

“Weaving Webs of Stories”

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IO2: Towards the online web Training Course

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Introduction

Some say that all the greatest human achievements and most of the technological advances we have made have come by chance. However, as Louis Pasteur put it “Chance favors the prepared mind”. Therefore, the WWS consortium needed to understand what it means to have a “prepared mind” in the 21st century and how we can contribute to developing the skills necessary for it.

In days when technology evolves at a rate, which the average human is hardly able to follow, humanity is bound to focus on other types of achievement, which are not simple supplements to STEM-related skills but which contribute transversally to all quality aspects of life – social, professional, mental, cultural wellbeing.

Humanity has been struggling with inequality, with prejudice, with discrimination far and wide – openly visible in less developed regions and subtly disguised in more advanced ones. No wonder that one of the most important **aims** of the training programme you are diving in is **encouraging equality, inclusion and diversity**. Yet, despite the unlimited informational vortex we and our children live in, what the youth and adults of the future will need, is not simply the availability of information but the possibility **to** analyse the information, consider it critically as well as create new content on their own. This is why the other main aim of this programme is, via non-formal learning, to **develop and promote literacy skills**. The empowerment, which would be generated from achieving these main objectives, would also manifest itself in a third achievement – the so-called socio-emotional literacy, which stories, books, poems, theatre and other creative activities inevitably pave the way for.

Even if it is never late for anybody to start/achieve anything, WWS training programme has focused its attention on a young audience – **10-14 y.o. children**, among whom, struggle with literacy and comprehension.

Skills developed by the training programme

The training programme, which the WWS consortium developed for use in schools throughout Europe, develops:

- Reading skills: awakening children's curiosity and appetite for reading by means of reading to them and sharing with them literary works, which transmit strong messages in an easy to comprehend way
- Writing skills: creating a safe environment for participants to share ideas via oral and written storytelling, where everyone's contribution is considered valuable and important and where the facilitator works and shares as an equal of the children
- Analysis and critical thinking: as children progress with their reading, story making and experiential learning (via theatre for example), their level of preparedness for discussing and analysing in depth materials, problems, texts or stories increases, as well as their proactiveness and the ability to formulate and state an opinion
- Collaboration, communication and teamwork: encouraged to work together on common projects or in smaller groups in relation to certain tasks, with the help of the facilitators, leads to the formation of mentioned skills
- Empathy, self-regulation (ability to regulate and control how to react to own emotions) & social skills: not isolated from all the other skills but rather developing gradually, as a group contract of behaviour and acceptance is adopted and adhered to, different roles and stories are lived and relived, thus adding to a virtually unlimited life-experience or at least mind-experience, thriving in a group of acceptance and tolerance, which discusses sensitive topics with utmost care, leaving ground for personal opinions, which never aim to inflict harm or to curb someone else's rights or safety.

General tips before you start

Before you commence with shaping your weekly session plan, we advise you to consider the following General tips for teachers and facilitators of reading and story-weaving workshop activities for children.

The tips listed here do not refer to reading or creating stories, which are discussed in deep details above. These tips refer to the group you will be working with and how to make the best out of it as far as devotion to the workshop and observance of its rules is concerned, focus of attention and bringing the best possible outcome for each individual group member. Therefore, these tips are transversal and provide hints on what you need to consider besides reading and creating stories when working with a group of children.

Based on experience, this list of tips may grow. Feel free to be among the contributors because we are certain that once you start weaving those webs of stories, you will come across numerous other tips for us and for your colleagues.

Tip: If you want to work with a group of children, even if they come from the same class, you may wish to approach them as if they are meeting each other and you for the first time. Start with:

- activities and games that would help them reveal their interests, talents, dreams, fears in a safe and empathic environment
- build trust by sharing with the children who YOU are
- help them create their own behavior contract made up of rules for treating each other
- you or another team member should be a watchdog that observes that the contract is abided by at all times and by all members – this will insert a feeling of being safe within the environment of the story-weaving group

Tip: Create a pleasant atmosphere in class: know your students' names and their interests, provide positive encouragement and support, show enthusiasm in what you do, build respectful & trustworthy relationships with students (learning takes place only on/is promoted by positive relationships).

Tip: When you shape up a group of children try to make sure it is not homogenous – if you want to help children develop a love for the process of reading and creating, sharing stories, you better use their peers. There is nothing as powerful as the admiration, interest and passion that one child sees in another child's eyes. Peer learning is a powerful instrument and it better be used as profusely as possible. You need all types of kids in your group – those who have trouble reading, those who are not interested, those who can read but struggle and are shy to read, those who love to read and are ready to read with and for others. Setting up a homogenous group would be less efficient and may leave the children with a sense of being picked out due to a certain characteristic. The other students, who are not a part of the group, may observe it as the group of those who can't read or the group of the book-worms, the nerds. Neither is attractive and the group members may quickly develop a strong wish to leave the group.

Tip: Before you start working with the children, you may wish to meet and work a bit with their teachers, so that you become acquainted with the school team and with the personalities, teaching the children on a daily basis. Get to know the school too – who is its patron, when was it set up, does it have anything peculiar about it, what is the team proud of. If you know where the children study and whom they interact with daily, you will not be considered an outsider. You will be insightful and as you get to know the daily routine of the children better, you will also be better at picking your exercises and games.

Tip: When organising workshop sessions, make sure they are not too long – children’s attention and interest can be held within an hour or slightly longer. Make sure to keep the regularity of the workshop sessions in order to build a habit with the children and to create a weekly event that they look forward to.

Tip: Use a variety of activities in each workshop session – combine music with activities for the hands (drawing, making various designs and compilations, creating 3d figures and objects) and activities for reading or creating stories together. Use *hand gestures and facial expressions* as they play an important role in *helping children learn and remember*. There are numerous such activities described in the programme with weekly suggestions.

