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OUR HERITAGE:  
WHERE THE PAST  
MEETS THE FUTURE

2018  
EUROPEAN YEAR  
OF CULTURAL  
HERITAGE  
#EuropeForCulture

# Metacognitive Strategies in Practice “THE MASTER PLAN”



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## Introduction - Metacognitive strategies for learning

### The people behind the book

Six years ago teachers from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and England started an Erasmus project called Xplicit. This project focused on IT-supported peer learning. The project was successful and we enjoyed working together as a team. We were all hard working and our different experiences as teachers from different countries brought a lot of different ideas to the discussions and work. After two years we evaluated the project and decided we wanted more. Peer learning was a good method for learning but something was missing. We had to improve the students' learning skills and also our teaching techniques in teaching different skills and using feedback.

Said and done 3 years later we had made a project plan. Most of the old project friends were there, only England was out and replaced by teachers and students from Greece and an old colleague partner from Spain and students from her school.

**Rose-Marie Conway** - lead coordinator  
Fässbergs school, Mölndal, Sweden  
rose-marie.conway@molndal.se

**Lisa Saur**  
Fässbergs school, Mölndal, Sweden

**Erik Raaby** - coordinator  
Trekløverskolen, Kjellerup, Denmark

**Birgitte Mørck Rugholm**  
Trekløverskolen, Kjellerup, Denmark  
**Lone Bruun Jepsen**  
Trekløverskolen, Kjellerup, Denmark

**Johanna Koukkari** - coordinator  
Hj. Nortamon peruskoulu, Rauma, Finland

**Titta Aitavaara**  
Hj. Nortamon peruskoulu, Rauma, Finland  
**Minerva Halminen**  
Hj. Nortamon peruskoulu, Rauma, Finland  
**Johanna Koski**  
Hj. Nortamon peruskoulu, Rauma, Finland

**Marifé García Ros** - coordinator  
CCE Virgen del Pasico, Torre-Pacheco, Spain

**Eirini Bataki** - coordinator  
4th Gymnasium of Chania, Crete, Greece  
**Elena Sousta** - creative design of the ebook  
4th Gymnasium of Chania, Crete, Greece

**Apostolis Papagiannis** - headmaster  
4th Gymnasium of Chania, Crete, Greece

### Project blog:

<https://mastererasmusplus.blogspot.com/>



### **How to use the book**

We hope that you will find this book helpful. The content of the book revolves around the work we have done in our Erasmus project MASTER - **M**etacognitive **A**ctivities and **S**trategies for **T**eaching and **E**ducational **R**esults.

The structure of the book is chronological around the 5 mobilities we did in the project. We have mixed a bit of theory with students and teachers' workshops and activities we did before, during and after our mobilities. We have added the examples that we thought were useful and were written in English. The book can be used as inspiration for doing something similar but can also be used as a teacher's source of teaching different skills.

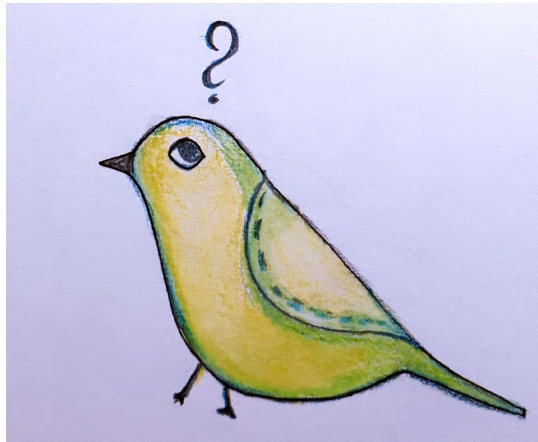
### **Why do we want to work with metacognitive strategies?**

As teachers we all want our students to learn, right? We try to stay updated with research. We prepare, we plan, we work hard to help our students learn.

You are teaching but not **all** learners are learning. Now, we are not talking about students with learning difficulties. We are talking about those students that haven't explicitly been taught how to learn. Those who haven't picked up these skills unreflectively and especially not looked inward to determine how they learn and which methods to choose for different assignments. We wanted to find out how we could teach students to learn and see which impact it would have on students' learning and their attitudes to learning.

The book you are reading is the result of a two year Erasmus+ project, where students and teachers from five schools from around Europe have been working together. The project has tried to find practical methods of using metacognitive strategies in learning. We have read books and articles to find inspiration and to try out new ideas. In our project we have worked collaboratively with teachers in workshops to help them acquire new skills and improve in our profession and in the classrooms with our students. In this book we would like to share our work with you and hopefully you will be inspired. In a way this is the story of our work. Our aim is that all these activities should work in any classroom in Europe.

picture 1 Questions



### **What is metacognition in learning?**

A standard definition for metacognition is “thinking about one's thinking”. But in order to master metacognition, thinking should lead to an action such as being able to control one's attitudes, being persistent when working towards a goal as well as taking responsibility for accomplishing a goal.

### **What have we tried to do in our project?**

Our goal has been to teach students skills and tools to take a conscious control of learning, planning and selecting strategies, monitoring one's process of learning, analyzing the process and changing behaviour and strategies if necessary. In order to be able to reach our goals we have worked with our students as well as the participating teachers in the different schools.

### **A note about the materials used in this book**

Some of the materials in this book are things from the internet like Youtube-videos or teacher's materials. These materials are free to use.

This book contains some original artwork(pictures 1 to 7) made by Elena Sousta. This material is copyrighted can not be used unless asking the artist ([elenasousta@gmail.com](mailto:elenasousta@gmail.com)).

### **Getting started - Knowledge is power**

It is always good to educate yourself. There is a lot of information online. We also read a few books as inspiration.

A book we used for inspiration was:

**Wilson;** *“Teaching students to drive their brain. Metacognitive Strategies, Activities and Lesson ideas”*

## **Building a team - The whole is greater than the sum of the parts**

To do new things in the classroom and stick to doing them long enough to see changes takes time and courage. You will need support from your colleagues and later in the process understanding from your students' parents, so they will support your work. We have talked to the students' parents about training your brain, about praising the process rather than the product and also about the use of the evaluation of "not yet". By that we mean, that the student may not yet reach his/her goal, but he/she is on his/her way, we want the parents to use the same language that you use in your classroom and praise effort rather than points on a test.

## **Introducing the project to the colleagues**

### **Keep it real, simple and short**

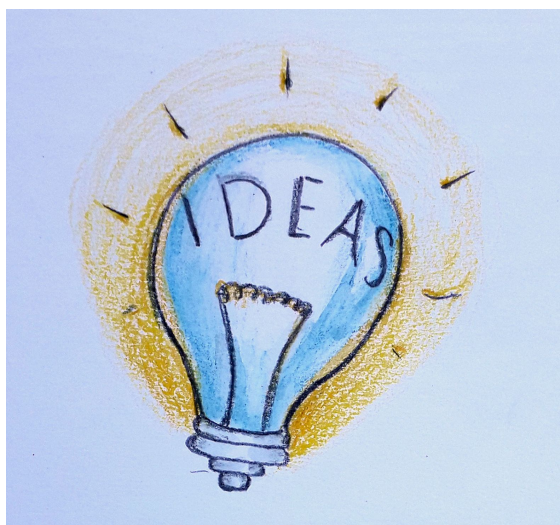
During the project we had workshops for our colleagues in the different schools once or twice a semester. These workshops had two purposes: to inform our colleagues and to educate ourselves about different aspects of metacognitive strategies. This was something we did throughout the project.

## **First teacher workshop**

### **What is metacognition, what are metacognitive strategies?**

- The teachers read a short text on metacognition.
- They watched the movie. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twvGN6irsqQ>
- They brainstormed on metacognition.
- They were divided into groups "Have you done anything like this before?"
- They discussed the pros and cons.
- And finally they discussed "If you would do a task in this area what would you do?"

picture 2 *Ideas*





### **Implementing the project to the students**

All the students who wanted to take part in the mobilities had to prepare a presentation about themselves using the following template. This was used by teachers to do the matching of the “host and guest”-students.

picture 3 *Watching my mind*





## A student presentation example!



Picture of student  
Name  
Contact details  
Age: 14

Myself : all my friends say that i'm funny, a really good friend, a happy person and animal caring.

My interests:i like sports, write my own stories, hobbies like drawing,skateboarding and ride my bike, and i also like spend time with my smartphome.

My family: nice, cool, friendly and caring.

Where do I see myself in 5 years?: probably i will be studying in university or college.

Where do I see myself in 10 years?: i cannot say for sure how i see myself in 10 years. I prefer enjoying my present.

10 quick responses:

A sport (or other "after school" activity) : I like running

My favorite food is: suvlaki (meat, tomato, onions and potatoes wrapped in pita bread).

I love: my friends, my family and animals.

I feel safe when I: have somebody i know around

I become afraid when I: i don't have any fears

My favorite holiday is: summer

I like: watching horror films

My favorite subject is: P.E. (gymnastics) I

don't like: When my ice cream melts.

I wish for: to travel around world and meet with awesome people!

### **Teaching students about metacognition**

For this activity we found inspiration in the book earlier mentioned “Driving your Brain”. We did a presentation, which we shared with the students emphasizing that success in school requires hard work and help to become an independent learner.

### **Starting to work together**

We started the project by having a competition about who could make the best logo for the project.

The logo was supposed to represent two things

- who we are
- what is our project about

Each school divided the students into groups, and each group designed a logo. Afterwards the partner schools organised their own competition where students presented their logos and the best one was chosen to be brought to the first mobility in Denmark. Here we merged the logos into our final logo.



### **Getting to know each other**

The students made a presentation of themselves, their school, town, and country. Furthermore the students made a short film telling about their school, their town, and their country to be shown during the mobilities. Students taking part in mobilities also made a video or a powerpoint presentation introducing themselves. This was part of sharing the European dimension of the project.

## Chapter 1 Metacognition and goal setting

To determine whether you have finished a task or not and to decide how successful you are and take out directions in learning and life you need to set goals. To do this you have to have different strategies.

In our project we started on a large scale: to set life goals.

The template below was something we went back to when we encouraged our students. We talked to them about their dream profession: "You said you wanted to be a doctor, do you think that math is important if you want to be a doctor?" The answer was almost always "Yes". After that we tried to help them realise what they would have to do to achieve their goal and narrow it down to a plan. We used this **SMART** goals template to do that.

| SMART  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>S</b> - specific<br>* what exactly do you want to accomplish?               |  |
| <b>M</b> - measurable<br>* how will you know when you've met your goal?        |  |
| <b>A</b> = achievable<br>* is your goal something you can actually accomplish? |  |
| <b>R</b> - relevant<br>* is this a meaningful goal for you?                    |  |
| <b>T</b> - timely<br>* when will you reach your goal?                          |  |

## 1.1 Preparing for the mobility - Setting life goals

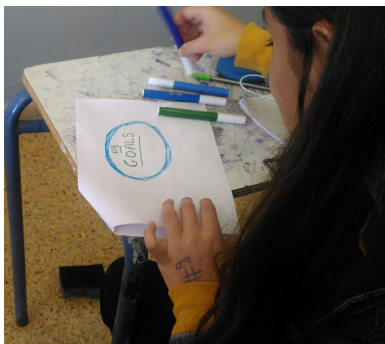
### Dream big - and setting goals

#### What is important to you when you grow up?

- To have a well paid job
- To have an interesting job
- To live in a nice house
- To own a car
- To have designer stuff
- To have time to spend on my hobbies
- To have someone in my life that loves me
- To be able to go on holiday
- To be able not to work so much
- To work abroad
- To be able to help other people
- Other suggestions

1. Choose the 5 most important things from the list above
2. Prioritise from 1-3 which is most important to you. 1 is the most important.
3. Compare with a friend
4. What does it take to make this come true? Brainstorm together with a friend.
5. Think about what you need to do to make your dreams come true. Try to be specific. Write down your thoughts.

