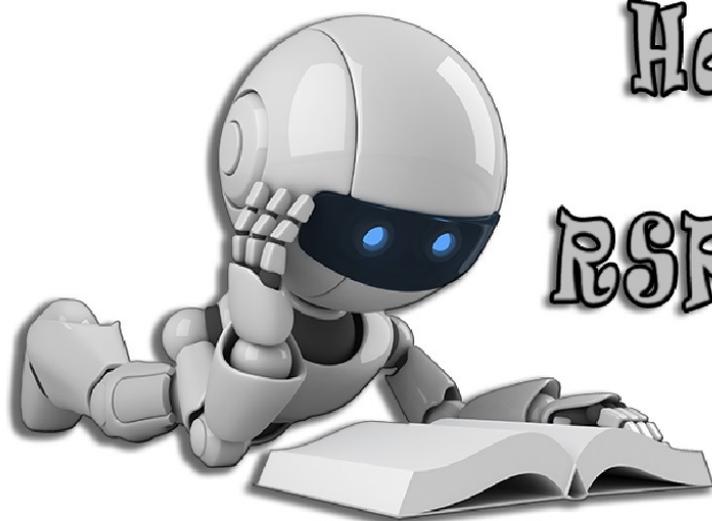


Czech Republic - Research report in the field of
motivational activities



Handbook 4 RSP readers

Střední škola designu a umění,
knižní kultury a ekonomiky
Náhorní, Praha



Funded by the
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of the European Union

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<p align="center"><i>Handbook for reluctant, struggling and poor readers</i> (project no. - 2016-1-HR01-KA201-022159) Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union</p>	

O2.A2 – Field research report

For the purpose of the field research, we have deliberately chosen schools with absolutely different background as we expected to gain as wide range of ideas and experience as possible.

Jan Kepler Grammar School in Prague is a prestigious institutions where you do really not expect to meet RSP readers. However, we wanted to see what it is like to work with talented students and if there is any difference in the teachers' approach.

Frantisek Krizik Grammar School is a private institution with a sort of alternative approach in comparison to more traditional state schools.

Hotelova skola Plzen offers, among the others, study programmes in which future chefs or waitres are educated and trained. Very often, these pupils are not keen on learning or spending time with a book.

Stredni skola Nahorni represents a vocational school with four year study programmes focused on different subjects – fine art, literature, economy.

The teachers in all these schools are separated into subject comittees according to the subjects they teach. The teachers within these comittees are supposed to meet regularly and discuss their ideas, suggestions, problems and other details. Naturally, for the purpose of the research, we addressed Czech language teachers. We were lucky, they all got interested in the project and were very helpful. We met up with each of them separately for the interview. They are all teaching enthusiast, they provided us with a lot of details and experience from teaching, the interview always grew into a great discussion about the state of the Czech schooling system, common problems, plans, hopes, dreams etc. They all agreed to carry out the research with the students, however, each of them under different conditions.

As we have mentioned before, Jan Kepler Grammar School is a prestigious institution with ambitious school board as well as the students and it is not easy to come there from the outside and change their programme. The teacher, Mr Horak, suggested he would implement the research questions into some of his lessons and deliver the results to us.

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Mr Zelenka from Frantisek Krizik Grammar School said he would not be allowed to use any of his lessons at that time of the year for any external projects but he agreed to implement the research questions in the essay his students were supposed to write those days. He summarized and delivered the conclusions to us later.

The last teacher, Ms Jana Bila from Hotelova skola Plzen invited us for the interview to her office. Then we had a chance to meet with some of the students and talk to them about our project and their reading habits.

We also discussed the research questions during one of the language teachers' meetings at Stredni skola Nahorni. To be honest, there grew a little clash between two groups of the teachers – we could simply call them the traditionalists versus the innovators. The traditionalists simply do not see any reason or possibility to change anything in their teaching approach. In their eyes, the innovations bring instability in education and does not guarantee the results. At the same time, they admit the recent approach does not bring the results either.

Summary of the research conclusions

The teachers from all the schools have agreed that young people are looking for something more than just reading, something interesting to go with the text. As the teacher from Jan Kepler Grammar School said, he does not have any trouble to motivate his students to read – they do not need any motivation, they just read what they are told. He also takes them for literary walks around Prague to show them places connected with the topics they are talking about. He also uses short videos introducing individual authors. His colleague from Frantisek Krizik Grammar School let his students read what they like – building a positive approach towards literature is crucial here. He motivates the students by reading a book aloud for them, involving drama techniques and performance reading. The students are also motivated by visiting the theatre or meeting authors in the school. The teacher at Hotelova skola said she felt tied by the curriculum which outlines the titles to be read (especially in the first year of the study programme). There is not enough time to let the students read what they like only. However, most of her students do not like reading and do not read either the compulsory literature which, as they say, is far away from the point of their interest nor anything else.

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The teachers agree that the most important factor influencing reading is the family background and reading habits adopted in the childhood. It is also helpful if they see the people around reading – parents, teachers, friends... Reading should be presented to them in a positive way which excludes ordering somebody what to read.

Students accent the possibility of free choice. On the one hand, they do not like being limited but, on the other hand, they often feel lost in the scope of literature, they do not know what to choose and, in the end, they sometimes rather do not read anything.

The personality of the teacher plays the crucial role in the perception of literature and books. Whether it is a man or woman, the teacher should always be positive and supportive. The students agree their teachers meet the above mentioned requirement, however, they more often find the problem in their classmates; they are afraid to make a mistake or say something wrong not to be mocked by their peers.

What the teachers and the students in all schools pointed out was using modern technologies. We are living in the 21st century, sadly, this fact is, quite often, not reflected in the teachers' approach.

Recommendations according to the teachers:

- Running the reader's diary
- Visiting the theatre, cinema
- Visiting libraries
- Visiting art exhibitions
- Comparing films to books
- Listening to audiobooks
- Meeting authors
- Visiting places connected with the authors
- Students present their favourite books
- Teachers read aloud
- Using drama techniques
- Using music or fine art
- Creating stories

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- Filming videos
- Reading news or magazines
- Discussions
- Games
- Competitions
- Using short texts and short activities
- All text should be up-to-date connected to students lives and interests
- Focusing on genres of the students' interest
- Engaging pre-reading activities
- Using modern technology