

**Sharing European Memories
at**

**Lower Secondary School
DEBINKA**

*„Welcome to our school under the oak leaf
where we learn both to think and feel”*

What kind of school are we?



- 
- <http://www.debinka.pl/>

- Community schools are run by special educational associations. They were created in the early 1990s as a reaction to a gloomy reality of the then Polish education. They have been continuously setting up the agenda and standards in school teaching .
- Community schools, along with the private ones, belong to the so-called non-public schools. They are fully recognized in the Polish school system.

- The owner of the school is an association, not the state.
- The school requires the educational process be conducted in small groups. E.g. each class has only have 18 students (contrary to 30 in public schools). The group is even smaller for IT and language courses and cannot be bigger than 10 students (as compared with 15-20 in public schools).

- A teacher has a sole responsibility in defining the curriculum and choosing the most appropriate methods. The approach is now becoming a standard in public schools.
- A majority of community schools is financed by fees paid by students parents.

Educational College
of Poznan Educational
Society

*Elementary School No.3
„Dębinka”
since 1990*

*Lower Secondary
School
Junior High „Dębinka”
since 1999*

*Kindergarten „Z mchu i
paproci” (With moss
and fern)
since 2004*

- 6 classes
(17 persons per class)

- 100 students

- 25 teachers

Our educational priorities

- *A high quality of education,*
- *A constant support of students,*
- *Teaching of respect to other people, family values and responsibility of their own development*



A NEW SCHOOL CURRICULUM

- A new school curriculum was implemented in 2008. As a result, history of the 20th got removed from the lower secondary school curriculum. Hence, the project is better suited for the first year of the upper secondary school.



- Introduction of educational content of the project into the obligatory school curriculum proved to be difficult.

- The history curriculum at lower high school comprises a period stretching from antiquity to the year of 1918.



- A history of the 20th century is only fragmentarily discussed during social studies classes or as an element of civic education within educational programs beyond the school curriculum.

PROJECT



SEM@s



Sharing European Memories
at school

Methodology proposed in the SEM@S project proved to be useful as regards expanding and enlarging the obligatory curriculum.



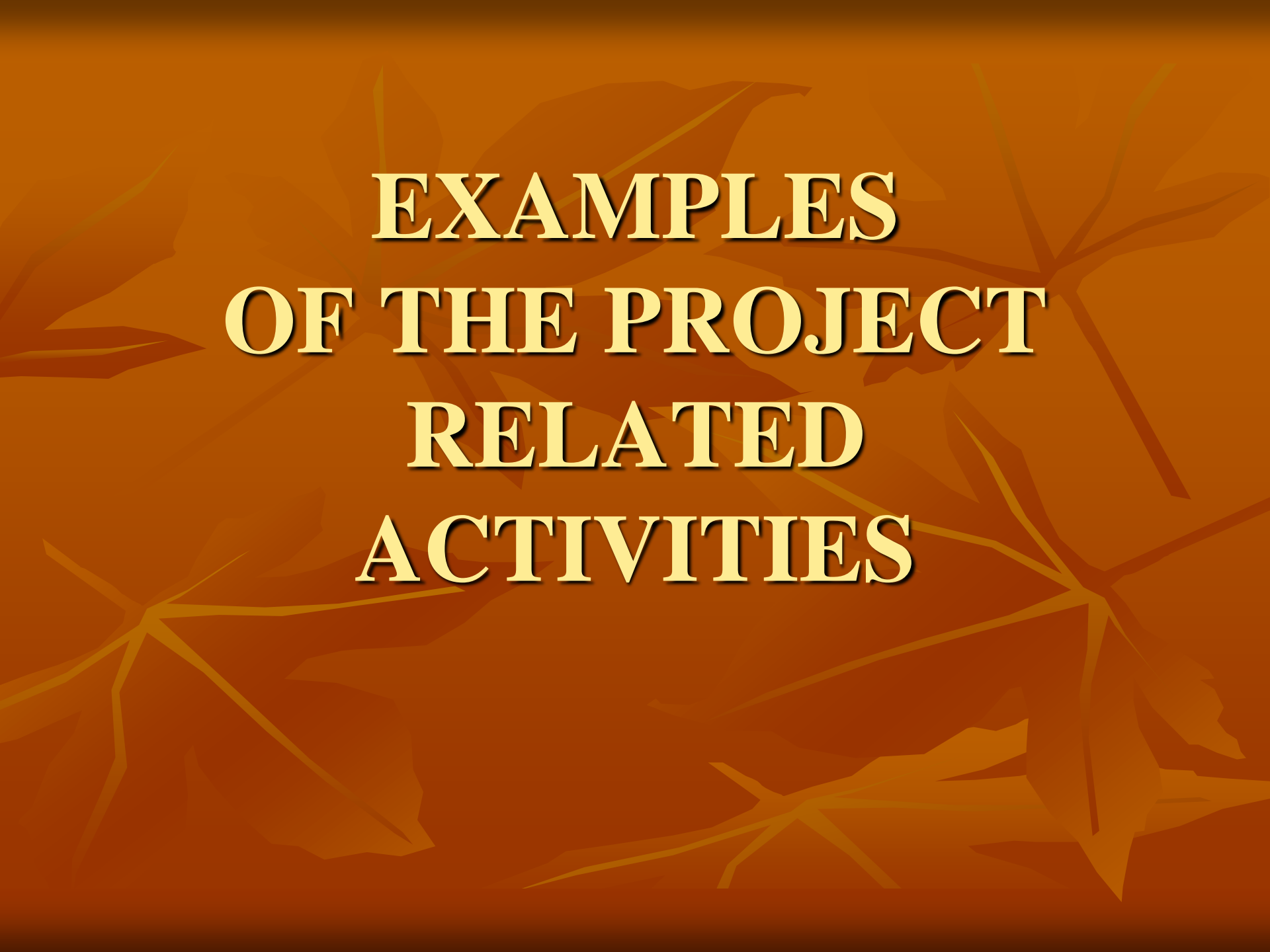
In particular, this applies to regional and local history as well as family history and other educational projects.



