DIVERSE:

Guidance Book for Teachers

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I Towards the management of diversity in the classroom

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I.1 This handbook

This handbook is written for primary and secondary education teachers. It aims to support you to improve the management of diversity in your classroom, introducing three storytelling techniques:

Drama in Education engages learners in fiction they create themselves, exploring issues they may be experiencing. Drama creates a space for participants to understand the world in which they live.

Digital storytelling uses multimedia elements such as photographs, videos, sounds, texts and narrative voices.

Folktales draw on oral traditions of the world, such as legends, myths, fables, parables, allegories, fairy tales, ghost stories and many others.

Our consortium believes that all three methods are excellent ways to manage and embrace diversity in your classroom. Based on our experience, pupils really enjoy working with methods based on storytelling. With such techniques, you will be able to convey your teaching goal and discuss sensitive issues in a way that pupils won't even recognize they are learning.

Each method is presented in a similar structure:

- Introduction to theory: the theoretical groundings of the method.
- Description of the methodology: a general introduction into the know-how.
- Lesson plans to try with your class, with plenty of explanations. Examples of using the method in different contexts and with different age groups.
- Some further tools: some further techniques and tips you can try.
- References: a rich selection of links, books and articles for the seriously curious.

We hope you find this handbook practical and useful, and it will help you to enrichen your toolkit to manage diversity in your classroom.

I.2 The DIVERSE project

This handbook has been developed in the framework of the transnational project DIVERSE ("Promotion of democratic values and diversity in schools through Creative Drama and Fairy Tales") which is co-funded in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union.

The recent arrival of an increased number of immigrants, classes all over Europe are becoming increasingly diverse. This poses challenges for teachers normally used to teach homogenous classes, who have little training and/or support to deal with diversity in the classroom.

A key aspect to relationship building in diverse classrooms is the development of Intercultural competences and sensitivity. The DIVERSE project has specifically selected storytelling methods to help teachers and learners develop these competences through interaction and dialogue.

Through storytelling, teachers and learners can better understand the different cultures in the classroom, increase empathy, and feel that the languages and cultures of all learners are valued. This in turn will contribute to the improvement of the social inclusion of the children from refugee / migrant / minority backgrounds, the primary aim of the DIVERSE project.

The handbook describes the methods and provides tools and activities that could be organized in the classroom. You should feel free to adapt these to meet the needs of your classroom.

The project is being implemented by a transnational consortium consisting of 7 partners from 6 partner countries (Greece, Spain, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Italy). The coordinator of the project is the Greek organisation Action Synergy. Responsible for the transfer of the Drama in Education method is InSite Drama from Hungary, responsible for the transfer of the Use of Fairy Tales in Education is the Centre for Higher Education in Theatre Studies from Greece and responsible for the transfer of the Digital Storytelling Method is the University of Girona from Spain. Two NGOs also participate in the project (HESED from Bulgaria and GEYC from Romania) as well as a secondary school (IIS Einaudi from Italy)

I.3 The current challenges

In order to provide relevant guidance to teachers, a situational analysis consisting of surveys and focus groups were carried out with teachers, principals and educational stakeholders in each of the participating countries, with special emphasis on multicultural schools and refugee / migrant / minority groups (RMM). Through this exercise, we sought to identify the challenges in this area, strategies currently used, and also to find out how familiar teachers already were with Drama in Education, Folktales and Digital Storytelling.

We also explored teachers' experience during the lockdown, including how e-learning was working with RMM children and their families.

I.3.1 Overall data on participation

The total number of people who have completed the questionnaires is **253**. The total number of people who have participated in the focus groups is **37**. The numbers broken down by country are as follows:

- **Bulgaria:** Questionnaires (16) - Focus Group (6)
- **Greece:** Questionnaires (69) - Focus Group (8)
- **Hungary:** Questionnaires (12) - Focus Group (4)
- **Italy:** Questionnaires (53) - Focus Group (6)
- **Romania:** Questionnaires (59) - Focus Group (9)
- **Spain:** Questionnaires (44) - Focus Group (4)

I.3.2 Findings from the situation analysis

Although the contexts of the six participating countries are different (minorities/Roma versus migrants/refugees), it was possible to draw some general conclusions applying to all.

Teachers perceived that RMM children as having special educational needs. Language for teachers was the greatest barrier to engaging with children and families, who teachers believed had very few resources and knowledge to help their children. Teachers identified the most important qualities for teaching these children as empathy, knowledge of other cultures and patience.

The importance of language and the skills that a teacher needs to work with RMM children are reflected in these testimonies from participating teachers:

> *"One of the main needs is language. Most RMM families do not have the local language as their mother tongue, so communication is often difficult. When RMM students start school, they start from a very different situation with respect to other students: RMM have very poor cultural background and poor*

knowledge of the local language. Throughout the entire educational process, the majority of students have little family support and few educational experiences outside of school."

"He/She [the teacher] must be a very close and empathetic person, at both the family and child levels. He/She must also be very familiar with the cultural reality of the families. He/She must be able to attend to diverse needs within the classroom and be flexible at the organizational level."

Communication therefore is the area drama, tales and digital storytelling in education should be particularly focussed on developing.

Of the three methods proposed by the DIVERSE project, the best known by teachers was the use of stories and tales in class. But they also know drama in education, and many of them have claimed to use digital storytelling.

Teachers felt sufficiently prepared but recognized that they lack knowledge about multiculturalism. They cited lack of time, having to follow a rigid curriculum, and materials and resources designed without considering diverse contexts and cultures as particular challenges. More time, freedom of action, training possibilities and teamwork were priorities in improving provision. Teachers had participated in some form of training, but believed there should be more opportunities and they should be more practical (what to do in the classroom), recommending also that topics of inclusive education and multiculturalism should be studied in the faculties of education (pre-service teachers).

Finally, teachers believed social workers and cultural mediators were important for communication and cooperation with RMM families, but just a few schools had such positions , and in cases this was thanks to other agencies providing this resource.

I.4 Opening up the classroom

In terms of teacher practice, it is important to plan for the fact that the pupils themselves will lead a lot of their learning in the DIVERSE classroom. Through DIVERSE activities, learners are given freedom to:

- choose what role to take on in the lesson,
- decide when and what to contribute to discussion and activities,
- create characters, plot, actions and story,
- propose and evaluate solutions,
- design graphics, written outputs, sets, costumes,
- develop own opinions and understanding of the world around them,
- choose their own use time.

Such freedom may go beyond what they or you are currently used to in the classroom, and so certain adjustments in expectations and behaviour need to be made. In this case, the following considerations may be helpful.

As a teacher, how much does your current practice allow your learners to use their initiative? What are the benefits of your learners making these choices for themselves, rather than you making them for them?

The biggest choice learners have to make is in how they relate to each other and to the teacher. When a teacher dominates the classroom, learners' behaviour is prescribed. When the classroom is loosened to allow them to lead their own learning, they also have to learn how to monitor and regulate their own behaviour. If this is not something they are used to doing, they have to learn the skills that help them make the most of this freedom. These include:

- skills of listening and observing,
- flexibility and adaptability,

- communication skills,
- co-operation skills,
- tolerance of ambiguity and other people's views.

The activities in DIVERSE both require and provide the conditions for the development of these skills. The teacher plays a critical role in being explicit about the importance of these skills, modelling them, and highlighting where students display them.

Giving learners freedom in the classroom is not the same as letting them 'get on with it' – the teacher has a crucial role to play in organising learning and giving feedback.

In organising and leading DIVERSE lessons, the following checklist will be of help in managing behaviour and supporting the development of skills for independent learning. They draw on the lessons of earlier projects.

- The main work for the teacher is in the planning. When the lesson is organised well and learners know what they are doing, it will be the learners doing the work in the classroom.
- Be explicit to learners about the aims of the lesson (what they will learn and be able to do), what they need to do during the lesson, and how they will do it.
- Share the plan for the lesson / individual activities with the learners, and encourage them to refer to it, so they can move on at their own pace where appropriate.
- Formulate the rules of the classroom with the learners (or if you already do this, continue to develop them for DIVERSE lessons). Return to the rules if learners drift off task. Consistently require rules are kept to, and agree any changes as a class.
- Check learners' understanding through open questions. When learners ask questions, where appropriate, address these to their neighbour or the whole class for discussion.

- Where the noise level rises, understand that this in itself is not an indicator of off-task behaviour – collaboration requires talk. Where learners are in discussion, ask them questions about their conversation, and use questions to bring their focus back to the activity if they are off task.

Hold your nerve and be consistent. Changing behaviour takes time, as does learning the skills to work independently and collaboratively. Be consistent in your approach and monitor changes in behaviour over time. Speak explicitly with learners about the lessons, what they need from you, what they need from each other, as well as what you need

from them.

II Drama in Education

Author: Adam Bethlenfalvy, InSite Drama, Hungary

As Drama in Education is complex spectrum of methodologies, we consider this section as an invitation into this exciting world. Therefore, we provide links and further resources at the end of the text. We hope that you will find those components of Drama in Education that are the most interesting for you and find more information and examples of lesson plans in those directions through these links.

II.1 Introduction to the theory[1]

II.1.1 *What is drama?*

Western European drama has its roots in Ancient Greece. Athens was at its centre, where Greek drama became part of the festival in honour of the god of wine, fertility and religious ecstasy, Dionysus. By attending the theatre as a community of people, Athenians were able to see their own place in society as their situations were dramatized. This enabled them to question, challenge, celebrate, debate and explore the problems of their community freely and ultimately learn something; gain new knowledge and understanding. The origins of Western European theatre were driven by society's need to learn about themselves and their place in the world. Drama and theatre served the people. But let's focus specifically on drama and education now.

Drama in Education (DiE, also referred to as Creative Drama or Process Drama), focuses on both the form and content of drama. Participants learn about issues and concepts raised in the drama and through drama. Importantly, DiE relies on engaging participants in fiction they are creating themselves – which offers an educational, rather than a therapeutic perspective, on issues they may be experiencing.

1   This summary is based on Democracy through Drama project's Conceptual and Pedagogical Framework, edited by Adam Bethlenfalvy. https://demodram.com/role-democracy-drama/pedagogical-framework/

Drama creates a space for participants to understand the world in which they live.

While the starting point of a drama lesson may be a topic from the curriculum, the emphasis is on *examining the human aspects*, providing *an 'other' to help understand ourselves*. This helps young people see complex connections, the unfolding of events, and the impact social forces have on real people.

By using drama in this way - understanding, exploring and identifying with the 'other' - participants can create meaning. They learn to understand and challenge the culture in which they operate and consider alternatives. Drama in the classroom not only provides a stage to act in different ways but is also preparation for acting differently in the real world.

Central to the points made above are the notions of democracy and democratic meaning-making. Both of these, among others, are strongly featured findings in the Drama Improves Lisbon Competences[2] (Cziboly, 2010) research, a large scale international quantitative research project that studied the impact of drama on young people with data collected in 12 countries from approximately 5000 children and young people. This research found that the impact of including educational drama and theatre in school curricula is that young people are more likely to be "citizens...[that are] sympathetic towards cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue" and that they;

1. are significantly more tolerant towards both minorities and foreigners,

2. are more active citizens,

3. show more interest in voting at any level,

4. show more interest in participating in public issues,

5. are more empathic: they have concern for others,

2   Full research findings and teacher's resources are available at www.dramanetwork.eu

6. are more able to change their perspective.

Thus, the importance of drama and the reason to use it is clearly beneficial to create more accepting, empathic and more democratic spaces for young people. As a result of the dramatic process, participants can be enabled to explore, learn, test and challenge pre-existing knowledge and arguably arrive at 'innerstandings' (Heathcote, 1981).

While creating performances is still present in schools, its educational aims have widened to creating community; to creating space for participants to tell their stories; to develop their communication or language skills; or to understand theatre forms and plays better. However, Drama in Education is not so widespread in its use in different countries. There is a strong tradition of using some elements of it in various language teaching methodologies but using more complex forms of it is not so common.

II.1.2 *Managing diversity in the classroom with drama*

Drama in Education can be an extremely useful resource in working with students who are from marginalised communities. As drama is based on exploring human situations, students who might not be strong academically also have the chance to take a central role. They can be experts of life and why people do what they do, even if they might not be best at some of the school subjects.

As drama is problem centred and invites people to express opinion rather than facts, it offers a safe space for students to express opinion and to communicate with each other. Drama is a social activity with a community working in groups and discussing and creating something together. This social experience can help in integrating different cultures and backgrounds.

Drama builds empathy – it allows students to understand that there are many different reasons for people behaving in certain ways, and that the same situation could be seen from many different perspectives. In the best cases drama allows students to step into the situation

of others, hence offering a felt understanding.

Hence, Drama in Education is an excellent to work with both RMM children and especially their classmates, enhancing the integration of RMM children into the class, the school and the society.

II.1.3 *Three different approaches*

There are a variety of approaches to drama and these are realised through different methodologies. It is quite usual that these different approaches appear within the same country's educational settings.

Drama, as the study of theatre: The GCSE curriculum for Drama and Theatre Studies in UK schools for example focus on making students of drama familiar with the artform itself, different genres and techniques of theatre, various authors and theories, which usually comes together with a focus on creating performance or reflecting on it in writing. These processes often start out from specific drama texts but devising performances or writing exercises can also be starting points. In both Hungary and the UK drama is often merged into Hungarian or English classes – in the UK drama sits within the English (language) National Curriculum formally as well and not as a separate subject – and so the focus is on how the work of dramatists is communicated effectively through performance, or teachers often work with drama in order to generate and discuss language use and meaning, relying heavily on voice and movement tasks.

Other approaches aim for young people to explore social or individual problems and situations using theatre.

Drama, as the application of drama conventions/forms: The Conventions Approach is one of these methodologies, as it offers dramatic forms for engaging students based on a variety of theatre practices. Forms like *hot seating* or *thought tracking* are widely used, but dozens of other forms are on offer for teachers to structure drama lessons or incorporate them individually within learning activities.

Drama, as a *Living Through* process: Process drama, lately used as

a synonym for Drama in Education also uses forms described as 'conventions' by Neelands, but the emphasis in this case is much more on underlying dramaturgical structures and the process of 'making' drama together, not for an audience but for the participating group itself.

The dichotomy that has dominated discourse about the role of young people in drama has been centred on the concepts of *experiencing* and *performing*. Performance remains in the focus traditionally for the Drama and Theatre Studies curriculum, which places emphasis on developing opportunities for creating, performing and responding, with lately a shift towards 'performance skills', as they are easier to measure and evaluate. Process drama lessons would traditionally emphasize experiencing or the 'living through' aspect of drama lessons, where students have the chance of engaging with fictional situations from within the fictional contexts. The Conventions approach would place emphasis on creating understanding and reflecting on situation. Gavin Bolton (1998) argues that Drama in Education incorporates *presenting* and *performance* as well, but mainly aims for the participants to be aware of themselves as 'makers' of the drama at the same time as 'living through' the fictional situations that they take part in creating, at least in the case of the genre defined as Process drama.

II.2 Description of the method

II.2.1 *Drama – some practical examples of how the different approaches manifest themselves in schools*

Drama is present in a variety of forms in education. Creating a performance can not only be an element of drama lessons, it can also provide a framework for language learning when creating a performance in a foreign language, or a motivation for studying history, Ancient Greece through rehearsing a Greek play for example.

Another approach is just using specific forms, conventions and integrating them into subject lessons. *Role-play* is perhaps the most widely used in language teaching, but conventions like *hot seating* or *still images* are also often built into humanities subject lesson plans.

Mantle of the Expert is a drama based pedagogical framework developed by Dorothy Heathcote that offers students a fictional frame: they behave as if they are employees of a company, for example, and this 'as if' allows a lot of different curriculum based materials to be incorporated into the fiction. Students count, plan, write, and research resources as the narrative of the fictional company demands.

Process drama makes it possible for students to engage in human problems, social issues and moral/ethical dilemmas within the education system, either as a separate drama lesson or a drama structure integrated into a subject lesson. Through engaging in narratives about 'others' a variety of human situations can be explored offering the human perspective on material in the curriculum. Often the teacher herself can step into role and enhance learning from within a fictional situation, for example model the use of language or create specific challenges that the participants of the drama need to deal with. A good example between the difference of a process drama approach and a performance-oriented approach would be the use of the concept of role versus character. While participants might develop or play different 'characters' in a performance-based lesson, in process drama participants are facilitated into 'roles', where the attitude to the fictional situation is of greater importance. This aspect of process drama is much more beneficial for historic explorations or engaging in geographical problems.

II.2.2 *Central components of Drama in Education*

With some practical questions to consider after each component

Engaging with problems: Dorothy Heathcote once defined drama as "a man in a mess". For a play to be interesting there needs to be some sort of problem that the people presented in the fiction are dealing with. It is useful to have a problem that is based on a human contradiction – there is no simple solution, or clear 'good' and 'bad' roles – but contradictions that offer themselves for examination. Through the play the audience – or in our case the participants – can engage safely with the problem as it is happening in the fictional world and not in reality. The problem of course is present at two levels. There is a me-

ta-layer, an underlying central problem and this is manifested in the plot, in the situations in different ways.

Choosing the appropriate problem and situation for a specific group is one of the challenging tasks of the teacher. It is important to find the 'angle of connection' for the participants, which aspect of a situation or a story would be engaging for a specific group?

Creating the 'other': Drama in Education relies on offering some form of *the other* to the students – this can be another person, or situation, or even an object – something that the students can examine and explore through dramatic forms. The central problem of the drama needs to be expressed in this 'other' – *it needs to be made tangible through a specific situation* which could contain objects, people or images expressing the problem.

What is the situation, the tangible form that expresses the contradictions, the human aspects of a certain story that we want to engage with? What 'other' can we offer to the students that they will be interested in engaging with?

'Making' fictional situations: It is an important component of drama in education that the participants and the facilitator are making the fictional situation or story together. It is the responsibility of the facilitator to offer the structure and some defining elements of the collective work, but it is also her/his responsibility to offer space for the participants to take ownership of the story and bring in the aspects, questions that are important for them. It is useful to structure the lesson so participants can be makers of the story in different forms: sometimes discussing what should happen directly, but also through creating/playing scenes, or taking part in improvisations where they build the story further from within the dramatic form.

What is it useful to offer as 'givens' in the story and what should be left free for the participants to decide? When is it useful to progress with the story and when is it useful to explore what is behind it?

Protecting the students into role: Participants can engage with fictional situations through taking on roles within the story. This can

enhance the experiential nature of drama; participants can step into other people's shoes and understand their perspective and position better. But students need to be protected into roles so that the experience does not become superficial and they can really engage with another person's situation.

The facilitator needs to ask what steps will help participants to engage with a role. How can the perspective of a certain role be brought in step by step so that participants are not pushed into a role that they cannot deal with?

Situations in context: The basic component of all drama is situation. In Drama in Education we explore human situations and try to understand why people do what they do. A situation always happens in a space, happens between people, and contains some problem that can be manifest in many different ways. There is also always a wider socio-political and cultural context in which situations happen, and this will also impact on how the different roles will react to what happens.

Although we all know that the situation of the drama is created/fictional (even if it is based on a real situation) all of us have to suspend disbelief and think about it 'as if' it was real.

What are the important elements of a situation that the facilitator has to offer, and which are the ones that the participants can build/create to make it their own? How can the cultural, socio-political elements of the context be brought into the situation?

Slowing down time – doing and making meaning: In order to explore human situations drama aims to slow down time, so participants can make meaning of what is happening, how people are behaving, how actions are impacting on different actors of a situation. Drama is based on the same sign system as real life, but the signing is highly selective so the audience can read it. Through drama participants become conscious of reading and also creating sign for others to read. *The facilitator needs to think about what forms would allow participants to make meaning and think about the significance of what is happening.*

II.2.3 *Facilitation*

Drama in Education uses the term **facilitator** when referring to the role of the teacher. This term expresses a pedagogical attitude – that of making it possible or easy for the participants to create/take part/ engage. This attitude can be broken down to some central elements relating to how the facilitator perceives the participants of the lessons. Participants of the lessons:

- Hold specific experience and knowledge about what it is like to be a human being. This knowledge should be taken seriously and offered a platform to share.
- Should be seen as partners in exploring and creating meaning.
- Have been socialised into a particular set of experiences (at home and in school) of what is expected of them. They need to build trust towards new educational forms explored with them.

The use of language is central in achieving these aims. The next sections reflect in a little more detail on this.

Alexander (2006) also identifies five main types of classroom talk of which the following three are important:

- Instruction/exposition (teacher–class, or teacher– group or teacher– individual): giving learners information or explanations,
- Discussion (teacher–class, or teacher–group or learner–learner): sharing ideas and information and solving problems,
- Dialogue (teacher–class, teacher–group, teacher–learner or learner–learner): building a common understanding through structured questions and purposeful discussion.

These types of talk feature heavily in any drama learning environment and considering them in the creation of dramatic exploration is key. In

addition to this, talk is important, as it acts as a bridge to written language, which is particularly true when oral tasks require students to make their meanings clear to their listeners, where they need to consider not only what they want to say but how to say it. Implicit within this is the notion of cognitive development and the important role of speech in attaining a goal. As talk and discussion are interactive processes, it means that both learners and teachers play a significant role in developing both oral skills and cognitive thinking.

The second pillar of dialogic pedagogy involves questioning. Neelands (2004) asserts that "Drama is a questioning medium. It seeks to disturb, extend or change our understanding of who we are who we are becoming". Methodologically speaking, drama can be used as a form of questioning in which potential realities can be discussed, explored and challenged. Ultimately, in doing this one is forced to consider who we are by looking at the 'other' in a particular context. Questions are the tools to do this and indeed are a fundamental part of democracy.

Questions can be used to clarify, infer, probe, challenge, or to provide a reality check and it goes without saying that different questions stimulate a variety of responses from those being asked. Primarily questions in drama fit into two distinctive places: open questions, ones that open up discussion and do not require a predetermined answer; and closed questions, which often contain a 'right' or 'wrong' answer. However, questions are more than this and the question you ask in drama will often determine the shape, direction or flow of the dramatic exploration.

For example, you may ask pupils to/for:

- List: What does democracy need? What is the point? What are the features of democracy?
- Specific information: Where does democracy exist? When did democracy begin?
- Reveal processes and feelings: How do you feel about freedom? How can we show that?
- Test potential: Could we lose democracy? Could you imagine an alternative?

- Moral/ethical judgement: Should we respect everyone's point of view?

Explanation: Why is democracy important? Why do some people have more power than others?

Being mindful of the types of questions we ask and the purpose of them is important. To strengthen this, however, it is not just about asking the questions but also about listening to the response. Often learners will offer a response based upon their prior cultural and/or social experience. It is vital that the drama teacher listens to this.

II.3 Three lesson plans

II.3.1 *LOST*

This drama lesson is based on the story of Homer's Odyssey, but rather than studying the text and engaging in transforming that into a performance, we are offering an example of using the story as a frame for joint creation and the dramatization of human experience. The teacher might choose to share specific stories from the eventful, 10-years-long homecoming journey of Odysseus, the King of Ithaca, but this is not necessary for the realisation of this drama lesson. At the centre of this structure is the concept of being lost, and the possible tools used to overcome this feeling / situation. We believe that this is a basic human sentiment shared by children / young people whatever background or situation they are from, and exploring it through the fiction of a story that is being built together will allow students to make connections for themselves or share experience with each other.

