**Instituto de Literatura y Ciencias del Lenguaje**

**Facultad de Filosofía y Educación**

**Not too young to write!**

**Building up cooperative writing skills through stories**

*An elective workshop for fourth graders*

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

para optar al título de Profesor de Inglés y al grado de Licenciado en Educación

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Camila Nicole Araya Delgado

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**Abstract**

This graduation project proposes cooperative writing in the L2 classrooms as an essential source for developing fourth graders students' writing skills through the creation of a story and a mini book. Working cooperatively is a highly beneficial opportunity for students as it enhances the development of interpersonal skills. Moreover, in the case of children, cooperative work directly tackles their social nature, and fosters their desire to know the people around them and the world they live in. Additionally, writing stories is an excellent way in which they can exploit their endless creativity. This pedagogical proposal is a support for some of the objectives related to writing skills of the Chilean optional English curriculum for fourth graders, which aim at promoting this productive skill. The topic of the workshop is food, and it was selected by fourth graders themselves on a survey carried out in the students' mother tongue, and the activities combine the theoretical framework of this project.

**Key words:** young learners, cooperative writing, stories, creativity.

**Introduction**

It is never too young to write. Traditionally, writing has been associated to be a product-centered skill in which the outcome is more important than the process. In addition, it has been associated to be highly cognitive and individual. This situation is different from the other productive skill, speaking, where students are encouraged to work together to promote the development of interpersonal skills. But, does the cognitive and individual characteristic of writing tackle the nature of children?

Children are social learners in a "world full of other people" (Cameron 2001, p.6). By having the chance of learning with other children, they have the opportunity of being helped and guided, developing social skills and improving cognitive abilities. Therefore, as children's nature is social, they should have instances in the language classroom that foster these two abilities. One way to help L2 young learners develop their social and cognitive skills is through cooperative writing.

Cameron (2001) defines writing as a literacy skill and indicates that it is essential to have in mind the idea of "writing as language used for expressing and sharing meanings between people" (p. 123). She also notes that approaches that involve activities related to their context and from different levels such as words, sentences, and text provide a great opportunity for young learners (p.139). Additionally, Pinter (2006 p. 74) states that

> writing is a complex skill progressing from the level of copying familiar words and phrases to developing an awareness of text structures, genres, the process of drafting and editing, and writing for an audience.

In this work, cooperative writing comes from the tenets of Cooperative Language Learning (CLL). This learning approach encourages students to think in positive interdependence, which means that they work together in order to achieve common goals rather than working individually and competing with each other (Larsen-Freeman 2000, p.167). An element that makes cooperative learning distinctive is that students have the unique chance of learning from each other, which promotes the development of interpersonal skills in the language classroom.

Certainly, cooperative work offers a wide variety of benefits for L2 young learners. From this perspective, having students writing stories cooperatively is a highly recommended approach. For one thing, by working in groups students can have the possibility of sharing the common world they live in and appreciate others' perspectives. For another, by creating stories, children can naturally turn their imagination on (Sharp 2004, p.6). Besides, children are able to build knowledge based on their experiences, which allows them to heighten curiosity by becoming more active observers, expand their awareness of the class environment, and shine in their classmates' eyes by creating amazing pieces of writing when the objective is to promote their "experiences and values" instead of error correcting (p. 221).

Cameron (2001) states that "stories are designed to be participated in" (p. 160) and "offer a whole imaginary world, created by language, that children can enter and enjoy, learning language as they go" (p. 159). In addition, Temple & Gillet (1996) point out that by writing stories, children are able to express ideas they have in mind. By giving the students the possibility of writing their own stories, they can use their endless creativity and make up every single aspect such as the characters and plot. More importantly, when children work in groups, they take into account and complement what other classmates think. This instance provide them with new and different ideas of what surrounds them.

The focus of the Chilean optional English curriculum for fourth graders is on listening and speaking skills development, which sets aside both reading and writing. Besides, the objectives of writing skill are focused on writing as a mere structured process made up of a numbers of steps students need to follow in order to have a product. Certainly, MINEDUC Curricular Bases for English as a Foreign Language does not really consider cooperative writing as an important part of the process; on the contrary, they just assume that students will move from step one to the following, even if this means working alone. As it was previously stated, L2 young learners benefit from working cooperatively as they are constantly making sense of the world surrounding them, so the focus of this curriculum affects children's desire for writing, or even thinking about writing something.

This graduation project aims at helping L2 young learners build up their writing skill through cooperative group work and stories. The project addresses a group of 20

fourth grade students from a semi-private, all-boy school. The proposal is aligned to some of the objectives from the MINEDUC program for written expression, "identify vocabulary from topics such as food, clothing, climate, etc. to express ideas and preferences," (MINEDUC 2012, p.23) and  "write short narrative texts going from words, to sentences, and to paragraph," (p.23) and the learning standards in Mapas de Progreso for English that state that students should be able to write sentences and short texts. It is structured into two main sections: literature review and pedagogical proposal. In the first section, literature review, I thoroughly discuss two developmental stages of young learners, cognitive and social; cooperative learning and its relevance in the language classroom and; stories as creativity and group work booster. In the second section, pedagogical proposal, I describe the elective workshop and units, I present the general objective, and the five sample lessons that combine the key elements of this project: young learners, cooperative work, stories, and creativity.

**Literature review**

This literature review presents four main sections: (1) How children learn, based on Piaget and Vygotsky's learning theories; (2) Cooperative learning and its relevance; (3) Writing in a foreign language; and (4) Cooperative writing with children. In each section, the topics are thoroughly discussed.

**Children and L2 learning**

Children have a natural ability to learn languages. Curtain and Dahlberg (2004, p.1) state that they seem to have an "effortless L2 acquisition." For that reason, they need to be constantly exposed to the target language that is comprehensible. At first, they just hear and understand. Later on, they get ready to use it to express themselves.

