

A Teeny Tiny Story
by KiSS Club

Athens, 2023



*To my dear students,
Lilian, Marilia, Stelios, John & Spyros,
who made this journey possible*

Keep It Short and Sweet

a teeny tiny story

Once upon a time, there was a teeny tiny club in the 1st Experimental Junior High School of Maroussi. It all started in November 2022 when we embarked on a teeny tiny journey. We took notebooks, many teeny tiny stories and a magic wand, meaning a never failing internet connection.



Marilia's notebook



from John's and Stelios' notebooks

First, we tried some bonding with the classic icebreaker '[Two Truths and a Lie](#)' and read [Esperanza's name story](#) from the *House on Mango Street* (1984) by Sandra Cisneros. We introduced ourselves working on our names, made our own [identity charts](#) and composed our own "My name" stories. Read the short excerpts below written by the KiSS Club members. Can you guess his/her name?

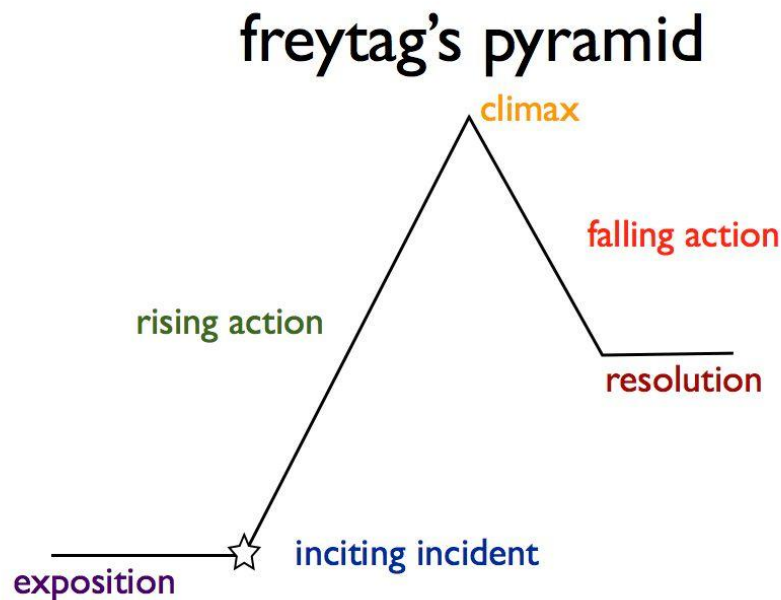
"My name has 7 letters, which are more than enough for one name. I wish I had a nickname but unfortunately, I don't. If I had one, I think that it shouldn't be more than 3 letters, something like Lia. Maybe then people wouldn't forget my name all the time. [...] If I could change my name, I would like to be called Magda or Nikoletta. But I don't think that I'll ever change it because it represents me. If I change my name is like changing myself. Many people change their name and their life. They change everything! I think the most powerful thing in the world is one's name. [...] At the moment I think I really love my name".

"In Greece, my name is a very common name. My parents chose this name because my grandfather was named like this. But I have never met him! [...] I wouldn't change my name despite the bad proverbs about it".

"I got my name from my grandfather. My grandfather is a good person, so I like having something from him. I like my name because it is not common and my father wanted me to have it. My full name is [...] but I don't like it so much! I don't have a nickname and no one has commented on my name so far!"

Then, we went out for a walk reading [“The Pedestrian”](#) (1951) by Raymond Bradbury. *“To enter out into that silence that was the city at eight o’clock of a misty evening in November, to put your feet upon that buckling concrete walk, to step over grassy seams and make your way, hands in pockets, through the silences”*... that was what we most dearly loved to do and began writing our own stories with this introduction!

On our way, there was [“The Feytag’s Pyramid”](#) with its five stages and many other wonders that we practised and examined from different POVs (Points of View).



It was actually after reading "[Popular Mechanics](#)"(1981) by Raymond Carver that we narrated the story of the separating couple from various POVs including that of an innocent frame. Can you imagine that?

The tragic life of an innocent frame by MK

It all began on a sunny morning. A happy couple expecting a baby came into the shop. I was so excited that someone wanted to buy something from us. Something was finally getting "adopted". When they came towards me, I got ecstatic! At last! They picked ME!!! Of course, at the time I didn't know what I was getting myself into...