> "Sing to me of the man, Muse, the man of twists and turns …
> driven time and again off course, once he had plundered
> the hallowed heights of Troy.
> Many cities of men he saw and learned their minds,
> many pains he suffered, heartsick on the open sea,
> fighting to save his life and bring his comrades home."[3]

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3   HOMER: THE ODYSSEY, Translated by Robert Fagles

Centre/focus of the drama lesson: *Being lost, and its impact on people.* *What resources can be used to find a way out?*	Being lost – as the concept can be investigated both on a literal level (in a situation / place), and also on a metaphorical level (feeling lost / being without a purpose in life, etc.). It allows participants to bring in a variety of experience and examine issues that interest them.
Age-group: primarily 9-12-years-olds	We provide a framework that can be adapted to different age-groups – possible ways of doing this are part of the comments below.
Timing: 45-60 minutes	The basic lesson plan can be completed in this timeframe, but it is always more fruitful to allow more time for it. The lesson can be easily extended into a series of lessons.

ACTIVITIES	THE THINKING BEHIND THEM

Narration – the teacher explains that today's lesson will be about creating a new episode of a very old story. The story is about a hero from the Greek mythology and his journey home, which became quite eventful. He wondered around the seas for 10 years before he got home from Troy to Ithaca. "We will invent one episode of this journey, which is about how he was lost and found his way."

Contracting – It is useful to clarify what the lesson demands of the students. For example:

"To be able to work together we will need to listen to each other's ideas and build upon them."

"There won't be any right or wrong answers, because we will be talking about ideas. The more ideas you share with each other the more interesting our story can become."

It might be useful to come back to the content of the story to re-focus the group. You can place the central theme of this lesson to your students, saying "we will be looking at how even the strongest, toughest people can be lost sometimes and what might help them find their direction again."

It is important to clarify both the content and the mode of the work for the students. You will have a clear idea how much or which part of the Odyssey might raise the interest of your group. Would the wooden horse of Troy be interesting for them? Or some of the cunning tricks of Odysseus – like how he tricked Polyphemus, the one-eyed giant Cyclopes? You are trying to your students engaged in the story and offering a fictional context.

It is important that the students have an understanding of what is expected of them and what their constraints/liberties are in a lesson. We call this 'contracting' in drama.

It is useful to think about how you can sign in your language / tone, and also in your body language that you are changing from your usual 'teacher' role to a partnership with the students in which you are 'facilitating' them in building and thinking about a story collectively.

Showing the statue – the facilitator sets the context by explaining that "after 9 years of adventures and challenges, after a night of terrible shipwrecking storms on the seas, once again Odysseus found himself alone on the shores of an unknown island. I will show you what he looked like that morning when he realised his situation". Following this the facilitator shows herself/himself as the **statue** of Odysseus.

Ask the participants to 'read' the statue

and open a discussion about what they see in the statue. You can help the discussion by asking open questions about what the statue expresses for them or what sort of questions does it raise (if your questions start with how, where or why then you are probably in the right territory). Remember you are talking about the statue at the moment, not so much about the person – you will be doing that after the next step.

It is useful for you to make an input in the beginning of the lesson, because it provides a model of engagement and it also liberates the participants – it is ok to move out of the usual classroom way of working.

You are also providing a focus point – something to stare at – for the students, and also something specific to talk about and then modify in the next step.

Creating the statue is a creative task for the facilitator, we suggest that you think it through and 'rehearse' it beforehand – remember, everything you do (the direction you look, the way your hands are clenched or loose, if you sit or stand) will be read for meaning by the participants!

Modifying the statue of Odysseus – the facilitator can state that she/he is not very satisfied with this statue and would like to ask the participants to help in making it better. How could it express 'being lost' better? Try to make the discussion into a practical exploration. Ask participants to show their ideas, for them to step into the 'role' of Odysseus. It is not so important to agree on the best solutions, but it is really useful to try to talk both about what 'being lost' means, and how body language, position and facial expressions sign different feelings and thoughts.	This section is really useful in changing set classroom dynamics – it is the 'teacher' who needs help and the 'students' who can 'know better'. This can be quite empowering for the students and this will be really useful for the rest of the lesson. Do not worry, you will not lose your authority – but this gesture will make you more genuine and human. It is also important to take the suggestion and thoughts of participants seriously, learn through trying things out.

Thought tracking – exploring thoughts and feelings. Till this point you were working on a statue, but now you will be looking at the person represented by the statue.	The structure is moving gradually towards moving into the situation and more active tasks for the participants.
Ask the participants to work in **pairs or threes** and for them to think about the thoughts that could be crossing his Odysseus' mind in this moment. Ask the participants to write these thoughts down in first person (eg. "What have I done wrong again?").	
Sharing: After a few minutes you can ask the participants to come back and share their work. Depending on the group this can be done by just simply reading out what they have written, or you can set up the statue again and ask them to read it out as if these thoughts were just crossing Odysseus's mind. Ask them to leave some time for you to bring the statue to life and react to the thought in some way.	Reacting from the role to the thoughts written by the participants offers some purpose for their work, and again takes the attention off them. It is best if you keep your reactions minimal and non-verbal (or if you talk, you could just repeat what is read out by the participants), your function here is to make them more tangible, and not to judge them.

Group work - Creating a **depiction** (you can read in detail about the differences between still image, depiction and statue below) of what Odysseus is wishing for the most in this moment.	You have been looking at his current situation till now, but in this task, you are moving towards exploring what his wishes are.
After a short discussion reflecting again on Odysseus's situation and story you can ask the participants what this man might be wishing for. It might be useful to share a few ideas (remember, this is fiction, it is in a mythical world and wishes are not reality!) and then split the participants up into groups and ask them to choose one and create a depiction – an image like painting – that shows the wish that is inside Odysseus.	Finding the best way of sharing the work between groups is always a challenge for the facilitator. Make sure that there is a little reflection – preferably from the other participants – about each image, but also that the work doesn't get drowned in long discussions.
After giving the group a clear time frame to create these images and checking on how the work is going (you can check if any group needs your support in coming to decisions), you can ask the groups to share their depictions.	

Narrating the story – The facilitator develops the story further by explaining that "as Odysseus was sitting on the seashore, he began hearing distant voices from the thick forest behind him. He looked at the forest but could not see any people there, so he moved closer. The voices were becoming stronger and stronger. It was as if he could hear the things he wished for the most from within the forest."	A drama lesson structure builds on givens the facilitator provides and the sections that are left open for the participants to fill with content. This section moves the story further in order to create more opportunities for the participants to think further.
Possible extra task - creating a **soundscape** of wishes. Depending on the time you have on your hand and the interest of the group you could create a soundscape of wishes – the sounds Odysseus hears from the forest. The facilitator would need to work like a conductor in this case and the groups might work on transforming their depictions into words and sentences.	This task offers the possibility to engage with another dimension of the artform of theatre. Some groups might be more open to this type of sound work, while others might be less interested. The structure works without this task as well, so implement it only if you think it offers more to the group.

Whole group discussion: this is the part when the group creates the story. What the facilitator states to structure this discussion is three 'givens' – that Odysseus meets some form of an 'enemy', overcomes it and finds his way back on track towards Ithaca. It is useful if you try to agree with the group on these one by one. In some cases, you might get too many ideas and it might be difficult for the group to agree. In this case it might be the best idea to split the group up according to the three/four ideas they find the most interesting and for them to create different variations to the end of the story.	This section looks at the narrative, the content. Stories work on a metaphorical level, so do not get worried if the group starts to come up with "wild" ideas, these can easily be part of a creative process.
Group work – creating a **still image**. In case you have agreed with the group on the ending of the story the three groups can work on three elements of the story. One can portray the enemy, the other the way it is fought and the third can show the way Odysseus find his way back. In case the groups are working on three different versions they will be creating three images each. In this case they will need more time.	This section is looking at the form of how the content agreed above is portrayed. Ideally the groups are going to pay more attention to HOW they show the narrative. It is the facilitators task to remind them of this aspect of their task.

Sharing the moments: Depending on which version the group has gone with the facilitator either needs to connect the three images into one story or set up for the 'audience' (the other participants) to see three different versions. It is useful to offer something specific to watch for the participants in this process. E.g. What are the most powerful elements in an image? Which image/part of an image surprised you the most? The participants should not be evaluating each other's work but helped in watching them carefully.	This section connects the work done in different groups. It provides a sense of community as well as of achievement. Participants are 'Performers' and 'Audience' to their own work at the same time.
Mapping thoughts – reflection on the story The participants here reflect on the story they actively took part in creating. This discussion should be centred around the question "what were the elements (inner and outer) that helped Odysseus overcome his being lost?" In case the discussion develops into directions that interest the participants more, that is not a problem. It can be useful if you note the participants thoughts down (just an important word from each) on a sugar paper, or the blackboard.	It is useful to create space to reflect on the story just created. Participants may want to reflect on the process as well, that is very useful. The facilitator might have reflections as well and in a partnership it is fair if he/she places these as well (for example: it seemed to me that agreeing on the story was really difficult for us, how did you feel about that part?) Make sure that your reflections are not heard as a teacher telling off students!

| Reflective task – **re-placing the statue**

Return to the statue of the lost Odysseus that you created and then the participants developed. Remind the group of this statue and ask them "if you could place this statue anywhere in the town, the country or even the world, for people to see, where would you place it?"

The facilitator can probe the responses further asking why the participants suggest a specific place, what would the statue remind people of who see it. | The purpose of this task is to make connections between the fiction of the drama and the actual world the participants live in.

This can happen by just asking the question, it will possibly be really interesting for the facilitator to see what the thoughts of the participants are on this. |

II.3.2 The Book

A variation of this drama lesson has been implemented with marginalised Roma students and it builds upon the experiences of other similar scenarios.

Objectives:

- offer a creative safe space where students can examine situations.
- move into "doing" and reflecting mode of exploration.
- offer possibilities to look at one incident from different perspectives.
- allow students to step into "the shoes" of others, to build empathy through felt understanding.
- explore social forces at work in school situations. To reflect on how language is used and abused.

Centre:

- A dictionary that has been brutally slashed by a knife.
- The relationship of aggression and language; doing and speaking.

The sequence of actions

Placing the problem through an object: The dictionary that has been slashed by a knife is unwrapped and shown to the group by the facilitator. The participants are asked to share the first words that come to their mind when they look at the book. The words are noted on brown wrapping paper.

The aim of this task is to generate discussion and note the first associations made by the group. It is important that there are no right or wrong answers.

Setting up the situation: The facilitator explains that this book is on the Headmaster's table in his/her office. The Headmaster's chair is also placed behind the table and another chair is placed at some dis-

tance from the table. The entrance to the room is behind the second chair.

The aim here is to begin easing the participants into the "as if", the fiction of the drama. It is also important to mark the significance of meaning in space (it is not arbitrary how far the chair is from the table and that it has its back to the door). The facilitator can create significance by slowing down time and placing emphasis on detail in how she/he is doing things.

Sharing a moment in the Headmasters office: The facilitator says that she/he will share a moment of action that happens here in the Headmaster's office. To do this she/he will step into the role of a student who has been summoned into the office. To mark the role, the facilitator puts on a hoody, then sits down in the second chair that is at some distance from the table.

The "student" (Teacher in Role) sits with his head bowed for some time. Then looks up. Looks around and then stands up. Looks at the book. Sighs. Steps a little closer to the book. After glimpsing at the door, he touches the book with one finger. Then starts paging through it. Smiles. He then pokes one of his fingers into one of the cuts in the book. Leaves his finger there. When he pulls his finger out it gets cut by a page (not really, of course). He sucks on his cut finger.

The facilitator stops here and takes of the hoody signing the student.

The aim of this task is to offer a problem that is presented through concrete actions which participants can interpret and make meaning for themselves. It is also offering a situation that is recognisable to all students.

Analysis of the situation: After sharing the moment above, the facilitator asks the group what they saw. Depending on what the students say, further questions can be asked. The facilitator is trying to get participants to make meaning of what they saw rather than just summarise the actions. It is useful to use open question.

The aim of this task is to begin a meaning making process that will later

be developed further into a narrative.

Improvisation with the Headmaster: The facilitator explains that she/he would like to see what happens in the continuation of the situation, when the Headmaster enters the office. But to help the person playing the Headmaster, it would be useful to clarify what *motto* the Headmaster has put up behind his/her desk. This is written on paper and stuck on the wall.

The facilitator needs a partner to be able to create the situation. She asks the participants who would be interested in trying out this situation in the role of the Headmaster. It is useful to reassure the group that the person playing the Headmaster can stop at any moment and ask for help/ideas from the rest of the group.

The facilitator – in the role of the student – should not say anything during the improvisation. There should be subtle reactions to what the Headmaster is doing of course, but no talk from the student. The participant playing the Headmaster can talk of course and should not be told in advance that the student will not speak.

The improvisation is followed by a short discussion, about why the student remains silent and what the Headmaster is trying to do and why.

The aim of this task is to create a situation that opens the problem presented through the book. The silence of the student can create a productive tension that forces the Headmaster to try out different things. The participant should be allowed the freedom to explore the possibilities in this situation.

Building the story – through creating still images: The participants are invited to build the story further through creating moments that happened before the incident in the office. They are asked to create still images (like photographs of actual moments) that show how the following events happened:

- Students find the slashed book – there are no teachers around, only students (they can also decide where they find it within the school).
- The students handing over the slashed book to a teacher.
- The book being brought into the staff room of the teachers, there are only teachers in this image.

The images are created and then depending on time and the abilities of the group, they might be shared first and then developed further, or the next step might come without sharing the still images collectively.

Developing a short scene from the images: The still images the groups created are developed further into short scenes, not longer than 20-30 seconds. The images can be the starting point or the end of the situation, or in the middle – this is left to the group. The scenes are realistic moments showing attitudes and responses.

The aim of the tasks above is offer the group the freedom of responding through the safety of roles to the problem presented. They have the possibility to examine different responses to the event and create situations that they think are exciting.

Whole group improvisation: After a short discussion about the scenes, the facilitator offers to explore how the story continues after the situation in the Headmaster's office. The Headmaster has called a staff meeting to discuss the situation with all the teachers. The participants are invited to take on the role of the teachers in the school. The facilitator will be playing the role of the Headmaster this time. The improvisation starts from a still image in which the teachers are in the meeting – this offers them some time to step into role. The Headmaster (Teacher in Role) starts and leads through the meeting.

The aim of this task is to offer space for different attitudes and understandings of the situations to be expressed verbally. The attitude of the Headmaster depends highly on the group, she/he might need to be provocative to tease out different opinions, but it might be possible that she/he might need to have a softer tone.

Reflection – through the object: After the improvisation the facilita-

tor offers a mode of reflection that leaves the people in the story and returns the book at the centre of it. She/he asks the participants to think about what the book would say about what happened to it. Participants are asked to write this down on post-it notes as if the book was saying it and place it on or around the book.

The aim of this task is to offer the space to look at the events from a different viewpoint and reflect on it.

II.3.3. *Talking objects*

We use objects all the time in our daily lives, but also assign great emotional value to objects that have some significance in our lives. Children especially use objects as transitional tools to express their needs, fears or wishes. Not only social scientists or psychologists are aware of this, but different art forms, including theatre, have been well aware of this and also used it.

The following structure allows children to use objects to connect with each other and play with animating the objects to help in thinking about solving problems.

Primary target age-group: early years (5 – 7 years).

Aims:

- To use the objects to help the group members to share stories and connect with each other.
- Connect the world of school and home through a transitional object.
- Create the possibility of group members taking home good experiences of working together with each other.

Description of the lesson:

The group members are invited to bring an object from home that is dear to them for some reason. They are asked to introduce their objects, but this should be done talking about their objects as if they were living people. Asking questions like: what is the object's favour-

ite activity? where would it really like to go? etc. can help is children talking about their objects through personifying them.

The facilitator asks: If these objects could talk what would their voice be like? How would they talk? What would they enjoy talking about? And what would they say about their owners? Step by step the participants are helped into the position of being able to speak through their objects. All this is done in a playful way, with great flexibility towards the children, as is normal with this age-group.

The children are asked to think of a difficult situation someone could get into, but a situation that the object could help in resolving. These situations do not need to be realistic; they can verge on fairy tale like stories. The children are encouraged to share and develop their ideas.

After the children share different situations and stories, the facilitator can suggest enacting one story in which he combines different elements offered by the children. This enactment is a mixture of storytelling by the facilitator ("once upon a time when a big group of children were travelling on a bus…") and stepping into the story to play what is being said. The central element of the story needs to be that of the object saving its owner. The storytelling can be stopped at this moment and the children can all suggest ideas of how their objects could save the day. Of course, the saving itself can also be enacted and so a happy end can be realised.

The story finishes with a last moment in which the group is asked what advise the object gave to its owner after the incident. These are shared and the objects can be put away to be taken home.

II.4 Some more tools

II.4.1 *Drama games and activities*

One of the most popular and easily adaptable forms of drama education are the games and activities that come from various sources, including folk games, theatre training tasks, but also sports and other

educational fields. They can be used effectively for very specific aims – like ice-breaking or helping concentration. They can be extremely useful in creating attention, collaboration or having an impact on group dynamics. But it is also useful to note that most of these games lack the most important aspect of drama – of creating 'the other', creating understanding in relation to human situations.

Example 1: Sit, lie, stand

Participants: Small Groups

Duration: 5 - 10 mins

Skills: Character, Concentration, Improvisation, Spontaneity, Teamwork

How to play it?

Participants are in 3s and at any one time one of them has to stand, one other sit and the other lie.

You can give a scenario e.g. a doctor's surgery and then they have to improvise a scene following the physical constraints.

If either of the students changes their position they must between the 3 of them have someone sitting, standing and lying.

Encourage participants to take their time over their scene to avoid a hurried scramble over positions.

Variations

You could change the constraints to different physical ones or verbal ones e.g. shout, whisper or laugh.

Example 2: Grandma's footsteps

Participants: Whole Group, 5 to adult

Duration: 10-15 minutes
Skills: Mime and movement, Concentration, Group Dynamics

How to play it?

One person is Grandma – he/she faces a wall. The others in the group start at the other end of the room, then try to creep up to Grandma and tap her on the shoulder. However, at any moment, Grandma can turn around suddenly. If she sees anyone moving, she points at them and that person must return to the start. No-one is allowed to move while she is watching them.

Whoever manages to tap her on the shoulder becomes Grandma (male or female) and the game starts again. It's a good activity for cultivating concentration and patience – not to mention lots of cheating!

Variations

- Afterwards, discuss with the group which strategies were most successful.
- To make it more challenging, put some hats, wigs, scarves, shoes, handbags or other items of Grandma costume on the floor. Make it a rule that you have to put on a hat or an item of clothing before you tap Grandma on the shoulder.

II.4.2 *Drama conventions and strategies*

Theatre and drama encode meaning into the elements of situation and make them accessible for the those watching it. Many of these forms can be used in education with the aim of grasping and exploring moments of the human experience. In this section we offer some fairly basic forms of drama that do just that – freeze a moment of life and hence, make it accessible, so we can engage with those who are in these moments. We are offering seemingly similar activities, that differ in small elements – but actually these elements make great differences when signs are used to make meaning and to read meaning,

as this is done in drama and theatre.

There are many possibilities for **working with objects** in drama lessons, but also many games can be built around them. This is because objects carry different sets of values with them. So a carved stick could have a specific price (fiscal value); but if it the only stick that someone can reach and press a very high switch with then that gives it a different value (use value); in case it was a stick that someone played with as a child together with their grandfather then it will have again a different value (sentimental value).

Still image / Freeze frame – this drama convention refers to freezing a moment of life. It is as a video has been stopped at a significant moment. It is important that the moment shared through this form carries some sort of importance. It can be used to portray fictional moments (from a story for example) or real-life situations. Its strength is that it is a quick step from speech towards situation – for example if children listen to a story and are then asked to make a still image of the most important moment from the story then they will immediately start working on it as a situation form a story. This can allow the teacher/facilitator to see what the interests of the children are, but also raise question, discuss and develop the situation that has been highlighted by the group. This form is widely used because of its simplicity and it can be developed in a variety of directions.

Depiction – this convention is similar to a still image in form with the important difference that while a still image is like a frozen moment of life, a depiction is like a painting created for an audience. This means that in the creation of a depiction the group should be aware that they are not only showing a significant moment, but using visual tools to place their thinking about it in the depiction as well. This means that they are coding their thinking about the moment into the image as well.

Statue – this dramatic convention is again similar to a depiction, but in this case the focus is on one character and that figure's situation rather than the situation as a whole. The statue allows participants to look at the details of that person's situation in the process of crafting

it. The statue can be created in small group work or in whole groups working together, as it is really useful for those observing it to share what comes through of the intentions of the creators.

A variety of forms can be used to develop the above-mentioned activities into processes of exploring meaning collectively. The drama lesson offered above gives one example, but surely teachers will be interested in building their own processes out of these forms.

II.5 Resources

II.5.1 *Selection of online resources*

- Democracy through Drama Open Resources: https://demodram.com/role-democracy-drama/open-education-resources/
- Democracy through Drama video resources: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FlemSYHBdmY&list=PLyTORC6pWlfuaPngMnF9p0gLYU4Rc_2ly
- Facing the Gap video resources: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kBu4rcP6WY&list=PLyTORC6pWlfu-u58NKboamjsiPvxPLZdfq
- DICE research outcomes and also education resource: http://www.dramanetwork.eu/
- Website for Mantle of the Expert Drama Approach: https://www.mantleoftheexpert.com/
- You can check out some videos of the drama lessons on InSite's Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FlemSYHBdmY&list=PLyTORC6pWlfuaPngMnF9p0gLYU4Rc_2ly
- Good resource for games: https://dramaresource.com/drama-games/
- Another good resource for games: https://www.drama-toolkit.co.uk/drama-games/
- Collection of impro games: http://www.learnimprov.com
- Drama resources: http://www.creativedrama.com

Drama resources: http://www.thedramateacher.com

II.5.2 *Selection of books*

- One example for the study of theatre approach: Alan Perks and Jacqueline Porteous (2009) *AS Drama and Theatre Studies: The Essential Introduction for Edexcel.* Routledge, London.
- Jonothan Neelands's and Tony Good's *Structuring Drama Work* (1990, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge) can be considered the seminal book of the conventions approach.
- An example of perhaps the most widely used books on techniques used in language teaching: Maley, A., and Duff, A. (2005) *Drama Techniques.* Third Edition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Further recommended introductory readings:

- Boal, Augusto (1985): *Theatre of the Oppressed,* New York: Theatre Communications Group
- Boal, Augusto (2002): *Games for Actors and Non-Actors,* London: Routledge
- Bolton, Gavin (1984): Drama as Education. An argument for placing drama at the centre of the curriculum, London: Longman
- Bolton, Gavin (1992): *New Perspectives on Classroom Drama,* Herts: Simon & Schuster Education
- Bolton, Gavin (1998): *Acting in Classroom Drama. A Critical Analysis,* Birmingham: UBC/Trentham Books
- Bowell, Pamela and Heap, Brian S. (2001): *Planning Process Drama,* London: David Fulton
- Davis, David ed. (2010): *Gavin Bolton. The Essential Writings,* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books
- Davis, David (2014): *Imagining the Real,* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books
- Heathcote, Dorothy and Bolton, Gavin (1995): Drama

for Learning. Dorothy Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert Approach to Education, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

- Heathcote, Dorothy and Bolton, Gavin (1999): *So you want to use role-play? A new approach in how to plan,* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books
- Johnstone, Keith (1979): *Impro. Improvisation and the theatre,* New York: Theatre Arts Books
- Johnstone, Keith (1999): *Impro for storytellers,* New York: Theatre Arts Books
- Morgan, Norah and Saxton, Juliana (1987): *Teaching Drama. A mind of many wonders,* London: Hutchinson
- Neelands, Jonothan (1984): *Making Sense of Drama,* London: Heinemann
- Nicholson, Helen (2009): *Theatre and Education,* London: Palgrave – Macmillan
- O'Neill, Cecily (1995): *Drama Worlds. A framework for process drama,* Portsmouth: NH Heinemann
- O'Neill, Cecily ed. (2015): Dorothy Heathcote on Education and Drama: Essential writings, London: Routledge
- Prendergast, Monica and Saxton, Juliana eds. (2009): *Applied Theatre. International Case Studies and Challenges for Practice,* Bristol: Intellect Books
- Prentki, Tim and Preston, Sheila eds. (2008): *The Applied Theatre Reader,* London: Routledge

Schonmann, Shifra ed. (2010): *Key Concepts in Theatre/Drama Education,* Rotterdam: Sense Publishers

III Digital storytelling

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III.1 Introduction to theory

Digital storytelling is a relatively new term that refers to stories that include multimedia elements such as photographs, videos, sounds, texts and also narrative voices, and this has found its way into the classroom in a number of contexts.

