved with local tree planting activities.

I would like to make people more aware of the work that is being done, but this will need to be more student led so that information can be updated more frequently. We have looked at making a blog for the school's Eco team to use.

Reflection on the PLACE project

I feel that it has fitted in well with activities that were already being done and has made the students more thoughtful about their impact in the local community.



Winterslow Primary School, Winterslow, UK

Introducing Ourselves

We are a small, rural primary school located in a village just outside Salisbury in Wiltshire. The whole school was involved - age 4 - 11 years.

Overview of your work

Following our PLACE visit, Eco Week was a culmination of our experience.

>>> Explore

We were keen to get the children involved in all the different aspects of Place Based Learning as well as familiarise staff with the opportunities to encourage PBL in our school.

>>> Plan

Katharyn and Emily led staff training to feedback on the project and what Place Based Learning can look like across all Key Stages. Katharyn then gave staff a huge list of activities that they could choose from and have a go at throughout the week. Eco Week was introduced to the children in a school assembly to ensure they understood the purpose of the week.

>>> Action

During the week, children and staff were encouraged to share their work to inspire the children. Below is a snapshot of the different activities that took place:

Therapeutic Gardening

During Eco Week Year 2 pupils explored honeybees! We looked at their role in our ecosystem, how they pollinate flowers and what we can do to help them. We revamped our flower beds and planted bee friendly wildflowers.

Year 4 pupils made compostable plant pots using newspaper. They filled them with soil and planted sweet peas ready to transfer to the raised beds next term!



Community

Year 3 pupils decided to make Eco-friendly bird feeders to help our wildlife combat this unusually cold weather! They then hung them around the school and local area.

Reception and Year 1 pupils thought a lot about their outside space and how they could improve it. They spent some time cleaning their outside equipment, weeding their flowerbeds and adding more materials to their bug hotel.

Year 5 and 6 pupils spent some time in our village plantation, they weaved their own art and painted stones. These were then placed around the village for the local community to enjoy.

>>> Share

We celebrated our work on social media and across the academy. Katharyn and Emily were invited to talk as ‘inspirational leaders’ at an Academy wide teacher training session and have been in contact with other schools who are interested in the project.

Learning & Reflection

The school is keen to continue celebrating our dedication to Place Based Learning. We are ensuring that sustainability is a thread that runs through our curriculum to ensure children feel empowered and able to make an impact – no matter how small.

Impact

As a school, we are taking on new projects. Our academy trust is running a new initiative alongside their school councils. Our Winterslow school council are ‘agents of change’ who have already visited other schools to give feedback on what we have been doing as well as give advice to other schools about what they can do to incorporate Place Based Learning within their curriculum.

PLACE has had a huge impact on us and how we all view our Place. It has inspired us to tailor our curriculum to foster young people to become agents of change.

Elementary and Kindergarten Montessori Prachatice, CZ

*“A lot of kids have already changed the world.
By doing good deeds, we teach that to those around us.”*

Introducing Ourselves

Our Elementary School and Montessori Kindergarten is in Prachatice, Czech Republic and is an urban residential school. Prachatice has over 10,000 inhabitants. It is a large school with more than 400 pupils and over 170 of them attend the Montessori program. The students from one class of this program participated in the project aged 9-11 years.



Overview

With the project, we wanted to arouse students' interest in the immediate surroundings, we wanted to motivate them to do community work and support them in spending more time outdoors.

We worked exactly according to the given plan - mapping the surroundings, critical thinking, meeting with an expert and our own project. We focused on connecting with the community through connecting with nature.

>>> Explore .

With the children, we walked around the neighbourhood several times, the children described what they saw. Then they recorded interesting and other places on the map and discussed what feelings some places evoke in them.



It was important for the children that they got to know lesser-known and neglected places in their surroundings and that they needed to cultivate them. We met with an expert from the field. He told the children about the importance of water in the landscape. The children then introduced the information they had acquired to their classmates and parents during a shared meeting. From a well-being point of view, it was beneficial for the children to go outside, which they wanted to do a lot themselves, and overall they enjoyed the project and connected with each other.

“I like Skalka because there is ice cream there.

Hazelnuts grow there.

It's scary there, they vaccinate there.

It's fun there, you'll have a blast there.

I like to train there, there is a ski jump.

I like looking at books in bookstores.”

