

IATEFL Slovenia Magazine
Autumn issue 2014, no. 62



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TWin

odlični izleti v London!

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Turistična agencija TWIN se s kulturno-izobraževalnimi potovanji ukvarja že 18. leto. Ker v Veliko Britanijo potujemo pogosteje kot večina ostalih slovenskih organizatorjev potovanj, ponujamo odlično in preverjeno izvedbo. Naše cene tudi že vključujejo javni prevoz in obvezne vstopnine. Cene so odvisne predvsem od termina odhoda in vaše fleksibilnosti pri odhodu.

“Večkrat sem brskala po vaši spletni strani, a je bila do nedavnega še zastarela, s programi iz pred let, ko sem še sama spremljala učence v VB. Danes pa sem nad prenovitvijo navdušena! Svetovala bi vsem učencem, dijakom (ki še niso potovali s Twinom) in njihovim staršem, naj se za tovrstno izkušnjo čimprej odločijo. Res je, da takšno potovanje oz. tečaj nekaj stane, a je vredno vsakega vplačanega centa. Investicija v znanje (pa naj bo to tečaj jezika ali zgolj spoznavanje dežele, njenih navad in kulture) je edine naložba, ki se splača. Sama sem učence (kot učitelj spremljevalec) spremljala dvanajstkrat, pa mi je žal, da nisem začela že prej. Kdor ima rad angleščino, je pot v njeno matično deželo neizbežna. Ko pa te dežela premami, ko vzljubiš njeno kulturo in blagovročnost jezika, se vedno znova vračaš. To je kot ljubezen. Sedaj sem v pokoju, najbolj od vsega pa pogrešam potovanja z učenci. Ni lepšega kot poslušati navdušene starše, ko jim njihovi otroci ob vrnitvi iz VB po prihodu še dolgo v noč ne dajo spati, ker jim pripovedujejo o svojih izkušnjah. Skoda, da ne obstajajo programi za starejše. LP”

Pavla Štepic, Zagorje ob Savi.

Zakaj s Twin-om v London:

1. Pogosti in redni, zagotovljeni odhodi v London. Twin organizira šolska potovanja v London že 18 let, v povprečju imamo na mesec vsaj 3 zagotovljene odhode v London.
2. Odlično vodstvo. Pri Twinu se zavedamo, da je odlično poznavanje običajev in turističnih znamenitosti Londončanov le prvi korak k odlični izvedbi. Naši vodniki imajo dolgoletne izkušnje pri vodenju šolske mladine, zato odlično poznajo vse sestavine programa, saj jih sami pripravljajo. Tudi zato je vodenje/izvedba toliko bolj fleksibilna glede na želje skupine. Naj še omenimo, da boste v Sloveniji težko našli vodnike, ki v London vodijo tako pogosto kot Twinovi vodniki.
3. Nastanitev, ki presega običajno turistično kategorijo. Pri Twinu se zavedamo, da je dober spanec pomembna sestavina izleta. Vsi naši hoteli so hoteli s 3* in pri večini udeležencev presežejo njihova pričakovanja. Kot specialist za London lahko zagotovimo vsaj en bogat angleški zajtrk (običajnih zajtrki v Londonu so skromni kontinentalni).
4. **Nikoli naknadno ne spreminjamo pogojev.** Naša cena je vedno znana že ob prijavi in se nikoli ne spremeni zaradi spremembe

cen dobaviteljev, goriva, manjšega števila prijavljenih ali drugih razlogov v drobnem tisku.

5. Vedno ponudimo kakšno dodatno storitev – brezplačno. S program zagotavljamo minimalni obseg storitev oz. ogledov, vendar nikoli ne izvedemo samo minimalnega obsega – vedno, pri vsaki skupini dodamo nekaj posebnega, kar ni zapisano v programu. Prav tako v naših programih nikoli ne zapišemo “če bo čas dopuščal”, kajti vse naše programe vedno v celoti izvedemo. In ker si London zelo pogosto ogledujemo, poznamo tudi optimalno zaporedje ogledov brez nepotrebnega hitenja.
6. Vsaj 183 osnovnih in srednjih šol je že potovalo z nami. Več kot 50 šol potuje vsaj enkrat povprečno na vsaki 2 leti. Če želite neobvezujoče vzpostaviti stik z organizatorjem na eni od šol, ki je že potovala z nami, vam bomo z veseljem posredovali kontakt.
7. Ponujamo 4-dnevni program, kjer je zajamčeno potreben le en dan izostanka od pouka.

Več informacij na www.twintur.com ali na brezplačnem telefonu 080 1025 ali v poslovalnici na Zemljemerski ulici 12 v Ljubljani.

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Dear readers,

You've had to be a bit more patient for this year's autumn issue of *IN*, but – better late than never! – here it is. And I really hope you'll find it was worth the wait! Just as September offers a fresh new start for teachers and students alike, so our IATEFL is undergoing a few changes this autumn. The elections have brought new board members and competition coordinators and have brought about quite some rearrangements in our community.

Actually, you are even now reading the words of one of the newcomers – yours truly. As editor, I am looking forward to the new challenge and also eagerly await all your future contributions to our magazine. Please do not hesitate to share your experience and ideas with the world – just send them to mojca.oblak@iatefl.si.

The writers of the articles you are about to read have kindly shared with us impressions of their summer travels, teacher training courses, adventures with their students, reflections on various IATEFL conferences, fresh teaching ideas and more. One of them has even undergone a search for the perfect toilet! All memories that will last a lifetime!

You are also kindly invited to make new memories at our Saturday Seminar on 18 October and at Marie Delaney's workshop on 4 December. Not to forget IATEFL's most important event of the year – 22nd International IATEFL Slovenia Conference, which will be held from 5th – 8th March 2015 in Terme Topolšica. Check the "It's a must-attend event" section.

In the hope of making great memories together, I wish you all a successful and colourful autumn!

And remember: "*Everyday is a new beginning. Treat it that way. Stay away from what might have been and look at what can be.*" (Marsha Petrie Sue).

Mojca Oblak, new *IN* editor

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The Language of Toilets

by Danny Singh



Danny Singh, born and raised in London but now based in Rome, gives creative English language lessons and teacher-training courses all over Italy and abroad. He also offers stimulating monthly presentations on language-related issues at Rome's biggest international bookshop and can be seen on

web TV at www.inmagicartwebtv.eu giving a series of interactive English video lessons. He is Vice-President of the Italian Laughter Yoga association and regularly attends Pilgrims TT summer courses as a Guest Speaker.

*His website is at www.laughnlearn.net
e-mail: singh_danny@hotmail.com*

Menu

- What's in a name?
- What's in a toilet?
- A question of gender
- The perfect toilet
- Toilet exercises



What's in a name?

The subject of toilets can throw up a whole range of linguistic points of interest and observations on cultural habits and customs. After all, “throwing up”, or vomiting, is one of the activities regularly performed in this fascinating location!

Let's start with the name itself. The official English word is “toilet”, though in the past it was usually referred to as the “lavatory”. Nowadays, few people would use the latter word and some younger speakers might even wonder what it meant. Then there are of course various informal terms, which can vary from region to region, and usage also depends on the usual factors – age, social class and even sex.

One common informal name is the “loo”. Children usually like this word, as it's simple and easy to pronounce. Then there are a number of more vulgar terms, one of which is “bog”. And the taboo of the toilet means that people don't always refer to it directly either. In some social classes, the word “bathroom” is preferred. My favourite expression for

those trying to avoid the use of the word toilet is “I'm just going to powder my nose”!

In American English the official word is “restroom”. One of the more common informal words is “John”. In Italy, the official word is gabinetto, which translates as toilet. However, it is very rarely used, and often people will say pardon if you ask them where the gabinetto is. And there are few signs for the gabinetto in Italy. In over 20 years, I have only ever seen one. Normally, the word for bathroom is used, otherwise the English word “toilet” or in some cases even the French word toilette.

Another important English word for toilets is found as we move outside. Several years ago, I was in London talking in Italian to an Italian friend who was visiting the city. At a certain point, I needed the toilet and entered a pub. Although I know very well the word that is used in an English pub, I was thinking in Italian and so asked the manager where the bathroom was. He replied by saying that there was no bathroom as far as he was aware, but that the “gents” was down the corridor on the left. A toilet for women is similarly called the “ladies”. Apart from pubs, there used to be numerous public toilets with signs saying “Gents” and “Ladies”. However, with the reduction of free public toilets (we are now expected to pay), these terms are now restricted almost solely to pubs. In some modern public toilets, there are no longer even words, just pictures, and you are left to judge for yourself which is for men and which for women!

What's in a toilet?

In a traditional, old-fashioned English house, you would find a very small room with a toilet bowl and that's it, not even a sink. The bathroom is traditionally kept separate and this probably explains why the use of the word bathroom is so rare in England, except among polite folk. Nowadays, however, modern flats and houses tend to have all-in-one bathrooms. In the Dutch city of Rotterdam, the average toilet is also a minute room with a toilet bowl, but with the addition of a very small sink. This changes, obviously, as you move to the suburbs, where the properties tend to be more spacious in general.

In Italy, the bathroom is considered by some to be the most important room in the house. Even the poorest Italian flat contains a toilet bowl, a sink, a bathtub and a bidet. This goes some way as to understanding why the Italian word for toilet is rarely used. In many Italian households, you can even find two or three bathrooms, which gives you plenty of options!

