

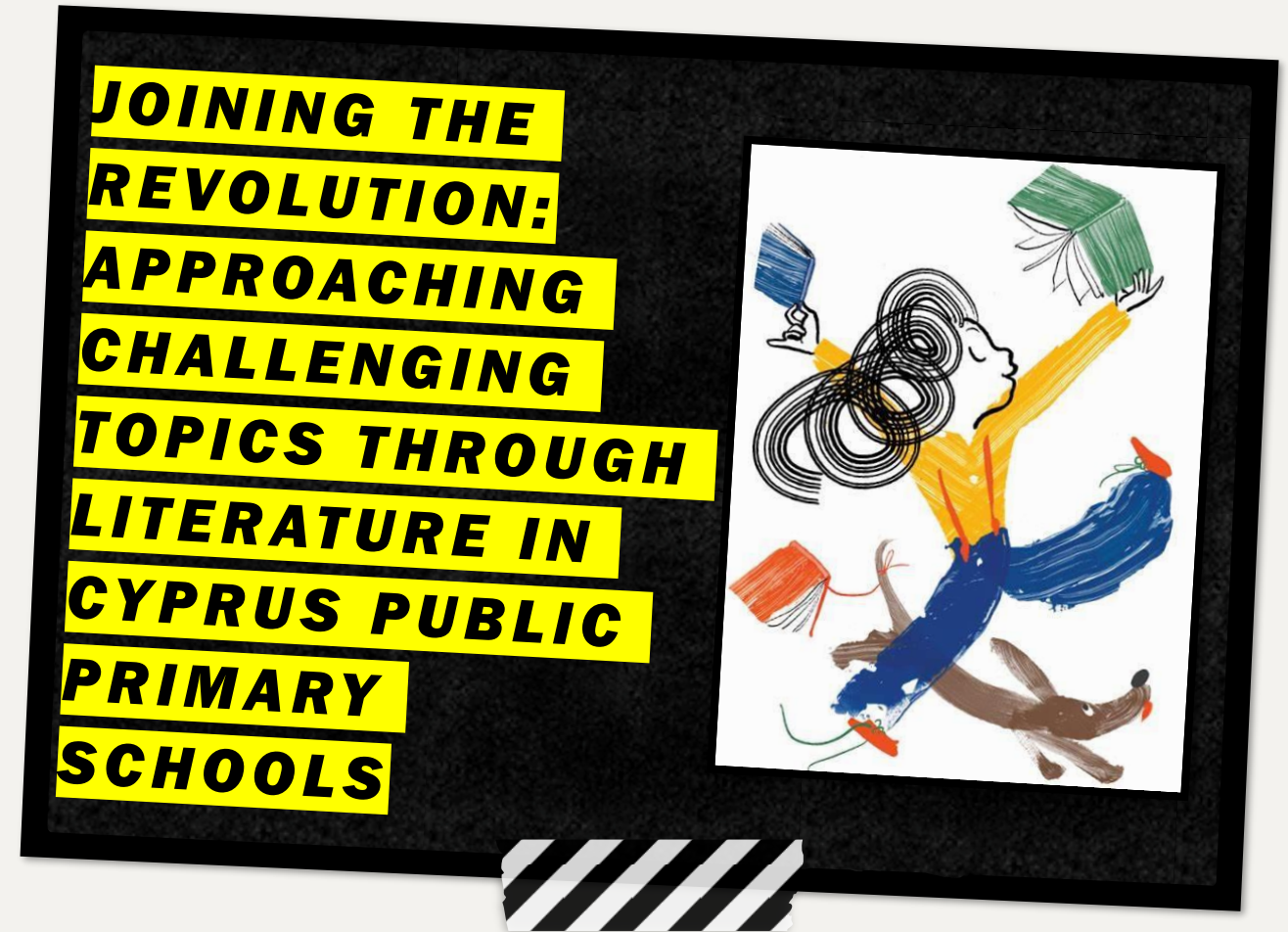
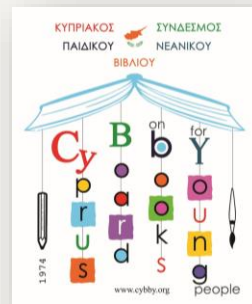
Charalambos Demetriou

