



# Young Investigators in rural municipality Jastkow

## **Inspiring. Educating. Supporting. From the start.**

The Comenius Foundation for Child Development was established in 2003 to create the best conditions for children in the early years.

We aim to provide equal opportunities for children to help them grow into open-minded individuals.

We have introduced innovative systemic and legal arrangements. We offer a wide variety of effective childcare programmes.

We operate large-scale projects because we know that investing in children means a better future for all of us.

## The Foundation's Geographical Reach



# Young Investigators Program

The aim of the Young Investigators Program is to develop children's logical thinking, cognitive curiosity, learning by experimenting, ability to ask questions, to draw conclusions and to work in a group.

The central feature of the Project Approach is its investigative character - activities are not pre-planned in advance, but are taken in response to questions that emerge in the course of the project. Questions may be put forward by the children or by the teacher.

This cross-disciplinary method works perfectly with children as young as two years of age.

Our Project Approach trainers were trained by the founders of the Project Approach: Prof. Lilian Katz and Prof. Sylvia Chard in Allerton (Illinois, USA), and also by Prof. Teresa Vasconcelos and Prof. Demetra Evangelou.

## Jastkow municipality on map of Poland



# Jastkow municipality map

Young Investigators project was implemented in all 5 municipality's primary schools and in 2 preschools in villages: Ługów, Moszenki, Tomaszowice, Płuszwice, Jastków, Snopków, Piotrawin. (on map marked in red)



# Young Investigators in Jastkow project

**The long-term aim of the “Young Investigators in Jastkow” project is to equalize educational opportunities for rural children by raising their self-esteem, developing their scientific attitudes and social competences.**

## Main activities

- 21 teachers participated in the training on Project Approach methodology, broadening their skills and competences in the areas of supporting group work of children, cooperating with parents, observing and documenting children's work.
- 20 Investigator's Toolbox" provided to the schools.
- Over 600 pupils age 6-11 engaged in running 42 science projects. Examples of projects' topics: Ball, Honey, Plank, Plants, Candies, Corn Salad, Bike, Flower, Flour, Spring Vegetables, Fire Brigade, Balloon, Exotic Fruits, Soap Bubble, Beetroot, Bread, Paint, Mushrooms, Wood, Noodles, Post Office, Cucumber.
- Over 40 local experts answering children question, among others: beekeepers, dietician, bakers, carpenter, sellers, parents, grandparents, nurse, post office clerks, firemen, clowns, farmers, gardeners.
- Municipality seminar to present the Project Approach impact on children for teachers and pupils from neighboring municipalities. Children will present their science projects and Young Investigators Clubs activities.
- Opening 5 Young Investigators Clubs in 5 primary schools.

# Phases of science projects

Each project consists of three phases.

- In Phase 1, the children choose what to investigate, discuss what they already know about the topic, list questions they want to answer and make predictions about the possible outcomes.
- In Phase 2, the children and the teacher plan their activities, and then work either in small groups or alone to collect information to test their predictions and answer their earlier questions.
- Phase 3 is the project conclusion and presentation of the findings.

An important learning resource in the Project Approach is the so-called “Investigator’s Toolbox” with necessary tools and other supplies (magnifying glasses, measuring tapes, voice recorders, clipboards, containers for samples, digging scoops, etc.). During the project, the children are allowed to make use of everything that is inside the toolbox.

