



*Universidad de Jaén*

Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación

## Trabajo Fin de Grado

# Graded stories in EFL classrooms for language skills development

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## RESUMEN

El presente documento versa sobre el uso de la literatura infantil en el aula de lengua extranjera, focalizando su atención en niños de Educación Primaria. Trata las diferencias entre esta y la literatura juvenil; y la importancia de leer literatura en la formación de los estudiantes, tanto profesional como personalmente.

Además, se centra en las historias graduadas en las clases de inglés como lengua extranjera para el desarrollo de habilidades del lenguaje, algo que es beneficioso para el aprendizaje integral de los estudiantes y la estimulación del hábito lector.

Para ello, he desarrollado una unidad didáctica para niños de Educación Primaria. Los objetivos se trabajan con una metodología donde el profesor es una guía y los estudiantes aprenden descubriendo. Por lo tanto, es relevante propiciar un ambiente adecuado.

**Palabras clave:** literatura, literatura infantil y juvenil, inglés como lengua extranjera, historias graduadas, lecturas literarias, hábito lector.

## ABSTRACT

The current document aims to explore Children's Literature, while focusing on Primary Education students. It exposes the differences between the latter compared to Young Adult's Literature along with the importance of reading literature for students' education, personal growth and future professional development.

Moreover, this project focuses on graded readers, adapted stories in English as a Foreign Language, in order to enhance language skills. This is extremely beneficial for the learning process of all students, as well as for encouraging reading habits from a young age.

For that purpose, I have developed a didactic unit for Primary School children. The objectives are achieved through following a methodology, in which the teacher plays a guiding role and the students learn by experimenting and discovering. Therefore, it is relevant to promote an appropriate environment.

**Key words:** Literature, Children's literature, young adults' literature, English as a Foreign Language, Graded stories, Reading literature.

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## I. Introduction

There are essential skills in life everybody should develop, both at the professional and personal level, and one of them is reading. Reading helps us manage many aspects of our daily life. This goes from gathering information about what is happening in the world, to buying something using the internet or even to taking a bus, etc.

First of all, I would like to illustrate, briefly, the formation process of the audience this work is targeting:

The United Nations defines a child as *every individual under 16, an age that also varies with the legislation of every country*. At the same time, international legislation states that children are subjects who must be provided with protection and care from adults in every aspects of their daily life. In addition, they are entitled to essential rights such as family, education, home, food and health.

- The definition of a child is that of a human being that has not reached puberty, meaning that they will remain in the childhood phase until they reach 12-14 years of age.
- This aforementioned phase, in terms of education, usually includes the acquisition of some knowledge and tools that will be crucial for their formation as an adult.
- In their very first years, the child will learn their mother tongue. Only after that, they will be able to learn how to read and write in their native language.
- What follows, would be learning the first values and concepts from their nuclear family. Soon after that, their education will be complemented with the school, where they will expand their knowledge and develop the essential skills to shape their future.

Bearing that in mind, society tends to adapt the world to children's needs and circumstances. There are many adaptations, such as food, TV series, pediatricians, etc. Nevertheless, in this work, I would like to address the education system, as it is within my field of expertise.

To define children's literature, we should start with the definition of literature:

- Literature is defined by the RASL (Royal Academy of Spanish Language) as the *combination of literary productions of a nation, period or genre*.

I would like to associate the concepts of children and reading literature, as this is a main tool for the former. In general children are:

- Innocent
- Tender
- Vigorous
- Imaginative

They usually enjoy short stories, either written or told. In the case of the written literature, some of the aspects we must bear in mind while creating a text for them to read:

- Make it simple and direct
- Use straightforward vocabulary
- Add animations or pictures
- Write in big fonts
- Defined characters (the good, the bad, the tall...)

The importance of the above-mentioned characteristics comes from the fact that children at young age cannot retain huge pieces of information, not to mention that they can get easily bored if they lose track of the storyline.

- Young adults' literature is a corpus written for teenage readers. Because of the different interests and needs they have in comparison to adult readers. The topics often presented are those physical, mental and psychological, which are connected with their development during the adolescent path towards adulthood.

- Works of children's literature can be defined as those books that are read by or to children, due to their appropriateness, taking into account their needs, interests and capabilities. This literature is characterized by the use of didactic elements with educational or moral lessons, fantasy topics, among others, in accordance to their level. For a long time, these were considered at the bottom of the scale of literature, practically invisible due to the public they focused on (immature readers that are not yet sufficiently grown). People did not use to look at the importance of this period of development. They used to avoid their needs, interests and complexity.

