

PROJECT "CRADLE TO CRADLE"

This year, the students of my class 3CE of the ITC Zanon, have had the possibility to participate to the didactic workshop "From Cradle to Cradle" . The 3 meetings were held in our school. The project was in English and Italian and had the purpose to raise our awareness on how the household waste impacts the environment.

First of all, together with 2 operators of Agora Zoe's association (on behalf of LAREA), we distinguished between 2 fundamental concepts: the first one is "from cradle to cradle" which indicates a continuous process of re-using and recycling materials. The second one is : "from cradle to grave" which means that rubbish goes to a landfill without being re-used at all. This is a close process with an end. "Downcycling" coincides with this second project. An example is plastic which, can be recycled only few times and requires a lot of energy and very polluting chemicals. "Cradle to cradle" refers to the process of recycling in which clean technologies are applied and this lengthens the life of some materials having a minor environmental impact.

In the second part of the workshop, some students said that everybody should devote themselves to recycling more seriously in order to change things, because if there are only few people doing something , it could be useless. So we examined in details both the human potentials, and the human bad characteristics. From the discussion, the following potentials came out: creativity, intelligence/cleverness, the will to change, altruism and the will to share ideas. As negative characteristics we mentioned: laziness, selfishness, ignorance, and the will to delegate the others instead of facing problems. Another interesting concept we took into consideration is Gaia's theory which says that the earth is a system and we belong to it.

At the end of the discussion, we were divided into 5 groups and we played a game: each group had to create a product following some instructions. Then we had to evaluate every finished product according to 3 indicators : ecological intelligence, respect, delight, celebration and fun.

We found this experience very positive because it gave us a lot of starting points to think about, as for example the importance to evaluate carefully before buying a product. Another important thing is that this experience permitted us, as a class, to share ideas and opinions.

At the end of this work-shop, our teachers talked with the school headmaster and they decided together to start recycling paper, plastic and newspapers.