

AMORES

An Approach to Motivating learners to Read in European Schools

DELIVERABLE D4-2-1

Revised methodology

for teachers in teaching national and European
literature supported by interactive ICT tools

Version 1.0

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ABSTRACT:

This document contains the full and abbreviated versions of the AMORES teaching methodology. This innovative methodology, aimed at increasing learner engagement with literature through the use of ICT, was developed as a result of a two-year EU-funded project carried out in five schools across Europe: in Croatia, Denmark, Poland, Sweden and the UK. The methodology was piloted on approximately 400 primary students in grades 1-9 and has shown itself to be highly effective at increasing learner engagement with works covered in classes of national and European literature. Increased engagement is achieved by learners creating e-artefacts (digital works inspired by literature), sharing these with other learners via videoconference, and finally reflecting on the process. The AMORES teaching methodology may also be used by educators in areas other than literature.

KEYWORDS: AMORES teaching methodology, literature, e-artefact creation, collaborative learning, learner-generated content

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1 Introduction

This document is a framework for teachers to use in teaching national and European literature with the support of interactive ICT tools. The AMORES teaching methodology described here draws upon the experience of the AMORES project experts and, more importantly, the teachers who conducted the learning activities with the students throughout the project. These teachers also participated in the AMORES teachers' workshop held at Staffordshire University, Stoke-on-Trent, UK, in March 2014, during which they shared expertise and started to plan the curriculum during the implementation phase. The AMORES teaching methodology is based on participant teachers' experience, state-of-the-art analysis (the literature review) and the user needs analysis developed in the initial stages of the project.

This final version of the document has been produced following the implementation of the AMORES teaching methodology in five partner schools across Europe during the school year 2014/15.

The AMORES teaching methodology presented in this document can be employed by all educators, but primarily those wishing to develop their students' participation in learning about national and European literature through the creation of e-artefacts.

The AMORES teaching methodology and its recommendations are a set of flexible resources for application across different contexts within participating schools and other, wider, learning contexts.

2 The main goals of the AMORES teaching methodology

This methodology provides a framework for teachers to improve literature learning across the EU by enabling students to engage via a methodology based on creativity and collaboration. The methodology responds to the essential need for a mechanism to engage students. Four of the five schools report issues with motivation and engagement with literature, particularly as the children get older. The competing demands of other media, which require shorter attention spans and

more interaction, and the nature of text studies (which may not always appeal to students) means that many pupils are switched off from reading.

The methodology has two additional goals: the first is to improve the digital literacy of both students and teachers by enabling them to create e-artefacts, as well as to promote sharing and critical reflection on the production of e-artefacts. The second is that by engaging in all these activities, teachers will be empowered to increase their pedagogical competencies.

3 The impact of the methodology following the pilot implementation

This chapter describes the findings from the pilot implementation in a school environment. They are likely to be similar for any school using the methodology which has a context similar to that of the schools participating in the project - see chapter 4 of this document for details.

The pilot has shown that this methodology, and especially the creation of e-artefacts, is an effective tool to encourage learning for both students and staff. These are the key observations.

3.1 Students

3.1.1 Technologies

- Students find the use of technologies to be more fun than writing
- Less academic-students can express themselves more easily in other modes than text
- The re-framing of a story within the artefact forces the creator to adopt a critical perspective
- The extra length of time taken to create the e-artefact requires a longer engagement with the text, and therefore a deeper analysis (and this longer engagement is maintained via greater levels of engagement which the students experience)

3.1.2 Collaboration

- The collaborative nature of the activity teaches teamwork and communication skills
- The alternative mode encourages some students who have self-efficacy or self-esteem problems to discover new talents and present them to other students
- The more engaging and participative nature of the process fosters better relationships between students and between students and staff

3.1.3 Age

- This methodology, through using technologies in the classroom to create e-artefacts, encourages digital literacy for younger students. It is less successful with older students but the pilot showed that the AMORES methodology is extremely helpful for those who are not so interested in teaching themselves, and who need refresher training in technologies they have already been taught in the classroom.

