

Erasmus + KA2 – Strategic Partnership (2014-1-IT02-KA200-003613)

This Methodology Overview document should be considered as vitally interconnected with the other iRemember resources such as the 3 Part “Training Pathway for Tutors”



Project *iRemember*
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Methodology Contents

Methodology: General Introduction and Overview

Methodology Aims

Training Resource for Teachers, Tutors, and Facilitators

Online Training Program for Students

Laboratories of Memory

Final Outputs

Methodology Key Objectives

Methodology Key Principles

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead, Anthropologist



Erasmus+

Methodology - General Introduction and Overview:

Storytelling is in us all – each of us has our own story, our own lived experience, our own perspective on wider events, joys and tragedies to share. Storytelling is a way to humanise, to preserve, to heal, make sense of, to expiate, to exorcise and to celebrate all we are and all we have been. In simply listening to the story of another, we travel with them upon the journey of a life lived: youth and age, experience and innocence: all have a place along the arc of story.

There is art in storytelling, there are understandings and storytelling skills that can be developed and explored. In all stories there is energy: those who listen and those who share stories exchange this energy. Each of us have truths, emotions, moments and memories to share – our lives – against the maelstrom of all that our years have cast us into, the context of the political or social reality of our life and times. In the artful and passionate sharing of memory the deeper rhythms of emotion, truth and meaning, and all the treasures that lie hidden behind every life lived may enrich any listener – even if that listener has been born into a different time or place. The “**iRemember**” project seeks to explore and unlock all the power of shared memory through the art of storytelling.

The project’s primary goal is to create an innovative and accessible methodology for the teaching and exploration of contemporary history, particularly in conflict and post-conflict regions. The key method employed in this endeavour will be to promote intergenerational storytelling, workshops that facilitate encounters between the young and the elderly, so that first-hand accounts and memories may, in the endgame, replace sterile history books and thus bring history to life. The methodology, in this process, also preserves memories and gives a platform to voices that would otherwise be lost.

The iRemember Methodology aims to:

- Upskill teachers and trainers by means of an innovative and accessible tool for the interactive, informal, and alternative teaching and exploration of contemporary history.
- Facilitate the coming together of senior citizens and young people in storytelling and multimedia workshops to address the past, the legacy of the past and its impact upon the present, particularly as regards region-specific conflict and post-conflict issues.
- Support the social inclusion of older citizens involving them in laboratories of memory, storytelling interactions with younger people, facilitating the realization of creative outputs for their shared memories and stories, and thus allowing them to contribute to the creation of a “common memory.”
- Support the inclusion of young people in democratic life through a participatory and active citizenship approach, empowering them to take ownership of the creation of artistic outputs for shared stories.
- Foster the use of ICT and web 2.0 tools to create a shared, social and participatory “common memory” about region-specific issues, particularly those related to conflict and post conflict themes.
- Define an effective tool to be used in conflict resolution policies and activities.

Components of the Overall Methodology

- **Three Part Training Pathway for Teachers, Tutors, and Facilitators:**

Closely aligned to this document is a three part training resource aimed at those who will be using the **iRemember** methodology in a facilitating or teaching capacity. The training resource is designed to upskill teachers and tutors through innovative active learning techniques that foreground storytelling and the **iRemember** ideal thus promoting an engaging, interactive educational exploration of contemporary history. This three sectioned training pathway employs a continuous learning ethos and is delivered through engagement with detailed lesson plans, practical activities, examples of best practice, storytelling techniques, storyboarding, multi-media formats, and archiving techniques.

- **Online Training Program for Students:**

One of the major desires of the iRemember method is to provide young people (students) with the skills to not only take part in intergenerational workshops that reveal hidden history, but also to creatively record and archive these stories in various modes and formats. To this end an accessible, online training program will allow for students to remotely interact with various resources such as interview technique videos, web documentaries, and clickable text resources on storytelling or storyboarding techniques. Students will be encouraged to undertake a structured program (20 hours) that will familiarize them with creative approaches and the necessary techniques to engage with all aspects of the **iRemember** ideal.

