TASK 4: IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

I had never been in such challenging classes, and when my tutor told me that my implementation was going to be in third grade, lots of feeling came to my mind. In my last Practicum (IV) I attended many staff meetings, and in all of them, these classes were the focus, and not in a positive way. Last term, the teachers from this class had to cancel a project they started, due to constant misbehaviours.However, this was not going to stop me, and I decided to recharge the battery and deal with any situation that may occur.

Before implementing my Teaching Unit, I met with my tutor and both of us started thinking about what could I do. It had to be something extremely motivated for them, and that wasn't going to be easy.

So, after giving a lot of thinking, I proposed her something about Sant Jordi, as the implementation was taking place in April. My tutor liked the idea, and she suggested me to think of involving another school in the project, just like I did in my last Practicum (which was successful!).

Definitely, it was a nice idea, so I started talking with one of my University classmates, and this is how all began… We were going to do a Poetry Contest between two schools (Sant Cugat and Mollet del Vallès) and students would create their own stories (in groups). Then, they would vote for the best stories of the other school!

SESSION 1:

I was quite nervous. However, I decided to leave my fears behind and show my passion and my energy to the students.

I started by introducing myself, although they already knew me, and telling them that I was sure we could do a good job together, so as to get a positive atmosphere among us. They were really happy to hear that.

So, I started telling them if they would like to do a project. Luckily, they nodded their heads so that I could feel their were willing to work and learn! I didn't mention what the project was going to be about, yet, I gave them different clues so they had to guess it (as you can see in the video). They really liked the idea of guessing, and I could make the "challenging students" participate in the activity, although at some point it was a bit difficult for me to keep them calmed. Later on, I projected the video about my partner from the other school and I, and they were amazed

In general, I felt happy with the session and the behaviour was generally controlled. We could fulfill a visual mural so that they understood what was going on in the project.

From my observations, I could also see that they are not used to working in groups. Some kids were frustrated as they were used to work individually and without helping each other.

Definitely, that was something they were going to deal with along the project!

Moreover, I also saw their faces when I asked them to record themselves to send the video to the other school. They were surprised, as they didn't believe they were going to work together!

Here, you can find the final result of the video.

Finally, I introduced them the so-called "behaviour passport". Each day, they would get a stamp according to their behaviour, and they would have to sign it, showing their approval. This would provide them with autonomy and self-awareness of their actions, and at the end of the Teaching Unit, their parents would need to sign it. Moreover, it is also an evidence of assessment (see the evaluation grid here)

Unluckily, not all the students got a happy face, and that provoked a disruptive behaviour with one student. At the end of the class, I talked to him and made him realised that these behaviour wasn't the way to get a happy face. However, he didn't agree with me and broke the passport. As my tutor said, "all actions have reactions". So, I didn't give him a new one.
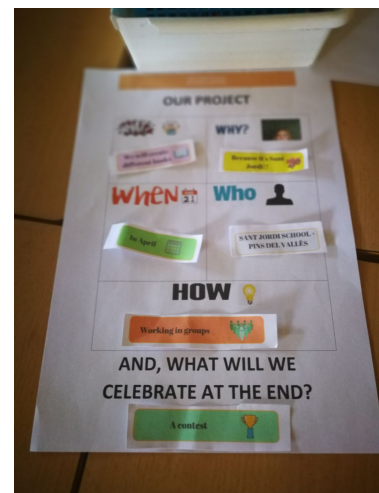
SESSION 2

The second session was quite satisfactory, and there was a peaceful atmosphere which made the work easier. I observed that sessions in the mornings really differ from the afternoon ones, where students are more tired and everything takes longer.

From this session, I could observe that they understood the wh- words, which was one of the aims of the sessions. Moreover, they really liked the idea of watching the other school's video. In this session, as an ice-breaker activity, I had a soft ball with me and I was passing it to the different students so as to make them answer a question of the project.

In one of the classes it really worked and students were very motivated to answer a question and get the ball.

