

In the Snow Covered Valley



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An idea from:

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Age: 5 years

Keywords: #storytelling #nature #language #stopmotion #images

Key question: *Can the natural environment inspire the creation of stories and characters?*

General objectives:

- Telling and inventing stories
- Developing the ability to read images
- Use vocabulary related to lived experiences
- Building and consolidating emotional ties
- Experimenting with the potential of media as a creative tool

Time: 7 activities with children of 20 to 50 minutes each for a total of approximately 6 hours.

Materials

At school	At Home
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projector• smartphone/digital camera• tablet• white and coloured sheets of paper• scissors• sample retainer• colours (pencils, markers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smartphone/tablet/digital camera

Software/ Apps:

Padlet Objective: Virtual wall where images, videos, texts, drawings can be shared. Media: Computer; smartphone; tablet Link: www.padlet.com Alternatives Mural	Stop Motion Studio Objective: Creating animations with the stop motion Media: smartphone; tablet Link: https://apps.apple.com/it/app/stop-motion-studio/id441651297 Alternatives PicPac/ Google photos	iMovie Objective: Audio/video editing Media: Computer; smartphone; tablet Link: https://www.apple.com/it/imovie/ Alternatives VN, CapCut, InShot, windows photos tool
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Short Presentation

Nature is the protagonist and muse of collaborative digital storytelling.

Children explore a natural environment with the family and play at creating characters using the materials they find there. Starting from the created characters, the children at school collaborate on the conception of a story and animate the various parts using the stop motion technique. The children also act as the narrators in the story, using in some parts all the languages present in class or in the family.

Step by Step

Step 1

At
home

Families are invited to take a walk in a natural environment and help the children take photographs of the landscape around them.

The parent's can support the children in the correct framing and in finding the subject. It is important that the children take as many photos as they like; at home parents help children select the landscape photos to be sent to the educators.

Step 2

At
school

Children explore the natural environment around the school (park, forest, etc.), play at collecting materials and assembling them to create characters, and take pictures of their works.

The educators share with the families photos of the characters made by the children as they explore together.



For distance learning

The family is again invited to explore the most accessible natural environment (garden, park, forest, etc.), with the aim of collecting and playing with the natural material present (leaves, flowers, twigs, pine cones, etc.), creating characters which, once ready, are to be photographed.

The material is to be taken home to continue playing with it.

Step 3

At home

Children and parents discuss the experience outside and watch the photos of characters that were either taken with the parents or with the educators and investigate further the created characters with questions as a starting point as: what is this character's name? What does he/she do? What other characters are there in this environment?.....

After this first discussion children draw or create, using the material available at home, another character inspired by the natural environments explored so far.



Step 4

At school

In class, the educator projects pictures of the landscapes and characters and the children produce ideas for a story.

Slowly, with the help of the educator, the children define the final version of their story : characters, objects, backgrounds, narrative arc and dialogue - which the educators document on a big paper poster on the wall together with the storyboard that illustrates all steps in a clear way (using drawings and symbols for example). Educators can also invite children to make a drawing of each step.



For distance learning

The educator shares a padlet with the families with a collection of the characters and environments photographed by the children so far and invites each family to be inspired by the pictures to create a short story.

Step 5

At
home

Educators share the ideas that have emerged with the parents via video message, especially regarding dialogues, characters and objects that are to be animated by the children. Each family chooses some objects and characters and, if a second language is spoken at home, teaches the child to pronounce the names of objects and characters in that second language, recording it and sending the audio file to the educators.

If there are no other languages spoken in the family, the educator assigns a dialogue between two or more characters (or a narrator's part); child and parents share the parts and record an audio to be sent to the educators.

Step 6

At
school

The children are divided into groups to develop the various parts of the story by animating the characters and objects using the stop motion technique. Missing audio parts are recorded.

	<p>For distance learning</p> <p>The educators send a video tutorial on how to use the Stop Motion Studio app and invite families to create their own short animated story, using the previously created characters, and share them with the educators.</p>
<p>Step 7</p> <p>---</p> <p><i>At school</i></p>	<p>The educators prepare the recorded parts, and linking the computer to the projector or white board edit the animations of the various sequences trying to involve children as much as possible in the choice of the sequences and recorded audios.</p>
	<p>For distance learning</p> <p>Tducators collect all materials, edit and assemble the story, and share the video with all families.</p>

Conclusion

Presence	Virtual
Parents are invited to attend the video screening during a dedicated event or at the school festival.	The educators invite all families to a call on meet , where they share the story. The video can also be uploaded to the school website and shared on the school's social media.

This atelier was experimented by 4 Kindergartens of the Comprehensive Institute of Tarvisio, in the Region of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia that collaborated in the creation of a common story. The story has been developed by sending the materials in a "surprise" box from school to school. In the final video the various characters that were developed by the children speak the various languages of the territory, where in addition to Italian, Friulian, Slovenian and German is spoken. Here the video as an example of the animation work that was developed: [Magic in the snow-covered valley](#)