3.2 Staff

For staff the sharing of expertise with peers, and the process of implementing the methodology contributes to their:

3.2.1 Professional development

- Improves digital literacy
- Improves experience of teaching in that it makes their role more collaborative and more fun
- Is a chance to influence peers, as the methodology is becoming more mainstream and is adopted by other disciplines within the schools

3.2.2 Classroom practice

- Teachers should note that the use of technology does make the classroom activities more engaging as long as the activities are changed regularly to avoid the novelty wearing off.
- Having a range of different tools that are planned to be used is therefore important.

- It is recommended that teachers focus on fewer books because students will then tend to read the books in more depth and therefore learn more effectively.

4 The setting for the development of the methodology

The first draft of the AMORES teaching methodology was developed by teachers from participating schools, coming from five countries: Croatia, Denmark, Poland, Sweden and the UK. The development was facilitated by the expert partners on the project. The teachers from participating schools all have a background in teaching national or European literature.

The teachers' face to face workshop took place from 17 to 19 March 2014. The development of the new methodology was based on participatory design, which allowed all voices to be heard and consensus achieved in order to make the methodology appropriate and sustainable. Teachers felt empowered and identified the roles and activities which they wished to undertake as part of the AMORES project. The collaborative nature of the venture came through very clearly. It allowed teachers to incorporate their experience into the development of the AMORES methodology.

After the draft of the methodology was developed, the educational technology team selected the appropriate ICT tools that support the methodology and correspond to the needs analysis results. The selection of the tools is described in the Technology Selection Report. When the technology selection was completed, the learning materials for teachers on interactive ICT tools in teaching literature were designed.

The AMORES teaching methodology was tested in a school environment during the school year 2014/15, and the teachers met at another face to face workshop from 23-15 March 2015. The final version of the methodology document was developed taking into account the findings from the use of the methodology in a practical setting, as well as the experiences of the students and teachers.

5 The context of the participating schools

It was clear from the group work at the teachers' workshop that although the teachers are working in very different contexts, the problems and issues regarding lack of engagement with literature are very similar.

In general, the opportunities and challenges faced by the participating schools are very similar. Four of the five schools have well-stocked libraries, and all have access to public libraries. Collaboration with local libraries is also very important for the schools, and there are various initiatives, such as bringing in parents and volunteers to read to the students. Sometimes children's authors are also brought into schools through the collaboration with local libraries. Most of the schools dedicate time during the week to encourage children to read, and all include reading at home as part of their expectation of the children. This is usually assessed by the writing of reading reports, and sometimes holding presentations in class.

Four of the five schools conduct group work around literature, and use digital technology to create these. These technologies are almost exclusively different types of presentation software, using a series of still images to convey the content. Creating moving images will therefore require some additional support. All students are familiar with e-books as a platform and have experience of digital technologies, but the majority of students do not have experience of learning using online discussion tools. EU countries vary in their attitudes to school children using social media. Whilst this is broadly similar in the EU as a whole - a relatively relaxed attitude to secure social media such as Edmodo - the UK has a high level of risk aversion to social media tools of any sort being used in the primary school setting. Furthermore, Safeguarding guidelines necessitate that permission should be sought from parents before any video or photographic images of children are placed online.

6 Recommended digital competencies for use of the methodology

In order to use the methodology, it is necessary to determine to what extent the teachers are familiar with particular categories of online tools. Those who do not have the expertise required to engage their students in the activities which will be taking place partly or wholly in the online environment, or to guide their students/pupils in the use of online tools, may be advised to use the AMORES learning materials for teachers on interactive ICT tools in teaching national and European literature, available at <https://loomen.carnet.hr/course/view.php?id=5635> and <http://www.amores-project.eu/>.

7 Instructional strategies, teaching methods and learning activities

The literature review indicates that creating artefacts is a learning strategy that involves the highest order learning skills, standing at the top of the revised Bloom's taxonomy. The pedagogical theory that best describes learning by creating is that of Papert's idea of constructionism. This not only emphasises the learning that is triggered by the constructivist approach of activity-based learning (or learning by doing), but also the importance of the learning that occurs as a result of discussion leading to shared meanings. This then led to the importance of two elements of the methodology:

- Encouraging students to learn by creating
- Encouraging students to learn by sharing and discussion

The literature review also covered the effectiveness of a learning cycle such as the Lewin or Kolb learning cycle has at consolidating learning. This involves encouraging the students to reflect on activities and develop their activities based on this reflection. The Kolbs also emphasise the value that reflecting on their learning has on improving learning. This led to an additional two elements of the methodology, that of:

- Encouraging students to maximise their learning by scaffolding activities around creation, observation and reflection
- Encouraging students to develop “metacognitive” approaches by reflecting on their learning

Students’ reflecting on their learning also has the additional benefit of providing much needed data on the effectiveness of the learning activities.

