

«The child is made of one hundred»

A thematic module on *early childhood education* through a *flipped classroom* approach.

by Ilaria Piccioli



This lesson plan consists of 4 time units of 60 minutes each, plus further expansions both in the classroom and at home, and it is aimed at making students familiar with the educational philosophy internationally known as «Reggio Emilia Approach».

TARGET AUDIENCE

This lesson plan is intended for use with students of Years 4 and 5 of *istituti tecnici* and *professionali*, specializing in social sciences and of *licei delle scienze umane* and *socio-psico-pedagogici*.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Beamer, PC or tablet, handouts, online resources.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Making the students familiar with the educational philosophy known as «Reggio Emilia Approach»
- Developing autonomous learning.
- Engaging actively in in-class debates.
- Learning specialised vocabulary.
- Applying *problem solving skills* in their professional practice.

METHODS

- ❖ Blended learning: brick-and-mortar lesson + flipped classroom
- ❖ Oral presentations/reports
- ❖ Class discussions and in-class debates



The whole teaching unit can be carried out in a virtual learning environment, using such websites as [blendspace.com](https://www.tes.com/teach)




a free website which enables users to easily create rich multimedia lessons, allowing for differentiated resources, supporting an inquiry-based approach, as well as the flipped classroom model. It is also possible to track students' progress during or outside lessons. Finally, it can be used as an organisational tool to collate numerous resources.

STEP 1 - An introduction to early childhood education

Length: 1 hour

- **ANTICIPATING CONTENT (10 mins)**
- This opening stage aims at introducing different types of *early education* through *key words*.
- The students will contribute *key words* relating to the theme of pre-primary education.
- The elicited words will be arranged in a *mind map* the teacher will create on the board. The students will later build their own mind map at home using specifically designed programs such as www.popplet.com

- The students will find some useful guidelines on how to create a concept map in the book *A World of Care* published by editrice San Marco.



HOW TO CREATE A CONCEPT MAP

Concept maps (also called spidergrams, because they resemble a spider's web) are a very useful tool to study, organize information and solve problems because they are easy to draw and help you visualize and remember notions and concepts. Concept maps are an effective graphical method of taking notes.

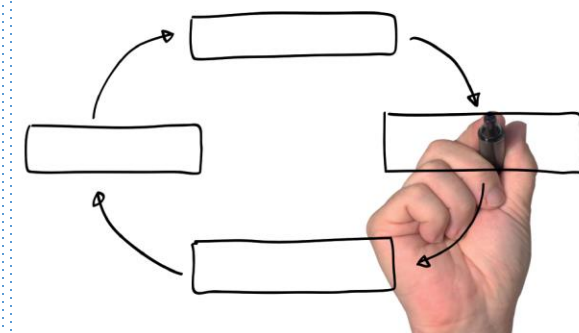
To create a spidergram from a given text you must:

