

Project idea: „What do you think about that?“

Competencies: Communication skills

Age group: all grades

Project duration: 90 minutes

Link to learning module: www.teachtoday.de/en/thinkabout

Project objectives

Learners' motivation is increased by having personal conversations with people who know about what they do and with other children and teens, and these experiences help them to remember the information they've learned. With a video conversation, the children and teens can ask their questions and at the same time see that they are actually being answered by a professional.

The teenagers

- be able to remember information more easily, because the use of video messengers produces a connection to their everyday world.

Subject and methods

The teenagers

- prepare for a media-mediated conversation.
- learn and practice the use of video messengers (individually and in group calls with optional live video connections as well as sending files via Skype, for example).
- learn about a software which they can use to communicate and to work from anywhere.

Activity and action competence

The teenagers

- be encouraged in the work that they are doing, because they get direct feedback from their Skype partner, who can communicate it face to face.
- overcome the initial hesitation that is there when speaking to experts for the first time or talking to people who speak a foreign language.

Social communications

The teenagers

- experience their own self-efficacy in that they are able to discuss with specialists and experts on the same level; and furthermore, they see first hand that the questions they pose are legitimate ones.
- get engaged in a topic intensively during the entire preparation, implementation and evaluation of the interviews, thereby formulating and solidifying their own individual positions.

Personal competence

Introduction

How to Skype with experts

“Madam Chancellor, what do you think about the German railway company’s ongoing strikes? – We admit, Angela Merkel is probably not that easy to get in front of a Skype camera for an interview, but many other experts and specialist conversation partners would be glad to have a talk, conversing, answering and posing questions from and to your children and teens. For one, because the effort involved is kept to a minimum thanks to the video messenger software.

In the video call, children and teens can converse directly with an expert and do so on the same level to learn more about a specific subject. They could even talk with fellow children and teens from foreign countries about cultural differences. The children and teens learn to operate video messenger software, like Skype, Google Hangouts or Snapchat, and make the necessary preparations for a video interview.

Project procedure

The project “What do you think about that?” can be used in many ways and is suitable for all subject matters and ages. In preparation, the teacher him- or herself must first get familiar with the video messenger software and make contact with the conversation partners that they would like their children and teens to communicate with.

During the project, the children and teens are then introduced to the software and get the opportunity to try out the video messenger amongst themselves. The next step is for the children and teens to find out what will be the topic of the conversation or interview so that they can prepare specific interview content. One student is chosen as a spokesperson who then conducts the interview with an expert or specialist via Skype. Following the conversation, the learning group will evaluate the discussion together.

Thanks to this kind of face-to-face conversation, children and teens gain a lively insight into a specialized subject area, such as politics, economics, science, sports, journalism, music, etc. This helps to embed the information and newly learned material in the memory in a sustainable way. Video conversations can be used in the classroom to speak with practitioners about their professional experiences as well, which allows children and teens to get a first-hand impression of what it is like to work in a certain profession.



Phase description | Social form

Phase 1 | Individual work

After you have become familiar with the video messenger software yourself, explain the basic functionalities to your class so they can use it effectively.

Word document

The children and teens then practice using the software in small groups by having short video conversations with each other. In the meantime, you should consider which experts to select and begin contacting them for the interview.

Phase 2 | Group work

How does one conduct competent conversations and interviews?

With the aid of a tutorial on YouTube, you can guide your children and teens in the construction and carrying out of a well-developed interview conversation.

YouTube video,
word document

Then they prepare the interview and consider appropriate questions to ask their interview partner, whether that partner is an expert or a fellow student from abroad.

Phase 3 | Group work

Children and teens conduct an interview/conversation with a specific person via video messenger software.

Video messenger
software

Phase 4 | Groupe discussion

Discuss the interview results together as a group with a follow-up conversation.

Word document

Notes



