"ARCHITECTURE IS A CRYSTAL"  
(GIO PONTI)

Subject areas
GEOPGRAPHY  HISTORY  ITALIAN  URBAN GEOGRAPHY

Pirelli, a century and a half of projects for the future

Pirelli has been behind some of the great urban transformations and innovations in Milan: the district where the Pirelli Tower stands, the Bicocca area to the north of the city, and the project for the world’s first metropolitan greenway (from Milan to Monza).

Meetings:
1. The Pirelli Tower: a building and a symbol, which turned 60 in 2020 and is as contemporary as ever thanks to its structure that, like a crystal, is traversed by light and that illuminates the city at night. We will study the architect Gio Ponti’s masterpiece with its diamond-shaped plan, designed to improve the conditions of those who inhabit it.
2. The Bicocca district: from the fifteenth-century villa from which it takes its name, to the historic cooling tower that is now the heart of the Pirelli Headquarters. Through videos, photographs and stories we will discover how the area has been transformed, all the way to the project created by the architect Vittorio Gregotti.

Activities: The students will play the part of tourist guides, creating interactive maps with a wealth of content to share with lots of new visitors.

The course will take place entirely online and will be in the form of two live meetings.

#cityofthefuture #pirellone #smartcity #bicocca #coolingtower #greenway #sustainablemobility

A look at some of the subjects and documents selected for this course

The exterior of the Pirelli Tower  The interiors, the design and work in the Tower  Tomorrow’s urban traffic
Pirelli, a century and a half of races

The greatest challenge facing Pirelli is to produce tyres that perform well and are safe. In order to keep innovating its technology, the company has always taken part in sports competitions on 2 and 4 wheels.

Meetings:
1. 1907-2022: the Peking-Paris motor race was the first in a string of challenges that has continued to this day on tracks across the world: in Formula 1, in rallies, in motorcycle championships and in cycling races.
2. And not just men – women too: countless female champions have won competitions on Pirelli tyres.

Activities: The students will be divided into groups and will learn how to produce podcasts with the most exciting stories from the world of racing on two and four wheels, which they can then share online with their peers.

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The research and experimentation that is needed to produce most of the objects that surround us is more complex than one might think. A tyre, for example, is made up of dozens of very different ingredients, including natural rubber, and its production involves a whole series of processes and stages.

Meetings:
1. Where does rubber come from? How is this precious material extracted and why does it need to be vulcanised? And then, who was the Nobel laureate Giulio Natta? What did he invent for Pirelli and what studies are being carried out today in the research and development laboratories to make sure tyres are increasingly sustainable?
2. Tyres and rubber objects have also inspired the world of culture: we’ll find out how artists, photographers and writers have portrayed this aspect of industry over the years.

Activities: At the end of the first meeting, the students will be helped to perform a search in the Pirelli online archive. Using an app, they will be able to think up and create an original comic story of their own on the most elastic of all materials, which can then be shared on the web.

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