Tip: When you use stories, try to pick ones that have a child character or characters in them, so that the group members can relate to them and empathise.

Tip: Create a sense of ritual by shaping up your working environment in an appealing way. Whether it would be cushions to sit down around a fire cut out of foam, image boards for the walls with characters from the stories the children are working with, objects that are connected to the stories. Those can be different toys and figures or again objects cut out of foam and drawn into objects like mirrors, crowns, etc.

Tip: Present the children with various books and stories. Expose them to as many stories as possible and make them see that a) imagination is unlimited and b) you can make a story out of everything.

Tip: Create possibilities for playing. Make the children do funny things during the reading story-weaving workshop. Ask them to read or tell a story with funny voices. Ask them to put their bodies into the story and demonstrate how they believe a character behaves or walks or talks. Human beings learn and bond so easily through playing. Adulthood is wrongly considered as a no-play time but there are very few human beings that refuse to “play” when they are given the opportunity to do so.

Tip: If you have a child or children in the group who are shy and refuse to read, never push them and never allow the others to push them or at least not beyond the healthy point after which continued interaction becomes uncomfortable. Those who refuse to read should be left to simply relish and observe the experience that the others provide. Let them move at their own pace; try giving them a job or a role. They will become more and more tempted and intrigued and at one point will ask willingly to join in the reading part.

Tip: As your group evolves and grows together, make sure you make their tasks more and more challenging.

Groups of activities

The activities presented below have been tested by the partners in the consortium. They most certainly are not exhaustive and teachers and facilitators can discover or come up with other possible activities of a similar type, leading to the same results. The implementations, which took place in the different partner countries, are presented as attachments, which exemplify how the process could develop.

The activities presented below are organised within 5 categories, depending on what their main purpose is - **Group building, Exploration, Creation, Presentation, Evaluation**.

Interested teachers and facilitators need to be aware that:

- Depending on the group you work with, you may find yourself doing more of the group building exercises in the beginning;
- Among the group building exercises there are activities which start from basic details – getting to know each other’s names but as you go deeper, you will find activities, which can be done as starters of later workshop sessions, which prepare the children for work and achieve better knowledge and sharing of how children feel on topics which are closer to the essence of the WWS project;
- One and the same activity can incorporate more than one purpose, e.g. doing both exploration and creation;
- According to the best case scenario, facilitators need to cover all five areas, however, should you decide to stick to literary activities, “presentation” might not be that strongly covered. It is however more than advisable to include “presentation” activities in your sessions with the children because these would develop precious transversal skills and confidence;
- Some of the activities have more detailed descriptions, provided in the national weekly planners, provided by the partners. Where the case is such, this will be clearly stated.

Group 1: Group building exercises/activities

Aim of this group of activities

Children need to make connections of honesty, acceptance and establish an atmosphere of safety and creativity, which requires some bonding exercises and games even for groups, the members of which know each other.

From the first weeks and meetings, the teachers/facilitators need to establish an expectation for something magical, fun and enriching, which would keep the participants attentive, creative, inspired and ready to challenge their own boundaries.

“Attention is a very limited resource so we need to “kidnap” it and treat it with the sensitivity it deserves”, states Chema Lazaro, awarded Best teacher in Spain (2013). In order to “kidnap” and maintain the attention, he explains that The Brain loves: (1) **Surprise and Narratives** (“Do you remember this teacher’s unforgettable class where he was leading you to a magical space? The brain embraces this experience that it activates completely”. (2) **Things out of the routine. Games. Cooperation**: The brain is more active when it works interconnected with other brains, especially in the initial phases of a task. (3) **Cognitive dissonances** (He gives as an example Escher’s paintings, where for example a staircase can be going up or down depending on the individual visual interpretation.) (4) **Laughing** (Laughter has been proven to renew and replenish attention). (5) **Curiosity** is the key to learning (Studies suggest that when some curiosity has been awakened one hour before a task, pupils show better results).

To the above we add **Joyce Carol Oates’s advice to start with shorter forms and things** that students can finish relatively fast. “We need the satisfaction of the uplift we get psychologically from finishing something”, the American writer states. She also insists that everybody has at least one story to tell. Writing should be **pleasurable, fun and exploratory**.

Based on these premises, here are presented several activities, which we find dynamic, entertaining and inspiring that are at the same time short and playful and have the potential of building an ensemble out of the group of individuals attending the workshops.

<p><i>Suggested activities</i> (5-10 minute duration each)</p>	<p>My Name is: Participants will be asked to form a large circle. Then each one will say their name while the others are attentive to this. Once the above is finished, the participants will be asked to raise their arms to chest height and put their palms together and in this pointing position, address another participant saying their name... When the participant reaches the position of the other; it will come out doing the same and so on. The workshop leader will give the guideline for the number of participants who are on the move. The activity ends when one of the participants knows everyone's name. This activity can be varied by changing the name to a word that identifies each participant or their favourite book’s title.</p> <p>Confidence. The workshop leader hands out the work material and explains how to carry out the exercise: dividing the sheet of paper, on the right side it is noted as a title “the happiest moment” and on the</p>
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	<p>left side, “the saddest moment”. Each person writes down the happiest and saddest moment of their life on their sheet. Then participants share their answers.</p> <p>Qualities. For greater group integration, it will be beneficial for each member to try to get to know and highlight the qualities of their peers. On a <i>post-it</i> each student writes the name of one of the participants (random assignment of names). Next to the name, write a characteristic quality of this person. All <i>post-it</i> are placed on the wall and in turn they are passed so that each person must add some quality to the one written in each one or if they find the same quality, just underline it.</p> <p>Two Truths & One Lie. To make it possible for participants to know and value each other better, through discovering common and unique experiences and interests. Participants should introduce themselves to each other, telling two real things or facts and a fake one, about themselves. A volunteer starts with two truths about themselves and a lie and shares the answers with the group. Whoever guesses the correct lie, continues with the game. Some participants may expand on their true statements.</p> <p>The Ball Asks: The workshop leader hands a ball to each team, invites the participants to sit in a circle and explain how to do the exercise. The ball runs from hand to hand; at a sign of the leader, the exercise stops. The person who is left with the ball in hand introduces themselves to the group: says their name and expresses their gratitude and/or appreciation for three things in their life or things that happened to them last week. The exercise continues in the same manner until the majority is presented.</p> <p>Finding the similarities: Ask the children to stand in a circle and select two children to come into the middle facing back to back to one another. Each person in the outer circle names two differences of each person of whom are in the middle one by one. Then find the similarities. Then swop and rotate so each child in the group has a turn in the middle. They should find they have more in common with each other than they may have first thought.</p> <p>Quizzes: Host weekly quizzes on a set theme and learn how much your students know about different cultures, religions, disabilities etc. You could even assign the task of writing the quiz to 2 students each week so that they are involved in doing the research.’ (Petty 2014)¹</p>
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¹Petty. L (2014) *How to Promote Equality & Diversity in the Classroom*. [Accessed: 21st August 2020][Online] Available: <https://hub.highspeedtraining.co.uk/classroom-equality-diversity/>

