



Developing key competences for lifelong learning and critical thinking through storytelling, in the EFL classroom

2025- 2026



Ομάδα Αγγλικών Δημοτικής



Overall connection of the 8 skills with storytelling

Skill

Indicative activities that foster the skills

1 - 2 Literacy and Multilingual competences

All pre, while and after storytelling activities-
Opportunities to become familiar with authentic foreign language literature-Development of the four language skills.

3. Mathematical and scientific competence

Classifying/sequencing events, counting elements

4. Digital competence

Creating a digital version, using illustration applications

5. Personal, social and learning to learn competence

Collaboration in a circle, exchange of opinions, reflection

6. Citizenship competence

Discussion of values, respect, acceptance of differences

7. Entrepreneurship competence

Creating a new ending, designing a cover, taking initiatives

8. Cultural awareness and expression competence

Dramatization, illustration, understanding cultural elements

Developing **Critical** Thinking Skills



Prediction

- Predict the story's next part from the cover or beginning.
- Discuss: Which predictions were realistic?



Inference

- Read the clues.
- "Why do you think the character did that?"
- Draw conclusions.



Evaluation

- Assess the character's decisions.
- "What would you do differently?"



Perspective-Taking

- Retell the story from a character's view.
- How did they feel?



Comparison

- Compare characters or stories.
- Create a "Similarities / Differences" chart.



Cause-Effect

- Identify causes and effects.
- "The dragon attacked → The village was evacuated."



Reasoned Decision-Making

- Discuss options:
- "The hero must choose X or Y."
- Support with arguments.





Stages of Storytelling



1. Pre-Storytelling Stage

- ◆ Prepares students for the story
- ◆ Activates prior knowledge and introduces key vocabulary
- ◆ Sets the scene and sparks interest



2. While-Storytelling Stage

- ◆ Engages students in the storytelling process
- ◆ Asks questions to monitor understanding
- ◆ Encourages participation through actions or simple role-plays



3. After-Storytelling Stage

- ◆ Facilitates consolidation of understanding
- ◆ Evaluates students' understanding of the story
- ◆ Develops additional activities to practice skills



The 3 stages of storytelling

1) Pre-storytelling stage

- It prepares students for the story

2) While-storytelling stage

- It engages students in the storytelling process

3) After storytelling stage

- It facilitates consolidation of understanding
- It evaluates students' understanding of the story
- It serves as a platform to develop additional activities and practice skills



Pre-Storytelling Stage Activities



1. Prediction

- ◆ From: Picture, title, characters, setting
- ◆ Look at the picture, title, and characters.
- ◆ Predict what the story might be about.



2. Brainstorming-Prediction of

- ◆ Plot, feelings, characters
- ◆ Discuss what could happen in the story.
- ◆ Share ideas about characters and feelings.



3. Sound and Emotion Guessing

- ◆ Listen to sounds or see pictures and predict what will happen
- ◆ Play sounds or show images hinting at the story.
- ◆ Guess the plot and emotions.

2) While-storytelling

Activity

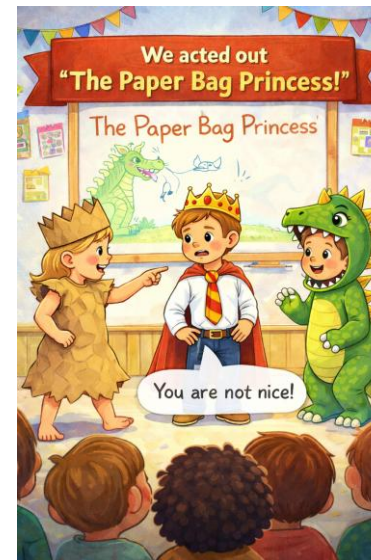
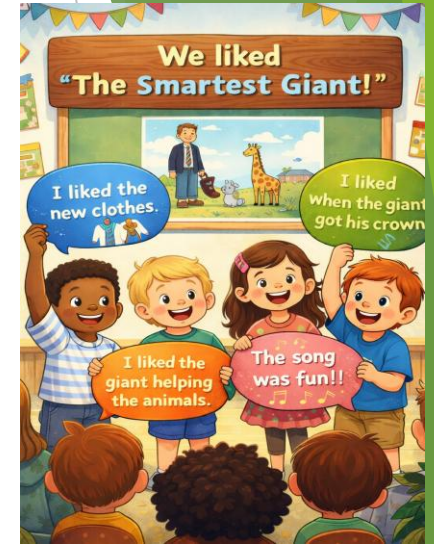
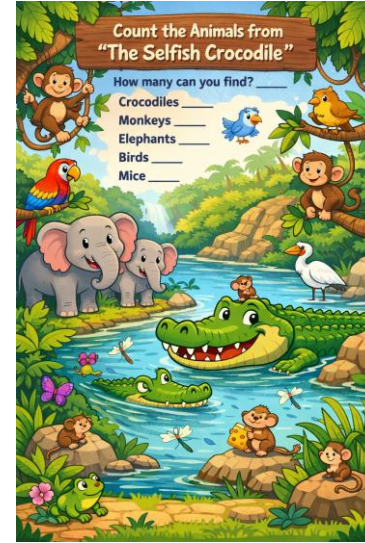
- “Discussing the pictures, characters, appearance- predicting what happens next?” Why?
- “Identifying and miming feelings” - students mime the characters’ feelings-Reasoning
- “Key Phrases repeating” - the students repeat key phrases of the story being engaged in the narration process
- “Acting out” - students repeat key phrases of story with body movement and/or facial expressions

