



How to use artistic projects with preschool children to tackle challenging topics

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is a singular independent artist's perspective on how being an artist can be and has been used as a tool for personal growth and how this information can be used with preschool children. The purpose of this thesis was to collect information from personal experience, research and interviews on how artistic projects can be used with preschool children to tackle challenging topics. The thesis considers the artists' mindset, art as a nonverbal language, community-based art, the artists' role in the setting of community-based art with special needs youth and preschool children, and the process of what it takes to create such an art piece.

This thesis was created after a practical training period in a kindergarten in the role of an art pedagogy trainee, which inspired this thesis. Different methods of collecting data have been working in these settings and executing different projects that this thesis will be presenting.

The conclusions show the complex mind of an artist, art being a language any age, gender and race can understand and that an artists need only be an artist when working in a community-based project. This thesis is mostly autoethnographic but also references in literature from the field of art.

Key words: Community based art, growth, youth

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1 INTRODUCTION

In this part of my thesis, I will go in depth of analysing things I've learned in the past few years: working as an artist in an artistic environment. Usually when starting something new, we like to research topics before starting a new project, but this time will be reviewing my work in retrospect. I think it will be good for us, this way can teach a lot.

2 ARTISTS FEEL DIFFERENT

As an artist, I've come to the conclusion that artistic nature is something people are born with. I 100% believe and encourage that anyone at any age can get into art, but I think that many tools that artists utilise in their work, such as curiosity, comes from one's personality.

As I learned from my own experience, school and research, art is supposed to make you feel something. You can't define art as art just by saying it makes you feel something, and not every piece will resonate with everyone, but when looking at art we tend to find our favourites, find the ones we don't seem to like as much, we tend to feel something. "The foreign becomes familiar as exiled emotions become companions—neither good nor bad, simply present" (Braman 2022). I think Bramans quote is a beautiful way of expressing the way art interacts with the world.

From personal experience as well as after talking with fellow artists, I find that the way artists express and handle their emotions is very expressive and colourful. They pour their emotions into their art. All emotions can be turned into art, the good, the bad and the dirty. Ideally these emotions are what viewers can directly reflect in their personal experience, or they can create original emotions through alternative interpretation of said piece. That way the artist and the one looking/hearing/experiencing the piece connect. They understand each other. You might learn what the artist has felt. It's like a non-spoken language between the two.

2.1 Why are artists never happy?

From personal experience, exploring the media, and hearing people talk, I believe that many people have the stereotype of artists being depressed and quirky, misunderstood perfectionists who will never be satisfied with their creations (Hrittik 2023). I think that this is only a scratch to the surface when it comes to understanding artists.

Well known artists like Vincent Van Gogh (1853-03-30 - 1890-07-29), who ended up ending his life, is a classic example of a depression riddled artist, but it's not that black and white. While having to keep an open mind as an artist, artists are also very vulnerable to the emotions the world has to offer, for example trying to find emotion in lifeless objects as inspiration. These emotions may not always be simply positive but even depressing.

When researching this topic, there are articles that like to put a lot of stress to the point of artists being perfectionists who put too much pressure on themselves, being the cause of mental struggles that artists seem to face (Artsology 2024). While agreeing with this, after seeing friends and fellow students falling under this stereotype, I also disagree that this is the whole reason for such a big stereotype. Such a large assumption from such a big group of people, everyone being their own individual, I don't believe that everyone struggles with only one stereotype. I see a big peer support among artists, helping others to remember that art doesn't need to always be perfect. The social network is an important part of taking pressure from artists.

Nittle (2023) in her article *The Link Between Depression and Creativity* talks about some famous artists like Vincent Van Gogh mentioned earlier, and the number of mental illnesses among artists. It's true that a percentage of artists struggle with mental illnesses the same as the rest of the human population (WHO 2022). I think, because of personal experience and that there isn't really any way to calculate it, that it's very unsure if being an artist predisposes to mental illnesses, or if mental illnesses spark art in people. This all comes a big circle to talking about how artists feel differently from someone who wouldn't call

themselves an artist. I think that while being in a vulnerable state, for example because of an unfortunate life situation one may find themselves in, is an inspiration to many, art can act as a way for many to cope with their emotions.

3 HOW TO SEE LIKE AN ARTIST

Being an artist isn't just working on a piece, it is something you constantly are, even when you are not working. It's good to always keep your eyes open for the possibility of finding something that inspires you.

