Under Matilda di Canossa’s Shield

After our treasures hunting from Thessaloniki-Greece, during our 2nd Comenius meeting we were challenged to find the heritage of Matilde di Canossa. If you talk about Matilda of Canossa to a person from the area of Reggio Emilia it is like talking about a present-day person, a neighbor and this happens especially if you talk to someone who is lucky enough to live in the hills surrounding Reggio Emilia.

Hills steeped in history are the places where are the remains of Matilda’s castles; old villages, tower-houses and medieval castles constitute the peculiarities of the man-made landscape. Matilda was an intelligent and powerful woman in a man’s world. I’ve never heard about her before, but now I realize she is so important for women’s history as Jeanne D’Arc.

But who is Matilda? At this question, our guide from the Canossa Castle replied to me: “She is my love. All my life I’ve been talking about her. I’ve dedicated my life to her. And I have no regrets.” Hearing him you could believe she is still alive. But she is alive in the hearts of Reggio Emilia’s people.

Matilda’s spirit was our host during our visit to Italy.

Grazzie!
Camelia Kollos – Romania

Totemic “thoughts”

It is a common human reaction to “totemize” events of our lives. For me the totems of our second Comenius mobility were two. Matilda and a song. Matilda’s story and legend, because they were both present there, is by far the answer to the question “What Italian story did you hear at Reggio Emilia?” Not only due to the historical importance of the material but basically due to the optical enforcement of the narration- the ladies in traditional clothing and the castle itself- Matilda’s story made such an impression to both teachers and students. I also believe that a lady’s story presented to a 70% female audience strengthened this impression even more. From educational prospective I found the visit to Cannosa an excellent paradigm of outdoor learning activity. As it concerns the main theme of the meetings, ballads, the variety of creativity version was fulfilling our basic aim of the program, to meet different aspects and get inspired from them enjoying the fresh air of a beautiful thought. From the happy Romanian cemetery to the detailed analysis of the Italian ballad, from the excellent dramatization of the Polish story to the passionate Spanish singing spirit, each one and all in the same time embedded feelings and ideas to the viewers. The usage of ICT technology was also a key factor in increasing the impact of the material presented.

My second totem though is not presentation originate. It has to do with our last day excursion. From the happy Romanian cemetery to the detailed analysis of the Italian ballad, from the excellent dramatization of the Polish story to the passionate Spanish singing spirit, each one and all in the same time embedded feelings and ideas to the viewers. The usage of ICT technology was also a key factor in increasing the impact of the material presented.

My second totem though is not presentation originate. It has to do with our last day excursion, the selection of which was absolutely perfect. Combined with our icons from Reggio Emilia and Canossa, Sala Tricolore, the cathedral and the street market, Mantova and Palazzo del Te offered us as one characteristic I think- knowledge of all this Italian area.

My second totem is the sound of the song playing in the bus the moment of our arrival at school. The first tears, lots of hugging, immediately aroused from one happy community of young people who had shared one day together. I felt so sad bringing in conscious that it was the last day of Matilda’s meeting as I have named it.

The expectations from the first day of the polish meeting are now higher. The program is in full development.

Zaharias Spanos – Greece
Interview with Sylwia and Justyna who came back from Italy

Interviewer: As we know that you came back from Italy. Why did you go there?
Sylwia i Justyna: Because our class is taking part in the Comenius project. We were chosen by our teachers to go to the next country of our project.

I: How did you get there?
Sij: We got there by bus, by plane, by train, by car. It was a long journey. We really liked flying by plane.

I: Describe the place where you lived.
S: I lived in an old house. It was a big flat. I slept with Francesca in her room. This house’s surroundings were built in an old style.
J: My house was very big. I had my own bedroom. This house was in Monte Cavolo.

I: Did you like it?
Sij: Yes, of course.

I: Describe Italian school and their lessons.
Sij: Their school is really big – bigger than our school. Their lessons were like ours. They have six lessons for six days. There were three schools together: primary school, gymnasium and technical school.

I: What were you doing at school?
Sij: At school we watched presentation about legends and our ballads. We presented a ballad about Mrs Tvardowska by A. Mickiewicz. We watched Power-Point presentations about:
- Mantova;
- Matilde of Canossa;
- Reggio Emilia;
- Tricolour Hall in Reggio Emilia;
We ate at school traditional, Italian cuisine. We took part in their lessons: Information Technology. On Valentine’s Day we walked from class to class and we delivered Valentines Cards.

I: What were you doing in your free time?
Sij: I went to the park with peacocks. I went to the shopping centre in Reggio Emilia. I watched when Francesca was playing the computer.
J: I met with Nicoletta’s friends. I went to play bowling. We had a pyjamas party with people from Comenius group.

I: What did you visit?
Sij: We visited:
- Reggio Emilia – it is city where their school is; Canossa – there are the ruins of the castle; Mantova – it is a big city, there are many museums i.e. Palazzo Ducale; Palazzo Te; Tricolour Hall – it is the Town Council where we can know history of Italian flag;
- National Park;

I: Did you try Italian food?
Sij: We ate lasagna, pasta, piadina, croissant, pizza. We drank special peach juice, different than ours, very tasty.

I: Did you buy anything special there?
Sij: We bought souvenirs for my parents and my friends.

I: What surprised you most in this country?
Sij: People from Italy talk very loud, but for us it sounded like shouting. They have two dinners and they eat cakes, sweets for breakfast. They drive fast and dangerous. The level of English was very low.

