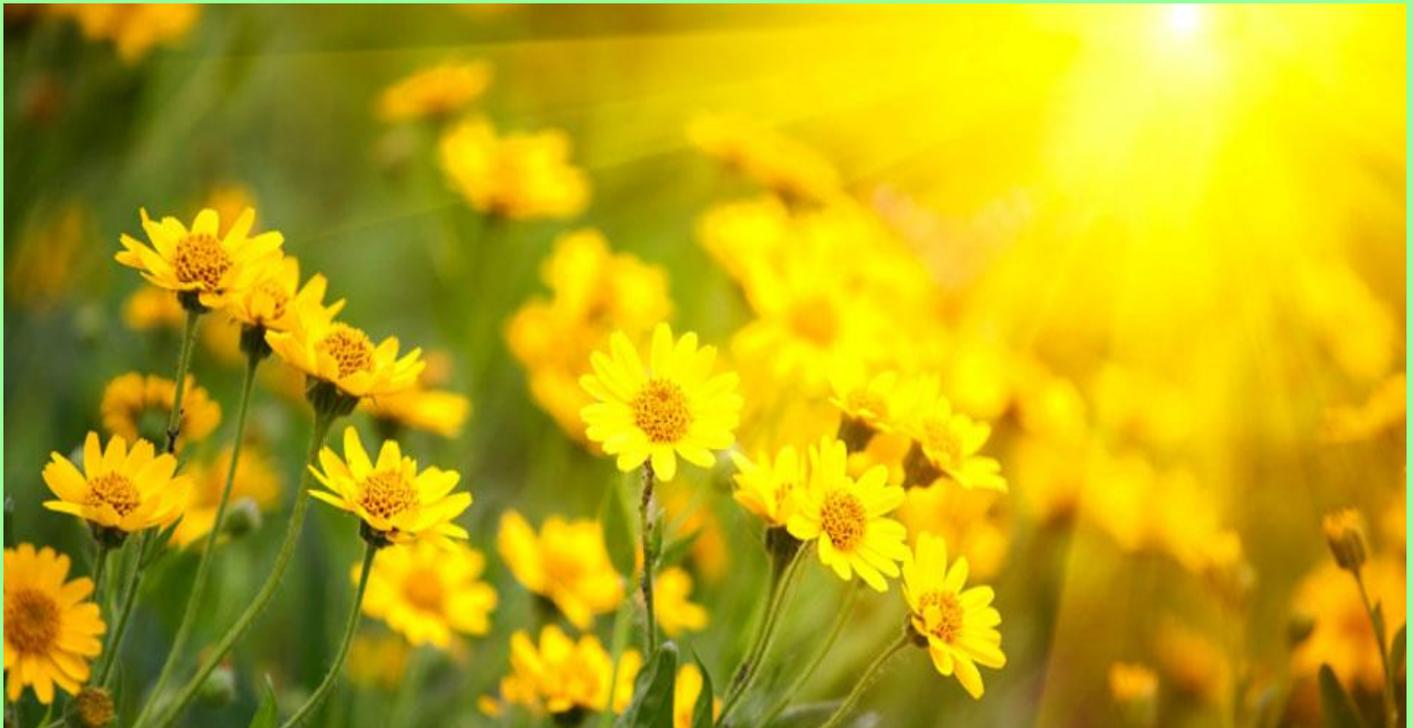




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English Language Teachers' Association of Macedonia



# ELTAM NEWSLETTER

Spring Edition 2015

## **PRESIDENT'S NOTE**



Spring is a time of the year full of rejuvenation and regeneration. Being the first season of the year, it is a herald of positive thoughts and new beginnings. We, as ELTAM team also took advantage of this spring spirit and had several productive activities.

First came the organization and coordination of the National Essay Contest together with the Peace Corps, the South East European University and the US Embassy. Here I would like to express our gratitude to the US Embassy for their sponsorship for publications, materials and the banner. It has been a wonderful cooperation and here I would like to state my gratitude to all people involved in this competition, to all English teachers in the country, to the Peace Corps, to the volunteers and especially to Nadica Georgieva for her constant assistance and coordination in this project. Congratulations to the winners of 2015 National Essay Contest!

ELTAM activities continued throughout February and together with our partner – the NOVA High School we organized and carried out a productive writing workshop. On February 23th, a collaboration agreement was signed between NOVA International Schools and ELTAM. By signing the Memorandum for collaboration both institutions are committing themselves to promoting a culture of continuous professional development, and exchange of experience and colleagues amongst themselves. March was marked by the preparation and information on the ELTAM National Competition, to be held in April.

Our board members had to work hard and Jovanka Jovanchevska Milenkoska and Godiana Gjorgova were our delegates representing our association in Slovenia at the conference - RELO Project Implemented By IATEFL Slovenia: Strengthening The Cooperation Of Teachers' Associations In The Region. Once again, a huge thanks to our dear sponsors RELO from Budapest and Mr. Georg Santha always here to help, like for our 8<sup>th</sup> ELTAM Conference when they sponsored 10 teachers from public schools from the region to obtain their grants for the conference. Thank you dear friends! After their return, we attended dissemination on the project goals, ideas and experience.

On 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015 the Annual Assembly was held in the primary school Ss Cyril and Methodius in Skopje. All the board members participated, along with some of the grant receivers from the 8<sup>th</sup> ELTAM Conference in November 2015.

So, ahead of us is the most beautiful and inspiring season. We have plenty of responsibilities and tasks to finish (the National Competitions first). I wish you to have a great spring and to freshen up your teaching! Happy Easter!

Yours truly,  
Elizabeta Hristovska

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

Dear Guests,

Feel free to taste our latest and freshest recipe right from the oven – the Spring Edition of our ELTAM Newsletter.

First of all, a huge thanks to all colleagues, consultants and EFL workers and students who participated in this issue. I must not forget my students for their support and suggestions for the layout of this issue. A huge thanks guys! 😊

I have seasoned this meal with a new ingredient – a subsection called *Food for thought*. It's a task for teachers, like a sort of homework, which you can find on page 28. If you are eager to do it, please send us the lesson plans and all the instructions, ideas and feedback, so we can publish them in the next issue.

This treat has been enhanced with a variety of *Viewpoints*, *2 Quick interviews*, *the notorious Secret teacher*, *Practical ideas & tidbits*, *Eltam Activities* and *Eltam Calendar*. I have also included some digital ingredients in this recipe. Have a look at Slavica Stojchevska's and Bisera Tolova's Articles in the *Teachers' Forum*. In the *Students' Corner* you can read about the delicacies of our younger cooks – our students. Here I must comment on this – please send us all your students' works, assignments, project and homework to be published. Otherwise I will have to continue publishing works by my own students, which turns out to be a bit self-centered and I dislike that. 😊

As for the *Practical Activities and Tidbits*, there are several creative tips and suggestions how to make your classroom cozy in the Easter spirit. Happy Easter to all our Christian teachers!

Without further ado, enjoy this recipe 😊

Bon Appétit!

Your chef,  
Marija Dzonova

## Special Letter of Appreciation

How many of you have tried to start a lesson with the very-well known: *What day is it today?* And finish it with *Are there any queries?* catching yourself with a gentle grin reminiscing good old university days at the *Department of English Language and Literature* in Skopje. Thinking of a great teacher, actually a master! A brilliant teacher, a prolific translator, and a great Macedonian in his heart. I am sure you are presuming I am writing about our dear Professor Graham Reid. With these several lines we cannot lessen the pain and loss, however, we can convey our sympathy and emphasise his greatness.



I met Mr. Reid as I was rushing in the English Library one gloomy autumn afternoon in my first year of studies, back in 1999. I was hesitating at first how to approach him (since university professors were feared and deified back then), still I got the courage and asked him about a certain collocation that I cannot remember right now, no matter how hard I am trying. To my surprise, my interlocutor (Mr. Reid) was a kind, warm man with a cheerful smile, eager to help. I still remember my uncertainty thinking whether in my 'query' all my grammar structures and my syntax were correct, and probably I was exceedingly preoccupied with it, stunned to hear his short reply in excellent Macedonian and with a welcoming smile. Two years later, I was rejoiced to have him as a teacher both in my third and fourth year of studies, teaching me Contemporary English III and IV and Translation. My colleagues all shared the same opinion about him.

Whenever he taught, his lectures were full of passion. This inspired me a couple of years later to become an English teacher. Not an ordinary one, yet, a teacher who is in love with her occupation, since this is what Mr. Reid taught us. Translation lessons were part of the curricula where you not only learn about the English language, but the hidden richness of abundant vocabulary and dialects in our mother tongue. He was always ready to propose profusion of translation options, which astounded us.

Hence, more than a decade later, I am in front of my laptop, trying really hard what to write. How to bring the essence of words, to write a lofty letter of appreciation. As we all know, these are neither such words nor sentences that can express gratitude, substitute emotions. Nevertheless, I must say:

*Dear Mr. Reid, we more than appreciate what you did for us. Teaching us proper language, flawless translations and motivating us. Thank you for your selfless aid in the teaching and translation processes. We are more than honoured to have had you as a teacher.*

So, my dear colleagues – teachers and translators, whenever his quotes (*What day is it today?* and *Are there any queries?*) arise, always remember that you are there in that classroom or in that translation cabin doing your job well just because of him.

