

# IATEFL Slovenia Newsletter

WINTER ISSUE 2010, no. 50

ISSN 1855-6833  
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# *M*

**Christmas Activities for Classroom Use**

**Mamma Mia Musical**

**Teaching Dyslexic Children**

**Team Teaching in Half a Minute**



Conference announcement

# **18<sup>th</sup>** **annual IATEFL Slovenia conference**

## **2 KUL 4 SKUL**

will be held at

**Terme Topolšica, 10th – 13th March 2011**

With key speakers

**Leni Dam, Lindsay Clandfield, Judy Copage,  
Marie Delaney, Eamonn Shanahan**  
and others to be confirmed

For updated information on the speakers,  
registration forms and speaker proposal forms,  
please check our website

**[www.iatefl.si](http://www.iatefl.si)**

As every year, the conference will provide superb education,  
socializing, relaxation, and fun.

We are looking forward to seeing you all again.

Registration is open to any member of the public who wishes to attend the conference. Registration fees differ depending on when you register and the delegate's membership of IATEFL SLOVENIA or IATEFL. We strongly recommend that delegates register early and take advantage of the early-registration and member rates. In order to register, conference participants should send a completed registration form and a completed IATEFL SLOVENIA membership form (if they wish to join IATEFL SLOVENIA and be entitled to member rates) together with proof of payment to the address on the registration form.

We wish we could put up some of the Christmas spirit in jars and open a jar of it every month.

The best of all gifts around any Christmas tree: the presence of a happy family all wrapped up in each other.

We wish you all a 48-hour day for every weekend, gourmet chocolate on every break and a friendly co-worker who brings you coffee as soon as you come into the staff room. Oh, peace on Earth good will to all. But mostly chocolate and coffee and Earth in good.

Your IATEFL Slovenia.



## IATEFL Slovenia newsletter

Vol. 12, No 50, Winter issue 2010

Published by:

**IATEFL Slovenia,**  
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Printed by: *Bograf d.o.o.*

Graphics: *Petra Turk*

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ISSN 1855-6833

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## OBVESTILO O TEKMOVANJU ZA DIJAKE 3. LETNIKA

Objavljamo osnovne informacije v zvezi s tekmovanjem v znanju angleškega jezika za šolsko leto 2010/2011. Pravilnik o tekmovanju srednješolcev v znanju angleščine, ki to tekmovanje natančno ureja je objavljen na spletni strani IATEFL Slovenia (<http://www.iatefl.si>) in vas vabimo, da si ga podrobneje ogledate.

### 1. TEKMOVALNE KATEGORIJE:

Tekmovanje poteka v petih kategorijah:

- A1:** za tekmovalce tretjih letnikov, ki se učijo angleščine kot prvega tujega jezika (sedmo leto učenja) in obiskujejo katerokoli splošno gimnazijo oz. so v evropskih oddelkih
- A2:** za tekmovalce tretjih letnikov, ki se učijo angleščine kot prvega tujega jezika (sedmo leto učenja) in obiskujejo katerokoli strokovno gimnazijo
- A3:** za tekmovalce tretjih letnikov, ki so več kot eno leto bivali na angleško govorečem področju in tiste, ki so v oddelkih mednarodne mature
- B:** za tekmovalce tretjih letnikov, ki se učijo angleščine kot prvega tujega jezika (sedmo leto učenja) in obiskujejo katerokoli 4-letno strokovno šolo, ki se zaključí s poklicno maturo
- C:** za tekmovalce tretjih letnikov, ki jim je angleščina drugi tuj jezik (tretje leto učenja)

### 2. SODELOVANJE UČITELJEV MENTORJEV:

Vsakih 10 dijakov, ki se s posamezne šole udeležijo regijskega ali državnega tekmovanja, mora spremljati en učitelj, ki bo sodeloval pri izvedbi oz. nadzoru tekmovanja in popravljanju tekmovalnih nalog.

### 3. PRIJAVA NA REGIJSKO TEKMOVANJE:

Tekmovanja se lahko udeležijo dijaki tretjih letnikov gimnazij in srednjih strokovnih šol. Šole same presodijo, na kakšen način bodo izbrale dijake, ki jih bodo poslale na regijsko tekmovanje. Vsaka šola sme na tekmovanje prijaviti neomejeno število dijakov. Dijaki, katerih materni jezik je angleščina, se tekmovanja ne morejo udeležiti.

### 4. POMEMBNI DATUMI:

Regijsko tekmovanje bo potekalo 2. 2. 2011 na izbranih regijskih šolah. Seznam bo objavljen na naši spletni strani. Državno tekmovanje se bo odvijalo 21. 3. 2011.

### 5. TEKMOVALNE NALOGE:

REGIJSKO TEKMOVANJE je razdeljeno na dva dela: (A) BRALNO RAZUMEVANJE in (B) RABA JEZIKA ter KULTURA. Letos se bodo vprašanja s področja kulture nanašala na britansko kulturo, in sicer področja: glasba, film in književnost. NA DRŽAVNEM TEKMOVANJU bodo dijaki svoje znanje angleščine prav tako pokazali v dveh delih: SLUŠNO RAZUMEVANJE in PISNO SPOROČANJE.

### 6. NOVOSTI:

- prijava tekmovalcev bo potekala preko našega strežnika na spletni strani [www.iatefl.si](http://www.iatefl.si)
- evropski oddelki so prestavljeni v kategorijo A1
- umaknili smo ustni del.

Za kakršnekoli dodatne informacije smo vam na voljo na telefonski številki 041 907 065, oziroma na elektronskem naslovu [beti.kerin@iatefl.si](mailto:beti.kerin@iatefl.si). Veselimo se vašega sodelovanja in vas lepo pozdravljamo.

Beti Kerin, prof.  
koordinatorka tekmovanja



Jasna Cepuder Sedmak, prof.  
predsednica društva



# The Language Show – Something for Every Language Enthusiast

By **Anže Perne** and **Mateja Stare**

What crosses your mind every Friday when your last lesson ends? After what is usually an intense week of not only teaching, but also dealing with (sometimes difficult) students, you probably want to leave school as soon as possible, relax and enjoy the quietness of your home. So do we most of the time. But in the middle of October our anticipation of a Friday afternoon was at its highest – leaving school at 12:30, driving to Italy, boarding a plane at 14:30, catching a train to central London at 16:30, trying to breathe on an over-crowded bus to our flat in East London, grabbing something to eat, taking a short walk, and then finally falling asleep. The alarm clock went off at 8:00 and it was finally time to go to The Language Show.



The Language Show is the UK's biggest event for language learners, teachers, linguists and anyone with a passion for languages. This year it took place at Earl's Court Exhibition Centre. According to Anita Gorny, Event Manager, the show offers a variety of inspiration, new teaching ideas, language teachers' seminars, language courses, and potential job opportunities. There you can meet not only teachers, but also other language enthusiasts. Although the basic idea of the show is that of a fair, there is much more to see, participate in or even taste. (We should point out that this is not specifically an ELT event

as it covers all major world languages.) This year we were able to see a vast variety of publishing houses and other language organisations. They provided the attendees with interesting resources and we were excited by the fact we would be able to use many of them in our classrooms.

For those of us who wanted to get as much as possible from the show and to gain new ideas for the classroom and to enrich our personal development, language teachers' seminars were the thing to attend. These seminars covered a staggering variety of topics, from bringing magic into the classroom to web 2.0 tools. The seminars were intriguing and also humorous. One of the seminars we attended was about the latest ICT hardware, software and methods to engage learners at all stages. The presenter was smiling, giving us the courage to use ICT, but at the same time she managed to show us about 100 slides, full of text and images, in a 45-minute session. Now, as they say in America, you do the math!

What gives a special feel to the show is a range of additional presentations, many of them culture-specific. You could find out what it's like to be a translator for the European Union, test yourself in interpreting in a real booth, watch TV5Monde, attend a dance performance or even try yourself in language karaoke. Of course, a coffee break from time to time was essential to cope with all that was going on around us. Time flew by and soon we found ourselves drinking coffee at the airport with our bags full of resources and our heads full of classroom ideas. It was time to go

back to the same school, the same classrooms, the same students, but with two slightly changed teachers full of ideas and willingness to use them.

*Reference: The Language Show 2010 – The Show Programme*

*Mateja Stare teaches English at Fran Albreht Primary School in Kamnik and Anže Perne at Davorin Jenko Primary School in Cerklje na Gorenjskem.*

**V. I. P. Corner suggests you to have a look at the following very important page:**

**\* <http://www.bl.uk/> is the British Library that holds 14 million books, 920,000 journal and newspaper titles, 58 million patents, 3 million sound recordings, and so much more, including the link to find out more about the free exhibition "Evolving English: One Language, Many Voices"**

# Collocations and the Acquisition of New Vocabulary

By **Veronika Piccinini**, *University of Nova Gorica*

Learners at all levels frequently face the problem of not knowing how to use a newly acquired word in the right way. They seem to be unable to form logical collocations and put the new word in the right context. In other words, learners seem to lack the ability to 'put things together' in a foreign language and to merge their pre-existing knowledge with new elements.

From the learner's point of view, acquiring new vocabulary is too often associated with learning by heart. Students often learn new words from lists containing isolated words, ripped from their context. What is more, assessment methods at schools frequently include tasks where students only have to translate words from one language to another. Word lists and translating individual words can be useful and help students memorise the words, but they are not enough for them to learn to use the new words actively and in the right way. Teachers should therefore go beyond teaching isolated words and instead offer learners whole chunks of language, as 'chunking' can help learners become aware of the environment in which a word can be used.

