

Professional Development through Literature Circles: Voices from the Experience

by Sandra Bayona, Federico Domínguez,
Germán Elsasser, Sandra Ojeda,
Antonella Percara, Sonia Ulrich

Fish is Fish – making the most of a story with a twist

by Uwe Pohl

What do I do now...?

by Mike Shreeve

“We, Too, Sing Europe”

by Martina Kobal

Poročila o tekmovanjih



Critical thinking at a glance (7)

Case Study: To think critically, or not to think critically, that is the question

Nada Đukić

Any ancient philosophy would claim, in essence, that all the answers that we need we already possess within us. It is in critical moments that we become aware of our resourcefulness, which seems to be almost out of this world. Critical thinking is a tool or ability that can put things into perspective. Chaotic situations that take control out of our hands can be transcended by re-introducing some basic logic and order that critical thinking provides. It is similar to the structure and balance that we can feel, for example, in the natural rhythms of day and night, tides and ebbs, breathing in and breathing out, etc.



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Editorial

How do you write an editorial after two months of isolation?

You grab a coffee, you sit down and try to organise your thoughts. Trying to make order out of chaos, which is, admittedly, something teachers do in the classroom every day. This shouldn't feel as strange as it does.

Yet this whole situation feels somehow different.

I have heard a lot of people referring to this time of corona as the end of the world. OK, no big deal, we have lived through several ends of the world now, my personal favourite being the Y2K end of the world. At this end of the world, I am torn between despair for the most vulnerable being let down once again by the system and by the joy of seeing new and exciting possibilities for my students and the chance to be better and do better. I hope this particular end of the world will mean that we change for the better and that our workplaces change for the better. Smaller classrooms, more empathy on both sides, a greater emphasis on the expertise of the teacher. More focus on the other aspects of teaching, like the care we offer to the people in our charge. I hope this end of the world will bring the change we all deserve to see in our system.

This issue focuses on different aspects of teaching in these strange and interesting times – from musings of teachers on what distance learning means to them to ideas to use when we finally return to our physical classrooms. I hope the varied ideas will help you plan the next school year and that this particular end of the world means a better and brighter future for you all.

With this issue my service to you is coming to an end. It has been a pleasure editing this magazine and I hope we meet again at future events and conferences.

I will leave you with the words of the great poets of our generation – R.E.M. "It's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine." I hope they come true.

Lea Koler

Editor



Professional Development through Literature Circles: Voices from the Experience

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A quick survey among teachers of English in our context, where English is a foreign language and Spanish is generally our mother tongue, will result in a common request for more opportunities to use the target language beyond the classroom. It is partly as a response to this that we decided to organise a Literature (Lit) Circle project, sponsored by the Universidad Autónoma de Entre Ríos, in Argentina, and open to EFL teachers and advanced students of the Teaching Programme. The project, called Literature Circles in English: Deepening Reading and Communication Strategies, aimed to provide teachers with an environment to use English for real, extensive and meaningful communication. As different authors point out (Grabe and Stoller, 2002; Koda, 2004; Gonzalez, 2015; Silva and Araujo, 2016), reading is fundamental to build up knowledge and have access to it; it contributes to developing critical thinking as well as empathy; it also provides access to a wider lexicon and a closer, more thorough contact with the structures of the language, which in turn is reflected in a better capacity to communicate opinions and concepts in a variety of forms, including oral expression.

A Lit Circle is a small discussion group in which the same book has been chosen to be read (Daniels, 1994). The members are actively involved: after reading the (part of the) book agreed upon, they share their interpretation and reactions in the meeting, thus providing the very material for the discussion (Buttler and Massano, 2015) in authentic, sustained, and meaningful oral exchanges. We therefore considered Lit Circles as a suitable environment for teachers to go beyond their classroom-bound use of the language and focus on reading for pleasure while interacting with peers with similar level of proficiency and interests.

The book chosen to be read over the course of the two-month project was *Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult. Between each of the four fortnightly sessions that took place, the participants were assigned the same number of chapters to read individually, which helped them be prepared to share their responses and perceptions about the

novel for the next meeting. After introducing the mechanics of literature circles, the exchange among the participants during the following meetings was guided towards focusing on certain literary elements (characters, context and theme in our case), so as to provide both an opportunity to use English in a real communicative situation and to expand the readers' awareness of different facets of a novel. This was done by proposing a variety of activities, two of which are explained here. A pre-reading task we proposed consisted of us providing the group members with cards with the titles in the Contents section from the novel. Taking these titles as a point of departure, the lit-circle had to discuss hypotheses regarding the story and then share their ideas with the other attendees. This resulted in an animated exchange, explaining and exploring each hypothesis. Another task, when the actual reading had already started, involved connecting images and sounds presented by the organisers with certain cultural aspects fundamental to the story (such as Disney Princesses ® and music connected to one of the main characters) and a subsequent in-group discussion of how the psychological, social and temporal context determined features of

the characters and their reality in *Small Great Things* in particular.

It was not only the attendees who had the chance to practise and develop by means of these activities. The process of selecting appealing tasks, adapting them to the specific situation in which we wanted to use them, preparing the necessary props and then deciding how we would present them to the participants represented another important experience for our growth as (future) professionals. It was in this aspect as well that the collaborative nature of the proposal allowed for professional development for both lit-circle members and those involved in the planning and leading of the project.

The team—four ELT professionals and an undergraduate student of the EFL Teacher Programme—had access to a different facet of the world of teaching, that of offering formation after and beyond graduation. We shared insights, tasks and responsibilities, sometimes as apprentices and sometimes as guides. Each of us and a participant will narrate their experience, and how it has contributed to our own growth as (future) professionals.



Federico (undergraduate):
Learning from experience

One of the most enriching experiences for an undergraduate is to be given the opportunity to work with more experienced teachers. When you start developing your teaching persona, you need someone to look to as a model. Working in this project with a wonderful group of teachers helped me to learn a lot about teaching and learning strategies. Also, this experience gave me my first opportunity to stand in front of a group of people and have contact with the kind of work my future profession entails.

In addition, participating in this project provided me with new strategies to enhance learning through reading, which in turn will result in me being a more effective educator. Literature circles are extremely useful in an English lesson: learners read extensively, use the language to express their ideas and opinions, and interact with their classmates meaningfully. Furthermore, through lit circles students actively engage in their own learning process. This experience has proved invaluable to me, and it will be more so in the future, when I have to face the classroom situation on my own.

Sonia (teacher):
A win-win approach to reading

Participating in this project provided an opportunity for me not only to develop professionally, but also to adopt a completely different approach to reading. As someone who is a passionate supporter of reading, I am eager to find new ways of bringing it into the classroom, as I strongly believe it empowers readers and gives them a voice. A lit circle allows readers to improve comprehension and communication skills while they build meaning together and make a stronger connection to books. Furthermore, this practice promotes critical thinking, collaboration and communication while encouraging creativity and catering for different levels and interests.

In addition to providing the necessary resources, ideas for group discussion were prompted and all of the tasks were shared. My role as a teacher in the project was mainly that of a facilitator. This was largely enriching as it allowed for peer feedback and support.

Sandra (teacher):
Learning through sharing

A literature circle can be organised and managed single-handedly. However, working together to offer other teachers the experience of joining a lit circle resulted in professional development not only for the participants, but mainly, for us, the team. I will address only one aspect: professional development is about sharing.

Offering an instance of professional development for ELT colleagues can be daunting. Whether a seasoned teacher or an undergraduate, there is always the fear of not fulfilling the participants' expectations. Working in a team availed us the moral and affective support we all needed: the younger turned to the more experienced when in doubt regarding aspects ranging from theoretical tenets to how to react to situations likely to arise in the sessions. In turn, they offered a wealth of suggestions to enhance activities and questions that helped me revisit my viewpoints. This synergy revamped my own take on lit circles; sharing with (future) colleagues highlighted for me the collegial nature of professional development.

Antonella (teacher):
A multiplier effect

The process of planning and organising an activity together with (future) colleagues contributed to both my personal and professional growth. The benefits of team collaboration were countless and results vital while attempting to achieve our goals. Here, I will refer to what I consider a significant impact of our joint work: the multiplier effect.

Embarking on this journey challenged us positively to ensure we were taking the right decisions as we strove to foster a pleasant and supportive learning environment. Energy, passion and assertiveness were required, and each group member helped to increase productivity, leaving their own footprints, as the tasks were completed. After the lit circle sessions came to an end, I was left feeling fulfilled and enthusiastic about repeating the experience or taking part in similar ones. Moreover, through our own reflection and participants'

feedback, it was possible to identify some strengths and weaknesses of our work. This information encouraged and motivated me even more to seek new instances of interaction with other teachers and teachers to be, thus multiplying the possibilities of collaborative learning.

Germán (teacher):
A real communicative environment

A literature circle subscribes to the idea of reading beyond what is actually being read, offering participants an appropriate space for oral practice at an advanced level of English in collaborative work that stimulates them to exchange their own thoughts and interpretations in a real communicative environment. Furthermore, it not only promotes the habit of sustained and extensive reading in English, but also provides teachers and teachers-to-be with tools for work with literature circles in an English class as a foreign language.

For my part, it has helped me to embrace an alternative approach to classroom readers, as well as to reassess the importance of working collaboratively, understanding that none of what has been achieved would have been possible without teamwork.

Sandra (graduate - participant):
Reading and thinking together:
a stimulating and rewarding experience

As already mentioned, finding opportunities to actually use the foreign language in our exolingual context is quite difficult. As EFL teachers, we are aware of the fact that technology might build bridges between our context and English-speaking cultures. However, the virtual experience might not replace the face-to-face situation, where participants can exchange meaningful messages, negotiate meaning or provide on-the-spot responses. The literature circles not only provided an environment in which I could communicate using the target language but also helped me and my colleagues enhance our social skills. This innovative approach to reading also fostered collaboration and reflective thinking through varied engaging speaking tasks that could also be replicated in our

classrooms. In fact, some of the participants actually incorporated the activities carried out during the course in their teaching practice, with highly positive results. As a participant, I benefited from the written and spoken exposure to the target language and I could also take part in an experiential learning process (Kolb and Kolb, 2009), which provided me with a deeper understanding of the benefits of implementing literature circles in my lessons. This was an enriching experience that led to linguistic, social and professional development.

Final thoughts

The main aim of this project was to offer teachers an opportunity to interact meaningfully in English. However, after sharing our experiences, there is no doubt that this activity provided additional benefits, not only to the recipients, but to all those involved. Working together as organisers or as participants meant learning from each other and developing professionally in a supportive environment. Undoubtedly, an adventure we hope to repeat and continue exploring.

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Fish is Fish

– making the most of a story with a twist

by **Uwe Pohl**



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Introduction

Fish is Fish is a story for children about the power of curiosity, imagination and friendship. Two friends, a tadpole and a fish, live together in the same pond until the tadpole grows into a frog and leaves the water. When the frog returns, he tells his friend about the outside world and the creatures he has come across there. The fish very much wants to see it all for himself but he finds out the hard way that he cannot breathe outside the pond and is only saved by his friend, the frog.

However, there is more to this story than meets the eye and since its publication in 1970, Leo Lionni's beautifully illustrated book has been translated into many

languages. Lionni also co-authored an animated film of the same name. I first heard about *Fish is Fish* in the early 1990s from Italian-born Matilde Grünhage-Monetti, who was then working at the *German Institute for Adult Education* in Frankfurt. She also drew my attention to the deeper layers of the story and how these might be explored for intercultural learning (Grünhage-Monetti/Pohl 1997). Since then, *Fish is Fish* has been a key ingredient of my language teaching, teacher training and cultural studies classes at university.

In this article, I would like to show why this story is not just for children. I will share the way I have been working with it in education because it has inspired creativity, reflection and discussion in generations of students and course participants from around the world.

Setting the scene

I always start by giving only the beginning of the story. As I talk, I make it simpler or more language-rich depending on the level of the students' English. Here is a more embellished version:



Once upon a time a little fish and a tadpole lived in a pond. They had been born on the same day and become really good friends. They spent many happy hours swimming and playing together, exploring their world. Every day they grew a little bigger.

One day, the fish noticed something sticking out of his friend's body. He asked: "What's that sticking out there?" The tadpole replied: "These are my front legs, stupid!" The fish said: "But you can't have legs – you're a fish like me!" But his friend answered: "I'm no fish! I'm going to be a frog!" And sure enough, soon he had grown front legs and hind legs. The fish didn't like this at all. Perhaps he sensed what might happen... because a few days later, the tadpole woke up and realised he had become a real frog. He climbed out of the pond. And his friend, the fish, was left behind all alone ...

But then, one day, there was a big splash! The fish looked up and to his great joy he saw his froggy friend. "Where have you been all this time?" said the fish. "I've missed you so much!" "Oh" said the frog, "I've been out there and I've seen very strange things."

"What? Tell me!" said the fish excitedly. "Birds" answered the frog. "What do they look like?" asked his friend. "Oh, they are very different from you and me. They have wings and feathers and only two legs and they come in many different shapes, sizes and colours." "Really?" said the little fish wide-eyed. "What else did you see?" he asked. "Cows" answered the frog matter-of-factly. "Cows? What do they look like?" asked the fish, "Are they like birds?"

"Completely different" replied his friend. "They are big, have horns and munch grass all the time. And between their legs they carry pink bags full of milk!"

"Goodness!" exclaimed the fish. "Was that all you saw?" "Oh, no!" replied the frog. "Well, what else? the fish wanted to know. "People" said his friend. "Bigger ones and smaller ones. They are not like any of the other creatures. They walk on two legs, and they always have some strange kind of stuff covering their body." "That's amazing!" gasped the fish. ...

Later that night, he just couldn't fall asleep for a long time. And when the fish finally did fall asleep, he had the strangest dream. In his dream, he saw all those strange creatures his friend had told him about...

Do you see what I see?

– what the story reveals

As is to be expected, the students come up with very different imaginings of the creatures the fish saw in his dream. Here are a few examples from my large collection of student drawings.



I stop at this point and then invite small groups of students to draw the creatures the fish saw in his dream. For this, I provide markers, coloured pencils, crayons or chalk as well as A3 size sheets of paper and set a rough time limit of about 20 minutes. Some groups share the task of drawing and colouring-in evenly. In other groups, some students give instructions and others do the drawing. Yet others take time to discuss what these creatures might look like. As the groups work, I do not comment on what I see but encourage everybody to do the task to the best of their ability.



As can be seen, though, these imaginings are of two types: most depict rather bizarre creatures with fishlike features like the ones on the left. Usually, as shown on the right, there are also one or two posters with 'real' birds, cows or people, i.e. living creatures as we know them based on our life experiences as humans. When everybody has finished, I get the groups to hold up their posters at the same time.

This is often a real surprise moment, when, in mock puzzlement, I ask: "Can someone please explain what is going on here?!" In the ensuing class discussion, we talk about why it is that the fish can only imagine what he knows, has seen or interacted with in the watery world of the pond. He only had the frog's report to go by and simply morphed this minimal information into shapes of fishlike beings. With the help of their posters, students from the groups with such 'fishy' creatures often provide specific illustrations of what that meant to them.

Digging deeper: what about your fishy experiences?

One possible way of continuing is to dig into the students' experiences of other cultures or people from other countries.

For example, I often ask my students to think about something they had imagined or expected in a certain way but found to be quite different when they first visited a particular place abroad or even just a different region in their home country. This may take a little time and it helps if prompts such as these sentence beginnings are provided:

- It was funny that...*
- I was surprised when ...*
- I felt uneasy because ...*
- I felt annoyed when...*

Talking about such personal experiences is best done in pairs or small groups first. This way, students can articulate and rehearse what they would like to say without pressure. I then invite some of them to share their stories with the whole group. This gets students to realise that what strikes us as 'alien' in some way—the appearance of people or their behaviour, unfamiliar sights or tastes—is personally and culturally conditioned. We make sense of everything against the background of what we know and are used to.

