



The public library in a multicultural society:

Multicultural adventures at Reykjavik City Library



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UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto

The Multicultural Library:

**- a gateway to a cultural diverse society
in dialogue**

Reykjavik City Library



Multicultural projects at Reykjavik City Library:

- The Flying Carpet - intercultural encounters in schools, libraries and working places.
- Study Café, homework assistance.
- The Women's Story Circle.
- Introduction to the library as part of Icelandic teaching as well as mother tongue teaching.
- Reykjavik Safari; A guided tour led by immigrants in different mother tongues. Introduction to cultural life in the city center.



- Family mornings.
- Café Lingua – language plaza.
- Storytellings for children in different languages.
- Events and exhibitions in cooperation with immigrant organisations and individuals.
- Let's read the papers.







www.heilahristingur.is

HEILAHRISTINGUR
heimanámsaðstoð á bókasafninu :-)

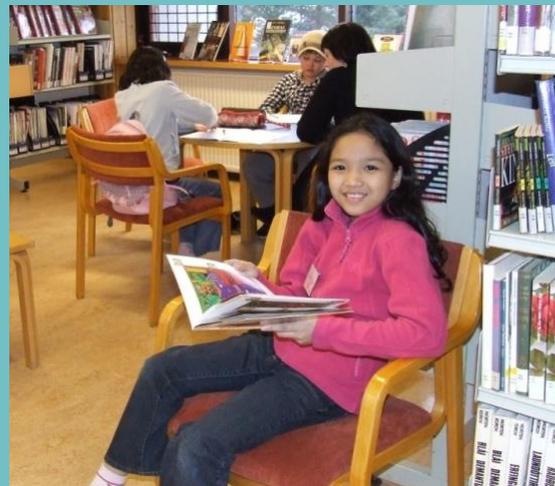
Study Café

- homework assistance at the library

Kawiarenka naukowa
Pomoc przy odrabianiu
prac domowych w bibliotece

เรียนในร้านกาแฟ
กิจกรรม ช่วยเหลือ ในการ
ทำ การบ้าน ใน ห้องสมุด

Café de estudio
Ayuda con los deberes de
la escuela en la biblioteca



The Women's Story Circle

– a cooperation with W.O.M.E.N in Iceland



Video



Café Lingua – living languages:

- A forum for people interested in encouraging their language skills.
- A place for words, dialogue and communication in relation to different languages
- A gateway to society as well as cultural diversity.
- A cooperation with The Vigdis Finnbogadóttir Institute, The University of Iceland, Bio Paradis, The Nordic house, NGOs and individuals.





One of the goals of Café Lingua is to activate the languages that have found their way to Iceland, enriching society and culture, while at the same time to make citizens curious about the world around us.



Children teach children languages







Menningarmót  Fljúgandi teppi

The Flying Carpet

www.menningarmot.is

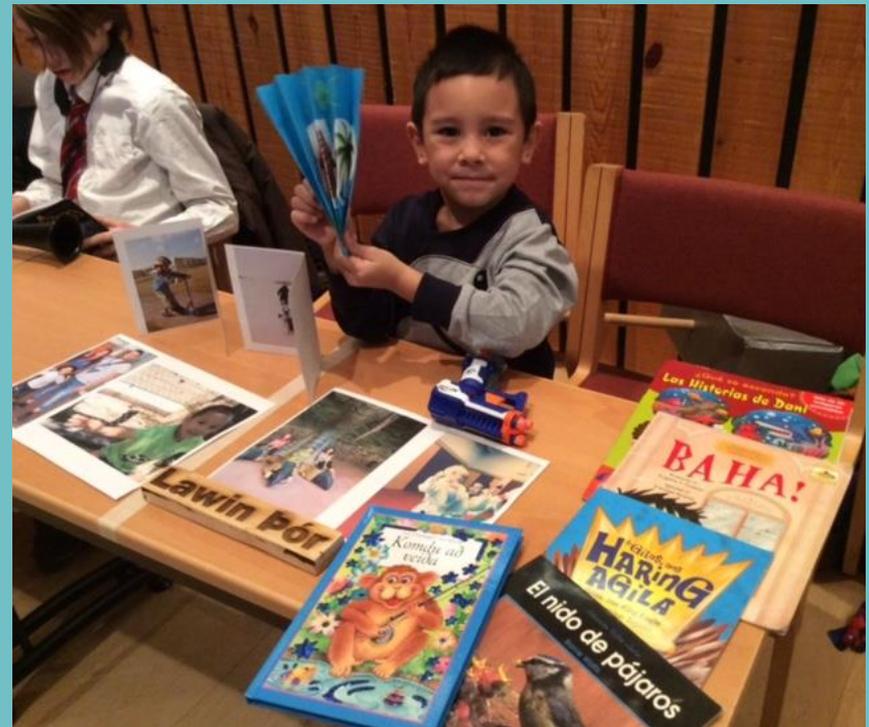
Intercultural encounters
in kindergardens, elementary schools and colleges.

