2. Nursery School and 1. Primary School

A Network of content about rivers

On this occasion we propose preparing a network of content that will help us get to know students' prior conceptions and construct the outline of a work project on the theme.

Undertaking a network of content will make it possible to organise, reflect, interrelate and establish the contents of the theme and it is an excellent classroom tool for Infant and Primary Education.

AIMS

To research the physical environment and identify the characteristics of some of its elements.

CAPABILITIES WORKED

- learn to learn
- linguistic communication

INTRODUCTION

• To begin, with everyone sitting in a circle, we can choose to tell one of the following stories from the collection Inguru-minguru:

Egun normal bat amonaren baserrian (1go zkia.)
ISBN 84-9746-004-9

Zubi misteriotsuan (5.zkia.)
ISBN 84-9746-003-0

• We ask them, with their eyes closed, to image a river they know, that they have visited on an excursion, in their town or village, that they have seen on TV or in a film. Then, altogether and in a loud voice we share any previous knowledge we have, even though, as we research and want to know more, we are going to do a project on this theme.

• We encourage them to bring from home photos, drawings, pictures, games, toys, materials or elements that might exist or be found in a river and between everyone in the class we prepare a great mural of our river.

**Activity**

FIRST STAGE: WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT RIVERS?

• We begin by drawing up a list of all that we know about the river, positioning the photos and objects we have brought. After that, we transfer this list to a large sheet, like a map, with the title in the heading of the mural.

A simple way of encouraging preliminary ideas is to carry out a guided questionnaire giving students an instruction such as "Let's ask all the questions that occur to us about the river":

- What is it? What is it like? Where does it come from, and where is it going? What objects, living beings does it have? What noises can we hear? What colour is it?

- Where is it? How to get there? Who lives there? What's near? What can you do there?

- What was it like before, what is it like now?

- What's it for, what does it give us?

- What dangers does it pose? How can we look after it?

• We group together what is related giving it a sticker of the same colour or underlining with different coloured markers the phrases, objects, pictures we have expressed. The teacher will read in a loud voice and by consensus will decide what sticker to put, where it is placed, etc. We introduce key concepts with a circle and from there other subordinate ideas will emerge. In this way we create a large conceptual map.

