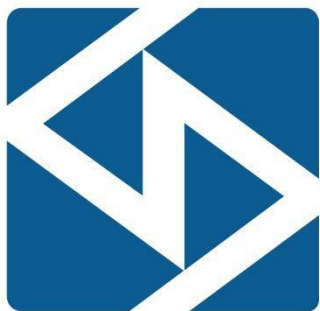


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“You cannot open a book without learning something.”

Confucius

Dear All,

Spring is a wonderful time indeed and while it is exciting to experience the beautiful weather and nature, we have also been working hard to prepare a new newsletter for all of you, with one great surprise, too!

Without further ado, we are extremely proud to present you **Ken Wilson**'s first chapter of his novel ***The Duke's portrait***, in the **Creative Corner** ! And since this is only the first of several, remember to stay tuned for the next chapters!

In the **Borrowed From** column, this time we are hosting **Dimitris Tzouris** and **Margarita Kosior** who explain us how to teach with TED Talks and how to Create our Own Lessons with TED-Ed.

In the **ELT Flash** section, our very own **Branka Dečković** and **Svetlana Gavrilović** report back from TEA'S Graz ConneXion in a very 'original' way (**you have to read it!!**). **Svetlana Gavrilović** gives us an account of *The Cinquain Poetry Contest* in Užice Grammar School and also presents the six winning entries. Again from Užice Grammar School, **Svetlana Gavrilović** narrates about an evening of poetry and music dedicated to women, which was called *The Phenomenal Woman*. Last, **Sanja Čonjagić** is very excited to tell us all about her experience at the 8th ELTA international conference in Tirana , Albania. Make sure you read a very special article *Small Town Stories* written by **Boris Kučera**, you will see why!!!

There are also 2 excellent **Lesson plans** which all teachers can use. One is by **Branka Dečković**. It is called *A picture is worth a thousand words* and, as Branka explains, the students are given a picture and two short articles about it, discuss about the validity and reliability of the information they find on the internet and then write a short newspaper article in the form of an argumentative essay.

The 2nd lesson plan is by **Nevena Stoilkov**, in which students can revise parts of the body with the help of monster drawings. That's why the title is *My Monster!*

In the **Students' Corner** we also have two exciting stories written by twin brothers **Marko** and **Igor Medvedev** about the International Junior Science Olympiad held in Argentina.

As always, of course, **Branka Dečković** brings us all the information about the upcoming events in the ELT world.

Finally, we would like to remind you that the ELTA Conference will take place on the 20th and 21st of May in Belgrade and we hope to see you all. Be there!

We would like to thank our readers as well as our writers for supporting us. Thank you for contributing your work. Your support is invaluable! We hope you will enjoy this issue too and we encourage you to write for the ELTA Newsletter and share your ideas and experience with other colleagues.

Write to us at newsletter.elta@gmail.com

All the best,

ELTA Editorial Team

The Duke's portrait
A novel by Ken Wilson

Chapter 1

The Oxford to Cheltenham stopping train pulled into the station and groaned to a halt. A booming voice on the platform announced: "Stanford St Mary! Stanford St Mary! Alight here [*dramatic pause*] for Stanford St Mary!"

After putting so much effort into his announcement, Arnold McGurk the stationmaster must have been disappointed to see only one person get off the train. Charles Goodgame, a young man with untidy sandy-coloured hair, stumbled out of the compartment that he had been sharing with an elderly vicar and his wife, put his battered leather suitcase and a wooden box down on the platform and promptly fell over them. McGurk marched down the platform, grabbed one of Charles's arms and tugged him to his feet.

"Ouch! Um... thank you," said Charles. "Oh, bugger!" he added, when he realised that his portfolio of canvases was still on the train. "Hold on a sec." He turned to get back into the compartment. Unfortunately, McGurk the stationmaster was still holding his arm in an iron grip.

"I say, can you let go?" said Charles. "I need to get back on the train."

"The train is about to depart," said McGurk, and blew his whistle. Charles pulled away from him, opened the compartment door and leapt inside. The stationmaster slammed the door behind him and blew his whistle again. When the train started moving, Charles had no choice but to lean up and pull the communication cord. The train braked, and he fell and landed heavily in the vicar's lap.

"Uuuuuuuf!" said the vicar.

"Awfully sorry," replied Charles. As he was standing, the train lurched again, and Charles fell diagonally onto the vicar's wife.

"Aaaaaaaaaaah!" said the vicar's wife.

"Many apologies," said Charles.

"Don't mention it," said the vicar's wife, giving Charles a fleeting smile.

Charles grabbed the portfolio, opened the door and quickly stepped back onto the platform, where McGurk, who was an imposing man well over six feet in height, stood in front of him. "I arrest you for a railway-related misdemeanour," he said, with relish.

"Really?" said Charles. "Can you actually do that?"

Instead of answering, McGurk emitted a loud yelp and collapsed in a heap on the platform. Charles looked down at him, puzzled. When he looked up again, his stepsister Polly was standing behind the fallen giant.

"Hello, Chas!" she said, brightly.

"Good God, Pol, did you do that?"

"Knock out our friend here? Yes."

"How?"

"Yoko Geri," said Polly.

"What?"

"Yoko Geri. It's a karate kick."

"Is he still alive?"

Polly looked down at the inert stationmaster. "I imagine so. Yoko Geri is only fatal in about ten per cent of cases."

"Good," said Charles. "What???"

The vicar was at the window of the compartment. "Is this train leaving or not?" he asked. When he looked down and saw the stationmaster lying on the platform, he added, "I say, is that chap all right?"

"He's fine, he just fainted," said Polly. "A touch of sunstroke."

"Sunstroke?" repeated the vicar doubtfully, looking up at the dark skies. "In November?"

Polly bent down and took the whistle from the unconscious stationmaster's hand. She blew it hard and the train moved slowly away.

"We'd better make ourselves scarce," she said, pocketing the whistle. She picked up the wooden box and Charles grabbed his suitcase and portfolio. They hurried out of the station, where an open-topped two-seater sports car was parked. Polly opened the boot and threw the box into it.

"I say, be careful," said Charles. "Those are my oils."

"Just put your things in there and get in the car," said Polly. "We have to get away from the scene of the crime."

"Oh right," said Charles. "Um yes, what about that chap you just knocked out? Shouldn't we...?"

"Get *in*, will you?"

Polly was already in the driving seat, revving the engine. Charles quickly put his suitcase and portfolio into the boot, slammed it shut and just made it into the car before she pressed her foot hard on the accelerator and the car roared away from the station and out of the village.

Ken Wilson**The Duke's portrait**

Charles looked at her admiringly, as she gripped the huge round steering wheel, her teeth biting her bottom lip, her long blonde hair flying wildly behind her.

"Is this car yours?" he asked.

"No."

"You haven't stolen it, have you?"

"Of course not. It belongs to Gilbert."

"Who's Gilbert?"

"A friend."

The roar of the engine made it almost impossible to have a conversation.

"It's awfully fancy," said Charles. "What is it?"

"SORRY?"

"WHAT KIND OF CAR IS IT?"

"Oh. It's an Alfa Romeo. Latest design, built in 1936, only two years old. It has an inline six engine."

"What does that mean?"

"Six cylinders, in a straight line. Revolutionary."

"I'll take your word for it."

"Don't you know anything about cars?"

"Not a thing," said Charles. "By the way, I didn't know you'd passed your driving test."

"I haven't," said Polly.

"What??"

"Relax, Chas! Driving this thing is a piece of cake. Oh heck..."

She swerved to avoid a small furry creature that was dashing across the road, and the car careered towards the tall thorny hedgerow on the left hand side of the road.

"Look out!" yelled Charles.

The passenger side of the car banged into the hedgerow, and sped along, shaking from side to side. Charles yanked his arm away from the door as sharp hawthorns rat-tat-tatted rapidly against the windscreen and then against him. Polly turned the steering wheel sharply to the right and the car zoomed across the road and scraped along the hedgerow on the other side of the road.