I: What are the similarities and differences between Polish and Italian culture?
Sij: There are many similarities between Polish culture and Italian. Nightlife among students isn’t popular. They have got different food than we have. Their families are hot-tempered.

I: What do you think about Italian people?
Sij: The Italians are nice and students look like we do. They are loud, and boys are handsome. They sometime are a bit little crazy.

I: Do you know any words in Italian?
Sij: We can count from one to ten in Italian. Hi is ciao. Stop is basta. Mother is la mamma. Dad is papa. Water is acqua. Milk is latte. Yes is si and no is no. How are you istocoma.

I: What was the weather like?
Sij: In Italy it was sunny but sometimes it was cold. The temperature was about 10 C.

I: Did you like this visit?
Sij: We liked it very much. It was a very nice experience, because we met many new people.

Polish Team
Once upon in Italy

The Romanian students Carina and Andreea, who went in Italy want to share with us the experience they had there and tell us about the different places they visited.

Rep.: Tell us about this project.
C&A: The project’s name is “European journey through legend” and this is a partnership between 6 countries like Romania the meaning coordinate, Greece, Italy Poland, Turkey, and Spain. The project has many purposes: we will talk about legends, myths and stories from Europe, we want to share our tradition and lifestyle with each others . I believe we will improve our English. We will visited different places from our country, but also from the partners countries, too. And that’s for sure: we will make friends for life.

Rep.: What did you do there? What places did you visit?
C&A: In every day we went to school.
In the first day the others countries had the presentation of their ballads.
In the second day we had Valentine’s day and we share the love notes that students write for the girls. After, we went to a place to visit one of the many castles of Matilde di Canossa.

Rep.: Who is Matilde di Canossa?
C&A: Matilde was an educated and a powerful woman. At Canossa the guide of the remains of the castle offered us an outdoor history lesson. We learn a lot about Matilde. She was a princes and after her sister and her brother’s death all the families castles returning to her. She had a husband for politics reasons and she was stayed for a while in foreign countries. She came back together with her husband in Italy where the Pope had a arguing with the king Henry. She manage to make peace between them.

Rep.: What did you do in the others days?
C&A: We went in different places. One day we were at “Sala del Tricolore” where we learned about the Italian tricolor flag. This building is currently the council chamber of the Reggio Emilia. This room in fact, on December 27, 1796, hosted the congress of delegates from Reggio, Modena, Bologna and Ferrara who, after proclaiming the Repubblica Cispadana, adopted on 7th January, 1797 a horizontal tricolor of green, white and red (with red at the top) which is considered the first Italian tricolor. My teacher received a book from one of the town’s authority representant.

Rep.: You said that we were at school in every day. Tell us the differences?
C&A: There the students are few in the class so in this way the teacher could take care of them almost individually. At the Foreign Language they have two teachers. But the rest of the classes are like in my country. Oh, and I must say, they have school classes on Saturday.

Rep.: Did you had free time? What did you did?
C&A: Yes, we had a lot of free time. We went with girls to the Zoo, and after that we went at the restaurant and we eat traditional Italian food called “Piadina”. In the evening we went in another town for Bowling. We had a great time there and a lot of fun. And our hosting families were great.

Rep.: What do you want to tell the others students about this trip?
C&A: This was an unique experience from my entire life. The family was amazing with me and I am so happy that I had this opportunity to get part of this project. I made friends and the country and the people from there is amazing. You should go there to convince yourself.

Rep.: Would you want to go there again?
C&A: As soon as I can. This project is the best thing from my life.

Rep.: Thank you your share your opinion with us.
C&A: It was my pleasure to tell the others what a great opportunity I had, and to tell all the new things I learned.

Romanian Team – Rocomenius

My Life Experience In Reggio Emilia

This has been my first Comenius experience and I should say it’s been a rich and highly positive time from my point of view. We have more things in common than one would think, and you have to travel abroad, share experiences to realize it fully.

I’ve enjoyed Friday’s session, ballads from different countries presented in such a lively way, and then, in the break time we’ve tasted the cakes, pastries families have brought for us. Delicious! On Saturday morning we’ve been to Canossa and have learnt about Mathilda and her time. In the afternoon we’ve visited Parma with a wonderful guide: Luca.

On Sunday I had to come back to Barcelona but I brought with me many experiences to share with my students, eager to take part in it.

Maitetxu Marcellán - Spain
My Italian diary

In February 12th 2009 we went to Italy, by plane. After we landed in the airport in Bologna we expected the Turkish team and we got on bus to reach station where we got on the train to Reggio Emilia. In station in Reggio Emilia I met my host Ida and left to her house to unpack and accommodate in Montecavolo near Reggio Emilia. Then at 4 p.m. we went to Nico, she is a friend of Ida and she had a guest Yustina from Poland. At Nico house came Carina and her host Vanessa and I spent all afternoon at Nico. At 8 p.m. we went home, and I met her family and I went to sleep because I was very tired. The next day we went to school by bus and at school we had a presentation about each country ballads. After we went home by bus and we ate pizza then at 4 p.m. we went to shopping center. The shopping center it’s very cool but I didn’t found something cheap and something to like. Saturday we went at school and we saw a presentation about “Matilda de Canossa”. After the presentation we travel by bus to Canossa, to visit the remains of one of Matilde’s castle. In the afternoon the girls came at Ida’s home and we were playing ping-pong. In the evening we went to Nico home and we had a pajama party.

