



Fotonovela

Stories from the South and the North
FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

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Welcome to the world of Fotonovela!

Create your own story and surrender to storytelling that can take you around the world. What do young people want to say about the world they live in? What are their views on their rights? What do young people dream about? What kind of flaws do they want to intervene in and influence?

While stories were once told around the campfire or read from books, now the art of storytelling has shifted onto television, radio, Internet, social media and other digital channels. The Internet enables us to share stories with people living on the other side of the world: the doors are open for intercultural and interlingual communication; the doors are open for us to learn from one another!

Every single one of us has an opinion and something unique to say. Fotonovela provides an opportunity to express it. Fotonovela are stories made by young people from the South and the North – the exchange of opinions and the sharing of experiences and stories through photographs and texts.

A Fotonovela workshop consists of seven stages. The last stage involves practical exercises that allow the group to familiarise themselves with Fotonovela stories from different countries without completing the entire workshop. A Fotonovela workshop can also work as an introduction to phenomenal learning: an exercise to narrow down and clarify the phenomenon that is being studied can be found at the end of the exercise section.

All Fotonovela stories can be found online at www.fotonovela.fi.

Enjoy your time with Fotonovela!



WHAT IS FOTONOVELA?

In a Fotonovela workshop, youth from all around the world can create stories about the same topics using the same technique, but utilising their individual experiences. Once finished, the Fotonovela stories will be published on a user-friendly website www.fotonovela.fi. The stories can be read in Finnish, Spanish and English so that young people can familiarise themselves with stories from different countries.

Fotonovela can help to dismantle stereotypes, question matters, and it can be used to practice argumentation. First of all, the creative force of Fotonovela offers a firm basis for learning that is based on one's own experiences. Fotonovela encourages youth to express their opinions and to play an active and influential part in their community. The method helps youth to visualise the world, and it supports cultural education and interaction. Fotonovela improves literacy and picture reading skills, and information and communications technology skills.

Fotonovela gives the floor to young people. In the Fotonovela stories, young people are the active agents, and their thoughts and opinions are heard through words and photographs. The youth themselves will narrow down the topic and choose their own viewpoint. The Fotonovela workshop is suitable for young people above the age of 11.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP

What is the suitable age group for Fotonovela?

Ages 11 and up

What is the ideal group size for a Fotonovela workshop?

A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 30 participants. It is good to have two facilitators if the number of participants exceeds 15.

How much time is needed?

Recommendation: one day of workshop.

What is needed?

- Each group needs to be provided with a camera, smartphone or tablet to take photos with. The photos need to be transferred from camera to computer or uploaded directly from a smartphone or a tablet to the website www.fotonovela.fi.
- Each group needs a computer or a tablet to write their texts on.
- Pens and paper.
- Clothes, accessories and other objects to be used as props (if necessary).
- Bundles of imagination!

What to do first?

1. **Order a password** to create your Fotonovela stories by sending an email to fotonovela@taksvarkki.fi. You should do this in good time before the workshop.
2. **Ask for consent** from the parents of minors to allow the youth to appear in the images and to allow their work to be published (see Guardian handout - appendix on p. 35)
3. **Establish the equipment** to be used (cameras, smartphones and computers) and check their functionality.
4. **The computers** and tablets need to be connected to the Internet in order for the stories to be published at www.fotonovela.fi.

ORGANISING THE FOTONOVELA WORKSHOP

The facilitator designs the structure of the workshop. However, below you will find a sample structure that can be used and modified to suit your needs.



The Fotonovela workshop can be used as an introduction to a phenomenal learning project. In this case, the exercise **Same Theme, Different Country** can be used (p. 31).



1. TUNING INTO STORYTELLING AND MOTIVATION

It is good to tune into storytelling before creating your own story and get ideas of different methods that can be used. Becoming familiar with Fotonovela stories through exercises prepares and encourages the youth to create their own stories!

TRUE OR FALSE?

- Objective:**
- To look at examples of good stories that take a stand on something.
 - To understand that realistic and imaginary elements can be linked in the story.
 - To view Fotonovela stories as a part of the storytelling tradition that surrounds us.

Duration: 15 min

Equipment: Internet access, data projector

Familiarise yourselves either with the story *Dangers on the Streets* (Our Community - theme, Bolivia) or *The Baltic Sea, a Beautiful Sea* (Environment and Sustainable Development -theme, Finland). Reflect on the following questions first in pairs, then in the group:

- Is the story true? Or false? Both perhaps?
- Does the storyteller describe his own life in the story? Which elements of the story could be derived from the youth's own life?
- Apart from personal life experiences, what other kind of experiences may end up in the story?
- In the past, stories were shared orally when people gathered together. How are stories shared in the digital society?
- How are the changes in the methods and traditions of storytelling visible in the young people's stories?

STORY INGREDIENTS

- Objective:**
- To recall the structure of the story and the elements involved.
 - To develop skills to analyse a story.

Duration: 15-30 min depending on how many stories are being analysed

Equipment: Internet access, data projector

Read together either ***Dream of an Extraordinary City*** (Environment and Sustainable Development, Bolivia) or ***Dream or Nightmare?*** (Our Community, Finland). Make sure to explore the pictures carefully. Contemplate the following:

- What is the initial situation? Where does the story start?
- What happens after the beginning?
- Is there a turning point – a moment that changes the course of events? What? What happens after?
- How does the story end? Can the end be interpreted in more ways than one?
- Who are the principle characters in the story? Do they change as the story goes along?
- What kinds of conflicts are present in the story?
- Why did the maker of the story want to tell this specific story? What does he or she want to communicate through the story?
- Does the maker want to influence something by telling the story? What does he or she want to influence?
- What kind of associations and emotions does the story evoke?

BUILDING A COLLECTIVE STORY

Objective:

- To practice storymaking.
- To acknowledge that a story can be created easily and effortlessly. It does not need to be complicated.

Duration: 10-20 min, depending on the amount of participants

Equipment: Pen and paper or alternatively a computer for typing for the facilitator

You can practice storymaking by using the Storycrafting method. Stand or sit down in a circle and quiet down for a moment of collective storytelling. You can start off by choosing a picture from a Fotonovela story for inspiration to get you going, but you can also create a story from scratch. The first person starts the story. The next one will continue. Go around the circle until you get to the last person, who will finish the story. Rule of thumb is that each person gets a turn to say one sentence. However, this is not to be obeyed to the letter. It is important to listen to others in order to create a unified story. Write down the story as it comes along. When the last person has brought the story to an end, read the story out loud and ask the participants if they would like to make any changes to it. After applying the potential changes, the story is ready.

