

The Living Book - Guidelines

Author: Forum del Libro, with contributions from partners

Version: August 2019



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The Living Book project (2016-1-CY01-KA201-017315) has been funded with support from the European Commission. This document reflects the views of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which might be made of the information contained herein.

Contents

Part one - Background

The Living Book Project
Youth reading literacy in Europe
Young readers & the digital environment

Part two - Methodology

Three pillars:

Off-line, class or group-based activities

- (a) Does the school have a library?
- (b) Is the school reader- and reading-friendly?
- (c) Are students actively involved?
- (d) Are Reading activities considered as multi-disciplinary?
- (e) Debates, flipped classroom
- (f) Reading groups

Enhanced reading

- (a) What is enhanced reading?
- (b) Enhanced reading and enhanced books
- (c) Enhanced reading as exploration
- (d) Enhanced reading and the digital environment
- (e) Examples of enhanced reading activities
- (f) Writing considered as enhanced reading
- (g) Enhanced reading and copyright

Social reading

- (a) What is social reading?
- (b) Reading groups
 - (b1) Reading groups - Engagement
 - (b2) Reading groups - Choosing the book(s) and the participants
 - (b3) Reading groups - Grouping
 - (b4) Reading groups - Spaces
 - (b5) Reading groups - Enhanced reading
 - (b6) Reading groups - Managing conversation

[\(b7\) Reading groups - on-line activities](#)

[\(c\) Inclusive local, national and transnational community building](#)

[Four methodological remarks:](#)

[2.1 Allowing a plurality of reading styles, interests, contents, devices](#)

[2.2 Protecting reading spaces and times](#)

[2.3 Inclusive reading: handling inequalities and SEN \(Special Educational Needs\)](#)

[\(a\) SEN, ICT and the Living Book Project](#)

[\(b\) Background information and literature](#)

[\(c\) Terminology: the debate](#)

[\(d\) SEN and The Living Book Project](#)

[2.4 The role of teachers and parents](#)

[\(a\) Teachers](#)

[\(b\) Parents](#)

[Part three - Tools](#)

[Part four - Comments and Experiences](#)

[OI - The Living Book Guidelines](#)

[FIRST WORKSHOP 'THE PLEASURE OF READING AT SCHOOL IN THE DIGITAL AGE' \('increased' reading path through the use of some specific digital materials\).](#)

[1st step](#)

[2nd step](#)

[THE CHOICE OF THEME](#)

[READING GROUP \(how to create one and make it live happily\)](#)

[HOW TO INCREASE READING with ICT](#)

[Links to the proposed apps](#)

[Some tools for creating timelines:](#)

[FEEDBACK of the focus group](#)

[The survey](#)

Part one - Background

1. The Living Book Project

Poor reading performance combined with a general disinterest for reading has long-term consequences for both individuals and society. In modern societies, reading literacy is considered a primary competence allowing citizens to act and live in a complex world, to work at higher competency levels, and to enjoy their lives more fully¹. As schools are usually the main official institutions responsible for the development of reading literacy, children who leave school with poor reading performance are not only at great risk of exclusion from the labour market, but are also, in effect, excluded from further education and from full participation in a knowledge-based society, not just in the field of humanities but even in science or technology related fields. Amongst the available data, a clear example is offered by the 2013 study “Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16”, conducted in the UK by the UCL Institute of Education (IOE), which shows that regular access to books between the age of 10 and 16 drives up standards in mathematics (Sullivan & Brown, 2013²). Struggling readers, in fact, also seem to have serious difficulties in understanding written mathematics problems, thus seriously compromising their chances of getting into Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education.

Recognizing the importance of reading, the EU Education and training 2020 (ET 2020) benchmarks set in 2009 included achieving less than 15 percent of 15-year-olds being under-skilled in reading by 2020 as one of its main targets. In reality, however, while some EU countries have since made significant progress towards improving their students’ performance in reading skills, other countries are still lagging behind. The percentage of low achievers in reading at the EU level has actually grown in recent years, from 17.8% in 2012 to 19.7% in 2015, cancelling all the progress made since 2009, when it was also 19.5% (European Commission, 2016³). According to the latest PISA

¹ European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture (2012). *EU High Level Group of Experts on Literacy: Final Report*. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf

² Sullivan, A. S., & Brown, M. (2013). *Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading*. London: Institute of Education, Center for Longitudinal Studies Working Paper.

³ European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture (2016). *PISA 2015: EU performance and initial conclusions regarding education policies in Europe*. Available online: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/pisa-2015-eu-policy-note_en.pdf

(2015) results, approximately 50% of the EU countries that participated in the study had significantly lower performance in basic science, reading and mathematics skills, while only two (2) European countries (Estonia and Finland) were included within the top-10 rated countries globally (EU Commission, 2016). The results of PISA 2018 will be available from December 2019.

In an attempt to respond to this challenge, the Erasmus+/KA2 project The Living Book - Augmenting Reading for Life project (Sept 2016-Aug 2019) was designed with the aim to address the under-achievement of European students aged 9-15 in reading skills. The project consortium is composed of nine partner organizations from six different EU countries (Cyprus, Estonia, Italy, Romania, Portugal, and the UK). In most of the partner countries, the proportion of low-achievers in reading is still dramatically high: Cyprus (35.6%), Romania (38.7%), Italy (21.0%), and Portugal (18.8%). Groups with low performance tend to be students from socio-economically disadvantaged families, with less well-educated parents and with immigrant backgrounds. The project's overall aim is to increase these young people's motivation to read and to contribute towards meeting the 2020 EU target of reducing the number of underachievers in partner countries and in the EU overall while at the same time boosting a cluster of other key and transversal competencies in students (e.g. digital skills, learning to learn, critical thinking, co-operative skills). Living Book aspires to achieve this through the development of a novel pedagogical approach that combines offline activities promoting reading literacy with online experiences of "virtual augmentation" of a book and its reading experience, as well as with social dynamics leading to the creation of European communities of young "augmented" readers.

Living Book has been reaching out to teachers and parents to inform them about new technological developments that could be utilized in primary and secondary schools to augment students' reading experience with rich media content. Through a combination of Open Educational Resources (OER), involvement in professional learning activities and pilot experimentation, Living Book has been contributing towards strengthening the profile and competencies of European teachers from upper primary and lower secondary schools (ages 9-15) by encouraging them to adopt standards-based practices and deal with diversified groups of learners, and particularly with pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Living Library supports the project activities by offering students, parents and teachers online tools to augment the reading experience with rich media content. A series of OER toolkits (downloadable guides, videos, links to tools) have been integrated into this multilingual platform, and can be used by students and teachers to create and edit content. The Living Library also hosts a social community of "Augmented Teachers" and "Augmented Readers" across Europe.

The current document outlines the methodological guidelines for European teachers (and other stakeholders) to follow in order to implement the Living Book approach.

These guidelines, as well as most of the instructional material and tools that has/will be developed within the context of the Living Book Project, deal with the use of enhanced reading as a strategy for fostering interest and love for reading among students and for bridging the gap between traditional and digital media ecosystems, thus enhancing complexity-related competencies.

2. Youth reading literacy in Europe

Available data on youth reading literacy in Europe show a clear and significant gap between best-performing (mostly northern and western) countries and poor-performing (mostly southern and eastern) countries. According to the latest OECD-PISA report (2015, students age 15, PISA reading scale), there is a gap of 94 points between the best performing European country (Finland, PISA reading score 526) and the worst performing one (Bulgaria, PISA reading score 432).

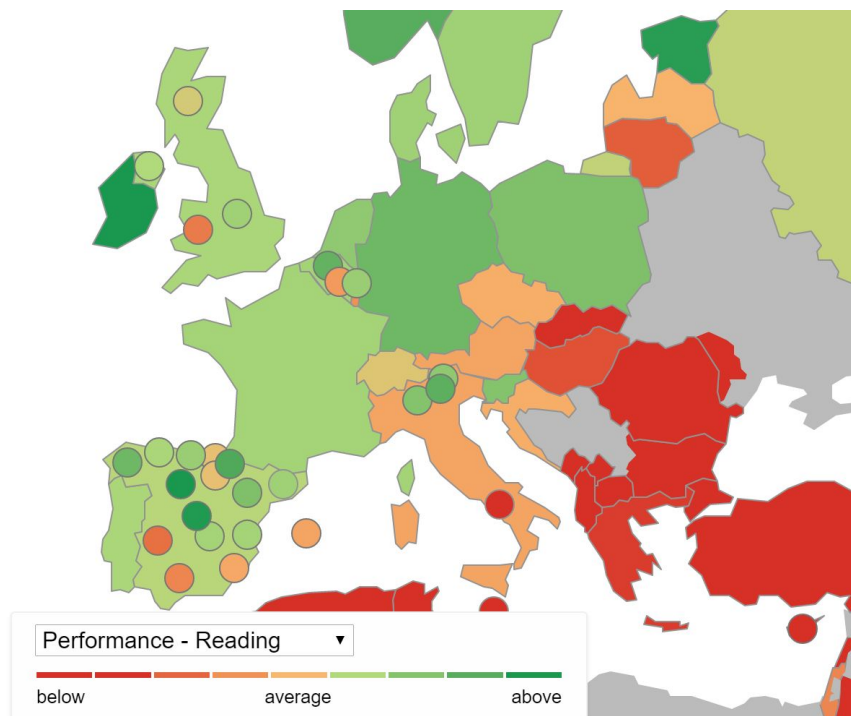


Fig. 1- PISA Reading Performances, Europe. Source: PISA 2015

Between 2012 and 2015, the average European reading score has dropped slightly from 496 to 493. Even more worryingly, the gap between the best-performing and worst-performing countries seems to be widening: the average three years trend for Finland shows a 5-point drop, but the negative trend is worse in Hungary (-12 points),

the Slovak Republic (-12 points), Iceland (-9 points), Greece (- 8 points), Cyprus (-6 points): all countries that were already below the European average in reading literacy.

According to PISA 2015, the nine European countries with a significant (equal or above 5 points) three-year positive trend are Estonia (+9), Slovenia (+11), Germany (+6), Ireland (+13), Norway (+5), the Czech Republic (+5), Spain (+7), Luxembourg (+5), Croatia (+5). Six of them, however, were already near or above the European average in reading literacy.

In 2011, drawing on the results of PISA surveys 2000-2009, the Eurydice document *Teaching Reading in Europe: Contexts, Policies and Practices* observed that “the spread of the results in reading [the gap between the highest and lowest scores] slightly decreased indicating a growth in equity of educational outcomes”. Unfortunately, as we have seen, the PISA surveys 2009-2015 seem to display a reversal of this trend.

This means that the process of improving the quality of youth reading literacy in Europe and of bridging the gaps between countries (and within countries) is NOT a direct and straightforward consequence of the process of European integration: it requires new specific, active, bold, shared policies and strategies. The Living Book Project aims to provide tools and methodologies that can help in dealing with this challenge, taking into account the other significant factor of the equation: the new digital ecosystem that shapes the informational and learning environment of the new generations.