“Drawing is the most immediate expression of seeing, thinking and feeling, a tool for investigating ideas, a recorder of knowledge, and a reflector of experiences” (Baldwin 2024). Back when all of us didn't have a smartphone in our pockets to record the world around us, although they still do today, artists carried a sketchbook with them and drew what they saw and inspired them. Now most of us very rarely have time to stop and do that, instead we now take a photo to our phones in seconds. Drawing on your sketchbook can be a great way even now to find inspiration, but instead of bashing on the new technology from the artistic point of view, it's better to embrace it. We now have the power to record so much so fast that it's easy to always have something to inspire us when working. Although this power has brought some backlash, people saying that today's youth are glued to their phones and only see the world through their camera lenses (Moak n.d), I do not see that as a bad thing. I see it as an opportunity to collect ideas and inspiration.

When travelling, I assume that everyone stops and takes a look at the beautiful views. An artist does the same, but they can find beauty from anywhere. A literal trash on the ground can be what an artist notices, and knows that this point of view is a story to be told.

3.1 Art is everywhere

While not always thinking this way, I truly think that art is a sort of a superpower. With art, you can understand complicated emotions, you can share your experiences and feelings, take stands on topics that are important to you and so much more. I have been interested in art for as long as I can remember. I've been told that as soon as I knew how to hold a pen, I have been drawing. Somewhere along the way I started thinking that it would be so much more useful to be good at sports, rather than just drawing. It got almost to the point where I wanted to quit art. I'm glad I didn't. Art was something that always came back to me and I couldn't just let go that easily.

It's important to know that art is so much more than paintings in a gallery. Art can be a performance you see in theatres. Art is movies you see in cinemas. Art is music you listen to on your headphones. While looking at your wallpaper, someone has designed that. The sheets you sleep in may have a print that an artist has worked hard on. Behind all those things, there is an artist working their magic to give you something anyone can enjoy.

3.1.1 Art as a way to cope with pain

Growing older, I've realised just how important art can be, looking back in my life. "Only an artist can see pain as something beautiful and work with it" is something I wrote in my notes a while ago and I really like that sentence. No matter if your art is painting, music or maybe dancing, your pain can be a great source of inspiration to you. You should use it. It can give strength to keep going to ease your mind from your personal feelings.

3.2 Pour your pain into art

While talking with teachers along my artistic journey, many agree that it's good to use your own experience in life as an inspiration. For me, it meant at one point to work on a loss I've experienced.

I always wanted to work on something that's beautiful to look at, something that makes people happy when looking at my work. Once I stated that the world is already full of sorrow, I want to create something happy. While now seeing that it was a very good thing to say and something that I and anyone could totally pursue, but while not being in a happy state of mind, it's hard to work on something you're not feeling yourself. I wanted to avoid the subject of loss, because it was painful for a long time. That's exactly when I was told to paint something about my loss. It was hard, but it was very meaningful. I worked on several paintings expressing my sorrow. Those works are beautiful to look at and make me happy now that I see them. I guess I succeeded in both viewpoints.

While loss and other traumatic experiences can be very unmotivating, even crippling, it is something close to your heart which already makes it meaningful, and can be a great inspiration for art.

3.3 Art as a nonverbal language

When I started working in early childhood education working alongside an art pedagogue, I knew nothing about the work and had zero experience on it. Nonetheless I was able to make use of my art studies. My professional experience was only from art and the social skills my studies have provided me and that was more than enough to get started. Thereby finding my own ecological compartment in the work community, and this special competence was greatly appreciated.

Art and creative work were like its own non-verbal language which adults and children spoke equally, listening and more importantly hearing each other. The gap between a young adult and a kindergarten-age child is far deeper than interactions between two adults with the same age gap. The lived years between the two take worldviews, desires, fears, hopes and dreams to the utmost far apart from each other.

While working in daycare (this applies to working in almost anywhere else too), there is a hierarchical structure that every person there follows. The just mentioned hierarchical structure in daycare, where I, the adult, am the caregiver, protector, supervisor/mentor, an example - and the children do what I say decisively guides all interaction. But in art, age, learned words, abstract concepts and social hierarchy disappear and we all speak a common, equal language where we understand each other. In this setting we create a connection between a child and an adult, where the adult takes an almost parent-like role where the adult takes care of the child.

4 ART IS FOR EVERYONE

While taking a risk of sounding cliché, art really is for everyone. It's something any of us and all of us can and do enjoy in one form or another. Brian Eno (born in 1948-05-15) said “children learn through play, but adults play through art” (Hind 2019). Art doesn't have an age, gender nor race, so it is not tied to a specific age, gender nor race to enjoy.