	<p>List things that come from abroad: A quick activity you can do at the start of a lesson to introduce the theme of multiculturalism. Ask your students to create a list of everything in their life that comes from a country outside of the UK. Go through their responses as a class – are they surprised by the results?’ (Petty 2014)</p> <p>True or false? Present the class with some facts about people with disabilities, another culture or based on the protected characteristics and ask them to decide whether the facts are true or false. Are they surprised by the correct answers?’ (Petty 2014)</p> <p>Hearing/sight/physical impairment games: Play games to raise awareness of different physical disabilities. Can your students put on a jumper with just one hand? Can they guide a friend around the classroom with a blindfold on? Can they lip-read what the characters on TV are saying with the sound off? Use these activities to show the difficulties that people face and explain how these people learn to overcome them.</p> <p>First impressions: This is a good activity for older students. Watch the YouTube video by the Guardian, but pause it after 10 seconds, 16 seconds and 24 seconds, taking time to ask the students what they think is happening in the video. Do their perceptions change as the video goes on? Get the students to justify their responses.’ (Petty 2014). You can find the video on YouTube- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3bfO1rE7Yg</p> <p>Tell stories: Find a few stories that challenge perceptions and stereotypes, such as the tortoise and the hare which proves that first impressions can be deceiving. These kinds of stories will encourage your students to think about their beliefs and look at the world in a different way.</p> <p>Jigsaws: Make your own jigsaws whereby facts need to match up with their country etc. You could also do this with different flags, national dresses or languages.’ (Petty 2014)</p> <p>Play music: Listen to music from around the world or create your own using percussion instruments. Introduce your class to instruments from other cultures that they may not have seen before and to different styles of music. If you have children with diverse cultural backgrounds in your class, perhaps they could do a show-and-tell?’ (Petty 2014)</p> <p>Story stimulation: Start each game with the teacher to show how it is played and then continue with all the students.</p> <p>I. “On my way to school today I saw....”</p>
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	<p>II. What is your Fantasy Pet?</p> <p>III. What's your "Dark Materials" demon?</p> <p>ANYONE WHO ...: The aim is to mix the group and find out more about them.</p> <p>Time: 10-15 minutes</p> <p>Directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group sits in a circle on chairs. - There is one person without a seat who stands in the middle (to begin with this can be the facilitator). - The aim of the game is for people to change seats. The last person without a seat stands in the middle. - Participants change seats by responding to a sentence from the person standing in the middle. - The person in the middle says the phrase "anyone who ..." and completes the sentence with something which is true of themselves. For example, "anyone who ... loves chocolate", "anyone who ... plays football", "anyone who ... is a mother", etc. - If the statement is also true of anyone in the group, they must change seats as quickly as possible. The person in the middle will also try to get a seat. - The person who does not get a seat in time, then stands in the middle and says a new sentence beginning with "anyone who..." and the game continues this way. - The facilitator can also play. It is often a useful opportunity when the facilitator is caught out and just stands in the middle, as they then have an opportunity to steer the questions a little towards finding out information they would like to know about the group. For example, the roles they play in their lives, the subjects they care about, the things they want in life, the things they fear ... <p>Present yourself on a card</p> <p>Divide the sheet of paper into 3 sections – in the upper part write our name, in the middle – make a self-portrait and at the bottom write your favourite book or literary character. Around all this, draw and write the things you like – to eat, to do, pets, activities, etc. Then exchange your card with someone else. You present them, through their card and they present you.</p> <p>(activities used in the face-to-face sessions carried out by the ZAT team – find it there, described in more details).</p>
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Group 2: Exploration activities/exercises (reading and/or listening to stories/books), focusing on the project objectives (literacy, inclusion, diversity, equality, etc.)

Aim of this group of activities: The stories you select and the reading activities you carry out should strengthen the children’s capacity to empathize with others, i.e. understand what others are thinking and feeling. As many successful books come with a main character who could be our neighbor or friend. Thus the child can connect emotionally often from the first few pages. Also books that stick our noses into our own assumptions and undermine stereotypes are important. It is at moments of strong emotions when we and children learn something about understanding people different from ourselves. We believe that fiction and other genres can teach us things about ourselves, about others and the world in general. We also believe that books serve as bridges leading to achieving socio-emotional understandings.

