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Promoting Literacy and Intercultural Competence in the EFL classroom through the Implementation of the Graphic Novel

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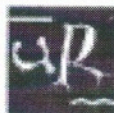
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A Eva,

gracias por todo.

"El verdadero conocimiento tiene que salir del interior de cada uno. No puede ser impuesto por otros. Solo el conocimiento que llega desde dentro es el verdadero."

Gaarder, J. (1994) *El mundo de Sofía*

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been an increase in the use of comics in the EFL classroom, where comic is defined as a narrative means of communication that combines verbal and visual language to convey meaning. The aim of this dissertation is to promote reading literacy and the development of the Intercultural competence by means of the implementation of the graphic novel *March* in the EFL classroom. Therefore, a review of the literature concerning reading and visual literacy and the use of the graphic novel as an educational tool is outlined. This project has been designed for a group of Spanish students in their fourth year of Secondary Education. Procedures reflect a task-based approach by means of a portfolio along with a workshop consisting on the creation of a comic. Results are expected to be positive as graphic novels foster students' motivation and interest in reading.

Keywords: Graphic novel, Intercultural Competence, Literacy Promotion, Reading literacy, Task-based Learning, Visual literacy.

Resumen

Recientemente, ha habido un aumento en el uso del cómic en la clase de lengua extranjera, definido como el medio de comunicación narrativa que combina imágenes y palabras para transmitir significados. El objetivo de este trabajo es fomentar la lectura y el desarrollo de la competencia intercultural por medio de la introducción de la novela gráfica *March* en la clase de lengua extranjera. Por lo tanto, se ofrece una revisión de la literatura concerniente a la alfabetización lectora y el uso del cómic como herramienta educativa. Este proyecto ha sido diseñado para estudiantes en su cuarto año de Educación Secundaria. Los procedimientos reflejan una metodología basada en proyectos por medio de un portafolio y un taller consistente en la creación de un cómic. Los resultados esperados son positivos ya que la novela gráfica fomenta la motivación y el interés en la lectura.

Palabras clave: Alfabetización lectora, Alfabetización visual, Aprendizaje basado en proyectos, Competencia Intercultural, Fomento a la lectura, Novela gráfica.

1. INTRODUCTION

The main goal of this dissertation is to promote reading literacy through the implementation of the graphic novel as an alternative to the use of literature in the foreign language teaching, particularly, in the English as a Foreign Language classroom (EFL henceforth), encouraging in this way the integration of English literature in the English subject.

Apart from promoting reading literacy as well as developing reading skills and strategies in the students, they are also encouraged to develop students' Intercultural Competence, made up of the Linguistic Communicative, the Social and Civic and the Cultural Awareness and Expression Competences, by means of the study of the Civil Rights Movement that forms part of the recent history of the US, and also part of the Anglo-Saxon culture, an integral part of the learning of English. In this way, students become aware not only on how language creates power relations by means of discourse strategies, but also how it reflects culture and society.

To achieve this goal, it is crucial to understand how this innovative project can boost language learning by implementing literature - and especially comics - in an EFL classroom. Hence, some key terms need to be defined. To begin with, *Literacy,* as the paramount term, is seen as "a set of cultural competences for making socially recognizable meanings by the use of particular material technologies" (Lemke 1998: 283). In this dissertation, reading and visual literacy are combined by means of graphic novels. *Reading literacy* is understood as the ability to read critically and understand the main ideas of a piece of writing work. Indeed, reading literacy does not refer only to the ability to read (nowadays, practically everyone is able to read) but to read in a deeply way. In Mialaret's words (1979: 11-13), "be able to read is to understand the content of a text, be capable of judging and appreciating it as a work of art"[1]. Thus, it is not sufficient to read the words, but it is essential to understand them in order to interact cognitively with the text.

Along with reading literacy, the other relevant term is *visual literacy,* first defined by Debes (1969: 27) as "a group of vision-competences a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other

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[1] The author's translation from Spanish.

sensory experiences." Branden and Hortin (1982: 41) define this term as "the ability to understand and use images, including the ability to think, learn and express oneself in terms of images". In short, when dealing with visual literacy, students must learn how to read certain symbols (e.g. icons), and how to decode their meaning.

Central to this dissertation is the concept of *comic*. This term can be defined as a narrative means for communication, where there is a mix of visual and verbal language to convey meaning, and where the verbal language is subordinated to the visual language. Texts and images are combined to form a higher communication unit, and not a mere sum of both (Guzmán 2011: 122). Eisner (1990: 5), one of the exponents in this field, defines comic as "sequential art", like a temporal and spatial sequencing of scenes represented by individual panels. As graphic novels are a subtype of comic, they are also defined as visual artefacts that convey *multimodality*, another important term to understand the advantage of using comics in the EFL classroom. According to Serafini (2014: 12), "modes constitute a system of visual and verbal entities created within or across various cultures to represent and express meanings". Multimodal texts, therefore, are those which integrate words, images and other modes to convey meaning. In this way, Serafini (2014: 13) identifies three main components in any multimodal ensemble, that are: (1) textual elements as written language; (2) visual images, that are drawings, pictures, photos, charts,...; and (3) design or graphic elements such as the typography. The term multimodality will be analysed in coming sections.

Another aspect is what skills are going to be taken into account in this proposal. Indeed, there are two main skills: reading and writing. While reading tasks develop receptive skills, writing activities focus on productive ones. This dissertation follows the order receptive-productive skill, as students must learn and acquire a series of academic aspects to produce a high-quality written artefact. Regarding the sequencing of different interrelated skills, Rivers (1981) remarks that the teacher must bear in mind the pedagogical implication in skill order. Indeed, the combination of two or more different skills provides successful results for language learners (Almarza 2000: 28).

With this in mind, section 2 overviews the literature concerning the development of the reading and writing skills, as well as the use of literature in the EFL classroom to boost literacy and language learning, and particularly the use of graphic novels to encourage students' motivation and interest. Section 3 deals with the methodology used in the creation of a three-section innovative project. Its first part focuses on the description of the participants, 4th CSE students, and the physical, psychological and cognitive aspects to take into account when designing the syllabus. Its second part moves to the instruments used with a list of materials and resources used; and a description of the nature of the tasks and how they relate to the curriculum requirements. The last subsection states the type of assessment that will be followed in the present project. Section 4 foresees the results regarding the implementation of this project, which are expected to be positive in a way that it encourages literacy and students' motivation and interest. Finally, section 5 considers assets and drawbacks in the application of the aforementioned innovative project. Two appendixes are included at the end: appendix A relates the three questionnaires addressed to the students while appendix B displays the ten tasks that form the portfolio.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides the main insights regarding reading and writing skills, how they are developed by means on the introduction of graphic novels in the EFL classroom and how they contribute to the learning process.

First, the receptive skill is explained regarding reading comprehension and strategies, as well as how it is connected to the wide series of advantages the introduction of literature has in the classroom. Second, the productive skill is covered and focused on the creation of comic scripts.

2.1. Development of Reading Skills

Reading skills can be divided into reading comprehension and reading strategies, the former refers to the general understanding of what is read, while the latter to those tools the reader counts on to reach the meaning of the text. Reading strategies are viewed as something more than just reading a text. Indeed, these strategies must be learnt overtly in order to help the student cope with a text. These two aspects of reading will be explored separately in the following sections.

2.1.1. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is defined as "the result of complex interactions between text, setting, reader, reader background, reading strategies, the L1 and the L2 and the reader decision-making" (Yukselir 2014: 66). In other words, reading comprehension deals with understanding a text by reading it critically, allowing the reader to interact with what he/she is reading in multifacetous ways. Comprehension means understanding, and this involves dealing with problems related to language use, such as the vocabulary used or the discourse strategies used by the writer (e.g. metaphor, irony,...); and problems related to the content, in a way that the text may relate new knowledge that can cause difficulties in its linkage to the previous one probably due to the complexity of the text. In order to understand a text, the reader applies a series of strategies that has learnt throughout her/his reading experiences. The following section covers these strategies and how they can be developed.

2.1.2. Reading Strategies

Reading strategies can be defined as "self-directed actions where readers flexibly take control with a certain degree of awareness to retrieve, store, regulate, elaborate, and evaluate textual information to achieve reading goals" (Erler & Finkbeiner, 2007; Paris et al., 1994, in Wang 2016). In the same vein, Duffy (1993: 232) claims that reading strategies are "plans for solving problems encountered in constructing meaning". These strategies involve simple actions such as looking up a word in the dictionary and more complex tasks such as to connect information from the text to previous readings.

This dissertation distinguishes reading strategies from reading comprehension in that a strategy is seen as "any organised, purposeful and regulated line of action chosen by an individual to carry out a task which he or she sets for himself or herself or with which he or she is confronted." (CEFR, 10). Thus, the key term is to take action, that is, the reader gets consciously and actively involved in the process of reading and dealing with a text. These strategies operate cognitively as they involve mental processes (Williams and Burden 1997, p. 149). These cognitive strategies are divided in "bottom-up", that are those that help dealing with phonetics, words and syntax; and in "up-bottom" strategies, those related to discursive aspects such as textual organization or background knowledge necessary to pick up the meaning of the text (Erler & Finkbeiner 2007; Paris et al. 1994).

Therefore, it is necessary for students to learn reading strategies in an active and conscious way in order to be able to deal with a wide variety of texts, and not just simply reading the text without any metacognitive activity involved. Some reading strategies may involve summarizing, predicting, clarifying or asking questions about what it is read. The use of these and other reading strategies depend on the mastery of the foreign language of the student, as one of the main objectives that students must achieve, according to the curriculum, is to understand the basic information of a text. So, the teacher should work with different reading strategies in class that students can put into practice.

Janzen (2002: 289) mentions some reading activities to develop these reading strategies to do in class, such as group reading, word-recognition exercises, individualized reading and work with vocabulary. Janzen (2002: 289) states that it is better to "focus on one text for the course of a semester so that

some of the benefits of content instructions could be present". Indeed, in this dissertation, students interact only with one single text - the graphic novel *March* - and all the other resources - texts about technical terms related to comics, political speeches, documentaries and films - revolve around this main source. In this way, as Janzen (2002: 289) points out, students make use of the same vocabulary and the same topic, as a common thread to allow the learning process. Indeed, learners must recall on previous knowledge to go on with the different tasks.

Janzen (2002) bases his approach to reading strategies on a content-based approach, in which students must follow a series of actions to develop their reading skills, such as reading within a communicative purpose, learning in a direct way the different strategies to deal with reading comprehension and using different strategies depending on the circumstances, that are, on the text type, whether they have to work individually or in groups and depending on the main goal associated with each task. At the end, these strategies are improved and developed over time.

This author also proposes five steps to follow in an effective instruction in strategic reading. These steps are the following:

1. General strategy discussion: Students must be aware of the importance of learning reading strategies to be able to get the main points of any text, be able to comment on in a critical way and to connect it with previous knowledge, that is, "strategies help readers to process the text actively, to monitor their comprehension, and to connect what they are reading to their own knowledge and to other parts of the text" (Janzen 2002: 289). These same strategies are "transferable" to other reading texts, both in the L1 and L2.

2. Teacher Modeling: As students need an example to follow, it is the teacher who starts reading and applying these reading strategies in class. It is important at the beginning to spend some time in class reading aloud and asking questions and making predictions about what it is read. In fact, students will have different types of reading, and they need to know the main differences among them, as well as the differences in language use (it is not the same reading a small excerpt from the graphic novel in which few words must convey many different meanings along with the drawings than to read an authentic speech with a specific purpose in which the students must take into account

other factors external to the text, such as the author of the text, the addressee, the purpose, the cause or the historical circumstances.)

3. Student Reading: After the teacher's reading guide in class, students must answer the questions and interact in class in order to complete the commentary on the text. Reading out loud the text in class for the first time makes students conscious of what they have to do once they are at home and go on with more practical tasks that require more background knowledge and autonomy on the part of the student.

4. Analysis of Strategy use: This part is overtly explained in Janzen's proposal of reading strategies instruction. In this proposal, the aim is that students will be able to deal with any kind of text (comic, speech or legal document), to understand the main ideas and to comment critically on them.

5. Strategy explanation and discussion: In this section, the teacher explains the different strategies they can use when reading. In this way, Janzen lists some strategies that are useful in a pre- and post- reading task, such as connecting or clarifying ideas, paraphrasing or evaluating content; evaluating by making assumptions about the author's purpose, by making their own opinion and by developing knowledge; asking questions to evaluate and to check the answers by paying attention to what they are reading; and translating some words or expressions to make sure the students have understand the main ideas.

At the end of the article, Janzen (2002: 292) lists some strategies used when reading, such as skimming (look at pictures and heading), predicting and checking these predictions, asking questions, underlying, using the dictionary, guessing, taking notes, translating, rereading some passages and finally thinking about the text after reading it.

Once more, the main goal when applying these reading strategies is to focus on the use of language with a communicate purpose, to predict who the author is, his/her interests, academic level, purpose and feelings about what he/she is talking about.

As pointed above, this dissertation connects reading skills with writing skills. Thus, the next point relates the production skill and how students develop it in the EFL classroom.

2.2. Development of the Writing Skill

As reading is the main receptive skill students are going to work with (along with some listening samples as a content-based support for the main reading), writing is the productive skill, the demonstration of what they have learnt throughout their reading process and how they put in practice this knowledge to create an original piece. Writing can be defined as:

> A form of communication that allows students to put their feelings and ideas on paper, to organize their knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments, and to convey meaning through well-constructed text. (...) Writing evolves from the first simple sentences to elaborate stories and essays. Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and organization come together and grow together to help the student demonstrate more advanced writing skills each year (Aupperlee et al., n.d.).

One of the purposes of learning writing strategies in the EFL classroom is the fact that learners "must be able to write in different ways for different purposes" (Reppen 2002: 321). In this way, Christie (1992) and Martin & Hasan (1989), among others, refer to the "importance of language form and structure as an integral part of meaningful language use" (Reppen 2002: 321). Poynton (1986) also emphasizes "the importance of helping students to realize the different purposes of writing. This metalinguistic awareness empowers students and gives them tools to manipulate information and accomplish different purposes through writing" (in Reppen 2002: 321). Thus, students have to be consciously aware of the differences on the use of language depending on the context these words appear (answer to reading comprehension questions, write a biography, write a short story or create a comic) and consequently, the different communicative purposes. These writing strategies must be learnt consciously and put into practice. Students need the appropriate tools to deal with different genres successfully. Reppen (2002) highlights the importance of learning the nuances of genre that calls for specific writing strategies. The best way to deal with these differences is to practice with models, that is, working with pre-tasks before accomplishing the final project. In Reppen's words, "students [have to become] aware that different tasks demand different texts." (2002: 326). This awareness is reached by means of explicit practice and guided support on the part of the teacher.

Raimes (2002) addresses the importance of promoting self-confidence concerning the students' writing process, apart from dealing with discursive aspects such as accuracy or fluency. Indeed, language is also a vehicle to transmit feelings and emotions, and this is more evident in comics and graphic novels, in which not only language serves to express what the characters are saying, but also to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions in a short space. Students must be sure about how to express a wide variety of language functions in a minimum physical space, not to mention the fact that these words must be in accordance with the images they belong to, as both image and language must work as a whole.

Raimes (2002) points out the relation between language and culture, in a way that the use of language reflects an ideology, that in turn is a product of a culture. So language is used as an instrument of power, and these power relations and ideological values are reflected as well in the discourse structure and in the writing styles, and not only in the choice of certain vocabulary. These aspects are also reflected in the language used in graphic novels.

In sum, the learning of the writing skill asks for a clear definition of the writing process, in which the different aspects are taken into account, such as "content, organization, originality, style, fluency, accuracy and the use of appropriate rhetorical forms of discourses" (Raimes 2002: 309). In doing so, the writing process must follow some stages that are Planning, Drafting, Revising and Editing (Seow 2002: 315). These steps are taken into account in this dissertation, as part of the workteam duty in accomplishing their project. In the first stage, planning (or pre-writing), students should have a well-developed idea in their minds before start writing (a bio, a short story or a comic strip). Seow (2002: 316) proposes some tasks for this stage, such as clustering, in which students have to match words and images (this activity is useful when dealing with the technical words related to comic creation) or *wh-* questions, that is, guided questions that help the students to deal with the main aspects of a text. The questions *who*, *what*, *how*, *why* and *where* help the student to contextualize her/his creative work and to think her/his next step. Once the planning stage is finished, students should write a draft which works like a rehearsal, encouraging students to try and play with words, styles, different content, and different discourse forms as they can change whenever they want.

In this stage, "students should also have in mind a central idea of what they want to communicate to the audience in order to give direction to their writing" (Seow 2002: 317). Before presenting the final draft, students have to self-assess their own work until now, in order to make improvements and to rethink those aspects that are unpolished. The teacher's role as guide and supporter is essential during this stage as he/she gives feedback to their students. In the last stage, "students are engaged in typing up their texts as they prepare the final draft for evaluation by the teacher. They edit their own or their peer's work for grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction, sentence structure and accuracy of supportive textual material such as quotations, examples and the like" (Seow 2002: 318). The result of this stage will appear in their comic as the script to follow. In this way, students make sure they are working with accurate language and they have only to care for the visual aspects.

