

LANG Primary



Keeping in touch!

When you receive this issue, you will be approaching the end of your classes this year. During the last weeks of lessons, a lot of your work is involved in organising language tests for the children in order to find out exactly what they remember with ease and, more importantly, to note what they have forgotten so that this can form part of the revision you will organise at the beginning of the next scholastic year.

It is well worth spending a little time with the children advising them on the type of English language activities they can do during the holidays so that they can keep in touch with the language. This will not only help the children to consolidate their learning but also be of assistance to the teacher; the more contact the children have with the language during the summer break, the more they will remember when lessons re-start.

This issue contains various ideas that can be passed on to the children so that they can keep in touch with the English language during the summer holidays.

From special summer books to summer projects, from tourism through the internet to worksheets you can photocopy and distribute. This issue of **LANG Primary** contains ideas for all the summer needs of your children, except the sun!

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Why study English in the Nursery School?

*Mariem Marie-Louise Azoulay**

*Francesca Giuliani**

In recent years, the use of the English language in the worlds of the New Economy, politics and social interactions has become more and more diffuse and a basic working knowledge of the language is an essential tool for most people during their working lives.

In order to give people the opportunity to become fluent in a second language it is generally agreed that there are great advantages in initiating contact from early childhood.



But why during childhood?

It has been proven that children from 3 to 6 have the following characteristics:

- an awareness of phonetics
- very few inhibitions
- the ability to copy sounds they hear
- more short-term memory than long-term memory
- short concentration spans
- curiosity for anything new

From birth babies learn a language by trying to understand the meaning of the words they hear and by making an attempt to repeat them correctly. Furthermore, by receiving approval from people around them, children gain confidence to use language at every opportunity.

This enthusiasm together with an almost total lack of inhibition helps them to meet some of their goals such as learning a second language.

But if children learn very quickly they also forget things very easily. To overcome this drawback and their inability to concentrate for extended periods of time, the language teacher should select short activities and games which stimulate and motivate the children to want to participate. In this way a frequent change of activity on the same subject will help the consolidation of learning.

Games and amusement should be the basis of every lesson as *playing* is the only activity that children take seriously.





Songs are an ideal way of introducing children to the sounds and rhythms of the English language and at the same time giving them the opportunity to memorise words, expressions and sounds in an appealing yet efficient way.

Before reproducing a vocal or instrumental sound children should hear it, recognise it and memorise it.

Therefore singing helps children to distinguish sounds, to develop a sense of rhythm and contributes towards improving their ability for oral expression.

Songs should be chosen for the vocabulary included in the lyrics as well as the repetitive nature of the expressions.

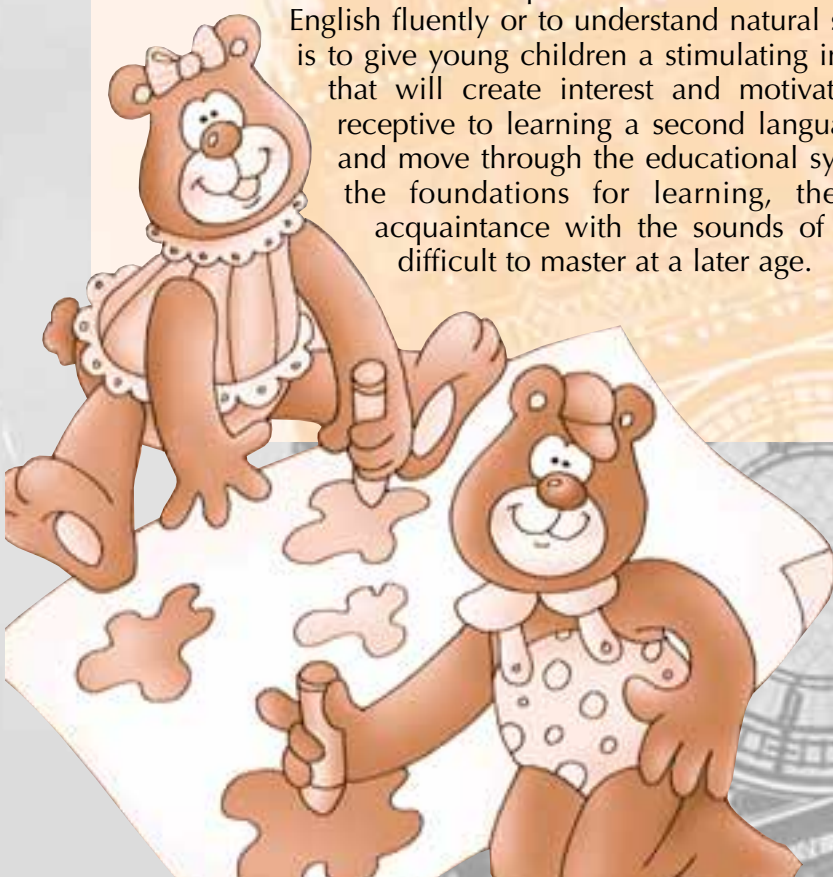
Singing encourages emotion, develops socialisation (singing together) and the sense of aesthetics. Songs can also give physical pleasure (reproducing a sound, living the rhythm) and involve movement of the body (waving, clapping, snapping fingers or dancing). It is generally accepted that gestures and movement have a basic role in the learning activities as:

- they encourage shy children to participate in socialising activities;
- they facilitate memorisation;
- they can introduce the culture, habits and traditions of a country.

Songs should be linked to both visual and non-visual activities as they help in the development of communication and of expression and logical thought as well as making the children aware of and develop their sensorial functions (hearing, touch, sight).

Languages are complex codes of communication and are learnt over a lifetime. The teacher should avoid expecting great leaps of quality in second language acquisition.

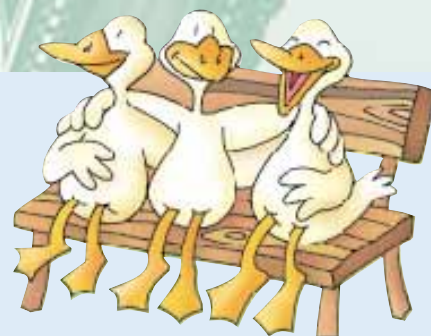
We should not expect children in the Nursery School to *spea*k English fluently or to understand natural speech. Our objective is to give young children a stimulating introduction to English that will create interest and motivate them to be more receptive to learning a second language as they get older and move through the educational system. As well as laying the foundations for learning, the emphasis is on the acquaintance with the sounds of English which is more difficult to master at a later age.



* The authors of this article are preparing special teaching materials for the Nursery School to be published by LANG Edizioni later this year.

SUMMER HOLIDAY projects for your class

Sarah M. Howell *



The summer holiday is a very long break from lessons and very often teachers worry that their pupils will forget everything they have learnt by the time the Autumn term starts.

Of course there are lots of summer holiday activity books, readers and other materials available in bookshops for help on revising and consolidating, in a fun way, the

syllabus content that has been presented during the school year.

Why do a project?

But what more can we do? Why not give the class a project to work on during the holidays.

There are lots of reasons why project work is generally very successful and stimulating and above all the personal, self-involvement factor of carrying out a project task creates

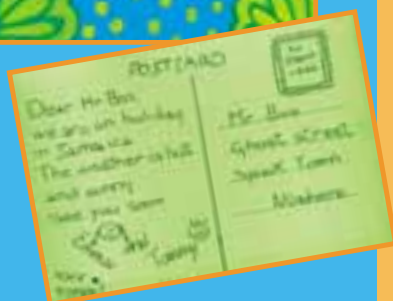
strong motivation which is coming from within the student and not from without, and we all know what effect motivation has on learning.

What kind of project?

Projects for their very nature are student-centred and the materials students produce can vary enormously for the same project.

Here are some ideas for you to use with your classes:

Summer Postcards



Making summer postcards are excellent mini-projects for children of all ages and levels. It doesn't matter whether they go away on holiday or stay at home – they will all find something to write about and draw and then send to their friends.

Procedure

1. Give the class clear instructions on how to make the postcard.
2. Give them some examples of what to write on the back.
3. Make sure all children receive a postcard by writing all their names on slips of paper – 2 slips for each child. Then put them all into a hat and get each child to draw out two names. If your children want to make more than two postcards to send, tell them they can.
4. The children should now circulate around the classroom asking each other for their addresses.
5. Remind the children that they must put a stamp on the postcard if they want it to arrive.

