



UNIVERSIDAD DE JAÉN
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Trabajo Fin de Máster

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRADED READERS AS A TOOL FOR TEACHING ENGLISH: EDGAR ALLAN POE: “THE BLACK CAT” AND “THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER”

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1. Abstract:

This project consists of two main parts: A theoretical part and a didactic unit. In the first part, the principal objective of this work is to identify the different possibilities of exploiting literature in class and the advantages of the use of graded readers. In the second part, the didactic proposal will be directed to the students of 4th Compulsory Secondary Education in which we will study Edgar Allan Poe and two of his horror short stories: "The Black Cat" and "The Fall of the House of Usher"

Key words: literature in the classroom, graded readers, horror stories, short stories, Edgar Allan Poe.

Resumen:

Este trabajo tiene dos partes principales: Una base teórica y una unidad didáctica. En la primera parte, el objetivo principal de este trabajo es identificar las diferentes posibilidades de explotar la literatura en clase y las ventajas de utilizar libros adaptados. En la segunda parte, la propuesta didáctica estará dirigida a los alumnos de 4^a Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en la que estudiaremos a Edgar Allan Poe y sus dos relatos cortos y del género de terror: "El gato negro" y "La caída de la casa Usher"

Palabras clave: literatura en la clase, libros adaptados, historias de terror, relatos cortos, Edgar Allan Poe

2. Introduction

The reason why I decided to carry out my dissertation about the use of literature to teach English has been mainly the fact that since I started my studies in high school and later in the degree of English Studies at the University of Almeria, literature has always been my favourite subject because it has enriched me culturally and allowed me to value the importance of learning a language in a world as globalized as the one we live in nowadays. Furthermore, literature allows people to put into practice all the theoretical concepts, regarding grammar, vocabulary or lexicon. The problem is that teachers have to achieve a series of annual objectives and many of them do not use literature as much as they wish to achieve them. Moreover, literature helps us to develop our abilities to keep in contact with the world and value the social and cultural differences that may exist. In addition, it is a tool that can serve us to develop interdisciplinary with other subjects as well as to show students how useful literature is and all its benefits.

In the first part, we will analyse the benefits of using graded readers in class and we will see a series of activities that we can develop in the classroom because they are a valid source of information that allows both the teacher and the students to get to know a story and to be able to apply all the theoretical concepts based on the students' level. Also, they can feel satisfied to discover that what is being narrated is understood by them and that they can communicate in English. To finish the first part of this dissertation and taking into account the importance of English in the world, I believe that it is very interesting to focus on a completely different genre from the ones we actually study in Compulsory Secondary Education, as is the case of horror and more specifically, on Edgar Allan Poe, an American author whose personality, life, literary style, marked an important time in America and this may be interesting for students to open their eyes and learn everything they can discover about American literature and prove that it has no limits. We will focus on the stories "The Black Cat" and "The Fall of the House of Usher", two stories that allow us to see into the depth and analyse the most important characteristics of this genre and author.

In the second part of this dissertation, a didactic unit will be designed in order to apply all the theoretical concepts that we have researched and explained previously. Our main objective is that the students learn, know and discover two different but similar stories at the same time, as well as a genre that can be very interesting to exploit at different times of the year, so that they can see the cultural and historical differences that existed between the years 1800 and 1865 in which there was a kind of revival in American literature and the similarities and differences that we find nowadays.

Finally, with this dissertation, I would like to defend and implement the use of literature in the classrooms, as well as the graded readers, with the goal of making students appreciate the importance of language to function and keep in touch in the world in which we live nowadays. Besides, literature helps us to achieve those objectives that are proposed in our legal documents in an effective way. Literature allows students to value the importance of culture and value the differences that exist with other cultures, languages and people.

3. State of the Art

In this section, I will discuss the different roles that literature has had as well as the varied approaches in the learning process. Then, I will carry out research on the works of relevant author who have discussed the use of literature in the teaching of English in a classroom and the advantages and disadvantages of using it. Finally, I will talk about the most suitable characteristics and advantages of graded readers as well as the different criterion that teacher should consider in order to select a graded reader to work and study in class. Finally, I will propose a series of activities which teachers can use with the aim of exploiting and obtaining satisfactory results both through the use of literature and the employment of graded readers.

3.1. The Role of Literature in EFL Classroom

It is often being discussed the importance of literature in ESL/EFL classes. According to Arthur Baird, Literature means "the use of language effectively in suitable conditions" (Baird 1968:203, cited in Turker 1991:300). Additionally, Kramsch and Kramsch (2000) state that the activity of learning a foreign language in the early part of the 20th century is related to the study of the most essential issues of literature in that language. Other researchers claim that literature is the most suitable tool to teach a language because literary texts provide students with works where everything is focused on language (Liaw 2001; cited in Khatib, Hossein and Rahimi 2012:32).

First of all, literature was one of the most relevant aspects in the Grammar Translation Method according to Bobkina and Dominguez (2014:249). This method was frequently used for teaching foreign languages. It consists in teaching the target language's grammatical structures and vocabulary by means of translation. The teacher would like to highlight the importance of literature in the EFL classroom. Students used literary texts with real language and were correctly written and used the grammatical structures, orthography and vocabulary mentioned before. The aim of this method was "to learn a language in order to read its literature, in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign

language study” (Richard and Rodgers, 2001:5). The disadvantage of this method was that the importance given by the teachers was on the use of language, since teachers were not interested in the content (Bobkina and Dominguez, 2014:149)

During the 1980s the Grammar Translation method lost much of the importance it was given in the foreign language classroom. It seemed already old-fashioned and EFL experts started to change the focus of their methods and put it on the oral skills instead of the written ones. This shift in perspective almost leads to the disappearance of literary texts from the EFL classroom (Garipova, 2014:83).

Although the majority of experts coincide that, apart from studying the oral aspects in a language (speaking, listening and interaction), the written language (writing, reading and written interaction) was nonetheless an essential part in the learning process.

Garipova (2014:84) notes that researchers do not know exactly the role that literature may play in the process of learning. Teachers, on the other hand, are perhaps more suitable to establish which are the most useful methodologies for teaching literature in the classroom. This is so for two main reasons. First, they are in contact with students and the available teaching materials on a daily basis. Second, teachers are the most appropriate people, who will encourage students to read literature, and the ones who will cope with the boredom and difficulties that students may undergo when reading a text in a foreign language. Besides, they have to find the original activities in which students could improve their skills as much as enjoy the process or learning the language.

In Spain, more particularly, in Andalusia, literature is part of the syllabus of Secondary Education. As it was stated in the Order of 14th of July 2016 included in BOJA, students must be aware of different cultures because they are learning a foreign language. Thus, literature implies that learners must be in contact with artistic and cultural manifestations like films, songs or books. Although the use of literature for teaching EFL is not compulsory, the teacher can find very enriching for students to include literature in the learning process in which they would get a cultural level of proficiency of English – speaking countries.

3.2. Advantages and disadvantages of using literature in classroom.

In recent years, the inclusion of methodologies using literature in the EFL classrooms have been considerably increasing due to the amount of benefits of including literature in the learning process. First of all, although there are several definitions for the word “Literature”, I particularly agree with Alexander Baird (1968:203) which defines Literature as “the use of language effectively in suitable conditions”. He believes that literature can be used in order to learn a new language

because the language used in literary texts is related to the context of those events. In this section, I will discuss the advantages and disadvantages that some researchers lay out regarding the use literature in classroom.

First, Collie and Slater (1987) in their book *Literature in the Language Classroom* emphasize four topics about the use of literature in classroom. They are the following:

- Authentic material.
- Cultural enrichment.
- Language enrichment.
- Personal involvement.

Collie and Slater explain that the importance of using literary texts which their content have a great variety of linguistic use and are related to topics that are essential for human beings (1987:3-4):

[...] literature offers a bountiful and extremely varied body of written material which is important in the sense that it says something about fundamental human issues, and which is enduring rather than ephemeral...In reading literary texts, students have also to cope with language intended for native speakers and thus they gain additional familiarity with many different linguistic uses, forms and conventions of the written mode, with irony, exposition, argument, narration, and so on.

According to the cultural content, they state that it is useful for students of a second language who do not have the possibility of going to the country of the language which is being studied, literature is a fantastic tool for achieving a quick “feel for the codes and preoccupations that structure a real society” (Collie & Slater, 1987:4)

However, they believe that “[...] literature does not always give learners the kind of vocabulary, they need” and “the language of literary works [...] is not typical of the language of daily life [...]” (1987:4) but they are in favour of using it due to the fact that it enriches their proficiency level of vocabulary and “[...] also provides a rich context in which individual lexical or syntactical items are made more memorable” (1987:5).

The last essential aspects which are mentioned by Collie and Slater are related to personal growth. Readers are involved in the books’ world in which they can identify themselves with the characters and expand their interest in following the plot. (1987:6)

Gillian Lazar, in her book: *Literature and Language Teaching* (1993), talks about similar benefits of including literature in language classes but she changes these advantages and adds some. She establishes six aspects in order to consider:

- Motivating material.
- Access to cultural background.
- Encouraging language acquisition.
- Expanding students' language awareness.
- Developing students' interpretive abilities.
- Educating the whole person.

