

Let's find out about “The Letter from the Earth” through the tale “Under the Acacia”

Work proposals for students

**Higher
Level**

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WORK PROPOSALS FOR STUDENTS

Under the Locust Tree

Worksheet 1: Yuri Gagarin

In the first chapter of 'Under the Locust Tree', two people meet at a bench, the boy introduces himself saying this:

[...] my name is Yuri, like the Russian astronaut Yuri Gagarin, the first man who went to Space on a Spaceship. The first one, you know? In those time, the dangers that could be found, the lack of gravity or the mere fact of whether they would return were unknown to the man. He went round the Earth for the first time- Yuri gets excited when remembering the achievements of his counterpart, the astronaut who, while being on the Spaceship, looking through the window, sent a message to the Earth telling them: 'Inhabitants to the world, save this beauty, do not destroy it'

The astronaut Gagarin was the first person who realized how wonderful our planet is. Some years later, other astronauts enjoyed the same vision. Voyages to the Space have generated the question about what should be the flag which could represent our planet. By now, there are different proposals and the most accepted is the one where there appears a photo of the planet, taken by the NASA, on a blue surface.

If you had to design a flag for our planet...what elements would you include? What colours would you use?...Do you feel like trying it? **Draw and paint** inside the box the way you imagine the flag of our planet.



Worksheet 3: Picasso's "Guernica"

Fina's mum tells her:

[...] Wars are a terrible thing, dear. They leave behind lots of wounds, some of them are so deep that can never be healed. Of course, I am not talking about bloody wounds. If you could see how houses, factories, schools or simple paths end up...all destroyed! And those who survive have no other way out rather than escaping or dying.

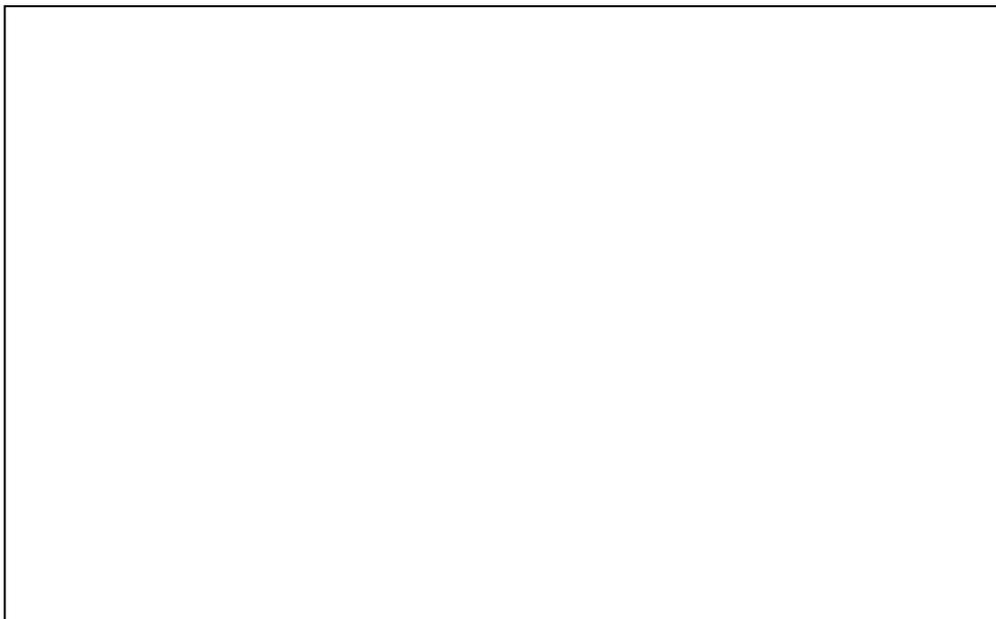
In 1937, the well-known painter Pablo Picasso painted a picture named *Guernica*. It is about a bombardment and the destruction of that city. On the painting one can see people, animals and buildings completely demolished due



to bombs. Surely, the horror undergone by the painter made him express it by means of white, black and grey tones..

We propose you to observe the painting with your classmates and try, all together, to guess what some of the elements are or mean; the bulb, the bull, la burning house, the man who is crying, the pigeon, the woman embracing her dead son, the flower, the sword that the fallen warrior is holding, and so on...

Then **choose one of the elements proposed above and try to draw it** inside the following box.



