

# TURNING THE SWITCH (NO REWINDING POSSIBLE) MULTIMEDIA CHALLENGES FOR CULTURE EDUCATION

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Renewed language of arts education  
2\_3 Digital Media, popular culture and Arts education

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This contribution focuses on the trajectory which the CANON Cultural Unit of the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training started some years ago with regard to multimedia literacy.

Creativity is a matter of showing respect for the language which most closely matches your personality. We live in an age which over-valorises the merit of verbal communication. In reality this skill is very unevenly distributed. There are many young people who feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts and emotions in dance, music or visual imagery... But in daily life these are languages which we tend to relegate to the sidelines. Little effort is made to explore the type of language with which youngsters feel most at home, but this is exactly what offers the best opportunities for creative education.

The digital revolution is currently going through its second wave: the majority of multimedia users are no longer just consumers of new technologies, but are *multimedia literate people* ready to appropriate these technologies, to use them for self-development and to express themselves. Because children and young people today are growing up in an IT society, they have a different way of processing information (creative, multi-disciplinary, lateral) than previous generations (logical, linear). Using a multimedia approach in the education context reflects more the living environment of the young, and therefore gives more opportunities to motivate them to learn.

In 2005, the CANON Cultural Unit launched the "INgeBEELD" project, following research into the current state of audiovisual education in Flemish education (2004). It is a specific initiative to support ICT-use in media and arts literacy, and aims at an integrated vision of audiovisual education, stemming from a coherent vertical (from the first year of nursery school to the last year of secondary school) and horizontal (across all subject areas and courses) approach, which is consistent with the existing curriculum.

Practical materials were developed for compulsory education (INgeBEELD 1 = 3-8 years, INgeBEELD 2 = 6-14 years, INgeBEELD 3 = 12-18 years, [www.ingebeeld.be](http://www.ingebeeld.be)). An accompanying trajectory for teacher training was also developed.

In addition to the practical materials, a 'media wisdom' platform ([www.ingebeeld4.be](http://www.ingebeeld4.be)) was developed for teachers in training and in practice. The platform offers the possibility of self-work on multimedia literacy via five different 'worlds'. The idea: to develop an educational audiovisual circuit and discourse to help educators and teachers to train their students in different aspects of media wisdom and thus, over the longer term, achieve complete integration of this wisdom into the Flemish education programme. The platform went online in April 2009 and is currently in further development and expansion.

In addition to the absolute need for the opening up of school culture to multimedia literacy, this trajectory highlights the need to build up a multimedia curriculum, and to train teachers to be able to create a place for multimedia literacy in their daily teaching programme. In other words: how do we go from media as an arts education discipline to multimedia literacy from an arts educational perspective.

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