

LANG Primary



Over half way to summer!

When you read this issue of **LANG Primary** you will be over half way through this scholastic year and well on the way to the summer break. But before you get there, you will be celebrating Easter and planning your end of term tests.

Some teachers in fifth year classes will be encouraging their children to take an external examination and this will create a lot of excitement in the classes.

In the new 2001 **LANG** catalogue you will find many new publications for both you and your students. **Come Along to Cambridge** is for fifth year classes who are taking the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate **Starters** test. The Student's Book contains lots of practice exercises and there is a Teacher's Key and audio cassette. Essential extra materials for those classes who intend to take the test.

Other new publications include Activity Workbooks on British and American life and times for all those students who are using either **Come Along!** or **Fun Club**, as well as an exciting new music and song book of **Traditional Songs and Rhymes**.

Included in this issue of **LANG Primary** is a beautiful Alphabet Chart for your classroom. The illustrations highlight two words for each letter but only one is written. Your children will have fun guessing the other words (see page 11).

Index

External Certification – Trinity	p 2
Using Readers in the Classroom – part 3	p 4
The English World Worksheet - Easter	p 6
External Certification – Preparing for Starters	p 8
Mr BOO is Alive!	p 9
Teaching 'Culture' in the Primary School	p 10
Poetry in the Primary Classroom	p 12
The English World Worksheets	p 13
Class and Teacher Projects	p 15





Trinity Exams and Young Learners

Claudia Beccheroni

Trinity has a long-standing tradition of examining Young Learners in Italy, and indeed all over the world. In 2000 in Italy Trinity examined over 10,000 children aged 7 to 13 and the results were very positive. In the *scuole elementari* most of the candidates took grades 1 and 2 (A1) and half of them passed with distinction. The failure rate was 50% lower than the national one.

This is confirmation that Trinity is very suitable for *scuola elementare* and *media* children.

Format of the examination

The Trinity Exam is a **one-to-one conversation** with a trained and experienced examiner sent especially from the United Kingdom.

The most suitable levels in the *scuola elementare* are grades 1,2 and in some cases 3, which last respectively 5, 6 and 7 minutes.

At this stage, which we call Initial, the student, especially if in the age range 7-13, is not able to take the initiative and the conversation is mostly examiner-led.

Requirements

The requirements for the Trinity exams are not substantially different from normal classwork if the emphasis is on speaking and listening as in the Progetto Lingua 2000. Grade 1 involves a lot of Physical Response as the ability to understand commands and requests at this grade is much higher than the ability to speak.

The exact requirements for each grade can be found in the Trinity ESOL Syllabus, available free of charge or downloadable from www.trinitycollege.it.

By the end of the Initial stage the candidate can:

- understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases to satisfy basic needs of a concrete type relating to family, people known to the candidate and immediate surroundings;
- introduce him/herself and others;
- ask and answer questions about personal details and very familiar subject areas and topics, such as where he/she lives, people that the candidate knows and items he/she possesses;
- interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

The subject areas for conversation at the end of the Initial stage are:

clothes, parts of the body, numbers, colours, home, family members, friends, animals and pets, possessions, daily routines and activities, days of the week, months of the year, school, weather, free time, places.

«No matter what level you are there is a Trinity level for you»

This is one of Trinity's strengths as we offer exams from a very basic level, bearing in mind that language learners go through a phase where they can understand a lot more than they can actually produce.

Language is communication

Trinity exams test the ability to communicate in English at various levels. Language is not considered a school subject. The aim of the exam is to evaluate how effectively the student can communicate ideas and needs and respond to requests and stimuli depending on his/her level.

Pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary and register are the means to achieve communication. They are not the final aim.



Reality-based situation

Trinity has tried to create a situation which is as close to reality as possible. That is why the exam is a one-to-one conversation and Trinity expects the candidate to actively take part in the conversation when his/her language level allows it.

A motivating experience

Talking in English with a native speaker who comes to Italy directly from the United Kingdom is undoubtedly a very motivating experience as in class a student can never get the same level of unique attention that he/she gets from the Trinity examiner.

Furthermore the examiner is not there to find out what the candidate **cannot** do - rather he/she is there to **encourage** and **motivate** the candidate to use the target language.