While not everyone finds themselves being drawn to paint their emotions or spend their free time at galleries admiring other people's work, I do believe that all of us have one or more forms of art we like to enjoy. Some of us use dancing to express their emotions. Dancing of course isn't for everyone, but maybe some of you listen to music while reading this thesis. Behind all music there is an artist working. While listening to music, you are in fact enjoying art and supporting the artist. Some of us write novels, some of us like reading them. Some like working on ceramics and others like collecting them.

In conclusion, it's safe to say, we all are exposed to art all the time. We can't escape from it. When looking at anything made by man, there is deliberate design behind it. Often this includes some sort of artistic endeavours to make it fit to our senses. Whether the purpose of it is to make it more appealing to buy or consume, provoke to make you take a certain stance on something or simply to make it more beautiful, the artistic component of the work is usually the first thing you face. Art is everywhere and it really is for every one of us.

4.1 Community based art

One form of art that was completely new to me before starting to study art at the university level is community based art. This form of art quickly became very important to me.

Community art is an art form that became common since the 1990s, where art is made on the terms of a community, with and for community members (Sovellataidetta n.d). Other sources also state that community art is often made with the intention of improving the community's conditions (deNobriga & Mat Schwarzman 2013).

When deciding to work on a community-based art project, it's important to decide the community which you want to work with. The same base idea for a project with different communities will lead to very different pieces.

Some things to consider are how big of a community you want and can work with? Community can be as little as just two people to hundreds to thousands of people. How much can you handle? Where is this community? What do you want to do with them? Is there a problem you want to help or bring awareness to with this community?

4.1.1 Art with children

Now, coming to the topic that has been the biggest question mark on my art journey for almost two years now, art with children, more specifically community art with children.



PICTURE 1. Mitä kehoni kuiskailee (What my body is whispering) - mixed media (Manner 2023).

To this moment, I have been part of four larger community art projects (and a few smaller ones here and there) with children at the local kindergarten, with the help of an art pedagogue and other staff, myself being at the role of an artist in these projects. Our works have been everything from a digital painting to ceramic to photography mixed media. Our works have been put up on display at Lastenkulttuurikeskus Rulla and at the Libraries of Lielähti and Tesoma. Our exhibitions are named “Mitä kehoni kuiskailee” (What my body is whispering) (Picture 1) and “Ikuinen Kesä” (Eternal Summer) (Picture 2). After my training period I decided to make one more work with kids, being my project part of my thesis, where me and my friend (Nyman M, social worker student) worked in collaboration to produce a children's book with children. This project got the

name “Inkeri menee päiväkotiin” (Inkeri goes to daycare) (Appendix 1). I was able to use all of my previous knowledge of working with children and utilise it to my very own project, that I was able to lead myself.



PICTURE 2. Ikuinen kesä (Eternal Summer) - made on ipad, procreate (2023)

After producing these projects I wanted to explore and talk about other artists, who have been working with children but came to the sad conclusion, that there are little to no artists who I was able to do research on. I was provided with the names of Lea and Pekka Kantonen by my teacher. The two come quite close to what I was searching for. During 1999 they started working on a project that was implemented in various countries such as Mexico, Finland, Estonia, The United States. This project was done in collaboration with the youth living and studying in these areas, but I did not find the exact age range of these people (L & P Kantonen n.d)

I really wanted to find people working with youth around the same age as I was working with, which was all the way from 2 to 7-year-olds but after many internet searches I found nothing, so instead I did my own research on why artists don't really want to work with such young people. I will come back to the subject of all the things you need to consider while working with kids, but I think that the things to consider is a heavy reason on this question. Young kids are working very differently than adults, they need lots of hand on hand assistance that not many artists are ready to tackle. Children need a lot of positive feedback while working and lots of breaks. With kids, you need patience. After all, artists aren't nannies. You also need special permission from the caretakers of these kids or you won't be able to do anything. In very simple terms, I think that kids are just too much work for many artists to take on and work with and not everyone knows how to get started. I hope that after reading this thesis, maybe some artist will find the courage to take on the challenge, because I can say from experience that working with children is so much more rewarding than I could have ever imagined. Seeing children really enjoy working on art and be sincerely interested in it, being able to express themselves with pictures and images they have created themselves felt almost therapeutic.

I found an article of an artist telling why they want to work with youth, so you can also have somebody else's opinion on this matter. Delaney stated that "I work with children and young people through the arts for two reasons: first, it's an area and methodology in which I'm deeply interested in and relatively skilled; second, many of the benefits that children experience from engaging in a creative process overlap with the outcomes we hope to generate through our direct work with them." (Delaney n.d)

Children are smart and capable of intricate works at a very young age, but they need lots of assistance. When you really put in your time and effort you will see that children are able to make such creative pieces, not just stick figures, if you just give them the opportunity and means to show their talent.