The main **differences** of these two types of literature are:

- The topics that are used. Young adults' literature is written focused on much more complex topics, according to their interests too; and children's literature adapts to their needs, in order to create or influence good behavior and make them eager to learn.

- Children's literature was often ignored by literature, being practically invisible in the literary world. That never happened with young adults'. We can say that there was an obvious disadvantage, which has set children back to the introduction of lecture.

- Young adults' literature do not require visual support.

- Books for children are meant to be read by and also to children; young adults' books are not.

- An essential key of children's literature is that it has a permanent didactic element, while it transforms the reading into something productive, fun and interesting. By that way, they acquire unconscious knowledge. Adults' literature does not always need this.

- Children's literature tries to reduce the level of difficulty of learning a foreign Language, so they can improve their capacity of concentration while developing and learning new concepts. Young adults' literature has a higher level of difficulty, adapted in order to develop competences that are more complex.

- Children's books may have unconventional shapes to catch their attention and their concentration: we cannot forget they get distracted easily. Adults' books do not need these types of characteristics for adults can focus easily.

## **1. Justification**

Nowadays, languages are very important for our education and formation.

In the current globalized world, the English language is of big help to this with an explosive rising and is a great influence. It has transformed our way of living, making possible a better communication with other cultures around the world. Considered a universal language, it has become the first truly worldwide Lingua Franca, which means that people

with different mother tongue languages use it to communicate among them (non-native speakers, non-locals...).

English has become a universal language. It provides wide access to information and knowledge, and this being one of the reasons why most of the countries have introduced it in school education programs. They are making an effort for their children to reach a good level of English, so they can communicate with it fluently.

In our country, unfortunately, the lack of knowledge in English among the general population is obvious, due to the little importance of it in students' education too. Now, we are trying to improve and to maximize the study of languages, which is why I will abroad Graded stories in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms for language skills development. It addresses two big educative areas: Literature and English.

Nowadays, our society is answering to a multilingual and intercultural reality, where different cultures and languages live together. The domain of foreign languages contributes to the comprehensive development of people, enabling them to respect and access different cultures. This helps us understand and appreciate everything in these cultures. Its acquisition is essential due to the globalization of our society and the mobility of people from diverse countries. To learn English, we have to prepare our students to manage in their real-life. This language means an essential tool for the affective, social and professional development of the students.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| <p>The Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) establishes a common guide for learning languages and for the levels of development (communicative competence in the different languages of the speaker). This guide has always included <b>learning, teaching and evaluation.</b></p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Talking about competences, this topic is very complete due to its multiple benefits. Linguistic competence is the main one here, but we have to talk about conscience and cultural expressions also, due to the linguistic productions as a cultural component. The competence “learn to learn” appears too, reflecting about how to identify the best way of learning using effective strategies.

In addition, social and civic competences are also important because they imply cultural knowledge to communicate. This knowledge serves as a vehicle of cultural transmission, to

understand and assess other cultures and languages. This favors its respect, recognition and acceptance.

Finally, the last competence within this topic is the initiative sense and enterprising spirit, competence, such as the pleasure of reading in order to create reading habits, or making decisions about ideas that appear in stories.

## **2. Objectives**

The main goal of developing graded stories in EFL classrooms is the learning of a new language such as is English, and the enrichment it can bring. I would like to address to the implementation of literary texts in English classrooms in Primary School. We have to know the competences that we have to work in for the students' development in this area, discovering the possibilities of literature and reinforcing its use of a foreign language. That means there are unquestionable benefits of working with it.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| According to the current Educational regulation in Spain (LOMCE), this area has to form people so that they can understand, to speak, to read and to write in an active and practice perspective, starting from their young ages to reach an effective communicative competence, both oral and written. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

This should be implemented in significant social contexts that allow them to express efficiently and correctly. With this acquisition, communication has to be the main guide for the learning process, favoring the development of the communicative competence. Mainly in Primary Education it is very important to consider their previous knowledge and experiences so that we understand and construct meanings, structures and strategies appropriate for them.

The understanding of different communicative situations and the structural knowledge of texts will help them identify and acquire linguistic elements that are much needed in a specific context. Moreover, they will cultivate strategies to learn better, which leads to self-confidence in their own capacities and creativity.