Backwash

The effect that Trinity exams have on the teaching and learning process is very positive as there is no need to focus the teaching on exam passing techniques and a series of non-communicative tasks. The focus is just on the language.

The positive experience that a Trinity exam provides boosts self-esteem, and provides the motivation to carry on learning the language.

The choice of the appropriate level is crucial, because if the student has been under-graded or over-graded the exam is perceived as being either too easy or far too difficult. In either cases the experience can be demotivating.

Sometimes the perception of the positiveness of the exam is not linked to the results - especially with young learners and one has to be very careful about how results are handled as there is a risk to turn a pedagogically sound experience into a mere rush for a piece of paper.

Practicability

Trinity exams are very practical to organise as:

- sessions can be organised every month;
- sessions can be run in state schools with a minimum of 2,000,000 lire in exam fees (or 2,200,000 lire for private schools);
- results are immediate.



Want to know more?

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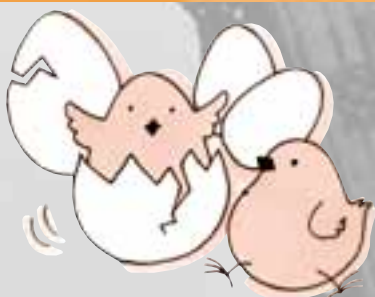
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Using Readers in the Classroom

Sue Swift*

* Sue Swift is a freelance teacher, teacher trainer and materials writer. She has been based in Italy for over twenty years, but has also worked in Japan, the Middle East and other parts of Europe.

In this, the third and final article in this series, we will look at how the **LANG Prime Readers** series can be used to promote independent learning, both in the classroom and for homework and holiday activities. First however, let's look at some of the factors which you need to consider when you are choosing a reader for use with a class.

★ Choosing the readers

When choosing the readers, you need to keep two objectives in mind. Firstly, you are looking for a book which will contribute to your children's language learning – whether as general consolidation of the language they already know, or as a vehicle for the presentation and practice of new items. But secondly and even more importantly, you need to consider their motivational value. The more the children enjoy using the readers, the more they are liable to learn from them, and the more they will be motivated to go on reading other books – in any language. In evaluating the readers for use, you therefore need to take into consideration three factors:



■ **Linguistic level.** How complex is the language which the readers contain? The **LANG Prime Readers** are divided into four levels – *Basic*, *Easy*, *Elementary* and *Easy Intermediate* – with each level becoming increasingly complex in terms of the structure and vocabulary which it contains. When you are evaluating the books for use, consider what the balance between new and old language will be for your children. Does the reader contain any important structures which your class has not yet met? How much new vocabulary does it contain? The children certainly don't need to be familiar with every item in the reader - we have

seen in the previous articles that if you are using the reader for shared class reading, pre-teaching of new vocabulary can easily be built into your plan for the lesson. In addition, all of the readers illustrate the new vocabulary which occurs in the story both at the beginning of the book and within the text itself. However, too much "new" language could mean that the children find the book difficult to understand, and therefore demotivating.

In particular, if you are choosing a book for out-of-class use, you may prefer that the majority of the language is already familiar and for consolidation rather than extension.

■ **Intellectual level and interest level.** Is the intellectual level of the book right for the children you are teaching? Ten year olds will not necessarily be attracted by the same books as seven year olds, and may be even more demotivated by a book where they find the story, graphics or activities too "babyish" than they are by one where the linguistic level is wrong. Will the children

be interested in the topic of the story? Is it a book they will want to read? If you are choosing a book for shared class reading, you will need to decide what will attract the majority of the class. If, on the other hand, you are using the readers for independent or out-of-class reading, you may choose to provide a variety of readers and let the children themselves decide which they wish to work on.



★ Independent and Out-of Class Reading

There are several reasons why you might wish to use the readers for independent reading inside the classroom:

■ **To develop effective learning skills.** If you wish the children eventually to use the readers for out-of-class reading, they will need to know how to use them effectively.

