

Teaching and Learning  
with Living Heritage

A Resource kit for  
teachers

# Glöcklerlauf in physics, art, German, and computer classes in Austria

**Age of students:** 10 to 14 years old

The Glöcklerlauf celebrations take place every year on 5 January in the Salzkammergut region of Austria. During the Glöcklerlauf parade, men, women and children wear costumes with colourful illuminated caps and bells. The Glöckler move in groups from house to house and through the villages to protect the people, the landscape and all animals from demons and calamity. In return, they receive drinks, snacks and even money for their work and help. Teachers collaborated to integrate this living heritage in several school subjects across different grades: German language, physics, art, computer-aided design (CAD) modules in computer classes, and an extracurricular project.

See the film [↗](#)

# Learning objectives

## Art (Grade 7): Creating cap patterns

- ▶ Transferring the patterns of the caps and cut them out;
- ▶ Constructing the caps.

## Computer classes: Digitizing cap patterns using computer-aided design (CAD) programmes (8th grade)

- ▶ Drawing two-dimensional patterns and ornaments using CAD software and print them out.

## German language: Reading skills (Grade 5)

- ▶ Improving reading skills and text comprehension in German;
- ▶ Enhancing the ability to summarize information.

## Physics: Acoustics (Grade 6)

- ▶ Learning about how sound waves are created and their properties, using the example of the *Glöckler* bells;
- ▶ Measuring the physical properties of sound with the free mobile app Phyphox.

## Extracurricular project (Grades 5-8): Research and information gathering

- ▶ Designing and conduct a small survey among students and some parents about living heritage in general, with a special focus on the *Glöcklerlauf* tradition;
- ▶ Presenting the survey results to peers;
- ▶ Collecting information, prepare short texts and give brief presentations about the living heritage practised in the region.

## Objectives related to the ICH element:

- ▶ Learning about living heritage in general and about the ICH practised in the region;
- ▶ Learning about the *Glöcklerlauf* tradition, including how it is practised within the community, the patterns and symbols present on the *Glöcklerkappe* (illuminated caps) and the meaning of the *Glöckler*-bells.

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# Preparation

## Description of the ICH element and the way it is practised today:

The *Glöcklerlauf* is a popular celebration in the Salzkammergut region of Austria, attended by locals and tourists alike. Since it has been practised for over two centuries, local communities consider it a part of their identity. On 5 January, the eve of Epiphany, groups parade through their village wearing white robes, cow bells and the ‘caps’ (*Glöcklerkappe*) - large wooden structures mounted on participants’ heads with decorative patterns and lights. These illuminated caps are meticulous

works of art that are entirely handmade. They are decorated with patterns that are meaningful for the community, such as a remarkable place or a valuable trade, or with geometric artistic designs. Often, several generations of *Glöckler* designs come from a single family, with fathers transmitting their cap-building skills to their children. In the past, only unmarried young men could take part in the procession, though with time, the practice has evolved and girls, boys, women and men now play an active role in ensuring its continuity. These celebrations have been listed on the national inventory of Austria since 2010.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Austrian Commission for UNESCO, *The “Glöcklerlauf” in Ebensee. Social Practices in Upper Austria, inscribed in 2010* (accessed on 30.10.2020)

### **Linkages between the ICH element and the school subject:**

The *Glöcklerlauf* celebration, along with the craftsmanship that goes into preparing the special parade costumes, were integrated into various school subjects. The history and meaning of the practice were analysed in German language classes and through an extracurricular project. The complex costumes, which are made by hand from wood, paper, lights and cowbells, served as examples in art, computer-aided design and physics classes.

### **Involvement of learners in the preparation of the activity:**

Martin, one of the students, is a *Glöckler*, as were both his father and grandfather in their youth. He is deeply involved in the celebration and eager to transmit the practice. Martin actively participated in the preparation of the activities revolving around the *Glöcklerlauf* tradition, volunteering to give presentations in front of his schoolmates about this local living heritage element. Learning with living heritage thus became a vibrant peer-to-

peer exchange, where Martin conveyed his passion and enriched lessons with real-life examples. Additionally, the research undertaken by the extracurricular group collected further information about the practice from parents and local bearers. The information was then shared with the entire school through pinboards and presentations.