# Investigator's Toolbox

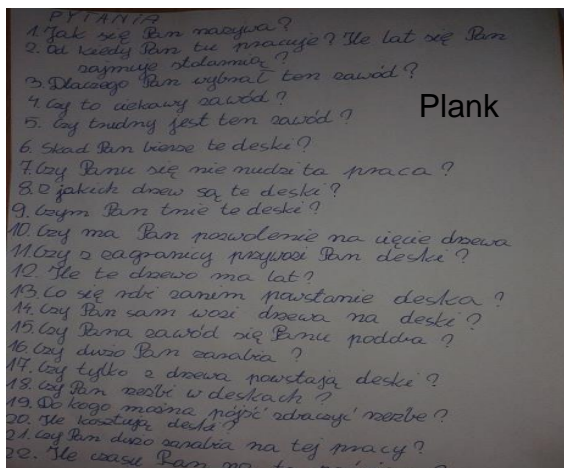
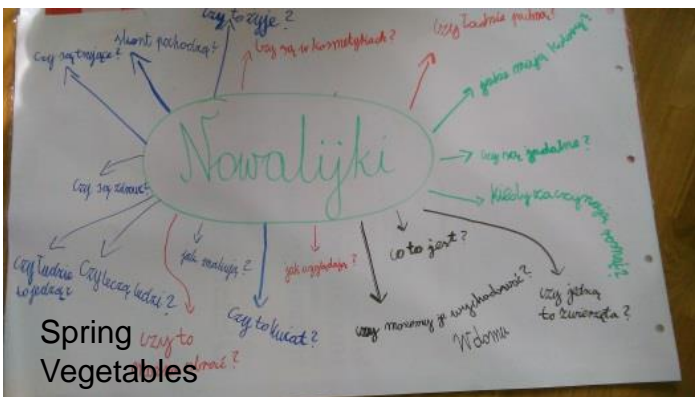
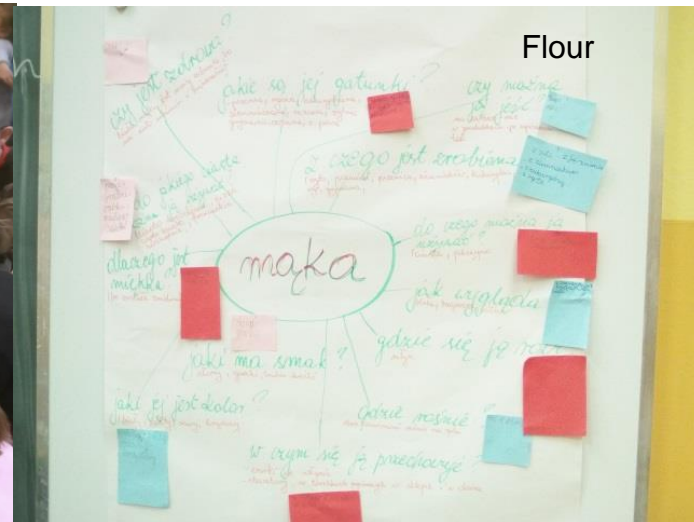
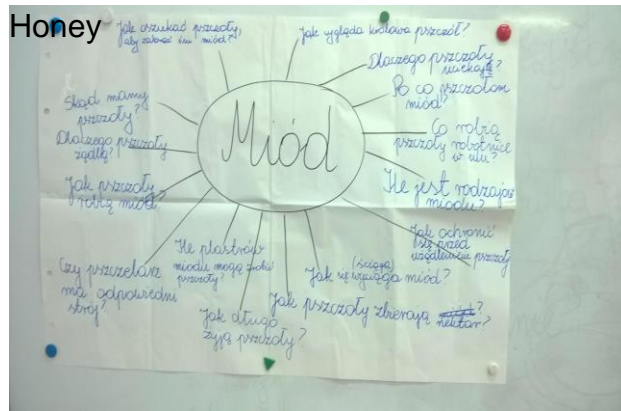


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## Phase I

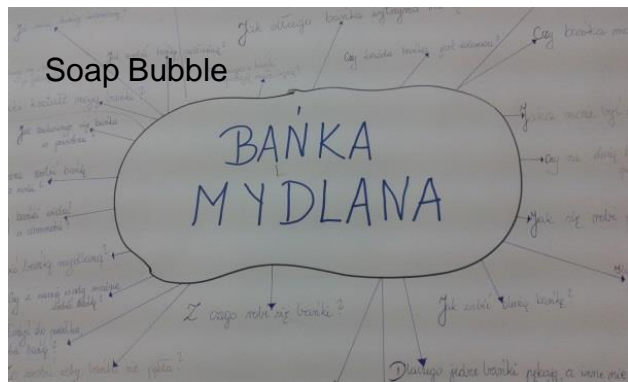
- choosing topic to investigate
- discuss what they already know about the topic
- create research maps
- list questions they want to answer
- make predictions about the possible outcomes

