



AGENCY FOR
MOBILITY AND
EU PROGRAMMES



Handbook 4 RSP readers



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The Handbook for Reluctant, Struggling and Poor Readers

Project partners:

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<http://handbook4rsreaders.org/>

In this edition of the project newsletter first we will present you our Praha Campus event and in the latter part you will see many other successful activities and collaborations made in the past six months. Enjoy the content, and feel free to send us any comments or suggestions on our group e-mail address: partners@handbook4rspreaders.org

PRAHA CAMPUS

“Praha Campus”, one of the most important activities of our project, was organised with an intent of bettering 15 to 18 years old students’ reading skills, developing and applying new methods and ways to improve students’ capabilities and personal motivation. The Campus was conducted in the Czech Republic, from May 7th to May 16th 2017, and involved 22 students and 8 teachers (mentors). To carry out the activity, teachers prepared workshops in which they replaced traditional literature processing methods with new, innovative and improved methodologies.

DAY ONE – MAY 8th

First day started with a **Czech** workshop named „**Book illustration workshop**“, during which students discussed their most significant national writers and their contributions to the national literature. Groups created posters of national writers and presented life and work of a significant national writer to other groups, offering a different perspective by telling a life story with details which they have never heard before.



Students and mentors in front of Nahorni High School where the first workshop, Book illustration workshop, was held



Work of Slovakian students portraying Samo Chalupka, Slovakian romantic poet

After, hosts organised an interactive Prague walk "**Secrets of the old town**", a sightseeing tour of historical heart of Prague. To make the walk more interesting, while sightseeing students had a mission to take a photograph of each spot, buy or take a picture of the most bizarre souvenir that they have found during the day, take pictures of the most interesting places they have seen on the tour and mark the places they have visited in their map. This interactive walk enabled students to explore the old town having a lot of fun.

DAY TWO – MAY 9th



Students presenting their results of the "Prose court" activity

The second day, led by **Croatian** teachers, was all about improving student's motivation for reading. Teachers Crnek and Božanić came up with an idea to organise a real trial for the students! Ok, not completely real, but you couldn't agree with that considering the atmosphere! During that first activity, **Prose court**, students read an excerpt from the book „Great Gatsby" written by Scott Fitzgerald and each group needed to argue why is the character

chosen by their group responsible for Gatsby's death. By the end of the activity, students were having fun

comping up with their own, completely different ending to a book! In the second activity called **The hero's journey**, students used a five-step diagram to interpret the excerpt from the previously read "Black gate opens" by J.R.R. Tolkien, and then used that diagram to write a short fantasy story during the final activity named **Fantasy**.

DAY THREE – MAY 10th

Third day of the meeting was a day for **Slovakian** literary workshops during which students became detectives! They were given a task of finding a specific book in a library, following clues hidden in various books. When they found the final book "I'll give you the sun", one of the tasks was to create an internal monologue for the main characters. Next activity was called **Pantomime a story**. Each group was given an excerpt of the story; they had to read it, pantomime it and record it, after which they were all trying to arrange it in the correct order to create a storyline. The third activity, named by the story by Isaac Asimov **The fun they had**, started with the pre-activity in which each group was on a mission to recognize as many books as they could from a collage of pictures. Student's next task was to read the story, place main characters from future to the present and illustrate it in a comic.



Example of the comic from the activity „The fun they had"

DAY FOUR – MAY 11th

Drama workshop **Stretching the imagination** was a Czech workshop for the fourth day, and it constituted out of two main activities. In the first one, called **Leaving home**, students were divided into groups, and from each

group one student who is different had to leave, while others had to come up with a good reason why he or she should leave the group. The aim of the activity was for students to experience the feeling of being

different and to be able to recognise this kind of judgement in real life. In the second activity, **Departures**, students read a story *Departures* by Jan Pytel, described a character and wrote a few parts of a diary of an imaginary person experiencing real historical events. Aim of this activity was for students to experience the feeling of and missing somebody/ something and find innovative ways to express feelings.



