

WORLD CLASS

Twinning project guide



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BBC WORLD CLASS PROJECT TWINNING GUIDE

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"Put your school on the map"

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **BBC World Class Twinning Project Guide**. This guide is designed to help you get started on your twinning project, with ideas which you can use and adapt depending on your teaching situation. And don't forget – what you learn from doing a twinning project can help other schools too. The **Staff Room** and **Class Activities** sections of the **BBC World Class** website allow you to exchange ideas and experiences with teachers around the world. If you don't have access to the internet, why not ask your contact in your twin school if they can contribute for you? That way, you can tell the world what you are doing!

The **Twinning Project Guide** is divided into 3 sections.

1. Setting up a project

This section gives you advice and guidance on the things you need to do *before* you begin a project with your students. It includes information about project planning and advice on how to set up systems to ensure that both you and your twin school or class get the most benefit from the projects you do together.

2. Project plans for primary and secondary classes

Twinning projects can benefit students of any age. In this section, you will find practical project plans on different themes for classes of different ages. Each project plan outlines:

- the 'product' of the project – i.e. what your class will make for their twin school
- the learning benefits of the project for your students
- what you need to start the project
- a suggested procedure for carrying out the project
- what you should send to your twin
- ideas for using the material and information which your twin sends to you
- possible ways of adapting the project, depending on the age of your students and the resources which you have available.

More project ideas

This section gives you lots of suggestions for different types of projects which you can develop, depending on the interests of your students and your school curriculum.

3. Evaluating your project

The final section of the **Twinning Project Guide** gives you some guidance on evaluating the projects you undertake. It looks at who can be involved in an evaluation, how you can conduct one, and what the potential benefits are for you, your students and your school.

PART 1: SETTING UP A PROJECT



The *World Class Users' Guide* gives you lots of information about setting up the process of twinning in your school. This section, however, is about what happens after you have found a twin. It is designed to help you think in detail about what you need to do to make sure that individual projects are successful.

The Pathway to Successful Projects

The word 'project' can cover a wide range of activities. It could be something which your students complete in one lesson, or it could spread over a number of weeks. It could involve them writing letters, making artwork, recording songs, or even – if you have access to technology – designing a website. It could require them to use knowledge and skills related to many different areas of the curriculum. Whatever the size and scope of what you plan to do, however, all twinning projects have one thing in common: they involve your students doing or making something to share with students in your twin school.

Here are 5 steps which you can take to make sure that the projects you choose – whether big or small – are successful:

1. Choose a project which is relevant, realistic and useful

Before deciding on a project for your class or school, think carefully about the needs and interests of your students, the curriculum you need to follow and the resources you have access to. The success of a project depends on how interested your students are in participating, and on the sense of achievement they get when it goes well. Choose

2. Look ahead

Remember that setting up a project can take some time, so it is important to look ahead at your teaching year to see *when* you would like your project to happen. This is particularly important if you would like to involve more than one class in your school or your twin's school in the project. Remember to begin your planning some weeks before you want your students to do the project work – your contact in your twin school may need to co-ordinate activities with you, and this takes time. Remember, too, that you need more time if you cannot communicate using email.

3. Recognise roles and responsibilities

From the beginning, it is important that you discuss and agree the project with your twin. Make sure that you have a named contact to work with in your twin school, and that this person is the one who can move the project forward. You need to agree together the aims of the project, along with a deadline for its completion. At this stage, you may need to adapt your original plans – remember, when working together on a project, you need to make sure that it is relevant, realistic and useful for both partners.

4. Plan the stages

You may know when you want to complete the project – but have you thought about all the things you and your students need to do before then? Even for small projects which last a short time, it is important to identify the different stages which need to be completed. For example, you may need to get permission to use resources or to take your students out of class, so this could be your first stage. You may need to prepare material or cover an area of the curriculum in class before your students can begin the project. Try to identify the various steps involved in getting to your main goal of completing the project, then plan when you are going to complete each step. Breaking your project down into these different stages will help you stay focused and give your students a sense of progress.

5. Keep in touch

Don't forget to communicate regularly with your contact in your twin school to let them know how the project is progressing. You could include a communication plan in your project plan: agree together when, how and how often you are going to contact each other during the project. Regular contact will enable you to support each other, and will help identify any problems which might arise. Keeping in touch means that you can work together to solve any unforeseen difficulties.

PART 2: PROJECT PLANS FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CLASSES



Each project is designed to encourage interaction between the students in each twinned school. Each can also be adapted to different age groups, and for use with or without technology.

Project plans: See the links on the *BBC Learning English* for some project plans which you can download.

Using the project plans:

Each plan contains the following sections.