Follow up

Get the children to show the postcards they have received to the rest of the class and to read out what their friends have written. Don't correct any mistakes the children have made as it wouldn't be productive for this kind of work. Pass the postcards around so the children can touch them and read them for themselves. You can then make a class poster entitled "Our Summer Postcards" – fix the postcards to the poster with pieces of string so that you can see both the fronts and the backs.

Variant

Children buy a postcard from a place they visit during the holidays or from their hometown. Get the children to write them and send them into you and the class at the school's address. Back at school children work in pairs describing the postcards to each other and reading the messages on the back. The class can then make a poster entitled "Our Summer Holidays". The class can also write about one of the postcards. Example: *I like Eleonora's postcard. There is a picture of a beach. It is sunny and hot. I like the beach very much.*

This mini-project is particularly good with older children as they have more English to be able to comment on the postcards.

Making a mini-book

A fun way for children to report back on their summer holidays in the present tense is by making a mini-book. These books can include photos, postcards, realia – in the form of tickets, leaflets, cuttings from brochures, etc and also pictures drawn by the children themselves.

Procedure

Show them how to make the book in class:

1. Fold the card in half to form a book
2. Loop the cord around the cover and through the centre pages to hold it all together.
3. With four sheets of card they will have 12 pages to work on. Tell them that one page is for the cover which they should design and write **"My Summer Holiday Book"**. If they find that 12 pages are not enough whilst they are working on it they can easily add more.
4. Stick small rectangles of white paper on the bottom half of each page to write on. It looks much neater and their writing won't show up on some coloured card.
5. Tell them they can stick absolutely anything they like in their books. And give them some examples of what they can write.

Example:

This is my family in Numana.

Here is a picture of my sandcastle.

Look at this funny goat.

Here is a postcard of the "Croda Rossa". It's enormous!

Here is my ticket to Gardaland. Gardaland is fantastic!

This is me. I'm walking in the mountains.

For younger children, get them to bring the materials into class and help them put the book together so they only have to worry about finding things and writing short descriptions about them. Instead of a story book they could make a picture-dictionary mini-book entitled **"My Summer Holiday Word Book"**.

Follow-up

Back at school, the teacher can show the books to the class and the children can then work in pairs talking about their summer holidays and showing each other their books. Tell them that they can read what they have written and they can also have a little chat in Italian about their holidays. They will want to say so much and it would be a little frustrating to have to talk only in English.

Variant

If some children are not going away on a summer holiday there are lots of other topics they can write about whilst they are at home. Here are some examples:

1. A tourist guide for... (name of town)
2. A day in my life...
3. My town in summer.

Do not wait until the last lesson to tell the children about the project and make sure they all write down what they have to do in their diaries. Give them some time to think about it (with their parents) and come back to school and ask you about anything they are not sure of. Try and encourage creativity and individual expression by telling the children that you can't wait to see all

these wonderful projects and that as we all do different things during the summer holidays, there will certainly be a lot to see. Try to be flexible and praise any effort made. Summer projects should be a stimulating fun way of taking a little of the English they know on holiday with them and back into the classroom in September. Have fun and happy holidays!!!!



You need:

- 4 A4 sized sheets of coloured card
- slips of white paper to write on
- a piece of cord
- glue

