



The Sustainable Art School: Present and Future

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Abstract

The need for Sustainable Development inevitably leads to the establishment of a Sustainable School and Environmental education. Sustainability and Environmental education -- concepts that encompass many meanings and levels -- have the potential to evolve and grow not only as abstract ideas but through experience and reality, providing they form part of an ongoing practice. Educating pupils in sustainability affects their conscience and leads them to use their environment in ways respectful towards nature and natural laws.

In attempting to define the framework within which the Sustainable School can move forward, we must determine the following:

1) the subjects and ideas we aim to highlight, in relation to cultural issues, 2) the manner of approaching and conveying the meaning of sustainability, so as to cultivate pupils' talents and develop their critical thinking, and 3) the physical environment in which these activities take place, as well as the conduct of everyone involved which must have an ecological orientation.

To this end we have designed environmental projects on the ART OF RECYCLING AND RE-USING MATERIALS and ORIGINAL AND INNOVATIVE GAMES that were realized at the GERAKAS ART HIGH SCHOOL during the 2005-2012 school years, intending both to develop our pupils' talents through a visual arts approach, and to encourage them to socialize, think critically, and respect the objects and human beings that surround us.

To realize our projects we used a visual approach to environmental issues. We set clear conditions, aims and goals, and used a variety of techniques and methodologies. Finally, we exhibited the work produced by our pupils. In the process of making it they learned to be confident in themselves, respect one another, to work together as a group, to respect the environment and consequently our fellow humans, stressing the fact that we are all equally responsible for our environment and civilization. Visual thinking and aesthetic culture lead a young person to link, directly or indirectly, concepts regarding the re-use of materials to issues that form part of the general curriculum, aiming towards a holistic approach to the relationship between humanity and environment through the ages.