Marija Dzonova

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# 8<sup>TH</sup> ELTAM - IATEFL - TESOL INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL IN SKOPJE, MACEDONIA REPORT

by **Daniela Valíková**

The 8th **ELTAM - IATEFL - TESOL International Biennial Conference** took place in Skopje from 31st October to 2nd November 2014. It was my utmost pleasure to represent **ATECR** (Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic) at this event. The title of the conference was **Managing Teaching and Learning: Making the Most of Both Worlds, Enhancing Teachers' and Students' Life and Organisational Skills**. As Macedonia is a land of lakes and mountains with thirty-eight peaks over 2500 metres, it is hardly surprising that already my landing at Skopje Alexander the Great Airport was an unforgettable experience. The view of Macedonian landscape from a plane is truly spectacular. ELTAM pre-conference event took place already on Friday afternoon at American College Skopje. The panel discussion dealt with continuous professional development. Its goal was to discuss several models of professional development (PD) and their possible use in Macedonian educational context. Except for traditional approaches, the speakers discussed innovative ones such as action research, exploratory practice, audio- and video-recording one's teaching, etc. International insight into this issue was provided by contributions and remarks made by representatives from partner associations and other speakers from abroad. Among many others, a model in which professional development is an inseparable part of working time was mentioned. In such a model, the time devoted to PD forms a part of a school calendar, which means that there are no classes at that time. Various opinions and practices were presented concerning the methods and usefulness of PD measurement with stress on regional issues.

After the panel discussion on Friday evening we were given a short tour of the city centre. I visited five years ago but I could hardly recognize the centre of the Macedonian capital. The area is beautifully reconstructed. The oldest bridge in Skopje, **Bridge/ Камен**, was one of a few places I was able to identify. The area



Skopje five years ago but I could hardly recognize the centre of the Macedonian capital. The area is beautifully reconstructed. The oldest bridge in Skopje, **Stone мост**, was one of a few places I was able to identify. The area

was, however, completely newly built, reconstructed. Thanks to Skopje 2014, a project financed by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, around 20 buildings such as museums, theatres, concert halls, hotels, and administrative offices, and over 40 monuments including a triumphal arch and around 15 equestrian statues, fountains were constructed. The project was aimed at giving the capital a more classical appeal by the year 2014. Below you can see the **Warrior on a Horse (Воин на коњ)**, a 14.5 m tall statue which sits on a 10 m high cylindrical column. The estimated cost of this monument is approximately 7.5 million euro. On one hand, these massive and radical urban transformations of last few years have provided the city with a more monumental and dynamic appearance. On the other hand, the project has attracted controversy as many critics suggest that a relatively poor country with high unemployment rates and stalled progress towards EU and NATO memberships should spend its resources in a different way. The total cost of the project is estimated at anywhere from 80 to more than 500 million euro. In fact, the monuments are so massive that if their size was just half of the actual size millions could be invested in sectors such as education. On a more positive note, the courage and ambitions of this project can serve as an inspiring and encouraging example for smaller projects in the region.

Once the conference was officially open on Saturday morning, it was time for the first plenary by Suzanne Mordue. After that, I managed to attend workshops for example by ELTA Albania president Ymer Leksi and George Kokolas. The next plenary

performed by Kate Mulvey dealt with alternative assessment. I also attended Gergo Santha's talk on RELO. My own workshop closed the official part of my Friday conference programme. In my workshop I talked about sensory experience in the classroom and guided fellow teachers through several examples of activities which use relaxation techniques and/or mental imagery. Shifting our attention from the outer world to inner perceptions and having a chance to experience a few moments of quite transition was hopefully enjoyable end of an exhausting day. In the evening it was time for socialising with old and new friends at a Halloween quiz. Unfortunately, my flight arrangement did not allow me to listen to plenary speakers on Sunday who were George Kokolas and Rakesh Bhanot.

Leaving Skopje and taking off was even more impressive than the landing as Sunday was finally a sunny day. On my way back, I was thinking of a long list of reasons why I should visit Macedonia again and spend there much more than two nights like I did this time. Some of the places worth a visit are surely Skopje itself, Ohrid, Matka (canyon, monasteries, caves), and Kokino (megalithic observatory). My gratitude belongs to ATECR and ELTAM for allowing me to participate at this inspiring event.

*Daniela Valikova is a lecturer of general and business English at Tomas Bata University in Zlin, Czech Republic. She holds a Master's degree in Teaching English and German, and has been studying ELT Methodology in a doctoral study programme at Charles University in Prague since 2011. She also teaches in-company language and cross-cultural communication courses, and is a regional centre coordinator of the Association of teachers of English of the Czech Republic. Her research interests include ELT methodology, ESP, cross-cultural social and business etiquette, relaxation techniques, and mental imagery in ELT. She greatly enjoys travelling and fostering her students' and her own cross-cultural awareness.*

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## 8th International ELTAM-IATEFL-TESOL Conference Skopje, October 31 – November 2, 2014 Marina Hadziomerovic

When I got a phonecall from the HUPE president asking me to replace Mrs Lidija Branilović at the ELTAM conference due to her sprained leg, I was shocked and heartbroken, knowing how excited she had been about the whole trip, conference and workshop she was supposed to give in Skopje. Despite my initial anxiety, we were able to organise everything in such a short notice, so I gradually started looking forward to the forthcoming intellectual challenges. I had already met Mrs Aleksandra Popovski Golubovikj, the ELTAM representative at our last HUPE conference, back in 2012 at the IATEFL conference in Glasgow, and we have been in contact ever since.

My university colleague and friend Jasna Nedelkovska, who lives in Skopje, offered to pick me up at the airport and take me to the hotel. With John Denver's *Leaving on a Jet Plane* sounding in my ears, I got to Skopje in no time. Jasna was already there and I had a guided tour already on the way to her flat. Catching up on our life stories over lunch and then meeting with Aleksandra and the other partners for dinner at a local restaurant was a promising start, so – sorry Lidija, but I started having fun. My roommate was Mrs Daniela Valikova, our well-known Czech colleague. Their two teachers' associations have merged into one, ATECR. I met the first president of the new ELTA Albania association Mr Ymer Leksi and the two representatives of ELTA Serbia, Ivana Banković and Gorica Kostić, so we shared our experiences of everyday teaching and collaboration among our associations.

The president of ELTAM, Mrs Elizabeta Hristovska-Iceva, opened the conference entitled ***Managing teaching and learning – making the most of both worlds, Enhancing teachers' and students' life and organisation skills***. The venue was in a building that houses three prominent institutions: the Cinematheque of Macedonia, the University of Audiovisual Arts and the library Drugarče.

The first plenary speaker Suzanne Mordue from the British Council in Istanbul, Turkey gave a talk on the continuous professional development pathways. Lifelong learning is a must, and we were upgraded to the latest version of 'Teacher' now.

There was a nicely decorated stand with homemade delicacies sold by elderly ladies with the money going to charity. Instant coffee was just what we needed

before Gorica's workshop began. She was kind enough to offer to assist me with my workshop later on. Her workshop entitled ***All the world is a stage – why not a classroom*** was full of new ideas how to incorporate Shakespeare's plays into our teaching.

Mrs Anzhela Nikolovska from the Faculty of Philology spoke about EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives on performance assessments. Teachers' feedback is a valuable tool for motivating students for improvement, but we have to show them how and what to assess and give them clear assessment criteria.

My friend Jasna came to listen to my workshop. She took some photos, uploading them to Facebook at once, so that everybody could see the Croatian flag and the HUPE logo on the board. My workshop entitled ***Feel Good Songs*** dealt with raising motivation and self confidence boost through pop songs. The room was full and I got great feedback mostly from younger colleagues. A quick sandwich for lunch and then Jasna took me out for coffee and a delicious fruit salad.

Mrs Kate Mulvey from the University and American Corner in Pristina, Kosovo gave a plenary talk on ***Alternative Assessment: The Cas for Not Testing***. This was the main theme of the whole conference, and different aspects of assessment were elaborated with examples from teaching practice.

Mr Georgo Santha gave a talk ***What's in it for me? A Complete Guide to RELO for Teachers***. This is the Budapest-based Regional English Language Office for Central and Southeastern Europe, through which the US Embassy Vilnius offers a range of programs and resources for both teachers and learners of American English and culture. We were introduced to teacher exchange programs, teacher training programs and grant opportunities as well as various free materials available for educators and students.

Ellie Boyadzhieva and Simona Balie, university professors from Bulgaria, talked about ***Myths and beliefs in modern ELT***. They argued that the concept of 'learner autonomy' as set in modern theory of ELT is a wishful idea inapplicable to the practices of the language classroom. Cultural differences were touched upon and a discussion followed where the concept of the teacher as a facilitator was compared to the traditional role of the teacher in the foreign language learning process.

The last workshop of the first day entitled ***Coming to our senses: sensory experience in ELT*** was delivered by Mrs Daniela Valikova.

It showed ways to include different senses into our teaching, giving students a moment of introspection and catering for different intelligences.

The conference dinner and Halloween party was organised at the nearby cafe. There were some lovely Halloween costumes, nice music in the background and a fun quiz with awkward facts connected to Halloween. When the raffle began, I was sure I wouldn't get anything. After my name had been drawn by Mr Georgo Santha and I got a CD and the book *Teaching Jazz Chants to Young Learners*, I was speechless. I couldn't have got a better present. Later on Jasna took me to a Latin Dance programme with her dance club members.

The second day plenary speaker Mr George Kokolas from Greece talked about Brain Rules. I've already seen that talk delivered by Mr Steve Leaver in Zagreb, so I tried to recall how much I remember.

Mrs Aleksandra Popovski Golubovikj's workshop ***Visualizing reading*** was such fun. She read the first chapter of her new story and we had to draw the scene and describe it in detail. I had a great time in a group with the young colleagues who had attended my workshop earlier.

Final photos and farewell from our Macedonian colleagues, with Aleksandra's promise to come to the HUPE conference in Šibenik. I was really sorry to miss the final plenary by Mr Rakesh Bhanot from SOL, but Jasna promised to take me on a sightseeing tour of Skopje and I could not resist that temptation. I was there 30 years ago and so much has changed. Skopje has become a real European metropolis, with monumental new buildings, huge statues and lots of tourists. My favourite part was still the old town with narrow streets, open markets and lively shops.

