

languages ICT

Using ICT effectively at Key Stage 4

Teaching about current affairs in Spanish

Useful site: www.micromadrid.es (researched March 2008)

Micromadrid is a Spanish children's website with news and current affairs, games and short video clips.

The site contains articles aimed at Spanish children about news, issues of interest to children and young people, interviews and information about famous people. Simple language is used in either a cartoon format or in a short paragraph.

For teaching and learning

On the home page there are links to different sections as well as a 'Microventana' about a celebrity. Activities about personal details can be created by the teacher based on these.

The 'Micsuplemento' section contains an archive of searchable articles, about different issues, such as equality, tolerance, health, the environment, emergencies and personal experiences. These articles are one page long, with excellent illustration and not too much text, and are therefore very readable. A news item could be selected by the teacher and viewed in advance of the lesson. The quiz questions could be done with the class as a whole deciding upon the answers.

The 'Microperiodistas' section contains an interview with a famous person, which changes regularly. The questions are simple, such as favourite, food, hobbies, holidays and friendship. The interviews can be used as excellent authentic source material for work on personal information.

In the 'Martina Derecho' section, within the 'Aventuras de Martina Derecho' there are personal facts and simple, cartoon-type stories. In the 'Ver películas' section there are short cartoon video clips with spoken Spanish based on the themes of family, young people's rights, education, participation, health and equality. Students can listen and try to work out what the song is about and perhaps note down any words that they recognise. They can consolidate and extend learning by completing interactive exercises prepared by the teacher using authoring software and placed on the network.

The Tablón section of 'Martina Derecho' allows people to paste messages onto an online noticeboard. These are an interesting source of authentic material from Spanish children of 11 to 12 years of age. These can be used by the teacher as examples of how to give opinions.

The 'Juegos' section contains educational games, such as the 'Euroca' game, which is aimed at finding out interesting facts and information about countries in the European Union. These games can be played interactively by students using individual computers or as a whole class activity on the interactive whiteboard.

Ocio Joven (www.ociojoven.com) is another site about current affairs aimed at older teenagers and suitable for more able learners.

Why this site was chosen

Information on current affairs in Spanish can be found online but is usually too difficult for GCSE students because of the complicated nature of the language. This Spanish newspaper is aimed at children and young people and the language level is appropriate for KS4 learners. Many of the articles, video clips and games on this site are suitable for use when teaching about social issues.

About the 'Using ICT effectively at Key Stage 4' series

www.languages-ict.org.uk/technology/ks4.htm

This series of advice sheets deals with the effective use of ICT at Key Stage 4 for teachers of modern languages. The series focuses on online resources characterised by their richness and potential for stimulating teaching and learning languages, particularly French, German and Spanish, at Key Stage 4. It is hoped that the suggestions and ideas put forward in the sheets will be of use to teachers of other languages.

The sites were chosen as useful resources for teachers dealing with topic areas which, for various reasons, may be classed as 'hard to teach' at Key Stage 4.

The sites chosen are not presented in any way by CILT, ALL or Becta as unique or comprehensive and no responsibility is taken for any changes which may take place subsequent to this research.

The sheets were researched and written by a small team of consultants working on behalf of CILT, the National Centre for Languages.

All advice and references in the series refer to content as found during the first quarter of 2008.

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