

Case Studies

This document presents a summary of each of the pilot experiences carried out between January and June 2012 during the implementation of Sharing European Memories at School project.

Royal Armouries Museum
in the Co-Operative Academy.
Leeds **(United Kingdom)**

Stiftelsen Arkivet
in Havlimyra school.
Kristiansand **(Norway)**

Adam Mickiewicz University
in Gimnasium Debinka.
Poznan **(Poland)**

Futura
in Forma Giovanni.
San Giovanni in Persiceto **(Italy)**

Kranj City Library
Slovenia in Gimnazija Kranj.
Kranj **(Slovenia)**

Aranzadi Society of Sciences
in Santo Tomas Lizeoa.
San Sebastian **(Spain)**

Futura
in Castiglione dei Pepoli Secondary School.
Castiglione dei Pepoli **(Italy)**



Case Study 1



Organisation

Stiftelsen Arkivet, Kristiansand, Norway.

School

Havlimyra lower secondary school, Kristiansand, has approximately 220 pupils. There are some socio-cultural challenges at this school. Traditionally this area has a high level of social housing which is associated with a relatively low level of education, but this picture is changing now along with city development and mobility. The number of pupils with minority background is low, with approximately 2-5 pupils per year. The pilot class is a 9th grade class of 14 and 15 year-olds. It consists of 31 students, which is the normal class size in Norway.

Description of the project

In the course of several weeks (using a total of 14 school hours + one excursion day + 18 school hours in the production of digital stories) our pilot class studied local memories of the Second World War. The pupils examined "official records" of the Second World War through history textbooks, and then they compared this with the historical memories of this period, as presented to them through visits to the following places of memory and interviews with the following witnesses:

- **Odderøya fortress:** A coastal defence battery from the Second World War. Interview with Kåre Steinsland who was a young boy when war broke out in Kristiansand on April 9th 1940 with the attack on the Odderøya fortress.
- **"Hestmanden":** A Second World War cargo ship which is today a museum ship. Interview with Søren Brandsnes who was a sailor for five years during the Second World War.
- **Jegersberg:** A place where Soviet Prisoners of War were executed by the Gestapo. Interview with Einar Svendsen who was a little boy living in this area at the time of the executions.
- **A refuge from the Second World War.** Interview with Harald Sødal, who sought refuge here as a little boy when the air raid sirens sounded.

The project was delivered by the teacher and experts from Stiftelsen Arkivet, through classroom teaching, use of informatics tools, visits to places of memory, workgroups and production of digital stories.



Outcomes

According to the teacher the learning outcomes are many. The project has helped his students to develop their knowledge of the Second World War in particular and of history in general. He thinks the concept of historical memory is useful and it has helped the students learn that history is about different types of evidence and interpretation.

Other learning outcomes are knowledge about new genres (digital story), interview skills, verbal communication skills, critical thinking skills, ability to learn independently, decision-making skills, social competence (through team working), democratic competence (through the focus on individual interpretation), digital competence (video editing) and foreign language skills (English).

The aspects of the project that he found most valuable in helping students to develop their subject knowledge and skills were the excursion day, the students' work comparing history with the memories told, and the making of the digital stories.

"The method is new and my students loved it".

Teacher involved

"What I liked the most was to visit different places of memory and to listen to witnesses, because it was interesting to hear about their experiences."

Student

"It was exciting and fun because it was a new way of working."
"I liked that there were many memories of what happened."

Student

"I liked thinking independently."
"I liked learning about Kristiansand. Because I live there."

Student



Successes and challenges

It is quite clear that meeting the living witnesses, visits to places of memory and the creative output-phase were the highlights of the project. The students also showed an interest for sharing memories with the schools from other pilot countries.

The concept of memory and the difference between history and memory was difficult for the students. We learnt that it is important to work thoroughly with both the concept phase (phase 1) and the analysis phase (phase 3), as explained in the methodology. The students were very eager to start their production of digital stories, and they tended to get "carried away" on technicalities. Moreover, this was the first time the students had used imovie software, so there were many things to learn. It is a question whether the students should learn the relevant digital skills first. However, it is most often in these kinds of "big projects" that teachers take the time to let students work with such time consuming programs/ methods.