Before you shape up the inclusion of reading activities related to the topics of the project into your weekly sessions, you are advised to consider:

How to pick your books annex (developed by ZAT): [download here](#)

Reading tips annex (developed by EuroED and Accesophia): [download here](#)

The WWS Book list: [download here](#)

Keywords to consider presenting before and discussing with your groups of children: [download here](#)

<i>Activity title</i>	<i>Description</i>
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<p>Speed dating [1](20-30 minutes)</p>	<p>A Date with Discrimination is a Diversity Activity² found in the Rutgers University Student Life database. This activity was created by the University of Texas for student organisations undergoing diversity training. This activity is meant for college students, but it is definitely appropriate to partake with lower secondary school students in any subject area.</p> <p>There will be several “date sections” throughout the classroom, created by pushing two desks across from each other. There are two students at every “date section”, where each student is provided with a character profile of the person they are at this “date” with. Then students will read off the given script of their characters interacting with each other. The scripts are based on true encounters of people’s experiences with sexism, racism and being stereotyped.</p> <p>This activity is very encompassing and covers all different issues of inequality. At the end of this activity, the students will feel first-hand what it is like to be profiled, stereotyped and treated differently just because of the culture, gender, socio-economic status or occupation that their characters had. The activity also has numerous scripts to draw from, each given a ranking of 1-3 based on the scene’s severity so one can tailor the activity to the needs of any given student demographic. The students may also be asked to share any personal experiences they have had, if they are comfortable, that are similar to the situations in the activity. This way, the students can see that the activity’s situations are very real and hearing that someone that they know experienced something similar may help them see the importance of the activity.</p>
<p>The Crayon Box (15-20 minutes)</p>	<p>The Crayon Box story is based on a box of crayons that do not get along but soon realise they are better together. You can find a video via this link – The Crayon Box story - https://youtu.be/XIszzJvLrDU</p> <p>Here are the inspirational Crayon Box Activities to help the children:</p> <p>Figure 1 – https://ecdn.teacherspayteachers.com/thumbitem/Back-to-School-Activity-The-Crayon-Box-That-Talked-1320435-1521641482/original-1320435-2.jpg</p> <p>Figure 2 – https://ecdn.teacherspayteachers.com/thumbitem/Back-to-School-Activity-The-Crayon-Box-That-Talked-1320435-1500067363/original-1320435-3.jpg</p> <p>Figure 3 – https://ecdn.teacherspayteachers.com/thumbitem/The-Crayon-Box-That-Talked-Writing-Papers-1420665903/original-191830-2.jpg</p>

²Madisonhagar6 (2014) *A September Ice Breaker: An Activity to Help Establish a Non-judgmental Classroom*. [Accessed: 21 August 2020] [Online] Available: <https://thequalitycurriculum.wordpress.com/2014/12/10/20/>

	<p>Figure 4 – https://sidnithome.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/the-crayon-box-that-talked.jpg</p> <p>Figure 5 - https://i.pinimg.com/564x/ed/5b/c1/ed5bc14b25d4b71648a14ef08123cd6a.jpg</p>
<p>Perspectives (15-20 minutes)</p>	<p>The aim is to learn to see things from someone else’s perspective and to learn how conflicts can start.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The participants sit in a circle. - One volunteer sits in the middle. The volunteer is told they are going to be described by the rest of the group but not to worry, it’s only a game. - The participants in the circle are asked to describe the person in the middle only from the perspective of what they can see and stating what they can see to be absolute fact. For example, if someone can only see one ear they say “She has only one ear”. Someone else will then contradict what that person has said from their perspective for example, “what are you talking about, it’s quite clear that she has one and three quarter ears”. Someone else may say “I don’t know what you are talking about, she hasn’t even got a face!” and so the debate continues into a kind of improvisation. - Then the person in the middle is invited to change position in their seat. The debate / improvisation continues. - Then all the participants are invited to move from their seat and sit somewhere else in the circle. - The person in the middle then rejoins the circle. The debate is over. The group now reflects on the many meanings of this exercise and what it has demonstrated. - The group is invited to remember this exercise whenever they are facing conflict within the group.
<p>Discussing stereotypes (20-30 minutes)</p>	<p>Download the activities presentation, as obtained from London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham / The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea</p>
<p>Challenging stereotypes activities (20-30 minutes)</p>	<p>Download the activities presentation, as obtained from Twinkl</p>
<p>Reading and discussing books</p>	<p>Consider annexes:</p> <p>How to pick your books annex (developed by ZAT)</p> <p>Reading tips annex (developed by EuroED and Accesophia)</p> <p>The WWS Book list</p>

Group 3: Creation[2]

Aim of this group of activities: The purpose of story creation is beautifully explained by *You in Europe*, stepping on Gianni Rodari's wisdom and approaches.

Gianni Rodari is widely acclaimed as one of the most influential Italian children's authors of the 20th century. Rodari earned renown for accessible stories of fantasy that incorporated real-world social issues, including "Il romanzo di Cipollino" ("The Tale of The Little Onion," 1951)

In 1970, he became the first—and to this date only—Italian to win the Hans Christian Andersen Award for writing, one of the highest international honors in children's literature. Gianni Rodari was born on this day in 1920 in the northern Italian town of Omegna. Interested in early children's education, he first taught at an elementary school before he transitioned to work as a newspaper reporter. Based on his previous experience, his editors asked him to write for the paper's children's section, beginning his iconic career in children's literature. By 1960 he had written enough material to publish his first book, "Nursery Rhymes in the Sky and on Earth." Two years later he released his hit story collection "Telephone Tales," considered by some to be his masterpiece. Rodari went on to craft a variety of beloved literature over the following decades, earning his place as a household name in Italy. He simultaneously contributed heavily to the country's educational reform movement. For his contributions to children's literature, Rodari won many major awards throughout his life and today his works have been translated into over twenty languages. Gianni Rodari was one of the founders of the innovative educational approach that began in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

In "The Grammar of Fantasy" Rodari presents numerous and wonderful techniques for creating stories. He discusses these specific techniques in the context of the imagination, fairy tales, folk tales, children's stories, cognitive development and compassionate education.

As he does not limit the children's thoughts, he encourages creative thinking which helps them look for different options and approaches as life learning skills to solve problems in their future.