Seow (2002: 320) also mentions the catering to diverse students' needs when working with writing tasks. One positive aspect of using comics is that it encourages those students who are reluctant to write or do not feel comfortable writing in a foreign language to participate actively in the accomplishment of the tasks and the creation of a comic strip by doing other things such as drawing, organising the ideas, typing the text or colouring the pictures.

Both reading and writing skills are carried out in this proposal through the reading of a graphic novel. As graphic novels are considered a literary genre, its implementation in a language classroom produces a series of advantages that are disposed in the next section.

2.3. The interaction between Literature and Language Learning

There are many studies that cover the interaction of literature and language learning in both the L1 and L2 classroom, mostly in the L1 classroom, as literature forms part of the L1 curriculum. In the L2 classroom, however, it depends much more on the teacher's decision to introduce or not literature as an important part in her/his classes, along with grammar and communication-based skills. Once literature is introduced in the classroom, it depends on the focus, whether it is on the literary content or on the language learning skills. In the EFL classroom, the focus is commonly on language learning. Indeed, written texts and reading tasks are usually oriented towards teaching language.

Paran (2008: 7) shows this interrelation between literature and language learning in a two-axis graph, in which the different approximations towards literature and language learning can be appreciated:
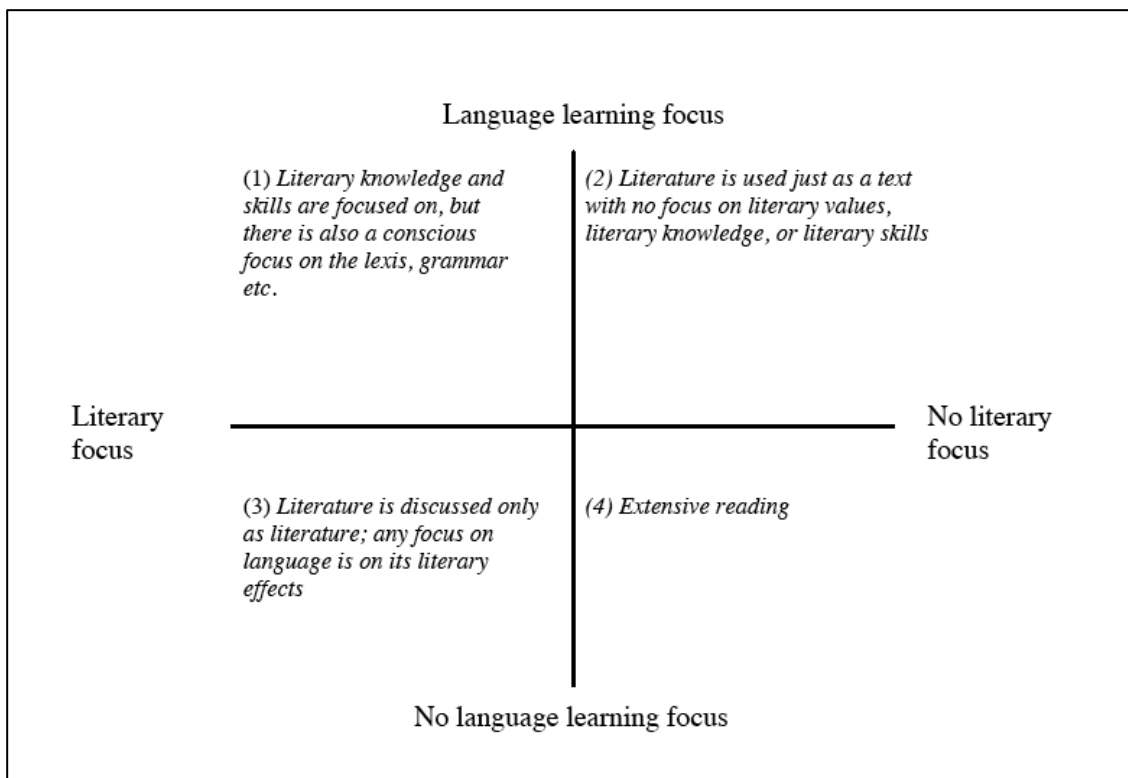

Figure 1: The intersection of literature and language teaching (Paran 2008: 7)

This graph can be seen as a continuum, in which the focus slightly moves towards one axis to the other, depending on the objectives students have to meet or on the students' necessities among other factors. The main goal of this dissertation is to meet the requirement of (1) in the graph, in which the focus is on the development of literature knowledge and skills, but also taking into account the grammatical and pragmatic aspects of language learning.

As a whole, many scholars identify the main advantages of using literature in the EFL classroom. Some of the advantages of introducing literary texts in the EFL classroom relate to the increase of the students' motivation, as they are exposed to meaningful contexts in which language is used for real purposes. As many literary works cover a wide range of topics regarding social and moral issues along with different cultures, they promote the development of students' Social and Civic C ompetence on one hand and the Cultural Awareness and Expression Competence on the other, as well as the development of critical

thinking skills (Van 2009). Furthermore, students are encouraged to develop their own moral and social code and express their own feelings and opinions. Obviously, literature is content-oriented, so it improves students' background knowledge about several topics apart from language use.

After tracing some advantages of using literature in the EFL classroom as a means to improve students' learning process, this innovative project proposes the introduction of the graphic novel as a subtype of literature to enhance the learner's motivation and interest and to promote reading literacy among secondary education students. These questions will be covered in detail in the following sections.

2.4. Use of Graphic novels in the EFL classroom

2.4.1. How graphic novels improve reading skills

Until recently, visual literature has not been included as part of reading comprehension material in Education. Rudiger (2006) believes that this lack of inclusion is due to the fact that reading comprehension is seen as an ability to read words exclusively, without paying so much attention to what is going on around these words in a graphic novel. However, these images are also conveying meaning in a way that words by their own are not able to convey.

Another aspect that Derrick (2008) comments on is the importance of input as essential to develop the reading skill, in a way that reading can improve vocabulary complexity and writing skills in both L1 and L2 languages. She also points out that, as many students are not willing to spend hours reading in the L2, reading comics can be a good alternative to engage them in reading, as students have to spend less hours reading a whole story. The author adds that "not only can they [comics] provide language learners with contextualized comprehensible input, that can also engage the learner and lead him or her to explore more graphic novels or books, magazines, newspapers and other reading materials" (2008: 1).

Gorman (2003: p. xi) remarks that "there is one format that covers a variety of genres, addresses current and relative issues for teens, stimulates the young people's imagination, and engages reluctant readers: the graphic novel." Carter (2007) also determines in a few words the principal thesis of this proposal in "graphic novels improve literacy skills". Therefore, the use of graphic storytelling

is crucial for the EFL classroom as students learn both linguistic and visual strategies to convey meaning. However, graphic novels are still considered a second-class literature genre. In this respect, Carter suggests that:

> The existence of literary canons and teachers' purposeful or inadvertent propagation of them are seen as probable reasons why comics and graphic novels have yet to be properly integrated and acknowledged in education (…) by viewing the canon as an evolving force, teachers can be empowered to embrace sequential art forms and elude the effects of elitist thinking that might have kept comics and graphic novels at bay for so long (2008a: 47).

It can be inferred from Carter's assertion that graphic novels can, and they do indeed, convey socio-cultural topics that are present in the L2 curriculum. In fact, *March* is one example of those comics that focus on "exploring significant historical events and their human impact, foregrounding personal narratives fused with striking graphic art" (Templer 2009: para. 3).

Nevertheless, there exists a tendency towards the introduction of visual literacy in the L1 and L2 classrooms. Heckman states that:

> The new popularity of graphic novels lends itself perfectly to becoming the new frontrunner for reading motivation. (...) Their eye-catching illustrations give contextual connections to the written text, making them perfect for remedial readers. They give confidence to frustrated readers with non-threatening, much needed practice and experience. This also leads to the reader's progress to more challenging texts (2004: 3-4).

In the light of this new interest in visual literacy, Templer (2009) establishes a series of advantages of using graphic novels as an educational tool. First, the use of graphic novels serves as a motivating tool to promote more autonomy on EFL learners when reading; it encourages voluntary reading (Krashen 2004). In other words, "comic reading led to other reading" (Krashen 2005: 2). Indeed, in Cary's (2004) book about using comics in the classroom, and particularly, in the EFL classroom, "he emphasizes the importance of Krashen's theory of comprehensible input and his subsequent ideas about free voluntary reading. He also explains how comics may fit content-based teaching practices and focuses on comics' appropriateness from the progressive literacy perspective" (in O'Neill 2006: 2). Moreover, according to this author, "comics readily fulfil the requirements of progressive literacy: un-excerpted whole texts, learner-centered

communication and rich content and language" (Cary 2004: 24). Another advantage is that nowadays there are plenty of graphic novels addressed to young adults, so the teacher has a wide range of materials to choose what fits best with her/his educational goals and his/her students' needs. Furthermore, most graphic novels address socio-cultural topics such as racism, war, poverty, justice, inequality or gender rights among other issues. Dealing with these topics in a critical and deep way promotes on students the development of democratic values such as "tolerance and respect for other people and cultures" (Kryszewska 2008). Besides, graphic novels are "friendly" with those students with a low level of English, so "it is an excellent means to reduce the "affective filters" of anxiety and lack of confidence blocking student pleasure in learning L2" (Templer 2009: para. 10). They also promote multiple intelligence development, as they are focused on multidisciplinary issues (in fact, it is a visual artefact, not only narrative), as well as they foster creativity in a way that students can create their own comic, taking into account multimodal production, that is, visual and linguistic literacy. The use of comics in class encourages both individual and collaborative work when creating a multimodal artefact. Indeed, thanks to this display of multimodality, comics help students develop aesthetic knowledge, in a way that it makes learners aware of the importance of images for transmitting ideas, feelings and emotions (art, painting or films).

All in all, Schwarz (2006: 58) stresses the importance of using this resource in Secondary Education to "build new literacies", whereas Eisner (1996: n.p) points out that "graphic narrative materials can challenge students to think in fresh ways about how stories, true and detective, are told and unfold." Finally, graphic novels allow the development of modality, an important aspect in the students' cultural and artistic awareness and expression.

The coming section involves the use of graphic novels in the EFL classroom and how this multimodal dimension is reflected.

2.4.2. Graphic novels and multimodality in the EFL classroom

As pointed above, graphic novels stress the importance of "multimodality in genre (word, image and sound) and modes of learner autonomy." (Maley 2008, in Templer 2009: para. 13). One way to convey multimodality in comics, mainly referring to the interaction between words and images, is through the use of

signs and the semiotic implications of that. In fact, the comic stresses the importance of image above language to communicate, creating a shift from verbal communication to multisensory or polysemiotic communication, bringing a new way of teaching a language (Canagarajah 2008: 539). In this respect, Rudiger (2006: para. 3) points out that "artists must convey as much information as possible in a limited amount of space". This author adds that "a good visual storyteller creates suspense and anticipation through the artwork as much as, if not more than, through the text". In fact, it is the reader who has to "draw conclusions and fill in what happens in that microsecond of space", referring to the gutter, or the space between the panels in a comic strip.

Furthermore, Burmark (2008: 24) states that "no one doubts that visual literacy - reading and writing images - is an even more basic skill". Similarly, Rudiger (2006: para. 1) concludes that "even before she can recognize a single letter, the child is able to make meaning from symbols. [...] She relies on what educators call "prior knowledge" to interpret pictorial clues that are not necessarily realistic representations of what she sees every day." Indeed, visual literacy helps students interpret emotions and feelings by reading facial expressions on others, thus avoiding misunderstandings. Indeed, while making drawings, students are working with the different dimensions of the individual such as the linguistic expression (when they talk), the kinetic expression (when they move), the dramatic expression (when they show emotions through facial gestures), the social expression (when characters interact) and the environmental expression (when characters interact with their environment). These expressions are a reflection of how people interact with their environment in order to survive, including the students themselves (Guzmán 2011: 129).

To conclude, Rudiger (2006: para. 18) advocates for the importance of images, as they "don't just supplement the story, they *are* the story, which means schooling visual literacy in surprising new ways" (in Templer 2009: para. 16).

Some questions regarding the implementation of the graphic novel in an EFL classroom and how it contributes to the development of students' creativity will be developed in the following section of this dissertation.

2.4.3. How to deal with comics and their creation in the EFL classroom

There are several guides of how to introduce comics as an educational tool. Cary (2004), Derrick (2008) and Smith (2007) are an interesting introduction to comics in the EFL classroom with many tips for teachers. Eisner (1996) serves to introduce to storytelling and how to create our own simple narratives. There are also some online resources with lots of materials for teachers, as National Association of Comic Art Educators to mention one.

One of the objectives of using comics in class is to encourage students to create their own comic. As Templer (2009: para. 28) points, "using graphics can also mean students drawing their own graphic sequences, individually and in groups". There are many ways to introduce comic production, such as adding a panel, interpreting jokes, sequencing panels, adding dialogue or adding drawings or interpreting emotions. These and other tasks focused on the creation of a comic will be introduced later in this innovative project.

Comics are also a good means for conveying emotions and feelings, and also, to teach them. Schwarz (2006) states that it can be appreciated an increase in the level of "emotional and mental involvement in classes where students create their own miniature graphic novels based on a story or play they are reading" (in Templer 2009: para. 28). Students, as part of the learning process of how to read and create a comic, must identify the different emotions people express through gestures and body language. This identification of emotions in the characters of the graphic novel are transferable to the recognition of emotions in others in order to avoid misunderstandings. In this way, it is interesting the study of the psychologist Paul Ekman (1999) who identified six basic emotions called happiness, sadness, surprise, fear, anger and disgust.

There are also evidences of the effective implementation of Cooperative learning techniques when creating a comic. As an illustration, Chandaran (2009) conducted a study in Malasyan high-school centred on the creation of mini-comics based on Steinbeck's *The Pearl*. Its findings showed how students developed their creative skills working in small groups and how they shared the final product with the rest of the Education community.

It is interesting the commentaries made by a Hemadevi's students about this experiment:

> The graphics give us a clearer picture about what's going on in the story (…) The storyline stays in your head and we understand it faster (…) The graphic supplement triggers group discussion and exchange of ideas and opinions between us pupils in the class. We become more confident to communicate in English and speak up in class (in Templer 2009: para. 30).

In fact, there is a tendency to bring classical literary works closer to children and teens, such as Shakespeare's plays, most of them available on comic version. One advantage of working with this visual depiction of the classics is that it makes them more accessible and easy-reading to many students.

Nowadays, there are several webpages where students can create their own comics and also to take a look at others' creations, such as *Comic Book Project*, Zimmerman's *Make beliefs Comix*, *Comixify*, a web page which turns videos into comic strips, or *Storyboard That*, with multiple options to create comic strips. One of these online webpages that promotes literary creativity among children and teens is *Storybird*. The dynamics of *Storybird* are simple: artists can upload their own pictures, so other users can use these pictures to create original stories, encouraging writing skills as well as creativity. These stories can be read and comment on by the webpage community. Moreover, the interface is easy to use and it is practically oriented towards children and teens. However, comic section is new, so by now there are few works published.

Thus, the best option for this dissertation is the use of the webpage *Storyboard That* (https://www.storyboardthat.com/), which offers a wide range of editing options to create a comic strip. The application is very intuitive and simple to use, with lots of layouts, characters, scenes and templates. Moreover, the free account allows the users to save their creations and edit them as many times as possible. In addition, users can launch their own creations via Powerpoint, email or Google Slides. It also supports Google Classroom, an interesting option for this proposal.

All in all, this section analyses the advantages of using graphic novels as a good alternative to introduce literature in the EFL classroom, improving reading skills as well as promoting reading literacy. It also encourages those reluctant students to engage in reading and writing process by reducing the affective filters that provoke anxiety in those students who do not feel comfortable

reading or writing in a foreign language. Graphic novels are also a good tool for students to learn multimodality, as comics combine both image and word to convey meaning. Comics, as a subtype of literature, though content-oriented, use language as a vehicle to transmit ideas, feelings and emotions, so students can deal with language in real contexts with a real communicative purpose.

Besides, creating a comic strip promotes students' creativity and motivation, as well as the application of writing skills, related to what they have read, fostering critical thinking skills.

The last point depicts a brief review about Postcolonialism, a literary theory that helps to contextualize this proposal from a literary perspective. However, teaching literary theory to the students is not the main goal. Rather, students will work with this literary approach in an implicit way through the comic *March* by means of answering the questions that accompany every reading activity.

2.4.4. The Graphic novel March: An approach to Literary Theory

The literary approach adopted to analyse the social and cultural implications of *March* from a literary perspective is Postcolonial criticism.

Postcolonial criticism has been developed as a separate theory since 1990s, under the influences of works by Spivak's *In Other Words* (1987), Ashcroft's *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), Bhabha's *Nation and Narration* (1990) and Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). One of the significant contributions of Postcolonial studies to Literary Theory is the questioning of what is considered as universal or essential, while what remains outside the realm of the universal, the norm, is considered as "The Other", described as something marginal and inferior. In Barry's words, "If we claim that great literature has a timeless and universal significance we thereby demote or disregard cultural, social, regional and national differences in experience and outlook, preferring instead to judge all literature by a single, supposedly "universal" standard" (2009: 185). Thus, the way of writing and depicting reality is seen from a white, middle-class, male Eurocentric perspective, that is considered in turn as the norm, relegating "The Other" as playing a "subsidiary, marginalised roles" (Barry 2009: 186). One of the main goals of Postcolonial writers is for those entities considered as "The Other" to find their own voices as separated from the European world. Furthermore, many past events related to this European dominance remained

silent or unspecified. This is true for the legal and social injustices Black people suffered in US and depicted in *March* (e.g. slavery).