- **Laboratories of Memory:**

A cornerstone of the iRemember methodology is to facilitate Laboratories of Memory - these intergenerational storytelling workshops will give creative space and time for senior citizens and the younger generation (students, teenagers, youths) to come together so that the stories of the past may be encouraged, recorded and captured through creative multi-media storytelling techniques. Facilitated by teachers and tutors trained via the “Training for Teachers and Tutors” resource, these laboratories will employ storytelling techniques, activities, and innovations that promote and develop intergenerational storytelling. Involving teacher, tutors, students and seniors, each region-specific "Laboratory of memory" will focus on the theme of conflict pertinent to that place to generate creative and accessible first hand stories that bring the past to life, and preserve these stories via creative methods

- **Final Outputs:**

The stories generated from the intergenerational laboratories can take the form of traditional written prose formats (such as the short story), the **iRemember** methodology, however, actively encourages other modes of narrative such as storyboarding, poetry, song, film, multi-media etc.- These individual, artistic, narrative works can interconnect to create one grand narrative relating to a specific location. Once the stories have been created in their final forms, they will be preserved through uploading them to an-online “Haatch” platform developed by the University of Rome "La Sapienza" called “The Land”. This online “The Land” tool uses specific location “gates” that house the stories in all forms created via the Laboratories of Memory. When clicked upon in the virtual map these stories are revealed and make up an innovative and interactive learning online resource that preserves first-hand accounts and brings contemporary history to life. Using “The Land” as an archiving tool forms section 3 of the Training Pathway Resource.

Methodology Key Objectives:

1. To establish an effective and sustainable multi-media tool for the informal teaching of history
2. To promote the social inclusion of the elderly and the sharing of experiences and points of view between the elderly and young people.
3. To preserve memories that would otherwise be lost through an interactive and accessible online platform.
4. To promote conflict resolution through the interactive, intergenerational exploration of the past and its impact upon the present day, and the utilisation of iRemember resources as tools to inform conflict resolution.

This **Methodology** will be delivered to tutors and participants, and all will progressively discuss, explore and experience the following key principles of **Storytelling and Narrative delivered through the shared memory of lived experience**. It is through the adherence to and engagement with these principles that the **iRemember** methodology and its key objectives will be successfully delivered.

Methodology Key Principles:

- **The Creation of Safe Environments for Open Communication:** The creation of safe environments relates to much more than simply holding sessions in a space and a neutral location conducive to comfort and discussion. Tutors / participants will consider how creating and agreeing on ground rules from the very start can deliver an environment where trust and shared discussion may develop. Safe spaces in communication are created and sustained when ground rules are mutually agreed from the outset. An early task should be the collective drawing up of a “charter” that all agree to and sign. This “charter” should promote diversity, equality and free discussion whilst guarding against agreed negative scenarios (such as caustic exchanges). Tutors / participants will consider the importance of consensus in this and also discuss strategies to improve collective “charters” such as open sections that may be added to at later dates.

Tutors / participants will also consider how vital transparency and honesty are concerning the desired aims and outcomes of the sessions, in the development of successful and safe storytelling and shared memory environments. These discussions will also take account of external partners and the wider reach of the sessions, whilst underlining that no one partner/ participant / facilitator / co-ordinator has more rights than others and that all are granted equal value and respect. A further examination of each’s rights to intellectual property and “opt out” scenarios can also serve to engender confidence and enlighten tutors and participants.

- **The Difference between Leading and Facilitating:** Tutors / participants will be encouraged to develop a focused awareness as to the vital difference between leading and facilitating – where key understandings such as leadership as something one does to a group and as facilitation as something one does *with* a group is promoted. Tutors /

participants will explore the idea of a facilitator as a neutral mediator whose role is to accommodate an exchange of dialogue.

Effective facilitation requires honesty, empathy, open mindedness and considered neutrality. Tutors / participants through structured exercises, scenario tasks and role-play will explore the concept of gently guiding and evaluating a group's interpersonal discussion through facilitation. Strategies explored will include effective ways for facilitators to maintain an accommodating, non-judgmental and neutral role among a diversity of people, opinions and positions – for example allowing all views an equal hearing and reflecting controversial questions back to the group for collective discussion. Tutors / participants will also evaluate the worth of facilitation versus leadership in promoting trust and confidence that may engender positive and honest expression through storytelling.