It is evident that this is an important resource to teach and learn the language, besides the own cultural elements that also helps to become familiar with sociocultural environment



and mannerisms unknown for them. As well, the teacher should have great materials and options to work in class.

In particular, reading literature has many more educative purposes than the purely esthetic one because its didactic elements are moral, intellectual, emotional, linguistic and cultural. Students can get closer to their country values, rules and social codes; furthermore, they can work their cultural conscience, which means a great development to know different manifestations in a society that is not their own, with other cultures behaviorism. In that way, they can learn knowledge about the world, which belongs to the intercultural competence.

In addition, reading in English allows understanding more deeply because it includes other big processes, and the text probably produces emotions in the student. This is very important to develop their creativity, imagination and learning strategies that are in continuous growth at this age. They are also beneficial to develop their communication skills.

Finally, it is positive to develop their critic thought, especially in English. As they learn to communicate better, they can express their opinions or reactions and analyze topics and conflicts in the stories through the use of English.

## **II. Theoretical framework**

### **1. Importance of reading literature in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)**

Reading is fundamental for the entire development of the students due to it is the most important and basic mechanism to transmit information. It affects to each posterior learning and it is required for the everyday life. There are essential things in life that adults do, and children must learn it to prepare for their future, so we need to let them know that relevance.

OECD/PISA (2006) Project defines reading as *“the capacity not only to understand a written text, but to think about it from personal reasoning and self-experiences”* (OECD/PISA, 2006).

We also should consider two types of reading that students have to read. These are:

- **General understanding**, which means the whole text as itself. It helps with the prediction and, extraction of information, at the same time students get the main idea of the text.

- **Specific understanding**, that, as its name says, involves detailed comprehension. These involve micro skills such as express opinions, have attitudes, deduce meaning from different contexts and recognize discourse patterns.

Therefore, understanding means not only knowing how to decode a text, but to elaborate an interaction of the meaning with the text, which is related with the previous knowledge of the student. That means understanding.

Here are some **techniques to develop and to secure reading comprehension skills**:

- Making predictions when reading only the title, pictures or places in the text.
- Finding the main idea: it is the basic and easiest process; in order to draw a picture in relation with the meaning of the text.
- Making an essay or summary with the main idea (/s) of the text.
- Looking for synonyms and antonyms in the text.
- Creating and answering questions about the text.

The way comprehension develops is conditioned by:

- The students' vocabulary
- Their abilities to reach the meaning of the words that is their domain of the language
- Literary and cultural baggage carried
- Personal experiences
- Their functionality to obtain new information
- Their ability to understand the message's interpretation
- Their written ability, which is essential to join reading and writing, that must be learnt it supplementary and parallel.

Due to the importance of reading skills for the complete development (in school and living success), all the teachers must worry about it in our respective areas and in each level of Primary Education. Its formation transcends not only from Spanish language and Literature's area, but also from all the others, as well from families and sociocultural context. It has to be a common goal worked in every area.

We have to think they are interested in learning, and therefore, they want to know and discover. Our work is to transmit the literature's pleasure to students. That is why it is important to involucre with them to increase reading in a funny and motivate way. If we create this reading habit, which is a fundamental autonomy goal in the Teaching-Learning process, we will let have the opportunity to choose whatever they want to be in the future and they can develop their imagination and creativity too.

Now I would like to focus on the importance of reading in English:

*“The term English as a Foreign Language (EFL) was created in 19<sup>th</sup> century. It highlights the importance of learning about the culture and society of native speakers; supporting a methodology based on an effective learning, simulating their cultural and social behavior” (Weber, 1999).*

Its relevance is also due to reading stories help children to understand the world where they live in. Language skills, which are reading, listening, writing and speaking, are essentials to learn a language and to be able to communicate with it. It is present in many daily-life situations, such as, listening to a story where they have to find a meaning and they pay attention to it; so they have to acquire the ability to understand this foreign language. In that way, they can prove their effort and motivate in order to improve listening comprehension ability.

In addition to all the benefits explained previously, it helps the students enriching their vocabulary, which leads to a better oral and written expressions. That means an improvement in public speaking, which is especially important when we are speaking about a foreign language that is not your mother tongue one.