Sunday we woke up and we went home at Ida. I was spending my day with my friends and their parents. In the afternoon we went to visit Reggio Emilia, we saw the “Piazza San Prospero” and we walked to the streets of the town. In the evening we went to play bowling. This was the first time I played bowling and it’s was cool. Monday we went to school and we saw a presentation of “Mantova”. After this presentation we went to “Sala tricolore”. This building is like a government house only a little smaller. After this we went back to school. In the afternoon we went to shopping and in the evening Nico, Yustina, Vanessa and Carina come at Ida’s home and we saw a movie.

Tuesday I went to school and we take the bus and were visited another town, Mantova. In Mantova we were at Palazzo Ducale and Palazzo Te and after we were went to Fun Park. The park were amazing, I liked very much. On the coming back trip, my teacher and the Greek teacher organized a song competition: Comevision, it’s was very nice! All teams had to sing a song, and the kids had small bills for voting the best team. The best team was the Polish team.

Wednesday it’s was my last day in Italy. In the morning I went with Ida to school and I attended to her classes: at geography, the teacher was very friendly and funny and we studied Romania; at the history, the teacher was serious and she don’t talk with us; Carina and I were talked about Romania at German class and in the sport class we stood and talked with the girls. In the afternoon I was with Ida’s family for a visit to Ida’s cousin. Late in the night I made my baggage and I went to sleep.

This one week was a big experience for me because I didn’t traveled in another country before, this was my first time abroad. I’ve enjoyed very much this week because everything was amazing. Everyone was so kind, the places were wonderful and the Italian food was good. And what is the most important result from this experience? I made new friends.

Thank you, Comenius!

Andreea Szabo - Romania

My Italian adventures

I had a week like a dream. I was very excited. After we arrived at the train station and we met the families who were waiting for us. I met my host family and their daughter and loved all of them. I had brought them some gifts from Turkey and they really liked gifts I gave. I cooked them special Turkish coffee and her father liked it very much. I explained them how to cook it. That night I slept with my partner.

Next day I got up at five o’clock in the morning. We had a nice breakfast. After breakfast we went to school together. Then, she introduced me to her friends. All of Comenius people were there. We ate the lunch in McDonald’s. After that we went shopping with her mother. And in the evening I spoke to my family on internet. At dinner we ate pasta, we listened to Italian music together and then we slept. The next day we met at the school than we went to Venice. It was so crowed because of the carnival. Buildings and architecture was great. At the lunch we ate famous pizza of Italy. Until evening we were in there and we took a lot of photos. Next day we went to Canossa. They told about its history. Learning that Matilda of Canossa was once as powerful as men was really interesting. We bought books describing Canossa. The next morning we went to Awa’s classes. We had a stroll around school. I talked about Turkey to her. Then we went to home together. She wore my clothes and I wore hers. Her mother darned my hair and that was nice.

We also went to Mantova. I took every place’s photos. And in our last day in the bus everyone said goodbye to each other. It was the only sad part of our journey. My family took me from school in the evening. That night was my last night at home with Awa. We took photos with Awa and her family. We wrote letters to each other. I have really loved her. I prepared my bag and we slept. In the morning I left home. Because we were returning to Turkey, I said goodbye to them and we hugged and kissed each other. After we had lunch with Awa she said: “I will miss you so much” and we couldn’t resist crying. Land our mobility finished. I want to thank to my teachers and everyone in the Project for his big opportunity.

Tansu Day - Turkey
I went to Italy thanks to this Project and stayed in an Italian family’s house for a week. I learned their lifestyle while I was living with them. They were so kind to me. They taught me a lot of things about Italian people and their way of living. It was a fabulous experience for me.

In Italy we visited lots of places. We went to Mantova and Venice. In Venice, I had a great time. It was like a dream that I would never want to wake up. There was a Carnival in there. Everybody was wearing different clothes. We made our hairs green.

There were lots of people in Venice and by dying our hair green we managed not to lose anybody in our group. We also bought masks. It was a crazy day for me. Then we went to an Italian restaurant and we tasted real Italian pasta. I ate the most delicious pasta in my life there. In my opinion Italian pasta is much more delicious than pizza...

In Mantova I had a great time too...We visited huge buildings. I learned that Mantova is famous for art. The buildings we visited were fantastic and the frescos on the buildings’ walls were awesome. While I was looking at them I was really fascinated by their beauty. We also took crazy photos in Mantova. I had so much fun. After visiting the palace we went to an amusement park. I was with Romanian and Greek students and we did crazy things together. We played games; we laughed all the day and we saw that no matter where we are from, we have a lot of things in common.

During our staying we also visited a castle in Canossa and learned about a powerful woman named “Matilda”. She was the most prominent figure of her time and Italian people still remember her. She was one of the first women in history who could be equal of men.

An Italian man showed us some pictures and told her story and he said she was respected by all the people including Pope and the Emperor. Before that day I knew nothing about these things but now I know that women can be as powerful as men. Matilda achieved this even in that time. I Canossa we also tasted some Italian food. Italian bread was really tasty. I drank a cup of tea with lemon. It tasted like peppermint. I liked it so much that I couldn’t stand having another one. An Italian lady told me that it’s their special tea. We also took lots of photos there. The castle was beautiful. Although the weather was a bit cold we had so much fun there.

