

STORYTELLING

cookbook



Storytelling Cookbook – a practical guide for teachers, youth workers and educators on how to use storytelling to enhance creativity and learning, 2016

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Within this strategic partnership there were three international training courses – one hosted by each organisation – and one forum on creative learning methods, several local workshops, as well as the publishing of a number of online resources and three toolkits. You’re reading one of these toolkits right now.

The main aim of the project was to raise the quality of educational and training activities in the context of formal and non-formal education by developing innovative approaches and methods in innovative teaching, training and learning whilst supporting the exchange and dissemination of best practices and creative educational tools. A large part of the exercises included in this toolkit were tested or developed during the international training course “Storytelling+” on storytelling and how to use it to enhance learning and creativity in life, youth work and classrooms that took place in Austria, in 2015, and gathered 19 youth workers and educators. Throughout this publication, you will find quotations of the feedback given by the participants of that training course.

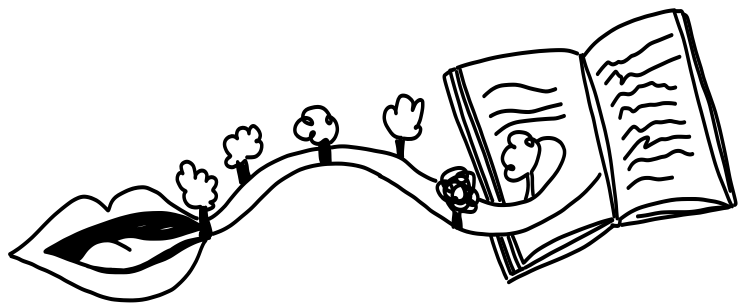
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What is Storytelling?

Storytelling is an art form, which is why it is also called “The Art of Telling Stories”. Storytelling as such is as old as language itself. Human beings are designed to live by telling and listening to stories. From the earliest beginnings of history, our understanding of the world around us has been passed on through stories. The experience of sharing stories with others bonds and unites communities and cultures.

A statement by the National Storytelling Network defines storytelling as an ancient art form and a valuable form of human expression. Because “story” is essential to so many art forms, however, the word “storytelling” is often used in many ways.



Storytelling represents, as such, a distinguished art, the art of telling a story, in which there are six specific elements that exist in any telling:

- the representation of a story
- interactivity
- verbal or semiotic language
- “showing” the story
- usage of actions such as vocalisation, physical movement and/or gesture
- encouragement of the active imagination of the listeners.

With time and practice these specific elements can be improved by any storyteller.

Storytelling and the Representation of a Story

Storytelling always involves the presentation of a story – a narrative path. Many other art forms also present stories, but storytelling presents it with the six elements stated above. There are many definitions of what a story is. Every culture has

“Storytelling is one of the oldest educational techniques known to mankind. Partly the learning points can be obvious and explicit, but they can also be hidden or accessible only through interpretation and reflection. An advantage of highly metaphorical or symbolical stories is that people can get all different learning points out of it, depending on their individual needs, conditions, realities and phase in life. Actually, there is no objective truth, there is only subjective reality, each individual has his or her own interpretation of reality, and as such we all always tell stories – the stories of our interpretation of the world.”

**Nikita Kljukin (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+**

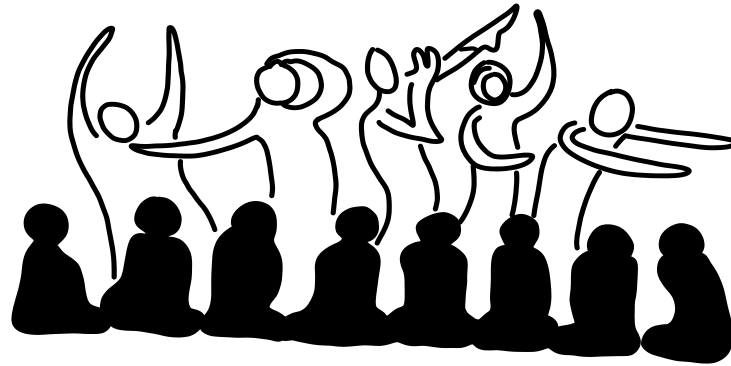
its own definition of story. Art forms such as poetry recitation and stand-up comedy sometimes present stories and sometimes they do not. Since they generally involve the other components, they can be regarded as forms and means of storytelling whenever they also present stories.

Storytelling is interactive

Storytelling involves an interaction between the storyteller and one or more listeners. The reactions of the listener(s) influences and shapes the telling of the story. In fact, storytelling emerges from the narrative path (the story itself) and the interaction and the dialogue. It represents a coordinated effort of the teller and the audience.

In particular, storytelling does not create a barrier between the speaker and the listeners, it creates a connection. This is what distinguishes storytelling from the forms of theatre that use an imaginary “fourth wall.”

There are different forms of interactions and roles between storyteller and audience. Different cultures and situations create different expectations for the exact roles of storyteller and listener(s)—who speaks, how often and when, for example—



and therefore create different forms of interaction. The interactive aspect of storytelling allows for a great impact, a great sense of living in the present moment and sharing the same common knowledge regarding the story. This brings a sense of intimacy and community, an extraordinary connection between the storyteller and the audience.

Storytelling and the verbal Language

Storytelling uses language, a rich and diverse language. The use of language distinguishes storytelling from most forms of dance and mime. The flow of the story is followed also with the help of the words.

“When using storytelling, sometimes the “feeling” becomes stronger than the “thinking” for the audience, which can be used in a positive way for example to break prejudices and stereotypes by making the audience feel empathy with a person facing exclusion or discrimination.”

**Maria Brachtel (Austria),
participant at Storytelling+**

“It is important that a storyteller is passionate about the story, and also that the storyteller should be honest and authentic with the audience, because, if not, the audience will not be willing to “enter” the story.”

**Liene Millere (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

Storytelling uses Actions such as Vocalisation, Physical Movement and/or Gesture

Non-verbal language and the use of the voice are well connected with the narrative path. The usage of these elements distinguishes storytelling from writing and text-based computer interactions, or stories. The storyteller will choose how much non-verbal language behaviour needs to be present in storytelling. Some storytellers use body movement extensively, making them similar to actors, for example, whereas others use little, or none. It all depends on the personality of the storyteller, the story itself and the environment.

Music used as a Background in Storytelling Sessions

It is a widely known fact that music is an incredible tool for expressing emotions and feelings and capturing our internal experience of life. Used in Storytelling sessions, music gives much more power to the story, so simple, yet so effective. Given the emotionally charged nature of music, it can be an incredibly effective way to express the persons' feelings at a deeper level and to cope better

with the challenges of a story. When using music while telling a story it affects how participants see even the visual images. The interpretations of the same set of words can differ and give a total different meaning when listening to different pieces of music. Researchers found that music is powerfully influencing the emotional ratings of the faces. Happy music made happy faces seem even happier while sad music exaggerated the melancholy of a frown. Same like in creative writing or free writing you can use different styles of music to boost the creativity of your storytellers and listeners. The diversity of the style will turn the characters of the story in a much more dynamic state, therefore it will enrich the story plot.

“Showing” the Story is more than telling it

Storytelling promotes the active imagination of the listener(s). In storytelling, the audience imagines the story because the storyteller is adding vivid elements to an empty spot in the imagination of their listeners; as a painter begins a painting. In most traditional theatre, or in a typical dramatic film, on the other hand, the listener enjoys the illusion that they are actually witnessing

“Storytelling is the way that we preferably store and transmit information. But on top of being very easy for the brain to compute, the stories go straight to the heart of the listener. Stories allow us to create connections, connections between concepts and connections between people. We link stories to our personal lives.”

Sandra Horea,
trainer at Storytelling+

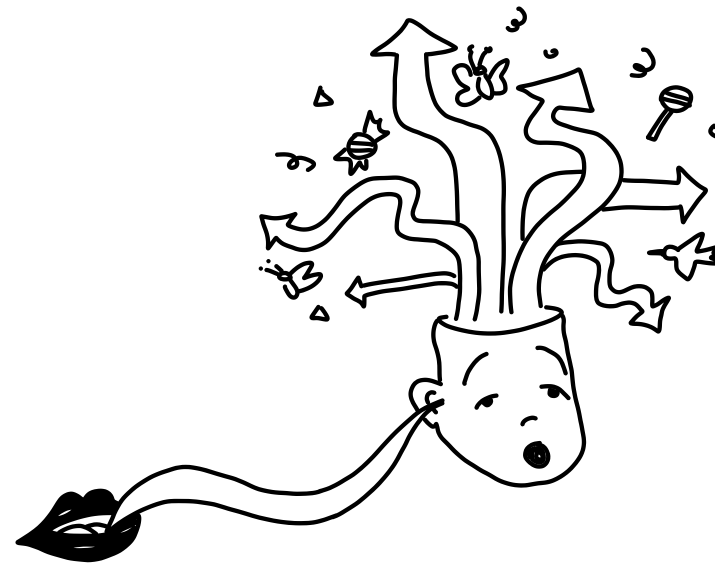
“Some of the most powerful stories are the ones written by life itself.”

MarCus Vreccer (Austria),
trainer at “Storytelling+”

the character(s) or event(s) described in the story. The role of the storytelling audience is to actively create the vivid, multi-sensory images, actions, characters, and events—the reality—of the story in their mind, based on the performance by the storyteller (the narrative path, the verbal language, the nonverbal language, the environment) and from past experiences, beliefs and understandings. The completed story happens in the mind of the listener(s), creating a unique story. The listener(s) becomes, therefore, co-creator(s) of the story, as experienced.

Storytelling can easily be combined with other art forms. The contemporary storytelling movement includes the development of ways to combine storytelling with drama, music, dance, comedy, puppetry, cooking, netting and numerous other forms of expression.

Storytelling happens in many situations, from advertising and marketing to kitchen-table conversation; from religious ritual to performances for thousands of paying listeners. Some storytelling



situations demand informality, others are highly formal. Some demand certain themes, attitudes, and artistic approaches. As noted above, expectations concerning listener interaction and the nature of the story itself vary widely.

There are many cultures, each with rich traditions, customs and opportunities for storytelling. All these forms of storytelling are valuable. All in all, we all are made of stories, aren't we?

“Storytelling helps me to make my lessons as an English teacher more interactive and inspirational. I don't think you can learn so much from theory and books, it is a lot more efficient to practice and to learn by doing.”

**Svetlana Starodumova (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+**

Storytelling as a (non-formal) Method of Education

Storytelling has also been elaborated and transformed into a powerful and valuable method of non-formal education which is used by educators, teachers and youth workers.

The method has three main elements that make up the storytelling session: the Story, the Storyteller and the Audience. When talking about the Story, one can notice that we have many types of stories: for example personal stories, well-known stories and unwritten stories, the ones that are created on the spot, etc. Storytelling has no age limit, with regards to both Storyteller and the Audience. When we speak about a good Storyteller, we do not refer only to their artistry, to the skills that can be developed with time, but also to the relationship created with the Audience. Storytelling represents a safe and inspiring environment for those who take part, a place where they can reflect, discover, communicate, find solutions, get involved – all of this depending on how open they are willing to be. The communication between

these three elements is what maintains a storytelling session, by giving power to both the people and messages involved.

Storytelling in education is used among other to create awareness, foster understanding, invite for reflection and discussion, spark curiosity, establish identity and rituals. In other words it is a lot about values, feelings, beliefs and concepts. But literally any subject or learning objective can be conveyed, or at least supported by storytelling, give it a try for instance for financial accounting, it works!

Planning the Storytelling Activity

When planning a storytelling session, you have to first think of the aim(s) that you have, in other words consider the messages, the values to be transmitted and the target audience. Be there! The involvement of the storyteller is crucial to the act of communication, the attachment of the storyteller to the story gives authenticity to the process. Regarding the setting: Be creative! Listeners

“One of the most important things I am taking home from this training course on storytelling is the feedback I received from my colleagues on how the audience reacts to me and on the impression I am leaving on my audience as a storyteller. I think feedback can really help you to develop yourself, and you should always be keen to ask for critical feedback if you are interested in improving yourself.”

**Johannes Herbert Tamegger (Austria),
participant at Storytelling+**

should sit comfortably, but at the same time enter a space meant for stories to happen. You can add value to the setting by using a special carpet, music, scarves, flowers or different objects that appear in the story and help create a vivid atmosphere.

Entering the Story

Before the actual act of telling the story (with emphasis on telling and not reading!), make sure everybody involved is present. Here and now! This means for example preparing a short theme-related activity in which the audience exchange ideas, communicate about themselves and get used to the elements of the story. You can use group activities, interviews, IT media, self-expression activities, improvising activities, multisensory activities, etc.

Telling the Story (Storytelling)

When telling the story, you should take into consideration the fact that there are elements like tone, volume, pauses, pitch, gestures, stress/emphasis, sounds, etc., which help the narrator to better transmit the story. These are personal elements that every storyteller can prepare and bring to perfection with time. You can also use other elements, like audio and visual elements, movement, touch-

ing, etc., which will make the audience more attentive and caught-up in following the plot of the story. It is vital to maintain contact with the audience, create suspense, raise interest through questions etc. In other words, communicating and at the same time actively listening to the audience.

Although anyone can tell a story, it takes skill and practice to become better at telling a story. Some of the skills needed might include:

- Ordering and remembering a narrative
- Speaking clearly and projecting the voice
- Empathising with various points of view
- Building a relationship with the audience
- Improvising based on the interaction with the audience
- Using body language to support a narrative

Leaving the Story

At this stage the story belongs to the audience. They added their own imagination and feelings, and experienced the story in a very personal way. It is time for them to take initiative and be involved in follow-up activities such as: debates, conventional and shadow theatre plays, creative writing sessions, drawing, etc.