They need to understand, for example, how to consult the vocabulary explanations; to realise that the activities should only be attempted after they have understood the story; and, if they

■ **To free yourself to give individual attention.** Particularly with larger groups, there may be times when you need to spend time working on the needs or problems of one smaller section of

have the tape, when to attempt shadow reading (**Lang Primary, 2/2000**). You might therefore wish to introduce the readers in a three step approach. First, use one reader for shared reading with the class, and demonstrate the techniques. Then have the children work independently but under your guidance in class on another, before finally setting a book for out-of-class work.

the class. Once the children know how to use the readers, they become an effective activity that can be used to occupy the others usefully, freeing you to work with the children who need your help.

■ **To allow children in a mixed ability class to work at their own pace and level.** Within your class you may have children who need extra consolidation work on language areas you have already covered, or alternatively others who are able to go on to a higher level of challenge earlier than the rest of the group. By providing a selection of readers at different levels of difficulty, you can allow the children to work, either individually or in small groups at the same ability level, on the texts which are right for them.

★ Outside the classroom

The readers are ideal for homework and particularly, holiday use.

■ **Homework.** If you have worked on a reader in class, there are various follow up activities which can be used as homework. These include the activities provided in the book, but you may also ask the children to complete a book report.

The questions you include in the report can vary depending on the children's knowledge of the

language. For lower levels the questions can be in multiple choice form.

For instance:

- I think the book is:*
- interesting
 - boring



Book Report

Title:

Author:

Who is the main character?
.....

What happens to him or her?
.....

Draw your favourite scene from the book.



■ **Holiday Use.** Providing consolidation of both structure and vocabulary, and activities which focus on all four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing), the readers are a simple way of ensuring that what you have taught during the term is not forgotten over the summer, Christmas or Easter break.



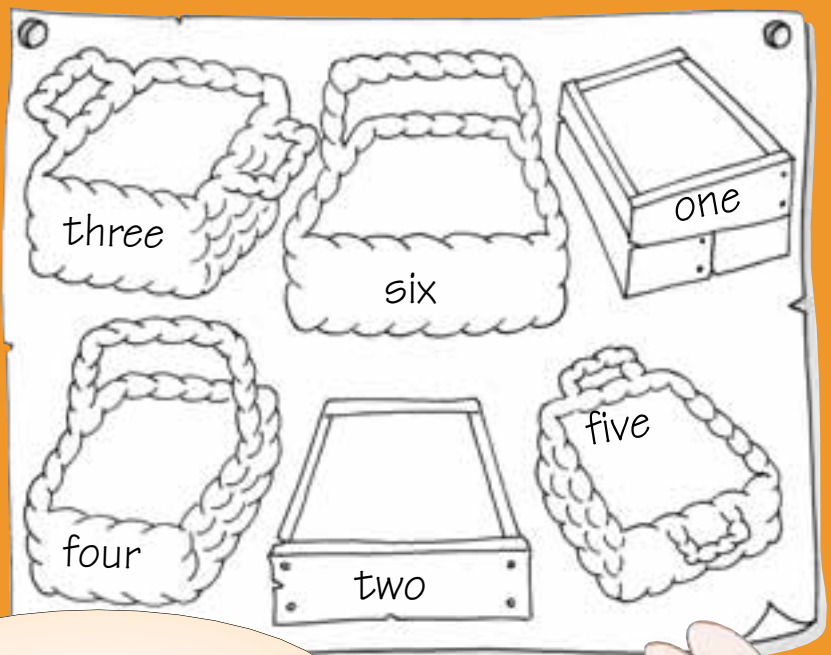
Happy

An old English legend says that the Easter Bunny delivers the Easter eggs to the children. The story tells of a poor woman who wanted to buy gifts for her children at Easter but she didn't have any money. Instead she coloured some eggs and hid

