

Christmas shoebox newsletters – Year 1

Software - Resources

The children used Microsoft Publisher for this activity. Any word processing or desktop publishing application would suffice to create a simple newspaper style front page. Photographs were taken using a Sony Mavica digital camera.

Context

The school have been engaged in the collection of materials for children in Kosovo. The whole school have participated and large quantities of present have been collected. The children were asked to create a newsletter publicising their efforts in an attempt to generate further contributions and to tell their parents and the community of their work.

Organisation

The children were put into writing groups of three to four children for this activity.

Activity

Children looked at and discussed the front pages of newspapers. They looked for common styles and layouts. They focused on headlines and the use of pictures and captions as common elements and decided to incorporate some of these styles into their newspaper. They were given a small word limit and asked to tell the story of the Christmas shoeboxes. They took digital photographs of themselves and the collected materials and imported these into their word-processed documents. They were asked to make their newspaper as appealing as possible so attention was paid to colour schemes and font sizes.

Conclusion – Extension work

Further newsletters are planned. Ideas include a small class newsletter covering in class events and news, a newsletter for the school and one aimed at the adjacent junior school. The pupils were eager to play the role of reporter/photographer and thought hard about the kind of things they should include in their reports. Development of objective writing would be a future target.

Curriculum links

English – Oracy (FS – 1.1, 2.1) - Writing (FS – 1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6)

ICT curriculum link

Focus Statement 1.1 – Opportunities to generate and communicate ideas in different forms using text, tables, pictures and sounds.

Focus Statement 1.2 – Enter and store information

Focus Statement 1.3 – Retrieve, process and display information that has been stored.

Teacher comments

“The children worked hard to recreate what they had seen in newspapers. Using the real context of their collections for charity was a great motivator. They were all keen to tell the story and show what has been going on. They worked hard to keep within the word limit and they did well to keep the writing in style”