"For Christ's sake, Pol, slow down, will you? You're going to kill us both if you drive like this!"

"Chas, you're such a worry-widget, just relax."

"Relax?? You nearly ripped my bally arm off!"

She turned the wheel to the left, then to the right, then left again. The car zigzagged down the narrow lane until she got it back in control and then continued more or less in a straight line.

"I'm so glad you're here," said Polly. "I've missed you."

Despite his increasing sense of alarm, Charles felt a glow of delight when he heard these words. He had to admit that the only time his life was even remotely exciting was when he was with his stepsister. He put fear for his safety to the back of his mind but gripped the sides of the leather seat just to be on the safe side.

"So," she said, darting a look at him. "Are you pleased you made the effort to get out here to the sticks?"

"Of course I am," he replied. "I mean, who could refuse an invitation like this? It isn't every day you get invited to paint the portrait of a Duke. And such an impressive name. The Duke of Burfaughtonleigh, right?"

"Actually, it's pronounced Burley," said Polly. She approached a crossroads and drove across it without looking to right or left. An old man on a bicycle swerved into a ditch to avoid her. Charles looked back, listening to the man cursing as he disappeared from view.

The road they were on now was lined with mature trees that hung over the road, looming dangerously just above their heads. Charles instinctively ducked as the car weaved its way under them.

"OK, first of all, I need to clear something up," said Polly. "The Duke is actually expecting Walter Washbrook to paint his portrait."

"He's ... he's what?"

"Expecting ---"

"I heard what you said! He's expecting Walter Washbrook to paint his portrait?"

"Yes."

"The chap who paints royalty?"

"The very same."

"So what am I doing here?"

"You're going to pretend to be Walter Washbrook."

"Polly, is this some kind of joke?"

"No, I'm deadly serious."

"But ... Walter Washbrook is about sixty!"

"Is he? In that case, it isn't going to be easy."

"Polly!"

"Don't worry, I was only joking."

"Thank goodness."

"I mean I was only joking about not knowing how old Walter Washbrook is. I've seen a photograph of him in a magazine. Fear not. I have a plan to make you look just like a sixty-year-old buffer who paints portraits of kings and queens."

"There is no way in a million years that I could pretend to be a sixty-year-old world famous portrait painter," Charles said firmly.

"Trust me," she replied.

"Look here! You told me that the Duke had asked for me personally to paint his portrait," he said. "You have brought me here under false pretences."

"I didn't, and I haven't," replied Polly, as the car zoomed over a slow-moving hedgehog in the middle of the road. "What I said was that the Duke wanted his portrait painted and I thought you'd be the ideal person to do it. The trouble is, he didn't agree with me. He said he was very keen on this Washbrook chap, so of course I said I knew him, too."

"Do you?"

"Do I what?"

"Know Walter Washbrook?"

"Well, I know who he *is*," said Polly. "So I wasn't actually telling fibs."

Charles snorted with exasperation. Not for the first time, he reflected on his stepsister's way with words and how adept she was at getting people to do what she wanted them to do.

"The duke will know I'm not Walter Washbrook," he said. "I'm a hundred per cent certain of that."

"No he won't," said Polly. "Gerald has never seen a photo of him."

"Gerald?"

"The Duke."

"Ah, right. By the way, I've been meaning to ask, how do you know this duke chap anyway?"

"I'm his secretary."

Charles burst out laughing. "You? A secretary? You can't even type! Never mind type, you can't even *spell*!"

Polly's face clouded over for a moment. "Well, maybe Gerald has seen some hidden talent of mine that you haven't."

I bet he has, thought Charles. "So how did you get the job?" he asked.

"Gilbert told me about it."

"Gilbert. The chap who owns this car?"

"Yes."

"Who is he?"

Ken Wilson**The Duke's portrait**

"Gilbert Woolnough, the Marquess of Stanford. He's Gerald's son."

"How do you know him?"

"I met him at a party in Chelsea and ..."

"And...?"

"And ... we got chatting."

"You got chatting with a marquess."

"You know how much I like meeting rich young men," said Polly. She laughed. "That was a joke," she added.

Charles knew full well it wasn't a joke. Not only did Polly enjoy meeting rich young men, she also made a habit of getting engaged to them. Polly had been engaged four times, possibly more. A succession of young men with more money than sense had fallen for her eccentric charms and asked her to marry them. In her defence, Polly had only accepted about half the proposals, but she always called them off almost as soon as she'd taken possession of an engagement ring, which she then sold. Charles presumed that selling engagement rings was one of the ways she made a living.

"Hold onto your hat, we're nearly there."

They had been passing a high crumbling stone wall for a while and now the car swerved left onto a muddy track which led to an open gate. As they approached the gateway, Charles saw an old dilapidated sign behind the wall. It had been ravaged by the weather over the years and the writing on it was faded and almost unreadable. Charles made out the letters EAT ARK.

"What's the name of this place?" he asked.

"Great Park."

"Ah," said Charles. He thought for a moment and then said: "Look, Pol, I don't think I can go through with this."

"You can and you will."

"The thing is ... "

Polly put her foot down hard on the brake and the car lurched to a stop in the mud, half in and half out of the gate. Charles had to put his hands on the dashboard to prevent his head from hitting the windscreen. Polly turned and took Charles's face in her hands. He was alarmed by the fierce look in her eyes.

"The thing *is*, brother dear," she said, holding his face in a tight grip which really hurt, "... the thing is that I have a plan which is going to make a lot of money, and you are going to help me."

"A lot of money? You said I'd get fifty pounds for painting the old boy's phizog. That isn't a *lot* of money."

Ken Wilson**The Duke's portrait**

"Painting the Duke's portrait is just a way to get you into the house. My plan involves doing something that will make us an absolute *heap* of money."

"What? Doing what?" Charles was now very apprehensive. He had visions of being chased by the police through the grounds of Great Park, wearing a mask and a striped pullover and carrying a sack bulging with the family silver. "Look, Pol, whatever it is, leave me out of it. I'm not the criminal type."

She let go of his jaw. Charles decided enough was enough. Much as he liked the idea of spending time with Polly in a fancy country house, he wasn't at all keen on the idea of doing something illegal. He wondered how he could get back to the station.

"Not the criminal type?" repeated Polly. "Really?"

"Really," he replied.

"Shall we talk about the painting you sold to that friend of my mother's....?" she began.

Charles stared at her. "You wouldn't...."

"Try me."

Of course, Polly knew about the painting. If she ever did tell everyone what she knew, it would be curtains.

"What is it you want to do?" he said.

"I want you to paint the Duke's portrait..." she began.

"I know that. What's the big money-making plan?"

"Let me finish," she continued. "The Duke has some genuine works of art hanging around the place, and one of them is by Van Gogh."

"Seriously?" said Charles. "Which one?"

"It's a portrait of Robert Louis Stevenson."

"The chap who wrote *Treasure Island*?"

"Yes."

"I don't know a lot about Van Gogh, but I don't remember a portrait of Robert Louis Stevenson. Are you sure it's genuine?"

"Absolutely. The duke's previous secretary actually took it to Sotheby's in London to get it valued."

"So what is this great plan of yours? Steal the painting?"

"Yes."

"You're mad."

"But first you're going to paint a copy of it."

"Now that is *totally* mad."

Ken Wilson**The Duke's portrait**

"I know."

In front of them was a wide tree-lined drive, which presumably led to the main house. Polly started the engine and drove about a hundred yards, but then turned left down a muddy track. The car passed through a small copse of willow trees and came to a halt outside what appeared to be an abandoned cottage.

"Um ... where are we?" asked Charles. "I mean, I presume this isn't Great Park."

"Well done, Sherlock, right first time," said Polly. "This is Willow Cottage."

"Do you live here?"