In sociocultural features, students increase their knowledges that learning about its cultural and social behavior in a different context that is not theirs. They can discover new interests, which helps to find pleasure in different types of literature. It goes along with the creation of a reading habit, which is so important and essential during all the educative process to make it valid for their diary life.

In conclusion, the knowledge of another language, in that case English, is one of the most valuable tools for literature due to its linguistic formation and communication.

## **2. Children's literature**

During this section, I would like to address the advantages of using literature in children's classrooms. There is no doubt about its use in Foreign Language classrooms, but we as teachers should consider the proper learning:

Literary texts are authentic sources of input, which means learning contribution for the student.

It is important also the features of characters for their motivation and interest, even they can feel identified, connected with or that literature also can projects children's imagination.

There are many possible activities to exploit children's literature in the classroom. They can create their own endings, change the roles of characters, draw pictures representing the story, etc. For oral and writing skill's improvement, they can rewrite the story or create a new one.

By that way, literature helps to create better readers, making them get interested in the world, not only their nearest environment, and developing their creation/imagination.

The didactic aspect of each book helps to learn about respecting different cultures or to understand foreign cultures, so they can develop an open-minded.

Also, with that, they learn unconsciously new vocabulary. At last, literature has to stimulate the student to discover more, in order to enjoy and like the reading, so motivation can be reinforced and the interest in improving too. Reading literature benefits the pupils in multicultural perspectives and communicative functions.

In addition, there are great varieties of contexts (e.g. Fiction/fantasy situations) that cannot be reproduced in reality. We, as teachers, have to vary the degree of difficulty of their readings depending on their maturity, knowledge or level of linguistic process. Each student's development is not the same because of their varied exposure to different situational language.

Moreover, it foments the FL's acquisition due to the use of extending readings helps to internalize the language by reinforcing known contents and linguistic concepts using different situations.

### 3. Children books' contents in FL classrooms

The introduction of literary texts in FL classrooms has three main contents:

- **Conceptual**, which has varied contexts where lexical and syntactical items can be better transmitted, such as different styles, register and text-types.
- **Procedural**, where the interaction among pupils takes place by expressing their opinions and interpretations.
- **Attitudinal** content is worked when they appreciate the text itself, making value judgements.

Topics of children books are adapted to their needs, interests and with features that improve their appropriate learning. Depending on the age and level of maturity, their interests and motivations probably will be different, but here we have different usual sub-genres:

#### a) **Fairytales:**

It is one of the most important and common in children's literature. Its contents are usually fantastic and fictional by using wishes and fears in order to keep their attention.

Fairytales match with them because of particular children's innocence, which heads to believe everything can be possible, due to at this age, they are very easy to drive or to form, that means they will learn all about the story, with its peculiar magic and hope.

In addition, characters tend to be clearly defined and unreal, being elves, trolls, giants, dragons, demons, witches, which always have the evil role; and, on the opposite, princes and princesses, kings and beautiful characters have the good one. It is necessary for them to have very defined features, because they are still in grown, so it is difficult for them to distinguish personalities that are more abstract.

Many of these stories have carried to international cinema, as Walt Disney productions. These are the best bedtime stories for them until the age of nine or ten, because after they start maturing the fear.

#### b) **Fables:**

These are short narrated allegorical episodes. Here, animals and creatures speak and act as human beings. They are enchanted and the protagonists, where there is no relevance to human beings' role.

Some known examples are *The Three Little Pigs*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Winnie the Pooh* and most Disney productions. Animals do not wish to be animals but human beings, and they are characterized by being kind, patient, civilized and friendly. It is commonly used for entertaining, where are implicit didactic elements or psychological processes (e.g. Moral lessons). Morals are made of universal truths.

Fables are a good resource to use in EFL classrooms for children because these stories are enjoyable and they find very funny the animals as protagonists, who also can speak.

Moreover, as fables are very popular, they will probably know it in their own language, so it is easier to follow, and there is a big quantity of activities to do.

### c) **Classical children's narrative**

It usually relates adventure stories with predictable endings, which helps to understand and it is known by most of the children.

Classical stories follow a defined structure, starting by:

- |    |                                                                                                            |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Introduction: "Once upon a time, there was/were..." and the presentation of characters and context.        |
| 2. | Development of the story.                                                                                  |
| 3. | The conflict takes place, reaching the climax of the story.                                                |
| 4. | Ending concludes with the solution of the problem. It usually finishes by "they lived happily ever after". |

As it always has a **clear structure**, it is easier for them to understand every part of the story. This is a good resource to use in EFL classrooms.