From the social interaction side: social interaction is important not only because it enables annotation, co-creation and feedback on the development of artefacts; it also provides a basis for team- and trust-building between the participants. However, the indication of these previous projects is that this trust-building interaction also needs to be scaffolded through the provision of set tasks.

In the context of the AMORES methodology, social interaction allows students from participant schools to become better acquainted with national and European literature through collaborating on the creation and discussion of e-artefacts. The methodology also has a European dimension, allowing students to discover more about the literatures and cultures of their counterparts from various countries.

The recommended instructional strategy is therefore collaborative creation, which is underpinned by the theory of social constructivism. In brief, collaborative learning is described by social constructivism as a means by which meaning is constructed jointly by a community (Conole et al, 2005; 11). Lewis, Pea and Rosen (2010; 7) summarise social constructivism as the process in which “By together questioning texts and situations, conceptualizing problems, designing solutions, building artifacts, redesigning, re-conceptualizing and reinterpreting, people generate forms of public knowledge that in turn provide conceptual and relational support for further interaction and learning”.

Recommended teaching methods are:

- collaborative or individual creating of e-artefacts based on works of literature

- sharing e-artefacts
- discussion of e-artefacts
- reflection on the process of creation of e-artefacts and on the whole learning process.

The recommended learning activities should align with the teaching methods, which should include learner-generated content such as creating an e-artefact that can be shared in and between schools and discussed face-to-face and via videoconferencing. Lewis et al (2010; 7) remark that, “students engage in deep learning when they research, design and construct an artefact or model as a representation of their knowledge” and also that “constructionism links personal and social influences on learning because the artefact produced is an output of the interaction of personal and social knowledge construction that needs to be meaningful and made public.

It is assumed that enthusiastic early adopters or those with some experience in the area of e-learning will be best placed to take the initiative forward in the school setting. Therefore, it is recommended that e-learning champions within the school are identified who can act as leaders in this process.

8 Example of a learning scenario

The following is a sample learning scenario employing the AMORES teaching methodology. The teachers who used the methodology with their students during the pilot incorporated most of the steps in this learning scenario, possibly with slight variations in the order of steps.

Recommended activities:

- Choose the book(s)
- Introduce the books to the students. Students/pupils read their stories.
- Discuss in class. Conduct an analysis of the texts with the students.
- Putting a series of questions about the text to students/pupils who then have to discuss in groups and come up with an agreed set of



answers. Questions could be: Who is your favourite character, why did you like her etc.

- Ask students to think about how they might retell this part of the story to a partner school
- Select the tools and activities to use. Keep these varied. Demonstrate e-tools for possible use to students.
- Students/pupils discuss and decide which e-tool to choose such as a movie film of students/pupils acting out an aspect of the story, or cartoon generator. Given that movies can be time-consuming to create it is recommended that teachers consider cartoon generators in the first instance as they are quicker to use and complete.
- Design the specifics of the activities so that they best combine the type of analysis and the tools chosen.
- Choose the groups for the students to work in.
- Students/pupils create their own a-artefact, such as a cartoon strip or a movie.
- Partner schools students/pupils share and discuss the e-artefacts via social network.
- Partner schools students/pupils discuss the process of creating e-artefacts via videoconference
- Teachers should moderate and summarise all discussions

9 Recommendations

The activities carried out in the classroom, such as those described in the learning scenario example, should take into consideration the following findings from students during the pilot methodology:

9.1 Tools and activities

- Activities should be meaningful to engage students and motivate them
- Activities should be structured to enable collaboration across institutions
- Technologies should stretch students but not overtax resources at schools