The Selfish Crocodile  What do you think will happen next?	The Paperbag Princess  How can she stop the dragon?
The Smartest Giant in Town  Why is he helping the others?	Marvin Wanted More  What may happen to Marvin?

3) After-storytelling

Activity

1. “Story Discussion” - children say if they liked the story and why
2. “Counting / Sequencing” - they count objects, animals, clothes etc. and put events in chronological order
3. “Digital Story Recreation” - use of software (e.g. Kartouche, Canva, Book Creator) for book illustration pupposes
4. “Role-play / Puppets” - scene dramatisation
5. “Values Reflection” - discussion about the meaning or the moral values of the story (e.g. kindness, respect)
6. “Invent your own story or story ending” - students come up with their own ending or version of the story

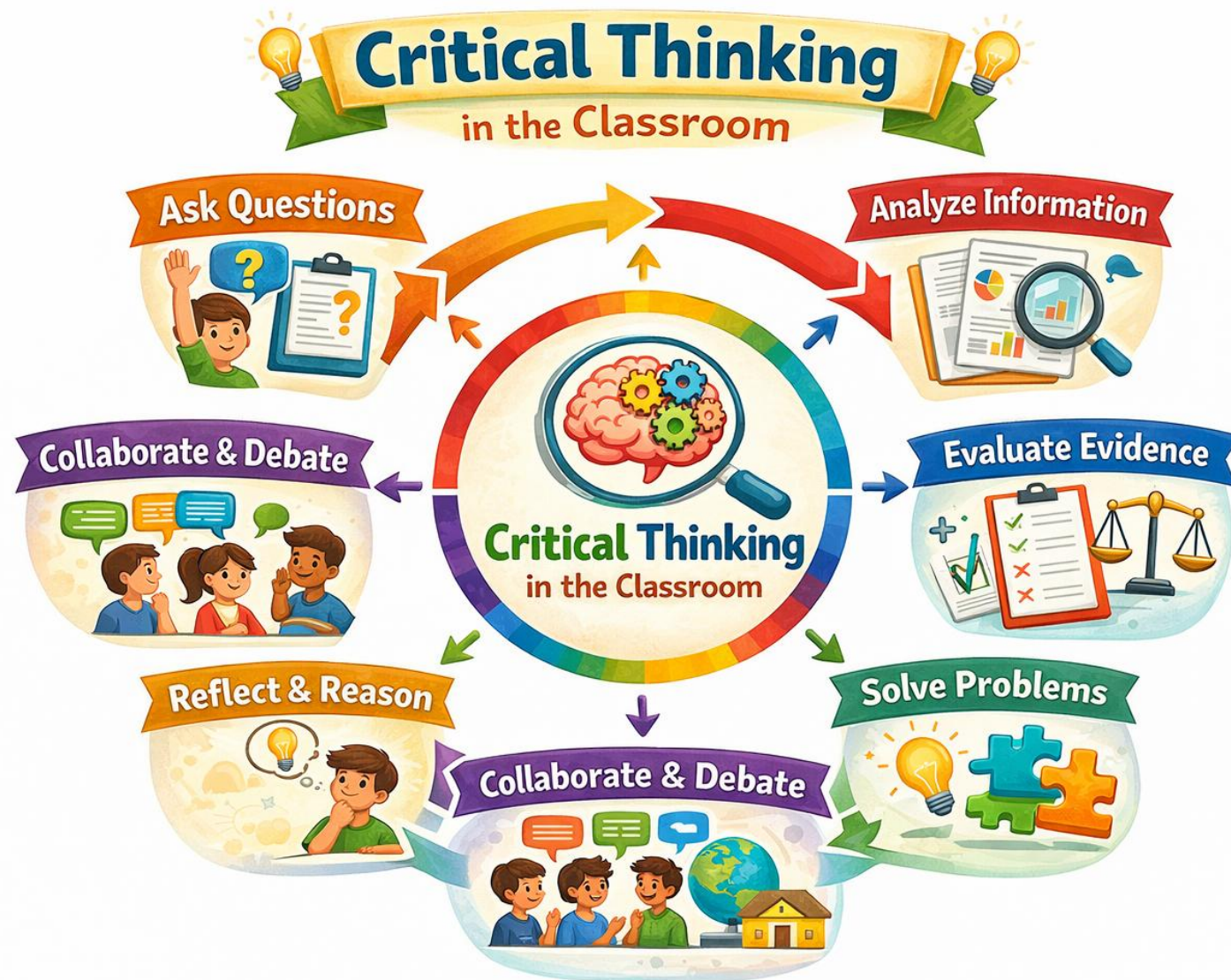


3) After-storytelling

7. Is the character right or wrong? Why?
8. Change the plot in a different setting.
9. Comparison of characters of different stories.
- 10 . What would you do if you were the character (at different points of the story).
11. True/False questions. Why? (e.g. The crocodile shares the river with the animals. → He doesn't share it. He is selfish)
12. Has this ever happened in real life? In your life?
13. Mini "Entrepreneurial" Game - students recommend a book cover or a title for their own version of the story



Indicative activities that develop the 8 key competences and critical thinking



The Smartest Giant in Town (Julia Donaldson)

Kindness Roleplay and create new character

Task Description:

Groups act out one scene from the story and then create **one new scenario** where George helps someone. Each group must explain why their scenario demonstrates kindness.

Competences: Citizenship, Cultural
Critical Thinking: Evaluate moral choices

The Smartest Giant in Town (Julia Donaldson)

Giant's Diary (could be digital)

Task Description:

Students write a short diary entry from George's point of view (can be done on Canva or Google Docs or other tools). They must include:

- How he feels
- Why he helps
- What he learns

Competences: Digital, Literacy
Critical Thinking: Perspective-taking

The Smartest Giant in Town (Julia Donaldson)

What Would You Do?

Task Description:

Students answer dilemma questions such as:

- ▲ Would you give away your shoes?
- ▶ Should the giant say No?
- ▶ Which kind of help was more urgent/important?

Focus: Speaking & Ethics

Competences: Citizenship

Critical thinking: evaluation

The Smartest Giant in Town (Julia Donaldson)

Alternative Ending – “The Giant Says No”

Task Description:

Students complete the prompt:

“One day the Giant decided not to give his clothes away. What happened?”

Critical Thinking Element:

Students analyse the consequences of changing one key decision.

Competences: Creativity, Emotional Understanding

Marvin Wanted More (Joseph Theobald)

- ▶ Theme: Self-acceptance, gratitude, emotional growth.
- ▶ Competences: Literacy, citizenship, personal/social.
- ▶ Critical Thinking: Ethical reasoning, emotional connection.

Marvin Wanted More (Joseph Theobald)

Marvin's Choices

Task Description:

Students discuss whether Marvin made good or bad choices. They must support their arguments with examples.

Competences: Citizenship competence, Literacy competence, Personal & social competence

Critical Thinking Skill: Evaluating choices, giving reasons

Marvin Wanted More (Joseph Theobald)

Story Sequencing & Alternative ending

Task Description:

Students reorder mixed-up events from the story. Then they create a possible alternative ending, justifying why it makes sense.

Competences: Literacy competence, Mathematical/scientific competence (logic), Entrepreneurship competence (creative planning)

Critical Thinking Skill: Predicting, cause-effect reasoning

Marvin Wanted More (Joseph Theobald)

Healthy Day Plan for Marvin

Task Description:

Students design a healthy eating and exercise plan for Marvin. They give reasons why each choice is healthy or unhealthy.