Do a **COACHING TALK** if you like to follow up the students' thoughts. Use the template below.



Date:

Teacher

Where am I  
now?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your name

Future  
Where do you  
want to be?

What do you need to do to reach your future goals?

What would it mean to you if you would reach these goals? What would you gain?

On a scale between 1-10:  
How big is your will to reach these goals?

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

On a scale between 1-10:  
How motivated are you to work towards your goals?

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

## 1.2 Danish Mobility 2nd - 8th February 2018

In the period from February the 2nd until February the 8th Trekløverskolen in Kjellerup, Denmark hosted the first mobility in the Erasmus-project – Master. Metacognitive Thinking Activities and Strategies for Teaching and Educational Results. The theme for this first mobility was to set Life Goals.

We worked with the following **students' activities**:

**Activity 1: Presentations:** Double Circle - when students meet, they shake hands, tell their names and their country and answer the following 2 questions: "What do you do in your spare time?" and "What is your favorite subject in school? Explain why."

**Activity 2: Tour around the school:** The Danish students make a guided tour around their school.

**Activity 3: Work shop - LEGO built to Express:** Different tasks where the students express themselves by building LEGO.

The tasks were:

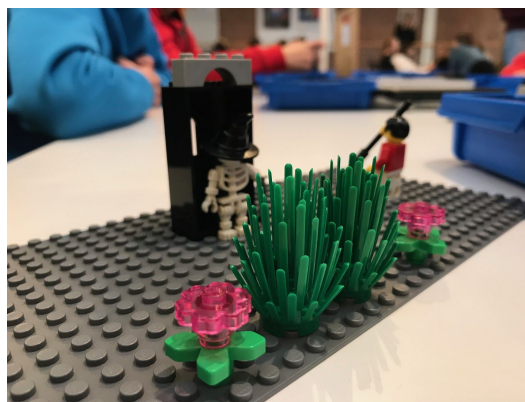
- Introduction
- Diversity
- My Family
- My Future

**Activity 4: Working with life goals:** Making a short movie with the headline "Your Everyday Life in 2030" (documentary, interview, news programme, role play, ect)

The last evening we saw all the movies, and the students elected the best.

**Break activities:**

- Name game
- Playing cards relay run
- Line up



## Chapter 2 Metacognitive strategies - Growth mindset and guided Inquiry

When preparing for the Spanish mobility we worked with two different metacognitive strategies: Growth mindset and guided inquiry.

picture 4 *Girls with different way of thinking*



### 2.1 Growth mindset

Believing that you can learn, improve your skills and actually succeed at different tasks in life and in school can make all the difference. We see that many of our students struggle with low self esteem and they are often comparing themselves to others, which is rarely a positive strategy.

The concept of a **growth mindset** was developed by psychologist Carol Dweck and popularized in her book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*.

A *mindset*, according to Dweck, is a self-perception or “self-theory” that people hold about themselves. Believing that you are either “intelligent” or “unintelligent” is a simple example of a mindset. People may also have a mindset related to their personal or professional lives: “I’m a good teacher” or “I’m a bad parent,” for example. People can be aware or unaware of their mindsets, according to Dweck, but they can have a profound effect on learning achievement, skill acquisition, personal relationships, professional success, and many other dimensions of life.



“In a **growth mindset**, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.” (Dweck, 2015)

Having all this in mind we wanted our students to do some activities in groups to develop their abilities to solve problems and be aware that they can do whatever they want, provided that they work hard and realise that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence.

Before the mobility the students had a lesson on “Growth Mindset”. At home they read some information about the topic, and a powerpoint presentation was given by the teacher. In class they took part in a Socratic circle where students sitting in a circle were giving their opinions, ideas, and experiences about the information they had previously read.

In this workshop we wanted to inspire each other and come up with new ideas on how to help our students with their mindset and help them believe that they have the capacity to succeed. In this workshop we prepared the penguin activity (see below) for the following year and also prepared a workshop for parents as it is very important that everyone involved in the students’ learning share the same mindset.

First we all prepared for this workshop by watching this TED talk:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/carol\\_dweck\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_believing\\_that\\_you\\_can\\_improve/discussion](https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve/discussion)

## **2.2 Growth mindset: penguin activity**

This student activity aims to teach students the difference between a fixed and a growth mindset. It shows how they react to different tasks and what they can achieve by having the right attitude and support.

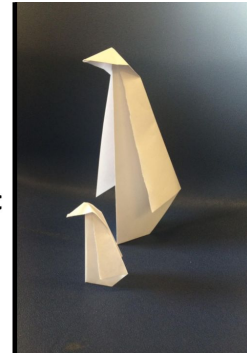
<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/developing-a-growth-mindset-roughly-35-minutes-11017727>

**DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET...**  
**THE SECRET TO SUCCESS!** □ □ □

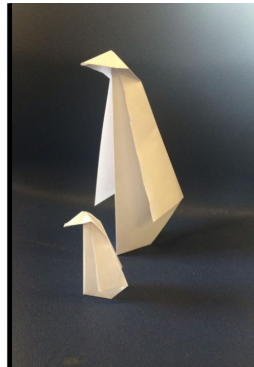
- 1 What is a growth mindset?
- 2 How can developing a growth mindset help me?
- 3 What do I need to do next?



Your challenge is to create an origami penguin from the sheet of paper in front of you. Good luck!



?



Did you give up immediately?

Did you try and then give up?

Did you expect to fail?

Did you expect to succeed?



A **mindset** is an attitude that determines how you will interpret and respond to situations.



A **growth mindset** is characterised by the belief that skills and abilities can be developed over time, through dedication and hard work.



- 1 Your strongest subjects
- 2 The subjects that require improvement
- 3 Barriers to your learning

For example, do you find it difficult to memorise and use key words?

- 4 Actions that will help to fulfil your potential

For example, do you need to improve the technical accuracy of your writing?

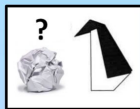


## DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET... THE SECRET TO SUCCESS! □□□

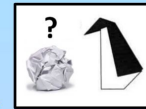
- 1 What is a growth mindset?
- 2 How can developing a growth mindset set help me?
- 3 What do I need to do next?



- Avoid challenges
- Give up easily
- See making an effort as being pointless
- Ignore all feedback that is not positive
- Feel threatened by the success of others



- Embrace challenges
- Persist in the face of setbacks
- See effort as the path to mastery
- Learn from criticism
- Be inspired by the success of others



## DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET... THE SECRET TO SUCCESS! □□□

- 1 What is a growth mindset?
- 2 How can developing a growth mindset set help me?
- 3 What do I need to do next?

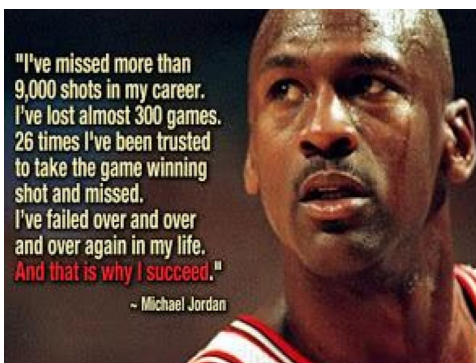


Ahead of you, during your time in school, you will face many challenges. Developing a **growth mindset** will be an important factor in enabling you to succeed.

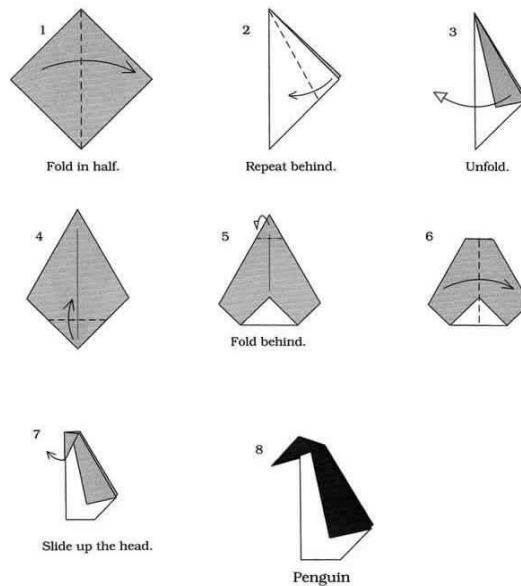


I want you to have another go at creating an origami penguin, but this time you'll have instructions. I want the penguin to be a reminder to you that, over time and with a bit of help and a positive attitude, everyone can achieve success.

Nobel



## Penguin



### 2.3 Guided inquiry

Guided inquiry is a structured model where students search for information in groups. When the students get a task to gather material for either a presentation or a paper, they work after the following structure:

1. Ask questions
  - a. What do we know?
  - b. What do we want to know?
  - c. How do we find out?
2. Online search
  - a. Start searching online while keeping record of search words and links.
  - b. Choose the best article and summarize them.
3. Determine whether or not the material is enough to answer their questions.
4. Make your presentation or write your paper.
5. Finish your job and evaluate your learning.
6. Evaluate the process. What can you do differently next time (to find better material, be more time ordered, ect.)?

We used guided inquiry when we asked the students to make an ebook about the different project countries (see 2.4). The purpose of this activity was to learn more about the countries but also to practise the guided inquiry method where we added teamwork and evaluation in the students' work.

## 2.4 Ebooks about the different project countries

### Country studies from a different angle

#### Activity description

This exercise is a group exercise where the students work with the different project countries but not their own country.

The goal is to work collaboratively with information search preferably trying “Guided inquiry”. The outcome is an ebook about project countries from every partner school.

**Warmup.** Brainstorm on the country and make a Word Cloud with your words. Use this as the first page of your ebook.

**1. Current events.** Learn more about the country you have been given by studying current events in the media. This is a useful link to find newspapers.

[http://www.thebigproject.co.uk/news/european%20newspapers%20in%20english.html#\\_WpMv5pOdWgR](http://www.thebigproject.co.uk/news/european%20newspapers%20in%20english.html#_WpMv5pOdWgR)

Let each student choose 1-2 news and make a short summary about their news article for their group. Every group will choose 2 news articles to study deeper.

- What is the news article about?
- Does the article come in a context?
- What have you concluded about your country from these articles?

#### 2. Interesting people

Each group makes interviews with interesting people from the country, they are studying. The persons can be dead or alive. Don't forget to explain why you chose these persons.

#### 3. What do people eat?

Try to find recipes for a starter, a main course and a dessert that are typical for this country.



#### 4. What is it like to be a young in your country?

Write a text in which you include facts about school, spare time, family life, etc. What is the best thing about living in this country? What is the worst?

