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Danny Singh's laughter exercises

Mojca Belak and Naturese

Stephanie Clarke's "Down, Dirty and Divine"

What was IATEFL Slovenia's international conference like?

How did the students do on the IATEFL Slovenia competitions and literary contest this year?

Finding and creating resources

This series of articles from the British Council aims to help you think about *your* teaching and bring new ideas and activities into your classroom. The series covers topics including homework, working with large classes and finding resources. Today we look at **finding and creating resources**.

Many English teachers don't have resources such as posters, photocopies, internet access or even books.

Read these comments from teachers. Do you agree with them?

'You don't need new technology to create an effective English lesson; you need imagination.'

'When there are no materials the teacher and the students are the main resource.'

Kuheli, India

Geoffrey, Malawi

What can we use to help us teach English?

- Draw or cut out pictures from magazines to **present** new words and **revise** language (for example numbers, letters, sports, daily routines, greetings). Stick the pictures on card if possible to make reusable **flashcards**.
- Use yourself and your students as teaching aids: For example, you can teach clothes, describe where things are, and practise parts of the face using the people in the class.
- Mime actions (sleeping, cooking, reading...) and ask the students to guess where you are and what you are doing.
- Use your voice. Beginners can listen and repeat new words. Higher levels can listen to the teacher then talk about their own experiences.
- Students can learn new songs and **chants** by repeating each line after the teacher. Adding actions to songs is fun and makes them easier to remember.
- Ask your students to find newspaper articles to discuss in class.
- We can even use old newspapers as craft material and tear it into shapes to make vocabulary items.
- Ask students to collect **authentic materials** in English such as train timetables or application forms to practise **dialogues** in different situations: *When is the next train to...? What's your surname?*
- Students can bring in a picture to describe or a photo of their family to talk about.
- Use objects in and around the classroom to represent words. *This table/pencil/chair is an animal. It can swim but it can't walk. It's a ...?'*

Be creative with limited resources and use your students' knowledge and creativity to actively involve everyone in learning English.

What do you think?

Dario, from Argentina writes:

*I make **flashcards** from old magazines and books to help me teach English. I also draw stick figures (on the board or on cards) to show people doing different actions or in different situations. I'm a terrible artist but my students have fun guessing what my drawings mean! I paste the pictures onto card and keep them in a folder so that we can use them again and again. I use **flashcards** to teach new language or to have fun with English in class. Here are some ideas: Show the class 10 cards then mix them up and remove one - ask which one is missing. Show the students 10 cards then turn them over and ask them to remember the pictures. Students work in small groups to invent a story about 5 picture cards. Hold up two pictures of famous people and ask the students to invent their conversation.*



A classroom activity - a back to back game

You can use objects from in and around the classroom to practise giving and understanding instructions.

- Ask students to collect a few things in the classroom (pencils, erasers, pieces of chalk, stones, leaves etc).
- Place the students in pairs back to back.
- Student A has to place his objects in a pattern and then tell his partner what order they are in. Student B has to listen and recreate the pattern.
- Tell more advanced students that they can't use the name of the object. This is good for practising adjectives. 'Put the long, black thing next to the soft, round object.'

Glossary

Authentic material is English texts which you can use in class but that are not designed for teaching.

A **chant** is similar to a song; a chant has rhythm but no tune.

Dialogue is conversation.

Flashcards are pictures on cards to help students to understand new vocabulary without translation.

Presenting language is introducing new language.

Revising is practising language that learners have seen previously.

Think about

- How could you use a newspaper as a teaching resource?
- Can you cut out pictures of people and ask your students to describe what they are wearing, doing or saying?
- Perhaps there are photographs that would prompt your students to discuss recent news or sports events.
- Children could use pieces of newspaper (and their imagination!) to tear out shapes of animals or favourite food and talk about them with their classmates.

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Dear readers,

Summer is almost here! Are you looking forward to it? I'm sure you are – after all, this is the best part of our job, isn't it?

This issue is mostly about our competitions, but you can also read some interesting articles we received from some of the speakers who took part in our conference.

There are also some classroom ideas, and we hope you find them useful – we all know how hard it is to sit in a classroom in June, just waiting for the holidays to begin...

If you're planning to go abroad during the summer, to visit an English speaking country, take part in a summer course or anything like that, please think about writing an article for our next issue. Wouldn't it be great if you could brag about the things you saw, did or experienced? ;)

I wish you long and carefree summer holidays with lots of fun in the sun!

Dolores Malić



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The Power of Laughter Exercises in Learning

by Danny Singh



Danny Singh, born and raised in London, but now based in Rome, gives creative English language lessons and teacher training courses all over Italy and abroad. He also offers stimulating monthly presentations on language related issues at Rome's biggest international bookshop and is visible on

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Introduction

I was lucky enough to be invited to the IATEFL teaching conference in Slovenia, in which I gave a one-hour presentation on this subject. As the workshop was quite successful, I thought I would put pen to paper and give readers a written summary, as the details are quite easily forgotten, as well as giving advice on how to put it all into practice.

Why use Laughter Exercises in the classroom?

There are many reasons why laughter exercises could be used in the classroom. It is not simply a question of warming up the students, or making them feel positive. It is far deeper than that. Students often enter the room with a tired, lazy body language. That is understandable to some extent. If they are adults who've been working or studying all day, the last thing they want to do is sit down and listen to someone blabbering on in a language that's already difficult to decipher. They need to get up and move and just 10-15 minutes of these exercises will completely change the atmosphere of the class. Children also have problems relating to energy and mood these days, thanks largely to their more static way of life.

Laughter has a strong link with emotion and so aids memory. Students and people in general remember information better if there is a link to humour or laughter. Therefore, laughter in all its forms should be a necessary part of teaching and learning.

As well as getting the blood circulating and creating endorphins, it opens up the creative, right side of the brain, stimulating ideas from within the student. This is not to be underestimated.

Once I've done a few minutes of laughter exercises, I can ask anything of my students and they will do it. All of those "out-



side the comfort zone” activities, which might provide embarrassment or inhibitions, go out the window once they’ve warmed up with these exercises. It becomes perfectly natural to ask a student to make strange facial expressions in front of another, or sing or dance, when normally they might well refuse.

Laughter exercises help to build group dynamics and team building. It becomes difficult for a student to fight against another, once he/she has laughed together. It reduces inhibitions in a way which many would find unbelievable. Shy students are less so after a few sessions of laughter exercises and that more extrovert part of them comes out, thereby giving them greater self-confidence.

The strongest impact of laughter exercises on a learner is the first time. From then on, it gets easier!

Not all students initially take to it. Some look confused, having been trained to sit down, be quiet and listen to a teacher talk, they are now being asked to express themselves freely and to make a lot of noise. These exercises become an inherent part of my lessons, students expect these exercises every lesson and will complain if they don’t get them.

If a student isn’t laughing with enormous enthusiasm, there is no problem. Everyone is free to laugh in his/her own way. It may take a while for a person to release their natural laughter, but when it comes, it’ll be worth it. The fact that a person is not laughing out loud does not mean they are not enjoying the activity.

Laughter Yoga versus Humour

I have my own personal sense of humour, which I use in teaching as well as non-teaching activities. Humour is great when it works, however, as humour is personal, it doesn’t always work. Some people might not understand your humour due to language, or quite simply, they don’t appreciate your form of humour. Others might even be offended!

Laughter Yoga transcends all these barriers of language, culture, religion, since it is based on facial gestures, body language and movement rather than through the spoken word. It is physiological, working on the body before it gets to the mind. This makes it less rational and more emotional.

On one occasion, I had to make a very difficult decision, one which could have had serious consequences on my teaching career. I was invited to a school in the northeast of Italy to give some of my laughter exercises, creative and dynamic activities to middle and high School students. Each class presents its own challenges, but one in particular, gave me a situation that I could never have envisaged. One of the students in that class had been killed a few days earlier and all his classmates were in mourning. The teacher who had invited me suggested that it might be better to avoid laughter with that particular class as they wouldn’t really be in the mood for it. I agreed, but reflected on the fact that laughter yoga doesn’t require any thinking or brainwork. Hence, I went ahead with my original lesson plan. The only thing I did differently was that I didn’t ask the students how they felt. The results were shocking, even for me. All the students broke into fits of laughter and their teachers were left speechless, having not seen their pupils laugh for at least a week.

A typical laughter session

The amount of time you spend doing laughter exercises with your students in any one lesson is entirely up to you, how you feel, the time of day, how much other course material you have to fit into your lesson and how your students react.

If I’m doing a one-day or weekend workshop, there’ll be at least two hours of laughter exercises. However, in a normal one-hour or 90 minute lesson, the laughter exercises will generally be around ten to fifteen minutes.

As demonstrated in the workshop, we begin with correct breathing; in through the nose and out through the mouth. We then do the clapping mantra, ho ho, ha ha ha before the laughs begin. I almost always begin with the Welcome laugh, as it seems the most appropriate. The other laughs I use will vary according to how I feel, my students and a series of other factors. In the workshop in Slovenia, I demonstrated the Welcome laugh, the three versions of the Milkshake laugh, the Bee laugh, the Laughter Cream and the Elephant laugh. We then finished off with the Swing laugh which I often do, as it helps to unite the group.

Between each laugh, there is the ho ho, ha ha ha mantra which the teacher uses discretionally to choose the right moment to



stop a particular laugh and move on to the next one. I'd also recommend some breathing between each laugh, as breathing is fundamental to almost every activity we do.

Laughing Even More

The eight or so laughs that I demonstrated in the workshop are more than enough to be getting on with, if you are going to use it as a 10-15 minute warm-up in your class. There are of course hundreds of different laughs which exist in laughter clubs all over the world. Ideally, if you enjoy this activity and see the benefits of it both in your teaching, as well as in your health and wellbeing, you should consider attending a local club in your area, thereby adding new laughs to your portfolio. If you have any difficulty finding a local club, feel free to contact me and I will help you.

After that, the next step would be to do a weekend training course in your country or even a one-week international training course. Apart from assimilating a number of laughs that you can use with different groups; kids, adults, businessmen and pensioners, you won't know when to stop laughing.

Even if you decide to limit yourself to the same few laughs each time, neither you nor your students will become bored, as we respond to the laughs in different ways at different times. They are never exactly the same!

Why I use Laughter Yoga in the class?

The first reason why I use laughter exercises in my lessons is to get the students moving, their blood flowing and their brains working. The consequences are that their inhibitions are reduced, their energy levels increased and they are willing to do more or less anything that I throw at them.

As the other activities that I use are often "outside the comfort zone" and physical, this gets them into the right frame of mind. Activities I use include; role-play, mime, voice work, singing, dancing, total physical response, drama, verb stretching, grammar massage, physical pronunciation and all kinds of games.

