



Story Changers: Enhancing Pupils' Social Skills and Enriching Teaching Methods Through Storytelling and Virtual Reality

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Aim of the Guide

The aim of this guide is to provide the Story Changers' partners with guidelines on how to create stories for children in general and "You Tell" stories in particular. The "You Tell" stories are the main deliverable of the project Story Changers, since, together with the "You Tell" VR scenarios, they constitute the most important tool in the teachers' training package which is to be used at the experiential "Change the Story" teaching events for pupils in the final part of the project (IO4).

This guide will be used both as the basic training material at the Learning, Teaching and Training Activity (LTTA C1 – IO2A3) on creating the "You Tell" stories and as a point of reference for partners in their creating of the "You Tell" stories after the LTTA. In addition, the guide will function as a sustainable output which can be used by any interested party also after the end of the project.

1.2 The Contents of the Guide

This guide contains information and advice on basic storytelling and story creating techniques and methods, as well as examples of stories that will help non-professional storytellers – such as teachers, trainers and pupils themselves – to familiarise themselves with the concept of story writing and narration and be enabled to eventually create the "You Tell" stories.

The theoretical section of this guide focuses on the methodologies of Vladimir Propp, Gianni Rodari and Eugene Trivizas, as they were considered the most appropriate to be used as a compass or inspiration for the creation of the "You Tell" stories.

The process of the creation of the "You Tell" stories is presented in three stages: from the elicitation of the story's main theme through various methods, to the composition of the story and to its final application in a VR environment.

The form and the basic elements of the "You Tell" stories are also presented in this guide.

2. Story Telling and Story Creation Process: Some Theories and Techniques

2.1 Propp's Theory

The Russian folklorist and scholar Vladimir Propp analysed the structural elements of Russian folk tales, identifying certain characters and functions that he considered as fundamental elements of all folk tales. These are presented in summary below.

Propp's characters

Propp concluded that all the characters in tales could be resolved into 7 abstract character functions.

1. The villain: an evil character that fights the hero or creates struggles for him
2. The dispatcher — a character who sends the hero off to his quest
3. The helper — a figure that helps the hero in his quest
4. The princess (a sought-for person) or prize, and often her father — the father assigns difficult tasks
5. The donor — a character that prepares the hero or gives the hero some magical object, sometimes after testing them
6. The hero — the character who departs on a search or reacts to the demands of the donor or the dispatcher
7. The false hero — a figure who takes credit for the hero's actions or tries to marry the princess.

Propp's functions

After the initial situation setup, a certain number of functions, elements of the plot occur.

1. Absentation: someone (a member of the hero's family or community or the hero himself) leaves or dies.
2. Interdiction: a forbidding edict or command is passed upon the hero ('don't go there', 'don't do this').
3. Violation of interdiction: someone breaks the rule (interdiction).
4. Reconnaissance: the villain spies the hero or the hero learns about the villain.

5. Delivery: the villain discovers information.
6. Trickery: the villain attempts to deceive the hero.
7. Complicity: the hero is fooled or forced to do something bad.
8. Villainy or lacking: the villain harms a family member (e.g. abduction, theft, murder).
9. Mediation: the hero learns about the villain actions.
10. Beginning counteraction: the hero decides to fight back.
11. Departure: the hero leaves the home environment, starting off with his adventure.
12. First function of the donor: the hero encounters a magical agent or helper (donor) on their path, and is tested in some manner through interrogation, combat, puzzles or more.
13. Hero's reaction: the hero outsmarts, outfights or finds a way around the donor's demands.
14. Receipt of a magical agent: the hero acquires use of a magical agent as a consequence of their good actions.
15. Guidance: the hero is transferred to a new place.
16. Struggle: the hero and the villain meet and engage in conflict directly, either in battle or some nature of contest.
17. Branding: the hero is marked in some manner, with a token or with a mark on his body.
18. Victory: the hero wins over the villain with his wits and his abilities.
19. Liquidation: the earlier misfortunes or issues of the story are resolved.
20. Return: the hero returns to home.
21. Pursuit: the hero is pursued by some threatening adversary, who perhaps seek to capture or eat them.
22. Rescue: the hero is saved from a chase e.g. through an obstacle.
23. Unrecognised arrival: the hero arrives and is unrecognised or unacknowledged.
24. Unfounded claims: a false hero presents unfounded claims or performs some other form of deceit.
25. Difficult task: a trial is proposed to the hero – riddles, test of strength or endurance, acrobatics and other ordeals.
26. Solution: the hero accomplishes a difficult task.
27. Recognition: the hero is given due recognition – usually by means of their prior branding.
28. Exposure: the false hero and/or villain is exposed to all.
29. Transfiguration: the hero gains a new appearance.



