



Castles for Children's Multicultural and Digital Experiences

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PodCast Conference

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Sala delle Capriate Fortezza Firmafede - Sarzana

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Three main areas of consideration, equally important, from the foundation of the work developed through the activities of the PodCastle project.

(1) the recognition of multiple intelligences and the relevance of movement and emotions in education;

(2) the promotion of multicultural inclusion through cultural heritage;

(3) the development of digital competences within a human-centred framework;

In the first area of considerations, we refer to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (1983).

Learners have diverse ways of learning, diverse intelligences, for instance, visual-spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences.

When education overlooks these, students may disengage.

PodCastle activates multiple intelligences at once, creating inclusive learning that boosts achievement, confidence, motivation, and belonging.



Many traditional classroom settings continue to require students to remain seated and physically inactive for extended periods.

Increasing evidence from neuroscience and educational research suggests that physical activity is integral to learning processes, contributing to improved concentration, memory retention, and overall brain function.

Environments that restrict physical activity may negatively affect cognitive development (Begley, 1996).

A key component of Podcastle involved experiential learning in a castle setting, where students participated in music, dance, and game-based activities while exploring historical content.



After collectively visiting the castles, the students engaged in researching, constructing and performing narratives that incorporate historical and anthropological elements. Supported by teachers and project experts, they become co-creators of knowledge rather than passive recipients.

The relationship between "history" and "story" underscores the central role of narrative in human understanding. Storytelling provides a powerful means of organizing and communicating knowledge, enabling learners to connect facts with meaning, context, and emotion.

Research indicates that students exposed to narrative forms of historical content demonstrate higher levels of recall and understanding compared to those relying solely on textbooks (Levstik, 1986).

The second area of considerations concerns the need to create multiculturally inclusive experiences within the classroom. This need is in line with broader European priorities.

Teachers play a crucial role in this process, particularly in primary education, where foundational attitudes and values are formed. In today's multiethnic and multilingual classrooms, it would be auspicious shifting from viewing diversity as a challenge to recognising it as a resource.

In PodCastle, the local castles acted has a mirror in which students with migrant background could reflect the important castles or other kind of meaningful building of their culture of origin.

Thus, cultural heritage becomes a platform for intercultural exchange and dialogue.

Cultural heritage supports identity formation by helping children situate themselves within broader historical and cultural contexts (Council of Europe, 2015).

The emphasis on cultural heritage contributes to its transmission and sustainability. By actively engaging with heritage, children become participants in its preservation and reinterpretation, ensuring its relevance for future generations.

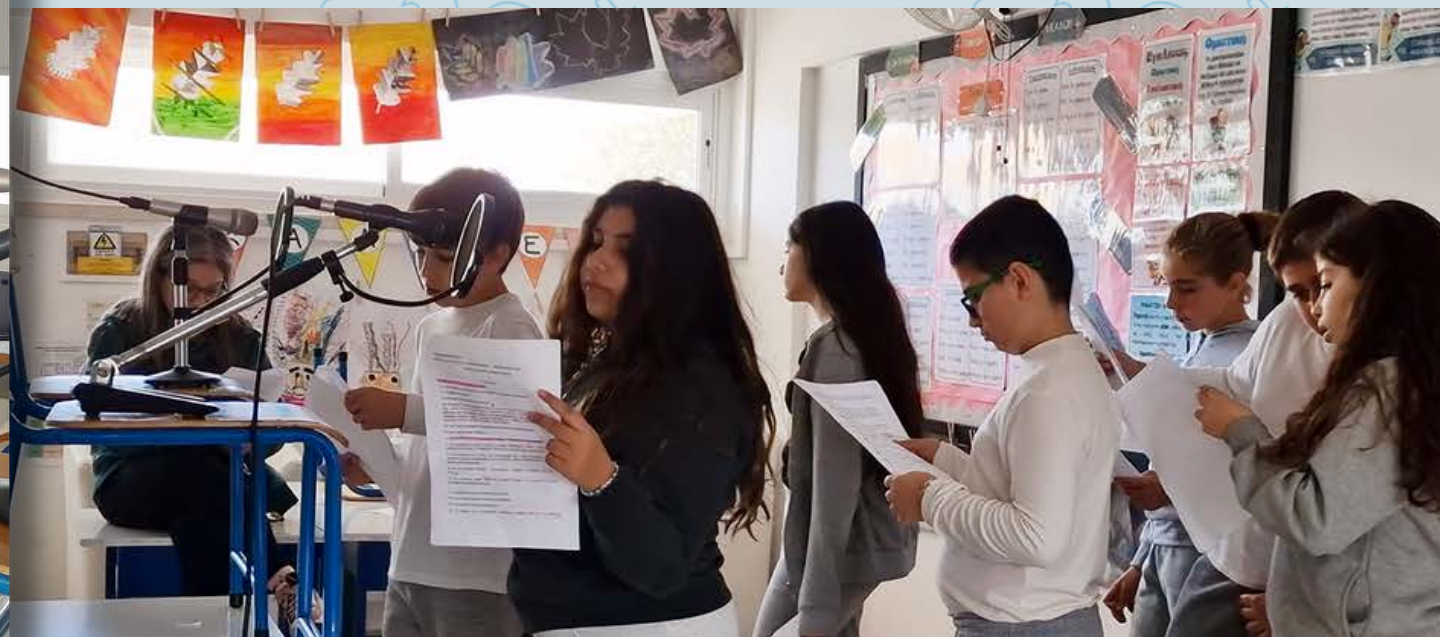
The third area of consideration concerns the development of digital skills and competences required in contemporary education.

The PodCastle project exemplifies this approach through the use of digital storytelling and podcast production.

Students participated in the creation of podcasts, engaging in creative writing, narrative construction, and audio recording.

These activities provided an authentic context for developing digital competences while reinforcing communication, creativity, and collaboration, grounding it in a human-centred approach.

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PodCastle Website:
<https://www.podcastproject.eu>

Thank you for your attention!