"No, I don't. My friend Garth lives here. He's the Duke's gardener."

"So why are we here?"

"I have to turn you into Walter Washbrook before we go to the main house."

"But this Garth chap, how does he fit into all this?"

"This Garth chap, as you call him, is our accomplice."

"Can we trust him?"

"To the ends of the earth and beyond. Get out of the car."

When Charles opened the door of the two-seater and put his foot down on the path, his boot almost disappeared into the mud. He pulled himself up and out of the car, took a step forward, slipped and fell flat on his face. Polly burst out laughing, and laughed even more when he stood up. He was covered in mud from his sandy hair to his brown boots.

"This is NOT FUNNY!" he shouted, "and to be honest, I'm A BIT ANGRY now!"

Polly walked round the car and stood in front of him. "Charles," she said, "I do love it when you're a bit angry." He started to say something else but she put her arms round his neck and kissed him firmly on his muddy lips.



Ken Wilson is an ELT author and trainer and has worked in English language teaching for more than forty years. He's written more than thirty ELT titles, including a dozen series of course books, and also writes radio and TV programmes, sketches, songs and drama resources.

His first ELT publication was an album of songs called *Mister Monday*, released when he was 23, which at the time made him the youngest published ELT

Ken Wilson**The Duke's portrait**

author ever. Since then, he has written and recorded more than two hundred songs for English learners.

Until 2002, Ken was artistic director of the English Teaching Theatre, a company which performed stage-shows for learners of English all over the world. The ETT made more than 250 tours to 55 countries on five continents.

Two years ago, Ken decided to embark on a Masters in Creative Writing at Birkbeck College London and is currently writing his dissertation, the first fifteen thousand words of a novel called *The Duke's Portrait*. The story is set in the 1930s, mainly in a large house in the English countryside. This is chapter one....

When ELT Met TED, Teaching with TED Talks: Creating your Own Lesson with TED-Ed¹

Margarita Kosior, The University of Sheffield International Faculty, CITY College Dimitris Tzouris, Anatolia College

Keywords: TED, TEDEd, edtech, flipped classroom, ELT, learner autonomy, student-centered approach, authentic materials

The concept of sharing ideas, the student-centered approach, the importance of critical thinking, the use of authentic materials, and the idea of learner autonomy are some of the buzzwords and commonly recurring themes in the contemporary ELT. Incorporating these concepts into teaching often entails creating your original teaching materials.

Over the past decades, there has been a radical shift from traditional teacher-centered perceptions of foreign language teaching in which the learner was merely a passive recipient of information to more innovative approaches focusing on the needs of the learner. Defined three decades ago as ‘... an attitude towards learning in which the learner is prepared to take, or does take, responsibility for his own learning’ (Dickinson 1995: 167), the concept of learner autonomy has gained momentum and the developments are fast and significant including a new understanding of the role of the teacher, the role of the student, and the nature of the teaching/learning environment.

In light of these developments, the learner has gained unprecedented levels of independence and has learned to assume responsibility for their own learning. This student-centered approach can be facilitated by the use of authentic materials, which enhances the development of receptive and productive skills of the learners. The right selection of materials provides the students with contexts in which they can also develop their creativity and critical thinking skills. Indirectly, the student-centered approach allows autonomous learners to find their creative outlets that allow for self-reflection but also increase students’ awareness of learning, eventually leading to increased student motivation and achievement.

Many of these changes can be related to technological advances.

TED - authenticity in the classroom

Incorporating TED Talks in the curriculum is a sure way to foster learner autonomy. TED Talks constitute authentic listening materials providing a variety of contexts and a springboard for a wide array of in-class, but also out-of-class, activities and tasks. The use of TED talks in ELT, and in education in more general terms, is not a new phenomenon. Unfortunately, more often than not, it takes the form of merely screening a talk relevant to the topic discussed in class. There is so much more

¹ The article was originally published in the 22nd IATEFL Slovenia Conference Selections from March 2015

potential to be explored. TED talks trigger deeper thought and insights into all aspects of life such as technology, business, arts, sciences, or education, and with the use of the right tools, this potential can be exploited to the fullest. Many of the ideas promoted by the TED conference are worth spreading in the classroom. Olivia Cucinotta, a high school student in 2014, wrote a post for the TED blog regarding the use of TED talks in education: “(...) TED Talks in the classroom really do take advantage of that ‘percolation of ideas.’ Talks work best when teachers use them to give perspective and to generate discussion around difficult topics” (2014). Indeed, TED Talks influence young people, help them gain a different perspective, change their attitudes, spark their minds, and ultimately reshape the world by achieving a growth mindset. In terms of their linguistic competency, students are exposed to real discourse in which language comes alive and words acquire a deeper meaning.

Merely introducing students to TED Talks opens up new doors for them and motivates them to explore the whole new world which unfolds in front of their eyes. The motivation becomes even greater when the students are given the possibility to access online lessons based on TED Talks, respond to questions, and use the specially designed TED-Ed platform in order to get into a dialogue with the instructor and a discussion with their classmates.

But what is TED?

TED stands for Technology Entertainment Design. Many people relate the second letter with education though. In fact, TED is about education, since it's much more than a conference. TED is a platform for sharing ideas, which educators around the world have been tapping into in order to inspire their students and spark discussions in the classroom. Not surprisingly, the most popular TED talk, counting more than 30 million views, is Sir Ken Robinson's talk about schools killing creativity.

A Platform for Spreading Ideas

In 2009, TED launched the TEDx program, allowing individuals and teams to organize an independent TEDlike event. Seven years later, the TEDx programme has enabled people all over the world to share their ideas and inspire local communities. In May 2014, TED celebrated 10,000 TEDx events in 167 countries. There are even events focused solely on education or student speakers, as well as events organized at universities and libraries. There are also TEDx events organized entirely by students.

Since all TEDx talks have to be recorded and made available online for free, some get selected and amplified by TED by getting featured on the main TED website. Really inspiring TEDx speakers might also be invited to give a second talk at one of the main TED conferences.

Going Mainstream

Although TED started appealing to a constantly increasing audience via the Internet, offering all the talks for free on the TED website, as well as on YouTube, iTunes and via mobile apps, it has also started spreading via mainstream media in order to reach an even wider audience and create conversations around those ideas. TED Books offers longer narratives based on TED talks and NPR's TED Radio Hour focuses on specific themes by going over selected TED talks and interviewing the speakers. One

of TED's latest initiatives was a TV special focused on education. TED Talks Education featured 8 speakers, including Sir Ken Robinson and Bill Gates. All talks are available online.

TED-Ed

In April 2012, TED launched TED-Ed, an online platform for educators to create original animated lessons or take existing TED talks or other YouTube videos and use them as teaching material.

According to Chris Anderson, Curator of TED, "[o]ne of the repeated requests from teachers regarding TEDTalks has been the desire to present them with added materials that allow someone to dig deeper. The TEDEd tools allow anyone to do just that" (2012). Since the flipped classroom model has become more popular, TED-Ed became a very useful tool because it allows educators to easily create teaching content from TED-Ed lessons, TED talks or any other video available on YouTube. These videos can become lessons, with multiple choice or open-ended questions, a dig deeper section, a final thought and a discussion section. All this content can be delivered before class time (at home) so students can then come to class prepared for a discussion, a project or other group activity. Educators can therefore time-shift their lecture time and take better advantage of the limited and precious in-class time.

TED + ELT = LOVE

TED-Ed is the place where two distinct disciplines, English language instruction and social media, meet and thrive. It is a cross-disciplinary dialogue, which results in an innovative approach to foreign language teaching.

The TED-Ed platform offers educators an opportunity to create a complete online lesson starting with a short introduction to the talk ("Let's Begin..."), moving on to the projection of the recording ("Watch") and responding to multiple choice or open-ended questions ("Think"), recommending additional resources for further research ("Dig Deeper"), and eventually getting the students engaged in a discussion related to the content of the talk, initiated by the instructor ("Discuss"). The final stage of a TED-Ed lesson is the equivalent of a post-listening stage in a conventional classroom ("... And Finally") during which the students can be assigned an essay topic or get motivated to take action.