“What does it take to be a good storyteller? Creativeness, attention to details in order to add colour to your story, the ability to be flexible in the process and embrace whatever comes along, and the ability to establish a strong connection with the audience and create impressive atmospheres.”

**Edmons Gruduls (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

“I think everybody can become a good storyteller, it is something already inside us. What is always important is presence, a good sense of presence.”

**Jana Katarina Harrer (Austria),
participant at Storytelling+**

Storytelling Types

There are many different ways and techniques a story can be told.

Digital Storytelling

Technology has not replaced the power of one person telling a story, however, these two elements are very important for a young audience and can be combined. Digital Storytelling combines the tradition of storytelling with digital technology. That means that anybody with a computer and a story to tell can create a short video that can be produced on the web, on a CD or a DVD. Compared to a movie, a digital story is like a postcard. The typical digital story is usually from two to five minutes long. Digital stories can be as creative or as simple as the person who creates them wants. All that is needed are pictures, background music and a story to tell. Digital storytelling begins with a story. The best way to begin is by choosing a story or creating one. Shorter stories work better for this medium. The first step is to narrate the story, then to add some audio elements—music and sound effects—titles and transitions and

then, the second step is to show it to as many people as possible. This can be done within different workshops or classes, or through the internet.

Historytelling

This type of Storytelling is used when teaching history classes, or when the aim of the activity is to place an emphasis on a specific historical period. The storyteller, being familiar with the historical period, could choose to tell a story that best reflects the historical reality. The story is not the lesson itself, it is just a descriptive anecdote or a vivid interaction between characters that aims to trigger the emotions and curiosity of the audience in such way that they more easily understand the historical context, personalities, dates and facts. As such, the purpose is to create an authentic flow of the learning process, based on the needs of the learners.

Storytelling starting from Books

This type of Storytelling is usually facilitated in libraries. The storyteller chooses any story that is re-

“A protagonist whose story inspired me a lot is Joseph from the Bible. He is a carpenter like me, and he is a role model for me in terms of family values and modesty.”

**Kristaps Butans (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

lated to the topic they want to tackle and begins by reading the story to the audience; or better, after familiarising themselves with the narrative and other elements of the story, telling the story in front of the audience. In this way, not only is the wonderful power of a story revealed, but also the “storage places” of both libraries and books become more popular and vivid for any target group.

Storytelling based on Creative Writing Techniques

Imagination is the core of creativity. There are many types of stories, such as well-known stories, historical stories, personal stories and also stories that are created with the help of creative writing techniques. This activity should place the listeners in a writing context, which can be done in several ways. By stimulating all the five human senses—sight, sound, taste, smell and touch—the participants can create powerful and richly detailed stories. Having a guided walk whilst being blindfolded, or tasting or smelling different ingredients also whilst blindfolded is an example of a significant method. While the participants are experiencing with their senses, they could be asked several questions in order to build the story, the main

character and the context of it. Having all this information gained from experiences without sight, the participants should have the time needed to write (in pairs or individually) in order to create and shape the story. At the end, the stories could be shared with the whole group.

Storytelling through Treasure Hunt

This is a perfect combination of two methods of non-formal education: Treasure Hunt and Storytelling. Any story that you want to tell can be created in the context of a treasure hunt game. The storyteller leads the process and prepares beforehand a path or route, placing hidden articles in different locations and by using a series of clues that can be identified in the story, while the story is being told. This kind of storytelling may happen indoors or outdoors, during the day or during the night—it depends a lot on the story chosen—usually it requires more space and it is facilitated in a garden or in a park, or even in a forest.

The Two Voices of a Story

This type of storytelling emphasises the fact that there are trillions of stories in this world and that one beginning of a story can lead to a wide va-

“Our lives without stories would be simply huge reports of facts and numbers.”

Edmons Gruduls (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+

“One of the greatest tools I have learned here on this training course is to let the whole group (the audience) create the story, and the storyteller only acts as a catalyst. That way, the story really brings out what the group needs and wants to express.”

Nikita Kljukin (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+

riety of endings. In this activity, the stories that are told are personal stories, anecdotes. The storyteller has two voices: two further storytellers that are placed behind the main storyteller and who don't know the anecdote. The activity starts with the main storyteller who sets the context of their story by telling only the beginning of their anecdote. The story continues with the help of the audience who ask questions about what happens next. The answers are given by the two storytellers that stood behind the main storyteller, as if they were the main character of the story. After the story has been created, the main storyteller will reveal the true story and the both stories can be compared.

Guided Journey (Visualisation and Introspection)

This type of storytelling helps the imagination to envision new possibilities by engaging the audience to listen to a story with their eyes (usually) closed. It is a collaborative process to stimulate reflection, uncover organisational and personal challenges and stimulate creative solutions. Usually, the story told is not well-defined with specific details as it then gives the space for the listener

to add their personal perspective on it. The storyboard should be developed ahead of time by the storyteller choosing a topic and, when delivering it, the storyteller should read it in a low and clear voice.

Storytelling as a non-formal Method of Education (used in different social, cultural and educational contexts)

As described in the previous chapter, storytelling is used as a non-formal method of education in order to enhance the learning and creativity of pupils or young people in schools or youth centres. Its three stages allow the beneficiaries to be prepared for the story, to listen carefully and reflect upon its events and to draw conclusions by developing a proactive attitude where the young people are involved in the post-telling of the story.

Storytelling on Stage (as performance)

This type of storytelling places stories on a real stage. Different stories told by professional actors, puppeteers, storytellers or amateurs are told on the stage in storytelling festivals that are becoming

“What I found really inspirational here at this training course was to learn about the collective plot of the ‘hero’s journey’, this universal structure or arc behind so many stories from all over the world. Actually, I want to apply it to my own life, as my aspiration is to do something spectacular and inspire other people. The hero’s journey can help me design the storyline of my own life.”

Viesturs Lusis (Latvia), participant at Storytelling+

ing more and more popular. As with theatre plays, storytelling on stage aims at entertaining the audience and reconnecting them with the simple, but powerful art of telling stories. It is important however that the characters on stage always stay aware of the audience and are ready to interact with them, and do not behave like in a glass-house or a fishbowl.

Storycollecting

Storycollecting is a tool that it is used in order to better connect a group's members by creating a common story. The storyteller in this case doesn't know the story they are going to tell. Having in mind the stages of any story and the story arc (beginning, inciting incident, midpoint, climax and the end), the storyteller will ask the audience questions in order to build up the story. The first step in storycollecting is that the storyteller usually has an object (rather undefined objects, such as a piece of wood or abstract shapes, etc., are better for this activity) with the help of which the story starts. The role of the storyteller here is only to ask questions starting from the object and to follow the story arc in order to discover the story from

the audiences' responses. The first answer that is suggested is integrated into the story. From time to time, the storyteller retells the story in order to refresh the events and to create space for the next part of the story. At the end, the group will have their own story that they have created and story that can be retold by someone from the audience, or can be written by every individual.

Multilingual Storytelling

Multilingual Storytelling raises awareness about the importance of multiculturalism and about the differences and similarities of cultures around the



“An amazing experience for me here was to tell the same story in two different languages: in German, which is my native language, and in Spanish, which I learned during my long-term stay in Latin America. It was fascinating to experience how the two versions had a very different impact on me and on the audience. It is almost like you have different personalities depending on which language you are using.”

**Maria Brachtel (Austria),
participant at Storytelling+**

world. Also, it reveals the importance of nonverbal communication. In this type of activity, one story is told in the language that is understood by all participants, the common working language. After everyone has heard the story, different people from the audience who know different languages (or have a sufficient level of ability) retell the story, sequence by sequence. The first person will start by retelling the first sequence of the story in the common working language, the second one will tell the same sequence, but in a different language, the third one will do the same, and so on. There can be from two to seven different storytellers and languages, or even more.

Multilingual storytelling has several benefits. For the storytellers, they can experience the telling of a story in a language that they know very well and the other don't, this way they are less nervous and they can also add their personal perspectives, inevitably changing and shaping the story. As for the audience, they will be observers of the different ways the same story can be told. Also, they will find many similarities and/or differences regarding the languages they are listening to.

“In storytelling, many times the trick is not to give answers, but to ask the right questions.”

**Edmons Gruduls (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

Storytelling as a Way to enhance Learning and Creativity

Storytelling represents the oldest form of education. People around the world have used stories as a way to transmit and pass down cultural beliefs, traditions and history to future generations. Stories are at the core of all that makes us human.

Storytelling has been elaborated and transformed also into a powerful and valuable method of non-formal education which is used by educators, teachers and youth workers. Why? Because stories are the way young people with whom we work store information in their brains. Stories go straight to the heart. Using the storytelling method in the class makes students and teachers emotionally involved, thus it helps pupils develop a positive attitude towards the learning process. It also produces a sense of connection between members of the class which is often missing in a classroom setting. Researchers have shown that even students with low motivation and weak academic skills are more likely to listen, read, write and work hard in the context of storytelling. Storytell-

ing should be a part of a teachers' lessons in order to make the actual lesson more powerful and creative.

The process of telling and listening to stories is one of the most fundamental ways of enhancing learning. Pupils find it easier to assimilate new ideas when they are presented in the form of storytelling. Even older students look to anecdotes to help them understand new concepts and link them to their lives.

Stories are perhaps the best presents teachers can give their students. Through storytelling, learning is enhanced, thus young people develop a large set of abilities, such as active listening and the capacity to concentrate and pay attention to the details. They must utilise these abilities in order to follow the flow of the story and understand it. With the help of a story, pupils also develop their ability of critical thinking, they will question the realities of the characters and also the reality in which they

“I see storytelling as a non-formal educational method. In order to make the learning points stronger and the learning process easier, we usually first do some activities with the audience to enter the story and to get acquainted with the main elements. Then we proceed to actually telling the story, at this point the quality of the performance and the involvement of the audience is very important. The third and last stage is to leave together the story, and to reflect upon it with the help of various activities, trying to get to the point of the story, or to the moral.”

Sandra Horea,
trainer at Storytelling+

live. Through storytelling, students open up and their willingness to learn increases. Dealing with fears is another ability which is developed within a storytelling workshop. The immense range of stories will also help students process and tackle sensitive topics which may be hard to deal with in their daily lives. Stories are a source of knowledge and inspiration and by telling or listening to them, young people develop also the capacity of acceptance, they learn to accept and let go of their own prejudices. The process, the stage after the telling of a story is extremely important for enhancing learning. After a story has been told, there are several ways a teacher can underline the most important features of the story in order to develop other sets of abilities, such as presentation skills. For example, students can talk in front of the class about some aspects of the story, or retell the story. In this process, students also learn the importance of being adaptable to change, to the audience that is in front of them and to their own state of mind. Many stories deal with problems that in the end, most of the time, are solved, through this students learn how to look for options to the problems they also face.

Stories are a perfect tool for reflection on your own experiences, while the story is told and also after the story, listeners make connections to their own personal life and experiences, because of this they can become inspired and find motivation. When telling a story, the teller also develops the skill of leadership. Depending on the audience, the storyteller shapes their story in order to reach their audience. The same story is never told the same way, using the same words, because there are emotions involved and the human factor which makes the story different every time. Leadership skills are developed because the story sets the teller free from the printed text, each telling is unique. Even the same story told by the same teller can be different every time.

Storytelling is motivating. Students recognise it to be an authentic activity and a skill that is well worth acquiring. This proves to be true whether students are listening to or telling stories. Children do not truly engage in an activity unless they think it is useful and interesting for them.

If students are encouraged to choose a folktale and, in keeping with the oral tradition, make it their own in the retelling, they learn to be cre-

“While stories are very important, many times the storyteller also plays an important role, his character, his voice, his interaction with the audience.”

**Lelde Senberga (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

ative and to think by themselves. Students can build their adaptive skills by writing and telling their own stories later. This creativity is inevitably transferred into their personal work and lives.

“Imagination is more important than knowledge”, Albert Einstein said, that is why it is essential to be enriched within the classroom context. Using one’s imagination means creating images in one’s mind and visualisation play a crucial role in the development of a child. The images emerge from all five senses, as well as emotions, and are anchored in the listener’s prior knowledge.

Storytellers as well as listeners use images to immerse themselves in rich details. The details give a wide dimension to the story, engaging the listeners more deeply, making the story memorable.

Storytelling is a way teachers and youth workers can enhance creativity and learning for young people and it allows an opportunity to exercise the imagination so that they can begin to see that the pictures in their mind are valid, too. Storytelling is unmatched as a tool for stimulating creativity and learning.

“As the saying goes: A person who does not read leads only one life, a person who reads lives countless lives.”

**Edmons Gruduls (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

How to become a good Storyteller?

As with many other competences in life, we would suggest that the key to become a good storyteller is to learn and improve from study, observation, analysis, reflection, feedback, and most importantly: from practice. Ideally, in the end you will have theoretical and conceptual knowledge, a large “internal” resource library of examples and tools, a proven and tweaked set of skills and practical abilities, as well as self-confidence, a positive approach, joy, curiosity, creativity, empathy, and a professional approach. In other words, you will be a good storyteller with your brain (mind), your hands (body), your heart (soul) and your external tools (physical world).

There are three areas that can be considered to be relevant in order to become a good storyteller: the competence to invent and construct stories, the quality of delivery/performance and interaction with the audience, and additional competences for examples related to being an educator.

Inventing and constructing stories

Think of some of your favourite movies, or books, or theatre plays, or song lyrics. What is it that

makes you like the story so much, or that makes the story so impacting? What makes you relate to the story or immerse in it? What is the setting of the story, what type of characters appear, what challenges are they facing, what are the main/big topics of the story, how does the story develop? What is it that makes the story appealing? Is it a universalistic story, or is it specific to a given culture or historic period?