Cyprus Ministry of Education

*Curriculum Development and Support
(Children's Literature)*

Teacher

Cyprus IBBY Board Member

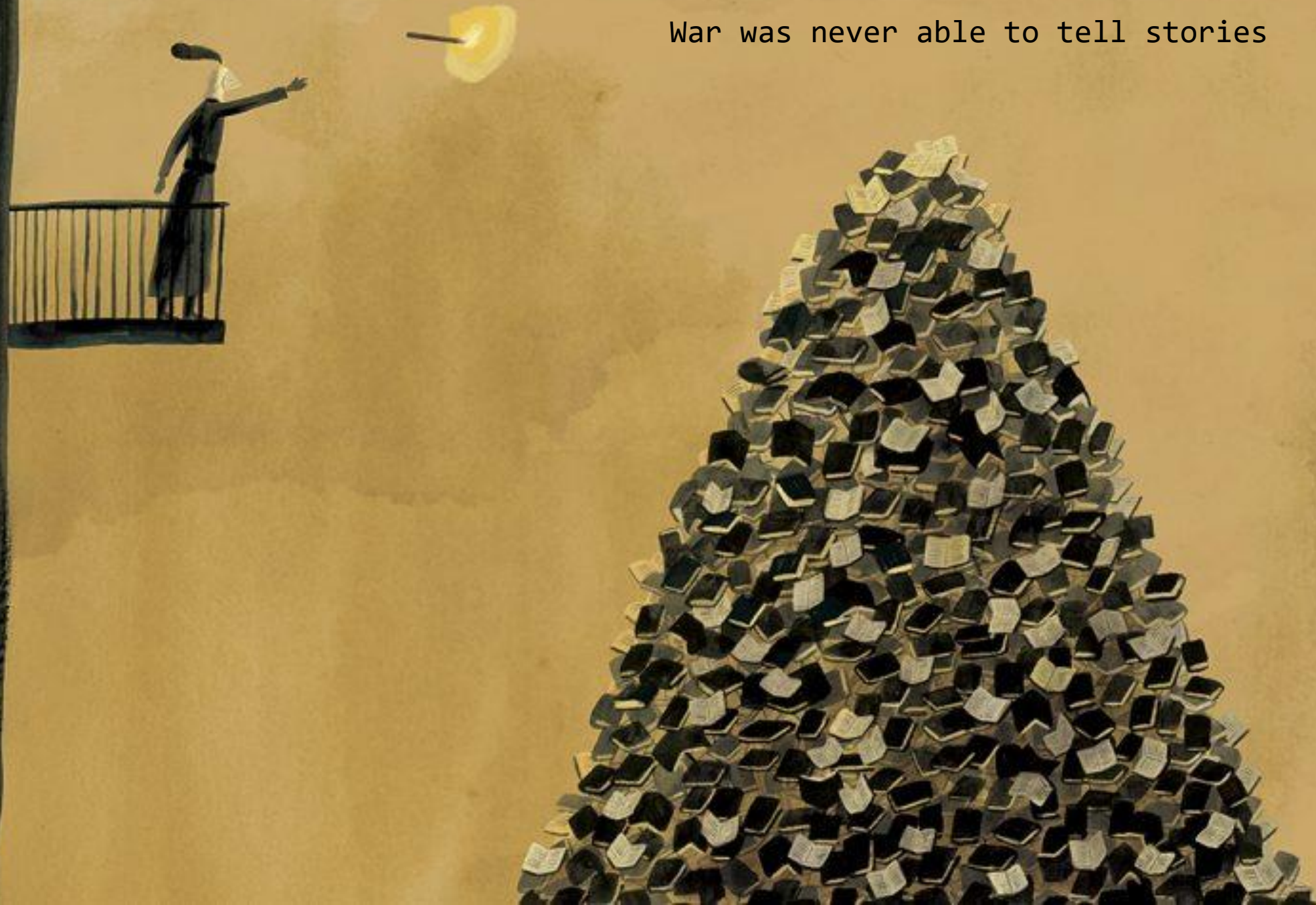


Trieste 1787 - Rigas Feraios

- Greek Enlightenment: writer, political thinker, and revolutionary
- His writings and actions inspired the Greek War of Independence in 1821.
- Rigas Feraios was arrested in Trieste by the Austrian authorities. At the time, Austria was an ally of the Ottoman Empire, and they were concerned that the French Revolution might incite similar upheavals in their realm.



War was never able to tell stories



Challenging Topics

Banning challenging books to assumedly “protect” young readers – problematic

“Supporting children’s intellectual freedom requires courage and commitment, yet it is one of the most important responsibilities of literacy educators”

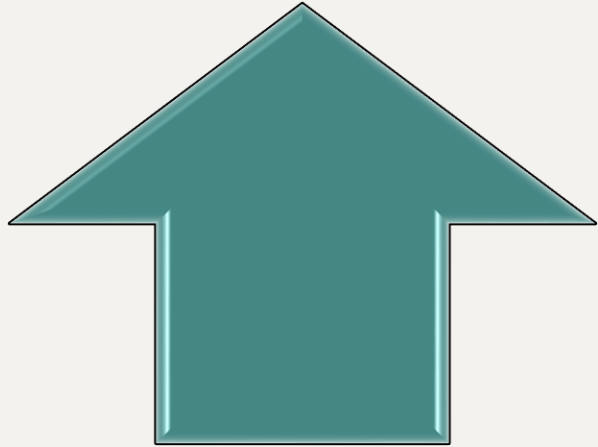
(Hartsfield and Kimmel, 2020, p.426)



Reviewing Literature

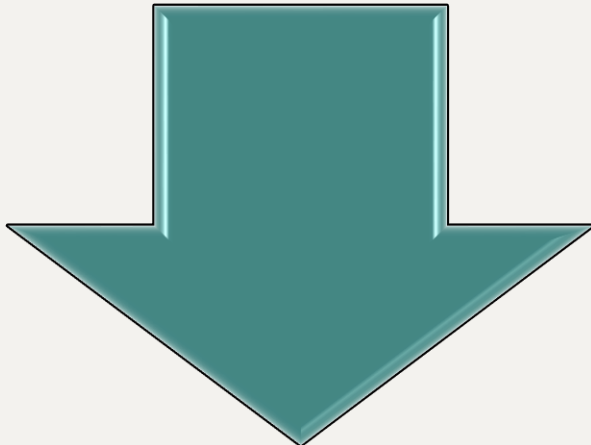


Loss and Grief



Open and honest communication -> high self-esteem levels in children and their ability of coming to terms with loss

(Field, Tzadikario, Pel, & Ret, 2014; Hurd, 1999)



Absence of communication -> feelings of anxiety, depression & stress for children

(Ellis, Dowrick, & Lloyd-Williams, 2013; Raveis, Siegel, & Karus, 1999; Wallin, Steineck, Nyberg, & Kreicbergs, 2016)



