

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

### **General Principles**

The study of cross-curricular topics in education makes it possible to highlight links between different fields as presented in subject syllabi, depending on particular goals for a cross-curricular topic, while also supporting integration between subjects and subject fields. The goals of cross-curricular topics can be met through obligatory or elective subjects. The contribution of individual subjects and subject fields to the study of cross-curricular topics can vary depending on the learning objectives and contents of a particular subject.

Opportunities for the study of cross-curricular topics are created through arrangements in the learning environment. Cross-curricular topics are implemented through social and physical environment.

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

The cross-curricular topic “Lifelong learning and career planning” strives to shape pupils’ readiness to find optimum use on the labour market, to make decisions independently, to fill different roles in life and to take part in lifelong learning. Pupils are guided to value lifelong learning as a way of life and career planning, to be able to analyse their skills, interests and knowledge in relation to work and study opportunities in continuous decision-making process.

The pupils are guided to:

- 1) be aware of various professional domains, professions, labour laws, education and training possibilities, general trends on the labour market and the local economic environment;
- 2) set up a personal career plan, to make career choices and to explore possible alternatives according to their learning outcomes and existing work experience;
- 3) examine the information for further studies and job opportunities (including business) and provide opportunities to obtain career advice;
- 4) analyse the work legislation, corporate and employee rights and responsibilities, different factors on the local economies.

Education develops independent study skills and responsibility, as well as skills to find and analyse information on further education opportunities, based on one’s development needs, and to prepare a career plan. Educational activities offer opportunities for direct contacts with the world of employment, e.g., through visits to undertakings, presentations of occupations and professions related to different subject fields. Attention is paid to practical job-seeking skills and providing information on respective legislation. Students are provided with career information (incl. information on entrepreneurship) and with opportunities to use career services (career studies, information and counselling).

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

The cross-curricular topic “Environment and Sustainable Development” strives to shape pupils into environmentally aware and social active people who live and act in a responsible manner, taking into account issues of future sustainability, and are ready to find solutions to problems related to the environment and human development.

The pupils are guided to:

- 1) value biological (including landscapes) and cultural diversity and ecological sustainability;
- 2) develop personal environmental opinions and participate in environmental decision-making initiatives, offering solutions to environmental problems at the personal, social and global levels;
- 3) understand nature as a whole system and the mutual interdependence between human beings and the surrounding environment and human beings' dependence on natural resources;
- 4) understand the mutual connections between the various factors of the cultural, social, economic, technological and human development of mankind and the risks associated with human activities;
- 5) take the responsibility for sustainable development and acquire values and behavioural norms that support sustainable development.

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study practice environmental decision-making and assessment, taking into account modern scientific and technological developments (including restrictions), the applicable regulatory documents and economic considerations. The study shapes pupils' readiness to deal with issues of environmental protection as critically thinking citizens on the personal, social and global levels and to implement environmentally protective and sustainable methods of management and other activities.

### **Cross-curricular Topic “Civic Initiative and Enterprise”**

The cross-curricular topic “Civic initiative and enterprise” strives to shape pupils active and responsible member of society, who understand the operation and mechanisms of the society and the importance of citizens' initiative; is integrated into society, relies on national cultural traditions and participate in the political and economical decision-making process.

The pupils are guided to:

- 1) recognize the value of democratic collective organization, cooperation, civic initiatives, and voluntary action, non-violent and peaceful conflict settlement;
- 2) understand the functioning of public, business and nonprofit relationships in society; principles, rights and responsibilities in those relations;
- 3) understand the role of individual's in the political and economical system, know the opportunities and have the skills to influence the society and participate in decision-making process;
- 4) understand the role of business in society, business-related negative and positive effects and develop business-related ethical issues; analyse the business risks and opportunities for reductions.

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study develops knowledge and skills for political and economical decision-making process on the local and national level. 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. Through class- and extracurricular activities and project works the pupils' awareness of political and economical operation is growing.