3. Young readers & the digital environment

The use of digital media has deeply modified the habits, the behaviours and the information ecosystem of young people. Time spent on-line exceeds time spent watching TV (UK data, [Ofcom Report 2016](#); similar results in other countries: [Germany](#), [France](#); in the USA, time spent online has exceeded time spent watching TV since 2009, in China since 2013); it should be added that young people prefer the new on-demand and/or on-line TV formats to traditional broadcasting. Time spent reading books is only a tiny fraction (Eurobarometer data) of the total amount of time spent on-line or on other media (including TV).

This, however, does not mean that our students are the product or the demonstration of an anthropological mutation: there is no ‘homo sapiens digital’, and the concept of ‘digital native’ is no more than a (misleading) metaphor. Our brain is the result of a long evolution, competencies and habits connected to the use of digital media are acquired, just as the competencies and habits connected to the use of traditional media have been. Reading is also an acquired competence. Education and learning remain therefore as essential as ever in shaping all the competencies connected with the use of information, both in traditional and in digital form.

There is, however, one significant difference between traditional media and the digital ecosystem: while in traditional media granular content and complex, structured content coexist (with the book being the main representative of complex, structured content), on digital media, as of now, granular and fragmented content largely prevail: complexity is often limited to the horizontal level connecting granular content (as exemplified by the World Wide Web), and does not extend to the vertical level of structured, thematically coherent content.

Fragmentation and granularity, however, are not *essential* features of the digital ecosystem: no intrinsic feature of the digital encoding requires granularity at the macro-level. Rather, they are a feature of the digital ecosystem as *it is now*. There are reasons for this: the new possibilities opened by horizontal complexity, by the use and the integration of sound, video, animation, links, interactive content, require time to adapt, and are better experimented in an environment constituted by granular content of low vertical complexity. After all, granular content (contracts, commercial and political agreements, letters...) also characterized the early history of writing, while vertically complex and structured contents were a much later development. Basically, the digital ecosystem is still too young to handle highly-structured and complex vertical content well.

Things, however, are changing. Competencies connected with the production, use, evaluation and selection of vertically (and not just horizontally) complex, structured *digital* information will be more and more important in the coming decades. The new generations face a momentous challenge: that of (re)acquiring the competencies required by (vertical, structured) complexity, extending them from the traditional to the new digital ecosystem. The (re)conquest of complexity-connected competencies is an essential educational need - possibly the most important one - for the first decades of the new millennium.

The book-form is the most important among the traditional formats for complex information, both in narrative and in argumentative contexts. This explains why books and reading might and should have an essential role in bridging the gap between traditional and digital media. Enhanced books and enhanced reading (as defined later on in the guidelines) are the two main tools that can be used in bridging this gap. Enhanced books, however, still require substantial development work (both in reading devices and in formats). Enhanced reading, on the contrary, is already possible and widely practiced.

These guidelines, as well as most of the contents and tools developed (and in development) in the context of the Living Book Project, deal with the use of enhanced reading as a strategy for fostering interest and love for reading among students (age range 9-15) and for bridging the gap between traditional and digital media ecosystems, thus enhancing complexity-related competencies. Our aim is to connect the habit of reading complex textual content with the digital media landscape and the digital

learning tools already used by students, while leaving them completely free to choose the preferred reading environment (paper or digital).

Special attention will be devoted to the connection between reading and writing, since the two activities are related to the same basic educational need of increasing complexity-related competencies. Furthermore, as we shall see, writing is - and has always been - a fundamental component of enhanced reading. However, writing will not and should not be considered as the *only* or even as the main component of enhanced reading: in a media-rich, multimedial environment, audio, music, images, video, interactive contents are all relevant and useful, offering multiple opportunities to expand the reading experience.

Part two - Methodology

1. Three pillars:

1.1 Off-line, class or group-based activities

The school is a relational learning environment which is not limited to a specific location or to its physical setting but is nevertheless deeply rooted in it; all available data show that the effective design and setting of physical learning spaces is a key factor in learning success. This is also true in fostering reading and literacy: “The physical arrangement and organization of an effective literacy classroom can be a powerful tool in support of, or an unintended impediment to, effective literacy instruction” (D.R. Reutzel and S. Clark, [Organizing Literacy Classrooms for Effective Instruction. A survival Guide](#). In «The Reading Teacher» vol. 65 issue 2 pp. 96-109).

The implementation of rich, reader-friendly learning environments is a key objective of the Living Book Project, and necessary when implementing enhanced reading strategies. Reading should be considered as a fundamental learning activity, and the design of *all* learning spaces, including the physical ones, should take this into account. A careful, reading-oriented redesign of school spaces is one of the first steps to be implemented.

We suggest starting with the following checklist:

(a) Does the school have a library?

The school library is a key element in the design of a reading-friendly school. The school library is much more than a space with books: it should be an *agent* fostering information literacy and reading-oriented activities, a *documentation and service centre*, an *open learning environment* for all the school community (students, teachers, but also families and the neighbourhood); a *laboratory* in which traditional media and digital media co-exist and interact, an *informal space* for learning and reading activities based on interests and projects rather than on traditional class-groups.

The schools participating in the Living Book Project are encouraged to improve and redesign the existing school library - or to create a school library if they do not have one - according to the specifications of the [IFLA School Library Guidelines](#). We suggest

including in the design or re-design of the school library a meeting room for reading groups and 'soft' spaces for relaxed, lean-back reading. We suggest connecting the school library to the public libraries nearby. We suggest having at least one specialized librarian on the staff of the school library, and providing adequate training to the teachers involved. We suggest considering the school library not just as an asset but as an active agent in shaping the learning policies of the school. The number of available books is less important than the quality of the spaces, of the competencies and of the activities.

(b) Is the school reader- and reading-friendly?

Reading activities should not be confined to the classroom and to the school library: all the spaces of the school should be reader-and reading-friendly; book crossing and reading suggestion kiosks could be placed in corridors and common spaces, audiobooks - as well as music and video - could be made available in the gym when it is used for individual practice, books and newspapers should be made available in the cafeteria or in relaxation spaces, spaces for reading and conversation should be included in the design of internal and external school spaces, etc.

(c) Are students actively involved?

Students should be actively involved in the design or re-design of the school library and of all the learning and reading spaces in the school, in the choice of reading content and services, in the choice and shaping of reading-related activities, and in monitoring their results. The participation in group-based activities should be based on interests and personal choice rather than on pre-existing disciplinary or class-based groups.

(d) Are Reading activities considered as multi-disciplinary?

It is often - and wrongly - assumed that the activity of promoting reading in the school environment should be mainly (or only) attributed to teachers of language and literature. This is not the case: reading is an inherently multidisciplinary activity, and may be just as important for science, economics, figurative arts, music, sports... *All* teachers should contribute to the shaping of the school policies, activities and services connected with reading, and literature should not be considered as the only or even the 'best' kind of reading. The 'right' book for a given student or a given group of students in a given moment might be a novel but also an essay, a comic book, a book of poetry, an art book, even a cooking or a gardening book.

(e) Debates, flipped classroom

While the concept of enhanced reading, which will be discussed in the next section, is better implemented in a media-rich environment and when using on-line contents and tools, there are many every-day, off-line, class or group-based activities which could (and should) include reading as a component. Among them, of special relevance for our guidelines are *debates* and *flipped classroom*.

A *debate* is an educational practice based on the evaluation of different positions on a given topic by means of an ordered discussion based on rational argumentation. Usually, in a debate two opposite positions are defended by two different groups of students. A debate should always use and declare authorities and grounds for the positions and ideas which are being defended or criticized; books and papers are among the content which should be included as reference. Their active use in debates is helpful to understand the key role complex written content has in shaping our knowledge and our interpretation of the world.

Flipped classroom is an educational strategy and practice based on the use of organized learning content, such as video lessons, used as a component of home activities for students, de-emphasizing the role of traditional frontal lessons in the classroom, and allowing for classroom activities focused on collaborative learning, debate/discussion, laboratory, content production. It should be stressed that in the context of a flipped classroom, books and written content should NOT disappear: on the contrary, they should be present - as part of the lesson content and as reference, in printed and/or in digital form - both in home and in classroom activities.

'Traditional' (and less traditional) class or group-based reading activities, such as reading contests, reading games, reading aloud, silent reading, dramatized reading (e.g. [Crazy Professor Reading](#)), partner reading, class- and school- based bookcrossing and book suggestions, reading day(s) or reading week(s), guided reading, meetings with authors, booktrailers, etc., can and should co-exist with enhanced reading as described in the next section. **The Living Book project guidelines do not substitute but integrate other possible strategies for fostering reading in the school environment.**

(f) Reading groups

Reading groups are a key component of the Living Book Project strategy, and can be organized in the form of off-line, blended and on-line activities. Reading groups are the ideal context for exploring enhanced reading, and are among the main tools for social reading. They will therefore be discussed in detail, after dealing with enhanced reading,

in the section of the Guidelines devoted to social reading (part two - section 1.3), and the Living Book platform will include specific tools for reading groups.

1.2 Enhanced reading

(a) What is enhanced reading?

For the purpose of these Guidelines, **enhanced (or augmented) reading** is defined as the activity of searching, selecting, producing, organizing, describing, reusing and remixing any kind of content (textual, audio, video, interactive...), on-line or off-line, to complement and enhance a given reading content, while exploring its possible connections with other texts, media and contents (intertextual dimension) and/or with the experience, interests, ideas, learning paths and activities of a single reader or a group of readers (experiential and motivational dimension).

In a somewhat simpler, alternative formulation, enhanced reading is based on collecting relevant external content and/or producing self-authored content (images, video, audio & music, other texts...), possibly re-mixing it in creative and original ways, and connecting it with the content of the book(s) or of the text(s) being read.

For the purpose of these Guidelines, the expression 'enhanced reading' and the expression 'augmented reading' are considered as synonymous. Enhanced or augmented reading should NOT be confused with augmented reality: augmented reading can use augmented reality tools as one of the (many) possible ways to enhance the reading experience, but the concept of augmented reading is a much broader one.

(b) Enhanced reading and enhanced books

The concept of enhanced (or augmented) reading should be carefully distinguished from (and can be better understood by contrasting it with) the concept of enhanced (or augmented) books, mainly explored in the context of contemporary digital publishing.

An enhanced book includes rich-media and possibly interactive material as part of the (usually digital) content itself. The enhanced content is therefore selected and provided by the *author/publisher*.

On the contrary, enhanced reading is based on the independent research, selection, production, remix of content **carried out by the reader** which can enhance his or her reading experience by exploring references and possibilities given by the text, and/or by connecting it with the world of experiences and interests of the reader.

(c) Enhanced reading as exploration

Our concept of enhanced reading is partially based on Louise Rosenblatt's idea of the relation between reader and text as a 'transaction', strongly dependent upon the individual and partially contingent interests, experiences, knowledge, competencies, and motivations of the reader (Louise M. Rosenblatt, *Literature as Exploration*, 1938, 5th ed. MLA 1995). From this point of view, each reading experience is a different 'exploration' of the text.

