

Out of classroom learning – Oodi library

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COMPETENCES ADDRESSED BY THE TOOL	<p>Cultural aspect Cultural attention Life skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with bureaucracy • Ability to learn something • Empower how to deal with different staff <p>(Intra)personal skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing the perspective that learning is boring • Communication – interpersonal skills: • Speaking/presenting • Interaction <p>Computer and digital skills</p>
METHODS	Out-of-clasroom learning, storytelling
DURATION	120 minutes
METHODOLOGY	The exercise is an original development of out-of-classroom activities and storytelling components. In the case that described here, we focused on the experience of exploring of a previously unknown public facility, using its resources and familiarizing yourself with rules and regulations of a modern library. As most of the methods described here, it can be adapted to your own goal, intended outcome, place and group.
TARGET GROUP	The tool can be used for work with any type of group. If digital equipment is an obstacle here, you can freely modify it (e.g. providing printed photos, asking to collect and write down necessary data on paper). This tool is especially designed for individuals facing access barriers to public facilities, including new inhabitants of the area.
GROUP SIZE	Recommended number of participants: up to 12 people. They should be assisted by two facilitators, if possible.
MATERIALS	<p>The participants should have smartphones with instated communication apps (e.g. WhatsApp, Messenger, Hangouts).</p> <p>The instructor has to prepare photos of the selected spot (3-4 photos of a building/place for step-by-step identification: from a detail that is hard to recognize to a full view of a building/place).</p>

Background

The tool is based on the components of out-of-classroom learning, gamification, digital storytelling and field games. It is an original development of our experience of working with adults. Its key element is play and puzzle solving, which can be an effective incentive to learn for some participants (especially in the context of the Education By The Way, discussed in this Manual). It can be particularly attractive for young learners or those looking for out-of-standard forms of education. New technologies, such as digital photography and mobile communication apps, play the key role in this tool, and this can also be one of your teaching goals.

Please remember that depending on the goal, teaching method and group type, this method allows for major modifications.

Aim

The goals may vary and largely depend on the instructor's choice. Depending on the place, group and workflow, they can include:

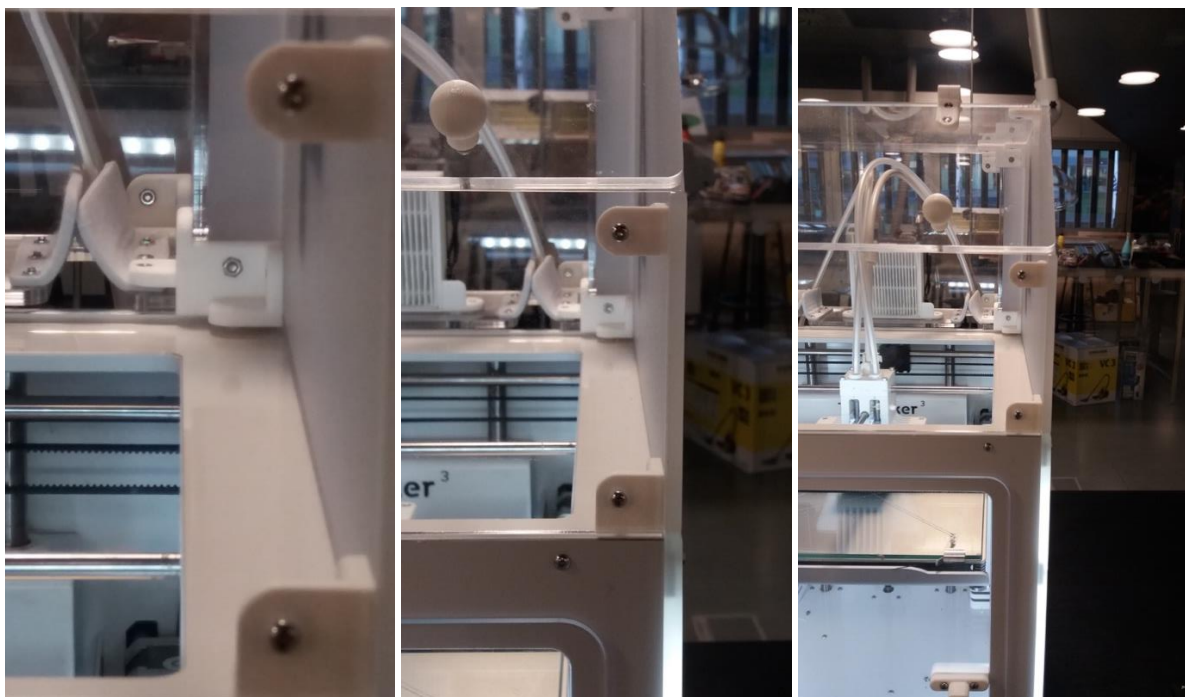
1. encouraging and familiarizing people that have not used a given public facility before (library, community centre, social service centre, cultural institutions, health, sports or education facilities, etc.)
2. pointing out important functions of a given facility and learning how to make use of them
3. `town exploration`, discovering its important spots for both long-term residents and newcomers
4. promoting activity, going out and integration of local community
 - learning how to navigate, communicate and deal with official matters that require interaction with civil servants of facility staff
 - creative exploration of a given space; paying attention to architectural details and equipment, contemplating and appreciating space, etc.
 - boosting creativity, self-expression and storytelling skills using various forms of expression
 - developing cooperative attitudes and communication skills within a group; focusing on co-working, group problem-solving and negotiation
 - learning how to use digital equipment and new communication tools