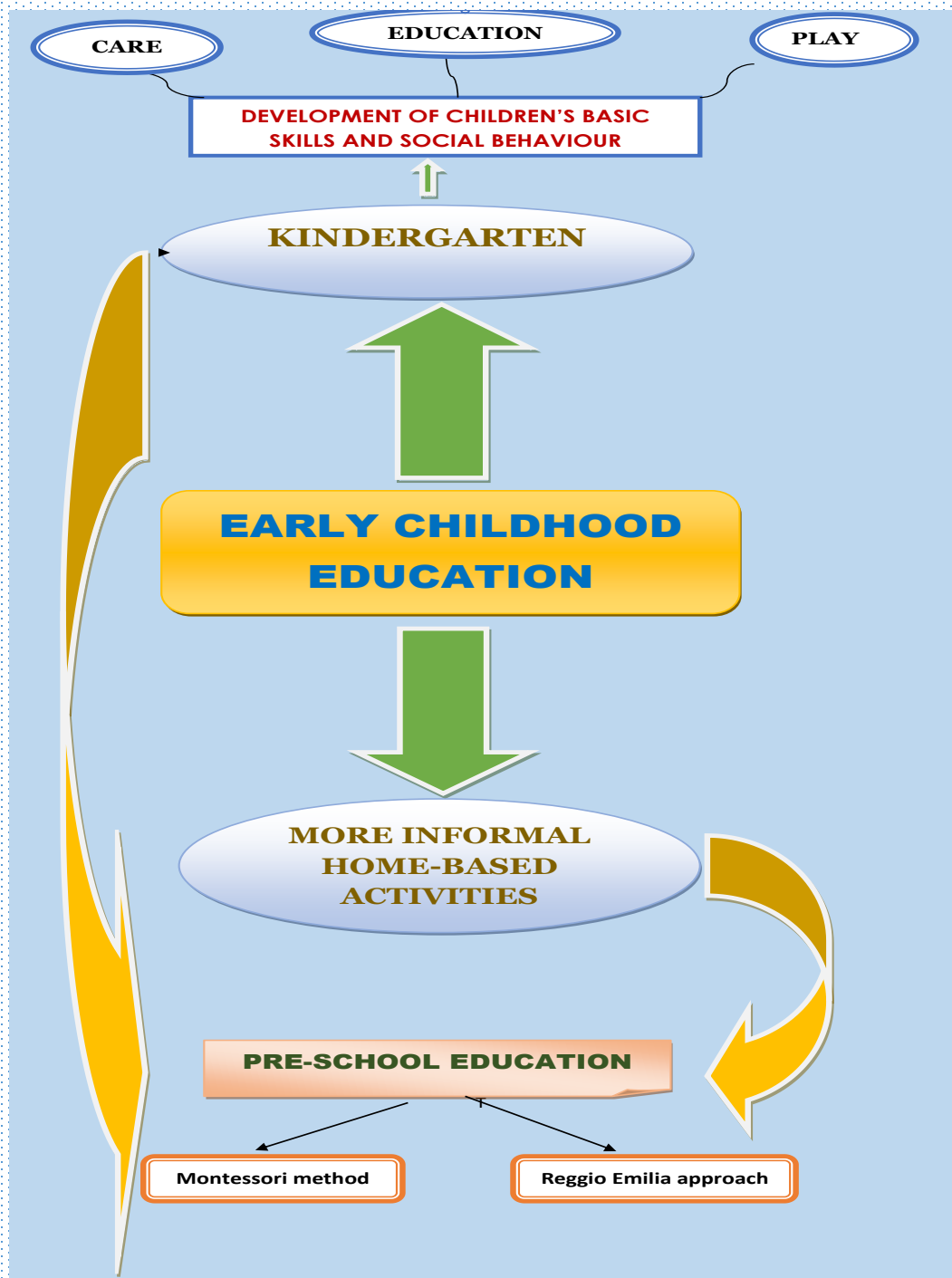
- 1 identify the **main concept**. In other words you must ask yourself: 'What is the text about?'
- 2 identify **other ideas** that are connected with the main concept;
- 3 identify the **relationship** among the main concept and related ideas.

Remember: not all information in a text needs to be included in the spidergram. Minor details and extra information can be left out if they are not necessary.

The structure of a concept map is the following:

- the **knot** is a frame or circle that contains the key concept and related ideas. Usually the main concept is represented with a shape or colour different from the other ideas, in order to be more easily identified;
- the **arrows** represent the relationships between concepts and ideas.

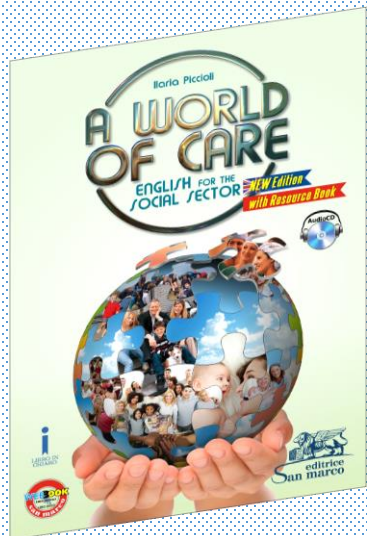




EXTENSIVE READING AND NOTE-TAKING (20 mins)

KINDERGARTENS

The students, working in pairs, will read the text «Early Childhood Education: Kindergartens» (from *A World of Care* and/or *Ways of the World*).



module 1

6 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: KINDERGARTENS

Early childhood care and education is a diverse area of learning. It ranges, on the one hand, from formal pre-primary education, which is integrated with the national education system, through **kindergartens** where care, play and education are all included, to more informal and often home-based activities.

The German word "Kindergarten" refers to a variety of institutions providing **preschool or pre-primary education** to children aged between three and seven, depending on the country concerned. Kindergarten originated in Germany in the early 19th century with the aim of developing young children's basic skills and social behaviour through games, music and simple handicrafts. The German teacher Friedrich Fröbel opened the first kindergarten in a village in the German region of Thuringia. Fröbel, who was largely self-educated, dedicated his life to providing children with an education that could develop their spirits as well as their bodies by making use of their natural creativity. This type of preschool embodied Fröbel's philosophy of 'guided play' and was called 'Kindergarten' by Fröbel himself as to suggest that it was a sunny experience that could cultivate children like plants and let them bloom like flowers. Though this new philosophy soon became popular all over the world, the German government banned kindergartens fearing that they would not be rigorous and formal enough. In the 1850s, refugee teachers established kindergartens in England, where the German word was adopted without translation, while in the United States the first kindergarten was opened in 1856. Kindergarten provides an educational context in which children's creative instincts are organised in a constructive way through the use of songs, stories, games, and simple manual activities which stimulate social expression and cooperation. In this way, children learn to communicate, play, and interact with other children appropriately. For children who have previously spent most of their time at home, kindergarten may serve the purpose of training them to be part of a group while remaining calm without their parents. By playing and interacting with other children on a regular basis they can get their first idea of friendship. These characteristics of kindergarten have learning and behavioural benefits for children.

