



ShareIT program motivates students to learn more

School: Julio Verne
Country: Spain (Valencia)
Year Level: Primary

Innovation Framework Focus

- Teaching, learning, and assessment
- Learning environments
- Student voice

Brief Description of Innovation

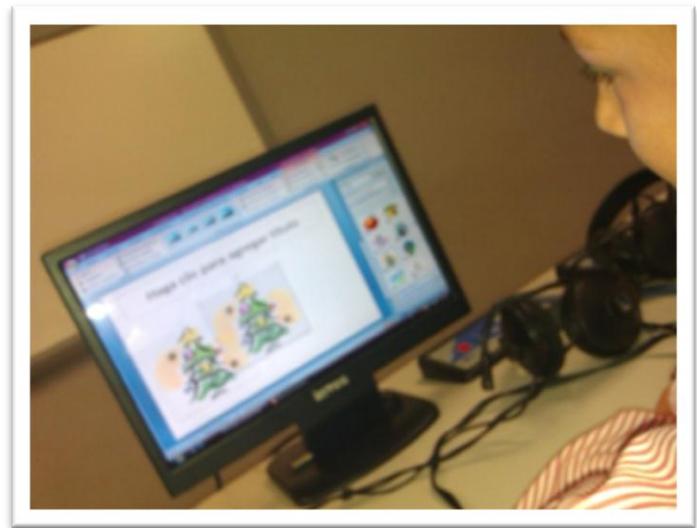
Seeking to promote learning 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, Julio Verne School incorporated ICT into certain activities in different subjects to test whether students and teachers could use ICT as easily as they currently use books, notebooks, and pencils. The project was called ShareIT.

Background

Julio Verne is a bilingual school in Valencia, Spain, focused on sports, arts, languages, and ICT. This innovative school even has a department that focuses on using studies of how the brain works to find and promote optimal teaching methods.

After researching many programs, the school chose the MORE method (Multiple Options for Results in Education), which combines different procedures to achieve success in learning. This method provides ways to keep students on task, promotes the continuous training of teachers, takes into account individual differences, and shows ways to reach different students. This approach increases student security and confidence, and it promotes active engagement involving all stakeholders.

Cooperative learning is integral to the MORE method, and the school uses the Kagan learning structures for cooperative learning, in the belief that working together is a way to improve community as well as individuals.





The school does not focus on learning software or hardware, but rather on learning *how* to use technology to its maximum potential as part of the overall learning process (getting and producing information, conducting assessment, communicating, working together in virtual workspaces, and so on).

Key Innovation and Areas of Focus

Pedagogical focus combines the MORE method with Kagan-style cooperative learning. Digital Boards have been in use in the classroom for 3 years, supporting interactive activities. Virtual spaces are seen as valid as physical ones. Students use the Moodle® course management system, and teachers and managers use Microsoft® SharePoint® collaboration software. SharePoint soon will be available to families and pupils, making learning accessible anytime and anyplace, and promoting fluid communication between school and families.



The school's Department of Innovation develops a strategic plan in support of the school's pedagogical and technological innovation. Based on the needs of the staff, the department provides training, and then evaluates the effectiveness and application of the training.

To answer the question of whether ICT could be integrated into everyday routine (in the same way that students typically use notebooks and pencils), the ShareIT project first identified skills that must be developed with both traditional and digital tools, and then developed one activity for each of these skills in every lesson in certain subjects.

To help overcome any resistance and fear that often accompany change, and to make teachers' jobs as easy and the project as

quick to implement as possible, all activities for students in years 3 and 4 were coordinated between the science and ICT departments, and the activities were presented to teachers in ready-to-implement form.

Shared Vision

The goal of Julio Verne School is to develop independent, critical-thinking students using ICT, languages, arts, and sports. ShareIT supports the school's goal.

Microsoft Technology

Microsoft Office and SharePoint are at the heart of the ShareIT program. For students in years 1 and 2, the project incorporated Microsoft Paint with the arts curriculum. Students in years 3 and 4 used Microsoft PowerPoint® with the science curriculum. Students in years 5 and 6 used Microsoft Word with the Spanish curriculum. All activities are stored in a Moodle platform (students are familiar with Moodle—they work with it from kindergarten through year 12).



Outcomes



To create excitement and expectation, the school advertised the project with posters and, using robots (like these at the left) specially designed for this activity, announced on the school portal that something was going to happen. This beginning had great effect.

Students quickly demonstrated that they were capable with the ICT tools. When they found the potential and meaning of working with the software, they started to investigate learning by themselves and began developing more complex skills.

Assessment was embedded in the lessons. Students were not only learning, they also wanted to work and learn more! Learning became more attractive. Students liked participating and showing their work to the rest of the school. They also found that communicating was easier because of Internet resources (forums, blogs, podcasts, and so on).

Teachers and staff changed, too. There was some initial resistance to what was seen as students having “loose” time in front of the computer (versus more structured time with pencil and paper). However, when teachers and staff saw how students were more motivated, the resistance disappeared and teachers and staff enthusiastically supported the project.

Future Plans

Future plans are developing for expanding the approach of this successful project into all grades and all subjects.

Family Comments

“We consider the program not only useful, but necessary.” Heather Bonte (mother of 4th and 6th graders).

“My point of view is that it’s the best way to show the relation between learning and the new technologies.” María Castells (mother of 4th grader)

Student Comments

“Thank you for creating ShareIT.” Diego, 3rd grader

“ShareIT is good because we can send our works straight to the teacher.” Carlos, 5th grader

“We can send our opinions in the forums.” Eduardo, 5th grader

Teacher Comments

“We should invest more time in technologies in education (at both school and home).” Ximo Casas, 6th grade teacher

“It’s great to transmit to our students the contents across the Web.” Ramón Llopis, 3rd grade teacher



References

Julio Verne School Web site: <http://www.cjulioverne.com>

<http://cjulioverne.com.es>

<http://cjulioverne.com/shareIT.pdf>

Video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYp5Pg5AOho>