Step by step process

The description below refers to the tool used during the Education By The Way project workshop in Oodi public library in Helsinki. Its components may be freely modified and adapted to fit your aim, learner group, place, etc. In this case, the participants were free to choose whether they would like to complete the task by following the instructions of the facilitators (option for people who enjoy puzzle solving), or if they would like to explore the place on their own and tell a story about it afterward (option for people who prefer creative thinking tasks). The free choice strategy allows the participants to decide individually how they learn (the decision in itself might be difficult to make for some of them,

however), but on the other hand it requires the instructor to make additional preparations and pay extra attention. Your aim may define the type of the activity you choose.

Attention! Before presenting the task to the group, the instructor must prepare photo materials beforehand. When choosing a place, equipment, people, process, etc., always bear in mind the aim of the exercise. The goal of the task in this workshop was stirring the debate on future education, role and functions of future libraries, and the unexpected variety of what they might offer. In order to achieve this, the photographed equipment included a 3D printer, a computer with color grading software for videos, sewing machine and information point of the European Commission. Each piece of equipment/spot was photographed in multiple frames with varied level of visible details, so as to produce puzzling and unexpected shots. In case that the participants had problems with their identification, they were provided with additional photographs depicting more revealing details.

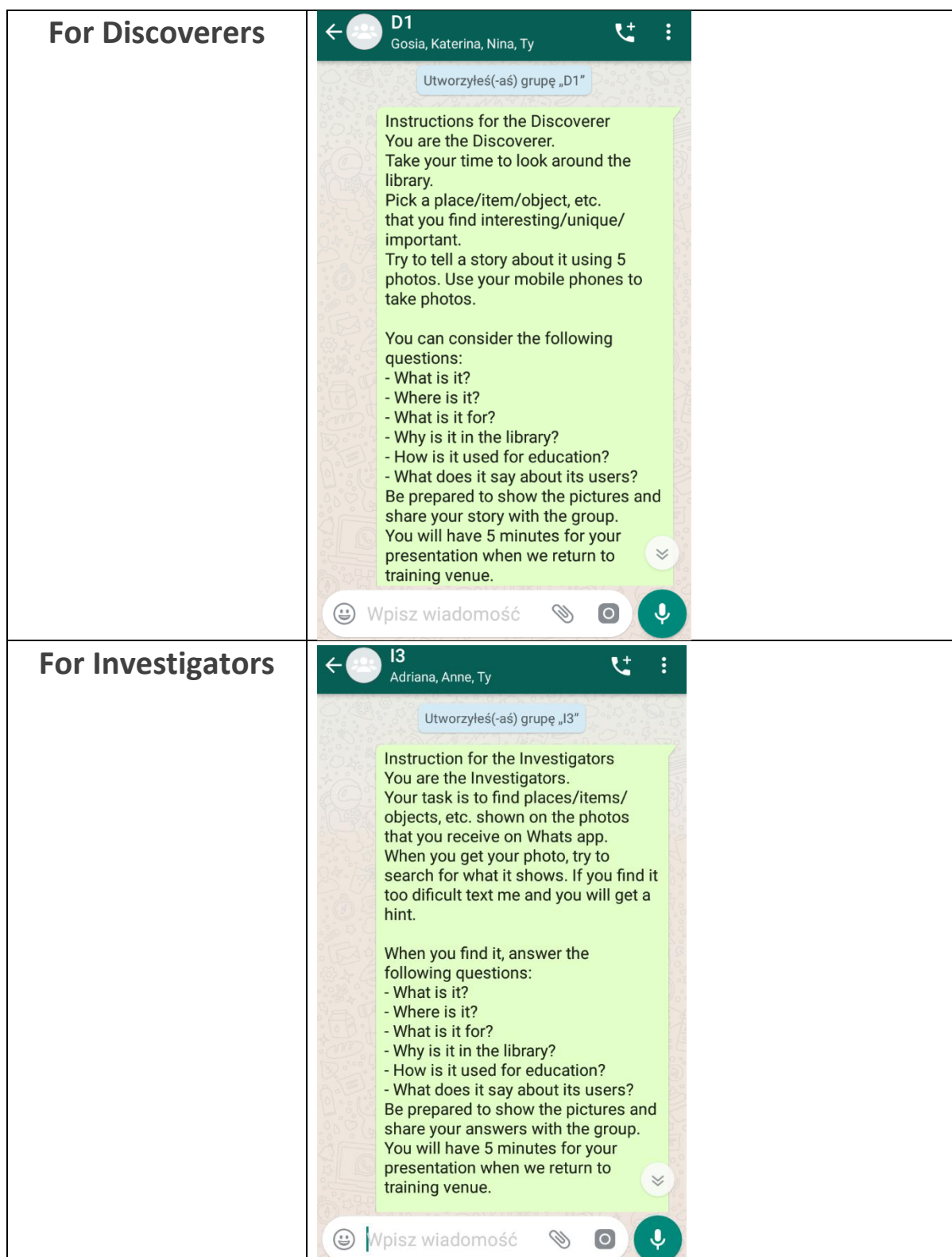


Another issue that the instructor has to deal with before the task is to ensure that s/he can contact all of the participants via a chosen social app (e.g. WhatsApp) and that the participants know how to communicate with this app. If your goal is to teach how to use digital communication tools, you can extend this initial part of the exercise (show how to download the app and use it, discuss privacy and data protection issues, present guidelines for online communication, etc.).