- Students need observation and feedback on their progress throughout the creation process to ensure they are mastering the required skills
- Providing an opportunity for learners to feedback on each-others' work is a motivating element, both in a formative way (by enabling annotation and response to each-others' work) and in a summative way in the form of a final "show and tell"
- Learning by creation is a resource-intensive activity, particularly on the time required by both learners and teachers, so adequate provision must be made for this.
- Students should create a logbook which can help order their thoughts and ensure key things do not get forgotten because the process of reading and analysing the book and then creating the artefact can be lengthy.
- Before implementing the activities a review of the structure of the activities should be undertaken, for example, how the groups are to be set up, whether all of the required technology is available, whether to examine the whole book or just a segment.
- Tools and activities must be carefully aligned and considerable thought should be given by teachers in choosing an appropriate task to encourage the students to learn about the book, and picking the right tool to support this task, e.g. *Tiki Toki* as a timeline tool because the analysis examines the key stages in a narrative.

9.2 Facilitating student learning

- Although the creation of an artefact requires the students to adopt a critical perspective on a book in order to re-tell it, the analysis of books is a difficult process and the students have to be led through it carefully.
- Give students time to reflect on the creation of e-artefacts. Reflection as a whole class exercise, where students to see each other's work, can also be motivating. In that regard, videos (those in which students appear) appear to work best as shared classroom activities as students find these more personally engaging.

9.3 Student individual differences

When teachers are planning the implementation of this methodology it is important to be aware of students' individual differences. Students will need to be observed for these factors to identify whether they need additional support:

- Language skills. i.e. how good is their English, and how confident are they in their English proficiency (not the same thing) in an international collaboration
- Ability to co-operate, some highly competent students are not comfortable with co-operating, some students have limited negotiation skills
- Maturity (or media literacy), when creating artefacts they may just put things in “because they’re cool” rather than relevant
- Academic focus. The AMORES methodology aims to address some of the imbalance between academically-focused and those that are not engaged. Although this levels the playing field for students, those who previously were high-flyers may not be in a new pedagogy and could feel alienated by this
- Age of students. Though the younger students have more to gain in terms of digital literacy (on the whole, though many older ones are also not highly digitally literate) they may also struggle with creating artefacts and collaborating and so need more support
- Results-focused v. explorative-creative. Some students may still see the creation of artefacts as something to just “get done” and want to move quickly onto the next thing. This means that they do not fully have the opportunity to explore the narrative and engage with individual perspective, meaning interpretation and so on. At the other end of the spectrum, others may get so caught up with the process of creation, they do not finish. Both extremes need to be supported to move somewhere towards the middle
- Learning difficulties. These can be verbal, such as stammering, meaning that talking on a video may be difficult, or students with social anxiety, with a similar effect. One remarkable effect of the AMORES methodology is the number of students who were normally withdrawn in class who suddenly came to the fore in activities. Be prepared for either response



- Students who define themselves as non-readers/Gender differences. Some students do not engage with reading because they have created an identity in which they define themselves as someone who does not read. This is more likely amongst boys than girls. Although the AMORES methodology may not address this self-definition, it still has proven more effective in engaging them in analysing the books. But don't expect students to like reading any more than they do at present
- Fluency. The AMORES methodology does not address fluency directly, though may motivate some students to try reading more. However, it is likely to surface issues with reading difficulties and could be an opportunity to address these

9.4 Classroom and parental support

- Teachers may find that the level of support needed for the AMORES methodology is more than for traditional teaching and pupil-teacher ratios may be a constraint on effectively supporting them. Although the technologies are not challenging, the requirement to upload material, and keep the technologies running, can be a time-consuming. Younger students particularly need more support.
- It is essential that parents are included in the process by having an introductory workshop for them. These will be helpful in addressing concerns about the use of the technology and to help them support their children's work.

10 Limitations

It should be noted that the activities carried out in the classroom for the pilot implementation of the methodology illustrated some possible limitations. The methodology has two general limitations and one specific limitation. The latter applies in the UK context only. These should be taken into account when planning to use the methodology in the classroom.

- The AMORES methodology encourages in-depth engagement with text and character but not attitudes to reading



- Although the creation of digital artefacts improves the learning about literature, has not changed attitudes to reading. It appears that issues associated with reading are too culturally ingrained to be addressed by a learning strategy alone
- However, encouraging communication between students who love reading and students who have a negative attitude, may enable changes in attitude over the longer term

10.1 The AMORES methodology is time intensive

- Creating artefacts can take up much more time than the traditional writing of essays, and this can be limit the degree to which the methodology can introduced
- This can be alleviated focussing on less time-consuming technologies such as the creation of digital comics strips which can be created quicker than videos.