In this respect, it is interesting the work *Orientalism* (1978) by Edward Said, considered as one of the most prominent scholars in Postcolonial Studies. In this work, Said examines how Eurocentric universalism "takes for granted both the superiority of what is European or Western, and the inferiority of what is not" (in Barry 2009: 186). "The Other" is tended to be seen as something *homogeneous*, not as separate individuals, but as a group moved by "instinctive emotions rather by conscious choices". This power relation is represented by means of language, as many Postcolonial writers express themselves in the colonist's language (e.g. English, French or Spanish). The use of the same language is one of the reasons why Postcolonial writers emphasize the notion of hybridity (the sense of belonging to two different and sometimes juxtaposed worlds) as something positive. Indeed, Postcolonialism goes hand in hand with Post-structuralism, as this movement focuses on the image of the identity as something fluid and unstable. Therefore, what is considered as "The Other", the marginal, is seen as something positive and inclusive.

In simple terms, Postcolonialism portrays how cultures define themselves by means of their relation to others, advocating for a heterogeneous and fluid depiction of cultures and societies, contrary to the traditional view of the European supremacy as the norm to follow. Accordingly, this literary approach contributes to the development of the students' Intercultural Competence, key to this project.

Thus, the next section covers the main aspects of the legal framework of this dissertation by means of the observance of the requirements of the CSE curriculum regarding objectives, contents, assessment criteria and learning standards, and the importance of the students' development of key competences and, particularly, Intercultural Competence, composed by Linguistic communicative, Social and Civic and Cultural Awareness and Expression Competences, and present in the study of any foreign language.

2.5. Curriculum

The curriculum is defined as the ensemble of "elements governing the learning and teaching processes for each of the subjects and educational

stages" (González 2018: 195). The aspects that the curriculum should cover are defined in LOMCE, article 6, chapter III as the objectives of each educational stage; the competences applied to resolve complex problems; the contents or set of knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to accomplish the specific objectives of each stage; the didactic methodology or the description of the teaching process and the organization of the different activities and tasks; the learning standards or the observable, measurable and assessable specifications of the assessment criteria which define the learning outcomes; and the assessment criteria to assess the degree of acquisition of the competences and the objectives.

Regarding key competences, they are defined by the CEFR "are the sum of knowledge, skills and characteristics that allow a person to perform actions." (CEFR, 9). LOMCE relates seven key competences that contribute to the full development of the student as an autonomous individual and as a member of a social community. In this dissertation, the most important key competences are Communicative, Social and Civic and Cultural Awareness and Expression Competences, although there are others that are present in the EFL classroom, such as the Learning to Learn Competence as students are encouraged to develop their own learning strategies that can apply in their daily lifes, as well as both autonomous and cooperative work; the Digital Competence, present in the use of the information and communicative technology (ICT); and Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship Competence, which boosts teamwork and cooperation in class and improves the students' social skills and problem-solving strategies.

As said before, the most important competences for this dissertation are Communicative Linguistic Competence, as the main objective in the English subject is to develop the students' communicative competence by learning the language across the four basic skills, as well as how to use certain pragmatic strategies depending on specific contexts to communicate; Social and Civic Competence, which promotes the students' development as members of society, which implies awareness and respect for oneself as well as for others; and Cultural Awareness and Expression Competence which involves the study of the foreign language culture and its expression. This competence also encourages students to express their own feelings and opinions while

respecting others as well as it promotes creativity and empathy. These three key competences form the **Intercultural Competence**, an ability and attitude towards others that implies respect and value for other cultures and way of thinking. Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008: 161) define intercultural competence as "the knowledge of how to produce a spoken or written piece of discourse within a particular sociocultural context". Several authors insist on the importance of intercultural competence in the curriculum. In this respect, Byram (1997) remarks that "truly intercultural communicative competence, or ICC, requires more than just factual knowledge and appropriate language use" (in East 2012: 59). Byram adds that language is "a visible symptom of a more complex phenomenon: the differences in beliefs, behaviours and meanings through which people interact with each other" (1997: 3). Thus, Guilherme (2002: 17) calls for a "critical cultural awareness", in which the FL learner is encouraged "to reflect critically on the values, beliefs and behaviours of their own society (...) through a comparative study of other societies" (Byram 2009: 323). Therefore, this competence is reflected in this dissertation by means of the reading of *March* and the cultural and social dimensions it reflects and that students are going to work with in a critical way.

The following section outlines the main methodological aspects of this dissertation: the characteristics of informants proposed to undertake this proposal, the instruments necessary to carry out this project, (i.e. the materials and resources recommended to accomplish this innovative project) and, finally, the procedures followed in order to carry out the portfolio and the workshop that define this dissertation and how they relate to the legal framework.

3. METHODOLOGY

This section relates the components that harmonize the three pillars of this innovative project: participants, instruments and procedures. The first section describes the physical, cognitive and psychological characteristics of those learners that are studying the second stage of Compulsory Secondary Education (CSE henceforth), 4th grade. The next section lists the materials and resources used in this project. Finally, the functioning of the didactic unit, the relation of these activities with the legal framework and the assessment carried out are described.

3.1. Participants

The group chosen to accomplish this project is 4th CSE. The ages of the students from this grade ranges from 15 to 17, a period that implies many changes at a physical, psychological and cognitive level that characterize the transition from childhood to adulthood and that affect the students' learning process. Hence, due to physiological changes, students are concerned about their self-image and self-esteem and the importance of being socially accepted by their peers, a topic present in the graphic novel *March* (e. g. how the characters fight against social discrimination).

Regarding cognitive changes, this stage is characterized by the development of executive functions such as the ability to test hypotheses, express their own opinions and discuss about abstract and complex issues (e.g. ethical issues such as freedom). These cognitive changes are also manifested in the development of what Gardner (1983, 1999) called *Multiple Intelligences*, in which, according to this author, every person develops in different degrees all these intelligences, called linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal and intrapersonal. These multiple intelligences should be taken into account in the classroom as they help students to fully develop their abilities and skills that influence greatly on their self-esteem and self-image.

Finally, psychological and emotional changes deal with the construction of the teenagers' own identity and the role they play in society. At this stage they are also establishing their own moral values and codes, as Kohlberg (1958) describes in terms of dilemmas, hypothetical situations that help students think

about possible solutions and consequences, and how social and moral values influence their decisions. Above all, the most important development that takes place during this period (and along one's life) is the development of the *Emotional Intelligence*, defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as the ability to deal with own feelings and emotions, differentiate them and use them appropriately to conduct actions and thoughts accordingly. Goleman (1995, 1996, 2006) adds the term *Social Intelligence* as an essential aspect of the *Emotional Intelligence*, which consists on the ability to manage one's own and others' feelings and emotions, distinguish among them and act accordingly to these actions and thoughts taking into account the others' feelings to avoid conflicts.

Therefore, during the ages of fourteen and seventeen, the teacher should promote their students' full development of emotions and intellectual capacities. In this respect, González (2018) poses that:

> The adolescent battles over his own set of values versus the set established by parents and other adult figures. The adolescent also begins to take on more control of educational and vocational pursuits and advantages. It is during this time that adolescents' self-dependence and a sense of responsibility become apparent, along with their quest to contribute to society and find their place in it (p. 20).

This dissertation agrees with Gonzalez (2018) on the fact that students from these ages are developing their own social and ideal values, along with moral issues concerning what should be considered right or wrong. González (2018: 21) refers also to some important aspects present in Piaget's theory that the teacher must bear in mind when designing the syllabus, such as the students' cognitive level, the importance of sequencing the teacher's instructions, the relevance of testing to find out the results of the teaching process, the need to encourage social interaction to facilitate learning and the fact that adolescents' thought processes are not the same as adults.

She also proposes some actions carried out by the students in class to develop their inferential and metacognitive thinking, such as working memory, executive functions (evaluating their own process to improve in future actions) and planning and organizing actions, such as the steps they have to follow to complete a task (González 2018: 21). Some of these actions are reflected in

this dissertation through the use of the self-evaluation questionnaires and through the *Analysis Questions* part of each task.

Thus, one of the main goals of the teaching-learning process is to foster students' motivation and interest, as it is obvious that without attention there is no learning process at all. Thanasoulas (2002) gives some tips to maintain our students' motivation, as students usually get bored quickly. One would be to increase the student's self-confidence by designing tasks where everybody can contribute. The other is to make the students more autonomous regarding their learning process.

Taking into account these aspects concerning the physical, cognitive and psychological features of the students, this dissertation suggests a total of 30 informants of the same group to implement this proposal, allowing 6 groups of 4 and 2 of three to work some activities in the portfolio part and to create the comic during the workshop. Nevertheless, part 2 of the tasks can be performed in pairs. Concerning the English level expected, the curriculum establishes the contents and the learning standards recommended for the 2nd stage of CSE.

The following section lists the materials and resources used in this project.

3.2. Instruments

Before listing the materials and resources used in this didactic unit, it is worth mentioning how these materials are basically conveyed in the form of tasks. So, the tasks proposed in this project are composed of three different parts:

(1) *Pre-activity*: This is the first step students have to take in order to complete the task successfully. Pre-activity usually takes place at home, as it is an introduction to what the student is going to do. Reading the extracts from *March* and answering some questions regarding reading comprehension are considered a pre-activity.

(2) *While-activity*: This kind of activity takes place in the classroom, as they require the active involvement of the student, that is, by applying what he/she has been read in the pre-activity. Watching some videos to reinforce historical events and completing part 2 of every task (individually, in pairs or in groups depending on the task) are considered as while-activities. These activities are also designed to reinforce the students' knowledge and to check if the students have understood the basics necessary to continue with the task.

(3) *Post-activity*: Students work to finish the task and to continue with the next one. The workshop would be also considered a post-activity task.

Regarding task types, students must accomplish in the first place the receptive skills (reading and listening) to go on with the productive skills (mostly the writing part). In the receptive tasks, that is reading the comic and watching some videos, students have to reflect on the effect created by the combination of verbal and non-verbal language, the communicative intention and the impact caused on the reader (Guzmán 2011: 126). Meanwhile, in the productive tasks, students must engage actively in the creation of different short comic strips and drawings and of the creation of a long comic during the workshop by means of applying what they have previously learned about comics and their technical proceedings. Guzmán (2011: 127) points out that, with the creation of their own comic, students can experiment the process that a comic suffers, from its creation by the persons implicated in a graphic novel (the illustrator, the inker, the writer or the editor among others) to its reception on the part of the readers.

With this in mind, a list of the main materials and resources used in this dissertation are displayed below:

(1) **The graphic novel *March* (2013-2016)***: This is the point of departure of the whole project, and the main resource to promote reading habits in the students. Every week, the teacher provides the students with some excerpts from this graphic novel, as it is not necessary to read the whole story to accomplish the different tasks.

(2) **McCloud's *Understanding the comic: The Invisible Art* (1994):** McCloud's comic strips serve as the technical reading material available to the students. This author offers a basis to work with comics in an entertaining way. McCloud's excerpts are combined with the readings of the graphic novel in each task.

(3) **Political Speeches**: Inside *March*, there are several instances of authentic political speeches, such as the speech delivered by John Lewis on August 1963, the famous speech delivered by the segregationist Wallace ("Segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever") or the speech by President Johnson in 1965 before the US Congress. One of the speeches that are mentioned in this graphic novel but does not appear in the comic is the one delivered by Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963

called "I have a Dream". Therefore, students are going to work on this speech (an abridged version) to turn Dr. King's speech into a comic strip.

(4) **Documentaries** (video format): The main function of the videos used in this proposal is not to develop the listening skill as such, but to give more background to the students regarding historical events, with authentic recordings and interviews of people who lived in first person the Civil Rights Movement. The documentaries used are *Selma: The Bridge to the Ballot* (2015), directed by Bill Brummel and *I am not your Negro* (2016), directed by Raoul Peck and written by James Baldwin.

(5) **Extracts from films** (video format): As well as with the documentaries, the main aim of using these visual materials is to reinforce some issues regarding stereotypes, segregation and social injustice. The two films used for this proposal are *Hidden Figures* (2016), directed by Theodore Melfi and *Green Book* (2018), directed by Peter Farrely.

(6) **Questionnaires**: The questionnaire gives feedback to the teacher about the students' learning process, as well as their interests and motivations and the degree of involvement in each task. There are three questionnaires: the first one consists on a series of self-assessed questions regarding the students' general attitude in class and work habits; the second one is about the students' reading interests and habits, and the third one serves as feedback for the teacher concerning the students' attitude and motivation during the project, whether they have enjoyed reading the comic, if they recommend it to others or not and suggestions for future changes. Questionnaires are available in appendix A. The first two questionnaires take place at the beginning while the third one at the end of the project.

(7) **Portfolio**: Students have to complete a portfolio that compiles the 10 tasks plus the project. The teacher, by means of two corresponding rubrics, will assess this portfolio and the creation of the comic strip. The portfolio is explained in section 3.3.1 and displayed in appendix B.

(8) **Online Resources to create comics**: There are many webpages that allow users to create their own comic strips. In this project, the webpage that students are going to use to accomplish some tasks (e.g. task 6, p. 3) will be *Storyboard That* because it is easy to use, it includes many templates and aspects to modify and comic strips can be saved and shared.

(9) **Other online Resources**: The main online resources are the webpage *Teaching Tolerance*, created by the Southern Poverty Law Center. This webpage offers teachers and parents a wide range of topics and materials to deal with social issues concerning democratic values, such as inclusion, tolerance, visibility or diversity. The other one is *Youtube*, as the political speeches, the documentary *Selma: the Bridge to the Ballot* and other videos are hosted in this webpage.

Thereupon, an organization of the proposed innovative project is offered in the next section, in which each task is accomplished taking into account the School calendar and the curriculum for 4th CSE or 2nd stage of CSE.

3.3. Procedures

This section covers three main aspects, the description of the portfolio plus the workshop regarding timing and proceedings, the relation of the portfolio and the requirements of the curriculum, and the assessment.

3.3.1. Description of the tasks

In this section, procedures regarding the completion of the tasks are described in detail, taking into account the following aspects: the number of tasks, the planned day, the expected timing, the materials used in class, the basic vocabulary and grammar involved, the type of skill, the competences involved and the relation with Bloom's taxonomy. Then, the steps in the performance of the workshop are outlined. The contents, the assessment criteria and the Learning standards are described in the following section.

This proposed project has been entitled **We're gonna march**, making possible a wordplay with the term *march,* and a clear connection with *March*, as this sentence is uttered by the character John Lewis in the graphic novel. The project consists on a total of 10 different *tasks* plus a *workshop*. Both parts compose the *Portfolio*. The tasks are related to each other by means of the excerpts from the graphic novel *March* arranged in chronological order. To carry out this project, the 2nd term has been chosen as the most appropriate, because by this time the teacher knows the interests and motivations of the students, as well as their proficiency level in English, and has a clear idea about whether students will be able to carry out the tasks.

As for the workshop, the best time would be at the end of the 3rd term, after all final exams have taken place, and consequently, students have less workload. The calendar corresponding to the academic year 2019/2020 has been taken as model, as can be seen in figure 2:

	JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH		APRIL		MAY		JUNE	
1	W		S		S		W		F		M	
2	T		S		M		T		S		T	
3	F		M		T		F	Task 10	S		W	
4	S		T		W		S		M		T	
5	S		W		T		S		T		F	Workshop
6	M		T		F	Task 6	M		W		S	
7	T		F	Task 3	S		T		T		S	
8	W		S		S		W		F		M	
9	T		S		M		T		S		T	
10	F	Task 0	M		T		F		S		W	
11	S		T		W		S		M		T	
12	S		W		T		S		T		F	Workshop
13	M		T		F	Task 7	M		W		S	
14	T		F	Task 4	S		T		T		S	
15	W		S		S		W		F		M	
16	T		S		M		T		S		T	
17	F	Task 0	M		T		F		S		W	
18	S		T		W		S		M		T	
19	S		W		T		S		T		F	Workshop
20	M		T		F	Task 8	M		W		S	
21	T		F	Task 5	S		T		T		S	
22	W		S		S		W		F		M	
23	T		S		M		T		S		T	
24	F	Task 2	M		T		F		S		W	
25	S		T		W		S		M		T	
26	S		W		T		S		T		F	
27	M		T		F	Task 9	M		W		S	
28	T		F	Task 6	S		T		T		S	
29	W		S		S		W		F	Workshop	M	
30	T				M		T		S		T	
31	F	Task 3			T				S			

Figure 2: Calendar based on the 2nd and 3rd term of the academic year 2019/20.

As can be appreciated in figure 2, each task takes place every Friday, as this dissertation means to be a part of the syllabus, in which the reading and writing skills are emphasized.

