



## CHILD-DIRECTED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Context: class; divers working spaces for pupils to choose working environment; child-directed tasks/lessons

Key-words: individual approach; open learning methods; self-paced learning

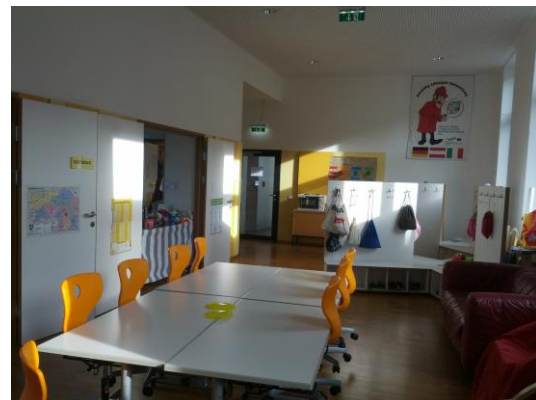
Description:

Open learning as a teaching method is founded on the work of Celestin Freinet in France and Maria Montessori in Italy, among others. Open learning is supposed to allow pupils self-determined, independent and interest-guided learning. A prominent example is the language experience approach to teaching initial literacy (cf. Brügelmann/ Brinkmann 2011). The approach is supposed to face up to three challenges:

- the vast differences in experiences, interests, and competencies between children of the same age;
- the constructivist nature of learning demanding active problem-solving by the learner him- and herself;
- the legal requirement of student participation in decisions stipulated by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open\\_learning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_learning)

One of the key-features of open learning is the prepared learning environment. It shall provide all needed materials and technical support as well as the suitable spatial conditions.





There are a variety of ways to group pupils during open learning sessions that will help teachers to individualise the program. Creative grouping for instance allows for a diversity of academic skills and gives the freedom to move among groups. When a pupil masters a given skill he or she can move to a new creative group and task. Cross-age tutoring has also proved to be very successful, especially in the area of literacy. The tutor and the tutee make substantial gains in vocabulary, reading accuracy, self-correction and comprehension. A key feature of tutoring programs is the provision of opportunity for pupils with disabilities to tutor other pupils.





## Conclusion

Open learning is defined as a *systematic teaching method that engages pupils in learning knowledge and skills through participation, self-evaluation, peer-learning methods and carefully designed products and tasks*. This process can last for varying time periods and can extend over multiple content areas.