We also have to consider the importance of intonation, which can be another key element in its presentation as well as to anticipate them to events.

These are the most popular books, where lots of authors have become famous due to its works. Some known are *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carroll, *Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter, *The Selfish Giant* and *The Canterville Ghost* by Oscar Wilde, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, *Harry Potter* series by J. K. Rowling, etc.

#### **d) Poetry**

It is good for them to practice oral skill. Common features are sonority, musicality, memorability, associations and comparison, and striking connections.

- In oral poetry is very important reader's role due to this person has the responsible to teach the child oral poems, either when the student is still in a pre-reading phase or in a reading phase.

- Written poetry usually is made in an attractive way in order to encourage their reading skills and to appreciate literature.

#### **e) Songs**

It makes emphasis on the musical part of poetry. Its popularity in society makes especially appropriate to include literary elements, besides to the listening comprehension.

There are popular songs, Christmas carols, etc. that compound a perfect element to do exercises to practice all communicative skills, as listening to songs, singing aloud or read the lyrics taking care of the pronunciation.

**Almost all sub-genres in children's literature have in common permanent didactic elements in order to educate or to influence. It is an entertaining, funny and interesting way of teaching knowledge or contents.**

*"Children's books writers have an extraordinary responsible in transmitting cultural values rather than simply <<telling>> the story. Children's literature has a greater potential psychological influence on its readers than other literary genres. This is especially true in children, who are, after all, merely <<developing readers>> in need of worldly and literary maturity." (Demetriou Eroulla & Mas, 2009)*

English literature has the widest range of books for children (Mark Twain, Arthur C. Doyle, Daniel Defoe, Herman Melville, etc.), and concretely, Children's' literature constitutes an essential element in the development of growing up. That is a key element in psychological success towards maturity, where they unconsciously find it significant and meaningful in life.

#### 4. Graded stories

These stories are defined as written texts oriented to children. Its goal is to learn language skills in their mother tongue language or, in this case, a foreign language.

Graded stories are used with the purpose of a didactic exploitation for them to learn:

- The contents and linguistic difficulty are adapted to the different levels of the children.
- Vocabulary used is limited or simplified, as well as there are restricted grammatical structures and lexical notes.

These texts do not make children confront with authentic texts that would help them to solve real linguistic problems. It is an artificial reading manipulated by didactic purposes.

Authentic texts have the problem of difficulty in understanding, as it usually has a higher level of competence because it is not adapted to specific levels. With this type of texts they can feel overloaded their capacity to assimilate the information and they will not reach to analyze, neither to connect with their previous knowledges.

On the opposite, reading graded stories intend to solve this problem; due to it has an adapted level for learner's competence. It also facilitates extensive reading.

These type of books are characterized by using a specific vocabulary oriented to the level of knowledge of the students. In that way, it is achieved linguistic and cultural competences with grammatical structures known by them in a context they know, by introducing the opportunity to guess the meaning of new unknown words.

As the difficulty in FL is higher due to it is not their mother tongue, the information given is reduced, and narrative techniques are simplified. In order to help them to follow the text, the use of pictures and photos is present.

It provides stimulating learning according to students' needs and it introduces different contexts. There are five levels of Primary Education students, according to publishers working in this field as Penguin, Longman, Heinmann, Oxford, and Cambridge...

“**Level O:** (Easystarts/Starters): 250 headwords (3rd year Primary). Recommended titles: the *Marcel* series by Stephen Rabley, the *Simon* series by Elizabeth Laird, *Alissa* by C. J. Moore, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, by L. Carroll, *Little Women* by L.M. Alcott, *Tales from Arabian Nights*, *Tales* by Perrault.



**Level 1 (Beginners):** 400 headwords (3<sup>rd</sup> year Primary). Some titles: *Sherlock Holmes* by A.C. Doyle, *A Christmas Carol* by C. Dickens, *Gulliver's Travels* by G. Swift, *The Jungle Book* by R. Kipling, *Lord Jim* by J. Conrad.

**Level 2 (Elementary):** 700 headwords. (4<sup>th</sup> year Primary). Some titles: *Tom Sawyer* by M. Twain, *The Canterville Ghost* by O. Wilde, *Robinson Crusoe* by D. Defoe, *David Copperfield* by C. Dickens, *Kidnapped* by R.L. Stevenson, *The Pearl* by J. Steinbeck.

