



LEARNING INTENTION

Learning



eTwinning

Tracy / M

eTwinning National Quality Label



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills



Co-funded by
the European Union



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eTwinning is the online community for schools in Europe. eTwinning offers an online platform for teachers to communicate, collaborate, develop projects, share and be part of the most exciting learning community in Europe. Getting involved in eTwinning is easy. Just register online through the European School Education Platform. Registered users can then access eTwinning, the entry point to the community. eTwinning enables users to find project partners and share resources, practice and ideas through its social networking features. Users can interact collaboratively in projects with their pupils and

partners through a special tool called TwinSpace, a private and secure working space for all project members. eTwinning is co-funded by the European Union and administered in participating countries by a National Support Organisation (NSO).

Léargas is the National Support Organisation for eTwinning in Ireland. The NSO is at your disposal to provide technical and pedagogical support, promote eTwinning across the country, organise professional development activities, and much more.

An Introduction to the National Quality Label

The eTwinning National Quality Label (NQL) provides concrete recognition for teachers and students who have achieved excellence through an eTwinning project. NQLs boost motivation and are public affirmation of a school's commitment to quality and openness in European collaborative work.

This eBook presents a selection of NQL winners in Ireland in 2023 as well as some useful information on creating projects. The projects vary widely in theme and content but the commitment to digital collaborative work and pedagogical innovation is common to all. We are very grateful to the teachers who have allowed us to feature their work in this booklet, and we hope its readers are inspired to apply some of these innovative approaches to their own projects in the future.

Flying High Together

Peter Kane, Kilglass National School



Background

This was a unique, cross-curricular STEAM project with the fun theme of kites as the centre. Children love a kite but this childhood favourite of old has lost some of its popularity in modern-day society, so, we set about reintroducing kites into our classrooms and this is the heart of our eTwinning project. The project brought together five countries: Denmark, Malta, Ireland, Spain and Portugal with pupils from ages 9-12. The 3rd/4th class in Kilglass N.S. participated in the project which started in October 2022 with a video conference. This gave pupils and teachers from partner schools the opportunity to meet for the first time and to establish initial connections. This virtual meeting represented an exciting starting point for our collaborative journey and ignited a real interest in our kite theme.

Project Aim

Collaboration was the main aim of the project as we aspired to develop collaborative practices within our classrooms and between our schools. The eventual goal of the project was to make and fly our own kites. To get there we designed an array of activities and tasks for the children to complete so they could get a real insight into

the world of kites. The project started out with virtual ice-breaker activities such as cultural presentations, a logo competition and each country's version of the Cup Song! The focus initially was cross-country communication, cooperation and fun! The partnerships were developed quickly and a strong sense of unity and collaboration was rapidly developed.

This really set our project up for success as all schools were committed from an early stage. The cross-curricular aims could then be developed and pursued. These included a range of subjects areas including the Science of flying a kite, History of Kites, collaborative kite story-making, kite research, Geography and the Art of designing a cool kite!

Project Work

The project was a huge success in terms of cooperation and collaboration. All partner countries took the project to heart and contributed to its success, and the pupils found a new interest in kites. This was often fuelled by parent interest in the subject matter. Teachers and pupils engaged fully with the project and kept to the timelines, which was achieved by on-going meetings, discussions and everyone buying into

the eTwinning project. Pupils loved the variety and 'outside the box' elements of the project including kite design, logo creations, collaborative storytelling and meeting some kite 'experts'. Some of the highlights of the project included the construction of the kites, the feedback from kite 'experts', the kite research and of course the flying of the kites in the school playground.

Outcomes

The pupils involved in all five schools really loved the project and developed numerous skills and competencies as a result. They engaged in a myriad of activities including art, research, story-writing, kite design and construction, scientific studies and learning about wind and weather. They also gained valuable technology and digital skills by designing PowerPoints, working on the project Padlet and adding to our project digital eBook using Book Creator. They also developed their higher order skills such as collaboration, critical-thinking, problem-solving and communication as the project progressed. All the pupils involved, and their teachers, found the project highly engaging and fun! It was very much pupil-led, and this really added to their confidence and enthusiasm.