- **Neutrality with Guidance:** Tutors / participants will explore how neutrality and an open and free exchange in a group setting may be maintained whilst an element of structure and focus on key issues, goals and deadlines is observed. Tutors / participants will examine how skilled facilitation can create free discussion whilst guiding and delivering on a set off aims, objectives and desirable outcomes. Exercises and role-play in these learning scenarios may include smaller sub groups each with a facilitator and one whose task it is to direct the conversation away from a live and relevant topic while the facilitator and the group try to keep discussions on topic. Debate preparation against deadlines may also be used as exercises in these scenarios.
- **Mutual Support and Learning:** Tutors / participants will explore the model of learning for all – whereby everyone's perspectives and contributions are treated as valid, valuable, and educational. This serves to create a platform for free expression where all: facilitator and group members may view reflection and the exchange of ideas as a learning opportunity.
- **Active Listening:** Tutors / participants will engage with and develop active listening techniques that will give focus and prominence to the teller of a tale or one who is offering an account from lived experience. Under consideration will be the advantages of active listening in helping to foster an enthusiastic story-telling environment. Techniques and approaches that will be developed include nonverbal listener skills (direct eye contact / inviting and welcoming body posture / non-verbal affirmation of focus techniques), paraphrasing key phrases to encourage speaker, positive verbal prompts to encourage speaker, holding back on counterpoints etc. Role playing exercises could involve creating a closed listener (with no eye contact, crossed arms and legs) and comparing with a listener using active listening skills. Developing active listener skills is key to creating an open, focused and respectful communication environment.
- **Active Learning and the Four Capacities:** Tutors / participants will explore and experience the concept of active learning whereby learners play an active part in directing the path of their own learning. Tutors / participants will help design and carry out practical and hands on learning activities which engage, challenge and inform. They will also gain insights and experience how active learning can support development in four interconnected capacities:

- **Successful learners** through the use of existing personal skills and interests, imagination, creativity, and tangible manifestations of these in a learning environment.
 - **Confident individuals** through succeeding in the design and unfolding of learning activities, problem solving, inventiveness, the satisfaction of a task successfully accomplished.
 - **Responsible and self-reflective individuals** through engaging with different or even opposing ways of perceiving the world and the past, and respecting the input of others (especially in a conflict or post conflict scenario).
 - **Effective contributors** through sharing memory and lived experience in a social setting, interacting together in leading or supporting roles, collective engagement with creativity, and the solving of problems.
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- **Promoting the Sharing of Memory and Story:** Tutors / participants will gain insights into strategies that encourage and support storytelling and the sharing of experience and memory particularly in conflict or post-conflict scenarios. Tutors / participants will explore the use of free and semi structured interview skills where dialogue, questions, emotive engagement and encouragement may enhance and inspire a storytelling session.
 - **The Worth of Storytelling:** Tutors / participants will explore the value of shared stories, especially personal stories emerging from a conflict or post conflict setting. As part of this focus tutors / participants will gain understandings as to the healing nature of storytelling, and the opportunities therein to enrich, illuminate and educate listeners. Further focus will be placed on storytelling as a means to both document and gain perspective on the past and the worth of a life lived. Tutors / participants will explore how storytelling preserves and celebrates the oral language from individual cultures and past times whilst introducing these aspects of language to the present generation. In bringing people together in a mutually beneficial shared experience, tutors / participants will gain insights into how storytelling can be a healing and positive affirmation of a life lived, whilst also igniting a positive attitude towards stories and books. Early exercises may include a collective dramatic reading of existing personal stories and autobiographical texts.
 - **The Art of Storytelling:** Tutors / participants will be introduced to storytelling techniques. Skills developed will include applying a fixed structure to stories and shared memories, encouraging expressiveness and emphasis of key moments, taking pauses and not rushing a tale in the telling, drawing on and embracing emotion rather than stifling or avoiding it. Being aware of the stages or arc of a story: the exposition, the rising conflict, and the ending – using different levels and modes of voice at key moments, giving character, drama and presence to language.
 - **Digital Storytelling:** Tutors / participants will gain insights into the digital storytelling process. They will become familiar with how narrative and shared memory may be enhanced for a digital format through the inclusion of illustrations, photos, music, or be the catalyst for a short film or video piece. Tutors / participants will explore how multimedia may be creatively employed to enhance narrative, and how personal reflection, emotion and story may be augmented through creative multimedia production
 - **Reflection and Editing Techniques:** Tutors / participants will be encouraged to develop a reflective awareness of a shared story as a work that may have stages of

development. Editing and self-reflection techniques will be introduced and discussed as a means to deliver the best possible telling of a tale. Tutors / participants will be encouraged to embrace feedback as a means to improve a piece. Different drafts / versions / modes of a story will be encouraged whereby the truth, emotion and power of a shared memory are prioritized.

- **Storytelling: Audience and Final Output Awareness:** through this methodology Tutors / participants will gain understanding as to the importance of storytelling elements such as body language, voice projection, eye contact with audience, prop use, music use, and space use. Tutors / participants will also explore preparation techniques for performance storytelling. This awareness of a story or shared memory as a dramatic or artistic work will be explored in relation to the differing possible outputs or modes of storytelling: printed text, audio and video recordings, internet resource, theatre pieces, poetry, song, etc. – tutors / participants will be encouraged to consider the strengths and limitations of all of these.