

## **Text for editors, distributed in October 2005**

### **Xplora School Projects 2005**

This autumn Xplora ([www.xplora.org](http://www.xplora.org)) is launching new science projects for schools. To signal your interest to take part, please contact Karl Sarnow at [karl.sarnow@eun.org](mailto:karl.sarnow@eun.org) - there is no deadline for registration. More project topics will be launched soon.

#### **1. Sunset project**

The sun rises in the east and sets in the west - but did you know that it doesn't always rise and set in exactly the same place? You can explore this topic with your pupils - even very young ones - in this simple project.

First, you find out the geographical coordinates of your school. Then, invite your pupils to observe a sunset and note the exact time of the sunset, and the precise compass direction where the sun set. You will be able to upload your results on the Xplora website, and compare them to other schools.

Full teacher and student materials - notes, worksheets - will be provided to all participating schools.

Skills learned:

General - telling the time

Basic geography - where the school is on a globe

Basic science - taking measurements with a compass, understanding the position of the sun in relation to the Earth.

#### **2. Four seasons project**

Science and culture are brought together in this project. For the scientific part, students are invited to note the exact time and compass direction of the sunset, in the same way as the Sunset project - but, they must take their measurements on special astronomic dates - the equinoxes and/or the solstices. Sharing measurements with other schools will help your group to make interesting scientific conclusions.

To bring in cultural traditions, students are invited to present and discuss their local cultural traditions relating to these dates on the Xplora portal through texts, online discussions, pictures and photographs. Schools can work together to compare results and traditions.

Skills learned:

General - telling the time, verbal and written expression (in a foreign language where relevant), using ICT

Geography - where the school is on a globe, geographical coordinates, the changing seasons,

Basic science - taking measurements with a compass, understanding the position of the sun in relation to the Earth, the Earth's orbit.