Apart from analysing other stories, also observe life, people and nature as such. Learn to be curious, inquisitive, persistent, and observe both the big picture as well as the little details.

Some researchers suggest that there are universal building blocks for stories, which are the basic ingredients for any story in this world, like an alphabet to build a language. For sure there are certain clichés and archetypes that we find in most stories in the world, for example certain type of heroes and villains, certain challenges the characters face, certain topics that are dealt with. Apart from analysing your own favourite stories and generally successful stories, you can research on the internet by focussing on keywords such as “story

“The embedding of storytelling in other techniques such as improv-theatre and creativity tools helped our group of participants to open up more and more, day by day, unleashing every day more creativity, passion and mutual inspiration in the stories they would come up with, transforming our group into to a boiling, bubbling and bursting lab of synergy and productivity.”

**MarCus Vreccer (Austria),
trainer at Storytelling+**

arc”, “archetypes”, “tropes”, “clichés”, “building blocks of stories”, “hero’s journey”, “plotlines”, “plot twists” and “common places”.

Quality in delivery and performance

Again, study some of the successful storytellers and speakers. These can be people that you know, or “celebrities” whose performances you can find for example on youtube. Pay attention among other to the following aspects: How and when do they use humour? When and how do they get serious? How do they use their voice? When do they pause? When do they speak fast, and when do they speak slowly? What are they doing with their hands? How do their facial expression change? What about the rest of their body? Do they use props? How are they dressed? In what setting do they perform? What type of stories are they using for what type of audience and what type of purpose? How do they interact with the audience? How do they manage to keep the attention of the audience? How do they create interest, curiosity, suspension and immersion? What dynamics do they create and use?

For your own performances, practice and experiment in front of a mirror, videotape yourself, re-

cord and listen to your voice, and ask for critical feedback. Don’t be afraid of failures and embarrassment, on the contrary, see it as important learning points on your way to develop your own style!

Additional competences

If you want to use storytelling in an educational context, for example as a teacher or youth worker, then the stages of entering the story and leaving/digesting the story are very crucial. For this, it will be useful for you to have set of educational methods and tools at hands that will facilitate the process of immersion, contextualisation, motivation, creativity, and very importantly: the conveying and extraction of learning points. These methods can comprise of elements of reflection, self-assessment, feedback, discussion and debate, creative writing, visualisation, role plays, simulations, gamification, blended learning and many more.

Also, if you go for special schools/types of storytelling such as digital storytelling, theatrical arts or historytelling, you will need to acquire the related specific required competences (eg use of IT and media, knowledge of history etc).

“What makes storytelling so useful for us educators is that it is very compatible with the toolbox of non-formal education. It is not just about the story that is to be told, which obviously needs a message and needs to be involving, and as a storyteller you need to have some good techniques of body-language intonation, etc., but as an educator you embed the story in activities before and afterwards, to raise the level of immersion and the impact of the story. And here, the toolbox of non-formal education comes in really handy.”

**MarCus Vreccer (Austria),
trainer at Storytelling+**

Practical Examples of Storytelling as a (non-formal) Method in Education

Below you will find different stories collected from books and stories created by participants of storytelling trainings. Every story has a set of aims, practical instructions on what to prepare for the story as a facilitator, and a large number of activ-

ities that can be done in the three stages of a storytelling workshop: before the story, in the process of telling the story and at the end of the story. The target groups of these stories are varied, from very young children (aged 4) to young adults.

STORY: THE ADVENTURE OF THE CURRY SEED

Story created during the youth exchange “Storytelling around YOUth”, 2013, Romania

Once upon a time there was a tiny little seed called Miss Curry. Miss Curry was born in a very sunny valley in India. Like every other seed, she wanted to grow up and become a very beautiful plant, but she just couldn't. She tried and tried and tried, but she just couldn't grow where she was. So, she thought to herself “Maybe India isn't the right place for me.”

She wanted to find the right place for herself to grow, so, one day, she realised, on a windy day, the old wise Wind could help her.

“Mr Wind, can you please help me and take me to the right place, the place where I can grow?”

“Sure, I will little seed”, he said.

In a nutshell

This is a story about a little seed from India that leaves its home in the pursuit of better soils and better conditions for growing. Its journey brings the seed to different places around the world, only to eventually return to India as the seed realizes after all its travels that it is at home where there are actually the best conditions.

The story can be used to reflect on topics such a multiculturalism, home, belonging, identity, refugees, living conditions around the world, pursuit of happiness, migration and travelling.

So they left her homeland and travelled to a place the wind believed to be perfect for Miss Curry to grow. They arrived in Lisbon, a place full of light and colour where people were listening to Fado. The wonderful smell of the sea made her think:

“This must be the right place for me!”

The Sun, who watched her arriving, offered to help Miss Curry grow. Together, they tried and tried, but failed.

So Miss Curry and her friends set to journey again, looking for the right place, and ended up in Latvia, where, like every girl, the seed fell in love with Riga Castle, next to the Baltic Sea. Here she made a new friend, who also offered to help her: the Rain.

So, the Rain, the Sun and the Wind tried to make the seed grow but, once again, failed.

Now, with the rain joining them, the four friends travelled again, to what they thought would be the right place for Miss Curry to grow. The Ground was already expecting them when they got to Romania and, received them saying: “Look! I’ve been able to grow plants from the Lotus in the Danubian Delta to the fir trees in the mountains, I’m sure I can help you grow, too!”

Miss Curry got very excited with the Ground’s story and believed she had finally found her place.

Now, all together, they tried to make her grow but, unfortunately, they failed again.

The little, sad seed, tired from failing so many times decided to give up, and stay forever a seed, asking the wind to take her to a nice place she could live in peace.

The wind tried to change her mind, but ended up agreeing and taking her to Italy. There she visited the Colosseum where she met a kind gardener named Francesco, she told him her story and he then explained what, for all her journey, she couldn't see:

“The Sun you were looking for was already in India.
The Rain you were looking for was already in India.
And, the Ground you were looking for was already India.
I will take you to your right place, and I will help too, I will plant you.”

Regaining her hope Miss Curry agreed and, with the Wind, the Sun, the Ground, the Rain and the Gardener, came back to her homeland.

In India, with the help of her friends, Miss Curry, the seed, was finally able to grow, in the right place, her Home.

Learning objectives:

1. Raising awareness regarding multiculturalism.
2. Raising awareness about immigrants.
3. Learning about cities and/or continents.
4. Learning about types of soil.

Target group:

Groups of children and young people (whole classes of pupils) from 4 to 15 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective and the target group, prepare the story, an image of a curry seed, the classroom/any room that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. Different elements from as many countries as possible (objects, pictures, food, etc.); ingredients, tools and a recipe for a cooking session.
2. Pictures of people from all around the world.

“My favourite story is the story I am living right in this moment. I believe everybody should place him- or herself in a beautiful story.”

Sandra Horea,
trainer at Storytelling+

3. A coloured world map, a blank world map, shapes of the continents, sticky notes and pens.
4. Information about the different types of soils in different continents; soil, flower pots/a place in the garden and curry/ flower/wheat seeds, or beans.

Before the story:

1. Invite the participants to sort the elements you have prepared by: a) colour, b) size, c) material, d) where they come from.
2. Invite the participants to guess where the people from the pictures come from and where are they living at present.
3. Organise a debate on the positive/negative aspects of living abroad.
4. Invite participants to match various continents and/or countries on a blank world map. Also, ask the participants to stick the cities that they know on the map.
5. Invite participants to feel the soil prepared in advance and to find as many adjectives as possible in order to describe it.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story and the different countries that the seed visited. Also, you can try to move and change the position of your body, one step for every stage of the story, for every country. At the end, try to place yourself in your initial starting place.

Leaving the story:

1. Invite the participants to a world café activity: divide the participants into three groups and place every group at their own table. Each table will have a topic to be discussed and a flipchart page, used like a tablecloth, on which the participants can take notes. The topics will be related to multiculturalism and the communities they live in (positive and/or negative point of view): different languages spoken/different traditions/different behaviours. The participants will spend 10 minutes at the same table discussing the topic, after 10 minutes, as a group they will change tables and topics until they have discussed all three topics. At the end, every group has to present one of the topics with the help of the flip-

“One tool I like in storytelling are DIXIT cards and pictures in general, as they trigger associations which might in turn help you to become aware of and express emotions.”

**Jana Katarina Harrer (Austria),
participant at Storytelling+**

charts that, by the end of the three rounds, will be filled in with ideas and comments.

Organise a cooking session using different Indian ingredients in order to taste and experience Indian culture.

2. Invite the participants to place sticky notes that have the names of cities from the story on the world map during a retelling of the story, recreating the route of Miss Curry, making use of the world map by pointing out everywhere she travels.
3. Plant the prepared seeds in flower pots or in the garden and make a plan of how to take care of them. Also present different types of soil with concrete examples of what kind of plants grow in them.

Question to reflect upon:

This can be done individually by every participant, in pairs, or with the whole group:

1. Would you like to live in a different place? Where? Why?
2. What is your favourite country/continent? Why?
3. Where would you like to go on your next holiday? With whom? Why?

“One of my favourite stories is the tale of the ugly duckling, as it shows that you have to believe in yourself, not compare yourself to others, and to give things time, simply trust on the good ending.”

**Johannes Herbert Tamegger (Austria),
participant at Storytelling+**

STORY: JONATHAN THE MONKEY

by Johannes Tamegger, (created during the project “Creative Learning Cookbook: Storytelling+”, Austria, Payerbach, 2015)

This is the story of Jonathan the Monkey who lives in the deep, deep heart of the African jungle. He lives together with his monkey family but Jonathan is a bit different, there is something about him very untypical for a monkey, he loves tomatoes. They are so juicy and delicious and have this wonderful red colour—red is the favourite colour of Jonathan—but there was only one tomato plant in the whole wide jungle. So, Jonathan cares a lot about these tomatoes, he gives them fresh water every day, he prepares everything so they have enough sun and he even talks to them. Obviously he isn't the only one who loves tomatoes. One day, Jonathan was just bringing fresh water to the tomato plant when he discovered that someone has eaten from his delicious juicy red tomatoes. He was shocked. So he starts to watch out for the offender and suddenly he saw a little slimy snail, sitting on a tomato. He starts yelling: “Hey, what are you doing? These are my tomatoes!”

The snail says: “No, no, no, no, no! I can't see your name written on them, they are as much mine as they are yours.” Neither of them wanted to give the other one the chance to eat a tomato, so they were there the whole day, staring at each other, waiting for a wrong move. Hours passing, days passing and weeks passing, always staring at each other's eyes. Jonathan even forgot to take care of the tomato plant, there was not enough fresh water and not enough sun for his beloved tomatoes. Jonathan didn't realise this until he heard a strange noise. “Pflatsh, pflatsh, pflatsh!” They looked at the plant and saw all the tomatoes falling down and the plant dying. Jonathan was really sad. He couldn't believe what was happening. And, all of this just because he didn't want to share his tomatoes, so now, no one will ever have tomatoes again.

He also felt sorry about the little slimy snail, actually it's the only one who could understand his sadness, so they become friends.

In a nutshell:

A monkey called Jonathan cultivates tomatoes in the jungle, thinking he is the only who likes them. One day a snail appears on the tomatoes. The monkey enters in a fight with the snail over the tomatoes. Being focussed so much on their fight, they forget to nurture the tomatoes and the tomato plants die. In their common grief, they find out about how much they actually share and they become friends. In an unexpected turn of events, the tomatoes grow again. The monkey and the snail now jointly take care of the tomatoes and share them with everybody.

The story can be used to work on topics such as how much enemies actually have in common, conflict solving and conflict transformation, sharing and community, how destruction can breed creation, and how by overly protecting something you can actually destroy it.

After a time, something happened which nobody expected. The seeds of the old brown tomato plant started to grow and get bigger and bigger. There were a lot of seeds, so there were enough tomatoes for ten monkeys and one hundred snails. They were both so happy that they started dancing and sharing the tomatoes with everybody, it was the best day they ever had. Jonathan and the little slimy snail became best friends now, and together they took care of the tomato plants and ate a lot of tomatoes.

Learning objectives:

1. To learn about generosity and sharing.
2. To solve a conflict between two persons (eg two pupils).

Target group:

Groups of children and young people (whole classes of pupils) from 4 to 11 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objectives, and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. Different kinds of food (fruits, vegetables, meats, cheeses, etc.) and different species of animals, with a monkey and a snail amongst them.

2. Ten written appreciation statements (e. g. I cherish your enthusiasm; I appreciate your generosity; etc.)

Before the story:

1. Before telling the story, invite the participants to play an animal mime game. At the end ask a volunteer to mime a monkey and a snail.
2. Play the game “Walk like...”. The participants are in the middle of the room, you name one animal and they have to walk as if they were the named animal. Demonstrate examples of three animals, then invite the participants to come up with new animals.
3. Invite the participants to match the different types of food you have prepared with the animals that eat them. Discuss their choices.

“Stories give us a possibility to tell very serious things in a more relaxed, enjoyable and memorable way.”

Ilze Kuhalska (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+

4. Divide the group into smaller groups of four/five pupils. Each group will have an animal (monkey or snail) to brainstorm the positive characteristics that these animals have. After 15 minutes of work, invite one representative of each group to come and present the characteristics. Make also a comparison regarding the characteristics that people and animals have in common, or that people lack and animals have. Discuss why.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story and the different feelings that the animals deal with. Also, you can try to move and change the position of your body and establish two movements, one for describing the monkey and another one for describing the snail.