WRITING

Objective:

- To discard unnecessary self-criticism and fear of blank paper.
- To acknowledge that a text can be produced at a fast pace without thinking too much.

Duration: 15 min

Equipment: Pen and paper for each participant

Each participant receives a pen and a blank sheet of paper. Give the participants 10 minutes and ask them to write about a simple topic (e.g. Family, My Dream, Nature). The writing will follow immediately. The objective is not to allow the pen to leave the paper during the 10 minutes. If a participant suddenly cannot come up with anything, they can simply write down: "I cannot think of anything to write". The most important thing is to continue writing. There is no need to think about neat handwriting or correct spelling. When time is up, each participant will read through their writing individually. The texts should not be gone through collectively or read out loud.

TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

Objective: To understand how abstract matters can be expressed in an image.

Duration: 20 min

Equipment: Camera for each pair

The exercise is done in pairs. Give each pair the same theme: something ambiguous and abstract such as loneliness, friendship or joy. The pairs will take a few minutes to design their photos and then take them by using a camera. The entire group will then go through the photos. In a group, think how the given theme is visible in the pictures and how differently the same theme can be presented.

FROM PHOTOS TO STORY

Objective: To acknowledge that a story can be told by mere photos.

Duration: 25-30 min

Equipment: Camera for each pair and the means to transfer the photos to a computer in order for the photos to be projected onto a board with the data projector

Divide the participants into groups and give them a theme they can use as the basis for the story. Youngster in Distress is a good example of a theme. The groups are allowed to tell a story by only using photos. 3-5 photos will suffice. Each group will first design and then take the photos bearing in mind which photos will be chosen to develop the story. At the end, study the groups' stories together and contemplate what kind of stories can be created by using photos.



2. AWAKENING ENERGY AND BRAINSTORMING A STORY

The purpose of Fotonovela is to get young people to tell the stories about their life and environment that they themselves consider significant. The participants get an opportunity to ponder the issues they would like to bring forth, issues they would like to take a stand on or issues they would like to change.

COBWEB

Objective:

- To tune into creating your own story.
- To concentrate on the things in the environment you would like to impact on.

Duration: 25–30 min

Equipment: Ball of string, questions projected onto a board or projector screen, board or paper to write the thought on.

Stage 1

Think about which relevant issues need changing and what issues you would like to take a stand on in your own life. In order to inspire the thought process, you can ask the participants:

- What do you want to take a stand on?
- Is there something you consider unjust?
- What matters would you like to make people aware of?
- What do you want to make a story of?

It is important for everyone to think about the questions individually. The bothersome things can be very commonplace.

Gather in a circle. The first person takes hold of the end of the ball of string and says out loud the issue he or she would like to take a stand on or change. The first person holds on to the end of the string and throws the ball to the next person who will share his or her thoughts. Continue this until everyone has got the ball at least once and a cobweb has formed in the centre of the circle. Write down the thoughts on the board or on a sheet of paper.

Stage 2

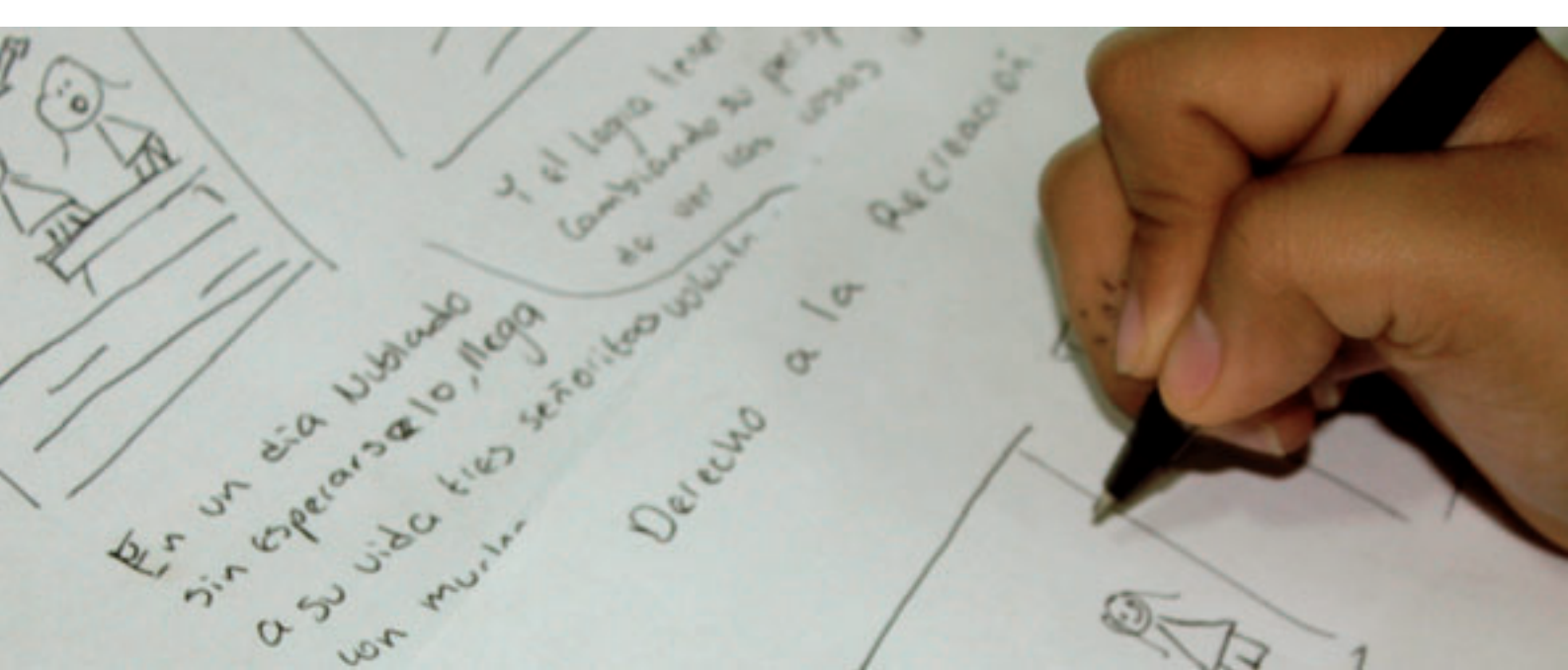
Divide the ideas from the previous exercise according to the Fotonovela themes. The themes are:

- Our community
- Young people's rights
- Environment and sustainable development
- Relationships

The exercise can be carried out in different ways. You can choose a different colour for each theme and then use different coloured marker pens to circle the ideas on the board dividing them into the categories mentioned above. You can also write the ideas on Post-it notes, divide the board into sections for each theme, and then place the Post-it notes in the right section. The role of the workshop leader is to only facilitate the process; the participants will do the rest.