>>> Plan

The children were very inspired by a lecture by an expert on wetlands. She told them about a spring in the vicinity of the school. At the community circle, the children themselves planned an expedition with the aim of finding the spring. When they succeeded, they planned to explore the spring and clean it up. They did this together in the following week. They also had to plan what tools they would need to take with them.

Our tip for successful planning is to really let the children plan and make the plans happen. Don't talk them into it too much, children are capable of so much more than we can imagine.

>>> Action

Using a map that they had to find in the garden in the form of questing, the students reached the spring, explored it to find out what was needed and equipped themselves with suitable clothes and utensils for the next expedition, and cleaned the spring. In the beginning, an expert on wetlands helped us, some parents also came to help with advice. In some matters, we wanted to contact the municipality, but after previous not entirely positive experiences, we ended up dealing with it ourselves.

>>> Share

The achieved results were shared by the children during a joint big assembly, which we hold every Monday. The children presented their achievements to the parents at a garden party, which we also organise regularly.

Learning and reflection

As a teacher, we once again verified that the more we trust the children and entrust them with the preparation and the entire organisation of the project, the more responsibly they approach it and are able to deal with it within their age. The children learned a lot about wetlands, once again practised working together, planning and implementing a project, sharing with the environment. We found out again that it makes sense to rely only on yourself when facing obstacles, or enthusiastic experts or parent volunteers. We consider it a success that we completed the project and helped to improve part of nature around the school.

*"I'm sure I can communicate in my town.
It's hard for me to say what justice is."*

Impact

As part of the project, we achieved the goal we set for ourselves. We participated in the improvement of the space around the school, and the children improved their planning and implementation of the project, communicating with the city management. Citizens of the city can use the surroundings of the cleaned spring for walks. This will once again serve as a home for plant and animal inhabitants and a wetland ecosystem overall.

We will continue to use the PLACE project methodology in other projects. We plan to improve the school garden, the children enjoyed the activities using Philosophy for Children.

Reflection on PLACE project overall:

The PLACE project was an opportunity for us to make learning more enjoyable for children. Given that we addressed the issue of wetlands around the school, the children worked in close contact with nature and their learning was thus tied to the place. The community was also involved in the project in the framework of sharing, experts and parents. In many activities, they used Philosophy for Children, which they enjoyed a lot. Thanks to the project, they also connected with peers from England at least online.



Heatherlands Primary School, Poole Dorset, UK

Introducing Ourselves

Our school is in an urban location, with 650 students from age 4-11 years. The students taking part were 8/9 years old.

Overview of your work

Our involvement in the Place project was to expand our curriculum and children's learning, to link local and global perspectives and learn more about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As part of our 'Food and Fairtrade' topic in Year 4, we saw the opportunity for children to put this into practice and demonstrate their understanding that the food we eat comes from all over the world. We followed a sequence of lessons and ended with a Fairtrade Sale, where children sold items on a stall in school to their parents/carers having created information posters to advertise the benefits of buying Fairtrade items.



Main themes

Investigation, design, problem solving, building skills & expertise of active citizenship. Links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and community connection. To demonstrate understanding that food we eat comes from all over the world.

>>> Explore

The topic began with an exploration of any Fairtrade items children could find in their homes or local communities. These were evaluated and discussed. They were asked to explain the stages of producing chocolate from cocoa bean to supermarket shelves and understand the importance of supporting Fairtrade and the environmental impact.



To know that Fairtrade works with farming co-operatives, businesses and governments to make trade fair.

Following this, DEED delivered a workshop to all students. This involved exploring a wider range of Fairtrade and upcycled items and placing them on a large map depending on their origin. The main learning for the children here was the huge selection of product types.

>>> Plan and Action

We wanted to understand more about Fairtrade, and how the FT premium enables farmers and producers to plan for the future and make decisions that protect the environment. By choosing to buy fairtrade products our pupils knew that they could make a positive difference to people around the world. The workshops from DEED, followed by the pupils setting up and running their own Fairtrade stalls after school, enabled them to make a positive difference.

>>> Share

For the final part of the topic, parents/carers and other teachers were invited into school at the end of the day, to share the children's learning. They attended the sale and celebrated the effective, persuasive posters and advertising that the children made. The pupils showed their maths skills to their adults, and in total the 3 classes sold over £200 worth of Fairtrade products after school! Great work!