The active sharing European memories part of the methodology did not work out due to practical reasons. Planning, organising and checking technical issues are vital in order to make this very valuable part of the methodology work.

Photos



Contact and further information

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Case Study 2



FUTURA
UNIVERSITÀ PUBBLICA PER
LA FORMAZIONE PROFESSIONALE
E LO SVILUPPO DEL TERRITORIO

Organisation

Futura cons.soc.r.l, San Giovanni in Persiceto (Bologna), Italy.

School

We worked with the fourth year class in the Secondary School of Castiglione dei Pepoli. There were 24 students who mostly came from the same town, but also from the municipalities of Prato' Province of Tuscany Region. The students were 17-18 years old. The class teacher had already collaborated on a previous EU project, "Sharing European Memories," in 2009-2010.

Description of the project

The topic tackled was a local event that happened on the Gothic Line, which was the last front of the Second World War in Italy. The first lesson introduced how war changes the people, how propaganda works, the typical behaviours of men in wartime and issues related to the revision of memory. Students were introduced to a case study about the massacre at Monte Sole, which took place on the Gothic Line in the Province of Bologna, and one about the liberation of Castiglione dei Pepoli. The students discussed the work produced by a past European project "SEME" based on the presentation "Lest we forget" created in the previous school year. The students also watched and analysed the film "L'uomo che verrà" by Giorgio Diritti. We then analysed the sources and introduced the concept of the difference between Memory and History. The students were prepared for interviewing witnesses and we asked them to observe and to try to understand the witness emotions. We interviewed some relatives who have experienced war: an eyewitness and a son of a South African soldier.

In the final phase of the project we held the "Living Diorama" in Monterumici during which the students were able to compare the different points of view of the war participants.

Outcomes

The project has helped students to develop sense of initiative, the ability to transform their thoughts into action, and the capacity to debate their opinions with other people, appreciating the importance of creative expression and ideas, of experiences and emotions. They have become responsible for their own actions and ideas. Also they have increased their English and digital skills. The teachers, with the help of the project, have worked with a new teaching method that is more active and engaging. Teachers have noticed in the students a growing awareness and greater active participation. The most complicated task was the living diorama. After the initial effort to involve the students in the atmosphere, they asked questions and interacted with the characters. At the end we all formed a circle to discuss the experience not only of the day, but also of the entire project.

Despite the different political points of view there was a genuine debate that was open and friendly. The final objective, that the students have realized, was not to change their ideas, but to understand that there are other points of view that must be respected and that they can work together.



Successes and challenges

The main challenge has been to develop the activities in a fixed timeframe. To do this, the concept of memory has become the method of teaching in normal hours of history. At the beginning the students were sceptical and worried about the commitment that was required of them. Working on the collection of family stories to be able to create the necessary empathic link between daily life and the historical period studied, listening to several witnesses and the Living Diorama have enabled students to participate actively in the project activities. All this has created a small breach in the beliefs of the pupils, often simplified (considering the age), to make way for a broader and deeper understanding of the complexity of war, placing them in the position of trying to understand the motivations of others.

Photos



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Case Study 3



FUTURA
SECTO PUBBLICA PER
LA FORMAZIONE PROFESSIONALE
E LO SVILUPPO DEL TERRITORIO

Organisation

Futura cons.soc.r.l, San Giovanni in Persiceto (Bologna), Italy.

School

The school chosen as case study is Forma Giovani. It's a professional institute in the compulsory education sector. The class we worked with was the second year of electricians. The class included 16 students aged from 16 to 19 years old, with some students from outside the EU. The students had different social and cultural backgrounds and different levels of education. One of them didn't speak the Italian language. We involved the English and History teachers and the tutors who support the students during their school years.