4.1.1.1 What can you do?

In case someone has been inspired to go all in and wants to take their shot at making a community art with children, but don't really know how to get started, let me tell you some things that I learned.

While I was also hesitant on giving children expensive equipment to work with, like an iPad, the children proved my hesitance unnecessary. Children were very careful and gentle with the equipment, but it did require one on one, hands on guidance from an adult. As long as you can monitor the situation, I believe it's more than okay to give children, for example, iPads to draw on or maybe take pictures.



PICTURE 3. Child drawing on Duck Duck Moose application on iPad (Manner 2023).

While on my internship, we also created our own “power animals” (Picture 4) from clay. After explaining how the clay works to the children and the other staff

how to shape the clay and connect parts, the children took the advice very fast and made some impressive works, not just long bars and called it a snake because it would have been the easiest shape to create (although there were one or two of those too). After the shape was done, the children were provided with beads, seeds, wire, coloured plastic and other stuff to decorate their animals with.



PICTURE 4. Power animals made from clay (Instagram - trevarhaiskasvatusesiopetus 2023)

Children really seemed to enjoy drawing and painting with lots of colours, which may be the most obvious way to work with them. It has a low risk of anything breaking and the kids not to get bored too fast. As an artist, you can introduce the children to new ways of drawing and painting, maybe do mixed media work and combine the two. While keeping in mind that you don't need nor can be a teacher to the children without a proper education for it, you can show an example and let the children follow.

I dare to say that anything you, as an artist, can do yourself, children can do it too with a little bit of help of course.

4.1.1.2 What is your role as an artist?

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, you, as an artist, do not need nor can you be a teacher for children (without an education for it). And that's okay. You are an artist. That is your role when working in a community based art as the artist.

Since your role is to be an artist, it means that you are the person who is the brain behind your piece. Your piece can maybe even be a commission to someone, where the commissioner has an idea of what they want to be created, but you still hold the artist's role in the project. That means that you will put your own special competence to your piece. You design how to merge the idea and your own special and unique style to a piece.

In a way, you are a mentor, a leader, an example, whatever you feel fits the best to your image of yourself. You are the one who plans the work, shares your idea, supervises the work to be produced in a way you intended it to be produced (while always keeping in mind that the community can and will shape your work).

4.1.1.3 What are the things you need to consider?

Collaborating with youth in the field of art is not as simple as just going and asking them if they want to be included in the project. Here are some issues I needed to take in consideration before starting a project with adolescents:

Kindergartens are a great place to implement community art projects with children, but (in Finland) you do need all the necessary permissions. First, I needed to get in contact with the kindergartens (or whatever is the place you choose to move forward with) head. After I got a yes from the head, I was informed that I need to also get permission from the city if I wanted to move forward with my project. I needed to make a research plan, send it to the city and wait for the reply. The research plan (Appendix 2) consisted of the goals, relevance, starting points, timetable, costs, hypothesis and implementations. After a few messages providing more information, I got approval from the city.

After all this, I still needed to send a message to a lawyer via my instructor in the kindergarten, explaining my situation and ask if I need some official permission from the city, that I would send it to the children's homes to be signed by the caretakers. In the end, it turned out that some of the children already had permission to take pictures and take part in all art projects. It was still better to be safe than sorry when working with children. Be ready for it.

After I had all the permissions, it was up to me to implement my vision. As mentioned before, children are very different to work with compared to adults. Children need more time, assistance, patience and positive feedback than most adults would.

While working with children, it's also extremely important to remember that you need help from adults of other fields too. It's impossible to work alone when the goal is community based art. Community based art, especially with children is a multidisciplinary activity. In addition to the artist, people working in the field of education if working in an educational environment (like kindergarten) are also

needed. I was able to work with an art pedagogue, social worker student, digital instructor and other kindergarten staff. Without all of them I wouldn't have been able to finish anything. An artist doesn't need to work as a social worker or a teacher but desperately needs help in those areas. As an artist I needed to be only an artist.

4.1.2 Art and youth with special needs

In my first ever community art project (Picture 5) I worked with special needs youth. While this project started because of a course in school I wanted to finish, I believe it was the start of my community artist career.