And then one day... let's get more creative!

Having only heard the beginning of the story, students are naturally curious about what happens next and how it ends. This is an ideal moment for a bit of creative writing. So, I ask what they think what might have happened. What would make an interesting ending to the story? I tend to make this homework and an individualised task to be shared in the next class or online. Here are two endings written by students of different age and language ability:

And then one day ...the fish went up to the surface of the lake. He looked around and saw some trees. Then the fish saw a cow and then a bird. He wanted to touch them and swam to the beach. Suddenly, an angel came and said: "Hello!" and gave him lungs. The fish tried to walk out to the lake. But he fell and the angel said to him. "OK, I'll give you wings." But he couldn't really fly. So the frog came and said: "Come with me and just be a fish, be yourself."

Written by a twelve-year-old pre-intermediate student

And then one day, Stickleback swam up to his friend, the frog and told him: "Look, I hate it here in the pond! I want to go outside, I want to see the birds, the cows and these people you told me about! I want to be like you!" The frog replied: "My friend, don't say that. You weren't born to be a tadpole and you have everything here that you need: crystalline water, friends, food. The world outside is dangerous for you." But Stickleback said: "I don't care! I have to see it all myself! I wish I were a frog, too!" OK, said the frog. "Come with me, I'll show you something."

It was a cold September evening. When the sun started to set Fluff, the frog, asked Stickleback to look up at the sky: there he could see a flock of white birds flying towards Africa. The next day, the frog asked his friend to come for a swim near the reeds. He knew that there was a pasture nearby. After some time, all the cows from the pasture started to come to the pond to drink water. Stickleback swam near their noses and looked up: he could finally see the cows, too.

A day later the frog asked Stickleback to come for a swim near the rocks. It was day-break when they started to swim around. There they saw a yummy piece of corn swinging just underneath the surface of the water. The frog asked Stickleback not to eat the food but look towards the edge of the pond: Stickleback looked up and saw an elderly man and a young boy sitting on chairs, waiting for something. Stickleback was very happy. He had seen the birds, the cows and the humans, too. When he said goodbye to his friend, Fluff reminded him: "These things, the birds, cows and humans have always been here, near the pond, Stickleback. You just have to look around and really see what is in front of you. Sometimes all we need is already there."

Written by an eighteen-year-old advanced learner

The first example shows that, even at lower levels, students can communicate their ending idea creatively, coherently and with good expression. Some students at all levels also like giving the two main characters a more personalised name or add illustrations to their story ending. Most importantly, perhaps, this task prompts students to think about and explore other potential layers or morals to the story. Interestingly, these interpretations often hint at the dangers or challenges of leaving home or remind us to value ourselves as imperfect but unique (human) beings.

Summary: What's in it for me (or you)?

Working with *Fish is Fish* offers a rare mix of opportunities for meaningful language practice, intercultural and (inter)personal learning. I would like to end with a brief summary:

🐟 The story offers a **light-hearted approach to the 'serious' topic of people's perception**: how we see others and are seen by them. We all create 'fishy worlds' in our heads as we tend to view people through the filter of our upbringing, experiences and personal habits. This is especially true when we are 'out of our depth'

in an unfamiliar cultural environment.

🐟 In our daily interactions with the people around us *perspective-taking* is a crucial part of social-emotional learning and systems thinking (Goleman/Senge 2014). It is when they realise the limits of their own, 'fishy' perspective that students can develop this skill into one of the habits of systems thinkers.

🐟 Discussing ideas for what to draw and how to do it triggers a **creative and collaborative process**: opinions and ideas are exchanged, negotiated and decided upon in order to achieve a satisfactory group outcome in limited time.

🐟 The drawing element itself creates **an intense but relaxed working atmosphere** and a sense of anticipation (what will the others produce?). Pinned to the classroom wall, the students' posters can serve as future reference points and reminders of shared achievement.

🐟 The different steps surface several **memorable 'fishy' student experi-**

ences and perspectives that are always interesting and often surprising for the whole class. Such sharing also tends to have a positive impact on the dynamics of the classroom group.

🐟 The activity sequence draws on **all the language resources** the students have at their disposal and calls for **meaningful practice of different skills** – listening, discussing, summarising, writing. At the same time, it is easy to tweak teacher inputs and student outputs to suit different age groups and proficiency levels.

🐟 *Fish is Fish* can be taken into several directions, i.e. become the starting point for personal or cultural **awareness raising** and limited or more extensive language work. At the same time, teachers can use all or only some of the steps, depending on time and the students' response.



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Erasmus KA2 project Innovate Together: How to teach disability etiquette

by **Branka Lamza**, *II. osnovna škola Čakovec*

Marking significant dates has always been an important part of the primary school curriculum. Projects are a great way to expand marking important dates on an international level. The article tackles the theme of marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. I will share ideas for how to mark this special date, which I selected and implemented together with my project partners and friends: **Zoi Kaouri** (9th Primary School Limassol, Cyprus), **Ewa Tyborowska** (Szkoła Podstawowa nr 19, Legnica, Poland), **Mihaela Mihăilescu** (Școala Gimnazială nr. 1, Independența, Romania), **Angela Gordino** (Agrupamento de Escola de Rua Afonso III, Loureiro, Portugal), **Tina de Rosa** (Istituto Comprensivo San Rocco, Faenza, Italy) and **Emma Foster** (St Michael's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Houghton-le-Spring, UK).

All activities were a part of the Erasmus+ KA2 and eTwinning project **Innovate Together**, carried out between 2017 and 2019 by primary schools from seven countries, including II. osnovna škola Čakovec, Croatia, as the coordinator.

The main aim of the project was to strengthen eight key competences for lifelong learning. Among many activities carried out, for this article we have chosen activities to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Second graders from Croatia had a guest – a mother of one of the pupils, who kindly told them the story of her life.

She has used a wheelchair since she was thirteen: it was difficult for her at first but eventually, she got used to it. She graduated from higher education, works and has a family. The children had an opportunity to try moving in a wheelchair and walk with blindfolded to see how disabled people must feel in their everyday activities.

In their English class, seventh graders from Croatia tried to move and identify objects with their classmates' help, while blindfolded. They watched and discussed a short film about a girl with a disability. The pupils from Čakovec also did research on disability etiquette – how to treat people with disabilities with respect. They were asked to highlight

the rules of good communication they find the most important. Here are some of them:

Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their companion; Respect their personal space; Offer your arm - don't take theirs; Be specific when giving directions; Always ask before you help; Children with disabilities are interested in the same topics as all other children.

The web 2.0 tool Voki was used to create animated characters with audio messages containing previously selected rules of disability etiquette. We also used Kizoa, a very simple-to-use tool to create slideshows.



In Cyprus, Mr Kyriakos Tsioupanis, a civil engineer, was hosted at school. Mr Tsioupanis has an artificial leg because of an accident while serving in the army. He was invited to the 9th Primary School Limassol to talk about the inner strength that enabled him to study abroad and overcome every difficulty he had to face.

Following the event (that took place on 3rd December), in the following few days, the pupils were taught issues related to diversity. As a result, they produced different kinds of creative assignments and activities. In particular, the children of the first class wrote acrostic poems using the word "respect". They wanted to give the message that people with disabilities need respect, not pity.

In Poland, sensory workshops were prepared for children from grades 1–3. During the classes, pupils experienced how to get to know and perceive the world of a person with motor, visual and auditory disabilities. Wearing blindfolds, the children recognised the flavours and smell of products demonstrated by

teachers and assembled wooden jigsaw puzzles. These struggles brought pupils closer to the specificity of the functioning of blind people. The next tasks the children had were exercises, consisting of recognising sounds and writing dictations with ear plugs in their ears. In this way, pupils learned about the difficulties faced by people with hearing impairment. The last exercises that pupils from grades 1–3 were given were a slalom between bollards without the use of their legs, drawing geometric figures with the help of their feet, and stacking a tower from blocks while wearing oven gloves on their hands. Participation in these activities made the children aware of the problems encountered in daily life by people with mobility disabilities. At the end of the meeting, pupils participated in a sign language lesson. The youngest got to know dactylography, that is, the finger alphabet and the gestures defining polite phrases.

In Portugal, this day was celebrated by the Physical Education Department. The teacher organised a "boccia" tournament among pupils (from the 5th to the

9th grade). Pupils got the opportunity to learn how to play this sport, which, in the Portuguese school, is played by the pupils with disabilities. It was a truly inclusive activity, in which all pupils, played in groups along with the team of pupils with special needs.

"It's normal to be different" is the motto of the Italian school. Every year teachers work with children on a specific issue connected with people, their identity and human relationships. This year the theme was Ikigai. Ikigai is a Japanese word that cannot be translated with a single word in English. Ikigai is a treasure in our soul that we have to discover and cultivate day by day, to live happily, in peace with ourselves and with other people. We could say it's our reason to live.

What is my passion? What am I good at? What's the reason I wake up every morning? What can I do for other people? What does the world need? Around these questions, we can build thinking about what we are and how we can live our life fully, taking care of ourselves and other people. If we focus on it, we will



discover that in the little details of everyday life we can find seeds to make our souls blossom. Every team put this theme into practice in their class in different ways: reading books, interviewing children, writing stories or poems, finding the words to describe pupils' talents and the way they can help other people through them. After these activities, each class created an artwork, which was exhibited in the school hall on 3rd December.

In Romania, pupils from the 3rd, 4th and 8th grades were asked to search for some information about disabled people which they turned into drawings, posters and messages. Furthermore, the school psychologist explained to the pupils the concepts of disability and infirmity. There was also an interactive meeting between the pupils and a disabled person. This person told the children about the incident which had led to his disability and which has put him into a wheelchair, his feelings and how his life is today. M.B.M. shared a few of the difficulties he has had to face: the inability to walk, the depression, the ignorant people, the lack of an access

ramp at the entrance of the buildings and so on. With the help of his family and psychologists, he has managed to overcome all these obstacles and today he is very proud that he is an active person who can move easily in his wheelchair; he can also drive and he attends different charity events for other disabled people.

The pupils were challenged to play the part of a disabled person and to use a wheelchair and they have realised that it is not easy to live like this. They have discovered that the disabled people are not different from us: they do things which we think are normal, but just a little differently. Many disabled people can fit perfectly into our society: they can learn and they can work, but they need the necessary conditions to do that and it is up to us to provide them. At the end, the pupils handed in cards and messages to support and encourage him.

To celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in the UK, the KS2 classes watched a video about a 13-year-old gymnast named Gemma

who was born with heart complications and has Down's syndrome. The children enjoyed learning about Gemma's story and how resilient and positive she is. Following on from this, the Year 6 class learned a little bit about disability sports and decided to organise a game of blind football. Much hilarity and fun ensued. However, on a more serious note, the children gained a much better understanding and respect for people with disabilities.

For all the partners, there has always been a need to promote tolerance, respect and appreciation for all members of society, as well as to raise the awareness of the dangers of intolerance. We were deeply moved by the experiences we were able to find out about from the disabled people we hosted at our schools. Most importantly, we managed to have our pupils empathise with people with disabilities and strengthen their social and civic competence. The project Innovate Together was funded by the EU. Please visit our website <https://brankalamza.wixsite.com/innovate-together> to find out more.



“We, Too, Sing Europe”

The European Parliament Ambassador School Programme (EPAS) at Gimnazija Nova Gorica, Slovenia

by **Martina Kobal**

Martina Kobal is a teacher of English at Gimnazija Nova Gorica. She enjoys working with teenagers and likes to think of herself as a committed, inspiring teacher. She has been involved in the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme since September 2016.

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1. Introduction

Gimnazija Nova Gorica is a co-educational secondary school for students aged 15 to 19, situated in the west of Slovenia, near the Italian border. The school has participated in the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme since September 2016 and it is officially certified as one of the best European Parliament Ambassador Schools in Slovenia.

The European Parliament Ambassador Schools Programme (EPAS) is a network of schools across the European Union whose aim is to raise awareness amongst young people in secondary education of the impact of the European Union in their daily lives. In Slovenia, the programme is comprised of nearly 600 youngsters and is implemented by the Slovenian European Parliament Liaison Office.

Gimnazija Nova Gorica's active participation in the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme has been a truly memorable experience for all the students and teachers alike. The five Senior Ambassadors (teachers) who are in charge of the project, Suzana

Černe, Head of EPAS, Anastazija Makorič Bevčar, Martina Kobal, Tina Kogoj and Vanja Gabrijelčič, see the programme as an excellent way to get and share ideas about teaching and about the European Union.

Students at Gimnazija Nova Gorica are eager to learn about European parliamentary democracy, political choices and European citizenship values. Every year they participate in the Euroscola programme competition and have won first prize several times, the prize being a subsidised trip to Strasbourg to represent Slovenia at Euroscola, where young people from the 27 EU Member States become Members of the European Parliament for one day. There are more than 30 students who aim to acquire the title of Junior European Parliament Ambassadors every year.

2. Ready, Steady, Action!

Students at Gimnazija Nova Gorica are actively involved in different activities and events related to the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme (see <https://ambasadorjiep.wixsite.com/mysite>).

The following events represent some of the programme's highlights:

- Every year the students organise the celebration of the European Day of Languages (26th September). The event called 'Language Café' is jointly organised at Splendid Bar by Gimnazija Nova Gorica and Europe Direct, Regional Development Agency of Northern Primorska Ltd Nova Gorica. The students have a chat over coffee with the customers and passers-by, and try to teach them some phrases



Fig. 1. Celebrating the European Day of Languages (September 2017)

and words in different foreign languages. Foreign languages are an integral part of the school curriculum at Gimnazija Nova Gorica. Students learn English as their first foreign language and they can choose from French, German, Italian, Spanish or Russian for their second foreign language. The general objectives of the European Day of Languages are “alerting the public to the importance of language learning, promoting the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe, and encouraging lifelong language learning in and out of school, whether for study purposes, for professional needs, for purposes of mobility or for pleasure and exchanges” (Council of Europe).

- In November 2017, the Junior Ambassadors were actively involved in ‘The Europe We Want’ event,

organised by the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). The students were asked to make an important contribution to the scenarios outlined in the White Paper on the Future of Europe. The Junior Ambassador students presented their views on how the scenarios offered by the White Paper would affect the lives and work of the young. They also participated in the discussion and had a say in cross-border policies and the presentation of cross-border projects regarding Slovenia and Italy.

- Every May the Junior Ambassadors organise a Europe Day event to celebrate peace and unity in Europe.

The Junior and Senior Ambassadors, teachers of Gimnazija Nova Gorica, Head of Unit and other representatives from the European Parliament Liaison

Office in Slovenia and the Faculty of Social Sciences, as well as other guests gathered at Europe Square on the border between Nova Gorica (Slovenia) and Gorizia (Italy), which honours the accession of Slovenia to the European Union, in order to be a part of the Living Flag of Europe. The participants stood in the right spots to raise the blue strips and twelve yellow stars and form the Flag of Europe in celebration of Europe Day (9th May). The flag symbolically represented the fact that if we *work together cooperatively*, we can *achieve* significant goals despite our differences.