Additionally, Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) suggest that grammar should not be the focus of the L2 lessons. That is, teachers do not have to wait until students master, for instance, simple present and then they work on simple past. Instead, communication has to be as natural as possible, and the learners should have the possibility of negotiating the meaning through interaction so that they realize that they have "influence on the message being communicated." (p.3)

**Children developmental stages**

This graduation project incorporates two theories that describe children developmental stages. One of them is from a cognitive perspective and the other from a social perspective. The former involves the development, and therefore, changes in children's mind since they are born until they are grown up. The major representative of it is Piaget, who carried out a vast numbers of experiments based on real-life situations where he could prove his ideas and knowledge about a child's mind development. The latter, which is based on research carried out by Vygotsky, focuses on the environment a child belongs to, and the way it greatly fosters the learning process by making it less individual.

### *Piaget*

The child as active learner

The way children interact with the world that surrounds them and how it affects their mental development was Piaget's main concern. He postulates that there are two ways in which cognitive development occurs: assimilation and accommodation. (p. 3) Assimilation happens when they transform the environment as a way of making sense of it –children relate what they perceive with their previous schemata. Accommodation, on the contrary, involves an adjustment of the children's schema to the characteristics of what surrounds them. It is this second way that has a major impact on children's learning because the adjustment reorganizes their "mental representations of the language"(Mclaughlin 1992, cited by Cameron 2001).

Piaget suggests that there are four stages of cognitive development: (1) sensory-motor, from birth to two years old; (2) preoperational stage, from two to seven years old; (3) concrete operational stage, from seven to eleven years old and; (4) formal operation, from eleven to sixteen. Since this project is focused on fourth grade students, the stage that best fits is the concrete operational. In this phase, children start thinking logically -but only physical objects- and are able to perform mental operations, or "actions." Moreover, they "become more social and less egocentric" (p.13), meaning that they start sharing and enjoying with other children.

### *Vygotsky*

Social learning

In contrast to Piaget, Lev Vygotsky (1962, cited by Cameron 2001) highlights the importance of social interactions among young learners since children are "active learners in a world full of other people" (p.6). He formulated the principle of *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD), where "students' intelligence is measured in terms of what students can do working with skilled help" (p.6). This idea of ZPD distinguishes the "zone of

current knowledge of the child and the potential knowledge achievable with some help from a more knowledgeable peer or adult" (p.11).

Pinter (2006) points out that one of the "major sources of learning and development" with children is the social environment, including the cultural context, influence of peers, teachers and parents (p.10). This supports the idea from Vygotsky that children are social learners who are actively in contact with people and will always be. Besides, by using their imagination, children are able to do a lot more working cooperatively rather than working on their own (Vygotsky 1978, p.88).

**Cooperative learning**

A key tenet of cooperative learning for learners is to "accomplish shared goals" (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubee, 1994. p.1:3). Therefore, students are expected to work together to pursue the same outcome as a whole. From this perspective, cooperative learning is different from both the competitive method, where students work against other classmates in order to achieve personal goals, and individualistic method, in which students work on their own to achieve "unrelated" learning goals.

Working cooperatively has many advantages when used in the language classroom. To start with, Johnson, Johnson, & Holubee (1994) suggest that it creates "higher achievement and productivity by all students" (p. 1:3) as they work together on a shared goal. Likewise, it generates positive, supportive relationships and a sense of belonging for students share and care about the group. Additionally, it fosters social development among students, improving their self-esteem, and giving them tools to tackle possible stressful situations.

There are three types of cooperative learning group work: formal, informal and base. The first one can last from one class period to a few weeks, and it assures that students actively take part on what they are doing (p.1:4). The second one, informal, lasts from a few minutes to one class period, and aims at getting students' attention to work with the material they are about to learn and encourage its cognitive processing. The third, base, one lasts at least one year and learners help each other and are able to create long-term relationships (p.1:4).

Certainly, making sure that students are actually working cooperatively can be difficult. For that reason, Johnson, Johnson, & Holubee identify five elements for successful cooperative work: interdependence, accountability, face-to-face interaction, social skill, and group processing:

- Interdependence: encourages teachers to give clear instructions and assign a group goal so that students understand they all "sink together" (p.1:9). In other words, it allows students to realize that they are tied up as a group; they function all together and no one feels left out –if one fails, everybody fails. Therefore, this first element enhances commitment and sense of belonging among students.
- Accountability: involves that students have defined goals as a group, and "each member must be accountable for contributing" (p.1:10).
- Face-to-face interaction: proposes that students boost each other's success by "helping, encouraging and praising each other's efforts to learn."
- Social skill: involves students working simultaneously on a task and their interpersonal skills. What it is important here is that teachers "provide effective leadership, decision-making, communication and conflict-management" (p.1:10).
- Group processing: encourages students to monitor their performance and decide the actions that are "helpful or unhelpful" (p.1:11) so that they can maintain or change them.

**Cooperative learning in Chile**

Outside the classroom, there is one concrete example of cooperative learning in Chile. This is the "Cooperative Learning Center," created and designed by Psychologist Ricardo Musalem, who was trained at "The Cooperative Learning Center" in Minneapolis, United States. The purpose of this center is to help students who cannot stay at their schools due to emotional, academic or special needs by working with other students bearing the same situation. So, the cooperative learning method makes them share with others and gives them support. Nevertheless, there are no examples of cooperative learning inside the classroom in Chilean schools, where the most important interactions among students occur.

**Writing in a foreign language**

**Teaching writing to young learners**

One of the essential characteristics of young learners (YL) is that they eagerly try to make sense of the world that surrounds them. For example, they try to find a meaning for something that adults ask them to do (Cameron, p.21). However, this meaning they try to make sense of is partial and limited. In fact, it depends a lot on the exposure to the target language they have.