Like every beautiful thing has an end this experience also came to end. It was time to go back to Turkey. It was really hard to leave my friends even if I missed my family and my friends in Turkey much. We only had a short time together but it was enough for me to feel them like my sisters and brothers. When it was time to say good bye, we started to cry. I hate saying good bye...But we have really strong friendship now and I’m sure we’ll see each other in future.

I believe that I’m so lucky. It was a great chance for learning new cultures, making new friends. Now I know a lot of things about other countries and this opportunity comes once in a lifetime. So, I wanna say “Thank you” to everyone in Comenius. It was the best week in my life. I will never forget that experience.

Elif Damla Yildiz - Turkey

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Things That Surprised Me

From my trip to Italy I expected to meet people from other countries and to learn about their languages, their cultures and their everyday lives.

Experiencing the Italian everyday life I saw many things that surprised me. We are two nations near geographically, but at the same time we differ a lot as far as our everyday lives are concerned. First of all, the two educational systems are totally different. Through the Greek educational system it is hard to enter university but it is not that hard then to attain the university degree. On the other hand, through the Italian educational system one can easily enter university, but it is very hard to finish it. Another difference between the Greeks and the Italians is that the Italians go back home at around 8’o clock in the afternoon to relax, whereas the Greeks return home many hours later. Finally, there is a remarkable difference in the price of the most necessary goods: Contrary to what happens in Italy, in Greece the prices for clothing are higher than the prices for food.

I would like to say thanks to my teachers for giving me the chance to go to Italy and I hope that I will have such opportunities in the future too.

Anastasios Kostas - Greece
Impressions from the Italian school and the educational system

Greece and Italy are both European countries but although they are near to each other, they have a lot of differences in their educational system, from the school accommodation. So many things impressed me during my stay to Italy.

To begin with, the first impression I had when I first saw the school building in Reggio Emilia was that it was very big, concerning the school in my country. Also the sport accommodation was incredible, since it has 2 football and one basketball pitches. Something else I noticed was that there were many special laboratories for instance, for chemistry, computers and physics. Another thing was that students there have more freedom and that can be seen from the fact that they are allowed to have wallpaper in the walls of their favorite singer actor or TV show.

Moreover, in the Italian education system, there is one more year than in Greece. Also, we were informed that it is quite easy to get in the university but only few finish it. In Greece, things are quite different, because getting into university is as hard as finishing it. One thing that really impressed me was that all students how the opportunity to choose a lesson they want to attend, far instance informatics, cooking, arts etc. That action is very important for the students because they gain practical skills for the lessons and exercise their interests.

To sum up, my journey to Italy was very interesting and helpful for me to understand the differences in the countries educational system, which otherwise I wouldn’t know. It was amazing to have the chance to see and know the others country.

Georgia Klifopoulou - Greece

Expectation

Generally the expectations of the Comenius program are many. Most of them, if not all, were successfully fulfilled during our visit to Italy. One of the most important expectations was to learn more information about Italy and especially Reggio Emilia, our hostess city. Even more important, we got the chance to see and know their daily program and habits, like what students are doing after they finish school, what hobbies or special activities they have. Overall, we had a great opportunity to learn and understand the culture of the people from Reggio Emilia and generally from Italy.

Thanks to the previous consideration of the Italian teachers, we visited many places with historical and mythological interest, that showed us the culture and the history of that specific area. This was very efficient because not only we had the theoretical and informational part (via the electronic presentations) but we also had the chance to visit these places and see with our own eyes the things that we learned.

One element that is very important for the success of the program is cooperation between the students and team spirit. Actually, it was noticed that team spirit wasn’t encouraged enough, so it was more difficult for the children to get to know and communicate with each other, so students didn’t have much time with the other Comenius partners. Last but not least, another goal that was succeeded was that we learned more Italian words since we were hosted in an Italian family, we heard natural daily dialogs and we learned more about their language (pronunciation, some words).

To sum up, our expectations were almost fulfilled and we had the chance to see and contrast our country with Italy in many aspects of life and understand the differences. Overall, we had a great time in Italy and we hope that the program will keep up like this way.

Georgia Klifopoulou - Greece

6 stories - one journey

Although we felt mesmerized by Italy, with its beauty, wonderful culture and history and by meeting new friends, we couldn’t forget the purpose of our journey. The presentation of the ballads chosen by each country was the highlight moment of our project. I had the opportunity to see a wonderful display of culture and folkloric tradition of each country presented in a unique and attractive manner. For example one of the pedagogical approaches used by most of the countries was the power point presentation. I have personally found them very informative and helpful in offering us visual support for certain moments in the presentations. Singing was highly entertaining and I must confess that my heart shivered at the hearing of the melodious voices of the Spanish and Greek children and teachers. The other teams were also invited to share these moments by singing along with them.

The surprise element was also a very interesting approach which was used by the Greeks in their presentation. The scattered “theme notes” were used as a starting point for the discussion of several concepts present in Saint George’s ballad. (E.g. the significance of no. 3, eating people, greetings etc.). Besides being very interactive and making all the countries participants to their presentation, this method helped us discover similarities between the Greek culture and the cultures of the other countries. Drama played an important role in the presentations, too. It not only helped the audience perceive the story and the concepts better, but it also had an entertaining role in making all the participants loosen-up. It also offered a different point of view by adapting the story to a modern approach which made it easier for the audience to understand the key elements from each presentation. We can’t forget the charismatic Italians who delighted us with their energetic performance nor the wonderful costumes and acting of the Polish and Romanian girls.