**Level 3 (Pre-intermediate):** 1,000 headwords. (5<sup>th</sup> year Primary). Some titles: *The Wizard of Oz* by L.F. Baum, *King Solomon's Mines* by H.R. Haggard, *Around the World in Eighty Days* by J. Verne, *Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by R.L. Stevenson, *Moby Dick* by H. Melville, *The Last of the Mohicans* by J.F. Cooper.

**Level 4 (Intermediate):** 1,400 headwords. (6<sup>th</sup> year Primary). Some titles: *Huckleberry Finn* by M. Twain, *Tales of Crime and Detection* by various authors, *Treasure Island* by R.L. Stevenson, *Frankenstein* by M. Shelley, *The Woman in White* by W. Collins, *My Family and Other Animals* by G. Durrell, *The Call of the Wild* by J. London" (Casellas, Children's Literature).

In order to select an appropriate graded story, first, we have to consider what we want our students to reach and their potential interests. In addition, it is very important the text as itself. We must have clear the position of pupils; they are not only receptors of information, but also producers, so they should interact with the text, with their classmates and with the teachers. As they produce too, for being more interesting, dynamic and pleasant, they can share opinions related to, experiences, etc. In that way, the reading can be more significant due to real-life situations.

Finally, the appropriateness of innovative and funny methodology can fit perfectly with a didactic exploitation. This should transmit cultural and linguistic knowledge in order to improve communicative skills, as well as being easily adaptable to the level and capability of the each student, which is where graded stories contribute too. It is also important for them to be motivated and interested in the topic, or on the opposite, they will be bored and they will stop paying attention. Reaching the needed elements, students can obtain a significant learning.

There is a clear advantage, which is the simplified language in order to make the reading easier for them and achievable. Graded stories help them to develop by their own the ability to understand the meaning of literary texts without any help. In contrast to authentic books, real native language is not used because it will probably be more difficult for them to understand by themselves. Its gradual use helps the students to find learning strategies.

### III. Didactic Unit

#### 1. Introduction

This unit will take place in an English class in order to improve this language and to learn stories too, concretely fables. I chose to create a fable because it is very entertaining and funny. It can be significant and enriched, due to they usually are interested in these.

Its contextualization is addressed to 3<sup>rd</sup> Primary Education, which pupils are at a beginner level of English.

#### 2. Main objectives

According to the current Educational normative LOMCE, these are some of the **general objectives in Primary Education**, which will lead children's development capacities that permit them:

*“Conocer y apreciar los valores y las normas de convivencia, aprender a obrar de acuerdo con ellas, prepararse para el ejercicio activo de la ciudadanía y respetar los derechos humanos, así como el pluralismo propio de una sociedad democrática”* (Real Decreto 126/2014, de 28 de febrero, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Primaria, 2014).

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Knowing and appreciating values and rules of living together, learning to act according to them, preparing for citizenship active exercise and respecting human rights, as well as the own pluralism of a democratic society. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*“Desarrollar hábitos de trabajo individual y de equipo, de esfuerzo y de responsabilidad en el estudio, así como actitudes de confianza en sí mismo, sentido crítico, iniciativa personal, curiosidad, interés y creatividad en el aprendizaje, y espíritu emprendedor”* (Real Decreto 126/2014, de 28 de febrero, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Primaria, 2014).

Developing individual and teamwork habits, effort and responsibility habits in the study, as well as self-confidence attitudes, critical sense, personal initiative, curiosity, interest and creativity in the learning, and enterprising spirit.

*“Adquirir en, al menos, una lengua extranjera la competencia comunicativa básica que les permita expresar y comprender mensajes sencillos y desenvolverse en situaciones cotidianas”* (Real Decreto 126/2014, de 28 de febrero, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Primaria, 2014).

Acquiring in, at least, one foreign language the basic communicative competence that permit them to express and to understand simple messages and to get on in quotidian situations.

I will develop these objectives through others more specific, which are the following:

- Knowing fables and their morals.
- Learning fairytale's structure, focusing in their different parts.
- Developing positive attitudes in relationship with others (transversal concept).
- Increasing new vocabulary in English and its verbal fluency.
- Developing own-thinking and respecting other different thoughts.
- Respecting differences among everyone in the society we live with.
- Learning to work individually as well as by groups.
- Discoursing to look for solving conflictive situation.
- Managing in a Foreign Language and encouraging their creativity.
- Expressing emotions and feelings.

