

Contemporary Literacy in Contemporary Kids

ABOUT IMPACT

Impact shows a significant effect or influence that an event, person or situation has on someone or something. In a school project context, impact is something that brings about long-term changes in the participants, the partner schools and their communities.

Let's get started with the students and the teachers directly involved, and the impact our project had on them.

The students developed their digital, technology, information, media, political and intercultural skills in an environment and atmosphere that supported collaboration, knowledge construction, real-world problem-solving, using ICT for learning, self-regulation and skilled communication. As a consequence, they reported to getting more effective at learning. As participating in the project activities required quite a bit of flexibility, adaptability, initiative, self-direction, accountability and responsibility, the students felt that they were more prepared to enter the job market after leaving school.

The teachers had many opportunities to learn together with their students. Not only did they improve their understanding of contemporary literacy, but they also learned how to apply different literacy skills in their classrooms. In connection with pedagogy, we asked several important questions about modern school and its aspirations. As experienced teachers we already knew that processes, experiences, organic systems, informal learning and intangible outcomes (the progressive approach) are as important as content, structures, ordered systems, formal learning and measurable outcomes (the traditional approach). So, finding a perfect balance was one of our priorities.

The partner schools benefitted mostly in teacher-student relationships, ICT-supported higher order learning, and European dimension. In other words, when students and teachers agree that effective learning is everyone's main focus at school, mutual understanding improves. When students are willing to analyse, synthesize, apply and evaluate, their critical thinking competence grows. When students use web sources for their research, critically evaluate online media and/or present their ideas electronically, they use ICT for learning. Finally, when schools choose to collaborate transnationally via Erasmus+ projects, European values receive a lot more attention in their development activities.

As regards the communities we'd like to point out that local authorities highly appreciated our project wherever we were. They took sincere interest in our activities and always had time to meet with us. When it comes to local employers, they also fully approved of our intention to teach the students how to work collaboratively, think strategically, take responsibility, and communicate well. Although we don't really think that our project changed the way our communities function, we still believe that we've made them more aware of the benefits of educational partnerships Europe-wide.

Contemporary Literacy in Contemporary Kids

Locally, our students and teachers went through a rather sharp learning curve. The partner schools gained more prestige in their communities and grew more capable of integrating innovation in their curricula. Local authorities, in turn, took pride in the fact that the schools under their rule were chosen to be part of Erasmus+ programme.

Regionally, when the partner schools communicate their project well enough, other schools get inspired, too. With new knowledge and skills acquired, the schools then can stand out as innovation-minded educational centres. This is also true at national level.

At European level we addressed the key competences with special attention to modern literacy skills, ICT for learning and teaching, and pedagogy and didactics in every learning, teaching and training activity we held. Our project outcomes prove that the participants gained knowledge of a broad range of digital devices in networking context; they learned how to use appropriate technology and how to maintain their e-safety; they improved their understanding of defining, accessing, evaluating and using the information effectively; they learned how to evaluate and create media messages, as well as how to communicate effectively across other cultures.

We believe that outside our partnership, those also interested in Erasmus+ projects will benefit the most. Our website, for example, is built as a true learning platform. It works as a dissemination tool and a repository for student and teacher outputs, but it also showcases what a high quality website can actually do. Our e-book, in turn, is the most important output of our transnational activities together. It gives ample evidence of active learning that took place during the project, and it provides the reader with a number of practical classroom activities based on the learning we did.

The CLICK team

August 2017