

LOUVAIN - LA - NEUVE

Developing the environment awareness through creative and outdoor learnings

Outdoor education : conceptualization content

Introduction

The goal of education is to prepare individuals to be citizens. When you ask a person if a person can become an active and responsible citizen by staying inside for the duration of their education, you will most likely have the answer "Of course not! ". Why?

The human needs to be in contact with the society in which he lives to contribute.

Why this methodology has emerged?

There's a growing gap between the external environment and the human. This external deficit has a direct negative impact on physical, mental, emotional and societal health. In fact, there are new psychological treatments that use exposure to the environment to treat various diseases or injuries.

In addition, recent research shows that spending time outdoors stimulates both children and adults, makes them think more clearly (structured) and makes them more creative. The most probable hypothesis is that, while being outside, the human mobilizes all of his senses (which constitutes the optimum state of learning). Finally, each school is situated in a geographical, environmental and social context. Developing outdoor activities means mobilizing these contexts as sources of learning and thus continuing to respect the legal prescriptions (laws, skills bases and programs).

Developing outdoor education methodology is not saying "goodbye" to school classes and facilities. It's opening the pupils to the world around them. Your classes will remain "headquarters", but the pupils need to be helped to understand the complexity of the world around them (where does milk or bread come from, how to behave in the street or any other common space?). In the end, it's not indoor vs. outdoor but rather how to choose the most relevant place to foster optimal learning.

There are 2 educational imperatives that we will follow: educating the child as a whole within authentic contexts **AND** helping to preserve the weakened planet and society by committed and energetic young adults.

Define the concept of outdoor education

- A bit of history: 3 approaches

The Scandinavian countries, the United Kingdom, Germany and the USA have a rich past in connection with outdoor education.

There were 3 different approaches: first, personal development related to forging character and developing physical abilities (related to the war needs); second, environmental education; and third, acquiring new skills in adventure activities (eg climbing a rock).

In the early 2000s (between 2005 and 2009), a new integrated approach (Udeskole, Danish term) has been developed. It consists of regular uses of the environment surrounding the school to reinforce the link between the school and the surrounding community. This Scandinavian movement has spread rapidly to Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and North America. These practices are more common in preschool and primary education for practical reasons: time use is not fragmented into periods given by different teachers. In secondary education, teachers often need to come together to develop these practices.

We then move from the concept of outdoor education to outdoor learning according to Beames, Higgins and Nicol (2012). These authors define 4 areas where outdoor learning can be developed. These are concentric circles: → *WEREN VERHOUDEN!*

- 1) the school and its grounds are at the center,
- 2) the environment surrounding the establishment and accessible by foot or by public transport,
- 3) day trips requiring more extensive transport logistics,
- 4) and finally, residential stays where logistics is at its maximum.

What are the benefits of using this methodology?

- 1) It allows to program interdisciplinary sessions related to the skills bases, programs and needs of pupils; works transversal skills including those related to communication and interactions with the surrounding world.
- 2) There's a dual function related to the environment: to understand and protect it by developing an ethics of planet protection and a willingness to trust scientific reports that specify the impacts of current environmental disruption. This will mobilize a multi-sensory outdoor approach and focus on capturing the climatic evolution of the last centuries.
- 3) Being aware of the uniqueness of one's local environment by discovering the local culture, the surrounding landscape as well as living organisms outside human beings that share this space of common life.
- 4) Learning is driven by personal curiosity. The teacher creates conditions and pupils take ownership of the environment. Students can also focus on topics that have a high level of personal interest, to increase their motivation.
- 5) It makes you feel responsible for yourself and others; each situation requires actions that will have an impact (eg. stay in a group vs. isolate yourself from the group).
- 6) Its helps to promote local partnerships for inter-generational learning. It also helps to develop an active citizenship and a contribution to a plural and democratic society (to get to know every age, ethnicity and race).
- 7) It helps to develop strategies to evaluate the risks and benefits of each trip outside the school grounds (eg. if there is a storm warning, is it relevant to go to the wood?); it also makes possible to define emergency plans in the event of a dangerous situation.
- 8) It allows becoming aware of basic needs (food, water and heat), needs often forgotten in Western societies where modern comfort makes us forget them.
- 9) Learning can only be done by experimenting the situation (eg. describing the taste of a banana to someone is complex whereas if the individual experiments the situation in a multi-sensory way, the whole mobilized channels will make it easier to remember - sensory memory). Therefore; you have to experiment in a context of genuine authenticity to facilitate learning.

Some logistic tags

You are now ready to go out. Here are some logistic tags for the session to take place as serenely as possible.

If you leave the school grounds...