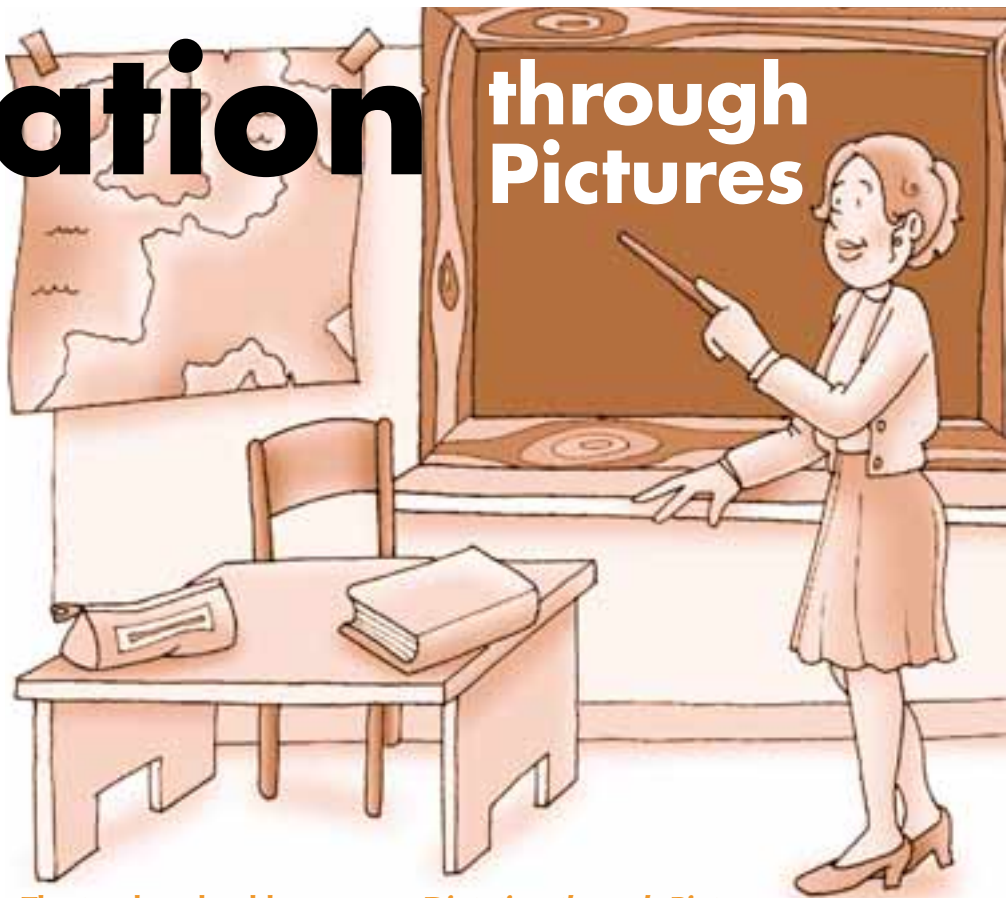


* Sarah M. Howell
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and educational consultant
for LANG Edizioni.



Dictation through Pictures

Dictating descriptions of pictures for children to draw and then describe, both orally and in written form, is a very exciting language activity to try during your lessons. The children enjoy the activity for many reasons. They love to draw and this is not usually a productive language activity in the English class; they love to describe what they have drawn as they are interpreting their own work and they are more likely to write sentences about pictures that they have created than about other visual stimulus that they find in their course books.



The teacher should prepare a Dictation through Pictures in the following way.

1. First decide the language point you want to practice.
2. Then draw a picture with several examples of the language item. Use stick people and simple lines.
3. Write sentences to describe the picture.

Now you are ready to start.

1. On the blackboard, draw the *frame* of the picture and any major lines such as the sea or the mountains. Ask the children to copy the *frame*.
2. Tell the children that you are going to read sentences describing the picture and that they must draw the details very quickly.
3. Dictate your sentences, watching the children while they draw. Do not give them too much time.
4. You have the option to read the sentences a second time if you think it necessary.
5. When you have dictated all the sentences, tell the children to put down their pencils or pens.

Time to check listening comprehension.

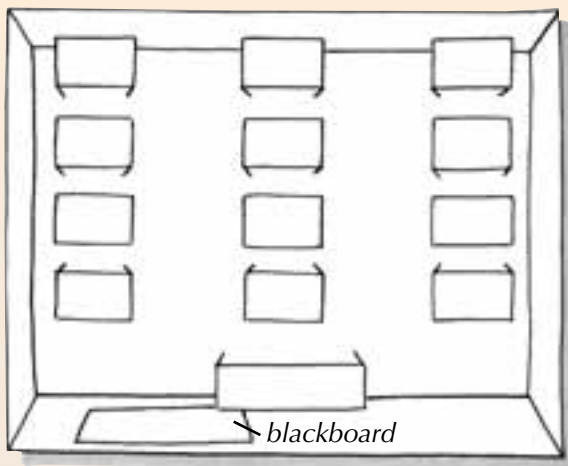
There are many ways to correct. Here is one suggestion. Ask a child to describe a detail of the picture and you draw it on the blackboard. You can sometimes make mistakes when you draw; this will make the children react with passion.