Six months of working with the SEM@S project, made us possible to expand the school history curriculum by introducing elements of local and the most recent history as well as to correlate history with spatial and social variables.

Thanks to incorporating the SEM@S project into our annual school educational priorities, a history of family as well as that of local communities became a part of almost all classes.





**EXAMPLES
OF THE PROJECT
RELATED
ACTIVITIES**



THE CITY GAME



The objective of the city game:

- A discovery of the historical and cultural richness
- of Wilda – one of the Poznań's district.

- A study of the Wilda's spatial development and factors that may have contributed to it,



- A study of different architecture types,

- Making use of both city and historical maps,



- Analysis of demographic (professional, ethnic and religious) transformations of the Wilda inhabitants in the period between the 18th and the beginning of the 20th centuries,

- A study of the needs of revitalization of old objects and parts of the district to meet contemporary requirements and expectations.



The game took place on 25 – 26 April.
More than 100 students of our school participated in that.





THE MEMORY BANK

One of the most important results of the project was to initiate a development of the

„School Memory Bank”

– a database of a range of different accounts about the past (that of parents, grandparents, members of local community)

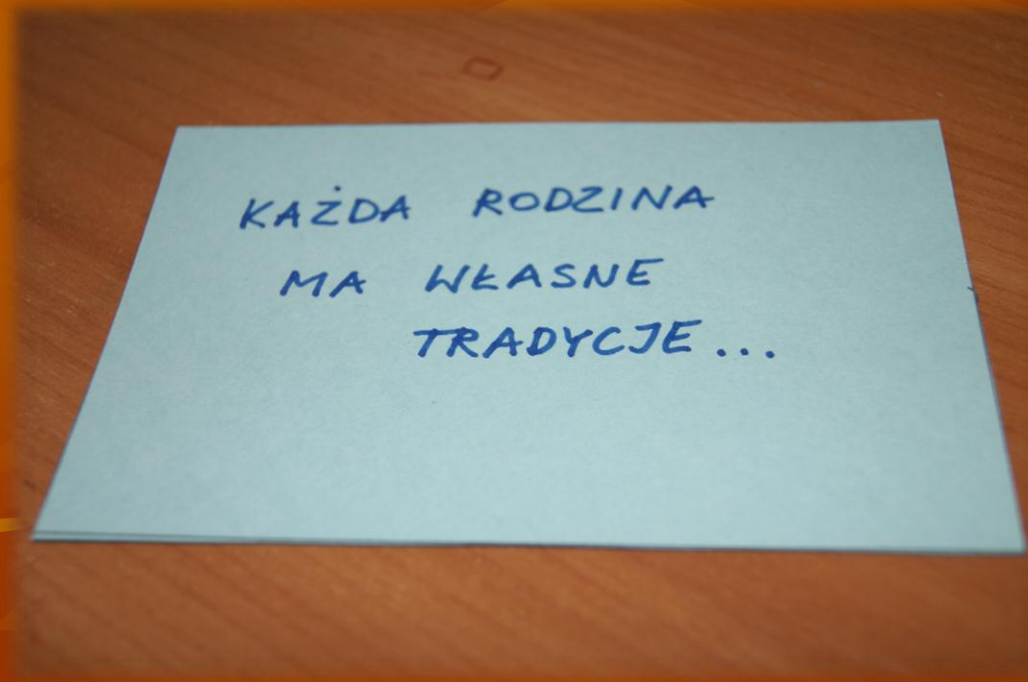
We run two workshops on oral history as well as collecting and analysing of oral accounts.



Altogether, almost 70 questionnaires have collected from witnesses of historical events in the years 1939-1989.



We have conducted 15 interviews. The next ones are under preparation as a permanent effect of the project that the school intends to continue.



The collected materials are to be used in the future as didactic materials to illustrate different historical events.

For example, while talking about the Poznań 1956 Uprising, we can refer to the account of its witness – a member of the local community



By getting acquainted with witnesses and thanks to personal contacts, students can easier identify with them.

Thanks to the project, history from the textbooks becoming closer
and more understandable to students





MUSEUM LESSONS

The project made us also possible to conduct some classes beyond the school, in particular in museums.

This facilitated a direct contact with historical sources analysed in school.





During the project, we organized 16 thematic trips and museum lessons (some of them for all lower secondary class students, some other for selected groups only).



These lessons helped students to compare the textbook version of history with a real world, decipher it from the contemporary reality as well as have a closer look at historical events and eventually grasp history from the hitherto unknown perspective.

In overall, students were pretty critical while evaluating the way in which history was presented in museums. A majority of museums they visited did not meet their expectations.



There is a significant difference between the mode of presenting skills and historical knowledge by German and Polish museums, the latter being less attractive.





The only exception are archaeological open air museums
offereing the so-called life history



The Museum of the Poznań June 1956 and the Museum of the Warsaw Uprising – multimedia



Gross – Rosen Museum – an individualized approach, the museum run the project related workshop

Students were highly satisfied with the history exhibition in City Museum in Wrocław.



A major disfunctionality of Polish museums is the form of the exhibitons and attitude of the museum staff presenting the museum colection in a boring, schematic and uninteresting way





COMPETENCES



- Our students got to know how to work with different categories of historical sources.
 - They were taught a critical analysis of sources and a need to confront them with other materials and accounts referring to events in question,



- Collect and analyse the questionnaires,



- Teamwork – the project required to consult conducted works with other members of the team as well as elaborate conversation skill while taking to witnesses of historical events, especially elderly people

- Students also became more aware of historical identity





ADDED VALUE

The project made us possible to get to know methods of work of fellow historians in other countries, get students interested in accounts of family's history, and get them understand a significance of local and regional history, especially that of Poznań and the Great Poland region.