Back to our story, they got me from the shop and some months later they put their baby's picture into me. I felt so blessed to be part of a loving family; at least for the following 9 months and 24 days. It was 9 months and 24 days later that the couple started fighting. They would yell and scream as loudly as they could. The baby would cry but that made things even worse as they forgot what they had been fighting for and started blaming one another for whose fault it was that the baby was crying. That's how the next 2 months went by.

In their last fight, the worst one, the couple started throwing and breaking things, which they hadn't done before. So here we are in the present...The couple is coming towards me once more... "Please, please don't hurt me!!!" I feel a sharp pain and everything goes blank!!!

One of the hardest parts of our journey was the technique ['Show, don't tell!'](#); a concept credited to the Russian playwright Anton Chekhov, who once said, *"Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass."* It proved a hard skill to master after all. Below there is an example of turning "telling" to "showing" by Stelios and John.

"Jonathan had ginger hair. He was very tall. He was feeling happy because it was the end of the term".

a.

Jonathan started jumping. His ginger hair went up and down. His classmates thought that he will be even taller after summer.

b.

-Hi, Marcus. Have you seen the new kid?

-No, Bill. But I have heard about him.

-Oh! What about?

-I heard he has ginger hair! How strange!

-Ok...but do you know why he came to school at the end of the first term?

-No...Oh! Look over there! I think it's him. Look how tall he is.

-Yes, he seems a happy lad too.

-Let's go and talk to him.

-Hey, what's your name?

-Oh..hi! I'm Jonathan. And you?

Hopefully, Christmas was approaching and it was time for gifts. We sent Christmas cards to our Polish partners from the eTwinning programme 'Book Club' that we had joined. Also, despite being a bit sad, the short story ["The Gift of the Magi"](#)(1906) by O. Henry inspired us to tell the story in different *settings* reminding us that love is always the greatest gift of all, the greatest luck when being sooo unlucky!!!

Read the following story as a fine example.

We are sooo unlucky by SD

It is Christmas Eve and the entire town is full of lights and Christmas decorations. But the couple of our story isn't happy. Peter hasn't got money to buy a nice present for his wife. "What can I do? I must buy something nice for Anna!" After thinking for a few minutes, he exclaims: "I will sell my phone to get money!" After an hour, someone sends him a message on the phone. "How much does the phone cost?" Peter types: "50 euros". "Ok, I'll buy it", comes a quick reply. Peter is heading to a shop wondering what he can buy for Anna. "A coin case for her coins!" he thought. "She has a lot of coins from all over the world". He bought one for 40 euros from the shop and returned home waiting for Anna.

- Hello! said Anna once into the flat.

- Hello, babe! said Peter.

- It is time to exchange our presents, don't you think? asked Anna with a wide smile on her face taking off her coat.

- Ok, me first, said Pete giving her his present.

Anna is opening the gift hastily.

- Do you like it? Why don't you talk to me? asked Peter.

- I like it but...

- But?

- But I don't have my coins any more. I sold them to buy you a gift.

- Oh no!

- Open your present! It doesn't matter! said Anna softly.

Peter is opening his gift impatiently.

- Oh no! I can't believe it!

- What?

- I sold my phone and you bought me a phone case!!!

- We are sooo unlucky!, they both sighed and kissed each other.

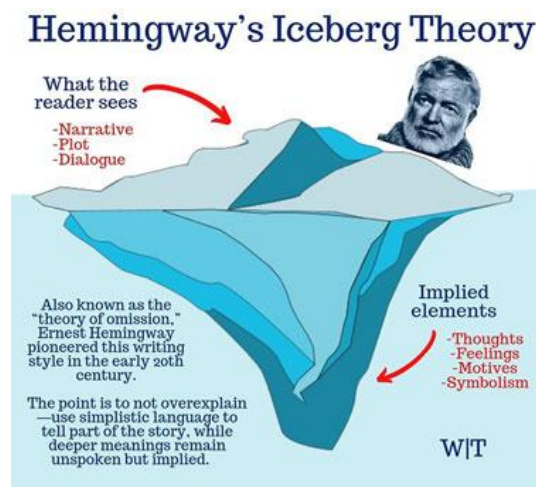


We started the New Year, 2023, by receiving handmade Christmas cards from our Polish partners in eTwinning, making bookmarks on Canva and reading the funny short story of naughty [“Charles”](#) (1948) by Shirley Jackson to have an optimistic beginning

by looking into *foreshadowing* and *twist endings*. Also, Lilian produced a book review video on one of her favourite book series, *The Hunger Games* (2008) by Suzanne Collins, to share with our fellow eTwinners; while unfortunately, Spyros decided to drop out and experience the real world instead of fiction.