The celebration of Europe Day in 2018 was marked by multilingualism. Our Guest Speaker at the event was Mr Valter Mavrič, Director of Translation and acting Director-General of DG Translation at the European Parliament. His expertise and experience in this field



Fig. 2. Junior Ambassadors participating in ‘The Europe We Want’ event



Fig. 4. Junior Ambassadors interviewing Mr Valter Mavrič (May 2018)



Fig. 3. Living Flag of Europe for 2017 Europe Day Celebration



Fig. 5. #thistimeimvoting Campaign (May 2019)

of work was an excellent addition to our European Parliament Ambassador School Programme and the Junior Ambassadors conducted an interview on the topic of multilingualism and translation, which was of great benefit for our students.

At the invitation of Mr Mavrič, Gimnazija Nova Gorica recorded a radio programme for Europarl Audio Capacity, a web-based audio channel, which aims at audiences with different programmes and podcasts. Eight candidates for Junior Ambassadors offered the audience an insight into some of the highlights of the European Parliament Ambassador Schools Programme at Gimnazija Nova Gorica. The audio texts were recorded in Slovenian, English, French, Italian and German and the programme was broadcast on 13th and 14th May 2018.

In May 2019, the Junior Ambassadors were actively involved in #thistimeimvoting campaign and they showed great enthusiasm and dedication in promoting the elections. They organised 'This Time I am Voting' Café, which proved to be very successful. The students had a chat over coffee with citizens of Nova Gorica, explaining the fact that participating in the European elections gives voters the possibility to influence the future direction of EU policies. They also created their own logo 'Leave your Mark' for 2019 European Parliament elections and printed T-shirts and shopping bags

with this logo. The T-shirts and bags were distributed to the public during the event.

- The Junior Ambassadors have set up an EU Info Point in the school library, where students and visitors can get information and learn a lot about the European Union. The Info Point has a wide selection of publications and brochures, magazines and newspapers that bring the EU and its institutions closer to the reader.

3. Main Benefits of EPAS

Stimulation, innovation and interaction lie at the heart of the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme, so the project has been beneficial in many ways. It enables Junior Ambassadors to do research on the European Union and learn about European parliamentary democracy and values. The project is a great opportunity for young people to be active, have their voices heard, and participate in their community.

The European Parliament Ambassador School Programme *helps students develop critical thinking, teamwork and problem-solving skills*, along with the ability to communicate effectively with others. *Junior Ambassador students engage in workshops, debates and various activities with their peers and also European decision-makers.* Moreover, Junior Ambassadors raise concerns about issues concerning the European Union and develop their ideas for a better

Europe. Finally, yet importantly, the programme also helped to bring the European Union and the vital importance of voting in the 2019 European elections closer to first-time voters.

The saying goes "the plan is to fan this spark into a flame" (Miranda), and this is exactly how the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme results in real change, as it is interdisciplinary, collaborative and motivating, and the contributions of young people are heard by policy makers and politicians throughout Europe.

What is more, the programme meets Senior Ambassadors' expectations. It is a popular and noble aspiration for educators to inspire and develop empowered learners, innovative designers, creative communicators and global collaborators. Undeniably, by joining the programme, students get involved and plant the seeds of many lasting ideas. In addition, they start their journey towards creating the future of the European Union. As Klaus Welle, Secretary-General of the European Parliament, put it, "Europe needs your participation, your energy and enthusiasm more than ever, but it also needs your creativity and your innovation. The future of the EU belongs to you, the young generation" (EYE2018 7).

4. Students' Comments

//note to proofreader: the comments should be proofread only very lightly,



Fig. 6. Senior Ambassadors



Fig. 7. 'This Time I am Voting' Logo

as we would like to preserve the students' unique voice//

Anastasija Knez, Junior Ambassador:

I am very happy and honoured to have been a part of that project, because it has undoubtedly given me a lot of new knowledge and experience. If I had a chance, I would definitely participate in that kind of project again. Not only did I get to know my school mates and their interests better, but I also learned how to interact with other people, sell them my ideas and listen to their opinions. The thing that I enjoyed most was our excursion to Brussels, because not everyone can visit the European Parliament, meet a MEP in person and see beautiful places in OUR Europe.

Nika Vrabec, Junior Ambassador:

Being a Junior Ambassador is the best experience every student can get. You have a chance to get to know the EU better: it gives you an opportunity to learn about the institutions of the EU and EU legislation, and most importantly, about democracy and freedom of choice. It encourages you to become an active citizen of the EU.

Julija Baša, Junior Ambassador in charge of photography and video-making:

I have gained a lot from EPAS. I immensely enjoyed the feeling of working together in a connected team, in which everyone strove to accomplish their task. There was a motivational atmosphere

and everything I did, I did with pleasure. I liked the fact that there was so much going on and that every task we had to face was a new exciting challenge.

5. Concluding Remarks

The European Parliament Ambassador Schools Programme started off at Gimnazija Nova Gorica not only as an idea to be awarded an EPAS plaque, but also to encourage students to become active citizens in a democratic Europe. The project became a huge part of our school and we met the challenge. Every year a number of our enthusiastic and dedicated Junior Ambassadors receive a Junior Ambassador Certificate. What is even more important, at the end of the school year Junior Ambassadors are aware of the fact that they can be the strongest force in shaping the future of Europe with their ideas and their actions.

Our aim is to consolidate the project in the future and to take a step further by applying for the *EU4Youth* project. Participation in *EU4Youth* opens great opportunities for both students and teachers to acquire valuable skills in communication, writing, video-making and team building while deepening the students' knowledge about the European Union. The project gives young committed students an excellent opportunity to exchange their fresh ideas with their European peers and to present their vision of a future Europe.

"The EP is not 751 individuals but 508 million voices, roaring for the future we want for Europe, our home" (European Parliament, Liaison Office in Ireland).

We, too, are Europe.

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Fig. 8. EU Info Point



Fig. 9. Our Europe

Enhancing closeness, creativity and humour in the classroom to motivate students' engagement in active learning

by **Daša Orešnik**



Daša Orešnik was born in 1967 in Celje. Her favourite subject in primary school was English. While attending the First High School in Celje, she also learnt French,

German and took a course in Italian. She studied French and English at the Faculty of Arts. She was interested in teaching both languages. Besides working as an English teacher in the Secondary School of Economics and Telecommunications, she has taught French in a private language school. She has always been an avid reader and a keen explorer of the human character.

I always wanted to be a teacher. When I was a little girl, I used to teach whoever was at hand; my dolls, teddy bears, peers, etc.

My career as a teacher started when I was still studying at university, barely a few years older and not much more mature than my 2nd year secondary school students of economics. I enjoyed myself being a teacher. We got on so well, they invited me to their final trip to the Croatian seaside.

I love being a teacher. Through my almost three decades of experience,

I have had plenty of time and opportunities to realise what makes a good teacher –one who's passionate about their job, who knows what/where/when they are teaching and what methods they are using, one who cares for their students and knows how to motivate them.

It has been a great challenge to motivate my students since I've always believed that being a teacher is a privilege, an honour, yet also a huge responsibility, especially when you come across students who are unmotivated or lack motivation and you know you need to do everything in your power to make them become interested and learn English.

IN 2013, I attended Teachers' Training Course at IH in London. One of the perks at the course was studying Dörnyei and his 10 Motivational Strategies (Dörnyei, 2001). I realised I had been thinking about them and implementing most of them in my teaching methods long before I saw them written down as such.

1. Set a personal example with your own behaviour (be passionate, friendly, punctual, respectful, etc.)
2. Recognize students' effort and celebrate their success (I believe in our culture we are reluctant to give

praise and too ready to criticise, we need to change that, step by step)

3. Promote learners' self-confidence (never underestimate your students' skills, knowledge, and their will to progress)
4. Create a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere in the classroom (I'm close to my students, they are encouraged to be witty, their sense of humour is appreciated, etc.)
5. Present a task properly (you have to be clear, precise, and know exactly what your demands are)
6. Increase the learners' goal-orientedness (they need to know what knowledge they will acquire and what it will mean to them)
7. Make the learning task stimulating (lessons should never be boring, if they bore you as a teacher, be sure they will have the same effect on your students, find ways to make them interesting)
8. Familiarise learners with L2-related values (students' behaviour, their expectations their beliefs, their culture-such as values, stereotypes, attitudes, prejudices, etc.)
9. Promote group cohesiveness and set group norms (in my experience, the most effective work tends to be done in groups of 3-4 students)
10. Promote learner autonomy (this strategy presented the biggest challenge to me, as I had the feeling

I needed to do more than was my due).

What I found crucial for a teacher of English is answering the following questions:

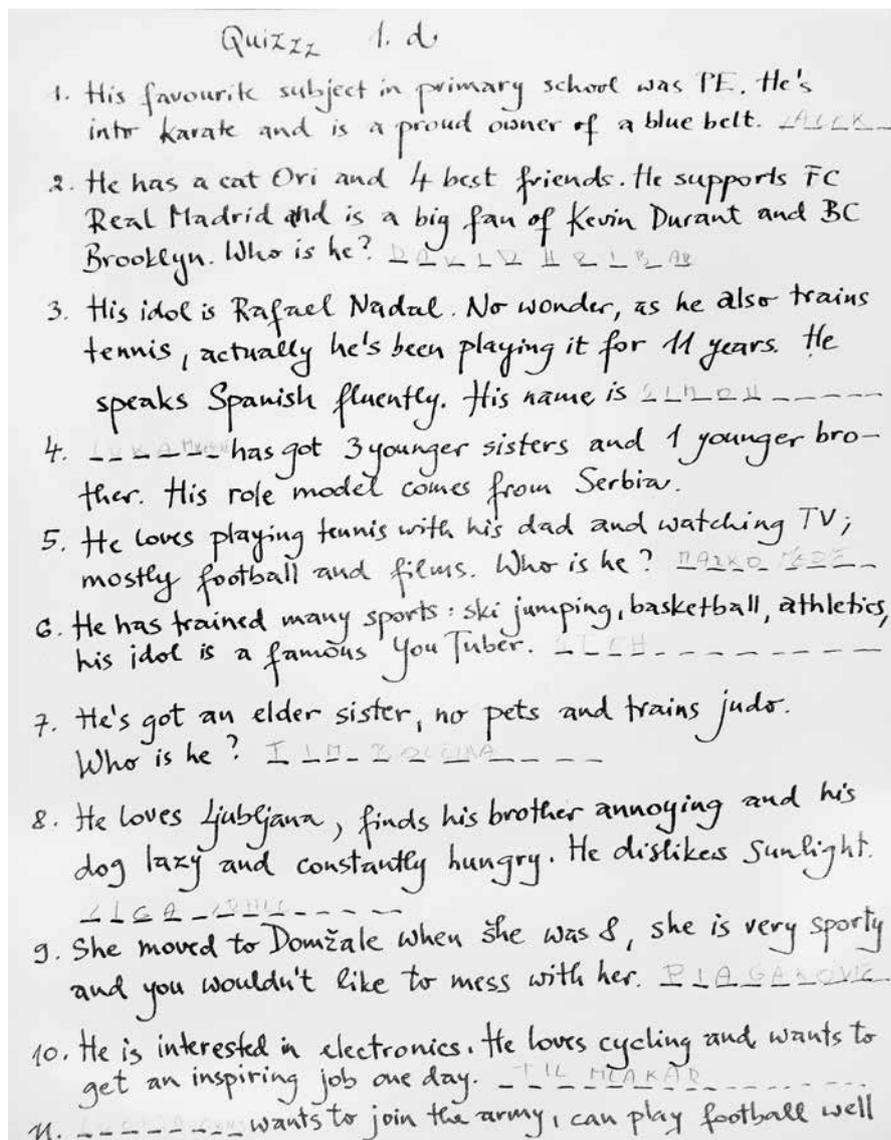
1. Which strategies do you feel are most effective to improve motivation, and why?
2. Which strategies are most difficult to implement, and why?
3. What are some effective methods for dealing with unmotivated learners?
4. What is your personal style or approach to motivating students?

I believe that L2 motivation is one of the most important factors that determine the rate and success of L2 attainment. I have always felt close to my students, they feel they can trust me. I always call them by their first names. I believe teachers being on a pedestal belongs to the past.

What I needed to learn was to be more patient in order to be able to wait for the students who are somewhat slower than the average (and usually less self-confident) and thus need more time to complete a certain task. By learning patience, I managed to get to know them better and some of them surprised me with a hidden talent, such as being good at drawing, delegating, computer skills, etc.)

Students allow you to influence them if you prove to them you are worth it. To do so, you need to stand out to them by being vocal, i.e. intelligent, informative, passionate, a person who is not afraid to speak their mind but also one who is there to listen to them.

My first-year students are asked to do a presentation entitled "Who am I?" in which they let their schoolmates know about their likes, dislikes, hobbies, family and friends. They present themselves in front of their classmates and me while we all write down notes and after the last student has done their presentation, I take my time and do a quiz on all the students in the class – one question for each student. Thus, we learn about one another, it's fun and while doing the quiz, there's nothing but good vibes in the classroom buzzing with questions, jokes and teasing.



One of this year's quizzes. I always write them by hand to make them more personal.

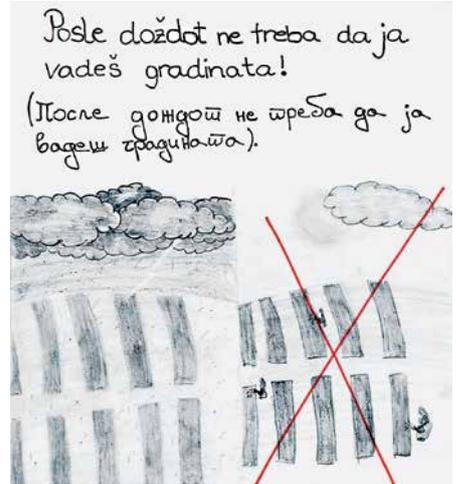
I'm passionate about teaching. I'm also quite creative and energetic, so my lessons reflect who I am. Enthusiasm is contagious. The fact is I care for my students, that's why I'm almost always willing to go the extra mile for them and they know it.

Sometimes when everything else fails, it's a (good) sense of humour that saves the day. Humour helps me engage my students and make the lesson more interesting, it also makes it easier for my students to relate to me. Humour is a great tension release. By creating a more fun environment, students become more motivated and eager to learn.

I've realised that if I want students to be excited about certain topics, I have to go above and beyond the curriculum and give assignments that let students think

outside the box. From time to time, we do an extensive class project that is unconventional and fun.

Here you can see four posters of the proverbs that were part of a project done by a multi-cultural class of female and male students of economics who happened to be familiar with numerous proverbs and sayings in their mother tongues. We studied the origin, use and meanings of various proverbs, trying to compare them (they were in English, Slovene, Croatian, Macedonian, etc.) and see how different they were. It was an unconventional task and students happened to have many ideas how to get down to it. Many of them asked their grandparents for help, so it became an extended multi-generation project. We had a lot of fun learning something new about each society's values and beliefs.

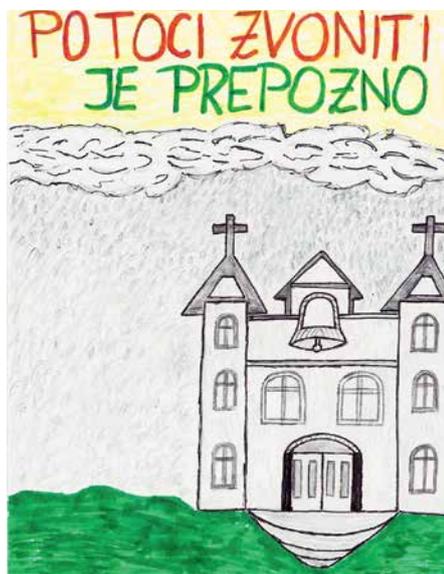
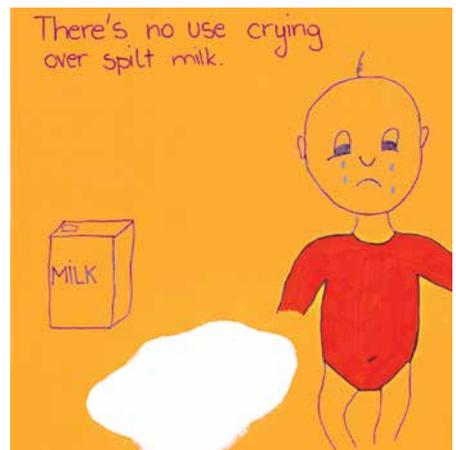


Most commonly used proverbs in German:

Ende gut, alles gut.
Eile mit Weile.
Morgenstunde hat Gold im Munde.
Alle Wege führen nach Rom.
Wo Rauch ist, ist auch Feuer.
Reden ist Silber, Schweigen ist Gold.