Loss and Grief

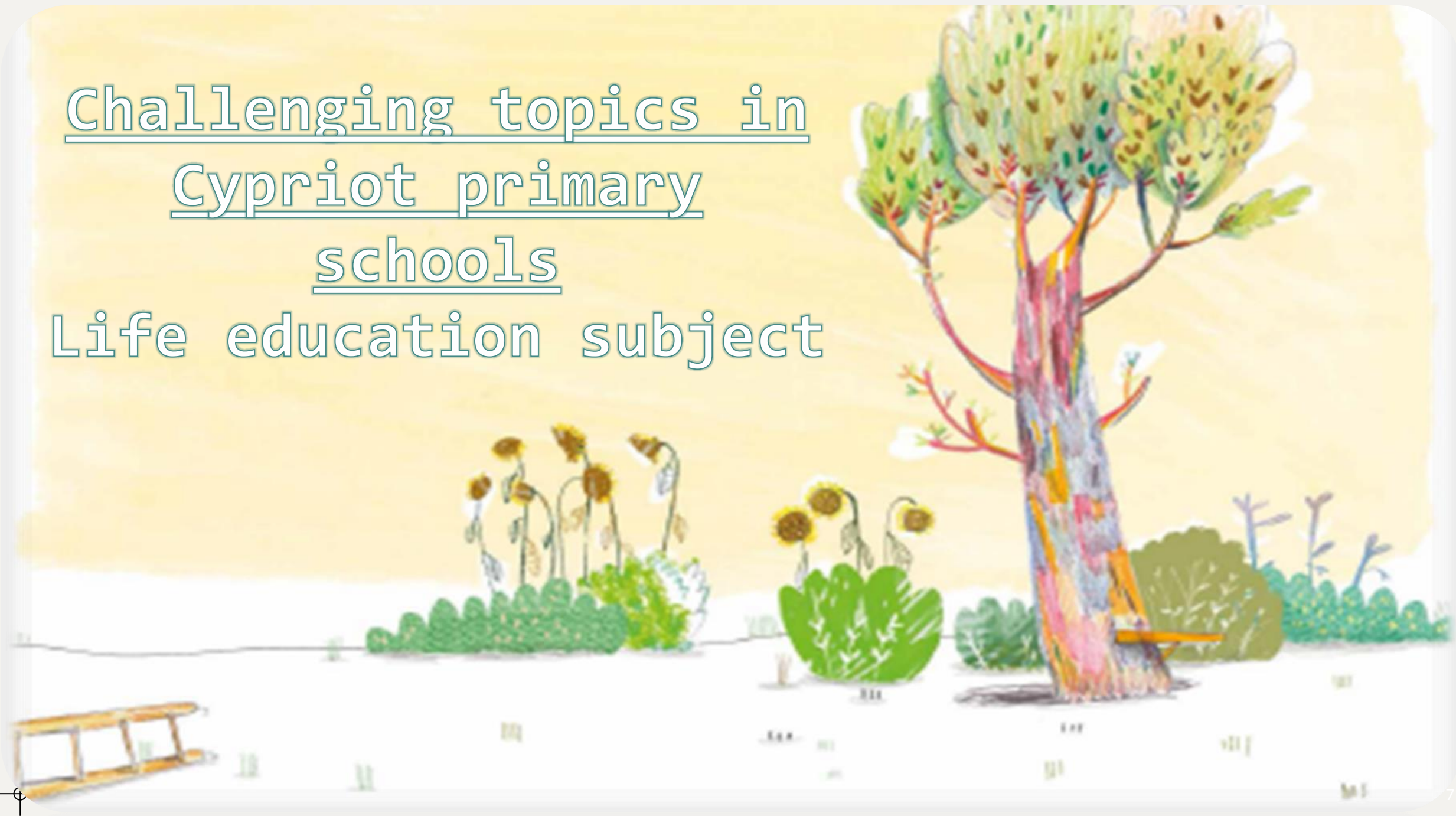
Literature Review



- Children less “protected” from information about death -> better adjustment to the process of dealing with loss, both as children and as adults (Martinčková, et al., 2018)
- The role of a supportive teacher and the significance of being able to talk openly about loss (Holland, 2008; Lytje, 2018)
- Teachers often feel they do not possess the necessary knowledge and skills to support a grieving child (Dyregrov, Dyregrov, & Idsoe, 2013; Holland, 2003; Papadatou, Metallinou, Hadjichristou, & Pavlidi, 2002)



Challenging topics in
Cypriot primary
schools
Life education subject



“Words on Waves”

- Written by Elena Perikleous

Acclaimed author

Cyprus IBBY president



- Illustrations by Iris Samartzi

Acclaimed illustrator

Nominated for the H.C. Andersen

Award 2020 and 2022



- Scientific editing by Dr Polyxeni Stylianou

“Death education” expert - educator



- Published by the Cyprus Ministry of Education (Pedagogical Institute) - In every school of Cyprus.

Έλενα Περικλέους

Λόγια

στα

κύματα

Επιστημονική επιμέλεια:
Δρ Πολυξένη Στυλιανού

Εικονογράφηση:
Ίρις Σαμαρτζή

“LIFE EDUCATION” SUBJECT

(4TH-6TH GRADE)

“Words on Waves”

Approaches concepts of loss and grief through literature

Aim:

- To introduce children to the stages of grief after a significant loss
- To discuss the importance of memories

Story:

Three letters to the child’s grandfather are left as paper boats on the waves. These letters have a therapeutic function, relieving and guiding the child and adult reader to accept mourning and loss.

The book’s illustrations enhance the story and, at the same time, tell a series of other stories that the children can “read”