GLOSSARY
1 any activity in which you use your hands in a skilful way to make things

03
Rhymes and Lullabies



While reading, they will complete the *graphic organizer* below with information from the text.

Kindergarten Graphic Organizer


| | |
|--|--|
| System of education | |
| Age of children | |
| When, where and by whom it was created | |
| Meaning of the word 'Kindergarten' | |
| Main goals of kindergarten education | |

The K.I.M. Strategy for Vocabulary Acquisition

In order to strengthen vocabulary acquisition, students may use the KIM strategy, based on a 3-column graphic organizer.

The first column, or «K» column is where the key idea or term goes. The second column, or «I» column is where information about the key term goes. The last column, or «m» column is where students come up with a memory cue such as a drawing, a picture, a media clip or a sentence using the word.

KIM Vocab Chart

| <p style="text-align: center;">K</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Key word</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Information</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Definition of the Word)</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">M</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Memory Cue</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Sentence or Picture)</p> |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Pre-primary education</p> | <p><i>Programmes of school-based organized instruction which cover at least 2 hours per day and 100 days per year.</i></p> |  |
| <p>Skill</p> | <p><i>Developed abilities</i></p> | <p>"Cooking is a useful skill"</p> |
| | | |
| | | |

ORAL REPORT (30 mins)

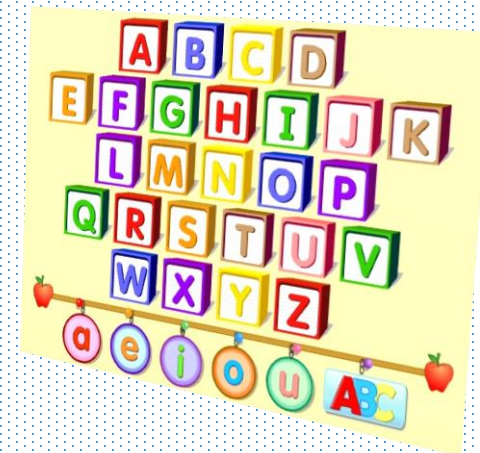
KINDERGARTENS

The students will give a 2-3 minute oral report of what they have learnt about KINDERGARTENS.

During the oral report they can use the *mind maps* and the *graphic organizer* as a visual aid.

The teacher will offer a constant and effective *feedback* and in order to correct language errors she/he will recur to such strategies as *elicitation* and *clarification request*, rather than *explicit correction* or *recast*.

The teacher will evaluate each student's report, using the rubric below.



| SPEAKING PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC | |
|---|--------------|
| CATEGORY | SCORE |
| CONTENT/SUBJECT/KNOWLEDGE | /40 |
| FLUENCY | /10 |
| VOCABULARY | /30 |
| PRONUNCIATION | /20 |
| TOTAL SCORE | /100 |

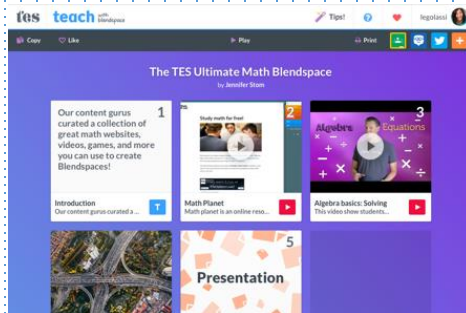
STEP 2 –The Reggio Emilia Approach

Length: 1 hour

Flipped classroom activity

As a homework assignment, the students will view the Powerpoint presentation «The Reggio Emilia Approach» downloaded from www.tes.com, an educational website which provides a wide range of teaching resources from and for teachers for any type of schools and students, special needs included.

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/reggio-emilia-information-powerpoint-6178733>



The Reggio Emilia Approach



They will also watch an online introductory video entitled «Reggio Emilia: in a nutshell» available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvwpLarbUD8>



Both the PPT presentation and the video can be uploaded to the Google account class page or to the *blendspace* section specifically created by the teacher.

