

CURRICULUM FOR RAISING THE LEVEL OF BASIC CULTURAL CAPITAL OF  
ROMA STUDENTS WITH THE HELP OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING

LITERACY

(from the first to the third grade of elementary school)

## Table of contents

1. PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM .....	1
1.1. Purpose and goals of learning and teaching .....	1
1.2. Values and principles of learning and teaching.....	1
2. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING OF THE PROGRAM.....	2
3. CURRICULUM STRUCTURE .....	2
3.1. Language and communication .....	2
3.2. Culture and creativity .....	3
3.3. Media literacy.....	3
4. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES ACCORDING TO THE CONTENT AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM .....	4
5. CONNECTION TO OTHER CURRICULAR TOPICS .....	10
6. DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL CAPITAL AND READING LITERACY AMONG ROMA STUDENTS.....	11
7. EVALUATION OF ADOPTION OF EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES .....	13

## 1. PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

### *1.1. Purpose and goals of learning and teaching*

Upbringing and education play a significant role in each individual's personal and social development. Despite the fact that modern society should be open and accepting, students, members of the Roma community encounter a series of prejudices and stereotypes daily. The goal of the Curriculum for raising the level of basic cultural capital of Roma students through the development of reading literacy in the first three grades of elementary school is to acquire the basic competences of the national language. The purpose of the Curriculum for raising the level of the basic cultural capital of Roma students through the development of reading literacy is to develop the basic literacy competencies of students in the national language for the needs of oral and written communication. By successfully mastering the Croatian/Slovenian language in speech and writing, students will be able to actively participate in the knowledge society in which they live, it will be easier for them to participate in classes, and a good basic knowledge of the national language will enable them to influence the various life situations in which they will find themselves as adults in the future.

### *1.2. Values and principles of learning and teaching*

Students who will attend the program for the development of cultural capital and basic language competences in the Slovenian/Croatian language, which will be implemented according to the Curriculum for raising the level of the basic cultural capital of Roma students through the development of reading literacy, have different circumstances in which they live. For example, the Croatian/Slovenian language is the language of the majority for them, they have an unequal amount of cultural capital in relation to the majority society, and consequently reduced communication skills in relation to students whose mother tongue is Croatian or Slovenian and who are part of the majority society. Many external factors, e.g. a different language family and community, different cultural capital of the Roma community in which they live, cause a language deficit in the national language, and the latter later leads to learning deficits that are manifested in the loss of motivation for schooling and early leaving of primary education. In order to successfully master the Croatian and Slovenian languages, which are not native languages for members of the Roma community, it is important to create a positive learning environment. Therefore, in the model of supplementary teaching of the

national language, in which emphasis is placed on getting to know and acquiring the cultural capital of the majority society, the focus of learning and teaching must be on the student himself and his needs and abilities, and already acquired knowledge and skills need to be upgraded. Equality, but also diversity, must be promoted through the pedagogical process. In order to encourage successful mastery of the Croatian/Slovenian language, students need to be introduced not only to the language, but also to the culture of the society in which they live and are surrounded.

## 2. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING OF THE PROGRAM

The educational goals of learning according to the prepared curriculum are as follows:

- mastering basic language activities: listening, speaking, reading and writing in the Croatian/Slovenian language in order to express thoughts, feelings and impressions in different communication situations;
- developing and nurturing cultural identity and responsible participation in the wider social community;
- developing critical thinking skills;
- training students for lifelong learning;
- understanding and respecting the customs and important events and individuals of the society in which they live, and nurturing and developing one's own national identity, which is the basis of raising the cultural capital of the majority society

## 3. CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

The subject curriculum of additional learning of the Slovenian and Croatian languages has three content areas:

1. Language and communication.
2. Culture and creativity.
3. Media literacy.

### *3.1. Language and communication*

Language and communication imply the ability to express thoughts, ideas, feelings and attitudes in oral and written form and in different communication situations. In different communication contexts, the student acquires basic competencies for mastering language activities: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Uses critical thinking for the purpose of

learning and personal development. While learning the national language and consequently adopting the elements of the cultural capital of the majority nation, students develop an awareness of people who respect their own and at the same time the linguistic identity of the environment, and learn about the culture of the majority nation, its norms and values, which they internalize during the process of secondary socialization in the learning process. At the same time, the teachers who teach must be subtle regarding their culture and language so that the teaching does not turn into a covert assimilation of Roma children.

### *3.2. Culture and creativity*

Culture and creativity refers to the understanding of artistic and non-artistic texts, which have different national, cultural, social and aesthetic values, and at the same time, they are artistic texts by local authors, intended for the youngest, the best carriers of the capital of the majority society.