I worked at Kiiipula Ammattiopisto for my project. My group had 4 students at the age from 17 to 19, and I was assisted by 2 workers there. As you may assume, working with a special needs youth differs from working with some other youth the same age. The students' cognitive age corresponded to around 6 to 8 years old, but the experiences from the world are the same as their own age (Manner 2024). This is why it's of utmost importance to work with other people too, who know your audience better than you do.

While going into a project in a community, the artist's job is to understand what your preferred community can produce. You need to propose the project's implementation level with the community's skills. As the Kiiipulas worker (Manner) stated, it's good to challenge the community within the limits of optimal performance.



PICTURE 5. Community art project at Kiiipula (Manner 2022)

5 ART PROCESS

Finnish artist named Tapani Kiippa once said (a rough translation by me) something along the lines of “It might take 25 minutes to create a painting, but it can take 25 years to learn the technique” (Manner n.d)

When creating an artwork, a painting for example, you don't just splash paints onto a canvas and hope it creates something that's worth calling art. Art takes many steps, from the first idea to the finishing touches. Every art process is a bit different and unique, it's not always clear where to start and where to finish, but I'll tell you the steps I usually make while making an art piece.

5.1 From beginning to the end

I will be talking about my personal experience on my art process, in this case I'm talking of the painting process with either watercolours, acrylics or digital art, because it is the most familiar art form to me but I'm sure other medium artists take some of the same steps as I do.

If the art piece is a commission aka pre-ordered custom project, there is obviously a pre-determined framework (theme, media, deadline, costs...) in which to create whereas with independent projects I have full artistic freedom. Following steps are still fairly similar in both cases apart from check-ups/dialogue with the one that ordered the commission, meaning additional outside opinions/directions.

Everything starts from an idea. This idea can be created days, months, even years before even starting a piece. One piece of art may and usually does have many ideas combined in it and scrapped some. Inspiration is what decides what idea is worth pursuing and what is ergonomically most useful to be taken off from my to do list.

After having an idea of what I want to create, I usually work on visualising the piece in some way that is fast and efficient. This usually means drawing on a sketchbook or tablet, where I draw sketches of possible layouts and lay down colour palettes to help me once I start working on the actual piece (Picture 6). In this step I'm usually able to decide if my piece will be made with watercolours, acrylics, digitally or with oil paints. This step also helps in case I don't happen to have all the colours in my paint supplies needed to make my piece. Then I can go and get only the things I need. While working, I always wish to work as economically as possible so I try to avoid getting paints I don't need while working and taking the risk of these paints getting bad before I come up with use for them.



PICTURE 6. A sketch done on an iPad with possible colour palettes (2024)

Once I have a clear visual of what I want to work on I can move on to the actual work. With my canvas or paper of choice, I always work on pencils to sketch my idea to the blank canvas. I usually use very cheap “bad quality” pencils because those tend to not have as much pigment as better quality soft pencils, and this is exactly what I want so my paints will have an easier time to cover the sketch underneath. When working digitally I don't need to worry about choosing pencils or paints, everything I need is within the app that I'm using (procreate) on my iPad and an Apple Pencil that connects to my iPad.

When I start working with colours, I usually paint a faint orange/yellowish colour before laying any colours I've already picked for my work. I feel that this step helps me get a warmer tone to the whole piece, which also helps keep all my paintings look a bit more united to each other. Once I get to work with colours, I admit that I struggle a bit because I tend not to recognise all colours, that makes it hard to tell warmer tones apart from cooler. This is why picking a colour palette beforehand is extremely important to me.

While working I also always pick music that fits the feeling of my work to listen to while I work. It helps me get to the mood of the painting and stay focused on what I'm doing.

In case I am doing a watercolour painting, I often like mixing other mediums as well (I do sometimes use mixed media in acrylic paintings but not as much so I won't be focusing on that). My favourite mediums to mix in my watercolour paintings are inks and acrylic paints. Using black ink helps me get a hard black colour that I feel I won't get when using just black watercolour, and using white acrylics help me archive small highlights that otherwise would get covered while painting and meaning to leave just a small part white. I also enjoy the 3d effect acrylics give to otherwise flat painting.

My finishing touches usually include going over my work and fixing possible errors and maybe filling in some blanks that I maybe could not notice while sketching. I also enjoy painting some more reflective areas with either glittery watercolours or glossy acrylic varnish.

The last step, not necessarily obligatory, I like picking frames to my works that fit my painting. I think that picking frames carefully really takes a painting from looking like a hobby to professional.