Learning and reflection

On reflection, there seemed to be a lot of misconceptions around Fairtrade amongst the children at the beginning of the topic, mainly around Fairtrade meaning special chocolate that was very expensive! It was positive to challenge these early on.

Children become very invested in the unfairness of how much negative impact there is on the producers and farmers – this led to an engaging piece of persuasive letter writing in order to harness their enthusiasm.

Impact and Reflection

The event was really well received by the school community and the school had lots of positive comments about its success. Our senior leaders commented on how engaged and enthusiastic the children were, as well as how cross-curricular the event became, involving a lot of English and Maths objectives also. The project will definitely be repeated next year!

Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 12- responsible consumption & production ;Goal 1 – 4 – No poverty, Zero hunger, Good health and wellbeing, quality education.

Witchampton Church of England First School, Dorset UK

"Look my banana is fairtrade and so is my apple."

Introducing ourselves

Witchampton C of E First School is a small rural school of 60 pupils aged 4 to 9 years old. Our school strapline is 'small school, big heart, making a difference' and our children are real advocates of this. Pupil voice is at the heart of the decisions that are made at our school and the School Council and Eco Team decided (in collaboration with their classes) that they wanted to continue to raise awareness of fair trade not only during Fairtrade Fortnight but as a sustainable part of our school ethos.



The year 3 and 4 pupils were further inspired by their topic work on 'Biomes' early in the Spring Term which raised questions on sustainability and Fairtrade and how our small school could make a difference. They were particularly passionate about the impact of palm oil production on rainforests and how it can be produced ethically. They questioned the use of palm oil in the food they had in their packed lunches and also in the dinners provided by school. They wrote to the Prime Minister about their concerns and received a reply! As a consequence the children have influenced their families choice in the foods they choose for their packed lunches. This led them to consider other produce that may not be produced ethically.

The School Council invited the Fairtrade shop into school and helped set it up and publicise the event to pupils and their families.

Louise from DEED guided pupils through a Fairtrade workshop with a focus on chocolate but also raising their awareness of the importance of being aware of where our food and other produce come from and whether it is ethically produced. Louise brought in a real tool that is used to cut down cocoa bean pods, which are used to make chocolate. It was very heavy! Then the children pretended to be cocoa farmers who grew cocoa beans together and sold them to Louise. With their new money, the children had to decide what they were going to spend it on and prioritise the most important things. They had to choose from food, water, new clothes, education, fertilisers and pesticides and medicine. Last but not least, the children tried fairtrade chocolate and mango!

After the workshop the children prepared an assembly to share what they had learned with the rest of the school and helped create a display in the school hall. The young children made Fairtrade badges to wear to help them spot the badge in the shops.

‘Our workshop was amazing and one of the best things we have done. Please can we have more’.

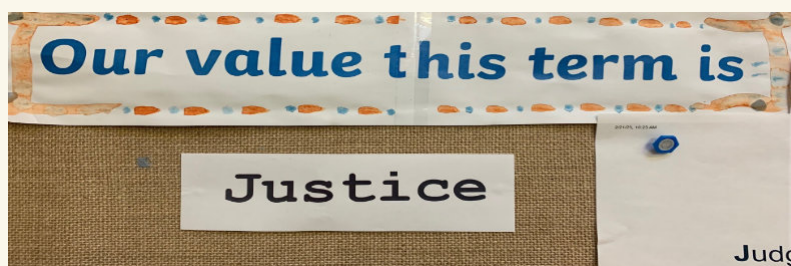
‘I took mummy to the Fairtrade shop in Wimborne on Saturday and we bought some chocolate’

Impact

The pupils and their families are more aware of where their food comes from and how it is produced. Pupils are actively looking at the wrappers on their food and letting each other and the staff know when a Fairtrade label is on a product. They are encouraging their families and friends to consider more carefully where their food comes from. This also linked very well with our school value focus of ‘justice’.

Pupils have questioned the origins of the meals that are provided by the caterers in school. The School Council and Eco Team are now working with the Headteacher to ensure their new catering company has the same ethical values that they do.

At Witchampton we are determined that this was just the start and it is a standing agenda point of the Eco Team and School Council meetings. Our values of ‘Love, Inspiration, Courage and Respect’ really are shining through!