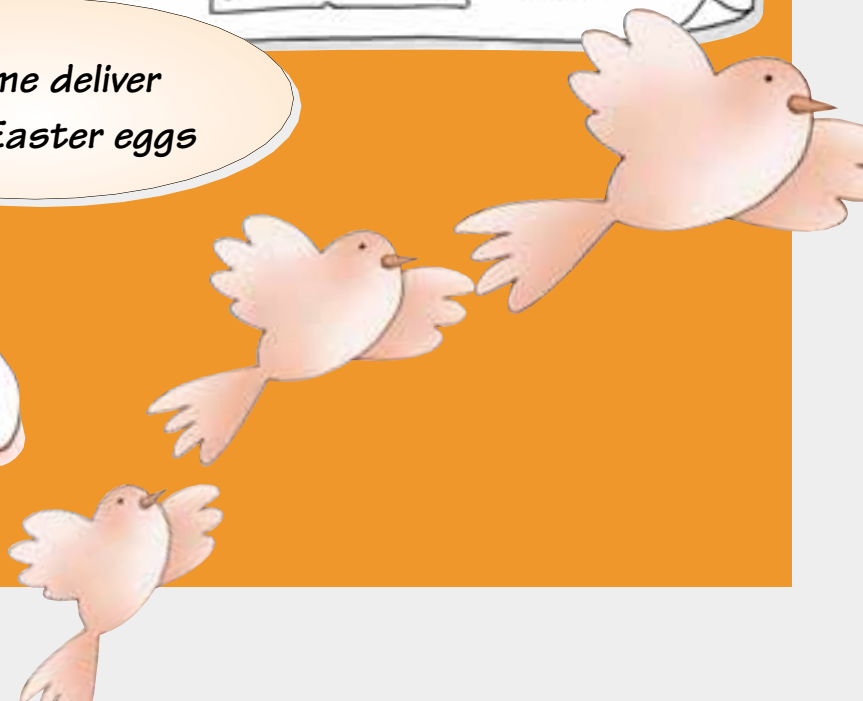
them in her garden. When the children were looking for their surprises, a rabbit jumped out from under some bushes. The children thought that the rabbit had brought the eggs, so they called it the Easter Bunny.

The English World WORKSHEET

Read and draw the eggs in the baskets.



Help me deliver all the Easter eggs



Easter



The English World WORKSHEET

Read and colour the eggs.

Count the eggs and complete the sentences.



- a. There are eggs on the table.
- b. There is egg under the flower.
- c. There are eggs in the basket.
- d. There is egg under the table.
- e. There are eggs in the tree.
- f. There are eggs in the van.
- g. There are eggs on the bicycle.

Colour Code

- 1 = blue
- 2 = green
- 3 = yellow
- 4 = orange
- 5 = pink
- 6 = violet
- 7 = red

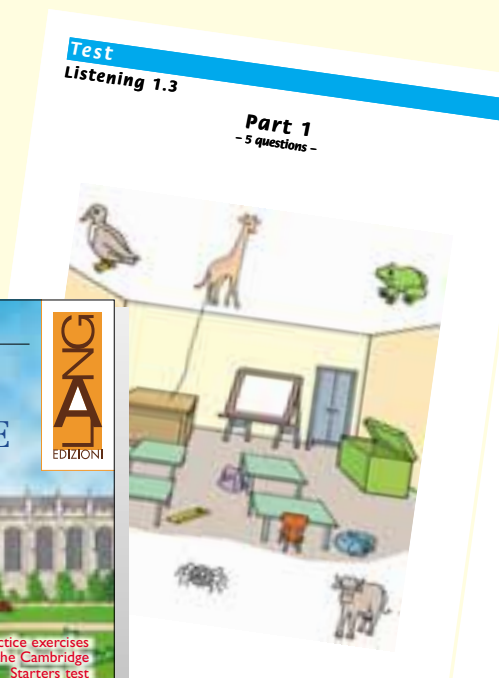
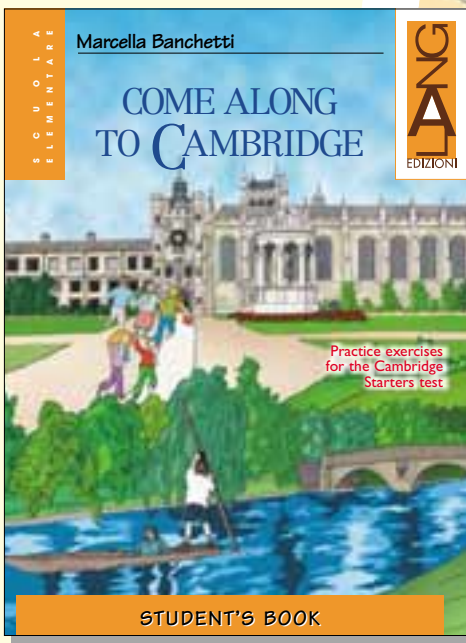
Preparing children for the CAMBRIDGE STARTERS TEST



On page 1 of this issue mention is made of the many children who take external examinations in the 5th Year of the Primary school. The Cambridge **Starters** test is a very popular test at this level. All the children who take this test receive an award (a type of certificate) and no extra language has to be taught to prepare children for the test as the language and vocabulary included in the test are typically found in course books on the market today.