To find information write someone from the project living in the country. Your teacher can help you find

email addresses or other ways of communication.

**5. General information about your country in brief. Here are some pages you can use.**

<http://www.nationmaster.com>

<https://www.factmonster.com/countries>

#### 6. Map

## 7. What did you like most about this country

Which similarities and differences did you find between this country and your home country?

## 8. Thinking about thinking...

- What have you learnt? How did you learn?
- Which strategies did you use to solve the different tasks?
- Is there anything you would have done differently if you had to do similar tasks?

## 2.5 Spanish mobility 19th - 25th May 2018

In our Erasmus+ Master –project the second mobility was to be held in Spain by the end of May 2018. The main theme of the mobility was “**Growth Mindset**”; so the students’ activities were focused on learning different techniques for problem solving.



### Students’ activities:

Activity 1: Making groups: Each student gets a slip of paper with a number and a question, they have to find the people with the same number, sit in a group together and speak about their question.

Activity 2: Song “Don’t give up”, Bruno Mars. Students listen to the song twice and on a piece of paper draw what it suggests to them, then in their group each student describes their drawing and why they have drawn it.

Activity 3: Brainteasers. In their groups students have three minutes to solve each problem. Then each group creates a brainteaser for their partners.

Activity 4: Yes / No Riddles. Students are given 2 or 3 riddles to solve in their group. Then each group creates a riddle for their partners.

Activity 5: Expedition to the Land of C. Students work in their groups to survive in the expedition and get to the Land of C.

Activity 6: Escape Room. “Calico Jack Treasure”

Activity 7: Analysis of the Escape Room activity. In their groups students answer some questions to analyse how they worked in the activity, how they solved the different tasks, how they felt when succeeding or failing.

## 2.6 Metacognition and reading comprehension strategies

A very important skill in school today is reading and being able to pick out not only relevant information but also what seems reasonable and whether or not the source is trustworthy. These are abilities that all of us struggle with more or less in today's society, and they need to be taught in school in order to be conscious democratic citizens.

## 2.7 Sharing ideas

### 2.7.1 FINLAND

Finnish national author Aleksis Kivi (1834-1872) and his novel "Seven Brothers".

1. The author and his novel (an introduction to the subjects)
  - mind mapping in groups: what do we know about Aleksis Kivi and his century
  - discussion: what do we already know about the story line, characters or the themes
  - summary of the mind maps; the teacher comes up with new ideas (if needed)
2. The novel
  - start the reading: the teacher reads aloud (so that the students can get used to the old Finnish and the style of the book).
  - students read the book chapter by chapter also at home
3. Different ways of working with the text:
  - The teacher or the students make questions to each other about the read chapter. The answers are checked together by discussion
  - Students pick odd words while reading and find the meanings:
    - i. by themselves or
    - ii. together in the lesson
4. Students apply the characters and the story line to the present.
  - which classmate or celebrity could be Juhani or Eero and so on
  - who would you choose to be your wife/husband or team mate?
  - who would be the one you couldn't collaborate with?
5. Students make an animation about the book or a chapter
6. Students choose five objects that could belong to some character and reason their choices.
7. Students make short plays.
8. Debate:
  - "Why do we read this book?"
  - "What can we learn from this book?"



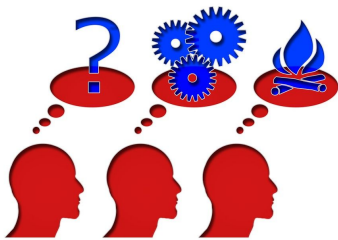
## 2.7.2 SWEDEN

### 1. Predict: Start up your brain

- What do you think the text will be about? Use headlines, pictures, and other things you see to make a prediction.
- What do you think you may learn from this text?
- What do you know about this subject before reading the text?

### 2. Clarify: What to do when it is difficult to understand.

- Read the passage again.
- Is it a word which is hard to understand? Does the context give you any clues? Can you divide the word into smaller parts? Do you recognise the word from another language?
- If you still don't understand - use a dictionary.

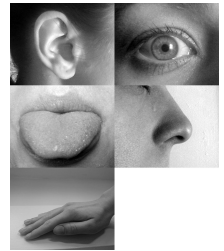


### 3. Ask questions: Figure out what you understood and what you have yet to understand.

- What is said in the text?
- What is said between the lines?
- Can you make a connection with your own life?

### 4. Create inner images: Use your senses

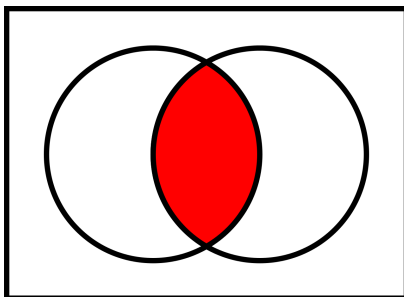
Try to imagine what things look like, sound like, smell like etc. Can you connect it to your own experiences?



### 5. Summarise: Retell using your own words

- Pick out important ideas from the text.
- Write a few sentences in your own words to capture the most important content from the text.

“Learning is the process of adding new ideas to things you already know”



The Venn diagram. This is a tool to structure one's thoughts when you want to compare facts. For instance if you want the students to compare the Protestant and Catholic Church. The students will write points that are typical for the Protestant Church in the left white field. In the right white field they write what is typical for the Catholic Church. In the red field they will write things both churches have in common.

### 2.7.3 DENMARK

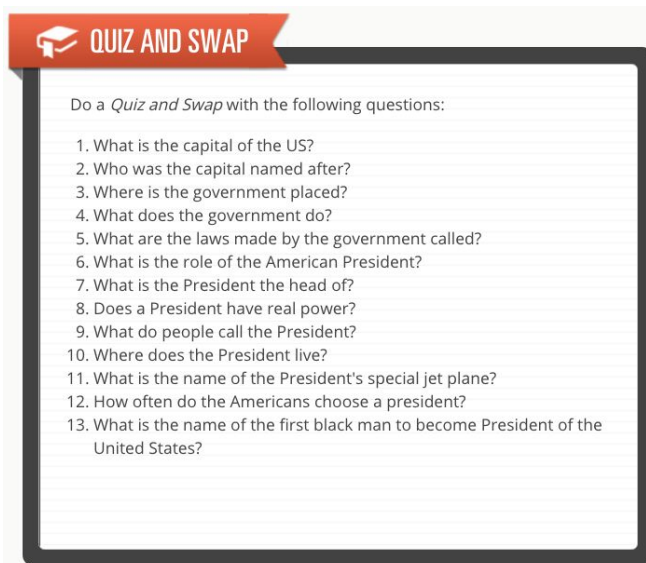
#### Quiz and Swap

An often used exercise for reading comprehension is *Quiz and Swap*. Below you will find a text from a book called *USA* used in 6th grade (a). After reading the text the class did *Quiz and Swap* with the questions from the screenshot (b).

A)



B)



#### Short description of *Quiz and Swap*

Each student gets a card with a question on one side and the answer on the other. Everyone walks around the room, asks the nearest person the question for them to answer, and then provides the correct response. Reverse roles so the other person asks their question, and checks the correct

answer. The students swap cards after having asked each other questions. Afterwards they find a new classmate and repeat the process.

Sometimes - to make it more difficult - the answers are not written on the cards. As a teacher you can either choose to show the students the questions on the smartboard and let them prepare their answers before doing the *Quiz and Swap* - or you can choose the most challenging version where the students do not see the questions before starting the game - and therefore do not have the chance to prepare their answers.

## 2.7.4 SPAIN

### TEXTS

1. Shared reading
  - a. Students in groups are given a text; one student reads a paragraph aloud to the rest of the members in the group. The student on their right explains what the paragraph is about, what the main idea is, then this student reads the next paragraph and the process goes on until they have read all the paragraphs. Then they all together write a summary of the whole text.
  - b. When all the groups have finished with their text, each group passes their summary to another group for them to give it a title.
2. Before reading a text
  - a. Students look at the photos and describe them. Then they read the title and guess what the text is about and what information they are going to find in the text. They also have to write questions to the information they think they will get in the text they are going to read.
  - b. When the text is about any cultural topic in a foreign country, students look at the map of that country and brainstorm any data and information they know about that specific country: capital city, any important city, language spoken, currency, typical food, famous people, etc.
3. After reading a text
  - a. Students read the text and then answer some questions about it using their own words. They complete sentences using information from the text or say if some sentences are true or false correcting the false ones or giving evidence from the text to justify whether the sentence is true or false.
  - b. Students read the text and then in groups they prepare questions of any of the types mentioned above to be answered by the other groups.
  - c. In their group they choose the words that they found difficult to understand in the text and make definitions of them. Then each group reads one of their definitions at a time without saying the word for the other groups to guess it.

## 2.7.5 GREECE

Applying reading comprehension strategies in literature or poetry.

Lesson Plan by Eleni Maraki

### A. Implementation framework

Class: C, 14-15 years old

Subject: Greek literature

(LITERATURE FROM 1892 TO 1945)

Writer: NIKOS KAVVADIAS

Poem: «Kuro Siwo» (The poem is included in the poetic collection named *Fog*).

Number of students: 22. Duration: 2 hours. Learning environment : the classroom, use of interactive board, audio recorder, internet, Pcs/laptops. Interconnected subjects: Geography, Music, Art and Computer Science

B. Learning Objectives: by the end of the lesson the students should be able:

(i) to get in contact, understand deeper and appreciate the poetry of Nikos Kavvadias, a committed seaman and writer.

(ii) to study the life and work of the poet and identify the reflection of his personal experiences in his poetry

(iii) to search for the role of the sea scenery in his poetry and the role of female presence and associate it with their own personal and cultural experience.

(iv) to gain awareness of the language, the tone, the structure of the poem

(v) to comment on choice of words and how they are being used in the context of poetry.

(vi) to understand the thoughts and imagination evoked by the poem and to express an argued opinion on the particular poem.

(vii) to express how the poem makes them feel and what in the poem fosters this feeling.

### C. Activities:

1. Teacher hands out the photos connected to the poet and the poem and pupils make assumptions on who he is, what the poem is about etc. Teacher reads the poem. Pupils revise their assumptions.
2. Pupils listen to the poem in music. (*The particular poem was set to music by Thanos Mikroutsikos in his albums "Stavros tou Notou :(Southern Cross) and "Grammes Orizonton"*).
3. Pupils in small groups search for details about the poet and his life, making assumptions and associations of details found in the lyrics/verses with his life.
4. Pupils read through the poem in small groups and underline words that stroke them, trying to come up with their own interpretation of the meaning of some words and connect them to their own inner pictures.
5. Each group of pupils is given cards with a set of questions on the poem, which they will answer, relying on the information found on the internet and on previous activities. Examples of questions: How does the person vocalizing the poem with music feel? Do you agree with this perspective? Can you create an imaginary dialogue between the poet and the woman?
6. Finally each group of pupils create their own questions and share them with the other groups in class. For each question raised pupils try to provide the answer. (A variation of this is the game "interrogation chair", that is a pupil sits on a chair, pretending to be the poet and the class interviews him.