### **Cross-curricular Topic “Cultural Identity”**

The cross-curricular topic “Cultural identity” strives to shape the pupils into culturally aware people who understand the role of culture in forming our way of thinking and behaving, cultural changes in history, cultural and values diversity, the specific nature of local culture, and are culturally tolerant and cooperative.

The pupils are guided to:

- 1) understand themselves as carriers of culture, cultural promoter and facilitator;
- 2) understand the importance of intercultural communication and cooperation as base of social sustainability, to participate in intercultural communication;
- 3) have tolerant and respectful attitude towards other cultures and their traditions, deprecate discrimination;
- 4) learn about and appreciate cultural heritage, define characteristics between the different subjects and cultural experiences;
- 5) be aware, learn about and compare the past and contemporary societies, cultural diversity;
- 6) gain knowledge of cultures (including the Estonian National) and evaluate the mutual enrichment of different cultures.

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study supports the valorisation of local culture, interest, unprejudiced and informed attitudes towards other cultures. The study expands pupils' knowledge about cultures (Estonian, especially European Union member states), extends the knowledge to synthesized in the whole of history, social studies, music, art, philosophy, religion history, literature, foreign languages and other classes. It is important to create opportunities for experiencing cultural diversity through different people, literature, the Internet and media, as well as through direct experience. Pupils are encouraged to discuss it, which leads to living in another culture.

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

The cross-curricular topic “Information environment” strives to shape the pupils into information-aware people who perceive the information and understands the surrounding information environment, is able to analyse critically the society acting in accordance with their goals and the socially accepted ethics of communication.

The pupils are guided to:

- 1) determine their information needs and find appropriate information;
- 2) develop an effective information search methods, encompassing various publications and information environments use;

- 3) develop skills of critical analysis of the information, compare the various discursive practices (eg parlour media, law, entertainment, communication between friends, etc.) and those prevailing norms of communication;
- 4) understand the media and the operation of economy, including the role of the media in the labor market;
- 5) analyse the existing rules of public space and to describe their activities in case of infringement of public space rules.

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study guide pupils to cope independently with different media formats, make consumer choices based on their different interests and needs. Pupils are familiar with the rules and acting in the public space, deplores the violations. Pupils analyse media's role in economy and society, examining globalization effects of media content and media habits of people, be able to formulate their message and communicate it meaningfully.

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

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.

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.

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses on the group works and research projects in the school. The goal is to develop the positive attitudes towards technological innovation and related career possibilities, to ensure preparedness for all pupils to use ICT in everyday life, studies and work.

### **Cross- curricular Topic “Health and Safety”**

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.

The pupils are guided to:

- 1) assess the health and safety behaviour in various degrees and short-long term consequences, explain according to the natural and social studies the impact of alcohol, drugs and tobacco on the human body and behaviour;
- 2) analyse and evaluate the environment and society (including peers) impact on human health and safety decision-making, avoid negative impacts and to support positive decisions;
- 3) analyse the health and safety information, products and services quality, cost and accessibility; and
- 4) be aware of the accident chain reaction, recognize situations that require professional help.

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study stresses on practicing supportive activities of health and safety, including projects and the guidance of the younger pupils of their school, or even national level.

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

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.

The pupils are guided to:

- 1) to analyse critically and argue the values and moral norms, different value systems in their historical and cultural context or relationships, religion and worldviews;
- 2) personal reflections upon the moral attitudes and beliefs over the value, make meaningful ideological and moral choices and justify them;
- 3) respecting the divergent views and opinions and to defend and justify their views;
- 4) be able to avoid and deal with values and moral standards related to conflict situations; and
- 5) understand that diversity is the wealth of society and development condition.

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study stresses the development of the critical thinking and arguing skills, collecting of relevant information and making generalizations, highlighting links between different areas of historical knowledge, experience and value systems and worldview issues. Pupils participate in democratic discussions and are involved in school management.