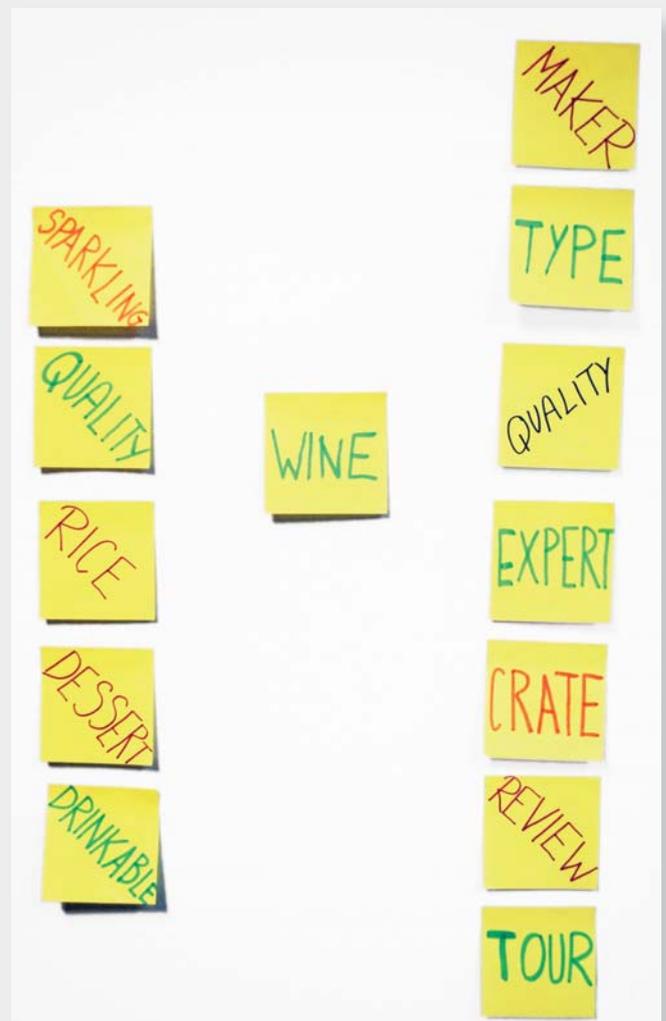
Teaching collocations can be a powerful tool for introducing simple language chunks to learners. The aim of the following two sample activities with collocations is not only to show learners in what kind of structures the new words can be used, but also to make them aware of the possibility to form new collocations with words they already know.

The activities can be adapted to suit different levels and can also be used for teaching English for specific purposes. For instance, I have used the following activity several times with undergraduate students of viticulture and enology at the University of Nova Gorica to review basic vocabulary about wine.

## Activity 1: 'Stick the word in the right place!'

Choose a word and write it on the blackboard. In advance, prepare some post-it notes or similar adhesive slips of paper, each containing a word which collocates with the word on the board. Distribute the words among the learners and invite them to walk to the blackboard and stick the word in the right place in order to form a collocation – to the left or right side of the word on the board. Discuss the meaning of each collocation with the students and ask them to think of some extra examples of collocations with the word on the blackboard.

When working with the students of viticulture and enology, I usually choose the word 'wine'. Examples of the words on the post-it notes are 'expert', 'quality', 'crate', 'review', 'rice', 'bottle' and 'dessert'. The students are generally highly motivated to do the task, and fruitful discussions follow – the students always notice that they can place the word 'quality' either to the left or to the right of the word 'wine' and thus form two collocations: 'quality wine' and 'wine quality'. The students also comment on the totally different meanings of these two noun phrases. The task can also help the learners distinguish between different parts of speech (e.g. 'bottle' in the collocations '(to) bottle wine' and 'wine bottle') and recognise the typical adjectival endings (e.g. '-able' in 'drinkable'). This is an adapted version of an activity presented to me by Chaz Pugliese.



# Upcoming events

Below is a schedule of upcoming events, including the dates, the places and the contact persons.

## Activity 2: 'Collo-snakes'

I unintentionally created this activity after I reminded my students that they could split a collocation into two parts and form new collocations out of the constituent parts.

Choose a word and write it on the blackboard. Ask the students to think of a word which collocates with the given word and put it on the blackboard to form a collocation. However, write it slightly below the original word, as the new word will now represent the new 'given word'. Once again, the students are asked to look for possible collocators/collocation nodes in order to form collocations containing the new given word. This process can be repeated several times in order to get a sequence – a 'collocational snake'.

Since the festive season is approaching, I will illustrate this exercise with an example starting with the word 'Christmas': The following collo-snake was produced by a group of intermediate learners:



As the picture shows, the students came up with the following collocations: Christmas present, birthday present, birthday card, Easter card, Easter egg, egg omelette, cheese omelette, goat cheese, goat milk, milk chocolate and chocolate bar.

I believe that such exercises can help learners become aware of the existence of language chunks and consequently overcome the problem of 'not knowing how to put the things together'. As a result, learners will gradually develop a richer vocabulary and become more fluent in their English.

## February

2. 2. 2011

► **Secondary school competition, third year – regional**  
*beti.kerin@iatefl.si*

## March

9. 3. - 13. 3. 2011

**IATEFL Slovenia annual conference in Topolšica  
2 KUL 4 SKUL**

► *jasna.sedmak@iatefl.si*  
sponsors, advertising in conference brochure,  
organisation and co-operation with exhibitors

► *jasna.dzambic@iatefl.si*  
organisation and student helper co-ordination

► *info@iatefl.edus.si*  
register for the conference

21. 3. 2011

**Secondary school competition, third year - state**  
► *beti.kerin@iatefl.si*

## April

7. 4. - 10. 4. 2011

**The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual HUPE Conference**

will be held in the Grand Hotel Adriatic, Opatija.  
The speaker proposal deadline is 15th January 2011.

8. 4. - 9. 4. 2011

**9<sup>th</sup> Elta IATEFL Conference**

"TEACHING-LEARNING-ASSESSING:  
STRENGTHENING THE LINKS"

15. 4. - 19. 4. 2011

**45<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and Exhibition**

Brighton Centre, Brighton, UK

## May

20. 5. 2011

**Competition award ceremony – Topolšica**

# HELP!

## AM I TEACHING A DYSLEXIC CHILD!

By **Andreja Lakner**

**Like many of us, I started my teaching career by tutoring. One day a man came and asked me if I could help him learn English. 'Sure' was my answer, but I didn't know what I was getting myself into. Immediately after we started, I discovered he couldn't read or write in English. My student told me he was dyslexic. 'What's that?' was my question. 'Well,' he said, 'it means I simply can't read and write well. I mix letters and sometimes I even cannot spell a very simple word.' As I found out later, he was quite right! His reading was poor; his spelling was a little better, but mostly because of the fact that he was copying pages and pages of exercises. I wish now that I had had the knowledge I have today, because there are so many things I could and would have done to help him.**

One day I asked a class of eighth graders to write about things they are really proud of. I collected their essays and read them through. A girl told me that, because she was dyslexic, one of her greatest achievements was that she could read and write. I remember myself thinking – but she never has any problems with reading or writing! To be honest, her English was very good! Later on we talked and she told me that one of her worst nightmares in English was when she got the list of irregular verbs she had to learn by heart.

Another experience that really made me think about the problem happened a few years ago. I was sitting over a cup of coffee with a friend when she told me her daughter was probably dyslexic. Her daughter was a fourth grader then, so she was supposed to be reading and writing quite well at this stage. But she wasn't. The girl played the flute, she was a good ballet dancer, her grades were good, but her spelling, writing and reading were poor. Often she would read without knowing what the passage was about. Furthermore, the girl was able to read aloud a whole page without making a single mistake, but the very same passage read the next day or even an hour later could be a complete disaster. As if she was still in the process of learning how to read. And often she had no idea what she had been reading about. The girl's notebooks, especially those from school, were another problem. Quite often neither the mother nor the girl knew what was supposed to be written there. So they had to get a notebook from one of her school friends to copy from. And when the girl copied, she copied it neatly. The fact was she had enough time to do it: there was no pressure of the teacher dictating. Test writing was another problem. She got excellent grades when tested orally, but not such great ones when writing a test paper, so she might be marked sufficient

for things she had got an excellent for a few days before. To cut the long story short – the girl was estimated dyslexic, but there was another extremely important thing that my friend told me. Her words were: 'You know, it was me who had to admit and accept my child was different and needs help first. It wasn't easy, believe me. But after I accepted it, I was able to explain the situation to my daughter, so she could process the whole thing in her head. It is extremely important she knows that even though, or, better, because she is a dyslexic child, she still has so many other abilities many of her friends don't. Only then we were able to start proper work and progress.'

For quite a long time it was thought that dyslexia meant the person's brain wasn't working properly, that the brain or the nerves were somehow damaged. That this caused all the reading and writing problems. Nowadays we know this is not true. The brain of a dyslexic is just functioning differently from those of other people. A very simple explanation of dyslexic thinking would be that they think in pictures and they must see the whole picture. And as long as a dyslexic can see the picture of the word, he can read it as well. But as soon as the word doesn't have the picture, a dyslexic cannot use it: he is lost, doesn't understand the word, cannot spell it, cannot read it, cannot write it.

In other words, people have the ability to think in two ways: either we think verbally, that is to say with the help of the words and the way they sound. This kind of thinking follows the structure of the language and is as fast as is the speech of the person. The other way of thinking is non-verbal. If a person is thinking non-verbally, they are thinking with the help of pictures for their ideas and conceptions. Non-verbal thinking follows the speaker's development. The picture grows when new concepts come into the person's mind. Non-verbal thinking is much faster than verbal. In a way we could say that dyslexia is a fast way of thinking, each picture is seen at a speed of 32 pictures a second (a verbal thinker has only got 2–5 thoughts a second, that is 6 to 10 times less than a non-verbal).

When you say a word like 'ball', any child, dyslexic or not, after reading the word, will also understand it. The majority of children by hearing the word, a dyslexic because they have a picture of a ball in their head. But when such a child reads a so called trigger word like 'this', or 'an' or 'under', he cannot make a picture of it. The word therefore has no meaning for the child; the whole picture (a sentence, a passage) is broken into pieces and the child doesn't know how to put them to-

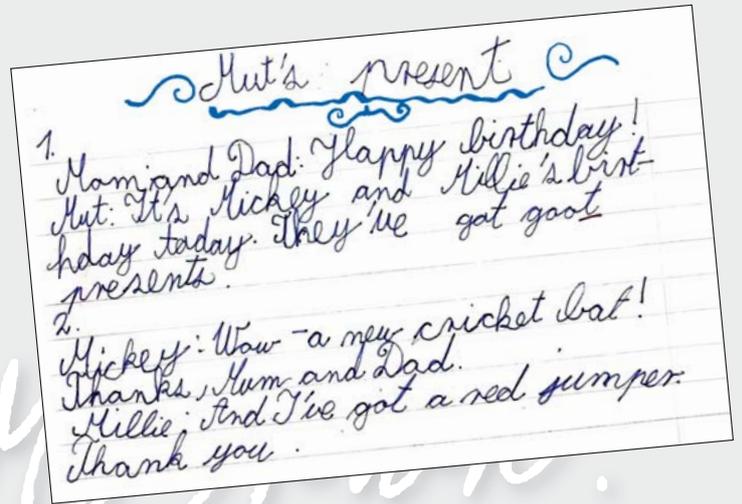
gether in order to get the whole. The result is that the child hasn't got the slightest idea what he has read.

