



2nd Newsletter, July 2022

## Enhancing Pupils' Social Skills and Enriching Teaching Methods through Storytelling and Virtual Reality

### About the project

Story Changers is a European project (Erasmus+, Key Action 2) coordinated by M.M.C Management Center Ltd, Cyprus.

Launched in December 2020 and ending in March 2023, the project aims at enhancing primary school pupils' social skills through an innovative teaching method which seeks to build a bridge between storytelling and virtual reality.

### Target groups and objectives

**The project's direct beneficiaries are represented by both the pupils and their teachers. In terms of objectives, these are:**

#### **PUPILS**

- To enhance their social skills, such as empathy, critical thinking, problem solving, accepting diversity, self-consciousness, etc.
- To help them discover the power of storytelling and be inspired to use it in their everyday life as well as in their future life (studies, professional career)
- To help them appreciate and acquaint themselves with new and innovative technologies, upgrading their digital/ICT skills

#### **TEACHERS**

- To help them upgrade their teaching skills through integrating the concept of storytelling into their teaching
- To help them appreciate and acquaint themselves with new and innovative teaching methods which combine storytelling and interactive VR scenarios, hence upgrading their digital/ICT skills
- To help them enhance skills such as creativity and flexibility and integrate them in their daily classroom practice
- To help them build on common experiences with their pupils, thus strengthening the professional, but also, above all, personal relationships with them. The "You Tell" stories concept gives teachers the opportunity to give the floor to their pupils, thus showing them that they respect and appreciate their intellectual and creative capacities
- To help them see beyond the given, structured and daily routine and experience a part of education that they may have never had the chance to experience

# Expected results

- **Best Practices Report on Storytelling and VR Technology in Primary Education**
- **10 "You Tell" Stories and Relevant Guide**
- **5 "You Tell" Virtual Reality Scenarios and Relevant Guide**
- **"Change the Story" Teaching Package for Pupils**

## Current Phase

### • **3rd Online meeting**

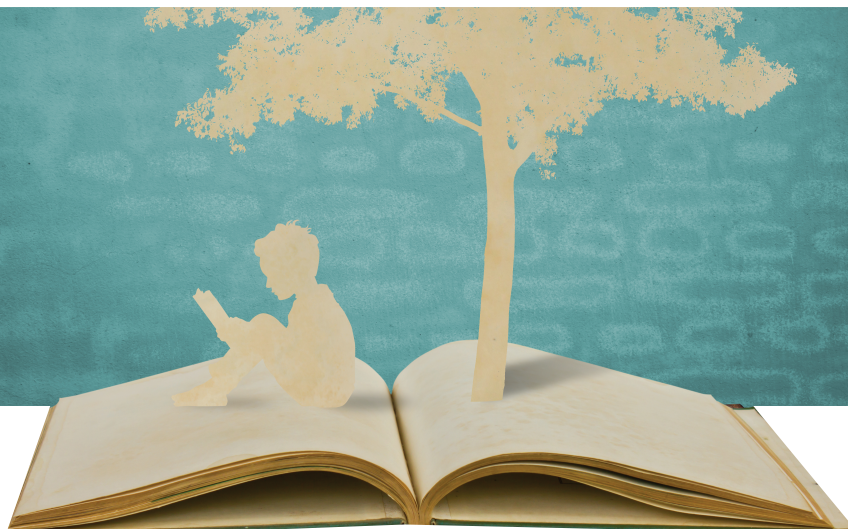
On November 22, 2021, a meeting of the partners was held online via Zoom in which the progress of composition of the "You Tell" stories was discussed, while feedback was given on the stories that had been completed. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of having options and several branches in stories, as well as the way in which the specific type of stories would be utilized, especially in the VR scenarios. There was a suggestion to prepare illustrations for the stories, so as to make them more appealing to children. All the partners agreed with the proposal and it was decided that the illustrations of the stories would be considered as additional work for the project.

### • **4th Online Meeting**

On June 3, 2022, a meeting of the partners was held online via Zoom to discuss the progress of the illustrations of the stories and the development of the virtual reality scenarios. In addition, the partners planned the transnational meeting of the project in Marseille that would take place the following month. During the meeting, MMC's illustrated story "The Scary Dictionary" was also presented, and all partners showed their enthusiasm for the result.

### • **5th Meeting in Marseille**

On July 12 and 13, 2022, the first face-to-face meeting of the project took place in Marseille. The first day of the meeting was dedicated to the detailed presentation of the progress of the project. The completed deliverables and activities were discussed, as well as all the pending tasks until the completion of the project. On the second day of the meeting, the partners had the opportunity to share ideas about the "Change the Story" training package, through which the stories and VR scenarios will be pilot tested with pupils. Also, the partners discussed the implementation of training workshops for teachers on the use of the training package, as well as the implementation of the pilot workshops with pupils in the schools of the project's consortium.





## Project Results

### 10 “You Tell” Stories

The project partners wrote 10 “You Tell” stories, which include various “decision points” in which students must decide what the next move of the story’s hero will be. The themes around which the stories revolve were agreed upon by the partners at the beginning of the project and are the following: diversity, respect, resilience, friendship, limits. Each story addresses a specific age group/class (1st-2nd, 3rd-4th, 5th-6th). Illustrations have already been added to some of the stories.

#### The 10 “You Tell” stories are as follows:

1. “The brightest firefly” – Respect – Jeanne D' Arc School (Greece)
2. “May It Shine for Them All: The Mystery of the Missing Moon” – Diversity – Eurocircle (France)
3. “Kiki and Kokkino” – Friendship – Apostolos Varnavas Primary School (Cyprus)
4. “The Scary Dictionary” – Respect – MMC (Cyprus)
5. “Rospo” – Limits – Saint Joseph Mater Boni Consilii School (Malta)
6. “The Red Crabs Island” – Resilience – Escola Sant Josep (Spain)
7. “The journey of the Animals” – Friendship – MMC (Cyprus)
8. “How can I say no to you?” – Limits – Jeanne D'Arc School (Greece)
9. “The carob tree” – Resilience – Mythos Center for the Study of Dissemination of Myths and Folktales (Greece)
10. “The girl with the enchanted voice” – Diversity – Mythos Center for the Study of Dissemination of Myths and Folktales (Greece)

## Upcoming activities

### Conversion of 5 “You Tell” Stories to VR Scenarios and Relevant Guide

The conversion of the five stories into virtual reality scenarios is in progress. Samples of the transformation of the first story, “The Carob Tree”, into a virtual reality scenario were presented during the partners' meeting in Marseille.

## Training Package “Change the Story”

The project partners are in the process of developing the “Change the Story” training package, which will be pilot tested by teachers in schools. The package includes, in addition to the “You Tell” stories and interactive VR scenarios, general and story-specific activities, as well as instructions on how to use them.

### Training workshops: “Train the Master Teacher” and “Train the National Teachers”

Once the training package is complete, the master teachers will be trained in its use. They will then train teachers in their countries in the use of the package, both from their schools as well as from other schools, at national workshops to be held in November.

### Pilot testing of the “Change the Story” Teaching Package with pupils

In the final phase of the project, teachers will use the “You Tell” virtual reality stories and scenarios with their students at school. The educational package “Change the Story” will be used with students in the five countries of the consortium in the period December 2022-March 2023. Specifically, 3 educational workshops will be held in Cyprus, 3 in Malta, 3 in Spain and 1 in France (13 in total). At least 20 students will participate in each workshop.

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