So much in common and so many differences, but embracing all these changes is the only way to welcome the future. We teachers do it all the time!

*Marina Hadziomerovic- HUPE Croatia Representative*

## THE TEACHER AS A TEACHING AID

by Biljana Temelkova



There is only one teaching aid that is convenient, portable, uses no electricity, can be used effectively in light or dark and is available all the time.

That's the TEACHER

**MOVEMENT:** stepping forward to emphasize a point, checking their work and helping them, allowing the shy students to ask questions quietly without the fear of embarrassment, reaching those at the back...

**BODY LANGUAGE:** too little - boring / too much - distraction

Look awake and alert all the time and subconsciously you encourage your students to become alert as well.

**EYE CONTACT:** keep your eyes lively, aware and interested; fix them on specific students but not for so long that they become uncomfortable. Avoid focusing on the worst or the best student.

**GESTURES:** arms and hands are a very expressive visual aid. Use them to describe shapes, actions, movements but remember to keep still while listening to a student.

**FACIAL EXPRESSIONS:** there's nothing worse than a constant frown, while a smile can work wonders.

**SPEECH:** always ask yourself: Are you speaking at the right volume? Are you speaking too fast or too slowly?

**STUDENT TALK:** break the monotony and give students plenty of time to talk! Make small jokes, be friendly!

**NAMES:** call students by their name. It sounds warmer and friendlier and lessens the distance between the teacher and the learner.

**The teacher is the best teaching aid.**

**Make sure that you are using yourself to the full effect.**

*Biljana Temelkova, Primary school teacher, OU Gorgi Sugarev, Bitola*

## SELF-DISCIPLINE

**BY KRISTINA LAOVA**

The importance of self-discipline is based on the demands the students employ over themselves although there are no external reasons and pressure. It should be achieved in a few steps.

The first step is to give the student some amount of freedom. The freedom is necessary for the student to develop his responsibility and freedom of choice. No student can cultivate the responsibility without discovering the opportunities. The teacher should never determine the limits and the conditions and she cannot give an appropriate explanation for their importance. The students call for a reasonable explanation. The numerous the areas in the student's life where the teacher acts, the greater the student's compliance with the teacher when something is really important. The exaggerated control of his behaviour can result in a blind obedience, which will not grow in self-discipline. Subsequently, the student would not be able to give a solution to his problems and make the proper choice. On the other hand, the exaggerated control leads to a student's shut-off, and when the teacher's demands are pretty important he will not listen to her.

The second step is reaching an agreement. All of us are people with a free will. If we want to share the mutual goals, we should become members of a certain group. If the student decides he wants to be a member of a group, he should follow the principles of the group to maintain the cooperation with its members. The agreement can be achieved in three areas in the classroom:

- ✓ agreement between the teacher and the student on their roles in the class
- ✓ agreement on the values trusted by the group
- ✓ agreement on the rules that supports the values

The personal significance grows in the student while serving the group. Once the student becomes a member of a group, he sacrifices his liberty for the belonging's sake. If we consider the student's presence in the class as a group, the least he can do is to behave in a manner that do not interrupt the other students' work while satisfying their needs. It is frequently argued whether the student should be forced to work during the lesson. The right not to work during the lesson should be supported because the rule is not broken if he sits still and do not bother the others. However, if the teacher is active with the other students and prepares the class in an interesting way, the disruptive students will be undisciplined for no more than two days. At that moment those students become students focused on them. If the student bothers the others, the teacher has the right, according to the rules, to detach the student from the group. Yet that will not be his real choice. Usually the need of class detachment is necessary when the student is embittered from the teacher's forcing to study. If the teacher offers him help and let him stay, the chance for failure is diminished.

The third step is to set and maintain the limits. If the student starts offending his classmates, the teacher has the right to control him. When the student realizes that his decisions and choices are being respected, then he will start learning by himself. He will succeed in it only when he will turn the mistakes into a learning occasion. Every question with an unknown answer is a chance to learn; the disruptive behaviour is a chance to do something good for the group; when everything is annihilated – that is a chance for repair and recovery.

- There are also some rules about the rules. The rule should be formulated in a positive form. There should be only a few of them because the students cannot remember a bunch of things. The teacher should be ready to change an ineffective rule. The students have to know the rules and cooperate for their execution. When a rule is broken, something has to happen.
- Once the rules are set, the teacher would put an effort to establish a positive interaction with the other teachers and the students. She should make a clear and concise statement about the way students should behave in terms of, for example, talking to the teacher.

Finally, here are some proverbs regarding self-discipline which might apply to every aspect of our life:

**‘For a man to conquer himself is the first and noblest of all victories.’**

*Plato (424/423 – 348/347 BC, philosopher in Classical Greece)*

**‘Rule your mind or it will rule you’.**

*Horace (65 BC – 8 BC, Roman lyric poet)*

**‘What lies in our power to do, lies in our power not to do?’**

*Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC, Greek philosopher and polymath)*

***Kristina Laova***

*Currently an English teacher in 'Vasil Glavinov' primary school in Skopje, she has been teaching for four years. Her Special interest in multisensory teaching, error correction and cognitive linguistics.*



## QUICK INTERVIEW 1: Rakesh Bhanot, SOL UK



Rakesh Bhanot has been a teacher and trainer for more than 40 years. Although he is retired, he still continues giving excellent workshops and plenaries at conferences. Currently Mr. Rakesh is working with the SO(u)L camps training and motivating English teachers. Another pastime of his is writing haiku poetry.

1. **Dear Rakesh, you've been to Macedonia several times, mostly on conferences, seminars and workshops. Each time is a unique experience. Still, in general, what attracts you mostly and you look forward to see/do/try/taste/meet in Macedonia?**

*You are right; I have been to Macedonia several times and I have had the privilege to teach (albeit on a very limited basis) at all levels from primary school to undergraduates, as well as to run workshops for teachers of English and to give presentations at conferences. I have many friends here and I am always happy to visit them. I am also fascinated by the multicultural/multilingual nature of the country and how it tries addressing some of the challenges this diversity offers.*

2. **When you reminisce, which teacher impressed you most when you were a student? Why?**

*From my school days, one of my most 'effective' mentors was my English teacher who encouraged me to study literature at university even though it was not my best subject at school. His efforts remind me that success often depends not just on the ability or hard work of the students but also on the attitude of the teachers. During the early part of professional career as a teacher of English, my main influence and inspiration was (and remains) Mario Rinvoluceri. Through him, or with him, I have developed the notion of 'teaching below the neck' - usually referred to as humanistic language teaching - whereby language teachers are exhorted to involve 'the whole person' of the learner and not just the cognitive part, i.e. the bit above the neck.*

3. **What is your everyday motivation in your job? How do you get inspired?**

*Well, I am retired now and mostly work on a voluntary basis. However, since I still run workshops for teachers of English, I feel it is important to be familiar with the modern ELT classroom and with different kinds of learners. To this end, I sometimes teach as a volunteer in different countries and these experiences inform some of what I do in my workshops or what I talk about at conferences. Meeting and talking to colleagues in different countries is stimulating and necessary to be an effective teacher trainer/educator on the international stage..*

- 4. Teacher's wellbeing is another key factor for successful teaching. This means decreasing the stress level, being more aware of teacher's health in order to be more productive both privately and professionally. Lately, there has been an increase in awareness of this through trainings, workshops and seminars. What do you normally do to improve your professional wellbeing?**

*Having been a teacher trainer/educator for many years, I have had the chance to observe many teachers in the classroom, and one thing that has always worried me is the amount of effort that they put in to their teaching. I have often wondered why they seem to be doing so much of the work; and not their students! As my friend and colleague, Mark Andrews - by the way, a truly inspirational teacher and trainer - exhorts all of us in this neat little edict. "Don't do anything that you can get your students to do". It is worth bearing this in mind when thinking about how to be less stressed as a teacher. Another tip is not to be afraid to ask others when you don't know what to do. I belong to many Facebook groups and it is heartening to see how many colleagues use these groups to get ideas from (and to share ideas with) other members. Attending conferences is another way to recharge one's batteries. I also take part in summer camps as a trainer and even though this is 'work', it is yet another way to improve one's personal and professional wellbeing by spending time with enthusiastic and energetic colleagues from different countries. Incidentally, these camps include starting the days with yoga, and also discussions about diet and nutrition as well as how to exploit all five senses in our teaching. I hope that is enough 'food for thought' in response to your question. By the way, here is a link to one such camp <http://www.sol.org.uk/solwp/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/SOuL-Camp-Refresh-you-Mind-Body-and-your-Soul-in-Serbia-2015.pdf>*

- 5. Technology has taken over in the ELT domain. Smart boards, laptops, tablets, eBooks, applications are all extremely useful in the teaching and learning process. Of course, the stereotyped board-chalk-book lessons in a teacher centered classroom have had their day, yet are we becoming too dependent on technology? Are there any negative aspects of too much technology in the classroom?**

*In my travels, I still see 'the stereotypical board-chalk-book lessons in a teacher centered classroom' even in more economically advanced (sic.) countries. Technology will never replace good teachers. Yes, teachers have to come to terms with the new technologies but without good teachers all the new tools are useless.*

- 6. I attended your presentation at our last ELTAM Conference. I am sure you hear this quite often, however I must repeat it, it was great. What are the essential ingredients for a successful lesson?**