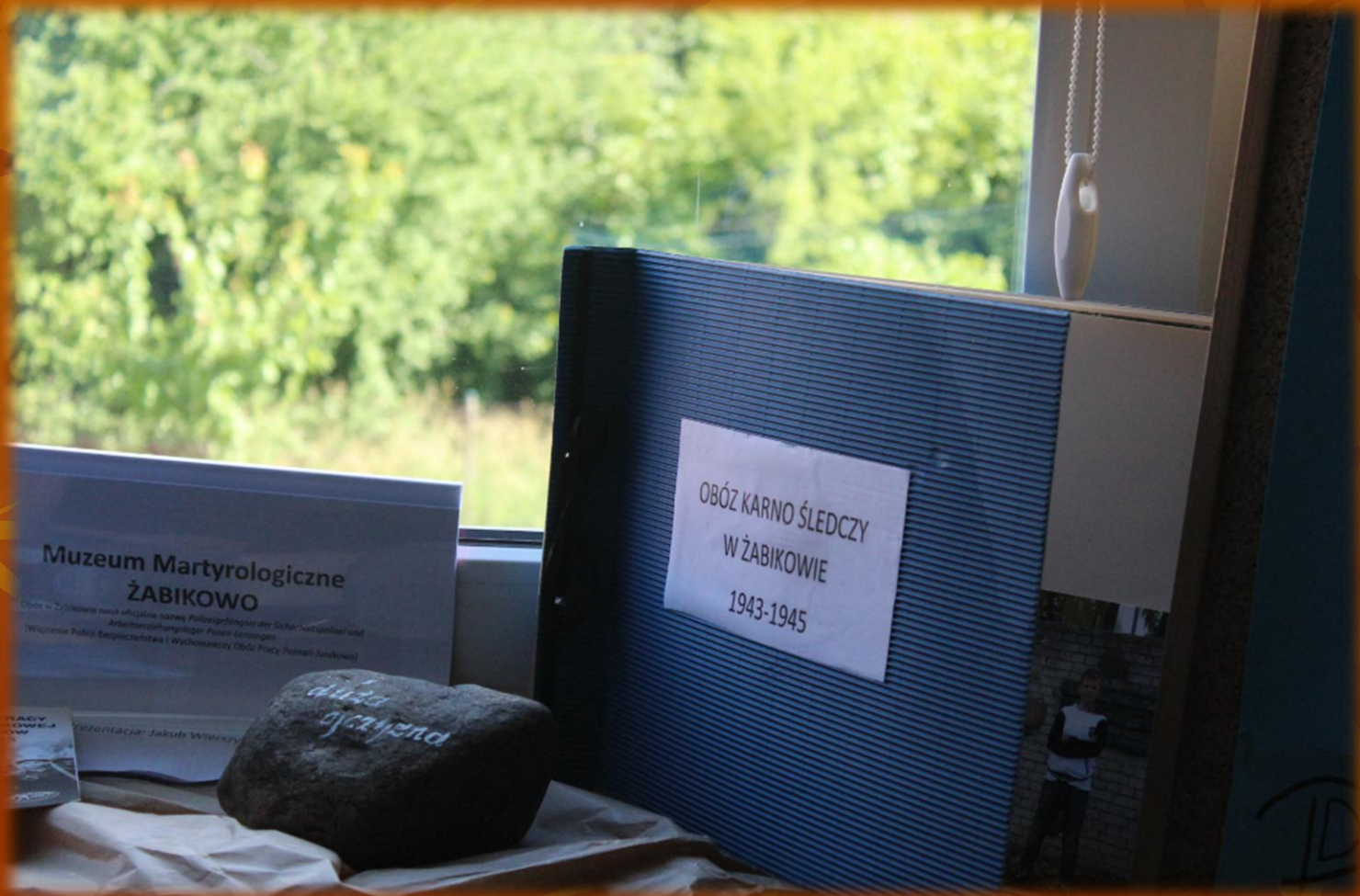
The feedback from students will be used while building up one of the regional museums,



Of particular significance for us was enriching the knowledge of the school premises and the Poznań's district in which the school is located.



We intend to continue the 'Memory Bank' project





CONCLUSIONS



We regards the project to be of a significant value as it focused upon different aspects of history and methods of teaching that are not part of the obligatory curriculum.



We think that methodology proposed in the project can be potentially used at different levels of school education. However, this requires to go beyond the obligatory school curriculum.

In order to facilitate a better and more efficient cooperation between schools participating in the project, it is required to organize meetings prior to the implementation phase for all school staff from participating countries.

Materials handed over to schools should be made available in national languages to avoid unnecessary hassle with their translation and authorization.