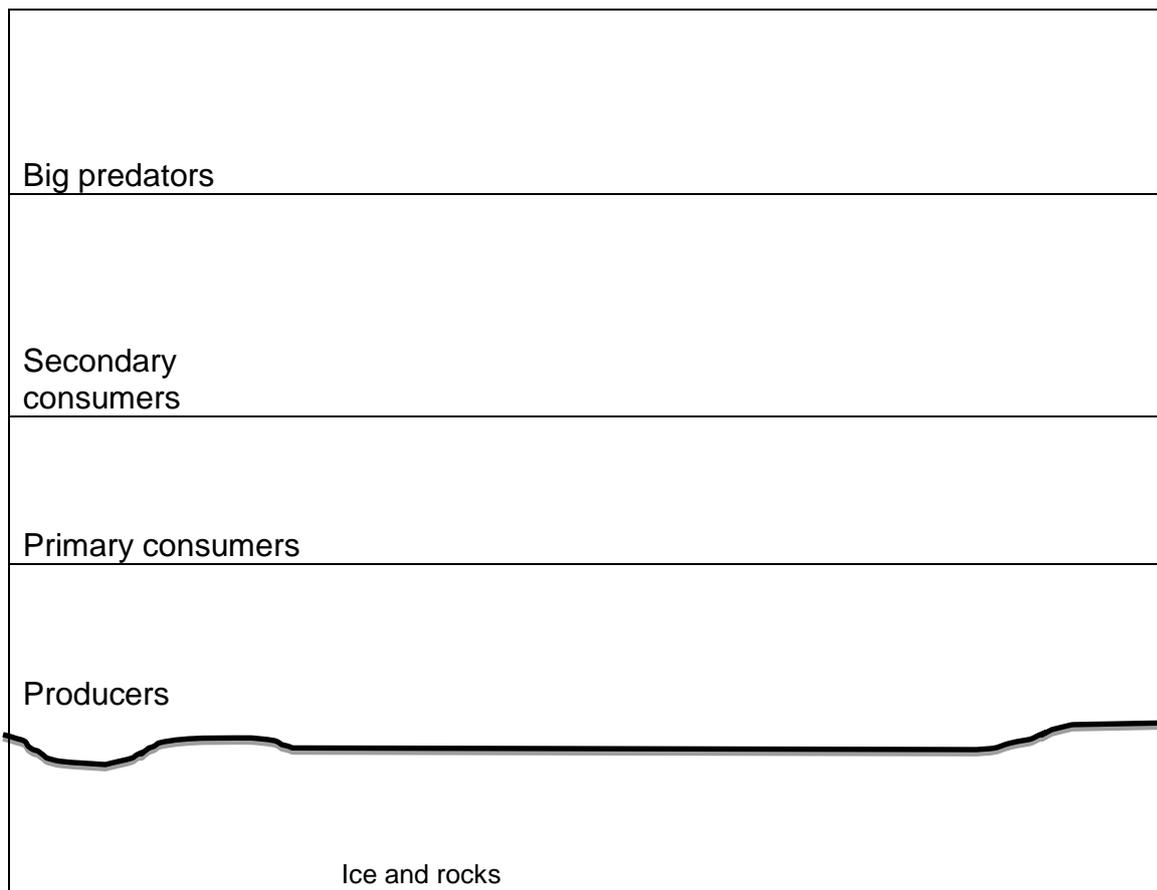
Worksheet 3: The trophic marine chain

Fina reads the letter which her father sent her from the scientific base in Antartica:

[...]Some days ago we received a visit in the area where there live the emperor penguins. It was a marvellous sight. Gunlaug, our Norway mate, took a lot of photos, some of which are attached to this letter.

The emperor penguins are one of the few animals who are able to live under extreme climate conditions. However, during summer days are longer and the shiny hours help the survival of some species, especially those who live in waters which surround the Australian continent..

We propose you **to locate the following animals and other trophic chain organisms into the right place**(much better if you draw them!): Penguins, small fish, squids, plankton, whales, krill, killer whales, seals, unicellular organisms, little prawns.



Worksheet 4: Instructions-examples about how being afraid

Fina and her mum talk about fear.

[...]—Now I understand, but I have got a ‘don’t-know-what’ in my stomach when I am on stage and everyone is looking at me...

—It is called ‘stage fear’. Even professional actors and actresses have it.

We all have fears and phobias. Some of them are absurd, others cause real anxiety. There are people who get frightened by a balloon because it may blow up; others can't get into a swimming pool and there are even persons who cross the street when they see a dog coming their way. Julio Cortázar wrote a book entitled *‘Stories about Cronopios and famas’* in which we can read this fragment:

Instructions-examples about how being afraid

In a Scottish village there sell books with a page in blank lost among the volume. If a reader gets to that page at three p.m., s/he dies.