First, she states that "[...] literature is highly valued [...], students of English may experience a real sense of achievement at tackling literary materials in the classroom" (1993:15). Secondly, "literature exposes students to complex themes and fresh, unexpected uses of language". Besides, it involves "[...] a powerful emotional response from students" (1993:15).

Regarding to "Access to Cultural Background", she asserts that "[...] reading literature in English does encourage students to become broadly aware of the social, political and historical events which form the background to a particular play or novel" (1993:17). In addition, she considers the importance of literary texts which provides meaningful and the most suitable context for studying and learning new language (1993:17).

Then, with the part of "Expanding Students' Language Awareness", Lazar considers that although this is not a handicap, since literary language could be used in a different manner from common usage, readers can appreciate these differences and how they affect the meaning and can put up with the characteristics of the new language (1993:18). In the final section, Lazar agrees that literature teaches students as "[...] it can help to stimulate the imagination of our students, to develop their critical abilities and to increase their emotional awareness" (1993:18).

Other researchers such as Alan Duff and Alan Maley, in their book: *Literature* (2007), mention the three most relevant benefits of using literature in language learning:

- Linguistic value.
- Cultural value.
- Affective value.

At first, they acknowledge literature for its authenticity and the variety of literary texts which have different levels of difficulty and can improve in our students their vocabulary, grammar and linguistic skills in terms of cohesion and coherence, etc. (2007:5).

Secondly, they point out that the only way of learning the culture of a language is through its literature because it is obviously that literary texts are the most appropriated tools to teach culture. (2007:5).

Finally, they believe in the importance of values in literature. It means that literary texts foster critical thinking and values like empathy and respect. They leave a legacy greater than the rest of texts because they “involve a deeper level of mental processing, a greater personal involvement and response” (2007:6)

Other researchers like Demetriou (2016:3-4) presents some of the benefits that literature gives us when using it in the classroom. First of all, both oral and written literary texts are authentic, therefore introducing a variety of contexts and situations that are difficult to reproduce on a day-to-day basis in a class. Also, students are exposed to different types of language, from dialogues to descriptions which have different degrees of difficulty, aiding those students with better command of the language and greater maturity.

Another aspect that can encourage students to study a foreign language is to use characters with a more complex psychological dimension, something that can make students feel identified with the character of the story. The use of literature can therefore stimulate the student's imagination. This can be channelled through other activities, such as asking them to write up an alternative ending to the story, to draw the characters, and even to represent the action in front of his classmates, etc.

Finally, the advantage that strikes me the most is that literature motivates the student to read other literary texts. The rest of oral, written and auditory skills can be practiced and improved with the different literary forms that exist:

- a) Speaking: reciting poems, drama, singing songs.
- b) Listening: drama, oral narrations of fairy tales, songs, poem declamations, etc.
- c) Writing: fiction (writing any type of short story which includes descriptions, dialogues, etc.).
- d) Reading: fiction (especially with the encouragement of reading novels and short stories, most of the times in the form of graded readers).

Other researcher like McKay (1982) supports the use of literature in the EFL classroom for some reasons. First, we can use literature to develop linguistic knowledge related to usage and level. Secondly if students enjoy working with literature, it may increase their motivation to work with texts which can improve their reading proficiency. Finally, it can improve the comprehension of a foreign culture and develop their imagination.

Parkinson and Thomas (2000:9-11) support the use of literature because they believe that literature can contribute to students in a variety of ways.

Literature supplies excellent writing and linguistic variety. It helps to improve their linguistic competence which is supported by an authentic material. Besides, it is very subjective, for this reason, students are able to interact with the rest of learners and the teachers in an easy way. Another reason that Parkinson and Thomas state is that literature enriches cultural skills. They conclude by explaining that the use of literature in the classroom is necessary for the acquisition of linguistic and cultural knowledge of the foreign language.

Many experts and teachers agree that literature is a unique tool for language learning. For example, Brumfit and Carter (1986) consider that literary texts are very useful due to the fact that they contain many different and significant contexts in which the majority of features related to a language are used in a natural way. It means that students are exposed to a variety of uses and different linguistic characteristics of the language. For this reason, they will be enriching their linguistic proficiency in written and oral forms because they use a language in a concrete context.

Loff (1988) claims that he is in favour of using literature because it helps students to expand their linguistic knowledge by giving signs of extensive vocabulary and the most suitable grammatical structures. Moreover, literature can help us to achieve the objectives related to communicative language because literature involves interpretations, debate groups and interactions among students and with the teacher.

Collie and Slater in their book, *Literature in the Language Classroom* (1987), apart from enumerating the benefits of using literature in the classroom, propose three main criteria that justify the use of literature in a foreign language.

First of all, the linguistic criterion is in favour of using literature in language teaching because it helps the learner to face authentic language and with plenty of different examples of styles, text types and registers. It is important for students to deal with these distinctions related to language because every activity in language classroom has to keep in contact with the communicative function. The communication function has to be related to the notion of competence. A message needs to have a correctness and appropriateness, both in content and in form.

The second criterion is related to methodology. It states that a literary text is subjective and these texts could develop different opinions among the students and these differences can help students to improve their interactive and oral skills with the text, students and with the teacher.

It is essential that literature provides interaction because, through speaking, the language is acquired taking into account the practise of the rest of the skills. We have to point out that related to methodology; literature helps to make more active the role of the learner who becomes active, autonomous and the essential element of the learning process. One aspect to point out is the idea of literature which improves the cultural skills of the learner about the country in whose, his language is being learnt.

The last criterion is related to motivation. Literature is a wonderful tool to connect with the motivation of students, through various means. First, characters will normally invite the reader to feel some sort of sympathy and to identify with them. The continuous descriptions of feelings, moods and emotions can also foster the immersion into the text. Added to all this, designing stimulating activities that would bridge those emotions to the personal lives and experiences of students will provoke further involvement in the learning.

The objective of using literature in a language classroom is mainly to create an atmosphere in which every student feels comfortable to participate in, improve their communication skills and keep a permanent thrill in their minds.

According to Carter and Long (1991:2), scholars have promoted three main approaches to teaching literature:

- Language Model
- Cultural Model
- Personal Growth

The Language Model is based on the improvement of student's knowledge by working with familiar grammar, lexical and discourse categories. It centres its attention on the way in which language is used in literary texts. It does not help to foster critical thinking but it focusses on the information related to the texts. This approach is considered too mechanic and students can find it boring. Exercises in line with this approach, as worked in EFL classroom, are: prediction exercises, summaries, role play, etc.

The Cultural Model incites teachers and students to work with literary texts in relation with the target language. A teacher, who works with this model, focusses their attention on improving cultural knowledge due to the fact that they not only learn about the specific novel but also about the historical, social and political context of the country which is described in the novel. Thanks to this, students foster their critical thinking and know about the possible differences that countries could have, in matters related to traditions, values or ways of thinking.

Finally, the Personal Growth Model is an approach which is a mixture between the language model and the cultural model. The main point of this method is to suit the use of language to that of a concrete cultural context. Carter and Long (1991:3-4) state that students develop their knowledge of and their knowledge about literature. Students feel able to express their opinions and foster a critical thinking establishing a link between their experiences and the text.

It is hard to challenge the multiple benefits of using literature in the classroom. Some EFL teachers and experts find it difficult to use literary works as materials in a teaching language.

The first difficulty of including literature in the teaching a foreign language mentioned by Collie and Slater (2009) is the nature of language used in the literary texts. Many EFL teachers consider that the use of the most popular works is the most suitable way of teaching literature. The problem is that students find difficult working with texts which were written in XIX century English and teachers do not feel prepared to work with literature in the foreign language class

Another difficulty mentioned is that most EFL teachers find inappropriate to work with texts which explain stories that will not happen anymore. Instead, they prefer using texts that are employed in real life situations to improve communication skills instead of just only learning the rules of language.

Finally, the third disadvantage that Collie and Slater (2009) mention is that literary texts are framed in a cultural setting which is fundamental to understand the development of the story. For this reason, EFL teachers often need to explain misunderstood concepts in order to solve all possible doubts derived from the cultural context of the story.

3.3. Graded readers

Graded readers are fiction and non-fiction books in which the language is controlled according to the linguistic and cultural level of the students. This is achieved in many different ways:

- a) The number of new words is controlled, so that students have the opportunity of looking up the meaning of any new word as they are introduced in a context of known terms;
- b) The grammatical structures are limited to those that the student knows or is already familiar with.

- c) The amount of information is reduced because it has been shown that the ability to absorb new information in a foreign language is lower, especially in the early stages of a student's learning process.
- d) The narrative techniques are easier and simpler and in the case of classical texts, they are adapted to coincide with a simple and easy to follow narrative structure.
- e) Photographs are included to support and acclaim the text and to increase the student's level of understanding of the text and level of motivation

Divsar and Tahriri (2009:107) state that “the purpose of teaching literature is to enable students to comprehend and analyse the linguistic structures, literary styles, figures of speech and rhetoric, develop their cultural understanding and expressive capabilities.” However, many authors show discrepancies regarding the use of graded readers for some reasons. For example, Collie and Slater (1987) (quoted in Garipova, 2014:86) state that graded readers used in the foreign language class in schools are brief versions. The book is abridged and many parts of the plot are not included. It is hard to assess whether the quality of the story is diminished: “although the graded reader retain the storyline of the original text, much else is lost”.