Stage 3

The topics on the board serve as a basis for the stories. The story can be created alone, in pairs or in small groups. If you are short on time, it is easier to create the stories in groups. The participants will choose a topic. The topic does not need to be based on the viewpoints brought forward in stage 1; the participants can create an entirely new topic. The most important thing is to come up with a story that speaks for the individual!



3. DEVISING THE STORYBOARD

The storyboard helps to balance the images and the text in the story. During the process, the participants will devise a story with care and think about the choices of images and the words to be used in the storytelling.

Objective:

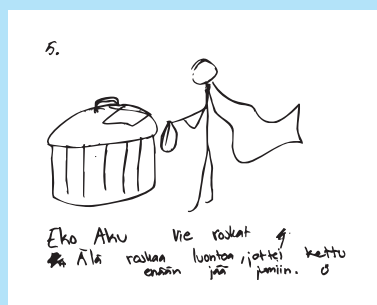
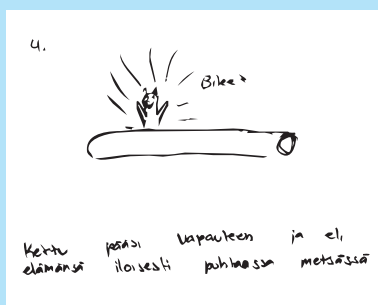
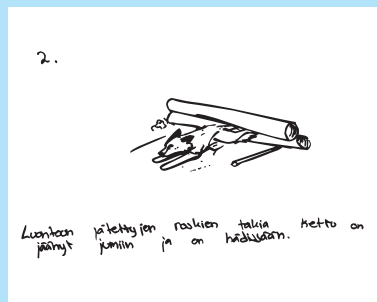
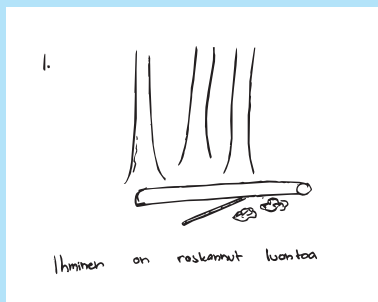
- To define the structure and character of the story.
- To design the texts and images in as much detail as possible.

Duration: 45 min

Equipment: Pens and paper

The Fotonovela story consists of pages with text and an image on each page. Make sketches of each page: draw a sketch of each designed photo and write down your thoughts in short sentences using bullet points. Make a sketch of each page on an individual sheet of paper; this way it is easier to change the order of the pages or discard them altogether. Come up with a title. An inventive title is always a standout!

SAMPLE SCRIPT: Fox's Story



It is good to remember that the people in the photos do not need to be recognised. Use creativity to capture a communicative and interesting photo without disclosing the faces of the people in the picture.

Go through the story with the creator(s) before continuing. If there are structural problems, if the photos are difficult to execute or they are all very similar, ask the creator(s) to reconsider the script. It is good to have a conversation about the boundaries of privacy with the participants. The stories can be based on reality, but because of the online exposure, it may be best not to expose the identities of the people in the photo. The content should not be offensive or against good manners.

**It is not
the purpose of
Fotonovela to
write a story and
illustrate it.**

Fotonovela stories can vary in length. A good story is 4-6 pages long. The most important thing is that the participants have the enthusiasm to complete the stories with care.

The photos are as important a part of the storytelling as the text. You should not explain the photos in the text; the text can be used to describe the action in general, and the photo adds detail to the written text. The photos can convey emotions, methods, tools and characteristics.

Tips for designing the photo

You can create different impressions by changing camera angles and by adjusting composition.



- A frontal shot brings the subject closer to the audience.



- A low-angle shot creates an impression of a bigger and nobler subject.



- A high-angle shot diminishes and undermines the subject.



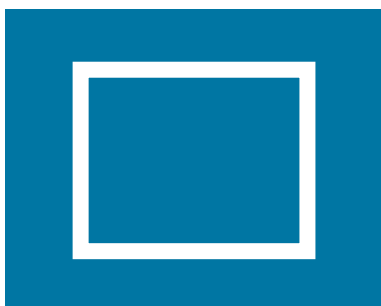
- Frame the things you want to emphasise in the photo.



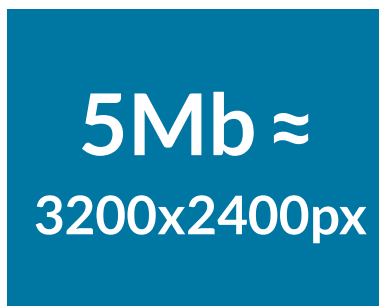
- Strong contrasts can create drama.



- To enhance the visual story, it is good to use both close-ups (hands, part of face, single object) and wide shots (landscape, view, indoor area, room).



- Fill the frame when taking the photo to eliminate excess editing time.



- The maximum photo size for www.fotonovela.fi is 5 megabytes. Change the image size settings in your camera.

4. FROM THOUGHT TO ACTION: WRITING TEXTS AND TAKING PHOTOS

Once the storyboard is finished, it is time to start writing texts and taking photos. After thorough preparation and planning, this stage is very practical. The participants get to finish their stories and their voices will be heard!

Objective:

- To finish the texts.
- To take the photos as designed.

Duration: 45 min

Equipment: Pens and paper or a computer for the texts, camera for taking photos

Writing the texts

The texts written for the storyboard serve as guidelines. Now it is time to concentrate on writing interesting texts to support the photos. You can animate the story with intriguing details. For example, you can use the questions below for help.

- What is the background of the principle character?
- What is the environment like in the story?
- How does a specific detail influence the story?
- How does the character feel in the story?
- What has happened before?
- Why is the situation like this?
- What is not visible in the photo?