The amount of time spent in the toilet naturally varies from person to person. It also depends, of course, on the purpose

of the visit. I use the toilet for certain basic functions, some of which take longer than others. In my case, it might be shaving, or applying all my creams, each one dedicated to a specific part of my body; in a woman's case, it might be painting her nails or putting on makeup. However, I have also discovered that there are some people who use the bathroom to read! If that's because it's the quietest room in the house, the one place you won't be disturbed, then that's fine, but no, there are those who read while performing their basic functions. How can you focus? Is this an example of multi-tasking?!

You can easily tell if the people residing in a house are male or female simply by taking a look at the bathroom. (Notice that I am now using the word "bathroom" and not "toilet"!) Aside from the perfumes, colours and various products that may distinguish a man from a woman, there is the important question of the toilet seat. The toilet seat may be completely closed, which is neutral and just means that you can lose valuable time when in a desperate hurry. Or the lid may be open with the seat down, which tends to mean that the property is inhabited, or at least dominated, by females, or the seat could be up, in which case, we are fairly certain that it is a male-run house.

This may seem like a trivial subject, but I can assure you that in many divorce cases this was the straw that broke the camel's back! Many a relationship has come to a definitive conclusion after endless conflicts on the subject of the toilet seat: up, down or closed...

A question of gender

The gender question comes up again in social situations – at the disco, at a party or even in a restaurant. One girl will announce that she is going to the toilet. Another will then ask if she can go with her. What for? On their way to the toilet, they meet another friend and explain where they are going. She then asks if she can come too. When they do finally arrive at the toilet, they will often have to queue, hardly surprising, as there is a limit as to how many people can easily fit into one toilet. What do they do while they are in there, apart from the obvious? Discuss personal problems, give boyfriend advice, conduct meetings, conferences, what else? When I decide to go the toilet, I'll usually announce it to the people that I am with, but not to the whole world! And what would happen if I invited someone to come with me? Or if someone then asked if he could come too? We would indeed be considered strange!

Although I've never been in a women's public toilet, I imagine that each toilet cubicle is separated by a door. This is the case in a men's toilet too, but there there is the addition of urinals, which are also very interesting indeed! Some of them, especially the more modern ones, are separate, with their own little space. But others are completely open, so you find a space where you can and insert yourself there. This makes socialising for men much easier, as there is no physical barrier and the distances are less than between cubicles.

It is amazing to observe how different men behave in this situation. Some are fully concentrated on what they are doing. Others spend their time observing what others are doing, instead of focusing on their own activity. Some might look at you and smile. An ex-colleague who had come out as gay taught me the slang term "cottaging", meaning the practice whereby some gay men deliberately spent time in public toilets examining others who were otherwise engaged in their basic functions.

Conversation in an all male toilet is limited to friends, family and people who you know – unless any of the conversers are drunk or at least slightly inebriated. Some of the most interesting conversations I have ever had have been while conversing with others under the influence of alcohol in a public toilet. If I am under the influence too, then the conversation has additional quality, otherwise it is more like speaking in a foreign language.

Those of you who have read my article "Cultural Differences – England v. Italy" (<http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jun09/sart10.htm>) may remember the story of a visit to a toilet in a company where I was working at the time. I met one of my many students there – nothing strange yet. However, as he hadn't been to lessons for a while, I inquired about his health and work situation, while he tried to justify his absence. He was waving his arms around as Italians often do, the consequence of which, while performing a basic function, I'll leave to your imagination!

By far the funniest experience I've had in a public toilet was at a beer festival in Kent. As you can probably imagine, there were no permanent toilets, but some temporary ones set up specifically for the purposes of the festival. When I entered, I saw that there was one of those long open urinals, but every single space was covered and behind each man, there was another waiting patiently for him to leave. I took my position and waited. When I did eventually reach pole position, I noticed that the urinal was absolutely awash with urine. It was like Venice when the water levels get too high. Amazing, so much beer emptied here, I thought to myself. At a certain point, I was alone in the toilet, as all those before had left, and another two or three men walked in. When they saw the quantity of urine flowing along the urinal, they looked at me in astonishment. We then began an extremely profound conversation, in which I managed to convince them that I hadn't deposited all the urine myself.

The perfect toilet

What makes for the perfect toilet or at least, let's say, a toilet a pleasure to go to (apart from your home one, of course) is a question of taste, but the most important aspect has to be cleanliness. Some toilets are cleaned regularly and have wonderful aromas. The better ones are not only cleaned regularly with attractive odours, but have music playing in the background. One of the best that I have ever experienced was in a Thai restaurant in the centre of London, where I went to celebrate my parents' birthdays. This toilet had relaxing music,

chairs to sit on, towels made of cotton and a mirror that covered the whole wall. It was so impressive that I spent almost half an hour sitting down, listening to the music, looking at the mirror and absorbing the atmosphere. Not surprising that my sister came looking for me thinking something was wrong!

This was obviously an exception – a luxurious toilet in a luxurious location at a luxurious price. In the less luxurious ones, on the other hand, one of the problems that exists is that some men apparently are not always able to hit the target, meaning that the floor gets rather wet! There have been endless attempts to resolve this problem – putting signs up, shouting at users and even fining people who are seen making a mess. None of these have really been successful. But I have since found one solution that is so simple and yet appears to work perfectly. In a famous pub in the centre of Ljubljana in Slovenia, I went to the toilet after a beer and had the experience of my life. The urinals were separate, and in each urinal there was a goal. Yes, a goal with a net! Just in front of the net was a ball. If you managed to hit the ball, but you had to hit it cleanly, mind, the ball flew into the net! Goal!! “Yes!” I shouted several times, with no sense of embarrassment whatsoever. And guess what I noticed? The floor was totally devoid of even a drop of liquid.

Toilet exercises

The subject of toilets is often deliberately avoided, but I hope this short article shows how much material and language can be obtained from this not-to-be-underestimated subject. As a teacher, you could even use the subject in class for discussion. Below are some examples of questions you could ask.



A Lesson in Your Pocket

by Danny Singh

This idea came from a workshop at the Words and Music Conference held in Maribor in April 2014.

Use The Gandhi Rap to introduce the subject of Gandhi. Play the song a couple of times. It should stimulate students to find out for themselves via online research who Gandhi was, where he came from and so on. Ask students to print out a copy of the text, learn the words and sing the song. Explain any vocabulary if necessary.

If students are very enthusiastic, get them to prepare a project on the subject in groups, which gives them unlimited opportunities.

If students are less enthusiastic, find the text for them and ask them questions to stimulate their interest – “Where is he from?”, “Why is he famous?” and so on.

- How many times a day do you visit the bathroom?
- How much time do you spend there on average?
- Does your bathroom have a window?
- If so, what is the view?
- Are there any activities that you do there which could easily be done elsewhere?
- Do you have any mirrors in your bathroom?
- Do you play music in your bathroom?
- Make a list of at least 10 objects in your bathroom.
- What is your favourite bathroom object?
- Is there anything you would change about your bathroom if you could?

Why? Because we can. Our SOL students' course in Tiverton

by Lea Sobočan

The above title encompasses my students' spirit very accurately. They are the kind of people that would build a three-storey robot that does nothing but move cars from left to right and when asked why, just shrug and go "Well, because we could." And because we could, we went on a summer course of English! SOL has three centres, in Barnstaple, Bideford and Tiverton, all lovely little towns with less traffic and more unpolluted air than the big cities. Then there was the added bonus of the Atlantic being very close by, so we could go swimming!

I was feeling rather terrified at first, not because of the course, but because I had thought it would be a most excellent idea to spend a few days in London beforehand. So even a few weeks before we took off, I was panicking: a city! And a huge one at that! My boys will get lost, kidnapped, sold for spare parts, enslaved by unsavory characters!

It was silly to worry, of course, but we teachers tend to do that. Nothing went wrong at all and we had a blast. Not least because we had company in the form of my colleague from Lendava, Sandra Vida, and three of her students, all girls. I am happy to report that there were no duels!

Some quotes from the students about London:

"I hated the rain that was falling like crazy." "I liked the underground very much." "I think the teachers could let us try to lead the group in the underground, so we could get some experience." "All the tickets were expensive." "London is a beautiful city, but I can't see myself living there or being there for a long time." "The weather pleasantly surprised me. I didn't expect any sunshine." "In the three days we were in London, I saw a lot of street performers. Every performer had a different show, but they were all good."

After an eventful three days in London, we climbed aboard the bus and, after short stops in Stonehenge and Salisbury, we were soon in Tiverton. And I could breathe a sigh of relief – the students were all there uninjured and no-one had tried to do parkour on Stonehenge.

Our days in Tiverton were packed full of activities and sights, so here are some things my students noticed, as jotted down in their journals (a great idea, by the way – email me for some examples) or said to me directly.

- *"I felt very nice and welcomed."*
- *"I was surprised by:
double pipes
eating outside
carpeted floors
chilly rooms
pictures all over the place."*
- *"Tiverton is much smaller than Ljubljana,
and there aren't so many people."*
- *"In the afternoon we went to see Haytor and
Widcombe. We saw this big rock and climbed it.
It was a beautiful day and we also saw some
ponies."*
- *What do you think of English food?
"It's not for me."
"It's tasty!"
"There are too many sandwiches."
"I like the fish and chips."*
- *"Lynmouth is a beautiful place with this amazing
cable car that works on water. We had a great day."*
- *What do you think of the UK and British people?
"I think they are no different than we are."
"They are very polite and out-going."*
- *What have you enjoyed the most?
"Meeting new people and getting to swim
in the Atlantic Ocean!"
"I don't think that I can say one thing was really
the best and the others weren't so good. I enjoyed
every single thing in the UK!"*
- *So there you have it. We survived buses that drive
on the wrong side, expensive ice-cream and only
sandwiches for lunch... and we had a blast!
Thank you, SOL, for a wonderful experience,
and thank you boys and girls for mostly being
perfect angels!*



Tea Time Chats in KOŽ

by Lea Sobočan

Libraries fill me with excitement. When I was little there was no better or more magical place than the library, because there were all these books you could read, for free, and they even let you take them home.

