

2024/2025
Volunteering Project



Mini Project



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What is a Mini Project?

A mini project can be seen as an extra assignment that we as volunteers develop separately or in tandem with our daily tasks in the organization/s that we work at.

A mini project can be anything, it depends on each of our goals and interests. A mini project can take the form of: a workshop; a presentation; an initiative; an event; a competition or a contest; language lessons / cooking lessons / dance lessons / sport lessons; a cultural event; communication outputs and much more.

The Volunteers



We came all the way from:

Portugal

Spain

France

Germany

Poland

Denmark

Learning german by cooking

by Anna

For my mini project, I thought about different ideas of what I wanted to do. In the end, I decided to keep it more simple since I only had limited time for it to do and I also wanted to keep it more realistic since I've never organised a project by myself before.

So what I decided to do, was that I wanted to bake german desserts with my three of my german classes at the Gymnasium in Broumov (9th, 11th and 12th grade). I already did the same thing with the parallel classes of those grades. So, I already knew that organising a small baking event for them was possible and that the students also enjoyed taking part in it.

The first step for preparation was to ask the teacher for those classes if she could reserve the school kitchen for me and if I could take the classes from their lessons. She agreed and told me it was no problem. So all I had to do for preparation was to look up a recipe and buy the ingredients.

For the project, I decided to do the german "Kaiserschmarrn", since it is a really simple dish. I was actually also thinking about doing some other kinds of desserts, but since I only had 45 minutes per each group, I needed to choose something that takes the least effort.



Learning german by cooking

So I had three different groups of classes of 8 to 16 students. The procedure was more or less the same with each group: I had the recipe for Kaiserschmarrn and I gave the students instructions in german and let them work. I noticed that it was easier to communicate with them in german than usual, since I could also explain by showing what to do. And if there were any questions, they were also able to ask me in english.

The first round was a bit messy and overwhelming for me. The main reasons for that were probably that I had to spend some time looking through the kitchen and finding the needed utensils before we could start. Also, I was really nervous that I would explain something wrong, thus I switched to english fairly often to avoid any miscommunication. However, the results were already pretty good in the first round. Even though we had to hurry, everyone was able to cook and eat the dessert. There was also some time left to clean up the kitchen before the next group arrived. With those two next groups, the process also went very smoothly. I had no problems explaining the students the recipe and they were not afraid to ask questions if there were any.

All in all, I think that my mini-project turned out to go like I expected it to. I reached my goal to show my students a part of my culture while trying to help improve their listening skills in german. I really enjoyed preparing and doing this project and I would do it again if I had the chance.



We made two pans for each class: one with raisins and one without. It was enough for everyone to try

Food and culture from France

by Clémence

The Idea

During the french lessons that I have every week in Obchdní akademie and in the gymnasium, I found out that most of my students don't know much about French culture and in particular French cuisine. So, I chose to do a French cooking lesson in those classes. I have already done it in Obchdní Akademie and I will do it in the gymnasium on Thursday, the 5th of June.

How I prepared

First, I had to speak with both of my teachers about it and they agreed with the idea. They both had this idea for the end of the school year. Then I had to find the recipes that we would cook. In Obchdní Akademie, we made crêpes which is a kind of pancake from Brittany. That was easy for me because I already had the traditional recipe from my family. In the gymnasium, I chose, together with the teacher, to cook and eat a whole of lunch together. We will cook some galettes which is the savoury version of crêpes, and ratatouille for the main meal. Then, we will eat mousse au chocolat as a dessert. I also had to look up for recipes. But, it was quite simple, because we make some galettes every week in my family so I already knew the recipe by heart. For the mousse au chocolat, it's simple, you just have to be patient. As for the ratatouille, I had already seen my father make it, but, I didn't know the recipe, so I had to look it up to know which ingredients to buy. I also needed a good pan to make crêpes or galettes.

Food and culture from France

How it was

In Obchdní akademie, it was nice. All of my students liked it because it was something different from usual. It was also another way to learn French, and that was very interesting for them. The teacher also liked it because it was a nice moment that we spent all together, without the stress of school. We only had one problem: we didn't have a good pan, because it was induction cook-top and I didn't know it before. So, we couldn't manage with the teacher's pan and we had to cook in a pot. I also think that the activity was too short. The 45 minutes that we had were not enough to actually cook and eat all together. At the gymnasium, it was also very nice. All my students and the teacher liked the activity. It was nice for me too because I could speak about something else than the lessons with them. The only bad thing was that some of the students were bored because there was a lot of them.