The content area of culture and creativity includes the interpretation and evaluation of texts for the purpose of personal development of students. Students develop the ability to think critically and understand artistic and other works in the Croatian or Slovenian language. They study, reflect and present traditional customs and cultural features of the Croatian/Slovenian language and the society that surrounds them, and at the same time they get to know the customs and traditions of the majority people and, with appropriate didactic approaches, nurture and preserve the customs and traditions of their community.

### *3.3. Media literacy*

As part of media literacy, students develop the ability to evaluate and select quality media content. Students are introduced to the safe use of digital technology, without which life at school, as well as in private life, is almost impossible to imagine. The content part includes a critical attitude towards media messages, the influence of the media on the individual and society, the creation of one's own messages and their exchange.

#### 4. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES ACCORDING TO THE CONTENT AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

Table 1: Content area of language and communication

<b>1. Language and communication</b>	
General outcome	Specific outcomes
1.1. The student understands short sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands short sentences related to the immediate environment and accompanied by visual or kinesthetic content spoken slowly, clearly, and distinctly with longer pauses and repetitions.</li> <li>• Responds verbally and non-verbally to auditory, written, and visual stimuli (e.g., instructions, commands, etc.).</li> <li>• Recognizes and connects graphic and sound images of words.</li> <li>• Recognizes the sounds, accent, rhythm and intonation of the Slovenian/Croatian language.</li> </ul>
1.2. The student reads aloud words, sentences, and shorter texts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes graphic word images for global reading.</li> <li>• Reads aloud words and sentences on familiar topics using familiar language aids.</li> <li>• Recognizes and imitates the correct pronunciation and intonation of the Slovenian/Croatian language.</li> </ul>
1.3. The student speaks words and short sentences, imitating the pronunciation and intonation of the speaking model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaks short and straightforward sentences, counters, and rhymes using a sound template.</li> <li>• Names and describes people, objects, simple actions, and situations with a few short and straightforward practiced sentences.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses basic language rules.</li> </ul>
1.4. The student exchanges short, rehearsed sentences in conversation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spontaneously uses learned basic communication patterns to exchange information.</li> <li>• Asks simple questions and answers such questions.</li> <li>• Participates in short dialogues and role-playing.</li> </ul>
1.5. The student copies words, phrases, or short sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewrites letters, words and sentences (font imitation) according to the template.</li> <li>• Completes missing letters in known words and missing words in sentences.</li> <li>• Notices the connection between phonemes and graphemes in the Croatian language.</li> <li>• Recognizes the graphic form of words and their sound images.</li> </ul>
<p>CONTENTS FOR ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:</p> <p>Recommended topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Home and family: family members, home, rooms in the home, environment</li> <li>- Who I am: body parts, body care, and health</li> <li>- School: school supplies, premises, employees</li> <li>- Occupations</li> <li>- Greetings</li> <li>- Food</li> <li>- Nature: plants and animals from the environment, seasons</li> <li>- Space: relationships in space, traffic</li> </ul>	

The following word types and sentence structures are recommended:

- verbs, verb tenses
- nouns
- pronouns
- numbers
- negations
- simple sentences

Language and communication functions:

- introduction
- greeting
- naming things, beings, and phenomena
- understanding simple instructions
- asking questions
- use of simple sentences in speech and writing

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Recommended types of texts: picture books, counters, songs, famous fairy tales, riddles, rhymes, games.

Recommended activities: memory game, completing the text with the missing words, role playing, acting, language games (bingo, guess who/what I am, soup or compote, spelling, looking at you...), working according to instructions (drawing and coloring according to instructions)

Table 2: Content area of culture and creativity

<b>2. Culture and creativity</b>	
General outcome	Specific outcomes
2.1. The student recognizes the basic patterns of appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using concrete examples in real or simulated situations, he recognizes acceptable and unacceptable behaviors and behaves correctly and friendly towards others.</li> </ul>