*I wish there were a simple answer I could give to this but there are so many factors at play. I think most of us know when we have taught, or been taught, a successful lesson. You can, as some people do, look for a sparkle in the eyes of the learners to know whether a lesson has been successful or not; you can observe whether the learners are actively engaged in the learning through their body language; you can look at the learners to see if they 'enjoyed' the lesson or not etc. This may not be answering your question but I don't know the secret ingredients of a successful lesson; if I did, I would bottle them and make a fortune. The only thing I would want to postulate is that where both teachers and learners work together in the learning process, there is likely to be more success, and fun/enjoyment, than where we stick to the traditional type of lesson you mentioned above.*

- 7. How long have you been writing Haiku poetry? How often do you use it in your teaching?**

*I have been scribbling haikus (more correctly, haiku format poems) and other ditties since childhood but only started using them in teaching and training about 30 years ago. Having to express some feeling/emotion (or an idea) in 17 syllables certainly focuses the mind, and I have found that, with some encouragement, most people are willing to have ago at writing short poems. One does not need to stick to the rule about 5/7/5 syllables; just invite people to write 3 short lines. Incidentally, the first time I used the haiku form was to evaluate a*

*course I delivered in 1985 when I had forgotten to take copies of the evaluation form with me.*

- 8. Dear Rakesh, one more thing before we finish. From your perspective are Macedonian teachers eager to develop professionally? What can you recommend especially to the NQT? What about the experienced QT? Learning never seems to cease, doesn't it?**

*I am still learning (after over 40 years in this profession) and to quote one of my own haikus, "if you leave a class/without learning something new/you're a bad teacher"! I can't really make any generalisation about Macedonian teachers but the ones I have met have all been keen to learn more. I look forward to meeting many more of them at future conferences or during forthcoming visits to Macedonia.*



## QUICK INTERVIEW 2: Olga Pauncheva Markovik, British Council Macedonia

Olga Pauncheva Markovik has been an Examinations Coordinator at the British Council Macedonia for almost 10 years. She is involved in administration of IELTS, Aptis, Cambridge English and other UK Academic and Professional exams administered by the BC. As the local BC team is small, her everyday work includes customer service, finances and IT..



- 1. In our previous issue we talked to your colleague, Svetlana Neftenova and asked her the same question - we are well familiar with the importance of the British Council not only in Macedonia, yet also globally. What is the feeling of being part of this global network?**

*To be part of the British Council in Macedonia and part of such an International organisation is a challenge and a big responsibility at the same time. What I most like is that our organisation values people, mutuality, integrity, creativity and professionalism and these values are incorporated in everything we do.*

- 2. You graduated from a completely different faculty having nothing to do with ELT – the Faculty of Electrical Engineering. So, how did the British Council and the UK exams become your life calling?**

*All professions have something in common. My position at the BC as an Examinations Coordinator, among other things, requires a good knowledge of computers, office programmes and attention to detail. I presume that my previous experience in the International organisation, IT skills and willingness to learn*

*new things helped me to get this position. At the beginning it was difficult as everything was new to me and I didn't know anyone in the ELT field, but it was a challenge that I managed to overcome. After some time, every job in some way becomes a routine.*

- 3. I must say that the new Roadmap to exams infographic is a great idea. It helps many English learners to find their way in the process of obtaining an international certificate of the English language. It's very useful and practical. When did the British Council Macedonia publish it? What is the feedback from it?**

*With all new state laws and requirements for international language certificates and diplomas, there is a constant need of explanation about the language levels and which type of exam each candidate should take. At the same time, English language schools and teachers are also exposed to the same situations every day. As we always try to cater for our customer needs, we had to find a way to help them out. The new Roadmap for exams was my colleague's idea. Our team created it and after we put it on the web and distributed to language schools, I must say that we had a very good response and we are proud to have such a product.*

- 4. Excuse me Olga, because we have many colleagues asking us, I must direct this question to you. On the page: <http://www.britishcouncil.mk/exam/why/public-administration-language-exams> there is a citation which states that according to the new law, teachers in educational institutions should take international exams by 2018. Would this mean that beside their University diploma, teachers must have an international certificate as well? Can you please be more specific on the level which they should take – C1 or C2 according to CERF? Is it only for public schools or private language schools are included here as well?**

*This is a question for the institutions that prepare the laws and I would encourage everybody to ask for more clarifications and discuss all ambiguities with relevant ministries.*

- 5. What is your everyday motivation in your job? How do you get inspired?**

*My motivation and inspiration are customers who are satisfied. We are always here to listen to their needs, questions and problems and make their exam experience pleasant.*

- 6. Teachers in Macedonia are really grateful for your work and effort in being part of the organization of the Cambridge English exams. I must point out your high level of professionalism, being always here to help and provide us with information. From your perspective which is the toughest exam session? Is it probably June? How do you deal with it?**

*We start organising each session a few months in advance. It might be strange to candidates as they have to register with us so early, but the process of registering candidates with Cambridge, hiring a suitable venue and examiners, preparing schedules and receiving tests from Cambridge on time is very thorough process and there is no place for mistakes.*

*You are right, the June session is the biggest and the toughest exam session. Sometimes some problems that we can't predict may occur, but we are always here to solve them.*

- 7. Technology has taken over in the ELT domain. Smart boards, laptops, tablets, eBooks, applications are all extremely useful in the teaching and learning process. Are we becoming too dependent on technology? Are there any negative aspects of too much technology in the classroom? What are the advantages/disadvantages of taking the computer based Cambridge English exam instead of the paper one?**

*In my opinion, computer based exams have more advantages than paper based exams. First, the registration for computer based exams is much closer to the test date as no paper tests should be sent to us by Cambridge. Secondly, results for CB tests are issued in 2 weeks. The listening part is performed with headphones and for the writing test, there is no need for candidates to count the number of words. Additionally, correcting the text is easier. Today, almost every candidate knows how to use a computer so I can't understand why candidates choose to take paper based test instead of CB test if there is an option to choose.*

- 8. Dear Olga, it has been a real pleasure to have you in our Newsletter. Thank you very much for your time. Is there anything you would like to add for this March issue?**

*I would like to thank you and all English language teachers and schools for their cooperation with the British Council and their effort in promotion of English language exams among their students.*

## STUDENTS' CORNER

### The Positive Impact of Facebook on Teenagers

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Facebook has a lot of impact on the lives of young people. That is the reason I am writing this essay.

77% of teenagers over the world use Facebook to communicate, share, meet new people and socialize. Facebook is a major part of young people's lives. They keep up with their friends, talk at any time of the day and play online games too. Teenagers make new friends via Facebook easily because it is the easiest and fastest way to communicate. They become parts of groups and meet people who share the same interests as them and organize events such as parties, meet-ups and reunions. They also keep in contact with friends and family who live in distant places.

Facebook is used for school purposes too. Teenagers make groups where they can easily reach their classmates and make plans, help with each other's homework and do projects. They can also find new scholarship programmes, information about summer camps and contact their teachers.

To sum up, Facebook is very useful and helpful to young people.

Ljubena Angelovska, 15, Q Language School





**Stefanija Coneva, 10, Q Language School**



#### Horoscope

Taurus

This month will be great for you, so prepare for surprises. Your boss will give you great news, you will get more money than last month because of your hard work.

On 8th March you will get a nice surprise from someone close to you. Also you'll get a chance to travel to France for one week and visit other beautiful countries.

So, be prepared, this month will be very exciting, but you must pay attention to your health and visit a doctor as soon as possible.

**NIKOLINA SHAGOVSKA, 22, Q LANGUAGE SCHOOL**

## The Mountain Fairy

Once upon a time there lived a Mountain fairy with a very big heart. She was the youngest amongst all the other fairies that were very powerful and wise. The Mountain fairy's power was to make it snow any time she pleased. She wasn't happy with her power because she couldn't do much with snow.

One day, an evil wizard attacked the mountains. All the fairies came together and fought him with their powers. Yet, the Mountain fairy couldn't do anything with her snow powers. She stayed hidden as she watched her friends fight the evil wizard.

The Mountain fairy was very sad because she couldn't do anything to help. The other fairies beat the evil wizard and he ran away in fear. The Mountain fairy decided to visit the nearest town. She walked around the empty streets and then she spotted a boy who was sitting alone. He looked very sad.

"What's wrong?" The fairy asked.

"I'm so bored, I have nothing to do." The boy said and the fairy felt bad for him. But then she came up with an idea. She used her powers to make it snow. The child's face lit up and he started playing in the snow. It warmed the fairy's heart knowing that she made someone smile.

The Mountain fairy learned that the small things in life are the greatest.

Ljubena Angelovska, 15, Q Language School



PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES & TIDBITS

## Creative Easter Classroom - DIY projects

by Marija Dzonova



*Bunny Ears for Kids*

Bunny Ears give a special touch to the Easter lesson, especially if you are giving them an Easter Hunt game (in the school premises or in the yard). They're very easy to make, inexpensive to create and your students will love them! All you need is the following: white and pink paper sheets, glue and scissors.

*Easter Chick Decoration*

**Materials needed:** All you need is a big cardboard paper, preferably yellow. Eyes (found in Jumbo) and orange paper, scissors, glue, markers and a bit of creativity!



### Other ideas:

- As mentioned previously, an Easter Egg Hunt is a good choice to go out of the classroom and to teach about Easter. For this game you need small chocolate eggs well hidden in the school premises or in the yard. If you have large classes, divide the Ss into teams and invite them to start a quest. Prior to this, of course you will teach/revise/consolidate Easter vocabulary. In the end, each team counts the eggs and they are evenly distributed. Besides English teach fairness and equality after all!
- "Blind" Egg & Spoon Races can be really thrilling and challenging. It's up to you whether you will use real, uncooked eggs. Still, if you decide to use little chocolate eggs instead, you will avoid a messy classroom afterwards. Divide the class into teams. Each team must have a 'deliverer' who will deliver the eggs from one location in the classroom to another. The 'deliverer' should be blindfolded and his team mates must assist by giving him/her verbal instructions where he/she should go. It's a great revision of Directions/Instructions. You can either choose to put all the eggs in one bowl or to give an exact number of eggs per team. It's up to you! The winner is the team who 'delivers' all the chocolate eggs from the first place to the second without taking off the blindfold and breaking or smashing the eggs. After the game, teach Ss to have an equal distribution of eggs. I tried this game last year with 3 groups (11-year-olds and 13-year-olds) and they got very excited about it. However, I must warn you that it's quite noisy, but productive. 😊
- Just below these activities you can find 2 more options what to do or how to create your classroom. For the first one you'll need some paper bags and for the second one a lot of cotton. I like them because of their simplicity. Hope you like them too.