Most commonly used proverbs in English

Practice makes perfect.
Easy come, easy go.
There's plenty of fish in the sea.
Two wrongs don't make a right.
When in Rome (do as the Romans do).



Most commonly used proverbs in Macedonian.

1. Koj pita ne svirita. (Koj pita ne svirita.)
2. Koj se tepa taj se saka. (Koj se tepa taj se saka.)
3. Nikoj učen ne se rodi. (Nikoj učen ne se rodi.)
4. Čovekot se uči dok e živ. (Čovekot se uči dok e živ.)
5. Daleku odi, ama i za doma misli. (Daleku odi, ama i za doma misli.)
6. So sila uđavina ne duđuva! (So sila uđavina ne duđuva!)

Most commonly used proverbs in Slovenian:

- Po toži zvoniti je prepozno.
- Osel gre samo enkrat na led.
- Kdor visoko leta, nizko pade.
- Jablko ne pade dalež od drevesa.
- Kdor drugemu jamo kopje, sam vanjo pade.

Home, sweet home.

Ljubo doma, kdor ga ima.
Svuda podgi, svojog kući dodgi.
Sekade odi, ama i za doma misli.
Trautes Heim, Glück allein.

Last but not least, I would like to mention my firm belief that lessons should be dynamic and one of my favourite warm-ups is brainstorming, used either as a strategy for revising a previous lesson or an introduction to a new topic. Students usually prove to be creative if you provoke them by letting them know there is no option to stay on the surface and by making them believe they are capable of going deep. To my great satisfaction, on such occasions, the Eureka moment is double and theirs always surpasses mine.

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What do I do now...?

Using your Inner Resources in the Coronavirus Crisis – how NLP knowledge, positive psychology and old school ideas can help us in these times

by **Mike Shreeve**

Mike Shreeve is currently in his sanctuary, a teacher trainer and coach with Pilgrims planning to run a coaching with NLP course in the summer, whether in person or on-line. To register an interest or just have a chat, please contact him at mikeshreevecoaching@gmail.com

Yes – all change please

Depending on where you are teaching, many of us are in lockdown in our own homes, teaching on-line or teaching the children of essential workers in much smaller classes. Wherever you are in the world, there has been a sudden and dramatic change to all our lives.

The coronavirus crisis has come out of the blue and escalated so quickly. Did we try to dismiss it as being over there – outside of ourselves – disassociated from us – “it will never happen to me”?

Did we try to delete or distort it by comparing it with previous outbreaks that were contained such as Ebola or swine flu? I must plead guilty to both. However, a recent seminar with Michael Carroll of the NLP Academy has reminded me that there are many tools from NLP and other disciplines that can help us in these times.

It is also important to recognise that we are entering a time of unpredictable outcomes and previous events will not necessarily be a guide to what happens next. In these times we must:

- Use our senses more and review what is happening with our own ears and eyes rather than accepting ideas and models based on what happened in the past.
- Embrace rather than fear the unknown. It is, as Roosevelt said, the fear of fear itself that is the problem. Many people may feel increased anxiety, suffering and loneliness in these times and, therefore, we may have to positively work to improve our mental health.

New living and working

It is not clear how long this new way will go on. The predictions vary from three months to two years, but the truth is no one knows. These ideas I offer, I have gained by reflection and listening to others and put forward as a way of seeing the present as an opportunity as well as a crisis. We can create our own routines to help us flourish. This will help us create a plan B to overcome the loss of a plan A.

So what do I do now? Improve self-healing

It is most important to activate your own self-healing by keeping your immune system strong. In this way, we can personally contribute to minimising the strain on our health services, so here are some suggestions to help achieve this.

1. Meditation.

It has been shown that regular meditation strengthens the immune system.¹

I am not an expert on this but a tool to get started can be found on YouTube. There are many different sorts of meditation. A simple one to begin with is the Coherence method or HeartMath. There are also many others available free online; another favourite of mine is by someone called Jackie Kakuska. Follow this link <https://bit.ly/HeartMath-Coherence> or scan the QR code to watch the video.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zHuoU8yKLQ>

I have started regular meditation for 15 minutes a day with a very positive impact up to now.

2. Increase exercise base

It's very old school – exercise. Most forms of exercise will strengthen your immune system.

A recent article in the Guardian (25th March 2020) cited research by the US Cancer Institute which said that walking 8000 steps a day lowered the risk of death by 50% compared to walking 4000 steps and those who took 12,000 steps had a

65% lower risk. In contrast, walking only 2000 steps a day raised the risk by 50%.

Similar studies show the benefits of cycling, running, yoga, tennis and so on.

For those completely inside all the time, there are some great resources like the Joe Wicks' exercise programme – it is aimed at replacing PE for children but is tough enough for all ages to benefit from and has the advantage of being live everyday so there is a feeling of joining in with others. There are many others to choose from too, so you can find the form of exercise which suits you best and is therefore the most likely to be sustainable for you.

3. Harness positive psychology and informed optimism

The body has the capacity to heal itself through its automatic or unconscious operations. When you fall over and graze your knee, your body will stop the bleeding and usually stop the impact of potential infections.

The mind's ability to influence the body is dramatically illustrated in the work

of Ellen Langer. The following is based on an account in the New York Times Magazine of 2014 by Bruce Grierson.

In her 1979 "Counterclockwise" study, eight elderly men were transported to a residential retreat that recreated the environment of 1959. They played the music of the time, watched television, ate the food and were surrounded by contemporary items from the time. After one week, all eight participants showed marked improvements in their hearing, memory, dexterity, appetite and general well-being. Even their fingers grew longer (reverse shrinkage).

Langer cites other research which has come up with similar findings. In one study, for instance, 650 people were surveyed about their attitudes on ageing. Twenty years later, those with a positive attitude had lived seven years longer on average than those with a negative attitude. For those who feel they cannot be more positive, it is possible through practice to learn to change our perception and impact through the study of psychology and NLP. Have a look at the lectures on Harvard Positive Psychology

(see reference e below) The lecturer, Ben Shahar, is not a natural when it comes to positivity, but he has learnt with immense benefits. One area that interests me is the development of inner optimism as a teaching and leadership tool.

In another study, participants read a list of negative words about ageing; within 15 minutes, they were walking more slowly than they had before.

One way, Langer illustrated her ideas was to get chambermaids buy into to the idea that their work was exercise rather than a job. The results were remarkable including weight loss and a 10% improvement in blood pressure.

She began to believe that the way we prime our minds was as important to our health as other physical factors.

What does this mean? A few practical steps

1. Develop more optimism

This may seem difficult at the moment. I think of a story I was told by a teaching



colleague when I was a young teacher. "A rich man has sailed to a beautiful island in the West Indies and sees a woman sitting under a palm tree relaxing. The rich man asks the native what she does with her life. She says she sits in the sun and watches nature; she picks the fruit off the trees and catches fish from the ocean, she talks and spends time with her children and relatives and plays games in the sea with her children. The woman asks the millionaire what he does with his life. He says he works sixty hours a week and is building up his fortune to retire. "And then what?" asks the woman? "I will sit in the sun and catch fish..."

A few questions that may help:

- What are the benefits of having time?
- What potential do you have that is not realised?
- Are there any different ways you can teach some of your classes that will enable faster progress?
- What gifts do you have, or strengths that you ignore?
- What "weaknesses" do you have that are useful in some contexts?

2. Change the meaning of lockdown and other negative associations

So how can we trigger or prime ourselves in a lockdown? The very name *lockdown* is disempowering, implying that we are helplessly trapped in a prison. We could look at different name—maybe it is a sanctuary or a retreat time. In NLP terms, this would be called reframing. Reframing is changing the associations with a word by decoupling it from its context or changing the way we look at it. The way we look at it becomes a frame and a new frame creates a new meaning through a different and more optimistic picture.

3. Be that child

We can play the music from our youth and remember how we felt at the time. This anchor may enable our emotions to switch to a more positive basis. We can surround ourselves with positive images and photographs to lift our spirits when we look at them.

4. Trigger the brain's best bits

Another NLP tool that can help you in your sanctuary is the notion of a high-performance game. This is a structured way to activate our whole

brain and full potential. There are some simple principles:

- The exercise must be scaffolded, i.e. it starts in a simple form and has higher levels of difficulty
- It involves logical, linguistic and physical activities – left and right hemisphere

There is an element of rhythm that ends in a flow state. An example can be found on YouTube on this link <https://bit.ly/NLPGameNewCode>



One high performance activity a day will help you with your creativity and learning and flow states.

5. Connect to your own unconscious resources

Through the process of meditation or self-hypnosis (see the Betty Erickson technique here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnqFmNxBVA8>) you may be able to reach a state of relaxation sufficient to set up a dialogue with your unconscious mind and create a filter to protect your immune system.

6. Create a plan B

You may need to find other ways to reach your goals or your destination itself may erode. The loss of those plans as our work and our lives change, may be a major source of grief. We need to alter any thought patterns which may be based on outmoded realities and carefully sense and watch what is happening, while training ourselves to accept or even embrace uncertainty. Online communication and leadership will become new and necessary skills. This may be a temporary or a permanent change.

7. Take the opportunities that knock

Whether it is learning new skills, languages, reading, looking at nature, volunteering, teaching your kids, working on that book or launching a new business, there are ways that the gift of time may profoundly help us develop while the inability to travel might help our wildlife and our beautiful planet.

Conclusion

- The resources that will help us survive and renew in this time are already within us all. Stay healthy, kind and wise.

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Education during weeks of isolation

by **Maja Belej**, *Franjo Malgaj Primary School in Šentjur*

Maja Belej is an English teacher at Franjo Malgaj Primary School in Šentjur. Before that, she was teaching English in a nursery school, primary school and secondary school. She has specialised in teaching English to young learners. She also actively participated in Reach the Sky project. Apart from teaching English to young learners, she is also interested into showing learners the practical use of the English language by trips to English-speaking countries and musicals in the English language.



It all started on 31st December 2019, when China alerted WHO (World Health Organization) to several cases of pneumonia in Wuhan.

In January, the virus was named coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) – 'Co' stands for corona, 'vi' for virus, and 'd' for disease. It causes severe acute respiratory problems that could lead into death as well.

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus continues to evolve at a rapid pace throughout the whole world. In February, our neighbouring country Italy confirmed the first two deaths because of this virus.

We observed the events in northern Italy and did not believe the virus would come to us. At that time, Slovenia had winter holidays and two weeks later, the first case was officially confirmed. Thereafter, on 13th March, Slovenia announced that all education facilities would be closed for an indefinite period. In order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, strict rules were introduced.

The coronavirus pandemic impacted our lives on all levels. We are really living in extraordinary times. Some say that it is a war-time atmosphere. Things may never be quite the same again. Change is being felt in all areas of our lives, from what we eat to who we socialise with, the way we shop and how we spend our time.

1.



2.

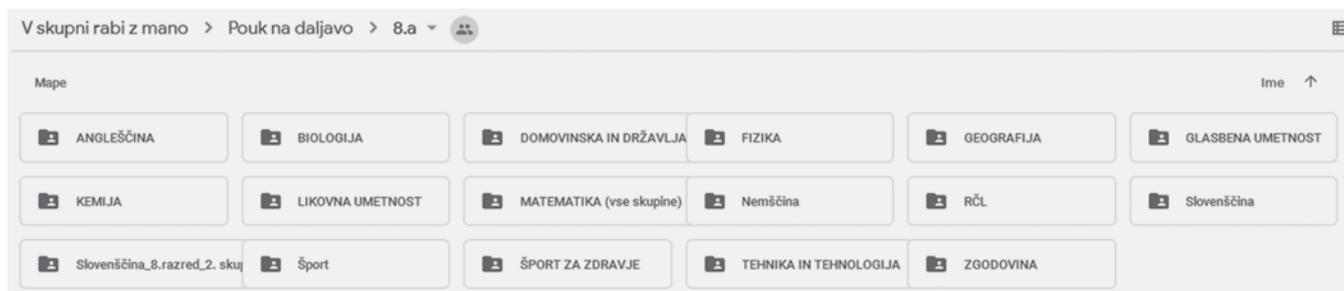
| | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. a | 1. b | 1. c | . |
| 2. a | 2. b | 2. c | 2. č |
| 3. a | 3. b | 3. c | 3. č |
| 4. a | 4. b | 4. c | 4. č |
| 5. a | 5. b | 5. c | 5. č |
| 6. a | 6. b | 6. c | 6. č |
| 7. a | 7. b | 7. c | . |
| 8. a | 8. b | 8. c | 8. č |

I am an English teacher at Franjo Malgaj Primary School in Šentjur. The biggest lifestyle change that I have made as a result of the virus was made on my personal and professional path. On 19th March we started with distance education / distance learning.

At first, the computer expert at our school established a school web-page for teachers, students and parents, in order to continue online education. Thereafter, our headmaster updated everybody by posting information on the official school web-page.

Teachers usually put their documents in different folders for each class on a daily basis. Some also use emails, virtual classrooms and other video applications.

3.



In the current school year, I teach English in ten classes. At first, I had to cope with my computer science knowledge. The impact and role of mass media during the pandemic is really important. Thereafter, I had to organise my time effectively since distance learning is really time consuming. English language is a specific subject where listening activity is of extreme importance, especially for young learners. That is why I often record my voice. I also use You-Tube for songs and stories. I use Google Meet for video conferencing, video meetings or for the explanation of more demanding topics, especially with students who have learning difficulties. You only have to be signed into a suitable account if you want to participate. Viber is another phone application that I like to use when I want to stay in touch with my colleagues and friends.

Two teachers at our school were in charge of the survey about distance education. The results of the survey at our school were presented on our Google Meet for teachers and they show that we are doing a great job. We should be only more careful about the amount of work we give to our students. Another thing that students and parents perceived as negative was keeping to a single channel of communication.

Parents also play a huge role in the life of each student during e-learning. They have to think about their own job and are also put into the role of a teacher. Keeping children focused and motivated to continue studying, while also providing them with enough productive activities to keep them occupied, is definitely not an easy task. However, some might see this additional family time as an opportunity to teach children

life skills they do not learn in schools, e.g., cooking, sewing, knitting, gardening and other skills.

Schools will remain closed until 18th May, except for certain age groups. The good point of this decision is definitely that the economy will start working again because that is imperative. That is why parents will have to put their children into day-care or, in other words, back to school with certain limitations. The negative aspect of this information is definitely that it is not going to be open for all students, meaning that teachers will have to be at school and they will have to use also other channels of communication for those students who have to stay at home. Another problem that we face nowadays is connected with not having enough teachers in order to follow the instruc-

tions we have received from the Ministry.

This situation puts teachers and the whole education in a totally new perspective. We should not exchange the education we have because of the coronavirus with real distance education or education at home. Another important thing that we had to take into consideration was the end of this school year. In response to the coronavirus crisis, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport took a long time to issue their guidelines for the assessment. We could definitely avoid this in the future by working hand in hand with the Ministry, on the one hand, and teachers on the other, since they work with their students. In this way, we could provide the fastest and most effective possible solutions.