What is «flipped learning»?



According to this approach, the opening stage of a traditional lesson is replaced by an individual, self-directed web-based learning phase.

Class time can now be spent applying that knowledge in engaging practical, collaborative ways.



<http://peterpappas.com>

The Flipped Classroom

DURING



Students practice applying key concepts with feedback

IN CLASS

GOAL

Students prepare to participate in class activities

BEFORE



GOAL

AFTER

Students check their understanding and extend their learning



OUT OF CLASS

GOAL

The Benefits of a “Flipped Classroom” Approach

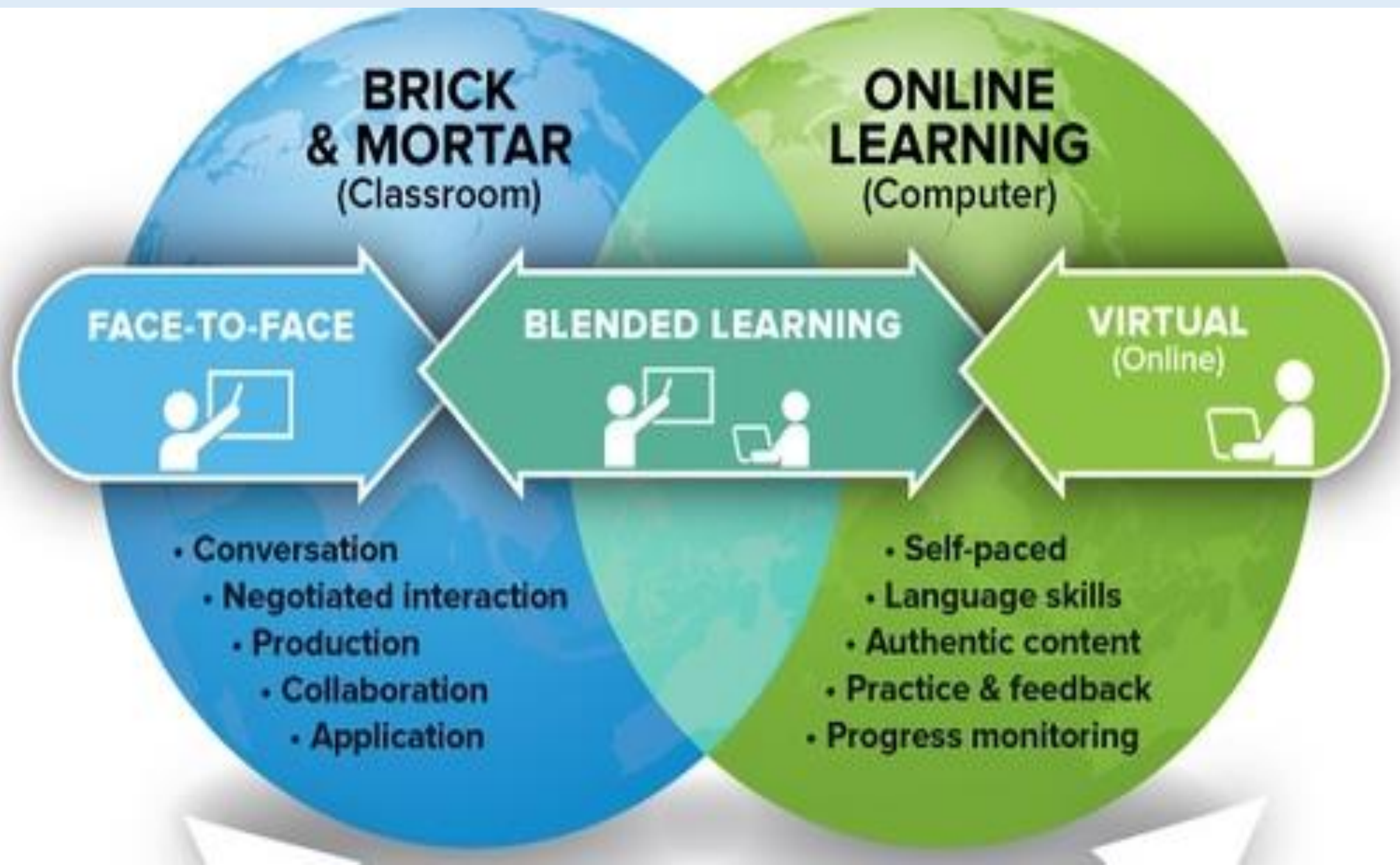
| STUDENTS | TEACHERS |
|--|---|
| STUDENTS LEARN AT VARIOUS SPEEDS. | TEACHERS FOCUS ON BEING THE “GUIDE ON THE SIDE” NOT THE “SAGE ON THE STAGE”. |
| STUDENTS ARE PROVIDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR REVIEW. | TEACHERS SPEND MORE TIME SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH PRACTICE. |
| LESSONS FRONT-LOAD STUDENTS FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES. | TEACHERS SPEND LESS TIME ON CLASSROOM MANAGAMENT OR STUDENTS BEHAVIOUR. |
| MATERIALS ARE READY AND AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ABSENT. | TEACHERS ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE ONE ON ONE AND SMALL GROUP ASSISTANCE. |
| PARENTS CAN VIEW LESSONS AND BETTER ASSIST STUDENTS. | TEACHERS ARE NOT SPENDING EXTRA HOURS TUTORING AND RE-EXPLAINING TO STUDENTS WHO WERE ABSENT OR DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE CLASS LESSON. |
| STUDENTS TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THEIR LEARNING. | TEACHERS COLLABORATE WITH PEERS IN CREATING MATERIALS OR SELECTING SOME OF THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE. |
| STUDENTS ARE ACTIVELY WORKING WITH THEIR PEERS. | TEACHERS CONNECT WITH STUDENTS. |