Sharing a love for cooking

by Lesley

Introduction

For my miniproject, I began by asking myself what I personally enjoy doing and what could be both fun and useful for the project. Since I really like baking, my first idea was to bake with some students. I believe that cooking, baking, and eating together is an important part of a country's culture. It's also engaging because it's a hands-on activity. In regular language classes, students often only learn grammar, vocabulary, and theoretical cultural facts. My goal was to offer something more practical and enjoyable that would still teach them about German culture.

Planning the Project

Originally, I wanted to bake traditional German Christmas cookies. However, my teacher suggested I find a simpler baking recipe in German. I decided on apple-cinnamon muffins. My teacher printed out the recipe, and we translated it together in class. Later, she suggested we carry out the baking activity before Christmas.

Because the class was quite large, it would have been difficult for everyone to bake together. So we came up with the idea that students would work in small groups, and each group would prepare a different German dish.

Implementation

On the 16th of December, we cooked and baked for about two hours in the school kitchen. The students brought the necessary ingredients from home. In total, four different dishes were made: Apfelstrudel, Pfannkuchen, Käse-Schinken-Nudeln, and the apple-cinnamon muffins. I helped the group working with my recipe, especially since it was written in German.

All the students were very engaged and enjoyed doing something different. They were especially excited when the food was ready and they could taste what they had made. There was a lot of food in the end, so they also shared it with their friends and classmates, including those who don't study German.

Sharing a love for cooking

Conclusion

Overall, I am very satisfied with how my miniproject turned out. The students had fun, the teacher was pleased, and it was a positive experience for me as well. The students learned about some typical German dishes, and perhaps they will use that knowledge again in the future by preparing the recipes at home.



A small garden in a school

by Cecilie

What was the idea behind my project?

I grew up with a big garden at home, and I used to garden with my grandpa when I was a kid. Therefore, I wanted to pass this experience on to other kids in hopes of them enjoying it as much as I did.

The idea of my mini-project was therefore to create a small herb garden for the kids to use in cooking lessons.

How did I carry out my project?

I started by talking to the school about my idea. Then we agreed on all the practical information about placement of the garden when we would do it which kids would be doing it and so on.

The day before doing the project I prepared the box by removing stones sticks and other things. I also made sure to water the dirt well to ensure that it would not be too dry for the next day. Lastly I went to the store and bought the different plants that I needed. I got blueberries strawberries, raspberries, oregano, rosemary, parsley and arugula.

On the day, I instructed the kids on how to properly plant and water the plants. We made signs with the different plants for the kids to know the names in English and Czech. I took pictures that are shown on the next page.

When did I carry out my project?

My project was carried out on the 29th of April 2025 however on the 28th of April 2025 I was preparing the dirt buying plants and so on.

What was the goal / aim of my project?

The goal / aim of my project was to teach the kids a bit about gardening and showing them that it can be fun. Additionally it was also to teach the kids about plants how to take care of them and what they are called in English.

A small garden in a school

What were some challenges I had along the way?

It went pretty smooth all the way the only big problem was the amount of stones in the dirt. There were a lot more big stones than I anticipated, so it took a bit longer to get it ready. The planting went great, and the kids enjoyed it.



French lessons

by Zoé

Where does my idea come from?

In one of the schools I work in Nové Město nad Metují my students only had the options to take German and English lessons so I decided to give my students the opportunity to participate in French lessons.

What was the content of my mini-project?

I taught them basic French sentences, for example how to greet people in the formal and informal ways, present themselves, ask how one person is doing, numbers(, basic conjugation of the verbs have, be and do, (was supposed to happen but I didn't have the time) we also discussed some famous French expressions and talked about the French culture.

When did it happen?

I gave two lessons all in all: Thursday 10th of April and Monday 28th of April 2025.

What was my goal?

I wanted to give my students the opportunity to open themselves up to a new language and learn a bit more about the French culture because I had noticed an interest from their side for France.

I hope to have motivated them to learn more deeply a new language (maybe on their own after my lessons) and travel to France to discover for themselves France, the culture and being an active European citizen.