Each *task* is divided in two parts. The first one is dedicated to the reading of the extract from *March*, a set of words to be defined and some questions regarding reading comprehension. Thus, part 1 conveys basically the vocabulary and grammar taken from the comic excerpts. The second part consists on some questions to analyse the different aspects that are present in these readings (the *Analysis Questions* section*)*, plus a section entitled *Time for Drawing*, focused on the visual aspects of the comic. While part 1 is supposed to be done at home individually before next Friday, part 2 is performed in class, in pairs or in groups, depending on the activity. This way students need to have

read the extract and do part 1 in order to carry out part 2 successfully. All the materials (the excerpts from *March*, plus the instructions for each task) will be available in Google Classroom, a space dedicated exclusively to this project. Furthermore, to complete some activities in class, students should have access to tablets or similar ICTs to look for information on the Internet, to read some extracts from Google Classroom (all reading extracts are available on PDF format) or creating a comic strip using the web page *Storyboard That*. As for the rest of activities, these devices are not necessary, only paper, colouring pencils and imagination. To watch the extracts from the films and the documentaries, the teacher needs a computer, a projector, a whiteboard and access to the Internet.

Before starting the project, the teacher provides the students with two different questionnaires: the first one is a self-assessment questionnaire that deals with aspects regarding general conduct and work habits of the student. The second one is about reading habits and interests to draw a clear picture of the students' motivation concerning reading literacy. Once the students have filled in this questionnaire, they are given the general instructions for the project, as they have to know the expected outcomes of this activity and how they have to deal with each task, alone and in groups. This is the reason task 0 is fulfilled entirely in class alongside two sessions.

Task 1 is the only one that is different from the rest, as it covers the basic vocabulary necessary to perform the following tasks. Note that task 1 does not appear in the calendar, as it is supposed to be done at home before the second session of task 0, as in this session students are going to analyse some aspects concerning comics and how they work and convey meaning. The rest of tasks have a similar outline. They can be accomplished in one session, which corresponds to a 50 minutes class, except task 3 that portrays the concept of non-violence and inspiring drawings, and task 6, which is central to the project because it works the linguistic part of the comic. In this task, students, in class, have to read an abridged version of Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech "I have a Dream", summarize the main ideas and put them into a comic strip using the webpage *Storyboard That*. Therefore, it is interesting to let students experiment with words and how they interact with images. Nevertheless, as the remaining tasks can turn too long (depending on contextual circumstances), it is not

necessary to accomplish all the activities proposed, or some of them can be extended to two sessions instead of one, but it is not recommendable due to curricula requirements.

Concerning the blocks or skills involved in the tasks, basically the reading skill is performed entirely at home, while the writing (doing the activities and the workshop) and speaking (interacting with the group members and with the teacher) skills are carried out in class. The listening skill is worked through the extracts from the films and the documentary, and also from some Youtube videos proposed in part 1 to help the students understand certain historical events necessary to follow the plot. These videos proposed at home can be enhanced with *Edpuzzle* to add some questions and to make sure the students have watched the video. Again, the use of this app is optional.

All tasks promote Intercultural Competence as explained above. Learning to Learn Competence is also present in the fact that students acquire gradually more autonomy in the fulfilment of the tasks, as well as Self-Initiative and Entrepreneurship Competence, mainly in the creation of their own comic strip during the Workshop.

Tasks also reflect Bloom's thinking skills at different degrees, known as a taxonomy of the six different levels in the acquisition of knowledge proposed by the psychologist Benjamin Bloom and others (1956), and reformulated later by Anderson (2001). These levels of thinking skills help learners to scaffold their own learning process by working with them progressively. Bearing this in mind, part 1, the one addressed at home, relates low thinking skills such as *Knowledge* and *Comprehension* while part 2 works on high thinking skills such as *Apply*, *Analysis* and *Synthesis*. According to Santiago (2018: 70-71) and Jones (2018: 3-4) the best way to apply Bloom's taxonomy is by keeping high level thinking skills in class while the low level thinking skills are undertaken at home. The arrangement of these skills into two different spaces (at home and in class) goes in hand with the Flipped-Learning methodology, originally developed by Bergmann and Sams (2012) as the pedagogical model that transfers the direct content-instruction from the classroom space to the individual one, reserving the classroom space to a more dynamic and interactive learning process (Santiago 2018: 24). Accordingly, the main goal is

to work high level thinking skills in class as the basis for the success of the student's learning process.

The other part of the project is the so-called *workshop*. The workshop is devoted to the creation of a comic strip. This would be the so-called big project or the final goal of this dissertation, as students must apply what they have learned and worked with during previous tasks. The comic strip is done in groups of four or three, in which each member plays a different role regarding the roles present in a comic book production. These roles have been established at the beginning of the term, as they are explained in task 1 and applied in some activities. Roles can be interchangeable within the same group allowing each member to experiment the different aspects involved in the production of comics. The topic of the comic strip should be linked with the issues seen in previous tasks, which are mainly those concerned with the fight for human rights, cultural awareness and the construction of a democratic society. Within these boundaries, the plot can be imaginary or can be based on real facts. It is advisable that students make their own drawings and script to promote creativity and multimodality. To carry out the workshop, Stoller (2002) describes the steps necessary in the implementation of a project-based work in the EFL classroom. Each step can be related to the different aspects that shape this innovative project, and particularly, in the completion of the workshop. Stoller (2002: 112) describes ten different steps, in which three steps concern preparing students for language demands, so the teacher's role is essential as she helps the students with problems regarding contextual and discursive uses of language. The remaining steps depend more on the students' own decisions and procedures, such as agreeing on a theme, determining the purpose of the project (e.g. the students have to establish the *purpose* of their comic: it is not about to tell a story, real or not, but the keypoint is *why* this story is important to tell), structuring the project, collecting, organizing and analysing the information necessary to create their artwork and lastly presenting the final product to the rest of the class. Notwithstanding, the implementation and completion of the workshop is optional as the key points are already touched in the tasks.

At the end of the project, the teacher gives the students the same self-assessment questionnaire plus a set of satisfaction questions to make students

aware of their own attitude during the project and whether they have felt motivated or not while doing the different tasks and working in groups.

The following section deals with the main requirements of the curriculum, established by the legal framework on Education, and how these requirements are met by the different activities present in the tasks.

3.3.2. 4th CSE Curriculum and its relation with the tasks

This dissertation is enclosed within the requirements established by Real Decree 1105/2014, December 26, that establishes the basic Curriculum for Compulsory Secondary Education and Baccalaureate[2], Annex I, and especially, on the 2nd stage of CSE curriculum, that corresponds to 4th CSE, the chosen group to carry out this project.

The relation between 4th CSE curriculum and the tasks proposed in this dissertation is displayed in table 1. The table discloses the following information: the block or skill (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing), the contents, the assessment criteria, the learning standards and examples from the proposed tasks that meet these requirements. Translation from Spanish has been provided by González (2018, 209-217):

Block 1: Understanding oral texts (Listening)			
Contents	**Assessment Criteria**	**Learning Standards**	**Tasks**
- Using previous knowledge of task and topic. - Identifying text type, adapting understanding of text to text type. - Distinguishing different types of understanding: general meaning, essential information, key points and important details.	Can identify the general meaning, general information, key points and the most significant details in brief or medium speed, using a formal, informal or neutral register, and dealing with specific or abstract general issues, or those pertaining to both everyday and less common situations, or those of the students' interest in the personal, public, educational or occupational domain, providing acoustic conditions do not distort the message and this can be repeated.		- Listening to the extracts from the videos and understanding the general meaning.
Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects: - Social conventions. - Politeness and register rules. - Customs, values, beliefs and attitudes. - Non-verbal language.	Can use sociocultural and sociolinguistic features to understand the text when they relate to everyday life (study and work habits and leisure activities), living conditions (environment and socio-economic structure), interpersonal relations (between generations, men and women, at work, school	4. Can understand specific information on general topics or those of the students' interests in informal conversations and can understand explanations and justifications of points of view, as well as being able to formulate hypotheses, express feelings and describe abstract aspects of	- Interview to Martin L. King Jr. and Malcolm X (documentary *I am not your negro*)

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[2] Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato.

		topics, such as e.g. music, cinema, literature and current affairs. 6. Can understand, with visual or written support, the main ideas and relevant details in a presentation, talk or lecture dealing with topics of the student's interest or of the academic or occupational domain (e.g. on an academic issue or scientific dissemination or a lecture on professional training in other countries)	
Syntactic-discourse structures: - Common oral lexis on: Personal identification. Daily activities. Work and occupations. Education and studies.	Can identify common oral lexis related to everyday issues and to general topics or those concerning the students' interests, studies and occupation, and a limited common repertoire of idiomatic and non-idiomatic expressions with the help of appropriate context or visual support.	7. Can understand the main points and relevant details in television news programmes clearly articulated when there is visual support to complement the story, as well as the main idea in adverts, television series and films providing they are well structured and clearly articulated, are not highly idiomatic and have images to ease comprehension.	- Vocabulary and grammatical expressions that appear in the extracts from the comic, the video resources, on the Internet and other texts (political speeches).
Sound stress, rhythm and intonational patterns.	Can discriminate common sound, stress and rhythm patterns and identify the most common meanings and communicative intentions related to them.		- In the film *Hidden Figures:* difference in intonation, pitch (Catherine is angry because of the discriminatory situation). - In the film *Green Book:* irony in Dr. Shirley's voice because he understands the "misunderstaning".
Block 2: Oral Production: expression and interaction (Speaking)			
Contents	**Assessment Criteria**	**Learning Standards**	**Tasks**
Production strategies: Planning: - Thinking out the message clearly, distinguishing the main ideas and its basic structure.	Can produce brief or medium-length comprehensible texts on face-to-face situations, or on those using in telephone and other technological means, in a formal, neutral or informal register and using simple language, with the purpose of exchanging information, ideas or opinions. The exchanges should include the motives behind the actions or plans and formulation of hypotheses even if this is done with hesitations to look for the right expression, pauses to reformulate and organize the discourse and there may need to be repetitions to help the interlocutor understand some of the details.	3. Can effectively take part in informal conversations taking place face-to-face, on the phone or via other technical means, in which facts, experiences, points of view are expressed in detail and clearly describes and narrates explanations and justifications of points of view, as well as being able to formulate hypotheses, express feelings and describe abstract aspects of topics such as e.g. music, cinema, literature and current affairs. 4. Can take part in formal conversations, interviews and academic or work meetings on general topics in these contexts, exchanging relevant information on specific facts, giving and asking for instructions or solutions, expressing points of view in a simple and clear fashion, reasoning and briefly explaining actions, opinions and plans.	- Answer the questions. - Work in class (part 2 of the tasks). - Group or pair discussion. - Workshop: create a comic strip in groups.
Performing: Making up for lack of linguistic knowledge by means of linguistic, paralinguistic and paratextual resources by means of: Linguistic: - Using other words with similar meaning.			- Drawing. - Defining terms and describing situations that appear in *March* (Task: part 2)

Contents	Assessment Criteria	Learning Standards	Tasks
- Defining or parahprasing terms and expressions. Paralinguistic and paratextual: - Asking for help. - Pointing at objects, using deictic words or performing actions to clarify meaning. - Using culturally relevant body language (gestures, facial expressions, visual or corporal contact, proxemics). - Using extralinguistic sounds and conventional prosodic sounds.			
Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects: - Social conventions. - Politeness and register rules. - Customs, values, beliefs and attitudes. - Non-verbal language.	Can use sociocultural and sociolinguistic features to produce monologues or take part in dialogues concerning interpersonal relations and social convention patterns in the personal, public, educational and occupational/labour domains, selecting and providing relevant and necessary information, adapting the message to the receiver, the communicative intention, the topic and the channel and expressing opinions and viewpoints following appropriate politeness conventions.		- Non-verbal language: drawing. - Drawing sociocultural situations or talk about sociocultural aspects related to the comic and to the documentaries and films (the extracts from the films and documentaries are watched in class to comment on them).
Communicative functions: - Describing physical and abstract qualities from people, objects, places and activities. - Narrating past punctual and habitual events. - Describing present states and situations.			- Describing situations that happens in the comic and in the films.
Syntactic-discourse structures: - Common oral lexis on: Personal identification. Daily activities.	Can use common oral lexis in common everyday situations and general topics or those related to own interests, studies or occupations, together with a limited repertoire of common idiomatic and non-idiomatic expressions.		- Vocabulary and grammatical expressions that appear in the extracts from the comic, the video resources, on the Internet and other texts (political speeches).
Block 3: Understanding written texts (Reading)			
Contents	Assessment Criteria	Learning Standards	Tasks
Comprehension strategies: - Using previous knowledge of task and topic. - Identifying text type, adapting understanding of text to text type. - Distinguishing different types of understanding: general meaning, essential information, key points and important details. - Formulating hypotheses on content and context. - Inferencing hypotheses on meanings based on linguistic and paralinguistic elements. - Reformulating hypotheses from the understanding of new elements.	Can identify essential information, the key points and the most significant details in brief or medium-length, well-structured texts, both on paper and online, and written in a formal, informal or neutral register and dealing with everyday and less common issues, topics of interest or relevant to the students' studies, work and occupations, containing common structures and lexis of a general and more specific nature.	1. Can identify relevant information on detailed instructions on the use of electronic devices and computer programmes as well as for activities and safety or coexistence rules (e.g. at a cultural event, student accommodation or in an occupational context). 7. Can follow the plot without major problems in contemporary fictional or short stories when there are well structured, use simple, direct, standard language and can understand the main features of the various characters and their relationships, when described clearly and with enough detail.	- Reading comprehension. - Hypothesis: interaction between words and images. - Using previous knowledge to understand the content. - Making inferences from new information. - Working with *Storyboard That* to create a comic strip, so they need to understand how this device works (this app is in English).
Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects: - Social conventions. - Politeness and register	Can use sociocultural and sociolinguistic features to understand the text when they relate to everday life		- *March* portrays the Civil Rights Movement in US during the 60s, so students have to understand the main

			socio-cultural aspects of this period and how these aspects have changed overtime.
rules. - Customs, values, beliefs and attitudes. - Non-verbal language.	(study, leisure and work habits, leisure activities including artistic manifestations such as music or films), living conditions (environment and socio-economic structure), interpersonal relations (between generations, men and women, at work, school or institutions), behaviour (gestures, facial expressions, voice, eye-contact, proxemics) and social conventions (attitudes and values), together with general cultural aspects which enable the reader to understand information or ideas present in the text (e.g. those of a historical or literary nature).		
Communicative functions: - Describing physical and abstract qualities from people, objects, places and activities. - Narrating past punctual and habitual events. - Describing present states and situations. - Expressing future events. - Asking for and giving information, opinions and viewpoints, advice and warnings. - Expressing knowledge, certainty, doubt and speculation. - Expressing will, intention, decision, promise, orders, authorisation and prohibition. - Expressing interest, approval, appreciation, sympathy, satisfaction, hope, trust, surprise and their opposites. - Formulating suggestions, wishes, conditions and hypotheses. - Establishing and maintaining communication and discourse organization.	Can distinguish the most significant communicative functions in a text and a repertoire of its most common exponents, as well as its most common discourse patterns in text structure concerning the organization, expansion or re-structuring of information (e.g. given/new information, giving examples, summarizing).	6. Can understand specific information from web pages and other sources of reference when they are well structured (e.g. encyclopedias, dictionaries, monographs, presentations) related to the student's field of interest and on topics of academic or occupational interest. 7. Can follow the plot without major problems in contemporary fictional or short stories when there are well structured, use simple, direct, standard language and can understand the main features of the various characters and their relationships, when described clearly and with enough detail.	- *March* is a literary artwork, so it expresses a wide range of pragmatic uses of language and a wide range of topics, situations, interactions. - Working with *Storyboard That* to create a comic strip. - Looking for specific information on the Internet about historical events and people.
Syntactic-discourse structures: - Common oral lexis on: Personal identification. Daily activities. Family and friends. Work and occupations. Education and Studies. Food and restaurants. Transport. Language and communication.	Can identify common written lexis related to everyday issues and general topics or those concerning the students' interests, studies or occupations, together with a limited repertoire of common idiomatic and non-idiomatic expressions with the help of appropriate context or visual support.		- Vocabulary and grammatical expressions that appear in the extracts from the comic, in video resources, on the Internet and other texts (political speeches).
Graphic patterns and ortographic conventions.	Can identify the main spelling, format, typographic and punctuation conventions, as well as common abbreviations and symbols.		- Dialogues, ellipted words, as *March* portrays spoken language. - Sound effects.
Block 4: Written production: expression and interaction (Writing)			
Contents	**Assessment Criteria**	**Learning Standards**	**Tasks**
Production strategies: Planification: - Making use of one's own general and communicative competences to successfully carry out the task (revise what is known about the	Can write, on paper or using any electronic means, brief or medium-length, clearly-structured, coherent texts on both everyday and less common topics or those of personal interest, using a	1. Can fill in a detailed questionnaire with personal, adacemic or labour information (e.g. become a member of an association or to apply for a grant). 3. Can take notes, drafts and	- Looking for definitions. - Creating a script. - Filling in a questionnaire about personal interests and reading habits. - Filling in a questionnaire evaluating the project once

topic, what can be said about it). - Locating and using linguistic and topic resources appropriately (using the dictionary, asking for help).	formal, neutral or informal register, cohesive resources, spelling rules, punctuation marks and reasonably mastering common expressions and structures as well as frequently-used lexis both of a general and a more specialised nature.	outlines with simple and specific information on everyday issues and specific aspects that deal with personal, academic or occupational topics of the student's field or interest.	finished.
Communicative strategies Performing: - Expressing the message with clarity adjusting to the models and formulae available for each type of text. - Re-adjusting to the task (starting a more modest version of it) or to the message (making concessions in what the sender really wants to express) after assessing the difficulties and resources available. - Using and making the most of previous knowledge (using pre-fabricated language).	Can select and apply the most appropriate strategies to draft brief or medium length written texts following a simple structure, e.g. by rephrasing structures from other texts of similar characteristics and communicative intentions, or writing drafts.		- Multimodal dimension of comics, as meaning is conveyed principally through images and words. - Summarizing events and speeches. - Creating the script and conveying the most possible information using few words and expressions.
Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects: - Social conventions. - Politeness and register rules. - Customs, values, beliefs and attitudes. - Non-verbal language.	Can use sociocultural and sociolinguistic features to produce written texts concerning interpersonal relations, and social convention patterns, in the personal, public, educational and occupational/labour domain, selecting and putting forward the necessary and relevant information, adapting the message to the receiver, the communicative intention, the topic and the text format and following appropriate politeness conventions to express opinions and viewpoints.		- Dealing with the expression of emotions by means of non-verbal communication reflected in the comic.
Communicative functions: - Describing physical and abstract qualities from people, objects, places and activities. - Narrating past punctual and habitual events. - Describing present states and situations. - Expressing future events. - Asking for and giving information, opinions and viewpoints, advice and warnings. - Expressing knowledge, certainty, doubt and speculation. - Expressing will, intention, decision, promise, orders, authorisation and prohibition. - Expressing interest, approval, appreciation, sympathy, satisfaction, hope, trust, surprise and their opposites. - Formulating suggestions, wishes, conditions and hypotheses. - Establishing and maintaining communication and discourse organization.	Can carry out the function required for the communicative intention, using a repertoire of common exponents and discourse patterns of such functions in order to appropriately initiate and conclude the written text, organize the information with clarity, expand it with examples or summarise it.	5. Can write in traditional format, brief reports providing relevant information on academic, occupational or less common issues (e.g. an accident) briefly describing situations, people, objects and places. Narrating events in a clear linear sequence and explaining in a simple fashion the reasons for certain lines of action.	- Filling in the characters' profile by looking at personal information (from the comic, the videos or from the Internet). - Summarizing Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech " I have a Dream" and turning it into a comic strip. - Accomplishing a comic strip by adding dialogue (Calvin and Hobbes template). - Creating a comic strip (Workshop).
Syntactic-discourse structures:	Can use common written lexis in common everyday		- Vocabulary and grammatical expressions