If the librarian was friends with you, you could even badger them for book they absolutely must put on that list of theirs and order them, like yesterday because it is imperative that you and everyone else reads them or something dreadful might happen.

Libraries are magical.

That is why we teamed up with Knjižnica Otona Župančiča, the ultimate portal to magical book kingdom and organised conversation classes for basically everyone with an hour to spare and a desire to chat a bit in English. As icing on our cake, CHA teahouse was kind enough to sponsor tea and tea-making kit for us to feel very posh indeed while improving our collective Englishes.

A team of very dedicated teachers including Alenka Tratnik, Dragana Stegić, Vesna Gros and Barbara Dvornik all gave up an hour of their very limited and extremely valuable time to promote our organisation and give back to the community. The topics we covered included:

Learn English – words, culture and people; Fashion and beauty – a universal language?; Art – from penny novels to Mona Lisa; The glitter and gloom of consumerism; Entertainment – films, books, music; The joy of free time; Foodies of the world unite!

... and many more besides.

Vesna Gros kindly shared her teaching tip for her topic Fashion and beauty

»I brought clippings from magazines and we played Fashion Police. We also had a look at Dove's Real Beauty Campaign and talked about beauty being in the eye of the beholder. Search on Youtube for Dove Real Beauty Sketches.«

Think it's a great idea? Get in touch and we'll see how we can transform your local library into an occasional English spot.





»It's a must-attend event!«

IATEFL Slovenia Saturday Seminar

When: 18th October 2014, 9 am – 5 pm

Where: Gimnazija Velenje, Trg mladosti 3, Velenje

We will have a workshop on teaching very young learners and at the same time - if you are not interested in that - one for teaching the new Matura literary text. Furthermore, we will talk about learner autonomy and getting students to speak. It will also be another opportunity to get a bigger pack of rods and find out how you can use them to teach practically everything. As always, there will also be time for exchange of ideas and a discussion.

The registration fee (includes a snack at lunchtime and drinks) for members of IATEFL Slovenia is 10 eur and for non member 50 eur (again this is a good time to become a member, membership fee is 40 eur for the whole year).

For application and the full programme visit:

<http://www.iatefl.si/sl/events/saturday-workshops/item/168-sobotni-seminar-18-10-2014-v-velenju.html>

Marie Delaney's Workshop: What about ME? Stress management, resilience and wellbeing for teachers in times of change and challenge

When: 4th December 2014

Marie Delaney, an Educational Psychotherapist, English Language and Modern Foreign Languages Teacher and Teacher Trainer, has extensive experience of working with challenging behaviour – both staff and pupils! She has been Director of Studies for International House, Poland, Course Director for Teacher Training at Pilgrims and has trained teachers in several countries for Pilgrims and the British Council.

We are looking forward to her workshop on 4th December where we will learn how to manage our own stress and well-being in order to teach effectively. The workshop will show us how inner and outer resources can be harnessed to create wellness and wellbeing as well as how to share this knowledge with learners, to create positive, healthy learning environments.

The even will consist of two 90 min parts:
What is wellbeing and why is it important?

Strategies for managing wellbeing and increasing motivation in teachers and learners

Make sure not to miss it!

Follow www.iatefl.si for more information on the event.

A reflection on “Little Ideas for Great Changes”

by Atsuko Takase

NO SNOW! Where’s all the snow?! Has it already gone?? All the way from Zagreb to Ljubljana I kept watching the landscape from the train window, looking for snow. I had expected a view of snow-covered fields and towns. So I was quite disappointed! Later I found out that the unusual weather, which has been affecting countries worldwide, had meant unprecedented snowfall in Tokyo and very little in Slovenia.

As this was my very first visit to Slovenia, I got off the train with expectations of exciting encounters with new people in Ljubljana and at the conference. And it all started on the evening of 5 March in Ljubljana. I had been informed by Sandra Vida of the evening of storytelling with words and music by Jeremy Harmer and Steve Bingham. As I am very interested in storytelling and love music, I immediately asked her for tickets for the event. Thus with Sandra’s help, the first great experience began – it really was an inspiring performance by two great communicators. Then a delicious dinner followed, with a lot of interesting conversation with many different people, which was something I had been really looking forward to. What impressed me in particular was that in spite of some unfortunate experiences of some members in getting into the UK, they had kept studying English without losing enthusiasm and, even more, that in spite of tragic wars in the past, teachers from countries which had been involved in these conflicts were talking to each other as good friends. What moved me most were the following words of some members: “As politicians never become friends, teachers will.”

The conference venue was Terme Topolšica, which is surrounded by beautiful scenery and was a delightful place to

stay. Since all the meals were served in the hotel restaurant, there were many opportunities from morning till night to get to know other guests. I attended as many presentations as possible, however early or late, not having to worry about travel or about getting back to my room safely. So in my opinion it was a wonderful idea to hold the conference in a hotel.

I found several interesting differences between this IATEFL conference – and the same applies to those I had previously attended in Hildesheim and Bulgaria (BETA) – and other language and education conferences I have attended, such as those held by TESOL in the USA, Egypt, Cambodia, Mexico and Korea, AILA, AAAL, BAAL, JALT (the Japan Association for Language Teaching), JLTA (the Japan Language Testing Association), JACET (the Japan Association of College English Teachers), JALET (the Japan Association for Language Education & Technology) and JERA (the Japan Extensive Reading Association).

First, as the number of attendees was not very big, plenary speeches were made in the two main halls and presentations were given in three smaller rooms, all in the same venue. So we did not have to rush from one building to another looking for a presentation. Some conferences I have attended, mostly held at universities, had a huge number of presentations in different buildings, which forced us to run to the different sessions or skip one or two in order to move to a different building, even by streetcar on one occasion! It often happens that by the time we get to the target session, the room is already full or the session is half over!. Also, when there are too many concurrent sessions, I always feel that I



am missing something interesting and important. It is always difficult to choose from several interesting concurrent sessions.

Second, at this conference there were more workshops than talks given by teachers of young or very young learners, in particular. As I am interested in English education for young learners in the 8–15 age group, who I believe are most capable of accepting and learning a language more effectively without feeling awkward with the new language being used, I attended several such workshops. There I really felt the teachers' enthusiasm and creativity is coming up with effective and attractive lessons. What surprised me most was the high level of English language proficiency – of both learners and presenters! According to the presentations at this conference, learners seem to be exposed to natural English in classes taught by fluent non-native English teachers at a very young age. As all the presentations were given in English, it was difficult to distinguish non-native speakers from native speakers. In contrast, at many conferences in Japan, including those organised by the above-mentioned JACET, JALET and JERA, most presentations are given in Japanese due either to the inadequacy of the presenters' communicative competence or to the lack of listening skills on the part of the audience. This often prevents many native-speaker English language teachers from attending such conferences, as they are conducted largely in Japanese. The cause of this biggest difference is the teaching method employed in most middle and high school (13–18 age group) English classes, where the traditional grammar-and-translation method is still mainstream in Japan.

A final highlight was the dance evening at the end of the conference. The social events I had experienced at other conferences included a sightseeing tour (Denver, USA), a performance of a traditional local dance (Cambodia and Japan), a traditional musical instrument performance (Japan) and an orchestra performance (Essen, Germany), at all of which the attendees were mostly spectators, whereas at this IATEFL Slovenia, attendees including keynote speakers, presenters, audiences, student helpers and the organisers themselves joined and danced for several hours. I enjoyed this, my very first such experience at a conference, very much. And then I

happened to encounter a second dancing party, just one week later, at the TESOL Greece Convention in Athens!

After the conference at Terme Topolšica, my husband and I stayed in Ljubljana for three more days to learn about Slovenia, visiting museums, the Narodna univerzitetna knjižnica (National University Library) and Ljubljanski grad (Ljubljana Castle), admiring the beauty and sacredness of the Frančiškanska cerkev (Franciscan Church) and Ljubljanska stolnica (Ljubljana Cathedral), enjoying the Masked Ball at the Opera House, the Ljubljana Philharmonia Chorus at the concert hall, and the ballet Cinderella at Cankarjev dom in the company of many schoolchildren. We also made a short trip to the amazing Postojna Cave and Lake Bled, which had been recommended to us by an attendee at the conference.

The two most impressive places for me were the Muzej novejšje zgodovine (Modern History Museum) in Tivoli Park and Cankarjev dom. At the museum, a guide kindly explained many exhibits referring to the modern history of Slovenia to us, noting that “Slovenia is a peace-loving nation. We don't want to fight with any country.” I had a very similar impression in Croatia when I visited museums and talked to the people I met there. At Cankarjev dom, there were so many schoolchildren studying their culture and enjoying the ballet Cinderella, which was combined with magic in order to attract the younger children. When I visited the Ethnographic Museum (Etnografski muzej) in Zagreb, it was similarly packed with younger schoolchildren very happily studying their traditional culture and lifestyle. What a wonderful education the children are receiving in these countries!

