



## Summer City Camp

**School name:** Pisacane

**Period:** 3 weeks, from June, 13th to July, 1st

**Year:** 2011

**Coordinator:** Carlotta

**Assistant:** no assistant

**Number of kids:** 36 kids 1<sup>st</sup> e 2<sup>nd</sup> week - 27 kids 3<sup>rd</sup> week

**Number of tutors:** 4 tutors 1<sup>st</sup> e 2<sup>nd</sup> week, 3 tutor 3<sup>rd</sup> week

### Camp Theme

#### How did the camp theme develop

For the whole period, the camp theme was "The five senses". We worked linguistically on it both during the different activities and during more didactic labs such as *Let's Talk* and *My Kitchen*.

The semantic widening and the potentiality of experiences related to every single sense allowed us to work on different words, concepts and contexts and helped the nonverbal communication during the activities.

The theme of monsters was added to the camp theme as a mean to introduce some activities linked to the five senses but that, at the same time, could lead to the creation of a story for the final show.

Kids really enjoyed one of Kyle's book: with the book came a puppet of a monster (Boris the monster). Activities were often based on one of the short stories of the book or were introduced by Boris the monster when linked to a really shared experience, such as the picnic at the park, or when linked to something totally new. In this way, it was often possible to link different activities to each other and to the sense related to each group without losing the meaning of the story: the kids really appreciated it.

#### Some examples:

- During the *Art Workshop* the tutor drew the shape of a very big monster with tape and asked the kids to dress it up by hiding the different parts of the monster's body (*arms, legs, face, ecc.*) with their own bodies and to undress it while learning new words and verbs or asked the kids what Boris could do with its hands (*to touch*) or its ears (*to hear, to listen*) and so on.
- To talk about the picnic of the day before, the tutor told that even Boris the monster wanted to make a picnic and that the kids had to feed it. This to introduce vocabulary on food and tastes and smells.



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- In other activities, Boris and other monsters were without one of the five senses and this had been really useful to simulate sensations and emotions through drama and to create little sketches linked to the final story of the Loch Ness Monster which decided to travel around the world getting to know it through the five senses.

## Groups Names and Tutors

**K.:** *Touch*

**S.:** *Taste and Smell*

**J.:** *Hearing*

**M.:** *Sight*

## Description of the first day welcome activities

Because of a referendum, the very first day of Summer City Camp we couldn't stay at our school but, together with other three camps, we spent the day at Cascina Monluè. Despite the expected logistic consequences, the daily schedule changes and the low attendance of kids, I personally lived this “forced” situation as a potential for:

- allowing us to introduce the kids the camp experience out of the school environment
- starting the camp experience as if it was a trip
- finding the collaboration and support of other staffs (both Italian and foreign)

The first day, just very few kids attended the camp (in some groups no kid was present) so to divide and to recognize singles groups made no sense. For this reason, we focused on the atmosphere for the welcome of the camp as a whole group, on the introduction of how the camp would have developed, on what the theme would have been, on the recognition of the camp staff and we gave more space, together with the other camps, to large group games. Moreover, since the yard was really big, we mainly did all the activities (sport and get to know each other activities) outside.

We welcomed the kids by choosing a reference place in the yard, trying to make it as much recognizable and accessible as possible both to the kids and the staff.

Each camp staff wore a t-shirt of a different colour. That same colour was used for the board with the name of the school and some drawings about the camp theme on it.

When families arrived, the coordinator welcomed the kid and introduced him/herself and the tutors to the kid and parents tying to the kid's arm a ribbon of the same colour of the t-shirts of the camp staff while explaining the reason of it: to recognize and to feel part of a group.

Kids then joined the rest of the group that had already started a welcome activity in a circle with tutors and began to express themselves in English with sentences such as “Hi, my name is... Nice to meet you” or “My name is... and I like.”



## Description of the daily welcome

The daily welcoming always started with K. counting loudly backward in the schoolyard (“*Ten, nine, eight, seven...*”) and the kids (the whole camp) answered by making a circle to sing songs and play games. Within number ‘1’ kids were in a circle. While tutors led the games, I used to go around the schoolyard to get “lost” kids and to spur them to join the activities whenever they seemed to make a stand.

An efficient and effective strategy for those kids who didn't want to get involved in the welcoming activities was to join the circle with them.

Tutors understood in no time kids preferences for what concerned songs and games and used them in difficult moments or when kids were tired or not paying attention.