- Common oral lexis on: Personal identification. Daily activities. Family and friends. Work and occupations. Education and Studies. Food and restaurants. Transport. Language and communication.	situations and general topics or those related to the students interests, studies or occupation, together with a limited repertoire of common idiomatic and non-idiomatic expressions.		that appear in the extracts from the comic, the video resources, on the Internet and other texts (political speeches).
Graphic patterns and ortographic conventions.	Can reasonably use common ortographic conventions, punctuation marks, spelling rules and those governing text format even though there may be some interference from L1: can handle basic resources from text processors to correct spelling mistakes, and to use common internet conventions in written texts (abbreviations or similar in chats).		- Dialogues: Write spoken language. - Sound effects.

Table 1: Contents, Assessment Criteria, Learning Standards of 4th CSE curriculum and its relation with the tasks.

The next point refers to the kind of assessment carried out to evaluate the students' performance regarding the portfolio and the workshop, and how this project contributes to the students' final assessment.

3.3.3. Assessment

This dissertation is divided into two clear parts: the portfolio with the 10 tasks and the workshop. Hence, both the teacher and the students count on two distinct rubrics to complete both activities. The aim of these rubrics is to provide the students with a guideline to accomplish successfully both the portfolio and the workshop. Figures 3 and 4 display the corresponding rubrics for the task completion and workshop. Rubric for task completion has been retrieved from Gaineda (n.d.), while rubric for workshop is based on Schrock's model (2019):

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC - TASK COMPLETION				
1/1 (Each task)	**0.2**	**0.5**	**0.8**	**1**
TASK COMPLETION How much of the task was completed.	Less than 1/2 of the task was completed.	At least 1/2 of the task was completed.	3/4 of the task was completed.	The entire task was completed.
ACCURACY How much of the task was done right.	Less than 1/2 of the task was done correctly.	At least 1/2 of the task was done correctly.	3/4 of the task was done correctly.	The entire task was done correctly.
FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS All points of each task were completed accordingly.	The task was not carried out in order.	The task was carried out partly in order.	The task was carried out mostly in order.	The entire task was carried out completely in order.
REVIEW The degree of involvement.	Minimal effort was given. The student should try harder.	Some effort was made. The student just did enough work.	Good effort was made. The student met my expectations.	Outstanding work. The student should be proud of their effort.

Figure 3: Assessment rubric for task completion.

COMIC STRIP RUBRIC - WORKSHOP				
5/5 (Total)	2	3	4	5
CONTENT Is the plot easy to followed and engaging?	The plot is not engaging and difficult to follow.	There are some passages difficult to follow. The plot is not well established.	The plot is interesting and easy to follow most of the times.	The plot is engaging and easy to follow.
RELATION IMAGES-WORDS Is this relation well established? Are the dialogues easy to follow?	No clear relation. Dialogues are difficult to follow. Words are inapropriate.	Sometimes there is no clear relation. Some dialogues are weird. Some words are inappropriate.	Most dialogues are well established. Words are appropriate.	There is a balance images-words. Dialogues are easy to follow. The choice of words matches with the purpose of the plot.
CHARACTERS AND DESIGN How are characters portrayed? Are the drawings attractive?	Characters are not well identified. Drawings are insufficient and/or not related to the plot.	Some characters are well identified, but others not. Drawings are too simple.	Characters are identified. Drawings are appropriate.	Characters are well identified. Drawings are related to the plot, well designed and attractive.
SPELLING, PUNCTUATION AND GRAMMAR Is the language correct and well used?	The comic cannot be understood because there are too many spelling and grammar errors.	There are spelling and grammar errors that impel understanding.	There are some spelling and grammar errors but they do not impel understanding.	There are no spelling, punctuation or grammar errors. The vocabulary is well used.

Figure 4: Assessment rubric for workshop.

Note that each task rates 0.1 point of the final mark, so the portfolio represents 0.10 of the final mark, while the workshop sums 0.5 to the final mark. Thus, the whole project represents the 15% of the final mark.

As the portfolio is part of the 2nd term and the workshop is carried out at the end of the 3rd term, the type of assessment that best fits with this proposal is the *continuous assessment* defined by González (2018: 65) as the one assessed by the teacher regarding the students' "class performance, pieces of work and projects throughout the course", contributing to the final assessment. It is important to supply this project with an important contribution to the final mark, as this is a reasonable manner to make students get thoughtfully involved in the project.

On account of what has been described above, there is a reason to believe that this proposal of innovative project can be feasible within the boundaries of the legal framework, and especially, as both the portfolio and the workshop meet the requirements of the CSE curriculum. Furthermore, as this proposal would take place once a week, it is conceivable to combine it with the didactic units reflected in the syllabus. One of the main characteristics to carry out this dissertation is the fact that it does not require a written exam to be assessed, but it encourages students to get actively involved in their own learning process,

at the same time as it gives them the necessary tools to face daily problems that demand critical thinking skills.

With this in mind, questions regarding the viability of this project and expected results and the assets and drawbacks are addressed in the following sections.

4. RESULTS

Results concerning the implementation of this innovative project are expected to be positive. The reasons of this likely success is that this proposal meets the requirements of CSE curriculum, while at the same time it does not interfere with the syllabus design for the specific group, regarding exams and organization of the different didactic units, as this dissertation would be carried out once a week.

One expected result refers to the improvement in the students' mastery of the foreign language, as they learn vocabulary and discursive uses of language in an indirect way due to the fact that literature is content-oriented. This encourages learners to make an effort to understand what they are reading in order to follow the plot. Furthermore, some tasks (e.g. task 6) gives students the tools to experiment with language in such a way that they become aware of the importance of the appropriate use of language to persuade people, to defend one's own opinions and ideas and to transmit emotions and feelings to others.

Mastery of language on the part of the learners is achieved through the multimodal dimension of comics, as they convey meaning both by means of images and language. This advantage of multimodality in language learning has been widely proved by some scholars, such as Paivio (1969, 2007, 2014) whose findings among multimodality reveal that pictures were superior to words regarding memory and that those words that were accompanied by images were remembered better (and consequently acquired) than those that appear in isolation. This author also describes the differences between non-verbal and verbal mechanisms to convey meaning, and how they were processed and interrelated cognitively. Thus, Paivio's findings can also be applied to comics and how images help retain information and remember it later with less cognitive effort than simply reading words (like in a novel or a short story). Moreover, as said before, multimodality boosts students' motivation as images help attract the reader's attention and facilitating the learning process.

Regarding expected results in terms of reading literacy, a comic seems to be a good way to start reading as Krashen (2005) suggests. Indeed, it is expected that some learners feel curious about other comics, as nowadays there are plenty of titles addressed to young adults, as well as a wide range of themes and formats, a huge diversity of arts design and, above all, they are easily

available on the Internet (both in English and in Spanish), and on public institutions such as the public library or the School library. And for those students who remain reluctant to reading, there are other visual facilities such as films or TV series that deal with topics some way linked to the contents of the curriculum. Moreover, they can become interested in arts and making drawings as an alternative for communicating ideas, opinions and feelings. In this way, the multimodal facet of comics raises the development of Multiple Intelligences explained above.

Despite the expected positive results with the implementation of this proposal, there are some inconveniences to bear in mind. Hence, advantages and disadvantages are highlighted in the next section.

5. DISCUSSION

The implementation of this dissertation implies a series of advantages and disadvantages. As a possible drawback could be the fact that *March* is originally conceived as a graphic novel for adults, not for young adults, because this work deals with complex political issues, it gives many dates and names that can make its reading quite disturbing and it calls for some degree of background about the historical events that it describes. Therefore, it is a possibility that students do not get engaged in *March*'s plot, as they can consider it being too far from their daily life and interests. Nevertheless, this graphic novel touches an interesting theme that is tolerance regardless race, origin or culture, so they can be in some way feel identified with the characters since at this age they are looking for social acceptance. This is why only some selected extracts from *March* have been taken into account for analysis. Indeed, the basic plot can be traced easily without reading the whole novel. Nevertheless, the teacher can choose any other graphic novel addressed to young adults and whose plot could be also interesting and educative. For instance, super hero comics are also a good source to introduce comics in class, as most of these comics touch social issues such as tolerance, acceptance, democracy, and questions regarding self-identity.

Another inconvenience for using *March* would be the real level of English of the students. Indeed, *March* is not an adaptation, but an artwork targeted to English-native people (otherwise, the graphic novel has been translated into other languages). For some students the provided glossary may not be sufficient to understand both the narration and the dialogues. However, as this graphic novel is a multimodal artefact, students whose level of proficiency could be inadequate can find support in the images to package the meaning necessary to follow the narrative.

Equally important is the fact that the reading of *March* is the core part of a bigger project that appeals for students' autonomous work and active implication. In other words, the project implies hard work on the part of the student. This is why some students can feel overwhelmed by the number of tasks. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the teacher to keep students motivated and to encourage them to do their tasks every week in order to follow the schedule.

Concerning the timetable, there is an appreciate lapse of time between the completion of the portfolio and the accomplishment of the workshop, where the former takes place alongside the 2nd term and the latter at the end of the 3rd term. As a consequence, most of the students probably forget the technical and theoretical issues worked in the tasks that are necessary to accomplish the creation of the comic strip. However, this dissertation has reached the conclusion that it is better to accomplish the first part of the project during the 2nd term and to deal with the most practical and relaxed part at the end of the course because students, after all, are usually more interested in passing their exams, and they need to cover the didactic units to meet the requirements of the syllabus.

An interesting aspect regarding multimodality and the use of comics is the possibility of transversality between the subject of English and the subject of Arts and technical drawing. In fact, these two subjects can implement this project together as students work with both language and drawings. Moreover, tasks could be divided in a way that in the English subject students focus on discourse aspects, such as the script, sound effects, the representation of spoken language or the translation of long texts into short chunks of dialogue, while in Arts students can experiment with technical and artistic drawing, focus on artistic movements and how they can apply different drawing techniques to convey meaning in a comic strip. This transversality between subjects is also possible for the subject of History and Spanish Language and Literature.

With this in mind, this dissertation can be improved regarding different aspects, for instance, the level of proficiency of students, since this proposal can also be adapted to primary level or to a university grade level, and the time available, where more time means the possibility of use more sources and authentic material to analyse in class.

6. CONCLUSION

The aim of this dissertation was to promote reading literacy by means of the introduction of the graphic novel as an alternative to the use of literature in the EFL classroom. Indeed, introducing literature in the English subject fosters students' motivation and interests through the use of language in a content-based real context and with a communicative purpose. It also facilitates language learning as well as the development of reading strategies. Moreover, in comics, the combination of both verbal and visual language encourages those students who are reluctant to read and write in both their mother tongue and in the foreign language to gain motivation, interest and self-confidence. Thus, through the use of graphic novels, students can deal with both visual and reading literacy, known as multimodality and seen as the ability to think, interpret and express oneself in terms of images and words. This is also related to the development of Intercultural Competence, as comics, as a subtype of artwork, reflect socio-cultural aspects essential to understand and apply the pragmatic uses of a language and also to promote respect for other cultures, ideas, customs and beliefs (Templer 2009). These socio-cultural issues are also reflected in the depiction and recognition of emotions and feelings by means of images.

Another asset for using comics in the EFL classroom is that they encourage students to actively participate in the accomplishment of the tasks and in the creation of their own comic. This is why this kind of literature fits well with flipped-learning methodology, and particularly, a task-based teaching approach, as comics boost creativity, the development of high-thinking skills and cooperative working (Santiago 2018).

Unfortunately, there are many teachers who feel hesitant about introducing literature in the EFL classroom, as foreign language learning is more focused on the grammatical and pragmatic aspects of language rather than on content or contextualized language. Furthermore, comics are still considered as second-class literature (Carter 2008a). However, graphic novels improve literacy skills by giving comprehensible input thanks to the combination of words and images and by reducing the affective filter of anxiety and lack of confidence in those students with a low level of English, leading them to voluntary reading (Krashen 2004, 2005).

Regarding future lines of research, as said in the previous section, this proposal can also be implemented in other grades, such as Primary education, Baccalaureate or in university levels. It is also a good means for those students who are studying Arts to cover the curriculum requirements of both English and Artistic Drawing subjects.

All in all, comics are a good alternative to introduce literature in the EFL classroom in a friendly way, encouraging those students averse to reading to take a chance on literature and promoting high thinking skills and multiple intelligences as students become aware of how images along with words can also be used to communicate.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRES

Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Before starting our big project, let's take a look at how you behave and work in class.

*Obligatorio

1. **CONDUCT IN CLASS** *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Always	Most of the times	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
I show self-control	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I exhibit a positive attitude	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I listen and follow my teacher's instructions	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I work well in groups	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I am respectful to myself and to others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

2. **WORK HABITS** *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Always	Most of the times	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
I complete the activities in class	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I participate actively in class	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I do my homework every week	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I give my best effort	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I use time wisely in class	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I do my best with my teamwork	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

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Google Forms

Reading Interests and Habits Questionnaire

Fill in this questionnaire before starting our Big Project!

*Obligatorio

1. **How much do you like reading? (Tick only one)**

   Marca solo un óvalo.

   ◯ I enjoy reading a lot.

   ◯ I like reading sometimes.

   ◯ I don't like reading.

2. **Which statements describe you as a reader? (You can tick more than one)**

   Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

   ☐ I prefer reading by myself.

   ☐ I like listening to stories or being read to.

   ☐ I like talking about what I've read.

3. **How often do you read or use the following...?**

   Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Almost every day	About once a week	About once a month	Never or hardly ever
Picture books	◯	◯	◯	◯
Novels	◯	◯	◯	◯
Non-fiction books	◯	◯	◯	◯
Comics/graphic novels	◯	◯	◯	◯
Magazines	◯	◯	◯	◯
Newspapers	◯	◯	◯	◯
Websites	◯	◯	◯	◯
Video games	◯	◯	◯	◯
Social Media	◯	◯	◯	◯
Text messages	◯	◯	◯	◯

4. **At home, how often do you read for...**

   Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Almost every day	About once a week	About once a month	Never or hardly ever
Personal reasons: for pleasure	◯	◯	◯	◯
School reasons: as homework	◯	◯	◯	◯

5. **Do you have a favourite book? What is it?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. **Do you have a favourite website? What is it?**

_____

7. **What do you enjoy reading? (You can tick more than one)**

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- [ ] Fantasy
- [ ] Adventure/mystery
- [ ] Books in series
- [ ] Science Fiction
- [ ] Horror/suspense
- [ ] Biographies
- [ ] Humour
- [ ] History
- [ ] Real life
- [ ] Hobbies
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Romantic
- [ ] In other languages
- [ ] Otro: _____

8. **How do you choose what to read? (You can tick more than one)**

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- [ ] I choose myself.
- [ ] I read what my friends read.
- [ ] I read what my brothers or sisters recommend.
- [ ] I read what my parents recommend me.
- [ ] I read what my teachers recommend me.
- [ ] Otro: _____

9. **How do you get books? (You can tick more than one)**

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- ☐ I buy them myself.
- ☐ I get them as presents.
- ☐ I borrow them from the School library.
- ☐ I borrow them from the local library.
- ☐ I borrow them from friends.
- ☐ Otro: _____

10. **How often do you use your laptop, mobile phone,... for....?**

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Every day	Almost every day	About once a week	About once a month	Never or hardly ever
Playing games	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Texting	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Emailing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Visiting Webpages	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Social Media	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Other	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

11. **Describe yourself as a reader** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Con la tecnología de

Google Forms

Final Self-assessment Questionnaire

Fill in this questionnaire once we have finished our Big Project.