Other authors say that many students feel bored when they have to read literature in general, independently of the use of short fiction or graded readers. For example, Ostria Gonzalez (2003) considers that students’ lack of motivation and feel boredom is mainly due to the fact that they are forced to read books just in order to pass an exam or a write up a paper. This could, as Fernandez states, have a negative effect on the teachers because if they sympathise with how their students feel when they have to read, they prefer not to use literary materials. (2008:188).

To sum up, I must cite Borger’s statement (1998:107) about compulsory reading explaining that “the idea of compulsory literature is an absurd idea: it would be worth talking about obligatory happiness”. It is obvious that there are disadvantages in the use of graded readers because in fact, they are really different from the original work but I believe that they play a fundamental role in the learning process of a foreign language due to the fact that they are an useful tool which could be used by teacher in order to stimulate the student’s imagination and develop all the skills as much as possible. In the following sections, we will talk about the selection criteria for graded readers.

Moreover, the use of a graded reader can be an important cultural source which could be exploited in many ways. If a teacher can combine the use of graded readers with other activities which deal with literature, such as a cinematographic adaption or a representation in which the students play roles in the story, students can

feel motivated and willing to learn about everything that surrounds a story without seeing the act of reading as something obligatory.

4. Criteria for selecting graded readers.

There are three main tendencies among teachers related to the steps they have to follow in order to choose the most suitable graded reader for their students.

First, some teachers prefer the use of classical literary works although these have to be adapted for young students who are learning a foreign language. Normally, these teachers choose the book that students must read.

Secondly, other teachers think that graded reader versions interfere with the original work and create an artificial language. These teachers think that students have to learn a language working with authentic material. However, they choose the most suitable book according to the level of their students.

Finally, other teachers give their students the choice of selecting the book that they want to read without encouraging them to read classical works. These teachers think that students would prefer to read a book that they can find interesting showing predisposition to read instead of a book which they have to read obligatory which they can find boring and long.

As stated by Richard Day (2016:5-6):

[...] difficult books force the reader to focus on the linguistic code and not on the meaning. As a result, students spend their valuable time and energy decoding the words and using their dictionaries. This means that they are not learning to read and to enjoy reading in the foreign language.

I agree with the different points of view that teachers use in order to choose a graded reader for their students. However, I believe that it is necessary to take into account a series of factors to choose a book.

First of all, the student's course, since it is very difficult for a student of the first or second year of Compulsory Secondary Education to work with a classical book. In fact, a great percentage of students do not start their studies in high school with an adequate level of English. In the case of the first courses of the secondary education, in which students are developing their skills, abilities and finding their identity, in order to engage their attention, the choice of the book must take into account the things that may or may not appeal to them.

The same can be said of the students in first and second year of Non-Compulsory Secondary Education, who will soon or already are preparing for the exams to access to university.

In any case, the most important thing for them is to work with a level of English adapted to serve them to put into practice everything they have learned and feel comfortable with the grammatical structures and the new vocabulary, since they all are ultimately interested in the access to the university.

But, as Demetriou (2016:80): believes

“[...] in spite of these currents of opinion, what is certain is that the teacher should encourage the reading of books that look as *authentic* as possible, with high quality illustrations and suited topics which will play an important role not only in ELT but also working basic competences.”

From my perspective, I coincide with Demetriou's opinion as far as I am concerned that the teacher should encourage students to work and read books independently of the genre or if they are classical or modern. The main thing is to improve student's abilities. To my mind, we cannot forget that students have many subjects and is difficult to work with literature with only a few hours per the week. For this reason, the teacher has to give a series of contents and achieve some objectives. Therefore, I find essential that according to their level and interest, students choose a book to read that catches their attention and that they can enjoy beyond any obligation.

Wallace (1992:79) thinks that as soon as texts, whatever their original purpose, are brought into classrooms for pedagogic purposes they have, arguably, lost authenticity. Although they can lose authenticity, teachers have to use as much as possible authentic materials because the use of authentic materials provides the students with a wide variety of registers and tones, the most important features of the work. Widdowson (1982:204-205) states that the language presented to learners should be simplified in some way in order to acquire the maximum information as much as possible.

We also have to take in account how we are going to deal with the text in class because it is essential to create an environment around the book in which cooperation among students is fostered and in which the teacher is seen as a guide to fulfil the objectives. The teacher should aim to make the student feel connected with the book and comfortable when expressing his/her opinions, feelings and personal experiences in an environment of tolerance and respect. According to Davies (2003,

quoted in Garipova, 2014:88) teaching materials for this methodology must include dynamic, visual exercises, trying to make emphasis on active participation and combining activities in which students can improve their skills.

Finally, after my personal experience in the high school and the procedures that teachers have been choosing with the graded readers, I would like in my future professional life to encourage students to choose from a variety of books and take into account the following factors which I will explain below:

A) About the content/subject matter: Is it relevant/interesting/amusing/meaningful? "The Black Cat" and "The Fall of the House of Usher" deal with topics related to death, family issues, alcoholism, etc. It can be very useful for students to study these topics because at the same time as they are working with the story, they are learning and taking in account the differences that they find in their daily life such as relationships among families or with animals in contrast with the ones in the stories.

B) About illustrations: Does the book include illustrations? Are they attractive? Do they help in the understanding of the book? Both books contain photographs than can help students to understand the story's plot. Moreover, with photos we can make a rest asking questions to students about "What do you think it will happen?" or "What can you tell me about the photograph?"

C) About the student's attitude: Is the book related to the student's experiences and characteristics? Does it arouse curiosity or interest in getting to know other cultures or more about language? The author that I have chosen is different from the rest: although his stories belong to the horror genre o gothic genre, Poe's tales use logic and reason to come to the final conclusion. The intrigue of the argument will motivate students to discuss the plot of the story, which will help them to develop their English oral expression.

D) About values: Does the book teach or encourage certain positive attitudes in the student? Both stories have many aspects that can be debated in the classroom and it is obvious that independently of the opinion of the students, they can share their views and discuss whether certain aspects and attitudes are wrong.

E) About the language level: Both stories have been carefully selected in terms of grammatical structures and vocabulary which are adapted according to the level of the students

4.1. Classification of graded readers according to their lexical complexity.

Nowadays, there is a common framework of reference which determines graded readers' level of difficulty according to their approximate number of headwords. The classification is:

- **Level 0 (Easystarts/starters):** 250 headwords.
- **Level 1 (Beginners):** 400 headwords.
- **Level 2 (Elementary):** 700 headwords.
- **Level 3 (Pre-intermediate):** 1000 headwords.
- **Level 4 (Intermediate):** 1400 headwords.
- **Level 5 (Upper intermediate/Lower advanced):** 1600-1800 headwords.
- **Level 6 (Advanced):** 2000 headwords.

After this classification according to the number of headwords, the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR), which is a guideline used to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages across Europe and in other countries, sets different taxonomies to determine the linguistic level of the graded reader; A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. According to this, A1 level corresponds to 1st CSE (Compulsory Secondary Education) (ESO); A2 level corresponds to 2nd CSE; B1 level would be ideally achieved at their 3rd CSE; B1-B2 level would correspond to 4th CSE; B2 level is achieved at their 1st Non-CSE (Bachillerato) and B2-C1 level for 2nd NCSE.

In our didactic unit, I will work with two short stories, "The Black Cat" and "The Fall of the House of Usher" from Penguin Readers and Pearson English, respectively. Both stories are classified in the level 3 and according to the CEFR, both books will be suitable for a B1-B2 level which corresponds to 4th year of CSE.

4.2. Classification of graded readers according to their grammatical structure.

One aspect that we have to take in account and include in order to choose the best graded readers for our students is the proficiency of grammatical structures that they have. The set grammar for the different years and levels of CSE and NCSE is the following:

1st CSE To be, To have got, present simple, imperatives, present continuous, can/can't, must/mustn't, shall in interrogatives, would/wouldn't like, going to for future reference, comparison of adjectives and adverbs, past simple of to be and common verbs, will for future reference.
2nd CSE Present simple and continuous, past simple and past continuous, future reference with present continuous, going to and will, present perfect (with ever and never), imperative and let's, infinitives and gerund after common verbs, coordination with but, and, or; subordination with because, when, if; defining relative clauses with who, which, that and where, comparison of regular and irregular adjectives and adverbs.
3rd CSE Present Perfect with yet, already, still and yet, past perfect, passive forms with going to and will, verb + object + infinitive (e.g. "I want you to go"), reported statements with say and tell, time clauses introduced by when, while, until, before, after and as soon as, clauses of purpose (so that, in order to, to).
4rd CSE Present Perfect with for and since, reported questions and requests/orders with ask and tell, 1st and 2nd conditional (if and unless), non-defining relative clauses with who and where, clauses of result with so, so ... that and such ... that; clauses of concession with although and though, clauses of comparison with (not) as/so ... as; (not) ... enough to; too ... to.
1st NCSE(Bachillerato) Present Perfect Continuous, passive forms with the Present Perfect, reported speech with precise reporting verbs (e.g. suggest, promise, apologize, etc.) 3rd conditional, may/might, non-defining relative clauses with which and whose, clauses of concession with even though, in spite of, despite.
2st NCSE(Bachillerato)

Present Perfect for negative duration (haven't ... for ages), Past Perfect Continuous, passive forms with Past Perfect and unrestricted use of modal verbs, reported speech introduced by more examples of precise reporting verbs (e.g. threaten, insist, complain, etc.), wish, if only, it's time + past tense, mixed conditional sentences, complex sentences with more than one subordinate clause.
2st NCSE(Bachillerato) Future reference with Future Continuous and Future Perfect, passive (all tenses) in continuous forms, wish and if only + would/past perfect, inversion of had in 2nd and 3rd conditional sentences without if, inversion of word order after initial negative adverbs (no sooner..., hardly..., etc.), non-finite -ing clauses, complex sentences with no restriction on number of subordinate clauses.

