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CASE STUDY: CRADLE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

HOW ONE SCHOOL IS HELPING YOUNG LEARNERS CONNECT WITH THE WORLD AROUND THEM





Summary

Cradle Hill Community Primary School in Seaford, East Sussex, uses Lyfta to teach pupils about global citizenship. In this case study, Sarah Eddie, a year 5 teacher, shares her experience about how she has been using Lyfta to encourage pupils to develop global citizenship skills and learn to appreciate different cultures and ways of life.

At Cradle Hill, pupils are encouraged to develop an appreciation for different cultures and approaches to life. The school also uses the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to help pupils understand the world around them. Their approach led the school to trial Lyfta, an immersive storytelling resource.

Teachers at Cradle Hill state that immersive storytelling has proved to be a highly effective way of not only

teaching pupils about big ideas and challenging concepts, but also fostering their empathy and understanding of different beliefs and cultures. For example, taking on a virtual visit to Awra Amba, a small community in Ethiopia to engage at a deeper level with the topic of apartheid and democracy and taking a virtual trip to the forests of Mount Apo in the Philippines for supporting the understanding of sustainable living.

Tell me about your school?

Based in the coastal town of Seaford, East Sussex, Cradle Hill Community Primary School provides a nurturing teaching and learning environment where young learners are supported to fulfil their academic and personal potential. With the motto, “together we care, together we achieve”, our vision is for each pupil to leave school feeling more confident, articulate, literate, numerate and better prepared to cope with life’s challenges.

We also encourage children to be independent thinkers and learners who understand the importance of inclusivity and show support and respect for one another and the world around them.



Therefore, a key part of our teaching and learning approach centres around developing global citizenship skills and appreciation for different cultures and approaches to life. Included in this is also engaging young pupils with wider social and environmental issues, so that they can go on to be a positive force for good in the world.

Why do you think it's important to teach children about global citizenship?

A broad and inclusive education is vitally important to help children grow and mature into well-rounded young people, who understand and form their own opinions and ideas on various issues, as well as listen to and respect the views and beliefs of others. By building this global awareness in pupils from an early age, their ability to be inclusive and empathise with others naturally increases.

In addition to teaching children about complex, social themes such as politics, race and diversity, global citizenship extend to environmental issues. Living by the seaside, we're lucky to have a beautiful natural environment around us, and we try to incorporate this into our teaching and learning to help children understand their environmental footprint and think about green living solutions. To further align our curriculum to these aims, we have been using the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in our lessons which map out the 'action areas' we must address now for a brighter future.

What resources do you use to engage children with the world around them?

We are very mindful of the fact that we have limited diversity in our school population, and so I was keen to find ways to help our children experience different cultures, perspectives and walks of life, within the classroom.

This led me to trial Lyfta, an immersive storytelling resource, with our Year 5 pupils.



The resource includes a range of inspiring real-life stories from people around the world, designed to engage children's curiosity and help bring complex and at times intangible themes and values to life. Within the interactive platform, children get to virtually 'visit' countries around the world through 360° scenes and soundscapes and short documentary films and can immerse themselves in the everyday lives of the people there. In the process, the children discover different approaches to social problems, work, family life and relationships, they find out about others and also learn about themselves.

I had heard about Lyfta through a Geography meeting with our local cluster of Primary and Secondary schools. Each 'storyworld' lesson is linked to the national curriculum and the UN's SDGs, which meant it tied in naturally to our ongoing work around global awareness and developing empathy within our pupils.

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What are some of the global learning topics you have covered recently?

When exploring democracy and equality, most recently in our History lessons, we have been learning about apartheid in South Africa and the key role that Nelson Mandela played in building democracy in the country. Often with History, as it can be with other global learning topics, it is difficult for children to truly engage with the subject matter and understand how it relates to their present-day life in Seaford.

To help bring these themes to life, we used one of the resource's immersive stories to take year five pupils on a virtual visit to Awra Amba, a small community in Ethiopia. In the story, pupils are introduced to the community's egalitarian approach to democracy, where each individual voice is prioritised to ensure that decisions are made as a collective.

The pupils were fascinated to learn about the people in the village and how they view equality, which sparked discussions around how democracy works in our local area and in the classroom. By hearing from the real-life people of Awra Amba and seeing democracy in practice, the children were able to engage at a deeper level with the topic and understand its significance. This certainly aided our learning about apartheid, as pupils came away with a real appreciation of the value of equality and democracy.

The lesson also influenced the children's approach to one another in the classroom and making sure to always listen to their peers and treat them with kindness, which was wonderful to see!



Sustainable living

As part of our learning around sustainable living, we have explored global issues including climate change and sustainability. The challenges facing our planet is a topic that young people are increasingly interested in, and immersive learning through the use of Lyfta, combined with practical



outdoor learning sessions has helped pupils to better understand the impact we have on the environment.

We have taken them on a virtual trip to the forests of Mount Apo in the Philippines, to explore the Mother of the Forest storyworld and learn about the work of a local conservationist. The pupils loved getting to explore Mount Apo through the videos and interactive environment, walking in the shoes of the conservationist, hearing her perspectives and listening to the sounds of the local wildlife.

This mode of learning is particularly effective as it helps the pupils to put climate change into context and critically engage with the subject matter, as they develop an emotional connection with the conservationist and her story.

The Mount Apo story prompted us to discuss as a class how the different ways we can live more sustainability can help protect fragile habitats, laying the groundwork before we go on a school trip to our local Friston Forest later this year.

We have also introduced pupils to the Beachcomber storyworld and the story of a Cornish-based artist who is reusing plastic ocean waste to create art, and a San Francisco-based sustainable fish chef, to teach children about marine life and microplastics.

Learning about real-life stories and communities around the world and the work they're doing to help the planet has further enriched pupils' knowledge and interest in environmental issues, enabling them to see the 'bigger picture' with climate change. The

immersive lessons are great for igniting debates and discussions as a class, but the videos are also effective to round-off topics or to be used as part of cross-curricular learning. For example, following our learning about the Cornish beachcomber, we are taking children on a history investigation to the local beach. We have also been translating our science and geography learning to art class, where the pupils have made green-inspired artwork such as a mural made from bottlecaps and a planter made out of ecobricks!

How do you overcome the challenge of engaging pupils with the world around them?

Big themes such as politics and equality and climate change and sustainability, can of course be tricky and at times, sensitive and complicated topics for young pupils to grasp. Finding a way to make these issues accessible and relatable for children is key. This is where immersive learning has proved to be a powerful classroom resource, particularly when used as part of an interdisciplinary approach and in tandem with different learning methods, for example hands-on activities and residentials. Whether we're taking pupils to the forest of the

Philippines or to a unique Ethiopian village to explore democracy, the immersive aspect has enabled pupils to deep-dive into new worlds, connect more emotionally with the topics and learn about different cultures and world views that otherwise might not have been inaccessible to them. The children also enjoy talking about how they can relate to some of the themes and experiences shared, whether that is personally or through what they've seen in the local community or at school, which helps to strengthen and reinforce their learning.

As a primary school, preparing our young pupils with the life skills and knowledge to grow and become empathetic, global citizens really underscores all that we do at Cradle Hill. Global learning is therefore a key part of our curriculum as it gives pupils' a broader perspective and helps to develop their cultural capital. Immersive storytelling has proved to be a highly effective way of not only teaching pupils about big ideas and challenging concepts, but also fostering their empathy and understanding of different beliefs and cultures. These are the skills we need in tomorrow's generation!