What didn't go as planned?

There were way less students than planned that came to my lessons because the teacher who was supposed to spread the informations about the French lessons put it too late on the school website.

I also only ended up doing only two lessons out of the three originally planned because we took too much time to organise everything, then all the students had exams , it was end of the year so not the right timing and no one was free to participate.

French Culture

by Dahiana

The idea :

On certain Fridays, with Dečko, when we visited middle schools, the French team would present a historical quiz game about France. Unfortunately, few students knew the answers, as they don't speak French and study very little about the country's history. Nevertheless, I kept going.

Since the beginning of September, I've been teaching French at the Broumov high school every Thursday. I have several classes at different levels. I decided to do this activity not with the final-year students, it would be too easy for them, but with the class just below. After spending a year with them, I thought it would be interesting to see if they, in turn, had managed to learn something about France.

How I prepared :

To be honest, the preparation wasn't very complicated overall. I had talked about it a while ago with the French teacher, but unfortunately the students had exams, so I had to wait two weeks. But today, I finally did it: I simply brought my cards and prepared an explanation in my head so I could be clear when speaking in front of the students.

So I started explaining it to them in French. It was a bit difficult for them, but I think some of them understood a few words, which is already great. Then I explained it in English, and it was much clearer for them!

How it was :

It went really well. The students were attentive and cooperative. Of course, since it was both a fun and historical game, some weren't very enthusiastic at first. But luckily, a few students and the teacher told them it was a way to test their general knowledge, and immediately, the competitive spirit kicked in!

They did a good job, both placing the events and identifying the pictures. Obviously, some of the events were completely unknown to them, so it was quite difficult, but it gave them the chance to learn something new, since I sometimes explained what they were about. Overall, it went really well!

Badminton and English – Let's Play and Learn!



And for me

it was an interesting experience to put myself in the shoes of a teacher (even though that's not what I want to do in the future, it's not my goal) and to have taught students throughout the year about my country. Being able to test them at the end of the year to see if I'd been helpful was really rewarding!

Badminton and English – Let's Play and Learn!

by Pilar

Objective:

Promote interest in English through sports.
Introduce basic badminton-related vocabulary in English.
Foster respect, teamwork, and intercultural understanding.

Basic words:

Racket
Shuttle
Net
Court
Point
Serve
Hit
Smash
Drop shot
Fault

Actions and movements:

Serve high
Underarm serve
Backhand
Forehand

Game:

Singles
Doubles
Opponent
Partner
Team
Referee
Match

Expressions:

Good shot!
Nice serve!
Well played!
Out!
In!
Let's play!
Your turn!

This mini project was created with the aim of integrating English language learning into a meaningful and motivating context such as sports practice. In this case, a badminton session was carried out in which basic vocabulary related to the sport was introduced in English, in order to spark students' interest in the language and demonstrate that it can also be learned outside the traditional classroom setting.

Badminton and English – Let's Play and Learn!

Activities:

To introduce the vocabulary, the session began with a game in which students had to search for English word cards hidden around the gym. Once found, they matched each word with the correct badminton-related object or concept (e.g., racket, shuttle, net). This allowed students to actively connect language with physical elements of the sport.

In the second activity, each student received one card in English and another in Czech. They had to find their “match” by speaking in English to their classmates and identifying the pair that had the same word in both languages. This encouraged authentic communication and cooperation in a playful setting.