As it got colder and colder in February, it was time for some '[Iceberg Theory](#)' by Ernest Hemingway, which is perfectly exemplified in his short story "[Cat in the Rain](#)" (1925), a story that helped us look into *symbolism*, as well.



And as the ending of the short story was both abrupt and ambiguous, we tried writing our own endings; happy, sad and funny ones. You can read two of them below.

Cat in the Rain, alternative ending 1 by JAG

-Excuse me! Did the maid bring the cat here? asked the husband.

-Yes! And I'm gonna keep this "little" cat, said the American wife.

-No way!!! You aren't gonna keep it. Get it out of here, he yelled.

-Okay, but I'm also leaving along with the cat, said the woman and walked out of the room shutting the door forcefully.

George didn't take it seriously and kept reading. As time went by, George realized that his wife was missing and found a letter in the door "I'm leaving you. I want to break up with you." The following day, George left Italy.

After some years, he returned while on a business trip and decided to stay at the same hotel. When he got in, he saw his wife in a wedding dress and the man next to her was the hotel keeper...

Cat in the Rain, alternative ending 2 by MK

"Oh my God!" Linda screamed. "A cat! Finally, I have a cat!" Linda grabbed the cat out of the maid's hands, thanked her quickly and ran downstairs to thank the hotel-keeper. When she went downstairs with the cat

in her arms and told him "Thank you so much for bring me the cat! Thank you!", the hovel-keeper looked confused and told her "I didn't bring a cat. I don't know what you are talking about."

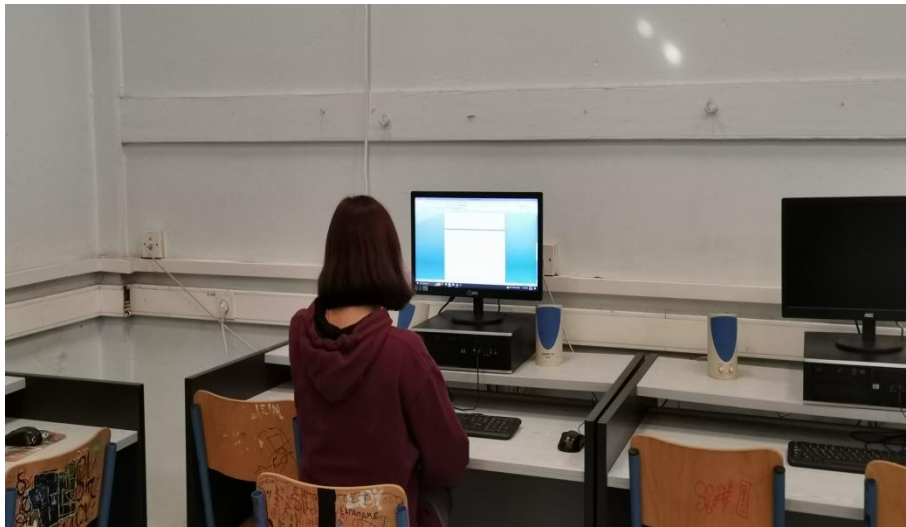
She was so confused and didn't have any idea who could have done it. She went back to her room. George was still reading but she couldn't care less about it at that moment. Linda sat down near George and was thinking about it for the rest of the night but when she finally fell asleep, she still didn't have a single idea.

At midnight she heard something break and someone whisper. She was terrified and was sure that thieves had broken into their room. She heard some footsteps coming towards her. She closed her eyes tightly and waited.