Imagine a dyslexic child who has to do a task at school. The first problem he bumps into is the instructions. He reads them a few times, but doesn't know what to do, because they include trigger words. Thus the instructions have little or no meaning. At least two things will probably happen. Firstly, the child will feel dumb and frustrated – everyone knows what to do except me! The more often this happens, the poorer the child's self-esteem gets. Secondly, the child gets bored. Everyone has work to do, including him, but he cannot do it, so he starts doing something else – he becomes either a trouble-maker or a daydreamer.

We have to keep in mind that a dyslexic child needn't read badly; in fact their reading aloud might be quite good. Their biggest problem is to understand what they have just read. Dyslexic children can feel dizzy and can even get headaches and stomach aches because of this. The reason lies in the letters – they can float in front of them. They often see words backwards or even 3-dimensionally. The picture might go around vertically and/or linearly. And not only do they sometimes miss letters: they often omit a line or two, and even continue reading due to their comprehension problems. Very often parents take such a child to have their eyes checked, but the eye examination doesn't reveal any visual problems.

A dyslexic child has problems not only with writing, but also with copying. Their handwriting can vary from day to day; sometimes it's good, but on other days it's completely illegible. Some dyslexic people can never learn to read and write.

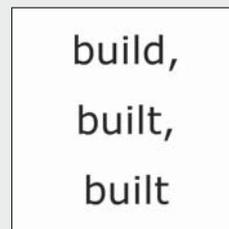
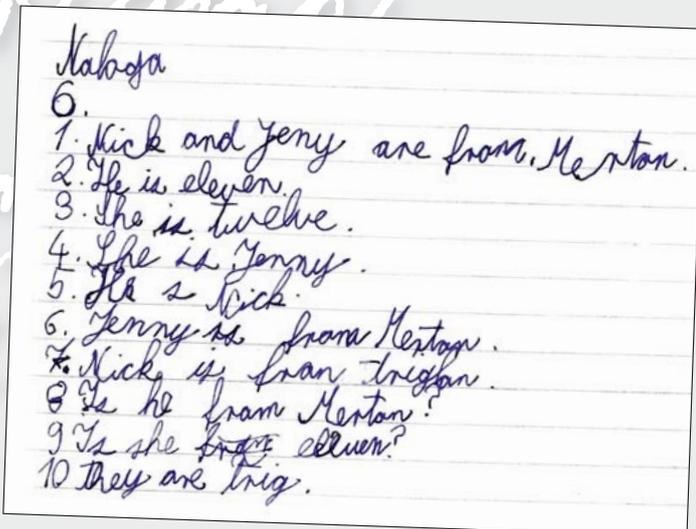
Here is an example of two short passages written by a dyslexic girl I teach. The passages are written on different days. At this point I think it is important to add that the girl's oral English is very good, she makes few grammar mistakes, her vocabulary is rich. She talks in English without thinking in her mother tongue first. She completely follows and participates in class discussions on different topics. She reads English books, understands them, even writes summaries. But there are times when I have no idea what she has written, because her writing can be very poor, not only from the point of view of spelling, but also in terms of legibility. Now imagine this girl writing a test paper!



What can we, the teachers, do to help a dyslexic child? A LOT! I've encountered various ideas that we can and should use in the class. Please bear in mind they are not listed in order of importance. Every dyslexic child is an individual – what works for John might not work for Jane. But whatever help dyslexic children get, they are grateful, because this helps them to feel more confident. So here are some hints for your teaching.

A dyslexic child can have difficulties in focusing and can easily be distracted by any sound or movement from their surroundings. Let them sit in the front rows. In this way there are less possibilities to be distracted by seeing others. Don't let them sit by the window or by the door – hearing the sounds and seeing the people outside will distract them. And you can always check their work and silently, unnoticed tell them about their mistakes.

Use different teaching strategies – these children are visual thinkers, so use a lot of visual materials. Try not to use lists. Even if learning the alphabet, irregular verbs or months of the year seem easy to us, they could turn into a nightmare for a dyslexic child. This doesn't mean they don't have to learn the alphabet or the irregular verbs. Of course they do, but they will learn them differently. For example, everybody gets the list of irregular verbs, but give a dyslexic child an enlarged list (font about 40 or even more). Then ask the child to cut out the verbs. Next to each verb they should draw their illustration. This will help them a great deal to remember them. They can make cards with the picture on one side and the enlarged word on the other. Here's an example:



one side of the card



the other side of the same card

Sometimes it will help the child simply to make the words by using clay or Plasticine. Get the child to model the word and see how much this can help!

Make sure you only show the principle of what to do and how to do it. The actual work should be done by the child. Also, tell them they can learn the rest of the words in the same way. This is often time-consuming, but once they get it and they see there are good results, I'm sure many of them will try it.

Another strategy you can use is to help them learn words from those they already know. For example, NIGHTMARE. It's a compound word consisting of NIGHT and MARE. Once the child gets the picture of night and mare and remembers both images, he will easily remember the meaning of nightmare as well. Another such word is TOGETHER. If we put the word into little chunks (to get her) and a dyslexic practises it to get it into his long-term memory, he will know it forever.

Don't forget that these children are also strongly kinaesthetic, so use as much movement as possible. I know we cannot use everything all the time, every lesson, but the least we can do is to consider doing things in different ways sometimes. And don't forget – moving doesn't mean the children should jump and run around the classroom like crazy. Sometimes it's enough if they can just raise their hands, or stand up and then sit down again.

NEVER use a 'strange' font! All the beautiful fonts on your computer are a complete disaster for a dyslexic child. Here are some examples:



The fonts you could use are, for example, Tahoma, Verdana, Trebuchet MS, Century Gothic or Comic Sans MS. Do not use italic fonts as well. The letters should be large enough – at least font 14 – and the line spacing should be wide enough – 1.5 or more.

When teaching simple things like days of the week or the months, make sure you teach them forwards and backwards. I know this sounds strange, but how many people that are not dyslexic can say the months of the year backwards? If you help a dyslexic learn this feature, they will put them into their long-term memory and never forget them, which is another characteristic of dyslexic people.

Telling the time can also be a problem, especially if you show them a clock with arms. It is difficult for these children to get the concept of the longer and shorter clock arm and which one shows hours and which one minutes. Using a digital clock instead will help them a great deal. Our aim is just to know how to tell the time in English, so I think it's reasonable to use the kind of clock that makes this easiest.

Right or left? Another big problem! If you just draw arrows for the direction, they will know where to go. Wouldn't it be a shame if a dyslexic child got no points in a test task of telling the way, simply because he mixed left and right and therefore arrived to the wrong building?

You will have to help them struggle through words that are very similar to each other – like there/three, fought/thought/taught, where/were/when and so on. These words can and will confuse a dyslexic child. You can simply read them aloud for them, or colour the different letters differently, so that the difference is more noticeable. Also, ask your children to write the words on cards, colour the differences, maybe even draw pictures of them. I'm sure after a while they will see the differences.

Sometimes a very easy way to deal with dyslexia is just not using white paper and black letters. This combination can simply be too bright for them. They say the best solution is to use light grey or beige paper.

A dyslexic child must write – so insist on writing at your lessons. But bear in mind that copying from the board means two very complicated tasks: first you have to read the sentence on the board, then you have to remember it and finally write it correctly into your notebook. Now dyslexic children very often don't read the sentence on the board correctly (if there is more than one sentence, they might read half of the first one and half of the second one), they don't remember it properly and finally when they have to write the sentence into their notebooks, it can be something completely different from the one on the board. Very often it makes no sense whatsoever! That's why it's usually far better to give them a handout to copy from instead of making them copy from the board. But at the same time make sure your dyslexic child has a notebook with all the missing data, and be ready to photocopy a few things.

Try to avoid making them read aloud in front of the whole class. Reading aloud is very often a huge problem for these children. The child feels ashamed because he cannot read properly and frustrated because he is reading something he doesn't understand. So don't be angry if they cannot read aloud – just call somebody else and that's that.

Dictations are another huge problem. Dyslexic children often don't understand everything that has been dictated, so they cannot follow and consequently get lost. Very often their dictations cannot even be corrected, so the teacher simply crosses everything. Now imagine seeing your whole dictation crossed out in red! How frustrating! That doesn't mean you have to stop writing dictations. But when correcting a dictation of a dyslexic child, stop correcting when you see everything is getting red. Correct half of it, or only three sentences, say. I also suggest you write it separately, with the dyslexic child only. Repeat the sentence as often as he asks you to, and use pictures. Then correct the dictation (or half of it) and ask the child to write the following correction: first he writes the first wrong sentence wrongly, as he had written it in the dictation. Then, with a red pencil, he corrects all the mistakes so he can see them clearly. Finally he writes the correct sentence at least three times. This kind of mistake correcting means quite a lot of work, but in the long run it pays off. Also, perhaps it's easier (and at the lower stages

certainly is!) to dictate words only. Picture support is also much easier with words only too. And another piece of advice: use the pictures you have shown in the class when teaching the words. It's much easier to remember a familiar picture and the word that goes along with it!

Another way of helping a dyslexic child is making a mind map. Use mind maps whenever possible, because they represent a kind of a picture for the child. This way of learning is also a very efficient one for everybody else. If you type mind maps on Google, you'll be surprised at the results!