Digital stories often present in compelling and emotionally engaging formats and can be interactive. The term "digital storytelling" can also cover a range of digital narratives (web-based stories, interactive stories, hypertexts, and narrative computer games).

The most important characteristics of a digital story are that it no longer conforms to the traditional conventions of storytelling because it is capable of combining still imagery, moving imagery, sound, and text, as well as being nonlinear and contain interactive features. The expressive capabilities of technology offer a broad base from which to integrate.

III.1.1. *Digital Storytelling and Education*

Digital Storytelling is a powerful learning tool. Teachers can use digital storytelling to introduce projects, themes, or any content area, and let students make their own digital stories and share them. Teachers can create digital stories to help class discussions, as an anticipatory set for a new topic, or help students gain a better understanding of abstract concepts. These stories can become an integral part of any lesson in many subject areas. When students create their own digital stories, they take ownership of the material they are introducing, analyse and synthesize information and express their own thoughts and ideas. All this supports higher-level thinking.

When students participate in the multiple steps of designing, creating and presenting their own digital stories, they develop a range of skills, including

- research skills when documenting the story,
- writing skills when developing a script
- organization skills by managing the scope of the project within a time constraint.

They learn about technology through their use of a variety of tools, such as digital cameras and multimedia software, coding environments, and presentation skills through the presentation of the story to an audience. Students also gain interview, interpersonal, problem-solving and assessment skills through completing their digital story and learning to receive and give constructive criticism. Digital storytelling can be approached as collaborative work between teams, so the children also develop teamwork skills.

Based on the principles of **constructionism** and **play** digital storytelling:

- increases the enthusiasm to read and re-read, because doing so allows us to find stories
- improves the ability to listen, and to express ourselves publicly
- allows learners to project and express emotions, feelings, and thoughts
- can be used at any age, from pre-school to college
- develop empathy.

III.1.2. *Theoretical foundations*

Digital storytelling is not a new idea. Joe Lambert and Dana Atchley helped create the **digital storytelling movement** in the late 1980s as cofounders of the **Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS)**, a non-profit, community arts organization in Berkeley, California. Since the early 1990s, the CDS has provided training and assistance to people

interested in creating and sharing their personal narratives. The CDS is also known for developing and disseminating the *Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling* (Table 1).

Table 1
The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling

Center for Digital Storytelling's Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling	
1. Point of view	What is the main point of the story and what is the perspective of the author?
2. A dramatic question	A key question that keeps the viewer's attention and will be answered by the end of the story.
3. Emotional content	Serious issues that come alive in a personal and powerful way and connects the story to the audience.
4. The gift of your voice	A way to personalize the story to help the audience understand the context.
5. The power of the soundtrack	Music or other sounds that support and embellish the storyline.
6. Economy	Using just enough content to tell the story without overloading the viewer.
7. Pacing	The rhythm of the story and how slowly or quickly it progresses.

As Bernard Robin says, in the early days of digital storytelling, Lambert was impressed by how easily average people were able to "capture their story in a really powerful way in a relatively short amount of time for a relatively small amount of money". Fast forward to today and one can see that what is new is that the tools needed for digital storytelling — computers, digital cameras, smart phones — have become increasingly more affordable and accessible. Also, a series of powerful, yet inexpensive software programs allow even novice computer users to become digital media producers and editors on a scale that was hardly imagined when Atchley and Lambert were first beginning their work. We are currently witnessing dramatic growth in the educational use of digital storytelling, as a convergence of affordable technologies interacts with a contemporary agenda for today's classroom, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The convergence of digital storytelling in education.

Figure 1. The convergence of digital storytelling in education (Robin, 2008).

Digital Storytelling also links perfectly with **Constructionism**, the theory of learning proposed by **Seymour Papert**, where children use technology as a medium of expression, and they construct knowledge in their minds while building something through technology (a robot, a digital story, etc.).

Following the model proposed by Papert, **Mitch Resnick** proposes a **creative thinking spiral** (Figure 2) that also fits perfectly with the principles of digital storytelling when we let children collaboratively create their stories in a playful way.
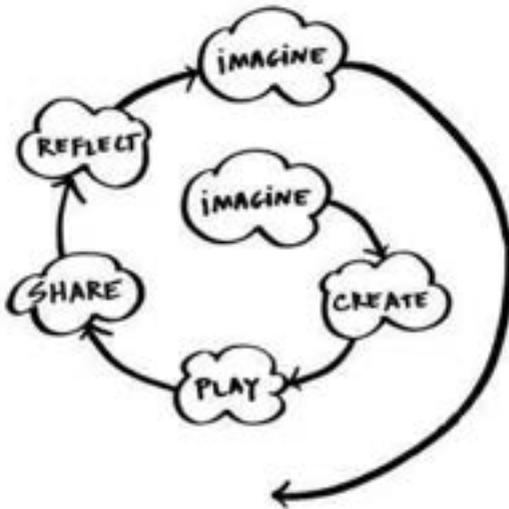
Figure 2. Creative Thinking Spiral (Resnick, 2007).

III.2. Description of the method

To describe the method we will focus on a specific tool: **Scratch**.

Scratch is a programming language and online community that makes it easy to create your own interactive stories, games, and animations—and share your creations online. As young people create and share Scratch projects, they learn to think creatively, reason systematically, and work collaboratively, while also learning important mathe-

matical and computational ideas. Young people around the world have shared more than 40 million projects on the Scratch website, with tens of thousands of new projects shared every day.

Scratch was designed and developed at the **MIT Media Lab**, in a research group called [Lifelong Kindergarten](). The tool is designed for children (although it is also used by many adults) and has a deep pedagogical grounding linked to **Constructionism**.

The advantages of Scratch as a tool are that it:

- is online and free, you don't need to install any special software to start creating
- is multiplatform and works on computers as well as tablets and mobile phones
- is available many languages
- allows intuitive learning through discovery and exploration
- can be used to create digital stories, games, artistic projects, simulations, etc
- allows the sharing and mixing of creations via the Internet
- gives access to a huge community
- is easy to start creating projects (low floor) while allowing advanced users to create complex projects (high ceiling) offers a wide range of activities and foci for learning (wide walls)
- allows the mixing of different media, digital and also traditional.
- has extensions for playing with music, giving voice to characters (recording or text-to-speech), and connecting the story on screen with the outside world (sensors, robots, etc.).

III.2.1 Aims of the method

Scratch can be used in both primary and secondary education, and there is also a version called Scratch Jr that is ideal for early childhood education or for children who cannot read yet.

Because it is translated into multiple languages, it can be used in schools in different countries, and is especially useful in multicultural schools, where different teams may be programming their stories in different languages within the same classroom.

Although the main target of the tool is children, also teachers and families can be co-participants and beneficiaries

III.2.2 *Application across the curriculum*

Scratch is not only designed as a tool to teach programming, but as a programming environment that can be used in a cross-curricular way. It doesn't matter if we are in a language class, a math class, an art class or a science class. Scratch allows us to create stories, games, artistic projects, simulations and a long list of projects where the disciplines are mixed and interconnected.

When we use Scratch for Digital Storytelling, children are learning a language (writing the story script and dialogues), learning art (while drawing the storyboard, characters and backgrounds), technology (because they have to program the animation and movements), global citizenship (because they interact with children from other countries), etc. In addition, they develop skills related to creative thinking, critical thinking, teamwork, curiosity, empathy, etc

III.2.3 *Resources and technology requirements*

All we need to use Scratch is a computer (or tablet or mobile phone) and an Internet connection. In the event that we do not have an Internet connection, instead of using the online version, we can use a downloadable version.

In order to do digital storytelling with Scratch, in addition to computers and an Internet connection, it is advisable (although not required) to have traditional materials such as pencils, markers, paper, cardboard, scissors, etc. In this way we can create crafts and drawings that can later be photographed (or scanned) and inserted into Scratch as characters and/or backgrounds.

III.2.4. *Creating characters (sprites) and backgrounds (backdrops)*

In the following, we will describe different ways to create characters (sprites) and backgrounds (backdrops) in Scratch, from using directly the Scratch digital editor, to importing drawings made with pencils, markers, cardboards and brushes. We will also discover how to create costumes, which will allow us "to bring life" to the characters. The Scratch Editor has two modes of operation: vector and bitmap. To create characters with the editor we will use the vector mode which is more versatile and allows us to create drawings in a simpler way. We will use the bitmap mode when we import images and we want to modify them. The bitmap mode is the mode where you paint pixels, that's why many times the sprites created with this mode have a pixelated aspect.

From Scratch gallery / Scratch editor

When you open Scratch with a new project, a sprite appears by default: The Scratch cat (that's its name). To create a new sprite, you have different options.

Click here to create a new sprite, and then:

This option, to choose one from the gallery

This option, to create one from digital editor

This option, to import one you created with paper
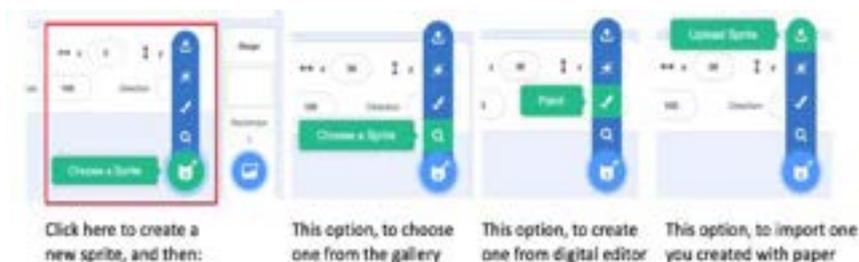
The simplest, to choose one sprite from the gallery. When you click on this option a menu appears with different possibilities: at the top there are some labels to help you select a sprite. For example, if you click on "animals", only all the sprites that are animals will appear.

But if we want to create your own character, Scratch also makes it very easy. Let's start with the option to draw the character directly with the Scratch graphics editor. For this option, click on the brush icon (paint option), and the left part of the screen will become the graphic editor.
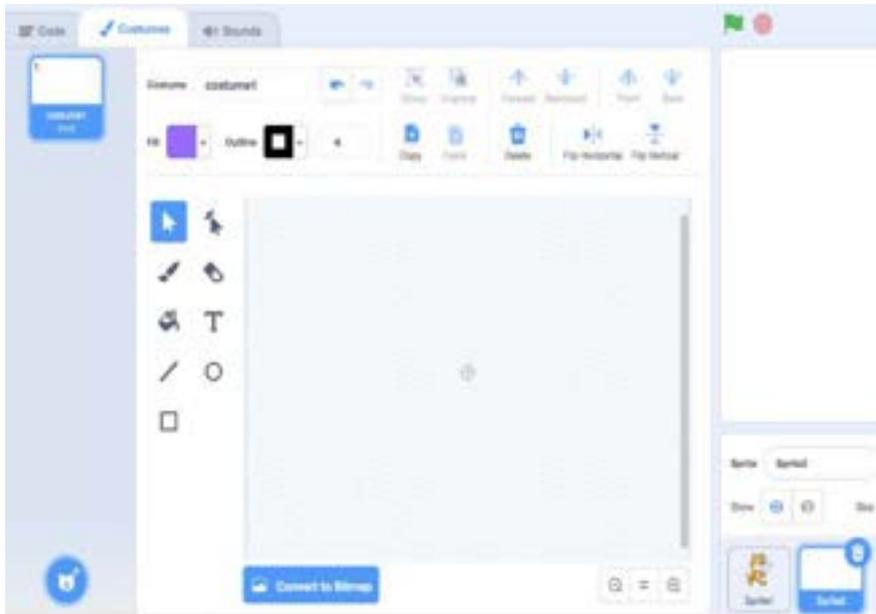
Let's start by drawing the Polyphemus face. We'll do it step by step. We will work with circles and we will deform them to draw the eye, the face and the hair. We select the circle and create one.
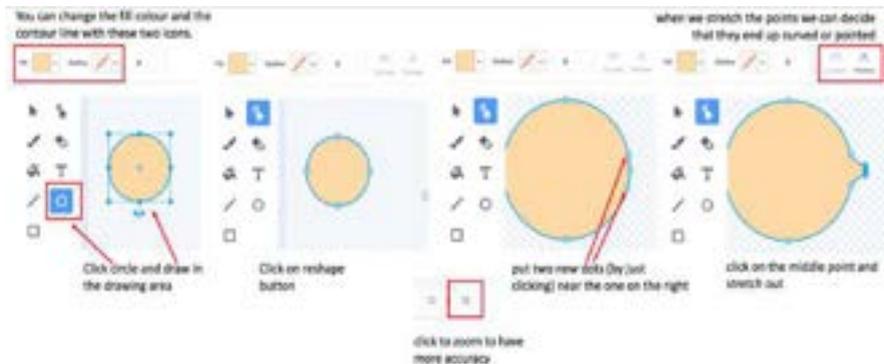
We repeat the same process for the other side. We can select the colour we like best by selecting the shape and clicking on the fill colour: play with the colour, saturation and brightness bars. Following a similar process, we created the eye, and the hair.

You can click this button to copy the colour you like
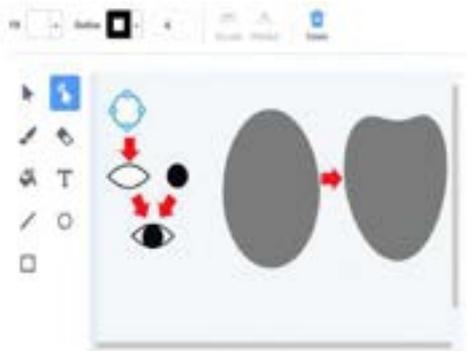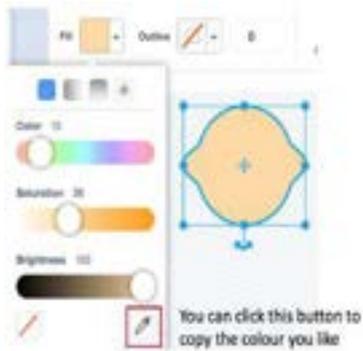
By selecting the different shapes, we can move them and place them wherever we want. With the layer buttons, we can put each of the shapes in front or behind the others. We can also use the copy & paste buttons, and flip to rotate and transform the shapes. We can also select several shapes and group them with the group button, and from here it will be a group. For example, the eye is made up of two shapes, which we can group together to make it more consistent.
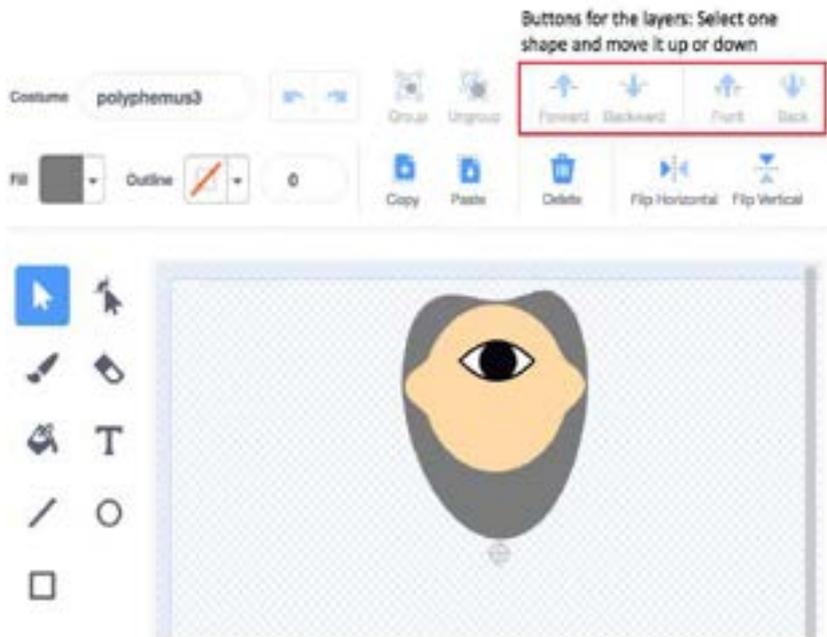
Once we have part of the head, we continue step by step with the rest of the character.

we drew the beard, the tooth and the eyebrow with the brush, while the mouth and nose have been drawn with the circle tool.

we draw the right arm and hand with 3 circles, and the fingers with the brush. For left arm and hand we select the right one, copy & paste, and then horizontal flip.

We are now going to give life to a character, and to do so we are going to introduce the concept of "costume". It's easy to get on the finished drawing and with the right click, click on duplicate, and a new dress (a new drawing) appears identical to the previous one. From here we can modify the duplicated drawing. In our project we easily created two new costumes for Polyphemus. Now in the code part we can easily change the costume to the sprite to make it look alive.
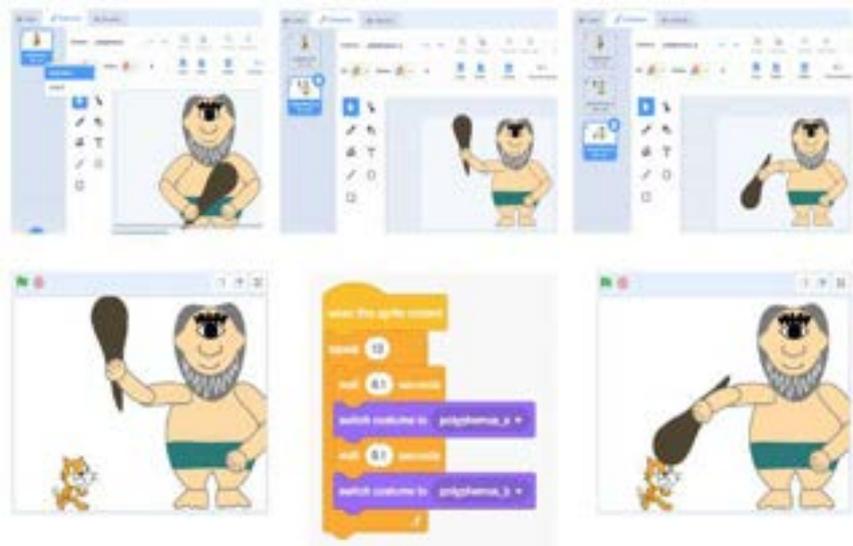
Polyphemus

From own art (drawing, maker project, etc.)

What we are going to tell in this section we like very much, and it is the method we recommend to create characters, because it is pedagogically powerful, and we understand that it can be a very enriching experience, to mix medias to create sprites and scenarios. In this section we are going to tell you how to incorporate characters that we have created on paper, either with markers, brushes or with cardboards. Once the drawing is created, we must photograph it, and then with the option "Upload Sprite" incorporate it as a new sprite in the Scratch project. Let's look at an example.
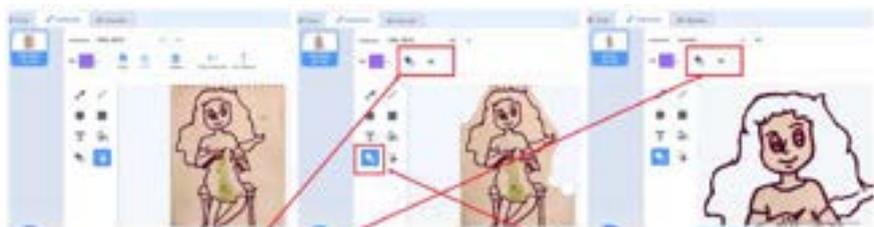
We first see the result of importing a drawing with markers. Then, we use the "eraser" tool, and initially we erase the background of the drawing, but also the inner parts. This process requires some technique, skill and a lot of patience. It's good to zoom in and change the "size of the eraser", to gradually refine the result.

The holes that we leave in the inner parts can be filled with the colour that we want. To do this we will use the "fill" tool. Don't worry, if something goes wrong, or we make a mistake, we have the "undo" and "redo" buttons, to correct what goes wrong. In this example we finally decided to erase Penelope's face, and draw with Scratch two new eyes, nose and mouth.

Let's see another example with Ulysses:
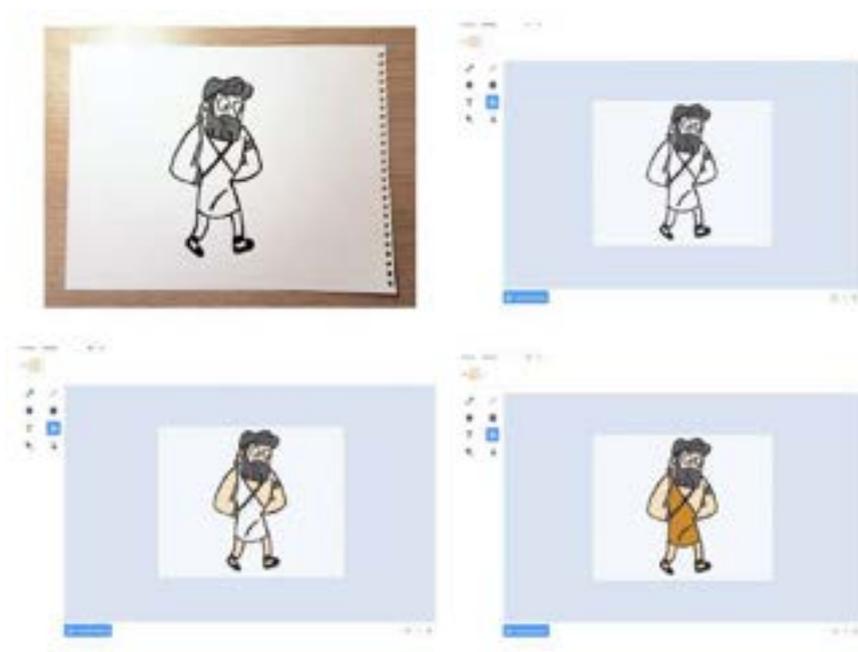
We create the drawing on paper and markers, upload the image to the Scratch, erase the background and interior parts, and colour with the fill tool.

We can also create different costumes for these characters. One way is by using two pictures of the same character: that is by making two drawings with some variation between them. Another way is to digitally manipulate the original drawing. That is to say: cut, paste, draw, select & move, change the mouth, move the arm, cross the legs, etc. Let the students discover, invent and try out different costumes.

The procedure for drawing scenarios is identical to that of the characters. We can select a background from a gallery, create one ourselves with the Scratch graphic editor, or import the photograph we want as a background. In the following image the background created with

brushes that shows a sea and a moon at dusk. The only thing we have done is to expand the image: with the selection tool, we select a region and then expand it to cover the whole scenario.

As we see in the first image, our project can have different backgrounds, and we will see later how to change from one scenario to another.

III.2.5 *Moving the characters*

Once we have created the characters of the story (in Scratch we call them "sprites"), we can make them move around the stage. Scratch allows us to move the sprites in all directions, we can also make them turn, glide, etc.

Move and Turn

The two most basic movement instructions are "move" and "turn". They are in the movement menu (blue menu).

The instruction "move X steps" makes the character move x steps in the direction the sprite is pointing to. The "steps" are the unit of measure for distance in Scratch. Instead of talking about millimetres or pixels, in Scratch we talk about "steps".