It should also be noted that I bring useful vocabulary and language into my laughs. When attending a typical laughter yoga session, a new laugh is demonstrated by a conductor and we then

all do it together, with very little explanation needed. However, as this is first and foremost an English language lesson, I not only demonstrate the movements, but explain using spoken language. When introducing the elephant laugh, I explain that it has a very long memory, not to mention trunk. The bee laugh is introduced by explaining its useful purpose, to extract nectar or pollen from a flower, in order for me to have my bread and honey for breakfast. The laughter cream goes through most parts of the body before we eventually get to laugh. In this way, the students are not only having fun and increasing their learning potential, but they are really learning words at the same time, often without fully realising it.

This is the greatest activity for group dynamics that I have discovered so far and along with other team building games that I apply such as dancing, singing and circle work ensures that my students always enjoy working together in harmony.

Further Reading

I would love to hear from any teachers who decide to use laughter exercises in their lessons. If you have any feedback, or wish to have any further sessions on this subject, feel free to contact me.

I would recommend reading the following two articles on the same subject (which can be found and printed directly from my website) and consulting the following three websites.

Note that the third website is a WebTV in which you can see 14 (so far) short video lessons, A short taste of English, **free ready-made video lessons** to use with your classes.

Articles

Laughter Yoga in English Language teaching
<http://www.hlomag.co.uk/aug08/mart02.htm>

Laughter is a serious business

<http://www.hlomag.co.uk/feb13/sart02.htm>

Sites

www.laughnlearn.net

www.laughteryoga.org

www.inmagicartwebtv.eu



“DOWN, DIRTY AND DIVINE: a spiritual ride through London’s underground”

by Rev. Stephanie Clarke



- Think globally
- Act locally
- Heal personally

The glorious dome of St. Paul’s Cathedral on the London skyline is one of the most famous sights in the world. But apart from the fact that it was designed by Sir Christopher Wren,

arguably Britain’s most well-known architect, and built after the previous cathedral was destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666, did you know that it was deliberately constructed along the lines of the ancient Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, Israel? When I say ‘along the lines’, I mean that St. Paul’s was constructed using sacred geometry, as was Solomon’s Temple, consisting of the most harmonious angles and proportions, with the intention of creating a sacred space that would increase and quicken the vibratory frequency of each person who entered in to pray and worship - thus affording an experience of being ‘closer to God’.

And now maybe you are asking ‘Why?’ What was the point of recreating an ancient Jewish temple in the heart of London? Why not simply build a classic Gothic European Christian type of cathedral with a tall spire that people could see from miles around? Well, Christopher Wren was a man of vision and ahead of his time. Apart from being an astronomer first and foremost and then an architect, he was a freemason and well-versed in esoteric knowledge. As a member of the Royal Society, he believed, like many other leading thinkers, statesman and monarchs, starting as far back as the 6th century, that London would be the New Jerusalem – the place that Jesus the Christ would return to at the time of the Second Coming. This notion of England’s messianic destiny began after the death of King Arthur. There was a popularly held belief that Arthur would return, perhaps in a different guise, when Britain was in despair and darkness, in order to lead the Britons into a time of peace and prosperity.

When the temple of Solomon was destroyed in 70 AD by the Romans, the twelve tribes of Israel were taken into captivity and scattered all over the Middle East. Wren and his contem-

poraries in the Royal Society believed that London would be the place where the lost tribes of Israel would gather at the time of the Second Coming and thus symbolize a homecoming and the beginning of a new age of peace and order.

Unfortunately, even though St Paul’s was completed in Wren’s lifetime, and he managed to rebuild 50 London parish churches, which had been burnt and destroyed, his full vision for the reconstruction of the City after the Fire was not implemented. He wanted the main city streets and city boundary line to be in alignment with the Kabbala, the Jewish Tree of Life, so that everyone who lived inside the city walls would be living inside sacred space. But after the Great Fire people needed homes and there was not enough time or money to take on a project of this magnitude and so houses went up in the same higgledy-piggledy fashion, along the same narrow winding streets, just like before the Fire.

The vision of London as the New Jerusalem was sustained by Britain’s monarchy and aristocracy until World War II but, sadly, in 1945, there was an urgent need to rebuild London after it had been heavily bombed during the war. No-one knew about the vision and even if they had, there would not have been sufficient time and resources to implement it. The vision went underground and this is exactly where *Down Dirty and Divine: a spiritual ride through London’s underground*” starts.

On September 25, 2011, I had a dream in which I was told to write a book about the spiritual history of London using the tube stations as my entry point. Over the next few days I was reminded about this instruction and when I went into meditation to ask for more guidance, I was told that I needed to write about London’s traumatic past around the sites of the tube stations and then include an affirmative prayer to heal the pain that had occurred at the various sites.

Furthermore, I was told that the book had to be published before the 2012 Olympics began because the Olympics represented a massive convergence of races and nations from all over the world who would be descending upon London to enjoy this magnificent sporting event and celebration of the human spirit. The book would be a spiritual tour guide which would give all these visitors a way to participate in the healing of the city by visiting the sites and praying to heal all the pain that has

been stuffed underground. The prayers would not only be a way for the light to be cast on the historical darkness but also a way for us to examine our own inner darkness – our shadow.

As I got up from my meditation, I was also reminded about Sir Christopher Wren and his belief that London would be the New Jerusalem. That was my starting point for the research. I then re-read Chapter 21 in the Bible's Book of Revelations about St. John's vision of the New Jerusalem. There were 12 city gates:

"12. It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel."

And it was a city of Divine Light and leader of all nations:

"23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

24 The nations will walk by its light..."

knew then that I had to write about 12 tube stations - but which ones exactly? As I did my research, focusing mainly on tube stations in the oldest parts of the City, one by one the 12 city gates into the depths of London's traumatic past were revealed to me.

The first one was London Bridge. It is on the South Bank of the River Thames in the borough of Southwark. From the Roman times and all through the mediaeval period, all of London's brothels were located here – as was Shakespeare's Globe Theatre – since all pious Londoners considered the theatre to be an immoral influence. Right around the corner from London Bridge tube station is Cross Bones Cemetery. This was where the prostitutes were buried, often sharing a grave with their illegitimate and unchristened babies. Christian burials in the grounds of the cathedrals or parish churches were very expensive but, it was believed, gave the deceased a better chance of getting to heaven. The prostitutes were buried in unconsecrated ground because they were considered to be sinners and therefore bound for hell. My prayer is for the healing of the fears that any of these women went to their graves with, for the healing of the insane notion that the location of a grave can determine the journey of the soul and for the healing of all warped religious and social attitudes towards sex and prostitution as sinful, shameful or dirty. I also pray for the healing of any trauma associated with sexual abuse such as rape, incest or domestic violence.

The fourth tube station is Liverpool Street. This station was built on the ground of the former St Mary of Bethlehem Priory which became famous as a mental hospital from 1272 onwards. Usually mental patients were thrown out of their homes and left to die on the streets because it was believed they were cursed and possessed by the devil. At St. Mary of Bethlehem Priory, various tactics were employed to exorcise the devil out of these patients which included dunking them in ice cold water and whipping them as punishment for their sins. They were mostly chained up like prisoners and treated as if they were lower than animals until the Victorians came along in the 19th century when the mental patients provided family entertainment on a Sunday afternoon. The wardens would tease the patients before the crowd arrived so that they would put on a good show. This would keep the prices high for the entry tickets. My prayer here is for the healing of the trauma that all these mental patients had to suffer in the "care" of St. Mary of Bethlehem Priory. It is also for the healing of all those who were given charge over the patients and who abused that responsibility out of ignorance of their own



1

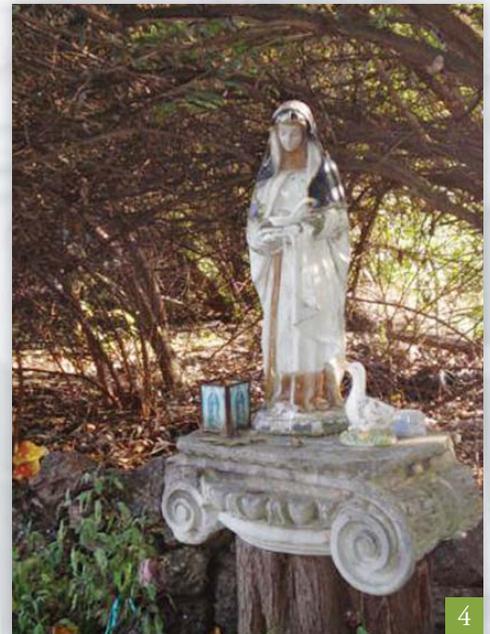
- 1 *St. Pauls with Mini Monument*
- 2 *Stn 7 Tyburn Tree Plaque*
- 3 *UG Mind the Gap CT*
- 4 *Stn 1 Crossbones 2 Mary Statue*
- 5 *Stn 12 Devil Temple Gargoyle*
- 6 *Crossbones Plaque*



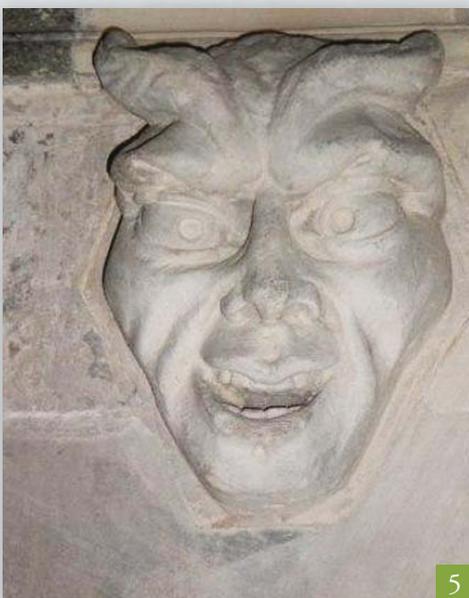
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6

spiritual nature and the essential spiritual nature of the patients. The prayer is not just for the patients at St. Mary of Bethlehem but for all those with the appearance of a mental illness and all those who have been called to care for them, whether inside or outside a mental institution. By the way, did you know that the word “bedlam” which means chaos or confusion is a shortened form of “St. Mary of Bethlehem”?

The seventh tube station is Marble Arch which is right next to Hyde Park Corner. Did you know that this was the site of the most famous hanging tree in all of London – the Tyburn Triple Tree. “Triple” because it was a wooden three-cornered structure that allowed for up to 24 people to be hanged at the same time. Most who were hanged were criminals – even if their crime was only petty theft – but many were hanged for treason. Their “crime” against the crown was that they refused to renounce their Catholic faith when King Henry VIII broke away from the Pope in Rome and announced himself to be Head of the Church of England. Hangings were a major form of entertainment in Mediaeval London. People would pay high prices to get the top seats on the stands with the best view. My prayer is for the healing of the fear and pain in those who were sent to their deaths in this violent and undignified way, being mocked by the crowds and jeered at for their “sins”. It is also for the healing of the violent streak in all of us that enjoys paying to be “entertained” by violent movies and video games. It is for the healing of our culture of violence that sensationalises war and conflict because it sells.