Everyone is Welcome

Bríd Grady, Killeen National School, Co. Mayo



Background

"Everyone is Welcome" was a project that brought five countries together. Ireland, the coordinating partner, along with Turkey, Italy, Poland and Romania. Not only in our schools, but around the world children are excluded due to disability, race, language, religion, gender, and poverty. Every child has the right to be welcomed and included in all areas of life. The focus of this project was developing a more effective inclusive education programme at European level through the exchange of good practice for students with disabilities or at disadvantage in our schools, using art therapies for children with special education students and other behavioral, emotional or psychological problems and placing inclusive practices into our curricula.

Project Aims

Our main aims were as follows: to increase awareness of inclusive education, including promoting parental involvement in schools; creating safe and inclusive environments for students with disabilities, disadvantaged students and those with special needs; improvement in opportunities for those students to learn cognitive and social-emotional skills; the integration of arts and art therapy to provide

opportunities, creating interesting lessons for students and giving them opportunities to work together; strengthen positive behaviours through art therapy and artwork, helping students to learn important life lessons and social skills that will enable them to develop in all areas of their lives; using arts on the European dimension to facilitate inclusive education, sharing inclusive practices with our partners, sharing knowledge and professional development.

Project Work

The partner schools all met for the first mobility in Poland. Each school took on different responsibilities e.g. the Irish school set up the eTwinning project, Romania created our website, Turkey and Italy created eBooks SEN Guides for parents and students. We all chose the project logo and created our 'Everyone is Welcome' corner and 'Wish Tree' in our schools. All schools communicated frequently throughout the project via postcards, Christmas cards, TwinSpace and Zoom videocalls. Thereafter, we met in Turkey, Romania, Italy and finally, Ireland. Our mobilities were very successful in terms of sharing inclusive arts practices around art & craft, music, drama, dance & movement and sculpture, with lots of students taking part in the various activities.

This was partly because some of the mobilities took place online during the worldwide } pandemic. So many of the students in our schools collaborated and communicated with each other, despite the limitations of disabilities or disadvantages.

Outcomes

The students involved in this wonderful project enjoyed every minute and communicated so well with each other. They developed the ability to recognise, accept and appreciate each other's differences. Students now feel more accepted and are motivated to learn and work together as a result of the decreased barriers. Teachers shared best practice and really learned so much from one another in the area of arts, art therapy and inclusion. They are now more equipped to teach according to different needs and abilities and have increased skills. Parents were involved throughout the project and have an increased awareness of arts and how we can include all students, regardless of abilities or disabilities. The parent handbook was beneficial to this end. Overall, arts and art therapy provided an excellent platform to facilitate inclusive learning, encouraged collaborative learning and fostered strong relationships for all five countries involved.

A Change is Gonna Come III — A Human Rights Project

Helen English, Maynooth Post Primary School

Background

Partners in seven countries brought students together to focus on the topic of human rights.

Project Aims

The aim of the project was to raise awareness of the importance of human rights and to highlight how violations of human rights erode the very foundations of our democratic societies. The project was designed to encourage and build team research and collaboration skills. Students were asked to reflect critically and communicate clearly on current global contexts such as aggression, exploitation and polarisation and demonstrate how they undermine human dignity and threaten social cohesion. Students were invited to consider how they might become advocates for international justice and human rights.

Project Work

Students worked initially in national teams to assess the human rights landscape in their own countries. They moved then to work in small international teams to research topics such as stereotypes and prejudices, human rights and media, democracy and media and human rights' violations in the world. They presented their research findings and team reflections in regular online webinars. They received feedback on their presentations from an invited expert and key speaker at the webinars. They also designed project logos and compiled a wish list for global peace and justice.

Outcomes

Students gained insights into how international laws and treaties have safeguarded our fundamental rights as human beings. Students became more informed about the events and forces that endanger our freedoms and undermine and strike at the values that permit us to live respectfully and peacefully with each other. Students developed important skills for life-long learning such as digital and media literacy, active citizenship, cultural awareness and interpersonal skills.