The type of movement this instruction causes is instantaneous. The sprite disappears from the point where it is and reappears X steps ahead. Therefore, this instruction does not make the character glide, but it is a quick move.

In the following example, we see the effect of moving Ulysses 200 steps forward.
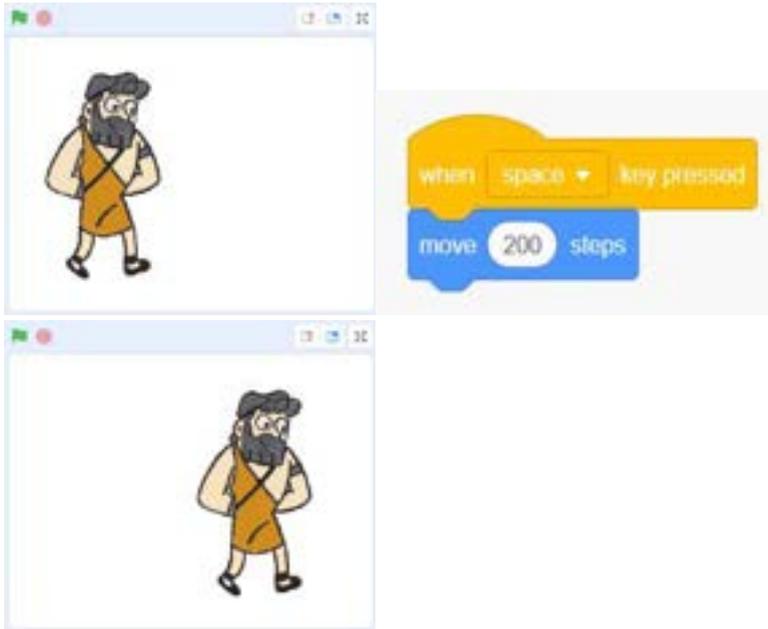
We use the instruction "turn X degrees" to turn our sprite. There are two ways to do this. There is a "turn right" instruction (clockwise) and a turn left instruction (counterclockwise). The value we give to X should be a number between 0 and 360.

There is also an instruction "point in direction X", which allows us to make our sprite point to a certain direction. Do not confuse these instructions: "turn" makes the character turn the degrees we want, while "point" makes the character point to a direction we have decided.

In the following example, Ulysses is facing right (that is, pointing at 90º). If we turn him 90º clockwise, he will be looking down (that is, pointing at 180º).
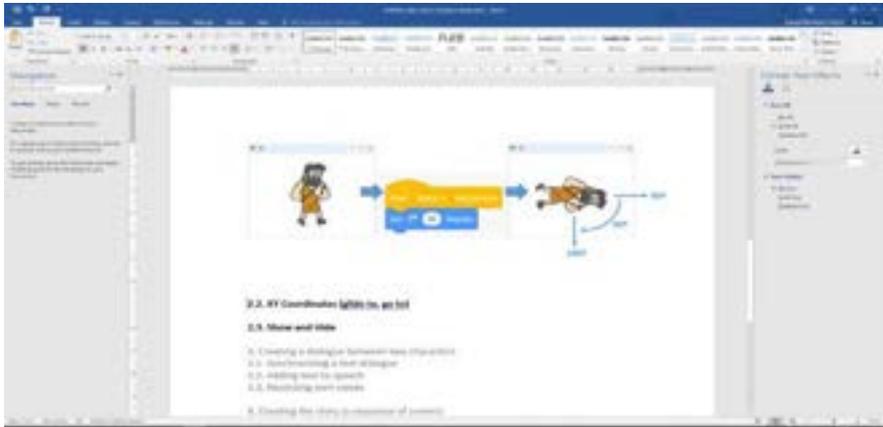
Coordinate system

Scratch's coordinate system uses 2 coordinates, "X position" and "Y position", to determine the location of a sprite on the stage. The "X position" value determines the horizontal location of the sprite and the "Y position" value determines the vertical location or height. The stage is a 480x360 rectangle, such that: the X position can range from 240 to -240, where 240 is the rightmost a sprite can be and -240 is the leftmost, and the Y position can range from 180 to -180, where 180 is the highest it can be and -180 is the lowest it can be.

Coordinates are, by convention, written as a pair (X, Y): for example, the centre of the screen is (0, 0).

In the image below we can see this coordinate system.
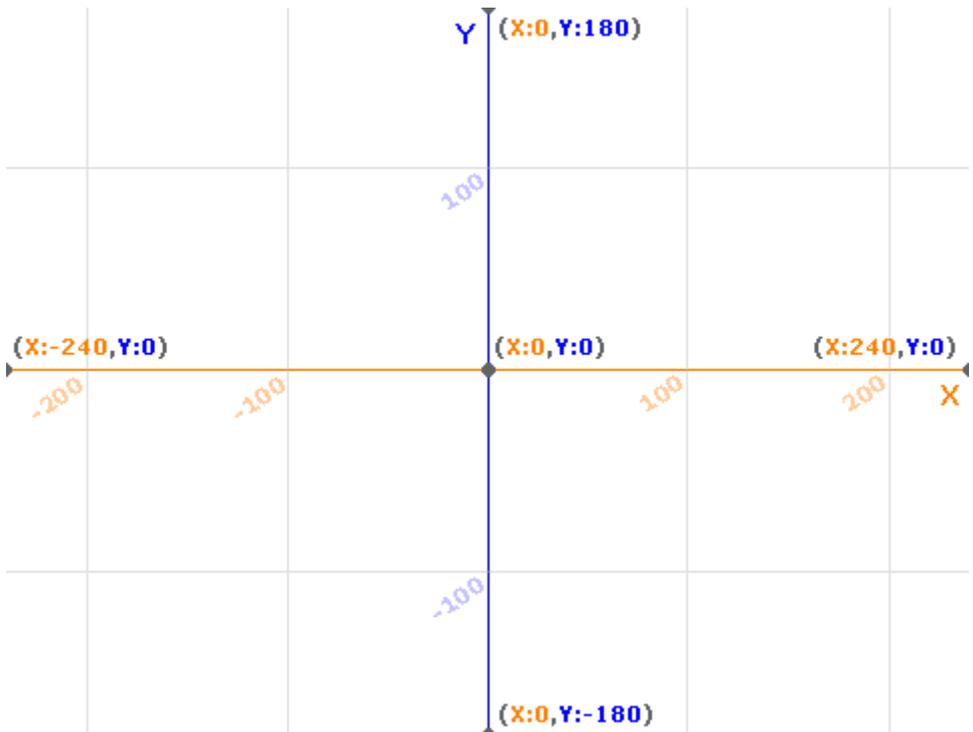
To place the character in a certain (X, Y) position, there are basically two instructions:

- Go to (X, Y): this places the character in the (X, Y) position that we decide. The movement is immediate.

- Glide T seconds to (X, Y): this causes the character to slide from its current point to the (X, Y) destination point. The movement takes the seconds we indicate in T.

The "glide" instruction is very useful when creating animated stories, because it allows us to move the characters with smooth and precise movements, and to control the speed.

Show and hide

The "Show" block is in the Looks menu (purple menu). If the sprite is hidden, it will show the sprite — if the sprite is already showing, noth-

ing will change. This block is one of the simplest and most commonly used Looks blocks.

The "Hide" block does the opposite. If the sprite is shown, it will hide the sprite — if the sprite is already hidden, nothing happens.

These two instructions are very useful for creating stories. In some scenes we need some characters but some we do not. With "Show" and "Hide" we can make them appear and disappear whenever we want.

Changing the size of characters

Size is a value given to all sprites. The default is 100 % (the sprite at its normal size) but can be changed with the size blocks.

The "Change Size by X" block is a Looks block. The block changes its sprite's size by the specified amount. The default sprite size is 100; size values below that percentage are for shrunken sprites, and size values above it are for overlarge sprites.

There is also a "Set Size to X" block. It sets its sprite's size to the specified amount.

In the following example, Ulysses has a size of 80, and using the instruction "Change size" we increase its size by 40 points, making the size of the sprite 120.

Specifying the character's characteristics

We have explained how to move the sprite, make it appear and disappear, and resize it. All this by means of instructions (blocks) that we use inside our program when we create the animated story.

We can also specify the size, position, direction and whether it is visible or not, using the panel under the stage. This is usually used to initialize the sprite's parameters once created. But then, in order to change its characteristics during the story, we have to do it as we had explained it, through the programming blocks.

III.2.5. Creating a dialogue between two characters

To create a dialogue between characters, we must create more than one sprite, and they have to be visible (shown) and placed in their appropriate positions.

Each of the sprites has to be programmed, that is, you have to create the sequence of phrases that they will say and determine exactly when they will say them.

Normally to program a dialogue, we will follow a structure like this one:

- We place the characters in their positions ("go to").

- We make them appear ("show").

- We make them talk and pause following the texts we have prepared ("say" and "wait").

Synchronizing a text dialogue

All the sprites participating in the dialogue will be acting at the same time (their programs will be running in parallel). To make them work in parallel, all characters must start with the same event block (orange menu), such as the green flag block.

To get the dialog properly synchronized, and to make sure that the sentences of one and the other don't overlap, we have to use the "wait" instructions properly. If we have two characters and one of them starts talking with the instruction "Say 'Hello' for 3 seconds", the other must wait with the instruction "wait 3 seconds". And so on. The "say" block is in the look menu, and the "wait" block is in the control menu (yellow).

In the following example we see a small dialogue between Ulysses and Penelope, and how to program it.
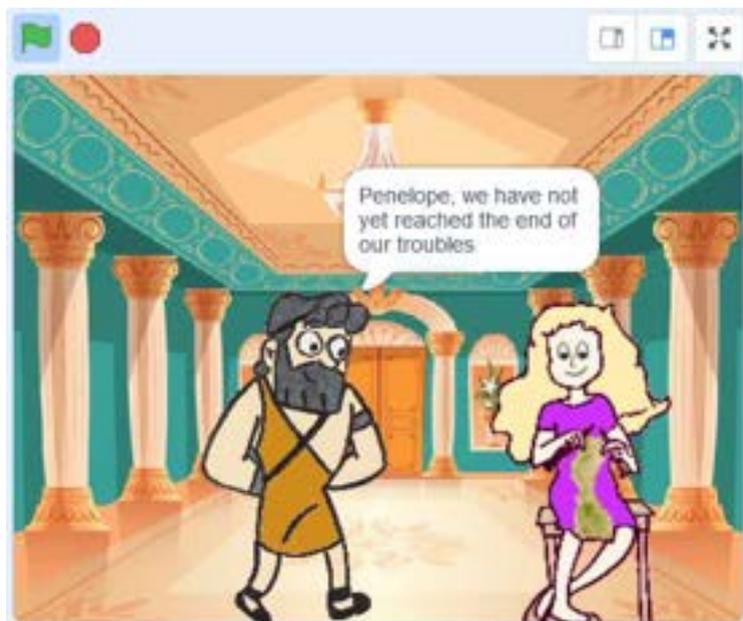
Ulysses:
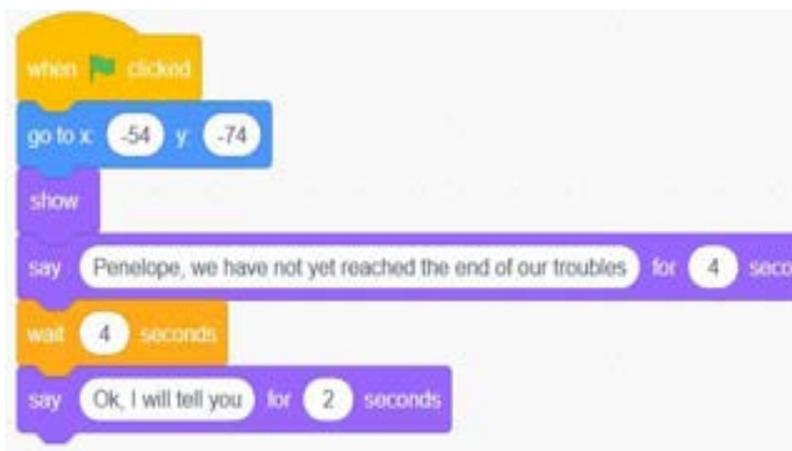
Penelope:
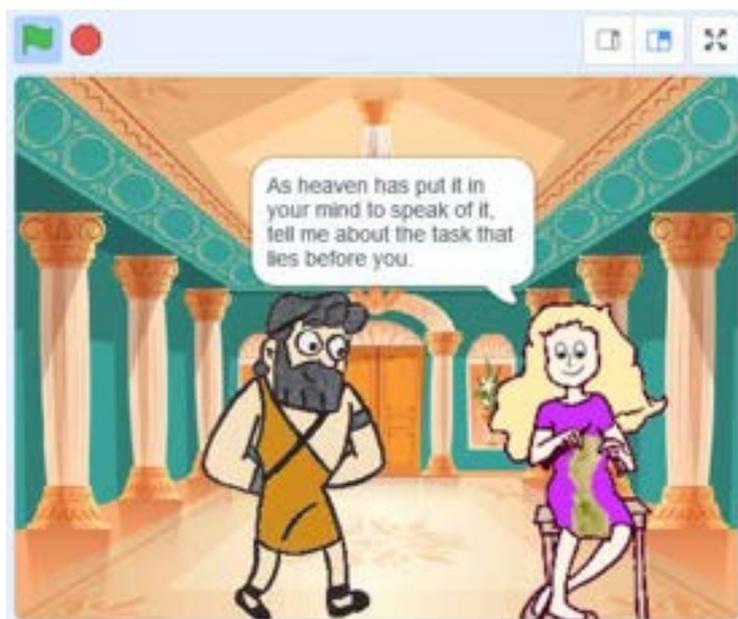
Ulysses:
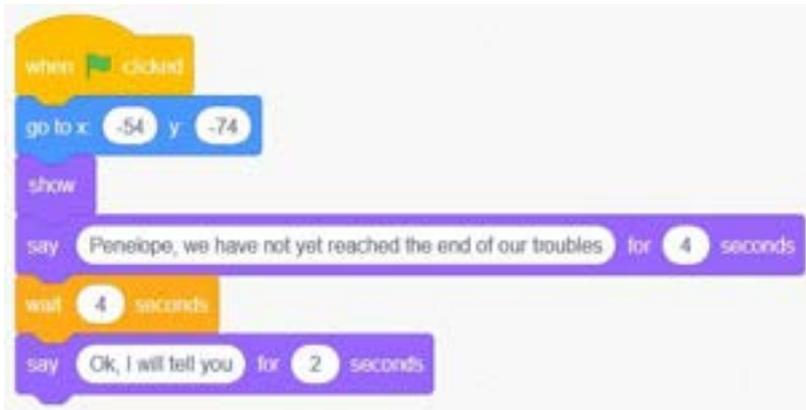
Penelope:

Adding text to speech

Scratch has Text to Speech Extension. It has three blocks ("Speak", "Set voice to", "Set language to") and it allows projects which use it to output synthesized speech. The service is provided by Amazon Web Services.

We first have to press the "Add extension" button (blue button in the bottom-left corner). Then choose "Text to Speech Extension". After that we will have a new menu for blocks, containing the new ones.

There are five voices that can be selected with the "Set voice to" block:

Alto: standard female voice.

Tenor: standard male voice.

Squeak: high-pitched female voice.

Giant: deep male voice.

Kitten: just repeatedly says "meow".

Supported Languages: Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Danish, Dutch, French, German, Hindi, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese (Brazilian), Portuguese (European), Romanian, Russian, Spanish (European), Spanish (Latin American), Swedish, Turkish and Welsh.

In the following example, Ulysses says to Penelope the same sentence than in the previous example, but now using text to speech.

Recording our own voices

The Sound Editor in Scratch allows a user to edit and remix sounds. We can import and export sounds and music and edit them. There is also a library with pre-defined sounds.

To do it, we to go "Sounds" tab, then "Choose a sound / Record", and we will be able to use our microphone (Scratch will ask permission to use it) to record sounds or out own voices.

This is how a recorded sound looks:

Then we can edit the sound:

And finally, we can use it in our programs:
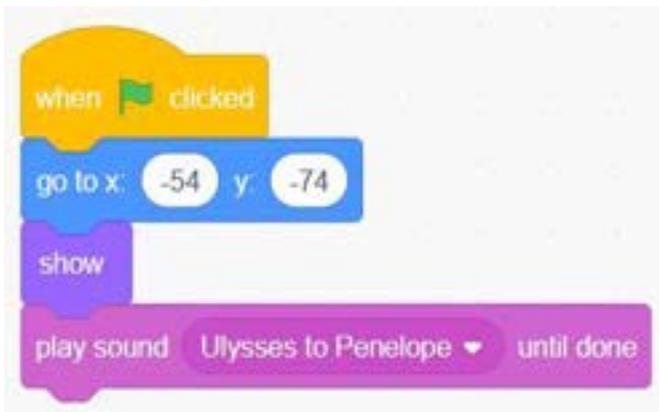
III.2.7 *Creating a story (a sequence of scenes)*

With what we have explained so far, it is now possible to start creating animated stories with Scratch. In section 6 we will see different dynamics to think and imagine collaboratively the story, its characters, scenarios, etc. Now we will focus on how we create several scenes and how we jump from one to the other.

Creating a scene

Normally, in a scene there are some characters that appear in an initial position, they begin to move and talk to each other, they go to some final positions and disappear. At this point we already know how to do all these actions. Let's see with an example how we build a scene.

We start adding all the required sprites and backdrops for the scene. In this case, we add sprites (Ulysses, Polyphemus and the ship) and one backdrop (the island).
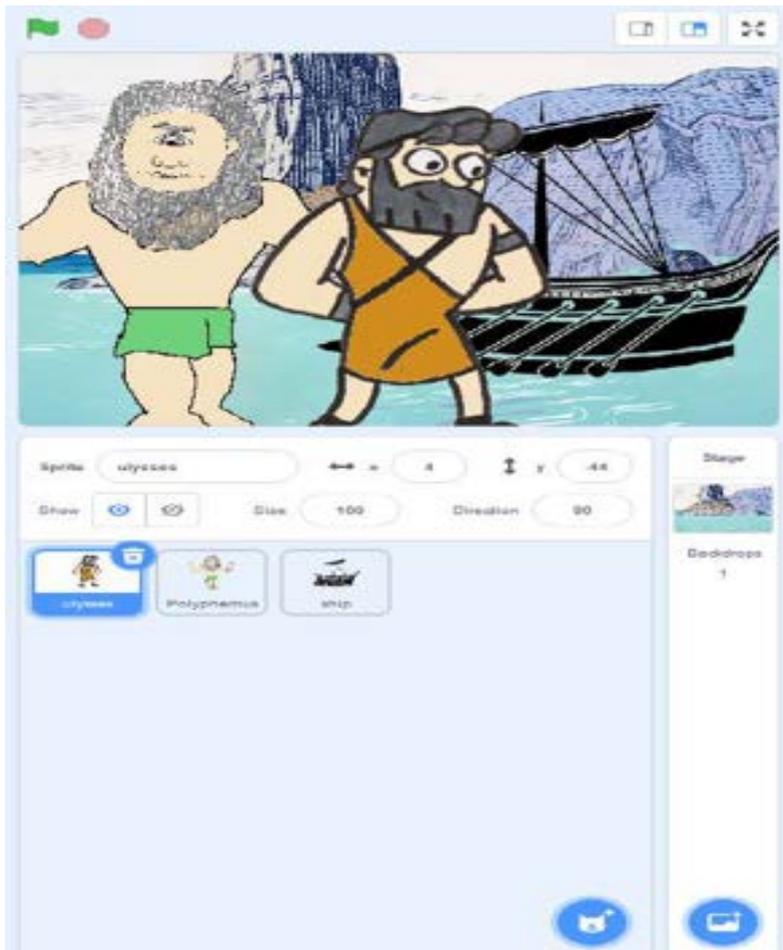
We place them in their starting positions, we choose the size and we make them appear:
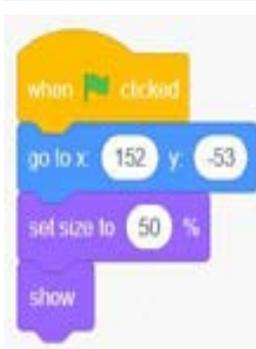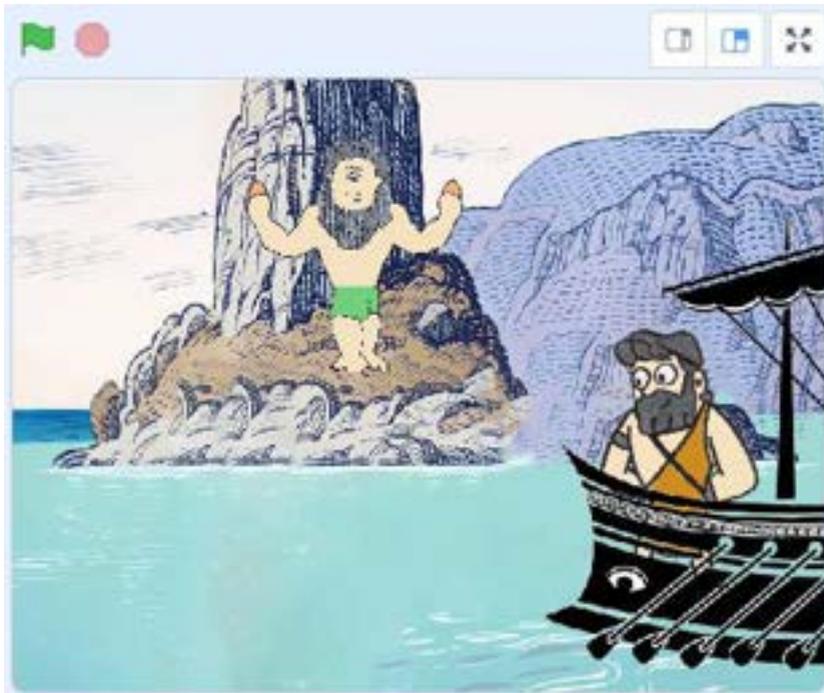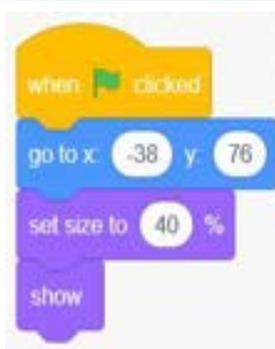
| Ulysses | Polyphemus | Ship |

Notice that to make it look as if Ulysses were inside the ship, we have used the "go to front layer" block to send the ship to the first layer and thus create the desired effect.