Table 1 Classification of graded readers according to their grammatical structures.

5. Types of activities.

To start with the explanation of the possible activities that we could develop in the classroom, I have to mention what Demetriou thinks (2016:80). She thinks that the teacher should encourage the reading of books which contain illustrations and relevant topics which will be an important role in ELT as well as working basic competences. For this reason, this is why I have selected this material to work with the students because we are usually accustomed to doing the same activities with the same stories and Edgar Allan Poe is different and will be very useful and relevant that students work with another perspective.

I have considered many relevant ideas from Demetriou (2016:80) with the aim of working with graded readers. Before starting with a graded reader, we have to take into account the following considerations:

- We must provide a context for the story, explaining the main characters and giving students illustrations and drawings on the blackboard which support this information.
- We have to explain the most important words and ideas of the story to make sure that students understand a series of key concepts.
- We have to relate the story to other subject areas if it is possible and organise the time employed by the students to work with the story.
- We have to support the story with pre-reading activities, while-reading activities and follow-up activities. This type of activities must be focused on the

involvement of the story in the book and to make students feel free to express their opinions, and feelings. Moreover, activities should be varied and original.

a) Examples of pre-reading activities: preliminary discussions, sequencing pictures, vocabulary pictures, etc.

It is essential that students know the most important features of the author such as his addiction to alcohol or the importance of women during his life. If students discover his life, they will understand the topics of both stories.

If we decide to start with “The Black Cat”, as pre-reading activities, we will create a group discussion. When they understand the topics of the story, we can ask the students, questions about what they think about “The Black Cat” and why they think the protagonist is in prison. Obviously we will support this information with images.

If they choose “The Fall of the House of Usher”, we will talk about the characteristics of the house, some details about the main characters and the personal opinion about what they expect of the story.

With these pre-activities, we would like to introduce the students in the context and make him/her feel free to express their opinions about the outcome of the story. Both stories will be discussed in a cooperative way and students will be divided into groups according to their level and main features, so the atmosphere will be the most suitable for them to develop their oral skills and to encourage them to read and discover what happens in the story.

b) Examples of while-reading activities:

First, if we want to check the general understanding of the story, we can recommend them to make an extensive reading (skimming) or to do other types of activities like suggesting an alternative title for the story, underling important information, answering comprehension questions, making a brief summary of what has been told in the story, explaining the new words, etc. Secondly, if we want to check a specific point of the story, intensive reading (scanning) is proposed. Activities that include the recognition of discourse patterns and markers, comprehension question on specific details and activities to deduce the meaning from the context.

We can also improve their writing skills as well as their communicative and interactive abilities. Moreover, as Demetriou affirms, “when using readers with our students we should maintain a constant practice of two major activities: silent and independent reading and reading aloud” (2016:81). With silence and reading, the student obtains pleasure and feels better because he is improving his/her grammatical

knowledge and vocabulary. However, reading aloud enriches his/her skills improving his/her pronunciation.

c) Examples of post-reading activities/follow-up activities.

The following activities are those which I find most suitable in order to work both stories after the reading:

- Students will choose one of two stories and will try to write a similar story in groups.
- Students will dramatize one of the most important parts of the short stories and they will have the possibility to prepare their dialogues, costumes, make – up, etc.
- Students can draw a comic including possible changes in the course of the story.
- Students can debate about the story; likes/dislikes, personal opinions, etc.

The objective of these activities is to foster critical thinking and improve all their basic skills. To my mind, graded readers can help students to deal with the target language and if we work with attractive and meaningful activities, we can motivate students to discover many stories and different types of literary genres and make students aware of the importance of reading.

6. Edgar Allan Poe.

In the following section, I will discuss the importance that the study of authors like Edgar Allan Poe could have in the development of personal and academical abilities for our students. Moreover, I am going to lay out the most relevant events in Edgar Allan Poe's life and his main literary features. Finally, I will look into the two stories chosen for study in our didactic proposal: "The Black Cat" and "The Fall of the House of Usher"

6.1. Why Edgar Allan Poe?

During my English degree at the University of Almeria, my love for literature grew when I had the opportunity of studying the literary works of the Victorian Era and those written during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in North America. Without a doubt, the writer who interested me the most was Edgar Allan Poe and the most thrilling subject was North American Literature of the 19th century. Besides, my teacher was very fond of him and he motivated me to deepen into the study of all his tales and poems as well as to explore the period in which Poe lived that marked a before and after in American literature.

Then, there are also some reasons why I have chosen these stories, such as the psychological complexity of the characters, Poe's mastery in the use of English and story-building or the present relevance of many of the topics dealt with.

Students might benefit immensely from the reading of these works, and they should be encouraged to do so. Literature has the potential for being a tool for exploring what truth is and what the consequences of our acts in life are. To my mind, both stories can help students to develop opinions of their own and then listen and respect differences in views with their peers, since these are subjective stories that each person can interpret in a different way.

From my perspective, it is also very enriching for students to study foreign authors. Edgar Allan Poe is one of the most brilliant writers of all times and I think that the analysis of works like "The Black Cat" and "The Fall of the House of Usher" develop a critical understanding of a different cultural background and provide key linguistic skills especially when dealing with emotions. In our image-driven society, linguistic skills are becoming increasingly necessary and help us to express our feelings.

Edgar Allan Poe was born in 1809 and it would be his second centenary and a good argument to remember his best literary works. In fact, Cortázar, who translated into Spanish his books and wrote about his life and literary career. In addition to its importance, it should be noted that it was a reference for many Europeans and Americans for his ability with poetry.

In addition, he can serve as a basis to study other stages in the history of literature and other authors like Franz Kafka or Charles Baudelaire, who was the father of modernist poetry. He, admired Edgar Allan Poe and translated all his poetry in French.

His contribution to the short novel is marked by his brilliant use of time narrative and his exquisite symbolism. I believe both features can provide useful insights into the makings of literature and allow students, through the study of these two short stories, to achieve a greater understanding and enjoyment of the complexities of literature. For this purpose and taking into account the complexity of the original texts, the use of graded readers can be the perfect tool to combine the understanding of the literary features while facilitating their learning. Therefore, the use of graded readers can be the perfect tool to combine both objectives and facilitate their achievement.

6.2. Life and scholarly work

American writer, poet and literary critic, Edgar Allan Poe was born in 1809 in Boston, Massachusetts. He died in Baltimore in 1849. He shared with many writers like Herman Melville, a metaphysical vision which mixes realism and parody. It is obvious that he marked a before and after in literature, but we also have to consider that due to the content and the way of expressing himself in his articles, he got a number of enemies turning him into a controversial figure at that moment.

When he was a baby, his father abandoned them in 1810. A year later, his mother passed away when he was two years old, a fact that influenced him during all his life becoming an obsession for him because he thought that all beauty and goodness were destined to die in forgetfulness.

However, we can say that the beginning of his life was during his stay at the orphanage. He was welcome by the marriage formed by Frances and John Allan, who provided him with an education. Due to his stepfather's work, the family moved to England when he was six years old. The act of moving to England gave him the possibility of discovering the Gothic architecture and Europe apart from observing the differences that there were with America. After this visit, Poe showed a great interest in the classic and humanistic world as well as in literature.

After he returned to the United States, his father decided to send him to the University of Virginia. Although he showed a great proficiency in languages, he had a lot of problems with alcohol, gambling, debts and his father decided to stop helping him economically. This was a setback for Poe, but also, in 1827, after enlisting in the army, he decided to regain the relationship with his father, who was inflexible and also hid the serious illness of his stepmother, for whom Poe felt great affection.

"Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque" (1840) was his first published volume of short stories of horror and suspense. In this volume, there were stories like "The Fall of the House of Usher", "Ligeia" and "William Wilson". Thanks to these works and his poem "The Raven", he was allowed to tour the country reciting his poems, as well as becoming a literary genius. Hatch and Dunning published his second collection of poetry that includes poems like "Al Aaraaf "Tamerlane" and others in Baltimore, in 1828.

