



Space Detectives

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NUCLIO is a Portuguese non-profit organization with a strong record of investing in science education and outreach. We have developed and implemented many activities mostly directed to a young audience, in a bid to awaken and reinforce the interest that young people devote to Astronomy and all things spatial. In this framework, we have created a week-long program called Space Detectives, supported by the Municipality of Cascais, based on a story-line that provided a number of challenges and opportunities for learning matters as diverse as the electro-magnetic spectrum, means of communication, space travel, the martian environment, coding and robotics. We report on the first session that took place in December 2016. We had as participants several kids aged 9 to 12, with a mixed background in terms of interest in the sciences. Their response varied from enthusiastic to somewhat less interested, depending on the nature of the subject and the way it was presented – a reaction not necessarily related to its complexity. This week was taken as something of a trial run, in preparation for the European Commission-funded project "Stories of Tomorrow", to be implemented in schools. The individual activities and the way they were related to the story-line, as well as the smooth transition from one to the next, were subject to an analysis that will allow for improvements in the next installments of this program. We believe this is an excellent approach to the goals of using Space and Astronomy as an anchor for generating and keeping interest in the scientific areas, and of finding new and richer ways of learning.