Suddenly the lights went on and everyone screamed "Happy Birthday!". Linda opened her eyed. There were no thieves. It was her husband and all her friends which surprised her for her birthday. She had totally forgotten about it. Then the cat jumped on her lap. Finally, she understood who had found the cat for her. It was George! He gave her the cat, a wig with long hair that she could wear and brought her the silvers she wanted. He was listening to her all the time!!!

Then, there was heavy snowfall and our school closed down for a couple of days; so, we prepared and played our online ['Creative Writing Quiz'](#) on QUIZIZZ.

Ernest Hemingway was also the spark for us to devote some time to *flash fiction* and practise writing our own *six-word stories*. Although the claim that Hemingway wrote the first six-word story ever recorded, "*For sale: baby shoes, never worn*", is believed to be an urban myth, we like myths, so we didn't mind and continued our journey. We also participated in the ['Cartoon Caption Contest'](#) by the online magazine *The New Yorker* and made our own digital cartoons on Canva inspired by the science fiction short story "[They are made out of meat](#)" (1991) by Terry Bisson, a fine example of dialogue, too.



Lilian is writing for the Cartoon Caption Contest

some six-word stories by KiSS Club

Baby Monster is the new group.

Baby sneezed. Never saw them again.

What am I supposed to do?

Who are you? It's a secret!

It's scary...Let's do it!

She was trapped, so she escaped.

"I prefer New York". Like everyone.

Painfully he changed 'mine' to 'yours'.

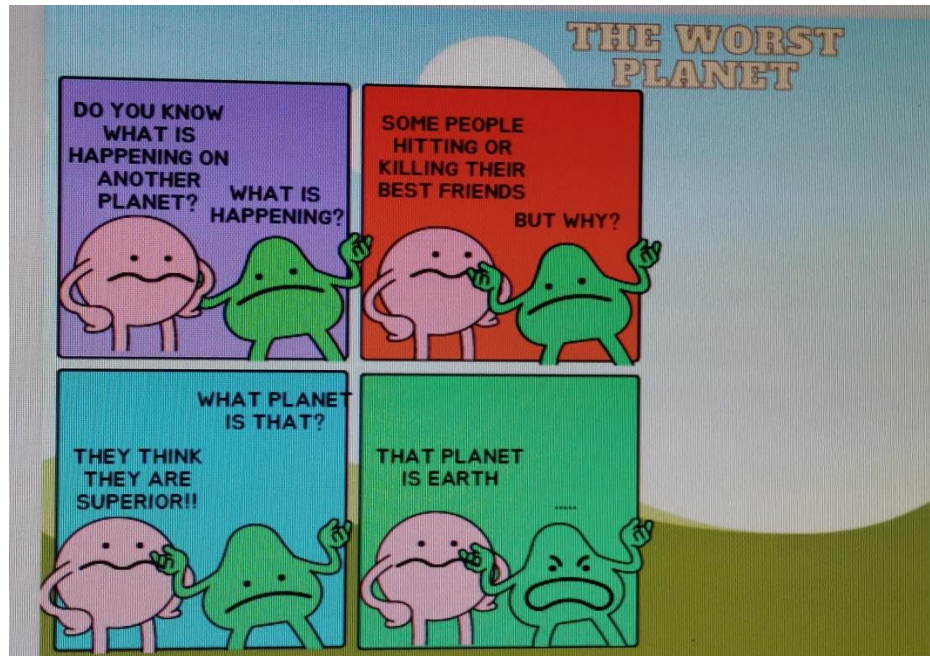
Couldn't stop laughing. They heard him.

"I'm leaving!" "Really? I asked.