- A cultural project in the teaching where the student's personal culture is the point of departure.



- The emphasis is on individual interests and those things that matter the most in each and every person's life.
- Other classes, parents and relatives are invited to get an insight in the cultural and linguistic landscapes of the children.

- The main goal is that all participants – including Icelandic children - feel the sense of pride. It increases the respect for others. If a child gets the opportunity to prosper in its strengths the odds are better for that child to create a space for others, to prosper as well.



Three steps:

1. Introduction of the project to the pupils.
2. Discussion; What is culture? What makes you shine? What are your strengths? A preparation of how to mediate ones culture in multiple ways. Involving parents by an informative letter.
3. The intercultural encounter: Parents, grandparents and other pupils are invited to get an insight in the cultural and linguistic landscapes of the children.



What makes you strong?

„Teachers need to learn about their students, identify with them, build on their strengths, and challenge head-on the many displays of privilege and inherent biases in the schools in which they teach.”

(Nieto, *The Light in Their Eyes*)



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A home page with guidelines for teachers

Menningarmót Flúgandi teppi



Yngsta stig

Heimsreynsla og reynsluheimar

3-7 ára

Home » Framkvæmd » Miðstig (8-12 ára) » Menning og miðlunarleiðir

- Forsíða
- Um verkefnið
 - Markmið
 - Menningarmóta
 - Fréttir
 - Umfjöllun og umsagnir
- Framkvæmd
 - Undirbúningur og skipulag
 - Yngsta stig (3-7 ára)
 - Kynning fyrir börnin
 - Menning og miðlunarleiðir
 - Menningarmóta
 - Miðstig (8-12 ára)
 - Kynning fyrir börnin
 - Menning og miðlunarleiðir
 - Menningarmóta

Menning og miðlunarleiðir

Það er gaman að velta merkingu orðsins „menning“ fyrir sér. Að mati margra þátttakenda í verkefninu er „menning“ þar sem eru menn. Hún er semsagt órjúfanlegur hluti manneskjunnar. Þá er einnig fróðlegt að skoða orðið á öðrum tungumálum, t.d. þeim tungumálum sem eiga rætur sínar í latínu. Orðið *cultivare* er latína og þýðir að *rækta*. Það getur verið uppspretta að samtali um það sem tungumálin eiga sameiginlegt að benda þátttakendum á það í hversu mörgum tungumálum maður notar „cultura“ og „kultura“ eða eitthvað sambærilegt. Svo má segja að menning sé mannrækt. Hér má sjá margar útgáfur af orðinu „menning“:



Cultura	Kultur	संस्कृति	Culture	Kulturē
ثقافة	Cultuur	Menning	문화	культура
Kultury	культуры	วัฒนธรรม	Kultūros	Văn hóa
культуре	культуре		Kultura	

How do we introduce our culture to others?



[Video from Denmark](#)



The goals:

- Promoting mutual respect and understanding between people in a concrete way and through different means of expressions.
- Students, parents and staff members get an opportunity to introduce their culture and what is important to them in a vibrant way within an encouraging and secure environment.
- Awareness of the value of own culture by introducing it to others.
- Encourage a positive identity.
- Seeing culture in a wide perspective.
- Tools to cultural literacy
- Linguistic consciousness.

The Flying Carpet should create:

- A framework in which different cultures meet in mutual respect and understanding through different means of expression.
- Interaction between cultures and languages.
- Enthusiasm and understanding of differences and similarities.
- A way of giving individuals the possibility to preserve their cultural identity in their (new) society.
- A space for fantasy, curiosity and creativity where each and everybody can be proud and define his/her own personal culture.



How to become a Flying Carpet School? (“Menningarmótsskóli”)

1. The project manager introduces the project and it's web page to the school staff.
2. The project is organised once or twice under the guidance of the project manager whereafter a key person from the school is nominated to continue the managing of the project inside the school. This person gives the other guidelines and informs them about the procedure and the web page. The key person also is responsible for saving materials and documentation about how the project is practiced and reminds his/her colleagues about the project.
4. The head master or the key person keeps the project manager informed about the development of the project in the school.
5. The school puts the project logo on the school web page with a link to www.menningarmot.is. In that way teachers and parents can always get acces to the filosofi and procedure of the project.