Use colours! Colours make a difference! If, for example, you're teaching the verb TO BE, and you make a chart for positive sentences and then another one for questions – colour the subjects in both cards with one colour, and the verb be with another. All the children will see right away how to make a question out of a positive sentence.

⊕			⊖		
I	AM		AM	I	
YOU	ARE	at home.	ARE	YOU	at home?
WE				WE	
THEY		in the garden.		THEY	in the garden?
HE	IS	Slovene.	IS	HE	Slovene?
SHE				SHE	
IT				IT	

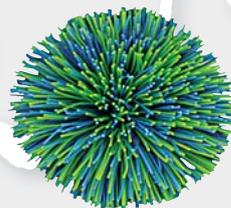
Never forget that when writing a test paper you are grading the child's knowledge, not the mistakes coming out of their disability. There are some mistakes that the child will make simply because he is dyslexic. Always consider his oral grades to be more important than the ones from his test papers. If a child asks you to explain the instructions of a task in the test, explain them. Really he might not understand the instructions even if he has followed the same instructions several times before! But once he understands the instructions, he is able to finish the task itself.

When writing a test paper, allow your dyslexic students as much time as they need. When under time pressure, dyslexic children will make even more mistakes and their writing will get more illegible. That doesn't mean making the test easier, just that there is more time to write and no time pressure. Stress the key words in instructions (for example put them in bold, or even better in a different colour) so the child can see what to do.

Be sensitive and understanding of the child's 'good' and 'bad' days. If a test is written on a 'bad' day, it will surely be written badly. Don't make a fuss out of it. Next time it'll be better.

Use Braingym – a very simple method to make both sides of the brain work. This is very important for dyslexic children. A very simple exercise we all know and did when we were younger is the following: put one of your hands on the top of your head. Put the other hand on your stomach. Now start circling with both hands in different directions. You can also make circles with the hand on your stomach while patting the top of your head with the other hand. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? It's a very

simple exercise that makes both sides of your brain work. You can find more about these activities if you Google 'brain gym'.



Use Koosh balls. They are awesome stress relievers. Use them not only for dyslexic children, but also for any child who cannot sit still!

Be strict! Dyslexia is a problem, but if you start feeling sorry for these children, you are not helping them. They need support, they need your help, but they must also know their duties. Doing homework is one of them, and they don't like it because they have to write. I believe there should be no excuses for not doing it. If you think there's more homework than a child can cope with until next time, agree on a longer time limit for it, but the child must do it. Being dyslexic should by no means lead to less work!

Help them organize. Very often you will notice a complete mess on their desks. They don't know what pencil to use, they don't know whether to use a notebook or their course book. Sometimes they write in the front of the exercise book, sometimes at the back. Again use colours to mark where to write. Show what to take in their hands. Let them have enough space on their desks, even if they sit alone.

Although this is my last point, it is far from being the least! Praise every accomplishment a dyslexic child makes. Use their strengths in order to help them feel more self-confident. Follow their progress and tell them they work well. Be honest with them – when you are not satisfied with their work, tell them. But never criticize their dyslexia – that's something they have and cannot simply get rid of. Believe me, they would if only they could!

## CONCLUSION

*Dyslexic children need help. They have to learn much more than verbal students in order to survive at school, to cope with all the schoolwork and to achieve good results. Our school system is still based on good reading and writing abilities. Bear in mind that dyslexic children are often very talented in other fields like art, drama, music, sports or making things. So a dyslexic child often has a high IQ. Just think of some famous people like Hans Christian Andersen (and he was a writer!), Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Edison, Walt Disney and many others – they were all dyslexic! Of course, being dyslexic doesn't ensure a child will become a genius, but it surely is good to know you and your disability belong to this club. Also, it is very important for dyslexic children to know that their spelling, reading and writing problems or problems with maths don't mean they are stupid. They should know that the way they think is different and that they can rely on your help. Don't forget that their imagination can be great, they can be extremely curious, and when thinking they use all their senses and think holistically. So when you find a dyslexic child in your class, don't get scared – with help and patience you will find your successful way of teaching him English as well.*

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# The Musical *Mamma Mia* Comes to Nazarje – How and Why We Did It

By **Mojca Grešak**

It all began almost by coincidence, just as many other good things start out.

One day I asked my 9th graders out of the blue (I honestly don't know what came over me!): 'Would you like to make a theatre performance or a musical or something this year?'

Hungry as they have always been for different forms of learning and eager to desert their 7-hour-long sitting position in stiff stuffy classrooms, they screamed out loudly and unanimously: 'Yeessss!'

Oh-oh! Now I really have to do it. Now they really want it. Now there was no way out. Time to take them seriously!

Only then did I start to think why on Earth I'd offered them bread before I had any flour! Was it just because I couldn't bear seeing so many of their unique talents vanishing in boredom behind the course books any more? Or was it because I was starting to hate myself for going with the flow from one lesson to another, even if I was usually trying hard to invent new ways of 'doing something' with those limiting texts. Most of the time I was teaching them for tests. For high school. For the system – not really for life.

And then I looked at my students as if it were for the first time: I saw a brilliant singer in one of them, who was on the other hand hopelessly shy with spoken language. I saw a great actor in another, who was a top celebrity in trouble-

making at most subjects. I saw a wonderful dancer in the next, who also had brilliant grades but so often looked so unhappy! And there was an amazing artist in another, who kept sabotaging every lesson where she was not able to 'express herself' somehow. I looked at all of them: there were many lonely young people, who were 'healing' their loneliness and disconnection from themselves through the simplest and most 'disconnected connection' of them all: the internet.

Then I also looked at myself, a middle-aged, reasonably good teacher of English, who every time she entered a classroom was virtually torturing herself and the others with something she didn't really believe in any longer. I wondered how we nevertheless still managed to have some fun with each other, while I knew deep inside we could have so much more fun in a different way! I had to admit that there was also so much more to learn and teach them in a different way.

There was a tiny problem, though. I didn't have much trust in myself: I had no experience in drama, I don't have a modicum of talent in singing or dancing and I had never done any directing in my life. But I had something, the only thing I could rely on: a great deal of trust in my students. And love for art. I believed it was enough.

So we started to meet every Friday afternoon for five months. The rehearsals were a funny cocktail of great fun



and great frustrations. The children were creative, cooperative, hard-working... but also very loud and sometimes a bit jealous and competitive – healthy and normal, I'd say. They did most of the work by themselves technically, like creating a stage scene, choreography and live music; they even established a school band consisting of three musicians. And they did all the work by themselves 'spiritually': they managed to put their truly wonderful selves onto the stage.

The result was a huge applause from an enthusiastic audience (aged from 6 years onwards), proud students and a happy teacher – all of us wearing huge glittering smiles such as I have never seen in a classroom before.

However, at the beginning there was work. Loads of work. Writing the script (adapting the original film script to make it shorter, witty and understandable for some of the audience whose English would be limited) was the easiest part, partly because it was something I could do on my own. The harder part which followed was delivering and developing the roles: the students all had different potentials, but none of them was born with all those talents needed for a good musical: singing, acting and dancing at the same time. Not to forget foreign language fluency in the first place! But they did practise and eventually managed to learn (even if not to perfection!) what wasn't put into their cradle at birth.

There were nevertheless also some tears from time to time. Stories came out during and after our rehearsals. All sorts of stories and pains, which otherwise stay hidden from a teacher (and sometimes also from the awareness of a student!), even if the teacher has been spending years in a classroom with these hugely interesting and wise young people, so often perceived simplistically as 'spoilt untamable savages'. You as a teacher simply have to sit down with them sometimes, listen to them, talk with them. Yet how often do we do that?

Well, we had to do that over and over again to get the worst pains to pour out and to make the pearls shine through

their shells. It hasn't always been as poetic as it sounds. Sometimes I doubted we'd make it myself and sometimes I was on the verge of giving up. There were moments when we even switched roles, when it was they who started encouraging me and taking personal responsibility for the project. We were building up a team (along with self-esteem!) and we managed to become one. This was the real success of our project, much greater than the applause of the capacity theatre hall. Because through the process of the many frustrations as well as the constructive contributions of each individual student, we learned one of the basic lessons, hardly ever learnt or taught in a classroom, yet so painfully needed in everyday life: how to be responsible for your own self and your own well-being as well as for others. In other words, how to cooperate with others without sacrificing your own needs. How to stay in (or establish) a balance. And how to get to know your own self and gain respect for the differences in your fellows. When I saw that happening, I knew my mission as a teacher was accomplished for the time being. It wasn't the flour for the bread we produced in the end, it was the salt of life. Or at least a pinch of it. It was something they cannot learn either from their school books or from the internet: how to be who they are while equally respecting others to do their thing and be who they are.

On or off the stage.

So I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my students for teaching me much more than I'd expected I'd ever learn from them.

*Mamma Mia*  
All who are interested are most welcome  
to see our performance once again:  
**on December 5th at 6 pm  
in Kulturni dom Nazarje.**



Here are some thoughts written by some of the students who created and participated in the musical:

Glasbena skupina ABBA mi je že od nekdaj izredno všeč. Ko pa se je na sceni pojavil musical s samimi njihovimi pesmimi in perfektno povezavo z vsebino le teh, mi je blo pa itak zakon, ko nas je prof. angleščine ga. Grešak vprašala, če smo za musical. Sploh ne vem, zakaj sem bila tako zainteresirana, saj se nikoli nisem počutila kot dobra igralka, kaj šele dovolj dobra plesalka za musical. Ampak ravno to, da bi pa ja nekaj ustvarila skupaj s sošolci, me je gnalo...

Musical ni nastal kar čez dan. Zanj je bilo potrebno veliko ustvarjalnosti, izvirnosti, medsebojnega poslušanja in sodelovanja, pa tudi veliko potrpežljivosti. Poleg tega smo morali prevzeti odgovornost za svojo vlogo in za tisto, kar smo bili pač zadolženi. Meni so vse te vaje pripomogle k odkritju, da moraš tistemu, za kar se odločiš, posvetiti čas. Da se moraš prilagajati in popuščati, sicer nastanejo konflikti, ki vse porušijo. Vključiti se moraš v družbo, s katero ustvarjaš in tako so ti vsake – tudi dodatne – vaje popestrilo, ne pa ovira. Projekt je bil zamet kot nek nov izziv, za katerega lahko rečem, da sem prav ponosna, da sem imela možnost pri njem sodelovati. Naučila sem se, da ne more biti vedno vse idealno in izpiljeno, pač pa da sta včasih ravno improvizacija in spontanost tisti, ki dasta nekaj, kar bi sicer manjkalo.