30. Punishment: the villain and/or false hero suffer the consequences of their actions, perhaps at the hands of the hero, the avenged victims, or as a direct result of their own ploy.

31. Wedding: the hero marries and is rewarded or promoted by the family or community, typically ascending to a throne.

2.2 Rodari's Theories

Gianni Rodari (1920-1980), a journalist and writer, is Italy's most celebrated author of children's stories, as well as of influential essays on creative story writing and storytelling.

Rodari's techniques

In what follows, a selection of Gianni Rodari's techniques and activities for teaching creative storytelling, which are included in *The Grammar of Fantasy. An Introduction to the Art of Inventing Stories*, is presented.

1. The stone in the pond

This technique consists of the exploration of words.

"A word thrown by chance into the mind, producing waves on the surface and in the depths" is like a stone thrown into a pond that "sets in motion concentric waves that spread out on the surface of the water, and their reverberation has an effect on the water lilies and reeds, the paper boat and the buoys of the fishermen at various distances".

Rodari, *The Grammar of Fantasy*, p. 5

For example, we choose a word and we create its acrostic in the form of a short story.

E.g. the word "stone"

S - Seven

T - Tigers

O - Oppose

N - Nasty

E - Enemies



2. The fantastic binominal

We choose two words which are not related with each other. It is necessary to have a certain distance between the two words in order to set our imagination in motion to establish a relationship between the two words. We can choose the words e.g. by pointing at two pages in a dictionary, by asking students to write them on a piece of paper or on the board etc.

Example of a fantastic binominal: “dog” and “closet”

Then we must create a connection between the two words; one way is to connect them through a preposition, e.g. the dog with the closet, the closet of the dog, the dog in the closet, the dog on the closet etc.

3. What would happen if...

We make fantastic hypotheses in order to create a story. We may ask a known situation where a foreign element is introduced.

E.g. What would happen if toys could speak?

What would happen if an alien landed in our school?

4. The arbitrary prefix

We take a word and place a prefix in front of it in order to transform it, thus creating a new concept to inspire us.

E.g. de-sharpener: a sharpener is transformed into an object which allows the points of the pencils to grow back by themselves when they have become dull.

5. The creative error

We take advantage of typographical errors to invent a new word and a story.

E.g. Antlantis Ocean instead of Atlantic Ocean



6. Old games

a) Cutting newspaper titles and mixing them to obtain absurd news and amusing events.

E.g. Bad accident on the highway

Between two tangos

In honour of George Washington

b) Question and answer routine using slips of paper. It begins with a series of questions that already include a sequence of events in the form of a narration:

- Who was it?
- Where was he?
- What did he do?
- What did he say?
- What did the people say?
- What happened in the end?

The first person in the group answers the first question on a piece of paper and folds it, the second person the second and so on. Then the participants read the answers aloud and these can lead to a story.

7. Popular folk tales as raw material

8. Making mistakes in the story

We include something new in a well-known story "by mistake".

9. The fairy tale reversed

E.g. the good heroes become bad and vice versa.



10. What happens after?

We try to find out what happens after the end of a well-known story.

11. The fairy tale salad

We mix different fairy tales. The heroes of fairy tale land in another, creating a new story.

12. Recasting fairy tales

We re-narrate a well-known fairy tale.

13. The cards of Propp

We create cards with Propp's functions and we try to create a story based on the function-cards we choose.

Rodari's Interactive stories

Rodari has written an 'interactive' book with the title *Many stories to play with (Tante storie per giocare, 1971)*. This book gives children the opportunity to choose between variable versions of the plot in order to experience different humorous stories according to their liking. This kind of stories offers readers the opportunity to meet totally different literary experiences by choosing between a variety of pathways.