10.2 The UK context

The UK school system severely constrains autonomy for teachers and hence creativity for students. Whereas most schools in the EU are able to introduce alternative modes within their curriculum, the UK school system has much more accountability built into it, which requires a degree of written work to demonstrate that various targets have been met. This means that bringing in the AMORES methodology into the UK educational context can only be achieved on a smaller scale, although it can still be done.

11 Technology selection considerations

In order to select the technologies which will be used for specific learning activities, the following points need to be taken into consideration.

According to the theoretical framework the draft methodology is based on, tools which allow both creation and mediation are necessary. Participant (teacher) experience suggests that the technologies chosen need to be ones that could be

remixed and annotated, as well as shared. They should also be engaging for students and flexible enough to draw on their experiences.

Key technologies that are recommended are video creation tools and comic strip generators. These are rich media, interesting to students and include the storytelling aspects which are crucial to creating digital artefacts based on literary works. An important consideration is that schools and students generally have some experience of creating videos, as is evidenced by most of the participant schools.

For a medium for socialisation, a social network is recommended for asynchronous activities, whilst videoconferencing is advised for synchronous ones. Project requirements stipulated the selection of technologies which allow sharing and collaboration at a distance.

11.1 Social media

When using online social platforms, there should be sufficient time allocated which is purely dedicated to online interaction between students. Specific activities requiring interaction need to be integrated into students' learning experiences for them to happen. These pedagogical modes also need to have been modelled for the teachers in workshops so that they are sufficiently familiar with them as a teaching technique. This is necessary because social platforms take much longer to adapt to than other technologies. Unlike other technologies, social platforms require a development of an online identity, a sense of the space as a social space and the development of a range of complex communication strategies, as well as a feeling of being accustomed to the functionality and to become engaged with a community, particularly when this is exclusively online.

Teachers need to be aware that students perceive proficient language skills as a necessity for communication in social platforms. Students, especially in an international setting, may be understandably self-conscious about their language skills

11.2 Videoconferencing

For the process of videoconferencing, preparation is absolutely the key priority. Trialling the software and hardware in advance is very helpful in enabling

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the videoconferences to be effective. This will give the students the opportunity to rehearse what they want to say. Sharing artefacts beforehand means that the students can fully prepare their responses for discussion.

Videoconferencing works best when students are the same age at both ends. Mismatches in ages of two years or more, can create a more stilted and awkward interaction at first. Videoconferencing does improve with practice. The second videoconferences will be better than the first. Students will be more confident with presenting material and technical issues that have become apparent in the first round, such as room and equipment set-up problems can be avoided or minimised.

12 APPENDIX A - ABBREVIATED REVISED METHODOLOGY

12.1 Introduction

This final version of the document has been produced following the implementation of the AMORES teaching methodology in five partner schools across Europe during the school year 2014-15.

The methodology presented here can be employed by all educators, but primarily those wishing to develop their students' participation in learning about national and European literature through the creation of e-artefacts.

The AMORES teaching methodology and its recommendations are a set of flexible resources for application across different contexts within participating schools and other, wider, learning contexts.

12.2 The main goals of the AMORES teaching methodology

This methodology provides a framework for teachers to improve literature learning across the EU by enabling students to engage via a creative and collaborative methodology.

The methodology responds to the essential need for a mechanism to engage students. Four of the five schools report issues with motivation and engagement with literature, particularly as the children get older. The competing demands of other media, which requires shorter attention spans and more interaction, and the GRANT AGREEMENT NUMBER: 540492-LLP-1-2013-1-HR-COMENIUS-CMP
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nature of text studies (which may not always appeal to students) means that many pupils can be switched off from reading.

The methodology has two additional goals: the first is to improve the digital literacy of both students and teachers by enabling them to create e-artefacts, as well as to promote sharing and critical reflection on the production of e-artefacts. The second is, by engaging in all these activities, teachers will be empowered to increase their pedagogical competencies.