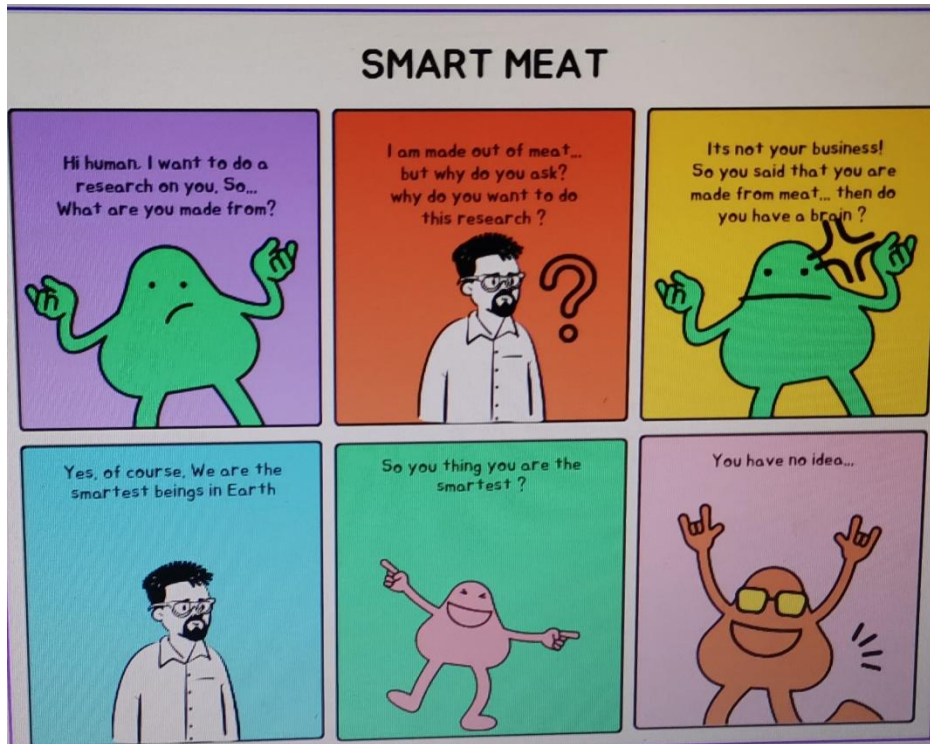
I am on train with enemies.

"You have been playing dirty, Adolf."

Talk about your mum. Past tenses.