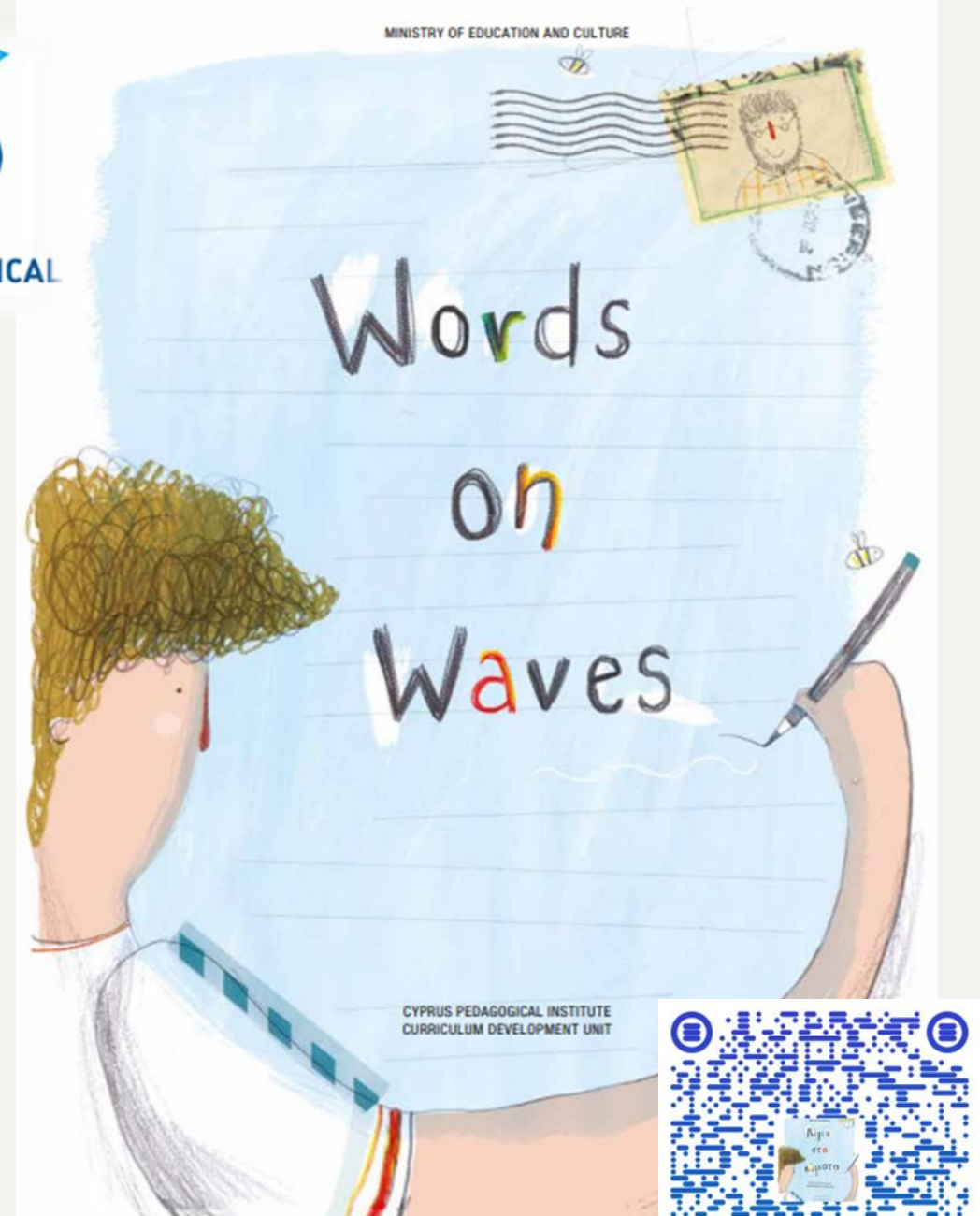
Lesson Plan for Teachers

Implemented several times, and research results were presented at international conferences about Death Education.

International scholars' interest prompted Cyprus Pedagogical Institute to translate and publish the book and lesson plan in English

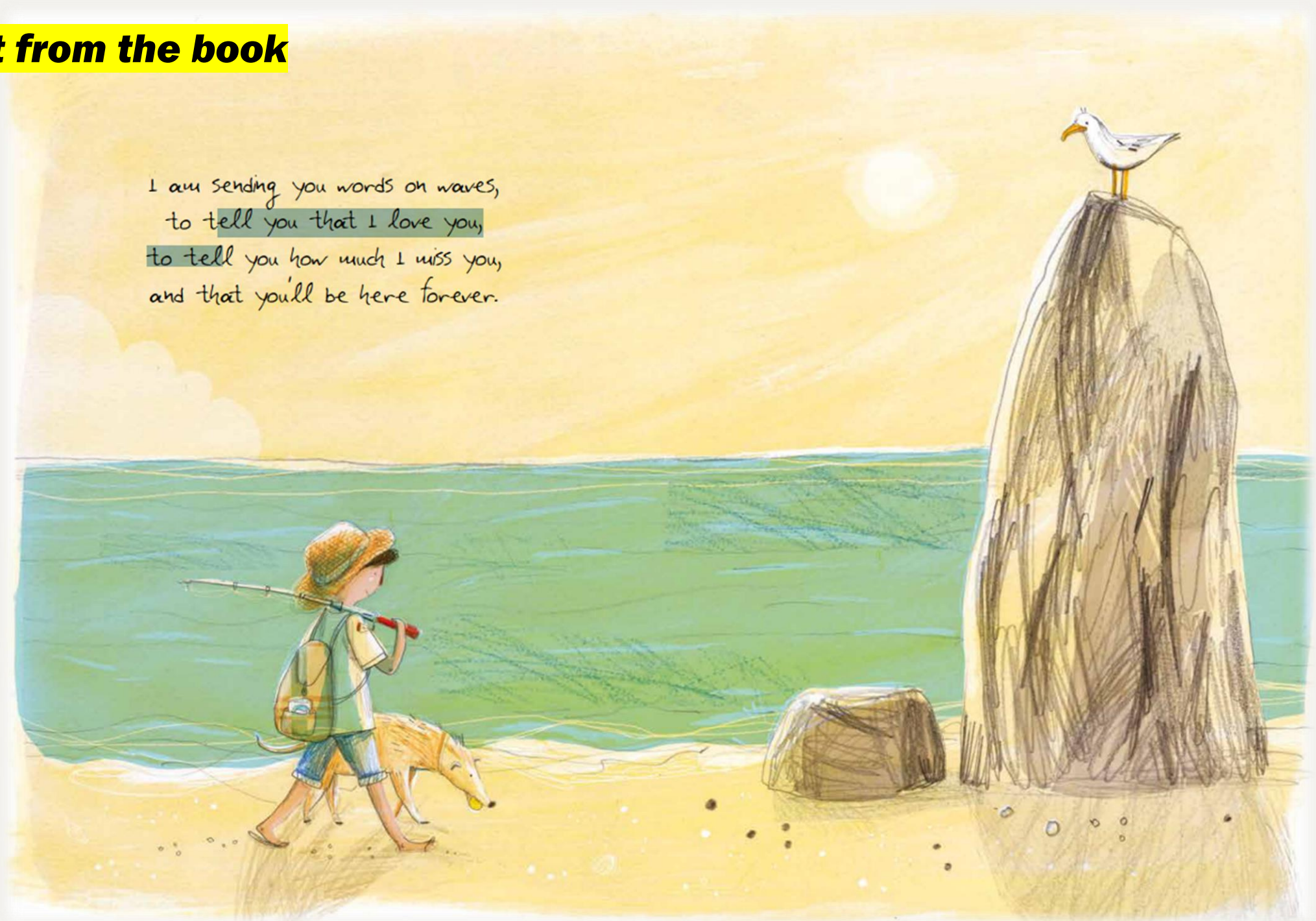
Lesson plan

“Life Education” subject (4th-6th grade)



Excerpt from the book

I am sending you words on waves,
to tell you that I love you,
to tell you how much I miss you,
and that you'll be here forever.