12.3 The impact of the methodology following the pilot implementation

This chapter describes the findings from the pilot implementation in a school environment. They are likely to be similar for any school using the methodology which has a context similar to that of the schools participating in the project.

The pilot has shown that this methodology, and especially the creation of e-artefacts, is an effective tool to encourage learning for both students and staff because:

12.3.1 Students

Technologies

- Students find the use of technologies to be more fun than writing
- Less academic-students can express themselves more easily in other modes than text
- The re-framing of a story within the artefact forces the creator to adopt a critical perspective
- The extra length of time taken to create the e-artefact requires a longer engagement with the text, and therefore a deeper analysis (and this longer engagement is maintained via greater levels of engagement which the students' experience)

Collaboration

- The collaborative nature of the activity teaches teamwork and communication skills



- This alternative mode encourages some students who have self-efficacy or self-esteem problems to discover new talents and present them to other students
- The more engaging and participative nature of the process fosters better relationships between students and between students and staff

Age

- This methodology, through using technologies in the classroom to create e-artefacts, encourages digital literacy for younger students. It is less successful with older students but the pilot showed that the AMORES methodology is extremely helpful for those who are not so interested in teaching themselves, and who need refresher training in technologies they have already been taught in the classroom.

12.3.2 Staff

For staff the sharing of expertise with peers, and the process of implementing the methodology contributes to their:

Professional development

- Improves digital literacy
- Improves experience of teaching in that it makes their role more collaborative and more fun
- Is a chance to influence peers, as the methodology is becoming more mainstream and is adopted by other disciplines within the schools

Classroom practice

- Teachers should note that the use of technology does make the classroom activities more engaging as long as the activities are changed regularly to avoid the novelty wearing off.
- Having a range of different tools that are planned to be used is therefore important.
- It is recommended that teachers focus on fewer books because students will then tend to read the books in more depth and therefore learn more effectively.

12.4 Recommended teaching methods and an example of a learning scenario

1. Creating collaborative or individual e-artefacts based on works of literature
2. Sharing e-artefacts
3. Discussion of e-artefacts
4. Reflection on the process of creation of e-artefacts and on the whole learning process.

The following is a sample learning scenario employing the AMORES teaching methodology. The teachers who used the methodology with students during the pilot used most of the steps shown here, with some variation in order.

12.4.1 Recommended activities:

- Choose the book(s)
- Introduce the books to the students. Students/pupils read their stories.
- Discuss in class. Conduct an analysis of the texts with the students.
- Put a series of questions about the text to students/pupils who then have to discuss in groups and come up with an agreed set of answers. Questions could be: Who is your favourite character, why did you like her etc.
- Ask students to think about how they might retell this part of the story to a partner school
- Select the tools and activities to use. Keep these varied. Demonstrate e-tools for possible use to students.
- Students discuss and decide which e-tool to choose such as a movie film of students/pupils acting out an aspect of the story, or cartoon generator. Given that movies can be time consuming to create it is recommended that teachers consider cartoon generators in the first instance as they are quicker to use and complete.
- Design activity components so that they best combine the type of analysis and the tools chosen.
- Choose the groups for the students to work in.
- Students create their own a-artefact, e.g., a cartoon strip or movie.

- Partner school students share and discuss e-artefacts via a social network.
- Partner school students discuss the process of creating e-artefacts via videoconference
- Teachers should moderate and summarise all discussions

12.5 Recommendations

The activities carried out in the classroom, such as those described above, should take into consideration the following findings from the pilot study:

12.5.1 Tools and activities

- Activities should be meaningful to engage students and motivate them
- Activities should be structured to enable collaboration across institutions
- Technologies should stretch students but not overtax resources at schools
- Students need observation and feedback on their progress throughout the creation process to ensure they are mastering the required skills
- Providing an opportunity for learners to feedback on each-others' work is a motivating element, both in a formative way (by enabling annotation and response to each-others' work) and in a summative way in the form of a final "show and tell"
- Learning by creation is a resource-intensive activity, particularly on the time required by both learners and teachers, so adequate provision must be made for this.
- Students should create a logbook which can help order their thoughts and ensure key things do not get forgotten because the process of reading and analysing the book and then creating the artefact can be lengthy.
- Review of the structure of the activities should be undertaken before implementation, for example, how the groups are to be set up, whether all of the required technology is available, whether to examine the whole book or just a segment.
- Tools and activities must be carefully aligned and considerable thought should be given by teachers in choosing an appropriate task to encourage the students to learn about the book, and picking the right tool to support



this task, e.g. *Tiki-Toki* as a timeline tool because the analysis examines the key stages in a narrative.

