

## **Descriptions of cross-curricular topics**

### **1. Cross-curricular Topic “Lifelong Learning and Career Planning”**

1.1. The cross-curricular topic “Lifelong learning and career planning” strives to shape pupils’ personalities to prepare them for lifelong learning and reasonable vocational choices based on informed decision-making, to cope and fulfil different roles in a changing society, living and working environments.

1.2. The pupils are guided to:

- 1) realize interests, abilities and skills for adequate self-assessment and facilitate decision-making in regard to their continuing education and career plans;
- 2) develop learning skills, communication skills, cooperation and decision-making skills, information-processing skills;
- 3) develop the ability to set and achieve personal goals;
- 4) develop the readiness to engage in lifelong learning, make vocational choices and be aware of different possibilities for further studies and trainings ;
- 5) become familiar with various professions and vocations, their historical evolution and the labour legislation and economic environment in their home area.

1.3. The “Lifelong learning and career planning” cross-curricular topic at the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of studies will help pupils form a positive attitude towards learning and support their acquisition of initial learning skills. Games are used to facilitate the pupils’ self-development and discovery of themselves and their immediate working surroundings on the basis of their everyday experiences. Different fields of activity and professions will be introduced to the pupils and their importance and connections explained.

1.4. The “Lifelong learning and career planning” cross-curricular topic at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses on the pupils’ social and coping skills and on discovering and developing their interests and abilities. The goal is to help the pupils as they shape their basic learning skills, empathy and skills of communication and self-control. Various vocations and jobs are introduced to the pupils and the people’s individual preferences and interests are explained.

1.5. The “Lifelong learning and career planning” cross-curricular topic at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study

The study cross-curricular topics at the 3rd stage of study focuses on raising students' awareness of their abilities, interests, needs and attitudes, developing independent learning skills as a crucial foundation of lifelong learning habits and attitudes. Students are guided to think about their potential future areas of activity and to reflect on their abilities and opportunities for realising their plans. Various educational activities provide students with an overview of the general situation and future prospects of the labour market, different jobs associated with occupations and professions of different activities, helping to use this information for future educational specialisation and long-term career planning. Various occupations and professions are presented with an emphasis on the nature of work, the working environment, required knowledge, skills and character traits. It is important to provide a critical assessment of stereotypical beliefs associated with particular jobs and occupations to prevent them from restricting students' future prospects. Students are informed of different opportunities for work practice and encouraged to take advantage of them. Students are communicated information on further education opportunities and provided with an opportunity to use career services (career studies, information and counselling) and to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for career planning.

## **2. Cross-curricular Topic “Environment and Sustainable Development”**

2.1. The cross-curricular topic “Environment and sustainable development” strives to shape the pupils into socially active, responsible and environmentally aware people who preserve and protect the environment and values sustainability and who are ready to find solutions to the problems of the environment and human development.

2.2. The pupils are guided to:

- 1) understand nature as a complete system, the connections between human beings and the surrounding environment and human beings' dependence on natural resources;
- 2) understand the connections between the various factors of the cultural, social, economic, technological and human development of mankind and the effects of human activities;
- 3) value biological (including landscape) and cultural diversity and ecological sustainability;
- 4) discuss environmental issues in their home area and on the social and global levels, develop personal environmental viewpoints and offer solutions to environmental problems; and
- 5) assume responsibility for sustainable development, act in an environmentally friendly manner supporting sustainable development and assess and, if necessary, change their own consumer choices and lifestyle.

2.3. Cross-curricular topic “Environment and sustainable development” at the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study relies on the pupils' experience, everyday phenomena and direct contact with nature. The educational activities are aimed at shaping the pupils' environmental awareness, and attention is given to environmental issues in the home area and around the school and corresponding methods of action facilitating practical prevention and solution of environmental problems.

2.4. Cross-curricular topic “Environment and sustainable development” at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses mainly on dealing with the environmental issues of the home area and Estonia. The pupils' will to participate in preventing and solving environmental issues is developed and environmental decision making skills are fostered. The pupils' economical attitude towards the surrounding natural environment and their appreciation of the living environment will be

developed and the pupils will learn to understand their role as consumers and act in an environmentally friendly manner.

### 2.5. Cross-curricular topic “Environment and sustainable development” at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses on local and global environmental and human development problems. The goal is to shape the pupils’ understanding of nature as an integral system, of the fragility of the natural environment and of people’s dependence on mineral deposits and other natural resources. The primary study methods are active learning, group work, case studies, discussions and role play. The knowledge, skills and viewpoints acquired will be the prerequisites for the establishment of responsible and economical attitudes towards the living environment and for taking into account ethic, moral and aesthetic aspects when solving problems in daily life.

