

# Can we really implement classical literature reading in primary classroom?

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## **Abstract**

This article shows how it is possible to implement the reading of classic literature in the classroom primary. This is due to the great work that involves the creation of a methodological system driven from Spain, which is specified in the Learning Communities, and more precisely in the dialogic learning through dialogic reading. This is one of the "successful actions" that provide these Learning Communities. It serves both readings in Spanish and English, provided that they are adapted to the level of understanding of our students.

**Keywords:** Literature for children, Performances of success

**Título:** ¿Realmente podemos poner en práctica la lectura de la literatura clásica en el aula de primaria?

## **Resumen**

Este artículo nos muestra como sí es posible implementar la lectura de clásicos de la literatura en el aula de Primaria. Ello se debe a la gran labor que supone la creación de un sistema metodológico impulsado desde España, que se concreta en las Comunidades de Aprendizaje, y más exactamente en el Aprendizaje dialógico a través de lecturas dialógicas. Se trata de una de las "actuaciones de éxito" que contemplan estas Comunidades de Aprendizaje. Sirve tanto para lecturas en español como en inglés, siempre que estas estén adaptadas al nivel de comprensión de nuestros alumnos.

**Palabras clave:** Literatura para niños, Actuaciones de éxito.

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## **BASIS**

Of course. The aim of this paper is to propose an interesting method to get children gain enthusiasm for reading, in particular for classical literature. In this way, children increment academic vocabulary. And, not only that, but that practice is done in a totally inclusive atmosphere.

Among the paragraphs we will see how this method is set up, its history, development and all its factors involved.

Lots of researchers in educational field, have always looked for the best way to get children learn in a suitable way. I'm talking about people like Platon, Luis Vives, Comenio, John Dewey, David and Roger Johnson, Gardner, Vygotski, Aubert, etc. Their way of thinking have been on target to an more and more inclusive education.

In this sense, it is well knowing by scientists that nowadays dialogic learning is one of the best ways to acquire knowledge. Jerome Bruner, an english psychologist who has made significant contributions related to educational pychology, focused his research in the importance of interaction and culture.

It was some years ago, that a group of European scientists, thinkers, teachers, psychologist and philosophers, all of them committed to inclusive education, founded a project that was destined to research scientifically succesfull actions in the european investigation framework. And not only that, but their aim is to create a network where people who are met in groups and working about inclusive education in Europe, can share their educational practices in this field.

In that work they noticed there was a serie of educational and inclusive actions which were certainly producing result scientifically proven, through picking data. Effectively, they found that a group in Spain, CREA (Centre of Research in Theories and Practicies that Overcome Inequalities), that is formed by university professors, researchers and profesionales from differents disciplines, and among their goals is to get overcome social inequalities since an inclusive education, set up an absolutely interesting project named Learning Communities.

Learning Communities is a project which aim is social success and educational transformation. It is consisted with two key factors for learning in today's society: interactions and community involvement, and involve all persons directly or indirectly influence the learning and development of students, including teachers, relatives, friends, neighbors, members of associations and local volunteers. Learning communities are based in dialogic learning, as it is the framework from which conducted the proceedings of success in learning communities. It means, people learns from interactions with others. Thus, through dialogue transform relationships, our environment and our own knowledge.

The 7 principles of dialogic learning are: dialogue egalitarian, cultural intelligence, transformation, instrumental dimension, creation of meaning, solidarity, and gender differences.

We focus now in the actions in learning communities which performing success. These recognized by the international scientific community, contribute to improving the learning of the students and the improvement of living together at school. These actions are:

5. Interactive groups.
6. Dialogic gathering.
7. Family formation.
8. Educational community involvement.
9. Dialogic model of prevention and resolution of conflicts.
10. Dialogic teacher training.

Thus, we are going to talk about the second of the actions, Dialogic gathering, concretely about 'dialogic reading gathering' at school, as this action can extend from literature to art or music, among people regardless age, gender, culture or ability. So, it is a dialogic approach to universal classical culture.

These dialogic reading increase vocabulary in pupils, and help to develop abstract thinking. Furthermore, the choice of read classical literature gives the action timeless value, and fosters critical reading; at the same time, it has more social value, a larger impact, and fosters empathy. However, it demands an effort and use of dictionary.

We will see how conduct this action in class.

## DEVELOPMENT

A dialogic literary gathering is a cultural and educative activity where people meet to share, read and converse about an universal classical literature book. Thus, they must think about topics like racism, history, injustice, Human Rights or violence against women, among others.

In a class, children act as some readers and reviewers, and the teacher acts as a moderator at the beginning. These sessions can carry out once a week

The sequence is the next one:

1st. - Two classical literature books are chosen among all together in class. These will be able to be proposed by the teacher or by any pupil provided criteria are explain to be selected.

2nd. - It's decided how many pages or chapters to will be readed to the next week.

3rd. - Each pupil read the pages agreed with the rest of classmates and the theacher at home; next, choose the paragraph or paragraph which he or she likes the most, and writes down it on a notebook, adding below a brief comment about it.

4th. - The next session, in class, people who have selected a paragraph, ask for turn to speak.

5th. - The moderator gives the floor to one of these children who have selected a paragraph. This pupil reads it out loud and explains why he chose it. All people listen to the pupil in silence.

6th. - After that, the moderator asks if someone wants to comment anything about that paragraph; next, opens to the floor, as all pupils can give his or her opinion about the already explained paragraph.

7th. - After being listening to all of opinions, the moderator asks to the reader if he or she wants to say anything about the rest of comments. If the answer is affirmative, the moderator will give him or her the floor, and if this is negative, he will give the floor to the next pupil who had selected a paragraph. Next, opens to the floor to comment that paragraph, and following it is readed another paragraph by another pupil, and so on and so forth.

This method is followed according to the order of chapters, and will continue in this way to the end of the book.

As some pieces of advice from experience to start this action in primary, I want to expose a few of points:

1. Doing some previous activities related to the topic.
2. At the first times, it is good someone unconnected with the class goes there to keep calm children.
3. Summarizing some main ideas about the chapters before starting each session.
4. Having always two or three extra books.
5. It's good the teacher approaches children and observes results, but the main objective is they get to feel pleased by reading.
6. The character of the moderator can turn in each class. Thus, all children finish acting as a moderator some time.

On the other hand it is important to remind children at the beginning of each session, what are the rules to develop this activity:

11. The moderator mustn't give his or her opinion, either oral nor gestural. Neither losing his or her role.
12. Opinions are always respected, but mistakes are corrected by the teacher (grammar, vocabulary, etc)
13. All people listen to the rest of classmates in silence.
14. The turn of floor is always respected. It means, we respect each others.

These rules can be reminded each session by a different pupil.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up, we can really implement classical literature reading in our Primary classroom. Thanks to this kind of activity, dialogic literary gathering, children get to participate in constructing knowledge through equality dialogue. Besides, they improve notoriously their skills related to reading and expression, and gain a wider and rich view of the World through classics.

In effect, it is not the only or the best method to engage children in reading, but it is demonstrated that is a wonderful way to do it. Besides, it is awesome this curiosity for reading is developed through master pieces of universal classical literature.

As far as I concern, it is most interesting that so beautiful activity can connect gaining of knowledge and inclusive education.



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- <https://global.oup.com/education/content/primary/series/treetops-international/classics/?view=ProductList&region=international>  
Maybe to bilingual schools. We find titles like Frankenstein, Machbeth, or The Jungle Book, among others.
- <http://www.pearsonlongman.com/penguinkids/disney/>  
It is about Disney films adaptations.