To mi pomeni mnogo več kot pa bedno učenje predmetov. Tam se naučiš, kar se pač moraš, v te – neformalne stvari greš pa z veseljem in pozitivno energijo in nehote pridobiš mnogo več. Pa ne samo za gradnjo kariere, pač pa za življenje. Lahko ustvarjaš. Lahko razvijaš mnoge vrednote za vsakdanje življenje, ki jih v šolskih klopeh ne moreš. Tam lahko odkrivaš samega sebe in spoznaš, da zmoreš. Spoznala sem tudi, da se je včasih bolje ugrizniti v jezik in si prej zamisliti kak morebiten odgovor, da ne pride do kakega prepira oz. slabe volje. Poleg tega je pomagalo to, da ni potrebno, da je igra

popolna in da kaka napaka musical še polepša. Ta naša MAMMAMIA je prav obogatila 9. razred.

*Em*

Za sodelovanje pri projektu "mammamia" sem se odločil zaradi ljubezni do igranja in petja, in pa zaradi odlične ostale igralske zasedbe. Med nastajanjem muzikla sem se počutil fantastično, saj sem si vedno želel igrati v muziklu. Zelo mi je bil tudi všeč odnos med igralci in režiserko.

Naučil sem se veliko, zato sodelovanje v takem projektu privoščim prav vsakemu. Seveda si želim svojo igralsko "kariero" nadaljevati tudi v srednji šoli in pa v življenju nasploh. Najbolj me je zabavalo druženje s svojimi sošolci in prijatelji. Od vsega mi je bilo najtežjepopolnoma izpiliti koreografijo, vendar se z veliko truda, volje in potrpežljivosti vse da. Seveda lahko pri muziklu kot je Mammamia sprostiš svo energijo in ideje ter se poleg veliko zabave in uživanja v igranju veliko tudi naučiš splošnih vrednot za življenje, v tem primeru pa tudi angleščine, zato takšno učenje sploh ne more biti primerljivo s poukom!

*Nejc*

Med nastajanjem muzikla sem mnogokrat prišla do točke, pri kateri nisem več vedela naprej a sem v nadaljevanju opazila tudi to, da sem iz mnogih strani napredovala: petje, igra, ples... Takšna oblika dejavnosti se mi zdi res v redu in polna novih priložnosti. Veliko mi je pomenilo druženje s prijatelji, vodila in spodbujala pa me je v bistvu želja, da sama sebi dokažem, da sem zmožna.

Naučila sem se tudi, da moram biti potrpežljiva, vztrajna, natančna ter zanesljiva.



Pri pouku res moramo delati izključno to, kar nam naroči učitelj/ica in je v tem primeru časa res premalo. V tem projektu pa smo se lahko razživel, dodajali svoje ideje, dokazali svojo kreativnost. Res je po mojem marsikdo med razvoju projekta odkril nekaj glede sebe, česar prej ni videl ali opazil, saj do takrat te možnosti ni imel. V ta projekt smo šli prostovoljno, iz veselja do glasbe in igre. vse skupaj pa je po mojem mnenju izpadlo fenomenalno!

*Katarina*

K muzikalu Mammamia nas je povabila učiteljica gospa Grešak, z odlično idejo, da bi skupaj pripravili prav posebno izvedbo le-te, in seveda sem takoj zgrabila priložnost, saj mi je igranje zelo všeč. Pred nastajanjem muzikala nisem pričakovala, da bo priprava in vse kar je s tem povezano tako naporno, vendar tekom vaj in vseh priprav, ko je bilo prisotno tudi kar nekaj napornih in zelo čustvenih trenutkov, je le prišel dan, ko smo imeli prvi nastop pred publiko, ki nas je odlično sprejela. To je bilo najboljšo plačilo. Ta projekt mi je dal veliko novih izkušenj, tako na šolski ravni, kot tudi v življenju, saj sem se naučila, da s potrpežljivostjo lahko dosežeš veliko stvari, pa če se zdijo še tako nemogoče. V prihodnje, na srednji šoli, če bo nam na razpolago podoben projekt bom z veseljem pristopila in ustvarila še eno podobno predstavo, kjer bom lahko navduševala in bila toliko pogumna, da se bom pokazala pred ljudmi. Po mojem mnenju je že nasplošno v šoli premalo takšnih predmetov, kjer bi učenci ali dijaki lahko pokazali kaj vse znajo, saj šolski načrt bolj spodbuja učenje, zato dijaki in učenci, ki so nadarjeni za igro, ples in petje pa ne morejo zadosti dokazati svojih raznovrstnih nadarjenosti.

*Anja*



# Can 6-, 7- and 8-Year-Olds Learn English in English Only?

## English for Young Learners

*English Language Immersion in the first years of primary school*

By **Mag. Katja Dragar**, *Škofijska klasična gimnazija Ljubljana (Osnovna šola Aljozija Šuštarja)*

The Alojzij Šuštar Primary School, the first private Catholic primary school in Slovenia, welcomed their first generation in the 2008/2009 school year. I was asked to teach English, which is a compulsory subject for all children starting in the first year, when the children are six years old.

That was quite a challenge for me. I had been teaching adults and students at secondary schools for more than 10 years and had enjoyed it. How about teaching children at a very early age, when they neither read nor write? Well, I might have a problem, I thought. However, those two years of teaching them turned out to be a great opportunity for my professional development as well as a very pleasant experience both for the children, I hope, and for me.

### How to start?

The first answer is a good teacher-training course for primary school teachers in England. I took a two-week one in Canterbury in August 2008, so I came into the classroom with fresh ideas and materials. A tremendous help was also my one-year stay in London as an au pair, where I was looking after year-and-a-half-old Jasmine and six-year-old James and thus learnt lots of nursery rhymes and got acquainted with children's literature, songs and other materials.

The second thing is to observe how children learn. They do not learn the language like adults but acquire it by repeating phrases, singing and playing. Thus the ideas of Michael Wambach of Convergent Pedagogy should be studied and applied to one's teaching. So I got into the books, studied the ideas of Convergent Pedagogy, read the results of some case studies abroad, got in touch with some Spanish teachers in Spain, where they start teaching English as early as the age of four, studied ideas of TPR (total physical response) activities, attended the conference on English for Young Learners held in Ljubljana... All in all I had quite a bit of a preparation before I got into the classroom!

Even though I was quite strong on theory, I quickly realised that teaching children brings new challenges to a teacher. Forget the classical way of teaching in front of a class, giving explanations and providing imaginary situations to make the students speak. I got among them, found a child inside me and started playing and singing along with them. So that's how it all started. Of course, I had to plan my lessons really

thoroughly since I had to switch activities several times in half an hour due to the children's short concentration span.

Before I started teaching, I had to discuss the method used with the principal. I suggested a method called Language Immersion or Language Bath, which means that a teacher speaks English only. This method is widely used around Europe and has achieved good results, so our headmistress, Dr Marina Rugelj, agreed. However, we were well aware that this method is not appropriate for every child, which was obvious at the beginning, with some children confused or even shocked. The majority accepted it very well, however. Using this method means not only learning words and phrases but also being able to use them in appropriate situations.

### How to plan a lesson

For children it is very important to have a routine. I made coming into a class a real life situation, a kind of a protocol. I knocked on the door and asked them if I might come in. When they answered in a choir 'Yes, you may', I got in. I also used a puppet, which was a great help to establish rapport with the children. Then we greeted each other, I asked them how they were, what day it was, what the weather was like and who was absent. It was always the same routine, and after a few months of repeating it all went very fluently. The children started using those phrases when they met me in the corridors or even out in the streets. At the end of a lesson it was the same: we said our goodbyes and always in the same way.

As a teacher of young children you are restricted to listening and speaking skills, since they do not read or write, so all the language learning is about listening to a teacher and repeating after her.

I did story-telling with the help of books, for instance *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, *The Very Quiet Cricket*, *The Mixed-up Chameleon* and *A Brown Bear*, all by Erik Carle, *Elmer the Patchwork Elephant* by David McKee, *Tunes for Kids* by Eric Herman and lots of other authentic materials.

In the first year we did not have a course book – the children had a notebook only, in which they drew what they learnt. The second and third classes followed a starter level course book, so they were already seeing words written in English before they'd learned to write.

## Does the Method of Language Immersion work at all levels of learning?

I was also teaching year four, where this method did not work. Children at the age of nine have a different approach to learning. They need explanations and the rules of a language, so I had to use mother tongue when explaining rules and when giving instructions for exercises. We also started writing in English and the children needed instructions and support in Slovene to get through.

In the first three years, with children aged six, seven and eight, my teaching was in English only; the children even believed that I could not speak Slovene. We went so far that other teachers addressed me in English when we met outside a classroom and I also spoke English to the children's parents. However, during an English lesson there was always a form teacher in the classroom, so she helped me to establish some discipline and translated basic words or patterns to the children. So the pupils did get translations into Slovene, but only very few and basic ones.

## What was the parents' reaction to my way of teaching?

Parents in general accepted our Language Immersion Method well. There were a few who had doubts at the beginning, but

as soon as they saw the results, I think they were reassured. In fact we received lots of letters of approval and the parents were happy since their children loved English and were able to express certain phrases or songs in English as well. We were also asked by the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana to have observation lessons for their students to see how it all works.

To help parents follow the programme and to make teaching goals transparent, I published monthly on our school homepages the syllabus covered, which made the teacher-parent cooperation very active and, it turned out, very helpful and useful.

## A wonderful experience

Teaching children at a very early age can be a very pleasing and rewarding experience. It demands lots of preparation in advance and lots of energy at the time of teaching, but the results can be surprising. Children acquire language very quickly. As soon as they are emotionally involved and they experience learning a foreign language as something positive, they will carry forward their learning into later years.

I warmly recommend trying it out.