As a way of fostering productive skills, Cameron (2001) remarks the importance of making literacy learning a multi-sensory experience for children. This implies that L2 young learners have to link "what they see (printed text), what they hear (spoken language), and what they produce, or written words (p.142). By relating these aspects, their mental connections are strengthened, and the content is more meaningful for them.

In terms of written activities, Cameron suggests that tasks should be "unified and coherent for learners," (p.31) in other words, outcomes and actions are tied up as a whole. The author presents five key features that tasks for L2 young learners have to follow: (1) be coherent for learners, (2) have a meaning and purpose, (3) identify specific language learning goals, (4) have a beginning and an end, (5) include learners as active participants. Additionally, language level depends on the speaking level they feel comfortable with, "their background, and ability to read in their first language" (Pinter, 2006 p. 65).

Writing itself is a complex skill that starts with the copying familiar words and phrases to develop an awareness of what is being written. As it was previously stated, depending on their background and writing system in their first language, L2 young learners need more or less time to practice the basics of writing. What it is useful is that they start with copying words they already know, and then progress to more difficult activities.

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**Creativity**

Creativity is defined by *Cambridge Online Dictionaries* as the ability to produce original and unusual ideas, or to make something new or imaginative. Besides, DeBord (1997) explains that creativity is a way of expressing ourselves, being imaginative and original. It is characterized by thinking imaginatively to achieve a goal, creating original ideas, and providing enjoyment to the creators or other participants. Since students have different ideas of the world, creativity is focused on the process rather than on the product. In this process, learners know more about themselves, gain confidence, develop social skills with the ones they are working with, and find their hidden talents which increases their motivation and "positive emotion." In the case of children, it is also essential to remember that what really matters is not the product but the creative process.

**Fostering creativity in children**

By being part of creative activities, children are exposed to a variety of positive experiences and benefits. Some of them are: get to know other visions of the world they know; work cooperatively and develop good relationships -provided that the process is in groups or teams; develop communicative skills; concentrate on what is being done, develop self-control, expressing real emotions, and; take part of something for pleasure rather than for external pressure.

In the language classroom, teachers can encourage creativity by letting the students to make their own decisions. By doing this, children show more interest in doing something since they are more the creators rather than the followers of an instruction. Nevertheless, some aspects than can negatively influence creativity and prevent students from performing at their best, for instance, using rewards, announcing the evaluative nature of the activity, and surveillance from others. (DeBord, 1997) For that reason, DeBord presents art as a way of working on creativity in the language classroom. Art is an approach that is developed before activities like thinking; therefore, it is less complicated for children to work with it. The author highlights the importance of considering the children's developmental stage, which in the case of this graduation project is the *realistic stage*. Here, young learners are influenced by peers, include more details to their works, and want to do things right. (p.3)

Considering that creativity is focused on the process, and cooperative learning on group working, stories are the best way of mixing them.

**Writing stories**

Cameron (2001) claims that simple stories are a great source for children that are learning the L2 as they "offer a whole imaginary world , created by language, that children can enter and enjoy, learning language as they go." (p.159) Temple & Gillet (1996) state that "stories come most directly from the imagination" (p.252) and pay special attention to real life events children face. Furthermore, the "organizing feature of stories" (p.161) are two important aspects to take into account: the central theme changes as the story progresses and all the possible difficulties are overcome.  In relation to this point, Temple & Gillet suggest that it is crucial to pay attention to the story's plot since they have to "go somewhere… and make sense." (p.255) Throughout the story, the plot has a beginning, where the setting and main problem are introduced; middle, where the characters try to solve this situation and; end, in which the problem is completely solved.

Also, Cameron (p.161) presents some features that a story should have, such as an opening with formulaic expressions, for instance, "once upon a time;" introduction of characters; description of the setting; introduction of a problem; and events that lead to the resolution of the problem and a closing –often "they all lived happily ever after."

**Task-Based Syllabus**

The syllabus designed for this pedagogical proposal is a task-based syllabus. This type of syllabus targets learning as a process rather than a mere product (Nunan, 2004). Moreover, in this syllabus, a task is recognized as goal-oriented, where the target language is the means that the learners use to reach a communicative outcome (Willis, 1996). When lessons are based on this type of syllabus, there is a sequence of interrelated tasks, that is, tasks are connected and serve as a preparation for the following activity (Ellis, 2003).

There are mainly three parts considered in each lesson of this syllabus:

1) Pre-task: in this instance, both the topic and the task are introduced to learners.

2) Task Cycle: a part in which students use and practice the language to carry out the task.

3) Post-task: in this last instance, students are encouraged to use the language learned in task cycle and try to produce the expected outcomes.

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**Pedagogical proposal**

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**Course name:** Not too young to write! Building up cooperative writing skills through stories

**Instructor:** Camila Araya Delgado

**Type:** elective workshop

**Duration:** 16 lessons 90 minutes each

**Number of students:** 20

**Email:** camila.araya7@gmail.com

**Level:** 4$^{th}$ grade students

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**Workshop description**

This elective workshop gives students the possibility of building up their cooperative writing skills through the creation of a story. Throughout the workshop, students are intended to work in groups on four units structured on word, sentence and paragraph level respectively, and more importantly, stories structure and writing process.

**Rationale**

This workshop aims at developing and boosting the cooperative writing skill of 4$^{th}$ grade students, at a beginner's level, and it lasts three months. The topic consists of a story in which students have to create their own planet based on type of food. This allows students not only to decide on their own plot and scenario, but also to enjoy English while creating and writing their own story.

**Workshop organization**

This workshop is organized into five units:

- The first unit, "Let's have something to eat," comprises different types of food such as pizza, burgers, fruit, and adjectives that allow students to describe the food so that they have a wider perspective and topics to choose when they start creating and writing their story.