Having the opportunity to discover elements from the cultures of each country I realized that some of the stories seem very familiar not only for me but for the participants of other countries, too. Thus the intercultural element makes us realize that we are all part of the European Culture and all the countries derive from it.

Ioana Nicodin – Romania
Drama

Drama exercises became popular in Polish curriculum about 8 years ago. I remember the time, when almost all students wrote their diplomas at university either about games used to teach kids, or drama activities used among youngsters and teenagers. I thought that such topics were popular because students were willing to act and to do it.

But when I started my teaching career, it turned out that students considered it to be childish to act. So I quickly changed my mind and tried not to make them do such activities. From time to time they accepted to do role play, but nothing else. I realized that they were too young to understand that it was only a play. But I didn’t want to discourage them and make them ashamed, so I gave up this idea.

However, doing drama exercises in Polish was not a problem for kids. They very often act at school academies and they are pretty good. So maybe it’s caused by the fear of talking in English in front of the audience. They don’t feel confident enough to do it.

It was in January this year, when two of my students were brave enough to get prepared to act in Italy during our visit within the Comenius project. The task was really difficult from the very beginning. First, the whole class decided on a ballad. To remind you, or let you know what it was – “Mrs Twaradowska” by Adam Mickiewicz. Then we had to translate it into English. It was a good experience to try translating skills, as most students hadn’t done it before. I must admit they did it excellent, paying attention to the rhythm and rhymes.

Then we chose the melodies which could accompany the lyrics. It was composed and mixed by our music teacher. (Thanks a lot, Peter. Good job!). Then it was the time to decide on costumes of a devil and a noble. And the decorations, just a few posters to make a better visual impression.

And the most important part, record the voice of the narrator and girls had to learn the lyrics by heart. But they had to be aware of the voice of a narrator. And they managed to do it perfectly. I am proud of their job, because I was only helping them and it was their work.

Then the time of performing came – in Italy. They were afraid and scared in order not to forget the text and to do it well. But they did it.

They had a chance to perform it again at school for all the students. I must admit they seemed to be even more afraid than in Italy before the performance. But they succeeded.

They were admired by the teachers and students, who were impressed they could remember such a long text and to have such a fun. I hope that it helped them and encouraged them to act in front of the audience and use English. And if not soon, so maybe in a few weeks or months they will be confident to stand on a stage and quote something like ... “To be or not to be”.)

Magdalena Pakulska –Poland

Using music and song into teaching

During our staying in Italy, we had a chance to experience a lot of things in the context of educational methods. One of the most memorable of them was our song contest we held during our bus trip to Mantova. Every group performed a song and then the best one was chosen by the students. It was really fun for both the students and the teachers. We saw there that the songs are very good tools to motivate students, it also worked as a break for the routine. Because the students who were sitting and getting bored started to be more interested in the things around them after the music was included. We all know that music is special. Virtually every person every day experiences music. Every person has the capacity to enjoy and make music. Every culture in the world includes music in some form: for ceremony, relaxation, communication, celebration and enjoyment. Imagine the absence of music in our lives. The world would be inconceivable without it. So, why don’t we use music and songs in our classes?

An education in music enriches students’ lives by providing joy and pleasure, a transforming human experience, a unique way of knowing, access to our musical cultural heritage, an enhancement to quality of life, an opportunity to develop potential. Teaching English to Young Learners has become a trend nowadays. In teaching young learners is not like teaching adults, children have their own way of learning. Since children like to play and have fun, the learning and teaching process should be suited with the nature of the children themselves. One of the forms of fun activities for children is through music, and songs are the common form of music that children know. Through songs, children could enhance their language skills, such as: listening (to the song) - Following the song to determine words, reading - (following the lyrics to determine the words), writing (filling in the blanks) – Reading the lyrics, speaking (singing the song).

Songs provide a valuable source of authentic language and there are hundreds of ways to exploit them in the classroom. The internet has made it very easy to find the lyrics of songs. A search on Google with the name of the band, the song title and the word ‘lyrics’ will bring up a selection of sites you can use. Once you have copied and pasted the lyrics into a word document it is quick and easy to make an effective worksheet. Music can play a really important part in the language classroom. It can change the atmosphere in the room within seconds. Songs sung in English are listened to around the world and students can often feel real progress in their level of English when they can begin to sing along to the chorus or even just to be able to separate what at first seemed to be a constant stream of words! I am going to split this article into using music and using songs. Before bringing music into the class, it may be worthwhile to do a music survey or questionnaire to find out what the students enjoy listening to. As much as possible try to use music they will like. I have found that the students’ motivation levels are the determining factor in whether or not a song will work with them. If the students really like the song and the artist they become determined to understand. If you choose the task carefully even lower levels will be able to get something out of working with tricky songs where the language is way above their level of English.

Cemil GÜLBAHAR - Turkey
General view regarding our trip to Italy

**EXPECTATION**

- My expectations: to make new friends, to have fun and visit history monuments.
- I was expecting people from there to think different then we are doing, and to learn new things.
- To learn about Italian way of life and their culture, meet new people and see different places, etc.  
- Meeting new people and learning new culture
- To learn English, meet people, know their culture and food.
- Have fun and meet new people!!!
- I think I will meet a lot of new people.
- I expect to have a very great time, to meet people from other countries and to learn a little bit of each country and their legends.
- I expect to meet some new European people and get to know their culture. Have a lot of fun and enjoy it.
- Visit nice places in Reggio or in other towns.