## Phase I





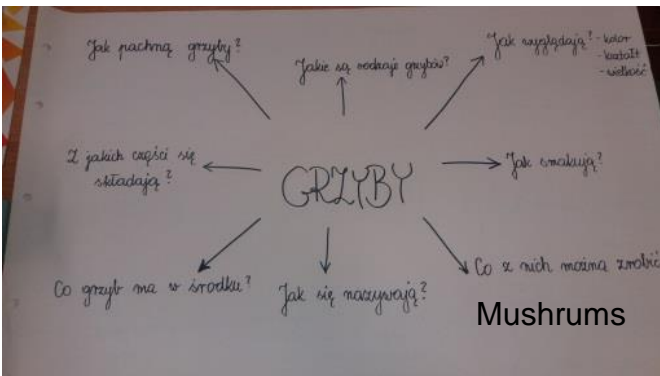
Bread



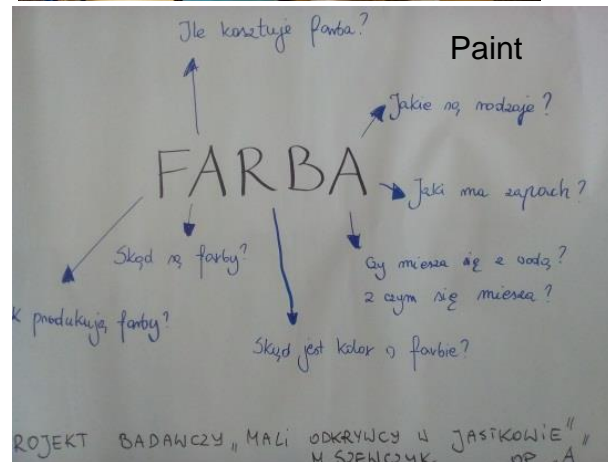
Soap Bubble



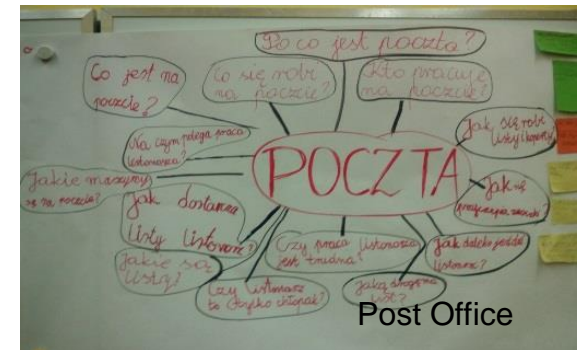
Wood



Mushrooms



Paint



Post Office

PROJEKT BADAWCZY „MALI ODKRYWCY 4 JASTKOWIE”  
M SZENKOWYK OP A

## Phase II

- plan activities
- collect information to test predictions
- experimenting and investigating
- Meeting with experts - getting answers to earlier questions





Soap Bubble



WYWIAD

IMIĘ I NAZWISKO: .....