*Obligatorio

1. CONDUCT IN CLASS *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Always	Most of the times	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
I've showed self-control in class	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've exhibited a positive attitude	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've listened and followed my teacher's instructions	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've worked well in my group	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've been respectful to myself and to others	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

2. WORK HABITS *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Always	Most of the times	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
I've completed the tasks every week	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've participated actively in class	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've given my best effort during these weeks	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've read all the comic extracts before class	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've used time wisely in class	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I've done my duties as a member of my group	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

3. INTERESTS AND MOTIVATIONS *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	YES	NO	I am not sure
I've enjoyed doing the project a lot	◯	◯	◯
I've felt motivated with this project	◯	◯	◯
I'd like to read the whole comic of March	◯	◯	◯
I'd recommended March to other people	◯	◯	◯
I'd like to read other comics	◯	◯	◯
I'd like to know more about the Civil Rights Movement	◯	◯	◯
I'd like to know more about comics	◯	◯	◯
I've enjoyed working in group	◯	◯	◯

4. **What did you like the most doing this project?** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. **What did you like the least doing this project?** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. **What things would you change to improve this project?** *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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APPENDIX B
WE'RE GONNA MARCH
PORTFOLIO
4TH CSE
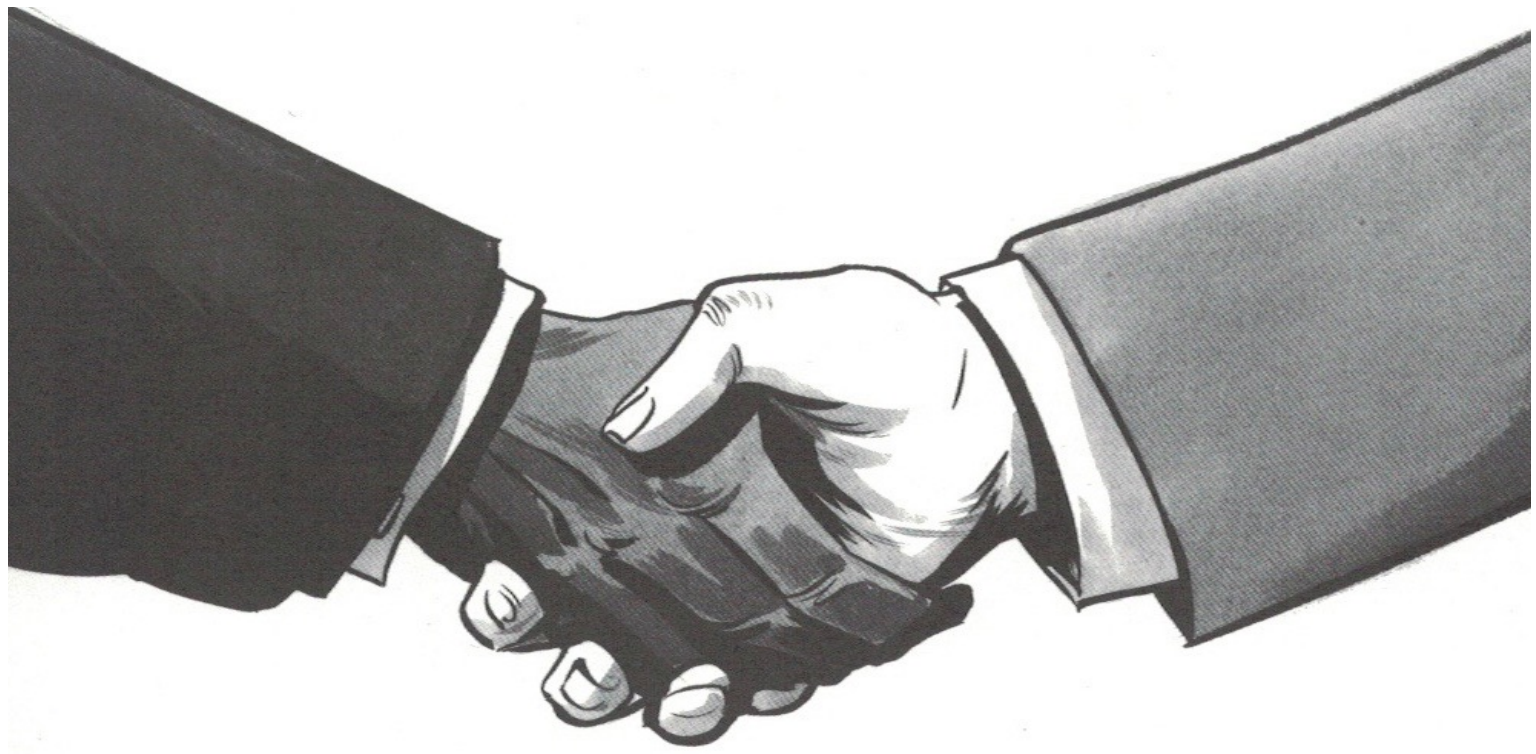
WE'RE GONNA MARCH

PORTFOLIO
4TH CSE

OUR BIG PROJECT

This term, we are going to carry out a project called **WE'RE GONNA MARCH**. To do so, we need to accomplish **10 different tasks** to learn about one of the most important human rights movements of the 20th century, that is, the so called **Civil Rights Movement in US** during the 60s. This movement relates the fight for the civil rights of Black people in the US, especially, in the Southern States of America, where slavery was prominent in the past.

To learn about this movement, we are going to read some extracts from the graphic novel entitled *March*, written by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin, and illustrated by Nate Powell.

Every week we will read an extract from this comic. Then, we will complete the task attached to each reading. Each task is divided into two parts:

- ✓ **Part 1 - at home**: you have to read the extract at home and complete some questions related to vocabulary and comprehension.

- ✓ **Part 2 - in class**: After reading the extract, we work in class some issues that appear in the comic and we work with some technical terms related to the creation of comics. So, in class we are going to work in pairs or groups of 4, because some tasks will require making drawings, as we will experiment with comics and how to write and draw one.

You have the instructions of each task in paper and at the Google Classroom. These tasks will be your portfolio of our project. Remember to complete and fill in the tasks because this will be crucial for your final mark at the end of the course, as **this project represents the 15% of your final mark**. To do so, there are two rubrics available, one for the Portfolio and the other for the Workshop. In your portfolio and in Google Classroom you have all you need to accomplish this project.

Once we have completed all the tasks, at the end of the course we are to engage in a **Workshop**, where, in groups of 4, you are going to create your own comic! Your comics will be later upload to Google Classroom to share with your mates.

So, remember to read the extracts every week and have fun!

This is the first task of our project. During these weeks, we are going to read some extracts from the graphic novel *March*.

This is the first extract, so we will do it in class. Next extracts will be read at home before the session in class. In class, we are going to work with what you have read and other aspects related to the reading.

SESSION 1

Glossary:

Conducive (p.6) providing the right conditions for something good to happen or exist.

Define:

kneel (p.7)

mayor (p.7)

nigger (p.8)

Reading comprehension questions:

- Describe what happens is this scene.

- Who is the protagonist of the story?

- By looking at the pictures guess who Black and White people are. Look also at their physical and face expressions and at their clothes. Who seems to have the power?

- Find instances of modal verbs in this scene and explain their meaning taking into account the context they appear.

Analysis Questions:

- Do you know where Edmund Pettus Bridge is?

- Look at the speech bubbles. Why do they have different shapes?

- Where is the last scene located?

- The title of this graphic novel is *March*. How many meanings of the word *march* do you know? By looking only at the title, how do you expect from the story?

- Look at the word *nigger*. What does this word imply? Is it a positive or a negative word? Why? In which contexts could this word appear? Think of other words used similarly.

What is a comic?

As you probably know, *March* is a graphic novel, or a type of comic. But, what is a comic? To find a good definition, list similarities and differences between comics and other types of artwork such as literature or cinema. What is the main common characteristic?

COMIC	LITERATURE	CINEMA

What do you think is more important in comics, images or words? Why?

- Eisner defines comic as "sequential art". Explain this brief definition. How would you improve this definition?

SESSION 2

Once you have read the basic vocabulary regarding comics and their design, let's continue analysis this extract!

- Make groups of four. Each of you will play a different role taking as models the roles you have read about. They are the following:

✓ Writer
✓ Artist
✓ Colorist
✓ Editor

You have each role's duties in the cards. So, it's time for drawing!

- Look again at extract 1 from the graphic novel March. Choose two or three pages and try to identify as many aspects as possible. Use the terms that appear in Task 1.

- Look at the first image. It is the drawing of a Bridge, a symbol very important in this story. What kind of shot does this scene represent?

Then, think of a place (imaginary or real) and make a drawing of that place carrying a mood listed below. Do not draw any character or word.

- ✓ abandoned
- ✓ serene
- ✓ forbidding
- ✓ welcoming
- ✓ official
- ✓ exotic
- ✓ innocent

Make this drawing taking into account the role assigned to you. Remember that you are a team, so you have to work collaboratively.

Can you guess other group's mood by looking at their drawings?

REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN!

When drawing, one member of the group can start drawing. Then, the rest of the members can improve the picture by adding more details, as in the example below:

a simple version

an improved version
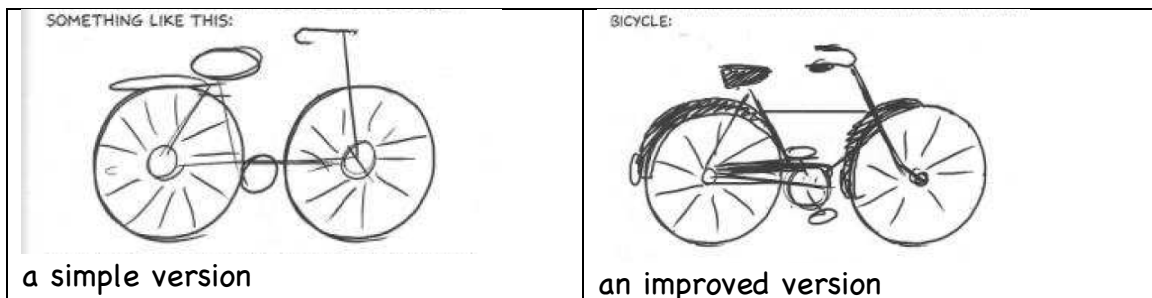
Now, try to do the same with an object (e.g. a bus, a building, an animal,....). First, draw a very simple picture. Then, each member will add one or two details to the first drawing. Compare the results with the first draft.

And remember the most important thing. It is not about who makes the best drawing, but to have fun and collaborate with your mates to make things better.

TASK 1 – COMICS VOCABULARY

Before going on with the graphic novel *March*, we need to learn some technical concepts related to comics. They are necessary if we want to make comics or to analyse *March* in a deeper way.

Basic Vocabulary related to the Design of the comic

Parts of a comic

Panel: Rectangles or squares where the action of the comic is drawn. Each panel corresponds to a scene in the narrative.

In this example, there are 5 different panels.
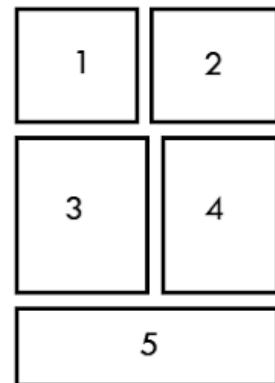
Splash panel: A big panel that takes the whole page, used to introduce the story or to attract the reader's attention. They can occupy one or two pages.

In the example, this panel occupies a whole page.

Open panel: Panels whose borders or sides are open (without frames) or not well defined.
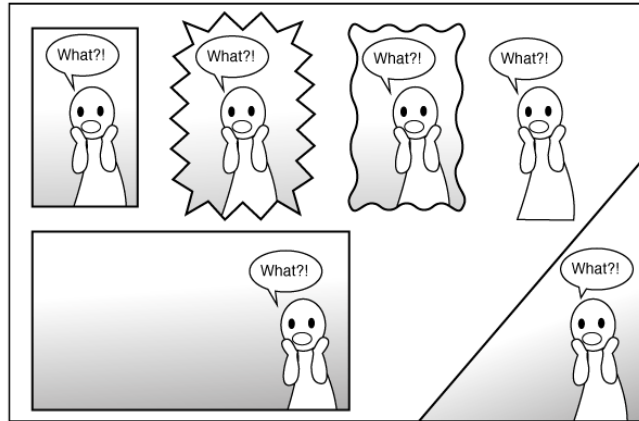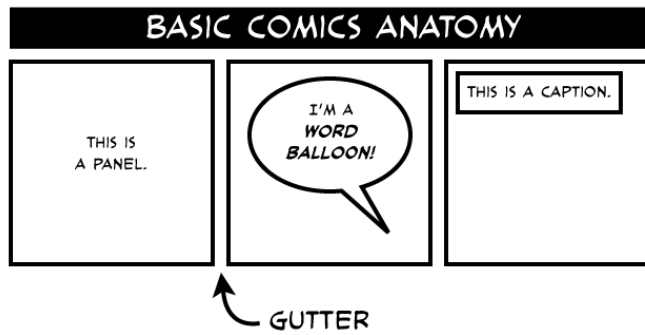
Panel 1 would be an example of open panel.

Frame (borders): Each side of a panel. If the panel is a rectangle, it has 4 borders.

There are many different types of frames, as in the example.

Gutter: The space between panels. The gutters serves to represent the passing of one action to another, that is how action takes place in time.
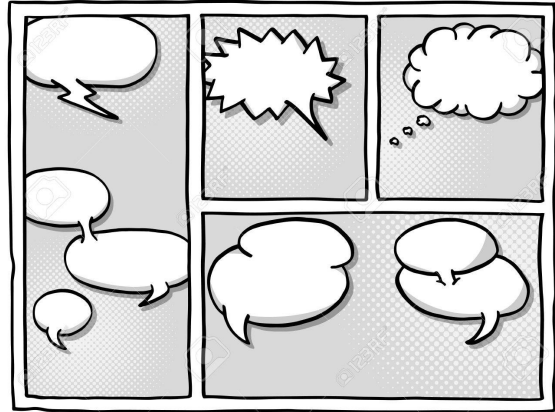
Elements of a comic

Script: The written part of a comic, that is, all the dialogues and narrations.

Balloons or bubbles: Objects used to contain the dialogue. They have different forms (rounded or rectangular, or irregular edges). Depending on the bubble form, they contain thoughts, dreams, screams, whispers,....

Word balloons: When people speak to each other.

Thought balloons: When people are thinking.

Narratory Blocks (caption): Little rectangles or squares where a narrator, maybe a character from the story, tells something to the reader.

Sound effects: Words that indicate a sound caused by something or someone. Sound words express duration and intensity of the sound.

Angles (what a panel shows)

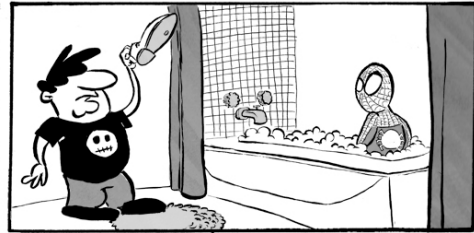**Close-up shot:** the panel focuses on small details or the character's face.

Long shot: The panel focuses on one or more objects fully. The reader can see the character's full body (or the most part of it).
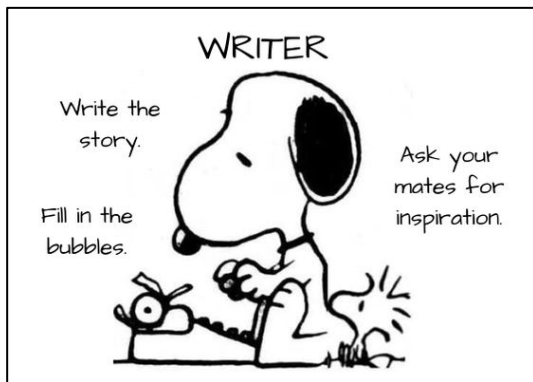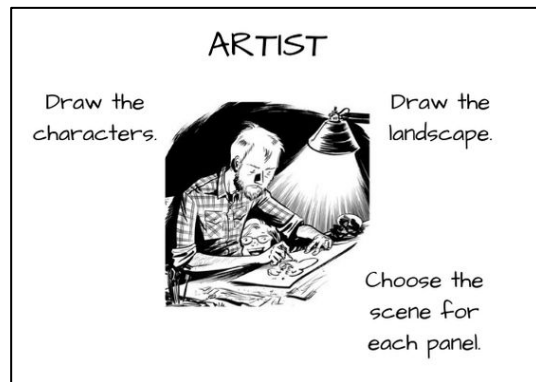

Panoramic view: The panel focuses on landscapes or large scenes, similar to a "bird's eye view".