The nature and shape of an individual reading 'transaction' between a given reader and a given text are not (and should not be) pre-determined by the text itself or by the teacher, yet are not to be seen as completely arbitrary: each reading experience is the exploration of a space of possibilities which is opened by the interaction between the text, the reader and the reading context.

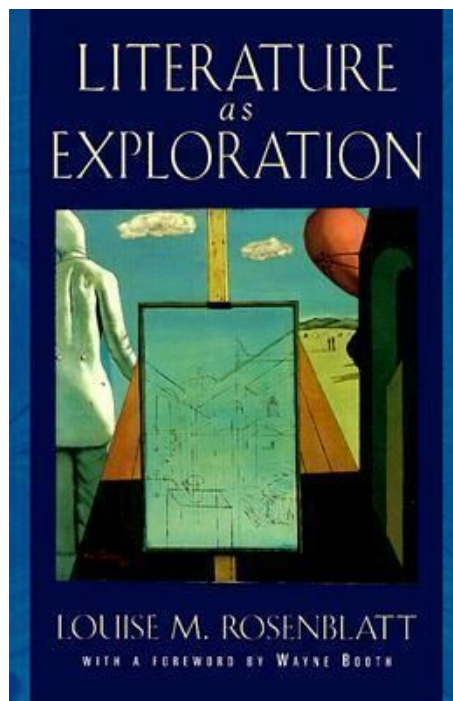


Fig. 2 - Louise M. Rosenblatt, *Literature as Exploration*, 5th ed., MLA 1995

Enhanced reading is a strategy (not necessarily the only one) which builds upon the idea of reading as transaction and exploration; enhanced reading should therefore be considered as strongly dependent upon the interests, motivations and experiences of the reader(s), rather than a mainly teacher/driven activity. The teacher and the school community, however, have a fundamental role in shaping the reading environment, the

activities implemented and their social dimension, and in promoting and recognizing enhanced reading as a useful learning practice.

(d) Enhanced reading and the digital environment

The idea of enhanced reading is not a new one: it is as old as reading itself, it is ubiquitous, and it is not necessarily limited to the digital environment: every reading experience makes reference to the intertextual dimension(s) of the text being read, and is connected by the reader with his or her experiences and interests, with other books and contents, with social activities and agents. Enhanced reading is therefore a well-established reading practice, and most readers will understand its meaning without the need of any 'technical' explanation.

However, given the relevance of the digital ecosystem for younger readers, on-line digital content should clearly be included within the scope of enhanced reading, and may even be considered as the main source for relevant content. Most readers, not just young ones, find it perfectly natural to search the web for images of places or objects described in the book they are reading, for information on events and persons mentioned, for opinions and reviews of other readers, for quoted texts but also for relevant video and audio content.

The methodologies and tools developed by the Living Book Project are designed to improve and to systematically implement the idea of enhanced reading within a learning and educational framework, assuming the digital ecosystem as a powerful environment both for discovery/selection and for production/remix of media-rich, reading related contents. The Living Library Platform is specifically designed in order to offer tools and examples for enhanced reading activities partially or totally based on the use of on-line and digital contents.

(e) Examples of enhanced reading activities



Fig. 3 – Enhanced reading activities: Visual exploration of intertextuality using Instagram stories and QR-codes. The books and objects on the table are related to the book being read (on the bookstand); the colour bars of the plastic sphere provide a visual representation of different dimensions of the book.

A few examples:

- **Maps:** students could draw maps of places or characters' movements in the book, using Google Maps or other map and georeferencing tools
- **Timeline:** students could organize a timeline of the main events described in the book, or of the actions of a character or a group of characters...
- **QR Codes:** linked to books or relevant on-line content; QR codes can be printed on post-it and added to the relevant pages of the physical book
- **Cover:** students could be invited to design a new cover for the book, possibly comparing different editions online; the cover could also be an animated, 3D or video cover
- **Music score or playlist** for the book
- **Booktrailer**
- **FanFiction** writing
- **Haiku:** a haiku for each character of the book
- **Social Media Marketing simulations**
- **Billboard:** a drawing and a few words to promote the book
- **Instagram** (and/or Snapchat): creating an account dedicated to the book students are reading, so that they can post and share photos and stories connected to it
- **Twitter:** reconstructing the book in form of a twitter conversation; Twitter summaries; Twitter social reading using apps such as Betwyll

- **Padlet:** images and texts could be uploaded to Padlet, a collaborative platform, halfway between a doc and a website page
- **Physical or 3D modelling**
- **Augmented or virtual reality**

(f) Writing considered as enhanced reading

Reading and writing are by their own nature complementary and strictly interrelated; writing tasks such as summaries or reviews have traditionally been considered (and should still be considered) as an important component of school-based reading practices. However, the digital environment offers new, powerful opportunities to explore the connection between reading and writing, and to investigate the many possible ways the reading experience can be enhanced through different kinds of writing practices.

Among them, **Fan Fiction** (or *Fanfic*) deserves special attention and can surely be included among the most interesting and recommended forms of enhanced reading.

Fan Fiction is the activity of writing stories based on a given narrative universe (which can be book-based, but also based on movies, TV series, comics...) and conceived as a possible follow-up, or integration parallel or alternate development of the original (or 'canonic') stories.

Fan Fiction is widespread on-line and mainly practiced by girls and boys in the age range 11-17. The texts produced are collected in specific and/or generalist repositories (such as fanfiction.net or archiveofourown.org; language-specific fanfic repositories are available for most European languages) which usually offer the possibility of adding comments and reviews. The Harry Potter universe alone has more than one million fanfic stories. Even if mainly based on writing, Fan Fiction can be (and often is) complemented by drawing and/or by producing video, audio or music content.

FanFiction offers a unique opportunity to explore in an easy and engaging way complex literary concepts such as canon, storytelling, (narrative) possible worlds, alternate story paths, character development...; it can be used both for collaborative writing and for writing contests; it is a perfect environment for introducing peer-reviewing and peer-tutoring, and the very idea of 'publishing' a story is usually self-rewarding.

(g) Enhanced reading and copyright

Unfortunately, copyright is a complex and sometimes discouraging issue, in which it might be necessary to take into account both European and national legislation. It is clear, however, that in its current form copyright legislation can often seriously hinder

learning and teaching activities, most notably when it includes content remix or reuse (as is the case of enhanced reading). The need for simpler European copyright regulation and for well-designed, teacher-empowering education exceptions has often been stressed and is reaffirmed here.

Given the complex nature of the issue, any attempt to summarize copyright regulations and suggested behaviours would undermine the very nature of our Guidelines. What can be done here is merely underline the relevance of carefully considering copyright regulations and copyright-related issues in planning enhanced reading activities. For a more detailed discussion, we suggest the following papers: Association of European Research Libraries, [Limitations and Exceptions in EU Copyright Law for Libraries, Educational and Research Establishments: A Basic Guide](#), October 2016, and Teresa Nobre, [Copyright and Education in Europe: 15 everyday cases in 15 countries](#), published by Communia - Open Society Foundations, April 2017.

N.B. Given the timeframe of its elaboration, this version of the Guidelines could not take into account the new European Copyright Directive approved by the European Parliament in March 2019, and, more specifically, the new provisions on education exception included in article 4 of the new norm. Teachers and school librarians are encouraged to acquire from reliable sources further information and advice on this point.

1.3 Social reading

(a) What is social reading?

Reading is an interesting mix of individual and social behaviours: while the act of reading itself is mostly individual and requires (as we shall see) protected spaces and times, reading is a social practice which both requires and prompts social interactions: the texts we read are usually written by others, are produced, distributed and selected in a social context (we often choose what to read on the basis of suggestions and reviews), and what we read is then discussed, re-elaborated and used in a social context.

The social dimension of reading is an essential component of any strategy for promoting and improving the practice of reading, even more so in social learning environments such as schools. The Living Book Project recognizes the idea of reading (and of enhanced reading) as a social practice and assumes it as an essential part of its methodology in order to offer strategies and tools to explore and improve the social dimension of reading.

In the digital ecosystem, the idea of social reading is often connected with the use of on-line social reading tools and platforms, allowing for a collaborative discussion and

review of reading contents; social reading platforms are usually based on the creation of user profiles, on their connection in social networks (mainly by means of a 'friendship' relation), and on a number of tools (such as forums, reviews and comments) offered to the users to produce reading-related content.

A significant aspect of social reading is represented by *reading suggestions*. In the digital ecosystem, reading suggestions are often the result of collaborative filtering algorithms, based on user profiling and on user behaviours within the platform. Basically, a collaborative filtering algorithm suggests books similar to the ones the reader has already read and liked, and to the ones that other users with 'similar' profiles to her/him have read and liked. While collaborative filtering is widely used by on-line retailers, it is not the only possible way to produce reading suggestions. The practice of enhanced reading might offer alternative ways to produce reading suggestions (mainly by exploring intertextuality and by collaboratively connecting the book to other relevant content) and promotes their sharing within social reading environments.

The Living Book project recognizes the interest in social reading tools and has developed the Living Library platform accordingly (<http://www.thelivinglibrary.eu/>). The Living Library is obviously not the only useful or available tool in this field, and we do not intend to suggest using just our platform. On the contrary, we suggest actively researching, evaluating and selecting other tools and/or platforms depending on the interests, competencies, objectives and activities involved in each and every reading project. Beside the Living Library platform, however, we do not endorse or recommend any specific tool or platform: rather, we suggest methodologies and activities which might (or might not) use different and specific tools and platform according to the choices, preferences and interests of the participants.

Among the social reading practices and methodologies endorsed by the Living Book Project, the implementation of reading groups is of special relevance. Reading groups are considered by the Project as the ideal context for social and enhanced reading.

(b) Reading groups

Traditionally, a reading group, or book club, is a group of people who decide to share their pleasure of reading and meet at pre-arranged times in order to discuss one or more books they have selected and read. Organizational problems are therefore reduced essentially to finding a convenient time and place for everyone and to selecting the criteria for choosing the book to read.

In a reading group addressed to students, the picture is usually very different. In most cases, girls and boys join the group not after making a fully autonomous decision, but because the group falls within school activities. Therefore, their degree of involvement,

as well as their reading abilities, may be extremely variable. But “the goal is simple: students interacting with each other about a common text in a way that is both engaging and interesting” (Molly Matheny, *One Size Does Not Fit All: Increasing Student Engagement through Book Clubs*⁴). Ideally, in a reading-friendly school environment, students should perceive the reading group as a voluntary, pleasurable, and largely self-organized activity. Participation in reading groups can and should be encouraged and could even be rewarded but should never be perceived as mandatory.