However, in the other class, there was a difficult situation in which one student didn't want to pass the ball to any of their mates, and was just distorsionating the class. Finally, I was able to manage the situation and I asked him to calm down by himself. He went outside and when he came back, everything was better.
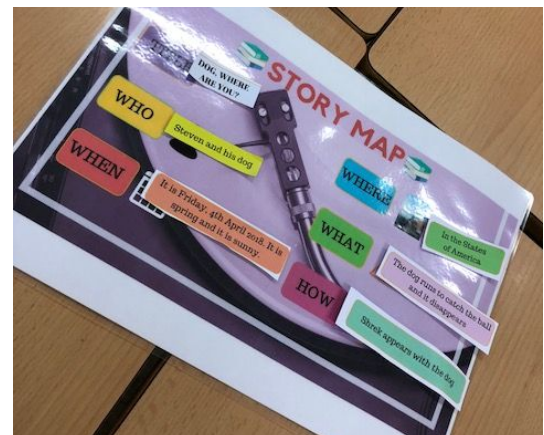
Moreover, I really caught their interest when I read them a story and made them participants of it. Some of them were the main characters to represent the story, and they really liked it! This way, they could understand what they were supposed to do in the next task.

Again, I could see they really motivated by the idea of the behaviour passport, so that they were asking to me "are we going to sign it today?".

In this session, I talked to the student about the behaviour he had in the previous class, and I told him that in the next sessions, he could recover his passport if he achieved a good behaviour during the class. However, this never happened.

SESSION 3

In this session, working in groups was essencial, and that meant "fights" for sure. So, the first I reminded them was the behaviour passport and the need to work in groups to participate in the contest. To be honest, the objectives were accomplished although sometimes they lost the concentration. For this moments, I had some transition activities (brain teasers/energyzers) that made them wake up. I believe they are essential to have!

In this session, I gave them a "survival kit" they needed to use to write their introduction. They really took care of the material and it was a success!

For the fast finishers, they also had a "let's play" activity, in which they could do crosswords, games, or even drawings on their books. This activities were laminated, so that they could write with a marker and then erase it. It was successful!
In this session, they also had to complete a DOL at the end of the lesson, which served me as an assessment tool. Most of them did really well! (see the assessment grid for more information)
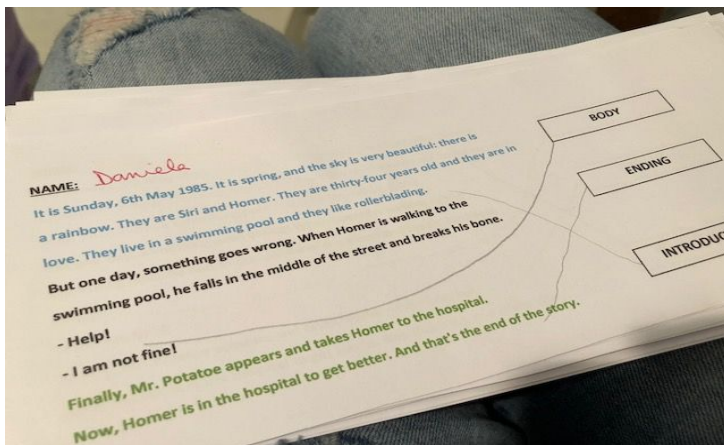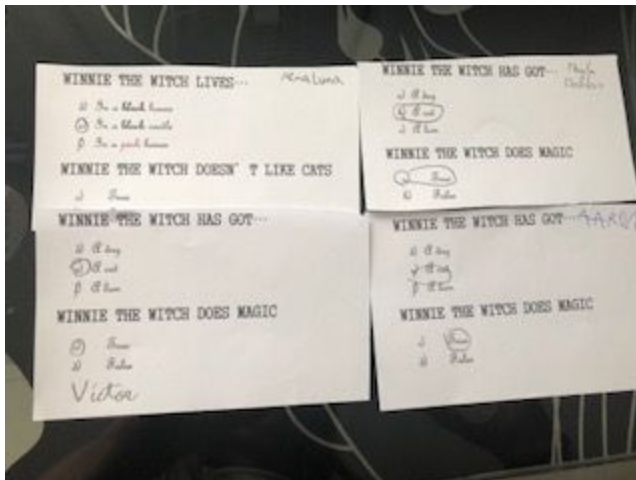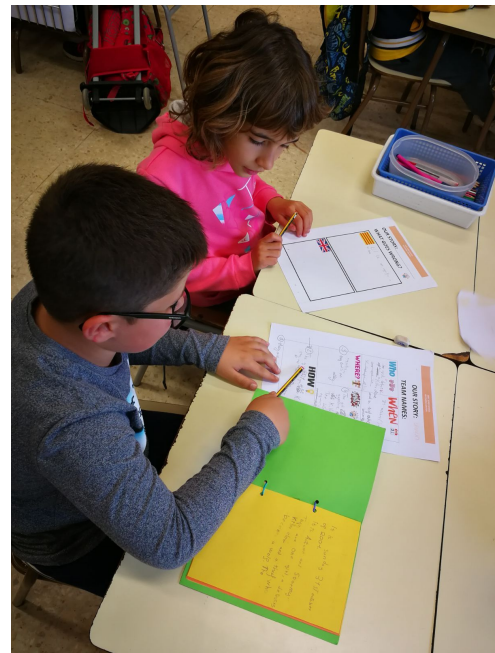
SESSION 4