Roles in Comic Book Production
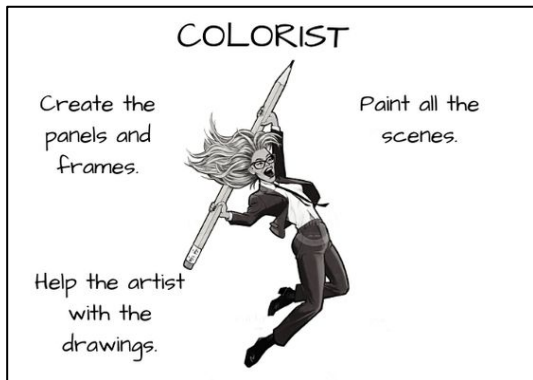

WRITER

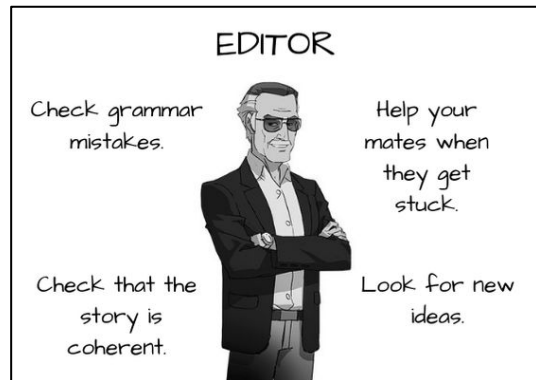Write the story.

Fill in the bubbles.

Ask your mates for inspiration.

Writer: The person who writes the script or the plot of the story.

ARTIST

Draw the characters.

Draw the landscape.

Choose the scene for each panel.

Artist: The person who draws the story.

COLORIST

Create the panels and frames.

Paint all the scenes.

Help the artist with the drawings.

Colorist or inker: The person who colors the artists' drawings.

EDITOR

Check grammar mistakes.

Help your mates when they get stuck.

Check that the story is coherent.

Look for new ideas.

Editor: The person who check the stories and looks for errors. The editor also supports the creative team in many ways.

Now, Check vocabulary!

Once you have read the vocabulary list, go to *Educaplay* webpage and match the words with their corresponding images:

https://www.educaplay.com/learning-resources/4592671-task_1_comics_vocabulary.html

Sample Comic Script and Visual Interpretation
from *Cedric the Dragon Slayer*

Page 4

Panel 1

Old Lady screams: There it is! There it is! I knew it! It's the At Last Dragon! Slay it, Dragon-Slayer!

Panel 2

(The dragon flies around and then settles in front of Cedric, sitting like a dog.)

Cedric then: HAHAHA! Ma'am, this is just a common floater dragon. They're all over this part of the countryside. They're harmless, like dogs.

Broad: Oh no, that there's the meanest, orneriest dragon they make!! He's done eaten my precious little Perty, I knows it, and come to think of it, I got a cow missin' too!!

Panel 3

Cedric then: But he's only 3 feet tall! He couldn't possibly eat a cow.

(The dragon spits the chicken out at Cedric)

Cedric then: And look at this; it's not even a chicken. It's a feather cap. He was probably just roosting in your roof for a while and . . . .

Panel 4

Tyber now: And the then old broad says, "If you was your daddy, boy, that dragon would be on my dinner table by now! You shame the family name, you yellow coward—well, I couldn't have her bad-mouth my buddy, you know."

Panel 5

Tyber now: I'd been just standing there listening to her yak, but I was not gonna let her cuss my buddy, no way, uh-uh!

Panel 6

(Tyber grabs the bartender's lips. Cedric and Tyber both smile at how comical the keeper looks, maybe crossing his eyes to see both of Tyber's massive fingers on his mouth)

Tyber now: So I just leaned down there and grabbed her lips shut like this see . . . .

Panel 7

Cedric narrates: Now that did happen. The witch started to flail and mumble out muffled screams that probably could have been heard in the next village over. Better Tyber than me . . . .

Sample Comic Script and Visual Interpretation
from *Cedric the Dragon Slayer*

Sample script for *Cedric the Dragon Slayer* created by Eric Goff. Scripted by James Bucky Carter with page and panel layout, followed by artist Eric Oakland's visual interpretation. Both used with permission from the above-mentioned and from Outcast Studios (http://www.outcaststudios.com).

TASK 2 - *MARCH* - Book I (pages 47-59)

Part 1: AT HOME

Glossary:

reminder (p. 47) something that helps you to remember something.

pave roads (p. 48) roads covered with concrete (Spa. cemento).

cluster (p. 48) a group of similar things that are close together.

cinderblock (p. 48) a small block made of concrete (Spa. ladrillo).

recess (p. 48) period of time between classes when students do not study.

plead (p. 50) to make a request for something.

let me go (p. 50) to allow someone go somewhere.

whip (p. 52) a piece of leather used to hit animals or people.

slip away (p. 51) to leave a place secretly.

dash out (p. 52) to go somewhere quickly.

defendant (p. 57) a person who is accused of doing something illegal in a trial.

counter (p. 57) a long surface in a restaurant or shop where people is attended (Spa. mostrador, barra).

firsthand (p. 59) to experience something by yourself, obtain information personally or from someone closed to you.

Define:

hand-me-down bus (p. 48)

tan my hide (p. 53)

turn something upside-down (p. 53)

State-of-the-art bus/school (p. 54)

Departed (p. 54)

sermon (p. 55)

Boycott (p. 58)

Reading Comprehension Questions:

- Who is the narrator of the story? What's his name?

- When does the story happen?

- Why does John say he felt inspired?

Did you know...?

The Brown v. Board of Education case (1954) was a decision made by the US Supreme Court ruled that separating children in public schools on the basis on race was unconstitutional. Watch this video and answer the questions:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1siiQelPHbQ&t=24s

Summarize the mains facts of this case. How does this case relate to the word segregation?

- Rosa Parks was considered the "mother of the freedom movement". Watch this video and summarize the main aspects concerning Rosa Park's biography. You will need Rosa Park's description next session in class.

https://edpuzzle.com/media/5cf246a96f8e6641473d23b0

PART 2: IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

Watch an extract from the Documentary *I am not your Negro*. This extract (05:55-07:46) tells the story of a 15 years old black girl. Then, answer the following questions.

- Do you like school?

- Have you ever think of the fact that still there are children who cannot go to school? Do you think that this fact makes a difference in those children's life and future? Why?

- Explain what segregation is.

- Who's Rosa Parks? Summarize what she did and think the reasons of her action. Why did she refuse to sit back in the bus?

- Who's Martin Luther King?

- Look at how movement is represented in this extract (look at the lines). Identify the page and number of panel in which lines representing movement appear.

- There are different word bubbles shapes. Why? What do they represent?

Time for Drawing

- Rosa Parks was a crucial figure in the Civil Rights Movement in the US. Use your summary about Rosa Parks' life and turn into a short comic strip (no more than 4 panels).

Complete the character profile with the main characteristics you know about Rosa Parks and then, try to draw her in a way that she transmits her essential features.

Character	Rosa Parks	
Age		
Height		
Weight		
Face features		
Ethnicity		
Outfit		
Background		
Personality		
Interests		
Allegiance		

CHARACTER DESIGN – PROFILE (Template)

Character		
Age		
Height		
Weight		
Face features		
Ethnicity		
Outfit		
Background		
Personality		
Interests		
Allegiance		

TASK 3 - *MARCH* - Book I (pages 68-73) + Extract "The way to non-violence" (pages 75-78)

PART 1: AT HOME

Glossary:

sue (p. 71) to take legal action against someone or an organization.

file suit (p. 71) to present a demand in front of a court for something that is considered unjust.

Define:

to face (p. 70)

supportive (p. 72)

Reading Comprehension Questions:

- Summarize John's moral philosophy. Do you agree with John's view?

PART 2: IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

- What is the meaning of "the Spirit of History" (p. 73)? Look for information on the Internet.

- Read the passage entitled "The Way of non-violence". Define the term non-violence. Do you agree with what this concept implies? Why?

Would you follow this philosophy under any circumstances? Do you think it is hard to follow it sometimes? Explain your answers.

Now, Watch an extract from the Documentary *I am not your Negro* (26:10-30:25). This extract shows an interview with Martin L. King Jr. and Malcolm X, the main representatives of the Social Rights Movement. Note that these two men, although they fight for the same cause, their philosophy are completely different. Summarize the main differences.

Why Does Malcolm X say that Martin L. King represent the figure of "Uncle Tom"? Where does this figure come from?

- In page 68 there are only images, not words. What feelings do these images transmit to you?

- Take a look at the shape of the text bubbles. How are dialogues represented? And thoughts and the narrator's voice?

- Can you find instances of sound effects?

Time for drawing

- Thanks to this extract, we know more things about John Lewis and his moral philosophy. Complete the information by filling his character design profile.

- Complete also the information of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X (from both the comic and the documentary).

- Look at the picture in page 78. Explain how colors black and white are used and how Lewis' face is drawn. Do you find this picture inspiring?

- Look at McCloud's pages about icons and how they work. Define what an icon is. Are they universal? What's the difference between icons and symbols? Give an example of symbol.

-Think of a picture that inspires you and describe it to your group. You can find for inspiration in McCloud's extract.

Then, make a very simple drawing of something that could inspire others to go on fighting against all odds.

TASK 4 - *MARCH* - Book I (pages 84-96); (pages 99-103)

PART 1: AT HOME

Glossary:

purchase (p. 84) to obtain, to buy something.

legitimate (p. 84) with the right to do something.

store policy (p. 86) Rules and norms a shop or restaurant has to follow.

harsh (p. 86) piercing, hurtful attitude.

flow (p. 86) to flourish.

hold up (p. 87) wait (in this context).

swell (p. 87) past of swell, to become bigger, to increase in size.

freshmen (p. 87) students in their first year of university.

downtown (p. 87) central part of the city.

Minister (p. 88) a religious leader of certain Christian churches.

eerie (p. 94) strange, misterious.

y'all (p. 94) you all.

wear someone out (p. 94) to make someone very tired by demanding a lot of that person's work or attention.

get through (p. 94) to succeed. In this context, the light can enter through the windows.

Baptist Church (p. 95) a Christian group that believes that baptism should not happen until a person is old enough to ask for it and to understand its meaning.

beget (p. 100) to cause.

subside (p. 101) to become less strong.

conspicuously absent (p. 101) noticeable (everyone knows) that someone is not present.

mob (p. 101) crowd, group of people, mass.

cross over (p. 102) to change from one place to another (literally and figuratively)

paddy wagon (p. 103) a closed police vehicle used for transporting prisoners.

Define:

a bite to eat (p. 84)

manger (p. 86)

incident (p. 87)

fate (p. 87)

drop (p. 95)

fury (p. 101)

overcome (p. 103)

Comprehension Questions:

- Explain the use of the modal verb in page 85. Find more examples.

- Find an example of inversion. Write down a similar example.

- Explain the statement "Violence begets violence" (p. 100)

PART 2: IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

- Explain how music is represented. In what ways is music important? Give examples.

- Why does the narrator relate Fate with the Spirit of History?

- Take a look at the Ladies' Bathroom scene from *March*. Then, watch an extract from the film *Hidden Figures* (1:00:10-1:04:33). The black woman called Catherine works in NASA making mathematical calculations related to the best moment for launching the astronauts. The white man is her boss.

Now, watch another extract from the film *Green Book* (1:10:44-01:12:29). The black man is a pianist who goes on tour alongside the Southern states in US, and the white man is his driver. Describe the misunderstanding.

In what ways can people be "segregationist"? Do you think that this happens nowadays? Why?

Time for Writing

Complete the comic strip from *Calvin and Hobbes* with words. Then, change your comic with other groups and read them. Take care of the grammar and vocabulary used! Use also sound effects.
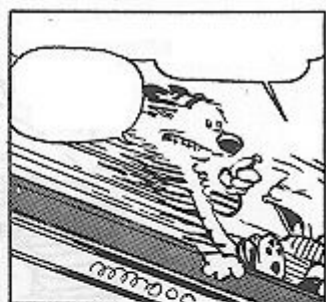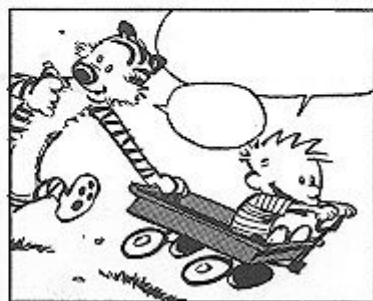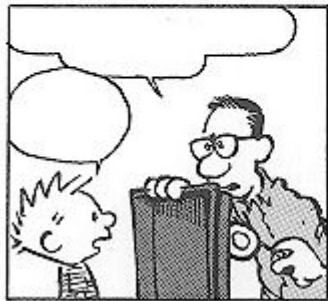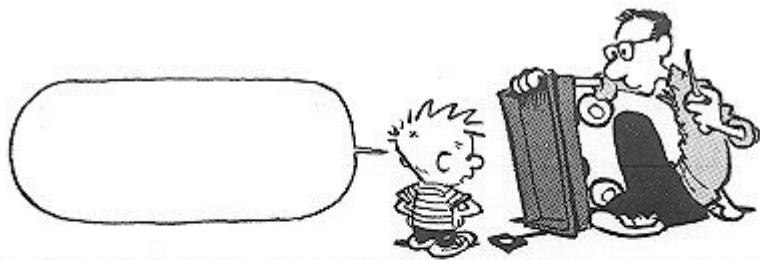
PART 1 - AT HOME

Glossary:

pest (p. 14) an insect or small animal that is harmful or damages crops.

unleash (p. 16) to suddenly release a violent force that cannot be controlled.

drill (p. 25) a line of people.

post bail (p. 25) to pay a fine to leave jail.

Define:

sit-in (p. 9)

unfairness (p. 10)

quest (p. 16)

slow down the line (p. 19)

stubborn (p. 23)

Comprehension Questions:

- Identify the different parts of these passages. Write down a title for each part.

- What is the Ten Commandments' plot?

- What is movement represented? Give examples.

PART 2 - IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

- What emotions do pages 14 and 15 bring to you?

- Explain how water, snow and fumes are represented and what emotions and feelings they transmit to the reader.

- Who is Kennedy? Write down in your Character Design Profile what you know about this person.

- Look at the face expressions of the two men in page 22. What emotions do they convey? What are the key features of these emotions?

Time for Drawing

- Look at the extract from McCloud called "Lines and Emotions". Can you describe these emotions? Give the Spanish translation for all of them.

Do you agree with the images and the emotions they transmit? Can you give other examples?

- Look at Munch's painting (page 122) What emotions and feelings does this painting transmit to you?

- Did you remember the place that you drew in task 0? Now, turn back to the same picture and draw the same place but choosing a different mood. Then, compare both drawings. What aspects make the two drawings look different?

TASK 6 - *MARCH* - Book II (pages 154-157); (pages 166-171)

PART 1 - AT HOME

Glossary:

staffer (p. 154) an employee, often of a political organization.

draft (p. 154) a piece of text or picture that contains the main ideas but that it is not fully developed yet.

be on duty (p. 155) be ready for work.

paratroopers (p. 155) a soldier trained to be dropped from an aircraft with a parachute.

submit (p. 157) to give or offer something for a decision to be made by others.

take something out (p. 157) to remove something from somewhere.

starvation (p. 166) people's death due to lack of food.

sharecroppers (p. 166) a farmer who rents land and who gives part of his or her crop as rent, especially in the past.

trumped-up charges (p. 166) an invented accusation.

misgiving (p. 166) a feeling of doubt or worry about a future event.

fire hose (p. 167) tube for watering fire, used by the firefighters to extinguish fire.

bill (p. 167) a written law.

salute (p. 168) say hello.

put off (p. 168) to decide or arrange to delay an event or activity until a later time or date.

dare (p. 168) to be brave enough to do something.

FEPC (p. 168) Fair Employment Practice Committe, an organization created by US president Roosevelt in the 40s to avoid discriminatory employment practices.

maid (p. 168) a female worker that works in other people's houses cleaning and cooking.

indicted (p. 169) been accused formally by a court.

locked up (p. 169) been in prison.

dixicrats (p. 169) members of a segregationist political party called The States' Right Democratic Party (usually called Dixiecrats).

holler (p. 170) a loud shout.

hamlet (p. 170) shelter, a place where you are safe from something dangerous.

appeal (p. 170) a request to the public, to ask for something.

Revolution of 1776 (p. 170) American Revolution, the war against Britain for the independence of the thirteen colonies that later became USA.

splinter (p. 171) a small, sharp piece of wood. (Spa. astilla).

Define:

it stuck with me (p. 154)

concern (p. 156)

death penalty (p. 167)

exploitation (p. 168)

confine (p. 170)

Comprehension Questions:

- Look at Lewis' speech in pages 166-171. Summarize the main ideas of his speech by taking into account the words that appear in bold. Write a title for your summary.

- Watch this video about Martin Luther King Jr.' famous speech. In class, we are going to work with his speech. In this video, you have some background.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IB0i6bJIjw

PART 2 - IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

- What are the implications of the statement "one man, one vote"?

- Complete the profile of Malcolm X from what the narrator says in the extract entitled "Talk with JFK-Malcolm X". You can also complete the info of John F. Kennedy (use also the extract "JFK's murder").

- Do you agree with Malcolm X on the need of support others although you don't share the same ideas? (page 155).

- Although you think something is right, maybe others do not think the same. Why?

- Compare Lewis' speech with the speech delivered by Governor George Wallace from Alabama (a Southern state) (read the extract "Wallace's speech").

What is the main purpose of a political speech?

