



Our Farm

A Storyline Topic in a primary school in Pargas, Finland

Ann-Catherine Henriksson

The curriculum in year five in the primary school in Finland tells us to teach about how our food is produced and about the plants and the animals that provides us with food. Although we live in a small town many of the pupils have never seen a living cow or been on a real farm.

The class was divided in family groups living on a farm. We discussed what kinds of buildings that there could be on a farm and how the buildings could be situated. Every family built their own farm and the farmyard. Then we made the characters living in our families. Every pupil made an own character, and then the families could be introduced to the other families. We reflected about what incidents could happen in the families through one year and made a diary for the character for one day in their everyday life.

We discussed about what plants we grow in our farm (seed, vegetables, berries..) and how the plants should be cultivated to give a good harvest. The newspapers provided us with news about the harvest in Finland this year.

We also listed the animals living on a farm and made some of the animals in clay. The pupils also brought some toy-animals to their farm. Every pupil chose one animal to do research about and then they made a book with facts about the animal. The facts were presented for the other pupils.

As a final conclusion of the topic the class visited a school where the students learn about agriculture work. We could see the machines you have on a farm and above all we could see the animals, feed them and learn new facts about how they should be taken care off.

The mean subject of the topic was biology but as you can see we included a lot of other subjects as well: environmental education, sustainable development, arts, mathematics and even history. We let an old oak tree in our farmyard tell us its story. The tree could tell us about peoples living on the farm long time ago, old things and tools, the first car and happenings from the time of the last war in Finland.