It is for the healing of our own inner voice of violence that judges and attacks ourselves as much as our neighbours and it is a call for compassion towards all victims and perpetrators of violence. “Forgive them for they know not what they do”.

If you would like know more about the dark secrets of London, please go to Rev. Steph’s website www.ministryoflight.org. where you can also order your own signed copy of “Down Dirty and Divine: a spiritual ride through London’s underground”. You may also be interested in Rev. Steph’s 2nd book: “The Miss-Adventures of an Irreverent Reverend”. This is a humorous autobiographical recounting of some of her life lessons on her spiritual journey and her impossible dream to start a multi-racial ministry during the Apartheid era in South Africa.

By day, Stephanie Clarke promotes English in Action in schools in Slovenia. EIA is a one-week in-school intensive communication course taught by qualified native speaker teachers who are flown direct from the UK. Courses are available from age 6 – 19. www.englishinaction.com. The Slovene micro-site is almost ready. www.englishinaction.si. You can contact Stephanie at sclarke@englishinaction.com.

A Teachers’ Development Programme is being scheduled from 19-22 August which will give teachers some new inspiration for motivating the students to speak as well as some intensive speaking practise for themselves throughout the course. Please register with Sandra Vida at IATEFL before June 15, 2013. www.iatefl.si





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20th IATEFL Slovenia Conference

by Nataša Božić Grojić



It's been a while since I came back from Slovenia, but if you have visited this blog before, you will know that sometimes I write about events long after they have happened. In this particular case I have a great story to tell and I feel that, like all stories, it deserves to be told from the beginning.

The story begins on the day I received the letter from ELTA Serbia telling me that I was elected to be one of their two official representatives at the annual IATEFL conference in Slovenia. That also meant that I was going to present at a conference for the first time. You might be surprised by this, knowing that I blog about TEFL, but before Slovenia I always managed to come up with different excuses for not presenting. Now was the right time for me to face my fears.

Two months later I was on my way. I arrived in Ljubljana a day before the conference, so I had a chance to go sightseeing. Ljubljana is beautiful

The next day I met a group of Serbian teachers who were also going to the conference and we boarded the van that was going to take us to Topolšica. As I was getting onto the van, I saw Shelly Terell's smiling face and she gave me a hug.



I am so glad that I have managed to meet Shelly face to face. She is every bit as wonderful as I thought she would be. A great thing about being a blogger is that you end up having a large PLN and that, from time to time, you actually get to meet the people in it.

Another person I met face to face was Saša Sirk. Saša has been in my PLN from the very beginning. I met her in my first BaW, where she was one of the moderators.



And don't you dare tell me that my online friends are not my real friends, because they are.

The only session we had on Thursday was Shelly's Motivating our Learners to Write with Webtools. She shared a bunch of free online resources with us, together with great ready-made lesson plans. Her presentation is here.

Friday started with Having Fun with English, a plenary by Vanessa Reis Esteves. She greeted us at the door, thus modelling what she was going to teach us later (get students into the English mode by greeting them at the door, build relationships on the way out, set the tone for the next lesson, always provide some positive feedback). She talked about the similarities between children and teenagers (impatient, distracted, demanding), as well as the differences (children are eager and energetic, teenagers are demotivated and apathetic). Finally, she shared some fun activities that can be used with both age groups.

Bojana Nikic Vujic had a workshop on Critical Thinking in EFL Curriculum. Step by step, she led us through the creation of a lesson plan which included critical thinking skills according to Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. The process included the creation of a first draft of the lesson plan and its revision after the introduction of the Taxonomy. We learnt how to include critical thinking activities into the textbooks we were using.

My presentation was next and, yes, I survived. There were some technical issues, which reminds me: If you are new to

presenting, take your own laptop with you whenever possible. And don't use fancy fonts you downloaded from the internet, as they might turn into something else on somebody else's computer. And don't apologise for the technical difficulties you are experiencing. And don't walk in front of the slides while you are presenting.



Having said that, I think (hope) that everything went well. Quite a lot of people turned up, which was a pleasant surprise. It was almost the same as teaching a class, in fact.

And, if you would like to hear me giving this presentation again, I will be doing it at the Virtual Round Table in May.

Ok, let's move on.

Willy Cardoso's workshop Open Space: Becoming the Best Teacher You Can Be was for me one of the highlights of the conference. You can read more about Open Space Principles here. Willy gave us little post-it notes and we wrote onto them a topic connected to teacher development that we wanted to discuss. Then we voted and three topics were selected. I am happy to say that mine was one of the three ("I want to keep improving as a teacher"). Three groups were formed based on the topics, but we were free to roam about the room and change groups. Finally, a summary was created for each group, as you can see in Willy's post (I linked to it above). It is easy to see how Open Space Principles can be used in the classroom and adapted to various levels and age groups.

Shelly's plenary Wings and Webs was about the social networks that educators create in order to share resources and collaborate. Shelly looked at reasons why teachers connect and she also shared places where someone who doesn't have a PLN could go to in order to start connecting. Her talk was something that resonated with me deeply. I have been a part of the large international family of educators since 2008 and I have a hard time remembering what my life was like before that.

Jean McCollister and her border collie Bamm Bamm taught us about Animal-assisted Language Teaching. Dogs are used in therapy, as well as in teaching. In a language classroom, a



dog is a strong motivator and the presence of a dog also has cognitive benefits. It provides mental stimulation and improves concentration and attention. This is true, since I have to admit that I remember everything from this workshop vividly. My attention was on the dog all the time and I remember everything he did.

Here's more about what Jean and Bamm Bamm do.



Our first plenary on Saturday was Peter Dyer's Getting Them to Speak. It was very interactive and lively, full of practical and fun activities. For one hour, we improvised, we passed around imaginary gifts, we invented stories and we lived in the fantasy world. These activities are easy to prepare and materials light (in fact, there was no PowerPoint).

The next workshop I attended was Danny Singh's The Power of Laughter Exercises in Learning. To find out more about the application of laughter yoga in language teaching, visit Danny's website. All I can say is that I have enjoyed this workshop tremendously and that I felt more alert after it. I can see how these exercises can lower inhibitions and boost learning.

Willy Cardoso's plenary A Philosophy of Teacher Development was another treat. He defined teacher development as trying to decrease the gap between what you believe you

should do and what you can do in your teaching situation. Teachers should ask themselves to what extent they can influence, shape and create their own knowledge. Classroom observation helps here (recording yourself, asking a colleague to sit in your class, co-teaching with a colleague, or even giving your learners an observation task). Rather than wait for someone to give them the knowledge, the teachers should legitimise what they already know and share it bottom-up. They should create portfolios, start blogging or give a workshop at a conference.

Marija Lukač spoke about Your Next Step on the Professional Development Ladder. Presenting to fellow colleagues is a way for teachers to grow and develop. Nobody is going to promote you into a conference presenter, you need to make that step yourself.

The last presentation I visited on Saturday was Shelly's Teaching with YouTube. Once again, she shared an abundance of links, resources, lesson plans, ideas...



So far I haven't talked much about evening entertainment, which was great. And the beer was more than great. I grabbed this image off Shelly's Facebook timeline, hope she won't mind: Yes, it's a beer barrel. In fact, there were three, each one with a different kind of beer.

And let's not forget that Topolšica is a spa. That meant that, when we got tired after sitting in workshops all day, we could always grab an hour to swim in the pool or relax in the sauna park. And we even had a discount on massages.

And kudos to the organising committee. They really went out of their way to make us all comfortable and everything was perfectly organised. Thank you, guys.

And, of course, big thanks to ELTA Serbia for sending me there in the first place.

Conferences are not only about presentations and workshops. They are about networking and meeting new people. And going to an international conference means meeting a lot of great new people. For me this was even more valuable than the presentations themselves. In fact I am looking forward to seeing some of those people again in Belgrade on 11th ELTA Conference in May.

A teaching idea

a warm-up activity or a closure:

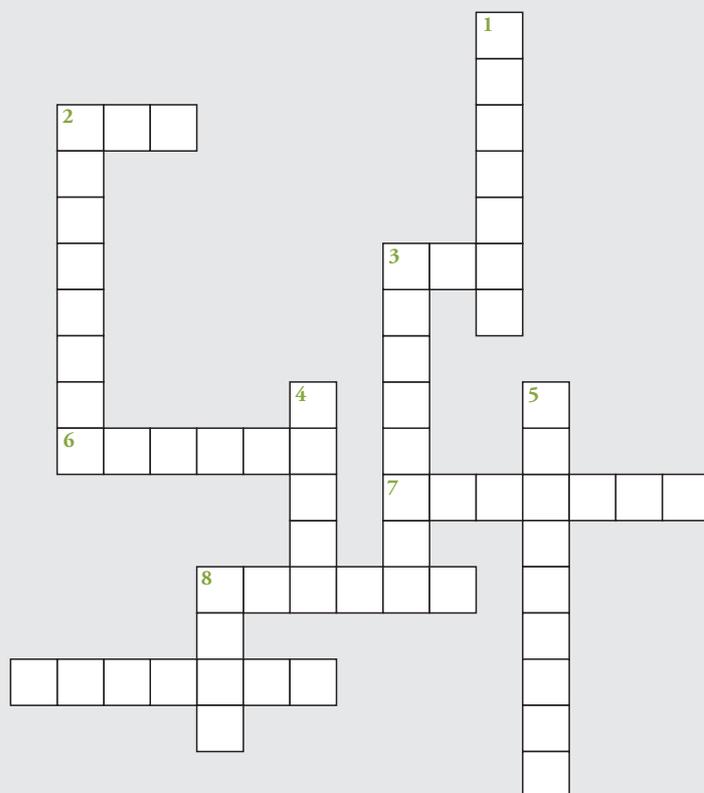
Summer is coming!

Across

2. the opposite of "cold"
3. a large area of salty water
6. the appearance of the sky in the evening before the sun goes down
7. the sudden loud noise that comes from the sky especially during a storm
8. June, July, August
9. the area near the sea

Down

1. a beam of light from the sun that you can see
2. time without going to school
3. to sit or lie in the sun in order to make your skin darker
4. an extreme weather condition with very strong wind, heavy rain, and often thunder and lightning
5. a substance that you put on your skin to prevent it from being burned by the sun
8. to move through water by moving the body or parts of the body



solutions:

across:

2. hot
3. sea
6. sunset
7. thunder
8. summer
9. seaside

down:

1. sunbeam
2. holidays
3. sunbath
4. storm
5. sunscreen
8. swim

IATEFL Slovenia Happy 20th Conference

Each year we take any opportunity we can to celebrate. At anniversaries and jubilees we get overwhelmed with nostalgia – a bittersweet longing for people or situations of the past – but with a clear focus on the bright future.

