



IO6.6 GUIDELINES AND TEMPLATE FOR AUTHORIZING CASE STUDIES

LIRE 2.0 Case Studies – Sharing practice

This template has been designed to record and share practice, and to help other teachers and researchers consider the relevance and potential for adapting this practice for use elsewhere.

Template for case studies¹

Case studies should be no more than 2 pages; plus any images you can provide

Use a quote that highlights the case study: You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have. Maya Angelou

Title: Ars longa vita brevis (Life is short, Art is eternal)

Summary: Frank Viva's book 'Young Charlotte, Filmmaker' proved to be a springboard for Grade 3 and Grade 6 children to stretch their imaginations and hone their critical thinking skills. They wrote a new scenario from the point of a view of a minor character in the original story, then created a dialogue in English (not their native language) and combined these two into an animation using a Web 2.0 tool and their iPads, thereby creating a short movie. The animation was then entered into a national competition for children from Grades 2-6. They ended up winning the first prize.

What was done:

Please give a description of the case study including (from the Toolkit):

With the Ars longa project, after the students read the book 'Young Charlotte, Filmmaker' by Frank Viva, they were asked to change the storyline by creating a new retelling of the story as seen through the eyes of Black, the cat. This was done in three main stages. To begin with, the two teachers showed the book cover and illustrations to the children to make predictions. They then read the book to the students and discussed the plot and characters. In the second stage, the children themselves created a new plot inspired by the original story. A division of tasks followed. The participating children from Grades 3 and 6 were chosen. The older group concentrated on writing the script in dialogue format, dramatizing and recording it. As this was done in English, the children who were chosen to participate were those whose oral skills in English were very good. The younger group created the visual scenery. They designed the cat, made the background collage for the different scenes and also found photographs with the help of their teacher that were also used as backgrounds. To

¹ *Template adapted from the University of Edinburgh (adapted from JISC and SHEEC case studies, JT 30/4/13; updated 9/5/13, 11/6/13, 25/6/13)*



animate the story, they positioned the cat at different points in the collage/photo backgrounds and took multiple photos. Finally, they used the Web tool iStopMotion, to make an animation of their story. Since movies are actually a sequence of photos presented to the audience at high speed, things seem to move because of small differences from one picture to the next. When the images are played back at a higher speed, they take on the form of an animation. iStopMotion also allows you to add audio to the video.

The topic chosen was not linked to one of the teaching units suggested by Doukas School; rather, it was linked to the teaching unit created by another partner, the IIS Ferraris Brunelleschi School in Italy. Through the movie-making process, we were able to confirm that what the educator does with a piece of literature can have a lasting impact on the child, even in the case of marginalized learners and disinterested students. Of the group of children chosen to work on the project in Grade 3 through a random process (lottery), 2 were marginalized learners. The Ars Longa project had an active, engaging role for all participants depending on their strengths and talents. The result? Amazing things were done with literature. The children experienced an innovative opportunity to exploit reading. The use of Web 2.0 tools, in this case iStopMotion, definitely added a new dimension to reading and writing for them and became a source of major motivation. Web 2.0 tools hinge on the educator being informed about the existence and use of such tools first and foremost, then depend on the educator to steer children to new avenues of exploration and exploitation of texts. The competitive element was an extra bonus. The choice of activities the teachers used in Ars Longa Vita Brevis encompassed all of these elements, which is why the endeavor was a winning combination, literally and figuratively.

Students were motivated to fully engage in writing and revising the text from their desire to communicate and by their individual pride of authorship. These factors increase student engagement with written language. The added incentive of producing completed movies to share with classmates, and others outside the school, cannot be overlooked.

Because the procedure and the outcome were so overwhelmingly positive, the teachers decided to incorporate this activity in the Literature curriculum as well as in the cross-curricular and interdisciplinary pool of activities of Doukas School. In addition to the fact that the initiative cultivates reading, it will also be used to help children with writing and spelling difficulties, as this was an observed outcome. The teachers noticed that the combination of Web tools/technology and writing, were a successful formula for motivating the children, and especially the marginalized ones.

How the learners were involved:

All the children contributed ideas for the new scenario, however, the Grade 6 children



wrote the dialogue, assigned roles and dramatized it. They had to ensure that the script followed the storyline, was cohesive and did not exceed the 3-minute limit. The teacher edited the dialogue to check the English and the flow of the text. The last stage was to practice the dialogue and record it on the iPad. In parallel, the Grade 3 teacher took the same script and directed her group to produce the visual scenery that would accompany the short movie. The children identified the scenes, designed the background (they made a collage), and the characters. With the help of their teacher, they selected images from Central Park in New York, city streets, the Museum of Modern Art and a Miro exhibit at the MoMa. The children created the central character, a cat, the cat's apartment, a few other characters and props in the museum. They created the effect of rain in the streets. As the cat was going to the Museum, it got wet. Once in the museum, the cat had to dry off before it was allowed to enter the exhibit. As the water dripped off of the cat, so did the black color, revealing the cat's true color (red). All this time the cat had seen the world through black glasses and as a very lonely place. Once the blackness washed away, the cat, for the first time in its life, saw the true colors that were all around.