**FEARS**

- I was afraid because I didn't know how I'll get on with the family I will stay at.
- I though that the children will not be sociable and I though that I will have accommodation problems and I though I will have fear of high, but was better that I was expecting.
- To loose my way in the city 😊
- What their living conditions, communication problems and if we have free time.
- Not to fail our expectations.
- If I don't like the family or the house... that can be a big problem...
- I’m scared of which kind of family will be the mine. I hope they’ll be nice people.
- I’m scared about my Italian family, Will they be good or bad?
- I have no fear.

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**MY PARTNER’S TOWN**

- Rubiera
  - Rubiera’s inhabitants call Reggio people “squareheaded”. It was because of the prisoners who were hit with shovels and their heads took square form.

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**GENERAL VIEW**

- Luciano Pavarotti - he is very famous because he has an amazing voice.
- Andrea Bocelli - he is famous too because of his voice.
- Giovanni Trapattoni - he was born in 1939. He is a famous footballer in Italy.
- Gentile Bellini - she was born in 1429. She is a famous painter in Italy.
- Monica Belluci - she is the one of the most famous models in the world.
- Laura Pausini - she is a famous singer in Italy and in the world.
- Giacomo Benevelli (born in 1925) is an Italian sculptor. He was born in Reggio Emilia
- Oreste Carpi (3 November 1921–11 March 2008)

- Durante degli Alighieri (known as Dante) was a poet from Florence, Italy.
- Marco Polo was a trader and explorer; he was one of the first to travel to China and visit Kublai Khan (grandson of Genghis Khan).
- Stefano Baldini is an Italian athlete and the 2004 Olympic and current European champion in the marathon.
- Fabio Cannavaro - he’s a football player who plays in Real Madrid. In 2006 he has won the “Golden Ball”.
- I don’t know.

**FAMOUS PEOPLE FROM ITALY**

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- Marco Polo was a trader and explorer; he was one of the first to travel to China and visit Kublai Khan (grandson of Genghis Khan).
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- Fabio Cannavaro - he’s a football player who plays in Real Madrid. In 2006 he has won the “Golden Ball”.
- I don’t know.

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**Fragments from students’ workbooks.**
Something I didn’t like at all 😞

• We spent too much time on the way coming in Italy.
• I was so tired, that’s all.
• My partner’s friends were rude.
• I didn’t like that the other countries were in Reggio since today and tomorrow we will miss their presentations...
• I didn’t like the train. It was dirty and it smelled strange...
• We had to wake up very, very early!!! At 5 a.m.!
• I was very tired because the trip was very long and a little bit hard.
• I didn’t have enough time to talk with students.
• The houses where we were staying were far from each other and it was difficult to meet altogether.
• Waking up at 6 in the morning.
• The trip from house to school. It takes an hour and it’s very tiring. My partner must do it twice everyday.
• I was shy to sing with all the Comenius people looking at us.
• It was very cold.
• I went to sleep late.
• The Italians didn’t go with us and they are distant with some of the “Comenius kids”.
• Today it was my birthday and I haven’t been so much time with my friends.
• It’s Saturday and I was in the school… it’s a new and hard thing for me!
• Time passed quickly.
• We were tired because of the trip and because we walked a lot in Bologna.
• That the train we took to went back to Reggio was full!
• The time restrictions.
• The distance between houses of children-school.
• No program/accompanying from hosts for the afternoon.
• I was bored in the palaces, because we visited two or three of them, which were almost the same instead of something else.
• The museum was really boring.
• We visited little Reggio Emilia.
• I didn’t like that our partners were not accompanying us all day through.
• I had to wait for more than 3 hours doing nothing! Some Italians had special lessons (they played computer games in school) and they made us wait for them.
• We’ve been a lot of time in the bus, although we spent some fantastic moments there.
• That not everyone did what some others asked.
• It was a boring day. I didn’t like the pizza that we ate in Mantova.
• I would have liked spending more time inside the “Planet”, the musical pub.
• We only have one day left before returning to our country. I’m sad.
• The sense of going back home.
• I cried a lot, I will miss Comenius people 😞
• This week was too short. I hate saying good bye … 😞
• I couldn’t be happy today, I will miss my friends...
• That as soon as we started to have a stronger relationship with each other, we had to separate.
• We had to come back home. I’ll really miss these days. It has been a fantastic trip; I’m not going to forget it… never!!.
• I don’t want to return back to my home, here we were very happy!
• Going Back home … Tomorrow we have classes 😞