Homework

For homework you can ask the children to write sentences describing their pictures.
Here are two pictures you can dictate together with the sentences.

The Classroom Frame

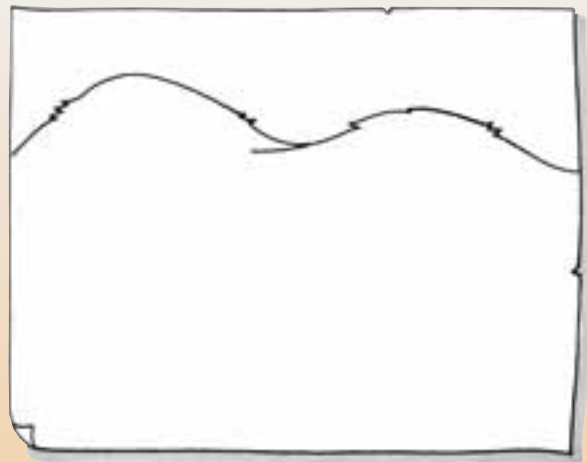


The teacher could also draw the position of only the teacher's desk and blackboard and dictate the position of the desks as:
There are 12 desks in the classroom in three rows of four.

1. In the front row on the left a boy is writing.
2. Behind him there is a girl. She's got long hair.
3. Beside the girl with long hair there is a boy with curly hair.
4. Behind the boy with curly hair there is a girl. Her hand is up because she wants to ask a question.
5. The teacher is standing beside the front desk on the right. She's talking to a boy.
6. The boy has got short hair.
7. The door is at the back next to the last desk on the right.
8. There is a boy at the desk next to the door.
9. In front of the boy next to the door there is a girl with short hair.
10. In front of the girl with short hair there is a boy. He is reading a book.
11. Beside the boy next to the door there is a girl. She's asleep.

How many desks are empty?

The Hill Frame



1. There is a river running along the bottom of the picture.
2. The sun is above the hill on the left.
3. There are two birds flying between the hills.
4. There are some trees on top of the hill on the right.
5. Below the trees there is a house.
6. There is a road from the house to the other side of the river.
7. There are trees on both sides of the bridge.
8. There are three cows on the hill on the left.
9. On the left of the cows there is a dog.
10. The dog is looking at a cat on the other side of the river.

Note: The road goes from one side of the river to the other. Therefore, there must be a bridge there too!



SUMMER Work &



Joanna Carter

It's almost the summer holidays and children and teachers alike will be looking forward to a long relaxing break with sun, fun and no school. But it's important not to completely forget about learning, especially when it comes to learning a language. Many teachers of English have realised it's a good idea to give their children homework to do over the holidays.

Why is summer homework so important?



A three month break from school is a long enough period for children to not only get out of the habit of learning but also to forget much of what they have studied during the academic year. This is especially true of language acquisition as, maybe unlike other subjects, it depends not only on learning, but on frequent and continual practice. Summer homework can bridge the gap and provide the continuity needed. It should be used to consolidate and recirculate what children have already learnt in the previous academic year and also helps them gain a head start in the new academic year. Work done in the holidays could also provide an opportunity to stimulate a natural interest in English which goes beyond the classroom.

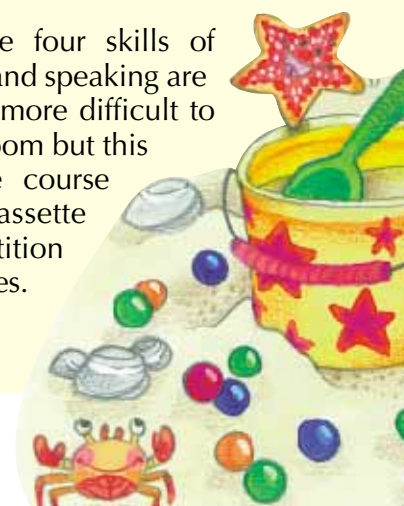
What should be given as summer homework?

An obvious choice is a summer course book but to choose the right one certain criteria should be followed. Remember children will be working autonomously and will be on holiday, so a book should be both educational and a lot of fun.

