



STORYLINE PROJECT

SLOVENIA

Report from Storyline project

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Project description

My first try of Storyline project named “Our farms” has turned out as an extremely positive experience. I didn’t dare to think about that great outcome before starting the project. Let me explain details;

We started the project with role-play game, in which I have played an employee at the tourist agency where we offer our visitors to visit and experience how it is to live on a farm. Since I couldn’t reach any of our farmers (some were on holidays; some had problems with animals, the stable...) I was acting desperate to get some farmers who would accept our visitors. The first suggestion comes: “*My grandfather has a farm. Maybe I can ask him*”, (said one of the children) and this is how our Storyline started. Each group (3 groups), made a plan of the farm. We made it before seeing it on the pictures. While presenting plans to other pupils, sharing ideas, checking pictures of farms pupils decided to supplement their ‘farm-plans’. It was really interesting how spontaneous it all came from pupils. They had so many questions and ideas later when they were able to complete their plans. It means that the principle “*of encouraging the children to develop their own conceptual model first*” plays an important role in teaching, especially in Storyline. It was time to start building our farms. Before building we have discussed about what plants can we grow on a farm, what things we use to work there (making a word-bank)... While building farms, children had lots of questions about animals, they even brought their own toy-animals from home to show them to the others, which means that they were thinking about this project also at home. There was not a day without asking things about our guests. Children were so curious and couldn’t wait to get some more information about it. When we finished building, pupils named their village “Vas pri kmetiji”, which means “A village near by the farm”. Each group also decided their own name of the family and it was time to think about what people could live on our farms. Children decided their family members, some decided to be parents, grandparents, children, and we also had a baby in one family. I can not explain how interesting it was for them to create a family and figures. They have really enjoyed, especially when they presented figures to others. I would especially like to expose how important it was for all pupils to have the same “starting point”, many of them said “*I can make so many things!*” which shows how important it is to have a structure in which everyone can feel competent.

And then, finally, our village got a letter from the family who plans to visit us. It was an English-Slovenian speaking family from Edinburgh who has two children; Tom and Amy. Tom had an accident a year before and he has to use a wheelchair. We have discussed what kind of programme we can make for our visitors. Pupils had so many questions. They were worried because they have not started to learn English in schools and they didn’t

know how they could communicate with visitors. Luckily, mother in this family was Slovene and she could communicate with children, this is what pupils thought. They were also worried for Tom; they asked how it could happen to him.

A day after the letter arrived we decided to make a good programme for our visitors. Each family decided for their own offer. We went in the school kitchen and baked apple pie and cooked milky porridge. Children also had their own jam, we brought honey and home baked bread. We also prepared 'dry fruit', biscuits and tea with the herbs that pupils picked up. We have translated all Slovenian words (of food) into English, so all members in the family could understand what we offer. It was, for some of the children the first time they got aware of how important it is to learn foreign languages, especially English. They were so excited that I can not explain.

And then it came, the last day - 'grand finale'. Each of the family prepared their own 'market stall' with the food and things we made for visitors. They were asking all the time "*Are they already here? Where are they?*" Finally, the first visitor came in, it was an employee at the Croatian tourist agency who told us that she has some visitors who missed the flight to Ljubljana and came in Zagreb instead. All children asked: "*But where are they? Are they here now? Please bring them in!*" And then John and Mojca (parents) came in and we greeted them nicely and said welcome. I felt like pupils couldn't believe it's real. They were so happy to see them but there was something they were missing – children. "*Where are they?*" Mojca, mother, explained that Tom had to stay in Zagreb because he is using a wheelchair and because this school is full of stairs, both - Tom and Amy stayed at the tourist agency. Children didn't think of it before, they thought it is not that big issue for handicapped children to be a part of their school, but now we saw why we don't have any of them in this school. And during the visit there happened also some unexpected things: There was a boy who painted, a day before our visitors came, a big picture of the bull because he wanted to tell them that he really adores bulls. The biggest surprise of this event, something I really didn't expect it could happen was when one pupil came to me and begged me for a plastic bag. He went to their stall and took some apple pie and dry fruit and gave it into the bag. He asked me to help him to translate something he would like to tell to John. We went to John and said: "*This is for Tom and Amy. Please tell them we were waiting for them!*" I can not explain how overwhelming feeling it was for all of us. Now, when I look it back, I think this Storyline project could not finish any better. Pupils were so motivated; they felt such a big part of the story they have created and I can say, for myself, that it was such a pleasure to teach with the Storyline method because it gave me such a good structure and high quality to teach in a way that I was all the time aware of why I am doing certain activities.



