

Digital resources for the classroom now available through Scoilnet

Britannica School is now available through Scoilnet. It contains a comprehensive range of age-appropriate resources with an emphasis on factual information, multimedia and interactivity. It comprises three levels:

- School Foundation (ages five to 10);
- School Intermediate (ages 10 to 14); and
- School Advanced (ages 14 and over).

A powerful resource

Britannica School is a powerful educational resource in the classroom and at home, presenting information on many topics in a highly interactive and easily searchable format. Regular updates keep it relevant to current events.

Some interactive features of the encyclopaedia at a glance include:

- Interactive and editable timelines;
- Activities and games for infants and junior classes;
- Stimulating project-based material in the Launch Packs section for middle/senior classes;
- The ImageQuest function is useful for finding copyright-free images for use in school and online.

The site also has atlases with clickable maps, as well as a wide range of video, animations and other multimedia clips to



enhance learning in the classroom.

Tools for subject areas

Various subject areas and lessons can be supported with the available information and resources, such as:

- English: Biographies of famous people in history, with accompanying media and articles. There is an additional option to have the articles read aloud, or to change

the reading level of the article.

- History: Timelines, videos and factfiles about important events and people.
- Geography: Animal and nature factfiles, a World Atlas, Compare Countries tool and a Geography Explorer game.

One of the most popular tools within the encyclopaedia is the Compare Countries feature, presented in a clear visual manner showing the differences in size, population and language. The comparison tool can be used easily by students when doing SESE projects, or learning about the conflict in Ukraine, for example. There are also daily news articles featured on the site, which can be explored by students with the help of their teacher.

Keep an eye on our Twitter account @ScoilnetPrimary for updates and details of some upcoming introductory and how-to courses which will help teachers and students to make the most out of this very worthwhile resource.

Britannica is completely free to use with no requirement to register: <https://bit.ly/3uqhp9f>.

MOIRA LAMBE, Technology in Education, PDST



Putting the arts and creativity at the heart of children's lives

I recently left my class of junior infants to take up a role with Creative Schools in putting the arts and creativity at the heart of the learning experience of every child. Our school had the wonderful opportunity to take part in the 2020 program to explore the depth and breadth of creativity in our school community. The grant of €4,000 and the expertise of our Creative Associate was a huge benefit as we developed our creative skills.

Embracing curiosity

It was a joy to see the reaction of the students and their teachers at each class level as we began to take part in workshops and open up a wide discussion about what creativity means to us. We very quickly realised that it was not about being good at the arts and definitely did not depend of our abilities and talents. The key to creativity

is embracing curiosity and starting to explore and investigate how learning can take place in a creative way across the entire curriculum. Using the arts is often a creative springboard into learning with dynamic results.

I found that when learning is delivered in this way, the students link knowledge in different subjects together. Integration and cross-curricular teaching became embedded in this creative experience.

Most of all, the students themselves played a key role in deciding what we should explore and their voice was invited, acknowledged and valued.

The magic of creativity

My experience of the program is echoed



by over 640 schools who have taken part in Creative Schools to date. Even throughout the times spent in online learning, students and teachers were able to embrace creativity in everyday experiences and learning came alive as the traditional

classroom relocated to the kitchen table or the garden picnic bench.

It is my wish that every school will access the Creative Schools program and see creativity work its magic in their school community. Applications for the Creative Schools Program 2022 opened on March 29. Full details about the program are available at <https://bit.ly/3wzfl89>.

SHELLY FURLONG, Creative Schools Manager