

Water: A sea of resources

Summary

Water is one of the most powerful resources on our planet. From the school partnership we expect to promote the understanding of issues related to water across Europe and include these issues within school curriculums. The students are the chief participants of the project and investigate various water-related aspects in their own location: natural environment and pollution, water as a primary source of life, weather /climatic conditions, use of rainwater as a way of storing water, sewage treatment, health and thermal water spas, renewable energy, transport mode, tourism, job opportunities, the products from the sea and from the fresh water, the significance of water in the economy, the impact of water on the history or geography, the tales and the legends around the water, water as an inspiration for poetry, art, music, drama or dance. The students will provide their European peers with significant information, create and keep constant contacts and exchange ideas/opinions. All schools will establish contacts with any regional businesses dealing with water. This cross-curricular project will develop transferable skills such as negotiation, foreign language as well as mother tongue communication and, most importantly, will develop the creative and entrepreneurial skills of students.

We also aim to enhance our students' intercultural understanding and cooperation. We have chosen a flexible approach to the project so that each school can meet its local needs more effectively. Schools in each country will research their own specific topics in relation to water which can be shared among the partner schools, discussed and proposals developed to solve problems. Products will include using ICT to present ideas (PowerPoint, partnership website, video DVD and brochure).

Rationale

Water is treated as something naturally available, whenever and whatever you require. Statistics show the quantity and the different purposes water that is used for in everyday life. This project will make students aware of the importance of this priceless resource of Nature that interfaces with every aspect of life. We want to approach this theme by joining the scientific and the creative, as well as the ethical and the economic aspects of water. Each partner has particular links with water related issues:

Teningen - Germany: Even in Germany water levels are dropping, so resources have to be balanced out. In Teningen there are several Companies dealing with ecological technologies (collecting rainwater) and renewable energy (turbines).

Bari - Italy: Our region was called 'thirsty Apulia' by Romans because of the lack of water resources, and we still store fresh water in traditional wells. At the same time the Adriatic Sea is of great importance as the coastline has the biggest saltworks in Italy, and the harvesting of seafood is important for our economy. Water is also important for tourism, wellness, health and a transport mode.

Gardabaer - Iceland: We are extremely lucky in Iceland to have plentiful of both hot and cold water and will emphasise on how it makes our lives easier. Our uniqueness is the geothermal water and we want to show the use of it in different aspects.

Lahti - Finland: We have one of the largest groundwater-resources in the Europe. One Finnish producer of beverages, Hartwall has a large production plant and a brewery here. Helsinki is supplied with water from the biggest lake, Lake Päijänne. Therefore it is vital to see the importance to protect the quality of water from pollution.

Lleida - Spain: Lleida is located by the river Segre. Its water brings life to the whole area: agriculture based on highly water demanding crops, marshlands upstream (La Mitjana) and downstream (Rufea) with a rich biodiversity. Reservoirs and irrigation channels have transformed the landscape and have even helped to develop water sports on the river and lakes.

Objectives

1. To promote the understanding of issues related to water across Europe and include these within school curriculums.
2. To challenge all participants to consider the responsible use of water.
3. To enable a partnership of European schools to collaborate and develop the theme of water as a resource within their curricular provision.
4. To allow participants to share knowledge and experiences from different backgrounds, cultures and geographical regions.
5. To promote pupils' use of ICT in researching and communicating core issues relating to water.
6. To explore and apply the methods of collecting information.
7. To support team activities and group dynamics in schools, developing abilities to reach a consensus about a common presentation.
8. To promote competencies essential for lifelong learning: foreign language skills, problem solving, project management, creativity and entrepreneurship.
9. To develop awareness among staff, pupils and the broader local community of the similar and diverse experiences and views about issues related to water within the framework of shared European citizenship.

SUBJECTS/PROBLEMS

This project focuses squarely on the importance of water as a resource.

1. Personal everyday consumption.
2. Water management and quality
3. Water and industry
4. Water as energy source
5. Use and storage of rain water
6. Environmental issues
7. Fishing and seafood
8. Tourism and leisure
9. Health (thermal water)
10. Transport mode.

Linked with this particular issue - as with the long standing EU aspiration of promoting mobility within Europe - our project will provide an authentic and stimulating framework for the use of foreign and mother tongue communication skills, as well as ICT. It will encourage pupil's creativity, problem solving, team-work and entrepreneurship, which are essential competencies.

APPROACHES

Project work will be pupil-centred. They will be allowed to determine which information is relevant and interesting for their partners, and manage the collation and presentation of this information, via e-mail, website and video-conferencing. Given the pupil-centred focus of this work, it will be important for a number of pupil representatives to accompany teachers on project visits and take part in planning and monitoring discussions. ICT will play a vital role in the development and presentation of project outcomes. We also want to try out and improve ways of teaching, especially bilingual lessons.