### D. Learning results

The pupils mentioned that the proposed activities helped them:

- To come up with their own interpretations of the poem to verbalize their ideas, make scenarios using their imagination

- To share views, listen to each other and challenge themselves
- To be more actively engaged in the learning process.

Poem in English

*Kuro Siwo* Nikos Kavvadias

That first trip - a southern freight, by chance -  
no sleep, malaria, difficult watches.  
Strangely deceptive, the lights of the Indies -  
they say you don't see them at a first glance.

Beyond Adam's bridge, you took on freight  
in South China - soya, sacks by the thousand,  
and couldn't get out of your mind for a second  
what they'd told you in Athens one wasted night.

The tar gets under your nails, and burns;  
the fish-oil stinks on your clothes for years,  
and her words keep ringing still in your ears:  
"Is it the ship or the compass that turns?"

You altered course when the weather turned,  
but the sea bore a grudge and exacted its cost.  
Tonight my two caged parrots were lost,  
and the ape I'd had such trouble to train.

The ship! - it wipes out all our chances.  
The Kuro Siwo crushed us under its heel,  
but you're still watching, over the wheel,  
how, point by point, the compass dances

*This translation reproduced by kind permission of the translator Simon Darragh, from "Wireless Operator, Selected Poems of Nikos Kavvadias", published by London Magazine Editions, 1998.*

## Chapter 3 Metacognition and critical thinking

Critical thinking has always been important but with a growing information flow it is more important than ever. It is one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. It is something we need to be aware of all the time. As information is very fast it is difficult for people to check different facts. Sometimes facts, for example about global warming, is too overwhelming to take in that people take the easy way out and choose to ignore the facts.

Critical thinking is important to prevent people to make bad choices and is very important in order to have a working democratic process. Even if we are democratic countries democracy has to be nurtured every day.

Critical thinking is something that should be addressed in classes all the time simply by talking to students about for example current events and history. We can practice critical thinking by debating. When you debate students see that there are always two sides of a story and seldomly an absolute truth. It is about evaluating, challenging one's own thoughts and beliefs and checking their facts.

### 3.1 Student activity: Fake news

1. We ask the students if they have heard about fake news? (Brainstorming)
2. The students work in groups to try to define which ingredients a fake news has. (Concept)
3. Next step is to write a fake news story in groups.
4. The teacher shows the different news stories. (for a bit of extra fun a few viral news stories can be added)
5. Students try their concepts (step 2) on the articles.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Consider the source</b><br/>Click away from the story and investigate the site, its mission and contact info.</p> | <p><b>Read beyond</b><br/>Headlines can be over the top in order to get clicks.<br/><br/>What is the whole story?</p>                          |
| <p><b>Check the author</b><br/>Are they reliable?</p>   | <p><b>Supporting sources</b><br/>Click on the links or search for new information.<br/><br/>Do they actually support the story?</p>            |
| <p><b>Check the date</b><br/>A lot of stories are reposted. Is it relevant?</p>   | <p><b>Is it a joke?</b><br/>If it is over the top. It may be satire.</p>   |
| <p><b>Check your biases</b><br/>Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.</p>                           | <p><b>Ask the experts</b><br/>Do an information search or when in doubt ask a teacher or a librarian. They are information search experts.</p> |



### 3.2 Student activity: Critical thinking

#### 1. Mixture of brainstorming and double checking

##### A. Brainstorm ideas individually → group work

- a) When starting a new topic, start by brainstorming ideas that students already know. Everyone works individually first. Then share ideas within the group. Everything is written. Debating and evaluating sources in media

##### B. How to prepare oneself for a debate ("5 steps to improve critical thinking" by Samantha Agoos)

1. Formulate the question
  - Which information do I need?
2. Gather the information
  - What is relevant concerning my question?
3. Apply the information
  - which concepts work?
  - Which assumptions exist?
  - Is my interpretation of the information logically sound?

#### 4. Consider the implication (look below).

b) This exercise is put aside until the very end of the work.

c) Brainstorming the ideas that have been learnt during the process of learning (eg. ebook).  
Everything is written down as such.

d) Comparison of the ideas from the beginning and the ending → double checking what is true, what has been learnt.

e) Finish by summarizing the topic in just "one-word words" (eg. word clouds, mind-map).

#### 5. Explore other points of view

- Why are other people thinking about the same thing so differently?



## Chapter 4 Metacognition and “Think Aloud Techniques”

The “Think Aloud Strategy” asks students to say out loud what they are thinking about when reading, solving math problems, or simply responding to questions posed by teachers or other students. Effective teachers think out loud on a regular basis to model this process for students. In this way, they demonstrate practical ways of approaching difficult problems while bringing to the surface the complex thinking processes that underlie reading comprehension, mathematical problem solving, and other cognitively demanding tasks.

Thinking aloud is an excellent way to teach how to estimate the number of people in a crowd, revise a paper for a specific audience, predict the outcome of a scientific experiment, use a key to decipher a map, access prior knowledge before reading a new passage, monitor comprehension while reading a difficult textbook, and so on.

Getting students into the habit of thinking aloud enriches classroom discourse and gives teachers an important assessment and diagnostic tool.

**Why is it important?** By verbalising their inner speech (silent dialogue) as they think their way through a problem, teachers model how expert thinkers solve problems. As teachers reflect on their learning processes, they discuss with students the problems learners face and how learners try to solve them. This lets students know that they are not alone in having to think their way through the problem-solving process.

Think alouds are used to model comprehension processes such as making predictions, creating images, linking information in text with prior knowledge, monitoring comprehension, and overcoming problems with word recognition or comprehension.

When reading aloud, you can stop from time to time and orally complete sentences like these:

- So far, I've learned...
- This made me think of...
- That didn't make sense.
- I think \_\_\_ will happen next.
- I reread that part because...
- I was confused by...
- I think the most important part was...
- That is interesting because...
- I wonder why...
- I just thought of...

#### 4.1 Teacher activities about thinking aloud (modelling)

We had a workshop with our teacher colleagues discussing how this could be implemented more in class. We watched videos for introducing the theme and later discussed the questions below.

##### Youtube videos:

What is think aloud <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBB0nbY-a8Y>

Modelling writing <https://youtu.be/Ysxg3CWv9Qw>

##### Questions:

- Do you use think aloud today? If yes, when and how?
- If you do what is your experience using the technique?
- The text talks about a number of types of modelling. Which one of these could be used in your classroom? How could a class involving modelling look like?

## Chapter 5 Metacognition and practical optimism

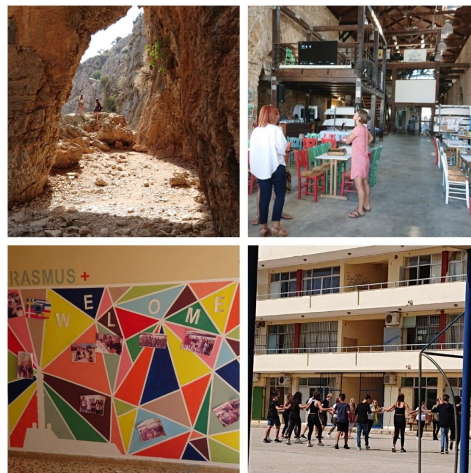
Practical optimism as an educational practice that promotes metacognition is related to the cultivation of an attitude about life that relies on taking realistic, positive action to increase the possibility of achieving successful results.

Optimism, traditionally considered to be a fixed trait of personality, is a way of thinking that can be learned, supported and gradually developed and applied in the learning process. Optimistic learners are more likely to persist in the hard work of learning, handle frustration and stress better, learn from their mistakes, develop their own problem solving competencies and finally accomplish their learning goals.

Practical optimism can be effectively taught by teachers by presenting their students a series of ***challenges*** in various fields and then ask them to collaboratively deal with them. By “challenge” we mean an activity that was unfamiliar/unknown to students and implicitly pushes him/her out of his/her comfort zone. In our Erasmus project, the fact that the students had to meet these challenges within an international group of students from 5 other European countries, gave an added value in terms of intercultural learning to the challenges faced.

The nature of challenges can vary according to the learning goals pursued by the teachers. In our case, students were involved in the following activities, that served later on as a base for their own reflection. The following activities were held in Greece at the end of September 2018 and had been developed around the metacognitive concept of practical optimism.

### 5.1 Greek mobility 29th September - 5th October 2018



**DAY 1 Sport and Dance:** The 1<sup>st</sup> day included a series of ice breaking team activities. National teams presented their home countries, towns, schools and families and then international mixed teams were built. The first challenge was to play an interactive knowledge game on each others countries using the kahoot app. Then, each team

participated in collaborative sport games that took place in the school gym and finally the day ended with learning Greek dances.

**DAY 2 Nature:** In the 2<sup>nd</sup> day pupils were taken to the ancient theatre of the ancient town Aptera, where they had to hold a short artistic presentation of their countries (prepared at home). Afterwards pupils had a 3 hour hike through Imbros Gorge, where they experienced the beauty of Cretan nature.

**DAY 3 Culture:** The 3<sup>rd</sup> day was also an outdoor activity day in the old town of Chania. Teams explored the town by playing an interactive game using their mobile phones.(hidden treasure). For each point of cultural interest that each team discovered, they gained a letter. When the game was over, teams were gathered in Chania Sailing club, where they had to form words in their own language with the given letters.

**DAY 4 Gastronomy :** The last day teams faced a challenge in the field of cooking. Students were asked to *co-create* with their team a food or a drink that would be tasted in the farewell barbeque party that took place in the same afternoon. A specific ingredient and budget as well as time management indications were given to them. The results were fantastic. Afterwards, the students have been encouraged to discover, reflect and share their results according to the following guidelines:

1. the high/medium or low challenging degree that each activity represented for them and the reason for that.
2. their own thoughts, feelings and actions when they meet a challenging activity.
3. the most stressful experience during their mobility.
4. the possibility to visualise this experience again, by considering a possible change that would allow them to experience this activity from a positive mindset (*using the motto "Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass, it is about learning to dance in the rain"*).

The complete reflection worksheet on practical optimism, that can be used by teachers in a variety of frameworks by adapting it according to their needs is presented below.

## **5.2 Student activity - Reflection worksheet on practical optimism**

1. MY CHALLENGES. Put the following activities in order. (from 1 to 5. 1 the most challenging for you. 5.The less challenging for you.)
  - Testing your knowledge in project countries with Kahoot app
  - Competing in sport challenges with your group in the gym
  - Dance Greek songs
  - Present yourself and country in an ancient theatre
  - Hike a gorge
  - Play hidden treasure in an unknown town.

other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Choose the most challenging activity these days and think about what made it challenging for you.
  - a. Share your thoughts with the person next to or in front of you
  - b. Share it with your group.
  
3. MY TREASURE. You have a box in front of you. It is a treasure box. Imagine you are a treasure hunter, hunting useful and positive things. Write on a piece of paper a “treasure” you found (that is a very useful and positive thing you experienced or did the last 3 days that you are grateful about) and put it inside the box.
  
4. Each member of your group puts the hand in the box and randomly reads aloud to the members of the group a treasure he/she picked from the box.



#### 5. DANCING IN THE STORM

- a. Think of a difficult or unknown situation you have experienced here or at home (like the storm)
  
- b. Think about how you felt, what you thought and what you did about it. Write 5 words that describe this experience and share it with the person next to or in front of you.
  