5 | Philosophy for Children Examples

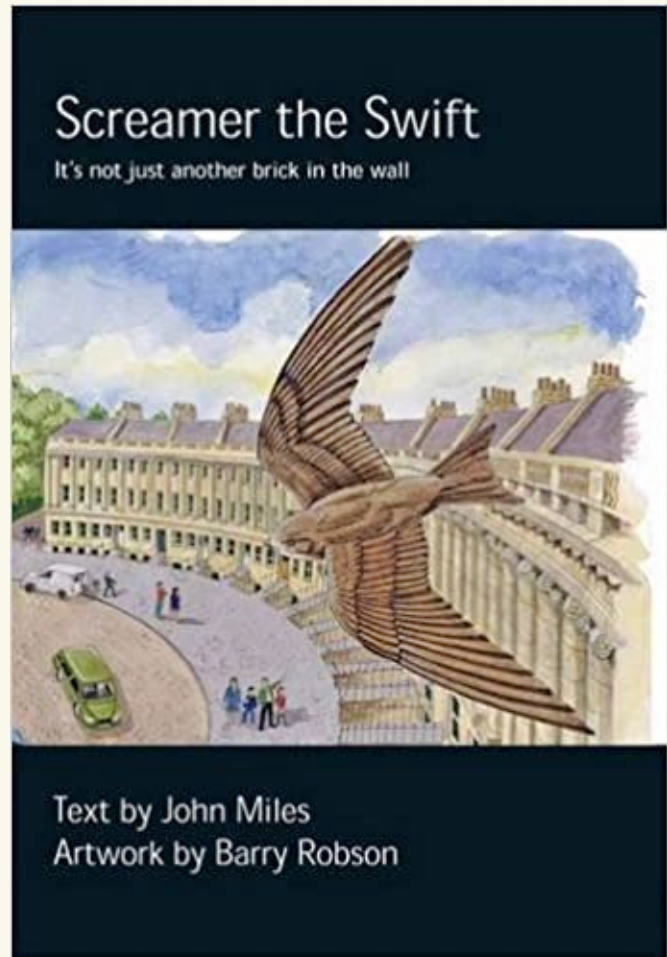
The Philosophy for Children (P4C) full methodology can be found in the Teacher Learning Guide and Toolkit www.paths2learning.eu.

Many schools used aspects of P4C and thinking skills in their discussions about their local Place and it became embedded in their work.

Fellview Primary School Cumbria UK

This P4C session was done as part of our PLACE project work discovering more about an endangered local bird and helping provide nest sites for them (described in the Therapeutic Spaces section)

We read 'Screamer the Swift' by John Miles and Barry Robson. This book describes the fact that swifts are losing their nesting sites due to humans maintaining their buildings and covering holes in walls. They like to live in houses and churches, squeezing through tiny gaps to nest inside roofs, but as more old buildings are renovated, swift nest sites are fast disappearing and this species is on the Conservation Red list - needing urgent action. At one time in our village the birds were much more common. This book conveys the magic of seeing swifts and tells the remarkable story of where they nest, their migration and where they go in the winter. The illustrations are excellent.



After reading the book as a stimulus for enquiry, the children wrote questions they would like to discuss:

Do you think people should keep old houses with holes in them?

Should all new houses have a hole in them?

Are humans more important than animals?

Do humans think more highly of themselves than animals?

Then they voted and chose the question 'Are humans more important than animals?'

A very heated discussion followed. They lined themselves up on a continuum between YES and NO in answer to the question and there were a few children at each extreme. The children holding extreme views debated directly and the children in the middle put forward both sides of the argument. The vast majority eventually decided that as humans are indeed animals, and humans don't always act very wisely, we should try to look after each other better.



6 | P4C Teacher – Training in Slovakia

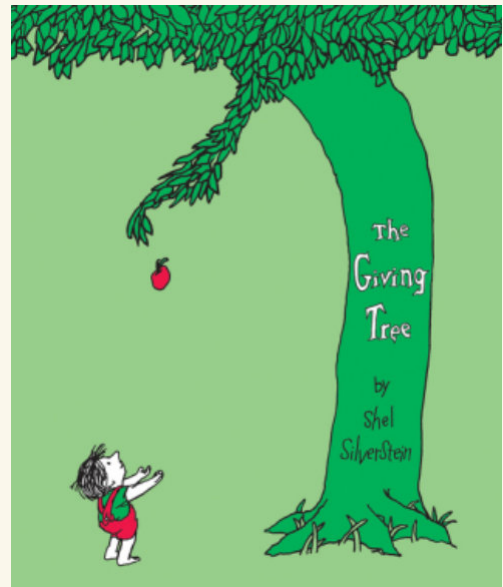
The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFQZfeHq9wo>

Overview

This story was used as a P4C stimulus for thinking by teachers at SOSNA international PLACE training. It has been used with pupils of above 7 years.

