

A Literacy Project for Northern Finland

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Education, skills and lifelong learning

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The content of this presentation

- Background of the project
- The aims of the project
- Interventions
- The possible impacts
- In the end of this literacy project

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Background

- The project is carried out in co-operation between universities of Oulu and Lapland and pilot schools
- Research results (Pisa 2015) have shown an unexpected deterioration in the literacy of Finnish youth, 11% of them have troubles
- Weak reading and writing skills concern the northern Finnish boys in particular
- It is an alarming trend also attracting public attention
- Finnish National Board of Education has funded to teacher education

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Finnish special education system: The tree tier support system

Special support (Special education teachers):
The most strongest support

- official decisions behind this support
- mainly individual support (IEP)
- if the lower level intensified support is not enough
- about 1-5% need this

General support in classes

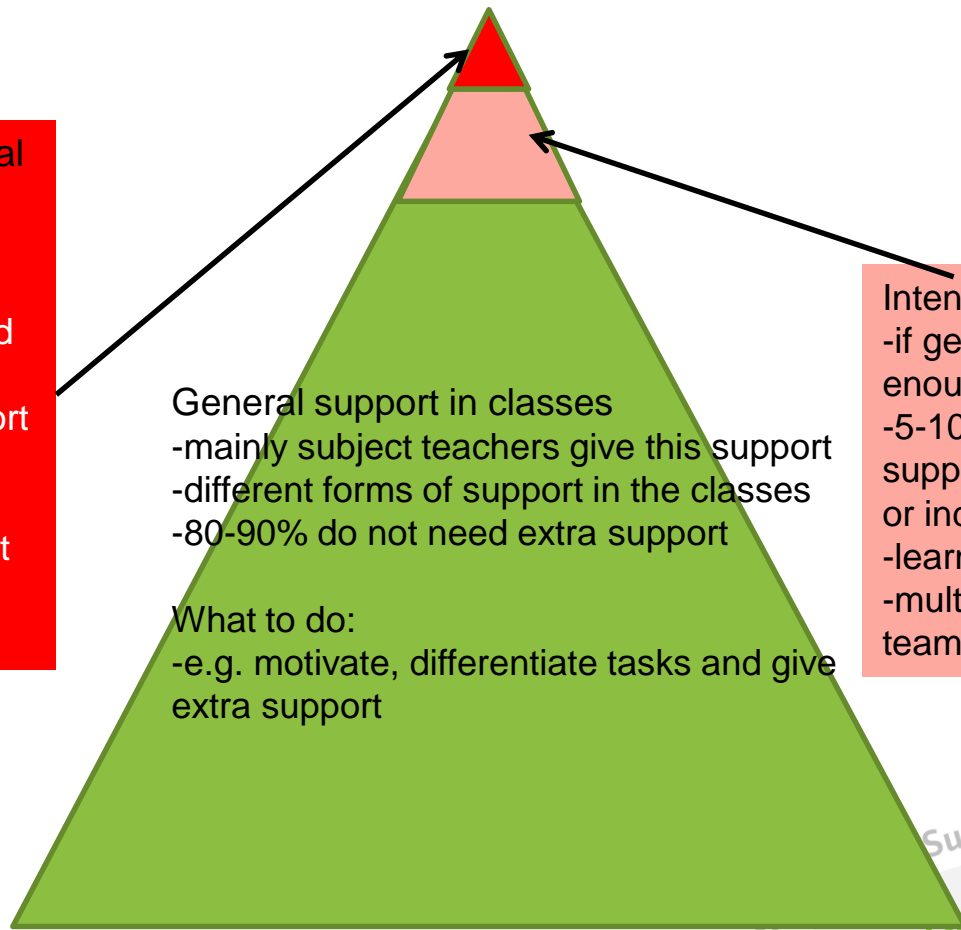
- mainly subject teachers give this support
- different forms of support in the classes
- 80-90% do not need extra support

What to do:

- e.g. motivate, differentiate tasks and give extra support

Intensified support

- if general support is not enough
- 5-10% need some extra support –in small groups, or individual support
- learning plans
- multidisciplinary welfare team



The aims of the project

- Core idea: Increase the equity and equality
- The first aim of the project
 - is to enhance the weak literacy skills of the adolescents generally and specifically
 - increase reading and writing motivation
 - by using varying pedagogical reading and writing methods, develop new tools, use useful digitalization
- The second aim is to develop school-specific models for improving reading and writing skills.
- The third is to plan a virtual Literacy Support Centre and carry out a guide book

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Interventions

- The main intervention focus is on reading and writing skills at the grades 9 of four pilot schools in Oulu and Rovaniemi
- Special and general support are based on assessment and individual learning plans (IEP) with multi-professional teams
 - reading and writing screening tests
 - individual tests
 - other tests?

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The interventions comprise

- reading motivation and positive, supportive feedback, reading fluency and spelling, executive functions and self-regulation, reading and writing strategies, genre pedagogy, digital tools and online reading, emphasizing literacy skills in classes and motivate all students in reading

Extra support is planned and given by special education teachers, subject teachers, researchers, special needs assistants

-individually, in small groups, in classes

We try help the students get over the transition period to secondary level (vocational school or upper secondary education), prevent drop-outs

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The possible impacts

- Better reading and writing skills
- Better reading and writing strategies
- Better online reading and critical reading
- Stronger motivation to read and write, stronger self-confidence as a reader (reading as a hobby)

=> Help students in their school going and boost forward

How to measure impacts:

- Tests, questionnaires
- Interviews
- Observations

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The final results

A virtual Literacy Support Centre will be developed

- offers expert assistance to the students, parents and teachers

A guide book

- The point is to clear up the importance of literacy
- Provide knowledge and new views of literacy
- Give practical tools for teacher education
- Help teachers to plan support in classes and in special education (dyslexic adolescents and students with weak skills) and promote literacy skills generally

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Thanks!



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