What makes The Grammar of Fantasy such a precious creative tool? Rodari was funny, smart and he could really understand kids. In the Grammar of Fantasy, he uses his personal experience of working with children. He packed this book with ideas, games, stories, random thoughts and serious silliness.

In his preface, Rodari writes: "I hope this small book can be useful for all those people who believe it is necessary for the imagination to have a place in education; for all those who trust in the creativity of children; and for all those who know the liberating value of the word". Later he says: "In our schools there is too little laughter, if I may generalize. The idea that the education of a mind must be a dismal affair is among the most difficult things to overcome."

In *The Grammar of Fantasy*, written in beautiful, accessible and poetic language, a teacher who wants to learn how to help children make stories has here all the tools they need. He shows us the process of making up stories, by oneself, in a group and giving the tools to the children so they can do it also. Their stories are quite perfect and like children's drawing and painting, have a quality which charms both adults and children in the audience.

Schools have traditionally relegated imagination to a very small place, valuing memory and attention much more highly. This book leads us into imagination. It shows us how we can help children use their imagination and make wonderful creations from them. When Rodari helps us see connections between science or math and story, he helps us knit our lives back together. When he helps us see how education and art come together, he helps us do our jobs well.

Rodari says: "By using stories and those fantastic methods that produce them, we help children to enter reality through the window instead of through the door. It is more fun. Therefore, it is more useful."

Following this line of thinking, creating stories is among the best ways to grow, expand knowledge, learn to think and analyse as well as develop empathy, understanding and tolerance.

Activity title	Description
<p>The story telling cards^[3] (full session – up to 40 minutes)</p>	<p>A really nice way to help children construct their own story, is using the Storytelling Cards, based on Props storytelling method, where the basic elements of the story are chosen randomly, by pulling out one card from every category.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characters: child, adult^[4]^[5], animal, idea, spirit, machine, thing, plant 0. Setting: farm, village, otherworldly, city, mountains, forest, arctic, ocean, desert 0. Time: olden, modern, future 0. Problem: Caught stealing, Told a lie, Saw or heard a secret, Lost something, Been captured, Under a spell or curse, Goes to forbidden place, Finds forbidden object, Has enemy, Is undervalued, Is unrecognized, Causes jealousy, Forgets something, Broke something, Does not like something, Needs something, Needs to escape or hide, Needs to rescue someone, Needs to rescue something, Needs to prove worth 0. Inner Traits That Cause Original Trouble: Is greedy, Dangerously curious, Doesn't follow advice, Is lazy, Is pessimistic, Is blindly in love, Is enraged & seeks revenge, Is naive & trusting, Is clumsy, Is untrained, Lacks confidence, Is foolish

	<p>0. Inner Traits That Aid Solution: Is courageous, Is resourceful, Is imaginative, Is kind, Is generous, Is clever, Is loyal, Is strong, Is optimistic</p> <p>0. Solution: Has helper, Magical, Non-magical, Is rescued, Is transformed, Discovers skill, Finds magic, Helps self, Exercises cleverness, Uses inner traits, Journey undertaken to obtain solution</p> <p>8. Conclusion: Returns to original setting new in some way, Is rewarded, Is wiser, Is transformed, Comes with gift or treasure</p> <p>0. End: Lives well, Passes luck or reward on to others, Has positive impact on the world, Offers wisdom</p>
<p>The Gianni Rodari techniques (can be implemented over different consecutive or not consecutive sessions)</p>	<p><u>THE FANTASTIC HYPOTHESIS:</u></p> <p>Rondari suggests that we wonder “What if...?” and leave our imagination free to harvest the craziest scenario.</p> <p>Great novelists have played with a similar idea too. “The Metamorphosis” by Franz Kafka, could be a good example: what would happen if a man woke up on an ordinary day, only to realise that he has been transformed into a disgusting cockroach?</p> <p>In order to form the hypothesis, we just have to choose a known situation and introduce a random element.</p> <p>For example, what would happen if an alien landed at our school? Or if the Reggio Emilia city could fly? What if a crocodile knocked on your door, to ask you for some basil? Let the children’s imagination go wild!</p> <p>They have amazing possibilities to match the unmatched!</p> <p><u>THE CREATIVE MISTAKE:</u></p> <p>In every mistake lies the possibility of a story. The Lapponia ("Lapland") turns into the juicy village of "Lamponia" (lampone=raspberry), the Lago ("Lake") of Garda becomes L'ago ("the needle") of Garda. Many of the mistakes that children make are autonomous creations, inspired by phonetic or semantic association, which they need to assimilate to an unknown reality. This is how the "pasticchina" (the little pill) becomes a "mastichina" (a little mastication). For example, writing "casa" (home) with two "s" offers the opportunity to invent a story about a man who lives in a "cassa" (box). From one word, we can obtain many mistakes, which are many stories. We can invent from mistakes. Also, laughing at mistakes is the first way to get rid of them. The exploitation of the mistake, voluntary or involuntary, is an interesting and subtle case of the now known fantastic binomial. The meaning of the "wrong" element can only be inferred from the meaning of the first: this is how "Quore" (Cuore = Heart) is a sick "heart" that needs a dose of vitamin C.</p>

OLD GAMES:

The search for the fantastic theme can also take place through games already practiced by the Surrealists, such as cutting out newspaper headlines and mixing them together to get news of absurd, sensational or simply entertaining events. These compositions can just entertain or offer the opportunity to create a story.

Alternatively: you write a list of questions that already configure events in series, for example, Who was it? Where was he? What did he do? What did he say? What did the others say about that? How did it end? etc and then you give the list to the first of the group who answers the first question, folds the sheet so that nobody can see what he/she has answered and gives the sheet to the second who answers the second question and so on. The answers are then read one after the other as if it were a story.