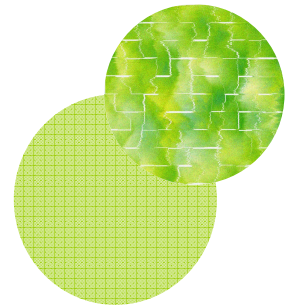
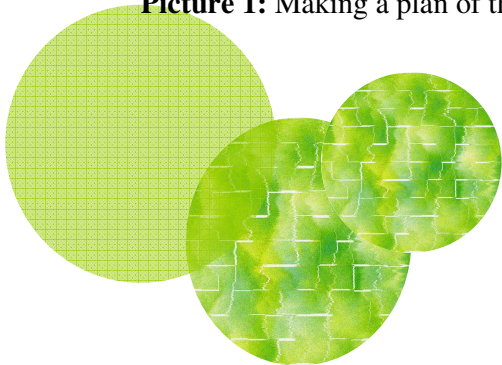
Pictures from the project



Picture 1: Making a plan of the farm.



Picture 2: Presenting a plan.





Picture 3: Frieze at the beginning of the project.



Pictures 4–7: Building our farms.





Picture 8: Welcome to our village. Sign of the village “Vas pri kmetiji”.



Picture 9: Farm of the first family.



Picture 10: Farm of the second family.



Picture 11: Farm of the third family.

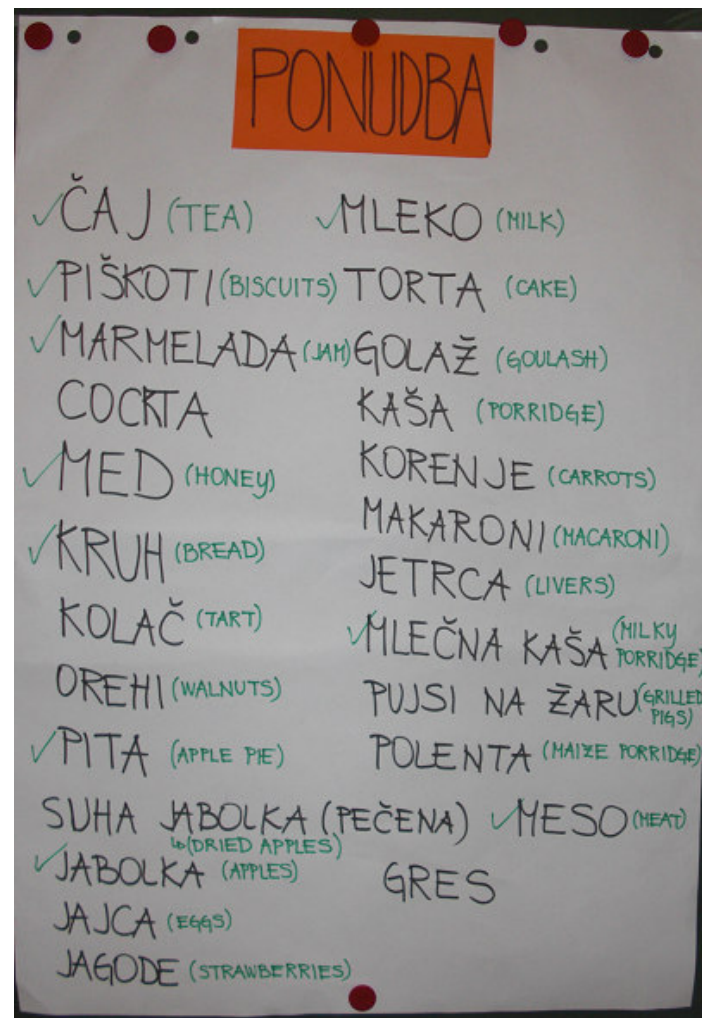
Pictures 12–16: Creating figures and presenting them.



Picture 17: We got a letter from visitors.



Picture 18: What shall we offer to our visitors?



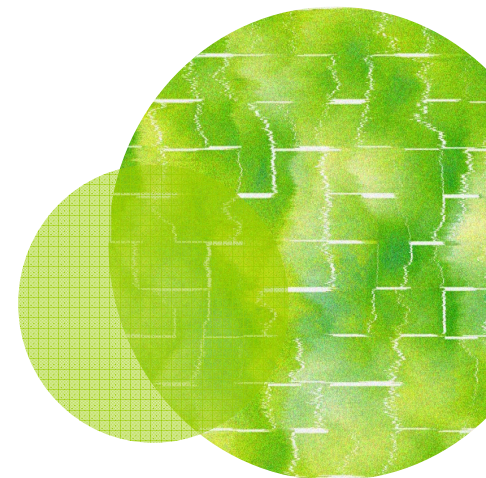
Pictures 19: Let's cook for our visitors.



Picture 20: If our visitors want to understand us, we need to translate words.



Pictures 21–22: Our visitors have to feel welcome.



Pictures 23–27: Grand finale. Our visitors are here!



Pictures 28–30: John and Mojca came!



Picture 31: Presenting figures to visitors.
Children tried to speak in English.

Picture 32–33: We didn't forget about Amy and Tom!



Picture 34: Pupils with the visitors.

Picture 35: Me with the pupils.





Picture 36: Frieze at the end of the project.

NAŠE KMETIJE

