Cultural heritage as informal content in classroom

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What is “cultural heritage”?

Cultural Heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. (ICOMOS, 2002).
What is “cultural heritage”?  

- Heritage is explained in UNESCO documents as “our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations.”  
- A heritage is something that is, or should be, passed from generation to generation because it is valued.
Cultural Heritage types

- Tangible Cultural Heritage
- Intangible Cultural Heritage
Tangible Cultural Heritage

- Built Environment (Buildings, Townscapes, Archaeological remains)
- Natural Environment (Rural landscapes, Coasts and shorelines, Agricultural heritage)
- Artefacts (Books & Documents, Objects, Pictures)
Intangible Heritage

- Intangible heritage includes, values, traditions, oral history. Popularly this is perceived through cuisine, clothing, forms of shelter, traditional skills and technologies, religious ceremonies, performing arts, storytelling.
A well-aimed example

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Heritage Cycle

- The Heritage Cycle diagram gives us an idea how we can make the past part of our future (Simon Thurley, 2005).
HERITAGE CYCLE

From Enjoying
- it will help people enjoy it

By Understanding
- comes a thirst to understand
- they will value it

By Caring

By Valuing
- they will want to care for it
• Driving force behind all definitions of Cultural Heritage is:

  *it is a human creation intended to inform* (John Feather, 2006).
Concept of Digital Heritage

- *Digital heritage* is made up of computer-based materials such as texts, databases, still and moving images, audio, graphics, software, and web pages, among a wide and growing range of formats.

- Many of these resources have lasting value and significance, and therefore constitute a heritage that should be protected and preserved for current and future generations.
Is there an emerging digital heritage?

- According to the UNESCO's Charter for the Preservation of Digital Heritage: Where resources are "born digital", there is no other format but the digital original.
Informal education

- Informal education is the wise, respectful and spontaneous process of cultivating learning. It works through conversation, and the exploration and enlargement of experience.
- With the formal learning bus, "the driver decides where the bus is going and the passengers are along for the ride."
- When on the informal learning bike, "the rider chooses the destination, the speed, and the route."
Museums/libraries/archives as informal education 1/3

- The traditional national museum, as had occurred in the late 18th century and then in the 19th century with the sole purpose of the dimensional presentation of objects and collections, mainly as a self-reliant institution providing scientific content and knowledge in a special audience (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999, Benett, 1995, Pearce, 1993).
Museums/libraries/archives as informal education 2/3

- In the late 20th and early 21st century, due to the cultural, economic and social changes brought about, the museum has redefined its role, value and aim is to meet the contemporary requirements of its public
Museums/libraries/archives as informal education 3/3

- Museums, like all places where culture is exposed, should have an interactive character, as states Andea Witcomb (Witcomb, 2003a, 2003b).
- Museums have to offer different presentation perspectives and a variety of subjects in order to meet the needs of a public composed of diverse people and encourage their active participation.
Constructivism and cultural heritage

Emphasizes on giving personal meaning to cultural heritage content (e.g. a museum object) while learning, according to learner’s conceptual representations (Hooper-Greenhill 1999, Hein 1998, Falk and Dierking 2000, Gardner 1993, Vygotsky, )
Constructivism and education

- Encourages educators to design and implement holistic, multidisciplinary, attractive, flexible educational environments in order students to “Learn how to learn”.

Cultural heritage content in Class as informal content—A museum object

- A museum object narrates a story that gives the opportunity to enhance the imagination and the critical thought of children.
How we can apply it in class?
Digital resources. The Europeana example

Digital learning is becoming more important, and as the number of visual learners rises, the demand for visuals and moving images grows. More attention is given to the development of transversal competencies such as cultural awareness and digital, social and civic competences.
As a result, educators need innovative educational resources that are engaging, reliable and of high quality, that help students to acquire competences, and are easy to use, adapt and develop.
Moreover, educational systems are traditionally focused on the history and culture of the individual nations, rather than on the links between them.

A transnational approach would be better suited to the current reality and diverse background of students.

Europeana makes culture available to everyone online, illuminating a diverse Europe.
Added value

The use of digital cultural heritage in education can provide unique added value to education and learning by facilitating and encouraging the open access and (re-)use of digital cultural heritage by students.

Engaging with digital cultural heritage in meaningful and critical ways can enhance the European dimension in learning, stimulate reflection and debate, and actively contribute to a sense of belonging to a common cultural space shared across.
Challenges and restrictions - Intellectual Rights

- The protection of intellectual property is an old problem.
- One of the most frequently recurring issues in protecting cultural heritage is the difficult relationship between the interests of the individual and the community, the balance between private and public rights.
Challenges and restrictions - Intellectual Rights

- Ancient Romans established that a work of art could be considered part of the patrimony of the whole community, even if privately owned.

- For example, sculptures decorating the façade of a private building were recognized as having a common value and couldn’t be removed, since they stood in a public site, where they could be seen by all citizens.
EdMuse Project

- The platform implemented by EdMuse Project we hope to encourage and facilitate educators to use and re-use digital content in class, designing multidisciplinary lessons and simultaneously respecting intellectual rights of cultural heritage.
References:

- Gardner, H., 1993, Frame of Mind, The theory of Multiple Intelligences
Thank you for your attention!