Leaving the story:

1. Make use of the prepared set of ten written appreciation statements for each participant and invite them to take each and give it to one of their classmates.
2. For younger participants who don't know how to read yet, give them ten images with cartoon people expressing different emotions. Give a set

of ten images to each participant and invite them to give each image to one of their classmates.

3. Invite the participants to create on a flipchart page a set of values that people cherish. Then invite them to make their own list in their notebooks and share the list if they want to.
4. Invite the participants to give example of a conflict (they could work in smaller groups of five people). Ask them to explain the situation and to find as many solutions as possible. Additionally, if they are big enough, invite them to write a play regarding a specific conflict they have identified and to perform it in front of the other groups.

Question to reflect upon:

This can be done individually by every participant, in pairs, or with the whole group:

1. Why have you chosen the first five values? What are your first five values that define you? Why? (For smaller children: What is most important for you when you play and communicate with the others?)
2. What is the last thing you have shared with your friends or family?
3. Think about the last time you forgave someone. How did you feel?

“One storytelling tool I have invented for teaching English to kids are the “grammar animals”. For example, for different tenses, I have associated them with different animals, and invented a story around each animal explaining why this specific animal represents this specific tense. Thanks to the associations and stories, it is a lot easier for the kids to remember and understand the function and use of the different tenses than it would be if the kids had to learn only abstract concepts.”

**Liene Millere (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

“I observed that people really open up and relax if you include physical movement and all of the senses into your learning activity, and if you slowly build up a safe yet creative atmosphere.”

**Svetlana Starodumova (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+**

STORY: WHO MOVED MY CHEESE?

Once upon a time, there were four little characters living in a maze. Two were mice, Sniff and Scurry, and two were little people, the size of the mice, named Hem and Haw. Each morning they did more or less the same things: waking up early in the morning, having breakfast and putting on their running shoes in order to race into the maze to look for the cheese. “Cheese” being whatever was most important to them, what made them happy.

For Sniff and Scurry, cheese was just cheese, but for Hem and Haw cheese was more than having something to eat. Finding it was a way to get what they thought they need: good health, financial safety, social fame, etc.

For Haw cheese meant having a beautiful family and a nice house on a hill, for Hem, cheese meant being a big Cheese, owning a big company and leading lots of people.

Sniff and Scurry had good instincts. They always smelled the place and went ahead. Hem and Haw had complex brains, beliefs and emotions, which made their finding their way in the maze more difficult and challenging. They needed maps and books, they didn't rely on their instincts.

In their own way, all the four characters arrived at the Cheese Station C where there was a lot of cheese.

Sniff and Scurry woke up early every morning, they put their running shoes and ran every day through the maze. Often they got lost, but very quickly they could find the right way, by smelling and running ahead. Hem and Haw started to wake up later every morning, they knew where the cheese was and they assumed it would always be there. They even put away their running shoes, thinking they wouldn't need them

In a nutshell:

Two mice and two little persons live in a maze, where they are feed cheese every-day on the same spot. One day the cheese suddenly appears in a different place of the maze. While the mice have no troubles finding it based on their instincts and effort, the two little persons who had become lazy are caught by surprise and react with fear and anger, which inhibits them in adapting to the new situation.

The story can be used to address issues such as dealing with changes in life, staying alert, being proactive and flexible, the danger of becoming over-confident and imprudent, inhibitions, fear, embracing change, and pursuing goals in life.

anymore. They felt very secure. Haw decorated the walls of the station with: “Having cheese makes you very happy.”

Hem and Haw became very comfortable in Cheese Station C and didn't notice the changes. They didn't pay attention to details, to what was happening.

Sniff and Scurry inspected the cheese station every day and they weren't surprised by the changes. They kept their running shoes around their neck to get to them quickly when they needed them again.

One morning, Sniff and Scurry discovered that the cheese was gone from the station. They didn't overreact when they noticed the changes. So, Sniff and Scurry changed. They were soon off in search of new cheese.

Later that day, Hem and Haw arrived and they were very, very surprised; shocked! “What is it going to be like if tomorrow the cheese won't be back?”

“Where are Sniff and Scurry?” asked Hem, “They are just mice, we are smart, we are people.” Meanwhile, the mice that only thought of finding new cheese, found another station with a lot more cheese.

The little people were discussing and analysing the situation. They were hoping that things will be the way they were before. Hem began telling Haw that maybe it could be better to go and search for new cheese. “Common, we have to change and enjoy things again!”

Haw replied “NO way!! It might be dangerous there in the maze. I like things here. Someday things will be just the way they were.”

Like Haw, also Hem started focusing on what he had lost.

Every day they woke up and went to Cheese Station C and return home having empty bellies. They even started to work longer hours in Cheese Station C, demolishing walls in order to find hidden cheese, but without success.

“They moved our cheese, they moved our cheese, it was ours! We owned it! Who moved my cheese? I want my old cheese back!” Haw kept saying all the time.

Meanwhile, Hem decided to find new cheese. Haw was too scared to try this:

“No, no way, I don’t want to go into the maze, it is too dangerous. Who moved my cheese?”

Hem had an “aha!” moment and wrote on the wall: “What would you do if you weren’t afraid?” and Hem started jogging into the maze and he realised it is not so bad.

“Smell the cheese often so you know when it is getting old.”

He started writing some inspiring quotes on the walls of the maze in order for his friend to see them and act accordingly. “Why do I feel soooo good, I don’t have any cheese: When you stop being afraid, you feel good”.

The more Hem imagined he will find the cheese, the more real it became in his mind and his heart. “Imagining yourself enjoying the new cheese leads you to it.”

He found Cheese Station E, but there was little cheese. It wasn’t much, but it was enough to keep him going.

“I have to return to Haw and let him know what I found and that there is new cheese.”

When he returned to his friend he found him suffering even more and working even harder to find his old cheese.

“No, I don’t need new cheese, I want my cheese back and I want things to be just the way they were”.

“When you change what you believe, you change what you do.”

Hem was adapting to the new and he was also helping his friend by making marks on the walls. And, one day, he finally found a new Cheese Station with a lot of cheese in it. Since then he was much more aware of his situation, he woke up early every day and even if he didn’t need the running shoes every day, he still kept them around his neck just in case he needed them. He continued to write inspiring messages on the wall for his friend Haw, or for anybody who needed them.

“Change happens, they keep moving the cheese.”

“Anticipate change, get ready for the cheese to move.”

“Monitor change, smell the cheese often so you know when it’s getting old.”

“Adapt to change quickly, the quicker you let go of your old cheese, the sooner you can enjoy new cheese.”

“Enjoy change, savour the adventure and enjoy the taste of new cheese.”

“Be ready to quickly change and enjoy it again.”

“Change and win! Move with the cheese.”

Learning objectives:

1. To strengthen life skills such as embracing change, adaptability and proactivity.
2. To develop organisational and planning skills.
3. To teach direct and indirect speech within an English class.

Target group:

Young people aged between 15 to 20 years old within youth centres and pupils of all ages at schools.

*You might want to change “cheese” to “chocolate” to fit the taste of younger target groups.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants. Put tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. Prepare (buy and cut) pieces of different types of cheese for the participants to taste.
2. Paper and pens or pencils for each participant.

3. Write each quote, each statement of Hem, the character of the story, on a different coloured paper. You can write all of them, or just some that you find important and will help you reach your aim.
4. Prepare “Dixit” cards or any images/postcards/photos/illustrations that are vivid and allow the participants to create a story upon.
5. Cards with different jobs from a school or a youth centre.

Before the story:

1. Before telling the story, invite the participants to taste several types of cheese, in order to get familiar with the main element of the story, without letting them know the reason or the title of the story.
2. Invite the participants, after they have found a comfortable place to sit, to change their place and sit somewhere else in the room.
3. Invite the participants to think about and write down information about a typical day in their life, what they do from the moment they wake up until they go to sleep. Ask them then to share and compare their days in pairs.

“Some tools for storytellers to keep the attention of the audience are eye contact, playing with the voice, making pauses, changing the pace of the speech or performance, and of course asking questions to the audience.”

**Nikita Kljukin (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+**

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story and the differences between the mice and the little people. Also, you can try to move and change the position of your body and whenever you say something about the mice, turn your body a little bit to the right, and whenever you say something about the little people, turn your body to the left.

In order to put an emphasis on the moral of the story, show your written cards with the quotes that Hem, the character, writes on the walls of the maze.

Leaving the story:

1. Using Dixit cards or any rich images illustrating different characters and places, invite the participants to find as many solutions for those characters as possible using direct and indirect speech. They will work in groups of four. Two will be the main characters and the other two participants will be the narrators of each character. Together they will make a story. Teach them first the rules of direct and indirect speech.

2. Invite participants to write an end for the story, following Haw's point of view.
3. Use roleplay with the participants. Give them a role within an organisation (e. g. if you are doing this activity within a school, give them roles like head of the school, secretary, head teacher of the math department, accountant, etc.) and invite them to think of the responsibilities and duties of each job. Discuss planning and prioritising.

Question to reflect upon:

1. Ask the participants: "What would you do if you weren't afraid?" They can reflect individually, write down their answers and afterwards share it (if they would like to) with a classmate.
2. In pairs, or in groups of three or four people, invite the participants to comment upon the statements in the story. You can organise four corners, each having two statements and after 10 minutes of talking, ask the participants to move to a different corner to discuss two different statements.

"When creating or collecting stories, one main approach is of course to experience stories oneself, and to be a protagonist. But another important technique can be to set oneself aside, and to be only an observer, with no involvement in the story."

Nikita Kljukin (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+

"The most important ingredients to being a good storyteller are: patience, passion, creativity, and presence!"

QiQi Shi (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+

STORY: THE RAINBOW FISH

A long way out in the deep blue sea there lived a fish. Not just an ordinary fish, but the most beautiful fish in the entire ocean. His scales were every shade of blue and green and purple, with sparkling silver scales among them. The other fish were amazed at his beauty. They called him Rainbow Fish. “Come on, Rainbow Fish,” they would call. “Come and play with us!” But the Rainbow Fish would just glide past, proud and silent, letting his scales shimmer. One day, a little blue fish followed after him. “Rainbow Fish,” he called, “wait for me! Please give me one of you shiny scales. They are so wonderful, and you have so many.”

“You want me to give you one of my special scales? Who do you think you are?” shouted the Rainbow Fish. “Get away from me!”

Shocked, the little blue fish swam away. He was so upset; he told all his friends what had happened. From then on, no one would have anything to do with the Rainbow Fish. They turned away when he swam by. What good were the dazzling, shimmering scales with no one to admire them? Now he was the loneliest fish in the entire ocean.

One day he poured out his troubles to the starfish. “I really am beautiful. Why doesn’t anybody like me?”

“I can’t answer that for you,” said the starfish. “But if you go beyond the coral reef to a deep cave you will find the wise octopus. Maybe she can help you.”

The Rainbow Fish found the cave. It was very dark inside and he couldn’t see anything. Then suddenly, two eyes caught him in their glare and the octopus emerged from the darkness.

In a nutshell:

In the deep blue sea lives the most beautiful fish: the rainbow fish, called like that for his shimmering scales. A little fish asks the rainbow fish for one of his shimmering scales, which he angrily rejects. Shocked by the rainbow fish’ reaction, all fish turn away from him, which makes him feel very lonely. A wise octopus gives the rainbow fish the advice to share his scales with the others. Reluctantly he does so, finding out that sharing actually makes him as well as the others very happy. In the end, he shares all but one of his beautiful scales with the others, and all fish invite him to play together, making him part of the community again.

The story can be used to reflect upon topics such as the importance and effects of sharing, begin part of a community, the illusion and problems of beauty.

“I have been waiting for you,” said the octopus with a deep voice. “The waves have told me your story. This is my advice. Give a glittering scale to each of the other fish. You will no longer be the most beautiful fish in the sea, but you will discover how to be happy.”

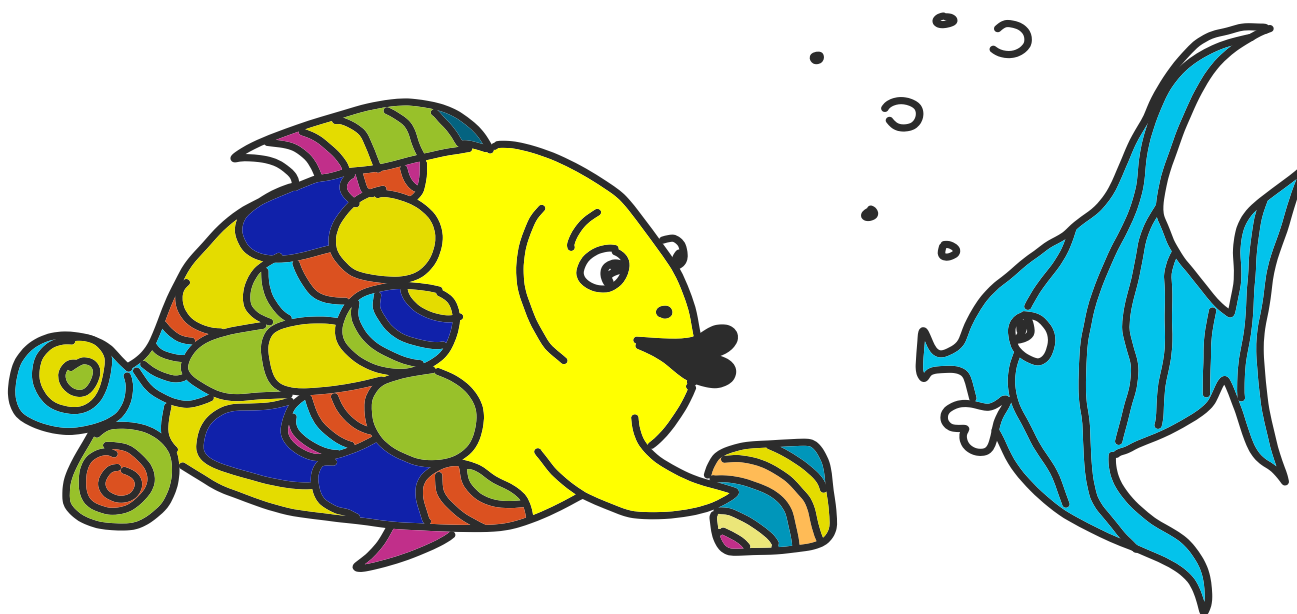
“I can’t...” the Rainbow Fish started to say, but the octopus had already disappeared into a dark cloud of ink.

