

Traditional Lullabies and Contemporary Poets



Preparation – before the lessons of this scenario

The teacher has asked the students in the previous lesson to use the questions found in a google form that she has created (<https://forms.gle/vvKtqjDtVxxd5PDp9>) to interview their parents. After taking the interview, which can be held in their native language, if their parents do not speak English, the students fill in the questionnaire, transferring their parents' answers in English.

1st teaching period

1st Activity:

Time: 5'

Type of activity: Presentation of the answers to a questionnaire, discussion

Class organisation: Plenary

Actions/Tasks: The teacher copies the answers that the students have transferred to the questionnaire, as they will appear on the answers' form (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1j9oNoz9GakAVPrZRbl99_h049rsbab7xVysglviz7cM/edit#responses) and posts them on a "padlet" wall she has created (<https://padlet.com/mepr4/27lz5wxsf8kr>). Each of the first three columns of the padlet, that the teacher has already prepared, will contain the answer to the relevant question. In the first column, the students will see who was responsible for the upbringing of their classmates, in the second who was the lullaby their guardians used to sing to them written by, and in the third column the teacher is going to display the most popular topics of the lullabies sung to the students. The fourth and the fifth column will be left blank, as they are going to be used in later stages of this scenario.



2nd Activity:

Time: 3'

Type of activity: Pairs of students answer questions

Class organisation: Pair work

Actions/Tasks: The teacher tells the students to discuss the following questions with their partners. Then they are expected to give full answers to the questions on their worksheets. The purpose of this activity is to activate the students' previous knowledge on the topic and to link the existing knowledge with the new one.

3rd Activity:

Time: 3'

Type of activity: Comparison of two paintings

Class organisation: Plenary

Actions/Tasks: The teacher displays on the interactive whiteboard (and on the students worksheet) two paintings made by famous artists, who were inspired by the topic of lullabies and asks them to compare and contrast them and answer some questions about them.



4th Activity:

Time: 10'

Type of activity: Listening (gap filling and answering questions)

Class organisation: Plenary

Actions/Tasks: The teacher has used the function "Columns" of the H5p tools to create a series of activities that the students will perform (on their worksheets and on the interactive whiteboard). The activities can be found [here](#). There is a picture, over which, when you move the cursor a general question appears, then the song can be heard by pressing the little speaker under the picture, and immediately after that there is the drag-and-drop activity. Of course if the lesson is held on a computer lab, the students can do the activity, individually, in pairs or groups, depending on the number of the computers in the room and the student arrangement. After, they have filled in the gaps, they watch a video of the song. The link for the activity is also integrated in the same H5p activity, as well as a glossary explaining some difficult terms and a set of questions that the students have to answer, analyzing the lullaby and their emotional reaction towards it.



Drag the words to the gaps. Then listen to the lullaby and confirm!

Hush-a-bye, don't you _____,
Go to sleepy little baby.
When you _____ you shall have
All the pretty little _____.
Rest your head _____ said,
Go to sleepy little baby
When you wake, you'll have _____
Coach and six-a-little horses.
Stacks and bays, dapples and _____
All the pretty little horses.

5th Activity:

Time: 20'

Type of activity: Reading a text and answering questions about it

Class organisation: Individually and then plenary

Actions/Tasks: The students read an adapted text from a Greek website that explains the history of the lullabies and the ancient Greeks' attitudes towards them. The students read the text silently and answer the questions. When they have finished, the teacher coordinates a discussion about their answers in the class and, if the students haven't found all of the correct answers the teacher gives them some time, after the end of the discussion, to fill in their worksheets.

6th Activity - Homework

Time: 4' (to give the instructions)

Type of activity: Teacher explains and assigns homework (writing)

Class organisation: Individually

Actions/Tasks: The teacher explains the students that for the following lesson they will have to read a text, from an article on a site addressed to parents (<https://www.parent.com/lullabies-working-experts/>). In this article the author, after referring to her personal experiences, presents the benefits of lullabies to children and then refers to some of her favourite lullabies from around the world. The students are offered three options and they have to choose one of them. The first is an essay on the benefits of singing lullabies to children, the second is a story ending with the phrase: "It was a long day, but finally everybody slept peacefully until the following morning". Finally, the last option is to write a blog entry, in which, helped by the questions in activity 5 and a table that their teacher has created, leading them easily to the lullabies and their lyrics, the students prepare a presentation of one of the lullabies that are mentioned in the article.