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# Team Teaching in Half a Minute

By **Anže Perne** and **Tanja Stare Pušavec**

Team teaching is something that many teachers avoid as they see it as something that requires extra work. Having a foreign teacher at our school, team teaching is a must, because every lesson with him in fact constitutes team teaching. But we would like to share with you an experience that happened to us quite spontaneously.

**Before that, let's consider some of the advantages of team teaching:**

- **The clash of teacher viewpoints, changes in voice and rhythm, and alternation of different styles and personalities are stimulating and exciting for students. Needless to say, they are not used to having two teachers in a classroom. That is why this may catch their attention without any other motivation.**
- **When teaching problematic classes, in terms of discipline two teachers can better control the class.**
- **The presence of more than one teacher makes it possible for the students to be split into small groups for discussion.**

When it comes to the disadvantages, preparation is often mentioned as being more demanding. This is true, but our case also shows that team teaching need not be a burden for teachers. We were supposed to teach Year 7 students at different levels, one of us substituting for an absent teacher. We both wanted to use ICT during the lesson, but one of the classrooms did not have any equipment, so we decided to join the two groups and team teach them. The preparation was not difficult as we were both supposed to teach the same topic. It took us about half a minute to decide who was going to do what and then we went into the classroom. The students were surprised and it seemed as if one and the same question was going through their minds throughout the lesson: "Why do we have two teachers today?" In spite of this, their reactions were positive and they responded to both of us.

The topic we covered was a reading comprehension text based on some historical and geographical data, and each teacher was able to add some of their own knowledge to make the lesson livelier. We just looked at each other and knew exactly what to do. It was incredible! We did not just take turns at teaching, but actually presented a spontaneous dialogue on the topic we had previously chosen. The language our students were able to take in was presented to them in a real-life situation, spontaneously produced by their teachers. We were the first examples when something was to

be done or performed. We had to use our imagination to its fullest potential and show the students that though we are not professional actors, we still dare to act. It was a perfectly natural situation, full of collaboration and exploring, probably more real than any other lesson.

All we can say is that it was certainly worth trying and we are definitely going to repeat it.

Anže Perne and Tanja Stare Pušavec teach English at Davorin Jenko Primary School in Cerklje na Gorenjskem.

## REFERENCE

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**TESOL Macedonia-Thrace, N Greece  
18<sup>th</sup> Annual International Convention.**

**Thessaloniki, 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2011**

Theme:

**"Education: light my fire!"**

Confirmed plenary speakers:

**Lindsay Clandfield**

**Antonella Sorace**

**Nik Peachey**

"Pecha Kucha Evening"  
to be hosted by Lindsay Clandfield

For more information including  
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# FACTS FOR THE CLASSROOM

By Anže Perne

Students like interesting facts about the world around them. Why not bring them into your classroom? Here are some facts that you can use in class as **FACT OF THE WEEK** or **FACT OF THE MONTH**. These need not be mere facts that you would stick up somewhere in your classroom. They can increase motivation, heighten anticipation, and initiate lively discussions. Here are some Christmas and New Year's Eve related facts that you can use.

In **1937**,  
the first postage stamp  
to commemorate  
Christmas was issued  
in Austria.

If you are an avid Christmas shopper,  
statistics have concluded that you will be  
**elbowed at least three times**  
while shopping.

An average  
household in  
America will  
mail out  
**28**  
Christmas  
cards each  
year.

The first  
Christmas card  
was created  
in England on  
**9 December**  
**1842.**

Tainted leftovers  
are responsible for  
**400,000**  
cases of post-  
Christmas  
associated  
illnesses.

On New Year's Eve, about  
**75%** of American  
parties are with **20**  
people or less.

**31 December**  
**1907**  
saw the very first ball  
lowering in Times  
Square.

The most popular  
New Year's  
resolution in the  
United States is  
**to lose**  
**weight.**

Sources:

[www.christmasfacts.net/strange-christmas-facts](http://www.christmasfacts.net/strange-christmas-facts)

[www.corsinet.com/braincandy/xmastrivia.html](http://www.corsinet.com/braincandy/xmastrivia.html)

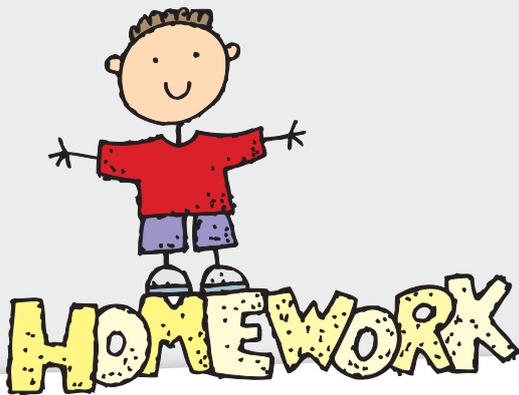
[www.2020site.org/fun-facts/New-Years-Eve-Fun-Facts.html](http://www.2020site.org/fun-facts/New-Years-Eve-Fun-Facts.html)

[www.celebrations.com/article/new-years-eve-fun-facts-and-trivia](http://www.celebrations.com/article/new-years-eve-fun-facts-and-trivia)

The original celebration of The New Year started around **2000 B.C.**, when the  
Babylonians observed the beginning of spring as the start of a new year.

# We Celebrated the European day of Languages – 26th September

A few days before the 26th September we invited the Slovene Primary and Secondary schools to translate two poems into different languages. Both poems we chose were in English and we received quite a lot of translations in many different languages and even different writings, not only by our pupils and students, but also by some of their mentors. At this point we would like to thank all of the participants for their excellent work. We also invite you to visit our website ([www.iatefl.si](http://www.iatefl.si)), where you can find all the translations. And here are some of them for you to get a taste of... Enjoy!



## DELAM DOMAČO NALOGO

Daša Pogorelec, OŠ Božidarja Jakca Ljubljana  
Mentorica: Maja Vovk

Delam domačo nalogo,  
In ugotovim,  
Da je luknjic mnogo,  
Če pogrizen svinčnik naredim,  
Pa še po mizi ga ne kotalim.

Delam domačo nalogo  
In odkrijem,  
Kjo z očmi po platnici matematičnega učbenika zavijem,  
So vse črke ozke in lebdijo,  
Da se jih lahko še Marsovci učijo.

Delam domačo nalogo,  
In ugotovim,  
Veliko različnih zvokov lahko dobim  
če z nalivnikom po robu postelje udarjam,  
Ali ob moje zobe ali ob moj stol ali po vrhu moje glave.

Delam domačo nalogo.  
Nekateri otroci mislijo, da je neumno,  
Ampak jaz mislim, da je prav bistroumno.  
Naloge so včasih dolgočasne, res je,  
Ampak vedno nekaj novega vmes je.

## DELAM DOMAČO NALOGO

Tamara Majcen, OŠ Hajdina  
Mentorica: Urška Medved

Delam domačo nalogo  
in sem ugotovil,  
če zgrizem svinčnik naokrog,  
nastane zabaven luknjičast obok,  
Svinčnik več mi ne drsi,  
drsenje vsaka luknja zadrži.

Delam domačo nalogo  
in sem ugotovil,  
če prekrižam oči,  
se na moji matematični knjigi vsaka črka zdí,  
kakor da lebdi,  
videti je, kot da marsovec jo pisal bi.

Delam domačo nalogo  
in sem ugotovil,  
da se veliko zvokov naredi,  
če udarjaš s svinčnikom ob stol, da vse bobni,  
ko zgrizeš ga z zobmi,  
lepše zazveni tudi na glavi in na postelji.

Delam domačo nalogo,  
Nekaterim se zdí,  
da nič narobe ni,  
če naloga kdaj se zamolči,  
jaz pa mislim si,  
da se tudi zabava lahko naredi,  
včasih dolgočasno je res zelo,  
vendar je tudi poučno ter malce lepo.

## DELAM NALOGO

Julija Stopar in Špela Drmolj, OŠ Gradec, Litija  
Mentorica: Tjaša Lemut Novak

Delam nalogo  
In sem ugotovil,  
Če pogrizem svoj svinčnik  
Okrog in okrog,  
Se ne bo kotalil.

Delam nalogo  
In sem spoznal,  
Če zaškrlim v svoj zvezek  
Zagledam takšne znake  
Kot bi jih vesoljec le prebral.

Delam nalogo  
In sem ugotovil,  
Da če sem s kulijem po mizi  
Glavi ali zobehi trkal,  
Razne zvoke sem dobil.

Delam nalogo.  
Večini ni všeč.  
A čeprav so včasih dolgočasne,  
So naloge prav koristna reč.

## DELAM DOMAČO NALOGO

Tanja Civič in Anja Zupanc, OŠ Trzin  
Mentorica: Stanka Jaklič

Pišem nalogo  
in sem odkril,  
če grizem svoj svinčnik  
vse naokrog  
na koncu izriše luknjast se krog.

Pišem nalogo  
in sem ugotovil,  
če v matematično knjigo zaškrlim  
črke vse pomešajo se  
kot zmazek, ki ga Marsovec napisal je.

Pišem nalogo  
in sem odkril  
zanimive zvoke,  
če s svinčnikom po  
svojih zobeh drsim.

Pišem nalogo,  
nekateri mislijo, da je neumno,  
meni pa se zdi zabavno in pogumno.  
Vaje so dolgočasne, priznam,  
a z znanjem nikoli ne ostanem sam.

## DELAM DOMAČO NALOGO

Eva Pavlič in Tina Erman, OŠ Staneta Žagarja, Lipnica  
Mentorica: Andreja Lakner

Delam domačo nalogo  
In ugotovila sem,  
Da če grizem moj svinčnik vse naokrog  
Naredim zanimive vzorce luknjaj povsod,  
Ki pomagajo svinčniku, da miruje non-stop.

Delam domačo nalogo  
In odkrila sem,  
Da če pred naslovnico matematične knjige prekržam oči,  
Črke vse zmečkajo se in kot da lebdiyo se zdi  
Kakor da Martin nekaj napisal bi.

Delam domačo nalogo  
In ugotovila sem  
Da lahko veliko različnih zvokov naredim  
Z udarjanjem nalivnika ob postelje rob  
Ob zobe ali stol, ali vrh moje glavé.