- 5.c If you had to experience the same situation again, what would you change in your feelings, thoughts and actions? (like the dance in the rain). Share it with the person next to or in front of you.

6.a. OPTIMISM ON PAPER. Each group receives a blank paper. Choose a place on the paper and make a drawing showing what optimism is for you.

6 b. Choose a title for this group work and present it.



## Chapter 6 Metacognition and writing strategies

In school we teach our students different skills that they might need in life whatever path they may choose. One of those important skills is to be able to recognise different types of texts and to some extent also write them yourself. In the teacher workshop during the greek mobility we shared ideas on different ways of teaching writing strategies such as cheat sheets, modelling etc.

### 6.1 Sharing ideas

#### 6.1.1 GREECE

##### An example from the world of poetry

Regarding the poetry and in order to be more specific, we chose a Greek poet who is well known abroad, Konstantinos Kavafis and his poem *Ithaca* which has been translated into many languages and also can be enjoyed by listening to the actor Sean Connery reciting it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2UDVAC31Zs> Kavafis recited by Sean Connery.

The class was divided into groups. Each of them had to approach different aspects of the poem. The groups were: philologists, biographers, psychologists, historians and screenwriters (artists).

- The group of philologists had to detect grammatical elements and those that had to do with the style of the poem and write their function to their possible recipient.
- The second group had to write a biography of the poet after having concerned about the life and work of him.
- The third group had to focus on the myth of the poet and write about the difference between the Odyssey of Homer and the Odyssey of Kavafis
- The psychologists had to write about the sentimental world of the poet combining pictures and emotions.
- The screen writers had to make a brief screenplay based on the lyrics 31-36 and had to render it through a dialogue, making good use of the elements of the poem that have to do with the direction .

At the end we wrote the phrase: "Ithaca is what it means for everyone".  
Write what is Ithaca for everyone of you.

Below you find the poem:

Ithaca

As you set out for Ithaca  
hope the voyage is a long one,  
full of adventure, full of discovery.  
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,  
angry Poseidon—don't be afraid of them:  
you'll never find things like that on your way  
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,  
as long as a rare excitement

stirs your spirit and your body.  
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,  
wild Poseidon—you won't encounter them  
unless you bring them along inside your soul,  
unless your soul sets them up in front of you.  
Hope the voyage is a long one.  
May there be many a summer morning when,  
with what pleasure, what joy,  
you come into harbors seen for the first time;  
may you stop at Phoenician trading stations  
to buy fine things,  
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,  
sensual perfume of every kind—  
as many sensual perfumes as you can;  
and may you visit many Egyptian cities  
to gather stores of knowledge from their scholars.  
Keep Ithaka always in your mind.  
Arriving there is what you are destined for.  
But do not hurry the journey at all.  
Better if it lasts for years,  
so you are old by the time you reach the island,  
wealthy with all you have gained on the way,  
not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.  
Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.  
Without her you would not have set out.  
She has nothing left to give you now.  
And if you find her poor, Ithaka won't have fooled you.  
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,  
you will have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.  
Translated by Edmund Keeley/Philip Sherrard  
(C.P. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*. Translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard. Edited by  
George  
Savidis. Revised Edition. Princeton University Press, 1992)  
- Original Greek Poem

### 6.1.2 SPAIN

In class students read and analysed a text as an example. As homework they wrote a text of the same type as the example analysed. They wrote about the same or a similar topic following a guideline. They sent it to the teacher through a platform. The teacher corrected it marking the mistakes with an explanation and sent it back to the students who had to correct the mistakes and return it again to the teacher; then he/she gave a mark.

#### SHARED WRITING. "A HOLIDAY ROMANCE"

Students work in groups of 4 or 5. They write a story together by individually answering a question without seeing what their group members have written previously (look below for the template and a detailed instruction).





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Fold

|   |
|---|
| Who was the man?  |
| Where did he go on holiday and who did he go with?        |
| Where did they stay?                                      |
| Who was the woman?  |
| Where did the man meet the woman?                         |
| What did the woman say to the man?                        |
| What did the man say to the woman?                        |
| Where did they go together and what did they do?          |
| What happened next?                                       |
| At the end of his holiday, what did the man decide to do? |

picture 5 *Puzzled bird*



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## *Holiday Romance*

In this activity, students create a story by inventing answers to questions and writing them down. The language focus is on past simple regular and irregular verbs as well as travel and holiday vocabulary.

Before class, make one copy of the worksheet for each student.

### Procedure

Ask the students to work in groups of five or six.

Tell them that they are going to write a story about a holiday romance by imagining answers to some questions.

Ask each group of five to six students to sit in a circle.

Give a copy of the worksheet to each student and ask them to write their name at the top and then fold the paper as indicated.

The students should hand their paper to the person on their right.

The student on the right answers the first question (Who was the man?) by inventing details and writing the answer in the space provided. The student then folds the paper and passes the paper to the person on the right who answers the next question and so on.

Make sure the students fold the paper correctly. They shouldn't be able to see what was written before.

This continues until all the questions have been completed.

Encourage the students to be as imaginative or as amusing as they like.

When the last question has been answered, ask the students to give the story back to the person whose name is at the top of the worksheet.

This person corrects any mistakes they find, and then reads the story to the group.

When everyone has finished, ask each group to choose the best story from their group. This story can be read aloud to the class. The class then votes for the best story.

### GROUP WRITING

In groups students are given 5 or 6 words which have been introduced in class or have appeared in a text read in class. They now have to write a text using all the words given.

### PAIR WRITING. "TELL US A STORY"

In pairs students have to invent a story using at least three of a set of given phrases and to discuss and answer some questions given. Then together they have to write the complete story using the linking words given in the worksheet. (Look for a detailed instruction below)

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## Tell us a Story



Invent a story which includes at least THREE of the following:

**AN EARTHQUAKE    A GUN    \$10,000 IN CASH    A POLICEMAN**  
**A FALSE PASSPORT    A DIAMOND    PLANE TICKETS    A STOLEN CAR**  
**A ROBBERY    A MAN CALLED JAMES    A WOMAN CALLED ANN**

In pairs, discuss the questions and write your ideas in the box. Then write the complete story with your partner. Connect your ideas with these linking words: *and, so, because, but, then.*

|    |  | WRITE YOUR IDEAS HERE |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 1  | Why was Dave late home from work?<br>How did he feel? Why?                             |                       |
| 2  | How did his wife Kate feel? Why?<br>What did she do?                                   |                       |
| 3  | What two things did Dave do when<br>he got home?                                       |                       |
| 4  | Dave went into the bedroom and<br>telephoned someone. Who was it?<br>What did they say |                       |
| 5  | How did Dave feel after the phone<br>call? What did he decide to do? Why?              |                       |
| 6  | What did he have in his briefcase?<br>What did he do with it/them?                     |                       |
| 7  | Kate walked into the bedroom.<br>Why was she angry?                                    |                       |
| 8  | What did Dave say to her? Did<br>she believe him? Why (not)?                           |                       |
| 9  | Somebody knocked at the front door.<br>Who was it? What did he/she do or say?          |                       |
| 10 | Dave left with the person at the door.<br>Where did they go? Why?                      |                       |
| 11 | How did Kate feel after Dave left?<br>Who did she telephone? Why?                      |                       |
| 12 | What happened at the end of the story?   |                       |

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## *Tell Us a Story*

This writing activity helps you to teach the past simple and linking words.

Before class, make one copy of the worksheet for each student.

Procedure

Put students into pairs.

Give each student a copy of the worksheet and tell them that they are going to invent a story.

Students must include at least three of the items, events or people at the top of the worksheet in their story.

The questions in the worksheet provide a framework for the story.

Students discuss each question in turn and write their ideas in the appropriate box. Encourage them to write notes rather than complete sentences.

When they have made notes for all the questions, students write their story in pairs.

Encourage them to use the linking words (and, because, but, so, then) when writing their story.

Students then put their stories up round the classroom and vote on which they like the most.

### WRITING FROM BOOKS

Students read a book and they have to invent a new chapter for the book they have read. Or they have to write a short play or scene from the book.

### WRITING OPINIONS FROM SPEAKING

They do Socratic Circles from which they get topics and later they have to write their opinions about those topics.

### CRITICAL COMMENTS

Students have to write critical comments about literary texts, news and videos.

### 6.1.3 SWEDEN

The example brought by the Swedish team was a template and an example text on how to write a well structured argumentative text. We start by talking about linking words and make sure the students know those that are most commonly used. Then we read an example text together, after that we go through the structure of the text making sure students understand the different pieces of the text. After that students plan their own texts by filling in the template, so that when they start writing they have everything planned.

Below you can find the example text, with comments, and the template.

Be curious, not scared![EP1]

Since the beginning of time, people have probably been scared of the unknown. Today it might be cultures you do not grasp, situations you are not familiar with or people who are not exactly like you that trigger the fear. Why choose to be scared, when being curious gives you so much more?[EP2]  
[EP3]

First of all, being curious makes you learn more about the world and the people around you. When it comes to learning, it is well-known that curiosity is important. Anne-Marie Körling, a Swedish teacher who these days coaches other teachers, writes about teaching in her blog Körlings Ord (Körling's Word/s). [EP4] In a post from December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012, "Undervisningens svaghet – utan erfarenhet men med fantasi" ("The Weakness of Teaching – without Experience but with Imagination")[EP5] , she means that curiosity leads to a search for the meaning behind something. You want to learn more. Being scared of something does not often lead to a will to learn about it, I think.[EP6]

Being curious is also, in my opinion, more fun than being scared. When I am curious I get excited and many thoughts run through my head. I then enjoy looking things up and can get stuck in the subject for hours. I strongly believe that having fun, makes you feel better, which makes the people around you feel better as well.[EP7]

Some may say that it is only natural to be afraid, and that we should be allowed to be scared because it will protect us. Yes, of course we might feel worried about some things and it can be good to be critical, but if we give in to the fear, we stop ourselves from understanding. Curiosity is important for learning. Without knowledge, it is only logical that there will be no understanding. No understanding of ourselves, no understanding of other cultures, no understanding of the world. How is that better?[EP8]

Even if people might have been scared now and then for ages, is it not time to take a stand and say that we should be curious in the future? Being curious will make us learn more, let us have more fun, and, most importantly, give us a greater understanding of ourselves and the world we live in. Let us do this for us and for our future children. Be curious, not scared![EP9]

Erika Pettersson [EP10]

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[EP1]A title with your point of view.

[EP2]Introduction in paragraph 1: A "hook" to make the reader interested and your point of view (the idea that you are writing about).

[EP3]A question to make the reader think.

[EP4]A source as "proof".

[EP5]Where the reader can find the source.

[EP6]Paragraph 2: Your second strongest argument and "proof" that supports it. Try to find a source of some kind.

[EP7]Paragraph 3: Your weakest argument with "proof". Here the proof is experience, an example.

[EP8]Paragraph 4: Counterargument and your strongest argument with "proof". This proof is linked to the first argument. Feelings are used.

[EP9]Paragraph 5: Conclusion that looks back at the introduction, with a summary of your arguments and your point of view.