Poe mixes the lyrical elements with the narrative. Also, he introduces supernatural elements. Nevertheless, he obtains a cold support from the Anglo – Saxon critics but thanks to Baudelaire and Valery, the figure of Poe will magnify itself. Later, he tried to start a magazine and after his rejection, he decided to continue

writing more short stories and launched himself towards the production of a new detective genre with the publication of "The Murders in Rue Morgue" although he barely got enough money to support his family.

Two facts that would mark the future of Edgar Allan Poe would be the bankruptcy of his publication and the death of his wife by tuberculosis which aggravated his psychological problems leading him to depression, alcohol and drugs. Finally, in October 1849, Dr James E. Snodgrass found him in a state of mental alienation and transferred him to the hospital. The causes of his death remain obscure, but we have to point out that a year ago, he had suffered malaria leaving him in a convalescent state. His last words were: "May God help my poor soul".

6.3. "The Fall of the House of Usher".

At the beginning of the story, we see how a character, in this case the narrator, approaches the house of Usher in a day which is boring, dark and soundless. This house belongs to his friends Roderick Usher. The narrator begins with a description of the environment that surrounds the house and its main features:

"During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible" (p.3)

The owner of this house is the narrator's friend, Roderick Usher. The reason for his visit was that Roderick sent him a letter asking him to come and see him. Besides, he tells him that he is physically ill and emotionally too:

"A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which, in its wildly importunate nature, had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness—of a mental disorder which oppressed him—and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend" (p.4)

The narrator talks about the clan and the family tree of Roderick Usher. He mentions that the only member who has survived was Roderick Usher, thus forming a direct line of descent. The Usher family has identified so much with their property that the peasantry confuses the inhabitants with their home. As the narrator enters the house, he mentions how the house is scary at the outside:

“and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagorical armorial trophies which rattled as I strode” (p.6-7)

When he arrives at the room, he starts to describe the physical state of Usher explaining that he is more pallid and less energetic than before. Moreover, they talked about Usher’s sister, Madeline Usher who has fallen ill with a strange disease and the doctor can not cure her:

“He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin—to the severe and long-continued illness—indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution—of a tenderly beloved sister, his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. “Her decease,” he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, “would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers”. (p.10)

The narrator tries to make Roderick happier, he listen to him, plays the guitar changing the lyrics of his songs but his attempts to make Roderick feel any better do not succeed. Roderick was elaborating a theory arguing that the house does not benefit his mental state. Madeline soon dies and Roderick decides to temporarily bury her under the house. He wants to keep her in the house because he thinks that the doctor might be able to investigate her body, since her illness was very strange for them. The narrator helps Roderick with the burial of her sister noticing that Madeline has rosy cheeks:

“Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the

deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house”. (P.17-18)

The narrator also suddenly discovers that Roderick and Madeline were twins. During the following days, the coexistence becomes difficult between Roderick and the narrator. One of the nights, the narrator can't sleep very well. Roderick knocks on his door in an angry way. He takes the narrator to the window in which, they can appreciate a bright – looking gas that surrounds the house. The narrator explains that the gas is a natural phenomenon.

He decides to read “Mad Trist” by Sir Launcelot Canning, which was a medieval romance. While he is reading, they started to hear sounds which correspond to the descriptions of the story. At first, they ignore these sounds but these sounds become more distinct and intense. Roderick revealed that he thinks that her sister is alive and she is trying to escape. The wind opens the door and confirms that her sister is behind the door and dressed in a white tunic bloodied by her struggle. She attacks Roderick, who dies of fear. Finally, the narrator escapes from the house and while he is abandoning it, the whole house is being demolished.

Reading is essential for the learning of any language. Reading books in English will always be an advantage in order to develop the language. You can learn English by reading and having fun. These are not only textbooks for learning grammar and expressions, but also narrative literature could also provide entertainment and fun. Reading in English will help students learn vocabulary, while improving their fluency in the language.

This story is recommended for both children and adults with a beginner or intermediate level of English. This story collects the most important characteristics of the Gothic novels and is one of the most important stories of Edgar Allan Poe. To my mind, the objective of including this story in the didactic unit is that the inclusion of features such as the importance of death or women in his life can help students to appreciate how defining the psychological effects of life circumstances can become. Besides, they can be kept in contact with different literary genres and they can start investigating about the gothic novel and be able to develop oral and writing skills and

try to identify and establish differences with the issues of the story and how these topics are dealt with people nowadays.

6.4 "The Black Cat."

Before explaining why we have chosen this story by Edgar Allan Poe, we are going to make an analysis of this work. The story begins with the narrator who is waiting to be killed the next morning for the crime that he has committed. In fact, the story begins: "You are not going to believe this story. But it is a true story" (1). The narrator tries to play psychologically with the reader although we already know that the end of this story is his death.

The narrator wants to release his soul from the atrocity he has committed. He explains how he was in the past, a person who loved animals, especially a cat called *Pluto*. It is very difficult to know when the plot really takes off because it goes back to his adolescence, when he got married, etc. However, everything changes as a result of his addiction to alcohol: "For years, I've lived happily together, the best of friends. But during those years I was slowly changing. It was that evil enemy of Man called Drink who was changing me." (1). This moment supposes the end of the affinity between the cat and the narrator. Thus, he starts to be a violent person.

The man arrives drunk most nights at home and one day, when he arrives, *Pluto* flees from him and when he tries to catch it, the cat bites the narrator. Suddenly, the narrator pulls out a knife and stabs the cat in the eye. We believe what the protagonist shows us, he is feeling guilty. In fact, the next morning, the narrator knows that his cat will not get closer to him and the feeling of guilt and grief that he had, mixed again with alcohol enraged him. Then, he decides to tie a rope around the cat's neck and hangs it in the garden where the cat eventually dies. The same night, we don't know how, a fire sets out in the house and the narrator, his wife and the servant remain outside: "We stood and watched as the house burned down to the ground." (3). The next day, when he is contemplating his house, which is only now rubble, he finds a wall with the image of a cat with a rope around it. However, he still does not recognize the crime he has committed and he thinks that it is someone responsible for having set the body in his room: "During the fire the garden was full of people. Probably, someone cut the dead cat from the tree and threw it through the window" (p.5).

The narrator is sad and feels guilty for what he has done to *Pluto* admitting that he really loved him and missed him. The addiction to alcohol continues to manifest itself throughout the story in the narrator. After a while, in a tavern and

although he is drunk, he discovers a cat very similar to *Pluto*: "I got up, and went to see what it was. I put my hand up, touched it, and found that it was a black cat large as *Pluto* "(p.5)

In addition, the cat has the same features as *Pluto* and also, he lacks an eye and he decides to take the cat home. The animal becomes his wife's favourite animal and he is delighted to have the cat at home but this one has a stain which reminds him of how *Pluto* died, something that torments him and the narrator decides to eliminate the cat from his life:

"I wanted to murder him when he did this, but I did not. I stopped myself because I remembered *Pluto*, but also because I was afraid of the animal. How can I explain this fear? It was not really a fear of something evil . . . but then how else can I possibly describe it? Slowly, this strange fear grew into horror. Yes, horror. If I tell you why, you will not believe me. You will think I am mad. Several times, my wife took the cat and showed me the white shape on his chest. She said the shape was slowly changing. For a long time I did not believe her, but slowly, after many weeks, I began to see that she was right." (6)

We can think that reading a horror novel is not the most appropriate activity for 15-year-olds, that the strong and terrifying images described by these stories can harm their education, although the recommended age for such readings should be taken into account.

But on the other hand and taking into account the above premises, horror stories can become one of the favourite readings by teenagers. They exert a great attraction and fascination on teenagers, confronting them with themes and ideas forbidden during their childhood and bringing them closer to adults. We must not waste this predisposition of the students to motivate them in the English class with the aim of expanding their vocabulary and oral expression through the discussion of reading.

Edgar Allan Poe moves readers but at the same time he makes us use reason and logic. In the case of "The Black Cat", it includes a complaint about alcohol, which leads the narrator to commit perverse actions that destroy his personality. The students will be attracted by this halo of mystery of the short story at the same time that the bloody and horror scenes will grab their attention.

The celebration of Halloween would be a good time to read "The Black Cat" and comment it in class. The students will be motivated to discuss the different aspects of the work that will enrich their command of English.

7. Didactic Unit: “The importance of Graded Readers: Edgar Allan Poe: “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “The Black Cat”.

7.1. Introduction.

This unit is designed for the fourth course of the second cycle of Compulsory Secondary Education. It is addressed to a specific group of 25 students between 14 and 15 years old. Besides, the heterogeneity in this class is easily perceived because there are students from different countries. This unit will be developed during 5 sessions of 50 – 55 minutes each. The last ten minutes will be devoted to review the main topics or introduce the next lesson. Finally, it will be taught during the Halloween’s day week.

7.2. Justification.

This didactic unit has been designed according to the following legislation: Ley Orgánica de Educación 2/2006 de 3 de Mayo. It is based on Edgar Allan Poe’s horror gothic stories. The main objective of this didactic unit is to provide our students with some knowledge about American literature focusing on horror and gothic tales. Thus, students will work with different language registers.

