Gcompris: A story about a DVD meeting

by Linda Giannini and Carlo Nati

We presented Xplora DVD science education in a **Nursery School** in Latina (Italy).

Once entered the classroom we showed 3-4-5 yrs kids the cover of DVD Xplora and then we asked them: *"What do you think it should be? What do you think is this stuff?"*

The followings are their answers.

- It's a CD
- There's music in it!
- It's a videogame
- It's about asteroids
- There are starships
- It's a robot game!

After this first phase dedicated to hypothesis, Carlo Nati, followed with interest from all the kids, showed them how to start Xplora DVD science education

Since Windows is normally used in the school where we did this experiment, kids were a little shocked by the different "start" of the program. We must say that in the classroom, a well-mixed (in sex and age) section composed by 28 pupils, there are 6 personal computers, and 3 of them are connected to the internet.

Kids were already acquainted with Xplora logo and online environment http://www.xplora.org/ww/en/pub/xplora/ since they met it during some research, images explorations and also for the presentation to their parents of the interview about chats (Giannini Nati) whose subject was just their active participation to an experience.

http://www.xplora.org/ww/en/pub/xplora/practice/examples/skype_children.htm

We met XPLORA logo even in occasion of the online documentation in **The Box of Experiences**
http://www.descrittiva.it/calip/0506/xplora2006.htm
for the 2005 October's sun eclipse
http://www.descrittiva.it/calip/0506/eclissi_2005.htm and March 2006
http://www.descrittiva.it/calip/0506/eclissi_2006.htm

On our return from Xplora Teachers Meeting on 08th Oct. 2005 Brussels, we told kids the travel of their drawings about the eclipse and that these were showed to adults of EUN Community. Kids were very proud of it, as well as their parents.

Back to Xplora DVD science education, during a first phase kids were free to explore and discover the environment on their own. Someone went to compose some "appearance" of a potato… others come by chance into GeoGebra and tried a sort of interaction.

Finally they asked where they could find games for them, the ones with images, and, if any, with some stories. So, we showed them the mouse "path"… until we came into **Gcompris software** an educational environment where kids can learn while having fun.
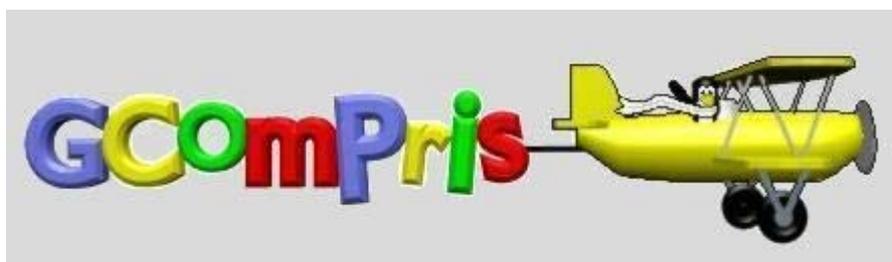
This wasn't for them the first occasion to meet a foreign language. English itself have already been "played" through some educational softwares like **Adibù imparo l'Inglese**, **Il castello della fantasia** and others.

Some games proposed by **Gcompris** resulted more interesting and intuitivefor kids. It seems worth to us to underline the importance of free exploration of kids and the intervention of an adult only if requested from kids themselves. **Gcompris** revealed a great tool to help kids develop their imagination and creativeness.

It was a research, a discovery, an action through hypothesis shared with peers-group and also a research together and with peers to find problems and their solutions.

Gcompris itself was played by kids in Italian version since with the beginning of the new school year (2006/2007) INDIRE proposed us to evaluate it.

http://www.bdp.it/software/

This path took its first steps in September and finished in October 2006, even though kids will continue to play with it. We remind that official website of **Gcompris** is http://gcompris.net/
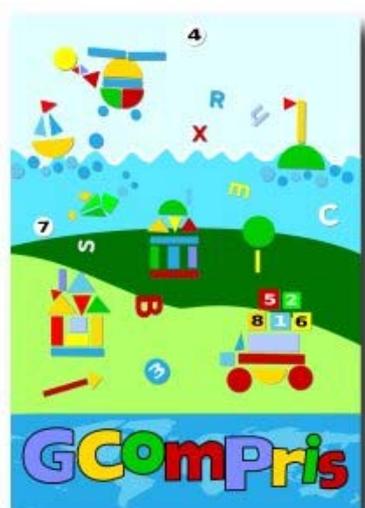
The brief evaluation fact sheet for pupils and teachers proposed for INDIRE will be available online soon.

We'd like to thank kids for their availability and curiosity and Paolo Bianchetti (from School of Robotics) for its kind cooperation.