Absolutely, a surprising session. Although the objectives were accomplished, I realised that sometimes, teachers take for granted many things. In this session, they had to start thinking of the body of their stories, and they needed to search in the dictionary for some words they didn't know how to say in English. The surprise came when one group went to the computer

to look for the word and once they entered in wordreference they typed the whole sentences they wanted to write! That made me realise that sometimes, when can't take for granted many things, and although kids are surrounded by technology, they are not used to working with some tools. When I implemented the same lesson in the other class, I specified how to use a dictionary and I explicitly state the difference between a translator and a dictionary.

In this session, they also did a listening activity about a story of Winnie the Witch. They really liked the story and they didn't realise they were being assessed by the questions I delivered to them (I made them think they were at the cinema!)
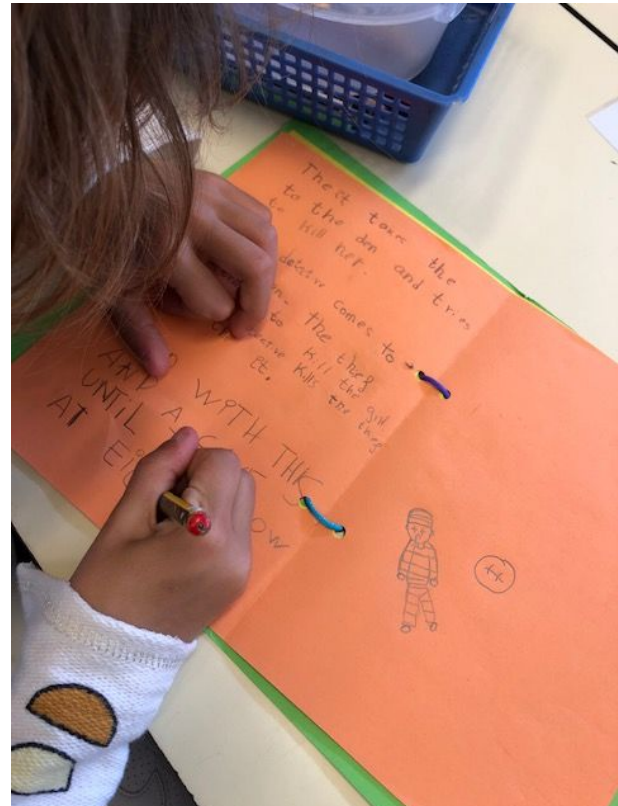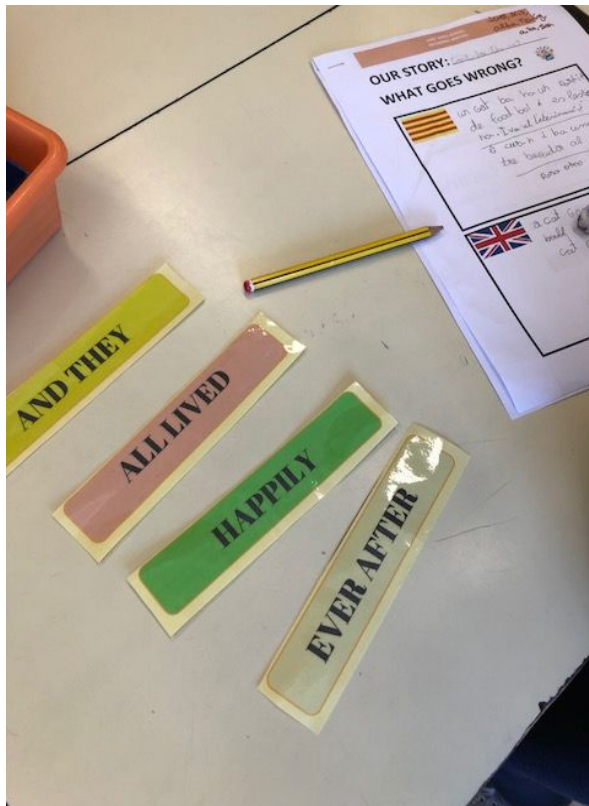
SESSION 5