“Give away my scales? My beautiful shining scales? Never! How could I ever be happy without them?” Suddenly he felt the light touch of a fin. The little blue fish was back!

“Rainbow Fish, please, don’t be angry. I just want one little scale.”

The Rainbow Fish wavered. Only one very, very small shimmery scale, he thought. Well maybe I wouldn’t miss just one. Carefully the Rainbow Fish pulled out the smallest scale and gave it to the little fish.

“Thank you! Thank you very much!” The little blue fish bubbled playfully, as he tucked the shiny scale in among his blue ones.



A rather peculiar feeling came over the Rainbow Fish. For a long time he watched the little blue fish swim back and forth with his new scale glittering in the water. The little blue fish whizzed through the ocean with his scale flashing, so it didn't take long before the Rainbow Fish was surrounded by the other fish. Everyone wanted a glittering scale. The Rainbow Fish shared his scales left and right. And, the more he gave away, the more delighted he became. When the water around him filled with glimmering scales, he at last felt at home among the other fish. Finally, the Rainbow Fish had only one shining scale left. His most prized possessions had been given away, yet he was very happy.

"Come on Rainbow Fish," called the other fishes. "Come and play with us!"

"Here I come," said the Rainbow Fish and happy as a splash, he swam off to join his friends.

Learning objectives:

1. To learn vocabulary related to sea animals.
2. To learn vocabulary related to colours.
3. To be aware of the importance of sharing and being part of a group.

Target group:

Young people aged between 4 and 7 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story,

know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants. Put tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. Prepare from cardboard a big fish on which you can stick coloured paper in the shape of fish scales that can be detached.
2. Prepare flashcards with different sea animals.

Before the story:

1. Show different flashcards with the animals of the sea. Name them and mime them in order for the pupils to remember them easily.

"About storytelling, I love the ultimate power of shifting the destinies of my protagonists, of changing lives and surroundings."

**Edmons Gruduls (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

2. Play a game that involves colours and body parts. You name one colour and a body part and children must touch that specific colour with the body part that was mentioned, for example: red-head – they have to touch something red with their head.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story and the differences between the Rainbow fish, the little fish and the octopus. Whenever you say something about the Rainbow fish, say it with a “full-of-himself” voice; when you say something about the little fish, say it in a high pitch voice; and, whenever you say something about the octopus, use a very low and serious voice. Also, you can try to move and change the position of your body in order to represent that the Rainbow fish acts bossy. When you act like the little fish, act like you are looking at someone much bigger than you and when you represent the octopus, enlarge your arms as if they were tentacles.

In order to make the story even more vivid, use the big fish made of cardboard with a lot of coloured paper scales and take one at the time and

give them to the children in the audience, as the Rainbow fish does at the end. So that at the end every child has one coloured scale.

Leaving the story:

1. Make a list of what people can give as a gift (that doesn't cost money) to other people. Brainstorm as many ideas as possible.
2. From the materials that you have in the classroom (paper, scissors, glue, pencils etc.) or outdoor space (leaves, grass, pieces of wood, etc.) have participants create gifts for their classmates (make sure that every child will receive a gift, it would be useful to establish in advance who is giving presents to whom). Alternatively, participants could make gifts for family members.

Question to reflect upon:

1. How did the Rainbow fish feel when the blue little fish asked for a scale for the first time?
2. How would have you reacted? Would you give him one of your scales?
3. What was the last act of appreciation you have shown lately? To whom was it and what were your reasons to do so?

“Stories that impress me a lot are stories about adventurers and travelers, about people who leave everything behind to embark on an open-end journey, and by such grow personally and learn about the world and the human condition. One of the things that stayed in my mind from one such traveler is that he said “happiness is only real if it is shared”. I am also impressed by dreamers and visionaries, for example, the guy who had the dream to balance on a rope between the Twin Towers in New York. In the end he did it, and his story taught me a lot about how to motivate and inspire other people, how to reach your goals, how to be courageous.”

**Viesturs Lūsis (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

“I believe stories are the most beautiful presents teachers can give to their students.”

**Sandra Horea,
trainer at Storytelling+**

THE STORY OF AN ANT

by Ilze Kuhalska (created during the project “Creative Learning Cookbook: Storytelling+”, Austria, Payerbach, 2015)

This is a story about one of the smallest of God’s creatures. This is a story about an ant. It was an ant like a typical ant. It wasn’t The Ant, it was just an ant. One of many. One of the colony.

There were a lot of ants like her. They led their daily life like their friends, parents, grandparents used to do for years. And, they were happy. But not our small ant.

Our ant was so unhappy and miserable. All of her life she... Well, let’s call her “She”, because it was a small girl ant. So, all her life, She, has spent on the mountain. She hadn’t been somewhere else. She hadn’t seen something else. And, imagine being tiny, almost invisible, on this huge mountain. But, our ant wanted to explore, discover, and overcome. Unfortunately, there was nothing of that kind. Well, She could satisfy her need to overcome difficulties. She had to struggle with the wind, snow and rain which were so strong on the mountain! Sometimes, on windy and snowy days, it took a couple of hours to reach her destination and do the job her colony asked her to do. Yeah, her colony... it was one more reason to feel wretched. She was just one of them, with no chance to express her feelings or wishes. But, even though She was lacking in size, She was still equipped with a brain! But nobody cared... Days passed, each one looking exactly the same as previous one. And, our small ant became more and more miserable.

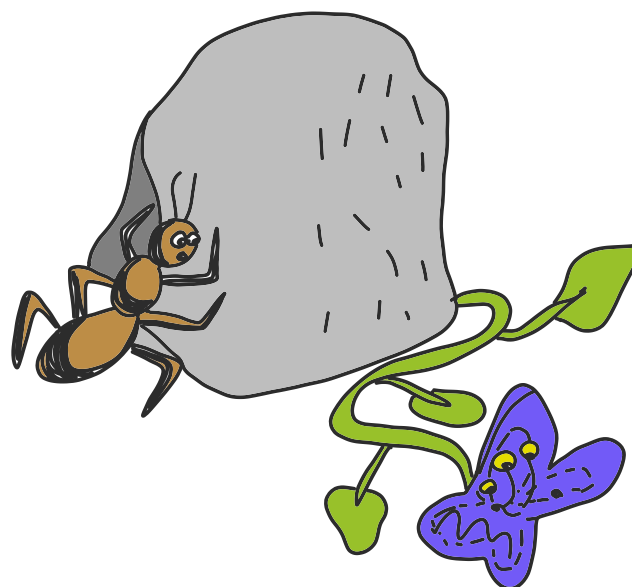
So, one morning, when the weather was also so miserable (like our small ant), our ant decided to leave the colony. She had had enough of it! She wanted to go down the steep mountain wall! To the valley! To the houses with beautiful roofs! Roofs she could already imagine with closed eyes, so many times she had observed them from the top of her mountain.

In a nutshell:

A little ant is sick of her routine-driven life in the ant-colony, and decides to leave the anthill. The travel is very challenging and full of obstacles. On the way, she helps a little violet that was stuck under a stone to become free and radiate her beauty. Although the violet is just a little detail on the way, the ant becomes very happy about the incident and continues her journey towards her unknown future with even more courage and happiness in her heart.

The story can be used to address issues such as having the courage to pursue your dreams, being resilient to hardships and failures, finding happiness and joy in little things, and gratitude.

With tears in her eyes (because somewhere deep inside she understood she will never come back to the place where she felt so tiny, so vulnerable, and so helpless in front of the nature) She left her colony, her home. Our ant approached the rock, made her final glance back and started climbing downwards. As you can imagine, it was quite a difficult task, it was raining, well, it was pouring down and our ant had to keep hold tight so as not to fall down. For a moment She stopped to take a deep breath and then suddenly She heard something. Our ant caught her breath, listening carefully, turning her head towards the sound. At first She couldn't see anything. Finally, She realised the sound was coming from a stone. It was making a noise that sounded like crying. As it was not far away, our ant decided to have a look and then continue her way down to the big world. When our ant approached the stone, she noticed that there was something underneath it. A small flower, a violet was trying to get out of it, get rid of the stone. Our ant was very compassionate, so She gathered all her strength and moved the stone. The small violet was freed! At first it was helpless, but then it stretched its petals. Well, you really should see its petals! They were the most beautiful our ant had ever seen in her life. And, they all were shining for her! Because she had given the violet the possibility to live, to fulfil her role in this life, to stretch towards the sun and make somebody happy with her beauty. The small ant forgot about moving down, all She could do was stare in amazement at the flower. Suddenly, out of nowhere, the Sun came out, making the colours of the flower even brighter. Yes, it was The Flower! And, suddenly also our ant became The Ant! At least She was The Ant for The Flower;



and the flower was The Flower for our ant. Our ant understood that sometimes, things that are usual and tiny for us are big and important for others. Everything depends on what we see and do when we open our minds and hearts to feel it, not just go past them, as wonders can be found everywhere, even very close to us. Our ant smiled and... continued her way down the mountain wall!

Learning objectives:

1. To empower young people to be proactive and follow their dreams.
2. To develop amongst young people a positive attitude towards change.
3. To make young people aware of the happiness that arises from little things.

Target group:

Young people aged between 4 and 13 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. Paper and pencils for every participant.
2. Ask permission to make use of the whole space in the building in order for you to be able to implement some of the activities outside the classroom or the usual working room.
3. Any kind of small seeds that can be carried in the palm of your hand.

Before the story:

1. Change the normal setting of the workshop or the class you are facilitating. Ask the young people to take all of their things and move into another room, or outside. Ask them how it feel like to be somewhere else? Do they enjoy the change?
2. Invite the participants to describe, in as much detail as possible, the typical day of an ant (daily routine, obstacles, happy moments, etc.).
3. Try to create for the participants a very repetitive task, for example to carry little seeds (one by

“As my mother always told me: you can learn from your own mistakes, but you can also learn from the mistakes of others. Hence again, the importance of stories.”

Viesturs Lusis (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+

“A good tool for a storyteller to interact with the audience is, for example, to interrupt the story and ask questions to the audience, such as how they think the story would or should continue, what the protagonist might be feeling, how they visualise certain personages, etc. The storyteller might even collect feedback from the audience and include it on the spot into the story as an organic evolving organism.”

Lelde Senberga (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+

one) from one part of the building to the other, walking in a row (in order for them to experience the life of an ant. Do not tell them anything about the ant!). At the end of the task, ask them how they felt. Allow time for sharing opinions.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story.

Tell the story until the fourth paragraph and from there leave the participants to come up (working individually or in groups) with the next stages and events of the story. After they have created their own stories, invite them to share them and after that you can share the version of the story's end given here.

Leaving the story:

1. Invite the participants to write (if they are of an age to do so, if not, only to speak) and then to act out the short role plays they have written, having as the main characters the ant and its colony, or the ant and the flower, or the ant and its inner thoughts, etc.
2. Invite the participants to write short messages for strangers on the street. If wished, it is possible

to extend this and to organise a Delivery Life moment in which they would stop people and give them the beautifully created pieces of paper together with an inspiring wish for the future. This should of course only be done under the supervision of adults, and it is very important to point out to the kids the dangers of talking to strangers.

3. Invite students to write a letter for themselves (for the ones that don't know how to write, invite them to make a drawing instead) when they will be for example 50 years old. Underline the fact that they should mention the most important events of their life they experience until the age of 50.
4. Invite the participants to continue the story of the ant.

Question to reflect upon:

1. What would have happened if the ant didn't leave the colony?
2. What courageous event are you planning to organise in the future? Is it for you or for someone else?
3. Invite the participants to think of their biggest dream. Ask them to share it with the other, if they feel like.

“People have always told stories, it is one of the most ancient techniques we have. It seems our brain is directly wired to understand stories, take stories in and think in stories. It is a very natural thing for the brain to hear and process stories. So, stories are a powerful tool to transmit things you want others or yourself to learn, this can be facts, values, beliefs, history, traditions, culture, science, good practices, behavioural norms, enigmas, etc. It is a technique that is still working nowadays obviously, and it can be used in any type of education.”

**MarCus Vreecer (Austria),
trainer at Storytelling+**

“Storytelling knows no age and no limitation of media or channel. Also technology can be used creatively for storytelling.”

**Sandra Horea,
trainer at Storytelling+**

STORY: THE VERY UGLY BUG

There once was an ugly bug. A very ugly bug. All the other bugs were a bit ugly, but she was by far the ugliest. She had huge boggly eyes, a really odd, wibbly wobbly shaped head, a horrible hairy back and wonky purple legs. What a sight she was!

The very ugly bug wondered why the other bugs didn't look like her. So she asked them. "Spotty red bug, why are your eyes so teeny tiny and not big and boggly like mine?"

"My eyes are teeny tiny so I can hide in the cherries and be safe from birds," said the spotty red bug.

"Skinny green bug, why is your back so smooth and green and not hairy like mine?" asked the very ugly bug.