Once finished with creating the lesson, teachers can send their students the link. Students then log into TEDEd with their TED or Facebook account and start watching the video. Then, they continue with answering the questions. Students' responses are recorded and the teacher gets notified every time a student completes a lesson. The teacher can leave feedback for the student online. If a student does not log in before starting a lesson, he or she can view the lesson, practice answering the questions, but the answers are not recorded. Lessons can be created as unlisted (they can only be shared via link) or public (searchable on the web).

In such a way a TED talk, or any other video available on YouTube, can become a complete online lesson and through the TED-Ed platform it can be made available to selected students, or much wider audiences, at any time and from any location. This,

by definition, grants the learners enormous autonomy and shifts the focus from the instructor to the learner. This shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning creates a student-centered environment in which students take greater responsibility for their learning, develop critical thinking skills, and benefit from the exposure to real life context of an authentic discourse.

Here are some lesson examples created by the authors of this article:

Benjamin Zander: Classical Music with Shining Eyes
<http://ed.ted.com/on/UaFFRT6Y>

Aimee Mullins: The Opportunity of Adversity <http://ed.ted.com/on/7TizHFvK>

Lisa Kristine: Illuminating the World of Modern-Day Slavery
<http://ed.ted.com/on/8Le9f3sB>

Matt Cutts: Try Something New for 30 Days <http://ed.ted.com/on/4CEqhinG>

Angela Lee Duckworth: The Key to Success? Grit <http://ed.ted.com/on/xafJr3pc>

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A tertiary educator teaching Academic English and Language Teaching Methodology at the Bachelor's and Master's levels. Particularly interested in ELT at the pre-K level. A passionate storyteller. Advocate for social justice spreading awareness through ELT. A strong supporter of bilingual and multilingual education and the mother of two multilingual children. Research interests: Global Issues in ELT; Teaching Very Young Learners; Bilingualism and Multilingualism; New trends, current approaches and

methods in language teaching. Outside of the classroom - an amateur photographer and dancer.

Bio - Dimitris Tzouris

Learning agent. Part-time teacher, full-time learner. Instructional Technologist at Anatolia High School and the American College of Thessaloniki. Computer Science teacher at Anatolia Elementary School. Advisor on Social Media and Learning Technologies at the American International Consortium of Academic Libraries (AMICAL). Member of the Global Education Conference leadership team. Reviews for EDUCAUSE. Founder of Global Game Jam Thessaloniki. Social Media Manager at TEDxThessaloniki.

ELT Frameworks – TEA’S Graz ConneXion

**Branka Dečković, Medical School Kragujevac and Secondary School Knić and
Svetlana Gavrilović, Užice Grammar School, Serbia**



It was April the first in sun-bathing Graz
When Branka and I came to the Hauptplatz.
We settled down quickly on an exciting spree
And headed promptly to the University.
Karl-Franzens it's called and a landmark it posts
Forty thousand students it usually hosts.
We entered it open-minded and light
What awaited us there was a pleasant site.
A cozy atmosphere, almost house-warming

And books, and stands, and people swarming.
Familiar faces Dragana, Grenville and Mark
Brightened it all up with a friendly spark.
The list of the speakers was as good as can be
Clandsfield Lindsay and Rosenberg Marjorie,
Peter Medgyes and two Phils, Keegan and Kerr,
After them nothing was left in a blur.
They talked about motivation, humour and IT,
Translation, TALO, TASP and TAVI.
There were insights and jokes, both of which we sought
And took back home a lot of food for thought.
The Penniless Players filled us with joy
They played with English swiftly as if it was a toy.
On April the second there was a brisk walking tour
The guide was terrific and so was Graz on the Mur.
It was a cold evening but we felt just fine,
We defrosted later with some sparkling wine.





There was really plenty to drink and eat
But Apfelstrudel and Topfenstrudel nothing
could beat.

The raffle was how the Conference ended
Branka and I left it sad and empty-handed.
There was nothing to regret or even feel blue
We had an extra day to see a sight or two.
We climbed to the Schlossberg up on a hill
Two hundred and sixty steps gave us no chill.
There were the Hacker Lion and the Turkish
Well,
The Kasamaten Stage, the Clock Tower and
the Bell.



Of the restaurants there we saw but a few,
They offered a perfect breathtaking view.
Three days did pass in the blink of an eye



It was finally time for us to say goodbye.
Goodbye, English teachers, Graz and TEA,
We sure hope again each other to see!



* * * * *

Branka Dečković has been teaching English for 12 years. She works in Medical School in Kragujevac and in Secondary School in Knić.

Svetlana Gavrilović has been teaching English for over 25 years. She is currently working in Užice Grammar School.

*We certify that we have the right to publish these photos.

The Cinquain Poetry Contest

Svetlana Gavrilović, Užice Grammar School, Užice, Serbia

Keywords: poetry, contest, cinquain

This year's literary contest in Užice Grammar School was dedicated to poetry - a special poetic form known as the cinquain, quintain or quintet, which is a poem or stanza composed of five lines. Examples of cinquains can be found in many European languages, and the origin of the form dates back to medieval French poetry. In many ways, it also resembles Japanese haiku and tanka poetry.

In order to help our students be up to the task set upon them we offered them some material found on the Internet hoping it would be challenging and helpful enough for them at the same time (http://hrsbstaff.ednet.ns.ca/davidc/6c_files/Poem%20pics/cinquaindescrip.htm, http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson43/RWT016-1.PDF, http://www.abcteach.com/free/h/howto_cinquain.pdf).



As much as we feared the reaction of teenagers to the idea of having to write a poem in English, we realised that our skepticism and fear were groundless the moment we read the first of the students' pieces. We received more than seventy entries on a variety of topics, both light-hearted and serious, enjoyed reading every one of them and after a long and thorough assessment decided on the best six, with a heavy heart though as it was impossible for us to provide adequate awards for all. The sponsors of our competition, as many times before, were The English Book Belgrade and Pearson.



Here are the six winning entries.

Sin by Bogdan Ršumović I6

Sin
Golden, powerful
Appealing, seducing, corrupting
No amount is enough
Greed

Doubt by Tamara Lacmanović II1

Doubt
Powerful, frightening
Disturbing, torturing, ruining
Silent killers of our minds
Suspicion

Chocolate by Anđela Paunović III1

Chocolate
Delicious, scrumptious
Eating, melting, savoring
Dark-skinned corker
Happiness

Toast by Maja Aleksić III5

Toast
Crispy edges
Baking, cracking, tempting
A welcomed morning guest
Butter

Mum by Kristina Avakumović III4

Mum
Emotional, devotional
Protecting, correcting, affecting
Always my first selection
Perfection

Shoes by Jovana Ilić II4

Shoes
Sparkly, pretty
Clicking, gliding, running
Love them with a heel
Best friends

War by Mihailo Cerovac III1

War
Meaningless conflict
Destroying, killing, avenging
Human nature pursues strife
Pain

* * * * *

Svetlana Gavrilović has been teaching English for over 25 years. She is currently working in Užice Grammar School.

*I certify that I have the right to publish these photos.

The Phenomenal Woman

Svetlana Gavrilović, Užice Grammar School, Užice, Serbia

Keywords: women, poetry, music, performance



'Tonight's programme is dedicated to women, known and unknown, those who have already touched our lives, and those who are yet to do so. A woman might have come upon this world out of the man's rib, but she has grown since then. She has built herself up through thousands of small victories won in pain, sacrifice and often contempt. She has crossed the uncrossable, cured the incurable and taught the unteachable. Within her is the power to create, to nurture and to transform. A woman is the full circle.'