Students for P.I.E. (Peace in Europe)

Ronan O'Sullivan, Davis College

Background

This project is a collaboration between four countries: Ireland, Germany, Spain and Norway. We decided to choose this topic because of the current conflict which is ongoing in Europe. I personally have four Ukrainian students in my eTwinning classroom. The conflict causes a lot of fear in our students' lives and many students ask, "could a war like this be real in our own country some day? What can we do to prevent this happening?"

Project Aims

We decided to embark on a very visual and media driven project. We wanted to make it as tangible as possible for the students. Some of our students had just arrived to the country and we decided to not to make it too text/English heavy. We started with the following aims, e-safety and netiquette, getting to know each other, conflicts in our lives, logo competition, interviews and raps. This allowed students new to Ireland to involve themselves in groups and to get actively involved in the project.

Project Work

The use of technology, besides allowing working together at distance, produced a higher level of students' engagement and triggered their creativity in the multimedia products. Having a real international audience of peers made the students' work more meaningful and increased motivation, producing an improvement in communicative and digital competences. Participants had the opportunity to use and make practice of a variety of web tools in different activities. In addition to the TwinSpace tools which were used regularly and extensively for all stages of the project (pages, forums, chat), there was also a range of ICT tools for the creation and display of products as well as for self-expression and giving feedback. Padlet, Mentimeter, Thinglink, Canva and Kahoot were some of the tools used.

Outcomes

This project has contributed to improve our students' social, linguistic and cultural competences thanks to an approach to the learning/teaching process through connecting and cooperating with other people in the world while making a well-integrated use of technology. The activities developed throughout the project involved different skills (communication, product design, use of ICT, organization and management of roles), which gave everyone a role to play and the opportunity to make their personal contribution to the final product. It created a positive and empathetic environment for all the students, especially those struggling, which helped them gain in autonomy and confidence.



Whispers of the Oak Tree

Carol Fynn, Midleton CBS, Cork

Background

This was an interesting collaboration between several countries on environmental issues and the importance of trees. Students from Moldova, Austria, Ireland, Turkey and Poland came together and did several online activities exploring trees.

Project Aims

The aim of this project was to develop awareness of a harmonious and green society through exploration of trees.

Project Work

For our ice breaker the tree was a virtual picture of our community. Each student choose a silhouette they identified with and placed it on a huge oak tree to describe what kind of person they were. Each country found a local oak tree and calculated its age using a mathematical method by the girth of the trees. We created podcasts all about trees. In Ireland students created dialogues in German where the interviewed fictional characters e.g. the sun and H2O were interviewed about their role in the forest.

The Moldovans planted acorns and brought their saplings to a native plantation and planted them there. Trees, like our lives, are prone to grief and changes over time, sometimes good can come from these times. We gave examples of how obstacles in life can lead to growth, e.g. a snag on a branch can lead to a new habitat for insects. These topics are difficult to discuss in a foreign language and some elements were dealt with in English, as my class was a German class we sought to use as much German as possible. We finally each shared an idea: 'I was once a tree', this was an easy activity for boys who love hurling and woodwork. Many posted photos of their favourite piece of sports equipment or a piece they created themselves from the lathe or woodwork room.

Outcomes

It was a lovely idea, and the students were very engaged. They worked well together, and it said it all when we met for an online meeting one class and played a quiz together all tree-based questions. Students had to physically create a tree with their bodies and post a photo of it as part of the competition. As they left the class, they told me it was the best class ever. Thank you eTwinning!



A Tour in My Town!

**Damien Wilson, St Paul's Secondary School,
Co. Kildare**

Background

This project was a collaboration between five countries with the goal of creating a curiosity among students and introduce their towns to their partners.

Project Aims

The main idea was for students to dive into their own town, digging up interesting spots, stories and history about their town, and creating presentations and videos to show their discoveries to their eTwinning buddies. But it wasn't just about landmarks; the project went deeper, exploring local products, food, dances, and cultural holidays (St. Patrick's Day for us). The project promoted the use Web2.0 tools and lessons from ICT classes in a holistic, real-world context.

Project Work

As the project unfolded, students didn't just stick to their solo efforts. They got hands-on with teamwork – researching, creating content, and interacting with their peers. And it wasn't your usual communication — it went beyond that, involving video calls, letters, and even old-school Christmas cards sent through snail mail. The eTwinning portal became the hub, showcasing the diverse outcomes of their digital endeavours — from presentations and videos to written exchanges.

