



Innovative assessment methodologies
for cooperative learning at primary schools

UPgrade Newsletters

3rd NEWSLETTER, APRIL 2021

Welcome to the 3rd issue of the **UPGRADE** Newsletter. It has been a year since the whole world has lived under the Covid-19 pandemic, not easy for anyone, especially the educational sector. Less face-to-face meetings, less travel, less personal contact. Education has almost completely shifted to distance learning. Despite the difficult conditions in the world and limited opportunities for meetings, the work on the project has not stopped. In this newsletter we will share what has happened in the project in the past few months.

Before we start, we'd like to remind you that the **UPGRADE** project will combine a suite of different, interconnected assessment methods (teachers' evaluation, self-evaluation, peer-review, group evaluations), using ICT to provide teachers with tools to visualize, follow-up and assess students and help them regulate their own learning. The methodology and tools will be validated in a pilot in 6 primary schools in Spain, Latvia, Norway, and Italy. The results will be published in the **UPGRADE** Handbook.

In October 2020, the **UPGRADE** project took part in #ErasmusDays 2020 where we shared experience on what has already been done. Norwegian partners from the [Center for Lifelong Learning of the Norway University of Applied Sciences](#) (Lillehammer) organized an online seminar and presented the methodological framework for the assessment of cooperative learning; Professor Stephen Dobson, talked about assessment in general, and gave some perspectives on culture and belonging, and on multi-culturalism and cross-cultural cooperation. Partners from Latvia [Education and Information Services of Riga City](#) published the project video trailer. You can watch it [here](#).



After several training sessions organized by [MyDocumenta](#) in the use of the eportfolio (how to create activities, how to use the assessment and communication tools, etc.) we started the project pilot at the beginning of the year: the six participating schools from Spain, Italy, Latvia and Norway are implementing the cooperative learning activities and assessment methods with the use of the MyDocumenta eportfolio. Some activities are done locally, other crossborder, where students can work together and assess each other's work.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the implementation is challenging: the Latvian schools are closed and have switched completely to distance learning, Brescia was partly in lockdown, and other schools had



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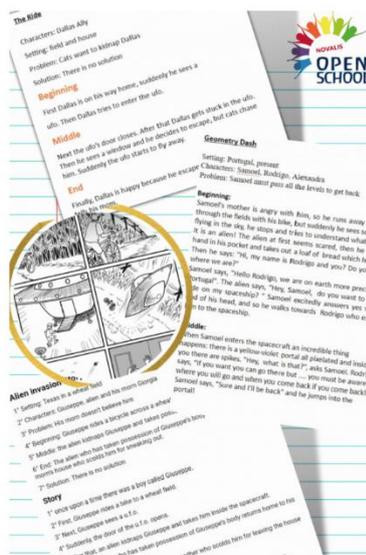
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to reorganize their classes, with smaller groups of students and less teachers, and limited access to tables and computers.

Thanks to the enormous effort and positive and constructive attitude of the participating teachers, the activities for cooperative learning were adapted to the current situation while maintaining the original project goals. They're having meetings with the teachers from the other schools, are organizing meetings with the students from the other schools, so they can get to know each other, see other cultures, present the results of the activities and give feedback to each other.

We'd like to share some of the teachers' comments on how they are progressing towards the project results, teaching students, and managing collaboration processes online:



"It is not enough to simply teach children to write; we have to give them something worth writing. Something that will stretch their imaginations, help them make sense of their own lives and encourage them to reach out toward people whose lives are quite different from their own." Our UPGRADE activity is being built on this very ideal. My students are developing the skills and knowledge required in order to create unique stories to share with students of another country, all in their common second language: English! This is a wonderful cultural opportunity and being able to witness my students approach the activity with such openness and desire fills my heart with joy. We are all enjoying every second of this journey despite the current lockdown situation!"

Kate, English teacher, [Novalis open School](#) (Brescia, Italy), implementing activity "Let's write a story together"



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"The project gives students the opportunity to apply their knowledge in real life communicating with peers from another country learning to recognize the features of another country's culture comparing them with their own culture and language environment. By communicating students can assess their existing knowledge of English and set an individual goal for further learning. Through the UPGRADE project students develop both self-directed learning skills communication and digital skills."

Margarita, English teacher, [Riga Sergey Zholtok Secondary School](#) (Riga, Latvia), implementing the activities "An International Cookbook", "A research about Values" and "Let's plan a trip".

This project has shown us a completely different way of learning English by applying it on our daily life. Students feel very motivated and are really trying to push their knowledge a step further in order to make themselves understood. They have chosen complex recipes, and some are struggling when translating them into English. However, working in groups is helping a lot to achieve the common goal. All together it is a challenging project for the students. Mostly because it requires a certain technological knowledge, and it would have helped to have two teachers on every session. Nevertheless, the students are really doing their best and we see great improvements in their vocabulary."

Ingrid, English teacher, [Escola GRAVI SCCL](#) (Barcelona, Spain) implements the activity "An international cookbook".

That's all from now. We'll keep you updated on our project website www.upgradeproject.eu and on social media **#UPgradeErasmus**.

UPGRADE team



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