2012 was marked by the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II – a multinational celebration of the Queen's accession to the thrones of seven countries at that time, in 1952. Today, Queen Elizabeth II is Queen Regnant of 16 sovereign states.

And in 2013 we are expecting! Yes, in August this year, the Royal Family will increase by one or maybe even two members. So another reason to celebrate!

However, in between the 60th jubilee and the very beginning of a new life, there was yet another occasion to celebrate. Our prominent community of English teachers united in IATEFL Slovenia has now been around for 20 years. Throughout this time, teachers, experts, colleagues and lecturers from abroad and locally have met annually at the international IATEFL Slovenia conference to keep abreast of developments in English language teaching, to share experience, acquire new knowledge, or just to connect.

It is a tradition that jubilees get names. The higher the jubilee, the more precious the name it gets, starting with paper, cotton, leather, linen and wooden – to mention just the initial five.

And as for our porcelain jubilee, it behoves us to eternalize, the grandness of such an event with a small but significant contribution: the e-book of abstracts. For you to remember and for us to brag about at the silver jubilee. This may only be a small contribution to our anniversary, but remember: the future is bright and we will deliver more in the years to come.

And when it comes to “diamonds”, I wonder what the future will really look like ☺.

Alenka Tratnik









Professional; multi-rued; friendly.
A conference I would definitely want to attend again.

Loved the presentations! Loved the people!
Loved the dancers! Hope to C U soon!

THIS CONFERENCE HAS BEEN AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE.
I WAS GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET SOME VERY
INSPIRING PEOPLE AND ALSO TO THINK ABOUT MY FUTURE
AS AN ENGLISH TEACHER.

It was a wonderful experience, full of the
laughter and inspiring persons.

My mind is now filled with new pieces of
information and I'm grateful that I can pass it on.

Attending conferences in the region became
a part of my job description when I established
an educational centre. Not only that I enjoy
listening to renowned speakers, implementing
some of the ideas, experimenting with new
approaches, but I find equal pleasure in
socialising and making new friends.

Your conference is one of those which offer
a perfect balance and that is the reason I keep
coming back and eagerly wait for the next one!

Wi-Fi is down ;) #iatefl

@dopaminnie

IATEFL Slovenia 2013 was all
about loving English - this was
my first time here and that's
why I loved it.

o o o o o
 Dear IATEFL,
 I had an epiphany in Topolšica!
 I know what I want now.
 I want to be a part of this!
 Veronika's PK said it all and everything else was just a bonus 😊 BRB

SO, WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THIS CONFERENCE ...

WELL ...

IATEFL Slovenia Rocks! I'm definitely coming next year, and the next, and...

TL Novak

I'm exhausted and a bit cranky, but at the same time I feel very blessed to have been here. See you next year.

Some things could have been better organised, especially the Saturday evening. Otherwise, I enjoyed the atmosphere, I've got many new ideas and inspirations. I wish there had been more time to enjoy the spa, though.

100%

* I had an amazing time. I met a lot of amazing people and made new friends."

I heard lots of good ideas and hope to use them soon... It was very educational for me as a student... Thank you!





Methodological implications
on age differences: an
experimental study

Ana Lazarova-Nikovska
FON University, Skopje,
Republic of Macedonia

8 Useful ideas

1. Children want to test whether caregivers will enforce rules.
2. They experience different sets of expectations between school and home.
3. They do not understand the rules, or are held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels.
4. They want to assert themselves and their independence.

Erin Hurt (teacher and author), online blog 2012







I really enjoyed the plenaries that gave this conference the spirit. The positive attitude and kindness contributed to this great experience. See you next year!

Grateful for all the information and new inspiring ideas the world leading experts shared.

This year I have 'waltzed' through the conference and utterly enjoyed all the presentations, workshops (and coffee/breaks).

A big thanks to all the IATEFL's little helpers (= students).

It's been a pleasure to be here, participate in great workshops by speakers from abroad and from Slovenia, hang out with friendly and inspiring people. I wish you luck in further work and hope to see you again.

I had a wonderful time - Meeting new people and learning new things.

Fantabulous! As always. It's my number 1 annual event, I've sort of grown up with it from a student helper to a teacher participant. I've really enjoyed the talks this year, got new ideas, had the opportunity to unwind and chat with friends and colleagues and now I'm going back to Ljubljana full of energy and good karma.

I loved it. So much in such a short time... But best of all... Peter Dyer, Veronika and Mojca Belak. Never tried to listen to them.





The Diamond as Big as the Ritz – a Literary Contest

IATEFL Slovenia organised a literary contest based on F. Scott Fitzgerald's novella *The Diamond as Big as the Ritz*. The results were announced at our annual conference in Topolšica. We are delighted to publish the winning compositions here. They were selected out of the twenty-three entries. The students did not have an easy task as writing an additional (last) chapter of the novella, keeping in mind Fitzgerald's language and style, was quite an undertaking. Here are the winning students and their compositions:

The winner:

LARA JERMAN, Srednja šola in gimnazija Rudolfa Maistra Kamnik
(Prize: a trip to London, sponsored by *TWIN*)

1st runner-up:

MATJAŽ ZGONC, Gimnazija Poljane
(Prize: *OALD and Practical English Usage*, sponsored by *Mladinska knjiga Trgovina – Center Oxford*)

2nd runner-up:

SAŠA SKOK, Srednja šola in gimnazija Rudolfa Maistra Kamnik
(Prize: a book, sponsored by *Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete UL*)

3rd runner-up:

ŠPELA ČERNILOGAR, Gimnazija Tolmin
(Prize: a book, sponsored by *Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete UL*)

4th runner-up:

SARA DOLJAK, Gimnazija Tolmin
(Prize: a book, sponsored by *Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete UL*)

We would like to thank all the participating students and our sponsors.

Anže Perne
Contest Coordinator



The winner:



Lara Jerman

Srednja šola in gimnazija Rudolfa Maistra Kamnik

XII

The night was chilly indeed, and the first ray of sunlight had not yet touched the ground, when John opened his eyes, shivering of cold. He rolled over to face the land he had been fascinated by in so many ways in the past weeks. Vivid images were flickering through his mind; in one moment he was only arriving in that astounding automobile, so very ignorant and naïve, passing this very same place; in the next second, he was flinching at the sound of Braddock Washington's deep, relentless voice:

'Cruelty doesn't exist where self-preservation is involved.'

He could see Kismine approaching him for the first time, the three negroes stepping out of his sitting-room into the hallway, an astonishing view of the château in all its twilight glory and the sudden darkness of God's refusal; he could feel the warmth of his rosewater bath and a gust of summer breeze playing with his hair; he could smell the heady flower fragrances and hear the unprecedented melodies of violins and flutes...

All these impressions and many more, which will remain known to him only, were merging into a single cluster of sensations and visions so clear, that he could hardly believe it has all come to its irrevocable end.

However, all of a sudden, he was dragged back into reality as a glimpse of rapid movement caught his eye. He turned around immediately, rising slowly onto his feet, gazing swiftly across the rocky terrain, and, at last, identifying the source of disturbance. A stone's throw from where he was standing, a cautious dark goldenrod figure froze in place. He advanced a few steps closer to the wary animal, and only then noted the burden it was carrying. A bright reflection overwhelmed him, and he took another step in its direction, when the frightened squirrel darted off, dropping the shiny object on the way.

John hastily picked it up but – it was not a diamond. It was a mere acorn, lit to its deceiving brightness by first sunbeams of the morning. He laughed out loud at his folly as he slid it into his pocket and returned to the girls, who were still sound asleep.

Slowly he retired to the ground, wrapped himself back into his blanket and dozed off almost instantly. It was a peaceful dawn, much like a fresh quiet morning after the storm; the winds were blowing and mixing, with a subtle wailing carrying the verses of a lone poet from a faraway city:

'These alone can ne'er bestow
Youth, and health, and Paradise.'

2nd runner-up:



Matjaž Zgonc

Gimnazija Poljane

XII

John T. Unger woke up hours later after he had suddenly become aware of water on his body. The girls were still lying, sound asleep and serene, with their backs against a fallen tree-trunk. John's awakening appeared to be a false alarm until he felt another raindrop trickle from his left cheek onto the ground. Indeed, massive somber clouds were looming above the deceased Mr. Washington's former estate.

Kismine woke up rather abruptly and, immediately wide awake and vigilant, peered into the leaden sky. "Rain!" she exclaimed excitedly. "And we're homeless! Free beneath the clear skies—"

"I'm afraid the sky is not clear whatsoever," replied John gloomily. He had a reason to be gloomy as he knew the girls were not accustomed to such conditions and they needed to shelter in the woods until the weather improved. Meanwhile, Jasmine woke up as well and did not seem too pleased about the impending precipitation. Just then, swiftly and without a warning, as a military attack, the downpour commenced and the trio was drenched in a matter of seconds.

"Let us depart, immediately!" ordered John and the two girls followed him sheepishly. The incessant cloudburst would by no means dissipate while they were looking to lee and soon afterwards, Kismine began to weep inconsolably. John, still inexperienced in his adapted leadership role, was growing increasingly nervous. He was unable to reassure her quickly, which made them all even more uncomfortable. "What are we going to do?" demanded Jasmine, to which John promptly replied: "How should I know? Conceive it by yourself!"

Frightened and hurt by John's remark, Jasmine turned her back on him. All at once she saw a movement— Something was shifting among the leaves. "It might be dangerous!" thought Jasmine. "We should run at once! We should flee—"

But her derailed trail of thought was brought to a halt when a petit furry animal with back-turned ears and a bushy tail peeped from the fallen leaves. "A squirrel!" exclaimed Jasmine exuberantly and ran after it without any contemplation.

Jasmine's rash departure caught John off guard. He was compelled to grab Kismine's forearm and chase after her. The manner in which John dragged Kismine along with him through the ominous, rain-saturated woods was so confounding that Kismine instantly forgot to weep. She yielded entirely and staggered after her onrushing fiancé.

The pair stumbled upon Jasmine after about fifteen minutes of constant pursuit. She was having a conversation with a familiar-looking fellow who was standing waist-high in a hole. Kismine, after recognising him, uttered a muffled "Eep!" and instantly, John identified a former prisoner from Mr. Washington's cage, the one who had faced Mr. Washington when he, Percy and John were at their cage together. Taken slightly aback, he trod a step backwards. Upon seeing his reaction, the former prisoner grinned heartily at John and Kismine, beckoning them to approach.