2nd teaching period (In the school's computer lab)

1st Activity:

Time: 8'

Type of activity: Review of the first teaching session

Class organisation: Group work

Actions/Tasks: After the students have handed in their homework, they are separated by the teacher into groups of four (It's better when there are two students in front of each computer and the two pairs that constitute each group sit in adjacent computers). Each group is going to focus on a different aspect of the lullabies. Group A is going to focus on the *form* of lullabies, Group B on their *origins* and group C on their *function*. Groups D and E are going to focus on the *emotional* and *cognitive benefits* of lullabies (in case there are more students in the classroom, more than one groups can deal with the same topic). Students can use ideas from what their parents have told them on the interviews, the lullabies and the texts they have studied so far, and their previous knowledge. When this process ends, the groups report their observations to the rest of the class and the teacher, who transfers what the students tell her to the fourth column of the "padlet" they have created in the previous teaching period,. (<https://padlet.com/mepr4/27lz5wxsf8kr>).

2nd Activity:

Time: 15'

Type of activity: The students watch a presentation and transfer the information given to them into a table.

Class organisation: The students work in groups of four

Actions/Tasks: The teacher shows the students the following presentation about lullabies in different countries of Europe: <https://prezi.com/view/1R8zml2qowdPGOYQ51TN/> and asks each group to find a table created for them in a google.doc (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pLaqoP9ETLZ5g6CvMktOqB95cT-JZvb4mL.DBx-Qs4s/edit>) (Activity 2). After the teacher has projected each country on the interactive whiteboard, the students are given one minute to discuss with their group members to fill in the appropriate row of the table. The groups, work on the same document simultaneously, but the teacher has to be sure that the groups have understood that they should find the table designed for their group and work in this part of the document.

The information they have to fill in is quite simple. They have to identify the musical instrument(s) heard, the person, the manner in which the baby is lulled and fill in any other information they think is worth mentioning (eg if they have heard this lullaby before, if they like it, if it reminds them of something else etc).



3rd Activity:

Time: 12'

Type of activity: The students fill in a gapped text about a particular lullaby from a particular country

Class organisation: The students work in the same groups as before

Actions/Tasks: The teacher asks the students to work in the same groups and randomly assigns one country to each group. The students can re-watch the prezi presentation (<https://prezi.com/view/1R8zml2qowdPGOYQ51TN/>) or visit the website from which the original information was taken (<http://lullabies-of-europe-org.joel-josephson.org>) and fill in the gaps in the table in their online worksheet (Activity 3 - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pLaqoP9ETLZ5g6CvMktOqB95cT-JZvb4mL_Dbx-Qs4s/edit).

With this activity the students analyse a particular traditional lullaby from a European country and try to locate some elements that exist in it (themes, topics, sound repetitions etc).

4th Activity:

Time: 10'

Type of activity: Group representatives present to the class – the students compare lullabies and keep notes (individually)

Class organisation: Plenary – individual work

Actions/Tasks: The teacher asks each group to select a student (or a pair of students) that will come to the front of the class, read the text that they have filled in with their own answers. When the groups finish, all of the students go back to their computers and take a second look at how the other groups have filled in the same text. Then individually they keep notes on similarities and differences. They are also asked to notice if there are common themes, and to say if there were any lullabies that they didn't like. Finally, they are asked to consider if lullabies from different countries would be effective in their own country.

The aim of this activity is to make the students aware of the fact that traditional lullabies share common characteristics, because they are specimens of a universal cultural expression and are based on and cross-cultural experiences of the ordinary people of different European countries. Particular emphasis is given to the proximity and constant interaction and communication of the European peoples. This constant interinfluence of the inhabitants of the European countries, has led to a common European culture with special characteristics. By the end of this teaching period, the students will have understood through the study of the lullabies, that all of the elements that lead the peoples of Europe to a joint process of development are far more numerous than the elements that divide them.

5th Activity – Homework

The students are asked to find a lullaby from their country (if the environment is multicultural) or of the area where their family originates. They can upload the recording to the padlet

(<https://padlet.com/mepr4/27lz5wxsf8kr>) in an mp3 form and fill in the same text that they have filled in the second teaching period (activity 3 - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pLaqoP9ETLZ5g6CvMkt0qB95cT-JZvb4mL_DBx-Qs4s/edit). This would lead to the personalization of what they have learnt, as they will identify their place of origin as a part of the European culture.

3rd teaching period (In the school's computer lab)

1st Activity:

Time: 15'

Type of activity: Comparison of traditional lullaby with one written by a poet

Class organisation: Groups – Plenary discussion

Actions/Tasks: In this teaching session the focus moves from the traditional lullabies to lullabies which are written by famous contemporary poets. The students work in the same groups as in the previous teaching period. One or two groups (depending on the number of students in the class) are going to study and work with the poem “Lullaby to my son” written by the Turkish poet Najim Hikmet (Worksheet 3a), one or two groups are going to work with the lullaby titled “Morning Star” by the Greek poet Yannis Ritsos (<https://www.storyjumper.com/book/read/86401865/5f23025acd9b6>) and the rest of the groups with “Silver Bells” by Federico García Lorca. At first, they are instructed to read the assigned poem carefully (the full poem can be found on their worksheet) and then choose one of the traditional lullabies their group members have brought and uploaded to the padlet, as it was their homework assignment. Then, the students in each group fill in a table in which they are called to locate the similarities and differences between the two lullabies. More specifically they have to compare the circumstances in which they were written, the tone and register of the poem, its content and the figures of speech used in it.