Students during the "Leaving home" activity

DAY FIVE – MAY 12th

The leading methodology for the fifth day was those of Italian teachers, called "learning by doing". Day started with students playing a memory game in the activity **Memory games: Bums on the outside, libraries inside**, based on the book "Fahrenheit 451" by Ray Bradbury. In the following activity, **Impossible interviews**, students read two short science-fiction stories "Pattern" and "Sentry" written by Fredric Brown, created imaginary, impossible interviews with aliens and then played them in front of other groups. During the last activity **So many faces in one story - Cubing**, students worked on an excerpt from the book „The diaries of Adam and Eve" written by Mark Twain, using three cubes with creative activities on their sides. Students had a mission to read a paragraph, throw the dice and present the activity written on top of the cube. This game was also used in activity **Reading for fun** in which students participated in an entertaining competition based on questions about the text and its author. This "gamification of learning" is an educational approach to motivate students to learn using game elements in learning environments. The goal is to maximise enjoyment and engagement, capturing the interest of learners and inspiring them to continue learning.



Students and mentors during Italian workshop

DAY SIX – MAY 13th

Czech workshops on the sixth day started with activity *The readhead*, based on a short story written by Russian surrealist Daniil Kharms. The aim of this activity was to encourage student's sympathy with the characters. Students also learned how to use diagrams to creatively write down important people in their life. During the following activity *Of waves and man*, students read an excerpt from the book „Of waves and man" by Tom Hadrava, analysed the language and predicted the meaning of unknown words in given excerpt. After that, students' job was to fantasize! Activity *One entry per person* encouraged students to talk about different worlds and act (in groups) upon entering those worlds. Thinking about good and bad things in every world made students stretch their imagination.



Fantasising with Tom Hadrava

DAY SEVEN – MAY 14th



Students on the Vltava river

To make this day special, Croatian embassy in Prague organised an **Adriatic day** on Vltava river. Partners planned how to enjoy a beautiful day in Prague and refresh it with reading activities, so each country prepared one of the students to read aloud one song in their mother tongue language. After that, all students had an opportunity to ride the river in a traditional wooden Czech boat. Boat ride offered a beautiful view of Prague from a different perspective.

DAY EIGHT – MAY 15th

On the last day of Prague Campus, students and their mentors visited **Olomouc**. They had a sightseeing tour of the ecclesiastical metropolis and historical capital city of Moravia, Olomouc. They also visited one of the most important landmarks of the city, Church of Saint Michael, as well as the city hall. After, they went to visit

The Research Library, the second oldest and third largest library of its kind in the Czech Republic, founded in 1566. They enjoyed a presentation about its rich tradition and an extensive collection covering various interesting subjects in more than 2 million volumes.



On the stairs of The Research Library

PROJECT MEETINGS

Praha Campus included project meetings, gathering only teacher representatives of each project country. While students attended guided Book illustration workshop in *Nahorni High school*, partners discussed activities taking place during the Campus. At the end of the Campus, one more project meeting was held while students were on a sightseeing tour in Olomouc. During this meeting, each partner revised the elements, strength and weakness of their own workshop and highlighted possible changes to the existing and future activities needed for successful realization of Handbook for RSP readers.

RESULTS

Comparing results collected on the first day (initial questionnaires) and results collected on the last day of Prague Campus (final questionnaires) significant improvements are visible:

1. **Motivation for reading** has **increased** (86% of students have better motivation for reading now than at the beginning of the Campus)
2. Students are **more confident** to read in front of the group (increase of 40%)
3. Students **are able to identify** with book characters even more (increase of 11%)
4. Students are more confident in **expressing their opinions** about books (increase of 14%)

It is important to emphasize that Praha Campus encouraged students to see positive effects of reading on motivation skills, knowledge transfer, artistic expression, organizational skills and team work.



Students and teachers on the last day of the Campus

And what have we been doing before Prague?

We promoted the project, opened students to new perspectives and achieved successful collaborations. We brought writers closer to students, talked about the importance of reading, inspired interest of both teachers and students and much more. But, it would be best if we showed you some pictures, wouldn't it?



Team of teachers from *Liceo Seguenza* gave students a chance to meet great Italian writer Dacia Maraini, often considered a writer of feminist literature. The author herself says, with a smile on her face, that she is a feminist only because she is always on the women's side!