In Quirinal Square, in Rome, there is a specific point well-known by the wisemen of the 19th Century, from which, you can see the Dioscuros statues move slowly while fighting against bolted horses.

In Amalfi, at the shore borderline, there is a seafront which gets into the sea at night. From there you can hear a dog bark from the last streetlamp.

A man is spreading toothpaste on a toothbrush. Suddenly he sees behind him the tiny figure of a woman made of coral or painted breadcrumb lying on a bed.

When I opened the wardrobe to take a shirt, there falls down an old calendar and breaks into pieces, it covers all White pieces of clothes with thousands of dirty paper butterflies

It is well-known the story of a salesman whose left wrist began to hurt, just below his watch.

When he took off his watch, there appeared blood, it was a wound made by very sharp teeth.

The doctor finishes examining us and calms us down. His grave and warm voice precedes the medicine prescription he is now writing down at his table. From time to time, he rises his head and smiles at us, reassuring us. It is not a serious illness. We will be fine in a week. We sit comfortably on our armchairs, happy and looking around absently. Suddenly, in the twilight, under the desk we see the doctor's legs. His trousers have gone up to knees and he is wearing a pair of woman's tights.

Following Cortázar, invent a situation which might become disturbing and write it down below:

Worksheet 5: Let's make a plane using recycled materials

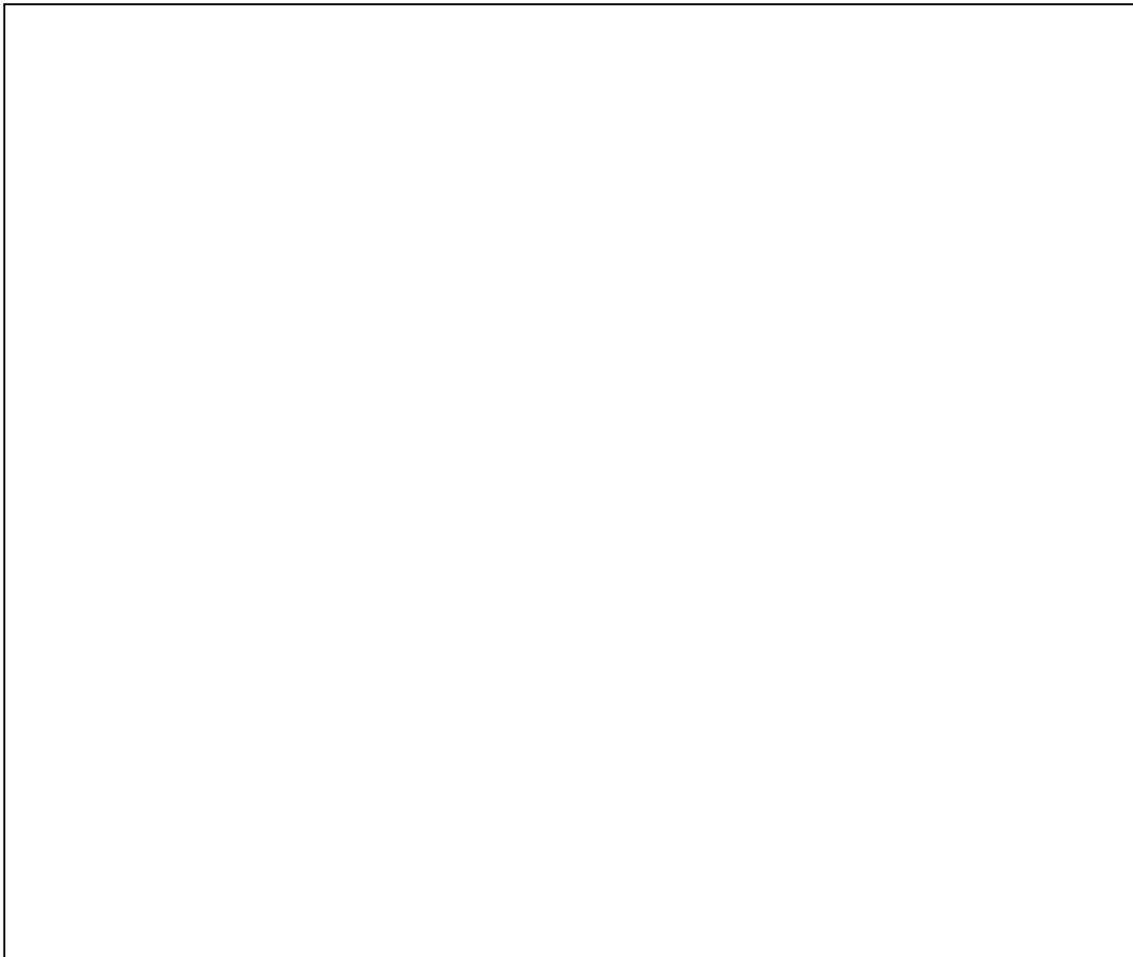
Iuri explains that, before war, when his dad was still alive:

[...] My dad used to work in Soko, the planes factory. He was a very good mechanic and he always told me adventures of pilots and astronauts. He knew a lot of stories and was very good at his job...When I get older, I want to be a mechanic, too...