Activity example - Paper Boats

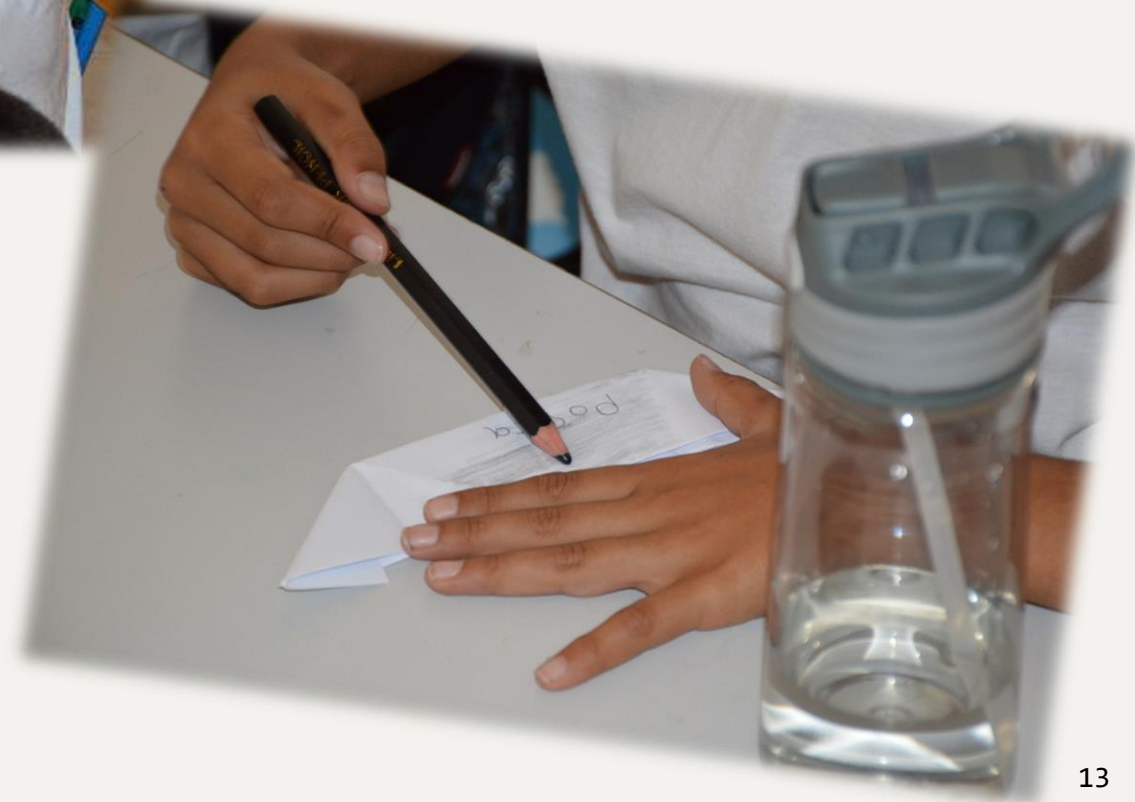


- Children are asked to make paper boats and to write on them a poem, a letter or to draw something for a loved one that they have lost (a human or animal, by death or other type of separation).

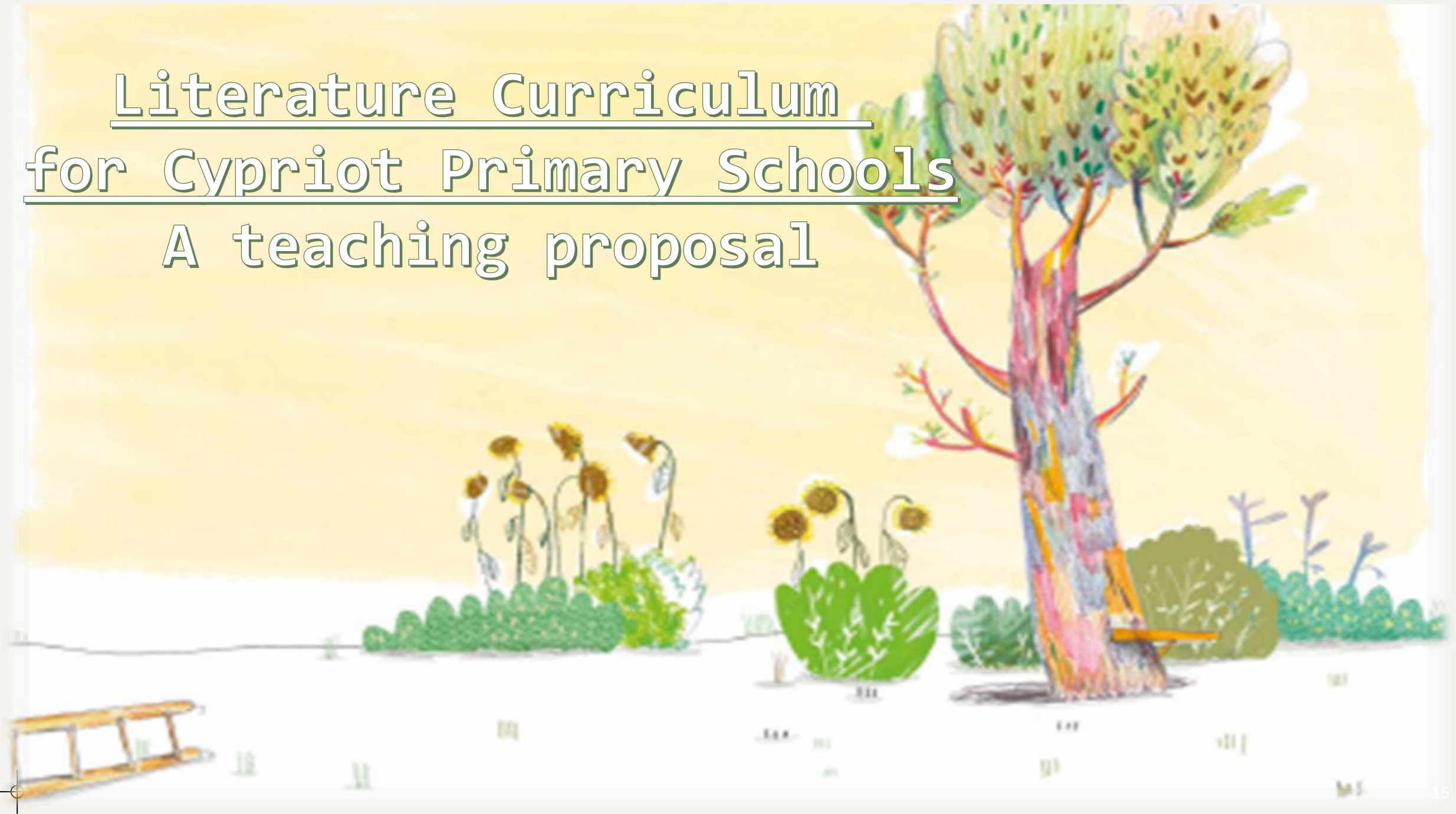
Words on waves.