Photography

The photos have been designed and sketched in the storyboard. After sufficient planning, it will be nice and easy to take the photos. The participants should take a moment to gather and set up the props. The technical quality of the photos is not important; simple photos can be used to express many things. During the process, think about the following

IMPORTANT!

Everyone can write their Fotonovela story in their own style. Neither grammatical errors nor technical difficulties will stand in the way of a good story. The style of writing is not as technical as e.g. at school. The most important thing is that the text is intelligible and the reader will understand the message of

things:

- Is the mood right in the photo?
- How could you improve the staging?
- How to make sure that the people in the photos cannot be identified?

Photo editing (voluntary)

Photo editing is not part of the Fotonovela workshop, but photos can be edited if the participants show particular interest. Photo editing is very contemporary and part of the youth's reality. It is also a great skill to master. It is important to have a discussion about the etiquette and the objectives of photo editing with the youths – the objective is to ensure the photos stay natural. The time needed for editing has not been calculated in the workshop schedule.

You can enhance the quality of the photo by:

- Straightening the horizon.
- Cropping the photo.
- Adjusting exposure.
- Blurring the background.
- Adjusting the colour palette, saturation and the colour of a specific area in the photo (e.g. making the sky darker).
- Adjusting the contrast.
- Reducing the pixel size.
- Sharpening the photo.
- Reducing the file size by compressing and changing format.

Only use photos taken by the participants in the workshop. You should not use pictures downloaded from the Internet or photos that have been taken before the workshop. Since the photos will be published online, it is important to own the rights for the pictures (see p. 35 Guardian handout). If a young person does not have permission to upload his or her own work, he or she can always take part in planning and creating a story.

IMPORTANT!



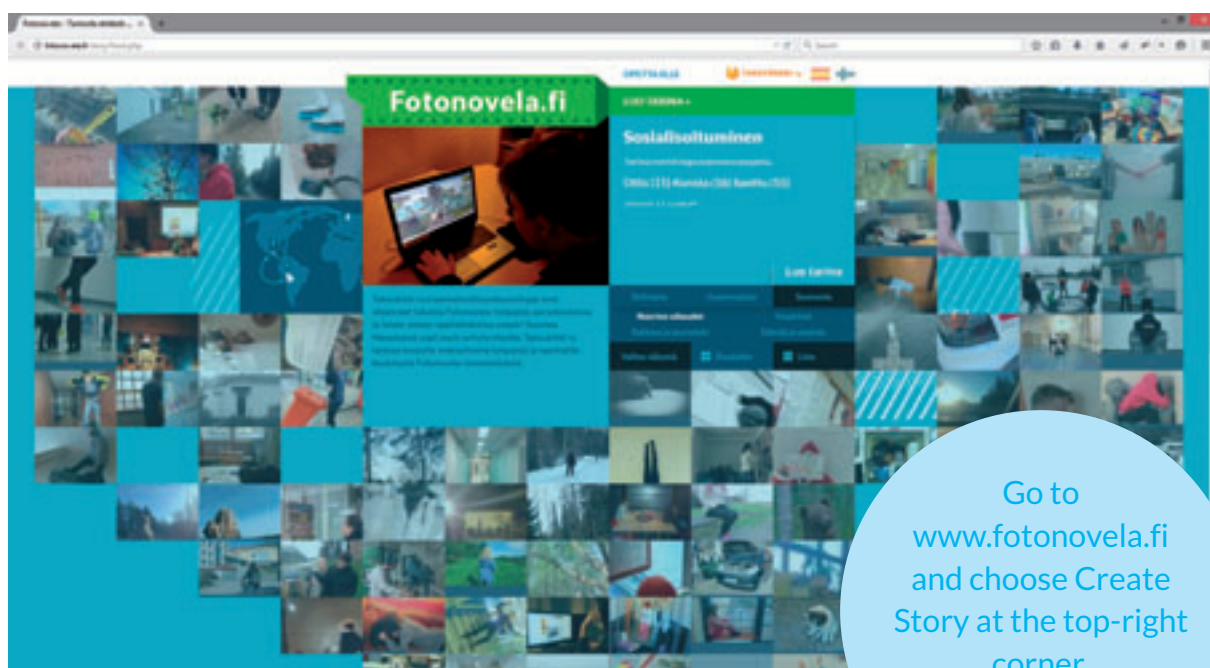
5. UPLOADING THE STORIES TO THE FOTONOVELA WEBSITE

The instructions for the website can be found by clicking the question mark at the bottom left corner.

If you have any problems, please contact fotonovela@taksvarkki.fi or tel. 00 358 9 5845 5504.

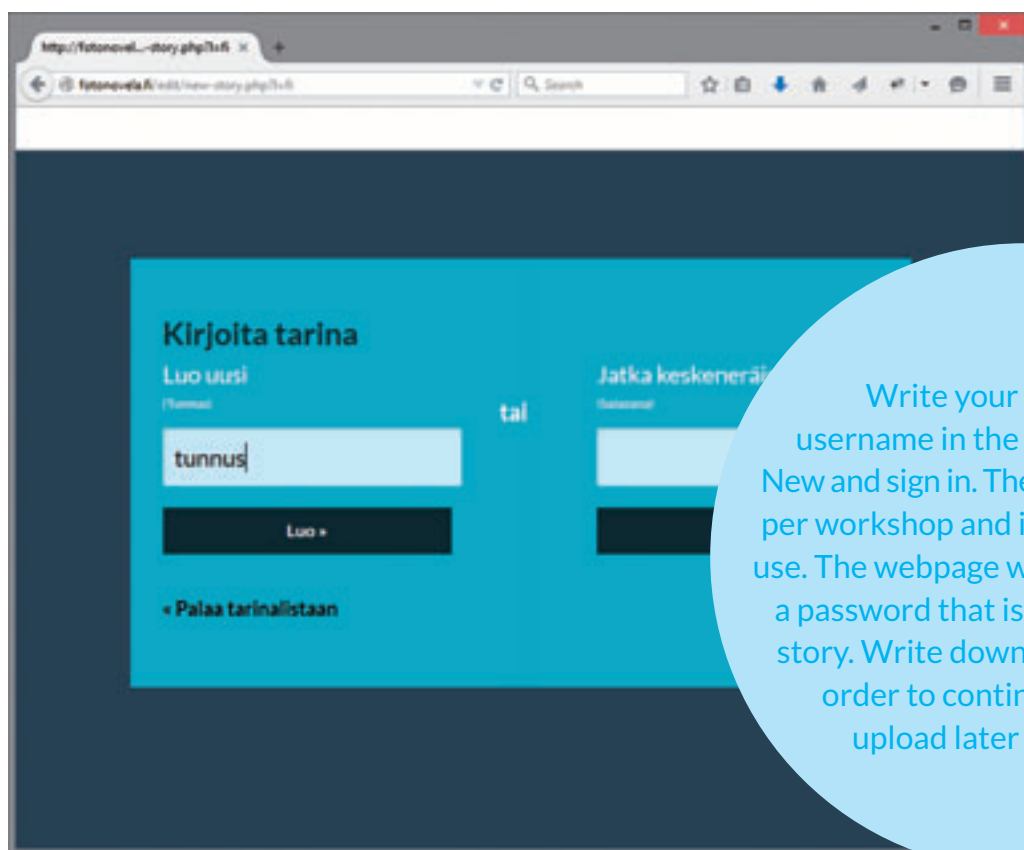
1.