Then, we make them move, talk and do all the required actions for the scene:

Ulysses:

Polyphemus:

```
when 🏳 clicked
go to x: -38 y: 76
set size to 40 %
go to back ▼ layer
show
wait 1 seconds
say What does my eye see? for 2 seconds
```

Ship:

```
when 🏳 clicked
go to x: 228 y: -26
set size to 150 %
go to front ▼ layer
show
glide 3 secs to x: -81 y: -26
hide
```
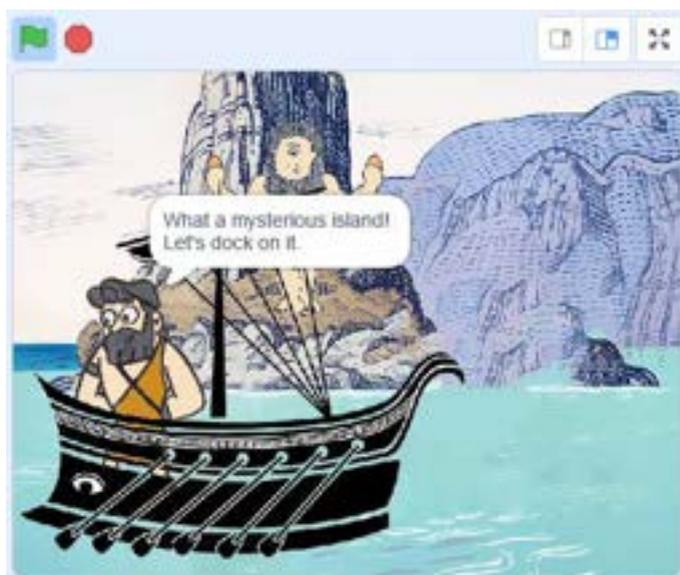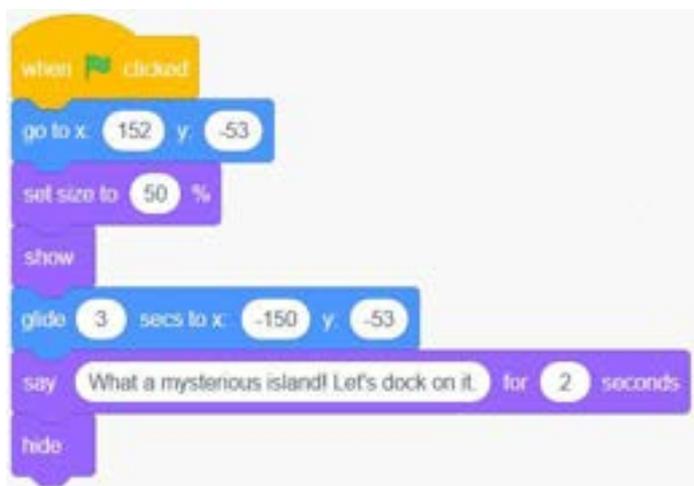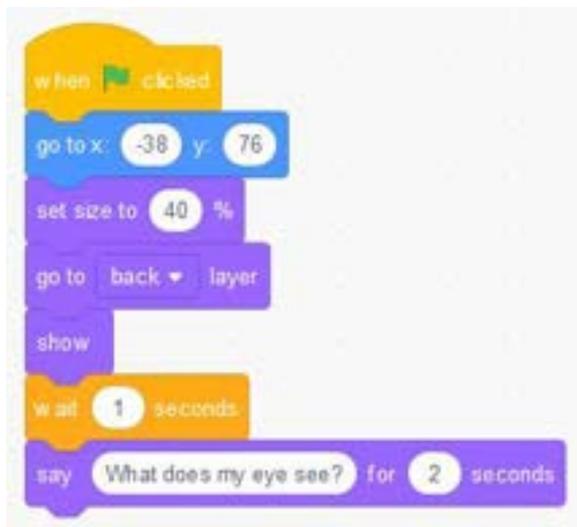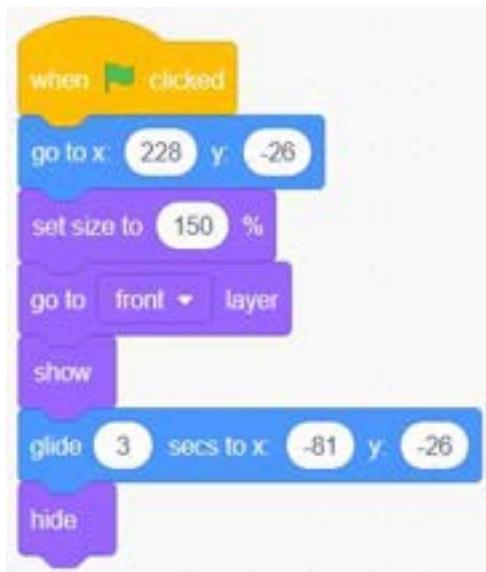
vTransition to next scene

To move to the next scene everything must be very well synchronized. There are several ways to do this, and the two most common are these:

- **Synchronize by time:** the same thing we've done to synchronize the dialogue. Each character has to control the time that has passed and know exactly when to make the change.

- **Synchronizing with messages:** the characters can send messages to each other. There can be one who is the "leader" and who sends a message every time the scene has to be changed.

We will explain the second way using an example.

In our example, Ulysses is the leader, and at the end of his program we use the "broadcast" block (events menu) to send a message to the rest of sprites and to the backdrop. In this case the message is "change to scene 2".
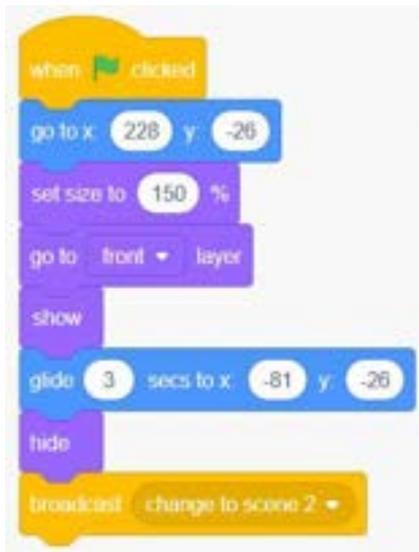
Now, all the sprites and the backdrop can use the block "when I re-

ceive (change to scene 2)" to control what happens in the new scene. These are the scripts for our 3 sprites and the backdrop:
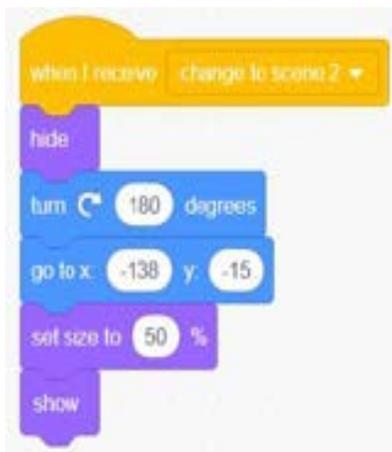
Ulysses

Polyphemus
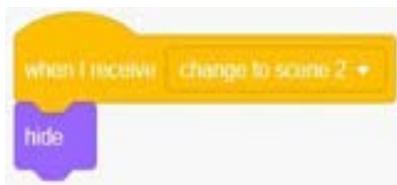
Ship

Backdrop

As we can see, when we start a new scene we have to decide for each character if it will be visible or not, which initial position it will hold, its size, and then we have program it to move and/or speak. We also turned Ulysses 180º to face the cyclops. Notice that the only thing that the ship does is to hide, because we don't need it anymore.

Scene 1

Scene 2

Adding background music and sound effects

In Scratch we can use the library of sound, we can create sounds and music with the Music Extension, or we can import music files (mp3).

Below we can see how to import a song and use it as a background sound for our story.
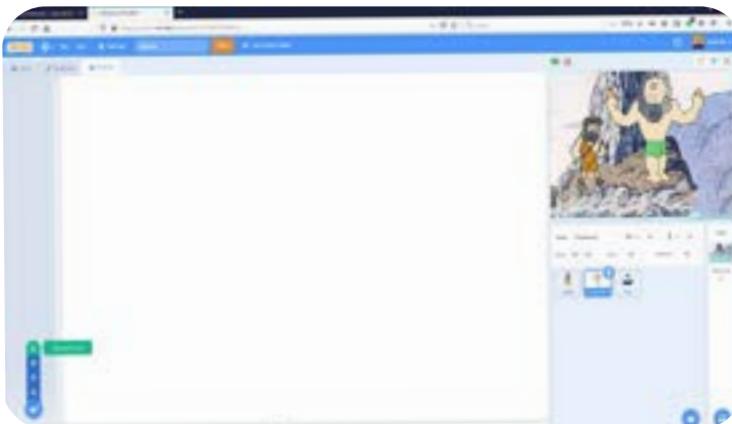
Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

In the example we used the "play sound" block from Sound Menu
(pink) within the scripts that controls the Stage, but it could also been
put in any of the sprite scripts.

III.2.8 *Possible issues*

There are some very common issues, which arise frequently when we are learning how to create stories with Scratch. In this section, we answer some of the most repeated ones.

Rotation style

Often, we need our character to turn and look the other way. If we use the "turn" instruction it can happen that the sprite is upside down, and that's not the effect we wanted.

We can change the way we turn by using a block called "Set Rotation Style" (movement menu).

In the next example we'll see the difference between turning using the left-right style and the all-around style.
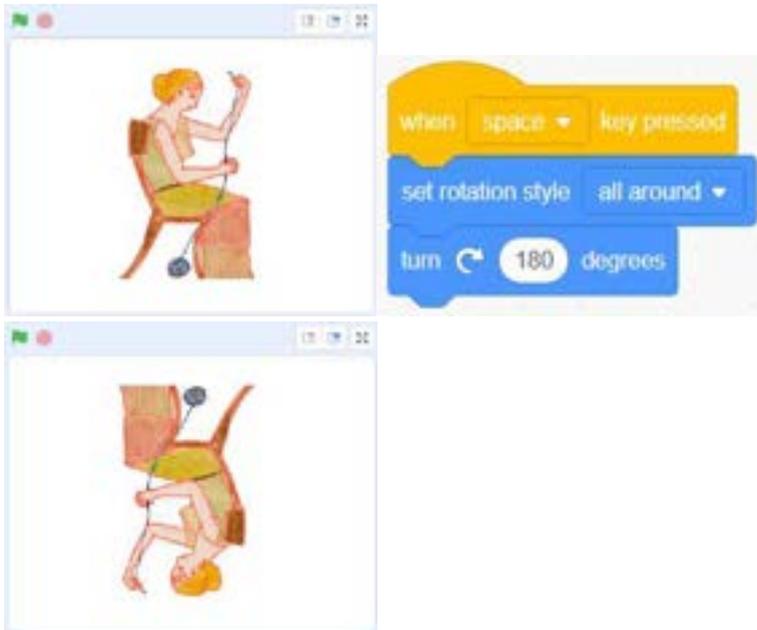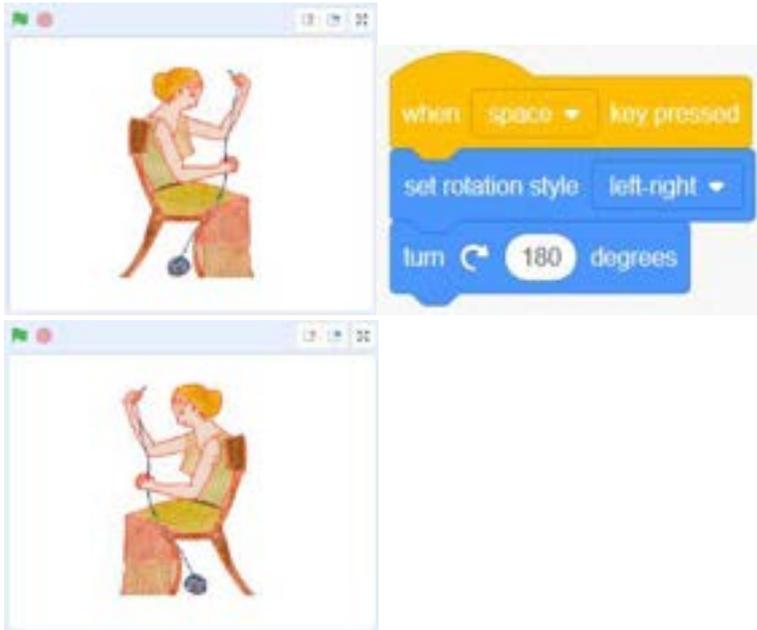
Where is the sprite?

Sometimes we run our story, and everything goes smoothly, but when we start it up again, the characters don't show up. This is because when the story ends, we have left them hidden (with "Hide" block), and therefore when the story begins we have to remember to show them (with "show" block).

In fact, this commentary is useful to start the story and to start each scene. We always have to place our characters in their initial positions and then show them.

Layers

In Scratch, sprites are organized in layers. So, when they cross, there's always one that's in front of the other.

Sometimes in the stories we need to get one character in front of another. To do this we use the "Go to (back/front) layer" instruction.

In the following example we see the difference between having the ship in the front layer or in the back layer. We are interested in having it in the front, since that way the effect is that Ulysses is inside.
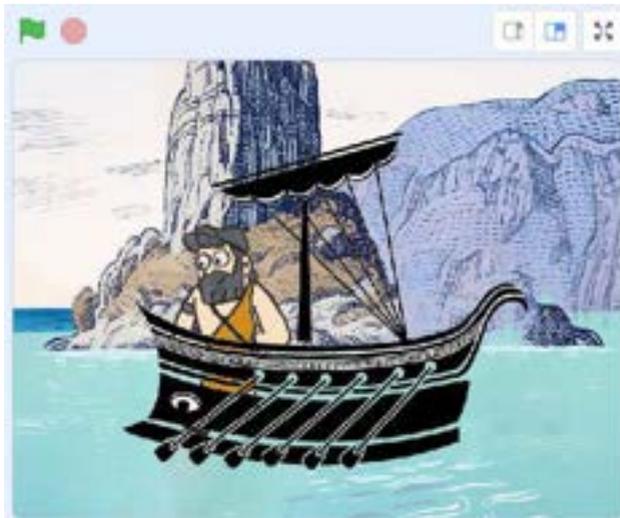
Sending the ship to the front layer.
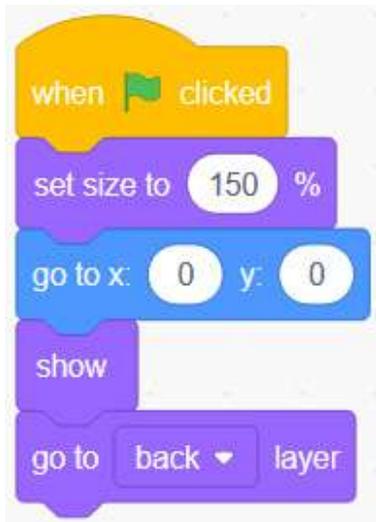
Sending the ship to the back layer.

III.2.9. *Making the story collaborative*

How do we all decide a general story/topic?

In the process of creating a story, the teacher must dedicate some time

to each of the phases of planning, composition and revision.

Storytelling: creative process

PLANNING	Initial stage in which ideas are generated, selected, and organized.
COMPOSITION	Phase in which the first sketch takes rhetorical or digital form, through writing or programming.
REVISION	Final process in which story is reread o reseen to ensure that the final product reflects the initial idea and that the narrative gears work.

In planning, ideas are generated, selected and organized, and the story gets born. Composition is the phase in which planning takes rhetorical or digital form, through linear writing or programming. Revision is the final process in which creation is reviewed to ensure that the final product reflects the initial idea and that the narrative gears work (no likelihood issues, undeveloped characters, etc.).

This section focuses on planning: the stage where the creative process must take place, the invention of the story. This phase cannot be reduced or omitted: it needs time and resources for ideas to take shape; that will enable students to focus on the demands and resources of digital storytelling during the following stages. In planning the teacher must make resources and strategies available to students so that ideas flow. And these strategies must be diversified over the year, in each

activity that is done. Here are some suggestions:

1. Document yourself: An intense story can emerge from reality. Sometimes we just have to read the newspaper or listen to the news to find great plots. For instance, the event sections can be used to build short stories where chance or bad luck have great importance; history books can be the basis of informative storytelling; in-depth interviews can help us to build short biographies...

2. Documenting yourself to relive and empathize: There is very poignant news (that should hit us, and sometimes they don't) that can become a literary plot if we explain it with proper resources, other than journalism, or if we change the perspective. For example, a headline like "Detained 11 occupants of a boat arrived yesterday on the coast of Ibiza" can become a story or a scene if we give names and faces to these eleven people (or at least to three of them), we think what has led them to get on board, imagine if they knew each other or not before starting the journey and what kind of relationship they settled while they were sailing between the waves and fear.

3. Versioning: Remaking or adapting classic stories, myths, fairy tales, from new perspectives, other points of views...

4. Cocreating: Develop a story together with other students, sharing ideas and different points of view; making ideas grow through interaction and dialogue among participants, using the brainstorming technique.

The aim of the teacher must be to ensure that students are able to turn good ideas into good stories: for this, it is necessary to help them to hybridise all the contributions, to sew all the threads. Students also need to keep in mind that most stories have an introduction, a conflict and a resolution. Students can decide not to follow this narrative scheme and choose other options: to make a scene, a portrait... where a conflict or a resolution might not be necessary. But teachers have to make sure that students make the choice accurately, and they don't end up constructing incomplete or incomprehensible stories.

1 introduction
- character
- Context
- ...

2 conflict
- problem
- confrontation
- Disease
- Change
- ...

3 resolution
- solution
- New situation
- Back to normality
- ...

If, for example, students create a large number of characters, the teacher should ask them what role they will play in the story; it is necessary to integrate them in the argument, to give them a mission, if any of them definitely does not have its own profile the teacher must suggest that he/she can be elided or transformed. If some of the conflicts suggested at the introduction remained open at the resolution, they have not been mentioned again, teacher must remind the students that they should be confronted.

Cocreation

Cocreation through brainstorming is a granted option, since conversation fosters creativity: an idea brings a new idea in an iterative process. But sometimes a spark is needed to focus the fantasy and the creativity of students towards new scenarios, new conflicts or new characters, to help them to be original, innovative. In these cases, *Grammatica della fantasia* by Gianni Rodari, can be very useful. This work, translated into almost all European languages, is today a classic in the didactics of creativity: it offers about forty techniques explained in detail and with examples to spur fantasy, so that children and adolescents are able to generate new disruptive stories. Rodari often resorts to *strangeness*, which consists in breaking logical associations

of thought and generating new connections, placing the student in unusual situations. This is achieved by creating unusual pairs, displacing objects or characters out of their usual scope, distorting fundamental elements of our daily lives, and so on. Here are some examples of Rodari's techniques:

Fantastic binomial: if we ask children to create a story using the words *cat* and *dog*, the two animals would fight and the plot probably won't surprise us? What if, instead, the protagonists have to build the stories using the words *cat* and *toaster*? Or *dog* and *razor*? Students will be compelled to settle new connections. Rodari proposes that we choose two words at random, which are not usually combined, and take them as a starting point. This will surely evoke disruptive arguments.

What if ...? The fantastic hypothesis: if we change a single feature of our daily lives, everything is shaken and a whole series of things begin to happen: this could be the beginning of great stories. What if our whole city became monochrome (red, for instance)? What if there were no more doors anywhere? With small initial pretexts like these, teachers can enhance children's creativity and encourage them to explore new paths.

From here, it will be very important the interaction (*brainstorming*) between students in order to grow and develop the story: this way, first ideas are developed, grow, are enriched, nuanced with everyone's contributions.

How do we create a modern version of a classic story?

Another source of good stories are the classic fairy tales and myths: we can take advantage of their powerful characters and narratives and rewrite them using different strategies. Rodari develops different options in the book quoted. We name some below...

Replace an old myth or character: locate him/her, for instance, in the 21st century, in our society. We can adapt or remake classic stories from a gender perspective or write them from an intercultural perspective. How would female characters react nowadays? What would

be the point of view of the story if it were told by the bad characters, the losers, the beasts?

Continue the story: make a second part of it. What would happen afterwards? Let's take advantage of strong and well-defined characters to imagine new adventures.

Change the focus: Choose a secondary character and make him become the main character. Give voice to the characters who have less.

To make these transformations, it is necessary to have a deep comprehension of the classic fairy tales or myths, to come to grasp their basic essence in order to give them a new shape. This requires a dialogic reading session, in which students will share their ideas about the selected text (myth or tale) and discuss them to delve into it; from here on, classic stories can be wrapped in new ways and retain their essence.

Here are two examples of how to transform some passages from the *Odyssey* into new stories:

> Polyphemus, the one-eyed monster who catches Ulysses and his men, and from whom only he manages to escape, is truly fearsome, he embodies fear since he is strange, tall, strong and cruel. What would an urban Polyphemus look like in the 21st century? What attributes should we give him to make him seem fearful and unsettling?

> Penelope waits twenty years for Ulysses without having news from him: she is a submissive and faithful woman. This behaviour is the best proof of your love. Do you think that would have been the case today? What would Penelope have done nowadays to show her love for Ulysses?

III.2.10. *Organization. Different collaborative options*

The activity of creating a collaborative story with Scratch can be approached in many possible ways. The following are three of the most

common.

Each team makes its own story

A first possibility is to divide the class into teams and propose each team to create its own story. If we approach it this way, collaboration is only within the team, not between teams.

The benefit is that in the end we will have many different stories, the main drawback is that there is no co-creation between teams.

Pairing teams

In this other approach, the class is also divided into teams, and each team is paired with another. A story is decided among all, and each pair of teams splits the story half and half.

In this way there is collaboration within the team, and co-creation between partner teams.

This way of working promotes the use of some very interesting options in Scratch, such as Sharing, Remixing, and using the Backpack (see section III.2.10.5).

With this approach, we can also pair up teams from different classes, or even from different schools and countries.

Each team in the class does one scene of the story

This last approach is also very interesting. The class is divided into teams and the story is decided together. Then the story is divided into parts (scenes), one for each team.

In this way there is collaboration within the team, and co-creation between teams.

As in the previous approach, this way of working promotes the use of Sharing, Remixing, and using the Backpack.

To visualize the entire story, there are different options. One of the most fun and spectacular is to align the computers of all the teams, synchronize the scenes (so that each one starts when the other one finishes) and enjoy the show with the whole class.

If they have co-created backgrounds that continue from one screen to another, and the characters are well synchronized, you can get the effect that the characters jump from one computer to another.

Interesting Scratch features for collaboration: Share, Remix and Backpack

Below we will try to explain some of the ways that exist to share and work together in co-creating the same project with Scratch. One of the things we insist on is teamwork. But teamwork doesn't mean one of the children has control of the keyboard and computer and the other two children "just look". Teamwork means planning and organizing tasks, every one of the team working on one thing, having one child on the team help and review what the other has done (and vice versa), building slowly and iteratively, sharing, showing what has done to each other, reflect and improve the work together. For all this, it is important to have tools so that, for example, two girls work on the same project, they can co-create and co-work correctly. This can be done in several ways. For example, sharing the same username and password. The only thing we have to watch out for in this option is that from two computers they don't work on the same project at the same time (if this happens, we only keep the work of the last one that presses the "save" button). We can also save the project on a pen drive, and copy it to the other computer, or send it by email, or...

The "backpack" method

Imagine we are two or three people working on the same project. In this case, Natalie and Mariona are from the same team and work together on the #Odyssey project. One of the tasks each one has to do is to draw a character. Below we tell you how Mariona can incorporate into her project, the character drawn by Natalie.

For example, imagine that NATALIE from her Scratch account (We use

this account for this tutorial: @scratchteam) is working on a project creating a character who has different costumes[4].

MARIONA from her Scratch account @marionaniell can visit the project of NATALIE and can "copy" whatever she likes for her projects (in fact, you can visit and copy any sprite from any project). To take it to her project MARIONA can use her backpack. What you can do is drag the sprite you like into your backpack (every user has each own backpack). But where is your backpack? The backpack appears when we hover the mouse at the bottom of the window and click on it.

ATTENTION: the backpack only appears when you enter Scratch with user and password. Scratch also allows you to create projects without having logged in, but then you do NOT have a backpack. The backpack is a utility that has every user and can be filled and emptied according to user needs. Here's a graphic example: Where's the backpack of the

4   You can see this project here: https://scratch.mit.edu/projects/323395688/editor/

user who signed in as @marionaniell?