Professor Neimeyer (2006) refers to this activity as a therapeutic technique for both children and adults to navigate their way through the grief process.





Literature Curriculum
for Cypriot Primary Schools
A teaching proposal



...“Therefore, literature enables students to perceive various versions of reality from multifaceted aspects. It encourages them to take a critical stance on personal and social issues. Additionally, its *subversive character* makes it a suitable subject for children and adolescents within the context of a school that respects youth and fosters *curiosity and inquiry*” (Literature for Primary Schools Homepage)

“We can make a space for healthy controversy in the classroom, despite the -sometimes-contentious relationship among ‘stakeholders’ -students, teachers, administrators, parents and community”

(Susan Fanetti, 2012)

ΛΟΓΟΤΕΧΝΙΑ
ΔΗΜΟΤΙΚΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

Λογοτεχνία Υλικό Δράσεις Επιμόρφωση Ενημέρωση Ημερολόγιο Επικοινωνία

Αναζητήση...

Αναλυτικό Πρόγραμμα

Αναλυτικό Πρόγραμμα

Επερχόμενες Δραστηριότητες

Ενημέρωση

Αριθμός	Θέμα	Καταχώριση
γπρ17036	26ος Πανελλήνιος Διαγωνισμός Ανάγνωσης Παιδικού Λογοτεχνικού Βιβλίου «ΒΙΒΛΙΟΔΡΟΜΙΕΣ 2024»	23/04/2024
γπρ16447	26ος Πανελλήνιος Διαγωνισμός Παιδικού Λογοτεχνικού Βιβλίου «ΒΙΒΛΙΟΔΡΟΜΙΕΣ 2024»	11/12/2023
γπρ16090	Διαπαιδαγωγικό Έργο Πανελλήνιου Διαγωνισμού Ανάγνωσης Παιδικού Λογοτεχνικού Βιβλίου «ΒΙΒΛΙΟΔΡΟΜΙΕΣ 2023»	27/09/2023
γπρ15927	Το βιβλίο των Σχολικών ΙΙΙ	06/09/2023

Σύστημα Ενημέρωσης

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Proposed Teaching Unit:
“Literature and
Society/Human Relations”

