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Portsmouth

It's Monday and I am at school for my first lesson in Portsmouth.

I'm talking to my European colleagues waiting for the teacher:

Lucy Norris.

When she arrives she doesn't waste her time and starts explaining the features of CLIL approach : "CLIL is not about transfer of knowledge from teacher to a student, the attention is not on "what" teaching but "how" the students learn"

I've always believed that one is a good teacher when has the ability to transmit knowledge in a clear, enjoyable way, but how can students build their own understanding?

During the week I have had lots of chances to clear my mind.

- First of all every task given needed interaction among learners, so we have always worked with a partner or in small group and at the end with the whole class.

- We had to do things , we were engaged with the material given to work, to share the meaning, to get the information useful to present to the other groups

- Of course, this approach stimulated dialogue to understand and produce content and language

Example 1

In pairs we (as students) have just a part of text and have to find out the key information.

Then forming a new small groups each student has to share the information with the new group members to get the whole meaning.

At the end students compare the text with the whole class choosing the best.

What is the wolf's fastest speed?	What does wolves eat?	When do mother wolves have babies?
When do the wolf cub start hunting?	How big is the wolf's family group?	Which dog looks like a wolf?
How big is a male wolf?	How good is their hearing?	How long did a wolf run in USA?
Why do the wolves go to the toilet on trees?	How do wolves work together?	What do wolves eat?

2 Jigsaw Reading Wolves

Texts from Aquila Magazine Vol IV 8 pages 4-5

Text 1

All dogs come from wolves. During the Stone Age men and wolves hunted together. Some dogs such as the German Shepherd dog look very much like their ancestors, the wolves. Mother wolves give birth in the spring. They can have 11 cubs a year. The cubs are born blind and feed from their mother. They start hunting when they are six months old. Wolves usually live in packs of eight or so members. But people sometimes see packs as large as 50 wolves.

Text 2

Wolves need to hunt in groups or packs so that they can kill large animals such as deer. They chase and catch their prey

usually live in packs of eight or so members. But people sometimes see packs as large as 50 wolves.

Text 2

Wolves need to hunt in groups or packs so that they can kill large animals such as deer. They chase and catch their prey working as team. They also eat rabbits, berries and insects. Wolves only hunt when they are hungry. They travel one behind the other in the snow making tracks for the other wolves to walk in and they take it in turns to lead. They have a good sense of smell and their noses can tell them when there is prey about. Their hearing is so good that they can hear a watch ticking ten metres away.

Text3

The wolves put their mark trees when they go to the toilet like a dog.. Sometimes the male wolf puts a mark on the ground

good sense of smell and their noses can tell them when there is prey about. Their hearing is so good that they can hear a watch ticking ten metres away.

Text3

The wolves put their mark trees when they go to the toilet like a dog.. Sometimes the male wolf puts a mark on the ground for other wolves to smell and these signs say to other wolves 'Stay away. This is my place.' Male wolves are about a metre high and the females are slightly smaller. They are good runners. One wolf in America didn't stop running for two weeks. Their fastest speed is 65 kilometres an hour.

This is just an example but it can be used with different input: the information can be collected from reading texts, images, graphic, internet sources...

Example 2

We are asked to work in small group about climate zones choosing sentences and then drawing the information. At the end a globe was drawn and each group must share the own " masterpiece".

- 1 Polar (including Arctic and Antarctic and sub-polar)**
2 sub tropical 3 temperate (including Mediterranean)

Tuning In

1 Pupils work in groups of three. Put three climate zones on the board/powerpoint. Each student chooses one climate zone
Make a pyramid – one per group.

