



Personal experience at school

# PECHAKUCHA

*A reflective period*

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**Speed, time and distance.** *Blurred landscape from the train at sunset.*

## **Perception**

Perception is key to the way we understand the world. According to how we see things, we develop an attitude and our actions and behavior depend greatly on that attitude.

## **Light**

We need light to see properly, light brings contrast and clearness. Knowledge enlightens us. Back in Spain we were already applying methodology we have been studying at the University, but we did not always have clear concepts. Knowing the basics makes things easier and more meaningful.

## **Focus**

Being focused means also being centred, and that's the way you get a sharp and accurate view.

## **Time out and distance**

We need distance to get the whole picture and to see clearly. When we are too close things are not clear, especially when we are moving very fast or when we are stressed. This time in the United Kingdom has given us an opportunity to take a step back and see our classes and the Spanish Educational System from another perspective.

## **Speed**

Sometimes we are going so fast that we are not fully aware of where our steps lead us and that applies to society, the Educational system and to our own lives.

**Business world.** *Old and new logo at Bourne Community College.*



## **Progress or process**

The school is managed like a business and it is all about progress; parents and students will judge the school based on results, said the deputy head. In my eyes, this approach puts human aspects at risk of being lost. As it happens, in education the process is essential for the development of the person. Most strategies for motivating students are extrinsic and teachers should try to develop intrinsic motivation in students, as that is how the student will be engaged for a life time in the exercise of learning.

Another aspect to bear in mind is that prioritizing progress we encourage competitiveness and individualism instead of team work and human power.

## **Image or content**

Sometimes the image doesn't match with the content. Sometimes highlighted presentation doesn't mean an outstanding content and sometimes putting a lot of effort on the surface diverts the attention from what really matters. In the picture a student is copying from another picture, the result may be nice, but it is not an authentic creation.

## **Uniform**

Students wearing uniforms is another way of taking care of the appearance, but it is also a way of bringing students closer to the world of business and money. All of them are the same. There are no differences, which sometimes could be an advantage, but it is not. There is no room for self-identity. They are not even allowed to wear a scarf or anything out of standards.



**Think outside the box.**

*Stone sculpture at Seven Sisters.*

## **Drama, Cooking, Music and Art.**

British schools offer these subjects for students until Year 9. I find this absolutely outstanding. This allows the students to express themselves, to be creative, to move around and to be playful in an academic context. I truly believe that arts are an essential part of education and *food for the soul*. “It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge” said Einstein.

## **Moving around the surface or going deeper**

School walls are full of messages, great ones, by the way, but I am afraid most of it is just visual noise. Sometimes I have the feeling that the messages say something that doesn't adjust to reality. *Think outside the box* is one of those messages. But students are not even allowed to wear the uniform differently, and rules are very strict in many ways.

The problem is when we assimilate the message but only superficially and we forget about the real meaning. To think outside the box we need first to be aware of the box, to identify our boundaries and then make the effort to go beyond them. I am thinking about the film The Truman show. The character believed a lie until something started not working properly, he started posing questions, asking himself, not taking anything for granted; he started breaking the rules, which was not supposed to happen, until one day he actually finds the borders of his fake little world – the box- and he breaks out. Have we really identified the “box” around education?