## 3. Cross-curricular Topic “Civic Initiative and Enterprise”

3.1. The cross-curricular topic “Civic initiative and enterprise” strives to shape the pupils into active and responsible members of the local community and society who understand the principles and mechanisms on which society relies to function properly and understand the importance of citizens’ initiatives, feel that they are members of society and act in accordance with the cultural traditions and development trends of the country they live in.

3.2. The pupils are guided to:

- 1) value democratic communal life arrangements, cooperation, civic initiative, volunteer activities and peaceful and non-violent resolution of conflicts;
- 2) show initiative and enterprise and develop personal viewpoints and express them;
- 3) learn about and protect their own rights and those of others and understand the accompanying responsibility and obligations;
- 4) understand the connections between the public, private and non-profit sectors and their functioning;
- 5) understand their role as individuals in society and acquire skills to participate in decision-making processes; and
- 6) understand the role of business in society and have a positive attitude towards business and participation in business enterprises.

### 3.3. Cross-curricular topic “Civic initiative and enterprise” at the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses on acquisition of cooperation and joint decision-making experience. Learning process can be lead via the pupils’ volunteer activities, such as neighbourhood clean-ups, organisation of common events, etc. Depending on the possibilities in the local area, the pupils become familiarised with local enterprise, youth associations and other volunteer organisations or interest groups that conduct useful public activities in the local community in which the pupils can participate.

### 3.4. Cross-curricular topic “Civic initiative and enterprise” at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study strives to support the pupils’ initiative and offer them opportunities and assistance with joint initiatives. The pupils will be encouraged to act independently in order to achieve a common objective, assuming the relevant responsibility and obligations. It is important

to direct the pupils towards finding creative solutions to problems that they are capable of dealing with and to help them experience the usefulness and necessity of joint efforts.

### 3.5. Cross-curricular topic “Civic initiative and enterprise” at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses on how the different sectors in society (public, private and non-profit) function and the connections between them. Of considerable importance are the issues of how the democratic state system is organised and how an individual or an interest group can influence and participate in the decision-making process at the local and national levels. The pupils will be offered opportunities to participate in activities for the good of the local area and encouraged to participate in them so that they can understand the notions of citizens’ initiatives and volunteer work, be motivated accordingly and develop enterprise skills.

## 4. Cross-curricular Topic “Cultural Identity”

4.1. The cross-curricular topic “Cultural identity” strives to shape the pupils into culturally aware people who understand the role of culture in forming our patterns of thought and behaviour and cultural changes throughout history, have a notion of cultural diversity and the culture-defined peculiarities of different lifestyles, value both their own culture and cultural diversity and are culturally tolerant and cooperative.

4.2. The pupils are guided to:

- 1) perceive themselves as carriers and advancers of a particular culture and also as mediators of cultures;
- 2) understand the importance of intercultural communication and cooperation in maintaining social sustainability;
- 3) be tolerant and treat representatives of other cultures, their customs and creations with respect and condemn discrimination;
- 4) study and value their own cultural heritage and peculiarities and those of people from other cultures, relying, on the one hand, on what they have learned in different subjects and generalising this knowledge and, on the other hand, on what they have read, seen and experienced on their own initiative;
- 5) realise and study the cultural diversity typical of present-day and past societies; and
- 6) acquire knowledge about how cultures (including Estonian national culture) are formed and their mutually enriching influences.

### 4.3. Cross-curricular topic “Cultural identity” at the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study offers the opportunities for pupils to become involved in the traditions of their cultural environment and experience the emotions this can provide. The pupils are thus helped to understand that certain traditions and customs are typical of a certain culture. The educational activities are aimed at shaping the behavioural habits that are generally recognised in our cultural space and at supporting the pupils’ interest in new and different things and their positive attitude towards them. By merging the various experiences of the pupils, a general overview is compiled of a particular culture and its contacts with other cultures.

### 4.4. Cross-curricular topic “Cultural identity” at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study strives to shape positive attitudes towards different cultures and different individuals, avoiding the development of any prejudiced attitudes. The pupils learn to respect these differences and value them as part of cultural diversity and a means of mutual enrichment of various cultures. Educational opportunities will be found and offered to the pupils so that they can implement the knowledge and skills they have acquired when introducing their culture to an audience, for instance via school and international projects.

#### 4.5. Cross-curricular topic “Cultural identity” at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study set priority to help the pupils understand that their strong cultural identity will support their orientation in other cultures. The pupils will be offered different opportunities to gain experience and deeper knowledge of other cultures and to experience different spheres of art and culture in general, including possibilities to participate in the preparation and staging of local cultural events.