2.3 Trivizas' Literature

Eugene Trivizas is one of the most important contemporary Greek authors for children. Having been called a successor of Rodari, he himself states that the driving force behind his stories is the question of what could possibly happen after the classic and line "and they lived happily ever after". He also states that his aim is to entertain children (and more mature readers), to broaden their creative horizons and to cultivate their imagination. The dominant elements in his stories are phantasy, surrealism, verbal humour using metaphors turned back to their literal sense, allegory, parody and the creative and playful use of language.



Trivizas and 'serious' topics

Trivizas uses symbols and allegories to talk to young children about serious issues aiming not to traumatize them. In this way, he also helps parents define their approach to discussing such issues with their children. He states that "fairytales offer children the hope that we can defeat the dragons and the monsters that threaten and oppress us", while they also "transmit the message that we are able to overcome the limitations of our roles, our environment and our existence". His novel *The Last Black Cat*, published in 2001, is the story of a ruthless hunt in a society full of prejudice and superstition, and a plea for an end to exclusion, persecution and cruelty - persistently portrayed from the perspective of an animal protagonist, "the last black cat". In his 1993's bestseller *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig*, Trivizas adapted the classic fairy tale casting the wolf as not evil, but good. Eugene Trivizas handles the topic of child abuse extremely sensitively in the book *The Little Bear in Trouble*, which was printed in 2005, but it was only made available to selected individuals and institutions who are specifically trained to explain this difficult subject to children appropriately.

Trivizas' interactive books

Trivizas is also well known for his "interactive" books *The 88 Small Stuffed Vine Leaves* (1997) and *The 33 Pink Coloured Rubies* (2003). The two books, which he characterised as "multi-fairy tales" or "multi-strand fairy tales", follow a format which allows the reader to make their own decisions about the story's order of events. Every time they read the story, they choose a different turn of events, making the book feel like a magic object that contains a thousand hidden tales. In the first pages Trivizas gives readers some advice on how to read those books, which are composed of narrative points (nodes) organized into a network with many paths.

3. The “You Tell” Stories

3.1 Form of the stories

- All stories must be composed in a way which will allow their reading from a printed text and oral narration.
- 5 of the “You Tell” stories must be composed in a way which will allow their transformation into VR scenarios with voice-over.
- The “You Tell” stories must be open-to-the-readers’-decisions stories. The decisions on how the plot will unfold are taken by the reader.
- Each story will consist of some “decision points” which are the moments when the reader must decide what the hero of the story should do. According to the decision of the reader, the story is re-oriented respectively (the reader is given instructions to move to a certain page).
- The reader will weight up the pros and cons of a decision, assess the situation which has occurred in the story, estimate the impact of his/her decision, take a decision and move on with it until the end of the story. The reader will thus become the basic actor, the hero of the story.
- Non-linear texts have a positive influence on the maturing process of young readers, as the latter have the opportunity to interact with the story relying on their own perspectives. They are invited to activate their critical thinking, their creativity and their imagination.

3.2 Length of the stories

- The stories should not exceed 15 pages (i.e. each plot path, thus c. 30 in total).
- The oral narration of each story should not exceed 30 minutes.

3.3 Topics

The main purpose of the stories will be to develop pupils' basic social skills and to cultivate values through taking the right decision for one's self. Each story must touch upon one or more of the following topics:

- Diversity (i.e. refugees, sexual orientation, disabilities etc.)
- Resilience (i.e. loss management, overcoming failures etc.)

- Friendship
- Respect (i.e. bullying, proper social interaction etc.)
- Limits (i.e. prevention of breach of personal space etc.)

4. The Three Stages of the “You Tell” Stories’ Creation

4.1 First stage

In order for the main idea of the story to be decided, the teacher/story creator has two options. The first one is to have a target topic in mind already and, via activities and games, to motivate the pupils to discover it by themselves. The other option is to decide the topic of the story on the spot, directly from the students, based on their own interests and concerns, through conversation and brainstorming in the classroom.

4.2 Second stage

As soon as the topic of the story is mutually decided, it is time to decide on the basic structure and elements of the story, based on Propp’s methodology - the central role of the hero and his/her course, the secondary characters and their role in the hero’s mission, the different places the action in going to take place and of course the ending and the final message of the story.