Competences: Mathematical/scientific competence, Citizenship competence, Entrepreneurship competence

Critical Thinking Skill: Applying knowledge to solve problems

Marvin Wanted More (Joseph Theobald)

Roleplay - Take a Friend's advice

Task Description:

Students act out a scene where Marvin's friend warns him before he eats too much. They propose better choices and better ways to convince Marvin.

Competences: Personal & social competence, Cultural awareness,

Critical Thinking Skill: Generating better alternatives

Marvin Wanted More (Joseph Theobald)

Story Remix - Marvin in Cyprus

Task Description:

Students rewrite part of the story in a Cypriot environment (e.g., Troodos, a beach, a village). They explain how the new setting changes the story.

Competences: Multilingual competence, Cultural awareness & expression, Literacy competence

Critical Thinking Skill: Creative adaptation

The Snail and the Whale (Julia Donaldson)

► **Propose solutions to problems**

- Theme: Friendship, courage, exploration, global citizenship.
- Competences: Literacy, STEM, citizenship, cultural awareness.
- Critical Thinking: Hypothesizing, reasoning, evaluating solutions.

The Snail and the Whale (Julia Donaldson)

Character Feelings Timeline

Task Description:

Students create a timeline showing how the snail and the whale feel at key moments. They justify each emotion using evidence.

Competences: Personal & social competence, Literacy competence, Cultural competence

Critical Thinking Skill: Explaining emotional causes

The Snail and the Whale (Julia Donaldson)

Let's Save the Whale

Task Description:

Groups brainstorm and design solutions for saving the whale (e.g., signs, water buckets, calling for help). They present and defend the most effective solution.

Focus: STEM + Collaboration, environmental awareness

Competences: Citizenship competence, Mathematical/scientific competence, Entrepreneurship competence

Critical Thinking Skill: Problem-solving & evaluating solutions

(Digital) Postcards from Around the World

Task Description:

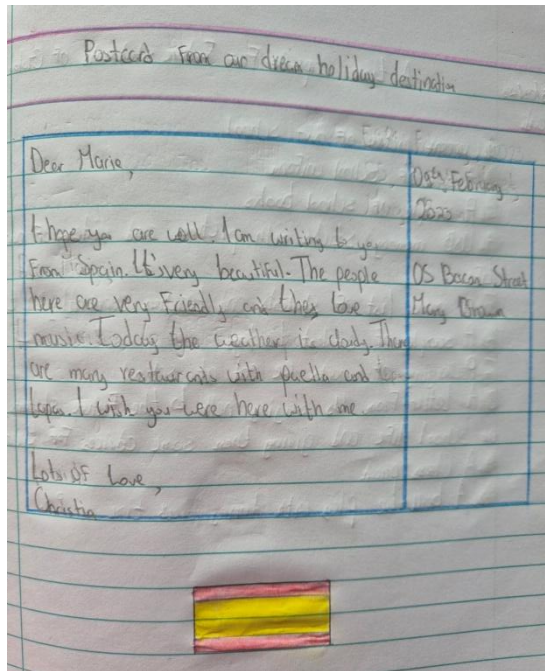
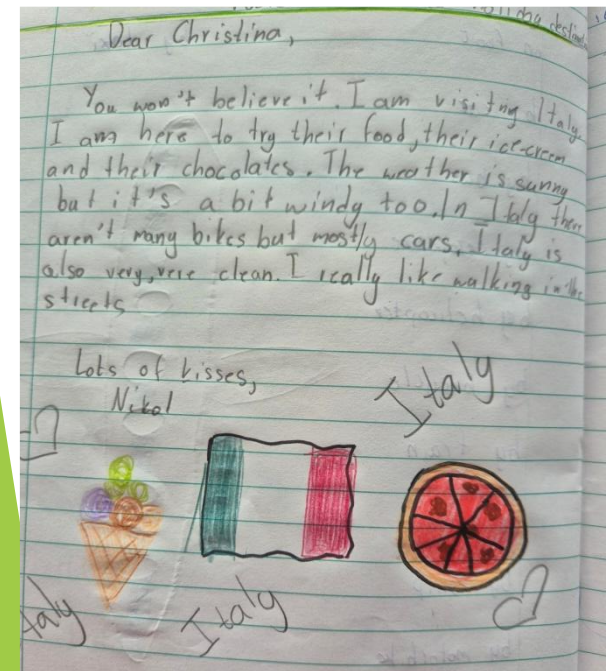
Students create postcards or messages from each destination, imagining they are the snail writing to a friend.