Even someone as omniscient and abysmally protective as Mr. Washington was unable to dominate over absolutely everything in his jurisdiction. The prisoners, as it turned out, had in fact built a tunnel which they used to escape just in time before the mountain disintegrated. Jasmine had encountered them trailing after a squirrel and the freed prisoners agreed to take the young people to St. Paul, where they too conciliated to go.

Two years later, John and Kismine were married and living in St. Paul while Jasmine was staying with the newlyweds as their maid. They dwelled in an old house which John had bought with the money they received when they pawned the little ball with St. Midas's motto engraved in, surprisingly for substantially more than its actual value. John depleted the rest of their money to purchase an enormous wooden Crucifix, which was now suspended in the biggest room in the house as a remainder of the forgotten times of abundance. Their visitants frequently complimented them on its size and beauty, to which John always replied: "Yes, indeed it is big." and no more. The wooden chunk eventually proved to be the exact opposite of the diamond, allowing Kismine to finally experience the life of the poor. All in all, it proved to be just as big as the Ritz.

2nd runner-up:



Saša Skok

Srednja šola in gimnazija Rudolfa Maistra Kamnik

XII

The beams of the rising sun shone pink upon the three wanderers. They looked dusty, dishevelled and exhausted, but the loving warmth of the sun put a smile on their faces. That morning, Mother Nature really wanted to show off her beauty: flowers of all colours were in full bloom, a light breeze was blowing and singing birds were flying so high, you could barely see them with unaided eye.

Accompanied by joyful song and reckless laughter, peculiar company arrived at the crossroads.

“Do you see that?” asked John in a flurry, pointing his finger at a tiny speck in the distance. “That is Hades. That is my home. That is – our home.”

He held Kismine in a warm embrace and burst into laughter while watching Jasmine cheerfully dancing around. They were much relieved to see their final destination appear on the horizon. It was a load off their mind, a horrifically weighty burden that suddenly flew away like a heavenly white dove.

John’s heart was in his mouth as he was approaching the wooden front door. He had his doubts about his parents’ response to his return home. He caught his breath and grabbed the silver door knocker. A few moments later – even though it seemed like an eternity for fidgety John – he heard familiar steps. Before he knew it, he was surrounded by tears of joy, tight hugs and loving kisses of his doting mother.

Although the unexpected arrival of the ‘Three Dusty Musketeers’ (as Mr Unger named them) threw Mr and Mrs Unger off the track, they weren’t over-inquisitive. Good parents know when they aren’t supposed to ask any questions. Instead of making inquiries, they organized a solemn homecoming dinner party for the newcomers. After their fragrant bathing and embellishment in the upper storey, they entered the dining hall. The table was heavily laden with food. There were enormous silver dishes full of mashed potatoes, various salads and casserole, four great jugs full of sparkling wine, two huge porcelain tureens filled with boiling hot crab soup and one colossal roasted trout, reigning over the whole dining table.

“You’ve been a lost sheep for so long, my son, and now you are back in the bosom of your family. So, let us toast this fortunate moment!” said Mr Unger slowly and audibly, while raising his glass.

It was a magnificent evening. After they had finished eating, dead tired Jasmine went straightly to her plain, yet unusually cosy bed, and John took a walk in the garden with his fiancée.

Under the gloomy blanket interwoven with twinkling stars, two people were silently lying on the crumpled grass.

“I–I am so sorry – I am – really sorry,” John stammered out quietly.

Kismine had a puzzled look on her face and she curled her lips.

“I shouldn’t have brought you here. I should have known better. There is no luxury here in Hades, at least no luxury that could compare to the biggest diamond in the whole wide world. No sapphires, no rubies, no emeralds! Hades is no place for you, little girl. Maybe it is too hot for you down here after all,” whispered John grievously.

“I had everything a girl wants! Wardrobes full of gorgeous dresses, braided gemstones in my hair, obliging black slaves and a dazzling château. And you know what? One night, one single night and the fairy-tale was over. Since then, I’ve been starving, all in rags and tired walking. When I look back, I cannot believe what a spoiled little brat I used to be. Only now – now I am aware of what life is. To tell you the truth – I think it’s pretty harsh. But at least is real – at least I know it won’t fade away to nothing.”

A fleeting smile turned up on Kismine’s rosy face.

“Frankly, I thought it was hotter down here. It doesn’t seem to me like Hades at all, more like Heaven on earth.”

“Well, your exquisite château turned out to be a golden cage. Maybe, Hades is Heaven, who knows. Maybe, nothing is as it seems and everything is possible,” said John playfully and tightly embraced his brave little girl.

3rd runner-up:



Špela Černilogar

Gimnazija Tolmin

XII

Waking up high in the mountains was like a remedy for all the fearful hours the three people had spent the last night. The dark bruised sky gave birth to the spectrum of bright colors that were reaching warmly towards the viewers' eyes. John, Kismine and Jasmine had just eaten the leftovers of the food brought by Jasmine the previous day. John was observing the two girls who were still full of the adventurous spirit and were laughing and joking, 'Have you ever been to these mountains before?' Jasmine answered diplomatically with her mouthful of crumbs, 'No. Have you, perhaps? All that I can say is that by far it feels like a whole lot of freedom.' John was quiet for a very long time before he decided to share his thoughts with the other two. As he had woken up well before Kismine and Jasmine, he was able to orientate himself by the North Star which was particularly bright, as if it had some message for the people of Earth. He knew that Hades was in the opposite direction, in the South and what he also comprehended was the fact that they were a gazillion miles away from their final destination. It could be easily said that it was as far away as the dreams one can never reach. 'We will have to figure out some way to make our journey faster,' John was thinking. 'Well, the fastest way would be by aeroplane.' John was irritable 'Hey, we don't have any, remember my dear?' In the exact moment they heard a silent and indistinguishable voice, a dialect, which could not be understood by the young. In no time, John recognized the language of the negroes from the château. 'Let's hide somewhere...', said John, but it was too late as he was violently grabbed by a black giant from behind. Neither Kismine, nor Jasmine could escape the unexpected assault. Apparently, the slaves, who were now free of their master, had come to get their revenge for all the years of mistreatment and dehumanizing, caused mostly by Braddock Washington. Jasmine, usually stony-hearted and vain, was yelling loudly as she was being tied with a thick rope by the biggest of the three negroes. John, Jasmine and Kismine were forced to walk in a line, descending the narrow path that was winding around the mountain slope like a snake. 'Oh, this is such an adventure we are in! We have spent only one day outside and here we are, already in the middle of »action« as the moving-picture fella said!' chatted Kismine. 'Darling, I believe we are in greater danger than you can even imagine,' was John trying to be realistic.

John wished that everything had been normal for them and that they could just enjoy spending hours and hours together without any distractions. But it seemed to him that everything had turned into a nightmare, even though he thought that it all had ended when he had managed to escape the execution. The caravan was approaching a plain and Jasmine was the first to notice the automobile parked in the near distance. 'Kismine, look! It is the station wagon!' The lavishness of the vehicle was as overwhelming to John as on the day he first saw it and it was the breathtaking beauty of its exterior that made John drowsy and dreamy. The voice of the biggest and blackest negro who surprisingly used the language known to all the three prisoners enlivened him from his brief stupefaction. 'The time has come, for the slave to replace his master! You are now our property and you will work, live and breathe as commanded! So, now, get your behinds in the automobile!'

John realized that it would help a lot if the negro's words were just a bad dream, a dream he could be awoken from.

4th runner-up:



Sara Doljak

Gimnazija Tolmin

XII

It was in the middle of the diabolically frigid night, when John was shaken awake to the infernal noise of his own heartbeat. There was a taunting struggle taking place in his puzzled heart and in his delusional brain. For the very first time in his life he was forced to admit being disheartened. He thought that he was all over it. He thought he was done with the self-indulging pathetic greed replacing high-flying strivings with the down-to-earth reality, yet it turned out once more that the two of them, heart and brain, were deceiving, when not adjusted to function together.

He reached in his pocket feeling for the large sapphire which he had shoved there just seconds before the château was to go down. His mind was flooded with the rhetorical questions to which he knew no certain answers. He really was apprehensive. Apprehensive of his father's reaction, apprehensive of being a failure to his parents and not being able to take care of the two foolish girls and to be a prisoner of his own thoughts dwelling inside of him, but this sapphire... This sapphire could change everything, it could provide for him and his future.

He glanced at Kismine. She was sleeping so tranquilly and there was almost a sign of a relief on her unlined forehead. She seemed so graceful, with her smooth body gleaming in the moonlight, just like the sapphire he held in his right hand. "Beauty with no practical purpose itself," ruminated John to himself. He lay down next to Kismine again in pursuit of ousting his demons.

He stood up abruptly and walked three steps gasping badly for breath, grabbing his belongings recklessly and disappearing into the thin air. He commenced running away, dreaded of himself and of the sort of a dreadful creature that was hidden inside of him. He ran for his life, away from himself. Having run for a mile or so, there was a sort of inscription hanging above him, saying: "All hope abandon ye who enter here, whether it is hot enough or not for you down there." A tender voice began whispering to him from a distance, repeating his name constantly: "John, John!" It was only then John realized he had fallen asleep.

"John, John! Wake up, it was a dream," Kismine exclaimed.

"It was a dream," John confirmed in a trembling voice.

"You probably had a nightmare, John. You were all shivering, so I decided to wake you up for good," she said apologetically.

"T.., thank you," he stammered. "Kismine, I believe this belongs to you," he declared while pointing with his eyes at the sapphire.

Kismine made big eyes, asking for an explanation. However, before she could say anything, he made an end to the awkward silence.

"Anyway, we should better get going. There is not much time before dawning and they might be looking for survivors," said John in a firm tone.

Jasmine was still indulged in sleeping in her usual phlegmatic manner. Kismine observed her for a brief moment. "She will be better off without us," resolved Kismine placing the sapphire next to her.

John put his hand into Kismine's, while walking into the sunlight together on the fervid path to Hades.

Poročilo o tekmovanju v znanju angleščine za 3. letnike

Slovensko društvo učiteljev angleškega jezika IATEFL Slovenia je ponovno izvedlo tekmovanje za dijake 3. letnikov na dveh ravneh – regijski in državni. Regijsko tekmovanje je potekalo 4. 2. 2013 na sedmih regijskih šolah (*Gimnazija Nova Gorica, Gimnazija Vič, Gimnazija Jesenice, Grm Novo mesto – Center biotehnike in turizma, Srednja šola Slovenska Bistrica, II. gimnazija Maribor, Gimnazija Murska Sobota*), državno tekmovanje pa 18. 3. 2013 na Gimnaziji Vič v Ljubljani.

Razpis tekmovanja smo na naši spletni strani objavili v oktobru 2012 in ga preko elektronske pošte posredovali tudi mentorjem. Razpis je med drugim vseboval tudi podatke o strukturi tekmovanja, ki je bila glede na prejšnja leta nekoliko spremenjena. Krajši pisni sestavek na državnem tekmovanju smo nadomestili s poznavanjem in rabo jezika.