[EP10]In many argumentative texts you need a signature.

## Argumentative text

Plan your text

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Headline</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Catch your reader</li></ul>  |  |
| <b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Catch your reader</li><li>- Background and your own point of view</li></ul>  |  |
| <b>Argument 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Second strongest argument</li><li>- Linking words: first of all, to start with, first, initially</li></ul>   |  |
| <b>Argument 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Weakest argument</li><li>- Linking words: second, also, in addition to, additionally</li></ul>   |  |
| <b>Counter argument</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Linking words: on the other hand, on the contrary, at the same time, however, there are those who would disagree,</li></ul> <b>Argument 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Your strongest argument</li><li>- Linking words: third, finally, ultimately etc.</li></ul> |  |
| <b>Conclusion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A short summary of what you have argued for</li><li>- Linking words: To conclude, all things considered, to summarise, given these points, to sum up, after all</li></ul>  |  |

picture 6 "How do I think?"



## Chapter 7 Metacognition and the importance of a great teacher

Great teachers are made not born. Behind students success and a good grade is a passionate teacher. Being a great teacher requires focus, skills, and hard work. What teachers fail to learn in University they learn in their first few years facing real pupils. Through observations and coaching teachers can proceed in their development. Therefore it is important to give time in school for teachers to observe their peers and give constructive feedback.

What makes a great teacher and what makes a great student were two questions that we wanted to investigate further. We did that by doing different workshops with the students in each country before and with the teachers when we were all together during the Finnish mobility (described below).

### 7.1 Student activity: What makes a good teacher or student great?

#### 1. Individual task

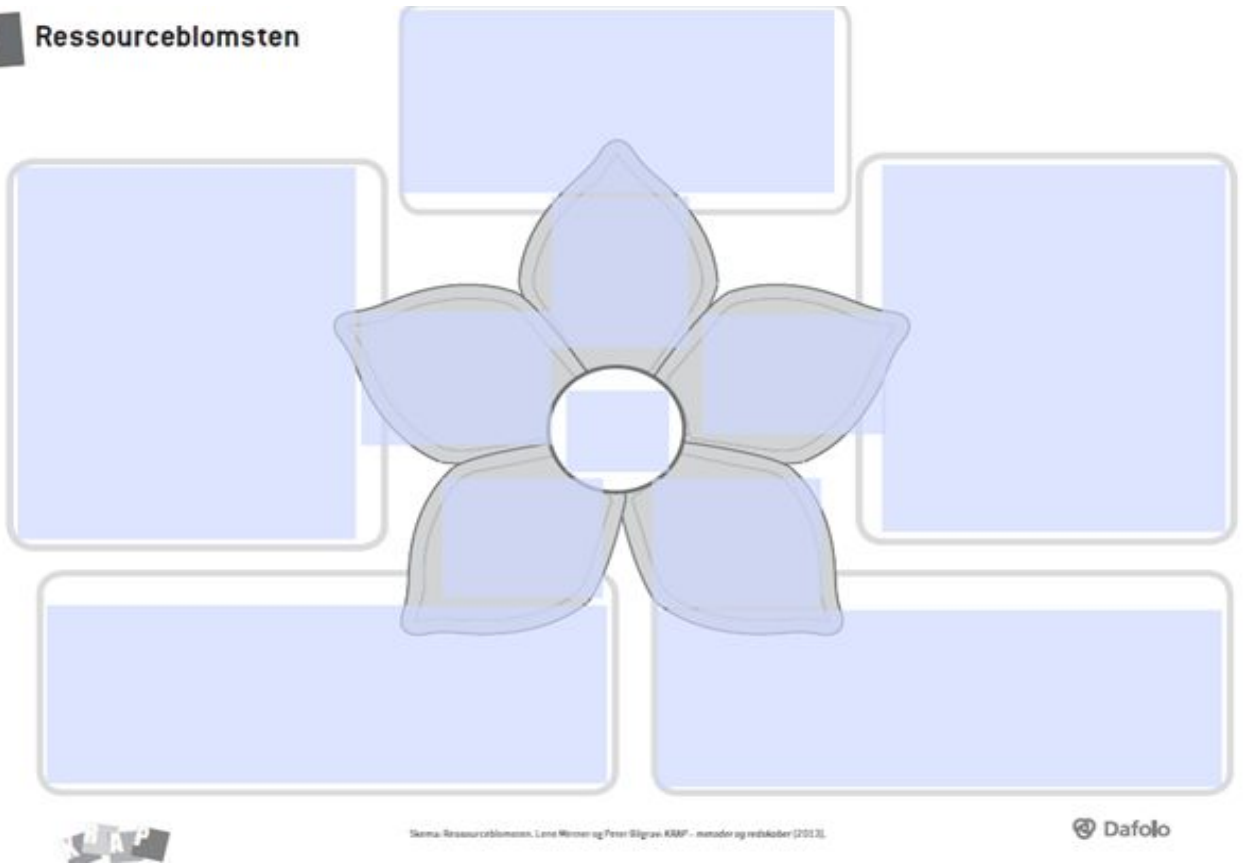
- Use *The Resource Flower*
  - Individually fill out two flowers: one for the teacher and one for the student.
  - Flower 1: What makes a good teacher great?
  - Flower 2: What makes a good student great?

#### 2. Group task

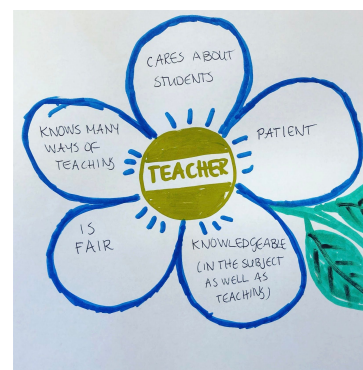
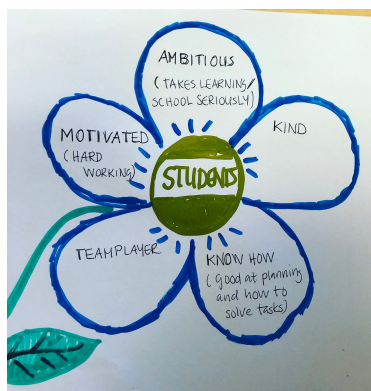
- Discuss in groups your individual resource flowers.
- Agree on five words / sentences about the teacher and five things about the student.
- In your group fill out two flowers with the sentences you have agreed on about the teacher and the student.



## 5 Ressourceblomsten



The flower filled in with students' replies.





## 7.2 Teacher activities

### 7.2.1 What makes a good teacher great?

Watch Ted talk by Azul Terrones

<https://youtu.be/vrU6YJle6Q4>

1. Give every teacher 5 post-it notes and ask them to mention one quality ( 1/post-it note) that a great teacher has.
2. Then collect the ideas by grouping the ideas that have the same “topic” on a whiteboard
3. Discuss what these qualities really mean. For instance, if someone has put “caring” on a post-it. What does it mean to be a caring teacher? What does a caring teacher do?
4. Share the ideas with the teachers of your school.
5. Let all participants individually think if there is one or more characteristics of a great teacher you want to improve. What has prevented you from making it happen so far? What will be your next step to improve your skills.

The Finnish team asked the teachers of Hj. Nortamo comprehensive school the question “What makes a great teacher”. Each teacher wrote down three words describing a great teacher. The answers could be listed under the following topics:

A great teacher...

\*cares for the students, is fair, empathic, present and listens to the students (27 answers)

\*has discipline in the classroom, has clear rules (17 answers)\*is professional and excited about his/her own subject, is dedicated (16 answers)

\*has good social skills, is flexible (12 answers)

\*is supportive (8 answers)

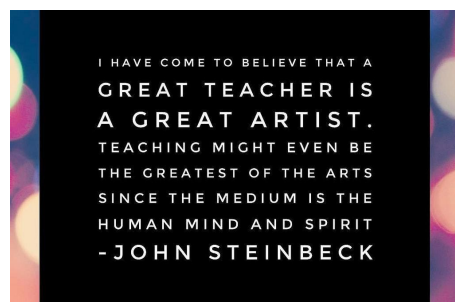
\*is patient (4 answers)

\*is a self-confident adult (4 answers)

\*is creative (3 answers)

\*has a sense of humor (2 answers)

\*smiles (1 answer)



### 7.2.2 Teacher learning visits

Mutual observation of teacher’s teaching followed by a discussion of the metacognitive techniques used can help the teachers develop more consciousness on the way they teach. Therefore the following grid has been elaborated. Each country submitted a reflection on the main results of the classroom visits which took place in each school.

#### Teacher learning visit

##### Classroom management techniques

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Connection with students    |  |
| Motivation                  |  |
| Collaboration/Inclusiveness |  |

##### Teaching Methods

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Metacognitive Strategies</p> <p>learning from mistakes</p> <p>writing post-it notes</p> <p>tests</p> <p>heuristics (problem solving strategies)</p> <p>summarizing</p> <p>making inferences</p> <p>thinking alouds (repeating, slowing down)</p> <p>time-planning</p> <p>elaborating to prior knowledge</p> <p>planning</p> <p>self-evaluating</p> <p>monitoring</p> <p>goal-setting (SMART)</p> <p>using thinking journals</p> | <p>brainstorming</p> <p>skimming</p> <p>drawing timelines</p> <p>using cognitive organizers (grouping,listing, mind-mapping)</p> <p>playing learning games</p> <p>note taking</p> <p>imagery (colouring, drawing)</p> <p>drawing diagrams</p> <p>reading aloud</p> <p>learning by hearing</p> <p>learning by seeing</p> <p>learning by doing</p> <p>resourcing</p> <p>detection (underlining, overlining)</p> <p>using music (rhyming, rapping)</p> <p>peer teaching</p> <p>asking each other questions</p> <p>critical thinking</p> |
|--|--|

##### Other Observations:

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## Chapter 8 Metacognition and life management

Today many people are suffering from stress. We live our lives constantly accessible through our smartphones and a lot of young people feel pressure to perform well in school as well as to fit in socially with their peers.

A hectic life is normal for most people and will not change, but you can choose how you will allow it to affect you. By planning you can make the most of your time. By listening to your body and give it what it needs, nutritious food, enough sleep, and time to relax, you will be a better version of yourself. Take control of your thoughts and do things that are good for you in the long run.

### 8.1 Finnish mobility 26th January - 2nd February 2019

In our Erasmus+ Master –project the fourth mobility was to be held in Finland in the end of January 2019. The main theme of the mobility was ***life management and metacognitive strategies in life***, which can be seen to cover three different areas such as ***how to deal with stress***, ***how to become a responsible adult*** and ***how to succeed in life***. Nature being our “common thread” of the week, we wanted to look at these three areas from the nature’s point of view.

Firstly, the topic of ***how to deal with stress*** requires a basic understanding of the importance of the right amount of sleep and daily exercise as well as the meaning of healthy nutrition and interests in life. During the week we tried to take a deeper look at these issues by using the methods of mindfulness, the impacts of traditional Finnish sauna, ice-swimming, and hiking in the middle of pure, fresh, and snowy nature.