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

**Homework task for teachers! 😊**

**Suggested reading and comprehension activities**

**I have copied some quite tedious texts for more advanced learners (high school students or adults). Feel free to “recycle” them. Invent creative activities based on these texts and please send us in the next issue your ideas along with the feedback how they worked on class. We will gladly publish them 😊**

### **Origins of Easter**

For us, the ancient rites celebrating the Spring Equinox are most obviously associated with the mysterious Druids and places like Stone Henge, but most ancient races around the world had similar spring festivals to celebrate the rebirth of the year. The Egg, as a symbol of fertility and re-birth, has been associated with these rites from the earliest times.

#### The Christian Festival Of Easter

In fact, the festival of Easter is a classic example of the early Christian church adapting an existing pagan ritual to suit their own purposes. The Saxon spring festival of Eostre, was named for their goddess of dawn, and when they came to Britain in about the 5th century AD, the festival came with them along with re-birth and fertility rituals involving eggs, chicks and rabbits. When the Saxons converted to Christianity and started to celebrate the death and the resurrection of Christ, it coincided with Eostre, so that's what the early church in Britain called the celebration, Eostre or Easter in modern English.

The actual date that Easter falls on every year is governed by a fairly complex calculation related to the Spring Equinox. The actual formula is: The first Sunday after

the first full moon following the Spring Equinox is Easter Sunday or Easter Day. This formula was set by Egyptian astronomers in Alexandria in 235ad, and calculated using the same method as the Jews have traditionally used to calculate the feast of the Passover, which occurred at about the same time as the crucifixion.

### Early Easter Eggs

As well as adopting the pagan festival of Eostre, the Egg, representing fertility and re-birth in pagan times, was also adopted as part of the Christian Easter festival and it came to represent the 'resurrection' or re-birth of Christ after the crucifixion, Some Christians believe it is a symbol of the the stone blocking the Sepulchre being 'rolled' away.

In the UK and Europe, the earliest Easter eggs were painted and decorated hen, duck or goose eggs, a practice still carried on in many parts of the world today. As time went by, artificial eggs were made and by the end of the 17th century, manufactured eggs made of various materials were available for purchase at Easter, for giving as Easter gifts and presents.

Easter eggs continued to evolve through the 18th and into the 19th Century, with hollow cardboard eggs filled with gifts and sumptuously decorated, culminating in the ultimate in Easter eggs, the fabulous Faberge Eggs. Encrusted with jewels, they were made for the Czar's of Russia by Carl Faberge, a French jeweller, surely these were the 'ultimate' Easter gift, to buy even a small one now would make you poorer by several millions of pounds sterling.

In the Christian faith, Easter has come to mean the celebration of the resurrection of Christ three days after His crucifixion. It is the oldest Christian holiday and the most important day of the church year because of the significance of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the events upon which Christianity is based. Easter Sunday is preceded by the season of Lent, a 40-day period of fasting and repentance culminating in Holy Week and followed by a 50-day Easter season that stretches from Easter to Pentecost.

### **Origins of Carnival**

Why do people, right before the beginning of Lent, celebrate Carnival with excessive eating and drinking, floats and processions, masks and merrymaking?



In Christian countries, **Carnival** is the last opportunity to eat and make merry before Lent, the 40 day period of fasting in preparation of Easter. Thus it is celebrated right before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. Thus Carnival is sometimes termed the **Anti-Lent**. In that sense the word can be interpreted as "carne vale", Latin for "farewell meat". Because it has this (psycho)logical connection to Lent, many churches are amenable to Carnival. In my Roman Catholic school in Belgium we were encouraged to dress up and bring candy and goodies.

But Carnival existed before Christianity, its pagan forms persisting well into the Christian era. When the Church couldn't suppress it, it wisely adapted it to its own traditions. For instance, "carnival" really stems from "carrus navalis": the "naval car" or ship, which carried the Celtic and Germanic Sea-God from his Northern abode to the winter feasts. The medieval Church reinterpreted this as the **Ship of Fools**, on which all kinds of sinners sail to their death.

Such floats also rolled in Babylon, in honor of the God Marduk, and in Egypt, for Isis, the queen-goddess of life and light, who opens the year. Elements of this **Isis-cult** persevered in early Christianity (Isis was even connected to Mary). They point to Carnival's nature as a celebration of the waning of winter, the return of a new year, and fertility.

Other elements derive from the Romans **Saturnalia**, a festival with lots of food and drink, dress-up and parades. The societal order was reversed and rules of behavior were suspended: higher classes had no authority over lower, masters waited on their slaves, men dressed like women. A temporary King was crowned and everyone had to abide by his most ludicrous whims. Even today, revelers elect a Prince Carnival.

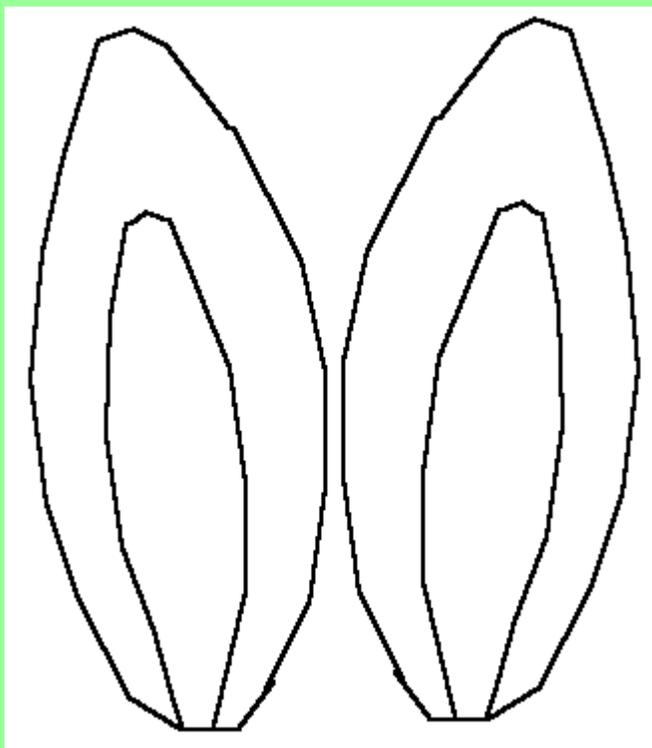
[Internet source](#)