Eva Szanyiová and her colleagues from *Gymnazium Pavla Jozefa Šafarika* organised an interesting conversation for their students. Students had an opportunity to learn from Slovakian writer Jan Zbojtek who, besides presenting his book *ABS book of health*, talked to them on how to stay healthy in the modern times.



Students from the *X gymnasium Ivan Supek* participated in a literary meet with Olja Savičević Ivančević, author of the novel *Pjevač u noći*. Literary meeting was organised by the project coordinator and school's headmistress Željka Frković, in association with Gavella theatre.

Olja Savičević Ivančević is one of the most successful representatives of Croatian contemporary literature and always enjoys sharing her thoughts on literary creation, inspiring love for books and reading.



Shortly after, students from *X. gimnazija Ivan Supek* talked to Croatian writer Kristijan Novak, author of the popular novel *Ciganin ali najljepši*.

Kristijan Novak is also a very successful representative of Croatian contemporary literature and a very welcomed guest on debates and literary meetings because of his specific approach that arouses interest for reading in young people.



With a help from their teacher, Jan Pytel, students from *Stredni škola Nahorni* organized a drama night in the Kamen theatre in Praha. School's drama section did a performance called *Project Billi*, after which students read their works written in the creative writing classes during the school year.

Aquilonis participated in the ceremony awarding the best works submitted to *Po(E)zitiva*, a nation-wide high school poetry writing competition, organised by the School for graphic design and media. This year's competition was tribute to the 95th anniversary of Vesna Parun's birth, thus putting *woman in art* as the main theme of the competition.





Gymnazium Pavla Jozefa Šafarika flamed students' interest with new set of posters for previously started WALL READING competition. New excerpts are from fantasy books popular among the students, and posters are again put both in English and Slovak language. Students participate by visiting school web site and answering related questions. In this second part of the competition, they started to compete immediately and are eager to read and win.

Mirela Barbaroša Šikić from *Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency* promoted project vision among teachers, enabling the project activities to have effect on as many schools as possible. While visiting schools, she was listening and talking to both teachers and students, finding out their outlook on the project problematic, problems they face and solutions they use.



Jan Pytel inspired creativity, imagination and expression in *Nahory high school* students by organising creative writing workshops. Workshops resulted with many great papers which showed students' accentuated love for creative writing and written expression in general.



Students from *Liceo Seguenza* , as well as other pupils from lots of local schools, took part in a project organised by the Regional Library.

Liceo students decided to develop a project about Catania. This initiative was very motivating for students because they were also attending several seminars and conferences about different topics, held by University professors and journalists.

Teachers from *Gymnazium Pavla Jozefa Šafarika* organised a book market. Students brought books they wanted to trade or give to other students. Interest for the market was very high and students gladly participated as they found it very fun and interesting.



Jelena Crnek, project coordinator, held a talk on the State Professional Conference of Teachers of the Croatian Language. Attendees listened to various lectures on the problematic of media literacy in Croatia and the possibilities of including media culture in primary and secondary schools' curriculum. Project coordinator had a lecture introducing our project, current achievements and future project activities in the upcoming project phases.

Students from *Nahory high school* woke up their minds and bodies during drama workshops, but not only that! Czech partners also started a competition in which students could participate by translating a selected poem from English to Czech.



Students from *Gymnázium Pavla Jozefa Šafárika* took part in an amazing „book day“ in the local library *Gemerská knižnica Pavla Dobšinského* in *Rožňava*. Teachers *Eva Szanyiová*, *Tatiana Chocholová* and *Lýdia Kalinová* worked hard to create intriguing and inspiring activities and succeeded in their mission to make students feel comfortable and inspired while spending time in a library.



Teachers from *Liceo Seguenza* motivated students to go on a book hunt! Students, grouped in different teams, were involved in a challenging and exciting game based on their knowledge about books and authors. The games were loosely based on the Italian TV programme "Per un pugno di libri" which showed great results in inspiring student's enthusiasm: they really read for fun!



We did a lot of other activities, too!

You can follow our work on our [Croatian](#) or [English](#) Facebook and the [project web site](#)!