

My first dictionary of science

Presentation

My first dictionary of science is a very **special** book. It is special because it has been **written by boys and girls** of five, six, seven and eight years old who think like you and who are the same age as you. It is also special because they have written it **for you**. And finally is a special book because it's not a story but a **dictionary**. And a dictionary for you, made with everything that boys and girls of your age know, is something very rare: it's a **different** kind of book, **original and new**, that I think you **will like very much!**

But what is a dictionary?

A dictionary, according to the boys and girls themselves, is a book that explains what certain words mean, but it's also a book that tells you how to write these words and how you use them.

A dictionary is also a book that you don't have to read in a single day, rather you can look at it little by little and read bits more than once, because no doubt every time you do you will find new ideas and information. And remember that you can start reading it at any page, even the last one!

When the boys and girls made this dictionary, they used all their imagination to try and explain to you what each word means. And they did this by saying what the word meant and also how and when they used it, they even drew it!

And what will you find?

In this dictionary, you will find **words, definitions**, explanations, and **drawings**.

But how many and what words?

This dictionary will tell you about 90 words and 128 different meanings because there are words that mean more than just one thing. The words of this first dictionary of science are very basic words used by experts in different scientific disciplines (such as mathematics, medicine, physics, chemistry, biology, law, etc.) with a specific meaning. Boys and girls like you have heard and have used some of these words (*water, brain, space, human rights, experiment, energy, ice, number, computer, zero, etc.*) and no doubt you already know a lot about these words, but perhaps you would like to know more. Well, this dictionary will explain words to you in an easy and understandable way. But don't think that the definitions of these words have been made by just one boy or girl, not at all! Instead, they have been built up from everything that 500 boys and girls knew about them, because between all of you, you definitely do know what this dictionary has to say!

How did we do it?

The children that worked on this project come from primary years one and two from the schools Annexa Joan-Puigbert de Girona and Sant Nicolau de Sabadell. For three school years (2009-2012), these children became little-big lexicographers (the people who make dictionaries) and produced files in which they explained the meaning of the words and they also did a drawing. All this material was entered into a computer and various experts (language, teaching and science experts in) have studied it. So, these experts made the definitions using the accumulated knowledge of the boys and girls. They only selected information that is true from the scientific point of view, and based on this selection of information they have built a single definition, which is the one contained in this dictionary. Now here's a secret: no information was added that had not been provided by the students!

The experts built up the definitions using clear language and they used words that were included in the definitions made by the boys and girls. They followed a definition model that was sentence-based, including the reader in the wording and trying to contextualise the meaning of the words. The selection of the content was made on the basis of more general uses, and never on just possible uses. This is why there are words which, even though they might have other meanings, only include those that the boys and girls have mentioned. Finally, a drawing made by the boys and girls was chosen for each definition. This drawing is aimed at complementing the explanation of the word.

All in all, we believe that we have put together an original dictionary: original because it is adapted to the needs of children of such early age groups, original because it was made using the knowledge and words of children aged 5 to 8 years, and also original because the recipients are boys and girls who are just starting to read and to write.

A dictionary is a work made by team of people!

As a dictionary is never made by just one person, it is necessary to thank everyone who participated in this collaboration.

Firstly, a very big thank you to the true architects of the work: the boys and girls from the schools Annexa-Joan Puigbert (Girona) and Sant Nicolau (Sabadell) in the first (years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011) and second years of primary (years 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012), and to the teachers who accompanied their work through this journey. Maite Agustí, Joel Aranda, Judith Baró, Francesc Brugué, Salut Camps, Montse Escalera, Núria Llobet, Susanna Mestres, Inés Morera de la Vall, Míriam Muñoz (coord.), Núria Ribot, Francesc Solé, Montse Valentí, Isabel Vela, Magda Urgelés (coord.). And to Carina Colomé who believed in the project right from the start.

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Lastly, although she should really be the first, because she gave me the idea and the strength to go ahead with the project, I want to thank my daughter Martina for her curiosity for words, and the fact that when she was 5 she would not stop asking me: "Mum, what does this word mean? And what about that one?". Her insistence led me to the conclusion that is the origin of the whole project: this girl needs a dictionary!

Have a very good read!

Rosa Estopà (Girona, February, 2013)