- The intercultural encounters have been implemented in several schools in Reykjavik. About 25 schools have taken part.
- 1500-2000 participants of all ages since 2008.
- One subject/Interdisciplinary.
- The three Hs: Head, heart, hands.
- Sustainability; Web page with guidelines for teachers since spring 2015.
- January 2017: Nine „Intercultural encounters schools“

Teacher team in an elementary school:

“ It was very amusing to see the different ways in which the students interpreted their culture. Some simply brought their favorite toys whilst others gathered objects from their country of origin, mixed them with objects from Iceland and introduced them as their culture. One student stood on a chair and sang songs in Polish for his fellow students and other guests, he was very excited about introducing his country to others through the objects he had brought along. He also brought a few objects that are dear to him, not expensive things but things of sentimental value to him. He prepared this introduction by himself, without assistance from school staff or parents. “



“.....A few weeks have passed since we worked on this project and the students are still discussing this great experience. We, the teachers, can also feel that altercations and bad moods between students have been reduced and we ask ourselves if this is connected to them having learnt more about each other’s cultures and therefore gotten to know each other in a new way.

We found it especially enjoyable to work on this project. It fits very well into the multicultural environment here at Fellaskóli. It was great to see how wide the theme is because then it was ours to decide what we wanted to focus on.”

Classroom teacher, elementary school:

“The Intercultural Gathering exceeded expectations and parents of ALL the children in the class are very pleased with this initiative. The atmosphere in class is also better as a result of doing this work. It would be a good idea to introduce the intercultural gatherings to all parents in the general introduction of the curriculum which is held at the beginning of each school year and to subsequently start working on this project.”

Teacher team from a kindergarden:

“It is our great pleasure to recommend the Intercultural gathering project which The Reykjavik City Library has to offer, it’s a great initiative. The structure is good, starts with an introduction for the main staff who then communicate the material to their co-workers. That makes the project a joint effort and every one is an equal participant. It is also enjoyable to experience that Intercultural gatherings are not only for children of foreign origin, but for all of us, since some had thought that gatherings like this were only for foreigners. This strengthens our ability to introduce our own culture and origin. Each individual can present whatever they want from their own life.”

Languages are our roots and wings

How to implement the intercultural encounters in language teaching?

1. Foreign languages

2. Language awareness/curiosity, multiple languages

The screenshot shows the website for Menningarmót Fljögandi teppi. The main navigation includes 'Um verkefnið', 'Framkvæmd', and 'Tungumálakennsla'. The featured article is 'Lifandi tungumál' with the subtitle 'Rætur og vængir'. Below the article is a sidebar with a 'Home » Tungumálakennsla' breadcrumb and a list of links: 'Forsíða', 'Um verkefnið', 'Markmið Menningarmóta', 'Fréttir', 'Umfjöllun og umsagnir', 'Framkvæmd', 'Undirbúningur og skipulag', 'Yngsta stig (3-7 ára)', 'Kynning fyrir börnin', 'Menning og miðlunarleiðir', 'Menningarmótið', 'Miðstig (8-12 ára)', 'Kynning fyrir börnin', 'Menning og miðlunarleiðir', 'Menningarmótið', 'Unglingastig (13-17 ára)', and 'Kynning fyrir nemendur'. The main content area is titled 'Tungumálakennsla' and features a circular graphic with the word 'language' in various scripts (Arabic, Chinese, English, etc.) and an open book below it. The text discusses the importance of language learning for cultural understanding and communication. On the right side, there are logos for 'BORGARBÓKASAFNIÐ MENNINGARHÚS', 'MÉIKRÖMIN', 'ALÞJÓÐADAGUR MÓÐURMÁLSINS', and 'MÓÐURMÁL - mál málanna'.

Multilingual students as language ambassadors



“Languages ambassadors“ in the teaching is an idea that aims to create linguistic curiosity and to encourage children and young people to learn languages by activating the treasure of the linguistic resources of bi – and multilingual students. This concerns both children with other mother languages than Icelandic and children of Icelandic origin that have lived in other parts of the world and brought languages and knowledge of different cultures to Iceland. This personal treasure can promote cultural literacy in the classroom as well as a positive identity and self confidence for the „ambassadors“.

An example from Hagaskóli in Reykjavík

The teachers went language hunting!





Students as „language ambassadors“ cont.

Social and academic achievement:

- Improved language skills
- Curiosity of languages
- The students personal world as well as their world knowledge becomes visible

The word for rose in various European languages

LEGEND

- from PIE *wrdʰos ("sweetbriar"), possibly ultimately a derivation from a verb for "to grow" only attested in Indo-Iranian (*Hwardh-)
- from Greek τριαντάφυλλο (triantáfyllο), meaning "thirty petals"
- "[flower] of the garden" - from Proto-Slavic *vьrѣtъ, from Latin hortus "garden", from PIE *ǵʰortós "enclosure"
- ???
- from Ancient Greek καρυόφυλλον (karyóphyllon), "dried flower buds of the clove tree", (designating "carnation" in other languages)



Scale
1:6.000.000