In short, the 21st International IATEFL Slovenia Conference, entitled “Little Ideas for Great Changes”, provided me with a great message and a great opportunity to get acquainted with many enthusiastic teachers from many different countries. Our goal is not only to educate young learners by teaching them English, but also to help them grow up to be good cosmopolitan citizens who love all people without prejudice, just as they love their own country and its people. I hope to keep attending different conferences in various countries and will certainly talk about the wonderful experiences I had at this one in Slovenia.



England Experience with the Twin travel agency

by Barbara Dvornik



“Why, Sir, you find no man, at all intellectual, who is willing to leave London. No, Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford.”

I can never get tired of London nor England and have never met anyone to prove me or the author of the above words wrong.

The “England Experience” organised tour with the Twin agency this June was a raffle prize I received at our latefl conference in March. Before you know it, school was over, I said goodbye to my old students and was already on a heavily delayed plane with a new group of students and teacher colleagues from Zasavje. So how did it go? What did we see and learn? Answer these questions about England and find out the identity of the author of the above quote!

1) The Monument is the tallest isolated stone column in the world and was designed by Sir Christopher Wren. It commemorates the Great Fire of London and offers great views of London from the top. How many steps must a tourist climb to enjoy these views?

- V) 58
- E) 168
- S) 331

2) The Shard building is a new 306-metre-tall construction in London by the River Thames. It was completed in 2012 and the viewing platform was opened a year later. What is it also true about the Shard?

- A) it is the tallest building in the EU
- L) it is still not finished
- T) its construction was commissioned by a group of Egyptians

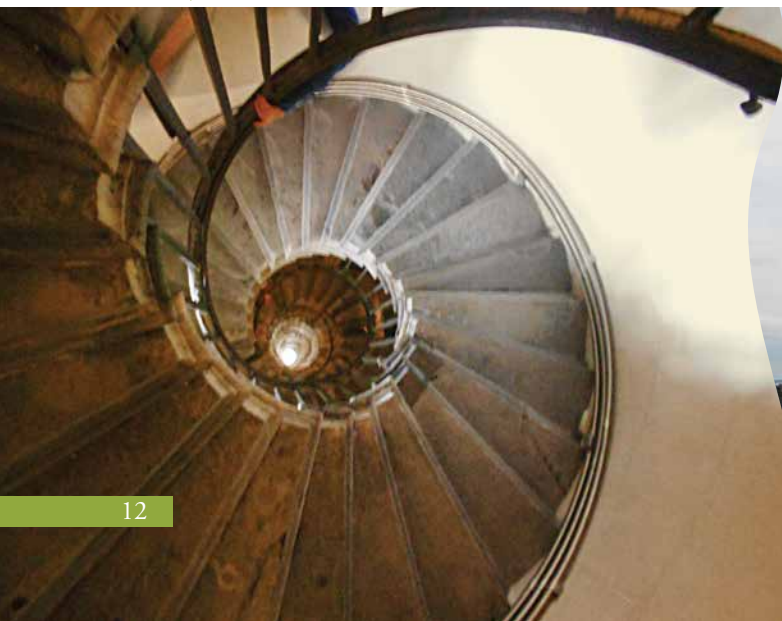
3) The Shard and the Monument both offer viewing platforms from their tops. However, most tourists choose to take in a view of London from on high by visiting this famous construction built for the millennium.

- P) the Dome
- M) the London Eye
- E) the Elizabeth Tower

4) Stonehenge is a world-famous prehistoric site, one of UNESCO’s World Heritage Sites, and is visited by thousands each year. This Bronze Age monument has stood here since around 2500 BC and the ring of stone structures, believed to be a burial site, still holds mysteries for archaeologists. Not a mystery at all are the structures across the road from the stone circle. What does the picture present?

- E) a home of the druids who have ceremonies at Stonehenge
- U) an open-air pig farm
- S) a construction site for a Hilton hotel

▼ 1)



▼ 2)



▼ 4)



- 5) If you are interested in the history of the justice system in England in the 18th and 19th centuries, do not forget to visit Galleries of Justice in Nottingham. You will be led through the dark halls and prison cells and realise that wearing green in the sheriff's court is not a good idea. Why is green frowned upon by the sheriff?
- G) green clashes with his usual outfit
 - R) it was the signature colour of a rival sheriff
 - E) it was the colour worn by Robin Hood
- 6) Trebuchet is a type of font in your everyday digital document. But before it was used as the name for a font, it was...
- L) a type of a catapult used in the Middle Ages
 - A) a type of construction where tools were kept in the past
 - W) an English hamlet famous for neat gardens
- 7) We all know what William Shakespeare did to earn his living (besides marrying Anne Hathaway). But what was his father's profession?
- J) he made leather gloves
 - K) he was a teacher
 - Y) he was an inn-owner
- 8) These boats as seen in Stratford upon Avon are not just ordinary boats. Why are they special?
- D) they are used as hostels for tourists
 - I) they serve for carrying goods on canals
 - O) they are homes for retired English people
- 9) If the statue on the top is William Shakespeare, who does the statue in front represent?
- S) Hamlet
 - H) a court jester
 - T) King Henry IV

- 10) The prison warden is trying to persuade visitors that the 19th century court system was just. People convicted to death by hanging could be pardoned if...

- B) they could pay a lot of money to change their sentence to exile to Australia
- N) they were unsuccessfully hanged three times
- X) the family of the victim decided to pardon them



▲ 4)

▼ 9)



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	8	10

▼ 7)

▼ 8)



Pilgrims Teacher Training

by Barbara Dvornik



Why the Pilgrims school in Canterbury was not just a destination this summer but the beginning of a new road in my teaching journey.

Pilgrims is a Canterbury-based school which offers English language training for young learners and adults, businesspeople and other professionals, and teacher language and methodology training. It is also a place where a community of people is dedicated to a humanistic approach in teaching and personal growth.

IATEFL Slovenia has been a part of this community for some time, both through our members attending courses in Canterbury and through seminars and workshops given by Pilgrims teachers in Slovenia. If you attended this year's IATEFL Slovenia conference in Topolšica, you had the chance to get a taste of Pilgrims by attending Stefania Ballotto's art-inspired workshops or Mojca Belak's activity-packed lessons. Thanks to the annual raffle at the conference and Stefania's draw, I was lucky enough to be able to attend a two-week course in Canterbury myself this summer.

Taking a course almost immediately after final meetings at school proved to be a challenge at first, but, after a long year of teaching, I was looking forward to becoming a student again, even if only for two weeks.

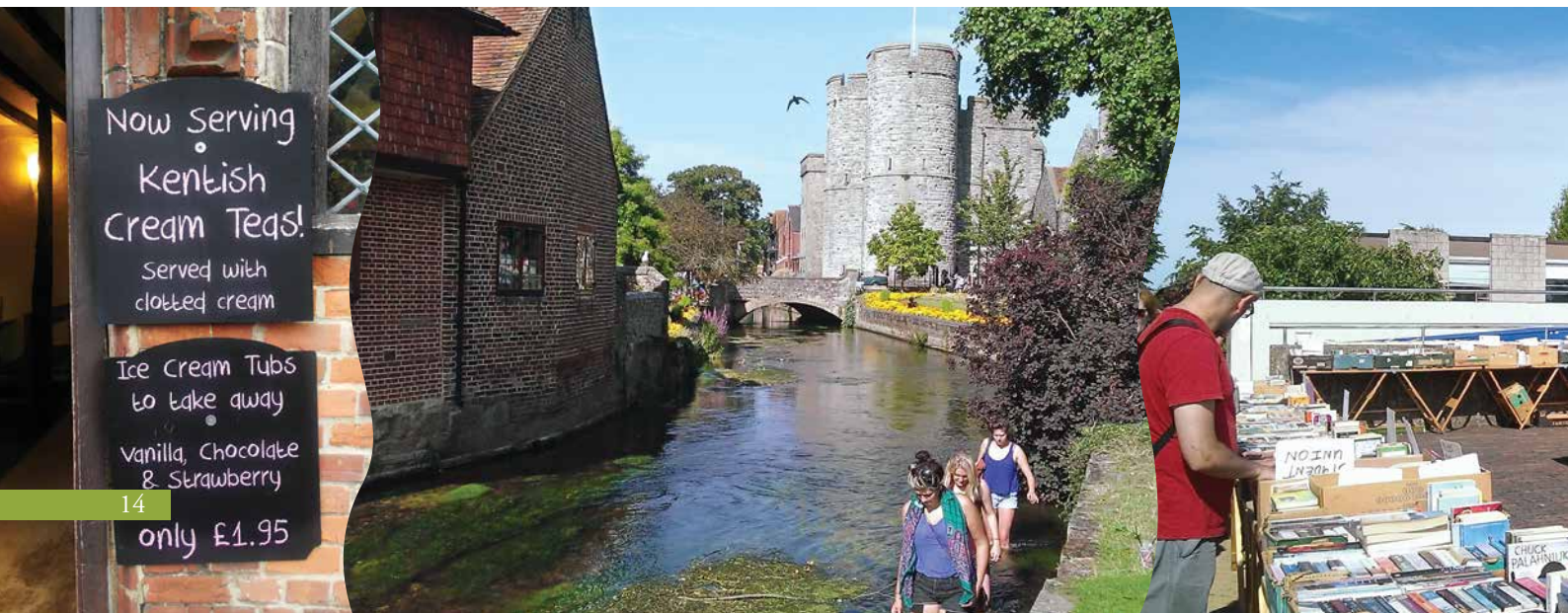
Anyone thinking of taking a course at Pilgrims in Canterbury will find that their website offers all kinds of detailed information about how to plan your journey and find accommodation. Pilgrims courses take place on the University of Kent campus in Canterbury, accommodation is available in shared

houses or individual rooms, and the green campus offers enough facilities to keep you busy every afternoon. My favourite thing about the campus was the fact that it is situated on a small hill overlooking Canterbury and the cathedral, which meant regular walks to the town centre and back after classes. My journey, finding accommodation and meeting my two housemates made me enthusiastic about the course already on arrival Sunday.