Description of the project

The school researched a local event on the Gothic Line, which was the last front of the Second World War in Italy. The first lesson introduced how war changes the people, how propaganda works, the typical behaviours of men in wartime and issues related to the revision of memory. Students were introduced to a case study of the massacre at Monte Sole, an historic event that took place on the Gothic Line in the Province of Bo. The students watched the film "L'uomo che verrà" by Giorgio Diritti and analysed some episodes. Students then visited the place of memory. The following term we started analysing the sources and introduced the concept of the difference between Memory and History. The students were trained to interview witnesses and we asked them to observe the witnesses' emotions when they spoke of the experience and to understand their point of view, even compared to other stakeholders involved.

In the final phase of the project we held a "Living Diorama" in Monterumici during which the students were able to compare the different points of view of the war participants.

Outcomes

The project has helped students develop their initiative, the ability to transform their thoughts into action, the capacity to take a risk such as standing up for their opinions with other people, and to appreciate the importance of creative expression and ideas, of experiences and emotions. They have become responsible for their actions and ideas. Also they have increased their foreign language and digital skills. The teachers, with the help of the project, have experienced a new way of teaching, more active and engaging. They have noticed in the students a growing awareness and a greater active participation.

The most complicated task was the living diorama. After the initial effort to involve the students in the atmosphere, they asked questions and interacted with the characters. At the end we formed a circle to discuss the experience not only of the day, but also of the entire project.

Despite the different political points of view there was a genuine debate that was open and friendly. The final objective, that the students have realized, was not to change their ideas, but to understand that there are other points of view that must be respected and that they can work together.



Successes and challenges

The main challenge has been to develop the activities in a fixed timeframe. To do this, the concept of memory has become the method of teaching in normal hours of history. The students had difficult relationships, were not used to expressing their ideas, had poor concentration, poor thinking skills and tended to work instinctively. They weren't used to working in groups and they tended to greatly simplify their world, often dividing it in black and white with no shades of grey in between.

The main tool for tackling these issues was the interview with living witnesses. This was the trigger for change on the level of relationships.

The empathy they developed has enabled students to actively participate in the project activities.

Photos



Contact and further information

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Organisation

Aranzadi Society of Sciences, (Donostia- San Sebastian) (Basque Country - Spain).

School

Santo Tomas Lizeoa is a private school, a member of the Association of Ikastolas of the Basque Country. (Ikastola is a type of primary and secondary school in the Basque Autonomous Community, Navarre and French Basque Country in which the main teaching language is Basque). It is the biggest school in San Sebastian with more than 1500 students. 113 students participated in the SEM@S project: five classes of the last year of lower secondary education, aged 15-16 years, and 5 teachers from the social sciences department contributed to the design of the methodology and the adaptation to the Basque curriculum. Two History teachers delivered the project. In this school History is taught in English.

Description of the project

The project implementation took place during 22 lessons of 1 hour each, from 18th April to 20th June. All History lessons during that term were devoted to the project. Students analysed the citizens' historical memory of the Second Industrialization in San Sebastian (1950-1970). From urban and landscape changes, students reviewed changes in the town (demography, housing, public authorities); economy (sector and gender work distribution); and society (daily life, education, rites of passage, festivities and leisure). Each team composed of four students researched these specific topics (demography, housing...) and then, the teams shared the work done with the classmates. Within the project, students re-discovered their town, visiting buildings and neighbourhoods of the time and interviewed people from their community (parents, grandparents, neighbours). At the end they organized a final exhibition, showing the results of their research using archive and object collections.

SEM@S was adapted to Spanish using the Aalborg University model of Project Oriented Problem Based Learning (POPBL) methodology. It is method of practical, active learning centered on the investigation and resolution of real-world problems or projects. Students approached their individual projects in 8 steps stored in a virtual portfolio using the Google Sites toolkit <https://sites.google.com/site/semsdonostia/home>. Each student created their own virtual portfolio with evidence and materials of the job done. This was used to co-evaluate their work and learning process leading to an official grade for their History lessons.



Outcomes

Students analysed the causes of change as well as the diversity of perspectives, opinions and interpretations in history to develop their critical thinking and team-work; then they presented their conclusions. The SEM@S adaptation to the Basque context focused on four general skills: learning to learn and think critically; learning to communicate; learning to live together and learning to do and be entrepreneurial. The methodology also covered seven specific competences.