### **3. Methodology**

From my point of view, the methodology which fits more for graded stories, and in particular for this unit (fables), is the one where the teacher is a guide in the Teaching-Learning process, who has to help when the pupils feel lost or with difficulties. To reach the objectives that we organized, first we must create a good environment in the class by being comfortable, entertaining as well as didactic and constructive, where the students feel they can

express their thoughts and opinions with no fear about mistakes. Besides, they should always be active and participants in their own learning.

By that way, the learning will be more significant and long lasting, which avoids forgetting easily. It is important to consider it for the comprehension and realization of the activities to achieve proposed objectives. Individual and group activities will alternate between them. The activities employed will be ludic, in order to facilitate everyone's participation and their oral expression. They will develop social habits about respect, tolerance and own-thought. Moreover, they will be reinforcing their self-esteem, surpassing themselves facing challenges or possible difficulties in the learning process.

This methodology is beneficial and very gratifying for pupils.

#### **4. Timing**

This didactic unit about fables is appropriate to work in eight sessions. As there are two English sessions per week, it will be developed in a month, since 29<sup>th</sup> of September to October 27, 2017.

#### **5. Resources**

For the development of this unit we will use mainly two types of resources:

- Human resources: teacher and pupils.
- Material resources: students' tools (paper, pencil, rubber...), internet and the fable created by the teacher (attached in appendix).

## 6. Activities

There are varied exercises that can be worked in class. Its classification has three sections:

1. Pre-reading activities
2. While-reading activities
3. Post-reading activities

### 1. **Pre-reading activities:**

- a) If you read only the title, what do you think the story is about?
- b) Look for information about Mahatma Gandhi
- c) Speak about the structure of a tale.
- d) Tell characters that usually appear in fables.
- e) Vocabulary list to familiarize with the fable (attached in appendix)

### 2. **While-reading activities:**

- a) Read the story
- b) Which differences can you find between traditional tales and this story?
- c) Describe the characters that appear in the story.
- d) What do you think the final will be?
- e) What would you react to Nak.Nak's attack?

### 3. **Post-reading activities:**

- a) Make an alternative ending
- b) Choose a different title
- c) Separate the parts of the fable in the introduction, development, ending and moral.

- d) Draw the fable.
- e) Write new words that you learnt and their translation into Spanish.
- f) Match animals with their features:

|             |                     |
|-------------|---------------------|
| Fly         | Long legs           |
| Giraffe     | Wings               |
| Snake       | Long neck           |
| Grasshopper | Long and green body |

- g) What is your favorite character? Why?
- h) Do you identify with any situation/character of the story?
- i) Explain the moral of the fable.
- j) Perform the fable in groups.
- k) Did you like the fable? Why?
- l) Compare a situation happened in the story with possible real-life situations.
- m) Which part of the story would you change?

## **7. Assesment**

To evaluate if the objectives are reached by the students, I will use a direct observation, oral and/or written activities. Moreover, I will also take into account the participation and cooperation during the class, being positive to have an active participation and cooperation work both the students and the teacher.

In my opinion, there are many ways to evaluate the work of the students, and this, as it is varied in its activities, they will be in continue evaluation, which is positive to check their learning.

## **IV. Conclusion**

To conclude, reading is fundamental for the entire development of the students due to it is the most important and basic mechanism to transmit information. It affects to each posterior learning and is required for the everyday life.

Reading Literature in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) helps children in communicative skills' acquisition, as well as prepare them to manage in their real-life.

Graded stories are oriented and adapted to children's level, due to they are in continuous growth at this age, in addition to the use of didactic elements, which benefit in their education. It is an entertaining, funny and interesting way of teaching knowledge or contents.

Moreover, competences worked in this topic are varied:

Linguistic competence is the main one, dealing with language and literature.

Learning about English native societies and their cultural behavior, values and rules is related with the competence “conscience and cultural expressions”. This is associated with “social and civic competence” in order to understand and communicate in different situations or context in the society where we live together, besides to learning about the world.

It is an important point developing their autonomy and independence to work with this methodology, where the students learn by discover and the teacher has a guide role. In that way, they can cultivate strategies to learn better, as well as developing their self-confidence, creativity and emotions. This encompass the competence “learn to learn”.