And the following two weeks? One course, 'How to motivate your students', one great teacher, Hania, three new colleagues in my group, and countless activities and ideas to use in classes. My course and the entire Pilgrims experience showed that the humanism that they put at the heart of everything they do is not just an abstract concept but can be a part of every methodology or activity, even meals or free time.

The seven core principles of humanistic teaching at Pilgrims are: (1) Each and everyone is a living syllabus, (2) Learner participation breeds motivation, confidence and success, (3) Cooperative learning is productive learning, (4) Be connected with the now, (5) Be here for yourself and be here for others, (6) Positive group dynamics are created – they don't simply happen, and (7) Teaching and learning is a joyful, life-affirming process.

So how did I do? Well, numbers 5 and 7 were no problem. So far I have managed to balance being here for myself and being here for others (my students) and have always found teaching and learning joyful and fulfilling (despite the constantly present difficult parents or students, working conditions and temporary contracts!). Interestingly, in our first lesson together I was reminded by our trainer Hania of being connected with the here and now (number 4). As a teacher I tend to be focused on the next lesson, test, report or holiday, and the here and now can get neglected as a result. Add to



this an obsession with meticulous planning, and I can easily find myself disconnected from the now. It's a lesson I am still learning today, two months after first becoming aware of it.

Other core principles I learned and discovered step by step, mainly by doing and reflecting on a number of activities that put me, this time as a student, in an active role. My colleagues and I, together with our teacher, of course, created positive dynamics with each lesson and conversation – we were allowed time to cooperate and present our own ideas and views. What's stayed with me in particular is the new view I now have of myself in the classroom when I follow my lesson plans and adapt them to at least one or two of the core Pilgrims principles. I spend less time thinking days ahead (of course one day ahead is mandatory) and give my students time and space to get involved. Although this might sound like a great step forward, it is in fact more about the series of little steps – baby steps one might even say! – we take every day with the students – but as long as they work, this is the way to go. I guess Pilgrims lives up to its name. See you in Canterbury next summer?

Must see and do in Canterbury

- a stroll by the river
- relaxing in the orchard behind the Marlowe Theatre, with its lovely view of the cathedral
- attending evensong
- the Parrot Inn
- second-hand shops in the main shopping streets
- Primark (organised and never crowded, if you can believe it!)

Must see and do at Pilgrims on campus

- afternoon yoga with Lizzie
- a night in the Gulbenkian Theatre
- lunch break on the meadow with another fine view of the cathedral
- observing happy faces at graduation ceremonies
- dinner with your trainer and group
- mingling during breaks (free biscuits and coffee every day!)



Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue – The Bratislava experience

by Dragana Stegić

I fell in love with Bratislava last year while on my way to the SOL Camp in Čadca and quietly promised myself that I would be back again soon. And so, indeed, I was.

Deciding to visit, or rather re-visit, Bratislava for the second time in less than a year was one of the easiest decisions I've ever had to make. Attending a conference outside your home country for the first time is always a challenge, especially if you're travelling alone, but since I already knew and loved Bratislava so much, there was no doubt that I would enjoy it. I went there as the official IATEFL Slovenia representative, and though that may sound a bit formal, the ELT Forum was anything but.

I was not just excited that I would be attending a conference with David Crystal as the key speaker, but also knew that some of my Slovakian friends would be there as well, so it was a kind of professional-development-cum-reunion event.

We stayed at a cosy hotel right next to the lovely (but not that blue) Danube, with a view of Bratislavský Hrad from my room. The castle has been repeatedly damaged and rebuilt since the 9th century, and some parts of it are still un-

der reconstruction. I could not think of a better way to start my day than with a cup of coffee and the view of that majestic building.

The title of this year's conference was "Building Blocks in ELT: Language, Learner and Vision". The title embodies precisely what the purpose of attending conferences such as this one is – it's about building friendships, skills, knowledge, networks and trust among the teachers in the region. Take just one of these blocks away and you are left with something altogether less valuable.

The number of participants this year was well over 400, which was truly amazing! They came from all across the region, but also from as far as Malaysia. The participant from Malaysia, Anita Adnan, and another teacher from the Czech Republic, Nina Hanáková shared their experience through "The Story of Two Teachers", which I strongly encourage you to view on YouTube. The two ladies met online and started working on several projects together using internet linkup only. It was only later that they met in person, and it was great to see teachers from across the globe collaborating and sharing the same problems and challenges of the teaching profession.



David Crystal's opening plenary titled "The Future of Englishes" (yes, you've read it right) was really interesting, with Crystal looking at the future of different varieties of English taught across the globe. He pointed out that it is not so much the way language is taught, but the cultural differences which occur in each country individually. It is not enough to master the form and the rules of a language, but it is essential to master the cultural context as well.

If you have not managed to so far, do try and attend one of his talks in the future. At first you might think that he could not possibly keep up with all the latest developments in the language teaching/learning arena, but trust me, he is a true gem of a communicator.

The workshops were wide-ranging, with various topics covering poetry, communicative language teaching, critical thinking, online games, using videos, drama, art and more.

It was physically impossible to attend all of the workshops and talks, however, and when I looked at the programme I felt somewhat guilty and torn because there were so many good ones to choose from that I could not make up my mind. The one I found most interesting and mind challenging was "Critical Thinking and Language Learning in the Age of Screenagers" by John Hughes. I was initially attracted to the coinage of "screenager" in the title, because I have not heard it before, but it describes perfectly the new generation of gadget-oriented students we see every day. In order to get the screen-oriented (not to say obsessed!) teenage students' attention, Hughes suggests awareness-raising activities, where students need to find answers themselves, rather than just being bombarded with information.

The key to successful development of critical thinking among students is in teaching them to question things, ask questions or even carry out their own research. This approach will do wonders with your students' motivation.

Here is one of the example sentences which you can use to spark a debate on the topic of too much technology at home: "Britain has the lowest proportion of children in Europe who eat with their parents at the table."

It takes just one simple sentence like this to start with agree/disagree arguments, asking questions, listing pros and cons, comparing to the situation in Slovenia, and so on.

So much to do and with so little – just brilliant!

As for the fun side to the conference, I cannot even begin to list all of the beautiful things I saw or all the lovely people I met. The nights were so wonderfully warm, and I have never seen so many young people out in the streets having fun and enjoying themselves. There was even a disco party happening in one of the main churches in the centre! At least, we saw the disco lights blinking and I definitely heard some James Brown, but the church doors were locked so I couldn't see anything else. The mystery of that party will haunt me forever.

There was good food (Bryndzové halušky), excellent beer (Zlatý Bažant) and the kindest people you will ever meet. The organising committee, students and everyone involved worked like clockwork, and wherever I went I was greeted with smiles and kindness.

While some may argue that two days at a conference will not make much of a difference, I disagree. Stepping away from your school, your classroom and the everyday routine helps you gain perspective. Whenever I've done this, I've experienced the same emotion – hope. Meeting teachers from other countries, who face the same challenges as you do and share the same fears and doubts but also ideas, can be nothing but inspiring. And this is what these conferences are there for – to boost your energy, give you tons of new ideas to try when you get back, and connect you with old and new friends alike. It was truly a priceless experience.





English in the gym

by Jasmina Nurkić

Using your school gym for an English class might be something new for your students, a novelty that can raise their motivation and make language learning easier and fun. We all know that the great majority of students look forward to various relaxing physical activities and sports. Your school gym will give you all the space you need to line your students up, have them standing in circles, even have them running from one place to another or kicking a ball about without fear of breaking something. What's more, there are no teachers from next-door classrooms to complain about the noise when students are mingling or moving tables and chairs.

The teaching method that would be most appropriate for such classes is TPR (total physical response). TPR was introduced by James Asher, a professor of psychology at San Jose State University. It's basically a "say and do" teaching method. In TPR, it's the teachers who do the speaking: they give commands in the target language, which students have to respond to by carrying them out. This method is often combined with other teaching techniques, such as drilling, which boost learning. Eventually, students may associate a certain grammar or vocabulary unit with the physical activity performed, so that when you bring a ball or use certain objects they know what's coming next.

I myself prefer to include physical activity in warm-up and follow-up exercises and for phonetic tasks such as primary word stress. The last especially tend to be considered as insignificant, as they are typically done at the end of the class, and take no more than 5 to 10 minutes. Here's one way to breathe some life and fun into them.

Hold a whole class in the school gym. It should be well planned ahead, preferably in close coordination with a PE teacher.

With so much space for the students to run around as they please, this is of the utmost importance. Tell them what the objectives are – you're going to do a series of different activities to teach or revise vocabulary, practice word formation, grammar or word stress, etc. It's very important that this class is dynamic, with various physical activities, as this will meet your students' expectations of a class in the gym. You can teach or practise various grammar or vocabulary units. For example, when practising primary word stress, ask your students to line up in front of the basketball basket and then one by one, take the ball, bend their knees and shoot when they say the stressed syllable, pronouncing it a little bit louder than usual.

TPR is also excellent for practising spatial expressions, such as run along..., run across..., face each other, lean against the wall, be ahead of a girl, be among, stand behind..., stand beside..., sit beneath the basket, stand between..., stand in front of..., walk towards..., opposite, behind, etc.