Focus: Writing & ICT

Competences: Digital competence, Literacy competence, Cultural awareness

Critical Thinking Skill:

Summarizing & perspective-taking



The Snail and the Whale (Julia Donaldson)

What If...?

Task Description:

Students explore “What if?” questions (e.g., What if the snail never left the rock?) and justify logical outcomes.

Competences: Citizenship competence, Literacy competence, Entrepreneurship competence

Critical Thinking Skill: Hypothesizing, predicting, reasoning

The Snail and the Whale (Julia Donaldson)

Cyprus alternative (e.g. Snail & Dolphin)

Task Description:

Students adapt the story to a Cypriot setting (Akamas, Lara Beach, Ayia Napa caves). They explain how this changes the story (e.g. weather, countries they visit etc.)

Competences: Literacy competence, Cultural awareness
Critical Thinking Skill: Creative transfer

The Paper Bag Princess (Robert Munsch)

- ▶ Theme: Bravery, independence, equality, challenging stereotypes.
- ▶ Competences: Citizenship, literacy, cultural awareness, entrepreneurship.
- ▶ Critical Thinking: Evaluating stereotypes, defending opinions.

The Paper Bag Princess (Robert Munsch)

Who's the Real Hero?

Task Description:

Students discuss who the real hero is (Elizabeth or Ronald). They provide reasons.

Competences: Citizenship competence, Cultural awareness

Critical Thinking Skill: Challenging stereotypes

Theme: Bravery, independence, equality, challenging stereotypes.

Competences: Citizenship, literacy, cultural awareness, entrepreneurship.