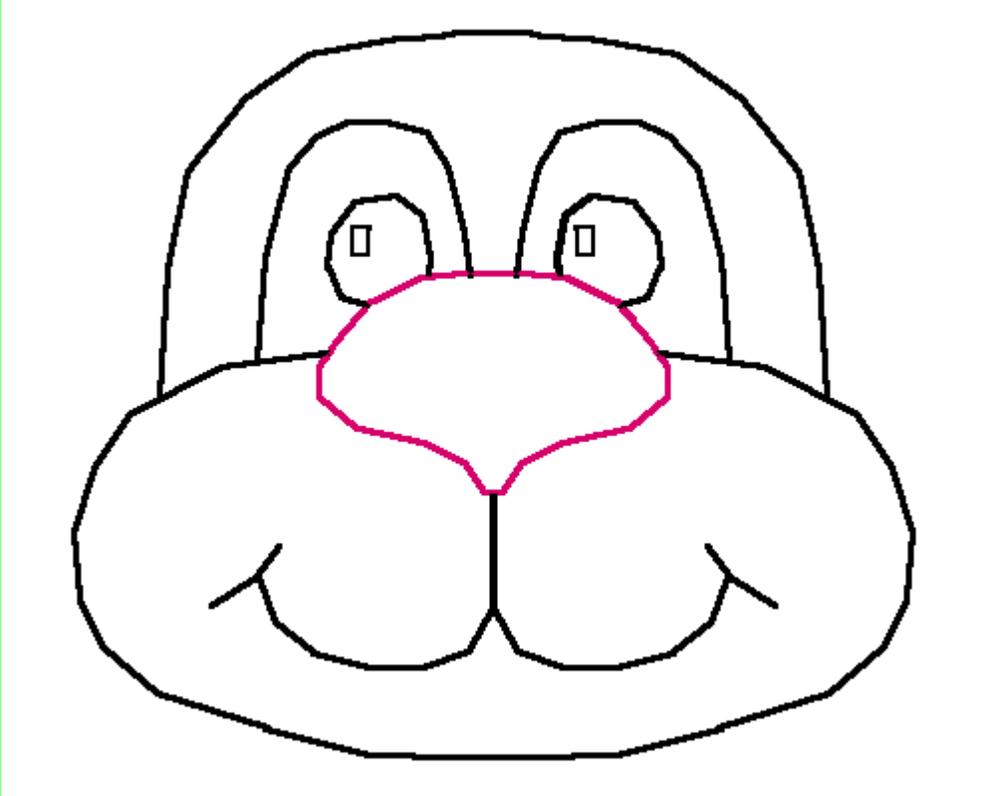


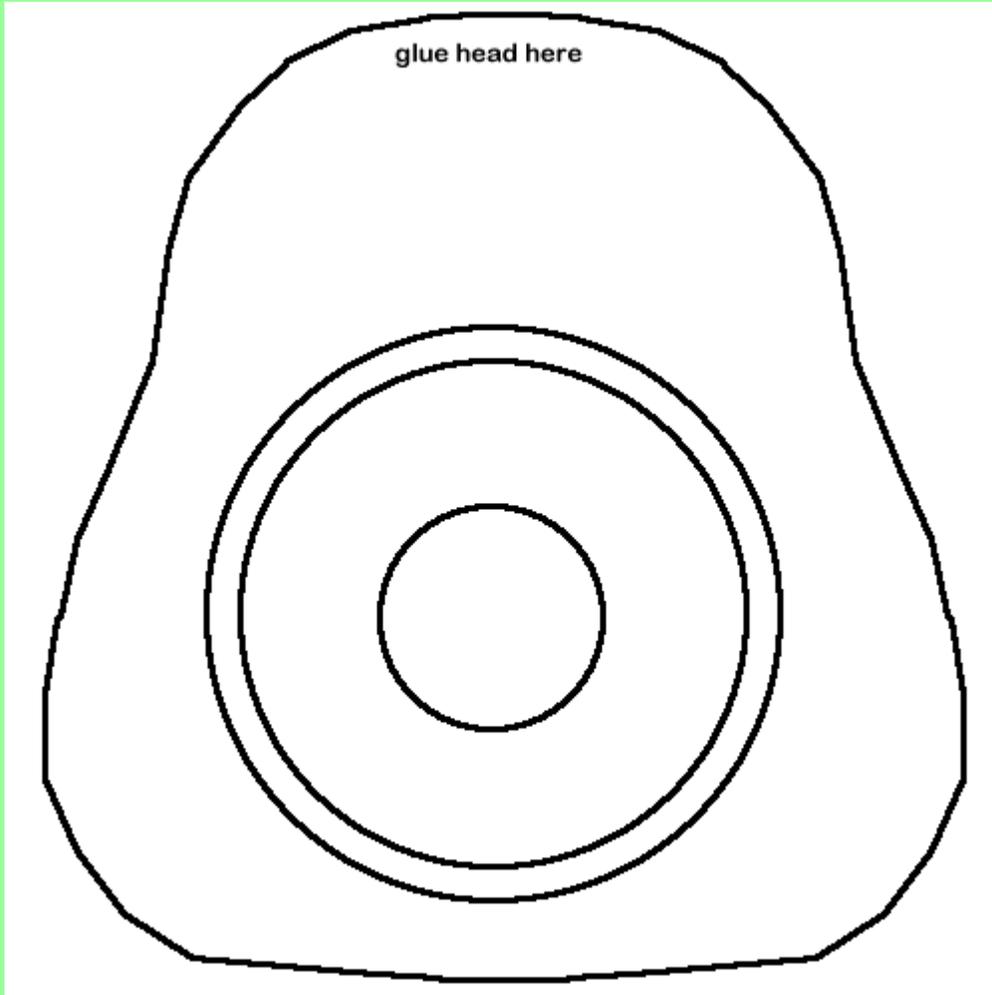
## Easter Bunny Template

**For YLE and Pre-school! My Pre-schoolers adore it!**

Use this template. Cut out the Bunny's tails. Divide the class into teams and make 2 lines in which Ss can stand one behind another. Ss come to the board in turns, blindfold them, so they can find the exact location of the Bunny's tail on the template. You can use a pin or BlueTag to stick the tail. No Peeking is allowed! ☺  
The teacher can also give points for other areas on the template, but the highest points are for the exact location of the tail. Let's have a go!







**Title: Easter Wordsearch**

s c e l e b r a t i o n  
 c g p r o c e s s i o n  
 h o t c r o s s b u n s  
 o o t h s c u p e g g t  
 c d f r n r r r l l s  
 o f e i b o r i p a e i  
 l r s s a s e n a m n b  
 a i t t s s c g r b r i  
 t d i i k t t i a u c s  
 e a v a e i i g d n a e  
 f y a n t n o a e n k n  
 p a l m s u n d a y e a

egg

Christian

spring

procession

Palm Sunday

hot cross buns

bunny

resurrection

cross

parade

basket

cake

festival

celebration

lamb

Good Friday

chocolate

*Source: Pearsonelt.com*

## THE PRINCESS EASTER



Once upon a time, on a faraway island, there lived a little princess. Her name was Princess Easter. She was named Easter because she was born on Easter Day. Princess Easter loved the spring. She was so excited when the flowers began to bloom. She liked watching the baby birds hatch and learn to fly. The beautiful butterflies always made her smile. Of course, the thing she loved most about the spring was Easter.

Princess Easter worked very hard every year to get ready for Easter. There was an Easter party at the castle on Easter Day. Everyone on the island would come to the castle to spend the day celebrating Princess Easter's birthday. They would have an Easter Egg hunt and a birthday party for Princess Easter.

One year, Princess Easter went to see the royal chickens to make sure they were laying eggs for the egg hunt. She was surprised to see that all of the royal chickens had been stolen from the chicken coop. Princess Easter was very upset. She ran all the way back to the castle to tell her father, King Lewis. King Lewis called his royal army. The royal army went all over the island, but they could not find the royal chickens. Princess Easter sat on her mother's lap and cried. The royal chickens had been taken from the island and could not be found. King Lewis sent out his royal army again, to tell all the people living on the island about the problem.

A young boy that lived on the island told the royal army to take his three chickens to Princess Easter. The royal army did not think that this would help, but they took the three chickens back to the castle, anyway. Princess Easter wanted thousands of eggs, enough to feed everyone on the island. She usually needed all of her one hundred chickens to lay the eggs for the egg hunt. Still, Princess Easter was very happy to see the three chickens. At least there would be some eggs. Princess Easter took the chickens to the chicken coop. The next morning, Princess Easter went out to the chicken coop. There were one thousand eggs in the chicken coop! Princess Easter ran all the way back to the castle to get help to bring all the eggs to the kitchen. Princess Easter and the cooks boiled and dyed all of the eggs for the egg hunt.

The young boy who had shared his magical chickens was the guest of honor on Easter

Day at the castle. Princess Easter and the young boy had a wonderful Easter Day. They would be friends forever.

1. Who did Princess Easter tell about the stolen chickens?
  - a. the royal army
  - b. her mother
  - c. her father
  - d. the young boy
  
2. The young boy solved the problem by giving Princess Easter \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. a diamond ring
  - b. a golden Easter Egg
  - c. a golden bird
  - d. three chickens
  
3. Why was Princess Easter surprised when she went to the chicken coop to see the three chickens?
  - a. They had laid one thousand eggs.
  - b. They had laid one hundred eggs.
  - c. The eggs were all blue.
  - d. The chickens did not lay any eggs.
  
4. Who sent the royal army to look for Princess Easter's stolen chickens?
  - a. King Lewis
  - b. The young boy
  - c. Princess Easter
  - d. the Princess' mother
  
5. Who helped Princess Easter boil and dye the eggs for the egg hunt?
  - a. the young boy
  - b. the cooks
  - c. Queen Leah
  - d. The royal army
  
6. Why did the royal army think the three chickens would not help Princess Easter?
  - a. They were all very old chickens.
  - b. They needed at least one hundred chickens.
  - c. The chickens were sick.
  - d. The royal army did not like chickens.
  
7. What did the Princess like most about the spring?
  - a. the butterflies

- b. the birds
- c. the flowers
- d. Easter

8. What did King Lewis send the royal army to do first?

- a. to tell everyone about Princess Easter's problem
- b. to look for the royal chickens
- c. to boil and dye the eggs
- d. to buy more chickens

9. The princess was named Easter because \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. She loved spring.
- b. She liked to hunt eggs.
- c. She was born on Easter.
- d. King Lewis and Queen Leah liked spring.

10. The Princess Easter lived \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. on a mountain
- b. on a river
- c. in a valley
- d. on an island

THE PRINCESS EASTER  
ANSWERS

1. c
2. d
3. a
4. a
5. b
6. b
7. d
8. b
9. c
10. d

• [2003abcteach.com](http://2003abcteach.com)

*Marija Dzonova is the ELTAM Newsletter Editor, YLT SIG Coordinator of ELTAM, Director and English Teacher at the private language school “Q Language School” in Skopje.*

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**TEACHERS' FORUM****The Secret Teacher****A CONFERENCE HERE, A CONFERENCE THERE**

The highlight of a teacher's professional life is attending a conference and I have attended many, believe you me. I am a passionate conference attendee but not a presenter so I really pay attention to what goes on at such events.

The last two I attended were the 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference organized by ELTAM – English Language Teachers' Association of Macedonia and the 1<sup>st</sup> Educonference organized by the Friends of Education, an NGO established some time ago.

I will start with the first one.

What can I say? ELTAM's conferences are getting better and better every time and I believe it's because they have a very experienced team although I did see some new faces in the organizing committee. The choice of presentations was excellent, about 40 presentations and workshops over 2 days, great presenters and even better plenary speakers. The support they have is enormous coming from such institutions as the US Embassy, British Council-Macedonia, RELO Budapest, publishing houses and of course, the President of the Republic of Macedonia.

However, I would like to ask the organizing committee to make sure that the next conference is held in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because I felt like I was in that movie "Back to the Future" because of the old interior of the Cinematique of Skopje where the conference was held. Yes, it was really warm, there was internet, enough rooms but please take us into the modern world.

One more thing- please answer people's questions about the conference. I wrote emails asking for more info and I only got one reply. Communication is the key to a successful relationship.

What else can I say? There is always room for improvement and I think the people from ELTAM understand this so I expect something even better in 2016.