You might also ask your students to stand in a circle and pass the ball to one another while performing a certain language task. For example, if you want to practise conditionals, you could ask them to make chain sentences, or for word formation, ask them to add suffixes or prefixes to your words, or simply have the students throwing the ball make up sentences that their peers catching the ball then put into indirect speech. As children are naturally competitive, you could even make it an elimination game.

A classroom does not need to be the only place to have an English class. A chance to speak English in a different environment, be it the school gym or playground (weather permitting, of course!), will create a relaxing atmosphere, raise the students' confidence and give them a new learning experience. So let's play ball!



Back to school: How to break the ice after the lazy summer days

by Tanja Stare Pušavec



OŠ Davorina Jenka, Cerklje na Gorenjskem, tanja.stare-pusavec@guest.arnes.si

Here we are, back to school again. The leaves have already started to change to all possible shades of brown and yellow, and our dear pupils and students might have just realised that the summer days are definitely over. One might say that it is much easier for teachers of English to start a new school year, because in the first couple of lessons summer holidays can be discussed and then you just carry on having “normal” lessons. But in reality it is just as difficult for us as for teachers of any other subject. Over the years I have been wondering what to do to get the pupils’ attention again and to “get them back” in September. So I have created a short list of the things that in my opinion have to be done at the beginning of each school year.

Ask your students what they were doing during the summer vacation and not where they were. Find out if they met any foreigners and if they used any English. Many teachers come across students who do not want to talk in class. Sometimes this is just what they’re like – they don’t want to share their personal experience and feelings with other people, and they have every right to keep their personal stuff to themselves. On the other hand, there are some students who are more afraid of making mistakes, and these you can help by asking long questions and thus giving them at least half the answer, so they only have to fill a few bits in. There is also a little trick I sometimes use which really seems to work. Well, “trick” may be too strong a word: don’t we teachers always try to bring our students round? And if it works and they learn something, it’s surely worth trying! Anyway, I don’t ask questions about their holiday but instead tell them something about mine. Students are usually quite curious about their teachers, so they start listening. After a couple of sentences I say something like “I hadn’t gone snorkelling for such a long time that I had some trouble putting on my mask and snorkel. But then, can you guess what I saw?” And before I can continue, someone tells me that s/he also went snorkelling, that s/he loves doing it and... And so it goes on and on. No more silent students. Basically they see that we teachers do pretty much the same things they do and they want to share their summer memories with everyone.

Together with your students make a set of classroom rules. Students don’t like following the rules, but if they create them themselves, they will feel responsible for not breaking them. The rules should be positive: instead of writing “Don’t talk during the class”, write “Listen to the teacher and your classmates”. “Treat everybody with respect” sounds much better than “Don’t

yell, scold or humiliate people”. Avoid using negative words like “Don’t” or “No”. Create a poster and put it somewhere in the class for everyone to see. If your students are more artistic, use their talent and ask them to illustrate and colour the rules. Establish a classroom routine. Tell your students what your lessons will look like – how you will begin and finish each lesson. Especially younger learners need a certain routine, because they like to know what to expect and then feel safe. And if they feel safe, they will get more out of the lesson. One of the ideas for a classroom routine is using a “magic word”. Each lesson, decide on a magic word/expression that your students have to remember. The magic word has to be connected to the topic of the lesson. Next time your students cannot enter the classroom if they don’t tell you the magic word. It is like an entrance fee for the English class! One might think that students might prefer to be left outside the classroom, but in practice they all want to get in. If somebody forgets the magic word, other students like to offer their help and whisper the word. Magic words are also fun with older students. Make a seating arrangement. At first students can sit wherever they want, but later you put them in pairs or groups, for example, or switch students in the front row with those from the third. Have the students write a top ten list of why they are happy to be back in school. You will be surprised to see how much your students missed school, obligations, their schoolmates and you. Create a calendar. Have a special calendar for your class with all the birthdays of the students marked, along with other special days you want to celebrate. For each of these days decide on a special activity: for example, for Earth Day create “talking T-shirts”, for Mother’s Day choose a flower for your mum and explain why you have chosen that particular flower, for Valentine’s Day write poems without signing them, for Teachers’ Day your students prepare a lesson instead of you...

Have some fun. Tell your students a funny story or a joke, show them a video, listen to a piece of music together... Make your students see that English is not just grammar and irregular verbs and that they can also learn it through things they really enjoy doing.

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My Serbian So(u)l experience: A summer school with a difference

17–24 August 2014, Sremski Karlovci

by Mateja Jošt

My So(u)l prize

It all began at the IATEFL Conference in Topolščica in March, when I won a raffle prize – a So(u)l Camp. I do not often win prizes, so getting lucky this time came as more of a shock than just a surprise! The So(u)l Camp took place in Serbia, in Sremski Karlovci to be more precise, during one week in August. As this was my first trip to Serbia, I knew it was going to be interesting. It is very important with what spirit and heart you enter this kind of adventure, where you do not know the others participants. Well, I met some great people and had some great teachers, so it was really worth going.

Even before the camp, we received homework! We got to do some interesting tasks at home, e.g. we had to bring something from our country, to look through our desks and to think about different things that we are interested in (favourite book, poem, bucket list). I was to be the only participant from Slovenia. I took the train to Belgrade and then a bus to Sremski Karlovci. Although it took 11 hours to get there, I enjoyed the journey. I got to see plenty of places and people, got to know the country a bit and didn't have to worry about traffic jams. There were around 15 participants, mostly from Eastern Europe. We stayed in the beautiful town of Sremski Karlovci in the Eco Centar Radulovački hostel.



Our hostel (Photo by Sanja Čonjagić)

Our host Sanja Čonjagić coordinated everything and Vladica Rakič, an English grammar teacher, helped her. Our tutors Mark Andrews and Rakesh Bhanot created great tasks for us, encouraging us to always think about how we in turn could use them in our own classes.



Mark Andrews during a lesson

Every morning we did Yoga with Branka. I felt much better afterwards and enjoyed that start to the day very much. In our hostel we had a small kitchen and a terrace; it was lovely and all new. We had coffee and tea whenever we wanted. The rooms were very nice, but I recommend taking something against mosquitoes to guarantee a better night's sleep! There was a lot of opportunity to have fun, such as a disco night, wine tasting and, of course, the yoga!

Monday fieldwork

On Monday we got ideas for different fieldwork tasks and got to try out some that we might use in the future with our students. First we visited the nearby Chapel of Peace. As Mark said, "Negotiation is a crucial element in communicative language teaching (CLT), which advocates having students work in small groups in order to maximise their opportunities for communicative practice."



The Chapel of Peace

When I learned that experts from Slovenia had repaired the chapel organ, it made me really proud. We found out about the significance of this chapel in history and we talked about how we could use a local historical place like this in our own fieldwork. Local historical events can make a great lesson, as we experience first-hand at the Chapel of Peace.



Organ in the Chapel of Peace

On Monday afternoon we visited the Green Lady's Garden. She opened the door to her home and we were so kindly welcomed by her and her family. We felt as though we were friends visiting, we drank tea and had a great time getting to know her and Sremski Karlovci through the video she showed us.

Getting to know other towns

On Tuesday we visited a local TV station in Novi Sad, where we learned about minority programming and I was surprised how many languages are spoken in this area, for example Slovakian, Bulgarian and Hungarian. The programmes are delivered in five official languages. Here we got the opportunity to speak about racism and what we can do about it, how we can make our students think about it and detect it in our own environments.

We were given the video link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpWl3wraEBI>. In this video we learned that the teacher is more than just an educator and that we are able to also teach critical thinking through our lessons. The lesson after the TV station visit was held in a nearby park under a tree, and that felt beneficial and relaxing at the same time. You can do a great exercise called "minority-majority", where you divide your students into groups, for example a right-handed and a left-handed group or people who wear glasses and those who don't. In the groups you get the participants to discuss how they feel being in the group they're in. "We have far more in common than we have differences, but that which is different should be respected," said one of the tutors. In this exercise everyone can learn how sometimes they are the minority. Thus they learn how to respect minorities and the diversity of the world.

We also got to experience work with recent history and memories that are still deep and painful for local people. A local teacher guided us through the town Zrenjanin and the Museum of Destruction. We also got new ideas on how to use recent history in our classes and how we can use minimum input/maximum output in different situations.



The Museum of Destruction in Zrenjanin



*Our guide Maja
(Photo by Sanja)*

“Getting students to find out about where they live, where they go to school and their local environment in general can be stimulating course content in an ELT classroom,” pointed out Mark. Students usually really like doing this kind of activity. They get to know the place where they live better and learn to work as a team.

Only connect

Every day we had a different motto, one of which was only connect. We connected both with each other and with the environment. There were a lot of comments to the effect that we usually do not get to really connect with the place we’re staying in as well as we did here, and we all were grateful for that feeling of connection. We also had an “international evening” sharing presents, which was turned into a guessing game; this was great fun and we really got to know each other better.



International evening (photo by Sanja)

Intercultural living

On Wednesday we headed to the village of Belo Blato, which is an intercultural village where in the school they teach in five different languages. All the Roma children there finish school, whereas in Slovenia this is not the case. The school is a good example of what is possible. The population is very mixed in terms of origin, yet they are a very tight-knit community. During the assignment we interviewed local people and found out about their lives and their backgrounds, which was very interesting as they were all multilingual. All the locals were very kind and helpful. They also offered us a delicious meal – all homemade food made with love. We also learned about Kuglof cake (similar to potica or šarkelj) and they demonstrated how it is made.