Iuri explains all this while looking for scrap in order to sell it. What do people do with scrap? Recycle it, what means that the different materials will be used to create new products. For example, recycled glass is new glass made from used glass, instead of using raw materials: sand, SOSA, CALCAR STONE.

We propose you, in a small group, to design and build up a toy plane with the materials you have around you. You can make use of cans, cartons, plastic bottles, magazines papers, barbed wire, clothes pieces, and so on

To finish with , **take a photo of your plane and stick it here.**

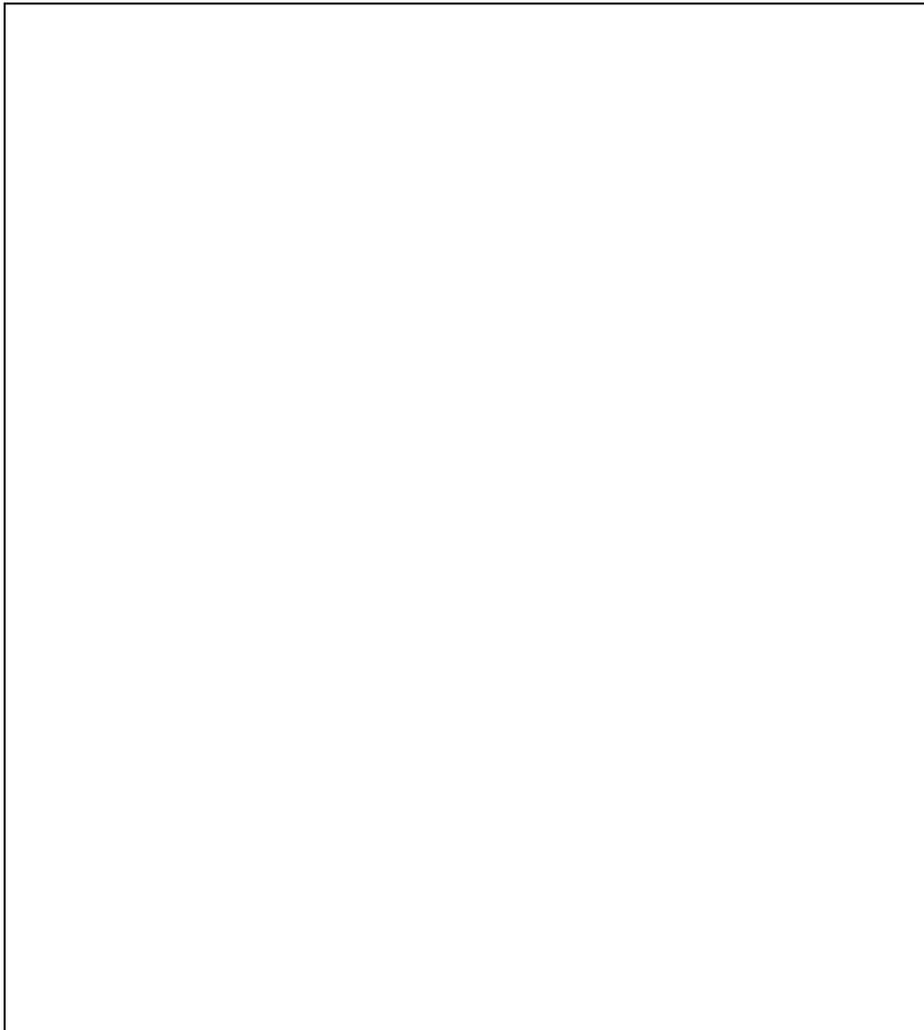


Worksheet 6: The poster

Fina tells Iuri that they are preparing the graduation party. It is a play called 'Harry Potter in the court of King Arthur'. The girl says to him:

[...] these are the scripts. The teacher has written them. She has invented a story which occurs in Camelot. One day, a group of students from Hogwarts appear there, it's Harry Potter and his friends, and there is a magic competition among all wizards. There appear Merlí, Melusina, Hermione, Malfoy, Lavender and the other ones.... I play the role of Morgana and my mum is finishing sewing my costume. There is also a pigeon who represents an owl because Harry has an owl called Hedwig who brings him messages as if it were a message delivery company.