I'm a teacher. What's your superpower?

by **Barbara Cajnar**, *Osnovna šola Brezovica pri Ljubljani*

The year 2020 started strangely. In January, the classrooms at many schools in Slovenia, including ours, were half-empty. Many pupils got ill. There were classes in which only six pupils were present. After the winter holidays in February, we heard the news about the outbreak of Covid-19 in Italy. Although Slovenia has a border with Italy, we still felt safe. Then the ball started rolling. On Thursday 12th March, an epidemic was declared. We were still at school trying to do our business as usual. As it turned out, that was the last day I saw most of my pupils in person. On the evening news, we were advised to stay at home, and on Friday 13th March, the majority of pupils didn't come to school. It came as a shock to everybody. Nobody could have seen this coming. Schools around the world went into lockdown at around the same time and for the same reason.

We usually have drills or seminars before starting something new, but in this case, we were caught off guard. And how we responded! Teachers around the world showed how resilient they are. After the first shock, they started reaching out to their pupils, trying to connect with them via emails, Viber, or phone calls. We soon discovered that not all students have the means to work from home.

The schools provided pupils with computers, laptops, and tablets. Then our work could begin. Many teachers, myself included, found themselves in a dual role, teaching our pupils and home-schooling our own children. The biggest challenge was how to handle all these tasks. The aspects of our lives that used to be separate—work, family, friends—were happening in the same space. During lockdown, family members living in the same household were allowed to go out for walks. We were also blessed with warm, sunny weather. These are some of the things that made our lockdown quite bearable.

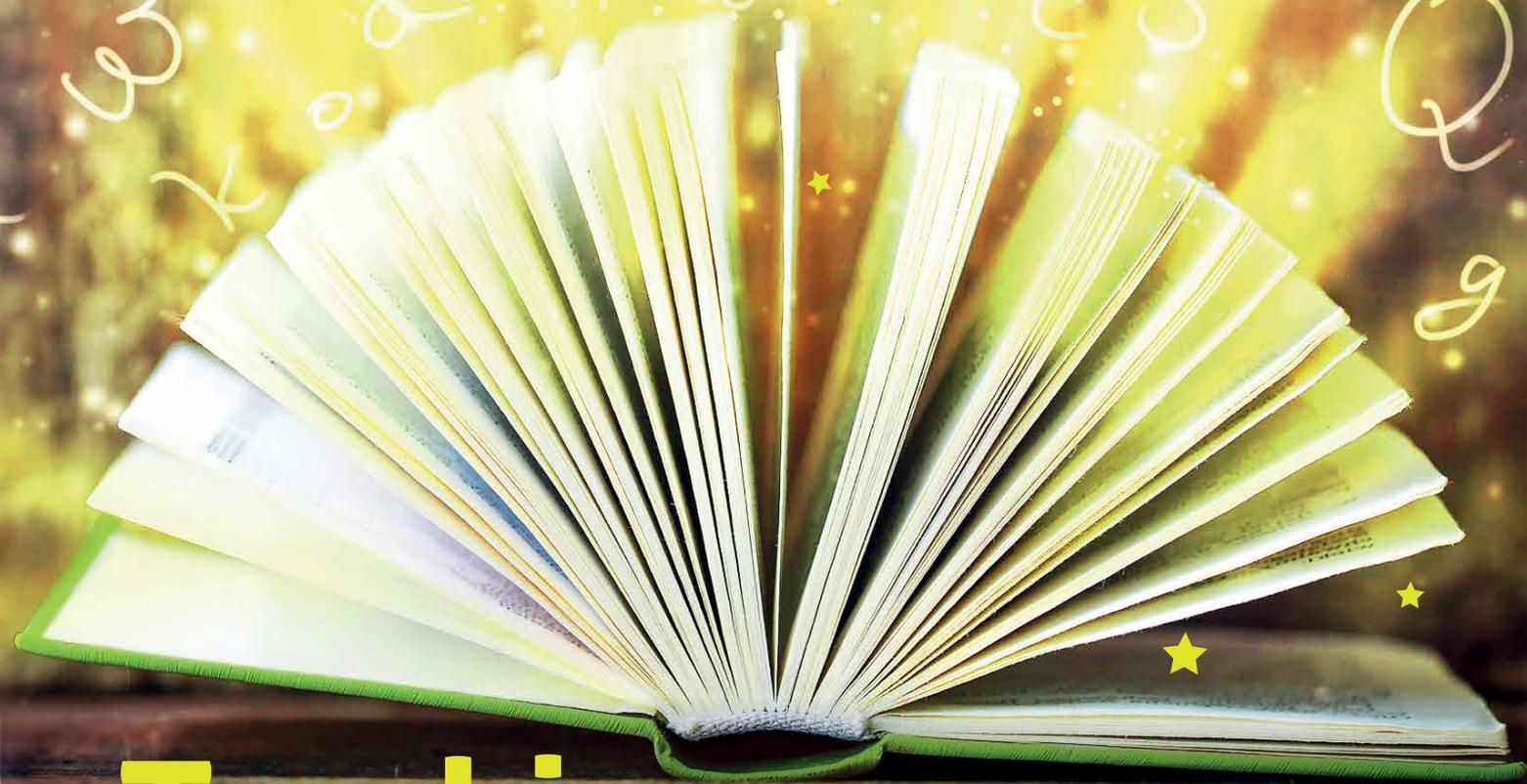
Another positive effect of distance learning I noticed is the attitude of parents towards teachers. I got lots of praise for our work and willingness to learn new things. Parents were positively surprised how quickly teachers switched from a classroom situation to an online one. If teachers feel their work is appreciated, the phrase "I'm just a teacher" will, hopefully, disappear from our vocabulary.

Now is also an excellent time to rethink our role as a teacher. The notion of a teacher as the knowledge-holder who imparts wisdom to their pupils is no longer fit for a 21st-century education. This is precisely the disruption we needed to ask ourselves what and how to teach. The changes coronavirus has caused will be here to stay. Many plan to make e-learning part of their "new normal" after experiencing the benefits first-hand. We have also learnt the importance of our human need for face-to-face social interaction. Something good has come out of this situation, after all.



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**Teaching...
it's a kind of magic!**

Modal verbs in Business English

by **Karoly Nagy**



Karoly Nagy is a Hungarian linguist currently studying Applied Linguistics MA at the University of Pecs. He is a certified IELTS coach, and a TEFL, Online and Business

English teacher with more than six years of teaching experience, having taught in Hungary and Turkey. He has also worked as an Education Coordinator in a language school in Turkey. He is passionate about teaching, learning languages and writing in English.

Motivation serves as one of the most important driving forces of our lives. We need it for achieving our goals more effectively, to develop ourselves and to keep us moving forward. There are many types of motivation but the most basic ones are intrinsic and extrinsic; the former comes from inner pleasure and the latter relies on rewards. In other words, intrinsic motivation can be a personal desire or habit, whereas extrinsic motivation has an external factor, such as money, promotion or better opportunities as its main motive. We need motivation for almost everything, be it work, studying or sport. People spend most of their lives studying and working, some might even study for their work or, on the contrary, work for their studies. Most of us would do anything in order to achieve success in our working life, such as working extra hours, acquiring new skills or even learning another language.

English has become a world language, which means that various countries use and accept it as a lingua franca. English has become a part of our everyday life: we can hear it on the television and

radio and might even encounter it in our workplace. Usually, workplaces where English might be more common are centred around business life. Business-related fields have been gaining popularity around the globe, in developed as well as developing countries, especially in recent years. In order to be able to boost their value, have a better position or to get better jobs, people choose to learn a specific field of English, namely Business English.

Usually in a Business English class you will see adults who have already achieved a certain level in previous General English classes: you have to be more focused as your students have to feel that they are learning something extra from your classes. Whichever course you encounter, as a teacher, you should be prepared and organised, so make sure you have a ready-made lesson plan. Although improvising is an important skill to have, still, in order to be able to conduct and have an organised and well-established lesson, it is crucial to prepare a lesson plan beforehand.

A lesson plan serves as the foundation of your lesson, it should include a clear goal and aim to know where your lesson should be heading. Although it is equally important to have a lesson plan for both General English and Business English classes, their content should differ.

A Business English lesson structure may include a diagnostic test and a needs analysis, although some elements which are also common in General English classes, such as (1) introduction and ice breakers, (2) language work, and (3) reflection, can also be included.

In order to achieve a more dynamic lesson, I have included some parts of

each lesson plan as well as extending some stages to be able to ensure a deep understanding and learning of the new language during the lesson.

In order to create a healthy and safe environment, a bond should be created between the students and the teacher. Asking questions about students' lives and experiences can be an effective way to start and create the desired bond. In order to have both the diagnostic test and to help the students tune into the lesson, I have included the diagnostic test in the warm-up stage of the lesson. Students have to use their creative thinking to create their own business logo with certain symbols which reflect their personalities as well as asking each other about their work experiences. This exercise not only helps the students to create small talk, get to know each other and practice creative improvisational skills but also helps the teacher to be able to monitor their speech and make a diagnostic analysis.

In order to be able to find out the students' needs, I have included a need analysis as the second part of the lesson. Students have to conduct the needs analysis with each other so that they can practice interview questions and real-life situations. Exploration through **guidance** is one of the best ways to teach adults, in my opinion. Adults like learning through discovery and practicing topics from their daily lives. Adult students can learn better and faster if they are the ones who figure out the rules, so in order to enable them to explore the new language, CCQs have been applied as the lead-in or introduction part of the lesson. In this way, students will be able to understand the context in which the new language is going to be needed.

When the students have understood or

explored the context of the new grammar, they are ready for an analysis. In the presentation part, the teacher inserts certain modal verbs into the context and explains the differences between them, enabling the students not only to understand the context but to visualise the new language. After having revised and seen the new grammatical structure multiple times, the students should also have a written, **guided practice** to make them deepen the newly learnt language. In order to help students to feel more confident before they start to construct the new language on their own, the teacher provides a **worksheet** as well as a paper about the rules and examples of modal verbs, then solves the first couple of exercises with them to create a sense of confidence for the students. If the exercises are not enough, the teacher provides more examples and explanations as well as guidance.

Due to the fact that students will most probably be required to give presentations or conduct meetings in their workplace, one of the most important parts of a Business English class is speaking. Students should be enabled to practice a lot of speaking; for this reason, the production stage of the lesson plan can be extended. The first production stage includes a 'job interview' game, where the students have to face a lot of different scenarios and situations with their partners and eventually have to find a solution to the problems. They will have to give advice, create theories or even give orders. All these functions make the game appropriate for practicing modal verbs. This game enables students to practice problem detection and employ solving, roleplay and improvisational skills.

The second production stage has been broken down into two parts. Both of them enable students to practice real life situations, brainstorming, creative thinking, and improvisational and presentational skills. The whole class has to work together and conduct a meeting in both parts. In the earlier roleplay exercise, all students are working for the same company. Different positions are assigned for the students, such as project manager, accountant, or designer, and they have to come up with a new product, analyse it and later on, give a presentation about

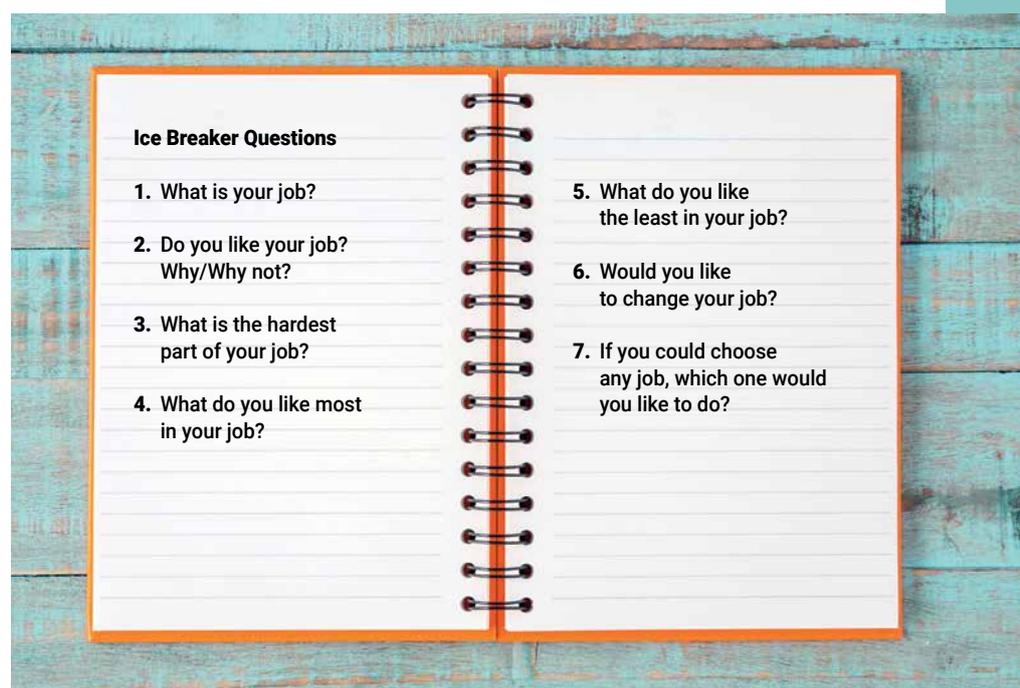
it. The accountant has to give a presentation about the financial situation of the company, the designer about the shape and form of the new product and then the project manager should supervise the whole business process by not only providing feedback but also reporting to the CEO of the company, in our case to the teacher.

When students have finished discussing the new product, there is one more task left: trying to sell it. The teacher takes on the role of a distributor or manufacturer and the students have to convince him or her to buy their product by using modal verbs in their speech. The teacher monitors their speech and notes the mistakes and errors. After having finished the roleplay, the teacher writes some of the mistakes on the board and as the language work part of the lesson, students have to correct these mistakes either individually or in a group, enabling them to practice language and deepen their grammatical knowledge.

When the students have finished all the previous stages and exercises, it is time to review the newly learnt language as well as to reflect on the lesson. Students should share their opinion about the lesson and tell the teacher what they are expecting to achieve in the following lesson; this helps the teacher to organise the lesson according to the students' needs. Then, the teacher also gives feedback to the students as the

cool down stage of the lesson and sets the homework for the following lesson, which is to answer a job interview questionnaire and to prepare from it so that the next lesson can start with a roleplay about the homework. Should the materials and stages be still insufficient and result in confusion, the teacher should provide more language information and examples connected to the target groups' culture which can enforce their understanding or appoint a student who seems to have understood to new language to explain it to the class either in L2 or L1.

The reason why I chose modal verbs is because they are one of the most important and frequent structures people use during meetings and business discussions. Students may have some difficulties understanding the difference between modal verbs. However, in my opinion, after having some explanations and drilling exercises as well as having finished the whole lesson, students should be able to understand and overcome the difficulties of the second conditional. Thanks to such a lesson plan, students will not only be more accustomed to using English as a language of communication but to situations as well as experiences that are connected to business. Apart from educating, the role of the teacher is also to prepare his or her students for real life situations which are yet to come.