Delam domačo nalogo,  
Nekateri mislijo, da je neumna,  
Ampak jaz mislim, da je neke vrste zabava.  
Naloge so včasih dolgočasne, to je res,  
Ampak nekako se zmeraj naučim nekaj več.

## DOMAČA NALOGA

Jasna Džambič, IATEFL Slovenia

Nad domačo nalogo  
bedim in odkrijem -  
če svoje zobe v svinčnik zarijem,  
nastanejo luknje najčudnejših vzorcev  
in svinčnik se reši majavih proporcev.

Nad domačo nalogo  
bedim, spet odkrijem -  
če z očmi čez knjigo za matko zavijem,  
vse črke lebdiyo, kot bi jih zmečkali  
in kot da so Marsovci vse to spisali.

Nad domačo nalogo  
bedim in odkrijem -  
moj glas na različne načine zavije,  
če s pisalom udarjam ob posteljni rob,  
spet drugič kar s stolom, pa z glavo - pa zob?

Pri domači nalogi sedim in se trudim.  
Nekomu se zdelo bo včasih brezveze,  
a mislim, da vedno se tudi prileže.  
Je že res, da dolgčas se včasih pojavi,  
vseeno pa vedno je več v moji glavi.

## POZABLJENI JEZIK

Lina Berlot, Gimnazija Nova Gorica  
mentorici: Svetlana Kutin, Vlasta Lukman

*Nekoč sem govoril jezik cvetic,  
nekoč sem razumel vsako besedo gosenice,  
nekoč sem se na skrivaj nasmehnil čenčanju škorcev  
in pogovor z muho imel  
v svoji postelji.  
Nekoč sem slišal in tudi odgovoril na vsa vprašanja  
čričkov  
in se pridružil joku vsake padajoče in umirajoče  
snežinke,  
nekoč sem govoril jezik cvetic ...  
Kako je že zvenel?  
Kako je že zvenel?*

## POZABLJEN JEZIK

Matej Perše, Ekonomska šola Novo mesto  
mentorica: Nataša Malnar Bregar

*Nekoč govoril sem jezik rož.  
Nekoč sem razumel vsako besedo goseničino.  
Nekoč sem se na skrivaj smehljaj opravljanju škorcev  
in v postelji delil pogovor z muhico.  
Nekoč sem uslišal in odgovoril na vsa vprašanja čričkov  
in z jokom pridružil se vsaki padajoči, umirajoči snežinki.  
Nekoč govoril sem jezik rož ....  
Kako je že šlo?  
Kako je že šlo?*

## POZABLJEN JEZIK

Maja Krajnc, Poslovno – komercialna šola Celje

*svojčas, enkrat in edinkrat,  
sem imel možnost govoriti jezik cvetja!  
svojčas, sem razumel prav vsako besedo, ki jo je izrekla gosenica,  
svojčas, sem se skrivnostno nasmihal opravljanju škorcev,  
v svoji postelji sem klepetal z muho!  
svojčas, sem slišal in odgovarjal na vsa vprašanja, ki so jih zastavljali  
črički!  
pridružil sem se vsaki padajoči snežinki, jokajoči, umirajoči!  
svoj čas! enkrat in edinkrat sem govoril, ugotovil izražanje cvetja!  
kako, na kakšen način je to odšlo?  
kako, na kakšen način, je vse v pozabo šlo?*

## POZABLJENI JEZIK

Skupina AN1 2.a, Ekonomska šola Murska Sobota  
mentorica: Natalija Bračun

*Nekoč sem govoril jezik rož,  
Nekoč sem razumel vsako besedo, ki jo je izrekla gosenica,  
Nekoč sem se skrivoma smejal čenčam škorcev,  
In klepetal z muho pred spanjem.  
Nekoč sem slišal in odgovoril na vsa vprašanja čričkov  
In se pridružil joku padajočih, umirajočih snežink.  
Nekoč sem govoril jezik rož  
Kako že gre?  
Kako že gre?*

## POZABLJENI JEZIK

Jasna Džambič, IATEFL Slovenia

*Nekdaj sem znala govoriti jezik rož,  
nekdaj sem razumela pogovore gosenic,  
nekdaj so moja ušesa ujela, kako čvekajo škorci  
in v postelji smo z muhami klepetali  
kot norci.  
Nekdaj sem prisluhnila in odgovorila vsem vprašanjem  
čričkov,  
in jokala z vsakim umirajočim  
snežnim kosmičem,  
včasih sem znala govoriti jezik rož...  
Kako to nazaj priključem?  
Kako to nazaj priključem?*

## POZABLJENI JEZIK

Cvetka Jošar Matič, prof., Gimnazija Murska Sobota

*Včasih sem govoril jezik rož,  
Včasih sem razumel vsako besedo, ki jo je izrekla gosenica,  
Včasih sem se skrivoma smejal opravljanju škorcev,  
In s hišno muho sodeloval v pogovoru  
Kar v postelji.  
Včasih sem slišal in odgovarjal na vsa vprašanja  
čričkov,  
In pridružil sem se joku vsake padajoče snežinke,  
Ki umira.  
Včasih sem govoril jezik rož...  
Kako že je šlo?  
Kako že je šlo?*



## ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS MY 2 FRONT TEETH

Everybody \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_ at me  
These two \_\_\_\_\_ are  
gone as you can \_\_\_\_\_  
I don't know just who  
to blame for this \_\_\_\_\_!  
But my one wish on \_\_\_\_\_  
is as plain as it can \_\_\_\_\_!

All I want for Christmas  
is my two \_\_\_\_\_ teeth,  
my two front teeth,  
see my two front teeth!

Gee, if I \_\_\_\_\_ only  
have my two front teeth,  
then I could be \_\_\_\_\_ you  
"\_\_\_\_\_ Christmas."  
It seems so long since I could \_\_\_\_\_,  
"Sister Susie sitting on a thistle!"

Gosh oh gee, how \_\_\_\_\_ I'd be,  
if I could only \_\_\_\_\_ (thhhh)

All I want for \_\_\_\_\_  
is my two front \_\_\_\_\_,  
my two front \_\_\_\_\_,  
see my two front \_\_\_\_\_.  
Gee, if I could \_\_\_\_\_  
have my two front \_\_\_\_\_,  
then I could wish \_\_\_\_\_  
"\_\_\_\_\_!"

### PROCEDURE:

1. play the song; children just listen to it
2. give them the handout
3. start with the first verse together; pupils should predict what the missing words are (work with the whole class)
4. individually or in pairs they try to add the missing words
5. check their answers
6. sing the song

Song taken from the Internet; you can find it under:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_1FAbCzshoc&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1FAbCzshoc&feature=related)  
Andreja Lakner was kind enough to share the teaching idea with us.

## ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS MY 2 FRONT TEETH

(teacher's copy)

Everybody stops  
and stares at me  
These two teeth are  
gone as you can see  
I don't know just who  
to blame for this catastrophe!  
But my one wish on Christmas Eve  
is as plain as it can be!

All I want for Christmas  
is my two front teeth,  
my two front teeth,  
my two front teeth!

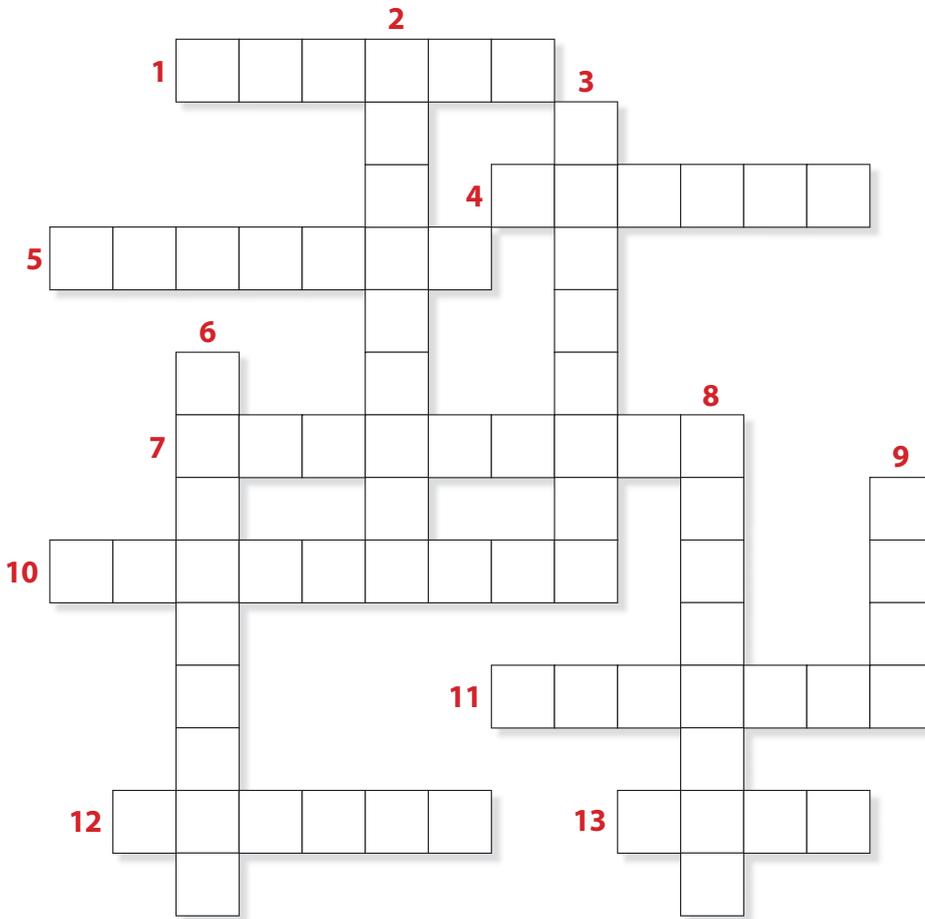
Gee, if I could only  
have my two front teeth,  
then I could be with you  
"Merry Christmas."  
It seems so long since I could say,  
"Sister Susie sitting on a thistle!"