6 DISCUSSION

This thesis itself is a milestone in my journey towards adulthood and professionalism. Growth. I have used my artistic skills to make sentences emit a feeling or mood, painted pictures in your mind with my words, created a subtle rhythm with poetic wording in which you will read through all of this. Art was the tool with which the "Art as a Tool of Growth " was grown.

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Appendix 1. Inkeri Menee Päiväkotiin



KIRJAN ON KIRJOITTANUT MALLA NYMAN.
KUVITUKSEN ON TEHNYT IIRIS MANNER.

2024



Olipas kerran pikkuruinen keijutyttö, nimeltänsä Inkeri. Inkeri oli juuri aloittanut päiväkodin Satumetsän päiväkodissa. Päiväkoti oli oikein mukavan oloinen paikka ja siellä oli paljon hauskoja ystäviä. Kuitenkin joku päiväkotiin lähtemisessä vaikutti harmittavan Inkeriä. Kukaan ei oikein tiennyt mikä, eikä Inkeri itsekään osannut sitä sanoa.



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Päivä alkoi aamupiirillä. Piirissä kaikki lapset saivat vuorollaan kertoa, mitä olivat viikonloppuna puuhailleet. Muilla oli paljon hienoja ja hauskoja tarinoita.

Inkerikin odotti innoissaan, että pääsisi kertomaan hauska viikonlopustaan äidin ja isän kanssa. Kun Inkerin vuoro vihdoin koitti, ei hän kuitenkaan saanut sanaa suustaan. Kaikki tuijottivat Inkeriä odottaen, mutta mitään ei vain tullut ulos. Niinpä tuli seuraavan lapsen vuoro. Inkeriä harmitti kovasti, että taas kävi näin.



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Seuraavaksi oli vuorossa tanssitunti. Inkeri piti kovasti tanssimisesta ja oli siitä todella innoissaan. Kun tanssihameet puettiin päälle, huomasi Inkeri kuitenkin harmikseen, että hameen sulat pistelivät hirmuisesti ja kutina oli kauheaa. Eihän tässä voi tanssia, harmitteli Inkeri ja katseli muiden hauskanpitoa sivusta.



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Pian koitti ruokatunnin aika. Inkeri ajatteli, että hyvä ruoka varmasti piristäisi hänen mieltään. Ruuaksi oli tänään sienikeittoa ja se näytti maistuvan kaikille hyvin. Tuoksu oli hyvä ja nälkä oli kova. Inkeri ei kuitenkaan voinut sietää sitä, miltä sienet tuntuivat suussa. Ne olivat niin kovin limaisia ja liukkaita. Inkeri yritti parhaansa, sillä halusi pitää keitosta, kuten muutkin lapset. Syömisestä ei kuitenkaan tullut yhtään mitään ja Inkerille jäi yhä nälkä, sekä paha mieli.



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Sitten olikin aika lähteä laulutunnille. Inkeri oli kovin uupunut päivän vastoinkäymisistä. Hän päätti kuitenkin yrittää, josko laulaminen piristäisi häntä. Pian Inkeri kuitenkin huomasi, että musiikki tuntui olevan aivan liian kovalla. Inkeri ihmetteli miksi kaikki huusivat niin kovin lujaan ääneen. Inkeri peitti korvansa ja koitti sietää meteliä, mutta siitä ei tullut mitään. "Tämä on jo liikaa", ajatteli Inkeri. Niinpä hänen oli nopeasti säännättävä pois laulusalista.

Inkeri juoksi piiloon risumajaan. Hän oli saanut tarpeekseen. Kaikki tuntui menevän ihan pieleen. Inkeristä tuntui, ettei hän osannut mitään, eikä ollut hyvä yhtään missään. Inkeri itkeä nyyhkytti yksin risumajassa ja ajatteli, ettei enää koskaan halua tulla päiväkotiin.



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Onneksi pian päiväkodintäti Paula Pupu huomasi Inkerin itkemässä ja tuli hänen luokseen. "Mikä hätänä pieni Inkeri?", kysyi Paula. Inkeri ei itkultaan saanut vastattua heti. Paula istahti Inkerin viereen ja odotti, kunnes Inkeri oli valmis kertomaan. Ja niinpä Inkeri kertoi, kuinka koko päivä oli mennyt ihan pieleen. Aamupiiirissä hän ei ollut saanut sanaa suustaan. Tanssitunnilla sulat kutittivat niin, ettei tanssimisesta tullut mitään. Inkeri ei saanut sienikeittoa syötyä millään. Ja laulutunnin meteliä hän ei voinut sietää hetkeäkään. Inkeri nyyhkytti, ettei hän osannut yhtään mitään!