In order to make the story more interesting and engaging, it is necessary to incorporate certain elements, such as suspense, the sense of humor and the element of the paradox, based on lexical games, improvisation and open endings. These are mostly Trivizas’ and Rodari’s techniques and that is why it will be extremely useful to have their work as a guide at this point.

4.3 Third stage

With the story now complete and ready for narration, it will be possible to explore the possibilities technology that gives, to highlight certain aspect of storytelling. Thus, the “You tell” story is now ready to be transferred into a Virtual Reality scenario. The means to achieve this transfer can be as simple as a scanned drawing and a video processing programme, to a more elaborate process of filming and editing

on a computer. In order for all the above to happen, it is necessary to ensure that the structure of the story will enable the narration to be adapted into a VR environment.

These three stages will be further explained below using two stories as examples, which have been created specifically to fit into the standards mentioned above.

5. Examples of Stories

5.1 First Example of a Story

“Lucky and the "B" word”

This story is created using Gianni Rodari's techniques.

A word that you throw randomly in your mind, creates circles in the surface and in depth, just like the ones which create a pebble you throw in a lake. Then it is a chain reaction: so many sounds, images, memories, meanings and dreams are created, the conscious with the unconscious are merged, fantasy unfolds and stories are created.

In today's story, let's talk about the word “bullying”, shall we?

First of all, the letters. How many can you count? It will be a lot easier if we put them one under the other:

B

U

L

L

Y

I

N

G

That's a big enough word, don't you think? But the letters seem so lonely that way... What if we found a name for them? Can you think of a name which start from each one of these letters?

Billy

Ursulla



Lucky

Less

Yan

Ilya

Nelly

Gabby

What lovely names have you chosen! Now let's imagine that each name belongs to an animal which also starts from this letter.

Billy the bull

Ursulla the *ursa* minor

Lucky the lamb

Less the lion

Yan the yak

Ilya the ibex

Nelly the nag

Gabby the goose

Great! Where do you think these guys live? Yes, probably on a farm. And which of these animals is being bullied and by whom?

Ok then, let's find out what happened on this farm.

Hello! I'm Lucky the lamb and I have lived on this farm since the day I was born. But I'm not alone. I live together with my friends, Nelly the nag, Gabby the goose, Yan the yak and Ilya the ibex. They are all about the same age and we go to the same school. Our teacher's name is Less the lion. We lived happily on the farm. Every animal, no matter how big or small they were, had their jobs and they always helped one another. Everything seemed quiet as usual, until Billy came...

Billy the bull came from abroad to live on our farm. He is Yan's cousin, whose aunt was married in a country named Spain. He was an athlete there! He participated in a very dangerous sport called bullfighting. You have to be very strong and fierce when you participate in this sport because you either live or die. So Billy was taught to always win - everything and everyone.



From the very first day he came to school, I realised that he would cause a lot of problems. During the first break of the day, he passed by my desk and dropped my book supposedly by mistake. Then he mumbled "Pick it up you freak!". From this day on, Billy constantly used games and sports as an excuse to push and kick me. I returned home in tears, with bruises all over my body, wondering what I have done to deserve this behaviour... But I never spoke to anyone. I was ashamed of myself for being weak and a coward...

One spring night, I could not sleep, so I decided to go for a walk in the garden. I sat under the lime tree and looked up to the sky. The stars were shining like small lanterns. Everything was magical. Then I noticed among the other stars two constellations that looked like a mama bear and her baby: Ursa Major and Ursa Minor. I felt the love and care between the mother and her child and I was suddenly emotional. I said a little prayer to the stars: "If only I could find the will and strength to confront Billy". I closed my eyes and a tear dropped on my cheek, when suddenly I felt like somebody was caressing me. I was sure that it was mama bear from above! And suddenly I felt strong and capable of reacting. Now I was ready to talk. I have decided.

Decision Point: But to whom should I talk first?

a) Lucky the lamb talks to Nelly the nag

Next evening, I found Nelly browsing in the meadow next to the farm. "Nelly, I want to talk to you about Billy's behaviour towards me", I said and talked about everything I was going through. When I saw the terror in her eyes I was so surprised! Even more so when I heard her saying: "I'm not better myself Lucky... Billy is shouting at me for no reason at all and he calls me names. Two days ago he opened my locker and threw all my stuff away... I wish I had the courage to talk to Mr Less, but I'm so scared..."