To my surprise, they could finish the body parts the session before, so that they could start writing their endings. Of course, I reminded them how important was to look for the words appropriately, so that they could look for them. As this session contained activities that required movement

and active listening, students were quite nervous and some disruptive situations occurred. My tutor and I had to deal with some students they were constantly breaking the dynamic of the class, and even the "vetlladora" had to take part in the assumption.

On the whole, the objectives were accomplished and the rest of the class did a good job by completing their endings. They really enjoyed "and with this and a cake, until tomorrow and eight" and they realised themselves about the meaning of it. I was happy to see that they were developing plurilingual abilities!

SESSION 6

This session was successful! The truth is that I wasn't sure it was going to work, as it required a good use of the digital tools. However, and luckily, with a tutorial made by myself, all of them could follow my explanations. At the end of it, I made a recap by letting them interact, so that I checked they were really following my explanations.

I decided to do that with the whole group, to make sure everybody knew what was going on.

Once I finished, I asked them to to go two of each group to the computers (I had already logged in) to start making the cover. The other members of the group were doing the final retouch of their stories, so as to make them attractive for the other school (and of course, to win!).

Later, these roles were changed so that everybody took part in everything. I was surprised by how well they managed with the computer. They were very into the task and they really knew what they had to do.

Once they finished, we saved the work and… ready to print!
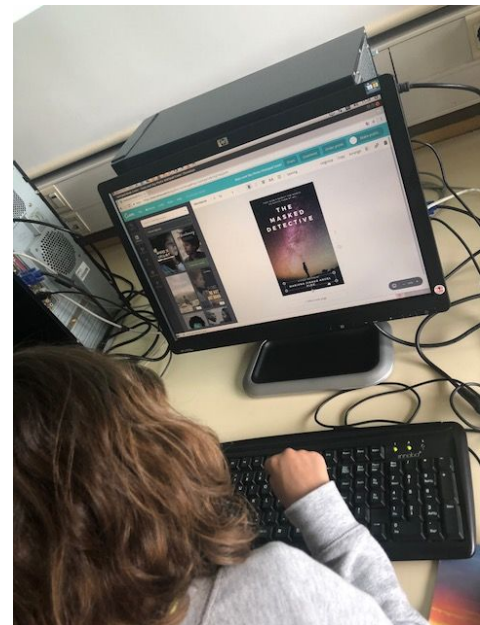
SESSION 7

The final session of the teaching unit arrived. Students were impressed by their own final products, and every time I was showing them to them, their faces were amazing. Now, it was time to do a kind of assessment to see if they had learnt. For this reason, I used their introductions (the ones they created) and ask them questions about them, individually (see the picture).