12.5.2 Facilitating student learning

- Although the creation of an artefact requires the students to adopt a critical perspective on a book in order to re-tell it, the analysis of books is a difficult process and the students have to be led through it carefully.
- Give students time to reflect on the creation of e-artefacts. Reflection as a whole class exercise, where students to see each other's work, can also be motivating. In that regard, videos (those in which students appear) appear to work best as shared classroom activities as students find these more personally engaging.

12.5.3 Student individual differences

- Language skills. i.e. how good is their English, and how confident are they in their English proficiency (not the same thing) in an international collaboration
- Ability to co-operate, some highly competent students are not comfortable with co-operating, some students have limited negotiation skills
- Maturity (or media literacy), when creating artefacts they may just put things in "because they're cool" rather than because they are relevant
- Academic focus. The AMORES methodology aims to address some of the imbalance between academically-focused and those that are not engaged. Although this levels the playing field for students, those who previously were high-flyers may not be in a new pedagogy and could feel alienated by this
- Age of students. Though the younger students have more to gain in terms of digital literacy (on the whole, though many older ones are also not highly digitally literate) they may also struggle with creating artefacts and collaborating and so need more support
- Results-focused v. explorative-creative. Some students may still see the creation of artefacts as something to just "get done" and want to move quickly onto the next thing. This means that they do not fully have the



opportunity to explore the narrative and engage with individual perspective, meaning interpretation and so on. At the other end of the spectrum, others may get so caught up with the process of creation, they do not finish. Both extremes need to be supported to move somewhere towards the middle

- Learning difficulties. These can be verbal, such as stammering, meaning that talking on a video may be difficult, or students with social anxiety, with a similar effect. One remarkable effect of the AMORES methodology is the number of students who were normally withdrawn in class who suddenly came to the fore in activities. Be prepared for either response
- Students who define themselves as non-readers/Gender differences. Some students do not engage with reading because they have created an identity in which they define themselves as someone who does not read. This is more likely amongst boys than girls. Although the AMORES methodology may not address this self-definition, it still has proven more effective in engaging them in analysing the books. But don't expect students to like reading any more than they do.
- Fluency. The AMORES methodology does not address fluency directly, though may motivate some students to try reading more. However, it is likely to reveal reading difficulties and could be an opportunity to address these.

12.5.4 Classroom and parental support

- Teachers found that the levels of support needed for the AMORES methodology was more than for traditional teaching and they found the pupil-teacher ratios a constraint on effectively supporting them. Although the technologies were not challenging, the requirement to upload material, and keep the technologies running, was challenging. Younger students particularly needed more support.
- It is essential that parents are included in the process by having an introductory workshop for them. These will be helpful in addressing



concerns about the use of the technology and to help them support their children's work.

12.6 Limitations

Before implementing activities in the classroom there are some methodological limitations which should be noted. It has two general limitations, which apply in all contexts, and one specific limitation for the UK.

- The AMORES methodology does not change attitudes to reading *per se*, but it does encourage more in-depth engagement with text and character
- The AMORES methodology is very demanding on time
- The UK school system has a micro-level of accountability built into it, this requires written work from students to demonstrate targets have been met. This means that using the AMORES methodology in the UK educational context can only be done on a smaller scale, although it can still be done.



The AMORES teaching methodology in four simple steps



AMORES



Reading



Reflection



Creating e-artefacts



Sharing and discussion



The AMORES teaching methodology has been piloted with 400 students in Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Croatia and the UK. It has been proven to improve literature learning by increasing student engagement with literature. Try it out with your class!

E-artefact /i-ˈɑːtɪfækt/ NOUN [COUNTABLE] Digital work created in different formats: text, audio, video, image, animation or a combination of these. Within the AMORES project used for digital works inspired by literature and created by students.

AMORES-PROJECT.EU

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Figure 1. The AMORES teaching methodology in four simple steps

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