Adapted from: <http://hlwiki.slais.ubc.ca>

...from «Flipped Classroom» to... «Blended Learning»



- **The «blended learning» approach combines individual online digital learning with face-to-face student and teacher interaction in the more traditional brick-and-mortar classroom location.**
- **Blended learning offers flexible time frames that can be personalized to each student, offering them the ability to learn at their own pace.**



Some websites providing useful resources for *blended* lessons

- www.engvid.com/
- www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/
- www.eslvideo.com/
- <https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org>
- <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/>
- <http://englishwithjennifer.com/>
- <http://britlish.com/>
- <https://ed.ted.com/>
- <https://padlet.com/mhfasquel>

STEP 3 - The «Reggio Way»

Length: 1 hour

ORAL REPORT (30 mins)

On the basis of what they have viewed, the students will give an oral report about the «Reggio Emilia» approach as an educational philosophy relating to early childhood, focusing on its main features. They will exchange ideas and compare their views.

During this 3-5 minute oral presentation they will be allowed to use an *outline* or *mind map* specifically designed or they will create one on the board while speaking in order better to explain what they have learnt.

The teacher will focus the students' attention on some key points, as in the examples below:

- *What are the guiding principles of this approach?*
- *Describe some project types*
- *What are the main differences with traditional approaches?*

The teacher may assess the students' *speaking performance* using the rubric shown before.

The Reggio Emilia Approach



PICTURE DESCRIPTION (30 mins)

In order to further strengthen some key concepts and lexical items, the teacher will share with the class some **pictures** taken from the presentation, which will be described and discussed by the students.

The students' remarks and descriptions will be later arranged in a ***graphic organizer*** specifically designed by the teacher.

PICTURES TO SHARE AND DESCRIBE



PICTURE DESCRIPTION GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

| Pictures | Objects in the room | Colours and materials used | Space | Children's activities |
|--|---------------------|----------------------------|-------|-----------------------|
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| | | | | |

STEP 4 - «The child is made of one hundred»

Length: 1 hour



POEM READING AND LISTENING (30 mins)

At this point, the students will be asked to read again the poem «*The Child is Made of One Hundred*» by Loris Malaguzzi, which is also included in the presentation they viewed at home.

The students will listen to the poem narrated by Sarah McRoberts at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=174pYUcwn7w>

and be inspired by the pictures in the video.

POEM ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

(30 mins)

During the last stage of the module, the students, divided into pairs, will go through a guided analysis of the poem by Loris Malaguzzi, in order to identify the key principles of the «Reggio Emilia Approach».

A *worksheet* specifically designed by the teacher will help them identify the *key concepts* and the most meaningful images.

The students will constantly compare their ideas with those of their peers and of the teacher.



“THE CHILD IS MADE OF ONE HUNDRED” WORKSHEET

Answer the questions below.

- 1) This poem is filled with joy, exuberance, sadness and truth. Find in the text words and images referring to each of the above mentioned feelings.

| JOY | EXUBERANCE | SADNESS | TRUTH |
|-----|------------|---------|-------|
| | | | |

- 2) What do the “hundred languages” mentioned by the poet refer to, in your opinion?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 3) What should children be free to choose according to the poet?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 4) **The second half of the poem details the destruction of the child’s languages. Who destroys them?**

.....
.....
.....

- 5) Which aspects of a child’s personality should be preserved and enhanced by educators according to the poet?

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.....
.....

