

In the summer of 2017, the World Education Program placed me in the city of Turin, Italy with a company dedicated to helping children from all backgrounds take part in informal learning activities during the summer. This company is called "XKE?" And their motto is: "il laboratorio della curiosita" which translates to: "the laboratory of curiosity". The activities prompt the children aged from 6 – 13 years old to ask "Why?". XKE continue to tinker with their laboratories, and the labs continue to evolve. This year, the ambition has been to integrate English into the 6 existing laboratories, to engage with the children in an alternative language. I worked here for three weeks and during this time I lived in Turin, ate great food and met the amazing team at XKE.

On the first day I met Caterina at the Porta Nuova train station and she took us to our accommodation at Luoghi Comuni. The accommodation was at Porta Palazzo, which is within walking distance to XKE and Turin's city centre. Feeling nervous about starting a new job in a new city I made my way to XKE to find that it was located right next to the iconic Mole Antonelliana. I was greeted by a pair of XKE veterans; Viviana and Mattia and a plate of pizza and focaccia! Their kind and positive attitudes removed any fears about the job as they explained the six laboratories in depth. The team at XKE welcomed us into the job, and into their city by taking us out for many gelato's at lunch time! The friendly workplace made the next 3 weeks fly by, and there were always things to do in the evening with the team of XKE.

Each day I did 2 different laboratories. Every laboratory was completely different, and engaged the children either with practical skills or with logical problem solving. By introducing playful activities in English instead of Italian, the children had to concentrate very hard to understand the activities. Helpful prompters like images and activities gave the children an easy way to communicate with me and all of the children were excited to say simple things like "hello" and "my name is". Each group of children were completely different and their English skills varied, however it was great to create a comfortable environment where they were happy to practice.

Overall I think that introducing English into the laboratories is a fantastic idea as it engages the children in new and invigorating ways. It also gives the children a comfortable environment to speak English, which they may not all have access to. The summer is a long break from school and brushing up English in the meantime is a must as it is easy to forget parts of a language. I am grateful for this experience as I got to take part in a great cause whilst exploring a new city and culture. Thanks to all the staff that were so friendly and made the weeks so fun! Thank you XKE!

Isaac Tennant