Teachers were very satisfied with the curriculum design of SEM@S. According to them, the educational needs of secondary education (competences, use of ICT, teaching in English) have been perfectly covered, as well as current trends in active learning (POPBL, cooperative learning, community-focused learning). Sharing experiences with foreign students is an added value for the project.

Students considered that the project required more than work than usual, but they have learned more than with traditional lessons. According to them, topics approached in their usual history lessons can be strange to them. By contrast they found the SEM@S topic much closer to them, which motivated them.

"Students enjoy the methodology, they work well in groups and they have to make decisions regarding history and memory."

One of the teachers

"What I have enjoyed the most was to make the interviews to my family and know more about my parents' and grandparents' life"

Student



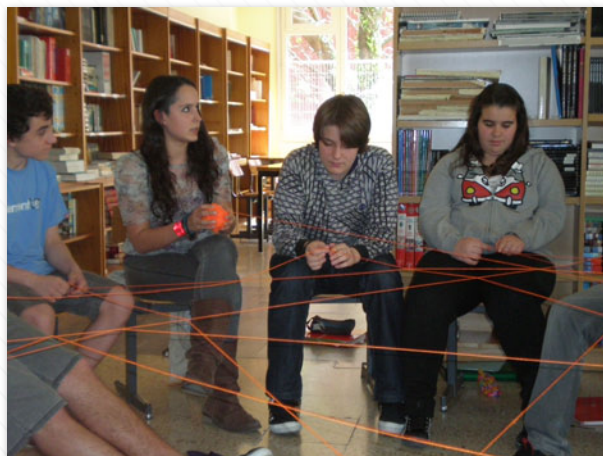
Successes and challenges

The fact of addressing a local topic motivated the students, who felt responsible for generating knowledge about their community. Interviewing family members was a good way to promote intergenerational dialogue, understanding that town and family stories are a part of history. In addition, tasks as gathering testimonies, stories, documents, videos and photographs helped students to increase their interest in History and Social Sciences.

In general, students spent too much time researching general concepts and interviews and then did not have time available to complete the project. It is important to have a detailed project plan and stick to it. The organization of the skype conferences was complex, and one of them did not work at all. This may be remedied by establishing a more fluid communication with other teachers from the beginning of the project.

An important point was the need to adapt the project to the school curriculum. This needed a lot of time and coordination between the school and the project partner, but the results were very positive, as the school has decided to apply the SEM@S project methodology in subsequent school years.

Photos



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Case Study 5



Organisation

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland.

School

The Lower Secondary School "Dębinka" is a semi-public school located in the southern part of Poznań, Poland. It carries out an ambitious academic and educational curriculum attracting the best students in the city. It explicitly teaches students to become aware of their own individuality and discover their talents. The educational process is based upon hard work and entrusting tasks to students. It explicitly aims to teach students to become honest and good citizens, respect Polish and school traditions, be sensitive to beauty and aesthetics and behave respectfully towards others. The project was completed with a group of almost 40 students aged 14-15 years old.

Description of the project

The project was completed in the second semester of the 2011/12 school year. It aimed to teach students a range of issues related to historical memory and its relationship with 'official' history. After a change to the program basis in 2008, related to the removal of 20th century history from gymnasium curricula, the project meets the needs of first and the second grade gymnasium students. However, it was difficult to incorporate the content of the project into the planned curriculum. The methods of work in the project proved to be useful and efficient and made it possible to broaden the obligatory program basis of social and history classes. As a result of the project, family history as well as that of small and large motherlands became integrated with the history curriculum.

Altogether, the school completed 16 thematic trips and museum based lessons during the project. During these activities, the students had the opportunity to connect history, as viewed from the perspective of textbook, with the surrounding world, to recognize it from the surrounding reality and eventually to look at history from a different, inward perspective. The students had also a change to compare different modes of representing the past in different museums.

Outcomes

Following a cycle of workshops on oral history, students prepared questionnaires aimed at collecting and assembling materials following interviews with witnesses of historical events. They conducted a range of interviews with parents, grandparents, relatives, and other witnesses of historical events.

