



Cap sur l'école inclusive
en Europe



Best practice

Outdoor Education

Section of the module / R

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1 Context

The students of the fifth class of CSEI "Elena Doamna" and the school "Anghel Saligny" Focsani took part during the spring holidays in the learning workshops in the natural environment of the mountainous region of Lepșa, in the county of Vrancea.

The program proposed an experiential approach, learning through direct exploration, reflection and creativity. acquire "outside" learning skills.

The activities had a transdisciplinary character, the theoretical and practical modules proposed came from the field of mathematics and science, including mathematics, science, art, but also physical education and sports, health, heritage cultural, environment and development.

When we approached this type of learning, we based our proposal on the learning pyramid, namely that the most effective learning occurs when using learning methods (learning with the brain, hands and the heart!), and in children with learning difficulties, it is more effective to learn in a non-formal context as close as possible to the surrounding reality. Approach the content of the child with intellectual disabilities and adapt them, find the most effective methods to achieve easy learning are arguments and priorities to address the act of learning.

2 Objectives.

The objectives of this good practice are:

- multisensory learning, exploring "learning by doing";

- increase motivation to learn and improve academic achievement by studying mathematics, science and the arts in the environment;
- develop personal and social skills through outdoor activities;
- to understand the benefits to health, through the organization of outdoor learning.

3 Development of the " Good practice".

Outdoor education is an interdisciplinary field of research and education that involves, among other things:

- the learning space, moved from life to society, in the natural and cultural environment
 - the emphasis on the interaction between sensory experience and classroom learning
 - recognize the natural space as a new learning environment that offers unique resources and experiences
- The main methods used were practical training, cooperative work, various learning activities through discovery, individual and collective reflections, as well as discussions. Thematic content was based on "learning by doing" combined with "reflection on action". New methods of teaching subjects in the midst of learning by doing have been combined with pleasure, eliminating stress (interactive, intercultural, role playing, teambuilding). The positive atmosphere, the exchange and the pleasure were part of the learning process during the week. The course took place mainly outdoors, close to nature, in the rural and urban landscape, geography, history and social sciences.

The first program took place in the mountainous countryside and the last day in town.

Monday: Theme: "Earth, Fire, Air and Water". We used an investigative approach combining theory and practice. The first was the air. We studied the air, its properties and its applications through workshops connected to the subjects. Participants shared their experiences and good practices.

Tuesday: Theme: "Fire, friend and enemy of man". Fire has always fascinated people and changed our way of life for a long time.

Wednesday: Theme: "The Earth". We visited the natural reserve of Lepsa where the children studied the reliefs, the soil types observed, the experiments. Participants shared their experience and good practices.

Thursday: Theme: "Water Music". We went to the Putna waterfall, where we saw banks, vegetation and animals near the water.

Friday: Theme: "The forest as an ecosystem" - forms of relief, types of trees in the forest, animals.

Saturday: On the return, we realized the activity's portfolio and a model of the visited ecosystem.

4/Evaluation of the activity

The transdisciplinary approach has made learning easier and more relaxing, leading to better results than in a competitive environment thanks to the "learning by doing" action completed by:

- A more enjoyable and relaxing natural setting in which children were more free, authentic, where they had the opportunity to exhibit a natural behavior beyond the formalism and stiffness of educational institutions;
- A more stimulating environment that has responded to children's natural curiosity, which has inspired research, research, leading to knowledge, real learning and practice;
- Direct contact with nature, allowing children to interact with environmental elements without intercession, without substitutes, without artificial simulation;
- The personal development of those involved who have been able to evaluate, measure their own strengths, overcome their fears, overcome their personal beliefs and learning difficulties, overcome social barriers, etc.
- The movement involved in outdoor activities has provided a desirable physical development that is also a major benefit, resulting in more significant body and mental health, which in turn influences the proper functioning of the internal organs and the body as a whole ;

- Harmonious social-emotional development is another result of this type of education, because the interpersonal relationships established between the participants (child-child, child-adult) have developed team spirit, fair play, belonging to a social group, the degree of involvement / active participation, social relations have intensified, forms of social / personal communication have been diversified and nuanced;
- Exercise less visible / known skills that can not be observed / practiced in the classroom;
- Outdoor education has allowed a high level of creativity / ingenuity on the part of the organizer, coordinator and participants in terms of activity design, design or presentation of the different solutions identified to solve the problems. high problems;
- The interactive side of outdoor activities allowed for a better knowledge of children, their knowledge in different situations and learning situations on the behavior-attitude-aptitude axis.

5/Limits.

Outdoor education is a holistic approach to learning. Through the implementation of outside learning, we anticipate that students will be more motivated. We also believe that learning will be more sustainable and attractive, to prevent dropping out and leaving school prematurely.

At home, if outdoor activities are organized, they are often reduced to walks in the nature and the greening of green spaces near the school, the planting of young trees, the collection of leaves, chestnuts or cones, excursions to historical monuments, free or organized play in the school / kindergarten yard or in the park near the institution or perhaps if time allows moving the furniture from the room class in the school yard, but it's still a classic activity.

It's time to realize the advantages and the facilities of this type of education, "to leave the walls" of the school building to venture it with a little creativity and imagination in the nature that still surrounds us "to break the barriers" raised by indifference, personal comfort and sometimes by ignorance, and to offer our children an interesting and more attractive alternative to learn.

Following the release of this type of activity, the following disadvantages have been observed:

- The absence of clear legislation and consistent methodological rules to regulate this type of education and place it in the school curriculum;
- The reluctance to change, many teachers and the risks associated with outdoor activities that teachers are unwilling to assume because of fear, convenience or social pressure from their colleagues, principals or teachers. parents of children;
- Insufficient initial and ongoing teacher training for outdoor activities.

6/Perspectives.

The students expressed their desire to participate in the activities of the "Friends of Nature" circle, specifically designed for outdoor activities. The involvement of parents in the partnership "Nature, my friend", the organization of the camp and participation in voluntary environmental actions, the introduction of the optional study material "Eco-Attitude" are new directions for action of the school.