If you look at the bottom of the window you see the backpack:
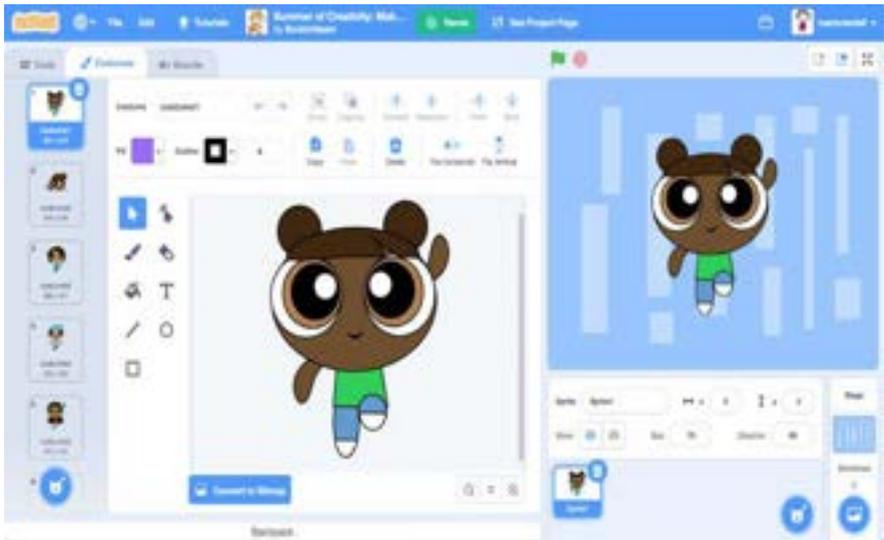

And if we click on the backpack, this happens:
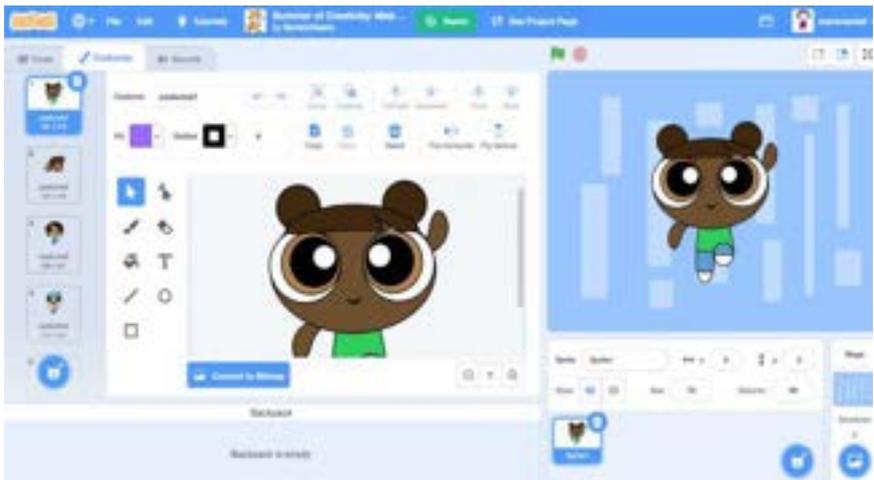
The backpack appears and tells us it is empty. Now what we can do is

drag the character we are interested in into our backpack. Here's what Mariona does:
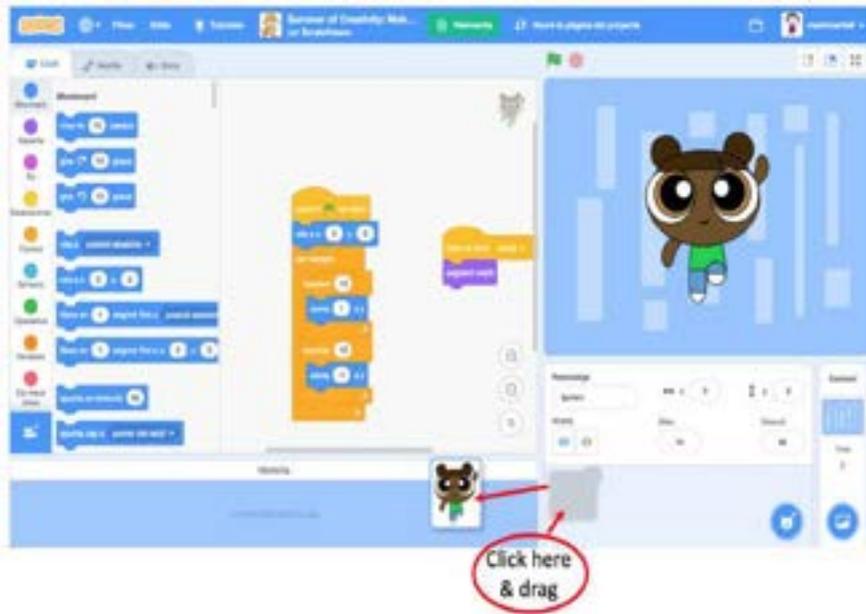

And this is the result:
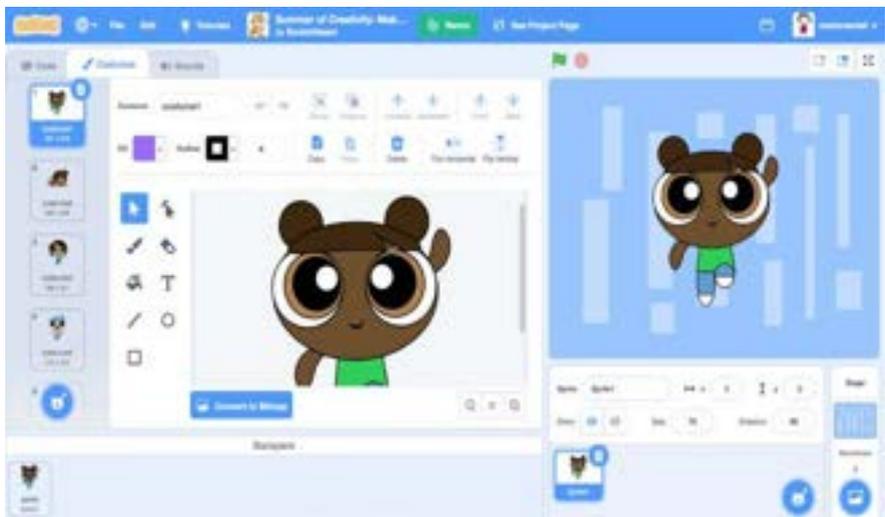
Now MARIONA is going to her project. She clicks on @marionaniell (upper right side)
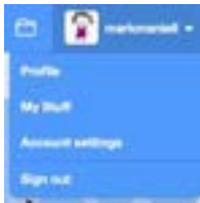

and then, click on "My Stuff" and appears:
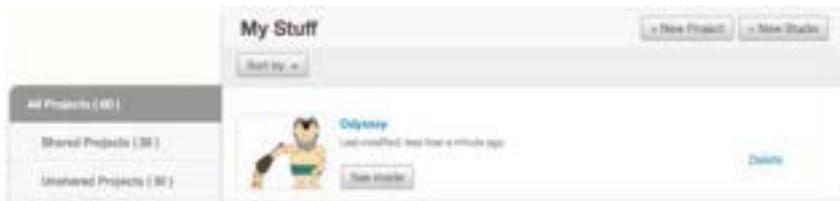
Click on "See inside" to work in the project about #Odyssey
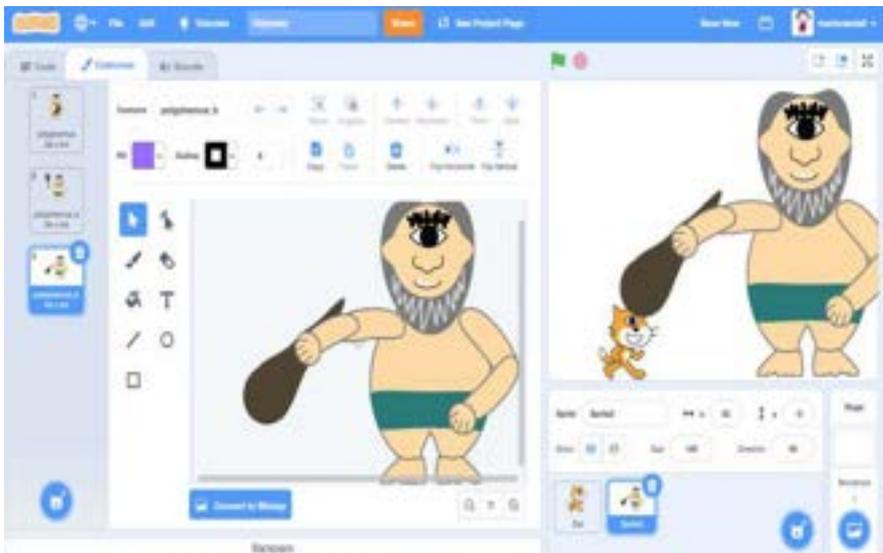
If we now, click on the backpack (at the bottom of the window where

it says "Backpack"):
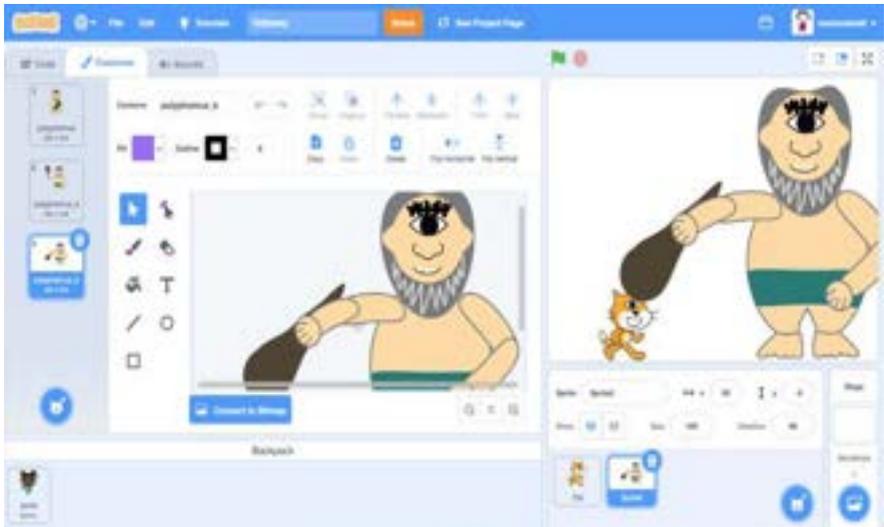
Appears what is inside my backpack, and I can drag it to the part of my sprites:
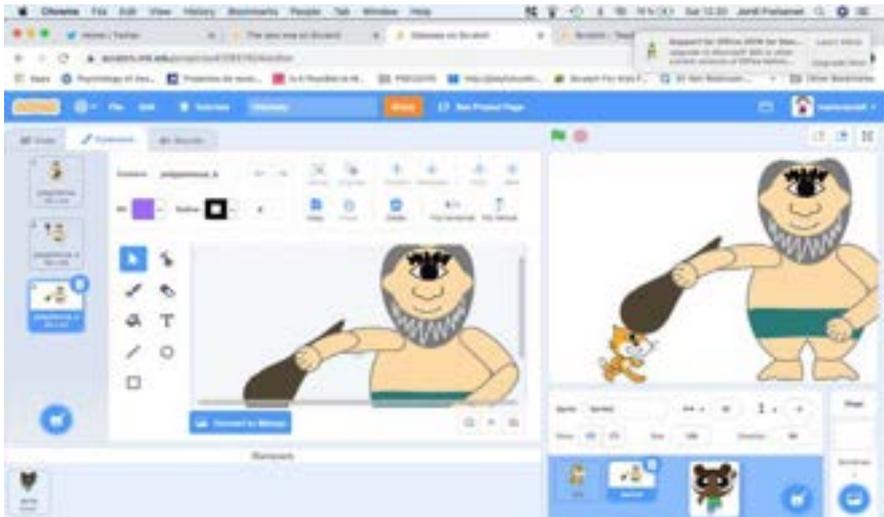
I let it go and I already have it incorporated in my project:
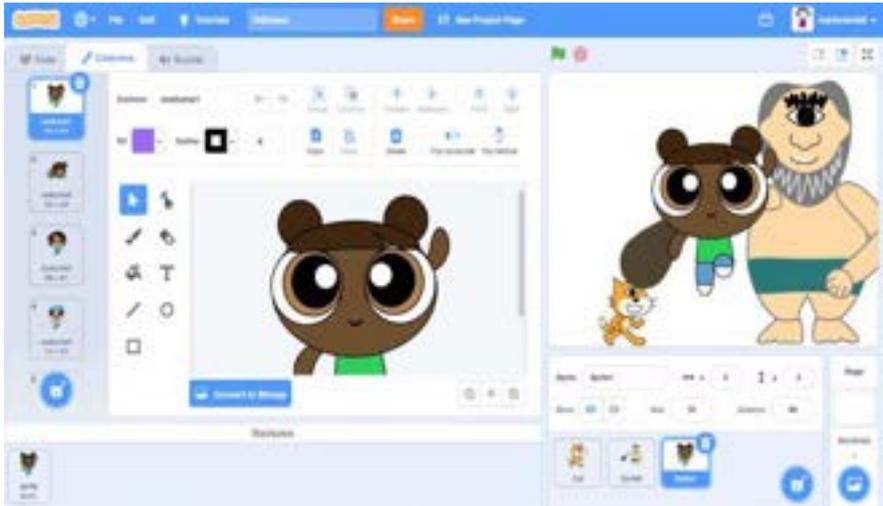
And if I click on the "Costumes" tab I can see all the costumes that NA-TALIE has created. If I click on "Code" I can see the code NATALIE has created for this sprite. I know this sprite can appear and disappear from our story whenever we want (see the pieces "show" and "hide" in the "Code" tab and the purple menu "Looks").

Remix

In the following, we will describe how two teams (each with its own Scratch profile) can co-create a digital story, working in shifts (iterations), and through the process of remixing projects and sharing them in a studio.

To unfold the example, let's imagine that there are two teams paired, coming from two different classes (Eduard is from class A and Mariona is from class B). Team A is working with the Scratch account of @ **eduardm**, while team B is working with **@marionaniell**.

Let's also imagine that the two teams have already agreed on the plot of the story and that the tasks have already been distributed. The team A designs the Ulysses character and the scenarios related with

the island, while team B designs Polyphemus and the sheep, and then they take turns programming the story. At the first iteration, team A creates a scene where Ulysses arrives by boat on an unknown island, disembarks and finds the Cyclops Polyphemus. Team A has created the project and also shared it by clicking on the "share" button.

Let's imagine this is the starting point, and now we'll see step by step how Team B continues the story. Team B can visit the project created by team A:
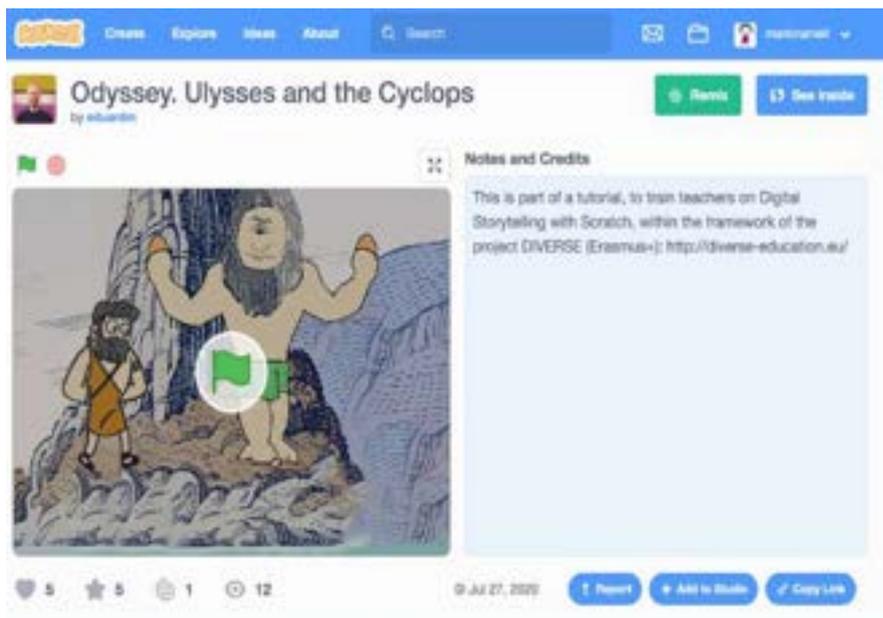
Then, click on "See Inside" button and see the following:

The Scratch user @marionaniell from team B, is visiting the project "Odyssey. Ulysses and the Cyclops" created by @eduardm from team A
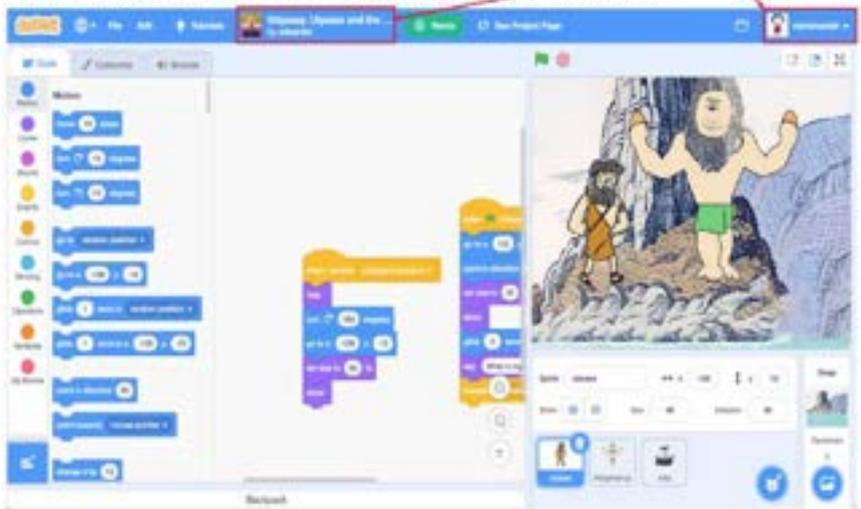
Note, although the team A was not assigned the task of drawing Polyphemus, they have done so. But, when team B takes the control, decides to erase the Polyphemus created by team A, and put into the scene a new Polyphemus they created. They can create a Polyphemus (or even take it from the backpack).
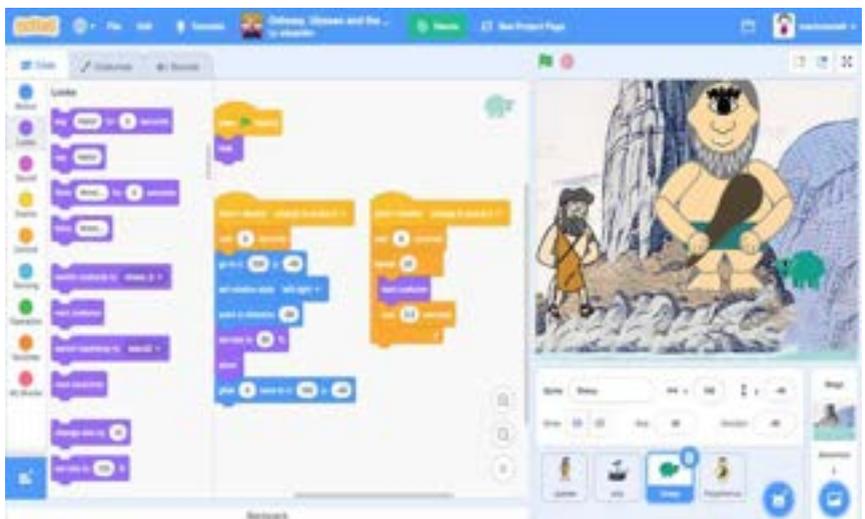
Mariona from team B also created a new sprite (sheep) and also continues the story according the plan, making movements and dialogues for the second scene. When team B finish their part and want their partner to continue the work, they have to click on "Remix" and then click on "share". When you do this, at the upper part of the window appears this:

And if you click on "See Project Page" button:
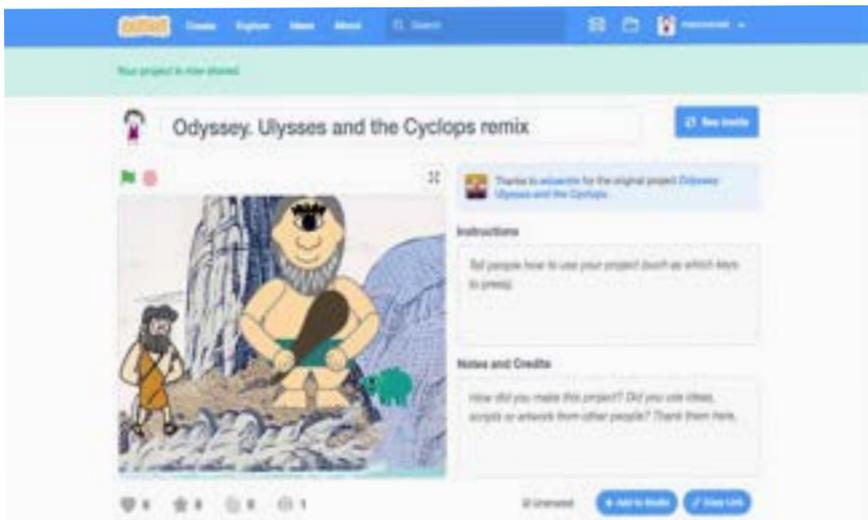
Then, team B could add the project to the studio where all projects are.

Now it's team A turn again. They can take the project of MARIONA as a starting point to continue with their part, modify what they want, add scenes, dialogues, sprites and backgrounds, and at the end, remix and share again.

III.3 Three lesson plans

III.3.1. *Discover Scratch: first steps (all ages)*

- **Estimated duration:** 50 min.

- **Age:** +8 years old.

- **Materials and technological resources:** computers (1 per team), Internet connection.

- **Number of students:** 10-30.

- **Teams:** groups of two.

Activity goal: to introduce Scratch to students of any age who have no or very little previous experience.

To take into account: the activity can be conducted in teams of more than 2 but is ideal for pairs. The lesson plan was inspired by the [creative computing curriculum](#) designed at Harvard. We recommend checking it out for more ideas and variations that can be used to introduce Scratch to children.

Activity description: a quick introductory activity to Scratch, combining teacher-led elements and student self-exploration.

Step 1: During the first 15 minutes we start with a live demo explaining the different parts of the Scratch window, highlighting three main areas: the place where all action happens, the area to define and create sprites and backgrounds, and the area for programming the actions of all the sprites.

We show where all the toolboxes appear, and how by clicking on each one (differentiated by colours), a set of instructions appears at the bottom.

We also show how we can drag an instruction to the scripting area

and see what happens when clicking on the piece, for instance with the instruction "move 10 steps".

Additionally, we can show a 1 minute video to introduce Scratch (https://scratch.mit.edu/about).

Step 2: then it is time for a guided demo (10 minutes) than pupils can repeat at the same time. For instance, we make the cat do a dance.

Start by dragging out the "move 10 steps" block from the "Motion" blocks palette to the scripting area. Every time you click on the block the cat moves a distance of 10. You can change the number to make the cat move a greater or smaller distance.

From the "Sound" extension, drag out the "play drum" block. Click on the block to hear its drum sound. Drag and snap the "play drum" block below the "move" block. When you click on this stack of two blocks, the cat will move and then play the drum sound.

Copy this stack of blocks (either using the Duplicate toolbar item or by right-clicking the stack and selecting "duplicate") and snap the copy to the already-placed blocks.

Change the second "move" block to -10 steps, so the cat moves backward. Every time the stack of four blocks is clicked, the cat does a little dance forward and back.

Go to the "Control" blocks palette and grab the "repeat" block. Wrap the "repeat" block around the other blocks in the scripting area. Now when you click on the stack, the cat dances forward and back 10 times. Here the word "loop" can be introduced to participants. (They get their first "computational thinking" concept). Finally, drag the "when Sprite clicked" block and snap it to the top of the stack. Click on the cat (instead of the blocks stack) to make the cat dance.

Step 3: then, we allow participants to explore and discover by themselves (20 minutes).

