**WEEK 4 REPORT**

**CYPRUS**

**ERIMI PRIMARY SCHOOL (ALL-DAY COMPULSORY)**

**IOANNOU IRENE**

**Define the challenge / problem that inspired your heart to take action and explain why it inspired you?**

The world is witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. An unprecedented 65.6 million **people** around the world have been forced from home by conflict and persecution at the end of 2016.

In Cyprus someone can find many refugees:

1. Refugees that have come from great danger like from example Syria;
2. Cypriot Refugees due to the Turkish invasion that happened in 1974.

On the 18th of January two new Syrian pupils came to our school. We feel that it is crucial to help our children become aware of the suffering which refugees have been going through so that they can better understand them and help them settle into their new school.

Our school is also near villages that accommodate Cypriot Refugees’ settlements. Some of our students come from Refugees’ families. We think that it is important for our students to learn more about the plight of Cypriot Refugees.

Moreover, we think that it is of great significance to compare their life to the life of the refugees in order to become conscious of the restrictions, dangers and problems a refugee goes through.

The idea is to work with the students of Year 6 through the project unit: “Away from home” that refers to refugees. This Unit is a part of the Cyprus English Language Learning Curriculum of Year 6. Erimi Primary School is an All-Day Compulsory School so the English Language Learning periods of Year 6 are double that of other schools so we have the flexibility to do extension and extra project activities on the given Units when possible. Our goal is to make Year 6 students aware of the Refugees’ hard life so that they can get into the Refugees’ shoes and understand what they have been through. All these can help our children support better the two new Syrian students to blend in their new school life and smoothen their life changes. Also it will give them the chance to become aware of the Cypriot Refugees problems.

**Organize the Steps of your SOS4 Love Action Plan to contribute to the solution of the challenge problem that you have chosen.**

Our Action plan addresses the following SDGs:

SDG4- Quality Education and promoting lifelong learning: Through this project unit we will offer students a number of quality educational activities to do that will help them gain crucial knowledge and provide them with the right attributes that will equip them to deal the important subject that of Refugees. All these are considered to provide and empower them with a strong base to improving people’s lives.  This project promotes Lifelong learning as it brings together learning from many different sources including life experiences.

SDG16- Peace and Justice: the theme of the unit and all activities are dedicated to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. It broadens and strengthens love and peace in all levels.

Some of the activities below are part of the Project Unit “Away From Home” in the English Language Curriculum of Year 6 (Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture Curriculum).

**Step 1:**  Study Photos of the Refugees, examine and discuss their problems and needs. Create a Mind map. Learn English Language vocabulary related to refugees.

**Step 2:** Listen to, discuss and learn the song “500 miles away from home”. Illustrate the lyrics of the song in any way they feel like and create a simple video clip of the song with their illustrations.

**Step 3:** Read about and watch real life stories or animations of refugee children. Complete a number of activities related to these stories. Compare and contrast their life with the life of a refugee. Role on the wall activity (thoughts and feelings of a refugee/ how others think/feel about refugees?)

**Step 4:** Read aloud and discuss the storybook : “ Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family’s Journey”

**Step 5:** Write poems related to peace/war/refugees and create a book.

**Step 6:** Draw or write on a piece of paper the hope or the dream that a refugee child has for the future. Create a group collage or poster.

**DIFFICULTIES:** One difficulty that we might face is the time allocation to complete the activities in the project. Another difficulty is the communication with the new Syrian students because they don’t speak English. Also, the discussion with refugees may be emotional and might be unwilling to share experiences. We may modify, change or skip some of the activities of the Action plan due to time limits and according to the interests/emotions of the students.

**RESULTS**

Through this project unit we helped our students gain crucial knowledge. We provided them with the right attributes on the important subject that of Refugees. This will help them improving Refugees’ lives and people lives in general.  The world is witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. They expanded their knowledge and vocabulary on this essential subject of refugees. We raised consciousness and awareness on the refugees’ difficult life. We equipped them we Lifelong learning skills as it brought them together learning from many different sources including life experiences. It helped them embrace and support the two new Syrian children in their school to feel more welcome. We practice our English Language skills by communicating in English throughout the project.

**Thoughts and feelings**

This project was a lovely challenge to me and to my students. We deeply studied the Refugee topic and this helped my students and myself gain better knowledge on this essential subject. I learnt together with my students. I wish I had more time to extend some of the activities. The children seemed to give a lot of concentration and showed great interest to the real life stories and experiences of refugees. We think that we achieved our goal. It was nice to feel that together with hundreds of students from all around the world were doing actions to support the SOS4Love Project. Yes indeed, ONLY LOVE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD. I am attaching some of their thoughts and feelings.