



Energetic News

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Project status

By Kirsten Dyhr-Mikkelsen, NEE

Our Active Learning project is currently well into the implementation phase, during which children will carry out energy monitoring and try out other fun active learning activities at school.

Some children have found it difficult to gain the necessary access to the energy meter at their school but are still very keen to save energy.

The project partners are reporting that the teachers of the Champion Schools have applied the Active Learning activities in a variety of creative ways. It will be very interesting to share this experience with all Champion Schools towards the end of the project.

Competition for champion schools

An international competition among the Active Learning Champion Schools was launched in January.

The challenge is for all participants to create a "collage" on what the Active Learning project has meant to the pupils. It could be what they have done within the project and how they have worked with the Active Learning toolbox, and/or how they generally view renewable energy, energy

efficiency or other related issues.

The collage can consist of drawings, photographs, diagrams, pictures from magazines or whatever the pupils like. Only the imagination is the limit!

Deadline for submission of competition contributions is April 30th, 2008 and the winner will be announced in the end of May 2008.

The 1st prize will be a LEGO Renewable Energy Activity Pack. Also a 2nd and a 3rd prize will be awarded.

More details can be found at the AL website:

www.teachers4energy.eu

EU recognition

At the Sustainable Energy Europe Award ceremony taking place under the umbrella of the second European Sustainable Energy week in January 2008, Innoterm Energetics from Hungary won trophy in Promotion, Communication and Education category with AL project. Innoterm and the other category winners were awarded for their exceptional work on the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficient methods.

Congratulations!

School work by candle light and energy audits in Finland

by Suvi Salmela and Irmeli Mikkonen, Motiva Oy

A day without electricity made learning fun

Pupils in eleven Finnish pilot schools have been monitoring energy use in their schools from September 2007. At the same time children have done exercises and research related to energy as part of the Active Learning project. During the ongoing school year schools try to achieve concrete savings along with learning more about energy.

Light Guardians brought excitement to teaching

One of the Finnish pilot schools is Mustamäki School, with a little over hundred pupils, in Halikko in South-west Finland. The second form teacher Kaisa Katava tells that a variety of fun activities have already been done in the project.

- At first, we approached the energy topic on a Climate Change -theme day. In October, we organized the *Guardians of the Light* week, when children were observing lighting and were very keen to turn off the lights. Turning off the lights has already become a good habit of the kids and gradually it has also started to stick to teachers as well, Kaisa acknowledges.

Learning by doing leads to in-depth understanding

Early in December (the darkest time of the year in Finland) we spent a day without electricity in our school. Pupils were making handicrafts and playing in candle light in the classrooms. Children were really excited and the day proved us all how dependent of electricity we really are.

Kaisa tells that actually it was more difficult for the teachers to get used to the idea of not using electricity. Many of them had planned to play music on CDs or using beamers. However, the kids were insistent and reminded teachers of their mistakes.

In the spring, a day without electricity will be organised again more profoundly. For example, the usual hot lunch will not be cooked but we will grill sausages outside instead.

My own actions matter!

Lauttasaari primary school in Helsinki has already gained some experience in learning environmental issues as an Eco-school. The school's environmental programme's theme for 2007 was energy saving, and AL brought a good extension and variety of exercises for the energy education. The school started enthusiastically the work as an AL pilot school with a common introduction to AL to the whole school of 500 pupils.

Tiina Kilpeläinen is the responsible teacher for the schools environmental programme and an acknowledged environmental educator in City of Helsinki Education Department. Her introduction to AL and energy and environmental awareness gave a powerful boost for active learning with AL activities.

Energy audit detected the flaws in energy use

The following steps were to study the school building to find out the immediate needs for energy efficiency improvement.

The school building was taken in use in 1954 and no major renovations have been made since. Pupils did a walk-through audit together with teachers and the school caretaker.

They discovered energy wasting e.g. in the following: hallway motion detectors were falsely adjusted - lights were on through the night; classroom temperatures were too high; windows were open all the time and there's draft in the windows; the front door was often left open and freezes the lobby area; copying machine was on through the night; electrical appliances were on stand-by mode; excess use of water in the showers; the freezers were frozen in and food was wasted in the cafeteria.