The Phenomenal Woman

Užička gimnazija

7 p.m., 9th March, 2016

This was how the students and English teachers of Užice Grammar School began an evening of poetry and music dedicated to women, and called it what else but *The Phenomenal Woman*. During an hour's performance held on 9th March, 2016, the packed audience heard some of the most memorable lines inspired by women and written by a select group of unsurpassable authors such as Shakespeare, Lord

Byron, W. B. Yeats, Margaret Atwood, Adrien Henri, Maya Angelou, to name just a few, as well as carefully chosen pop and rock songs of the present and past times that included Bob Marley's *No woman, no cry*, Bill Withers' *Ain't no sunshine when she's gone*, Gloria Gaynor's *I will survive*, Bruno Mars' *Just the way you are*, Alicia Keys' *Superwoman* and many more. The school auditorium shook with applause throughout the evening, and the smiles on the faces of those who were on stage and in front of it radiated with nothing but pure joy.

The Phenomenal Woman was phenomenal indeed.



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Svetlana Gavrilović has been teaching English for over 25 years. She is currently working in Užice Grammar School.

*I certify that I have the right to publish these photos.

Small Town Stories

Boris Kučera, Isidora Sekulić Primary School, Pančevo, Serbia

Keywords : creative writing course, report, ELTA

Marija parked her car in front of the Danica, a humble road-side B&B in Vrnjačka Banja. She had driven our colleague Maja and me all the way from our homes in Pančevo to the boarding house front door. (I still owe you one for that, Marija, and I'll make good on it some day, I promise.) It was Friday evening, December 11th 2015, and we had come for a three-day residential weekend, the final stage of Small Town Stories, a month long creative writing course for ELTA teachers. We checked in and went down to the Danica's restaurant for a quick drink before the welcome session at 8 o'clock.

The restaurant was only half full, and the people sitting at the desks could have been anyone, but I guess us teachers have a sixth sense when it comes to sniffing each other out and, although I couldn't recognize any faces, I simply knew that everyone in that small restaurant was an English teacher. Marija confirmed my suspicions; an ELTA veteran and coordinator, she remembered a few names and faces from previous events, but most still remained a mystery.

I chatted with Marija and Maja and sipped my tea, all the while surreptitiously studying the faces around us. For the past month we had read and commented on each other's writing on the Wikispaces page our course tutors had set up for us without ever laying eyes on one another. I knew the names of all the colleagues who had posted their comments and was now trying to put the faces to the names. Was the elderly woman in the corner the one who wrote that story about the two sisters? I had no way of knowing, and just had to wait for 8 o'clock. We had had to post our final short story assignment a week before and then wait for this weekend's creative writing workshop to get feedback from our colleagues. I wondered if anyone else was as anxious as me about how that would turn out. I itched to find out if anyone liked my story, but had abstained from asking Marija and Maja about it on the trip from Pančevo. If they had ended up criticizing it heavily, it would've been one long and lonesome ride for me.

Finally, the time had come and some fifteen or so teachers filed into the back room where the first session was to take place. We took our seats around a long table and were greeted by our course tutors, as charming a pair of ladies as I had ever seen. I was surprised to find out that they were Olja Milošević and Gordana Klačnja, the President and Vice President of ELTA, respectively. Somehow you don't expect people in positions of leadership to be so easy-going and good-natured, but they were. In a quiet corner of the room sat the tall, gaunt figure of Nathan William Meyer, a Belgrade-based Fellow for the US Department of State English Language Fellow Program, who was good enough to volunteer his creative writing expertise for the purpose of teaching this US Embassy supported course. Although he towered over everyone in the room – I guess he must be over 6'4" – his unassuming demeanour still managed to make him seem unobtrusive. We all recognized him at once, though, from his profile photo on our Wiki. For most of us, he was probably the most important person in the room. The one whose feedback on our creative writing exercises we had impatiently and often apprehensively awaited over the course of the last four weeks.

After a brief introduction, Olja and Gordana gave us a rundown of the weekend's timetable. Sunday morning was reserved for wrap-up and farewells, while most of the activities were scheduled for Saturday. There would be one creative writing workshop with Nathan and one writing oriented ELT workshop with Olja and Gordana in the morning and the same again after lunch. The formalities complete, we were all invited to say a few words about ourselves and, as each of the familiar names finally got its face, I was surprised by how different most of the participants were from what reading their stories had led me to expect. It made me realize how important it was to see the people you work with face to face. And indeed, after this short time together I felt I knew these people better than months of online collaboration would have made possible. By the time the welcome session was over, we were all pleasantly making small talk. We took our leave and retired to our respective rooms, where many of us spent the last hour or so before sleep going over our colleagues' stories one last time and preparing to give them constructive feedback.

During the ELT workshops next day, we gave our best to stay focused, but it was plain to see that our hearts were not in it. We had come to get feedback on our stories and work on improving our creative writing skills, and working on lesson plans and activity outlines had retreated to a low second place in our minds. So, when Nathan finally took his place at the head of the table all the eyes immediately snapped alert. Time flew by as stories were analyzed and dissected, to various degrees of their authors' satisfaction. Some stories got more praise than others, but we followed Nathan's lead in taking special care not to hurt anyone's feelings, while at the same time providing honest, productive feedback. That is not to say that everyone approached the workshop with the same amount of commitment. Some participants were happy enough to have their own story analyzed, while at the same time contributing very little in the way of feedback, and some were simply inexperienced in this kind of group work. At the end of the day, however, there was ample opportunity for every participant to receive invaluable information about their English writing skills, which is not something easily obtained in Serbia.

When the workshops had come to an end, Olja and Gordana came out with a pleasant announcement: ELTA was going to treat all the participants and tutors for a drink at one of Vrnjačka Banja's many cafés – the town is a well-known tourist destination, after all. So, later that evening, we all went for a walk to the centre of town. When we got to our destination we realized that, this far out of season, with most of the tourists gone, Vrnjačka Banja was a ghost town. But we were in a good mood and allowed nothing to spoil it for us. After spending half an hour looking for a café that would accept credit cards – which remarkably had not managed to dampen our spirits – we finally found a cozy place, pulled the tables together Serbia-style and, drinks in hand, toasted our generous tutors.

The next morning, our wrap-up session flew by and before long we were saying our goodbyes. Some participants were going home happy to have confirmation that they were doing quality work, some were already working on how to incorporate the feedback they got this weekend into improving their writing, while still some, whose stories were among the least praised, were less pleased with the course results.

"I'm not sure this weekend was really necessary," one colleague said. "We could have simply posted all the feedback online."

Although this may be true to an extent, I had to disagree. I found the face-to-face workshops useful and enjoyable. Part of the reason was certainly that my story was among the most successful, but the most important reason was that I

was able to get to know so many people who shared my passion for writing. In fact, I think I met more people who wrote in English this weekend, than I had my entire life, and we were already planning to carry on helping each other and providing feedback on each other's writing for a long time to come.

As I got in Marija's car for the return trip, I took one last look toward the Danica, thinking how fortunate I was to have been able to spend the weekend here.

Boris Kučera has spent the last 12 of his 38 years as an EFL teacher and freelance translator. In 2003, he graduated from the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade. Currently, he is teaching English in Isidora Sekulić elementary school in his hometown of Pančevo. In his free time he enjoys reading books, writing stories and playing with his son.

Feeling welcome in Albania

Sanja Čonjagić, School Premier Šabac, Private Language School, Serbia

Keywords: conference, report, Albania

When I got the invitation from Ymer Leksi, the president of ELTA Albania, to come as a speaker to their national conference, I felt honoured and delighted about another opportunity to travel to the country which left a great impact on me six years ago, when I visited it for the first time.

Not much is known about Albania, at least from our perspective, in Serbia. We can easily be led to draw conclusions based on prejudices, stereotypes, misconceptions or political and media presentations. Contrary to what some people might expect, Tirana is a very welcoming place, with hospitable, caring and friendly hosts.