I left disappointed and I decided to talk to somebody else.

b) Lucky the lamb talks to Yan the yak

One day passed and the next afternoon I visited Yan. He was at home absorbed in his reading. "Sorry to bother you, but I would like to talk to you about Billy and everything he puts me through every day", I said and described the situation. Yan listened to me and replied: "I don't like him either, but he is my cousin and I can't help you. If I go against him, my mum will be very angry with me..."



I didn't want to cause any problems to Yan, so I decided to talk to somebody else.

c) Lucky the lamb talks to Ilya the ibex

I ran into Ilya the next day, shopping for candy and I immediately seized the opportunity to talk to her about my troubles. We went somewhere more privately and, after listening to me, she said: "We are on the same page... He threatens me and takes my pencils and markers from me. I am so afraid of Billy, that I even have trouble sleeping! I cannot eat because fear makes my stomach hurt! I have headaches all the time, so I cannot read any more! That's why I came here to buy candy today... I hope that they will help me to cheer up a bit... Somebody has to confront Billy but who? I am not the one for sure! I'm so scared of him and I do whatever I can not to run into him! I even ditch school sometimes, because of Billy!"

Only then I realised that Ilya was not just scared, she was terrified... And it was certain that she couldn't help right now. That's why I decided to talk to somebody else.

d) Lucky the lamb talks to Gabby the goose

The very same day I called Gabby the goose and we talked about my decision to do something and stop Billy's behaviour to all of us. Because Gabby was one more victim. "I was meaning to talk to you as well" she said. "Billy makes fun of me and humiliates me. He is shouting at me and pulls my feathers. I can't stand him any more! I've been thinking of talking to the teacher for a long time now and I'm glad that you are thinking the same thing. Let's go tomorrow and talk to Mr Less together! Are you in?"

e) Lucky the lamb and Gabby the goose talk to Less the lion

The next day Gabby and I were standing outside Mr Less' door. We knocked and entered his office. We talked about everything we were going through, in tears, holding each other's hand. Then our teacher opened his arms, hugged us and said: "Everything will be OK now".



5.2 Second Example of a Story

In the footsteps of Chronis (Time-man)

Once upon a time, there was Chronis. He was not a human, nor an animal. He was transparent and airy. He lived on his own planet, from where he could watch all the planets in the universe. But nobody could see Chronis.

So, since nobody could see him, Chronis faced two problems. Firstly, he had no friends. Secondly, he felt lonely and bored.

To face his boredom, he invented some games. Games like running and rolling - where he ran as fast as he could, or the frozen statue - where he did not move for a very long time. Sometimes he looked at the flowers and counted how much time it's necessary for the flowers to bloom and then to wither. But his favorite game was to observe the other planets.

One day he made up his mind. He would go and visit the planets. For this journey, he prepared a backpack with three magic tools:

- an old pocket watch, which was used as a compass as well
- an hourglass that could transfer you in time
- a camera that could capture time

Chronis took the pocket-watch in his hand, he spun it and the time was a quarter past eight. That means the big clock pointer shows the planet of the rabbit and the small clock pointer shows the planet of the tortoise.

1st Decision Point: Which planet do you think he visited first?

a) Planet of the rabbit

b) The Planet of the Turtle



a) Planet of the rabbit

He decided to visit the planet of the rabbit. When he landed on the planet it was winter. Everything around him was snowy. But when he put on his scarf, he suddenly saw the sun shining, the snow melting and, as he bent down to smell a flower, summer was already there.

- Oh, my God! Everything passes by so fast on this planet!, he said.

He saw many weird things on this planet! A small seed fell on the ground, and the next moment it grew up as a tall tree. When he walked closer to the tree, he looked up on his branches and there was a nest full of eggs. But a few minutes later the eggs hatched into small birds and flew away.

- But how can I catch up with this planet? Chronis thought. Everything goes so fast!

Suddenly he heard a voice.

- Hey you, my friend! What are you doing here?

And before Chronis could see who it was, a small lady rabbit appeared in front of him.

- Faster, faster, faster, please! Faster, faster!

- What are you talking about? Please talk a bit slower. I can't understand.

Then the rabbit touched Chronis' foot with her tail and he was immediately transformed into a speedy red scooter.

- There you go! Now that I made you faster, you must be able to understand me.