- The second unit, "How it goes," covers the writing process the students will need in their stories. This unit presents recipes as a simple and easy way to cover this

process of writing, in which students go from the first step, brainstorming, until the last one, rewriting.

- The third unit, "Word it up," is where students are set up in groups of four, and start working together towards their common goal: the mini book. This unit is based on the word level, and it covers the structure of a story, setting, characters, and plot, using "The Cold Planet" story as a model. Actually, this story is an example used in units 4 and 5 as well. First, students are introduced to this story by watching a video and reading the script. Once they watch the video, they identify the main characteristics of this new planet, the main characters, and the plot, in which there is a problem and a solution presented at the end. Finally, students are able to create their own planet based on the types of food covered in unit 1, and they create the characters for their story.

- The fourth unit, "More than words," is based on the sentence level, and it comprises the description of the planet and characters created by the students in unit 3.

- The fifth and final unit, "The story begins," is based on the paragraph level. Here, students start to write the beginning of their story using two different beginnings as model. In the first example, the story begins by highlighting the problem. In the second example, on the other hand, the story starts by describing the place where all happens. Consequently, students have to write the body of their story, in which they present the problem. Finally, they write the end of the story, which consists on the solution and closure. After that, groups locate the drawings on each page, and make up a name for their mini book.

**Workshop syllabus**

**General Objective**

By the end of the workshop, students will be able to write short narrative paragraphs and to create their own mini book in groups.

| UNIT | SESSIONS | OBJECTIVES |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | | *Students will be able to:* |
| o **Unit 1** *Let's have something to eat* | 3 | • Identify five different types of food in oral and written texts. <br> ✓ pizza, chocolate, cake, burger, fruit, candy, cheese <br> • Distinguish adjectives to describe food <br> ✓ Colors, size, taste <br> • Relate vocabulary with images <br> • Write simple sentences to describe images using vocabulary. <br> • Illustrate food following written instructions. |
| o **Unit 2** *How it goes* | 2 | • Identify the steps of the writing process in a short written text about food: <br> ✓ brainstorming <br> ✓ drafting <br> ✓ editing <br> ✓ rewriting <br> • Identify a simple recipe of a type of food. <br> • Create a simple recipe about a type of food of choice. |
| o **Unit 3** *Word it up!* | 3 | • Identify the structure of a story: <br> ✓ setting <br> ✓ Characters <br> ✓ Plot <br> • Illustrate and create a planet based on a type of food. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | • Illustrate and describe the characters of a story. |
| ○ **Unit 4**<br><br>*More than*<br><br>*words* | 3 | • Describe a new planet's characteristics.<br><br>• Describe the story's characters.<br><br>• Illustrate their story's characters. |
| ○ **Unit 5**<br><br>*The story*<br><br>*begins* | 5 | • Distinguish two ways of starting a story.<br><br>• Write a draft for the introduction of their story<br><br>• Revise and rewrite the beginning of their story.<br><br>• Write the development of the story.<br><br>• Write a conclusion paragraph with the end of their story.<br><br>• Locate the drawings in each page according to the paragraphs.<br><br>• Create a name for the mini book. |

**Material**

**-** Flashcards

**-** Video from BBC Learning English Kids "The Cold Planet"

**Assessment**

The assessment for this course is based on the following criteria:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Portfolio** | Students will keep record of the worksheets developed in the lessons. | **30%** |
| **Class participation** | Students need to be engaged in all the activities done in the workshop | **20%** |
| **Mini book** | At the end of the workshop, students are expected to hand in the mini book they worked on during unit 4 | **50%** |

# Sample Lessons

The following sample lessons belong to unit 1, 3, 4 and 5. In unit 1, students work on vocabulary about different types of food and some adjectives that describe them. In unit 3 and 4, students work on brainstorming and drafting about their own story, creating and describing their planet and characters. Finally, in unit 5, students write the beginning of the story based on their planet, plot, and characters.

**BEFORE YOU START!**

Let me introduce some friends to you:
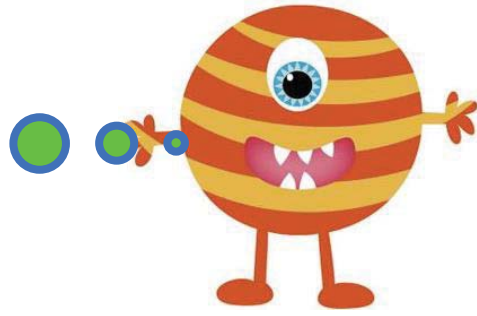
Hi, I am Kelsey. I am always at the beginning of an activity.

Hi, I am Tom. I usually indicate individual work.

Hi, I am Lisa. This pose means it is time to speak.

This pose means it is time to listen.

This pose means it is time to write.

Hi, I am Jean. This pose means it is time to create.
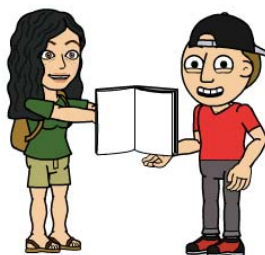
This means you have to compare your work with a classmate.

When we are together, it means group work.

**Unit 1**

*Let's have something to eat!*

# Step-by-step
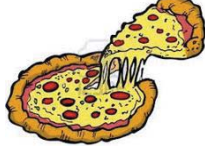
**Objective**
In this lesson, you will identify and classify different types of food.