Something I really enjoyed 😊

• I like that the family were very friendly.
• I enjoyed to know my partner.
• It was my first day in Italy and I love that country 😊
• My room and my partner.
• I met new people
• I really enjoyed all the adventure generally because it made our bonds tighter.
• I loved the trip by plane.
• I enjoyed visiting the city very much.
• During the trip I laughed a lot with my new friends.
• We met the students from other countries and that was fantastic!!!
• I liked my partner’s school and friends
• I love making new friends and today was the best day of making friends
• I ate some Italian food
• When students presented their legends.
• The presentations of all the countries were very good and funny
• Meeting lots of people from different countries.
• The castle, Matilda di Canossa’s Story
• My partner and I listened to music together at the train.
• I had so much fun that day, it was the best day of my journey...
• Pajama-party
• The first view of the city
• Taking photos in Venice with people in beautiful fancy-dresses
• Finally the Greeks are here! They are really funny.
• In Canossa we met the Greek teacher. He was absolutely crazy. We laughed all together and we took some beautiful pictures.
• That I took the second place at the bowling.
• I liked Venezia very much. I will never forget this day.
• There was a Carnival there… It was just amazing...
• Bowling.
• Peacocks walked close to people
• I really enjoyed the trip because we were altogether for the whole day!
• The city of Bologna is very nice!
• Waking up at 10:30.
• The history of Reggio Emilia’s Tricolore.
• It was a sunny day 😊
• I liked when we ran to the bus stop
• I really enjoyed when we went to the municipality’s office and we learned more about the history of the town.
• We asked questions to an “important” person of the town council.
• We found a pub in Reggio where we could listen to very good music
• We went to an amusement park, we did something crazy
• We got to know people from the Comenius group better
• We won the song contest “Comevision” and we danced in the coach.
• I liked, that the delegations from all countries were altogether for a lot of hours during the trip to Mantova.
• Everywhere we went, everywhere we laughed.

Fragments from students’ workbooks.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Romanian</th>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Polish</th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Da</td>
<td>Evet</td>
<td>Si</td>
<td>Tak</td>
<td>Ναι</td>
<td>Sí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Nu</td>
<td>Hayır</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Nie</td>
<td>‘Όχι</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please</td>
<td>Te rog</td>
<td>Lütfen</td>
<td>Te prego</td>
<td>Proszę</td>
<td>Παρακαλώ</td>
<td>Porfabor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td>Muștumesc</td>
<td>Teşekkür ederim</td>
<td>Grazie</td>
<td>Dziękuję</td>
<td>Ευχαριστώ</td>
<td>Gracias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good morning</td>
<td>Buna dimineața</td>
<td>Günaydın</td>
<td>Buon giorno</td>
<td>Dzień dobry</td>
<td>Καλημέρα</td>
<td>Buenos días</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hello/hi</td>
<td>Bună/ Ceau</td>
<td>Merhaba</td>
<td>Ciao</td>
<td>Siema</td>
<td>Γεια σας/ Γεια</td>
<td>Hola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodbye</td>
<td>La revedere</td>
<td>Güle güle</td>
<td>Ciao</td>
<td>Do widzenia</td>
<td>Αντίο</td>
<td>Adios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are you?</td>
<td>Ce faci?</td>
<td>Nasilsın</td>
<td>Come estai?</td>
<td>Jak się masz?</td>
<td>Πως είσαι;</td>
<td>¿como estás?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine</td>
<td>Bine</td>
<td>Iyiym</td>
<td>Bene</td>
<td>Dobrze</td>
<td>Καλά</td>
<td>Bien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungry</td>
<td>Foame</td>
<td>Aç</td>
<td>Fame</td>
<td>Głodnny</td>
<td>Πεινάω</td>
<td>Hambre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirsty</td>
<td>Sete</td>
<td>Susamış</td>
<td>Sete</td>
<td>Spragniony</td>
<td>Διψάω</td>
<td>Sediento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Prieten</td>
<td>Arkadaş</td>
<td>Amigo</td>
<td>Przyjaciel</td>
<td>Φίλος</td>
<td>Amigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Mamă</td>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Madre</td>
<td>Mama</td>
<td>Μαμά</td>
<td>Madre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Tată</td>
<td>Baba</td>
<td>Padre</td>
<td>Tata</td>
<td>Μπαμπάς</td>
<td>Padre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>Frate</td>
<td>Erkek kardeş</td>
<td>Fratella</td>
<td>Brat</td>
<td>Αδερφός</td>
<td>Hermano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>Soră</td>
<td>Kız kardeş</td>
<td>Sorella</td>
<td>Siostra</td>
<td>Αδερφή</td>
<td>Hermana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>Pâine</td>
<td>Ekmek</td>
<td>Pane</td>
<td>Chleb</td>
<td>Ψωμί</td>
<td>Pan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Apă</td>
<td>Su</td>
<td>Acqua</td>
<td>Woda</td>
<td>Νερό</td>
<td>Agua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>Lapte</td>
<td>Süt</td>
<td>latte</td>
<td>Mleko</td>
<td>Γάλα</td>
<td>Leche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Bine</td>
<td>Iyi</td>
<td>bene</td>
<td>Dobrze</td>
<td>Καλά</td>
<td>Bien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>Rău</td>
<td>Kötü</td>
<td>Mala</td>
<td>źle</td>
<td>Κακά</td>
<td>Mal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One, two</td>
<td>Unu, doi</td>
<td>Bir iki</td>
<td>Uno duo</td>
<td>Jeden, dwa,</td>
<td>Ένα Δύο</td>
<td>Uno, dos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three, four</td>
<td>Trei, patru</td>
<td>üç, dört</td>
<td>tre quatro</td>
<td>trzy</td>
<td>Τρία Τέσσερα</td>
<td>Tres, cuatro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five, six, seven</td>
<td>Cinci, şase, şapte</td>
<td>Beş, altı, yedi</td>
<td>Cinque, sei, sette</td>
<td>Cztery, pięć, sześć,</td>
<td>Πέντε, Έξι, Επτά</td>
<td>Cinco, seis, siete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight, nine, ten</td>
<td>Opt, nouă, zece</td>
<td>Sekiz, dokuz, on</td>
<td>Otto, novo, dieci</td>
<td>Siedem, osiem,</td>
<td>Οκτώ, Εννια, Δέκα</td>
<td>Ocho, nueve, dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good night</td>
<td>Noapte bună</td>
<td>Bouna notte</td>
<td>Dziewięć, dziesięć</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intro
It's been a big dream of mine to visit Venice during the Carnival. Buy a mask, put on a long cloak and wander through the early morning mists of the lagoon in late February was my fantasy. Also take lots of photos for disbelieving relatives back home. This is the best way to celebrate the carnival with the best backdrop in the world!

