

I believe that one of the characteristic aspects of teaching in Modena is that of frequent outings.

In summer and winter, trips are taken to areas outside Modena, to the sea, to mountain forests or to art cities. Most of all, outings are done on foot, and more and more often with scheduled buses to explore Modena, the city for children. The children discover its cultural beauties and it is not rare to see them in the morning in front of and inside the Cathedral of Modena or seated in the small square sketching reality with their moleskine.

The children walk, take the scheduled buses and quickly develop an excellent sense of direction and recognise the landmarks defined by them that they consider important. They often meet the people of Modena, perhaps old age pensioners on their bicycle who have the time to stop for a friendly chat.

More and more frequently, they explore the natural beauties of the city. This input was given by Professor Ceciliani when he decided to propose the two-day training event at Ferrari Park. After a day of theory, spent sitting on chairs, the teachers had to physically try what it means to do a relay race, use the map and find their way around the park, climb the Tibetan bridge or do a treasure hunt, being, for example, very attentive to the clues.

From these inputs, the teachers were encouraged to go out in search of the city's parks to experience nature, touch leaves, soil, trees, and observe the marvellous colours of nature and educate the children to contemplate its beauty.

The children discovered the Ferrari, Resistance and Amendola Parks in this way and, perhaps, stimulated by the question of what can we do or find in this park, gave free rein to their creativity.

Loaded with baskets, they collected treasures, played games like hide and seek or puss-in-the-corner and, above all, invented a kind of "movement dance" with nature in which they rolled down the hills at full speed and then climbed back up breathless. They jumped over ditches, took daring leaps from the boulders of Resistance Park and climbed up lots of trees, assessing their height and resistance.

The park is not an opportunity to give free rein to the children or a day of rest for the teachers to chat to each other as they watch the children play. It is, instead, the moment in which to observe their competences and understand, thanks to biophilia and namely the symbiosis of the child with nature, how they can succeed in seeing and doing with nature things that are no longer accessible to adults. We, adults, no longer perceive nature as a game partner, but as something to contemplate standing still. This is an important lesson that children give us adults.

When the European partners came to Modena and saw the children wearing their capes waiting for them in the pedestrian underpass of the Porta Nuova station embellished with the drawings of Modena's children, they were very impressed because it is an unusual thing for them. We can boast of doing many positive things for children and outings to the surrounding territory are certainly one of these.