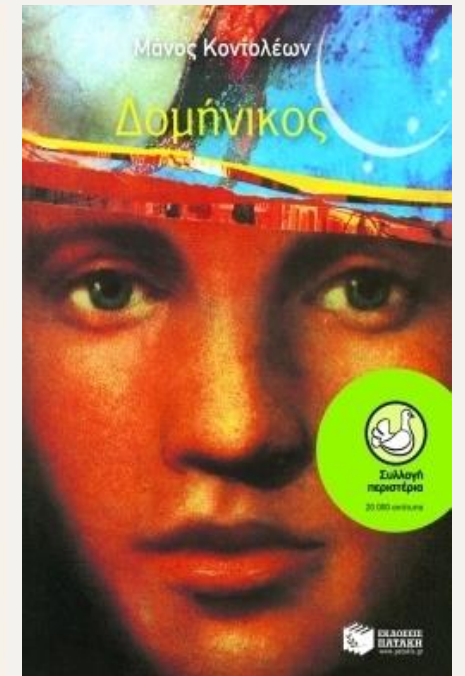
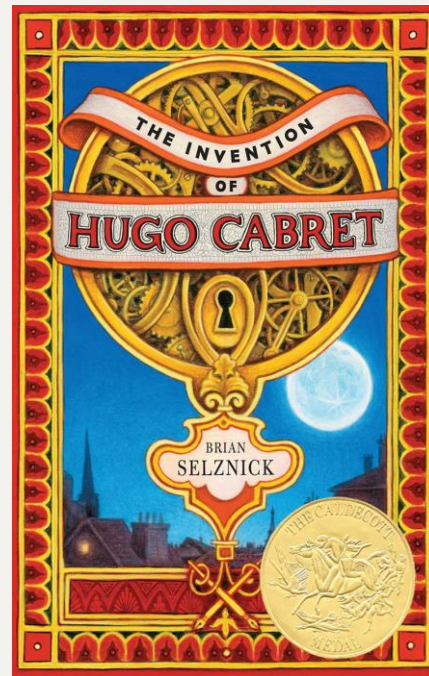
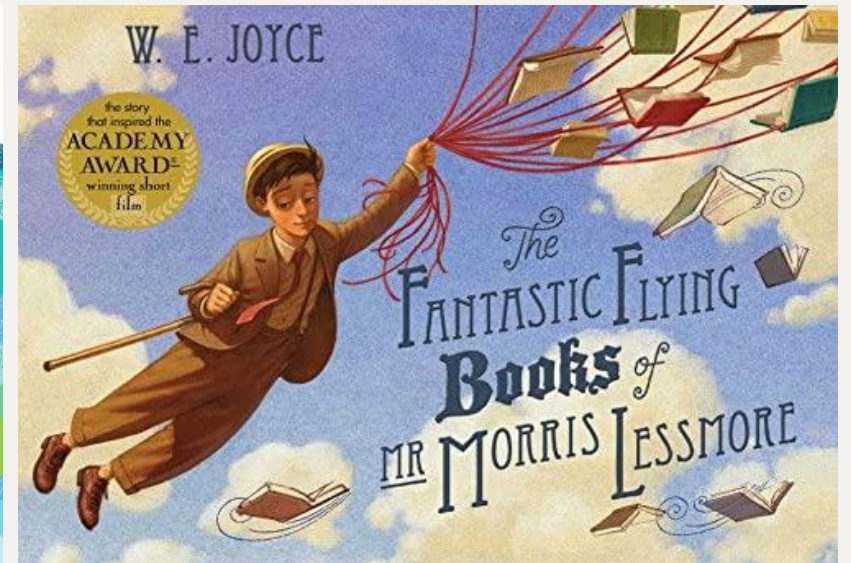
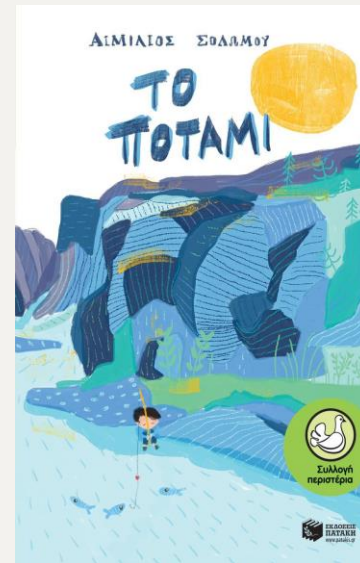
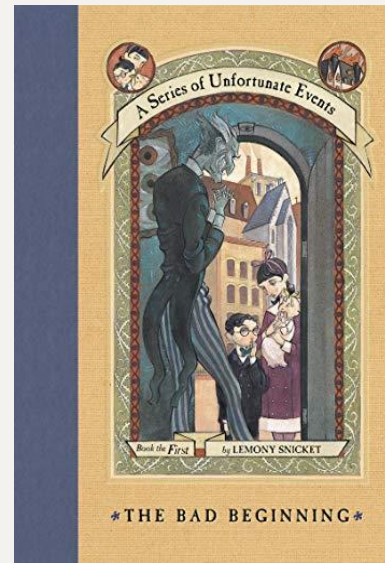
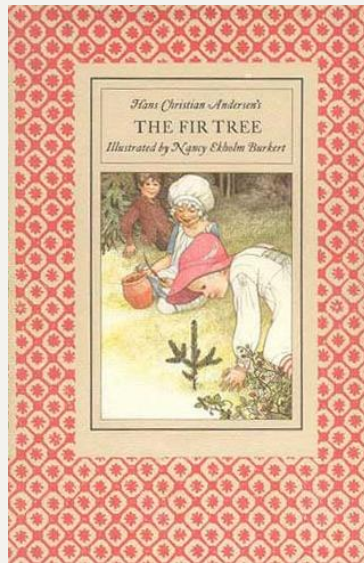
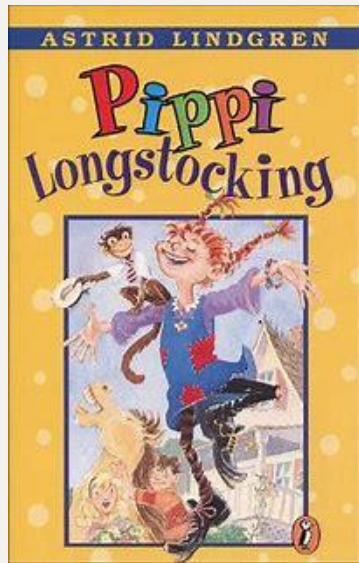
Theme: "Loss - Grief"



This is me, sad...