The reading group is a community: “Creating meaning together will force total strangers to connect. We will reveal strengths, expose our weaknesses and grow stronger as we build a community of readers” (Cris Tovani, *I Read It, But I Don’t Get It*⁵). “The great virtue of collective reading projects is that they give us an occasion to work together to help us sustain our attention, to achieve goals we might have thought too difficult to attain working on our own.” (#OccupyGaddis, Lee Konstantinou⁶).

Before starting the group, it is useful to plan - and to discuss with students - its form and the main activities involved. A few points that teachers and school librarians should address and on which we will offer specific suggestions in the following sections are:

- How to foster engagement before the group starts?
- Choosing the book(s)...
- ...and the participants
- The reading experience: where, when, how
- Enhanced reading as a stimulus to engagement
- Management of discussions

(b1) Reading groups - Engagement

Even reluctant readers can be enticed if they can have their say and their opinions are respected. A conversation about students' reading experiences, their different habits, their likes and dislikes might be a good starting point. Students should be involved in the creation and management of the reading group from the start; they should say what they expect from the reading group and give their suggestions. The students who are most actively interested can make suggestions about how to better engage the more reluctant ones. When it is difficult to engage the readers directly, the engagement can be indirect: e.g. “we want to make a video (a play, a comic book, a booktrailer, a 3D

⁴ Molly Matheny, *One Size Does Not Fit All: Increasing Student Engagement through Book Clubs*, Wisconsin English Journal Volume 53, Number 2 Fall 2011, on-line at

<http://journals.sfu.ca/uwmadison/index.php/wej/article/viewFile/414/480>

⁵ Cris Tovani, *I Read It, But I Don’t Get It*, Portland, Main: Stenhouse Publishers, 2000.

⁶ Lee Konstantinou, #OccupyGaddis Begins, post in the blog *The Habit of Tlön*, June 15, 2012, on-line at <https://www.leekonstantinou.com/2012/06/15/occupygaddis-begins/>.

animation...) based on this book: let's read the book together so we can discuss what should be in the screenplay and define the storyboard".

(b2) Reading groups - Choosing the book(s) and the participants

Choosing a book that "fits all" is not easy. For this reason, students should be involved in choosing the book(s) to read from the start. Reading groups should be based on interests and on free choice, not on pre-arranged decisions. Therefore, reading groups can (and should) include interested students from different classes and - within a reasonable range - even of different ages. Class-based reading groups are of course possible, but they are usually less effective than interest-based, transversal reading groups.

Teachers and students should pre-select *together* a few books (not necessarily belonging to the same genre) from which to choose the one(s) to read; during the process of selection they should see them (as physical books and/or in digital format and/or by means of summary sheets which should always include the book cover). If possible, they can also read aloud two or three pages from each of them. Reading aloud a short story and stimulating a discussion about it is the best way to show in practice what a book club is and prepares students to make the choice of the book that will be read.

There is no need to restrict the scope of the reading group just to narrative or literature: reading groups can discuss fiction and nonfiction, graphic novels, audiobooks...

In discussing the possible choices, new suggestions can be made. A common discussion of different possible choices might lead to choosing a single book to be read together, or two or more books to be read in different reading group. If a book has strong support in the discussion, it is always wise to check whether it is possible to identify a sufficient number of interested students in order to organize a specific reading group about it.

At the end of the discussion, and *only* after everybody has expressed his or her opinion, is it possible to decide which book(s) to read either by reaching an agreement or by voting (in this case, including a second choice).

The process of choosing the book(s) to read might take place either in the school (ideally, in the school library) or on-line, making use of argumentative decision tools such as Tricider, a free online tool that gives participants the opportunity to add pros and cons to different alternatives before voting (*here is how we used Tricider in one of our test groups: <http://www.tricider.com/brainstorming/3BP0rbiKoaN>*).

(b3) Reading groups - Grouping

In order to have good discussions, where each member of the book club can have her/his say, it is preferable that the number of participants not exceed 8/10.

In principle, grouping should be based on interest and voluntary choice, not on homogeneous skills.

Engagement can be enhanced if students have different roles within their group (for example, each student "follows" a different character closely). One of the participants (or more than one, taking turns) should keep the 'reading diary' (or 'log') of the group. Teachers should guide, but not impose these choices.

(b4) Reading groups - Spaces

Although the goal of a book club in a school is the interaction of students around a book, the reading experience is solitary and requires a dedicated time and a quiet environment. Students should be aware of this necessity and should be supported by the school in finding such spaces.

The spaces for the meetings of reading groups should be comfortable, well-lit, organized in a circular and participatory way; they should offer a computer with video projection or an interactive whiteboard and Wi-Fi Internet connection, allowing for a collaborative on-line search for relevant data and material.

"The physical arrangement and organization of a classroom [and, more generally, of school spaces, including school library] can be powerful and supportive of effective literacy instruction" (Ray Reutzel, Sarah Clark, *Organizing literacy classrooms for effective instruction*⁷)

(b5) Reading groups - Enhanced reading

Tasks related to a reading group should never be compulsory and should be chosen in a collaborative way; both students and teachers could suggest a variety of activities both offline and online in order to improve engagement and prepare collective discussions.

⁷ Ray Reutzel, Sarah Clark, *Organizing literacy classrooms for effective instruction*, in [The Reading Teacher](#) 65(2):96 - 109 · October 2011.

Enhanced reading is suggested by the Living Book Project as a key strategy in organizing reading-group activities. The strategies and examples of enhanced reading discussed in section (ii) of the Guidelines can all be applied within reading groups.

Reading aloud or dramatizing sections or passages of a text can be a further, useful strategy to improve engagement. "Reading aloud to students of all ages, including teenagers, is a vital part of any good reading program. It's enjoyable, stimulates interest, the imagination and language, and exposes students to the joys of reading". (*Strategies to engage students as readers*, National Library, New Zealand⁸)

(b6) Reading groups - Managing conversation

Before starting the discussion about the book, students, and especially shy and reluctant readers, could be put at ease by having them participate in a relaxed conversation focusing on the enhanced reading activities and not just on the reading itself.

Teachers can decide whether to moderate the discussion themselves or (better) having a student moderate it (with a rotation of this role). In any case the key factor for the success of a discussion is respect: moderators should not be judgmental; students should listen to other opinions without interrupting.

Discussions could also include specific sessions organized as a debate (opposing students who liked the book they read and students who disliked it, or students who prefer a character to another or...); however, the debate works better *after* a general and free discussion about the book.

(b7) Reading groups - on-line activities

While enhanced reading usually requires on-line activities, the reading group itself can be based on traditional, physical meetings. However, we suggest using the Living Library Platform as a support tool even in traditional reading groups.

Of course, it is also possible to use the on-line environment in a stronger and more pervasive way, by organizing all or most of the group activities on-line. In this case, on-line meetings (using tools such as a virtual classroom or an on-line meeting centre, or even just by means of Skype or Google hangouts) can take the place of physical meetings, and enhanced reading activities can all be based on the use of the Living Library Platform and/or of learning management systems such as Moodle.

⁸ On-line at <https://natlib.govt.nz/schools/reading-engagement/strategies-to-engage-students-as-readers>.

(c) Inclusive local, national and transnational community building

The methodologies and tools identified by the Living Book Project can be applied, as we have done so far, at the level of single schools, but can also (and should also) be considered in a broader dimension, as a way to promote collaborative activities between:

- ◆ different schools, in the same or in different countries
- ◆ schools and local communities (e.g. local libraries)

In the case of local, national or trans-national reading projects, reading groups and enhanced reading can be based on the Living Library Platform and, if necessary, on other cloud-based tools, as suggested above.

2. Four methodological remarks:

2.1 Allowing a plurality of reading styles, interests, contents, devices

The Living Book Project methodology assumes that the reading experience is a transaction between reader, text and reading context that can be facilitated but cannot and should not be pre-determined or oriented.

This means that:

- a. The Living Book Project does not and will not suggest specific books to be read (while some of the tools provided by the Living Library platform or mentioned in the Guidelines will help to improve the quality of the negotiation and of the choosing process, especially in the context of reading groups). **The choice of the books and contents to be read, both individually and in reading groups, should always be reader-driven** and based on readers interests, preferences, and motivations. The teacher can and should be a facilitator in the choosing process, but not its unique or main agent.
- b. this also applies to the choice of specific literary genres or canons: while literary canons have their role in shaping the syllabus of a course and in suggesting/requiring that specific authors or books be studied and/or read, the Project itself does not endorse any specific canon and does not provide or suggest any value-based judgment concerning different kinds of readings.
- c. this means that the lesson plans and the learning content produced by the project are to be seen as possible, although validated and endorsed,

models for organizing (enhanced) reading-related content and activities, NOT as reading suggestions or as recommendations of specific books or activities.

- d. while the Living Book Project does recognize and endorse the relevance of the book as a highly effective format for complex and structured narrative or argumentative content, and recommends the use of books (either printed or digital) as a key component of project-related (enhanced) reading activities, it does NOT assume that all activities should be based on reading books: other kinds of contents and formats (papers, articles, on-line content such as blogs or web sites) can be explored as well, depending on the interests and preferences of the reader(s).
- e. the Living Book Project does not endorse any particular reading style, recognizing the plurality of reading styles practiced by readers, nor does it endorse any particular reading format or reading device: each reader should be free to choose the reading style, format or device that best suits his/her needs. This means that the Project is strictly neutral about the choice of reading on paper or on digital reading devices. This also means that schools and school libraries are encouraged to offer a plurality of reading devices and settings, to better suit individual preferences and needs.

2.2 Protecting reading spaces and times

Despite the social nature of all reading practices, the act of reading itself requires protected spaces and times, and the school should offer protected spaces and times for reading. This means that, as has already been mentioned, the design of the physical learning environment should always consider the need to provide good reading spaces, the design of virtual environments and tools should be oriented toward a focused and un-distracting user experience, and the design of learning activities and schedules should provide protected time for reading.

2.3 Inclusive reading: handling inequalities and SEN (Special Educational Needs)

(a) SEN, ICT and the Living Book Project

Thanks to the evolution of **ICT**, institutions, educators and schools dispose of more instruments to remove barriers and ensure an inclusive education, accessible to all students.

The **Living Book project** intends to enhance reading through enhanced reading tools and methods, for all kinds of students, including those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, with disabilities or other educational needs. Moreover, the Living Book Project assumes that reading can and should be a practice that fosters social and personal inclusion, at all levels and in all situations. This means that the Living Book project intends to work on augmented inclusive reading.

(b) Background information and literature

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD⁹) is one of the fundamental texts in this context. It was adopted in 2006 at the United Nations and since then it has been orienting and inspiring national and international policies and regulations. The convention does *not* explicitly define disability but the preface of the Convention states:

Disability is an evolving concept, and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Which is followed by article 1 of the Convention stating:

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'.

At European level, one of the principal observatories studying how to address special needs in education systems is the *European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education*, an independent organization supported by European institutions (Commission and Parliament). Since 2011 it has coordinated the member countries in

⁹ <http://www.cbm.org/United-Nations-CRPD-256097.php>

making education systems more inclusive. One of the most significant achievements has been the definition of SEN.

