

Introducing Kandinsky

Context

These children are studying the painter Kandinsky in art. A French specialist teacher is working with the class teacher to teach the art syllabus through the medium of French. This approach is called Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Here the teacher talks about Kandinsky's work, referring to colour pictures of his paintings on the interactive whiteboard.


Exploration

This school provides a high level of integration of the curriculum by teaching some subjects through the medium of French. In this lesson the teacher is teaching about the paintings of Kandinsky using internet pictures combined with summary texts. Learning is enhanced by studying authentic language in a real context. Integrated work such as this can be stimulating, enjoyable and challenging, reflecting children's increasing maturity and offering them motivation to communicate and use language creatively and imaginatively. Integrated learning develops intercultural understanding and helps learners to view aspects of life from the standpoint of others. After revising the colours in French, the teacher begins her lesson about the paintings, talking about the artist's work whilst referring to pictures on the interactive whiteboard. She pays special attention to the use of cognates, speaks carefully and patiently with lots of repetition, visual aids, consistent and clear body language and use of gestures. The class teacher is also present during the lesson. At this point, she is not involved in presenting material but works in a supporting role. This role can involve activating the interactive whiteboard, helping with resources, circulating amongst the children to check that everyone understands, ensuring everyone is on task and evaluation. Later in the lesson the teachers will swap roles when the children discuss the science objectives covered in the lesson. The KS2 Framework does not prescribe specific topics or contexts for learning. It gives teachers the freedom to be creative and innovative and to devise programmes of work and activities which will engage, excite and challenge children. The choice of topic may reveal a relatively restricted range of vocabulary and structures, even though children are working at a level of sophistication that matches the expectations if they were operating in English. Teachers are often surprised at how much can be done with a little language. This high level of integration depends, for its success, on collaborative planning. Both teachers must share this responsibility and carefully plan not only their roles within the lesson but also the content of each lessons, to ensure that both science and language objectives are at the correct cognitive level for the children. You can find further guidance and case studies of cross curricular links and integrated work in Part 3 of the Framework, pages 33 – 45.

Learning Outcomes

The children:

- Listen attentively and understand instructions, everyday classroom language and praise words
- Listen for specific words and phrases
- Listen attentively and understand more complex phrases and sentences
- Understand longer and more complex phrases and sentences

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- Recognise some familiar words in written form
 - Read and understand a range of familiar written phrases
 - Follow a short familiar text, listening and reading at the same time
 - Identify different text types and read short, authentic texts for enjoyment or information
 - Recognise question forms
 - Hear main word classes
 - Notice different text types and deal with authentic texts
 - use context and previous knowledge to help understanding
 - plan and prepare – analyse what needs to be done in order to carry out a task
 - look and listen for visual and aural clues
 - listen for clues to meaning e.g. tone of voice, key words
 - make predictions based on existing knowledge

Next steps

As children are accustomed to longer spoken and written texts, they will be able to join in by responding with phrases and sentences in the language and by writing short sentences themselves.

Development

What would need to be in place before a school could consider introducing CLIL? What are the benefits of collaborative planning? Do you plan beforehand, the language you are going to use during lessons? What might be the benefits of doing this? Try out a simple level of integration using colours and paintings or geometric shapes.