Besides, if the methodology is worked successfully, they can find pleasure in reading literature and develop the reading habit, which is addressed to “initiative sense and enterprising spirit” competence. It is so relevant to acquire from a young age, which can be crucial for their future.

The main goal of working Graded Stories in EFL classrooms is learning a new language such as English, which is a universal worldwide language. Reading literature in EFL enables children to have from their young ages an effective communicative competence. As well as the enrichment of student’s vocabulary leads to a better oral and written expression.

Also, it is positive to develop their critic thought. As they learn to communicate better, they can express their opinions or reactions and analyze topics and conflicts in the stories through the use of English.

The term EFL highlights the importance of learning about the culture and society of native speakers and supports a methodology based on an effective learning, stimulating their cultural and social behavior.

Lastly, it helps them to learn as students but also to produce, working on their communicative skills in order to share opinions about the stories, which means a significant learning due to real-life situations. These are some key elements in psychological success towards maturity, unconsciously significant and meaningful in life.



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## VI. Appendix

### Appendix 1

## ***Vocabulary***

### **Verbs**

To realize: darse cuenta

To bite: morder

To get ill: enfermar

To recover: recuperarse

To fall down: caerse

To reach: alcanzar

To disturb: molestar

To hurt: dañar

To obtain: obtener

To catch: coger

To solve: solucionar

To think: pensar    \* Thought: pasado simple del verbo pensar

### **Body parts**

Mouth: boca

Neck: cuello

Leg: pierna/pata

Wing: ala

### **Connectors**

Once upon a time: había una vez

After a while: después de un rato

Then: entonces, luego

### **Adjectives**

Avaricious: avaro/a

Powerful: poderoso/a

Rude: grosero/a

Jealous: celoso/a o envidioso/a

Angry: enfadado/a

Insecure: inseguro/a

Fearful: miedoso/a

Damaged: dañado/a

Poison: envenenado/a

Alone: solo/a

Blind: ciego/a

### **Others**

Wounds: heridas

Kingdom: reino

Inhabitants: habitantes

Statue: estatua

Fighting: lucha

Battle: batalla

Disagreement: Desacuerdo

Both: ambos/los dos

Whole: entero/a

Anymore: ya no

## **Appendix 2**

### ***A poison fighting in Wildland***

“Once upon a time, there was a kingdom called Wildland, where its population was all composed of animals. The king Nak-Nak, a snake with long and green body, was very avaricious and powerful, and he wanted to have everything and to control everyone in the place. All the inhabitants were good friends, but the king, who was rude with all of them. He felt jealous of the other animals because he was the only one with no legs.

One day, three friends were walking through the forest of Wildland: Marguerite, a yellow and beautiful giraffe, Emma, a little and flying fly, and Tico, a funny and lively grasshopper. Suddenly, the fly Emma realized that someone was following them. It was the king Nak-Nak, he was planning to bite them. They tried to escape quickly from him, but the giraffe Marguerite fell down and Nak-Nak caught her. The snake bit her with his poison mouth in her long neck and soon the giraffe got ill. Their friends stopped because of Marguerite and the snake took advantage of their weakness to bite them too. The next one was the grasshopper Tico, who tried to escape jumping high, but soon Nak-Nak reached his legs and bit them. He fell down damaged, with no legs to move. Emma, who was very angry about her friends, started to fly around the snake telling him to stop it. After a while, Nak-Nak ate Emma, so she wouldn't disturb him anymore.

When Marguerite and Tico recovered, they discovered that the king Nak-Nak killed their friend Emma, so they decided to meet all the animals in the Wildland and both tell them what happened. Everyone felt insecure and fearful. After a long discussion, they thought the easiest way to finish it was to fight against the king, running the risk of them being hurt too.

Then, all the animals together went to Nak-Nak's house and they started to attack him. As the snake was very intelligent, he was not alone. His family was there to help him. Everyone was fighting and hurting each other, no one thought that was bad for both teams.

At the end, when everyone recovered from the wounds of the battle, they realized that it wasn't an effective solution. They spoke about the happen and they decided to live in peace. Finally, they built a statue in Emma's honor, where they wrote, and “An eye for an eye and soon the whole world is blind”. And with that, they learnt that if you use violence to fight for peace, you will not obtain what you want and everyone will be damaged. To talk is always the best idea for solving disagreements.”