Venice is a city of fairytales at anytime, but nothing compares to it during the fabulous celebration known as Carnival! It is a city steeped in traditions, a city with a rich history with past intrigues, power and pageantry. I really thought about how much this place is like a movie set. Everything just seemed to be unreal, from the narrow streets to the saturated colors of the buildings.

During Carnival the streets are alive, people wearing masks are all over. You could meet harlequins or other masks typical for the "commedia dell’arte" or ladies of the 18th century, or Don Giovanni or the famous Casanova and his beloved Camilla.

The City of Venice is a masterpiece born from water. Venice looks like a complicate maze with narrow and gloomy streets, small gardens, colorful boutiques, dark and twisting canals and miniature bridges. Venice could be visit only by feet or by gondola. All those streets are going to the city center, in San Marco Square, the heart of the town, one of the most beautiful place from entire world. In this charming "plaza". Who hasn’t heard about the romantic “Piazza of San Marco”, “Ponte dei Sospiri” - the bridge of sighs and the Doge’s Palace?

"Il Carnevale"
Where does Carnival come from? And what is it, really? First mention to origin of Venetian Carnival start in the 12th century. The Carnival finished sometimes around 18th century, when Venice has been merged into Austria, and lot of traditions were forbidden. Starting from 1979 the authorities of Venice decided to recreate this lost tradition.

Carnival, or Carnevale, has been celebrated for centuries throughout Italy. The story said the word Carnevale may well derive from "carnale" a.k.a "farewell to meat". There are many stories regarding wearing masks in Venice. Wearing masks has always been more than just simple fun for the Venetians; it’s still a strongly felt tradition with deep cultural roots. Venetians were famous for being libertines and for transgression - they didn’t just use masks during the official Carnival. Putting on a mask in Venice meant taking forbidden liberties: you could gamble without being caught, to hide from gambling creditors, to take risks over love or business etc.

The most traditional type of costumes worn during the long history of Carnival included long-nosed masks in black or white, a black cloak or white veil, and a tricorn hat. The “bauta” is typical mask in Venice during XVIII century. This mask could be wore both during carnival and normal life as common accessory. For many historiographers, Word bauta come from children claims “bau-bau” and for other historians, from “bava” the name of cone of lace in Venetian dialect. There are many kind of typical masks. One is “serveta muta” (the silent maid) and this is a little black mask for women with a button to be kept only with the mouth. Another one has a long nose contained filter prepared with aromatic plants to send away the awful smell of the water from the channels during historical times. Other traditional masks were some masks which were wear by man in the purpose to be disguise with female clothes.

Strange old times, adventurous lifestyle!

One day in Venice
In our February trip to Italy, some of us had the opportunity to spend a day in Venice during Carnevale. Animation, popular music and dancing bring together locals and visitors.

Venice’s Carnival took place in this year in February 14th - 24th. The ceremony for opening the Carnival started with an event called “The Angel’s flight. Another main event is the parade of costumes from Piazza San Marco. The Carnival ends with a impressive fireworks games which is also held in the San Marco Square. We were there in February 15th, the first Carnival’s Sunday.

Looking at our pictures everybody could understand the way we felt there. Trying to get around Venice during the Carnival was a real challenge. It seems all the people from the earth were there!

Being there, was an extraordinary experience: for a couple of hours the reality of every day life was replaced with a fun and festive atmosphere. Venice is a magic place, is the perfect place where you could be lost on time and history, through velvet’s masks, black mantles and tricorn hats. You could spend a lifetime in Venice, and still not know it.

And, I think I'm one of those people, who have fallen in love with a city…Venice.

Camelia Kallos - Romania
Crossword

Using the definitions from the bottom of the page, please complete the crossword puzzle below:

Across:
1. Here were held our second meeting
3. The hero of Polish ballad presented in Italy
4. The most powerful women from Italian history
7. Our hosting town
9. The name of the Spanish ballad
10. Italian dish (Image 2)
11. Statue from the main square from Reggio-Emilia (Image 1)
13. The working language from our partnership
15. The Saint from the Greek’s ballad presented in Italy
18. The name of Romanian little charmed ewe

Down:
2. The main working theme of our meeting
5. Our European program
6. Italian friend :) 
8. The partnership’s motto (see page 1)
12. River in Emilia Romagna
13. Italian dish (Image 3)
14. The place of the first castle visited in Italy
16. Where the Rigoletto’s house is.
17. Italian flag
19. The place where Romanian Merry Cemetery is

Romanian Team – Rocomenius