1. Czy lubi Pani chodzić do lasu? TAK NIE

2. Czy lubi Pani zbierać grzyby? TAK NIE

3. Czy często Pani chodzi na grzyby? TAK NIE

4. Czy zna się Pani na grzybach? TAK NIE

5. Jakie grzyby Pani zna? .....

6. Czy lubi Pani jeść grzyby? TAK NIE

Mushrooms



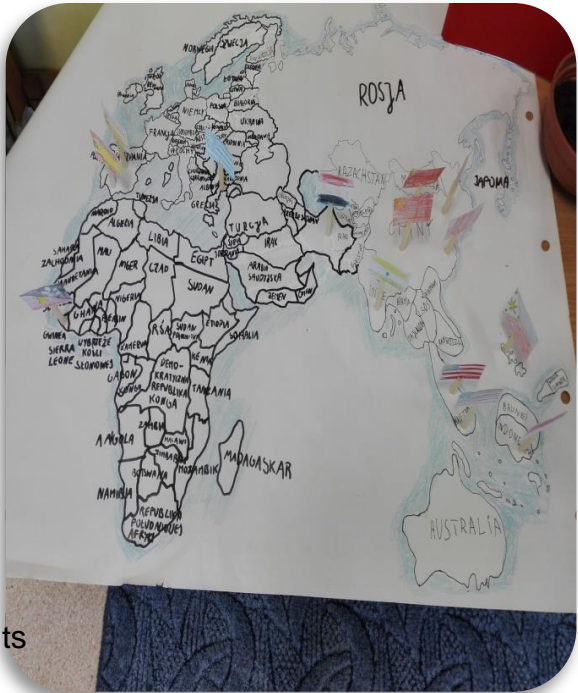
Bread



Honey



Exotic Fruits



## Phase II - meetings with experts



## Phase II - meetings with experts



## Phase III

- summing up new knowledge
- conclusions
- presentation of the findings

## Phase III

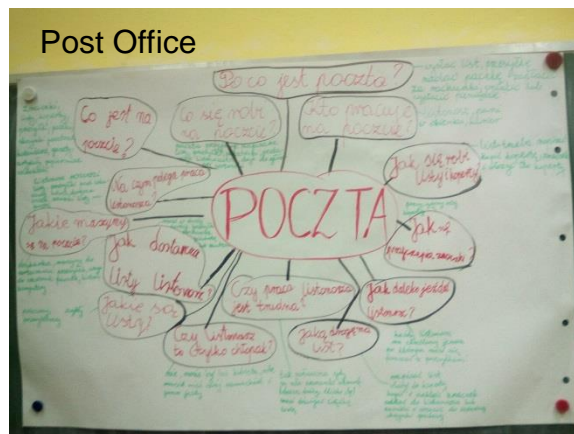
## Spring Vegetables



## Corn Salad



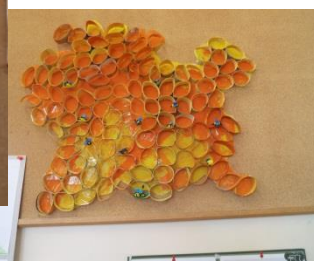
## Post Office



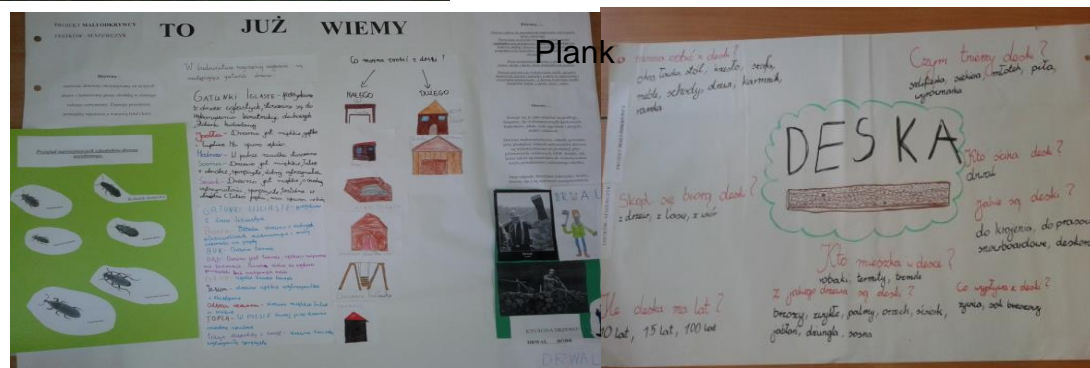
## Candies



## Honey



# Plank





Post Office



Bread



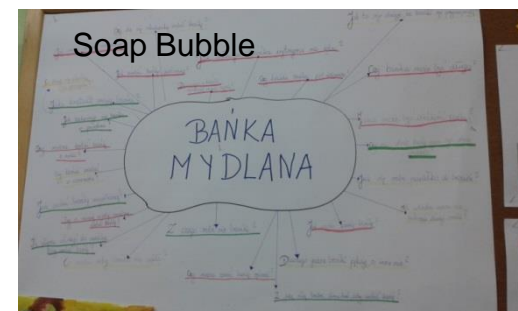
Mushrooms



Noodles



Beetroot



Soap Bubble

## Local seminar



# Impact on Children

– according to the teachers

- Participation in the project **activated** children which had previously been passive.
- The children learn new ways of **acquiring knowledge**.
- Completion of the project developed children's **ingenuity** and **encouraged** them to do tasks aiming at reaching the goal. I've never seen a greater satisfaction and joy than those I observed for example while they were working with the microscope.
- The children became more **courageous** and willing to **try unknown** things.
- The children became **independent and responsible** while performing various tasks/activities.
- The project tasks were **encouraging co-operation**: the children experienced working in groups, learned how to share the work.
- They learned how to **verify hypotheses**, for example they sowed the beetroot again, according to the information received from an expert.
- The pupils present the acquired knowledge and their opinions to the wide audience more **boldly**.

## Teacher from Primary School in Snopkow village:

*The “Honey” project was selected after a long discussion and consultation with the whole class. We selected this theme because it turned out that the family of Łukasz, one of the pupils, are bee-keepers. The children got deeply involved in the project. They were very inquisitive and collaborative, also had many questions to the bee-keepers.*

*The participation in the project made children very active, in spite of being passive in the past. Łukasz, previously withdrawn and taciturn, gained self-confidence. At the end of the project he said “**I am the best**”.*

*For me it is particularly important that the children discover new ways of gaining knowledge. One of the pupils summarised the activity: “**We did a lot of work all day, although we never got a book out from our school bags, we are so tired**”. That day the whole class worked on phase 2 of the project: making models of beehives, drawing a plan of the apiary and describing a collection of products containing honey.*

We thank  
MoneyGram Foundation  
for the possibility of implementing  
Young Investigators  
project!