<p>behavior towards others in his own culture and the culture of the majority nation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responds appropriately in straightforward communication situations in the Croatian/Slovenian language.</li> </ul>
<p>2.2. The student listens/reads a literary text, expresses what the text is about, and recognizes literary texts according to their form in accordance with language development and age.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listens/reads adapted literary texts from children’s literature in the Croatian/Slovenian language in pictures or comics.</li> <li>• Listens to and performs traditional and modern children's songs in the Slovenian/Croatian language.</li> <li>• Retells the read story in his own words in simple sentences.</li> </ul>
<p>2.3. The student shows openness and curiosity for cultures related to Croatian/Slovenian language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows interest for very simple content in the national language.</li> <li>• Asks questions about related topics and customs in the Slovenian/Croatian language.</li> <li>• Names the characters from the school materials and is interested in their everyday life.</li> <li>• Reacts positively to content related to holidays and customs and gladly participates in activities in the Croatian/Slovenian language.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CONTENTS FOR ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:</b></p> <p>Content unit Culture and creativity achieves results with the same language content as in the first content unit, but with certain adjustments. For example, the topic "Greeting" can be adapted to remind students that there are formal and informal greetings in Slovenian/Croatian.</p> <p>We teach them which greetings to use when greeting close people (e.g., family and friends) or strangers. We also refer to the cultural difference between the Slovenian/Croatian and Romani language (the form -ti or -Vi when addressing with respect).</p>	

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:

Activities in the content part Culture and creativity are aimed at achieving results in all three content parts of the curriculum. The emphasis is on accepting the diversity of cultures and successfully mastering the customs of each culture in the encounter with it. It is recommended to choose learning content that is close to the students and their experiences so that they can compare their culture with others.

#### Recommended activities:

- creative, reading hours in students' environment (Christmas, Carnival, Easter);
- visit to the theater;
- visit to the museum;
- visit to the library;
- visit to the cinema;
- attending events in the local community;
- participation in marking important dates;
- participation in school and municipal events;
- celebration of World Roma Day.

Table 3: Content area of media culture

<b>3. Media culture</b>	
General outcome	Specific outcomes
3.1. Student uses different sources of information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognizes the structure of textbooks.</li><li>• Differentiates types of tasks.</li><li>• Gets to know the ways of using information in different sources, such as textbooks and picture dictionaries, and looks for the meaning and explanation of unknown words in them.</li><li>• Understands individual words in the textbook and pictures in the picture dictionary.</li><li>• Gets to know children's magazines and their use.</li></ul>

<p>3.2. Student recognizes some strategies for learning and using the language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes similarities with words he knows in his native language.</li> <li>• Considers the basic steps that lead to the understanding of words and sentences and contributes to easier expression.</li> <li>• Uses non-verbal signs to communicate.</li> <li>• Participates in simple tasks in a group or pair work.</li> <li>• Adopts a positive attitude and develops positive emotions towards learning the Slovenian/Croatian language.</li> <li>• Understands that mistakes are an integral part of the learning process and overcomes the fear of mistakes.</li> <li>• Despite his insecurity, he speaks Slovenian/Croatian.</li> </ul>
<p>3.3. The student differentiates media content appropriate for age and interest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selects and processes appropriate media content: animated films, television and radio shows for children, educational and children’s shows, theater plays, picture books and books for children.</li> <li>• Listens to readings or independently reads short texts in literary and entertaining-educational magazines for children.</li> <li>• Recognizes and uses age-appropriate educational digital media.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CONTENTS FOR ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:</b></p> <p>In media culture, the results are achieved with the same language content as in the previous content parts, but with some adjustments. The topics are adapted to the age of the students, their interests and contents from their lives. The use of interactive exercises</p>	

and work with the computer (adjusted to the age of the child) is foreseen.

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- Picture dictionaries, children's magazines, textbooks/work materials, animated films, television and radio shows for children, educational and children's programs, theater plays, picture books and books for children, digital content appropriate for the child's age.
- Video and audio stories with tasks to check understanding.

## 5. CONNECTION TO OTHER CURRICULAR TOPICS

The curriculum consists of content units: Language and communication, Culture and creativity and Media literacy and is an integral part of language-communication, social-humanistic and artistic areas. By developing basic reading and writing skills in all forms, students are trained for easier and simpler expression of ideas, attitudes and opinions in cross-curricular topics. The student is encouraged to express himself orally and in writing in different subject areas, with special attention being paid to his interests and "strong areas". The ability to accept diversity, collaborative work, successful problem solving and gaining self-confidence is related to the cross-curricular topic *Personal and Social Development*<sup>1</sup>. The ability to use different learning strategies, recognizing the value of learning, developing a positive self-image as a student is related to the topic of *Learning how to learn*<sup>1</sup>, which is also one of the core competencies. Acquiring knowledge about human rights, the right to freedom and national equality and equality, acceptance of fundamental human values (marriage, family, community) is connected with the cross-curricular topic *Civic education*<sup>1</sup>. The right to health care, the acquisition of knowledge and skills to help oneself and others, the acquisition of health literacy are related to the cross-curricular topic *Health*<sup>1</sup>. Learning and teaching about the appropriate and responsible use of information, its search, understanding and critical evaluation in the digital environment is connected with the cross-curricular topic *Use of information and communication technology*<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Cross-curricular topics are realized in Croatia by connecting educational areas and teaching topics of all teaching subjects, and the aim is to achieve educational objectives of all cross-curricular topics through all subjects. The above means that teachers within each subject realize the expectations of those cross-curricular topics that are close to them in terms of content and expectations.