(c) Terminology: the debate

In the recent scientific debate, past perception of the field and of its key concepts is evolving. The main result of this process is the renowned definition of SEN: Special Educational Needs. It is a broad definition conceived to include different conditions related to students of all ages:

- intellectual disabilities
- physical disabilities
- specific learning disabilities (SLD)
- developmental disorders
- difficulties due to socio-economic, cultural or linguistic barriers

However, disabled activists have criticized the term 'special needs' as it implies that disabled students have different needs than non-disabled students (Oliver, 1996¹⁰). The use of this term focuses on the individual which depicts the medical model of disability (models are different ways of perceiving disability). This model considers the problems and difficulties that disabled people face as a result of their own individual pathology (Barnes et al, 2002); in other words, a disabled student is viewed as 'an individual with a problem'. On the contrary, the social model of disability takes into consideration that socio-economic-educational barriers are the major part of the problem and these barriers operate in constructing disability. For example, the literature has documented the relation between the labelling of students as 'disabled' and their low socio-economic background (Sleeter, 2010¹¹).

Hence, endorsed by the disability movement the concept of "disability" substitutes the general definitions of "impairment" and "handicap": their implicit reference to the idea of incapability is now rejected.

Against this outdated perspective, recent studies intend to look at these situations from a different angle. While "handicap" conveys the idea of impossibility of meeting a standard, "specialness" implies the idea of building tailored educational plans for each student presenting any of these conditions. Nevertheless, tailored educational plans reflect the medical model of disability as they place emphasis on the individual condition. What is underlined is not that each student's diversity should not be taken into consideration but that these conditions must be placed in a wider context, a context

¹⁰ Oliver, M. (1996). *Understanding disability: From theory to practice*. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan.

¹¹ Sleeter, C. (2010). *Why is there learning disabilities? A critical analysis of the birth of the field in its social context*. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 30 (2).

where it is recognized that all students are diverse individuals; which, as has already been mentioned, depicts the social model as well as the human rights model of disability. It should be said though that the term “human rights model” is not often used in the literature; what is underlined by this term is the inextricable relation of the social model with the UNCRPD and diversity as a human right. UNCRPD draws heavily on the social model as the emphasis is placed on disabled people’s rights for equal participation in all aspects of life such as society, education, and employment (Harpur, 2012)¹². Within the UNCRPD equal opportunities in these areas do not arise from notions of humanity or charity but from fundamental human rights that every person has and can claim (Rioux & Carbert, 2003)¹³.

(d) SEN and The Living Book Project

The Living Book Project endorses the new cultural, social, and scientific perspective on disability and special educational needs. Its methodologies and tools (including the platform) are therefore designed to ensure access for all students and provide for accessible and inclusive reading experiences, considered as connected to the human right to learn and to engage in social and cultural participation. Furthermore, the enhanced reading approach can be used to reinforce and enrich the personalized learning paths, in a bottom-up perspective, which for learners with disabilities will not emphasize the deficit model.

Referring to inclusive learning and reading, **socio-economic, cultural, physical emotional, learning and/or linguistic barriers should be considered to draw up personalized learning paths and differentiate in inclusive learning environments.** In other words, inclusive learning takes into consideration the needs of all students using diversity as a strength and not as a weakness. The project builds upon this notion by placing emphasis on the different learning styles and needs of students, in line with Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL constitutes a learning approach which makes learning accessible for **all** students irrespective of their socioeconomic background, disability, gender, or age, by focusing on removing the abovementioned barriers to learning. UDL Learning is enhanced by the employment of various learning **strategies and differentiation in learning content, material, and means.** Therefore, the Living Book Project promotes a participative and augmented way of practicing reading, combined with an inclusive attitude. For instance:

Socio-economic background: Regarding economically disadvantaged students, the tools and contents produced should be accessible from any standard family of devices (also

¹² Harpur, P. (2012). *Embracing the new disability rights paradigm: the importance of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, in *Disability & Society*, 27(1), 1-14.

¹³ Rioux, M., & Carbert, A. (2003). *Human rights and disability: The international context*. GLADNET Collection, 316.

including, whenever possible, mobile ones) without the need of overly sophisticated or expensive latest-generation devices. If possible, disadvantaged students should be preferred for student exchanges, when school delegations visit each other.

Within this group - and in general between all students - there are different learning styles such as visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, as well as a combination of these learning styles. Current literature on learning styles is also connected to learners with disabilities and the literature on the right of diversity. Hence, the project will help students develop their literacy skills by using students' strengths. The use of different media and of visual and audio content besides the textual one is part of the enhanced reading strategy and should be organized so as to enhance and not to reduce content accessibility.

Some examples on how this will be targeted are provided below:

Visual learners can benefit from colour coding, the use of high-legibility fonts, voice output, visualization of textual information, easy-to-read content, etc. The Living Library platform will provide all its textual contents using a high-legibility font.. At the same time, it will include accessibility suggestions for access to text by means of several of the above strategies. Accessibility for visual learners is also necessary and effective for learners with **hearing disabilities** as well as learners with **learning and specific learning disabilities (SLD) and intellectual disabilities (ID)**. **Dyslexia** is one of the most common SLD, which relates to particular **reading, spelling and writing** difficulties due to different factors (genetic, environmental, traumatic).

Similarly, learners with Intellectual Disabilities are often excluded from literacy practices in schools as they are considered to lack conventional literacy skills. Learning is enhanced by the employment of various learning **strategies and differentiation in learning content, material, means**.

In addition, a number of tools and technology solutions can be employed to support **auditory learners, including learners with visual difficulties**. Visual difficulties is used here as a broad term to include a wide range of difficulties in sight and visual perception, and not only the legal definition of visual disabilities.

- **TTS software** (Text To Speech): speech synthesizers are very common in the educational marketplace. They recognize every kind of written text and automatically read it aloud. They are the main software that totally blind people use in their everyday life
- **VTT software** (Voice To Text) recognize a human voice and translate it into text
- **audiobooks** could be a part of the non-textual content provided by the Living Book platform. But even more: due to the specific aim of the project (augmenting the reading experience), the platform could offer the possibility of **creating audiobooks and vocal contents**. Once again, this would realize the higher

purpose of the project: augmenting reading in a participative and inclusive perspective.

Creating audiobooks and vocal contents applies to **kinaesthetic learners** (but it could also be applied to visual/and auditory learners).

By considering these aspects, the project can assist in multicultural and bilingual education: In the case of **bilingual countries or schools**, or classes with a significant number of **foreign students**, the Project can reinforce linguistic competencies through specific (enhanced) reading activities. A significant way of augmenting the reading experience could be **translating texts** and having students work on **language comparison**.

Attempting to meet the needs of all students by utilizing enhanced reading is not an easy task, but it is a feasible and desirable one.

2.4 The role of teachers and parents

(a) Teachers

The Living Book Project recognizes the essential role of teachers in fostering the interest in reading and considers them as a key agent in promoting enhanced reading. More specifically, within the framework of the Living Book methodology teachers should:

- Help shape school policies, investments, and infrastructures, so that reading is recognized as an essential learning practice, acquiring good reading competencies and skills is recognized as a key learning objective, and providing a reader-friendly learning environment is a priority for the school;
- More specifically, help shape active school policies concerning the school library, which should be present, well-organized and well-managed (with professional school librarians, following the already mentioned IFLA School library guidelines), should offer a wide range of contents (books and e-books, but also video and audio material, software, access to the Internet and to relevant digital collections) and services (including, but not limited to, information literacy activities, inter-library loans, digital lending...) and should be connected to other local public libraries;
- Promote reading and enhanced reading activities and reading groups, both school-based ones and ones through local, national, and international co-operation between different schools and other relevant agents and institutions; organizing and managing them with the active participation of students, as described in the Guidelines;

- Involve parents and other stakeholders in the reading-related activities, helping them to understand the importance of reading for the learning success of students, and promoting reading and enhanced reading in the wider school community, possibly also by organizing open reading and enhanced activities and reading groups;
- Use 'scaffolding' strategies to progressively improve the autonomy of students in all the reading related activities.

(b) Parents

The Living Book Project recognizes the essential role of parents in fostering the interest for reading and considers them as a key agent in promoting enhanced reading. More specifically, within the framework of the Living Book methodology, parents should:

- Read, and recognize the relevance of reading in fostering the learning success of their children. The single, most important factor in building a lasting love for reading in children (and in increasing their learning success) is growing up in a family where parents read and love to read, and where books are readily available. Reading aloud to even very young kids is a proven strategy to increase their love for reading while growing and as adults.
- Always respect the reading interests of their children, be curious but not judgmental about them, encourage the children to use school and local libraries.
- Help shape the school policies, investments, and infrastructures, so that reading is recognized as an essential learning practice, acquiring good reading competencies and skills is recognized as a key learning objective, and providing a reader-friendly learning environment is a priority for the school;
- More specifically, help shape active school policies concerning the school library, which should be present, well-organized and well-managed (with professional school librarians, following the already mentioned IFLA School library guidelines), should offer a wide range of contents (books and e-books, but also video and audio material, software, access to the Internet and to relevant digital collections) and services (including, but not limited to, information literacy activities, inter-library loans, digital lending...) and should be connected to other local public libraries.

Parents can and should be involved in enhanced reading activities and in reading groups; schools should be perceived by parents as an environment capable of fostering *their* love for reading, too. While many reading related activities of the school and of the school library (such as book readings and presentations) should be open both to students and parents, though parent reading groups should usually be independent from student reading groups, in order to ensure that students have the freedom to fully express themselves and their ideas without being conditioned by the presence of their parents. However, if circumstances allow, mixed reading groups are possible, with

AUGMENTING READING FOR LIFE

teachers acting as facilitators and helping fruitful and non-hierarchical interaction between students and parents. Mixed reading groups might be a tool to help students cope with stressful events such as natural catastrophes or human-related traumatic events.

More specific information on activities and policies useful for increasing parents' awareness and participation in enhanced reading activities are included in the Parent training package developed within the Project.

Part three - Tools

The Living Library is the 'hub' of The Living Book project; the place where the project's outputs are used and shared, and where the community of users can interact. It is available in English, Estonian, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Romanian. The language will be automatically selected, based on the user's browser settings, or users can choose a different language in which to view the library.

One of the key features of the Living Library are the 'books' (sections of the library) where users can share the media they have created or found, based on the book they are reading. Within each book users can embed or post media content from any website; for example, embedding a video from YouTube, or embedding a 3D object from Sketchfab. The media could be a video recreation of a scene, an audio retelling or critique of the book, stop-motion animation, user-created images inspired by the book, a Scratch coded animation or game, a 3D model of an artefact or scene in a book, or almost any type of media that pupils and teachers can think of!

The collection of books available is different for each language. These are based on suggestions by teachers of the most popular books for pupils 9-15 year olds in that country. Teachers registered in the library (and students registered as Librarians) can also easily add new books, to expand the library further.