### **5. Cross-curricular Topic “Information Environment”**

5.1. The cross-curricular topic “Information environment” strives to shape the pupils into information-aware people who perceive and comprehend the information environment around them, can critically analyse it and act in it in accordance with their goals and the socially accepted ethics of communication.

5.2. The pupils are guided to:

- 1) understand the similarities and differences between direct and mediated information;
- 2) select a suitable communication mode and channel depending on the situation and the need;
- 3) determine their information needs and find suitable information;
- 4) develop efficient methods of searching for information that include the use of various reference sources and information environments; and
- 5) develop the skill of critical information analysis.

#### 5.3. Cross-curricular topic “Information environment” at the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses on the daily information environment of the pupils. With the assistance of teachers and classmates, the pupils practise describing their actions in the information environment. They will learn to understand the communication objectives of messages sent to them and to distinguish between important and unimportant messages. The pupils will also understand and become accustomed to the different principles that govern private space and public space, including the Internet. The primary stress on the first level of study is on shaping communication skills via human studies, native language and other subjects. More attention is given to visual media and visual text analysis, ensuring that the pupils use media that is suited to their age.

#### 5.4. Cross-curricular topic “Information environment” at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study consists of the principles that govern private space and public space and the main formats of communication. The pupils who use the Internet will learn to distinguish between the public and personal spheres and to select an appropriate communication mode depending on the sphere. During Stage II the pupils practise reading and listening to news as one of the

main types of mass-media texts, assessing quality and identifying information that is missing from the news.

#### 5.5. Cross-curricular topic “Information environment” at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of studies designed for the pupils to learn how to understand and analyse social, economic and media roles and use mass media as a source of information. Of more importance is critical assessment of the reliability of information, as the pupils are increasingly beginning to use the information they find when making personal decisions, for instance when choosing further learning opportunities. The educational activities are aimed at helping the pupils to understand both the opportunities and dangers of the Internet and to protect themselves and their privacy accordingly. The pupils will become accustomed to searching for information independently. Teaching of the cross-curricular topic creates possibilities for analysis of problematic media-related situations (invasion of privacy, communication of false information, damaging of interests, communication of biased information, etc.).

### **6. Cross-curricular Topic “Technology and Innovation”**

6.1. The cross-curricular topic “Technology and innovation” strives to shape the pupils into people who are open to innovation and who can expediently use modern technology and cope in rapidly changing technological living, learning and working environments.

6.2. The pupils are guided to:

- 1) acquire knowledge about how technology functions and what its development trends are in different spheres of life;
- 2) comprehend the influence of technological innovation on how people work and live, on their quality of life and the environment today and in the past;
- 3) understand the mutual influences and connections of technological, economic, social and cultural innovation;
- 4) comprehend and critically assess the positive and negative effects of technological development and develop balanced opinions on ethical issues of technological development and the corresponding applications;
- 5) use information and communication technology (ICT) to solve vital problems and make learning and working more efficient; and
- 6) develop creativity, cooperation and initiative skills when implementing innovative ideas in various projects.

#### 6.3. Cross-curricular topic “Technology and innovation” at the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses on learning about the primary methods of use of information technology by doing creative work on computers. It is recommended above all to use the frontal teaching method coupled with computer gaming software. Technological application opportunities are diversified by integrating photography or videography and miniature and model-making into educational activities.

#### 6.4. Cross-curricular topic “Technology and innovation” at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study is based primarily on practical assignments that are connected with the school and studies and that imply the application of technology during different subject lessons or hobby activities. Group work and active learning methods are recommended for computer-based studies.

#### 6.5. Cross-curricular topic “Technology and innovation” at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study strives to shape ICT application competence in the pupils’ daily lives and studies. To ensure that this competence is instilled, teachers of different subjects should integrate methods and operations that are based on ICT applications into their lessons. In addition to lessons in the computer classroom, it is also recommended to use modern ICT resources at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study for home assignments and outdoor study activities.

### 7. Cross-curricular Topic “Health and Safety”

7.1. The cross-curricular topic “Health and safety” strives to shape the pupils into mentally, emotionally, socially and physically healthy members of society who are capable of leading a healthy life, behaving safely and facilitating the formation of an environment that is safe and promotes health.

- a) Health education is based on development of the knowledge, attitudes and social coping skills connected with the pupils’ health. This is supported by the implementation of health-promoting school principles.
- b) The pupils are taught the following safety aspects: how to behave safely in situations of traffic, fire, water and other environmental dangers and seek help when necessary.