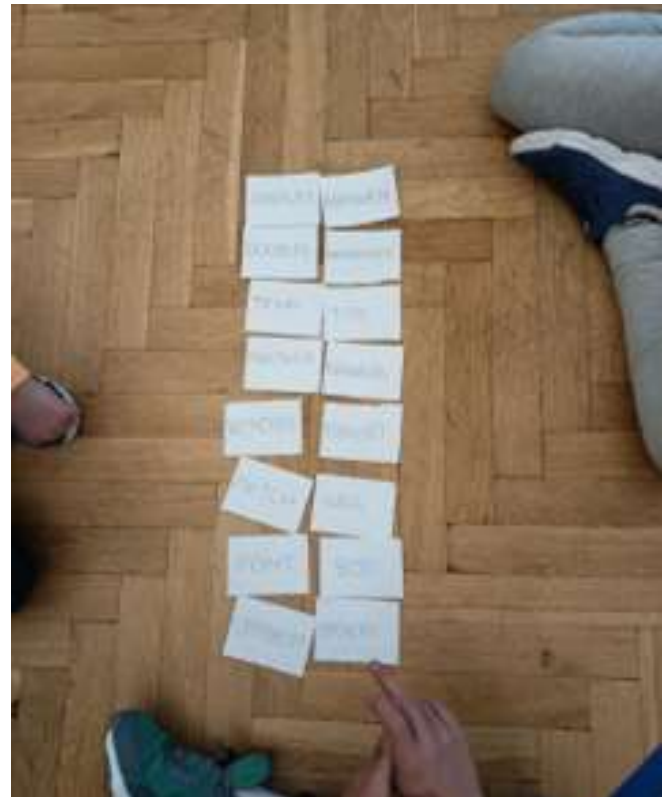
Next, the group played a guessing game in which they had to figure out the meaning of various expressions related to the game (e.g., It's my turn, Good job, Let's play), reinforcing both vocabulary and functional language use.

Finally, during the matches, students were encouraged to use the expressions and words they had learned throughout the session while playing. This final phase helped consolidate the vocabulary through real use in context.

The use of English in this sporting activity not only had a linguistic goal, but also a broader educational purpose. Through interaction and cooperation during the game, values such as respect, teamwork, and openness to other languages and cultures were promoted, contributing to the students' holistic development.

This experience shows that it is possible to introduce students to English in a natural way within non-academic contexts, encouraging a positive attitude toward the language through real-life situations connected to their interests and motivations.

Badminton and English – Let's Play and Learn!



My Experience Travelling

by Zosia

Mini project – Sharing my travelling experience

As part of my mini project this month, I created and delivered a presentation about my experience with travelling and volunteering. I chose this topic because it's something I'm truly passionate about, and I felt it could be interesting and inspiring for others as well – especially for young students who might be thinking about their future opportunities abroad.

In the presentation, I talked about the different countries I've travelled to, some of the activities I took part in while volunteering, and the general idea of what it means to travel with a purpose. I tried to keep the presentation simple and engaging, using photos from my travels and short stories to give the students a real sense of what such experiences can look like.

One of the most important parts of the presentation was showing the students that travelling and volunteering abroad isn't just for a specific group of people – it's something that anyone can do if they're open-minded and willing to step out of their comfort zone. I also briefly explained some of the basic formalities people usually need to take care of before travelling – like getting documents ready, packing wisely, or thinking about health insurance.

Since I presented this in English classes, I wanted to make sure that it wasn't just me talking the whole time. I actively involved the students in the presentation by asking them questions during and after each section. For example, I asked them where they would like to travel, what they think would be the biggest challenge in a foreign country, or what kind of volunteering activities they would enjoy. In smaller groups, I even gave them short tasks like creating their own imaginary travel plan or describing what they would pack for a volunteering trip.

Their responses were really creative, and it was great to see how many of them were curious and willing to share their ideas – even in English, which was a good opportunity for them to practise the language in a fun and relaxed way. One moment I particularly enjoyed was when a younger student confidently raised his hand and said he would like to volunteer in Japan “to take care of robots and eat sushi every day.” It made everyone laugh and helped break the ice – and it also showed how open-minded and imaginative children can be when given space to express themselves.

I ended each session with a short quiz about what I had talked about, and gave small rewards (like stickers or postcards) to the students who remembered the most.

Overall, I really enjoyed preparing and giving this presentation. It was not only a chance to reflect on my own experience, but also to inspire and connect with younger students in a meaningful way. I hope that I managed to show them that travelling can be more than just a holiday – it can be a way to grow, learn, and help others at the same time.

Art activities for kids

by Mariana

The “why” for my mini project

Before having a clear idea of what I wanted to develop has my mini project, I knew that I wanted it to be art and teaching related. Since my main reason for joining the project was my desire to gain experience in pedagogy to then apply for university to become an art school teacher.

Mini project planning and failures

One of my favourite classes in university was printmaking, where we got to experiment with screen printing and linocut. However, those techniques require special tools and materials that come with a high cost, making printmaking a hard art form for children and teens to try out. So for my mini project, I wanted to teach some basics for printmaking with easily accessible materials. After some research, I decided to do printing with Tetra Pak (reference pictures below), however after many tries I couldn't come up with good enough results to replicate with the children (pictures of the tests below) and had to scrap the idea.