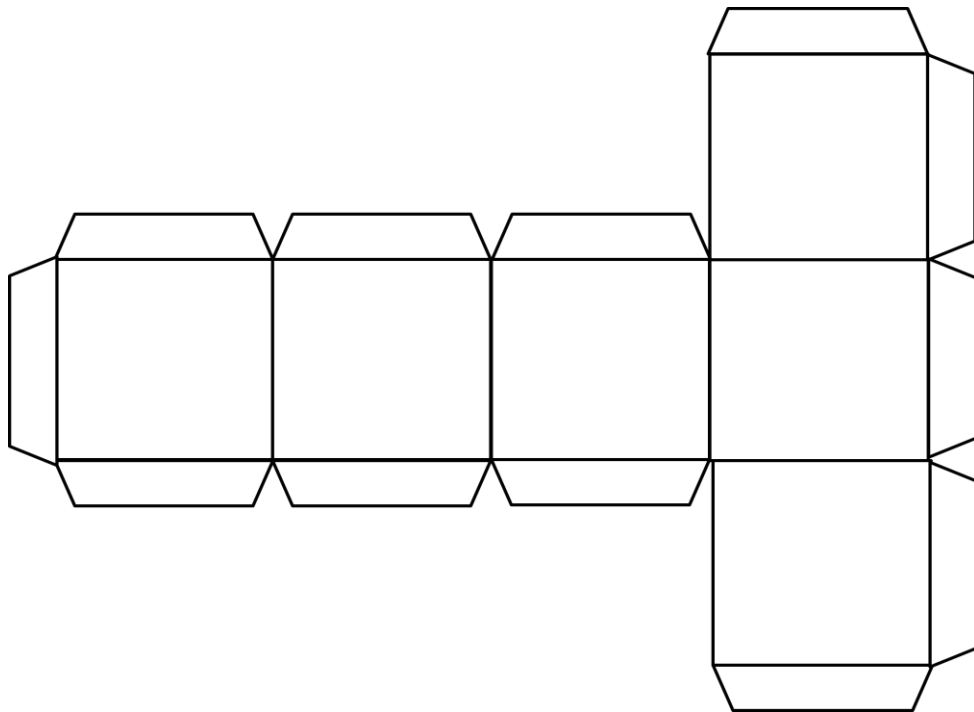
Comic strip by Stelios



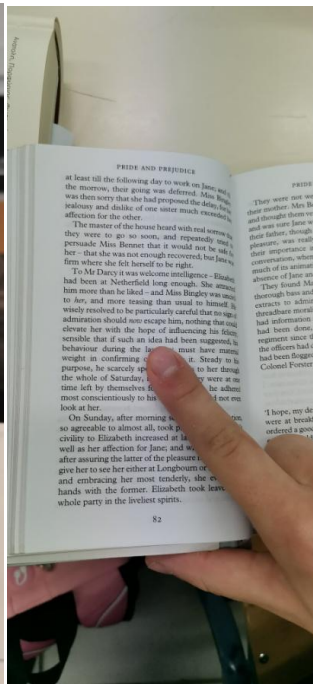
Comic strip by John

Along the way, some scary stories unfolded from English folk tales to "[The Tell-Tale Heart](#)" (1843) by Edgar Allan Poe and we recorded them for the podcast series of our school. We laughed a lot while recording, so it took us a while to finish the recording. You can laugh too by listening to it, too. It is episode no12! (<https://blogs.sch.gr/1gymamar/podcasts/>).

In the meantime, we faced '[The Writer's Block](#)'. Along with our guest star, Anastasis, we played different games looking for inspiration making our own story dices and trying collaborative writing.



a story cube/dice: are you ready to cut, draw and play?



Below you can read some of the crazy stories we made up. The first one was made with words we came across while opening books at random and pointing to words with our eyes closed and the other two were written using our story dices.

Flight to Fall by JAG

“Don’t look down! I told you not to look down!”, he said to his friend and they both fell into a trampoline on Pineapple Street. They started exploring the town and realized that they were on an island.

They found an abandoned house and then got separated to find some food. Person A found an encyclopedia in the attic of the house and started murmuring the texts. Person B saw a huge spider, shouted and ran away to find his friend. He was running so fast that the moment he entered the house, he fell unconscious on the floor that was full of spiders and cockroaches. When Person A heard the loud noises, he went downstairs and found his friend unconscious. He gave him an injection, which he had found in the attic! Person B recovered soon.

They called for help from a fixed line in the house that worked and left the island with a helicopter!!!

Date Prep by LP

Once upon a time, there was a baker whose speciality was baking pies. He made pies every day for his bakery and had many loyal customers who loved his pastry and would buy them every day.

One day a gorgeous woman came into the man's bakery. "Good morning", she exclaimed, "A cherry pie, please". The man was stunned as the woman looked like an angel! "Oh, yes. One cherry pie coming right up", he stuttered. Once he served her, he decided to be bold and ask her out. "I may never see her again", he thought. "Uh, excuse me. Do you know that our village is holding a sailing boat race in the lake?", he smiled nervously. "Yes, I really wanna go. It sounds fun!", she said. "Well, we could go together if you'd like...I'm Nigel, by the way", he chuckled. "I'd love that Nigel". The woman started writing on a napkin that she quickly handed to Nigel. On the napkin, Nigel could read "Maria, 6972417628". Nigel smiled and kept on doing his work. After work, he went home and switched on his computer as he had no phone. He typed Mary's phone and texted her "Sailing boat contest, tomorrow at 10:00 am?" "For sure!", the woman replied in seconds and a text with her address followed.

The next morning, Nigel woke up bright and early, shaved, got dressed and headed to the bakery to get a small pie for his date. He got her a mini cherry pie.

"Good luck on your date", said Nigel's employer. Nigel played with his chain nervously. "Thanks, Mark. I really want to impress her". "Don't

worry, Nigel. You've got this!", Mark encouraged him. Nigel left and took a deep breath.

Once he got to Mary's house, he rang her doorbell. "You look like a star!", he said the moment she opened the door.