We tell the participants they are going to have 20 minutes for discov-

ery by themselves. We encourage them to do whatever they want. We tell them they must not be afraid of breaking anything or doing something wrong.

We encourage them to drag an instruction to the script area, do a click and see what happens. We encourage them to link two, three and more instructions and click on the group and see what happens.

During these 20 minutes the teacher-guide goes to every group encouraging participants to discover by trying things and click on instructions and see what happens. We also encourage participants tell other participants what they have discovered.

Step 4: after the exploration, we dedicate the rest of the time to ask participants to share something surprising with the class group. This is a class exercise, where we ask for the attention of the entire group. We also emphasize that what is important is to learn to listen to each other.

Extensions and challenges

What challenges can we propose?

We can ask participants to make the cat draw a square using motion, pen, control and events toolboxes. We allow them to explore and to discover. We emphasize there can always be many solutions to one problem and let them to show different solutions.

We can ask participants to explore tutorials in Scratch. We can ask to explore and discover the graphical editor that permits us to draw and create our own sprites. The graphical editor is simple and powerful at the same time. We can also let them to explore the sound editor.

We can propose that they swap the project between teams. So teams are encouraged to continue working in a project that was initially started by their colleagues. This is interesting because this exercise encourages them to understand what other participants have done, and to follow a story that someone else started.

III.3.2. *Poetry with Scratch (activity for primary schools)*

- **School where it was designed and implemented:** "Constantin Ianculescu" School (Romania).

- **Estimated duration:** 6 hours (can be split as desired).

- **Age:** 8-10 years old.

- **Materials and technological resources:** computers (1 per team), Internet connection, papers and pens.

- **Number of students:** 10-30.

- **Teams:** ideal for groups of two or three kids.

Activity goal: learn English, learn about poetry, about programming, improve digital skills and enhance teamwork.

To take into account: although the activity shows an example related to Halloween, it can be implemented in the framework of other celebrations (Christmas, etc.), or with completely different poems. It was an activity for an English class (ESL, English as a Second Language), but it can be carried out in any other language class, or even in an art or technology class.

Activity description: the students use a poetry entitled *"Happy Halloween"*. They use their imagination and their Scratch knowledge to create a digital story according to what they have read before.

Steps:

The poem selected was *"Happy Halloween"*, which was shortened in order to match their level of understanding.

Happy Halloween!

White ghost, white ghost, what do you see?

I see a black bat looking at me.
Black bat, black bat, what do you see?
I see a brown owl looking at me.
Brown owl, brown owl, what do you see?
I see a black cat looking at me.
Black cat, black cat, what do you see?
I see a jack-o-lantern looking at me!
Happy **Halloween!**

Step 1: The teacher helped the children translate (to Romanian) and understand the poem.

Halloween fericit!
Fantoma alba, fantoma alba, ce vezi tu?
Eu vad un liliac negru care se uita la mine
Liliac negru, liliac negru, ce vezi tu?
Eu vad o bufnita maro care se uita la mine.
Bufnita maro, bufnita maro ce vezi tu?
Eu vad o pisica neagra care se uita la mine.
Pisica neagra, pisica neagra ce vezi tu?
Eu vad o lumina de dovleac care se uita la mine!
Halloween fericit!

Step 2: Children open Scratch, and they delete the sprite cat. Then they choose the right backdrop. They click the "Backdrops" block and then "Fill with color" to choose the colour and the shade they consider suitable.

Step 3: They choose the characters of the poem: the pumpkin, the ghost, the bat, the owl and the cat. If they can't find sprites for these characters in the Scratch library, then they look for them on the Internet.

The teacher can show them how to save a certain picture and then use it in Scratch as a Sprite. Sometimes that means that children will have to remove the background of the image or make it bigger or smaller. These are great opportunities to improve digital skills.

Once they have all the sprites within Scratch, they can modify them, change colours, create costumes, etc.

Step 4: children can start programming, trying to make the characters move, show, hide and say the verses of the poem. In order to do that, it's interesting that they first write on paper a simple dialogue for each character, or that they draw with pencil a basic storyboard including the verses that each character will say.

Step 5: the Scratch blocks below are the main coding instructions that children will require. The teacher can explain how to use them with examples, depending on the Scratch knowledge of the pupils. The teacher can let the students explore other blocks. If the children have little knowledge of English, they can use Scratch in their mother tongue.
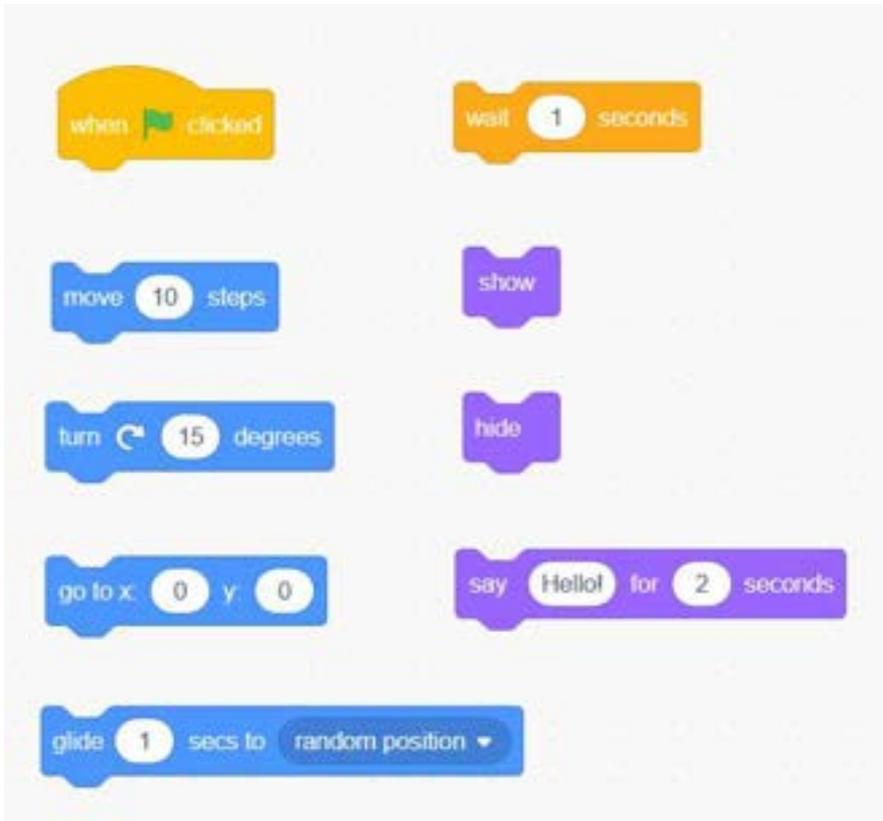
Step 6: the activity is very open and can have many variations. For example, text-to-speech blocks could be used, or the children could record their own voices to practice English speaking.

III.3.3. *Hack your window (all ages)*

- **Estimated duration:** 60 min.

- **Age:** +8 years old.

- **Materials and technological resources:** computers (1 per team), Internet connection, a device to take photos (camera, cel phone, etc.).

- **Teams:** family activity at home.

Activity goal: to create a digital story with Scratch and a photo of a window at home.

To take into account: this activity was designed during the confinement due to the COVID19. It is specially designed as a family activity to be conducted at home, but also can be adapted for schools.

Activity description: take a picture of a window at home, and using Scratch, turn it into a computer game, or into an animated story, an art project, etc. The possibilities are endless, you just have to imagine.

Complete tutorial: https://hackart.eduard.cat/2020/03/hack-your-window.html
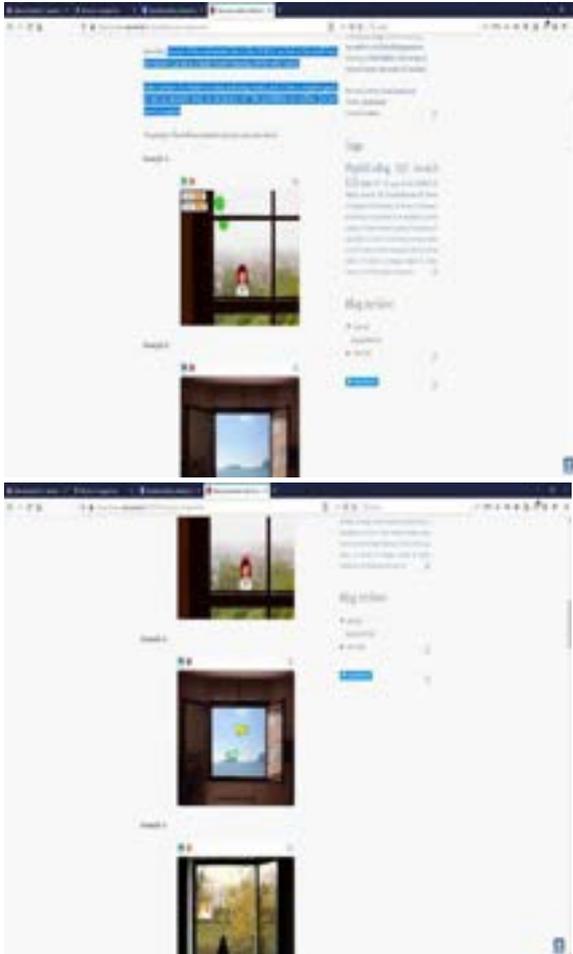
Step 1: Take a picture of your window

Step 2: upload the photo and open it with Scratch

Go to Scratch, create a new project, and add your photo as a new sprite from your computer. Now, go to "costumes", and with the paint editor you can modify the photo, for example we can cut out the inside part of the window, to make things happen inside. Then you can program this sprite to centre it and send it to the front (so the other sprites will pass behind).
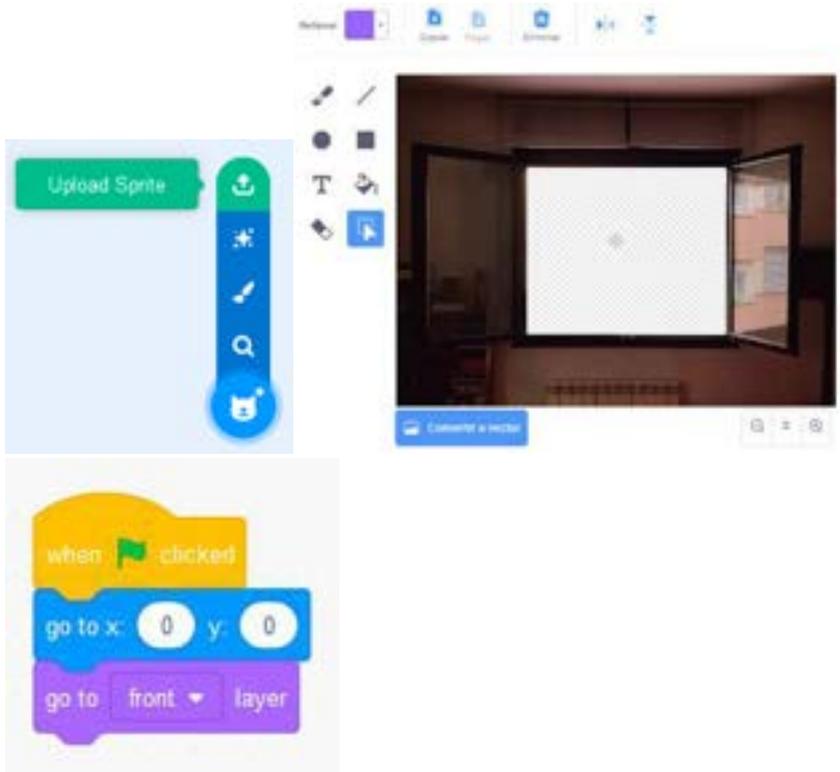
Step 3: add a stage and other sprites

In this example we have emptied the inside part of the window, and now we can put in some more beautiful views. We could use a photo of us, a drawing, a landscape from Internet, etc. Add it to the Scratch project as a stage, then add other sprites! In this example I added two birds and a wizard.
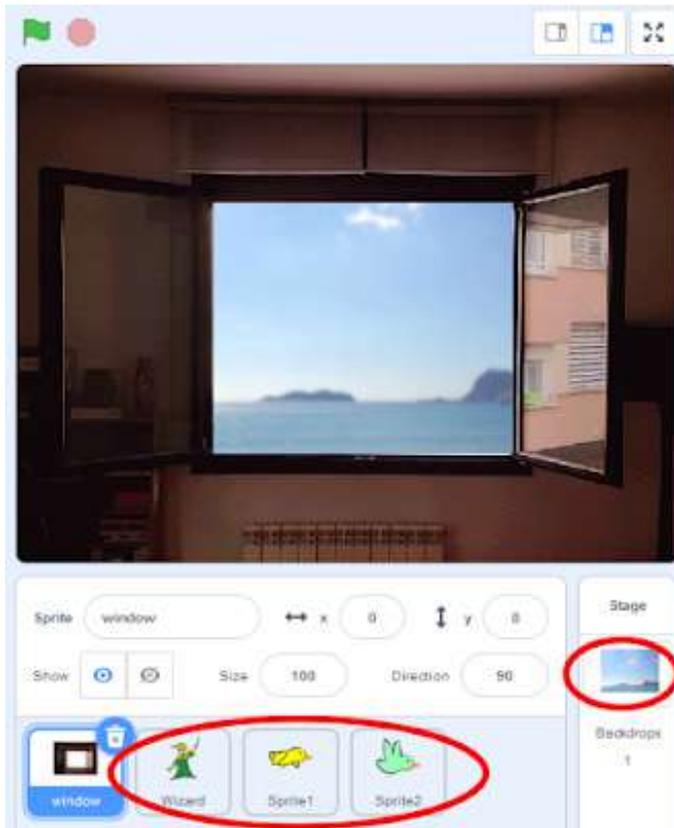
Step 4: create the story (or game, or art...)

When you have all the elements, now comes the really fun part: explore how to program them to make things happen in your project. For example, make the sprites move, talk, draw... Don't be afraid of making mistakes! For example, my birds move like this:
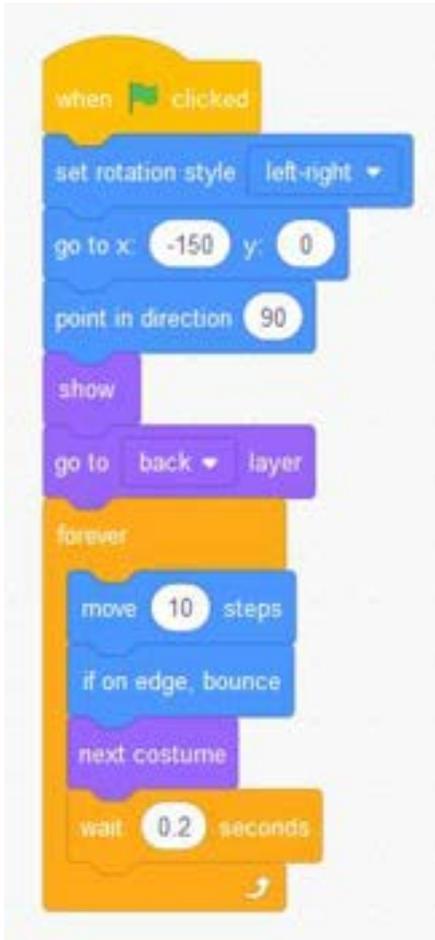
Important: when you finish your project, share it on the Scratch website, and then add it to [this studio](#), so everyone can see it, and your project can inspire others.

And if you share it on social networks, please use the hashtags #HackYourWindow i #ScratchAtHome.

III.4. Some more tools

We want to introduce a couple of very useful tools, compatible with

[Scratch](), that can help make our digital stories and animations interactive with the physical world, and much more fun.

III.4.1. *Makey Makey*

https://makeymakey.com/MakeyMakey

It is an invention kit for the 21ˢᵗ century. It turns everyday objects into touchpads and combine them with the internet. It's a simple circuit board for beginners and experts doing art, engineering, music, social studies, language arts, and everything in-between. The board connects via USB and is recognized as a USB mouse or keyboard. The board will work on any PC, Mac, and most tablets and smart phones.

III.4.2. *micro:bit*

https://microbit.org/
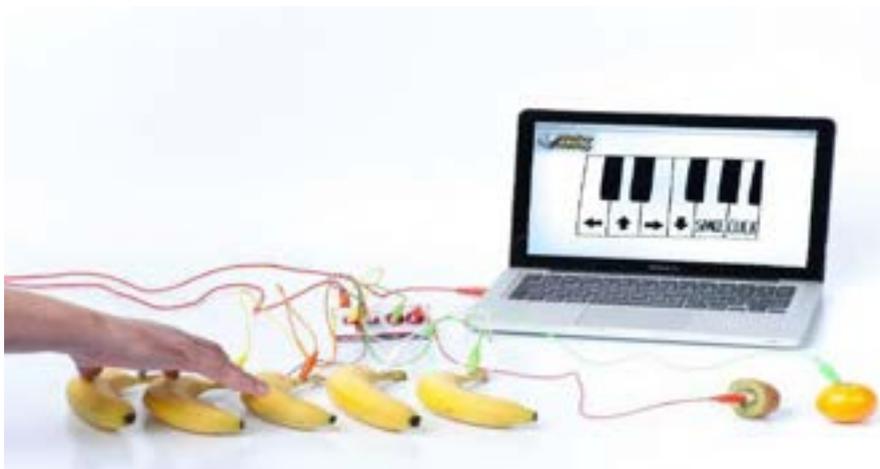
it is a physical computing device that provides a bridge between abstract concepts and tangible experiences. Physical computing combines **Computational thinking, Coding, Creativity and Innovation.** Using the micro:bit, your students will gain vital competencies and skills in critical thinking and collaboration, building their ability and confidence to have ideas, share them and make them real. The sim-

plicity of the micro:bit's design allows for immediate success, but also becomes a more sophisticated tool as your students' knowledge and understanding grows.

III.5. Resources

III.5.1. *Selection of online resources*

- Scratch website: https://scratch.mit.edu
- Scratch teacher's community website: https://scratched.gse.harvard.edu
- An open course about Scratch: Learning Creative Learning: https://learn.media.mit.edu/lcl/
- Scratch in practice shares ideas and materials from the Scratch Team and teachers around the world: https://sip.scratch.mit.edu
- Scratch tutorials: https://scratch.mit.edu/projects/

- editor/?tutorial=all
- Scratch cards: https://resources.scratch.mit.edu/www/cards/en/scratch-cards-all.pdf
- Scratch teachers guide for the cards: https://resources.scratch.mit.edu/www/guides/en/TeacherGuidesAll.pdf
- <u>Digital Storytelling Using Scratch: Engaging Children Towards Digital Storytelling</u> (Vinayakumar et al. 2018).
- The writers' workshop for youth programmers: digital storytelling with scratch in middle school classrooms (Burke & Kafai 2012).
- INCLUDED Erasmus+ Project: Inclusive childhood education supported by multimedia and digital storytelling (INCLUDED Project) is a training and action-research project promoted by the European Commission (Erasmus+).
- <u>Digital Storytelling with Refugee Youth: A Tool for Promoting Literacy and Youth Empowerment And a Catalyst for Social Action</u> (Christina Chen 2015).
- Interactive Digital Storytelling with Refugee Children (Toby Emert 2014).
- Playfulcoding guide: Main result of Early Mastery Erasmus+ project. It contains several step by step activities related to Scratch and Digital Storytelling (Scratch and poetry, Collaborative stories with Scratch, etc.).
- Digital Storytelling in the Primary Classroom
- Digital Storytelling Tools: an EdShelf collection of apps and web tools that are useful for promoting the creation of digital stories within classrooms.

III.5.2. *Selection of books*

- Creative Computing Guide (Harvard): The Creative Computing Curriculum, designed by the Creative Computing Lab at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, is a collection of ideas, strategies, and activities for an introductory creative computing experience

using Scratch. It contains a lot of lessons and activities related to digital storytelling.

- Family Creative Learning Guide (MIT): This guide provides a basic framework to implement some workshops on Scratch and other creative learning technologies. It is designed for teachers, community center staff, and volunteers interested in engaging young people and their families to become designers and inventors in their community.

- Center for Digital Storytelling. (2005). Center for Digital Storytelling Web site. Retrieved May 12, 2007, from http://www.storycenter.org/history.html
- Papert, S. (1980). Mindstorms—Children, Computers and Powerful Ideas. New York Basic Books, Inc.
- Resnick, Mitchel. (2007). All I really need to know (about creative thinking) I learned (by studying how children learn) in kindergarten. Creativity and Cognition 2007, CC2007 - Seeding Creativity: Tools, Media, and Environments. 1-6.
- Robin, Bernard. (2008). Digital Storytelling: A Powerful Technology Tool for the 21st Century Classroom. Theory Into Practice - THEORY PRACT. 47. 220-228. 10.1080/00405840802153916.
- Tucker, G. (2006). First person singular: The power of digital storytelling. Screen Education, 42, 54–58.

IV Folktales

Author: Nikolas Kamtsis, Centre of Higher Education in Theatre Studies, Greece

IV.1 Introduction to theory

IV.1.1 *The folktale - definition and subtypes*

The term 'folktale' covers a range of story types based on oral traditions around the world. Margarete Misch (2008) identifies several categories:

- folktale – can include religious, imaginary and mythical elements, depicting sometimes everyday events
- legends – describe the lives of people said to have accomplished extraordinary feats
- myths – describe events in which supernatural beings are the protagonists, and explain origins. Fables are a subset of myths, populated by animals and providing a moral lesson
- parables – stories with a moral lesson attributed to Jesus Christ
- allegories – stories with a double meaning that have a moral or political message beneath the surface of the main story, eg Gulliver's Travels
- fairy tales – stories relating the adventures and fortunes of a hero or heroine, containing elements of magic.

IV.1.2. *The value of folktales in the classroom*

There is a reason folktales endure across all cultures, and that has to do with their structure and plot, which have particular appeal to chil-

dren:

> *[They] are involved easily in the story, they are identified with the characters and the situations that have been recounted, and as a result the story that is developed via the verbal speech, is transformed into experiential reality* (Grammatas, n.d.)

Such engagement in the story, naturally promotes concentration among children, but also models creative thinking for them, and provides an opportunity to develop problem-solving skills.

Folktales can boost inclusion in the classroom. The fact that folktales are a part of all cultures, makes them a universal vehicle for learning. Any child can ask a family member to tell a story, or look one up online, and be able to bring that to the classroom. Immediately, all children are included in the lesson, and have something valuable to contribute.

In terms of language and communication skills development, folktales have an important role to play. Reading aloud has been found to have a number of language, literacy and cognitive benefits, both for children (Duursma, Augustyn, & Zuckerman, 2006), and adults (Hardach, 2020). For the diverse classroom, where a range of languages are present, there is an opportunity to promote literacy development in every child's home language (L1). The benefits of this apply to bilingual pupils with L1 other than the dominant language of the classroom (eg Arabic), as well as to pupils whose L1 is the dominant language of the classroom.

Where bilingual children learn to read and write in their L1, this supports academic progress generally, as well as literacy learning in the dominant L2 (Branum-Martin, et al. 2010, Cobo-Lewis, et al. 2002, Thomas and Collier 2002, Kenner, et al. 2008). There is also evidence that bilingual pupils' literacy engagement with their L1 supports general literacy learning of their peers, including dominant language monolinguals (Chin, Daysal and Imberman 2012).

In terms of the focus of DIVERSE – to promote inclusive education and the inclusion of newly arrived migrants – structured use of multiple

languages in the classroom, including migrant children's home languages. can contribute to important social and emotional outcomes, including:

- self-esteem and emotional well-being (Bougie, Wright and Taylor 2003, Combs 2005)
- respect for one's home culture (Conteh 2007)
- family cohesion (Wong-Fillmore 1991)

Such affective outcomes are further enhanced by encouraging parent-child interaction in the home language through stories (Costigan and Dokis 2006).