Finding out

2 Pupils scan the slips and underline their word.

3 They cut out their sentences

(If the class is weak put three of each climate zone together first)

4 They draw what they can understand and stick the picture on the pyramid

5 Explain their picture to their group

Sorting out

6 Rank their sentences from the most to the least important

7 Take it in turns to share the information with their group

8 stick the sentences on the pyramid under the picture

Reflection

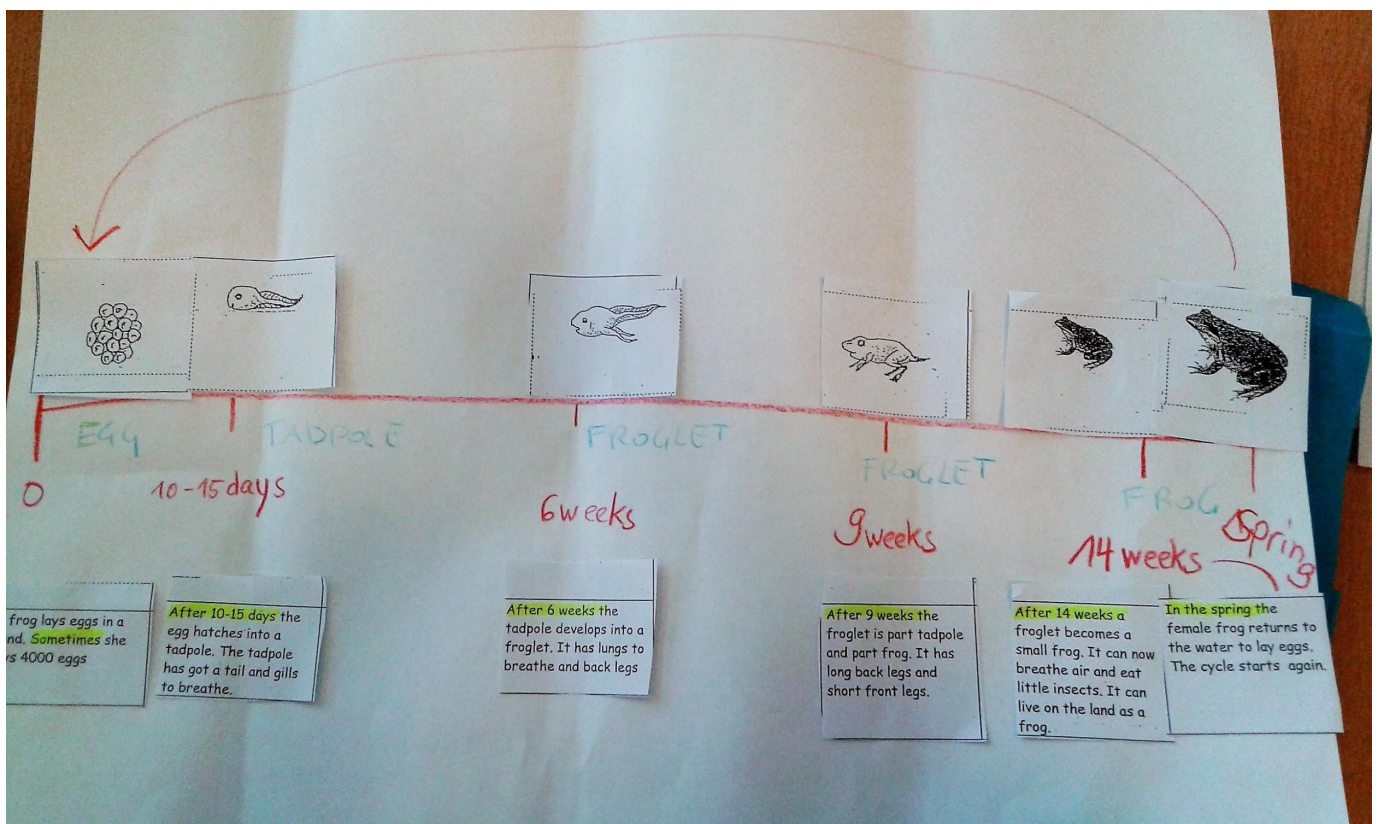
9 Draw a globe and draw lines to show the climate zones.

11 Write information in each section about the climate zones. Use L1 and L2.



Example 3

Students are asked to research about the life cycle of a frog and then communicate their findings (egg, tadpole, froglet, frog) using the temporal word markers(first, sometimes, then, after 6 weeks, in the spring), this is useful for organizing ideas in both written texts and conversation. Here the language is clearly a vehicle for the understanding of concepts, but concepts can also be vehicle for competences.