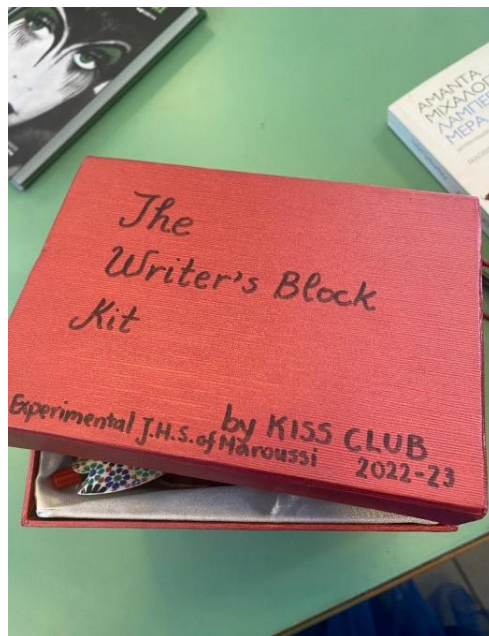
Angel Pies by TB

I was in the kitchen preparing a pie. I was thinking of my love for them. I loved pies: cheese pies, spinach pies, onion pies, apple pies, tequila pies, baby pies...

Oops!, An angel on the kitchen table. These angels keep appearing everywhere lately. How annoying! This one must be really hungry, I guess. Well, it should wait for my pie to be ready. I looked out of the window and saw my pink boat dancing on the waves. Meanwhile, from my computer screen more angels were popping out. "I must switch it off immediately! My pie can't feed all these angels! Well, I might have some fish on the boat. I shall go and get them. Hungry angels can be really frightening. Or, how about some sweets that some other angels dropped on my front door the other day?" I used my chain to move towards the door. It helped me not to fly all the time and bump into the roaming angels. It also helped when I went on holidays in space.

How relaxing were the holidays in space! No angels appearing out of the blue. Aliens were very hospitable, too; making wonderful angel pies!!!

When organizing the Day of European Authors, John proposed offering a dream catcher to the author we had invited; but none of us knew how to make one, so we prepared some questions to ask her and *The Writer's Block Kit* box. We offered the box to the well-known Greek author, Mrs Amanda Michalopoulou who came to our school for a reading session on the Day of European Authors, an initiative of the European Commission, led by Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, to reconnect younger generations with book reading and to help them discover the diversity of European literature celebrated on 27 March 2023 for the first time; a chance not to be missed by our teeny tiny KiSS Club!





Creative Europe

**PUSH
BOUNDARIES**



Amanda Michalopoulou
1ο Πειραματικό Γυμνάσιο Αμαρουσίου
Athens, GREECE



"Η ανάγνωση είναι μια επαναστατική πράξη"
Αμάντα Μιχαλοπούλου
READING IS A REVOLUTIONARY ACT

Day of European Authors
27.03.2023

Also, we visited the Museum of Modern Art in New York, in short MoMA. We observed and listened to information about different paintings, which served as a springboard for writing our own stories. Here you can see two of the paintings selected by Stelios and Marilia and read their stories! By the way, MoMA's online gallery is amazing! You should check it out! (<https://www.moma.org/>).



Marc Chagall, *I and the Village*, 1911

-Hello, my friend, said the human.

-Hello, replied the cow in a low tone.

-What's wrong?, asked the human.

-I'm very sad!!!, sighed the cow in tears.

-Tell me and I'll help you, said the human in earnest concern.

-The humans ate my baby!!!

-That's awful, that's dreadful!!! I don't know what to say!!!

*-All of you, humans, are so alike. You think we, cows, are inferior. But
we...*

-I'm so sorry...All humans are not the same, though!

-YOU ARE!!! Tell me...haven't YOU ever tried cow's meat?



Florine Stettheimer, *Family Portrait, II*, 1933

“Where am I?, I yelled. I'm in the sky above the clouds. Flowers are dancing! I'm serious. They are dancing!!! And OMG!!! Is that Queen Victoria and her daughter Elizabeth? They are watching the flowers, while they are being served wine!!! How did I end up here? What's going on?

Actually, everything started as usual. I was heading to work wearing my favourite black suit and red heels. But I was late, so I started running because I had an important meeting at 8:00 and it was 7:55. I crossed the road without looking and I heard a loud BAM! Everything went blank.