With this didactic proposal, my aim is to use literature as a means to improve the student’s communicative and cultural skills, as well as providing them with the tools needed to understand different opinions. Then, I would like to make students aware of the importance of the English language as a vehicle to foster critical thinking.

Finally, one of the main purposes of this didactic unit is to show our students the benefits that literature offer in order to put into practice all the skills that are proposed by the Common European Framework of References for Languages. In addition, I would like to support teachers to use literature with the objective of achieving the General Objectives of Stage and Area and the development of the Key Competences that are demanded by the Real Decreto 1631/2006 and Decreto 231/2007

7.3. Background Information and contextualization.

The school is located in the city of Almeria. All the students are quite heterogeneous from the cultural point of view, as they are from Almería and other

countries like Morocco, Colombia and Russia. Besides, they share the same socioeconomic features.

This unit is developed for a 4th year of Compulsory Secondary Education group of students in a public high school, in a classroom with 25 students (13 girls and 12 boys), in which two of them have specific educational needs. They have a low level of knowledge in most subjects so activities must be adapted for them. The average level should be A2/B1 in the Foreign Language according to the CEFRL. In the classroom, students sit in pairs and sometimes in groups of three or four to perform communicative and interactive activities but in this unit, they will work in groups of five.

Each classroom has two multimedia computer labs, where students can make use of multimedia material in order to reinforce their knowledge of the language. The classroom is equipped with a projector, interactive whiteboard, traditional blackboard and a computer for the teacher.

In this group, students show a variety of learning styles and abilities. It is therefore important to have them into account when devising the most useful teaching strategies, the ones which could boost motivation in most of them. This didactic unit will be developed at the end of October, which coincides with the festivity of Halloween. It is a revision unit dealing with the cultural background of this celebration. It is divided into five sessions of fifty or fifty – five minutes each one.

7.4. Objectives and Competences.

The different objectives and competences in which this didactic unit is based are those appearing in Real Decreto 1631/2006 and Decreto 231/2007:

Didactic Objectives	Stage Objectives	Foreign Language Activities	Key Competences
- To practise reading using the graded readers prepared for this unit. - To acquire some knowledge about the Halloween's day.	a, b, d, e, g, i, j, l (RD 1631/2006)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10	1. Communicative competence in one's mother tongue 2. Communication in foreign languages

- To acquire some knowledge about "horror literature" and gothic stories from the beginning of the 20th Century. - To learn new vocabulary related to the stories. - To recognize and practice "Past tenses: Past Simple". - To practise pronunciation by reading aloud. - To practise listening by listening to videos and to the oral texts. - To practise speaking through debates and discussions.	a, b (D 231/2007)		3.Mathematical competence and basic competence in science and technology: 4. Digital competence. 5. Social and civic competence. 6. Cultural awareness and expression 7. Learning to learn competence. 8. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
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- To practise writing by doing a personal composition			
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Table 1. Didactic Objectives and Competences. The material is original and has been devised by myself.

7.5. Contents.

According to the *Ley Orgánica de Educación, 2/2006, de 3 de Mayo*, contents should be delivered into four different groups:

7.5.1. Listening, speaking and interacting.

- Listening to the oral exposition of the stories.
- Debating some cultural and moral issues in class.
- Fostering critical opinions.
- Interacting and co-working with the partner or group in speaking activities.
- Reading dialogues aloud in pairs

7.5.2. Reading and writing.

- Reading a graded reader; “The Black Cat” & “The Fall of the House of Usher”.
- Writing a personal composition about the most important topics in both stories.
- Answering comprehension questions.
- Writing an overview about the stories.

7.5.3. Linguistic awareness and reflection upon the language.

Within linguistic awareness, there are four main categories:

a) Functions

- Describing the main topics of a story.
- Inventing a story.

b) Grammar

- Reinforcing past tenses: Past Simple
- Recognizing syntactic structures, verbs and practicing them.

c) Vocabulary

- Learning vocabulary related to the stories.
- Using the new vocabulary to write your own short story.
- Learning new expressions or idioms.

d) Pronunciation

- Practicing pronunciation by reading the stories aloud in the classroom.
- Reinforcing the pronunciation, the ending in past tenses.

7.5.4. Socio-cultural aspects.

- Presenting literature and its development to our students as an essential element of our society.
- Promoting a positive attitude towards other cultures and countries.
- Fostering students' awareness towards literary texts and their contexts.
- Fostering the use of a foreign language to communicate.
- Acquiring knowledge about horror and gothic stories of the beginning of the 20th century.

7.6. Cross-curricular Issues.

- Cooperation and collaboration (BOJA Order 14th July 2016, First Foreign Language in Compulsory Secondary Education, Objective 1): To assume, in a responsible way, his/her duties, knowing and practising his/her rights respecting the others, practising tolerance, cooperation and solidarity between people, practising dialogues to strengthen human rights and equality of treatment and opportunities between men and women as the common values of a plural society and getting ready to exercise democratic citizenship.

- Cultural awareness (BOJA Order 14th July 2016, First Foreign Language in Compulsory Secondary Education): To know, value and respect basic aspects of their own and others culture and history as well as artistic and cultural heritage. It is essential to know and identify the behaviours which are generally accepted and

respected by different cultures as well as intercultural and socioeconomic dimensions of countries which could have different features, especially European ones as well as understanding how history and geography have influenced those countries and the differences that America. It implies to keep in contact with artistic and cultural manifestations of the foreign language that the student will learn through the use of films, songs or books.

- Entrepreneurship (BOE, Royal Decree 1105/2014, page 177, G): To foster the entrepreneur spirit and self-confidence, participation, critical thinking, personal initiative and the ability to plan, taking decisions and responsibilities.

7.7. Interdisciplinarity.

- ICT: Information and communication technologies are used in the majority of activities due to the fact that a lot of them require the use of a projector, computer or interactive whiteboard.

- Geography: Edgar Allan Poe is an American writer and, apart from studying and reading both graded readers, it is a good opportunity to discover America's geography with a map.

- Civic Education: Or religion, for working with moral values. During the development of the didactic unit, students will discuss relevant moral topics which are present in both stories. These topics, such as violence, drugs or alcoholism, are related to society and human beings.

7.8. Methodology.

In order to achieve the objectives previously established, an active and participatory practice will be presented in which the student is the protagonist in the teaching-learning process. Even so, if it is necessary, we would apply other more traditional techniques such as the master class, in case that some student requires it or if the teacher detects some problems that would only be solved in this way.

Specifically, this project will be developed through Project-Based Learning, which will culminate with a final product (a short film) consisting of a series of specific evaluable tasks. This methodology, according to Maldonado (2008: 160) helps meaningful learning, insofar as it involves the student; it approaches a concrete reality in an academic environment; and encourages it in the development of activities to solve real situations, which encourages research or discussion.

Many of the activities and tasks that are proposed will be solved through cooperative groups in order to favour learning by accumulation and scaffolding due to the fact that teams will be heterogeneous, that is to say, they will be composed of students with different abilities. In the classroom, we will divide the 25 students into five groups of five people according to the previously established criteria.

The methodology I intend to carry out will be addressed to the diversity that there is in the classroom, not only at a general level (since there is a variety of skills and abilities), but also to respond to those students who require significant curricular adaptations. Particularly, there is a student who has High Intellectual Abilities (AACC) and the Moroccan student who has experienced a late incorporation into the education system. Thus, we will include these two students in the same group to contribute as much as possible to their personal and their educational needs.

We have to take in account that this project, in addition to having a communicative approach, aims for students to start in the field of research as a source of learning using debates as a tool.

7.9. Attention to Diversity.

Regarding those students who require some specific attention, it is my intention to focus especially on the ones who may have difficulties during the development of the lessons. Although the majority of our students have a lower level of English, there are two special cases: a Moroccan student and a High Intellectual Abilities student. Both require a particular attention.

As it was mentioned before, the majority of activities during this unit will require the division in groups of five in order to work together. We will mix students who share same level and same personal features with the objective of creating a suitable atmosphere and that everyone enjoys each task proposed. The teacher will provide reinforcing activities to all our students due to the fact that there is not much difference among students who have a lower level of English and some students who have a higher level. We have to mention that the teacher will be checking on them to make sure that there are no doubts and solve the possible problems that could come up in the classroom.

Besides, they are going to work in groups in order to encourage support and help among each other. It is very important for students to help one another and to appreciate the importance of acting as a whole group in which all members are equally relevant. We would like to include the student from Morocco, who has arrived later than their classmates, in one of these groups. Moreover, the student who has High

Intellectual Abilities will be invited to help the teacher with vocabulary, grammar and writing, helping him to explain those aspects to the rest of their classmates.

To finish with this section, we have to mention that every student will download the app *MyGrammarLab* which is very useful for students to improve their skills that they have learnt and also to learn some new aspects about grammar.