In order to advertise the play, there are usually leaflets and posters stuck on walls or billboards to inform people. We ask you to make up a poster for this theatre play. Do not forget to include the title, the place where it will be held, the date and its characters. Well then, create a nice poster!



Worksheet 7: The taumatrop

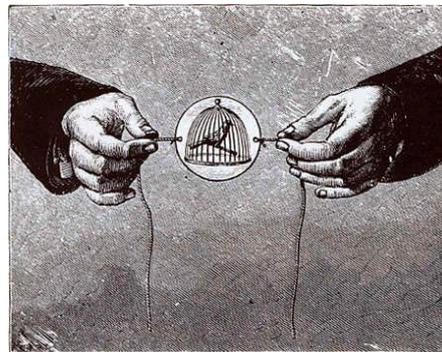
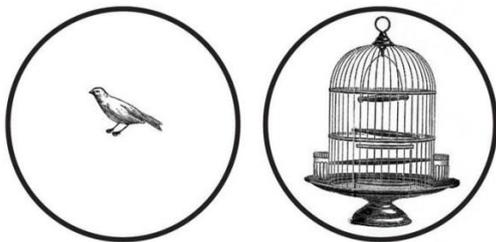
When Iuri gives Fina a turtledove as a present, a small bird that fell off a tree, the girl says:

[...] I am not sure whether my mum will allow me to take care of him. We don't like cages, we prefer birds to fly free...

Fina and her mum, like yourself, know how wonderful it is to see birds flying free with her wings wide open, peaking up and circling...

There is a very old game called 'taumatrop' and consists of making a toy create an optical illusion by lasting its movements.

It is a cardboard circle/disc, of about 12 cm, drawn both sides, with two parts of the same scene. You tie both threads (or put a stick in between) so that when you whirl it fast, the images from both sides overlay. This lets you see the complete scene. For instance, if on one side there is a bird and on the other one there is a cage, we will see a bird inside a cage.



Now we are going to make one. In order to do so you are going to need cardboard, scissors, rope or a long thin wooden stick and glue.

If you are using rope, remember you need to stick the cardboard circles in such a way that one of the images remains upside down so that when it turns we can get the desired optical effect.

The challenge we propose you is that **your taumatrop represents a bird escaping from a cage when it whirls**. Good luck!

Worksheet 8: Ode to Joy!

A German poet, Friedrich Schiller, wrote a poem entitled 'Ode to Joy' in 1785 in order to celebrate the ideal of unity and fraternity of humankind. Some years later, in 1824, a famous composer, Ludwig van Beethoven, adapted this text and included it into one of his symphonies- the last one he composed- the Ninth Symphony.

Throughout time, Beethoven's symphony has become the official anthem of the European Union and has become a symbol of freedom and fraternity among countries.

We propose you to listen carefully to this musical piece, let your thoughts fly away and **make a drawing which represents a bird's flying**.

You will need a piece of drawing *canon* paper size DIN A3 or similar and a set of colourful wax crayons.

While you are listening to the music, your teacher will be giving you instructions, such as: 'change colour', 'now use the yellow one', 'with the other hand', 'now using both hands', and 'hitting' and so on.

Make sure you fill the whole of the paper and let the music lead you.

Ode to Joy
(Theme from Symphony No.9)
Ludwig van Beethoven

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system begins with the instruction "With strength" and a dynamic marking of "ff". The melody in the right hand is marked with a triplet and a slur. The bass line consists of chords and single notes. The second system continues the piece, ending with a "decresc." marking. The score is written in G major and 4/4 time.

Worksheet 9: The Farewell

We have come to the end but, just like in the tale 'Under the Acacia' , the door is not closed. Last chapter, Luri says:

—Let's go to show! I am glad because I will perhaps see my friends and grandparents if they are still alive.

Likewise him, we have discovered other worlds and have able to enter this book. Now we will keep it inside our hearts, share it with friends so that it can never get lost.

We will be more than pleased if you could fill this questionnaire and leave us your opinion, as you do with all books you read.

The book I have just read is entitled

.....

It was written by

.....

It was illustrated by

.....

It was published in

.....

What I like the most:

- The characters
- The sites where events take place
- The adventures

The main characters are named:

.....

I would recommend my friend to read it because it made me feel:

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joy | <input type="checkbox"/> Fear | <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> It made me laugh | <input type="checkbox"/> It made me cry | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> It really touched me | <input type="checkbox"/> Other feelings | |

