

2 HOW TO SET-UP YOUR INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECT

generations@school

In order to implement an intergenerational project with pupils for the European Day of Solidarity and Cooperation between Generations on 29 April 2013, we suggest following the steps described below.

Reflecting on notions of growing up and getting older with the children

Adults often have certain fears and preconceived ideas of old age, while children are not at all afraid of old age or disability.

The fears listed are firstly those of adults who are faced with their own fears of old age and their life experience.

Things to take into account

Certain children sometimes make the link with their own family, though many of them have no real attachment to their ancestors. Certain children in schools are in fact separated from their families, sometimes from their parents and especially from their grandparents.

Certain children may express that they miss the old members of their family or feel affection towards the older people they meet.

Reflection actions prior to the visit by older people

- **Reflecting on one's identity:** I know where I come from (e.g., family tree work, drawing one's family or doing research on one's ancestors) (*optional*).



- **Reflecting on one's future:** I know where I'm going; pupils note down or draw, on a line of life, the important events in their lives, from birth to the age they are now, then they imagine what the important events in their future lives will be: education, family events, hobbies, maximum lifespan (*optional*).
- **Reflecting on shared activities:** What could we do together? (E.g., a discussion about the pupils' grandparents or older people that the pupils know. A discussion may revolve around what they would like to learn from older people and what they would like to do together) (*optional*).
- **Reflecting on oneself and on the other:** Learning to introduce oneself for the visit by older people (*optional*).
- **Learning about the guests:** What would I like to know about the older people that are coming to the class? (E.g., developing a questionnaire to get to know the older people, their passions, their hobbies, the jobs they used to do, what school used to be like, what school is like today, their families, etc.) (*recommended*)

Selecting older people for the *generations@school* project

Teachers will be able to design their *generations@school* projects in conjunction with homes for older people, retired persons associations and isolated older people, and also with their pupils' grandparents. The choice will depend on the activities that teachers want to implement.

If a home for older people, a retirement home, sheltered housing or an older persons' club is chosen, it should be located fairly close to the school. Teachers will get in touch with the director or facilitator to jointly set up workshops for the visit by older people in class.

If teachers call on an association or on isolated older people, they will first need to find out about their activities to ensure that they are suited to the project in mind.

Activities in class: writing an invitation to the older people

Objective

To get them to come

Target audience

Older people

Written format

Invitation cards

First stage: Project

- The *generations@school* project and the day for inviting older people are presented to pupils.
- Pupils are asked to give their ideas about invitation cards by remembering cards they have already seen (e.g., invitation to a birthday party).
- Teachers take note of all the proposals made in order to create the invitation. Pupils then decide which ideas will be kept.

Second stage: Text

- Teachers remind pupils about the ideas that will be written in the invitation. Bearing these ideas in mind, pupils choose suitable illustrations from a range of images provided by teachers.
- In groups of three, they try to lay out the various elements. The different layouts produced will be presented to the class as a whole and discussed; the criteria for a successful layout will be explained.

Third stage: Layout

- Pupils decide on the order of the pieces of information that need to go into the invitation card and suggest, to teachers, a possible layout for the text and images.
- This work can be done in writing or in a computer workshop.



Model letter written by pupils

10 April 2013

Marie Lewis,
Class teacher,
Tel. _____

Dear Members of the _____ Retired Persons' Association,

At our school, we are carrying out a project called generations@school. It is a European project that will allow us to get in touch with other schools and swap information about what we do in class.

Would you like to help us with it? The project is about chatting with older people in class, and we thought that you might be able to come to our school to talk to us. We have put together some questions to ask you, and you too can also think about some questions that you would like to ask us. We would like to know how life changes when you are a grown-up and also what your favourite activities are, what you like doing, etc. We would also like to learn more about your childhood and your life as it used to be and as it is today. If you have got some photos of when you were a child, for example, or some toys or objects you are fond of, or games or songs that tell your story and teach us a lot about the past, we would be very pleased if you could bring them with you. That will allow us to discover a time that is different from ours.

If you would like more information or if you would like to meet us, please get in touch with our teacher/school to arrange a time and day that would suit you best.

If you decide to come, we can have tea together.

Would the week from 22 to 26 suit you?

Thank you!
Yours faithfully,
5A class
School _____, _____

Preparing older people for their participation in class

When teachers get in touch with older people, they should explain the nature of the dialogues in class to them: free discussions where the exchange in itself is what counts.

Guests of the *generations@school* project must be prepared to talk about their past and present in an informal, relaxed way. Teachers will always be on hand to guide the dialogue.

Beforehand, teachers will tell older people how the session is expected to develop, what is expected from their participation, as well as the subject that the dialogue will revolve around. What does it mean to grow older? What can we learn from each other? What can we do together?

Teachers may ask older people to bring photos of themselves as children and of their schools, as well

Things to take into account

Prepare name tags for pupils to facilitate communication between the people in attendance.

as recent pictures of their favourite activities, of their work and professions, of things they like to eat, of their hobbies and of elements of their current lives that they would like to talk to pupils about.

These materials will serve as icebreakers to begin conversations between pupils and older people.

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