

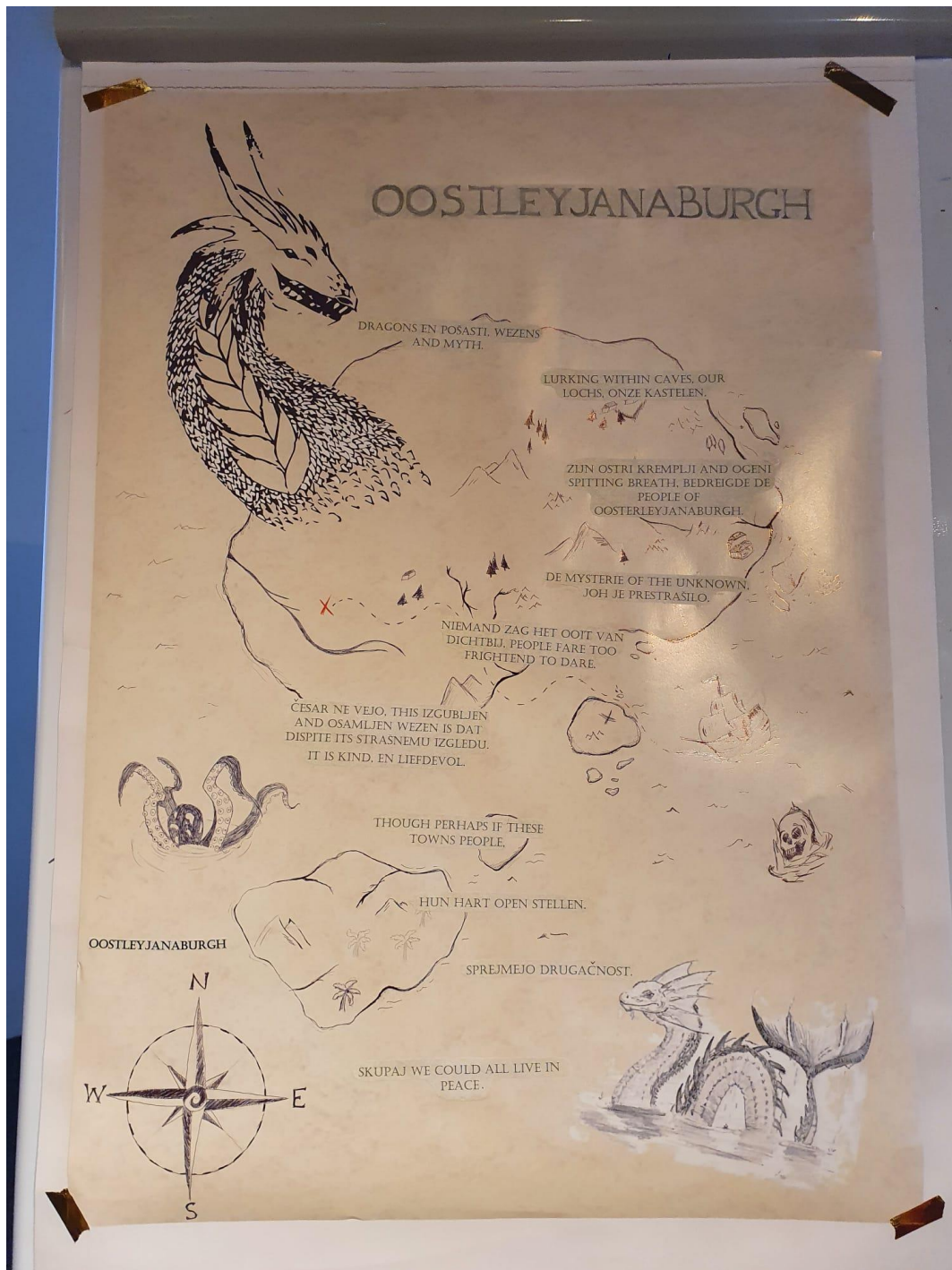
Story Valley Case Study

A Story Valley case study, presented as an example to support other settings to run the programme

Background information

This case study was submitted by Barbara Iskra Šarec, a teacher of Slovene language and literature at Srednja medijska in grafična šola (SMGS), Ljubljana.

She delivered Story Valley as an intensive project over two days, with a group of students who had come together from Scotland, Slovenia and the Netherlands.



Delivering Story Valley

This section will provide an example of how Story Valley can be delivered as a coherent project.

In particular, you may find this useful for the 'get creative' module – providing ideas of how to develop the stories shared in your initial sessions into a creative project.