Recycling vocabulary

*lesson 1*

➡️

| burger  pizza  cheese  tomato  lettuce |
| :--- |
| chocolate  candy  fruit  cake  french fries |

⭐ **Activity one** – write the name of what you see in each picture:

| | | | | |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

- Now, compare your answers with a partner

⭐ **Activity two** – find the words in the wordsearch and complete them:

```
E N J X T O M A T O V H U G Z
G U O F C F M P U P I Z Z A C
M S T C A G P Z N O E P R K A
W R E L H N C O I C H B T Q M
U J P Z Q S H Y Q A W U O L N
G L M L O F O O C N F R A R W
K L E T T U C E X D E G N E N
A P O D Q J O E G Y M E C K F
V O B P J R L V E H N R A A D
F B F Y L R A Z Z Z N I M Y F
R E C F C O T F J A F U L E B
U G A C F R E N C H F R I E S
I G K Y C H E E S E D S G W F
T R E I V D X V I A G B V V W
L R V A Q B E J D P V P S I Z
```

<u>T O M</u> _ <u>T O</u>          <u>C</u> _ _ K _

L _ T T _ C _          _ A N _ _ _

_ H E _ S _

B U _ G _ _

_ R E _ _ _     F _ I _ S

_ _ Z _ A

C _ O _ O _ A _ _

F R _ _ T

⭐ **Activity three** – locate each picture according to how it tastes:



| SWEET | SALTY |
|---|---|
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Reflection**
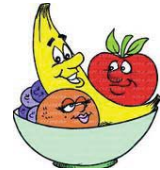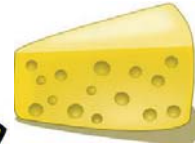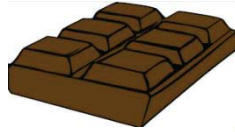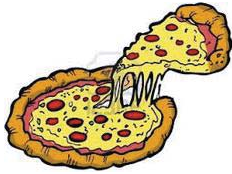
In this lesson I learned:

☐ ten different types of food.

☐ that each food has a different taste.

Lesson 3
"The Cold Planet"

STORY TIME!
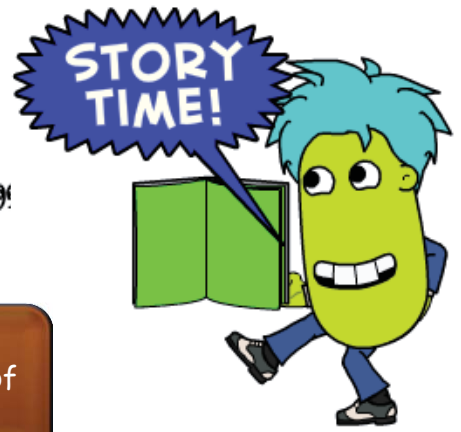
**Objective**
In this lesson, you will identify the structure of a story (beginning, body, closure) and its plot.

Get ready!
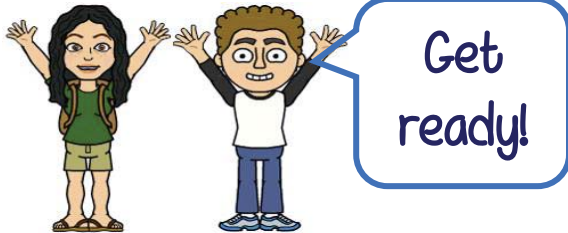
⭐ **Write the name of what you see in each picture:**

| Boy - Ice-cream - Alien - Sun - Dog - Torch - Mirror - Planet |
|---|

|  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

Let's practice!

⭐ **Activity one**

listen to the first part of "The Cold Planet" story and complete the following:

Planet's name:

Character's name:

⭐ **Activity two** Listen to the second part of the <u>video</u> and circle the right answer:

**a)** What is planet Fliptune like?

**b)** What is it made of?

**c)** What is different about this planet?

**d)** Who lives in this planet?

**e)** What is the weapon that Neila uses?

| | |
|---|---|
| Cold | Hot |
| Pizza | Ice cream |
| No sun | No air |
| Aliens | Animals |
| Torch | Alien |

⭐ **Activity three** Order the parts of the video from 1 to 6 (beginning to end)

The boy and the dog fly to Fliptune

Neila lives in Fliptune

Neila puts the wrong batteries

Neila is happy with the sun

The boy and the dog help Neila
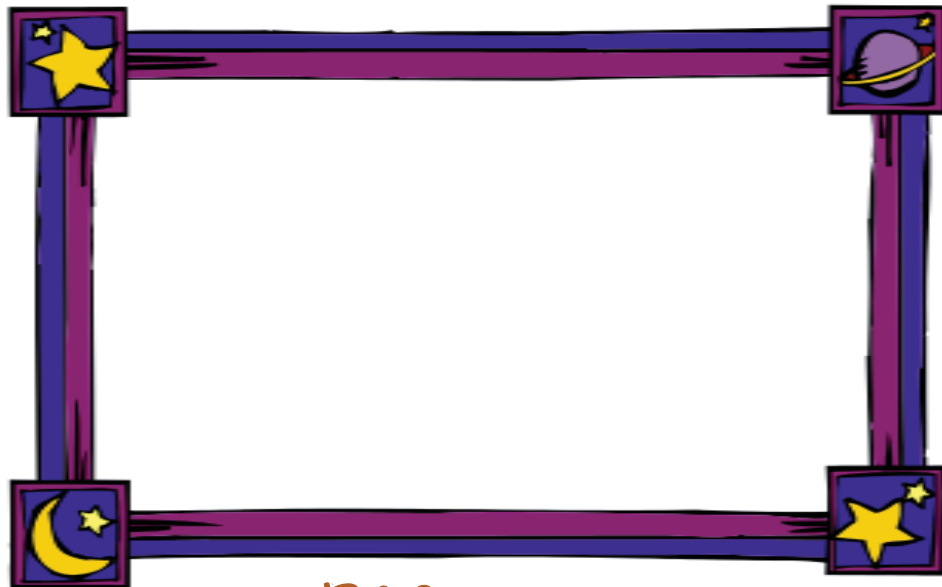
Neila is sad as they have no sunlight
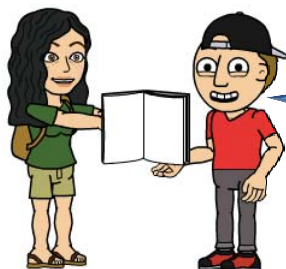
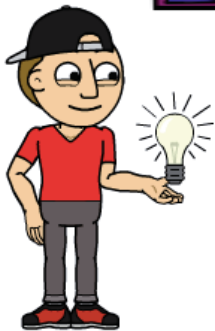- Now, compare your answers with a partner

Time to create!

