

# Transdisciplinary Learning in Tallinn English College

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# Transdisciplinary learning in the Primary Years Programme

*Students' interests and questions form the heart of transdisciplinary learning. It is a curriculum-organizing approach where human commonalities rise to the top without regard for subject boundaries. Subjects become an instrument/tool/resource to explore a theme, problem or concept in depth. (Beane 1997; Klein 2006).*

*Transdisciplinary learning in the PYP refers to learning that is not confined within the boundaries of traditional subjects but is supported and enriched by them. (IBO)*

Each year: 6 transdisciplinary themes.

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organize ourselves
- Sharing the planet



Unit poster: Sharing the planet



# Connecting with the world outside the classroom

We try to take students out to the “world outside” as much as possible (museums, parks, ERR, Postimees, nature) and give students hands on activities



Students visiting the National Broadcasting Studio



Students exploring maps from the Tourism Office.



Charity event: helping out at the local foodbank



Unit “Survival Synergies” Exploring the park.



Visiting a garden center to learn how to pot plants



Growing cucumber plants in class

# Collaboration

- Students sit in groups
  - Changing seats regularly
- Lots of group work
  - Multilevel groups
  - Various grouping methods
- Teachers model collaboration
  - Planning a unit happens collaboratively
  - Weekly planning
  - Teachers work together to create an engaging unit and to ensure the integration of all subject areas

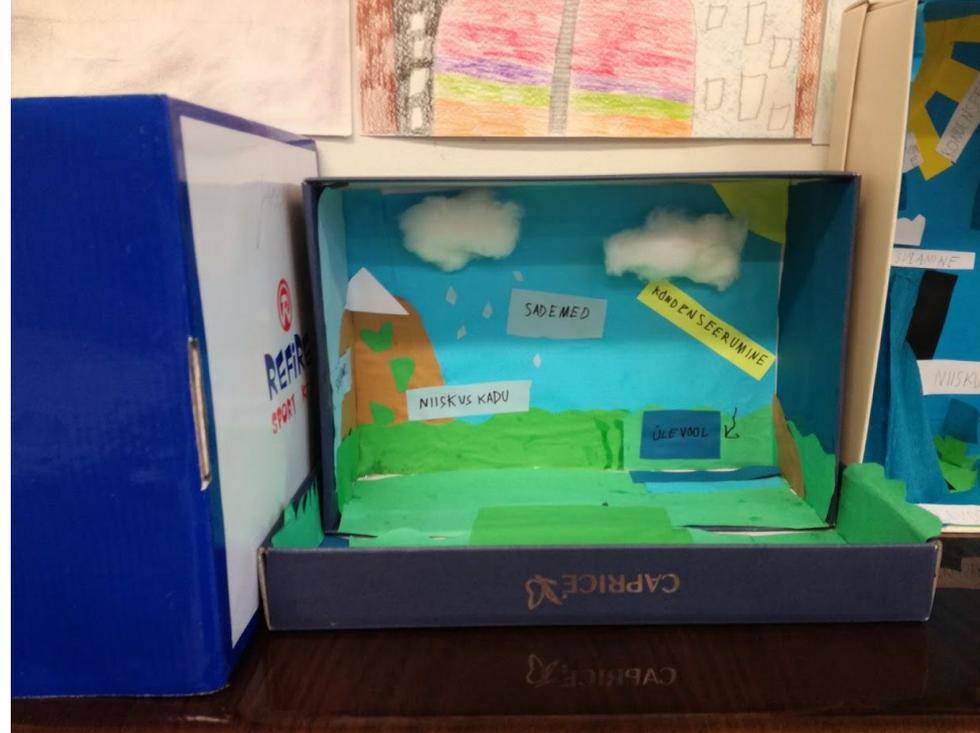


Group work

# Examples



Students collaborating on a Baltic Sea project. They are showing the food webs in the sea, and they collected examples of pollution from the shoreline.



Students learned about the water cycle and made their own models of it in a shoe box.



Unit “Solar System” As a pre-assessment students showed their prior knowledge by creating a model of the solar system in groups.



Unit “Signs and Symbols”. Students created their own alphabet and a secret message for their classmates.



Learning geometric shapes. In groups students created buildings out of the learned 3D shapes.

# Challenges

- Time consuming
- Differentiation
- Teacher skills
- Not everything can (or should) be integrated
- Collaboration between subject teachers and homeroom teachers

# Opportunities

- Creating deeper understanding, gaining a wider perspective
- Flexibility
- Student engagement, student initiated action
- Whole school development, collaboration

Thank you for listening!