In 2010, I was curious and open-minded, excited about the experience, stunned by hospitality, not only of our colleague teachers, but people I met everywhere I went: a receptionist trying to speak some Serbian with me, a taxi driver sharing his childhood memories of watching Yugoslav TV and singing Zdravko Colic's songs, a waiter bringing me a cup of cappuccino with a heart shaped chocolate or a lovely teacher Blerina taking us to the coast and breathtaking beaches!

Thanks to Facebook, I have stayed in touch with all the teachers I met then, so it was a real pleasure seeing them again.

So, the 8th ELTA international conference entitled *Language Teaching and Learning in a Changing World* was held in Tirana from 22-24th April. As we could hear at the opening ceremony, Albania has changed tremendously in the last twenty years, due to the fall of communism and the need to keep pace with the changing world. *We are asking our students to disconnect and unplug from their world when they walk through the doors of the school. We have them put their cell phones away when that is the only technology in the classroom instead of finding ways to include their use for learning. We are asking them to step back in the time and learn in a way that is not much different from the way their parents did instead of preparing them for the future....* - as you can notice, our colleagues face the same challenges as we do and are trying to find ways to overcome them.

Ymer Leksi introduced their work by saying: *ELTA Albania is the only association of English teachers in Albania and it was created in 2002 from that time we have been working hard in the field of teacher development. For that we organize three regional conferences every year and every second year we organize our International conference. The next regional conference will be September 30 – October 1st in Kukës.*

Since I was the representative of ELTA Serbia, their partner's association, I was also invited to address the participants at the opening. Besides informing them about our association and inviting them to our next conference, I emphasized the importance of such events – not only for professional growth but even more for meeting people in person, getting to know them,

overcoming differences, noticing similarities, building relationships and enhancing friendships, because I truly believe that only if we strive to be better people we can become better teachers!

This year, there was a group of teachers from Kosovo and I asked one of them, Blerim Sherifi, a very enthusiastic and active young teacher in KETNET association, to send through his impressions:

It is difficult to find words and to describe about ELTA'S Conference. Elta, as a big family, always tries to gather teachers and students from different countries in order to practice, share, learn, cooperate and meet with very professional people. Though the last Elta conference which took place in Tirana is over, I would love to thank all the participants who joined the conference and shared a good time with each other. Being very active in these kinds of conferences I can say that Elta is growing up and creating communication bridges with other families from the Balkan region such as Elta Serbia, Ketnet Kosova, Elta Macedonia and so on and so on. This time we were a group consisting of 27 teachers and students from different cities of Kosovo who attended the Elta conference in Tirana, also we had four brilliant and very beneficial presentations. It was a great time to meet new friends, learn new things, share different types of teaching and learning and finally bringing in one place English teachers and students from different countries both from inside and outside Albania. And finally, I would like to thank all the participants who attend and are very active in these conferences ,since we are Lifelong learners and we always need to learn new things and share the same time with the others. I would conclude with this quote "When and where there is a will. there is a way ".

And these were a few thoughts from Mark Andrews, Training Director at SOL (Sharing One Language)

'It was a privilege to be asked to do the opening plenary and as it was Earth Day, April 22nd, I chose to do my talk on Earth Day, a day which was introduced in 1970 in the USA and which has spread all over the world since. In many ways, it was the birth of the modern environmental movement and I chose to include bits about the environmental film festival in Albania and our role as teachers in encouraging young people to cherish and care for the planet with live on, the only home we have.

In other workshops I focused on the work we do at SOL both in Devon and abroad and England at a crossroads as the second day of the conference was St George's Day, April 23rd and also the day that Shakespeare was born and died 400 years ago. With the help of Tim Bowen and Grenville Yeo we also explored aspects of the upcoming British referendum on membership of the European Union on June 23rd this year.

All in all we were made to feel very welcome and I thoroughly enjoyed my third visit to a country in Europe that most of us know very little about.'

Sanja Čonjagić is an English teacher and director at the Educational centre Premier, Šabac, active member of ELTA Serbia, SOL coordinator in Serbia, presenter at regional ELT conferences and still keen on learning and sharing.

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

Branka Dečković, Teacher at English Access Microscholarship Program,
Kragujevac, Serbia

Keywords: picture, newspaper article, Internet, critical thinking

Time: 60 minutes

Age group: Teenagers (the idea can be adapted to younger learners, as in most cases)

Learning outcomes: Given the picture and two short articles about it, the students will be able to discuss about the validity and reliability of the information they find on the internet. They will write a 100-150 words newspaper article in the form of an argumentative essay.

Warm –up

Show students this picture.



Tell them to ask questions about it – one of the students writes the questions on the bb, the rest of them are writing the questions in their notebooks.

(Where is this? Why are these chairs in the woods? How did they get there?...)

(10 minutes)

Activity 1

When they have written the questions, divide them into groups and ask them to answer these questions, they should use their imagination, there's no right or wrong answer (at this point).

When they have finished, each group reads their story, and we compare them.

(10 minutes)

Activity 2

Now, the teacher reads this to the students.

These chairs were laid out for a wedding in 1939 in Poland. The wedding was abandoned, and so were the chairs due to the German invasion. They were found again after the war with the trees growing through them. Every year they are repainted.



The students comment – whether they like the story – whether they think it’s true...

Whether they think it’s true story or not, ask them to justify their assumption.

I think... because... on one hand/on the other hand/therefore/however...

(10 minutes)

Activity 3

The teacher now shows the students the following article

Fact Check > Fauxtography > Arts

Second (World War) Chair

An intriguing image of chairs with trees growing through them does not stem from an ill-fated wedding in Poland in 1939 halted by the onset of World War II.

 Kim LaCapria
Jul 15, 2015

 **740**

SHARE

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FACT CHECK: Does a photograph show chairs set up for a wedding in Poland in 1939 that were abandoned due to the start of World War II?



Origins: The above-related tale about a photograph of still-cared-for chairs symbolizing a wedding in Poland that was called off due to the onset of World War II in 1939 is a poignant and touching narrative, but it's a false backstory that has become attached to an entirely unrelated image. (One would have wonder about the likelihood that all these chairs were somehow precisely located in spots where trees would later grow up between their seats and backs).

What is actually seen above is an [art installation](#) (entitled "The Four Seasons of Vivaldi") created along the road between Haut-bois and Faulx in Namur, Belgium, in 2001 by French conceptual artist/sculptor [Patrick Demazeau](#).

Much of Demazeau's work involves the juxtaposition of furniture and nature, which symbolizes the trees (who spend their lives standing) offering seats to share with the walkers and dreamers who come across them:

Show the article on projector and ask student to read it individually.

After reading the article, the students discuss – what they thought before – which story is true story – why it is important to double-check the “facts” you find on the internet...

Show the students these two photos – two more installations from the same artist.



(10 minutes)

Activity 4

In their groups, the students write a newspaper article, the title of which is “Should you believe everything you read on the Internet?”.

They should use all the information previously provided about this picture, and write a short article.

Each group reads their article.

(20 minutes)

For homework, teacher encourages students to try and find on the internet a site or an application through which they can make their article look like a real article in the newspaper. The teacher suggested this link, <http://newspaper.jaguarpaw.co.uk/>, but the students were encouraged to search more, and find different ones.



About English Access Microscholarship Program:

The English Access Microscholarship Program (Access) provides a foundation of English language skills to talented 13-20 year-olds from economically disadvantaged sectors through after-school classes and intensive sessions. Access gives participants English skills that may

lead to better jobs and educational prospects. Participants also gain the ability to compete for and participate in future exchanges and study in the United States.

Since its inception in 2004, approximately 95,000 students in more than 85 countries have participated in the Access Program.

Branka Dečković has been teaching English for 12 years. She works in medical school in Kragujevac and Secondary school in Knić. She started working on English Access Microscholarship Program in October 2015.