- Colourful illustrations and characters children can identify with will promote interest.
- A storyline that runs alongside the exercises will stimulate curiosity and encourage children to complete the book.
- Exercises and activities should be well structured and appropriate for each learner's level. They should contain material covered during the school year, so they can be used for systematic revision and consolidation.
- Instructions can be in English or Italian but must be very clear and easy to follow. Complicated books which contain unknown topics will only dishearten and discourage children.



- It's important that the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking are covered. The last two are more difficult to practise outside the classroom but this can be overcome if the course book incorporates a cassette with, for example, repetition exercises, songs and rhymes.



SUMMER FUN



How should homework be set?

If you choose to do a summer course book you could begin it in the classroom before the holidays, so the children can familiarise themselves with the type of exercise they are expected to do. The book chosen should be designed so the children can use it for independent study, but you could encourage parental involvement. Parents don't have to know English themselves, but can check that the children have followed instructions in Italian correctly and help set objectives on how much should be done and when. If there is an accompanying cassette they could join in and learn some of the songs and rhymes.

Above all, present the work as interesting and fun so it becomes part of the childrens' holiday not an obstacle to enjoying it.



This is Olly. He features in **Summer Fun 3** as a guide and friend, showing learners how to do the exercises. He also features on the accompanying cassette.



In the **Summer Fun** series the exercises follow the adventures of Thomas and Penny.

SKILLS TO PRACTISE DURING THE SUMMER



The English World WORKSHEET



Look at these holiday photos. What are Sam and Penny doing?
Complete the sentences and colour the pictures.



Sam ising to the
Penny ising an



Penny ising in the
Sam ising with a



Penny ising.
Sam ising a



Sam ising a
Penny ising a



Now find
photos from
your summer
holidays.
What are
you doing?

The verbs to use are:

listen
eat
swim
play
sunbathe
read
write
drink

The vocabulary to use is:

ice cream
sea
book
postcard
radio
ball
Coca-Cola



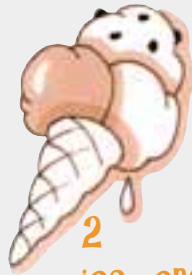
The English World

WORKSHEET

Find the
Seaside
Words.