Each piece of media content has a unique QR code which can be scanned on screen to view the media on a phone or tablet. The QR codes could also be printed and attached to a real book to create an augmented book!

The Living Library has a social community, with many social media functions users will be familiar with. Users can become friends, create reading groups, create reading events, post updates, send messages and more. Users will be updated in their profile when other users post comments to their content and they can follow any of their favourite book titles in the Library to see what other users are posting.

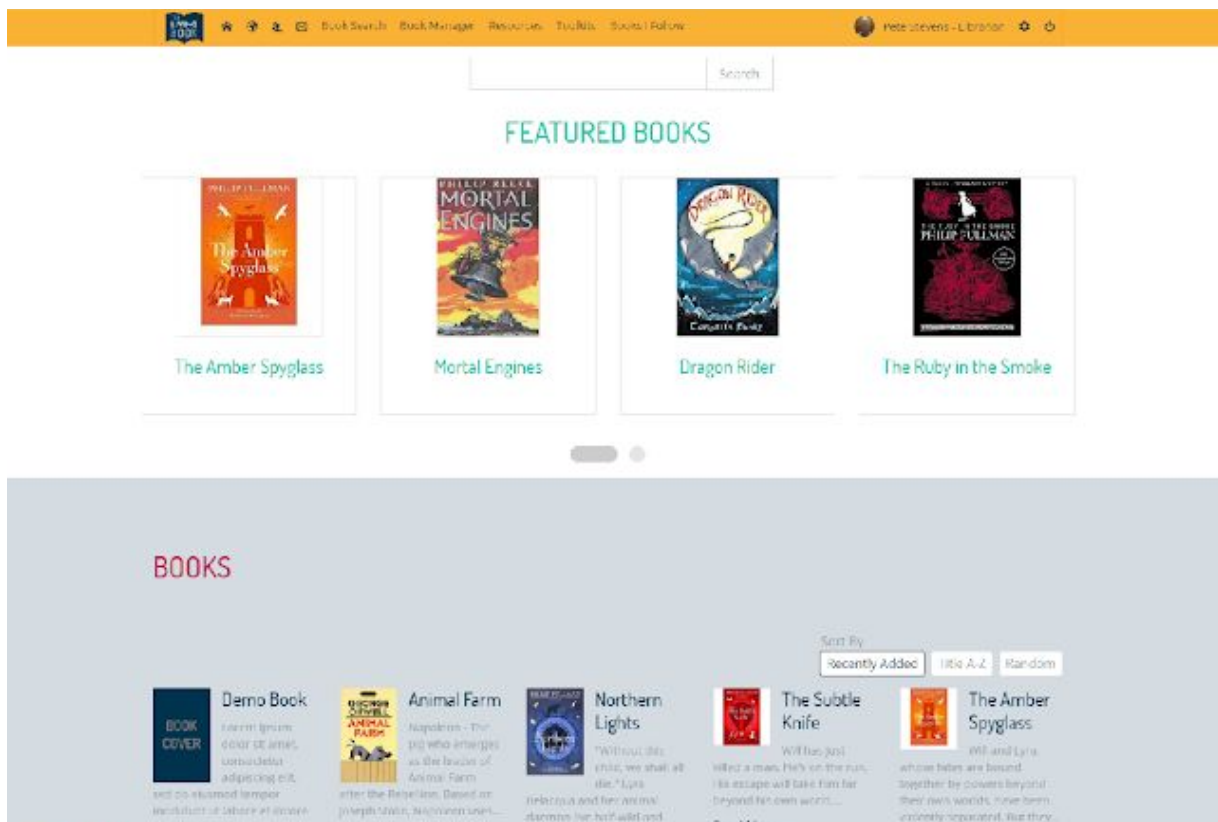
Online reading groups are an interesting and innovative feature of the platform. Teachers or groups or pupils can create an online reading group where they can share ideas and thoughts whilst reading a book, organise physical or online meetings, and share the media content they have created.

One of the features which is aimed specifically at teachers are Lesson Plans. Teachers can view existing lesson plans created by the project and other teachers to inspire them. The 'Lesson Plan Creator' publishing tool also enables all teachers using the platform to create and share lesson plans with other educators.

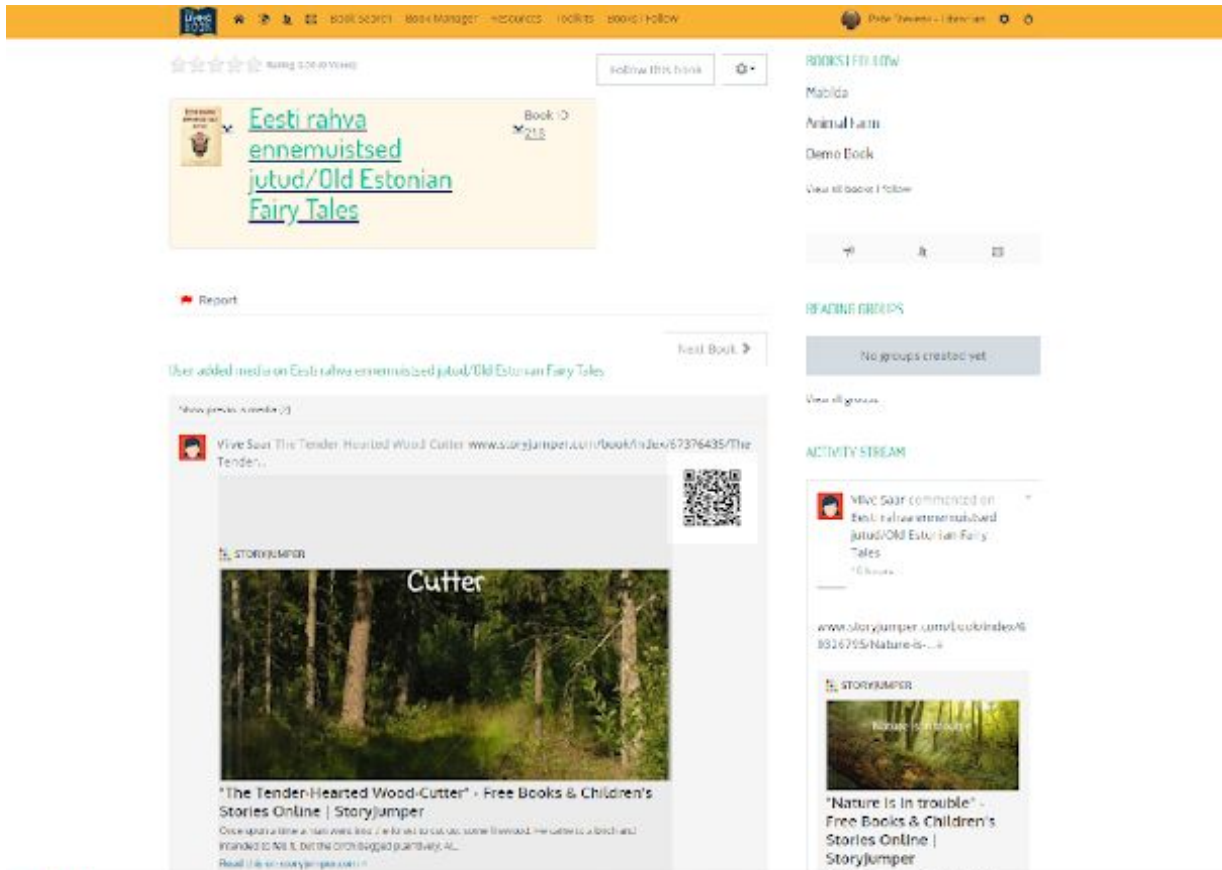
To help teachers and pupils use a variety of online and offline tools, the project has produced a series of toolkits. Within each toolkit users can read a description of the app or tool, find links to download the app or use online, watch instructional videos, and read instruction of how to take the media from the app and add to the Living Library. <http://thelivinglibrary.eu/toolkits>

Most features require users to register for an account. There are two types of accounts available - Members and Librarians. Librarian accounts are primarily intended for teachers and Member accounts are primarily intended for pupils. All users have access to books, toolkits and the social community and can add media to the library. Librarians have the additional functionality to add new books to the library, view and create lesson plans, and access the elearning course.

The Living Library and all resources created for The Living Book project will remain online and be available for teachers and pupils across Europe to continue to use for many years to come.



The Living Library homepage showing some of the collection of 'books' www.thelivinglibrary.eu



An example of one of the books showing the user generated media



The screenshot shows the 'Toolkits' section of the website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Toolkits' selected. Below it, the 'Sketchfab' toolkit is highlighted. A QR code is provided for mobile access. The text describes Sketchfab as a platform to explore over 2 million models in 3D, VR, and AR on mobile devices. It explains how users can share their 3D models to the database, add annotations, and link them to physical books. Below this, there are 'Instructional Videos' for Sketchfab, including a demo and two tutorial parts. A section titled 'How do I share my creation to The Living Library?' provides a four-step guide. On the right side, there are QR codes for 'the Web', 'Google play', and 'App Store'. At the bottom of the screenshot, three mobile device screens are shown with text: 'Over 2 million models in 3D, VR & AR direct from your device', 'Search and discover by subject matter, category, popularity and more', and 'Bring your own experiences into the real world with AR'.

An example of one of the toolkits available for pupils and teachers
www.thelivinglibrary.eu/toolkits

Part four - Comments and Experiences

This section of the Guidelines is open to comments and experiences both from schools which are among the partners of the project and from other schools. Contributions for this section can be sent to info@forumdellibro.it

G. Cristofoli - A. Nardi (Municipality of Vicenza focus group)

01 - The Living Book Guidelines

The primary objective of the Focus Group in Vicenza is to experiment with augmented reading, to explore reading a book, to combine the pleasure of reading with the pleasure of searching for information to 'increase' the skills and knowledge promoted by the reading itself with photos, videos, films, selected pages, comments, interviews, exchanges, research, etc., and with the use of new technologies (ICT).

Educating readers is "getting used to looking at themselves and the world through the meaningful weaves that books incessantly draw, as maps capable of signaling possible routes to those who want to understand" (p.3 Reading to write, Ed. 92. Fabrizio Frasnedi). And taking this into account, it becomes strategic in an educational, formative and communicative environment, that the readers / young people are capable to engage in an active dialogue with any type of text.

Augmented reading, therefore, allows readers to discover, customize, enrich, expand, read in a different way, involve, apply ICT to reality, "work" in the team, create ... go deep into the book itself and get even richer output as media readers and writers.

Our main objective is to involve students, to combine personalized reading paths with digital creativity and, during this journey, we will explore various solutions to digitally increase the students' experience while reading a book. The intent is to transform the book (physical or digital) into a "living book": an intense experience for young readers who can participate, transform and expand what they read, applying digital skills, collaborating with their peers, developing their skills reading and, ultimately, being more engaged in reading. This approach will be supported at school through the involvement of teachers (FOCUS GROUP) of every order and degree, as well as at home through the commitment of parents.