Thanks to it, I could value how much they had learnt with regards to content.

Moreover, I had also planned to do the Plickers assessment, that is, the same questions they did in the first lesson, but at the end, to see their progress. However, I couldn't do that with all the class, as they started misbehaving and my tutor took a decision: only the students who had behaved properly would play Plickers. So, less than half of the class had the opportunity to play. However, its results were surprising to me, and I could see they had definitely progress from the first class.

At the end, they did a peer-assessment among the members of the group and we said goodbye to the teaching sequence!
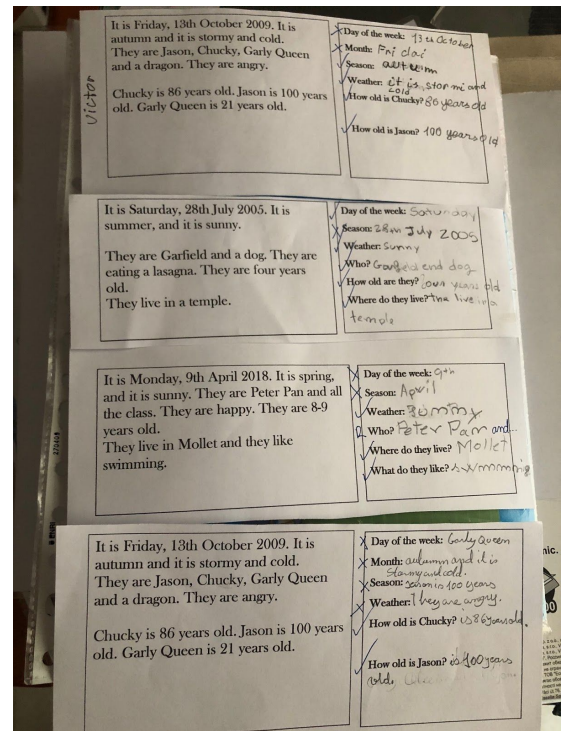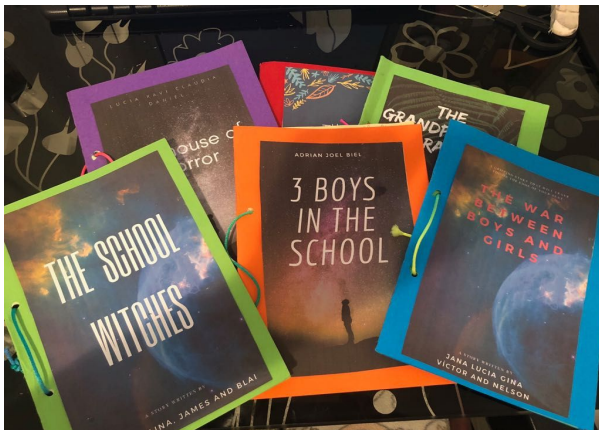
Here, you can find an example about a story written by a group:
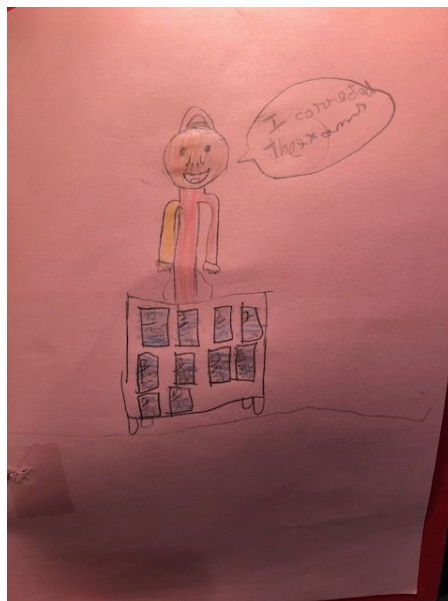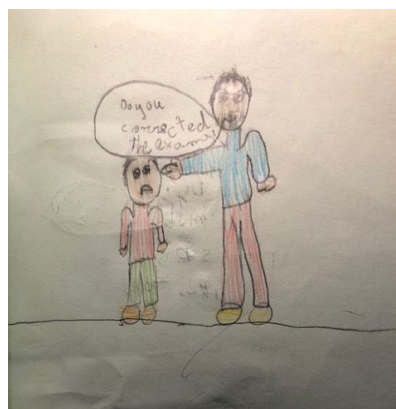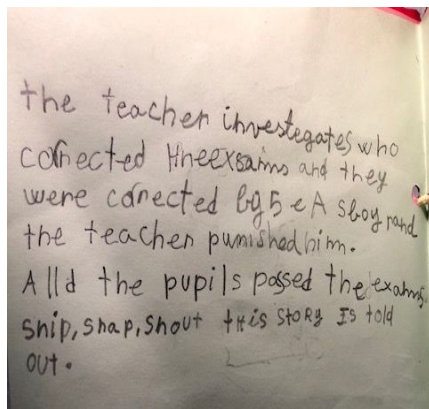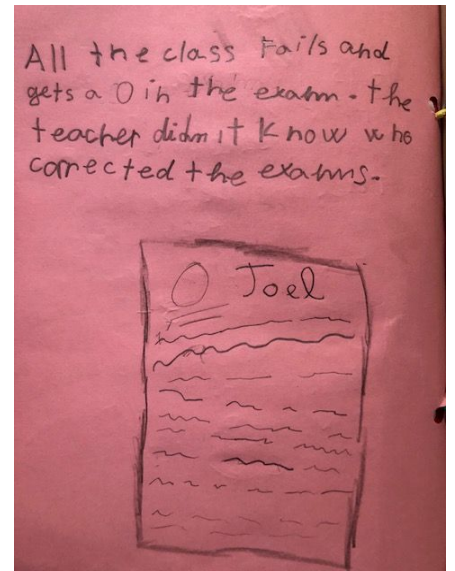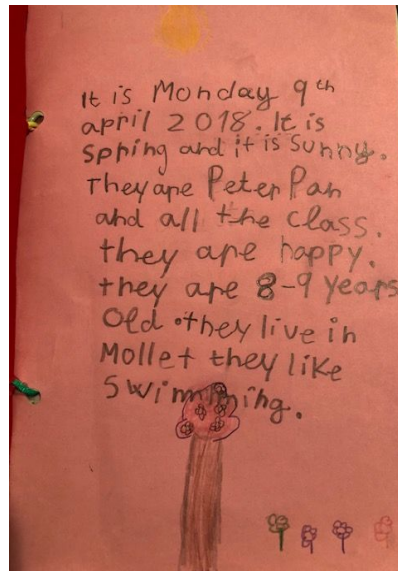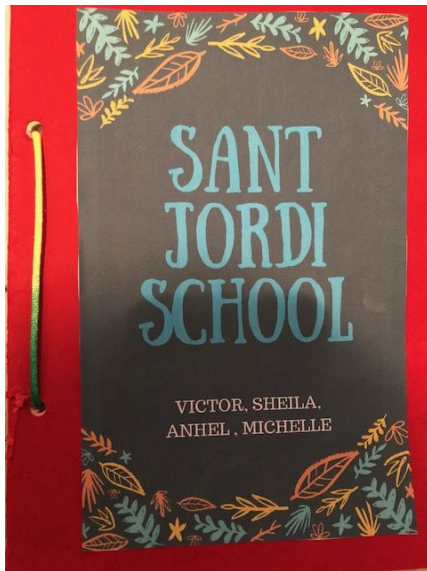
GENERAL REFLECTION:

In this teaching Unit, I have learnt how easy is to assess with DOL. Everyday, I established an item (or some) to assess (behaviour/listening/writing, etc.) at and the end of the session, I collected evidences which allowed me to give the student a grade. At the end of the teaching unit, I had all the marks of the students without the need of doing anything else. So, formative assessment has been regularly used by different techniques. However, not every student has been assessed in the same way. For the special needs' students, I designed a different evaluation criteria, as I consider that each pupil is different and so is the assessment criteria and tools. This evaluation criteria can be found in my teaching unit design.