However the children must be given the opportunity to practice the mechanics of the various exercises contained in the **Starters** test, some of which the children may not have seen before.

Come Along to Cambridge, Practice exercises for the Cambridge **Starters** test, gives children the opportunity to become familiar with all the different types of exercises they will have to perform when they take the test. All aspects are practised and include listening, reading, writing and speaking tasks based on those of the test. For the teacher there is a Teacher's Key including the tapescripts, answers and teaching notes together with a cassette.





Mr BOO is alive!

Mr BOO is the main character in the Primary course Fun Club. He and his family of ghosts appear throughout the three year course especially in the presentation dialogues. Mr BOO also featured on the school year calendar which was included in the October issue of **LANG Primary**.

Now Mr BOO has come to life on the new video cassettes which contain many of the exercises from the three course books to motivate the children to complete the exercises and sing the songs.

THE FUN CLUB VIDEOS FEATURE:

- The dialogues, which the children see twice. The first time at a natural speed so that the children can acquire an overall understanding and then at a slower speed so the children can read and complete the tasks. The Comprehension Check exercises which follow the dialogues are also on the video together with the correct answers so that the children can compare them with their own.
- The Listening Comprehension tasks, Listen and Repeat exercises and Songs have also been specially filmed for the children to enjoy.
- At the end of each unit the Portfolio Check is shown so that the children can hear a native speaker saying the 'can do' statements.

The video cassettes are given to all teachers who have adopted Fun Club for their classes.



Culture in a young learner's

Sarah Howell

ALTHOUGH MOST OF US WOULD AGREE THAT LANGUAGE TEACHING IS CULTURE TEACHING IN ITSELF, VERY FEW ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT TEACHING CULTURE REALLY IMPLIES.

So what exactly is "culture"?

As far as language acquisition is concerned, culture can be broadly defined in three main areas.



1

The way people behave and what is considered as acceptable behaviour by others within the same cultural group.

The kind of things you pick up during childhood, adolescence, or by living abroad or the kind of things you notice when visiting or living in another country for a certain period of time – a different culture. Some examples of this could be that a lot of Italians gesticulate when communicating, most British people queue at bus stops, Japanese people avoid eye contact in conversation and so on.

2

Cultural knowledge, that means the very "texture" of the culture of the target language (English in this case). How and why things work and the way they do.

It deals with every aspect of the society of the target language – from government and politics to education, from things like music to famous people and why not even things like... scrambled eggs on toast or kippers for breakfast!

3

People's cultural attitudes or way of thinking and this is the most complex aspect to convey to young children.

People from different cultures see the same things differently. An example of this would be the classic but true example of punctuality. Being 15 minutes late for an appointment in some countries is considered as on time ("un quarto d'ora accademico"), in some countries it would be early and in Great Britain it would be most definitely – late!

Cultural attitudes are usually intricately intertwined with course content in the form of dialogues, stories, role-plays and so on.



English language programme?

Why teach culture?

A good point – if culture already exists in language course books, why bother to teach it?

Well, an instinctive reaction would be because it's fun and both teachers and pupils love it.

But there is more to it than that. Firstly, by intentionally teaching the target culture we can overcome the classic stereotyping culture usually undergoes, thus breaking down mental barriers and creating a "liking" for a certain culture and consequently the target language in the years to follow.

Secondly, children are naturally curious and like making discoveries about the world around them so channelling this enthusiasm into a motivation for learning can be one of the best resources teachers can have in the classroom for creating a positive learning environment.

Last, but not least, we should also remember that when children (and adults) begin learning about other cultures they automatically compare them

to their own real life situations and become more aware of the culture they are part of.

LANG have produced a series of publications for the Primary student that contain many worksheets where the students are asked to practise the English language and at the same time discover the realities of other English speaking countries such as Great Britain, America, Canada and Australia.