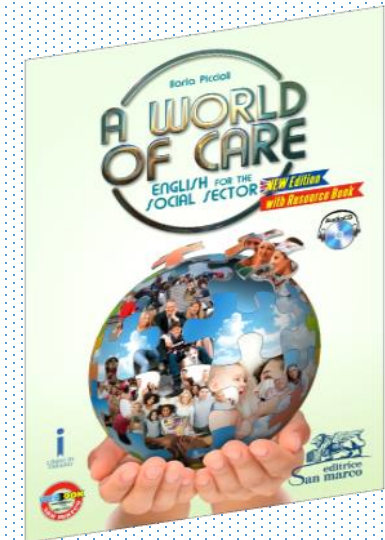
STEP 5 -

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES (HOMEWORK OR CLASSWORK)

READING & WRITING SKILLS

- From *A World of Care*: «The Gift of Imagination»

The students may read an *excerpt* from *The Songlines* by Bruce Chatwin entitled «An Incessant Red Country» and complete the *reading comprehension* and *text analysis*.



The Gift of Imagination

Imagination is the ability to dream, create, improvise and entertain oneself anywhere and anytime. Imagination is an essential gift for children as it allows them to express their true authentic self and improves their ability to deal with feelings and problems. Due to an active imagination, words often evoke unusual associations in the mind of children.

In this passage from *The Songlines*, Bruce Chatwin recalls how, during his childhood, the word 'Australia' used to call to his mind a series of strange-looking creatures and was always associated to the idea of movement and travel which were to become the primary goals of his adult life.



BRUCE CHATWIN
(1940-1989)

Bruce Chatwin is a British writer known for his novels and travel essays. As a young boy he created his first job as a guide to Shakespeare's monument and tomb. When he was fourteen, he travelled alone to Sweden, living there with a family to whom he taught English. He worked as a columnist for the *London Times* and was particularly interested in the study of nomadic cultures. His first book *In Patagonia* (1977) consists of a hundred short chapters relating the author's adventures in Patagonia, while *The Songlines* (1987) was inspired by Chatwin's travels among aboriginal nomads in Australia. He died in 1989 at age 48.

Before Reading

What kind of books did you like reading/looking at during your childhood?



GLOSSARY

- 1 walked in
- 2 rejected
- 3 with arrogance
- 4 be opened suddenly

An Incessant Red Country

In my childhood I never heard the word 'Australia' without calling to mind the fumes of the eucalyptus inhaler and an incessant red country populated by sheep. My father loved to tell, and we to hear, the story of the Australian sheep-millionaire who strolled into¹ a Rolls-Royce showroom in London; scorned² all the smaller models; chose an enormous limousine with a plate-glass panel between the chauffeur and passengers, and added, cockily³, as he counted out the cash, 'That'll stop the sheep from breathing down my neck.' I also knew, from my great-aunt Ruth, that Australia was the country of the Upside-downers. A hole, bored straight through the earth from England, would burst out⁴ under their feet. 'Why don't they fall off?' I asked. 'Gravity,' she whispered. She had in her library a book about the continent, and I would gaze in wonder



- From *Ways of the World: «The Montessori Method»*: the students may learn about another educational philosophy and do the *comprehension, synonym finding, e writing* activities.

7 APPROACHES TO CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Childhood care and education ranges from formal school and preschool education, which is integrated with the national education system through infant and elementary schools, to more informal activities.

Psychologists, anthropologists and educators have developed innovative educational philosophies that have sometimes been adopted by many school programmes.

THE MONTESSORI METHOD

This revolutionary educational philosophy was developed in the 1920s by Italian **pedagogue** Maria Montessori and is based on the principles listed below.

- ❶ **No Passive Listeners:** the child is the leader and the teacher's job is not to lead and lecture, but to observe and follow, sensing when the child is ready to try something new and being ready to present it as close to the perfect time as possible. The learning style is very physical and a lot of emphasis is placed on actively pursuing tasks.
- ❷ **No Gold Stars:** Montessori discovered that rewards and punishments were not necessary for children to learn – or learn happily. Instead, the learning experience was successful when the child was allowed to pursue¹ his/her own interests – whether it be washing a table, feeding the cat or learning the alphabet.
- ❸ **Learning from Other Children:** classroom children are grouped in mixed ages and abilities. There is a great deal of interaction between children of differing ages and a lot of socialising. Older children generally teach younger ones.
- ❹ **Character Education:** Maria Montessori believed that character education – teaching children to take care of themselves, each other and the world

A **psychologist** studies the human mind and how it influences people's behaviour.

An **anthropologist** studies people, their cultures and societies.

A **pedagogue** studies theories of teaching.