Inspirations for printing with Tetra Pak.



Tests tried at home with Tetra Pak and a stamp pad.

Art activities for kids

First mini project - learning from doing

While I was still coming up with the idea for a mini project related with printing, I got my hand at preparing a smaller project — an art class. I decided to make something inspired by the season, Autumn, and nature, after gathering some inspirations (in the pictures bellow) I choose to make and activity with the goal of making illustrations of animals with leaves from the florist near Náchod.



Inspirations for the activity.

After gathering and preparing the materials, I made some examples of what the students could do with the technic and with the help of Terka had the students make their own illustrations.



Art activities for kids



The activity — preparing the activity, drawing and cutting the leafs and final results.

Mini project and ceramics - a second try

For the ceramics classes, I wanted to introduce to the students the idea of making useful and common household objects out of clay. But I also wanted them to see beyond the possibilities of more basic objects like plates, bowls and such. Instead, I wanted them to make objects that aren't usually made out of ceramics.

For that I decided on, for the first class project to make a picture frame (which has just one piece), and for the second class project to make a tic-tac-toe game (more complicated and with multiple pieces).

The process for both projects was the same:

- Make a sample in the adult ceramics class for the students to have as example;
 - Gather inspirational pictures and print them out before the class;
- Teach the class as usual with help of the teacher because of the language barrier.
- The main idea was for each student to take both the printed out illustrations and my sample and come up in an unique idea for their picture frame and tic-tac-toe game.

Art activities for kids

Mini project and ceramics - Picture frame



Inspirations for the activity.



My sample and the ones made by the students (sadly I didn't take more pictures).

Art activities for kids

Mini project and ceramics - Tic-tac-toe game



Inspirations for the activity.



My sample and the preparation for the activity.

Art activities for kids



The activity — making the board game and pieces, and the finished product.



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A Different Kind of Learning

MINI PROJECTS

by Gaspard

My name is Gaspard and I come from France. There is a particular memory that often comes back to me—a moment that has deeply shaped how I think about education and the way children learn.

It happened during my time volunteering at a kindergarten in the Czech Republic. One day, we went for a walk in the forest with the children. Nothing extraordinary was planned—just a simple outing into nature. But what I witnessed there left a lasting impression on me.

We arrived in a quiet corner of the forest, surrounded by trees, with the soft sounds of birds and rustling leaves all around. As soon as we settled, the children naturally began to explore. There were no toys, no structured games—just what nature had to offer: branches, stones, earth, and their own endless curiosity.

They immediately got to work—building imaginary worlds, creating tools, inventing stories. Some were digging in the dirt, others stacking stones like towers, and a few were carefully arranging sticks into what looked like tiny houses. They were completely absorbed, fully present in the moment, their imaginations flowing freely. There was no need for instructions, no adult guidance. Nature was both their playground and their teacher.

This scene struck me deeply because it stood in such stark contrast to what I had known growing up in France. In many places, playgrounds are often made of concrete and plastic—safe but sterile. There are fixed rules, set structures, and very little room for the kind of open-ended discovery I saw in that forest. Of course, children in France laugh and play, but something vital often seems to be missing: a connection to the natural world and to their own inner creativity.

In that small clearing in the Czech woods, I saw another way. I saw a kind of learning that was freer, more intuitive, and more connected—not only to the environment but to the children themselves. They were learning through doing, through observing, through feeling. They were not being filled with knowledge from the outside, but rather growing from the inside out.

This simple moment reinforced a belief I had long carried within me: that education should not be confined to the four walls of a classroom. True learning often happens through experience—through play, discovery, and interaction with the real world. It should nurture curiosity, allow time, and respect the unique rhythm of each child.

Since that day, I have felt even more determined to devote myself to popular education—to an approach that is open, inclusive, and rooted in everyday life. I want to help create spaces where children can learn not just facts, but who they are and how they relate to the world around them. Spaces where wonder is encouraged, where mistakes are welcome, and where nature is not something separate from learning, but a fundamental part of it.

That moment in the forest was more than just a memory—it was a vision. And I carry it with me as a quiet