

**Erasmus+**

**Reflective teaching/learning in a modern European  
digital classroom**



**Mascalucia, 26-30 novembre 2018**



**Short-term joint staff training event**

# Premise - 1

Nowadays in Italy we find great difficulties in teaching history. This is due to various factors:

I try to list some of them:

- 1) devaluation of the importance of national history.
- 2) flattening of the new generations on the present.
- 3) difficulty in creating a civic consciousness, mindful of the past.
- 4) in primary school, junior high school and in the first two years of high school the teaching of history has been reduced and is often neglected.

# Premise - 2

In Italy, in the three years of high school the teaching of history is associated with that of philosophy and I can assure you that almost always the students are very inclined to philosophical study and much less to that of history.

For these reasons, especially in the teaching of history, we tried to innovate the style of teaching, using new methods and new tools.

In fact, the discipline lends itself very much to the use of multimedia materials, to an investigative and research study, to a critical and dialectical comparison, all elements that can enrich and make the study of history more interesting and effective.

# Premise - 3

Personally, I have twenty years of experience in teaching high school history and especially in the last ten years I have found it more difficult to transmit historical knowledge and arouse an interest in historical knowledge.

This is why I enthusiastically embraced the idea of being able to participate in an Erasmus project, in which we can compare with colleagues from other countries to discuss together on what benefits a reflective teaching can bring today in a digital world and with new digital generations.

# The first step. Together

Today we take the first step together in this research.

It has touched me to present four methodologies that I apply or that I intend to apply in my classes, trying to monitor their effects.

I present them to you in the hope of being able to discuss them, to improve them, and to change them in comparison with you and thanks to your precious contributions.

I will present them to you in a very little theoretical and very practical way, actually showing what I have accomplished or what I intend to accomplish in my hours of history. They are not completely original methodologies, but methodologies already known and experimented with some adaptations.

# Context and Contest - 1

The first one I called **CONTEXT AND CONTEST** and I have already applied it in some of my classes.

# Context and Contest - 2

## A virtual learning group

The premise is that the whole class is part of a virtual learning group.

We use the social network facebook, for reasons of convenience and universality of the medium, but you can also use dedicated educational platforms.

The important thing is that the chosen platform allows instant feedback between teachers and students. I prefer facebook because I have found the 'educational' platforms I have tested to be rigid and not always 'user friendly'.

# Context and Contest - 3

*An image of one of the virtual classes on facebook*



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook group page titled "3Cs FILOSOFIA-STORIA 2018/2019". The page is viewed by a user named "Alessandro". On the left, there is a navigation menu with options like "Informazioni", "Discussione", "Chat", "Membri", "Eventi", and "Foto". Below the menu is a search bar for members within the group and a list of "Collegamenti rapidi" (quick links) to other groups, including "4A/s Storia 18/19", "3Cs FILOSOFIA-STORI...", "Filosofia e storia 4Cc", "Filosofia e Storia 4Cs 2...", "Mascalucia 5 Stelle (PR...", and "Altro...". The main content area displays a list of group members, each with a profile picture, name, and details about when they were added to the group and their location or affiliation. The members listed are:

- Ivan Caputo**: Utente aggiunto da Maria Ludovica Maiolino in data 8 novembre 2018. Lavora presso Scuola calcio Pedara. Button: "Aggiungi agli amici".
- Rakele Mazzara**: Utente aggiunto da Maria Ludovica Maiolino in data 7 novembre 2018. Liceo Classico e Scientifico Concetto Marchesi. Button: "Amici".
- Samuele Volpe**: Utente aggiunto da Gabri Licari in data 10 ottobre 2018. Button: "Aggiungi agli amici".
- Andrea La Spina**: Membro fondatore. Visualizza 1 post recente. Utente aggiunto da Maria Ludovica Maiolino in data 4 ottobre 2018. Sponsor section presso Will Smith. Button: "Aggiungi agli amici".
- Ivan D'Arrigo**: Membro fondatore. Utente aggiunto da Maria Ludovica Maiolino in data 3 ottobre 2018. Pedara. Button: "Aggiungi agli amici".
- Lisa Silvi**: (Profile picture partially visible).



# Context and Contest - 4

## The facebook group as a logbook

Since the beginning of the year, our Facebook group is a sort of logbook, as we put into and share:

- 1) the notes elaborated by the students after the lessons
- 2) didactic materials
- 3) the questions that are asked or the questions that arise during the oral checks and that are reported by some students who act as secretaries during the oral checks.

# Context and Contest - 5

## Preparatory Phase

After a period of work, after having accumulated a certain amount of material, in the form of notes, questions, educational cards, we can organize the real 'contest'.

You can set the contest date a few days in advance so that students can review the work done.

# Context and Contest - 6

## Organization of the Contest

The day of the contest, in the classroom, the students are divided into groups (depending on the needs, you can divide the groups by level bands, or in a mixed way);

then you allow at least an hour to review all the material in the classroom and above all try to respond in a synthetic way to the questions already present in the logbook.

A group of students does not participate in the contest but acts as a jury together with the teacher.

# Context and Contest - 7

## The day of the Contest

Each student has at his disposal a device, personal or provided by the school, with which to connect to the internet.

If the device is personal, the proposed methodology is part of the BYOD methodologies ([Bring Your Own Device](#)).



# Context and Contest - 8



## Contest procedure

The competition is, from time to time, between students of each group, each with their own device.

The teacher asks a question in writing as a post on the group, whose 'homepage' is projected simultaneously on the IWB for the benefit of everyone.

The teacher assigns the maximum response time (2, 3, 4 minutes depending on the difficulty of the question) and starts the timer.