Students participating in the project also produced a "bank of memory". This is a database of different memory accounts delivered by parents, grandparents and other members of the local community. The school is considering a publishing these memories in collaboration with Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.



Students also prepared and organized a municipal game the "Memory of generations inscribed in stone". Its main aim was to discover the historical and cultural richness of Wilda, a district of Poznań. They created an "historical map" of the school surroundings by studying the district inhabitants' contemporary understanding of recent history. This was achieved by the study of material culture, in particular architecture and landscape elements altered by man.

Students also visited numerous museums in Poland and Germany and prepared an analysis of the modes of representing the past at different sites.

Successes and challenges

The project enabled students to acquire a range of different skills. These include methods of working with historical sources as well as preparing, conducting, documenting, and analysing the interviews (the so-called oral history).

Students achieved a number of important goals. They included inter-generational dialogue and a good understanding of collective memory as a means of understanding the present. Students' sense of belonging to the European community was also strengthened as well as their appreciation of the significance of European and local historical memory.

All planned tasks in the project were satisfactorily completed. However, not all the students were equally engaged with the work. A considerable problem lay in inefficient communication with other schools participating in the project. A meeting with coordinators with other participating schools at the beginning of the project would significantly facilitate its implementation.

Photos



Contact and further information

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Organisation

Kranj City Library, Slovenia.

School

In Slovenia we worked with Gimnazija Kranj (Gymnasium Kranj), which is secondary school with a four year programme. In the implementation of the methodology we included 2 classes of 2nd grade students: 52 students in total aged 16 and 17 years old.

Description of the project

Our topic was industrialization of Kranj. We started the project in December and finished in the middle of May. However, students continued work on the topic even longer because they wanted to make their documentary as good as it could be.

Students enjoyed the exploratory work. They found personal stories even more interesting because they had already studied theoretical background of the chosen topic and they already knew about the written facts.

Students prepared their interviews based on the theoretical background. Interviewees had very diverse roles during the time of industrialization: some were from the factory owner class, some were ordinary workers and others were just citizens of Kranj who were observing all the changes happening in the city centre, the population around the city and development of different ways of living.

After the interviews students compared the historical facts with personal stories. All the elements of analysis were combined in a short documentary film about industrialization. The documentary includes historical facts, personal stories, critical evaluation from students, English subtitles, documents, plans of the factories, old invoices, old video of Kranj, photographs from archive and museum ...

After the creative output students had a Skype conference with students from Spain. Both worked on similar topics and it is interesting to know how different students dealt with related topic.



Outcomes

After the analysis of the questionnaires we found out that students improved their skills in team work, critical thinking, the ability to learn independently, decision making and verbal communication. Students and teachers enjoyed doing exploratory work outside the school walls.

The teacher who led implementation in school was Miss Patricija Veldin and she commented on the implementation of methodology:

"The most enjoyable part was the execution itself, therefore participation and project work with students and institutions involved."

Miss Patricija
Veldin
(Teacher)

"During the project, students developed the following key competences: communication in the mother tongue, communication in English, use of digital technology, basic competences in science and technology, learning how to study, social competences, making conclusions, cultural awareness and expression, self initiative and entrepreneurship."

Miss Patricija
Veldin
(Teacher)



Successes and challenges

The methodology has proven to be very useful for discovering topics in a new, more personal way. While the Slovenian curriculum is strictly focused on final exams, other topics are very neglected. With this methodology and project work we can revive topics that have been forgotten or never been dealt with. Students learned about the history of their home town and the roles that senior citizens played when they were young. At the end of the project they realized that it is important for them to know what people went through to make their world exactly as it is today.

The challenging part was the lack of school time. Miss Veldin commented, "Due to the matura exams and, in my opinion, the lack of history classes to cover the extensive curriculum, it is difficult to make any changes in the field of history teaching. However, modifications could easily be applied in after-school activities, i.e. history club, young researchers club etc. Teachers should not be afraid of the demands of the curriculum, e. g. extensive material and the lack of classes to cover it, and they should motivate as many children as possible to engage in research of historical events with the help of eye-witnesses."