GLOSSARY

1 try to achieve



-- From *Around Kids and Beyond*:
 the students will read the short
 story «The Trout» by Sean
 O'Faolain, followed by
**comprehension, vocabulary and
 analysis.**

Sean O'Faolain **The Trout**

WARMING UP

- Speaking**
- Before reading the story, answer the following questions.
 - 1 Did you like exploring places when you were a child? What were your favourite places?
 - 2 What childhood stories did you believe in when you were very young?

WHILE READING

Comprehension

■ While reading through, answer the questions in the margin.



What is the Dark Walk?



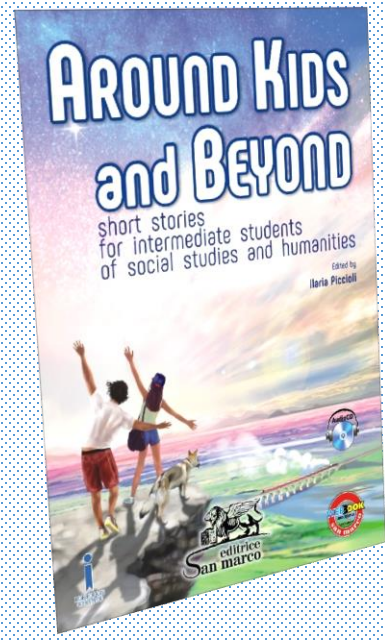
One of the first places Julia always ran to when they arrived in G. was The Dark Walk. It is a laurel walk, very old, almost gone wild, a lofty midnight tunnel of smooth, sinewy¹ branches. Underfoot the tough brown leaves are never dry enough to crackle: there is always a suggestion of damp and cool trickle.²

She raced right into it. For the first few yards she always had the memory of the sun behind her, then she felt the dusk closing swiftly down on her so that she screamed³ with pleasure and raced on to reach the light at the far end; and it was always just a little too long in coming so that she emerged gasping, clasping her hands, laughing, drinking in the sun. When she was filled with the heat and glare⁴ she would turn and consider the ordeal⁵ again.

This year she had the extra joy of showing it to her small brother, and of terrifying him as well as herself. And for him the fear lasted longer because his legs were so short and she had gone out at the far end while he was still screaming and racing. When they had done this many times they came back to the house to tell everybody that they had done it. He boasted.

Glossary

1 strong 2 thin flow of water 3 cried out 4 bright light
 5 difficult experience



Definitions

- Read the story again and find the words corresponding to the definitions below.
- 1 Soft bag of cloth or leather filled with feathers or rubber foam on which to sit

- Young male cow

- 3 Thick, soft dessert made of flour, milk and eggs

- 4 Small mark differing in colour from its surroundings

- 5 A body of water smaller than a lake

- 6 The soft, movable part in the mouth used for eating and speaking

Matching

- Match each verb with the corresponding noun. Then build a sentence of your own for each verb.
 - 1 Lose A Flowers
 - 2 Tell B The carriage
 - 3 Make C A medal
 - 4 Win D A story
 - 5 Pick E Friends
 - 6 Leave F A bet
-

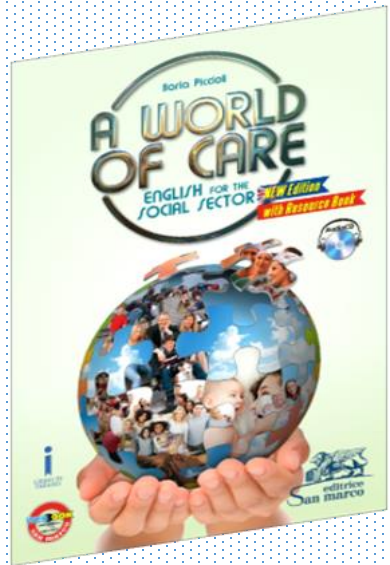
Adjectives

- What are the English equivalents of the following Italian adjectives?
- 1 Antipatico
- 2 Sognante
- 3 Petulante
- 4 Sincero
- 5 Educatore
- 6 Carino
- 7 Inevitabile
- 8 Delizioso
- 9 Spaventato
- 10 Pallido

- **Poem writing:** inspired by the poem by Loris Malaguzzi, the students will create their own poem, focusing on the theme of «*children's hundred languages*».



- **Preschool lesson plan writing:** The students can draw on the *sample preschool lesson plan* in the *resource book* of *A World of Care* to create their own *lesson plan* based on the «Reggio Emilia Approach».



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Nursery
School
Teachers

A PRESCHOOL LESSON PLAN

A **lesson plan** is a detailed description of a lesson a teacher is going to give. Here are some guidelines to follow when preparing a lesson plan.