Being critical, I would say my teaching Unit has been based on the students' previous knowledge and their abilities. Actually, I got informed about the content they had previously dealt with, their marks, etc. to know how competent students were not only in English but also about the topic, and this has definitely been helpful at the time of starting to design my teaching sequence. Moreover, I have also beared in mind the competences and contents that needed to be dealt with, as well as the dimensions that needed to be included, as that is part of the nowadays curriculum and I believe that would actually introduce me to the real teaching world . Moreover, I wanted my teaching Unit to be interdisciplinary, and that is why it includes topics about Arts and Crafts, ICT and of course, Catalan and Spanish literature (narratives). Moreover, the topic of telecollaboration has been included, and the fact that they needed to write because they had a real purpose has definitely motivated them.

With regards to management, there is a mixture of individual, pair and group work. At the beginning, I was too focused on group-work, since they were not used to working this way. However, when I talked to my University tutor, she realised that there was a lack of individual work, and that is why I added some activities that first are carried out individual and then shared, or just individual (DOL). However, I need to mention that group-work has not been easy. In both groups, there is a huge diversity of students with different needs, and a high number of students with special needs. This is why me, along with my tutor, set the groups, making sure they are all heterogeneous and balanced. However, that wasn't the only thing to take into account, as in this group, I observed there was not cohesion at all, which meant that there were some students who were always teasing someone, or just scorning. Definitely, I wanted to avoid most of my problems, so that I had to really think about it. Along the teaching unit, I consider that the groups have worked quite well. However, I remember one boy who easily became frustrated because he was not used to working in groups (see the video). Luckily, session by session, he changed little by little his behaviour and could enhanced the project.

Apart from this, Iconsider autonomy one of the basis of my T.U. They are free to choose how they want to develop their story, they peer-assess their final products, they help the teacher to decide the stamp of the behaviour passport, etc. In other words, pupils are given

significant opportunities to take responsibility, and all the language support and scaffolding had been carefully thought in advance to ensure students' success. Moreover, this scaffolding was varied and offered in a variety of ways (visual, auditive, hands-on experiences, etc) so as to satisfy everybody's learning style. It is for this reason that mainly all the materials were created and designed by me. I wanted to adapt to everybody, so I preferred to create and design a story by myself to make them understand better what I asked them to do, instead of just copying one from the Internet which would have nothing to do with their final products. As something to change, I would say that as the content is mainly free (the body of their stories), sometimes it was difficult to assess this part. However, when I couldn't assess these parts, the DOL was about another aspect that had been dealt with in class.

The digital competence was also key along my implementation. For instance, they used Plickers to test their previous and final knowledge, they used Canva to design the cover of their stories, they used online dictionaries to look for words they wanted to use…. These have also given autonomy to them and have felt a sense of responsibility. Moreover, it has made me realise that sometimes teachers take for granted so many things: when they started looking up at the online dictionary whole sentences, I was stunned as I hadn't thought that might have come to their minds! For this reason, when I implemented this lesson in the other class, I made them a "short tutorial" about how to use them, learning from my own mistakes.

With regards to their final product, it was very meaningful for them, since they had to present it to their peers of the other school, so that it was targeted to an authentic addressee. Moreover, they all tried to do their best not only in content but also in drawings and presentation, as they definitely wanted to be the winners!

As stars, I would highlight the different materials I have designed. I consider they have been key for the students to do the task. Moreover, I would also highlight the telecollaborative project we have carried out with the other school. It was the light that kept students motivated during all the process, wanting to do their best.

Another key star would be that I have achieved that some of the so-called "disruptive students" have joint the project, a fact which at the beginning, it was unthinkable. I would never thought they would join it, and it was very rewarding when they saw me in the corridor and asked me "when are we going to continue with the book?, do we have English today?".