Future energy and environmental advocates

At once actions were taken to all of the above issues and improvements have already been made. The pupils involved in AL activities have taken it as their first priority and have actively educated their families as well.

One 9-year girl, for example, rejected her parents' idea of going to Spain during the autumn break. Her argument of causing so much CO₂ by flying there was accepted and the family spent the holiday in Finland.

AL provides versatile tools for energy education and Lauttasaari primary school has used the AL toolbox also in their recently started European Comenius project.



The heart was the key to open the children's minds for energy saving in the project introduction. My own actions matter!

Active Learning experience in the Czech Republic – A practical example

Tereza Vošáhlíková, Civic inspiration & Andrea Hlavová, SEVEN

The Prague NGO called "Civic inspiration" entered the project Active learning organised by SEVEN, The Energy Efficiency Centre in the Czech Republic as the only NGO among other participating subjects (grammar schools). The recent experience shows a positive effect both for children and for the lecturers supporting the project.



Since September 2007 Civic inspiration has been organising a free-time activity that is held one hour each week. Although the time subsidy appears to be too little, it works. The age group of children is broader which helps to involve all kids in the Active Learning activities.

For example, during measuring the energy consumption of the Civic inspiration's offices and playrooms, small children can watch the thermometer whereas older children register the current energy use and note it down.

Another example shows the positive opportunity for participation of non-formal learning. Small children express their ideas in pictures whereas the older ones note them down. The outcome of such activity is very interesting – "colourful" ideas, understandable and attractive for all participants.

Another participating school, the Jan Werich Grammar school in Prague, also chose a non-

standard way of Active learning implementation.

The school project coordinator Ms. Kvetova prepared and organised a one-day programme where all 682 children worked on different workshops according to their age and favourite issues. All teachers were involved to help to organise the workshops. As Ms. Kvetova said this was the hardest problem – to persuade all teachers to try to teach differently. But after the experience of the project day all teachers have been excited and willing to continue in similar activities.

The biggest satisfaction for all Ms. Kvetova's work was the excitement of children building an energy efficient house or new means of transport.

Searching new paths for AL tools

By G. Wisniewski, EC-BREC IEO

Inspired by the article "It is our duty to teach on energy topics", found in AL Newsletter no. 3, two teachers from Gimnazjum no. 123 in Warsaw, Poland decided to search for new ways of applying the Active Learning tools.

The idea was to avoid using the

Active Learning activities exclusively within science-oriented subjects such as physics or chemistry.

Ms. Monika Samczuk and Mr. Tomasz Remiszewski, both teaching in an experimental bilingual class, found the Active Learning activities ideal tools to fulfill this class' curriculum. They joined efforts and taught English and science simultaneously. Given the fact that the Active Learning tools are available in both English and Polish, applying these in a language context was facilitated and the concept was success.

Students eager to learn the language appeared to enjoy the combination of the two subjects. Their learning was reflected in the results presented at the end of the class. The presentations were not only educational and funny, but also showed the energy awareness of the pupils.

Also other Warsaw teachers benefit from the Active Learning tools. The ways in which the Active Learning tools are applied are surprising!

The creative ideas of the teachers as well as pupils' inventiveness help meet the particular needs of their individual schools and successfully meet national curricula objectives.



European Commission recognises AL project

By Miklós Fráter, Innoterm

On January 29th six winning projects from four EU member states, including AL represented by Innoterm Energetics, Hungary, were awarded trophies at the Sustainable Energy Europe Award ceremony taking place under the umbrella of the second European Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW). The European Commission initiative aims to raise public awareness on the use of sustainable energy sources and energy efficiency. The winners were awarded for their exceptional work. It is the second time that the European Commission awards outstanding energy projects launched by local authorities, government agencies, private companies, and associations.



The winners were selected by an independent selection committee, comprising special representatives from key energy stakeholders at regional, national, and European level from more than 240 project nominees. The Active Learning project, represented by Innoterm Energetics, won in the "Promotion, Communication, and Education" category.

More details can be found at the EUSEW 2008 website www.eusew.eu.

More information can be obtained by contacting the consortium partner representing your country:

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