7.10. Materials.

In order to complete the tasks and achieve all the goals which are proposed in the didactic unit, we would use the following materials:

- Graded Readers; “The Black Cat” and “The Fall of the House of Usher”
- Google Classroom
- YouTube
- App *MyGrammarLab*
- Kahoot!
- Computer and projector
- Interactive whiteboard
- Smartphones
- Activities provided by the teacher

7.11. Assessment.

7.11.1 Evaluation Criteria:

- If students have practiced reading by using both graded readers prepared for this unit.
- If students have acquired some knowledge about American culture.
- If students have acquired some knowledge about “horror literature” and gothic stories.
- If students have learnt new vocabulary related to the stories.
- If students are able to recognize and practice “Past tenses”.
- If students have practiced pronunciation by reading aloud.

- If students have practiced listening by listening to videos and to the oral texts.
- If students have practiced speaking through debates and discussions.
- If students have practiced writing through writing a personal composition.

7.11.2 Evaluation Tools:

10 % Kahoot

30% Active participation in class, positive marks, daily homework etc.

30 %: Short film (The teacher evaluates the dialogue of the short film by a rubric and other aspects of the short film).

30 % Students co – evaluate the short film through a rubric.

The teacher will use this rubric to mark the final project:

LANGUAGE USE	Proper orthography.	0.25 points
	Suitable vocabulary, according to the topic and level.	0,25 points
	Adequate use of grammar, according to the topic and level.	0,25 points
	Grammatical correctness (word order, agreement, etc.)	0,25 points
COHERENCE	Originality	0,25 points
	Correct use of punctuation marks and connectors	0,25 points
	Performance	0,25 points
	Task development and register	0,25 points

ORAL SKILLS	Fluency	0,25 points
	Pronunciation and intonation	0,25 points
	Speech organization	0, 50 points

Students will use this rubric in order to evaluate the short film:

ASPECTS TO EVALUATE	MARK
CREATIVITY AND ORIGINALITY	0,5 Points
PERFORMANCE	0,5 Points
SPEECH ORGANIZATION	0,5 Points
ADEQUATE USE OF GRAMMAR	0,5 Points
SUITABLE LEVEL OF VOCABULARY	0,5 Points
PRONUNCIATION	0,5 Points

7.12. Lesson Plan: Step-by-step Account. Temporalization.

OCTOBER 2019				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
20	21	22	23	24 SESSION 1
27 SESSION 2	28 SESSION 3	29 SESSION 4	30	31 SESSION 5

7.12.1. Session 1

The didactic unit will begin by dividing the class into groups of five. The teacher will explain them that all tasks proposed in this unit will be developed in groups and they have to work in a cooperative way.

Then, the teacher will ask some questions to their students in order to introduce the figure of Edgar Allan Poe. Students have to talk with their classmates and exchange their opinions with the rest of groups. Students can formulate some other questions if they consider it properly. The questions will be similar to the following ones:

- Do you like horror stories?
- Do you know the difference between horror and gothic?
- What is your favourite horror story?
- Do you know some famous “horror” writer?

We will use employ ten minutes in this pre – introductory activity. The teacher will remind the students that they have to participate actively in order to get good results. After this activity, the teacher will explain some aspects about Edgar Allan Poe, an American writer, and we will watch a YouTube video, which is about the life of the author and some relevant aspects about him.

Link to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-387NMCR6w>

After watching the video, the teacher will provide students with some cards which contain information about Edgar Allan Poe. Each group will collect one card and after reading it and translate it, they will explain it in front of the class. Each card explains some aspects about Edgar Allan Poe: early life, literary style, main important books, how he died, etc. These are some examples of the cards:

Poe was born on January 19, 1809 in Boston, Massachusetts. He never really knew his parents. His father left the family early in Poe’s life and his mother died when he was only three. Poe went to live with John Allan, a successful businessman, in Richmond, Virginia. It is said that when he was thirteen years old, Poe wrote poems on the back of some of Allan's business papers.

In 1826, Poe went to the University of Virginia. He was an excellent student, but he didn't have enough money to continue his studies. He tried to get money by gambling, but he failed. He moved to Boston and published there his first book, *Tamerlane and Other Poems*, in 1827. Around this time, Poe joined the U.S. Army. He studied at the United States Military Academy in West Point. He was a good student, but was kicked out after a year because he didn't do his duties.

After leaving West Point, Poe tried to become a full-time writer. From 1831 to 1835, he lived in Baltimore with his aunt Maria Clemm and her daughter Virginia. In 1835, Poe became an editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger* in Richmond. He fell in love with Virginia and the couple married in 1836 when she was only thirteen years old.

In the 1830s, Poe published *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, a collection of stories. It contained some of his most famous short stories, for example *The Fall of the House of Usher* or *Ligeia*. In 1841, he wrote *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, a detective story. His short story *The Gold Bug* won a literary prize in 1843. In 1845, Poe published his most famous poem, *The Raven*. In this poem, a student is visited by a raven on a stormy December midnight.

Poe's wife Virginia died in 1847. Poe continued writing, but he wasn't healthy and had financial problems. His final days remain mysterious. On October 3, 1849, Poe was found on the street in Baltimore. He was taken to Washington College Hospital where he died on October 7. Some people think that alcohol played role in his death. Poe's last words were "Lord, help my poor soul!"

The teacher will give instructions and help each group if there are any doubts related to pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Then, the teacher will give the rest of the cards to the groups. After that, students will read them aloud.

After this task, students will be handed a photocopy with the next comprehension activity:

1 Read the text and answer the following questions.

- 1 How old was Edgar Allan Poe when his mother died?
- 2 How did Poe try to make money when he was studying at the University of Virginia?
- 3 Why was Poe kicked out of West Point?
- 4 Which story by Edgar Allan Poe won a literary prize in 1843?
- 5 What is Poe's most famous poem?
- 6 Where did Edgar Allan Poe die?
- 7 What were Poe's last words?

2 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

1. Edgar Allan Poe didn't live with his biological parents.
2. Edgar Allan Poe was a very good student.
3. Edgar Allan Poe published his first book in Richmond
4. Edgar Allan Poe was thirteen years old when he married Virginia Clemm.
5. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is a science-fiction story.
6. *The Raven* takes place on a November night.
7. It is possible that Edgar Allan Poe died because of his drinking.

We will employ around 20 – 25 minutes in this activity. This activity will be developed orally.

All the cards and the exercises are taken from the following link:
<http://files.odysseus.webnode.cz/2000001075aee65be72/EDGAR%20ALLAN%20POE%20-%20reading.pdf>

Finally, before starting with the reading of "The Black Cat", we are going to ask the students if they are superstitious and also, if they know any such belief in their respectively cultures. In addition, they will be also asked their opinion about black cats in the different cultures that we have in our class. Besides, we intend our students to give their opinions about the impressions that they have got from Edgar Allan Poe and some aspects that they would like to point out (10 – 15 minutes)

For homework, the teacher requires students to read "The Black Cat" for the next day and to answer these questions:

- Who is telling the story?
- Describe the man's personality at the beginning of the story and compare/contrast it with the man's personality at the end of the story.
- Write a brief summary of the story.
- How does the narrator feel about animals?
- How did the narrator kill Pluto?

7.12.2. Session 2

This session will begin by revising the questions that were proposed in the previous session. Then, the teacher will ask students if they have enjoyed the story or not and if there is any special detail which has impressed them. Students have to hand in the answers to the questions. The teacher will ask them if they remember the meaning of words like fear, murder, guilty, etc. (Time: 5 minutes)

The next activity consists in the reading of some excerpts of the story that will be reproduced in the interactive whiteboard. The followings excerpts are:

- The narrator is sad and feels guilty for what he has done to Pluto admitting that he really loved him and missed him. The addiction to alcohol continues to manifest itself throughout the story in the narrator. After a while, in a tavern and although he is drunk, he discovers a cat very similar to Pluto: "I got up and went to see what it was. I put my hand up, touched it, and found that it was a black cat large as Pluto "(p.5)
- The narrator is sad and feels guilty for what he has done to Pluto admitting that he really loved him and missed him. The addiction to alcohol continues to manifest itself throughout the story in the narrator. After a while, in a tavern and although he is drunk, he discovers a cat very similar to Pluto: "I got up and went to see what it was. I put my hand up, touched it, and found that it was a black cat large as Pluto "(p.5)

Students have to underline the past simple verbs. After that, the teacher will explain the appropriate use of past simple. Then, the teacher gives students examples which could be used in real communicative situations. The different structures in affirmative, negative and interrogative forms will be presented in the whiteboard. Finally, the teacher will make some questions to check if students have grasped the proper use of the past simple.

- Did you understand the personality of the protagonist?
- Did the narrator find a second black cat? Why?
- What attitude did the animal have towards his owner?

The activity and explanation of past simple will be developed during 20 – 25 minutes. Then, students will complete a filling- gap activity about past simple. The following exercise is found in the following link:
<https://www.ejerciciosinglesonline.com/>

Complete the following sentences using the past simple in English:

1. My father _____ (go) to work by car yesterday.
2. This morning I _____ (have) a shower.
3. My sister _____ (not clean) her room on Saturday.
4. The bird _____ (fly) over our heads.
5. Last week my family _____ t (buy) a new table for the dining room.
6. The other day, I _____ (lose) my math's book.
7. I _____ (tell) my mother a lie.
8. We _____ (hear) a terrible sound outside last night.
9. _____ (you / see) football match Tuesday night?
10. Paul _____ (drink) a litre of coke for lunch yesterday

This activity will last around 5 – 10 minutes.

