

DESCRIPTION OF SUCCESSFUL READING PROGRAMME PROGRAMME TITLE: "Reading Finland" PROGRAMME ORGANISER(S): Finnish National Board of Education	
Description Created by LiRe Partner Institution: W.J Grabski Public Library in Ursus	
Time & Place	Target Group(s)
Finland 2001-2004	Students in the age 6-14 years old
Short Description (Max. 200 words)	
<p>Reading Finland was a priority project of the Finnish National Board of Education implemented in 2001-2004. The objectives of the project were to improve the reading and writing skills of pupils in basic and general education and to increase their knowledge of literature. It was addressed to primary schools, involving all subjects and teachers.</p> <p>Although in spring 2001 the results of the PISA 2000 study showed that the reading skills among Finnish youth were easily the best in the OECD countries, about a fifth of the pupils perform alarmingly inadequately in relation to nationally set objectives according to national evaluations of mother tongue skills. There were significant individual discrepancies; boys performed worse than girls especially in their knowledge of Finnish, and it seemed that pupils had problems in deductive and critical reading. In an information-based society like Finland, there was a need for even better and more versatile reading skills.</p>	
Objectives (General & Specific)	
<p>General Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to improve the reading and writing skills of pupils in basic and general education - to increase students' knowledge of literature <p>Specific Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to raise the skills and knowledge of the weakest performing quarter - to develop methodologies to increase reading among boys - to improve methods for teaching writing skills - to have the pupils read more, both at school and in their leisure time - to develop school libraries, and to increase collaboration between schools and municipal libraries - to increase school visits of authors - to increase cross-curricular activity in the areas specified in the project - to improve deductive reading skills 	
Scheme of Reading Promotion Actions & Activities	
<p>The programme included the following actions and activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing new deductive and critical reading activities - Discussing methods of improving reading and writing skills of pupils in basic and general education - Inviting authors and illustrators to schools - Organising book exhibitions 	

Results / Indicators of Success

Sixty-nine municipalities, six teacher training schools and one state-ran educational institution participated in this voluntary development project. The opening seminar of the development network was held in May 2001. About 250 participants were present. They represented 6 operational branches:

- Curricular development in all subjects to promote reading and writing skills and to increase the knowledge of literature
- Improving school libraries and promoting collaboration between schools and municipal libraries
- Improving reading and writing skills as a collaborative effort between basic education and special needs education
- Reading comprehension, especially the improvement of deductive and critical reading strategies in all subjects
- Writing different genres of texts and learning through writing in all subjects
- Improving pedagogical methods for educating boys in the areas specified in the project

CONCLUSIONS (WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHY)

The programme brought all the teachers together to improve reading comprehension and writing skills. It also helped primary teachers improve their methodologies. The programme better familiarized teachers with literature aimed at children and young people. It strengthened cooperation between home and school, to support reading and writing skills. It developed the teaching of Finnish as a second language and the teaching of mother tongue to immigrant children. It was noted that good reading skills prevented social exclusion and were the most significant factor in educational success.

References:

www.oecd.org/finland