Save the finished text with the photos that have been numbered according to the pages in the story to the computer. The maximum size for a photo is 5 megabytes or 3,200 x 2,400 pixels. You can resize the photo with editing software before uploading.



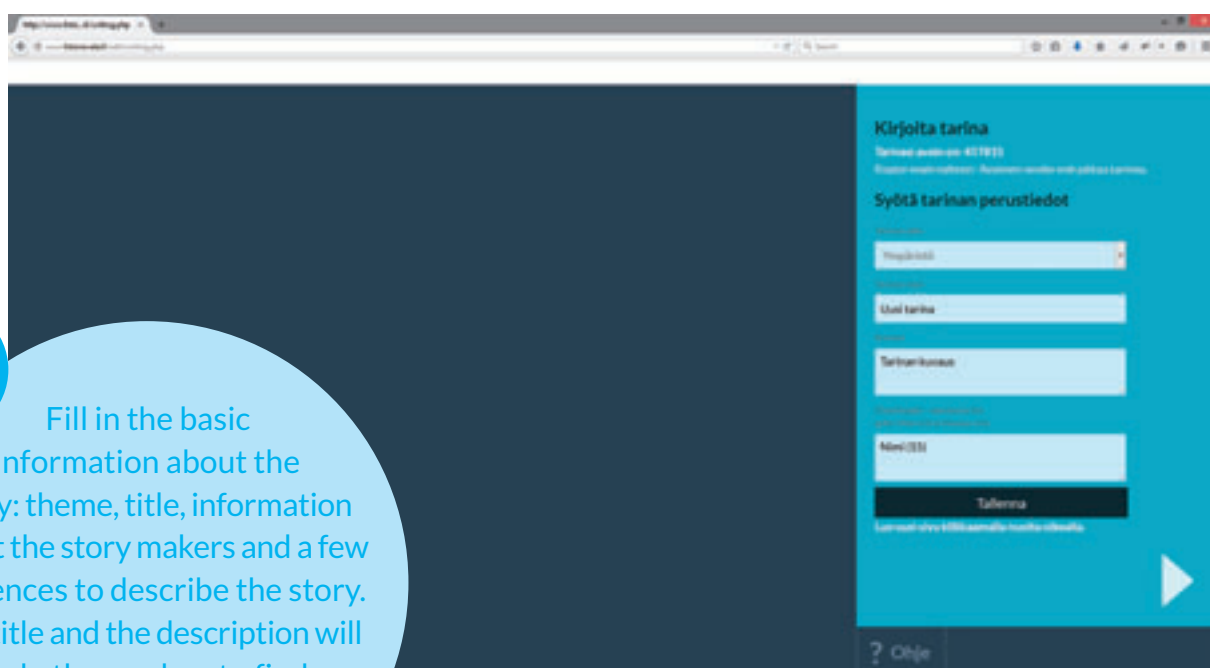
Go to
www.fotonovela.fi
and choose Create
Story at the top-right
corner.

2.



3.

Write your Fotonovela username in the text field Create New and sign in. There is one username per workshop and it is for everyone to use. The webpage will provide you with a password that is different for each story. Write down your password in order to continue your story-upload later if necessary.

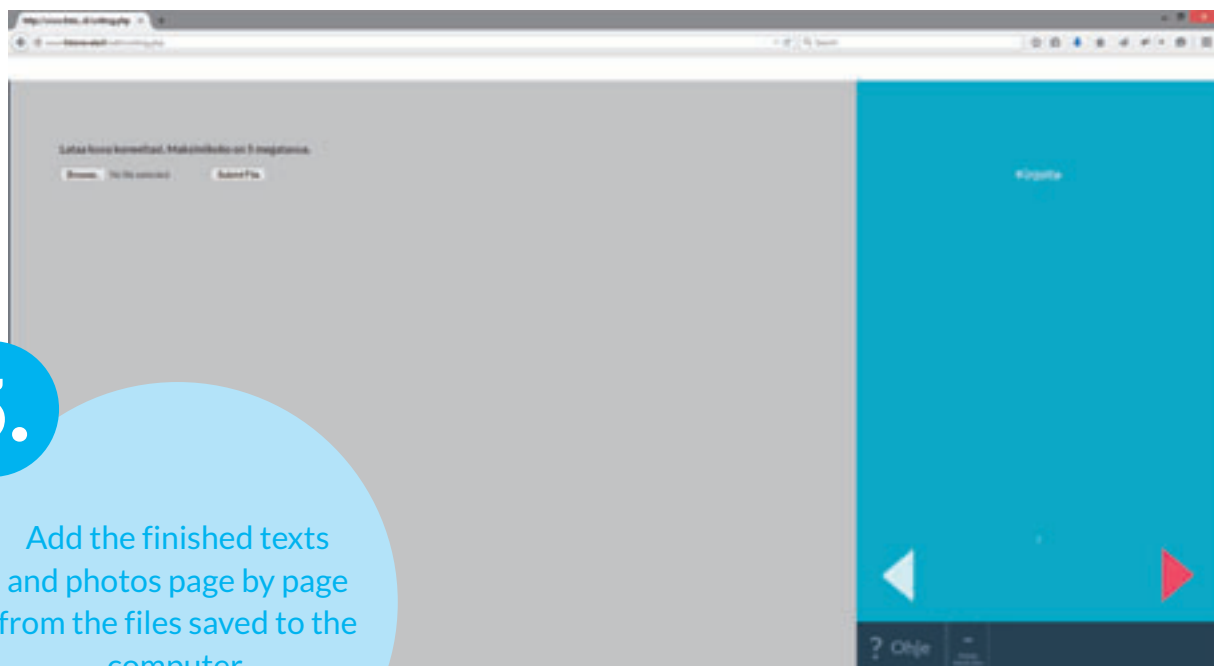


4.