Paula Pupu lohdutti Inkeriä ja kertoi, että kaikki järjestyy. Inkerin itku hieman hellitti. Paula kertoi, ettei Inkerissä totisesti ole mitään vikaa. Mehän olemme vain kaikki erilaisia, erityisiä, omia itsejämme! Emme kaikki voikaan pitää samoista asioista tai hoitaa asioita samalla tavalla.

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Paula kertoi, että esimerkiksi Salla Sieni saa välillä aamupiirissä piirtää kuulumisistaan kuvan, jos hän ei ole juttutuulella. Sulo Sammakko taas on askarrellut itselleen oman tanssihameen kukan terälehdistä, sillä sai sulista ihottumaa. Ja Kaisa

Käärme käyttää usein meluisilla musiikki- ja laulutunneilla kuulosuojaimia, jottei saa pahaa päänsärkyä. Inkeri kuunteli ihmeissään. "Me täällä päiväkodissa haluamme auttaa teitä kaikkia lapsia löytämään juuri teille sopivat tavat osallistua yhteiseen puuhailuun! Kaikille keksimme varmasti jotain toimivaa.", kertoi Paula. Inkeri oli kovin helpottunut ja huomasikin, että juuri sillä hetkellä äiti tuli hakemaan häntä päiväkodista.



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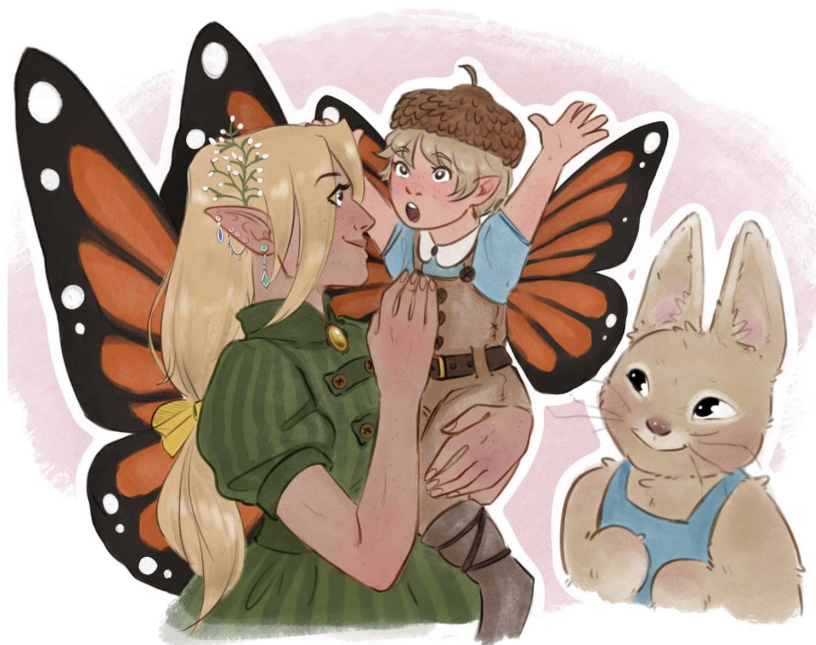


Inkeri ryntäsi innoissaan äidin syliin ja kertoi heti äidille, että päivä oli ollut aika hurja! Aluksi oli ollut paljon harmillisia sattumia. Sitten Inkeri oli kuitenkin oivaltanut, että mehän vain olemmekin kaikki erilaisia. "Ei minussa ollutkaan vikaa!", hikkaisi Inkeri. Inkeri kertoi ystävistään ja heidän erikoisuuksistaan. Äiti, Inkeri ja Paula Pupu sopivat, että huomenna pidetään palaveri päiväkodilla ja tehdään Inkerille ihan oma suunnitelma ja etsitään keinot, joilla Inkerin päiväkodissa olosta tulisi mahdollisimman mukavaa. Kotimatalla Inkeri kertoikin äidille todella monia mahtavia ideoita.



Mikä sinusta tekee juuri sinut,
erilaisen erityisen oman itsesi?