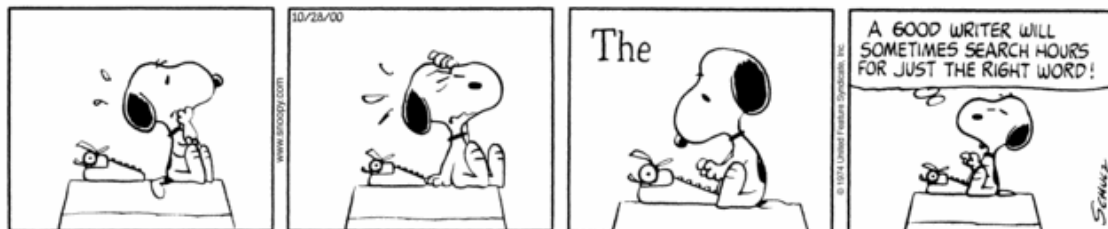**Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a Dream" speech**

Read a short version of Martin Luther King's famous speech "I have a Dream", delivered in 1963 in front of thousands of people in Washington.

Then, choose the sentences you think represent the essence of his speech and write them down in the worksheet.

Be careful with your choices, as you have little space for writing.

Once you have written your own version of King's speech, translate this text into a comic strip. To do so, go to **Storyboard That** and follow the instructions.

https://www.storyboardthat.com/

Martin Luther King Jr.

I have a Dream

Delivered August 28, 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial, Washington D.C.

I am happy to join with you today in what will be the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

One hundred years ago, a great American who became the symbol of our nation signed the *Emancipation Declaration*. This moment was a step forward in the liberation of thousands of Negro slaves.

But today, one hundred years later, The Negro still is not free. The life of the Negro is marked by the chains of segregation and discrimination. The Negro still lives in poverty and in isolation from society and his own land.

When our forefathers wrote the *Constitution and the Declaration of Independence*, they promised to every American the guarantee of the "unalienable Rights" of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Obviously, America has not fulfill that promise.

We refuse to believe that justice is corrupted. But now it is the time to make real promises of democracy. Now it is time to rise from the darkness of segregation and injustice to the lightness of racial justice and brotherhood.

1963 is not an end, but a beginning, and there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights.

I have some words to my people. We must fight with dignity and discipline. Our protests must never turn into physical violence. We will fight physical force with our soul force.

The Negro community must not distrust all white people, as many of our white brothers are here today, because they know that their freedom depend on our freedom.

Some people ask when we will satisfy with our struggle. Well, we can never be satisfied as long as we cannot stay in hotels, as long as our children have not their dignity because it is "for whites only", we can never be satisfied as long as many of us cannot vote.

Some of you have come from jail, some of you have suffered police brutality at home. But I say to you, go back to your homes in the South and in the North, because we know that somehow this situation will be changed.

Even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, **I still have a dream**. It is a dream based on the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live the true meaning of "all men are created equal".

I have a dream that one day, all people will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day, all the states will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

With this faith, we will be able to transform the discords of our nations into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to fight together, to stand up from freedom together, knowing that one day we will be free.

And when this happens, in every state and every city, we will be able to stay all together, black men and white men, Jews, Protestants and Catholics, and joining hands we will sing the words of the old Negro spiritual:

Free at last! Free at last!

Notes:

- The **Emancipation Declaration** was a legal document written in 1863, in which US president **Abraham Lincoln** freed all slaves who lived in the Southern States during the Civil War (the war between Northern and Southern States). Lincoln is considered as a symbol of the American union.

- The **Declaration of Independence** is a legal document written in 1776 and signed by some forthcoming presidents of US, in which the so-called 13 colonies ceased to be British colonies and became independent colonies. Later, these 13 colonies formed the origin of what we know as the United States of America.

- The **Constitution of US** is the legal document written in 1787 which contains the Supreme Law of US. It establishes the America's national government and its fundamental laws, and guarantees the basic rights for the American citizens.

Martin Luther King Jr.: I have a Dream (1963)
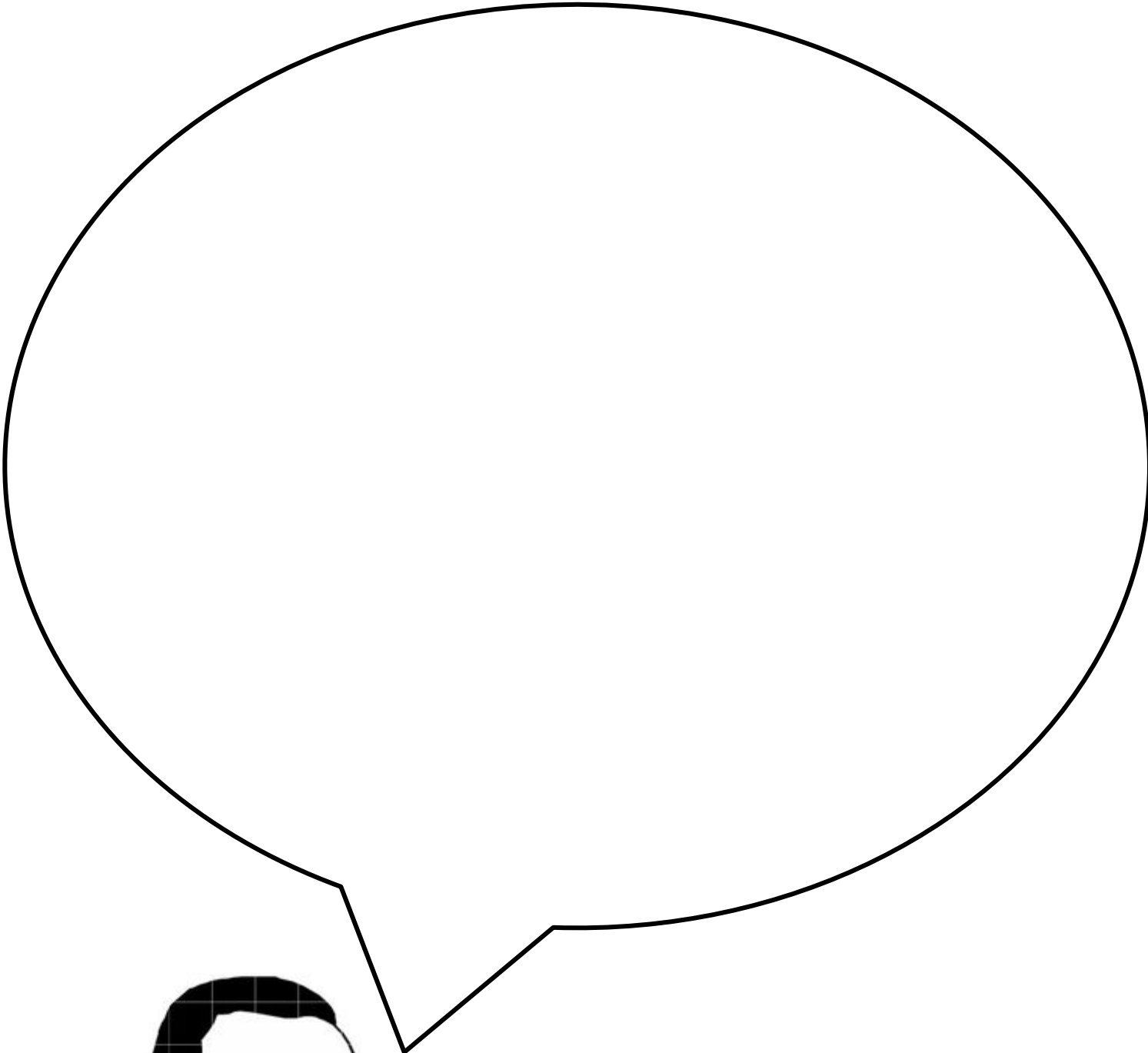
PART 1 - AT HOME

Glossary:

usher (p. 4) a person who shows people where they should seat, especially in a formal event (like in a church, a wedding or in a theatre)

hurry along (p. 5) to move quickly.

broadcast (p. 11) a radio program (e.g. an interview).

grip (p. 12) to hold very tightly.

to make one's own way from (p. 12) to go forward, to proceed, to achieve.

Klan rally (p. 12) a public meeting made by the Ku Klux Klan.

to be indicted (p. 14) to be formally accused of doing something illegal.

packed with (p. 16) full of.

spawn (p. 16) to cause to happen.

pay our last tribute (p. 17) saying goodbye to a dead person.

perpetrate (p. 17) to do something harmful to others.

martyred (p. 17) someone who has been killed by their religious or political beliefs.

Holy Crusade (p. 17) a long and determined attempt to achieve something.

quote (p. 18) to repeat someone's words.

shake up (p. 19) to cause to change to improve.

all-out revolution (p. 19) complete and with as much effort as possible.

SCLC (p. 19) Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an African-American civil rights organization, closely associated with its first president, Martin L. King Jr.

outlet (p. 20) a way in which emotion or energy can be expressed or made use of.

weigh (p. 20) to consider.

belt (p. 20) geographical zone where some places are closed to each other.

Define:

Breaking news Bulletin (p. 11)

recruit (p. 19)

pour (p. 19)

shut down (p. 19)

Comprehension Questions:

- Find examples of omitted words like startin'. What do these words represent?

- What does the expression "I'd like to blow the whole town up" mean? (page 10)

- Find instances of words related to religion.

- What does Gov. Wallace mean with the expression "few first-class funerals"? Do you think this is a real solution? Why?

- What are the main goals of Selma March?

- Does Martin L. King agree on this march? Why?

PART 2 - IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

- Watch an extract from the Documentary *Selma: the Bridge to Ballot* (0:23-2:22)

- Do you find violence against children justifiable for a social cause?

- Look at page 12. Why do these boys kill another boy? Do you think education may influence in your future acts? In what ways?

- What do speech bubbles with short lines represent?

- What types of speaking are present in the extract? How are they represented?

- Look at the speech delivered in the Funeral. In which ways does the system produce murderers? How can we avoid these type of behaviour?

- What was the Ku Klux Klan? Look for info on the Internet.

Time for Drawing

Look at McCloud's extracts about emotions.

- The six basic emotions (page 83) were described by the psychologist Eckman. He believed that any person around the world would be able to identify these six basic emotions.

Give examples of situations in which you feel these six basic emotions.

- Then, take a look at the most complex emotions in page 84. Translate the words into Spanish.

Do you usually recognize these emotions easily in other people by looking at their face expressions? Do you recognise your own emotions when they pop up? Do you express your emotions in a proper way? Think that the philosopher Aristotle used to say that:

"Anybody can become angry - that is easy, but to be angry with the *right person* and to the *right degree* and at the *right time* and for the *right purpose*, and in the *right way* - that is not within everybody's power and is not easy."

Do you agree with Aristotle's statement? Why?

- Take a look at the face expressions caused by physical states. Translate these words into Spanish.

- Pick an expression from the list and draw a face to match. Then, show it to your partner to guess what emotion this face is expressing. Make sure you know the meaning of all these adjectives.

- ✓ confident
- ✓ uncertain
- ✓ frustrated
- ✓ hurt (emotionally)
- ✓ flirtatious
- ✓ mischievious
- ✓ tired
- ✓ impatient
- ✓ aggressive

TASK 8 - *MARCH* - Book III (pages 195-211)

PART 1 - AT HOME

Glossary:

detrimental (p. 198) causing harm or damage.

impromptu (p. 207) done or said without earlier planning or preparation.

throb (p. 207) to produce a strong, regular beat.

gut (p. 207) the long tube in the body of a person or animal, through which food moves during the process of digesting food. Figuratively, intuition (Spa. entrañas, instinto).

Judgement at Nuremberg (p. 208) a film based on the trial against the Nazi Regime and its executors.

anchor (p. 208) a heavy metal object used to prevent a boat from moving. Figuratively, something you can lean on, count on to go on.

film footage (p. 208) film, especially one showing an event.

injunction (p. 209) an official order given by a law court, usually to stop someone from doing something.

rabbi (p. 209) the religious leader of a synagoge, the religious place for Jews.

rest assured (p. 210) to be certain that something will happen.

Define:

walkway (p. 206)

touch a nerve (p. 209)

Comprehension Questions:

- Relate this scene with Task 0. Are they the same scene? Why is the reason of beginning a story by the end?

PART 2 - IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

- How is chaos portrayed? (pages 200-205)

- Watch the extract from the documentary *Selma: the Bridge to the Ballot* (23:26-28). There are real images from the riot.

- Look at the panels without words (pages 195-197). What emotions do these images transmit to the reader?

- Is it difficult to express our own feelings and thoughts to others? Why?

- Do you think that words can lead to misunderstanding? And body language? In what ways can we avoid misunderstanding?

- What was the effect of broadcasting what happened in Selma and to show on TV?

Time for Drawing

- Take a look at McCloud's extract entitled "How many panels?". Read Carl's story. How many panels would you maintain? From all the available panels, choose the ones you consider necessary to tell the story.

- Taking into account the number of panels necessary to tell a story and the transitions (the passing of time) between panels, pick one of these three mini-plots and create a short comic strip (no more than 4 panels). Then, change your story with another group to look how they have made the transitions.

> ✓ The queen died and the king died of grief after her.
> ✓ Boy meets girl, boy loses girl.
> ✓ Dog eats dog, dog burps, dog figure skates.

- Now, we are going to work with some frames. A frame refers to the particular shape of a panel. Look at Eisner' extract "Types of Frames" to see examples of frame shapes. Then, draw the appropriate frame for these scenes:

> ✓ a TV screen
> ✓ an old polaroid photo
> ✓ a panoramic view of a landscape
> ✓ a reel (roll of film, Spa. bobina)

TASK 9 - *MARCH* - Book III (pages 222-224)

PART 1 - AT HOME

Glossary:

turning point (p. 222) a moment of change.

Lexington, Concord and Appomatox (p. 222) places related to the Civil War (a war that took place between Northern and Southern states in the US in 1863-1865).

assaulted (p. 222) attacked with violence.

summon (p. 223) to order someone to come to or be present at a particular place, or to officially arrange a meeting of people.

lay bare (p. 223) to make something known.

overcome (p. 224) to suceed in doing something.

crippling (p. 224) causing injuries or harm.

bigotry (p. 224) the fact of having and expressing strong, unreasonable beliefs and disliking other people who have different beliefs or a different way of life. To hate others on the basis on having different beliefs.

Define:

fate (p. 222)

long-suffering (p. 222)

denial (p. 222)

hymn (p. 223)

majesty (p. 223)

issues (p. 223)

defeat (p. 223)

moving speech (p. 224)

Comprehension Questions:

- Summarize the main ideas of President Johnson's speech.

- What does Johnson mean by saying "secret heart of America itself"? (page 223)

- What is the meaning of the expression "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul"? (page 223) Rephrase this sentence.

- Why does Johnson finish his speech by saying "we shall overcome"?

PART 2 - IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

- How can the reader know the order of the speech bubbles? How are bubbles linked to each other?

- Why is this speech so important for John?

- Complete the profile of president Johnson with the information available. Compare what John thought about Johnson based on his background and how Johnson takes a step forward to fight against segregationism. Do you think that John had prejudices against Johnson?

- Take a look at the extract entitled "Register for voting in Selma". Describe the differences between the white man and the black woman taking into account the words and the images.

- Watch the extract from the documentary *Selma: the Bridge to the Ballot* (32:17-35:15). List the changes that took place after Johnson's speech.

TASK 10 - *MARCH* - Book III (pages 228-238)

PART 1 - AT HOME

Glossary:

fed (p. 232) to give food to someone.

hell out of (p. 235) very much.

rally (p. 235) a public meeting.

weary (p. 236) very tired.

bubbling out (p. 236) feelings that comes from someone's soul (in this context).

perpetrate (p. 237) to commit a crime.

abiding (p. 237) An abiding feeling or memory is one that you have had for a long time.

unsheathed (p. 237) remove from its protecting cover (Spa. desenfundar).

scabbard (p. 237) a long, thin cover for the blade of a sword, usually attached to a belt. (Spa. vaina, funda).

Define:

marvel (p. 232)

give back (p. 237)

Comprehension Questions:

- What is the meaning of the expression "This is a revolution that won't fire a shot"? (p. 235)

- What does Boynton refer to when she say "three centuries of trouble and hardship"? (p. 235)

- Who was Rosa Parks? What did she do?

- Explain the expressions "Truth crushed to earth will rise again" and "No lie can live forever" (p. 238). Do you agree with that? Why?

PART 2 - IN CLASS

Analysis Questions:

- Complete the profile of Rosa Parks with the new information that appears in this extract.

- Watch the extract from the documentary *Selma: The bridge to the Ballot* (35:15-39:22)

What was the main change after the signing of the Civil Rights Act in 1965. Why is this change so important? Why does the narrator say at the end that "there is so much more to be done"?

- John says at the end of the extract "**I wish I could** say that the violence, the threats, the murders all stopped after Dr. King spoke." What does this sentence imply? Is it the same as saying that all these things stopped after Dr. King spoke?

- Take a look at the extract from *March* which portrays president Obama. What reasons make this scene possible today?

Nowadays, is it necessary to go on fighting against discrimination? Do you think that violence is the only way to assure your rights as citizens? Give examples in which violence has been used to obtain some legal benefits.

- Martin Luther King Jr. was one of the figures who represents non-violence social movement. Sadly, he was killed for his beliefs, as many others. Think of other figures that use non-violence to fight against injustice.