



HOLISTIC
LEARNING
INNOVATIONS

COM(VIVIR) EM COM(UNIDADEAE)

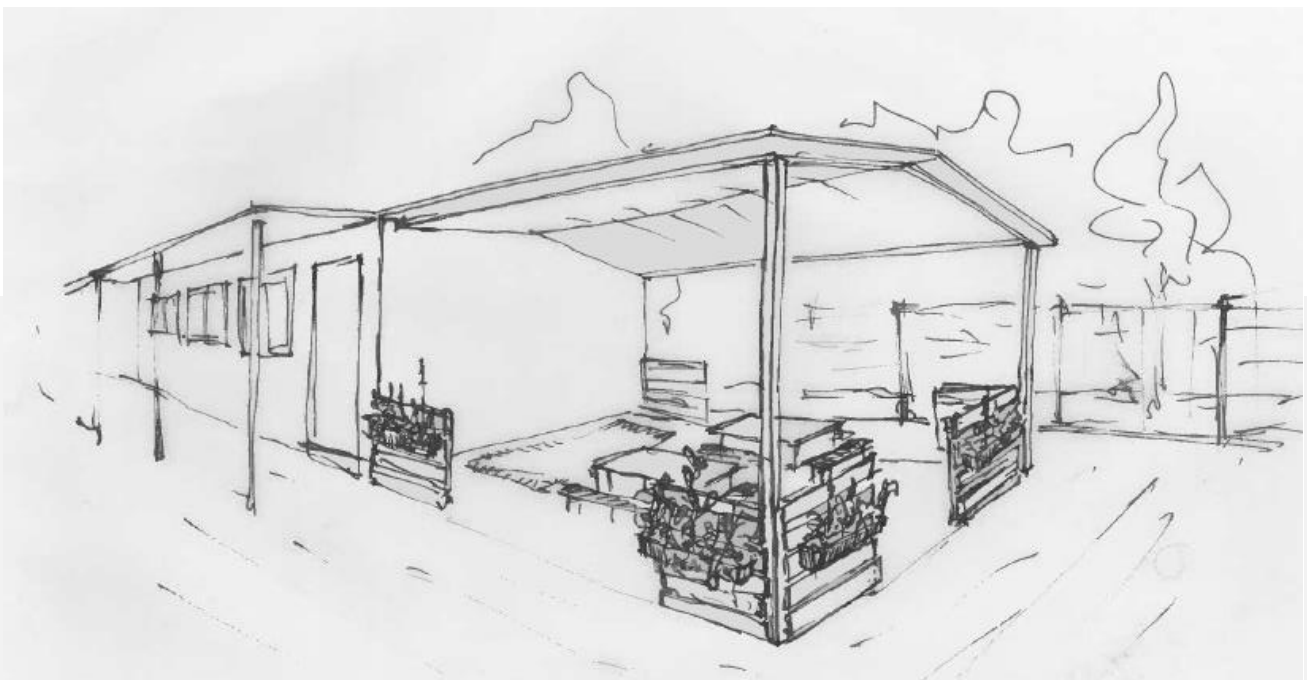
Country: Portugal

Target Age: 5-15 Years

Learning Areas: Literacy | Empathy | Problem
Solving | Student Engagement | Community
Cohesion

THE CONTEXT

The Santa Bárbara Cluster, located in Gondomar near Porto, comprises seven schools serving around 1019 students. The community faces social and economic challenges, with 58% of students coming from low-income households. Despite these challenges, the school focuses on enhancing student competencies, critical thinking, community engagement, and personal development.



THE CHALLENGE

How might we Introduce more activity-based, engaging lessons?

The schools in the cluster wanted to ensure high levels of success for students in all subject areas. There was also a concern about student retention, and so teachers in the cluster design team decided to respond by co-creating more activity-based lessons that would stimulate student interest and hopefully lead to more engagement and higher attainment.



THE INNOVATION

COM(VIVIR) EM COM(UNIDADEAE)

Teachers identified that there were some under-utilised outdoor spaces that could be equipped with materials to facilitate creative and interactive learning. A needs assessment was conducted that identified community and nature-based learning as priorities and so the school built an outdoor lesson space which is now the site for 21 activities and two workshops, as well as games and resources to enhance the experience. (COM)viver em (COM)unidade (which roughly translates to Living with the Community) has become a pedagogical approach that has sparked student interest. Challenges like weather are being addressed through improvements to flooring and the addition of wind and cold protections.





THE IMPACT

Improved student wellbeing and community bonds

Since its inception, a significant portion of about 400 students from across the cluster, have been directly involved in the (COM) viver em (COM)unidade innovation. The project has also seen increased parental participation and an improved school climate. 20 new games, four activity guides, and a digital platform have been created. Surveys indicate that a large percentage of teachers use or plan to use the outdoor learning space. The various activities have enhanced student competencies, promoted well-being, strengthened community bonds, and fostered environmental awareness.

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