Fill in the basic information about the story: theme, title, information about the story makers and a few sentences to describe the story. The title and the description will help the readers to find stories that interest them.

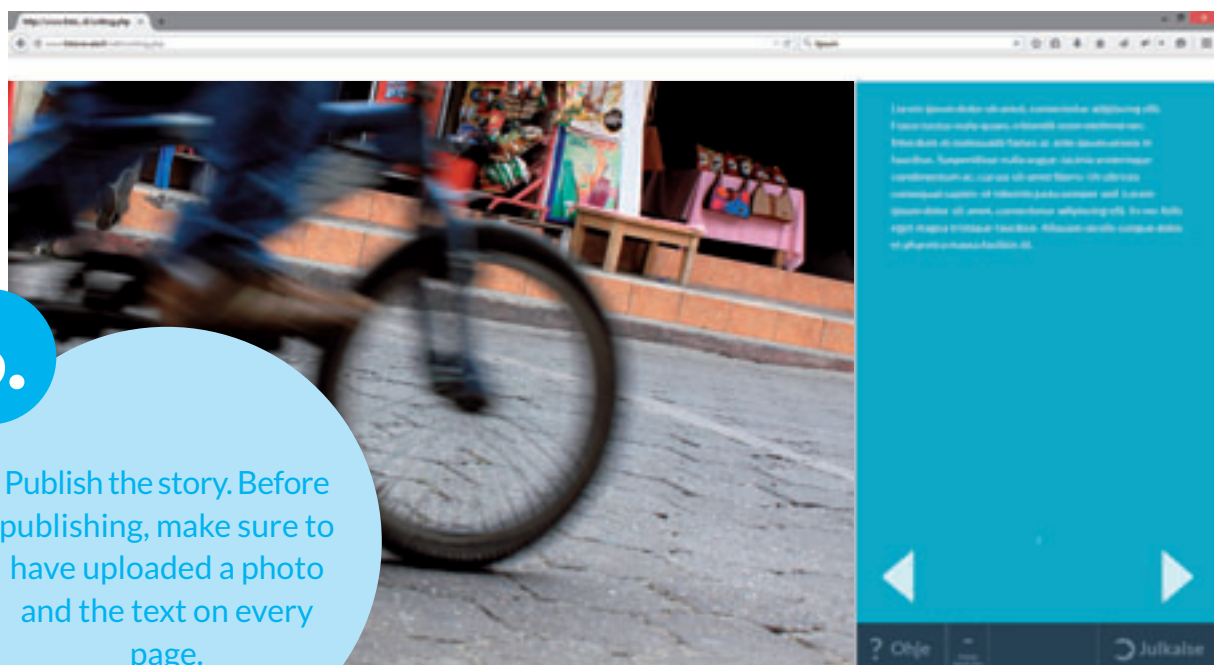
5.

Add the finished texts and photos page by page from the files saved to the computer.



6.

Publish the story. Before publishing, make sure to have uploaded a photo and the text on every page.



6. INTRODUCING AND EXPLORING THE STORIES

Objective: To explore the stories and learn about the creative process of other participants.

Duration: approximately 5 min per group

Equipment: Data projector and projector screen or computer

Once everyone has uploaded their stories on the Fotonovela website, familiarise yourselves as a group with the stories made in the workshop.

You can project the stories onto the projector screen. If there are only few participants, everyone can gather around one computer. The group, the leader or a volunteer participant reads the story out loud, after which the group will enlighten the audience about the creative process. You can encourage the group to reveal their thoughts by asking:

- What triggered the story?
- Which things in particular interested the group?
- What was the most challenging about narrowing down the theme?
- How did you experience the storytelling in a group?

Encourage the participants to tell their families and friends about the story they have created. You can also encourage them to familiarise themselves with other stories available on the website at home.

7. EXPLORING STORIES OF YOUTH FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

During the last stage of the workshop, the participants get to explore the stories written by young people living in other countries and to ponder what the stories reveal about their reality. We all have preconceptions and stereotypical views on realities that are not familiar to us. It is possible to recognise and to think about the similarities and differences and to challenge the stereotypes and preconceptions by discussing the stories through different exercises. The exercises develop literacy and picture reading skills and increase intercultural interaction.

Objective:

- To get acquainted with stories written in other countries.
- To contemplate similarities and differences.
- To discuss prejudices and stereotypes.

PRECONCEPTIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Objective: To acknowledge and question one's own preconceptions.

Duration: 20-30 min (stage 1) + 10 min (stage 2)

Equipment: Board and marker pens or piece of chalk

This is a good exercise to do before the participants get to explore Fotonovela stories created in other countries.

Stage 1

Choose the country to pick the stories from. Ask the youths in pairs to come up with things, words and associations about the country. Give them a few minutes to think. Each pair will then write down their thoughts on the board. Finally, read the thoughts written on the board out loud. The thoughts reflect preconceptions about and associations of the chosen country. Together you can discuss how preconceptions and stereotypes are born and what keeps them alive. Take a picture of the mind map in order to return to it later.

Stage 2

Return to the mind map made in stage 1 after exploring the stories. This can be done straight away or e.g. the following day. Did the stories meet the preconceptions? Which associations were strengthened? Which ones changed?

You can also discuss the questions in the exercise **True or False** (p. 9).

FROM PICTURES TO STORY

- Objective:**
- To challenge yourself as a viewer to interpret a picture.
 - To acknowledge that there are different ways to interpret a picture and to acknowledge the many stories and truths that can be influenced not only by the photographer but the viewer as well.

Duration: 20 min

Equipment: Pictures that have been chosen in advance and have been cut and glued to a sheet of paper

Preparation:

Choose, in advance, a Fotonovela story that has interesting pictures that differ from one another. Print out the pictures in colour for each group. Cut out the pictures and glue them to a blank sheet of paper (one story per sheet). Glue the pictures to the left side of the sheet in a column and leave the right column blank. Divide the stack of paper into two and glue the pictures in the correct order to half of the sheets and in an “incorrect” order to the other half: the last picture in the place of the first, and so on.

