

Bridgematic Project

How to prevent lack of academic focus and achieve academic success in scientific and mathematical subjects

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The teaching of mathematics and related subjects is an area where there is great disparity, between the mental structure of a young adult and the theoretical learning (without practical applications) required by the official scholastic curriculum. This issue, which generates frustration and lack of enthusiasm, can effectively be dealt with by practicing simulation techniques, through the game-sport of Bridge. Through a scientific laboratory where Bridge and mathematics are interfaced, a teaching methodology is founded on real tasks, and the student becomes a true protagonist of his/her own academic journey.

Why? Because the student:

- together with the teacher, plans the development of a real product, visible to and usable by himself/herself, as well as others
- actively participates in all the production phases, learning the rules, bonds And timings
- gets to know himself/herself, by autonomously making choices and being responsible for them, whether successful or mistaken
- must confront himself/herself and communicate with everyone, having to overcome any prejudice or mental obstacle
- has to acquire the understanding that the quest for knowledge and skills is a result of work, effort and sacrifice; yet defeat may also be part of this process, seen as a pause to reflect on your own limitations and how to overcome these. In the game of Bridge “Achieving All Now” doesn’t exist, one must learn how to manage defeat, recognising and respecting better players — not bullies.
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Why Bridge? Because:

- All the components of the game, both theoretical and practical, have a logical-mathematical-statistical foundation, that drive players to keep thinking, improving their ability to concentrate and analyse
- In order to play and analyse the game, players require high levels of attention and concentration, memory and technical knowledge — all of these are skills which developed in the initial stages of learning, then become key to mature analytical and critiquing capabilities.

- Lastly, whilst playing Bridge, students are able to immediately put into practice the knowledge learned, realising the necessity for an efficient technical and cultural structure. In this instance, the teacher becomes a fundamental reference point for the cultural formation and the pupil feels the need for him/her in their educational role.

Target Audience:

- Junior High School Students
- Teachers

For teachers:

- Highlight to teachers and academic workers the validity of teaching Bridge, as a complementary activity to traditional academic studies, as it is a practice which helps with the effective use of the brain, improves the relationship between students and teachers, and preventing potential student's unhappiness/discomfort at school
- Contributes to the formation of teachers interested in the education of Bridge, both as a subject to include in the academic curriculum, as well as a sport activity for the student sports carnivals.

Implementation of the Module

The project is implemented in two phases:

Phase 1 - Students' training

Program:

- Commencement of subject units, 30 hours each, once a week, to be carried out during the schools' standard hours, in collaboration with interested teachers.
- Each unit of study is dedicated to a group of students/class and will last the whole academic year
- Participation in the sports competitions organised by FIGB and the student's sports carnivals is expected.

Duration: three years for students, from 1st to 3rd year Junior High. One year for teachers.

Phase 2 - Teachers' training

Program:

- Identification of teachers interested in learning and teaching of Bridge
- Intensive (theoretical and practical) course, to be undertaken during the school year.

Function of the PATROCINIO and of co-operating with FIGB

The FIGB contributing to the start of this project, in collaboration with the Academic Management and the sports associations, can undertake its institutional role in the

introduction of Bridge into schools with new formats. Bridge becomes an academic subject, as a tool to train the effective functioning of the brain and improvement of logical and concentration capabilities.

Looking into a 3-party collaboration, FIGB, sports associations and the academic management, the tasks performed by the sports associations are as follows:

1. Collaborate through its own staff to the recruitment of the necessary technical experts
2. Source and provide the technical materials (cards, scoring boards, table cloths and bidding boxes)
3. Distribute at no charge training materials, required in order to follow the course
4. Manage the technical and organisational aspect of the courses
5. Collaborate with the technical aspect and organisation of the competitions.

FIGB will:

1. Provide prizes
2. Provide a financial contribution to the payment of the academic staff
3. Manage training of the teachers

The Academic Management will:

1. Manage the logistics of the courses and competitions
2. Build and maximise awareness of this project
3. Invite teachers to the training

Testing the Bridge Project at Scuola Media Statale Giuseppe Sinopoli di Roma:

The implementation of this project started from the collaboration between Associazione La Rotonda and Scuola Sinopoli, with the support of 2nd Municipio that has contributed to the project.

Phase I of the project has been tested:

- **Over the school year 2006/2007 for 2 classes (I A and I C)**
- **Over the school year 2007/2008 training was carried on by students of the above classes (now 2A and 2C), with the addition of two new classes (current I A and I C).**

The second phase, which is planned to complete the 3 year cycle for students and teachers, will be carried out over school year 2008/2009.

Over the first two years, the Association has invested exclusively its own resources for the implementation of this project. During the second phase, FIGB, recognising the validity of this test, has committed its own support, enabling the testing with students and teachers to be completed.

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