Critical Thinking: Evaluating stereotypes, defending opinions

Design a New Ending

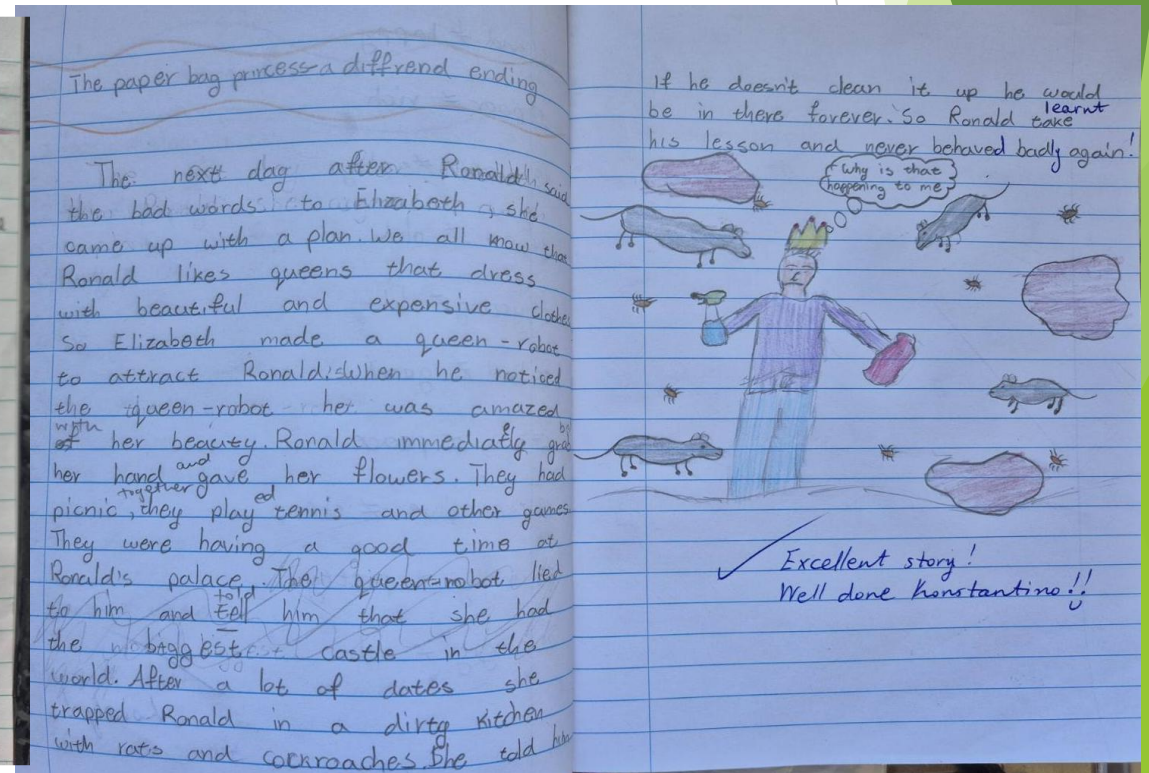
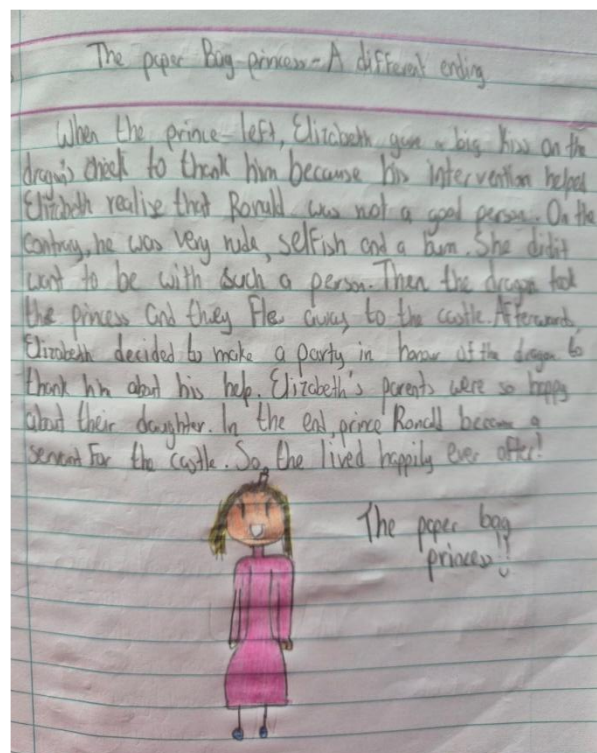
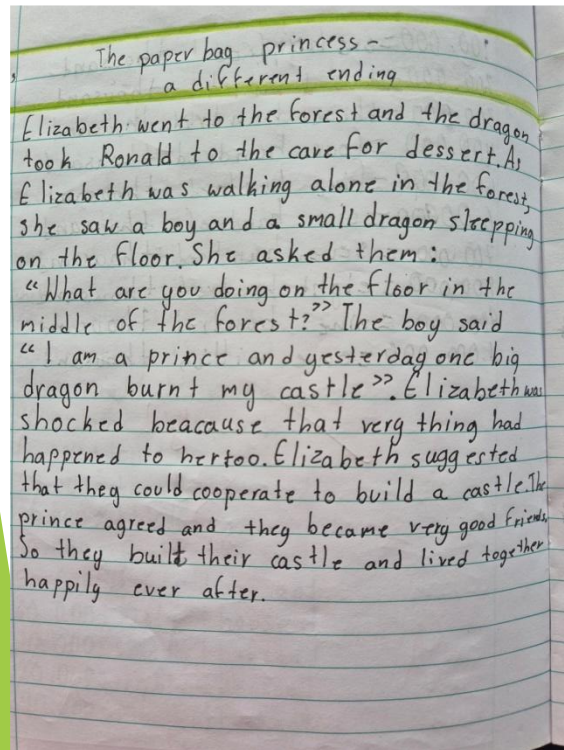
Task Description:

Groups create a new ending for the story.

Focus: Creative Writing

Competences: Literacy competence, Entrepreneurship competence, Cultural awareness

Critical Thinking Skill: Generating better alternatives



The Paper Bag Princess (Robert Munsch)

Digital Interview

Task Description:

Students record short interview videos acting as reporters and characters. (e.g. Dragon's Point of View)

Competences: Digital competence, Literacy competence, Personal/social competence

Critical Thinking Skill: Perspective-taking

Paper Bag Fashion Design

Task Description:

Students design an outfit for Elizabeth using paper bags or recycled materials.

Competences: Entrepreneurship competence, Cultural awareness, Literacy competence

Critical Thinking Skill: Creative problem-solving