And the most important impact on teachers is greater competence in cultivating the motivation and reading skills of young students, as well as skills in involving parents in support of reading strategies. Teachers have been trained through seminars (workshops) during which plans are experimented, which provide examples on how to integrate the

approach to the living book in their classroom activities so as to define practically the skills of the "augmented reader", from the perspective of the Guidelines of The Living Book project and of the curriculum of Education for reading already experimented in numerous schools of every type and level of the Vicenza area.

The WORKSHOP held so far with the focus group in Vicenza wanted to orientate the teachers first through the presentation of the project The Living Book and its guidelines, then presenting:

- what are the reading groups among the boys, led by the teachers themselves as facilitators rather than teachers
- the choice of books by young readers
- the new technologies as expansion and promoter of the reading itself in a context of sharing.

The process, which the Vicenza group has thought about the methods of carrying out "enhanced reading" with the use of ICT, provides for a gradual process. This method allows teachers, strongly motivated and engaged for years in promotion actions to read, but who do not use the technologies in daily education, to approach in a "soft" to their use.

The "enhanced reading" methodology is developed according to the following steps:

- The choice of the subject of reading by the students as a unifying reason for the formation of the groups
- The choice of the book to read within the groups
- The first activities of reflection and re-elaboration of the readings, expressed in digital form.

The possibility for students to share with their classmates the choice of the topic first and that of the book is an opportunity for socialization, but also for discussion and education for citizenship, not just digital.

FIRST WORKSHOP 'THE PLEASURE OF READING AT SCHOOL IN THE DIGITAL AGE' ('increased' reading path through the use of some specific digital materials).

1st step

The main theme of the meeting was the presentation to the teaching group of the project The Living Book, related to increased reading and new technologies, through its Guidelines.

Communication technologies produce a change in the nature of reading and in its social consideration and therefore the question that arises is: what did you do to help kids grow as readers and, moreover, expert readers?

The project's objective was illustrated: providing on-line strategies and tools that help to broaden the reading experience, allowing to link the book being read, on paper or digital, with content produced (individually or in collaborative form) or discovered online. At the base is the idea that, for the younger generation, the digital and network ecosystem constitutes a family and stimulating environment for multimodal interaction with information.

The beneficiaries of the project are all types of students, including those in socio-economic disadvantaged contexts or with special needs or conditions.

The Municipality of Vicenza offers in POFT a design related to the training of reading groups, which are a key component of the The Living Book project strategy, for increased and social reading and which can be organized in different forms with off-line activities, mixed or online.

The answer that the focus group wants to experiment therefore is that of a greater integration between the practice of reading and the production and use of digital information content as a possible key - though certainly not the only one possible - to encourage the growth of motivation and of interest in reading, for the active involvement of the reader. Experimentation, as suggested by the Guidelines is, first of all, the sharing of reading through reading groups that decide how, when, what to read, using ICT both in the pre-reading phase (group formation, choice of the book) that during the reading (logbook, maps etc ...) and, eventually, in the post-reading with real products of increased reading.

2nd step

It has been identified as the ideal place to create THE LIVING BOOK, the digital school library. The focus group, in fact, collaborates with numerous teachers who participated in the Banking of the PNDS action 24 - Innovative libraries, considering that the conjugation between reading and ICT is a winning card for education and school. In this perspective, the decision to dedicate the second step to the **BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESEARCH**, focusing on the research methodology in the RBS catalog (Vicentine Librarian Network) and in the catalog of the Vicenza Civic Library, with the support of some experts. The path aimed to lead to full methodological autonomy both teachers and students, who little and badly know valuable research tools for an approach to study that takes into account important operations such as:

- select relevant and meaningful materials
- prepare a bibliography / sitography
- build conceptual maps that take into account the chosen materials

The phases of a catalog research were illustrated: simple search (author, title, editor) advanced search (by subject, by keyword, age, edition, language ...). The digital Media Library online platform (MLOL)¹⁴ was also presented.

THE CHOICE OF THEME

The activity takes place in the school library or in the classroom, even if, in case of difficulty, it can be carried out from home. In this case the aspect of sociality in the presence is a little less in the presence but the character of the curiosity and of the discovery of the interest of the companions remains, if not even strengthened.

- We invite the class to a brainstorming, carried out for example, through the use of the **Padlet**¹⁵ web tool: a web application, a virtual bulletin board, wall (or wall) that allows you to publish and share multimedia content. Specifically in the Living Book project, in this phase of realization, Padlet lends itself well to collecting the brainstorming outcomes related to the choice of the theme as it is easy to use, accessible also by mobile devices and without the obligation of registration students. The teacher opens a new Padlet and makes it available for students who can express their own interest in one of the proposed reading themes or propose new ones. This can all be done using a random or ordered Padlet structure just for topics. In the latter case, the analysis of preferences and the identification and constitution of reading groups for thematic aggregation is much simpler.

¹⁴ <https://scuola.medialibrary.it/home/cover.aspx>

¹⁵ <https://padlet.com/>

- In the first case the **Padlet** will already be organized by topics and each boy will express his choice by inserting a post in the column corresponding to the chosen theme
- In the second case, instead, the subjects included by the students will have to be analyzed by the class, classified into categories (the same topic can be expressed by different students with different methods and terminology) also corresponding to literary genres. The activity is more dynamic for the students and takes on more the sense of a brainstorming, contrary to what happens in the first case where it connotes more as a choice, almost a vote of the theme.
- To make it easier for students to find information relevant to their topic, Padlet can still be used, which, in this case, acts as an aggregator of resources, with links to the most accredited websites of children's literature, which teachers put to them. available in a special bulletin board, so that they can explore and know them (we have mentioned some of them: biblioragazzi, fuorilegge, Sala Borsa library, www.liberweb.it, sites of the most interesting publishing houses ...) to which the online catalog of School library network and that of the Civic or territorial Library. This also provides the advantage of allowing the children themselves to make available new links to sites not already proposed or to books of their own interest.
- Teachers were then advised to use **Tricider**¹⁶, which allows to create discussions in which to compare the ideas of a group on a given book, to start a survey. In this way each student proposes a book and motivates the possible choice. The voting of each member will allow the choice. The reading proposals of the students, the discussion and the comparison, as well as in the classroom, can therefore also take place online through the web application Tricider, an excellent tool for the goal, as it is not a simple vote , but the students are asked to comment on and argue both the proposals made and the reasons for the vote, overcoming the epidemic invasion of 'Like'. The interaction through the online tool indicated allows each student to express their opinions and support their goodness and effectiveness, this method leads to greater reflection ...

From the different discussions within the groups and from the evaluations expressed, each group has therefore chosen the book to read.

READING GROUP (how to create one and make it live happily)

It has been proposed to teachers as an "enhanced" reading path, through the use of some specific digital tools, and includes several phases:

¹⁶ <https://www.tricider.com>

- training of reading groups
- brainstorming with Padlet in order to allow children to choose topics on which they are interested
- search for books on selected topics (catalog search in the library, use of the RBS network catalog and RBV civic libraries network, dedicated sites), consultation of selected books in the designated places, including bookshops.

To underline the importance of the reading group: the reading group is a group of readers who decide to share, by talking about it, their own private reading of the same book. Readers or readers of the reading, with a certain homogeneity of age, find themselves with a more or less precise cadence to talk about books, with the presence or the guide or both of an adult reader. The group wants to offer an opportunity and a meeting place for teenagers who like to read or who want to get closer to reading through peer reporting. Finally, the school devotes time to reading and, for the focus group, this is an important achievement for the benefit of reading. In this school time, readers will be able to choose between many proposals and activities presented, related to the book itself - how the book is made, the identity card of the book, reading the incipit ..

HOW TO INCREASE READING with ICT

The focus group of Vicenza intends to experiment with the increased reading not only through sharing - considered a very significant and innovative step - but also through the combination of reading and new technologies, to consolidate both the reading and the digital skills, as well '.

There are many tools that allow, albeit in very different forms, to accompany, expand and expand the time of reading by establishing links and transforming the "classic read" into a "hypertext reading" or into a more complex form of "augmented reality".

In this first phase of the project the choice was to propose simple tools that allow, for example:

- to deepen the reading through the construction of timelines to highlight the succession of events in the narrative
- to provide the reading of a map of the places
- to add other multimedia resources such as images, music and videos to the reading
- to recompose the story and compose stories through digital storytelling tools. As regards digital storytelling, we refer in particular to Didapages software.

This makes it possible to enhance, on the one hand, the digital skills of students, refine their skills in web searches, but at the same time, improve reading skills and personal

re-elaboration to grasp reading facts, characters, places and their characteristics. Alongside tools that can be used directly online, tools that can be used locally are also proposed, a choice that sometimes is necessary to make up for connection difficulties, which may occur in some schools.

Links to the proposed apps

Padlet: web application, bulletin board or virtual wall, resource aggregator that allows you to publish and share multimedia content.



<https://padlet.com/>

Tricider: web application free that allows the creation of surveys with the possibility of involving students in the decision-making process of choosing the book. Students can formulate motivated proposals for readings, discuss and vote on the proposals made by their classmates.

tricider + Create new tricision

Proposta di fantasy

Area in cui discutere la proposta di lettura di libri fantasy

time is up

[Complete tricision](#) | [change deadline](#)

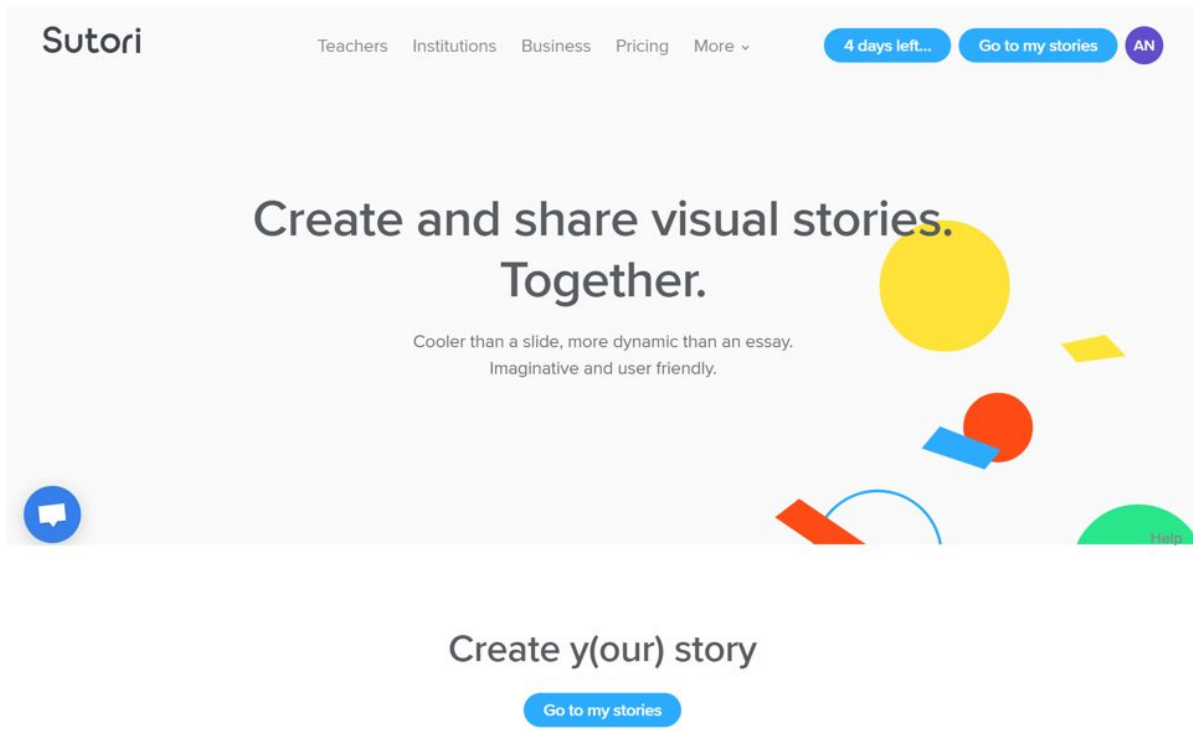
[Share and Invite](#) [Subscribe to updates](#)