Gosh oh gee, how happy I'd be,  
if I could only whistle (thhhh)

All I want for Christmas  
is my two front teeth,  
my two front teeth,  
my two front teeth.  
Gee, if I could only  
have my two front teeth,  
then I could wish you  
"Merry Christmas!"

# Festive Crossword

By Dolores Malić



► **across:**

- 1. A small sweet cake
- 4. The most famous snowman
- 5. Santa can get stuck in it
- 7. You decorate your Christmas tree with them
- 10. Rudolph and the rest of them
- 11. You leave them together with milk for Santa to have a snack
- 12. The most famous is Jingle Bells
- 13. Soft, white substance that falls from the sky

▼ **down:**

- 2. Where a fire burns
- 3. Santa brings you...
- 6. 26<sup>th</sup> December
- 8. A long sock you leave for Santa to fill with presents
- 9. Children usually get them



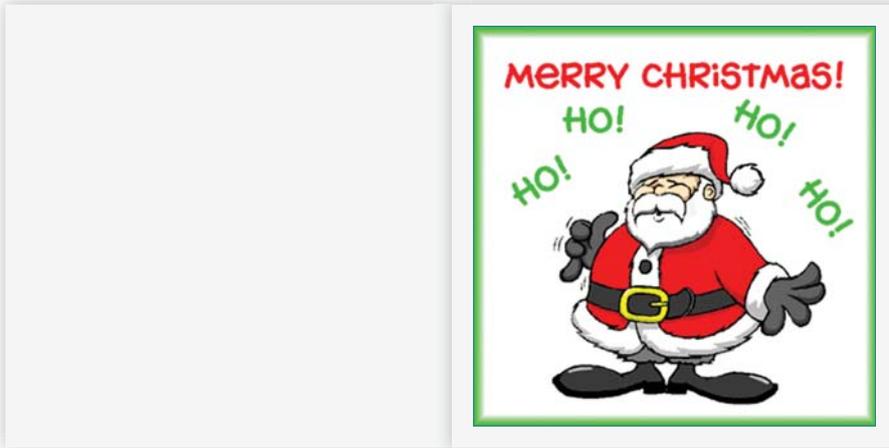
*There's nothing sadder in this world than to awake at Christmas morning and not be a child.*



# Christmas Activities

By **Tjaša Lemut Novak**

## Make a Christmas card.



1. Copy the card.
2. Fold it in half.
3. Colour and decorate the front.
4. Write your message inside.
5. Give it to a friend

## Colour Santa. (a dictation)

1. 4<sup>th</sup> class: number the things in the picture and then say i.e.: Number one is red. Number two is white. Number three is green ... (the picture can be coloured in two ways: 1 – as usually, 2 – strangely, funnily ...)

2. 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> class: there are no numbers in the picture; the teacher used words for the objects instead i.e.: The hat is red and white. The bag is brown. The present is yellow and blue. The bow on the present is blue ... (the picture can be coloured in two ways: 1 – as usually, 2 – strangely, funnily ...)



*sack don't worry I told Santa I wanted you for Christmas.*



# The KINDOMETER

Santa Claus needs to know who has been naughty and who has been nice. The kindometer is a survey designed to measure how nice a girl or boy has been. Ask your partner these questions and then calculate their kindness.

- (1) Did you clean your room?
- (2) Did you do your homework?
- (3) Did you pick up garbage?
- (4) Did you tell the truth?
- (5) Did you share snacks with your friends?
- (6) Did you help your friends?
- (7) Did you obey your parents?
- (8) Did you listen to your teacher?
- (9) Did you give food or money to charity?
- (10) Did you remember your friends' birthdays?
- (11) Did you say 'Please' and 'Thank You'?
- (12) Did you work hard?
- (13) Did you keep your promises?
- (14) Did you recycle cans and paper?
- (15) Did you volunteer?
- (16) Did you give up your seat to the elderly?
- (17) Did you smile?
- (18) Were you polite?
- (19) Were you kind to animals?
- (20) Were you friendly?

	always	often	rarely	never

Your Partner's Kindness Score (Out of 60):  
 Always x 3 + Often x 2 + Rarely x 1 = \_\_\_\_\_

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## 20 WAYS TO CONFUSE SANTA

1. Instead of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, leave him a salad, and a note explaining that you think he could stand to lose a few pounds.
2. While he's in the house, go find his \_\_\_\_\_ and write him a speeding ticket.
3. Leave him a note, explaining that you've gone away for the holidays. Ask if he would mind watering your \_\_\_\_\_.
4. While he's in the house, replace all his \_\_\_\_\_ with exact replicas. Then wait and see what happens when he tries to get them to fly.
5. Keep an angry bull in your living room. If you think a bull goes crazy when he sees a little red cap, wait until he sees that big, red Santa \_\_\_\_\_!
6. Build an army of mean-looking snowmen on the roof, holding signs that say "We \_\_\_\_\_ Christmas," and "Go \_\_\_\_\_ Santa."
7. Leave a note by the telephone, telling Santa that Mrs. Claus called and wanted to remind him to pick up some \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_ of bread on his way home.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ a surprise party for Santa when he comes down the chimney. Refuse to let him leave until the Christmas cake is baked.
9. While he's in the house, find the sleigh and sit in it. As soon as he comes back and sees you, tell him that he shouldn't have missed that last film, and take off.
10. Leave a plate filled with cookies and a glass of milk out, with a note that says, "For The Tooth \_\_\_\_\_". Leave another plate out with \_\_\_\_\_ a stale cookie and a few drops of \_\_\_\_\_ milk in a \_\_\_\_\_ glass with a note that says, "For Santa."
11. Take everything out of your house as if it's just been \_\_\_\_\_. When Santa arrives, show up dressed like a \_\_\_\_\_ and say, "Well, well. They always return to the scene of the crime."
12. Leave out a copy of your Christmas list with last-minute \_\_\_\_\_ and corrections.
13. While he's in the house, cover the top of the \_\_\_\_\_ with barbed wire.
14. Leave lots of hunting trophies and \_\_\_\_\_ out where Santa's sure to see them. Go outside, yell, "Ooh! Look! A deer! And he's got a red nose!" and \_\_\_\_\_ a gun.
15. Leave Santa a note, explaining that you've \_\_\_\_\_. Include a map with unclear and hard-to-read directions to your new house.
16. Set a bear trap at the bottom of the chimney. Wait for Santa to get caught in it, and then explain that you're sorry, but from a distance, he looked like a \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Leave out a Santa suit, with a dry-cleaning bill.
18. Paint "hoof-prints" all over your face and clothes. While he's in the house, go out on the roof. When he comes back up, act like you've been "trampled." Threaten to sue.
19. Instead of ornaments, decorate your tree with \_\_\_\_\_ eggs.
20. Dress up like the Easter \_\_\_\_\_. Wait for Santa to come and then say, "This neighbourhood ain't big enough for the \_\_\_\_\_ of us."

### PROCEDURE:

1. in pairs children read the sentences and try to add the missing words
2. if they can't do all the answers:
  - a. discuss what they could be before you tell them the correct answer
  - b. give them the English explanation of the word, so they can guess it
3. check their answers

# 20 WAYS TO CONFUSE SANTA

## (teacher's copy)

1. Instead of milk and cookies, leave him a salad, and a note explaining that you think he could stand to lose a few pounds.
2. While he's in the house, go find his sleigh and write him a speeding ticket.
3. Leave him a note, explaining that you've gone away for the holidays. Ask if he would mind watering your plants.
4. While he's in the house, replace all his reindeer with exact replicas. Then wait and see what happens when he tries to get them to fly.
5. Keep an angry bull in your living room. If you think a bull goes crazy when he sees a little red cap, wait until he sees that big, red Santa suit!
6. Build an army of mean-looking snowmen on the roof, holding signs that say "We hate Christmas," and "Go away Santa."
7. Leave a note by the telephone, telling Santa that Mrs. Claus called and wanted to remind him to pick up some milk and a loaf of bread on his way home.
8. Throw a surprise party for Santa when he comes down the chimney. Refuse to let him leave until the Christmas cake is baked.
9. While he's in the house, find the sleigh and sit in it. As soon as he comes back and sees you, tell him that he shouldn't have missed that last film, and take off.
10. Leave a plate filled with cookies and a glass of milk out, with a note that says, "For The Tooth Fairy". Leave another plate out with half a stale cookie and a few drops of skim milk in a dirty glass with a note that says, "For Santa."
11. Take everything out of your house as if it's just been robbed. When Santa arrives, show up dressed like a policeman and say, "Well, well. They always return to the scene of the crime."
12. Leave out a copy of your Christmas list with last-minute changes and corrections.
13. While he's in the house, cover the top of the chimney with barbed wire.
14. Leave lots of hunting trophies and guns out where Santa's sure to see them. Go outside, yell, "Ooh! Look! A deer! And he's got a red nose!" and fire a gun.
15. Leave Santa a note, explaining that you've moved. Include a map with unclear and hard-to-read directions to your new house.
16. Set a bear trap at the bottom of the chimney. Wait for Santa to get caught in it, and then explain that you're sorry, but from a distance, he looked like a bear.
17. Leave out a Santa suit, with a dry-cleaning bill.
18. Paint "hoof-prints" all over your face and clothes. While he's in the house, go out on the roof. When he comes back up, act like you've been "trampled." Threaten to sue.
19. Instead of ornaments, decorate your tree with Easter eggs.
20. Dress up like the Easter Bunny. Wait for Santa to come and then say, "This neighbourhood ain't big enough for the both of us."

### Description of the group:

- children in grade 7 or 8
  - can be used either at regular lessons or extra English lessons
- NOTE: if the text is used at regular lessons the weak pupils will certainly need more help than the good ones. Perhaps it's a good idea if you pair a good pupils with a weak one.

### Objectives:

- pupils practise all four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening)
- pupils learn some new words
- cultural awareness

### Materials and equipment:

- handouts with the text

Text taken from the Internet; you can find it under: <http://kraftmstr.com/christmas/humor/confuse.html>



# Contact list

Since we have recently created new e-mail addresses for each board member, please make sure that you are sending the e-mail to the right contact person and/or to the right address.

For more information on WHO IS WHO, please visit our website [www.iatefl.si](http://www.iatefl.si).

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