The same procedure can be applied to compose a multi-hand drawing. One child can draw something that is the shape of the eye. The other child continues the drawing. He didn't see an eye there. He saw a chicken, so he added the legs. The third one perceives this image as a pot and draws a flower. So we have a really strange, obscure object here. From this point on, continue with creating a story with this hero. Once again, a movement from nonsense to meaning. As Rodari reiterates that "the stimulus of imagination also arises in this game from the intuition of a new bond between two elements brought into contact by chance".

THE STONE IN THE POND

In this exercise, Rodari compares the word to a stone thrown in the pond. Similar to a word "thrown into the mind at random" produces waves. It causes an endless series of chain reactions, involving experience, memory, fantasy and the unconscious because the mind does not passively assist to the representation but it co-creates it. For example: the word "stone" refers to all the words that start with a-t[6], the words that start with a "st", or the ones that have the ending "-one", like throne or drone or words that have a similar meaning with this word, like rock or pebble etc. This shows how "any word, chosen at random, can function as a magic word to dig up fields of memory that lay under the dust of time".

Also from every word we can build acronyms that form a meaningful sentence.

S even
T oys
O f
N igeria
E scape
S chool

This could be a start for an interesting story too.

POPULAR FAIRIES AS RAW MATERIAL:

Fairy tales were the raw material of many fantastic procedures: just think about Perrault, Calvino, the commercial exploitation of Disney. "The Grimms, Andersen and Collodi were - on the fairytale side - among the great liberators of children's literature from the edifying tasks that its origins (linked to the birth of the popular school) had assigned it". Andersen took the characters out of the limbo of "no time" and put them into the present. Collodi made children the protagonists. They were innovators without perhaps knowing it and certainly without the widespread knowledge of the fairy-tale heritage that we have today. Rodari counts on this and begins to illustrate some fantastic games to "treat" the classic fairy tales.

AT GETTING THE STORIES WRONG

This game consists in telling a known story but in being intentionally wrong in some of its parts (Little Yellow Riding Hood, instead of Red). In order to be successful you have to play it at the right time. Children are conservatives regarding stories: they always want to listen to the same ones, they want to recognise them. Listening to the changes they can get annoyed because they don't know how to react (the new character is good or bad?). When the story has exhausted its value for them, then they will be ready to let it go and will accept the changes. The novelty becomes pleasant because it leads them to challenge each other, to discover that they are able to jump into the void. This game can be therapeutic because it helps the children to let go of certain fixations: it defrauds and ridicules things that before were scary, it establishes a boundary between real and imagined things. Rodari also points out that these mistakes should be done in the points that characterise and structure it, not in the changes from one significant node to another.

FAIRY TALES IN REVERSE

"A variant of the game of making mistakes in stories consists of a premeditated and more organic reversal of the fairy tale theme". Imagine that Little Red Riding Hood becomes bad and the Wolf becomes good or that Tom Thumb wants to abandon his parents and so on... The reversal can be applied to one or more elements of the story. The stories originating from the overthrow of historical facts are particularly funny.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER

Since we know the characters and what has happened to them, we can play to invent what happens after the end of the story. The fantastic binomial consists of two elements of the fairy tale that are analysed at an intuitive level and then readapted. This happens easily when the children wonder what

	<p>happened to a certain element that particularly struck them ("privileged theme"), such as "What happens to the boots of The Cat with boots?". Imagination continues through "inertia" and becomes an autonomous reverie which must then be rationalised into a story.</p> <p><u>SALAD OF FAIRY TALES</u> Mix different fairy tales, "choosing a new road that will be, in some way, the diagonal of the two forces acting on the same point". Then Pinocchio becomes the eighth dwarf of Snow White and the clash of the two energies forces the stories to recompose themselves in a new result. The fantastic binomial in this case is made up of two proper names: two proper fairy-tale names.</p> <p><u>CREATIVE ANALYSIS:</u> Many stories have secondary characters and we know nothing about them. These characters can be taken as a starting point of a new imaginary story, to try to imagine what are their stories: where he/she comes from? , What was their role in the story, etc.</p>
<p>Additional story-making exercises <i>(provided by Accesophia)</i></p> <p>10-15 minutes each</p>	<p>Inventing new words: Creating word maps/stories around a context where some unknown (scarcely or widely used words) are used. Creating a non-sense (or looking for new invented "sense-s") will boost imagination and for sure will provide a good laugh. A more ambitious alternative would be creating a whole new language.</p> <p>Travel through books: The novels describe wonderful, sometimes magical spaces. Some of them are real, others invented. In both cases students can explore these places through some research or with their own imagination. They can even create a travel guide – again, real or imaginary.</p> <p>The key word: Prepare eight cards per team; each has a word: friendship, freedom, dialogue, justice, truth, companionship, courage, ideal, etc. Cards are deposited in an envelope. The workshop leader forms the teams and hands out the work material. Explain how to perform the exercise: people remove one of the cards from the envelope and every participant comments on the meaning that attributes to it. Then the team chooses one of the words and prepares an allusive phrase/short story. Each team introduces itself: they say the name of their members and the phrase/short story.</p> <p>Vote for fun: Creating a story and voting for the end or the beginning or even the characters.</p> <p>Ball to Complete the Sentence: Arrange the participants in a circle and tell them that they will now discover their talent for extemporaneous speaking. The members of the circle will throw the ball to each other, while saying a simple, descriptive phrase (<i>the placid lake, the little girl, the beautiful skyline of the city, the terrifying gray bear, the softball, etc.</i>). Since there are no rules, there are no wrong phrases either! The group throws the ball and speaks in</p>