1
crab



2
ice cream



3
SUNSHINE



4
FISH



13
beachball

12
SUNcream



11
Wave

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



5
SUNGLASSES

6
boat



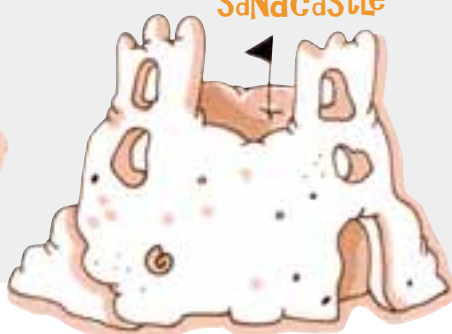
7
Spade



10
SWIMMING
costume



9
SANDcastle



8
bucket



Using the Internet in the Primary Classroom

Pack your e-bags: The Virtual Tourist

Dede Teeler *



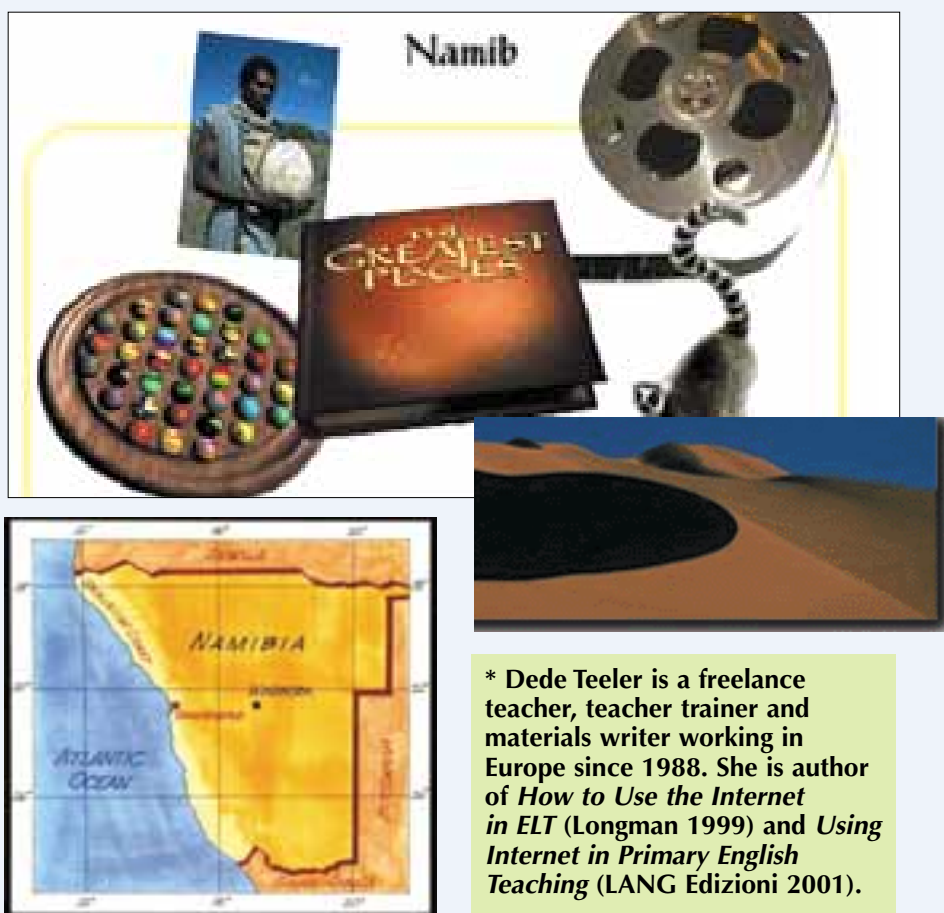
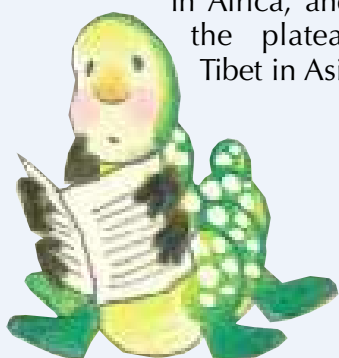
Travel has never been easier. You can make airline reservations on the Web, book your hotel room by email and even check the weather at your destination as you pack your bags. So it is easy to transfer any trip-planning task in your coursebook directly to the Internet. The children in your class must have a good reading level, of course. And they will need some guidance in searching the Web as well.

But let's look at a different way to travel online. Virtual Travel, a chance to visit another place while staying at your desk in your classroom. There are many virtual travel sites available now, and many of them are designed specifically for kids. Some things to look for when choosing a site include:

1. hosted by a permanent organization: a museum, government organization or school;
2. simplicity in design and language;
3. easy to navigate;
4. multimedia files, readable on your computer;
5. interactive, encourages communication.

Now, let's look at an example.

Greatest Places Online is a Website that answers these criteria. It has existed since 1999, designed by the Science Museum of Minnesota to go along with a large-format film playing worldwide. The film takes you on an educational journey to seven of the most geographically dynamic locations on Earth: the Amazon River and Iguazu Falls in South America; the Namib Desert in Namibia, the Okavango delta in Botswana and Madagascar in Africa, and even the plateaus of Tibet in Asia.