Interview with Milena

Belo Blato was a great experience and a good example of intercultural living. Our tutor Mark suggested another task we could do with our students – compare Wikipedia entries for the same thing in different languages and see the differences. At the end the students compare their findings.

We also had some great fieldwork tasks, one of which was CLIL-related (Content and Language Integrated Learning). We learned about the restoration of old buildings and archaeology and met some scientists, who gave us a lot of useful information about their work. For example, we got to look at mould under the microscope and learnt about the procedure of how to remove it from old brickwork.



Brick mould under the microscope

We do not pour knowledge into our students’ heads with a funnel from a textbook, it is much more complicated than that. Rakesh Bhanot said that “learning is a change in attitude, skill and knowledge (ASK).”

Connecting fun with work

Altogether we had a lot of fun doing the fieldwork and we learned during the tasks how we can make our classes fun and enjoyable but still part of an efficient learn-

ing process. One evening, for example, we watched a movie and then discussed it as a possible class item.



One of the tasks ☺

On Saturday we went to a small sandy island on the Danube. We relaxed and also found time for some fun tasks. Things may be put down on paper, but whether things turn out as successfully as our trip all depends on the group atmosphere, collaboration and willingness to participate.

There were other interesting activities, but I recommend that you experience them for yourself. We had a great week learning and getting to know each other and getting to know Serbia. The atmosphere was relaxed and friendly – this was a real combination of pleasure and work. As my colleague Branka pointed out, these are just some of the things that we learned from the So(u)l course:

1. Try DITOW (do it the other way),
2. Make the known unknown,
3. Look at things from a different perspective,
4. The “Italian chef principle” – minimum input, maximum satisfaction/outcome,
5. Only connect.



Handing out certificates

On Saturday evening we received our certificates and we reflected on the course, sharing our opinions and feelings about the camp. Sunday was departure day, so we all had to go our separate ways. We were a small group and the So(u)l Camp was being organised for the first time in Serbia; hopefully it won't be the last! Personally I'd recommend any English teacher to go to a So(u)l Camp and experience it for themselves.

Thanks to all the organisers, tutors and especially Grenville Yeo for making this possible for me.

Competitions in 2014/2015

English language competition for 7th grade primary school pupils

Coordinator: Vesna Gros

vesna.gros@iatefl.si

Regional level: **30 January 2015**

National level: **25 February 2015**

English language competition for 8th grade primary school pupils

Coordinator: Barbara Dvornik

barbara.dvornik@iatefl.si

Regional level: **20 October 2014**

National level: **24 November 2014**

English language competition for 3rd year secondary school students

Coordinator: to be announced. Would you like to help us shape the competition?

Email us at

Regional level: **2 February 2015**

National level: **16 March 2015**

English language competition for 2nd year secondary school students

Coordinator: Jasna Džambić

jasna.dzambic@iatefl.si

Regional level: **10 November 2014**

National level: **8 December 2014**

How my summer travels helped me become a better teacher

by Lea Sobočan

Imagine this – no plan, no destination, no timetables. Just you and the road. Well this is what me and my partner decided would make for the perfect holiday, so we packed all the necessities in our backpacks and off we went to explore the wonders of Scotland.

This kind of thing is what me and my partner value most about our time off, going something spontaneous and without a clear plan, but with a very clear goal – to explore as much as possible, meet people and accumulate stories.

But it's not for everyone, this “unplugged” experience. I often hear people comment on how great it must be and how they would like to do the same, but in reality, not having a plan also leads to you not knowing where you're going to sleep until eight in the evening. And sometimes it means sitting on the side of the road playing word games, because it's been a quarter of an hour since the last car drove past and you are now quite certain you are stuck in Creepytown for the night as your hitch-hiking has failed!

And yes, it can be scary. But it can also be wonderful. You walk for three miles because you forgot to check how far it is from the bus stop to the brewery. Suddenly, a friendly face stops for you and gives you a lift to town and during that short ride you learn there is something called WWOOF – organic farms where you volunteer to help in exchange for food, shelter and work experience. I never knew such things existed and had I kept to a plan I would probably never have even seen this particular town, much less met Paul and his very friendly girlfriend.

Does this remind you of anything? Isn't this just the sort of thing that tends to happen when you first venture into the territory of the “Unplugged” approach. In the context what we do, it was Scott Thornbury who wrote down the principles of the materials-light approach and thereby focused our attention on this wonderful way of teaching. No materials, except what the students bring. Conversation-driven, plan-light. Because you don't have a book to fall back on, you are sometimes metaphorically lost in a strange city – no map, just your wits to help you cope.

Again, it can be scary. But putting away the book lets you better see the people you are teaching – you hear their stories, you learn what their favourite hair band is and why they absolutely detest vanilla ice-cream.

Treasuring such experiences was a perfect platform for continuing our trip from the icy winds of northern Scotland, where you might see nothing but Highland cows for hours, to the scorching summer of Devon and our friendly SOL hosts. Because we enjoy connecting with our fellow educators, we decided to turn part of our summer holiday into a working holiday and attend the SOL Unplugged course in Barnstaple.

The Unplugged course we did there had us exploring the countryside, drinking tea with a prepper*, collecting different types of fudge and discussing the finer points of Hirst's Verity Statue. We started by having classes everywhere: on the bus, in a pub, on a bench overlooking the ocean, even very unexpectedly next to some horses. Everything was a teaching moment. We then went on to do some exploring



on our own, deciding when, where and what to do to help us understand England better.

I had never before been so autonomous in my choice of topics! It felt so good, but at the same time, it was so difficult. Being a bit of a control freak, I had to consciously remind myself to let go – I don't need to guide anyone: people can cope without me fussing over them... Mark Andrews and Fiona Mauchline were our gentle guides through this jungle of the unknown. They helped us by putting the Unplugged approach into context, helping us with group dynamics and challenging us when we were underperforming.

Each group of participants had their own agenda, their own goals and their own challenges to face. We might think it's easy to do that, to work in a group – we're teachers, right, we do that all the time! But it isn't the same. I saw we faced the same difficulties as our students face when left to their own devices. The experience was really invaluable for all of us, because we saw how the group dynamics change when the teacher takes a mentoring role and the participants are left to their own devices.



The experience made me grow so much, both as an educator and as a person. I learnt a lot about myself as a person and as a teacher and I wasn't sure I liked everything that I learned, but that's perfectly okay, because we can all improve. The important thing is to acknowledge what we are good at and what still needs a bit of work.

Challenging ourselves every step of the way, we even climbed onto a surf board. I am not much of a sports enthusiast, I admit. I tend to trip on flat surfaces and I am unable to catch a ball even when it's thrown very carefully and slowly in my direction! But climbing onto that surfboard sent me from panic attack into screaming for joy, because I was flying! I was scared stiff, but I have also never been happier. I was letting go and had absolutely no idea what I was doing... and it was amazing!

Maybe putting my control-freak personality on hold in class wouldn't be such a bad idea either?

So let go! Challenge yourself. You will fall. Maybe you'll even drink a sea's worth of water. But you will also fly!

* someone who prepares for a breakdown in the world order. You should see her garden!

Photos

Top left: A classroom in a bus.

Top right: Get out and explore!

Middle left: Resting our weary feet.

Middle right: An unexpected teaching moment when we encountered a horse.

Bottom left: Catching the sunset.

Bottom right: A moment of peace and tranquility, reflecting after a busy day.



Fotografski natečaj

IATEFL Slovenia je 5. maja 2014 razpisal atraktiven fotografski natečaj za učitelje, na temo 21. mednarodne IATEFL Slovenia konference Little ideas for great changes. Z malo sreče in domišljije je bilo učiteljem omogočeno priti do lepih nagrad, saj smo nagrajenim udeležencem obljubili fotoaparata Canon, knjigo in IATEFL majčko.

Z natečajem smo želeli spodbuditi posameznike, da s fotografiranjem predstavijo svoje ideje, videnja in razmišljanja, kako z majhnimi idejami v razredu narediti velike spremembe. Poleg tega smo posameznike 21. mednarodne IATEFL Slovenia konference Little ideas for great changes želeli spodbuditi, da podživijo konferenco in uporabijo palčke, ki so jih prejeli kot darilo, ter jih uporabijo pri pouku in preko fotografije z nami delijo način njihove uporabe. Na ta način smo želeli spodbuditi posameznike k izmenjavi idej, naše člane angažirati k večji aktivnosti pri sodelovanju pri raznih društvenih dejavnostih, obenem pa pridobiti tudi nove podpornike društva in širiti dejavnosti društva.

Ker do roka za oddajo fotografij, dne 10. 6. 2014, na naš elektronski naslov žal ni prispel niti en prispevek, smo rok za oddajo podaljšali do 26. 6. 2014, ko se je le opogumila učiteljica OŠ Gradec Tjaša Lemut Novak, ki je na natečaj prijavila tri svoje fotografije. Natečajna komisija je ugotovila, da žal nobena izmed poslanih fotografij ne ustreza zahtevam kakovosti vsaj 5 mega pikslov, da bi jo lahko uporabili na naslovnici IN Magazine, kot je bilo obljubljeno v razpisu natečaja. Vse tri avtoričine fotografije vključno s komentarji objavljamo tukaj in se ji za sodelovanje zahvaljujemo ter čestitamo za osvojeno prvo nagrado na natečaju.

1. DO DRAMA

Do drama – let the students be as active as they can be. This was a little idea I had more than ten years ago. I used scenes, role plays, improvisations etc. during English lessons and then upgraded that with a club – The Black & White Theatre (it's still a club at our school). Students love being active and working really hard in it. There are different plays studied and performed. We tend to do original plays - writing them, acting them and sharing them with others. Students present their work also at a very special event at our school called An evening of English drama. Try it, it's fun.