- 1) Take a backpack with a first aid kit, emergency plan, some snacks, a water bottle and goblets, your attendance register (or a copy).
- 2) Check the weather.
- 3) Recall the instructions already given for the trip and for the activity on site.
- 4) Prevent school when you leave and return to the building, who is present (adult and pupils).
- 5) Ensure that pupils go to the bathroom before leaving.
- 6) Ensure that pupils have knowledge of the assigned adult and their traveling friend.

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ODESKOLE

THESSY PATH
J. ROBERTSON

You said « creativity » ?

Introduction

Creativity is the ability to think out of all conformism, to invent what does not yet exist, to create something from what exists. It's really personal.

If creativity is to "get out of the box", to be creative is starting with "define the framework".

The paradox of creativity is that this approach that feeds on transgressions must, indeed, be conducted with great rigor to give results.

This therefore assumes:

- To frame the steps of creativities to polarize the energies on the real challenges to take up. It is therefore necessary to choose a creative process.
- To choose the tools of idea generation best suited to the challenges to be met.
- To dare going from the intention to the action, putting all the chances on its side by a good formalization and a good implementation of the ideas.

Why working on creativity?

- To dare, to excel, to go further.
- To find his place within the group.
- To have a better cohesion, more confidence within the group.
- To increase your self-confidence.
- To value a pupil (which may not be successful in other subjects).
- To develop his creative intelligence which means not only IQ intelligence, but also curiosity, empathy, self-esteem, adaptability, openness to his emotions, etc.

Why training creative children?

Because Education is changing: from a normative school, we are moving to a teaching centered on the pupil as an individual. How can each pupil be realized as a differentiated and autonomous person?

Because the world is changing: the pupils we train today will have jobs that ... do not exist yet! The world is changing very fast and it is crucial to train pupils who are "mentally flexible", able to adapt to change.

The creative process

Creativity can be considered as an individual aptitude, a psychological process through which an individual (a group of individuals) bears witness to originality both in the way he leads his reflection (original associations) and in the result himself.

In an operational way, creativity is considered to be the process by which the human being is able to emit ideas.

However, one of the most common mistakes is to consider that creativity is about generating only ideas. But it's more than that. A good creative person is a good problem maker. All the art of the creative process is to combine problem posing, divergence phase and convergence phase.

Several processes exist to implement this creativity.

The creative process of Wallas (1926)

Goal: this process makes possible to invent relevant solutions to solve new problems, by alternating conscious and unconscious work phases.			
Context: this method applies to any creative work.			
<i>Phase 1 Impregnation</i>	<i>Phase 2 Incubation</i>	<i>Phase 3 Illumination</i>	<i>Phase 4 Production</i>
- Ask the problem: perimeter, objective, etc. - Gather information: events, documentary research, etc. - Note the first ideas that come to mind, broadly and uncensored.	- Letting go: no longer thinking about the problem, let the unconscious work. - Playing sports, music, a very different activity, low consumption in mental charge	- Illumination can occur at any time. - We can promote his arrival by providing a free writing session.	- Confront the ideas of enlightenment with reality. - Select the most relevant ones and format them.

The looping of Wallas creativity (1926)

Goal: the goal is to structure the creative process to advance step by step, organize the working time during a creative session and make the creative act more readable.			
Context: the looping of creativity allows organizing a session of creativity in a methodical way, and is particularly suitable for people who fear to get lost in the obscure meanders of uncontrolled creativity.			
<i>Phase 1 Impregnation</i>	<i>Phase 2 Divergence</i>	<i>Phase 3 Converge</i>	<i>Phase 4 Evaluation</i>
Imagine the problem under its different facets.	Ability to formulate a large amount of original ideas.	Ability to transform ideas from divergence into solutions that respond to the initial problem.	Select the "best ideas" to develop.

The four roles of creativity of Van Oech (1954)

Goal: this process exposes solutions to a given problem. This creative process allows less creative people to free them by giving them the opportunity to see the problem from a different, unusual angle.

Context: this process is based on the idea that by understanding the different phases of the creative process, one can try to favor it.

<i>The explorer</i>	<i>The artist</i>	<i>The judge</i>	<i>The warrior</i>
- Seeking. - Observed. - Scans. - View. - Think outside the box. - Harvest information, etc.	- Imagine new and original ideas. - Avoid habits by thinking differently.	- Evaluates ideas. - Decide their fate.	- Shifts the retained idea of the abstract world to that of action.

The scale of ideas

All ideas proposed during the creative process can be categorized into three categories :

Heaven: Unrealizable, but bold, carrying dreams for the future.

Mountain: feasible, energizing, but breaking with the existing.

Earth: easy to carry out, without risks, will be accepted, "there is only ...".

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Personal notes