Work in pairs or in groups of three. There should be an even number of groups. Hand out a sheet of paper for each group. Ask the groups to come up with a story to suit the images. Once the stories have been finished, each group will take turns in reading their story. You can view the pictures simultaneously on the Fotonovela website (Print preview > Photos only). The stories are very likely to be different. Reveal the real texts at the end, and read the original story.

Discuss together:

- Are there similar elements in the stories by different groups? Which elements?
- What are the moods in the stories?

Alternative:

You can also complete the exercise by providing all the groups with the same picture to start off from. The groups will now come up with a story based on the given picture.

HERE AS WELL

Objective:

- To analyse similarities and differences between the societies.
- To get acquainted with Fotonovela stories.

Duration: 15-25 min depending on the number of participants

Equipment: Internet access

Each participant gets independently acquainted with stories created in other countries and each one will choose a story that they believe

1. could be situated in their own country,
2. could not be situated in their country.

Each participant presents their choice and gives reasons for their decisions to the group. Discuss the chosen stories together. Were there many who chose the same story or did everyone end up choosing a different story? Why?

MY CHOICE

Objective:

- To get acquainted with Fotonovela stories.
- To practice justifying one's own opinions.

Duration: 15-20 min

Equipment: Internet access

The participants get acquainted with Fotonovela stories beforehand at home, and they will choose a story they consider most impressive, interesting or actual. Contemplate together:

- What themes are visible in the stories?
- How are the stories?
- Are young people portrayed in the stories? What kind of roles are they in? Are they victims or heroes? Are they passive or active agents?
- Was it easy to choose one story amongst many? What did you base your decision on?

Alternative 1

A few participants present their chosen story to the group and answer the following questions:

1. What is the theme in the story and which country is it from?
2. What happens in the story?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?

4. What is the message?
5. Why did they choose the story?

Project the story onto the wall while it is being presented.

Alternative 2

The participants present their stories to one another in small groups. Project the questions onto the board for everyone to see.

WHAT DOES THE FRAMING REVEAL?

Objective: To acknowledge that something is always left out of the picture and by taking the picture, the photographer has an impact on the message portrayed in the picture.

Duration: 15 min

Equipment: A4 size pictures and frames

Alternative 1

Work in groups of three or four. Each group will receive a picture and frames of different shapes and sizes (see the appendix at www.fotonovela.fi).

Examine the framing. How is the picture framed? Why? What is left outside? Use the frames to try out how different things can be framed out. How would the story change, if the picture were framed differently? What kind of framing would you use to make the mood in the picture

- a. Happy?
- b. Oppressive?
- c. Sad?
- d. Joyous?

Alternative 2

Glue the printed picture to a blank A3 size sheet. In groups, contemplate what could happen outside the picture. What kind of people, landscape, objects or things have been framed out? Draw more things around the picture. Feel free to use your imagination! How does the picture change?

FIRST IMPRESSION

Objective:

- To develop literacy and picture reading skills.
- To contemplate the creation of first impressions.

Duration: 20 min

Equipment: Pictures printed from the Internet that have been glued to a sheet of paper, pens

Preparation: You should have as many pictures as there are participants. Glue each picture to the top of an A4 size sheet (see the appendix at www.fotonovela.fi).

Alternative 1

Arrange the group in a circle. Each participant will first receive a picture. On the bottom of the sheet each one will write the first thing that comes to mind about the picture. You should not take too long to think; the first thing that comes to mind will do! Each one should fold the paper, so that the writing will be covered, and then hand it over to the next person who will do the same. The sheets will go around the entire circle. At the end, open the folded sheets and place them in the middle of the circle.

As a group, analyse the things that were written about each picture. Did different people see different things in the pictures? At the end, tell the group which country the pictures were taken in and what happens in the picture. Is the information about the country or context surprising?

After the exercise, it is important to highlight the fact that everyone sees the picture in a different way. Previous experiences, knowledge and associations play a part in building the overall perspective. Our own preconceptions influence our observations, and there is nothing wrong with that, it is completely natural. However, we should not get so attached to the preconceptions that we can no longer change them.

Alternative 2

You can also do the exercise by attaching the sheets to a wall with tape and have the participants move from one picture to another, writing their first impressions on the sheets. After writing their thoughts, each participant should fold the bottom part of the paper to hide their writing. At the end, the participants should go around again to unfold the sheets to reveal the writing.

Alternative 3

Rotate the pictures that have been glued to the centre of an A3 size sheet around the circle. When a participant receives the sheet of paper, he or she should write down the first thing that comes to mind somewhere on the sheet round the picture. Then exchange pictures. The changes should be fast; it is all about the first impression!

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Objective: To realise there are many similarities between the lives of the young people regardless of the country.

Duration: 15-20 min

Equipment: Board, Internet access, pieces of paper of different colours (e.g. Post-its)

Divide the board in two, and name the sides “Similarities” and “Differences”. Examine Fotonovela stories from different countries, and in pairs or in groups of three, write down on the pieces of paper the things that are similar (e.g. red Post-its) and things that are different (e.g. blue Post-its) to your country. At the end, each pair or group will bring their pieces of paper to the board.

Read the pieces of paper out loud and discuss them together. Were there more similarities or differences? What kind of things are the same? Where do they differ? Why?

SAME THEME, DIFFERENT COUNTRY

Objective:

- To compare Fotonovela stories of the same theme from different countries.
- To narrow the group’s focus on one topic on global responsibility.

Duration: 45 min

Equipment: Internet access and a computer for each small group, word processing software or note taking tools, Post-its and a board or flip paper

An
exercise
to support
phenomenal
learning

Stage 1

The participants will work in groups of four. They will discuss the Fotonovela themes (Our Community, Young people’s rights, Environment, and Sustainable Development and Relationships) and choose a theme to focus on. It is most important for each participant to be able to work with a topic that interests them.

Stage 2

The groups will familiarise themselves with stories of the chosen theme that were created in other countries. If you wish, you can use the following questions: What topics are hidden behind the theme? Are the themes the same? Which topic does the group find particularly interesting and how is it portrayed in the stories created in other countries? The participants narrow the topics down to the most interesting one within the theme, and then think

about what they would like to know more about the topic. One member of the group writes down the thoughts on separate Post-its. The group will then present their observations and ideas in turns by bringing their notes to the board or to a large sheet of paper. Other groups get a chance to challenge the ideas and develop them.