"My smooth green back means I can hide in the leaves and be safe from birds," said the skinny green bug.

"Skinny blue bug, why have you got such big fluttery wings, when I don't have any at all?" asked the very ugly bug.

"I use my big fluttery wings to fly away from the birds, high up in the sky."

"Hmmm," thought the very ugly bug. "If only I had teeny tiny eyes, a smooth green back and lovely fluttery wings then I would be safe from the birds and beautiful, too!"

So the very ugly bug decided that she would make a mask to make herself look beautiful. In order to have teeny tiny eyes she uses a leaf and made two holes, not

In a nutshell:

A very ugly bug tries to imitate the physical features of other bugs in order to assimilate. This backfires however and the ugly bug becomes even uglier. During a bird-attack, the very ugly bug is spared from the predator because of her ugliness. Another bug interprets this as bravery and self-esteem by the very ugly bug, and falls in love with her.

The story address issues of self-esteem, being special, trying to assimilate, and the relativity of beauty.

teeny and not round at all, and she uses a leaf to make her back look smooth and green. She even found a pair of fluttery wings—two petals from a flower—and she sticks them on her back (one higher and the other one lower). She was very proud of her new look.

“I am so beautiful now and I will be safe from the birds now!” she said.

But, she wasn't safe at all. The funny disguise made her stand out even more and she was even uglier. Now everyone could see her. Having the new look, she went to her friends to show them how beautiful she became. Their friends didn't know how to react, because she was even uglier than before. The red one said that they should tell her that her new look doesn't fit her. The green one said they should leave her being happy if she feels happy. And, the third one, the blue one, had no idea whether to tell her something or not and if yes, she had no idea what could be said.

While they were discussing amongst themselves, “Yum, Yum”, a very hungry bird said while it was approaching the four bugs. “Look at those lovely juicy bugs down there. They look delicious!” And he flew down for a tasty bug snack.

The three bug friends noticed the bird and they had time to hide, in the cherries, on the leaves and in the air, but our very ugly bug was too preoccupied with her new look, so she noticed only at the last second that the bird was approaching her.

“Argh!” screamed the very ugly bug as the bird swooped closer. Then suddenly, something very strange begun to happen. As she got scared, the very ugly bug became even uglier. Her big boggly eyes got bigger. Her odd-shaped head began to wobble and wobble. Her horrible hairy back spiked up, and her crooked purple legs waved in the air. She looked hideous!

“Ugh!” said the bird. “That bug looks disgusting. It’ll give me a tummy ache!” So he flew off to look for a nice juicy caterpillar instead.

Wow, her friends were amazed by the courage of the very ugly bug! “Hooray for the very ugly bug!!” cheered the other bugs. “She’s so ugly, she has scared the bird away!”

“I love being myself, I love being ugly!” Said the very ugly bug proudly.

Mr Ugly Bug agreed, he saw the entire scene whilst being hidden in a flower and he fell in love with the very ugly bug. He thought she was gorgeous. They fell madly in love and had a huge family of baby bugs who were all even uglier than they were.

Learning objectives:

1. To raise the participants’ self-esteem.
2. To make participants aware of the importance of non-verbal communication.
3. To raise awareness of the importance of acceptance.
4. To introduce a larger task of writing based on detailed description.

Target group:

Young people aged between 4 and 18 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in

a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park), that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. Dixit cards or any pictures with different characters and places.
2. Some flipchart paper and many coloured pencils that can be used while telling the story.
3. Sticky notes.

Before the story:

1. Invite participants to take one of the cards (Dixit or any picture that you find) and describe in details what the picture is about. When you see

“From an educator’s point of view, a story can also be considered like a framework, a box in which you can put many different methods and learning purposes you want to achieve.”

**Edmons Gruduls (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

that they have finished, invite them again to talk about the same image, adding more details. This aims to encourage them to use details while describing an image.

2. Tell participants about that the story is about a bug, a very unusual main character, and ask participants to guess what the story is about. They will need a lot of time to guess and finally after they have guessed, invite them again to guess the adjective (ugly) that best describes the bug.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story and the differences between the different bugs that are in the story. For every bug, try to establish a specific movement that can be repeated every time you mention that specific character.

While you are telling the story, after introducing every character make a pause and give space for the participants to draw the character on a flip-chart page, based on your detailed description.

Leaving the story:

1. Invite the participants to write on pieces of paper some messages for three of the characters in the story. It can be advice, a comment, a wish, a comparison, etc.
2. Use the Multilingual Storytelling technique if you have participants who speak other languages.
3. For the younger participants, invite them to draw the happiest bug in the world (it can be ugly or beautiful, or strong, etc.)
4. Invite participants to continue the story, being aware of the importance of the details in written form.

Question to reflect upon:

1. What do you cherish/appreciate the most about a person?
2. Is beauty important for you? How important? What about for the society in which we live?
3. Share with the group a moment in which you felt extremely special. What made you feel this way?

“Participating in this training course on storytelling has helped me a lot to gain confidence in talking and telling stories in front of a group, and also in trusting my intuition and creativity when it comes to telling and inventing stories.”

**Jana Katarina Harrer (Austria),
participant at Storytelling+**

STORY: WOLFIE

Once upon a time there lived a wolf who we will call Wolfie. He lived in a beautiful forest where he was born, his parents were born there and even their grandparents. He loved his forest, he knew all the trees and flowers, all the secret places and he loved walking through the forest.

One day, as he was walking and taking care of the flowers, he sees a red spot in the distance. He wondered what it could possibly be. Red wasn't his favourite colour. He gets a little scared and he decides to hide himself behind one of the trees. The red spot came closer and then he notices that it is a little girl dressed all in RED! Red tights, red shoes, red dress, red hat, red basket, everything was red.

“Well, all right, some people do prefer this colour! Nothing wrong with that.”

As he was standing behind the tree he noticed that the little girl began grabbing flowers and collecting, not some, but a lot of them. This for Wolfie was not quite acceptable. From his point of view, flowers belong in the forest, or in the mountains, or in gardens, however not in some human's house.

So, he said to himself: “Well, that's fine, hopefully she will stop soon...”

And, she did stop in order to be able to eat some biscuits. After eating the biscuits, she throws the package of the biscuits on the ground, in the middle of the flowers. Seeing this Wolfie became very angry, upset and confused.

“Those humans,” he said, “this little girl must be taught a lesson! I think she is the granddaughter of the old lady living in the wooden cottage in middle of the forest, I will go and talk with her!”

In a nutshell:

The well known tale of the little red riding hood, told from the perspective of the wolf. It turns out that the wolf has a completely different viewpoint and motivation for his actions than commonly attributed to him.

The story can be used to raise the awareness of the audience for avoiding prejudice, being open to different viewpoints and subjective realities, as well as the importance of empathy.

Arriving at the house of the grandmother, he knocks at the door and the old lady welcomes him.

“Ohhh, Wolfie it’s been a while since I’ve seen you, how are you? Is everything all right? I can see you are a bit upset.”

“Well,” Wolfie says, “there is a little girl dressed all in red, she’s coming towards your house right now, she has collected almost all the flowers in the forest AND she threw on the ground the packaging of the biscuits that she ate...” Wolfie started describing the behaviour of the little girl, “this is not possible, not in my forest, not in any forest!”

“Yes, that’s my granddaughter, I can tell by your description that she is the one. She indeed loves the colour red and you couldn’t believe how many times myself and her mother tried to explain to her that she shouldn’t collect so many flowers because I have so many flowers here, so close to me, and you couldn’t imagine what her room looks like, but what can we do?”

“I think,” said Wolfie, “that we should teach her a lesson, what do you say?”

“Yes, yes, sure!! I absolutely agree!”

But, as they were talking the little girl approached the house of the grandmother and the two of them, the grandmother and Wolfie didn’t have time to finish the plan, how would they teach the little girl a lesson? Being out of time, the grandmother told Wolfie to grab some of her clothes and sit in her bed, because she didn’t know what and how exactly to tell her. So he did. He took some of grandma’s clothes and sat on her bed. The grandmother hid herself under the bed.

The little girl burst into the house—without even knocking on the door—and looking at her grandmother asked “But why do you have such big eyes?”

Wolfie felt a bit uncomfortable, he was taken by surprise and he just said “So I can see you better.”

Right after the answer, the little girl asked another question, as impolite as she asked the first one. “Why do you have such big ears?”

Wolfie was feeling even more uncomfortable, so he couldn’t answer anything except “So I can hear you better.”

The next second, the little girl asked, “But why do you have such a big mouth?”

“Ohhh, not the mouth”, thought Wolfie “ever since I was a little baby, the other wolves made fun of me because I have a big—too big, they used to say—mouth...”

So this being a very sensitive subject for him he got extremely angry and upset and he got out of the bed, went out of the house and he started running towards his house thinking that no lesson could help the little girl behave better.

This is the well-known story of a little girl, some call it “Little Red Riding Hood”. This is the story from the point of view of the wolf. Nobody knew his version of the story. Just as nobody knows why the grandmother kept this version secret from the public. Who knows?

Learning objectives:

1. To develop young people's lateral thinking.
2. To raise awareness amongst young people regarding empathy.
3. To create the space for children to think using other perspectives.

Target group:

Young people aged between 4 and 18 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. A puppet wolf.
2. Paper and pencils or pens for each participant.
3. Two flipchart pages and markers.

Before the story:

1. Ask the participants if they know any story in which one of the characters is a wolf. Ask them to describe the character. (They will tend to say the wolf is the negative character from almost any story that they know.)
2. Ask participants to describe (they can work in pairs) the place they live and if they were born in the same town/village. Ask them next if they know where their parents were born and finally ask them if they know where their grandparents were born.
3. Organise a survey among your participants related to the places they like to be and activities they enjoy doing. They can organise the survey themselves and speak with a minimum of five different people. At the end, try to analyse the answers and make a list of the top five places they like to be and the top five activities they enjoy doing.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story. Use a puppet wolf if

“One of the biggest learning points for me at this training course was how to involve the audience in the telling and the development of a story, so that it is not only me creating the story, but a co-creation of everybody.”

**Svetlana Starodumova (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+**

you have one and, even from the start of the story, use a soft and pleasant voice to describe the wolf. Use a rather negative tone when you are describing the little girl.

Leaving the story:

1. Give the puppet wolf to every participant and invite them to share what people usually think about wolves.
2. Choose another well-known story and try to come up with a story from the point of view of the negative character. For example, “Snow White”. Try to put your participants in the shoes of the stepmother and place her in a positive light. For the same story, you can divide the participants in three or four groups and each group will tell the same story but from different perspectives (e. g. the stepmother, one of the stepsisters, of the prince, etc.).

3. Invite the participants to make a play in which they will be the characters from the story.
4. Organise a debate: divide the group into two. One is against collecting flowers from the forest and the other one is for collecting flowers from the forest. You can propose, or let participants choose, other topics they can debate, as well.

Question to reflect upon:

1. What is your favourite story from when you were younger/now? What are the reasons you have chosen that specific story?
2. Imagine a world in which empathy is a precious value for everyone. How would that world look?
3. What does “I will teach someone a lesson” mean to you? Did you ever teach someone a lesson?

“We all love success stories. They inspire us, and we admire the protagonists. But often, these success stories are not how things really happened. It is an idealised and simplified version written by the winners, a version that sounds more convincing and more impressive. It is very important to be aware of that distortion. But, the good news is: everybody can write his or her own story the way you’d like to.”

**Nikita Kljukin (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+**

“Deep stories with strong moral can give you the grounds and opportunity to reflect on your own morals and values in life.”

**MarCus Vreccer (Austria),
trainer at Storytelling+**

STORY: CHERRY THE CLOWN

by Ioana Trifa and Magdalena Krzysik (created during the project "Storytelling: Senses and Competences", Romania, 2015)

There was this colourful, funny clown, dressed in a dotted costume with a large black hat on his head, curly orange hair and with cheeks red like cherries. He lived in a small house with his family, Marta, his wife, and their three beautiful children, two girls and a boy, but they weren't clowns like Cherry.

It was a summer day, but one of those days when the Sun was kind, it wasn't hot and not cold either, a perfect day for a picnic in the garden. They were all in the house preparing the food for a tasty lunch and all of a sudden the doorbell rings. Marta goes and opens the door and with a large smile on her face welcomes the guests inside. They were her children's friends with their parents. She invited them for lunch but she forgot to tell her husband about this.

Cherry was a good and understanding man so he didn't get upset for not knowing about the guests. This was the first time when they received people in their house because they recently moved to this town. They were friendly people and wanted to get to know the members of the community and to socialise.

Marta invited them in the living room and Cherry served the drinks and some appetisers, but when he entered the room with the tray, the parents were stunned because of the way he looked, big orange hair, red round nose, colourful clothes and big clown shoes. They didn't understand who he was and why he was dressed like that.

Cherry introduced himself "Hello, I'm Cherry the father and I'm very happy to have you in our home."

A cheerful and friendly clown called Cherry lived with his family in a community. They receive a visit by other children and their parents. The other parents do not trust Cherry because of his appearance. During a sudden earthquake, only Cherry reacts responsibly and protects all children under a table, while the other parents panic. After the earthquake, the other parents realize they misjudged Cherry because of his appearance, and they accept him.

The story can be used to address issues such as being courageous to be different, not to be prejudiced based on appearances, and how children are often more open-minded than adults.

The children were very excited and happy to see him. But the parents were confused, they didn't understand why he was dressed up like that and they were asking him a lot of questions: "do you have a job as a clown?", "do you wear these clothes every day?" and many other similar questions.

Cherry explained them that he has a normal job, but this is the way he dresses every day because he likes it and he feels comfortable. This answer confused the parents and they thought that he is a weird person, unsuitable to be a parent and they wanted to take their children home, to stay away from him. But the children were having so much fun, they loved Cherry and didn't want to leave, so they continued playing.