2. John Smith – a friend in the classroom

Everybody needs at least one friend in the classroom. I have John Smith – it was a little idea with little work to do – some paper, some colour, some time ... oh and a wardrobe. He is on the wardrobe surrounded with question words (I have another wardrobe with Janez Novak and some more question words). He's very useful and versatile – for stimulating conversation, introducing a topic, relating something to him/his life/England, creating an ID/home/story/background/ ... basically, there are no limits on how and when one could use him (or ignore him). New ideas keep popping up all the time.



3. Finger puppets

Sometimes it's fun and educational at the same time to play. Students like puppets – you can buy finger puppets or you can make them yourself. All you need is some colour paper, scissors, glue and a black marker. Here is an example of animal finger puppets that we used for different role plays. Their stage is a tipped desk (so the students hide behind it and all you see are the small animals), so it takes just a little time to do but it makes a long lasting memory and gives the fun factor to perhaps a rather dull drill of phrases used in specific situations or a bit different practice of a revised vocabulary.



Dragi člani in članice,

najlepše se zahvaljujemo vsem, ki ste na volitvah za člane odbora društva podali svoje glasove, hkrati pa vas obveščamo o izidu volitev.

Mesto	Kandidat/-i	Za	Proti	Vzdržani
Vodja sekcije za PR	Lea Sobočan	17	1	3
Vodja sekcije za izobraževanje	Sandra Vida	18	1	2
Vodja sekcije za OŠ	Janja Čolić	18	0	0
	Mojca Oblak	3	0	0
Člani nadzornega sveta	Dragana Stegić	21	0	0
	Anže Perne	12	0	0

Glasovalo je 21 članov, od tega neveljavnih glasovnic ni bilo. Ker žal do predpisanega roka nismo dobili zadostnih prijav na nezasedena mesta, smo podaljšali razpis in naknadno izvedli še dva roka volitev, da se mesta zapolnijo.

3. dopisna seja občnega zbora

Mesto	Kandidat/i	Za	Proti	Vzdržani
Urednik revije IN	Mojca Oblak	31	0	0
Član nadzornega sveta	Alenka Tratnik	31	0	0

V sklopu 3. dopisne seje občnega zbora je glasovalo 31 članov, od tega je bila ena neveljavna glasovnica - podvojena glasovnica.

4. dopisna seja občnega zbora

Mesto	Kandidat/i	Za	Proti	Vzdržani
Vodja sekcije za SŠ	Nataša Meh	25	0	1
Vodja sekcije za prijavljanje na javne razpise in iskanje sponzorskih sredstev	Doroteja Podgrajšek	26	0	0

V sklopu 4. dopisne seje občnega zbora je glasovalo 26 članov. Neveljavnih glasovnic ni bilo.

Predlogi na dopisnih sejah so sprejeti, zato so v UO potrjeni:

- Janja Čolić kot vodja sekcije za OŠ
- Nataša Meh kot vodja sekcije za SŠ
- Mojca Oblak kot urednica revije IN
- Doroteja Podgrajšek kot vodja sekcije za prijavljanje na javne razpise in iskanje sponzorskih sredstev
- Lea Sobočan kot vodja sekcije za PR
- Sandra Vida kot vodja sekcije za izobraževanje

Kot člani nadzornega sveta so bili potrjeni:

Anže Perne, Dragana Stegić in Alenka Tratnik.

Za udeležbo na volitvah se vam še enkrat iskreno zahvaljujemo! Če ste se med tem odločili, da bi radi bolj aktivno sodelovali v društvu, se nam še vedno lahko oglasite na info@iatefl.si, veseli bomo vašega zanimanja.

Ekipe IATEFL Slovenia

International IATEFL Slovenia Conference 2015

5th to 8th March 2015
Terme Topolšica

Adopt, adapt, improve

Are you ready to be a part of the »cosiest conference in Central Europe«? A conference which is held in a spa and will include a plenary in the swimming pool?

The IATEFL Slovenia team is very proud to announce our main event of the year - the 22nd International IATEFL Slovenia Conference 2015, which will be held at Terme Topolšica from the 5th to 8th March 2015.

Next year's title Adopt, Adapt, Improve will undoubtedly spark our inner innovative and resourceful teacher as well as offer a great variety of workshops and plenaries.

Why not participate as a speaker this year? Fill in the Speaker Proposal Form till 27th October 2014.

Key speakers will include:

Mojca Belak
Marjorie Rosenberg
Chaz Pugliese
Rakesh Bhanot
Mark Andrews

and many more to be confirmed.

Catch the early train and save some money - early bird registration until 15th January 2015!

For updated information on the speakers, registration forms and speaker proposal forms please check our website at www.iatefl.si or FB event page.

As every year, the conference will provide superb education, socializing, relaxation, and fun. We are looking forward to seeing you all again.

Freshers' week

by Ellen Darling



Each September in the UK, thousands of new students move to new cities to start their university life with 'freshers' week'. I found out more about it.

1 New students starting their time at university are known as freshers and freshers' week is a UK university tradition. It's an introductory week for the new students to find their way around and get to know what student life has to offer. The official purpose of freshers' week is for all students to register for their course and organise their timetables as well as to help them settle into their new accommodation. There's also another purpose: it's a great opportunity to really start to get involved in university life and have some fun. You will meet hundreds of people who you will probably never see again, but you never know, you might even meet a friend for life. I talked to two freshers to find out about their experiences.

2 John, Sheffield University

'The great thing about freshers' week is you have a whole week before the start of your courses to move into your room and meet some friends. My mum and dad dropped me off with all my bags and when they left I felt a bit sad and lonely. I decided to leave my door open while I was unpacking and it didn't take long for Sarah to knock on the door and say hello. We got talking for a bit and had a cup of tea and then we decided to go out and explore the city. The next day we went along to registration together with a few other people we'd met the night before. It was all so much easier because I wasn't doing things on my own. I had to queue for a long time with loads of other students, but finally I got through all the paperwork and made my choices about the courses I was going to study. Then I went over to the Student Union to see what there was on offer there. The Student Union is great because you can buy cheap food and drink and they have lots of other facilities, such as a shop, student advice centre, photocopiers, a laundry and a jobshop. In fact that's where I found out about jobs in the university restaurant. I'm really glad I did because now I have some extra cash.'

3 Gemma, Southampton University

'Freshers' week was so exciting. There were lots of things to go to in the evening and I met so many people. I went out every night, to discos, pubs, quizzes, karaoke and all the other things going on at the Students Union. I loved the freshers' fair, which is where you can find out about all the student clubs and societies. I wanted to join everything, but in the end I joined the dance society, hillwalking society and surfing society. I probably should have joined just one or two clubs as now I find I don't have time to go to all their events. The highlight for me, though, was the freshers' disco. I had a brilliant time. I suppose I went a bit crazy really and spent an awful lot of money! I had to really economise for the rest of the term to make up for all the money I spent in freshers' week.'

4 As for me, when I started university I was lucky enough to meet my friends Cath and Fran on the first night of freshers' week. We went out to a pub together and it turned out that Cath was doing the same course as me and Fran was on the same corridor of the halls of residence. A whole crowd of us ended up sitting in Cath's room, drinking her coffee, joking with each other and putting the world to rights until the early hours of the morning. Then in the second year we moved into a shared house together with a few other friends. Some of my fondest memories of university are of living the student life together with those friends. Who would have thought then, that over twenty years later I would still be friends with Cath and Franon Facebook!

Fun Corner

Here are some anagrams of university subjects. Can you rearrange the letters to find the subject?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 sthma | 5 hioolspphy |
| 2 rosthly | 6 ssisbneu diustes |
| 3 eeegiingnrr | 7 ogeygal |
| 4 syhipsc | |

Activity 1

Cultural comparisons

Look at the list below. Tick (✓) the things that new students do in your country in their first week of university?

- 1 spend a lot of money
- 2 choose their courses
- 3 go out a lot
- 4 join clubs
- 5 make new friends
- 6 look for a job
- 7 move into student accommodation
- 8 spend a long time queuing
- 9 explore their new city
- 10 stay up late

Now look at the article and compare your answers to students in the UK.

Activity 2

Synonyms

Find the word or phrase that means the same as those below.

- 1 a place to live (paragraph 1)
- 2 reason (paragraph 1)
- 3 stand in a line and wait your turn (paragraph 2)
- 4 the place where you wash clothes (paragraph 2)
- 5 money (paragraph 2)
- 6 hiking or trekking in the mountains (paragraph 3)
- 7 best part (paragraph 3)
- 8 student rooms (paragraph 4)

Activity 3

Multiple choice

Decide if the sentences below describe John (J), Gemma (G) or the author, Ellen. (E).

Who...

- 1 joined too many clubs?
- 2 moved in with people from freshers' week?
- 3 was a bit lonely at first?
- 4 spent too much money?
- 5 found a job at the Union?
- 6 stayed up late in someone's room, the first night?

Answers

Activity 1
1 ✓ 2 ✓ 3 ✓ 4 ✓ 5 ✓ 6 ✓ 7 ✓ 8 ✓ 9 ✓ 10 ✓

Activity 2
1 accommodation
2 purpose
3 queue
4 laundry
5 cash
6 hillwalking

Activity 3
1 G 2 E 3 J 4 G 5 J 6 E 7 G 8 J 9 J 10 J

Fun Corner
1 hills
2 history
3 engineering
4 physics
5 philosophy
6 business studies
7 geology