- 1 Before planning effective lessons, you must assess your **students' skills** in communication, language and number awareness, movement skills, social and emotional development.
- 2 Using a computer program or a notebook, create a **calendar of the semester or school year**. By including start and end dates and holidays, you will have an outline of the plan for the preschool year.
- 3 Choose a **topic** for each month and focus on a specific **area** each week. For example, topics can be 'The Community', 'Food', 'The Weather'. If the month's theme is 'Food', the weekly focus areas may include 'Breakfast', 'Lunch', 'Dinner' and 'Desserts'. The focus areas will be further developed in daily lessons.
- 4 Write your class's **daily schedule**. This might look something like:
 - 8-8.10 am: arrival, roll call
 - 9-9.20 am: potty break
 - 10-10.20 am: outdoor recess
- 5 Divide the remaining time into **subject areas**, on which you will focus your lessons. Activities might include oral language, letter recognition, motor skills, book time, number recognition, etc. Remember to focus on all major areas of early learning, including emotional, social, physical and cognitive development, that are the major goal of preschool curricula.
- 6 Organise these subject areas in **small blocks of time** of about 10-20 minutes each, according to the length of your school day. Preschoolers' attention spans are short, so changing the activity regularly is essential. At this point, your schedule may look something like this:
 - 8-8.10 am: arrival, roll call
 - 8.10-8.30: community circle
 - 8.30-8.45: phonological awareness
 - 8.45-9: free play or art
 - 9-9.20: potty break, snack
 - 9.20-9.40: reader's workshop
 - 9.40-10: maths
 - 10-10.20: outdoor recess
 - 10.20-10.40: vocabulary
 - 10.40-10.50: community circle
- 7 Now you can fill in activities and lessons with specific tasks and content. Each activity or lesson should connect the topic, focus area and subject area.



LISTENING & SPEAKING SKILLS

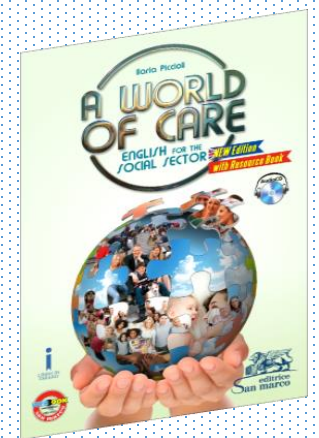
- **Role-play activity:** in pairs, the students will role-play an interview between a reporter and the principal of the Atelier School in Miami, Florida, a «Reggio Emilia» inspired preschool. In order to get ready for the interview, they may gather some information about the school at the school website www.latelier.org.



- **«A Day in the Life of a Kindergarten Teacher» video**

watching: the students will watch the video from the section ENGLISH AT WORK in the *resource book of A World of Care* and will do the activities in the book.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsHCK1LLGhc



REFERENCES

❖ **About *flipped classroom* and *blended learning* strategies:**

- «5 Reasons Flipped Classroom Work», www.universitybusiness.com
- «Blended Learning: Making it Work in Your Classroom», www.edutopia.org
- Kaye Thorne, *Blended Learning: How to Integrate Online and Traditional Learning*, Koga Page, 2003
- «Blended Learning: Combining the Power of Teachers with the Power of Technology», www.readinghorizons.com
- «Seven Blended Models Used Today in Higher Education», <http://acrobatiq.com>
- «Blended Learning: Resource Roundup», www.edutopia.org

❖ About the «Reggio Emilia Approach:

- www.reggiochildren.it
- «What is the Reggio Emilia Approach?», www.aneverydaystory.com
- «What is Reggio Emilia?», www.education.com
- Carolyn Pope Edwards «Three Approaches from Europe: Waldorf, Montessori and Reggio Emilia», <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v4n1/edwards.html>
- George Forman and Lella Gandini, *The Hundred Languages of Children*, Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1998
- “5 key elements of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education”, www.rainforestlearningcentre.ca
- “Reggio Emilia Approach Gives Students a Voice in the Curriculum”, www.neatoday.org
- Lella Gandini, “Values and Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach”, <http://learningmaterialswork.com>

Some useful online resources for a multimedia didactics

- www.blendspace.com ideal for shared lessons, flipped classroom, various kinds of projects.
- www.dropbox.com useful to share different types of material.
- www.popplet.com useful to create mind maps.
- www.studystack.com ideal to save and share flashcards.
- www.educreations.com useful to create captivating presentations.
- www.wevideo.com ideal to create videos.
- www.runistar.4teachers.org/index.php you can use it to create assessment rubrics.
- www.utellstory.com useful to create stories.