

NAVE2 MYSTERY BOXES EVALUATION

Introduction

The purpose of this note is to suggest how we might assess the success of the mystery box initiative.

The accompanying paper circulated earlier describes the rationale & methodology.

How best can we evaluate the learning outcomes of this activity?

This note provides some guidance on how we can record activities & propose a structure for doing this so we can share what has worked well & not so well. The results should assist us in making improvements.

How you carry out the evaluation is best decided by each partner. But your evaluation report should keep to the format described here.

Let's start with the learning objectives.

Mystery Box Learning Objectives

- 1 As a result of the discussions around what the visiting students should know/find useful or interesting about the host country, the students should be able to make decisions themselves as to the contents of their mystery box. They should have demonstrated knowledge of their own country; used the skills of team working; problem solving in working with the size, weight, cost parameters of the contents; & prepared themselves for the potential questions they will be asked about the contents.
- 2 Having received the visiting students' mystery box, the students will have learned how to discover the story behind the contents in the box; how to formulate questions to ask of their visiting students, perhaps using some words in a language other than their own. Students may also demonstrate new communication skills in the subsequent questioning & answering activity, such as email, WhatsApp, Zoom, Teams. They should be able to demonstrate more knowledge of the country they are to visit & feel much better prepared.

Mystery Boxes : Partner Evaluation Report

Partners should decide how best to undertake the evaluation but your report should include the feedback from teachers & students.

Essentially, is this an effective, enjoyable learning experience to prepare for mobilities?

Keep it brief & to essential information. This is a guide.

1 Teacher Preparation

- Describe how you prepared yourselves & your visiting colleagues for the exchange of boxes.
- Did you encounter any difficulties?
- Best communication methods?
- Suggestions for next time?

2 Host Box Preparation

- Describe how you introduced the idea of the mystery box & engaged the students in making decisions about the contents.
- What methods worked really well & any not so well?
- What difficulties did the students encounter with the process?
- Can you give examples of how deciding the mystery box engaged or excited the students?
- What was the most important lesson the students learned?
- Did you video/photo/ a mood board getting the box ready?

3 Unpacking the Visitor Box

- Describe briefly how you prepared your students & what their reaction was like.
- Describe how you worked with the students to understand the story behind each item in the box.
- What difficulties, if any, did the students encounter? How did you overcome them?

4 Questions & Answers

- Formulating the questions & answers was perhaps the most difficult element of this initiative but a very important one. How did you go about this?
- Did the students find it difficult, interesting? Did they want to discover more about the items?
- Do you have any examples of how students asked or responded to questions?

5 Concluding Remarks

- Taking account of the learning objectives would you say these were fully achieved, partially achieved or not achieved?
- Are there any good ideas you would like to share with the other partners about this initiative?
- Main difficulties?
- Biggest successes?

Student Evaluation of the Mystery Boxes

Each partner should decide how best to do this taking into account the ability level of the students.

You may wish to do it as a class response, individually, or as a mix of both. You could ask some of the questions to an individual & record their answers on video.

Student feedback if possible should be organised so as to include items 2 to 5 above.

Keep it simple. So for example, you might ask:

Host Box Preparation

- Can you tell me, what is a mystery box?
- How did you decide what to put in it?
- What did learn from doing this? What did you learn about your own country?
- Did you like working as a team?
- What was enjoyable about packing the contents?

Unpacking the Visitors' Box

- Were there any surprising items in the box you received?
- What did you learn about the other country?
- What was the most interesting thing you learned about the other country?

Questions & Answers

- What items did you ask questions about?
- What questions did you answer about the box you sent?
- Did you use any foreign language?

Concluding Remarks

- Do you know more about the country & the students you are to visit?
- How many marks out 10 would you give the Mystery Box exercise?
- Do you feel better prepared for your visit?