

Summary presentation: biodiversity and travel

To improve the biodiversity in our school, a school garden was implemented by some teachers. The purpose was to apply more nature because the schoolyard was bare and dismal before. Furthermore, it should lead to more sustainability and more user orientation. The school garden is not finished yet, but there are already some plants and trees and chill-out-areas for students build by students. Only native species of plants are used to install a habitat for birds and insects. Additionally, it is possible to do practical (biology) lessons there.

Future plans include to implement beehives, natural nesting aids, herbal snails, cord plants as blueberries, raspberries and strawberries and a birdbath. In addition, the rock garden should be transformed into a second garden to increase the consciousness of biodiversity. Due to the topic of biodiversity our school works with the “NABU” (Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union). It is the oldest and largest environment association in Germany, founded in 1899. The main objectives are the preservation of habitats and biodiversity, promotion of sustainability in agriculture and forest management. Therefore, the NABU helps to seed and raise wildflowers in our school garden to transform the grassland with trees into a wildflower meadow for even more biodiversity.

Another plan according to biodiversity is to implement sustainable storytelling. That is, conveying information and values about sustainability by telling a story because a well-told story can inspire and bind the reader or listener in order to draw attention and raise awareness. This should be part of the classes, especially in language lessons.

To find out more about how the teachers and students at our school travel we carried out a survey. 263 students and 62 teachers participated. 35% of the students get to school by car, 33% by bus, 18% by train, 10% on foot and the rest with other options. In comparison to that, 79% of the teacher come to school by car. The reason is that most students do not have another option. The most reasons given for the choice were: “No one who could bother me during the ride to school”, “missing public transport connections”, “I feel more comfortable when driving myself”, “flexibility and independence”. Some students and teachers named environmental aspects as a reason. We also asked, what needs to change to switch. The most common answer was: “better public transport”. Other answers given here were: “better routes”, “cheaper tickets”, “charging station for e-bikes”, “better cycle path”, “more buses so it is less crowded”.

Due to the high prices caused by inflation the German government wanted to support the people by implementing a so called “9€ ticket”. It was valid for all regional forms of transportation, costed 9€ per month and was only available from June to August. Because the people used it a lot it led to crowded trains and busses. We wanted to know if and how often our students and teachers used this ticket. 27% of the students used it daily, 16% once a week, 7% twice a month, 14% once a month and 36% never used it. Even 68% of the teacher never used it, 14% once a month, 7% twice a month, 9% once a week and only 2% daily. Our results, therefore, cover with bigger survey that were made. They found out that the ticket was used more by the younger ones than by the older people and that it was used more often in the cities than in the countryside.

According to the topic of travel we have also charging stations for electric cars at our school. Initially only the headmaster had an electric car, but the number of teachers and students is increasing more and more. Furthermore, we intend to travel the most sustainable way when we do class trips. Last year for example the 12th grad of the vocational high school travelled to the Lake Garda by train. In comparison to do this trip by flight 545.760g CO₂ had been saved.