My Monster – Revising Body Parts

Nevena Stoilkov, English teacher at Primary School “Milisav Nikolić”,
Boževac, Serbia

Keywords: young learners, teaching material, following instructions, drawing, description, *have got*

Short description: Students revise parts of the body with the help of monster drawings.

Note: Lesson plan is suitable for small groups.

Learning outcomes: After the lesson, students are supposed to know how to:

- follow instructions in English
- name body parts and answer the questions about them
- read simple descriptions and follow them while drawing
- describe their pictures using the expression “have got”

Teaching materials: student’s book, monster drawings, paper, coloring pencils

Age of the students: 8 years old

Time: up to 60 minutes

Beginning the lesson (5 minutes)

Teacher greets the students and informs them that they will practice parts of the body. By showing a picture of a robot from the student’s book, T asks questions about the parts of the body and their color to remind the students of the body vocabulary.

Main part of the lesson

Activity 1 (5 minutes)

Students stand up by their desks and listen to the instructions of the T. They are supposed to follow the instructions and touch or show the correct part of the body.

T’s instructions: *Touch your tummy / legs / nose / ears / feet / toes; Show me your hands / eyes / mouth / fingers...*

When the students have successfully revised all the body parts, T asks them to sit down.

Activity 2 (15 minutes)

T has prepared monster drawings for every student in the class. Each of the students takes one drawing, until they all have one. Then T asks questions about the drawings, and every student answers the questions about their monster.

T's questions: "What's this?" (Showing a part of the body) "How many legs / arms / fingers..." / "Is the tummy big or small?" / "What color are legs / arms / eyes...?"



If a student has difficulties with answering the questions, T helps him / her.

Activity 3 (20 minutes)

For this task, T has prepared cards with descriptions of monsters (each card has one description on it). Every student again takes one card, and then T informs them that they should draw their monster following the given description, and color it as they like it. Before starting the task, T checks if they all understand the words in the description.

<i>MONSTER 1</i>	<i>MONSTER 2</i>	<i>MONSTER 3</i>
<i>Four heads</i> <i>Three arms</i> <i>Three hands</i> <i>Six fingers</i> <i>Small tummy</i> <i>Two legs</i> <i>Two feet</i>	<i>One head</i> <i>Two arms</i> <i>Two hands</i> <i>Eight fingers</i> <i>Big tummy</i> <i>Four legs</i> <i>Four feet</i>	<i>Two heads</i> <i>Three arms</i> <i>Three hands</i> <i>Three fingers</i> <i>Small tummy</i> <i>Four legs</i> <i>Four feet</i>

Ending the lesson (10 minutes)

Students describe their monsters (number of heads/ legs/ arms... and their color) using the expression "have got". If necessary, T asks extra questions about the monster.

(Example: I have got four legs. / I have got big tummy. / I have got yellow arms...)

Then students decorate billboard in their classroom with their drawings.



Nevena Stoilkov graduated from University of Kragujevac, Serbia in 2011. She has worked as an English teacher since 2011. She is interested in teaching English to young learners and working with children of challenging behavior.

**I certify that I have the right to publish these photos.*

IJSO 2014, Mendoza, Argentina

Marko Medvedev, Mathematical Grammar School, Belgrade, Serbia

The International Junior Science Olympiad is an annually held contest in science (physics, biology, chemistry) which gathers a lot of countries (this year 33) and six students per country (or three, Serbia had seven (I guess I am the odd one out)) who want to compete in this subject. From Serbia there were: Igor, my brother, Bogdan and Novak (twins from Niš), Tamara (from Novi Sad), and two girls from a place in Serbia. After whole day of flying from Belgrade to Rome, then from Rome to Buenos Aires, and then to Mendoza, we finally arrived. There were two Argentinians Tomas and Emi, waiting for us at the airport, as called group monitors' (every country had 2, mostly people of young age, studying at university, that were there to take care of us). We got on the bus with our teachers, but they got off at their hotel and we continued to ours. It took us a little bit longer than I had expected to get there because our hotel was out of the town center. The hotel looked fairly good, it had a huge courtyard, pool, basketball courts, football pitches, tennis courts etc. We weren't the first to arrive, but many people were still arriving. After lunch we had free time, so we got to know some students.

We got our schedule: we had the whole next day free, and then every second day an exam, the days between the exams we had some excursions and a lot of free time, also some times after the exam we had student-teacher meetings and excursions.

The next day we went to the opening ceremony, it was also at the hotel (the hotel had a big ceremony hall). A lot of people from IJSO organization, IJSO committee etc. were speaking there. After that we had "Recreation time" (basically free time) so we went to play basketball, we played against some guys from Hungary and Slovakia, not to mention we won with 50. By the end of the day met people from Azerbaijan, Zimbabwe, Hungary, Netherlands, Ireland, Hong Kong... On Thursday we (they) had the Multiple Option Theoretical Exams (exactly as the name says), it was relatively easy (Igor had 29 out of 30 points). Then we had the first excursion, in the schedule it said the city tour but it was an around the city tour, we visited two wineries (where our team leader bought 41 bottles ? of wine) and an olive oil factory. By that time I learnt some facts about Mendoza like : it is the fourth biggest city in Argentina with the population about 10 possibly million), it's just below the mountains so it's in the desert, the temperature was around 40 C (it rains only 300 mm per year), there are four universities...

On Friday we visited an oil refinery and a zoo, which both are the property of the oil company called YPF, one of the leading ones in Argentina. They had some interesting animals in the zoo

which are specific for that part of the world. After that we got back to the hotel. We hung out a little bit more with Emi, than with Tomas, because he constantly had some exams of his own (he is studying medicine) but we also met some other group monitors, for example, the Russia group monitor was very friendly. (Emi is studying engineering but she didn't have any exams)

The day after we (they) had the Problem Solving Exam, it is way harder than the first one. The Serbian team didn't do it so well so we went to play basketball to recover from it. This time we played with some Asians, one of them was so good he could beat us all together (later he got the gold medal). The next day we went on the High mountain tour, to the Andes. It was the best excursion we had. We climbed to about 3500 m and got just below Aconcagua, the highest mountain in the Western and Southern hemispheres.

The Experimental Exam, basically the one that is deciding the medal you will get, was on Monday. It was done in groups of three, which was for some students good and for some bad. It was mainly chemistry with a little bit of physics packed with wine culture around Mendoza. After the end of this exam, everyone started to be more friendly, by the way, there were some people who were studying and revising the days before the exams). So the last three days were the best. We went to a real city tour and to the national university. Also last three nights there were three parties, they placed big speakers just besides the pool and played music, and even for the last one they made a huge bonfire (they is referring to the group monitors). Last day, there was a closing (awarding) ceremony, medals were awarded, and there was some kind of feast. We had a great time that last day, everyone enjoyed their last day there (including us). Because our plane was leaving at 6 am the day afterwards we said goodbye to all of our friends (except to the girls from Zimbabwe who woke up at four just to say goodbye) packed our luggage and started our journey back.

All in all this whole experience was amazing, I travelled halfway across the globe, made so many new friends from around the world, and saw a lot. I'm looking forward to another experience like this (International Olympiad I hope, in Math (or Physics), participating as a medal winner....)

Marko Medvedev is a student of Mathematical Grammar School in Belgrade. His English teacher is Mirjana Savić- Obradović.

International Junior Science Olympiad in Mendoza, Argentina

Igor Medvedev, Mathematical Grammar School, Belgrade, Serbia

The International Junior Science Olympiad is a competition of students up to 16 years old. Science as they call it consists of chemistry, biology, and most important, physics. Usually about 20-30 countries participate. This year there were 196 students from around 33 countries. Every year six (or twelve) students are chosen through several stages of the competition to represent their own country. I was lucky enough to be one of the six students from Serbia. My twin brother wasn't that lucky, he was very near but he didn't make it to the team, but he was travelling with us. There was one other pair of twins from Nis in the team – everybody knew Serbian team for having two pairs of twins. Also there was a girl from Novi Sad and two girls from Sabac, and there were three teachers who were coming with us.