In the plenary discussion that follows, the students will most probably reach the conclusion that all the poets were influenced by the traditional lullabies, but have also added their personal touch to the poems they have created.

Finally, the students try to find verses in the two lullabies that are thematically or stylistically related and there is another short plenary discussion.

2nd Activity:

Time: 20'

Type of activity: Projection of the 3 poems – groupwork – plenary discussion

Class organisation: Plenary - Groups – Plenary

Actions/Tasks: The teacher projects a power point presentation which shows Najim Hikmet’s “Lullaby to my son”, a flipbook containing Yannis Ritsos’ “Morning star” and a video in which the poem “Balad of a Day in July” by Federico Garcia Lorca has been transformed to a song titled “Silver Bells” by Christos Leontis (music) and Lefteris Papadopoulos (lyrics)

(<http://users.sch.gr/ipap/Ellinikos%20Politismos/Yliko/mou/nanourismata.htm>). In the video there are subtitles with the English translation of the lyrics (separate file included in the folder which has been uploaded).



After the students have been familiarised with all the poems, in order to be able to understand the following stages of the lesson, they continue working with their groups in order to discuss and write a short paragraph in a question that aims at a deeper analysis of the poem.

- The first group, which is studying Najim Hikmet's lullaby (Worksheet 3a) makes a list of the occupations that are mentioned in the poem (the professions that the father wants his son to follow), and then they define their characteristics
- The second group which is working with Yannis Ritsos' lullaby (Worksheet 3b) have to develop in the form of a short paragraph their thoughts about the gifts that the poet wants to give his daughter and the reason why he chooses them
- The third group, tries to analyse two of the surrealistic images in Lorca's lullaby (Worksheet 3c) and create a short paragraph explaining their deeper meaning

When the groups finish the students read their paragraphs to their classmates, and if necessary the teacher leads a discussion on the three topics.

3rd Activity:

Time: 10'

Type of activity: The students create a different form of a lullaby

Class organisation: Groupwork

Actions/Tasks: The teacher tells the students that it is time to be creative. The purpose of this activity is to make students use their imagination and creative thinking and to cooperate in order to make a different lullaby. Each group is going to select a form of a lullaby that does not necessarily have to be a poem. The students can, for example, create a goodnight story, a poster that is going to be placed in a baby's room to help it sleep calmly, a card to be given as a present to their little brother or sister, or anything else they can think of!

The groups' finished creations can be uploaded on the last column of the padlet (<https://padlet.com/mepr4/271z5wxsf8kr>) under the heading "Creativity time".

Homework

The students choose one of the two following tasks:

- 1) If you had to write a lullaby to a child, what would you wish for him or her? Justify your choices.
- 2) Let's reverse the situation. Write a text (prose or poem) addressing your parents, in which you express your ideas on how *you want them to behave* towards you, in order to become the person described by the lullabies you have studied.

Finally they fill in an evaluation questionnaire in <https://forms.gle/o7aTufxFVuUVxtpq7>

Suggestions for future development and expansion of the scenario

- 1) Stereotypes: Based on the following pictures from the book "Dad by my side", by the Ukrainian Artist Soosh (<https://www.amazon.com/Dad-My-Side-Soosh/dp/0316438081>), on the fact that the three poems we have studied are male and on the students' personal experience, we discuss the role on the mother and the father in relation to babies and little kids. Questions such as "Who used to put you and the other children of your family to sleep?", "Who sang lullabies or read bedtime stories to you? Was it a male or a female member of your family?", "Do you think that men are more, equally or less able than women to take care of a child?", "What happens when one or both of the parents work long hours?", "When you have children of your own, will you devote time to put them to sleep?" etc can be discussed in order to discover and challenge any existing stereotypes.



Differentiation

The scenario, has been designed with the students of the 1st Experimental Middle School of Athens, who generally have a good level of English and are familiarised with the use of web 2.0 tools in their lessons. If however, the students of a particular school need more time to carry out the activities, the teacher can omit some of them or expand the scenario to cover one more hour and of course additional help (eg a glossary) can be provided by the teacher.

In addition, the fact that most of the activities are carried out in groups and that some of the activities offer options to the students is also beneficial for students with different levels of English and different learning styles.