### **Involvement of bearers and local community in the preparation and/or implementation of the activity:**

The *Glöcklerlauf* takes place in many villages across the Salzkammergut region, each with their own group of practitioners. Teachers found local community members and living heritage practitioners to be easy to work with and friendly and generous with their time. Bearers and craftspeople provided teachers with valuable information and materials that greatly helped them to develop the pedagogic materials. At a teacher's recommendation, students also visited a handicraft workshop and spoke with one of the *Glöcklerkappe* artisans, which was a memorable experience for the group.

## **Description of the activity**

The *Glöcklerlauf* celebrations were selected for this school project for two reasons: first, because Martin, one of the students, was a *Glöckler* himself and second, because the parade was soon approaching. A team of interested teachers developed a comprehensive interdisciplinary programme aimed at **integrating various dimensions of this living heritage in lessons across all grades.**

In German class, students improved their reading skills and comprehension by studying different texts on the customs related to the *Glöcklerlauf*, which elaborated on the patterns and symbols used to decorate the caps worn by the *Glöckler*. During three lessons of approximately 20 minutes each, students received worksheets of varying difficulty levels to complete individually or in teams. Students learned to appreciate differences and similarities in the practice across communities.

Students in physics class worked on exercises to be completed in groups of two over the course of four lessons. The bells used by the *Glöckler* and other types of bells were provided by teachers for experiments. Using a free mobile app called Phyphox, the students recorded the sounds of the various bells and learnt about the physical properties of sound waves.

The *Glöcklerkappe* also inspired lessons in art and computer-aided design (CAD) classes. Students received first-hand information about the *Glöcklerlauf* from their fellow student, Martin. Together, they looked at pictures from the parade and close-ups of different patterns and symbols decorating the caps. In the two handicrafts lessons, they designed a *Glöcklerkappe* structure and patterns following a given template and then cut and assembled them into a cap. The CAD lessons

used software to draw increasingly complex two-dimensional designs. **These activities encouraged and highly motivated students to cooperate and learn one from another, and they were inspired by what they could achieve.**

The classroom activities were complemented by the efforts of an extracurricular group comprised of students from the 5th to the 8th grades. They sought out more information about the Glöcklerlauf online, interviewed practitioners and visited a handicraft workshop. In the artisan's workshop, they learned how caps are made and about the importance of the Glöcklerlauf for local communities and tourism. This visit fostered a sense of belonging

to the community and motivated the students to build their own cap with symbols representing local living heritage elements, the school and UNESCO. The group compiled their findings into an informative exhibition to share with all the pupils at the school. They also conducted a survey on ICH among the school's students and their parents. Interestingly, **80% of the parents highly favoured the integration of ICH in school-based education.**

The preparation of the activities took the teachers about two to three weeks. However, once the activities began, the preparation continued as an ongoing process.

## Learning outcomes

While the *Glöcklerlauf* celebrations are attracting fewer and fewer young participants, most students from the UNESCO Welterbe Mittelschule Bad Goisern felt a strong connection to this living heritage practice. They found the examples given by teachers and the objects integrated in the classes to be familiar and meaningful. As a result of this more experiential approach, teachers noticed that their **students showed greater motivation to participate**. Although some exercises were more challenging, such as the digitization of complex patterns, students enjoyed them and achieved excellent results. All the learning objectives were met and teachers expressed interest in continuing to teach with living heritage in the future.



Designing the traditional *Glöcklerlauf* caps during the CAD lesson was much more complex and challenging [than the simple geometric patterns we usually do], but students found it more interesting and meaningful, as it was related to a practice that they all knew.

– Martin, student, Austria

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