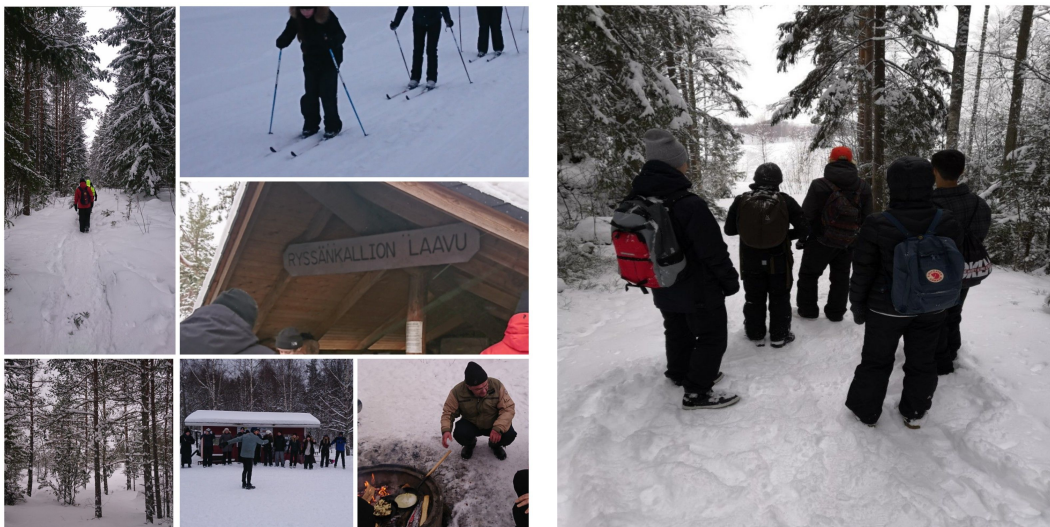
Secondly, the theme of ***how to become a responsible adult*** is based on the understanding of how to take others into consideration. In order to give our youngsters a deeper, nature-based experience of the meaning of the responsibilities the adulthood will bring, we decided to give the students a lesson of everyman’s rights and responsibilities in the nature wilderness. Furthermore, we wanted them to start thinking about the meaning of recycling in general and what everyone is able to do on an individual basis.

Thirdly, ***how to succeed in life*** depends very much on the ability of mastering metacognition and metacognitive strategies. Mastering metacognition means understanding how the brain works as well as understanding how feelings and actions are connected, and how they can be guided towards certain actions. Possessing or teaching oneself to have a positive inner attitude (growth mindset) when facing challenges in life, plays an important role in succeeding in life. Moreover, knowing what metacognitive strategies are and being able to choose the right ones for oneself in certain situations can be seen as the key to succeed in learning and in life.

From day 1 the students were divided into 6 international groups and given 5 different group tasks, which, every day, had to be thought over individually by keeping a learning diary. The students filled in a metacognitive strategies’ chart and answered some open-ended

questions concerning reflections of chosen strategies as well as personal feelings when facing any challenge. Thus, as the students kept this learning diary on the strategies they had used, they became more aware of the different strategies and began to choose the most suitable ones for every situation. They also reflected their growth mindset the whole week. Everyone's learning diaries played an important role at the end of the week. The final task for the groups was to share their experiences within the groups, discuss their learning diaries, and make a presentation of the topic ***Keep calm and manage your life***. These six outcomes of the week were to serve as one bigger outcome of the whole MASTER project proving a thorough learning of the life management as such.

In the opinion of the Finnish Team, the week was successful and full of joy. The students worked smoothly in the groups, they were enthusiastic to participate whatever the task were, they accomplished the homework of keeping the diary and finally were able to make excellent presentations of their experiences during the week. These presentations really served as a perfect outcome of the whole two-year project and they can be found on the official webpage of the project (<https://mastererasmusplus.blogspot.com>)



## 8.2 Student activities of the week and learning diary

The learning diary was based on the experiences of the activities during the week. In the evening the students wrote about their feelings when facing a challenge and picked different metacognitive strategies they had used during the group task. Obviously, the learning diary as such would have no sense to be included, so we want to present the idea of it day by day.

## Day 1. NATURE

During the mobility we used an educational game application called Seppo (seppo.io). The teacher creates game tasks and locates them on the map. The game can be played in any selected area. Students try to solve the tasks in teams using their mobile devices.

As said, the nature was our “common thread”. Group task 1 was situated by and on a frozen lake and it was -20 degrees. “Silent walk” was the name of the game and it led the students to understand the concept of mindfulness. The students were supposed to follow a snowy path, and as they got near a certain point a task opened on their phones. They completed the task by answering the questions together and taking a selfie and then sending the answers to the teacher.

**Stage 1** Be silent, close your eyes. Stay like this for a minute. Take six deep breaths. How does the air feel? Open your eyes and take a calm and relaxed group selfie. Mindfulness is about being silent and taking control of one's breathing.

**Stage 2** Take your gloves off and grab some snow in your hands. How does the snow feel? Make a snowball and set it on your head. Stand on one foot. Take a picture of the group with the snowballs on everyone's head. Mindfulness is also being able to have a certain balance in life!

**Stage 3** Lay on your back in the snow and make very peacefully a beautiful snow angel. Stop and look upon you. What do you see? Think about three things that you see and share them with your group. Take one photo of the angels of the group and another group selfie of a very snowy you :) Mindfulness is about being able to take a little while for oneself and to see the world from a different point of view.



**Stage 4** Be very silent. Listen to both yourself and the nature around you very carefully. What do you hear? Think about three different voices and share them whispering with your group. Please, write your thoughts. Finally, take a group selfie showing that you really, really are capable of listening! Mindfulness is knowing how to hear the voices inside you as well as around you!

**Final stage** Please, stay silent and go and change your clothes in the dressing room. A wonderful and thorough experience of hot and cold is waiting for you as you enter the sauna and then later dip yourself into the ice-cold water. In the sauna you are supposed to remain silent and to move carefully.

This experience is 100% Finnish and it will calm you down, relax and decrease your blood pressure. Mindfulness, indeed! Take a group selfie before entering the water or sauna!

## Day 2. SLEEP, NUTRITION AND SPORT

On day 2 the students were given the second group task to reflect in their international group the meaning of sleep, nutrition and personal interests. They shared their ideas and made posters. In the afternoon students were taken to a nearby ice stadium and they had a chance to try skating



## Day 3. NATURE AND CULTURE

On day 3 the students were taken to a recreational centre. We used Seppo-game again to introduce the students a Finnish way to relate with nature and to present everyman's rights and responsibilities when being outdoors. In the morning the international groups hiked a 5 kilometres long path in the middle of the snowy forest and completed the following tasks (stages).

**Stage 1** You can walk and spend time in Finnish nature quite freely. Take a group selfie showing that you are true nature lovers!

**Stage 2** For the Finns nature is a place to escape duties and rush. Did you know that only 20 minutes walk a day in a quiet and fresh forest decreases significantly stress, improves our ability to focus, and it can also reduce our pulse rate and blood pressure? Take a good and long breath and smile: you are in the middle of the snowy forest together with your friends! Take a group selfie where you smile and shine!

**Stage 3** In Finnish nature we are allowed to light a fire when using a camping stove. Open fires are allowed only at the campfire sites. Elsewhere it is prohibited to light open fire without landowner's permission. Enjoy your packed meal here without hurrying but remember to make room for the newcomers when you are ready to continue your hike. Take a group selfie with delicious "makkaras" in your hand :)

**Stage 4** In summer and autumn forests and meadows are important sources of beautiful flowers and delicious berries and mushrooms for many Finns. Everyman's right includes the possibility of picking the fruits of the forests if they are not protected species. Did you know that an ordinary person can also sell berries, mushrooms and flowers at the marketplaces without having to pay taxes? It is said

that millions of euros are left in the Finnish forests every year! Take a group selfie where you are really thinking about that sum of money!

**Stage 5** You are now walking on a route that is often called a "dog path". Many people think that it is possible to let dogs run free here. However, according to the Public order Act, dogs must be kept on a leash or in the immediate vicinity of the handler so that they can easily be leashed if necessary. Letting them run free is only possible if the landowner gives permission for it. Take a group selfie where one of you plays a role of a dog handler others being his/her well-behaving pets ☺

**Stage 6** Can you see any cross-country skiers skiing on the frozen lake? Anyone ice-fishing there? What about snowmobiles driving on the lake? Yes, according to everyman's right, it is possible to walk, ski, fish, and drive a snowmobile on frozen lakes, rivers, and the sea. Take a group selfie where you are all gazing at the people enjoying the wintry weather on ice!

**Stage 7** Hiking in nature helps soothe the mind and improve one's mood and concentration. It can also reduce physical symptoms and accelerate recovery from illnesses. How are you feeling right now? Have you enjoyed the hike? Take a group selfie where you show how relaxed and happy you are!

**Final stage** "Leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but memories! "

Hikers should not leave any traces of their visits, meaning that you should stay on marked trails to prevent erosion and leave no trash behind. If you are able to carry a full bottle of water with you, you certainly are strong enough to carry the empty bottle back home. If you drop a piece of handkerchief, it will take 1-2 years to degrade. If you spit chewing gum on the ground, it will stay there for 20-25 years! Why would you harm nature like that? Little things can be really meaningful. A true nature lover also picks trash other people have left behind them. Take the final group selfie. Show somehow that you all are true nature lovers and ready to become a bit more responsible adults!

In the afternoon, the students were able to try sledge sliding, cross-country skiing in a skiing school, skating and they could enjoy hot drinks and pancakes by the fire.

As an individual task the students were asked to reflect on the day's experiences by writing their thoughts in their learning diaries.

**Individual task 1:** Outdoor activities. What was interesting? What seemed difficult or dangerous? What did you try? What did you like the most?

#### Day 4. BECOMING A (MORE) RESPONSIBLE ADULT

In the morning the students were taken to a local waste management site, where they were told about recycling in Finland. At noon the students played Seppo-game for the third time in their international groups. Now they had to complete tasks concerning recycling. These tasks are underneath.

**Stage 1** You have come to a recycling point of Hj. Nortamo Comprehensive School. You are carrying a box of different kinds of things to be recycled. Make a short movie of your group recycling correctly.

**Stage 2** You have now come to the place where you can leave used batteries. Before placing batteries in a receptacle, please cover the terminals of the batteries with adhesive tape. A bit further, inside the store, you will find a bottle bank where you can return all that you have left (hopefully).

Continue making the movie about recycling! Finally, you may very well enjoy the little sum of money you have gained by returning the deposit bottles and cans.

In the afternoon the students started working with their final work of the week in the same international groups as before. They had to plan their work with SMART and decide how they were going to present it on day 5.

#### Day 5. WORK AND JOY

On day 5 the students finished the outcomes of the week to be presented in the evening's farewell party. The presentations included the students' reflections (individual task 2) on the week's experiences.