The curriculum develops competencies for lifelong learning, enables independent and critical reflection on one's own identity and position in one's own community, but also in the majority community in modern society.

## 6. DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL CAPITAL AND READING LITERACY AMONG ROMA STUDENTS

The fundamental principle of the Curriculum for raising the level of the basic cultural capital of Roma students through the development of reading literacy is the focus on the student and the development of his language competences in all life situations. The aim of the curriculum is to master the basic language activities of listening, speaking, reading and writing in the Slovenian/Croatian literary language. A sense of belonging to the community in which the student lives and is educated, respect for one's own identity, but also respect and acceptance of the customs and values of others is developed and cherished. The curriculum also develops the ability to think critically and solve problems in concrete situations. The student is actively involved in the learning and teaching process and develops a positive attitude towards the above.

The curriculum for raising the level of basic cultural capital of Roma students through the development of reading literacy includes different methods and forms of teaching and is adapted to the age and abilities of the students. In the first grade, the emphasis is on oral expression and understanding of what is heard, while in the second and third grades, the teaching is expanded by written expression of thoughts, feelings and needs.

The role of the teacher greatly contributes to the successful mastering of the Slovenian/Croatian language for students whose mother tongue is not that language. Creating a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom, encouraging and motivating the mastering of the Slovenian/Croatian language, adjusting methods and forms of work, learning content and selecting learning materials are the fundamental tasks of every teacher. The role of the teacher in the implementation of the program according to the prepared curriculum and good cooperation with other teachers, parents and professional associates of the school is important. In order for the learning and teaching process itself to be high-quality and

successful, the teacher must be expert, professional, follow and use modern methodical approaches, and improve regularly.

Different sources of knowledge adapted to the needs and abilities of students should be available to students and teachers. The teacher selects the teaching materials by himself or in cooperation with the students. Teaching materials are aligned with learning goals and student activities and include different types of texts of all functional styles, different contents and structures in different types of media. The language didactic template is aligned with the language and developmental stage of the student, his interests, experiences and previously acquired language knowledge, abilities and skills. Learning and teaching resources must be diverse and accessible to students during learning and teaching. The teacher should use digital and multimedia content in his work.

In working with students, the teacher should start from the principle of formative assessment, which means that he starts from the student's prior knowledge, setting goals together with the student that he evaluates (feedback) and supplements during assessment (and evidence). Work and knowledge should be valued or evaluated, and further goals should be set based on the findings. The teacher guides and directs the student in learning (with the steps of formative assessment). It is necessary to strive for the student to become more and more independent and motivated to work and study. In this way, knowledge becomes a value for which he is ready to work diligently, and at the same time he takes responsibility for his progress and achievements. This kind of work is very individualized.

The subject is taught from the first to the third grade of primary school. Two weeks of classes are planned. The curriculum for raising the level of basic cultural capital of Roma students through the development of reading literacy is designed in such a way that two hours of the program are realized every week, which corresponds to 70 hours a year.

The teacher independently plans the hours of implementation with his implementation plan, exercises, repetition, organization and checking according to the achievement of results and student progress. The number of hours according to organizational areas is distributed according to the principle of intra-subject correlation and integration, i.e. in one hour it is

possible to teach and learn the contents of all three content areas. Students are assigned to classes according to chronological age.

For students with special educational needs (students with special needs), teachers prepare a student-oriented curriculum. Working with these students requires an individualized approach, in which the degree of achievement of the educational result, the scope of teaching content and activities are adjusted.

## 7. EVALUATION OF ADOPTION OF EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

The curriculum for raising the level of basic cultural capital of Roma students through the development of reading literacy envisages the achievement of educational results that are evaluated exclusively formatively in the form of records. Assessment elements are listening comprehension, reading comprehension, oral and written expression. Emphasis is also placed on monitoring students' efforts in the pedagogical process, responsibility, independence, communication and cooperation. Formative assessment in the form of notes is good feedback for students, teachers and parents. During the entire school year, students' language, communication and cultural development is monitored and evaluated with descriptive records. There is no final assessment, at the end of the school year a report is drawn up on achieved, partially achieved and unachieved educational results.