Then, the teacher will deal with some topics which can foster discussion like as “gender violence” or “death penalty”. The teacher will introduce some questions to make students participate in a small debate in the groups and then, they will share their opinions with the rest of the class: (Time: 10 minutes)

- Do you think in the society in which we live nowadays is there “gender violence”? Do you know of any cases? Do you think there are differences between both periods?
- What is the role of the women?
- Does the story end as you imagine? How? Why?

For homework, they will have to read this story and write a brief summary of it. They also have to give their opinion about the story. In order to reinforce the knowledge of past simple structures, also students have to do this small exercise in which they have to write the following sentences in negative and interrogative:

1. I phoned you yesterday
2. You played very well tennis
3. I talked with my sister because her friend invited us to her party
4. She went to school yesterday by bus
5. We really loved animals when we were teenagers.

Subsequently, the teacher will introduce the following story that we are going to read: “The Fall of the House of Usher” with some pictures. The students will talk about what they expect about the story. The session will finish watching a video from YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi6b0cpG34s> which tells us a brief summary of the story. (Time: 5 minutes)



https://www.google.com/search?q=the+fall+of+the+house+of+usher&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiKoJmZz8jiAhVSAGMBHT3GB6gQ_AUIECgB&biw=1366&bih=608#imgsrc=6ia0KEm9LtE4YM:



https://www.google.com/search?q=the+fall+of+the+house+of+usher&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiKoJmZz8jiAhVSAGMBHT3GB6gQ_AUIECgB&biw=1366&bih=608#imgrc=1JxQv6B9nhK7TM:

7.12.3. Session 3

This session will begin by revising the homework. The teacher will ask for a volunteer to read his/her summary and express his/her opinion about what this student would like to point o with their classmates (Time: 5 minutes).

Then, students will start reading aloud some excerpts that the teacher will put in the interactive whiteboard in order to listen them. Each student will read one or two sentences. I am going to use the following excerpts:

“During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible” (p.3)

“and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to

the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagorical armorial trophies which rattled as I strode” (p.6-7)

“Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.” (p.17-18)

“From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the “House of Usher.” (p.25)

Between each excerpt, the teacher will ask some questions in order to check that the story is being understood by the class:

- Why is the narrator going to the House of Usher?
- How does the narrator describe Roderick?
- What happens with Madeline?

- Why Roderick changes his behaviour after the death of his sister?
- How does the story end?

Then, the teacher, with the collaboration of the classroom, will answer all possible doubts about vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, especially past simple verbs. (15 – 20 minutes)

Then, although we have 25 students and we have divided them into groups of five, now each group will be subdivided into pairs and one group of three. They will elaborate a dialogue between Madeline, Roderick and the narrator talking about the life that they had before the narrator's visit. They will rewrite the dialogue and the teacher will collect it. After that, each group will represent their dialogue in front of the class. They are going to prepare it until the end of the classroom. The teacher will walk around the classroom helping students with possible doubts. (20 – 25 minutes)

For homework, each student will imagine that he/she is a journalist. He/she has to write an interview asking Roderick about how he felt during those days in the House of Usher. They have to use past simple.

7.12.4. Session 4

In this session before students will represent the role play about the dialogue between Roderick, Madeline and the narrator in front of the classroom, the teacher will explain the final project. Then, after each representation, the teacher and their classmates can give feedbacks and opinions. (Time: 30 minutes)

After the representation of the role play, in their groups, students will discuss the following questions about Halloween. (Time: 5-10 minutes):

1. Do people in your country celebrate Halloween?
2. How do people celebrate Halloween?
3. What kind of person or animal would you like to be during Halloween? Why?
4. Do you believe in ghosts?

The class will finish by doing a reading activity about Halloween which is provided by the following link:

<https://www.allthingstopics.com/uploads/2/3/2/9/23290220/lesson-halloween.pdf>

After that, students have to fill in the exercises related to the text “What is Halloween” (Time 10 – 15 minutes). Each student will read and this exercise will be developed in an oral way). Students will listen to the text twice before reading it.

7.12.5. Session 5

In this session, we are going to start creating a suitable atmosphere. Students will prepare the classroom, switch off lights. Subsequently, the teacher will call each group at random and they will show their short films to the whole class. This class will be divided into 3 parts:

First, students will watch the videos of the final projects of this didactic unit. Each group has to choose one scene from “The Black Cat” and they have to change the end of the story including whatever they want, new characters, new dialogues, a different final for the story. Aspects such as pronunciation or creativity will be evaluated. The rest of the groups have to evaluate the short film with a rubric that the teacher will provide them with. After each video, students and teacher can express their opinion and give some feedback. Each group has to rewrite the story and the teacher will collect them and evaluate the final composition. (Time: 30/35 minutes).

Secondly, we will make a Kahoot in which we would like to point out the most relevant issues that we have learnt during this unit including aspects of vocabulary, a review of past tenses (Past Simple), some questions about both stories and the author. Each group will have a computer or smartphone and we have to mention that if there were some kind of problems in terms of the Internet connection, the teacher will provide them with a multiple-choice sheet. Then, this sheet will be corrected by everyone with the aim of clarifying all the concepts of the unit and solve all their doubts (Time: 15 min).

To finish the lesson, we will vote the best stories and the teacher will make some questions about how they are going to celebrate Halloween. (Time: 10 min)

8. Conclusion.

I am in favour of the use of literature in the English classroom, due to the number of benefits for students and despite the presence of possible difficulties that may arise, especially for those students who have a lower level of English.

When I started this dissertation, I had doubts about the main topic due to the troubles of bringing an author like Edgar Allan Poe into the classroom. I have always

liked literature but it is evident that the approaches to literature have changed immensely, especially due to the development of technology. Besides, a large percentage of students do not show a love for reading. When I started to investigate Poe and the different resources that I could use to bring his two works into the classroom, I realized that he was an ideal author to motivate students to read, since both stories deal with current issues even though they were written in the XIX century.

It has often been discussed how literature should be used in the classroom. This topic has been discussed since the first methods of teaching literature. In this essay I have highlighted the advantages of literature, in this case in English, and how we can, not only to encourage reading, but also to expand student's vocabulary and to improve their oral expression in a fun and entertaining way.

Literature can be the perfect tool to learn English, provided that the method is not boring or mechanical. Besides, it can be interesting and enjoyable. For this purpose, I decided to work with the stories of "The Black Cat" and "The Fall of the House of Usher".

Why have I chosen these works by Allan Edgar Poe? First, both works are short stories. Then, the stories involve the use of reason and logic, which will make the reading entertaining to the students. In addition, they have been adapted in numerous occasions to the cinema and to the small screen. Fear and mystery are among the most appealing feelings humans are subject to. The strange attraction that we feel towards strange and surrealistic situations, such as the ones appearing in literary texts, can lead students, not only to read but also to interact with their classmates, through dialogue and discussion.

My aim is to exploit literature in class, but it is obvious that teachers also have to find the proper moment to improve the students' curiosity and motivate them to read while they expand their vocabulary and their oral expression in the English language. For example, this didactic unit will be developed around Halloween which is the most appropriate time to read horror stories and learn about how Halloween is celebrated in the British culture. I have used short stories instead of an extensive text, so that students can interact with the rest of their classmates and the teacher, expressing their opinions and impressions. If we work with stories in an adequate period, we can help students to improve their communicative and interactive abilities apart of being considered the main protagonist of the learning process. The function of the teacher with this approach is to be considered as an instructor who helps students to express their opinions and solve possible doubts related to grammar, vocabulary and culture. He should also be seen integrated within the whole class and not only seen as an evaluator. Thanks to the investigation that I have carried out about the

benefits of using literature, I have discovered new methods and activities which increase students' motivation. Besides, I will use them in my future to promote the learning through the use of literary texts in English in the classroom.

Graded readers allow us to exploit a literary text in many ways. It is true that a graded reader loses the essence of the original work for different reasons, either by selecting different relevant fragments or by adapting the grammatical structures and the lexicon to a specific level, however the use of adapted graded readers is a very useful tool in order to develop and practice the different oral, listening, interactive and written skills. Besides, they help us to study literary texts and understand the social, cultural and historical aspects of this work which allow students to learn the most important characteristics of the country whose language they are learning..

When I was elaborating the didactic unit, I observed that, although I had doubts about how to carry it out, I found many interesting and useful resources and activities to introduce literature in the classroom.

This unit is composed of activities which help us to develop a learning capacity and a proficiency level of the language. In my opinion, these become more useful than standard textbooks. One of the objectives of this unit is to foster critical thinking through reading. This objective may be achieved by discussing and interacting with others who have different opinions and beliefs. From my perspective, reading is the perfect tool for improving basic skills but also, psychological and social ones.

To conclude, literature offers the opportunity to establish a connection with the reader's emotions. Moreover, if we use activities related to literature which help students to reinforce and encourage their interactive and communicative skills, they will be accustomed to use the English language in classroom apart of increasing the interest of students through reading realising that they are learning a language.

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