The children took multiple pictures of a given scene in order to create the effect of animation. The YouTube link of the final product is here:
<https://youtu.be/hAKKHHp9oHc>

Did the learners' reading attitudes change? How?

A quote from a student shared by others, is representative, "Now I understand how movies are made. If we read longer books, then our movie will also be longer." The enthusiasm was shared among all the children, including the marginalized learners.

Which were the ICT-based educational practices and resources that the learners considered innovative?

The use of the Web tool iStopMotion, allowed the children to make an animation of their story. They had to be shown how to use it, but it was straightforward and intuitive. iStopMotion also allowed them to add audio to the video.

Give a couple of quotes from students or staff illustrating the case study.

Teacher's quotes: "It was satisfying watching the children learn about the movie-making process." "I was pleased to see them easily grasp the steps they needed to take to make an animation."

Learners' quotes: "This is how literary works are transferred to cinema!" "I enjoyed the movie very much. I want to read another book and do this all over again." "Now I understand how movies are made. If we read longer books, then our movie will also be longer." "Why don't we write our own book and turn it into a movie?"

Motivation and aims:

A brief outline of the reasons behind the practice described - its purpose and benefits.



The LiRe2.0 project is expected to address low achievement in basic skills through more effective teaching methods and develop basic and transversal skills by using innovative methods. In accordance with the objectives of LiRe, the Ars Longa Case Study addressed a way of motivating children who are low achievers. It proved to be successful, as gauged by the excitement and participation of the children, and their desire to repeat the process. They found it to be extremely rewarding.

Innovative pedagogical methods, best practice guidelines and implementation strategies towards scalable use of ICT for reading promotion.

By combining a new twist to the ‘assignment’ after reading the original text, not only did the children exercise higher order critical thinking skills, they were able to use their imaginations both orally and figuratively through the visual scenery they created. Their ideas were implemented in an exciting way through the making of an animated end product using ICT. Furthermore, the competitive element was present and in the case of the children, they were rewarded by winning First Prize in a national competition sponsored by the Greek Ministry of Education. The short movie was submitted as an entry in the Μαθητικός Διαγωνισμός Κινηματογράφου: Παιδί και Κινηματογράφος, από το Χαρτί στην Οθόνη (translation: Student Cinema Competition: Child and Cinema, from Paper to Screen). The title of the contest given by the Ministry was: Κάτι Τρέχει με τον Μουντζούρη (translation: Something’s Up with Blackie). The competition was geared for children between Grades 2-6 in Primary School. It required children to work in groups with a maximum of 10 participants, and to make a movie up to 3 minutes in length with the help of their teachers.

Successes and lessons learnt:

A brief outline of what works well, any particular challenges faced and how these were addressed.

The collaboration worked very well. Children were informed about the progress each group was making every step of the way. The children had a number of challenges, the first of which was that they had never had any experience making movies or with the app, iStopMotion. They needed to work closely and quickly with each other because they found out about the competition very close to the deadline for submitting the project.

Transferability:

Is this practice transferable? How? Are adaptations needed?

The procedure used in Ars Longa is definitely transferable. Already, the teachers have reported the success to the school administration and it has been decided to incorporate this activity in the Literature curriculum as well as in the cross-curricular and interdisciplinary pool of activities. In addition, it will also be used to cultivate writing and spelling in children with learning difficulties. The Grade 3 teacher noticed some positive effects in this direction. The teachers observed that the use of Web tools and technology in general, provided an extra motivating factor especially for the



marginalized learners and will, therefore, incorporate this in the future.

Further information:

Resources used from the LIRE2.0 toolkit:

1. The 'Ideas, Actions, and Activities for Incorporating ICT in Reading Promotion' was a useful guide.
2. Resources for Reading Promotion through ICT
The Lesson Plans developed by the IIS Ferraris Brunelleschi School in Empoli, Italy were considered before making the final lesson plans. They, too, exploited video, but with older students.

Webpage or platform where the students' work is kept:
See attachment entitled Data Analysis.

Location of practice: country, partner, school, grade, students' age
Greece, Doukas School, Grade 3 (8 years old) and Grade 6 (11 year old) pupils.

Author of case study (teacher's name and subject/ area taught in this context) and contact for further information:

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