	<p>turns until everyone has gained confidence in their ability to say a phrase and throw the ball. When you think it's time, wait for the ball to be thrown at you and pause. Congratulate them all on their verbal virtuosity and tell them that they have risen to the advanced level with surprising speed. Now they will play again, this time with only one rule: their sentences must be related to the sentence that precedes it. That is, a person will say a phrase and throw the ball and the person who catches it will finish formulating it. Try a couple of passes. Throw the ball and say: "the new member... The person who catches it should say something like, "who organizes the carnival". This person will then throw the ball to someone else, saying perhaps, "You want to sell popcorn ..." And whoever catches it could add ... "and cotton candy." The person turns and throws it to another, saying, "the little girl ..." That person grabs it and says "she needs glasses." and so it continues. Do this until everyone, or at least almost everyone, is comfortable with their ability to speak extemporaneously.</p>
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A short guide to process and basic story format (provided by EuroEd): [download here](#)
Template for starting the story creative process (provided by EuroEd): [download here](#)

Group 4: Presentation

Aim of this group of activities:

Getting ready for presenting the story to others / an audience requires some further confidence and teamwork. The exercises provided here will prepare the group of children to share their magnificent stories with confidence and professionalism.

When you are out there, presenting your story, trying to get your audience involved in the dialogue, you need a strong, audible voice.

Having a good voice is not the same as shouting. Shouting might get you heard but you won't have a voice for long, just a sore throat.

Training your voice to get those words across to the audience with clarity, meaning and emotion is a process of breathing, opening the throat and projection. The voice is a physical action and when we know which parts of the body help voice production, it becomes much easier.

Activity title	Description
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<p>Truth or duty</p>	<p>Everyone is sitting in a circle on the floor. If you want, you can ask another person in the circle a personal question. The interviewed person can choose between truth or duty. If she chooses the truth, she has to answer the question honestly. However, if she does not want to answer the question because it goes beyond her own inner boundary, she can choose duty. Then the questioner has to come up with a small task that the interviewee has to carry out. If the request goes beyond an inner limit of the interviewed player, she may say "veto" and refuse the request. In this case, the person in question has crossed the inner boundaries of his counterpart twice and "lost" as the aim of this game is to assess the other person as correctly as possible. The last step in the final round is to sound out the inner perspective. The players exchange either in large groups or in pairs on the following questions: When (under what circumstances) do I reveal a lot? When do I reveal little? When do I tell the truth? When do I hide something? Why?</p>
<p>My journey to here</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Place an object or mark an X in the centre of the space where you are working. This represents the here and now. - One at a time each group member will choose a spot in the room which represents where they were born. If they were born very close to the mark for example, they start fairly close to it. If they are born in a foreign country or another district, they will be further away. - Starting from the place which represents their birth place, one at a time each group member will take 5 minutes (or more if you have time) to tell the story of how they arrived at the theatre workshop. As they are telling the story they move to different places in the room according to where they went in their lives. As they are speaking, encourage them to demonstrate their story through actions. Each person's journey will finally end at the mark in the middle of the room until everyone has arrived there. - Many elements of these stories and actions may give facilitators rich source material from which to create plays, dances, stories and songs to perform later.
<p>Chair of truth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Place one chair or object in the centre of the space. - This chair is the "chair of truth" - The participants walk around the space in different directions. - The facilitator will call out statements moured issues relevant to the work (the facilitator can start with a couple of statements which are just for fun, to start with) - In reaction to the statement called out, the participants will place themselves in relation to the chair. - If they believe the statement that the facilitator has called out is absolutely 100% true, then they stand as close to the chair as they can. They can even sit on the chair. If they believe the statement is 75% true then they place themselves a bit further away. If they think

	<p>the statement is nonsense then they place themselves as far away from the chair as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The facilitator should invite the group first to reflect on how the bodies have been placed in the space. Even this will heighten the group’s awareness of how placing yourself in a space can heighten a dramatic message. - The facilitator can then invite people to comment on why they have chosen to stand where they are. Some debate may then be entered into. - It is important however, that no one is shouted down and differences of opinion are valued and the right to believe different things is respected. - The facilitator asks the group to move around again and calls out another statement. - This process continues until a good level of debate around various issues has been achieved. - The facilitator can then hand over to various members of the company to call out statements and “chair” the debate.
<p>Story circle</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group sits in a circle. They are going to create a story together through saying one sentence each. - One person begins the story with a sentence. The next person continues the story with a sentence and the next and so on. - The story must make sense. - Encourage the group to listen carefully to what has been said before, who the characters are, where the story takes place, which objects feature in the story. Encourage the group to keep within the parameters of the story and to bring all elements together by the end.
<p>Stories from objects^[7]</p>	<p>You will need a bag of objects which will spark the group’s imagination. These objects may belong to the group, they may have been found or bought in the area which the community is based in, there may also be unusual, unfamiliar objects which awaken other possibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group plays the “story circle” above to prepare. - This time the participants are not restricted to just one sentence, they may offer a few sentences each. - The participants begin their section of the story by placing a hand in the bag and without looking they produce an object. This object will inspire their storytelling. They must use the object in some way in the story. - The next person takes an object, continues the story, building in their object and so on ... - As before, the groups’ story must make sense. The participants must listen carefully to what has happened before. <p>After creating spontaneous stories, I suggest taking a traditional myth or folk talk from your community and bringing it to life dramatically.</p>