Some 'big ideas' from this story include happiness, human needs v nature, consumption, stewardship, self-sacrifice, exploitation.



>>> Explore

The story was read together and participants shared their initial ideas in pairs. Any problems in understanding were Clarified and the main themes were identified. Participants then worked in small groups of 4 or 5 to create a 'thinking' question that they would like to discuss around the main themes of the book.

>>> Plan

Here are some of the questions they created:

- Can we be happy without an appreciation of nature?
- Should human needs come before those of non-humans?
- Do all good things come to an end?
- Can you ever give too much to a loved one?
- Who was happier? The tree or the boy/man?
- When should you stop giving selflessly and practise self-care?
- Does a tree ever die?
- Can small things make us happy?
- Where is the boundary of self-sacrifice?
- What is happiness? What do we really need for happiness?
- Where is the boundary, when a person will have enough, will be happy?
- Why do different cultures vary so much in their stewardship of the earth

>>> Action and reflection

Then the participants voted on which question they thought would stimulate a good discussion. They chose 'Can we be happy without an appreciation of nature?' In the discussion we tried to define what happiness was - this was tricky as there are many interpretations. We also wondered what appreciation meant - respect, love, care. Also how do we define nature and are we part of nature or separate from it?

Learning

This book can easily be used with students and it will help them think more deeply about their responsibilities towards nature. More ideas for P4C can be found in the Toolkit <https://www.paths2learning.eu>.



7 | Nature Journaling

Wigton Infant School, Cumbria, UK

This creative way of exploring Place was introduced by a headteacher of a PLACE School and the methodology was adopted into the PLACE project. Here is a description of their experiences with 6 and 7 year old pupils. See the PLACE Toolkit for more information about using Journaling.

Overview

We wanted to develop children's connection to nature and broaden the curriculum by developing their observational skills and their ability to link concepts across art, science and maths.

The overriding theme was nature connection for wellbeing and the development of pro-conservation values. However by developing their ability to interrogate a subject through close observation and then subsequently guiding them to make connections with their previous experiences we also hoped to develop their critical thinking and imaginative skills.

>>> Explore

Through a series of afternoon lessons we explored a number of species within the school grounds.

The pupils were keen to spend time looking closely at wildlife, particularly when using a hand lens to gain a new perspective on what they thought were familiar species. There was lots of excited talk in response to the sessions and the children benefited from being outside and being able to speak freely with each other.

We feel the pupils became more connected to the school grounds through closer examination of what lives there and developing a greater knowledge and understanding.

We also feel it gave them a tool or process for exploring places in the future.

>>> Plan

The exploration through journaling was not designed to result in specific actions, but we hope that it helped to develop pro-conservation values in our children. Alongside the other projects to improve the biodiversity of the school grounds, develop a therapeutic garden in the public park adjacent to school, and take children to spend time in local nature-rich sites we hope that this activity encourages positive feelings about being in nature, has a positive impact on the children's wellbeing and encourages them to take positive environmental action in the future.

>>> Action

We delivered a weekly 1 hour nature journaling lesson to our pupils for approximately one term. The lessons were led by the headteacher and were heavily influenced by the methodology and approach described by John Muir Laws. (<https://www.wildwonder.org/>)

Short videos by John Muir Laws were used as inspiration for some sessions. Adults were able to scribe for children who were less able to record their thoughts and observations in their journals making sessions accessible to all children, and the focus for feedback is always about observation and what the children have noticed, rather than any perceived artistic merit.

>>> Share

The children's work was shared with their parents and the headteacher has shared the process and examples of the children's journaling with members of the PLACE project community.

Learning and reflection

The biggest challenge is perhaps to consistently find curriculum time to journal regularly. I don't feel that we did it over a long enough period to embed the skills and approach across even the Year 2 staff. Once embedded as an approach I feel it would be easier to sustain and maintain the skills in the pupils as I would use the journaling process in many areas of the curriculum, particularly the approach of "I notice... I wonder ... It reminds me of ..."