• When the network or map of contents is finished we will have succeeded in placing the information within everyone's reach and will give us the opportunity to consult it at a glance. This information will be organised and easy to assimilate.
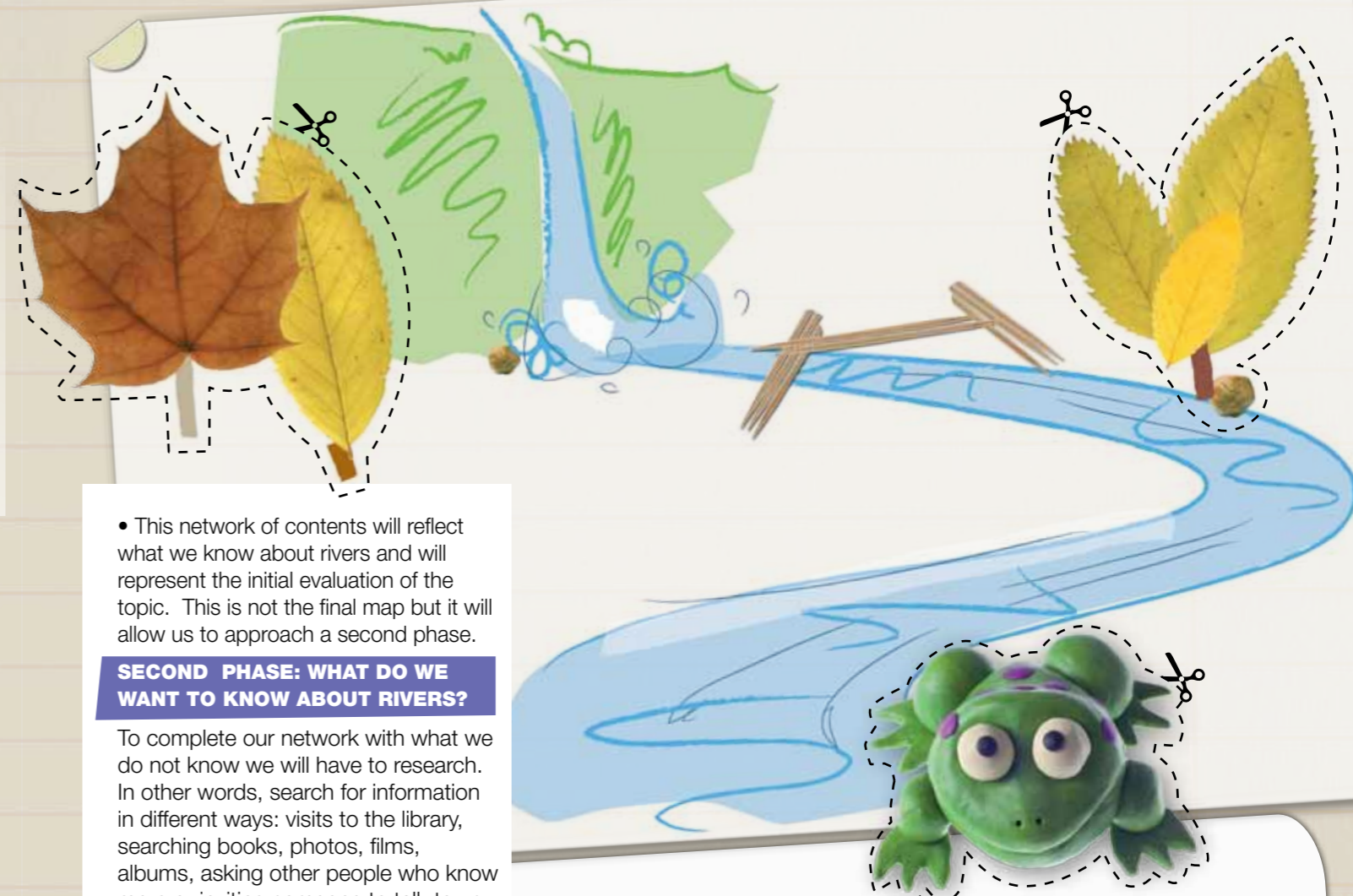
• This network of contents will reflect what we know about rivers and will represent the initial evaluation of the topic. This is not the final map but it will allow us to approach a second phase.

SECOND PHASE: WHAT DO WE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT RIVERS?

To complete our network with what we do not know we will have to research. In other words, search for information in different ways: visits to the library, searching books, photos, films, albums, asking other people who know more or inviting someone to talk to us about rivers.

We build a work plan which brings together the previous knowledge we have and the replies to the questions that have emerged.

To do this we will work in pairs or small groups and share out the tasks so as to jointly complete the definitive network on the river.

FINAL PHASE

This network of contents will be exhibited in the classroom and will help to express orally what we have learned from other people (a group of older students, the classroom next door, families, etc.).

Source:
•*Margarida Falgàs Isern. (1999)
Conceptual maps in pre-school: description of an experience.
Revista Aula de Innovación Educativa 78*

What do we know?

BEFORE: Clean

NOW: Dirty, froth, strange colours, dam

How is it?

THINGS: town, bridge, mill, park

What's there?

WHAT LIVES THERE: Plants, grass, flowers, trees
Animals, fish, duck, bird, butterfly, seagull
People

River

What do we want to know?

How to look after it? — Walking and not leaving rubbish behind Recycling caring for nature

What do we do? — Fish, play, drink, swim

What is it like?

ELEMENTS: Stones, sun, water, air, rubbish

> Colours, sounds, smell
> Flow, riverbank, bed, current
> Stream, source, water flow
> Corners