<p>Show and tell the story</p>	<p>You may want to have simple storytelling objects available such as cloth, sticks, boxes or stools strong enough to stand on or build with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group sits in a circle. The storyteller stands. - The storyteller slowly begins to tell the story. At each point in the action participants jump up, enter the circle and create either a still or moving image which expresses that element of the story. - Begin by using a traditional folk tale. After the exercise ask the group to identify the problems raised in the story. Now try the exercise again but telling it from the point of view of hidden characters, or character who are not traditionally given a voice in the story.
<p>Supported storytelling</p>	<p>Directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group sits in a circle. In the centre, one player tells a story - one they know or one they invent. - The audience listens. - At any time the storyteller should be replaced by a spectator if that spectator thinks the storyteller has lost the plot or needs rescuing. - If this happens, the storyteller has to sit down and is replaced by the rescuing group member.
<p>Pilot / co-pilot</p>	<p>Directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The storyteller tells their story not to the whole group but privately to another group member. - Then the co-pilot interprets that story back to the group, perhaps as an image, a piece of movement, a monologue or an improvisation. What we hope to capture is a truthful essence. <p>The co-pilot has to get to the core feeling and empathetically construct an imagery world around it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once presented, the pilot can assess it and say “Yes, that captures something” or “No, I don’t recognise it”. Very often what you find is that something is captured and recognised but from another point of view. For example the co-pilot might have concentrated on the perspective of a different player in the story or a less obvious dramatic moment but one which still has feelings attached to it.
<p>The emotional map</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The exercise is done in pairs. There is one teller and one listener. - The teller takes the listener by the hand and they walk into their own space. - The teller does not plan ahead what they are going to tell about but simply does the action of drawing aside an imaginary curtain and “seeing what they see”. - From this seeing, they find a memory from their own life. They describe what is happening but from outside themselves: “That’s me, sitting at my desk ... over there is the teacher ...” They can move around the image, leading their partner by the hand. - The partner stays silent. They should aim to tell as much about what they “see” as they can, even going “inside the head” to see further memories, if necessary.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Then the roles reverse and the listener becomes a teller, taking their partner around a memory of theirs. - Once the memories are told, the listener sits the teller down on the follow and performs, drawing on the teller’s story. - Then they reverse roles. Perhaps each player will get two or three chances to perform, in which case they alternate performing until the end of the exercise. - In feedback, the teller can comment on what they recognised. What aspects of the memory were picked up on? Did they see themselves in this interpretation? Or did they feel disappointed that important aspects were ignored? Could more risks have been taken? At this point, the teller is speaking as an audience at the play of their own life. They can ask for more of whatever they choose - after all, it’s their material.
Immediate stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group divides between story-tellers, performers and audience. - Each of the story-tellers takes it in turn to articulate a story. They make it up in the moment. - At a given signal, the story-telling function is passed to another story-teller. - Meanwhile the performers, sit at the stage edge, come into the middle and act out the story as it is told. - They sit down and get up according to the demands of the story.
The bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It’s important to have the right number of players for this exercise; four, eight or sixteen. - A theme is predetermined for the exercise. - Each player goes separately into their own space in the room. They decide who they are, where they are and what they’re doing - in relation to the theme. For example if the theme is “work” their characters action must connect in some way, be working or avoiding work. - They then “rehearse” a short moment of action. - After this, each player pairs up with another and each shows the other what they’ve created. <p>Then they discuss how the moments could be bridged. They have to link them into the same short play. The bridge piece could come between the moments or before both or after both.</p> <p>Each initial moment should be kept “as it was” - not corrupted. (If the second player is an aircraft pilot looking for his back box after a crash, then this moment has to be bridged with that of the unemployed woman counting invoices.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When each pair has joined their pieces, they team up with another pair and the process is repeated. - Finally, a group of four or eight can “show” to another group of four or eight.

	- Variation: There is no theme but each team of four is given character instructions. For example, one character has lost something, one has found something, one is searching for something and one is about to lose something.
Collective storytelling	One participant begins telling a story, another continues, then a third until everyone is involved. Another group simultaneously presents the story non-verbally. The imagination knows no limits. In the further course of joint theater work, the emphasis is increasingly placed on the content. One participant tells something that happened to them, the others initially describe the incident non-verbally or with text. Only when they have finished their description, the differences to the experienced situation are discussed, the participant can compare their behaviour in the described real situation with that of the actors.

Group 5: Evaluation activities (after each session as well as at the end of the course)

Aim of this group of activities: To measure/capture the progress children are making towards the objectives set, as well as to check whether the workshop experience (from each individual session or in general) is a positive one.

Activity title	Description
Simple evaluation at the end of each session	Possible questions for discussion: How did you feel? What did you learn? What did you like best?/what you didn't like? (see children's feedback) The facilitator could just ask in the form of an open discussion or use such tech tools as Kahoot, cloze, quizzes, etc Can you explain what a stereotype is ?
Mid-term or end of programme evaluation	Download the questionnaire here.

Evaluation Form

ERASMUS+ Weaving Webs of Stories Project Outcomes Evaluation Form

SCHOOL:

Before joining the sessions:

- | | | | |
|---|--|------------|-----------|
| 1 | I had heard the word “stereotype” | Yes | No |
| 2 | I understand what it means | Yes | No |
| 3 | Before joining WWS sessions, I have read books other than the ones read in the classroom | | |

Yes **No**

4 If yes:

I have read number of books during the last school term

At the end of the sessions:

- 5 I understand what “stereotype” means and the harmful effects it can have on some groups



Yes **No**

[tutors will have used ice breakers and quizzes to determine whether the young people have a sound awareness of stereotypes]

During the 12-weeks programme:

6 I have participated in other story clubs besides WWS **Yes** **No**

7 I enjoy the activities

Yes **No** **Not Sure** - Please, explain why

8 I like stories - **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

9 I like reading stories **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

10 I like creating stories **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

11 I enjoy different genres -adventure, comedy, drama, nonsense, fiction, tragedy, others

Yes **No** **Not Sure**

12 I like reading silently to myself - yes, no, not sure

13 I like reading to others

Yes No Not Sure

14 I like having a grown up to help me with my reading

Yes No Not Sure

15 In the WWS club I would like to have more of: reading writing improvising chain stories

Yes No Not Sure

16 In the WWS club I would like to have less of: reading writing improvising chain stories, o

Yes No Not Sure

17 I am aware of concepts such as empathy, stereotypes, inclusion, diversity

Yes No Not Sure

18 Sometimes I feel awkward when we talk about a certain topic

Yes No Not Sure if yes, which topic/s



19 If I could change something, that would be