Ice Breaker Questions

1. What is your job?
2. Do you like your job?
Why/Why not?
3. What is the hardest part of your job?
4. What do you like most in your job?
5. What do you like the least in your job?
6. Would you like to change your job?
7. If you could choose any job, which one would you like to do?

| Name: Karoly Nagy | | Lesson title: Business English | | Topic: Modals |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Type of lesson: Grammar | | Student level: B2 (according to CEFR) | Student type: Adult | Length: 60 minutes |
| Lesson aims: By the end of the lesson, students will be better able to: 1. engage in conversations, small talk (networking) 2. use and understand the differences between modals 3. ask and answer job-related interview type questions | | | Teacher comments: Practicing improvisational skills as well as how to negotiate | |
| Materials: 1. Create your business card 2. Job interview questionnaire 3. Job interview game 4. Advertisement presentation | | | | |
| Lesson procedure: | | | | |
| Time | Procedure | | | Teacher comments |
| 5 mins. | <p>Diagnostic testing & Ice-breaker: First, the teacher draws a logo on the board. It can be any kind of logo. The logo has some hidden symbols in it. The teacher tells them that the symbols are a representation of his personality. Then asks the students to guess what the symbols might represent.</p> <p>example: crown → noble, expensive, unique, leader green colour → lucky</p> <p>Then, tell the students to try to create their own logo with their own hidden symbols. After they finish, tell them to discuss their logos with other students.</p> <p>Needs analysis: Put the students into pairs. Give them the Needs Analysis and ask them to fill in the papers with their partner's info and answers.</p> <p>After they finish, collect the papers.</p> | | | <p>Grammar & vocabulary check.</p> <p>To make students get to know about each other.</p> <p>Asking questions.</p> <p>Practicing social skills.</p> <p>Creative thinking.</p> |
| 5 mins. | <p>Lead-in: Asking questions about their work and work experience as well as CCQs. 1. What is your job? 2. Do you like your job? Why/Why not? 3. What do you like the most? 4. What do you like the least? 5. Would you like to change your job? 6. If you could do any kind of job, which one would it be? 7. Do you have any rules in your workplace? → When does your work start? → What can/ can't you do?</p> <p>Presentation: Write a sentence on the board. I can't smoke in my workplace.</p> <p>Underline "I can't" and tell them that it can be replaced with "I shouldn't" or "I am not allowed to".</p> | | | <p>Interview questions.</p> <p>Practising form filling.</p> <p>Monitoring.</p> <p>Making students understand the context where we are going to need the new language.</p> <p>Self-exploration.</p> |
| 5 mins. | <p>My work starts at 7.00 AM so I have to be/must be in my office at 7AM. Also write may/might/could/would on the board and explain the differences between these modal verbs.</p> <p>Guided Practice: Handing out a paper with the logic and examples of modals. Analyse the differences with the students.</p> <p>Hand out worksheet, firstly finishing a couple of sentences together. Then, tell the students to finish the rest by themselves. After having finished the sentences together, read them out loud. (Auditory, Drilling)</p> | | | <p>Making them see the new language and understand why we need a new structure.</p> <p>Analysing the structure grammatically. Drilling. Practicing the newly learnt in a controlled way.</p> <p>Enabling the students to see the various uses and structures of the new grammar with examples.</p> |

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| 5 mins. | <p>Production: Hand out the “job interview game” worksheets and ask your students to form groups.</p> <p>Tell the them to choose certain boxes and talk about them.</p> <p>Students are supposed to detect and solve problems by using modals.</p> | <p>Roleplay.</p> <p>Enabling them to be creative as well as developing their improvisational skills.</p> <p>Practicing modals in a free way.</p> |
| 10 mins. | <p>Such as giving advice and criticism → should</p> <p>emphasising and giving orders → have to, must</p> <p>imagining a situation and talking about theories → would</p> <p>Production:</p> <p>Part 1: Tell the class the you are going to have a meeting.</p> <p>Assign roles for all students (accountant, designer, project manager).</p> <p>Hand out the paper ‘Advertisement Presentation’ and tell them that they are all working for a company, they have to come up with a name, slogan and new product for the company.</p> | <p>Making them practice the new language by speaking.</p> <p>The teacher monitors.</p> <p>Enabling the students to practise:</p> <p>Brainstorming,</p> <p>Roleplay</p> <p>Improvisational skills</p> <p>Creative thinking</p> <p>Creating a friendly and safe environment.</p> <p>Speaking skills.</p> |
| 15 mins. | <p>Students work together and then have to state specific information about the new product in the form of a presentation.</p> <p>For example: the accountant will give a presentation about the financial situation of the company.</p> <p>The designer will talk about the appearance, shape and form of the new product.</p> <p>Part 2: After the company has agreed about the new product.</p> <p>The teacher will join as another distributor or manufacturer and the students have to try to sell their product to the teacher by using modals.</p> <p>Language work</p> <p>Write on the board the errors that came up in the production part.</p> <p>Tell students to correct them, they can either do it individually or in teams.</p> <p>Feedback.</p> | <p>Error correction and language feedback.</p> |
| 5 mins. | <p>Reflection</p> <p>Review what you have learnt during the lesson.</p> <p>Students reflect on the lesson.</p> <p>You can also ask them what they expect of the course.</p> | <p>Review.</p> <p>Reflection.</p> <p>Assessment.</p> <p>Feedback.</p> <p>Organising future lesson according to the students’ needs.</p> |
| 3 mins. | <p>Cool down</p> <p>Feedback to the class, congratulating them for their work and setting homework for the next lesson.</p> <p>Homework: give the students typical business interview question and tell them that they will write down their answers to the questions as well as to try to prepare for a roleplay about it.</p> | <p>Evaluating the students.</p> <p>Providing motivation for them.</p> |
| 2 mins. | <p>You can start the next lesson by both checking the homework and doing a roleplay as the warm-up stage.</p> | |

Sources:

- Job interview homework: <https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/vocabulary/jobs-and-work/job-interview/24814>
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- Modal exercise: http://www.macmillaninspiration.com/new/files/2010/12/Grammar-EXTRA_NL3_Unit3_Modal-verbs-%E2%80%93-must-can%E2%80%99t-could-may-and-might.pdf
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Canterbury Tales 2019

by **Janja Čolić**, OŠ Janko Kersnik Brdo, IATEFL Slovenia President

It seems like ages ago, and almost unbelievable compared to this year's coronavirus situation when we all might have to spend the whole year at home and not travel anywhere, that I was blessed enough to be able to travel a lot last year. I spent a weekend at the Croatian seaside, I took a 3-week family road trip to the beautiful US National Parks of the West, spent a week on a cruise on the Mediterranean Sea, enjoyed delicious food and the hospitality of the great people of Bosnia and Herzegovina for a few weekends and last, but not least, I spent a wonderful week in the English countryside, in Canterbury.

I was lucky enough to get the opportunity to take a one-week course on *How to motivate students* taught by Chaz Pugliese at Pilgrims, Canterbury, England in July last year.

I was happy to use English all the time there, to talk a lot, to communicate in English and use all those words I never use in the classroom teaching in primary school; all those words I thought I had forgotten. Besides the conversational bit, it was this course that made me think about my teaching habits, and made me analyse what I do well and what I could improve in the classroom.

It was at this course that I realised again that there isn't a recipe for how to motivate students or for how to teach successfully, but knowing loads of different exercises might help! And being creative, personal, interested in your students' lives and interests might help a lot as well! Each of our students is different. And each of them is a part of the group. So how am I to lead them in their learning experience? It is by trying to keep their attention, finding something that interests them; by doing that, the motivation will come from the inside and the learning process stands a better chance.

During this course, Chaz Pugliese talked a lot about many important concepts such as movement, choices, options and varieties. He talked about doing things differently and about a feel-good factor and how important it is to let your students know that their feelings matter. He taught us about how to speak to our students and that the motivational point of view is as important as the language perspective. And last but not least, he pointed out how personalisation in the classroom matters and the more personalised our lesson is, the more our students learn – unfortunately our students don't always learn what we teach (although that is our wish, right?)

Hopefully, I can put my week of learning on *How to motivate students* into this article presenting the main points of teaching supported by a few exercises I learnt at the course. Bear in mind, it was difficult for me to choose the exercises and try to find the right category for them since all of them are intertwined.

Focus. First things first, the beginning of the lesson needs to be fun. It helps students get ready for the lesson. Chaz Pugliese suggests movement-based exercises and exercises that don't have a specific language learning point and therefore don't require the students to produce language, but make them concentrate and focus. He emphasises it needs to be something to get them focused and the less linguistic it is, the better. It doesn't have to be long or in sentences, it can simply be saying one word that has stuck in their mind about the last English lesson, or three words that would describe their weekend or sentences like *Today I'm feeling ... because ...* or *My energy level today is ...* and they shout out a number from 1 to 10. It all depends on the level of English of your students but the opening of a lesson is really important because that is the time you get an idea of the energy level of your students and how they're feeling and, therefore, you can make changes to the lesson plan if necessary.

It doesn't make sense to push your students to their limits only to finish your lesson plan. Make sure you are a human being first and then a teacher to your students or to put it in other words: "Treat your students as people first and students second," as I heard Mark Andrews say years ago. Chaz Pugliese agrees: "Have interest in your students as people first, then as students. We're not teaching exams, tests, content, we're teaching people, we're helping them learn."

Here are some ideas for either starting a lesson (non-linguistically) or using these exercises when students lose their focus:

Say hello to the group but not at the same time. When you manage to say hello, sit down. If you say it together with other people, don't sit down but you keep trying saying it until it is only you who says hello. Then you may sit down and wait until everyone is seated.

Find one word that has stuck with you since our last lesson.

Choose three words that describe your weekend.

Today I'm feeling ... because ...

My energy level today is ... (the students shout out a number from 1 to 10).

Write down ten objects you have used since you got up this morning.

Work in pairs and do the counting. A counts 0-60 out loud and B counts down 60-0 out loud, too. Start and finish at the same time.

Work in pairs. Keep counting from 1 to 3 alternately but you clap instead of saying number 2. For example: A starts and says 1, B claps, A says 3, B says 1, A claps, B says three, etc.

Work in pairs and build up a conversation or a story together. Each of you says one word and the other person repeats the word(s) before adding their own. After you think you are finished with the story, write it down individually and then compare it.

Example:

A: When

B: When I

A: When I came

B: When I came here, etc.

Work in pairs or in groups and work on irregular verbs. Find moves you enjoy and make those moves while saying the verbs. You need to change the move for each of the three forms of the verb. For example: say hide and clap above your head at the same time; then say hid and clap in front of your chest at the same time; then say hidden and clap below your waist at the same time. Then change the verb but not the moves. Later, you change the moves, too.

Work in pairs or in groups and do similar to in the exercise above, but this time instead of using irregular verbs, use 3-word phrases instead, e.g. listen to music. For example: say listen and stamp your right leg at the same time; then say to and stamp your left leg at the same time; then say music and jump in the air at the same time. Then change the phrase but not the moves. Later, you change the moves, too.

Students observe the classroom for 30 seconds and then close their eyes. You ask them different kinds of questions, e.g. What colour is the vase on the desk? / Where is the globe? / Is there an English dictionary on the shelf? etc. and they answer them in their minds. When you are finished, the students discuss the answers with their partners and/or look around to check.

A group activity. Walk around the classroom and observe your classmates. The teacher claps and the students stop. Stand next to the closest and look at each other for twenty seconds. Then turn around, change three things on yourselves and look at each other again. What is different?

Keeping your students focused is always important, not only at the beginning of the lesson but throughout the lesson, too. Feel free to come back to these short exercises in the middle of the lesson or whenever you notice you're losing your students. Do visualisation exercises with them or let them know you're going to quiz them, for example: have them look at the room, sitting down or standing up (let them decide, having a choice does wonders!) and observe the room for thirty seconds. Students then close their eyes and you start asking them questions. They keep their answers to themselves and after you are finished, they open their eyes and discuss the answers in pairs.

Each passing year I realise more and more how little I need to teach the language. I believe there are too many English teachers trying to teach too much grammar and vocabulary through worksheets and packs of photocopies instead of using some basic ideas and making students talk. The truth is, we need neither a lot of paper nor technology to teach.

Write down three things you're good at starting with:

I'm good at ...

I can ... well.

Now work in pairs and pick one thing from your partner's list you'd like to know more about.

Ask him/her questions:

- 1.** How do you know you do it so well?
- 2.** Whose feedback do you need?
- 3.** Who/What can stop you from doing this?
- 4.** What advice would you give to a beginner?
- 5.** What special skills are required?
- 6.** How would you feel if you had to stop doing this?

*I'm someone who ...
A tells B about themselves starting with I'm someone who ... (try to say as many things about yourself as you can).
B talks about A to the group.
A is someone who ...
Teacher: Did he/she miss anything?
The others help.
A is someone who ...*

Engagement and personalisation.

Speaking exercises like these are good for several reasons. The first one is engagement. If we let students pick three things, not only one, they are engaged, they think more and they don't feel pressure to choose only one thing they are good at and then having a hard time deciding which one would that be. Secondly, the above-mentioned exercise is personalised because it is focused on them, on their strong points, and students are treated not as language students but as human beings. Therefore, they are usually more motivated than if it was only a language exercise. And though they are not treated as language learners, there is a language point of view there as well presenting chunks of language (good at / can do something well / I'm someone who .../ He's someone who ...) to which other words can be added e.g. I'm a fairly / pretty / reasonably good cook. An engaged student is self-determined and self-determination is always better than motivation.

An element of surprise. One of the exercises I really liked was working with a text from a coursebook. He tossed us a crumpled paper ball with the coursebook text and asked "What if you were to change something next time you need to teach a new text from a coursebook?"

Each group got one. We were not allowed to unfold it but we could look at it and turn it around and try to read as many words and sentences we could and in a group, we had to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the text about?
- 2) How do you know? How do you get to the conclusion?
- 3) What is the genre of the text'?
- 4) How do you know? How do you get to the conclusion?
- 5) Write down what you think the main words of the text are and what you notice about the text.
- 6) Can you think of a possible title?

When we were finished answering the questions, we sent a spokesperson to another group. So, one person in a group was swapped for one individual from another group. After checking the answers and reporting to each other, the spokespersons came back to the original group. When the group was back together with some additional pieces of information, we had to come up with a few questions about the text (if you want, your students can skip this extra follow-up activity of asking more questions about the text and you can have them open their coursebooks and answer the questions about the text in there). Interestingly, at the time, we didn't know that we all had the same photocopy of the same text from the coursebook. We were sure this was not the case, but it was – the only difference was that each of the balls was folded differently. After preparing questions for the text, we were allowed to unfold the ball and we continued working in a group by answering more questions.

- 1) Looking back at the six questions: How close were you?
- 2) Read the text and answer the questions you put together before.

He asked the question again: "What if you were to change something next time you need to teach a new text from a coursebook? What if, instead of telling them to read it or listen to it, you started telling them the text and asked them to stop you as many times as they like and ask you a question?" Basically, it means that you start narrating a story, for example: "*Pippi Longstocking is the only girl ...*" and somebody stops you and asks you a question ... *How old is she?* or *Where does she live?* It doesn't matter whether you have the answer from the text or not. You can make it up or simply say *I don't know* and keep telling the story. After you have finished, they can either look it up in the coursebook and check how much more information you have given them

and what that was, or you could ask them to retell the story to each other in pairs. Don't worry if they make up something new – they're speaking, aren't they? Also, you can clap your hands after five seconds or so and they swap roles and continue retelling the story where their partner stopped. That is how they must keep the attention going.

Students are usually more interested in that kind of learning about the text than from a regular exercise they get by reading or listening to the story in the coursebook. If you still want to use the coursebook first, Chaz suggests you give them at least ten questions to answer while reading but only ask them to answer five of the ten questions because choice is power and it makes them feel important and included in decision-making with their learning. Later on, you can easily add one or three questions to be answered but not all of them. They are a group and by checking their answers, everybody will hear the answers to all ten questions anyway!

Imagination and creativity. You can use a text from a coursebook or this one below. Narrate the text for students to write it in their notebook.