Na regijsko tekmovanje je bilo prijavljenih **617 dijakov s 65 šol** oz. šolskih centrov. Razdeljeni so bili v pet kategorij – A1 (splošne gimnazije), A2 (strokovne gimnazije), A3 (mednarodni oddelki), B (strokovne šole) in C (angleščina kot 2. tuji jezik). Na državno tekmovanje se je skupno uvrstilo **119 dijakov**.

V letošnjem letu so se naloge po posameznih kategorijah skoraj v celoti razlikovale. Na državnem tekmovanju so se pri poznavanju in rabi jezika razlikovale tudi naloge, saj smo npr. v kategoriji A1 preverjali poznavanje in rabo idiomatskih izrazov, v drugih kategorijah pa besedotvorje.

Anže Perne,
koordinator tekmovanja

mag. Alenka Tratnik,
predsednica društva

Na državnem tekmovanju so se najboljše uvrstili naslednji dijaki:

- kategorija A1: **ANA TACER**
šola: Gimnazija Kranj
mentor: Mitja Hribar
- kategorija A2: **JERNEJ SLAK**
šola: Šolski center Novo mesto,
Srednja elektro šola in tehniška gimnazija
mentorica: Marjana Pogačnik
- kategorija A3: **HANNA BARIČIČ**
šola: Gimnazija Bežigrad
mentorica: Karmen Goršak
- kategorija B: **ANDRAŽ STERLE**
šola: Elektrotehniško-računalniška
strokovna šola in gimnazija Ljubljana
mentorica: Beti Kerin
- kategorija C: **ŽIGA BARBARIČ**
šola: Gimnazija Murska Sobota
mentor: Vilko Šimon

Ostali rezultati so objavljeni na spletni strani www.iatefl.si.

Vsem dijakom se zahvaljujemo za udeležbo na tekmovanju. Iskreno se zahvaljujemo mentorjem in regijskim koordinatorjem, ki so prijazno pomagali pri izvedbi tekmovanja.



Glavni sponzor tekmovanja:
Mint International House Ljubljana



Sponzor tekmovanja:
*Znanstveno raziskovalna založba
Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani*

Poročilo o tekmovanju v znanju angleščine za 2. letnike

Slovensko društvo učiteljev angleškega jezika IATEFL Slovenia je v šolskem letu 2012/2013 znova izvedlo tekmovanje za dijake 2. letnikov. Razpis, pravilnik tekmovanja, navodila za tekmovanje in kriteriji za ocenjevanje so bili objavljeni konec avgusta na spletni strani www.iatefl.si, prav tako pa so bili vsi dokumenti poslani članom IATEFL Slovenia po elektronski pošti.

Tekmovanje je potekalo na dveh ravneh, in sicer je bilo na posameznih šolah najprej izvedeno šolsko tekmovanje (26. 10. 2013), nato pa so izmed prijavljenih izdelkov šole poslale najboljše na državno tekmovanje (19. 11. 2013).

Letos je bila tematika tekmovanja »**The British Royal Family**«, saj se je zdela primerna za letošnje šolsko leto glede na vse pomembne dogodke, ki so se zgodili v prejšnjem letu v kontekstu britanske kraljeve družine. Določen je bil tudi žanr posnetega prispevka, in sicer so morali dijaki posneti **igrano-dokumentarni prispevek**, kar jim je dalo precej možnosti za uporabo lastne domišljije in ogromne količine razpoložljivih virov na predpisano tematiko. Predpisanih je bilo tudi po 10 besed v posamezni kategoriji, ki so jih morali dijaki smiselno uporabiti v posnetem prispevku. Besede so bile naslednje:

Kategorija A/C: *PRODIGY, VERVE, FABLE, SPRUCE, VIRAL, ETHEREAL, TO RATION, TO OVERSHADOW, EERILY, NOTORIOUSLY*

Kategorija B/D: *SNOWFLAKE, LUNCHEON, STRUGGLE, VISIONARY, SPLENDID, DESOLATE, TO UNFOLD, TO OUTDO, EFFORTLESSLY, SEVERELY*

Kriteriji pri izbiri najboljših skupin (tako na šolski kot na državni ravni) so bili naslednji: pravilnost uporabe podanih besed, ustvarjalnost/domiselnost pri uporabi podanih besed, jezik, izgovorjava, informativnost prispevka, splošni vtis in tehnična izvedba.

Državnega tekmovanja se je udeležilo **13 šol**, in sicer je v **24 skupinah** tekmovalo skupno **112 dijakov**. Dijaki so tudi letos žal tekmovali samo v kategorijah A in B, čeprav so imeli možnost tekmovali tudi tisti, ki spadajo v kategorijo C ali D. Prav tako smo na žalost morali tudi letos zaradi neupoštevanja tehničnih navodil diskvalificirati eno skupino (2,5-krat predolg pos-

netek), saj želimo, da so pravila in navodila dosledno upoštevana in enaka za vse.

Število priznanj po kategorijah

Priznanje	A	B	Skupaj
zlato	3	1	4
srebrno	7	0	7
bronasto	5	0	5
Skupaj	15	1	16

Najbolje so se odrezale naslednje šole oz skupine dijakov (zlato priznanje):

- 1. Gimnazija Nova Gorica** (Dominik Rebek, Jan Kontestabile, Anei Makovec, Miha Ožbot, Filip Cernatič), *kategorija A*
Mentorica: Nataša Munih
- 2. Gimnazija Jesenice** (Sara Jensterle, Kristina Jan, Tina Pogačar, Sara Kanalec, Ana Krese), *kategorija A*
Mentorica: Tatjana Sitar
- 3. Šolski center Rogaška Slatina** (Manca Mrkša, Estera Gjuras, Kaja Kalečak, Tina Fajs, Jolanda Čonč), *kategorija A*
Mentorica: Bernarda Leva
- 4. Srednja elektro-računalniška šola Maribor** (Špela Arnuš, Cindy Beširevič, Izak Glasenčnik, Žiga Gomboc, Boštjan Vodnik), *kategorija B*
Mentorica: Sanela Magerl Majhenič

Dijaki in dijakinje so se pri pripravi filmov znova zelo potrudili. Veseli smo, da predpisane tematike tekmovalce in tekmovalke vsako leto znova pritegnejo in jim predstavljajo izziv, nam pa obilo zadovoljstva pri ocenjevanju. Iskreno čestitamo vsem sodelujočim, vsem mentorjem pa se najlepše zahvaljujemo za pomoč pri izpeljavi tekmovanj.

Nasvidenje do prihodnjega leta!

Jasna Džambič,
koordinatorka tekmovanja

mag. Alenka Tratnik,
predsednica društva

Poročilo o tekmovanju iz znanja angleščine za osmošolce

Slovensko društvo učiteljev angleškega jezika IATEFL Slovenia je ponovno izvedlo tekmovanje za učence osmega razreda. Tekmovanje je potekalo na dveh ravneh, šolski in državni, in sicer na posameznih šolah. Šolsko tekmovanje je potekalo 22. 10. 2012, državno pa 19. 11. 2012. Tekmovalne pole je pripravilo društvo.

Obvestilo o tekmovanju smo pripravili 3. 9. 2012 in ga razposlali šolam. Na spletni strani društva so bili mentorjem na voljo dokumenti povezani s tekmovanjem – pravilnik, razpis, opis nalog ter arhiv starih tekmovanj.

Na šolsko tekmovanje je bilo prijavljenih 4612 učencev z 299 šol. Mejo za bronasto priznanje je tekmovalna komisija postavila na 64 točkah, mejo za uvrstitev na državno tekmovanje pa na 65,5 točkah. Državnega tekmovanja se je udeležilo 433 učencev. Na državnem tekmovanju je komisija postavila mejo za srebrno priznanje na 46 točkah ter za zlato na 72 točkah. Bronasto priznanje je prejelo 317 učencev, srebrno 196 učencev ter zlato 62 učencev. Dobitnikom priznanj ter njihovim mentorjem iskreno čestitamo za lep uspeh.

Na državnem tekmovanju so se najbolje uvrstili naslednji učenci:

1. Anja Dacko

Osnovna šola Nove Jarše
Mentorica: Mateja Janše

2. Astrid Marovič

Osnovna šola Mladika Ptuj
Mentorica: Lia Apat

3. Patricija Kreševc

Osnovna šola Milojke Štrukelj Nova Gorica
Mentorica: Radojka Varl

4. Špela Ačko

Osnovna šola Fram
Mentorica: Simona Napast

5. Lena Trnovec

Osnovna šola Mengeš
Mentorica: Polona Žabota

Ostali rezultati so objavljeni na spletni strani www.iatefl.si.

Vsem učencem se zahvaljujemo za udeležbo na tekmovanju. Iskreno pa se zahvaljujemo tudi mentorjem in šolskim koordinatorjem, ki so prijazno pomagali pri izvedbi tekmovanja.

Lea Sobočan,
koordinatorka tekmovanja

mag. Alenka Tratnik,
predsednica društva

Poročilo o tekmovanju iz znanja angleščine za sedmošolce

Letos je v našem društvu drugič zapored potekalo tekmovanje v znanju angleškega jezika za 7. razrede. Tekmovanje je bilo organizirano na dveh ravneh, šolski in državni. Vsaka šola je lahko na državno tekmovanje prijavila največ tri skupine. Na šolski ravni so učenci prejeli bronasta, na državni ravni pa smo podelili srebrna in zlata priznanja.

Z namenom, da tekmovanje ne bi preveč sovpadalo z osmošolci, smo datume nekoliko zamaknili. Tako je šolsko tekmovanje potekalo konec januarja letos, državno pa v mesecu marcu. Tema letošnjega tekmovanja je bilo branje. Za temo smo se odločili, ker se zavedamo, kako težko je današnja mladež pripraviti do branja. Tako smo letošnje tekmovanje naslovili **READING IN ENGLISH? YES, PLEASE**. Sedmošolci so pod vodstvom svojih mentorjev v spletni aplikaciji Voicethread predstavljali različne zvrsti, ki jih berejo v angleščini – od revij in stripov pa vse do knjig, ki jih berejo za bralno značko ali pa kar tako. Nikakor pa ne gre pozabiti na vse tiste stvari, ki jih berejo zato, da lahko igrajo računalniške igrice, pa različne spletne strani, besedila popevk in še mnogo tega bi se našlo.

Svoje izdelke ste objavili na spletni strani <http://tekmovanje7razred.pbworks.com>, naša komisija pa jih je ocenila.