Outcomes

What made this project special was its mix of subjects. It wasn't just about history or geography; it brought in digital media literacy, cultural understanding, and literacy skills. Plus, it opened the door to learning in unexpected ways. Students got to explore themes like inclusion, differences, and respect in the context of cultural exchange, expanding their understanding. The eTwinning platform played a big role, capturing the entire learning journey. It wasn't just about skills like self-management, well-being, communication, creativity, collaboration, and information management — it was about cultivating these skills within a holistic learning experience/approach.



eTwinning Ambassadors are there to support you with their experience, enthusiasm and exceptional eTwinning skills and knowledge. This engaged group of teachers are fundamental to the success of eTwinning in each and every country. eTwinning Ambassadors are an active community that works closely together to make eTwinning stronger.

In collaboration with the National Support Organisation, they share good practice, learn from each other and develop their skills so that they are always ready to provide support and guidance to all eTwinners both online and in person. To contact an ambassador in your area, visit www.etwinning.ie.



Celebrations

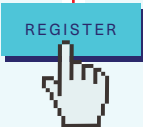
In 2023, a total of 10 projects received National Quality Labels. The winners were celebrated at an award ceremony at the eTwinning National Conference 2023. Well done to all the teachers, students and schools for their hard work and creativity in their projects!



8 Easy Steps to Register a Project!

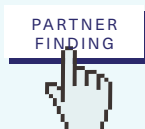
1 Register

Register on the **European School Education Platform**. Check your inbox for an email to complete the sign-up process. Once verified, you will be prompted to register for eTwinning. You can join your organisation or create it, if it doesn't already exist on the platform.



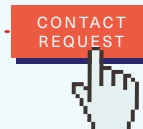
2 Find a Partner

Go to **PARTNER FINDING** where you can check out proposed project ideas from other teachers and answer their posts. You can also post your own ideas and connect with teachers.



3 Check Availability

Contact teachers first to check their availability and interest in working with you. Make sure you have ticked that you are available for an eTwinning project on your profile.



4 Add Contacts

Once you've found potential partners, add them as a contact. This allows you to register a project together.

5 Register

When they accept your request, you are ready to set up a project! Decide which one of you will register the project — only one can do this. Go to **MY PROJECTS** and click on **CREATE PROJECT**.



6 Approval

After you submit your project, your colleague will receive a notification to accept it. Once this is done, the project will be approved by the NSO of both countries.

7 Your TwinSpace

Once the project is approved, you can find it in **MY PROJECTS** where you can navigate to your **TWinspace**, the private workspace for your project.



8 Collaborate

You can now go to the **PROJECT > MEMBERS > INVITE A MEMBER** to add other colleagues you want to work with.



Contact the National Support Organisation for eTwinning in Ireland

Léargas manage national and international programmes in education, youth and community work, and vocational education and training. Established in 1986, we are a registered charity under the remit of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

Our programmes focus on cooperation between communities and between countries and bring an international dimension to the work of education, training, and youth and community organisations. As well as eTwinning, we manage intercultural programmes such as the European Solidarity Corps, EPALÉ and are the National Agency for the European Union programme Erasmus+.

Déan teagmháil leis an tSeirbhís Tacaíochta Náisiúnta eTwinning in Éirinn

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Eagraíocht neamhbhrabúis is ea Léargas a dhéanann bainistíocht ar chlár náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta san oideachas, obair óige agus pobail agus in oideachas agus oiliúint ghairme. Bunaíodh sa bhliain 1986 é agus is leis an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna é ina iomláine.

Tá ár gcuid clár dírithe ar chomhar idir pobail agus idir tíortha, agus déanann siad iarracht ar ghné idirnáisiúnta a thabhairt d'obair eagraíochtaí oideachais, oiliúna agus eagraíochtaí óige agus pobail. Lasmuigh d'eTwinning déanaimid bainistíocht ar chlár idirchultúrtha ar European Solidarity Corps agus EPALÉ agus is sinne an ghníomhaireacht Náisiúnta don gClár Erasmus+ de chuid an Aontais Eorpaigh.



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