- Of course, of course, of course, Chronis answered quickly.

- What do you think? Shall we go for a walk?

- Let's go!



Then the rabbit climbed on him and they went around the planet. They had a great time playing and laughing but, in the middle of the journey, Chronis thought:

- But I cannot manage to save all these beautiful moments in my mind!

Then he remembered the camera he had in his bag. He took it out immediately and started photographing all the happy moments he spent with the rabbit. In the end, he printed them and sat with her on a stone to see them together. But just when he took the first photo in his hands, in front of him appeared...

2nd Decision Point Who do you want to appear? An ogress or a king?

b) The Planet of the Turtle

He decided to go to the planet of the turtle. Even though he was an experienced traveler, this time he made a hard landing. As a result, he found himself lying down on a large clearing. He tried to open his eyes, but they were fading out and it was very difficult for them to open. Eventually he managed to wake up and then he saw high greens around him. He tried to get up, but his body was still heavy. He felt his hands and legs heavy and his movements were too slow. "What is happening to me? Why do I move so slowly? ", he wondered.

He looked at the sky and the birds were flying so slow than looked like they weren't moving at all. The same happened with the foliage of the trees. Then he heard a slow distant voice saying:

- Hey, friend! Where are you going?

Chronis looked around him and he heard the voice again:

- Hey! look here down!

Chronis lowered his head and saw a snail.

- Hi, I'm Chronis! Who are you?



- I'm Spyras, said the snail, and suddenly heavy steps were heard and the earth began to tremble.

- Follow me! Quickly! The giant is coming!, he said.

Chronis tried to run, but he went so slowly that he shouted in fear:

- Can't we go faster? He will catch us!

- My friend, we are on the planet of the turtle. Everything moves slowly here. Even the giant runs slowly...

Suddenly, a huge shadow covered them and the giant almost stepped on the snail! Chronis managed to help the snail with the magic hourglass that goes back in time, at the last minute, and saved the snail.

- You saved my life, thank you!

The two friends took a rest to catch their breath, when suddenly.... a giant butterfly net appeared from nowhere and captured Chronis...

2nd Decision Point: Who do you think was holding this butterfly net? An ogress or a king?

a) The Ungrateful King

b) The Ogress

--

a) The Ungrateful King

An old, tired and wrinkled king was holding the net.

- I'm looking for a way to become young again. I will not let go of anything I catch until I get what I want.

Chronis, before even having the chance to say one word, found himself trapped by the king. The king grabbed him and took him to his planet.



This ugly place was like a huge mirror. On this frozen land, only the king, some angry guards and all the king's victims were living in a castle full of mirrors.

Chronis told the king: "I know the way to make you young again" and turned his hourglass upside down. In a moment, all the wrinkles on the king's face disappeared and the king became young and strong! He was so happy that he let all his prisoners free. All except Chronis!

"My king, why are you punishing me after all the good things I did for you?" asked Chronis.

"I'm not punishing you. On the contrary, I'll be watching over you! You're so precious that I wouldn't risk losing you!"

Everyday the king was looking at himself in every mirror of the castle to see if any new wrinkle on his face had appeared. And everyday he would say to his prisoner: "Look how beautiful I am. And what a beautiful hourglass you have!"

Chronis was feeling bored and trapped. He didn't know what to do. He burst into tears. He really needed a friend.

As his tears were rolling down his cheek, he noticed that one of them was smiling at him!

"Chronis please, don't cry anymore. Can't you see how easily we, your tears, can escape from your eyes? As soon as I roll down your cheek and reach your neck, you'll find the solution!"

The tear rolled down his cheek and reached his neck. Suddenly Chronis was turned into water! He flew away from the boring castle, under the doors and through the cracks.

What a misfortune! A huge wall appeared in front of him, so tall that it was impossible to surmount. He could already hear the voices of the king and his guardians who were running after him.

"Please! Somebody save me!"

3rd Decision Point: Who do you think will save Chronis? Will it be the sweet musician or the bright child?



b) The Ogress

Chronis continued with his journey around the planets. "I'm so happy with my new adventure!" he thought. He hadn't completed his sentence when an ogress grabbed him and held him in her palm. "I got you!" shouted the ogress and her eyes were sparking.

