

Tourism we are all A project and one of the best practices in Education

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Abstract

Marica Triola will trace the various steps used over an entire school year to help her students enrich their knowledge of their home town (Bologna, Italy). Her talk will highlight three itineraries: the most important monument, museums and traditional dishes and ingredients. She will also present multi-media material made by the children themselves in this CLIL project.

Parole chiave: tourism; training path; cross-curricula itinerary

Every academic year in all the primary schools in Italy, all teachers build up projects/educational paths to enrich students curricula in order to keep alive student interest/love towards culture.

The project “Tourism we are all” was carried out during the last academic year, 2007-2008, at the Carducci Primary School in Bologna .

This project come out of an idea of Claudio Quintano and Franco Garbaccio and from the project ““Turismo somos todos y es area de todos”, promoted in 2005 from Alianza para la Excelencia Turística and from Federazione dei Municipi spagnoli, to sensitize 8000 municipalities and all the Spanish citizens on the importance of Tourism and the welcoming of each tourist. France and New York City followed the Spanish example.¹

¹ Garbaccio F. e Quintano C., *Turismo siamo tutti*. Napoli, Denaro Libri, 2005.

The aim of the project was to get the children to know their own city since we realised that the only thing they knew about it was the route they took everyday from the door of their home to the door of their school, and further, that they knew more about places where they had been on holiday than the city they live in .

So, the starting point of this project was their holiday experience. The teacher did a brainstorming in class eliciting all the things they knew about the place/s they had spent the summer. They all complained about their parents' choices to visit churches, monuments and going to eat typical food.

The children said that if they really had to go sightseeing with their parents, they would have preferred to have visited places off 'the beaten track', in other words to go around a town or city looking for 'hidden things'. This idea came out because of the fact that the children, aged 10 and 11, play with role cards such as Dungeons and Dragons and they love dungeons or basements, buildings that used to be prisons, high, frightening places like towers and so on.....

So, we decided to start our journey with the GIROTOUR, a double decker red bus which takes tourists around Bologna and where there is the possibility to listen to a guide speaking either in Italian or in English .

On the 12th of October, 2007, the class went on this tour and the children were given the opportunity to chose which language they wanted to listen to.

Although the children had done quite a lot of preparation concerning the monuments they were going to listen to, expressions like:

“This wonderful church dates back to the 11th century.”
“San Petronio was built in the early 12th century.”

Some of the commentary was a little above their heads. Nevertheless, the children still enjoyed this tour as it gave them an idea of just how many things there are to see in Bologna that they had never seen before and they were seeing them from the top of the bus, a different perspective from walking in the street.

Garbaccio F. e Quintano C. (a cura di), *Turismosiamotutti atto secondo*. Napoli, Denaro Libri, 2008.

The children then had the opportunity, after the bus tour, to take a walk into Piazza Santo Stefano, where they saw the famous church of the ‘Sette Chiese’, a dark, mysterious church dating back to the Roman Times and then there they moved on to the Asinelli Tower, both places reminding them of something in their Dungeons and Dragon games.

At the foot of the Asinelli Tower, there are beautiful craft shops, whose shop windows and ‘portcullis like decoration’ takes your imagination back to medieval times. Once again, the children were able to relate to these shops because of the games they play.

Back in class, the children were asked which monument, of all the ones they had seen, would they have adopted. They were asked to write a description of it, which meant they had to put to some personal use the grammar they had learnt so far, and find out some information about it, which involved reading.

The descriptions were to be sent to their penpals in Scuola Primaria Madonna di Lonigo (Vicenza), who were doing the same project.

The children were beginning to realise that there was a lot to see in Bologna and they decided, together with their parents, to visit some museums. The ones they chose were: Museo Civico Medievale, Museo Davia Bargellini, Collezioni Comunali d’Arte in Bologna (Palazzo d’Accursio), as they were the ones they felt would give them more information about their city.

Not satisfied with this, the children and the teacher spent five Sunday afternoons, again with their parents, visiting the hidden parts of the Centre of Bologna.

Having enjoyed themselves discovering their own city, they decided to create a DVD and a journal to show other children just how beautiful their city is and how much it has to offer.

Children, in cooperation with the University of Bologna, MELA Laboratory², began filming the DVD at the Asinelli tower, then they moved on to the Collezioni Comunali, where they had discovered a lot about the history of Bologna. To conclude, they decided to include a TASTE ITINERARY, since Bologna is also fa-

² MELA – Media Education E-Learning Laboratory, Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione e Dipartimento di Scienze dell’Educazione. URL: <http://mela.scedu.unibo.it> . Supervisor, Laura Corazza.

mous for its food. They visited a home made pasta shop, where they filmed how to prepare sfoglia and tortellini.

Back in class, the children started putting together all the materials they had collected, photos they had taken, pieces that had been written and extracts from books they had read together into a journal so that there would also be a written record of their experience.

This project has been like Pandora's box as many things have resulted from it.

First of all, it has not only given the students in the Carducci school the possibility to get to know their city well, but, through the creation of the DVD's and the journal, the possibility for other children, apart from their penpals in Scuola Primaria Madonna di Lonigo working on the same project in their town, to get to know the city of Bologna, too. What's more, it is something prepared by children for children, consequently far more appropriate for them than materials written by adults.

Secondly, apart from giving these children a better knowledge of their city, this project has made them realise just how important it is to be aware of what is around you, and to protect it whether it be a monument, like the Two Towers or a tradition, like Tortellini. It is part of their heritage and this project has made them learn to be proud of their city.

Thirdly, it has been an interesting learning/teaching experience as both children and their families have worked together on this project and have brought about a pleasant community spirit. This was confirmed when all these students came to the former school to see the movies and, after watching them, thanked all the people involved in this experience for having made them aware of their community and having created the opportunity for them to share this experience with their parents.

It has also been an opportunity to work in two languages, Italian and English and to make choices as, for example, on the bus tour as to which language to listen to. Once again, a concrete learning experience.

This project won the Competition 2008 for the Agenzia Nazionale per lo Sviluppo dell'Autonomia Scolastica, as one of the best practices in teaching and was included in the online catalogue.³

³ <http://gold.indire.it/nazionale/> Downloadable materials handouts.