On Monday, 1st December we met at the Nikola Tesla International Airport. We flew to Rome and there we had some time to spend – the teachers didn't want to go outside of the airport so we stayed there until the next flight to Buenos Aires. We took off around 10 pm that evening. The flight lasted 13 hours – we had movies to watch so it didn't seem so long. We arrived in Buenos Aires in the morning. We were welcomed by Ambassador of Serbia and we went to the Embassy of Serbia. After that they drove us to the Airport which was for national flights – we had a short flight from Buenos Aires to Mendoza.

The first Argentinians who we met were our so called team monitors - every team had a pair of Argentinian students from Mendoza who were there to help them. Our group monitors were Tommy, a medicine student, currently studying in Mendoza, and Emi, an engineering student, who actually is from Mendoza, and they were very nice and friendly. We separated with our teachers, because they were in a different hotel so they wouldn't contact us and give us hints about the exams. Our hotel wasn't very near to the city center but it was really big - it had a swimming pool, two football pitches, some basketball courts, tennis courts and many more things to do. We were very tired so we went to bed early.

The next morning we went to the opening ceremony. There we met with all the other students and listened to some speeches held by the organizers. They took our mobile phones and devices so we could not contact our teachers – the only thing we were left with was a camera. It

wasn't boring at all because there were so many people to chat with, to play with, to meet .. Some of the first ones we met were the students from Zimbabwe, Hong Kong, Russia and from Azerbaijan. Also we were not only hanging out with students – we were spending some time with our and group monitors of other teams like the Russian group monitor (the Russians were intensively revising for the exams the day before the exam).

We had organized excursions and day trips on our free days: we went to two city tours, high mountains tour, oil refinery tour and had a lot of free time. The schedule said that we have 3 days of exams each two separated by a day for resting and relaxation, mostly free time.

The competition itself involves three stages. The first one, called multiple choice question exam is done on the first day: there are 30 questions – 10 in chemistry, 10 in physics and 10 in biology, each has options a, b, c, and d, you have three hours to solve it, and maximum number of points is 30. Then after a day of rest, there is theory exam – questions in biology, chemistry and physics that you need to solve for 3 and a half hours, and again the maximum number of points is 30. Again after a day of rest there is the third, most difficult exam – experimental exam. It consists of many experiments that you need to complete in four hours and the maximum number of points is 40, and it is done in groups of three.

The multiple choice test was on Thursday, it wasn't that hard and we all did well. That afternoon we visited a winery, and an olive oil factory. There wasn't much to see, but it was fun to taste Argentinian wine because they are known for good wine making. The next morning we went to the YPF oil refinery and a zoo. There were some strange animals that are endemic to Argentina. On Saturday we had the theory exam – it was a bit harder than the previous one, but we were satisfied with how we did. After that we had a crafts fair where we were able to buy some Argentinian homemade stuff. The best trip was on Sunday. We went high up in to the mountains, the Andes, and we climbed to around 3000 meters. The best thing was that we saw the highest peak of the western hemisphere – Aconcagua. We went to the hotel but that afternoon we were very anxious about the experimental exam next day. I was in a group with a girl from Sabac and a boy from Nis and we did as much as we could. As the last exam passed, anxiety had left us. By the time we made a lot of friends and we didn't even need our phones back. The next few days were the best – everybody was very cheerful and friendly. We had some open air parties with good music and nearly everybody danced. The next day passed quickly because we went shopping and visited the city centre and we also had a party that night. On the last day closing ceremony was held and they awarded the best ones with medals – I got

the silver medal – which is great considering that the silver medal is awarded to best 30% of 196 students (the ones that don't get gold which is for best 10%). That night we said goodbye to all the other people as we were leaving at 4 am next morning. I was a bit sad, but also happy to see my parents and friends in school. We went to the airport and had the same route, to Buenos Aires and then to Rome, but this time we convinced our teachers to go to visit the city. We had around 6 hours, so we were not able to see everything but we saw the most famous things like Colosseum.

This is one of my best experiences yet, and I am very glad I did all this: I went to the other side of the world, met many new friends and achieved that much.

I am looking forward to another international Olympiad and hope it will be this great.

Igor Medvedev is a student of Mathematical Grammar School in Belgrade. His English teacher is Mirjana Savić- Obradović.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- [Conferences](#)
- [Competitions](#)
- [Summer Camps](#)
- [Webinars](#)
- [Courses](#)
- [Announcement – Cambridge English Language Assessment](#)

CONFERENCES

** Call for papers still open for some of the conferences, check it out*

✓ **14th ELTA Serbia Conference – One Child, One Teacher, One Book, One Pen can Change the World**

Date: 20-21 May 2016

Place: Singidunum University Belgrade

For more, follow the link: [ELTA Conference](#)

✓ **25th BETA-IATEFL Annual International Conference ‘Teaching and Learning English: from No Tech to High Tech. How to Motivate Learners?’**

Date: 4-5 June 2016

Place: Plovdiv, Bulgaria

For more, follow the link: [25th BETA_IATEFL Annual International Conference](#)

✓ **ELT Forum**

Date: 10-11 June, 2016.

Place: University of Economics, Bratislava, Slovakia

For more, follow the link: [ELT Forum](#)

✓ **25th IATEFL Poland Conference**

Date: 16-18 September 2016

Place: West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin

For more, follow the link: [IATEFL Poland](#)

✓ **2nd Annual International SKA ELT Conference, Mind the Gap**

Date: 23-24 September, 2016.

Place: Košice, Slovakia

For more, follow the link: [SKA Conference 2016](#)

✓ **Image Conference and 5th ELT Malta Conference**

Date: 6 - 8 October 2016.

Place: to be announced

For more, follow the link: [Image Conference & 5th ELT Malta Conference](#)

✓ **26th International IATEFL Hungary 3D Conference Dimensions, Diversity and Directions in ELT**

Date: 7-8 October 2016

Place: University of Kaposvár, Hungary

For more, follow the link: [IATEFL Hungary](#)

✓ **51st IATEFL Conference 2017**

Date: 4-7th April 2017 (PCEs 3rd April)

Place: Glasgow

For more, follow the link: [51st IATEFL Conference 2017](#)

COMPETITIONS

ELTA COMPETITION

SHAKESPEARE 400

for teachers and students

To mark 400 years since Shakespeare's death, ELTA is organizing two competitions for English language teachers and students.

We invite you to send your authentic lesson plans, quizzes, games and other classroom activities related to the Bard's life and work, which will be posted on ELTA's site and Facebook page. Each month from February to May 2016, two book prizes will be given to teachers who send us the most inspiring ideas, and in June 2016, the teacher whose activity wins the most likes on Facebook will be given a special prize.

For more, follow the link: [Call for ELT Activities](#)

SUMMER CAMPS

✓ SOuL Camps for Teachers

Dates: July 31st – August 7th 2016 and 11th – 18th August 2016

Places: Penzi3n Roh, Lubina, Star3 Tur3 and Eco-Center “Radulova3ki”, Sremski Karlovci, Serbia

For more, follow the link: [SOuL Camps](#)

✓ SOL Programmes for Teachers in Devon

Date: Summer 2016

Place: Devon, UK

For more, follow the link: [SOL Programmes](#)

✓ SOL Programmes for Students

Date: Summer 2016

Place: Devon, UK

For more, follow the link: [SOL Programmes](#)

WEBINARS

✓ Macmillan webinars

[Macmillan webinars](#)

✓ OUP webinars

[OUP webinars](#)

✓ SEETA Webinars

[SEETA Webinars](#)

COURSES

Free courses on [Coursera](#)

ANNOUNCEMENT



Take a look at what Cambridge English Language Assessment has to offer.

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