Two young fish are swimming in the ocean. As they swim past an old fish, he says: "Hi, guys, how's the water?" The two young fish are swimming along until one says: "What the hell is water?"

Ask your students to rewrite the story without changing the meaning but without using the letter 'i'. Being creative, my partner and I came up with this text at the course:

One day two young water creatures are under the surface. They meet an old water creature and he says: "Hey, guys, how's the water?" and as they go on one of them says: "What the hell does water mean?"

We did one more exercise working in pairs. We had to write a story together on one piece of paper. The first participant started writing and continued until Chaz gave a signal to swap (in a classroom it can either be music playing or clapping hands, etc.), then continued but needed to follow the words and ideas that the first one had used. Sometimes, we even had to finish half sentences ... it's funny and interesting how the story changed, and I

had no influence on the story going in the direction I wanted it to. The story that my course partner and I wrote came out completely different from what my idea of the story was (the two colours represent the two people creating the story):

Music reminds me of my daughters. They sometimes prepare our bedroom to feel comfy and full of light. I really like it this way, brings peace into my mind. And flowers, yes, lots of flowers. Then they play this kind of music and give me massage and I really enjoy it. It's bonding with the girls, it's our time. I miss them. Do I have a picture of them? Oh, it's here in my bag. Look at them. They will call me in the afternoon anyway, it's much easier now with the phones. This music also reminds me of myself time. I also like being alone, without anybody, lost in thoughts. I am a beautiful, strong, loved woman who's enjoying every minute of her life. Life is beautiful. I'm loving it. I like reading, doing yoga, I learn to meditate ...

Exercises like that are fun to do and whatever they write is acceptable. Students are brought up on a diet of correct answers and for that reason exercises where everything is right are welcome in the classroom. Do exercises where they can use their imagination and creativity but make sure you prepare both guided and free exercises for a lesson. In that case, you balance between the two. It is also important to know that guided exercises must be checked and students need to get feedback, while free exercises are free and there is no need to check everything. Let them speak, let them write, let them experience the language.

Using pictures in the classroom Work in pairs. A chooses a picture from a pile of pictures. A starts describing the picture in the opposite way to what he/she sees but not using the negative forms (isn't/aren't, etc.). B starts drawing or writing the opposite of what they hear from A.

Three important numbers. A thinks of three important numbers. B asks yes/no questions to find out their significance. Then they swap roles.

How we speak to our students. I've read a lot about this topic and also listened to a talk on the topic a few years ago. I listened to Chaz talking about it – but still there are things I can learn, revise and do better when speaking to my students. It is important to include ourselves in the work in the classroom and instead of saying *You need to work on ... You need to improve ... change you to we ... We need to ...* The topic of how we speak to our students is also closely connected to treating our students as human beings and being interested in them as individuals. From that point of view, it is therefore better to ask *How much energy do you have for this?* before starting an activity instead of telling them they look tired.

Here are a few examples of good and bad use of language when speaking to students based on praising their work:

| BAD USE | GOOD USE |
|---|---|
| Well done. | Well done. I like it how you used ... |
| Well done but you still have to work on ... | Well done. You've improved since your last essay. |
| Teacher: <i>Jane, what is the answer.?</i> Jane: <i>Ten.</i> Teacher. Brilliant. You're so smart. * When talking to your students, it is important to praise the effort, not the intelligence. | Teacher: <i>Jane, what is the answer.?</i> Jane: <i>Ten.</i> Teacher. Brilliant. It pays off when you work hard. You have worked hard and I can see that. |

A wind of change. As we have all learnt in this time of coronavirus, things are changing. Nothing is the same and nothing will ever be the same again, I believe. We will have to adjust to the future of teaching (online) and we will probably never know when a lockdown like this year's might strike again. It was actually distance teaching that made me do things differently to what I usually do in the classroom and it was distance teaching that helped me make my lessons more creative, even more interesting, to be honest. I had to rethink which content was important and which



wasn't, because it was impossible to include everything I would have taught at school into my online and distance teaching lessons. I have changed quite a few things in my teaching now I'm doing it from my home. I suppose I can say that I started breaking the rules, as John F. Fanselow would say. Interestingly enough, Fanselow first started talking about breaking rules back in 1988 in his book *Breaking Rules: Generating and exploring alternatives in language teaching* when he suggested the following:

the difference' helped me stop whining about what the Ministry of Education, the National Education Institute, the government or our school management didn't do or say or send or help ... and started focusing on what I, as a teacher, a person, could give to the people around me. To my family. To my students. It is ME who matters to MY daughters and husband, it is ME who matters to MY students. What am I to do to make them feel better about being at home together 24/7, as we both work from home and the girls both learn from home? What am I to do to help my students learn easier on their own from the (un)safe/(in)convenient environments of their homes?

So, going through this troubling time of the corona situation doesn't mean there isn't anything to be found to talk about, to think about, to learn about, to be motivated about. This isn't the time for whining nor the time for being passive. On the contrary, it is the time for action, the time to reflect on our experience in the classroom, the time for looking for new ways of teaching, the time for loving yourself, the time for looking for new ways of self-fulfilment in our private life. It is the time to do what we don't get to do in our daily chaotic schedule. It is the time for changes, not excuses.

At home, I managed to find some time to do the things I love. Despite long working hours. I exercise more than I used to. I meditate more. I read more. As a family, we spend a lot more time together. We cook together, eat all meals

together, clean the house together, go for long walks and work in and around the house together; we watch films and cartoons, play board games and learn together. We grow together. There are so many things that my daughters have learnt to do only because there is more time now; cooking, baking, sewing clothes, sawing wood and improving computer skills to only mention a few!

Working from home, for me, means working for much more than 40 hours a week. I knew nothing of distance learning when all of this started. I knew nothing of teaching pronunciation or grammar remotely, etc. I had to learn. A lot. I stepped onto the other side. I became an online student. Again. And I still love that 8 weeks later because I strongly believe in life-long learning.

As a teacher, besides teaching regular content through instruction via email, I have Zoom lessons and we not only learn but have fun and enjoy the time when we are able to see and hear each other. I also prepare prize challenges for my students and project- and team-based tasks for them and they enjoy them! They also get picture cards from me with pronunciation so they can learn English by playing. Being apart does not necessarily mean we are not connected. By looking for new and different ways of reaching each other, I feel that being apart has actually brought us closer together.

My experience of the corona situation has shifted from "Remote teaching for

two weeks? Piece of cake!" in the first two weeks to worrying questions "What is this going to mean for my teaching? What is this going to mean for my life?" in the last few weeks.

By the time you have read my thoughts about these troubling times, more will be known about re-opening schools. Let's hope we will all have gone back to normal at least by autumn, whatever normal means now ...

What if 'virtual' is the new normal? Have we thought about that? I know many people around the world who have written off 2020 for 'normal' and are already focused on 2021, hoping it'll all be different. Different from now. And I do really believe and I hope, I must admit, things will change. Because some things were bad. There were so many things that needed to be changed, like being in a hurry all the time; living too fast; children having too many afternoon activities and parents being their taxi drivers; curricula being overpacked and the school system needed to be changed in many ways. There were things that needed to be changed. But will they?

This rapidly spreading virus has touched all aspects of my professional and personal life. But I stayed focused on the here and now. On what's happening now. I cannot go back to school and teach my students there. There are so many things I can't change. But what I can do is make the most out of this situation. Not everything is bad. I only need to see it. Let myself see it, feel it. Be grateful for this time and focus on myself. I am the most important person now. If I'm OK, the people around me are OK, too.

In that state of my mind, I look after myself, my health and look after my family. And reach out for my students and their parents, some might need me more than I think. I do what I can for them but I try not forget that it is still me—the first person on my list. I'm trying to take this time no matter how long it might last—to reflect, to relax, to feel. And to remember: whatever I am going through these days, is fine. I'm fine.



POROČILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠČINE ZA UČENCE 7. RAZREDA

Letos je že devetič zapored potekalo tekmovanje v znanju angleškega jezika za učence 7. razreda. Tekmovanje je bilo organizirano na dveh ravneh, šolski in državni. Šolsko tekmovanje je potekalo 31. januarja 2020, državno pa 29. februarja 2020. Vsaka šola je lahko na državno tekmovanje prijavila največ tri skupine, vsa priznanja (bronasta, srebrna in zlata) pa smo podelili na državni ravni. Letos je bilo na šolski ravni – v primerjavi z lanskim šolskim letom – manj udeležencev, in sicer 406 sodelujočih učencev, od teh je 307 napredovalo na državno tekmovanje. Razlog za upad v številu tekmovalcev se deloma najde tudi v številnih odjavah tik pred državnim tekmovanjem, za katere so mentorji najpogosteje navajali nedokončane izdelke zaradi bolezni in odsotnosti učencev od pouka.

Letošnje tekmovanje smo naslovili THE MAGIC OF FRIENDSHIP, s čimer smo želeni nagovoriti vidik, za katerega predvidevamo, da je najstnikom zelo pri srcu: prijateljstvo. Učenci so prevzeli dramske vloge najstnikov, ki skupaj doživijo dogodivščino in pokažejo, kaj je pomen prijateljstva. Kako dogodivščino so uprizorili, je bilo prepuščeno kreativnosti tekmovalcev. Veliko prispevkov je kakovostno in izvirno pokazalo, kako prijatelji pomagajo, ko se posameznik počuti izključenega, kako nudijo uteho, ko družinsko okolje ni zdravo, kako požrtvovalno podpirajo drugega, ko bi pravzaprav lahko bili sebični. Prijateljske vezi so tekmovalci prikazali v situacijah, v katerih se znajdejo vsak dan – pogosto vezane na šolo in preživljanje prostega časa – kar je prispevkom dalo pridih pravega življenja. Vsebinsko so bili dobro premišljeni, občasno tudi družbenokritični, kar kaže na izjemno zrelost. Po drugi strani pa so nekateri izdelki žal pretiravali v načinu prikaza nasilja – npr. nazorni prikaz pretepa, grožnje s orožjem, uporaba drog – kar je presegalo meje dramskega učinka. Iz tega razloga je bilo 8 tekmovalnih skupin tudi diskvalificiranih.

Novost letošnjega tekmovanja so bile korenite spremembe kriterijev, ki so natančneje opredelile tehnični in pravopisni vidik ter scenarij. Zaradi lanskih tehničnih težav se je tudi uvedla obvezna uporaba aplikacije Videoshop – Video Editor, katere uvedba je imela namen poenotiti tehnične zahteve, nuditi podporo mentorjem in spodbuditi večjo samostojnost učencev pri izdelavi posnetkov. Intuitivna zasnova aplikacije je pomagala ustvariti brezhrebno delujoče prispevke, tekmovalci in mentorji pa so za oblikovanje uvodne špice kljub temu pogosto pozabili uporabiti učinek »themes«, s katerim naj bi bilo poskrbljeno za enotno trajanje uvodnega dela. Skupine,

ki učinka niso uporabile, so velikokrat imele dolge uvodne špice, ki so odžirali čas za govor. Nekatere skupine so po nepotrebnem izgubljale točke tudi zaradi vertikalne postavitve snemanja in neurejenega scenarija (npr. manjkajoč naslov, nenačeljena imena tekmovalcev in vlog). Tudi tem bi se bilo dalo izogniti.

Na državno tekmovanje smo preko uveljavljenega spletnega odložišča prejeli 81 izdelkov, ki so jih pripravile dve- do petčlanske skupine. Prispele izdelke je tekmovalna komisija ocenjevala glede na naslednje kriterije: vsebino oz. sporočilno vrednost, slovnično oz. jezikovno pravilnost, bogastvo besedišča, pravilno izgovorjavo in gladkost, strukturo izdelka, ustreznost njegove dolžine, urejenost scenarija, tehnično dovršenost prispevka in splošni vtis.

Za bronasto priznanje je bilo treba osvojiti 70 % točk, za srebrno 80 % točk ter za zlato 90 % točk. Bronasto priznanje je letos osvojilo 64 tekmovalcev, srebrno 52 tekmovalcev, zlato priznanje pa 9 tekmovalcev. Zmagovalna ekipa je za nagrado prejela tablične računalnike. Članici ekipe sta: Zoja Kušar in Špela Božič z OŠ Domžale (pod mentorstvom Maje Juvan Stough). Tekmovalki sta poleg izvrstnega poznavanja jezika tudi pokazali izjemno spretnost v igranju več vlog, zaradi česar sprva ni bilo za opaziti, da gre v igralski zasedbi pravzaprav le za dve osebi.

Statistika na kratko:

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Število sodelujočih šol: | 58 |
| Število izdelkov, ki smo jih prejeli za državno tekmovanje: | 81 |
| Število vseh tekmovalcev: | 406 |
| Število bronastih priznanj: | 18 skupin (64 tekmovalcev) |
| Število srebrnih priznanj: | 13 skupin (52 tekmovalcev) |
| Število zlatih priznanj: | 3 skupine (9 tekmovalcev) |
| Število mentorjev: | 59 |

V imenu tekmovalne komisije vsem tekmovalcem iskreno čestitamo za njihove dosežke, mentorjem pa se najlepše zahvaljujemo za njihovo sodelovanje in se jim priporočamo za povratne informacije. Potrudili se bomo vaše predloge čim bolj upoštevati in oblikovati tekmovanje, ki temelji na skupnem, vzajemnem trudu. Vabimo vas, da se nam ponovno pridružite prihodnje leto.

Metka Lovrin
koordinatrica tekmovanja

POROČILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠČINE ZA UČENCE 8. RAZREDA

V šolskem letu 2019/20 je Slovensko društvo učiteljev angleškega jezika IATEFL Slovenia organiziralo enajsto tekmovanje v znanju angleščine za učence 8. razreda. Pravilnik in razpis tekmovanja v tekočem šolskem letu sta bila objavljena na spletni strani društva. Tekmovanje je bilo sistemsko podprto in izvedeno preko strežnika DMFA.

Tekmovanje iz znanja angleščine za učence 8. razreda je dvostopenjsko, na šolski ravni tekmujejo učenci za bronasta priznanja, na državni ravni pa za zlata in srebrna priznanja.

Tema letošnjega šolskega tekmovanja je bila History of Slovenia – A people without the knowledge of their past origin and culture is like a tree without roots (Marcus Garvey). 21.10.2019 so se učenci pomerili med seboj na svojih matičnih šolah. Šolskega tekmovanja se je udeležilo 3988 učencev, ki so tekmovali v bralni spretnosti, uporabi jezika v sobesedilu in kreativnem pisanju. Bronasto priznanje je osvojilo 640 učencev.

Tema državnega tekmovanja je bila History - People are trapped in history and history is trapped in them. (James Baldwin).

Na državno tekmovanje se je na podlagi rezultatov šolskega tekmovanja uvrstilo 411 učencev. Organizirano in izvedeno je bilo 25. 11. 2019 na 5 lokacijah.

| lokacija | gostitelj | organizator |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Celje | OŠ Franja Malgaja Šentjur | mag. Alenka Kalan |
| Koper | OŠ Antona Ukmarja Koper | Tanja Berginc Švab |
| Ljubljana jug | OŠ Log – Dragomer | Petra Baksa |
| Ljubljana sever | OŠ Jožeta Moškriča, Ljubljana | mag. Helena Žnidaršič Seme |
| Maribor | OŠ Gustava Šiliha Laporje | Tina Lešnik |

Učenci so se pomerili v poznavanju in rabi besedišča, poznavanju kulture in kreativnem pisanju. Zlato priznanje je osvojilo 49 učencev, srebrno priznanje pa 89 učencev.