⭐ **Activity four** - create a new weapon that helps Neila and the aliens in their planet.

- Draw it in the space below, describe it, and color it.

## My weapon:

Name:

It is:

It is made of:

**Reflection**

In this lesson I learned that:

☐ Fliptune is a planet made of icream and there is a main character.

☐ I can create my own weapon

Lesson 4

# Let's create our story

## Objective
In this lesson, you will create and describe a planet based on a type of food covered in unit 1.

**Time to talk**

**Get ready!**

What do you remember from last class' story?

-- What is it about?   -- Is it about a planet?   -- What's the name of it?  -- What is it made of?

⭐**Activity one** – complete the following information:

Planet "_____" is a _____ planet located in the _____, behind another _____.

It is made of _____, so it is _____. It doesn't get sun_____.

Your group received a topic. Now you create your planet!

⭐ **Activity two –** in groups of four, assign the following roles for creating the planet:

- Two students draw the planet.

- Two students color the planet.

- The whole group decides the name.

- The whole group writes the characteristics of the planet.

Time to create!

⭐ **Draw your planet here:**

## Remember the vocabulary from unit 1

Big  small  cold  hot  orange  green  yellow

sweet  salty  cheesy  fresh  tasty

⭐ **Activity three –** describe your planet with your group:

**1** The name of the planet is:

_____

**2** This planet is made of _____.
It is _____ and it is famous because
_____.

**3** The creatures that live in there are _____.

What it is different about our planet is that _____

so they need _____.

**Reflection**

In this lesson I learned that:

☐ Fliptune is different from other planets.

☐ I can create my own planet and its characteristics.
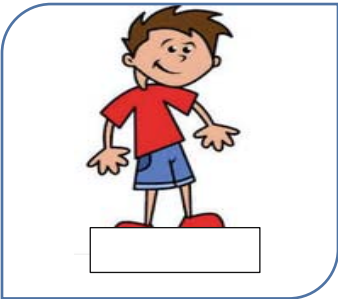
**Unit 4**

*More tan words!*

# Let's create our story

## Objective

In this lesson, you will create and describe the characters of your story.

⭐ **Activity one –** watch the first part of the <u>video</u> and write the name of the two main helpers:

Neila

⭐ **Activity two –** now complete the boxes below in pairs:

This character is a _____. He got to Fliptune by a _____ with his friend _____. He uses a _____ to help Neila.

Neila is an _____ that lives in Fliptune. She uses a _____ to light up her planet because it doesn't get _____.

This character is a _____. With his friend _____ he uses a _____ and helps Neila to have _____ in her planet.

Time to create!

⭐ **Activity three** - Draw four characters of your story (one character each).

- Think of the main character (as Neila from Fliptune), and three helpers (like the boy and the dog).

Main character

This character is called_____. It is _____ and _____. It has _____.

Helper 1

This character is _____. It is _____ and _____. It has _____.

Helper 2

This character is _____. It is _____ and _____. It has _____.

Helper 3

This character is _____. It is _____ and _____. It has _____.

**Reflection**

In this lesson I learned:

☐ that The Cold Planet has three main characters with each characteristic.

☐ how to create my own characters for the story.

**Unit 5**

*The story begins!*

# It's time to begin!

## Objective
In this lesson, you will identify ways of starting a story and write the beginning of your own story.

⭐ Read carefully the following information:

### The three giants

"Don't eat our food!" said Marcus to the three giants that were stealing the monsters' food from their important place. "we need a plan to save

### The cold planet

Thousands of miles from Earth, on the far side of the universe, is a small planet, Fliptune. It is dark and cold…

⭐ **Activity one -** draw the two moments of each story individually:

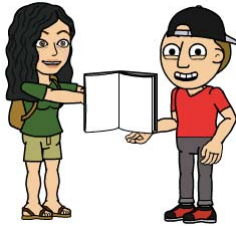| A c t i v | |
|---|---|
| | |
| "The Three giants steal the food." | "…small planet… It's dark and cold" |

**Activity two** – read the beginnings of the two stories and answer the following:

What's the problem in these two planets?

**The Three Giants**

The problem is that there are

_____

**The Cold Planet**

The problem is that there is

_____

- Now, compare your answers with a partner.

**Activity three** – complete the following information with your group:

1) What happens at the beginning of The Three Giants' story?
_____

2) What do the monsters decide to do?
_____

3) Does *The Cold Planet* start with a description of the planet?
_____

- Remember the problem of your group's story and decide who is going to be the hero.
- The problem of our planet is:

_____

_____

_____.

**Start by writing:**

- the name and location of your planet
- a short description of its main features

OR

o The problem of your planet and a plan to face it.
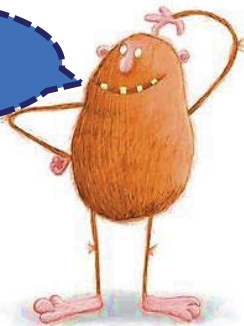
Time to create!

⭐ **Activity four** – start drafting the beginning of your story. You can describe the problem or describe the location of your planet.

- "Don't eat our food" said Marcus to the giants that were stealing the monsters' food…
- Thousands of miles from Earth, on the far side of the universe, is a small planet, Fliptune.

  ❖ How will your story begin?
  _____
  _____
  _____

**Reflection**

In this lesson I learned:

☐ two ways of starting to write a story.

☐ how to start writing the beginning of the story.