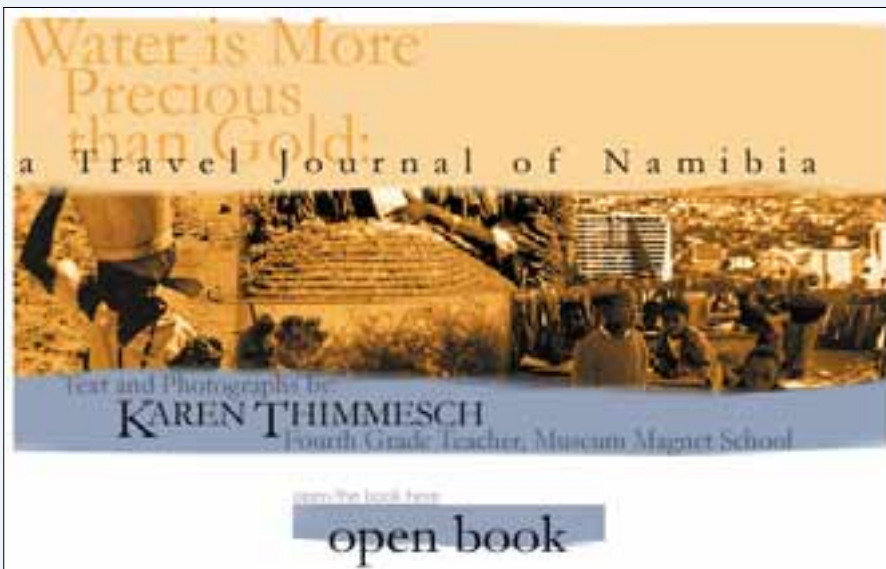


* Dede Teeler is a freelance teacher, teacher trainer and materials writer working in Europe since 1988. She is author of *How to Use the Internet in ELT* (Longman 1999) and *Using Internet in Primary English Teaching* (LANG Edizioni 2001).

This Website is intended to inspire students to learn about the geographically diverse regions and cultures related to the film. The introduction to each area is written in very simple language. As you explore each place, you are given a great variety of activities to choose from: listening to sounds, watching videos of the animals, learning about the people. And the site requires only one program, QuickTime, to see all the multimedia files.



The Namib section you see here explores life in the desert. The map shows you exactly where the desert is, and links to another site which can calculate its exact distance from your school. A video shows the hard life of the beetles that live here, and another captures footage of ships that have crashed on its shores. Your children can read the journal of a teacher who traveled there, where *Water is More Precious than Gold*. Then discover how to make your own mirage, or look at how Namibia connects to your own ecosystem. Finally you can send e-postcards from Namibia, add your own 'Greatest Place' to the site, or even join a discussion board to talk about your experiences.



No need to pack a bag! The simplest way to take advantage of this resource may be to divide your class into 7 travel groups. Each group will explore a different region and do the activities there. Then they can prepare a poster or picture book with a tour guide to show their virtual vacation to the rest of the class.


<http://www.greatestplaces.org>

The English world WORKSHEET

Read this picture letter
with a friend.
Then write a picture letter
about your holidays.





D  FR ,

AM STAYING IN A BIG  NEAR

THE C. THE WEATHER IZ .


 DO M   WORK AND 

HAVE  WITH M  FAMILY.

WHEN IT    TV.

M  SISTER IZ  AND SHE IZ

IN   DAY.

T  ME ABOUT YOUR HOLIDAY.


JOHN



Class and Teacher PROJECTS



We would like to thank our readers for all the wonderful Teacher and Student Projects that have arrived at the LANG offices. Special congratulations to the children and teachers from Primary schools in Bastardo (PG), Casarano (LE), Foligno (PG), Giuggianello (LE) and Sinalunga (SI) who have sent us some excellent materials.

CLASS PROJECT - May 2001

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

Famous Monuments and Buildings

Choose at least six famous monuments or buildings in Great Britain and/or the United States. Find out as much as you can about their history including the people who were involved in the building of them.

The project should be in English and include drawings and/or photographs.

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.

TEACHER PROJECT - May 2001

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:

Introducing the Present Continuous tense.

The lesson plan should be divided into three phases:

- Presentation
- Initial practice exercises
- Consolidation tasks

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 the project following the instructions described.

All projects should be received by 31.10.2001
We may publish extracts from some of the projects in future issues of LANG Primary.

... no summer break for LANG staff!

In the next issue of **LANG Primary** in September 2001 we will be announcing some important new publications for both the Nursery school and the first two years of the Primo Biennio.

More and more schools are introducing a second language in the Nursery school when the children can learn to use the English language for colouring, for categorising and for games and songs. PICNIC is a new course for the Nursery school and will be available in September.

September 2001 also sees the introduction of English into the first-year classes of the Primary School.

LANG Edizioni have for the past eighteen months been developing a new course to meet the needs of young children.

SUNSHINE books 1 and 2 for the first two years of language learning will be published in September.

Both the books start from the beginning and although the language introduced is similar, the language exercises and tasks are very different in the two books. This is an important factor and means that the books can be used either independently or consecutively without repetition of the exercises.

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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6

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School name and address	_____	
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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"/>		

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