V letošnjem šolskem letu so največ znanje pokazali naslednji tekmovalci:

| tekmovalec | šola | mentorica |
|------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Alexander Škof | OŠ Brežice | Mihaela Cekuta |
| Robert Pepelnjak | OŠ Ivana Cankarja, Vrhnika | Valerija Karba |
| Maj Levičar | OŠ Martina Krpana, Ljubljana | Lane Vukadinović |

Iskreno čestitamo vsem tekmovalcem, ki so prejeli priznanja in njihovim mentorjem. Zahvaljujemo se vsem učiteljem angleščine za prispevek k našemu skupnemu tekmovanju, ki širi zanimanje za učenje angleščine in večja znanje angleščine. Hvala popravljavcem državnega tekmovanja, organizatorjem državnega tekmovanja, organizatorjem šolskega tekmovanja in vsem mentorjem, ki so sodelovali pri izvedbi in vrednotenju.

Želimo vam uspešen in miren zaključek šolskega leta in vas vabimo, da se nam ponovno pridružite v naslednjem šolskem letu.

mag. Helena Žnidaršič Seme
koordinatorka tekmovanja

glavni sponzor tekmovanja



POROČILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠČINE ZA 2. LETNIK

Slovensko društvo učiteljev angleškega jezika IATEFL Slovenia je v šolskem letu 2019/2020 že deseto šolsko leto zapored uspešno izvedlo tekmovanje za dijake 2. letnikov srednjih šol. Razpis, pravilnik tekmovanja, navodila za tekmovanje in kriteriji za ocenjevanje so bili objavljeni konec julija na spletni strani www.iatefl.si. Dokumenti so bili poslani članom IATEFL Slovenia po elektronski pošti, prav tako pa tudi mentorjem in mentoricam dijakov, ki so sodelovali na dosedanjih tekmovanjih.

Tekmovanje je potekalo na dveh ravneh, in sicer je bilo na posameznih šolah najprej izvedeno šolsko tekmovanje (11. 11. 2019), nato pa so izmed prijavljenih izdelkov šole poslale najboljše na državno tekmovanje (16. 12. 2019).

Letošnja tematika tekmovanja je bila »*HEROES*«. Določen je bil tudi žanr, in sicer so morali dijaki in dijakinje posneti VLOG. Predpisanih je bilo po 10 besed v posamezni kategoriji, ki so jih morali dijaki smiselno uporabiti v posnetem prispevku. Besede so bile naslednje:

KATEGORIJA A / C:

COMMITMENT (N), BURDEN (N), APPEAL (N), ALTER (V), LANGUISH (V), BACKFIRE (V), UBIQUITOUS (ADJ), DIMINISHING (ADJ), CAPRICIOUSLY (ADV), LAVISHLY (ADV)

KATEGORIJA B / D:

PLEDGE (N), COMMITMENT (N), HEADLINE (N), RESONATE (V), GRIEVE (V), ASSUME (V), PERSONAL (ADJ), SENSATIONAL (ADJ), GRADUALLY (ADV), TRUTHFULLY (ADV)

Kriteriji pri izbiri najboljše skupine (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 **14 šol**, in sicer je v **32 skupinah** tekmovalo skupno več kot **150 dijakov**. Zaradi neupoštevanja pravilnika in kriterijev so bile diskvalificirane štiri skupine.

Dijake in dijakinje je potrebno - kot vsako leto - znova pohvaliti za izvirnost in ustvarjalnost pri pripravi filmov, kot tudi za veliko truda, vloženega v pripravo in snemanje prispevkov. Zmagovalci v posameznih kategorijah so se še posebej izkazali, za kar jim še enkrat iskreno čestitamo.

Število priznanj po kategorijah

| Priznanje | A | B | C | D | skupaj |
|-----------|----|---|---|---|--------|
| zlato | 2 | / | / | / | 2 |
| srebrno | 9 | 1 | / | / | 10 |
| bronasto | 7 | 1 | / | / | 8 |
| skupaj | 18 | 2 | / | / | 20 |

Najbolje so se odrezale naslednje šole oz. skupine dijakov (**zlata priznanja v kategoriji A**):

- 1. Gimnazija Poljane** s posnetkom *Heroes of Our Times* (Alenka Strušnik, Nika Gerkišič, Aiko Zakrajšek, Tibor Remškar, Trisha Robnik)
mentorica: Petra Hrovat Hristovski
- 2. ŠŠ Slovenska Bistrica** s posnetkom *For the Planet* (Jaša Šalabalija, Anže Lešnik, Jaka Selaković, Matic Radanović, Domen Vrbeč)
mentorica: Nataša Gumilar Papatnik

V kategoriji B letos nismo podelili zlatih priznanj.

Še enkrat iskreno čestitamo vsem sodelujočim, vsem mentorjem pa se najlepše zahvaljujemo za pomoč pri izpeljavi tekmovanja.

Nasvidenje do prihodnjega leta!

Jasna Šebez
koordinatrica tekmovanja

POROČILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠČINE ZA 3. LETNIK

Slovensko društvo učiteljev angleškega jezika IATEFL Slovenia je tudi letos izvedlo tekmovanje za dijake 3. letnikov na regijski ravni. Regijsko tekmovanje je potekalo 3. 2. 2020 na sedmih regijskih šolah (Gimnazija Nova Gorica, Gimnazija Škofja Loka, Gimnazija Murska Sobota, II. gimnazija Maribor, Šolski center Ljubljana, Šolski center Celje – Gimnazija Lava in Grm Novo Mesto – Center biotehnike in turizma. Državna raven tekmovanja, predvidena za 23. 3. 2020 na Šolskem centru Ljubljana, pa zaradi posebnih okoliščin ob izbruhu epidemije bolezni COVID-19 ni bila izvedena in je bila odpovedana.

Razpis tekmovanje smo na naši spletni strani objavili konec julija 2019. Razpis je vseboval podatke o strukturi tekmovanja in tipu nalog.

Na regijsko tekmovanje se je prijavilo 648 dijakov. Letos je tekmovanje potekalo v 3 kategorijah – **A1** (splošne gimnazije), **A2** (mednarodni oddelki in dijaki, ki so več kot eno leto bivali na angleško govorečem področju), **B** (strokovne šole in

angleščina kot drugi tuji jezik). Na državno tekmovanje se je skupaj uvrstilo 125 dijakov, ki so tudi prejemniki 125 podeljenih bronastih regijskih priznanj. Vsi rezultati so bili objavljeni na Infoserverju v sistemu DMFA. Podobno, kot je veljalo tudi za druga tekmovanja, po sklepu Državne tekmovalne komisije ter v dogovoru z DMFA v letošnjem šolskem letu srebrnih in zlatih državnih priznanj nismo podelili.

Naloge s področja kulture so bile letos v vseh kategorijah vezane na literarno delo. V kategorijah A1 in A2 so se nanašale na knjigo Stephena Chboskyja *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, v kategoriji B pa na knjigo Mary Ann Shafer in Annie Barrows *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*.

Vsem dijakom, ki so se udeležili letošnjega tekmovanja čestitamo za uspehe in sodelovanje na tekmovanju. Zahvaljujemo se tudi mentorjem in popravljalcem na regijskem tekmovanju ter vsem regijskim organizatorjem za pomoč pri izvedbi regijske ravni tekmovanja.

mag. Marija Sedmak
koordinatorka tekmovanja

Welcome to our pre-conference event IATEFL Slovenia Saturday

WHEN?

Saturday,
29th August 2020,
9 am - 5 pm

WHERE?

Kongresni center Bernardin

WHY?

Because we believe it is now - more than ever - important to meet face to face since no one knows what to expect in September! Let's meet, let's chat, let's widen our horizons – together! Together we grow!



SPEAKERS

dr. Janez Skela
dr. Lisa Hudley
dr. Claudia Molnar
mag. Špela Munih Stanič
Rebecca Svetina
Marša Jovič

REGISTRATION FEE:

The registration fee includes lunch at the hotel, coffee break and snacks and it is non refundable (you will receive an invoice after your registration).

REGISTRATION HERE:

<https://forms.gle/nRAiw1xCcdkraHfH9>

IATEFL Slovenia members: 15€

Non-Members: 60€*

*It is cheaper to come to our seminar as a member than a non-member. Become a member of IATEFL Slovenia for 40€/year with all the benefits. Complete a membership form on our website www.iatefl.si, section Become one of us.

All the participants will receive a certificate of attendance.

All necessary measures to protect the health of the participants will be planned and put into place but due to the government ban, the seminar is limited to 50 participants only!

Don't hesitate and register here as soon as possible:
<https://bit.ly/IATEFLSLOpreconference>

IATEFL Slovenia

For more information, check www.iatefl.si or follow us on FB.

Seminar abstracts

dr. Janez Skela

The Territory of Culture – From the Noble to the Trivial

The lecture/workshop will resonate with the recognition of an unbreakable bond between language and culture that motivates foreign language teaching profession's implicit commandment that 'thou shalt not teach language without also teaching culture'. Culture in language teaching has traditionally involved providing cultural information. But goals and objectives of culture teaching have to be set that relate not only to descriptive and analytical knowledge of facts, but also to procedural knowledge of culture. In other words, teachers need to focus on both high/achievement culture (or big-C culture), and low/behavioural culture (or little-c culture).

Language-learning materials also carry cultural content and are never culturally neutral. The cultural content in the EFL course book may be about source culture, target culture, or international/global culture. In the case of the global course book which has to be sold globally to a variety of very different markets, the underlying philosophy of 'one size fits all' means that (cultural) content is often limited to a narrow range of bland topics.

dr. Lisa Hudley

Moving materials online

This workshop will feature a variety of material for synchronous and asynchronous learning environments, with particular focus on what to consider when adapting face-to-face activities to virtual ones. We will also look at how traditional materials may be utilized in new and creative ways.

dr. Claudia Molnar

Bridging the gap between the classroom and learning from home

In this workshop we'll be putting classroom strategies into practice while working with authentic materials learners can use outside the classroom to improve their listening, pronunciation and writing skills.

mag. Špela Munih Stanič

Contemporary learning: children of images, sounds and feelings before learning challenges

Which method is the right and wrong? Unfortunately, there is no single answer. It depends on the learning needs of the child. Research on the functioning of the mind in the field of memory formation brings important innovations in the field of teaching in school as well as learning at home, which should be known to all parents and teachers today:

- how to establish good contact with the child, willingness to participate and active participation,
- get concrete ideas on how to structure the lesson for the equal inclusion of all types,
- get to know the different learning types and learn to recognize them in class,
- get ideas on how to introduce "brain-friendly learning" methods into the classroom and create a lesson plan that meets the needs of all "learning types",
- gain an understanding of how different "learning types" work in the classroom.

Neurolinguistic programming tools are based on activating conscious and non-conscious powers, understanding human thinking and decision-making, and finding the excellence and potential of each of us.

Rebecca Svetina **"Slovenish"**

A "refresher" course (and game) for English teachers who've been listening to their students' mistakes for too long.

Marša Jovič

Non-violent communication

Teaching a language must also mean teaching about culture. Dr. Montessori explored and studied the importance and the development of social skills. The model of nonviolent communication seems to fit well into a Montessori classroom and we will begin to explore it in the workshop as well as dive into the learning process of children in such a setting.



TWin odlični izleti!

Turistična agencija TWIN se s kulturno-izobraževalnimi potovanji ukvarja že 20. leto. Ker v Veliko Britanijo potujemo pogosteje kot večina ostalih slovenskih organizatorjev potovanj, ponujamo odlično in preverjeno izvedbo. Naše cene tudi že vključujejo javni prevoz in obvezne vstopnine. Cene so odvisne predvsem od termina odhoda in vaše fleksibilnosti pri odhodu.

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www.twintur.com

Zakaj s Twin-om v London:

- 1 Pogosti in redni, zagotovljeni odhodi v London.** Twin organizira šolska potovanja v London že 20 let, v povprečju imamo na mesec vsaj 3 zagotovljene odhode v London.
- 2 Odlično vodstvo.** Pri Twinu se zavedamo, da je odlično poznavanje običajev in turističnih znamenitosti Londončanov le prvi korak k odlični izvedbi. Naši vodniki imajo dolgoletne izkušnje pri vodenju šolske mladine, zato odlično poznajo vse sestavine programa, saj jih sami pripravljajo. Tudi zato je vodenje/izvedba toliko bolj fleksibilna glede na želje skupine. Naj še omenimo, da boste v Sloveniji težko našli vodnike, ki v London vodijo tako pogosto kot Twinovi vodniki.
- 3 Nastanitev, ki presega običajno turistično kategorijo.** Pri Twinu se zavedamo, da je dober spanec pomembna sestavina izleta. Vsi naši hoteli so hoteli s 3* in pri večini udeležencev presežejo njihova pričakovanja. Kot specialist za London lahko zagotovimo vsaj en bogat angleški zajtrk (običajnih zajtrki v Londonu so skromni kontinentalni).
- 4 Nikoli naknadno ne spreminjamo pogojev.** Naša cena je vedno znana že ob prijavi in se nikoli ne spremeni zaradi spremembe cen dobaviteljev, goriva oz letalskega prevoznika.
- 5 Vedno ponudimo kakšno dodatno storitev – brezplačno.** S program zagotavljamo minimalni obseg storitev oz. ogledov, vendar nikoli ne izvedemo samo minimalnega obsega – vedno, pri vsaki skupini dodamo nekaj posebnega, kar ni zapisano v programu. Prav tako v naših programih nikoli ne zapišemo "če bo čas dopuščal", kajti vse naše programe vedno v celoti izvedemo. In ker si London zelo pogosto ogledujemo, poznamo tudi optimalno zaporedje ogledov brez nepotrebnega hitenja.
- 6 Vsaj 183 osnovnih in srednjih šol je že potovalo z nami. Z nami zelo malo šol potuje samo enkrat.** Če želite neobvezujoče vzpostaviti stik z organizatorjem na eni od šol, ki je že potovala z nami, vam bomo z veseljem posredovali kontakt.
- 7 Ponujamo 3-dnevni program, kjer za izvedbo ni potrebno delovnika.**

Več informacij na www.twintur.com ali na 040 187 830 ali v poslovalnici na Zemljemski ulici 12 v Ljubljani.

Osmisliti učenje je osnovna naloga vsakega učitelja in ni boljšega načina, kako priljubiti angleščino, od tega, da učence popelješ po svetu. V današnjih časih to ni enostavno. Šole in učitelji se bojijo odgovornosti, mnogi starši pa ne zmorejo ali znajo otrok odpeljati sami. Ni bilo lahko pred 15 leti prvič sestiti na avtobus in se podati z agencijo, o kateri nismo vedeli ničesar, na večdnevno potovanje v Veliko Britanijo. Bilo nas je strah pred odhodom, a takoj ko smo se podali na pot, smo vedeli, da je bila odločitev prava.

Po tistem, ko smo prvič potovali s TWinom, smo vedeli, da nas ne bo več strah. Lani smo že deseti odkrivali Evropo in vsakič smo se vrnili ne samo zadovoljni, ampak tudi hvaležni za TWinovo strokovnost, prijaznost, ustrežljivost ... Hvaležni smo celotni ekipi in nikoli ne bi izbrala druge agencije, saj sem prepričana, da niti cenovno niti strokovno potovanja ne bi mogla biti ugodnejše in bolj izpeljana.

Ta ekskurzija je postala stalna praksa naše šole in učenci komaj čakajo, da bodo dovolj stari, da se je bodo lahko udeležili. Nam, spremljevalcem, pa je v neizmerno veselje, ko jih opazujemo, kako polni vtisov in lepih doživetij še dolgo pripovedujejo o potovanju.

Ksenija Tripkovič, OŠ Selnica ob Dravi