7.2. The pupils are guided to:

- a) in health education:
  - 1) develop health awareness which includes an appreciation of their own health and safe behaviour;
  - 2) use their knowledge, self-coping skills and general social skills to ensure safety for themselves and others and to shape a safe school environment;
  - 3) comprehend how their own decisions and behaviour and the consequences thereof are connected with health and safety;
  - 4) find and use reliable health information and assistance services; and
  - 5) realise how the environment affects their health.
- b) in safety education:
  - 1) know different types of danger sources, the nature of dangerous situations and how they can be caused;
  - 2) avoid dangerous situations;
  - 3) develop attitudes and behaviour in compliance with a safe environment at home and school and with traffic safety;
  - 4) acquire knowledge and skills of efficient behaviour in dangerous and crisis situations;
  - 5) develop proper traffic behaviour, become accustomed to complying with traffic norms and take into account other people in traffic; and

- 6) learn about and appreciate all of the rights, obligations and responsibility arising from traffic and safety rules.

### 7.3. Cross-curricular topic “Health and safety” at the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study stresses the shaping of healthy and safe behavioural patterns. The pupils will acquire knowledge and skills that are suited to their age and connected with the physical, mental, emotional and social aspects of health, developing an appreciation for their health. At this stage it is important for the pupils to understand danger and its causes in the everyday environment and to acquire skills of safe and secure behaviour. The primary study methods are stories, discussions, group work, demonstrations, role play and behaviour modelling.

### 7.4. Cross-curricular topic “Health and safety” at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study shapes corresponding value judgements with attention to developing the relevant knowledge and skills. Pupils are guided how to avoid risk behaviour that is most widespread and likely to occur in their home area (behaviour that is connected with such things as injuries, danger, alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, sexual risks, unhealthy eating, insufficient physical activity and physical overload). The most suitable study methods are active learning methods, discussions, group work, role play and demonstrations. Subject lesson studies can be complemented with extracurricular projects based on the methodology of ‘by youth, for youth’.

### 7.5. Cross-curricular topic “Health and safety” at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study shapes attitudes that value health and safety and developing skills of healthy and safe behaviour. The primary study methods are active learning, discussions, case studies, group work, research projects and role play. Also important are prevention programmes organised with pupil participation outside of the classroom and maximum pupil involvement in activities that promote health and enhance security in the surrounding area.

## **8. Cross-curricular Topic “Values and Morality”**

8.1. The cross-curricular topic “Values and morality” strives to shape the pupils into morally well-developed people who are familiar with the values and moral principles that are generally acknowledged by society, adhere to them while attending school and outside of school, do not remain indifferent when these are disregarded and, if necessary, intervene to the best of their ability.

8.2. The pupils are guided to:

- 1) recognise values, moral norms and rules of courtesy;
- 2) systematically analyse moral norms and values;
- 3) discuss generally accepted ethical principles and adopt them;
- 4) behave in accordance with these principles and assess their own behaviour and that of other people based on these principles;
- 5) participate in the development of the collective (class, school, hobby circle, etc.) code of ethics and rules of behaviour and adhere to them; and

- 6) reflect on their own behavioural principles and those of other people, using the skills of solving moral conflicts and making responsible choices.

#### 8.3. Cross-curricular topic “Values and morality” at the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study stresses learning about oneself, acquisition of good manners and formation of a class collective that attaches significance to justice, honesty, consideration, tolerance, human dignity, respect for oneself and others, keeping promises, democratic participation and national belonging. The primary methods of study are work with stories, role play, discussions and teacher explanations, during which the pupils learn to comprehend their experience, monitor their actions and reflect on them.

#### 8.4. Cross-curricular topic “Values and morality” at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study is designed for the pupils to become aware of and comprehend moral norms and develop tolerance of and respect for different people. The multi-viewpoint approach strives to shape the pupils’ personal positions based on humanistic moral norms. The pupils’ thought development should be approached in a flexible manner, allowing them to retain their opinions. The primary study methods are analysis of stories, active learning, group work, discussions of conflict cases and role play. Teaching aids are used to introduce positive moral examples and ideals to the pupils. The daily school life should offer opportunities to implement the knowledge acquired.

#### 8.5. Cross-curricular topic “Values and morality” at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of study

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study clarifies the social and historical/cultural aspects of value judgements and moral norms. The pupils will be introduced to various world views and religions (both past and present), which is designed to support the shaping of tolerance, respect and skills of orientation in world view issues. Through collection of information from various sources and the knowledge and experience acquired in different subject lessons, the pupils are guided to discuss topics of values and morality, to compare different positions and justify their positions with unprejudiced, tactful, open and respectful treatment of different notions. Suitable research projects are those which enable a deeper and more diverse approach to relevant issues.