

## **e-ARTinED Background Report On Using Literature To Teach Curricular Subjects**

Arts can serve to lead a society into new ways of thinking and being and empowers individual creativity and critical thinking skills

Children should gain these skills. They can use them to open up psychological and intellectual horizons towards new prospective of personal and collective happiness.

The ARTinED methodology use poems and prose texts to provide examples of how teachers, through them, can support teaching of different curriculum subjects.

Prose is committed to a less symbolic and pure realistic approach to reality while poetry offers multiple possibilities of meanings.

### **Creative writing**

In ARTinED the teachers use creative writing exercises to develop children's communication and cognitive skills using poetry and prose texts.

Working with an artist in the classroom is a valuable strategy. S/he would be in direct contact- intellectually and emotionally- with the children and able to communicate technique of writing, narrative strategies and the joy of the creative act.

Written competences, narrative skills and vocabulary improve. Students explain better their ideas and communicate thoughts, emotions, vision and deepest feelings.

While working on sentence structure, punctuation and grammar the students' ability of self-expression is enhanced.

### **Poetry**

From the very early age poetry accompanies or is central to children's playful interactions with adults and other children through nursery rhymes, songs, jingles, word play, and riddles.

Through poetry, children's sense of beauty, enjoyment of language and awakened aesthetic response can be promoted.

These activities can contribute to the development of the phonic ability

It is recognized that students who learn phonics at a young age become better spellers and use a larger vocabulary. It is widely recognized that phonemic awareness is an important skill in learning to read and that it can be also a very useful tool for the second language teaching.

**The approach:**

**Reading** . The idea is to capture children’s interest through play and pleasure and accompany them to enjoy the magic rhythm of poetic texts and learning to compose.

Group activities are suggested . Children sit in circle or in small groups on the floor, are comfortable and follow freely the rhythm of the text with their body.

**Writing poetic texts** should form part of the child’s writing experience. It is an opportunity for stimulating a taste for beauty in children.

Teacher’s assistance , or of the artist leading the session, should be discrete but she/he should encourage children to explore feelings through writing verses as poetry provides a safe, creative way to describe personal emotions.

### **How a poetic text can help children to image and visualize the information to be learned**

1. Poetry brings a personal touch to topics. Students form strong visual images that facilitate their remembering information. A collection of poems for history, geography, science, and math is the first step to bringing a human element and a personal touch to curricular topics. Students retain information and vocabulary and forge remembering connections.

2. Poetry provides powerful messages that breathe life into facts and concepts that students might otherwise find uninteresting. Poetry in fact is shortcut to the heart of a topic and connects children to content topic in powerful and memorable ways. Students link new information to their own life’s experiences.

3 Students can form new insights about the content that are relevant to their lives, their communities and the world. They can create new understandings and develop social and community responsibility.

### **How to choose the text**

- selection of poetry of the highest quality
- poetry should be a great source of pleasure
- content within the reach of children's experience and able to engage their imagination
- texts suitable for class and group recitation
- start with humorous poems that rhyme
- children should be encouraged to select and suggest the poems
- “the touch stone of poetry is that there is magic in everyday life” (Weinstein)

### **Prose**

The term prose considers the whole literary production that is not in the form of verse.

Reading and writing in prose, beyond and through the aesthetical dimension, helps developing children’s personality and their understanding of the society.

## **The approach**

Questioning is the essential process. All children need frequent exposure to 'open' questions that allows and encourages deduction, speculation, prediction, intuition, evaluation and development of their analytical thinking.

**Writing texts in prose** enable students to elaborate an idea both real or invented.

Children learn core curriculum concepts and improve writing skills by defining characters, setting and plot. To this end the teacher will use creative writing exercises to help them understand how a story/plot is constructed and how all the parts of the story work together.

## **How texts in prose can help children to image and visualize the information to be learned**

As for poetry, prose leads to the children's personal touch helping them to understand contents and situations.

Particularly relevant in areas such as history and geography- creating, exploring and interpreting maps, tables, graphs, etc.- science and math, —solving problems, analyzing cause and effect, reading, predicting, deducing.

## **How to choose the text**

The selection of texts should take into consideration children's interests, background and age but also literary values and the quality of the images/ pictures. It is better to select texts together with the children.

**Practical Examples** are available in the longer text of the report "ARTinED Background Report On Using Literature To Teach Curricular Subjects"