- **Fun Club – Worlds,**
 - **Come Along to Great Britain 3,**
 - **Come Along to America 4**
- will be distributed to all children using either Fun Club or Come Along as from September 2001.**
- **Come Along to Australia 5 (in 2002).**



The Alphabet Chart

The Alphabet Chart included with this issue of **LANG Primary** has illustrations for each letter of the alphabet. The illustrations picture two words beginning with each letter. One of the words is printed next to each picture. The children can be asked to find and write the missing words during their English course. The words that are illustrated but not written are:

ant	green	nurse	umbrella
blue	horse	orange	violet
cat	Italy	penguin	window
door	jacket	queen	Xmas
elephant	kangaroo	rabbit	yo-yo
flower	ladder	sun	zip.
	mouse	tree	

Note: Xmas can be pronounced /krisməs/ or /eksməs/

Poetry in the Primary classroom



The Common European Framework for Reference level A1, which illustrates the new language teaching/learning objectives for the Primary school student, is an integral part of the Progetto Lingua 2000. The objectives are expressed as 'can do' statements and the great majority of them are statements of useful language functions.

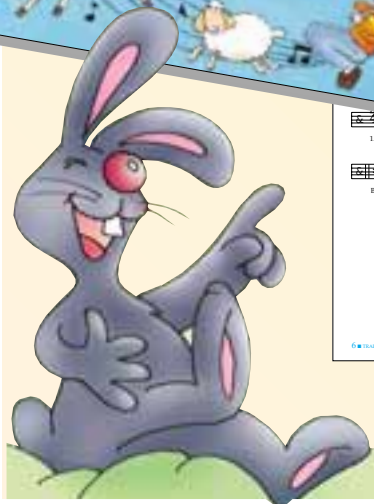
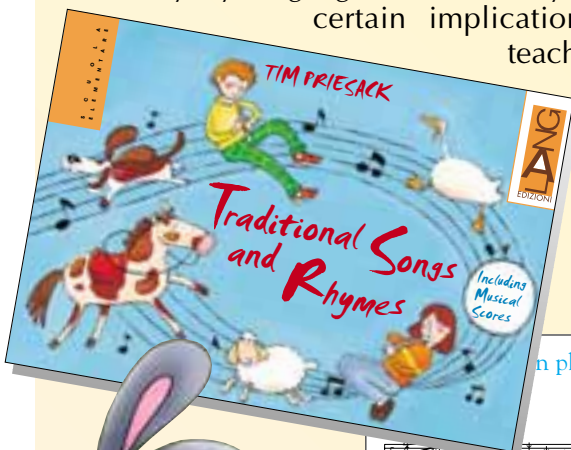
However two of the statements appear, at first glance, to be rather non-functional. The first, in the functions of understanding is *I can understand very simple rhymes*, the second concerning reading is *I can read and understand simple poetry*.

Although these statements do not express useful everyday language functions they do contain certain implications for the teacher.

During the learning years of the Primary school the children must be taught both to discriminate between words with similar sounds and to understand words from the context in which they read or hear them. Very often songs and rhymes contain words with similar sounds. When the children are asked to listen, sing or recite they practise not only understanding words from context but also learn to identify words which have similar sounds.

Traditional Songs and Rhymes is a collection of songs and rhymes that English children learn and love. The Music and Activity book contains not only illustrations and language activities for each song to help the children to understand the concept of the words but also the musical scores for the recorder or flute. In this way the songs can be taught and played in the music class too.

The music and songs are recorded on the audio cassette as well as the traditional rhymes.



...n play the big bass

2. Ch, we can play on the violin, And this is the way we do it, Fiddle-dee-dee on the violin, Boom, boom, boom on the big bass drum, And that's the way we do it.

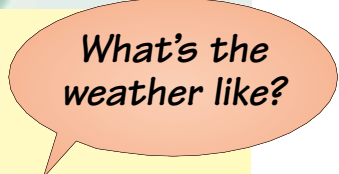
3. Ch, we can play on the triangle, And this is the way we do it, Ting, ting, ting on the triangle, Fiddle-dee-dee on the violin, Boom, boom, boom on the big bass drum, And that's the way we do it.

4. Ch, we can play on the silver flute, And this is the way we do it, Toot, toot, toot on the silver flute, Ting, ting, ting on the triangle, Fiddle-dee-dee on the violin, Boom, boom, boom on the big bass drum, And that's the way we do it.