IV.2 Description of the method

The use of folktales and fairy tales in the classroom can take a lot of forms:

- Teachers can use existing folktales
- Teachers can make up folktales and use them for the purposes of the lesson.

Also, the folktales can be used:

- In the form of a theatre action
- In the form of interaction between students and teachers
- In the form of a narration by the teacher.

IV.2.1. *Introduction and definitions*

Creative learning can come in the form of narration, as a story or a fairy tale. In this case the teacher can follow theatre paths and methods. Creative learning is an acquisition of knowledge and skills through active participation. Story telling has the same characteristics. And narrating folktales as a teaching method has to step on the same

routes more or less. It is a combined procedure of a creative exchange between the individual and his natural or social environment.

Learning is a complicated human function which has roots both in the psychological, and the physiological part of man. It is the outcome of internal as well as external operations, aiming at acquiring knowledge and skills. The process of learning becomes more interesting and compound once it moves out of the state of memorizing, to a state where fundamental human functions are involved.

Learning can be called creative if it stimulates imagination, memory, sensitiveness and the sentiment, mimesis, (following the Aristotelian idea), play, art and creation and also, learning, is creative, when it gains experience from the above. Using folktales as a teaching method, we do nothing less that placing all the above characteristics and elements into the educational process.

By using narrative techniques, adapting the lesson to tell it like a story recruit all the functions of the performing arts (theatrical and narrative) for the sake of the educational process.

Along with the narration and the use of folktales, a variety of other functions are recruited such as theatrical games, role playing games (role playing, or participation theatre) and storytelling. However, the target is always one; the conquering and evolution of man's knowledge of himself, of his environment and the laws that govern it.

The narration of stories and folktales as a teaching method, makes use of many theatre techniques while comprising a methodology for teaching. Creative and practical elements originating from a range of other arts, are likely to be used. However, the narration is likely to be the main source since, here we have the action and the experience incorporated, mainly the collective experience rather than the individual.

Here we have an alternative kind of learning, a methodology which takes elements from narration and the performing arts sector that could serve amateur purposes or not, but which, however, are indispensable for creating the setting in which we are to work.

The narration in the classroom differs from the performing art and theatre. In a theatrical play or in professional narration, our main interest lies in the outcome that it is integral and perfect, in other words, that the play is worth attending. *In the narration of folktales as a teaching method our main interest covers the medium, the techniques, and the various ways we use within the boundaries of teaching, whereas the final outcome depends on the extend of learning the students have acquired in other words, how well each time they grasp the learning object.*

Once more we should make clear that creative learning should by no means get involved in the requirements of a 'work of art'. The 'beautiful' we seek in a work of art, has an entirely different meaning in the issue of narration learning. In the specific case when speaking of the beautiful, we make reference to the extent of knowledge gained through playing, acting or creating. Our interest and preoccupation should be dedicated in the field learning, on how well we assimilate knowledge, and to what extend we conquer the object of learning.

IV.2.2 *Main characteristics of the narration*

It is therefore within this scheme which is formed according to our educational aims and the manner in which the lesson is planned that we should take into consideration the following:

Human field

From the moment that narration moves on as the characters and the heroes are caught up in the "adventure", we have to deal with a context of human attributes. This happens both if the heroes are human or other entities but again with human characteristics (animals, plants, elves, dragons etc.).

Imaginative realm

Whether the teachers use a well-known folktale or invent one for the needs of the lessons cognitive subject, they enter the fantasy realm and have to follow these roads to complete their lesson from start to

end.

Heroes – characters

The lesson through the narration methods will develop in between "entities". Humans, animals or anything else that uses language and movements that are familiar to us.

The dramatic conflict

These characters will be built up a constructive conflict between them, that will have as a result the lesson, the cognitive subject and its understanding / learning by the students.

Imaginative place

The narrative action takes place in an invented place where time has no meaning or matters. Especially regarding the actual understanding of the lesson.

Symbols

Characters and actions naturally escape the context of reality and become symbols. This is one more advantage. Symbols are poetically energized and carry away not only the mind but also the emotions of the students. Therefore, learning becomes more concrete and permanent.

Our aim is that the children achieve the best possible understanding and comprehension. The teacher, therefore, is the one to choose the best possible way in handling each educational topic.
It is known that there is a variety of issues and topics that we can approach and teach in the form of narration.

A lecture could also come as a combination of narrative and action. It could begin with storytelling, continue with action, and end with a story.

Teachers know that repetition and routine spoil the children's interest and concentration span, and therefore finding new teaching meth-

ods and presentations that could initiate the unpredictable, the astonishing, or simply the novel, is highly advisable.

IV.2.3. *How you build a lesson based on folktales*

If we are to introduce an instructional proposition to a lesson of such kind, we could begin by mentioning the following:

1. Defining the target

What meaning do we want to convey by teaching the specific lesson. What do we want to prove? This target has to be related with the learning objectives of our lesson.

2. Use our inventiveness in choosing an interesting fable which has

- Conflict in the middle of the plot,

- an interesting plot

    o beginning like "once upon a time…",

    o development of the theme

    o and finishing like "… they lived happily ever after",

- conflict between two antithetical main characters or two controversial themes,

- by the end of the story, we should be ready to have reached our goal.

3. Defining opposites factors

Which battle – discuss with each other- so as with the confliction to reached our final goal (Result – conclusion - message)

4. Defining-bring out main conflict results

If our narration was polished, children with the appropriate encouragement will express by themselves their results. At the end, a discussion should be organised on the story and children should be supported to identify what they have learned through the story.

IV.3 Three lesson plans

Creative learning offers many ways to narrate a fairy tale, or to create a new one for the purposes of the lesson. We encourage the reader to read the methodology in order to understand it and more over to be able to create news ways of teaching through narration and fairy tales.

- Like a theatre action.
- Participation of teacher and students (Interaction)
- Narration by the teacher.

IV.3.1 *Science (Properties of the air)*

In this lesson plan, the main learning objective is to identify the properties of the air. This is what we want the students to get at the end of the session.

In order to achieve this objective, we have to choose two antithetical main characters. In the example provided below, we have chosen a flag (unable to move around) and a Seagull which is constantly on the move, one who is knowledgeable about the properties of the air and one that does not have clue. Any couple of opposites that could be somehow related with the main theme could be used.

The, we need to select the properties of the air in which we would like to focus and construct a dialogue. It is important that these antithetical main characters present their ideas

from different points of view. In our story, we have the point of view of a character that is not able to travel and of a character that is a traveller. Often in fairy tales, travelling is associated with knowledge and knowledge comes through travels.

It is important that the story constructed has a beginning (where the background situation is explained so that the students can understand who is who), a middle part (where the story is unfold) and an end (that will come as a conclusion).

Example of a story that can be narrated as a theatre action

Subject: Science

Topic: The air and space

The folktale of the loneliness of the flag which think that the air doesn't exist and the space is empty

Once upon a time it was a flag.

AND she had a philosophical existential question which tortured her.

But let's take the story from the beginning.

It was hung and forgotten on a pole high above a large building. In the front, it was written "School".
To tell the truth It had been forgotten there long enough from the pre-pre-pre-national holiday.
And she was bored. Very bored. The time was passing by and it was getting older. Her colours faded, and the edges were torn from the air that was beating her.
And as we said air … it was a long time now that the air hadn't passed through that place and our flag hung sad and motionless.
In her sadness she began to wonder why the air was not passing, to blow her and to breathe a bit of freshness. Only a

strong and bad smell came and whipped her up there.
And who is this air anyway? And why didn't it go through
there? And why was it so arrogant and obnoxious? Does it no
longer exist, does it die?

One day she decided and shouted at a flying seagull.

FLAG   Sir sir, would you like to come a bit closer?

SEAGULL   What do you want, I have a job, the boats
            came in to the harbour with a bunch of fish
            in their nets and I'm hungry.

FLAG   Well ok...ok. Come a bit closer I want to ask
            you something and I will let you go. Tell me
            why the air does not pass here anymore. Is
            he arrogant, has he left from our territory
            or has he died?

SEAGULL   What are you talking about? The air is al-
            ways here and there and everywhere.

FLAG   How is it always here? If it is such, why I'm
            not waving anymore? I'm down, sad and
            poor;

SEAGULL   Look there on the sky. What do you see?

FLAG   Clouds. Still clouds like me.

SEAGULL   And what is a cloud?

FLAG   A cloud is a cloud dummy. What else?

SEAGULL   No, clouds are air. Air with different thick-
            ness.

FLAG   You are insane. You say that the clouds I can

see don't exist and the air that I cannot see exists.

SEAGULL Believe it or not YES. The air is here but it's not in a hurry, rushing and savage.

FLAG No it is not. Because I know the air. It's clean and cool. I have a bad smell on my nose only.

SEAGULL It's from the exhaust gas, cars and motorcycles down the road.

FLAG Whatever it is. As it passed by, the air cleared all that. So now it's not here.

SEAGULL Oh Yeah? And how do you think the smell comes up here?
And how do you think I'm flying?
And look there at this shining sunbeam?
What do you see?
(Someone blows a little talc in the light beam of a lens)

FLAG Dust. Small pieces of dirty dust.

SEAGULL Right. And how do you think this dust flies right and left?

FLAG I do not know.

SEAGULL From the air, into the air. The air is everywhere. Whether rushing or calm, cold or hot is here.

FLAG You say so?

SEAGULL Yes. Let me leave now because the sail ships enter the port quickly and their nets have a

lot of fish. I am going to eat.

FLAG   Hahaha! Quickly? Quickly???? And how do
            you know that they come quickly. How do
            you see them from here.

SEAGULL   I see them. I'm not blind. Don't you see their
            sails full.

FLAG   Full? Full of what?

SEAGULL   Full of air poor woman. Air is everywhere,
            and make everything. Makes the dust go
            here and there, the sail boats to go every-
            where the captain wants, the smells to
            come up here to your nose, even me to fly.
            That's enough now I'm leaving otherwise I
            will be hungry for the rest of the day.

The flag was alone again but now she had many things to
think about.

Is the air there or not?

Is the air invisible but exists and is it everywhere in the
space?

And to solve the existential philosophical question.

"That what we see may not exist and what we don't see is
present all the time".

IV.3.2 Botany

A plant is born. The procedure of sowing, growing, and
bearing fruit, up to the time a new plant is reproduce.

We define our target: our intention is teaching the chil-
dren the reproduction of the plants, and under what cir-

cumstances this takes place.

We make up an interesting little story, like:

- The adventure of the restless spirit of a tiny seed of chickpea that decided to seek its fortune to unknown world and places.
- A beginning that might run as following: "once upon a time…"
  (Dialogue with mother chick pea and declaration that she wants to leave)
- Development: meeting a number of remarkable people (air, soil, sun etc)
- End (The end could be something like… they lived happily ever after…)
- Repetition of the same story, the same plot, and same dialogue with the new seed, the outcome of this.
- We define the controversial factors who talk to each other, fight and (1) so that the outcome brings out the desired final goal (outcome, deduction, message)
- Our first hero is the seed
- The other could alternatively be the air (that picks the seed and carries it elsewhere)
- A lump of soil that happens to be next to where our seed has fallen.
- The water running nearby, that waters the seed.
- A pebble that temporarily obstructs the seed's roots to expand and it's leaves to grow the sun the most indispensable element for

And the story goes on and on until our new plant is ready to produce seeds of its own

Definition – clearing of the final conflict

In the given example, we have many:
Talking with the sun, the air, the soil, with the pebble, etc.

How nature operates, spring, winter, conditions permitting, etc.

IV.3.3 *History*

History – elementary school – grade 3

Based on the book http://ebooks.edu.gr/modules/ebook/show.php/DSDIM-C103/737/4824,21988/

HERCULES

A history series in 14 episodes

Narration by the teacher:

(he can use puppets, mask, shadows, objects etc. according to the lesson concept)

Once upon a time in a village lived an old man. Plato. He was very old and wise. There was a dark and deep forest around the village and the villagers went in the forest to kill birds and rabbits to fit their families. But many times, one or two of the lost in the forest and never returned back again. The other villagers stared to afraid of the forest and they refused to go hunting.

Plato thought about it and found a method to encourage the hunters not to afraid and risk to go hunting in the forest. Moreover, he managed to make them brave, to be all together and collaborate, to help each other and manage not to get lost in the forest. How? By narration.

Plato gather all the villagers around the fire in the middle of the village and starting to say stories. One story just before hunting.

He said Once upon a time there was a young man name Hercules. He was very strong and brave. Because Zeus the king of the

all Gods when Hercules was baby took a little milk from Hera (his Goddess wife) and fit the baby. So the baby became strong and unbeatable.

Episode 1

The villagers came to Plato and announced that they will not go to forest anymore because yesterday, when they hunted, a snake appeared and killed three of them.

Plato thought for a while and said them to sit down on the ground. He had something to say.

Plato: Listen to me. When I was young, I went to school. My teacher has a little baby who was very strong. Because my teacher went on the mountain and invited Zeus and told him that he wants the God to be the Godfather of the baby. Zeus accepted his proposal and became the Godfather of the baby. He promised to protect the baby and when he will grow up he will make him... almost God like him.

When Hercules was baby. Hera – who didn't like what is happen before with the stolen milk by her husband Zeus - sent two poisoned snakes to bite Hercules and kill him.

But Zeus understood one minute before the snakes could bite Hercules and threw a thunder in the room. Hercules waked up grabbed the snakes and killed them.

Plato looked at the eyes of the villagers and said them: Well, if a baby can kill two poisoned snakes sent by Hera, then you adults can go in the forest and hunt unless you are cowards. And if snakes appear, you will do what the baby did.

Go hunting Now.

The villagers took courage and they went to the forest without being afraid.

Episode 2 and next.

The action continues like this where the villagers come to Plato in every episode and say that they are afraid to go hunting because a lion appears.

Plato says the story of Hercules and the Lion of Nemea.

The same happen with the wild bull of Minoa in Crete, Stymfalides birds, Lernaia Hydra and so on.

IV.4 Some more tools

The possibilities that we have in order to introduce fairy tales / folktales in the classroom are numerous. Here we present some of them.

IV.4.1 *Innovative narration based on objects*

We will ask the group, students, and participants etc. to bring one or two or more objects that mean something to them. Memory objects are ideal, especially a childhood or one from a parent, grandparent, something old or new. Objects might seem simple and everyday but… they have the power… the mystery to create a story and even more so trigger a memory.

This could be described as a lesson plan related to narration and it always works very well with diverse and special social groups and helps participant's interactivity and bonding.

Phase A

The teacher divides the group in smaller groups of 3-4-5 and they place their objects all together. These can be: old photos, a box, a match box, a glove, a souvenir, a tin box, a stone, a toy, and many more depending on who brings them and their fantasy and creativity.

Alternatively, the teacher could have some objects and give

them to the groups randomly.

Phase B

The goal is for each group to observe the objects for some minutes and then start creating a story. Naming characters and places and they can be connected and become a fairy tale, a myth. They can take notes and write it down whatever is more helpful. It needs to have a beginning, action, crescendo and an ending.

Phase C

Each group will read it / narrate it when ready to the rest of the classroom, group etc. They can do it personally or in groups, to narrate stories they have created, whatever the Teacher feels is more suitable.

Phase D (advanced)

The students / participants can act on an improvised scenario made by themselves and make short theatre performances. When the group (classroom or not) becomes familiar with such activities and procedures, the teacher can direct the action on more specific goals like special cognitive and lesson subjects. For example, this can be applied for Literature, History, Geography and more. The Teacher can choose a specific piece and which objects and elements and direct the making of the story / narration to teach a specific theme.

IV.4.2 *Narration and creation of a story with the guidance of the teacher and the active participation of the students*

Phase 1: The process can begin with a short action based on trust and get-to know-each-other exercises (10 min duration). A basic condition would be that the students are from the same class and know each other. In the case they do not, this first phase can last longer and involve more activities to achieve trust and bonding for a better collaboration between them.

Phase 2: The teacher begins to narrate a story (original, made up and organized beforehand), based for a certain object of knowledge, that is a specific lesson to which it will return and be completed by the end of the class. The narration remains unfinished.

Phase 3: The teacher divides the classroom into groups and asks the children to work upon the unfinished story and create a common ending all together.

Besides the above mentioned benefits 1,2,3,4 that can be applied and after the teacher listens to the proposed ending by the groups, can go on to teach the lesson i.e. addition or subtraction.

An example for Math: For example, the story has a milkman for a hero that goes around the village/town/city and distributes the milk. The milkman has 4 children that help him with his work. Every day, after they leave his shop, they go into 4 directions towards the North, the South, the East and the West to distribute the milk.

What is happening a=towards the North, b=towards the South, c=towards the East and d=towards the West of the city?

Teachers can here divide the class into 4 groups, give the students 15 minutes of time to imagine the development of the story of the 4 helpers to the 4 directions.

Phase 4: Presentation of the 4 stories from the 4 groups of students that will give their own version of the plot and the adventure that took place at the 4 points of the horizon of the city by the 4 children of the milkman.

Phase 5: Dialogue and educational process of the mathematics class with questions and answers from all.

I.e. if in the shop there were 40 cases with 10 bottles of milk in each one. And the milkman gave each of his children 8 cases to distribute:

1. How any bottles did each child take? (80)

2. How many bottles did all the children together, take? (360)

3. How many cases were left in the shop? (8)

4. How many bottles stayed in the shop? (80)

The questions can vary in numerous ways, can be many easier or more difficult according to the level of the classroom.

IV.4.3 *Narration and creative use of traditional fairy tales, coming from the homelands of the students in multicultural schools*

Phase 1: Collection of stories

The teacher asks from the children to bring in writing, a story they know from their country. To ask from their parents or grandparents to tell them a story, to write and bring to class. So, the class acquires and collects a small treasure, a collection of stories to be used in various ways (educational, creative, artistic and from which many activities can be created: theatre games, aesthetics, short drama sketches and performances).

Phase 2   : Narration by each student, of the story they brought from home to their other classmates

        . Enhancement of the activity with questions from all to the young narrator - dialogue.

        . The narration can evolve into a drawing activity with images deriving from the story we all heard. Furthermore, an exhibition of all the works created, in class or in the school.

        C. Narrating again the story collectively, where the children narrate part or whole of the story, alone or in groups.

Benefit 1

a. The teacher can directly take advantage and make a language class with the students, focusing on certain words, writing them on the blackboard and inviting the students to find explanation and accordance of these words to their own language.

b. Analysis of grammar and syntactic characteristics of their

language with the language of the hosting country. I.e. the adjective is placed behind the noun or does precedes it?

c. Etymologically or word history: Is there any common characteristics in the sound and the musicality of their words with ours. The similarities are amazing if we manage to escape the surface of things. Let's take as an example the names of the countries. Spain, Espana as it is called, is pronounced as such because it has (or had in the past) many forests and the myth says one was the home of God Panas. So we go to (Es in Greek mean to) Pana, Es-Pana. Germany is called Deutschland. The first part is Deus (God) and the second Land that means Earth (las=stone-earth). The Asian continent took its name from the brother of Ecuba Asio, who was killed by Aias the Telamonius during the Trojan war.

Benefit 2

The stories of the students can become – with the according process - a basis for lessons such as geography history, environment, civic education or religion.

Benefit 3

Movement and improvisation inside the classroom. A story many times involves a voyage from one country to another and can be very easily develop in an improvisation voyage from one corner of the classroom to the other, travelling over mountains (of desks) tunnels (under the desks) and other creative obstacles such as chairs or backpacks.

Benefit 4

Artistic activities. A story or many together can end up and create a text or a scenario for a performance for all the class that can be presented to the other classes or the whole school or an event that will include students, teachers and parents.

IV.4.4 The puzzle of the lesson

A reconstruction activity can take place in the frame of the lesson. If the lesson and the topic is convenient the teacher can divide it into sections, and each group of students can receive one section. After they have been read as a group and collected in again, the students have to retell their sections from memory and form new groups later on. The aim of the activity is to recreate the story, find the right order of sections and compare the results with the original story.

IV.4.5 Strips with sentences

If the lesson is the language, a discussion of the pictures before reading the folktale also helps to introduce the language needed for the story. By preparing strips with sentences that summarize the tale, the students have to put them in the correct order, while the teacher recounts it orally or reads it out aloud. On the other hand, the students can create a story from the strips (ambiguous strip story), then share their versions with the class and compare it to the original story. In case of multicultural classes, this exercise can be made by asking the students to name the strips in their languages. This increases the multicultural understanding in the classroom.
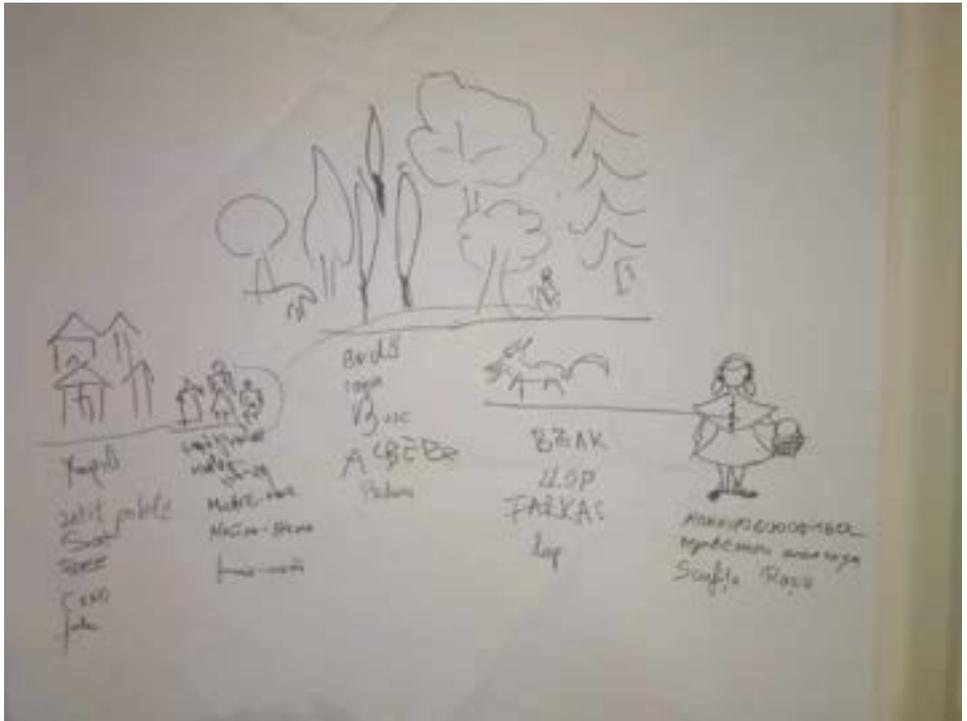
IV.4.6 Pictures tell a story

Another language learning approach is the discussion of story pictures. To do this the teacher can gather appropriate pictures from various sources and make the illustrated folktale of the lesson. This form is good for lessons like history, art, civilization etc where the teacher can easily find pictures.

The student can participate by telling each other what they think. Depending on the grade, the teacher can also prepare questions link with the pictures, that help formulate an answer. It is also possible to leave out the last few pictures, so that there is more opportunity for creativity.

IV.5 Resources

IV.5.1 Selection of online resources

- Lesson plans and activities for folktales, myths and fairy tales: www.scholastic.com/teachers/unit-plans/teaching-content/myths-folktales-and-fairy-tales/
- Some tips on teaching with stories by Melanie Green: www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/storytelling-in-teaching
- Evidence for the cognitive, social and emotional value of storytelling for children: https://dinamico2.unibg.it/lazzari/doc/EL-lazzari-2016-sito.pdf
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IV.5.2 Selection of books and publications

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