## Description of laboratories

### ***Let's Talk and My Kitchen: highly interconnected***

*Let's Talk* was generally led thought storytelling, poems, songs lyrics, drama scripts and recalls to daily activities and extraordinary activities such as trips trying to link them, when possible and useful, to each group theme.

### ***Art Workshop***

Tutors used big cardboards as a mean both to create collaboration and group and to increase the comprehension of what had already been done in other laboratories (creative synthesis of the day or of a specific activity/reinforcement of the storytelling or of a specific semantic group of vocabs/link to specific aims such as the final show/assimilation of the *time table*).

Some sensorial laboratories, such as K.'s on the sense of touch, had been led (kids were blindfolded and had to, through the vocab learned during the *Let's Talk*, describe an object in its different features - cold/hot, smooth/coarse, heavy/light - or they perceived the feature first to find out the word that described it later,...)

### ***Drama***

Improvisation and reproduction of emotions, role games, sketches to introduce daily actions, impersonation of animals just after the trip to the museum, rehearsal of the final show.

All activities, even if different, were linked to each other both from the meaning and continuity and the transmission and linguistic reinforcement point of view. Even during more didactical moments sketches, mimes, imitations and anything nonverbal was strongly used.

In accordance with tutors, I sometimes found a way to understand whether the activities or the explanations were really understood by the kids in order to support, when necessary, the comprehension and the enthusiasm through a short explanation in Italian or a slower way of speaking English.

## Description of sport activities

**Tag** (large or small group): even called tig, tip, tick, chasey,...involves one or more players chasing other players in an attempt to tag or touch them, usually with their fingers. There are many variations.

**Dodgeball** (large group): players try to hit other players on the opposing team with balls while avoiding being hit themselves.



**Volcanoes and Spaceships** (large group): the group is divided into two teams, volcanoes and spaceships. In command of “volcanoes”, they have to turn the cones up to make them be volcanoes and vice versa. Who has got more “volcanoes cones” or “spaceship cones” when a tutor says “stop”, wins.

**Command Game** (with or without a ball): either with colours or numbers or actions (*to catch, to head, to throw, to run, etc.*)

**Explosion**

**Gymnastic**

**Scottish traditional dances**

**The final show: how the show was planned, structured and prepared (theme, ideas,...)**

The show took place on Friday of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week, the very last day of camp.

The starting idea of the show was interesting and linked to the five senses theme as well as to the monster used throughout the whole camp period.

The idea was to make each group embody different kinds of monsters which were missing one particular sense each. In the end, the idea was changed into the story of the Loch Ness Monster who travelled around the world (going to Jamaica, Scotland, Italy and India, that were the countries from where the staff came from) getting to know it through the features of different senses.

The creation and production of scripts was good: fantasy was leading and a lot of attention was paid for the choice of vocabs learned during the activities of the previous weeks.

For what concerns the most theatrical part, we had a few problems. The show should have been a little play acted by the kids in different acts and developed in different corners of the schoolyard that represented the different countries (represented by cardboards decorated by kids). In the end, it resulted in a mostly still story: that's because tutors focused more on the memorization of each kids sentence than on the acting.

After the show, we danced some traditional Scottish dances.

Another aspect that didn't work was the lack of music, which I asked for more than once, that had never been copied on a cd as we decided altogether.

**Trips (where, how you moved from one place to another, how they were organized and how they were revised later)**

We went on two trips: **Natural History Museum** (animals and their habitats), after which we had a picnic and played in a park, and the **Planetarium**. Those places were both in Porta Venezia, so they were easy to be reached by foot.

Even if a lot of kids that had attended the SCC in the last years already went to the Planetarium, parents and young kids who had never visited it really wanted to go. Moreover, since tutors couldn't really watch the kids, I felt safer spending our time in Porta Venezia Park which was extremely near to school.

The kids really enjoyed both trips and worked on them during the Let's Talk and other labs. They even wrote an article for the magazine *Quelli del 20/11* (a magazine entirely written by kids) about what they experienced in the museum.

**Description of the relation with the school and its staff**



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The relation with the staff of the school was good: everyone was friendly, fair and quite cooperative.

I paid attention to the respect of the rules of the school and I didn't ask for anything more than what had already been arranged with the supervisor.

I underline and confirm the helpfulness and kindness of the teacher L. who has been a good support in all the situations.

### **Description of the third week (if not described above)**

The third week was mainly committed to the final show and the magazine articles. The atmosphere was more relaxed in spite of tiredness.



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