

OULUMA SCIENCE CLUBS – A FUN AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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It is well-known that collaborative learning has a crucial role in learning. Also inquiry-based learning have been under investigation for the last decades because this modern education method has reported to improve learning outcomes. By utilizing collaborative and inquiry-based learning, especially in science education, students are able to develop their skills of experimental working as well as learn fundamental concepts related to the environment [1-4]. Collaborative learning by inquiry-based approach can develop students' attitudes towards natural sciences but also enhance their cognitive and analytical skills as well as cooperation skills [1-4]. Thus, this modern type of approach to natural sciences should be utilized in education already at primary school level.

OuLUMA Science clubs provide the possibility for collaborative learning by inquiry-based approach to natural sciences for 3-6 grade children in Oulu primary schools. This six-week after school activity collects together a wide range of natural sciences: physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology and geology (see Fig. 1). By exceeding the limits of the common school subjects, this after school activity integrates natural sciences not only together but also into arts, household and sports.

Spring 2014 was the first time when the Science clubs were provided in Oulu primary schools. During the first spring, 17 schools and over 200 children participated in this activity. A positive feedback have been given by schools, children and the club leaders. Spring 2016 is the third time when the clubs are provided. So far this activity have been provided free of charge. Our purpose is to make the Science clubs persistent so that we could widely inspire and motivate new “young scientists” in the field of natural sciences also in the future.

Fig. 1. Examples from the science clubs: A sugar rainbow and a home-made lava lamp.



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