GOOD PRACTICES IN INSTITUT GUILLEM CATÀ

SOCIAL INCLUSION

If one had to choose an activity that perfectly embodies the spirit of social inclusion in Institut Guillem Catà, that would clearly be "*Nadal al Catà.*" This is much more than the typical Christmas play: it is a modern show that embraces music, poetry reading and theatre. Reaching its eighth edition in 2018, every year by Christmas time, over a hundred students come onstage to perform for other students, teachers, parents and many other members of the education community, as it is performed in a centric city theatre. Since the students in our high school come from a great variety of countries, many cultures converge with the purpose of creating a singular show that unites people. Even though some teachers play along with the students onstage, many other teachers and parents also participate behind the curtains, either by making up the actors, setting up the stage or customizing the attires, for example. These are just some of the many activities that the show entails as, for over the three months prior to the representation, all of the participants work hard to achieve a successful performance.

Because it is an inclusive show, students are asked to state which characters they are willing to play regardless of their origin. Thus, one may find black angels onstage who are traditionally depicted as white with blond hair, for instance. Languages other than the native Catalan or Spanish, such as English, French or Arabic are also used which help to solidify the concept of inclusion. This represents a deconstruction of conventional stereotypes that inevitably impregnates not only those directly participating in the show but, most importantly, the hundreds of spectators that attend the several representations in the well-known city venue.

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Hence, the whole of the education community is given the chance to participate in an inclusive activity that conceives education as an integral concept departing from the traditionally oriented approach. So successful has it become that it has already evolved into "*Emociona't, que és Nadal!*" ("*Joy, it's Christmas!*"): a show where other Manresa collectives such as the elderly, handicapped or even convicts participate.

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21ST CENTURY SKILLS

In Institut Guillem Catà, we are quite proud of a variety of cultural activities that demand social commitment on the part of the student. One such innovative show is a theatre play called "*A Modern Cinderella*." This performance is a modern revision where Cinderella is a young man who lives with his stepfamily and is forced to do all the household chores. He does not have all the privileges and comforts that his stepbrother and stepsister have, namely technology gadgets, while his stepmother likes to constantly humiliate him in front of them. Nevertheless, as they are spoiled, unlucky and they are not content with anything, they indulge in cruelty with Cinderella. One day, he manages to escape to a dance party with the help of a female friend and there he meets a lovely princess. The rest of the story is well known by everyone.

The main objective of the work is to denounce gender violence and to deliberately deconstruct the traditionally depicted stereotypes and roles. Students do this in a collaborative manner, by teamworking an initial idea and making it evolve towards an appealing construct which the audience, especially young students and their parents, may familiarise with. A great deal of critical thinking is also involved since not all students think the same and they are forced to share opinions and reach meaningful conclusions. The eventual agreements must take the form of a script which can be both captivating and intriguing to the audience, thus, in turn, demanding a lot of creativity from the students. Finally, the result must be communicated effectively, which asks for entertainers who are competent in acting and performing onstage, especially before young kids who may not be particularly easy to please if they are not given a believable plot.

Furthermore, other values are also present which include, for example, friendship, conflict resolution, empathy, curiosity and leadership, to name a few.

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All these come together to make a cultural product that perfectly fills the gap of a clear social need.

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PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

In the last years, our school has also been aware of the importance to find new approaches to give an answer to the current needs in the world of education. We are trying to create and manage projects aimed at methodological innovation that help our students to improve their 21st century skills. These improvements in training-learning have the Project Based Learning methodology at their core. We wanted our students to develop their critical thinking and their communication skills as well as to gain a deep content knowledge and PBL was an excellent approach to succeed in our aim.

We decided that our Compulsory Education (ESO) students would do at least 3 projects every school year. These projects are scheduled over a week every term and engage them in solving a real-world problem or answering a complex question. They demonstrate their knowledge and skills by developing a product or presentation for a real audience. The projects are also multidisciplinary and content related so the students are required to be able to use different skills as well as the content they have acquired in their ordinary lessons in different subjects.

Here are two examples of the projects we carry on.

PROJECT: Introducing our school

MAIN LEARNING AREAS: Art, language and IT

SUMMARY:

1st year students are asked to introduce their new school to family and friends by making a video. Among other things, they have to write a script for the video, decide on locations, do some research on the different shots they can use, draw a storyboard of the scene and, finally, act, shoot and edit their film.

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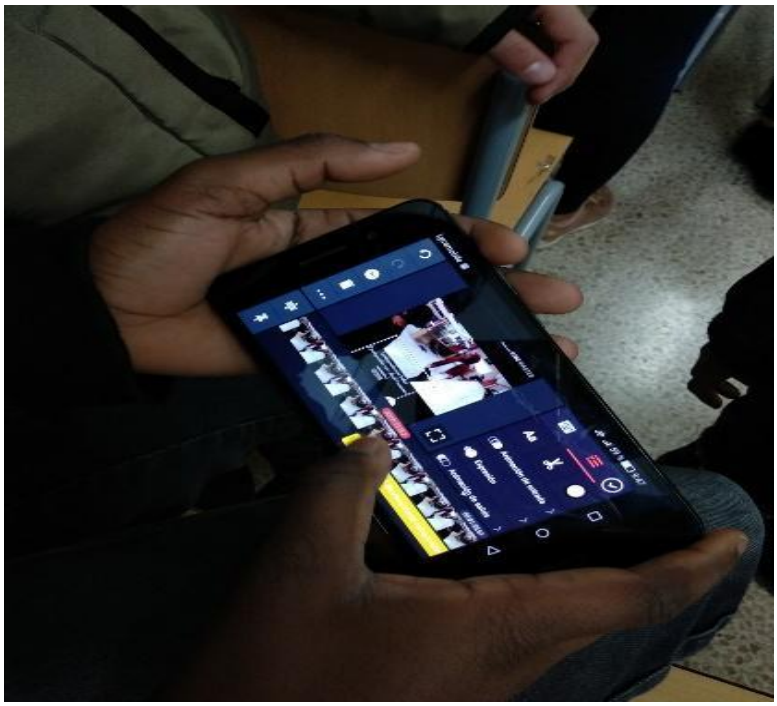

PROJECT: The microorganisms around us

MAIN LEARNING AREAS: Science, English language and Maths

SUMMARY:

The students are faced with two questions for this project. The first part is called *'Why do we have to wash our hands before eating?'* and the students are expected to make a hypothesis of where more microorganisms can be found (dirty hands, floor, coins or door handles, for example) and later to prove their assumption by collecting samples and growing them in the school lab. In the second part of the project, which is conducted in English language, the students have to do some research on microorganisms frequently used in cooking. They have to find a recipe using one of these microorganisms, make a budget of the cost of all ingredients and cook it. They are expected to document the cooking with pictures and videos so they can later show their schoolmates how it is done.

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