**Individual task 2:** Reflection on the week. Write some thoughts how well you did in different group tasks and how you managed your week in general.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <u>Metacognitive Strategies</u>           | brainstorming  |
| flashcards                                | skimming   |
| learning from mistakes                    | drawing timelines  |
| writing post-it notes                     | using cognitive organizers (grouping, listing, mind-mapping) |
| tests                                     | playing learning games                                       |
| heuristics (problem solving strategies)   | note taking  |
| summarizing                               | imagery (colouring, drawing)                                 |
| making inferences                         | drawing diagrams   |
| thinking alouds (repeating, slowing down) | reading aloud  |
| time-planning                             | learning by hearing  |
| elaborating to prior knowledge            | learning by seeing   |
| planning                                  | learning by doing  |
| self-evaluating                           | resourcing   |
| monitoring                                | detection (underlining, overlining)                          |
| goal-setting (SMART)                      | using music (rhyming, rapping)                               |
| using thinking journals                   | peer teaching  |
| using drama                               | asking each other questions                                  |
| debating                                  | critical thinking  |
| working in a group                        | using imagination, memory rules                              |



## Chapter 9 Metacognition and preparing for the future

As the last and finishing mobility in the project the Swedish mobility focused on looking forward towards the future and the problems we are facing concerning our environment. Working with the different tasks to prepare for the mobility the students had to use many of the metacognitive strategies taught during this project.

### 9.1 Student activity: UN role play

To get prepared for one of the activities to be developed in the mobility in Sweden, students at their home schools had to prepare for a UN role play. They got information about the United Nations, UN Assemblies, UN resolutions and how to write and develop one. Each country was given a country different from their own and they had to prepare a resolution to be presented in Sweden.



### 9.2 Student activity: Future jobs

The labour market is constantly changing. Many jobs will disappear due to machines taking over. Computers make it possible for us to do things ourselves e.g. we can do bank arrements online, and more and more people buy things online rather than in physical shops. New jobs are also created.

#### The task

Your task is together with your group to brainstorm about which jobs will be popular in 2034.

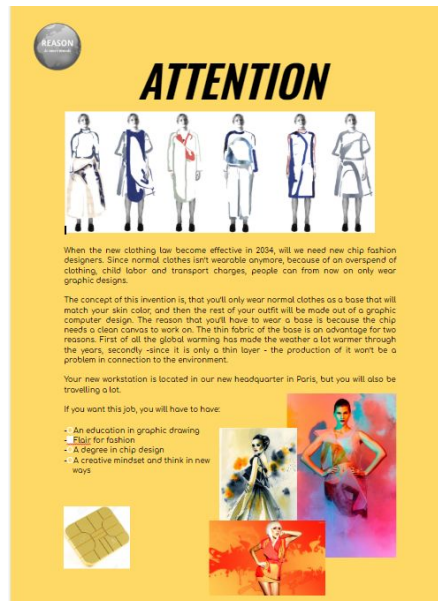
Decide on two jobs and make an advertisement for these jobs.

A job ad should contain

- A great headline with the job title you are looking for
- A short presentation of the company
- A short presentation of the job
- Experiences and qualifications required for the job

Your ad will be competing with other companies about the best people - make it pop!

Below you can see an example of an advertisement made by a group of students.



### 9.3 Swedish mobility 18th - 24th May 2019

The mobility in Sweden was the last one in our project. The topic for the last semester of the project which was applicable for the final meeting was “Using strategies for learning, and learning metacognitive strategies for self monitoring, becoming a self regulated learner and learning to use metacognitive strategies for other areas in life”

This mobility was sort of the final exam for the project students and we put them up for a test. We wanted to see what they have learnt as well as let more students from the Swedish school to join. As this was a very hectic time in the school year and the MASTER students were in the final year we also brought the MASTER guests to the school activities. During this mobility the overall topic was future where we focused on the environment.

#### Day 1

When a new group is formed for a mobility it is always important to unite the group. We did so by organizing a speed date where we used a lot of different questions both about the project and more general topics. Example of questions about metacognitive strategies were:

- What is your best advice to someone that wants to perform well in school? And why?
- How do you keep track of things you need to remember in school or elsewhere?
- How do you get balance in your life?
- Name as many reading techniques as you can. When can they be useful.
- Why is repetition important in learning?

By doing this activity students not only talked to everyone in the group, but they also repeated what they have learnt.

Next activity, which we have done during all mobilities, is that every country has made a presentation of themselves, their schools, and their hometowns. When they do so, they practice to take out important information, present information in a funny way, and are also practising to talk to a group as well as listening.

#### Day 2 Future skills

We had prepared by thinking about the future labour market and created jobs which we think will exist in the future. We had a workshop for the students where they learnt how to write a job application and a CV. We used the groups as a tool for feedback. During the afternoon we visited a park, where we did different group activities and the students got to know each other a bit better.

#### Day 3

In the morning we went to the forest to take part in an orienteering activity. For many of the students this was the first time they tried to read a map and also to be in a forest. Being in nature and exercise is a good way to deal with stress.

We had a cheat sheet for the students on how to interview a job applicant so they could practice their interview as well as how to be interviewed. Afterwards we talked about what it felt like to be interviewed and if they would do anything differently if they would be interviewed for a job.

#### Day 4

The importance of sustainability was incorporated in the programme by visiting the World Culture Museum where we held the workshop "Everything is connected - Human nature". We learnt how human activity is affecting the environment and how we can make better choices in our everyday life. The students were very engaged in the climate change problems.

#### Day 5

Model UN about the environment. All our students had prepared for weeks and used all the different techniques we have trained in this project. The students have worked in groups of 3-5 people.

- All the students have written a short summary about the history of their country (take out important facts).
- Economy (Learning new terms) Making a conclusion of the financial situation in the country.
- Democracy
- Environment. Which impact does this country has on global climate? What can this country do better to help the environment? How can this country influence global politics in order to improve the environment?
- Political situation

During this process all the groups wrote a log book.

- What have you accomplished since last lesson?
- Divide the work in the group (plan).
- How did the work go? Did you have any problems? Do you need help? By whom? Do you have to do anything differently next time? (Evaluating and monitoring behaviour).
- The students wrote a resolution and made a speech for the general assembly.
- During the General assembly students were negotiating and finally voted on a resolution (negotiating skills)

This was the last student mobility. Students had learnt a lot about the topics concerning this project. They had also learnt more about everyday life, how to take care of themselves and to build confidence.



## Final thoughts

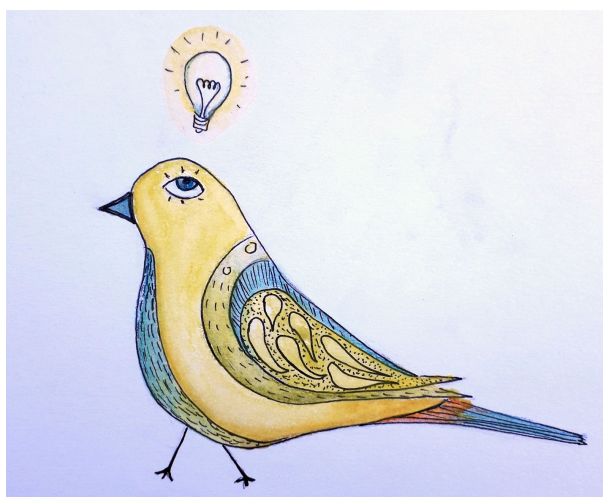
### Teachers' testimonials about "the Master plan"

During this project I have more and more given responsibility to students. They had to take charge of studying and learning themselves. We have also talked more about setting goals and different ways to achieve them. Students have to think which way is the best in order to learn things. For me the most important thing is the growth mindset. It's a thing that has to be known and assimilated. Metacognitive strategies are on the carpet and we use different strategies in different tasks. It is important that students are aware of metacognitive strategies and will use them in the learning process. We use different strategies in the classroom and I hope students will get many tools for studying in the future.

Titta Aitavaara, Finnish language and literature teacher, Finland

In my teaching I tend to emphasize the ability of oral communication, and that is why I am thrilled when I can offer international contacts for my students. I also try to encourage my students to believe in themselves and to be wise language learners. When there is a strong will and courage to improve oneself, no matter the situation, the improvement will inevitably happen. Not only these aspects were perfectly connected in this project, but also the idea of improving one's metacognition. Being wise, indeed! Metacognitive strategies, and knowing how to use them in foreign language learning are absolutely the key to success.

Johanna Koukkari, teacher of English, French and Spanish, Finland



picture7 *Bird with ideas*

Sharing ideas, thoughts and helping each other is a natural part of our school day. However, both growth mindset and metacognitive strategies inspired us and we included parts from both in our teaching and will also do it forwards. Discussing and working with colleagues from other countries and school cultures has inspired us and made us reflect upon our own teaching. These reflections are always valuable and raise awareness on our own teaching practice.

Birgitte Mørck Rugholm and Lone Bruun Jepsen,  
Danish and English teachers, Denmark

The major gain of this project is that it gave me the theoretical background of things that I was already using in my class, although I had never heard about metacognition. Studying the theory behind the metacognitive strategies, helped me organise my classes better and redefine the targets of my teaching. This project was a great experience for the students that took part in it. Through the tasks that they had to complete, they learned to be more responsible, cooperative and creative. They also became more active, participating in initiatives that aim to make the school better.

Apostolis Papagiannis, headmaster of the Greek school, Maths and ICT teacher, Greece

In this project pupils were encouraged to use their imagination for setting future goals and reflect upon the necessary steps to achieve them. This is a very important step for learning to manage their life and assume responsibility for themselves. They were also invited to think on the difficulties they face when they learn and how they can overcome them. They learnt that learning is an on-going process towards personal and collective growth. The best memory from this project was having the chance to work in an international framework collaborating with teachers from other countries and co-creating students and teaching activities by sharing common goals.

Eirini Bataki, German teacher, Greece

I have learnt to collaborate more with my partners and share techniques and ideas that they use or are using in their classes. I also use group work in class more than before and encourage students to collaborate among themselves helping each other in their learning process. As for my subject, students have realised that being fluent in English is essential to be able to communicate with people from different countries and they take the subject a bit more seriously. It has also made them more open-minded and tolerant to other cultures as well as better European citizens making them more curious to learn about other countries, their cultures, and lifestyles.

Marife García Ros, English teacher, Spain

I believe that my approach to teaching has changed, because students have shown that they are capable of doing many things on their own. Also, if you let them work, they learn better. I believe that they have taken a lot of confidence in themselves, and that will allow them to advance their studies in different ways.

Eva Pedrós Costa, Maths and technical drawing teacher, Spain

Planning and setting learning goals has been useful for students. We did a planning worksheets with one of our classes. That was a game changer for some of the students with learning difficulties as they got visual map over things that should be accomplished and also got help to plan things that for some reason had not been done. That was also useful for teachers and parents in helping the students. Moreover, by changing the vocabulary rather



to say “not achieved” the general learning goals or personal learning goals we have used “not yet achieved” as a reminder that learning is a process and that all students who are willing to practice, evaluate, and moderate will constantly improve and that we also can learn from minor setbacks. All students directly involved with the project have really grown as students and as people. They have challenged themselves and have pushed their limits forward in their believe in what they are capable of. The best memory in this Erasmus Project was to see our students grow as individuals and see them learn and have fun with students from other countries. To see how brave and open-minded our students are gives us hope for a better world where diversity is embraced and people learn from each other, together to create a better world.

Rose-Marie Conway, Social studies and Swedish teacher, Project Coordinator

Lisa Saur, Spanish and English teacher, Sweden