At the end of the time, each student still has a few seconds to review the text, then all must simultaneously publish the answer as a comment to the post.

# Context and Contest - 9

## The role of the jury

After the first answer the jury (better with the help of another teacher) compares the answers, evaluating the richness of content, correspondence with the request, lexical and formal precision and designating the best among them.

During the evaluation of the jury the teacher asks a second question and so on until the end of the time available.



# Context and Contest - 10

## Positive aspects in my first test

- 1) the best answers were not reductive at all despite very tight deadlines.
- 2) despite the stressful situation the best answers were excellent also from a formal point of view (syntax, spelling, punctuation).
- 3) the competitive climate gave enthusiasm to the activity without degenerations.
- 4) It is very nice to be able to immediately compare different productions and realize the views and contributions of each one.

5) The role in the jury helps students in self-valuation.



# Context and Contest - 11

## Negative aspects in my first test

- 1) the attempt of some students to hide a rough preparation behind non-existent technical problems.
- 2) Performance anxiety in some students.





# Context and Contest - 12

## Important precaution

My advice in the possible use of this methodology is **to separate** the **competition** from the teacher's subsequent **evaluation**.

The jury establishes the ranking of the contest, but the teacher subsequently evaluates the answers of each individual student with the vote and the judgment.

I find it very appropriate **to highlight a comment** to explain why an answer is considered better than another in terms of completeness, adherence to the request, substantial and formal correctness.

# CLIL Context and Contest

The second methodology I propose is simply a derivation of the first. The work organized for "context and contest" can be done in L2 for a certain period of the year and become a CLIL activity.

You can organize lessons in L2, provide material in L2 and after a certain training period you can organize the contest in L2 in the classroom.

In the evaluation phase the presence of an L2 teacher could be very important. In our school the L2 is only English and there are several teachers qualified to perform activities with CLIL methodology.

# Flipped classroom and Cooperative learning

The third methodology proposed will be explained better and more thoroughly by Eliana.

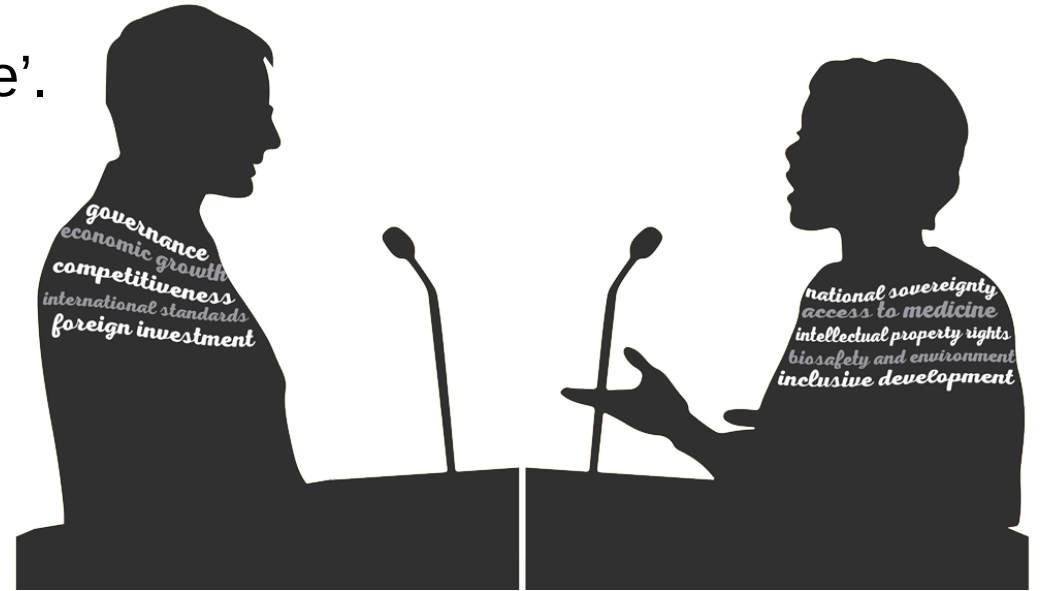
I limit myself to saying that for our discipline, history, a vast quantity of lessons, videos and documentaries is available on the web.

In Italy there is also an entire television network that continuously transmits high quality materials. Through these tools we can easily organized a flipped classroom with subsequent work of 'cooperative learning'.

# Debate

The fourth methodology is the 'Debate'.

I believe that this methodology is particularly suitable for history, because it allows discussion on historiographical topics, on controversial historical figures or on current social issues.



# Debate - 2

As we know the debate, very popular in the Anglo-Saxon world, has its roots in the medieval *disputatio*. It consists of a debate, carried out with established times and rules, in which two teams (usually composed of three students each) support and counter an affirmation or an argument assigned by the teacher, placing themselves in a field (PRO) or in the other (CONTRO).



# Debate - 3

The skills that can be improved with this methodology are:  
Working independently, speaking in public, listening critically.

Students learn to structure a logical discourse, aimed at persuasion, researching and selecting sources, including through online multimedia resources, actively listening, arguing, founding and motivating their theses, working in groups. Furthermore, respect for the point of view of others is promoted.

According to a recent survey conducted by the English Speaking Union, students in public schools who debate have increased their motivation to study by 25%, a percentage that rises to 70% in the African-American male student population.

# Debate - 4

We can adopt various formulas of debate.

The elements that should not be missing, in my opinion, are the following:

1. Preparatory group work on the selected topic.
2. The two teams facing each other.
3. Timekeeping.
4. Control of sources during the debate.
5. The jury that decrees the winner.





*Thanks for your attention!*