1 Violin	2 Trumpet	3 Silver flute	4 Saxophone
5 Drum	6 Clarinet	7 Guitar	8 Piano

Match the pictures and the instruments.

Welcome Spring



The weather in Spring is so unpredictable! Here is a game for your children to practise the months of the year and words describing the weather. Here are a few rhymes and poems about the weather.

January	THE WEATHER	hot
February	LADDER	cold
March		warm
April		cool
May	in it is	sunny
June		cloudy
July		rainy
August		foggy
September		windy
October		snowy
November		
December		

Easter

*Easter and Spring,
Together they sing,
They sing for love,
They sing for joy,
They sing for peace and for
happiness, too.
Easter for the rich,
Easter for the poor,
Easter for all is the wish,
Happy Easter world.
Cecilia Perillo*

March Winds

*March winds and April
showers
Bring us May flowers.*

Rain Rain Go Away

*Rain, rain go away,
Come again another day.
All the children want to play.*

Evening Red

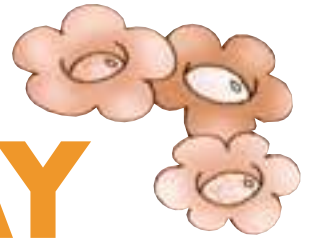
*Evening red and morning grey
Are the signs of a bonny day.
Evening grey and morning red
bring down rain on the
farmer's head.*

Clouds

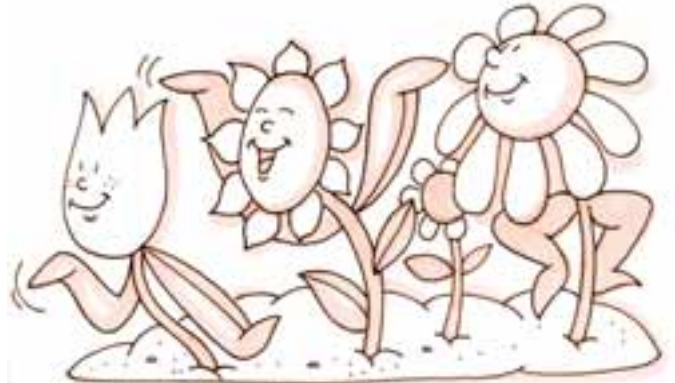
*White sheep, white sheep,
on a blue hill
when the wind stops
you all stand still.
When the wind blows
you walk away slow.
White sheep, white sheep,
where do you go?
Christina Rossetti*



A special day in MAY



Mother's Day is one of the most celebrated holidays in the USA and Great Britain. Get your pupils to prepare Mother's Day cards using this photocopyable material.



APRIL

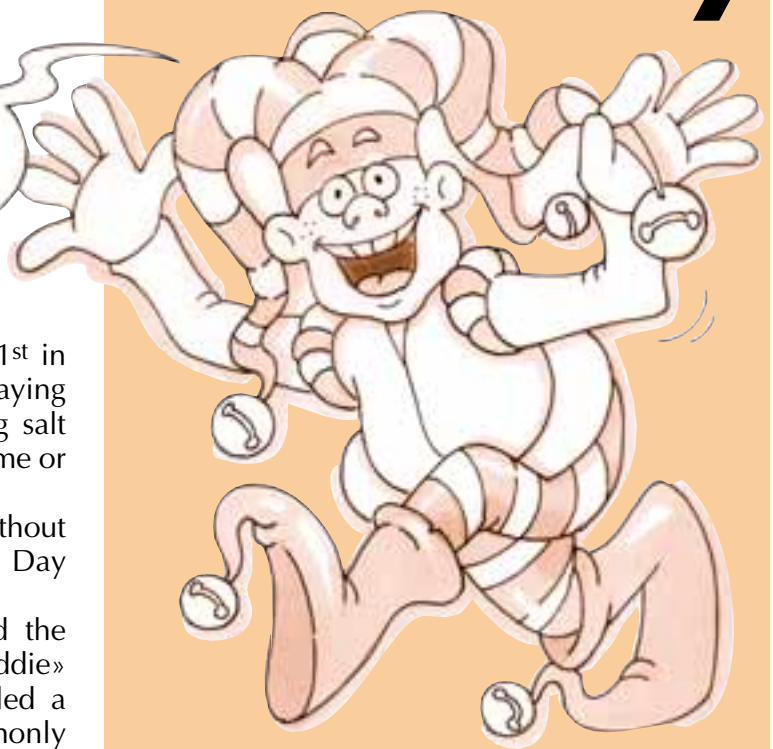
Fool's day

Don't forget that the fun stops at midday. For anyone who plays a trick on someone else after midday is an April Fool himself!