"Let, let me down, please, don't hurt me!" Chronis begged her. Then the ogress answered in her most sweet way: "I'm not planning to hurt you! I just want to put you in the machine I constructed".

"Machine? What machine? A meat grinder? Are you going to turn me into minced meat? Spaghetti Bolognese?" said Chronis.

The ogress laughed and put Chronis on her machine that was smelling oil. The machine had numerous gears, big and small and each one was coming out of the other's belly. The machine had two big pedals and a saddle. Chronis sat on the saddle. "This is the machine I made. I designed it. It has a thousand small and big gears. I'm a very proud ogress! This machine has the power to stop time whenever I want!" said the ogress.

"And what do I have to do with it?" asked Chronis angrily.

"You will be sitting on the saddle and pedaling. Come on! Pedal a hundred times backwards!" said the ogress.

Chronis was very worried. He had to find a way to stop her. He wanted to travel the world and dream, not pedaling on a time controlling machine!

"Ride on!" said the ogress. And you know what happened next!

a) Rescue from the musician

From far away, music started playing! A sweet melody was getting closer. But of course! It was his favourite song!



He felt so happy inside him that he was no longer sad. So, he started to dance. His feet didn't touch the ground but flew high in the air!

Flying higher and higher, he managed to escape and looking down he saw who was playing music: a girl with colourful clothes, playing ukulele and singing sweetly.

He flew to her : "You sing very well! You made my day!" The girl thanked him and then they continued to walk together. Then Chronis learned that the girl was a travelling musician from the Melodic planet and she was returning to play music with her friends.

"Don't worry, just play music and the rest is up to me!" said Chronis and took out his pocket watch. Immediately his pointers showed the right direction and left for the Melodic planet. When the girl returned, all were very happy! Chronis was also welcomed by them. For many days and nights, they celebrated their return and everyone sang and danced together!

Chronis made many new friends, he was happy. One night, he heard his girlfriend play a children's song that Chronis knew from a baby and remembered his childhood years on his planet, his garden, and his toys. Then he felt a tightness and a sweet sadness. It was the nostalgia for his home. It was time to come back.

b) Rescue from the bright child

Suddenly he saw a yellow slot in the sky and through this, came out a giant blue marker. A happy child was riding the blue marker. The happy child came closer and said to Chronis:

-Heeeeyyy. It feels very sad here. Where do you want me to take you?

-In a colourful place, said Chronis!

- Oh! I know exactly this place. But don't look at me with this face. Come along and paint with me the planet of the children. And so Chronis and the happy child. took the blue giant marker and painted on the



wall a round blue planet. A planet that you have never seen before. When they were done, the happy child asked Chronis:

- Do you trust me?

Then they grabbed each other's hand, they made one step forward and touched the wall and.....chrouououp, they arrived through the wall on the planet of the children.

- Oh ! What a strange planet! It looks like a bubble. Everything around them was swimming underwater but not very fast nor very slow.

- It would be great if I was a bubble too! Said Chronis. And the child bowed his eye craftily, it blew softly on Chronis and he turned into a bubble!

- Now tell me! Who are you? said the child.

And Chronis tried to explain. He talked about fast and slow. He talked about those people who forced him to do things they wanted. In the end Chronis said in grievance:

-No one ever asked me what I would really like to do for me.

Then the child looked at him with compassion and said:

-Nothing of all this really matters. Let's take a nap

-Aahh! I have never thought about it before... I never stop! I never sleep.

But how can you make a child unhappy? So he opened his bubble and both of them fell asleep on a bubbling mattress. And they had many great dreams together. And when they woke up the bubble popped and Chronis was back on his planet.

Chronis' return to his planet



When he arrived at his house, a surprise waited for him in the mailbox. Three letters in coloured envelopes awaited Chronis. Who do you think they are from? That's right! From the friends he met in his adventures. Chronis was so enthusiastic, he took the letters and started reading them:

"Time does not stop. Time is moments!"

"Time is medicine and knowledge"

"Time is a friend"

When he finished reading them all, a smile was drawn upon his face and he came up with a crazy idea. He took a needle and a thread, he cut and he sewed, he cut and he sewed and finally he created a beautiful colourful quilt full of words and sentences. So every night he slept with his warm quilt and he did not feel lonely anymore. Why? Because all of his friends were around him and warmed him up.