Vaš odziv je bil ponovno velik, lahko se pohvalimo, da celo nekoliko večji kot lani. Naša komisija je tako na tekmovanju ocenila 102 izdelka. Tudi letos so bile skupine sestavljene iz dveh do petih članov, kar pomeni, da je na državnem tekmovanju sodelovalo 349 tekmovalcev pod vodstvom 65 mentorjev iz 61 osnovnih šol iz vse Slovenije. Prispele izdelke je tekmovalna komisija ocenjevala glede na naslednje kriterije: sporočilno vrednost, jezikovno pravilnost, bogastvo besedišča in pravopis, pravilno izgovorjavo in gladkost, strukturo izdelka, ustreznost njegove dolžine ter splošni vtis.

Bronasto priznanje je letos osvojilo 114 skupin. Tu so štete tudi skupine, ki se sicer niso uspele uvrstiti na državno tekmovanje. To pomeni, da so na šoli osvojile bronasto priznanje več kot tri skupine. Srebrno priznanje so osvojile tri skupine oz. 10 tekmovalcev. Za osvojitev srebrnega priznanja je bilo treba na državnem tekmovanju doseči 85% in več. Število zlatih priznanj

je omejeno glede na število vseh tekmovalcev. Zlato priznanje je tako prejelo 6 skupin oz. 16 učencev.

Statistika na kratko:

- Število sodelujočih šol: **61**
- Število izdelkov, ki smo jih prejeli na državno tekmovanje: **102**
- Število vseh tekmovalcev: **408** (118 skupin)
- Število bronastih priznanj: **114** skupin (370 tekmovalcev)
- Število srebrnih priznanj: **3** skupine (10 tekmovalcev)
- Število zlatih priznanj: **6** skupin (16 tekmovalcev)
- Število mentorjev: **65**

Vse izdelke si lahko še vedno ogledate na že zgoraj omenjeni spletni strani.

Poudariti je treba, da so sedmošolci ponovno pokazali visok nivo znanja angleškega jezika, saj so bili njihovi izdelki v veliki meri izvorni, vsebinsko bogati in zanimivi. Kar nekaj bi jih lahko brez zadržkov uporabili v razredu, bodisi pri pouku tujega jezika ali pa pri razredni uri. Tak je bil tudi naš namen, zato bomo tudi v prihodnje skušali izbrati teme, ki jih lahko uporabimo pri pouku.

Za konec naj dodam še komentar na eni izmed prijav na državno tekmovanje:

*Spoštovani,
z naše šole je to vse,
lep pozdrav in veliko užitka ob ocenjevanju izdelkov – naše učence so se zelo zabavale ob ustvarjanju tekmovalne naloge,
zraven pa še marsikaj naučile!*

Bernarda Kežzar, OŠ Železniki

V svojem imenu, predvsem pa v imenu tekmovalne komisije vsem tekmovalcem iskreno čestitam za njihove dosežke, mentorjem pa se najlepše zahvaljujem za njihovo sodelovanje in podporo. Vabim vas, da se nam ponovno pridružite prihodnje leto.

Andreja Lakner,
koordinatorka tekmovanja

mag. Alenka Tratnik,
predsednica društva

How good is your Naturese?

by Mojca Belak

I call it Naturese the ability to understand nature and live with it. Animals are fluent in it, humans used to be fluent, but then with civilization the natural ties that bind people and the environment loosened up. In the western world it is only young children who still have an inborn interest in nature and seek first-hand experience when they learn about the world around them. Older children gradually lose it, first when they learn to speak, and later when their understanding of the world becomes more abstract through learning to read and write. Modern children, digital residents, have got detached from the natural environment to such an extent that they have completely or almost completely forgotten their Naturese. Still, Naturese is still here, proving its existence in many maybe already subconscious reactions people have: many adults seek window seats in restaurants, like having picnics and barbecues because they include eating outdoors, get restless in windowless rooms during conferences, etc.

Cultures differ in their (dis)ability to master Naturese. Slovenians are closer to nature than the British, for example. Hotel rooms in Slovenian hotels still have windows with a decent view. In the UK windows often cannot be opened because of the air-conditioning system that replaced fresh air, and they can look onto covered inner courts or walls of the nearby building. Many people have made a big step away from nature by getting used to riding stationary bikes in a gym instead of cycling outdoors, and by accepting walking or running on a treadmill in a gym as a better option to going for a walk.

In the past, people lived closer with nature. My granddad knew how to tell the weather from the movement of leaves on trees, he could predict when the first snow was coming, and could easily tell birds apart from just the way they chirped. According to my vocabulary, he was an intermediate speaker of Naturese.

What are lower intermediate speakers of Naturese like then? They would feel somebody walking or cycling behind them without really seeing them. They

notice and enjoy different scents in nature, such as wet soil in the spring, fir trees smelling of raisin in the summer, they know what sea air, autumn leaves or freshly fallen snow smell like. They know where and when the sun rises and sets, and will often stop to observe sunrise or sunset. They spend a lot of time hiking or going to the mountains.

Despite the fact that Naturese seems a dying language, there are still some native speakers around. After the tsunami in Southeast Asia, according to some reports certain indigenous groups survived the disaster because they followed the advice of the oldest members of the community, who had learned to live with nature. A whole tribe managed to avoid the disaster following old wisdom passed down orally from generation to generation. The Moken in Thailand moved to higher ground and this way escaped the disaster, at the same time showing the world how important traditional indigenous knowledge is. In comparison, groups of indigenous people who had opted for a more Western way of life, could not predict the tsunami and as a consequence couldn't avoid its destruction.

Natural natives or native speakers of Naturese are difficult to get in contact with because they live away from modern civilization. What modern western people could still do to save human feel for natural environment from dying, however, is at least become non-native speakers of Naturese. This way the instinctive language of Nature will be saved, while in the years to come its revival may even prove vital for human survival.

The main goal of eco activities in an English class is therefore raising lost or forgotten natural intelligence. When modern teenagers were little they still very much felt with their natural environment. If they are reminded of nature now, they may almost feel as if they were coming home. Here are some brain-friendly cross-curricular eco activities that can help reach this goal.

Activity 1:

Eco listening and speaking exercise

The teacher tells a story featuring an animal. They pause at crucial points and encourage students to guess what happens next. What is important in this activity is that the animal should not be human-like, meaning that it should not have human habits such as Maček Muri, for example. Useful stories to use here are The story of Gelert (or many other folk tales including animals), The Bear that wasn't, Ernest Thompson Seton's stories, and the like.

After reading the story to the end, the class talk about their views of the plot. This could develop into a debate about how ethical it is to keep pets, expect animals to have human reactions, imagining that humans can easily read and understand animals' facial expressions, and so on.

Activity 2:

Hobbit Scent Calendar

Ask class what smells/scents they like and help with some ideas such as rose, honeysuckle, oranges, freshly fallen snow, air after the rain in the summer, etc.

Ask students to name months according to which smell prevails in that time of year.

(This is how my students re-named the months from January to December: Snow, Doughnut, Moss, Rain, Bloom, Paper, Sea, Hay, Apples, Chestnut, Wet leaves, and Cinnamon) When they have decided on the names, put them on the board and ask them questions such as Are there any holidays in Snow in our country? (2nd of Snow used to be a holiday, I added bitterly this year.) Whose birthday is in Doughnut? When do we start summer holidays?

Activity 3:

If I were a tree

Ask students which trees they would like to be if they were trees. You'll need to help with vocabulary of the most widely spread trees in the country. Ask them why they would like to be that particular tree.

Students work in pairs. They describe a tree that they know focusing only on how it feels to touch parts of it – roots, trunk, branches, twigs, leaves, fruit, seeds.

This is not the easiest of activities because students will soon realise that the language fails them. It is very difficult to describe in words what is stored in kinaesthetic memory. How would they describe the scent of an orange or a rose? It is good to let students know that language, too, has its limits. Sometimes feelings are difficult or impossible to put into words, as are some other notions such as near-death experience or anything else that the majority has no knowledge or experience of.



Activity 4:

A year in the life of a tree (a project, primary school)

Ask students to choose a tree near their home. Every month, on the same day, they take a picture of it and describe the changes. The teacher provides the necessary vocabulary beforehand: roots, trunk, bark, branches, twigs, shoots, buds, bloom, leaves, turn yellow, wither, fall off, etc.

A note: If students have access to a private garden, they can also observe other plants, such as flowers (roses are ideal for this exercise because they are in bloom for a long time) or bushes (e.g. currant bushes). Observing plants in a park is not such a good idea because they can get damaged or even removed.

Activity 5:

Natural sounds

The teacher asks students what natural sounds they like. Students talk about them and even try to imitate them. Set the ball rolling by mentioning a few, for example rustling leaves, a brook, the sea lapping, etc.

This activity raises awareness of what people often hear but rarely listen to.

Activity 6:

From a sparrow to an eagle

Ask students to take a blank sheet of paper and draw a small square or circle of the size of the top of a pencil in the middle of it.

Then ask them to close their eyes (if they are comfortable with this), and think of their home. While students sit with their eyes closed, the teacher speaks in soft, slow voice guiding the visualization. Students imagine themselves sitting at home, looking out of a window. They see a sparrow close by. The little bird flies off into the air and they follow it with their eyes. Suddenly the sparrow turns into an eagle soaring higher and higher. Ask students to imagine that they are the eagle. They look down from high up in the air and see their house and their neighbourhood. Suggest that students spend some time high in the air admiring the view. Then invite them that, in their own time, they come back to the room, and when they are ready, open their eyes.

Students then take the piece of paper they had marked with the square. The mark represents their home. Ask them to draw the rest of their neighbourhood as they saw it in visualization, paying special attention to trees, grass patches, parks, fields, forests, etc. Students work in pairs and compare their pictures with their colleagues. They briefly discuss the green areas around their home.

Activity 7:

Translating poems and simple stories about nature

Take a well-known folk song / story featuring animals and translate it into English. Give students the translation and let them figure out the story or the message

of the poem. Don't tell them where the text comes from. If they guess it themselves, fine, but don't press it if they don't.

Ask them to translate the text into Slovenian. Help with unknown vocabulary but make sure there are not too many new words and phrases in the text.

Show students the original.

After careful reading the understanding of both, English and Slovenian version will be much better.

Note: I've used *Stoji učilna zidana* and *Lipa zlenela* je for this activity. If you choose songs, poems or stories in which animals and plants behave like humans, this is a good starting point for discussion on how humans (mis)understand nature.

* * *

What all these activities have in common is ecology and the exploration of space where human civilization meets wilderness be it through a contact with a wild animal, a trip to an untouched place or simply by staying at home but being open to what goes on. All activities are based on a mixture of ecocriticism and NLP - for primarily visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners. The general underlying idea that connects them is that while in the western hemisphere fewer and fewer people can speak Naturese, meaning that they no longer possess the ability to understand nature and communicate with it, children are still relatively close to the natural environment and can therefore return to it (and easily revise their knowledge of Naturese) without much effort - if pointed in the right direction, that is.