Another aspect I consider I have achieved is the group work. It is a difficult class and they are not used to work in groups, which meant that at the beginning, they were frustrated and some students wanted to do everything by themselves. However, this has been changing along the project and they have understood that with collaborative work , the final product improves its quality.

As mentioned, sometimes I felt overwhelmed by the hard situations produced in classroom. There are some attitudes that you never know how to react, and sometimes it's hard to

control them. At the end of the lessons, I have always received feedback from my tutor and she has been key to cheer me up, by telling me that this is what I will find in real life and that I'm going on the right track. However, I believe that with effort and motivation everything is possible, so next time I face with these behaviours and situations, I would have experience on how to deal with them!

Personally, I believe that the areas which I need to work harder are classroom management and time.

With regards to classroom management, I believe it is one of the most difficult aspects which even experienced teachers have to deal with. I consider that in general, I have achieved the objectives with regards to it, as the students were not used to working in groups at all, and they finally did it, collaborating. Each session I could see they were progressing, and some negative behaviours I observed during the first one were being improved session by session.

Regarding the time, I believe it's also an aspect which worries most of the teachers. At the beginning of my teaching unit design, I decided to plan more sessions than needed, just in case, and that gave me an extra-time I knew I could use if needed. Luckily, I didn't need to use it and we finished on time! I recognise that sometimes I am a bit overambitious, so that I want my students to do many things! (and yes, that's great some times but some others we need to be realistic!). The truth is that once I started implementing my teaching unit, I could readjust the timing and see what we could do, and every time I finished a lesson I wrote down some facts/observations I did, any assessment I had done and the planning for the other session. This way, I had everything under control.

As a fact to highlight, I would say how many things one can learn when the same teaching unit is implemented in two different groups. I could see how different they are, how different they are used to working, and maybe for the same amount of time, one group could do much more than the other. I have learnt a lot from this experience, and it was definitely a challenge for me!

ABOUT THE VIDEO:

The video belongs to the first session of the Teaching Unit, where students are introduced to the project. As can be seen, they are motivated and willing to participate. I must say that when I asked for volunteers, I didn't pick them randomly. First of all, I chose a girl I knew she would know the answer and secondly, I picked a boy which is constantly misbehaving, so as to give him an opportunity to participate and to be the main character of the activity. Luckily, it really worked and students did what I asked them to do (although this last one, catching the attention from everyone by doing a kind of dance). However, my reaction was not to pay attention to him, but just looking at him and ask him to please do it, since he was doing well.

The second part of the video belongs to the excerpt where students are watching the video from the other school and completing a paper with the stickers I provided to them. In theory, that was meant to be done individually and then in small groups. However, I couldn't do this with both groups, as in one group I had 1h and in the other one 1h and a half. In general, it can be seen they understood my explanations, and they were carefully watching the video and trying to complete the paper. However, I was surprised when I watched my own recording and realised there was a group that was writing the answers in pencil, instead of using the stickers I provided. Next time, I would exemplify that in front of all of them, since I believe modelling is a good strategy for them to understand the tasks.

Moreover, I realised how difficult is for them to work in groups. Specifically, one kid who has been diagnosed with autism was very frustrated and wanted to do everything by himself (Victor). His reaction was taking the chair and separate it from the rest of the group. According to my tutor, this is something he normally does when frustration appears. Along the T.U, he has definitely improved and sometimes, he has been able to manage his manners. However, there have been some hard sessions in which his behaviour was not appropriate and thus, has caused a class disruption.

The last part of the video belongs to the part where students are recording themselves to send the video. I decided to give an important role (the recorder) to one child who is usually misbehaving, so as to have him under control and give him a feeling of responsibility. It actually worked and he was happy to help me!

In conclusion, I am happy with the result and with the participation of the students. I definitely believe that giving them responsibilities increase their self-esteem and make them feel important in the class. Moreover, I have realised how positive is to record yourself to see ways of improving and possible behaviours that you have taken for granted in the class. With the video, I have also realised that students definitely understand us when speaking in English if we help them to do so (body language, support, etc.). Sometimes, we think they will not be following but the truth is that they definitely do!