At the end of the project students were very proud on the creative outcome and the new knowledge they gained through the project work.

Photos



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Organisation

Royal Armouries Museum, United Kingdom.

School

The Co-op Academy of Leeds is a large inner-city mixed-ability school with students from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds. There are 70 languages spoken and over half of pupils do not have English as their first language. Almost half of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school became an Academy in September 2011. In 2011 approximately 30% of students gained the equivalent of five GCSEs at grade A* to C compared with an average of 58% of pupils nationally.

We worked with one class of 27 Year 9 History students aged 13-14. The class teacher was an experienced Head of History.

Description of the project

Following initial discussions with the teacher we decided to focus on the Second World War with a particular focus on the experiences of people who took part in the invasion of Normandy on D-Day. We delivered the project during history lesson time but we also made connections with English and ICT curriculum areas. Two Royal Armouries project workers delivered the project, supported by the class teacher.

We spent 11 lessons on the project, each 1 hour 45 minutes long, plus a full day visit to the Royal Armouries Museum.

We used a range of teaching methods which were focused on encouraging students to learn independently and develop their skills in analysing different types of source material. These included:

- **Responding to presentations**, led by the teacher or the project expert.
- **Historical source analysis** individually or in groups.
- Taking part in **group feedback sessions**.
- Watching and analysing **archive and contemporary film clips**.
- **Analysing examples** of contemporary media reports and advertising.
- **Practice interviewing** in small groups.
- Preparing for interviews by coming up with **questions** and practising **relevant skills**.
- **Interviewing** living witnesses.
- Creating a **storyboard** for a digital story.
- Writing and recording an **audio track** about their chosen interviewee.
- Creating a list of **images** for the digital story.
- Creating the **digital story** using Movie Maker software.



Outcomes

Of the 24 students who filled in evaluation forms at the end of the project:

- **16** said they had enjoyed it a lot and 6 had enjoyed it a little. This is a higher level of enjoyment than students usually have for history lessons: at the beginning of the project only 4 students told us they enjoyed history a lot and 10 enjoyed it a little.
- **18** said the project had helped them develop critical thinking skills.
- **17** thought it had improved their ability to learn independently.
- **16** thought it had improved their team working skills.
- **14** said it had helped their verbal communication skills.

The teacher thought the project had helped students 'a lot' in developing their team working and verbal communication skills and 'a little' in developing students' decision-making and critical thinking skills.

Both students and teachers felt the project had supported independent learning.

"Instead of just learning about stuff by reading books, we actually got to meet people who'd been there during the war and had real life experiences."

Student

"I think it was a lot more interesting because we got to do more activities, like varied, and we got to meet people we wouldn't be able to meet in a usual history lesson."

Student

Students have developed empathy and an awareness of other people's experiences.

"You can't really get emotions of World War II out of books. You can read about the emotions but you can't feel the emotion. Interviewing the people, you felt the emotion and you took the emotion with you."

Student

"The outcomes which lead to an understanding developed through the students' work not teacher led interventions"

Teacher



Successes and challenges

Successes and challenges

The project was successful in engaging students with the subject matter and developing their understanding of the importance of memory in history. They developed their knowledge of the Second World War from different perspectives, including those of different European countries, and developed valuable skills.

In terms of students understanding the concept of historical memory the project was less successful. The teacher felt that this was a difficult concept to communicate to 14 year olds and that we had perhaps been over-ambitious in trying to incorporate social memory and commemoration as well as oral history, though this approach would work well with older students. However, students were very engaged in discussions about the nature of commemoration and the way in which politicians and the media use the social memory of the Second World War in the present day to influence public opinion. Creating digital stories was time consuming and vulnerable to technical problems.

The highlight of the project for both the students and teacher was interviewing Second World War veterans. This was very motivating for everyone, and several less academic students shone at this task.

Overall, while the project was very successful, we felt that it would work better in future if it was more tightly focused on one area of history and memory, particularly as we had the luxury of more time than would normally be available for project work. Planning time is needed to create effective digital outputs which need to take into account the availability of ICT equipment and networks in school.

Photos



Contact and further information

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