**Appendix A: Needs Analysis Results**

The purpose of this needs analysis was getting to know the students' perception about the English subject, and their motivation towards learning and participating in the lessons. The statements were aimed at knowing the kind of activities they would like to have and how they would prefer to work on them. The survey was designed for fourth graders from a semi-private all-boy school in Viña del Mar.

In order to reduce students' anxiety, the survey was carried out in Spanish to take advantage of the time provided to conduct it. This instrument is organized considering three aspects:

1) Students' attitude and motivation towards the language.

2) Students' preferences in activities towards the workshop.

3) Students' preferred way of working in the classroom.

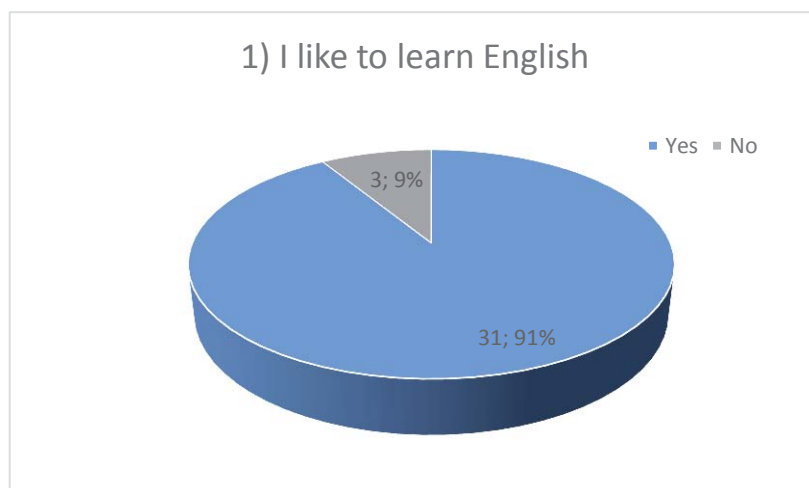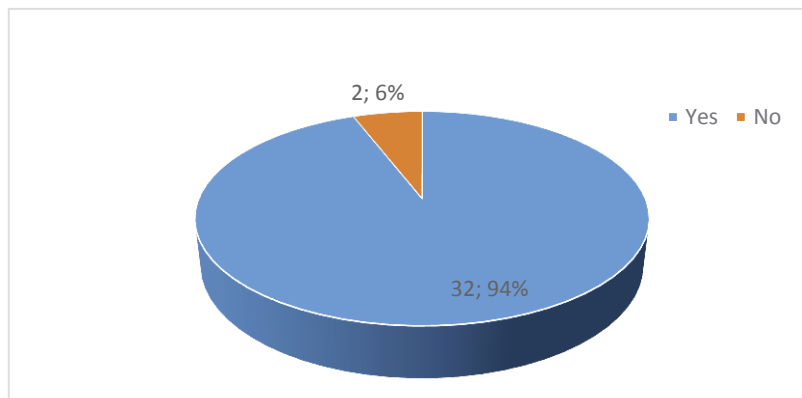**Students' attitude and motivation towards the language**



Figure 1 shows the attitude students have towards learning English. A 91% of them marked Yes, which indicates that the big majority of the young learners like to learn this foreign language.
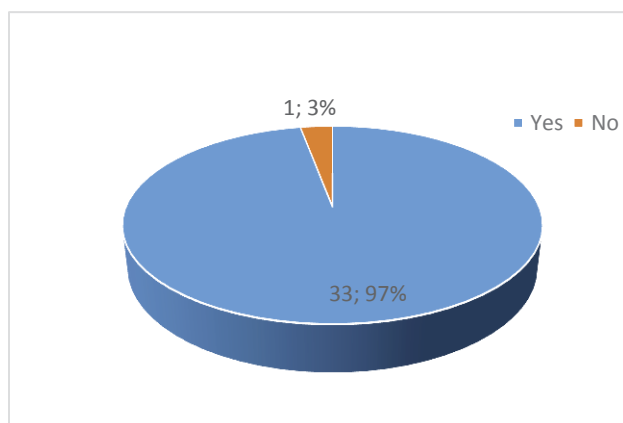
**3) I like to take part in the English class**



As shown in Figure 2, a 94% of the students indicated that they like to participate during the class, proving that almost everybody is willing to learn the language by taking part in the lessons and the activities.

**Students' preferred way of working in the classroom**

**8) I prefer to work in groups**



As it can be appreciated in Figure 3, a 97% of the students prefers to work in groups. Since this graduation project is based on cooperative work, it is convenient that children prefer to work in groups without imposing it to them.

**Students' preferences in activities towards the workshop**

This section provides information about data obtained regarding an eventual activity that students would like to do in class and the way they would prefer to work on.

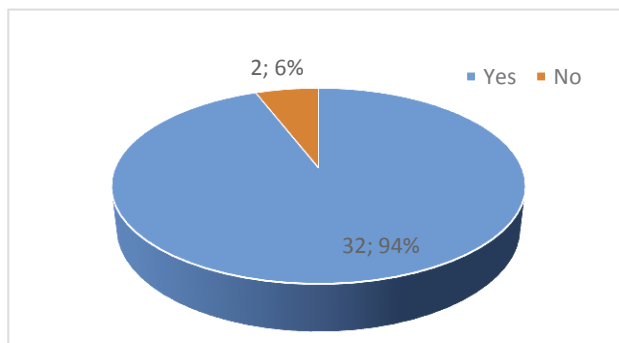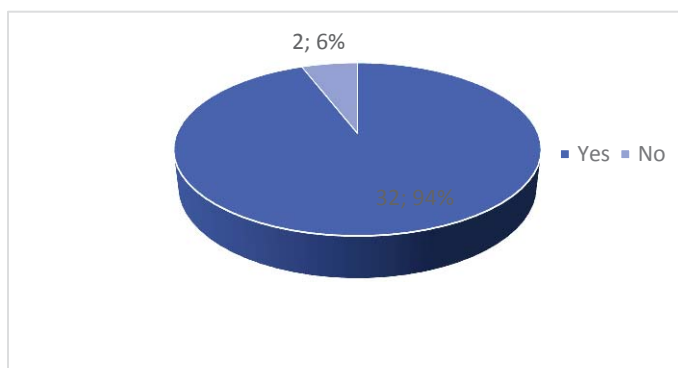**5) I would like to write a story in English with my classmates**



Figure 3 shows that a 94% of the students marked *Yes* when asked if they would like to write a story with their classmates. This answer validates both the writing skill and the cooperative approach that this project is based on.

