

CREATIVE USE OF TABLETS IN SCHOOLS: MODULE 3

SECTION 3.3 (VIDEO 1)

Creative Classrooms Lab is a European project focused on using tablets in classrooms. Its primary aim is to create model learning scenarios for tablets and to practise these scenarios in classrooms.

Eight European countries joined this project. The involvement of the Czech Republic is coordinated by the Centre for International Cooperation in Education.

The preparation for the project started in 2012 when tablets in Czech schools were a relatively new technology. Teachers used them primarily for their own preparation, they were able to use them from the technical point of view, but they did not know the methodology of using tablets in classrooms. That is why the DZS decided to join this project and to show Czech teachers how to use tablets in education process.

The basis of Creative Classrooms Lab project is the creation of learning scenarios which can be used in any subject. Their general content enables teachers to adapt these scenarios according to their specific needs, taking into account the school curriculum, the age, the level of pupils and the subject taught.

The scenario “School to school collaboration” enables for pupils to cooperate with another school, another classroom, not only in the Czech republic, but also abroad. They can be in contact with their classmates from all over the Europe, they can invite an expert to join their class and, if necessary, they can go out with the tablets and carry out the scenarios in the conditions they require.

Elementary school Dr. Edvarda Beneše in Čakovice-and its seven-graders were one of the first classes to join the project. Their partner is a school in Slovakia with which they have been cooperating for many years using eTwinning.

After discussing the issue with the pupils and our partner school we chose the topic of speed, thus our scenario is focused on physics.

When discussing the topic with pupils they chose the speed of paper planes because they liked the idea of creating their own paper planes and instructions on how to make them.

The pupils cooperate by using tablets which enables them to work in international groups and to share their results and outputs immediately with their classmates and friends.

Both partner schools use different types of tablets and for that reason they prefer to use applications and tools which are typical for all types of tablets, for example tools for making videos or taking photos.

From other applications we use PiratePad, mostly for chatting and making notes, PicCollage for creating instructions, Tackk for blogging (pupils can write their own contributions or they can comment on someone else’s) and Google documents for cooperation among pupils. All of the outputs are shared in the virtual classroom TwinSpace which is accessible to every project registered in eTwinning.

The “School to school collaboration” scenario is divided into 7 stages. Each of them has a title which represents the key word of the activity in the given stage.

In the first stage, called DREAM, pupils together with their teachers and their partner school chose a topic which they would like to explore

In the second stage, called EXPLORE, pupils looked up different types of paper planes and the instructions on making them. They also tried to answer the question of what factors have influence on the speed and distance a paper plane can reach.

During the third stage, called MAP, pupils shared their results with their partner school, using a videoconference among other applications.

The most interesting stage for the pupils was the fourth one, called MAKE. In this stage they created their own paper planes and instructions on how to proceed while creating them.

In the fifth stage, called ASK, pupil tried out the paper planes and chose the best one.

There are two remaining stages to complete. In the sixth stage, called RE-MAKE, pupils in the international working groups will create one universal set of instructions for creating a paper plane.

And in the last stage, called SHOW, the Czech school wants to organize a meeting of pupils and parents to share the things they learned. Their partner school in Slovakia will join them using an online form of communication.

However, these activities are not the only ones these seven-graders participated in during the school year. As part of the project the pupils visited the Václav Havel Airport and the air tunnel where they could experience flying on their own.

I think, that the main result of this project is the realization that tablets are part of the classroom and that they enable the pupils to be active and to have fun while learning.