Oh, and kudos to the girls who organized the social event. They tried to fight the music in the restaurant and I am sure they both ended up with laryngitis after that. I talked to them afterwards to congratulate them on a job well-done despite the bad venue and they did their best not to kill the owner of the place for not getting them what they needed. I cannot hold anything against them because they gave away so many prizes. Oh, yeah! Even I won something but I'm not telling you what.

Time to tell you about the second conference.

Now here is an organization that needs to learn a lot. Congratulations on getting 400 hundred teachers from all subjects in one place! Hats off!

BUT, next time keep in mind that conferences are for participants and not for you.

I found the programme very poor with few practical presentations (and it was published on the last day for registration / payment so you couldn't cancel your attendance even if you wanted to, AND it was printed on A4 sheet of paper when I got to the hotel –what's up with that) some presenters were unprepared and you could tell that from their lack of presentation skills, poor choice of vocabulary and other things.

The sessions were constantly late, the internet was down too often although it was supposed to be an ICT conference, and the most important thing – NO FREE COFFEE!!! What do you think we teachers live on during such events?! I paid 30 Euros and then I had to pay for coffee too?! No, no, no!!! That's not how we play. Maybe it's OK for teachers who have never been to a conference and don't know what it's like, but not for me.

Poster presentations were great, I liked that. Food was great! I liked that too ☺ I also saw many familiar faces and met some new people, teachers of course.

However, I left Struga on Sunday feeling disappointed because I expected something better, but maybe, I hope, next time it WILL be better.

My advice – they should learn from other associations and organizations if they want to make it an annual event. Otherwise, teachers who know what a real conference looks like will not come and give them support.

*The Secret Teacher* is the new section of our Newsletter. Anyone can be a secret teacher. It expresses teachers' everyday worries, problems, and concerns. Feel free to join in!



## New tool in my classroom thanks to 8<sup>th</sup> ELTAM conference

**By Slavica Stojcevska**



I attended the 8<sup>th</sup> ELTAM Conference in Skopje, an incredible and inspiring event, which challenged me to present and use a new tool in my classroom.

The conference was a true global village of colleagues involved and interested in ELT that had the unique opportunity to attend educational workshops where we learnt and discussed that we all face the same challenges. On moments I liked to attend two, three or all of the parallel workshops. I truly enjoyed all the workshops because the presenters were brilliant and thought-provoking.

The conference was such an incredible event that when it was over, you want it to last longer. Looking from the bright sight, the end of the conference was not an end. Moreover, it was a stimulating beginning to put in practice the different ideas of teaching, methods and aspects shared by colleagues.

On the conference I heard about *Dvolver* new tool that I decided to try and refresh my classroom. I was amazed with how much enthusiasm students used it to create free short videos. From my point of view, students adore it because it encourages their creativity and imagination and gives them freedom of choice. Students can choose the background, the characters, the dialogue, the music and the title. It is interactive, it engages and motivates students. It is awesome for storytelling, cartoons and comics.

*Dvolver* is very interesting and innovative tool that improves language learning. It requires computers and a reliable internet connection to make digital movies with animated characters. It can be easily accessed from the link <http://www.dvolver.com/moviemaker/make.html> and it is friendly use. From my experience *Dvolver* has just two negative drawbacks. Some of the animated characters are not properly dressed but before the students start making the digital movies you can make an agreement not to use them and easily resolve. The second is that there is no audio.

In general, *Dvolver* offers more positive learning opportunities for learners and it is awesome for making movies. Here you can find videos made from my students from 5<sup>th</sup> class

on versatile topics: (you can open and watch the videos by pressing the button Ctrl and click on the mouse at the same time)

[Valentine's Day](#) by Vladan

[Santa and the girl](#) by **Sandra**

[Happy New Year](#) by Milan

[At the market](#) by Teo

[Love](#) by Marija

[When is your birthday?](#) by Mladen

[Happy New Year](#) by **Andrej**

[At the market](#) by Melanija

[Easter](#) by Anabela

If you want to know how much my students enjoy using *Dvolver* please read their reviews.



Anabela

I love *Dvolver* because it is interesting and fantastic. I made lots of videos and sent to my English teacher. On *Dvolver* you can make different videos, you can make a story from the things that happened to you.

I like *Dvolver* because I can use my English. *Dvolver* is nice because I can make my stories.



Marija



Mladen

I love *Dvolver*. *Dvolver* is not boring.

I can write my stories.  
I love *Dvolver*.



Melanija



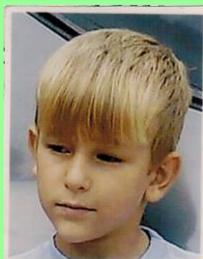
Teo

*Dvolver* is very exciting program for making video clips. On the English classes I can make very beautiful video clips. I like very much *Dvolver* because it is very, very interesting program.

I love *Dvolver*. It is interesting.



Andrej



Milan

I can make movies and I can write and play on *Dvolver* that's why I like it.

*Dvolver* is easy and very interesting. I love it. I made video for Happy New Year.



Sandra

It is good and it is funny.  
I like *Dvolver*.

By Vladan

**Slavica Stojcevska** is a teacher to students from 1st to 5<sup>th</sup> grade in Primary School 11 Oktomvri in Kumanovo for almost 5 years. If you want to discover more on how we learn English through playing you can visit us [on englishclub.ucoz.org](http://on.englishclub.ucoz.org)

## My tips on digital storytelling by Bisera Tolova

Small children or young age students are not often aware of the enrollment in the education world, namely do not understand its key roles and impact. There are numerous ways to convey real life values and good morals in order to make students a good fit for society. This process can be immensely rewarding and disappointing at the same time, so you will need to consider many things before entering the classroom.

As a teacher of English, I have always had in mind that creating the perfect classroom is the primary factor of how students accept the learning environment, and additionally vital for achievement.

The preeminent weight in the first grade curriculum is put on the listening skills, or the aural input, which means that most of the content is taught through stories and chants. In the foreign language teaching short stories are recognized as a jumping board to motivation and appreciation of the language and culture students learn. Additionally they provide visual cues and imaginative input as well as skills development such as listening comprehension. Since most of the values are rooted in our own personality you have to be extremely cautious of the content and the way you present the story.

My typical procedure for presenting the story in the classroom has emphasis on the rich wordless pictures aiming to instill imagination of how things are and what happens next. Classical reading makes student bored and soon after students start yawning or tend to lie down. Owing to the fact I run two blogs brimming with the newest applications and web tools I opted the digital storytelling approach. Most of these storybook platforms are free to use and children friendly. The easy to use tools offer rich illustrations, huge choice of props, class management tools and what I love most safely share to all social networks and embed codes for your blogs. The practical conversion from text to colorful canvas is actually a combination of digital and narrative content. My digital bookshelf is a product made with the assistance of free tools like [Storybird](#) , [Storyjumper](#) , [Tikatok](#) , [Flipsnack](#) , [Bookemon](#) as well tons of other publishing platforms and applications which you can find them [here](#).

The storyjumper platform provides free canvas for educators as well as students to create their own piece of art whether this is a poem, a booklet, a story, some kind of grammar explanation , or flashcards. See how this simple canvas functions.



*Storyjumper canvas*



*The cat and the bell. A scene from the story*



*The three butterflies and the rainbow*



*Cat, kittens, lost & found mittens*

As you can see each page is full of colors, props, clip arts or any kind of digital content to better story telling.

The consequence which follows is nothing more but students' appreciation and attention and the final outcome is pleasant and delightful learning environment, where the teacher is mostly awarded by the instant feedback. Students know well when the teacher has prepared in advance and do not hesitate to show off their joy on how this story kept them amused. Some of the mentioned story creators offer advanced features so you will have to figure out which tool is appropriate to create your story. For example some stories have more than two or three characters including animals or plants in specific roles which

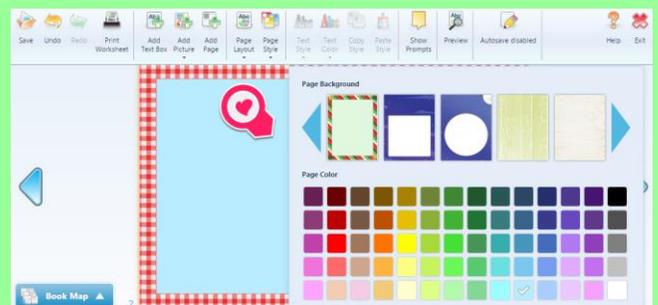
gradually doubles the work you need to do, but in return you become more skilled and accurate when conveying the moral of the story.



*Tikatok/create your own book*



*The simple tool bar*



*The careful background selection boosts the predictions*

Find my ABC book [at Storybird](https://www.storybird.com/). I spent so much time on selecting the right art theme since the upload option is not available for free on this platform. Each art theme is limited to a certain number of pictures. The cute creatures helped me provide a word for each letter. In this way students mastered pronunciation, word recognition, and improved spelling.



*My abc book cover*

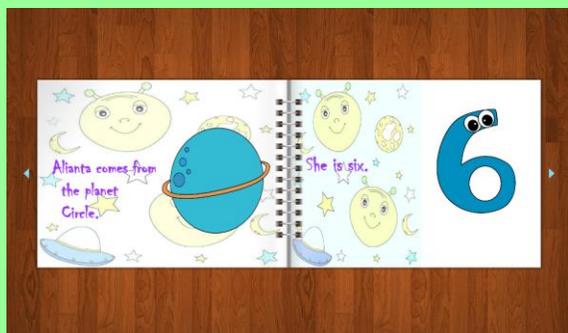


*The lovely canvas where you can drag art from*

And have you ever heard about the [Flipsnack software studio](#), where each of my creations is uploaded as pdf file and transformed into a beautiful interactive book, reaching all of my readers across online platforms, with no registration required. It works and looks great. Sneak a peek bellow on [Alianta](#) flipping over the wooden background in full size window.