**9) I like to draw and create new things**



As shown in Figure 4, just a 6% of the students indicated that they do not like to either draw or create new things. On the other hand, a 94% of them marked *Yes* as their answer. Thus, this workshop will provide them with the opportunity of use their creativity to imagine and create things they have in mind.

The survey also considered a prompt regarding the eventual topic for the workshop, which is the following:

**6) Me gustaría crear una historia de superhéroes en inglés.**

Nevertheless, a 65% of the students indicated that they didn't want to create a story of super heroes. That is why during a brief survey was carried out orally during the English class, and three topics were written on the board: food, monsters, TV cartoons. A 90% of them said that they would prefer to create a story based on food rather than monsters or TV cartoons.

**Appendix B: Survey**

PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD
**CATOLICA**
**DE VALPARAISO**

Cooperative Writing Survey
Graduation Project

Esta encuesta tiene por objetivo conocer los gustos e intereses de los alumnos de 4º básico del Colegio Rubén Castro respecto a la asignatura Inglés y la creación de una historia colaborativamente.

**I.** **Escucha atentamente lo siguiente (leído en voz alta por la profesora)**
- Esta es una encuesta que debes responder de acuerdo a lo que sientes y piensas sobre el idioma inglés.
- Una vez que escuches cada pregunta, si piensas que sí, colorea la carita feliz. Si piensas que no, colorea la carita triste.
- Si no sabes que responder, levanta tu mano y avísale a la profesora.

| *PREGUNTA* | *CARITA FELIZ* | *CARITA TRISTE* |
|---|---|---|
| 1) Me gusta aprender inglés | ☺ | ☹ |
| 2) Me gusta la clase de inglés | ☺ | ☹ |
| 3) Me gusta participar en clases de inglés | ☺ | ☹ |
| 4) Me gustan los cuentos en inglés | ☺ | ☹ |
| 5) Me gustaría escribir un cuento en inglés con mis compañeros | ☺ | ☹ |
| 6) Me gustaría crear un cuento en inglés sobre súper héroes | ☺ | ☹ |
| 7) Me gusta trabajar solo | ☺ | ☹ |
| 8) Prefiero trabajar en grupos | ☺ | ☹ |
| 9) Me gusta dibujar y crear cosas nuevas | ☺ | ☹ |

**Appendix C: "The Cold Planet" script**



# The Cold Planet

**Neila**



Thousands of miles from Earth, on the far side of the universe, is a small planet, Fliptune. It is dark and cold, far from the sun, behind a much bigger planet.

Little green aliens live there. They use torches to see.

One day, a young alien, Neila, put the wrong batteries in her torch.

Suddenly, there was a dazzling beam of light. It went up into the sky, around the Sun, and hit planet Earth.

The light hit a boy called Billy and his dog, Splodge. Neila quickly turned the torch off, but the pair were sucked up by the light.

They flew through space and landed near Neila.
"Hello," said Billy. Neila waved.

"Wow!" said Billy. "Everything's made of ice cream!" Splodge licked his paw.

"The ice cream never melts, and nobody eats it. It's too cold here," said Neila.
"It will in my tummy," thought Splodge.

Neila looked sad. "Can you help us?" she said. "We need sunshine to make things grow."

"No problem," said Billy. "Can you get us home? I have an idea." "Wait there!" said Neila.
She got her torch and put the wrong batteries in again.
ZOOOOOOOOM! Billy and Splodge were speeding back to Earth.
Billy pointed his bedroom mirror between the sun and Fliptune.
The sun's rays bounced off the mirror and up onto Neila's planet.
Thanks to Billy, Fliptune is not cold any more. Splodge moves the mirror each day to keep the sun shining there. Now, Neila and her friends sit in the sun and enjoy all that free ice cream.

**Appendix D: Mini book rubric**

# Mini Book Rubric

| Aspect | Excellent | Good job | You can improve |
|--------|-----------|----------|-----------------|
| **Cover** | Cover has three elements: the name of the story, a drawing, and the authors' names. Clear work. (6 pts) | Cover has two elements: the name of the story and the authors' names. (4 pts) | Cover has just one of the three elements. Messy work. (2 pts) |
| **Story structure** (beginning, body, end) | The story includes the three essential parts: beginning, body, and end. (6 pts) | The story presents two of the essential parts. (4 pts) | The story presents one of the essential parts. (2 pts) |
| **Plot development** | The story presents a clear transition, with a problem and a resolution. (6 pts) | The story presents a transition that does not prevent the natural reading of it. There is a problem or solution, not both. (4 pts) | The story lacks of a clear transition. There is no problem/resolution. Disorganized ideas. (2 pts) |
| **Execution of illustrations** | Illustrations are clear and visually pleasing throughout the entire work. (6 pts) | Illustrations help present the plot in a majority of areas throughout the work. (4 pts) | Illustrations help present the plot in a minority of areas throughout the work. (2 pts) |
| **Length** | The mini book includes 10 pages. (6 pts) | The mini book includes between 6 and 9 pages. (4 pts) | The mini book includes less than 5 pages. (2 pts) |

| POINTS: / 30 | GRADE: |
|--------------|--------|

*(Adapted from www.readthinkwrite.org)*

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