All of a sudden the floor started to vibrate, the furniture and the objects that were on it were moving slowly, it was like the entire house was wallowing. Cherry sensed it and he realised what is happening, so he took the children under the big table in the living room and he started entertaining them with some improvised games so that they didn't realise that it was an earthquake. The other parents panicked and they also got under the table and saw what Cherry was doing. They calmed down because they knew that the children were safe. Luckily, the earthquake wasn't violent and it lasted only about 10 minutes. After those almost 10 minutes under the table, Cherry and the children went outside in the garden to play. The parents were grateful for what he had done and they realised that he is a good and responsible parent, although he looks different.

Learning objectives:

1. To raise awareness and introduce the topic of an earthquake to the children.
2. To encourage children to be different if they feel like it.
3. To raise awareness regarding what is beneath appearances.

Target group:

Young people aged between 4 and 7 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. Some cardboard round plates.
2. Face-painting crayons.
3. Some wool.
4. Some watercolours and brushes.

Before the story:

1. With the help of the children, create a clown mask, a handicraft one that can be put on and taken off.
2. Show children different persons wearing different clothes. From 1700 till the present and invite them to express their opinions on the fashions they see and the way they like to dress.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story. Try to describe—using as many details as possible—the funny, colourful and unusual way the father was dressed, but without making fun or exaggerating anything. Describe it as if he were a business man dressed in a suit with a tie. Underline the great abilities Cherry has to distract the children and make funny faces during the earthquake by making funny faces.

Having created the clown mask, invite the children to put on the mask whenever you are saying something about Cherry or whenever he speaks in the story.

“I learn a lot from storytelling when I am actually the storyteller, as this forces me to dig deep into the story and the protagonist. I cannot simply lean back and listen, I need to be totally in the story in order to transmit it, and this makes me reflect and learn a lot.”

**Viesturs Lūsis (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

Leaving the story:

1. Show the children a video related to what happens during an earthquake. Show them what they must do whenever they think there is an earthquake and put it into practice by simulating such an event.
2. Invite the children to use the face-painting colours and to draw different characters on one another.
3. Invite the participants to think and describe a typical day of one of their favourite stars. For example, their favourite singer, or actor, etc. If possible watch together a video about one famous person in which they describe the usual things they do during a day.
4. You can create a handicraft of a clown together with the children from a paper plates. Use watercolours, coloured paper and small wool balls for the eyes.

Question to reflect upon:

1. Would you like your father to dress up like a clown every day when going to the work? Whether they answer yes or no, ask them why?
2. Have you ever felt an earthquake?
3. Do you know any story about people that faced an earthquake?
4. Do you invite other children to come to your house? If yes, what do you like doing most together?

“I believe that countries and nations also have stories, heroic stories that constitute their identity. Many times these stories are rather myths, but they are powerful. Latvia is a very young country, and I feel that sometimes we are still looking for or are in the process of creating some of these stories to constitute what it means to be Latvian and what is the identity of Latvia as a nation.”

**Viesturs Lusis (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

“What makes storytelling a powerful tool is also that, if done in the right way, it can appeal to all senses and provide a holistic experience. And, by providing such a strong experience, it also stays in the mind in a more persistent way and triggers more thoughts, associations and consequences.”

**MarCus Vreccer (Austria),
trainer at Storytelling+**

STORY: JACK AND HIS COMPUTER

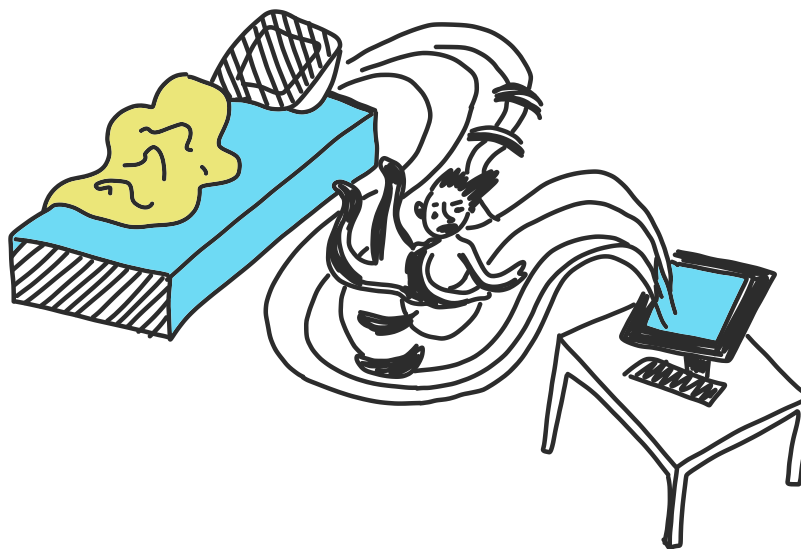
by Svetlana Starodumova (created during the project “Creative Learning Cookbook: Storytelling+”, Austria, Payerbach, 2015)

Once upon a time, there lived Jack who liked to spend his time at the screen of his computer. Jack always tried to make some simple things into complex ones. He had a lot of primitive programmes and one day he was thinking what kind of breakthrough he could make virtually, with a computer. That night he was online and chatting to his classmates, discussing different ideas and then he fell asleep.

He had a dream where he saw a very strange link, he clicked that and downloaded a manual where he could read instructions in a strange language and suddenly things from his folders started to appear in his room: his calculations were jumping on the window, the photos were floating on the ceiling, then everything faded away. Jack started to feel a great desire to enter into the magic of the virtual world! A voice said: “I will send you there, but come back before 12 o’clock or your family will never see you again.”

Jack turned out to be in the world of magic, he could fly as a small bee in different countries, feeling sunshine, warm wind and drops of the rain, play with dolphins and he could do away with the boredom that pressed him for such a long time.

Of course he came back before 12 o’clock, Jack felt so excited and did a back-up of all the things he experienced during his flight to be able to return to them again someday.



In a nutshell:

A boy called Jack is passionate about computers. One night he has a vivid dream about living in a magic online world where he can fly and experience nature to the fullest. After waking up, he develops a system to ensure he can always return to his magic online world.

The story is about creativity, the relation of dreams with real life, and the relevance of being passionate about one’s hobbies and aspirations in lifes.

Learning objectives:

1. To develop the creativity of the participants.
2. To be aware of their passions and to start exploring them even more.

Target group:

Young people aged between 7 and 11 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. An instrumental song to play while telling the story.
2. A3 paper, coloured pencils, scissors, glue and markers.
3. As many different objects as possible (more or less 10–15 objects), such as a candle holder, toilet paper, a marker, a sharpener, scotch tape, a paper clip, a bottle, a phone, etc.

Before the story:

1. Divide the participants into two or three groups. Give them 3 minutes to brainstorm and to write down as many computer components and as possible.
2. In pairs, ask the children to tell to their partner about the last dream they had.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story. While the boy is dreaming you can introduce some music while you are telling the story. The music will stop when the dream ends.

Leaving the story:

1. Put different objects in the middle of the room (e. g. a candle holder, toilet paper, a marker, a sharpener, scotch tape, etc.). Invite the children to be as creative as possible and to imagine that aliens (which they will play) have just landed on it and they find these objects. Ask the children to find as many uses as possible for the objects, ignoring their proper use.

“Storytelling is a dialogue between the storyteller and the audience, it is a way of establishing a connection. The storyteller must thus observe and “feel” the audience, and react accordingly. The connection is without barriers and reactions are immediate, this is why gestures and facial expressions play an important role in enhancing the performance.”

Sandra Horea,
trainer at Storytelling+

2. Invite every participant to create a poster of their passion and to present it to the others by underlining the positive aspects of the activity and the reasons why they have chosen that particular one.
3. Individually, invite the participants to write down one of their dreams and to describe it as clearly as possible. If they want, they can share their writings with their classmates.

Question to reflect upon:

1. Would you like to be invisible?
2. What do you think is your superpower?
3. Why do you think we have dreams at night when we sleep?
4. Why do you think we have dreams we want to achieve in the real life?

“One nice way of using storytelling when working with kids is to organise themed summer camps, e.g. pirates or science fiction or medieval ages, and let the kids be the protagonists of the story, and even more, let them create a big part of the story themselves.”

**Edmons Gruduls (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

STORY: WOULD YOU RATHER BE A CARROT, AN EGG OR A COFFEE BEAN?

collected by Natalia Niemiec (during the project "Storytelling: Senses and Competences", Romania, 2015)

A young woman went to her grandmother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling and wanted to give up.

Her grandmother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water. In the first, she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs and in the last she placed ground coffee beans.

She let them sit and boil without saying a word. After about twenty minutes, she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee into a cup. Turning to her granddaughter, she asked, "Tell me what you see?"

"Carrots, eggs, and coffee," she replied.

She brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. Then she asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled, as she tasted its rich aroma.

The granddaughter then asked, "What does it mean grandmother?"

Her grandmother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversary—boiling water—but each reacted differently. The carrot was strong and hard. However, after being in the boiling water, it became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin

In a nutshell:

A young woman complains to her grandmother about the hardships of life, and that she is considering to give up. The grandmother explains about different ways of facing hardships in life by using the examples of carrot, egg and coffee beans in boiling water. A carrot, which is hard at first, becomes squishy. An egg, which is fragile at first, becomes hard. But a coffee bean, which is nothing spectacular at first, turns the boiling water into a delicious essence. In other words, if you behave like a coffee bean in life, you transform the hardships into something positive and beneficial for everybody.

The story shows how we always have a choice in how we face the hardships of life, and how we can transform them into opportunities even for further people.

shell had protected its liquid interior. But, after being in the boiling water, it became hard inside. The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

“Which are you?” she asked the granddaughter. “When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?”

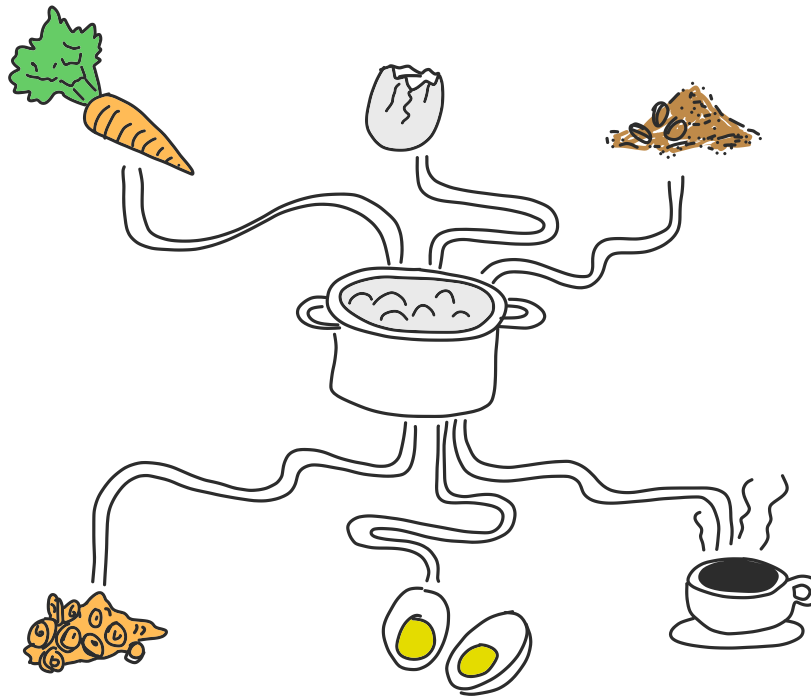
The granddaughter thought about this: “Which am I?”

Am I the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity, do I become soft and lose my strength? Or am I the egg that is fragile, but changes with the heat? Do I, after a death, a break up, a financial hardship, or some other trial, become like a stone?

Does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter with a hardened heart? Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the flavour. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you change, get better and change the situation around you.

“How do you handle adversity?”

ARE YOU A CARROT, AN EGG OR A COFFEE BEAN?”



Learning objectives:

1. To empower young people to think positively and have a positive attitude towards life and the future
2. To create the space where young people have the chance to reflect on their personal behaviour.

Target group:

Young people aged between 12 and 18 years old.

Preparation

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

1. Two sets of 10 questions related to coffee, the colour orange, and the way people prefer to eat their eggs. For example: Who's favourite colour is orange? Who eats their eggs very soft? Who drinks four coffees per day? Who doesn't drink coffee at all? Who eats only raw food? Who eats boiled vegetables? Who cracks eggs for Easter?

Whose favourite colour is brown? Who drinks their coffee with a lot of milk?

2. A real carrot, a real egg and some coffee beans.
3. Coloured thread, super-glue and scissor.

Before the story

1. Invite participants to play the game "Find someone who..." Give them only 2 minutes to find as many people as possible who answer yes to the questions.
2. Show them the three elements of the story: the carrot, the coffee beans and the egg and invite them individually, or in pairs, to come up with a short story. Share the stories within the whole group, or in groups of four.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story. You can use the three elements of the story, a real carrot, some real coffee beans and a real egg in order to underline the specific qualities of each.

"This training course on storytelling was like a classic hero's journey, where people initially met as strangers, and thanks to mutually supporting each other with their special and unique powers, ended up as heroes."

**MarCus Vrečer (Austria),
trainer at Storytelling+**

"Part of being a good storyteller is also to improvise, to use illustrations and drawings, to use intonation and body language, to use props and real physical objects, to use music, to use puppets, to use the environment creatively, in short: to put life into your story."

