

Erasmus+ Training for teachers of English at Gravesend, Kent, GB October 2015



The Storyline Method A helpful strategy for heterogeneous learner groups in the foreign language classroom

- What are your experiences in the foreign language classroom?
- Are your learners still motivated and actively involved?
- Do they get tasks that lead to constructing individual language?
- Does your teaching offer enough possibilities for differentiated work?
- Do your learners reach the national standards in all skills?

Why not try out an alternative teaching method?



For centuries the structure of a story has been used to educate and inform. In Scotland in the 70's and 80's a Storyline strategy was introduced into primary schools by a tutor team around Steve Bell based at *Jordanhill College of Education* in Glasgow. Although this approach was originally designed to teach environmental studies the international Comenius project "***Creative Dialogues***" (2003-2006) could prove that it offers a successful task based opportunity for language development and is an ideal approach for teaching heterogeneous learner groups.

Storyline offers:

- a motivating context
- integration of the individual ideas and interests of the pupils,
- authentic usage of the target language,
- a wide variety of differentiation. The pupils' learning styles and abilities are not a hindrance but lead to a significant collaborative outcome.
- an opportunity for the pupils to become aware of their individual learning styles, and to develop their self-organisational skills as well as their own learning strategies. (Life-long learning)

The motivation of the Storyline strategy arises from the ownership and involvement of the learners, who find themselves as participants within the story. The teacher has the plan or line, the pupils are the creators of the detail and the content of the story

While being involved in the storyline the participants of our courses will:

- make their own experiences by taking all the important steps through a story,
- collect teaching material and take home a full range of teaching ideas,
- learn and actively try to differentiate their tasks.
- discuss the evaluation of the learners' language outcomes.
- meet teachers of English from different European countries to compare teaching styles and much more
- enjoy an ideal way to improve their own language competence,
- discuss the advantages or disadvantages of this method for their learners.
- meet the inventors of this marvellous teaching strategy.

Course 3/2015:

Let's design a storyline around the Virginia Indian "Pocahontas"

17th – 24th October 2015 Gravesend

Run by: **Storyline Germany and lecturers of Gravesend....?**

Wikipedia states:

Pocahontas (born **Matoaka**, known as **Amonute**, and later known as **Rebecca Rolfe**, c. 1595 – March 1617) was a Virginia Indian^{[1][2][3]} notable for her association with the colonial settlement at Jamestown, Virginia. Pocahontas was the daughter of Powhatan, the paramount chief^[1] of a network of tributary tribal nations in the Tsenacommacah, encompassing the Tidewater region of Virginia. In a well-known historical anecdote, she is said to have saved the life of an Indian captive, Englishman John Smith, in 1607 by placing her head upon his own when her father raised his war club to execute him.



Pocahontas was captured by the English during Anglo-Indian hostilities in 1613, and held for ransom. During her captivity, she converted to Christianity and took the name Rebecca. When the opportunity arose for her to return to her people, she chose to remain with the English. In April 1614, she married tobacco planter John Rolfe, and in January 1615, bore him a son, Thomas Rolfe. Pocahontas's marriage to Rolfe was the first recorded interracial marriage in North American history.^[4]

In 1616, the Rolfes traveled to London. Pocahontas was presented to English society as an example of the civilized "savage" in hopes of stimulating investment in the Jamestown settlement. She became something of a celebrity, was elegantly fêted, and attended a masque at Whitehall Palace. In 1617, the Rolfes set sail for Virginia, but Pocahontas died at Gravesend of unknown causes. She was **buried in a church in Gravesend, but the exact location of her grave is unknown.**



(The pictures are taken from Wikipedia)

During the course we will not only visit her memorial in Saint George's church, Gravesend but we will have the opportunity to learn more about Pocahontas

- through a storyteller and a picture book aiming at young learners (language level A1/A2)
- through an historian who will tell about the background of her time and the many wrong facts that have been published (language level A2/B1+)
- by visiting an exhibition about the culture of the Virginia Indians in London
- by trying out native Indian recipes by doing some practical cooking



- In the end we will sit down and design a storyline in which the learners will be motivated to take over the identity of an Indian or an Englishman at Pocahontas' time, This will lead to asking questions, listening to or reading informational texts, inventing dialogues, writing letters etc:...well, all the important things to develop the target language.

Accommodation = 1050€
(7 nights in ensuite rooms in a hotel + half board)
Course fee = 500€

If you are interested to sign in, please send us a note and we can provide you with additional material.

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