Workflow:

1. The instructor asks the participants to choose whether they would like to be Discoverers: creatively explore the place and tell a story about it; or Investigators: solve a mystery task. If it is important for you to have groups of more or less the same size, you may disclaim that each group has a limited number of members, and the last to choose a side have to join a group with less members (for example, you can do this by sticking post-its next to which the participants will have to stand).

- Depending on the number of participants, you may divide each group (Discoverers and Investigators) into subgroups (2-3 people). Following this division, you create corresponding groups in your chosen social app via which you will be sending instructions, tips, updates on the remaining time, etc.
- When the groups are formed, the instructor sends info about the task to each group, indicating the time for completing it. In our case, the instructions looked like this:



**accompanying
photos for each
group**



4. The instructor leaves the means and methods to complete the task to the participants, s/he might even be outside the selected space, however s/he must reply to all queries that pop up via the app.
5. When the time for the task runs out, all participants meet in a designated place (e.g. a pre-reserved room), where they can comfortably share their experiences, solutions to the task and newly acquired knowledge. The way you organize this group follow-up session is note set and it can be arranged to suit your intended goal. However, we do recommend that there should be time for spontaneous sharing of the experience (the participants should feel comfortable enough to express less positive attitudes as well), presenting the outcomes of the task (it is crucial that the instructor or the participants explain what their task was about, as it may have differed from group to group), and a short summary of the knowledge acquired through that experience (e.g. how to use a public library step-by-step, how to get housing assistance when you are an immigrant, etc.). As a conclusion, you may want to discuss how to put that knowledge into practice.