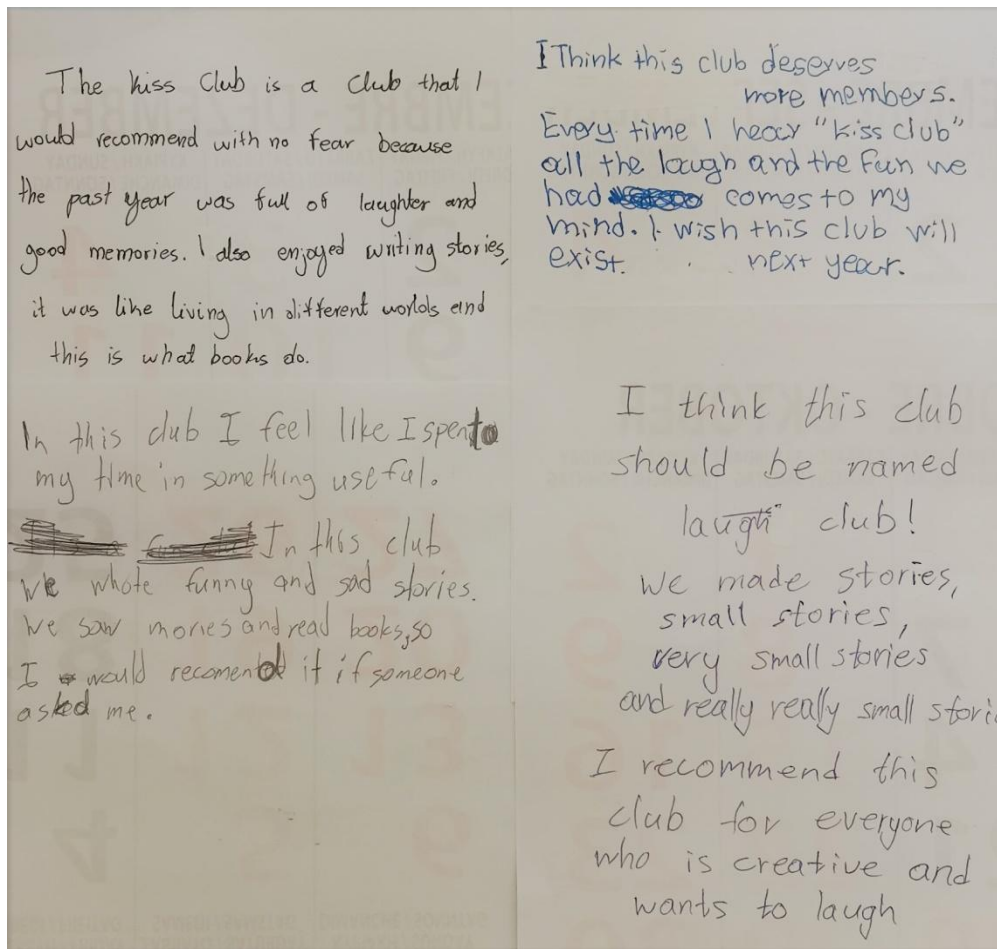
Then...

In the end, we got a bit tired. It was time to return to school for good. On Thursday 11 May 2023, we were given the chance to participate in a unique workshop entitled *“Archives, Libraries and Climate Change”* organized by The Cavafy Archive and the Onassis Library in partnership with the General State Archives of Greece – Department of Conservation and Preservation of Archival Material. In this educational programme, we were provided with information to raise awareness on one of the most unexpected long-term repercussions of the climate crisis, the loss of cultural heritage due to more frequent and devastating natural disasters. But it wasn’t just theory – it also got practical, as we learnt techniques for the preservation and conservation of archival documents and books, and used them to save a library in a simulation exercise.





In our last meeting, we discussed our journey, did some self-reflection on our strengths and weaknesses providing feedback, and promised to write a letter to our future selves on <https://www.futureme.org/>.



Positive feedback, best gift for the teacher!!!

Finally, what a better way to end our journey than a party with friends from the Athletics Club!!! They held their sessions every Thursday, too!!



Last story for you to read, ["The Child's Story"](#)(1852) by Charles Dickens, a parable about life's journey! Our teeny tiny journey has come to an end heralding hopefully the birth of a new bigger one...

You can also find our teeny tiny story on

<https://read.bookcreator.com/fXBHiVxbT1NzHkVHz7ZScsjQrh23/qvo8BR17RKKp-9e6yUfx8g>

Dive into summer
and
don't forget

"Thou hast it!!!"