Ideas	Pros and cons	Votes
<p>Un libro che di solito piace molto è Harry Potter by Anna Nardi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Mi piace perchè non è solo un fantasy, ma anche un romanzo di formazione. by Giancarla 3 👍 - Bello, ma l'ho già letto! by Francesca 👍 + molto bello by Gullo 👍 - Preferisco la fantascienza 👍 - Ma no a me non interessa by Paola 👍 + La scuola è uno dei temi che ho sempre desiderato affrontare, 'in termini' fantasy e qui è mirabi... more by Loredana 👍 - troppo lungo 👍 + bellissimo! 👍 <p>Add argument</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> 6 Vote </div> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Gullo, Alessia and 3 more</p>
<p>Berlin by Alessiafrigo</p> <p>Propongo questo perché Fabio Geda è un autore strepitoso!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Bello bello, Berlin mi interessa molto by Paola 1 👍 <p>Add argument</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> 2 Vote </div> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Mena Paola</p>

<https://www.tricider.com>

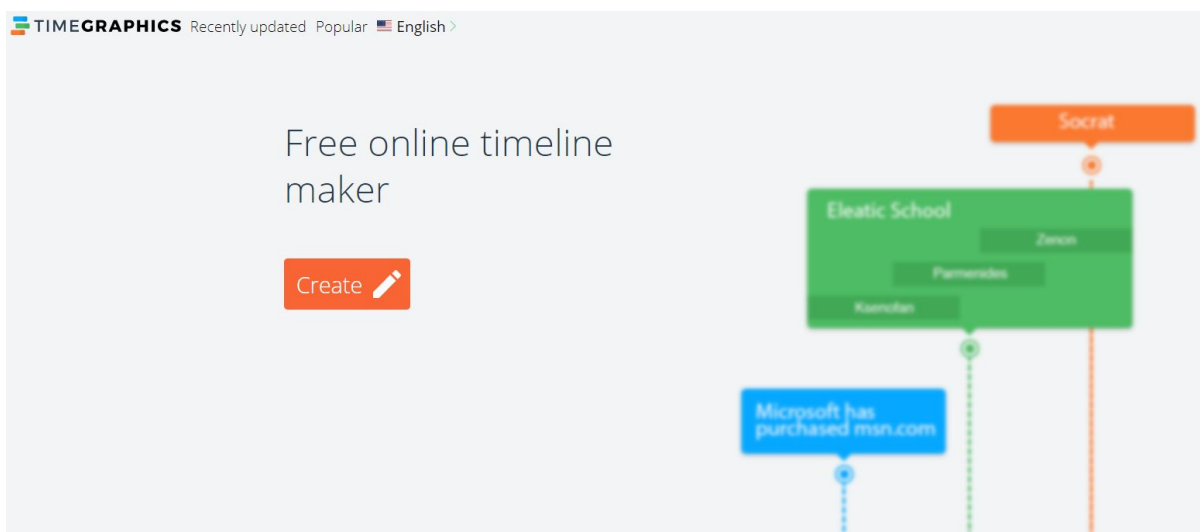
Some tools for creating timelines:

Sutori: web application freemium, allows the creation of multimedia and interactive timelines. It is possible to insert text, images, audio and video and also quizzes.



<https://www.sutori.com>

Time Graphics: Web application for creating timeline that allows the addition of multimedia elements. The application can be integrated with google maps and google calendar. The timeline produced can be shared with social media or incorporated into a web page. Available in multiple languages.



Timeline integrated with

- Google Spreadsheet
- Google Calendar
- YouTube
- Vimeo
- Your server reporting APIs
- Google Search Console
- Google Analytics
- 250K World Bank Indicators
- Google Maps
- Embed timelines on your own website or blog
- Team collaboration
- Export: JSON, Excel, PPT, PDF (soon)
- Duplicate (make your own copy of any timeline)

<https://time.graphics/>

TimeMapper: application that allows you to generate a map with timeline starting from data (description of the point, date, etc ...) included in a google spreadsheet.

<http://timemapper.okfnlabs.org>

FEEDBACK of the focus group

During the first phase of work proposed to the teachers group, interesting and constructive observations emerged. First of all, the teachers asked that the project proposal be aimed at all school orders, from indistinctly, from infancy to secondary school and, for some school orders, to be promoted even in the mother tongue.

The group of teachers found it interesting to use the search engines for bibliographic research, to consult the catalog of the Civic Library, by enrolling the students themselves, also using the Library Network of the Vicentine Schools, thus exploiting the link between libraries schools and municipalities of Vicenza and its province. Here the school library becomes a meeting place to develop: information, communication, creativity and critical spirit.

It has been appreciated that to make the school library a place of easy access to the documentation for all classes it is useful to make the material easily available, for anyone who wants to consult it.

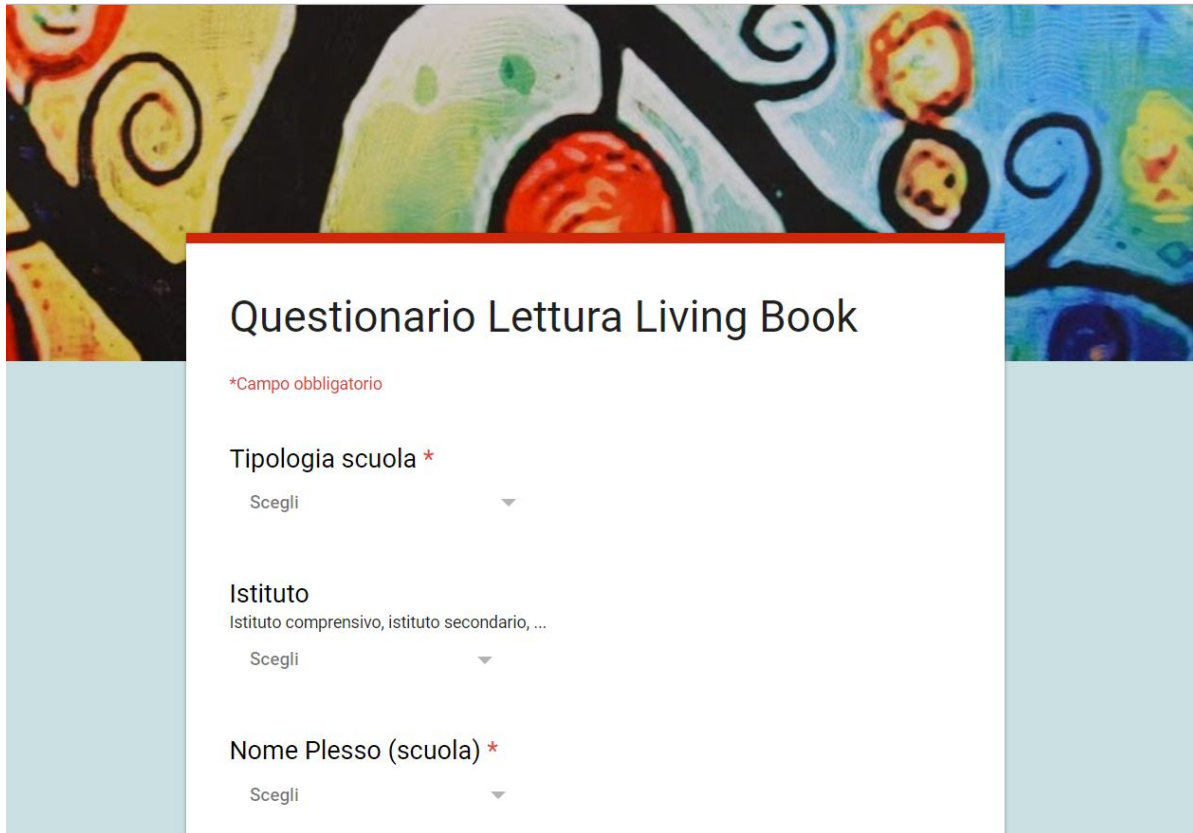
At this point, teachers' difficulties and lack of good practices in consultation and use of the catalog of civic libraries have emerged.

Often in our schools, and especially in school libraries, many books are purchased and teachers are not always advised to use the catalog to the youngsters, as they are not used to leaving the pupils to operate in this sense. loath to show its usefulness. It is easier to provide a pre-compiled bibliography or paper books themselves, not considering that this passage is important in reading literacy and underlines a lack of civic competence, if neglected.

Suggestions from the use of apps to increase reading were greatly appreciated by teachers, as they admitted to being often in difficulty in promoting activities after reading a book: they were well received and promoted in the classes during the course. Reading groups, in general, are proposed by civic libraries, never in schools, at least in Vicenza, so teachers have found positive feedback in practicing them in the classroom, welcoming positive consents from the children invited to discuss and discuss. The tutorials themselves proposed for the use of the app have constituted a useful and widespread guide to accompany the teachers to this practice and invite them to try their hand at activities for them new.

The materials provided during the training interventions (or focus groups?) (Presentations, tutorials, ...) were shared with all the teachers involved in the project through the Google Drive tool reachable with a specific account livingbook.vi@gmail.com. This allows to provide constant support to teachers who request it and also have a constant feedback on the evolution of activities in the different classes.

The survey



Questionario Lettura Living Book

*Campo obbligatorio

Tipologia scuola *

Scegli

Istituto

Istituto comprensivo, istituto secondario, ...

Scegli

Nome Plesso (scuola) *

Scegli

The survey was produced with the Google Form tool. The teachers gave the survey to their students. The data have all converged in the same spreadsheet so as to have an overview of the answers of all the schools. The expert also took care of extracting the data related to each class to transmit them to the respective teachers so that they can obtain useful information on the methods and reading preferences of their students.

Furthermore, the expert will deal with the overall data and make them available to the whole work group.

The file with the complete survey results will be made available on-line.