When introducing journaling, both at Wigton Infant School and at other schools, it was surprising and pleasing to see how quickly the children adopted the approach and how insightful they were, particularly in making connections to things that were in their existing experience.

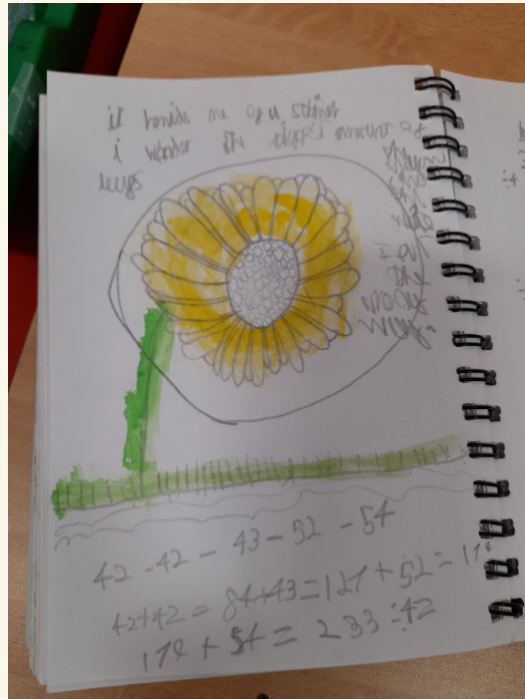
We hope that you have enjoyed reading about the wonderful learning, benefits for pupil wellbeing and the value that has come from nature and community connection through the PLACE project in action. The teachers and pupils have



found the experience empowering and motivating (as well as fun!) and they are to be congratulated for all their achievements.

The PLACE partners hope that these Case Studies have inspired you to explore your local Place and try some of these Place based approaches with your pupils and community.

“What did the project give me? I found out what other people like and that they are a little different than I originally thought.”



“I was glad that I could go to that place more. It was very interesting to learn about its past. I started thinking more about how to look after it. This place is a very diverse forest - on the south side there are beeches, in other places there are more conifers, and in one place there are more stones. There used to be a castle there, so it is possible to find some of its remains. I also started to enjoy following the tracks.”

We hope that you have enjoyed reading about the wonderful learning, benefits for pupil wellbeing and the value that has come from nature and community connection through the PLACE project in action. The teachers and pupils have found the experience empowering and motivating (as well as fun!) and they are to be congratulated for all their achievements.

The PLACE partners hope that these Case Studies have inspired you to explore your local Place and try some of these Place based approaches with your pupils and community.

The Schools taking part in the PLACE Project were:

Czech republic:

- ZŠ a MŠ Horní Maršov | www.zshornimarsov.cz
- Grammar School Úpice | www.gymsos-upice.cz
- ZŠ Schulzovy sady Dvůr Králové | www.zsschsady.cz
- ZŠ a Montessori MŠ Prachatice | www.narodka.cz/montessori.html
- Základní škola, Vrchlabí | www.zsskolnivr.cz

UK - Cumbria:

- Wington Nursery and Infant School | www.wigtoninf.cumbria.sch.uk
- Fellview Primary School | www.fellview.cumbria.sch.uk
- Inglewood Infants School | www.inglewood-inf.cumbria.sch.uk
- Oughterside Foundation | www.oughtersideschool.co.uk
- Seascale Primary School | www.seascaleschool.co.uk
- St Patrick's RC Primary School | www.stpatricksworkington.co.uk

UK - Dorset & Wiltshire

- Allenbourn Middle School | www.allenbournmiddle.org
- Heatherlands Primary School | www.heatherlands.poole.sch.uk
- Winterslow Primary school | www.winterslow.wilts.sch.uk
- Witchampton First School | www.witchampton.dorset.sch.uk

Slovakia:

- ZŠ Mateja Lechkého, Košice | zslechkeho.edupage.org
- ZŠ Masaryková, Košice | zsmasarykovake.edupage.org
- ZŠ Tomašiková, Košice | zstomke.edupage.org
- Gymnázium P.J. Šafárika, Rožňava | gymrv.edupage.org
- ZŠ a MŠ M.R.Štefánika, Budimír | zsbudimir.edupage.org
- ZŠ s MŠ F.J.Fullu, Vinné | zsfuguvinne.edupage.org



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