

Recommendations for transmedia heritage education for early childhood educators (ECEC)

A practical, child-centred approach for cultural heritage learning through creative and digital pedagogy

These recommendations are based on the CREATECH project (2023–2025), co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. CREATECH developed and tested a transmedia cultural heritage education approach for early childhood education and care by combining storytelling, creativity and digital pedagogy in kindergartens in Finland, Spain, Italy and Serbia. The recommendations build on the project's implementation experiences and evidence gathered through documentation, reflections, feedback from educators and project staff and observations from the pedagogical development projects carried out with children.

The recommendations are primarily aimed at early childhood educators and other ECEC professionals who want to use cultural heritage as a living learning resource in everyday practice. They support educators in creating child-centred heritage projects where children explore meaningful places and traditions through the lenses of past, present and future and express their ideas through multiple creative forms. The approach integrates heritage education with art-based learning, play, collaboration and age-appropriate digital tools and it strengthens children's agency by positioning them not only as learners, but as active creators of heritage and culture. Alongside these recommendations, the [CREATECH Guidebook](#) offers practical tools and examples to help educators plan and implement their own transmedia heritage projects in ECEC settings. The approach can also be applied in non-formal education and used by cultural and heritage professionals working with young children.

Cultural heritage has strong communicative potential, and young children learn particularly well through stories, sensory experiences and creative expression. For this reason, CREATECH uses transmedia storytelling as a pedagogical approach that brings together multiple ways of expressing the same meaning. In practice, this means that children's ideas and stories can be shared through voice, music, movement, visual art, crafts, photos, short videos and immersive 360 environments. Transmedia work supports collaboration and inclusion, because children can participate using different languages, strengths and modes of expression and it allows learning to expand naturally from the classroom into families, communities and wider audiences.

The following recommendations can be read as individual good-practice principles for cultural heritage education in ECEC. They can also be read as a practical pathway for planning a multidisciplinary project: starting from exploring heritage in a meaningful place through multiple senses, continuing with creative and digital production, and culminating in a shared transmedia story world that brings children's perspectives together in a coherent and celebratory form.

1) Start from a meaningful Place and children's curiosity

Choose a Place that matters to the children (a park, a forest, a courtyard, a street corner, a familiar route). Let children explore it through the lenses of past, present, and future. Build learning from children's questions, observations and feelings, not from a pre-set adult script.

2) Treat cultural heritage as living, not "museum-only"

Cultural heritage in ECEC can be local traditions, everyday routines, languages, songs, celebrations, stories from home and the meanings children attach to their surroundings. Heritage is also something children create, reinterpret and carry forward together.

3) Use transmedia storytelling to widen participation

Transmedia means telling and building meaning across multiple media forms. In ECEC, this is powerful because it gives children different entry points. The same story world can be expressed through drawing, acting, movement, crafting, photos, sound, music and short video. Children do not need to do everything; each child can contribute in their own way.

4) Apply digital pedagogy as a creative extension

Digital tools should extend children's ideas rather than replace play. Use technology for recording, music composing, documenting and sharing, not passive consumption. Keep tasks short, joyful and age-appropriate. Focus on meaning and collaboration rather than technical perfection.

5) Build projects as a process, not a one-off activity

High-quality work comes from continuity. Return to the Place, revisit ideas, refine stories and let children's thinking evolve. This supports deeper learning, stronger ownership and more confident expression.


6) Make collaboration visible and fair


Rotate roles and emphasise that all roles matter. Encourage children to notice how they succeed together: listening, taking turns, supporting and celebrating each other's contributions. This strengthens social learning, participation and wellbeing.


7) Share the results and celebrate children as cultural creators


A meaningful "premiere" or exhibition moment is not only dissemination; it's pedagogy. Children deserve to experience pride, recognition and shared achievement. Invite families and local actors when possible and make the celebration accessible and joyful.


Tips & Tricks for ECEC Educators


 Introduce a friendly character to guide the journey. A curious animal, imaginary friend or mascot can help children connect emotionally, keep the process playful and encourage exploration and storytelling.


 Know your group and create a safe space. Observe group dynamics, explain clearly what will happen in each session and use gentle encouragement to support shy children. Use clear, simple sentences in discussions, make sure every child's ideas are welcomed and use picture cards to support understanding, participation, and vocabulary, especially when working with diverse language backgrounds.


 Stay flexible and open. Adapt pacing and structure to your group's needs. Shorten tasks, break into smaller groups or switch approaches when needed. Unexpected turns often lead to the most meaningful learning moments.

 Work in small groups when possible. Groups of 3–5 children create space for participation, easier collaboration and more focused adult support.

 Connect technology meaningfully. Use digital tools as creative extensions of children's ideas: record voices, capture sounds, take photos, create simple music, assemble a shared story world.

 Document the process (with permission). Photos, short clips, children's quotes, and teacher notes make learning visible and support reflection with children and families.

 Include reflection time. After each session, invite children to share what surprised them, what they enjoyed or what they want to do next. Even a few minutes strengthens memory and meaning-making.

 Open the daycare to the local community. Involve families, neighbourhood associations and senior centres. Encourage children to bring stories or cultural objects from home. Host a "heritage day" or themed day to build pride, belonging and respect.

Visit the CREATECH 360° Online Exhibition for inspiration:

<https://www.intoschool.org/createch/>