Stage 3

The groups will familiarise themselves with their chosen topic. The leader will advise the group on how to move forward with the phenomenon. Presenting the finished products and discussing how the objectives were gained finish the phenomenal learning project.

Fotonovela was created by volunteers

The creators of the Fotonovela method are Arts Professionals Antti Halonen and Eeva Kemppi who volunteered for Operation a Day's Work Finland's partner organisation, the cultural centre COMPA in Bolivia in early 2010. They lived in El Alto, which is situated at 4000 metres above sea level in the Andes and is one of the poorest cities in Bolivia.

What inspired the Fotonovela method?

Antti: We came up with the idea when we started thinking about how the youth who speak different languages could interact with one another.

Eeva: The thought of exchanging stories appealed to us from the start. The youngsters are in constant contact with pictures. The young people living in urban Bolivia are starting to get accustomed to the use of the Internet, which makes interaction like this possible, and it can connect youngsters from all over the world.

How was the first Fotonovela workshop in Bolivia?

Antti: We had loads of time for the first workshop, so we were able to perfect the method together with the youngsters. Around twenty youngsters from ages 10-14 were eager to be part of the workshop. First we practiced writing and taking photos, and thought about what it is that makes a story a story. The youngsters got to choose the topic, plan their story and sketch the storyboard. The ideas and sketches developed rapidly. We staged the scenes or took quick photos in the neighbourhood with ease, even though some of the youngsters had not used a camera before. It was the writing part that was laborious for the lively youngsters of El Alto. At the end we had about ten stories. Some of them were made alone and some in pairs.

Eeva: There were a few great ideas that we never got to complete, since the makers did not return to the workshop after the initial session. Perhaps it was too personal for some to tell stories about their own life. However, the participants, and we as well, left the workshop in good spirits.

Why should one use the Fotonovela method?

Eeva: When we left to work as volunteers in Bolivia, it was our intention to spend time with the youth, get to know them and hear stories about their lives. Fotonovela workshops offered a unique opportunity to peek into their lives and for that reason were the best part of the volunteering. You can create a real connection with the other side of the world with Fotonovela. It is completely different from, for example, watching a documentary about Bolivia. Fotonovela opens your eyes to another culture and gives a realistic view of the life and thoughts of the youth in a different culture.

Antti: Fotonovela develops group working skills, literacy and narrative thinking. The method is simple and easy to use. The voice of the youth can clearly be heard through Fotonovela.

Further information

Operation a Day's Work (ODW) Finland is a non-governmental organisation and one of the first Finnish young people's own development NGOs. ODW Finland has implemented development co-operation projects since 1967 with funds raised by Finnish schoolchildren and students. The long-term projects promote the human rights of the children and young people in developing countries, improve their life management skills and help them to get their voices heard. Our goal is to help youth to become active agents in their own community.

ODW Finland encourages Finnish youth towards global solidarity. ODW Finland's volunteer Development Educators visit primary and secondary schools and hold workshops on children's rights and the everyday life of youth in developing countries. In addition, ODW Finland produces high-quality teaching materials and methods for global education. ODW Finland's global education aims to promote equality and human rights, and it encourages people to question and to tear down stereotypes of developing countries.
www.taksvarkki.fi

COMPA is a Bolivian non-governmental organisation that initially functioned as a community theatre for street children and young people. The organisation was registered in 1991, and it has been in collaboration with ODW Finland since 2010. COMPA aims to strengthen the capacity of the children and young people in a vulnerable position by empowering them with art workshops. The cultural centre COMPA offers teaching and practice in different forms of e.g. theatre, fine art, music, circus, writing and dance. Artistic creativity develops the youth's people skills, self-expression and self-esteem. The topics for the workshops and compositions are inspired by the reality and the needs in the surrounding community; therefore it is art that aims for social change.
www.facebook.com/compa.teatrotrono

PAMI is a Guatemalan non-governmental organisation founded in 1989, and it has been in collaboration with ODW Finland since 2007. PAMI promotes the rights of children and young people at a grass-root level through political advocacy. PAMI aims to give young people a voice and to empower them so they can actively promote their own rights in society. Organising events, media work and wall paintings are among the ways for youth to be heard and seen, and serve as a basis for work. In addition, PAMI actively takes part in political debates on issues affecting children and youth at municipal level and promotes child welfare development locally.
www.pami-guatemala.org

APPENDIX: Guardian handout

Fotonovela workshop

Dear parents of the youth activity group _____,

A Fotonovela workshop will be held for the group during the week _____. Fotonovela is a practical workshop that provides the youth with an opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences through stories that cross cultural borders.

In the Fotonovela, a short story is made by combining photographs and texts. The story is then uploaded to www.fotonovela.fi, which is a small but an open website. All the stories consist of the photographs taken and the texts written by the young people. All the stories can be read online. The stories are translated into Spanish and Finnish for the young across the world to read. Fotonovela workshops have been held in schools across Finland, in the cultural centre COMPA in Bolivia and in a youth organisation PAMI in Guatemala.

The youth will plan the photographs and the contents of their story. No one will be photographed against their will. The facilitator is responsible for keeping the youth unrecognisable in the photographs. The full name of the youth will not be published with the photographs. The rights to the photo belong to the person who took the photo.

We ask for your consent to publish the work of your minor child on the website www.fotonovela.fi and to publish a photograph which may include your child.

CONSENT TO PUBLISH AND TO PHOTOGRAPH

Name of the youth _____

I do / do not consent to have the work made by my child in the workshop published.

I do / do not consent to have the photographs, which feature my child published.
____ / ____ 20____

Signature of guardian, name in block capitals and telephone number

The Fotonovela method is developed by Operation a Day's Work (ODW). ODW Finland is a non-governmental organisation whose objective is to improve the living conditions and promote the human rights of children and young people in developing countries. ODW Finland encourages young people towards global solidarity.

“Felt like we really interacted with young people living on the other side of the world.” -teacher

“Fun factor 10/10.” -youth

“I liked the Fotonovela stories because they tell about different cultures and realities.” -youth

Every single one of us has something unique to say, and Fotonovela provides an opportunity to express it.

Fotonovela are stories from the South and the North – the exchange of opinions and the sharing of experiences and stories through photographs and texts.



Fotonovela.fi