How did you plan your first Story Valley session?

Before travelling to Leeuwarden, students were asked to find one interesting story that represents them or their country. When we talked about how to find a story, I suggested them some ideas:

- search for a story from the history of your town or your country and culture
- ask your parents, friends or relatives if they know some interesting story
- go to the tourist office in your town and ask the tourist guide if she/he knows some interesting stories related to important people that lived/live in your town or important places of your town.
- Bring an item, or a photo of an item, that represents 'you'

How did you engage students with finding and telling stories?

1. On the first day in Leeuwarden, the students were put into internationally mixed groups. At the beginning of group work they were invited to connect as a group and get to know each other well.
2. To support this, each student shared an item that represented 'them' and explained why these items were important for them.
3. We then asked students to think about what their items and stories had in common: to find a common theme that represents their group
4. They wrote some typical words about this theme, and translated these words into all three languages of the group.
5. They highlighted the most common words from their lists, and began to consider why these words might be common across their three cultures.

Can you provide some examples of creative projects students completed as part of Story Valley?

The students decided to write a poem using the words in different languages that had emerged from their initial discussion. Their process involved:

1. **Brainstorming** – they talked about what their poem would be about and invented a story of the poem (considering how it will start and end)
2. **Using 'pidgin' language** - combining languages to create new "languages". As they wrote the poem, they considered which language to use for every word.
3. **Editing** - when they finished the poem, they read it again several times, in order to change some words from one language to another.
4. **Sketching** – they drew some sketches of the poem to present to the group.
5. **Designing** a poster - They wrote the final version of the poem on the poster; adding drawings alongside.

Can you provide an example of how creative thinking and creative practice were developed by your students throughout the project?

All of the students used their different creative talents to contribute to the poem.

- They all used their writing talents to compose the poem
- One drew interesting parts from the poem, to illustrate their writing.
- One was studying to be an actor so his role was to present the poem in a special way

What went well and what you would do differently in the future when running a Story Valley project?

I think that it was good that the students got only a few instructions at the beginning, as this allowed the students to be totally free in their creativity.
However, I don't know how this would go if the students were less interested. Our students were very engaged and interested.

Can you summarise any formal or informal feedback you have received from students regarding their involvement in the project?

The Slovene students told me:

- they were younger than the students from other countries but they didn't feel like it, they were accepted very well by their new friends,
- they could practise their English with foreigners (not native speakers) and they were proud of themselves because they have realised that their knowledge of English language was quite good
- they were happy that they could work in such good conditions: a very well equipped classroom

Sharing creative work

The section will provide an example how students' work was shared – which might provide ideas for sharing your own group's project(s).

On what scale was students' work disseminated?

- Internally
- In your local area
- Nationally
- Internationally
- Other (please describe)

Describe how students shared their work as part of your project

On the last day all the groups presented their work to the other groups and to partners of the project.
Slovene students went on to present their work to students in our school, when they got home.

Can you share any examples with us? (e.g. links, images, videos)

You can see a picture of the poster students created at the top of this file.

Did students benefit from the process of sharing their work? If so, how?
Yes, they did. They saw the presentations of other groups and so they got an idea how to improve their work. They also talked about their final projects among the groups and they were critical to each other in a good way.

Integrating Story Valley with your curriculum

In this section, the Story Valley deliverer reflects on how they used Story Valley to meet wider goals and outcomes, which might prove useful in setting up or pitching a project in your own setting.

The deliverer also describes their formal and informal evaluation practice; providing ideas on how to explore and communicate the programme’s impact in your community.

Are the students in your Story Valley project studying on a course or for a formal qualification?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – please specify which course and/or qualification <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – please describe the nature of your Story Valley group In our school students who collaborate in the project Story Valley have chosen this project as an extra-curricular activity, because they loved the idea of it.
What was your main objective when you began the Story Valley project?
<input type="checkbox"/> To build students’ literacy skills <input type="checkbox"/> To connect students to stories and storytelling <input type="checkbox"/> To build students’ creativity and/or creative skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To connect students from different backgrounds <input type="checkbox"/> To engage students with their learning <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please explain
How did you embed Story Valley into your curriculum?
<input type="checkbox"/> Story Valley was delivered as part of students’ curriculum course <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Story Valley was delivered separately – as an extra-curricular activity
How did the Story Valley project link to the objectives of your curriculum?
Students came on the project to connect with other students from other colleges, and this programme supported that objective. While students did not go on the trip to study language, they also reported that it helped them to improve and practise their language skills.