Source:

Text on tsunami: <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/voices/mariana-budjeryn/survivors-tsunami>

iatefl Slovenia

IATEFL Slovenia is above all a community. Everybody brings into it and takes out whatever they feel appropriate and we are lucky enough that our members are dedicated to their profession and consider it their mission rather than just a job.

We offer a base for all those teachers who strive to become the best versions of themselves by offering independent, innovative and up-to-date seminars and conferences, regularly keeping our members informed through articles in our newsletters and sharing interesting and relevant information through our social networks on FB and Twitter.

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- membership rates at registration for our conference
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But above all, you will become a member of a community of dedicated English teachers who wish to learn more in order to become better.

To become an institutional or individual member write to our email info@iatefl.si.



What our student helpers had to say about the conference and some of the workshops (*only good things, of course*)

First of all, let me say that it was great being a part of this conference's staff just because of the positive energy that was created primarily by our bosses and later on by the students themselves. This made the long working hours and the occasional stress much more bearable.



I was completely happy to be a part of an eye-opener, which this conference has been to me. Anyone lost, not sure whether they want to become a teacher or not, having frustrations of their own should attend this event and leave all doubt at home. Working, learning and having fun – can one ask for more?



A device showing 10 and 1 minute for the assistants to use would come handy because to me it seemed very awkward to wave to the speaker to inform him or her how much time it was left till the end.



During the conference I was convinced that this association is something outstanding, something that functions as a parent to teachers, something that helps people develop their potential. I would definitely like to attend the conference next year as a student helper again. I would also love to prepare a paper and a workshop of my own.



I do not have a plan to become a teacher but these workshops gave me so much knowledge I could hardly gain anywhere else. They motivated and convinced me that English is really an important part of my life. I also enjoyed meeting new people, talking to them and participating with them in all those fun activities.



The opportunity to be surrounded by amazing people with whom I share a common interest (not necessarily passion for teaching as a profession, since I haven't experienced it, but passion for the English language), the opportunity to help and assist experts from different countries and also get to talk to them and discuss both the conference and completely unrelated things, and especially the opportunity to stand on "the other side of the classroom" for the first time, facing the audience, were some of the most amazing things I've experienced.

This was my second year working at the IATEFL conference and I really enjoyed meeting all kinds of different people with amazing life stories. It is because men and women like that I feel inspired and wanting to become a teacher. There wasn't a presentation that did not motivate and amaze me. Seeing how teachers can be passionate about teaching is invigorating. They come back year after year to build up on their knowledge and share it with everyone else.



While the overall experience of the conference was great, including the vast majority of the people I worked with, there were issues of a technical nature that could've been avoided and should be during next year's conference. Most of them were resolved with ad hoc solutions so that the presentations could be executed the way they were intended. It was somewhat exhausting but the hard work paid off.



I really enjoyed this workshop, because the whole Open Space concept reminds me of brainstorming, only that here we reached a solution, whereas with brainstorming we would only discuss a certain topic. I liked the relaxed manner of our speaker, he made himself more approachable to his audience. (on Willy Cardoso, Open Space: becoming the best teacher you can be)



Peter Dyer was my favourite because he connected fun with teamwork. He showed the audience how to respect the people around you and that even the smallest part in the whole is important. He boosted our coordination, imagination, and physical activity. A wise man once said: "Positive emotions overcome the negative ones." I think that Peter Dyer follows this principle. (On Peter Dyer, Group Dynamics and Warmers)



I enjoyed her presentation because one can see that she lives for her job. It was not only exciting to watch her, but also the subject itself is something Slovenia will have to, in my opinion, think about more thoroughly. We are entering the internet phase, where our children are growing up with internet from their birth onwards, not like we, who were introduced to it later on in our childhood. If we want to make them interested in something, we will have to step up the pace of teaching them what they need to be taught. (on Shelly Terrell: Digital storytelling projects)



There are two reasons why this workshop was one of my favourite ones during the whole conference. One is the fact that it was pure fun. The second one is learning something which can come in handy both in and outside the classroom. (on Luka Lavrin and Biljana Makuljevič, The English Waltz)

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Summer courses: a relaxing way to develop as a teacher

There are many kinds of teacher development opportunities available to teachers now ranging from one day seminars, 2-3 day conferences, online webinars, blogs, facebook groups, sharing links on twitter, in-house sessions in your own school, reading articles and just getting together with a couple of colleagues from time to time and chatting about what might puzzle you about your classroom or particular students or how to choose a new coursebook.

However, one of the most relaxed enjoyable forms of teacher development is still the residential summer school. Some of you will remember a summer course at Lake Bled in late August 1999, Douglas Allen, John Rogers and myself were all British Council tutors on it and I have seen some of you since then at IATEFL Slovenia conferences in both Ljubljana and Topolšica and we have reminisced about that lovely time by the lake.

Being in a residential setting in a nice place where teachers can share their experiences of teaching and reflect on their own teaching in a relaxed setting, free of domestic duties can be an excellent way of working on becoming a better teacher.

For over 20 years now SOL has been running summer schools in Devon where teachers stay in host families and enjoy the Devon countryside at the same time as attending workshops in the classroom and doing out of class fieldwork. You can check out these courses on the SOL website here and there are still places available for this summer's three courses.

<http://www.sol.org.uk/pdf/teachercourse2013.pdf>

Following on from the success of a series of workshops that we did in October** in five cities in Slovakia, together with



our new Slovak co-ordinator, Klaudia Bednárová, we have decided to run a summer school with a difference this year in July in Čadca, Slovakia.

This will be open to teachers from all countries. For contact details write to Klaudia atslovakia.sol@gmail.com.

** (a film of the workshop tour is here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxAUebHYFBM>)

If you come you will be able to experience hands on practical methodology workshops, including the benefits and ways of using L1 in the classroom, ways of exploiting and extending the coursebook, ways of “checking learning”, using personalisation to good effect in the classroom, ways of developing critical thinking, language change, project learning, field work techniques both at home in your own country

and when learning abroad, what makes a good intercultural speaker, using newspapers in the classroom and an ecological approach to language education.

Fieldwork tasks in the two neighbouring countries, Poland and the Czech Republic, will provide a framework for discussing what aspiring to be a good intercultural speaker might be, how we can encourage out of classroom learning and how we can help our students to be researchers and collectors of language and not just learners of language.

The two main tutors will be Kathy King and myself, Mark Andrews.

Kathy has been involved in EFL since the late 1980s and has worked in a range of places teaching and delivering teacher development programmes in Turkey, Spain, Italy and the UK. She has also worked on EAP and MA programmes at UCL and Bath Universities. Her other line of work is as a CELTA and DELTA teacher trainer. She lives in the UK and moved from London to Devon in the South West of the country a year ago in search of a quieter life, and is now be-



ginning to collaborate with SOL on our cultural and language programmes. She also teaches English and Italian online via Skype and is interested in distance learning. When she is not teaching and training, she spends as much time as possible playing with her children on the beach. She also enjoys yoga, reading and film.

After teaching at two universities in the German Democratic Republic and a language school in Brighton in the eighties I worked with the British Council for 12 years in Czechoslovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary as a teacher trainer and then stayed on in Hungary to carry on working at ELTE university teaching methodology, cultural studies, pragmatics and academic writing courses. I co-ordinated the Hungarian IATEFL culture and literature Special Interest Group for 4 years and am now working with SOL teaching on both student courses and teacher courses in Devon. Like Kathy, I am planning on moving from Budapest to Devon in search of sand, surf and sea and to continue working with SOL both in Devon and abroad.

As you can see both Kathy and I are fans of the beach and although we don't have the sea in Slovakia a feature of our course will be an emphasis on general well-being, quality of life and a good balance between work and play. To facilitate this we will be having yoga sessions and runs in the morning, all optional you understand!

I have noticed on 20 years of summer courses that teachers have often complained about there being far too much meat so we thought we'd try out this summer course with a vegetarian menu for a change with lots of fresh fruit and salads. Hopefully at the end of the course, as a result of this, you will feel refreshed and regenerated both in mind and body! At least that's the aim.



Am sure there will be plenty of good Slovak wine flowing and in our experience it's always nice if you bring some wine along with you from your own country and we can have an evening doing some wine tasting in English too, all optional of course!

On courses where there are teachers from different countries it is good to create space for talking about your cultures. Singing evenings are good for this. I often work with teachers from the countries of ex-Yugoslavia and it is always heart-

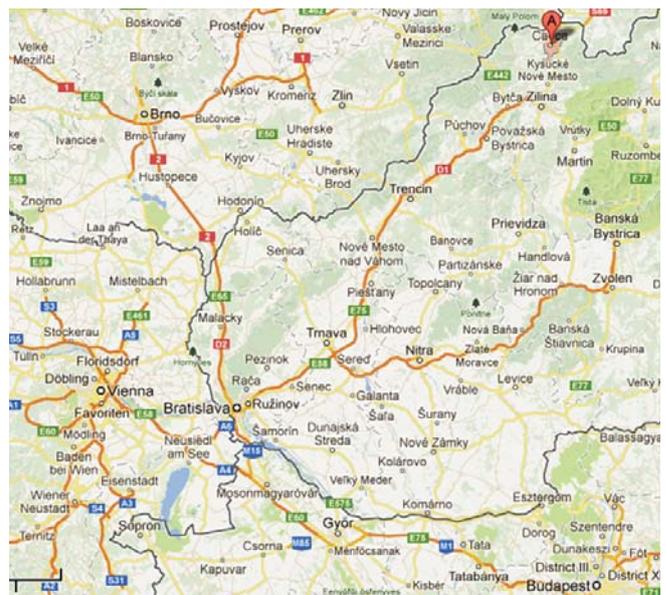
warming to see teachers singing songs together which they love and have in common. I'm sure there will be plenty of this in Čadca

In Devon on some of our courses we have sessions when teachers introduce their own culture and often bring T-Shirts, dresses, flags, sweets, biscuits, wines and banknotes from their different countries. We will have an international evening on our course in Slovakia where participants will be able to do this and teach us all a song or more songs from their countries. ELT courses are not just about ELT, they are also about learning about each other and each other's countries.



So if you like the idea of this get in touch and please let anyone know who you think might be interested. Lane Vukanovič is our new SOL Slovene co-ordinator and you can also contact her for information as well as Klaudia in Slovakia. Lane's email is: lane.vslapar@gmail.com

We are planning to organise a minibus from Vienna airport, if there is a demand for it, to take you to the venue which is approximately three hours from Vienna in the top right hand corner of the map below.



Happy summer holidays wherever they take you, be it to the Adriatic, Devon or wherever and maybe part of them may even be with us in Slovakia.

Kathy King



Mark Andrews



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