17

“Sad Book”, by Michael Rosen

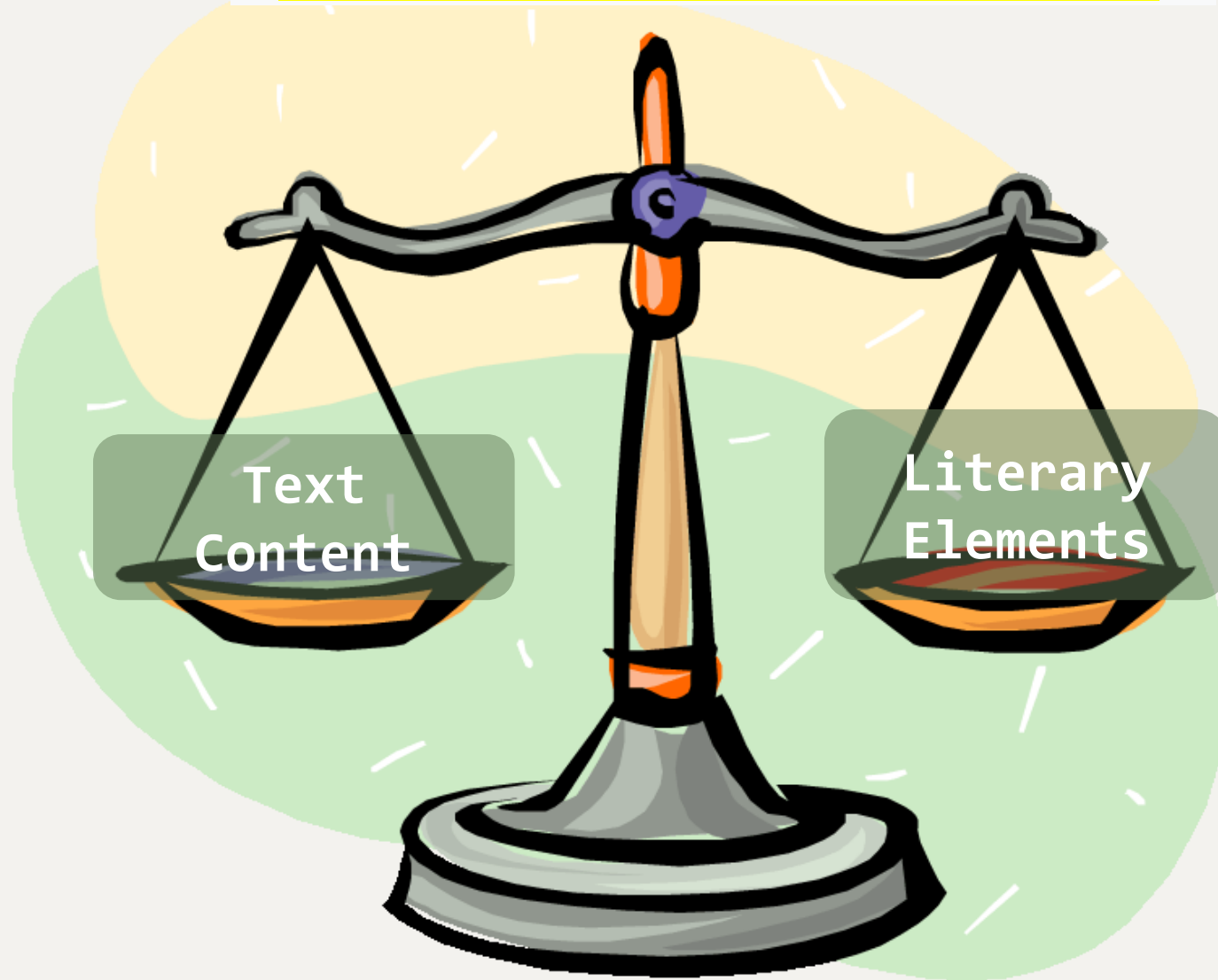


"Text Pack" – Intertextual Connections

- *Comparing different/similar points of view*
- *Theme becomes the link between texts*
- *Texts "converse" with each other*
- *Interaction with content of texts and literary elements (Literary Literacy)*



Balanced presentation



Indicators of proficiency and success ²⁰



Examples

Text content:

- How do the Bontleur brothers (A series of Unfortunate events) react to the news of their parents' death and how does Mary Lenox (Secret garden)?



Literary literacy:

- Writer (H.C. Andersen - *The fir Tree*) and Recorder of a folk story (L. Lambrelli - *The voice of the sand*)
- 1st person narrative vs 3rd person narrative - function/differences



While Engaging with the Texts

Children:

- Explore different literary genres
- Learn about the ingredients of writing
- Dive into creative writing or other expressive media
- Discover and use writing techniques
- Interact with texts and each other
- Motivated to read the entire books



**The healing and
relieving power of
stories**



Literary Pharmacies

Literature can provide countless “escape rooms”

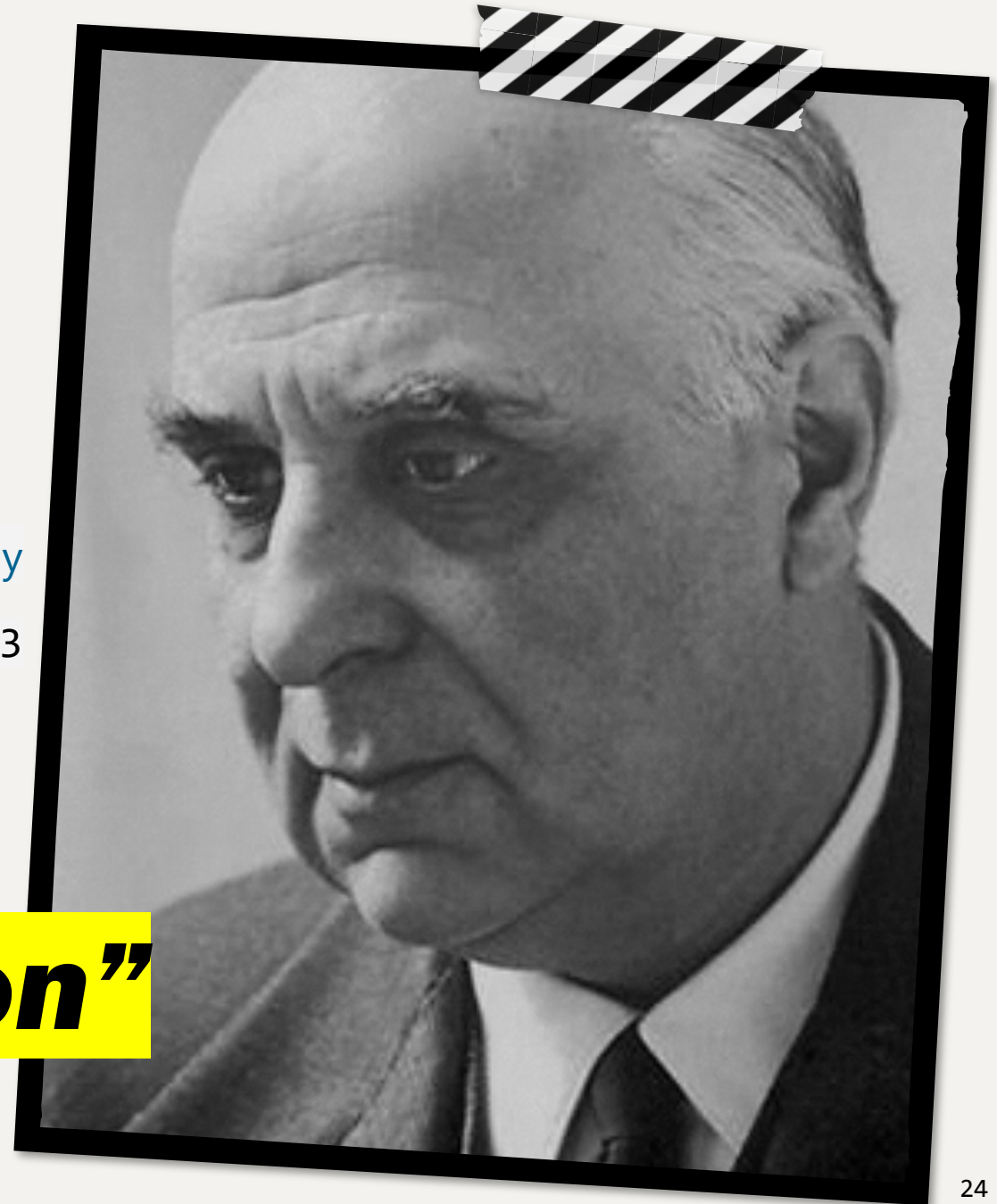


“And if I speak to you in fairy tales and parables,
it’s because you hear them more sweetly,
and horror remains unspoken because it is alive,
silent, and persistent...”

Cava dei Tirreni, Salerno, Italy

George Seferis, Nobel prize 1963

“The last station”



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