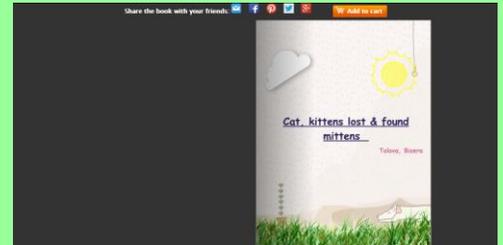


*The cover of my interactive book*



*Inside the flipping book*

I am bringing this article to an end with the easy-to-use book creator [Bookemon](#), where you can also order your story in printed version and sell to others readers internationally recognized with ISBN-13., optional to sell on Amazon. As an author you have an insight on the stats referring to the number of readers, likes and favorite picks.



Full screen share



Another version of the story-Cat, kittens, lost and found mittens

The purpose of my story telling using digital support is to avoid the initial reluctance to adopt web tools, and satisfy students' needs. Moreover the adoption made me realize how learners understand content more comprehensively and reached significant level of perception . To stay current with the newest tech tools and some of my creative work follow my personal blogs <http://biseratolovatefl.snack.ws/> & <http://myenglishworldbt.blogspot.com/>.



**Biserica Tolova** – Primary School teacher in Goce Delchev, Kavadarci

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## ELTAM ACTIVITIES

### ✓ Annual Assembly

Held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015 at the primary school Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje on which key points were discussed like: the 2014 working programme of Eltam and a new one was designed for the upcoming 2015.

- Eltam representatives were appointed, who will represent our association at the regional conferences (ELTA Serbia, BETA Bulgaria). They are: Elizabeta Hristovska Icheva and Biljana Temelkova – ELLA Serbia and Valentina Kikerkova and Makedonka Madzirova – BETA Bulgaria
- Coordination and organisation of the National Essay Contest and the ELTAM National Competitions for primary and secondary school

### ✓ ELTAM representatives at the IATEFL Slovenia Conference in March 2015 carried out dissemination of the activities and experience from the conference in Slovenia

### ✓ National Essay Contest organised in February and March in cooperation with the Peace Corps, the South East European University and the US Embassy.

- The US Embassy was a great sponsor for the publications, materials and the banner

### ✓ NOVA Partnership and workshop - On February 23th, a collaboration agreement was signed between NOVA International Schools and English Language Teachers Association of Macedonia (ELTAM). By signing the Memorandum for collaboration both institutions are committing themselves to promoting a culture of continuous professional development, and exchange of experience and colleagues amongst themselves.

<http://www.eltam.org.mk/news/view/58>



## REPORT

**RELO PROJECT IMPLEMENTED BY IATEFL SLOVENIA: STRENGTHENING THE COOPERATION OF TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS IN THE REGION**

*On the invitation from IATEFL Slovenia, ELTAM delegated two board members, Ms. Gordiana Gjorgova and Ms. Jovanka Jovanchevska Milenkoska, to participate in the IATEFL Conference Slovenia, and be part of the RELO project implemented by IATEFL Slovenia: Strengthening the Cooperation of Teachers' Associations in the Region. The accommodation and travel expenses were covered by the host association, IATEFL Slovenia.*

At the beginning of the conference, we had an initial meeting with the representatives of HUPE Croatia, ELTA Serbia, TETA Bosnia, Tuzla, ELTAM Monte Negro and ELTA Albania. Moderator was the representative of the host association, Ms. Dragana Stegic, who introduced us to the aims of the project and our tasks at the conference. All the delegates introduced themselves and gave a brief background of their associations, activities, and projects, positive and negative experiences in running their associations, as well as future projects and plans. We were all given observation sheets to fill in during the conference, expressing our views, notes, observations, suggestions, things we learnt and ideas on how to strengthen cooperation among the associations in the region.



On the opening day of the conference, we were greeted by the president of IATEFL Slovenia and higher representatives of the American embassy in Slovenia. Apart from the plenaries and workshops, at the end of the first day there was a unique moment for introduction of all the participants in the conference at the Multi-Culti social event, moderated by the representatives of SOL, Mark Andrews and Rakesh Bhanot, where the conference participants introduced their countries, presenting special articles from their countries (food and drink). The event was a major success, providing an opportunity for promoting multiethnic awareness among the participants, enabling everybody to get to know each other better and exchange ideas and humorous remarks on their nationalities, thus completely bringing down stereotypes.



Regarding the host conference, it was organized in a very professional manner, with high-profile plenary speakers and workshop presenters; the topics covered a wide range of expertise and a lot of practical ideas for the ELT classrooms across borders. The pace of the program was elaborately established, sustaining our interest throughout the whole conference. Everything ran smoothly and the long working days turned out to be exceptionally productive, keeping us thoroughly engaged. In addition to this, we can definitely say that organizing a conference in a venue away from the large cities can really help focusing on the content of the conference. This particular venue was exquisite. It provided comfortable accommodation and suitably equipped rooms for plenaries and workshops – everything in the same building – which really proved the renowned reputation of the IATEFL Slovenia conference as the coziest conference in the region. The additional perks in the resort rejuvenated us and provided calming setting for the educative nature of the event.



Regarding our experience at the conference, we would like to highlight the things we've learnt:

- Instead of organizing a biannual conference in our country, ELTAM could successfully organize an annual conference, which will require a better organization and probably a larger team of our organizing board, together with a larger team of partners and collaborators.

- Collaborating with neighboring teachers' associations can present beneficial opportunities for development in all areas, exchanging experiences and expertise, solutions for problematic in-house issues and initialization of common projects and events. Our initiative to form an alliance of the teacher's association ABELTA was already launched through its Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/716768141776224/>. This will be our platform where we can continue to communicate and share our ideas on our future collaboration.



- Throughout the whole conference we engaged in brainstorming sessions, looking for ways to continue with the RELO project initiative and several ideas emerged, which will hopefully be realized in the future. The idea that Gordiana came up with is a long-term project focused around ABELTA summer schools. These schools are envisaged to be organized each summer by a different BALKAN association, having the form of training workshops for teachers of the whole region. The content of the workshops will be identified by the host country, while the funding will be provided by the partners and sponsors. Should this idea be accepted by the rest of the ABELTA members, it will be further elaborated by contribution of the remaining associations.

In the end, we would like to express our gratitude for this opportunity to be part of a project and participate in the conference, which proved as an invaluable experience for networking and establishing closer connections with the other Balkan associations. We hope that this initiative will be sustainable in the future.

RELO Budapest together with MR. Gergo Santha are our friends and partners. Their assistance and cooperation is invaluable both for ELTAM and for the English language teachers in Macedonia. Once again, we would like to express our gratitude for their sponsorship at our 8<sup>th</sup> ELTAM Conference, at which they fully sponsored 10 teachers from public schools from the region to receive grants for the conference. Our cooperation and friendship will continue in the future.

Gordiana Gjorgova  
Jovanka Jovanchevska Milenkoska

**PhD Gordiana Gjorgova** - Conference Secretary and National Coordinator for Secondary School Competitions, Secondary school teacher at the Josip Broz High School in Skopje  
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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Announcing winners of the National Essay Competition in cooperation with the Peace Corps on Friday, 03<sup>rd</sup> April 2015 in the US Embassy in Skopje, waiting for the official photos (they will be published in the next issue)**
- **National Competitions**

**Will be held on the following dates:**

**Local - 04<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

**Regional – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

**National**

**The venues to be announced**



## FOR PROSPECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

From now on, the ELTAM Newsletter will be published four times a year (December, March, June and September) in an electronic version. The deadline for contributions for the next issue is **10 February 2015**.

What's important to keep in mind is that the article must be ELT-related, covering any issue relevant in English language teaching (the focus being on your country's specific context), preferably mixing theory and your own unique experience. The topic isn't fixed, but try to make the ideas fresh and applicable in a classroom situation. There is also no limit as to the type of classroom - it can be about primary, secondary or tertiary education. Another suggestion would be to send in a review or report of a past Conference (seminar, workshop or other event) that you have attended and would like to share with the readers. You could also send in a lesson plan with a detailed description of the steps and the teaching techniques incorporated in it.

Invite your pupils/students to contribute to the "Students' Corner" section with a poem, project or a short story in English they have written.

Don't forget to add photos and pictures in order to make the article aesthetically and visually pleasing. A picture or two does wonders for the readers!

In terms of word count, the article should be between 800 and 2,200 words.

Add your name, workplace and email address at the end of the article, in addition with a photo of you for inclusion (no hard feelings if you don't want a photo of you published). If you have any other contact information you'd like to give out (Twitter account, Facebook profile, and your own blog/website), write it after your email, so that interested colleagues can contact you via any form of communication.

Send in the article as a Microsoft Word document (it will be converted into the appropriate format afterwards) to the **Newsletter Editor, Marija Dzonova**: [dzonova@hotmail.com](mailto:dzonova@hotmail.com)

Feel free to contact me via email if you need more information regarding the article requirements, or if you simply get writer's block.

If you have anything you would like to share with the ELTAM readership, feel welcome to send it. Even if there is a topic you would like to be covered in the following issues, please let me know. I'll be waiting for your articles, your students' works and even the worries that bother you in the form of a *Secret Teacher* text!



## ELTAM CONTACTS

**Web page:** [www.eltam.org.mk](http://www.eltam.org.mk)

**Facebook profile:** ELTAM Teachers, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Eltam/419137048118635>

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<b>Conference Secretary and National Coordinator for Secondary School Competitions</b>	<b>Gordiana Gjorgova, PhD</b> gordianag@t-home.mk
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**3. Graham Reid:**

<http://sundaysuppermovement.com/a-sneak-peek-at-sundaysupper-springtime-sweets-ft-dixiecrystals/>