**Svetlana Starodumova (Estonia),
participant at Storytelling+**

Leaving the story:

1. Invite participants to answer the last question of the story by freewriting what they are: a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean. At the end they can share if they want with the group.
2. Create a bracelet from thread and glue a coffee bean on it, as a souvenir of the story.
3. Invite the participants to write inspiring messages for strangers that might face the problem of the young women from the story. If wished, it is possible to extend this and to organise a Delivery Life moment in which they

would stop people and give them the beautifully created pieces of paper together with an inspiring wish for the future. This should of course only be done under the supervision of adults, and it is very important to point out to the teenagers the dangers of talking to strangers.

Question to reflect upon:

1. Think of an event when you have acted as if you were a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean.
2. What can make us act more like a coffee bean?

“The same story might make a totally different impact on you depending on which phase of your life you are currently in. For me, for example, I read the story of the Little Prince three times already, once as a kid, once as a teenager and once recently. As a kid, it was simply a funny and colourful story for me, and I paid special attention to the animals. As a teenager however, I reflected a lot more on the aspects of values and on responsibilities over others that I found in that book, and the type of expectation you create when you take care of somebody.”

**Lelda Senberga (Latvia),
participant at Storytelling+**

STORY: JUST FOR A SECOND

by Liene Millere (created during the project “Creative Learning Cookbook: Storytelling+”, Austria, Payerbach, 2015)

It was quiet, a bit too quiet for his liking. It was getting colder and he moved closer to the fireplace to keep himself warm. His vivid imagination started playing tricks on him. The subtle, cold wind brought the sad cry-out of an owl, it was so sudden that he was startled and a small wave of shivers went down his spine. It probably triggered some subconscious thoughts because his imagination grew wild and started noticing scary creatures within every shadow. Every single noise he could hear seemed creepy and even the rustling of the leaves promised the arrival of something terrifying. It became darker and the only thing he could see was the flame tongues of the fire licking the darkness. He concentrated on the fire and the pleasant crackling of the fireplace calmed him down.

Even though he was very close to the fire the chillness of the mountain air was slowly soaking into his body. He noticed that the weather had changed again. Suddenly, he saw the lightning that cut the pitch dark sky. He didn't have to wait long for thunder and when it struck, he could feel it echoing in his stomach. That was bad and, for the first time since the accident, he had a grim thought that he might not make it till the morning.

Somewhere in the dark he saw a tiny light ball. It was too far to tell if it was a star, a plane or something else, but it reminded him of the welcoming lights of his hometown. He remembered how he had yelled at his sister for taking his phone. It seemed now like it happened millions of light years ago, in another dimension. All of a sudden, all the excuses he had ever made started to resurface.

In a nutshell:

As we witness his last thoughts and impressions, a man is defeated by the forces of nature.

The story can be used to trigger the creativity of young people, to reflect about the relation of man and nature, and to explore the issue of death.

It began to rain and soon he beads of rain were dropping down his soaked hair and, just like the rain, the feeling of regret overtook him. The rain was pouring down and it soon destroyed the only source of heat. It became so dark that he couldn't even see his fingers. Eventually, the rain, regret and despair wore him out and he felt extremely tired. The eyelids seemed too heavy, so he shut the eyes just for a second.

Two weeks later his rotten body was found by a group of tourists, who were hiking in the mountains.

Learning objectives:

To develop the creativity of the young people.

Target group:

Young people aged between 14 and 18 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants.

Before the story:

If you are sitting outside, even better, if not, open the windows and pay attention to all the sounds

that can be heard and the possible sources where they come from.

Telling the story:

Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch, use of gestures and pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story. If possible, while you are telling the story have the windows wide open and switch off the lights of the room.

Leaving the story:

1. Invite the participants to write a continuation for the story. Ask them to share their stories after they have finished.
2. Invite the participants to work in teams of five to write a script starting from the story and to play it in front of the other participants.

“Sometimes I find it hard to bring the ideas and stories I have in my head to paper. In such cases, there are some creative tools and rituals than can support this process of giving birth to a story, for example free writing.”

Johannes Herbert Tamegger (Austria),
participant at Storytelling+

STORY: A SHORT MOMENT OF ETERNITY

By Ilze Kuhaluska (created during the project “Creative Learning Cookbook: Storytelling+”, Austria, Payerbach, 2015)

Peace... Sunshine... The smell of first spring flowers... Mountains at the horizon... The touch of soft grass on our feet... Only blue sky above us... Small clouds floating in the blue sky... Feels like they are dancing a secret dance... We enjoy watching them... Have the feeling that we can hear music... We can feel it... We can dance it... Feels like eternity... There is nothing else... There is nobody else... There is no yesterday... There is no tomorrow... There is just this moment... There is satisfaction... There is trust... There is closeness... There is loneliness... There is happiness... And, above everything there is hope... trust... belief... Everything and at the same time nothing embraces us... Nothing else matters and everything has importance... Tiny things become big... Big things become tiny... Smiles become tears and tears become smiles... Everything and nothing... The Earth and the sky... The day and the night... Good and evil... Everything is mixed in this one single moment when we are together... When we are here...

Learning objectives:

1. To relax the participants after a hard working day.
2. Or: To start the day with this story as a gift.
3. To develop creativity among young people.
4. To better understand antonyms.

Target group:

Young people aged between 15 and 18 years old.

Preparation:

Depending on the learning objective, the context in which the story is told (in a youth centre or in a school) and the target group, prepare the story, know your story and prepare the classroom/any room, or even an outdoor place (such as a park) that accommodates your number of participants. Put the tables and chairs aside and prepare:

In a nutshell:

A short mental travel full of positivity, warmth, hope, transcendence and relaxation.

This story can be used as a gift for the audience to feel good, to relax, to feel gratitude, and to become aware of the power of words, music and meditations.

“I found out that details are a very important element to bring stories to life and to make them credible and enjoyable. I always have the rough concept and the main message of my story in my mind, but so far I have not paid enough attention to decorating my stories with interesting and playful details. I will now try to either think of these details before, or to gain enough confidence to come up with these details as I am telling a story.”

1. Some comfortable pillows and blankets for the participants to lay down on.
2. Some soft instrumental music.
3. The story, by removing all adjectives from the text.
4. Paper and writing instruments for every participant.

Before the story:

1. Invite the participants to walk around, using the Brownian movement (walking around randomly at a changing pace) in the place you are, in the room or in the park, and stop them after every 30 seconds, asking them to pay attention to the little details that surrounds them, for example the grass, the trees, the breathing of their classmates, the walls of the room, etc.
2. Use music and contemporary dance techniques in order to soften the participants' bodies and souls. Make them work in pairs to guide each other while listening to the music.

Telling the story:

This time you will ask the participants to listen to the story laying down on the floor or grass with

their eyes closed. You will read the story, word by word. Be aware of your voice, tone, volume, pitch and make long pauses in order to underline the different stages of the story. Use a soft voice and don't move at all. Play soft music while you are reading the story, make sure it is not too loud.

Leaving the story:

1. Ask the participants to open their eyes and grab a piece of paper and freely write the story that they have imagined.
2. Invite the participants to draw the story using pencils and paper and to give a name to the drawing.
3. Give the participants the story without the adjectives and invite them to fill them in, paying attention that they have to be antonyms.

Question to reflect upon:

1. How did you feel while you were listening to the story?
2. What do words mean to you?
3. Is music important for you? Why?

“In general, it is getting more and more difficult nowadays with all the data we are overloaded with, to filter that data and to put different levels of relevance to it. If you embed the data in a story however, it is something that goes directly to your soul, to your brain, to your experiential and existential sphere and can be processed easier and be retained in an easier way.”

**MarCus Vreccer (Austria),
trainer at Storytelling+**

It was part of the concept of the Creative Learning Cookbook project that in each of the three partner countries, Austria, Estonia and Latvia, there would be an international training course on one of the three methods we selected to creatively enhance the learning process: Storytelling, Creative Writing and Visual Facilitation. The training course on storytelling took place in May 2015 in Austria, with 15 educators from different fields who all work with young people participated in it. The participants then applied their learning points in local follow-up activities in their countries, where they would see how they could use storytelling in a creative and beneficial way for different target groups and different learning purposes. In the following, we have summarised some of the outcomes and reflection points for you.

Austria

One of the follow-up projects taking place in Austria was an outdoor-weekend in co-operation with a youth club. Young people aged 13–22 years who are regulars at the youth club had the opportuni-

ty to travel to the countryside, stay overnight in tents and explore the beautiful nature. The whole event was embedded in storytelling, as the participants were the heroes of a journey that they would discover bit by bit, through the stories told by the educators. So the young people were not simply passive consumers of the stories, but they were an integral part of it, thus completely immersed into it.

In their feedback and reflection after the activity, the educators underline that when you organise an event of such strong emotional impact and group interaction, it is very important to set common grounds and create a safe atmosphere:

“We agreed also upon some rules in behaviour – such as respecting the ideas and thoughts of everybody in the group, decision-making only together and so on.”

They witnessed how the event would affect the soft skills and social attitude of the participants:

“To see everybody getting more self-confident while talking or acting was also something we could notice during the time.”

The educators also reflected on the technical side of their event:

“Our recommendation: Try out EVERYthing you want to do before you think it will work. Especially everything which has to do with technical advice ;) Also a good recommendation is to go to the place where you want to perform your event – there you get a lot of inspiration and also theoretical plans can turn out to be impractical, etc. ...”

In the end, they were very satisfied with the impact of the storytelling event had on the young people, and thought about other possible learning purposes that could be used in the type of event they had created:

“Group-forming or getting to know each other is also a side effect of our event, but could be the main goal for other who might use our method.”

The event took place in July 2015 in the countryside of Carinthia, Austria. It was designed and organised by Johannes Herbert Tamegger, Maria Brachtel, Andreas Franz Auinger and Jana Katarina Harrer in co-operation with the youth club “gemma”.

Estonia

In Estonia, Svetlana Starodumova offered a workshop on storytelling techniques to a group of English teachers. She did this by first making a PowerPoint presentation, and then showing some of the techniques in a practical way by involving the audience and performing the techniques live.

Svetlana felt that the teachers were very open to enhancing their repertoire of methods:

“The teachers felt enthusiastic about the methods and felt motivated themselves, participating in all the activities. The outcome was quite promising. The teachers were encouraged to use all that they have learnt at their future lessons.”

Storytelling is a good way to add to the process of foreign language learning and to raise the motivation of their students:

“Positive, motivating. They would like to have more such interesting presentations with new games, stories, techniques as nowadays it’s a great concern for teachers to find such interesting approaches to language learning and most of them are stuck in repetitive and boring schemes that are no longer motivating for the students.”

Svetlana observes that the workshop she offered could be suitable in a wide range of foreign language teaching:

“This activity is suitable for the teachers of foreign languages to teach students of different ages, at kindergarten, at school or university. I’d recommend to make a presentation, but involve the participants to take an active part in all the activities to get a full understanding of storytelling techniques.”

The event was organised in September 2015 in Estonia by Svetlana Starodumova in co-operation with Interlink MTÜ and Narva Mainor Kõrgkool.

Latvia

In late August, shortly before the opening of the new school season, Ilze Kuhalska organised a workshop for primary school teachers from the Rēzekne region in Latvia. She undertook an experiential learning experience, which means she did not provide a theoretic presentation of a set of methods, but she directly applied them with the teachers so that they would profoundly experience the techniques themselves.

One of the main effects of storytelling techniques, Ilze envisages, is the boosting and unleashing of creativity:

“My workshop was concentrating on activities related to how to awaken and “bring out” creativity, which is in each of us; activities that help students to create stories in the moments when they feel stuck. We did some icebreaking activities –

called different nouns, then associations, then we joined nouns, adjectives and verbs making some titles for poems which we wrote afterwards. We pretended to be architects and anthropologists while investigating found household items. We filled all the room with a wonderful smell of coffee by doing a scent and touch activity. We listened to the story of Wolfie and the story of the egg, coffee and carrot, wishing that each of us is a coffee bean that gives our best to our students. And, we ended the workshop by telling our stories (impressions) with the Dixit cards about this workshop.”

Ilze is confident that she sparked inspiration and ideas in the teachers:

“As the workshop was organised just a couple of days before the beginning of a new school year, I hope that I gave participants new inspiration, some new ideas for their work.”

The teachers underlined that storytelling is an important approach in working with small children, and that there is an ongoing need for enhancing the toolset at the disposal of educators:

“Participants confirmed that the ability to tell stories is very important nowadays (especially with small children), unfortunately we use it too seldom. Participants were interested to find out new methods (scent/touch activity) that they could use in their lessons, as well new materials – Dixit cards, story cubes.”

And finally, Ilze points out that the same as in stories, also in your workshop it is useful to play with dynamics:

“Timing is very important. As well as logical structure and sequence of all carried out activities, that it makes Your Story (workshop) with an introduction, a climax and an ending.”

The event was organised by Ilze Kuhalska in August 2015 in Rēzekne, Latvia, in cooperation with Rēzekne region municipality, department of education. The workshop was attended by primary school teachers from all over the region.

About the Authors



Sandra Horea

I was born in 1987 in Romania. In love with working with people since forever. I discovered non-formal education some years ago and felt amazed by its impact. I decided to dedicate myself to offering possibilities for personal growth to young people and youth workers. Currently, I am a youth worker and a trainer, collaborating with various NGOs. I have discovered and co-create Storytelling as a non-formal method of education and for me Storytelling encompasses two of my most important personal values: the wonder of giving and the power of people to bring desired change.



Marcus Vrečer

Born in 1973 in Austria, in youth work since 1992. Believes that the world is slowly but surely becoming a better place and wants to contribute to that by strengthening civil society and empowering young people. Long-standing experience both as manager and educator in international youth work and civil society activism. Still amazed by the beauty of life and the world, passionate traveller, cook, musician and father.

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