16



17



SULO SAMMAKKO



PÄIVÄKODIN PAULA PUPU



KAUKO KEIJU



LAURI LINTU

18



SALLA SIENI



INKERI



KAISA KÄÄRME



ÄITI MINNA MENNINKÄINEN

19

ERITYISKIIТОKSET:

NIEMENRANNAN PÄIVÄKODIN VÄKI

KATARIINA KANGASNIEMI

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INKERI ON ALOITTANUT
TAIKAMETSÄN PÄIVÄKODISSA JA
KAIKEN PITÄISI OLLA IHAN HYVIN.
PÄIVÄKODISSA ON HAUSKOJA YSTÄVIÄ
JA PALJON MUKAVAA TEKEMISTÄ.
JOKIN PÄIVÄKOTIIN MENEMISESSÄ
KUITENKIN VAIVAA INKERIÄ. MIKÄ
IHME NIIN MUKAVASSA PAIKASSA
VOI OLLA PIELESSÄ JA MIKSI SE SAA
TÄNÄÄN INKERIN AJATTELEMAAN,
ETTEI HÄN ENÄÄ KOSKAAN HALUA
MENNÄ PÄIVÄKOTIIN?

Tutkimussuunnitelma - Iiris Manner ja Mallan Nyman

Lastenkirja Projekti

Tutkimuksen tavoitteet, lähtökohdat, relevanssi

Tämän työn tavoitteena on vastata kysymyksiin kuten: Mitkä asiat ovat lapsille tärkeitä ja mistä asioista he ja heidän vanhempansa toivoisivat että, lastenkirjoissa puhuttaisiin enemmän?

Lähtökohdat tähän työhön on omasta kokemuksesta työskentelystä lasten kanssa.

Kiinnostus tuottaa jotain lapsille ja lasten kanssa tuntuu hyvin tärkeältä itselle että lapsille. Haluan antaa lapsille äänen, mahdollisuuden vaikuttaa johonkin asioihin, jotka vaikuttavat heihin, kuten siihen mitä heille luetaan.

On tärkeää kuunnella lapsia ja olla kärsivällisiä heidän vastausten kanssa. Lapset ovat mahdollisesti fiksuja ja kekseliäitä, heillä on paljon ajatuksia ja mielipiteitä, olisi tärkeää antaa näille taidoille tilaisuus loistaa.

Aikataulu

Aikataulu koko työlle sijoittuisi ajalle toukokuu 2023 - maaliskuu 2024

Itse haastattelu aikataulu sijoittuisi vain lokakuun ajalle, jotta pääsee työstämään lopullista tuotosta mahdollisimman nopeasti.

Kustannukset

Työn kustannuksiin kuuluu suurimmassa osassa kirjan itse tuottaminen ja tilaus. Yhden kirjan tilaaminen maksaa noin 50€, mutta koska tilaan useamman, voi kirjoista saada jonkinlaista alennusta.

Kustannuksiin kuuluu myös kirjan kuvien tuottaminen, johon tarvitsee paperia, pensseleitä ja maaleja.

Koska työ tehdään koulun lopputyönä, ja yksi kopio kirjoista päättyy Degree Show näyttelyyn, saamme siihen pienen apurahan. Kaikki ylimenevä kustannus menee omasta pussista.

Mitä uutta pyritään selvittämään?

Tutkimuksen yksi olennaisista asioista on työskennellä lasten kanssa, ja todistaa että he osaavat ilmaista itseään ja omia mielenkiintojaan, kunhan heille vain annetaan siihen kunnon mahdollisuus.

Haluamme selvittää mitkä asiat ovat lapsille tärkeitä, sekä mitkä aiheet yhdistävät lapsia sekä heidän vanhempiaan, ja täten yhdistää näitä asioita yhdistävän aktiviteetin, lukemisen muotoon.

Menetelmät

Haluaisin toteuttaa projektin tutkimus osuuden haastattelemalla lapsia X päiväkodilla tutkimus partnerini, sosionomiopiskelija Malla Nymannin kanssa. Haastattelemalla saisimme hyvän mahdollisuuden tutustua lapsiin paremmin, sekä saada heidän ideoitaan esille, millainen hyvä lastenkirja heidän mielestään olisi.

Haastattelemalla saisimme tietysti tietoomme vain lasten näkökulman asiasta, joten haluaisin myös lähettää muutaman lapsen mukana lyhyen, vapaaehtoisen sekä anonyymin kyselylomakkeen, jotta voisimme saada muutaman lapsen vanhemmankin näkökulman näihin asioihin.

Kirja itse toteutetaan yhteistyönä, minun liris Mannerin sekä Malla Nymanin toimesta. Työskentelemme yhdessä tarinan keksimisessä, Malla kirjoittaisi tarinan puhtaaksi ja minä kuvittaisin kirjan, sekä kokoaisin sen valmiiksi, sekä hoitaisin kirjan tilaamisen. Haluaisimme tilata yhden "ylimääräisen" kirjan, ja lahjoittaa sen päiväkodille kiitoksena yhteistyöstä.