Example 4

Students work about the digestive process by learning the specific verbs with a song and then using their body as if they are "the digestive system". After this miming activity, students can label a text or a diagram or a picture.

The teeth in my mouth go chew grind tear, chew grind tear, chew grind tear
The teeth in my mouth go chew grind tear, whenever food is there

The glands in my mouth squirt saliva, squirt saliva, squirt saliva
The glands in my mouth squirt saliva, all day long

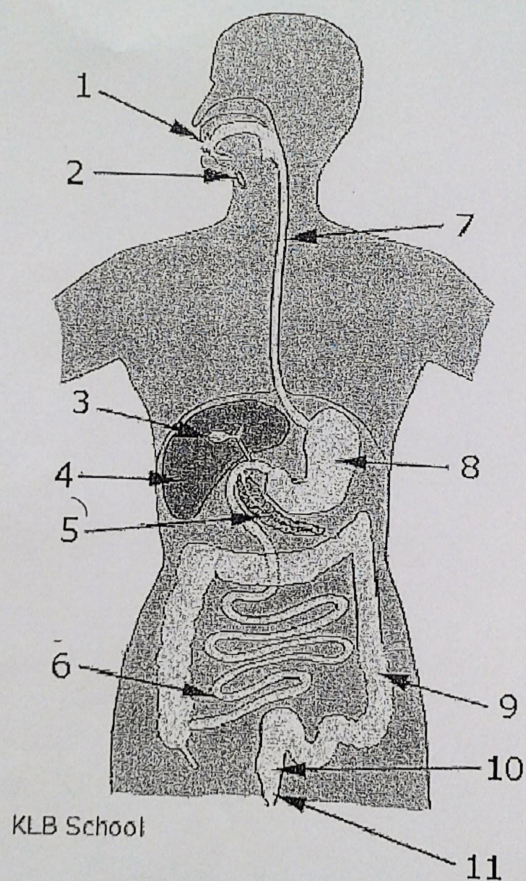
The tongue in my mouth moves food down, moves food down, moves food down
The tongue in my mouth moves food down, down the oesophagus

Oesophagus takes it to my stomach, to my stomach, to my stomach
Oesophagus takes it to my stomach, and breaks down food much more

The stomach takes food to my intestines, to my intestines, to my intestines
The stomach takes food to my intestines, the small, then the large

That's how my body digests food, digests food, digests food
That's how my body digests food, every time I eat, Yum! Yum!

The Digestion Song (based on "The wheel



The teeth in my mouth go chew grind tear, chew

On Wednesday, we met another teacher: Michael Fennell for language training. I remember this activity among the other given:

Students draw three drawings about their life, then they stay in two rows facing their partner.

They ask each other questions about drawings and learn about the other's life. The last student moves the row (pushing the other students) so each one has a new partner to talk.

"Do you like flowers?"

"Yes, I've got a small garden full of flowers"

"Do you like riding a bike?"

"Yes, I do."

"Oh! And that is your big squared house !"

"Oh dear! No, this is my school!"

SCAFFOLDED LEARNING

The role of the teacher in a CLIL approach is making learners feel comfortable enough for interaction and making topics accessible to students through scaffolded language.

Here are some tips.

CLIL Primary vocabulary (Schmitt and Schmitt)

Which words do you know?

1 These words are in the text. Write them in the chart

Special invited slaves sandals lay sofas mice knives forks		
I know this word	I recognise this word but I don't use it	I don't know it

The life of a Roman soldier

1 Work alone. You need three colours, red, green and yellow.

A Look at the text and underline everything you know in green.

Compare with your partner.

B Now underline all the words you can guess in yellow. Compare with your partner.

C Now underline in red all the words you don't know. Put the words in columns in your copy book like this.

1 This word is not necessary- I can understand the sentence without it	10- This word is necessary. I am lost without it

All the soldiers in the Roman army were men. The army did not have
any women soldiers. All the soldiers were 20 years old or older. The
army did not have any young boy soldiers. All the soldiers agreed to