Title and aim: At the top of the plan, you will see the *product* of the project, i.e. what the students will complete at the end of the project. The project *products* include:

- Poems and stories
- Songs and chants
- Plays and sketches
- Playground games
- Charts and graphs
- Photos, pictures and posters
- Video/audio recordings
- Menus and recipes
- Making models
- Making magazines and newspapers
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Puzzles
- Newspaper/magazine articles
- Models and collages
- Competitions

This section also contains information about the different *media* which can be used for the project. The media suggested in the project plans include:

- Writing
- Drawing
- Other art forms
- Photographs
- Video recording
- Audio cassette recording
- Email
- Telephone technology

Learning outcomes for the students: This section shows what the students can be expected to learn while they are completing the project. This includes what they may learn when they are working on the product, and what they can learn from the project sent by the twin school. This section also indicates:

- the age group which might be interested in this project
- the curriculum areas which can link to the project
- the language which students will need to use to talk about the project. (*You may find this useful if your students are learning a foreign language and communicating with your twin in that language.*)

Stage 1 of the project: This section contains advice and guidance on working with the students on the project product. It includes information about:

- **Preparation:** information about the resources needed for the project
- **Procedure:** guidance on setting up the project in the classroom

Stage 2 of the project: This is when you exchange project products with your twin. This section of the plan tells you:

- what you need to send to your twin school
- ideas for using the material which your twin sends to you

Adaptations: The final section of the plan gives you ideas for other ways of using the project. For example, it may give suggestions for adapting the plan to a different age group, or for using different technology or media.

TIP: Remember, the project plans give you suggestions for things to do – but you can change and adapt them to suit your own needs. However, don't forget to make sure that your contact in your twin school also has a copy of the project plan which you want to use. This will help ensure that you are both working towards the same goal!

Finding resources

If you are using project work to help your students develop their English skills, don't forget about these great websites:

- **BBC Learning English** (www.BBC.co.UK/worldservice/learningenglish) has lots of activities which can support your projects, and Study Guides to help your students develop their communication skills.
- **BBC/British Council Teaching English** (www.teachingenglish.org.UK) has classroom materials, lesson plans and suggestions for teachers on a wide range of topics.

If you don't have access to the internet, why not ask your twin to search for material which is relevant to the project and to send it to you?

PART 3: EVALUATING YOUR PROJECT



At the end of a project – or at the end of one stage in the project – it is valuable to reflect on what has gone well and where problems occurred. Doing this at different stages in the project can help you plan to avoid problems at the next step, and can highlight why things were successful.

As with everything in twinning, planning the evaluation stages is very important. You consider four main areas: **When? Who? What? and How?**

When are you going to evaluate the project?

When you begin to discuss the project with your twin school, try to plan in evaluation points. For example, you might want to include two main evaluations: one at the end of Stage 1 of the project, when your students have completed their 'project product' and one at the end, when they have received and responded to their twin's 'project product'. Evaluating at the end of Stage 1 can help you identify very clearly what was successful about the work which your students did, and why any problems occurred. Evaluating after the exchange of materials can help you identify how successful your planning with your twin was: did the students in the twin school contribute in the way you expected?

Who's going to be involved?

There are a lot of different people who can be involved in your project:

- **The students:** Remember – the whole purpose of twinning is to benefit your students and those in your twin school. By asking the students what they did (and didn't) enjoy about the project, you can learn how to involve them effectively and quickly next time round.
- **Your colleagues:** Would you like more of your colleagues to be involved in twinning projects? If so, why not ask them to evaluate the project? They could speak to your students, look at the material from the twin school, and even speak to the students in their own classes – remember, if your students are happy with their project, they will tell their schoolmates!
- **Your head teacher:** You may have needed to ask for extra resources for your project, and you probably have put a great deal of work into making it successful. Your head teacher may wish to evaluate what you and your students have done so that she or he can see the benefit to the school.
- **Your twin:** Did your twin get what they expected from the project? Planning to evaluate each other's contribution to the project can help you learn make the twinning process more effective. You will learn more about the expectations of the twin school, and be able to discuss these together before the next project.
- **Yourself:** It is very important that you evaluate the project for yourself. After all, you are the person who has made the project work, and you need to ask yourself: What went well – and why did it work? What didn't work – and why not? Do I want to do this again? If so, when? Reflecting on the strengths and benefits of the

project as well as the weaknesses and limitations can teach you a lot about project work – and can help you decide what you need to do to make the next project even better.

What are you going to evaluate?

The focus of the evaluation will depend on who is evaluating the project. For example, your head teacher may want to find out if the resources were used well.

However, underlying all evaluations of twinning projects, there needs to be a focus on the benefits to the students. Has this process really helped them learn about other cultures as well as learning about curriculum areas?

Think carefully about what you want to learn from your evaluation – but remember always to think about your students learning.

How are you going to evaluate the project?

Remember that evaluation means identifying what was good about the project (or the stage of the project) and what could be improved. Remember, too, that it's very easy to criticise things which were not perfect. When you are evaluating any project, try to avoid being too negative or *destructive*. Try, instead, to think *constructively*.

The best learning occurs when we turn negative views into advice for the future. So, instead of saying: '*You didn't send the project to us early enough.*' you could say: '*Next time, please send the project earlier.*' This makes it much easier to learn from the evaluation process.

Example: EVALUATION FORM

Try to keep evaluation focused by preparing a short one-page form to complete. The questions will depend on the stage you are evaluating. This one has been prepared to help the students in one class evaluate what they learnt from the project which their twin class sent to them.

Project Evaluation Form	
Name of Project:	
Evaluation by: <i>Class 4c</i>	Date:
What were the most interesting things in the project material? Why were they interesting?	
Was there anything you didn't like? Why didn't you like it?	
Was the language of the project easy to understand? Were there any points which were confusing?	
Imagine we were going to do this project again. What would you: a) like more of? b) like less of? Please say why.	
Imagine a friend has asked you to describe what you think about this project. What would you say to him or her (in one sentence)?	