April Fool's Day is celebrated on April the 1st in Great Britain and the USA. It is a day spent playing practical jokes and tricks, such as switching salt and sugar, setting the clocks to an incorrect time or sending people on meaningless errands.

Pinning paper fish on other people's backs without getting caught is not a typical April Fool's Day tradition in England or America.

Many names for the fool are used around the world. In England the person tricked is a «noddie» or a «gawby». In Scotland, the fool is called a «gawk» or a «cuckoo», but the most commonly used term is «April fool».



Class and Teacher PROJECTS



Another opportunity for both teachers and students to exchange projects for books.

CLASS PROJECT - March 2001

The theme of the project for your children to organise as a class or in smaller groups is:

FESTIVITIES IN ITALY

Your children should make posters with pictures and text (in English) describing their favourite festivities in Italy. These can include national, regional or local festivities such as Patron saint days. The project should include at least six posters.

When the project is complete, please sign it as work produced by your class (include the number of students who have contributed) and send to:

**PBM spa
LANG Primary Student Project
Corso Trapani 16
10139 Torino**

LANG Edizioni will send a class set of *Prime Readers* to the classes that present the most interesting projects.

Class Project May 2000

Many thanks for all the Class Projects sent to us. A special mention to the 70 children from two Primary schools in Montecchio Maggiore (VI) who sent in two wonderful projects on Wales. Each project was over 60 pages long and covered all aspects of the country in a cross curricular programme which involved the teachers of music, computer science, Italian, art, geography and English. Very well done!

TEACHER PROJECT - March 2001

Many teachers have sent in their lesson plans although they are sometimes very brief. We would like to encourage you to put together one of the lesson plans you have prepared for your children. You should describe the lesson in detail and include the various steps in the lesson.

The topic for the Teacher Project this month is:

Describe a lesson when you are using a dialogue.

Give details of the pre-listening activities and the various tasks you ask the children to complete during and after listening. Include the script of the dialogue in the lesson plan.

When the project is complete, please sign it as work produced by yourself and send to:

**PBM spa
LANG Primary Teacher Project
Corso Trapani 16
10139 Torino**

LANG Edizioni will send a copy of **DAI** (dizionario di apprendimento della lingua inglese) or **FRIENDLY** Italiano-Inglese to all teachers who present a project following the instructions.

**All projects should be received by 31.06.2001
We may publish extracts from some of the projects in future issues of LANG Primary.**

... and we look forward to meeting you!

Between mid-February and mid-May **LANG** Teacher Trainers will be giving nearly one hundred seminars for Primary teachers in towns throughout Italy. The title of the seminar is *The Listening Skill in Primary Teaching*. If you are able to attend a session you will certainly get some practical ideas you can use with your children before the end of term.

To find out if there is a seminar near you, you can either contact your local **LANG** agent or visit our web site, where you will find the abstract of the seminar, the locations and dates.

The next issue of **LANG Primary** will be with you in May, in time for the last six weeks or so of your courses.

It will feature several articles on the various materials and language exercises you can ask your children to complete during the holidays as well as some thoughts on end of course testing. There will, of course, also be photocopiable worksheets as well as details of Class and Teacher Projects.

Below is the coupon to register for future issues of **LANG Primary**. You need only return the form once to receive future copies.

If you have already sent in your details, use this form when you need to change/amend your address.

If you wish to comment on the articles in **LANG Primary**, please do not hesitate to write to us.

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Name	Home address	favourite pages in this issue
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_____	_____	
Topics you would like to see in future issues	_____	
Course book used	_____	
Supplementary materials used	_____	
I would like a LANG agent to visit me at school	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Ai sensi della Legge 675/96, con la presente vi autorizzo esplicitamente al trattamento dei miei dati personali unicamente ai fini amministrativi per l'invio di materiali di **Lang Edizioni** al mio indirizzo.

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